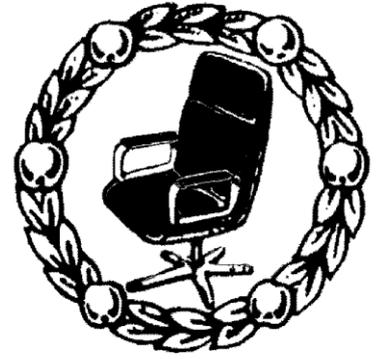
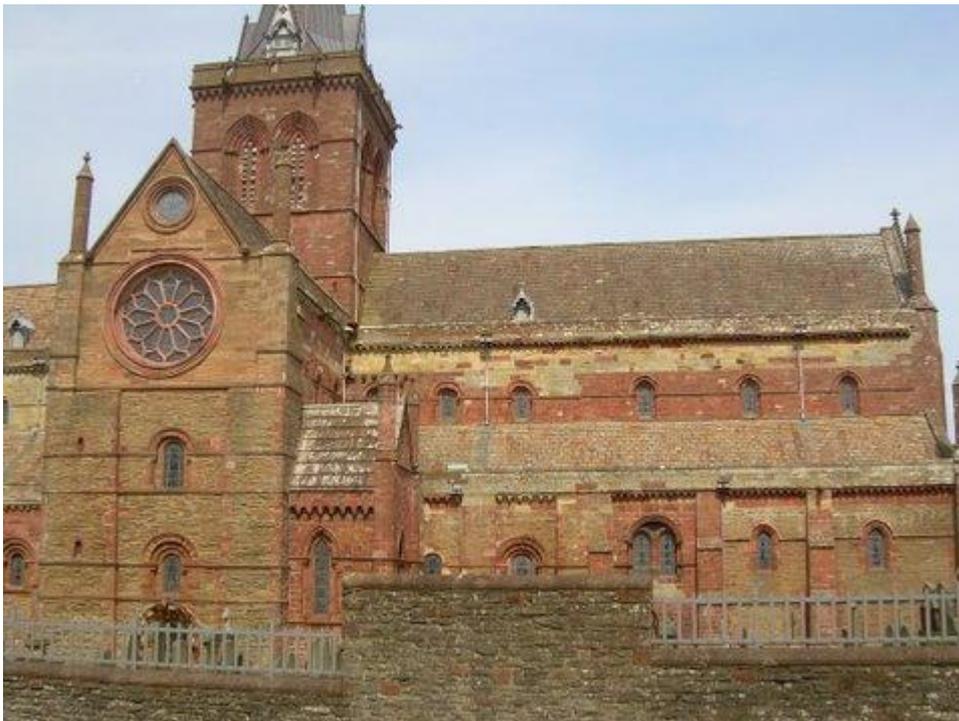


pass



The Quarterly Magazine of the Mastermind Club



2011 – 3

Memories of the 1997 Final!

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Please note that prices quoted below no longer include postage and packing. If ordering insignia to be delivered by post, **please add £3 per item**. Send a cheque with your order, payable to the Mastermind Club, to:

Phillida Grantham

New Insignia – great value, high quality!

	£
Polo Shirts	
Navy (M (limited quantity), L, XL)	15.00
Red (M (limited quantity), L, XL)	15.00
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Jackets	
Reversible Mistral (S, M,)	23.95
Weatherwise (M)	19.95
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Maroon (multi-logo)	7.00
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White on dark navy (XL, XXL)	6.00, or 3 for £10.00 (special offer)
Jewellery	
Stick pins	6.00

Editorial**Ann Kelly**

Welcome to the latest edition of PASS and indeed a very big welcome to our new members. I'm also pleased to say that the club is getting rather media savvy: we are now on Facebook!! Just enter "Mastermind Club" into search and the club page will come up, it's there for sharing photographs, leaving messages, announcements and generally keeping in touch. That's not all: a Mastermind Club Website is in the pipeline! Mel Kinsey is very kindly organising this for us.

Don't forget, I am always looking for articles for PASS. For the benefit of our new members, articles can be on any subject and can be sent by email or on disc.

Membership Matters

The recordings for the next series of Mastermind have brought in 8 new members so far, and since two issues ago we have also acquired two new members from the recently-screened series, including one of the doughty finalists.

The new members are:

1059 Martin Short, from Burton-on-Trent, to whom I must apologise for not having included in 2011:2

1060 Andy Tucker, from Winchester

1061 Graeme Jones, from Liverpool

1062 Keith Bate, from Wolverhampton

1063 Philip Price, from Hitchin

1064 Paul Steeples, from London

1065 Paul Maddern, from North Weald

1066 Denise Smith, from Aberaeron

1067 Quentin Holt, from Kingston-upon-Thames

1068 Mary Bucknall, from West Malling

Apart from myself – my new address is to be found on the inside front cover – the only person to have a change of address in the last six months is one of my fellow contenders from the first heat of 1993, David Penfold (membership number 725) who has altered his address in West Kirby. From now on, for privacy reasons, I shall only give full changes of address of members in PASS if you specifically ask me to put it in, otherwise I shall only note the move in this column in similar fashion to above.

