

2020  
V

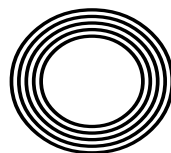
HOW TO  
UPCYCLE  
*your lampshade*

HAS YOUR  
HOROSCOPE  
CHANGED?

MARKING 80 YEARS SINCE  
*the Battle of Britain*

Andi  
PETERS

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At the time of print all content in **VISION** was relevant and up to date according to COVID-19 government guidelines

# Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**Rayleigh. It's fair to say we've all undergone a significant process of self-reflection over the past few months - we've probably altered our views a

little on ourselves and those around us - hopefully, overall, for the better.

Personally, during lockdown, I found it was a great time to hit the reset button and look at what I loved about my life and what I was grateful for, but also what I would like to change. Some of us fell back in love with fitness during lockdown, albeit running or our daily walks, some watched nostalgic TV and films from our childhood or younger years, others connected with hobbies or interests we may have let life get in the way of doing more frequently, such as drawing, writing or some other skill.

Human beings are reflective, sentimental, sometimes even soppy creatures; but through all the challenges we face - and we have confronted many this year - our true purpose, for our friends, family, for society and, mostly, for ourselves, is to keep looking forward, keep building, keep growing. That's how life works.

By all means, gaze over that postcard from a wet week in Brighton in 1998 - good, happy, probably simpler times. But remember, truly respecting the past means focusing on building your future, and right now that's something we all need to do.

Until next month, take care of yourself and each other.

*Nik*



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# THE KINGS of the castle

Celebrating 30 years together, Ant and Dec remain at the top table of British entertainment... which may come in handy for this year's *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here*.

From spotty lads in Ellesse jumpers, baggy jeans and Fila trainers skulking their way round the streets of Newcastle, Ant and Dec's rise to becoming the modern-day majesties of light entertainment has been unparalleled.

Now, 30 years after Anthony McPartlin and Declan Donnelly first met on the set of kids' BBC drama *Byker Grove* – a series based around a tatty youth club and the life events of its members – the duo are celebrating the three-decade milestone by swapping the Australian jungle for a couple of weeks bolted up in a haunted castle.

The coronavirus outbreak has made even the most basic travel arrangements complicated, and as for transporting a film crew and a selection of celebrities halfway around the world... forget it. So rather than give up entirely on a television experience that is one of the keystones of ITV's autumn output, the show's producers have kept things much closer to home, with Gwrych Castle in Wales providing the base for what will be a unique spin on the *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here* format.

With an experience that will be less bugs and more bumps in the night, the 200-year-old Conwy residence has a chequered history, one that its presenters are certain to work to their advantage in their own inimitable style.

The ghost of Countess of the Dundonald is said to prowls the castle ruins, with reports detailing the outline of an angry woman dressed in white. And during the Second World War, the castle housed 200 Jewish refugee children who had made it to Wales having fled the Nazis.

The much anticipated Bushtucker Trials will find themselves transformed this year, with the as yet unrevealed celebrities undertaking ghastly gothic, mind-bendingly medieval and ruggedly ruined challenges.

For Gwrych Castle, which has regularly been threatened with closure and was saved by the campaigning efforts of a 12-year-old boy back in 1997 when he wrote to then-Prime Minister Tony Blair, it is an incredible rebirth, and one that is hoped will protect its future.

As for what is to come for Britain's favourite presenting duo, anything is possible. Ant and Dec have ridden the waves of success for so long, the spotlight has become second nature. That means when controversy does arrive – notably the playing out of Ant's personal troubles over the past couple of years – the duo have stuck together in much the same way as they did when PJ and Duncan first buddied up way back in 1990.

"I think it's clear now we are going to be side by side until the day we die, like it or not," Declan commented recently. "People look at the shows and the awards, but what we have is friendship, respect and an affection that only comes between two best mates. We both feel very lucky."





# HORROR-scope

IF YOU'RE A SCORPIO, BAD NEWS COULD BE ON THE WAY, WITH A 13TH SIGN OF THE ZODIAC COMING INTO PLAY.

NASA's apparent 'discovery' of a 13th star sign has created furore in the astrology world... if you'll excuse the pun. From way back, 3,000 years ago, when the Babylonians created the zodiac chart, we have always recognised 12 star signs or constellations, representing the 12 months of the calendar.

In recent times – aided by the Twitterati wind-up merchants – a 13th sign has come to the fore: Ophiuchus, the serpent-bearer. Recognising this, with a proposed window of between November 29 and December 17, has meant true Scorpions now have a timeframe of just seven days, beginning on November 23.

Worse news is to follow, with the revelation that because constellations have shifted so much in the time since the Ancient Greeks first threw together a chart of the skies, the dates of all the other star signs have changed too, as follows:

**CAPRICORN:** January 20 – February 16

**AQUARIUS:** February 16 – March 11

**PISCES:** March 11 – April 18

**ARIES:** April 18 – May 13

**TAURUS:** May 13 – June 21

**GEMINI:** June 21 – July 20

**CANCER:** July 20 – August 10

**LEO:** August 10 – September 16

**VIRGO:** September 16 – October 30

**LIBRA:** October 30 – November 23

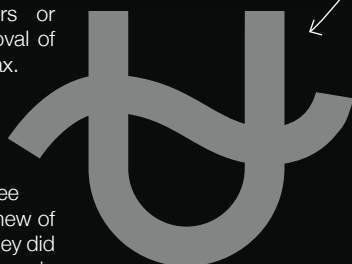
**SCORPIO:** November 23 – November 29

**OPHIUCHUS:** November 29 – December 17

**SAGITTARIUS:** December 17 – January 20

Yet before you rip up your posters or begin laser removal of that tattoo, relax. NASA's 'new discovery' is anything but – even Ancient Greeks from three millennia back knew of Ophiuchus, as they did another eight stars in the sky that could legitimately have been included on the zodiac. Simply, some appear much less prominently in the sky, so only the largest 12 were chosen.

