

ISSUE ONE • DECEMBER 2021

Be Phenomenal, *Women*



CLICK TO
SEE MORE

Be Phenomenal Women

Welcome to the first issue of 'Be Phenomenal Women!'

It's an online magazine aimed at women who are 35+ but we're not going to stop anyone else - of any age or gender - reading and enjoying it's contents.

Let me explain from the very beginning that while this magazine is primarily for women, by women it doesn't mean that we won't carry editorial from men or non binary individuals who can say something worth hearing by women.

Be Phenomenal Women will always attempt to be a positive force for individuals and communities and so our editorial content will bring the very best message that we can but at times we will challenge some conventions which may make us all a little uncomfortable. So, if you want to comment or even send us in your own editorial, we would welcome that - just contact us at hello@bephenomenalwomen.com.

We hope that you enjoy what we've done with the first issue. It's been a challenge but fun to put together and with it being online, we hope that you will follow the links, and interact with all the hidden buttons within the magazine. Over time, we'll do even more so that you benefit from offers and information.

Every page can be turned just as you would with a physical magazine and for those of us who are visually challenged, you can even increase the size to make reading even easier. Or, if you still like the feel of printed material in your hands - print pages out and read at your leisure.

So, enjoy what we've done and please, please share with all your friends and let's get Be Phenomenal Women into as many hands as possible.

Gill ✱



PS. Despite the increasing concern about new coronavirus variants, please have a wonderful Christmas/Holiday.



Contents

- Page 04** The Phenomenal Dolly Parton
- Page 08** Travel - Great Victoria, Australia
- Page 12** Introducing Frances Magee
- Page 16** New Year, New Career
- Page 18** Christmas Recipes
- Page 26** Menopause - The Great Awakening
- Page 30** Katie Piper & Radley
- Page 34** Gardening for Your Health
- Page 36** How to Grow a Garden for Free
- Page 38** How to do a Digital Detox
- Page 40** Bee The Change!
- Page 42** TWN - Working for Women
- Page 46** How to get out of Debt
- Page 48** Secret Santa Ideas
- Page 52** Introducing Maggie Feeley
- Page 54** Christmas Cocktails
- Page 56** Charlene White
- Page 60** Saint Sister
- Page 62** Music Rocks!
- Page 64** Book Reviews
- Page 66** Poetry Corner - Different
- Page 68** Just for Laughs - A.A.A.D.D.
- Page 70** Pause for Thought





THE PHENOMENAL

Dolly Parton

When I was 15, Dolly Parton hit the charts with Jolene and if someone had told me then that someday she would be my pick for a phenomenal woman, I would have scoffed: back then she was just a country singer with embarrassingly big boobs (I was 15!), lots of curly blonde hair and glitter.

Perhaps back then Dolly hadn't had time to grow into the phenomenal woman that she is now, or perhaps the world didn't appreciate what a star she was to become. Referred to as the 'Dolly Lama' she frequently has something to say on almost every topic, be that life, love, work, beauty, social and political issues, religion, and she's not afraid to speak up against all types of discrimination including that of the LGBTQ+ community and Black Lives Matter - more of which I'll share later.

At 75 she seems to be unstoppable having a career spanning over 50 years, written more than 3000 songs, won 10 Grammys, sold more than 100 million records and the list goes on. She's not only a music legend but she's also a very canny businesswoman, author, style icon and philanthropist.



Her goddaughter, Miley Cyrus, has referred to her as being, 'at her core, ...the definition of a humanitarian' which we saw early in the pandemic when she donated \$1 million to COVID-19 vaccine research publicly used her voice to encourage everyone to take up the vaccine when it became available.

But this kindness and willingness to put herself forward isn't a new persona just for publicity or social media memes - she's

Some more Dollyisms...

"I make a point to appreciate all the little things in my life. I go out and smell the air after a good, hard rain,... These small actions help remind me that there are so many great, glorious pieces of good in the world."

"A peacock that rests on its feathers is just another turkey."

"I think everybody should be allowed to be who they are and to love who they love."

"I'm very real where it counts, and that's inside."

"People say, 'Oh, you just always seem so happy,'" said Parton in "Dream More."

"Well, that's the Botox. Nobody's happy all the time. But I work hard at it."

"I'm flashy, and I'm flamboyant,... Had I not been a girl, I definitely would have been a drag queen."

"Don't get so busy making a living that you forgot to make a life."

"Rhinestones, makeup and hair are fun, but it's what's on the inside that makes you a truly special one."



been doing a lot of good since the mid 1980s when her career started to take off.

One area she is passionate about is children's literacy and to date her program, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has seen almost 850,000 children receive a book in the post each month from birth to kindergarten age, not only in America but across Canada, the UK, Australia and Ireland.

Perhaps one of my favourite philanthropic stories came about after the success of Whitney Houston's version of 'I Will Always Love You'. It's reported that although the song had moderate success for Dolly herself, it was the 1992 version that featured in *The Bodyguard* that rocketed the royalties into millions.

And what did Dolly do? She invested some of that money in an old business complex in a historically black community that was run down and struggling; and she made sure that her investment trickled down to the black business community in the area. Speaking to Andy Cohen in a recent interview she explained that the decision to invest in that area took on more significance after Whitney died saying, 'I love the fact that I spent that money on a complex and I think, 'This is the house that Whitney built'.



Apart from being a songwriter, singer, philanthropist and businesswoman, Dolly has also turned her hand to acting

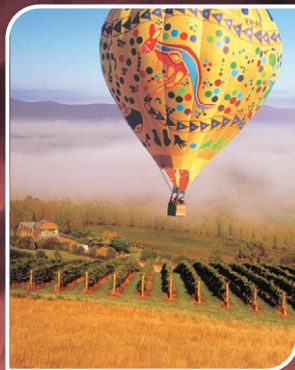
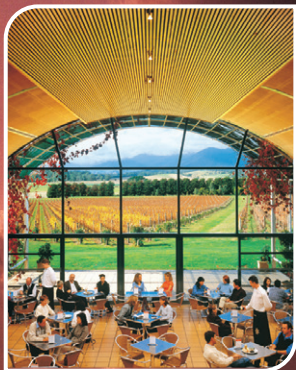
and her debut was in one of my all-time favourites, *9-5*, which celebrated its 40th anniversary last year. The movie dealt with discrimination against women in the workplace and created awareness of the National Association of Working Women. She received nominations for a Golden Globe Award for Best Actress and a Golden Globe Award for

New Star of the Year, the first of many such nominations. I'm delighted that these three magnificent women are about to star again in theist season of Grace & Frankie - it's sure to please.

From very humble roots - Dolly was 4th eldest in a large family of 12 children - she has overcome many major hurdles to get where she is today but she never seems to forget her 'dirt poor' upbringing, "I always count my blessings more than I count my money," said Parton during an interview with CBS Sunday Morning. "I don't work for money, never did."

That's a wonderful attitude but not entirely surprising from Dolly as she has a reputation for her 'Dollyisms' - little pearls of wisdom from a woman who has her feet firmly planted in her faith and her humanity.





Great Victoria



Melbourne is the trendy metropolitan city of Australia. Known for its cafes, restaurants, stylish shopping and shows, it is an excellent location for a driving holiday with magnificent scenery and attractions all within an hours drive of the city centre.



Victoria's capital promises to keep you fascinated from dawn to day past dusk. In the heart of the city, visit the lush Royal Botanic Gardens, popular for a quick lunch or stroll. Federation Square is a meeting place, which has become a well known landmark within the city, and Brunswick Street is known for its eclectic cafés, shops and atmosphere. You also can't miss the extensive Melbourne Museum, which displays some of the best art, sculptures and technology this city has to offer.

How could you visit Melbourne without shopping?

The Queen Victoria Market will keep you captivated with its myriad of stalls and food halls. You can catch a tram or walk here from the centre of the city. There are also shopping spree tours, of course, which will take you to the best bargains.

For a touch of class, board a dinner and cabaret cruise on the Yarra River, or dress up for an opera or show at the Arts Centre Melbourne. The busy restaurants, clubs and shows bring the city to life at night.

Just ninety minutes drive from Melbourne, Phillip Island offers a rare opportunity to see fairy penguins at play as you watch the 'Penguin Parade'.

Sunsets are also exciting as guided tours are available to watch the penguins march.



There is plenty of wildlife in this nature reserve. The fur seals will steal your heart at Seal Rocks, as will the cuddly koalas at the Koala Conservation Reserve. There is a fantastic walk along Philip Island's headland that gives you breathtaking views plus a look at the Pinnacles, which are unique rock formations off the coast. Journeying on, the scenery keeps getting better with natural beauty such as Wilsons Promontory National Park at the most southern end of Australia, featuring long white beaches and incredible wildlife.

Under an hours drive from Melbourne, the Yarra Valley is perfect for a getaway to recharge the batteries and enjoy breathtaking scenery. There is so much to do in this beautiful region of Victoria, also known as one of the world great wine growing regions, and famous for its pinot noir and sparkling champagne. There are plenty of locals who also flock to this area to enjoy a weekend away.

The blue ranges, massive trees, rivers and valleys all combine to create an irresistible escape from the frantic city life. Set aside at least a minimum of two days here to take in the scenery and enjoy the countryside.





There are pretty towns nestled in the rolling hills of the valley waiting to be explored, and so many fine foods and wines to sample. With incredible accommodation choices, the Yarra Valley is ideal for the driving holiday, with a vast choice of cosy bed and breakfasts, self-contained cottages through to five star hotels. You may not want to leave once you have settled in!

Follow the Mount Dandenong Tourist Road and you will arrive at one of the most sought after regions in Victoria, the Dandenong Ranges. Ideal for a weekend retreat, the majestic forests, amazing gardens and panoramic views of the Yarra Valley are the most distinct drawcards for tourists. Home of the Rhododendron, the gardens go on and on and will lead you to art galleries and cosy cafés.

There is even a local Puffing Billy, which will take you through old villages and through

incredible scenery. There are kilometres of walking tracks also featuring the Thousand Steps and The Sherbrooke Forest.

Further down the range is the town of Healesville, which is known for its extensive Sanctuary wildlife park. It is home to a myriad of birdlife, and boasts over 200 species of animals such as the platypus, Tasmanian devil, dingos, echidnas, koalas, emus and wombats. Healesville is also known for its yearly Grape Grazing Festival and Yarra Valley Tourist Railway.

Stevenson Falls is a magnificent attraction, known as one of the highest waterfalls in Victoria. Lady Talbot Drive is perfect for a picnic lunch surrounded by eucalyptus forest followed by a rainforest walk. The Cumberland Scenic Reserve features the tallest tree known in Victoria, known as 'The Big Tree', and the Cora Lynn Falls are also worth a visit. Warburton is one of the most attractive towns in the entire valley. It is also known as a health retreat and welcoming for all desiring a complete



break from the pressures of life. With forests, rivers, wineries and plenty of activities and attractions, make sure this is on your list of places to see.

The Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail is popular for cycling or walking enthusiasts, and there is a shorter walk to Lala falls. The Mount Donna Buang Rainforest Gallery offers a fantastic treetop skywalk, which is a great way for all ages to see the beautiful rainforest. There is even a night tour to the Upper Yarra Reservoir Park. There are plenty of walks, which begin close to town and into the Mountain Ash forests. You will certainly leave here feeling fit and rejuvenated. For some it would be enough to enjoy the views of the sun setting accompanied with a glass of local wine, browsing the boutiques and enjoying a visit to the wildlife sanctuary. Others seeking outdoor adventure will love the treetop skywalk, cross country skiing at Lake Mountain or abundance of cycling and bushwalking tracks. For whoever is blessed to visit this abundant region, the outcome is still the same.

The Great Ocean Road would have to be one of the most scenic drives in Australia, with 300 kilometres of winding roads, which stretch from the headlands to beach views and rainforests. It is absolutely fantastic for a self-drive holiday as there are so many places to stop and admire the views. It is most famous for its Twelve Apostles. These giant limestone rocks have been formed over the years by the pelting waves, and are best admired at sunset as the colours change before your eyes.

If you love adventure and rugged scenery, there are plenty of exhilarating moments waiting for you further out from the city. The Grampians are three hours drive west of Melbourne, and are especially stunning in Spring when almost 1000 species of flower are blooming.

With so many sights and dynamic attractions, it is hard to know where to start. Depending on your tastes you can sit at a café admiring views of the city skyline and enjoy watching the world go by, or you can set off to explore the wonders of the surrounding areas. One thing is sure; Melbourne will capture your heart and call you back again and again.

