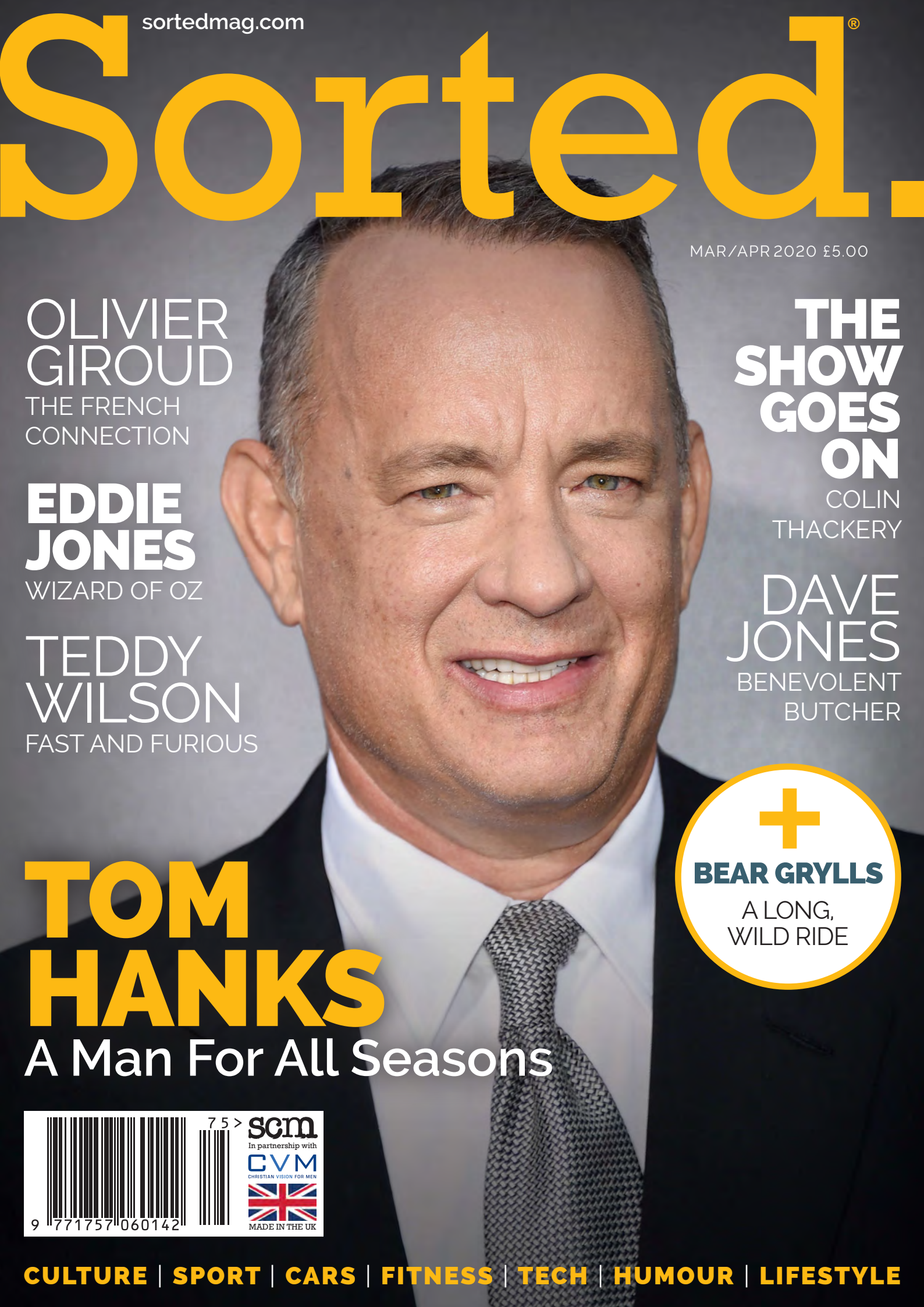
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Cover photo: Getty Images / Michael Loccisano



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# Jump To It

**1979 – the year of the Village People, jumpsuits and the Walkman. It was then my heart was broken for the first time and I became a world-class pogo stick expert. Definitely a year with its ups and downs.**



Getty Images / Michael Ochs Archives

It was my first year at Kingsleigh Secondary School in Bournemouth, happy carefree days. Imagine Grange Hill with less aggro and more seagulls. Blockbuster movies *Alien* and *Mad Max* were released in cinemas – not that I was allowed to watch them. On the radio, Village People were flying high with their party anthems 'YMCA' and 'Go West' and I still have all the moves as well as the hardhat and leather chaps.

As the decade ended, flares were replaced by baggy jeans; I thought I was the bee's knees in mine, which was just as well as a new girl had moved from Leeds to the south coast.

Gillian Dickinson was the prettiest girl in our year, and she lived on our street, less than a stone's throw or Cupid's arrow away. My house quickly became a base for me and my classmates to play out, hoping she'd notice us and our football skills, but we lost so many balls in the neighbours' gardens, they stopped handing them back.

We urgently rethought our strategy.

I found a pogo stick in the shed, gathering dust, and we 'jumped' into action. We spent hours on it and swiftly became pros. Jumping stairs, no hands, 180° spins, even a Malcolm X – look it up.

I'm pretty sure Gillian was oblivious to our efforts, but I discovered something along the way. Goals are important, but so is the journey there. You learn new things en route, have new and exciting experiences, and interact with people. I even built new relationships with the people travelling the journey (sometimes no-handed) with me. We had more laughs than scrapes and became friends for life, even after the Gillian Dickinson fan club disbanded.

It's a lesson I've tried to remember. Set goals but have fun along the way. Make it fun and the journey will be so much more enjoyable.

None of us got the girl. Gillian Dickinson gave me the bounce for a lad in the 4th year with designer stubble, a Walkman and a pair of Calvin Kleins but no pogo stick. What a loser. S.



VILLAGE PEOPLE WERE FLYING HIGH WITH THEIR PARTY ANTHEMS 'YMCA' AND 'GO WEST' AND I STILL HAVE ALL THE MOVES





**STEVE LEGG**

Steve is a British entertainer and motivational speaker. The author of 13 books, Steve launched *Sorted* at the Odyssey Arena, Belfast in 2007. *Sorted* has been voted the world's most wholesome men's magazine, with 100,000 readers in 21 countries.

@SteveLeggUK



# STALK THIS WAY

I've shared my romantic failings in the past but today I thought I'd share the story of how I met my wife. It was at a corporate event, and she seemed really nice, but I was too shy to ask for her number or her email address. I did, however, manage to get her actual home address... from the delegate roster near the entrance! So I thought to myself, 'How do I contrive a way to go round her house, without looking like a massive stalker?' I quickly came up with a plan – 'I'll park near her house, knock on the door, pretend it's a coincidence and explain that my car has broken down, my phone has run out of battery, and ask if I can come in to call the RAC.' From there surely romance would flow!

And that is exactly what I did. I parked near her house. I knocked on her door. She answered with a start. 'Hello, don't I know you' she asked, 'from the conference?' I feigned surprise. 'Gosh! No way! Is it... Sarah?' I knew exactly what her name was. She looked pleased. 'Wow! What's brought you out here?' 'Well, it's incredible really, but my car's broken down, my phone is out of battery and I just wondered if I could come in and call the RAC?' 'Of course you can,' she said, smiling. 'I've just put the kettle on, why don't you come in for a cuppa?' and she leaned towards me for one of those friendly 'both-cheek' kisses. I took a deep breath and as I stepped forward, from my pocket came a noise...' *You have arrived at your destination.*'

# SWALLOW THE CAMEL



News and views from funnyman, Rob Thomas

# SCOTT

I've had an idea for a new TV series called Scott about a petty criminal called Scott who never gets caught. Don't add the second word, it has to just be called Scott.





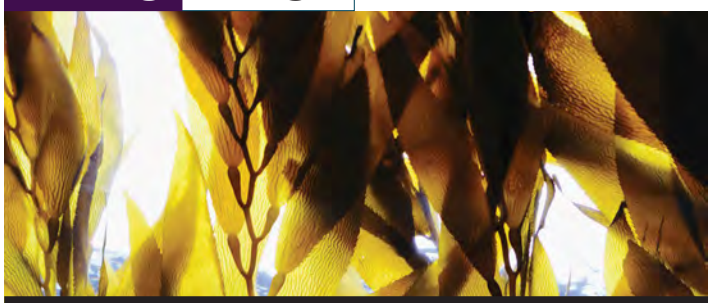
# Nunemployed

I wonder how much of nuns' contemplation time is spent contemplating how Mother Superiors managed to land the single most egotistical job title on the planet.

Wonder how that approach would go down at the garage... 'OK, lads, gather round. I wanna introduce the new gaffer. Before I get him in, you need to know, he's asked that we call him...' (coughs awkwardly) '... Mechanic Ultimate.'

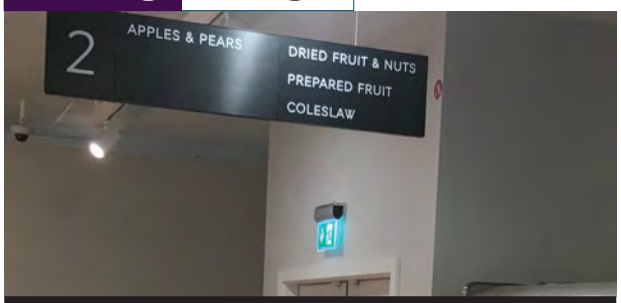


## NEWS FLASH



Did you know that seaweed is really good for you? If you're ever feeling ill, sea kelp.

## NEWS FLASH




So nice to see that Marks and Spencer are now using Cockney to indicate: the stairs/declared route/fire door.

# Marry-go-round




When I got married, my wife got me a digital watch. After a year it was irreparably damaged.

But enough about the marriage and back to the watch.

Only kidding – wind-up!

But enough about the watch and back to the marriage.

# Gym karma

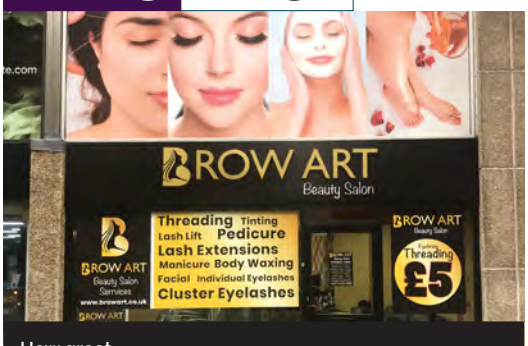
I'm jealous of my friends who've got personal trainers. Oh, to go for a jog without having to borrow a pair.



# ORDINARY WORD

A guy next to me on the train said to his friend, 'What's the girl version of bromance?' I thought about it for a bit and realised it's just friendship.

## NEWS FLASH




How great...

# SCONE ALONE

Midland Hotels surveyed 1,300 people across the UK to solve one of the country's most ancient and fiercely contested debates – is 'scone' pronounced to rhyme with 'gone' or 'cone'? In Scotland, 71 per cent pronounce it to rhyme with gone. In Northern Ireland it's a crushing 85 per cent who go likewise and the Welsh agree – but only just, with 51 per cent also thinking gone. Believe it or not, it's only when you get to Yorkshire stretching all the way down to London that you find the cone lovers. I don't want to tell you which I think it is. I was on the phon the other day to my friend who said that it's a little-knon fact that Brits are pron to dron on and on about this. They mon and gron in the pubs until they get thron out. I think you get the idea, sorry to drag own, don't want to sound posh like woan of the prone sandwich brigade, you see it's been this way since the doan of time... and it's jam then cream.



# Muddy muddy money

On a more personal note, does anyone want to sponsor me? I'm doing the Muddy McMud Monster Tough Action Scraped Knee Night-time McMudathon. It's this really cool challenge, only cost me 52 quid to enter, where you run on a treadmill in a gym for four hours from midnight, whilst they throw mud at you and rub your knees with sandpaper and spray a hose in your face. Then at the end (or the beginning; it doesn't really matter) they give you a massive medal that says 'I MURDERED the Muddy McMud Monster Tough Action Scraped Knee Nighttime McMudathon.'

It's great: it really helps with raising awareness of feeling that there's a meaning to things and that.

And then I'm going to do Trench Foot for Poverty. It's in Portugal and I get the flights and all that and if just half of you gave ten quid, and the other half of you twenty, then that sorts the financials. Then I'll be pretending mud is GREAT with a selfie stick for a few hours followed by two weeks off in the villa. BARBARIAN RRROOOAAARRRR!





**ROB THOMAS**

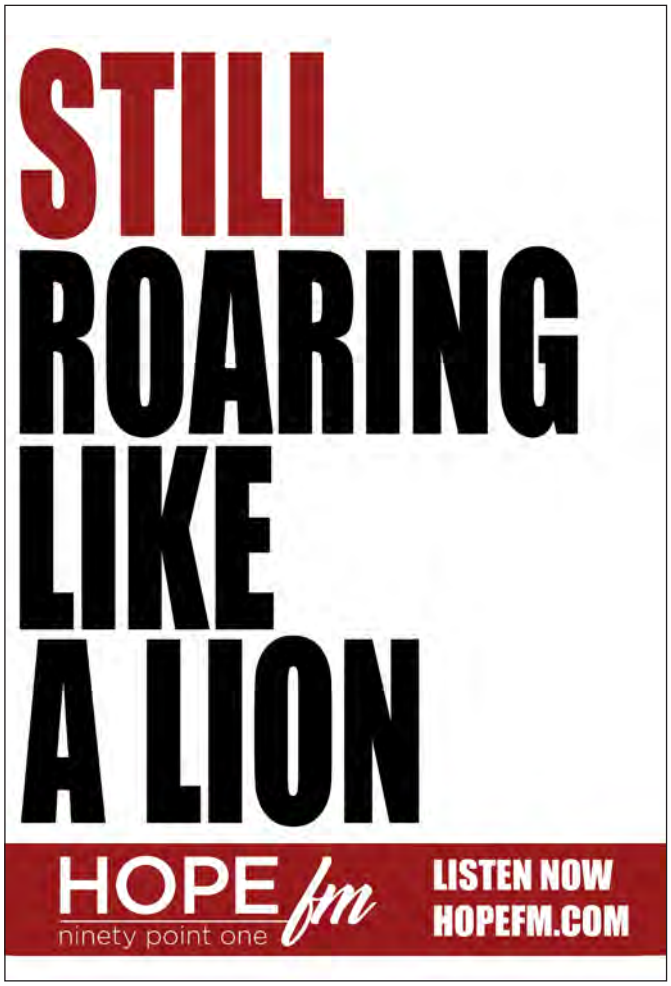
Rob Thomas is a stand-up comedian and winner of the UK Pun Championship. He has performed at churches, comedy clubs, the Edinburgh Fringe and all the major Christian festivals. His quirky mix of storytelling and physical comedy made him the London *Evening Standard*'s 'Critics Choice'.

Find out more and get in touch at www.robbyt.co.uk/sorted or follow Rob on Twitter @roblavs

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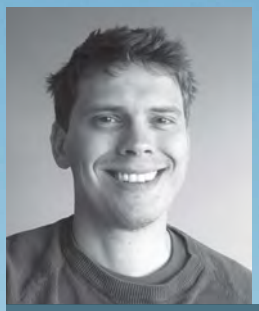

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# An adventurer of a different kind







Tom Morgan's adventure CV is a little odd. It includes traversing the Himalayas, helium balloons, children's motorbikes, tuk tuks and rubbish cars.

**Then you read the fine print and a few eyebrows begin to be raised. Tom tied himself to a bunch of helium balloons and flew across the skies of Africa to set up the world's most ridiculous air race. He rode monkey bikes across the Sahara to set up an adventure called the Monkey Run, and he has crossed continents in tin auto rickshaws that are barely suitable for a trip to the shops. We speak to Tom Morgan, founder of The Adventurists, to find out what on earth he's up to...**

### How did it all start?

I was on an exchange with a friend called Joolz in the Czech Republic when we were students studying fine art, which meant we had virtually no work to do and were drunk quite a lot of the time. We bought the world's worst Fiat 126 in the north of Prague which turned out to be two cars badly welded together. We ended up picking the most difficult place to drive – Mongolia – and set off without packing any spare clothes. We failed to get there as we didn't have the right visas, meaning we only reached the Iranian border. An idea was seeded however and a few years later we tried again, but were joined by six other teams...The Mongol Rally was born.

### What came next?

The Mongol Rally, basically teams driving from London to Mongolia (although the start and finish lines change from time to time) in rubbish cars, →

It was somewhere between mind-blowingly awesome and pants-browningly terrifying.







Robert Winchell

went from strength to strength and this year we'll get over 300 teams taking part. Epic chaos ensues each year, whether it is people being thrown in jail in Russia or getting lost in the Middle East, but no one ever finishes without having a few stories to tell.

As the popularity of the Rally grew, we realised there was a thirst for this kind of adventure, not least from ourselves, so we started think about what else we'd like to do – thinking if we wanted to do it, surely there were other people in the world stupid enough to want to do it too. We came up with a few different ideas and then launched The Rickshaw Run, riding across India in a rickshaw, followed by the world's longest horse race, The Mongol Derby, 1000 miles across Mongolia (I hasten to add that the riders do that distance, meaning lots of sore backsides, but the horses get changed every 25 miles).

### And now?

We do Monkey Runs through the Peruvian Amazon, Morocco, Romania and Mongolia. Monkey Bikes are basically children's motorbikes, which are incredible fun to ride and it doesn't really matter if you fall off because you're so close to the ground. They have an engine of 49cc which makes them almost completely useless for going uphill and so they're perfect for the Andes. An added bonus is that everyone laughs at you all the time, which makes getting to know the locals a whole lot easier.

We also now have Rickshaw Runs in the Himalayas and Sri Lanka and a horse race through Patagonia. There are also a few new things on the horizon, once we've figured out if there's any chance at all of not losing all the participants taking part.

### What's wrong with 'normal' adventure trips?

I think people can have an adventure anywhere. It's not so much about the activity, it's about the way you approach it. Some people would call climbing a mountain an adventure. I think that depends on how you do it. If you plan your trip or have a guide and an itinerary and all the right equipment, you can still have a nice time but it's not an adventure. It becomes either a holiday or it is a type of sport. Both great but if you climbed the same mountain but knew nothing about it and only got halfway up because you got lost and ran out of food, *then* you've had an adventure. To me adventure is about setting off into the unknown. You could have an adventure in a supermarket as much as you can in a far-flung setting. Our job is to set the stage for chaos. We're not a travel company or an adventure company, we try to give people chaos.



So it depends what you mean by 'normal adventure'. I'm not sure those two words go very well together. Like 'freezing hot'. But if you mean travel, holidays or outdoor sports then there is absolutely nothing wrong with them at all. It's awesome. I just think there is a need for people to get lost and stuck more often than they do as well.

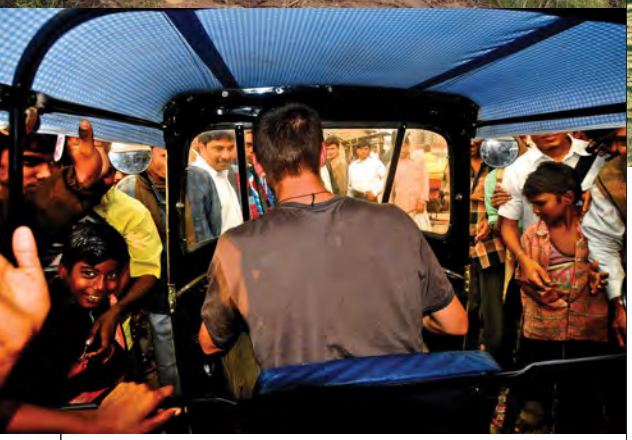
### What are you most proud of?

We ask everyone who takes part in one of our adventures to raise money for charity. We split this between our official charity partner, Cool Earth (a charity that works with local people to halt deforestation and climate change), and the participants' chosen charities. Over the years we've managed to raise 8 million pounds. I like to think we're helping save the world a little.



Henning of the Himalayahs





Team Yala Kidding Me!



## What's next?

I tied a hundred helium balloons to a camping chair in South Africa as a test run for a new and particularly ridiculous air race. I managed to get up to 2,438m and drifted around 16 miles, having to burst the balloons to get down again. It was somewhere between mind-blowingly awesome and pants-browningly terrifying.

## Final message

I think getting lost and stuck is an essential need for humans. Not everyone agrees with me, though. You could just rock up in a country and follow the tourist trail and have an amazing time. However, there's nothing like a little disaster in the back end of nowhere if you want to experience something truly memorable that forces you to embrace your surroundings and the people in it. These are the moments that modern life is missing. We believe the world is far too safe and organised, that we've come to live in ever-decreasing circles of freedom. Fear of litigation, greed and a spineless refusal to take responsibility for ourselves have robbed us of one of the most interesting things in life: the unexpected. Our adventures aim to rally against this, to force you to be lost, to not know what's around the next corner, to embrace the unknown. S.

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**William Wilberforce was loved as much as he was respected. Driven by his faith, he joined with others and campaigned to end the slave trade. It was a long, wild ride, and at times he was said to be both the most admired and the most hated man in England.**

Jesus was both admired and hated too. And those of us who are trying to live with Christ inside us can expect to face moments of negative reaction. But when we're properly rooted and looking to Him, those extremes won't matter so much. We have something greater inside ourselves than the opinions of others. We hold the keys to life and freedom in our hearts. Christ brings that to us, quietly and with love. He brings joy, never religion.

When I was growing up, church services so often were lacking in joy. They seemed to be about rules and solemn voices – no wonder I assumed that God was cold and impersonal.

But Jesus wants to show us the truth about what it means to live with Him.

> I have come that [you] may have life, and have it to the full.
> **John 10:10**

When we try to live in Jesus' footsteps, things get put into perspective. The highs and lows that used to turn our heads can begin to lose their power. And the quiet, still, unsung moments can excite our hearts. The joy of Jesus creeps up on us. Finally – perhaps for the first time in our lives – we begin to discover what true freedom really looks like. S.

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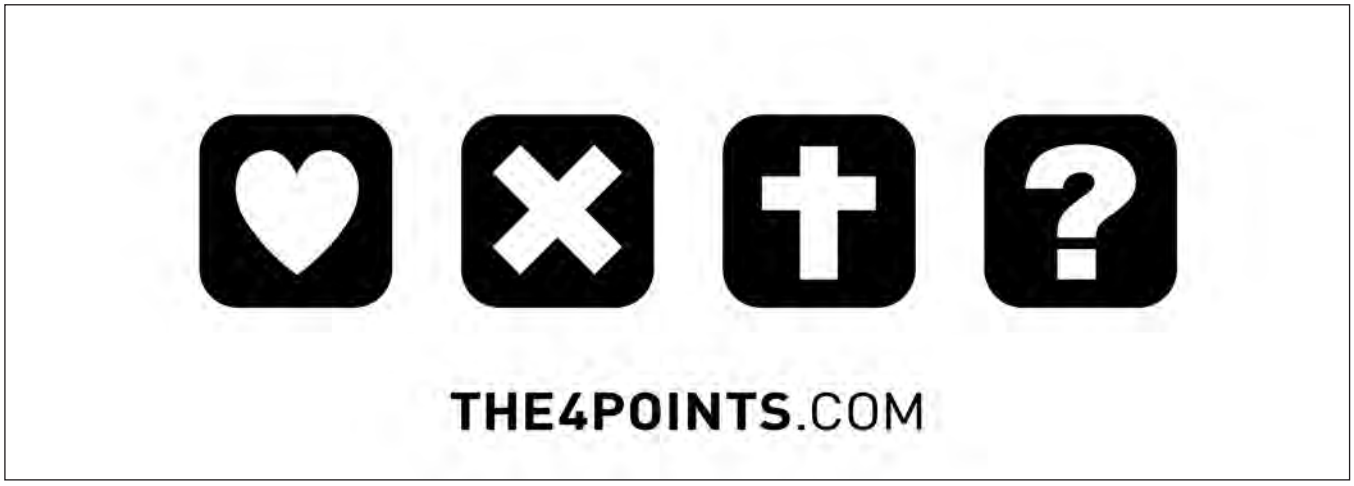

Extract taken from *Soul Fuel* by Bear Grylls published by Zondervan in US and Hodder Faith in the UK.



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# How you can listen so others can talk



Ask another man if he'd like to talk and then just listen.

**Over 30 years working with thousands of men I've discovered most will talk about their concerns and feelings. Recent research from Movember[1] confirms my experience: more than three-quarters of men recognise that talking is an effective way to deal with problems, and the same proportion has at least one person to talk to.**

Yet in the same survey, 58% say society expects them to be emotionally strong and not show weakness. 62% of men who say they're under pressure don't talk to avoid being unmanly (38% of all men). 43% wish they could talk openly about personal problems but don't. 41% regret opening up in the past because they weren't taken seriously or respected.

My experience is that once men get talking, you can't shut them up. The problem is many must overcome obstacles like 'being manly'. So how do we encourage more guys to open up?

We need more men who know how to listen.

Most of us think simply listening to another man is too passive to make any difference but done with care and respect, it's a gift. When a man listens, he demonstrates that what others have to say is valuable and talking is useful. With space to talk, a man can think. Seemingly insurmountable problems are exposed to the light and broken down into manageable pieces. He can run scenarios and test ideas. His confidence grows.

A while ago in a mentor training session, I ran a simple listening exercise. The guys paired up into speakers and listeners. The latter were asked to push their opinions aside, look interested, say little except to ask a few questions, and refrain from offering advice. Their job was to create space for the other men to talk, think and solve their own problems. We all felt unnatural but agreed to try it in our mentoring sessions.

A few days later a man I was mentoring was struggling to articulate his problem and then work out his course of action. I was dying to interrupt to tell him what I thought was the bleeding obvious answer. But he soon came up with a far better solution and left happy and empowered. I was so glad I kept my mouth shut.

My invitation to you is to ask another man if he'd like to talk and then just listen. That's all you need to create space for magic to happen. S.



1. *Perceptions of Masculinity and the Challenges of Opening Up* by Ipsos Mori October 2019 surveyed 4,000 men in Australia, Canada, UK and USA. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/amhf/pages/722/attachments/original/1572840692/Movember_Masculinity_Report_%281%29.pdf?1572840692

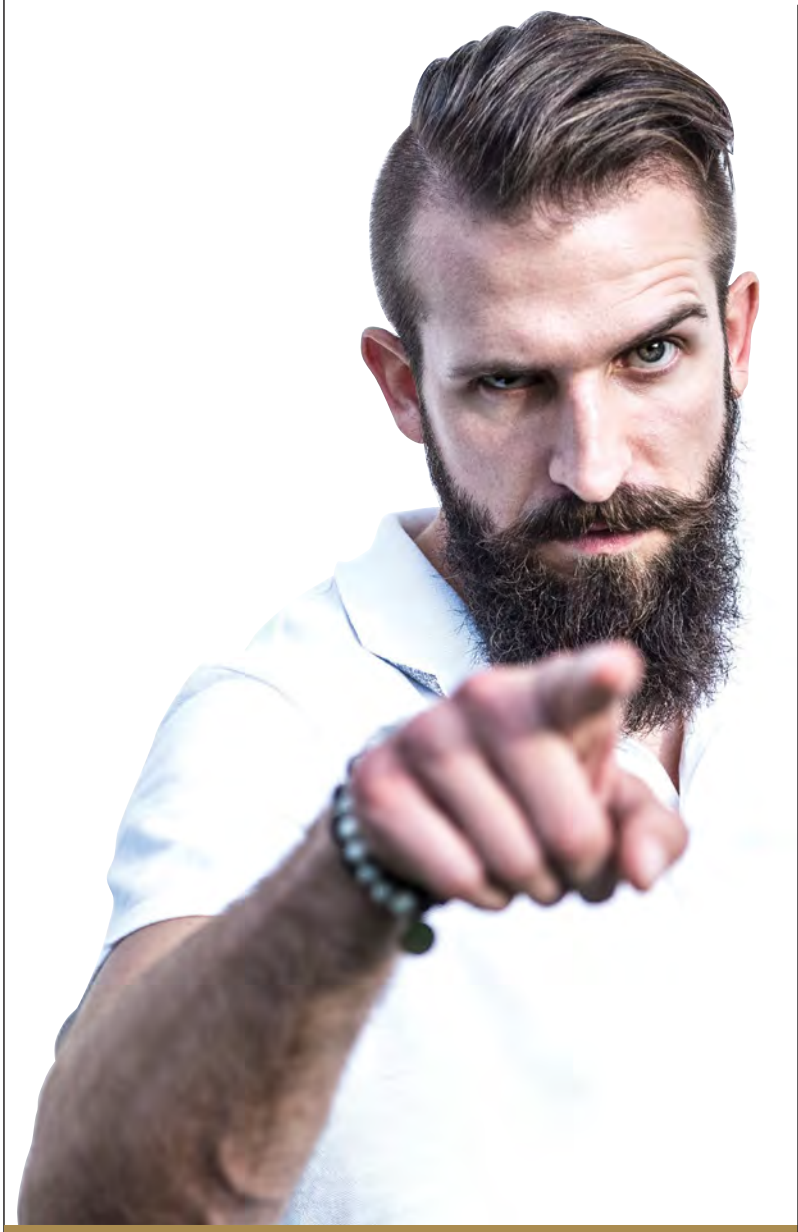


**MILES PROTTER**

Miles Protter is a thought leader who's been seeking to understand how we become good men. He offers mentoring, retreats and workshops for men to connect, reflect, and grow. Contact Miles on miles@mensbusiness.net. More articles and resources are available on mensbusiness.net/blog/ and videos on his Youtube channel

mensbusiness.net

# BE EASY TO DO BUSINESS WITH





THIS GUY JUMPED AT ME WHILE I WAS TAKING A PHOTO. 'NO PHOTOS, NO PHOTOS!' HE BARKED.

