

# Twenty years after TV's The Partridge Family, singer, actor, songwriter David Cassidy is **MOVING ON**

**By Alison Mayes**

(Herald writer)

**D**avid Cassidy was browsing in a Tinsel Town nostalgia shop when he spotted it.

The signature guitar created in his honor two decades ago was now priced at \$240.

"It cost 12 bucks when it was out!" exclaims the '70s heartthrob. "I guess it's kitsch — it's very hip now."

The instrument might have increased in value even more, except for one teensy detail: it's a plastic toy. And while Cassidy claims to have put the past behind him, such cheapening of his image still rankles.

"It was a reflection of me!" he complains from his California home. "Don't make a piece of junk out of a David Cassidy guitar! I wanted, like, you know, Chet Atkins had a good guitar. The Everly Brothers had a good guitar. Why can't David Cassidy have a good guitar?"

Alas, the toy makes an apt symbol for Cassidy's career. Currently promoting a new album called *Didn't You Used To Be . . .*, he views himself as a legitimate singer, actor and songwriter (at one point in the interview he earnestly refers to himself as "this artist").

But most of the public still laughs him off as the teen-dream star of the early-'70s TV series *The Partridge Family*, a sitcom about a musical clan that spun off such pop hits as *I Think I Love You* and *Doesn't Somebody Want To Be Wanted*.

The 42-year-old, divorced Cassidy is delighted that *Partridge Family* reruns are now airing daily on MTV and MuchMusic. It's hard to tell whether he appreciates the show's camp qualities, but he says he doesn't mind if today's TV audience is snickering.

"I don't give a shit if people laugh at me at all," he says bluntly. "I don't care. If I turned the show on today I would probably laugh at it, too. I think it was a good show in its time . . . The fact that it's still on proves that it's a good show."

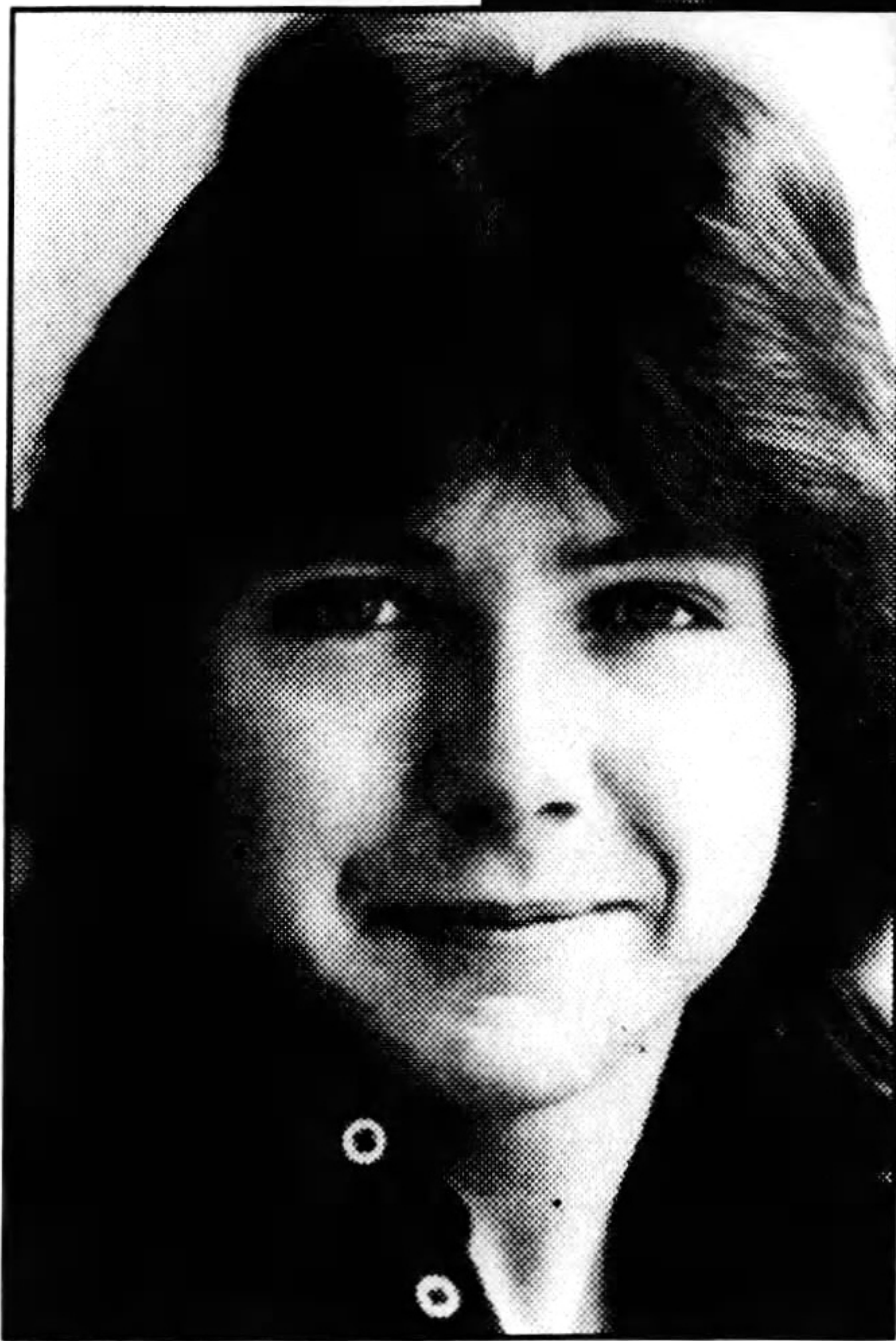
The question he's asked most often is whether he had sex with Susan Dey, who portrayed his Twiggy-thin, keyboard-playing sister. He hints that he did, but he's saving the juicy details for a confessional book about his superstar years, to be published early next year.