And the shifting of dates? Well, astrology is a very personal thing, and whether we follow a star sign of what we once were or what we are now, it makes little difference – we are all invested in this existence, and no matter what star sign we are, none of us is getting out of here alive!



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# SHOWTIME

for your DIY

Gone are the days of cheap interior design shows produced on a shoestring budget – TV DIY these days is big business and even bigger impact.

## INTERIOR DESIGN MASTERS

Fearne Cotton is the perfect foil for a show that delves into the personal stories of the amateur designers featured, even if the end assessments can be brutal. The aim is to win a major design contract, and because of that the tasks are on the edgier side, from minimalism to brutalism to over-the-top floweriness.

## ABSTRACT: THE ART OF DESIGN

An intense watch that really delves into the elements of design and form, this Netflix series tours a number of salubrious destinations (from Soho House to Michelin-starred restaurants) in search of not just the art of design, but also how structure and form works to create something that fulfils a purpose, both in provision and comfort.

## AMAZING INTERIORS

From indoor roller coasters to secret bedrooms and cinemas in the basement, *Amazing Interiors* looks behind the door of supposedly ordinary homes to find inspiring spaces lurking.

## GRAND DESIGNS

Arguably the most popular design programme of the past decade, host Kevin McCloud MBE is the perfect master of ceremonies in overseeing renovations across a lengthy time period that often – though not always – go to plan.

## THE GREAT INTERIOR DESIGN CHALLENGE

While the producers of this show may have been short of a catchy title, they more than make up for it with a vast array of brilliant platforms on which contestant designers work their magic – from 17th-century cottages to seaside villas and Victorian terraces.

## TIDYING UP WITH MARIE KONDO

No matter what style guide you apply to your living space, without tidiness and a desire to remove the clutter, you'll quickly have something resembling chaos. Step in Marie Kondo, the queen of declutter, and a show that offers a bevy of brilliant tips for keeping your home in great shape.







# SHRED IT or FILE IT?

*Documents: what to keep and what to shred*

While moving so much of our lives online means the amount of paper we have to deal with is perhaps not as great as it once was, it's still very easy to get swamped by documents, forms, booklets and more.

Here's a simple guide to what you should be keeping and what can be satisfyingly put through the shredder:

- > **Home documents:** This includes everything from your car logbook (V5C) to building and contents insurance printouts, house deeds, mortgage statements, vehicle records and any rental agreements. These should be kept for as long as they are valid. Utility bills should be kept for a year.
- > **Personal documents:** Birth and marriage documents obviously sit high up on this list and should be kept forever; but consider as well life insurance, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates, medical records, driver's licence and pension details. These should be kept for as long as they are valid.
- > **Financial documents:** These include National Insurance cards, which should always be kept, to tax affairs and recent bank and credit card statements, even if you access these online. Financial documents should be accessible for seven years, but taking this online means your provider can store them rather than you.

For the most part you should now be able to shred anything else, but if you've something you're uncertain of, by all means hold on to it until your next sort-out.

The important thing is to keep hold of what's still relevant and rid yourself of what isn't. On that note, it's a good idea to keep some documents for a year after you dispose of the thing it relates to – for instance, a rented car – in case you need to check back for the purpose of a tax return, or similar.

And it's a good idea too to go back over all paperwork every now and again. Some personal effects that were important then may now be outdated, and keeping your documents organised and up to date is vital.

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# Love YOUR LAMPSHADES

If lockdown has unleashed your inner craft fiend, you won't be able to wait to get stuck into the following ideas for transforming any uninspiring and unimaginative lampshades you have lying around the house. Be prepared to be amazed.

## FABULOUS FABRIC

One of the simplest ways to change a lampshade so that it matches the rest of a room's décor is by covering it with fabric. All you need to do is purchase enough fabric in your chosen colour or pattern or, if you are feeling particularly thrifty, you can use a selection of different scrap fabrics that you already have, and then glue it around your shade using an adhesive spray.



## WONDROUS WALLPAPER

If you have recently decorated one of the rooms in your home or added a feature wall and you have some wallpaper left over, instead of throwing it away, why not use it to upcycle a lampshade? In the same way that you can attach fabric, simply use adhesive spray or craft glue to stick the wallpaper around your shade.

## STUNNING STENCILS

For those who are feeling a bit more ambitious, you can transform a dull lampshade into a thing of beauty using just a stencil and a little paint. Simply purchase a stencil design from your local craft shop or make your own using plastic or vinyl and gently dab on your choice of paint.

## GORGEOUS GOLDEN LEAF

Looking for a decadent design? By applying gold leaf, either in a particular pattern using painter's tape or all over, you can create a luxurious and expensive-looking lampshade at a fraction of the cost.

**NB:** Make sure you let all of the above designs dry fully before reattaching your shade to the lamp.



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## HOW CLEAN is your kitchen?

Hand-washing and social distancing have been the buzzwords for 2020 so far, but forget about the enemy outside; it's the humble kitchen that apparently poses one of the greatest everyday threats in our fight against bugs, according to recent research.

