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All eyes on the mother of the bride! Woman who kept her £20,000 facelift secret (then unveiled it at her daughter's wedding)

- . Dee Dawson, 67, underwent drastic surgery but didn't tell her family
- . She decided the perfect place to unveil it was at her daughter's wedding
- . When she retired she had the time to contemplate cosmetic surgery
- She had hankered after an operation for years
- . In May she went ahead with the gruelling, eight-hour operation
- . It involved a full face and neck lift and removal of skin on her eyelids
- · Fat from her stomach was put into her cheeks
- She also had laser resurfacing of her skin

By POLLY DUNBAR FOR THE DAILY MAIL

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17

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When Dee Dawson, 67, looks at the photographs of her daughter Katie's wedding, she beams with satisfaction.

However, it's not the pictures of the bride that she lingers over — but rather those of herself.

'Old friends were coming up to me that day to tell me how well I looked and asking if I'd changed my hair or lost weight,' says Dee. 'I was delighted, especially because nobody seemed able to put their finger on what had changed about me.'

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When Dee Dawson, 67, looks at the photographs of her daughter Katie's wedding, she beams with satisfaction over the results of her faceli

It's hardly surprising that her friends and family couldn't quite work out what had changed, as Dee had been keeping a shocking secret from them all.

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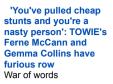


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Unbeknown to her nearest and dearest — whom she knew would regard it at best as foolish and at worst as a betrayal — she'd had £20,000 of surgery in a bid to look younger, and decided the perfect place to unveil it was at the wedding.

While some may think it supremely selfish for a mother to divert the spotlight from the bride, Dee felt her friends and family would be happy for her. 'I knew they would end up coming round when they saw the results,' she says.

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SPOILER ALERT:





Dee had £20,000 of surgery in a bid to look younger (right), and decided the perfect place to unveil it was at her daughter's wedding

Keeping the radical facelift a secret required no small degree of scheming, snatched phone calls in hushed tones and several clandestine meetings.

But for Dee, a retired eating disorder specialist from North London, it was worth it. She knew discovery would not only threaten her carefully made plans, but also the harmony of her family life.

In May, she went ahead with the gruelling, eight-hour operation, which involved a full face and neck lift, removal of the excess skin on her eyelids and the bags beneath her eyes, the injection of fat from her stomach into her cheeks and laser resurfacing of her skin — and left her looking 20 years younger.

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In May, Dee went ahead with the gruelling, eight-hour operation, which involved a full face and neck lift, removal of the excess skin on her eyelids and the bags beneath her eyes, the injection of fat from her stomach into her cheeks and laser resurfacing of her skin

Apart from informing her husband, retired judge Eberhard, 70, days before going into hospital, she didn't tell a soul.

'I adore my family, but I knew if I told them they would try to talk me out of it,' says Dee. 'When I'd mentioned I wanted a facelift over the past few years, my husband always said, "I love you the way you are and don't want you to look strange".

'My daughter is a nervous soul, and she would have been scared that I'd die if she'd known I was going to be under anaesthetic for eight hours. She doesn't even wear make-up, so she wouldn't have understood why I wanted the surgery.

DID YOU KNOW?

surgery every year

15 million people worldwide have plastic

'I was determined to go ahead with it. I worked hard through my career and had the money I needed in savings.'

Dee's determination to 'fix' her appearance outweighed her worries about her family's

reservations. Her impressive resolve is well known to those who encountered her during her highflying career as founder and medical director of Rhodes Farm, Britain's first and largest residential clinic for children with eating disorders. black shift dress and beige beret at charity event in New York City Forever young



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During her 20 years at its helm, the London clinic became world-renowned, with Dee acclaimed as a leading expert in the field, juggling her duties there with those as mother to Joanna, now 34, Dom, 32, Katie, 30, Amy, 28 and Alex, 23.

She retired two years ago, and finally had the time to contemplate the cosmetic surgery she had hankered after since noticing a change in her appearance three years before that.

Dee says: 'I was confident about my looks when I was younger. I wasn't a great beauty, but I always thought that when I put my make-up on to go out, I looked really good.

'I didn't realise how much I cared about my appearance until I was 62. Before that, everyone thought I was much younger, but suddenly I found that when I told people my age they were no longer saying: "Wow, I'd never have guessed".

'Before I knew it, I had deep lines stretching from the corners of my mouth to my chin, bags under my eyes and a saggy neck.'

