

AUSTRALIA

Reader's Digest

**RD
TALKS**
OUR STORIES
AS PODCASTS

TRAPPED!

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MEET THE GHOSTBUSTERS
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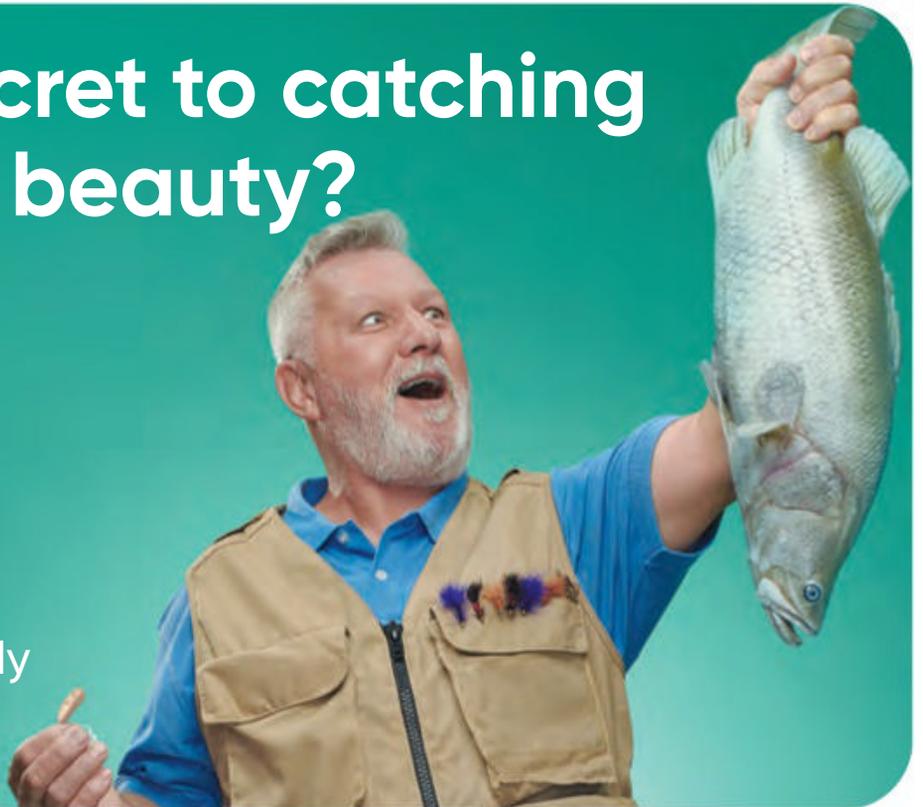


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Client statements are their own. Les received a thank you gift for his time.

EDITOR'S NOTE

A Wider Perspective

WITH TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE STILL LARGELY ON HOLD for many of us, the urge to explore the wonders on offer beyond our shores has never been greater. This month, we have a wide selection of reading that offers a window on today's world with perspectives that will enlighten and entertain.

Morocco's exotic local tastes and sights have made it popular with travellers for centuries. It's also home to one of the oldest fleets of Mercedes 240D taxis in the world. 'Au Revoir To The Grand Taxis' (page 54) looks at the upheaval caused by phasing out the old blue taxis that have graced local roads since the 1970s. Then, in 'Cape Town Revival' (page 120) we take a look at the city's transformation from one once overshadowed by violence, to an art and food centre with locals determined to embrace its diverse history and cultural identity.



This month's 'Then and Now' traces the origins and success of vending machines (page 92). The Romans were the first to shop via a coin and a slot. Today, vending machines continue to offer a nifty shopping experience, extending way beyond drink cans and chocolate bars.

We also tackle a wonderfully perplexing topic: ghosts. In 'Meet The Ghostbusters' (page 34) regular contributor Helen Foster speaks with scientists to find a rational explanation for ghosts, which almost half the adult population are convinced are real. What they reveal is fascinating.

These stories and much more in this March issue.

Happy reading!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Louise".

LOUISE WATERSON Editor-in-Chief

AUSTRALIA Reader's Digest

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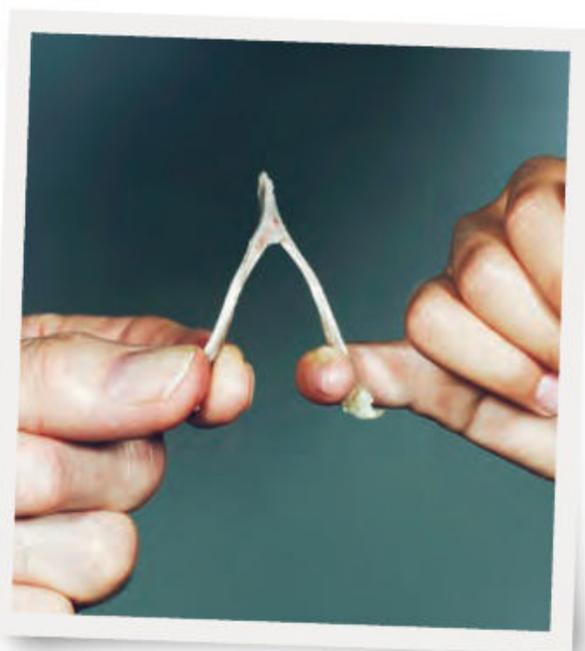
LETTERS

Reader's Comments And Opinions

Making A Wish

I remember as a child fighting with my sisters over the wishbone each time we had roast chicken ('Tell Me Why', December). All I knew was that the person left holding the larger part of the bone when it snapped got to make a wish. I had no idea that the tradition originated with the Romans. I will definitely be sharing this information (and sounding very intelligent) when I next invite my sisters over for roast chicken.

HELEN SWEENEY



Gems From The Past

There are few things I enjoy more than catching up with my reading over the Christmas and New Year break, and the January issue added to my enjoyment. The stories you chose from your archives are brilliant – they are just as relevant, informative and entertaining today as they would have been when first published.

I can't pick a favourite as each held something for me. I was unaware of Churchill's fascination with painting ('My Adventures With A Paintbrush'); I marvelled at Annette Anselmo's bravery and the skill of her surgeon ('Awake Through A Brain Operation'); and teared up reading 'A String Of Blue Beads'. I look forward to next year's gems from the past. ANNA SIMON

Let us know if you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. See page 8 for how to join the discussion.

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

Family Ties Across The Ocean

‘Leaving New Zealand Behind’ (My Story, November) depicts the importance of social and family ties in times of hardship. Although the writer loved New Zealand’s gorgeous scenery, he tried not to post too many pictures of it because he empathised with his family and friends who were in lockdown in the UK. A family’s love is life’s greatest blessing.

LIN ZHAO

Vivid Sunsets After Explosion

When my husband, John, was a young boy, he would often hear stories from his grandfather, William Ryan, who was born in South Australia in 1878. One yarn that he remembers well was about the eruption of Krakatoa in 1883 (‘When Krakatoa Blew Up’, January).

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I CAN BE A LITTLE TART SOMETIMES

We asked you to think up a funny caption for this photo.

Don’t look so sour.

ZOEY TAN

Now here’s a lemon with zest!

MISCHELLE SCHILLER

ExSqueeze me!

SINDHURA VIJAY

Who said that I have lost zest for life?

RAJ SANEJA

When life throws you a lemon... face it!

MELISSA GOEDHART

Congratulations to this month’s winner, Zoey Tan.



CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win

\$100. To enter, email

editor@readersdigest.com.au

or see details on page 8.

READER'S DIGEST

William was five years old at the time and witnessed the glorious sunsets that occurred after the volcanic explosion. Every evening for about 12 months, he would look forward to the ever-changing colours in the sky. **DENISE TARRANT**

Festive Treats

I found my mouth watering as I read 'A World Of Christmas Treats' (December). Although I am not much of a cook, I do enjoy trying new things so I found a recipe for *los buñuelos* (dough fritters from Mexico) and am keen to give it a go. Your article put me in a festive mood after a very disappointing few months. **THERESE DILLON**

Pinpointing Ankle Pain

As someone with a large family who are all extremely keen on exercise, I found your health article on ankle pain (December) very interesting. It was a good basic introduction to the various causes and treatments, how serious it may be, and whether or not you may need to see a doctor. **CYNTHIA REYES**

Straight To The Heart

I really liked the story 'Melodies Straight From The Heart' (My Story, December). It was a gentle, soft family story that made me happy. It took a bit of a sad turn in the end, though.

RAFIA MUMTAHINIAH NUHA

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100 YEARS OF READER'S DIGEST

A Letter From The Queen

"I hope you continue to inspire people through the power of the written word"

It's not every day we receive a letter from the Queen, which is why we are delighted to share with our readers the one the magazine received marking its 100th Anniversary. Over the years, Reader's Digest has published many articles and photographs, both in print and online, offering compelling glimpses into Queen Elizabeth II's public and private life. Features about the Queen have offered not only insights about her role as the head of a royal dynasty and a leader of the Commonwealth but a living history of our times.





WINDSOR CASTLE

As *Reader's Digest* celebrates its One Hundredth year, it is with great pleasure that I send my best wishes to you, the readers and all those associated with the publication.

Founded with the spirit of bringing the best writing to a worldwide audience, you have enlightened, encouraged and entertained individuals on a variety of subjects and important issues.

On this notable anniversary, I wish you every success for the future and hope you continue to inspire people around the world through the power of the written word for many years to come.

ELIZABETH R.

1st February, 2022.

MY STORY

The Garage Sale

A thorough clean-up cleared away more than just junk and cobwebs

BY Robin Keown

THE TIME HAD COME, the writing was on the wall – we were not going to make old bones! I had been given a terminal cancer diagnosis in October 2019 with a prognosis of five years. My husband's atrial fibrillation episodes were happening with increasing regularity – and his father died of heart-related problems at exactly his age.

We had cared for my parents in their own home for the last few years of their lives – a very bonding experience – and had bought their home when they died in their 90s. The usual clause about having to clear one's chattels before selling had been glossed over. After all, we

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES



were family, and they were not capable of clearing anything as their health had declined.

Out of respect, we did not touch their property while they were alive. We knew there was a lot of stuff stored in the barn, not to mention the garage and several smaller sheds on the property.

However, not all the accumulated stuff was theirs. We had substantially added to the collection of superfluous goods over the previous six years.

My scary health diagnosis was the catalyst that motivated us to start clearing the mountain of junk. My parents were from the Depression era, so hated to throw anything away. My stepfather was an engineer-turned-mechanic and loved to fix things, so collections of appliances were

faithfully kept for future tinkering. Vacuum cleaners were tucked in spaces all around the rafters like empty cocoons, while old washing-machines, dishwashers and clothes-dryers sat about rusting.

My mother, a great sewer, mender and all-round fix-it person, kept a dozen mattresses that the abundant vermin from the surrounding bush had discovered were warm and comfortable refuges. There were also piles of pillows and old wool blankets.

Once we had taken the unusable stuff to the tip, we decided to have a garage sale. It was quite a job setting up benches to display what we wanted to sell, and then dusting down the furniture and other items. We had renovated the house after we bought it, and so there were discarded window frames and cupboards from an old kitchen to get rid of, plus my parents' old lounge suite and other dated furniture.

We watched the weather forecast closely in the weeks leading up to the Saturday of the garage sale, hoping it would be dry.

We'd set the opening time for 9am, but half expected people to start arriving at 8am. So we were ready when a forlorn old lady arrived early to get the best goodies. We later learned that she arrives first at every local garage sale. She chatted away to us for some time



Robin Keown is a writer, poet, musician and artist who lives in Golden Bay, New Zealand. Prior to moving to the 'Top of the South', she was involved in education.

while picking over the stuff like a curious bird. Then, people began to arrive in dribs and drabs, buying a few pieces here and there. But our big break came when a man bought both our old camper vans and my parents' old caravan – none of which were roadworthy. They had leaks in the roofs and dings in the bodywork.

Our property would look less like a used car yard once they were gone.

We re-ran the garage sale the following Saturday, advertising stuff 'Free For Removal'. Over the next couple of weeks the venture bore fruit, as one by one the windows, kitchen cupboards and freezer were taken. We loaded up the trailer with the leftovers and made several trips to the recycling depot at the tip. By the end of this exercise we could see space in the barn for the first time in years.

The anxiety I had been suffering from for weeks started to lift as daylight entered the barn.

What I had been worrying about was, that although we were retired when my parents died, we were now in our early 70s, and our four wonderful children were all full-time working professionals, with their own families. Two were also living on the other side of the world.

The thought of them having to clear the property of four generations worth of rubbish was enough to fill me with guilt and dread. It certainly was not why we had our beautiful children, and the thought that the clean-up might be their last memory of us made me shudder.

Sorting the vast pile had seemed insurmountable. Although time-consuming, it was a satisfying task.

During this process I had an *a-ha!* moment about

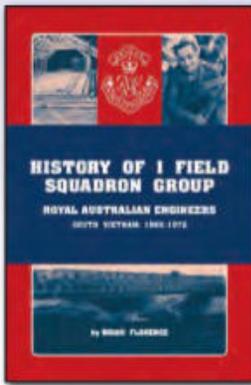
materialism, consumerism and our indulgent modern lifestyle. Sayings such as "less is more" and "if you haven't used it in two years you don't need it – throw it out" assumed particular significance. But "too little, too late" also competed for headspace, as I was tortured by the possibility of not completing the clearance before I ran out of energy – or time.

But, we eventually finished, halting the snowball effect of our out-of-control accumulation and hopefully saving our precious ones from a future nightmare.

DURING THE PROCESS OF CLEARING OUT THE JUNK, I HAD AN A-HA! MOMENT

Do you have a tale to tell? We'll pay cash for any original and unpublished story we print. See page 8 for details on how to contribute.

CHANGE YOUR POV AGAIN AND AGAIN.



History of 1 Field Squadron Group, Royal Australian Engineers, SVN, 1965-1972

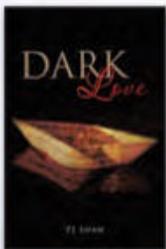
Brian Florence

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Dark Love

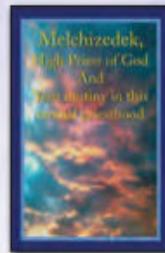
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Shut Up and Do It!

Property Investment

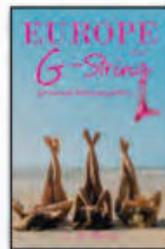
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When three friends decide to throw caution to the wind, they quit their full time jobs and travel through Europe in an adventure they would never forget.

SMART ANIMALS

Some pets are very quick learners



A Lesson For Kittens

CAROLE LAWRENCE

When I was a teenager living in Ouyen in the Victorian Mallee region, we had quite a few pet cats about the place that helped to keep the ever-present mice population down.

One day I watched as one of our cats, a grey tabby called Mummy-Puss, sat peacefully on the grass in our back garden under a white cedar tree. Meanwhile, her three young kittens were playing a game: climbing up the white cedar tree and tiptoeing out onto a branch. Then, one by one, those naughty little

kittens jumped from the branch onto the top of Mummy-Puss's head while she sat under the tree.

This happened four times until poor Mummy-Puss got heartily sick of it. The next time a kitten landed on her head, she grabbed it and with one of her front paws, smacked the kitten until it squealed. She then let it go.

The other two kittens, who obviously didn't want to face the

You could earn cash by telling us about the antics of unique pets or wildlife. Turn to page 8 for details on how to contribute.

same admonishment, very slowly and carefully climbed backwards down the tree. With their heads hanging low and very sorry looks on their little kitten faces, the two kittens walked slowly over to their mother and lay down beside her on the grass.

Mummy-Puss expressed her forgiveness by licking all three kittens with her long pink rasping tongue, before cuddling up with them as they all fell asleep.



Bungee, The Bilingual Border Collie

MICHAEL DAVIDSON

Our neighbours Liz and Bill moved in next door four years ago and very soon after became proud parents to Bungee, a now four-year-old border collie.

Our children, who do not have a dog of their own, adore Bungee and like to think of him as their own.

Thankfully Liz and Bill are very happy for the extra hands as, like most border collies, he is extremely active.

Bungee loves his walks and even though he gets a run or a walk in the early morning with Liz and then another in the evening with Bill, he's always ready for more.

He gets so excited by the sight of them putting on their running shoes that he has literally knocked them to the ground. When they walk past the laundry, where his lead hangs, he jumps frantically, starts to bark, and bolts to the front door in anticipation.

The very mention of the word 'walk' intensifies this behaviour so Liz and Billy started using the Irish word *siúl* to keep him calm. My children were instructed to substitute *siúl* for walk unless they had his lead in hand and were ready to take him out.

This trick worked for a few months until clever Bungee worked out the translation and now he jumps, barks and tears through the house whenever the Irish word is spoken.

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PETS

Avoiding Common Dangers

Some activities, plants and food can be hazardous

BY Dr Katrina Warren



Our regular pet columnist, Dr Katrina Warren, is an established and trusted animal expert.

WE LOVE OUR PETS and always try to take good care of them, but there are some simple things that can be harmful to pets - and even kill them - that many pet owners aren't aware of.

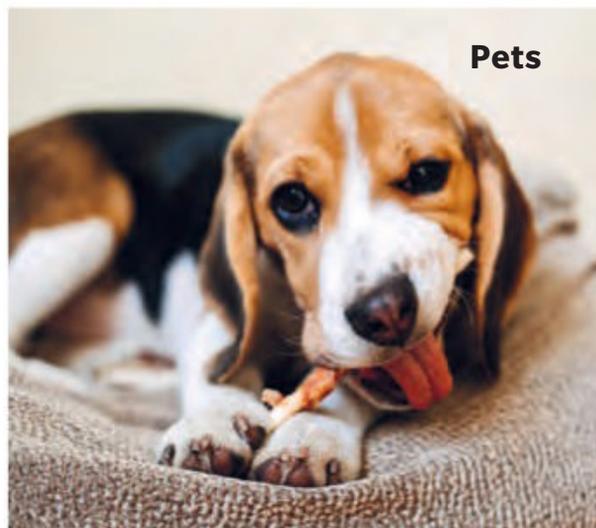
PLAYING FETCH WITH STICKS

Most dogs love playing fetch with sticks and it may be tempting to throw one for your dog when you don't have a ball or rubber toy handy, but they can be extremely dangerous. Sticks can easily splinter and pieces can cut the mouth or throat. Dogs can also be impaled on a stick or it can get lodged in their throat or soft tissues which can be life threatening.

LILIES ARE TOXIC TO CATS

Lily toxicity is a devastating poison which often affects young cats. Despite aggressive treatment, many cats die from eating lilies. The leaves, flowers, pollen and stems from plants of the lily (*Liliaceae*) family are highly toxic to cats. For some reason cats, especially young cats, are prone to ingesting them and becoming intoxicated.

Only small amounts of the plant are required to cause serious problems. Even a kitten mouthing a plant should be considered a serious and potentially fatal ingestion. If you suspect lily toxicity, take your cat straight to your vet.



FEEDING COOKED BONES

Dogs love chomping on bones and human leftovers, but cooked bones should never be fed to dogs. They can splinter and break into small, sharp pieces that have the potential to cause choking or cuts to the mouth, throat or gut. Pieces of bone can also compact and cause bowel obstructions.

If your dog has eaten cooked bones it is possible they will pass through the digestive tract without causing any problems, but look out for signs such as vomiting, loss of appetite or abnormal bowel movements.

If you choose to feed your dog bones, only feed raw bones and always under supervision – chat to your vet about the right type of bones for the breed and size of your dog.

NOT ALL DOGS CAN SWIM

Dog owners often assume that all dogs can swim, but in fact some dogs may not be able to swim at all. Breeds with heavy bodies, short legs or short noses are often poor swimmers – pugs, French bulldogs, dachshunds and similar. In order for these breeds to keep their nose and

Don't give your dog cooked bones as they can break into sharp shards

mouth above water they must tilt their head upwards, which points their back end downwards, making them almost vertical in the water and prone to sinking.

Most dogs need to be taught how to swim. To do this, get in the water with them and support them under the tummy until they get the hang of using all four legs to propel themselves. Don't force your dog if they are not comfortable, and always start by paddling in a shallow area. Many dogs will learn to swim by following other dogs into the water.

If you have a swimming pool, be sure it is securely fenced not only for people, but also for dogs. Dogs can squeeze through pool fencing and end up stuck in the pool treading water until they become exhausted and drown. Be aware that pool covers are dangerous as dogs can get trapped underneath them. Always supervise your pet at a swimming pool, just as you would with children.

KEY FOODS

THAT CAN POISON PETS

Chocolate

Onions

Alcohol

Xylitol

Grapes and their dry products such as raisins and sultanas

HEALTH



Small Device Saves Lives

Automated external defibrillators (AEDs) can be used by anyone in an emergency

BY *The Editors*

Do you fancy yourself as someone capable of responding to a person suffering from cardiac arrest? If not, you are not alone. Very few of us have had any professional training in such things.

Even basic first aid training is something that most of us have never done. And yet, new technology makes it possible for anyone to save the life of a cardiac arrest victim without any formal training.

The secret is in a machine known as the automated external defibrillator (AED). This small, lifesaving device can be used by anyone capable of opening its case and reading basic instructions. The fact that the device is automated means it requires very little input from its human user.

CARDIAC ARRESTS Sudden cardiac arrest, a condition characterised by the sudden stopping of the heart, is the third leading cause of death in industrialised nations.

The deadly nature of sudden cardiac arrest is due to the fact that a stopped heart requires some sort of electrical charge to restart. CPR rarely works to restart a stopped heart. Rather, it only serves to manually force the heart to pump for as long as it is applied. The heart needs a jolt of electricity – whether internal or external – to start beating again.

A defibrillator provides that jolt of electricity. The amount of current

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES. FROM READERSDIGEST.CO.UK

delivered by an AED is enough to restart the heart but not so much as to damage the heart muscle. That makes it the perfect tool for saving a life that could otherwise be taken by cardiac arrest.

CARDIAC ARRESTS DIFFER FROM HEART ATTACKS It is important to point out that cardiac arrest is not the same thing as a heart attack. Cardiac arrest is a condition in which the heart stops beating. As you might imagine, every second that cardiac arrest continues increases the chance of serious injury or death.

A heart attack is different in a couple of ways. First, a heart attack is clinically defined as a loss of blood flow to the heart due to arterial blockage. Without sufficient blood, heart tissue begins to die. A heart attack can eventually lead to cardiac arrest if it is not treated quickly enough. However, it doesn't have to. It is entirely possible to have a mild heart attack and never experience cardiac arrest.

Why is this important to know? Because learning to recognise the signs of a heart attack could help prevent cardiac arrest. And recognising the symptoms may be enough motivation to locate an AED, just in case it is needed.

EARLY INTERVENTION Standard defibrillators and AEDs have both become more commonplace

across public buildings since it was discovered how effective they are at saving lives.

For the record, survival rates among cardiac arrest victims fall by as much as ten per cent with every minute that passes without defibrillation. Successful defibrillation within the first minute or so gives a cardiac arrest patient the highest chances of survival without injury.

SIMPLE TO USE AEDs are one of the simplest of all medical devices to use. You just have to be able to read instructions and place a couple of electrodes on the skin using adhesive patches.

Your typical AED comes in a plastic case. To use it, you open the plastic case and read the instructions printed on the inside. There should be diagrams or illustrations included in those instructions. You then place the electrodes in the right locations by peeling adhesive strips and pressing the electrode to the skin. Then you turn the device on and let it do its thing.

Because an AED is automated, it does not require your assistance once it is up and running. It automatically monitors the patient's heartbeat. If no heartbeat is detected, it delivers a controlled electrical shock before resuming monitoring. This cycle continues until the paramedics arrive.



Tricks To Fix Poor Sleep

Had a bad night? Here's how to cope the next day

BY *Lauren Gelman*

TELL YOURSELF YOU'RE NOT TIRED Dwelling on how exhausted you are may make you feel more run-down, according to a study in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*. Researchers asked 164 participants how they'd slept the previous night, then hooked them up to a sham machine that purportedly revealed to scientists their REM sleep. People who were told they had above-average REM sleep performed better on cognitive tasks than those who were told their sleep was below average, regardless of how they'd actually slept.

IGNORE YOUR CRAVINGS Fatty foods require a lot of energy to digest, leaving you even more sluggish, and sweet treats and processed carbohydrates cause your blood sugar and energy levels to spike and

crash. Try a mix of complex carbs and protein, such as porridge with fruit.

ALTERNATE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL ACTIVITY Slog away at your desk for an hour, then take a break to walk or stretch. This toggling back and forth between rest and activity usually improves alertness. Exercise "stimulates alertness in the brain and wakefulness," says sleep expert Dr Jeffrey Durmer.

CHANGE YOUR PYJAMAS If you repeatedly wake up during the night from overheating due to menopause, fevers, medical therapy or medication, rethink your sleepwear. Avoid 100% cotton and instead look for sleepwear made of 'moisture-wicking' fabric blends, such as cleancool, a moisture-absorbing fabric that has an odour-absorbing and cooling effect – triggered when you start to perspire. Try sleepwear by ChillyTowel, which offers a range of nighties and pyjamas specially designed to avoid you waking up overheated.

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

How would you rate the quality of your sleep out of 10?

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WORLD OF MEDICINE

TRAFFIC NOISE MAY IMPACT HEART HEALTH

According to a recent review of noise and cardiovascular health co-authored by cardiologist Thomas Münzel, night-time noise from planes, trains and cars affects sleep quality, stress-hormone levels and oxidative stress, which leads to cell damage. In turn, these factors promote vascular dysfunction, inflammation and hypertension.

Therefore, it's important to reduce noise pollution, perhaps with heavy curtains or by sleeping in a room that doesn't face the street.

PREVENT DIABETES WITH FRUIT – BUT NOT JUICE

A new Australian study has found people who consume two servings of fruit per day have 36 per cent lower odds of developing type 2 diabetes than those who consume less than half a serving. The five-year study, published in the Endocrine Society's *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, reported

that fruit juice didn't have the same effect, possibly because it contains more sugar and less fibre.

LOW BONE DENSITY RAISES THE RISK OF HEARING LOSS

Hearing loss is the third most common chronic health condition among adults. A Harvard teaching hospital study has discovered one common cause: the likelihood of developing moderate to severe hearing loss was up to 40 per cent higher among participants with osteoporosis or low bone density.

What's the link between brittle bones and hearing loss?

The research suggests that abnormalities in the body's ability to create new bone and remove old tissue may weaken the integrity of the bone that protects the nerves and structures involved in hearing.

Another theory is that those issues may alter the conduction of sound through the cochlea, the main structure involved in hearing.



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Best Of Buddies

It was the middle of the night, back in September 2020, when Anna Culliton was woken by a phone call. A traffic accident had killed a female wombat. Could Anna take care of her baby?

BY *Diane Godley*

In a heartbeat, 52-year-old Anna was out the door and driving to the Jenolan Caves, 20 kilometres away, to retrieve the tiny animal. When the mother wombat was hit by a vehicle, her baby, which was the size of a pear, was flung from

her pouch and sustained gravel rash to its head and torso. The tiny joey was lucky to have survived.

Anna, who originally lived in Sydney's inner-city suburb of Surry Hills, decided when she had children 25 years ago that the bush would be a better place to bring up her kids than

READER'S DIGEST

the city. So they moved due west to the Kanimbla Valley, on the western side of the Blue Mountains in the central west of New South Wales.

But what motivated this former city slicker to become a wildlife carer was the school run. As she ferried her two children along country roads each morning, she'd often have to move dead animals off the road, pulling joeys out of pouches and calling the wildlife rescue organisation to come and collect them – which caused a lot of drama from the backseat. “I'd have screaming children yelling ‘can't we keep them?!’” says Anna.

But rearing two young children was not the time to open a menagerie in her home. Anna bided her time and four years ago, when her two kids were “fully fledged”, she became a volunteer with WIRES (Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service),

Anna with Candy in her backyard in January this year



Australia's largest wildlife rescue organisation. To date, she has raised 14 orphaned wombat joeys as well as kangaroos, wallaroos, wallabies, possums, echidnas and native birds.

So Candy, as Anna would later call the joey she rescued that late September night “because she was so pink”, was in capable hands. Weighing just 394 grams, less than a tin of tomatoes, Candy was, in human terms, equivalent to a premature baby and needed immediate medical attention.

