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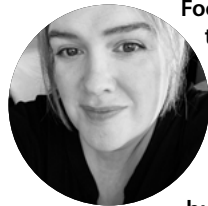


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Dear Readers,



Food is one of everyone's favourite topics. We all have an opinion, don't we? We're lucky to live in an area that's widely respected from a culinary point of view, with lots of great eateries, pop ups and food and drinks businesses right on our doorstep.

This month, the Abergavenny Food Festival takes place just 'across the border' and last month we ran a competition to win one of 5 pairs of Food Festival stroller tickets that we were giving away. The winners of that competition were: Mrs Heather Turgis, Maneek Harry, Alison Morgan, Helen Botting and Klara Lewis. Congratulations to them, and enjoy! I am looking forward to taking part in the Food Festival too and can be found in the Local and Vocal Tent in the Castle Grounds throughout the course of the weekend. I hope to see some of you there.

Continuing the theme of food and drink, we're delighted to feature some local businesses in the pages of this month's magazine, including Tatws Poeth A Mwy based in Crickhowell as well as Two Dogs Coffee Company based in Brecon. We've also included our top picks for Best Burgers locally on page 18, so be sure to look out for that! Brecon Foodbank reminds us that not everyone is able to afford even the most basic food to put on their table, and update us with what's currently needed by those most in need in our local community.

Enjoy this month's read,

Hannah

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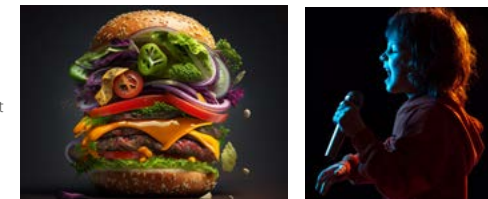
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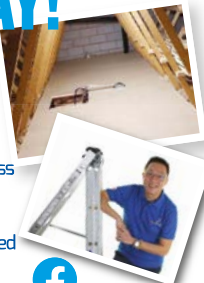


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Another Defibrillator for Llangattock

Sian Davies of Save A Life Cymru (in the uniform) with Helen Burns of Llangattock Village Society (holding the defibrillator), Alasdair Kirkpatrick of Beacon Park Boats (black jacket) and members of Llangattock Village Society.

A public fundraising campaign run by volunteers and a collaboration between the Welsh Government's free defibrillator scheme, the community council, a local luxury hire boat company, and the Canal and River Trust has seen another life-saving Public Access Defibrillator installed in Llangattock. It has been fitted to the amenity block at the Lime Kilns, just above bridge 115 on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal.

The fundraising campaign to pay for the bright yellow cabinet to house the defibrillator was run by the Llangattock Village Society (LVS) Helen Burns of LVS said: "We're grateful to everyone in the community who donated and helped in any way. Particular thanks go to Alasdair Kirkpatrick of Beacon Park Boats for his support and generosity, to the Canal & River Trust for allowing the equipment to be placed on their property, and to Welsh Government and The Welsh Ambulance Service/ Save a Life Cymru for supplying the defibrillator and steering

us through the process. Finally, we'd like to thank Llangattock Community Council for agreeing to take responsibility for the equipment."

Alasdair Kirkpatrick said: "We are delighted to support this project. You never know when a medical emergency will strike. I am still recovering from a sudden illness six years ago and having a defibrillator so close will reassure our customers and the community of Llangattock should the worst happen."

Sian Davis, Save a Life Cymru, Powys Community Co-ordinator Lead said; "Save a Life Cymru is delighted to have been involved in securing a new Welsh Government defibrillator for Llangattock community. We know that a person's only chance of surviving a cardiac arrest depends on a bystander acting quickly; calling 999, starting CPR and using a defibrillator. A cardiac arrest can happen suddenly, to anyone, at any age, at any time, and having defibrillators located in busy locations can be lifesaving. "You don't need any training to use a

defibrillator, but you can build-up your confidence by taking a few minutes to watch our CPR and defibrillation awareness film, just search the Save a Life Cymru website. "Defibrillators are important to both residents and visitors to Llangattock, so look after them, respect them, they could one day save a life".

Tim Jones, Vice Chair of Llangattock Community Council said: "When the Village Society asked the Council to take long-term responsibility for this life-saving piece of equipment, it was supported unanimously. We are grateful to them for doing all the hard work to help make Llangattock safer."

Helen Burns added "There are now three Public Access Defibrillators in the village and one restricted access Defibrillator at the Community Hall. We sincerely hope that none of this equipment ever needs to be used, but the community should be reassured we are now a heart-safe community!"

Llangattock Village Society

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IMPROVING OUR RIVER QUALITY

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As a company, we take our responsibilities to protect the environment seriously. This is why we have been developing plans to protect the quality of the water in our rivers.

