



Our News Our Views

Created by People with a Learning Disability for the Learning Disability Community.

Edition 68 – **March 2021**



Victoria Wood - By Tracy Roberts

Special points of interest:

Imlonely - YouTube channel becomes a mental health hub.



Victoria Wood was a comedian, composer and she played the piano. She wrote some amazing pieces of comedy some of my favourites are:-

Barry and Freda - Let's Do It
Dinnerladies
Acorn Antiques
Victoria Wood As Seen On TV



Sadly, she died in 2016 of cancer I decided to write about her because she is a legend and her writing was genius.

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Captain Tom - By Peter Crum

Captain Sir Tom Moore - the Second World War veteran who raised tens of millions of pounds for the NHS died 2nd February at the age of 100.

People across the UK took part in a special clap on 3rd February to show respect and to remember him.

In the first lockdown Captain Tom became an unlikely hero.



Captain Tom took on the challenge to raise £1,000 for NHS charities by walking 100 lengths of his garden before his 100th birthday.

He went on to raise over £39 million and became a hero in my eyes.

Update from the editors



Goodness what a long year it has been with Covid-19 changing the way we deliver our newsletter and having to lockdown again.

We are very pleased to see that people with learning disabilities have now been prioritized to have the vaccine if they wish.

We hope you are managing ok and staying safe and well.

We have another online bumper issue to entertain you in these difficult times. Hopefully there is light at the end of this tunnel.

In this edition lots for you to see:

- Historical articles about piracy, wartime escapes and Vikings.
- A story about moving away from home, using art and a YouTube channel to explore mental health.
- Ideas for mothering Sunday, puzzles jokes and more. Enjoy!

See you in April— deadline 17th March.

Blackbeard, who terrified the Americans — By Adrian Phipps

Before going into action, the pirate known as Blackbeard stuck long, slow-burning fuses under the brim of his hat. His smoke-wreathed face made him seem like a creature from hell.

His long, bushy black beard was described by the writer Daniel Defoe as 'a Meteor (which) covered his face, and frightened America more than any Comet that has appeared there for a long time.'

Born Edward Teach, in Bristol, England, in the late 17th century, Blackbeard fought as a privateer before turning pirate in 1716.

In November 1718, a British naval force under Lieutenant Robert Maynard cornered Blackbeard at his base at Ocracoke Inlet, South Carolina, where Blackbeard was shot dead.



About the world - some thoughts - By Alex Rodgerson

People usually say; what do you think is positive about the world? Some say they like the idea of world peace and harmony. Others think we can be friends with everyone in the world and go hand in hand together in kindness.

Me? I think that is something completely false because to me realistically none of those things are ever going to happen any-time soon.

People (not all) usually forget the bad things and horrendous events that happened in world history: The second world war; the assassination of President Kennedy; the IRA bombings of the 70s and 80s.

If history has taught us one thing it is this: world peace and friendships with all the nations will never happen.

It is a sad thought I know, but it is what it is unfortunately.

Another obstacle (not in this country), but the world has to overcome is political wokeism.

I hope in the next 100 – 1000 years' time we might become a more realistic race and that way we can evolve.



No one knows what the next human species could be after homo sapiens are extinct, but I have a feeling the next stage of human evolution will be the age of machines where humans will one day be taken over by robots, androids, cyborgs etc.

Another theory suggests that one day the next step of evolution for mankind will be superhumans where the new species of humans are genetically born with superpowers.

Both theories sound remarkably interesting but as we cannot predict the future, we do not know what will happen. **Continued on page 5.....**

Have you heard the one about...



Colditz Castle- By Adrian Phipps

There have been lots of games called "Colditz" or "Escape from Colditz" and many more. But what is Colditz?

Colditz was a prison in Germany for P.O.W's (Prisoners Of War) who had tried to escape many times from other P.O.W camps, and was said to be impossible to escape from.

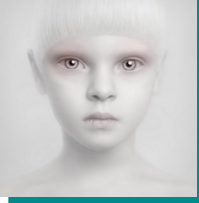
But there was one man, Major Patrick Reid, who managed to break out of Colditz.

They managed to file some bars in the room loose, climb quickly but quietly down to a rooftop and use rope to get out of Colditz Castle. Then they had to climb down the wall on the other side.

