

mirthy →

EXPLORER

Hidden Histories of
English Spas

Are you an
**Ethical
Genealogist?**

Let music bring you
JOY

From ukelele to harp
to singing and signing

**ARTHUR
WHARTON**

A sporting pioneer

Explore
INDIA

**FRONTIERS OF
ASTRONOMY:**

How astronomy helps us
understand our world

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Dear Readers,

As we enter the Autumn months I am thrilled to be bringing the second issue of the Mirthy magazine to our community. As the first issue was so well received, it only seemed fair to give the magazine a name of its own. So I am excited to reveal... the *Mirthy Explorer!*

The last month has seen the introduction of a new partner, Parsley Box, and with that we are pleased to be able to expand our Health & Wellbeing and Cooking & Baking offerings, as well as introduce some more community events, such as the new weekly Lunch Club!

Other new community interests groups will include a monthly 'Feel Good Club', the Family History Detective Club, and a monthly 'Culture Club'.

As well as these updates to our programme, September and October will deliver a selection of series to Mirthy, such as Melanie King's series on English Spas, Malcolm Coe's 'Frontiers of Astronomy', and Sun Jester's series on medicine throughout history!

As ever, Mirthy's autumn will be bursting with creative workshops (including Singing events with Rock Choir!), educational talks and demonstrations, dance and fitness classes (with free access to Mr Motivator events!), and informative tech and finance workshops.

I look forward to seeing you at our events and hearing your thoughts on the *Mirthy Explorer!*

Mahalia



The Vietnam War: A Two-Part History
 Jem Duducu
 13th & 20th September
 at 4:00 pm

The war would change America forever both in terms of its military and its society as a whole. Its legacy is still killing Vietnamese people 50 years later.

Jack the Ripper
 Chris Green

26th September at 2:30pm

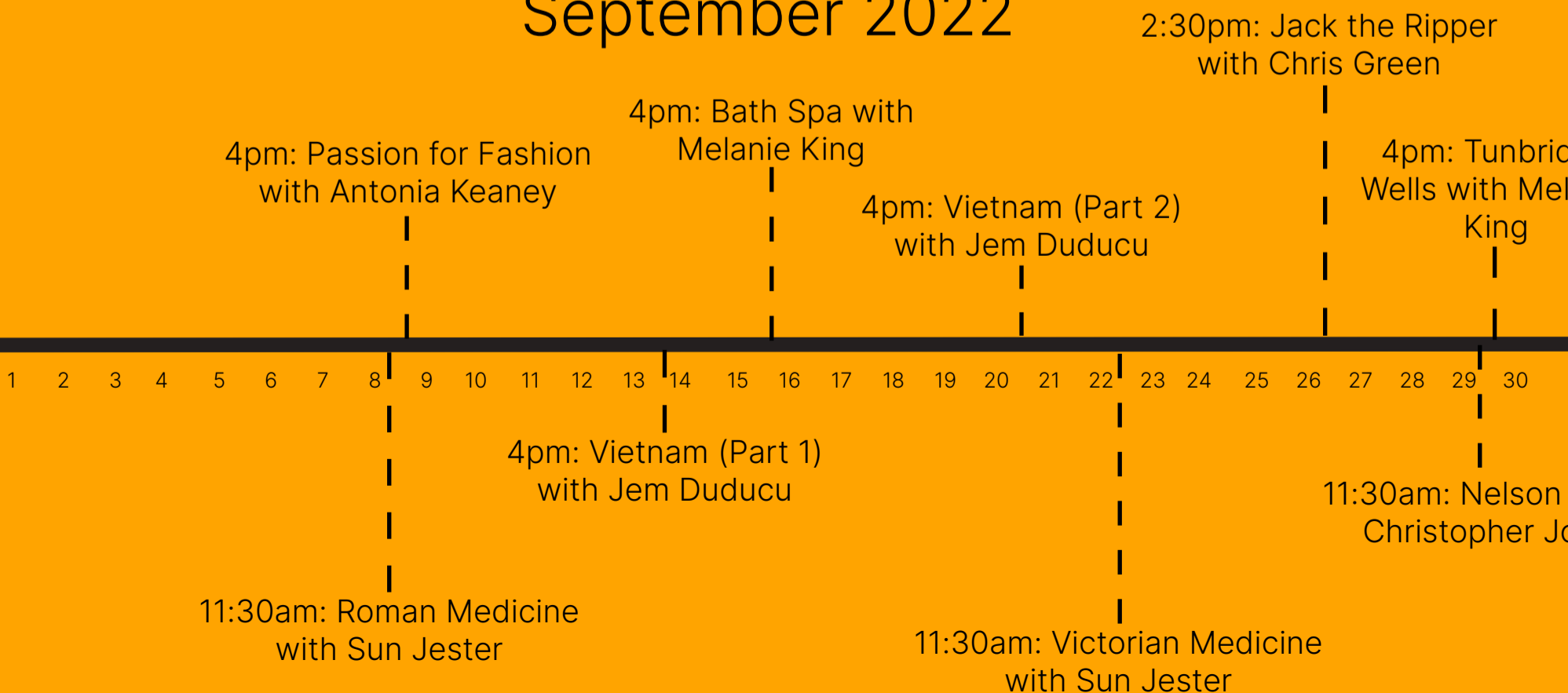
Who was he and why did his reign of terror end as suddenly as it started? Hear the story of the Whitechapel murders and the series of suspects in a case which has never been conclusively solved to this very day.

Nelson: An Unlikely Hero
 Christopher Jones

29th September

In this talk, Jolliffe goes beyond the historical facts that add colour to the life of England's greatest naval hero.

September 2022





Weekly British Hero
 with Joll
11:30am
 Looks behind and
 critical persona, and
 down or forgotten
 considerable colour to
 d's greatest sailor.

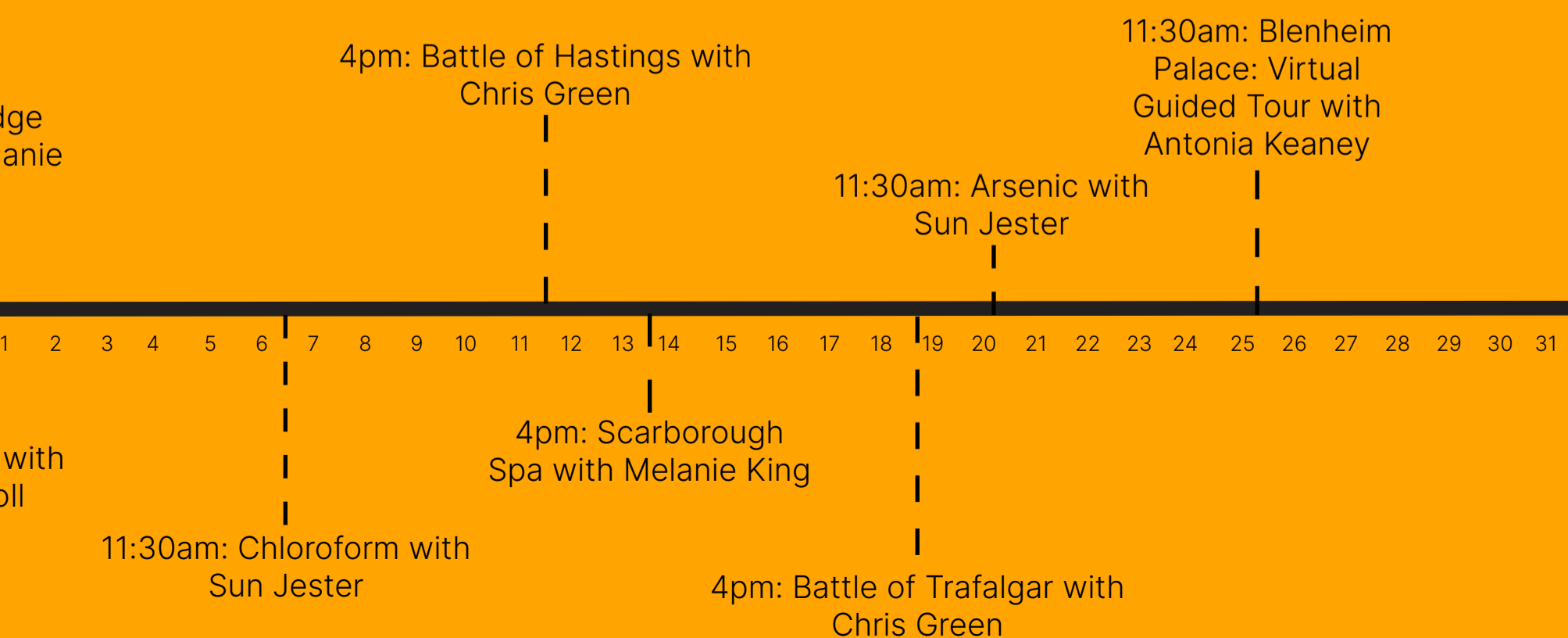


1066: England's Real Game of Thrones
 Chris Green
11th October at 4pm
 You've heard of 1066; you've heard of the Battle of Hastings. You've heard that William became The Conqueror whilst Harold got an arrow in his eye. But that is only half the story. It could have all been so different...



1066: England's Real Game of Thrones
 Chris Green
11th October at 4pm
 His victory at Trafalgar scuppered Napoleon's plans to invade Britain and paved the way for Britain's dominance of the 19th century. Learn about what happened on this momentous day.

October 2022





Blenheim Palace with Antonia Keaney

A Passion for Fashion at Blenheim Palace

Thursday 8th October at 4:00pm

An entertaining look at the lives and loves of the ladies of the Marlborough family - usually overlooked in favour of the men. Beginning with Sarah Churchill, the indomitable First Duchess and continuing through the centuries with the adventures of some of successors, this talk redresses the balance as it looks at the achievement of some of the women and discusses the thwarted talents and potential of others.

Blenheim Palace: Virtual Guided Tour

Tuesday 25th October at 11:30am

This exclusive online event, hosted by Palace Historian Antonia Keaney, will take us into fascinating subjects about the Palace and its history. Known throughout the world as the birthplace of Winston Churchill, Blenheim Palace has a fascinating 300 year history. Meet some of its many characters and discover some of the fascinating events which have taken place in its richly furnished State Rooms.



Discover Kensington Palace with Andrew Warde

Tuesday 25th October
at 11:30am

The Glorious Revolution of 1688 expelled an unpopular English king and his successors created their palace next to the country village at Kensington. The palace state rooms had others added with grand decorative style for the first Georgian kings and these glorious rooms have unexpectedly survived intact to the present day. The talk shows some of the highlights of that period and explains why Queen Victoria was so fond of this splendid survival from times past.





Roman Baths, Abbey Churchyard, Bath, UK

SPA SERIES

MELANIE KING

When my publisher asked if I would consider writing a book on the history of English spas, I had no trouble making up my mind. I imagined swanning around the country having hot stone massages and reclining in jacuzzis before fluffing up my towel on the way to the infrared sauna. The reality of my research proved a bit different. I clocked up countless hours sitting in Oxford's Bodleian Library reading through seventeenth- and eighteenth-century medical treatise, diaries, personal accounts, newspaper reports and even poems, plays and novels. It might not have been as relaxing as a Shiatsu massage, but it was certainly a rewarding experience.

What did I learn? I learnt that the word spa comes from the Roman phrase *Salus per Aquam* ('health through water') and that the spas were integral to how the English developed as a nation—essential to our social traditions and etiquette, architecture and street names, entertainment, arts and crafts, and even our sense of humour.

The English have always been obsessed with drinking and bathing in mineral waters, from kings and queens to the poor of eighteenth-century London. Spas catered to all classes, all tastes, and all diseases. And they were at the forefront not just of health and well-being but also of politics, entertainment and social trends. There is, I learnt, a lot more to English spas than dancing the night away in Bath with Mr D'Arcy.

It was not all work and no play when researching my book. I was fortunate enough to visit spa resorts throughout the country, from Bath, Cheltenham and Tunbridge Wells in the South, and Malvern, Droitwich and Leamington in the Midlands, to Buxton, Scarborough, Harrogate and Ilkley in the North. And there are still, fortunately, many left for me to visit.