Like all marsupials, wombats are just two centimetres long when they're born – the size of a jellybean. Immediately after birth, the joey crawls into its mother's pouch where it stays for around six months until it has grown fur and ears and can waddle on its own.

Candy, a bare-nosed wombat, was about four months old when she came into Anna's care. In wildlife rescue parlance she was a ‘pinkie’ because she hadn't yet grown fur. There was no way the tiny joey, which could fit in the palm of Anna's hand, would survive outside her mother's pouch without the dedication of volunteer wildlife carers like Anna.

Anna immediately placed Candy in a humidicrib, where she stayed for six weeks and was given round-the-clock care. Every four hours, Anna would retrieve the tiny animal from her humidicrib, tuck her up on her lap and bottle feed her a special formula of

wombat-milk replacer – each bottle taking Candy an hour to finish. “It was a very slow but rewarding process,” says Anna fondly.

Anna was not only feeding Candy six times every 24 hours, she was also looking after three other wombats, two brushtail possums, and four wallaroos – all of which came into her care after road accidents. Plus, she was checking 32 surrounding properties that were treating wombats with mange – a skin condition caused by mites which is deadly to wombats if not treated.

Candy’s first two weeks with Anna were agonising because she refused to drink the formula and was losing weight fast. “Some wombat joeys take to the wombat-milk replacer right away, but not Candy,” says Anna. But once Candy was feeding regularly, she started to bulk up.

Orphaned joeys need to be looked after for between 18 months and three years before they are able to return to their natural habitat. Wombats are very affectionate creatures and if allowed, they’ll snuggle up to their human carers to get the cuddles they would otherwise have received from their mothers. Although this sounds lovely, the outcome is not in the wombat’s best interest.

A key step in the animal’s rehabilitation is finding them a buddy to create



Although initially Candy gave Ernie (top) a frosty reception, they became inseparable

Every four hours, Anna fed Candy a bottle of special wombat-milk formula

a strong animal-based bond. When the joeys are very small, human carers nurture them to replicate their mother’s love and warmth. “However we must always be aware that they are not pets and avoid humanising them, which is detrimental to a successful release outcome,” says Anna.

Wombat joeys need to be ‘buddied up’ while in care, not only so they are not ‘humanised’ but also so they can learn from each other and develop the necessary survival skills to be successfully released back into the wild.

Because much of Australia’s wildlife is nocturnal, there are countless deaths every night due to vehicle collisions. So, you would think finding

READER'S DIGEST

an orphaned wombat for a buddy would be straightforward. But like humans, wombat dynamics come into play.

Ernie came into Anna's care a month after Candy. His mother was also hit by a car, but fortunately, the motorist stopped, checked for a pouch, discovered the joey and called WIRES.

Although Ernie was a little older than Candy when he arrived at Anna's, he was severely underweight, weighing just 370 grams. "Maybe the health of his mother had been compromised in some way," says Anna. It took an agonising four weeks for Ernie's tummy to cope with the wombat-milk replacer, but eventually it did and he, too, started putting on weight.

After six weeks in humidicribs, the two joeys were moved into pouches to replicate their mothers, and placed in a portable cot in a room Anna has converted into an animal nursery. It was time to introduce the pair to each other.

While Anna was feeding one wombat, she would place the other close by. They were also next to each other during 'play time', which, like human babies, they had after finishing their bottles. But it certainly wasn't love at first sight.

"Candy was not impressed with Ernie at all," says Anna. "It took her around a month to decide he was worth knowing."



The pair at the entrance of their enclosure, a year after Anna took Candy into care

Then the magic happened and they are now inseparable. "They can play quite roughly and enjoy biting one another, which is how wombats communicate. They also like to chase each other a lot," says Anna.

At about six months of age, Candy's gravel rash sores had all healed, the wombats' top teeth had begun to appear and their velvety fur started growing. Anna moved the two animals into an outdoor enclosure where they now live full-time. "As a bonded pair they are always close to one another. They provide each other warmth and companionship, and together they are learning the skills to survive in the wild."

They are acclimatising to the outdoor environment and acquiring independent wombat skills, such as digging a burrow and 'unfriending' their human companion. >>

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Wednesday 30 and Thursday 31 March

Aware Super Theatre, International Convention Centre Sydney

With performances from Phil Burton of Human Nature, Christine Anu, Shannon Noll, Emma Pask, The Diamonds and Gary Pinto.

NSW Seniors Festival Comedy Show

Monday 28 March

Sydney Town Hall

Featuring the talents of Peter Meisel, Chris Ryan, Nick Rado, Umit Bali, Lizzie Hoo and Tommy Dean, and hosted by Jean Kitson.

More information and online events: www.seniorsfestival.nsw.gov.au

READER'S DIGEST

>> Ernie has already decided he doesn't like Anna touching or approaching him, but Candy is still affectionate towards her carer.

To protect herself from aggressive wombats, Anna has leather horse-riding chaps for her legs and a metal garbage bin lid which she can use like a shield if a wombat decides to charge. She hasn't had to use them with Ernie yet, but she has with other wombats. Anna doesn't find this behaviour discouraging, because when a wombat is aggressive towards humans it means it will be able to fend for itself in the wild.

Candy and Ernie will remain with Anna until spring 2023 and, like the other three wombats she recently released, will be given what's called a 'soft release'. This means Anna will leave the gate open to their enclosure

and continue to provide food and water so they can always come 'home' if they need to.

When the time comes to say goodbye to Candy and Ernie, Anna says she'll definitely shed a tear or two. "It's a huge moment, which is accompanied by angst and concern. They have to have all the skills, and it's my call to say they are ready," says Anna. "So it's exciting but it's horrible, too."

Anna worries about the dangers they will face when they leave her, such as catching mange, being attacked by foxes, and being hit by a car - which happened to one of the wombats she raised.

"Looking after orphaned wildlife is a journey that takes patience and dedication," says Anna. She has both qualities in spades. **R**

REHABILITATING AND PRESERVING WILDLIFE

WIRES is a wildlife charity that has been rescuing and caring for wildlife in regional and metropolitan NSW for more than 35 years. Every year WIRES trains new volunteers and provides ongoing training for the 3000-plus existing volunteers. Training includes online and face-to-face learning on animal identification, rescue, first aid, policies and licensing.

WIRES receives more than 170,000 calls every year. The charity actively assists native animals in NSW, and plays a major role in national community wildlife education. Just like Candy and Ernie, WIRES needs partners to thrive. "Everyone would love to care for a wombat joey until they see what they do to their garden," laughs WIRES media officer John Grant. But there are many other ways you can help injured and orphaned wildlife.

For more information, visit www.wires.org.au



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“I suddenly realised I didn’t have tinnitus anymore!”

*Kelvin Fleming,
panel beater*



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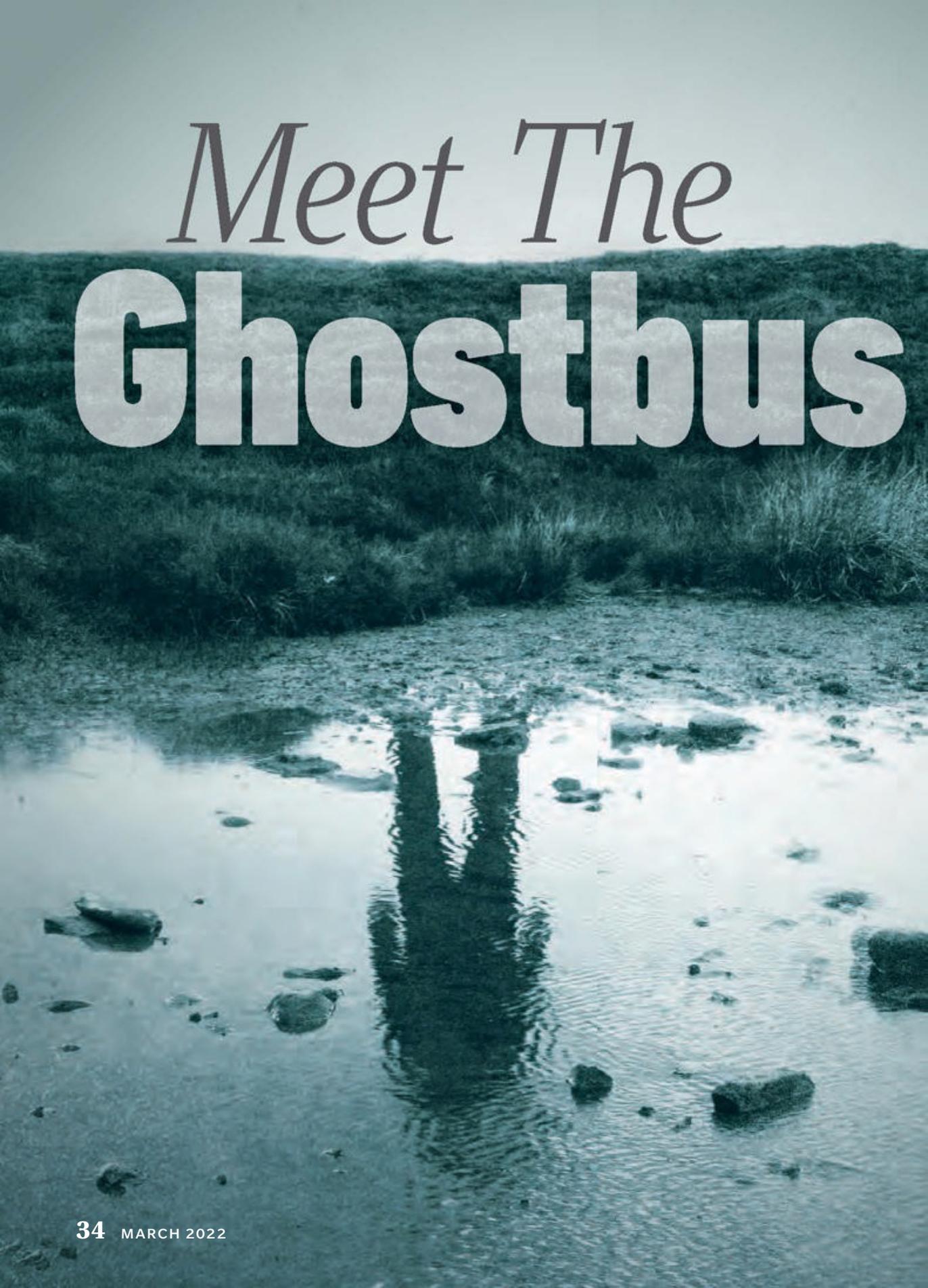
Effective Tinnitus Relief – at last!

Every year millions of people visit their doctors complaining of tinnitus (ringing in the ears), and most are told that they just have to learn to live with it. Affecting approximately 20% of the population, tinnitus is a stressful condition that can cause sleeplessness, anxiety and social isolation. It is often accompanied by dizziness, sound sensitivity, blocked-ear or hearing loss.

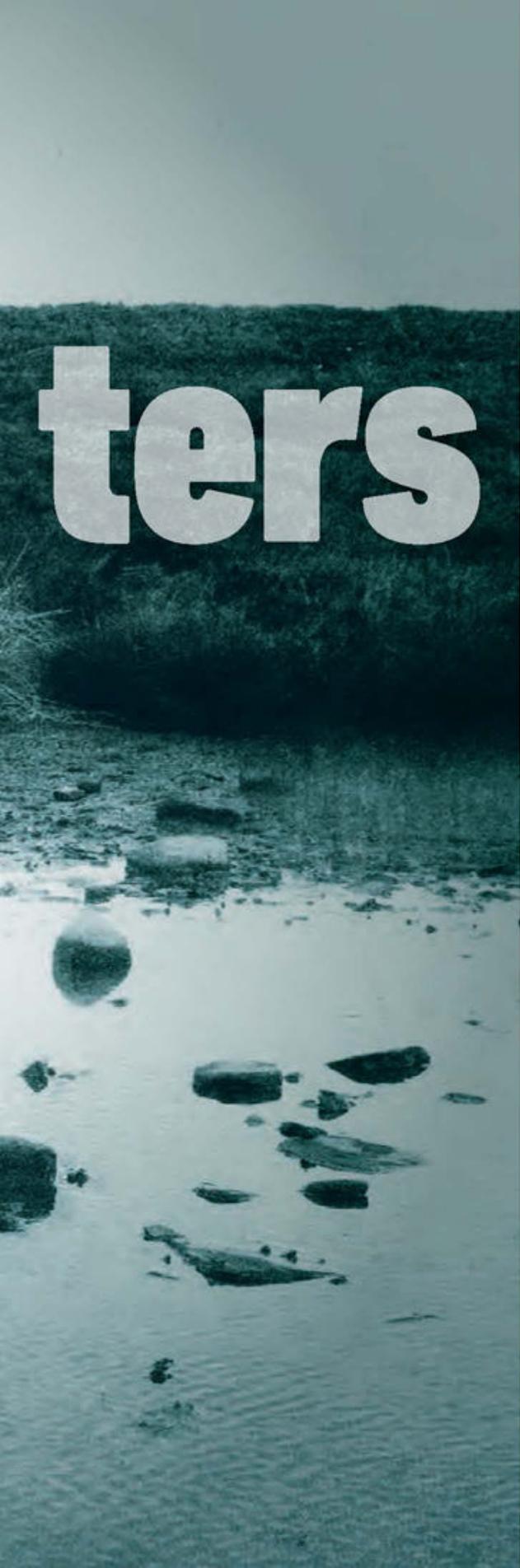
Now there is a home-based treatment which comes from new research on the ear and brain. It uses high frequency stimulation, through music, to re-build and organise brain connections. The result, for most listeners, is relief or reduction of tinnitus and related conditions.

Benefits can also include better sleep, clearer hearing, better memory, relief of dizziness and vertigo and a general feeling that the brain is sharper and communication is easier.

For a free DVD and information pack call the Sound Therapy national enquiry line on 1300 55 77 96.



Meet The
Ghostbus



ters

While some dismiss it completely out of hand, others believe inexplicably in the spirit world. We ask the experts to weigh in

BY *Helen Foster*

According to a recent survey, 48 per cent of Australians believe in ghosts. But are the spirits that may walk among us actually the souls of the departed, or the result of more down-to-earth phenomena? While science and spirits might not seem to go hand in hand, you'll be surprised how many evidence-based explanations for spooky sightings there are. We ask some ghostbusters in white coats for alternative ideas about why things might go bump in the night.

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

THE SLEEP EXPERT

Sleep paralysis is a condition where you wake at night unable to move. It affects around 20 per cent of people at some point and sleep specialist Dr Baland Jalal from Harvard University in the US feels it could explain some ghost sightings. "The stage of sleep called REM sleep is when we have our most vivid dreams and, to protect us from acting these out, we go into a state of paralysis," he says. "If you wake up at this point you can see and hear, but your body can't move. And, our research has found that about 40 per cent of people start to see things when this happens."

The sightings are the brain trying to make sense of this. It's telling your arms and legs to move and expecting feedback from them as to where they are 'in space'. When it doesn't get that feedback, cells in the brain called mirror neurons start to draw a picture of what should be happening. "And in its confusion we can visualise this image as something in front of us," says Dr Jalal. "Some people experience this as an out-of-body experience, where they look down upon themselves in bed, others impose another explanation - you're seeing a ghost."

The good news is you can treat sleep paralysis with a four-step method Dr Jalal has created: the first step of which is just closing your eyes so the mirror neurons can't create their picture. Without this the 'ghost' can't appear.

THE COGNITIVE SPECIALIST

If you've ever looked at a cloud or building and seen a face, you might be more prone to seeing ghosts. The ability, known as pareidolia, is your brain's way of creating patterns from randomness and, according to psychologist Toby Prike from the University of Western Australia, those who are good at it might also be more prone to seeing ghosts. "Humans are primed to see faces as it's important to quickly read information from them, and if you're a good pattern observer, you'll be more likely to ascribe forms or faces to something like a shadow than someone else. Your brain then fills in the gaps to make it a ghost."

And it's not just sight that might be affected. Researchers at the UK's Durham University have also found that some people's brains are tuned to pick up speech patterns from random noise, which might explain spooky voices, too.

THE PLANT PATHOLOGIST

Conjure up an image of a haunted house and you probably think of somewhere dark, mouldy and a bit run down - which led researchers at Clarkson University in the US to suggest that mould might be behind some spook sightings.

"It's a really interesting idea; some moulds do give off biotoxins that can affect the health and the brain," says



IF YOU'RE ABLE TO SEE A FACE OR PATTERN IN A CLOUD, YOU ARE MORE PRONE TO SEEING GHOSTS

Jordan Bailey, curator for the New South Wales Plant Pathology and Mycology Herbarium. “There is a fungus called *aspergillus fumigatus* which can produce hallucinogens – and it does grow quite nicely on latex paints in homes, although I don’t know of many old houses painted in those.”

He points out that if you’re breathing in enough spores to cause hallucinations, you’re probably quite sick with other symptoms. But people see what they want to see, he says, “and if someone *is* starting to suffer from neurological problems of mould toxicity, like brain fog, sleep problems or depression, they might be more impressionable.”

Meet The Ghostbusters

However, you wouldn’t just walk into a haunted house, breathe in some mould and ‘see a ghost,’ he says.

THE GRIEF COUNSELLOR

Around 50 per cent of widowers experience some kind of ‘visit’ from their loved one after their death. These encounters normally fit something researchers call the four Rs: reassurance from the deceased that they are OK; resolving – allowing for forgiveness or closure; reaffirming connections; and/or release.

“This is a normal part of the grieving process,” says grief counsellor Eugenie Pepper from Sydney. “The idea that someone is lost to us forever is huge, sometimes too huge to accept, and so the brain may protect us by creating this ongoing connection after death.”

Pepper says she’s heard enough stories of unusual encounters to make her think that perhaps sometimes something more spiritual is going on. “There’s a famous exercise in psychology where you’re told to concentrate on some people throwing balls and halfway through a gorilla appears. Because they’re told to watch the balls, most people don’t see the gorilla – until they are told about it.”

READER'S DIGEST

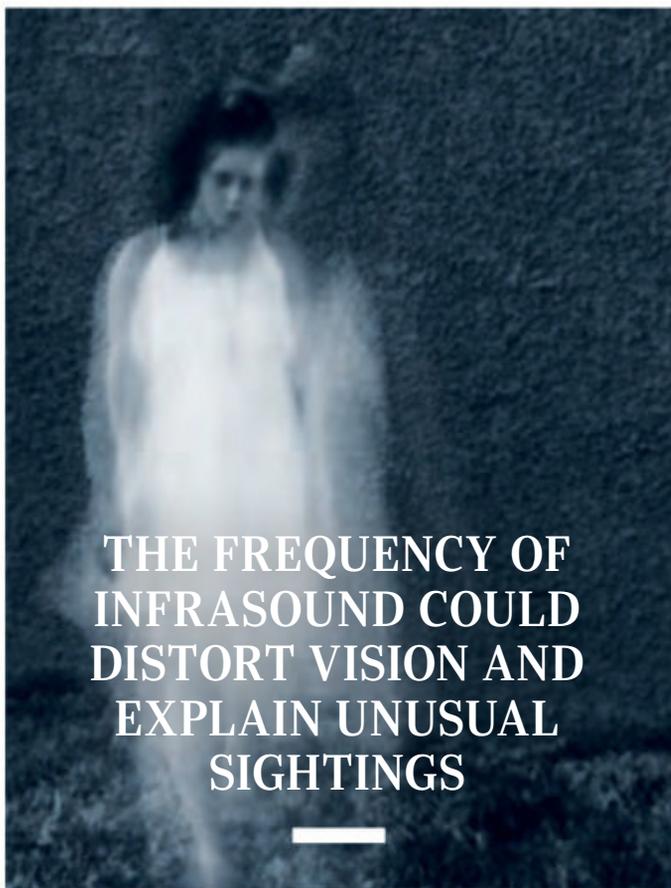
She says that sometimes she wonder if this is the case with ghosts. "Maybe they are there and we ignore them. Only when we deeply want to see something does it become visible."

THE SOUND SPECIALISTS

Infrasound has a frequency of under 20 Hertz, below the range of human hearing. Although we can't hear infrasound, it can affect our body causing discomfort, dizziness, blurred vision and panic attacks. In the 1990s, infrasound was linked to ghosts after British engineer Vic Tandy felt a sense of unease and saw a figure he couldn't explain in a laboratory he was working in. Eventually, he realised a recently installed fan, which was emitting vibrations at 19 Hertz, was to blame. But once the same frequency was discovered in a 'haunted' pub, the theory of infrasound causing hauntings was born.

It's a controversial idea. "I've studied infrasound for years and it gets blamed for a lot of things that are actually caused by other issues," says Norman Broner from the Australian Acoustical Society.

But it is true that a few experiments have shown a change in people's feeling upon exposure to infrasound. In a study by Professor Richard Wiseman from the UK's University of Hertfordshire, 22 per cent of people said they



THE FREQUENCY OF INFRASOUND COULD DISTORT VISION AND EXPLAIN UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

felt uneasy listening to music 'spiked' with infrasound.

There's a few reasons why this might occur. A study at Max Planck Institute in Germany found that infrasound exposure triggered activity in the amygdala, a part of the brain involved with stress and fear.

"There's also some evidence that the frequency of infrasound might cause vibration of the head and neck which could distort vision and explain unusual sightings," says Professor Wiseman. But even he admits there may be a level of suggestion about how the feelings are interpreted.

"If you walked into a modern building and suddenly felt uneasy,

you might ignore it. But walk into an old Scottish castle with a reputation and feel the same thing, that's a ghost," he says.

THE PSYCHOLOGISTS

People who believe in ghosts are more likely to see them (not surprisingly), but there are also other personality traits that psychologist Neil Dagnall from Manchester Metropolitan University in the UK associates with people he names 'ghost-experiencers'. "They tend to be less tolerant of ambiguity and look for solutions for unknown occurrences/sensations rather than ignore them," he says. "They are also higher in imagination and creativity than other people."

The combination is a recipe for attributing ordinary things to spooky causes.

Loneliness has also been associated with a greater chance of seeing ghosts. Reports of home hauntings increased during Melbourne's long lockdown and New York saw a similar rise.

Asked why by *The New York Times*, psychologist Professor Kurt Gray from the University of North Carolina blamed it on a combination of pandemic stress and isolation.

"If you're trapped at home needing human contact, it's comforting to think there might be a supernatural agent there with you."

Although we guess that depends on how friendly they are! **R**

Meet The Ghostbusters

5 SPOOKY SPOTS TO VISIT – OR AVOID AT ALL COSTS

Changi Beach, Singapore

Scene of a military massacre during WWII, visitors to the beach claim to hear the cries of soldiers and even see bloodstains appear on the sand.

Monte Cristo Homestead, Australia

This Victorian-era home in Junee, NSW, has had at least four deaths at the property – and it seems the victims haven't left! You can stay overnight but be warned, sceptics are apparently visited more often than believers.

Kellie's Castle, Perak, Malaysia

This folly close to Ipoh has underground tunnels, impressive architecture and at least four ghosts, including its former owner William Kellie Smith and his young daughter, who still runs around her bedroom. The identity of who haunts the wine cellar is unknown.

The Vulcan Hotel, New Zealand

The ghost of a murdered prostitute is said to haunt this hotel in Saint Bathans, Otago. Some male guests said they experienced a feeling of being held down at night.

Nam Koo Terrace, Hong Kong

Now abandoned, this was once used as a military brothel and is reportedly haunted by a number of women. Its spooky reputation grew after rumours that some schoolgirls who snuck in to stay overnight were so distressed they needed psychiatric treatment afterwards.

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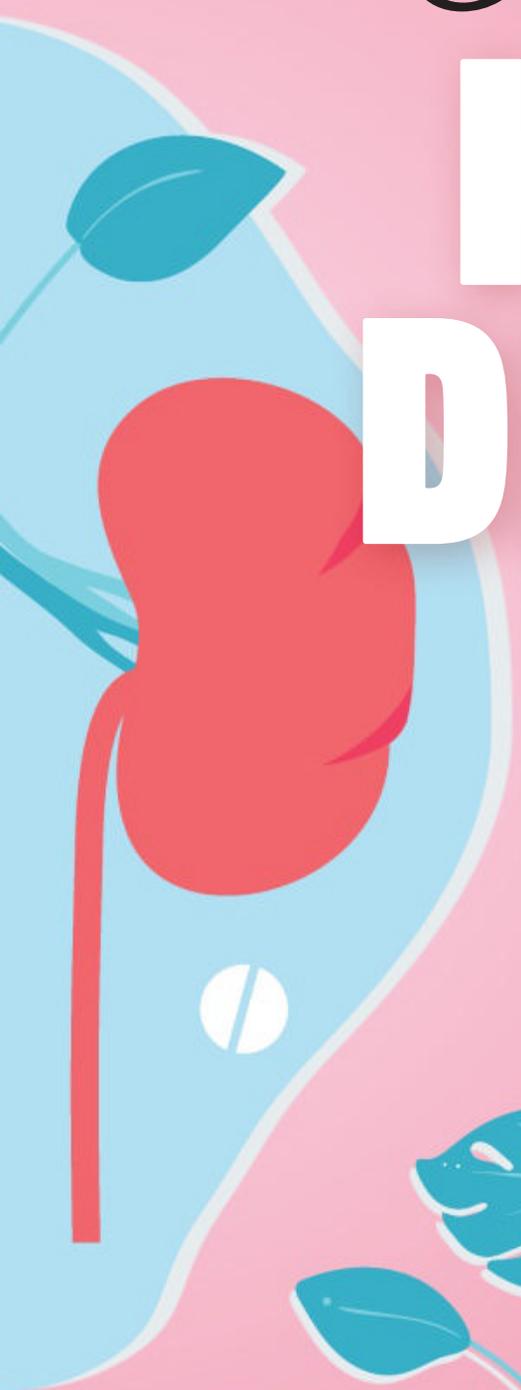
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HEALTH



An illustration on the left side of the page shows a stylized human torso in light blue. A large, red, bean-shaped kidney is highlighted within the torso. A red tube, representing the ureter, extends downwards from the kidney. Below the kidney, a white pill with a blue diagonal line is shown. To the right of the kidney, there are several teal-colored leaves with white veins, some of which have holes, resembling Monstera leaves. The background is a solid light pink color.

Outsmart Kidney Disease

Symptoms are elusive. Here's what you need to know

BY Zoë Meunier

While visiting the doctor about a nose bleed in 2017, Carey Penn, then 44, from Hamilton, New Zealand, mentioned he'd been feeling a bit tired lately, so his doctor ran some tests. Carey wasn't overly concerned — as a fit and active guy, he had put his fatigue down to his busy life as the managing director of an industrial electrical and automation services company and a father to young children.

"Two days later I got a message saying, 'You'd better come in on Monday, because you've got stage 4 renal failure,'" Carey recalls.

Like most of us would, Carey and his wife Gemma explored Google in the meantime to learn more. "Of course, you find all the worst stories online, and I remember sitting there with my wife with tears streaming down both our faces, thinking, '*what did I do to deserve this?*'"

Though many people don't realise they have it, kidney disease doesn't discriminate: it affects men and women of all ages and ethnicities. Last year, it became the tenth-ranked cause of death worldwide, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), rising from 13th place in 2019.

In Australia and New Zealand, one

in ten non-Indigenous people have evidence of chronic kidney disease, with the figure substantially higher in the Indigenous community.

Why is it so prevalent? Because the two most common causes of the disease are hypertension – high blood pressure – and diabetes, and these have become more widespread, in tandem with the obesity epidemic. Less-common causes include infections and genetic conditions; kidney stones can also raise risk for chronic kidney



Most people don't know how important their two kidneys are to overall health

disease.

Kidney disease is defined by a couple of parameters, explains Dr Karen Dwyer, clinical director of Kidney Health Australia.

If kidney function drops below 60 per cent and that is present for at

least three months, it's evidence of kidney dysfunction or chronic kidney disease. Other signs might be losing protein in the urine or blood in the urine.

Most people don't know how important their two kidneys are to overall health. When they're functioning properly, these organs filter waste and excess fluid out of the bloodstream, turning it into urine. But excess sugar in your blood as a result of diabetes damages your kidneys' filters over time.

"When you have diabetes and you get high blood sugar levels, blood vessels become very stiff and thick, so the kidney is not getting as much blood supply and therefore oxygen as it would normally," explains Dr Dwyer.