After they got out, they separated, but only Reid made it home. The other two were re-captured and taken back to Colditz.



About the world - Some thoughts continued from page 3...



Maybe the next species might be more intelligent than us which may be the case. Perhaps maybe in years to come we would become a celestial race with God like powers and rule over the entire universe.



One way the human race could one day be extinct is that we either die of a nasty virus, global warming will wipe us out or we might end up the same way as the dinosaurs did: by being struck by a meteorite. Whatever the case may be, we must adapt to new things in life.



A lot of the things we have done throughout history are atrocious and unforgivable. But we have also done a lot of good things that we have accomplished as well such as discovering fire, electing our first female uk prime minister and creating the oxford English dictionary. And do not forget we were the first people to send humans into space leading to having our first moon landing in the 60s.

Our whole society has been built upon by growing crops and building houses, learning to hunt and defend ourselves overcoming the biggest trials we might have to face someday.

The human mind has helped us gain experience and intelligence (for some people).



Having the knowledge to do anything can be good, but for some people it could be used for wrong reasons like committing something horrible like murder or theft. This world has only two forces: good and evil. These two aspects of nature have been going at each other since forever and will not stop until judgement day arrives.



We have places of worship like churches, cathedrals, abbeys, chapels etc. some people believe in one God that rules over all i.e. Christians, Catholics, Anglicans, protestants etc. Whatever people believe or do, life carry's on for as long as we're on this planet.

Whether we start a war with a neighbouring country, construct a landmark or monument for people to remember and learn or discover a new element or planet we will continue to flourish and thrive for as long as the planet is intact.

Barabara Windsor — By Peter Crum



I think Barbara was the best actress and everybody liked her.

Barbara was in carry on's films and Eastenders and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

I watched her in Carry On Camping, she was brilliant, and the scene, which is my favourite, when her bra pinged off, and matron pull her in the tent, which makes me laugh.



The Great Escape — By Adrian Phipps



75 years ago this month, on the night of the 24th March 1944, one of the most audacious projects carried out during World War II occurred.

It was the mass escape of Allied soldiers from the German Prisoner of war camp Stalag Luft III.

Like in the famous film of The Great Escape, 3 tunnels had been dug, which were named Tom, Dick and Harry,

While digging the tunnels, Tom was discovered by the German guards in the camp. But after that, the prisoners dug for 24 hours every day on the others 2 tunnels, and eventually 75 prisoners escaped before the tunnels were discovered.

After that, when some of the ones who got out were caught, 50 men were shot because of trying to escape.



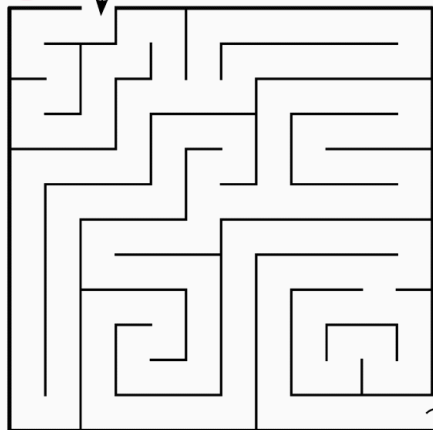
But there were a few who made it home, and one of them, Paul Brickhall, wrote a book about the escape from the camp, which told the whole story, and was eventually made into a film.



Puzzle page



Happy Easter!

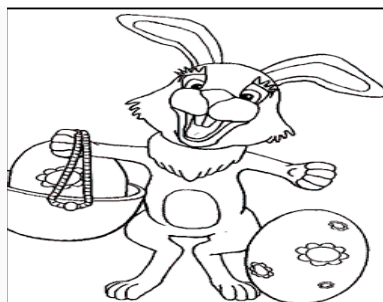
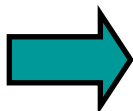


It's Easter Day and the baby chick just hatched from her egg. Help her take her first steps and find her way through the chicken coop.

£10 prize. Enter by photographing your completed crossword puzzle and emailing it to us with your name, address, and email or phone number.

Deadline 17th March 2021. One entry per person please!

Prize donated by Ms Beth White. Thank You!



Easter egg hunt

The words easter egg are hidden in this puzzle 20 times. Can you find all of the easter eggs?

