

YOUR ESSENTIAL SEVEN-DAY TV GUIDE

SATURDAY

DAILY EXPRESS

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THE QUEEN AT WAR

Experiences that have shaped our monarch

ENCOURAGE BIRDS INTO YOUR GARDEN

Alan Titchmarsh's tips for home-grown entertainment

Anthea Turner

'FOR MY 60TH I JOINED THE SAS'

Normally so clean and pristine, the TV presenter's challenge to keep feeling young...

CELEBRITY SAS: WHO DARES WINS

Mon 9pm C4

NEW

Anthea Turner is about to have a significant birthday – and what better way to celebrate than by proving that age is just a number?

That explains why she took on the challenge of a lifetime in this new series of Celebrity SAS, in which Ant Middleton puts famous faces through an incredibly tough endurance test in the wilds of Scotland.

'I'm 60 this year and I've got this thing about trying something that puts me out of

my comfort zone every year – and it was this!' she smiles. 'I did it for myself. It was like it landed from the heavens.'

Which is one way of describing having to jump out of a helicopter backwards and run miles uphill carrying a heavy backpack...

The presenter – who started her long TV career on Blue Peter – didn't have much time to prepare for the brutal task.

'My training was walking around the kitchen a few times in the army boots,' she admits. 'What you surprise yourself with is what you don't need. Cosmetics, and all the little comforts in life. I didn't think one jot at all about anything to do with looking good. And that never happens, I'm a girly girl.'

The celebs living in a derelict farm on the Isle of Raasay included former Blue Peter presenter Helen Skelton, ex Strictly pro Brendan Cole, Katie Price and Joey Essex.

The unlikely crew 'got on tremendously' says Anthea. 'My revelation was meeting the real Katie Price and just getting to know each other. You cannot imagine what it is like unless you have been there.'

The person who surprised her most was Joey. 'There's a preconception, but he smashed it, he really did.'

The toughest part was running with a backpack. 'I thought, I'm on fumes now,' she says. 'Nobody's ever pushed me that

far. To the point where I am absolutely on my knees in pain. Ant and his guys never let up for one moment. They're not your friends, they are the way that you see them on the television, until the very end.'

The celebs had to do incredible things – including pairing up to go to the toilet.

'That's not normal in your everyday life,' says Anthea. 'Once you get past the embarrassment and realise we are all in this together, it was quite a growth for us as individuals. And we got to experience what it's like on the front lines.'

'I thought my age would let me down in some sections, but on the other hand there is a maturity you have to call on.'

The one person who did make it all a bit ageist, sadly, was Ant, who gave it the, 'Hurry up, Grandma'. 'My telly savvy kicked in and I thought, okay this is a TV programme and you can say whatever you want to, so I didn't rise to it.'

Anthea is currently isolating at home in London with her fiancé Mark Armstrong.

'If there is any thread I have heard from everyone during lockdown, it is the word perspective,' she says.

'We are able to look at the bigger picture and it gives us a calmness to deal with it. I've been working for a food bank, doing deliveries and met some of these

people – from a distance – who are on their own or need help.'

And as she turns 60 next month, Anthea says that top of her list is 'to go off in an RV like Meet the Fockers, do a real trail'.

'As you get older, you tend to become safer,' she says. 'It's not about lotions and potions. Get out there and frighten yourself a bit.'

'You might fall flat on your face, but have a go. Don't stay in the safe lane.'

THE CELEB RECRUITS



ANTHEA TURNER TV Presenter

'To celebrate my 60th birthday I joined the SAS!'