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velvet*



The ALL WOMAN Issue

HOMES ■ FOOD ■ CULTURE ■ PEOPLE ■ WELLBEING ■ STYLE

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Feel the Force

In the month that celebrates International Women's Day, Velvet pays tribute to the women on our patch who are walking the walk. Be upstanding for Velvet's Power List 2019

CHARLOTTE HALDANE

Magpas Air Ambulance Doctor Charlotte Haldane always wanted to be a medic. "I got a plastic stethoscope set for my fourth birthday and never looked back. I also realised very early on that I wanted to be in the acute specialties (pre-hospital care, A&E and Intensive Care Unit)." A stint at her local Emergency Department when Charlotte was 16 had her hooked. "I loved watching people put their knowledge into action and seeing the results unfold right before my eyes."



Securing a placement with London HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Services) while at medical school confirmed her leanings: "It was incredible. From then on I shaped my career towards pre-hospital care. It's taken a very long time and much patience to achieve my goal – you need to be a senior doctor for this type of work. I am over the moon to have realised my ambition and to now be working with Magpas Air Ambulance – a fantastic pre-hospital service."

While there are plenty of female doctors in medicine, far fewer work in the acute specialties. "Being female has never been a barrier to anything for me. I was brought up in a family where gender did not matter and I was told from a very young age

that I could do anything I wanted to do, providing I was willing to put the effort in. "That said, I do think it is important to ask why so many women end up moving away from the acute specialties. It can be a hurdle too far for women trying to juggle young families and complete their acute training. More needs to be done to support females during this process."

Charlotte loves working with a team and for an organisation passionate about what they do. "There is a culture within the charity of always striving for more and wanting to improve. It's never enough to just be good at what we are doing now, it's about progress and trying to find ways that we can get even better every day." Working on the front line, providing pre-hospital care does, she says, offer perspective on life. "I am reminded regularly how exceptionally fragile life can be. The beauty of a normal day, where everything is just fine, is not something to be underestimated. Therefore, in general, I think we should focus more time and energy on being happy, laughing and being kind. It's a cliché, but life really is too short."

Lisa Millard

TINE ROCHE



Cambridge has undergone a foodie renaissance in recent years, and nobody has been more influential in this shift from 'clone town' to culinary hotspot than the brilliant Cambridge Cookery founder and MD Tine Roche. Chef and food writer Tine, who trained at the prestigious Leiths Cookery School in London, founded the then Cambridge Cookery School in 2008, offering locals hands-on culinary experiences led by professional chefs, from bread making to French patisserie via knife skills and sushi. In 2015, it expanded to include a gorgeous café and bistro, taking over the former headquarters of Rattee and Kett stonemasons on Purbeck Road, and then in 2017, the business was relaunched as Cambridge Cookery, comprising both cookery school and bistro-café. Anyone who has visited this Cambridge gem will know that the coffee, homemade bread and pastries, and Italian and Scandinavian inspired dishes (Tine was brought up in Copenhagen and Stockholm) are all seriously good, but what we really love about Cambridge Cookery is its ethos. It's the city's first zero-waste café; provides weekly dinners to visitors of Jimmy's, the Cambridge night shelter; and uses locally-sourced produce at every opportunity. A wonderful place, doing brilliant things, led by one very inspiring lady. Tine, we salute you.

What life lessons have you learned?

If you have a vision, dream, goal – call it what you like – stick to it. Don't listen to the nay-sayers, of which there are usually many.

What would be your words of wisdom for other women?

Don't let one role define you and don't feel guilty.

Lydia Parkin

ANDREA COCKERTON

Cambridge arts entrepreneur and all-round wonder woman Andrea Cockerton is the founder of not one, but three unique arts enterprises. The first – running since 2010 – is We are Sound, a 100-strong music collective delivering live, immersive and spectacular sound experiences. Then there's the Dosoco Foundation, which financially supports projects across our region using music for social good, from choirs for people with dementia to music therapy for children with behavioural needs. The third is Andrea's latest creation, In The Dark, an immersive events concept



launched in Cambridge last year treating audience goers to extraordinary sound experiences in total darkness. Described as 'counter-cultural' and 'the panacea the world needs right now', In The Dark is now being taken on tour to London. Phew! It's quite the CV, and one that recently led to the former choral scholar being featured in the Observer newspaper as one of '50 new radicals' using innovative ideas to tackle social challenges and shape our world for the better. An impressive accolade for an incredibly impressive woman, who we are lucky to have flying the flag for our local arts scene.

What life lessons have you learned?

I have found that trusting my gut is absolutely essential. The more I do, the more robust I become, even if it doesn't quite work out in the way I had thought it might. When I don't, I often land up in trouble! I've also learnt that people are capable of amazing things, and that the more you do, the more you can do.