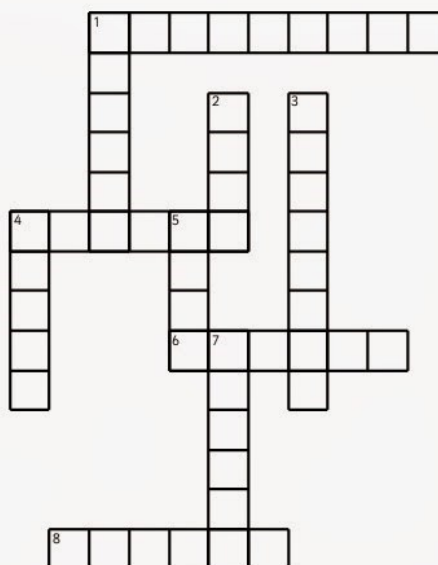
W	E	A	S	T	E	R	E	G	G	M	E	O	G	Y
J	O	E	R	P	R	Y	G	W	H	G	O	E	K	W
E	D	E	A	S	T	E	R	E	G	O	A	V	E	
R	A	R	E	S	R	M	M	G	O	Y	E	S	J	A
G	E	S	Z	E	T	O	Y	G	F	D	A	T	E	S
E	K	A	T	B	I	E	G	T	D	K	S	E	A	T
E	A	S	S	E	E	E	R	G	B	Q	T	R	S	E
M	A	S	N	T	R	A	G	E	F	R	E	E	T	R
E	W	S	T	E	E	E	S	F	G	D	R	G	E	E
H	A	W	T	E	R	R	G	T	B	G	E	G	R	G
C	G	S	K	E	R	V	E	G	E	S	G	T	E	G
E	A	Z	T	Z	R	E	B	G	H	R	G	V	G	H
E	A	S	T	E	R	E	G	G	Z	E	B	G	X	
H	A	T	V	S	S	D	G	G	Z	S	P	G	D	F
E	L	O	Y	Y	B	O	U	G	G	X	R	J	G	U



Easter Crossword



Solve the crossword using the list of words and the clues



basket

bonnet

bunny

chicks

chocolate

daffodil

eggs

hunt

parade

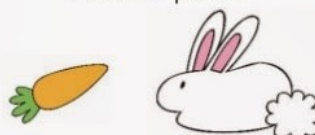
spring

Across

1. Easter eggs are often made out of this treat!
4. Collect your eggs in this.
6. The season in which Easter is celebrated.
8. You may wear one in the Easter parade.

Down

1. These hatch out of real eggs.
2. You may go on an Easter egg ...
3. Cheerful, yellow spring flower.
4. Will he visit you this year?
5. We give chocolate ones at Easter.
7. Show off your Easter bonnet at one!





Making a play list — By Peter Crum

I made my own playlist to play my music on my phone.

How I did it.

I create a file and add the music to my file on Amazon Music. If anyone wants to know where to get the music from.

Look for more information on Amazon Music.

Play station 5: Amazon investigation over missing consoles - By Peter Crum



Amazon said it is investigating what has happened to missing PlayStation 5 deliveries, amid reports of thefts.

Some UK customers opened delivery boxes to find unordered items such as kitchen appliances or toys inside, instead of the console. Many feared their consoles had been stolen in transit, with allegations leveled at delivery staff.

"We're really sorry about that and are investigating exactly what's happened," Amazon said.

Incorrect items being put in boxes is not unheard of, but the shortage of stock of PlayStation 5 consoles - and the fact that they are being sold at inflated prices online - led to customers fearing their allocation had been stolen.

A man in Utah ordered a PlayStation 5 he paid \$878 (£640) instead of the PlayStation console inside the box he received a brick, he was not happy about this.

I think this is unfair because people are selfish.

Poem about Spring - By Tracy Roberts

I decided to use a poem style called a limerick - a limerick is a five-line poem, the rhyme scheme is usually AABBA. Line one and two end with the same rhyme, line three and four end with the same rhyme and the last line ends with the same rhyme as the first two.

One day I woke up into Spring.
Then I heard the telephone ring
Where the bunnies hop
Then they heard a chop
I heard the birds started to sing.



