

NEWARK BOUND

A man with short brown hair, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt, is playing a black electric guitar on a stage. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is dark with some stage lights visible.

2017

WINTER | SPRING

Celebrating Our
Fifth Year

All Rapped Up
Newark's
Thriving
Hip-Hop
Scene

**DAVID
CASSIDY**
Sings Songs
Fans Love

Tastes of
The City
With Chicken
AS A GUIDE

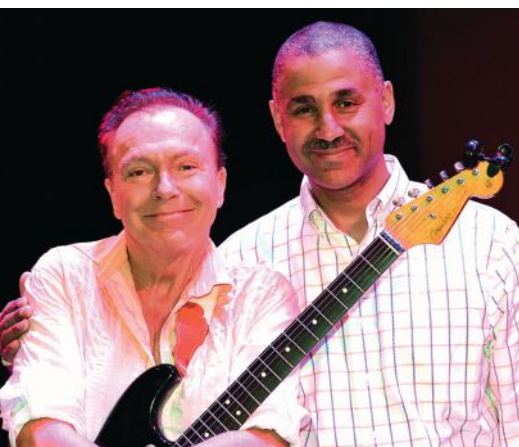
**FILM
FESTIVALS**
*Light up the
Silver Screen*

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Message from the Publisher

NEWARK BOUND MAGAZINE

Newark has much to celebrate, and so many reasons to be proud! Last year the city marked its 350th anniversary with special programs and events that underscored its proud history—Newark is the third oldest major city in the country, after New York and Boston—and bright future.



In 2017, *NewarkBound* marks its fifth anniversary of sharing with visitors and residents alike the rich mosaic of Newark's offerings.

In this issue we feature two examples of the area's impressive range of arts. Newark has a thriving hip-hop scene that has nurtured the famous and influential. And if you like movies—and enjoy being the first of your friends to see films that are going to be talked about—be sure to attend the area's film festivals. We focus on ones in Newark and Montclair, but there are a number throughout the area.

Along with an always growing number of things to see and do, the architectural profile of the city is also changing as Newark sees an unmistakable

upsurge in new developments and major adaptive use projects that convert old landmarks and make them into 21st century marvels.

For many of us, David Cassidy, teen heartthrob who spent formative years in a nearby New Jersey suburb, West Orange, is part of our musical marrow. Hear a few bars of *Cherish*, and many of us are transported to our youth—or to our parents, with stories of their teen years. Yet Cassidy transcends his music, and that is why our cover story explores the enduring affection in which he is held. He performed at NJPAC last June, and I had the honor of meeting him backstage. Here we are at left.

The Partridge Family isn't the only topic that inspired reminiscing. We ponder how chicken, in various guises and flavors, reflects the many cultures in Newark. I remember fondly the fried chicken my late grandmother prepared.

But along with music and food, we also touch on another happy memory generations of Newarkers recall—shopping at Bamberger's. We continue our new section, Literary Voices, with an excerpt from *Louis Bamberger, Department Store Innovator and Philanthropist* by independent scholar Linda Forgosh. Bamberger was a fascinating man, an ahead-of-his-times marketer and a generous supporter of cultural growth in the city.

Don't forget to take us with you at newarkbound.com and on [@NewarkBound](https://twitter.com/NewarkBound). You can also follow us on Facebook at NewarkBound Magazine and on Pinterest at pinterest.com/newarkbound.

Sample its rich history, lively present, and exciting future, enjoy Newark!

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David Cassidy

Finds Joy Singing the Songs Fans Love

BY MICHAEL A. GONZALES

Sometimes it's difficult to look at our pop culture heroes as having once been mortal beings who lived regular lives in ordinary places far away from the bright lights of Hollywood, miles away from the glam and glitter documented in fan magazines and gossip columns.

For many of us coming of age in the 1970s, our window into pop paradise was watching television and admiring the teen dreams—David Cassidy could be considered the epitome of the type—whose world seemed far removed from our own mundane lives.

Left: David Cassidy performing at NJPAC in June 2016.

magining actor/singer Cassidy as a cute kid growing up in West Orange, New Jersey with his grandparents might seem a stretch, but that is where the star of television, concert stages and Las Vegas lived before his success on the West Coast. Introduced to the world via the hit television show *The Partridge Family* (1970-1974), where he played the older brother and lead singer of his family's band, Cassidy's platinum singles *I Think I Love You*, *Cherish* and *Doesn't Somebody Want to Be Wanted* were first performed on the show and are still a part of his repertoire today.

While Cassidy didn't always get praise from serious music critics, the fans understood perfectly. "I actually think that David Cassidy is one of the most underrated vocalists in rock history," said Quentin Tarantino in 2015.

More than 40 years later these songs are considered AM radio classics, and Cassidy, at 66, is still touring the globe singing these golden oldies and wailing on his guitar. Last June, when Cassidy brought his *Up Close & Personal* tour to the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), lifelong fan Brian Scott attended the concert and had a blast.