Our research with Natural Resources Wales shows that our assets (i.e. our treatment works, Combined Storm Overflows or CSOs) are responsible for around 21% of the phosphates in the river Usk, with CSOs only responsible for 1%. The remainder, is caused by other factors such as rural land use and animal faeces, urban surface water drainage, misconnected drains, as well as private septic tanks.

We have permits in place at our wastewater treatment works to protect the river. These permits are set by our environmental regulators and can be changed by them when needed, to reflect the changing needs of the river, or when new evidence is found. When this happens, we work with our regulators to improve and upgrade our treatment works.

We understand that river water quality is an important matter for local residents and we are committed to playing our part to reducing our impact on the river Usk and the wider environment. To find out more visit dwrcymru.com/environment or scan this handy QR code.



Fel cwmni, rydyn ni'n cymryd ein cyfrifoldebau dros amddiffyn yr amgylchedd o ddifri. Dyma pam ein bod ni wedi bod yn datblygu cynlluniau i wella'r dŵr yn ein hafonydd.

Mae ein gwaith ymchwil gyda Chyfoeth Naturiol Cymru'n dangos bod ein hosedau (fel ein gweithfeydd trin, a'n Gorlifoedd Storm Cyfun neu CSOs) yn gyfrifol am tua 21% o'r ffosffadau yn afon Wysg, a'r CSOs sy'n gyfrifol am gwa 1%. Mae'r gweddill yn cael ei achosi gan ffactorau eraill fel defnydd tir gwledig a bow anifeiliaid, dŵr yn draenio oddi ar wynebau trefol, draeniau sydd wedi eu cam-gysylltu, a thanciau septig preifat.

Mae trwyddedau mewn grym yn ein gweithfeydd trin dŵr gwastraff i amddiffyn yr afon. Ein rheoleiddwyr amgylcheddol sy'n pennu'r trwyddedau hyn, a gallant eu newid pan fo angen i adlewyrchu anghenion newidiol yr afon, neu pan fo tystiolaeth newydd yn codi. Pan fo hynny'n digwydd, rydyn ni'n gweithio gyda'n rheoleiddwyr i wella ac uwchraddio ein gweithfeydd trin.

Rydyn ni'n deall bod ansawdd dŵr afonol yn fater pwysig i drigolion lleol ac rydyn ni wedi ymrwmo i chwarae ein rhan wrth leihau ein heffaith ar afon Wysg a'r amgylchedd ehangach. I gael rhagor o fanylion, ewch i dwrcymru.com/amgylchedd neu sganiwch y cod QR hwylus.



Hardy Plant Society

HPS Monmouthshire group is for people who love plants and gardening and enjoy sharing their enthusiasm with other like-minded gardeners in the county and beyond.

Non-members are welcome to come along - it's an opportunity to meet people with similar interests in a friendly atmosphere. Entry fees vary between £4 and £8. Our regular meetings are held at the village hall in Little Mill NP4 0HJ.

The group also hosts occasional Zoom talks and organises garden visits, gardening discussion dinners and plant sales. Keep in touch by emailing monmouthshirehps@gmail.com or look up our website www.hpsmonmouthshire.co.uk Lots of news and plant-related information in both. If you are interested in coming to any of our events, we would love to hear from you. Here's what's coming up in the next two months:

Saturday 2nd Sept 2.30pm Little Mill Village Hall 'Robinson's Wild

Garden at Gravetye' by Tom Coward the Head Gardener at Gravetye Manor in Sussex. An illustrated talk.

Saturday 9th September The Usk Show a highlight of many people's year. We will be selling plants on our stand. Come and buy!

Saturday 14th October 2.30pm Little Mill Village Hall 'A Garden above the Estuary' by Adam Alexander. Adam, also known as the Seed Detective, will be full of tips and techniques for growing his beloved heritage veg so you can enjoy it at reasonable cost and by sustainable, organic methods.

Wednesday 18th October Tim Walker 7.30 'Paradise Lost and Restored' a Zoom talk. Tim, the former Director of Oxford Botanic Garden, looks at how gardening has changed over the last 400 years. Or has it?

Please do come along to the meetings - we look forward to welcoming you.

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EVENTS CALENDAR AUGUST 2023

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4TH SEPTEMBER
BOOK-ISH WRITING GROUP

A monthly meeting in Book-ish for writers of all levels to write, develop, and share their work in an informal and supportive setting.

7pm-9pm, Book-ish Loft, 18 High St, Crickhowell

Tickets £6.50 from book-ish.co.uk/events

2ND & 3RD SEPTEMBER
BRECON CLASSIC VEHICLE WEEKEND
CLASSIC VEHICLE SHOW



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rides. Both days
the vehicles
leave at 4pm site
closes at 5.30pm
All times

depending on weather.