**I've spent most of my life as a DJ in one way or another. These days vinyl has made a big comeback and my struggling local indoor market has cottoned on to this trend and now has an amazing monthly record fair. I went along last week, picked up some vinyl, ate some good food, and then started to look around the older market stalls. There was a stall with clothes and comedy jumpers on it, a mix of rude, cheesy and random ones. I'd not seen a stall like this in ages, so I pulled out my phone to take a photo of a jumper that made me laugh, to put on social media.**

And this guy jumped at me while I was taking a photo. 'No photos, no photos!' he barked.

I backed off but even then, he and his assistant were prowling around, scowling. They looked scared, and a bit scary and they had faces like a smacked ar*e. I tried to chat to him politely, and point out that maybe fun photos on social media could actually increase his visibility and sales in this new hipster type market. He wouldn't listen, he just didn't get it. His stall remained empty, scary and uninviting.

Some people in business literally have no idea how business works. It's very sad. Maybe he was having a bad day, I thought, but then I saw on almost every rack on his massive stall there was a handwritten sign saying 'No photos' – a sign I hadn't seen, by the way!

No welcoming signs or even prices, just instructions saying 'No! No! No!' Being controlling never works. If you own or you're just working in a business, you're a public figure. So get yourself out there, smile for selfies, be welcoming and laugh with people. If you do, they'll buy from you or come back. If he'd had a sense of humour, he'd have made an extra few quid from me and maybe got extra customers, building his SEO and online footprint as well. But he pushed me away – how many others did he push away that day too?

Be proud of what you do or what you sell. Be open to photos and promotion. Don't take yourself too seriously, and be easy to do business with: it could mean the difference between success and failure. It really isn't that difficult.S



**LEE JACKSON**

Lee Jackson is an award-winning motivational speaker and presentation coach and the author of twelve books. He loves good comedy and basketball but doesn't like gardening. His Twitter handle is @leejackson, his hashtag is #getgood and his website is leejackson.biz A longer version of this article is available on his website.

**leejackson.biz**

**@leejackson**

# MEN

# THEY'RE WORTH SAVING

## One man dies every 45 minutes from prostate cancer



PROSTATE CANCER UK

**Men, we are with you**

5300

Prostate Cancer UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1005541) and in Scotland (SC039332). Registered company number 02653887.



# WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU, MR BOND

BOND MUST ONCE AGAIN SWING INTO ACTION IN ORDER TO SAVE THE WORLD AND PREVENT DISASTER.

**BY ANDY GODFREY**

**Between March and April this year at least 18 new films are scheduled to be released in British cinemas. Several of them feature big name stars and directors and have big budgets, but none are as widely anticipated as the new James Bond movie, out on 2 April. Fans will already have that date ringed in their diaries and the whole movie-going world will be holding its breath to see what a new team of writers, a first time Bond director and some returning actors have crafted.**

*No time to die* has had a troubled production history, in which the original director, Danny Boyle, walked off the set having had 'creative differences' with the film's original writer John Hodge. Boyle went on to make last year's highly successful Beatles-inspired flick *Yesterday* with Richard Curtis while the writing duties on *No time to die* went to, among others, Phoebe Waller-Bridge. Best known for the ground-breaking BBC 4 series *FleaBag*, Waller-Bridge is likely to bring a lighter element to Bond and certainly will ensure the film's female characters provide more than glamour. The trailer introduces us to Lashana Lynch, playing Naomi, an 00 agent – though this is not a first. Both *Thunderball* and *The world is not enough* featured female agents and as recently as *Skyfall* the current Miss Moneypenny was working out in the field with Bond. In fact, she shot him!

*No time to die* begins with Bond in retirement and living in Jamaica (Ian Fleming's home from home!) It's been five years since the capture of Blofeld and Bond is approached by Felix Leiter, (played once again by Jeffrey Wright) his friend and a CIA officer, who enlists his help in the search for a missing scientist. When it becomes apparent that the scientist was abducted, Bond must once again swing into action in order to save the world and prevent disaster. The trailer certainly looks tantalising.

Mention should also be made of the first time Bond director: Cary Joji Fukunaga gained recognition for writing and directing the 2009 film *Sin Nombre*, and the 2011 adaptation of *Jane Eyre*. He was also the director and executive producer of the first season of the HBO series *True Detective*, for which he won the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Directing for a Drama Series. He received acclaim for the 2015 war drama *Beasts of No Nation*, in which he was writer, director, producer, and cinematographer. As a massive Bond fan, and one who has been delighted by Daniel Craig's performances in the role, I am really looking forward to the new film and have high hopes that it will deliver a high octane and fitting conclusion to Craig's time as the famous agent.

## RELEASE DATES

- ***Onward***
  6 March
- ***Escape from Pretoria***
  6 March
- ***And Then We Danced***
  13 March
- ***The Way Back***
  13 March
- ***Bacurau***
  13 March
- ***Mulan***
  27 March
- ***The Painted Bird***
  27 March
- ***No Time to Die***
  2 April
- ***The New Mutants***
  8 April
- ***Les Misérables***
  24 April



## MULAN THE LIVE ACTION REMAKE

Also hoping to make a killing at the box office is Disney's latest live action remake, *Mulan*, out on 27 March. Starring Yifei Liu, the film tells the story of a young Chinese girl who disguises herself as a boy in order to save her father. Disney has been keen to emphasise that the film's cast are entirely from China and, in a change from the animated version, has dropped the character of Mushu, who was a talking dragon. The film looks spectacular, and would be perfect family viewing over the Easter holidays.

## LIGHTS, CAMERA ACTION: OTHER SPRING RELEASES

In and amidst the fantasy and action, every now and then a film comes out which reminds us that the real world can be harsh. One such film is released on 6 March. *Escape from Pretoria* tells the story of two white prisoners, put away for working for the ANC, who are trying to escape from the notorious Robben Island prison, and it stars Daniel Radcliffe and Daniel Webber. Another title looking at the seamy side of life is *Les Misérables* (not another remake of the musical), a crime drama set in the poorer regions of Paris. This film already has a fistful of awards and award nominations

Redemption is the theme of *The way back*, in which Ben Affleck plays a former basketball star struggling with alcoholism. When he is offered the chance to teach at his old high school all sorts of old demons begin to confront him. Affleck is a tremendous actor and this film sees him deliver another great performance. *The Painted Bird* should probably come with a health warning. It goes on for almost three hours and, during its screening at the 2019 Venice film festival, almost half the audience walked out. It is a deeply moving tale of a young Jewish boy seeking refuge in Eastern Europe during the Second World War, and stars Harvey Keitel, as a priest who goes on to play a large part in the boy's life, Stellan Skarsgard and Julian Sands.

Other films to look out for this spring include *And then we danced*, a romantic drama set in a dance school; *Onward*, an animated fantasy in which two elves set out to discover the source of magic, and *Bacurau*, a fantasy set in the near future. After the death of her grandmother a young girl comes home to her matriarchal village in Brazil. A succession of sinister events seems to mobilise the residents with life-changing consequences. As a fan of fantasy films, I am really looking forward to this one. Speaking of fantasy, *The New Mutants* is also out in March. The story centres on five young mutants being held against their will in a secret facility and discovering their gifts. Josh Boone, who previously wrote the well-received *The fault in our stars*, directs. S.



MULAN ... WOULD BE PERFECT FAMILY VIEWING OVER THE EASTER HOLIDAYS.



THE PAINTED BIRD SHOULD PROBABLY COME WITH A HEALTH WARNING.





**ANDY GODFREY**

Andy has spent most of his life in full-time Christian work in the UK and in Eastern Europe. Today he works for the *Good News Paper*, with Outreach UK and as a rep for Christian Aid. His free time is spent in a cinema or watching Bristol City.

@andymgodfrey1

# Life, Death and the Thrill of the Catch



## GONE FISHING SERIES 1 & 2

### Paul Whitehouse and Bob Mortimer

**The *Fast Show* this is not, more *The Slow Show* and the gentle pace of the fishing and the nature of the self-deprecating humour give room for some honest reflection.**

Both comedians having suffered heart problems, Paul Whitehouse suggests he and his old mate Bob Mortimer go fishing for a while, as it is a sport tailormade for relaxation and forgetting your troubles. So the two comedy chaps head off, armed with the right gear to catch scaly swimming things, and a plan to eat heart-healthy food. Paul is the expert, Bob the novice. Men are best at talking when they have something else to worry about, and this is true here. As they sit by the water, casting off and reeling in, the two friends joke, reminisce and banter about waders, health, parties, fish, bad backs, meatballs and Robert De Niro. Throwing a fistful of gentle jibes at one another along the way, they swap tales of their own fathers and of themselves being dads, and Bob even discusses crying on one occasion. The laughs are gently done, and the scenery on its own is enough to mellow you down. The humorous heroes go searching for tench and roach in Norfolk, rainbow trout in Derbyshire, barbell in Herefordshire, carp in Essex and so on, bedding down along the way in yurts, cabins, beach huts and even a railway carriage and a bus. They are upfront about their health troubles, including swapping scars, and you don't have to be into fishing to enjoy the company of a couple of aging comics bantering without too much cynicism about vulnerability, mortality and wearing out. *The Fast Show* this is not, more *The Slow Show* and the gentle pace of the fishing and the nature of the self-deprecating humour give room for some honest reflection: something we blokes don't always find easy. The language is sometimes on the wild side, but if you can take that, it's worth a look.

## SORRY WE MISSED YOU

Out on DVD soon

When Ricky finally gets a job, after a long stretch out of work, he thinks he has landed on his feet. Driving for PDF deliveries he is self-employed, his own boss, and the man at PDF promises him he can earn good money. He also tells him he doesn't work for PDF, but with them.

This is not the good news Ricky thinks it is. He is given his own digital device, for registering his daily orders, and he must deliver everything within a given time slot. If he loses the device, it will cost him £1000. If he misses a day's work, he has to find a replacement driver. In order to buy his own van, he persuades Abbie, his wife, to sell her car, even though this is vital transport for her job as a home carer. Like Ricky, Abbie has a list of clients to reach every day, with limited time to do so, and bussing the journeys adds extra stress. Both are now working long hours and the pressure builds on Ricky and his family. His daughter Eliza starts to wish things could go back to the time before dad took up driving. His son Sebastian meanwhile is skipping school.

This is a tough tale of life at the edges, about a caring family shredded by the nature of modern living. It's acted with gritty realism, featuring characters that are always believable.




**GONE FISHING SERIES 1 & 2**
Paul Whitehouse
and Bob Mortimer




**SORRY WE MISSED YOU**




**MADE IN SCOTLAND**
Billy Connolly

This is a family desperate to pull together, in spite of the growing stress and heavy burdens placed on them. If you want a story that will open your eyes to the injustice in this country hidden in plain sight, take a look. Oh, and be kind to the delivery man or woman at your door. You never know what sort of day they have had or what pressures they are living with.

## MADE IN SCOTLAND

### Billy Connolly

Out now

**Reviewed by Ali Hull**

Despite suffering from Parkinson's disease, Billy Connolly is still going, and still loved – particularly in his native Scotland. The subtitle of this DVD is 'Billy's love letter to Scotland' – and that exactly describes this pair of BBC documentaries; a mutual love affair. He returns to some of the places and people who matter to him; his native Glasgow, the streets, the pubs, but also the art galleries and the incredible Scottish scenery. Along the way, there are plenty of jokes and stories, details of his 'early influences and motivations', as well as footage of his appearances over the years. He has a go at everything – including faith – and his language is as ripe as ever. But he is big-hearted and a pleasure to watch. S.





**DAVE HOPWOOD**

Dave Hopwood is a freelance writer and speaker. Accessible, entertaining and honest, he spends much of his time communicating the Christian faith using contemporary media and relevant language. He is author of several books, including *The Bloke's Bible*, and *Film & Faith*.

# *The Irishman* on Netflix

★★★★★

**BY JIM McKELLAR**

**When Martin Scorsese pulls together an ensemble of Hollywood royalty that includes Robert De Niro, Al Pacino, and Joe Pesci, fans of gangster films know they are in for a treat. The director of classics such as *Goodfellas* (1990) and *Casino* (1995) has form in exploring the mob, and in *The Irishman* he doesn't disappoint. Although the violence, profanity and run time of just under three and a half hours all exclude it from ever being family fun, this is no crude bad guy kills bad guys fast action romp. It is much more than that.**

The film is based on the book *I Heard You Paint Houses* by Charles Brandt, and the title refers to the gore left on the walls after a hit and is code for ordering a killing. Frank (The Irishman) Sheeran, superbly played by De Niro, is the outsider hired to paint.

An elderly wheelchair-bound Frank is being interviewed in a nursing home. He recalls how he starts out as a petty criminal in 1950's Pennsylvania, and rapidly moves up the criminal hierarchy to become a runner and top hitman for the Philadelphia mob. The story is told through a series of flashbacks over the decades, that by luck and design find him in the right place at the right time, grabbing the opportunities presented. For those earlier scenes, the actors are digitally enhanced younger versions of themselves. The results of this are not completely convincing, but don't hinder the development of the story.

Right from the opening shots, Frank is a lonely, hard-bitten and self-centred old man, who refuses to be apologetic or seek forgiveness for the mayhem he created.

The tight friendships of Frank, Jimmy Hoffa (Pacino) of the notorious Teamsters Union, and Russell Buffalino (Pesci) the head of the Philadelphia crime family, are the lynch pin holding the plot together. The slow pace, and lengthy run time allows Scorsese to develop a lot of detail in the narrative that adds to the game. As a downside, it may just be too long and glacial to take in one sitting for some. Then again, Netflix on the small screen allows the viewer to dip in and out at their leisure.

Typical Scorsese, there are a number of humorous aspects throughout the film. I particularly like where sleazy comically ugly characters are introduced in the flashbacks. The frame is frozen as the likes of Fat Tony Salerno, Tony Pro Provenzo, Crazy Joe Callo and Skinny Razor make their entries. It is hard not to find yourself having a chuckle . It will be quickly followed by the kicker cringe as their deaths are described. Deaths by natural causes are a rarity in the gangster fraternity.

Supported by Netflix and a fine soundtrack from Robbie Robertson (songwriter and vocalist for The Band), Scorsese and his troupe have produced an excellent picture. By its very nature this will not appeal to everyone, but it deserves and will surely get a huge audience. S.

FANS OF GANGSTER FILMS KNOW THEY ARE IN FOR A TREAT.



BOUND & GAGGED COMEDY presents

# JOHN ARCHER

## AGAINST THE ODDS

BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT

"AMAZING!"
SIMON COWELL

"HUGELY FUNNY. HUGELY TALENTED. YOU ARE A SUPERSTAR"
DAVID WALLIAMS

"HYSTERICALLY FUNNY"
DERREN BROWN

"POWERFUL AND INCREDIBLY ENTERTAINING"
★★★★★
EDINBURGH EVENING NEWS

"JOHN ARCHER WILL BLOW YOUR MIND"
DYNAMO



"YOU COULD PUT JOHN ARCHER ANYWHERE AND HE WOULD KILL AN AUDIENCE"
PENN JILLETTE (PENN & TELLER)

FEBRUARY 2020
1 EPSOM Playhouse
7 BRADFORD The Studio
8 SOUTHEND Palace Theatre
21 NORTHAMPTON Royal & Derngate
28 NEW MILTON Forest Arts Centre

MARCH 2020
1 SHREWSBURY Theatre Severn
7 GLOUCESTER Guildhall
13 BORDON Pheonix Arts Centre
14 COLCHESTER Arts Centre
20 STOCKTON ARC
22 BIRMINGHAM Old Rep Theatre
27 BARROW-IN-FURNESS The Forum
28 FAREHAM Ashcroft Arts Centre

APRIL 2020
3 GUILDFORD G-Live
4 FOLKESTONE Quaterhouse
24 HARLOW Playhouse

MAY 2020
17 SALFORD The Lowry

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# The Brexit antidote




Getty Images / Peter Summers

## REBELLION

**Philip Yorke**

Mashiach Publishing £9.99

★★★★

The first in a planned series of five in what feels like a seventeenth century version of *Star Wars*: a battle between the forces of good and evil. *Rebellion* is a fast-paced, gritty account of the deeds of Francis Hacker, a confidante of Oliver Cromwell and a renowned Parliamentarian military commander.

The plot, with Hacker at its heart, takes the reader to a time when fathers and sons were torn apart, their loyalties divided and their faith put to the test in a way we cannot comprehend. There are many twists and turns plus a quite shocking ending. All in all, it's a great debut from an author writing in the Bernard Cornwell tradition.

## STANDING UP, SPEAKING OUT: FORTY YEARS OF FIGHTING INJUSTICE

**Mervyn Thomas**

River Publishing & Media Ltd £9.99

★★★

**Review by Des Thomas**

Following a lengthy acknowledgement of those who started Christian Solidarity Worldwide, this book comes to life with stories of people who live out their faith under extreme pressure.

Paul Negrut finding out his co-pastor, the only person he trusted in Romania was working for the Securitate is harrowing but sadly this book highlights many cases of harassment, torture and murder meted out to individuals, families and communities who are firm in their faith. The book is a bit disjointed but nevertheless inspirational as we hear of courageous individuals willing to speak and stand up for religious freedom for all faiths.

## DECLINE AND FAIL

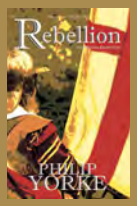
**John Crace**

Guardian Faber £9.99

★★★★★

**Review by Jim McKellar**

Whatever one's views on Brexit, many will probably agree, despite the recent election result, that it is the nagging toothache that just won't go away. Relief might seem in sight, only for it to be snatched away by the dim-witted, ill-prepared, self-absorbed and incompetent politicians' failure to lead or offer hope. John Crace's *Decline and Fail* might just be the entertaining painkiller required. He wittily spares no one in this selection of political sketches that




**REBELLION**
Philip Yorke



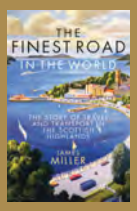

**STANDING UP, SPEAKING OUT**
Mervyn Thomas




**DECLINE AND FAIL**
John Crace




**GRANDAD**
Andrew Parkinson




**THE FINEST ROAD IN THE WORLD**
James Miller




**A BETTER AMBITION**
Tim Farron




**MUDLARKING**
Lara Maiklem




Getty Images / Matt Cardy

move from the chaos of May and Corbyn to the three-ring circus of BoJo. The support acts are also given a fair lashing. Cutting, funny and perceptive. A must read.

## GRANDAD

**Andrew Parkinson**

Haynes manuals £12.99

★★★★★

Haynes have to be one of the most innovative publishers working in the industry at the moment, and this book is no exception to that. Appearing in their concise manual size, so therefore smaller and cheaper than the previous books, it is the same delightful mix of photos and text, clear and packed with information – from how to respect the rules the children's parents want you to follow, to what to do on a rainy day (or indeed a sunny one). The first chapter looks at the role of grandparenting, the different stages that children go through, and what is appropriate at each stage. Then the fun starts! A great present for any man who is about to be, or already is, a grandad.

## THE FINEST ROAD IN THE WORLD

**James Miller**

Birlinn £9.99

★★★★

The book's sub-title says it all: 'The story of travel and transport in the Scottish Highlands.' If you are not interested in any of that, this isn't the book for you. I found it fascinating. Scotland is, to many of us who live south of the border, something of a mystery and an unknown. Vast areas are not only without people, they are without roads – in fact, parts of it are less well populated than they were a few centuries ago. How do you travel from one place to another when the terrain is so unhospitable, and how do you provide roads or build tracks when the land doesn't want you to do so? Read the book while the days are still cold and the evenings dark, then visit in the summer.

## A BETTER AMBITION: CONFESSIONS OF A FAITHFUL LIBERAL

**Tim Farron**

SPCK £19.99

★★★★

At the time of writing, the Liberal Democrats are still licking their wounds from the December 2019 election, and seeking a new leader. This is the autobiography of their penultimate one – Tim Farron, who was hounded by the press over his views on homosexuality, to the exclusion, virtually, of all else. The book mainly traces his political career, from the moment he became a Liberal – when he was still a teenager. He was heavily involved in student politics and as a councillor, before he became a hard-working MP. And he is one of the few Lib Dem MPs to have held onto his seat, even when their numbers were reduced. Is it an interesting book? In places. If you are interested in politics, then I recommend it. And if you want to know what Liberals stand for, then you must read it. I suspect most of us just see them as an alternative to the two big parties, without having much idea of what they believe.

## MUDLARKING: LOST AND FOUND ON THE RIVER THAMES

**Lara Maiklem**

Bloomsbury £18.99

★★★★★

I was not aware of the term mudlarking, nor of the practice: searching the riverbanks for lost treasures. But there has now been a TV series about it, and this book tells you everything you need to know. It is not a how to guide, but one woman's passion for the river Thames, which she has been plundering now for many years. And it is fascinating. Despite the fact that she must spend much of her time dirty, wet and cold, the joy of discovery and the desire to find keep her going in her searches. Throughout the book, she tells the stories of the history of London, of the people who would have first owned the coins or the pipes or whatever she has found, and of others who have searched for treasures alongside the river. Enthusiasm is infectious, and she clearly loves what she does. If you enjoyed the series *The Detectorists*, and have wondered about following in their footsteps, mudlarking provides another way of getting hold of the past. S.

He is one of the few Lib Dem MPs to have held onto his seat.



**ALI HULL**

Ali Hull is addicted to books – reading them, and helping others write them, polish them, publish them and publicise them.



# SUNRISE TO SUNSET

## EVERYDAY LIFE

**Coldplay**

✪✪✪

This sixteen-track double album, with the first half entitled 'Sunrise' and the other 'Sunset', is very different from previous Coldplay releases, and highly likely to divide opinion. It is more about the socio-political landscape and embracing one another as family, than about making pop anthems that will spin the globe for decades to come.

The closing track 'Everyday Life', perhaps one of the more melodically memorable, summarises the album's main themes of love, equality, pain, humanity and hope.

'Trouble In Town' records police harassment, featuring real audio of police brutalisation and racial profiling; 'Guns' criticises soft gun laws; and heartfelt piano ballad 'Daddy' sketches the disconnect between sons and fathers. In addition to these already weighty topics, lead singles 'Orphans' and 'Arabesque' tackle the refugee crisis and extreme religious disunity. A minor reprise comes in the form of the retro gospel 'BrokEn' and fifties style 'Cry, Cry, Cry'.

*Everyday Life* is interesting listening, more of a grower than immediate, and leaves you wondering whether Coldplay's concerns about today's pertinent issues have overtaken their desire to write instantaneous hits or whether they should be commended for such a brave and honest venture.



## HOPE HAS A NAME

**River Valley Worship**

✪✪✪✪

This customised collection features eleven impressive and spirited songs recorded live from 'River Valley Worship', a collective of musicians and singers based at various River Valley Church locations across the Greater Minneapolis area, USA. Inspired by their Christian faith, they write as a response to what they see God doing in their church and region. Judging by the eloquence of the lyrics and the anthemic nature of the music, it seems there is plenty of hope, promise and vision in River Valley. The stirring 'Hope Has A Name', the heartening 'Calvary's Shadow' and the impassioned 'World Needs Jesus' are highlights from an album full of gems.



**EVERYDAY LIFE**
Coldplay



**HOPE HAS A NAME**
River Valley Worship




**ROD STEWART**
You're in my heart




**SUITE NO 2: WORLD KEEPS SPINNING**
The Brilliance



## ROD STEWART

### You're in my heart

✪✪✪

Legendary, distinctive and enduring are just a few words to describe one of the greatest rock artists alive today. With a career spanning almost sixty years, and an impressive list of best-selling albums and singles to his name, this spiky-haired, raspy-voiced artist has successfully voyaged from being a young 'Rod-the Mod' during the adventurous 1960s to releasing an MOR album of his greatest hits accompanied by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Too many to mention, but all of his celebrated songs are there, and apart from two new recordings, which includes a raucous duet with Robbie Williams on 'It Takes Two', the RPO play to Stewart's original vocals. A classic and nostalgic listen which finds you singing along in true memory-lane style.

A CLASSIC AND NOSTALGIC LISTEN WHICH FINDS YOU SINGING ALONG IN TRUE MEMORY-LANE STYLE.



## SUITE NO 2: WORLD KEEPS SPINNING

### The Brilliance

✪✪✪✪

Life-long friends John Arndt and David Gungor colour outside the lines of familiarity and formula by continually creating music with intensity, artistry and intrigue. Fourth album *World Keeps Spinning* delivers a scenic mix of songs ranging from the orchestral 'Release Me' to the pop-infused 'How Do We Know', with unexpected dalliances with the chorale and the indie-acoustic. Very much a concept album, it explores the causes of modern anxiety and searches for ways to cope in the face of existential dread, and the title track is an appeal to be more extreme in our love and acceptance of others. Skilfully crafted and reassuring, this is an album to absorb. S.



**SUE RINALDI**

Sue Rinaldi travels internationally as a concert artist, worship coordinator, speaker and creative consultant. A self-confessed info junkie and movie enthusiast, her interest in culture, justice, technology and the future fuels her living and writing.

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**@suerinaldimedia**

# QUALITY 'WHEELS'



If you're curious about cars, check out what our motoring editor, Tim Barnes-Clay, has been test-driving since our last issue.








## NEW TOYOTA SUPRA

It is a Japanese car scene legend. Yes, the name 'Supra' brings joy to automotive aficionados everywhere. And guess what? It's back.

Toyota has been teasing us with the model's return for what seems like forever. And it's the beast we've been hoping for.

Looks-wise, the car is bold and brawny – and this mirrors what's under the metal, too. Beneath the lengthy bonnet, there's a bulging six-cylinder powerplant, just bursting at the seams with clout. Then there's the cosy, well-equipped cabin for two under the Toyota's roof – and the obligatory rear spoiler.

If you're buying this for play purposes – and you will be – the 3.0-litre lump will please you. It is silky-smooth, pushing out 340ps, propelling the Toyota to 62mph in 4.3 seconds via an eight-speed auto box. Oh, and the top speed is 155mph. That is licence-losing territory right there.

2020's rear-wheel-drive Supra is a clear triumph when it comes to entertainment. But it's a lot of dosh for a non-premium marque. Happily, though, the car's cabin is generously trimmed and is a more pleasant place to sit than, say, a similarly priced Porsche.



## FAST FACTS

**Toyota GR Supra 3.0 Pro – as tested**

**Max. speed:** 155mph
**0-62mph:** 4.3s
**Combined mpg:** 34.45
**Engine layout:** 2998cc, 6-cylinder turbo petrol
**Max. power (PS):** 340
**CO2:** 170g/km
**£54,000**



Admirers of fast cars from the Far East will be delighted to learn, then, that the Supra's return to these shores is a victory. It is a talented sports car with hot looks and a responsive rear end. I just wish I had a spare £54,000 because it was hard to give this motor back after a week behind its wheel.

# It's a solid, comfortable car with enough space for the brood.













## SSANGYONG KORANDO

Yes, guys, I know – it's another SUV. Yawn. Oh, are you still here? Well, you should be because even though SsangYong's new Korando has a face only a mother could love, it's a winner in every other department.

It's a solid, comfortable car with enough space for the brood. The Korando's boot does the job for a family, too.