She adds: 'My husband is very good-looking, rugged and youthful — he looks 15 years younger than he is. I didn't want people to think he was my toyboy.

'I hated photographs of myself and I found it excruciating to go to the hairdresser and sit in front of a mirror for a couple of hours. I kept catching a glimpse of the skin under my chin as it reflected in the screen of my iPad, and it horrified me.'

If she needed a nudge to go ahead with her plan, it came in the form of a special family occasion. Katie was getting married on September 6 with a reception at the family home in Totteridge, so Dee decided to have the surgery in May, giving her plenty of time to recover and unveil her new look on the big day.



See says: 'I hated photographs of myself and I found it excruciating to go to the hairdresser and sit in front of a mirror for a couple of hours'

She had visited a clinic to inquire about fillers, but had been told they wouldn't erase the lines down each side of her mouth. The doctor said only a full facelift could give her the effect she wanted.

'I thought it would be nice to look back on the pictures and think I looked all right, instead of cringing every time a photographer came near me,' she says.

Dee decided on Dr Julian De Silva, a top cosmetic surgeon based in Harley Street (Iondonfacialplasticsurgery.co.uk) who uses small incisions for subtle results and fast recovery.

Leaving after 8 years



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She retired two years ago, and finally had the time to contemplate the cosmetic surgery she had hankered after since noticing a change in her appearance three years before that

He described the procedures he believed she needed, suggesting a neck, face and eye lift, involving subtly removing excess, saggy skin. He also suggested laser resurfacing and a fat transfer from her stomach to her face to smooth and plump out her skin where it had lost volume through ageing.

Satisfied, she booked her surgery.

It might be assumed that Dee felt guilty keeping the secret from her family, but she believed she was acting in their interests. 'I knew I was doing the right thing in not telling them,' she says. 'I knew exactly what they'd say — they'd tell me they were scared it would go wrong and I'd look terrible. But I knew it would be fine.

As the date of her surgery approached, she knew she had to tell her husband, not least because she would need someone to take care of her after the lengthy operation. With just days to go, she sat him down and broke the news.

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downtime

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Dee pictured with her daughter. She was adamant that she did not want her family to find out about her

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Eberhard says: 'When she told me, I wasn't happy at all. I told her I didn't want her looking like Frankenstein's monster with scars all over the place. But I wasn't upset about her deception. I just found it funny that she had gone to all that effort not to be found out.

'I was worried she might spoil her face, which I loved. I didn't mind her lines. But her mind was made up. She made me promise I wouldn't tell anybody else. Reluctantly, I agreed.'

The operation on May 16 was a success. But if Dee had been hoping to recuperate in peace before her children found out, that was shattered when daughter Alex called her while she was still in hospital and about to go home.

'We had a quick chat, and I thought, "There's something wrong with her",' says Alex, an account manager in the City. 'She didn't say anything about where she was, but she sounded very odd; flat and sad.

'I decided to visit her straight away. When I arrived, I found her upstairs in her bedroom. The lights were dimmed and she was sitting up in bed with an enormous bandage wrapped around her head. She looked absolutely awful and she couldn't open her eyes properly.

'It was a huge shock, but after a few seconds I realised she'd had a facelift, not a car accident. I couldn't believe she hadn't told us. I thought we'd at least get advance warning if she ever did anything like that. I was quite upset — but then I couldn't help laughing because she looked so ridiculous.

'She said she was sorry, but I could tell she was really pleased with herself for pulling it off.

Alex called her siblings to tell them the news, and one by one they rang Dee. 'They all said: "What have you done to yourself?" and that I was very silly, says Dee. I didn't care, because I'd done what I wanted.

When Katie, an advertising project manager, heard, she was on the way to the airport to spend a month working in the U.S. I didn't like the idea at all, because I thought she looked lovely as she was and feared she'd look weird and different at my wedding,' she says. 'I was angry that Mum hadn't told

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'I thought she'd had the facelift for my wedding, but I knew it would be because she was worried about the photos, rather than because she wanted to upstage me.'

After only a couple of weeks, the swelling on Dee's face had reduced and she and her family could see the results. 'I was absolutely thrilled,' she says. 'My face looked so much less lined and tired, and I definitely looked younger.

'As it healed, the scars disappeared. The main ones are in my hairline behind my ears and under my chin, and the tiny ones on my eyelids have gone. The girls were relieved when they saw the results and realised I hadn't turned into the Bride of Wildenstein.'