"Cassidy performed all of his hits," Scott recalled. "We all have gotten older, but those songs have a timeless quality and still sound great. His fans are well aware of some of the personal issues

he's had over the years, but that night he looked so happy on that stage... It was as though I was back in the early '70s... when watching *The Partridge Family* and David Cassidy on television meant everything to me."

A TV FAMILY CALLED PARTRIDGE

Created by Bernard Slade, who'd previously conceived *The Flying Nun* series starring Sally Field, *The Partridge Family* came roaring into our lives dressed in velveteen stage outfits and riding on a multicolored tour bus. Shirley Jones was the known star when the show debuted. She played a widowed mom with pop-singing kids, all performing together as they toured the country.

Unbeknownst to Jones, her real-life stepson David Cassidy, son of her husband, actor Jack Cassidy, was cast to play Keith Partridge, the oldest kid in the clan; other cast members included Susan Dey, Danny Bonaduce and Dave Madden as the group's manager. Cassidy's sad-puppy-eyed gaze, sulky expressions and feathered hair melted millions of pounding little girls' hearts and inspired similar looks in legions of young boys who saw his character Keith as the barometer for teenage cool.

In addition to the show's catchy theme *C'mon Get Happy*, the lushly arranged mid-tempo ballad *I Think I Love You*,

with Cassidy singing lead (he and Jones were the only cast members on the actual records), was the group's first hit.

"I think when you're a prepubescent girl, you're attracted to male teen idols that are kind of girly," writer Judy McGuire, author of *The Official Book of Sex, Drugs, and Rock 'n' Roll Lists*, explained. A former Jersey girl currently living in Queens, New York, she spent many childhood hours staring at Cassidy on the TV screen and on the fan magazine pin-ups hanging on her bedroom wall. "Cassidy didn't have any facial hair, he was thin like a girl and he had winged-hair; he was non-threatening, but those are the kind of guys little girls like. Between David Cassidy and Donny Osmond, I was happy."

BUBBLEGUM POP, DONE WELL

The style of songs on *The Partridge Family* was referred to as "bubblegum pop" by folks who thought it was less serious than "real rock." To those people, the prefab Partridges were no better than the animated Archies, whose candy-coated single *Sugar Sugar* was a hit the year before. "The Partridge Family and David Cassidy made music for kids in the same way One Direction does today," continued McGuire. "It was bubblegum, but it was still good."

Music critic Scott Woods, who co-authored *I Wanna Be Sedated: Pop Music in the Seventies*, agreed. "It comes down to the songs, and the Partridge Family made well-crafted pop," Wood said. Within a year of the show's premiere, Cassidy was propelled from a minor actor who had guest starred on *Bonanza* and *Ironside* to one of the biggest television and pop stars of his generation.

At the height of David Cassidy's fame, he was on the number one television program and performing sold-out concerts across the globe. The crying girls and shoving fans often reached Beatlemania proportions. "We all had respect for David, because he could sell out Dodger Stadium a couple of times and that gives you a lot of respect," said rocker Alice Cooper, a longtime friend of Cassidy's, in the documentary *The Story Of... David Cassidy*.

In filming *The Partridge Family* by day and recording with producer Wes Farrell



Left: Publicity shot for the *Partridge Family* with David Cassidy (front left) and Shirley Jones (center).



Above: In 1974, Cassidy's fans mass outside the Radio Luxembourg building in London, bringing traffic to a halt.

at night, Cassidy put in long hours. "Because David's schedule is so involved, we usually don't have the opportunity to learn the songs completely before going into the studio," Farrell told *Tiger Beat* magazine in 1971. "And that's how it was at our first session... you must remember that he has never recorded before. After running through *I Think I Love You* two or three times, while I

was getting the proper recording levels, we did it once and would you believe we recorded it on the very first take?"

Although he was on top of the world, Cassidy's pop idol position was often at odds with his artistic ambitions. He didn't want to be a teen idol, he wanted to be a rocker like Jimi Hendrix; he didn't want to be a sitcom star, he wanted to be a serious actor like his father Jack Cassidy.

While the senior Cassidy had done Broadway early in his career, he was best known in the seventies as a popular character actor (*Columbo*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*) and guest on game show *Hollywood Squares*. Although Jack wasn't much of a dad when Cassidy was a kid, the son still sought approval that wasn't always forthcoming.

THE EARLY DAYS—ABSENTEE PARENTS

David Cassidy was born into a theater family that included his dashing daddy Jack Cassidy and his beautiful mother Evelyn Ward, both stage actors in the 1940s. The two met when they appeared together on Broadway in 1946 and married in 1948. Two years later in 1950, the couple's only son David was born in New York City, but because of his parents' constant touring in plays and musicals, young Cassidy was sent to live with Ward's parents at 23 Elm Street in West Orange.

"Elm Street is made up of unpretentious closely spaced, single family homes with clotheslines in clear view...my

SAVE DATE

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David Cassidy seems to now realize how many lives his music has touched and the profound effect it has had on so many.

