



'IN THE SPOTLIGHT'

Each month we put a different person 'in the spotlight' and pose 12 wide-ranging questions to them. This month, we feature **CEO of Citizens Advice South Worcestershire and amateur author, Marie Henry.**

1. Tell us an interesting fact about yourself that not many people know.

I opened the first all girl cub scout pack in the country.

2. What book made most impact on you as a child?

The Borrowers by Mary Norton; the idea that there were little people living under the floor boards having adventures really fired my imagination and I spent many nights pretending to go to sleep then using a torch to see if I could spot any in my bedroom.

3. What is your favourite film, and why?

I think Pretty Woman has to be my choice. I saw it at the cinema at a time when my life had been turned upside down and it felt like the start of the better days. It's really just a fairy tale but we all need a happy ending don't we?

4. What are your main hobbies/interests, apart from reading, of course?

I have lots of hobbies including tap dancing (which I started when I was 50), I run 2 choirs, I paint (pictures not walls) but mostly I write. I published a book called The Library Ladies and the Body behind the Library under my maiden name Marie Green and I am hoping to publish the next one in the series in Spring this year - The Library Ladies and the Killer Companion. They are cozy, comedy, murder mysteries with the main characters based on me and 4 of my friends who worked in a library together for 10 years.

5. What would be the three things you would like to have if you were stranded on a desert island?

My Kindle (so I'd have access to lots of books), my laptop so I could write and my art supplies.

6. What would a look at your bookshelves tell us about you?

That I have a broad range of interests; wide ranging fiction, biographies, art, photography, history, philosophy, quotes, poetry and more. Also that I was a librarian because they're all in order of subject.



7. If you could invite any three people, dead or alive, to a dinner party, who would they be, and why?

Michelle Obama for inspiration, Caroline Aherne for comedy and creativity and John Lennon for music and stories from the sixties.

8. What kind of music do you like, and is there one favourite soundtrack?

This is as hard as picking my favourite book! I love lots of music and find that what I want to listen to will depend on my mood. Everything from Bob Marley, the Beatles, Michael Jackson and Ed Sheeran to Vivaldi. If I need a pick me up, I listen to the Gypsy Kings.

9. What are your favourite charities/good causes, and why?

Citizens Advice are top of my list (well it would be wouldn't it?), we are small independent charities and have to fund ourselves through relationships with local authorities, contracts and fundraising although people often think we are government funded. We help anyone regardless of status with anything from homelessness, employment issues to debt. I also have a passion to prevent and eradicate homelessness, no one in a country as wealthy as ours should be without a secure home although I do understand that there are many complex issues that lead to homelessness so the solution will need to be multi channel and organisations.

10. Who is the person who has influenced you most/you most admire?

Career influence would go to Mike Brown, he was the CEO when I worked at bdht in Bromsgrove and he encouraged and supported me to achieve a potential I didn't realise I had. Most admire - probably my mom, she was a simple lady who made sure I got the support and encouragement I needed and loved her simple life. She was married to my dad for over 60 years and she enjoyed the small things, never longing for more than she had a chance of getting and that is a great lesson to learn.

11. What is your connection to Evesham?

I am the CEO of Citizens Advice South Worcestershire and one of our main offices is in Port Street in Evesham. Prior to that as a young family we would visit Evesham and have holidays here in my mom and dad's caravan. It felt like miles from Birmingham and me and my children have fabulous memories of Evesham.

12. What would you list as your greatest achievement to date?

It's a bit predictable but definitely my two children Daniel and Ashlea. They have turned out to be kind, thoughtful, interesting adults and have given me beautiful grandchildren - no other achievement can top them.