Article by:
Jenny Brewer



Mirieville



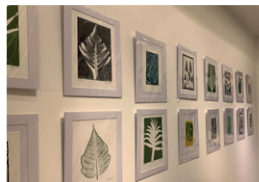
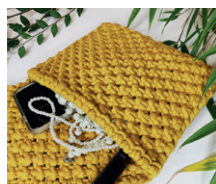
Belfast native Frances Magee is a multi-disciplinary artist and designer. Frances trained in Art and Design at the York street campus of the University of Ulster specialising in creating sculpture in mixed media.

Having lived and travelled extensively across Europe, Frances has absorbed a modern European view on family living spaces. Creating a pared back interior aesthetic of her own which has proven popular amongst clients.

Frances has been developing macrame and hand weaving techniques for many years, producing unique finishing touch pieces for homes across the UK.







There is nothing comparable to the tactile feel of the threads, as well as the rhythm of making knot after knot, until a piece takes form.

On the most personal level, knotting gives me a chance to immerse myself in a very peaceful, private meditative process that allows me to create simple, elegant forms with bold, striking colours."

The range of products has expanded to include linocut and monotype prints on earth friendly materials and is an extension of the botanical themes which have proved so popular with customers across residential and commercial settings.

Breathing new life into materials which are destined for landfill has become a mission for Frances. Giving a 'second life' to this previously discarded medium and sharing the creations with customers new and old has become a source of great joy.

You can shop for Frances' creations online at www.mirievile.com







New Year New Career

FIVE DAY FREE FACEBOOK CHALLENGE AIMS TO GET WOMEN BACK INTO THE DRIVING SEAT

One of NI's top career and leadership coaches and international motivational speakers is calling on women who want to get the recognition they deserve in their careers in 2022 to sign up to her free Kickstart Your Career Facebook Challenge.



Sinead Sharkey Steenson; the founder of Generation Women - a company dedicated to supporting women rise in their careers is offering five days free training and support launching on Monday, January 24th.

During the first lockdown Sinead ran her first ever Facebook Challenge with over 100 signing up. Because of the success of the programme she's now calling on more women to get back in the driving seat and get the job, promotion and salary they want.

It is aimed at supporting and motivating women to get their career mojo back; to be seen and heard; act with confidence and influence, get the next promotion and get noticed at work.

Sinead said: "I started the Challenge because I was fed up with women getting looked over when it comes to career progression, exacerbated by the Pandemic. Lockdown and the additional pressure on women has been the final straw in the equality battle, with women picking up the slack on what has now been dubbed 'the Pink Pandemic.'

Numerous reports back up what Sinead has said. According to PWC, progress for women in work will be back to 2017 levels by the end of the year. The WRDA has also released a report that revealed women's careers and job prospects have been negatively impacted by Covid 19.

Sinead, renowned for her good humoured but no-nonsense approach said: "There will be no Cinderella's on my watch. The course aims to motivate

and teach participants how to get clear on what they want, stop wasting time on doing things that get other people promoted, ask their boss for a pay rise in a can't say no type of way and rip of the invisibility cloak and build a vision board for future career success on steroids. Past challengers have said taking part has made them feel unstoppable."

"I know that the key to career success is NOT to work harder, get another qualification or jump into another job. When women sign up for this challenge they will find out what it is they need to do to float into work on a Monday morning and get noticed."

Stylist Nuala McMenamin said: "Sinead is an absolute breath of fresh air. There is no corporate BS about her. She cuts through all that sort of thing and gets to the root of the issues you may be experiencing and gives you practical tools to surmount them.

"Sinead breaks everything down in really simple terms and provides you with skills to make previously impossible scenarios possible. Working with her is like having a secret weapon in your back pocket. The info on the programme is that powerful. Working with Sinead has completely changed my life."

The Five Day Challenge is free, it's fun and changes lives. <https://genwomen.global/kickstart-your-career/>



2022





BBQ Prawns, Lobster and Crayfish with Herb Butter and Siracha Mayonnaise

Lobster, prawns and crayfish are often considered delicacies for a special occasion, so this BBQ recipe with smoky siracha mayonnaise and herbed butter is perfect for a showstopping Christmas feast.

Serves: 6 people | Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

2 lobster, sliced in half lengthways
 450g king prawns
 300g crayfish
 150g unsalted butter, softened
 1 tsp Maldon salt
 Cracked black pepper
 10g parsley, finely chopped
 10g coriander, finely chopped
 2 lemons, halves
 100g mayonnaise
 1 tbsp siracha

Method:

1. Begin by mixing together the herb butter for your seafood. In a small bowl mix together the softened butter with Maldon salt, cracked black pepper, the chopped parsley and coriander. Set aside.
2. The perfect way to cook your seafood is on a hot BBQ, however if you don't have one then a griddle pan will work too. Make sure it has reached a medium to high temperature and start by grilling your lobster halves.

Cook flesh side down on the griddle until the meat has turned pink and has some lovely charring on it. The shells will turn orangey pink too, and this is when you know your lobster are cooked. Do the same with the king prawns and crayfish, although these will take less time to cook.

3. While your seafood is cooking, it is also nice to griddle some lemon to serve alongside. Simply add your lemon halves cut side down onto the grill and allow them to cook and char for 3 minutes.
4. Once your seafood is all cooked, pile onto a large serving platter and using a pastry brush, brush all across the flesh with your delicious herb butter letting it melt in. Place your griddled lemon onto the serving platter too.
5. In a small bowl mix together the mayonnaise and siracha. Serve this alongside the platter of BBQ seafood and allow everyone to tuck in!



Vegetarian Wellington with Beetroot, Butternut Squash, Lentils and Chestnuts

This vegetarian wellington recipe is a fantastic centrepiece for a vegetarian Christmas table. It includes beetroot, butternut squash, lentils and chestnuts all wrapped in wonderfully crisp pastry no one will miss the meat.

Serves: 6-8 people | Prep time: 1 hour plus colling time | Cook time: 45 minutes



Ingredients:

300g butternut squash,
chopped into 1cm cubes
2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, diced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
250g chestnut mushrooms, chopped
10g sage, finely chopped
10g thyme, leaves picked

130g cooked puy lentils
100ml double cream
75g cooked chestnuts, crumbled
1 tsp Maldon salt
Cracked black pepper
500g puff pastry
5-6 cooked beetroot
1 egg, beaten

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 180C.
2. Begin with the butternut squash. Place the diced squash onto a baking tray and drizzle with some oil, Maldon salt and cracked black pepper. Place into the oven and roast for 20 minutes until soft and cooked through.
3. Meanwhile, in a large frying pan heat 1 tbsp oil. Once the oil is hot, add the diced onion and fry gently for 5 minutes until softened. To the softened onions, add the crushed garlic and cook for a further 2 minutes. Next add the chopped chestnut mushrooms and continue to cook these for 5-8 minutes until the mushrooms have softened and beginning to caramelize.
4. Once the mushrooms are cooked, add the chopped sage and thyme leaves, followed by the cooked puy lentils and double cream. Allow this to fry and cook for 3 minutes, mixing well so everything is well combined. Remove from the heat and add the crumbled cooked chestnuts, Maldon salt, cracked black pepper and the cooked butternut squash. Set aside and allow to cool.
5. Once the mixture has cooled, you are ready to assemble.
6. On a lightly floured surface roll out the puff pastry block until it is a roughly 30 x 40cm rectangle and 1cm thick.

At this stage you want to carefully lift the rolled pastry onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Next spoon on the cooled filling and spread out evenly, leaving a 1 inch boarder along the top and 1cm board round all the rest of the edges. Next take the cooked beetroot and make sure they are dry of any excess liquid. Choose beetroot that are similar in size and place them in a row down the middle.

7. Take one of the long sides and lift it up and over the beetroot to enclose them. Pinch the pastry together at the seams and rest the whole wellington seam side down. Pinch the pastry at either end of the wellington also, and trim off any excess.
8. Use the excess pastry to create long strips and decorate the top of the wellington with a lattice pattern (optional). And brush the entire thing with the beaten egg.
9. Place the wellington into the fridge for a minimum of 30 minutes (but the longer, the better) to cool.
10. When ready to bake, take your chilled wellington from the fridge and place into the preheated oven. Bake for 40-45 minutes until the pastry is golden and crisp all over. Remove from the oven and allow to rest for 10 minutes before slicing and serving.



Maldon Salt
available from
Tesco, Asda &
Sainsburys.





Rum Spiced Roast Ham

This is a recipe for a delicious Rum spiced Ham, perfect for the festive period this could be served on Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve and would be perfect alongside slow cooked red cabbage and dauphinoise potatoes.

It is surprisingly easy to prepare and any leftovers make the best sandwiches!

Serves: 10-12 people | Prep time: 25 minutes | Cook time: 3 hours

Ingredients:

4kg gammon joint, boneless
450ml black treacle
2 bay leaves
½ an orange
1 cinnamon stick
1 star anise
6 black peppercorns
6 cloves
50ml spiced rum
2 tbsp black treacle
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
1 tsp Maldon salt
Olive oil

Method:

1. Traditionally, a gammon joint would often require soaking overnight to remove some of the strong salt from the cure. However, more often these days the butchers use cures which don't require this check with your butcher first if you are unsure.
2. Take a large pan, big enough to hold your ham and to the pan fill it up halfway with water. To the water add the black treacle and mix in well. Then add your gammon joint and top up the

pan with some more cold water until it just covers the ham. Then add the bay leaves, half an orange, cinnamon stick, star anise, black peppercorns and cloves. Then place on the hob and bring the liquid up the boil and then reduce to a low simmer and let it simmer for 2 hours 30 mins. Keep topping up the water level if necessary, to ensure the ham is evenly covered.

3. Preheat oven to 180C.
4. After 2 hours 30 mins remove the ham from the heat and allow to cool slightly before removing carefully from the pan of water.
5. Place the ham on a large baking tray and using a sharp knife, score the skin in a diamond pattern. In small bowl mix together the spiced rum, 2 tbsp black treacle, Dijon mustard, Maldon salt and 1 tbsp olive oil. Use a pastry brush to rub this glaze all over the ham. Then place into the oven for 15 20 minutes. Remove from the oven and brush again with any remaining glaze.
6. Let the ham rest for 30 minutes before slicing and serving.



Clementine and Cardamom Christmas Trifle with Amaretto and Pistashio

This recipe takes the traditional trifle but gives it a Christmassy twist with additions of clementine's, cardamom, amaretto and pistachio. Not only does it taste amazing, but it makes for a show stopping dessert at your Christmas table.

Serves: 8 people | Prep time: 30 minutes | Cook time: 5 minutes plus cooling

Ingredients:

10 clementine's
300g madeira sponge, cut into 2cm slices
450ml whole milk
250ml double cream
6 cardamom pods
1 tsp vanilla bean paste
9 medium egg yolks
75g golden caster sugar
60g cornflour
600ml double cream
60ml amaretto
100g icing sugar
Pinch of Maldon Salt
3 tbsp amaretto
25g pistachios, chopped
5 amaretti biscuits, crumbled
6-8 physalis, to decorate
Edible gold glitter, to decorate

Method:

1. Begin by making your custard. In a large bowl whisk together the egg yolks with the golden caster sugar until pale and thickened.

Then add the cornflour and mix again. In a saucepan, heat the 450ml whole milk, 250ml double cream, 6 based cardamom pods and the vanilla bean paste gently until it reaches scalding point.

Then remove from the heat and pour gradually into the egg mixture through a sieve to catch the cardamom pods, whisking as you go until all the milk and cream is added and you have a smooth mixture. Clean out the saucepan and then pour the custard back in. Place it onto the heat once more and gently heat over a low flame, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon or spatula until the custard has thickened.

2. Remove the custard from the heat and pour into a bowl. Use clingfilm to close cover the surface of the custard and place into the fridge to cool.
3. Use a large trifle dish to assemble your dessert. Start with the clementine's,

- peel them and cut into rounds roughly 1cm thick. Place the slices of clementine around the bottom of the trifle dish so they stand up against the sides. Next take the slices of madeira cake and place into the bottom of the dish and keep layering up until you have used all the cake.
4. Drizzle the madeira cake layer with 3 tbsp amaretto. Remove the cooled custard from the fridge and pour this over the cake layer.
 5. Add 600ml double cream to a large bowl and add the icing sugar and a pinch of Maldon salt. Then whip the cream until it starts to form soft peaks. Add the 60ml amaretto and whisk you want medium peaks that aren't too stiff.
 6. Spoon the cream over the custard layer and use the back of your spoon to create soft peaks in the top. Decorate the top of the trifle with crushed amaretti biscuits, chopped pistachios, physalis fruit and gold leaf. Serve.