BRIAN SCOTT, a lifelong fan

friends' parents are carpenters, plumbers, policemen." In Cassidy's 1994 autobiography *C'mon Get Happy...Fear and Loathing on The Partridge Family Bus* (reprinted in 2007 under the title *Could It Be Forever?*), he wrote about his early years in the middle-class community where his grandmother worked in a factory and grandpa was a meter reader. Still, he admired what his parents did for a living. He told *Life* magazine in 1971, "I think I decided to be an actor when I was about three."

In the meantime, it was his grandparents who watched over him. "My grandfather was really fantastic. He was more of a father to me than my own dad," Cassidy said. While on Saturday afternoons Cassidy might play Little League baseball with his buddies, listen to the Yankees games with his grandfather or go into New York City to meet his parents for a Broadway matinee, come Sunday morning he was attending church services at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church with his grandmother.

"My grandmother was the head of the senior choir. They had me singing in choir as soon as I was old enough," he said. Although Cassidy loved his grandparents and extended family in New Jersey, he missed his mother and father. As he told an interviewer later, "I was so insecure as a kid and always crying. My parents were always gone, always not around me. They were actors."

However, a few years later when his mother joined her son and parents in West Orange, he was too young to realize that there was trouble in his parents' marriage—until the neighborhood children started teasing him about his parents being divorced.

PARENTS' DIVORCE CHANGES EVERYTHING

"I have never heard the word 'divorce' before, but somehow I know what it means. That just didn't exist in my world. I suddenly feel very uneasy. I think it was the first time I can remember feeling naked. I ran into the house for assurance," Cassidy said. When his mom instructed him to ask his father, the

inevitable was put off for a few weeks until Cassidy senior came to see his son and take him to New York.

Driving into the city, young Cassidy asked about the divorce. When his father told him that he'd been divorced from Evelyn for two years, Cassidy's reaction was extreme. "I could hardly keep myself together," he said in his autobiography. "It felt as though every part of my body came unglued at once and I began to shake and convulse out of pain, fear and rejection." It was a feeling that would take him years of therapy to work through. It didn't help when Jack married successful actress Shirley Jones (*Oklahoma*, *The Music Man*), relocated to a mansion in California, but still refused to support Evelyn and David, who seldom saw his father.

"Jack didn't have any patience for kids," Shirley Jones wrote in her self-titled 2013 memoir, though she and Jack had three sons. "He wanted to be a child himself and be the center of attention at all times." When David's mom married television writer/director Elliot Silverstein, they too moved west in 1960. It was the beginning of the hippie generation, and, a few years later David had grown his hair long and started taking guitar lessons.

THE ROAD TO AND FROM STARDOM

"I was a big fan of Jimi Hendrix, who I saw five times," Cassidy told an interviewer in the '70s. Yet wanting to please his dad, he decided to be an actor. Moving back to New York City after high school, he landed a role in the Broadway play *The Fig Leaves Are Falling* in 1969, but the play was a disaster and closed after four days.

Cassidy went back to California and a year later became a star on *The Partridge Family*. Yet while he still craved Jack's approval, his father was feeling jealous of David. "Sadly at the time that David and I started working in *The Partridge Family*, and David's career hit the heights and he attained instant stardom, Jack's career was downward spiraling," said Jones.

After two years as America's number one star, David Cassidy became frustrated with the fame and money, and tried to kill off his television character Keith Partridge

by giving a scathing sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll interview to *Rolling Stone*, which featured America's innocent idol posed artistically nude as a waif statue in a stunning shot taken by Annie Leibovitz.

The Partridge Family was cancelled in 1974, but the next few years were tough for Cassidy. A few months after the show ended, a young female fan attending one of his concerts in England died at the crowded event. Two years later, Cassidy's father died in a fire; the two were estranged at the time.

In 1978, no longer a pop idol, Cassidy was nominated for an Emmy for his part as an undercover cop on *Police Story*, but a series spin-off called *Man Undercover* (1978/79) failed after 10 episodes. By the mid-80s, according to a *Biography* episode shot in 2004, Cassidy was almost broke from "years of partying and bad investments," but was able to turn that around after putting together a profitable music tour in 1991; that same year, he also co-starred with half-brother (and fellow former teen idol) Shaun Cassidy in the successful Broadway musical *Blood Brothers*. In 1996, he relocated to Las Vegas where he starred in the musical *EFX* for three years. Future R&B star Ne-Yo, who lived in Vegas, was a nobody when he was cast in the show. "David Cassidy was cool," Ne-Yo told me in 2008. "We were on stage together every night."

In 2001, Cassidy began touring again, performing for crowds that his music director Lon Brown described as, "... some of the most loyal, diehard fans of any of the stars I've ever worked with." Cassidy has also guest-starred on *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* and *Ruby & the Rockits*, playing a retired pop star dad. Cassidy has been married three times. His daughter, actress Katie Cassidy, plays Laurel Lance/Black Canary on the CW's series *Arrow*.

After seeing the NJPAC show in June, fan Brian Scott concluded, "It might've taken awhile for him to understand, but David Cassidy seems to now realize how many lives his music has touched and the profound effect it has had on so many. Just seeing him perform on that stage, we could tell he was grateful." ■