

**I DON'T KNOW HOW
I MADE IT OUT ALIVE**

American parents sent their troubled teens to this Jamaican boarding school. What really went on behind the gates? Decca Aitkenhead reports

An illustration of a hand holding a Sainsbury's salmon fillet tray. The tray is white with a red label that says 'Sainsbury's' and features a fish icon. Below the tray, two white plates are shown, each containing a salmon fillet. The background is a solid green color. The text 'We've stopped using plastic trays for all our salmon fillets.' is written in large, bold, orange letters on the right side of the image.

We've stopped using plastic trays for all our salmon fillets.

This saves over 300 tonnes of plastic every year.

Good to know

Sainsbury's
Good food for all of us



THIS WEEK IN **1954**

The Broadway dancer Babs Warden is served a cup of tea by Joan Wilsher in the Oasis swimming pool in Holborn, central London. She is trialling the “unsinkable swimsuit”, designed by the English inventor Mark Shaw, which uses air panels to keep the wearer afloat, face up. It didn’t catch on. Photograph by Stanley Devon.

14.07.2024

5 **Matt Rudd**

I’ve been robbed. Case closed

6 **Relative Values**

The author *Salman Rushdie* and his pianist niece *Mishka Rushdie Momen*

10 **Saskia Tidey**

How the Team GB sailor learnt of her father’s capture by the IRA. Interview by *David Walsh*

18 **Storm in a pint glass**

The Campaign for Real Ale is caught up in a culture war. *Pete Brown* sorts the fizz from the froth

26 **COVER: Inside Atlantis**

Why Paris Hilton is fighting for US teenagers sent away from home to Jamaica. Special report by *Decca Aitkenhead*

37 **Table Talk**

Amber Guinness serves up the best of Italy and *Charlotte Ivers* finds sunshine in Leith

40 **WINE SPECIAL: your questions answered**

Which bottle should I bring to a barbecue? Do vintages matter? And just what is orange wine? Our expert, *Will Lyons*, shares his knowledge

46 **Health**

The Radio 4 comedian *Jon Holmes* on how he survived

40



prostate cancer with his sense of humour intact

48 **Driving**

The new Nissan Qashqai is as insipid as its predecessors. Prepare to see many more on our roads, says *Nick Rufford*

58 **A Life in the Day**

The Formula 1 design chief *Adrian Newey*

© Times Media Ltd, 2024. Published and licensed by Times Media Ltd, 1 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9GF (020 7782 5000). Printed at Walsstead Bicester Limited, Oxfordshire. Not to be sold separately

Non-stop bangers



Let summer come to you

 ocado



MATT RUDD

CSI Stroud: on the trail of the so-and-so who stole my credit card

0545 hours, Tuesday The first light of dawn picks out an evil grin on the face of a solitary figure as he exits a petrol station on the outskirts of Stroud. The rest of the town sleeps as the crime wave continues.

Seconds later a phone beeps on the utilitarian bedstand of my Premier Inn bedroom: £26.15 has just been debited from my credit card. Do I recognise this? I do not, I think to myself groggily. Nor do I recognise eight other transactions on my card overnight. I check my wallet, my pockets, my bag — no card.

I close my eyes and use my little grey cells. I went to the Prince Albert and used the card to buy half a pint at 8.40pm. Then I walked to McDonald's, the only place open in Stroud after 9pm. I remember my card wasn't in my wallet. I remember assuming it was somewhere in my bag. I paid for the Big Mac with my debit card instead. Then I went to bed.

"So you think you dropped your card?" asks the voice on the credit card lost or stolen number.

"Either that or I was pickpocketed at some point between 8.40pm and 9.30pm."

Even when I try the Belgian accent, the voice sounds unimpressed by my reconstruction, so I ask if I'll lose the £340 the perp has spent. The voice tells me I'll need a crime number from the police. I hadn't even thought about calling the police what with the ways things are these days, but he insists.

0653 hours I call Stroud police station and explain that a crime spree is in progress. The police customer services assistant tells me I need to call the National Fraud & Cyber Crime Reporting Centre in London and gives me an 0300 number. This never happened in *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*.

0659 hours "Oh dear," says the fraud reporting chap as he painstakingly takes down my details. Thoughtfully he offers to put me in touch with a victims of crime therapist. Bravely I decline. Then he says I don't need to worry, I'll get all the money back. Worldpay, which operates the contactless machines, will inform the vendors and ask for a refund. "It's called a double loss," he says. "The vendors lose their goods and the money."