Katie Price on Harvey's 'terrifying' move to a specialist college -

By Tracy Roberts



TV star and ex-model, Katie Price, is on a journey with her eldest son, Harvey, who is about to make that transition.

His birthday marks another milestone. It is time to leave school and find a college, a process the family has filmed for BBC One documentary, Katie Price: Harvey and Me.

"It's pretty predictable to know what will happen with the other kids," Katie says, "But with Harvey it's not predictable because he's got complex needs."

She says searching for a specialist college has been a "new journey" for her. "It's not easy and it's terrifying."

Harvey was born in 2002. He was diagnosed with Septic Optic Dysplasia, a rare genetic disorder affecting his eyesight, as well as autism and Prader-Willi syndrome which can cause learning difficulties and behavioural problems.

He is unable to control his weight and requires 24-hour care.

"It's not straightforward, where you can just choose a college," Katie says. "They have to have the right nursing team and know how to deal with his challenging behaviour." Katie Price and her son Harvey in a crucial year of his life. It can be a precarious moment and often involves a lot of meetings with new teams and specialists.

The Prices have been warned the most suitable college may be a long way from their Essex home, because there are only few of them. For Harvey, the most appropriate include those in Camden, Wales, Sunderland and Somerset. The distance, and Harvey's age, means he will become a full-time residential student, including weekends.

To make sure they find the perfect home, Katie and Harvey have visited as many as possible. It was a process made difficult by Covid-19 and Katie having broken her bones in both heels in a water park accident.

Continued pages 10 and 11

"It's not
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Stonehenge — By Adrian Phipps

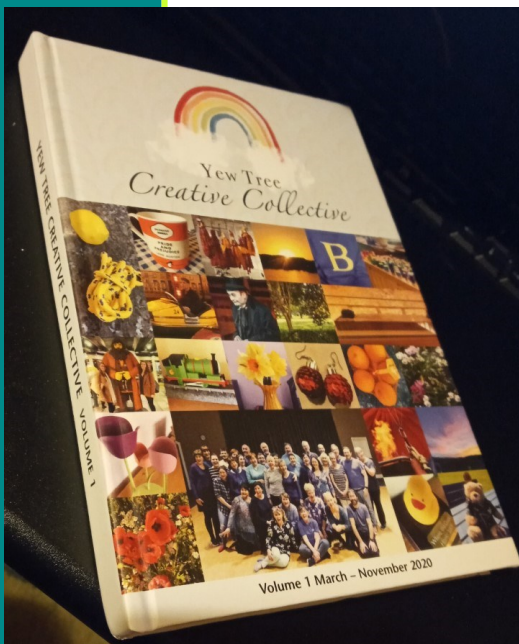
In 2000 BC Salisbury Plain, in the west of England, was the scene of backbreaking toil as the largest stones were erected at Stonehenge. Raising the head of the monster stone the first few feet off the ground was the hardest task, lifting tackle hung from two spars joined at the top and spread at the base.

The building of Stonehenge took place in three phases over 1600 years. The first began in 3100 BC, and the Stone Age builders built a circle 380 feet across, formed by a low outer bank surrounding a ditch, with another bank about 6 feet high inside the ditch.



At the start of the third phase a double circle of 80 large bluish stones was added. The monument that these builders left behind is an astonishing tribute to their imagination and skill.

Yew Tree Creative Collective Book review - By Tracy Roberts



In March last year Sarah Osbourne created a Facebook group called Yew Tree creative collective in which members responded to her posts with creative thoughts and writing. Then she decided to bring out a book – a selection of writing created by 245 members. When I heard about this I was excited.

The book is really good, because it is nice to see some of the ideas that I put into the book.

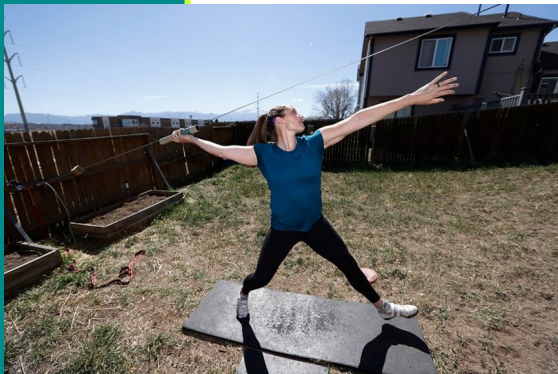
Overall, I am pleased with the way the book turned out.

