



*"I didn't **become** what I am, I was born that way"* – The Journey of Kristiana Jayne Taylor

At the age of 8 years old I just knew I was different – that I was a girl on the inside. I started wearing female clothes, this made me look and feel beautiful. At school I wanted to play with the girls because I *felt* like a girl and because of this I was bullied and was forced to conform to my birth gender as a boy.

By the age of 13 or 14 I was "borrowing" clothes from my sister and dressing in them in private. I was shy, quiet and left school with little in the way of qualifications and decided to join the Royal Navy. At that time in the early 1980's being gay in the forces was a criminal offence so my career choice forced me to stop dressing (repressing the urge) which I felt was right at the time.

I left the Royal Navy in 1996 and started dressing in private again. I successfully completed a degree in Psychology and then met and married my wife Denise; I also have a 13 year old son. I then went on to qualify as an accountant and became a forensic auditor, travelling the world investigating fraud in large high profile companies. Due to health reasons and the conflict inside with my gender identity I decided to leave that job; I could not live as a man any longer.

In 2010 I came out to my wife and with her support, I decided to re-train. She is a midwife and we decided that two in the same house may be a bit much and nothing to talk about! Having come from a healthcare focussed family and remembering an X-ray I had needed on a fractured ankle in my youth, I decided a career in radiography was for me. I applied to Canterbury Christchurch University in Medway and managed to get a First-Class Honours Degree in Radiographic Science whilst embarking upon my transitional journey in my first year of my degree. I joined MTW in September last year as a Radiographer and continued my journey.

After four years of psychotherapy I underwent Gender Reassignment Surgery (GRS) in April this year, with the support of my wife, son, family and friends. My line manager and all the staff at Tunbridge Wells Hospital have been just amazingly supportive and caring – taking the lead from me and moving at my pace.

I am now a Radiographer working for TWH at Pembury – I love my job and have made some great friends and have some fabulous colleagues. I want to share my story with others, dispel some of the myths about transgender people and provide education and knowledge. I lecture in equality and diversity for Kent Police and I'm a mentor for other Trans people at a local help group in Ashford and Canterbury.

Cooper Lee Bombardier said:

"It isn't about "becoming" another person- I already am who I am – I just want my body to reflect that. It's not like I'm suddenly changing into another person you've always known – this is more about your willingness to see who I have always been".

If you want to know more about the transgender community, you can find information from:

- www.beaumontsociety.org.uk – help and support for the transgender community
- <http://gires.org.uk/index.php> - Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIREs)
- www.stonewall.org.uk – charity supporting LGBT