Which seems unfair. I've stupidly lost my card, the solitary figure has done the nicking, but it's



the shopkeepers who take the hit. "Won't you try to catch them?" I ask.

"Without specific times, my colleagues don't have much to go on," the reportee says. "They don't have time to sift through hours of CCTV."

So that's it. Case closed. Or it would have been, except Hercule has had his coffee now.

0735 hours I call the credit card people back and ask for the timings of the nine transactions. There were three at the newsagents in the five minutes before it closed at 10pm. There was one at midnight in the garage and then, presumably after a ne'er-do-well nap, five more from 4.13am onwards.

"Can I leave my car here while I do some crime-fighting?" I ask the Premier Inn receptionist. "Of course," she says admiringly.

0810 hours I walk into the newsagents. Yes, the assistant was here last night. She looks up the three transactions on her till: a pack of tobacco, then some booze, then three more packs of tobacco. The knives! I point at the large monitor by the door. In a 4x4 grid it is showing the live feed from 16 — SIXTEEN! — CCTV cameras.

"Would you have the recordings from last night?" I ask, twirling my moustaches.

"Yes. I'll call my manager now."

The manager says he can get hold of the CCTV this afternoon and that I should leave my details.

0830 hours Stroud police station. A nice old lady in uniform looks surprised to see me. I tell her about the crime spree. I say I've spoken to the fraud (reporting) squad in London but that subsequently I have found CCTV evidence of the criminal rampage that started 150 yards down the road. She says I mustn't look at the evidence because of data protection. I say I won't but perhaps a detective could? She looks pensive and then reaches for a leaflet about the fraud (reporting) squad.

0850 hours I call the number again. For ten minutes it tells me my call is important and then hangs up. I call again and the same thing happens. All the other victims of fraud must now be awake and reporting.

Epilogue The newsagent never called back. My card has been refunded. The fraud (reporting) squad is almost certainly poised to swoop into action ■

CHARLIE CLIFT, GETTY IMAGES

GOOD NEWS!

A teenager from Somerset with severe epilepsy has become the first patient in the world to be fitted with a brain implant to control seizures.

Oran Knowlson, 13, had the device fitted in October as part of a trial at Great Ormond Street Hospital. Since the age of three he has suffered up to

several hundred seizures a day, caused by a treatment-resistant form of epilepsy. The signals from the implant have reduced these attacks by 80 per cent.

RELATIVE VALUES

Salman Rushdie and Mishka Rushdie Momen

The author and his niece, a pianist, on surviving fanatics and who the real family genius is

Salman

My sister Sameen — Mishka's mother — is just a year younger than me, though she always refers to herself as "Salman's much younger sister". We were very close as children and have remained so. I was very good and she was quite naughty; it worked well. She would beat people up for me and I would get her out of trouble. She's still the person who knows me better than anyone.

For a long time after the trouble with *The Satanic Verses* began it was hard to see Sameen, partly because I didn't want to draw danger in her direction. For a while it was impossible. The novel was published in 1988 and I moved ten or twelve times in the year following. It was a long time before the protection team trusted my family to be let into the secret of where I was, so I couldn't see them. Those were tough times. But after a few years I was smuggled into Sameen's house, always under the cover of darkness, to spend time with her, Mishka and her older sister, Maya. It was terrible for them too. I have no intention of revisiting those days.

I'm happy to say that, perhaps because of all this, my relationship with my nieces has always been very close. A good uncle is hard to find, you know. I had one very good one — my mother's older brother was enormous fun to be around and he took an interest in us kids. So I put the work in. Even in those desperately hard days, I tried to make as much time as I could to see them.

From quite a young age Mishka revealed a kind of genius. Sameen had bought a simple upright piano for Maya. On hearing the sound, Mishka, who was four, sat down and within a day or two was playing with perfect pitch. No one could accuse our family of being musical — you don't want to hear me sing — so it was extraordinary this talent should arise. I discussed this with her teacher and I'll never forget her reply: "You're quite right, musical talent often runs in families where music is all around, but genius comes from nowhere." When people talk about a gift, the word is literal, but Mishka also had an incredible work ethic. She practised so much that Sameen had to remind her to eat and sleep.