Menopause

Menopause is a natural transition all women experience, as natural as adolescence. For your grandmother and great-grandmother, life expectancy was shorter. Reaching menopause often meant that their life was nearing an end. But this is no longer true as today women are living longer - on average, until age 78.

How you experience menopause is determined by many factors: attitude, diet, overall health, genetics, and your cultural group. Medical science views menopause as the state of your body after you have completed one full year without having a period. It is most definitely not a disease! By making wise decisions about your menopause and healthy lifestyle, you can make the most of the 20, 30, or more years afterwards!

Attitude

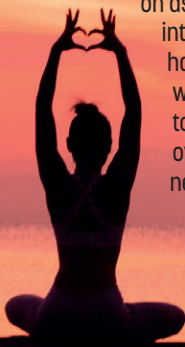
Many women report that they are glad to no longer have their monthly periods and all of the hormonal or just physical issues that accompanied their periods. They feel a freedom from having to be concerned about pregnancy and birth control. There is a sense of more energy, and a sense of freedom that comes without the biological drive to be mother, helper, and nurturer. Many women turn their attention to those things in life they have put aside. Some start new careers or businesses.

Others take up creative pursuits like photography or painting, while others travel to places they have wanted to see. These women have a positive attitude.

Those women who dread menopause, see it as unnatural, or a sign of old age (and we all get old don't we!), and have more problems enjoying the transition during perimenopause. They report more symptom issues. Negative attitudes result in negative experiences.

Wake-up Call

Everything is magnified, starting in your perimenopause (the time when you begin to experience symptoms), and then continuing on as you make the transition into menopause. Issues you have not reconciled as a woman will surface for you to deal with. Perhaps long overdue lifestyle changes need to be made.

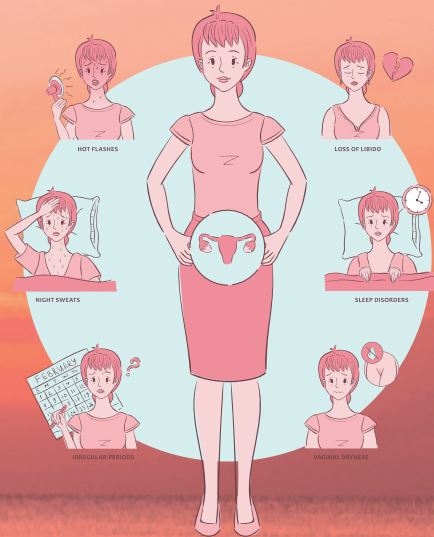


Your body is very smart and it will start to purge any “stuffed” emotions. This means the body does not want to carry these negative thought patterns or habits inside anymore.

If you have experienced trauma or hurtful experiences - the unresolved ones - they will come up. You will remember incidents you ignored or just could not deal with at the time. Maybe you did not have a safe space to work on them. This is the opportunity to let them go. If you understand this purge and welcome it, you will experience an easier transition.

Health issues that have been neglected will also wake-up. Be sure you get thorough check-ups and tests during this time, including dental,

COMMON SYMPTOMS



vision, heart health, as well as hormones. Health issues are serious to me. I have walked the path of being unhealthy and the path of health. I very definitely choose being healthy. We can implement preventative health. Diet, exercise, clean water, stress management, healthy environment, and no synthetic drugs if possible go a long way in creating and keeping a healthy body.

Spiritual Awakening

You may find that the changes you are making lead you to an awakening spiritually. This happens to many women who welcome this growth. Seek out your local church, take classes in meditation, discover new spiritual thought, or a renewed connection with your God. You are a spirit with a body. Approaching your spiritual wellness includes making choices that take care of yourself physically and emotionally.

Proactive Steps

Although menopause is one of the important physical milestones in a woman's life, many women lack concrete information about what is taking place, and what are the options. It is your right to know your body and be informed. With a proper attitude, diet, nutritional supplements, exercise, and simple lifestyle changes, most of the unpleasant side effects of menopause can be minimised to a great extent. With this knowledge and preparation you can step forward with grace and embrace it!

To make menopause fun and pleasant:

- Make choices to eliminate/reduce stress.
- Create a sanctuary space for yourself where you can meditate, write, draw, or anything that expresses your thoughts and emotions.
- Find an exercise you like and stick with it.
- Evaluate diet and reduce weight, if you have gained pounds over the years.
- Become selfish with your time for yourself. Do more things for you and evaluate caregiving roles.
- Get enough rest and sleep.
- Develop an outside interest or hobby.
- Have joy and fun in your life. If this means making new friends, go do it.



Exercises for Menopause

Deep Abdominal Breathing

Lie flat on your back with your knees pulled up, keeping your feet slightly apart. Inhale deeply through the nose, allowing your

stomach to relax. Your stomach should balloon out as you breathe in. Imagine that your body is filling with energy on each inhalation. As you exhale, imagine the air being pushed out from the bottom of your lungs to the top. This breathing will promote deep relaxation, abundant energy, and stress control.

Joint Flexibility

Improving range of motion and flexibility in all joints will remedy stiffness and soreness that are so common as women reach menopause. With the exception of the last one, the following exercises are done in sequence sitting on the floor, legs stretched out in front.

Toes - Place your hands at your sides and flex your toes 10 times.



BODY CHANGES



BONE

- Increased risk of osteoporosis (loss of bone mass)



REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

- Amenorrhea (no more periods)
- Reproductive organs decrease in size
- Vaginal pH changes
- Increased risk for vaginal infections



HEART & CIRCULATORY SYSTEM

- Increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure and high cholesterol



EMOTIONAL & MENTAL SYMPTOMS

- Mood changes/disturbances
- Decreased sex drive
- Lack of concentration/forgetfulness
- Depression and nervousness



HAIR GROWTH

- Thinning of scalp hair
- Thinning, thickening of body hair



URINARY SYSTEM

- Increased risk of urinary infections
- Urinary incontinence



BREASTS & BODY CHANGES

- Lumpy firm breasts
- Weight gain



SKIN

- Thinning of skin
- Sensitivity to sun exposure

Ankles - Rotate your ankles in each direction 10 times, keeping heels on the floor.

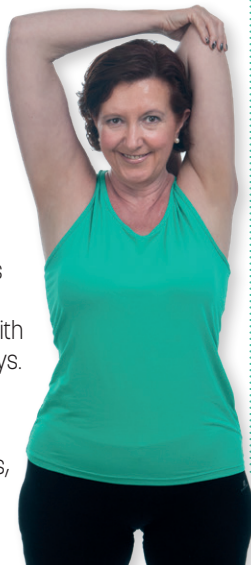
Knees - Bend the right leg and bring the heel near your buttock. Then lift the right leg off the floor and straighten the right knee, repeating 10 times. Then the left leg and knee 10 times. Next, holding your thigh near your body, rotate your lower leg as you did your ankle, 10 times clockwise and 10 times counter clockwise.

Hips - Bend the left leg and place your left foot on your right thigh. Hold the left knee with the left hand, and the left ankle with the right hand. Gently move the knee up and down with the left hand; then repeat with the right leg. Now rotate the left knee clockwise 10 times then counter-clockwise 10 times. This improves hip flexibility. Repeat with the right knee. Also for hip flexibility, bring the soles of the feet together, bringing the heels close to the body. Using your hands, press your knees to the floor and let them come up again. Repeat 10 times.

Fingers - Lift your arms to shoulder height. Keeping your arms straight open the hands wide. Flex your fingers, closing over your thumbs. Repeat 10 times. **Wrists** - Flex and extend the wrists, repeating 10 times. Rotate your wrists clockwise and counter clockwise 10 times each. Now hold the hand in extension and move it from side to side at the wrist. Repeat 10 times.

Elbows - Stretch out the arms at shoulder height with palms facing upward. Bend the arms at the elbow and touch the shoulders with your fingers; then straighten out the arms again. Repeat 10 times with arms front, then with arms extended sideways.

Shoulders - With arms bent and fingertips touching your shoulders,



make circular motions with the elbows. Repeat 10 times clockwise and 10 times counter clockwise. With legs straight out in front, reach over and touch your legs without bending your knees. Repeat 20 times.

Waist - Stand up and slowly reach over and touch your toes, bending from the waist. Try to keep your knees straight. Repeat 10 times. Remain standing, and spread your legs about 2 feet apart. Bend to the side at the waist first to the left, reaching your right arm over your head, repeating 5 times. Then repeat, bending to the right with your left arm over your head.



Dr. Loretta Lanphier, ND, CN, HHP is a Doctor of Naturopath, Clinical Nutritionist and Holistic Health Practitioner and Founder/CEO of Oasis Advanced Wellness.

She is also Editor of the worldwide E-newsletter Advanced Health & Wellness, which can be found on www.oasisadvancedwellness.com

Menopause in the Workplace

Women make up nearly half the working population in Northern Ireland and with the recent change in pension age, it is likely that more women will be working into later life. This changing demography, together with employers duty of care to their employees and a greater openness in the discussing the difficulties faced by those experiencing menopausal symptoms, helps explain why employers should ensure that they have the appropriate policies place.

For more information you can download 'Promoting Equality in Employment for Women Affected by Menopause'.



A Woman of Spirit!

Throughout the year, Radley London has celebrated Women of Spirit through a campaign featuring women who are working to make a real difference in the world: the leaders of tomorrow, the freethinkers, the voices for change that inspire those around them every day.

Katie Piper embodies what it means to be a Women of Spirit - she advocates for positive change through her charity work, podcast and writing.

Celebrating the extraordinary in others and finding peace and positivity, is something Katie feels passionately about. For Katie, World Kindness Day was an important opportunity to encourage everyone to look at the people around them, and to reflect on their impact on your life. Katie talks beautifully on how kindness is what she's built her life around, and how pivotal it is to her.

"World Kindness Day is a chance to recognise the good in the world. A lot of people have shown me kindness over the years, it's something very close to my heart" - Katie Piper

With Christmas fast approaching Katie has worked with Radley on selecting an eight piece edit of her top gifts this year.



Katie and Radley both know the importance of gifting thoughtfully as well as responsibly at Christmas, whether it be a beautifully crafted, festive red leather handbag (Duke's Place) for her best friend, or cosy check Radley Blankets for her hardworking Katie Piper Foundation colleagues. The blankets are made from recycled polyester and are a part of the Radley Responsible sustainable collection.

WOMEN

OF

Spirit

WEDNESDAY





WOMEN OF *Spirit* WEDNESDAY

The price range of the products featured in Katie's edit range from £10 - £249, making it the perfect mix of ideal stocking fillers and under the tree must-haves.

Link to <https://www.radley.co.uk/the-katie-piper-edit/>

- 1 Summerstown - £179
- 2 Hyde Road - £199
- 3 Manor Grove - £159
- 4 Cranwell Close - £119
- 5 Mill Bay (metallic) - £159
- 6 Water bottle - £30

Products that are a part of the Gift Guide edit:

- 7 Dukes Place - available in red, black and tan £159
- 8 Mill Bay - available in ink and tan £179
- 9 Check Blanket - available in grey and red £89
- 10 A5 Diary Agenda - £20
- 11 Festive dog socks - £10

"A Woman of Spirit is a woman who is truly herself, with no apologies."

Katie Piper

Katie Piper

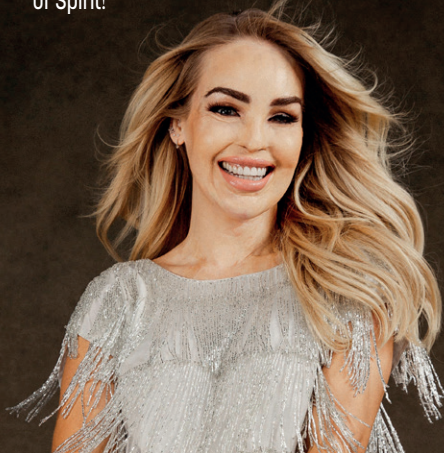
Katie is an English writer, activist, television presenter and model. She is from Andover in Hampshire where she lived with her parents.

Katie, 38, originally trained as a beautician after leaving school before following modelling and TV presenting roles. She was subjected to a horrific acid attack in 2008 but she hasn't let the attack define her, and has since gone on to become a published author and a TV presenter.