After only a couple of weeks, the swelling on Dee's face had reduced and she and her family could see the results

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Dee now says she has no regrets about keeping such a drastic procedure secret

Katie's wedding to fellow advertising project manager Jack Bailey, 30, provided the perfect opportunity for Dee to show off her new face.

'My best friend, Hilary, told me I looked fantastic, so I came clean and told her I'd had a facelift.

'She said she'd never have guessed. Within half an hour, word got around and lots of people were complimenting me and asking to see my scars. Everyone said it looked natural and that I looked rested but not "done". It became the talk of the wedding.

'The day after, I was in a local shop and a man in the queue told me I looked tired. I explained I'd been up until the early hours because it was my daughter's wedding, and he said: "You don't look old enough to have a daughter who's married". I was thrilled.'

And Dee now says she has no regrets about keeping such a drastic procedure secret. 'It was worth it, because I didn't give my family the chance to worry or try to change my mind. And they all think I look great now,' she says.

'I didn't want to give up on my appearance just because I'm retired. I care about the face I present to the world, and I'm so much happier with it now.'

For the sake of her family's nerves, one hopes that she stays satisfied with her new appearance.

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Dr Julian De Silva performed the operation

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jeffro123, Liverpool, United Kingdom, about 3 hours ago

I still wouldn't go there and normally i'm not that fussy.

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johnosullivan, London, United Kingdom, about 3 hours ago

Hope she kept the receipt

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BetsyPaige, Seattle WA, United States, about 3 hours ago

She looks lovely; may not be a huge change to strangers but if she feels better, good for her. Everyone needs to do what's right for them.

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poolside observer, Kouklia cyprus, about 3 hours ago

Good for her, I would say she looks her age now as she looked a lot older before. The facelift looks natural and not as if she has had the skin stretched and botoxed.

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ME, Wellington, New Zealand, about 4 hours ago

Talk about upstaging the bride..... what a self centred thing to do.

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Alexandra, East of the big lake, United States, about 4 hours ago

Grumble, grumble, grumble.

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Karbet, seaford, United Kingdom, about 4 hours ago

Not very effective if you have to put "Before" and "After" in big white letters on a bright red background

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Bristolbeau, Bristol, United Kingdom, about 4 hours ago

There's nothing quite like trying to steal the bride's (your daughter's) thunder eh....I've no problem with having the surgery but to unveil your 'new face' at her wedding seems a little selfish to say the least....

Ms B. London, about 4 hours ago

New Comment Reply

I seriously don't know what to make of this article.

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Michael Souris, Hong Kong, Hong Kong, about 4 hours ago

The trick is knowing when to stop.

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Sue, London, United Kingdom, about 4 hours ago

You can't really compare before and after images because in the before photo she isn't smiling, it's an unflattering light and her head is downturned. I'm sure she'd have got just as much of a result using botox and fillers. That said, if it makes her happy then good on her.

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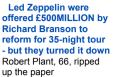


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Dogs and owners DO look alike

FKA Twigs covers up in maxi dress and leather jacket as she leaves racy New York performance with boyfriend Robert Pattinson

'The halfway point hurdles!' Chloe Madeley compares four thong selfies as she boasts radically transformed body in seven weeks Focused on her diet

Tom Cruise's latest Mission Impossible: Staying at the Marriott Hotel, Peterborough, without a loyalty card One member of staff left red-faced

She's all about The Base! Lara Bingle stars as creative director, model and client as she documents creative process behind skincare products

She looks heavenly!
Jessica Alba turns
every head in angelic
floor-length gold and
white gown at
Baby2Baby gala
Every inch the heavenly
vision in gold and white

FOREVER BEAUTIFUL: Are those beauty gift sets really worth it? ELSA MCALONAN asks the experts which are worth spending on this













Christmas



Looking ripped! Kim Kardashian dares to bare in shredded leather pencil skirt as she steps out with sister Khloe in London Pre-party dinner

Blooming marvelous! Malin Akerman brandishes bouquet of roses as she puts on very leggy display in tiny shorts Showed off her assets

Alessandra Ambrosio shows off toned bikini body ahead of Victoria's Secret show... as Jamie Mazur throws giggling Noah in the air Working hard on figure

Olivia Palermo beams with delight as she hits Cotton's recordbreaking 24-hour runway show in jeans and fierce heels

Sexy senorita! Rose McGowan displays some cleavage in lowcut tank top during solo lunch at Mexican restaurant

Rock chic! Kimberly Stewart wears edgy outfit as she takes adorable daughter Delilah with her to run errands All black ensemble