From 10am Saturday and 11am on Sunday
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7TH SEPTEMBER

Book-ish Event
AN EVENING WITH JOHN CONNELLY

Join us for an evening with John Connolly, author of The Book of Lost Things and its new, delightful sequel!

7.30pm, Kings Arms Abergavenny

Tickets are priced at £8 for admission or £20 for admission plus a hardback copy of The Land of Lost Things. www.book-ish.co.uk/events

13TH SEPTEMBER

(AND EVERY 2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH)
BOARD GAMES EVENING

Monthly board games night hosted by 'Shuffle & Roll'. A wide selection of games are on offer, with help on hand for rules and tips if needed.

6pm-9pm, The Foundry, 8 Bell Lane, Brecon

16TH SEPTEMBER

BRECON MEDIEVAL FAYRE



Step back in time for the first ever Medieval festival in Brecon. There will be battles, jesters, workshops, food+drink, living history, medieval music, archery, dance, informative talks and much much more!

Held on Brecon Cathedral grounds from 10am

18TH – 23RD SEPTEMBER
BRECON BEACONS COLLEGE
ADULT LEARNERS' WEEK

Adult Learner's Week is coming up this month from 18th September – 23rd September. We expect to host an exciting set of activities for adults to try and learn something new. Please keep checking our website, www.nptcgroup.ac.uk, for a list of activities.

24TH SEPTEMBER

WOMEN'S WELLBEING WALK

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countryside to come and walk with other women reinvigorating the body & soul. This walk will be circular taking us up above Talgarth which sits under the Black Mountains in the Brecon Beacons National Park. It's an 8 mile route with plenty to see as well as the views. We walk on the edge of a glider centre, down old green lanes, over moorland, and finally through a forest. This walk should help to de-stress, with plenty of 'green' to soak up and flora & fauna to see.
10am, Talgarth Main Car Park
Tickets: www.walkhay.co.uk/event-details/womens-wellbeing-walk-talgarth

16TH & 17TH SEPTEMBER
25TH ABERGAVENNY FOOD FESTIVAL

Celebrating 25 years of one of the biggest and best Food Festivals. Two days of foodie events, produce stalls and street food.
www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com

27TH SEPTEMBER
Book-ish Event
AN EVENING WITH KATE HUMBLE

Join us for an evening with Kate Humble, on her

latest book *Where The Hearth Is* 7.30pm, Angel Hotel, Abergavenny
Tickets are priced at £10 for admission or £22 with a copy of the book www.book-ish.co.uk/events

29TH SEPTEMBER
Book-ish Event
AN EVENING WITH NICK THOMAS-SYMONDS

Join us for an evening with Nick Thomas-Symonds discussing his new biography of Harold Wilson: *The Winner*.
7.30pm, The Loft @ Book-ish. Tickets are £10 for admission only, or £18 with a copy of the book.
www.book-ish.co.uk/events

SHARE YOUR EVENT

Go to:

thefocus.wales/calendar/

A Note about Events. All the events listed are correct at the time of publishing. We strongly recommend double checking dates and times prior to attending an event to ensure these have not changed. Focus Magazines accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions

September Weather Outlook

by Jonathan Powell

After a dry and warm June for Wales and indeed the UK, July faltered, whilst other parts of Europe experienced settled weather, albeit with challenging extremes of heat. August started where July left off across Wales, rather indifferent, with the jet stream's southerly position allowing the Atlantic to continue to produce changeable and at times, unseasonably stormy weather. Whereas some stability gradually impressed itself during the latter part of August, much of the summer season was all but lost. September looks set to offer its best weather during the first half of the month, with a generally unsettled picture developing thereafter. In that early September sunshine some pleasantly warm temperatures are to be expected. On the average for rainfall for the month, with temperatures above average for the month.

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Tatws Poeth A Mwy



Tatws Poeth A Mwy is a new business set in the heart of Crickhowell in the fabulous Market Hall building. We are open 6 days a week from 10:30am until 5:30pm. We are closed on Sundays.

We offer traditional oven baked jacket potatoes served with a variety of different toppings, all homemade with tender, loving, care. Examples of what we offer are: Cheesy Chicken, Spinach and Pesto, and Feta cheese, Sundried tomatoes and Olives, plus your usual classics of course. We feel strongly about supporting Crickhowell's High Street businesses by sourcing our meat from Cashells and FE Richards, and sourcing our bread rolls from Maiflour Bakery.

We also do foot long hot dogs. Yes, they are 12 inches and we do local, free range pork or the classic German Frankfurters topped with just onions or our poplar Claire's chilli, house slaw or beans all with a variety of sauces.

