

## YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS

# Author helps David Cassidy fans express passion for their hero

A FORMER sports editor of the Surrey Mirror and Dorking and Leatherhead Advertiser has returned to her first love of music to compile a book of memories and tributes about what it means to be a David Cassidy fan.

Louise Poynton gives fans a grandstand seat for a journey from the 1970s, when teenagers all over the world first fell in love with the biggest teen idol of that decade, through to his unexpected death in 2017.

The award-winning journalist was group sports editor at the Surrey Mirror and associated titles for 14 years, until 2012, and a former member of Redhill Cycling Club.

She invited fans to share their memories of falling in love with the iconic star and explain why he has been so important in their lives.

A project she started working on before Cassidy died, Louise was overwhelmed with heartfelt stories from around the world, which not only celebrate his life but paint a picture of the personal journey fans went through over the past 50 years.

Cassidy was one of the biggest superstars in the 1970s. Selling millions of records and playing to record sell-out crowds around the world, he was more than just an idol for teenagers; for many he was their saviour.

This year marks what would have been his 70th birthday, on April 12, and also 50 years since *The Partridge Family* – a sitcom in which Cassidy starred – was first aired on television.

Now, in a celebration of his life, fans and friends explain in their own words how Cassidy had an impact on them, his influence and friendship; the lasting legacy of love and music he left.

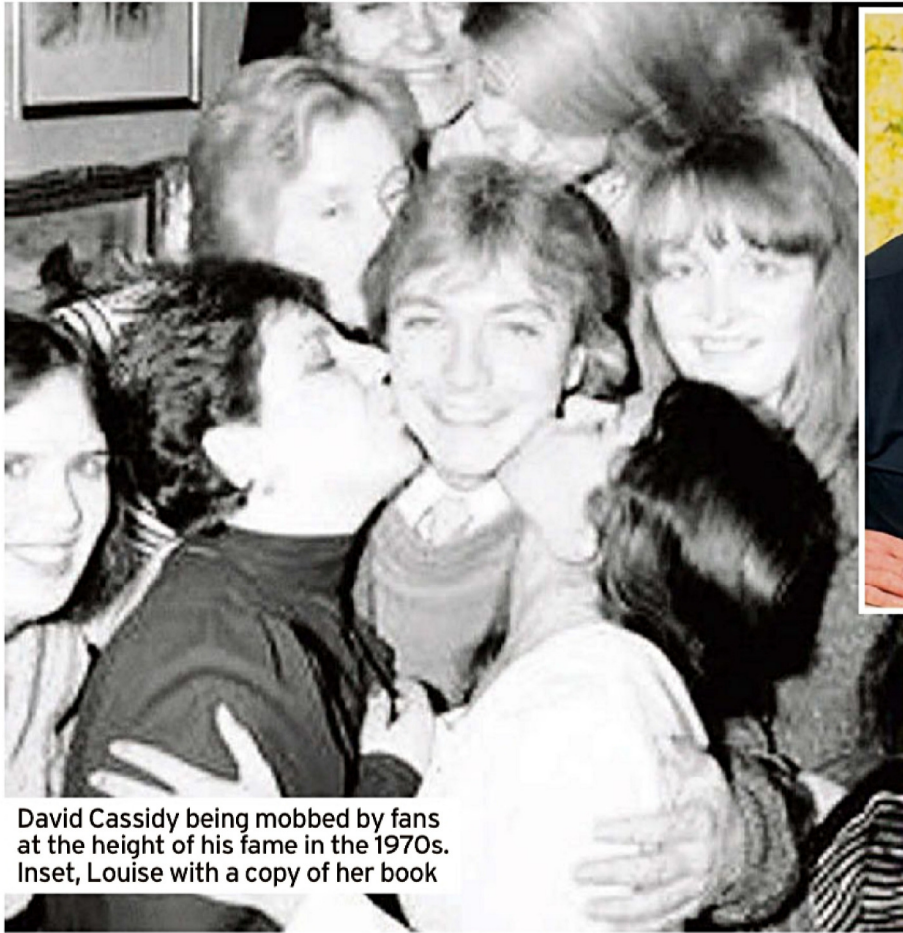
Louise said: "As teenagers in the early 1970s when David Cassidy sang, you felt he was singing to you. Sitting in your poster-covered bedroom, you would pour out to him all your dreams and ambitions, your troubles and concerns. He brought considerable happiness to millions.

