



# Louise Rennison Obituary

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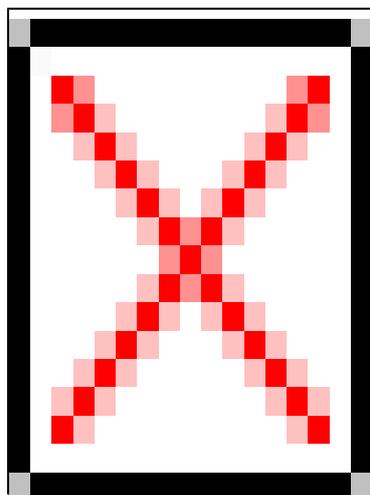
**Louise Rennison** remembered by her publisher **Brenda Gardner**

Louise Rennison 11 October 1951 - 29 February 2016

Publisher [Brenda Gardner](#) [3] remembers the author Louise Rennison.

*My bedroom raining 10 am Sunday August 23rd*

*Dad had Uncle Eddie round so naturally they had to come and nose around and see what I was up to. If Uncle Eddie (who is bald as a coot - two coots, in fact) says to me one more time, ?Should bald heads be buttered?? I may kill myself. I feel like yelling at him. ?I am fourteen years old, Uncle Eddie! I am bursting with womanhood, I wear a bra! OK, it's a bit on the loose side and does ride up round my neck if I run for the bus . . . But the womanly potential is there, you bald coot!?* **Angus, Thongs & Full-Frontal Snogging**



And so the world was introduced to the wonderful, mad, self-obsessed and funny Georgia Nicolson, who was really Louise herself at fourteen. Piccadilly Press published this, her first book in 1999. It was an immediate success not only in the UK, but globally. And it is still in print in many of the thirty countries that published it in spite of the fact that Georgia is without a mobile phone (Louise didn't have one growing up and liked the comic potential of the 'family' phone), and certainly doesn't do email or any social media.

Louise wrote the first four titles in the **Confessions of Georgia Nicolson** for Piccadilly and then six more for HarperCollins. She wrote all of them (plus the subsequent series, **The Misadventures of Tallulah Casey**) from the heart. This is probably why the books were such a resounding success with teens and adults alike. Louise found humour in baboon bottoms, thongs, sex gods, and school. She was the irreverent energetic friend you wished you had had, or the girl you longed to be. School was Stalag 14 with teachers called Hawkeye, Oberführer, Herr or Frau and lessons called Froggie and Geoggers. Georgia was always after the gorgeous Sex God who was older and played in a band and had a girlfriend, but she had a better relationship with Dave the Laugh ? you knew they were soul mates. And she worried about her appearance constantly ? I am ugly, my nose is too big, the pimple is lurking and just won't come. But the

most important thing in Georgia's life were the friendships ? the Ace Gang who were with her through thick and thin, and with Jas who she also could have also cheerfully killed at times.

There was a lovely innocence and decency about her characters which was totally Louise. She valued her friendships, and her family, and even seemed to remain friends with most of her ex-boyfriends. She was born in 1951 growing up in Leeds with an extended family. When her parents moved to New Zealand Louise was just 15, and she claims to have spent a lot of time lying on the grass at the back of their house, furious at being taken away from her friends. She managed to be sent back several years later to live with her Nan. In her 20s she was determined to be a performer, and her one-woman autobiographical stage show called **Stevie Wonder Touched My Face** in the 1980s was a success. She spent four years performing the show in the UK. During this time Louise also performed in other stage shows, and was a contributor to both **Woman's Hour** and **The John Peel Show**.

It was an article that Louise wrote for the **Evening Standard** that caught my eye one night. It was about being over thirty and single and how all the men you meet were either axe murderers or lived with their mothers and ironed their socks. Louise wasn't thirtyish, nor single at the time. I thought she could write a funny teen diary. It was a bit of a risk commissioning her to write the book, and I remember ringing her fairly often to see how it was going. She always said fine. It was called **Daisy's Diary** at the time, but when I got the manuscript about a month later, I could see that this was a totally inappropriate title. It was far, far funnier and more off the wall than I had expected. As an editor you know a book is significant when you spend the week after reading it telling the office about this bit or that bit, and then when everyone starts quoting each other their favourite bits.

Like Georgia, Louise careened through life. She had a great appetite for fun and her warmth, generous spirit and her ability to see humour inspired so many of us to love her dearly. Her death is a sad loss in a world that needs all the *joie de vivre* it can get.

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