What would be your words of wisdom for other women?

Resilience and the power to step outside yourself to observe yourself and the situation objectively are two priceless skills to develop, whether in your personal life or working life. Often things go wrong or plans change, so being able to withstand these shifts is vital, as is looking at the why - without judging - from all perspectives, and then learning, picking yourself up and carrying on! Don't give up, basically.

Lydia Parkin

JULES BRIM

Jules Brim is a marketing professional from St Neots and leader of women's business group Girl Tribe Gang Cambridge. In January 2018, the 34-year-old set up her business Marketing Mixology, and is enjoying the learning curve.

"I am creative, positive and a problem-solver, but I'm also a work in progress; I

constantly strive to develop my skills in the changing landscape of marketing," says Jules.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do when I left school, but after doing some research into marketing, I fell in love with the creativity, the psychology, and the nerdy numbers work. I took a course, got brilliant grades (unlike when I was at school) and have been in the industry for eight years since then.

"I had watched a lot of inspiring women give seminars on how they set up their businesses, and would sit in the audience daydreaming about doing the same. Eventually, I realised I had no reason not to try, so I launched Marketing Mixology." Jules is keen to support other women in business, and help them to find their strengths in a competitive corporate world. "I read that women are more likely to collaborate than compete with each other, which I believe is a real benefit to entrepreneurial success. Nobody can do everything on their own, so building a network you can collaborate with can



aid you in meeting goals, and open up opportunities you didn't realise were available."

Her passion for helping fellow female entrepreneurs led her to Girl Tribe Gang, which organises meet-ups for businesswomen across the UK.

"I don't usually enjoy networking events, as entering a room full of strangers on your own can be a bit intimidating. But I'd heard about Girl Tribe Gang on social media, and my first meet-up felt completely different. There were no awkward corporate icebreakers or death by power points. It felt more like a community.

"Working for yourself can get lonely sometimes, which can have an impact on your mental health. Having the opportunity to work with others is so valuable, and it's wonderful to be part of something that helps women to reach their goals by

sharing experience. It's better to help each other up, rather than pull up the ladder so no one else can join you."

Jasmine Watkiss

NICKY MASSEY

Nicky Massey is a Cambridge City Labour councillor and charity fundraiser. She worked in the credit card industry for many years until giving birth to her youngest son Ethan 16 weeks prematurely in 2009.

"I would describe myself as persistent, kind, honest and ambitious, but what motivates me has changed over time. Years ago, I was driven by the desire to be successful, but happiness and a sense of achievement is what I strive for now. I feel most proud when I am able to help people in some way," says Nicky.

In 2009, the mum-of-four gave birth to her premature son Ethan, starting her family on an emotional rollercoaster of round-the-clock medical care, until Ethan sadly passed away in 2013 at the age of four. But Nicky says having Ethan, even for such a short time, was a gift that changed the course of her life.

"I found I had a voice when I gave birth to Ethan; I had to be his advocate and ensure he got the right care. When I realised I could achieve what others told me I wouldn't - I successfully booked gastro-surgery for him - I knew I had the strength to help others.

"Thanks to Ethan's life, I see the world in a different way. I better understand the hardships people go through because I have been through some myself. As a premature child, Ethan needed constant care: he was non-verbal, he was fed through a tube inserted in his stomach, and our family life centred on meeting his medical needs. But he was so beautiful and very happy - he would sing and play so joyfully - and he brightened up our world."



The confidence and compassion that Nicky developed while caring for her son contributed to her decision to run as a local councillor. She was elected in May 2018 and represents Abbey ward in Cambridge. "After we lost Ethan in September 2013, I had a close call with my three older children, Eliza, Ben and Oliver, on a dangerous road in Cambridge, and started a campaign to get a pedestrian crossing installed. With the help of local councillors, we managed to get a temporary crossing built in four months, which is still there two years later. The experience gave me the impetus to run as a councillor, as I wanted to use my voice to combat rising poverty, food bank usage and homelessness in Cambridge."

Nicky says grief isn't something to be shied away from and enjoys the moments she can talk about her son with friends and family. "I think people worry about upsetting you so they don't mention the ones we have lost, but I love talking about Ethan. I miss him every day, I still burst into tears, I still dream about him and I still ache for his hugs. As a family, we talk about him often."

"We all fundraise for East Anglia's Children's Hospices, who were absolutely incredible in supporting us and taking such good care of him. I would not have been able to cope with the last 24 hours of Ethan's life without them. The staff made salt dough Christmas decorations – one part went with Ethan while the other hangs on our tree every year. I now work as a fundraiser for them, in the hope I can give something back to such an amazing charity that we are so lucky to have right on our doorstep. "My life has changed since my son's passing, but in a good way. Losing him was devastating, but I am so happy that I had the amount of time with him that I did. Ethan gave me strength that I didn't think I had, and I use that strength now."