### Sponges

The sponge is by far the go-to item for nuisance nasties. It draws in bugs and baddies like no other, and in the study commissioned by Currys PC World and undertaken at the University of Lincoln, scientists found that 35 per cent of kitchen sponges included faecal streptococci (FS) colonies. And if you think that sounds like something you may want to keep strictly in the lavatory... you'd be right. Found in the intestines of humans and animals, contamination can lead to symptoms of food poisoning, such as vomiting, diarrhoea and nausea.

### That sinking feeling

The study revealed that the pathogen *P. aeruginosa* was present in 100 per cent of sinks. Found in soil and vegetation, it sounds harmless enough, but can cause skin irritation, abscesses and wounds.

### This will floor you

And as for our trusty, lovingly maintained wooden, tiled, laminated or concreted flooring, our attention should perhaps be directed a little closer to some decent antiseptic mopping, with both *aeruginosa* and FS found in significant quantities on the floor.

Meanwhile, it appears it's time to debunk the five-second rule, because any contact with a surface will contaminate food. And as for our ovens, only 37 per cent of us clean our oven handles. But it's not all bad news: lead researcher Dr Hughes admitted that our kitchens are not as dirty as they might be. "The good news is surface levels of bacteria are usually well below the levels required for infection of healthy individuals, so are unlikely to lead to illness – unless coupled with a pre-existing health complaint, or if the person infected is immunocompromised."

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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*

LOCAL NEWS



## Generous barber praised for selfless act

A barber from Rayleigh showed his generosity and human spirit as he took time out of his day to cut a local homeless man's hair for free.

Jamie Dennington, who works at Ashley Knott's Barbershop on London Road, noticed that a homeless man had been regularly walking up and down the street for the past few weeks.

Then, on August 13, when Jamie had a break in customers, he used that time to chat to the man, called Patrick, and offer him a free haircut.

Patrick was extremely grateful, and when the story was shared on Ashley Knott's Facebook page, it was met with widespread praise for Jamie and others offering to help Patrick.

Ashley Knott said: "I couldn't be prouder of him for the way he has established himself not only as a very good barber but also as an all-round really nice guy."

"Then yesterday he showed another side not even I really expected.

"After a small chat outside the guy came in, had his hair washed, a haircut and some water, and he couldn't be more thankful to Jamie.

"Jamie asked me not to post anything about this as he didn't want anyone to think he just did it for attention, but I think he deserves a little credit and appreciation for his kindness and trying to help anyone whenever he can."

People quickly shared their joy at hearing what Jamie had done, which led to another update from the barbershop: "Thank you all for your kind messages and appreciation towards Jamie, he is totally overwhelmed by all your nice comments and you've made his day as much as Jamie made Patrick's day."

"We've had a lot of messages and comments asking how you can all help him by donating food/drink so if you do not see him then we are more than happy for you to drop anything at the shop and we'll make sure it gets to him when he's passing by."



# MARK FRANCOIS MP



Member of Parliament for Rayleigh and Wickford



Our local community in Rayleigh has had to go through a very difficult ordeal in 2020 in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been a tremendous challenge for everyone concerned, but our community has rallied together and, as we emerge from lockdown, we can begin to see a way forward as we return to "the new normal".

I have dealt with literally thousands of emails from constituents over the space of several months, with issues ranging from queries about shielding through to businesses anxious about government financial support. As a result, along with other MPs, I lobbied the Chief Executive of UK Finance and even the Governor of the Bank of England to come up with a quicker scheme – the Business Bounce Back Loans Scheme (BBBLS). This simpler scheme, which provides cash for up to £50,000 with no interest for 12 months, was designed to keep businesses afloat. I understand that this scheme was generally well received, not just in Rayleigh, but across the country.

Most High Street businesses have now, thankfully, reopened, as have facilities like Rayleigh Leisure Centre. Another major change will take place in September, when schools go back and children return to the classrooms. Not only will they be able to catch up with their studies and see their friends again, but this should also free up many parents to return to work and allow families to begin to return to something more akin to a normal routine.

We should be under no illusions – we are not out of the woods yet. Nevertheless, I hope that we have now weathered the worst of the storm and, like everybody else, I hope there will be no "second spike". So far, the indicators are broadly going in the right direction, and our country is beginning to get back on its feet again. This has been the greatest challenge our country has faced since the end of the Second World War but, working together – exactly as our community has done in Rayleigh, we have managed to endure it. I hope and believe that we can now successfully recover from this terrible ordeal.

## Florist crowned as award winner

A florist from Rayleigh has been crowned a winner at The Wedding Business Awards 2020.

Simply Stunning Flowers, based in Byford Close, was picked as a winner in the Wedding Florist Category, much to the delight of Victoria Makepeace who runs the business.

Victoria told **VISION** Rayleigh: "I have been walking on cloud nine since I found out. Finally many years of hard work has paid off, and it feels amazing."

"I am a very honest and genuine person and that's how I run my business. I truly believe in receiving the best most personal customer service, so that's what I aim to provide, along with many years' experience in the flower and wedding industry."

"I am very lucky to work with flowers, and every flower arrangement that leaves my workshop has been made with love."

Simply Stunning Flowers was set up by Victoria after she had been working in the floral industry as a high street florist for six years. It was working there that she realised there was a gap in the market for a unique wedding service.

The judging that led to Simply Stunning Flowers' success was based on reviews and feedback from previous wedding couples.

It means Victoria's business will now be put forward for the national awards.