To finish off, we have homemade sweet treats such as Old School tray bakes and muffins. We also have our famous warm gooey chocolate cookies served with squirty cream and strawberries. Our classic Mr Whippy ice-cream has been a big hit with children and grown ups. We have a variety of sauces and toppings including Oreos, Biscoff and dinosaurs!!

Each week we also do a random act of kindness/giveaway. Being kind and spreading the love goes a long way in life. One lucky customer will receive a free drink and sweet treat with their Hot Dog or Jacket Potato purchase.

We love this complete career change as we wanted an improved work-life balance and to be part of a wonderful community. It's a family affair and we're passionate about offering a wholesome, healthy meal option to takeaway. We would love to meet you so please come and support our small business in the lovely Crickhowell.

Tatws Poeth A Mwy



PETER HILL

creative

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Orange Cloud Cake

This is a lovely light and airy cake, very much like Madeira, but with a citrusy flavour. It looks impressive baked in a Bundt tin (ring) but don't worry if you haven't got one, it can be cooked in any deep cake tin, just adjust the cooking time.

Ingredients

320g plain flour
300g caster sugar
1 tbsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
5 egg yolks
120ml vegetable oil
180 ml orange juice
Zest of 1 orange
1 tsp vanilla extract
225 ml egg whites
1/2 tsp cream of tartar

Method

1. Preheat oven to 170C/150Fan/ Gas3
2. Sift the flour and baking powder into a bowl, add sugar and salt and mix
3. Make a well in the centre and add the egg yolks, oil, orange juice, vanilla essence and zest. Do not beat, just leave to stand
4. In a separate large bowl whisk egg whites and cream of tartar until very stiff. Leave to one side
5. Now return to the flour, oil and egg yolk mixture and beat until smooth.
6. Gently fold the beaten flour mixture a 1/4 at a time, into the beaten egg whites until well combined
7. Pour the mixture into the tin and bake in the oven for 60-70 mins, until an inserted wooden skewer comes out clean. Invert tin until cake has cooled.
8. Decorate as desired - dust with icing sugar or make up a small amount of fondant icing flavoured with orange.

Pauline Mardell



Our coffee roasting journey started in 2017 in Treorchy in the Rhondda Valley where we live with our two terriers Jack and Gelert. We decided to set up a small-batch coffee roastery in our garage after John attended a coffee roasting course and was hooked! We bought a roaster, converted our garage and Two Dogs Coffee Roasting Company was born.



Early in 2020, following requests from customers at events, we decided to start selling our delicious coffee by the cup. John converted a van and we were all set to go when Covid hit and things got delayed but we got out on the road as soon as we could.

Next our online shop took off and suddenly we needed a bigger roaster. Not being able to fit the 'monster' into our garage/roastery and feeling that we'd like to have a High Street presence to allow our customers to see their coffee being roasted, we took on retail premises in Brecon opening in November 2021.

Two Dogs Coffee & Tea Emporium is essentially a coffee and tea store selling a selection of 30 coffees, roasted on site, and 20 loose teas. We also sell cups of coffee & tea and hot chocolate to takeaway and brewing equipment and accessories.

We endeavour to be as sustainable as we can, sourcing our coffee beans from small farms and cooperatives especially women's cooperatives; we use compostable and recycled/ recyclable packaging and supply our products loose, as well as packaged, for you to fill your own containers as a cheaper and more eco-friendly option. We also plant a tree in the Amazon for every kilo of Brazilian coffee we sell.



Together, we hope to pass on our passion for premium, sustainably produced coffee, locally roasted, by supplying through our shop, website, cafes & retail outlets, Food Festivals & events.

www.twodogscoffeecompany.com for more information.





The Humble Garage



but you would be surprised by how animated people can become at the prospect of a garage and how disappointed they are when one is lacking. Prior to the invention of the car, outbuildings tended to be used to house livestock and to store carriages; from basic stables with space for a carriage to more ornate coach houses with stalls and cobbled floors, often with a hayloft above where a groom would sleep.

Having been an estate agent for more years than I can count, I am still intrigued and sometimes fascinated by garages. A pretty boring subject, I know,



Usually, when visiting a property to carry out a Market Appraisal, I walk around the interior of the house first and then proceed outside. At this point I am asked if I want to see the garage and outbuildings. Outbuildings I don't mind, especially if there are stables and horses involved, but garages? I have to feign interest and excitement.

In my experience, garages fall into 3 categories (1) immaculate, everything in its place and often with a workshop area too, (2) utilised as additional living space/ study/gym/utility room or (3) a complete mess and used for storage. Very rarely do I visit a property where the garage is used to keep cars, especially cars used on a day to day basis.