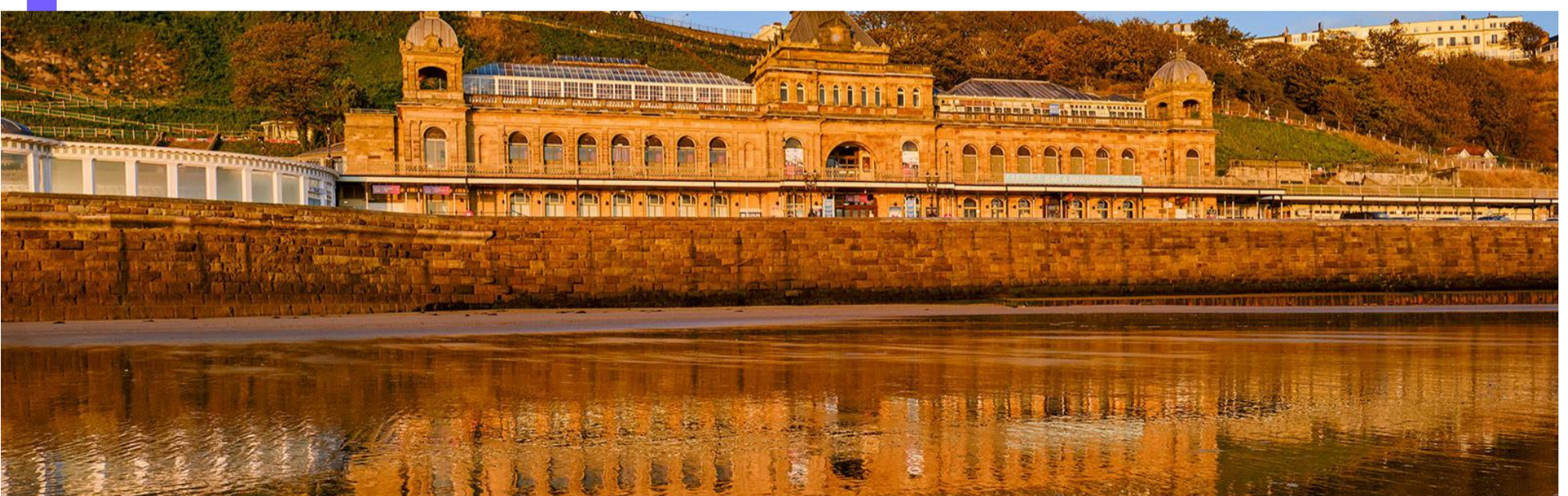




TUNBRIDGE WELLS

THURSDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER | 4PM

Tunbridge Wells was a successful 'start-up' in an age of 'spa wars' in England. The mineral waters were discovered in 1606 by a 24 year-old nobleman, Dudley, third Baron North, while recuperating at his friend's hunting lodge in the Kent countryside. By 1619 the spring was enclosed and quickly became a spa with royal and noble patronage, and with both men and women coming to ensure that (as one observer wrote) they could 'piss well'. This talk will introduce some of the fascinating characters that helped Tunbridge Wells gain the reputation as the 'Wells of Scandal'.



BATH SPA

THURSDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER | 4PM

The Romans enjoyed the hot waters of Aquae Sulis hundreds of years before Bath became the elegant city we know today. This talk will look at how Bath was dramatically transformed in the eighteenth century from a rustic, rundown city to a capital of leisure and entertainment, hence becoming the blue-print for all other English spas. Our starting point is in 1704 when a 30-year-old chancer, gambler and opportunist called Richard 'Beau' Nash arrives in town.



SCARBOROUGH SPA

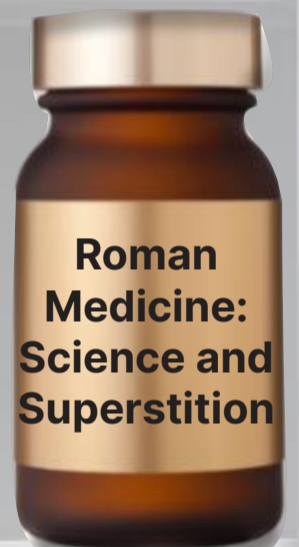
THURSDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER | 4PM

Once described as the 'Queen of English Watering Places', Scarborough Spa sits on the North Sea coast of Yorkshire. The healing waters were discovered in 1626 by Thomasin Farrer, who spotted them trickling down the cliffs. They soon became so popular that the Corporation of Bath began spreading rumours that people died from drinking the mineral water due to pollution from sea water. The long journey, bracing Yorkshire climate and rumoured toxicity did not put off either Celia Fiennes (in 1698) or Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough (in 1732), who were drawn to the spa because of its reputation for curing all sorts of ailments from gout to infertility. One famous visitor that its waters failed to cure was the English novelist Anne Brontë, who died of consumption in the resort in 1849, at the age of 29.

MEDICINE I

A study of some of the medical ideas and procedures inflicted on our ancestors. You will wonder how they survived! Prepare to be astounded, amused and appalled in equal measures...

The Romans were very clever but their ideas on medicine and surgery relied largely on magic and folklore. We present real artefacts and authentic replicas which give insight into how the Romans thought the body worked and what they did to treat disease and injury. We look at their beliefs and the practical ways they dealt with everyday problems such as toothache and piles. Prepare to be surprised!



A darkly humorous look at medicine in the 19th Century. The reign of Victoria saw the development of chemical medicine from medieval-style alchemy to modern pharmacy. Chemists lent their ingenuity to attempt to provide any cure their customers wanted. Some made fortunes, some made disastrous mistakes. As the speaker points out, our recent forebears must have had incredibly strong constitutions to have survived the lethal doses of over-the-counter poisons blatantly advertised as cure-alls. The talk leaves you amused and stunned in equal measure.

N HISTORY

Four part series on alternate Thursdays from 8th September to 20th October at 11:30am

Horror and humour combine to explore how early doctors and scientists experimented with anaesthesia, often on themselves or their family and friends. The quest to transform surgery from a terrifying ordeal to pain-free experience resulted in alarming degrees of both bravery and recklessness.



**Chloroform:
Sense and
Insensibility**



**Arsenic: the
Victorian
Housewife's
friend**

From a ballroom gown that floored the dancers, to wallpaper that rendered Queen Victoria's guest at Buckingham Palace unconscious; no wonder Arsenic has such a bad press. This talk reveals how, in the 19th century, this substance (which could be sold freely to children), was the culprit in countless careless deaths and also many sinister and sometimes systematic murders. Interesting and amusing.

The Psychology of Searching

Dr Penny Walters

Tuesday 27th September | 4:00 pm

Why are you compiling your family tree? What are the psychological explanations? Are you searching for who your ancestors were, or who you are?

Family history research and compiling pedigrees was historically needed for landed gentry, but is now a popular hobby. Why the sudden interest?

This session will look at psychological explanations as to why we are interested in our family tree and our ancestors'

Ethical Dilemma

Are you an
Ethical Genealogist?

Dr Penny Walters

Tuesday 4th October | 4:00 pm

I'm a nice person. 'I'm just compiling our family tree, what possible problems could there be?

Researching a family tree traditionally involved asking grandparents and relatives about their lives, drawing a tree and undertaking a paper trail, but it now involves finding new records and dealing with strangers on the internet. What information should and shouldn't you include on your tree?

Ethical dilemmas came to the forefront since law enforcement utilised information from GEDMatch to apprehend a suspected serial killer, which created a division in the genealogy field about invasion of privacy. Ethical dilemmas unfolding include discovering other people's secrets, lies, enslavement, unexpected ethnicities, indigenous cultures, convict ancestors,

pasts. We will look at the psychology of contextualising ourselves, tribal territoriality, kinship, experiencing genealogical voids from separation, the notion of homelands, romanticised heritages, cultural dejavu, race memory, and inherited trauma.

How do we develop an apparently seamless narrative based on fragmented information we have gleaned from various sources?

Why do we eagerly research ancestors we share so little DNA with, and feel less connection to 2nd cousins? Has social media made us lonely, so that we feel the need to hoard people? How many people do you interact with on your tree? Does your personality influence your interest in compiling your family tree? Is it all a type of jigsaw puzzle connecting these people?

Are we searching for who they were, or who we are?

as in Genealogy

criminality, new DNA relatives, and finding that some relatives aren't now related.

Because such a huge variety of people are now doing family history, and very few of us have had any training in ethics before, we may feel confused as to what to do if a difficult or awkward situation arises. We do much of the searching online now, so there's often nobody to discuss things with, because most hobbyists and many professional genealogists work from home. People can study accredited courses and join professional bodies which have Codes of Ethics and Conduct, responsibilities and accountability.

Attendees will benefit from reflecting on their own ethical dilemmas and considering ethical issues with empathy, sensitivity and diplomacy.

What is the way forward? Are you an ethical genealogist?

SCIENCE



NATURE



FRONTIERS OF ASTRONOMY

Asteroids – A
waste of Space?

27th September

On one hand there is indisputable evidence that the Earth has been bombarded from space by asteroids and comets over the past billions of years, and it hasn't stopped yet! But on the other hand, as we are running out of resources on our planet, it is now believed that asteroids may contain extremely valuable materials for the future. Plus we will look at how they may play a key role in mankind expanding off our planet to explore elsewhere in the Solar System.

The Pyramids and
Stonehenge

4th October

The talk will discuss the view of the sky seen by ancient people. It will look at how the appearance of the night sky has evolved over the millennia, and how ancient people over the past 5000 years may have made use of the constellations for both engineering and religious purposes. We will look at what tools modern astronomy gives us that allows us to predict accurately the star patterns and accurately to time events seen in the distant past.

The Search for Life
in the Universe

11th October

The talk will look at the way we have been searching for life, from nearby planets to distant star systems. In particular, we will look at SETI (Search for Extra-terrestrial Intelligence). This will be followed by an up-to-date view of what astronomers are doing & what exciting results are emerging from their work. We will be talking about the rovers on Mars, probes to the distant planets and the discovery of thousands of planets around other star systems.

All About Foraging



Find out about the abundance of plants and trees growing in the UK and how you can use them for edible and medicinal purposes. You will be amazed how many you recognise. In this talk, we will also learn interesting facts about the plants and get recipe ideas for how they can be used. By the end, leave inspired to appreciate plants you may have ignored in the past, and you will never look at “weeds” in the same way again!

Meet the Host, Wendy

As well as being experienced in bushcraft in the UK, Wendy Paton has led 21 expeditions worldwide. During these trips she has foraged for wild rhubarb in Mongolia; eaten live ants in Ecuador; gone mud fishing in Vietnam; tracked with the Kalahari Bushmen in Botswana; caught and eaten frogs for breakfast in Laos; and picked enough wild blueberries in Ecuador to turn

herself blue. These experiences bring real depth of knowledge to the bushcraft and survival skills taught by London Bushcraft. Wendy’s interest in bushcraft started as a young child. She grew up in Australia and has always been fascinated by the skills and knowledge that allowed indigenous Australians to survive for thousands of years off the land. She loves returning to her home country regularly to see family and friends and having time for her favourite pastime; snorkelling and diving for shellfish. She believes that bushcraft is very much needed in a society that has in some ways drifted away from its ancestral and natural roots. It provides people with an opportunity to connect with the world around them more fully - and sometimes also a part of themselves they have never come into contact with before. Her qualifications include Mountain Leader and Level 4 survival instructor.

GROWING HERBS AT HOME:

A beginner's guide to starting your own garden

What Are Herbs and Why Should I Grow Them?

In general use, a herb is any plant with leaves, seeds or flowers used for flavouring, food, drink, medicine or perfume.

Culinary use distinguishes between herbs (from the leafy green parts of a plant, fresh or dried) and spices (from the seeds, berries, bark root and fruit, usually dried). They are distinguished from vegetables as they are only used in small amounts to provide fragrance or flavour rather than as a direct food.

Today, herbs seeds and plants are readily available in garden centres and nurseries. They can also be bought from supermarkets, but you may not use all the cut aromatics you buy before they start to go brown and lose their flavour. After all, they may have been cut a couple of days before they even reach the shelves. Also, the choice of supermarket herbs can also be fairly limited and may not include everything you need for a particular recipe.

A packet of a hundred seeds can cost just a couple of pounds. Put them together with a bag of compost and a few pots and you can get started for very little money. Even if you don't have a garden, you can grow a few herbs in a window box or the kitchen windowsill.

But is the actual growing of herbs good for us?

Another big, fat YES. Doctors and scientists say that gardening,

even on a small scale, means spending time in the open air, even on a patio or balcony, coupled with all the stretching and bending, can improve your health, physically and mentally. Just be careful when carrying any heavy pots and don't do too much in one go if this is your first venture into gardening.

Many herbs have insect pollinated flowers, this means they have lower rates of airborne pollen and may therefore be better for those with allergies. Even just sitting and watching those bees and butterflies visiting your herbs can be both rewarding and restful. Let alone the medicinal value of the herbs that we will discover.

Using fresh and dried herbs Even though fresh and dried herbs are a natural product, they contain chemical substances that can sometimes have marked side-effects. They can also cause allergic reactions and may interact with prescription and over the counter medicines. Please check before use in large quantities, if used unwisely herbs can be toxic.

Where Do I Start?

I believe anyone can grow herbs. No green fingers or specialist equipment necessary! I started with just a kitchen spoon, fork and a sharp pair of scissors, some garden soil and a little help from nature, by way of sun and rain.

When I'm in my garden working with herbs, I find it easiest to have a small shoulder bag with most of the things that I need.

My bag holds the following:

- A pair of pocket-sized pruners (bypass pruners and trimming shears)
- A small note book and pen to jot down things that need doing that I might not have time to do right at that moment
- A few plant labels and permanent black and red pens
- A widget and dibber, again available at a variety of costs, including from the pound shop (a widget helps remove seedlings and weeds from soil, whilst a dibber makes holes to plant seedling in)
- A very small trowel to make larger holes
- And a little tin of rooting compound and a small ball of garden twine
- Plus, a couple of tissues and my mobile phone, in case I need rescuing by way of an extra pair of hands or, if I am lucky, a cup of coffee! And hanging from the strap you will find my gardening gloves.

Talking of hands, you can begin growing just by using those tools on the end of your arms! I can promise you, as long as you are gentle, the plants won't mind and by actually handling the soil you will begin to feel what is right for each plant.

My top tip?

Don't wait, start growing your own herbs right now! If you want some ideas on which herbs to grow, you'll soon be able to read my article on the best herbs to grow.

Article by Lynda Warren



Buen Camino!

Julia Goodfellow-Smith

Thursday 22nd September at 4:00 pm

Is the Camino de Santiago, a pilgrimage route across northern Spain, just another long-distance path, or is there something more to it? This talk explores the Camino journey, both physical and spiritual. Who walks the Camino, and why? What challenges do pilgrims face? And how does it differ from other long-distance walks? Enjoy stunning photography of the Spanish landscape and architecture. Laugh, cry and wonder. Will this be the start of your Camino?