For more on Simply Stunning Flowers, visit its Facebook page or find it online at [www.simplystunningflowers.co.uk](http://www.simplystunningflowers.co.uk)



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## NEWS FROM RAYLEIGH TOWN MUSEUM

The Rayleigh Town Museum closed temporarily to the public on March 16, owing to the serious outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

However, colleagues have been busy working behind the scenes undertaking ongoing research and maintenance work. Our various social media outlets are regularly updated with lots of interesting snippets. Indeed, we have just introduced a "virtual tour of the museum" as well as an "object of the week". Why not take a look?

For a number of weeks, we have been busy working on all the many logistics to enable us to reopen the museum in a way that is safe and enjoyable for both our volunteers and our visitors. This will be in full compliance with the latest government requirements as the pandemic continues to evolve.

Our detailed planning (as I write this article) indicates that we are looking towards a limited reopening from October. Initially this will ONLY be for members of our Museum Friends group (see our website for details as to how to join) via a pre-booked ticketing system, to ensure the appropriate number of visitors at any one time, with members of the public welcome before the end of the year.

There will be a one-way system through the museum,



with social distancing, volunteers wearing appropriate PPE and supervised access to the archives. Indeed, we are hoping to replicate previous displays as much as we can given the current restrictions.

Although we will not be able to resume our talks, coach trips and exhibitions immediately, the receipt of a government COVID-19 grant of £10,000 has helped to ensure the sustainability of the museum.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to discover and enjoy our town's rich and varied heritage.

## Appeal for witnesses following attack



Police are appealing for witnesses following an assault that left a man unconscious in Rayleigh.

Between 1am and 1.30am on August 1, the victim, a man in his 50s, was walking along Eastwood Road, near to the junction of High Road, towards a taxi rank when he was attacked from behind by two men.

He fell to the floor, hitting his head on some metal railings, and was knocked unconscious.

It was reported the men then left before returning a short time later as the victim was getting into a taxi, and threatened him.

One of the men is described as being in his early-to-mid 20s, white, around 6ft tall, muscular with dark hair and wearing a tight black t-shirt.

The second man is also described as being in his early-to-mid 20s, white, around 6ft tall and muscular but with fair hair. He is also believed to have been wearing a tight black t-shirt.

An Essex Police spokesperson said: "If you saw anything, have any CCTV or dashcam footage, or have any other information, please call us on 101 quoting the crime reference number 42/116427/20, or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111."





## News from THE ROTARY CLUB

Rayleigh Mill

With the COVID-19 restrictions still in force, the club has not been able to enjoy its usual Monday evening meetings, but the members have continued to get a little flavour of normality by conducting Zoom meetings. This has allowed us to do some business, but that too has been limited because our main fundraising activities – the Rayleigh 10k run and our Charity Golf Day – have had to be cancelled. The inability to enjoy our usual social dinner meetings has not meant that we haven't lost touch. Via Zoom we have had online quizzes and entertaining speakers so we have been able to enjoy some of the activities and the banter, albeit remotely.

While these meetings enable the members to enjoy the lively camaraderie that is an essential part of the club, there is no substitute for actual physical, social contact, and the members have been discussing ways to get together that meet the COVID-19 guidelines.

With the opening of golf clubs, the club seized the opportunity to stage its annual Paul Wellman Trophy Golf Competition at Three Rivers Golf and Country Club, where the competitors enjoyed a bit of a get-together and an excellent day of golf.

The keenly fought competition resulted in a win for Rotarian John Culwick, with Andrew Shackleton and



Martin Hodson sharing the prize for the longest drive, John Cuthbertson taking the prize for "Nearest the Pin" and Chris Chorley taking the prize for the top-scoring guest.

Past president Jackie Wellman has continued her sterling effort in collecting unwanted bicycles and delivering them to the charity Rework in Colchester for refurbishment and shipment to Africa, where they make a huge difference to the lives of the communities that receive them. Jackie has conducted four collections so far, totalling more than 160 bicycles, and is still accumulating more.

If you have a bike that you want to donate, please get in touch with the Rotary Club of Rayleigh Mill at [president@rayleighmillrotary.org.uk](mailto:president@rayleighmillrotary.org.uk)

## Two men arrested after drug bust

Two men from Rayleigh have been arrested after a police raid uncovered hundreds of cannabis plants.

The early morning raid on August 13 saw multiple police vehicles and officers descend on the Brook Road Industrial Estate near the junction of the A127 at Rayleigh Weir before a successful search was carried out.

A spokesman for Essex Police said: "We executed a warrant at an address at Brook Road Industrial Estate in Rayleigh at around 9.20am on Thursday, August 13.

"We found around 200 cannabis plants inside.

"We arrested a 31-year-old man and a 24-year-old man on suspicion of cultivating cannabis.

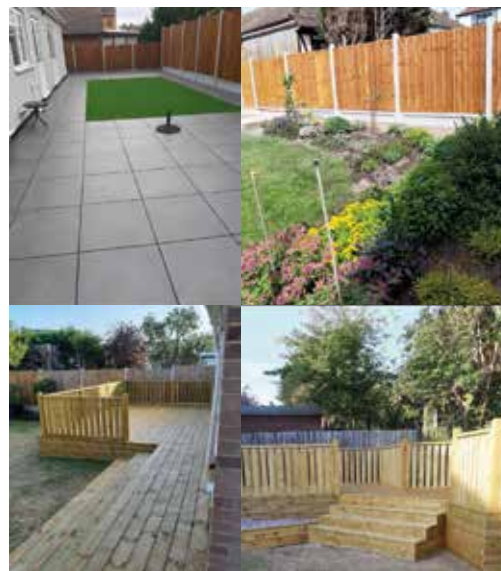
"The plants are being seized and our enquiries are ongoing.

"Anyone with concerns about drug crimes in Rayleigh should call police on 101.