Katie originally trained as a beautician which led her to a career in modelling and a digital television presenter. However, in 2008 she suffered an horrific acid attack, orchestrated by an ex-boyfriend. She suffered devastating facial disfigurement and had to undergo pioneering surgery and rehabilitation.

However, rather than retreat back into herself following such trauma, Katie decided to share her experience and help others. In 2009 she set up the Katie Piper Foundation to help improve services and support for burns victims.

She is a published author, TV presenter and advocate for burns survivors. Her latest book *A Little Bit of Faith: Hopeful Affirmations for Every Day of the Year* was launched earlier this year but she faced a backlash from trolls online. However, she, in her usual stoic and determined self, addressed the issue and once again proved herself to be a 'Woman of Spirit!'





Why a regular dose of gardening is good for your health

"The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies..."

Many of us will be able to relate to this quote from garden designer Gertrude Jekyll, including the millions of people who have taken up caring for plants over the last two years. Lockdown gave an opportunity to connect (or reconnect) with gardens and nature, and to experience what powerful forces they can be for wellbeing.

The significance of gardens is borne out by research by Natural England, with 86 per cent of people questioned saying they viewed their gardens or allotments as important during lockdown, with nearly 60 per cent saying they were very important.

It's not hard to see why gardens are so valued. Ask any gardener what they get out of gardening and an answer on the lines of "It makes me feel

good" will be highly likely. Or as one study put it: "A regular dose of gardening can improve health."

The therapeutic value of gardening and nature-based interventions is increasingly being recognised across the health sector, with 'Green social prescriptions' gradually being made available for patients.

The beauty of using gardening as a way to wellbeing is it can be made accessible to people with all sorts of health needs and abilities.

Social and Therapeutic Horticulture (STH) is one tried and tested option that offers holistic benefits. STH is a process where plants and gardens are used to improve mental and physical health, as well as social, communication and thinking skills.



The gardening-for-health charity Thrive was one of the early pioneers of STH in the UK, and has three large gardens where hundreds of clients with a wide range of disabilities and long-term health conditions work with experienced STH practitioners.

Shan has Primary Progressive Multiple Sclerosis, a condition that can lead to secondary issues such as diabetes and heart disease because of impaired movement and inactivity.

To help stem the progression of his MS, Shan enrolled on a Thrive STH programme, which has assisted him physically as well as psychologically: "I have managed to increase stamina and range of movement in my hand and arm," he said.

His consultant neurologist saw the difference gardening sessions were having and when she heard there was an opportunity to extend his time at Thrive, her message was emphatic: "The more the better."

Gardening is now a strong motivator, getting him up and moving: "It gets me out of the house," said Shan. "It has given me a sense of purpose and structure in my life.

"Working as part of a team led by the STH practitioners, I learned this was more than making the garden and gardening accessible. The tailored horticultural programmes provide people with ways of coping with varying disabilities and health concerns.

"They enrich people's lives and complement their wellbeing and rehabilitation, for example in tackling



fatigue, addressing poor sleep, managing pain, regaining strength and overcoming isolation.

"Through mindful individual activity they find time to pause and take stock of their lives, while knowing their contribution is valued by a supportive social group."

Staff at Thrive speak of how gardens are not only restorative but caring for plants is a meaningful activity which connects us to inner desires to nurture and care.

Their experience of working with people with a wide range of mental and physical needs shows how gardening can provide a sense of purpose and achievement, leading to less anxiety, better mood, and greater confidence.

Crucially for the time we are living in, STH practitioners talk about how planting seeds and growing plants is an investment in the future that fuels hope, something that's integral to mental wellbeing.

While much has changed because of coronavirus, the health benefits of gardening are a certainty we can rely on whatever the future holds.

Find out more about Thrive's work, including training in STH, at www.thrive.org.uk.

Sign-up for free gardening for health tips every fortnight at: www.thrive.org.uk/gardeningclub.





How To Grow A Garden For Free

You can invest a bundle in your garden if you want to, but not everyone does. It is completely feasible to do your gardening on a budget by using free or low-cost materials. If you are excited by the idea of putting in a garden but you don't have a lot of money to spend, it's time to concentrate on frugal gardening - getting what you need for little or nothing.

While completely no-cost gardening may be a stretch, it is certainly possible to keep landscape costs down by working some free gardening ideas. Many of the tools and gadgets people buy for their gardens are totally unnecessary to growing flowers or crops.

Identify what you truly need to get into gardening on a budget, starting with the basics. This includes garden beds or containers, soil, seeds or plants, and mulch. By being creative, you can come up with many of these materials for free.

Gardening Starts with Soil

Very few homes have the perfect soil, rich in organic content, that vegetables and many flowers require to thrive. Instead of buying soil supplements, get soil for free by composting it yourself.

Starting a compost pile isn't difficult, nor is it expensive. You simply pick a corner in the garden, put some dried grass or straw as a base, then deposit kitchen and garden waste on top. Water and stir it from time to time and you end up with free garden compost.

You can also get free fertiliser for your garden by using certain kitchen products. For example, used coffee grounds and tea bags work well. You can also boil garden clippings and use the resulting "compost tea" to provide nutrients to plants.

Getting Plants for No-Cost Gardening

What about seeds or plants, you wonder? Even one six-pack of veggie starts can cost you more money than you want to spend, let alone buying a beautiful hydrangea or rose bush. When gardening on a budget, you can actually obtain plants for free by saving seeds and taking cuttings.



Remove and store seeds from the vegetables you buy such as tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers.

Another option is to buy last year's seeds from the garden centre or look for giveaways. For trees, plant seeds like acorns, as these are easy to find under any oak.

To get perennials in your garden, think cuttings. Many wonderful plants can be grown from cuttings including:

- Hydrangea
- Lilac
- Raspberries
- Roses
- Blackberries
- Geranium

Stick the cuttings in water or potting soil, keep them moist, and let them root.

Mulch Your Garden for Free

Mulch works wonders for your garden. Just layer it on top of garden soil after planting for protection from weeds, erosion, as well as regulating temperatures and moisture in the soil. Buying bags of mulch can set you back quite a bit, especially if you have a larger area to cover. However, your garden will appreciate homemade mulch just as much. Save and dry lawn clippings or chop dried leaves in autumn. Both make excellent mulch, and both are free.





Doing A Digital Detox

Feeling panicked when you aren't near your mobile, laptop, or iPad is a sign that you might have an unhealthy attachment to your devices, shall we dare say - a tech-addiction?

When online activities don't serve your mental well-being anymore, it's time to take a step back, switch off, and detox from social media, constant scrolling, and content overload.

Though it may sound weird at first, such a detox can actually make your natural glow stand out more!

This is due to the multitude of effects it has on your habitual life and stress levels, as well as perception of self and confidence.

Let us elaborate and tell you EXACTLY what we mean. Here's what a digital detox might lead to...

Healthier Habits

Is the first thing you do in the morning, and before you go to bed, to grab your phone and scroll mindlessly through social media networks? Then you are trapped in one of the baddest habits ever.

When we maintain a healthy relationship with our devices, we'll adopt better late night and early morning routines and habits; instead of scrolling, you'll be able to do an early morning yoga class or meditation or even spend time with loved ones.

Other habits that will improve when you detox from technology is that you'll get a better night's sleep. This is because the blue screenlight from your

device reduces melatonin production, a hormone that induces relaxation and deep sleep.

You'll also have much better posture and won't suffer from a sore thumb or 'tech neck' from long periods of bending over and scrolling through online content.

Comparisons Are A Thing Of The Past

One of the things that social media and a constant overload of images does, is that it creates inevitable comparisons - Comparisons of people's looks, others' lifestyles, others' riches, others' happiness, and others' achievements.

Being bombarded with how 'perfect' everyone else's lives seem online, will not only make you question your own reality, but also the way you live your life - a constant feeling of 'I need more' or 'I want that' will inevitably occur.

Surely it is almost impossible not to be envious of what an influencer has or to desire the attention that some online personas get, but it is exhausting trying to constantly please your audience by trying to be 'perfect'.

When it comes to social media the saying, 'don't compare your insides to everyone else's outsides' is extremely applicable; in most cases, what you see in a carefully curated post, isn't necessarily reality.

Better Mental Health

There have been numerous mental health studies that have proven that the internet is one of the main causes of depression and anxiety in the 21st century, because we are constantly comparing ourselves and have a desperate need for validation from 'watchers' online.

Some people see their phones as a 'security blanket' or a means of escape out of real life situations - unfortunately, this reinforces anxious responses and unhealthy coping mechanisms.

Being on your device for long periods of time might have an affect on your sleeping patterns, your eating habits, and physical movement; all of which are extremely hazardous to your mental state.

Too much screen time has a negative physical effect on your brain function and therefore, when you regularly detox from it, you'll be able to maintain a much healthier brain function and mental well-being.

Putting Things into Perspective

What would you do if your phone disappeared overnight? Or if the global internet and Wi-Fi system completely shut down? Would you be able to function at all?

Put the role that technology plays in your life into perspective by partaking in a conscious break from your devices - your phone should never be in charge of you, you should be in charge of your phone.

If you are prone to spend hours on end scrolling through your phone - switch off for a short period, take a breath, see the world around you, and start reaping the benefits!

Get sunshine and not screenshine and you'll see yourself blossom in little to no time!



10 Digital Detox Tips

1. Try to be mindful of your screen time.

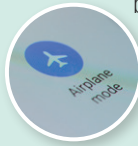
You could set limits or reminders or even use monitoring apps to prompt you.



2. Let friends and family know so they can support you or so they're aware there might be a delay in your reply.

3. Turn off all banner-style notifications, pop-ups or sound alerts on your apps.

4. Make your bedroom a tech-free zone. You could keep your phone in another room overnight. If you need to wake up at a certain time, turn up the volume on your alarm so you'll hear it when it's further away, or consider buying an alarm clock.



5. Put your phone on airplane mode and only switch it on when you need to use it.

6. Don't take your phone into the bathroom. Make this tech-free zone your very own spa. Use your focus to tune in to the senses and enjoy a long soak in a foamy bubble bath or slather on your favourite skincare.

7. If you don't want to leave home without your phone, you can always keep it at a distance when you want to focus on other things, like under the table if you're out to dinner or in your locker at the gym.



8. When you're at home, keep your phone in a central place. Instead of carrying it around, aim for this to be the only place you check your phone.

9. Convert your screen to black and white. Suddenly the lure of the internet becomes far less appealing.

10. Spring clean your social media. When you scroll through your feed, think about which posts make you feel good and which ones do the opposite. If what you're seeing is taking away from your confidence or frame of mind, you can block, mute or unfollow.

The Effects of Smartphones on Your Brain

Quitting Social Media - A Challenge



Bee the Change



*Bee the Change wherever you live -
with help from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust*

The Bumblebee Conservation Trust is on a mission to help you Bee the Change in your local area. Bee the Change is all about simple, quick micro-actions you can do to make your postcode more bumblebee-friendly.

It doesn't matter if you live in the city or the countryside. If you have a garden, a flower pot - or no

outdoor space at all. You can Bee the Change wherever you live!

Bumblebees are familiar and much-loved insects that pollinate our crops and wildflowers. Thanks to their 'free-bee' service, more wildflowers can grow and we can enjoy delicious foods like tomatoes and blueberries.



But bumblebees are in trouble. Over the past century we've lost millions of the flowers they need to survive. Now we can help feed our local bumblebees by providing more flowers in our towns, cities, and countryside.

The Bumblebee Conservation Trust has lots of FREE online resources and how-to guides to help you spot your local bumblebees, grow bee-friendly plants, and spread the word in your community. Simply choose the action that's right for you and get started!

If lots of people can do just one thing, together we can get these little superheroes buzzing again.

Show your love now by pledging to Bee the Change, and don't forget to tell your friends on social media using #BeeTheChange.

Make your pledge online and download your FREE resources at bumblebeeconservation.org/beethechange

6 plants to give bumblebees a winter boost

In the UK, 'winter active bumblebees' are becoming more and more common especially in the south of England - possibly as a result of our changing climate. Instead of going into hibernation, these queens set up their nests in autumn and you could find their daughters visiting your flowers all through the winter!

Growing flowers such as winter heathers and winter honeysuckle will help keep them well-fed throughout the colder months. Winter-flowering mahonias are also great for bumblebees,



but do have the potential to spread outside gardens so should be pruned soon after flowering.