To join Mirthy's Travel Club on Facebook, [click here!](#)

Walking Holidays: The Best Type of Slow Travel

by Sally Jenkins

Consider the following types of walking holiday:

An organised group holiday with a single base for the duration of the break and with guided walks of varying difficulty taking place each day. This type of getaway is ideal for those who want a sociable holiday without the burden of self-navigation or the re-packing of luggage to move on to new accommodation every night. Many companies offering such packages can be found online or via travel agents.

Walking festivals offer a halfway house between an organised holiday and going completely independent. Take a look at the walking festivals planned for the coming year, find your accommodation and then book as many or as few of the festival guided walks as you wish. This type of holiday provides the opportunity to chat to new people while walking but also provides some free time to do as you please. If none of the festivals appeal or you prefer to walk in solitude, simply buy or borrow a book of walks and a map relevant to the area, book somewhere to stay and you're off! This is probably the simplest holiday option; there are no group timetables to adhere to and no pre-ordained routes to follow. You can look at the weather each morning and decide how far you want to walk. However, if you want to try some non-circular walks, it is worth investigating local bus times to ensure that you can always get back to base or out to the start of a walk – rural areas can have notoriously infrequent bus services.

Walk a National Trail such as Offa's Dyke, the Cleveland Way, Hadrian's Wall or part of the England Coast Path. Walk a section of the trail each day and stay in a different place each night. Hardier walkers

might choose to carry their own baggage and camp overnight. The alternative is to stay in a mix of guest houses, pubs and hotels and use a luggage company to move your suitcase, freeing you to walk with only a daysack. These holidays can be organised independently, if you have the time to research the route and accommodation options, or there are companies that will organise everything for you and provide a route map plus emergency telephone support. Start with the National Trails website and then search for companies offering your chosen trail as a holiday.

How to Prepare Physically for a Walking Holiday

A certain level of fitness is required in order to get the most out of a walking holiday. Exactly how fit you need to be will depend on the terrain and distances to be covered.

A four-mile canal walk requires far less stamina than a twenty-mile hike in the peaks of the Lake District.

When you book the holiday be realistic about your abilities, even if you do plan to do some training beforehand. It's impossible to go from couch potato to mountain climber in six weeks!

If you are not used to regular walking, begin an exercise regime at least three months before the holiday. If you have any medical issues ask your doctor for advice beforehand.

Start slowly and build up gradually. Begin with thirty minutes of walking three times a week and then increase the amount of time as you feel able. Practise carrying your daypack loaded with drinks,

waterproof, guidebook etc.

You may also find it beneficial to mix in other kinds of exercise. Mirthy has a range of classes on offer, all of which will improve your mobility and general fitness and they also have some guided walking tours. The Ramblers Association are running short Wellbeing Walks for those new to walking.

What to Pack for a Walking Holiday

When packing for a walking holiday, always prepare for the worst! Much of your kit will depend on the time of year and type of walking but the list below gives some suggestions of what to take with you:

- A daysack, or small rucksack, to carry what you will need on the walk each day.
- Layers of clothing so that you can take off or add to as the temperature varies.
- Foldable waterproof jacket and trousers that can be carried in your daysack in case the weather changes.
- A pair of walking trousers with legs that zip off to become shorts are useful for days that start cloudy but may become hot.
- Boots or sturdy shoes that suit the terrain. Make sure you've worn them several times before the holiday.
- Blister plasters. Use these sooner rather than later to avoid the blister getting worse.
- Water bottle (more than one if it is likely to be very hot).
- Map (and know how to use it if you might have to navigate)
- Snacks to keep energy levels up.

Full article available [here](#).

Pembrokeshire Coastal Path

We have visited the Tenby area of the Pembrokeshire coastal path many times, but this year decided it would be our last for a year or two. There are lots of other parts of Britains coastal path after all for us to enjoy. We repeated a couple of our favourite walks but decided to explore new places too.

Our visit to the [National Botanic Garden of Wales](#) though off the coastal path was well worth the detour. Dog friendly on some days, the Great Glasshouse which is the largest single span glasshouse in the world was stunning and the Boulder Garden with a winding stream, beautiful planting and a haven for pollinators are just 2 of the highlights.

Visiting the Green Bridge of Wales required a reschedule of our planned days as it is in the middle of the Castlemartin firing range and is only accessible on certain days. It seems incredible to me that such a beautiful part of the coast should be subject to live ordnance firing , part of the sea is restricted too. We also visited St Govan's chapel, a tiny hermit's cell built into the cliff, is accessed by steep steps down to the chapel and beach.

Carew Castle, it's tidal mill and millpond was also a new destination for us, only a short distance from where we have regularly stayed, how had we missed this gem. Impressive castle, with freshly baked scones and doggy ice cream. Who could ask for more.

A visit to Pembrokeshire wouldn't be complete without a trip to Marloes my favourite beach, beautiful cliffs, golden sandy beach and a great circular walk on the coastal path stopping often to admire the views, Iron Age hill fort, deer parks and the old coast guard station. Did I mention seals?

I'm quite sad that we won't be visiting Pembrokeshire next year, but Northumberland and Norfolk are 2 new destinations for us to explore.

Clare Beaumont
Mid Wales



Explore India



Delhi, Agra and Rajasthan

Sue Ablett

Thursday 6th October at 4:00 pm

Enjoy a trip based on the 'Golden Triangle' of Delhi, Agra and Jaipur, but with lots more beside. See the stunning beauty of the Taj Mahal and the Golden Temple of Amritsar; see mass catering at a Sikh Temple; magnificent palaces and forts; and witness a truly bizarre border ceremony. They say about India that you love it or hate it, but you can never ignore it. This was Sue's fifth visit - and yes she absolutely loves it! Chaotic, certainly, but just so wonderfully colourful.

Indian Cooking

(more information on page 32)

Naan Bread

Anne Marie Lambert

Friday 2nd September at 12pm

Shahi Paneer with Indian Bread, Paratha

Komal Darira

Friday 23rd September at 12pm

Indian Art

(more information on page 29)

Let's Meditate With Mandala

Pallavi Jha

**Wednesday 28th September at
11am**

Rangoli Demonstration

Pallavi Jha

Wednesday 26th October at 11am

Visit a Diwali Marketplace!

Komal Darira

Saturday 22nd October at 1:00 pm

India is a diverse country with people from over seven different religions. It is a country which is known for its architecture, food, culture, languages, different textiles and equally famous for celebrating all the festivals in a big way!!

Diwali is one such festival that is spiritually connected to all and the whole of India celebrates with equal zeal and passion. There are different cultural ways of celebrating this festival of lights throughout India. It is a five-day long festival and is also a fusion of harvest festivals in India. People in India start preparing for these days one week back by cleaning their houses, decorating them with lights, lamps and shopping for new attires. It is a day to also celebrate goodness and the win of good over evil.

To celebrate the biggest festival of India and learn more about it, join Komal for the celebration of the festival of lights. On the tour, she will take you for Diwali Shopping, explain the different rituals, help you experience Diwali Bling.





Lesley Robinson

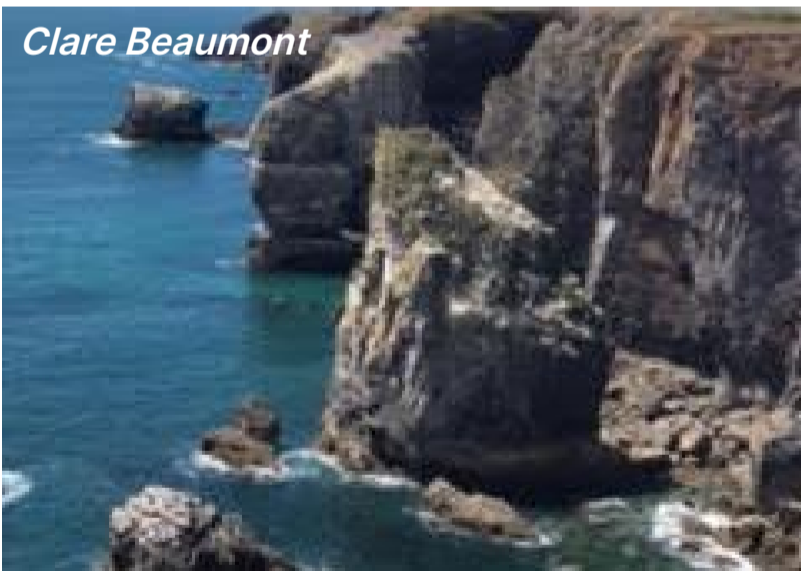


Karen Holmes



Marian Linford

PHOTOGRAPHY: COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS



Clare Beaumont



Karen Holmes



Lesley Robinson

Mirthy

JOHN HUMPHREY

Photography: Creativity and Technique



What makes a good photograph?

7th October

An illustrated review of the so called 'rules' of composition. When they are helpful and when to ignore them. How to achieve success in photography and present photographs that have real impact. How to escape subjectivity in assessing your own photographs and to see them as they will be experienced by others.

Close-up photography

14th October

An illustrated review of the so called 'rules' of composition. When they are helpful and when to ignore them. How to achieve success in photography and present photographs that have real impact. How to escape subjectivity in assessing your own photographs and to see them as they will be experienced by others.

New approaches to flower photography

21st October

Flowers are the most photographed of all subjects. This is not surprising since they are inherently beautiful and present an extraordinary range of shapes and colours. This session looks at unusual ways to photograph this most versatile of all subjects, including techniques for pressed flowers, dried flowers, and frozen flowers.

Creative photography

28th October

As adults we may feel we have lost the creative energy we had as children. Creativity slips away as we introduce rules, structure, and language into our lives. This session looks at ways to reawaken our creative confidence. Subjects and techniques are described that take us out of our comfort zone to produce striking, unusual, and artistic photographs.

Drypoint with a Juice Carton: September Craft Workshop

with **Amy Hutchings**

Monday 12th September at 12pm

Join Amy, pick up your recycling, and create something unexpected! Tetrapak enables the artist to cut, score, peel and print, creating unique artworks from recycling waste. Using a juice, milk, soup or custard carton, you can play with the process of drypoint - a fine art intaglio print technique - using low cost, immediate materials. The idea is to scratch a drawing into the silver-side of the tetrapak, apply ink, clean the ink so that it just stays in the areas you have scratched and then print. (You will need to work within the confines of your paper size, so the tetrapak will have to be cut smaller than your design).

Put on your old clothes/ apron/ gloves, find a clean surface to work on, or place newspaper on a surface to protect it.



ART & CRAFT



Knit &

with **Anna**

Monday 19th S

Monday 17th Oc

Join Anna and meet members at Knit and N chance to have a chat a

Feel free to bring what working on, or, just bring

New to the communi any questions you have events to hear from fell

S & CRAFTS

Printing with Autumn: October Craft Workshop

with **Amy Hutchings**

Monday 12th September at 12pm

Join Amy, pick up your falling leaves, and create something unexpected! This is an experimental workshop where we try things out just to see what will happen, no experience necessary!

During this session we will direct print using found materials from the natural world. In advance, please collect flowers/ petals/leaves. Flatter objects might print better, but I encourage you to test things out by selecting a variety of textures/ sizes and objects.

We will paint and print these, creating our own homage to the natural world, considering colour, placement, and pattern when printing. During the workshop we can share what we are creating and discuss what works well and what doesn't, learning from each other.



Natter D'Angelo

**September and
October at 2:30pm**

at some fellow Mirthy
natter. This session is a
and connect with others.

ever craft project you're
ng yourself and chat!

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e about Mirthy and the
ow attendees!

LET'S MEDITATE WITH MANDALA

Wednesday 28th September at 11am

Pallavi Jha

India is a peaceful country where people have been practicing meditation for decades. The oldest documented evidence of the practice of meditation are wall arts in the Indian Subcontinent from approximately 5,000 to 3,500 BCE. However, Art is also an act of Meditation wherein people from all across India are practicing meditation from decades through different Art Forms.

In this session, Pallavi will be sharing how to create this art form along with different Indian art forms with the help of activities, as simple as breathing in a rhythm while drawing which will help you feel good.

The best thing about creating this art form is that you do not have to be an artist to create your personalized Mandala! It's all about the experience of creating and experiencing the therapeutic effects of Mandala and not thinking about what the outcome would be.

DEMONSTRATING RANGOLI: ART FOR THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHT

Wednesday 26th October at 11am

Pallavi Jha

Diwali or Deepavali is one of the biggest and auspicious festivals celebrated by Hindus all around the globe. The festival of lights signifies peace and joy, the victory of good over evil, and light over darkness every day. It is one of the most symbolic Hindu Festivals, and all the communities in the country celebrate it with much pomp. During this festival, people clean their homes, decorate every corner with lights, lamps, diyas, flowers, rangoli, and candles. Families also perform Lakshmi Puja and pray to the Goddess of wealth to bless them with health, wealth, and prosperity.

Rangoli is art made on the floor using colours, rice flour, flowers as a part of the decoration on Diwali and is believed to bring prosperity and good luck. Join Pallavi at her home to create a beautiful Rangoli and be a part of the celebration of the Festival of Lights!



DRAWING WORKSHOPS

6th September: Drawing Fruit

with Caitlin Heslop

This class will look at capturing the difference in textural quality between the outside and inside of a piece of fruit. Caitlin will help participants to explore a variety of mark making techniques to capture their subject matter.

4th October: Capturing Textiles

with Caitlin Heslop

This class will build on an understanding that line can be used to communicate shape, tone can communicate form, and mark making can communicate the texture of an object.

Laughter Yoga

Sylvia Tillman

Alternate Mondays at 10am

'mirth' means joy and laughter - let's turn that into action by laughing like nobody is watching – just for the pure joy of it and to boost your mood, health and resilience.

