

The PAL Gazette

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Front Page Poems

This month we are treated to two poems showing the different sides of September.

“September”

by Anne Coulter

Our fingers get stained with blackberry juice,
But what we don't eat we'll put to good use.
The sun still shines but it's not quite so warm,
Pink nerines blossom and come to no harm.
Co-Antrim is now the place to go,
This is where you will find lots of apples on show.
Sycamore seeds are scattered in the breeze,
Next spring we will find the tiny trees.
Now is the time to buy autumn bulbs.
Some folk like to plant them in layers in tubs.
The mountains look distant when the shadows fall,
And overhead we hear seagulls as they call.
I'm imagining Newcastle on the path by the sea,
It's a very good place to stop for tea.

“September Changes”

by Anne Coulter

September brings changes. Life makes a turn,
Things get serious - there's money to earn.
Children lugging sports gear return to school,
Night classes start - your diary is full.
You put on the heating. Wear socks in bed.
You don't work in the garden. Read the paper instead.
Summer is over. We had one sunny day.
Now it is winter. Nothing more to say.

2 ROYAL AVENUE

From a bank to a supermarket, and now one of the fastest growing cultural and community hubs in Northern Ireland, 2 Royal Avenue has become the place to be since it re-opened its doors to the public in 2021/22.

2 Royal Avenue is that very fine building in the city centre of Belfast that was a Tesco Metro until a few years ago. It is situated beside Primark on Royal Avenue near the corner of Royal Avenue and High Street.

The building is owned by Belfast City Council and while long term plans for the space are being developed the council is treating it as a “meanwhile use space”. This means it has opened its doors to the public as a warm, indoor public park. And since reopening, an amazing 200,00 people have crossed its doors in just over a year and a half. What a story the building has.

2 Royal Avenue was designed by architect W J Barre between 1864-1869. Barre was a prolific architect whose other works include the Ulster Hall and the Albert Clock. 2 Royal Avenue was originally used as the head office of the Provincial Bank of Ireland.

The building has an impressive seven-bay façade. Described as “extraordinarily exuberant” it is significant as being the only building to survive the redevelopment of Royal Avenue in the 1880s. The inside has an interior as impressive as its exterior, with a wonderfully ornate ceiling with white architraves and pale blue domes that are still visible. The interior itself is huge and ideal for a large number of activities.

2 Royal Avenue is now managed by the MayWe Events team on behalf of Belfast City Council. It is open to the public seven days a week offering a diverse programme of activities, monthly exhibitions, events, and it also boasts a fine coffee shop. It is an accessible and inclusive space designed to create a sense of calm for people of all ages and abilities.



Royal Avenue.

Belfast.

One of its appealing features is the range of spaces to sit, meet up, grab some refreshment, and enjoy what's on offer. Spaces include a coffee bar, sensory zone, snugs for seating, and exhibition spaces. Every other month the place buzzes to music and dancing with a Tea Dance to live music. The next Tea Dance is on 17th October 2023 (no need to book, just come down).

A wonderful community of people has gathered around 2 Royal Avenue, many of whom are older people. Customers don't need to attend any activity as such, everyone is welcome to come in, meet up and use the space. Half of the staff for the building are over the age of 55 themselves, and they offer a very warm welcome.

Some of the stories of the people using the building are wonderful.

An older gentleman arrived one day wanting to find someone to play chess with. He was encouraged to bring his chess set with him next time. Before long, a group of chess players has started to meet regularly with their own chess group. A number of older men who have been recently widowed has gathered around the centre, and they meet

regularly for coffee and craic. One woman travels from Enniskillen by bus on her SmartPass everyday to visit the place. People pop in to play the games in the centre, play the resident piano, pick up a book from the library, and use the free wifi.

We asked MayWe why 2 Royal Avenue is proving to be such a great hit. They said: “It is the people who make it. It's the warmth of the welcome, the unique friendly atmosphere, the free spaces. 2 Royal Avenue just welcomes everyone, all people, all abilities, all ages. There's always something different going on.”

“Every day we go in there is something different happening: young people playing instruments; a Portuguese mothers group singing Portugues songs, beautiful exhibitions... it's a self-forming community, many of whom are older people. 2 Royal Avenue is centrally located, safe, warm, and we just love meeting the people who use it.”

Be sure to enjoy everything 2 Royal Avenue has to offer. Just pop in.

To find out what's on with their ongoing programme of activities, log on to: <https://www.maywe.co.uk/2ra> or telephone: **07595 261253**.