Gavin

Regional Gatherings**From Ann Kelly**

Each month there are informal gatherings of members, in Manchester and London. The Manchester meet is held on the second Wednesday of the month at Wetherspoons Waterhouse, 67–71 Princess Street, M2 4EG. Members meet at about 6.30 as close to the back as possible, with a copy of "Pass" visible so you will know which group is them. Spouses, partners, friends and family are welcome (if you think they would enjoy the evening). If you are a local member who has not yet been to one of these meetings and would like to know more before venturing, please ring Glenys Hopkins on 01925 762192. If you are not keen on coming into the Waterhouse to meet people you may not have met before, ring Glenys on her mobile (0771 236 5777) from outside so that you can be met and introduced. Food is available at the Waterhouse.

The London gathering is held on the third Wednesday of the month at the Tapster Wine Bar 3, Brewers Green, London SW1 0RH – Nearest tube station is St James' Park. Members meet from from about 6.30 and we have a reserved table, food is also available. As with Glenys, if you would like further information, please ring me on 01525 712787, or if you would like me to meet you outside the wine bar ring my mobile (07860 957062).

A Christmas lunch is also held in a London venue at the beginning of December where everyone (and their guests) are welcome, not just attendees of the gatherings. For further details please contact Gavin nearer the time. These do tend to finish about closing time!!

There are also gatherings and events organised by members in the North East. For information on the next event, please contact Marga Scott-Johnson (01669620217) or Christine Moorcroft (01434 345309, christine.moorcroft@btinternet.com).

JOHN SANDALLS ASKS:

What's Punctuation all About?

In the year 2003, Lynne Truss became so concerned about the misuse of apostrophes that she published a book about it. I believe Lynne wrote the book as a means of relieving the pressure which built up inside her every time she saw an apostrophe used incorrectly. Poor Lynne had reached a point where some days she felt like staying in bed rather than risk seeing an apostrophe in the wrong place. Much to everyone's surprise, the book turned out to be a best-seller. But I can take a much more relaxed view on the subject of punctuation and sometimes the results can be quite interesting. Only last week I saw a notice in my local garden centre that read,

Pansy's Ready Now. To which a graffiti artist had added, **So am I, and will Iris be ready shortly?**

During the race riots in London in 1958, a notice placed outside a school read: **Black's Out**, to which somebody added, **But he should be in later.**

The programme of forthcoming events on the prime minister's website said, **Topic for Discussion, the Lord's Reform.** I wanted to add, **I didn't know he'd been in trouble.**

Of course, you can mischievously remove an apostrophe and change the meaning of a phrase or sentence. At my place of work, a man named Richard went on holiday and attached a notice to his office door saying, **Dick's out for the next two weeks.** One of the girls erased the apostrophe and added, **'Sounds like fun'.**

Similarly, commas can critically influence the meaning of a sequence of words. The late Ronnie Barker was a master of punctuation. Perhaps you will remember him as Norman Stanley Fletcher in *Porridge* where he is reading aloud a letter from the wife of an illiterate inmate. He reads the final sentence in the letter as: **"Now I must go and get on my lover."** He then thinks about what he has said and says, "I'm sorry, I'll read that again." Second-time around he says, **'Now I must go and get on, my lover.'**

Hyphens can be important. A broadsheet newspaper wrote about the **hot dog-munching people** who watch baseball games. A newspaper reported that **sixty odd people attended a meeting.** An item on the menu in a restaurant in Cambridge read:

Char-grilled diver caught scallops.

A Visit To Libya – Part Two – Steve Priestley

Friday

The great thing about a one-man tour is that you're in charge. The itinerary is for me to decide upon. My priority is to find the flat in Tobruk where I lived for a few months in 1963; my other goals are to find as many as possible of the other places in Tobruk I can remember; to try to visit the air base at El-Adem where I lived for the majority of the time in Libya; and to visit the war cemeteries around Tobruk. But my short-term goal, once I decide that no shower is probably better than an orange shower (the mains pipes are rusting, spectacularly) is to have breakfast.

The receptionist (male, of course) gestures across the wide expanse of the lobby in response to my enquiry about breakfast and I walk past the huge satellite television (permanently on and always showing sport), through some swing doors and into the restaurant. This soulless room overlooks an outdoor swimming pool (not in use) and, like everything else, it has the appearance of being in a state of suspended animation. As is the way of the world these days, breakfast is self-service. One juice dispenser contains orange squash, another water. The orange squash is the same colour as the water in the bathroom. There is cake, cold cuts, some fruit (Steve's top tip: arrive early to claim this) and corn flakes; coffee stews quietly in a metal pot on a hotplate.

