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▲ Despite lost privacy, "I never resented my fans," says David (in '72).

◀ "They give my life meaning," says David (home in L.A. with Sue and Beau).



JULIAN WASSER

◀ "Being family brings out inherent truth" onstage, says Shaun.

▲ Shaun (glammed up in '74) saw fame as "a novelty—like winning a lottery."



STEWART NYER

In five years of analysis, which he began in 1987, David started to examine his troubled feelings, including the resentment he felt for his absentee father, whose approval he had desperately sought. "He'd promise the moon," says David. "But he only came to one Little League game. One." When David's career began to take off, Jack was encouraging—at first. "But I think he became resentful when people began calling him David Cassidy's father," says David. To his great regret, the two had been estranged for more than six months when Jack died in a fire in his Los Angeles penthouse apartment in 1976. David is determined that his son's upbringing will be different from his own. "I'm there for him," he says. "I keep my promises to him." Besides, he is grateful for the gift of parenthood: His wife, Sue, had been told at 40 that she couldn't have children. "He's a miracle child," she says.

Sue Shifrin first met David in 1973, after one of his shows at Wembley Stadium. The model and singer, who comes from Miami but was based in London, was invited to a party in David's penthouse hotel suite after

perks. "I was definitely Jack the Lad," says David. "I got to live the ultimate male fantasy, with women flinging themselves at me. I'm not bragging, just telling you." (He dated TV sis Susan Dey, but won't say whether they became serious. "[It's] in the book," demurs David, who has written a memoir, *C'mon, Get Happy: Fear and Loathing in the Partridge Family Bus*, due out next spring.) Of course, many of the females who wanted to fling themselves at David were swooning over his image on their school lunch box. "Fortunately, my taste was always more toward the 30-year-olds," he says. Still, the fantasy of Keith Partridge consumed him. "I was emotionally stunted," he says. "I became paranoid. There were people all over me all the time."

In 1974, Davidmania seemed to come to a tragic climax during his farewell concert, at London's White City Stadium, when a 14-year-old girl suffered a heart attack and died. David

himself was spent. He retired from performing that year and went into a self-imposed exile followed by bouts of depression, fueled by the slow realization that no one in Hollywood could see beyond David Cassidy, pinup boy. As a result, he says, "I spent a couple of really dark, dark years." He married actress Kay Lenz in 1977, but they split in 1981. In 1984 he wed horse breeder Meryl Tanz, but that relationship lasted barely a year.