Shortly after the invention of the first cars, owners wanted somewhere to store their prized possession when not in use. Many older cars did not have a roof, so finding somewhere to protect them during bad weather was

an important consideration. Initially, cars were stored in the carriage house along with the horse as, at the time, both the car as well as a horse and carriage were being used for the purpose of transportation. This didn't represent an ideal solution, which prompted car owners to start looking at alternatives...and along came the garage.

During the early 1900s, architects were looking at alternative storage for cars and the garage was born. Introduced into the English language around 1902, the word garage was derived from the French word 'garer', which means to shelter or protect.

The garage evolved initially as a 'shared storage space' in towns, then often the adaptation of an

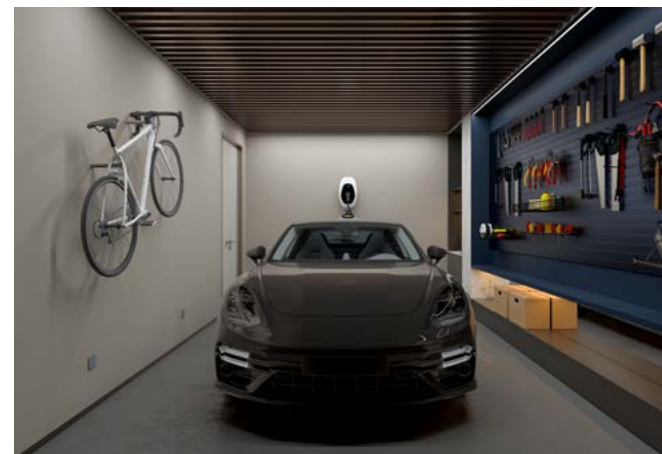
original coach house before the addition of a building at home. The original garages were small with just enough room to store the car, floors were often dirt and there was no lighting or windows. The doors were wooden, often the coach house doors so they were cumbersome to open and shut. It is believed the first up and over type of garage door was invented in circa 1921 by a Mr C.G. Johnson who, a few years later, invented an electric garage door opener. The emergence of garages with power and light was beginning and what was nothing more than a shelter created from necessity was becoming more of a bespoke outbuilding with space for a vehicle, storage and workshop too.

Today garages are an important consideration for homeowners. Since the COVID pandemic and working from home is more commonplace, we have seen people either converting their garage to a study or, if it has a pitched roof, creating a workspace above. Both new builds and the conversion of older coach houses often have additional living space which has a flexible use either as guest accommodation, playroom, hobby room or office.



During my time as an agent, I have sold garages for some strong prices - they are still a commodity in demand. Many years ago, my husband owned a house in Dartmouth which had a garage next door belonging to another property in the town. My husband bought the other property just so he could obtain the garage next to his house! I have heard many similar stories over the years which goes to show just how much the humble garage remains very much in demand today.

Heather Cook



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BEST BURGERS

Hamburgers have been around in some form or another for a very long time. In 1758 they appeared in a book entitled 'The Art of Cookery Made Easy' by Hannah Glasse and were referred to as a 'Hamburg sausage.' The true origins of the hamburger, however, are unknown and although the term Hamburger derives from the German city, Hamburg, there is no certain connection between the food and the city. There are many who have claimed to be the true inventors over the years, but nobody can properly trace the burger's true origins.

One thing is for certain, the hamburger is one of the nation's most popular dishes and in the UK it's estimated that the burger market is worth over £3 billion and, unsurprisingly, features in the top ten choices when it comes to takeaway food.

So what makes a great burger? Well, it's a question that has no definite answer. Some will argue that the key is a patty with a high fat content (around 40%) to keep it moist, using chuck or brisket. Others say a coarse grind on well-aged prime rib is best.

You can get some pretty banging meat free burgers too, whether you buy these as alternative protein products or you slap a hunk of halloumi or panko crumbed aubergine slices between a bun.



And about the bun...is brioche best? Some say yes, while others will tell you that a brioche isn't robust enough to deal with all those juices and suggest that the chewiness of a sourdough roll is more suitable.



Cheese, pickles and sauces are also points of contention with modern twists including relishes made with bacon, or mayonnaise laced with sriracha or kimchee. The possibilities are endless which is perhaps why the burger endures... because it has so many ways of being reinvented.

BEST BURGER?

So where can you get a banging burger from locally? Here are our picks...

1. **HILLS, Brecon**, known for their 'explicit burgers'. Try their New York burger with pastrami, sauerkraut and pickles, or for a vegetarian option go for the pickled and spiced tofu!
2. **Nantynn Cider Mill**. Head here for their Vegan Bad Boy burger served with chips and house salad.
3. **The Farmers Arms, Cwmdru** for their imaginative Sliders Board including cheeseburger, barbecue pulled pork and lamb and mint sliders. Delicious!

If you want to make your own gourmet burger at home, we strongly suggest a visit to Cashells of Crickhowell or Beacons Farm shop at the Welsh Venison Centre for all your high quality meat needs.