I switch my mobile phone on: no coverage here. No English newspaper to read at the table; no newspaper of any description. My few fellow breakfasters are mostly European, and mostly alone. I am alone too—having negotiated an 8.30 start the previous evening, I find I have beaten my guides to the table. Jalil arrives about 10 minutes late; Mustapha is still sleeping off the long drive. I show Jalil the photographs I have printed from my Dad's slides, taken in 1964. I explain that I wish to recreate some of the pictures, and to find the locations shown in others; he is very interested. I share some recollections of the time I lived here, finding as I talk that my memories are quite detailed. He is surprised that I can remember so much, but I think the reason I can is that so little happened during that time that the highlights really stand out. No trees to climb; no farm animals; no television and no car; but lots of days on the beach, and occasional excursions further afield. Those are the memories I am in pursuit of now.

Jalil tells me that our guide is late. I was surprised; I had thought Jalil was my guide, but he tells me I am to have the services of a local guide—"It will be better for you." I'm not going to argue, but when the local guide has still not turned up at 9.30 and I can see myself spending my precious single day in Tobruk in the lobby of the hotel from hell I suggest we make a start without him. Jalil asks me in which order I wish to see things. I suggest visiting the outlying war cemeteries and associated sites first, returning to Tobruk later. Noting that it is a Friday, I also say to Jalil that he and his companions must take some time off to attend Friday prayers, if that is their wish. He intimates that such is indeed his wish. Mustapha having now appeared, the car is fetched and we set off.

My first view of Tobruk in daylight is confusing. I did not expect to recognise much, but in truth I recognise nothing, until the road climbs out of town, towards the East and I can see the once familiar shape of the inlet which gives the town its natural harbour. But where formerly I would have been sitting in the back of a wheezing Bedford 3-tonner, on a road which meandered, narrow and winding, through a bare and sterile stonescape, now I am in a modern Japanese car, moving swiftly along a straight, dual carriageway, bordered by smallholdings, industrial development and—that curse of the Middle East—rubbish. It is with something of a shock that, much sooner than I expected (but of course it is due to the straightness of the road and the speed of a modern car) I recognise the turning to the former RAF air base of El-Adem.

The reason I recognise the turning is that beside it sits the French war cemetery; in every other respect the scene is much changed. As we pull up, two motor homes with foreign registrations are leaving; intrepid Europeans (later perusal of the visitors' book reveals they are French) travelling overland in convoy. I am slightly ashamed to admit even to myself that I am unsure as to whether the hundreds of French dead commemorated (and in many cases, buried) here fought on 'our' side, or on Rommel's. Fortunately, a small museum near the entrance gives me the answer: most of those remembered here fell at the battle of Bir Hakheim (a few miles inland) or at other battles in the area; and all were fighting with the Free French. Scrutiny of the headstones also reveals that many of them were North Africans. The cemetery is clean and well-kept. In the museum is a wreath from the British Ambassador in Tripoli; here at least the *entente cordiale* seems to be in good health.

So close are we to my former home at El-Adem, I wonder whether we might try to visit it, but I ask myself how a Libyan tourist in the UK would fare if he were to present himself at the gates of a RAF base on a Sunday and ask to look around. It is probably the wrong day of the week to try to visit the Gamal Abdul Nasser air base and photograph the MiGs; I doubt whether there will be a right day. So we head for the Commonwealth cemetery, only a few hundred yards back along the road towards Tobruk.

I am puzzled how I have managed to miss this cemetery on the way out of town, for it was a landmark on the road as I recall it, but I now realise that it is surrounded by new development, which has done nothing for the setting but which, thankfully, has not robbed it of its dignity. It remains a quiet spot, a fitting memorial to the young British, Australian, South African, Polish, Czech and indeed Libyan men whose bones lie beneath the standard issue white headstones. It is much as I remember it; a serene spot, well laid-out and well cared-for. It has very few visitors now—I am able to spend 30 minutes there quite alone—but those who do make the journey leave their thoughts in the visitors' book; it is the least we can do.

One thing above all has changed from what I can remember of the time when I lived in the area: it is raining. In my memory, it rained on only 2 or 3 days in the year, and those were always in November. Now, in February, the sky is grey and there are puddles on the ground (yes, puddles in the desert). To complete the effect, it soon begins to rain, but an alcove, provided—presumably—to shade visitors from the sun, serves to keep me dry and it is at this point that Jalil and Mustapha re-appear, with my local guide, Ali Zourgani.

Ali is justly celebrated in the *Lonely Planet* guide as the man who knows most about this region and its history. Scarcely are the formalities over and Ali is reciting a history of the war in the Western Desert: statistics, names, dates hit me in a constant barrage of facts. Much of it I know (even if I had not been certain as to whose side the French fought on, but can one ever be certain of that?). Much of it I do not know.

The rain stops and we are ready to move on. Ali's car, an elderly Volkswagen, is reluctant to start, but some swift work under the bonnet persuades it to fire and we travel a little further back along the road, to a point across the bay from Tobruk itself. Here, a dirt track leads off to the North, past an oil refinery built by Shell just before the British were asked to leave, eventually reaching the German war cemetery.