Join certified Laughter Yoga Leader Sylvia for this unique session, combining laughter with breathing and stretching exercises – this will most certainly give your Monday morning a boost.

Sylvia will facilitate the exercises. When we laugh, we release feel-good hormones that uplift our mood, help to combat stress and even relieve pain.

30 Minute Morning Meditation

Claire Nelson

Every Thursday at 9am

This weekly mindfulness session will give you the opportunity to start your day from a place of balance, calm & clarity, by providing half an hour of precious 'you' time.

Whether you're a seasoned meditator or it's something you've been curious about but never tried, this drop in is for you. Everyone is welcome. All you need is a quiet space (or earphones) to enable you to be fully present with the guided mindfulness meditation.

Tai Chi

J.T. Turner

Every Thursday at 2:30pm

Tai Chi is a mindful movement system from China. It has been used around the world for thousands of years to help reduce stress, prevent falls, and improve focus, balance, circulation, & mobility. This session will focus on simple Tai Chi exercises.

Morning Mindfulness and Massage

Yewande Rolph

Thursday 15th September at 10am

Join Yewande for self-care on a September morning. Get your autumn off to a great, relaxed start moving forward. Experience the basics of mindful massage for hands and parts of the face. Event to include techniques of pull, rotate, stroke, stretch, with deep belly breathing. Session concludes with feedback from participants as well as an opportunity to ask questions. By the end of the session, Yewande hopes you will feel psychological, social, emotional and physical benefits.

HEAL
WELL

“The Wisdom of Observation”

Sinsi Ong

4 part series

Alternate Mondays from 12th September to 24th October

Discover the potential of observing our mind in the context of meditation and loving kindness.

When these practices are embraced with ethics and wisdom, they can enrich our experiences & deepen the meaning of our lives. This can lead us to taste a fresh “outlook” towards ourselves & others.

This is a series of workshops that can be followed one by one or as a course. It is an interactive process which includes guided meditations, contemplations and discussions.

These sessions are open for beginners as well as for those who have some previous experiences of meditation.

**TH &
BEING**

Happiness & Acceptance (12th September)

We will focus on what happiness really means to each of us. And what role meditation would play in this context. This session includes a Loving kindness practice.

The Power of Invention (26th September)

The importance of motivation can never be overestimated. It directs our actions and shapes our view of reality.

The Courage to Love (10th October)

“In order to develop love, universal love... one must accept the whole situation of life as it is, both the light and the dark...” This session includes a Loving kindness practice.

Working with Emotions (24th October)

Emotions are inevitable, and whether we have a love or hate relation with them, it is a work in progress to manage them skilfully.

However we react to our feelings, we can make use of them as a support of our meditation practice.



FOOD

2nd September at 12pm

Making your own Naan Bread with Anne Marie-Lambert

23rd September at 12pm

Indian Cooking with Komal Darira

30th September at 2:30pm

Vegetarian Cooking with Justina Bajorinaite

19th October at 1pm

Vegetarian Cooking with Justina Bajorinaite

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RECIPES



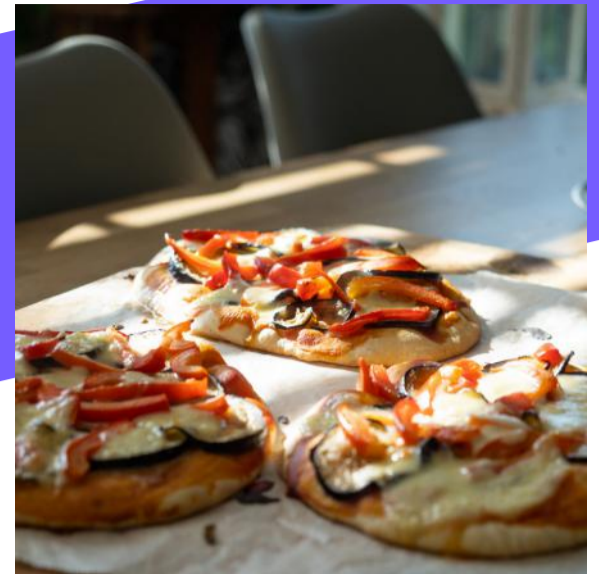
Partnered with

ParsleyBox

meals made for sharing



Parsley Box and Mirthy share a mission - to create stimulating products and content that are delivered in a convenient and accessible way to promote, support and celebrate independent living and wellbeing. After a busy day, or when you simply don't feel like cooking, Parsley Box meals can bring joy to mealtimes. You can have a delicious meal on the table in minutes. And because most of the meals are cupboard-stored, you don't need to plan ahead – with Parsley Box you can enjoy your day, knowing you'll have a tasty dinner ready whenever you are. So, why not settle down with one of Mirthy's events and a delicious meal to enjoy alongside it?



RECIPE: Yoghurt Pot Pizzas

Recipe by Anne Marie Lambert

MAKES 1 INDIVIDUAL PIZZA

- 1.** Add 50g of natural yoghurt (1/4 of a cup or half pot small yoghurt) and 50g of self raising flour to a bowl (1/2 cup or fill up the empty yoghurt pot).
- 2.** Mix together in a bowl and then knead into a dough.
- 3.** Spread out with hand or use a rolling pin to make the pizza base.
- 4.** Spread passata/chopped tomatoes/puree/ketchup onto the base.
- 5.** Add toppings and finish with 25g cheese (match box size)
- 6.** Place in the oven for 12 - 15 minutes at 190°C until crisp and cooked through.

TO MAKE TWO INDIVIDUAL PIZZAS:

Use 1 small pot of yoghurt & 2 small pots of self raising flour.

TO MAKE A LARGE PIZZA /4 INDIVIDUALS:

Use 200g yoghurt (1 cup of yoghurt or 2 x yoghurt pots) and 200g of self raising flour (2 cups or 4 x yoghurt pots)

Introducing...

LUNCH





Brought to
you by
ParsleyBox

MIRTHY CLUB

Our new Lunch Club is a chance to have a lunchtime date with a fellow Mirthy member who could be joining from anywhere around the world! This is time set aside each week for us to talk about what's on your mind and enjoy a conversation over a meal. Come and join in!

At Parsley Box, meals are made for sharing. So come and share your meal with Mirthy today!

Seated Pilates

Helen Tudge

Tuesdays at 10:30am

Helen is a chartered physiotherapist with over 30 years experience in Physiotherapy, and has been a Pilates instructor for the past 10 years. Having worked in orthopaedics and an NHS Back Pain clinic, she is passionate about the importance of maintaining muscle strength and joint mobility to avoid back pain and joint damage. She is a keen cyclist, runner and allotment holder who loves supporting her clients to stay active and enjoy their hobbies, whatever they may be. Join Helen Tudge (MCSP) for an online Pilates class. This class is predominantly seated with a few optional standing movements.

This class gives all the benefits of Pilates without having to get down to the floor, offering a whole body workout which will include strengthening and flexibility, with particular emphasis on postural exercises.

Mat-based Pilates

Helen Tudge

Wednesday 7th September at 11:30am

Wednesday 5th October at 11:30am

A gentle Pilates class suitable for complete beginners, working on both strength and mobility with particular emphasis on engaging postural muscles. Each class will include exercises in standing, kneeling, sitting, and lying to give an all-body work-out, but different options and adaptations will be offered to accommodate any sore joints that don't like to be knelt or laid on.

Early Morning Stretch

Helen Tudge

Wednesdays at 8:30am

Join Helen Tudge (MCSP) for an early morning stretch class.

We will loosen off the whole body before getting up to our feet and checking our posture ready to start the day

This class can be done on an exercise mat on the floor or if you prefer on a bed.



Aerobic Fitness

Trinity Handley

Alternate Thursdays at 10am

This aerobics style class will get your feet moving, heart pumping and face smiling! Expect some different cardio and strength-based exercises scattered amongst more traditional aerobics moves (the leotard and sweatbands are not compulsory!). Suitable for anyone of any ability; just bring your enthusiasm!

Osteoporosis Workshop

Helen Tudge

Wednesday 21 September at 11:30am

Osteoporosis is a condition in which the bones become fragile leading to a higher risk of fractures (breaks or cracks) than in normal bone .

This session will give an overview of osteoporosis and osteopenia to help understand the condition and learn why weight bearing and extension exercises are very beneficial whilst some exercises should be avoided.

Pilates can help improve bone strength, posture and balance and therefore significantly reduce the risk of fractures. I will demonstrate postures / activities for daily life and key Pilates exercises and modifications to help you get the most out of our regular Pilates classes.



Standing Pilates

Helen Tudge

Fridays at 10:30am

Join Helen Tudge (MCSP) for an online pilates class.

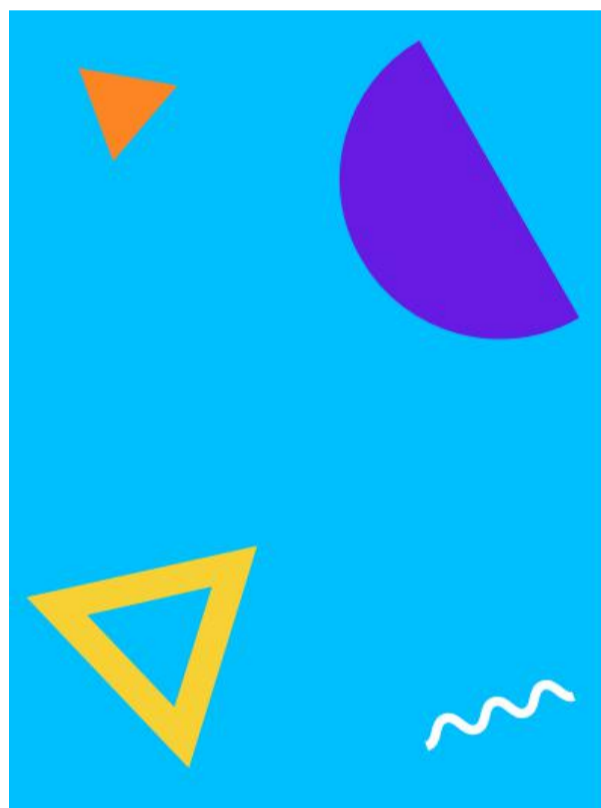
This class gives all the benefits of Pilates without having to get down to the floor. Join Helen Tudge (MCSP) for a whole body workout, including strengthening and flexibility with particular emphasis on postural exercises.

Mr Motivator teams up with Mirthy!

Mr Motivator is giving Mirthy members access to his classes, **completely for free!**

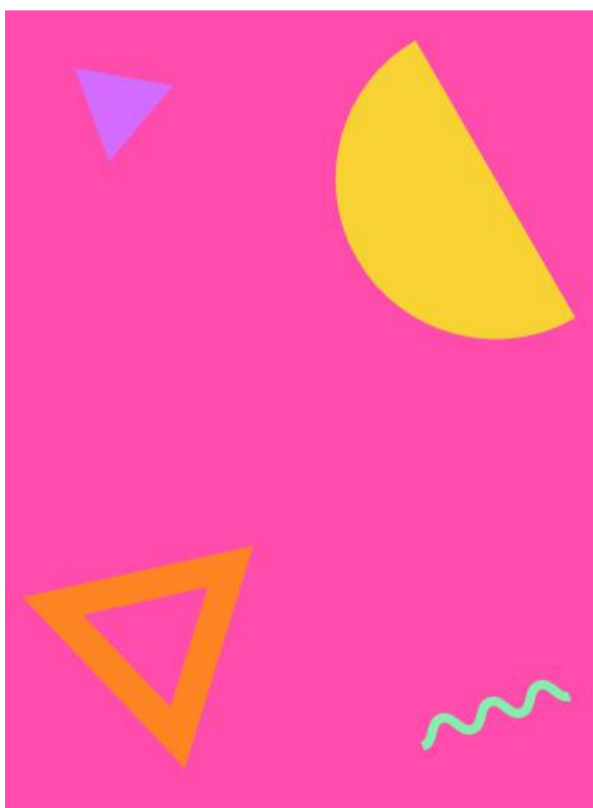
The classes can be found on our events calendar as normal, simply book through Mirthy for the Zoom link!

MONDAY WORKITOUT



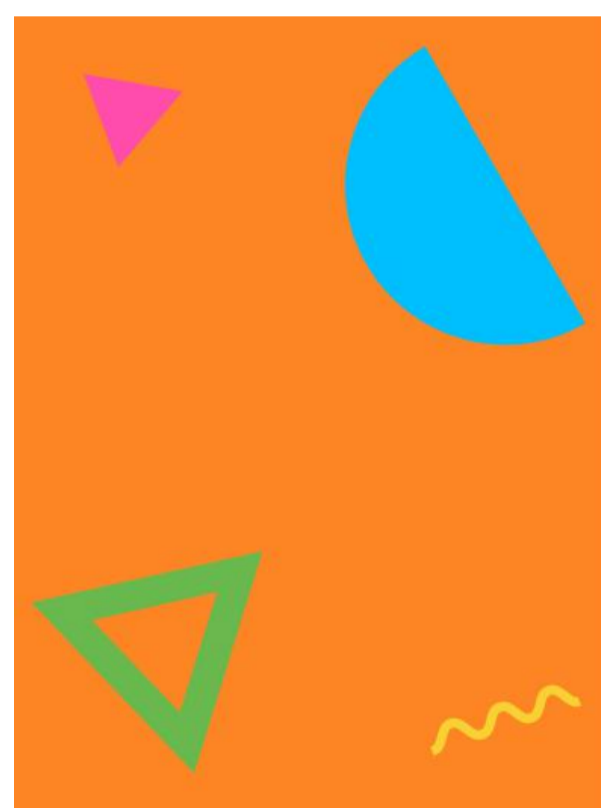
This class is for all abilities any age, Palmer will be in the chair showing alternatives. The content of this class consists of a longer than usual warm up, cardio, body conditioning using your own weight. A must for the first timer and also perfect for the whole family, something for everyone. Lots of fun.