Training at home for the Olympic games - By Peter Crum

During covid19 2020 Olympic games was cancelled so 2020 Summer Olympics will begin on 23rd July 2021 and ends on 8th August 2021.

People had ideas about what they could do while they were in lockdown so this was what they did.

All over the world people are getting creative to design ways to train in their own homes and gardens, like practicing javelin with a piece of cable with a tube on it, running, throwing, building their own mini swimming pools and lots more like lifting weight out of cement. It's been very hard for everyone.



Winger uses a cable system to simulate throwing a javelin as she trains outside her home in Colorado Springs in April.

David Zalubowski—AP

It's been
very hard
for
everyone

Argentinian boxer Yamil Peralta bench lifts a weight made of cement in the backyard of his home on the outskirts of Buenos Aires in July

Marcos Brindicci—AP



Jordanian judo athlete, Hadeel Alami uses the sofa as a part of her trainings at her home in Amman in April

Muhammad Hamed—REUTERS

Katie Price on Harvey's 'terrifying' move to a specialist college - continued

"He needs to have his independence and I think he'll enjoy it - make friends," Katie says. "I want him to be in a room with his mates while he plays the keyboard and sings his songs."

At Harvey's current school he is a weekly boarder. Making the decision for him to board was difficult and prompted by the distress he felt at the daily travel from home to school, and the impact on the family.

"I was at crisis point," Katie says. "It was affecting the other kids, it was the danger-zone for him, smashing the house up."

"I hated him going to residential. I cried. But I saw he was happy there."



His autism can lead to meltdowns when he becomes overwhelmed or distressed by a situation. For Harvey, loud noises like slamming doors can trigger this and lead him to hit his head or punch a wall -

It is a situation Katie had to consider when they looked at colleges - would Harvey be safe? Could the staff handle him?

During a visit to The Orpheus Centre, a college in Surrey which provides therapy to disabled young adults through the performing arts, a loud and unexpected noise distressed Harvey and he threw his head repeatedly against a door. Katie told him to count to 10 to control the stress but another noise sounded and he kicked out. The staff encouraged him outside where it was quieter, but it signalled the end of the visit.

Katie will often touch Harvey or speak with him to maintain his calmness. The duo banter constantly and have scripted phrases they say to each other - when Harvey says "Hip, hip," Katie replies, "Hooray".

The scripting is sometimes considered similar to stimming (self-stimulatory behaviours) that many autistic people like to use to relieve anxiety or show happiness. When they visited National Star college in Cheltenham, Harvey was distressed and worried he would have to stay overnight.

He didn't want to get out of the car and whimpered. Again, Katie reassured him and encouraged him to wear his ear defenders. Because this isn't a regular day for Harvey, the teacher, Alice, showed him a "social story" with pictures of what he could expect from the hours ahead.

Continued page 11

Katie Price on Harey's 'terrifying' move to a specialist college - continued

She decided to begin at the end with "goodbye" - so Harvey knew he would go home. It was a difficult start, but when he visited the flats the students live in - with their own bathrooms and kitchens - and got to watch frogs and trains on a big screen in a sensory room, he was won over.

He described the college as "wicked" and excitedly said "yes Mum" when asked if he would be happy there.

Katie says: "The reason I want him to go full-time residential is because some weekends they might have disco nights or bowling and he might want to go and do that and not just come home to me. It gives him a choice."

But it is far from a done deal. Lynette Barrett, chief operations officer at the college, tells Katie: "We would put in a funding application to your local authority and that application would detail everything that we are going to provide for Harvey."

It will be the Prices' local authority which makes the decision on whether to fund it or it may decide somewhere local is suitable. The approval depends on Harvey's needs. Katie must ensure his Education Health and Care Plan - a legally binding document in England detailing the support he must receive - is up to date.

"Everything about Harvey is in that plan," she says. "It's so time-consuming and you feel like you're alone, but you've just got to get on with it."

Katie must detail Harvey's education goals, health problems and the medication he requires, as well as the tasks he can complete - whether he can cook for himself, dress, make the bed and wash.

The thought of Harvey leaving home is daunting for Katie, but a move she wants to pursue.