"And uncontrolled high blood pressure can eventually cause arteries around the kidneys to narrow, weaken or harden, making it difficult for them to deliver enough blood to kidney tissue."

There's also a significant link between chronic kidney disease and heart disease. Of people with chronic kidney disease, "more people will die of cardiovascular disease than actually progress to kidney failure, that's how strong the link is," says Dr Dwyer. "That's why early detection is so important; it's slowing the progression of kidney disease, protecting the heart, and protecting from premature death."



Stage 4 renal failure: Carey Penn

SCREENING

After age 50, the kidneys gradually become less efficient, and after age 60, a moderate loss of function can be normal, as long as there are no other signs of kidney disease.

Because chronic kidney disease is often asymptomatic and you can lose so much kidney function before you do get symptoms, Dr Dwyer says it's really important to be proactive about screening for kidney disease.

"If you can identify that someone has chronic kidney disease, there's data to show that we can slow its progression by up to 50 per cent by putting certain measures in place, which is really significant."

Fortunately, a kidney screening test is simple: it involves a blood test, urine test and blood pressure check. Dr Dwyer advises it for anyone at

READER'S DIGEST

risk, which for starters, is anyone over the age of 60.

“But at any age, if you have diabetes or high blood pressure, you definitely need to be screened,” she says. Other risk factors include if you're a smoker, overweight, have known heart disease or have had an acute kidney injury in the past.

TREATMENT

Depending on the severity, people may simply need to monitor their condition and look at lifestyle factors, such as diet, physical activity, quitting smoking or limiting salt in the diet. If medications are required, they include ACE inhibitors and ARBs, two classes of blood-pressure-lowering medication that slow down or prevent further kidney damage.

A newer drug class, SGLT2 inhibitors, are prescribed for diabetes and limit the body's absorption of salt, which helps kidney function.

Even with these measures in place, however, kidney function can continue to decline and progress to 'kidney failure'. This is when kidney function is at around ten per cent, dependent on other factors.

“That's usually when we'll start to talk about things like dialysis or

transplantation,” Dr Dwyer explains.

When Carey – whose kidney failure was brought about by IgA nephropathy – was first diagnosed, his kidney function was 24 per cent and at his regular check-ups, it continued to plummet.

“At 19 per cent I was still doing 50-kilometre cross country mountain bike events,” he says, “then it dropped to 14 per cent in November 2019, then 9 per cent in December. My consultant explained that when your kidney is running at 20 per cent, that 20 per cent is doing 100 per cent of what a normal

kidney does, so it's like running a motor at full revs constantly, which means it's going to fail sooner.” By February 2020, Carey's kidney function was at five per cent and he was instructed to start dialysis.

Dialysis does what kidneys should do: remove waste, salt and extra water to prevent them from

building up in the body; keep potassium and sodium at safe levels; and help control blood pressure.

There are two different kinds of dialysis, haemodialysis – in which blood is pumped out of your body to an artificial kidney machine and returned to your body by tubes that connect you to the machine – and



Dialysis does what kidneys should do: remove waste, salt and extra water to prevent them from building up

peritoneal dialysis – in which the inside lining of your own belly acts as a natural filter. For this method, a catheter is surgically placed in your belly, through which a sterile cleansing fluid flows in and out.

For Carey, the choice was simple. “When I saw the size of the needles for haemo, there was no question, I’m was doing peritoneal dialysis!”

It was a bumpy ride for Carey though, who was already feeling very unwell by then. His body reacted against the first fluid used, and he had to have a second operation to insert a new catheter after experiencing something called ‘drain pain’. He then ended up in an emergency ward after fluid leaked from the tube site. But he eventually got into a routine, varying between doing a manual bag exchange and using a ‘cyclor’ machine, which cycles the litres out at night.

“While the cyclor was great because it meant you didn’t do any dialysis during the day, at night time you didn’t get a good sleep because you were hooked up to a machine that was pumping fluid in and out of you,” he says.

For Jenny Skentzos, 55, from Sydney, starting haemodialysis was quite overwhelming. While the outgoing executive assistant had lived with chronic kidney disease for over a decade, her kidney decline had been very slow and had had little impact on her life. Then in October 2019, she



Jenny Skentzos has lived with chronic kidney disease for over a decade

experienced symptoms such as “foggy brain, itchy skin, metallic taste in the mouth, body aches and pains”.

“I was so tired, I couldn’t remember anything and was having trouble stringing sentences together,” she recalls. “After always being really get-up-and-go, I would have to lie on a couch for two days straight. My whole life changed.”

Within two weeks, Jenny started on dialysis and says it was initially “just so much to deal with” that she got the nurses to do everything for her in hospital. But as she became more familiar with it, she received “very military, precise training” to teach her how to dialyse at home, which she has now become adept at. Even so, she admits it’s “a very big commitment”.

“I’m on the machine for five hours – it takes about one-and-a-half hours

to set up, and just under an hour to come off, so you're looking at seven-and-a-half hours minimum, every second to third day," says Jenny. "It's hard, you've just got to fit it into your lifestyle. If I've been invited out for dinner with the girls, I need to think, *Right, when am I going to dialyse?* because there's no way I'm giving up a night out!"

DONOR TRANSPLANT

Carey's life has come full circle after receiving a live donor transplant from his friend Peter in July 2021.

"He came around one night and said, 'I want to donate my kidney,'" recalls Carey. "He said, 'I've been through all the stats, there's a 0.03 per cent chance of something going wrong. If something happens to my [remaining] kidney, my sister has offered to donate to me, and my partner and my daughter are on board."

Carey says he was amazed that somebody was willing to do "such a selfless act of going through major surgery and removing an organ from their body and giving it to somebody else. I just feel so lucky that someone would do that for me."

While the surgery also came with

its share of complications, both Peter and Carey have recovered and Carey continues to get stronger by the day.

For those who don't have any opportunities for a live donor, such as Jenny, a deceased donor is the only option.

"I'm on the list for a transplant, so I guess it's just a matter of waiting for one to come up," she says. "The hardest part is the wait. It's soul crushing."

"The average time to be on the waiting list does vary from year to year, depending on all sorts of factors,"

says Dr Dwyer, "but it's somewhere around 3.5 to four years, though it's not uncommon for people to wait seven or more years."

"You hear of some people who are waiting nine years, 13 years," says Jenny, "and you think, *I don't know how I'm going to do this.* But the alternative doesn't bear thinking about."



Fortunately, you can take steps to help lower your risk of kidney disease, such as watching your salt intake

REDUCE YOUR RISK

Fortunately, you can take steps to help lower your risk of kidney disease. Aside from controlling high blood pressure, avoiding diabetes and maintaining a healthy weight, see your doctor regularly.

And it's important for anyone, not

just kidney patients, to watch their salt intake. Excess salt raises blood pressure and makes kidneys work harder. Consuming fewer than five grams of salt a day could save 2.5 million lives annually.

Because most salt we consume is in prepackaged foods, WHO member states have agreed to help reduce their population's salt intake by 30 per cent by 2025, and have instituted policies to reduce salt in packaged foods and restaurant meals.

There are two more things of which to be aware. Firstly, ask your doctor if you should avoid NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) painkillers. One recent study found that 41 per cent of people with kidney disease took NSAIDs, not realising the damage they could cause.

Secondly, avoid smoking; it damages blood vessels and speeds up the deterioration of the kidneys. People who don't smoke are more likely to preserve kidney function. **R**

PAYING IT FORWARD

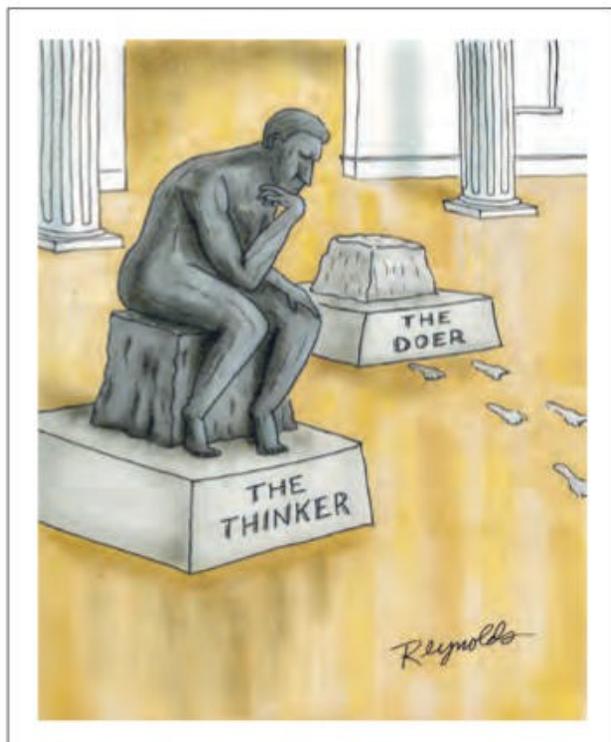
Carey Penn found being stuck in one location while doing a manual bag exchange very frustrating so with the help of his friends at Mitchell Race Extreme (MRX), he designed a mobile stand that gave him the freedom to move around at home or work. He went on to manufacture ten of these stands, which he donated to the renal unit at Waikato Hospital on New Zealand's North Island. The stands are loaned to other dialysis patients so they can also enjoy that freedom. "I really just wanted to do it to help people," he explains.

Above: Staff at the Renal Unit at Waikato Hospital. Right: Patients using the mobile stands



LIFE'S LIKE THAT

Seeing The Funny Side



Winners And Losers

When I played games with my son Luke, aged seven, I used to let him win. But then I decided he should learn that in life things don't always go your way. So I won the next game. This clearly bothered him.

In the supermarket later that day he said in a loud voice, while in a long queue to the cashier, "Don't beat me again, Mummy. I don't like it." I got some very suspicious looks!

SUBMITTED BY AVA JACOBS

Follow The Scent

While working in our garden, my partner and I noticed the most beautiful floral scent. Trying to determine the source, we sniffed every plant, weed and shrub around us. Finally, my partner exclaimed, "I found it! The neighbour's spin-dryer is running and it's coming from their vent."

SUBMITTED BY LINDA LEVERMAN

Remember When?

"Yeah, but that was only one or two years ago."

Me, talking about anything that happened between 1991 and 2019.

ANNE T. DONAHUE, AUTHOR

Cow-herd

Outside the ladies' and men's toilets of a Texas-themed steak house, I found a confused and anxious young woman who sighed with relief when she saw me.

"Oh, I'm so glad you're here," she said. "I was afraid to enter. I don't know whether I am a steer or a heifer."

SUBMITTED BY CHRISTINE LOONEY

Timely Reminder

My husband surprised me with a night out to celebrate the anniversary of our first date. I was reminded of the man I fell in love with. We arrived at the cinema and discovered that the movie we were supposed to be watching had started an hour earlier at a different location. I was reminded of the man I married.

@GOODSHEWRITES

Closing The Books

Mum, who is 94 and an avid reader, was perusing a list of new books from the public library when she noted disappointedly, "I never see familiar authors on these lists."

My ever-helpful husband explained, "That's because Louisa May Alcott died."

SUBMITTED BY COLLEEN WEBER

LINGUISTIC GOOFS

I collect malapropisms (misused words). Some good ones include: 'Sitting back on one's hinges' and 'Bull in a china closet'.

My favourite came in response to a first-aid questionnaire handed out by my women's group. To the question: "If someone was choking, what would you do?" one person wrote, "I would perform the Hamlet Manoeuvre."

SUBMITTED BY VIRGINIA COOK



THE GREAT TWEET OFF: MOVIES EDITION

Grab some popcorn as Twitter goes to the cinem-ha!

The tenth *Fast and Furious* movie should be called *Fast 10: Your Seatbelts*.

@SOPHIEKEEN

Jurassic Park is a movie about how just because something is great it doesn't mean you should bring it back, and it has three sequels.

@MEAKOOPA

Don't call me "honey" and expect it to soften the fact that you SHRUNK THE KIDS.

@BROTIGUPTA

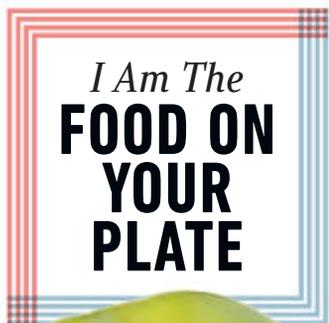
The mayor in *Jaws* is still the mayor in *Jaws 2*. It is so important to vote in your local elections.

@ADAMGODELL

My question is, did Disney come up with the movie and then the name, or did someone just think of the pun 'Aristocats' and design the entire movie around it?

@MEMANTULA





I Am Olive Oil...

Beware of imposters and spoilers

BY *Kate Lowenstein and Daniel Gritzer*

In early 2017, a special unit of the Italian police arrested 33 members of the 'Ndrangheta, an organised crime group based in the Calabria region. The offence for which the men were apprehended did not involve selling drugs, committing murder or laundering money (although the group is known for those things, too). It was about me, olive oil.

This notorious Italian mafia had been taking low-quality olive mash, called pomace, and selling it in the US as the good stuff - extra virgin - making millions of dollars in the process.

This isn't the first time I have been at the centre of high drama; in fact, that's been part of my deal for millennia. Take the Hanukkah story - the one in which the Jews had only one night's worth of lamp oil but, miraculously, it lasted eight. That was me, back when I was more important as a source of light than as a food.

I've also been used as perfume, skin lotion, hair ointment and even a cleaning agent. The ancient Romans had no soap, so instead they'd slather me all over their bodies and then scrape the oil off with a dull blade called a strigil. I was used similarly in ancient Greece, where the sweaty, dirty scrapings from the bodies of elite athletes would be collected and sold as a medicine believed to reduce inflammation and other maladies. I give myself a lot of credit on the health front, but I don't think I really did much good like that.

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

Much more recently, I've been categorised into quality grades based on processing methods and levels of free oleic acid (the lower the level, the more pristine the oil). Extra-virgin olive oil, or EVOO, has the lowest oleic acid and the best flavour; it's good raw in dressings or as a cooking oil. Virgin olive oil has higher oleic acid but can work as a frying oil. However, refined olive oil (referred to as 'pure', 'classic' or simply olive oil) is so heavily processed it's better for lubricating machinery than for use in food.

Instances of fraud aside, high-quality EVOO can be difficult to find, as there's little guarantee that I will still be in good form when you open the bottle. Time and heat can degrade my taste and health benefits and bring me closer to full-on rancidity. Best-by dates often give more than two years for the oil in the bottle, but that assumes good storage conditions, which are far from guaranteed in many places. How do you avoid such pitfalls? There's no easy answer, but look for bottles that have a best-by date that's as far into the future as possible, which suggests it's fresher.

Avoid super cheap EVOO. Because light speeds oxidation, steer clear of clear bottles; any company serious about my quality will sell me in dark glass or tin. Look for companies with

a shorter supply chain by buying from a specialty shop that has a direct relationship with the farmers, or from bigger (often more affordable) producers that have a transparent process.

It's also smart to skip those giant jugs of me unless you're sure you'll use me up within a couple of months, as I go rancid rapidly once my container is opened. Good versions of me can taste herbal, grassy, almondy, artichoke-y, green tomato-ish and peppery, while some varieties are floral, some mild and others spicy.

Among my main sources of bitterness are the antioxidants known as polyphenols. An oil isn't inherently higher quality if it's bitter, though that might be indicative of more

health benefits. In general, I'm one of the healthiest oils you can eat, courtesy of my low ratio of saturated fats and high proportion of heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, which tend to be more plentiful than in other vegetable oils.

My uses in the kitchen are vast, but I'm most handy for oiling a pan before sautéing and for making simple sauces, vinaigrettes and marinades. I have a distinctive flavour, so using me in a dish is a question of whether you want my flavour in your food. If the answer is no – say, if you're making a cake or a vegetable stir-fry – a more neutral oil might be a better fit.

**ANY COMPANY
SERIOUS ABOUT
EVOO QUALITY
WILL SELL ME IN
DARK GLASS OR TIN**

READER'S DIGEST

If you've read much about oils for cooking, their smoke point – the temperature at which the oil begins to visibly emit bluish smoke, a sign of the oil degrading as harmful free radicals form – has likely come up. EVOO has a relatively low smoke point as cooking oils go, somewhere in the 160-180°C range.

It'd be easy to conclude that EVOO should therefore be avoided for

frying, but this isn't necessarily the case. Thanks to my high antioxidants, I am also a very stable oil, so while my smoke point is low, I resist free-radical formation quite well, making me, counterintuitively, a pretty decent oil for frying. But of course, that assumes you're getting the real me and not some cheap knock-off. **R**



GARLIC-HERB OIL DIP

- In a small bowl, stir together:
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil;
- 2 finely minced cloves garlic;
- ½ tsp finely minced fresh rosemary needles;
- ½ tsp finely minced fresh oregano leaves;
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper flakes, and ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper.
- Leave to infuse for at least 15 minutes and up to 1 hour before serving with fresh crusty bread.
- Garlic-herb oil can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to two days.



Artist Takes Money And Runs

A Danish artist who was paid by a museum to create artwork has submitted two empty canvases titled *Take The Money And Run*. Jens Haaning was given the equivalent of nearly \$US84,000 by the Kunsten Museum of Modern Art in Aalborg. The artist said the blank canvases were a commentary on poor wages. Although not satisfied with the explanation, it didn't stop the museum from displaying the canvases – and trying to reclaim its fee from the artist. AP

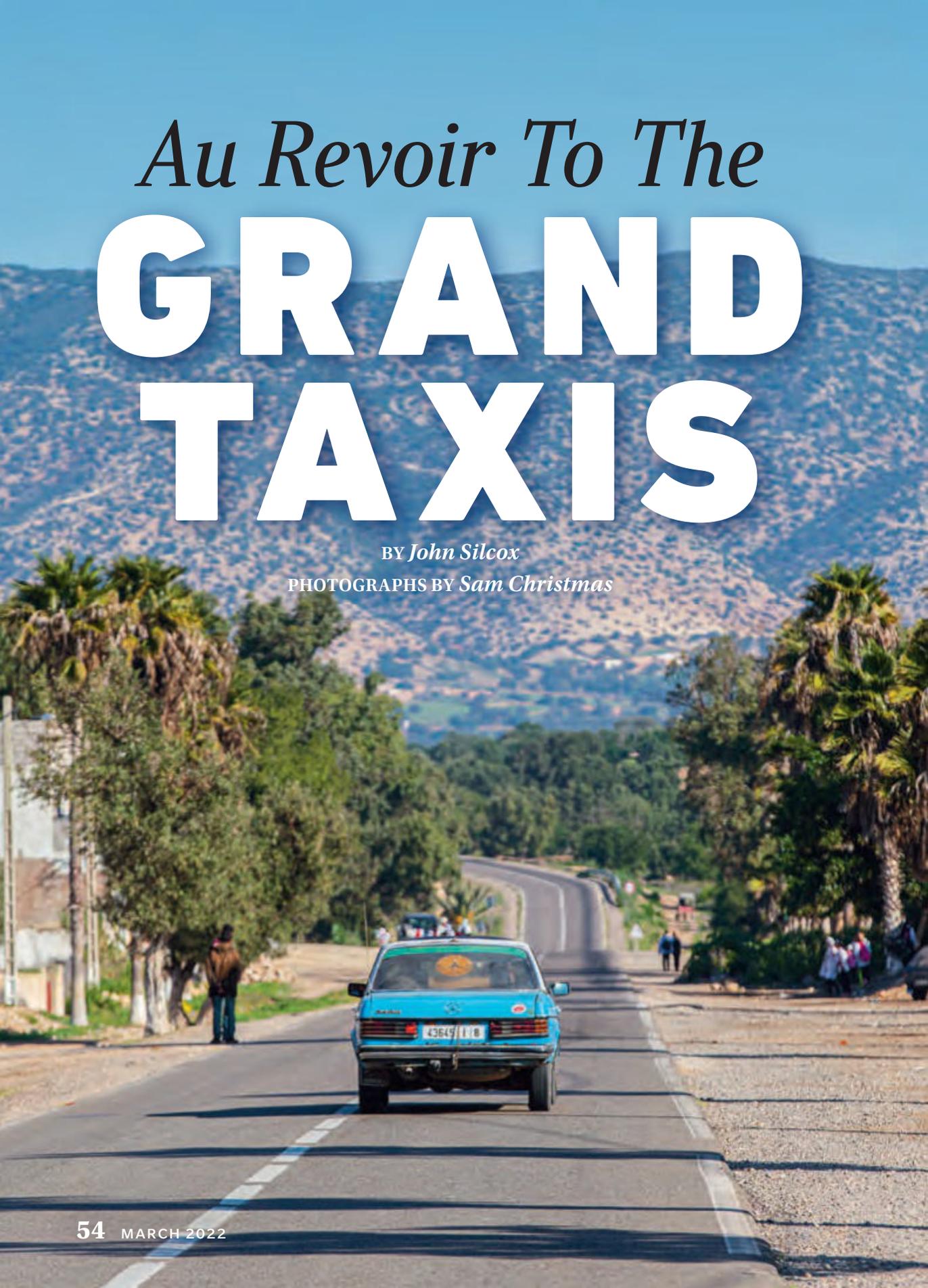
weber. 

Thank you
Australia



For every year there has been an award for barbecues, Weber has been voted by Australians as the Most Trusted Barbecue brand. So, thank you Australia.

www.weber.com/au



Au Revoir To The
**GRAND
TAXIS**

BY *John Silcox*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY *Sam Christmas*

In Morocco, locals travel by Grand Taxis, battered but colourful old diesel Mercedes that never let them down. With the government trying to force these cars off the streets, we hitch a ride to understand their cultural significance, while shedding light on the legacy of the West's new car market and the rapid expansion of North African automotive production



End Of An Era

Morning at Essaouira's Place des Grand Taxis is a unique scene. Long before daybreak, drivers start demisting cracked windscreens with filthy wads of old newspaper while oil-covered mechanics coax weary engines back to life through clouds of blue smoke. Groups of travellers huddle together, dotted among cars. They are waiting for a ride, their faces concealed from the cold by hooded woolen cloaks called djellabas.

Along the many lines of battered and bruised diesel relics being readied to hit the road, one in particular stands out. It's a 1974 Mercedes Stroke 8 belonging to Hassan Mesfar, a well-known character in the neighbourhood.

Back in England, a car of this vintage would most likely grace a motor museum, but in Morocco it's just another rolling ruin, albeit one that boasts the dubious honour of being the oldest taxi in town.



Au Revoir To The Grand Taxis

Far from being unique, this car is among thousands of Mercedes 240Ds from the 1970s and '80s that have spent their twilight years in the sun, shipped over when deemed too old for the European market.

Here they are woven into the fabric of society, providing an essential long-distance travel link for locals as well as a colourful snapshot for tourists, much like the old cars in Cuba.

Sadly, the days of the Mercedes Grand Taxis are now numbered, as

the Moroccan government is keen to rid them from the country's roads. In 2014, it launched an incentive scheme offering Grand Taxi drivers 80,000 Diram (A\$12,000) to scrap their old vehicles. So far, more than half of the 45,000 Grand Taxis in service have been updated thanks to this programme; something the government aims to increase to 100 per cent this year.

"It's the end of an era," says Mesfar. "The government is offering us money to update our cars for shiny new ones but they're not the same as my old Mercedes. It's the best car I have ever driven – so solid, so reliable, so comfortable – and it never lets me down. That's why around here we call them *Merci dix*."

In Moroccan French this literally translates as "thanks times ten", but there's also a play on words with the local pronunciation of Mercedes as *Mersids*, which Mesfar delivers with a smile and a shake of the hand.

Vital Link

It's easy to understand why the Grand Taxis play such a vital link in the country's long-distance transport system when you consider there is, on average, just one private car registered for ten Moroccans. There is also a near complete lack of public transport alternatives.

The Place des Grand Taxis is more than a simple taxi rank: it's a main transport hub and every city in the



READER'S DIGEST

1600-kilometre long country has one. They are all organised in a similar manner: a chief broker, usually found in a prominent position surrounded by assistants, orchestrates operations. Travellers going to a particular city up north are ushered into one taxi, those going south into another and so forth. And then, when all the seats in a car are taken, it can set off.

“Look at the green taxi parked over there,” says Mesfar. “That’s stayed overnight from Taroudant and that one over there is from Rabat, as it’s white. Each city in Morocco has its own taxi colour scheme that makes it easy to spot.”

Essaouria boasts a unique shade of blue that originally came from crushed seashells. Nearly everything in the city has been painted with

it: from horse-drawn carriages to people’s front doors – even the Petit Taxis. Most Moroccan cities chose different colours to differentiate Petit Taxis, which are smaller cars (usually French hatchbacks) that are only allowed to take a maximum of two passengers on much shorter rides within the urban perimeter.

The World’s Scrapyard

“In the 1980s Africa started to experience an influx of second-hand Mercedes cars,” says Flavien Neuvy, an economist specialising in the African automobile industry. “Moroccan taxi drivers simply started catching on to what cab owners in Europe had understood: diesel Mercedes were built to last.”

Mesfar’s Mercedes W114 Stroke 8



IN THE 1980s AFRICA STARTED TO EXPERIENCE AN INFLUX OF SECOND-HAND MERCEDES



model was a game-changer for the Stuttgart-based manufacturer and 1.9 million rolled off the line during its eight years of production. Its successor, the W123, appeared in 1976 and even more were produced with 2.9 million of these cars built in the nine years that followed.

Back in the 1970s and 1980s, the average age of cars in Europe was less than seven years. So millions of robust and reliable Mercedes were soon swapped for newer cars by their original owners and sold on the used

car market. Finally, when deemed too old for the European buyers they were picked up at discounted rates by exporters and shipped to emerging countries, with African nations being the favourite destination.

In 2000, more than 70 per cent of all cars imported into Morocco were more than five years old, including many old Mercedes, which have enjoyed incredible longevity thanks to their robust mechanics, simple maintenance requirements and an abundance of salvaged spare parts. It was



estimated 35,000 W123 240Ds alone were still on Moroccan roads in 2011, more than 30 years after the last car rolled off production lines.

“Africa is a hotbed of mechanical resourcefulness,” says Neuvy. “Everything has a value, even if we’d deem it rubbish in Europe. When things break, people always find a way to fix them. Local taxi drivers have many tricks up their sleeves to keep their vehicles on the road: from bits of string and wire to rocks in the boot to fix a driveshaft – they know it all.”

Clearing The Air

The downside of this longevity is, while European drivers have enjoyed generations of cleaner, more efficient vehicles, Moroccans have

been suffering from increasingly bad air pollution. According to the Barcelona Institute for Global Health, mortality due to air pollution in the country has increased by 50 per cent since 1997. Vehicle emissions are the most significant source of air pollution in Moroccan urban centres, accounting for nearly 60 per cent in total.

“Some developing countries have some pretty hideous pollution problems in their cities,” says Mike Berners-Lee, a leading expert in carbon footprinting. “With old diesel engines there are two types of pollution: the type of pollution that clogs up your lungs and kills you and passersby with particulates; and then there’s carbon emissions which affect

climate change.” Australia, in comparison, has fairly clean air, but it’s still estimated that about 3000 people die each year from air pollution, so it’s definitely something that needs to be taken seriously.

The Moroccan government’s response has been to implement a series of measures to improve matters. In 2010 they banned the importation of cars that were more than five years old and increased taxes on the sale of second-hand vehicles. Then, in 2014, they brought in the first cash incentive scheme aimed at Grand Taxi drivers.

Critics are calling out the government for having other motivations for subsidising new car purchases: notably the country’s recent heavy investment to develop extensive automobile production facilities. The North African kingdom aims to become one of the world’s big players in the automotive sector with an industry worth approximately A\$18 billion within the next five years.

French manufacturer Renault is historically linked with the territory and benefits from considerable support from the Moroccan government, operating two plants in the north of the country. Production at these sites includes the seven-seater

Dacia Lodgy, which is now the most commonly bought taxi in the country – representing one in every two new sales.

“From an embodied carbon perspective, keeping these old Mercedes on the road is actually better than replacing them with new ones,” argues Berners-Lee.

“People often forget that producing new vehicles generates a lot of unseen carbon emissions, even though the end product spits out less from its tailpipe. The direct savings from the previous model must be significant enough to warrant renewal, otherwise we are simply offsetting the problem onto another different part of the vehicle’s life-cycle.”

