



Bobby Davro

Louise O'Loughlin chats to Bobby Davro about his varied career, property developing ... and EastEnders



Best known for his work as an impressionist, Bobby Davro's television career started in the early eighties with his breakthrough at Live from Her Majesty's. He soon became a household name with appearances on TV shows like 'Who Do You Do?', 'Bobby Davro on The Box' and 'Bobby Davro's TV Annual'.

Bobby's popularity was also enhanced when he appeared on the comedy impression sketch show 'Copy Cats' followed by two more programmes called 'Davro's Sketch Pad' and 'Davro'.

Matt Lucas and Peter Kay invited him to perform on their single 500 Miles for charity and he also appeared in Birmingham as part of Jasper Carrott's 'Rock With Laughter'. Bobby, who now lives in Walton-on-Thames, is heavily involved in children's charities and is an active fund-raiser and patron.

Bobby's career took a different direction a year ago when he joined the cast of soap opera 'EastEnders', playing the character Vinnie Monks.

Where did you grow up?

In Ashford, Middlesex with my parents.

Where do you live now?

Burwood Park, Walton-on-Thames

Why did you choose Surrey and have you moved around a lot?

I love Surrey. It was my dream to live here.

It was my stomping ground when I was growing up, so I know the area really well. I have lived in Sunningdale, Staines, Laleham, Banbury and Oxshott – and now Burwood Park.

What is it about the area you like?

It is great and so central to everything: the airports, half-an-hour on the train and you are in London and it's reasonably close to Hayling Island, where I like to spend time.

What is your favourite restaurant or bar?

You can often find me having lunch in Café Rouge on the Queens Road in Weybridge or San Marco in Hersham. One of my all-time favourites is The Good Earth in Esher.

Can you see yourself staying in the area long term?

Most definitely. I have been in Burwood Park for five years, and I plan on staying. I am really content and comfortable here.

What was the first car you had and what is your most recent?

My first car was a Capri, very class, and then a Vauxhall Estate, which was great for entertaining! I now have an Aston Martin DB9.

Do you do any sports?

I play golf, go fishing and am really excited about my recent discovery of the Burwood Park

lake. To my amazement, there are carp in there, although I haven't caught anything... yet. I have to confess I do play with my Wii.

How do you relax?

Fishing is very relaxing and golf makes you unwind.

What music do you listen to?

I am a big fan of Gilbert O'Sullivan, Frank Sinatra, Elton John and love listening to the bands from the eighties, such as Simply Red.

What is your main hobby?

Collecting jokes. I have absolutely loads.

What are your interests?

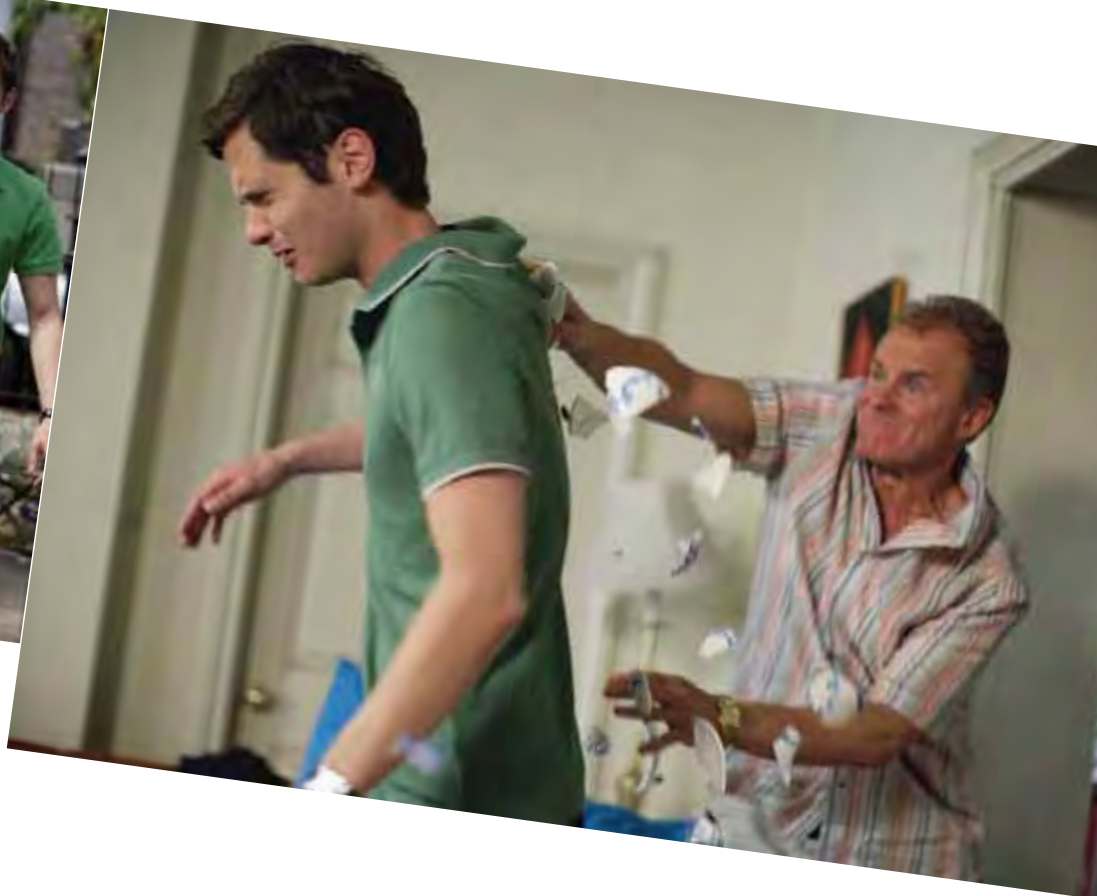
Other than my beautiful three girls, Brittany, Tierney and Marnie, I am in the process of building two properties in Walton. It's probably a crazy time to embark on this, but they should be ready by 2010 and by that time I hope the market will be on the up, and my investments will pay off.