WEDNESDAY FIZZICAL



This class is for all abilities any age, Palmer will be in the chair showing alternatives. The content of this class consist of all round conditioning, cardio, interval, fun, always have a chair nearby and dumbbells or cans, two bottles the same size, to use for your weight training.

SATURDAY BODY BLITZ



Saturday is a class that Mr M Calls Body Blitz as it is controlled, with single exercises and each give you the opportunity to understand your body and capabilities better. Full of teaching points to keep you safe and provide you with a great workout and you will feel the full effects of each muscle been worked

MOTIVATION CLUB



**Look after each other,
make sure you have
a kindly word to say
every day.**

- Mr. Motivator



www.mrmotivatorsclub.com

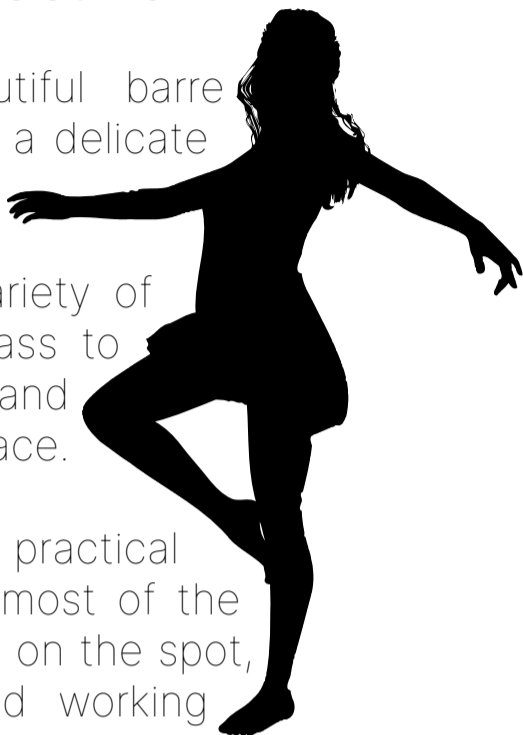


Barre/Contemporary

with Lucia De Paiva-Kynch

Alternating Mondays at 11am

Combining the beautiful barre ballet technique, with a delicate contemporary flow. This class is aimed at all abilities, with a variety of options within the class to work to your own level and improve at your own pace.



This is designed to be practical in minimal space, as most of the exercises will be done on the spot, utilising the feet, and working on balance and the calf and leg muscles, as well as dancers' postural alignment and grace. This class will make you feel revived and strong, whilst working to align the body with core and fundamental dance techniques. The contemporary dance exercises will combine some choreography to use the exercises that have been explored.

Jazz

with Lucia De Paiva-Kynch

Alternating Mondays at 11am

Do you love fun, upbeat choreography to your favourite musical numbers? These jazz dance workshops will be a chance to explore fun footwork and dramatic choreography! Led by a current musical theatre and dance performer. It is perfect for those that have danced previously, though there will also be options for beginners in the class that want to experiment with the learning and picking up of choreography!

Belly Dancing

with Shelley Lozano

Alternating Mondays at 4pm

Belly dancing is a fun, exciting way to keep fit and is suitable for all ages and ability. It uses all the main muscle groups, increases strength and flexibility, and is a great physical and mental tonic. As well as keeping fit, belly dancing can also help improve confidence and fight depression. Learn various belly dance steps, arm movements, and a simple choreographed routine at your own pace in this introductory workshop.

Shelley has worked as a professional entertainer in cabaret for over 30 years, and has taught belly dance on cruise ships, fitness clubs, and for adult education.

Please bring along a veil, scarf, or sarong. You can also choose whether you would like to dance barefoot or with shoes.

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Bollywood Dancing

with Vidhi Shah

Alternating Saturdays at 10am

Bollywood dance is the name given to the type of dance used in Hindi films. The term Bollywood was created by combining two names, Bombay (the city now called Mumbai) and Hollywood.



Bollywood based in Mumbai (Bombay), is India's – and the world's – largest film industry in terms of the number of films produced, and also the number of tickets sold each year.

A vibrant and entertaining dance that is suitable for beginners. It gives a whole body workout while dancing to the rhythm of joy with the powerful nature of Bollywood music. This 50-minute class sets workout cycles to the latest upbeat songs from

Bollywood Movies. All experience levels encouraged, beginners welcome to sweat and have FUN together!

You do not have to be a professional dancer or have any prior dance training to enjoy dancing. All you need is a positive attitude, a desire & willingness to learn, and most importantly, JUST ENJOY!



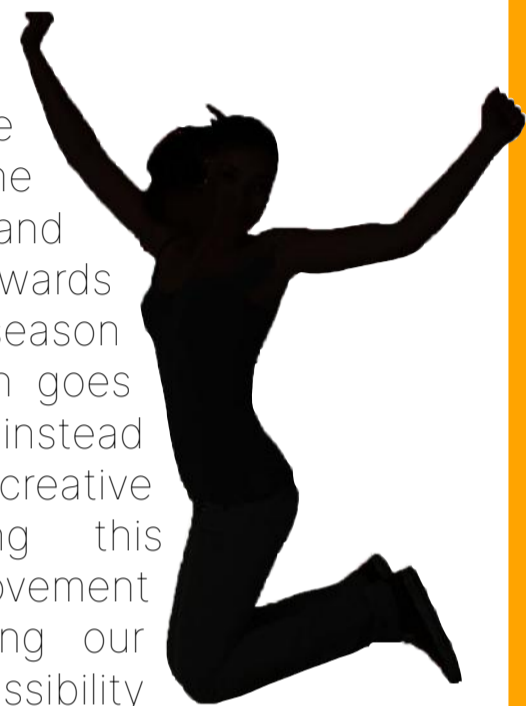
Dance That Matters

with Creative Dance London

Friday 9th September at 4pm

It's our Mo(ve)ment!

Elizabeth will be inviting you to tune into your bodies and to take our focus inwards as we prepare for season change. This session goes beyond technique, instead exploring a space of creative investigation. During this session of guided movement we will be unlocking our imaginations to the possibility of unique creativity and the opportunity to start a new relationship with our bodies. This session will be the best spring clean you ever did, leaving you refreshed and inspired. Intrigued? Come along and find out what it's all about!



African Dance Workshop

with Kenzi

Monday 10th October at 4pm

A fun and energising dance class which will introduce you to the foundations of African dance. During this experience we will do a warm up that helps you to become familiar with the movements, whilst bringing attention and energy to your body. We will then learn a short routine which Kenzi will break down step by step, guiding you through as you become more comfortable with the moves and routine. We will then complete our

GOOD

I am not particularly athletic, or of a balletic or gymnastic disposition. However, in 2020 during Covid lockdowns my exercise of choice was hula hoop. I purchased a “proper” hula hoop and enjoyed it daily. Then suddenly in March 2021 I experienced a medical event, the details of which are not relevant here. It left me unable to walk, unable to even stand for any length of time and unable to weight bear on my left foot for about six months. It involved two ambulance trips to A&E at hospital. I was referred to six different specialists each for different parts of my body. Some of the referrals were marked “urgent” and some “routine” but waiting times to be seen varied from 8 weeks to 50 weeks, yes fifty!

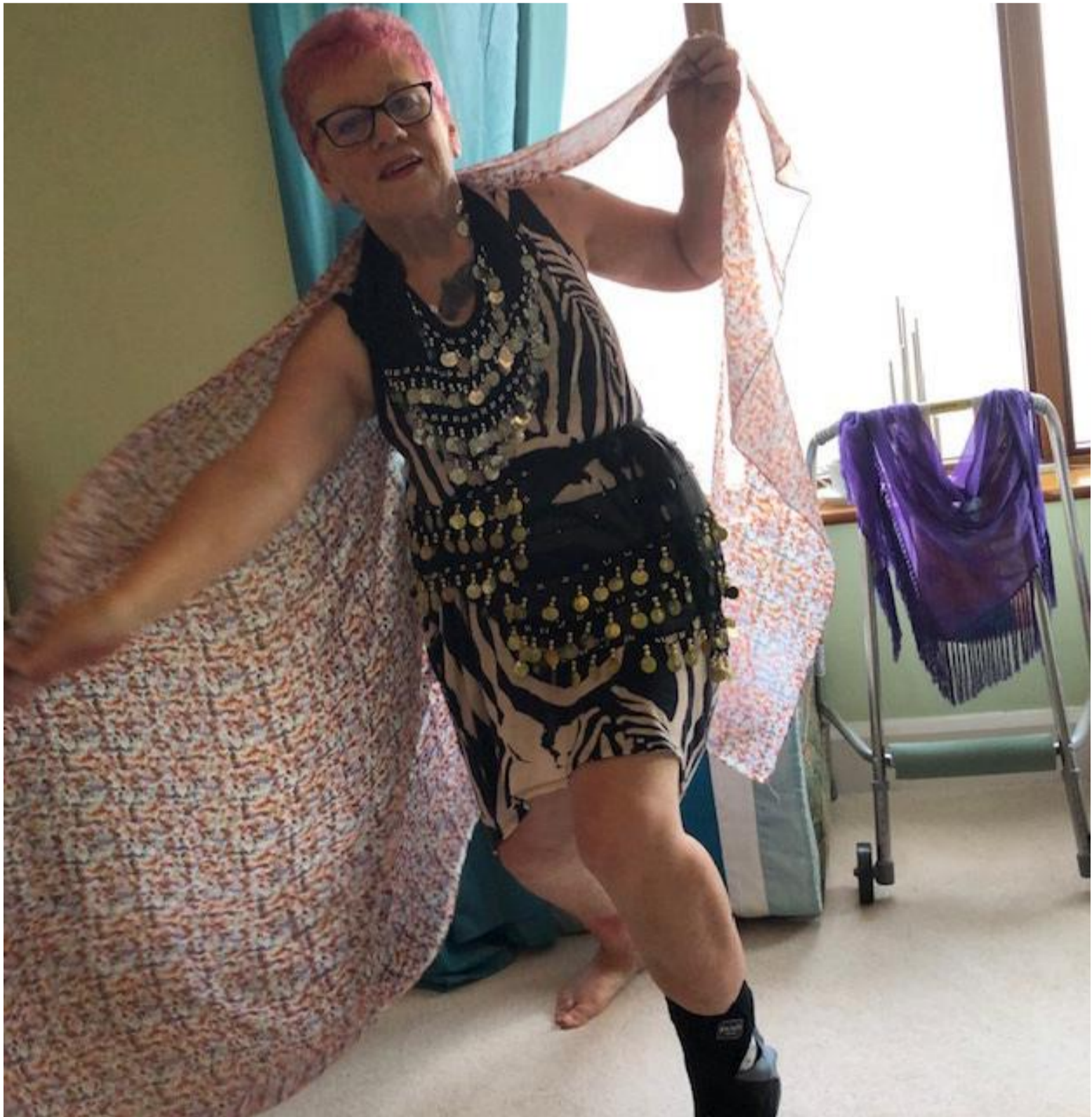
I realised that I was pretty much “on my own” to deal with the pain and mobility problems. I was unable to stand up straight or lie down flat. After a few days of meditation-like concentration and tuning in to my body I realised that my pelvis was stuck solid at an odd angle, and I felt that the clue to my recovery was rooted in my being able to free up my pelvis. I began trying to move it side to side, literally fractions of a centimetre at first, and not without pain. I also told relatives and friends I felt as if I needed one of those “Baby Bouncers” that hang in doorways on strong rubber straps that let the body completely hang there! I had the idea to try and hang from the monkey bars in one of the local public playgrounds, but knew I must not try it alone. One evening my grandson took me there; by now I had progressed to walking outdoors with a rollator called Wally Walker. It was winter time and dark at 8 p.m. when we went. With my bodyguard standing behind me, I managed to hang there for all of about 3 seconds!!! I was thrilled and we must have looked hilarious with our torches, and sounded even more hilarious with the fits of laughter I was in. I have since done the same on my own, in broad daylight, and with people around; and now manage to hang there for almost a whole minute.

I continued to work on hip movements, at first from side to side and then back and forth which was much more difficult and more painful. There was no way I dare to try my lovely hula hoop. With perfect timing, an advert for Mirthy popped up on my Facebook and I looked at it, with the intention of either doing some craft or tours to the Seven Wonders of the World. I stumbled on Belly Dancing by Shelley Lozano and immediately booked a spot on my first virtual class. I currently wear a brace on one ankle and am waiting a total knee replacement on the other side, but I managed most of the moves, finding it easier once I had a veil in my hands. I was too self-conscious to have my camera turned on, until after about 6 weeks. Some weeks I feel it best not to have camera on, and last week I was in pain and had to do most of the session seated, but still able to move my hips and have fun. I also learn a lot from just watching Shelley (and sometimes other participants). I am not yet very graceful or fluid but I am managing most steps, with daily practice thanks to the video recordings.

Most of my family are supportive saying I know my body best; most of my friends were horrified and said I should not be doing that until I have spoken to the “experts” which would have meant almost a year of doing nothing to get myself better. When I found the courage to tell an osteopath and a physiotherapist that I was hanging from monkey bars and doing belly dancing both said “Perfect!”. I owe a lot to Shelly Lozano for helping me on my road to recovery, and for showing me there was a fun way to do it rather than taking literally hundreds of pills and possibly surgery on my spine. I don't yet feel ready for my hula hoop but know that it is on the horizon. I can now stand up straight and lie down flat for the first time since March 2021. I am due to have a total knee replacement in two weeks' time, so will be watching Shelly for several weeks now - but I cant wait to join in again soon!

