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Tribute to Louise Hordern

Life member of the Seahorse Club of Victoria

by Sally Goldner

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Louise was a quiet pioneer in transgender advocacy

It is with sadness that I advise the passing at 12:30am on Wednesday 27th December 2000, of Louise Hordern, a life member of the Seahorse Club of Victoria, aged eighty-six. To those of you who did not know this remarkable person, I offer this tribute.

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Louise was someone who's simple cheer and goodwill helped many a "first time out of the bedroom closet" tranny. Those who turned up at their first Seahorse meeting not knowing anyone had their nerves eased by her friendliness.

Her catchcry when asked "how are you" that, "I'm still giving plenty of cheek because it's more blessed to give than receive" broke the ice for many a new seahorse member.

Louise's hospitality went further: for many years her home in the Dandenongs hosted the January barbecue that invariably ran longer than the scheduled time.

Louise, an engineer by profession took the opportunity to demonstrate her self-designed, amazing disappearing wall that separated her lounge room and balcony.

Most of all, Louise was a quiet pioneer in transgender advocacy. Her involvement in local church groups where she simply was herself, interviews on mainstream radio, and her book *Cross-Dressing: Questions and Answers* all helped increase awareness of transgender people and break down misunderstandings.

Her accumulation of a vast library of transgender literature from around the world, including every *Seahorse Times* published from its inception in 1977 to today, has built a huge and valuable history of transgender knowledge.

Finally, when Louise commenced living fulltime as a female after the passing of her wife, she (Louise) continued to attend Scotch College Old Boys reunions and met with unconditional acceptance.

Like Elaine Barry, 1996 Rainbow Award winner and recently deceased Lady Paula Howard, Louise Hordern is part of a generation owed a debt of gratitude by the transgender community.

For your courageous, inspirational, and pioneering contribution to the transgender community, bless you and thank you Louise Hordern.

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