Quick-fire Phone Competition!

The 5th person to call Lois on **07595 261253** will receive a £10 Tesco voucher.

Calls will be taken 10am-4pm, Monday-Friday.

Competition closes 17th September 2023.

Winner announced in next edition.

Winner of the August Edition (Edition 40) was **Paula Tabakan**.



PAL Gazette News

GET INVOLVED! Would you like to join the team that helps put the Gazette together? You can help by writing articles, collecting recipes, searching for competitions, even helping with the mail out.

Call Lois on **07595 261253** if you would like to join the PAL Gazette team.

In the meantime, keep sending in your stories! We love your recipes, special stories, and poems.

Call Lois on **07595 261253**. Or if you use email, send them to info@engagewithage.org.uk



HERE TO HELP

To reach the Engage with Age team see numbers below.

We are always happy to receive your phone calls so our mobile numbers are:

- John McCandless 07729 526576**
- Eileen McQuillan 07423 702721**
- Cathy Chambers 07468 695593**

Eamon Quinn 07710 993036
Anna Albrzykowska 07425 627531

Our telephones are available during office hours and weekdays.

If you phone and we can't answer, please leave a message and we will return your call.

Send your letters to:

The PAL Gazette, Engage with Age, East Belfast Network Centre, 55 Templemore Avenue, Belfast BT5 4FP.

Or you can email: info@engagewithage.org.uk



Anne's Crafty Corner Pressed Flower Bookmarks

Bring a bit of natural beauty to your reading with a set of pressed flower bookmarks. This particular project uses clear contact paper to truly showcase the organic beauty of pressed blooms - no background colour or pattern needed.

What you need:

- Fresh flowers or leaves
- Heavy books
- Heavy weight (optional)
- Clear contact paper - or you can use the sticky back plastic you would cover books with
- Scissors

To make:

- Pick your flowers or leaves. (Freshly picked works best.)
- Place them in a thick, heavy book. Make sure that they are slightly spaced apart. Also ensure that they're placed in such a way that when the book closes, they'll flatten nicely.
- If you have it, place a heavy weight on the book, such as a few tins of beans or alternatively, stack a few more heavy books on top of the one with the flowers in it.
- Wait at least 2 days and open the book up. If they're sufficiently pressed, you're ready to go! If you want them more flat or dry, leave for another day or two.
- Cut a bookmark-shaped strip of clear contact paper. Remove the backing and place it on a surface with the sticky side up. Then stick some pressed flowers to it.
- Next, cut a slightly larger piece of contact paper and sandwich the flowers between the two pieces.
- Finally, trim the larger contact paper to the size of the smaller one.



The Questionnaire

Name: Francis Hughes

Position: Trustee with Enagage with Age, Committee Member Finaghy Friendship Group, Volunteer Lisburn Health Centre and South Eastern Trust, member Retired Workers Committee Irish Congress of Trades Unions, committee member Northern Ireland National Pensioners Committee, member South Belfast Lifestyle Forum.

How do you enjoy spending your free time?

I don't have a lot of free time, but I love country and western music and the Scottish fiddle orchestra. My wife and I have all of the orchestra's videos and we go to their concerts. We're going to see them when they are back this year. I knew their leader John Mason well. They have great Irish section, and everyone in the orchestra is a volunteer. Music is very important to me.

Why are these activities important to you?

Volunteering is important as I enjoy helping out and seeing people able to get out and about. I enjoy music for relaxation. When I listen to music it takes away and gets me out

of the zone from volunteering and I can leave my troubles behind for a while.

What is the best thing about living here?

Everything is near at hand. You can get to the seaside within 30 minutes. Life here is very good with free travel throughout the whole of Ireland which was very hard won. I do enjoy travelling and seeing bits of the country. You can get on the train and go up to Dublin or Derry. We're very lucky with that.

Favourite Food?

I love beef stew. My father, my grandfather and long line of fathers running back were all butchers. I have a picture hanging on the wall in my house of my great great great grandfather. It was done in 1850s by hand by some gentleman (we don't know who did it). It's my great great great grandfather in his butcher's outfit. He looks very dapper with a big top hat and a blue and white apron, and a prize Heffer beside him.

Favourite Film/ TV Show

I enjoy the "Carry On" films. "Carry On Up The Kyber" and the like. I'm a great fan of actress Hatty Jacques.