Angela Stearn

NEWS



LET MUSIC BR



Friday 9th September at 2:30pm

A September Afternoon Harp Concert with Fiona Hosford

Wednesday 14th September & Tuesday 11th October at 2:30pm

Desert Island Discs with Head of Events, Abbie

Friday 16th September & 14th October at 2:30pm

Sing-Along Workshop with Sun Jester

Wednesday 21st September & 19th October at 4pm

Singing Workshop with Julia Loveless

Friday 30th September at 12pm

Easy Way to Learn Ukelele and SingAlong!

BRING YOU JOY

Mirthy Partners with Rock Choir

Mirthy has partnered with Rock Choir to bring you their best singing workshops! From a Wham! workshop, to Singing & Signing, to Vocal Yoga, we know Mirthy is going to have A LOT of fun with Rock Choir!

Friday 9th September at 2:30pm
Singing Workshop with Rock Choir

Wednesday 5th October at 4pm
Singing and Signing with Rock Choir

Friday 4th November at 11:30am
Vocal Yoga with Rock Choir





The World of Art Nouveau

M

1st September
11:30am

This radical new style of art and architecture developed in Europe at the end of the 19th Century and was characterized by a spectrum of contradictory images and ideas that embraced the spirit world, fantasy, and myth. The talk explains its origins, the key exponents of the movement, and its eventual demise.

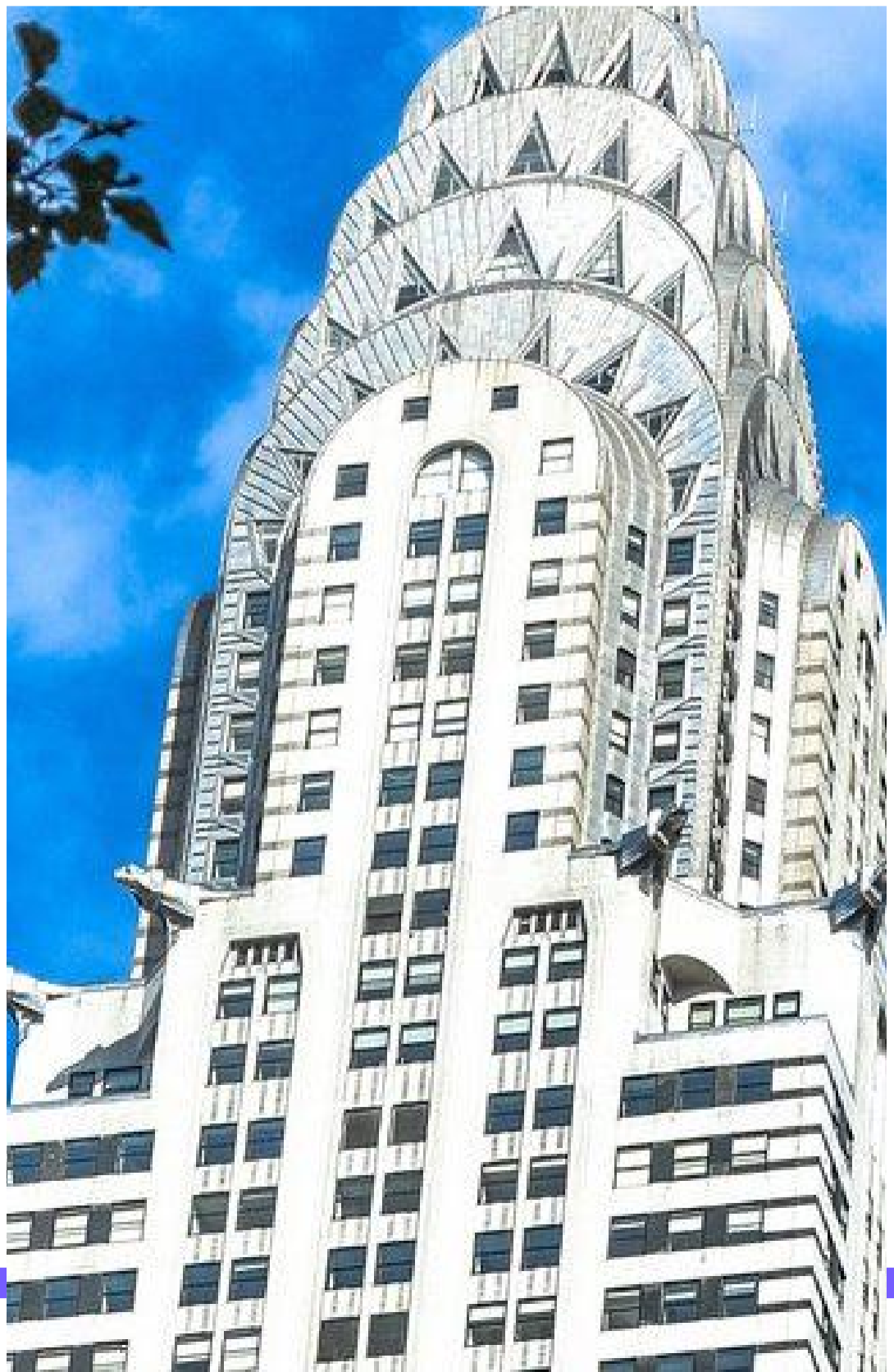


The World of Art Deco

with
Mark Lewis

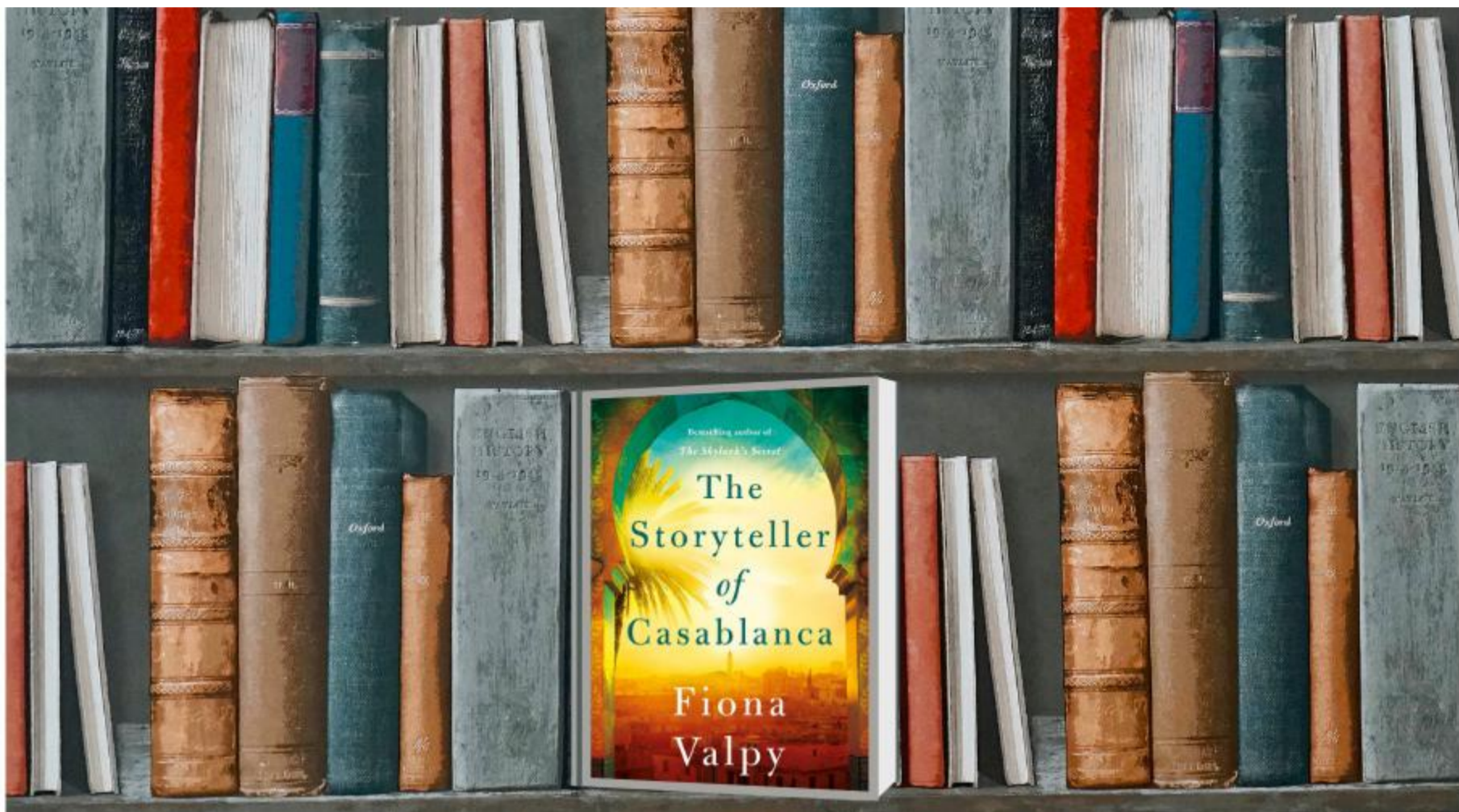
15th September
11:30am

A celebration of this highly influential and design style that first appeared in France after World War I and flourished internationally from the 1920s to the 1940s. Characterised by bold geometric shapes and lavish ornamentation, Art Deco came to represent luxury and glamour in a technologically progressive world.



THE MIRTHY BOOK CLUB:

Brought to you by Reader's Digest



Book Club Coffee and Chats

With Head of Events, Abbie

Wednesday 14th September at 11am

Monday 10th October at 2pm

Join the Mirthy Book Club for a coffee and chat to talk about our favourite reads. We will be discussing the Book of the Month and chatting about books generally. This is a chance to meet other bookworms in the community.

All you need for this event is an electronic device, a mug, and a love of reading.

Do consider joining our Facebook group to participate in discussions and if you'd like to join our monthly mailing list, send an email to community@mirthy.co.uk requesting to be added.

5 Tips for Starting an Online Book Club

1. Different Formats Work for Different People

At our Mirthy Book Club, there are 4 ways you can be involved.

a) Coffee and Chats where we break into smaller groups in breakout rooms on Zoom to talk about the Book of the Month with other Book Club members. We inevitably go off on tangents but it's a great way to get to know each other better.

b) Q&As with authors and scholars, going into the Book of the Month in more depth with some guided questions. Often community members find these sessions help them to think about the book in a whole new light, or discover a nuance they didn't previously notice!

c) Community Led Book Groups which cover themes rather than set reads. So far, we have had discussions around comfort reads, guilty pleasures, 'must-read' books, with a discussion about summer reads coming up next. If you're interested in running a Community Led Book Group yourself on a topic of your choice, please email community@mirthy.co.uk with your ideas and suggestions.

d) Community forum Facebook group where we can continue discussions, share interesting links around the Book of the Month or reading generally.

Keeping it varied helps everyone to stay involved in a way that works for them from month to month. Being in a Book Club should never feel like a chore, so best to make it accessible for people to be able to dip in and out as they wish.

2. Don't Be Scared to Try Something Different

One month, we started a monthly Coffee and Chat session with a writing challenge which added a bit of variety. We've had both more structured discussion groups and less prescriptive sessions. We've tested our general knowledge with a Book Club Christmas Quiz, and will be playing games on Zoom together in our Summer Book Club Social. Being creative and being prepared to try new things out keeps it fresh. Especially for a group on Zoom, it's fun to explore the opportunities we have through being an online group around the world, seeing it as a strength rather than a limitation.

3. Variety Is Vital

In such a large book club group, you've got to get comfortable with the fact that whatever the book choice for the month, it's never going to please everyone. What's important is to choose a variety of different books. Actually, the most interesting discussions and best group bonding happens when the book either divides opinion or unites people with equally strong views!