Jasmine Watkiss

LIZ O'RIORDAN

As a consultant breast surgeon at Ipswich Hospital, Liz O'Riordan is used to supporting women through some of the darkest and most terrifying moments of their lives. But when she received her own diagnosis of breast cancer, first in 2015 and again in 2018, the shoe was suddenly and devastatingly on the other foot; Liz was now the patient, desperately trying to find her own light in the darkness as she struggled to cope with the one illness she had trained her whole life to treat. Determined to use her own unique experience of being both a doctor and a patient to help others navigating the disease, Liz started a blog chronicling her breast cancer journey. The reaction was immense: Liz's humour, honesty and bravery resonated with women all over the world, and she was nominated for a Woman of the Year award in 2016 in recognition of the incredible impact it made. But Liz's achievements don't end



there, she's since co-authored a book, *The Complete Guide to Breast Cancer: How to Feel Empowered and Take Control* with Professor Trisha Greenhalgh; given TED talks, completed numerous triathlons, and dressed up as superhero Mrs Incredible for her final radiotherapy session at Addenbrooke's. What. A. Woman.

What life lessons have you learned through your experiences?

I am quite a private person but I decided to tell Twitter I had breast cancer the day I got my diagnosis. I was being treated in a hospital where I had worked so people would recognise me anyway. It was the best thing I could have done. I have been amazed by the kindness of strangers who shared with me how to cope with treatment. I now pass all that knowledge on to people who ask me for help. Even though it sounds scary to do it, open the door and let others in – you won't regret it.

What would be your words of wisdom for other women?

Breast cancer robbed me of my femininity – or so I thought... I lost my hair, my eyebrows and lashes, my breast, my ovaries and my sex hormones. There's not much left! I may not like the woman looking back at me in the mirror now but that's OK. I've slowly learned that my looks don't define me. It's my personality, my spirit, my love of hedgehogs that does that – and cancer can't take that away from me. Remember when you're having a bad hair day that you're still an amazing woman inside.

Lydia Parkin

PROFESSOR DAME CAROL BLACK

Professor Dame Carol Black was appointed Principal of Newnham College in 2012 – and what a role model she is, not just for the students at Newnham, but all over the world.

Dame Carol has previously said her biggest achievement was to defy limited family expectations: "I was meant to stay living in

my home town and work in a shoe factory or shop; but I had a stubborn belief that more was possible."

That determination paid off; Dame Carol's achievements are nothing short of exceptional. Over the years she's held a number of top positions in medicine, including Chairman of the Royal College of Physicians, of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, and the British Lung Foundation.

Between 2006 and 2012 she was the National Director for Health and Work and has advised the Government on a number of key issues. She's appeared on *Desert Island Discs* and was featured in the BBC *Woman's Hour* Power List in 2013.

But, perhaps most inspiring of all, is Dame Carol's unwavering commitment to ensuring women from all walks of life aspire to be the very best they can be; to dream big and place no limits on themselves.

What life lessons have you learned through your experiences?

1. There is always someone out there to help, give advice, and support at the worst time.



2. Do not give up on the things that most matter to you.

3. I almost gave up medicine at the lowest point of my life. Thank God someone stopped me.

4. Accept you cannot always be liked, but hopefully you can be respected.

5. You may well get stabbed in the back. Do not seek revenge.

What would be your words of wisdom for other women?

1. Listen hard to your dreams and aspirations and go for them.

2. Please do not let failure and disappointment stop you. Brush yourself down and have another go.

3. Ignore or work around negative people, the nay-sayers of this world. They sap your energy. Seek the positive kind.

Lydia Parkin

CAROLINE-SHAHEERA ASANTE

Caroline-Shaheera Asante is a former BBC broadcaster turned sustainability professional and environmentalist based in Cambridge. She launched Cambridge Eco Living Festival last September at Lion Yard Shopping Centre and the Museum of Zoology, after completing an MSc at the Global Sustainability Institute, Anglia Ruskin University.

"I am open-minded, enthusiastic and have a positive outlook to life and lived in Canada for many years, so perhaps the Canadian habit of treating everyone like a long-lost pal has never left me. My passion for our natural environment and choice to move into a career that focuses on sustainability issues and behaviour change is both a professional and personal one. I love to help people shift their awareness and habits to understand there are many non-polluting consumption choices available instead of ones that harm our planet."

Caroline-Shaheera took a break from her nine-year career as a BBC radio presenter and producer to have her son (who is now a youth eco advocate), and it was a family reunion in the Caribbean in 2014 that truly inspired her interest in sustainability.