You can also report crime online at [essex.police.uk](https://essex.police.uk)

"People can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

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# HANDY ANDI

*The Peter Pan of daytime TV and a career both in and out of the spotlight*

If you're of a certain demographic, you've undoubtedly seen the Twitter posts, Facebook pictures and Instagram uploads detailing the so-called 'golden era' of kids' TV, when terrestrial television was a metaphorical playground for some of the biggest stars of our time.

From the basics of *Blue Peter* and *Grange Hill* in the 1970s through to big-budget kid-themed quiz shows and youth soaps, the presenters were our link between a mind-boggling array of British brilliance that has since gone by the wayside in favour of American imports.

To consider that Andi Peters was at the centre of such an era is remarkable, for two reasons. First, he's still on our screens today, most recently covering for Lorraine Kelly on her eponymous weekday morning chat show. Second, there's the small point that Andi barely looks any older than the bunch of Generation X youngsters currently at the forefront of youth entertainment.

Chelsea-born presenter, journalist and actor is 50. That makes him less Andi Peters and more Peter Pan, though securing both longevity and relevance is no pantomime in the current era where TV producers are even more cut-throat than Captain Hook.

Peters' ability to survive and, indeed, flourish has as much to do with his proficiency behind the camera as in front of it. He started out in the famous CBBC broom cupboard (where he succeeded the likes of Andy Crane and Philip Schofield), and despite retaining presenting duties alongside Emma Forbes in the hugely successful *Live & Kicking*, his skill as commissioning editor, producer and versatile creative is ultimately what has kept him in such high demand.

Always affable and famously clean-living, from continued BBC work with *The O-Zone* and *Top of the Pops* to *The Noise* (ITV), *T4* and *Shipwrecked* (Channel 4), diversity and desire to keep adapting have always been at the forefront for Peters.

And discovering Dermot O'Leary, who introduced him to the world of adult programming (*Dancing on Ice*, *Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway*), proved a joint enterprise that has garnered more success.

"At the heart of it I am just someone in love with TV," he says. "To bring so much joy, entertainment and fun into people's front rooms has always been a pleasure, and to this day I still get the same thrill at being broadcast live on air that I did all those years ago."

"I have had odd breaks from the cut and thrust of it,

but it is always something I know I will come back to, and of course I count myself very lucky to have been able to sample this from so many different sides."

Being the first man to stand in for Lorraine for more than a decade proves Peters' relevance and ability is still as strong at 50 as it was when he started out on radio way back in the 1980s, on the advice of Schofield.

"If the work keeps coming, I'll keep doing it," he says.

"It's a dream come true, and even at 50 I'm not ready for it to end."







# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

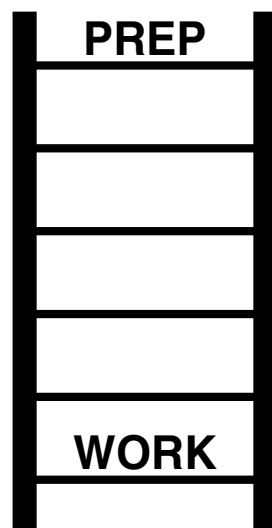
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## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Wall-E was named after Walter Elias Disney
- ▶ Disney animators often hide classic characters in scenes of their films
- ▶ There is a tunnel system in Disney World so characters aren't seen in the 'wrong' lands
- ▶ Dumbo is the only lead character in a film who doesn't speak – he only makes a few noises
- ▶ Disney World in Orlando is around the same size as San Francisco
- ▶ The original *The Jungle Book* was the last film to be overseen by Walt Disney before his death in 1966
- ▶ The first animated character to receive a star on the Walk of Fame was Mickey Mouse
- ▶ Mickey Mouse ears are one of the most popular souvenirs bought from Disneyland

## WORD LADDER



THE AIM: Change the word at the top of the ladder one letter at a time to make the word at the bottom.

HOW TO: Change one letter on each step to make a new word. By the time you reach the end, you should have created the new word.

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

TIP: There is usually more than one way to solve this puzzle.

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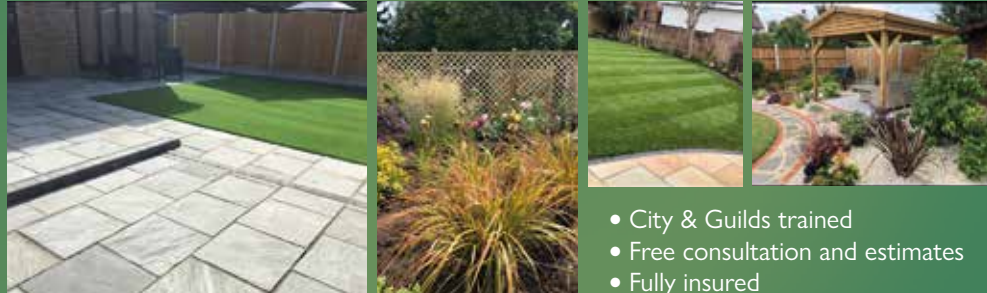
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SEPTEMBER BIRTH FLOWER  
OF THE MONTH

GARDENING

If you were born in September, your birth flower is one of the most colourful flowers of autumn: the aster. Part of the daisy family, this wild flower is known for its tiny flowerheads and long petals. Loved by pollinators, asters are ideal for growing in mixed borders around your garden.

optimist and are devoted to living life to the full. You are also predisposed to good luck.

### HOW DO YOU GROW ASTERS IN YOUR GARDEN?

Asters offer great beauty with little work and are therefore ideal for less-experienced growers. You can either choose to plant them from seed in spring or purchase a potted plant later in the year.

