

An Interview with Penney Malecaut by members of the Cross-Over Group

Q1 Where were you born and live as a child?

I was born in Welwyn Garden City in the QE2 hospital so I am a Hertfordshire Hedgehog.

Q2 What were you good at in school?

Reading and writing. I was always making up stories and making up new words. I would read a book and then imagine a sequel to it and try to write it. I was also good at handwriting, but not anymore!

Q3 Do you have brothers and sisters?

I have a younger sister called Cheri and a brother called Mark. He is at University and is a member of the Territorial Army.

Q4 Did you go to Church as a young person?

Yes, I attended a Methodist Church Sunday School and I remember one of my teachers was Australian and her name was Bronwyn. I was a member of the Crusader organisation.

Q5 Do you still have school-day friendships?

I have a best friend whom I met in the Juniors 30 years ago. I recently went to a re-union with High School friends.

Q6 Are your parents living near you?

No, they still live in the same house where I grew up in Welwyn Garden City. Now I am a mother myself, I understand them better and have a good relationship with them.

Q7 Did you attend a University? What did you study?

I studied for a Social Work degree at Huddersfield University, but didn't start until I was 26. I have a B.Sc. and the studies included reading things like The Children Act and The Mental Health Act.

Q8 When and how did you meet your husband?

I met Guy at a cousin's wedding. The cousin was marrying Guy's sister. I asked him to hold my sunglasses while I was being photographed and he wouldn't give them back to me until I gave him my phone number! We married in 2002.

Q9 Do you have hobbies?

I like making cakes for special occasions such as weddings, christenings and Christmas. I enjoy skiing and would love to be a skater. In Switzerland I enjoyed being a passenger in a bobsleigh on the famous Cresta Run. I also like reading.

Q10 What television do you enjoy?

I love Coronation Street which I have watched since I was very young. I also like ER, Desperate Housewives and if I am home, perhaps feeling ill, I will watch Countdown. I enjoy football if it's a good game.

Q11 What are your favourite food and drink?

Champagne is my favourite drink if there is enough money! I love Greek food, especially lamb and feta cheese.

Q12 Where do you like to go on holiday?

Mauritius or anywhere that is warm but I also enjoy skiing weather.

Q13 Have you ever been seriously ill?

I was very poorly once, but now everything is fine.



- Q14 Do you support a football team?
Arsenal. When I lived in the North it was easy to find tickets for their away games at northern clubs. I like Thierry Henri, Paul Merson, Tony Adams and David Seaman. Thierry Henri is very good looking!
- Q15 Do you enjoy sports and do you cycle?
Yes I have a bike and have been known to roller blade to work, although it is very dangerous due to traffic.
- Q16 Which is your favourite restaurant
Our neighbour has a restaurant in China Town called Mr Kong's and it serves very good food at good prices.
- Q17 Do enjoy going to the cinema? What is your favourite film?
I really love going to the cinema and my favourite film is The Magnificent Seven. I love films from a broad range of genre.
- Q18 What kind of books do you read?
Crime thrillers for example. I like books that make good use of the English language like those by Pat Conroy and books by Iain McEwan. I also have a lot of work-related reading.
- Q19 What kind of work do you do?
I am a Social Worker and I manage a team of Social Work assistants. We deal with people in crisis often including children who may need to be taken into care and we try to ensure that they have a chance to see their birth parents safely.
- Q20 Do you ever get upset at work?
I sometimes feel upset when having difficulties within my team and also when I see children in trouble. Three cases in particular have upset me a lot.
- Q21 Do you deal with difficult things at work?
It is always difficult when children die either through sickness or accidents.
- Q22 What age range of children do you deal with?
From before birth to about the age of 15.
- Q23 What other countries have you visited?
Mauritius, Egypt, Israel, Greece, USA, Canada, Belgium, Ireland, Czech Republic and others. I would like to go to Hong Kong.
- Q24 Do you have lots of time for home and family?
Full-time work makes it hard, but I do my best to fit everything in as well as I can.
- Q25 Who does the house work at home?
The cleaner! Guy is good at hoovering and I do the washing and ironing.
- Q26 Are you afraid of anything?
A was once bitten by a spider, but mostly I fear change.
- Q27 Are you allergic to anything?
Not really, although two years ago my finger reacted badly to a wasp sting.
- Q28 Do you like children's programmes on t.v.?
I enjoyed watching Brum when Lloyd was younger and I enjoyed Star Wars- Clone Wars and Dr. Who.
- Q29 Have you ever contributed to a publication?
In Infant school, I had a poem published in an anthology of children's verse.
- Q30 Do you have any questions for us?
Yes, what do you want to be when you are grown up?
The answers included Footballer, Doctor (that what Mum wants me to be anyway) artist, club entertainer, hairdresser, actress and singer.