He's still got it! Not even a menacing skinhead haircut deters James Franco's female fans as he flirts up a storm while filming Zeroville at USC

Selena Gomez is chic and sophisticated in a cream pantsuit as she lends her star power to the annual Unlikely Heroes Awards Gala Fashionable display

From Pretty Woman to soccer mom! Julia Roberts looks freshfaced with no make-up as she takes little Henry to match Dressed down

Caped crusader!
Nicole Richie wows in
skintight white dress
and quirky cloak for
Baby2Baby Gala
The actress sits on the
board of the event



















hot pink! Emily Blunt and Reese Witherspoon look stunning in fuchsia gowns at Governors Awards Embracing brightness



'Victoria Beckham was just a normal girl, look how much she's achieved': Gemma Collins models her brand on Posh's as she opens Essex boutique

Come slide with me! Tom Arnold bonds with cute son Jax during trip to the playground The 55-year-old clearly has a big fan in his son Jax, in Beverly Hills

'This is possibly one of the greatest X Factor performances of all time': Simon Cowell praises 'rock god' Stevi Ritchie for standout Bohemian Rhapsody

'He literally did not care': Ex-girlfriend of Stereo Kicks singer James Graham claims he got her pregnant and told her to 'get rid' of it

Thirty and flirty! From Neighbours school girl to sassy songstress... Australian music sweetheart Delta Goodrem celebrates milestone birthday

Tori Spelling and Dean McDermott share a loving embrace and feed each other orange slices after couples massage therapy Grabbed a pick-me-up

Rowan Pelling's sex column: I'm so confused by mid-life dating

After divorce one woman has plunged into dating again at 53 but doesn't know where to begin

Fan-demonium! Kendall and Kylie Jenner cause a stir while debuting their holiday fashion collection in Chicago Screaming fans

'That was your worst dance yet': Strictly's Frankie Bridge reduced to tears after splitting judges with error-filled Samba Came top last week

'You ate up that dancefloor!' Strictly's Pixie Lott becomes 'superstar housewife' as

















she tops leaderboard and gets her first 10 with fun Foxtrot



makes Strictly Come Dancing appearance

Down but not out! A sick Jennifer Lawrence still manages to impress during a German talk show appearance with Liam Hemsworth

'I find your ocean in its place': Jaime King unveils new tattoo of song lyrics on rib cage... and hints it's a tribute to late friend Lyris to Jsu Garcia song

'Doing it on my own': Newly-single Kelly Brook wows in figurehugging LBD for lunch with a friend... as she shares series of glamorous snaps

My part in Stephen Hawking's marriage break-up! Anguish of scientist's 'dumped' wife revealed by star Felicity Jones who's playing her in movie

Macaulay Culkin is NOT dead: Rumors about the former child star revealed to be false Mmany mourned his death on social media

'We have great wives!'
Ben Affleck and Matt
Damon talk about early
careers... and how
they're 'lucky' to have
supportive partners

That's one lucky dog! Emmy Rossum sizzles in denim Daisy Dukes as she cuddles new pet pup at adoption event Promoting charity for strays in LA

Her little angel!
Jessica Alba showers
daughter Haven with
kisses during family
shopping trip
The 33-year-old tenderly
held her tot to her chest

Showing their support! X Factor contestants Fleur East and Ben Haenow visit wounded military troops at Help For Heroes Centre



















Just follow her lead! Heidi Klum dazzles in unusual beaded minidress as she arrives at casting for Germany's Next Top Model

Bradley Cooper lays low in cap and sunglasses as he catches the train following new Broadway premiere Low profile

It's Hunger Games Jennifer Lawrence in her tastiest role yet...as a GIANT CAKE In a fitting tribute the actress was immortalised as a 5ft 10in cake

Supermodel and supermum: An interview with Jourdan Dunn She's taken the cult of the supermodel to new heights

GIRL ABOUT TOWN: Romeo earns £45k for posing in a raincoat (while brother Brooklyn gets just £3 in a coffee bar)

Brunette bombshell! Gemma Merna works her new dark hairstyle with a ravishing red dress alongside Jennifer Metcalfe at Liverpool Style Awards

Let's get ready to rumba! Frankie Bridge leads the pack in stylish leather jacket as she heads to Strictly studios Ready to show what she's made of

Amanda Seyfried displays her svelte physique as she hits the boxing gym for Hollywood's favorite workout Back in shape

Purple hair, don't care! Amanda Bynes puffs away on a cigarette as she rocks her new lilac locks during lunch outing in LA

