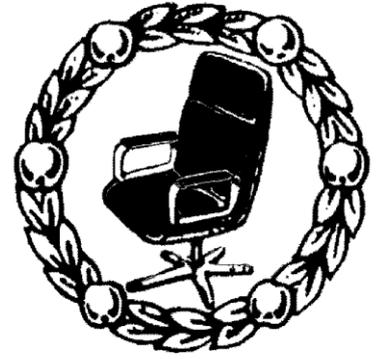


pass



The Quarterly Magazine of the Mastermind Club



2011 - 4 Season's Greetings!!!!

2012 - Annual Function Information Inside

Pass and its contents ©2011 by the Mastermind Club except where noted. Contributions are welcome but may be edited or held over owing to space limitations. Check with the Editor for advice on the format of contributions. All material is published at the sole discretion of the Editor and Committee. Copy deadlines are the last of January (Issue 1), April (2), July (3), and October (4). Publication is normally 4–6 weeks later. Please notify the Secretary of any problems in receiving pass (allow an extra week or two for printing and postal delays).

Officers and Committee

President Alan D. Blackburn, 9 Jordanstown Road, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim BT37 8QD. 028 90 862035

Hon. Vice-President

Tony Dart, 25 Queen Street, Caversham, Reading RG4 7RB. 0118 954 5712; ardart5713@aol.com

Secretary Gavin Fuller, 114 Bensham Manor Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR7 7AU,. 07875 384778;
gavin_fuller@hotmail.com

Treasurer Susan Leng, 36 Albany Road, West Bergholt, Colchester, CO6 3LB. 01206 241748; s.leng@tiscali.co.uk

Editor of Pass Ann Kelly, 91 Bluebell Close, Flitwick, Beds. MK45 1NR. 01525 712787; ann599@btinternet.com

Committee Members

Patricia Owen, 14 Lanark Mansions, Pennard Road, London W12 8DT. 020 8740 6792; delaneyowen@hotmail.com

Phillida Grantham, 35 Barkston Gardens, London SW5 0ER. 020 7370 3345; philgran@btinternet.com

Glenys Hopkins, 154, Bent Lane, Culneth, Warrington WA3 5ES 01925 762192

Ken Emond, 108 Havil Street, Camberwell, London, SE5 7RS. 020 7252 6312; kene@britac.ac.uk

Club Shopping

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, 35 Barkston Gardens, London SW5 0ER. 020 7370 3345

New Insignia – great value, high quality!

	£
Polo Shirts	
Navy (M (limited quantity), L, XL)	15.00
Red (M (limited quantity), L, XL)	15.00
Bottle Green (M (limited quantity), L, XL)	15.00
Jackets	
Reversible Mistral (S, M)	23.95
Weatherwise (M)	19.95
Polar Fleece (S, M)	18.50
Ties	
Maroon (multi-logo)	7.00
T- shirts	
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 last PASS for 2011, my hasn't the year flown by etc. The photograph of St Magnus Cathedral that was on the last cover has prompted an article about the fabulous islands of Orkney. Sadly this edition also contains obituaries of two long-standing members: Fred Dyson and John Burke who I remember with great affection.

This December marks twenty five years since I joined the Mastermind Club (I was a child member, well that's what I think) and I never would have thought how it has been so important in my life with the wonderful friendships I have made and the fantastic (and infamous) experiences we have had down the years.

Included in this edition is Round One of The Magnum, so you don't have to just flop in front of the TV with a turkey sandwich and a chocolate orange over Christmas, you have a great quiz to do instead.

Articles on any subject are always most welcome either by e-mail or on disc.

The Website is now up and running - www.mastermindclub.co.uk Many thanks to Mel Kinsey for all his hard work.

Happy Christmas!!

Membership Matters

There have been another 4 new members joining from the current series:

1069 Malcolm Sumner, from Cheltenham

1070 Mary Bucknall, from West Malling in Kent

1071 Martin O'Gorman, from Edinburgh

1072 Maya Davis, from Brighton

Meanwhile, Sally Branson (membership number 581) has moved in Cascais in Portugal, whilst Giles Falconer (membership number 685) has moved to Deal.

On a sadder note, as mentioned elsewhere in this issue, there has been the death of Fred Dyson from the class of 1992. Gavin

From the Treasurer. Subscriptions 2012

It is coming up to that time of year once again, for the annual Club subscription to be paid. For the majority of members this will be taken care of by their bank Standing Order and you do not have to do anything at all. I will look forward to your £12 subscription arriving in the Mastermind Club account soon after 1st January – thank you in advance for this.

However, if you still prefer to pay by cheque, I would be grateful if you would send it to me at my address on the front inside cover as soon as possible please, and ideally by the 1st January 2012. Your £12 cheque should be

made payable, as usual, to "Mastermind Club". And "thank you" to you too, in anticipation of receipt of your subscription.

Payment by Standing Order makes it easier for you and makes life simpler for me too. If you want to switch to this method of payment, please let me know by phone or e-mail and I will let you have the necessary form.

With my good wishes to you all for a Happy Christmas.

From Paul Webberwood

"Is anyone interested in competing for the Masterminders in the Quiz League of London's President's Cup?
<http://www.quizleagueoflondon.co.uk/competitions/presidentscup.aspx>

Matches take place over the winter on Sunday afternoons mostly in London. We have a dedicated but small squad and occasionally need reinforcements, so people who only want to play occasionally are particularly welcome. Please contact Paul Webbewood 020-8318-3295 paul.webbewood@ntlworld.com."

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 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 BURKE 1922-2011

Mastermind semi-finalist 1985

A tribute by Michael Davison

My friendship with John Burke goes back to long before our Mastermind days – as far back as 1969, in fact. I had just joined Reader's Digest Books and was assembling a team of contributors to work on an Illustrated Guide to Britain. With his established reputation as a freelance author on the British countryside (among many other topics!), John was an obvious choice as a member of the team.

So began an association which lasted through a series of further guide books in the 1970s and 1980s, in the cause of which John drove thousands of miles on the highways and byways of Britain and brought back meticulously crafted reports on places most worth a visit.

Editorial deadlines have no respect for the seasons, and John had sometimes to make his journeys under less-than-perfect weather conditions. One autumn I had to ask him to research and report on the south-western corner of Scotland. It proved to be a time of pelting rain and exceptionally high winds. Fallen trees blocking roads added to the discomforts of the tour, every detail of which John would report to me on the phone with patient martyrdom.

This trip, however, had a happy outcome for John, as the dedication he wrote for me in his *A Traveller's History of Scotland* (1990) explains: 'For Michael, who first directed my footsteps and tyretracks to Scotland'. For it was in Kirkcudbright that John and his wife Jean finally made their home, after earlier sojourns at Southwold in Suffolk and Corbridge in Northumberland.

John had a gift for the telling description, and his copy was a joy to read. Sometimes I had the unenviable task of trimming his text for reasons of space. John had a just pride in his prose and didn't always take well to the intervention of the editor's pen between typescript and proof. I often found myself cast in the villain's role as 'one of these fools of editors': but we would settle our 'creative differences' over a lunch on *Reader's Digest* expenses (that was the '70s, remember!)

As well as introducing John to Scotland, I can also take credit for tempting John to follow my example and apply for *Mastermind*. He far outshone my own performance and in 1985 his encyclopedic knowledge of the life and works of Danish composer Carl Nielsen took him to the semi-finals. John in turn propelled Jean into competing: in 1987 she too reached the semi-finals, and subsequently occupied a seat on the top table at the *Magnum* finals for many years.

Travel writing was of course only part of John's prodigious literary output. Under his own name and at least ten pseudonyms he produced a continuous flow of historical and topographical books, mystery novels and science fiction novels, thrillers, Gothic romances (in partnership with Jean), short stories and – one of John's specialities – a string of novelisations of films and TV series.

Sadly, distance separated us in recent years after John and Jean could no longer travel to *Mastermind* Reunions. But we always exchanged letters at Christmas, and I shall this year miss his testy but always witty outpourings on the dilatoriness of literary agents, the incompetence of Scottish Gas, the high failure rate of household appliances, the price of postage stamps, the decline of public libraries, the sale of woodlands . . . 'Shall we throw up our hands and pray for the imminent end of the world?', he asked last year. 'No need. It's well on the way without needing any intervention from us'.

Farewell, John. You will be missed, and so will your incomparable way with words. My thoughts go out to Jean and a devoted family.





Photos of John

REMEMBERING FRED DYSON (1933-2011)

Anyone who met Fred Dyson could not help being impressed by his phenomenal memory and his extensive knowledge on a wide range of subjects: whether it was literature, history, astronomy, music, philosophy, archaeology or palaeontology – Fred had something interesting to say about them all, and what he did not know was not worth knowing. If I had ever made it to *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*, Fred would have been my first choice of ‘phone-a-friend’.

Fred was born in Huddersfield, less than five miles away from Linthwaite, the location of the first recorded occurrence of the name ‘Dyson’ in 1316. Despite early trauma and a brain tumour that caused him to lose his sight at the age of 12, Fred managed to develop his academic potential with the help of his brother Maurice, who bought every book and magazine he could lay his hands on and read them all to Fred. During these years, the power of the mind became extremely important to Fred; later he would tell his children: ‘Look with your eyes, but see with your mind’. He then went to various residential schools and colleges, eventually qualifying as a physiotherapist. It was through his work that he met his wife Sheila, when they were both working as physiotherapists in Aylesbury. Six months after their marriage in 1958, they moved to Alnwick in Northumberland, where they took over a retiring physiotherapist’s practice.

He became a well-known and respected figure in Alnwick: he was chairman of the Round Table and Young Conservatives and president of the Rotary Club, as well as a founder member of the local museum and the chief reviewer for Alnwick Music Society. As one friend remarked during the celebration of Fred’s life, there was hardly a person in Alnwick who had not been touched by Fred in some way or other. He could often be seen striding around the town in the

company of one or more golden retrievers. The latter were always pet dogs; Fred refused to use a guide dog, so sometimes the dogs led him astray – into lamp posts, out on the fairway of the golf course and straight through puddles. But without them, he knew his way around perfectly. When I was staying with Fred and Sheila in 1998, Fred showed me around on his morning walk with the dogs. On several occasions, he drew my attention to a particular house or a spot from where you could see the sea, and he was accurate to the nearest yard. I was amazed!

Fred never let his blindness get in his way. He was a keen DIY enthusiast, and during the renovation of their home the family decided to remove a drab painted stone fireplace surround and mantle shelf. So Fred set to work with a crowbar, assisted by his children. It was not until the fireplace had crashed to the floor and fractured that the children discovered ‘funny black lines in the white stone’ – it turned out they had just wrecked a marble fireplace! The two remaining fireplaces were consequently inspected and treated with paint stripper rather than attacked with a crowbar.

Fred appeared on *Mastermind* in 1992, his specialist subject being ‘The history of the Percy family – the Earls and Dukes of Northumberland’. Although he acquitted himself well, scoring 16 and 11 points respectively in his specialist and general knowledge rounds, he lost by one point in the end. If there had been a tie, Fred would have won on passes. The fact that he did not was no general disaster, though – Sheila was heard to utter: ‘Thank goodness we don’t have to go through that again!’ As it happened, the transmission date coincided with Fred’s birthday, and at the party held on that occasion Fred was presented with a bonsai tree and a Battenberg cake, the two subjects on which he had passed during the general knowledge round! Fred’s choice of subjects for *Mastermind* reflected his wide range of interests, with his subjects for the semi-final and final respectively being ‘The US manned spaceflight programme’ and something to do with James Joyce (I believe his original offering, ‘*Finnegan’s Wake*’, had been rejected by the production team). Although Fred did not take part in any other television quizzes, he was the mainstay of the Alnwick Rotary Club’s quiz team, leading them to victory in the Club’s annual Area Quiz in 2010.

On a personal note, Fred and Sheila were very kind friends to me from the moment I met them, always making me feel welcome at their home. This was never more so than when my supposedly part-time job turned out to be a fulltime affair, and I felt I could not look after my dog Emma any more and had to rehome her. Without hesitation, they offered to take her, saying I could visit her whenever I liked and could have her back if the situation changed. As it turned out, I did not like the job very much and resigned not long afterwards, but Emma had five very happy months with Fred and Sheila and I was delighted to have her back, which would not have happened if she had gone to anybody else.

Fred was a lovely man, who will be much missed by his family, friends and all who had the privilege to know him.

With special thanks to Julian Dyson for his help in writing this piece

A Visit To Libya – Part Three – Steve Priestley

Pre-dinner drinks are ordered: Pepsi for me and for my three companions a bright red local fizz, which I recall was known as *gazooza* when I was last in town. We also have bottled water and some small dishes which in Turkey I would call *meze*: hummus, aubergine, chilli and a sort of tzatziki, which we eat with some bread. Pretty soon (they don’t hang about here) there is soup (fish soup, since this is clearly a fish restaurant) and then a timbale of rice and a green salad.

Conversation is limited, my fellow diners’ attention being focused on a large television screen in the corner of the restaurant. Far from watching Al-Jazeera, they are captivated by some kind of variety show, featuring heavily made-up male singers and—by local standards—scandalously underdressed female dancers, with very big hair. In response to my query, I am told that the programme is beamed from Lebanon, but that everyone in Libya watches it and follows it closely; yes, it is the Arab world’s *X Factor*. The half-dozen acts all seem to sound the same. Not so very different from our own version of the show, then.

The fish, while certainly fresh, has been done no favours by the chef. There are herbs and seasoning a-plenty, and a selection of vegetables; it is not the accompaniment which is the problem. Grilling is the cook’s method of choice here, and a very healthy choice it is too, but there is a lack of juices in the fish, either its own or contributed by basting, so that it requires a lot of chewing and dries the walls of the mouth. Oh for a glass of wine to help it out!

My companions pitch in with enthusiasm. The hands (to my surprise, the left hand plays an equal part) are used to assist the removal of every last piece of flesh from the bones, even including the head. I tend to think I can do a neat job of work on a fish with a knife and fork, but the carcass on my plate looks practically untouched against the clean-picked bones left by my fellow diners. I assure everyone that I have enjoyed my meal; I am not the first prissy Englishman they have met, and they understand.

We adjourn to another table for green tea, which arrives in a small metal teapot. Mustapha makes a great ritual of pouring the tea from the narrow spout from a height of about a foot, which requires a good aim and a steady hand. Assuming this display is not only for effect, I ask why and he tells me he does this in order to generate some bubbles in the glass. This aerates the tea and improves its flavour. He feels he has done his job well if, after pouring, a layer of bubbles covers the surface of the tea. I tell him we have a similar tradition of requiring a good head on our beer, to which the reaction is one of polite bafflement.

We discuss my priorities for the afternoon. These are: to visit the old garrison site, where I went to school and where my Mum would shop at the NAAFI; to recreate some of my Dad's old photos; and, if at all possible, to gain entry to the former RAF airbase at El-Adem. We decide to start with the garrison.

Ali knows exactly where the garrison is, or was. We drive slowly down some streets which did not exist forty years ago. At one intersection, about thirty men sit, squat or stand in groups. Many of them hold hand-tools. This, Jalil explains, is the place to hire casual labour. Most of the labourers are from Egypt. They work, if they work, for very little pay. They don't look very happy.

A little further down this road, the potholes give way to a firmer surface. We are driving across the old parade ground of the former British garrison. As we get out of the cars, Ali tells me there is not a finer bit of concrete to be found anywhere in Libya. Houses have been built upon this firm base, quite large and well-appointed by local standards. To one side are some older buildings; in appearance they are workshops of some kind, but one of them is clearly inhabited. These are all that is left of the garrison.

Adjacent to these buildings is a raised platform (of finest concrete), on which can be seen the remains of glazed floor tiles. This, Ali tells me, was the garrison school. There is not enough remaining for me to know whether I am indeed standing in my old classroom (top infants and bottom juniors—teacher, Mrs Barrett) but I'd like to think so. Around us are some pieces of very rusty iron which were certainly not here in 1963: some small artillery pieces minus their brass; a much larger piece, minus most of its barrel; and a small, tracked vehicle, pretty much complete but from its appearance probably bodged together locally for a specific purpose long forgotten. In the centre of this is a small concrete structure, with a locked door, and standing next to it is a man with a key. He is the curator, for we are in the centre of Tobruk's war museum. I am its only visitor today.

The star exhibit at the museum is the *Lady-be-Good*, a B25 of the US Air Force which crashed in the desert in the latter days of the WW2 campaign. The wreckage was undiscovered for more than a decade. When it was found, so were the remains of its crew, at various distances and in various directions from it. I remember my Dad telling me about how he had visited the plane and the skeletons in the desert; as a child, I used to think about it a lot. Now, the Libyans have brought the wreck to act as a centrepiece of their museum, but it looks very sad, lying in a cluttered way, the pieces all mixed up. The wing is more or less complete, but the nose has been laid behind it, tipped up on one side, and other bits are scattered around in random fashion. And of course, the brass and anything else of value has gone. Ali blames this on those pesky Egyptians, the ones who swarmed over the border and nicked things from the cemeteries too. He also says that it cost thousands of pounds to move the plane from the desert to the town, and that Libya expects the US to pay that cost. I don't think they should hold their breath waiting for the cheque.

Through the door, unlocked for us by the curator, a flight of steps leads down to Rommel's bunker, also used by Montgomery—once Rommel had decided to move further West. A series of subterranean rooms has recently been repainted and wired for light. They are interesting for what they are, but unfortunately they contain nothing. With their fresh paint and electric light, they do not even contain atmosphere. Ali tells me there are plans to fill them with exhibits. So some day, maybe this will be a proper museum; for now, however, there is very little to see.

We search next for the scenes shown in my Dad's slides of downtown Tobruk. I am quite certain that one building we are looking for was called by us the 'Jebel Flats'. Some friends of ours lived there and I remember visiting them and going out on the roof; they kept some tortoises there in a wooden hutch. Ali finds the building without difficulty and we walk into a courtyard below it, pointing up at features we can recognise from the prints I had brought with me. This provokes some interest from above, and faces start to appear at the open windows. Some explanation having been offered by Ali, we are soon making our way up several flights of stairs and on to the roof.

Quite a few structures have been built on to the roof in the decades since I last stood here, but I am able to move around quite freely and to take the photographs I want to, trailed by a group of children who must think I am very strange. Jalil catches me at a pensive moment and observes aloud that I am standing at the exact spot from which my Dad must have taken one of the pictures. I don't suppose that Dad would have imagined then that I would be back here forty years later.

Going back down the stairs, I am greeted by several people standing on the landings outside their flats, all smiling and wishing to shake my hand. Ali is enjoying himself greatly, telling everyone about the *bretani*, and for a moment I have a sense of what it must be like to be a celebrity of a minor sort; someone who has achieved nothing, but who is famous just because. Given the delicate state of Anglo-Libyan relations, and the UK's modern reputation among Arabs generally as a latter-day Crusader, I am pleasantly surprised by the goodwill shown by all the Libyan people I meet. Once again down in the courtyard, Ali introduces me to yet another friend, who speaks a few words of English and wants to know when I was here and so on. A gentle, cultured fellow, driving another of the bashed-up cars one sees throughout Tobruk.

We walk around a little more and then return to the car, so that I can try to find the beach from which we used to swim most weekends. The armed forces being what they are (or were), beaches were strictly segregated by rank. The largest beach was for airmen (corporals and other ranks). It had plenty of sand, but few facilities. The best beach was used by officers. It was in an inlet, close to one of the King's palaces, on the other side of the peninsula from the airmen's beach. The beach my family used was the sergeants' beach, which was one inlet down from the officers'. It had a club house, a hard standing on which a military band would play, and a raft moored out to sea. At the age of 8, it was quite an achievement for me to swim out to the raft and dive off it. I have many splendid memories of this beach, and I have brought two of Dad's slides with me that show it, so I hope to find it again.

Ali knows the way, of course, but as we drive out of the town centre I can recognise nothing. Behind the continuous breeze-block wall on the right, I am told, there is a naval base. Soon, we pull over. We are still in a built-up area, whereas the beaches had been out-of-town, but Ali says this is the spot. A large, square, white building is to our left, the sea is straight ahead and the wall of the naval base executes a 90-degree turn to our right, running down to the sea. The white building looks familiar, but it is not in its correct setting. I take out my Dad's photos. The building resembles the King's palace, but all the corroborating evidence is against it. The surroundings are completely different; even the road is in the wrong place. No, Ali insists, this is indeed the former King's palace. Pointing to the photograph, he shows me how a wall visible in it has actually been incorporated in the newer wall to our side, and parts of the old road are still there—indeed, we are standing on it.

So, the sergeants' beach? That, alas, is behind the wall, in the naval base. Not even worth thinking about pointing my camera over the wall of a Libyan naval base and in any case, Ali assures me, there is nothing to see. The officers' beach, on the other hand, that might be visited. But I don't want to see the officers' beach; I was never allowed to see it when I lived here, so why start now?

Following the revolution, the palace (one of several owned by King Idris ben Senussi and his family) was, of course, appropriated by the people. It has been at some stage a nurses' home; now, it is semi-derelect. Somewhere, I suppose, there may be a pretender to the throne, who dreams of reclaiming his birthright. If he ever succeeds, he will find that there is really very little for him to repossess.

The afternoon is threatening to turn into evening and we still have not visited El-Adem. So once again, we take the new road out to the East, past the various war cemeteries and turn right, into the desert and towards El-Adem. This journey used to take quite a long time in a wheezy old bus or 3-tonner, but to my great surprise there is now a dual carriageway along the entire route and in no time at all we reach our destination. We are waved through a checkpoint without having to stop, but I note that we are still on a public road. Very soon, the road leads off to the left and we fork right. Whereas the base I remember lay behind a wire fence, the present-day facility is surrounded by a two metre high wall. Mustapha parks by the double gates, which bear insignia, presumably of the squadrons based here. Jalil picks up his paperwork and he and Ali walk up to the guardhouse. A uniformed guard greets them (like everyone round here, he clearly knows Ali)

and they disappear the other side of the gates. I am frustrated that I cannot see a thing through the high wall, but I wonder is there anything to see? Others who have visited have told me that very little remains from my time here. Apparently the old Astra cinema, where I used to spend every Saturday morning, is still screening films, but the base as a whole has been heavily redeveloped in recent years.

Ali and Jalil return and I can see from their body language that we will not be entering the base. Jalil explains that they were able to speak to the base commander on the telephone (not bad, considering today is his day of rest), who would have had no objection to my visit, but he does not have the authority to agree to it unless it has also been approved by the local intelligence chief, who is not available today. Anyway, Ali tells me that he has asked about the married quarters and has been told that they were all demolished some time ago, so there would really be very little to see. When I get home, I check Google Earth and it's true: only the outlines of the former married quarters remain in the sand. It's an Ozymandias moment.

We head back to Tobruk. It is time for my three companions to attend Friday prayers, so I suggest that they drop me off at the hotel while they go to the mosque. This they do. As I walk into the lobby, the lighting seems a little subdued, but that suits the almost-empty feel of the place. I go up to my room. Again, the corridor seems a little gloomy. I enter the room and flick the light switch. No power. No lights, no TV, nothing. And it's nearly dark outside. I manage to have a pee in the dark, and then open the door so that what I now realise is the emergency lighting in the corridor casts some sort of a glow into my room. Looking through the window, I note that this part of Tobruk is experiencing a power cut—it's not just the hotel. Then I shut the door and take the opportunity for a short rest.

The prayers over and the power still off, I meet up with the others in the lobby. I take the stairs this time, not wishing to find that the lift dies between floors. Ali tells me that the hotel has a stand-by generator for these occasions, which powers the lifts and the lighting in the communal areas, but which has insufficient capacity to light the rooms. Apparently, there are plans to increase generator capacity. Great things, plans.

Ali and I walk down some typical Tobruk streets, muddy, pot-holed and lined with buildings in a state of some decay. Ali points out that, beneath the peeling white paint, some of these buildings betray a more colourful history. A number of them have been blue, one black, but a few years ago the Leader came to town on a very rare visit and declared that all buildings in Tobruk really should be white, and so they are.

After a few encounters with yet more of Ali's friends and acquaintances and some more dry fish, washed down with red fizz for them, Pepsi for me, followed by Mustapha's accomplished tea ceremony, we return to the hotel and, yes, it's still in semi-darkness. Ali wants me to visit his tour manager's office, which is just off the hotel lobby. It's a little difficult in the dark to see very much, but he shows me various photographs and other souvenirs. He also has a glass cabinet, in which are displayed a diverse collection of items, including some small relics of the desert war. Unlocking the cabinet, he insists on presenting me with a gift. Touched, and not a little alarmed, I listen as he invites me to take my pick of any of the items in the case. I know better than to refuse an offer made so genuinely, but wonder how I will explain to the customs officers at Heathrow that the live round in my bag was a gift I could not turn down. Ali saves me from having to choose by picking a piece of petrified wood from the cabinet and handing it to me. This is pleasing, because I had such a piece as a child and have lost it; now it is replaced. I thank Ali, we exchange gifts, have our pictures taken together, and there being no bar to adjourn to, it's time for bed.

I grope my way into my room, manage somehow to brush my teeth, thinking all the while that it's probably for the best I can't see the orange tap water, and then to bed. The maid (or someone) has somehow contrived to make what I recognise as an approximation of an apple pie bed. Fortunately, I do not put my feet through the sheets, but I wonder how on earth something like that comes to pass. I have stayed in some strange places, but this hotel is beyond parody. The Embassy boys were wrong; the Funduq al-Masira rates a full minus five stars.

Saturday

With a very full day before us, Jalil is keen that we should start early. I arrive in the breakfast room at 6.30, surprised to discover a handful of other westerners already there. The orange squash is on tap, the tired pastries are fated never to awaken, but at least the coffee is reasonably fresh. Jalil arrives and we discuss the day's journey before I return for the last time to my room, brush my teeth in the rusty water and pick up my bag.

We drive again through the outskirts of Tobruk—they are not looking any better—and then head West, on the Derna road. Our journey in the opposite direction had been made at the dead of night, so this is my first chance to see the scenery. The road is straight and the landscape is generally flat, rising a little to the South. There is little vegetation hereabouts. To our right, may be seen the remains of the old, single-width road which I had travelled in a Bedford van with my family and another on our great camping expedition 40 years ago. It twists and turns past every natural obstacle; the *wadis* or dried-up river beds (which can turn very wet indeed on the rare occasions of a downpour) clearly caused the Italian engineers who had to build the original road in double-quick time the most headaches. The culverts and bridges remain, no longer needed because the new road takes a direct line across the desert, through dynamited cuttings or over bridges as necessary. There also the remains of a pipeline, raised on stilts about two feet off the ground, but in several places collapsed and clearly no longer functioning. If the Libyan stereotype of their neighbours has any truth to it, why has no passing Egyptian carted this off for the scrap metal value?

There is little traffic. The occasional checkpoint is stopping the shared taxis which form the greater part of the circulation on this road, but our paperwork is all in order and we are delayed only for moments. Gradually, the scenery changes and the escarpment which has been consistently some distance to our left begins to converge with the road. We pass through what for this landscape must count as a pass and see before us some proper hills, which have obliged even the heroic Libyan revolutionary road-builders to introduce a turn or two into the road. Eventually, we climb a couple of hundred feet or so and the coast is visible down below, to our right. The sight of a large town confirms we are approaching Derna.

My childhood memory of this part of the journey West from Tobruk is of a series of incredibly tight hairpin bends, the road bordered by large steel crash barriers painted black and white. In 1964 we had met what was then the most stylish mode of public transport in Libya, a bright blue bus known to us as the *Benghazi Flyer*, coming up the hill as we were about half-way down. It didn't really slow down as it passed with no room to spare; maybe if it had stopped to let us pass it would not have been able to restart. It was a close encounter of the Libyan kind.

The modern road—a little disappointingly—takes an entirely different route, descending slowly towards the town in a dead straight line. I catch a glimpse of the old road to my left and I fancy the crash barriers are still in place, but there is not enough time for a photograph and we are soon in the town of Derna. This is not somewhere I know at all, and I am unaware of any attraction here, but we pull over as we drive along the seafront. The reason is soon clear; my companions need a coffee. A pause is welcome to me also and we are soon sitting on plastic chairs outside a café, our jackets buttoned against the cool air blowing off the sea. And, yes, it's been raining here too; there are puddles everywhere.

Our orders are taken and a cappuccino being one of the options offered me I ask for one, hoping the Italian legacy has not entirely worn off. It has. The drink I get has some superficial resemblance to the frothy, caffeine-enhanced, chocolate-bedecked delicacy familiar from my rare visits to Italy, but only until I put my specs on. Then, the squirry cream atop a watered-down espresso confirms that my gamble has not paid off. But, surely it was worth a try?

Before we leave, I say to Jalil that I will visit the toilet, but he very firmly rejects any such notion. I can see from his face that I do not need to ask the reason for his advice. He says we will find a toilet elsewhere. The elsewhere turns out to be an olive grove a mile or two outside Derna; I hope that the owner does not mind his tree being irrigated so unconventionally, and that his olives do not taste any the worse for it.

The olive grove is one manifestation of a steadily greener vista as we climb once again out of Derna and towards the hilly coastal region of *Ras el-Hillal*. Here, until the Green Revolution, lived Miss Olive Brittan, official bee-keeper to His Majesty King Idris ben Senussi. On our camping expedition in 1964, we had visited Miss Brittan in her villa (which during the war had briefly served as accommodation for officers of the *Afrika Korps*) and had even been permitted to stay there for a few nights, camped in the grounds. These were very green, with lush vegetation and exotic fauna, including large and impressive stick insects. For us children, Miss Brittan had offered a demonstration of honey-making. She was kindly, yet a little fierce and called us to order if we did not pay quiet and close attention to her demonstration.

I ask Jalil if he has heard of this formidable lady, but he has not and aware as I am that we have a great deal to see today and not all of it things I have seen before I do not propose that we try to find her villa. We do, however, turn off the road briefly to view a very nice waterfall in the hills, near another villa, previously the residence of the Italian colonial administrator for Cyrenaica. Jalil tells me there is much wildlife here, including wolves. I can't see any wildlife. In fact, I have not seen a single camel since I arrived in Libya, and I have counted only two donkeys. I am quite certain that

camels were a common sight when I lived here, and the donkeys must have been almost as numerous as the people. Of course, there were not the cars then; that is the great difference.

Our next stop—and it is now mid-morning—is the ancient port of Apollonia. A modern hotel sits almost alone and quite incongruously next to the ruins of what was once one of the most important ports of the Roman empire. Jalil has secured for me the services of a local guide, Ibrahim, who wastes no time in leading me through the lines of standing (re-erected) columns and waist-high walls. Immediately, I am struck by the fact that we are walking over thousands and thousands of red clay sherds. These are apparently the remains of roof tiles and of pottery vessels. After a while, I see what is clearly the handle of an amphora; it is tempting to take it home, but it is better to leave it for others to see and that is what I do.

Apollonia having been settled continuously from classical Greek times until the coming of the Arabs, what is visible now are the remains of a largely Byzantine city. Instead of temples, there are churches, albeit churches in classical style, and all but one of them probably converted from temples. There is an amphitheatre, of course, and several buildings of a more modest nature. Ibrahim, a well educated and cultured man, explains everything very clearly in excellent English, displaying great knowledge not only of the site, but of the history of the region and indeed of all classical antiquity.

After a very pleasant hour, during which I learn so much more from Ibrahim's detailed knowledge of every stone on the site than I could from any written guide, it is time to move on to our next stop. Cyrene is the city which Apollonia supported through its trade with the rest of the Greek and then Roman empire. A remarkably well-built road, much of which still exists, connected the two over a distance of about eight miles and up a considerable gradient.

The approach to Cyrene is spectacular, the road passing a vast necropolis, consisting of countless caves, most of them man-made into the hillside and many of them adorned with pilasters and pediments. There are acres of these graves, forming a city of the dead almost as impressive as that which, in times of empire, housed the living.

Our first stop in Cyrene is the museum, a temporary structure containing sufficient exhibits to hint at the great wealth of this city in classical times. For once, there is some labelling in English as well as in Arabic, but Ibrahim supplements this and explains in detail the symbolism of each statue or carving. The evolution of representations of Persephone in funerary statuary from a completely faceless deity, through a veiled figure to a more conventionally depicted woman can be seen in a series of statues separated by centuries of time, now placed next to each other. He points out also two unfinished sculpted marble heads, in appearance not unlike a three-dimensional version of the sort of pixelated face of an innocent bystander one sees in a Crimewatch video, all squares and no detail. These were churned out on a production line for funerary or other monuments and left unfinished so that a local sculptor could carve the likeness of an individual. It's fascinating stuff.

Next, I take a ride with Ibrahim in his ancient pick-up to the Temple of Zeus. Re-erected in its present state by Italian archaeologists in the 1930s, the temple is bigger than the Parthenon. It once contained an enormous and magnificent statue of Zeus, of which only fragments remain. The views from the high ground here are stunning, yet, just as at Apollonia, I and my guide are the only people here to enjoy them. If this site were in Greece or Italy, it would be overrun by tourists.

It is a similar story at the forum, which is far more impressive than that at Rome. We walk over fine mosaics, such as would be fenced off and under cover at almost any other site. Around us are the remains of a narrow-gauge railway, constructed by the Italians in the 1930s to transport lazy tourists around the strung-out site. The tracks were laid so as to afford the tourists a close-up view of the ruins; they weave incongruously through the markets, temples and houses. Long disused, the rusty lines seem almost a part of the ruins they used to ferry people through. But just in case we should allow ourselves to imagine we are not really in the twenty-first century, the Libyan authorities installed electric standard lamps some years ago. These were put here to light the way for Libyan schoolchildren attending cultural shows at the amphitheatre at the far end of the site. Kids being kids even in Libya, the plastic globes and the glass bulbs have all been shattered by well-aimed stones and their remains lie atop the rubbish of centuries. Soon, like the train tracks, they will be just another part of this place.

It is time for lunch, which Jalil has arranged for us to take at a café near the main entrance to the site, placed so as to catch the passing trade which, presumably, passes this way on days busier than this. The café overlooks the necropolis and the only other diners are locals. Outside, a number of men sit on crude benches, smoking (everyone in Libya smokes) and chatting. After a while, they are joined by Ibrahim.

To my relief, the loos here are deemed acceptable and so I start the afternoon suitably refreshed. Jalil and Mustapha regard the opportunity to take a siesta as among their most fundamental human rights, so they recline the front seats in the car, while Ibrahim and I return to the ruins, this time to view the Agora and the temple complex. Once again, my guide is able to show me details I should certainly have missed without his help. We are able to see all the more important remains before the hour appointed for my departure. I tap on the car windows, waking two deeply slumbering young men, and it is time to go.

We give Ibrahim a lift to near his home in modern Cyrene. I had not really asked myself where the locals live now. On the way in, Jalil had commented approvingly on the Italian colonial-era houses which line the approach. Almost all are now empty and many are boarded up. Jalil told me he would like to buy one and renovate it, perhaps to let to tourists. However, Ibrahim has told me that all these houses, which although small are really quite fine, are to be demolished. They were built over part of the ancient site and there are almost certainly important archaeological remains beneath them. The former occupants now live in the modern town of Cyrene, located only a few hundred yards from the ruins, and a more complete contrast would be hard to imagine. Half-completed concrete houses and shops—the sort you see throughout the Middle East—line the main street. They are grey and ugly, the only embellishments being garish signs in Arabic script. This is a poor community, in contrast to that of centuries ago, just a spear's throw away. Such a contrast.

Saying 'thank-you' and farewell to Ibrahim, we continue our journey West, passing once again through Al-Baida and then into the hills. With the benefit of daylight, I can see what a beautiful landscape this is. It was a favoured area for Italian colonists to settle in. Many of them were given plots of land and houses, all identical, right down to the contents. The houses are still there. The design is quite attractive: a double-fronted villa with a romanesque arch to the front door and small, shuttered windows to keep out the sun. Each villa, set in its own spot of shelter beneath gently sloping hills, was sufficiently close to its neighbours to allow a sense of community. It must have been very pleasant for the settlers, while it lasted.

It didn't last. Libyans were not prepared to tolerate the loss of their land and livelihoods to the colonists. Some of them resisted with force and of those who fought the Italians the greatest was Omar al-Mukhtar. Operating from a network of caves in the Wadi al-Kufa, Omar and his fellow fighters harassed and killed the colonists in a series of hit-and-run raids. The might of Mussolini's Italy was turned against them. Aircraft were used to bomb their hideouts and Omar himself was eventually captured as he led a raiding party in search of food; he was subsequently executed and the resistance petered out.

As we cross a modern bridge across the Wadi al-Kufa, Jalil tells me we will shortly turn off the road and double back on the old road (he calls it the "Italian road") to see where Omar's hideout was. It is a beautiful drive, following the winding course of the *wadi* through a verdant landscape, with steep slopes on either side. After a few miles, we can see the first of the caves, and soon there are many more; some of them are quite large and would have held a sizeable number of men and their equipment.

We pull over near an iron girder bridge which passes overhead. Jalil explains that the original Italian road was more winding than that which we are on, and that this is one place where it took a different line. The bridge is part of that original road, although it is no longer paved. From the bridge hangs a banner, bearing a likeness of Omar al-Mukhtar and some Arabic script. The film about Omar, *Lion of the Desert*, was filmed on location here, with Anthony Quinn in the title role, Rod Steiger as Mussolini and Oliver Reed as General Graziani. When I get home, I track down a DVD of it; it's not a bad film.

I take a photograph of my companions by their national hero's monument and then we resume our journey, back up on to the main road, which gradually straightens out and levels off as we approach Benghazi. Jalil has been anxious all day to get here before dark, so that we may see the sunset. I know Benghazi is famed for its sunsets, but I am not too bothered whether we catch it or not; there has been so much else to see. This is just as well, for as we make our way through the dusty, busy suburbs the sun is well on its way to bed, and by the time we reach the seafront it has sunk out of view, leaving only a few deep red rays to show us what we have missed.

By this stage of what has been a long day, however, I am frankly more interested in the hotel. Will it be any better than the al-Masirah at Tobruk? Thank goodness, it is. The Funduq el-Fadeel is a perfectly respectable sort of place, with friendly, efficient staff, a working lift, 24-hour electricity and clear(ish) water. As I'm shown to my room, I realise how

long it is since I had my last fix of news. Gesturing to the television set, I utter, more in hope than in expectation, “BBC?” In return, I get a smile and much pressing of buttons on the set (no remote control here) until an English language programme appears. A lot of people are being killed, rather noisily and to the accompaniment of truly horrible music. “Good!” my proud host announces. “Thank you” I say, insincerely.

I have arranged to meet up with Jalil in time for dinner and, as ever, he is only 5 minutes late. We set off in the car, through some very deep puddles (it has clearly been raining quite hard here) and soon pull over, still on the seafront. My hopes rise as we enter what appears to be well-appointed restaurant. The dining area is upstairs, and has been dressed in such a way as to create the impression we are in a large Bedouin tent. The walls are hung with carpets and the ceilings are draped with rich cloth. The effect is completed by subdued lighting and brass knick-knacks. Crisp tablecloths and clean cutlery confirm my initially optimistic assessment and for the first time I am presented with a menu. Evidently, Benghazi attracts enough tourists to sustain some good restaurants; if only poor old Tobruk could do the same.

Having had my fill of fish over the past two days, I opt for an omelette, although first there is an excellent lentil soup and a good selection of olives, dips and other snacks. This is the last evening of my tour and an opportunity to explore some controversial issues which interest me. I was not inclined to discuss these earlier, in case it soured the atmosphere for the duration of the trip. I find my companions more than willing to engage in this conversation.

I want to know more about their attachment to Islam and the basis of their faith. Mustapha is particularly keen to talk about this. He tells me that the Q’uran is at the heart of his belief, because it is the word of God as revealed through the Prophet. He is anxious that I should understand that, although written down many centuries ago, the Q’uran has a strong contemporary relevance. All the latest scientific advances and discoveries are, apparently, foreshadowed in it. There is a large literature on this subject, with which my young interlocutor is evidently very familiar.

He has also made some study of the Bible, by which he means the New Testament. It is at this stage that I mention that I am not a Christian. Genuine shock appears on both their faces; they had not expected this. Mustapha wants to know why I am not a Christian. I explain that I lack faith, that I would have to be persuaded and, in all honesty, I have not thus far been persuaded. But if it could be demonstrated, says Mustapha, that a book contains the word of God, surely then I would have to believe. The ‘fact’ that the Q’uran has correctly anticipated and in many cases described all major scientific discoveries since it was written should of itself be sufficient to convince me. I say that I really would require rather more than that to cast aside my disbelief, and as I say this am conscious of how arrogant I sound.

They want to know what I do believe in and via liberal democracy we arrive at women’s rights, which is one of the subjects I had wanted to tick off this evening. Their beliefs—and both the single Mustapha and the married Jalil agree on this—are based on the Q’uran, which according to them teaches that a woman is worth only half a man. I think it is the Ulema, the interpretation of the Q’uran, which teaches this, rather than the Book itself, one verse of which has been extrapolated from (later, I look it up: it’s verse 2:82), but I don’t want to debate ancient texts, I’m more interested in modern-day realities. So I am told that, apparently, scientists have confirmed women’s semi-status, for my companions have read in recent newspaper reports that studies have shown that suckling male infants will take twice as much milk as their female counterparts. And so it goes; a selective text or two here, some selective news items there, and no progress.

I ask about particular jobs: can women be teachers, doctors, lawyers? Women teachers may teach girls, and women doctors may treat other women—in fact, it is considered better for a woman to be treated by another. But neither of my fellow diners likes the idea of women practising law. They do not accept as a matter of principle that a woman should have jurisdiction over a man, but they also assert that a woman’s menstrual cycle affects her judgment, and that it is therefore unfair to expect her to represent a client or to adjudicate on what may be complex matters of law. I can normally keep a straight face in any circumstances but at this point my incredulity becomes obvious. I move the conversation on to safer ground.

Politics is not safe ground. None of us then has any inkling of the role that Benghazi will play six years later as the centre of an anti-Gadhafi uprising. Jalil is from Tripoli and Mustapha is from the deep South; neither has any connection with Cyrenaica. The modern state of Libya, like Jordan or Iraq, is a colonial construct, a national blueprint superimposed over an ancient matrix of Arab, Berber and Bedouin tribes. The forces that unify Libyans appear to be the Arab language, Islam and the Leader, but only the last of these incorporates the modern Libyan national identity. The red hats still worn by many Cyrenaicans, the black hats of the Tripolitarians and the turbans of the desert people are superficial tokens of much deeper divisions. If the Leader does leave the scene, then one has to wonder, especially after Iraq, what will hold Libya together. Like others who have met the Leader’s British-educated son, Saif al-Islam Gadhafi, I found him

plausible and, in contrast to his father, reasonable. Maybe I was mistaken. Such has been the dominance of the Gadhaffi clan, there appears to be no credible successor from outside it. I regret now (in 2011) that I did not ask my young guides, both of them thoughtful and intelligent men, what would happen post-Gadhaffi, but that was not a conversation I felt able to have on the basis of such a short acquaintance; at the time, I judged it would not have been fair to them. And I might not have liked the answer.

Sunday

The return flight from Benghazi to Tripoli takes me over places—Ajdabiya, Brega, Misurata—that mean little to me then but which later become all too familiar from news broadcasts. Once back in Tripoli, Jalil takes me to the museum, where a loud group of Italian tourists from a cruise ship appear oblivious to the offence their skimpy dress and shouted conversations are causing local people. In contrast, the hustle and bustle of the souk is entirely in keeping and I spend a happy hour there, choosing some small gifts for my family. Then I just have to pay the balance and say my thank-yous and goodbyes.

Flying home on British Airways, I have my first proper drink in days. But I do not feel that I am returning to civilisation; rather, I am exchanging one cultural setting for another, and each has its strengths and weaknesses. The notebook in my pocket and the desert dust that sticks to my shoes connect me to a place that, for all its shortcomings, still captivates me.

Postscript

Looking back on this now, in 2011 and recently retired, I have no doubt that once things have quietened down a bit I'll be back. I just hope that Jalil and Mustapha—whichever side of the current conflict they may be on—are alright.

WHO WAS J M FERRIS? – Tracking down the Mastermind Club’s founder members

I’ve been a member of the Mastermind Club for a long time now, but I certainly wasn’t one of its founders. However, I did become the Club Treasurer in 1983, after Margery Elliott and John Withrington had so heroically sorted out the membership records and tried to get its finances in order. The Club was then only five years old, but in the turmoil of its early years many original members had left. It has been my aim ever since to identify the Club’s founder members.

As Treasurer I inherited the Club’s original loose-leaf ledger of 1978, with a page for each of the former contestants who had joined. Membership numbers had been allocated in order of date of first (and, in many cases, only) subscription. From this book it should have been possible to make a list of the original members of the Club, but there were two problems:

- The ledger had been compiled over a number of years and was in alphabetical, not date, order;
- In those pre-IT days all the entries were hand-written (in two or three different hands) and there was no consistency regarding the use of first names, initials or titles.

To make a list of the first members in numerical order could have been a very tedious job, but two things came to my rescue:

- Microsoft Excel’s “Low-to-High Sort” function; and
- *“I’ve Started, So I’ll Finish”* by Magnus Magnusson, of which I somehow seem to have acquired at least five copies.

Using Excel instead of Word meant that I could list the names in alphabetical order, as in the ledger, but then sort them numerically, which simplified the task immensely. Magnus’s book contains, at Appendix V, a definitive list of all Mastermind contenders up to 1997, which was immensely useful in cross-referencing to clear up uncertain names or those which had only initials, for example. It didn’t always work: clearly member No.4 was ever known to both Club and Mastermind by initials alone!

According to Magnus, eighty enthusiasts, out of 160 who had expressed favourable interest, attended an initial meeting called by Charles Key at an hotel in Bloomsbury on 8 April 1978. It was at this session that the Club was founded and its initial structure set up. As I don’t know if those were exactly the first 80 to join the Club, I extended my researches to No. 100, and eventually compiled this table, which shows (at least in 99 cases) membership number and full name.

Even if you don’t personally recall any of the pioneers, a few interesting points still emerge:

- All these members joined within one month, from 4 August to 1 September 1978
- Despite all the vicissitudes of the Club’s early years, 18 founders remain in the current membership, the earliest being our own 007, Richard Snailham
- The list includes three of the six Mastermind Champions of the time (Patricia Owen, John Hart and Sir David Hunt, who went on to become Champion of Champions in 1982)
- It also includes three Past Presidents (Charles Key, Lance Haward, and Gerald MacKenzie) – plus, amazingly, our current President, Alan Blackburn.

No doubt there are quite a few other issues about this list that longer-term Members (all of whom have, by definition, excellent memories) could settle, but I am longing to ask just one: James Joyce fans all know “Who was M’Intosh?” – so can any Masterminder answer “Who was Ferris?”

I Think We Should Be Told.

Tony Dart (No. 275) September 2011

Orkney 1997 and Now

The photo on the front cover of the last edition of PASS, albeit with its tower chopped off at the top, was instantly recognizable to me as being St Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall, Orkney. My first visit to Orkney was in 1997, along with a large group of Masterminders for the Grand Final of Finals as it was to be known then. As we all know now, the programme restarted a few years later, but in 1996 the BBC had decided that the 25 year long run of Mastermind was to end in 1997, and I believe Magnus Magnusson was allowed to choose the final venue. Well, where else would he choose but Orkney and the cathedral bearing his name ? If the powers that be at the BBC had known that he would select such a difficult and expensive place to reach, maybe they would have changed their minds!

However, Orkney it was to be, and as a member of the Mastermind Club (one of the newest members in fact, as I was to appear in that very last series) I was eligible for an audience ticket in the Cathedral at the Grand Final. Two tickets in fact, as my husband Robert came along too, and we had a most amazing week on the islands and with the people, who prefer to be known as Orcadian rather than Scottish. They were so pleased that Mastermind had come to Orkney, that they welcomed us all with a true warm Orcadian welcome. Almost everywhere we visited, on mentioning that we were there with Mastermind, entry fees were waived and extra 'wee drams' were produced at Highland Park Distillery. Robert and I even had a private conducted tour of Balfour Castle on the Isle of Shapinsay by the owner, even though it didn't officially open to visitors until the following week.

At the time I thought that our magical week in Orkney would be last time we visited it, as it is a difficult and expensive journey from the East of England. However, eleven years later, in 2008, I qualified as a Port Lecturer on cruise ships. My second cruise took me around the British Isles. Fortunately it wasn't my first cruise, as we had very stormy weather despite it being August, and had I thought that all cruises were going to be like that, it could well have been the last. One of our ports of call was Kirkwall on Orkney. Many of the ports on that cruise had to be changed due to the bad weather, but fortunately our Orkney visit was on a beautiful day for sailing in and later out of the port, which was just as well as I have now found that Orkney is generally the most popular destination on 'Round Britain' cruises. I have lost count of the times that passengers have said they chose that particular cruise because of the visit to Orkney, and there are those who have sailed to many countries around the world who say that Orkney has been on their 'wish-list' for some time. Generally they are not disappointed. There is something special about the islands – there are 67 of them, although only 17 are inhabited.

Cruise passengers are only able in one day, to see Mainland , where there is a population of about 20,000, mostly in the towns of Kirkwall and Stromness. They are spoilt for choice in where to go when they arrive and usually take a tour to try to see as much as possible. The town of Kirkwall is popular for those who just want to explore the narrow streets by themselves and visit the Cathedral of St Magnus which was founded in 1137, at the end of the main street. Tankerness House, opposite the Cathedral, is home to the Museum which tells the story of Orkney and its history which goes back at least five and a half thousand years.

Many visitors go to Orkney to see the ancient sites. At Skara Brae there is a Neolithic settlement thought to have been inhabited even before Stonehenge or the Egyptian Pyramids were built. The Stone Age Ring of Brodgar is also part of the Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site and dates from about 3000BC. The spectacular Neolithic Chambered Cairn built about 5,000 years ago at Maeshowe is considered to be one of the finest architectural achievements of prehistoric Europe.

Scapa Flow was where HMS Royal Oak was sunk in the early days of World War Two. Tales of bravery are told to visitors who criss- cross Scapa Flow on their tour of the islands, using the causeways known as the Churchill Barriers. These are linked historically with one of my favourite places on Orkney, although not one of the Ancient Sites as it was only built in the 1940's. It has now become world famous – it is the Italian Chapel at Lamb Holm. Space does not permit me to write about this now, but I will conclude my article about Orkney in the next issue, with an account of how this little chapel came to be built.

Susan Leng



Stones of Stenness - Orkney

Getting That Sinking Feeling

Gavin Fuller on the Annual Reunion 2012

As those of you who were at this year's reunion are aware the committee took an executive decision at the beginning of the year as regards next year's function. As the prospective date for the reunion coincided with the centenary of the R.M.S. Titanic's fatal encounter with an iceberg, we decided to look into going to the port from here she initially set sail on this fateful voyage, namely Southampton. It being an anniversary weekend, we thought trying earlier rather than later might be sensible, and so struck while the iron was hot. Fortunately a suitable venue was available, and do a good thirteen months prior to the reunion weekend, it was booked!

So next year's reunion will be in Hampshire's third city from Friday 13th to Sunday 15th April. There will be commemorative events planned in the city during this time, which hopefully will make give the weekend some distinctiveness! Nevertheless the city does have various other things to offer for those of us who will be there!

The Bargate



The base for the weekend is the 4-star Mercure Dolphin Hotel, based in the city centre in the High Street. This is the city's most historic hotel, being a former coaching inn established in 1550, and underwent a £4m refurbishment in 2010. The hotel has various literary connections - Shakespeare is believed to have performed in the yard, Jane Austen reputedly held her 18th birthday party here and attended two Assembly Balls arranged by Florence Nightingale's mother in the room where we'll be dining, which lays claim to two of the largest bay windows in the country, in one of which William Thackeray wrote *Pendennis*; whilst Thomas Hardy mentions the hotel in *The Trumpet Major*. We have negotiated a special room rate of £65 B&B for

single occupancy and £75 for double/twin and I have been able to hold meal rates for the Friday and Saturday dinners at the same as last year. I'm experimenting with Sunday – as some people have found the amount of food over the whole weekend a bit too much in recent years rather than the three course lunch of previous years there will be a



lighter buffet-style meal instead, which will be at a lower cost.

If you do wish to attend, and I hope a goodly number of you do, then send me the forms enclosed with this to book your place. Rooms will be paid for on checkout so **do not send payment for the hotel booking**. This I need by **Thursday 15th March** as I cannot guarantee any room bookings after this date. For the meals I need to know by **Thursday 29th March**. If you do not receive or mislay your booking form I can send a replacement both electronically or in the post. I look forward to receiving your bookings and seeing you in Southampton next year.

MASTER QUIZ 2012

Phillida introduces Round I questions:

Welcome to the first part of the Master quiz 2012 in which the theme is 'Films and the Cinema'. As usual I shall be awarding a prize to the best *in absentia* entry and also for the highest scorer in the themed questions. The best nine entries will compete in the finals to take place after dinner at our Annual Reunion in Southampton. Ready for the screen test ?!

Round II set by Gavin Fuller will appear in the next issue of PASS.

Instructions

Please read these carefully before starting the quiz. Each preliminary round has two entries:

UNSEEN: Head your paper 'U' and answer the questions 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 or send them on to me later.

REFERENCE; On another sheet of paper headed 'R' and using any reference you care to consult (internet, books, friends), please feel free to check, alter or expand your 'U' answers, quoting your source or stating 'Second Thoughts'. Don't forget to include your name and address.

80% of the possible marks are awarded on the 'U' entry and 20% on the 'R' entry. As ever, the 'R' entry is not compulsory - if you are confident or knowledgeable enough, do not bother with it.

N.B. The question-setters may not be infallible but they have mutually agreed that their decision is final and, short of any flagrant inaccuracies, e.g. the battle of Hastings was fought in 1067, they can enter into no correspondence about the questions and answers.

Address for Round I entries:

Phillida Grantham, 35 Barkston Gardens, London, SW5 OER

Closing date: 31st January 2012

“Cinema is the most beautiful fraud in the world.” Jean-Luc Godard.

1. Which was the only marriage of Elizabeth Taylor to end with her husband's death?
2. What was “The Longest Day”?
3. A galantophile collects: a) crocuses b) snowdrops or c) anemones?
4. Which sport has an Omnium event?
5. What is the name of David Beckham's daughter?
6. What first appeared in 1868 called *croquet sandals*?
7. What does “Tora, Tora” mean?
8. Who made the famous film of the 1936 Berlin Olympics?
9. Robert Koch made which medical discovery in 1882?
10. What in Germany is a *Gastarbeiter*?
11. What first did Carol Ann Duffy achieve in 2009?
12. In “Dad's Army”, what is the name of the vicar?
13. What is David Cameron's constituency?
14. Which sharp-eyed person was born Phoebe Ann Mosey?
15. Why did the film actor assume the name of Stewart Granger?
16. Which film actress married Mickey Rooney and Frank Sinatra?
17. What is the newest country in the world as of July 2011?
18. Which opera opens with the main character measuring a room?
19. In which EU country is it legal to marry a dead person?
20. Phil Serrell, James Lewis and Paul Hayes are ex-Chelsea footballers, or antiques experts or Lib Dem MPs?
21. In “The Searchers”, who is John Wayne looking for?
22. Which walker/journalist recently enjoyed *Wanderlust* in Germany?
23. By what name do we better know Pablo Ruiz?
24. The film “Paths of Glory” takes its name from what?
25. “I warm billions” is an anagram of which film actor's name?
26. What is the name of Prince Charles's estate near Tetbury?
27. What are “The Magnificent Seven” built in London in the 1830's?
28. In which country did the art of Bonsai originate? It was not Japan!
29. Who is the head of the IMF?
30. Sercial is the driest style of which fortified wine?
31. “Virgins are rare” is the mnemonic for which scientific law?
32. Name a classical composition from the Disney film “Fantasia”.
33. When is Ground Hog Day?
34. Which actor said: “I'm free of all prejudice - I hate everyone equally”?
35. Who succeeded Henry II on the English throne?
36. A loganberry is a cross between which two fruits?
37. What is the difference between a triangular road sign and a round one?
38. Who is the current quiz master of Brain of Britain?
39. Vectis was the Roman name for which part of Britain?

40. From which United States President did Judy Garland claim descent?
41. Who was the winner of Strictly Come Dancing in 2010?
42. Sarah Boone invented which piece of domestic equipment?
43. The driving test in this country was introduced in 1935, 1936 or 1937?
44. Yellowstone National Park is in Wyoming and which other two states?
45. Who married Geraldine Lynton-Edwards in September 2011 after a 50 year courtship?
46. Sir Arnold Wolfendale held which position from 1991 to 1995?
47. Who won the Eurovision Song Contest in 1981?
48. Of the thousand most commonly used words in England, 83% are of (a) Germanic or (b) French or (c) Latin origin ?
49. Name a member of the Rat Pack.
50. In which year was "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" released?
51. Who said "Being a princess isn't all it's cracked up to be": Anne, Diana or Margaret?
52. What is the meaning of the name Sudoku?
53. 56th in the Sunday Times Rich List (May 2011), how did Dame Mary Perkins make her money?
54. In which year will Halley's Comet be seen again in Britain?
55. Carlos Acosta, the ballet dancer, comes from which country?
56. Who composed and played the zither music in "The Third Man"?
57. Which film features the 'Hole in the Wall' gang?
58. Why are Naunton Wayne and Basil Radford hurrying back to England in "The Lady Vanishes"?
59. Which is the oldest Cambridge College?
60. Which English novelist/poet said "A man's silence is wonderful to listen to"?
61. Which English king died, probably murdered, in Pontefract castle?
62. Name the main ingredients of a tapenade?
63. Acrophobia is a fear of what?
64. Who hosted the National Movie Awards in May 2011?
65. Which composer of Bond film scores died in January 2011?
66. In which film does Nurse Ratched appear?
67. Michael Caine: "You were only supposed to blow the bloody doors off" - which film?
68. What is the official Indian name for Bangalore?
69. What is the capital of Belarus?
70. In the 1890's, which British city was nicknamed "Chocolate Town"?
71. When Count Dracula is first encountered in Bram Stoker's novel, what is he reading?
72. The 1920 Olympics were held in Antwerp, Brussels or Amsterdam?
73. From which country does this saying come: "Do not resist growing old - many are denied the privilege"?
74. What is the link between "A Fish called Wanda" and "The Lavender Hill Mob"?
75. Who played the businessman and the chauffeur's daughter in "Sabrina"?
76. Which film director is choreographing the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympics?
77. In retirement, the Gloucestershire wicket keeper Jack Russell has become famous for what?
78. Dame Fiona Reynolds is the head of which organisation?
79. "I'd do anything for love (but I won't do that)" - whose song?
80. In which city was "Shallow Grave" filmed?
81. Which film actor's real name was James Byron?
82. What were the first spoken words on film (talkies)?
83. In which English county is Stilton after which the cheese is named?
84. Which famous woman athlete won the 200 metres in the 1948 Olympics?
(I was there and saw it). She also won other gold medals.

85. Who is the current Dr. Who?
86. The song "The man who got away" is in which film?
87. Which two films were found in Hitler's bunker in 1945?
88. From which part of the animal does sweetbread come?
89. Who first coined the name Gotham City for New York City: Washington Irvine, Mark Twain or Nathaniel Hawthorn?
90. Who owns both Alnwick Castle and Syon Park?
91. Who wrote the script for "The Misfits"?
92. Which actor played the chauffeur who drove Miss Daisy?
93. Which actors traded places in the film "Trading Places"?
94. Who is credited with the invention of Mr. Whippy, the ice cream?
95. Who sang the part of Eliza Doolittle in the film "My Fair Lady"?
96. What make of car is the Quattro?
97. Who killed Agamemnon?
98. In which EU capital would you find the statue "Manneken Pis" ?
99. With which group of artists was Sir James Guthrie associated ?
100. Having photographed Sir Winston Churchill on his 80th birthday, the photographer obsequiously expressed the wish to photograph him again on his 100th birthday. What was Churchill's response ?





Christmas again? Bah humbug, maybe, but you still have to send those cards....so why not send special cards that are unavailable anywhere else? Blank greetings cards suitable for Christmas and birthdays etc showing my paintings are available on my website and you can now buy them easily and safely via PayPal – see www.leostevenson.com . NEW -! I have now had cards made of my ‘*Jubilee*’ painting, very apt for next year – if not before!

Remember that you can also buy limited-edition signed prints of my ‘*Jubilee*’ and many other paintings, including landscapes, seascapes and aviation paintings. No one responded to my article on ‘*Jubilee*’ in *Pass*, so perhaps NOW it is time to treat yourself or someone special to a large and dramatic high-quality print that you can’t get from anywhere else; and remember, an artist’s limited-edition print means just that, when they’re gone they’re gone!

Leo Stevenson

GENE POOL

'Hi Juliet, it would be cool
To double up on our gene pool ---
The Reverend Lawrence in his cell,
Thinks everything should augur well ---
With Montague enriched with Capulet
What precious boon should fair Verona get.'

"My Mum and Dad want me to wed,
A prospect I most deeply dread,
A Count, who's young and good it's true,
But always solving sudoku ---
Oh Romeo, how could I ever bear
To be the wife of such a boring square?"

'O Juliet, my suit is true ---
My chromosomes are right for you ---
I shall forget fair Rosaline.'
"Her face is not as fair as mine!"
'And we shall blend a rich genetic mix
Which love to timeless rolling time shall fix.'

"But Romeo, what does one do
To make these coupled dreams come true?"
'Well Julie Love, I'm not sure yet ---
Let's find out on the Internet ---
Then veiled and clad in white from top to toe
You'll surely wed your loving Romeo.'

Timothy Robey