"You knew he was listening and in many ways, he really helped many pre-teens and teenagers get through difficult times.

"These memories, which echo across time, have been written by his fans in their own words. There is also a collection of beautiful poems composed over the past 50 years.

"Every page is full of love, beautiful memories which bring smiles, laughter, happiness and a few tears.

"In many ways he was an inspiration in terms of his image – the



David Cassidy being mobbed by fans at the height of his fame in the 1970s. Inset, Louise with a copy of her book

clean-cut looks, the shag-style haircut – but also through the music he made both with *The Partridge Family* and as a hugely successful solo artist. He helped give teenagers an identity; he was someone you could relate to, someone you wanted to be like. Girls wanted to walk along the beach with him, boys wanted to be him.

"With a third of the content coming from his army of male fans, who write of how much he meant in their lives leading some to a career in music, that is further validation of his influence."

Louise, who first saw Cassidy in concert in March 1973 at Wembley's Empire Pool, started her career at the *Eastbourne Herald and Gazette*. "Originally, I wanted to work for *Melody Maker* or one of the other leading music papers which would publish a lot of my letters and concert reviews about David, but I had

to do the hard graft first in the newsroom. Strangely my path led me to my other love, sport, so now I feel I have come full circle.

"Every story in *Cherish* is a singular experience, a thematic journey but when brought together they provide stops on the adventure with David at the heart of everything his fans have ever done," she added.

"In being so honest about themselves, exposing their emotions and life stories, they have made themselves emotionally vulnerable as they opened their hearts to share their life experiences and the role David Cassidy played in them. The memories will make you smile, laugh and cry.

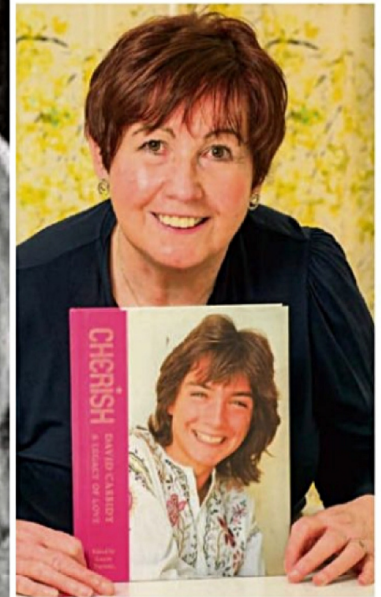
"This is a unique collection of memories, anecdotes, conversations remembered and tributes from his loyal fans around the world, many never before told, alongside numerous previously unseen

images from photographers who have opened their archives for me. There is a vivacious appetite to have more about him. This is a beautiful homage to an extraordinary man."

Contributing fans recall concert experiences, chance meetings, share precious keepsakes and explain how he made their world a brighter place. They share examples of his unfailing generosity, unexpected acts of kindness and how he made them feel important when they needed it.

Using photographs from their own collections showing memorabilia, outfits which once belonged to David, crumpled concert tickets, portraits, a precious keepsake or maybe a meeting with a cherished photograph, and other memories which make up what being a fan is all about across the decades, this is the ultimate "DC" experience.

Alongside the fans' memories are tributes from musicians Cassidy



worked with, and others who regard him as a hugely underrated musician. Contributors include Neil Sedaka, Richie Furay, whose bands Poco and Buffalo Springfield influenced David, and Ron "Bumblefoot" Thal, former lead guitarist with Guns n' Roses.

Louise, a Cassidy fan since 1971, said: "There was an immensely powerful feeling of love that radiated from and around David and this is obvious in the response I received from fans who wanted to share their memories and tell the world what David meant to them. David was more loved, admired and respected by people around the world than he would ever have known.

"We need to remember the good things David did in life, how gracious he was, a kind soul and generous of spirit. His legacy must be preserved.

"David occupies a special place in the hearts of millions. When he died, almost seven million people took to Twitter to express their love and respect. At the same time fans mourned their lost childhood as much as they grieved for their first crush and a pivotal influence on a generation.

"*Cherish* is a standing ovation to his life and the gift he gave the world through his music."

■ *Cherish: David Cassidy – A Legacy of Love*, is published by Unicorn Publishing Group [www.unicornpublishing.org](http://www.unicornpublishing.org) on April 6.