

David Cassidy was the ultimate pop star. Keith Partridge from the TV series 'The Partridge Family', Seventies pop idol extraordinaire, Cassidy's face was on the cover of every teeny magazine on the planet. Airports were packed with screaming fans whenever his plane was due to touch down, girls fainted at the mere sight of him, and on one tragic occasion a 14 year-old was crushed to death in a stampede at one of his concerts. Oh yes, David Cassidy had it ALL.

Then, one day in 1975, after flogging 25 million albums and selling out two world tours, David Cassidy gave it all up.

He decided he needed to become a real person again and dedicated himself to breeding horses. And apart from the odd bit of acting, very little has been heard of him since as he hid himself away up here in the hills. Now 42, he sits laughing, recalling the past, and contemplating a comeback. "I just had to stop" he says. "Times were very hard for me. I couldn't venture into the streets on my own any more. My life was comparable to that of a Michael Jackson. You reach a point where you're not leading your own life any more.

"At the moment I am writing my biography and I hope the book will come out next

spring. It will show the phenomenon of David Cassidy in the Seventies and the loss of his identity. It really was a fantastic time. A gift. You could compare that time with a chocolate cake - if you eat too much of it you get sick. You reach a point where you no longer live your own life.

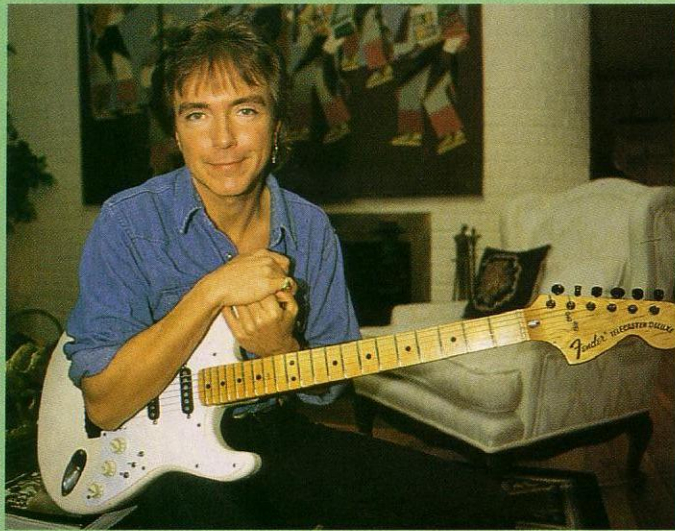
"I was constantly asked what the life of an idol or sex symbol was like. All the women love you and the boys dress like you, have the same hairstyle, etc. It was all very difficult for me because I had a lot of responsibilities." So how different is the David Cassidy of the Nineties?

"Yes, I have changed a lot since then. But I think I'm still struggling to grow up. Probably because I am in this particular profession. Every time I play the guitar I feel like I'm 13 or 14, when I started playing the guitar". He laughs. "I definitely don't feel like an adult, although my two year old son Beau sometimes lets me feel that I am getting a bit closer to adulthood. I learn a lot through Beau. All the memories, experiences I had as a child are being revived."

David's own father - Jack Cassidy - was a celebrated actor, but their relationship was never close. "My father left us when I was three and a half years old. He didn't give a damn about me. My father and me didn't get along very well although I adored and loved him dearly.

Unfortunately he was never there for me, so I was even closer to my mother. My father was always on the road and I can only say I'm happy I didn't become a father earlier because I am just as self-centred as he was. If you want to be a successful actor you simply have to work very hard on your career every day."

David's childhood, in fact, wasn't too rosy at all. He grew up in West Orange, New Jersey, with his mother Evelyn Ward, also an actress. His father showed up every now and then until they finally divorced and he married Shirley Jones, who became David's TV mother in 'The Partridge Family'. David was just ten when he moved with his mother to Los Angeles. There he obtained his degree from Rexford High School, a private school in Beverly Hills.

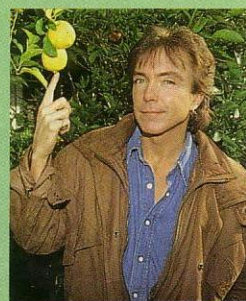


PICS: HANS DIETER STAHL

In the first of a new series discovering what happened to the heroes of our youth (!) ANGIE SAUTER goes to Hollywood in search of Seventies idol DAVID CASSIDY, who

sold six million albums and disappeared. She finds a 42 year-old family man plotting his comeback...

Teen Ange



"I always like to think back to how I hitch-hiked up to the Golden Gate Park in San Francisco in late 1967. We were considered hippies and when I finally got to see The Beatles for the first time I was sure that I wanted to play in a band. I first started playing the drums, but when I heard Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix and Jeff Beck I switched to guitar." After High School he was with the Los Angeles Theatre Group for a year but very soon he ended up back on the East Coast in New York.

He financed his theatre studies at the David Craig School of Musical Comedy with odd jobs until one day a talent scout stumbled over him and he went back to Hollywood. He had various parts in series like 'Bonanza' and 'Fantasy Island' before landing the part in 'The Partridge Family' at the age of 20. He and his TV sister Susan Day - now very successful in 'L.A. Law' were the dream couple of the Seventies. During that period David recorded eight albums with the Partridge Family before launching his solo career and making another seven albums on his own. When it all finished he hid on his ranch in California for a few years before re-emerging as a TV actor before moving into musicals. Now on his third marriage (to songwriter Sue Shifrin,

who's written material for Cher, Tina Turner and Asia) he's planning a new album and even a tour. "Since becoming a father I think about our future a lot more now, about our planet and about the air we

breathe. I want to contribute something to the civilisation on this planet, personally as well as creatively."

For this reason he and his wife have written a song 'Stand And Be Proud' for the organisation 'Rebuild Los Angeles'. It has been released as a single and all profits go to helping the homeless and destitute in L.A. "Words can't describe my feelings during the riots in L.A. I stayed up all night following the course of events on TV. The whole affair really made me think. It's important to help all those who weren't as lucky as I've been."

He's also heavily involved in other charity work... "I have many dreams. There's still so much for me to do. I have only gone a short distance but the road is very long. I have got so many plans, I still want to make several films. There aren't many people still around from the days when I started. I count myself lucky and I take nothing for granted."

Now he feels he's definitely on the way back. "You know, journalists, even people in the street ask me again and again why I don't make albums any more. I always said I was happy with what I was doing and that I wouldn't record any more solo albums. But that was a lie. That's how I got the idea for the title 'Lying To Myself' (the likely title track of his new album). I really missed all this a lot.

"I can hardly wait to be on stage again, too, because then I'm going to feel like a little boy again..." 🌍