

At 56, David Cassidy looks very little changed from the elfin pop star who, at the beginning of the 1970s and via hit TV show *The Partridge Family*, had a bigger fan club than The Beatles or Elvis. Much water has since passed under the bridge – and much alcohol was subsequently consumed by the man who hit rock bottom in the 1980s as his career got derailed and two marriages hit the buffers.

But that was then. Now teetotal, David has found happiness in his beautiful house in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with third wife Sue Shifrin, a noted singer/ songwriter, and their son, Beau, 15. He also has a daughter, Katie, from an earlier relationship, who is making great strides as an actress.

In the UK this week, David is taking part in Children In Need and promoting an album of hits. A month later, he'll attend an auction of his memorabilia in LA. He took time out exclusively for HELLO! to discuss why he's so content with the way his life has panned out.

You've said you have no wish to recreate the *Partridge Family* years. Why the change of heart?

"I still have no interest in recreating the show, but I'm proud of the songs. When it was over, I went off in different directions – first with my solo career, then into musical theatre, then a spell in Las Vegas. Earlier this year, I realised I hadn't sung any of my hits in ten years. My record label, BMG, merged with Sony and there was impetus to put together a greatest hits album. These are songs that touched people's lives. They certainly changed mine."

Can you remember the first time you realised that you and *The Partridge Family* were a phenomenon?

"Vividly. We were in Cleveland, Ohio, and guests in the Thanksgiving Day parade. The show had only been on air for a matter of weeks and I'd already had a No.1 record. As Grand Marshall, I sat on top of the fire engine. There were 100,000 people lining the streets and all screaming as if everyone wanted a piece of me. It was scary. I do believe that I'd have been ripped limb from limb if I'd fallen off."

No fan base was more loyal than the British...

"It's one reason I'm touring the UK next April with David Essex and the Osmonds. I'm also involved in Children In Need. I'll do whatever they ask. I'd host it if that's what they want!"

Now you plan to auction much of your memorabilia.

"It'll take place at the Beverly Hilton LA on 16 December. Some of the pieces – stage outfits, guitars, *Partridge Family* lunchboxes, you name it, will be on display in London's Hard Rock Café from 14 November for ten days. I'd heard Cher had an auction of her outfits and artefacts so, when the auction house approached me, I decided the time was right to take all my bits and pieces out of storage. I liked the idea of sharing them with the fans who gave me my career."

Will you attend the auction?

"Of course. I don't think I'll be shedding a silent tear. I hope I'll see it as a celebration and also that it raises lots of money, a good portion of which I plan to give to charity. From 15 November, anyone who wants to place a bid can do so on www.juliensauctions.com."

What's your attitude now to *The Partridge Family*?

"It was never something I didn't love. People