

Keeping Up...With Youth

by Pamela Swift



DAVID CASSIDY: STAR-SPANGLED ON STAGE AND IN PARIS WITH A FRIEND ANNOUNCING HIS RETIREMENT

Free! Free at Last!

At age 24, David Cassidy, the teenyboppers' superpuppy, has retired from show biz—for how long, no one can predict. But he's had it—at least for a while.

After four years of money-minting fame, Cassidy plans to retire to a mountaintop home he is building in Hawaii. "There," he says, "I'm going to wind down, let the pressure ooze out of me,

try and regain my true identity, whatever that is."

Cassidy has sold more than 20 million records in his time, has earned a small fortune, financially no longer has to work. "For

months," he explains, "I worked seven days a week on tour, 18 hours a day, lived in hiding most of the time, never even had time to develop any sort of deep relationship with a girl. People kept clawing away at me. My life was never my own.

"I never wanted to be a pop star. It just happened. Our TV show, *The Partridge Family*, happened to catch on." (The show was recently cancelled. It ranked 64 among the 64 TV series telecast this past season.)

"I'm getting out," he continues, "while I'm still in one piece and I have my sanity. In all honesty I hated being on that show, and I don't want to do another TV series ever if I can help it.

"What do I want? I'd like to develop into a fairly decent actor and have people regard me as one, rather than as some sort of freak attraction who inspires little girls to squeal and shriek."

Cassidy used to tour with an entourage of 32 helpers including three burly bodyguards, his own hair stylist, and even his own psychiatrist. For a while he was reportedly on grass and speed, no longer is.

"I'm free!" he exclaims. "Free at last!"