Plant in full to partial sun in loamy, well-drained soil and keep new plants moist until they stop blooming.

### WHAT DO ASTERS SYMBOLISE?

Asters come in a variety of vibrant colours and each one carries a different meaning:

- Purple asters, the most popular colour, symbolise wisdom and royalty.
- White asters represent purity and innocence, as well as new beginnings.
- Red asters can be used to convey undying devotion.
- Pink asters symbolise sensitivity and love.

### WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON ASTER PESTS AND DISEASES?

Asters attract aphids, spider mites, whiteflies and leafhoppers, all of which can be kept under control with the use of pesticides. They are also prone to stem rot, a fungus that can begin at the start of the germination process. Prevent this by not overwatering and ensuring the soil is well drained.

### WHAT DOES THIS BIRTH FLOWER SAY ABOUT YOU?

If your birth flower is the aster, you feel most at home on the stage and will embrace any opportunity to entertain others. You are an





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Although traditionally used for stews and soups, slow cookers are now being tested out on a wide variety of dishes, including cooked breakfasts, lasagne and even steaming hot cocktails. What more could you want on a blustery autumn day?

**BUTTERBEER RUM (YES, JUST LIKE IN HARRY POTTER BUT WITH A BOOZY HIT)**

**You will need:** 6 cups water | 2 cans cream soda | 1 cup brown sugar | ½ cup unsalted butter | ½ cup butterscotch syrup | 3 cinnamon sticks | 1 tsp vanilla essence | 1½ tsp salt | 2 cups spiced rum | Whipped cream and golden sparkling sugar crystals for decoration

**How to make:** Put in the water, cream soda, sugar, butter, ¼ cup of butterscotch, cinnamon sticks, vanilla and salt | Cover and cook for 3–3½ hours | Stir in the rum | Use the remaining butterscotch to coat the rims of your glasses | Pour, top with whipped cream and sprinkle with sugar crystals

**INDULGENT HOT CHOCOLATE**

**You will need:** 1 litre milk | 300ml double cream | 200g chopped dark chocolate | 100g chopped milk chocolate | Whipped cream, marshmallows and chocolate shavings to serve | Optional: liqueur or schnapps – coffee, peppermint or cinnamon

**How to make:** Pour the milk and double cream into your slow cooker | Add the chocolate | Cover and cook on low for 2 hours | Remove the lid, give it a good stir, then replace the lid and cook for a further 20 mins | Add 4 shots of your chosen liqueur | Spoon into mugs and top with marshmallows, cream and chocolate shavings

**CARAMEL APPLE CIDER**

**You will need:** 2 cups vodka | 8 cups apple cider | 1 cup caramel syrup | 2 tsp ground cloves | 2 tbs cinnamon | ¼ cup brown sugar | Apples to garnish

**How to make:** Add all the ingredients to your slow cooker | Cook on low for 3 hours | Serve in mulled cups or glasses with sliced apples and cinnamon sticks



Photo credit: realhousemoms.com, amindfullmom.com



FOOD & DRINK





# ARE YOU AN *emotional eater?*

**M**any people have understandably struggled with healthy eating during lockdown, with stress, boredom and increased feelings of wanting to treat ourselves all being contributing factors.

However, now that we have started to return to normality, are you still eating for reasons other than hunger?

## MINDLESS EATING

Do you often find yourself eating for no particular reason? Do you simply take mouthful after mouthful without even registering what the food tastes like or whether or not your appetite has been sated? If yes, you need to stop eating in front of the TV and start appreciating your food more. Ensure you chew your food as many times as you can and listen to your stomach when it tells you that it's full.

## BOREDOM EATING

If you find that you reach for the snacks when you

have nothing else to do, then you are eating out of boredom rather than because your body needs sustenance. Try to find yourself something else to do, such as read a book, phone a friend or go for a walk: any activity that will take your mind off eating.

## STRESS EATING

We've all been there. Perhaps you have an important meeting at work, you are struggling to make ends meet or maybe your relationship is going through a rough patch. Whatever the reason, eating when you are stressed can help to alleviate anxiety, even if only momentarily. The key to avoid stress eating is to know your triggers and to actively try to avoid them.

## EATING TO MASK YOUR FEELINGS

Whether you feel sad, depressed or lonely, eating to try to push down your feelings is never the answer. Instead, try to identify why you are feeling this way and talk to someone if you need to.



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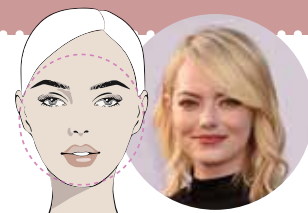
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# Bangs

ON TREND

The flexible and fabulous fringe rarely goes out of fashion. Instead, it adapts to the season at hand and offers a simple yet stylish way to update your look.

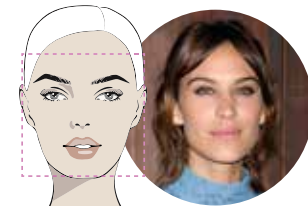
However, to get it right and avoid the common pitfalls of bad bangs, you need to choose the right fringe for your face shape.



### THE SIDE FRINGE

#### Best for round face shapes

Popular with the likes of Mila Kunis, Emma Stone and Renée Zellweger, the side fringe is incredibly flattering for those with more round faces. Opt for a feathered fringe to give your face a more slender look and to draw attention to your eyes and mouth.



### THE A-SHAPED FRINGE

#### Best for square and oblong faces

This face shape tends to be wider at the cheeks and more angular around the jawline. A soft A-shaped fringe can help soften your features and switch the focus to your eyes.