By adding one of the following plants to your garden, you can help feed winter-active bumblebees and hungry queens emerging from hibernation early next spring.

- Winter honeysuckle (flowers November-February)
- Mahonia (flowers November-March)
- Winter-flowering heather (flowers December-April)
- Crocus bulbs (flowers December-March)
- Stinking hellebore (flowers December-April)*
- Pussy willow (flowers February-March)

All of these plants are easy to grow and look after, and available to buy right now. Ask your local garden centre if they have organic, pesticide-free plants, as these are best for bumblebees.



*Potentially toxic if eaten

Tampon Tax Fund 2021/22

TWN are delighted to announce their successful bid for the 'IMPROVE' Project through the Tampon Tax fund 2021/22.

The project will improve the lives of vulnerable, disadvantaged and under-represented women and girls in areas of multiple deprivation across NI, through education & skills programmes to improve their capacities and create a sense of safety and belonging.





TWN recognises the contribution grassroots groups and organisations make to the lives of women and girls throughout Northern Ireland, and are aware that funding is not always fully accessible. TWN will endeavour to ensure this project assists these organisations to deliver programmes to women and girls who face multiple disadvantages.

TWN will implement an open call for small grants which will be advertised using various mediums to ensure a wide audience is reached. TWN will provide potential applicants with support and guidance to help develop their organisational capacity.

Activities of funded projects could include:

- Training and vocational education, aimed at upgrading skills, improving quality, including the redevelopment and promotion of sectors, for example tourism and hospitality, in a post COVID-19 economy
- Training and education actions aimed at the promotion and development of entrepreneurial and work skills to avail of the changing opportunities in NI, e.g. digital skills
- Generic vocational education, training, guidance and counselling packages for those most affected by the conflict
- Guidance, counselling, training and retraining for employees and those recently made redundant or facing redundancy as a result of COVID-19
- Assistance towards self-employment and the promotion of entrepreneurship
- Addressing barriers to women's participation, e.g. provision of childcare with a view of increasing access to training, education, and employment opportunities
- Provision of leadership and mentoring training to advance women in the workplace as well as developing leadership for a sustainable future
- Training and education opportunities in digital skills for the growing IT, Telecommunications and Media and Communications sectors
- Advance women in STEM and contribute to the Women in STEM Strategy.

The first open call for small grants will be implemented in January 2022.

For further information on applying for a small grant please contact Elizabeth or Amanda on 028 9031 9888 or via email: elizabeth@twnonline.com or amanda@twnonline.com.

Response to Tampon Tax funding success

- Patricia Lewsley Mooney
- Sharlene Anderson
- Pauline Noade



Community Partnership Project

The Training for Women Network Ltd are delighted to announce that we have signed up with The Open University to become part of their Community Partnerships Project - bringing learning to the community. The CPP is a widening access initiative which offers OU study in a community setting.

As an OU student, participants will normally study from home, with the support of either online and face to face support from an OU tutor and also from the Student Support Team.

The module which participants will study is called 'People, Work and Society' and is designed to help with confidence skills, digital skills and a strong support network.

The cost of the module will be fully funded if you meet the following criteria:

- Are a resident of NI
- Are registered on a OU qualification
- Have a household income of less than £25,000 (or be in receipt of qualifying benefits)



- Have not completed 1 year or more on any full-time undergraduate programme at NQF Level 4 or above or have completed 30 credits or more of OU study.

4 weeks into the training, financial help can be sought from the OU - students with a household income below £25,000 or in receipt of qualifying benefits can apply to the OU Support Fund for assistance with buying a computer; those eligible can also apply for help with internet and other related costs.

The recommended time spent each week on the module is 8-10 hrs; there is also group peer support.

The next 30 week course will start in February 2022 with the last date to sign up with TWN to begin the course being the 13 January 2022.

*For more information or to sign up,
please contact: Heather Lindsay -
Tel No. 028 90 319888 or
via email: heather@twnonline.com.*

Women Involved in Community Transformation, 2017 - 2021

'A Fresh Start - The Stormont Agreement and Implementation Plan' (also referred to as the 'Fresh Start Agreement') was published by the Executive and the British and Irish Governments in November 2015. The Agreement set out a wide range of proposals for addressing some of the most challenging and intractable issues that impact upon communities, including commitments to tackle paramilitarism and organised crime.

This led to the development of the Women in Community Transformation Programme (WICT), designed to increase the participation and influence of women in community development.

The WICT Project rolled out a 2-phase programme designed to increase the participation and influence of women to carry out transformative community development work in their communities as well as ensuring that they were equipped to take on more leadership roles in public decision-making.

Phase 1 and 2 of the programme was a huge success with 539 women from across Northern Ireland completing the WICT Training Programme and the WICT Extension saw a further 341 women recruited to complete courses in mentoring skills, mediation practice and education and training.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, a further 6 month extension was agreed to enable women to complete their programmes. Alongside the women completing, a further 110 women were recruited to complete the 5 module based WICT programme. This was hugely successful with women completing the programme and starting their journey in leadership to assist to implement change in their communities.

Project End

With the massive success of the WICT programme and the journeys women are on, it was hugely disappointing that the Department for Communities chose to change the focus of the programme. A further 3 year funding was agreed for B5 of the Executive Action Plan, the Department for Communities has changed the focus of the recommendation and has implemented a small grants process via grant aid to work in communities across NI.

The Intervention Forum and WIP Partnership will continue to source the relevant support to continue the WICT programme and give all women participants the opportunity to complete their journeys in becoming change agents in communities across Northern Ireland



Promote, Advance, Support for Success

For young women, aged 16-24:
NOT in full-time employment (16 or less hours),
education, or training.

JOIN OUR YOUNG WOMEN'S PROGRAMME
AND GET £60 IN VOUCHERS! *
Refer a friend and get another £20! *



The PASS project includes:

- A personal development programme
- Employability skills training
- Mentoring
- Certificate

* subject to funding and eligibility

Contact:
TWN PASS Team
028 9031 9888
pass@twnonline.com

How to get out of debt

We're living in challenging times right now - and for many people this is compounded by feeling anxious about money.



Almost everyone has some sort of debt, whether it's the mortgage, credit cards, an overdraft or loans. And whether it's hundreds or thousands of pounds, finding yourself in debt is both frightening and overwhelming.

Getting into debt is always easier than getting out. Credit card companies and retailers encourage shoppers to take out cards with attractive sign-up benefits, and banks continually offer their customers loans - all involving repayment at a healthy annual percentage rate. Lenders have made it far too easy to get into trouble. Depending on how deep in debt you are, you may feel like there is no light at the end of the tunnel, but rest assured there is.

Don't Ignore Debts

People find themselves in financial difficulty for any number of reasons, such as unemployment, illness, marital breakdown, or other unforeseen circumstances. Although you cannot do anything about these or past mistakes, there are things you can do to improve your current situation.

Many people ignore debts when they experience financial difficulty. Some fear contacting their creditors. They do not understand the consequences of not paying bills. Ignoring debts will affect your credit rating. In addition, creditors may take action against you in an effort to get payment. Or your bill can be turned over to a debt collector, your property can be repossessed, or you may be forced into bankruptcy. If trying to get out of debt seems like trying to run a race while being tied to the starting line, and no matter how much energy you put into it you never seem to get anywhere, it's time to get some serious help. The key to solving the financial difficulty is communication.

There is help

The National Debtline estimates that more than 8 million people in the UK have financial difficulties, and has come up with a plan called 'How to deal with debt' to help you take your first steps towards a fresh start with your finances, which can be downloaded from www.nationaldebtline.org

Here's a summary of their 3 key pointers:

1. Know what you've really got.

Get all your information together on your income and outgoings - bank statements, wage slips, benefit/pension statements, bills, letters from creditors.

- Work out your monthly outgoings
- Work out your debts and categorise them by priority
- Use this information to complete the budget template available on the National Debtline website.

2. Maximise Your Money

Check out the advice on www.moneysavingexpert.com - you may be able to save hundreds or thousands of pounds by following their tips.

- Plan your grocery shopping carefully - make a list, use vouchers where you can, and buy own brands wherever possible.
- Check your utilities such as gas, electric, phone, and broadband tariffs to make sure you are on the best deals. You may also be eligible for certain grants depending on your circumstances.

3. Choose your debt solution

Deal with your priority debts first - for example, debts that could mean losing your home or having the gas or electricity cut off.

- Get in touch with your creditors straight away and explain your difficulties. Contact everyone you owe money to. If you make arrangements to pay some creditors but not others, you could run into difficulties again.
- Always respond to any correspondence regarding County Court action. Don't think that going to the County Court makes you a criminal; it isn't that type of court. You won't go to prison and there's no jury. Keep copies of any letters or court forms you send or receive.

FREE ADVICE

For detailed and comprehensive guidance on dealing with your debts there is free advice offered by:

National Debtline

National Debtline is a charity who give free, confidential, and independent advice over the phone and online. Call them on **0808 808 4000** or visit their website for details of how to set up a webchat with an advisor. Download their 'How to deal with debt' guide on www.nationaldebtline.org

Advice NI

Advice NI offers free, confidential and impartial debt and money advice services at a range of outlets across NI and via a helpline and website. Its helps people manage their money and debt issues so they can take back control.

Freephone **0800 915 4604**

Email advice@adviceni.net

StepChange Debt Charity

StepChange Debt Charity has a helpline and website providing free and impartial debt help to people with debt problems

Freephone helpline **0800 138 1111**

(Monday to Friday from 8.00 am to 8.00 pm)

www.stepchange.org/debtadviceinNorthernIreland

Back on Track

The Insolvency Service of Ireland (ISI) is an independent government organisation set up to help sort out personal debt problems and help get people back on track.

www.backontrack.ie Freetext **GETHELP to 50015**



Secret SANTA?

Thanks, but no thanks

Politeness prevails, with four out of five (79%) refusing to admit they do not like their Secret Santa gift

Almost half (46%) of Secret Santa buyers confirm that they've purchased meaningful gifts for their recipient

Two in five (44%) confess that they have re-gifted their Secret Santa present, whilst a further 37% going as far to return their unloved gift

A quarter of the nation (25%) disclose that they think the secret gift-giving event is wasteful

On average Brits spend £12.16 on a Secret Santa gift so with the holiday season ramping up, merrymakers are once again in search for the perfect Secret Santa gift.



However, a recent survey conducted by Mastercard reveals the true secret of this long-standing tradition is that many don't get it right. Often efforts are wasted with trinkets being regifted, never used or ending up in the bin.

Knowing this, the leading payments brand has partnered with online retailer, Protect the Planet, which caters to those that want to give the gift of more meaningful and sustainable presents.

Together, they have created a curated 'Mastercard Edit' consisting of the top best-selling eco-friendly options. Available items include metal straws to bath bombs, hand cream and vinyl coasters, ranging from £3 to £15, so whatever you choose, you won't break the bank.

All gifts purchased on the site, as well as the gifts in the edit, from now until 21st December will contribute 5,000 trees being planted towards Mastercard's ongoing pledge with Conservation International through its Priceless Planet Coalition initiative.

With the average Brit spending £12.16 on Secret Santa gifts, Mastercard has discovered a generational divide when it comes to Secret Santa budgets with Gen Z willing to dig deeper than their older counterparts. 18-24 year-olds on average spend 40% more (£14.22) than typical baby boomers (£10.06), reflecting the attitudes Gen Z have towards gift giving and the festive period as they are willing to spend more than over 50s.

It's not just the generations that can't agree. Men (30%) are almost 50% more likely to think that Secret Santa is wasteful compared to women (21%). This is also likely to explain why men (17%) are twice as likely to ask for the receipt of their Secret Santa gift than women (8%).

Christina Lapsa, Co-owner of Protect the Planet said: *"We are excited to work with Mastercard to make gifting during the festive period more sustainable. COP26 showed us that global warming is a problem that the public care passionately about, making the partnership even more crucial. We hope to inspire the nation to continue to gift the people closest to them without having a destructive impact on the planet."*

To shop the Mastercard Edit, visit: www.protecttheplanet.co.uk/mastercardedit from now until 21st December to contribute 5,000 trees being planted.