Tell us something about you that not many people know:

I support Ackrington Stanley Football Club. They are one of the founders of the English Football League. I've supported them for over twenty years. They yo-yo between Division One and Division Two. They tend to do well in the first half of the year and then seem to take a holiday in the second half of the season.

What advice would you give to younger people?

The advice I was given as a young person was to start saving money when you are in your twenties. That was from my boss when I started to work. He said live on what you are paid on and save any increments you get each year. It is very fine advice.

Keeping Good Manners in Fashion

With the increase in technology some feel that manners are suffering. Society blames technology, saying, it is taking over and good manners are decreasing. But is it really technology or is just an excuse to not be polite?

According to research about technology, the modern generations are more interested in watching their technological devices than interacting with people around them. But it would be unfair to blame the younger generations as there are some adults who are the same. So why are good manners so important?

Good manners are important because:

- They indicate whether you're dependable, reliable, and selfless, which are critical elements in building trusting personal and business relationships.
- They help you gain respect and create a good as well as lasting impression.
- They make other people feel comfortable around you and encourage them to talk with you.
- They show others that you care about them.

- They are something to be used every day to make a good impression on others and to feel good about yourself at work, home or with your friends.

By practicing basic good manners, we are showing those around us that we respect them and are considerate to their feelings. This makes them feel better, and us too. Most of us have heard the old adage: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Examples of good manners can manifest themselves in seemingly small actions and rewards - like holding the door open for someone and receiving a silent smile of recognition in return.

But it can also make or break crucial relationships and be the difference between harmony and conflict at home, at work, or even between countries and cultures on the world stage. Like any rule, there are some exceptions, and we must appreciate that others' experiences, needs, and boundaries can be different from our own.

Most of us learn manners in childhood but the benefits of manners last throughout our lives. Good behaviour, etiquette, and simply being polite positively impacts everyone around you, and the advantages of that are countless - and priceless.

Can You Read This Paper Clearly?

If you need a magnifying glass phone or text **Eamon** on **07710 993 036**.

We will send you one through the post for FREE.



WHAT'S ON

WALKS

There will be walks in East Belfast. If you are interested in taking part, phone **07436 174793** or email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

KIT GROUP

Every Thursday 2pm - The Keeping In Touch Group (KIT Group)
Dee Street Community Centre, 12-16 Dee Street, Belfast BT4 1FT.

T'AI CHI

Every Friday 11am at Dee Street Centre, 12-16 Dee Street, Belfast BT4 1FT.
(No class Fridays 8th and 15th September.)

DANCE GROUP

Every Friday at 2pm. Contact Engage with Age for details on this fun dance group.

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COFFEE MORNING

11am on 4th and 18th September, Café Refresh, Skainos Centre. For people living with dementia and their carers. Please phone **07436 174793** or email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk for details.

In all instances, please phone 07436 174793 or email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk for details

South Belfast Lifestyle Forum

Next meeting is the AGM, 10.45am on 12th September.

ONLINE EVENTS

Chocolate Bingo

7.30pm Thursday 7th and 28th September 2023.

For zoom link email eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk

The Pub Quiz Without a Pub

Via Zoom, 7.00pm Thursday 21st September 2023.

For zoom link email eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk

Free IT Assistance

If you are over the age of 60, live in Belfast, and have a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone, you are eligible.

The training is provided by Ignite IT and can help you with your email, getting online, online safety etc.

To avail of this, call Eamon on **07710 993036**.

Have Your Say with the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum

How to Have Your Say



We have been struck at how it is sometimes difficult to get things done because of the way modern communication is changing.

Try to speak to your doctor – you have to book a phone appointment and can be lucky to get one. Want to check your phone bill? – press 5 and hear “your call is very important to us but have high call volumes...”. Want to make a query but you aren’t on the internet or on “Twitter”?... getting your message through can be difficult.

The recent consultation about the 60+ SmartPass was an example of how it can be very hard to state your point of view. Though the staff running the consultation were very friendly, the survey was too long, too complex, and if felt like many of the questions were loaded. It acted as a barrier to getting feedback from ordinary older people.



How can we get through to the powers that be? Here are some top tips on “How To Have Your Say”:

Get the right person

Find out who can help you and deal with them directly. Support staff are often busy or distracted. Don't let your request get lost.

Put pen to paper

A verbal message can get lost without proof you've asked. Take the time to send a short note and keep a copy so you can prove you sent it. Email works too (it's still in writing).

