

the other kids knew each other and gathered in groups to talk about what they had been doing during the holidays. Everyone else had a special friend they wanted to sit next to, except David who felt completely left out in the cold.

He was so convinced that nobody wanted to get to know him that he retreated right into his shell and even rebuffed the first signs of friendliness that came his way! He didn't realise this at the time, of course, but now he can see how his attitude must have puzzled some of the nice kids in his grade. Really he just behaved that way because he felt totally on the defensive.

It didn't take him long to snap out of this though, and soon the 'new' boy, David Cassidy, was one of the most popular kids in the class and everyone forgot that he hadn't been at Fairburn all his life—he came to belong there so fast!

### Centre of Things

His love of sports, and his success at every game he took part in, soon put him right at the centre of things—just like he had been before in West Orange. He played baseball for the Little League in Los Angeles. And, when he wasn't playing baseball, he was most likely to be found down on the beach with a crowd of pals, maybe swimming, or snorkelling, or having a preliminary try at surfing (which would later be such a big thing with him) . . . often just larking about in the water and the sunshine.

Evelyn's and David's house was within fairly easy reach of the beach and David took every advantage of that fact! There was a time when he more or less lived down there, coming home pretty regularly for meals—then doing another disappearing act till the next meal was due! Evelyn reckoned that she could almost have set her watch by David's entrances and exits—usually accompanied by a couple of equally ravenous pals!

But she was happy that he had come to look on Los Angeles as being 'home' so quickly. It was obvious that he had taken to this completely new life-style, and she was pleased to see him looking so tanned and healthy after long days in the sun.

More than anything, Evelyn was always

delighted by the easy way her son went about making friends. The great aim in her life had been to ensure David's future happiness, and she knew that good friends can add a lot to life.

Everything seemed to be settling down wonderfully . . . David was happy; Evelyn had accepted some excellent offers of work; and, in the summer vacation, they went back to West Orange for quite a long spell.

David was bubbling over with all the excitement of his new activities. He told his grandparents and all his friends about the wonderful surfing beaches out west, about the sunshine, about their new home, about the Boy Scouts (which he'd joined in L.A., although he had already been a Cub in New Jersey), about his brand-new step-brother, about how he hoped to have a horse of his own one day, and a go-cart, and a guitar, and a drum kit . . . His grandpa and grandma were so happy for him. He was terribly important to them.

Not that you could really call him a 'little' boy any more! Although he was still quite small for his age (he would always be slim in build), he was very definitely growing up.

His grandparents had been sad to part with David when he had first gone with Evelyn to California, but now they saw how right she had been in her decision. Their beloved grandson had blossomed out with liveliness and happiness.

He was still sad, and a little tearful, when the time came to say goodbye again. But they knew that this was simply a proof of his love for them . . . it was very different from his sorrow at that first parting.

Now, he was heading for 'home' to a new-found security. And, what's more, he had the promise of next year's holiday in New Jersey to look forward to.

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ABOVE: Brian, Danny and David wait to sample Mom Shirley's cooking

BELOW: Shirley and David always seem to understand each other so well