Bramley Products 250ml Hand Cream

Lavender, geranium & petitgrain hand cream by Bramley Products. Highly absorbent, so it will not remain greasy on your hands! 100% naturally derived ingredients. Fully recyclable packaging. 250ml bottle. Cruelty free. Vegan friendly. Made in Britain. Enjoy luxury

skincare at home, everyday!
£14.99

Eco Warrior Mini Cube Soap Gift Pack

The perfect mini cube soap bundle for travel! Includes 4 Mini Eco Warrior Bars (Sensitive Facial, Shampoo, Exfoliating & Shaving). Each weighs 30g. The mini soap bundle also make a great way to try them out and fall in love!



These minis may be smaller in size, but they still bring a big punch, ensuring you can still enjoy these wonderful, luxury natural soaps when you're away from home too! The range is plant-based, 100% vegan, and cruelty and plastic-free. **£8.99**



Gin Growbar

Grow your own aromatic garnishes, with this Gin Growbar, perfect for any gin lover!

Contains lemon basil, cucumber & wild bergamot! Plant from March-June. Seeds in a bar of fertile coconut fibre. All packaging is 100% recyclable. Lovely eco gift for any gin fan! Coir is an eco-friendly coconut and sustainable alternative to peat. Made by The Gluttonous Gardener. **£11.99**



Keep Leaf Sandwich Bag with Geo Print

Say goodbye to cling film, sandwich bags and tin foil with this reusable

baggie. This reusable bag, complete with green geo print design is suitable for a sandwich, for taking snacks, crisps or other lunch items to work or on a picnic. Machine washable and dishwasher safe. Hand rinse. Cotton exterior with waterproof liner to keep food fresh. Velcro closure. **£5.99**



Mini Tones Straws

If you enjoy your drink with a straw but despise all the plastic waste, then these super cool coloured straws are a must-have reusable staple!

The stainless steel minis are made from eco-friendly, food-grade material, with a round-ended tip for additional comfort.

Coming in a set

of four in the colours of silver, gold, rose gold and iridescent, this set of four straws comes with its own cleaning brush too. So, throw away your plastic straws for the last time and feel good about drinking that Mai Tai! **£4.49**

MooPops Reusable Bottle Tops

Silicone lid to replace foil or cling film on your milk. These milk bottle lids will fit snugly on your glass milk bottles, helping to keep your milk fresher for longer.



Buy your milk in reusable glass bottles and reduce your kitchen's plastic waste, whilst supporting local dairy farmers. Reuse over-and-over, and make your kitchen more sustainable! Food grade silicone. Fridge safe. BPA free. **£4.99**

Notes A5 Notebook

Exclusive to protecttheplanet.co.uk, an A5 notebook with leaves & fern design. Containing 36 uncoated & recycled pages of 90gsm. 300gsm front cover made of



recycled material. All carbon created during production is offset by reforestation with the Woodland Trust. A nice and handy environmentally friendly jotter. **£3.49**

Orangutan Animal Socks

Which cheeky monkey are you getting these for? Lovely orangutan bamboo socks by Bare Kind. 10% of the manufacturers profits from the sale of these socks go to support the Orangutan Foundation.



Feel good and know you're doing good every morning you put these cute socks on. Available in a choice of two adult sizes.

Made from 65% viscose derived from bamboo, 18% polyamide, 15% cotton and 2% elastane. **£8.99**



Recycled Plant Labels

A set of 5 Eco-friendly plant marker labels made from recycled material. The plant labels are hand crafted in the UK, and feel very much like slate. Made from recycled plant pots. Very tough and long lasting, they come complete with a wax pencil. Ideal for marking all your spring seedlings, or ideal as herb markers - its never good to get your Parsley mixed up with your rosemary. A fantastic, recycled plant label.

As featured in 'Amateur Gardening Weekly'. Dimensions: 22cm x 2cm. **£7.99**

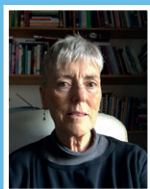


Murder in the Academy

Murder in the Academy is the first in a series of three murder mysteries, introducing Alice Fox as an understated sleuth with a passion for social justice.

*In the way of Georges Simenon, Stieg Larsson, Louise Penny, Agatha Christie and Robert Galbraith, **Murder in the Academy** is a detective story set in Belfast. It has a strong sense of place, significant women characters and an intelligent approach to solving a chilling murder mystery.*

Belfast in recovery

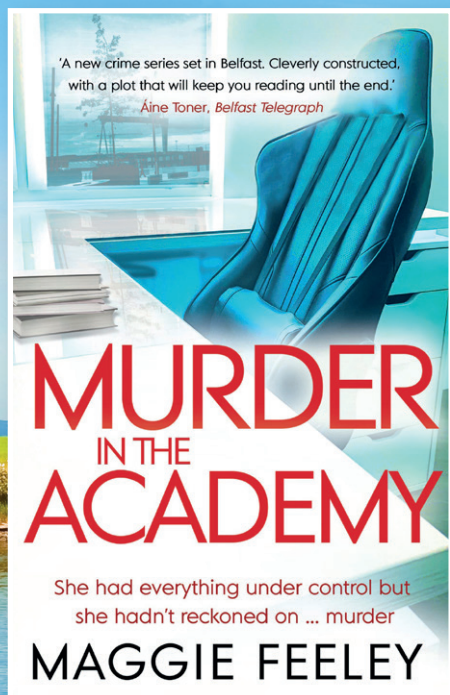


Murder in the Academy by Maggie Feeley is a classic murder mystery set in the fictitious Belfast City College, located in the regenerated Titanic Quarter - the icon of disaster

ironically reclaimed by optimism. The city that forms the backdrop for the gripping detective action is a post-Agreement Belfast rising out

of the ashes of its industrial past and slowly coming to terms with the legacy of the years of conflict. The Department of Peace and Reconciliation, known by its acronym - DePreC, is making international academic mileage out of its multidisciplinary study of post conflict situations.

A new professorship is proposed to manage the increasing numbers of international students who see DePreC as a study destination of choice, and the competition is toxic. But while the theory of peace and reconciliation is liberally articulated the practice is not so clearly in evidence. The worthy departmental image is then totally upset when DePreC becomes the site of a gruesome murder investigation. Is this everyday murder in the workplace another strange sign of a city in recovery?



Through the eyes of visiting US scholar, Alice Fox, we see Belfast anew as it struggles to shed its history of division and sectarianism. Detective turned academic, she works with those who have been pushed to the margins by harmful, deep-rooted systemic inequalities. When murder comes to DePreC, Alice Fox finds herself distracted from her community study of restorative justice and drawn into old patterns of when she was a detective in Lowell PD, Massachusetts.

Alongside Caroline Paton of the Belfast Murder Squad, Alice plays a key support role in the investigation. She is the low-key, thoughtful collaborator who is instrumental in solving the murder mystery. In the background, Belfast epitomises the post conflict situation where unresolved animosities, evident in communities divided by sectarianism, can quickly flare into violence. Its people are friendly and helpful to strangers but the painful remnants of the past are visible everywhere on the walls and in the stubborn signs of division between poor communities. Together, the partnership of detective and scholar unravels a tangled web of deception surrounding a chilling murder.

Eminent feminist historian,
Margaret Ward
put it like this:

"We see the shiny new buildings, the miracle of the transformation of the Titanic quarter, but we also travel to the Falls Road and meet those who have not been beneficiaries of the partial prosperity that has come with peace. And Maggie gives us a grounded, utterly authentic portrayal of alienated young people in the EXIT project, whose experiences of reality are brilliantly articulated and contrasted with the theories expounded by the academics".

Murder in the Academy, launched as part of the Poolbeg Crimson series, strives to capture the complexity of life in twenty first century Northern Ireland. The reality of the worst atrocities of war is gradually disappearing into the past but behind a cautious everyday normality there are still too many harmful social and political elements at work. Maybe what we learn is that murder is just the most obvious and immediate crime against people that has to be solved. There are less obvious, equally destructive forces still to be reckoned with before there can be any real peace.

'A new crime series set in Belfast. Cleverly constructed, with a plot that will keep you reading until the end.'

Áine Toner, Belfast Telegraph.

 **BUY NOW** 



Christmas Cocktails

Christmas wouldn't be complete without a winter warmup cocktail - the ones that remind you of the season and that you only enjoy at this time of year. Two of our favourites are given here but you can easily modify to make your cocktail a 'mocktail'.

Please remember to drink responsibly!





Classic Mulled Wine

Ingredients

750ml bottle of good red wine
1 large cinnamon stick
2 star anise
4 cloves
2 strips lemon zest
4 tbsp caster sugar

Method

STEP 1: Put the red wine, cinnamon, star anise, cloves, lemon zest and sugar in a large pan. Cook on a low heat for roughly 10 minutes.

STEP 2: Remove from the heat and cool, leaving to infuse for about 30 minutes.

STEP 3: To serve, heat without boiling, stir in the sloe gin (if using, see tip below) and pour into mugs or heatproof glasses.

ADD SLOE GIN! For an extra punch, try stirring in 100ml of sloe gin, in the final step when warming your mulled wine.

TO DECORATE: Decorate with fresh cranberries, cinnamon sticks and slices of fresh oranges.



Classic Eggnog

Ingredients

1 vanilla pod
4 eggs, separated
100ml double cream
500ml whole milk

100ml sugar syrup (500g caster sugar and 500 ml water in a saucepan and bring to a low heat, allowing the sugar to dissolve. Leave until cold and store in fridge).

100-150ml brandy/whiskey/rum - whatever your favourite tippie may be.

Method

STEP 1: Split the vanilla pod and scrap the seeds into a large bowl. Add the egg yolks and sugar syrup, and beat with an electric whisk until pale, about 2-3 mins. Add the cream, milk and alcohol, and beat again until just combined. Strain into a punch bowl.

STEP 2: Beat the egg whites to soft peaks. Fold a third of the whipped egg whites into the milk and cream mixture in the punch bowl before adding the remaining whipped egg whites. Gently fold these in until the eggnog is fluffy and smooth. Chill until ready to serve and then pour over plenty of ice.



Charlene White

Charlene White embarked on a deeply personal journey to uncover the roots of her connection to the British Empire in a bid to find out if we can ever truly emerge from its shadow.

She travelled across Britain and Jamaica on a genealogy journey to investigate her own heritage and the relationship between the Empire and her family. By piecing together broken familial records and going back in time to the very start of the British Empire, Charlene made some surprising discoveries about how the British Empire has shaped her family's lives and asks what it is to be Black and British.

Watch 'Charlene White: Empires Child' on ITV Hub



How did the documentary come about?

My aunt Eleanor had been looking into our family history but had reached a point where she just couldn't get any more information past a William Stanbury, who was her great grandfather. Purely by chance, ITV contacted me to see if I was interested in looking into my family history and it seemed like the perfect project to be involved in. When I called my aunt to say that I was probably going to do this, she just squealed down the phone and burst into tears, because she was just so happy.

We follow your journey of discovering your family history, but how much did you know before filming?

We knew about a William Stanbury. My grandad died when I was pregnant with my son and so I couldn't go over to Jamaica for the funeral. My aunt, my sister, my dad, my brother and my grandad's family from America all went to the funeral.

Until then we didn't have any idea that we had a massive contingent in America. That's when I realised we are part of something a lot bigger. It got my aunt thinking, where is it that we come from exactly and how did his family end up with some in America, some in Jamaica and some in the UK? Where did that happen and where did that come from?

The one person who my aunt could have got a lot of information from was my grandad. He was no longer around to ask those questions of and so the journey began.

Your search took a bit of a surprising turn when your first destination was Devon. Was that just one of many surprises to come? Did you have to prepare yourself for the unknown?

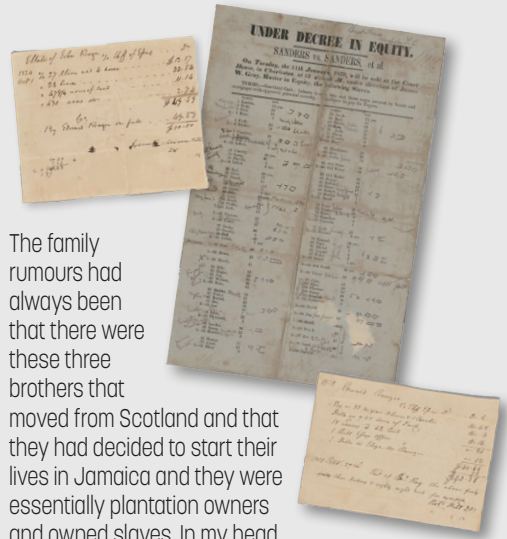
I think I started it very much from a journalistic perspective, because I'm a journalist and have been for 20 years, half my life. I think you can tell in the film the point at which I realise that actually it's not a journey of a story that I'm telling about someone else. This is the story of me.