Regardless of all this, back in Essaouira, as far as Hassan Mesfar is concerned, it’s going to take more than a few thousand Diram and a shiny new car to make the veteran driver change his ways.

“I’ll be retiring in a few years so it would be a waste of money to upgrade,” he says. “I also don’t think my customers would like it and for me, it wouldn’t be the same job without my Mercedes. We’ve been on unforgettable adventures so it’s only fair we reach the end of the road together.” **R**



Human Bean

A 67-year-old baked bean fanatic from Wales has forked out thousands on bean-themed merchandise, even painting his house the orangey colour of his favourite food. FEMALE FIRST





SEE THE WORLD...

Turn the page »



...DIFFERENTLY

THIS SPECTACULAR DRAGON TEMPLE, named Wat Sam Phran, is located in the province of Nakhon Pathom, roughly 40 kilometres west of Bangkok, Thailand. Finished in 1985, the Buddhist temple is 80 metres high in recognition of Buddha who died at the age of 80. The 17 floors of the pink tower and its surrounds are filled with statues and shrines, including a giant bronze Buddha. An impressive green and gilt dragon curls around the exterior. Visitors are encouraged to perform luck-bringing rituals while there, for example saying a prayer while touching the dragon's massive claws or stroking its chin, which can be accessed from the top floor.

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK EDITORIAL/HALUK CIGSARSAMPHRAN
PHOTO: AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES/MLADEN ANTONOV



LAUGHTER

The Best Medicine



On The Face Of It

My girlfriend just complained that I'm not good at describing her. She's got a cheek!

GLENNY RODGE, COMEDIAN

Clear Path

Why was it called the 'Road Out of Lockdown' and not the 'Road to De-Mask-Us?'

SEEN ON TWITTER

Plumb Crazy

I have just left my old job working at the sewer. Ten years down the drain.

ANDY RYAN, COMEDIAN

Tools Of Government

Did you hear the news? The former CEO of IKEA is now Prime Minister of Sweden. He's spent the first week assembling his cabinet.

@IMMOLANDWERTH

CARTOON: D.T. WALSH. ILLUSTRATION: VECTEEZY.COM

Flight Of Imagination

Investor: So it's like a spoon going into a baby's mouth?

Orville Wright: But in the air, yes.

SEEN ON TWITTER

One Bite At A Time

Yesterday, I ate a clock. It was very time-consuming. Especially when I went back for seconds.

SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL

Open Invitation

A man was invited to a wedding. When he reached the hotel, he found two doors. The sign on one said 'Bride Relatives' and the other 'Groom Relatives'.

He entered through the Groom door and found another two doors. One had 'Ladies' on it, and the other 'Men'.

Entering through the 'Men' door, the man came to a choice of doors called 'People With Gifts' and 'People Without Gifts'. He selected the 'People Without Gifts' door and found himself back outside the hotel.

@MICKEY

Medical Diagnosis

Doctor: Your case is quite complicated.

Patient: Why, Doc? What has happened?

Doctor: You have a disease from the chapter of a medical book which I left as optional during my studies.

MEMEZILA.COM

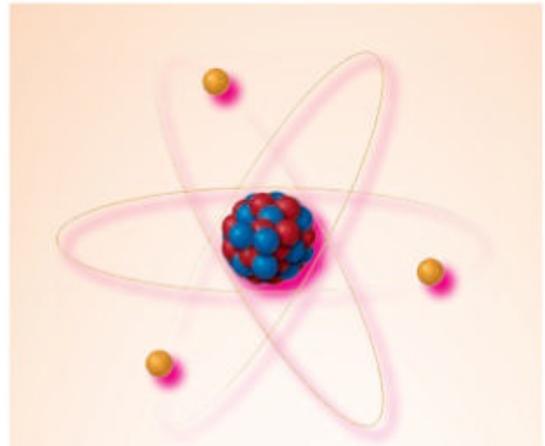
Road Service

Police officer to a driver: Your tail light is broken, your tyres must be changed, and your bumper hangs halfway down. That will be \$300!!

[Pause]

Driver: Alright, thank you. Go ahead and do it. They want twice as much as that at the garage.

@MOUNIKA



FISSION FOR LAUGHS

Jokes Every Science Lover Will Appreciate

A photon walks into a hotel and is asked if he needs help with his bags.
"No thanks, I'm travelling light."

SEEN ON FACEBOOK

A neutron goes into a bar and asks the bartender, "How much for a beer?" The bartender replies, "For you, no charge."

Nuclear physicists often have trouble concentrating on one project because they have too many ions in the fire.

Did you hear about the criminal photon that was arrested and sent to prism?

ANGELO.EDU



PARENTING



A New LIFE

A reluctant father wonders why any couple would voluntarily want to have a baby

BY Roy Innes

FROM THE BOOK **THE TURNING POINT**

I'm a throwback. I admit it. Back to the days when men were men as the saying goes, male through and through – in thought, word and deed. I have, however, learnt to temper the word and deed parts, a necessity if I want to safely navigate the minefield of modern sentiment.

The trend to unisex is everywhere

these days but there are times when a distinct gender difference exists. No better example of this is having a newborn infant thrust upon the scene. Males do not handle this well – at any age.

I distinctly remember my first encounter, forced upon me by my mother when she brought my baby



sister home from the hospital. I was six years old.

“You can hold her.”

She said this with such an air of loving pride that even at that young age I knew I’d better show some enthusiasm. My father, of course, was a lost cause in this regard. Babies were women’s work.

It was awful. Hardly any hair, red face, puffy eyes, a mouth that kept making guppy movements – and a

very bad smell. I handed her back as quickly as I could.

Fast forward to the first year of my married life. The subject of children crept into our conversations, usually after a glass or two of wine. I grew up with two brothers and, along with my sister, we competed for our parents’ attention. Frequently, this got ugly and so family did not have the same warm, fuzzy feeling for me that it obviously did for my wife – she, an only child.

The screw got turned, ever so slowly. It began with an appeal to my maleness – a strapping son who would play golf and go hunting with me. Sounded good, although I’m in a regular foursome and I’ve hunted with the same bunch of guys for years. “You could teach him,” she said. Good move. I like teaching and there certainly were no opportunities to do so in either my golf or hunting groups – hard-nosed egotists, the lot of them.

Her friends were having babies, which, for reasons only a woman would understand, necessitated frequent viewings. “Ooh, she/he is *sooooo* cute.”

Not so from my point of view. Still red faced and so forth, just like when I was six, and if anything, they smelled worse. Holding them, however, appeared to thrill the women. The rapturous look in my wife’s eyes when she did so worried me. Fortunately, no one, even her, expected

me to hold the precious things, especially after I let go one of those male bad deed things: an overt grimace of distaste. I was, however, careful not to risk making any descriptive comments. I didn't have to: the women gushed out more than enough of those on their own.

My interest focused on the fathers. Males can read males, I kid you not. To a man, they were embarrassed. I could feel it. Not one "ooh" from any of them. The closest to any reaction that I could see was the occasional chest puffed out.

And the women - merciless. "When are you two going to start? It will change your lives."

Change my life? I was quite happy with my life as it was and I didn't appreciate being pushed. Bad deed signs again, which embarrassed my wife. I would pay for those later, but it was worth it.

I stalled for as long as I could, but eventually she wore me down. "We" got pregnant. This instantly gained me acceptance in the when-are-you-going-to-start group. The husbands, however, seemed reserved at the news - unnervingly so.

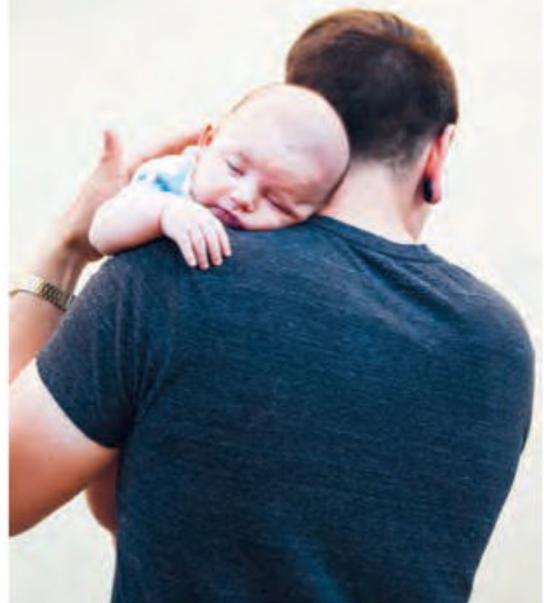
It didn't take long for me to discover why they reacted that way. Pregnancy is nine months of escalating hell - for both of us. Six weeks of cheery, cheery, happy, happy and then - morning sickness.

It got worse. Near the end she was exhausted. No wonder. Trying to

move with a basketball in her belly and lug around a 15-kilogram gain in weight would have exhausted me, too. But it was the change in attitude that got me down - a mix of "I want it all over" and "damn it, you did this to me". Not fair.

The last hours were the worst - waves of panic and tons of pain. Fortunately, my presence at the actual birth was a no-go. I told her that, without one iota of doubt, I would

I STALLED FOR AS LONG AS I COULD, BUT EVENTUALLY SHE WORE ME DOWN. "WE" GOT PREGNANT



READER'S DIGEST

pass out and be an unnecessary burden to the medical staff, to say nothing of the indignity of my having to be carried out.

I gave her hand a squeeze when they put her on the stretcher and wheeled her to wherever the last of the suffering takes place. Best I could do.

And then I retired to the waiting room where I sat alone with my thoughts, the major one being, *Why the hell does any sane pair of human beings voluntarily put themselves through all this?* Pregnancy should be an accidental thing, a 'no choice' event - like fire or a flood or any other natural disaster that must be faced should it actually occur.

Her parents joined me near the end of my wait; she bubbling over with joy, he, a man of few words likely wishing he was at home watching a sports game.

Our obstetrician finally

appeared, still wearing his greens, mask pulled down. Big smile.

"Your wife's just fine and you are the father of a healthy baby boy. Congratulations. Nurse will bring him around to the viewing window in just a few minutes."

And there he was - red face, puffy eyes - indistinguishable from his nursery mates nearby.

But was he? I thought I could see a bit of his mother in those eyes and that frown surely came from my side of the family. He looked smarter, too, than all the rest, his fleeting gaze taking in the world around him. And just once, I swear he focused on me, wiggling my fingers at him through the glass, his father, smitten and overwhelmed by this little life that would change his - forever.

And to my utter astonishment, I wanted to hold him. **R**



This is an extract from *The Turning Point*, Gareth St John Thomas (ed.). © Exisle Publishing 2021. RRP \$39.99. Available from www.exislepublishing.com and wherever great books are sold.



Accidental Charity Donation

Montequilla, a pet cat from Denver, has been reunited with his family after he was accidentally donated to a charity shop. Fortunately for the ginger tom, employees of the shop found him hiding inside the recliner the family had donated before anyone could purchase it. UPI

ADVERTORIAL PROMOTION

THE ENVY OF TOILETING

“I first saw the bidet advertised in the Reader’s Digest magazine. We were so intrigued by the product that we spent about 6 months looking around Sydney for a retailer, or even a handicap specialist that would be able to give us a product demonstration, but without any luck.

So I decided to give The Bidet Shop a call and have not regretted it!

I’m a spring chicken compared to my husband, who was incapacitated at the time. The bidet was a great help to him and his situation, preventing the need of a carer - unfortunately my husband is now in a home...

Although, I have just ordered our second bidet for our son. He is currently building a holiday home and has insisted that a bidet be put in, he says, *“Mum, we have to get it, the bidet is my inheritance...”*

I absolutely love the bidet and all it has done to help ease the suffering of my husband while he was still at home, as well as the continuous aid it has provided as a health care product for me....

...I wouldn’t be getting a second one if I didn’t like it!”

Mrs Saunders, customer testimonial 2012

For more information or to purchase, contact **The BIDET Shop** on **1300 138 365**.



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A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's legs and feet. The person is wearing blue shorts and a white and green running shoe. The shoe is positioned on a dirt path covered with brown leaves and twigs. The background is a blurred green forest with sunlight filtering through the trees.

LET'S GO FOR A



PERSPECTIVE



*I discovered that
this gentle activity
supports healing for
both body and soul*

BY *Gloria Liu*

FROM **OUTSIDE**

WALK

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

Until recently, the idea of going for a walk for fun never crossed my mind. I preferred mountain biking or skiing. But in July 2019, my fiancé, Andrew, was hit by a van while riding his bike. He survived – just barely – but his left leg was paralysed.



He came home from the hospital in October. Wearing a rigid, full-leg orthotic brace and wielding forearm crutches, Andrew, 34, ventured out in our neighbourhood in Boulder, Colorado. Initially, going up and down the block exhausted him. But by February, he was able to unlock the knee joint of his brace and stabilise his leg on his own. By mid-March, we were walking up to 90 minutes at a time.

When COVID-19 came to Colorado, the ski resorts, breweries and many other vestiges of normalcy began shutting down. Suddenly the streets

were filled with people who were also just ... walking around. Couples sauntered. Families with young children trooped the footpaths. I started walking on my own, too.

Each evening, I'd get on a local trail. I drew deep breaths of the damp, piney air, and gaped at the panoramic views of the Flatirons rock formations jutting up over the horizon. The walks seemed to loosen my thoughts, bestowing clarity and inspiring ideas that I jotted down in my phone.

But as much as I enjoyed my new walking habit, I was conflicted about it. Walking with Andrew was a wonderful way to spend time together. But when I wasn't with him, well – I was an athletic, fit 36 year old. Shouldn't I be doing something more vigorous?

Billed for so long as a gentle, slow-speed form of exercise for older people, or for those looking to lose a little weight, walking had lost its appeal to much of the younger, outdoorsier set. But maybe all this stemmed from a fundamental misunderstanding of why we walk at all.



Gloria Liu with her fiancé Andrew in hospital after his accident

The history of walking as a means of liberating the mind spans cultures and centuries. Great thinkers from Nietzsche to Kant to Thoreau to early-feminist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir would take walks. The hajj, the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, often involves walking several kilometres per day. Thru-hikers traverse entire continents in search of challenge, adventure and self-knowledge.

“There is a lot of research on creativity while walking,” says Jennifer Udler, a therapist who practises ‘walk and talk’ therapy with her clients. “Our dopamine, our serotonin, all the feel-good chemicals, are being released when we walk. And that’s not just mood. It’s creativity, it’s de-stressing, it’s lowering cortisol – there’s a lot of chemistry involved in this.”

A 2014 study at Stanford University, for example, asked participants to come up with novel uses for common items like a tyre or a button. Researchers found that the number of creative ideas generated increased by roughly 60 per cent while participants were walking, compared to when they were sitting.

Udler points to a growing body of research examining the therapeutic



Andrew on a walking trail in Sedona, Arizona, nearly six months after the near-fatal traffic accident

benefits of simply being in nature. One 2018 study found that walking outdoors reduces cortisol and improves your mood more than, say, exercising on a treadmill. “I have to say, it takes away half my job,” Udler says, laughing. “Because people are just naturally feeling better.”

The best reason to walk, though, is because we can. I began to be impressed with the biomechanics of walking well before Andrew’s crash, when I was reporting a story about professional mountain biker Paul Basagoitia, who had sustained a spinal-cord injury that left him paralysed below the waist. A year after his injury, Paul regained the use of his quads and hamstrings, and he could

ride a bike. But because his glutes and calves still don't work properly, he uses a cane to get around day to day. "Believe it or not, it's a lot easier to pedal a bike than it is to walk," he told me.

As a mountain biker myself, I marvelled at the idea that this placid activity was in some way more demanding than the sport I spent ten to 12 hours a week training for.

Then Andrew's crash happened. When he began taking his first steps in the rehab hospital with his leg brace and a walker, the effort of hoisting his left leg forward made him grimace. I suddenly understood that I performed miraculous feats countless times a day: shuffling sleepily out of my bedroom each morning, navigating a carpark, striding down the street.

Here's what it takes for you to take a single step, according to Dr Jessica Rose, director of the Motion and Gait Analysis Laboratory at Stanford University's children's hospital: as you step forward, just before your foot makes contact with the ground, the glutes, hamstrings and quads activate to stabilise the hip and knee. As your foot touches down, your weight shifts to that limb, the 'stance limb'. The stance-limb calf muscle activates to stabilise the ankle and knee,

controlling the forward progression of your centre of gravity over your foot. As weight shifts to your forefoot, it allows your heel to rise, initiating the 'swing phase' of walking.

At this point, you need to bend your hip and knee quickly to lift your foot off the ground. Your other leg is your new stance limb. Now the hip flexors

and ankle dorsiflexors get involved to swing your leg through swiftly. At the end of the swing, your hamstring controls the speed of your knee extension. Your foot then makes contact with the ground, beginning the cycle again.

None of this, by the way, even gets into the upper-body biomechan-

ics of a normal gait: opposing arm swing, balance and proprioception, which allows you to place your foot on the ground without looking at it.

We take this mind-boggling sequence for granted. But anyone who's nursed even a minor injury, like an ankle sprain, becomes acutely aware of what you lose when just one link in the chain is broken.

That Christmas, Andrew and I went to Sedona, Arizona. Even the easiest trails had obstacles. As I watched Andrew use his crutches to hoist himself up step boulders and totter precariously over mellow creek crossings, I became acutely aware of



I WANT TO NOTICE THE THINGS I NEVER SAW WHEN I WAS RUSHING

the flexing, tensing and balancing happening in my own body to move over this uneven terrain.

We pushed Andrew's limits so much that the rivets popped out of his leg brace, requiring two visits to the local orthotist to get it repaired. But we felt grateful. None of the trails we did, none of the spectacular scenery or the soul-soothing solitude, would have been accessible in a wheelchair.

A month after Colorado went into lockdown, I started feeling motivated for bike rides again, rebuilding my muscles and lungs after a long winter. My solo walks got more sporadic.

But I still walked with Andrew on weekends up forested dirt roads. We talked – my worries about work, his dreams about the future, our conflicts with loved ones. We ran into friends, and even made new ones.

One evening, after a late-spring snowstorm, I went for a trail run. A couple of kilometres in, my run slowed to a walk. Birds trilled. Water trickled – the snow melting. My gaze, no longer fixed to the ground, took in the towering ponderosas along the trail. After a day spent at my computer, they looked achingly real. I felt

myself becoming real again, too, re-inhabiting my body.

I knew then that walking isn't just exercise to me. As a society, we treat exercise as an antidote to our sedentary lives. We dose it like medicine: apply exercise once daily. But what if walking was simply a way to spend more of our lives in motion? This year, I've taken phone calls with faraway friends on walks, used walks to break through writing blocks and rehearse for difficult conversations. I wasn't just exercising. My life was happening.

If walking is something most of us only learn to do as we get older, then I welcome this early wisdom. I want to notice the things I never saw when I was rushing. I want to take time to consider which way I'm going.

That day, I left the trail to crunch through the snow's brittle upper crust, feeling the muscles in my body tense and snap and release, nerves firing in a thousand unconscious places. I passed between trees, nimble and free. It felt good to move as I was designed to do. The body got a little light exercise. The soul got much more. **R**

FROM OUTSIDE (JUNE 2020),
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Dog House Up For Sale

A Miami mansion allegedly belonging to the world's richest dog, German shepherd Gunther VI, is up for sale for \$32 million. Countess Karlotta Liebenstein, who died in 1992, reportedly left her fortune to her dog Gunther III. The money has since passed from dog to dog. FORBES

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HOW TO 00101

AVOID 0010010

DIGITAL 011001

IMMORTALITY

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NOW IS THE TIME TO 0100110

ORGANISE YOUR ONLINE LIFE

BY PAUL ROBERT 011001001

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: MARILEE LAMARQUE; GETTY IMAGES; ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

A woman with blonde hair and blue eyes is the central focus, looking directly at the camera. Her face is framed by a glowing blue digital interface. The background is a dark blue field filled with binary code (0s and 1s) and various digital graphics, including a large circular gauge on the left, a grid of dots on the right, and a glowing blue cube-like structure. The overall aesthetic is futuristic and high-tech.

TECHNOLOGY



“Do you have her password for Facebook?” My sister, Louise, looked across the table from behind our mother’s iPad, while I leafed through a tiny notebook full of scribbled telephone numbers, addresses and an occasional user ID and password. “Nope,” I said. “Nothing here.”

Only the day before, our nonagenarian mother, Miep, had passed away peacefully. Louise and I, still numb, were in her apartment, going through the next steps – cards, funeral arrangements – and trying to erase her digital footprint.

She didn’t have a huge online presence; insecure about the digital world, Mum had really only played Wordfeud with us, read the news, checked local shops for their weekly offers, and sent emails to her friends and family. She had a Facebook account only to keep up on family news. Her few online activities were recorded in the tiny notebook that my late father had started 20 years ago. But Mum didn’t really grasp the difference between a URL, a user ID and a password, and the booklet was as enlightening as a collection of hieroglyphics.

We ended up logging in to Facebook from my laptop, using Mum’s user ID and clicking “forgotten password?” This allowed us to reset the

password through her email account, log in to Facebook, and go through the several steps (“are you sure?” “are you really sure?” “are you really, really sure?”) to permanently delete her account.

It was an important lesson for my sister and me. “When I get home, I’m going to make a list of all my accounts,” said Louise. “If something should happen to me now, my daughter wouldn’t be able to find them.”

A couple of weeks later I decided to streamline my own list of passwords, which I keep organised in an online vault accessed through an app on my phone that requires just one master password. Though I have never had social media accounts, I had 140 online IDs – for retailers, the gym, web-hosting services, email accounts, my bank, insurance companies, credit cards and more. Even though they’re all in one place, if my wife, who knows my master password, ever has to sort through the

‘vault’ it would be a herculean task. Yet I am the exception to the rule: most people have not organised their digital access information.

“It is sad, but hardly anyone thinks about taking care of their digital footprint,” says Wil-Jan Dona, 75, a retired telecom project manager who now volunteers for a Dutch organisation called SeniorWeb, where he gives seminars on this subject. “Many older people have at least a Facebook and a WhatsApp account, but when I ask

John’s laptop that they urgently needed. His wife didn’t have access. Then other clients started calling.”

In despair, she turned to Dona, who managed to unlock the laptop. “It ended well, but it caused her a lot of stress on top of the grief,” he says. “And then we still needed to handle his personal accounts.”

On the laptop these were easy to close and remove, but his iPhone, full of photos that his widow wanted to retrieve, presented an even bigger

THE MORE ACTIVE WE ARE ONLINE, THE MORE THERE IS AT STAKE. THOSE WHO DON'T PREPARE MAY BECOME VIRTUAL 'GHOSTS'

them what they do with their passwords, most often they reply: ‘I don’t know, my grandchild set it up.’”

It’s not an issue only for the elderly, says Dona. “I had a middle-aged friend who owned a small business. I’ll call him John. He had ongoing projects with clients when he was diagnosed with cancer. It was aggressive and he died soon after.” After the funeral one of John’s clients called his wife. “They were very understanding,” says Dona, “but there were files on

technical problem: Apple phones in particular are all but impossible to access if you don’t have the password or the owner’s thumbprint.

“Only the police have the software tools to access some of these phones, and they were willing to help,” says Dona. But that’s not something you can count on.

The more active you are online, the more there is at stake. How about the photos you uploaded to Flickr? What if you leave behind years’ worth of

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STEPS YOU CAN TAKE NOW

There was a time when the treasure chest of memories left to us by our ancestors was simply a shoebox filled with faded photos, postcards and letters. But what we leave online can be used by anyone when we are gone, until authorities figure out a way to extend privacy legislation to our digital afterlife.

The worst-case scenario is that your photos (including photos of yourself) may end up in commercial or political messages, or your identity used for fraudulent emails. At the least, your friends and loved ones will continue to be confronted with things like unexpected birthday reminders and 'friend' suggestions. Here's how to mitigate that.

1 APPOINT A DIGITAL EXECUTOR

Give a trusted friend or relative access to your accounts and instructions for what you want done with them. Facebook, for instance, offers the option to register a 'legacy contact', a trusted person who can manage your account when you are gone. Otherwise, the only way to delete these accounts may be by submitting to the company a death certificate and proof of identity, and demonstrating you have the authority to act on the account holder's behalf. An increasing

activities, comments and tweets on social media? They will not disappear with you, and if you don't prepare – by making your passwords available to your loved ones so that they can close your account when you pass away – those posts will remain public. Many of us will become digitally immortal, virtual ghosts. Only when your loved ones close your accounts will your old posts be deleted.

“You have to decide what you want to do with your digital footprint. It is no different from making sure that the right thing happens with your money,” says Dona. That is also nobody's favourite activity. Many of us do not even have a registered will and testament. That means that most people leave decisions about their heritage to local legislation.

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number of funeral homes and online start-ups offer services in this field, ranging from deleting accounts to the preservation of a digital 'shoebox' with photos, tweets and other such memorabilia.

2 **KEEP A LIST**

If you don't have too many online accounts, make a list of your IDs and passwords and tell your executor, and your loved ones, where to find it. "That is the simplest way to help those who stay behind," says Dona. "Make a clear list and write it down in a notebook. Don't leave all

your passwords on your computer."

But if you are like me, and your work, your hobbies, your finances, and your contacts with friends are all online and your accounts run into the dozens, you may consider an online password manager like 1Password, Keeper or OneLogin. They generate complicated passwords for each account you have and store them in an encrypted online vault accessible only to you. All you need to remember (and share with your virtual executor) is one master password for the app that is installed on your devices.

3 **PREVENT IDENTITY THEFT**

To protect yourself, don't use simple passwords. "You have no idea how many people still use passwords like 12345," says Dona, who suggests that if you don't want complicated passwords, use sentences. "Hackers can easily break simple passwords, but they haven't figured out how to hack a sentence." He adds with a smile, "I've used 'Ireallydislikemy motherinlaw' as a password." This is made even safer by adding a number. "But use a different one for each account, and update them at least once per year."

Our digital footprint is even further from our minds. The US is one of the few countries to have introduced a law to exclusively address the handling of digital legacies. But technological developments force us to think about what will happen to 'us' if we don't take steps to choose for ourselves. For example, it's now possible to bring loved ones 'back to life' with apps that animate photos.

In years to come, who knows what it will be possible to do with our images and our voices?

I, for one, wouldn't want my virtual persona to survive. Two days before she died, Mum wisely told my daughter: "Don't worry. It will be hard for you for a while, but after that there'll just be happy memories." That's all I need and all I hope to leave: a photograph and happy memories. **R**



Time To Say **GOODBYE**

*So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen,
goodbye ... ways to part are expressed
in a multitude of forms*

BY *Cornelia Kumfert*

THE DAY OF THE DEAD or *Día de los Muertos* in Spanish, a festival mainly celebrated in Mexico, takes place during the first days of November every year. Family and friends come together to celebrate those who have passed with offerings and parades where people dress up and paint their faces as *calacas* and *calaveras* (skeletons and skulls). The ceremonies differ slightly from one region to the next. Some people say the celebrations stem from Catholicism's All Saints' Day while others believe they have an ancient Aztec origin.



OFF TO UNIVERSITY Parents of new students at Wuhan University in central China's Hubei province sleep on some 400 mats laid out for them as they come to see their children off for their first day of studies. This helps them save money they would otherwise spend on a hotel – money their studious offspring will probably need.



BLANKET OF FLOWERS

An estimated 60 million flowers, innumerable teddy bears and even bottles of Champagne were left by Princess Diana's mourners in 1997, such as seen here at Buckingham Palace. An army of volunteers later distributed the offerings to children, the sick and the elderly.



Time To Say Goodbye

ANOTHER TYPE OF 'EMPTY NEST' A tiny penduline tit chick pokes its head out of its pouch-like nest one last time before taking flight. The home it is leaving is constructed from twigs, animal hair and spider webs, among other things, and has a hidden chamber where the chicks mature, concealed by a secret flap.

A LATVIAN WEDDING may be complicated, but it's fun. Among the rituals, the groom may need to carry his wife over a bridge or even confront a 'witch'. After they are hitched, the couple might bury their list of plans for the first year of marriage in a bottle or pass through three gates as a symbolic farewell to youth and single life.



