

WIN!
A Mother's Day
lunch at The
Surrey Oaks



INTERVIEW:
Comedian
LUCY PORTER
returns to Epsom



INTERIORS:
Furniture
painting near
Farnham

SURREY LIFE

surreylife.co.uk | March 2018

**SURREY'S SUFFRAGETTES
CELEBRATING**



**years of women's
INDEPENDENCE**

*Hear ye,
hear ye!*

How Dorking's
town crier spends
his weekends

Racing driver
Tom Chilton
at home in Redhill

Review: Ewell's
award-winning
Indian restaurant

10 things we love
about Cranleigh

30

**FUN IDEAS FOR
A SPRING DAY OUT**

- » Dunsborough Park Festival of Tulips
- » Explore Kew Gardens with Peter Rabbit
- » Lambing season at Godstone Farm

£3.99





PHOTO BY ANDY NEWBOLD

Brighen up your home for spring by transforming furniture and accessories

Editor's letter

SPRING is generally the time to have a bit of a clear out, to pack the winter wardrobe away and start looking forward to warmer weather. The extreme cold (and snow) recently however, has made it a little difficult to start thinking about shedding the winter warmers just yet so I turned my thoughts to home interiors.

Except this year, instead of carting off my clutter to the charity shop, dump or boot fair as I usually would, I decided to keep it. Not because I'm a closet hoarder but because I was booked on a furniture painting course. You can read how I got on by turning to page 144 but needless to say, while my annual spring clean hasn't got rid of as much clutter as it might usually, it has brightened up my home, given some tired looking pieces of furniture a new lease of life and saved me buying new stuff to fill the gap of the old.

I do love the arrival of spring, not just because it signals an increase in temperatures (usually) and lighter evenings but it is also when we launch the *Surrey Life* Food & Drink Awards. Taking place again this year at Foxhills in Ottershaw, the black tie awards ceremony held in September is one of (if not THE, but then I could be biased) highlights in the county's foodie calendar. Turn to page 94 for full category details and to find out how to nominate your food and drink heroes.

March also sees the return of World Book Day, when children up and down the country get to go to school dressed as characters from their favourite books. While the thought of pulling together a costume in time may well fill parents with dread, the initiative has been fundamental in encouraging children to read since it began in 1997 and last year enabled one in four children to buy their first book. For more on this year's event, turn to page 131.

Just as World Book Day encourages children to embrace their creative side, we at *Surrey Life* love to nurture and champion creative minds, which has led us to launch our Readers' Short Story competition.

The saying goes that 'everyone has a book inside of them' but if (like me) you've been intending to write a novel for years but can always think of an excuse not to, this could be the kick-start you need. Details of how to enter can be found on page 70. I, for one, can't wait to read the entries. Good luck!



Rebecca Younger
Editor, *Surrey Life*

Email: rebecca.younger@archant.co.uk
Twitter: @surreylife and @youngerbex
Instagram: @surreylifemagazine

{ MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS }



DUNCAN HALL

As well as interviewing comedian Lucy Porter about her return to Epsom, assistant editor Duncan went in search of the county's best days out to keep the whole family entertained this spring.
Read on P43



ADELE PARKS

All mums deserve a bit of pampering now and again but especially on Mother's Day so we sent mum and bestselling author Adele to Nuffield Priory. She'll also be helping to judge our short story competition.
Read on P39



ANDY SMITH

Andy is a journalist, conservationist and Surrey branch director of the Campaign to Protect Rural England. This month, he discusses how our Green Belt can be good for our health and wellbeing.
Read on P65



SET in 12 acres, high on Nutfield Ridge and overlooking the Surrey Downs, is the Nutfield Priory; a four-star country house hotel and spa, inspired by the Neo-Gothic splendour of the Palace of Westminster.

This beautiful and unique Victorian mansion house dates back to 1872 and really is quite something, managing to be imposing and intimate at once. The priory's many original features are breathtaking; impressive stained-glass windows, wooden panelling and fireplaces, the fine paintings and unique artwork are wonderful.

Pouring over the website I discovered that the hotel has 15 feature bedrooms and excitingly, there's a Byron Suite, located in the tower, that's spread over three floors. Three floors! How very indulgent, how very Byronic! This information is wildly enticing to anyone interested in beautiful or quirky hotels but the fact the suite is called the Byron Suite is catnip to a novelist.

I suggested to my husband that we should stay there for a weekend, as it sounded desperately romantic. I reminded him I'd just launched a new book, which surely demands a treat and pointed out that Valentine's Day had been and gone without us having time to celebrate properly. He muttered something about Valentine's Day being a storm of commercialism that we should resist, but promised to put The Byron Suite on our bucket list.



Relax and indulge

It's not often mums get a break from it all so this month, bestselling author Adele Parks enjoyed a day of pampering at Nutfield Priory's day spa

He then organised a day spa at the private members health club, adjacent to the hotel.

His romantic gesture did not extend to, "suffering the indignity of wearing a dressing gown in public", although I assured him that Hugh Jackman probably visited spas all the time – Jackman being the agreed measure of all things marvellous in our home. Unconvinced, he booked the spa day for me and my friend, Tara. To be fair, massage and afternoon treats are – in my experience – most appreciated by women, besides Tara hadn't heard the, 'Are we nearly there yet?' joke and was thoroughly game.

"This beautiful and unique Victorian mansion house, dates back to 1872, and really is quite something"

A spa day is a wonderful way to relax your mind, body and senses, although we were perhaps more of the camp, 'a change is as good as a rest' as we barely stopped chatting for the entire visit and therefore were invigorated rather than reposed. We had to be quiet when we were separated and taken to the treatment rooms. The spa day package includes a 55-minute pampering treatment (we both chose full body massage) plus cream tea and a glass of Champagne. The massages were wonderful, I think the beds must have been heated, or if not, somehow the room was the perfect temperature; often the therapeutic benefits of good massage are ruined because it's a bit chilly!

We also had a dip in the pool and visited the sauna room. You can drift into your own thoughts in the relaxation room or quiet lounge. For the more energetic, there are regular studio classes and a fully-equipped gymnasium available to use. Unfortunately, The Byron suite was occupied so I couldn't get a sneak peek, I'll simply have to hold my husband to his promise and go back! ♦

For more, see handpickedhotels.co.uk



Top: Nutfield Priory
Left: Adele's afternoon tea