4. Check the Availability and Accessibility of Each Book

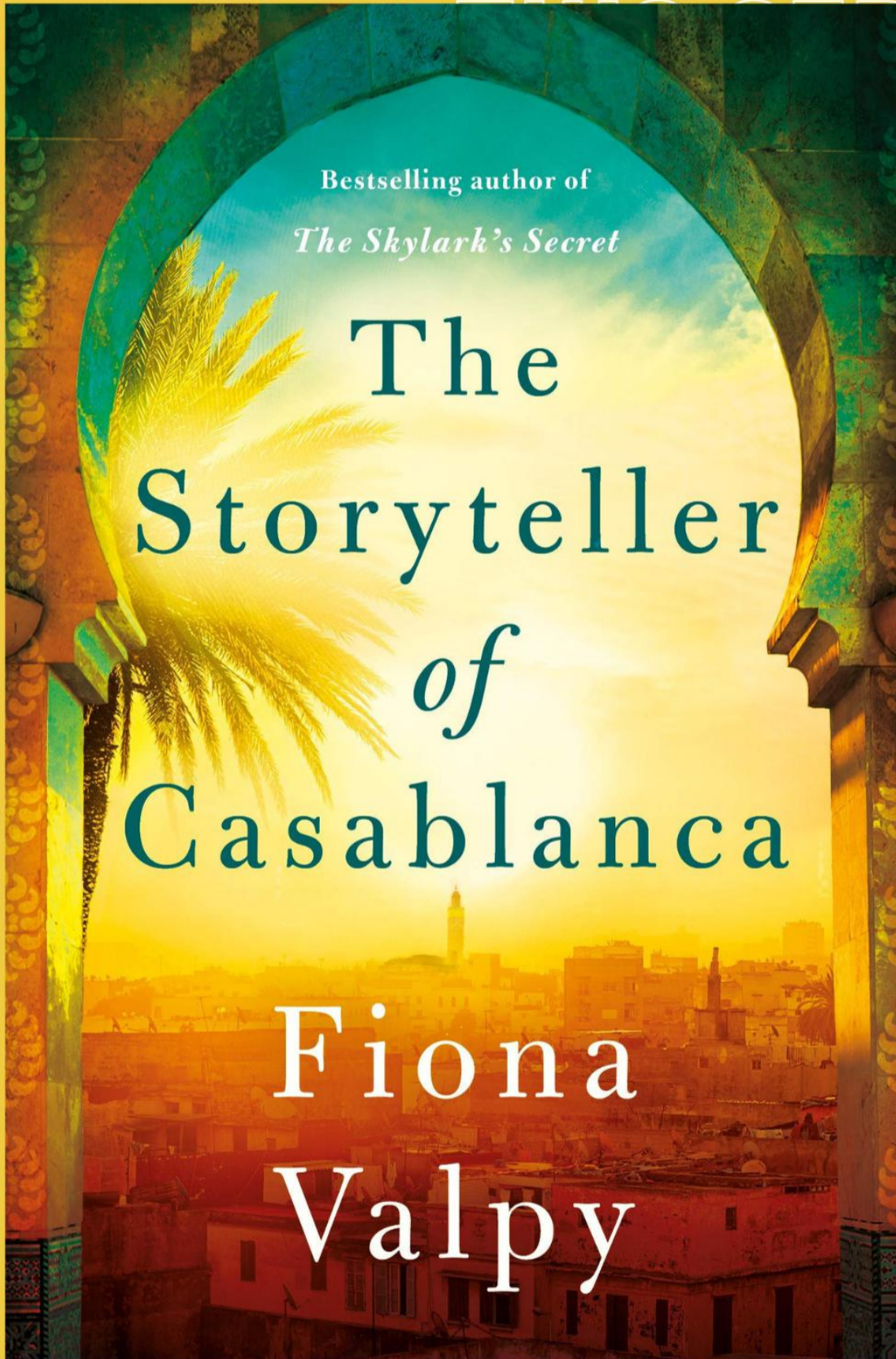
It's important to check where members can access the book. Is there an Audiobook available? And is there a Kindle edition? Can the book be found in local libraries? Is there a paperback as well as hardback version? What size is the font in the paper copies? All these considerations really make a difference to ensuring that everyone who wants to participate in the Book Club is able to.

5. Communication Is Key

Perhaps one of the biggest challenges I've encountered has been ensuring that communication has been clear. With so many events at Mirthy every month, it can be difficult to ensure that messages get through to everyone who wants to be involved. We started a Book Club Newsletter at the beginning of the year to communicate with all those who want to receive updates.

If you'd like to be added to the mailing list, please email community@mirthy.co.uk

mirthy →



Book Club

AUTHOR Q&A WITH FIONA VALPY

Friday 30th September | 4pm | Online (Zoom)

Book online at:
www.mirthy.co.uk/book-club

FIONA VALPY



Fiona was our first ever guest to the Mirthy Book Club in April 2021 when she joined us to discuss her novel 'The Skylark's Secret' - we are so excited to welcome her back a year later for Septembers book, *The Storyteller of*

What are you currently reading?

Miss Wilmott's Ghosts by Sandra Lawrence, a book about the Victorian plantswoman Ellen Wilmott.

What inspires you to write?

Life! I collect ideas and inspiration wherever I go and sometimes it even arrives in my inbox... The inspiration for *The Storyteller Of Casablanca* came via an email from one of my readers who mentioned his wife's experiences in Morocco during World War 2. I realised it was a strand of wartime history that I knew little about and so I wanted to find out more.

Can you describe your ideal writing spot?

At home in Perthshire, especially on a drier Scottish winter's day, sitting by the fire with my cat curled up beside me.

Who would you invite to your perfect dinner party?

I'd love to invite Josephine Baker, who features as one of the real-life characters that I included in *The Storyteller of Casablanca*. She was a truly amazing woman and I think

she had a wonderful sense of humour too. Dorothy Parker and Nancy Mitford would help make the conversation sparkle, and Michael Palin would tell us about his world travels. I'd also invite Mr Darcy, Colonel Brandon and Mr Knightley from *Pride & Prejudice*, *Sense & Sensibility* and *Emma*). I'm sure Jane Austen wouldn't mind lending them to us for the evening!

What would be on the menu?

To celebrate *The Storyteller Of Casablanca* I'd serve some delicious Moroccan food, including several of the dishes mentioned in the book - olives and slices of stuffed m'semmen pancakes to begin with, then a lamb tajine made with figs and almonds, followed by ghoribas (little soft cookies flavoured with orange), and gazelle horn pastries filled with almonds and cinnamon, all washed down with pots of fresh mint tea.

Could you give us a taster of what to expect in 'The Storyteller of Casablanca'?

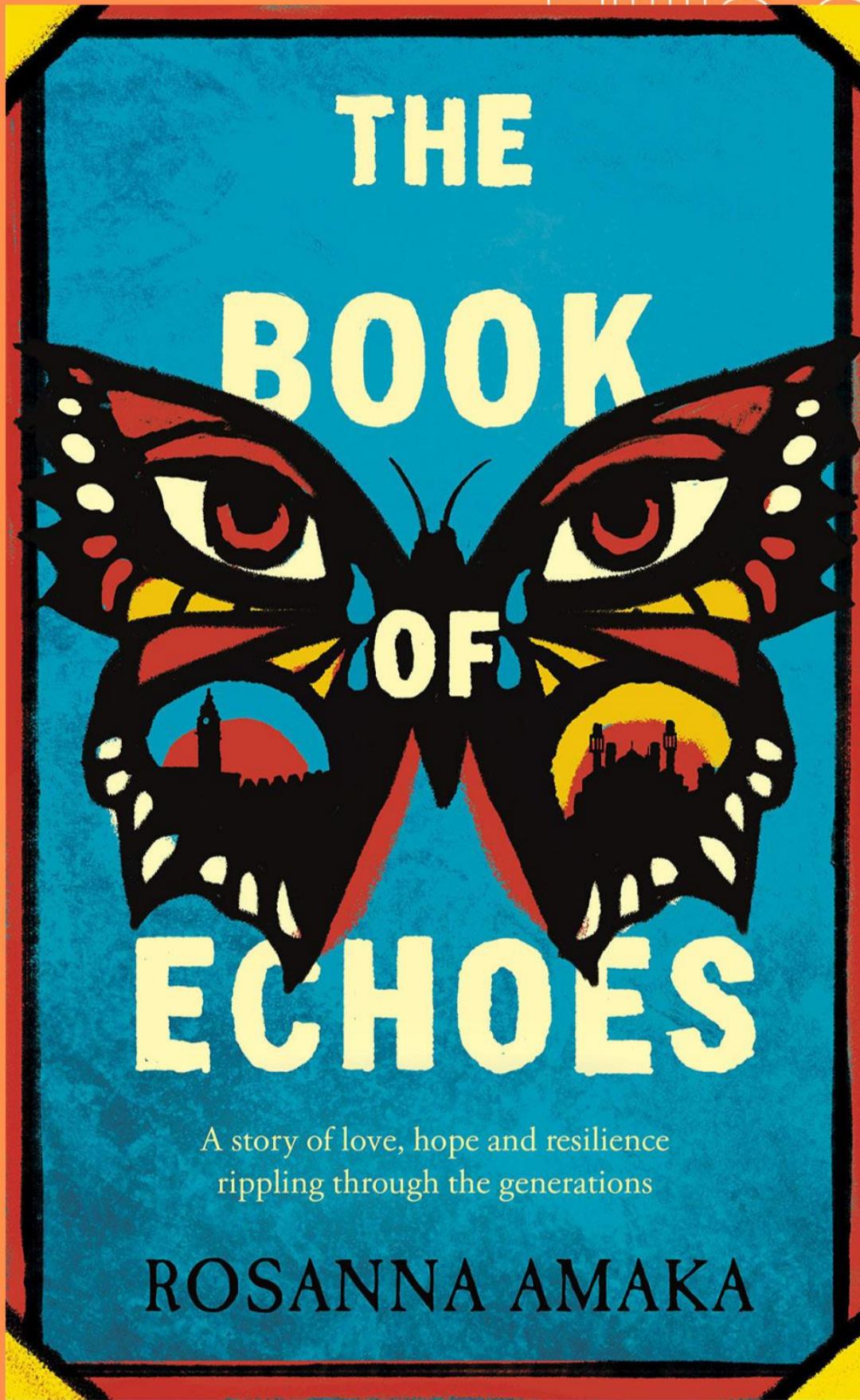
It's a dual timeline book which tells the story of Josie Duval, a 12-year-old refugee from France, whose family have fled to North Africa to escape the German occupation and attempt to get their papers in

order to sail for America. Josie's story unfurls through the eyes of Zoe Harris, a modern-day expat, who's come to live in Casablanca with her husband who works in the shipping industry. As the novel unfolds, we learn that something is wrong in Zoe's marriage and her story becomes intertwined with Josie's.

The Storyteller of Casablanca includes some themes that I've explored in my previous books - what happens to ordinary people when their lives are turned upside down in extraordinary times, for example, and how tales of courage and determination can help inspire us in our own lives. But it was also a joy to delve into a new culture and to read more widely around the subject. I had a research trip to Morocco planned but then the pandemic hit and everything was cancelled - it forced me to be more creative with my research and it became a wonderful escape from lockdown, vicariously roaming the beaches and souks. Storytelling is another important theme and there are many stories told in this book in different ways.

Join Head of Events, Abbie and Fiona Valpy for our Book Club Q&A on Friday 30th September at 4pm.

mirthy →



BOOK CLUB

AUTHOR Q&A WITH ROSANNA AMAKA

Friday 28th October | 5pm | Online (Zoom)

Book online at:
www.mirthy.co.uk/book-club

ROSANNA AMAKA



Fiona was our first ever guest to the Mirthy Book Club in April 2021 when she joined us to discuss her novel 'The Skylark's Secret' - we are so excited to welcome her back a year later for Septembers book, *The Storyteller of*

What are you currently reading?

Miss Wilmott's Ghosts by Sandra Lawrence, a book about the Victorian plantswoman Ellen Wilmott.

What inspires you to write?

Life! I collect ideas and inspiration wherever I go and sometimes it even arrives in my inbox... The inspiration for *The Storyteller Of Casablanca* came via an email from one of my readers who mentioned his wife's experiences in Morocco during World War 2. I realised it was a strand of wartime history that I knew little about and so I wanted to find out more.

Can you describe your ideal writing spot?

At home in Perthshire, especially on a drier Scottish winter's day, sitting by the fire with my cat curled up beside me.

Who would you invite to your perfect dinner party?

I'd love to invite Josephine Baker, who features as one of the real-life characters that I included in *The Storyteller of Casablanca*. She was a truly amazing woman and I think

she had a wonderful sense of humour too. Dorothy Parker and Nancy Mitford would help make the conversation sparkle, and Michael Palin would tell us about his world travels. I'd also invite Mr Darcy, Colonel Brandon and Mr Knightley from *Pride & Prejudice*, *Sense & Sensibility* and *Emma*). I'm sure Jane Austen wouldn't mind lending them to us for the evening!

What would be on the menu?

To celebrate *The Storyteller Of Casablanca* I'd serve some delicious Moroccan food, including several of the dishes mentioned in the book - olives and slices of stuffed m'semmen pancakes to begin with, then a lamb tajine made with figs and almonds, followed by ghoribas (little soft cookies flavoured with orange), and gazelle horn pastries filled with almonds and cinnamon, all washed down with pots of fresh mint tea.

Could you give us a taster of what to expect in 'The Storyteller of Casablanca'?

It's a dual timeline book which tells the story of Josie Duval, a 12-year-old refugee from France, whose family have fled to North Africa to escape the German occupation and attempt to get their papers in

order to sail for America. Josie's story unfurls through the eyes of Zoe Harris, a modern-day expat, who's come to live in Casablanca with her husband who works in the shipping industry. As the novel unfolds, we learn that something is wrong in Zoe's marriage and her story becomes intertwined with Josie's.