"As much as you smother your kids and you want them with you all the time, sometimes you have to let them go, just give them that bit of space to go and explore."

This year has been challenging for the family. Harvey is classed as extremely clinically vulnerable and has been shielding during the pandemic. He also spent some time in intensive care and his health is a constant concern.

"With Harvey the future is unpredictable, but I'll make sure that he's in a place where he thrives on happiness, excitement, joy and he looks forward to waking up."

Katie and Harvey have applied to National Star. They will find out in March if they have been successful.



The cartoonists making mental health their muse - by Tracy Roberts

Comics are not just about superheroes. a genre focused on the experience of living with this illness.

Ellen Forney was in her twenties and working as a professional cartoonist when she stumbled into the world of graphic medicine.

The artist had been working for one of Seattle's long-running newspapers The Stranger when, in 1998 and just before she turned 30, she was diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

She says the diagnosis "sank in like the sun had gone behind the clouds".

Comics had always been a familiar language and format for Ellen Forney. She turned to them looking for comfort and was excited to discover a new genre she had never heard of - graphic medicine.



The genre focuses on and discusses topics within the medical field from cancer to Alzheimer's and anorexia in an engaging and entertaining way.

Although developed for patients and medical professionals as a way to explore different conditions, it is now often found in general stores and libraries.

Ellen Forney who was comfortable telling stories through this medium, started to create comics for herself about her experience of living with mental illness.

"I wrote a lot in my journals," she says. "I didn't know that those were going to be pieces of a comic, but it's kind of how it comes out of me, in words and pictures."

"I felt like I needed to do it for myself and to get it out there to reach other people - because I can, because I'm a storyteller, and I thought it was an important story to tell.

"It's not just 'here's my experience, that was a mess', but how do we put those pieces together? How do we come to heal?"

Ellen Forney, who has taught the art of comics at the Cornish College of the Arts since 2002, has also created artwork for Seattle's Capitol Hill light rail station and collaborated on the award-winning illustrated novel, The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian.

But graphic medicine remains an important part of her life. She recently published her latest book, Rock Steady: Brilliant Advice From My Bipolar Life which is a self-help survival guide full of tips, tricks, and tools that can help those living with bipolar disorder thrive. Continued on page 15...

The cartoonists making mental health their muse continued

"One of the things that's really, really important, is a sense of humour," Forney says. "It's one of the ways to give yourself some sort of perspective when you're telling a story."

British cartoonist Gemma Correll agrees. "It can be good to laugh at yourself sometimes, especially when you feel really bad."

She says graphic medicine has helped her convey her experience of anxiety and depression and she incorporates humour in a way that is relatable to many people.

In her comic version of Sleeping Beauty, while she depicts two fairies giving baby Aurora nice presents, the third gives her the gift of a lifetime of clinical depression.

As the saying goes, laughter can be the best medicine.



Correll, who has been featured by the BBC, The New York Times and Mindful Magazine, says: "One of the hardest things I think about mental illness is actually being able to describe how you feel."

"If I needed to go to the doctor or a counsellor, I would have a really hard time vocalising any problems that I was having. So I would always write them down instead and just give them the paper and say 'this is how I'm feeling'."

Not only have Forney and Correll's comics helped them personally, they have also helped readers find solidarity and recognise their own mental health challenges. One of Gemma's readers told her the comic "helped me articulate how I feel like I haven't been able to put it into words until now".

While many people with mental illness can feel alone in their experience, Forney has also been able to find company through graphic medicine.

She said that after releasing Marbles she was "blown away and delighted to find that there was this whole community of people who also found that comics were an important and really valuable way to tell these stories of health".

Dr. Ian Williams, a cartoonist and physician based in Brighton, UK, was the first to coin the term "graphic medicine" and created the Graphic Medicine organisation which brings artists and enthusiasts together.

Continued on page 16...

The cartoonists making mental health their muse continued from page 15

He did so while studying for a medical humanities degree "partially as an excuse to put off getting down to writing my dissertation," he says.

Williams defines graphic medicine as "anything that happens or is happening at the interface between the medium of comics and the discourse of healthcare".

While Covid-19 has put a stop to any physical events in the past year, it has not stopped the community coming together.