Cindy Crawford is effortlessly stylish while car shopping as she takes new \$120K Mercedes for a test drive A Mercedes S550 Coupe

No pain, no gain! Hugh Jackman posts intense workout video just days after slicing his hand during Broadway show Still looking buff























Consistency is key! Kim Kardashian touches

down in London in same figure-hugging outfit Expected at the launch of a new beauty brand



Kim Kardashian sparks new peek-aboob trend as Kym Marsh and Danielle Armstrong embrace cleavage-baring jumpsuits

'Harding is in the house!': Cheryl Fernandez-Versini joined by ex-Girls Aloud band mate Sarah at The X Factor... after slating Nadine Coyle

'Missing her that's all': Bobbi Kristina shares retro snaps of herself with mother Whitney Houston Arguably the greatest love

'I like Khloe Montana': Kardashian hints at marriage with her rapper beau during heart-to-heart with Scott Disick Back with French?

'It stresses me out!'
Khloe Kardashian
admits she doesn't
know what to buy 'major
fashionista' niece North
for Christmas

GIRL ABOUT TOWN:
Does Pippa's new
reporting job mean Nico
is now old news?
If the job at NBC is
offered, she will have a lot
more long-haul flights

Taylor Swift is like a real life Barbie doll in cropped sweater and skintight jeans as she jets out of Tokyo Promoting her new album in Japan

Superhero on a wire! Henry Cavill takes flight with the greatest of ease before embracing love interest Amy Adams on Chicago set of Batman V Superman

All pout and no trousers! Amy Childs goes bare-legged in just heeled cowgirl boots and an oversized boyfriend shirt Matched her hair

'Music is a big drain': Gwen Stefani reveals why she returned to fashion... and calls baby boy Apollo a 'miracle'





















Single and ready to spend big! Debra Messing drops \$5.45 million on an Upper East Side condo No Messing around when it comes to property!

'Bringing some sun(flowers) to this appalling weather': Chanelle Hayes shows off her taut tum in floral print bikini as she enjoys girly getaway

Are you FUR real? Made In Chelsea star Rosie Fortescue wears fluffy coat and leather trousers to jewellery party Celebrate Buckley Jewellery's first store

GIRL ABOUT TOWN: Emily Blunt is a splash hit at George Clooney wedding Emily got her £3k Emilio Pucci gown soaking wet

during the celebrations

Did they find their dream home? Zoe Saldana and Marco Perego continue hunt for family house ahead of actress's due date Hunting in LA

Liberty Ross bares her legs in short black frock on dinner date with boyfriend Jimmy Iovine in Hollywood Marriage to Rupert Sanders ended last year

EXCLUSIVE: Cheryl Fernandez-Versini prepares to give fans an inside glimpse at her life in teaser for new music video with Beats by Dr.Dre

Like mother, like daughter! Padma Lakshmi and daughter Krishna step out in matching coats in New York

Battle of the busts! Snooki and best pal JWoww show off ample cleavage in skimpy attire for her bachelorette weekend



















Charity challenges keep former Big Breakfast presenter Denise Van Outen in trim as she signs up for 250-mile cycle through Vietnam and Cambodia



Superstar DJ Calvin Harris forced to pull out of the MTV European Music Awards due to 'heart problems'... 24 hours before he is set to perform

Lara Flynn Boyle is barely recognisable with her puffy cheeks and sagging jaw as she helps a friend move The 44-year-old actress looked out of sorts

In need of support: Bra-less Danielle Armstrong steps out in a plunging jumpsuit as she parties with newly single TOWIE co-star Jessica Wright

Belle of the ball! Lucy Mecklenburgh is the picture of elegance in scarlet princess-style gown for charity event Beauty swept her tresses into mass curls

Giving the 'cold shoulder' again? Christina Aguilera responds to Valerie Bertinelli's feud comments with subtle Instagram dig

Jared Leto 'in talks to play The Joker' in the upcoming DC Comics film Suicide Squad The actor won an Oscar earlier this year for Dallas Buyers Club

Still pumping iron! Arnie Schwarzenegger, 67, shows off ripped torso as he takes girlfriend for a spin in his \$2.25m Bugatti He'll be back

Adding to the collection! Demi Lovato gets 15th tattoo to pay tribute to her family Demi Lovato is fast becoming the painted woman of pop

The return of James Blunt: How the former tank commander (and the most ridiculed man in pop) conquered a new army of fans ...by battling on Twitter!

























Grant reveals grey hair in dapper black suit during appearance on **German TV show**





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