And this is the story of my brother. And this is a story of my sister. It was midway through filming this that that really started hitting my heart.

The family rumours had always been that there were these three brothers that moved from Scotland and that they had decided to start their lives in Jamaica and they were essentially plantation owners and owned slaves. In my head I thought oh my gosh, we are Scottish - imagine if we owned a whiskey distillery and are going to come into money. Then that didn't really come to fruition and yes I was slightly disappointed! These narratives seem to take on a world of their own, because usually there's no way of proving or disproving that. Then realising that the William Stanbury that we thought we'd found in Devon, wasn't there and he actually was born in Jamaica.

We were extremely lucky to have access to records. We worked alongside genealogists here, in America and in Jamaica. They were very surprised just how far back we were able to go. When it came to the Empire, when countries became free and gained their independence, many records were destroyed and a lot of proof in terms of the realities of living within the Empire with them.

To be able to go as far back as we were able to really did surprise a lot of the genealogists and I didn't think they'd be able to go as far back to find out where the Stanbury name came from. That really did hit me and it was very interesting to find out more about those members of my family that were born into slavery. And about the members of my family that became freed slaves and what they chose to do with their life once they became free. There was a point at which all the emotions hit me like a 10 ton truck. I just crumbled at that point which was very unlike me.





Do you feel you became more connected to your family and their past?

I think I was determined not to get hugely connected to it because I just thought it's a massive cliché to get really upset about my own family history. I'm a journalist, we don't do that - and then I did. I would really encourage people to find out as much as they can about their family history from their older generations before they go because they've got a wealth of information in their brains. Once that goes, being able to find that out and the ability to tell that story will be gone.

I would plea for everyone to sit down and have some amazing conversations with their grandparents and great grandparents if they're lucky enough to still have them and jot down notes. At some point in time, when you get a bit older like me and my aunt, you will want to know. You can pretend that it's not important until the cows come home, but at some point in time when we're trying to figure out more about ourselves and who we are the people that can answer those questions will be gone.

Your auntie does get quite emotional meeting Albert Johnson, who helped your family when they first arrived. How did you find it?

For her it was very emotional because the reason why my grandparents were able to have a home in London, and to be able to have my mum and my uncles come over from Jamaica to join them, was because of Mr. Johnson renting my grandparents

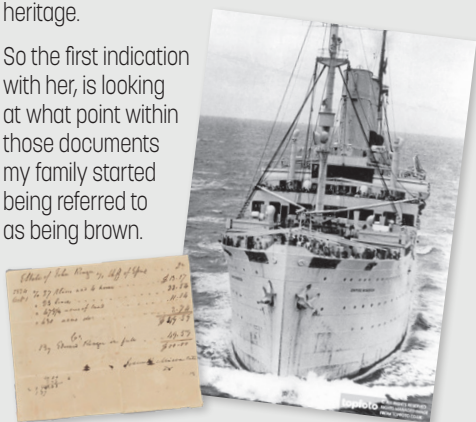
that room. Auntie Eleanor had not stepped foot in that house for over 50 years and as soon as Mr Johnson opened that door and auntie Eleanor glimpsed inside, she just said to me, it's exactly the same. Exactly the same, from the carpet, to the wallpaper, to the banister, to her bedroom and she didn't expect that. My aunt is very much like me and panic almost set in with her, where she wasn't quite sure what to do or what to say, she was just in shock. I held her hand as we were walking around upstairs, because she just couldn't believe it.

Immigrants that move here have each other's back. And at a moment in time when the government were encouraging banks not to lend immigrants money, they had to look after themselves. People like Mr Johnson are why that generation were able to thrive. Someone else did it for Mr Johnson, so that he could buy somewhere and help another family, and there would have been someone before them, and someone before them. That's the only reason why so many immigrants were able to thrive and grow and build foundations here - because they looked after themselves, and they looked after each other.

What did you find out about your family from Professor Catherine Hall?

Talking to Catherine Hall, who I can say is just incredible and her knowledge is amazing, is the first indication that we had, in an official document, talking about a family member of mine that has brown skin. So when they spoke about somebody having brown skin in those official documents is essentially talking about them being of mixed heritage.

So the first indication with her, is looking at what point within those documents my family started being referred to as being brown.



So we knew the brother and sister - I think it was William and Mary - were of brown skin but then we didn't know who their parents were. Was one of their parents White British? At that point we just didn't know. But that was the first indication of concrete information regarding when my family started being referred to as brown, as mixed heritage. And back then, it was whether you were mixed in terms of black and white parents, or having one parent that's of mixed heritage, and the other one being black, and it was the first time that we were really able to have a look at that.

And what Dr Catherine Hall was able to put into context, is the detachments that we had here in Britain regarding the slave trade and the work that my family would have been doing as slaves - producing goods that then came over here and were brought into those docks at the docklands - she was able to really put those things into context for me.

What was your connection to slavery in your ancestry? Were you surprised and how do you feel about it?

A slave owner is a slave owner, a plantation owner is just that. I do not sign up to the belief that there are good slave owners or there are bad slave owners - they are slave owners. They used people as goods, as products to be used and to be abused and to be treated in the most inhumane manner.

Finding out about John Stanbury and finding out his connection to my family - knowing that he is within my family - it's a lot to get your head round. As a result of the John Stanbury's of the world I have no idea where in West Africa my family originate from. I have no idea what villages they come from. I have no idea how many of them didn't survive that journey coming over from West Africa. The most pristine documents in order to be able to find out about slave history comes from stock take forms, an official document that shows how many slaves they've lost over that past year - those that have died, those that have been killed. They had to have a stock take because they were produce. They kept pristine documents of their produce and that's the reason why we know that John Stanbury is where the name comes from -

is because he kept pristine plantation stock take documents of the human beings he owned. How do you get your head around that?

Everything was taken away from my family, for all I know, my family could have had these amazing homes somewhere in West Africa where they had a great life, they were self-sufficient, they had their own land - they could have had all these things which were ripped away from them and they had to start again. I think it's difficult for people to understand what impact that can have on a family. Everything was taken away. Even the stuff they built while they were slaves - they took all of that away as well and started from the very bottom. It's made me even prouder of my family than I think I was already.

How do you feel about the whole process and what do you take away from it?

I think it's that finding home within your heart is not as easy as it seems, understanding where home is - especially when you're from an immigrant family - it's not easy to define in any shape or form. And knowing and understanding what's in your heart is not an easy process. I think anyone who comes from somewhere else - which could be from within the UK - you could move from Scotland to London and live in London your whole life and Scotland will probably always be in your heart. You could move from South Africa to London, from New Zealand to London, and live in London for the majority of your life but that's not necessarily what's in your heart. And I think that is what I've learnt above all else is that those things are not easily defined at all. Where you physically are and where your heart is can sometimes be two completely different places.



Saint Sister

Morgana MacIntyre (Belfast) and Gemma Doherty (Derry) first met at Trinity College, Dublin in 2014. Both had graduated from the same college that summer and stayed in the city to pursue music; MacIntyre was working in a bookshop and Doherty was teaching harp and piano. They had known of each other, through mutual friends, but not well. Over the years, they watched each other play from afar, once competing against each other in a battle of the bands, and later singing different Gorillaz songs on the same night with their college orchestra.



Gemma studied music composition; a multi-instrumentalist, she had aspirations of becoming a film composer. Exposed to a mix of classical and traditional music as a young child, and later playing in Irish folk bands, she found herself becoming disillusioned with performing whilst studying composition.

Towards the end of college she was drawn back to her first instrument, the harp, and rekindled a love for it through her experimentation with effects and electronics. Inspired by composers like Steve Reich, she began to create self-contained soundscapes with the harp at the centre.

By contrast, MacIntyre has always been a songwriter. As a child she developed an obsession with lyrics, spending her formative years stopping and starting her cassette player in order to transcribe the words to her favourite songs. Absorbing the prophetic words of Joni Mitchell and Leonard Cohen, she began writing herself, cutting her teeth on Belfast's open mic circuit.

In college, she released music under her own name and started to garner early recognition. Praise from Snow Patrol's Gary Lightbody & Joan Armatrading established her as one to watch, but she soon became frustrated by the limitations of working alone and went in search of a collaborator.

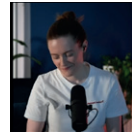
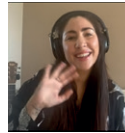
Chatting over coffee it quickly became apparent that they were hoping to build something similar.

Between Morgan's lyrics and Gemma's soundscapes, their voices met right in the middle. Having both moved to Dublin at the same time, to find the same thing, their shared experience cemented their friendship and in 2018 their debut album 'Shape of Silence' was met with critical acclaim and was nominated for the Choice Music Prize.

Acapella is definitely one of their main and distinct sounds which was in evidence when they performed their version of Dreams by the Cranberries at the funeral of the murdered journalist Lyra McKee in Derry in 2019, which they later recorded for Safe Ireland to highlight the rising prevalence of domestic abuse during lockdown.

In November of this year they won best album at the NI Music Prize Awards.

In 2020 a collective of Irish female artists, including Saint Sister, came together to raise desperately needed support for Safe Ireland, helping women and children living in crisis. This is a cover of "Dreams" by The Cranberries.

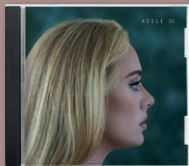


[Click here](#)

vevo



Music Rocks



30

Adele

What can I say? She's done it again. Another powerful and soul searching album, which, on first listening

may come across as a little depressing and self indulgent but is ultimately thought provoking and challenging. It actually may be her best album to date but who knows because she just seems, like a fine wine, to age perfectly.



Red (Taylor's Version)
Taylor Swift

She was only 22 when the original Red was produced. It was seen as being

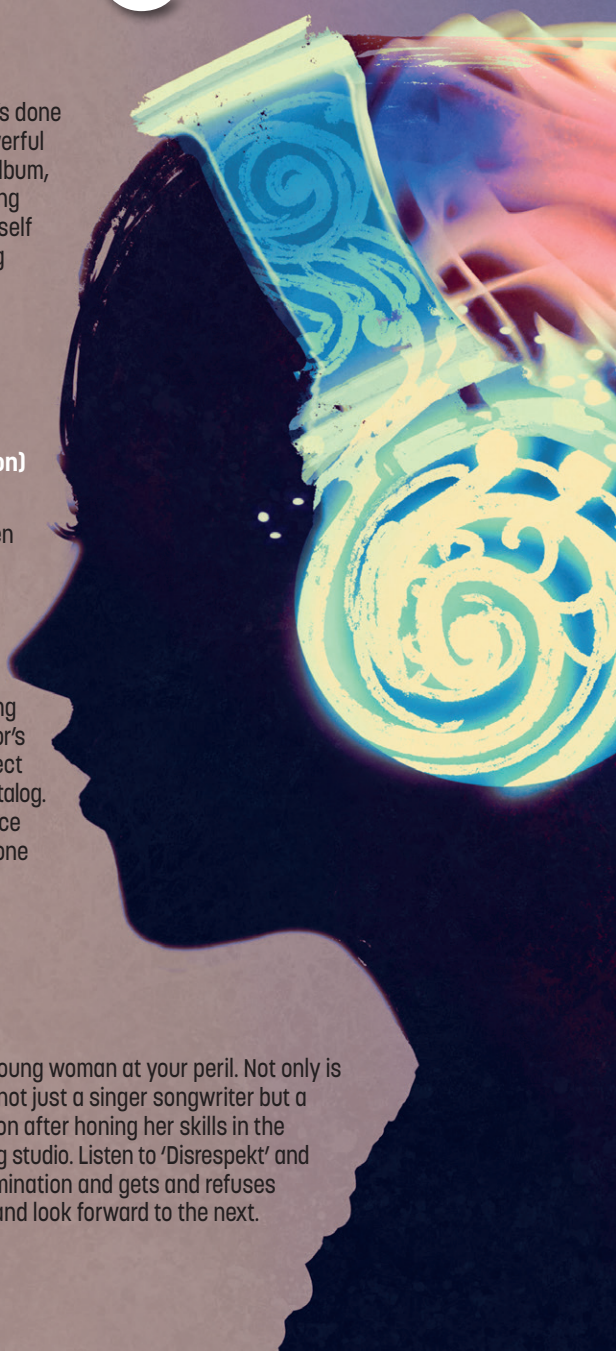
mediocre by the critics of the time and it did mark a transition from country-lite to pop and coincided with her personal life being thrown into the public stratosphere. Red (Taylor's Version) is the latest in her re-recording project in an effort to regain control over her music catalog. The 2021 version highlights her maturing voice which is stronger than ever before and I for one am delighted with the 30 track remix.