In contrast to the French and Commonwealth cemeteries, the German dead are commemorated in a rectangular fort, built on the heights above the bay, with views over the town. Ali says that the fort was already there when turned into a cemetery, although other authorities are not so sure, but whether it was purpose-built for its current use or not, it certainly works. I had remembered a large wooden door giving access to the windowless structure, which stands about 3 stories high, bearing a large knocker in the shape of a lion's head. It had given me nightmares, aged 8. Immediately, I can see it has been replaced by a modern, steel door. "Thieves" says Ali (pronouncing the final syllable). Apparently, when Colonel Gadhaffi opened Libya's borders in a gesture of pan-Africanism, the worst sort of neighbours streamed in and stripped Libya of much of the little wealth it possessed. The Tobruk area was the main target for Egypt's criminal classes and the splendid door to the German cemetery was one of their trophies; the brass bell which hung outside the Commonwealth cemetery was another (happily, it was later found and returned).

Ali obtains the key to the fort (it resides at a nearby hovel) and lets us in. This place really is very German: it is solid, clean and functional. It is also no less moving than the other cemeteries. Here there are no graves; instead, a mosaic lists all those who died, and a slate sculpture in relief depicts *blondhaarig, blauäugig* young men (somehow, it does this in monochrome), conveying sadness and fortitude alike in its simple lines. I should have liked to write something in the book of remembrance, but I can not find one. Ali, who like me was born more than ten years after the war, tells me that the Libyans respected the Germans, who were seen as fair and who did not seek to colonise the land. As for Italians, well, Libyans still do not like the Italians. They fought a war of resistance against them, of which I am to learn more the following day. There are no Italian war cemeteries in the Western desert.

And so to Tobruk, and before we go to the place which I remember as 'Italian Square'—an appellation I decide on this occasion to keep to myself—Jalil decides we must deal with the difficult matter of my meat-free diet. Ali leads us to a potential lunch venue in the modern outskirts of Tobruk. This allows me to see the conditions in which modern Libyans live: apartment blocks of a reasonably spacious and contemporary style, many of them in a somewhat unfinished state but not bad at all. The restaurant is located in a small parade of shops, including a greengrocer and a video hire shop, and, after a short visit, Jalil pronounces it to be acceptable. I am acutely aware that my diet is making it awkward for him.

As we enter the town, I recognise the old harbour area, at which as a child I sometimes embarked on a British military landing vessel, known (to us at any rate) as a 'Z craft', for a trip around the bay. Very soon, we are in the town centre and parking in the square. When preparing the trip, I had sought a street map of Tobruk on the internet. To my surprise, I had found none, so my Mum drew a map from memory. It turns out to be remarkably accurate. As I get out of the car in the square, I can already see the layout of surrounding streets and buildings as she has drawn it. The former Catholic (later Anglican) Church to one side, now missing the top of its square bell tower and painted garishly green and white. The old gardens opposite, now smaller and less well-tended than old photographs show them to have been when I lived just a block away from here.

Ali is keen to compare the present view with the prints from my Dad's slides. Some buildings have gone; some have been altered (a window bricked up here; a door added there); and some, but not many, remain pretty much the same. I wonder if I will be able to find the flat I lived in; both Mum's sketch map and my rapidly returning memories agree it was quite near here.

But the search for the old homestead has to wait. Ali and the photographs (and, I suppose, myself, sticking out as I do) have attracted a crowd. The photos are passed round, held up to the view, commented upon. Heads nod, or shake; brows furrow, then widening eyes show that a scene has been recognised, or a memory retrieved.

Soon we are on the search for my old flat. For some reason, this has to be conducted by car, although I know we are very close. The road leading from the square is rutted and muddy; the side roads are, well, ruttier and muddier. They all look pretty much the same. We turn down one of them, and Ali (who has joined us in order that we may be in one car, or maybe just to give his poor old car a rest) points out various tumbledown houses where English people once lived. They are not the right ones. Then I mention to Ali that our flat was near a cinema and his eyes light up. There are (and were) only two cinemas in Tobruk, and one of them is just around the corner.

It's not exactly the Odeon in Leicester Square. In fact, only a poster or two flapping in the damp breeze give the game away, but for me it is an important find; we are getting nearer. The street does seem to look familiar; that building is the right sort of size and shape, but the ones next to it are not; of course, they are newer, they were not there in 1963; this is it. A three-storey building, closed shutters either side of a double wooden door at the top of a single, crumbling step. A step I sat on many times as a seven-year old to watch the world go by (the world in Tobruk then consisting of an occasional donkey cart). How tatty it looks now, the doors broken and the paint worn thin. To tell the truth, it was pretty tatty even then.