AROUND THE WORLD WITH HENRY HEDGEHOG

FINISH

HI EVERYBODY!
I HAVE INSTALLED A DANISH PASTRY MACHINE IN MY KITCHEN!

WHICH PASTRY PATH LEADS FROM THE MACHINE TO ME, CHEF HENRY!?

WHICH PIECE OF LEGO BELOW IS THE ODD ONE OUT?

START

Can you answer whether the following facts about Denmark's famous 'Little Mermaid' statue (right) are TRUE or FALSE?

1. The Little Mermaid is 101 years old on the 23rd August.

TRUE FALSE

2. The statue has had her head stolen three times!

TRUE FALSE

3. The Little Mermaid receives just under 500,000 visitors each year.

TRUE FALSE

Created by Alex Barnett
www.rubinsandkiddington.com

Brecon Food Bank

Brecon Foodbank, has been open over 9 years providing 'emergency food for people in crisis' to people in Brecon and the surrounding area. During that time we have provided over 400 parcels of emergency food feeding about 9500 people (about a third of them children) – initially 3-day parcels, now 7-day. Parcels are tailored to the household size, and we also help with toiletries and pet food.

With the number of people needing us increasing since we opened, this year we have seen about a third more people needing our help as in the same period last year.

If people need food there is an underlying reason (e.g. loss or earnings, health or home, debt, benefit problems, etc), so we work with referral agencies to ensure that this reason is being addressed. This is why clients need a voucher to come, though people without once can still attend and we will link them with an agency suited to

helping with their particular issues. Clients are allowed 5 vouchers in a 3-month period, by when any problems should be resolved. If they aren't we will usually continue to support them in conjunction with their agency.

To feed people we need donations, and the local community is very supportive, whether with individual donations, special events, Harvest Festivals or in other ways. Food donations have increased despite the 'Cost of Living Crisis' but sadly not as much

as is needed, and we now have to buy more food ourselves; currently financial donations still enable us to do this.

For more information and ways to help, see our website Brecon.foodbank.org.uk and Breconfoodbank Facebook page. Our current shopping list and donation points can be found on

both, or on the 'Bank the Food' app which we use, or you can donate food on-line at givetoday.co.uk.

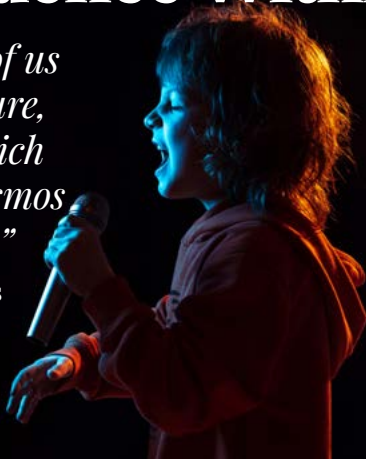
Thank you.



Confidence Within

“Every one of us is an aperture, through which the whole cosmos looks out.”

~ Alan Watts



Had you ever stopped to wonder why little kids behave with such confidence? Ask toddlers if they're any good at singing, dancing, drawing, football, you name it – they'll let you know they're *actually* the best, and if you're lucky, they'll give you a demonstration, there and then.

My own daughter, when little, never held back in bashing away at the piano with a self-satisfied grin on her face. Now she's older, her playing is much more hesitant and self-conscious.

Observing this progression in children, and in our own relationship with confidence, we are led naturally to conclude that confidence doesn't last; that maybe it's a personality trait reserved for the chosen few; or that to have more of it, we need to gain a lot more experience of success.

Looking to the origins of the word — *'confidere'*; which is Latin for having 'full trust' — it's easy to see why. When we're *not* feeling confident about a situation, we have no trust in our abilities. Our head is full of what-ifs and worst-

case scenarios, or it's dwelling on past mistakes and how they're just going to happen all over again.

Seen through this lens, it *looks* like the obvious solution is to tackle this worrisome thinking head on: to work hard at building up our self-concept from being someone who's maybe a bit quiet and insecure, to one who's bold and self-assured. *Then* we'll be ok.

This *additive* model (where an 'inadequate you' needs extra stuff to make a 'better version' of you) lies at the heart of the personal development industry. Books, seminars and success gurus awaken our deepest fears and promise confidence as the prize, if we're willing to open our wallets and put the work in, on ourselves.

But it's built on a lie.

Little kids don't have some grand concept of themselves that their confidence stems from, they have **no** concept of themselves! It's not some bold idea of 'who they are' that they fully trust, it's the infinite creative energy of life in the moment. They draw from the same, ever-present well of confidence

as us, they just don't have any thinking about it!

It is our belief in, and reliance upon, an imagined self-concept, that is the very source of our disquiet.