Kali Claire
A Man's World

Underestimate this young woman at your peril. Not only is she super talented - not just a singer songwriter but a real force in production after honing her skills in the professional recording studio. Listen to 'Disrespekt' and

you'll realise that she's a woman with determination and gets and refuses to be pigeon-holed. Loved this debut album and look forward to the next.





Tori Amos **Ocean to Ocean**

This is the sixteenth studio album by the American singer-songwriter, written

while in lockdown in Cornwall where she now lives. It's haunting and reflective and digs deep into the grief she experienced when her mother died in 2019, the unfolding pandemic malaise and the 6th January resurrection. It's an earthy elemental sound which transports me back in time when I first heard her debut album 'Little Earthquakes' back in 1992.



Raise The Roof **Alison Krauss and Robert Plant**

As good as, perhaps even better, than Raising Sand which

the duo released back in 2007. I'm not quite sure how these two artists can marry Bluegrass, Country and Rock but they do - and they do it so well!



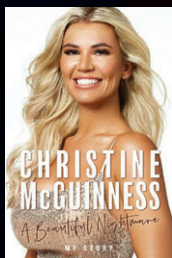
I Dream of Christmas **Norah Jones**

Everyone has one - a Christmas album that is. Now the

9-time GRAMMY-winning singer, songwriter, and pianist has released her first-ever holiday album with I Dream Of Christmas, a delightful and comforting collection of timeless seasonal favourites and some originals that build on the joy and togetherness that we all hope will be Christmas 2021.



Book Reviews



A Beautiful Nightmare **Christine McGuinness**

This is Christine's first book, where she tells the world her life story for the very first time. As well as outlining the difficulties and joys of being a mother to three autistic

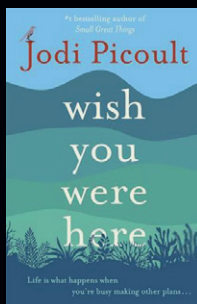
children, the autobiography delves into her anorexia battle, fertility troubles, her marriage, modelling career and tough childhood, subjects which are sensitive and many of which she hasn't spoken about before.



Manifesto **Bernardine Evaristo**

Bernardine Evaristo's life story is a manifesto for courage, integrity, optimism, resourcefulness and tenacity. It's a manifesto for anyone

who has ever stood on the margins, and anyone who wants to make their mark on history. It's a manifesto for being unstoppable.



Wish You Were Here **Jodi Picoult**

Diana O'Toole's life is going perfectly to plan. At twenty-nine, she's up for promotion to her dream job as an art specialist at Sotheby's and she's about to fly to the Galápagos but

once she's in the Galápagos, the world shuts down around her due to Covid-19, leaving Diana stranded.

Completely isolated, with only intermittent news from the outside world, Diana finds herself examining everything that has brought her to this point and wondering if there's a better way to live.

But not everything is as it seems...

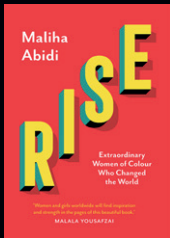


A Three Dog Problem **S. J. Bennett**

Queen Elizabeth II is having a royal nightmare.

A referendum divides the nation, a tumultuous election grips the United States - and the body of a staff member is found

dead beside Buckingham Palace swimming pool. Is it a tragic accident, as the police think? Or is something more sinister going on? Her Majesty looks for answers, after all, though the staff and public may not realise it, she is the keenest sleuth among them. Sometimes, it takes a Queen's eye to see connections where no one else can...



Rise - Extraordinary Women of Colour Who Changed the World **Maliha Abidi**

Rise celebrates the inspirational stories of 100 remarkable women of colour. From the

entrepreneur with a homemade marmalade business who went on to found Women's World Banking, to the educator who built the first university in the world; and from the athlete who fled civil war on a sinking boat and then swam in the Olympics, to the first Black female astronaut, these trailblazers have risen above challenges to reach dizzying heights.



We Should All Be Millionaires **Rachel Rodgers**

Only 10 percent of the world's millionaires are women, making it difficult for women to wield the economic power that

will create lasting equality. Whatever is s topping you from having seven figures in the bank - whether it's shaky confidence, knowledge gaps when it comes to wealth building tactics, imposter syndrome, a janky mindset about money (it's okay, we've all been there!), or simply not knowing where to begin - this book shows you how to clear every obstacle in your way, show up, and glow up.



One Hundred Years of Lenin & Margo **Marianne Cronin**

Life is short.

No-one knows that better than seventeen-year-old Lenni living on a hospital ward. But as she is about to learn,

it's not only what you make of life that matters, but who you share it with. When she bumps into 83 year old rebel-hearted Margot their bond is instant and their stories funny and tender.

An extraordinary friendship. A lifetime of stories. Their last one begins here.



Soulwork **Elizabeth Radcliffe**

This is a deeply personal account of a one woman journey to find a more meaningful life.

Whether you fall done of the side of science or religion or neither, this book offers you the tools you need to investigate further.

Click each book cover for more details.

Different

Caroline Parkes - Taken from her new book, A Crying Shame

I can only wonder
What the world would be to be to me
If I had been the person
That life set me up to be
If I hadn't had to challenge
What so many would agree
Is how I would be better
If I'd sought conformity

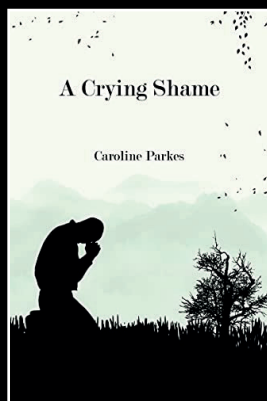
If life had just acknowledged
In a way I understood
That I am just a person
Who is humble, kind and good
Then I'd be so different
I would now be living free
Instead of being imprisoned
In some crass hypocrisy

Where people offer platitudes
Declare an open mind
Then leave behind an attitude
That's cruel and unkind

All I ask, is see me
For the person that I am
Don't force me to exist within
Some soulless, empty, sham

I'm proud of what God made me
I'm how I'm meant to be
I cannot hide the simple truth
That I'm made differently
The freedom that I wanted
Seems too much for some to give
And so I have to contemplate
Just how I want to live

To live amongst the shadows
To be soulless and unknown
Or stand and face the future
Claim tomorrow as my own
I think I'll face the future
For it's those who choose to fight
That change the world's perception
Of what's wrong, and what's right



WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE WORLD, AS WE KNOW IT?

These are questions that Caroline Parkes is asking in her poetry. Everything she writes is aimed at making people think about the world around us, the problems we face today, the difficulties we are leaving behind for our children.

She believes that we can still make a difference if we pull together, understand that we are owed nothing that we have not contributed to, and try our absolute best to remedy the dreadful harm that we have created.

Not just to the environment, but for the next generation, who, she believes, have been dealt a very bad hand.

Her mantra about the western world is that we are experiencing 'the end of an empire'. Whether that is for good, or bad, only time will tell.





Northern Ireland
Executive

LET'S KEEP
MOVING
FORWARD
SAFELY

MEETING INDOORS? LET FRESH AIR IN

**WE ALL
MUST DO IT
TO GET
THROUGH IT**



KEEP
DISTANCE



WEAR FACE
COVERING



WASH
HANDS



FRESH
AIR

Follow the public health advice even after you're vaccinated.

nidirect.gov.uk/coronavirus

A.A.A.D.D.

Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder

*For those of you who don't get this, you will. Your day is coming...
Recently I was diagnosed with A.A.A.D.D. - Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder.
This is how it manifests:*

I decide to water my garden. As I turn on the hose in the driveway, I look over at my car and decide it needs washing.

As I start toward the garage, I notice the postman and take my mail off him

I decide to go through the mail before I wash the car.

I lay my car keys on the table, put the junk mail in the bin under the table and notice that the bin is full.

So, I decide to put the bills back on the table and take out the bin first.

But then I think, since the post box is at the end of the street and I'm going outside anyway, I may as well pay the bills first.

I take my cheque book out of my handbag and see that there is only one cheque left.

My extra cheques are in my desk in the study, so I go to my desk where I find the can of Coke I'd been drinking earlier.

I'm going to look for my cheques, but first I need to push the Coke aside so that I don't accidentally knock it over.

The Coke is getting warm, and I decide to put it in the refrigerator to keep it cold.

As I head toward the kitchen with the Coke, a vase of flowers on the counter catches my eye - they need water.

I put the Coke on the counter and discover my reading glasses that I've been searching for all morning.

I decide I better put them back on my desk, but first I'm going to water the flowers.

I set the glasses back down on the counter, fill a container with water and suddenly spot the TV remote.

Someone left it on the kitchen table.

I realise that tonight when we go to watch TV, I'll be looking for the remote, but I won't remember that it's on the kitchen table, so I decide to put it back in the living room where it belongs, but first I'll water the flowers.



I pour some water in the flowers, but quite a bit spills on the floor.

So, I set the remote back on the table, get some towels and wipe up the spill.

Then I head down the hall trying to remember what I was planning to do

At the end of the day: the car isn't washed, the bills aren't paid, there is a warm can of Coke sitting on the counter, the flowers don't have enough water, there is still only one cheque in my cheque book, I can't find the remote, I can't find my glasses and I don't remember what

I did with the car keys. Then when I try to figure out why nothing got done today, I'm really baffled because I know I was busy all day, and I'm really tired.

I realise that this is a serious problem, and I'll try to get some information about it off the Internet, but first I'll check my email.

Don't laugh. If this isn't you yet, your day is coming!

Remember... Growing older is mandatory, growing up is optional and laughing at yourself is therapeutic.



Discounted Travel @

igo

✉ gowithigo@gmail.com

🌐 www.gowithigo.com

f www.facebook.com/gowithigo

🐦 twitter.com/gowithigo

📷 www.instagram.com/gowithigo/

Please scan the above on your phone to open exclusive discounted offers...

**Car Hire • Cruises
Flights • Hotels
Adventure Days Out**

igo

Pause for Thought

IF I HAD MY LIFE TO LIVE OVER

by Erma Bombeck

(written after she found out she was dying from cancer)

I would have gone to bed when I was sick instead of pretending the earth would go into a holding pattern if I weren't there for the day.

I would have burned the pink candle sculpted like a rose before it melted in storage.

I would have talked less and listened more.

I would have invited friends over to dinner even if the carpet was stained, or the sofa faded.

I would have eaten the popcorn in the 'good' living room and worried much less about the dirt when someone wanted to light a fire in the fireplace.

I would have taken the time to listen to my grandfather ramble about his youth.

I would have shared more of the responsibility carried by my husband.

I would never have insisted the car windows be rolled up on a summer day because my hair had just been teased and sprayed.

I would have sat on the lawn with my grass stains.

I would have cried and laughed less while watching television and more while watching life.

I would never have bought anything just because it was practical, wouldn't show soil, or was guaranteed to last a lifetime.

Instead of wishing away nine months of pregnancy, I'd have cherished every moment and realised that the wonderment growing inside me was the only chance in life to assist God in a miracle.

When my kids kissed me impetuously, I would never have said, "Later. Now go get washed up for dinner."

There would have been more "I love you's, more "I'm sorry's."

But mostly, given another shot at life, I would seize every minute... look at it and really see it, live it and never give it back.

Stop sweating the small stuff.

Don't worry about who doesn't like you, who has more, or who's doing what. Instead, let's cherish the relationships we have with those who do love us.

Let's think about what God has blessed us with. And what we are doing each day to promote ourselves mentally, physically, emotionally.

I hope you all have a blessed day.

Erma Bombeck was an American humourist who achieved great popularity for her syndicated newspaper humour column describing suburban home life. She died in 1996, aged 69, from complications following a kidney operation.





Northern Ireland
Executive

LET'S KEEP
MOVING
FORWARD
SAFELY

KEEP WASHING YOUR HANDS

**WE ALL
MUST DO IT
TO GET
THROUGH IT**



KEEP
DISTANCE



WEAR FACE
COVERING



WASH
HANDS



FRESH
AIR

Follow the public health advice even after you're vaccinated.

nidirect.gov.uk/coronavirus

TEL.: +44 028 686 33300
EMAIL.: WWW.LUSTYBEGISLAND.COM

Lusty Beg

AN
ISLAND
APART