### THE CURTAIN FRINGE

#### Best for heart-shaped faces

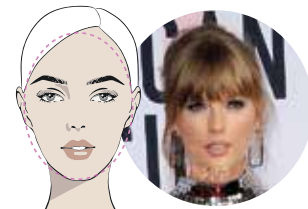
A long side fringe, aka the curtain fringe, is ideal for those with a heart face shape as this style will help widen out a narrow chin and highlight both your cheekbones and jawline. Ask for a feathered look to perfectly balance softness and structure.



### THE FULL BLUNT FRINGE

#### Best for those with a small forehead

You may think that having a small forehead means you cannot pull off a fringe, but this is simply not true. A full and blunt fringe will instantly add length to your face and broaden your forehead. This style suits those with poker-straight hair better than those with waves.



### THE FULL CHOPPY FRINGE

#### Best for oval face shapes

With this face shape you want a full fringe that will cover your forehead but not one that will overpower your delicate features. Adding choppyness at the ends will create a softer and more textured feel.

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**THEY OFFER UNRIVALLED COMFORT:** Although you will need to break them in a bit, Dr. Martens will undoubtedly be the most comfortable boots you ever own. The hard leather has the unique ability to be

able to mould perfectly with the shape of your foot, resulting in a feeling of walking on air.

**THEY LAST FOREVER:** Dr. Martens might not be the cheapest boots you have ever bought, but they will offer the best value for money. Unlike other leather that may split or crack, Dr. Martens will last you a lifetime.

**THEY TRANSCEND TRENDS:** As all other footwear trends come and go, and then come again, Dr. Martens have stuck resolutely to their fundamental USPs, and fashion followers love them for it.

**THEY ARE INCREDIBLY VERSATILE:** There are so many different looks that you can go for with a pair of Dr. Martens:

- > Sophisticated with chinos and chunky knitwear.
- > Street style with cut-offs and a slogan tee.
- > Casual with a simple pair of black trousers and matching jumper.
- > Modern with jeans and a leather jacket.

**CELEBRITIES OF ALL AGES LOVE THEM:** Miley Cyrus, Diane Keaton, Susan Sarandon, Jared Leto and Robert Pattinson have all been papped rocking these vintage and stylish boots.

**THEY COME IN A WIDE VARIETY OF COLOURS AND**

**DESIGNS:** You can pretty much find a pair of Dr. Martens in every colour you can think of, plus they do some truly unique designs, including one with renaissance art printed all over them. Need a bit of extra height? Yes, Dr. Martens come in heeled versions too.



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# BATTLE STATIONS

*This year marks eight decades since one of the most important British victories during the Second World War: the Battle of Britain.*

It's June 1940 and France has been quickly defeated by Germany in Adolf Hitler's march across Europe. His aim: to bring Gleichschaltung (coordination), the process of Nazification and totalitarian control to the continent.

Hitler was expecting the British to also fall into line and to try to agree a peace deal with Germany. In the first instance, he knew that to have any chance of setting up a successful invasion of British shores (which was codenamed Operation Sealion), he would need to combat the formidable Royal Air Force. Subsequently, he gave the Luftwaffe (the German equivalent of the RAF) the go-ahead to engage with it.

Even though the German occupation of France was rapid, the country had experienced severe damage to its air fleet; yet when asked to go to battle in the skies of Southern England two months later, it was ready.

However, the Luftwaffe hadn't reckoned on Britain's secret weapon in the Battle of Britain – the Dowding System. Named after Commander in Chief of the Fighter Command, Sir Hugh Dowding, it was a remarkable network that brought together ground defence, radar and fighter aircraft.

Knowing where and when the Luftwaffe was on its way to Britain was of huge advantage to the RAF, whereby it could then scramble fighters quickly – notably the Spitfire – to intercept the threat.

However, in truth, it was in the way the Spitfire was armed that gave it a significant edge. And that was thanks to a young mathematician, whose brilliant calculations meant it could leave the ground with

double its original gun capacity.

Her name was Hazel Hill, and she was the daughter of Fred, who was part of the Air Ministry,

Fred returned home from work one day and asked for help in providing a solution to the Spitfire's perceived lack of firepower. The iconic British warplane was initially only designed to have four guns on it; he felt it could be more but needed his daughter's help.

Many of the Air Ministry felt that eight guns would be too heavy for the Spitfire – and for its compatriot, the Hurricane – but Fred and his daughter Hazel found a way to equip the machine with double the artillery. It was a significant advancement, and it worked.

As the conflict heightened, with support from Commonwealth pilots, and as the Luftwaffe fatally miscalculated its own successes, a three-month-long skirmish in the skies eventually started to go the way of the Allies.

The Battle of Britain will go down in history as one of the most important parts of the Second World War and a colossal reason as to why Germany was unable to seize Great Britain. It was a barrier that ultimately led the Nazis to fail in their attempt to take control of Europe, and it preserved the freedom that we acknowledge with gratitude and humility today.



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# SAVE

*yourself the effort?*



It's fair to say savings accounts have probably never seemed less appealing. From buoyant interest rates well into double digits back in the mid-1990s, the Bank of England base rate has plummeted in recent years, dropping to a historic low of 0.1 per cent in March.

The recent lockdown means government initiatives to stimulate spending are additionally affecting the appeal of savings accounts, to the point where the consideration of a negative base rate has come into view... and with it the possibility that savers will actually have to pay to 'store' their money.