PHOTOS: (BIRD) MARTIN CREASSER/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; (WEDDING) EDIJS VOLCIJOKS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

READER'S DIGEST



A COMPLICATED FELLOW:

the US Republican who ended the Vietnam War. A conservative, Richard Nixon occasionally supported Martin Luther King and was active in the civil rights movement before running for President. Here he makes his final 'goodbye' from the steps of *Marine One* after resigning in 1974 because of the Watergate scandal. Years later he reflected on that morning: "I looked at my watch, the battery had run out, worn out, at 4 o'clock the last day I was in office. By that day, I was worn out, too." His fellow citizens felt the same.

CRACK THAT WHIP! In Rupertiwinkel, Bavaria, Germany, tradition has it that the loud, rhythmic whip cracking during a ceremony known as 'Aperschnalzen' will drive winter away. The whips, which are up to four metres long, are swung by teams of seven or more people who each crack them either nine or 11 times.



THE DIVING CEREMONY on the Vanuatu island of Pentecost is said to have its origins in a wife fleeing a marital fight. The wife, being chased by her husband, climbed a tree and when he followed, she tied a vine to herself and jumped safely to the ground. Her husband's attempt to follow was his final farewell. As a modern sport, only men do the jumping and the trees have become towers of fresh, flexible wood.



The Vending Machine



*Place a coin in the slot
and prepare to be rewarded*

BY Zoë Meunier

When we think about the benefits of vending machines, convenience probably springs to the forefront, but in its very first incarnation, the purpose was more about minimising greed. Apparently, temple goers in first-century Egypt thought 'more was more' when it came to blessing themselves with holy water. Saving the day was renowned Greek engineer and mathematician, Hero of Alexandria, who devised the world's first vending machine. A coin was inserted in a slot, which pushed down a

bar to release a measure of holy water.

Fast forward to the dusty taverns of England in 1615, and you could find brass honour boxes containing snuff and tobacco. A coin in the slot opened the box for a pinch of your choosing. This was usually placed directly in front of the watchful eye of the inn-keeper, suggesting 'honour' may have been somewhat lacking.

In 1822, radical bookseller Richard Carlile made the first inroads towards a practical coin-operated vending machine. Under fire for selling prohibited books, Carlile's clever fix was to add a



READER'S DIGEST

contraption to the front of his shop into which a patron could insert a coin, then turn a dial to select whichever clandestine tome they were after, which would be delivered through a chute by one of Carlile's assistants.

The first of the stereotypical vending machines, a small machine dispensing postage stamps, launched in Britain in 1857. Meanwhile, in Tokyo in 1876, a newspaper vending machine was introduced to the public – the start of an enduring love affair. Back in the UK, a huge cast-iron dispenser made by Percival Everitt launched in 1883, selling postcards. It soon became a fixture at railway stations and post offices, adding stamped envelopes and notepaper to the mix.

The US was a bit slower to the game, with their first vending machine offering appearing in 1888 on New York train platforms. And the all-important merchandise contained inside? Tutti-Frutti chewing gum. The Germans soon pounced on the concept of a food-based vending machine, with

manufacturer Max Sielaff designing machines to dispense chocolate bars. This was considered as good an idea then as it is now, and by 1893, German chocolate manufacturer Stollwerck was selling its chocolate in 15,000 vending machines – as well as cigarettes, matches and soap products.

The Americans took the concept one step further, opening a completely coin-operated restaurant called Horn & Hardart in Pennsylvania in 1902, with more following. Known as automats, meals were displayed behind small glass windows. Popular among struggling actors and musicians of the era, the automat's death knell sounded in the 1960s with the rise of fast-food franchises such as McDonalds.

The most popular offering in vending machines today is beverages, and this has also evolved slowly. The first beverage vending machine launched in Paris, France, in 1890, and allowed people to buy beer, wine and liquor – it was the *Belle Epoque* (Golden Era), after all!

PHOTOS: PUBLIC DOMAIN; (LUXURY CAR) ALAMY

THE PENNY DROPS Historical Machines



1st Century

HOLY WATER DISPENSER



1860s

POSTAGE STAMPS



1890s

TUTTI-FRUTTI GUM

The Vending Machine

Bottled fizzy drinks, cooled by ice, were introduced in the 1930s, and before World War II were accompanied by machines that used electricity to stay cool. Paper-cup soda machines, which would mix the customer's flavour of choice with carbonated water into a paper cup, also dropped onto the scene around this time.

Coin-operated vending machines for soft drinks arrived in Australia in 1953. The early machines opened at the top and most were basically bottles standing in iced water. Nonetheless, the cost of installing them was substantial, which saw the domination of bigger brands such as Cotties and, of course, the ubiquitous Coca-Cola.

One beverage choice that has proven quite the challenge for vending machine vendors is coffee. The drinkability of said beverages has remained in question for many years – with some aficionados convinced they still haven't nailed it.

Operators of early vending-machines had another pressing problem

– their machines were unable to distinguish between legitimate coins and frauds made of other metals, wood or even ice. This created such a thriving industry among fraudsters that laws had to be passed throughout the 1930s and 1940s banning the manufacture of objects mimicking coins. At the same time, vending-machines started used magnet technology to better detect and reject fakes.

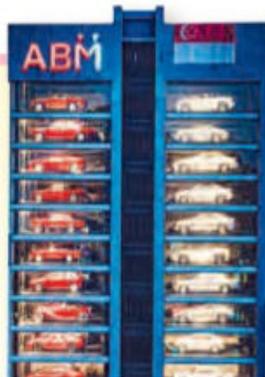
Another innovation game changer came in 1960, when vending machines began accepting paper notes.

This was also the decade that would see the explosion of vending machines in the country that has now become synonymous with the concept, Japan, which has an incredible 5.5 million vending machines in use today – one for every 23 people.

Japan's pioneering vending machine in the late 1950s was a juice dispenser consisting of a box with a juice fountain on top – at just 10 yen per paper cup of juice, it was an instant hit. The number of vending machines



1930s
COCA-COLA



2016
LUXURY CARS



2020s
PIZZA TO ORDER

READER'S DIGEST

rapidly increased from 240,000 in 1964 to five million by 1984. This exponential growth was made possible for several reasons – firstly, Japan's low vandalism rates meant vending machines could be safely placed anywhere outside. Secondly, in 1967, the formerly silver 100-yen coins were remade more cheaply as nickel, which saw a massive number go into circulation, just begging to be placed into the slot of the latest and most exciting offering.

And exciting they certainly have been, with everything from groceries – including, of course, sushi – hot food, batteries, umbrellas, books, sake, flower arrangements, business cards and even (somewhat disturbingly) live puppies, available for instant transaction.

Some of these increasingly high-tech vending machines also serve more important roles, such as those equipped with an AED (automated external defibrillator) and LCD screens that provide vital information in the case of an emergency.

Globally, the vending machine industry got another big push when credit card scanning capability became widespread in 2006. This has allowed for the sale of high-priced items including iPads, mobile phones, digital cameras, computers and even

luxury cars. In late 2016, Autobahn Motors in Singapore opened a luxury car vending machine with Ferraris and Lamborghinis.

For some, the joy of vending machines is the ability to access items without having to look a cashier in the eye, which could explain the roaring trade for condoms, feminine hygiene products and, recently, marijuana.

For tech-heads and gimmick lovers though, vending machines continue to deliver the goods. There's the Let's Pizza vending machine, which actually makes and kneads the dough before topping and baking customers' pizzas to order – all in less than three minutes. A Chinese company, Beyondte Electronics, has a machine that fries French fries in hot oil on re-

quest, while a new Oreo vending machine uses 3-D printer technology to custom-fill a cookie sandwich order.

The latest trend is, of course, smart vending machines, offering face, eye, or fingerprint recognition and social media connectivity. Vending machines of the future will remember you from your previous purchases and ask you if you want your usual “skim latte with a double shot of vanilla”. But will they be up to the standards of the coffee devotees? Only time will tell. **R**



**FOR TECH-HEADS
AND GIMMICK
LOVERS,
VENDING
MACHINES
DELIVER
THE GOODS**

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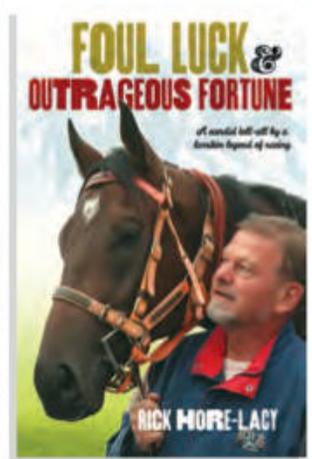
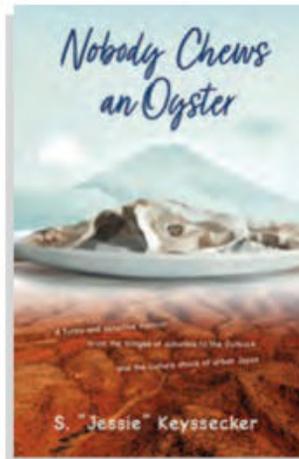
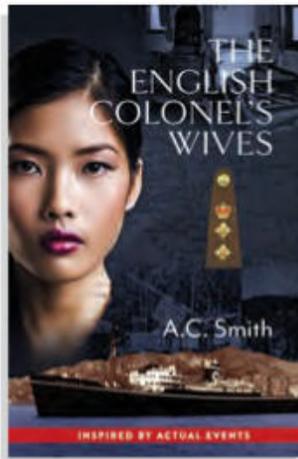
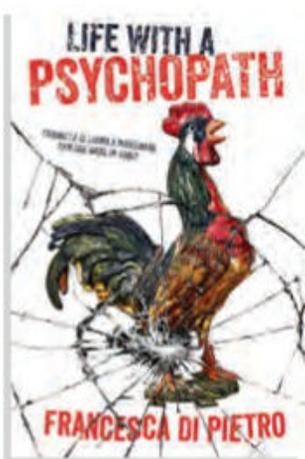


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RECENT TITLES...





A WORLD OF

WORRY

Compounding crises have made everyone anxious, but how do you know if you've slipped into a more serious disorder – and what do you do about it?

BY *Rebecca Philps*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY **PETE RYAN**



FIVE YEARS AGO, Meredith Arthur, a 45-year-old employee of the social media company Pinterest, arrived at a neurologist appointment in a distraught state. She spoke a mile a minute, rattling through her extensive research on the vagus cranial nerve and explaining why she thought it might hold clues to her crippling shoulder and neck pain, frequent dizziness and nausea and chronic migraines. “I was presenting my inexpert case to an expert, and she stopped me and said, ‘I know what’s wrong. You have generalised anxiety disorder.’”

For Arthur, the diagnosis was a shock. She had been so focused on her debilitating physical symptoms that she hadn’t considered that they could be linked to her

mental health. But almost immediately, it clicked. “My brain has been in overdrive since early childhood,” Arthur says. “I always wanted to work really hard all the time and solve everything.”

She would have never described herself as a worrier, however, and certainly didn’t connect her perfectionism to anxiety or its impact on her body. But in fact, physical discomfort (like stomach and chest pain, feeling restless or irritable, sleep problems, fatigue and muscle aches) is most often what drives people with anxiety to seek treatment, not distressing thoughts.

“The diagnosis changed everything,” says Arthur. “It’s like somebody picked me up off the Earth, turned me around 180 degrees and put me back down. It was the same world, but everything looked a little different.”

Arthur is one of the 284 million adults globally who experience an anxiety disorder – the most common form of mental illness – every year. Closer to home, it effects the lives of one in seven Australians. But beyond serious cases, anxiety is something that touches everyone to varying degrees. Typically, it’s intermittent and brought on by a stressful or traumatic event. The core features of anxiety are excessive fear and worry – followed by extreme problem solving, in Arthur’s case – and one of the major underlying factors is a feeling

of uncertainty about situations that occur in daily life.

We are in exceedingly anxious times due to the unholy combination of economic precariousness, social unrest, political volatility, environmental catastrophes (pause: deep breath) and the COVID-19 pandemic. But an individualised, holistic approach to managing anxiety – including lifestyle tweaks, medication, mindfulness exercises and, to begin with, acceptance – will ensure it doesn't rule your life.

WHAT ANXIETY DOES TO YOUR BODY

Anxiety is part of your body's stress-response system – and it's uncomfortable, overwhelming and sometimes plain confusing.

"I describe anxiety as a future-oriented emotional response to a perceived threat," says Joel Minden, a clinical psychologist and the author of *Show Your Anxiety Who's Boss*. "We anticipate that something bad will happen. Maybe we have evidence for thinking that. Maybe we don't. But we have a belief that something catastrophic might occur."

Almost immediately after that, Minden says, your sympathetic nervous system, which controls involuntary processes like breathing and heart rate, kicks into high gear. This leads your adrenal glands to release adrenalin and cortisol, two of the

crucial hormones driving your body's fight-freeze-or-flight response, which prompt anxiety's physical symptoms. Your heart races, your blood pressure rises, your pupils dilate, you get short of breath and you break out into clammy sweats.

Meanwhile, cortisol curbs functions that your brain considers non-essential: it alters immune-system responses and suppresses the digestive system, the reproductive system and growth processes. This was helpful for our ancestors trying to outrun a sabre-toothed tiger, but not so much when you walk past someone in a supermarket and, even though you're both wearing masks, can't stop ruminating for days afterwards about whether you might have caught COVID-19 when they coughed.

"The physiological sensations you get make sense when you're in danger," says psychologist Melisa Robichaud. "But they feel odd and sometimes quite scary when there's no physical threat."

EVERYDAY ANXIETY OR AN ANXIETY DISORDER?

For Arthur, chronic physical pain and discomfort were the most powerful manifestations of her disorder, but anxiety can show itself in many ways. You might perceive something as threatening, even when it isn't, or go to great lengths to avoid uncomfortable situations. You might

constantly overthink plans or spend all of your time creating solutions to worst-case scenarios that are unlikely to happen. Maybe you're indecisive and fear making the wrong decision. Or you might find yourself unable to relax and feel restless and keyed up.

Often, those symptoms last only as long as a certain situation or problem is present. You may feel nervous about flying, but you do it and the feeling fades when the wheels touch down. But sometimes anxiety can tip into a chronic anxiety disorder. These include generalised anxiety disorder, but also panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic-stress disorder and phobias.

People with an anxiety disorder can also suffer from depression – some estimates show that 60 per cent of those with anxiety will also have symptoms of depression.

The distinction between circumstantial or temporary anxiety and a more severe case isn't always easy to make, says clinical psychologist David Carbonell.

"There isn't a blood test for anxiety. At some point, everybody experiences it," he says. "It becomes a disorder when it interferes with your behavioural choices and your ability to do as you wish in life."

For instance, that point could be when your job requires you to fly, but you're too anxious to even make it as far as the airport, which ultimately

puts your livelihood in jeopardy. Or, more generally, when you find that anxious feelings last for a long time, beyond when a problem has passed or been resolved, and they seem to jump from one situation to the next without relief.

Despite the fact that chronic anxiety is very manageable with professional help – and some combination of medication, therapy and lifestyle adjustments – less than 40 per cent of affected people receive treatment of any kind. "I always say that I have a really good job because I specialise in treating people who have anxiety disorders," says Robichaud, "and by and large, almost everyone I see gets better."

HOW TO TREAT AN ANXIETY DISORDER

1 Accept It

Just like happiness and sadness, anxiety is part of everyone's lived experience – but it's not always tolerated as such.

"People spend too much time and effort on trying to control anxiety," says Minden. "I encourage them to remember that anxiety is a normal emotional response." If you try to banish it, he adds, all you're doing is putting it more at the forefront of your mind. But if you accept anxiety as part of life, you can learn to relate to it with self-compassion or even with humour. This is a cornerstone of

THERE'S NO SHAME IN TAKING MEDICATION

Many people avoid taking, or even looking into, medication for anxiety because of the stigmas associated with psychiatric drugs. They may worry about dangerous side effects, that they'll become dependent on them or that loved ones will see them as weak or flawed. But the fact is, modern pharmacological treatments for anxiety disorders are safer and produce fewer side effects than they did 30 years ago. Attitudes towards mental illnesses are also improving.

If you're ready to explore medication, talk to your doctor, who can prescribe the medications taken for anxiety, suggests Dr Debra Kissen, who specialises in cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) for anxiety.

Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are considered a good starting medication for many forms of anxiety, she says. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that plays a role in feelings of wellbeing and happiness, as well as thinking, memory, sleep, digestion and circulation. SSRIs increase levels of serotonin in the brain and are considered non-addictive and safe for long-term use.

Another choice is benzodiazepines, which strengthen the effect of the

neurotransmitter GABA – the primary inhibitory ('turn off') signaller in the brain. Benzodiazepines are fast-acting and don't stay in your system for long, but they are considered unsafe for continuous use and are potentially addictive.

Dr Kissen believes therapy is still crucial because the gains are hardwired into your brain. For moderate to severe anxiety, combining therapy with medication is generally the most impactful. "It's a one-two punch where the medication is setting up the environment of your brain to make the most rapid gains as you're doing the work of learning new ways of looking at situations," she says.



acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), which has been gaining clinical validation.

ACT guides people to see their unpleasant emotions as just feelings and to accept that parts of life are hard. Practitioners encourage patients to begin a dialogue with anxious thoughts, examining their causes while keeping in mind their personal goals and values. Although anxious thoughts shouldn't be completely suppressed, sufferers can deliberately not allow anxiety to decide what gets their attention.

This way of relating to anxiety has been a powerful strategy for John Bateman, the 52-year-old host of the podcast *Our Anxiety Stories*. When negative or irrational thoughts arise, he acknowledges them but doesn't let them drive his decisions.

Over the years, Bateman has noticed that if he acquiesces to his thoughts, they don't go away, rather they dramatically increase. However, when he recognises them for what they are, just a passing thought and not a fact that needs to be acted upon, they diminish. Since beginning to train his brain to think in this new way eight years ago, he's noticed that the negative thought patterns have decreased. "I discovered that my brain is this amazing, elastic thing," he says.

2 Be Curious About It

After acceptance, a mindfulness approach to anxiety can be useful, especially when you're cycling through anxious thoughts and are unable to think clearly or rationally.

In his book *Unwinding Anxiety*, psychiatrist and neuroscientist Dr Judson Brewer recommends paying attention to the body sensations, thoughts and emotions that come as a result of feeling anxious or worried.

When we notice and name the physical sensations that are arising

NOTING PHYSICAL SENSATIONS OF ANXIETY ALLOWS YOU TO BE LESS CAUGHT UP IN THEM

in our bodies (my face feels hot and flushed; my breathing is shallow; my heart is beating quickly; I feel sweat prickling my underarms), we are already less caught up in it, simply through that act of observation, writes Dr Brewer.

Many mindfulness training apps can provide you with help, including one that Dr Brewer developed in his lab at Brown University and shares a name with his book. After three months of using the app, a test group reported a 57 per cent reduction in their anxiety.

Understanding exactly what was happening inside her body and bringing her awareness to it was an empowering tool for Arthur. When she'd notice the shaky feeling in her

chest or belly that radiated out to her hands and down her legs, she knew that meant adrenalin had been released. And by noting these changes as an observer, her 'thinking brain' could take over from her immediate fight-freeze-flight reaction to an anxious moment – and as she began processing what just happened, her symptoms became less acute and threatening. She pictured the hormones hitting her body the same way an ocean wave hits the beach. The beach can't fight the wave, but it remains steady and allows the wave to wash over and fall back.

3 Make Lifestyle Adjustments

Learning to live with anxiety is an individual process, and one that requires trial and error to get just right. While acceptance is the first and most important step to take, some lifestyle changes have been proven to take the edge off, as well.

Since fatigue and increased tension and stress leave us more vulnerable

to anxiety, a well-balanced diet, adequate rest and, especially, regular exercise can help us manage it better.

In one study, researchers showed that regular vigorous workouts lead people to be 25 per cent less likely to develop an anxiety disorder or depression over the next five years.

Meredith Arthur's toolkit consists of medication – a prescription SSRI antidepressant – and regular meditation. She also shares her experiences and edits stories about mental illness for the web platform Medium and recently wrote *Get Out Of My Head*, an illustrated guide on how to understand anxiety and learn to navigate problems without overthinking.

Openly discussing the condition with an online community and readers has transformed her relationship with anxiety.

"I'm learning to live in harmony, as much as possible, with this thing that is a part of me," she says. "It's not always pleasant, but I'm learning to accept and, as much as I can, take care of my anxiety." **R**



Hoofing The Vaccination Message

The German government made an unusual appeal to its people to get vaccinated at the beginning of the year, in an attempt to beat back the latest wave of COVID-19 infections. Seven hundred sheep and goats were given tasty bits of bread in a field south of Hamburg. Photographed from above, the animals took on the appearance of a 100-metre syringe. NPR.ORG

What Your
Glasses
Reveal About You

—
BY *Taylor Markarian*



Your glasses are one of the first things people notice about you. Some give the impression that you're an extrovert, while others the opposite. What do yours say?



COLOURFUL FRAMES ARE FOR CREATIVE TYPES

Glasses frames come in every imaginable colour nowadays. While black and brown frames still exist, they are no longer the only options. Those who dare to colour their vision are typically creative, says optician Lynn Green. "Artists love colour," she says. "They are very particular with what they like and they know what they like."

But artists aren't the only ones who gravitate towards colour frames. Both the extrovert and the introvert veer towards this kind of eye wear. "Usually people wearing bright, bold colours are fun and outgoing," Green discerns. What's nice about fun colours is that somebody who normally wears neutral colours may have

reached a point in their life where they need a change. While it is natural for an outgoing person to pick up a pair of attention-grabbing glasses, shy people who are trying to break out of their shell can use these glasses as a means of putting themselves out there.



AVIATORS ARE FOR THE ADVENTUROUS

Another person who has an intimate relationship with fashion and eye wear is Vint & York fashion designer Larisa Ginzburg. According to her, those who have a penchant for aviators are quite the adventurers. "If you're a fan of the aviators frame, chances are you've always been a risk taker." She says that while this style

READER'S DIGEST

is classic, it is not too concerned with respecting the rules and will stand out in its modern reinterpretations. The wearer is an active, devoted person who knows what they want and they're not afraid to live for the moment, she says. "An undying staple of coolness, aviator glasses are a favourite among outspoken people who don't just talk, but walk the talk." If you've got at least one pair of aviators, you're the kind of person whose presence is always felt. You enter a room and people notice, and you usually end up being the life of the party.



THICK BLACK FRAMES ARE TRENDY

Thick black frames go largely to the young, hipster crowd. The people who wear these glasses are definitely trying to make a statement. Green describes this type as, "that bold, 'look-at-me' frame." Dark, thick, heavier frames are a favourite with people in the late teens to 20s age range. One of today's biggest trends, a person that has a pair of these glasses is probably young, bold and trendy.



PATTERNED FRAMES ARE CHEERFUL

It is not surprising that it is mostly women who opt for colours and patterns on their frames. Not only that, but bright colours with patterns are also preferred by older people who want to feel the fun of youth again. Sometimes they even have designs by the temples, like little flowers. These cute and stylish glasses express a cheerful nature and someone who doesn't like to take life too seriously.



FAKE GLASSES ARE A CONFIDENCE BOOST

Yes, people really do wear fake glasses, and it's more common than you'd think. According to Green, the whole "glasses make you look smart" thing still applies. She says she had a patient who wanted glasses for a very important job interview, although she didn't have a prescription.

What Your Glasses Reveal About You

“She wanted glasses that made her look confident, and we found the perfect Tom Ford classic look. She brought us all chocolate because she got the job, and she said it was the glasses that did it.”

But there are a lot of reasons why people wear fake glasses. Green says that glasses are now just as much an accessory as they are a necessity. Like shoes or purses or earrings, people buy glasses to intentionally convey something about themselves. People who wear fake glasses are very concerned with how the world sees them and may be somewhat insecure. At the same time, they could also be fashionistas who want to complete their perfect look.



TORTOISE SHELL GLASSES ARE SPUNKY

There's more than just one way to showcase your creativity and your individuality with your glasses, Ginzburg says. It's not always about the colour, the shape is important as well. She says, tortoiseshell glasses (also known as horn rimmed) are full of charm and will always be a staple of originality.

“This frame is a favourite among independent, creative thinkers. They make a lasting impression and let the world know that the wearer is a distinctive individual with a taste for vintage and art,” says Ginzburg.

The shape of a pair of tortoise shell glasses goes outside the regular square, rectangle, round or oval. It is not a regular shape, and the wearer is by no means a regular person. They are high-spirited and cheerful.



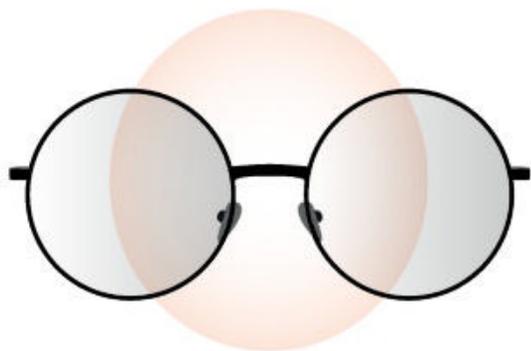
SIMPLE, CLEAN LINES ARE PRAGMATIC

We've talked a lot about the creative person, but what about people who are more logically, mathematically, or scientifically driven?

In her two decades of being an optician, Green has noticed that these types of people tend to pay less attention to style and more attention to function.

“They go for structure,” she says. “They're very detail oriented. They usually go with a more simple, clean line look.”

For this type of person, glasses are more about pragmatism and not so much about showing off.



BIG ROUND FRAMES ARE QUIRKY

Green refers to these glasses as “Harry Potter frames”, although decades earlier they were referred to as “John Lennon frames”. They’re not as common as they used to be, but people do still rock that circular frame. “That round shape is a very classic style,” she says. “It’s old Hollywood.”

People who wear these glasses in the modern era tend to be men in their 30s to late 40s, she says. They’re a bit quirker than your average person and might have an appreciation for history or vintage style.



BROWLINE FRAMES MEAN BUSINESS

Last on the list are browline frames. These glasses have a bold upper frame and a thin bottom frame. Ginzburg says, “They are both smart and stylish and they say that ‘you mean business’.” They are a classic power accessory for professional life, and a favourite among knowledgeable hipsters who aim high in life, she says. Browline frames are a compromise between bold and simple. If you wear these, you’re not afraid to make a statement but you also don’t let your ego get you in trouble. 

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



Underwater Robot Patrol

A robot fish is changing the behaviour, physiology and fertility of “one of the most problematic animals on the planet”. According to a study published in *iScience*, tests of the robot fish found it essentially scared *Gambusia* (aka the mosquitofish) “to death”. An international team of biologists and engineers created the robot fish to mimic the largemouth bass, a natural predator of the mosquitofish. The invasive mosquitofish was introduced to Australia over 100 years ago to combat mosquitos and is now considered one of the country’s biggest freshwater threats. ABC.NET.AU



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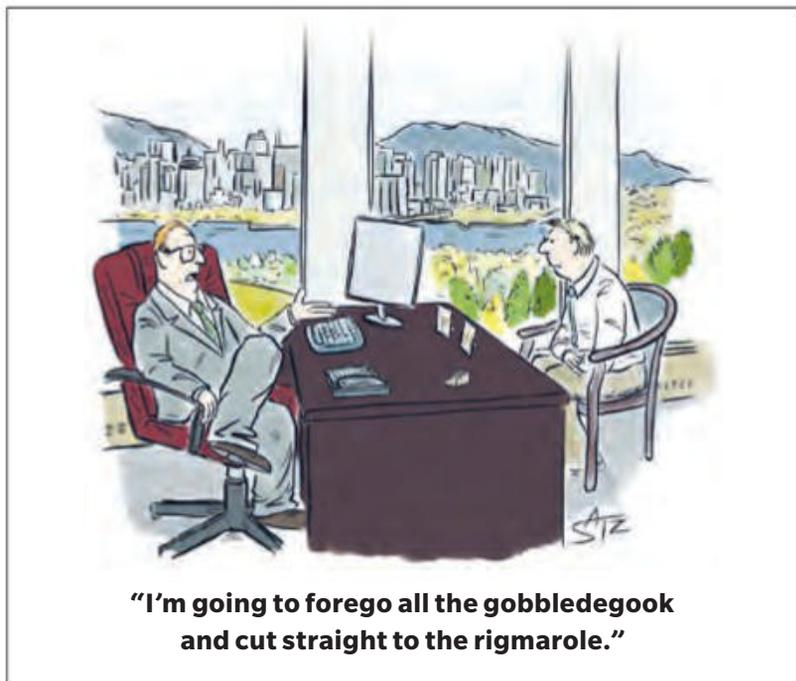


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Louis Angelino is a professional cleaner. A new client texted him the address and said the key was under the mat. Angelino arrived, found the key, and got to work. After three hours of mopping and scrubbing, he was done. Just then, his client called asking where he was.