The book, he says, will delve into "the irony of being perceived as this rock god, this idol . . . how lonely and empty it is, and how isolated I was."

As any fan will remember, the *Partridge Family*'s lush songs had lyrics designed to stoke every pre-teen's fantasy of being adored by the twinkly-eyed, shag-haired Cassidy.

"This is you, this pillow that I'm huggin' and I'm kissin'," for instance, was delivered in his trademark silky-but-urgent tenor on *I Woke Up In Love This Morning*.

Chuckling, he agrees the lyric was calculating. But he never felt guilty about fuelling desires that could never



**Now 42, top, David Cassidy wants to move on with his career but most of the public still laughs him off as the teen-dream star, left, of the early '70s.**

## **We'd like your opinion!**

**Do David Cassidy's dimples still make you dizzy? Are you a diehard fan who still knows the words to I'll Meet You Halfway? Would you like to see Keith Partridge right here in Calgary?**

**Cassidy told the Herald he'd like to bring his nostalgia-packed musical act to the Calgary Stampede, with comic Danny Bonaduce (his TV-brother) as opening act. What do you think?**

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be fulfilled.

"I was hired to sing and act, and I did the best I could," he says. "The only thing I felt really responsible about was this junk they were selling people, that they were gouging them for."

Though he wishes the David Cassidy dolls, lunchboxes, clothes and trinkets hadn't been so junky, he does regret that he didn't see many of the profits. Comparing himself to recent pop idols New Kids On The Block, he claims he made about \$250 compared to their \$250 million from merchandising.

"I'm not bitter about it, but I think (those who profited) have no conscience, and it's really stealing."

"In the middle '70s it all changed. The artists got control. My only misfortune is I came a little too soon."

Cassidy has fond memories of a 1982 stint at Stage West dinner theatre in Calgary. "I'd love to play the Stampede," he says, going as far as to ask who books the musical acts for the annual exhibition.

If he does appear here it will likely be with his favorite opening act, smart-

mouthed standup comic/deejay Danny Bonaduce, who played redhaired Danny Partridge.

"He sets the tone for the evening, and that's why I wanted him to do it. I wanted people to know this wasn't some attempt to recreate the *Partridge Family*. It was to blow it up, and to have fun with it, and celebrate it in a way that was kind of satire."

Cassidy performs his new songs, but garners the biggest reaction for vintage *Partridge* material, which "goes over like gangbusters."

"The old stuff works very well. The songs themselves are very strong. I mean, *I Think I Love You* is an anthem for a whole generation — your generation."

Geez, Dave, did you have to remind me? Now I have to confess: the *Partridges*' 1970 debut album was the first LP I ever bought.

"I've heard that many, many times," the former pin-up purrs into my ear. "And I'm very pleased that at least I brought you into the fray. I'm glad you bought it. And I'm glad you dug it."