But it's not all bad news for savers:

> One-year fixed rates for savings accounts are still tracking considerably above the Bank of England base rate, with rates of around 1 per cent still possible... although in relation to a similar level of inflation, there isn't any real 'gain' to be had; in fact, with most 'everyday' savings accounts you're losing money.

> For those still looking to gain a return on their savings, it could be that switching from a traditional savings account to a Lifetime, Fixed Rate or Easy Access cash ISA is the sensible way forward. The former will give you a 25 per cent return (up to £4,000 only), while a Fixed Rate ISA can still net you up to 1.3 per cent.

> Finally, remember savings aren't all about profit – many people save for security, to have a feelgood 'project', and to put money away for a rainy day. Unlike investments, savings accounts are protected to the hilt, so when you want your money it is protected and will be there.





# ENSURE *you* INSURE

## Your home insurance checklist

Insurance is about protecting ourselves and those around us, so here's a handy checklist outlining what you definitely need, and what might be worth considering.

### CONTENTS INSURANCE

In the event of an accident or theft from within your home, it's vital your possessions are covered. Many see paying out for contents insurance as a waste of money, but we will all claim for something at some

point. Knowing you're covered can bring a huge sense of relief in the midst of what is likely to be a disappointing event or episode.

You can also extend your contents insurance to items you take outside the home – consider bikes, watches, phones and more; but read the small print to ensure you're covering what you think you are.

### BUILDINGS INSURANCE

Also known as house insurance, this covers your bricks and mortar, and whilst not a legal stipulation, most mortgage lenders will insist on you taking it out if you are embarking on home ownership.

### LIFE INSURANCE

Purely for the protection of those around you; should the day come when you're not around, you will want to ensure your dependants have enough to get by. For what is often a small amount each month, life insurance can at least mean you are not adding financial loss to the emotional loss experienced by loved ones.

### INCOME PROTECTION

Particularly good for those who are self-employed, income protection means that in the event of illness, bills can still be paid. If 2020 has taught us anything where health is concerned, it's to expect the unexpected!

### CRITICAL COVER

Different from life insurance, critical cover will pay out a lump sum if you are diagnosed with a critical illness during the life of your policy. That means you'll be provided for by the policy to restore some sense of comfort and peace.



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# SOLD



MOTORING

# Motoring Madness

## AVOIDING THE PITFALLS OF SELLING YOUR CAR PRIVATELY

**S**elling your motor privately can be good for a number of reasons. It's the best way to get a high price for your old set of wheels, if organised you may be able to secure a sale quickly, and in most instances you won't even need to leave the comfort of your own home... well, the driveway, at least.

However, if you are keen to strip out the middleman, beware some of the pitfalls that may lie in wait:

### Telephone time-wasters

You may get countless people phoning up asking endless questions – remember, buyers will be as wary about the process as sellers. The best way to avoid this is to make your listing as detailed as possible, adding lots of photos.

### Go-slow no-showers

Ever waited in for a delivery that never arrives? Welcome to the world of private car-selling.

### Part-ex stress

You may find your motor is attracting the interest of

traders who would rather negotiate a part-exchange than an offer of straight cash.

### Larry Hagglers

A huge worry for many vendors is agreeing a price over the phone, only to find someone at your door pressuring you for a discount.

### Comeback Kings

In the event of something going wrong with the car soon after it's bought, you won't have anyone to sort this out but yourself. The buyer will also have your home address so is likely to come knocking if anything seems wrong in those weeks post purchase.

### Not-so-smooth criminals

And of course, the biggest fear for those who sell privately is that someone will run off with your motor. Ensure all monies have been transferred before handing over documentation, be wary over PayPal transactions (which can be refunded) and, if accepting cash, check notes carefully.



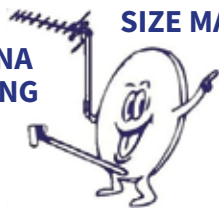
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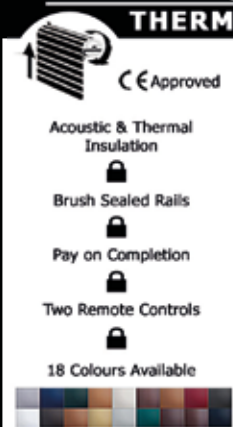
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TECHNOLOGY

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In 1995, a former Tesco shelf-stacker came up with the idea of rewarding customers' loyalty by giving them points that could be redeemed against future purchases. The concept itself wasn't revolutionary, but in a rapidly evolving digital age, the knowledge, insight and trend-tracking the Clubcard scheme offered meant the retailer's understanding of consumer habits had never been so great.

The man behind the idea was Sir Terry Leahy. A Liverpoolian who started on the shop floor, literally, he had risen to CEO level and was already well on the way to rejuvenating Tesco's fortunes; but his adoption of the Clubcard took the supermarket chain from a top three UK retailer (in terms of profit) to a top three global entity.

The introduction of the Clubcard drove both him and the supermarket on to unparalleled heights – the most efficient method ever for analysing consumer spending behaviour. It also sparked ferocious loyalty, and enabled Tesco to

extend into sectors it had never before touched – from tech to travel to insurance – with a certainty of success brought about from truly knowing who their customers were and how they would respond to products and offers.

These days, 17 million of us have a Tesco Clubcard – that's more than one-third of the adult population in the UK. Relunched in 2009 and again last year with Clubcard Plus – which promised to save the average large family £400 a year on their shopping bill – our adoption of the technology has now become part of our daily routine.

Numerous other brands have followed suit and enjoyed the rewards over the past quarter of a century, yet none can boast a loyalty scheme that has had such a profound effect on an already successful business.



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