Before I utter this truth, Ali tells me with pride that these "English flats" were built by his family, and indeed are still owned by an 'uncle' (we are, I think, talking extended family here). I take some photographs, and Ali then opens the front door by pulling on a piece of string which protrudes from a split in the wood and I enter the hallway. It is just as I remember: the stairs are at the rear left and the double doors to each of the ground floor flats are to either side. As I take a photograph looking out through the front doors, a pick-up parks outside. Ali is talking to the driver, who gets out and enters the hallway. We exchange smiles and *salaams* and he opens the door of the flat to the left, not the one I lived in, but its mirror image. Jalil reminds me to take off my shoes as Ali gestures me to enter. A small boy, very confused, is pushed towards me as I walk into the sitting room, which is furnished in the local way with low seating along two walls. Having made sufficient fuss of the poor child, I am then shown and encouraged to take photos of the kitchen and bathroom. How small they are, but very well kept. Conscious that I am intruding unexpectedly into this family's home, I pause only to take a photograph of a smiling baby and make an exit. What a curious experience.

It is time for lunch. We arrive at the venue previously vetted. The front of the premises appears to be a sort of waiting area; there is a counter, and a few men sitting around. The dining room is up a few steps at the back and has seating for about thirty. There is no menu, or at least I see none; instead, after we have removed our jackets, Jalil leads me back to the entrance and we walk through to another room, where I see a marble slab, on which are laid out some wet fish: about half a dozen red mullet or similar, and a larger number of something which looks like sea bream. We choose our fish (I am prevailed upon to choose two) and return to the table.



To Be Continued Next Issue



Sheffield Report

Another very successful re-union has taken place, this time in sunny Sheffield. Our base for the weekend was the very comfortable Holiday Inn Royal Victoria Hotel.

Members began gathering on Friday afternoon and Mel Kinsey organised a very interesting visit to the assay office, then there was time for exploring the city and catching up with old friends in the bar, followed a buffet dinner and Gavin's famous review of the previous years function. This year journalist Richard Johnson, who was preparing an article for "Radio Times", joined us.

Another interesting activity on Saturday, was a tour of Sheffield city centre by Big Ron, who showed us the nooks and crannies that you wouldn't think where there. The local wildlife rescue centre were holding an exhibition in the centre and the staff where most impressed that Master minders, Eggheads etc. were in town. Various members were sent to them for chats and photographs.

Saturday evening saw everyone gathering in the hotel bar for the formal dinner. Unfortunately the glasses of champagne lined up on tables were not for us but for the student's ball also being held in the hotel that night. After a lovely meal the Magnum was held, then the evening ended with a convivial time back in the bar.

The following morning saw a lively and interesting AGM, lunch, then members either headed for home or spent more time in Sheffield and surrounds, another successful reunion!

Note to new members:

This is rather brief account of our time in Sheffield. Next year we are in Southampton (which coincides with the centenary of the sinking of the Titanic) It would be fantastic to see new members there. The weekends are very friendly and you will be made most welcome. Friends and family are also most welcome and you do not have to stay for the whole weekend if do not wish to. Further details of next years event will be published in PASS in due course.

Masterquiz Round 2 2011 Answers

- 1) *Ivanhoe* by Sir Walter Scott
- 2) Taurus
- 3) Canada, Mexico and the USA
- 4) Richard II
- 5) Frederick Delius
- 6) Snooker
- 7) Senegal
- 8) Four
- 9) Brigadier
- 10) Betelgeuse
- 11) A Möbius Strip
- 12) Sir Henry Bessemer
- 13) The Cubit
- 14) Bramall Lane
- 15) A North Sea fog
- 16) *Open All Hours*
- 17) Aconite
- 18) The Human League
- 19) Japan
- 20) Christina Rossetti
- 21) Sir John Arbuthnot "Jackie" Fisher, 1st Baron Fisher of Kilverstone
- 22) Marten
- 23) Riboflavin
- 24) David Icke
- 25) Egon Ronay
- 26) President Abraham Lincoln
- 27) Corbetts
- 28) Fell Running
- 29) William Morris
- 30) It (allegedly) belonged to Billy the Kid himself
- 31) Yorkshire
- 32) Pentangle
- 33) India and Sri Lanka
- 34) Islay
- 35) Toyota Corolla
- 36) William Langland
- 37) Willy Loman
- 38) Samuel Smith
- 39) Hot Chocolate
- 40) Gaskell
- 41) In a motor vehicle
- 42) Afghanistan (although several other survivors subsequently turned up)
- 43) Lord Salisbury (Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil, 3rd Marquess of Salisbury)
- 44) Iceland

- 45) A Pup
- 46) Fresh Water
- 47) Black (like the usual mood of the passengers on it!)
- 48) Bouquet Garni
- 49) Sir Thomas Fairfax
- 50) Jean-Antoine Watteau
- 51) George
- 52) Mae West
- 53) Morris Dancing
- 54) Carcassonne
- 55) Qatar
- 56) Blood
- 57) A Victoria Cross
- 58) Ronald Harwood
- 59) Valency
- 60) Countess (Erszébet) Báthory
- 61) Pet Shop Boys
- 62) Duke of Buccleuch
- 63) The person was born illegitimate
- 64) Deborah Kerr
- 65) Edvard Grieg
- 66) John Maynard Keynes
- 67) St Ailred
- 68) Delphi
- 69) Computerised Axial Tomography
- 70) *The Railway Children*
- 71) In the brain
- 72) Ptolemy I
- 73) Lough Neagh
- 74) Peter Sellars
- 75) Sir Winston Churchill
- 76) Spain
- 77) The Pharynx
- 78) The Cleveland Way
- 79) Rain
- 80) The Babylonians
- 81) Thomas Jefferson
- 82) King David
- 83) Flower Arranging
- 84) Methanol
- 85) The Little Russian (Little Russia being a Russian term for the Ukraine)
- 86) The Earl of Grantham
- 87) St Anselm
- 88) Frédéric Chopin
- 89) Plastination
- 90) It was the location of the field in the film *Field of Dreams*
- 91) *Historia Regum Britanniae* (or *History of the Kings of Britain*) by Geoffrey of Monmouth
- 92) A Slype

- 93) Emerson, Lake & Palmer
- 94) The Darcy
- 95) Violet or Purple
- 96) Sudbury Hall
- 97) Alfredo Catalini
- 98) A bird (a member of the warbler family)
- 99) The Nobel Peace Prize
- 100) Anna Pavlova

Mugnum 2011 Answers

20: Park Hill Flats (by city architect J L Womersley, 1961)

22: (Eastman) Kodak

61: 2010 (At Wroxeter in Shropshire for English Heritage)

81: Dr Thérèse Coffey (chemistry) and Dr Julian Huppert (physics)

145: Argosy (a term used for ships of Ragusa, now Dubrovnik).

217: Stratford, Ontario (home of a Shakespeare Festival)

253: Lisbon

275: Sheffield Railway Station (the original)

280: Birmingham, Liverpool, Newcastle, Norwich and Portsmouth. Manchester & Salford and Bristol & Clifton are also valid.

287: Sian Massey

307: Ernest Cox (of Cox & Danks Ltd., who bought and raised much of the sunken German fleet in Scapa flow, and broke the ships up for scrap)

337: Margaret Court & Evonne Cawley

338: Southport

349: Sheffield United FC

394: On Saba in the Netherlands Antilles

448: Graham Hill

455: *Get Carter*

475: Sydney (Gallery of New South Wales)

496: The Oak

526: Cadet Roussel (in an old French song)

579: A Crown and a (Yorkshire) Rose

629: Bottom Shapes

642: Titanium

672: Shakespeare's First Folio

687: Mario

696: Johnny Sheffield

731: *Sapphire and Steel*

766: *Chu Chin Chow*

769: *Monty Python's Flying Circus*

774: Mary, Queen of Scots

779: Jackie Coogan (*The Kid* and Uncle Fester)

797: The Thompson Twins

819: Jack Sheffield

824: The Grand National

849: Sean Bean

866: (Westland) Lysander

869: Bradford

899: Colonel Tom Parker

955: An England v Australia Test Match (Australia won by 143 runs)

971: Arthur Miller

986: Bishop

1029: Jessica Ennis

1034: E.M.F.

1035: Cher

1038: Have I Got News For You

Scores

Individual

Mel Kinsey	29.6
Sonia Anderson	27.9
Pat Gibson	25.5
Kevin Ashman	25
Paul Emerson	24.1
Andy Crane	24
David Edwards	23
Bob Foulkes	22.7
Stewart Cross	20
Geoff Thomas	19.1
Ann Kelly	18.8
David Cowan	18.5
Ray Ward	17
Dave Taylor	16.5
Neil O'Donovan	16.4
David Porch	14.5
Ann Leaney	13.8
Patricia Owen	12.9
Constance Moore	12.6
Glenys Hopkins	12.1
Patricia Cowley	12
Kate Vernon-Parry	11.6
Hazel Prowse	7.7
Leslie Grout	7.5

Team

The Somesorts	23.2
(Phillida Grantham & Ken Emond)	
The Pre-Raphaelite Sisterhood	17.9
(Mary Andrews, Susan Leng & Anne Miller)	

Gadgets and Gizmos

Stewart Cross

As an employee of my local museum in Carlisle, I see a whole range of exhibitions from the inspired, the beautiful, the worthy to the downright peculiar. One of our current ones focuses on strange inventions from the late 19th century to the Second World War. Some have stood the test of time and are still around in one form or another: the telescopic umbrella, the retail price gun, the foot warmer and even the odd device that fastened to a lavatory chain and released pleasant aromas when flushed, but many are very, very odd indeed. These are my favourites.

Coachman's Belly Warmer c1880 This metal device was filled with hot water and fitted under a gentleman's coat around his belly. It kept him warm on long journeys.

Skirt Lifter c1880 This was clipped to the hem of a full length skirt with a cord tied to the wearer's hand. A discreet tug would prevent the skirt from sweeping through mud or damp on the ground.

Archimedes Food Mixer c1890 There are many gadgets based on the concept of Archimedes. Simply put the tool into the mixture and a constant pressure on the top keeps the head revolving constantly.

Thimble with Attached Knife c 1900 Just a small refinement to help the Victorian seamstress. Adding a knife to the thimble could save a movement of the hand to pick up the scissors.

Magnetic Corset Tester c1900 Similar to a massage machine, 'electric corsets' were said to offer healing vibrations. This compass could be passed over a magnetic bar sewn into the corsets. The frantic movement of the compass was supposedly evidence of the corset's power – a deceptive marketing tool!

Propeller Spoon c1910 When you stirred one way, the propeller at the business end of the spoon went in the opposite direction. This doubled the effect of the stirring action.

Better Sight Maker c1920s This contraption made of wood would be held against the eyeball and the other ratcheted stick run against it. Advertising claimed your eyesight would be improved (I doubt that very much).

Car Burglar Alarm c1935 A firework you place under the bonnet linked to the spark plug, this object causes a car to smoke, whistle and scream (and probably blows up your engine).

Blackhead Remover 1940 Back in the 40s and 50s young lads were subjected to this horrible looking tool to remove unsightly blackheads. Just put it over the blemish and the vacuum does the rest!

Window RAF strip (foil) c1940 WINDOW was the code name for small metallic strips designed to be dropped from RAF bombers. The result was a drifting cloud of strips that created confusing signals on German radar screens and concealed the position of the actual bombers.

'Hanging Hitler' Badge c1942 Using the slogan 'let's pull together', this has an illustration of an American, possibly Abraham Lincoln, pulling on a rope. When pressed, the lever on the side shows Hitler in a noose.

I wonder how these would have fared in the Dragon's Den?

Around the World in 8 Days, or, Getting Nowhere Fast

Chris Pelly

This spring I took part in a huge fundraising challenge that would involve several hundred cyclists covering 24,906 miles on static bikes within 8 days. The objective was to raise a substantial sum of money through individual sponsorship for the Dorset Cancer Centre, Breast Cancer Care, and Cancer Research. One of our tennis club lady members, who is an operational firefighter in the Dorset Fire and Rescue Service, was determined to mark the end of a long personal battle with cancer by organising a potentially world record-breaking charity event. Those interested in participating were required to register online and select "slots" (minimum 14 minutes) for times during each 24 hours.

An army of behind-the-scenes volunteer helpers was soon raised and rostered. Groups needed to be on hand at all hours (including the Graveyard Shifts) to provide first aid, if required, and sustenance in the form of drinks and high-energy snacks. Since the hall was extremely hot and airless, much "mopping up" beneath perspiring cyclists became necessary ! Ten bikes were in use, each fitted with a display giving mileage, speed and rpm, zeroed when a new rider took the saddle. Mileages were recorded and fed into a computer to give a running total which was then projected by some IT wizardry onto a large plasma screen affixed to the wall in front. This showed a map with two longitudinal lines, blue and red, indicating starting point and current position. We were fed data as to how far we were behind or ahead of schedule. Adjacent to the map was a TV screen belting out Beyonce, The Vault, et al. to help us on our way. (Totally unfamiliar with this music channel, I concluded from the action that the teenage population of Los Angeles spends its entire time break-dancing.)

Despite being a seasoned road cyclist, I initially found these static machines a peculiarly refined form of torture, as did others I spoke to. Astride the narrow dagger-like saddles, I soon began to feel like a victim of Vlad the Impaler. Imported cushions gave scant relief : besides, they proved impossible to secure and quickly slipped off. Dismounting and retrieving them wasted valuable seconds when time was of the essence. Then the dilemma of gear-selection: top or bottom ? Experience dictated a choice of extremes. I opted for the former as progress would be quicker even though it entailed much greater effort. The data on the mileometer display soon palled, until I received some sound advice from a part-time Royal Marine on an adjacent bike : "Keep to a minimum rpm and the miles will look after themselves." No possibility of a luxurious freewheel on these statics -if you suddenly stop pedalling you risk injuring your ankle. Only a gradual deceleration will ensure a safe stop.

A major frustration was the changeover. No extra time was allowed for adjusting the saddle, or wiping the machine after the previous incumbent. One or two wretches even asked one to wait till they had reached a mileage whole number ! In a typical slot of say 30 minutes, 5 minutes would be lost preparing the machine and loosening or tightening the pedal straps. It was hardly akin to a Grand Prix pit stop.

After a few days I noticed a competitive spirit creeping in. Was this boredom-inducing activity becoming just a tad addictive ? Hitherto people had been content to complete their quota of pedalling and go off and nurse cramps or aching thighs. Now, joints inured to the task, riders were surreptitiously registering for more slots, mainly, I suspect, to be able to lord it over fellow-participants in the individual mileage stakes. Progress was certainly being made. "50 miles shy of Riga!" announced a somnolent timekeeper to ironic cheers. This somehow lacked the bracing pleasure of a later "You are now bang over the Marianas Trench !"