Speak to someone who can help

Ask your MLA or your MP to help –

they are there for you. Action will happen once someone senior like an MLA or MP gets involved.

Get advice

If you are addressing a complicated matter, there are agencies that can help. The Belfast Trust has a wealth of information and guidance, including a Health and Wellbeing book. Call them on 028 9615 8100 (for North and West Belfast) or 028 9615 8200 (for East and South Belfast).

Make contact your way

If the system for communication doesn't work, get in touch your own way. Many found the 60+ SmartPass consultation survey overwhelming, so some of us made our own written responses in letters and emails. These all count, even if the consultation didn't make it clear that it does.

Don't let a barrier to communication stop

The Taxi Driver

by Kate Glackin

The taxi arrives twenty minutes late.

“What kept you?” I said angrily to the driver. “Your office told me you left forty minutes ago, I have a flight to catch to London.”

The taxi driver was contrite.

“I'm really sorry,” he said. “I felt a bit unwell this morning, I think it is indigestion, but don't worry, it will pass.”

I said happily that I was off to London for the weekend with some of my old school friends and I asked him to please drive fast to the airport because I wanted to be in good time for a cuppa with them and wander round the duty-free shop.

He never said a word but I noticed in the mirror that his face was pale and his breathing was loud and rapid. He kept punching his chest with his clenched fist. His driving was erratic.

From the back seat I shouted, “Are you alright?”

He whispered with difficulty, “I think I'm having a heart attack, please get me to Antrim Hospital now. I will direct you.”

He stopped in the nearest lay-by and I struggled to push this hefty stranger into the passenger seat.

“I can't do this,” I exclaimed.

“Please help me,” he said. “I think I'm dying.”

I turned the ignition and drove. When we arrived at the A&E he was whisked away immediately. He shouted from the trolley, “Please get my passenger to the airport now, her flight is due to leave soon.”

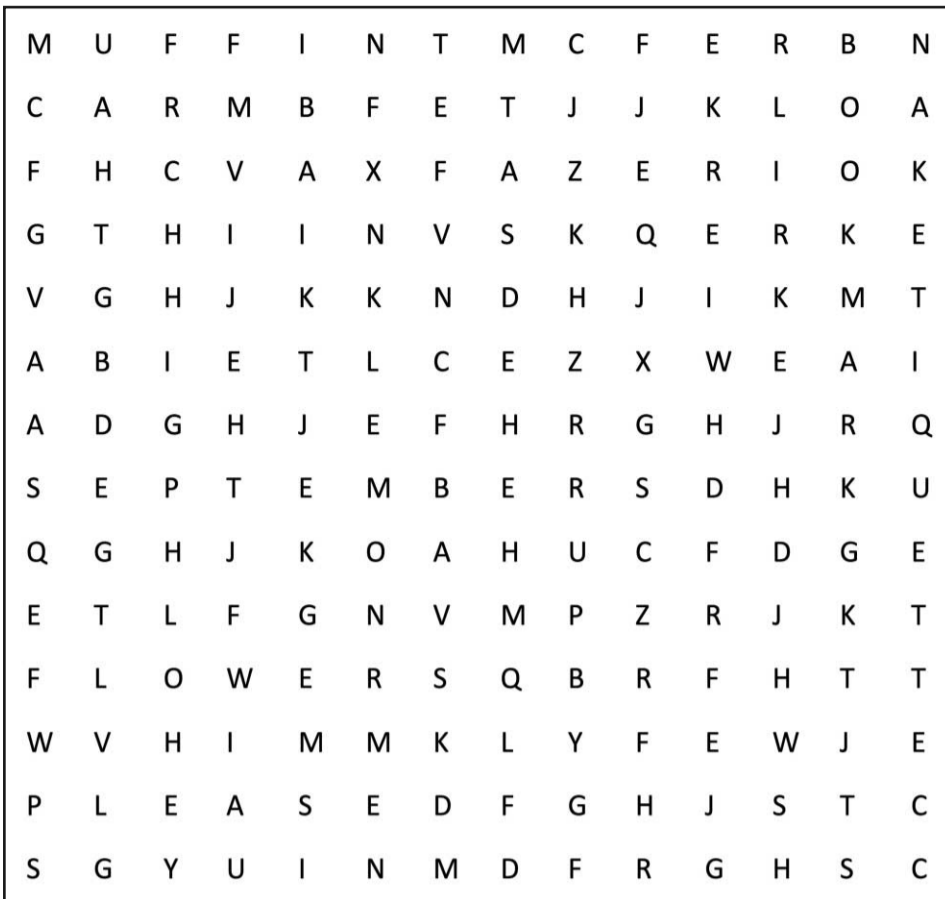
The ambulance driver drove me there with flashing lights and loud horns. We were speeding at what seemed ninety miles an hour. I arrived to hear the final call for my flight to London, I was the last passenger on board.