"While travelling around the Grenadines and St Lucia, we became acutely aware of the stark reality of climate change: rising sea levels had caused huge losses of agricultural land, ancestral graves sites were being washed into the ocean, and beaches no longer visited by tourists were carpeted with plastic.

"Mangrove trees along the coast, which provide a natural barrier against flooding, were rotting away due to ocean acidification, which had also damaged a great deal of marine life and the ecosystem that supports it. I came back from that trip a different person – more awake about the



impact all of us have on the environment." She decided to go back to university to find out more about what could be done. "I learnt so much while studying for my Msc in Sustainability; it became clear to me that the general population was being left out of a wider conversation around the issue and about an individual's impact. Changing human behaviour is vital if we're going to reverse the devastation caused by climate change.

"Climate change and sustainability events in Cambridge mostly took place during the day when many of us are at work, and attendees were people who were already familiar with environmental issues in their profession or academic field.

"I wanted to do something different to cater to the public in a meaningful way, using my communications and media background, and to set up a more engaging programme of public facing creative and educational events that called people to take action in their own lives and choices."

Caroline-Shaheera feels that mass cultural awareness of all things sustainable has shifted recently for the better. "I think the BBC Blue Planet 2 episode on ocean plastics in November 2017 has changed the world view on ocean pollution and environmental damage. It has made millions of people face up to terrifying consequences of collective overconsumption and human addiction to single-use plastic items. We all needed to wake up to the realities of our behaviour and move towards a more environmentally conscious lifestyle that considers the impact for future generations."

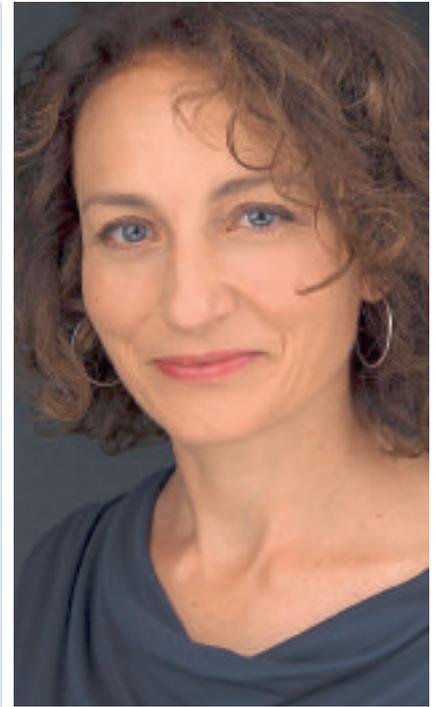
Cambridge Eco Living Festival launched in 2018, with the mission to help Cambridge people achieve a low-waste lifestyle, regardless of their background – the second Festival will be on July 6 at Lion Yard Shopping Centre, Cambridge.

"It took a lot of inner strength, positive energy, luck and networking to launch the festival. I like to think there are no failures, only learning curves. I found it most important to trust my instincts, and never give up when faced with an obstacle; it's usually an opportunity in disguise."

Jasmine Watkiss

LUCY LAKE

As CEO of the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) – based in Cambridge and with national offices in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi and Ghana – Lucy Lake has helped to transform the lives of millions of young people in Africa, and was this year awarded an OBE for her work. CAMFED is a ground-breaking organisation tackling poverty and inequality in some of the poorest communities in sub-Saharan Africa. For 25 years, CAMFED has united communities in a collective effort to secure the right to education for the most excluded girls, resulting in more than 2.6 million children receiving support to go to school. Lucy Lake joined CAMFED in



1994, just after it was founded, and was appointed CEO in 2012. Core to her work is galvanising support and investment in a continent-wide movement for girls' education, led by CAMFED's alumnae in the CAMA network. Lawyers, doctors, educators, and entrepreneurs, they represent a unique, pan-African movement of young women leaders, who are joining forces with local and national authorities to lead change for the younger generation of girls. Already numbering 120,000, CAMA is set to grow exponentially as more girls complete and join them.

What life lessons have you learned through your experiences?

It may be a bit of a cliché, but my greatest lesson is that 'actions speak louder than words'. I've learnt that if you walk the walk and don't just talk the talk then you win the respect that will ultimately give you a platform and voice, and the chance to influence change. I'm now seeing that play out in CAMFED's alumnae network of 120,000 young women leaders in Africa. Their actions to support girls in school are winning them seats at the table alongside policymakers.

What would be your words of wisdom for other women?

I believe lack of confidence and low self-esteem is a major barrier to progress among many girls and women, and we need to change that. A popular saying among CAMFED's alumnae network is, 'if you think you're too small to be effective, try sharing a bed with a mosquito!'

Lydia Parkin

Professor Dame Carol Black will be speaking at The Rising Festival along with many other women worth listening to. Last, last reminder to book tickets for the one-day event. See therisingfestival.com