The organisation, Graphic Medicine, has held monthly virtual meet-ups called Drawing Together where the community comes together to draw, support one another and share.

They hope physical events may be able to take place soon.

While it was initially terrifying to be vulnerable and publish personal comics, Forney says: "I really, really wish that everyone with a mental disorder could have the experience of talking about it and getting the reaction of people saying 'me too!'"

"It's astounding... It's given me a lot of strength to the point where I can just talk about it with the guy on the airplane next to me."

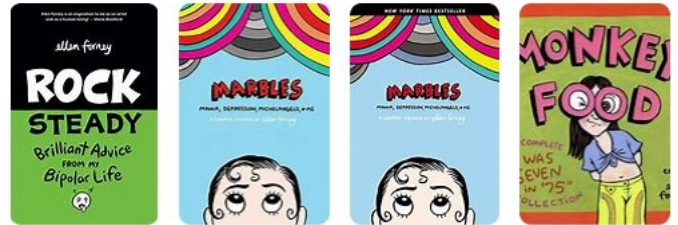
World Theatre Day - By Tracy Roberts

This year world theatre day is on Saturday 27th March.

Since 1962 World Theatre Day has been celebrated by International Theatre Institute Centres, International Theatre Institute Cooperating Members, theatre professionals, theatre organisations, theatre universities and theatre lovers all over the world on the 27th of March.

This day is a celebration for those who can see the value and importance of the art form "theatre", and acts as a wake-up-call for governments, politicians and institutions which have not yet recognised its value to the people and to the individual and have not yet real-ised its potential for economic growth.

Last year I didn't do much performing in a theatre because of COVID19. Bring back theatre because I miss it!



How Vikings crossed the Atlantic without magnetic compass or sea chart - By Adrian Phipps

The wind whistling through the rigging had to be a wind from the Gods.

For days now, Eric the Red had been sailing into the unknown, giving up hope of seeing land again when he saw the mass of Greenland heave into sight over the horizon.



The true heroism of the Vikings was their willingness to follow the winds and currents using 'environmental' navigation to set their courses.

When they approached land, they read the cloudscape or followed the flight of homing birds – like the legendary discoverers of Iceland in the 9th century, who released ravens at regular intervals and followed them to land.

Top Ten list of mother's day presents - By Peter Crum

These are some ideas for presents:

1. flowers
2. chocolate
3. clothes
- 4 vouchers
- 5 wine or champagne
- 6 books
- 7 cake
- 8 meal at home
- 9 DVDs
- 10 films



They feel
like they're
part of
something..

Imlonely: How a YouTube music channel became a mental health hub - By Tracy Roberts

Among the thousands of music channels on YouTube there is one like no other. Imlonely started as a musical diary for one person but became a mental health community providing support to thousands of young people going through their toughest times.

"What I'd name them actually is family," says Hunter, of the people who follow his Imlonely YouTube channel. "They feel like they're part of something."



Hunter, 23, from Wales, has anxiety and started to remix popular tracks and upload them to his channel depending on how he felt at the time.

"I just started it as a mood board for myself," he says. "My taste in music has always been based on feeling rather than genre."

But what started as a "hobby" rapidly grew. His mixes started to accumulate millions of views and hundreds of thousands of people subscribed to his channel, mostly aged between 13 and 24.

Sometimes his tracks created a relaxed mood like his mix of Best Part by Daniel Caesar while his Ariana Grande mix was uplifting - it was viewed seven million times.

People started to comment on his videos about how the songs resonated with them, sharing how they felt, and providing support to each other.

The mix of Ariana Grande's hit song 7 Rings has seven million views. Almost by accident Hunter had created a space for members to be open about their feelings and mental health.

Just clicking on a video reveals a string of supportive comments: "It gets better", "You are amazing", "Keep going".

You don't have to scroll far to see who they're talking to. People share their struggles openly: "Is it just me who is all happy during the day but, when night comes, you let all of your emotion out? I'm crying every night at the moment and I don't know why."

Another reads: "I stayed up all night overthinking and beating myself up with no control over it but this [Imlonely] helped me calm down and focus."

One of those who turned to Imlonely is Monica, an 18-year-old student from the Philippines, who visited Imlonely for the music but says it got her through one of the toughest periods of her life.