Confidence is innate and unconditional, in other words, it's an inbuilt part of who we are that arises naturally and effortlessly whenever our attention *isn't* being consumed by our conditioned beliefs and fears. It is an eternal flame, burning inside of us, the light of which can only ever be briefly obscured.

Confidence is therefore not something we build, or create. It is simply an absence of insecure, personal thinking. The answer is *subtractive*. With less on our minds, we find our strength was there all along.

This simple insight changed my life, when it hit me up on stage once, in front of a hundred people. Consumed by nerves, I suddenly realised that the fear I felt wasn't coming from the audience, or what might happen, but from my own fearful thinking, right there, in that moment.

Stunned, relieved, inspired, I watched my fears dissolve as I became present to the situation before me and delivered a talk for the ages. I rediscovered the child-like confidence within, that day, and there is nothing stopping you from doing so too.

Knowing where to look for it, your path is now clear.



Dr Giles P Croft gilescroft.com
Healing • Coaching • Speaking

To learn how the subtractive approach to wellbeing helps busy, stressed-out staff, watch this 3 minute video and get in touch if you'd like to support your employees in this way: gilescroft.link/staff-wellbeing



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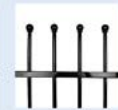
ColourRail design options



Decorative Ring



Fleur de lys



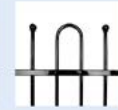
Ball Top



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Loop & Ball



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Book Recommendations

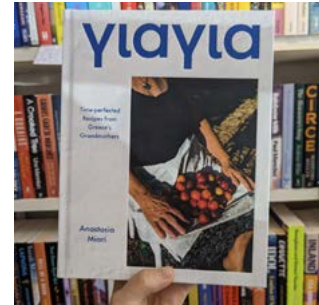
This month the team at Book-ish offer their freshly selected foodie book choices, ready to serve!



Of Cabbages and Kimchi: A Practical Guide to the World of Fermented Food

James Read - £22

James Read takes the ten greatest 'living' ferments - fermented foods that are neither cooked nor pasteurized - and places them under the microscope, before cooking with them in all their delicious versatility. From the fiery funk of kimchi to the velvet tang of kefir, James describes the microbial process, then shares his recipes for recreating these wonders in your own kitchen - no specialist equipment required.



Yiayia: Time-perfected Recipes from Greece's Grandmothers

Anastasia Miari - £27

From Cretan Dakos salad to Ionian pasta, Yiayia brings together a wide variety of dishes crafted by the culinary geniuses that are Greece's grandmothers.



Heartburn

Nora Ephron - £9.99

Seven months into her pregnancy, Rachel discovers that her husband is in love with another woman. The fact that this woman has a 'neck as long as an arm and a nose as long as a thumb' is no consolation. Food sometimes is, though, since Rachel is a cookery writer, and between trying to win Mark back and wishing him dead, she offers us some of her favourite recipes. Heartburn is a roller coaster of love, betrayal, loss and most satisfyingly revenge.

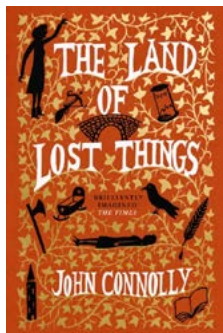
the chance to join a cooking class taught by a gifted chef, to develop her own subtle palate and powerful gift.



Lose you to Find Me

Erik J Brown - £6.99

This is a tender-hearted romance between culinary school aspirant Tommy and his old crush Gabe who he is forced to train up...



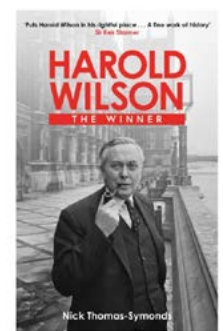
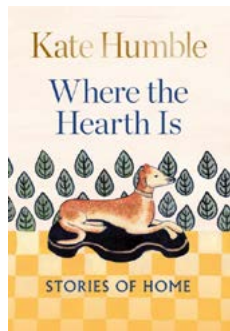
{BOOK•ISH}

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Salad Pizza Wine: and many more good things from Elena

Janice Tiefenbach, Stephanie Mercier Voyer, Ryan Gray
£29.99

A different kind of cookbook, from a different kind of restaurant. The team behind the award-winning Montreal pizza joint Elena presents Salad Pizza Wine, delivering recipes for all of life's good things, with fresh, delicious and easy-to-recreate takes on modern Italian dishes.



With the Fire on High

Elizabeth Acevedo - £7.99

Though she is still a high-school student, Emoni has a two-year-old daughter, for whom she wants nothing but the best. When it comes to her own prospects, she is less focused - but then she's offered



Crying in H Mart

Michelle Zauner - £9.99

From the indie rockstar Japanese Breakfast, an unflinching, powerful, deeply moving memoir about growing up mixed-race, Korean food, losing her Korean mother, and forging her own identity.

One Minute to a Calmer Mind

How much time do you spend ruminating on your problems? On all the things that are not how you want them to be?

And how much time do you spend looking for what's right?

I bet the ratio is hugely stacked in the 'wrong' camp.

We do this because somewhere in our subconscious brain we believe that by endlessly picking over a problem, we're doing something useful. But worry never solved anything. Only action does that.

The best action is always taken with a good frame of mind. How do we get there? By focusing on things that make us feel better.

This is not about being relentlessly positive, smiling through gritted teeth and pretending all is well. That takes willpower and a massive amount of effort.

I'm talking about using your freewill to focus on the nice stuff: a partner, a friend, a child, a pet, a home, a meal, a hobby, a friendly neighbour, a kind word.

Wanting to be happy while spending your time thinking about all that's wrong is like wanting to see the sun and looking at the ground instead of the sky.

Be willing to give up your problems for an hour, an afternoon, a whole day, and instead look for what's right. I mean, why wouldn't you?

Life Coach Liz Wilde
Visit www.lizwilde.co.uk to read more emotional advice and book a no-obligation initial discounted session.



WE WANT YOUR ARTICLES!

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Here at the Focus, we believe in Positive News! We understand that the world can be a tricky, daunting and scary place to navigate, often with depressing news splashed across our screens on a daily basis.

The Focus aims to provide our readers with an upbeat and positive reading experience. We want to fill our pages with lively editorial about local news and articles of community interest and intrigue!

Do you have something in mind that you'd like to share with our estimated 40,000 monthly readers?

Read our submissions guidelines below and find out how to go about doing so.

Will I be charged?

We are frequently asked this question, so it's a valid one. If you are sharing an article that in some way promotes a self-employed, sole trader, limited company or partnership then there will be a charge involved. Please look at our advertising prices to find out what

type of advertising option will suit you best.

How will I know if you are going to include it or not?

Editorial decisions regarding inclusion into the magazine depends on a number of varying factors. We can't give you a firm 'yes' or 'no' as to whether it will definitely appear in print or not. If you want inclusion absolutely guaranteed, there is a cost involved. If, for whatever reason we cannot include your article in our print magazine, we may be able to publish it on our website.

How long should I make my article?

No longer than 500 words. This will fit into a full page. It may well be if we choose to print your article but we are tight for space, that we will ask you to reduce the word count so that we can fit it into the space available to us.

What else do I need to include?

Please include the name of the person or organisation we are to credit for editorial contribution. We

would also love for you to include an image to go with the article. Please send this as a high-resolution jpeg attachment to your email. It should be free of copyright so that it can be reproduced. Focus Magazines accepts no liability for this.

Can I see the article before it goes to press?

We do not send proof layouts provided on a complimentary basis ahead of going to press.

Can I make changes to the article?

Minor editorial changes can be made up to and including our copy deadline date.

When do I need to send it to you by?

15th of the month, please

Can I submit an article regularly?

We try to give everyone a fair opportunity to have editorial submissions included in the magazines where possible. If you require content to be included on a regular basis, please speak to us about how this might be possible ahead of making your submission.

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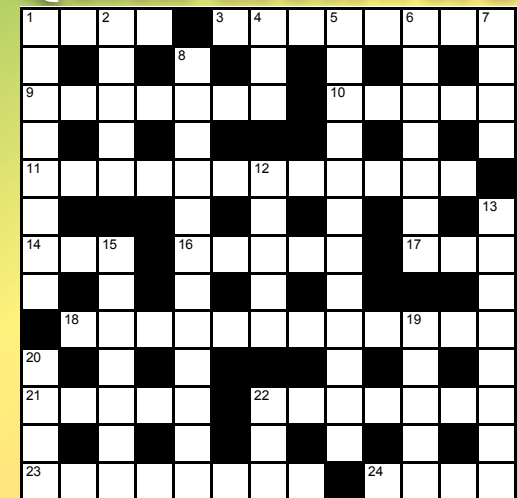
ACROSS

- In addition (4)
- Greets (8)
- Painful condition (7)
- Childminder (5)
- Developments (12)
- Appropriate (3)
- Braid hair (5)
- Winter sport (3)
- Purposefully (12)
- Time-piece (5)
- Distinctive (7)
- Moving very fast (8)
- Questions (4)

DOWN

- From the United States (8)
- Tantrum (5)
- Used for seeing (3)
- Condensed (12)
- Parts of an hour (7)
- Speaks (4)
- Talented (12)
- Delete (5)
- Two wheeled vehicles (8)
- Rigid support frame (7)
- Departs (5)
- In debt (4)
- Male child (3)

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