

The groupie syndrome had not yet developed when this tormented fan paid tribute to Elvis Presley in 1957. It was not long, however, before devoted girls started trying to get closer to their rock idols. Today Cassidy is hoping to turn on adults instead.



Post-Dispatch Photo

make him one of the most successful teenage stars ever, quit singing. His various managers were stunned to find he had retreated to a mountain top hideaway somewhere in Hawaii, "to let the tension ooze out of me," as he put it.

Today, less than two years later, he's back, putting into song what he says is the real David Cassidy.

His single, "Get It Up For Love," is drawing strong attention. It was banned by the British Broadcast Corporation in Britain within three days of its release, and an album, "The Higher They Climb," appears headed for the charts.

Unattached and wealthy, the boy who made bubblegum melt in mouths around the world is getting it back together, this time

with the grownups.

He looks back with humor on a career that saw every album turn to gold, nearly every concert transform into a riot, and every relationship into a memory.

"It's ironic," he said, "but when I had girls climbing up the fire escape and others hiding in the shower, I was actually very lonely.

"Once, just once, I became seriously involved. But I was working 18 hours a day. I didn't have the time this lady wanted.

"Because I was unable to pursue girls in the normal manner, and because I had so little time, I became emotionally retarded. One part of my life was growing all the time, along with my bank account, while the other remained stunted.

"Now . . . all that has changed. I have found myself responding to living the way other people do. I'm normal and I like it!"

Normal for David Cassidy is something others might find hard to take. He was sipping orange juice and reading the morning paper recently when he discovered he had lost \$300,000 in a bad investment. He turned the page and buttered his toast.

Cassidy's life had been a drama of fortunes ebbing and flowing.

He was born in New York in 1950, the son of actor Jack Cassidy and actress Evelyn Ward, who confirms: "He has seen hard times and lean years. This teen-age idol thing hasn't changed him. David has great insight."

After his parents were divorced, David moved to Hollywood with his mother. He was 7; she had a promise of movie breaks.

He grew up in Beverly Hills with a transistor radio firmly attached to his ear. "The Beatles wrote the sound track to my youth," he said. "They plugged me into music."

He went to high school, saw his father on weekends and played basketball at the YMCA. He tried singing, didn't like the sounds that came out, so he decided to become an actor, working for a time with the Los Angeles Theater Group.

He returned to New York when he was 17 and stayed just long enough to decide that the action was really back in Hollywood, so he once again went west.

Cassidy was working in a garment factory and living on peanut butter sandwiches in 1969, when he was discovered by Ruth H. Aarons, who got him his first acting role in "Fig Leaves Are Falling."

Immediately he found leading dramatic roles in hot television shows like "Marcus Welby, M.D.," "Medical Center," "Adam 12," "Ironside," "Bonanza," "Mod Squad" and in 1970 he became a regular on "The Partridge Family," starring his stepmother, Shirley Jones.

"It was difficult to keep him in line," recalls Shirley, who recently broke off with

(Continued on Page 33)