"The community really helped me a lot, especially during 2019. That really was the worst year of my life, so my mental health was so unstable around that time."



At the beginning of 2019, Monica's little sister was diagnosed with chronic kidney disease and needed a transplant, which improved her health for a short time. Soon after, however, her sister's health deteriorated and Monica had to administer dialysis and commit hours every day to her sister's care.

"I barely got sleep, barely got time for myself since I had to do so many things. One of the only things I could do though was listen to music. "That's probably why the channel really helped me a lot. I couldn't forget the countless nights I had when I was awake at 03:00-04:00 running errands to buy medicine, listening to Imlonely's YouTube videos. It brought comfort to me."

At the end of 2019, Monica's sister passed away, leaving Monica "at the lowest of my lows". But the channel continued to be a source of comfort and she now says she wants to be happy for her sister. "I'm really happy to say that the channel has really helped me a lot. It brought me comfort and happiness around the time when I was so depressed and helpless. I've also realised that in the littlest things, one can truly be happy, so I'm glad that I found the channel."

Hunter knows from the statistics YouTube provides that he has a young audience, and he thinks this is what has brought so many people together. "A lot of people don't have anyone to talk to at home or school," he says. "They'll vent about problems they're having with friends or parents. Personally, if I had something like that, back when I was younger, I feel like I wouldn't have had anywhere near as many problems as I did with feeling anxious and not talking about it."

Dr John Naslund, an instructor in global health and social medicine at Harvard Medical School, has researched peer-to-peer support on social media and studied groups similar to Imlonely. He says interactions like these can help mental health and that for many people "going online and finding stories of other people who've had similar experiences can be incredibly validating and inspiring". While Imlonely began life as an outlet for one person to express themselves it has become a global community of support.

Continued on page 20...

Imlonely: How a YouTube music channel became a mental health hub

- continued from page 19



These experiences are echoed by Morgan, a 17-year-old student from the UK, who came for the music but was drawn in by a community she identified with.

"I kinda fell down the rabbit hole of reading the comment section and realised there are so many people out there that I can relate to and those who encourage positivity. The comment section just has a nice vibe, it's comfortable, I guess? Like home."

The community helped Morgan open up about her mental health. Listening to the music helped her stay calm and have a "healthier mindset" but the comments left by the community helped show her other people were going through similar experiences.

"It opened my eyes a bit more and helped me distinguish between reality and my overthinking as well, because sometimes I assume everything is the worst it can be and my life is a shambles but then I realise it's not so bad after all and what I feel is more common than I thought."

"I'm not alone."

Spending time online talking to people about her experiences also encouraged Morgan to open up to some of her friends outside of the channel.

If you would like to take a look at this channel you can follow this link: [imlonely - YouTube](#)

I'm not alone...



Belmont and Colwall libraries re-open for click and collect services - Herefordshire Council

Due to current Covid restrictions all libraries are temporarily closed for browsing and computer use, but Hereford, Leominster, Ross, Ledbury and Kington Libraries offer a Click and Collect service for the collection of pre-ordered library books and the return of library items.

Belmont Library has now reopened for Click and Collect services. The library will be open on Tuesdays 1-4pm and Saturdays 10-1pm.
Colwall will be open 10am-1pm on Wednesdays and 10am-1pm on Saturdays.

You can ask for up to 20 books from the Click and Collect categories offered. Library staff will select titles and email when your order is ready for collection. If you wish to order specific titles, you can do this by [reserving items](#) on the library catalogue. If you're not already a library member, you can join online before completing your request.

Pre-ordered green sacks for garden waste may also be collected from the Click and Collect libraries. Customers must pre-order and pay for the sacks online at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/gardenwaste and allow at least two working days before their visit. Only pre-ordered sacks are available to collect from libraries and they are not able to take payments.

Have you heard the one about...



"What a lucky break!
Not only do we FIND the Easter bunny...
BUT we catch him right when he's
making chocolate mini-eggs!"

Why was the Easter bunny upset?

He was having a bad hare day.

What happened when the Easter Bunny met the rabbit of his dreams?

They lived hoppily ever after.

What did the Easter bunny say to the carrot?

It's been nice gnawing you.

What do you call a mischievous egg?

A practical yolker.

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