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COMMUNIT



Mirthy's Ink

26th September at 4pm
&
24th October at 4pm



Feel Good Club

5th September at 2pm
&
3rd October at 2pm



Family History

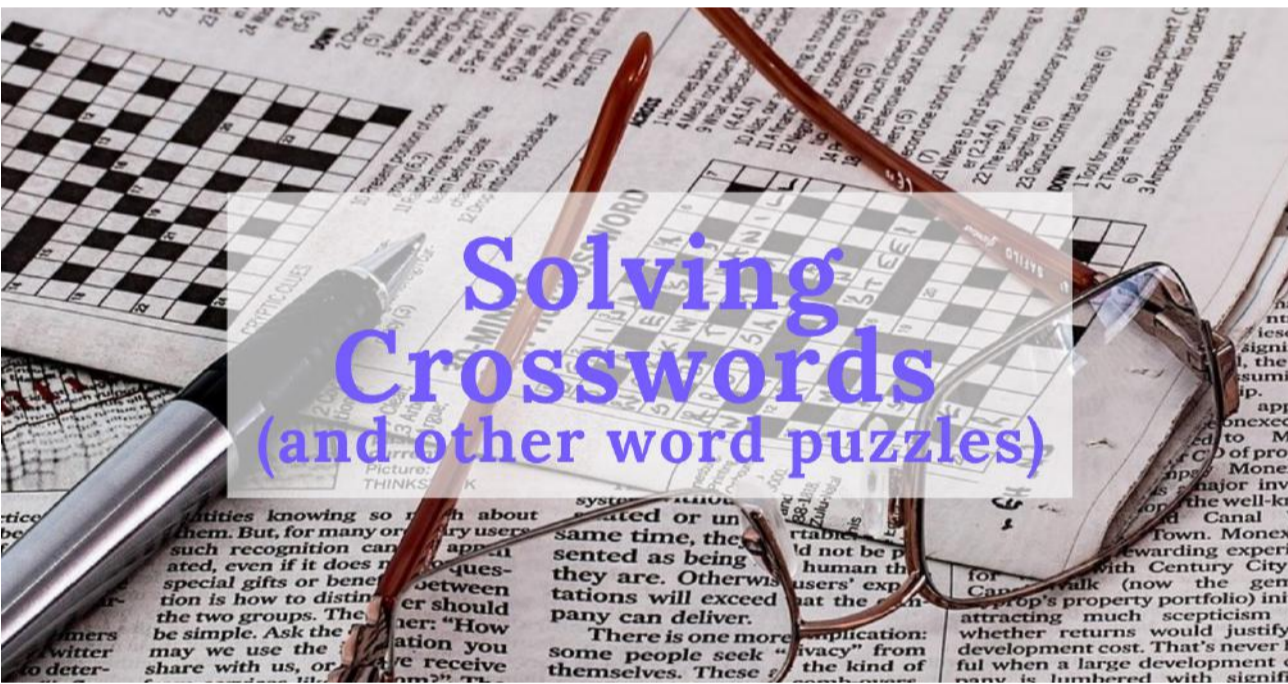
13th September at 11:30am
&
18th October at 2:30pm

CLUB GROUPS



Storytelling Cafe

12th September at 2:30pm



Solving Crosswords (and other word puzzles)

5th September at 2pm
&
3rd October at 2pm



Culture Club

20th September at 2:30pm
&
24th October at 2:30pm

STORYTIME

With Mirthy's Ink

Mirthy's Ink is a newly formed, informal group of budding writers who meet once a month to share and discuss creative writing. If you enjoy writing and would like a supportive space to explore your writing further, join us and come along to one of our monthly meetings!

The Old Curiosity Shop

After much soul searching following her recent divorce, Sally was finally leaving the city. She couldn't recall when things had started to go wrong for her and Daniel but now, having got her life back on track, she had decided to move to a beautiful part of Devon that she knew well. It was one of her favourite parts of the country where, hopefully, she could have a new beginning. Sally's parents had retired to France last year after her beloved Grandfather had sadly died. She now felt that this was the time to discover some new opportunities for herself. It was hard to resign from her current job as Head of Marketing as she had made the job her own over the last 10 years and was very well thought of in the company. However, the chance to branch out and try something new was too compelling. Of course, she had several friends and colleagues whom she would miss being able to catch up with regularly for a drink or meal, but they were very supportive

of her move and why wouldn't they be – after all, they now had a ready-made holiday in the West Country to look forward to! After plenty of research trawling through websites and weekends spent viewing properties, when she was either disappointed or elated with her findings, Sally finally settled on a chocolate box cottage not too far from the sea in a small village near Dartmouth, a place she had always loved.

It didn't take Sally long to settle into her new home and to discover the delights of her neighbourhood. There was always plenty going on in the village for the old, young and in-between and her local badminton group had very much welcomed her into their small but enthusiastic set of amateur players! What Sally now needed to do was to find some meaningful employment or maybe embark on a new business venture of her own! She was deep in thought one afternoon as she walked along the small but engaging high street full

of antique and high-end fashion shops when Sally was suddenly brought out of her trance by the sight of a sign outside a curious looking, bijou shop 'Business Partner required' it read. As Sally stopped and pressed her nose to the window, the door promptly swung open and outstepped a tall, flamboyantly dressed man of around forty with a mop of dark, unruly hair.

'Come in, come in,' said this larger-than-life character, 'Let me show you around my delightful little shop!' It certainly did look delightful Sally thought as she stepped inside this colourful emporium.

'Richard Trent's the name, though I'm known as Dick and you are...?' He continued. Rather taken aback by his forthrightness, Sally hesitated for a moment before telling him her name.

'Sally, Sally Morley, pleased to meet you,' she held out her hand which Dick duly accepted and gave Sally a powerful handshake leaving her needing to give her hand a bit of a shake afterwards to restore feeling!

'I saw you looking at my sign outside, is it something in which you might be interested? I'm looking for someone to join me in my passion for antiques and curios, do you have that passion, Sally?'

Sally thought Dick quite eccentric, but then again, looking around his shop he seemed very well suited to the environment. Sally certainly did have more than a passing interest in treasures and objets d'art, the like of which were in abundance here! Her Grandfather had been quite a serious collector and she had often visited the auction houses with him and had become quite a dab hand at buying and selling to advantage.

'Well,' she replied, 'I must say I do have quite an eye for picking out interesting pieces.'

Sally's Grandfather had been very impressed with her ability to judge the worth of a collectible item. She recounted some of these stories to Dick who listened intently and nodded enthusiastically.

'Hmm, it seems to me, Sally, that you would be perfect as my business partner!' Dick was prowling up and down as though he was considering all he had heard from her.

Sally's eyes took in all the nooks and crevices around the walls of this quaint little shop and was charmed by the myriad of different artefacts on the shelves and bookcases. She glanced over at Dick who was staring at her earnestly. He was certainly handsome in a rugged sort of way, she thought.

She didn't need long to decide, that she too, thought she'd be perfect to assist Dick with his business! Over a glass of cider in the musty room at the back of the shop, Dick told Sally about himself and how he had come to own the shop. The shop had passed down several generations and was first opened by a distant uncle in the mid-1900s. As they discussed the details of their business contract Sally was captivated by Dick's charm.

Sally had a renewed spring in her step as she returned home in the early evening sunshine. She could barely believe what she was doing. However, she had some very transferable skills from her years working in marketing and with her love of antiques acquired from her Grandfather she felt confident that, alongside Dick, she could make a real impact here in this old, very curious little shop! Her new life here in Devon was only just beginning.

by Lesley Robinson for Mirthy's Ink

GET INV

Becoming a Community Interest Group Leader

Head of Events, Abbie

Thursday 1st September at 2:30pm

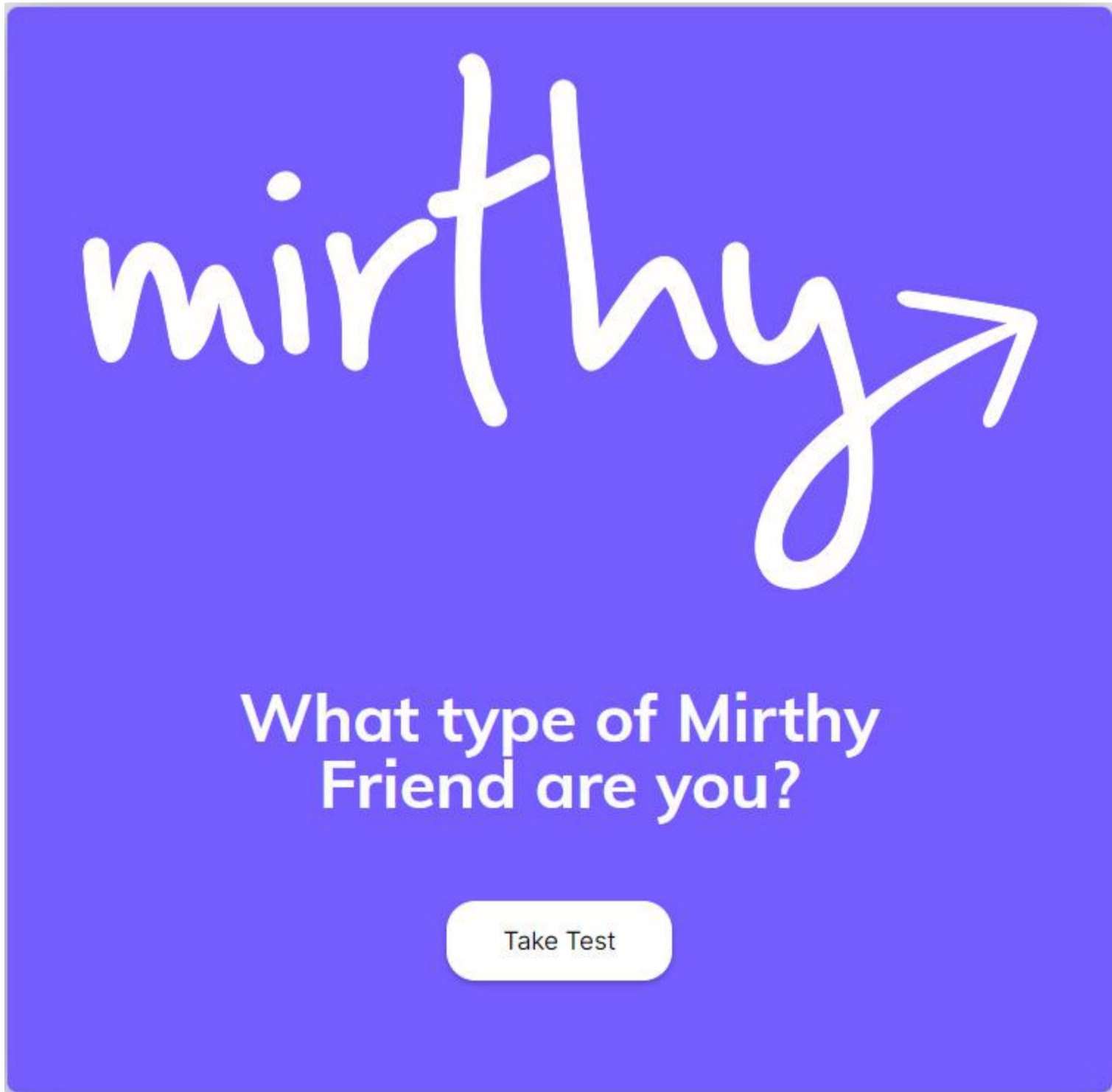
If you're interested in being a community group leader, come along to this session to find out what it's all about! We're really excited about the introduction of 'Feel-Good Club', 'Culture Club' and 'Family History Group' to our main event programme, alongside the current community groups 'Coffee and Chats', 'Mirthy's Ink: Writing Group' and Book Club Community Group. Attending this session does not commit you to anything in the future so just come along to find out how to successfully lead interest and discussion groups, whether at Mirthy or beyond.



INVOLVED

What Mirthy Friend are you?

Take our Quiz!



mirthy →

What type of Mirthy Friend are you?

Take Test

Finance

Money Safety Workshop

The Money Charity

Tuesday 25th October at 4pm

Online scamming and identity theft are now more common than ever. Scammers are incredibly sophisticated, and it really can happen to anyone. This hour long workshop is designed to help you understand how to keep your money and identity safe.

We will cover the main types of financial fraud and scams, what to do if you become a victim of financial fraud, how to reduce your risk of identity theft, and how to shop safely online.



Technology

Finding the best tech deals

Tech Relief

Wednesday 7th September at 2:30pm

With the cost of living going up, it pays to know where and how to keep on top of all your spending. Nicola and Jude are back to show us some useful tips and tricks on how to get great tech and more affordable prices, including where to look and what questions you should ask.

Useful Websites everyone should know

Chris Dowdell

Wednesday 14th September at 2:30pm

A selection of useful websites that everyone should know to make their life easier. Helping you to get more done with a range of great time saving services. Check whether your email has been included in a data breach, remove a background from an image/photo, install all your favourite apps on a new device in one go, dictate emails and documents or send a note that self-destructs after it's been read!

Discover Apps

Three Discovery Team

Friday 23rd September at 2:30pm

An interactive session going through questions previously submitted to Chris on techcafe@mirthy.co.uk. To submit a question for discussion, please send Chris an email in advance.

Tech Cafe

Chris Dowdell

Wednesday 28th September at 2:30pm

A selection of useful websites that everyone should know to make their life easier. Helping you to get more done with a range of great time saving services. Check whether your email has been included in a data breach, remove a background from an image/photo, install all your favourite apps on a new device in one go, dictate emails and documents or send a note that self-destructs after it's been read!

Tech Cafe

Chris Dowdell

Wednesday 5th October at 2:30pm

A selection of useful websites that everyone should know to make their life easier. Helping you to get more done with a range of great time saving services. Check whether your email has been included in a data breach, remove a background from an image/photo, install all your favourite apps on a new device in one go, dictate emails and documents or send a note

PUZZ

TRIVIA

- 1. If you are walking along an English country lane and meet someone who says he is a batologist, which forager's dream would he be studying?**
- 2. Which constellation represents a hunter and weapons?**
- 3. One of the most famous spas in England is Bath, whose famous waters have been visited since Roman times. What was the Roman name for Bath?**
- 4. What is "a cappella" music?**
- 5. The late 1920s and early 1930s saw the first true skyscrapers being built in Europe and America. A photo in this magazine shows the exterior of one Art Deco's most famous creations, whose silhouette has graced the New York City skyline since 1930. What iconic skyscraper am I referring to?**
- 6. Although the Art Nouveau movement started in the last decade of the 19th century, it was brought to international attention by the World Fair organized in 1900 in which European city?**
- 7. The word "masala" can often be seen on some of the delicious menus served in India. What does the word "masala" mean?**
- 8. When sitting down and eating an Indian meal, what are paratha, appam and roti?**

Discover the correct answers at www.mirthy.co.uk/trivia

ZLES

SUDOKU CHALLENGE

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	4		6	3		8		
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9		7				2		



**“I’m so glad I live in a world
where there are Octobers.”**

— L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables

