

Optimist Shirley Jones Enjoys Partridge Job

By CIMA STAR

CINCINNATI (CNS) — The nation's largest dancing fountain was shooting its 10,000 gallons of water up into the sky, tourists were peering down from the 33-story replica Eiffel Tower and some 5,000 people were pressed against the police lines.

The Partridge Family had arrived! Kings Island Park, the brand-new, \$30 million amusement-theme park just north of Cincinnati had an extra dash of excitement.

Danny Bonaduce, the freckle-faced redhead who plays the family financial wizard on the Friday night comedy, got lost somewhere in the mob, but reappeared after some loud-speaker paging. Rumor had it he'd snuck back to go on the roller coaster one more time.

One of the extras sprained an ankle; several of David Cassidy's teeny-bopper fans got hysterical at not being allowed on the set; others tried forging identification cards to get in, and some pretended fainting spells in the hopes of being rescued by David, the Partridges, the producers or anybody who could get them near their idol.

Aside from that, one of the Partridges' rare ventures out on location was going smoothly. In front of the cameras or off, in fact, the sixsome — Shirley Jones, David Cassidy, Danny Bonaduce, Susan Dey, Brian Forster and Suzanne Crough — interact very much like the family they play with Shirley as the compleat mother hen.

That evening, at a cocktail party given for Shirley, she smiled and said, "I'm an optimist and a realist. That's why I enjoy working on television."

She has several reasons for good cheer. First of all, she is back with Jack Cassidy, her husband of 16 years, from whom she was separated for six months.

Second, The Partridge Family, which a lot of people predicted wouldn't last out its first season, is now going into its third. The comedy has consistently remained among the top 20 rated shows during the last two years, and through their recordings on Bell Records, the Partridge Family has earned seven gold records for million-plus sales.



SHIRLEY JONES
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Besides, unlike so many movie and stage actresses, Shirley enjoys doing a series.

"I'm a very organized person," she said. "I like the routine of knowing precisely where I'll be when, of getting up in the morning and going to work and coming home at the same time every night. And I like the financial security of a series. That paycheck is always coming in."

An occasional break with routine, however, is fine with the petite blonde.

"I really love location work and this has been especially nice. I even rode the roller coaster four times, though I'll admit I'm a little groggy now. The only reason we don't do more location work is that it's too expensive."

Producer Larry Rosen admits it costs about \$20,000 above normal just to take the show out of the studios. The management of Kings Island is picking up the food and housing bills for this one or it would go even higher.

Away from the home screen, Shirley seems much the same kind of mother as she does on the show. Despite a glamorous movie-star career which has included an Academy Award and dozens of starring roles in films and on Broadway, she is most comfortable as mother of her own brood, her three sons Shaun, Patrick and Ryan, and her stepson, David Cassidy.

Playing David Cassidy's mother has its drawbacks. "In all those years of film making," Shirley said, "I never had the kind of national exposure I have now when we're in people's homes every week. It has made it a little difficult to do things with my own sons. Kids all recognize me, so I can't go places like a Little League ball game with my boys without wearing disguise." Usually, she says, the first thing fans notice is her blonde hair. "So, if I wear a turban around my head a pair of dark glasses, that generally works."