The compact crossover SUV is well-made inside and out; it looks genuinely durable for years to come, which is what you'd hope for from your next main car. The automatic gearbox shifter looks like a golf club, and there are lots of slabs of black plastic, but it's been put together with accuracy.

Whether you opt for a diesel or a petrol is up to you – both variants are efficient. Diesel isn't the cool fuel to have any more, but it's still unbeatable if you're regularly driving long distances. I managed 40mpg in the 1.6 Pioneer diesel 4x4 Auto, on test here. It's also useful for towing. So, if you need to lug a trailer or whatever, you can – as long as it doesn't exceed 2,000kg. I also drove the petrol variant and was impressed. It can't match the towing prowess of the diesel, but it can still handle up to 1,500kg. The 1.5 GDI-turbo petrol also offers good fuel economy and decent clout, producing 163PS of max power.

Behind the wheel, the diesel-propelled Korando sounds a tad clattery. Fortunately, the noise settles once things warm up. It's not quick, either. It'll get you from 0-62mph in twelve seconds. The steering is a little vague, too, but the delivery of power is even, helped by the able six-speed automatic gearbox.

The Pioneer version, fitted with either two or four-wheel drive, is well-appointed with an eight-inch infotainment display, heated front seats and a heated steering wheel. It also houses Apple CarPlay and Android Auto – and provides graphic displays showing infotainment and driving data. Outside, you get 17-inch alloys shod with all-weather rubber.

What's more, the SUV comes with a seven-year/150,000 mileage warranty. Oh, and if you've never heard of SsangYong, the word means 'double dragon'. Yes, the Korando isn't exactly a fire-breathing beast, but the Korean brand is on the rise, so expect to see a lot more from it this decade – including cars with electric-only powertrains. →

## FAST FACTS

**SsangYong Korando Pioneer Diesel 4x4 Auto – as tested**

**Max. speed:** 112mph
**0-62mph:** 12.0s
**Combined mpg:** 43.5
**Engine layout:** 1.6-litre 4-cylinder diesel
**Max. power (PS):** 136
**CO2:** 171 g/km
**£28,495**

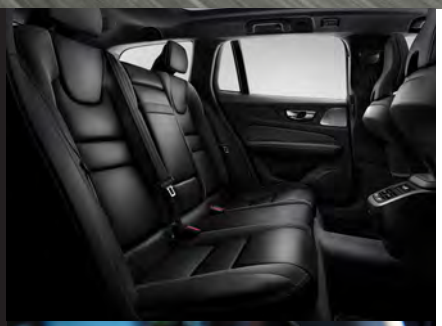



**Hand on heart, this is a superb machine.**

## FAST FACTS

**Volvo V60 D4 Inscription Plus Automatic – as tested**

**Max. speed:** 137mph
**0-62mph:** 7.9s
**Combined mpg:**
**Engine layout:** 1969cc, 4-cylinder turbo diesel
**Max. power (PS):** 190
**CO2:** 122 g/km
**£40,465**







## VOLVO V60 D4 INSCRIPTION PLUS AUTOMATIC

Volvo – you've got to love the brand. Honestly, its cars aren't just for old folk and people who like to wear cardigans any more. These days, the Swedish firm is turning the likes of BMW green with envy because its motors are so dynamic.

Volvos are not only good to drive; they also have the most luxurious cabins south of a Bentley. And, as estate cars go, I reckon the V60 is one of the most attractive ever made.

Its proportions are just right and, behind the tiller, you feel you could be in a smaller hatchback or a saloon. The car stays flat in corners and has the sort of agility and power hot hatches might envy.

Of course, being an estate car, you have loads of room for your luggage in the boot – making it a practical buy as well as an emotional one. What's more, the V60 will seat five-up and will munch miles quickly and effortlessly – whether fully laden or with just you at the wheel.

It's also easy to drive, thanks to the slick automatic transmission and its tremendously comfortable seats.

It's rare that I don't have a small grumble about a car, but hand on heart, this is a superb machine. It's pricey, yes, but you'll be so glad you've spent your money on this Swede. It's got near bullet-proof reliability; it's as safe as houses; it will get you hundreds of miles in one go without tiring you out – and it'll be your handsome workhorse if you really want to take stuff to the tip in it.

More than that, this is a car that doesn't have the same image as some premium German marques. There's no arrogance associated with Volvo, so you'd have to do something seriously irksome to evoke any road rage.

All that and it's economical as well. As long as you don't stomp on the throttle, you can expect around 60mpg from the D4 diesel variant, on test here.




# You can be assured the Scala will look after you and your clan.




## FAST FACTS

**Škoda Scala SE L 1.0 TSI 115PS DSG – as tested**

**Max. speed:** 123mph
**0-62mph:** 9.9s
**Combined mpg:** 47.1-41.5
**Engine layout:** 999cc, 3-cylinder turbo petrol
**Max. power (PS):** 115
**CO2:** 116 g/km
**£22,000**

## ŠKODA SCALA

If you're after a compact family hatchback, look no further than the Škoda Scala. This new car from the Czech automaker offers space and versatility as well as good looks.

The driver and front-seat passenger have generous leg and headroom, while there's ample space for two adults or three kids in the back. And at 467 litres, the boot will swallow a lot. What's more, this cargo capacity expands to 1,410 litres with the rear seats folded down. So, if you need to pick up some flat-pack furniture, the Škoda transforms from a compact family hatch into a virtual 'van-car'.

On the move, the Scala is fun to drive, shifting gracefully around corners with hardly any body roll. The steering is pin-sharp, making the car easy to manoeuvre at all speeds, but particularly so in town. What's more, the Skoda is easy to park, due to its rear parking sensors and excellent all-round visibility.

Performance is surprisingly quick in the Scala, with the 1.0 TSI 115ps engine automatic on test here, capable of 0-62mph in 9.9 seconds. The fuel economy is equally impressive, with the model averaging out a frugal 40+mpg. CO2 emissions are low as well at 116g/km.

The seven-speed automatic transmission moves fluidly through the gears, making the DSG version of the Scala an effortless drive, especially if you regularly need to drive in stop-start traffic. It saves you getting that 'clutch in, clutch out' ache in your left foot, which is a tick in the positive box first thing on a Monday morning, right?

Finally, if you're buying or leasing a family hatchback, then safety will be a priority. Thankfully, you can rest easy with the Scala, because it holds a top five-star rating, as awarded by crash test safety body, Euro NCAP. Furthermore, Škoda does well on the reliability side of things, so you can be assured the Scala will look after you and your clan. S.










**TIM BARNES-CLAY**

Tim Barnes-Clay trained in broadcast journalism and has worked in radio and at ITV.
He is now a freelance automotive writer, focusing on car reviews and features. He has media accreditation with motor manufacturers' press offices, and this enables him to test drive the latest cars. He also regularly attends new vehicle press launches around the world.

@tbarnesclay
TimBarnesClay/
@carwriteups

# HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL




**At the beginning of the year temperatures in Australia, following three years of drought, sparked catastrophic bushfires. These killed dozens of people and *millions* of animals. It's hard to comprehend the damage to that continent's famously rich wildlife.**

Fortunately, we've seen no such apocalyptic images of nature's destruction in the UK. But it's a deceptively 'peaceful' scene. Did you know that the UK is one of the most nature-poor countries in Europe? At least 10% of our wild animals and plant species are in danger of extinction *in the next decade*. It's a silent catastrophe.

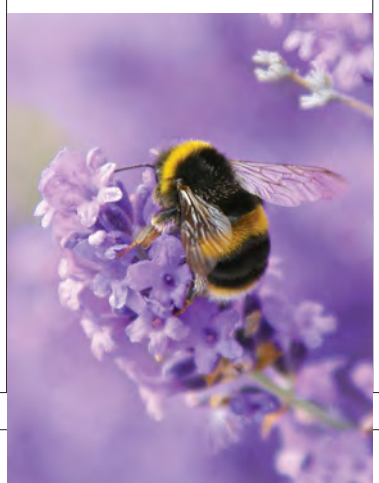
One critical threat is that our insect population, including pollinators like bees – vital for fertilising many food crops – is in terrible decline. The causes are many – from over-use of chemicals in farming to climate change. Insects are the bottom of the food chain; if they go, we lose the birds and mammals that feed on them, then the ones that feed on *them* etc. Fortunately, there is much a man can do.

Firstly, you can plant pollinator-friendly flowers in beds or pots.

INVEST IN A FUTURE WHERE WILDLIFE STILL EXISTS IN BRITAIN.

Look up varieties that bloom at different times of year, to provide pollinator food from spring to autumn. Google 'wildlife friendly gardens' to see some great guides.

Secondly, be careful with the products you buy. If you have a lawn, it's tempting to put some miracle lawn improver on it in the spring. It may make your grass a tropical-looking green, but it's not 'green'. Many are lethal for insects, slugs, snails and worms, whose decline is partly responsible for the alarming decline in the hedgehog. Spread natural compost instead.



Thirdly, join a local wildlife group. They clear plastic and restore streams, remove 'alien invasive species' (pests like Japanese Knotweed) and plant native British trees and shrubs for animal food and shelter. Google 'Wildlife groups near [*your home area*]'.

Then use your voice. Look for the latest campaigns on the websites of reputable charities like RSPB, Buglife, Wildlife Trusts and A Rocha and many more. Sign up on-line to take part in a campaign on an issue that grabs your attention

Finally, let's talk money. Without our national nature charities, Britain's wildlife would probably have disappeared long ago. They protect nature, through their research, practical wildlife protection and campaigning. Most are largely dependent on public donations to keep going. Invest in a future where wildlife still exists in Britain. S.



**ANDY ATKINS**

Andy Atkins was previously CEO of Friends of the Earth. Prior to that he was Advocacy Director at Tearfund, and a founder member of the 2005 Make Poverty History campaign. He became CEO of A Rocha UK in 2016.

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# Baby Steps to Big Plans



Stay strongly motivated towards your end goal.

**A muted metallic sound chimed from my electronic tablet device – the joy of another unwanted marketing email sneaking into my Inbox. This one was different from most: 'New Decade. Big Plans. Fresh Start.' One of the major high street banks had offered me a helping hand towards a big change in my life. As all the techy geeks at NASA will know, big plans require much more than a low interest loan to ensure success.**

Most of us have big dreams at various points in our lives. Business coach Joseph O'Connor coined the acronym HUGGS to describe goals like this: Huge, Unbelievably Great Goals. HUGGs are your biggest outcomes and can shape your life. They are usually creative and personal. They are mid to long-term, clear, compelling and easy to grasp. They connect with your identity, express your core values, and you feel good when you think about them. When you first identify these goals, they may seem impossible to achieve, but as time goes by, they start to become more attainable, perhaps because of other changes in your life.

O'Connor suggests that because such outcomes are long term and connected with your core values, you will often achieve them in unpredictable, even paradoxical ways. HUGGs often have an 'away from' element – it hurts if you don't achieve them, which in turn motivates you even more. O'Connor also suggests that the most powerful HUGGs often involve removing things from your life because they are getting in the way of achieving your more important goal. S.

### A few other strategies can help us too:

**Identify mini goals to help along the way.** I recommend keeping track of these goals and reviewing them regularly. Remind yourself about your achievements and celebrate them as you make progress, because this will help maintain your motivation for the continuing journey ahead.

**Focus your emotional energy on the outcomes you're seeking rather than on the obstacles you're encountering.** When things go wrong, do your very best to find a way to laugh about it because it's a good way to dissipate emotion, leaving you better equipped to ask more useful questions about the best way to respond to your situation and continue towards your major goal.

**Take time on occasions to vividly imagine yourself having attained your goal** – notice what you can see, hear, feel, touch and taste. All of this will help you stay strongly motivated towards your end goal.



**PETER HORNE**

Peter Horne is a qualified life coach with a passion for helping people change things in their lives when they feel stuck. He works with individuals and organisations and can be contacted at admin@therealyou.info. Peter is married with four adult children and attends All Saints Church in Littlehampton.

# Top Gear



Sorted. TOP BUY

## Propaganda Bike

Here's a city bike that is both effortlessly stylish and sleek. Paying homage to classic Raleigh bikes of the past, the Propaganda adds iconic design features such as the bull horn handlebars, sophisticated colourway and traditional saddle. Cruise around with ease and simplicity with fixed or single speed and feel yourself glide effortlessly through the city streets with the lightweight frame. The Propaganda provides an elegant solution to city riding and it will be sure to turn heads wherever you go.

**£500 raleigh.co.uk**

## Drink Me Chai Spiced Chai Latte

Blended from natural and authentic spices from India, Spiced Chai Latte is gluten-free and can be enjoyed hot or cold with different milks including dairy, soya, almond and coconut. It's never been easier to replicate your favourite drink from your local coffee shop.

**£2.30 drinkmechai.co.uk**






## UNTUCKit Shirts

Most traditional shirts don't look good untucked. They're either too baggy, too long, or both. UNTUCKit's shirts are specifically designed to be worn untucked, most notably through the perfect length, French seams and a contoured hemline. The shirts look great at work, at the pub, and at the game to help you look sharp in any situation.

**From £70 uk.untuckit.com**

## ZeroWater's 12-cup Ready-Pour™ Pitcher

This pitcher combines five sophisticated technologies that work together to remove virtually all dissolved solids from your water. The result is great-tasting water, straight from the tap. This is the only pour-through filter pitcher on the market that's certified to reduce lead.

**£39.99 zerowater.co.uk**






## Jazzy High Shine Chelsea Boots

It's all about the super shine on these cool and edgy Chelsea boots. Loaded with style and feel-good attitude, they're finished with classic brogue details for a timeless investment.

**£70 joebrowns.co.uk**

Sorted. TOP BUY



## FUNK 35 True Wireless Earbuds

Lose the wires and enjoy complete listening freedom with these wireless earbuds. All in a portable magnetic charging case for up to 24 hours play time. Listen for up to six hours, then charge back up within just 1.5 hours on the go. They're perfect for listening to music during exercise without wires getting in the way, and the IPX3 rating means they are sweat-resistant and ready for the toughest gym sessions.

**£49.99 kondor.co.uk**



## Hawaiian Shirts

The Hawaiian Shirt Shop offers authentic Hawaiian shirts in a range of more than 60 colourful, bold fabric designs; all of them premium quality and direct from Honolulu. Sold across the UK, Europe and beyond to gents seeking out casual clothing for holidays, cruises, stag parties, BBQ parties and beach weddings.

**£44.99 hawaiian-shirt-shop.co.uk**

## BoomBar 50 Bluetooth Speaker

The new BoomBar 50 Bluetooth Speaker is made for no-limit listening with its 22-hour play time and IP67 waterproof protection. With all the great features you need, at a price you can't ignore, the BoomBar is a great speaker for every home and garden.

**£49.99 kondor.co.uk**



Sorted. TOP BUY



## Denim Leaves Shirt

Joe Browns are known for their eye-catching shirts and this one is no different. Bold, captivating colours create a style that can't be matched. It goes perfectly with a pair of jeans or under a smart blazer. This shirt is sure to make you stand out for all the right reasons.

**£35 joebrowns.co.uk**



## Martez Grey Tweed Slim Fit Blazer

Another winning style from House of Cavani. Cut to a sleek slim fit, their stunning new Martez grey tweed-style blazer is sure to smarten up a classic, casual look.

**£89.99 cavani.co.uk**



# A personal experience of EXTINCTION

Main images Bruce Callender

**BY BRUCE CALLANDER**

**'Are you up for this?' I hesitated. 'This' was civil disobedience as part of the imminent Extinction Rebellion (XR) protests in London. OK, it was non-violent civil disobedience, but it could still get me arrested, a fine and maybe a criminal record. Having spent most of my 60-plus years being a law-abiding citizen, believing in the power of rational argument rather than loud protest, this was definitely outside my comfort zone. To say 'Yes' would alter my identity, both in my own eyes and in the eyes of my family...**

Professionally, I had always been involved with the environment in one form or another. Following my Physics degree, I had gone on to gain a PhD in Environmental Science. In 1991 I joined the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to help coordinate the teams of scientists who drafted the various chapters of the second IPCC report, eventually published in 1996. This was a dream job for me, matching my personal conviction that the environment is supremely important, sustaining all of life on earth. What could be better than to be actively involved in protecting it? And surely, if we presented a body of scientifically-sound evidence concerning the dangers of climate change, the world's leaders would respond rationally and appropriately? Surely.

I was naïve. In the IPCC, I soon came across diplomats who only saw the world in terms of politics, power balance and economic growth. The revenue of a significant number of countries depended hugely on the export of fossil fuels and for them human-induced climate change was – and is – a very inconvenient truth. Aided by lawyers funded by the oil and gas industries, they took every opportunity to oppose the science, attack the reputation of individual scientists or push for watered down text that minimized the predicted consequences of a warming world. My job, to help ensure that the IPCC report faithfully reflected the underlying scientific literature, was a constant battle. Nevertheless, and in spite of the opposition, at an historic meeting in Madrid in November 1995 the world's nations accepted without dissent the conclusion of the IPCC that humanity was changing the climate. That statement kicked off the series of meetings called the 'Conference of the Parties' (CoP) at which the world's nations committed to work together to solve the problem of climate change.

I left the IPCC in 1996 and for the next two decades observed it and successive climate treaties from a distance. The evidence for human-induced climate change and its associated impacts grew steadily stronger. By 2000, the sea level was rising about 50% faster than the 1996 IPCC report anticipated, extreme weather events were becoming more frequent just as predicted, and land in the Pacific and elsewhere had begun to go under the waves.

At a personal level I tried to be responsible: I switched to a renewable energy supplier, I avoided air travel, I cycled and used public transport where possible. I wrote to my MP and took part in lawful and good-natured protest marches. It might have given me a little self-righteous pride, but it certainly wasn't making any significant difference.

Increasingly I realised that, like everyone else, I am entangled in a system of global trade and powerful vested interests that is slowly destroying the natural world and the lives of many human beings. The system has to radically change. Tinkering around the edges and hoping that our consumer lifestyle can, with a few

1. The full title is the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change




# REBELLION

tweaks, continue pretty much as normal will just not work. Our own government and much of industry are complicit in pretending to care for the environment while planning for business (and destruction) as usual.

The UK government, which in the 1990s aimed to be a lead nation in responding to climate change, has gone backwards. Austerity following the financial crash of 2008 starved local authorities of the resources needed to take local action such as better bus services to reduce car dependency, or flood prevention. The UK Sustainable Development Commission, set up in 2000, was closed in 2011, and the body set up by government to achieve zero carbon homes was closed in 2016 for lack of funding. To demonstrate its ambivalence towards reducing emissions, the UK government in 2016 approved a third runway for Heathrow and in 2018 gave the go-ahead for fracking.

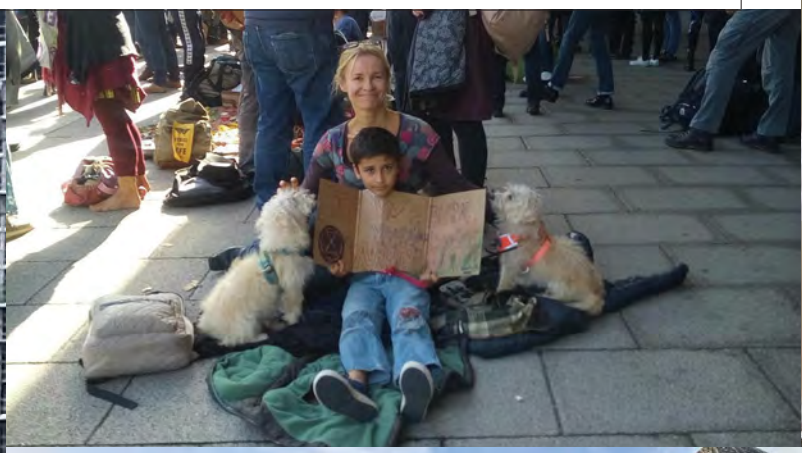
I had been vaguely aware of the XR protests in London in April 2019. I scanned their website but wasn't attracted by their confrontational, albeit non-violent, tactics. My instincts for quiet, non-confrontational argument ran deep. But I was impressed by their emphasis on the scientific basis for action, and by their success in challenging the UK government's lack of commitment to the environment. Then I did some reading, including Justin Welby's *Reimagining Britain* and Naomi Klein's *No is Not Enough*. I also went back to the Bible's New Testament and had to admit that Jesus and His disciples were no strangers to civil disobedience. My instincts, and my existing interpretation of what being a Christian meant, began to appear a form of escape, the wrong response to a desperate situation. Like the rest of the population I was sleep-walking towards disaster, but I had less excuse than others; given my background, I knew the serious and growing threat we face but was doing little to challenge the system that locks us all into unsustainable living.

I looked again at XR and found myself in complete agreement with their demands for government to 'Tell the Truth and Act Now'. I went along to a local XR group out of curiosity and found them planning for the imminent October 2019 'rebellion'. I was impressed by the diversity of those present and inspired by their commitment to striving for change. My familiarity with the topic over decades had, I had to admit, blunted my sense of urgency. These people had come much later to the issue and with fresh eyes had recognised the gravity of the threat and the urgent need for effective action. I went home and read what the legal implications might be of participating in Non-Violent Direct Action. I contrasted the minimal impact on government of well-behaved, polite protests with the societal injustices brought to the fore by the civil disobedience of Rosa Parks, the suffragettes and Gandhi. I reflected on the in-depth view that IPCC had given me of climate change, and its impacts. Given the obfuscation, complacency and direct opposition to action that I saw, was I prepared to agitate for change even if it involved personal cost?

So when asked if I was up for the coming XR protest, →

> LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, I AM ENTANGLED IN A SYSTEM OF GLOBAL TRADE AND POWERFUL VESTED INTERESTS THAT ARE SLOWLY DESTROYING THE NATURAL WORLD AND THE LIVES OF MANY HUMAN BEINGS.





Main images Bruce Callender

and after a moment's hesitation when I said goodbye to some of my preferences and instincts, I raised my hand; 'Yes, I am up for this.' Five days later I joined hundreds of others, of all ages and from all walks of life, as we parked ourselves in Whitehall, outside the Cabinet Office, one of a number of London sites occupied as part of the XR October 'rebellion'.

XR has provided a lightning rod for the pent-up energy and frustration of thousands of ordinary people who recognise that we need radical change. We are appalled and angry that our political leaders are either blind to the threats that we face, or bound by obligations to vested interests opposing change. Or perhaps they lack the moral courage to introduce the radical shift in policies needed to protect us and our families against the adverse impacts of climate change now, and to reduce the emissions that will exacerbate future change. Many people of my age were motivated by deep concern for the environmental legacy that this generation is passing on to our children and grandchildren.

WE HAVE A CHOICE: EITHER SHRUG OUR SHOULDERS AND WATCH THE WORLD HEAD FOR INCREASING ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER, OR BELIEVE IN AND WORK FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE.



Getty Images / Chris J Ratcliffe

A core value of XR is not to point fingers at others; we are all inevitably entangled in the way the world is currently run. But we have a choice: either shrug our shoulders and watch the world head for increasing environmental disaster, or believe in and work for systemic change, even if that involves significant changes to our own lifestyles. XR is not wedded to a particular religious or political ideology, it doesn't mandate a particular solution to the problems we face, and it has kept its demands simple: Tell the Truth, Act Now and create a Citizens' Assembly on climate and ecological justice. On the streets of London I was surrounded by thousands of people of all persuasions who had never taken to the streets before. The atmosphere was peaceful, creative, optimistic – and determined. In contrast to the characterisations by politicians and the press of the protesters as crusties, hippies or the unemployed, the ranks consisted of people from all walks of life: bankers, bricklayers, doctors, farmers, teachers, civil servants, IT specialists, parents, grandparents, architects and nurses. There were all sorts of political agendas – vegans, animal rights etc – but these were secondary to the recognition that we are joined by a common concern for the future of this beautiful planet and its inhabitants. We know deep down that something is gravely wrong in humans' relationship with the environment.

Most XR protesters have already adapted their lifestyle to minimise their individual environmental footprint. What unites us is the recognition that this is not enough. The political, financial and industrial organisations – The System – on which the world runs are taking us on a collective path to ruin. The forces favouring the status quo are immense. But ordinary people can make a difference. Acting together, we can bring about change for the better. But it will involve personal cost because change won't happen by shouting politely, or even loudly, from the sidelines. We have to throw a few spanners into The System and The System will, inevitably, fight back.

I was surprised at the deep emotional impact that taking part in the October rebellion had on me. I had made the




decision to participate based on a weighing up of the evidence, and now I was going to stand on London streets to make my point. Straightforward, or so I thought. What I hadn't reckoned on was being surrounded by so many committed, vulnerable and caring people, prepared to make much greater sacrifices than I had so far made, to protect our world. I was inspired by the generosity and selflessness that I saw between strangers. I drew strength from their belief that ordinary everyday people can make a difference, in the face of the combined might of the state and powerful industries. I also saw the apprehension mixed with determination on the faces of those willing to be arrested when the police decided that it was time to clear the street.

The willingness of many XR protesters to be arrested is also key to its impact. To be arrested carries the risk of fine, imprisonment and a criminal record. Why do this, especially if you have led an otherwise blameless, law-abiding life? One reason is that it demonstrates unequivocally the commitment of the protester to their cause. Further, it highlights the fact that the government is willing to spend millions of pounds and thousands of hours prosecuting people whose motivation for protest is the protection and saving of lives, while organisations who plan for and profit from the destruction of the environment are never called to account. Not only that, the government actively subsidises many of their activities. Magistrates and judges are people too. While their responsibilities may require them to reach a guilty verdict, having to deal with so many admirable and principled people before them, who tell the same consistent story of deep concern for the damage that humanity is doing to the Earth, forces them to consider their personal attitude to this crisis. Many police who attended the XR protests expressed their own deep concerns about the current environmental crisis, even as their duty required them to arrest protesters.

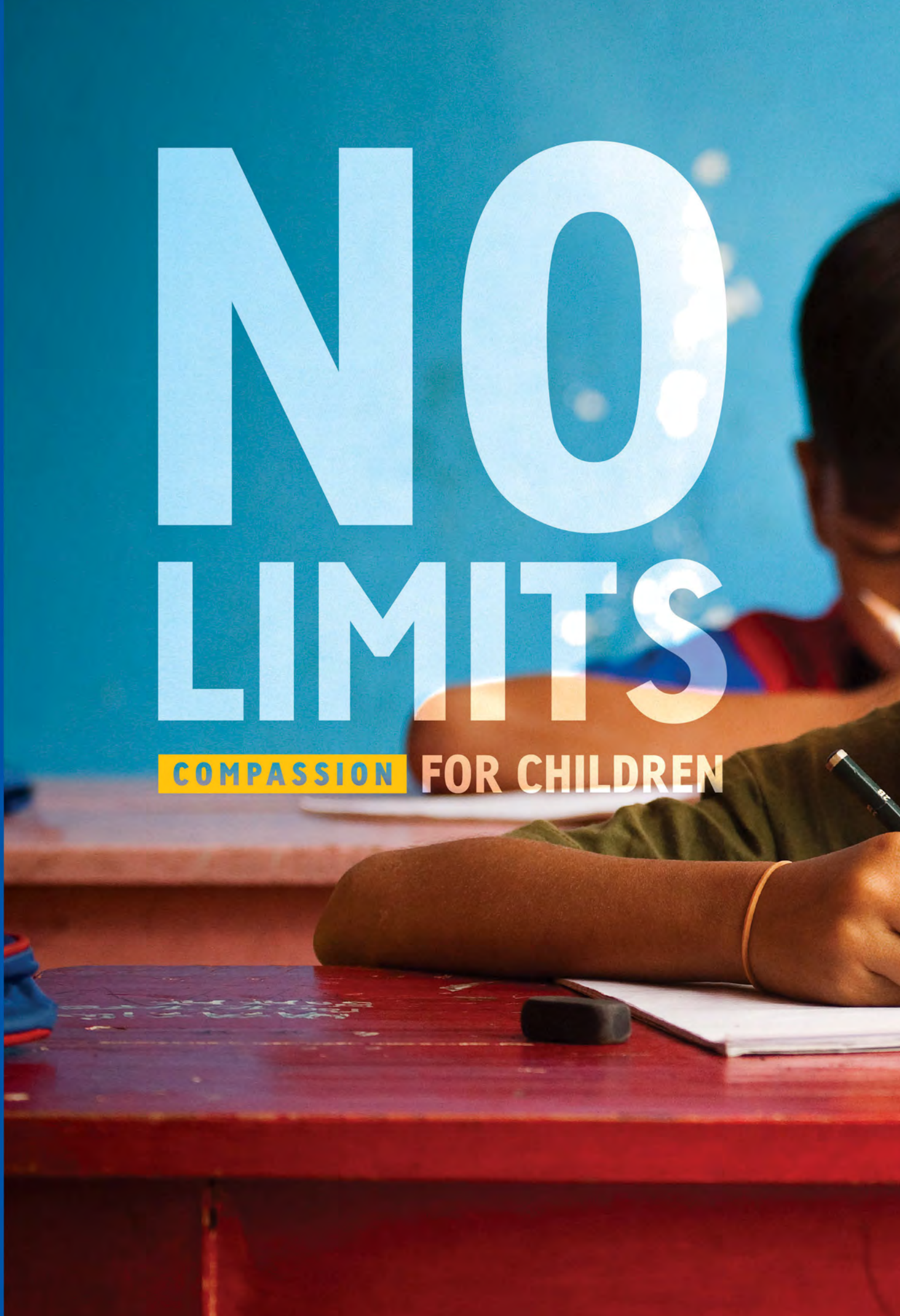
I know that some people's daily lives were inconvenienced by the XR protests. I don't enjoy that aspect but my personal preference to be polite and non-confrontational was one of the things that I had to give up for the sake of a higher good. XR rebellions set out to cause disruption, but focused on locations where government and others with power will be forced to take notice. Inevitably, members of the general public will sometimes be inconvenienced. The justification for this approach is that by its inactions or ill-advised actions, government is taking us down a path that will lead to adverse consequences of immeasurably greater scale and gravity than a delay in getting to work today. Everyone accepts that the short pain of a flu jab is a small price to pay to avoid the actual disease. For at least a quarter of a century scientists have been describing in pretty clear terms the potential worlds we are heading for given our historic and possible future greenhouse gas emissions. Serious climate change impacts are already being felt, but the worst so far are remote from Britain. But like many others who have looked at the growing evidence with an open mind, I believe that 'We ain't seen nothin' yet.' Apart from weather extremes and sea level rise on this island, conflicts over scarce resources of food, water and land, and mass migrations of people from areas made uninhabitable by a changing climate are likely to be on a scale never before experienced or imagined.

So, as you observe Extinction Rebellion protests on the news or on your street, I respectfully ask you not to jump immediately to condemn. The rebels are ordinary people just like you, from all walks of life, who have decided that they must make a stand to protect our planet and all the species, including humanity, who inhabit it. If you were to be asked 'Are you up for this?', what would you say? S.



**BRUCE CALLENDER**

From 1991 to 1996 Bruce Callander coordinated the international science teams who drafted the Second IPCC assessment of climate change. That report, approved at a cliff-hanger meeting in Madrid in November 1995, acknowledged for the first time, at intergovernmental level, that humans were changing the climate.


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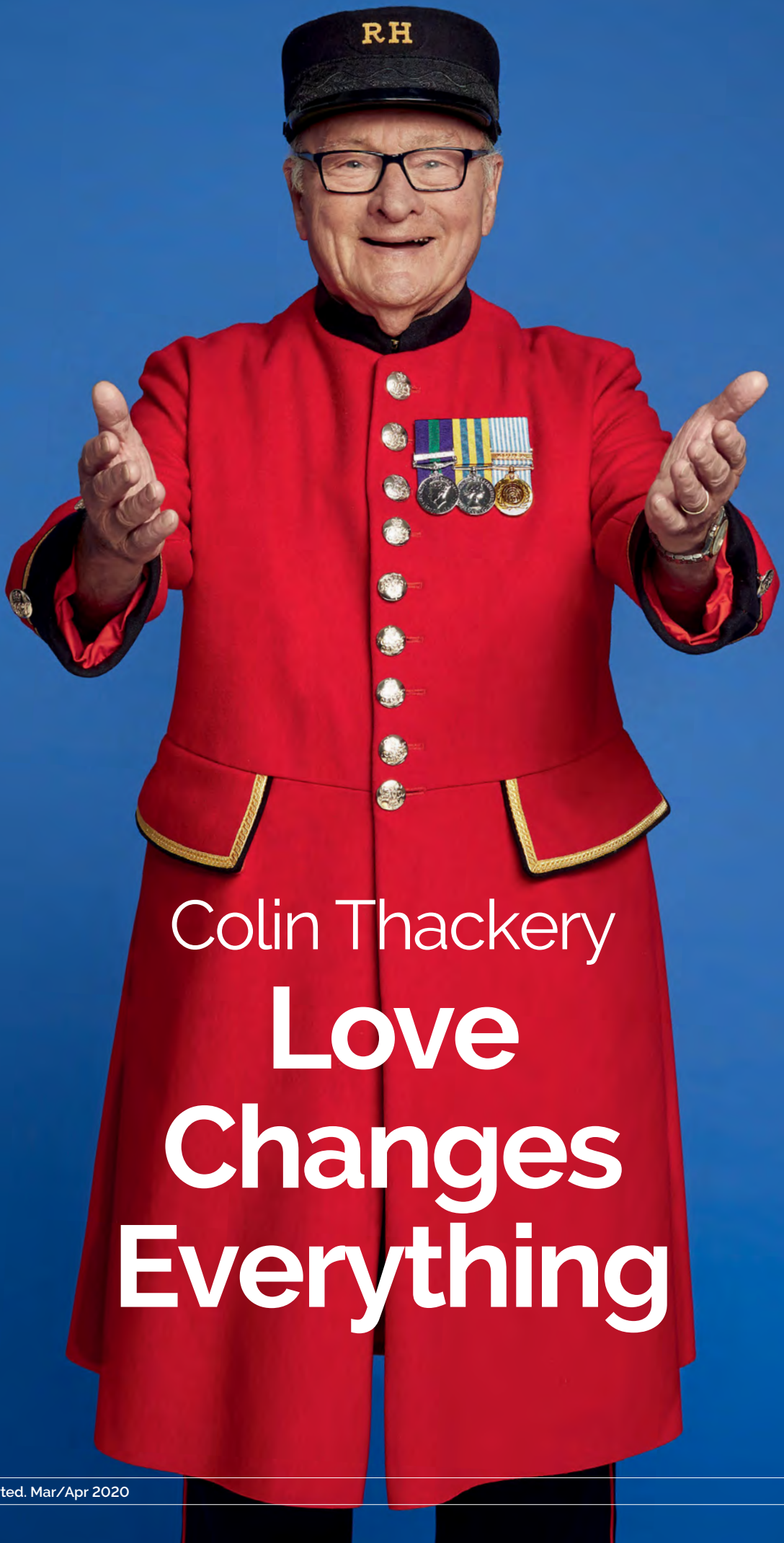
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# Colin Thackery
# Love Changes Everything

Mark Harrison



BY SAMANTHA REA

**Colin Thackery is the 89 year old Chelsea Pensioner who won the nation's hearts when he sang on *Britain's Got Talent*. But he wasn't just a novelty act – Colin won the show, taking home £250,000. While this might seem an unlikely feat for a grandfather who's survived two heart attacks, it might be said that Colin's entire life has led to that performance.**

As a member of the Royal Artillery band, Colin performed all over the world, from Malta to Malaysia and Hong Kong to Korea. He sang on the USA forces radio network and, as a support act, he shared a stage with stars such as Danny Kaye, and *Dixon of Dock Green* actor Jack Warner OBE, who were brought in to entertain the troops.

Since leaving the army, Colin has sung with his local opera group, and in the dementia ward at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, where he's lived since the loss of his wife Joan. His autobiography, *My Story: How Love Changed Everything* is dedicated to Joan, whose picture he talks to every night. *Sorted* caught up with him, to find out more...

**In your autobiography, you said: 'I can't imagine how I will feel if I do perform for Her Majesty, but I'm sure I will feel humbled and honoured, as I never have before.' How *did* it feel?**

I performed for the Queen in the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall and it was marvellous, and a great honour to do something I've always wanted to do.

**You wrote that you hoped going on *Britain's Got Talent* would raise the profile of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, and give the viewers an insight into all the good work that's done there. What would you like people to know?**

It's a unique organisation that exists for old soldiers, for men and women who are ex-army. I always describe it as the best old folks' home in the world. We live a good life. We're well fed, we've got nice quarters, and we have uniforms to wear if we want to. There's so many lovely things to do – we're invited to football matches, rugby matches, dinners and events. We also do fundraising, which is great – you feel good doing it!

**You hoped *BGT* viewers would see what Chelsea Pensioners are made of. What *are* you made of?**

We're made of stern stuff! The average age is about 80, and we have a centenarian, and a couple of 99 year olds. There's an infirmary, which is marvellous if anything happens to you in later life, and the staff are extraordinary. That's important for people of my age, especially if you get the dreaded dementia. Some people unfortunately do suffer, but they're well looked after here.

**You've had a lifetime of performing. What's been the key experience in preparing you to win *BGT*?**

The love of music – I've always loved music. My late wife loved it too and she was a good singer. We were in an organisation called the Norfolk Opera Players for over 25 years, and it was lots of fun. I love to sing, and now I sing at the drop of a hat.

**Was the army the first time you sang?**



No, I was a choir boy when I was 11. I spent part of my childhood with my grandparents – my grandmother was a staunch Catholic and I went to church with her every Sunday. Eventually that meant I joined the choir – that's where I started singing!

**How did the Chelsea Pensioners react to your win?**

They were absolutely delighted, especially the guys who'd been with me on stage. We're all chums, and people here are extremely complimentary. They'll come up and say how much they enjoyed things. We have guides here, who show people round, and they often point me out. It's very gratifying!

**Did you choose which Chelsea Pensioners joined you on stage for backing vocals?**

No, we're all members of the Hospital singing group. There are lots of cables and lights, and steps around the stage, so they picked people from the singing group who were mobile enough to get up there.

**You did your first audition by yourself, and the other Chelsea Pensioners were brought in to join you after that. What advice did you give them?**

None! We have a marvellous captain of singing, called Major Philip Shannon, who was director of music for the Irish Guards and the Welsh Guards. He's been instrumental in mentoring us, along with Lady Elaine who leads our singing group.

**One of the other Chelsea Pensioners inspired you to go on the show – how did he react when you won?**

He's very pleased he inspired me to do it. Lots of people have asked who he is, and I've been pestering him to let me identify him, but he won't let me! He's quite shy about it.

**Have you had an extra set of Scarlets [Royal Hospital Chelsea's uniform] made for you, for all your performances?**

We've got new lightweight Scarlets coming, but it's a huge job. It's cost £300,000 to kit the whole Hospital out in Scarlets. The money's come from a fundraising effort called the Scarlet Appeal. We've all been →

measured for them – I just hope they come soon, because the ones we've got get very hot under the lights on stage!

**How do you feel about people approaching you for autographs and selfies since your *BGT* win?**

I feel extremely humble that they should ask me. It happens outside theatres and radio stations. People shout my name and say: 'Can you sign this? Could I have a picture?' I never refuse anybody – who am I to deny people? One chap waited all day – he must have been frozen!

**Had you ever done a selfie before *BGT*?**

When any of us from the Hospital go out in our Scarlets, we're stopped and asked for pictures. There's a fixed grin you maintain because the photographs go on and on!

**What's been the biggest impact of your win?**

Winning the money was a marvellous windfall that's allowed me to help my grandchildren. My two senior granddaughters are making their first step on the property ladder, and the younger two are studying, so there's always a need for cash. My wife would be delighted – well I know she is, because she knows everything that's going on!

**When you got back to the Hospital on the night of your win, what did you say to Joan?**

I told her all about it – the four yeses, the standing ovation, people cheering – it was extraordinary, and I got a sneaky feeling she already knew! I didn't actually realise I'd won – I was confused, because I'm slightly deaf and I have hearing aids, but they just amplify sound, and there was that much sound in the theatre, with people shouting, stamping and calling my name, I couldn't hear a thing – it was Ant and Dec who told me I'd won.

**You were with Joan for 66 years: what's the secret to a happy marriage?**

Tolerance – that's always in the back of my mind. Tolerance that you're married to a lady who's completely different from you. She thinks, acts and dresses differently. I say, vive la difference! I treated my wife as a lady. She was great – she always looked good and acted well. She was the wind beneath my wings.

**How did you choose the songs you sang on *BGT*?**

The first one was 'Wind Beneath My Wings' – that was easy because it was Joan's favourite. Joan always joked that Bette Midler was a naughty lady, but she loved her, and she loved her rendering of that song. 'Love Changes Everything' was a favourite of mine – I've admired Michael Ball for many years. 'We'll Meet Again' was chosen for me – I'd been singing it for years because it's a song people know and they join in. It was meaningful to guys leaving their families, and it was significant because a week later it was the 75th anniversary of D Day.

**What advice would you give to someone who wants to follow their dreams, like you did, but they're struggling with confidence?**

You've got to overcome that first little problem of pushing yourself forward. There are people who retire and do nothing. They say, 'I can't!' but nothing's impossible. You've just got to overcome that fear. Go to somebody who can help – somebody who has the same interest, or join clubs. Drum up that first bit of courage, then it becomes surprisingly easy.



**The army gave you great opportunities to perform – and wasn't it your military experience that first led you to performing outside the army?**

Yes, I was sitting next to a chap at a regimental association dinner, talking about how I enjoyed music. He turned out to be the treasurer of the Norfolk Opera Players and he said they were doing *Carmen*, at the Theatre Royal in Norwich. They needed somebody to teach these guys how to march and use swords. He asked if I'd be interested, and I said: 'Yes I would!'

**What are you most looking forward to in the future?**

It's all exciting! The book is out already – it was lovely to see the display and do the signings. Then there's the album, which includes the songs I got through *BGT* with. There are 14 songs on the album, including one by Ed Sheeran, which is beautiful. It's called 'Supermarket Flowers' and it meant something to me, because he'd written it for his grandmother who'd just died. The sentiment resonated with me and I really enjoyed singing it. So there's ancient and modern, and a couple of war time songs as well.

**You seem so much younger than 89 – what are your secrets?**

I'm in fairly good nick for an 89 year old. One doesn't know how long one's got at my age, but I try not to walk around like an old man. You can succumb to being elderly, or not – that's my view. Don't let it get you down!

## THEY SAY, 'I CAN'T!' BUT NOTHING'S IMPOSSIBLE

**You actually sound a lot younger, and in the book you said that if you don't use your voice, you lose it. Is that why you keep singing?**

Yes, and that's how I came to be challenged by this chap to go on *BGT*. We were at the monthly curry supper at the Hospital, and I said I was worried, because I hadn't sung for some time. He said: 'Do something about it then!' He told me *BGT* were looking for people. I said: 'Don't be silly, what would they want an old man like me for?' He said: 'Go on, I dare you!' The rest is history!

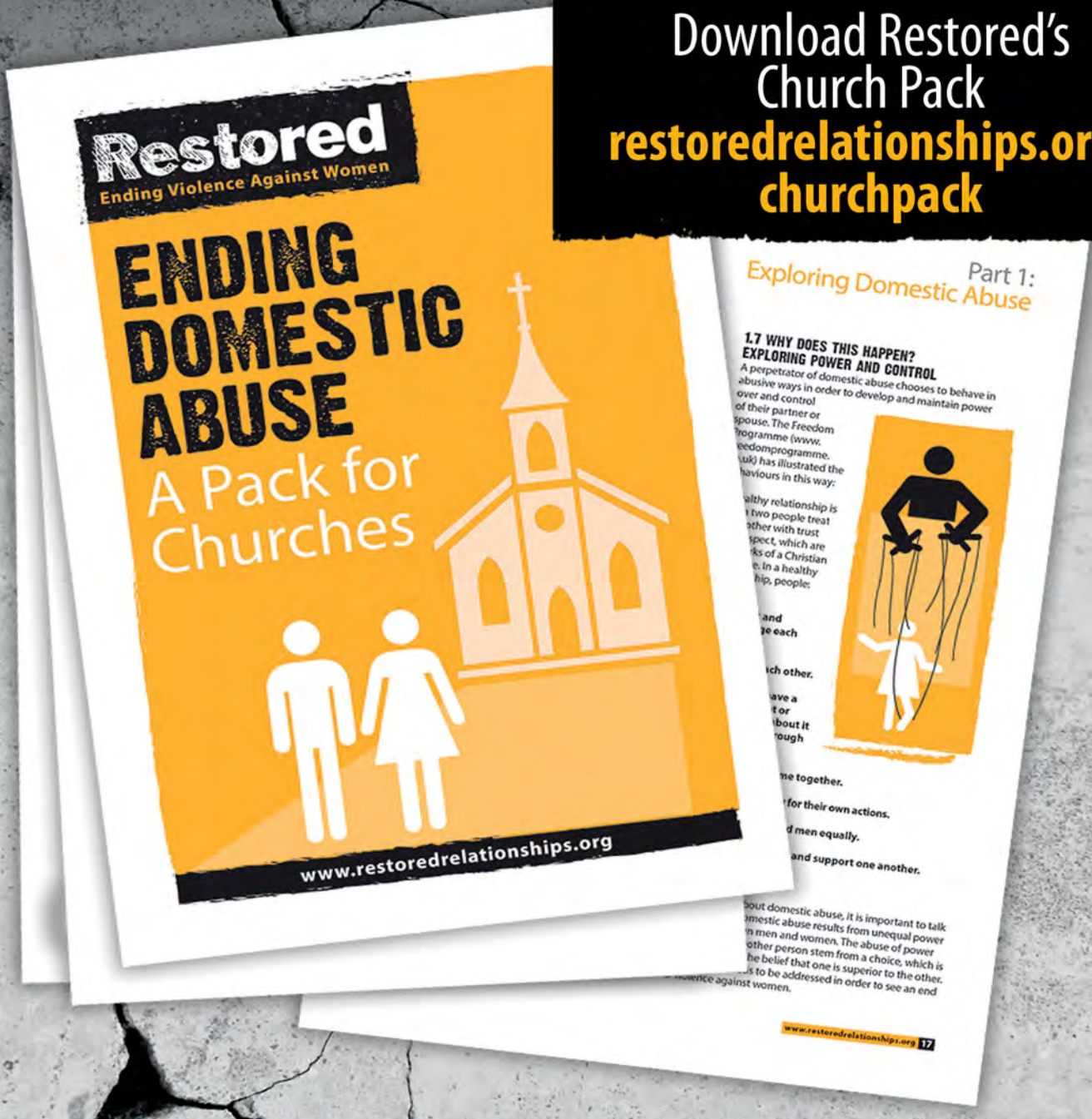
**How can we all stay young as we're getting older?**

Think positively and keep the brain active. Your body wears down, but your brain doesn't have to – that can stay sharp. Crossword puzzles are good, and Scrabble! I play that online. I have no idea who I'm playing against, but they sometimes play me in the middle of the night! I used to love listening to audiobooks when I was driving, but I don't drive much these days, so I read on my Kindle. My sight's not brilliant, but I can enhance the font size – I've got all sorts of books on it! And I love sport – rugby's my game. I don't support a particular team, except England, of course!



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**BY VIVA PRESS**

**Tom Hanks is generally recognised as the nicest man in Hollywood, if not the entire planet. Now he's starring in *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, playing another public figure whose reputation is just as sterling – Fred Rogers, the late host of the award-winning and immensely popular children's TV series, *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*. Hanks's winning performance (nominated for a Golden Globe Best Actor award) as the beloved TV host has earned rave reviews and is likely to earn him a sixth Oscar nomination and possibly his third trophy. Assessing his screen *alter ego*, Hanks believes that kindness was the hallmark of Rogers and his legacy.**

'He had the three secrets to happiness,' said Hanks. 'Be kind, be kind and be kind. I think "kindness" becomes a buzz word. It ends up being diminished by the fact of what it means. But honestly, if you give everybody a fair shake, if you understand that the person that is serving you or filling up your gas might have had just as bad a day as you had, that's just kindness.'

The film, directed by Marielle Heller (*Can You Ever Forgive Me?*), co-stars Welsh actor Matthew Rhys (*The Americans*) as *Esquire* journalist Tom Junod, whose life was changed after interviewing Rogers for the magazine in 1998. After premiering at the Toronto International Film Festival in September, the film has charmed audiences and critics alike and is likely to rank amongst Hanks' most memorable roles.

Rhys admitted to being somewhat intimidated acting opposite Hanks, an actor he has long revered.

'It was terrifying,' he remarked. 'In a very personal, insecure way, yes, terrifying. Having grown up with Tom Hanks as a true iconic hero of mine, it takes days to kind of go, "Oh, my God, that's Tom Hanks. What do I say next to him?" [I felt like] falling apart. And then seeing him embody Fred, not in an impersonating way, but in a true embodiment of who he was, was incredible to watch. So, it took a few weeks to relax.'

For Hanks, playing Rogers is merely one more outstanding example of the 63-year-old actor's capacity to seamlessly morph into his characters and deliver the pathos and requisite appeal that have enchanted audiences throughout his career. Many of his previous films rank as all-time classics.

## Q&A WITH TOM HANKS

### Tom, what is it about Fred Rogers that endowed him with this almost mystical aura?

The thing about Fred was that he's instantaneously, to almost every adult in America ... one of two things: a saint or a fraud. I think maybe even Tom [Junod, the *Esquire* journalist who became Rogers' friend – Ed] experienced that when he first met him. It's like, you can't be both. You have to be one or the other because that's the way movie life works. And in order to get to that place where we never make fun of Fred, we need to slow down in order to listen to him. Even some of the physical aspects of it were always going to be deconstructing the myth of it, in order to show he's a regular guy who went out for Chinese food. But at the same time, in scene after scene after scene, there is this mystery of 'What's his motivation here?' →





**Did anything surprise you about Rogers when you researched him?**

One of the most wonderful things is that he was actually an ordained minister who never mentioned God on his show.

**Did you ever watch *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* with your children when they were little?**

No, but I wish that when my son was three years old, that he and I sat down and watched half an hour of Mr Rogers a week. I would have better understood the role of a parent in saying to one's children: 'It's all right if you're sad.'

**You're known for being very nice and kind in the same way that Fred Rogers was seen. Did any of Rogers seep into your own personality?**

I'm not sure...[But] when my wife and I get into it, and when we're done with whatever subject matter got us all heated up, I'm now driving her insane because I sing: 'It's good to talk/ It's good to share the things we feel/ It's good to talk.' [A classic lyric from the TV series]

**Apparently the cast and crew of the film were stunned into silence when they first saw you walk onto the set as Fred Rogers and wearing his iconic cardigan?**






It was like coming in as Elvis into Graceland. I had no sense of self. I really felt like I was having an out-of-body experience of watching this other guy be Fred Rogers.

**Did you spend a lot of time watching old episodes of his show?**

I watched a ton. Hours and hours. Look, the show was on when I was maybe eleven, twelve, thirteen years old. I just thought it was odd. The puppets, their mouths didn't move. What are these odd songs he keeps trying to sing all the time? I was probably more in tune with all the imitations of him, the comedy bits about him. I didn't realise that the show was a very specific sort of work that is not meant for us. If you have any reason for cynicism in your outlook, you cannot watch that show and not just have cynicism completely take over. The thing that no one could quite believe is that the purpose [of the show] was good – the purpose was to make little kids feel safe. [There was this suspicion] that somehow – there's got to be something nefarious about that, there's got to be something sleazy. Who takes that mantle upon themselves and guards it and keeps working at it?

[When Rogers was asked] why did you stop doing your show, he said: 'Well, because we had really talked about everything.' He's talking about his output as a canon that can exist again and again and again for any kid who's two to three years old. That's profound. I don't think people trust that. They don't buy it.

**Had you ever imagined playing someone like Rogers?**

I have a story about that... I was making this movie, *The Road to Perdition*. It was a night shoot. We were in the back lot of Warner Bros, where they don't actually make a lot of movies any more. They had rain and wind machines set up because we were going to be shooting a scene in a torrential downpour. All the actors were dressed in black and carrying umbrellas and I entered the shot from the end of the street with a submachine gun and I butchered twelve guys and shot Paul Newman dead.

And I thought, 'God, I hope I get to play Mr Rogers someday.' I'd like to think that between the executioner in *The Green Mile* and the Nazi killer in *Saving Private Ryan*, it was all leading up to playing the man who created the neighborhood of make-believe.

**Do you love your job as much as ever when you get to play great real-life figures like Sully or Jim Lovell (in *Apollo 13*) or characters who are just as uplifting?**

I'm very lucky because I feel that every film is a new adventure and a new experience. It's great to be able to keep doing something that you love to do and have that kind of creative satisfaction. It never gets boring. For me, the true measure of success is artistic longevity. I don't like to look back on my past work because there's nothing I can do to change that and the only thing →

that really matters is what kinds of work you're doing now and in the future. I simply try to stick to the path that's taken me this far and I hope that keeps on working for me.

**Do you have any specific things you look for in each film or role you play?**

I'm very instinctive. I just start reading the script and if after the first fifteen pages I think: 'This role has to be mine and I don't think anyone else could do it better,' then I'll do it. Maybe it's just a matter of self-centredness and competitiveness but I think most actors are like that.

It's also easy to accept a role sometimes because you're being offered a lot of money, you have the opportunity to work with a director you hold in high esteem, or maybe you get to work with a beautiful and talented actress. Saying no is much more difficult.

**You and your wife, Rita Wilson, have raised two children together. Has it been hard to keep your status as a movie star separate from your home life?**

We're not the kind of family where we have posters of our films on the walls of the house. But having said that, my wife knew she was marrying an actor and not a dentist. And my children learned from a young age that their dad had a funny job. They always knew that I was working on a film because my haircut would be different, or I've had to grow a moustache. But this is the kind of a job that gives us the opportunity to spend free holidays in Budapest or Morocco. I think the best way that I've been able to have a good and balanced home life is to have eaten breakfast together.

**Is it limiting at all to be continually identified with good guy or heroic roles?**

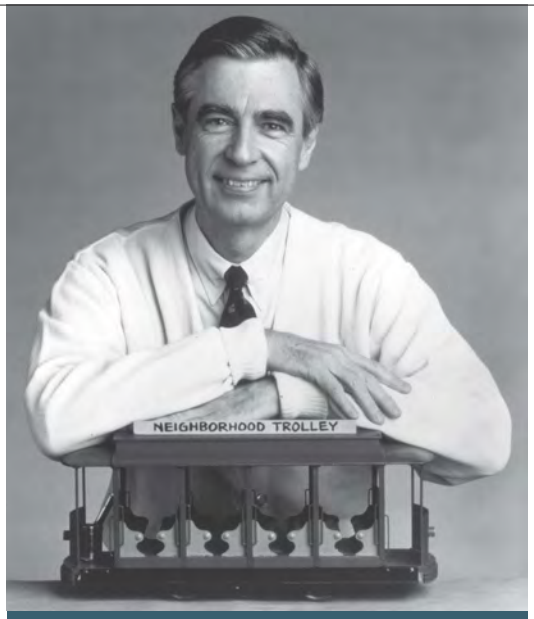
Every character is different. I'm aware that the public will probably always have this image of me as the nice guy. I don't think I can ever erase that impression – but then again, it's not the worst thing that people can think about you, even though I assure you that I'm not always lovable and charming. S.

**I simply try to stick to the path that's taken me this far and I hope that keeps on working for me.**

The free official resources to accompany the film release can be found at **www.kovapr.com/beautifulday**

Getty Images / 20th Century Fox






Getty Images

## A television legend

Fred Rogers was born in Pennsylvania in 1928. A shy child, he was often isolated and subjected to bullying as he grew up, turning to puppetry, playing the piano and creating vivid imaginary worlds in his solitude. He began to work in television in the 1950s. But his real mission was born after he attended Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and was ordained a minister in 1963. Fred saw the potential of television as a tool for ministering to children, and showing them God's love. This was the motivation behind the shows he created and hosted. Through his musical skills and puppetry, Fred created a warm, friendly, kind and safe space for children to learn about the realities of growing up, often drawing on his own experiences growing up in isolation to talk directly to his young audience about difficult topics, such as divorce, death, bullying, anger and sadness. Mister Rogers' *Neighborhood* ran for 895 episodes, ending its tenure in 2001, when Fred decided to step down.

He died in 2003, but his legacy lives on through the vast impact and influence he had on the generations who grew up watching him.

### A living legacy

The screenplay for *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood* is based on a 1998 *Esquire* profile by journalist Tom Junod, who was known for his dark and controversial pieces. 'Somebody at the magazine thought it would be really funny having me doing a story on Fred Rogers,' Junod recollects. 'It was intended as this juxtaposition of good, Fred, and bad, me.'

What happened next took everybody by surprise. 'Fred saw me, sized me up and went to work, which is where the movie and script is very, very true to life,' says Tom, who is fictionalized in the film in the character of Lloyd. 'Fred had that amazing gift of looking at a person and seeing what that person needed, and that he was going to minister to that person.'

As actor Tom Hanks explains using the words of Mister Rogers, 'Fred was literally one of the people who loved Lloyd into existence. Lloyd is a better son, he's a better father, he's a better husband, he's a better journalist, he's a better friend, all because a guy who had no reason to do so told him, "You're very special. I think you're great just exactly as you are. You don't have to change at all."'

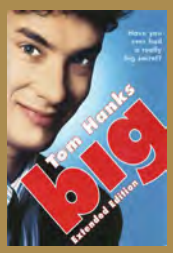
'I think it's clear by the way that everybody is reacting to anything about Mister Rogers right now, that we are thirsty and starving for guidance in this world,' says Marielle Heller, director of *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*. 'We are at a point where it feels like the divide, politically, is bigger than ever. And I think finding and hearing Fred's voice is really reassuring in these times. There's something about his message that feels more important now than ever.'

Tom Hanks

# Major films




**1984**
*Splash*




**1988**
*Big*




**1989**
*Turner and Hooch*




**1990**
*Bonfire of the Vanities*




**1993**
*Sleepless in Seattle*




**1993**
*Philadelphia*




**1994**
*Forrest Gump*




**1995**
*Apollo 13*




**1998**
*Saving Private Ryan*




**1998**
*You've Got Mail*




**1999**
*The Green Mile*




**2000**
*Cast Away*




**2002**
*Catch Me if You Can*




**2004**
*The Terminal*




**2004**
*Polar Express*




**2006**
*The Da Vinci Code*




**2007**
*Charlie Wilson's War*




**2009**
*Angels and Demons*




**2011**
*Larry Crowne*




**2012**
*Cloud Atlas*




**2013**
*Saving Mr Banks*




**2015**
*Bridge of Spies*



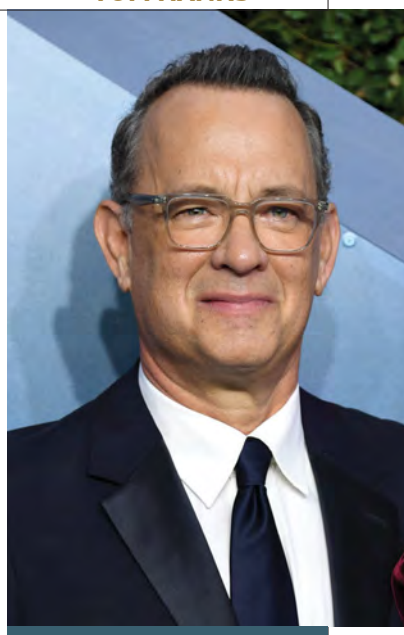

**2016**
*Sully*




**2016**
*Inferno*

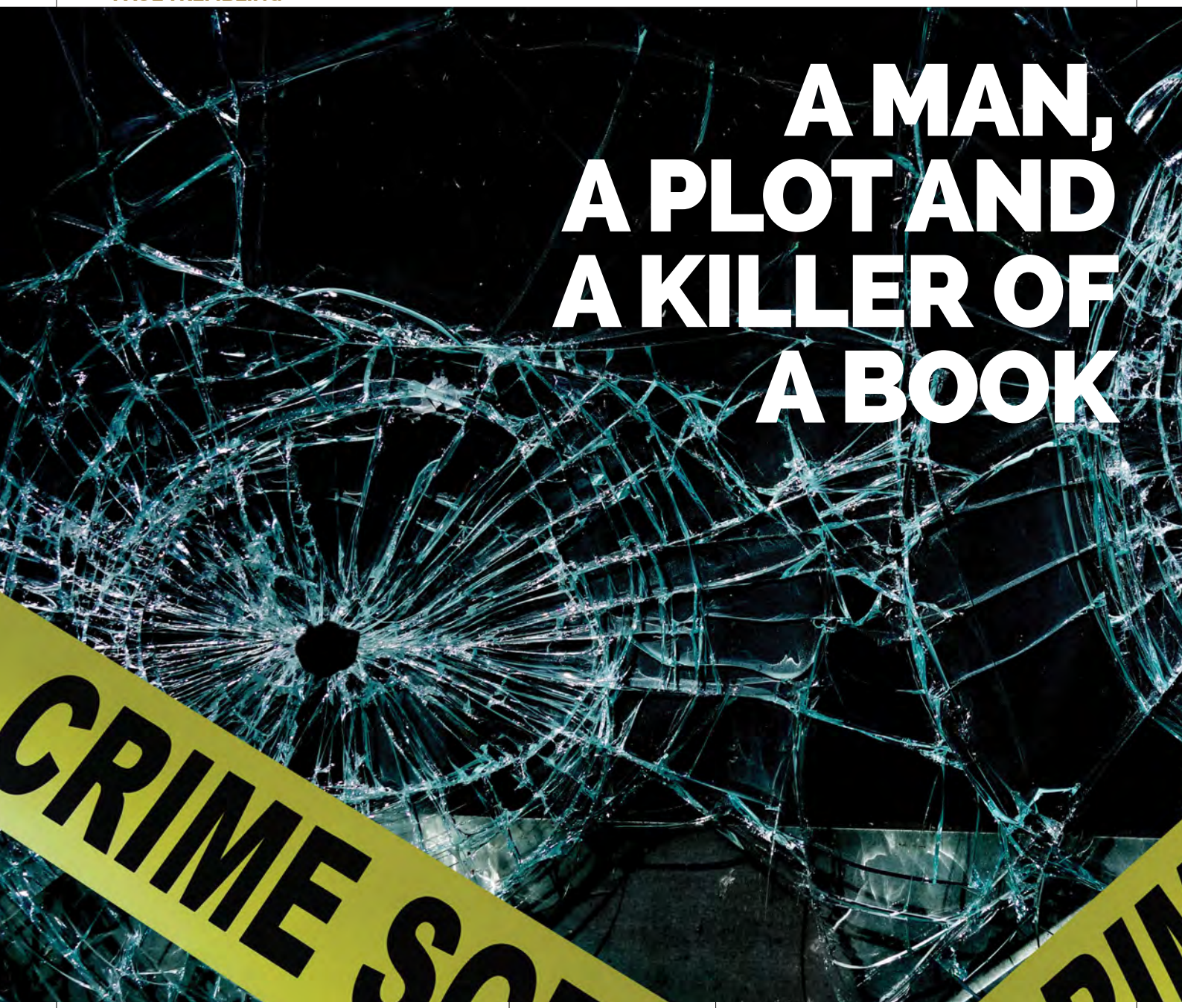



**2017**
*The Post*



## Tom Hanks

Tom was born in July 1956. He has been nominated for 5 Academy Awards for Best Actor and won 2. He has also won 8 Emmy Awards (12 nominations); 4 Golden Globes (9 nominations), and 2 Screen Actors Guild Awards (7 nominations). He lives with his wife, actress/producer Rita Wilson, in Los Angeles. They have two adult-age children, Chet, 29, and Truman, 24. Hanks also has two children from his previous marriage to Samantha Lewes, Colin, 43, and Elizabeth, 37.




# A MAN, A PLOT AND A KILLER OF A BOOK

BY ALI HULL

**Paul Trembling writes crime novels – and has an unusual advantage in doing so: he knows what happens when a body is discovered. He is a CSI – (Crime Scene Investigator) – formerly known as SOCOs. He is the one with the camera, picking up the tiny bits of evidence, armed with gloves.**

### How did he get into that? Was he a police officer already?

There was a time when most SOCO's (Scenes of Crime Officers) were ex-police officers, or ex-Forces. Often, they'd been photographers in the RAF or Navy. But I found a different route in. I was already working for the police as an Admin Assistant when they opened up a few posts to internal transfers. These were for Assistant SOCOs, with the limited remit of examining vehicles only – they didn't have enough fully trained SOCOs to deal with all the low-level vehicle crime which was taking place then, so they created this post specifically to deal with it. I ended up staying in the job for fifteen years and eventually worked my way up to full SOCO – except by then they'd changed the job title to CSI (Crime Scene Investigator), for some management reason. It didn't make any difference to the job, apart from having to explain nearly every working day that it was nothing like you see on TV!

### What was the appeal?

It was a big improvement on Admin, that's for sure! For a start, there was more variety – even when I was only doing cars, you never knew for sure exactly what you'd find. A lot of it was just routine, but you always got a bit of a buzz when you found a good fingerprint or recovered some DNA. It sounds a bit pretentious to say that I was working for law, order and justice, that's something a superhero would say – but yes, when it came down to it, that was the job. It was doing something significant, something that made a difference.

### How do you cope with the gory side of the job?

One of my first solo jobs as a full CSI was to attend a scene where a young woman had jumped, fallen or been pushed from the top of a block of flats. As you can imagine, it was quite gory. While I was going about my business, a young copper asked me, 'How do you deal




crime fiction!' But if you have to try and narrow it down, I think that all – or most! – crime fiction has in it a sense of mystery. There's a question to answer, a puzzle to solve. It might be a 'Whodunnit?' or it might be a 'How did they do it?' or even a 'Why did they do it?' It might even be 'Was there even a crime at all?' (My novel *Local Poet* starts off with a suicide, not a murder). And of course, there might be more than one of these elements involved. But the desire to know, to understand what really happened, is quite a common one in people, and I think that crime fiction connects with that really well. And there's also an element of justice being done. We like to think that, ultimately, wrongs will be righted, lies will be exposed and truth will out. Of course, in the real world, that doesn't always happen – all the more important to show that it can happen. Don't give up on the hope! That's an integral part of my Christian faith: to combat cynicism and despair, my own included, is an important reason to write, and crime stories fit well into that.

**What is your creative process? Do you start with the idea for a crime, or what?**

I usually start with a person, or perhaps just a picture in my mind. I sometimes don't even find out what the crime is until I've started writing the story. *Local Poet* began with a vague idea. 'What if someone accidentally killed a poet – would that get them into reading poetry?' Actually, it wasn't even that clearly defined when I started and I was only thinking in terms of a short story. But as I got into it, other elements began to come in. Who was this person who had been killed? How did they come to be there? The back stories of the people involved began to intrude, and had to be woven into the narrative – and eventually, it turned out that it was a crime novel.

After *Local Poet*, I wanted to find out more about some of the minor characters, so I started with Sandra, a librarian. I also wanted a murder early on, so that shaped the first chapter and gave me the crime to start with. But with *Local Legend* – centred on Sandra's husband, Graham – it took me a lot longer to come to the actual crime involved. There isn't even a body until chapter 5, and that's an accident. However, the mystery element is there from the beginning, and that's important. For me, writing is a journey, a voyage of discovery if you like. Of course, there's some element of planning involved, but I don't →

with this stuff?' I told her that I was still trying to work that out. But afterwards, thinking about it, I realised that there was nothing to work out. The blood and gore didn't bother me at all. What was foremost in my mind was doing the job right – especially as it was my first one. Had I got enough photos? Had I covered all the necessary angles? Had I got the camera settings right? Yes, at the back of my mind there was sadness for the unfortunate person. But as I gained more experience and saw more bodies – some of them in worse condition – I realised that, by the time I got there, the person who had once lived in that flesh was long gone. I felt worse for the people who remained behind, the family and friends who had to deal with the loss.

**What made you branch out into writing novels, and what do you think explains the huge appeal of crime fiction?**

Crime fiction is a very broad church, and there are a huge range of styles and approaches, all the way from 'Cosy Crime' to dark psychological thrillers. So perhaps part of the appeal is that there is something in there for every taste – and part of the problem is that however you define it, someone will say 'That's not why I read

THE BLOOD AND GORE DIDN'T BOTHER ME AT ALL. WHAT WAS FOREMOST IN MY MIND WAS DOING THE JOB RIGHT.



know quite where it's going until I'm on the way. I prefer it that way. It's more exciting.

**How many novels have you done so far, and how many are jostling around in your head?**

I've had three published by Lion Hudson, and I've just sent them number four. I've also self-published two other novels, a children's story and several short-story collections. As for how many others... how long do you have? There's a folder on my hard drive labelled 'The Back Burner' which has – oh, let me see... forty-five files of story ideas, outlines, bits started, character sketches, etc. However, this is small compared with the huge Back Burner file in my head, which is constantly expanding. To be a little more specific... there's the next one in the *Local* series, for which I've started putting together some characters and ideas for the opening chapter. Then there's a long-term project called *The Hidden Libraries* which is up to nearly 91,000 words now. It's a sequel to one of my completed books, and I really need to get it finished. I also have another short story collection that just needs putting together, and... well, you get the idea. I realised a while ago that I probably wouldn't live long enough to finish all the story ideas I already have, never mind all the new ones I keep getting! Frustrating.

**How long does it take you to write a novel, and then how much revision do you usually need to do?**

Depends on the novel! *The Hidden Libraries* which I mentioned before has been an ongoing project for years, mostly because I've been focused on the *Local* series for Lion Hudson. When LH published *Local Poet*, they asked if they could have another one in a year, and that's the plan I've been working to ever since – a novel a year (plus a few odd short stories here and there). It has been challenging to keep to that, but fortunately I'm only working part-time at the moment, which gives me more opportunity to write. And I have a very understanding and supportive wife: without her it wouldn't be possible.

I do a lot of revision along the way. As the story develops, I have to go back and revise early chapters to bring in new information or adjust the order of events. But of course, when the publisher has looked at it, there are usually several more stages of revision to go through, which can take a few months. Revision is a process that starts as soon as the writing does, and continues up to the moment that I sign off on the final proofs.

**How well have the novels done?**

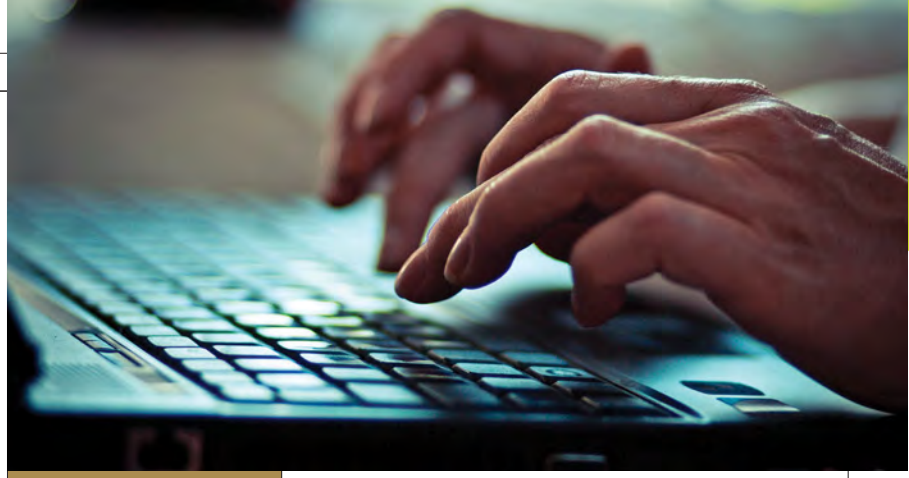
It's hard to be sure how to measure that. Sales could be better! But most writers would say that, no matter how well they're doing. The encouraging thing has been the reviews that I've had back, which have been generally very positive. Most people who've read them seem to have enjoyed them, and that's brilliant.

**Have you thought of branching out into any other kind of fiction?**

Actually, crime wasn't my first choice of genre – I might never have got into it if I hadn't become a CSI. But I didn't want all that experience and free research to go to waste. Science fiction and fantasy were where I started, and it's still something I want to do in parallel with the crime writing. *The Hidden Libraries* is a fantasy novel, and a sequel to *The Empress's Lover*, set in the same world. Most of my short stories are fantasy, my next collection (if I ever get around to putting it together) will be SF.

The great thing about fantasy is that you can give your imagination free rein and invent the entire thing. Which also means you don't have to worry so much about the research. I love historical fiction, but it's the amount of research involved that puts me off writing it! I've also written some children's stories – specifically, stories for my children. One of these has been published (*Trouble in Toyland*), another one you can find on my website (*Matt's Dragon*).

I've never set out to write romantic fiction, but I do find a bit of romance creeping into a lot of my writing. It's inevitable. If you write about people, you're writing about relationships between people, and that's where romance comes in. There aren't many genres that I'd rule out entirely. I probably wouldn't do well with chick-lit – but then again, I've written a whole series of fantasy stories about a female dragon slayer; does that count?



I REALISED A WHILE AGO THAT I PROBABLY WOULDN'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO FINISH ALL THE STORY IDEAS I ALREADY HAVE.










**How do you ensure that you don't let real people creep into your novels, with all the resulting problems that could cause?**

Oh, I want real people in my novels! Or perhaps I should say, I want the people in my novels to be as real as possible, and the way to do that is to incorporate as much as you can of real people. But that doesn't mean copying them exactly. It's more about noticing particular things; character traits, idiosyncrasies, ways of talking and turning a phrase. When I'm developing a character, I do it from scratch. I don't start with a known person and adjust them to fit, I start with an outline of the sort of person that the character might be and fill in details from different sources: this little quirk, that sort of personality trait. Often, I don't take these things deliberately from real people, they're just things I've notice in general and filed away somewhere for future reference. I do try and observe people, how they look, walk, talk, act and react. It's all potential material. But I don't copy entire people, just bits of them. Being observant of people is probably the most important research a writer can do.

Having said that, people have said to me about some of my characters 'Yes, I know who that is!' I point them to the disclaimer at the front of the book – if it looks like a real person, that's a coincidence!

**And tell us something about your age, family and faith...**

I was born in 1957, and I'm terrible at maths, so you work it out! (I'm not sure I want to know...) I'm a Christian, a member of the Methodist Church. My wife, Annie, is a Methodist Minister. We're currently living in Bath where she is in charge of the Southdown Methodist Project. We've got three boys, all grown up now. Tom is the eldest, he got married to Charlotte earlier this year and they live up in Nottingham. Matt is the second one, he finished at Uni this year and is currently living with us and working in Bath. The youngest – and tallest! – is Andy, who's studying Veterinary Science up in Liverpool. We shouldn't forget Edna, our dog. She's a lurcher, and we think she's about a year old, but we can't be sure because she's a rescue. We do know she's quite young, though, because of her puppy behaviour – she chews everything! But she's also very affectionate and likes to give big doggy hugs and kisses. S.

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"Thank you... I came back feeling more refreshed, enthusiastic and inspired than I have for years."



# DAVE JONES BENEVOLENT BUTCHER

BY SAMANTHA REA

**Dave Jones is a butcher from Barnsley whose community spirit is inspiring the nation. He offers help to those experiencing financial hardship, whether they need cooking equipment, food parcels, or a suit to wear to an interview. The assistance Dave can give personally is limited to his Yorkshire village – but his social media posts are retweeted thousands of times, motivating people across the UK to do good deeds in their local community.**

**Shying away from the limelight, Dave didn't want to be pictured, but he did give us an insight into how we can all #BeMoreDave. Meet the man behind the tweets...**

ANY CIVILISED COUNTRY SHOULD LOOK AFTER ITS SICK, ITS ELDERLY, ITS DISABLED, AND ITS LESS FORTUNATE PEOPLE. OUR GOVERNMENT CHOOSES NOT TO DO THAT.

**A few weeks ago, you posted a tweet offering to buy a microwave, a toaster, a kettle and a month's electricity for a family who needed help. What was the outcome?**

We helped three families. One had been moved to a safe house following a marriage breakdown: they were starting out from nothing. One woman had been evicted after her husband passed away, and the other one had hit rock bottom. It was really nice to help them get back on their feet.

**That post was retweeted over 2,000 times: did anyone else get in touch?**

We got a large response, but unfortunately, you sometimes have to say, 'I've done what I can do now. I can't do anything else at this moment in time.' You've got to use your life skills, and your past experience to know who really needs help, and you get a feel of whether something's right. These were genuine people.

**At half term you offered free food parcels to families struggling to feed their children over the holidays, but you can't help anyone if you go out of business. Is your partner fully supportive, or does she ever worry that you're giving too much away?**

The business is well supported by the local community, so when I'm in a position to help, I do. I can't help absolutely everybody, but it's important that we give back. My partner is fully supportive, but I don't do anything without discussing it with her. She's in the same mould as I am, probably kinder in a lot of ways, certainly regarding her people skills. Sometimes she might say, 'Leave that at the moment, but do it another time.' It's brilliant that she supports me, I wouldn't be able to do it otherwise, and I don't think we'd be together if we weren't both that way. We want to be helpful and kind to people.

**On Facebook, you offered to help local families at Christmas, and someone replied to your post offering to donate decorations. Do you think that what you do inspires other people to get involved?**

I think it does. One of the reasons we do it is because it inspires other people to contribute to their community.

Sometimes they just need an outlet, and the knowledge that, 'I can drop this food parcel off here and I know it'll be passed on to people in need.' We do regular appeals for the local foodbank, and it's immense what the customers bring in. When I asked if people would bring us a tin of potatoes instead of buying us a Christmas card, we ended up with 400 tins, which we gave to the foodbank, so it does inspire people. I ask the foodbank what they're short of, and in summer it was UHT milk; today, it was tinned rice pudding. There are children waking up in severe poverty. Some of them haven't even got carpets or curtains. So, if we can do our bit, in our area, and if that inspires other businesses, and other people, that's a fantastic result.

**Would you like us, as a society, to be in a position where you didn't need to help in the way you do?**

Absolutely. We shouldn't have to support foodbanks to make sure people have food on the table. We're a rich nation: we've got a huge amount of money. Unfortunately, it's not channelled into helping vulnerable people. Any civilised country should look after its sick, its elderly, its disabled, and its less fortunate people. Our government chooses not to do that. They'd rather give tax breaks to corporations and billionaires than help people who've hit hard times.

**You're very tuned in to what people need; for instance, there was another post where you invited people to use your wifi to access Universal Credit and job applications. I read a news story about a woman ending up penniless due to missing a Universal Credit appointment that she had no knowledge of, because she'd become homeless and didn't have internet access. What gives you your insight?**

I think it's your upbringing and your connection with people, and an awareness of what's going on in the country; staying away from the tabloids, and listening to people who are on Universal Credit, and realising how things affect people. It's being grounded, and aware of the pressures people are under.

**I saw that you retweeted a guy who runs a charity shop, who was inviting people to come in and use the wifi. He'd clearly been inspired by your tweet. Is it nice to see the domino effect of your actions?**

Yes, and other people have messaged me to say, 'We're offering the same – we've put a sign up in our window!' It's great, because these aren't willy nilly tweets off the top of my head. I've thought about them, and aimed them at the people I think we can help the most.

**Do you think there are people who need help, but who struggle to accept it, through a sense of pride?**

I think there is a pride issue. Not everybody wants to ask for help. Normally, in cases like that, a family member or friend will message me about them. Often, they've tried to help, but they can't do everything, so I'll see if I can take a bit of pressure off for mealtimes.

There's one lady I've just helped who was recommended to me. She'd landed her dream job, and she was waiting for her first month's wage, and in between time, she'd been waiting for Universal Credit, which takes ages. She's got three children, so I took her a food parcel because it must be scary to wonder whether you can feed your kids. She was delighted, and she messaged afterwards to say I'd inspired her children, which is so nice. If those girls grow up and remember that kindness, and take it out there, that's great.

**Were these values you were brought up with yourself?**

Yes, my grandad was a Yorkshire miner, and my grandmother was an old-fashioned Yorkshire miner's housewife. They were members of the Labour party, and in those days money was scarce, but families helped each other. I remember there was a lad whose mum and dad had absolutely nothing, and I used to go to my grandma on my way to school, and say, 'All the kids are taking a slice of buttered toast to school, grandma, can I have one?' She wrapped it up in foil and about three weeks later, she started doing two →







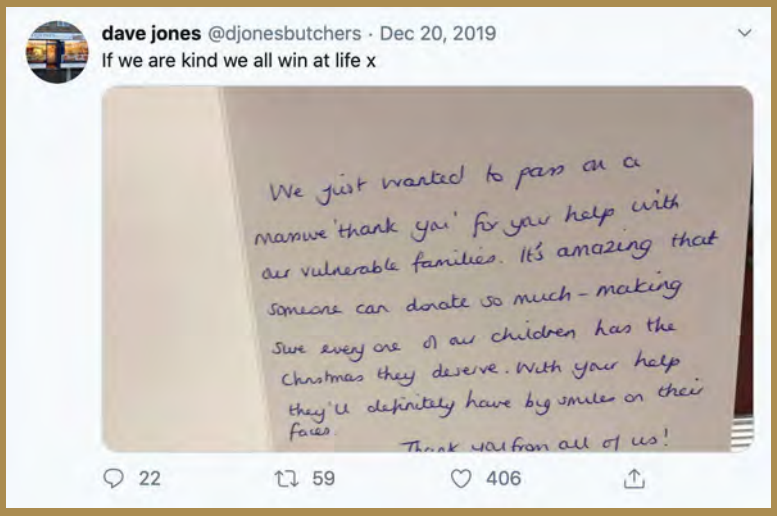


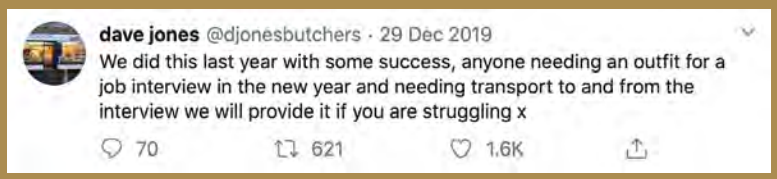









I DON'T SEE WHAT I'M DOING AS ANYTHING TO BE REWARDED: I DO IT BECAUSE I WANT TO.

slices of toast. I said, 'I don't know if I'll eat two.' She said, 'I'm sure your friend will.' She'd actually seen me give it to him, because he was only having one meal a day. Back in the early 70s, that was a regular occurrence. I think it's the values you're brought up with, and the area you've lived in. I was born and bred in Barnsley. You're never going to be rich when you're the son or grandson of a Yorkshire miner, but there was a great sense of community then.

**The village primary school presented you with a Local Hero Award – how did you feel about that?**

Oh, how proud was I? My knees were knocking. I've never been so nervous in all my life. To get an award like that from the children at the school, I was amazed. The headmistress came to the shop with two children, with a letter for me. I opened it, and the more I read, the bigger the lump in my throat was getting. I held it together because I didn't want two small children seeing a 53 year-old man blubbering. I thought it was amazing that they took the time and effort to do that, because I don't see what I'm doing as anything to be rewarded: I do it because I want to. They gave me a lovely plaque and a trophy, and I read out a poem about being kind and helpful. If it inspires just one or two of them, that's great.

**Social media is useful for getting messages out there, but you've been helping people for a long time. How did you reach people before Facebook and Twitter?**

Before social media I mainly responded to requests for donations for school fetes and the foodbank. It's so much easier now, because one of my Facebook posts can reach 50,000 people if I put a boost on it. Social media's brilliant because it exposes everything that's wrong, as well as allowing us to post videos and photos of what we're doing.

**Is anyone ever suspicious of your motives, perhaps feeling like it's too good to be true?**

Not really, not when people know me, and understand what I'm about. One or two might wonder if I'm posting on Facebook to promote the business, but I don't gain customers from it. No one's going to travel far to see us, and I don't need to promote the business, because we're already a well-supported shop.

**It's clear that you were raised to be kind and community spirited. Does this stem from Christian values?**

My brother's a vicar, but for me, this is to do with socialism, which means making sure nobody's poor. It's about making sure that those who are doing well are contributing to society through paying fair taxes, so that those who are less fortunate can receive the help they need.

**If somebody feels inspired by you and wants to help, what advice would you give them?**

When you pass a homeless person, say good morning. You don't have to get them anything. Normally, my chat results in: 'Good morning, how are you doing? Are you having a coffee?' Nine times out of ten, they're not, but if they are, I get them one and say, 'How's things? Have you got anybody looking after you? Is there anybody you want me to get in touch with for you?' Nine times out of ten, the answer's no. But that 'good morning' might keep them going for an hour or two, thinking: 'Somebody spoke to me!'

Look into volunteering in foodbanks, or charity shops, or a street kitchen. There are some great street kitchens out there that help vulnerable people who've fallen on hard times. They're in every major town, serving hot food, cold food, tea and coffee, and they'll often have clothes, toiletries, and sanitary products. That's a great way to help. S

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# ABLE AND WILLING

**BY STUART WEIR**
**Photographs © IPC**

**Guohua Zhou of China stands at the start of her run up, composes herself, and sets off at full speed down the runway before taking off and jumping into the sand, landing nearly five metres away. Oh, there is one small detail that I forgot to mention. Zhou is totally blind. Imagine the courage it must take to launch yourself without being able to see where you're going – talk about a leap in the dark! Someone lines her up and tells her when it is safe to go. A coach or assistant typically stands behind the sandpit shouting so that she can direct herself towards the sound. That helps. But it still requires courage to execute. It can go badly wrong. I once saw a blind long jumper lose the direction, veer to the side and literally take out the no-jump judge as he sat on his chair!**

Zhou won the F12 long jump with a leap of 4.92m at the 2019 World Para Athletics Championships. These took place last year in Dubai, United Arab Emirates with more than 1400 athletes from about 120 nations involved; 528 women competed, the largest number ever. Zhou can jump five metres because she trains hard and practises a lot – like any long jumper. But there is also an additional determination and courage that is not required of the sighted long jumper.

Another incredible event is the one-legged high jump. Rick Broadbent wrote in *The Times*: 'We should not ask why the one-legged man decided to try the high jump; we should just be glad that he did.' The T63/T42 high jump is arguably the most compelling event in the para athletics programme. It is for athletes with an above knee amputation or equivalent level of impairment. So you have a group of amputees and others with legs that don't work normally doing the high jump. Some jump with a running blade. Some remove their prosthetic and hop to the bar and hurl themselves over. Those with two







## Para athletics explained

Para athletics is regulated by a complex set of classification rules, which determine who is eligible to compete, and aim to ensure that athletes in a particular classification have approximately the same amount of activity limitations. There are four types of competition: running, jumping, throwing and wheelchair racing. Athletes are classified according to their level of disability in order to produce a fair competition. Classes include vision impairment, intellectual impairment, co-ordination impairments including cerebral palsy, short stature and amputees. There are sub-divisions within most of the classes.

Para sport is sometimes called adapted sport and that is a good descriptor. Basically, it involves taking the core track and field disciplines and adapting them to allow athletes with varying levels and types of disability to participate in running, jumping and throwing competitively. Take running. If you can run, you run. If you don't have two legs, you can run with a prosthetic. If you cannot see, you can run with a guide. If you cannot walk at all, then race in a wheelchair. Races range from 100m to 5000m. And remember that para athletes are just normal people who have a body that doesn't fully function; either because of illness or an accident, or because it has never done so, from birth. They are able to run/jump/throw because, like any athlete, they train their bodies and practise their technique. That is where the excellence comes from.

legs limp towards the bar and leap over it. Some go over the bar head first, effectively diving. Others use a more conventional approach.

The 2019 men's World Champion was Sam Crewe (USA) who cleared 1.86m, with Sharad Kumar (India) second (1.83m). Crewe explained afterwards: 'There are four or five different styles of jumping because it is so versatile and everyone has their own challenges and issues. So, everyone adapts to what they're good at and works on what they struggle with. What attracted me was knowing that if something isn't working, I can always change it. And I think people are just fascinated by the amputee high jump, seeing the running blades in action or people just hopping over but jumping effectively over a height as high as most people's head. It just relates to everyone as inspiring.'

Silver medallist Kumar enthused: 'The one-legged high jump is the best experience to do – or watch. →

IMAGINE THE COURAGE IT MUST TAKE TO LAUNCH YOURSELF WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO SEE WHERE YOU'RE GOING.



# How do disabled athletes view their disability? Are they resentful of it?

### JARRYD WALLACE (AMPUTEE)

'I absolutely without any hesitation would say that I do not blame God. I rejoice with Him in my disability because in my disability, He has made me able and He has made Himself even more able in me. I honestly don't know if my faith and strength would be where it is now and I would actually lean towards it not being where it is now if the amputation had not happened and I had stayed "able."'




### JEREMY CAMPBELL (AMPUTEE)

'Do I blame God? Absolutely not. I believe this has given me a platform to show just how amazing God is and what He can do. 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 (the Bible) says that God uses the weak to shame the strong, the foolish to shame the wise, the things in this world which are nothing to make something. I think it is amazing how God uses lesser things to make a bigger impact. So, do I blame Him? No – He is God.'

### STEF REID (AMPUTEE)

'I certainly had moments of frustration but never anger towards God. Despite my anger I still know in the back of my head that God is in control and if He could save me from an accident like that, there is not much else that He cannot handle.'

### TATYANA MCFADDEN (WHEELCHAIR RACER)

'I know sometimes days can be tough and you have to say, "Why me?" But then you have to say it is my job to teach and to educate. And my disability is really not that bad. With my disability I can still go to school. I am an athlete with gold medals and I can teach others and help others. If I win or lose a race, I believe God is going to be there or even at really scary times.'

### God burns rubber

Anne Wafula Strike (Wheelchair racer) shared her favourite Bible verse with me:

[God's] throne was flaming with fire and its wheels were all ablaze. **Daniel 7:9**

As Anne explained: 'Not only am I made in the image of God, my chair is in the image of God's throne – with wheels. And that the wheels are ablaze shows me that God burns rubber.'

I DON'T BELIEVE THAT GOD MADE A MISTAKE WHEN HE MADE ME BLIND. HE SIMPLY GAVE THE EYES TO SOMEONE THAT WAS BESIDE ME, SO THAT WHEN I NEEDED THEM, I COULD BORROW THEM.

### ANNE WAFULA STRIKE (WHEELCHAIR RACER)

'I realized that God has got a purpose in my life and instead of just being angry with God I am learning to be thankful and grateful to God every single day when I wake up.'




### TEREZINHA GUILHERMINA (BLIND SPRINTER WHO RUNS WITH A GUIDE)

'I don't believe that God made a mistake when He made me blind. He simply gave the eyes to someone that was beside me, so that when I needed them, I could borrow them.'

### BRENT LAKATOS (WHEELCHAIR RACER)

'I'm thankful for what happened. If it wasn't for my accident, I wouldn't be a Christian, I wouldn't be married to Stef, I wouldn't be competing in competitions. I think I am blessed in all the things I'm able to do and the life that I have right now.'






If you haven't seen it, you need to catch up. For a person with one leg to be jumping nearly two metres is defying the human body.'

While Crewe, an amputee who jumps with a blade, referred to the four or five different styles of jumping, he has only used one: 'I've never tried without my blade on because I wasn't coached that way. I've always trained with athletes with two legs. I'm on the university track team and I am coached the same as any of those athletes. It works for me so I've never considered changing it but if it hadn't worked for me, I would have chosen a different way.' Kumar agreed: 'When you start with one style you tend to carry on with it because that's how you start eroding your fears. We all have certain restrictions and have to do what our body allows.'

The blind long-jump and the amputee high-jump are compelling spectacles, events which combine great skill and raw courage. They are the essence of para athletics.

Markus Rehm is one of the superstars of para athletics. The German amputee long-jumper, who lost his lower right leg in a wakeboarding accident as a 14-year-old, has a best ever jump of 8.48m – which would have given him second place in the 2019 IAAF (able-bodied) World Championship in Doha. Competing in the T64 (amputee) class in Dubai, he needed only the first of his six jumps (8.17) to accomplish a successful defence of his title.

Writing about disability sport is a challenge. You want to get the balance between doing justice to the achievements but yet not exaggerating. The slogan for the 2015 World (Disability) Athletics Championships in Doha was 'Beyond incredible', but that wording is in danger of making para athletics sound like a freak show. Arguably it is no more incredible for a para athlete to break a world record than for Usain Bolt to run 100 metres in 9.58. The Dubai description of the disabled as 'people of determination' acknowledges the hurdles that have to be overcome.

Serial wheelchair marathon winner, Jean Driscoll, once told me that a well-meaning person had said to her: 'I think it's just wonderful that you can do a marathon.' Jean replied: 'Not really. I'm sure you could do a marathon too if you trained four hours a day, six days a week, like me!' The first point to understand when considering para athletics is that the reason that amputee, Irmgard Bensusan can run 200m in 26.93 or Lisa Adams (cerebral palsy) can throw a shot 14.80m or Omara Durand (blind) can run 400m in 52.85, attached to a guide – is that they all train really hard. They are magnificent athletes. S.




**STUART WEIR**

Stuart Weir is passionate about Jesus Christ and about sport, and he spends his life trying to help people make the connection. He has written several books about sport and Christianity and has worked as a sports writer at Olympic, Paralympic and World Championship events. He has been to three football World Cups and was Togo's Olympic attaché at the 2012 and 2016 Olympics. Married to Lynne, he has two grown-up children. He is a member of Kidlington Baptist Church and Frilford Heath Golf Club.

@stuartweir

**The 100m dash is many people's favourite event. It is over in about 10 seconds and the winner is the fastest person in the town/county/country/world. In disability sport it is a bit more complicated with 32 different 100m races:17 classes for men and 15 for women. The advantage is that whenever you happen to be in the stadium, you have a good chance of seeing one!**

**The following table lists the 17 men's winners with their time and classification. As the times show, these are serious athletes.**

**MEN**

| Class | Description | Name | Country | Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T11 | Visual impairment | Lucas Prado | BRA | 10.95 |
| T12 | Visual impairment | Salum Kashafli | NOR | 10.54 |
| T13 | Visual impairment | Jason Smyth | IRE | 10.54 |
| T33 | Athetosis etc wheelchair | Ahmad Almutairi | KUW | 17.08 |
| T34 | Athetosis etc wheelchair | Walid Ktila | TUN | 14.99 |
| T35 | Cerebral palsy etc | Ihor Tsietov | UKR | 12.19 |
| T36 | Cerebral palsy etc | James Turner | AUS | 11.72 |
| T37 | Cerebral palsy etc | Andrei Vdovin | RUS | 11.18 |
| T38 | Cerebral palsy etc | Dening Zhu | CHN | 11.00 |
| T47 | Arm Amputee | Petrucio Ferreira dos Santos | BRA | 10.44 |
| T51 | Wheelchair | Toni Piispanen | FIN | 20.33 |
| T52 | Wheelchair | Raymond Martin | USA | 16.88 |
| T53 | Wheelchair | Brent Lakatos | CAN | 14.59 |
| T54 | Wheelchair | Leo Pekka Tahti | FIN | 13.97 |
| T63 | Amputee | Daniel Wagner | DEN | 12.32 |
| T64 | Amputee | Johannes Floors | GER | 10.60 |
| RR3 | Use Tricycle without pedals | Gavin Drysdale | GBR | 16.72 |

# CHANGING YOUR LIFE ONE PAPER-CLIP AT A TIME



**How are those New Year's resolutions going? Congratulations if you're still smashing them, because studies show that by now more than 75% of us have given up. But if you're one of those, then don't be disheartened, just grab yourself paperclips!**

In his book *Atomic Habits*, James Clear tells the story of stockbroker Trent Dyrsmid who joined a bank in Abbotsford in Canada in 1993. No one expected much of Trent. He was a rookie and Abbotsford was a small suburban office in the shadow of Vancouver, where the big deals were made. Yet within eighteen months, he had generated $5 million of business. The secret of his success? Two jars he kept on his desk, one empty, one filled with 120 paper clips.

Every morning at 8am Trent started dialling potential clients.

## WE NEED SMALLER, MORE IMMEDIATE GOALS.

After each call he moved a paper clip from the full to the empty jar and kept dialling until he had moved them all. And that was his secret: 120 calls per day, one paper clip at a time.

Most of us realise that we need to translate our resolutions into tangible goals (so get fitter becomes run 5k in 40 minutes, read more becomes finish 20 books this year), but often this isn't enough. The gap between where we are and where we want to be is too large. We need smaller, more immediate goals to keep us working consistently and habitually towards our overall goal (so run 5k in 40 minutes becomes run for 45 minutes 3 times a week, read 20 books this year becomes read 20 pages a day). The genius in Trent's ideas was to translate these into visual triggers that:

**Encourage us to make progress:** they remind us of the small steps necessary to move us towards our overall goal.

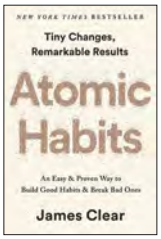
**Provide instant reward:** the act of moving a paper clip between jars provides a tangible sense of achievement.

**Monitor our progress:** the paperclips provide a short-term visual measure of how well we are doing.

**Motivate us to continue** seeing the progress we have already made stimulates and motivates us to complete the sequence.

**Helps us get back on track:** when illness, busyness or lack of motivation hits, we can see what we need to do to get back on track rather than feeling discouraged and giving up.

So if you're serious about those resolutions, maybe it's time to grab yourself some paper clips. S.




*Atomic Habits* by James Clear, published by Random House Business. October 2018.



**MARTIN CARTER**

Martin Carter is an experienced leadership coach, consultant and facilitator. He helps individuals, groups and organisations to make a bigger difference in the world by equipping them to be bolder in their actions and conversations as well as helping them shift the boulders that sometimes get in the way. Martin lives in the West Midlands with his wife and three children.

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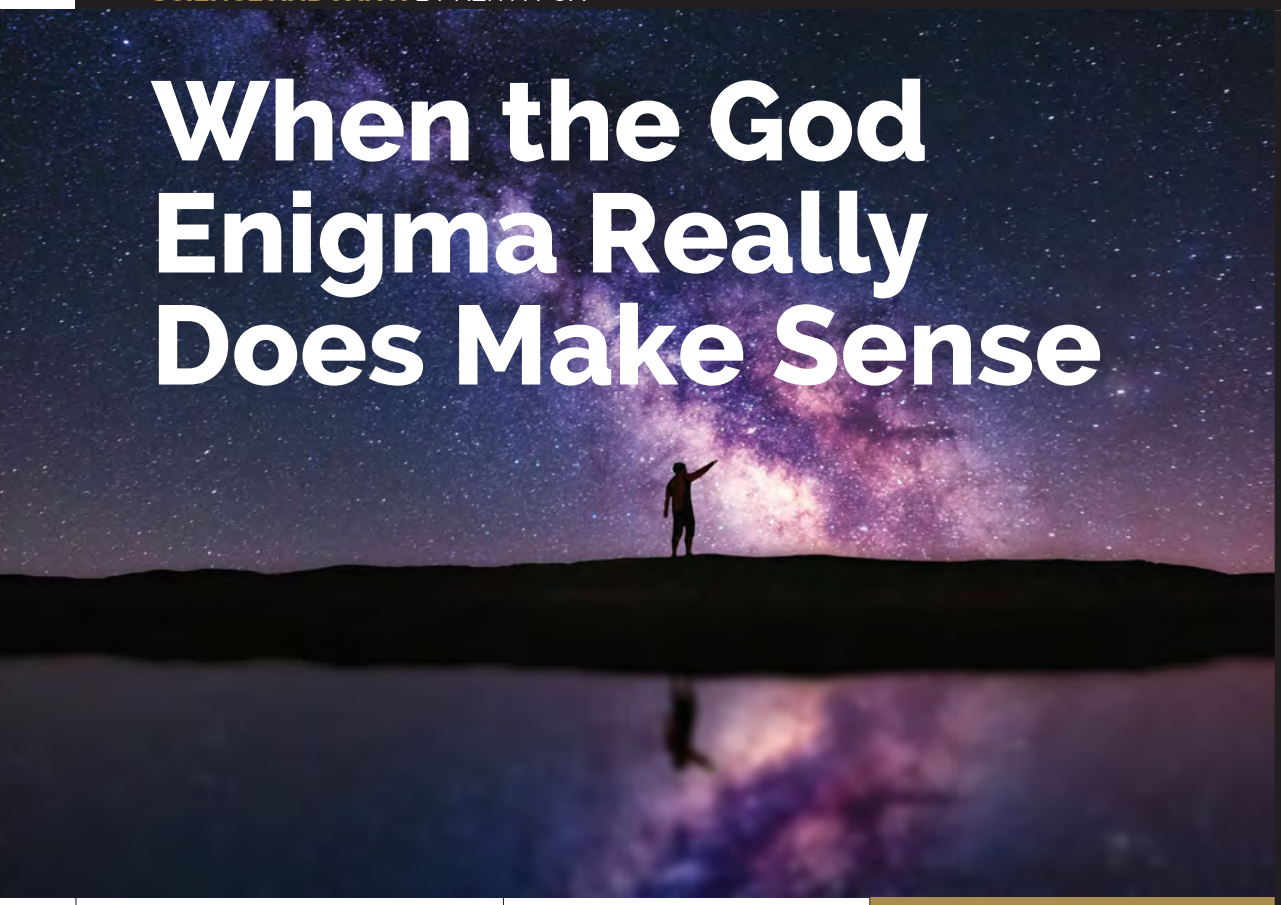
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# When the God Enigma Really Does Make Sense



**'You can't be a serious scientist and a Christian.' That's what many people believe, but there have been, and still are, many believing scientists: I am one of these. For some people that comes as a surprise, but why shouldn't a scientist believe in God? Science is about describing the way that the world works and for a believer this means exploring how God has ordered things. As the astronomer Kepler said, we are simply 'thinking God's thought's after him'.**

I'm not one of those scientists who knew what they were going to do from a young age. I went through some bumpy years at school in my early teens, when I lost interest and was close to the bottom of the class. That was until I discovered a fascination with chemistry, thanks to a brilliant teacher, and within a few months I went from near the bottom of the class in everything to top in chemistry. From there, other subjects began to fall into place (though I never was any good at English!) At about the same time my Christian faith came alive. My parents were Christians, and I was taken to church every Sunday, though this meant little to me until my mid-teens, when I began to understand what it meant to be a Christian. Since then my faith has grown in parallel with my scientific understanding, so for me there never has been a conflict.



## Why shouldn't a scientist believe in God?

My understanding of science has changed over the years, and my Christian faith has grown. I see science as my Christian vocation, as another way of worshipping God.

Science is about gathering evidence, weighing things up and constructing hypotheses, something that is described as 'inference to the best explanation'. There are very few 'proofs' in science, but the weight of evidence means that we can be sure about many things. Some people see belief as blind faith, in which evidence is irrelevant, but for Christians, evidence is crucially important. The resurrection of Jesus is central to that belief, and this event in history needs an explanation. If we just look at equations, chemistry etc., then we might be able to construct a worldview without God, but a scientist must examine all the evidence, not just the bits that fit into our favourite theories, and that includes religious claims. These two complementary approaches give a fuller view of life in which science provides an opportunity to understand God better and increase our awe for what God has created. S.



**KEITH FOX**

Keith Fox is Professor of Biochemistry at Southampton University, Associate Director of the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge, and a Licensed lay minister in the Church of England.

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# TIME TO CUT YOUR CLOTH



**Spring! Perhaps my favourite season, as well as summer and autumn! Synonymous with having a 'spring clean' which supposedly comes from the Persian new year which falls on the first day of spring and involves the practice known as *khaneh tekani* which (if Wikipedia is to be believed) literally means 'shaking the house.'**

It's a good time to do a spring clean on our personal finances too. Especially as the new tax year is soon to be upon us.

Firstly, how about consolidating or changing your current account? Some bank accounts will literally pay you a reward for paying utility bills via direct debit, or give you free travel or mobile phone insurance. Could a little spring clean actually save you money?

Whilst interest rates are low, it probably doesn't seem worth making the effort, but do you have savings which are in old accounts earning you next to nothing? I discovered my wife had a Halifax account earning 0.01% but Halifax will be lending that money out at a much higher rate and the difference is their profit! Time to transfer. The info on who are offering the best rates is readily available online and as many of the best rates are through online banking, there isn't even a need to visit a branch.

Do you use a credit card? In 2020 it's a mortal sin to still be paying for the privilege. Many providers will reward you with points which can be converted into cash, air miles or Nectar points. However, do ensure you are paying your balance off each month. If you don't, the reward may well be far less than the interest rate you are being charged.

We all spend money, and if we can tilt this in our favour so that it is earning us some benefit, it's a prudent exercise. In addition to all the interest retail banks earn on lending money, they must make a packet in saving money through our inertia when it comes to shopping around for our banking.

There's nothing wrong with a bank making a profit for its shareholders. You may even own shares in a bank yourself, either directly or unknowingly in your pension, but if we all have a spring clean and are proactive in this area, we can force them to become more competitive and creative in their offerings. I think that would be good for everyone. S.

## Could a little spring clean actually save you money?





**JON COBB**

Jon Cobb runs financial advisory business Trinity Wealth Management. He is a keen runner, ex-white collar boxer, passionate Portsmouth supporter, speaker and writer.

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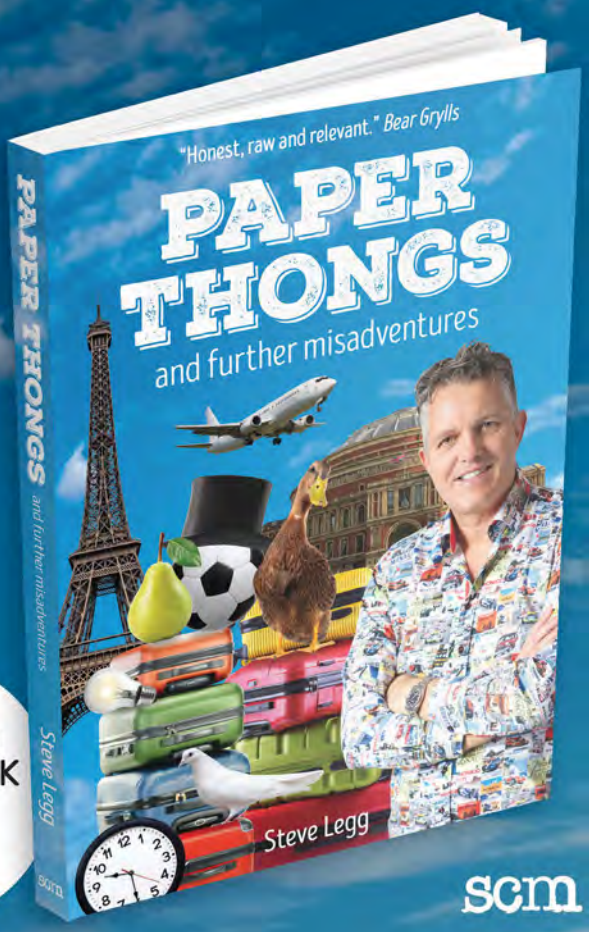
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Getty Images / Stu Forster

# A world-class attitude: the servant heart

**I grew up in South Africa so rugby is in my blood. I was twelve before I realised that balls could be round – I thought they were all oval shaped!**

From an early age, rugby-loving boys in South Africa learn that New Zealand's All Blacks are the ultimate foe on the pitch. I remember watching them play in Cardiff, and after the match, they threw into the crowd miniature rugby balls with a silver fern printed on them. People were practically fighting over them. Their fullback threw one straight at me, I caught it, and then promptly threw it back at him, pointing at the Springboks cap on my head. So please understand what I am about to say is very hard – my opinion of the All Blacks has since changed and I am now in awe of them. New Zealand is the best rugby-playing nation in history and the All Blacks are arguably the best sporting team in the world! With a success rate of 86% over 130 years, no other team comes even close.

In his book *Legacy*, James Kerr writes that after a match the All Blacks sweep their own changing rooms (which they call the sheds). I find that extraordinary. Why is it necessary for the world's best team to clean up after themselves?

But then it struck me; around 2,000 years ago Jesus of Nazareth was eating with his disciples when he suddenly got up and began to wash their feet (a job for the lowliest of slaves); commanding them, 'If I, the Master and Teacher, washed your feet, you must now wash each other's feet.'

I understand that not everyone who reads this shares my faith. Whatever you think of Jesus, his life and work can't be denied, and any reputable historian acknowledges that no other man has impacted humanity more. Over 2,000 years later, millions of people still follow his teachings.

We admire toughness in our sport's heroes, but one quality that really sets the great apart from the rest is a willingness to serve others. Sweeping the sheds cultivates a servant heart in the All Blacks, some of the toughest sportsmen on earth – the same servant heart demonstrated by Jesus when he washed people's feet.

> A WILLINGNESS TO SERVE OTHERS.

But what does that look like for us? It's about being selfless, giving of ourselves for the benefit of others in our families, in the workplace and in society – without always expecting something in return.

I sometimes wonder where the All Blacks got their idea from. S.





**GERRIT BANTJES**

South African by birth, Gerrit became fitness coach at Cardiff RFC after playing first class rugby in South Africa and Wales. He served in two armies and passed the gruelling British Army Pre-Parachute Selection Course, P-Company, at the age of forty. Married to a Welsh girl, he has lived in Cardiff for more than twenty years. Gerrit works for Care for the Family and speaks all over the UK.

careforthefamily.org.uk

# Men Behaving Gladly

## Divorce rates are plummeting because men are deciding, not sliding, into marriage



Right, let's do this thing.

**Toxic masculinity. #MeToo. Patriarchy. It's all bad news about men, isn't it? But here's a good news story about men doing better.**

Divorce rates have been falling since the 1980s because fewer wives are filing for divorce in the early years of marriage.

Let's compare the first ten years of marriage for couples who married in 1986 – the group who had the highest divorce rates ever – and couples who married much more recently.

Of the 1986 couples, 229 out of every 1,000 couples got divorced: of these, 169 were initiated by wives and 60 by husbands.

Of the 2007 couples, 172 out of every 1,000 couples got divorced: of these, 110 were initiated by wives and 62 by husbands.

Amazing! Over two decades, there's been almost no change at all in the rate of divorces initiated by husbands. And yet there's been a huge reduction in the rate of divorce initiated by wives.

### WHY THE GENDER GAP?

There are only two possibilities. Either men haven't changed but today's wives have become more tolerant of their husbands' bad behaviour. Or women haven't changed but today's husbands are a lot better at making their wives happy.

In an era of #Metoo, the first possibility is implausible. Women today are *less* likely to put up with bad behaviour. So you'd expect divorce rates to go up!

Perhaps, as social pressure to marry has reduced, those men who might previously have been subtly pressured into marriage are no longer doing so, leaving only the men who *want* to marry doing so.

In the words of top US commitment researcher Professor Scott Stanley, men are 'deciding, not sliding'.

This fits with a growing body of evidence that shows men and women see commitment in different ways.

Men's commitment tends to revolve around a decision, an act of deliberate intent, the making of a clear plan. Right, let's do this thing. Women's commitment is more about attachment and begins when they move in with somebody.

With Britain leading the downtrend in divorce, we are beginning to see a similar pattern emerge across Europe. In fifteen of the top twenty European nations, divorce rates are now beginning to fall in the early years of marriage.

The relevance of this story to all of us men – married or not – is that if we want our relationships to work, we need to make a clear commitment to our future together.

Right, let's do this thing. Decide, don't slide. S.

**1986**

229 **out of** 1,000 **couples divorced**

169 **initiated by wives**

60 **initiated by husbands**

**2007**

172 **out of** 1,000 **couples divorced**

110 **initiated by wives**

62 **initiated by husbands**

**HARRY BENSON**

Harry is research director for Marriage Foundation and, with his wife Kate, co-author of bestseller *What Mums Want and Dads Need to Know.*

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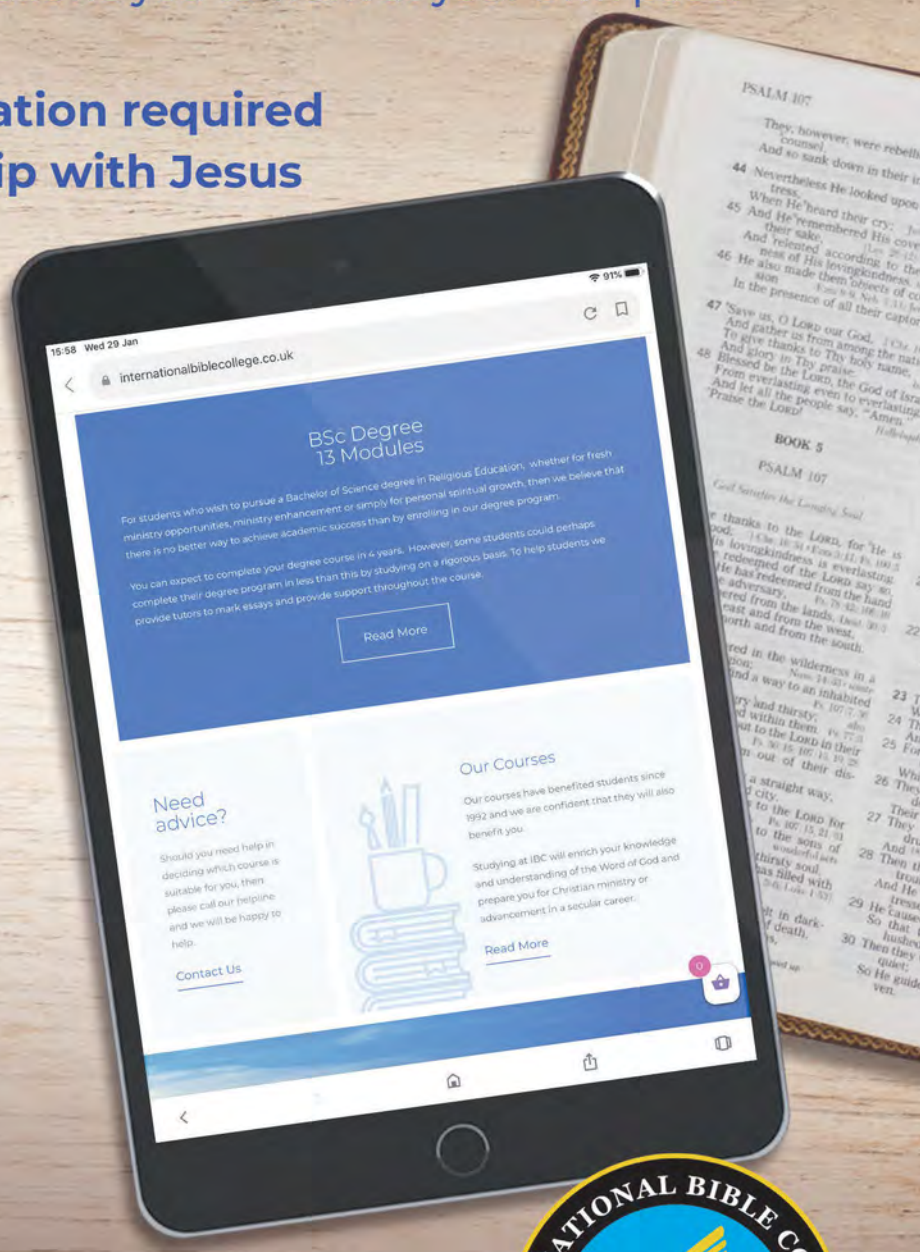
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# SLAVERY: THE SHAME WE ALL CARRY

Getty Images / Christopher Furlong

**Few of us can forget last year's horrific incident when 39 Vietnamese people died inside a refrigerated lorry container as they were being smuggled into the UK, not to mention the heartache of their families. Smuggling involves illegally transporting people across an international border, but when whoever arranged this then exploits them, it's human trafficking. Some traffickers bring their victims in openly, confiscating their passports, money and freedom on arrival. And thousands of UK nationals are trafficked within the country – particularly children.**

In Britain some 136,000 people from 100 nations are estimated to be in modern slavery, many lied to about jobs awaiting them. All too often victims are coerced




into prostitution or hard labour on farms and elsewhere, under appalling conditions. If adult victims face difficulties, how much more for children! In 2018, over 3,000 potential young victims were identified, almost half of them British. Vulnerable children, for example those in care, who live in deprived areas and have dropped out of society are targeted. They're groomed, plied with gifts, alcohol and drugs, before being used for sex or, now on the increase, sent to sell drugs across the country in 'county lines' operations.

In 2019 there were over 1,400 active investigations and recent raids rescued several sexually exploited women and slave labourers, with police often working alongside local charities and national organisations, such as The Salvation Army, Barnardo's, Hope for Justice and International Justice Mission. Since 2006 CARE has campaigned in Parliament and new laws now make it easier to prosecute perpetrators and protect survivors. But more needs to be done, especially for those rescued who need help to stay free. For the last few years veteran justice champion Lord McColl of Dulwich has worked on a bill to extend support for victims from the current paltry 45 days to one year. Find out more at freeforgood.org.uk They need legal advice, somewhere safe to live, counselling and practical help.

And rescued children must be better protected. Many are placed in care but subsequently disappear, taken back by their traffickers. In Northern Ireland each has an independent guardian to support them and CARE is working hard to see this scheme extended throughout the UK. They say the only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing. This may be something you'd like to get behind – by being better informed, donating to relevant charities and maybe finding volunteering opportunities. S.



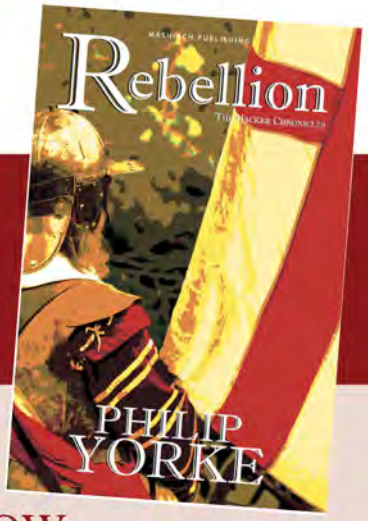
## More needs to be done.



**LYNDON BOWRING**

Lyndon Bowring was born in Wales and studied at London Bible College. He is an associate minister at Kensington Temple, and has been executive chairman of CARE for more than 25 years. His hobbies include watching rugby, exploring London's restaurants and developing friendships. He lives in London with his wife, Celia, and they have three children.

It is 1643
England is being ripped apart by a brutal civil war
It is time for a hero to emerge



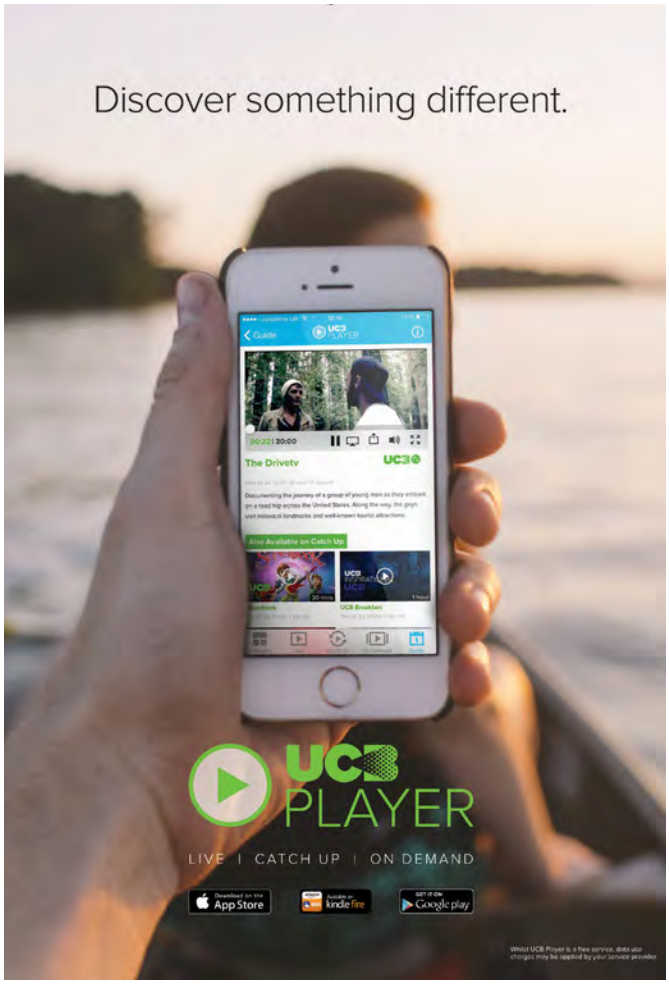

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Getty Images / Michael Regan

# THESE BOOTS ARE MADE FOR TALKING

BY STUART WEIR

**Oliver Giroud is a Premier League legend, currently in his eighth season in England. What is more, he has played successfully for two clubs, Arsenal and Chelsea. He made his reputation at Arsenal. In the 2011-12 season, when 21 goals took unfancied Montpellier to the French title and earned the 25 year-old a move to Arsenal.**

In five seasons there, he played 180 league games, scoring 73 Premier League goals. He also helped the club to three FA Cup wins, scoring in the 2015 final against Aston Villa. In the 2017 final he helped Arsenal beat Chelsea but within a few months he was a Chelsea player. He had only come off the bench for the last ten minutes of the 2017 Cup Final, a pattern which was to recur the following season when his Premier League appearances for Arsenal consisted of one start and 15 appearances as a substitute.

Having played against Chelsea in the 2017 FA Cup Final, he found himself playing for Chelsea as they beat Manchester United 1-0 in the 2018 final and he played the whole game until being substituted in the last minute. In 2019, Chelsea won the Europa League – ironically for Oliver, beating Arsenal 4-1 in the final. Inevitably, Giroud scored one of the goals. He had a magnificent competition, finishing as overall top-scorer with11 Europa League goals.

He was first capped by France in 2011 and has played 97 times for his country (at 31 December 2019), scoring 39 goals. The highlight was the 2018 World Cup Final in Moscow. Giroud started as France went 4-2 up on Croatia and was substituted after 81 minutes, after which there were no more goals. In 2016 France reached the European Championship Final, losing 0-1 to Portugal. Giroud, whose three goals earlier in the competition helped them progress, started in the final.

He has proved himself in the French League, with two Premier League clubs and in international football where his achievements include being a World Cup winner.

### Do you remember the first time you prayed?

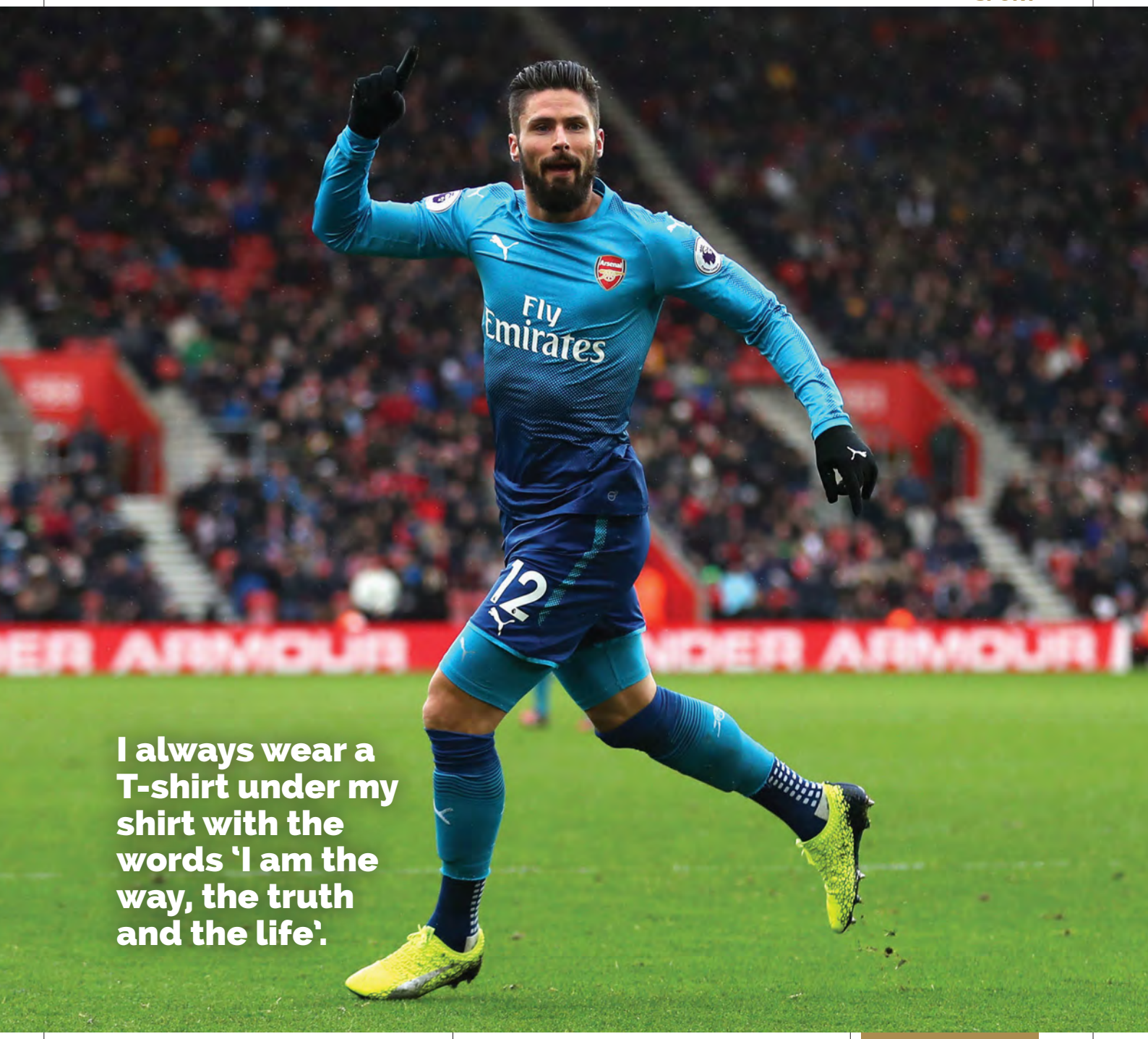
It must have been in church. I used to go with my Mum who would go to church every Sunday in Grenoble. Friends had introduced her to Jesus.

### When your mother used to take you, did you understand?

At that age, I would follow my mother, I liked it because there were songs, there was a nice atmosphere and a good general feeling. When the pastor preached, I would go to the children's club. I realised there was something really powerful, that the Holy Spirit would come down in that room, that He would take over that place and the people present. I was really challenged, I could see the pastor and the church members being filled with His presence. Obviously I had discussions with my mother so that she could explain to me what we were doing. She told me why we were singing and worshipping the Lord. I also learned more about Jesus' life during the children's club. Then later, when you grow up, it's your turn to speak about it and evangelise.

### When you were a teenager, did you, like other teenagers, reject religion?

Not really. When I was a teenager, my mother would send me to holiday camps where there were lots of activities, including prayer times. The leaders would speak to us about certain Bible verses. For me, these were great times. My mother knew where she was sending me! Let's say I didn't rebel because I asked myself deep and meaningful questions. I think we can have doubts




**I always wear a T-shirt under my shirt with the words 'I am the way, the truth and the life'.**

throughout our whole life, not just when we're teenagers. We seek to know whether Jesus has abandoned us, especially when we go through tough times. I feel very lucky in that area. I have always been grateful to have avoided tough times as a teenager.

**When you became a professional footballer, did God continue to have the first place in your life?**

I have never separated my spiritual life and my professional life. For me it's not one above the other, it's one with the other.

**Was it easier to keep everything together because your family was present?**

That's true. I was living 20km from Grenoble, the football club where I had trained from the age of 12, and I was lucky to have my father working in Grenoble every day. He would take me to school at 8.00am every day and then at 3.30pm I'd rush off to the training centre which was a 20 minute walk away. Then my father would come and pick me up at 7pm and we'd go home and start again the next day. I was lucky to stay with my family, in our nest.

**What advice would you give to young Christian footballers?**

First of all, in my own life as a professional footballer, in the last couple of years I've been through some tough times. I explained this to a young Christian, who's started here in the Premier League. I told him to keep focused, to keep a certain strength of character. I had this strength at the beginning of my career and it has never left me. You just need to believe. I have faith. I believe in God, I know that nothing happens to us by chance and that Jesus has a plan for each one of us. Of course, it's not Jesus who's going to run on the pitch! You must never give up, be patient and work hard. Even in the difficult times, don't feel sorry for yourself, but keep trying and remember there will be better days. Our faith allows us to stay objective. →

**5**
**seasons**

**180**
**League games played**

**73**
**goals scored for Arsenal**

Getty Images / Catherine Ivill



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Getty Images / Clive Rose

**During the 2016 Euro, the team's videographer goes past your room at Clairefontaine and captures a scene that goes viral... What happened?**

Guillaume Bigot, the French team's cameraman, had been following me around for a while, he wanted to know what I did before a match. So he asked me if I wouldn't mind speaking about the Bible. I simply explained that before a match I would read a few psalms. He asked me if I would mind being filmed reading some psalms, I said 'No, of course not.' I had already spoken about it while I played for Montpellier, but it hadn't taken this scale.

**I was actually going to ask you... in the changing rooms, do people ask questions about your faith?**

Yes of course! It's not a coincidence that Mathieu Debuchy became the godfather of my second child. We know each other very well. Otherwise, in the changing rooms, I've already given out some little booklets that have testimonies of professional sportspeople and I spoke about my faith with a few players who were more or less believers.

**Recently you took part in a gala for the benefit of persecuted Christians. Why?**

What I have realised is that we speak about disasters that happen all over the world, and for me persecuted Christians are part of those disasters. It's surprising that we have never heard those numbers before [he's referring to the statistics from Open Doors] and it's a shame to only realise this now, because the numbers are unbelievable. There are 245 million Christians being persecuted, I can't even begin to imagine it.

**Your last child was baptised in 2018. Is faith ingrained in your family? For example, do you pray together?**

With my wife Jennifer? Yes, we sometimes pray together. We often pray in our own time. The children are still a little young but when they are old enough, I will explain it to them, I will read the Bible with them. They already have some knowledge. One day my Mum told my daughter: 'You see everything around you, God created it, He created the world, the sky, the oceans. Look at that beautiful sunset, it's Jesus!' And now, every time there's a sunset, my daughter says: 'Look Daddy, it's Jesus!'

**You had some frustrations at Arsenal?**

It's true. In 2016, when I came back from the Euros. I'd just had my best season with Arsenal. I came back and had a discussion with Arsène Wenger and he told me it's hard to keep focused after a big competition, especially after a failure in the final. Then, I started to understand. It is very difficult. You're coming out of your best season, you're two steps away from becoming European champion and when you come back to your club, your coach doesn't pick you... at the same time I'm very grateful to Arsène Wenger because he's the one who brought me over from Montpellier. And he's the one who trusted me the night of the Cup Final in 2017 during which I was a game-changer.

**Actually, it's during this final that you shared your first testimony of faith...**

That night, together, we decided to offer this victory to Jesus. I always wear a T-shirt under my shirt with the words 'I am the way, the truth and the life.'

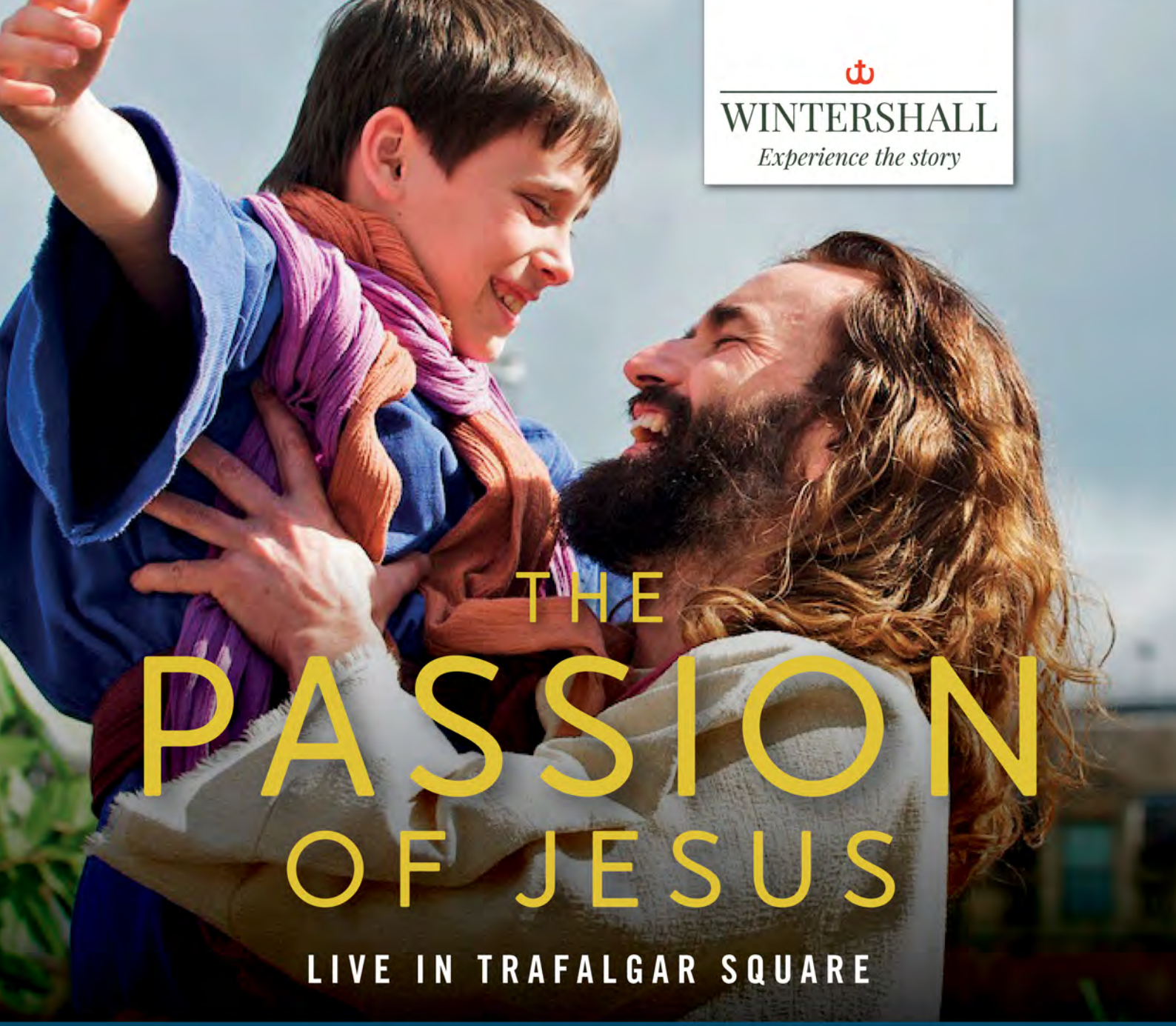
**I don't want to make you think of retiring but are you thinking of doing anything linked with your faith after your career?**

I probably won't be a pastor. But one thing I'm sure of, I will always be available when people need me for events or any charity galas. Even if I know I want to stay in the world of football, I don't know exactly what I will do but I will be present and available to Christians.

**Is your celebrity status an inconvenience or an advantage for you to live out your faith?**

To speak about my faith and evangelise, it's a great asset. Because you can reach a big number of people through your testimony. It's a little more interesting going to church. People recognise me, so it gets complicated, but that comes with the job. You can't say to people 'Leave me alone.' And I can understand, people are there with their children. It reminds me of when I was little and I'd look up to people like Zidane with admiration. But I know it's really important to go to church. I pray regularly and I can live out my faith elsewhere. But I'd like to go more often as I often experience extraordinary moments when I'm there. S.

Interview with Giroud, by *Jésus* magazine, France, used by permission.




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F1 HAS BECOME UNATTAINABLE FOR ANYONE FROM A NORMAL BACKGROUND.

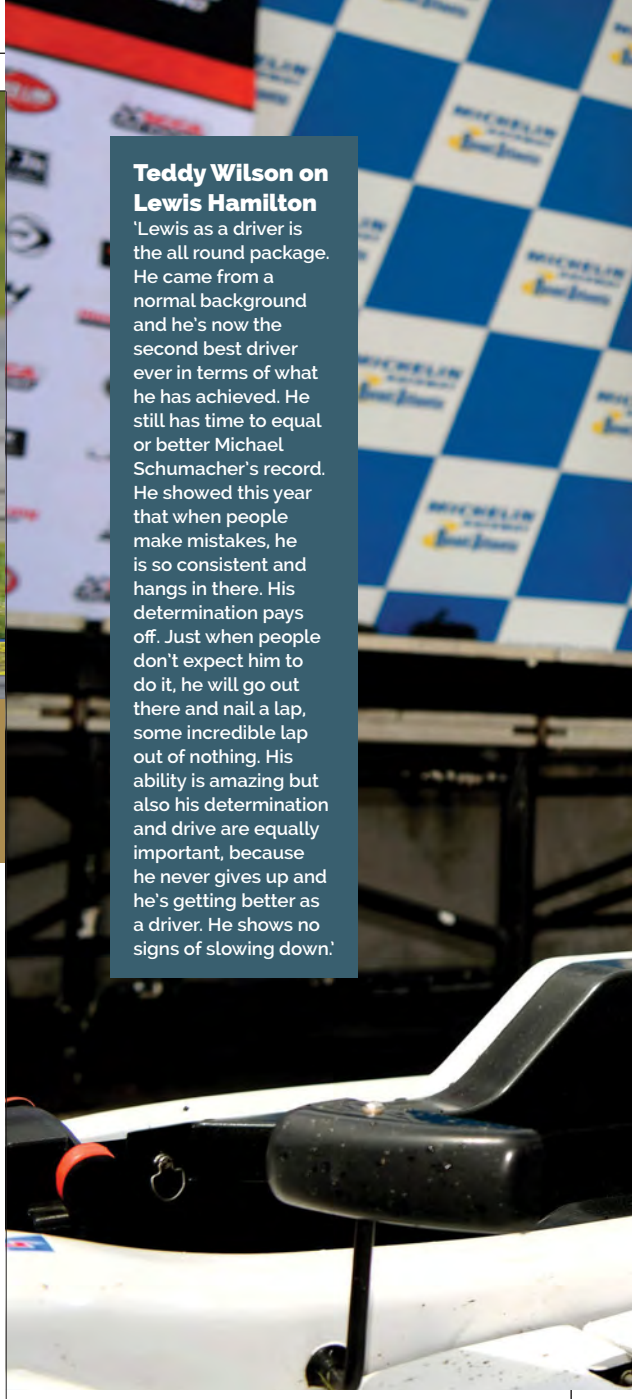
# MR FAST TRACK

BY STUART WEIR

**In 2014 Teddy Wilson won the British Cadet Karting Championship, following in the footsteps of Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button. It was the moment when he knew what he wanted to do with his life and knew he had the talent. He recalls: 'I was just 13 at the time and I remember seeing my name on the trophy beside Lewis Hamilton and other previous winners – a pretty amazing moment.' Teddy was already a karting veteran at that age, having started at six years old. He started racing when he was eight, the age at which you can get your motor sport licence in the UK. Over the next few years, he competed in Britain and Europe, trying to balance sport and school. He admits: 'The school thing was tricky but it all worked OK in the end. From the age of 13, I knew that's what I wanted to do with my life so I had to put everything into it, and not let the opportunity slip by. Even though I missed a lot of school, I got my target grades or even better.'**

After having some good results in 2017, out of the blue he got an invitation to take part in a kart race in Daytona, Florida. He won the race and impressed those who had invited him enough that they offered him the chance to race in Formula 4 in the US. F4 is the base level of racing, intended for young drivers, which operates in a lot of different countries around the world. It is the first stepping stone for any driver going into motor racing. The minimum age is 15. Teddy explains: 'The car I drove in America had a two litre Honda engine, naturally aspirated. It is the same engine as is in road cars, just without the turbo, 165 horsepower. That doesn't seem a lot but when you've only got 600 kilos weight, it can reach speeds of 150mph – which is pretty quick for a 15 year old driver. It has a wings and slicks. You could say that that it is a mini F1 car. It has less aerodynamics but the basics are there, which is why it's a really important stepping stone for anyone trying to reach the higher levels of motor sport.' F4 races last 30 minutes – continuous racing with no pit-stops.

Unlike F1 where some cars are demonstrably better than others, all F4 in a race are identically manufactured so the deciding factors are the car set-up and the skill



**Teddy Wilson on Lewis Hamilton**

'Lewis as a driver is the all round package. He came from a normal background and he's now the second best driver ever in terms of what he has achieved. He still has time to equal or better Michael Schumacher's record. He showed this year that when people make mistakes, he is so consistent and hangs in there. His determination pays off. Just when people don't expect him to do it, he will go out there and nail a lap, some incredible lap out of nothing. His ability is amazing but also his determination and drive are equally important, because he never gives up and he's getting better as a driver. He shows no signs of slowing down.'

IT'S FLAT OUT AS FAST AS YOU CAN FROM START TO FINISH.




WE NEED SOME KIND OF SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME.

Gavin Baker Photography

of the driver. Teddy thinks this 'makes the racing better and exciting to watch with everyone jostling for position. The driving makes a massive difference because everyone at the front of the field is very close. It's like a sprint race requiring you to be consistent for the whole 30 minutes. There is strategy when you're making overtaking manoeuvres but it's flat out as fast as you can from start to finish.' He finished the year seventh out of 51 drivers with two second place finishes and six thirds. While it was a great performance, Teddy felt it could have been even better as there were some mechanical issues with the car, which forced him to drop out of some races.

He recalls one race where he started dead last on the grid of about 34 cars but managed to finish eighth, making up a lot of places. At the same time he suggests that it is equally satisfying 'if you start at the front, you put together a good succession of laps and dominate the race as if you come through the field to the front – even if it isn't as exciting to watch.'

In 2019 he competed in the first three races in the US but couldn't raise the funds to continue. His focus is now on competing in 2020 in a Ginetta supercar in the British touring car class. Motor sport is extremely expensive and impossible without a backer but as Teddy is quick to point out: 'Sponsorship is not about you giving me money to go racing but there's a lot that can be offered to a sponsoring company like running events, inviting them to race meetings, some on live television. You can get in the car, do passenger hot laps, I can take you round the track flat out and scare the living daylights out of you!' Beyond that, his aim is Indycars, which is big in the USA, running four series of races including the world-famous Indianapolis 500.

Sadly he feels that 'F1 has become unattainable for anyone from a normal background. The sheer cost makes it impossible without the backing of a big company or family money. Lewis Hamilton recently said on the Graham Norton show that there needs to be a change, or he will be the last person from a normal background to get into F1. He was funded by Ron Dennis and Mercedes but that hasn't happened to anyone since. So I'd like to see a change which would help talented drivers get an opportunity. You may be the best driver but if you can't get yourself in a race car because of finance, then you can't compete. It really is as simple as that, unfortunately. That is the harsh reality of the sport at the moment. We need some kind of scholarship programme – something similar to what they've done with the women's W Series, showcasing what woman racing drivers can do. So to have a talent platform for male drivers would be great for the sport.' S.

# Ed's Up




Getty Images / WPA Pool

BY STUART WEIR

**The England football manager's job is sometimes called 'the poisoned chalice', and seen as an impossible job. While the England Rugby head coach role is not as high profile, it brings with it high expectations. England's disappointing performance in the 2015 home World Cup led to the departure of head coach, Stuart Lancaster, a nice man and an excellent coach who had simply been unable to deliver the success expected of him. The appointment of a foreign coach to succeed him – an Australian at that – was unprecedented.**

When England lost five games in succession in 2018, just one year out from the World Cup, the pressure was suddenly on Eddie Jones. He had been in post for over two years but was the team getting better? Was he the right man? Was he up to the job? Were England facing a second successive World Cup disaster?

In the end, Jones took England to the World Cup final. A quarter-final with Australia looked on paper a hard match but Jones' team triumphed 40-16. In the semi-final, England beat the World Cup holders, and favourites, New Zealand comprehensively 19-7, in what some writers called 'England's greatest ever performance'. In the final, somehow England were flat, unable to reproduce the form, guile and strategy of the semi-final, losing 32-12 to South Africa.

Jones' book was published less than a month after the 2019 World Cup, obviously written in advance, with his account of the World Cup added just before going to print. It is a long book – 423 pages. While the part that is of most interest to most readers is his account of the World Cup, one has to work through 380 pages before getting there.

The book gives away more trade secrets than the average autobiography; for example, his admission that he made selection errors for the World Cup final. His analysis of the selection issues involving Ford, Farrell, Brown, Daly and Watson is very interesting. He also explains his reasons for not picking Danny Cipriani, something Cipriani recently said had never been said to him face to face. But as it is a ghosted autobiography, there is always the question of whether one is reading Jones' words or the writer's.

The earlier parts of the book set the scene, so that by the time we come to the chapters on coaching England, we have more understanding of the man: 'The art of good coaching is turning an idea in your head into reality on the field...the feeling you get nowhere else in life. It's this intensity, this fear, this hope, this dread, this thrill, all knotted together in your gut... This is what we do.'

Jones was a decent player but even then he admits: 'I played for the first team and even captained them but I was more fascinated by the challenge of turning the reserves into a better outfit.' All good teams, he believes, exude confidence. He then discusses the balance between confidence and arrogance, naming Ian Chappell, former Australian cricket captain, as a leader who got the balance right.

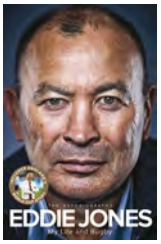
> The art of good coaching is turning an idea in your head into reality on the field.

One incident with the England team gives the reader an insight into Jones's approach to the management of people. He set up a meeting with the players but did not turn up himself. However, he had put video cameras in place to observe reactions. On another occasion he told the players a bus would pick them up for training at 10.00 am but no bus was sent – in order to observe the reactions and note which players took charge and showed the leadership skills he was looking for.

He describes a final, early in his career, where his (superior) team lost. The opposing coach (Steve Hansen) told him later: 'You played the same way as in our previous game so we knew how to counter it.' Jones writes of the incident: 'We would never make the same mistake again in another final. We had allowed the Crusaders to work out exactly how to nullify our attack and because we had no alternative plan we had lost the game.' I couldn't help wondering if he had made the same mistake again in the World Cup semi and final.

In an unexpected passage in the book, he reveals himself as a church-goer: 'I also started to go to a church near our home. I had never been a practising Christian but I found peace in church. It was not some dramatic conversion but, rather, a place where I reflect and give thanks for my returning health, my family, my work. I began to strongly believe that there is a purpose for all of us in our lives...Whenever I'm in a new town now, and I see a church I'll step inside. It's very low-key but I've retained that gratitude and faith. It's simply a belief in something higher and greater than all of us.'

Jones comes across as a man obsessed with rugby and with coaching, who has few outside interests but whose life is consumed by finding new ways to make whichever group of players he is working with compete better. S.




**MY LIFE AND RUGBY**

**Eddie Jones**

MacMillan, 2019 £20

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## MAY 2020

01 TUNBRIDGE WELLS Assembly Hall
02 CHATHAM Central Theatre
07 WATFORD Colosseum
08 SOUTHEND Cliffs Pavilion
09 WORTHING Pavilion
12 HIGH WYCOMBE Swan Theatre
14 SWANSEA Grand
15 TORQUAY Babbacombe Theatre
19 DARTFORD Orchard
21 BUXTON Opera House
22 GUILDFORD G Live
23 CRAWLEY The Hawth

## JUNE 2020

11 PETERBOROUGH Cresset Theatre
12 HASTINGS White Rock Theatre
13 HARROGATE Theatre
16 ST ALBANS Arena
17 NORWICH Theatre Royal
19 DONCASTER Dome
20 BLACKPOOL Grand
30 BIRMINGHAM Alexandra Theatre

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# NEW SEASON NEW CAPTAIN

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LONDON BRONCOS
RUGBY LEAGUE



## I can't wait to lead the team this season.

**It is with great pleasure that London Broncos can announce that the new Captain for the 2020 BetFred Championship season will be Will Lovell.**

Danny Ward and his coaching staff decided that Northampton-born Lovell was the one to stand out in pre-season and that he was the man to lead the squad going into the 2020 campaign.

The 6ft 4ins centre told us his journey to becoming the new club Captain.

'My journey has not been straightforward. I started as an under-16 with the Harlequins RL team, as it was known then, and came through the system at under 18s and under 20s, in which I also captained the team for a period of time. I was then fortunate enough to be signed with the first team and went on to play three seasons for the club before injuries forced me in the direction of a different path. After a short spell in rugby union with Northampton Saints, I played part-time with London Skolars for three years before being invited back to the Broncos by Wardy and Andrew Henderson. It was here that I had another setback through injury and decided to utilise this time by community coaching in the local schools with John Keyes' guidance, whilst rehabilitating my knee. Finally, I signed back for the Broncos fulltime and have been here since, enjoying being part of a fantastic set-up which has produced some of my best rugby to date.'

We asked Lovell his reaction to the news when he spoke with Danny Ward, 'I was quite shocked but very humbled to receive the news from Wardy. It will be a great honour to captain the club that gave me the opportunity to play professional rugby. I have come through the system here and know what it means to wear the London Broncos jersey with pride so I can't wait to lead the team this season.'

Lovell told us what it means to him to now be Captain of the capital side. 'I started this journey at 16 years of age. I would never have guessed that ten years later I would be captaining the team. It's an honour and something that will mean a lot to myself and my family. I only hope to do it justice.'

Life will be changing in many ways now in 2020 for Will as, after dealing with personal tragedy recently, he has just become a father for the first time. We asked him how that felt; 'It's an amazing feeling becoming a dad! Alfie is such a contented and lovely little baby and has changed my life. Each day is different and after the recent loss of my dad, Alfie has brought much needed happiness to our lives.'



He went on to say, 'I'd like to thank my mum and step-dad, as without them none of this would be possible. The hours and support they have and still give up for me, I will never be able to thank them enough.' He also wanted to thank 'My partner Jess, for giving me my little boy Alfie and for being a rock throughout my career and our years together, particularly during a tough last 6 months... To the rest of my immediate family and friends for their continued support, and to Wardy and all the London Broncos staff for helping me become the player that I am today and providing me with the support needed throughout.'

Broncos Head Coach Ward told us about his decision to name Lovell as Captain; 'Will has worked his way up with us through the Broncos academy ranks and it's a real honour for him to captain the team. As well as the highs, he has overcome a lot of adversity over the years and has worked harder than anyone to get himself to where he is now. Becoming a Dad for the first time over Christmas has also seen Will develop his "Dad strength" which we are all excited about seeing in action this year. Will leads by example and the boys will be by his side every step of the way. He will be closely supported by a number of our experienced players on and off the field and I am sure he will do a fine job.'

Broncos Chairman, David Hughes said; 'I am delighted that Will has been given the captaincy for the 2020 season. He is a credit to the club across the board and will represent everyone to the highest standards. He has faced some tough times in his career but has come through and proved that hard work really does pay off. He is yet another product of the Broncos Academy to make it at the highest level and I am confident that Will will lead his side with pride and passion for the shirt each and every time they take the field.'

Lovell's Vice Captain has also been decided and this year it will be Prop forward, Eddie Battye. S.



# LONDON BRONCOS

BETFRED CHAMPIONSHIP

## 1980-2020

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FEBRUARY** | | | | |
| 2ND | SUNDAY | BRADFORD BULLS | TETLEY'S STADIUM | 3PM |
| 9TH | SUNDAY | WHITEHAVEN RLFC | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| 16TH | SUNDAY | WIDNES VIKINGS | HALTON STADIUM | 3PM |
| **MARCH** | | | | |
| 1ST | SUNDAY | FEATHERSTONE ROVERS | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| 8TH | SUNDAY | YORK CITY KNIGHTS | YORK COMMUNITY STADIUM | 3PM |
| 22ND | SUNDAY | HAILFAX RLFC | THE MBI SHAY STADIUM | 3PM |
| 29TH | SUNDAY | SHEFFIELD EAGLES | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| **APRIL** | | | | |
| 10TH | FRIDAY | TOULOUSE OLYMPIQUE | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| 14TH | TUESDAY | SWINTON LIONS | HAYWOOD ROAD | 7.30PM |
| 19TH | SUNDAY | LEIGH CENTURIONS | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| 26TH | SUNDAY | BATLEY BULLDOGS | THE FOX'S BISCUITS STADIUM | 3PM |
| **MAY** | | | | |
| 3RD | SUNDAY | DEWSBURY RAMS | TETLEY'S STADIUM | 3PM |
| 17TH | SUNDAY | OLDHAM ROUGHYEDS | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| 24TH | SUNDAY | BRADFORD BULLS | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| 30TH | SATURDAY | TOULOUSE OLYMPIQUE | STADE ERNEST WALLON | 3.30PM |
| **JUNE** | | | | |
| 14TH | SUNDAY | WIDNES VIKINGS | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| 21ST | SUNDAY | LEIGH CENTURIONS | LEIGH SPORTS VILLAGE | 3PM |
| 28TH | SUNDAY | BATLEY BULLDOGS | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| **JULY** | | | | |
| 5TH | SUNDAY | WHITEHAVEN RLFC | RECREATION GROUND | 3PM |
| 12TH | SUNDAY | HALIFAX RLFC | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| 19TH | SUNDAY | YORK CITY KNIGHTS | TRAILFINDERS | 1PM |
| 31ST | FRIDAY | SHEFFIELD EAGLES | OLYMPIC LEGACY PARK | 7.45PM |
| **AUGUST** | | | | |
| 7TH | FRIDAY | TOULOUSE OLYMPIQUE | EMERALD HEADINGLEY | 5.45PM |
| 15TH | SATURDAY | FEATHERSTONE ROVERS | LB NUTRITION STADIUM | 6PM |
| 23RD | SUNDAY | DEWSBURY RAMS | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| 30TH | SUNDAY | SWINTON LIONS | TRAILFINDERS | 3PM |
| **SEPTEMBER** | | | | |
| 6TH | SUNDAY | OLDHAM ROUGHYEDS | BOWER FOLD | 3PM |

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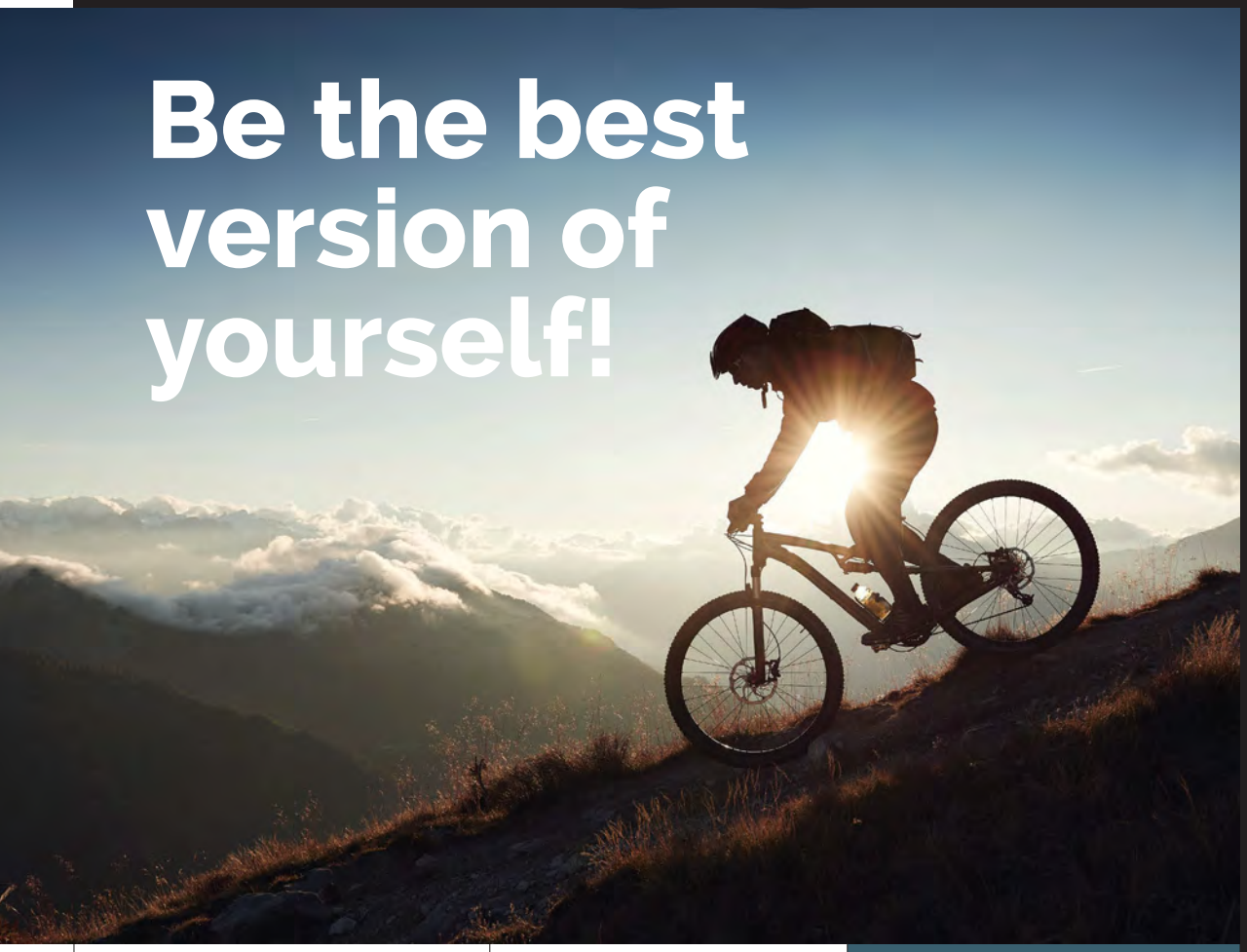
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**Exercise to live rather than live for exercise.**

It is so good to be fit and exercise with no injury. No illness. We look in the mirror and feel good. But how many of us feel like that? I suspect not many. We are normally suffering from some kind of injury. How we get fit and strong depends so much on how we react. So why not use this year, 2020, to become the best version of ourselves we can be? Not perfect!

This will vary person to person depending on circumstances, natural abilities etc. Some of us will be facing tough times. Have you recently been diagnosed with an illness, or been told you need surgery? Have you got diabetes? Are you suffering from depression? For all of these I couldn't recommend strongly enough the importance of exercise and getting fitter!

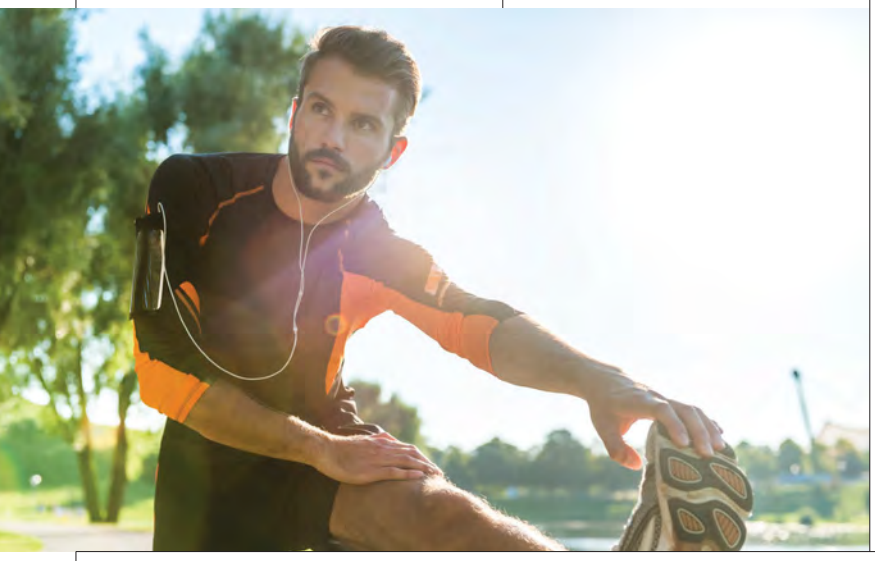
The government have recently announced that people who have been diagnosed with cancer should have up to three exercise sessions a week to build up strength, prior to other treatments like chemotherapy and radiotherapy. I jumped for joy when I heard this and hope it is rolled out for other conditions, such as diabetes. We could avoid many other forms of treatment by exercising and getting fitter. If you are waiting for operations or treatment of any kind, getting your body stronger will only help with your rehab. Exercise is only part of the answer: I am not trivialising illness.

> I PREFER TO USE THE GREAT OUTDOORS TO GET FIT.

When we talk about getting stronger and fitter, one of the first things that comes into our minds is the gym. For a lot of us this thought is not appealing (even though I work in one). Gyms are great, if you enjoy them. I prefer to use the great outdoors to get fit. Walking is probably the easiest way, as long as you are walking at a decent pace to raise the heart rate. This can fit into any lifestyle, first thing in the morning or lunchtimes, or on a journey to work.

If you have been diagnosed with anything, I recommend you speak to someone to prepare an exercise programme for you and perhaps have a few sessions with them. It may cost a bit but it will be money well spent. Whatever your circumstances, try to be the best version of yourself in 2020.

I wish you all the very best with that. S.





**PHIL BAINES**

Phil Baines is passionate about fitness and sport. He recently began a venture called Fit 4 The Challenge (f4tc.co.uk), which offers a range of physical challenges for diverse abilities. Phil organises each challenge and trains individuals and teams to complete them, either for charity or for personal achievement or both. Phil is married with two teenage sons.

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# CAUSING A STINK




Getty Images / London Stereoscopic Company

## A COMPLETELY NEW APPROACH IS NEEDED.

**My high school was located next to a farm and I have distinct memories of the pungent smell of manure on spreading days. Now that I live in central Manchester, the closest I get to experiencing muck-spreading is reading the comments under Youtube videos.**

However, there was a time when the overpowering smell of manure was more a phenomenon in cities than the countryside. The Great Manure Crisis of 1894 was the first global urban crisis. London had over 50,000 horses, New York over 100,000, each moving cabs, buses, and freight. Each one produced 35 pounds of manure daily – plus at least two pints of urine. Not to mention the countless number of dead horses lying around that were often left to putrefy before being removed. If you think a red phone box on a summer's day can smell a bit fruity, that is nothing compared to Trafalgar Square in the late 1800s.

No one could figure out how to handle all this manure, which attracted huge numbers of flies that spread disease. In 1894, the *Times* predicted 'In 50 years, every street in London will be buried under nine feet of manure' – based on the increase in population and horses at the time. The crisis led to the very first International Urban Planning Conference in New York which was abandoned after three days because none of the delegates could see any solution.

Urban civilisation was doomed! Yet as you know serendipitously then came the invention of motor transport, with electric trams and motor buses replacing horse-drawn buses. By 1912, this seemingly insurmountable problem had been resolved. The pioneering work of people like Carl Benz and Henry Ford became one of humanity's technological triumphs.

Let's put to one side the obvious downsides of the advent of motor transportation: disastrous carbon emissions and Milton Keynes. This story shows us that sometimes the answer to a problem doesn't come from simply multiplying our efforts, it may be a completely new approach is needed. If my room is untidy because my drawers are overflowing with clothes, maybe I need to learn some decluttering techniques instead of buying more wardrobes. As Einstein said, 'The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.'

Is there any area of your life where a problem persists? Open yourself to a whole new approach, new technology or new way of thinking. If a horse is dead, there is no use in flogging it. Let it putrefy, then jump into a self-drive Tesla. S.



**TONY VINO**

Tony Vino is a professional comedian who straddles the world of comedy clubs, festivals and churches.

**tonyvino.co.uk**

**@tonyvino**



Aciib / Getty Images





# Baby George

Getty Images / Chris Jackson

**My encounters with the Royal Family have been limited. I'd love to be able to say that I've spent many happy days hobnobbing with the Windsors, but, alas, it's not true. I *have* been inside Buckingham Palace, and I have even had tea on the back lawn, but I paid for the tour. And I have been within about ten feet of the Queen, but I'm not proud of the encounter. Riding in her annual birthday parade, she trotted down the Mall resplendent on a horse while a young pre-teen friend and I ran alongside yelling expletives. Hopefully she didn't hear me.**

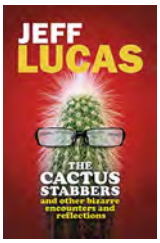
Despite my not being acquainted with the Royals, I was still one of the worldwide throng who were delighted at the arrival of young Prince George, son of William and Kate, and future King. As he was carried across the hospital threshold to blink in the flashlights of the paparazzi for the first time, he obediently lifted a little finger as if to wave. Twitter went crazy, with 25,000 tweets a minute greeting his arrival. Watching the event unfolding from America was fascinating, because the interest here was overwhelming, and I wondered why. The USA has the 4th of July, the day when our Yankee cousins celebrate the vanquishing of the British. This is a proud republic. So why should they be even vaguely interested in the birth of a distant future king?

**Twitter went crazy, with 25,000 tweets a minute greeting his arrival.**



Perhaps there are a number of reasons. Babies are cute, and turn many of us into cooing, infant-talking idiots when we encounter them. Then there's a fascination that many Americans have with anything British, for which I'm grateful, having been treated with irrational kindness ever since I've lived here. And then our global *Hello*-dominated culture, with its insatiable thirst to know everything about celebrities, fuels the fuss. But is the American interest with royalty a sign of something deeper? Do all humans everywhere long for a king? Were we designed to be ruled?

Whatever Eden was, it's portrayed as a kingdom, a place of order where a good, righteous Ruler reigned. It was paradise, not because the first couple lived it to the max with no moral boundaries but because order and peace was theirs: the Good King was in residence. Surely humanity has been purposely designed with a desire, even a need, to be ruled over by a righteous King who will reign with love and justice, and make true shalom a reality. Living with a bowed knee and a surrendered heart – far from being abnormal, we were made for it. Perhaps the American fascination endorses that idea. Wherever we live, and whatever our politics, we've been created to be subjects. S.




Adapted from *The Cactus Stabbers* by Jeff Lucas. Published by CWR.



**JEFF LUCAS**

Jeff Lucas is an international speaker, broadcaster and author of 22 books. He loves to communicate using humour and storytelling. He is a monthly contributor to Premier *Christianity* magazine and writes daily Bible-reading notes, *Life Every Day*. Jeff holds a teaching position at Timberline Church in Colorado and is married to Kay.

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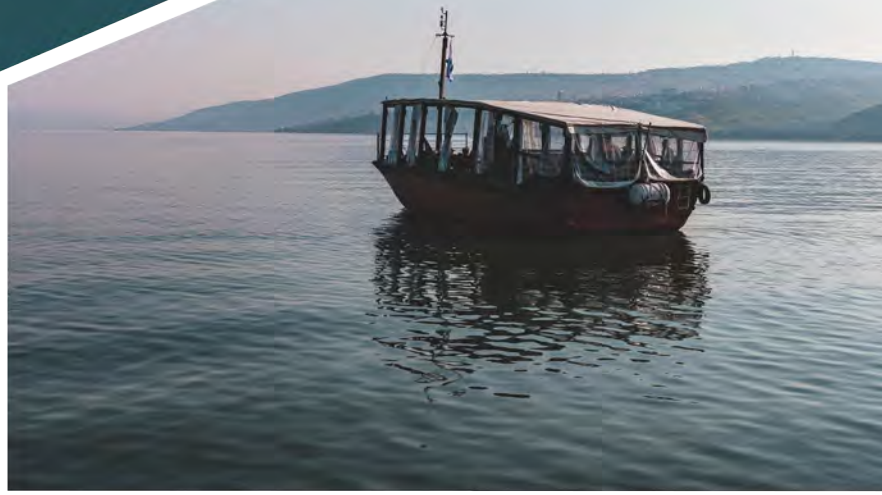
**Jerusalem**
Garden Tomb, Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Israel Museum, Western Wall

**Dead Sea**
Masada, Qumran (Dead Sea Scrolls), Floating on the waters

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Nazareth, Feeding of 5000, Mount of Beatitudes, Boat ride, Banias (Caesarea Philippi)

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Do I just let it go and give up or do I try again?

# IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED



**We are now way into 2020 and it's usually around now that most of the plans, goals and targets set for the new year are a distant memory. True for you this year? I wanted to read more this year, guess what? Hasn't happened.**

So, the challenge is, do I just let it go and give up or do I try again? What I have found is that staying in a rut is so much is easier than changing things up and pioneering or ploughing into something new.

My mind will often run towards the path of least resistance. In this case, I wanted to read more and that hasn't worked out, so just don't bother, give up and don't try and change anything.

I was watching some videos recently about Space X and Elon Musk's attempts to develop a rocket that can take off and then land again. The video showed attempt after attempt, rockets trying to land and falling over in a fireball or tiny parts failing and again, bursting into a ball of flames. Explosions sent fragments of ultra-expensive tech all over the place and the whole thing was set to music, with the years it was taking being shown in the bottom corner.

As I was watching this, I felt inspired to never give up. The last video shows a rocket land on a floating drone platform in the middle of the sea. Elon did it. Through failures, disasters, people mocking, making fun and doubting his vision, he never gave up.

At CVM we have something called the Code. Its 12 Codes that we use to live by and help us keep our lives on track and focused. Code 12 says 'If I fail, I will not give up. He never gives up on me.'

I don't know what motivated Elon to never give up, but for me and in my life, it's this truth. I believe that even when I have lost heart and failed, it doesn't need to be the end. This is way more than me struggling to read enough books each year. We all have stuff in our lives that goes wrong and our heads and hearts feel defeated. With Jesus, it's never over, He never gives up on you. Get up and go again.



**NATHAN BLACKABY**

Nathan is married to Jennie and they have three children. Nathan loves skipping, boxing, riding motorbikes, and his dog. He has lived in Brazil working with Teen Challenge and enjoys trying to keep his Portuguese going. In his free time he can be found sitting around a fire and eating.

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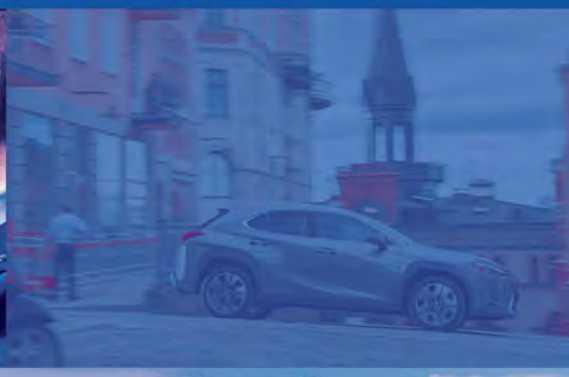


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