Where are your favourite holiday destinations?

Florida and Spain.

What is your favourite film?

I will watch anything with Jack Nicholson. 'As Good As It Gets' is one of my all-time favourites. 'The Natural' with Robert



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Redford and 'Shawshank Redemption' are both 'must see' movies. The best evenings are in front of the TV with my girls watching Monsters Inc, Ratatouille and Toy Story.

How did you get involved in television?

I started out doing stand-up and worked very hard at it. Television was a natural progression. I got an agent and my career took off from there.

If you weren't involved in television, what career would you have liked?

I would have made an excellent gynaecologist, but I wasn't tall enough!

When are you at your happiest?

When I am with my three girls and when I am on stage with a microphone, either singing or telling jokes.

Who are you inspired by and who do you admire?

Gilbert O'Sullivan is my idol. From a comedy stand-point, Robin Williams from the old school and Lee Evans from the new school. I admire my friends: Freddy Starr, Mike Yarwood, Jim Davidson, Les Dennis and Max Clifford. Mostly I admire my dad. He is a kind and honest man.

If you hosted a dinner party and had to invite six people, dead or alive, who would you invite?

Robin Williams, Professor Stephen Hawkins, Frank Sinatra, Arnold Palmer, the beautiful Claudia Cardinale and Al Pacino.

Which current television programme is your favourite?

EastEnders of course!

How did you find the transition from comedy to acting in a soap?

EastEnders was a huge challenge at first. The directors were determined not to have Bobby Davro, the jester. I admit, I wanted to look down the camera lens and pull a silly face because that was what I was used to doing. In acting you can't look anywhere near the camera, so that took some time getting used to.

Did you enjoy being Vinnie in EastEnders, and are there any similarities between the character and yourself?

It was great fun. I worked with a fantastic team who all welcomed me. Vinnie is very sensitive, much like myself.

Out of the cast of EastEnders, who have become your friends?

Steve McFadden (Phil), Rick Peterson (Minty), Ricky Groves (Gary), Linda Henry (Shirley), Cheryl Fergison (Heather), Elliott Jordan (Callum) and last, but certainly not least, Barbara Windsor (Peggy).

Do you think you will return to The Square?

I hope so. The door has been left wide open.

With Christmas looming, are you doing panto?

Yes. I am doing a panto in Bristol, which is opening on the 12th December, with Mickey Rooney.

Which charity do you support and why?

I always get asked to support charities. I sit down with my loyal PA Sivovanya at the start of each year and decide which charities I am going to support. I like to rotate them so that everyone gets a piece of the pot, so to speak. They are mainly related to children's charities. I have supported Children's Leukaemia, Woking Hospice, the Reece Daniels Charity and I am patron of a couple more.

Have you ever done an impression of someone and they have loved it or hated it?

I dressed up as Patrick Moore and stood next to him. He didn't find it funny at all. That in itself still makes me laugh. Claire Raynor, the TV agony aunt, is another one. She wasn't impressed. Generally many are flattered I have taken the time to study their every move.

What is your favourite quote?

Don't marry someone you can live with. Marry someone you can't live without.