My friends shouted, “What kept you?” I said it was a long story and sank into my seat, utterly shattered and bewildered.

However, I enjoyed the weekend with my friends and when I arrived home a huge bouquet of flowers and a gift voucher were delivered to my door. The card read: “Thank you, my dearest passenger, for saving my life. Your (late) taxi driver!”

WORD SEARCH



Enter our Word Search competition for a chance to win a £10 Tesco voucher.

Find the following 9 words hidden in the word square above:

- SEPTEMBER • LEMON • MUFFIN • FLOWERS • PRESS
- BOOKMARK • MANNERS • ETIQUETTE • PLEASE

To enter, phone Lois Kennedy on **07595 261 253 on weekdays, 10am-4pm.** Please note due to the popularity of competitions all correct entries are placed in a draw and the winner chosen at random.

The winner will be announced in the next edition of The PAL Gazette.

Entries for this edition's quiz need to be in by 17th September 2023.

The winner of August's Edition (Edition 40) was Doreen Jones.

Night Blessing Submitted by Audrey Lynas

Don't give up. When the task you face is hard may you be given determination and resilience. When you think that the problem is intractable may you have the wisdom to know what to try next. When fear of failure rises may you have the grace to keep trying.

OLD JOKES HOME!

Submitted by our Anonymous Phone Caller who loves a joke.



What do you call cheese that isn't yours?
Nacho cheese.

Cooking Safety

- > **Don't leave cooking unattended-** if you have to leave the kitchen, turn the cooker off and take the saucepans off the heat.
- > Make sure your **smoke alarms** are working.
- > If you use gas, oil or solid fuel in the home, fit **carbon monoxide alarms.**
- > Keep flammable items such as **oven mitts, tea towels, food packaging & cables** away from the cooker top.
- > Avoid cooking when under the influence of **alcohol.**

Safer Together



Tea Time Quiz

Answer each of these five questions correctly for your chance to win a £10 Tesco voucher.

1. **Who was the first man on the Moon?**
2. **In which city is 'Breakfast at Tiffany's' set?**
3. **Which British secret agent works for MI6 under the codename 007?**
4. **Which author created the character Hercule Poirot?**
5. **What is the capital of Italy?**

To enter, phone **Lois Kennedy on 07595 261253 on weekdays, 10am-4pm.** Please note due to the popularity of competitions all correct entries are placed in a draw and the winner chosen at random.

Entries for this edition's quiz need to be in by 17th September 2023.

Winner of August's Edition (Edition 40) is Bill McNeil.

For all quiz lovers, join the Pub Quiz without a Pub. 7pm, Thursday 21st September 2023.

For zoom link email Eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk

The answers to May's quiz were:

1. Isaac Newton
2. Clyde
3. Tower Bridge
4. The African Elephant
5. Mercury.

Recipe Lemon Drizzle Muffins

by Kerry Hannah

Ingredients

- 150 g self-raising flour
- 1 egg
- 125 ml full-fat milk
- 3 tbsp butter, melted and cooled
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp lemon extract / essence
- 1 lemon
- 100 g sugar + 3 tbsp for the drizzle
- 6 tsp lemon curd

Method

- **STEP 1**
Preheat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius
- **STEP 2**
Sift the flour, and add it to a bowl together with the 100 grams of sugar and baking powder
- **STEP 3**
Beat the egg well until pale yellow and fluffy, add the milk and cooled melted butter.
- **STEP 4**
Pour it over the dry ingredients, then grate the lemon and add the lemon zest to the other ingredients.
- **STEP 5**
Use a spatula to mix gently until you get a batter, making sure you don't over mix it.

STEP 6

Grease and flour a 6-hole muffin tin, add half a tablespoon of batter to each hole, then add one teaspoon of lemon curd, and top with the remaining batter.

STEP 7

Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden.

STEP 8

Squeeze the lemon juice out of the lemon used for the zest and mix it with the 3 tablespoons of sugar. When the muffins are ready, drizzle the lemon juice mixture over as soon as they come out of the oven. Leave to cool then eat.



Engage with Age thanks its supporters and funders:

