

PASS

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE MASTERMIND CLUB

AUTUMN 1998

Annual Function

Master Quiz Round 1

Metric nightmare

What's in a name?

Silky secrets

Life imitates Hitchcock



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WELCOME TO TWO REJOINED MEMBERS, Catherine Slater from the 1977 series and John E. R. Lloyd from 1990, and congratulations to Ann Nicholson on her marriage to Ronnie Donaldson.

REJOINED MEMBERS

122 Catherine Slater

638 John E. R. Lloyd

PASS

AUTUMN 1998

PASS NOTES

In which your editor introduces the new-look magazine

AS YOU CAN SEE, I've been tinkering again. I've felt it coming on for some time. Rather than devise a new layout from scratch, I was guided by the Layout Wizard in Microsoft Word, suitably enhanced. I think it looks kinda classy, know what I mean? Lance Haward will be glad to see that his long campaign to retire Bookman, our long-standing headline face, has finally borne fruit.

Eye on the ball

The major-league baseball season is over, and what a season it was! I'm finally starting to emerge from my post-World-Series slump. Thanks to Channel Five, I've been able to enjoy two live baseball games per week, from

opening day all the way to the World Series.

Now, I don't mean to be baited with cheap shots about the game's origins in rounders. Suffice it to say that it is a (mostly) honourable pastime with a heritage stretching back to the Mother Country. What, after all, is the name of Derby County's football stadium?

I contend that your general knowledge cannot be considered complete without a certain measure of baseball literacy. In particular, after this year you should be conversant with the achievements of the following (see below to find out why):

- ❖ Mark McGwire
- ❖ Sammy Sosa
- ❖ Cal Ripken Jr.
- ❖ David Wells
- ❖ The New York Yankees

An apology

My regrets for the delay in publishing this issue. After nearly three and a half years on contract to Nestlé, Sarah and I have shifted our flag to P&O Cruises, and our pace of life has increased markedly. I'll try to do better next time. In the meantime, enjoy the holidays!

Mark McGwire (70) and Sammy Sosa (66) both broke Roger Maris's 1961 major-league record of 61 home runs in 162 games and Babe Ruth's 1927 record of 60 in 154 games. Cal Ripken Jr. finally ended his consecutive-games record at 2632, having played in every Baltimore Orioles game for the last fourteen years and more. David Wells threw a perfect game for the New York Yankees, who set a major-league record for games won in a single season.

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LETTERS, NEWS AND VIEWS

Annual Function 1999

THIS YEAR'S BIG DO will be held at Mansfield College, Oxford, 16th–18th April 1999, with the formal dinner and Magnum Quiz at Trinity College. Booking forms are included with this issue. Please return the Accommodation Booking Form (with the relevant payment) **directly to the college** and the Catering Reservation Form (with the relevant payment) to Phillida. Remember to include your Mugnum question on the Catering form, with the answer in a sealed envelope bearing your membership number.

Lance and his partners

LANCE HAWARD recently appeared on *University Challenge* as part of the winning Open University team, he attracted the special notice of Jeremy Paxman for buzzing almost before the questions were asked.

Isabelle's screen test

ISABELLE HEWARD reports that she won her heat of the new Radio 4 film quiz Screen Test on 23rd October and will appear in the semi-final on New Year's Day.

From Susan Leng

THANK YOU FOR AN EXCELLENT EDITION OF PASS, just received. Many thanks for sticking up for me regarding the photo – the reply from R. Hughes was bit OTT and I welcomed the reply from Alan Blackburn, who I think gave a balanced response. I'm sorry you were castigated as the Editor, but this is always the case! I speak from experience – in my case only as Editor of the Parish Church magazine, but I still get disgruntled comments, and never any praise.

I won't be sending any more photos – no, on second thoughts, I will! I shall try to find the most controversial figure I can, when we go to Oxford next year, to have a photo taken with.

Mastermind Gold

IF YOU'VE BEEN WAITING for a reason to get satellite TV, this may be it. The UK Gold channel is rerunning *Mastermind* (vintage unspecified) in the wee small hours of Sunday mornings.

Daily Live

Marjorie Elliott, Geoff Roberts, and other Club stalwarts from the Birmingham area were on parade in support of Magnus when he appeared on *Daily Live* to plug the paperback edition of his book on 5th October. It featured (wait for it) a mock round of *Mastermind* with Magnus in the chair.

St. Albans for a day – an invitation from Michael Schwartz

AT THE LAST AGM one Masterminder suggested St Albans as the site for a Mastermind annual weekend. Oxford was the actual choice, but next February 13th (a Saturday), Hazel and I would like to organise a one-day walk around Roman Britain's third largest city. We plan to meet at St Albans City Thameslink station at 11am. If we cannot get a St Albans Blue Badge Guide, then our own dulcet tones will inspire you.

St Albans is not just a Roman city. It boasts the famous abbey – and even then there is a multitude of less well-known churches. St Albans has connections with Charles II who starred with Nell Gwynn in that world-famous production, the First Duke of St Albans.

Two battles were fought in St Albans – Yorkist and Lancastrian Masterminders are free to slog it out (verbally) for the benefit of the Northerly-challenged. The re-enactment will be more peacefully or sleepily conducted over lunch and a beverage or six. A score of pubs awaits you in St Albans!

Parking can be difficult by the way – use the railway (no chariot jams).

So I can get some idea of numbers, please ring me on 01727 812190.

Game on

IF YOU DON'T ALREADY HAVE YOUR COPY, the December issue of *PC Format* magazine comes with the full BBC Multimedia *Mastermind* game on a freebie CD-ROM. Introducing it in the magazine, they say that the Black Chair "has probably supported more of the world's most intelligent buttocks than any other chair this century".

MASTER QUIZ 1999

Phillida Grantham introduces the Round 1 questions

WELCOME TO ROUND 1 OF THE 1999 MASTER QUIZ.

There is no special theme this year though, as we shall be in Oxford for the Final, I have included a few fairly general questions on Oxbridge halfway through. There will be a prize for the person scoring highest on these (if the winner is not an Oxbridge graduate, the prize may well be a special one) and the customary prize for the best 'in absentia' entry (the highest scorer in the top 12 who is unable to attend the Final).

In the Master Quiz there are two preliminary written rounds from which the best nine contestants on aggregate score will proceed to the Final rounds, with Magnus as Question Master, to be held after dinner on Saturday 17 April 1999 in Trinity College, Oxford. The winner will hold the Magnum, a Toby jug in the likeness of Magnus, for the following year.

Round 2, set by Gerald MacKenzie, will appear with his instructions in the next issue of PASS.

THE SPELLING CHEQUER

or Poet Tree without Mist Aches

I have a spelling chequer
It came with my pea sea
It plainly marks four my revue
miss steaks eye cannot sea.
Each thyme when eye have struck the quays
I weight for it two say
If watt eye rote is wrong or rite
It shows me strait a weigh
As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose bee for two late
And eye can put the error rite
No I shall find it grate
I've run this poem threw it
I'm shore yore policed to no
Its letter perfect in its weigh
My chequer tolled me sew

*Anon. – discovered on a notice board at Walford
College by Richard Green*

INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY before tackling the questions. Each preliminary round has two entries:

1. Head your paper 'U', and please answer the questions **UNSEEN** in your own time. When you have finished, sign the entry as being your own unaided work. This need not be the final version - if you subsequently come on any answers by chance, please include them.
2. On another sheet of paper headed 'R' for **REFERENCE** and using any reference you care to consult, please check, alter or expand your 'U' answers if desired, quoting your source or stating 'Second Thoughts'. Use your friends if you wish but be warned – they are not so accurate as reference books! Put your name and Club membership number on each sheet of paper and your address on the first sheet. 80% of the possible marks are awarded on the 'U' entry and 20% on the 'R' entry. It should be stressed that the 'R' entry is not obligatory and some of the most successful entrants prefer to submit only the unseen.

NB: The question-setters have mutually agreed that their decisions are final and, regretfully, they can enter into no correspondence about the questions and answers.

ADDRESS FOR ROUND 1 ENTRIES:

PHILLIDA GRANTHAM

The questions begin overleaf

MASTER QUIZ 1999

Round 1 questions

CLOSING DATE: 13 JANUARY 1999.

1. "Once upon a time there was a little girl called Lucie, who lived at a farm called Little-town" is the first sentence of which book?
2. Frans Hals was most closely associated with (a) Haarlem (b) Amsterdam or (c) Rotterdam?
3. Holburne of Menstrie Museum is in (a) Bath (b) Manchester or (c) Hastings?
4. Size 4½ in British shoes corresponds to what size in continental Europe?
5. Marcel Desailly, of France's World Cup winning side, now plays for which Premiership club?
6. Cynophobia is a fear of what?
7. Journalist, to Noel Coward: "Have you anything to say to 'The Star', sir?" What was the reply?
8. What is the difference between a bloater and a kipper?
9. St. Patrick was not Irish. What was his original nationality?
10. What is the S.I. unit of potential difference?
11. Libreville is the capital of (a) Ghana (b) Niger or (c) Gabon?
12. What is the name of Twiggy's actor husband?
13. In which year did *Blue Peter* start?
14. Which is the busiest port in the world?
15. When is *Quasimodo* in the church calendar?
16. What appeared for the first time on April 4, 1931?
17. Who was the uncle (by marriage) of both Rudyard Kipling and Stanley Baldwin?
18. What is Zinfandel?
19. What is Rupert Murdoch's first name?
20. Who wrote the fantasia *Francesca da Rimini*?
21. What is the name of the John Lewis store in Nottingham?
22. Of whom was Queen Victoria speaking: "He is not an Englishman, or if he is, he is not a gentleman"?
23. In Victorian times, what was Felt Hat Day?
24. What are Hawick balls?
25. Why is the British Open Golf Championship always played on a links course?
26. Allegedly the largest what in the world is in the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in London?
27. Allegedly the highest what in the world is in the Jarong Bird Park, Singapore?
28. What is the correct title of the picture by Yeames in the Walker Art Gallery of a Roundhead interrogating a little boy?
29. UNIFY is the main trades union of which profession?

OXBRIDGE QUESTIONS

30. "C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la gare" was said of which Oxford college?
31. What is the Cambridge equivalent of Blackwells in Oxford?
32. Oliver Cromwell's head is buried in his Cambridge college.

33. What rescued St. Frideswide, founder of a priory at Oxford, from the unwelcome attentions of King Algar?
 34. Who was the Lady Margaret of Lady Margaret Hall?
 35. Name the 'weed' first grown in the Botanic Gardens at Oxford with seed from Mount Etna.
 36. Write phonetically Magdalen (Oxford) and Caius (Cambridge).
 37. "Miss Buss(*) and Miss Beale
Cupid's darts do not feel..."
Give the next two lines. (*) Founder of St. Hilda's College.
 38. Undergraduate gowns at Oxford are always black but the gowns of Trinity College, Cambridge are (a) dark blue (b) dark red or (c) black with white bands?
 39. Scholars at which Oxford College are known as 'Postmasters'?
 40. The Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford was the first architectural work of which Savillian Professor of Astronomy?
 41. Samuel Pepys, Charles Kingsley, Charles Parnell and Lord Tedder were at the same Cambridge college. Was it (a) Pembroke (b) Magdalene or (c) Queens?
 42. Name the alumnus of Magdalen, Oxford, who wrote *Whisky Galore* and *Winds of Love*.
 43. What is 'subfusc' at Oxford?
 44. What is the origin of light blue as the Cambridge colour?
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45. What is the German for Thursday?
 46. *Reine-Claude* is French for (a) plum (b) quince or (c) greengage?
 47. What were Proton, Cosmos and Energia?
 48. A lion with a straight, stiff tail is the symbol of which ducal family?
 49. The book *A Walk in the Woods* is an account of what?
 50. Who said "Ah, the patter of little feet about the house. There is nothing like having a midget for a butler"?
 51. What is the significance of the hypothetical line drawn between Lombok and Bali?
 52. '*Delerium Tremens*', a strong pale beer with added coriander, comes from which country?
 53. Which shipping forecast area is due south of Sole?
 54. What is the name for paint made with egg yolk?
 55. The film, *A Song to Remember*, is about which composer's life?
 56. In the dish '*Carbonnade de boeuf*', what is the beef stewed in?
 57. Who replaced Barbara Mills as Director of Public Prosecutions?
 58. Recently gaoled for threatening behaviour on a British Airways flight, Ian Brown was a singer with which former rock group?
 59. Which Football League club play their home games in the Stadium of Light?
 60. What is the chemical name for '*aqua fortis*'?
 61. "Did Mary Ever Visit Brighton Beach?" is the mnemonic for what?
 62. Where is King Arthur (allegedly) buried?
 63. In a railway connection, what is MTD?

64. Enid Eyelash is an anagram of which politician's name?
65. The title song of which James Bond film was written by Paul McCartney?
66. *Mus musculus* is the Latin name for which British mammal?
67. What is the name for the square root of a negative number?
68. What is the Italian cheese *pecorino* made from?
69. In film making, what is the 'pancake'?
70. By what name do we better know Barbara Deeks?
71. How was Magnus introduced by Angus Deayton on *Have I Got News for You*?
72. Which capital city has a name meaning 'village of bitter plums'?
73. Which station in the UK was recently named as 'Top Railtrack Station'?
74. Jumper is an alternative name for sweater in Britain. What garment is called a jumper in the United States?
75. Who invented the term 'life style'?
76. In the House of Commons, the result of voting is given as 'Ayes and Noes'. What terms are used in the House of Lords?
77. Why do no Spaniards sing their national anthem?
78. What is 'whistling down the wind'?
79. In a literary context, what do the following countries have in common:
Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria and South Africa?
80. What is the equivalent of an *eisteddfod* in the Highlands of Scotland?
81. Which philosopher said (evidently before the days of political correctness!) "When a woman inclines to learning, there is usually something wrong with her sex apparatus"?
82. Whose songs: 'Aladdin Sane', 'Let's Dance' and 'China Girl'?
83. Who played Walsingham in the film *Elizabeth*?
84. What is Ken Livingstone's unusual hobby?
85. What is the recommended household remedy for a wasp sting?
86. How often is 'once in a blue moon'?
87. Identify the leading end-of-season horse race run over 2400 metres at Longchamp and first run in 1920.
88. 'Quicksilver' is a new limited edition model of which make of car?
89. How many party balloons could be filled from the helium Goodyear Balloon:
(a) 96,000 (b) 106,000 or (c) 116,000?
90. Where is Colebrookdale Gate?
91. What is the correct and official title of Massachusetts?
92. What is the permanent exhibit (the largest in Europe) from the Lisboa 98 Exhibition?
93. What did Gore Vidal say on hearing of the death of Tennessee Williams?
94. Name the Louis de Bernières novel which became a cult book in 1998?
95. What is the common name for pyrosis?
96. What is a 'grizzled skipper'?
97. How does Carmen meet her death in the opera by Bizet?
98. Which period of English church architecture succeeded the Norman style?
99. Whose last words were, allegedly "Tell me, Gene, is it true that you're the illegitimate son of Buffalo Bill?"?
100. On whose tombstone is the epitaph: "I will return and I will be millions"?

CLUB SHOPPING

The new T-shirts are going fast — only extra-large left. These have "I've started, so I'll finish" on the front and "It's only a bloody game" on the back and come in oatmeal (the colour, that is).

- ❖ Sweatshirts are printed with the club logo in black. New stock is priced at £15 and old stock at £12.
- ❖ Ties have a single embroidered logo.
- ❖ Jewellery is enamelled with the club logo in black.
- ❖ Pens are black with the club logo in gold.
- ❖ All prices include postage and packing.

Send a cheque with your order, payable to the Mastermind Club, to Patricia Owen

TIES	£
	6.00
BURGUNDY (L ONLY)	15.00
OATMEAL (M, L, XL)	15.00
RED (M, L, XL)	15.00
NAVY (XL ONLY)	12.00
WHITE (XL ONLY)	12.00
CATCHPHRASE T-SHIRTS	
OATMEAL (XL ONLY)	9.00
JEWELLERY	
KEY RINGS	5.00
PENDANTS	5.00
PENS (ONE ONLY)	2.50
PENS (TWO OR MORE)	2.00

THAT'S BESIDE THE POINT

Lance Haward's two bob's worth (sorry, 10p worth)

WELL DONE, PATRICIA COWLEY (SPRING, 1998). The almost-universal silence hitherto on this official conspiracy has sometimes caused me to wonder whether I am the only rational being left in England.