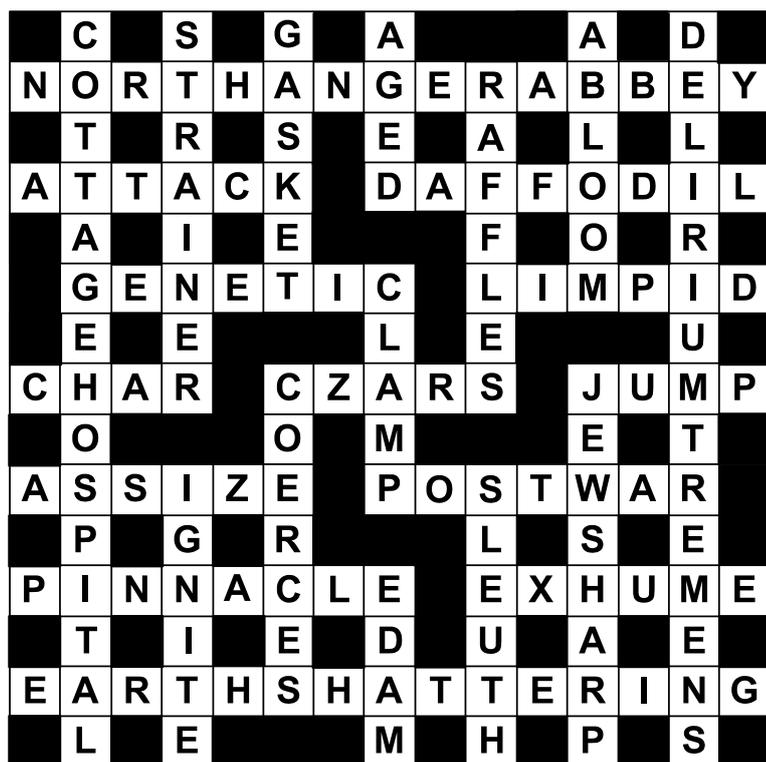
Well, we easily achieved our objective, with two days to spare. As it would have been a considerable anticlimax to stop there and then, it was decided to press on till 6pm Saturday June 4, the "official" finish time, to see how many extra miles we could complete. By the end our total distance was 33,642.83 miles. My own contribution of 223.20 miles covered in a total of 10.75 hours gave me an average speed of 20.76 mph and, particularly pleasing in view of my age, a final position of 22nd out of 740 participants.

The organiser hoped to raise a sum of at least £70,000. The final figure we will not know until the end of August when all sponsorship monies are due.

Is our "record" likely to be officially recognised ? No. The Guinness Book of Records was approached well before the event took place and expressed interest. However, since then they have mysteriously changed the goalposts by insisting that we use only ONE bike !!

Not that it matters one iota. It was a privilege to have been involved in a wonderful challenge for a truly wonderful

Solution to Prize Crossword (2011:2)



This last crossword in the series would seem to have been quite a challenging one. Nevertheless, entries were received from most of the "usual" suspects.

It has not escaped my attention when perusing "Pass" crossword entrants' tie-break offerings, that if a literary allusion presents itself, it will be siezed upon with enthusiasm. Thus, in clueing the solution "ABLOOM", it was no surprise that a good half of the submissions made reference to Joyce or "Ulysses" or Leopold or Molly Bloom. My two favourite entries, however, both spotted a colloquialism for money, MOOLA, lurking reversed in the target word. Of those, although Iwan Thomas's was the more concise, I liked the topicality of Sonia Anderson's "Return the money(cutting in bankers first) for a flourishing state", and it is Sonia who will receive the last £10 book token.

My thanks to those who submitted entries, and again to all those who have sent me their offerings over the last five years.

Au revoir

David

Born In Sheffield Quiz – The Answers For The Quiz In 2011-1

- 1/ Sir Malcolm Bradbury**
- 2/ Dame Margaret Drabble**
- 3/ Joe Scarborough**
- 4/ Dame Josephine Barstow**
- 5/ James Blackton**
- 6/ Alastair Burnet**
- 7/ Marti Caine**
- 8/ Paul Carrack**
- 9/ Maurice Colbourne**
- 10/ John Robert "Joe" Cocker**
- 11/ Thomas Craig**
- 12/ Brian Glover**
- 13/ James Jacob-Lomas**
- 14/ Judy Parfitt**
- 15/ Michael Palin**
- 16/ Dominic West**
- 17/ David Blunkett**
- 18/ Roy Hattersley**
- 19/ Oona King**
- 20/ Hugo Young**
- 21/ Thomas Boulsover**
- 22/ Sir John Fowler**
- 23/ David W. Hughes**
- 24/ Helen Sharman**
- 25/ Derek Dooley**
- 26/ Jessica Ennis**
- 27/ Peter Stringfellow**
- 28/ Harry Brearley**
- 29/ Joseph Locke**
- 30/ Charlie Peace**