"I'm in your living room playing with your cats," said Angelino.

"Louis," said the client, "I don't have cats." And that's how Angelino learned that he'd broken into a stranger's home and cleaned it for free.

NJ.COM

Getting A Handel On It

I showed my music class a short film about composer George Frideric Handel. Afterwards, a student asked if that was really Handel or an actor playing Handel.

"Well, Alex," I said, "Handel lived way back in the 1700s. Does that give you a hint?"

"Ah," said Alex, realising his mistake. "It couldn't have been him. If it were really Handel from that long ago, the film would have been in black-and-white."

SUBMITTED BY PAULA FARINA

Writing On The Wall

The people of Plover, Wisconsin, wanted the name of their village written large on the local water tower. So crews began painting. When they finished, travellers from near and far could see that they were entering the picturesque village of 'Plvoer'. The locals commemorated the gaffe with a T-shirt that proclaims 'I Lvoe Plvoer'. KXAN

Long Stretch Ahead

A few days after my 17-year-old nephew started his first job, I asked how it was going. His reply was very relatable. "Well," he said, "it sure does take up a lot of time."

SUBMITTED BY KATHY IRBY

Time Is Money

A company owner was asked a question: "How do you motivate your employees to be so punctual?" He smiled and replied: "It's simple. I have 30 employees and 29 free parking spaces. One is paid parking."

@MICKEY



DAY ONE AND YOU'RE ALREADY THREE MONTHS BEHIND ...

CLIENT: You should have indicated a problem with the app sooner.

ME: It was only just made available to me to launch. As soon as I saw the problem, I flagged it.

CLIENT: But you should have looked for a problem sooner.

ME: I just saw it for the first time. I wasn't involved with the project until now. You just hired me yesterday.

CLIENT: That's not true. I sent you an email three months ago about it where I said I had found someone to make the app at a lower price. Remember?

ME: I think so. How'd that work out?

CLIENTSFROMHELL.NET

DELIVERING JUSTICE

An assistant district attorney in the US was demoted for moonlighting for a food delivery service when he should have been in the office. *The Week* magazine asked its readers to title a TV show based on the scenario. You may soon be watching:

- Law and Order In
- A Few Good Menus
- Food Court
- 12 Hungry Men
- Crime & Nourishment
- The Meals Of Justice
- CSI: KFC
- The French Fry Connection



QUIZ



Say It With A Song

*Do you know the stories behind
these famous songs and melodies?*

BY *Doris Kochanek*

QUESTIONS

1 One of the Rolling Stones' most melodic hits is *Ruby Tuesday*, written by Keith Richards. According to his autobiography, the song refers to the breakup with his girlfriend at the time. But *Ruby Tuesday* was not just a hit. What else bears this name?

- a)** a restaurant chain in the US
- b)** a painting by Mark Rothko
- c)** a star discovered in 1970
- d)** the world's biggest ruby gemstone

2 Ludwig van Beethoven's composition *Für Elise* (For Elise) is world famous. Why is it still not clear who exactly is behind the name Elise?

- a)** Beethoven had several lovers named Elise
- b)** The dedication is disputed and the original piece is lost
- c)** It is disputed whether the piece is really by Beethoven
- d)** Beethoven was not responsible for naming the piece

3 In 1971 Joan Baez wrote *Here's To You*, a song dedicated to two men, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. What made these two Americans of Italian origin famous around the world in the 1920s?

- a)** They invented the foldable pocket umbrella
- b)** They were the first to cross Antarctica
- c)** They were executed after a controversial verdict
- d)** They introduced dry pasta to the world

4 In *Candle In The Wind*, Elton John sings about movie star Marilyn Monroe. When Princess Diana, a friend of the singer, died in an accident on August 31, 1997, Elton John's lyricist Bernie Taupin gave new words to the song. Which of the following is true of *Goodbye England's Rose*?

- a)** All proceeds from the song went to UNICEF
- b)** Elton John sang it live only once - at Diana's funeral service
- c)** It is the best-selling single of all time
- d)** The title is a tribute to Princess Diana's favourite flower

5 In 1968 *Hey Jude* by the Beatles was top of the charts. Paul McCartney wrote it for John Lennon's son Julian, who was suffering from the separation of his parents. What else distinguishes *Hey Jude*?

- a)** The lyrics are a nursery rhyme
- b)** It is the Beatles's most successful single
- c)** It is more than seven minutes long - a record at that time
- d)** Both b and c

6 The sound of the UEFA Champions League anthem resembles George Frideric Handel's *Zadok The Priest*. Handel, who was born in the German state of Saxony-Anhalt, wrote *Zadok* for the coronation of British King George II in 1727. How is it that a German was given the commission by the British crown?

- a)** He had become a British citizen a few months earlier
- b)** George II himself came from Saxony-Anhalt
- c)** George II was Handel's cousin
- d)** Handel knew George II

7 In 1968, when Frank Sinatra released *My Way*, he had no way of knowing that it would become the most popular karaoke song across the globe. Nor would he have anticipated the hit would be taken off many karaoke machine playlists across the Philippines in 2007. Why was the song banned?

- a)** It apparently incited fights and murders when sung off tune
- b)** It was no longer popular
- c)** It was bumped off by the rise of KPop songs
- d)** The song caused many bar patrons to cry

8 *Waltzing Matilda* is considered the unofficial national anthem of Australia. However, this song is not about a woman waltzing, as the title might lead you to believe. What is meant by Waltzing Matilda?

- a) a hopping kangaroo
- b) the windy dunes in the Great Victoria Desert
- c) the bag of a swagman (itinerant worker)
- d) a falling gum tree

9 “You’re so vain/You probably think this song is about you.” This unusual dedication earned Carly Simon a number one hit in 1972. But it wasn’t until 2015 that she confirmed what many believed, that she was singing about ...

- a) singer James Taylor
- b) The Rolling Stones’s Mick Jagger
- c) actor Warren Beatty
- d) her high-school boyfriend

10 Chuck Berry’s hit *Johnny B. Goode* begins with a famous guitar intro. Berry wrote the song in 1955 for his friend Johnnie Johnson. What honour has been bestowed upon the song more recently?

- a) A recording of the song is travelling through space aboard the *Voyager* space probe as part of a cultural snapshot intended for extraterrestrials
- b) It is the official anthem of the US state of Utah

- c) It was played at the inauguration of US President Barack Obama
- d) It has been covered by BTS

11 When the hit movie *Frozen* was released in 2013, audiences across the world came to love Olaf, the singing and dancing snowman. Complete the title of the tune Anna sings to her sister, Elsa, to coax her out to play: “Do You Want to ___ a Snowman?”

- a) catch
- b) kiss
- c) build
- d) melt



Olaf, everyone’s favourite singing and dancing snowman

>> Turn to page 118 for quiz answers

ANSWERS TO SONG QUIZ

1 a. A chain of fast-food restaurants was named after Richards's song.

2 b. Beethoven's notes to *Für Elise* are lost, as are the title and dedication. Many experts assume that the composer dedicated the piece to Therese Malfatti, to whom he proposed marriage in 1810. Therese, by the way, turned him down.

3 c. The anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti were accused of robbery and murder, sentenced to death and executed in 1927. The two denied the crime. Numerous contemporaries all over the world did not believe in their guilt and campaigned for them, ultimately in vain.

4 b. Elton John sang *Goodbye England's Rose* live only at Princess Diana's funeral service.

5 d. *Hey Jude* is the Beatles's best-selling single and is more than seven minutes long – a record in 1968.

6 a. Handel, who had been living and working in London at the time, had become a British citizen shortly before he was commissioned to write the song for the King's coronation.

7 a. Between 2002-2012, up to 12 karaoke "singers" were killed across the Philippines when incensed patrons were said to have become violently enraged by drunken renditions of the song.

8 c. A waltzing Matilda is a swagman's bag.

9 c. Carly Simon dedicated the second verse of the song to her ex-lover Warren Beatty. She never revealed whether in the other verses she was thinking of James Taylor, to whom she was married for several years, or Mick Jagger (who sings in the chorus of *You're So Vain*), with whom she also had a relationship.

10 a. A recording of Chuck Berry's *Johnny B. Goode* is travelling through space aboard the *Voyager* space probe. Images and sounds have been stored on the 'Golden Record' to give extraterrestrial life an impression of Earth.

11 c. In *Frozen*, Elsa forces herself into self-isolation as she struggles with the danger her special powers pose to her little sister, Anna. In an attempt to coax Elsa outside, Anna sings to her through a locked door "Do you want to build a snowman?".

R

QUOTABLE QUOTES



You don't have to be rich to live a rich life — and to me, taking time to prepare and enjoy food at a communal table with the ones you love is the best way to live richly.

RACHAEL RAY, FOOD PERSONALITY

If you can affect someone when they're young, you are in their hearts forever.

MARA WILSON, ACTRESS

MENTAL TOUGHNESS IS THE ABILITY TO SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE OF A HOPELESS SITUATION. ADVERSITY IS AN EXPERIENCE, NOT A FINAL ACT.

GEORGE RAVELING,
BASKETBALL COACH

People don't come to rock shows to learn something. They come to be reminded of something they already know and feel deep down in their gut ... It's the reason true rock 'n' roll will never die.

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN, SINGER



Grief and loss, those are things that don't ever go away. They stay with you.

KEANU REEVES, ACTOR





TRAVEL



CAPE TOWN

Revival

*A generation after the end of apartheid,
the city is buzzing with a new creative energy*

BY *Nicholas DeRenzo*

FROM **HEMISPHERES MAGAZINE FOR UNITED AIRLINES**

**Cape Town's Bo Kaap neighbourhood is
filled with brightly painted buildings**

PHOTO: ALISTAIR BERG/GETTY IMAGES

Perched on the south-westernmost edge of the continent, Cape Town can feel like the tip of the African iceberg – and many visitors don't realise how much depth lies beneath the surface. They sunbathe on its beaches, cage-dive with its great white sharks, sip its wine – but do they ever truly engage with its people?

A quarter century after the end of apartheid, a new generation of creative Capetonians demands to be seen and heard for the first time. Formerly ignored cuisines from the area's Xhosa people and Muslim-majority Cape Malay community are coming to the fore; African contemporary art has finally got a museum that feels as vital as Paris's famed Centre Pompidou; and even townships are embracing their status as entrepreneurial hubs.

To squeeze in as much of the region's dramatic scenery as possible, I begin my visit with a half-day tour with Cape Sidecar Adventures, which offers rides on a fleet of 1950s and '60s motorcycle sidecars.

Owner Tim Clarke outfits me in a leather jacket, helmet, goggles and gloves, and introduces me to the company's 'marketing manager': a rescue mutt named Brody who wears 'doggles'.

Brody and I hop into the tandem sidecar. I'm not a dog person, but I can't fight that feeling when he rests

his head on my shoulder throughout the drive.

In the fishing village of Hout Bay, we wait for the coastal fog to lift. Inside Bay Harbour Market I drink a red latte, made with rooibos 'tea' – actually a scrubby bush that grows in the Western Cape – then snack on biltong (dried, cured meat) and droëwors (dried sausage).

On our way out of town, Brody gets into a barking match with a fur seal on the dock. People grin and flail their arms like kids as we pass. I wave back, and Clarke shouts over the motor, pointing at Brody, "They're not smiling at you!"

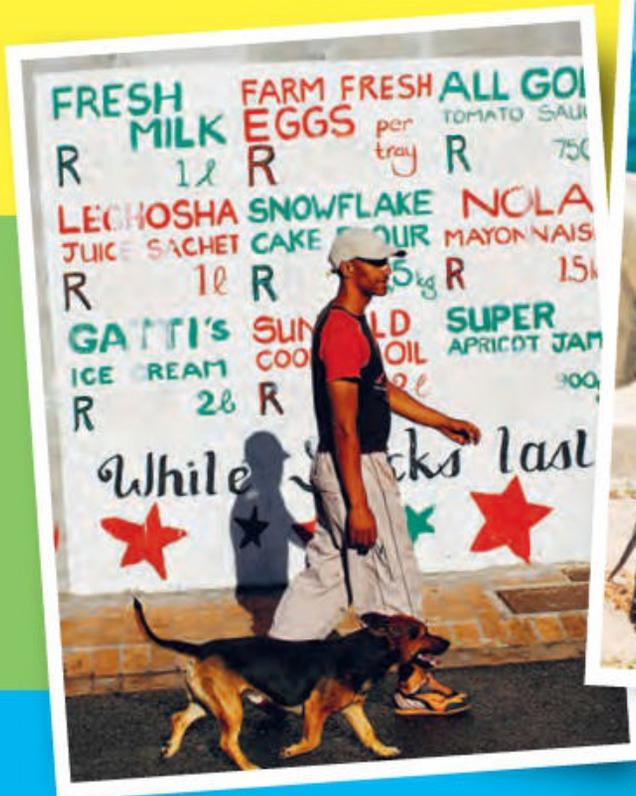
We zigzag along the scenic paths on the Cape Peninsula – the jutting landmass that ends in the famed Cape of Good Hope, the continent's south-westernmost point. I keep my eyes peeled for breaching right whales. No such luck.

Our next stop is the penguin colony at Boulders Beach. "We used to take our kids to swim with them," Clarke tells me. Dozens of penguins squawk, waddle and roll around in the surf. Tourists *ooh* and *aah* at the fluffy chicks and snap photos. It's impossible not to be swept up in the scene.

After the tour, I grab a rideshare to Woodstock, a burgeoning but still scrappy neighbourhood where factories are being converted into galleries and high-end restaurants. At the Old Biscuit Mill, an early 20th-century red-brick factory, I ride a lift up to

Cape Town Revival

Clockwise from top: Table Mountain looms over Cape Town, showing some 500 hectares of land burnt in a wildfire last year; murals brighten up the revitalised neighbourhood of Woodstock; penguins at Boulders Beach put on a show for visitors





Clockwise from top left: The Zeitz Museum is a showcase for African art; the Dutch colonial architecture of Babylonstoren; a growing entrepreneurial spirit is creating a brighter future in the townships, including for these kids in Hout Bay



The Pot Luck Club, sister restaurant to The Test Kitchen (Africa's only entry on the World's 50 Best Restaurants list) downstairs.

Up here, with outlandish views towards Table Mountain, I order a Thai green curry martini, springbok antelope loin with fermented black beans and vermicelli rice noodles, and deboned lamb ribs with tomatoes infused with pomegranate juice.

I work off that hearty lunch at Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden, at Table Mountain's eastern foot. South Africa's plants don't get equal billing with its lions and elephants, but this mountain has more botanical diversity than the entire United Kingdom. It is part of the Cape Floral Region, a one million-hectare belt of protected areas.

In the park, I track mongoose, chubby guinea fowl, and partridge-like Cape francolins, and then climb onto a wooden platform that snakes over the canopy. Back on the ground, I marvel at the proteas, flowering plants that look like Seussian artichokes (and gave their name to the national cricket team).

The next morning I set out to do a deep dive into the city's townships, formerly segregated neighbourhoods that are a lasting reminder of the apartheid era. Some 60 per cent of Capetonians live in townships or other informal settlements. Despite a reputation for crime, these areas are hotbeds of creativity.

In the Gardens area of the city centre, I meet tour guide Keith Sparks. As we drive east, he recalls township tours of the past. "I used to see buses pull up on the highway, and people would jump out and take photos at the fence. It was almost like a zoo experience."

This tour, the 'City Futures' itinerary, on the other hand, is based on the idea that the city's entrepreneurial future lies here.

In Langa, the region's oldest township, British-Jamaican Tony Elvin - who moved here to open a social-enterprise restaurant for celebrity chef Jamie Oliver and decided to stay - welcomes us to his arts hub and business incubator, iKhaya le Langa NPC. It supports some 106 enterprises, from artists to jewellers to hot-sauce makers.

Elvin leads me into the complex's Sun Diner. "They say don't go to the townships, but Langa is a gateway into another Cape Town that's bubbling up. We're calling Langa the new city centre - the Afrocentric heart of the city."

Sparks and I head back to the highway, towards Khayelitsha, which he compares to Soweto - Johannesburg's city-size township. We drive past people braaiing (barbecuing) fragrant meats outside colourful corrugated-tin houses and pull into a school carpark to meet gardener Athi Ndulula of iKhaya Kulture Garden.

"*iKhaya* means home, so I want

you to feel at home,” Ndulula says as he ushers us past living walls and soil-filled tyres. “We wanted to show the youth what they can do with minimal space.” We sample crisp dune spinach, naartjie (a citrus fruit) and spekboom (a lemony succulent).

Before I leave, Ndulula tells me to check out his side job: he’s an aspiring rapper who goes by the name Artist-X. “The ‘X’ is for my mother tongue, Xhosa,” he says.

All that nibbling has stoked my appetite, so I thank Sparks and depart for chef Abigail Mbalo-Mokoena’s place in Khayelitsha: 4Roomed The Restaurant. A former dental technician, Mbalo-Mokoena greets me warmly, dressed in a T-shirt that says, “Africa Your Time is Now.” In 2019 and 2020, *Food & Wine* and *Travel + Leisure* magazines jointly named 4Roomed one of the world’s 30 best restaurants.

“We love heavy spice,” she says, as she serves Xhosa-inspired dishes: *isonka samanzi* (steamed bread), sous vide beef, samp (mashed corn kernels) and beans, reportedly Nelson Mandela’s favourite food. Her version, made with hominy, tarragon, and coconut cream, tastes so good I wish I had a Xhosa grandma to cook it for me.

“My dental profession was a ticket out of the ’hood, but people leaving was depriving the area of black professionals,” Mbalo-Mokoena says. “I needed a purpose, and my purpose was to move back to the townships – to use food to bring people together.”

I take a car to the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, Cape Town’s answer to San Francisco’s Fisherman’s Wharf. At the Watershed market I stock up

on souvenirs: sleek ostrich-eggshell jewellery and animal figurines carved from upcycled flip-flops found on the beach.

Nearby, I stop at the experimental Cause Effect Cocktail Kitchen and Cape Brandy Bar, where bar manager Justin Shaw pours me a South African brandy. Co-

gnac-smooth, it was born of necessity: apartheid-era sanctions limited booze from abroad, so South Africans crafted their own spirits. “It’s our duty to retell the story of brandy in a non-pretentious way,” Shaw says.

Baskets of botanicals hang over the bar for custom infusions. “Fynbos has been a part of the food culture here from before the Ice Age,” Shaw says, referring to the scrubby, hardy vegetation that grows in these parts. I have a hot, spiced negroni, made with fynbos-infused gin and vermouth.

**“MY PURPOSE
WAS TO MOVE
BACK TO THE
TOWNSHIPS AND
USE FOOD TO
BRING PEOPLE
TOGETHER”**

In the morning I head to the Waterfront's Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, which opened in 2017 in a converted 1921 grain silo. Walls carved out of 42 concrete cylinders create an atrium that is run through with curves, ovals and parabolas.

Tour guide Siseko Maweyi points up to a vast wall-hanging by Ghana's El Anatsui. What looks like a luxurious textile is made from scraps of copper wire and smashed bottle caps. "It confronts notions of consumerism and waste," Maweyi says.

I pick up a rental car and drive south for lunch at La Colombe, a fine-dining restaurant at the Silvermist Organic Wine Estate, in the suburb of Constantia. One dish in the meal I'll remember for years is a foie gras mousse with springbok tartare on a paper-thin wafer. I wonder if any other country is so comfortable eating its national mascot?

My final stop is a peaceful retreat called Babylonstoren, near the Franschhoek Valley. Born in the 1600s as a Cape Dutch farm, the estate takes its name from a pyramidal hill that reminded settlers of the Tower of Babel – an apt allusion, given that this country has 11 official languages.

I drive through kilometres of vineyard, braking hard once or twice to let baboons cross the road, and pull into the 200-hectare wonderland, drop my bags off at my cottage and head out to explore the orchards, olive groves, and a veritable zoo's worth of turkeys, chickens, ducks, geese and donkeys that run to the fence for behind-the-ear scratches.

Before I know it, it's time for dinner. As the staff at the hotel's Bakery Restaurant serves family-style boerevors (coriander-spiced sausages), chargrilled biltong and dry-aged cuts cooked over hot coals, a duo plays Afrikaner folk music on guitar and accordion. The wine is flowing. Serving staff begin grabbing guests and twirling them around between the tables. It feels as if I've stumbled into a 19th-century Boer harvest festival.

On the walk back to my cottage, I'm literally starstruck by how dazzling the constellations and the Milky Way are out here. I have to admit there's something immensely special and satisfying about being welcomed into the South African family – if only for a while. **R**

FROM *HEMISPHERES* (DECEMBER 1, 2019),
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Jumpy Victim

A 17-year-old junior lifeguard rescued an unusual swimmer recently off a NSW beach. On only her fourth day, Lillian Bee Young saved a kangaroo caught in rough surf that couldn't paddle back to shore. UPI



BONUS READ



TRAPPED AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

*His air-supply cord severed,
commercial diver Chris Lemons
had minutes to live*

BY *Simon Hemelryk*



PHOTO: THE SUN/NEWS LICENSING

Leaving his fiancé to go to work was harder for Chris Lemons than for most people. The deep-sea diver was typically away for four weeks several times a year. As Chris, 32, readied to leave one day in September 2012 for a job replacing oil pipes at the bottom of the North Sea, 200 kilometres off Aberdeen, northeast Scotland, he gave Morag the usual reassurances. “Don’t worry. It’s a carefully controlled environment.”

“I’ll miss you,” replied the 39-year-old school headmistress. “But we’ll keep in touch, all the time.”



Trapped At The Bottom Of The Sea



From left to right: Saturation divers Duncan Allcock, Chris Lemons and David Yuasa

The couple met five years earlier at a party in Dunoon, west of Glasgow, where Morag worked at a primary school. Chris, a 1.9-metre-tall man from Cambridge, England, was a diver and dive-boat crewman taking a course in the area. He loved Morag's gregariousness, while she found him kind and funny. They started dating and soon Chris moved in with her. They lived frugally while he trained in specialised saturation (SAT) diving in 2011, a job that involved maintaining seabed pipes for the oil and gas industry. It had its risks, from decompression sickness to drowning – several saturation divers had died in recent decades around the world. But Morag knew how much it meant to him.

And it paid well, helping the couple plan an exciting future together. Their wedding was set for the following April. Morag had recently started working at a school in Mallaig in the Scottish Highlands, and the couple were building a dream house overlooking the sea. They talked about having children and, after the kids finished their education, moving to France, where Chris had family. It was a joyful time.

It's called saturation diving because, at the intense pressures found in the deep sea, gas that a diver breathes saturates into his body. When he surfaces and the pressure

drops, this gas can emerge as deadly bubbles in his tissues – causing decompression sickness AKA 'the bends'. SAT divers reduce this risk by living full-time in a pressurised chamber within the dive ship.

For this job, Chris and his three-man team would be sharing the SAT chamber with three other teams aboard the 106-metre vessel *Topaz* for a month. He was delighted to learn he'd be working with Duncan Allcock.

The 50 year old had been diving in the North Sea for 17 years and had worked with Chris on his first few dives when he qualified 18 months earlier, becoming Chris's unofficial mentor. In a competitive industry with only short-term contracts, Duncan had striven to make Chris look good in front of supervisors, giving him advice and nudging him away from mistakes. "If you're unsure

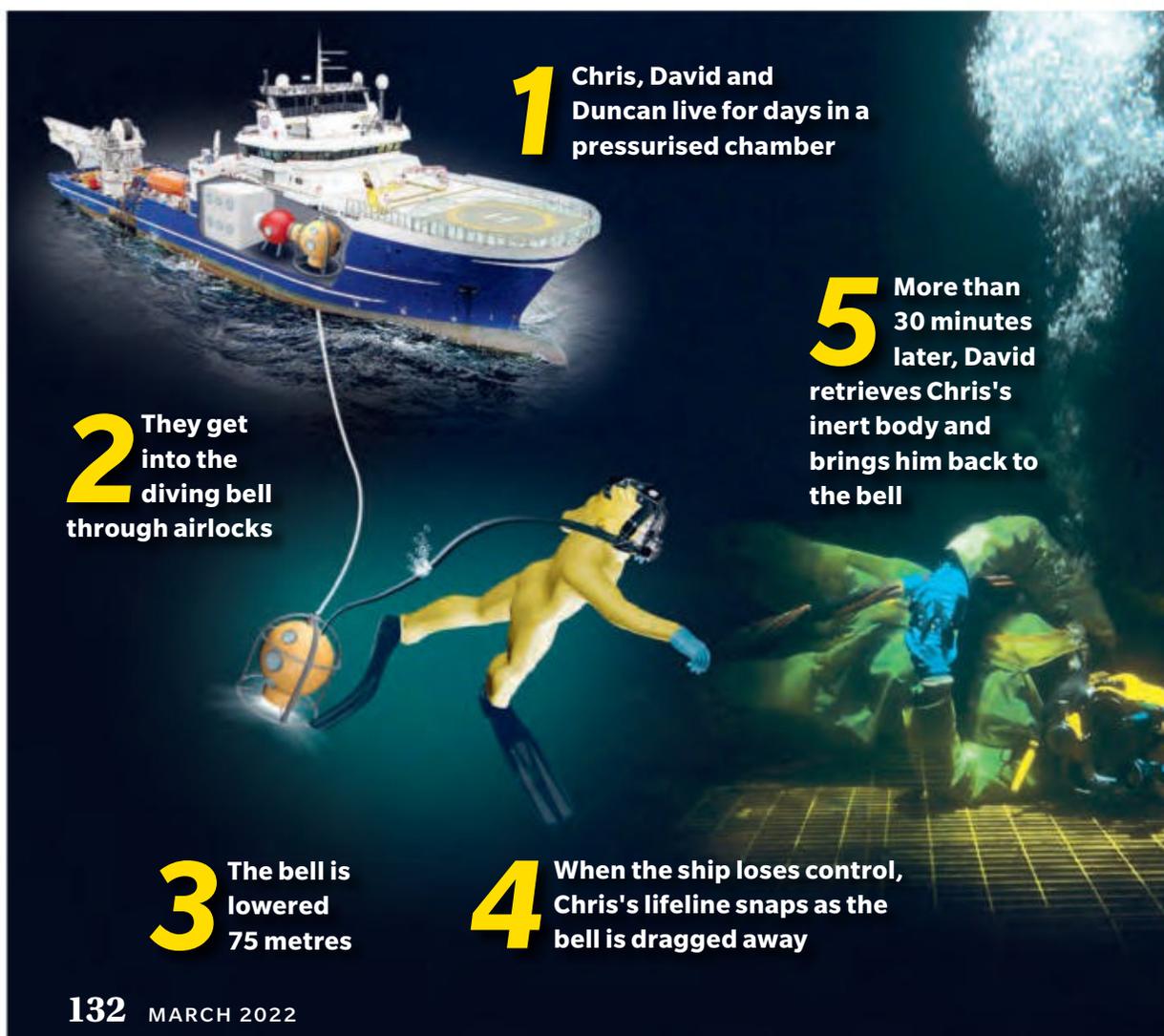
READER'S DIGEST

about something, don't blag it. I'll talk you through," he'd reassured Chris. The pair had become friends. The third team member would be David Yuasa, whom Chris knew by his excellent reputation.

For the first few days in the chamber, the men chatted about Chris's house build and upcoming wedding, and Duncan's son, who'd just started working in diving. Chris couldn't speak to Morag properly - helium in the chamber made the divers' voices high-pitched and distorted - but they

kept connected by email, and Morag sent pictures of her adventures cycling or climbing local mountains.