The wholly unauthorised attempt (unauthorised, that is, by any democratic process) to detach future generations from their cultural heritage by imposing an educational blanket of ignorance on them was surreptitiously put in train by Harold Wilson's government long before the European so-called Union pointed its bulldozer in our direction.

From Shakespeare to the idiom of the football terraces, from the food we eat to the occupations of our leisure hours and the very map we move across, fathoms and clothyards, pints, inches and ells, ounces, miles and groats are the very stuff of our existence.

Let's face it. In this matter, the effects of Waterloo have been overturned at a stroke: the French may lament (as we also may) the rampant triumph of *Franglais*, but finally it is we who are the victims of that bottomless fund of Gallic irrationality which is responsible for laws more bizarre than anything concocted by the Medes and Persians. This esoteric people is incapable of recognizing the straightforward reality of the span of an average foot and its average stride. It seriously believes that the basic unit of measurement is "the length of the path travelled by light in a vacuum during a timed interval of one 299,729,458th of a second". Nothing that I might add could do justice to the unreality of that. Just to pick up the least of its particles of meaninglessness: "interval" between *what?*

One has to conclude from such extremes of mental detachment that the innate superiority of English common-sense by which nature actually equipped *us* for ruling *them* is more than just the idle witticism of an epigrammatic playwright: there is the mark of intellectual mediocrity in virtually every decree that emanates from Brussels.

Now the virus has managed to cross over into the English bloodstream. An alternative definition has found its way into English statute-law, compared with

which the above is as simple as Do Re Mi. I will briefly take those of you who are sufficiently esoteric, and sufficiently stable not to get swept off your feet, into the surreal world in which the metricators live, move and have their dubious being. According to this definition, the metre is (hang on tight.): 1,650,763.73 wave-lengths in a vacuum of the radiation corresponding to the transition between the levels $2p_{10}$ and $5d_5$ of the Krypton 86 atom.

Mathematicians, I'm sure, are capable of going bananas over such formulae. (As a lawyer, I can get quite excited myself over the sheer poetry of a Westminster statute.) Ordinary mortals can only stand and gape. Such rarified flights of the imagination need, on health and safety grounds, to be kept coralled where they belong — inside the relatively sane world of Monty Python. Anything less in touch with useful reality it would require a stiff dose of L.S.D. (not coinage) and a prod in the *Medulla Oblongata* by a laser to suggest.

Whereas, if you want to define a yard, you don't even have to catch a bus down to Trafalgar Square; all that's necessary is to lay hold on the nearest bystander of average dimensions and measure off a span of cloth from his nose to his finger-tip and there, more or less, and sufficient for all *practical* purposes, you have it.

Note that the one element common to both those definitions is, significantly, the *vacuum*, which, as we well know, nature abhors.

The decimal-based systems of measurement are inept for two reasons. Firstly, they have a base divisible by a mere two factors, as against the four available to a *natural* base such as 12. Secondly, decimal expressions simply cannot cope with numerous, useful functions. Try telling me that such commonplace, *finite* quantities as one third of anything are point 3 recurring (that is, an uncertain and *infinitesimal* portion of the whole), and I will recommend you to the useful expenditure of five cents on a psychiatric consultation with Lucy.

I have it on the authority of people who used to work in the optics industry that the severely pragmatic Germans, world-leaders in all branches of the trade (even when not World Cup winners) while paying the

lip-service to metrication that European law required of them, converted all their actual blotting-paper calculations back into sensible Imperial, the way one yanks the batteries out of the smoke alarms the minute the Building Inspector's gone back to the office.

The sheer folly of metrication, if not apparent from that, is certainly expressed in its megalomaniac assumption that every form of measurement under the sun is suitable for decimalization, where the reality of both nature and universal human practice gives that proposition the lie. The figure 12 and its derivatives, fundamental to both Imperial measurement and L.S.D. (the other sort this time), are as good as imprinted upon the natural order itself.

The passage of time has, since at least the end of the 16th Century, and arguably since 159 B.C., been calculated in two phases of twelve hours each, with all sub-divisions of the hour calculated in multiples of twelve. It's only within the clouds of mental confusion which every Revolution comes trailing that we can find the lunacy of the "hundred minute" hour. It's obvious during which forty of these most Continentals put in their busiest spells of brainwork.

The very globe and space we inhabit have from time immemorial been measured in multiples of six squared. Is the structure of crystals decimal? Is the structure of snowflakes decimal? God's Approved System derives from a base of six – significantly, the same number of days that it took Him to create the whole thing.

Other than the Mayan, I believe that all the major calendars throughout history have instinctively opted for a system of twelve months as the most natural expression of the procession of the seasons.

No less august a document than Magna Carta, dammit, promises me that "there shall be one width of dyed cloth throughout the realm, namely of two ells within the selvedges". I bet that's being transgressed every day. We've given them an inch and they've taken an ell.

The limitations of the French system are revealed at every turn. On the athletics track, neither is the 800 metres half the distance of the 1,500, nor the 4x400 relay equivalent in distance to the 1,500, in the same way as quarter, half and mile inter-relate; nor is there any particular connection between the 1,500 and the next flat distance, the 5,000, as there is between the

mile and any multiple of miles you care to name. All useful comparison of relative times, speeds and distances collapses.

The lunatic obsession to reduce every quantity to tens is not just a piece of intellectual slovenliness: it also impinges on life and convenience in ways which, even when not positively disruptive, are always bizarre. It's almost impossible to indulge the time-honoured desire to purchase a dozen red roses any longer.

When you buy postage stamps by the dozen, the counter clerk manifests a stroke-victim's difficulty in tearing the sheet to produce the required quantity, and usually has to ask for a repetition or translation of the order, a small, portable machine on which to work it out and a moment's communion with an atomizer or a thermos to restore his synchronization with the rest of his customers.

Even that most ancient of symbols, the gold in an archery butt (which no doubt some buffoon insists on referring to as a "Bull's eye"!) is now scored at ten in Olympic competition. It's not the average onlooker who's too brain-dead to understand the score when it's only achieved in nines, believe me.

I'm now prevented from replacing the damaged lock in one of my internal doors without first gouging out an entirely new hole, as manufacturers no longer produce locks that match hitherto-standard sizes. Thus the alien norms that have been foisted upon us unheralded, uninvited and unvoted-for bring about wholly unnecessary obsolescence, destruction and waste. As always, of course, big business gets rich on the carnage – a motivation blatant for decades in pronouncements by the British Standards Institution.

Our daily measurements should, as sensible Anglo-Saxons recognized, have an observable scale and proportion, and relationship to external reality. XYZ recurring of the distance from the equator to the North Pole when the sun's in Libra and sanity in the balance represents only the apotheosis of the Insubstantial.

The pity is that, having long since dumped the sillinesses of Brumaires and Frigidaires and depersonalized playing-cards and other figments of the disordered Revolutionary mind, the successors of Fabre d'Eglantine haven't yet dumped the silliest of the lot, as being – in a word – pointless.

A SPANGLER BY ANY OTHER NAME

Paul Gradwell is inspired by last issue's AKA Crossword

WHEN I WAS ABOUT EIGHT OR NINE YEARS OLD, like most little boys, I thought that my father knew absolutely everything and that nothing whatsoever could perplex him. One evening he had taken delivery of his Film Magazine and was poring over it intensely. Suddenly he exclaimed "Well! I didn't know that!" When I asked him what he could have possibly read in his beloved magazine that he didn't already know, as he was a real film buff, he replied, "Robert Taylor's real name is Spangler Arlington Brugh". I hadn't a clue who Robert Taylor was, but I was hooked.

For the next forty years or so, I have made it my business to find out which famous people have, for whatever reason, changed their names. Some two thousand real names later, I'm still as fascinated as ever. Why have so many actors, singers, dancers, authors, musicians, artists, politicians, businessmen and sportsmen not used the name with which they were born – the given name which dotting parents may have spent many hours deciding on, or the distinguished surname of which many previous generations had been honourably and justly proud?

Many have changed their name very little. Nathaniel Adams Coles became Nat Cole by dropping an 'S'. Michael Bentin added an 'E'. Actress Dorothy Maloney left off a 'Y' and became Dorothy Malone. Some have used parts of their real names for their pseudonyms or stage names. Gordon Langford became Musician Don Lang as a presenter of *Six-Five Special* on television. John Anthony Burgess Wilson simply dismissed John and Wilson to become a famous Author, whilst Raymond Pierre Carlo Bessone coiffeured the stars as Mr Teasy-Weasy, Pierre Raymond.

Among those who didn't, presumably, care very much for their parents' choice of forenames are Mary Frances Reynolds who became Debbie, Marilyn Pauline Novak (Kim), Nigel Neill (Sam), Kenneth King (Jonathan) and

Frances Octavia Evans who became famous as Dale Evans, the wife of Roy Rogers, which brings us to another category of name changers.

That famous upholder of Law and Order, that champion of the Fair and Good, was actually born Leonard Slye. Good old Roy changed his name for fairly obvious reasons as did Diana Fluck (Diana Dors), Frances Gumm (Judy Garland), Eugene Klass (Gene Barry), Dennis Pratt (Quentin Crisp), William Pratt (Boris Karloff), Lillian Clott (Georgia Brown), Eric Clapp (Eric Clapton) and Gladys Smith (Mary Pickford). Surely thousands of fashion-conscious people on both sides of the Atlantic might have second (or even third) thoughts at having Ralph Lipschitz blazoned across their chests, but are quite happy with Ralph Lauren. Having said all that, why did John Uhler Lemmon III stick to being plain old Jack Lemmon?

Maria Callas, like so many before and since, anglicised her name – certainly more pronounceable than Cecilia Sophia Anna Maria Kalogeropoulos. The same can be said (not very easily) for Issur Danilovitch Demsky (Kirk Douglas), Laruschka Mischa Skikne (Laurence Harvey), Mladen Sekulovitch (Karl Malden) and Walter Mataschanskayasky (Walter Matthau).

Maybe our enjoyment of some of the great entertainers wouldn't have been quite the same if we had to sing and dance along to Frederick Austerlitz and Virginia McMath rather than Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Would we have laughed as much at Bartholomew and Wiseman as we did at Morecambe and Wise, or Derbyshire and Harper as we did at Cannon and Ball, and surely Mike and Bernie Winters has a better than Michael and Bernard Weinstein. We often quote the wit of Groucho Marx by just using his stage name, but would it have the same poignancy if you quoted Julius. Apparently, James Michael Aloysius Bradford became known as Jimmy Nail in his early days of working in a

AKA CROSSWORD

Brian Bovington with the solution and results (see last issue)

THERE WERE NINE ENTRIES; those from Chris Hughes, Colin Pickles, Sonia Anderson, Stuart Lyon, and Anthony Marks were all correct. However, as Chris Hughes's entry was the first of these five I opened, he wins the book token.

Of the other entries, Raymond Kahn, Timothy Robey, and Michael Grosvenor Myer had one wrong answer and Michael Davison had two.

Overall, I was quite impressed by the standard of the entries. Thanks to all who entered.

ACROSS

1. Abbott and Costello
8. Napoleons horse
11. Leif
14. Thane of Cawdor
17. Lammas
18. Bononcini
20. Pele
23. Mark Twain
24. Pip
25. Lias
26. Mr. Bean
27. AKA
29. Handel
32. Mata Hari
36. Fernandel
37. Bakers dozen
38. Thrums

DOWN

2. Bing
3. Ouph
4. Tell
5. Dana
6. Otho
7. Tory
9. El Greco
10. Big
12. Jessica
13. Swan of Avon
15. Hamlet's mother
16. Phiz
18. Booth
19. Apple
21. Ant
22. Vicky
28. Amman
30. Amen
31. Dench
33. Hoss
34. Rood
35. Adam
36. Fec

SPANGLER (CONTINUED)

factory when he stepped on a nail and badly injured his foot. When you think what he could have stepped on, I suppose we should be thankful he only stepped on a nail! A favourite of mine belongs to Karen Verne, a German actress who made a few Hollywood films – including *King's Row* with Ronald Reagan – who was actually born Ingabor Katrine Klinckerfuss.

One of the longest names in the world of famous people is Ramon Felipe San Juan Mario Silvio Enrico Smith Heathcote-Brace Sierra Y Alvarez-Del Rey Y De Los Verdes, who, fortunately for his publishers chose to write under the name of Lester Del Rey. Perhaps not as long, but equally grand are such names as Derek

Julius Gaspard Ulric Niven Van Der Bogaerde (Dirk Bogarde), Caterina Irene Helen Imperiali Di Francavilla (Katie Boyle), Florentia Bisenta De Casillas Martinez Cardona (Vicki Carr) and Rudolf Alfonso Rafaelo Pierre Filibert Guglielmi Di Valentino D'Antongoulla (Rudolf Valentino).

Herbert Lom remains one of my favourite actors, simply because his real name is Herbert Charles Angelo Kuchacevich Ze Schluderpacheru, but my all time favourite always has been and always will be, the one that started the whole damned thing off – Spangler Arlington Brugh.

SILK, SOUFLI AND A SECRET INDUSTRY

Michael Schwartz considers the lore of a magical fabric

SOMETIMES DESCRIBED AS EUROPE'S LAST FRONTIER, one slender strip of water separates the traditionally hostile nations, Greece and Turkey. The River Evros slides, cascades, and on occasion rages and foams its way through to the Aegean Sea.

Over two hundred species of wildlife and rare plants depend on the Evros for survival. Many are left to flourish, feeding and blooming, unaware of man's presence. That presence is itself precarious, a reflection of political tensions. Yet among these species is one of the few insects which humans have ever harnessed for their own purposes. After the honeybee, the silkworm must be man's most domesticated insect.

By the banks of the Evros is a small, quiet town called Soufli. It has a railway (22 hours to Athens, thank you but no) and an all-but-forgotten silk industry known outside Greece to just a few expatriate Greeks in Australia or the USA.

Thousands of acres of mulberry plantations grow around Soufli, cultivated each year at just the right time and size for the silkworm to feed on. Since Soufli was first mentioned in the 1660s, the cycle has continued. Generations of silkworms producing a fine thread originally discovered two and a half millennia ago. A local workforce weaving a true treasure of nature.

This summer, Hazel, Stuart, Lisa and I braved a heatwave to visit the silk weavers. Our guide was a local silk trader called Christos Pittas, whose family have been producing and selling silk products since 1894. Christos is also a local historian and wrote the local museum's booklet on silk.

Silk arrived in Greece during the time of Alexander the Great. It was a rare and expensive product. Some sources tell us that silk was a valuable commodity worth as much as precious stones and even gold, thus making it a status symbol in the later world of Byzantium. The Emperor always wore red silk, and presented foreign visitors with silk as a present.

The most renowned of these emperors, Justinian no less, wanted to make silk a Byzantine product. A few Orthodox monks were out in the East. He persuaded

them to find some silk cocoons, hide them in their bamboo walking sticks and smuggle them back to Constantinople. At least Westerners could no longer believe that silk grew on trees...

How does Soufli fit in?

When it comes to the small Thracian town of Soufli, history and tradition swing back and forth between myth and reality. It is claimed that the inhabitants of Soufli were the descendants of ancient Thracians. By Ottoman times, the geographical conditions for silk-cultivation had already been identified: Soufli and her neighbouring villages numbered 60,000 inhabitants, with silk as the province's financial "lung".

An epidemic in France called piperitis wiped out that country's silk production. Soufli's "lung" received a fresh breath of air. By this time almost everyone in Soufli was working in the silk trade. The area became one vast mulberry plantation.

In 1910 the British consul in Edirne (now in Turkey) noted a large growth in trade in Soufli and nearby Komotini, while Edirne – a former capital of the Ottoman Empire - was suffering from the successes of two small towns almost unknown outside the region.

Years of war in the early 20th Century, which set Greece's modern boundaries, brought chaos. Even after the treaties were signed and the frontiers drawn up, things could not get back to normal. Soufli only officially became part of Greece in the 1920s: just in time to see her silk industry go into decline.

Quite simply, once the River Evros became the new frontier between Greece and Turkey, anything to the east of the Evros disappeared into Turkey, never to return.

Before 1922 Soufli contained 4,000 acres of mulberry plantations, 1,750 acres of vineyards, and 1,250 acres of fields. The 4,000 acres of mulberry plantations became 2,250 acres, and the fields 625 acres: the vineyards disappeared, the victim of disease.

So what was left of silk in Soufli? Well, 600 commercial silkworm breeders belonged to the local trade

federation. They produced 120,000 kilograms of fresh silkworm cocoons. Every year, between May 25 and June 25, the wheeling and dealing in fresh cocoons took place, under the auspices of the local authority: it continues to this very day, and visitors to Soufli can see the buildings where the bartering takes place.

Introducing the silkworms...

The silkworm itself is still the highly developed species initially cultivated in its Eastern Asian homeland. Eastern influences continue to this day. Recently, in fact, Japanese and Korean leaves have been imported.

So what makes a good silkworm? A healthy diet of mulberry leaves, that's what. In Soufli, there are many kinds of mulberry leaf, but chiefly those with black and white leaves, traditionally the best for the silkworm. The people who have the job of supplying the silkworms with their leaves do have one great advantage: mulberry branches at their best must not be more than 1.5 metres high, which makes them easy to cut and collect.

The silkworm changes radically during its early development – four times in fact. From the egg, comes the larva, and a month later the chrysalis, followed by the cocoon. Later, the fully winged insect arrives on the scene. Under no circumstances must the thread produced by the silkworm be removed, because doing so kills the chrysalis.

Silkworms break down into three categories: those producing one new generation each year, those producing two such generations, and those providing more than two. Soufli's silkworms, even today, belong to the first category. Mind you, there was an experiment in 1990 where some Chinese scientists (eastern influences again!) and certain silkworm breeders did try to improve this towards a second generation every year. They experimented with creating a better type of leaf (Chinese mulberry) in an attempt to produce more and better silk. Their experiment worked – production increased 96%!

...and their sleeping habits

Incubation takes place from mid-April to early May. Silkworm eggs incubate in approximately a fortnight, and then go through five ages, each separated by a

sleeping period. Only fresh mulberry leaves are acceptable food.

Breeding takes 40 days, and the silkworms are put onto wooden shelves called "beds". This is quite appropriate as the silkworm gives the impression of being asleep when, in fact, there are complex activities taking place, including tearing apart the insect's old skin and producing a new one. At one point, silk fibres are generated from the worm's mouth to help it stand steady (a problem I seem to remember after every Mastermind Club Christmas dinner...).

Now the cocooning starts. For twelve days in complete darkness and silence silkworms excrete silk from their glands. The silkworms traditionally climbed onto holm-oak branches to start knitting their cocoons. Nowadays, paper frameworks with rectangles are supplied for the silkworm – collecting the cocoons is easier.

Unfortunately, we now come to the tragic bit. The pupa, the newest state of the silkworm, must be prevented from becoming a complete insect. The pupae are gathered up, and "roasted" that is suffocated in large steam ovens. The cocoons are ready for reeling, in hot water.

The finished item

Think of any colour you want – discreet, bright or downright gaudy – and the silk-weavers of Soufli will have used it at some stage for dyeing their finished silk. It is perfectly possible to buy a white or cream tablecloth from Soufli, but those who want a little colour will find scarves, handkerchiefs, ties and many other items in any shade they can think of. The delicate pastel lies on the shop counter next to King Hippy's psychedelic best. We even saw a *keomboloi* (Greek worry-beads) made out of a line of silk cocoons!

What now for silk from Soufli?

Nowadays just three small silk-weaving enterprises survive by the Evros, along with some shops selling silken goods. The 1908 production of 800,000 kilos of pure silk cocoons had plunged to 5,000 kilos in 1993.

And yet, something continues to motivate people such as Christos Pittas and his family. Their designs are

Continued overleaf

THE BIRDS

Paul Slater describes a Farne Island incident in which life replicated art

“WATCH OUT FOR THE BIRDS!” said a woman in the hotel, cryptically, when my father mentioned the day’s plans to fellow-guests at breakfast. I found it a puzzling comment, as we were going on a boat-trip to the Farne Islands during a holiday in Northumberland, and bird-watching was the whole point of the outing.

Not long after setting out from Seahouses, the boat circled an islet where seals lay on the rocks, and then put the passengers ashore on a larger island. I admired shags, razorbills, guillemots and puffins at close quarters, and then everyone got back in the boats for the short crossing to the main island of the group.

One bald-headed man ... was standing by a wall with blood running down his face.

There, I saw the meaning of the woman’s words at breakfast. Eider ducks were nesting on the island, also a large colony of arctic terns. The ducks defended their nests by sitting motionless on them, their dull brown plumage camouflaging them against the sparse vegetation, but the terns used entirely different tactics. A previous boatload of visitors was looking at the terns’ nests, and the birds swooped at them, screeching and chattering angrily. Some of the visitors ran from the terns, and I saw that the birds, agile as swallows,

were actually diving at people’s heads and attacking them with their beaks. I had never seen a bird physically drive home an attack on a person before, but there was no mistaking it here. One bald-headed man had abandoned his inspection of the nest site and was standing by a wall with blood running down his face.

When it was our boatload’s turn to look at the nests, the terns were hovering above me and diving on to my fellow-passengers. I heard a furious call overhead, and then felt the stab of a beak on my scalp; I had a good head of hair in those days, and suffered no harm. I evaded the attacks of the other terns by waving my arms at them or by simply running away.

The next boatload disembarked at a different jetty, very near the nests, and as the passengers walked up the path from the shore they were met by a screaming, plunging attack from the terns.

It must have been a terrifying reception to the islands, and it brought back uncomfortable memories of a film I had seen not long before, *The Birds*, in which huge flocks of crows, gulls and other birds attacked and killed people in a small American town.

I would remember the Farne Islands, and the day I saw a horror-film begin to come true.

SILK (CONTINUED)

colourful and bright. They undertake special commissions, often sitting down to weaving after a day in the fields, and their ready-made products are of every conceivable dimension.

The industry has a healthy cynicism where politicians are concerned. They’ve heard the promises from people who say that something will be done, whether from Athens or from Brussels, and who forget about Soufli as soon as they board their planes. Why should this industry be allowed to disappear?

Importing silk

Yes, Hazel and I do have an interest here. A friend in Athens told us about a contact in Soufli, and would we

like to meet him to talk about importing? With Hazel’s love of design and my love for Greece, it is the perfect combination.

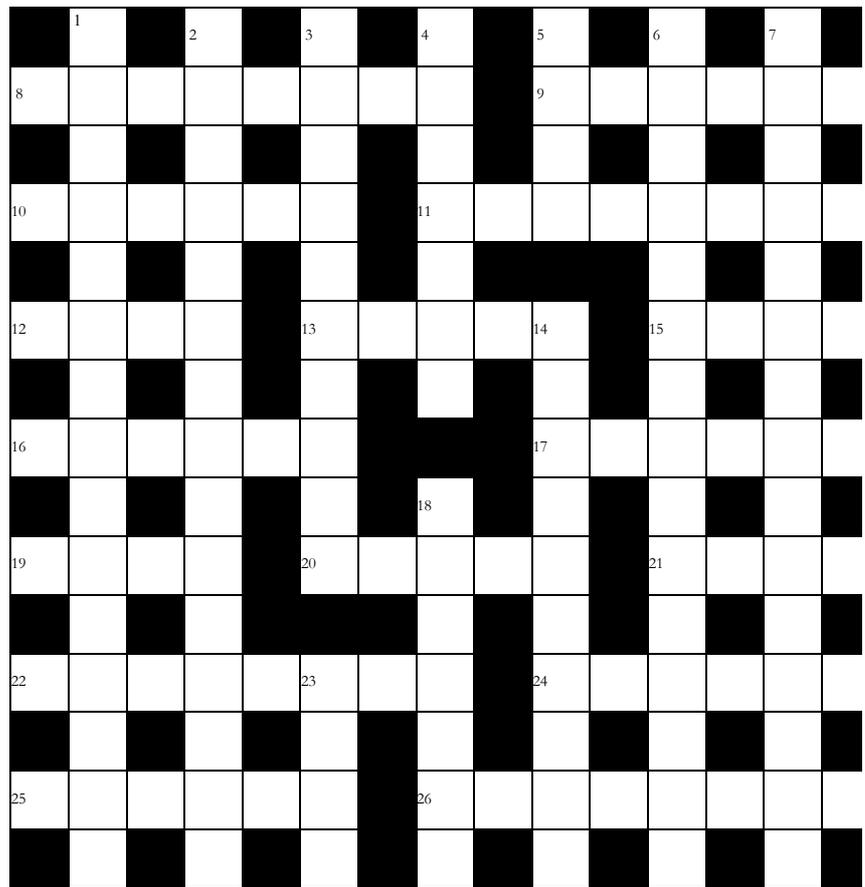
We hope to import many other products from Greece and the rest of the Eastern Mediterranean. In Soufli there is nothing of the mass-production Chinese silk factory which I saw a few years ago. At present we are working out our range of goods and prices, and building up a list of prospective customers. You will even see us in St Albans market in the near future. Why not ring us up – it doesn’t hurt to ask!

CROSSWORD

Set by Richard Sturch

THE FORMAT OF THE CLUES is that of a *Mastermind* question – except for three which I couldn't think of clues for, and fell back on normal 'cryptic' style. (It might be worth trying to see how many you can answer *before* filling them in on the grid...). A £10 book token prize to the first all-correct answer received.

Entries to:



ACROSS

8. Whom did George Washington choose as the first Secretary of the American Treasury? (8)
9. What chemical compounds are formed when certain elements are heated in a normal atmosphere? (6)
10. What name is given to an artist whose pictures are formed by using acid to eat away at a metal plate? (6)
11. I hear the last of you calling in a confused way (but not in French). (8)
12. On what river does the city of Durham stand? (4)
13. In the Bible, what was Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, also known as? (5)
15. What name was given in mediaeval times to the ruler of the Mongols? (4)
16. What acronym is used for the body responsible for school inspections? (6)
17. What name is given in carpentry to wooden projections meant to fit into mortises? (6)
19. What is a small abscess on a hair follicle of the eyelid known as? (4)
20. After Job's 'comforters' gave up accusing Job, who took over their rôle? (5)
21. Which Lord Chancellor of England is the chief character in the play & film *A Man for All Seasons*? (4)
22. After Shakespearean county, Scot prefers not to be 11. (8)
24. What name was given to the original inhabitants of certain West Indian islands, now better known in a derivative form?(6)
25. What Persian queen's name was used in one of his poems by Pope, probably satirizing the Duchess of Buckingham? (6)
26. What word preceded "billion" as a term for a thousand million (and is still in use on the Continent)? (8)

DOWN

1. What famous 'Gothic' novel by Walpole was in fact set in Italy? (6,2,7)
2. In Shakespeare's *King John*, who is the father of the Bastard of Faulconbridge? (7,3,5)
3. Novels set in what fictitious City enabled Susan Howatch to endow a lectureship in a real one? (10)
4. What kind of demon was supposed to seduce mortal women? (7)
5. What is the name of the pilot in *Dr. Strangelove* who sets off the Doomsday Machine? (4)
6. What singer usually opened *That Was the Week, That Was*? (9,6)
7. Who, according to Shaw, were Magnús's wife and eldest son? (6,3,6)
14. What Roman board game has a name meaning "little bandits"? (10)
18. VIP, like Montagu-Stuart-Wortley-Mackenzie. (3,4)
23. Who leads the prayers in a mosque? (4)