

Cassidy: After all these years, he still loves performing

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As a youngster, life was not always easy for Cassidy, the son of actor Jack Cassidy and actress Evelyn Ward.

After his parents divorced when he was 5, Cassidy and his mother lived for a number of years with his grandparents in New Jersey. Cassidy's grandfather read meters for the public works department.

Cassidy and his mother moved to California when he was 11, for a time living in a one-bedroom apartment. Cassidy, always interested in music — "I sang from the time I was born"

— was in junior choir in church and chorus in school. As he grew older, he played in rock 'n' roll bands in high school.

Cassidy dabbled in summer stock productions, and, after high school, earned roles on television shows such as "Marcus Welby," "The Mod Squad" and "Bonanza."

In 1970, Cassidy was a struggling 19-year-old actor trying to pay his rent. At the time, he and a roommate shared expenses and a lot of macaroni and cheese —

"the Kraft brand was good," Cassidy recalled.

That year, after six auditions and a screen test, Cassidy won the role of Keith Partridge in "The Partridge Family," co-starring with his real-life stepmother, Shirley Jones.

Life would never be the same for David Bruce Cassidy.

When the show debuted on ABC, Cassidy was launched into the teen idol stratosphere, with his picture not only on the cover of every teen magazine worldwide, but on lunchboxes, paper doll sets, jigsaw puzzles and cereal boxes.

Cassidy soon found that he could rarely leave his home to go to a store or a restaurant — or anywhere — because of the crush of fans that followed his every move. Even getting to work in the morning was a struggle.

"I couldn't get to the set. I had to drive two or three different routes. Hundreds of people waited at the (set's) gate. People camped out in front of my house," he said.

As lead vocalist for "The Par-

tridge Family," Cassidy had seven hit singles including "I Woke Up In Love This Morning" and "I Think I Love You," which became the best-selling record of 1971. He also topped the charts as a solo artist with five hit singles including "Cherish" and "Could It Be Forever."

Cassidy's concerts broke box office records at places such as Madison Square Garden, London's White City Stadium and the Houston Astrodome.

His official fan club membership exceeded that of either the Beatles or Elvis Presley. At the tender age of 21, Cassidy was the highest paid performer in the world, with not a moment for himself each day.

"I worked all day. At night I would record, and on weekends I was performing. I had no social life for five years," Cassidy said.

And while millions of girls woke up each morning, hugging their David Cassidy pillowcases, he arose each day, looked in the mirror and "saw a very tired guy — but a very fortunate guy," he said.

After "The Partridge Family" ended its run in 1974, Cassidy continued with his television acting career, receiving an Emmy nomination for his performance in a 1978 episode of "Police Story." He also starred in "David Cassidy

THE SCOOP

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Man Undercover" on NBC, in the role of officer Dan Shay.

In the early 1980s, Cassidy ventured onto Broadway's stage, starring in "Little Johnny Jones" and the original production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat." In 1994, he starred with step-brother Shaun Cassidy in sold-out tours of the Broadway production "Blood Brothers."

During the last six years, Cassidy has performed almost exclusively in Las Vegas. In 1996, he opened at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas in "EFX," a \$75 million high-tech musical.

He also wrote and produced Vegas productions such as "The Rat Pack Is Back," which played at the Sahara Hotel and Casino, and "At The Copa," which was at the Rio.

Today, Cassidy resides in Florida with his wife, songwriter Sue Shifrin-Cassidy, and their 11-year-old son, Beau. Cassidy also has a 15-year-old daughter, Katie from a previous relationship.

When he is not working, he enjoys breeding and racing thoroughbred horses at racetracks around the country.

After his current tour ends, Cassidy said he hopes to write and produce another Broadway show. And the only clue he will reveal to fans about a new CD he will release next year is that it will be "very different."

Cassidy is grateful he has been able to pursue his dreams for so many years.

"If you do good work, great things come," Cassidy said. "It's never been about money or fame for me. I think I am one of the most fortunate men that walks the face of the earth."