Just before 9pm on September 18, it was Chris's team's turn to dive. The three transferred to a diving bell, which was lowered on cables around 75 metres below the *Topaz*. Chris and David descended a further 15 metres to replace some pipe on a structure resting on the sea bed. Each man was connected to the bell by an umbilical cord attached at the hip to their diving suits. It was a five-centimetre-thick



1 Chris, David and Duncan live for days in a pressurised chamber

2 They get into the diving bell through airlocks

5 More than 30 minutes later, David retrieves Chris's inert body and brings him back to the bell

3 The bell is lowered 75 metres

4 When the ship loses control, Chris's lifeline snaps as the bell is dragged away

cluster of tubes carrying their air, a communications line, electricity for the lamps and cameras on their helmets, and hot water to keep their suits warm on the 4°C seabed. At the core was a steel-reinforced rope. Each diver had 50 metres of this lifeline, coiled ready on a rack inside the bell. Duncan fed this out as needed.

Above water, the wind was about 30 knots (55km/h) and the sea four metres high. Rough, but nothing *Topaz* couldn't handle. Instead of fixed propellers, the ship had five thrusters that could each be rotated. A dynamic positioning system kept the ship locked in place by constantly adjusting these, so there was no need for an anchor.

Though it was a routine job, as Duncan secured Chris's heavy helmet he said, "There's no rush. Take your time." Chris gave him the thumbs up. He felt relaxed, focused, ready to go.

Dropping through the 80-centimetre hole at the bottom of the bell and into the dark ocean was always a magical moment for Chris. Leaving behind the claustrophobic SAT chamber and the bell, he felt weightless, sediment and fleeting marine life highlighted by his helmet lamp.

He and David started working within the manifold, a structure nine metres high and 20 metres long with pipes and valves that managed the oil flow from the wells to the platforms. Toiling a metre apart with wrenches and other tools, the pair were expected to be under water for six hours.

Up on the ship, dive supervisor Craig Frederick sat before a bank of

controls and monitors showing the camera feeds from the divers' helmets. He followed their progress, giving instructions by intercom for each stage of the job. Meanwhile, in the cramped bell Duncan sat surrounded by gauges. He monitored his

colleagues' oxygen and carbon dioxide levels, but he had no communication with them.

Chris had been working around an hour when he heard a noise in Craig's control room. An alarm. *Perhaps the crew were running a test?*

Alarmingly, the green light on Craig's instrument panel was suddenly amber, then red. *I've never seen that before*, Craig thought.

Topaz had a major problem. The positioning system had failed and the boat was drifting and would soon drag the divers with it.

"Leave your tools and get back to

**THE SHIP
HAD A BIG
PROBLEM.
"GET BACK
TO THE BELL,"
THE MEN WERE
ORDERED**

the bell," Craig ordered. It was a highly unusual request, but Chris and David started climbing hand-over-hand up their umbilical cords towards the top of the structure. In the bell, Duncan, who couldn't see what Chris and David's helmet cameras relayed, didn't know what was happening but followed Craig's instruction to start hauling in the cords.

Glancing up, Chris had expected to see the bell's lights, but there was only blackness. Then, as he reached the top of the manifold he felt his umbilical cord tugging and saw it had looped around a metal outcrop. He struggled to unhitch it, but the knot only pulled tighter. *What's going on?* Chris thought.

In the bell, Duncan saw Chris's umbilical cord was suddenly taut. "Give Diver 2 more slack," Craig ordered. "I can't!" Duncan replied. Not only was it too tight, the cord was pulling its rack off the wall, steel struts bending, bolts groaning. It was unthinkable: if the cord broke, it would leave Chris adrift and without oxygen. Duncan also knew that in this tiny space, if it came loose it would knock him through the bottom of the bell into the water. He quickly climbed onto his seat to get out of the way. But there was nothing he could do for Chris.

As Chris struggled to free himself, David desperately tried to get back to help, flailing his arms against the water. He almost made it. The two divers' hands were just a couple of metres apart when David's cord yanked him away. Chris saw a look of resignation and apology on David's face as he disappeared into the dark.

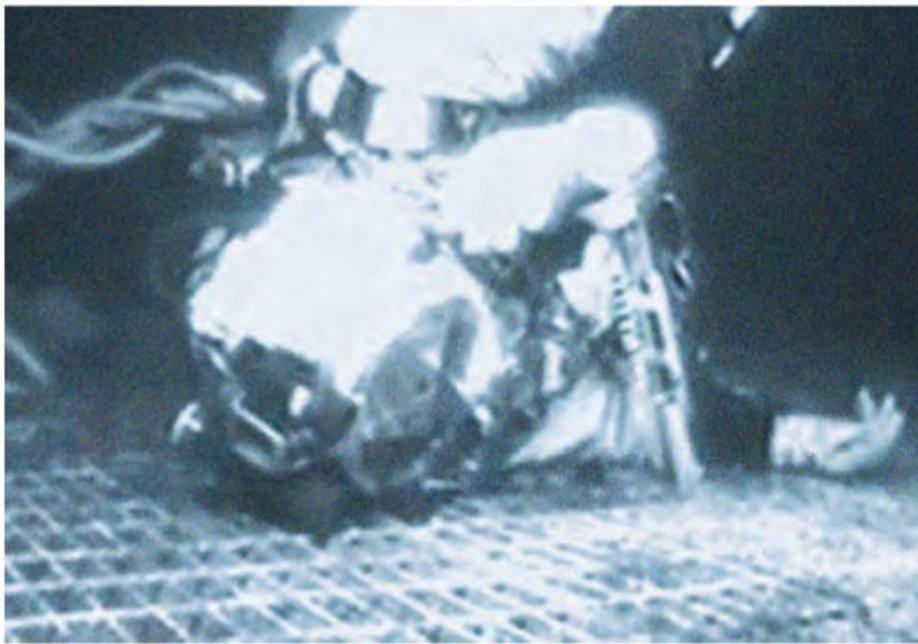
Chris redoubled his frantic attempts to dislodge the cord. He heard it creak ominously, and then the air-supply line broke, followed by the communications feed. Unable to inhale, Chris opened the emergency air tank on his back, as he'd done many times in training. Seconds later there was a noise like a shotgun as the cable snapped. His lifeline was now completely severed.

Chris was thrown backwards. Slowly sinking, his helmet was silent without the intercom, his lights dead and his suit was beginning to cool. He knew he had about eight minutes of oxygen.

In the bell, Duncan feverishly pulled up the suddenly slack umbilical, hoping Chris would be on the end of it. His heart sank as the broken hot-water hose came up. Then came the hissing air line. He felt sick. "I've lost my diver!" he shouted to Craig.

Landing on the soft seabed, Chris

**DUNCAN
PULLED UP
THE LIFELINE,
BUT HIS
HEART SANK:
CHRIS WASN'T
ON IT**



Chris lay in the cold, dark North Sea without air, warmth or any communication from the ship above

struggled to his feet in total darkness. The ship could track him via a beacon on his suit, but he knew if he could get himself to the top of the manifold there was a better chance of rescue before his oxygen ran out. Yet he had no idea where it was. What if he walked the wrong way, into the blackness?

He picked a direction almost at random and took small steps, feeling only the mud beneath his feet. Suddenly his outstretched hands struck metal. He grasped it in relief. He began struggling up the structure, breathing hard.

Reaching the top, he still couldn't see the bell. Not a speck of light. Where had *Topaz* gone? He crawled onto the platform and clung to the metal grille, terrified the current would drag him away. He reckoned he had about five minutes of air left, a terrifying thought. He knew his chances of surviving this were slim.

Yet the situation was even worse than he realised. The ship was now some 225 metres away. The crew were desperately trying to steer it back but, without the positioning system, it took two people to manually coordinate the thrusters. *Topaz* was zigzagging slowly against the waves.

The minutes passed, and Chris's fear turned to grief. This is probably where I die. He'd never see their house finished, never have children. "I'm sorry, Morag," he called out. His mind fumbled with mundane practicalities. *Does she know when the next payment for the building work is due?*

He shouted out for Duncan. "Where are you?"

His chest grew tighter as his oxygen dwindled. *I hope dying doesn't hurt.* He felt himself slowly slipping into unconsciousness.

Craig had ordered *Topaz's* remotely operated underwater vehicle to descend and look for Chris. It sent

back pictures of him lying on the metal grille. His hands seemed to be twitching. *But was he still alive, or were his limbs just moving in the current?* It had been 16 minutes since the umbilical cord had snapped.

By now David had made it back to the bell, poised to retrieve Chris if they could get in position. Craig kept him and Duncan updated on the boat's progress, though he massaged the truth to keep their spirits up. "We're nearly there."

David already assumed he'd be recovering a body. Duncan's thoughts were darkening, too, and he wondered how he would tell Morag that her fiancé wasn't coming home. The wait was agonising, but he tried to keep hope alive. *We've not forgotten you, lad. Hang in there.*

Attempts by *Topaz's* engineers to re-engage the positioning system had been futile, so in desperation they shut it down and restarted it. Amazingly, this worked. But more than 25 minutes had now passed since Chris's umbilical cord had snapped.

Finally, with the ship over the dive site, David dropped down and found Chris lying on his back. He briefly glanced through Chris's mask; ominously, there was water inside. He clipped Chris onto him with a rescue lanyard and began hauling them both up his umbilical cord. David was fit, but Chris was a big man; it was like trying to carry a giant starfish. By the time he pushed Chris's

upper body into the bell, another six minutes had passed.

Duncan unclipped Chris's helmet. The diver's eyes were closed, his bald head as blue as a pair of jeans. Duncan knew there was little chance of surviving that long without oxygen, but with nothing to lose he kept talking. "You've had an accident. I'm going to give you CPR."

He gave Chris two breaths. Unbelievably, Chris suddenly inhaled. His eyes opened. He blinked.

Duncan could've danced a jig. He's back with us! For Craig, watching via monitor, it was a big moment. "Are you all right?" he asked on the intercom. Chris gave a weak thumbs up.

Duncan probed Chris with questions after flushing his suit with hot water. "Do you know where you are?"

"Yeah."

"You know you've had a broken umbilical?"

"Yeah."

Chris was groggy but, remarkably, seemed himself. Back in the ship's SAT chamber he got medical attention while David and Duncan had "a bit of a hug". Once Chris was stable they visited him. More hugs followed.

Over the next three days, as the men depressurised on *Topaz*, which was now docked at Aberdeen, they talked over what had happened. It helped them deal with the shock. Duncan gently teased Chris about the CPR. "Snogging on a dive is not normally done, you know."

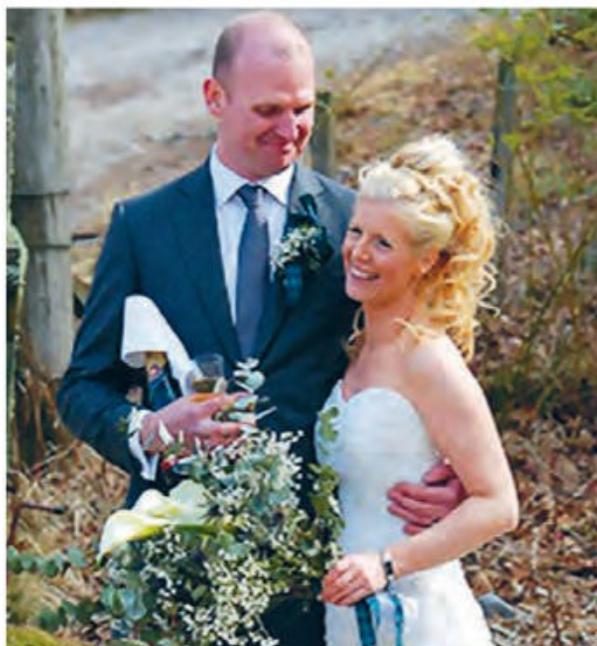
How Chris survived without brain damage remains unclear. The oxygen in divers' gas is about four times richer than normal air, so his body may have been saturated with enough to keep him going. Hypothermia could have put him in shutdown mode, too, sending oxygen to his vital organs.

When Chris phoned Morag, she was horrified and raced across Scotland to meet him as he disembarked *Topaz*. They kissed and hugged for a long time. For a distraction, they went to the cinema, but Morag didn't see a second of the film through her tears.

Three weeks later, Chris was declared fit and returned to the North Sea with David and Duncan to finish the job. "I didn't want to lose my nerve," says Chris, who is still a SAT diver.

"I'm proud of him," adds Duncan. "Many would have said, 'This is too dangerous. I'm not coming back'."

The following April, Chris and Morag got married in an emotional ceremony near their home. David couldn't be there but, says Chris, "at the reception, people were buying Duncan whiskies all night. And they were telling me, 'I don't even want to speak to you, I just want to hug you'."



**Chris and Morag at their wedding
"that almost never was"**

"A band played until 4am and the place was jumping," recalls Morag. "People knew it was the wedding that almost never was."

Chris and Morag have since adopted a little girl, Eubh. They finished their house. But their life plans have accelerated. "We're selling the house and moving to France already," says Morag, smiling.

"I've had a glimpse of dying and I'm not scared," says Chris.

"I know I'm lucky to have a second chance. I always had a lust for life, and the accident only made that stronger." **R**

◆ ◆ ◆

Wheely Silly

A man in Germany discovered that it's best to get a driver's licence before taking to the road. After the 37 year old drove himself to his driving test, he was charged with driving without a licence. AP

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Downton Abbey: A New Era **Historical drama**

In the 2019 feature film of the hit British TV series, the Crawley family and Downton staff receive a royal visit from the king and queen. Two years later, in the sequel, the family receive another piece of stimulating news: the family matriarch, Violet Crawley (played by Dame Maggie Smith), gathers them together in

one of the Abbey's splendid rooms to tell them that she has acquired a villa in the south of France, and they are all to pack up and move there pronto – staff included. While the members of the beloved Crawley household escape to picturesque locations, they also discover a dark secret from their past that they must address.

COMPILED BY DIANE GODLEY



The Bad Guys Family

Based on the *New York Times* best-selling book series from Australian author Aaron Blabey, *The Bad Guys* is an action-filled comedy caper. After years of countless heists and being the world's most-wanted villains, the notorious gang is finally caught. To save the gang from prison, gang leader Mr Wolf brokers a deal: The Bad Guys will go straight. But becoming model citizens proves more challenging than they thought. Nobody has ever failed so badly at trying to be good as these animal outlaws.



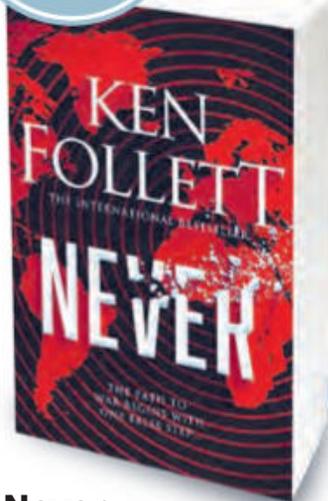
The Batman Superhero

Unlike the golden boy portrayed in the old comic books, in the latest portrayal of the superhero the morality of Gotham City's masked vigilante is a little off-centre. Robert Pattinson plays reclusive billionaire Bruce Wayne/Batman, who along with Commissioner Gordon (Jeffrey Wright), is in a dangerous game of cat and mouse with the Riddler (Paul Dano). Described as 'detective noir', *The Batman* is raw, dark and moving. It also stars Zoë Kravitz as Selina Kyle and Colin Farrell as Penguin.

PHOTOS: (THE BAD GUYS) © 2021 DREAMWORKS ANIMATION LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED;
(THE BATMAN) COURTESY OF WARNER BROS. PICTURES/™ & ©DC COMICS.



Fiction

**Never****Ken Follett**

MACMILLAN

It wouldn't be a Ken Follett novel if it wasn't over 800 pages long, and *Never* is no exception. Perhaps best known for his historical fiction, Follett hurtles you smack-bang into the present day in *Never* – so if you are looking for a book that provides an escape, this isn't it. In fact, it's a bit like watching distressing events of superpowers and rogue nations flexing their military might on the nightly news. With tit-for-tat retaliations escalating, the scenarios that unfold seem all too real and horrible to contemplate.

The Last Exiles**Ann Shin**

HARPERCOLLINS

Inspired by real stories of harrowing escape attempts from North Korea, Ann Shin gives a rare glimpse inside the hermit nation. Suja is one of Pyongyang's privileged. Jin Lee, who comes from the country's north, is not. He is clever though and wins a scholarship to attend university. The two secretly become close friends. On a trip home to see his family, Jin Lee acts out against the authorities and is sent to prison. When Suja finds out about his escape, she hatches a plan to meet him in China, but she has no idea of the harrowing ordeal ahead.

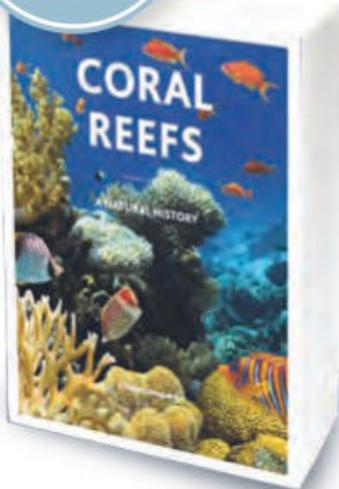
**Home And Other Hiding Places****Jack Ellis**

ULTIMO PRESS

This is a heart-wrenching and heart-warming story told through the eyes of eight-year-old Fin. When he and his single mother, Lindy, visit his grandmother's house in Sydney for Christmas, arguments between mother and daughter ensue, and Lindy buckles under the pressure of past memories. She suffers a mental health event and is hospitalised. But Lindy warns Fin that Grandmother will try and poison him and he is scared out of his wits. An adventure story like no other.



Non
Fiction



Coral Reefs: A Natural History

Charles Sheppard

PRINCETON
UNIVERSITY PRESS

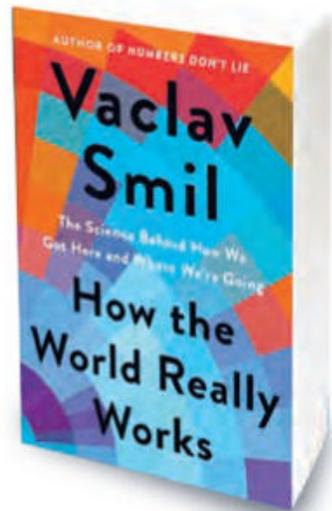
Whether or not you're one of the lucky ones who have snorkelled in tropical waters and seen the amazing marine life there, this hardcover book will enchant all. It features hundreds of photos illustrating the beauty and diversity of the world's coral groups. Emeritus Professor of life sciences Charles Sheppard highlights key aspects of corals from around the world and explains in easy-to-understand language why coral reefs are so critical to the health of our oceans.

Reckoning: The Forgotten Children And Their Quest For Justice

David Hill

PENGUIN
RANDOM HOUSE

Reckoning follows on from David Hill's 2007 best-selling memoir, *The Forgotten Children*, which exposed the abuse faced by child migrants at Fairbridge Farm School in Australia (Hill being one of those children). After the book's publication came a quest for justice, which Hill portrays in his latest book. He also reveals new information that has come to light, such as first-hand accounts of the abuse and their subsequent cover-ups.



How The World Really Works

Vaclav Smil

PENGUIN
RANDOM HOUSE

If you want a scientist's guide to our past, present and future, this is the book. Providing a guiding light on our fight against climate change, Smil explains seven of the most fundamental realities governing our survival and prosperity. He draws on the latest science in *How the World Really Works* to tackle sources of misinformation head-on and to discuss the most profound question of our age: are we irrevocably doomed or is there a brighter utopia ahead?

PHOTOS: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS; PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE



Podcasts

**Emergency On The Ski Lift**

The heart-stopping story of a child left dangling dangerously ten metres in the air from a ski lift. Rescuers and skiers scramble to help, but will they be able to prevent the little girl from slowly slipping from her mother's grasp?

**The Thing About Helen & Olga**

On the surface Helen and Olga are two kindly grandmothers who open their hearts and wallets to homeless men in Los Angeles, and help them get off the streets. But then an investigation begins uncovering a horrifying and twisted plot that stuns even the most seasoned detectives.

**Emperors Of Rome**

'Beware the Ides of March' was the famous warning Julius Caesar ignored in 44 BCE. If you've always wanted to learn more about the Roman Empire, this series from La Trobe University is an excellent start, covering everyone from great military strategists and scheming empresses to untrustworthy senators.

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**THE
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SECTION**

*Sharpen Your
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*Opening
The Door On*
THERAPY

*Counselling almost
always happens in a
room, but what if
more people had the
option to go outside?*

BY *Will W. Dobud*

FROM **THE CONVERSATION.COM**

If you peered through the keyhole of any psychotherapy session, chances are they would all look very similar.

There may be nearly 1000 types of therapies – such as cognitive behavioural and family therapy – but you will typically find a client and practitioner in a room, sitting opposite each other, talking.

Even if you travelled back in time to the 1960s, the 1940s, or even visited Sigmund Freud at the turn of the 20th century, things would also appear similar. But this is starting to change.

WHAT IS OUTDOOR THERAPY?

During COVID-19, many therapists took their sessions online. But others went outside, sitting on a park bench with their clients or taking a leisurely stroll through a nearby park.

This added to the existing use of the outdoors for therapeutic purposes, including camping trips, canoeing, rock climbing, gardening and simple walk-and-talk therapy sessions.

Outdoor therapies use excursions to address behavioural and mental health issues. Whether with individuals or in groups, practitioners combine outdoor activity with talking therapies.

We are also seeing increasing evidence outdoor therapy can improve wellbeing, decrease symptoms of post-traumatic stress and increase the quality of people's participation for those who have experienced multiple therapy treatment failures.

Recipients of outdoor therapy have reported enjoying the shared adventure of being outside with their therapist. The time in nature, with its own remedial effects, also boosts the restorative potential of the sessions.

Of course, using outdoor settings for healing is nothing new. First Nations people have appreciated the benefits of this for tens of thousands of years.

In the western world, there is also a tradition of outdoor healing. In 1901 Manhattan State Hospital developed 'tent therapy' when patients in the psychiatric units developed tuberculosis.

Five years later, an earthquake damaged the San Francisco Agnew Asylum requiring patients to live in outdoor settings. Adapting to these unforeseen circumstances facilitated improvements in mental and physical health, and reductions in violent behaviour.

But outdoor therapy should not just be a crisis response, it should be as accessible as sitting on a counsellor's couch or engaging in telehealth services.

Previously, outdoor therapies have been considered as something just to help troubled young people (which has been accompanied by some valid ethical and safety concerns in cases where 'tough love' has been pushed too far). But there is growing evidence it can be applied more broadly.

Combat veterans, Indigenous populations, people with disabilities, people with terminal illnesses are

among those who have shown benefit from outdoor therapy.

For some people, traditional talk therapy does not suit. Sitting across from a therapist may seem too confrontational, or there is an expectation that business-as-usual therapy is ineffective. For example, we know that for many young people, therapy attempts fail. Taking therapy outdoors has demonstrated outcomes on par with tightly-controlled clinical trials, with regards to improved wellbeing and symptom reduction.

INCREASING OPTIONS But there are compelling reasons why we should expand this option to anyone seeking psychological help. Beyond the therapeutic benefits, there are access benefits as well.

While there is no doubt what many experience in psychotherapists' offices is effective – and online therapy can also work – the small take-up rate of therapies combined with the high indicators of mental health in society show that we have an engagement problem.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, around 20 per cent of Australians experienced diagnosable mental health concerns each year, but only about 11 per cent received a Medicare-

subsidised mental health service in 2019-20.

Access is clearly an issue. Sometimes this is because costs of treatment are high, despite subsidies, and waitlists are long.

We also know that different people may need different treatment options. In the UK, a huge investment in mental health care in 2008 saw 56 per cent of those who accessed a service stop using it after a single visit. Even when therapy was free and accessible, engagement was a serious issue.

TAKING THERAPY OUTDOORS HAS DEMONSTRATED IMPROVED WELLBEING

ACCESSIBILITY A common concern regarding therapy outdoors is confidentiality. What happens if someone sees your client during a walk in the park?

But taking therapy outside can actually appear less visible as there is no need to walk into the local psychotherapy clinic from the street to sit in a small, crowded waiting room.

If we want more people to seek help, get that help and stick with it, we need more options. And an obvious one begins with opening the counselling room door. **R**

Will W Dobud is a Social Work Lecturer at Charles Sturt University.

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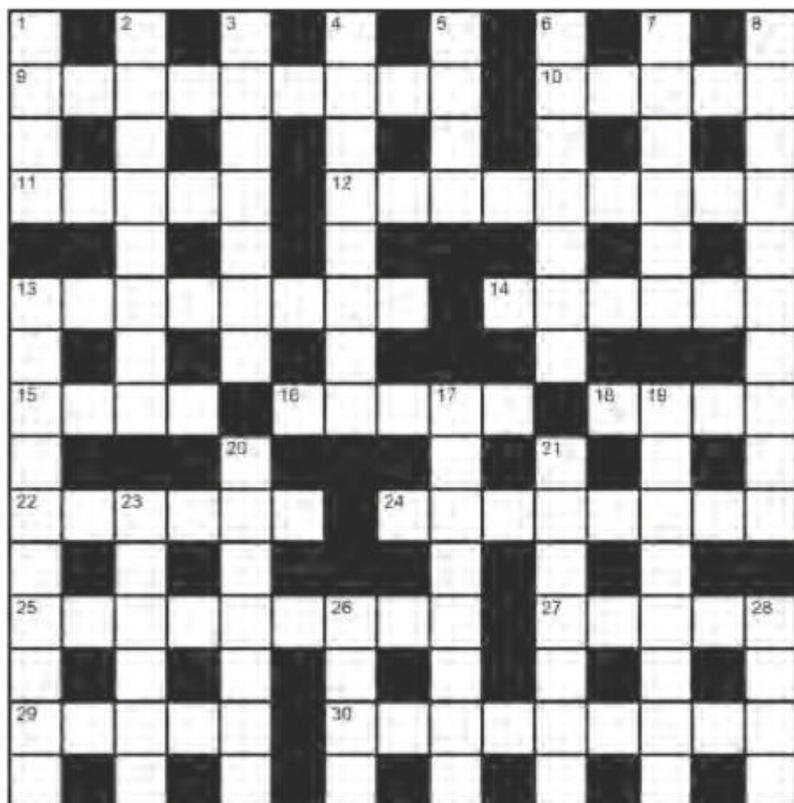
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PUZZLES

Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 154.



ACROSS

- 9** Deserted settlement (5,4)
- 10** Shout of greeting (5)
- 11** Artist's support (5)
- 12** Square one (9)
- 13** Helps drivers see (8)
- 14** Most secure (6)
- 15** Whirlpool (4)
- 16** More unfavourable (5)

- 18** Grant to the needy (4)
- 22** Arrest (6)
- 24** Railway track supports (8)
- 25** Long-armed anthropoid ape (9)
- 27** Anaesthetic (5)
- 29** Boat spines (5)
- 30** Flattery (5,4)

Crossword

Test your general knowledge.

DOWN

- 1** Look at amorously (4)
- 2** Ate (8)
- 3** Smart (7)
- 4** Broad-brimmed straw hat (8)
- 5** Obstacle (4)
- 6** Gossip (4-3)
- 7** Mountain plant (6)
- 8** Diva (10)
- 13** Rope-like hairstyle (10)
- 17** Prevented from speaking (8)
- 19** Get too hot (8)
- 20** Revulsion (7)
- 21** Arid areas (7)
- 23** Merchant (6)
- 26** Protruding tooth (4)
- 28** Garden tool (4)

Puzzle Answers

PAGES 154

1	4			6	8	9		3
6		7		3				
8				5		1		6
	3		6	8				7
		8		7				1
7		6			3	8		2
		1	7	9		2	5	
	7		8	1		6		
9		4				7		8

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: To win, you have to put a number from 1 to 9 in each outlined section so that:

- Every horizontal row and vertical column contains all nine numerals (1-9) without repeating any of them;
- Each of the outlined sections has all nine numerals, none repeated.

IF YOU SOLVE IT WITHIN:

15 minutes, you're a true expert

30 minutes, you're no slouch

60 minutes or more, maybe numbers aren't your thing

To enjoy more puzzles and interactive games, go to www.readersdigest.com.au/games-jokes

BRAIN POWER
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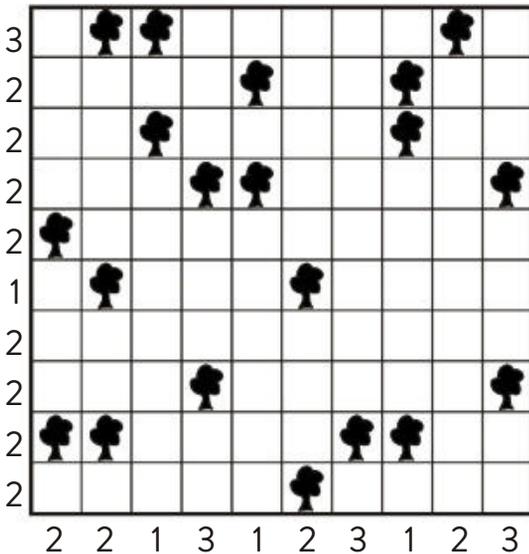
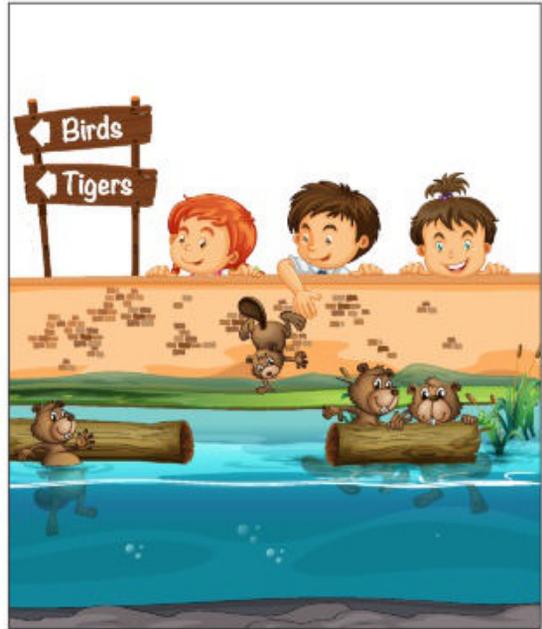
"Write, Erase, Rewrite"

FAMILY FUN

Puzzle Answers
PAGES 154

Spot The Difference

There are eight differences. Can you find them?

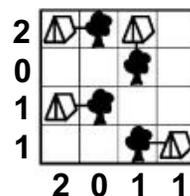


Tents & Trees

How to play:

At this camping site each tent is adjacent to its own tree, either horizontally or vertically. Tents are not adjacent to each other, not even diagonally. The numbers outside the grid indicate how many tents are in that row or column. Locate all tents.

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TRIVIA

Test Your General Knowledge

1. The longest river in Australia is the Murrumbidgee River. True or false?

1 point

2. Governments around the world have offered prizes such as a \$1.4-million Hong Kong apartment and a cow as incentives to do what?

1 point

3. Which famous French artist painted *Le Bateau* which was accidentally displayed upside down for 47 days at the Museum of Modern Art, New York? *2 points*

4. What is the name of Chris Pratt's character in the *Avengers* movies?

a) Space-Lord; b) Star-Lord; c) Time-Lord; d) War-Lord. *2 points*

5. What colour were the earliest cultivated carrots?

1 point

6. What sparkling adornment are some scientists trying to ban, due to its harmful effects on the environment and human skin? *1 point*

7. Scuba diver Hiroyuki Arakawa developed a friendship with what during his work at the Shinto shrine in Japan? *1 point*

8. Which people likely explored Antarctica long before British and Russian explorers claimed to be the first? *2 points*

9. Which population segment is projected to increase eightfold by 2050? *1 point*

10. What is the name of the unique species of huge striped orange cat that is native to Malaysia? *1 point*

11. In what year did the Berlin Wall come down? a) 1975; b) 1994; c) 1989. *1 point*

12. Which of the following is not a golf club: putter, copper, driver, iron, wood?

1 point

13. Who was the first and only English pope? *2 points*

14. Which planet spins the fastest? *1 point*



15. The French government is proposing to give residents an e-bike voucher worth 2500 euros (A\$3950) in exchange for what? *2 points*

16-20 Gold medal **11-15** Silver medal **6-10** Bronze medal **0-5** Wooden spoon

ANSWERS 1. False. It is the Murray River (2508 km). 2. Get vaccinated against COVID-19. 3. Henri Matisse. 4. b) Star-Lord. 5. Purple. 6. Gilttiter. 7. A fish (Asian sheephead wrasse). 8. The Maori. 9. Centenarians. 10. Malaysian Tiger (*Panthera tigris jacksoni*). 11. c) 1989. 12. Copper. 13. Adrian IV (Nicholas Breakspear) from 1154 to 1159. 14. Jupiter. 15. Trading in old, inefficient cars.

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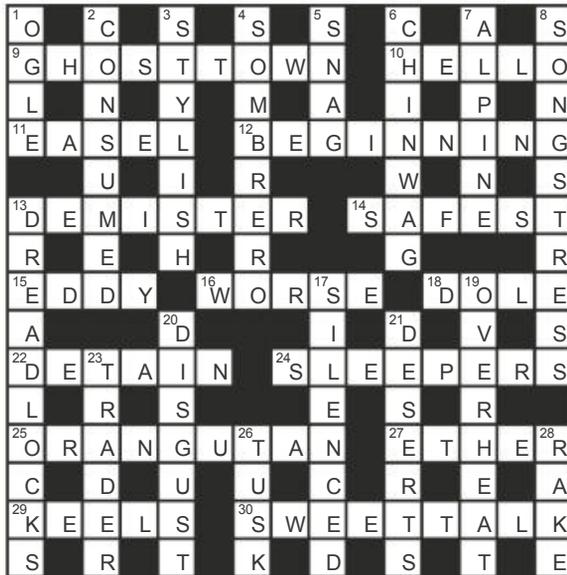
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PUZZLES

From Page 148

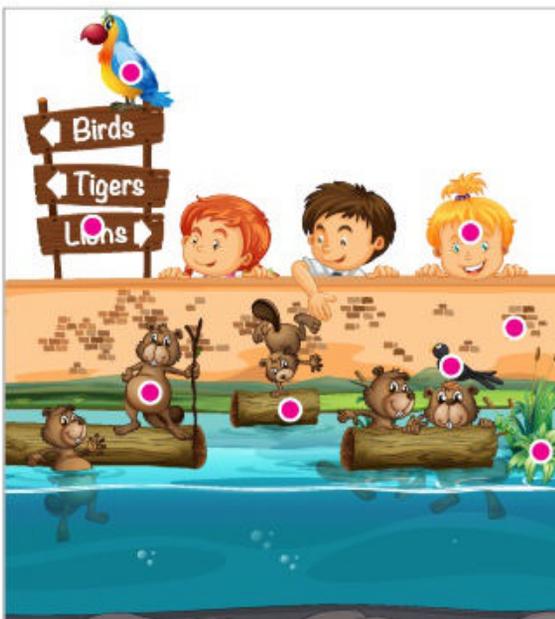
Crossword



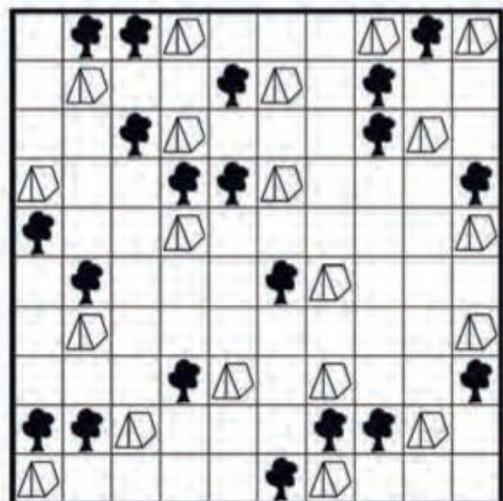
Sudoku

1	4	5	2	6	8	9	7	3
6	2	7	1	3	9	4	8	5
8	9	3	4	5	7	1	2	6
2	3	9	6	8	1	5	4	7
4	5	8	9	7	2	3	6	1
7	1	6	5	4	3	8	9	2
3	8	1	7	9	6	2	5	4
5	7	2	8	1	4	6	3	9
9	6	4	3	2	5	7	1	8

Spot The Difference



Tents & Trees





WORD POWER

Joining Words

*Many expressions are joined by a hyphen.
Which ones can you define?*

BY *Beth Shillibeer*

- 1. A-line** – A: vertical axis on a graph. B: roof with steep angles. C: garment flaring slightly from top to bottom.
- 2. also-ran** – A: short film that plays before the main show. B: unlikely to win or succeed. C: printing press run for discount sellers.
- 3. by-bidder** – A: auction that restricts bidders to certain criteria. B: bidder on a government project. C: one who bids on behalf of another to inflate prices.
- 4. catch-22** – A: dilemma due to conflicting conditions. B: desirable outcome achieved by unethical means. C: legal clause allowing withdrawal from contract.
- 5. coat-trailing** – A: provocative writing, speech or behaviour. B: following close behind. C: using another's success to bolster your own.
- 6. derring-do** – A: avant-garde fashion. B: action displaying courage. C: alcohol-induced state of bravado.
- 7. glad-hand** – A: greet or welcome warmly. B: treat gently due to misfortune. C: give a grade higher than deserved.
- 8. vis-à-vis** – A: side by side. B: in relation to. C: divided from.
- 9. mealy-mouthed** – A: stingy with compliments. B: mean-spirited gossip. C: avoiding straightforward speech.
- 10. pell-mell** – A: disorderly or rushed manner. B: exhibiting incompatible attributes. C: meal preparation from leftovers.
- 11. pied-à-terre** – A: small space kept for occasional use. B: ballet step with rapid foot movement. C: pilgrimage route.
- 12. will-o'-the-wisp** – A: poisonous plant found in mountainous areas. B: elusive goal or object. C: unreliable person.
- 13. zero-sum** – situation where A: both sides lose equally. B: both sides have an equal chance. C: one side's gain is the other side's loss.

Answers

1. A-line – C: garment flaring slightly from top to bottom.

A-line dresses are versatile and typically flattering.

2. also-ran – B: unlikely to win or succeed. Zamira planned to pass the also-ran contestants and take an early lead in the marathon race.

3. by-bidder – C: one who bids on behalf of another to inflate prices. Use of a by-bidder in auctions to raise the price for the auctioneer or owner is illegal in many countries.

4. catch-22 – A: dilemma due to conflicting conditions. Joshua faced the catch-22 of needing a job to get experience and needing experience to get a job.

5. coat-trailing – A: provocative writing, speech or behaviour. Bob was known for his coat-trailing during town council meetings.

6. derring-do – B: action displaying courage. Robin Hood tales feature many feats of derring-do.

7. glad-hand – A: greet or welcome warmly. Election candidates were glad-handing voters after the debate.

8. vis-à-vis – B: in relation to. Zaina's income vis-à-vis her expenditures was very healthy,

easily qualifying her for a bank loan.

9. mealy-mouthed – C: avoiding straightforward speech. Afraid of getting fired by the managing director, Feng was mealy-mouthed during the staff meeting.

10. pell-mell – A: disorderly or rushed manner. The children rushed pell-mell into the playground, despite repeated calls from their teachers to slow down.

11. pied-à-terre – A: small space kept for occasional use. The flat in the city was just a pied-à-terre for the wealthy couple as they spent most of their time at their country house.

12. will-o'-the-wisp – B: elusive goal or object. Chaya had little patience for will-o'-the-wisp ideas and preferred to work on achievable goals.

13. zero-sum – C: situation where one side's gain is the other side's loss. Poker is a zero-sum game where the winnings equal the bets of the losers.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

5–8: Fair

9–10: Good

11–13: Word Power Wizard

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Easy-to-read LED display

Set Of 2 Copper Bracelets – famed for natural benefits!

For generations people have worn copper bracelets in the belief that they had natural benefits. Beautifully crafted from different shades of jewellers' copper. The Serpent design is woven from strands of red, yellow and white while the Wave features red and yellow. Both are 167 mm long, slip easily on to your wrist, and they even have a small 80-gauss magnet at each end for added effect. *Note: Not suitable for those with pacemakers.*

Copper Bracelet Set • COPBS
\$39.95



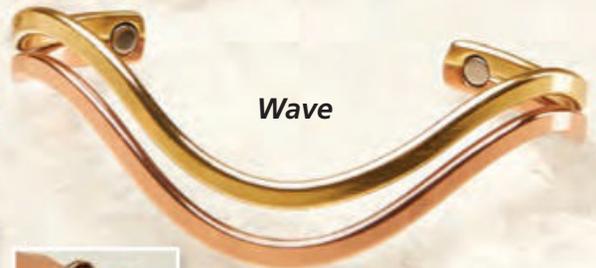
Gift boxed

Stunning design



Serpent

Set of 2



Wave



Attractive on your wrist

Wooden Thread Cabinet ►

Organise your embroidery thread for quick and easy access in this exquisitely finished wooden cabinet. Not only is it a useful organiser, but this beautiful set of drawers is a lovely piece of furniture which will give a touch of elegance to your home décor. And you don't have to use it just for thread. You may store all kinds of personal and craft items like make-up, jewellery, beading supplies and much more.

• 31980 \$159.00 or \$39.75 x 4 months



▲ Elephant With Butterfly

An irresistible small format design from the team at Luca-S. Your Counted Cross Stitch kit includes 16-count white Zweigart Aida fabric, pre-sorted Anchor cotton thread, needle, chart and instructions. 19 x 23 cm.

• 66935 \$29.95



Pictured contents
not included

▼ Knitted Animal Hats



Super simple hats and more for babies, kids and the young at heart. All of these 35 projects use simple stitches and have easy-to-follow instructions. Animals include chick, ladybug, owl, zebra, cow, cat, pig, tiger, polar bear, mouse, monkey, fish, panda, reindeer and more. 112 pages.

• 66798 \$33.95

Only \$2 Postage on your entire order! Quote code RM223S when ordering



3-Seater

Protects your sofas from wear and tear



Reverse side

Washable and hardwearing



Armchair

Paisley Furniture Covers • PAISC

- Armchair \$39.95
 - 2-Seater \$49
 - 3-Seater \$59
- 4 mths payment terms available

Reversible Paisley Furniture Protectors

These covers provide protection where it's needed most – on the arms of your chair or sofa as well as the seat and back. And, as they're reversible, you can choose between an attractive paisley design or plain, quilted wine colour. 190 cm long, they're available in widths of 185 cm, 237 cm and 295 cm to fit one, two or three seaters.

Both the covers and the filling are polyester so they're also washable and hardwearing.

Measurements:

- Armchair Cover: fits back width 60-100 cm
- 2 Seater Cover: fits back width 120-160 cm
- 3 Seater Cover: fits back width 170-210 cm



Impressive feature in any room

Acacia Plant Stand – create a designer display

When you group three plants at different heights they're transformed into an impressive feature. This stand makes it easy – and it's an ornament in itself, crafted from iron with an eggshell finish. Perfect for pots up to 21 cm in diameter, the three holders are 24, 34 and 44 cm high and fold from 45W x 49D cm down to 28W x 28D cm. Ideal for a corner, this is a lovely way to display your plants. *Pots and plants not included.*



Acacia Plant Stand

- ACAPS \$59 or \$29.50 x 2 mths

Folds neatly

Get Rid Of Lint And Fuzz – your clothes will look like new!

Just a couple of wears may be enough to give some clothes the 'fuzzies' – the pilling that makes them look old before their time. Plugged into the mains or powered by 4 C batteries (not supplied), this 14H x 18.5W x 7D cm heavy duty shaver will simply whisk all that messy fluff away. With a removable lint holder, safety switch and blade cover, it's very safe, convenient and easy to use.

Fabric Shaver • FBSV
\$29.95



Great Features:

- Adaptor or batteries
- Ergonomic design
- Safety Switch
- Empty pill bin
- Large shaving head

Great for clothes and sofas too!



Only \$2 Postage! - Quote code RM223S when ordering

\$2
Postage
 Offer ends
 31/03/2022

CALLAN

THE ULTIMATE COLLECTION (1976)

14
 DVDs

Edward Woodward gives an electrifying performance as Callan, a reluctant professional killer working for British Intelligence. Includes: Original pilot play 'A Magnum for Schneider', all surviving episodes from Series 1 & 2, all episodes from Series 3 & 4, 1974 'Callan' feature film, 1981 television film 'Wet Job', Documentary 'This Man Alone', Episode 'The Worst Soldier I Ever Saw', 1971 television special 'The Edward Woodward Hour'.

14 DVDs, 33 hrs.

• **MCLNC \$129 or \$32.25 x 4 mths**



MIDSOMER MURDERS



2
 DVDs

Nothing is what it seems behind the well-trimmed hedges of the picturesque cottages in the idyllic English countryside of Midsomer. Beneath the tranquil surface of sleepy village life, there exists dark secrets, scandals and downright evil. Murder, kidnap and blackmail are commonplace among the eccentric inhabitants of Midsomer. 2 DVDs, 360 mins.

• **MIHC Season 22 (part 1) \$29.95**

New Release!



Flattering ruched detailing on yoke



White



Blue



Soft Pink

Soft and roomy cotton nightie

Pretty Cotton Nightie – cool comfort for summer!

You're sure to love the comfort of this flattering nightie. The pure cotton fabric is soft, breathable and absorbent and the classic design means there are no lumps or bumps to irritate when you're lying down. Even the three-quarter sleeves are hemmed rather than elasticated so they won't cut into your skin. Choose from soft pink, blue or white in S, M, L & XL.

Comfortable Nightgown • CNITY
\$59 each or \$29.50 x 2 mths

Feather-Light Comfort Shoes – you'll forget you're wearing them

Enjoy that barefoot feeling with these fabulous, easy-to-wear shoes. The woven fabric uppers have a slight stretch so they shape gently to your feet, and the synthetic slip-resistant soles are incredibly light and flexible. Fun for weekends and holidays, they're ideal for walking – and so comfortable you'll want to wear them all day. Just think how those gorgeous colours will brighten up any outfit!

Ultimate Walking Shoes

• **ULWLS \$39.95**



So flexible!



Colourful interwoven metallic lustre thread!



Slip-on lightweight comfort!

Blissful easy-to-wear shoes

Euro Sizes	36	37	38	39	40	41
Australian Fractional Sizes	5	6	7	8	9	10

Cute Sausage Dog Doorstop

– a practical, fun way to keep out draughts

Keep out draughts or prop the door open for a cool breeze!

This adorable sausage dog will help you stay warm during the colder months – just lie him along the bottom of a door to keep out draughts. When the weather warms up he can hold the door open. Either way, the polyester fibre and sand filling will keep him securely in place. 70 cm long, he's covered with a leather-look fabric with cute fluffy ears and tail – the perfect, practical and no-fuss pet.

Sausage Dog Doorstop
• SAUSA \$29.95



The perfect, no-fuss pet for your home

Only \$2 Postage! - Quote code RM223S when ordering

\$2
Postage
Offer ends
31/03/2022

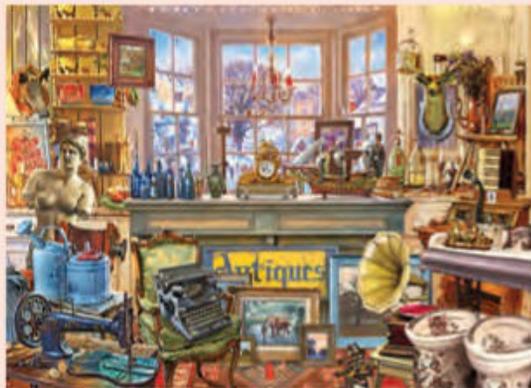
▼ Puzzle Lounger With Sorting Trays

Pictured contents
not included



This wooden lounger has extendable legs, four 40 x 27 cm sliding drawers to sort and hold your pieces, a work surface and raised edges to keep your puzzle pieces from sliding off. It also comes with a heavy acetate cover to protect your puzzles in progress. The working surface measures 86 x 63 cm and fits most puzzles up to 1500 pieces. With legs extended, the height of the lounger is 32 cm, and closed it measures 89 x 66 x 8 cm deep.

• 67024 \$159.00 or \$39.75 x 4 months



Antique Shop Jigsaw Puzzle ▶

1000 pieces 69 x 51 cm. • 67500 \$34.95

Fun Nodding Dog Planters – just choose your favourite breed

It's hard to imagine a sweeter way of showing off your favourite plants than these three adorable dogs. They're beautifully crafted from painted metal – and every time they're touched or catch the breeze they nod a welcome and wag their tails! You can pop a pot or plant directly into the 10.5 cm diameter centre to enjoy them indoors or outside. Choose from Pug, Schnauzer, or French Bulldog.

Plants not included.

SAVE \$15

Buy any 3 for \$59.85
or \$29.93 x 2 mths

*Heads and tails "bob"
on movable springs*

**Fun Dog Breed
Planters • FNDBP**
\$24.95 each

*Sold
separately*



French Bulldog

Pug

Schnauzer

- **Pug:** 20H x 14.5W x 24L cm
- **Schnauzer:** 32.5H x 15W x 23L cm
- **Bulldog:** 23.5H x 18.5W x 23.5L cm

DVD Storage Cases – set of 2 for your collection

*Keep your DVDs
clean, safe and
portable*



Set of 2

Each case holds up to 32 DVDs!

SAVE \$15

**Buy three sets
for \$53.85 or
\$26.93 x 2 mths**

These cases will keep your DVDs organised and easy to find. They're made from clear PVC so you can see the titles at a glance and, at 18H x 31W x 13D cm, they each hold up to 32 DVDs. The tough polyester fabric covers zip closed and, as they're fitted with reinforced handles, the cases are easy to carry around. They're also ideal for keeping out dust when your DVDs are on a shelf. *DVDs not included.*

DVD Storage Cases
• **MSCSE \$22.95**
Set of 2

Set Of 3 Comfort Bras – soft, stretchy and seam free

Amazingly comfortable, these bras are perfect for sleep and relaxation. There are no seams, fasteners, wires or clasps to scratch or pinch – even the cups are molded rather than stitched. Plus they're so wonderfully soft and stretchy that you can simply pull them on over your head. They're made from nylon with a touch of spandex for extra 'give' and the set includes three popular colours – black, white and nude. S, M, L, XL and XXL.

Soft Seamless Bras • SSBRA
\$29.95

Provides soft comfort and support

3 colours
- **White, Black and Nude**

Black

White

Minimise back bulge and discomfort

Wide straps for comfort

Nude

Set of 3



Only \$2 Postage! - Quote code **RM223S** when ordering

\$2 Postage
Offer ends 31/03/2022

The Darling Buds of May

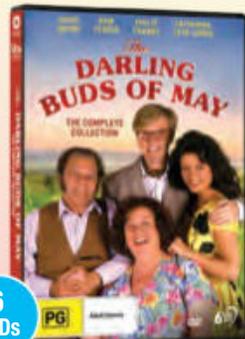
- **Complete Collection** (1991)

Wallow in the nostalgia of the 1950s as Britain's best loved family are back in this celebration of love, family and romance in the idyllic British countryside. Led by loveable rogue Pop Larkin (*David Jason*) with Ma Larkin (*Pam Ferris*) and their six children, family life is never short of surprises. Stars *Catherine Zeta-Jones*. Includes Series 1-3. 6 DVDs, 16 hrs.

SUBTITLES

• **MDBPA \$64.95** or **\$21.65 x 3 mths**

6 DVDs



DANGER UXB
SPECIAL EDITION
(1979)

4 DVDs

A classic British drama starring *Anthony Andrews* as young officer Brian Ash, who joined the UXB unit during the Blitz, the military organisation responsible for defusing unexploded German bombs. For Lieutenant Brian, no risk was too great. His job was to deactivate bombs, some of which had fuses specifically designed to kill him! 4 DVDs, 650 mins.

• **MDANGW \$49.95** or **\$24.98 x 2 mths**



*Stunning
white-on-blue
floral print*

Zip-Front Kaftan – the ultimate in ease and comfort

Slip into this gorgeous zip-front kaftan any time of the day or night to enjoy a luxurious combination of absolute comfort and impressive style. The 50 cm long zip makes it easy to put on and take off. Every detail is designed to flatter, from the rows of fit and flare pintucks that emphasise the smart V-neck to the roomy short sleeves. It's made from easy-care polyester and the length makes the most of the stunning white-on-blue floral print. Available in sizes S, M, L & XL.

Zip-Front Kaftan • ZFKFT
\$49 or \$24.50 x 2 mths

*Flattering
shape with
side pockets!*



Remove weeds and moss, and dirt from the tight grooves between paving blocks

*Interchangeable
crevice blades*

Clever 3-in-1 Patio Wheeled Paver Set – clears weeds from cracks without bending!

Now you can keep your paths, driveway and wooden deck clean and weed free without bending or kneeling, or resorting to chemicals. This clever set has two interchangeable zinc-plated blades to tackle cracks and crevices of every size as you simply wheel it along. When you're done, attach the tough bristle brush to whisk the debris away. The steel handle extends between 70 and 120 cm for even greater ease and comfort.

3-in-1 Paving Blades and Brush Set • PAVRB \$39.95



*A
chemical free
alternative*

*Attach the brush
head to scrub
tough areas*



Extends 70 - 120 cm

*Telescopic
handle
– no bending!*

Perfect for:

- Paving blocks
- Patios • Decks
- Steps • Driveways

Cordless Grass And Hedge Trimmer

- lightweight, efficient & easy to use



The super-sharp interchangeable steel heads are tailor made to tackle large and small jobs. The aluminium handle extends between 58 and 90 cm and the heads also rotate through 180° so it's easy to trim vertically and horizontally right-or left-handed. A 4-hour charge lets you work for up to 40 minutes and you can also purchase a spare battery and blades.

Reach high or low with the lightweight pole



Cordless Grass & Hedge Trimmer

• GSHT \$79 or \$19.75 x 4 mths

Spare Battery • GSHT-1 \$24.95

Spare Grass Blade

• GSHT-2 \$14.95

Spare Hedge Trimmer

Blade • GSHT-3 \$22.95



Includes 2 trimming heads, charger and lightweight pole

Only \$2 Postage! - Quote code RM223S when ordering

\$2 Postage
Offer ends 31/03/2022

▼ Shearing The Rams

Easy, relaxing and super fast, tiny "diamonds" are placed on a pre-printed fabric with adhesive surface, using a special stylus. Your Diamond Painting kit includes quality colour printed fabric, round or square acrylic facets sorted by colour, stylus, wax caddy, craft tray and instructions. 100 x 70 cm. • 66865 (Round) • 66866 (Square)

\$115.00 or \$28.75 x 4 months



▲ Pub Quiz

Hold your own pub quiz in the comfort of your living room. Features 1000 fun trivia questions, an answer booklet and score sheets. • 67543 \$37.95

Provides:

- Premium moulded support
- Extra comfort for hips and buttocks
- Rests & relaxes back, shoulders & ankles

Get a better night's rest!



Moulds to your shape



5 Zone Memory Foam Mattress Topper • ZMEMF

Single	\$69
Double.....	\$89
Queen	\$99
King	\$109
4 mths payment terms available	

Five Zone Memory Foam Topper

– helps to distribute your body weight for improved comfort & sleep

This brilliant bed topper will enhance your mattress by using contoured memory foam to create five levels of support. Each of the zones will reduce pressure to a different area of your body to cradle you in sumptuous comfort. The topper also provides an extra layer of protection to your mattress so it lasts longer. To help you enjoy an even better and more restful night's sleep the textured design also enables air to circulate.

Calm Calf Massagers – soothing relief for both legs

Wear them while you are relaxing or moving around

You can treat yourself to as many calf massages as you want. These two massagers have airbags that inflate and deflate in a choice of a kneading or pressing motion, or a mix of the two. You can also select from three intensities and two temperatures. They're rechargeable, so you can wear one or both when you're relaxing, working or even moving around and, at 63 x 34 cm, they adjust to fit most calves.

Control heat and intensity for each leg



Calf Massagers • CALM \$79 or \$19.75 x 4 mths

Adjustable for a personalised fit



Features:

- Adjustable
- Charging port
- Breathable fabric
- 3 Intensities
- 2 Temperatures



Australia's most trusted tyres.

With only one hand print of tread connecting each of your tyres to the road, Australians put their trust in Bridgestone time and time again.

You're in safe hands with Bridgestone.



IMAGINE A LIFT IN YOUR HOME

RES↑
LIFT®

Never struggle on the stairs again!



**Install Australia's
favourite residential lift**



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