Mishka and I have always recognised in each other a kind of creative kinship and we've been able to talk to each other very directly about artistic work. We are both disciplined in the way we approach it. For her, it came naturally — I had to learn it. She's far more like me than my sons, who chose a different path from writing. My older son, Zafar [with his first wife, Clarissa Luard], is involved in event management, and my younger son [with his third wife, Elizabeth West] Milan's great interest is hip-hop and rap.

Us Rushdies are quite a funny bunch — everyone's funniness feeds into everybody else's, it's a really

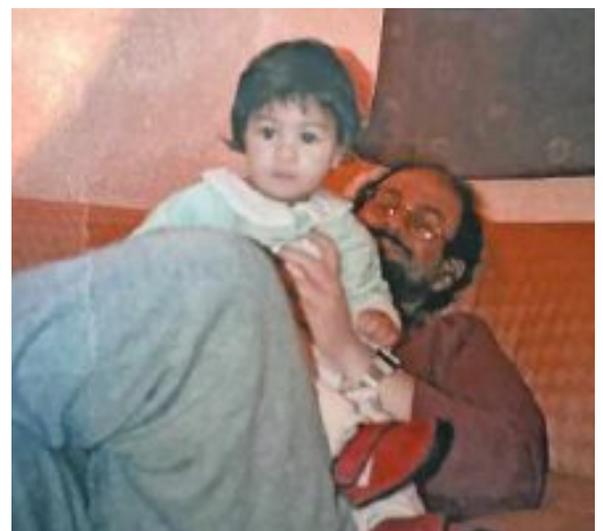
important aspect of our family life. Mishka and Sameen and my wife, Eliza [his fifth, whom he married in 2021], a writer, instantly hit it off and have formed a really close relationship of their own. Sometimes I think Eliza is taking over my family. There has been a lot of love and a lot of fun — she and I have been in this love story for five and a half years. We didn't want to be in a murder story, we wanted to get back to the love story, and I think we've done that.

I used to feel helpless because, having no connections in classical music, there was nothing I could do to help Mishka. She is mild and softly spoken and I worried about that, but she has a sharp mind and very strong opinions, and she has made her own way. The more successful she has become, the more at home she seems in the world. How many uncles get to see their nieces play at Carnegie Hall? I'm ridiculously proud of her. I think of her as the real genius in the family.

Mishka

My sister, mum and I were at home in London when Mamu was stabbed at an event in New York in August two years ago. My sister ran into the room screaming, "Turn on the news!" I've never known collective fear like it, us trying to reach Eliza and trying to prepare

At family gatherings there would be policemen sitting on tiny children's furniture with guns on their knees



Main: Salman, 77, and Mishka, 32, at Mishka's home in London. Right: together in the early 1990s, after the fatwa against Salman had been issued by Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini



ourselves, because no one survives an attack like that. Finally Eliza phoned us and said, “He can wiggle his toes,” and we started to breathe again. My mum rushed to New York to be with him — he needed her there so he could be vulnerable. He was very affectionate and my mother teased him for not being his normal grumpy self. When he was a little better I asked her to put the phone to his ear so I could speak to him and he talked about the amazing dreams he was having. Just hearing his voice filled me with hope.

Family is so important to Mamu and the bond with my mother is special. They laugh on the phone together for hours. My mum remembers him calling her the morning the fatwa began to say don’t worry, but that evening he came over and said, “They’re taking me into hiding and I don’t know when we’ll see each other again.” My sister and I knew never to say when or where we last saw him. We were often not told about a visit until the last minute. We’d meet the police at a random location, then drive behind them on a convoluted route that we’d realise later hadn’t taken us very far. Now I realise how much it would have taken out of him to create a sense of normality for us. My memories are of happy family gatherings, even though there were always two big policemen sitting on our tiny children’s furniture with guns on their knees.

STRANGE HABITS

Salman on Mishka
If someone blows out birthday candles, she won’t eat the cake

Mishka on Salman
He always wears a Yankees baseball cap when he writes. It was originally to stop the glare of sunlight, but now he can’t write without it

I read and wrote early and I’d show him my poems and stories, which he always took very seriously. At six I auditioned for the Purcell, a specialist music school in Hertfordshire. I was so small I couldn’t even reach the door handles. It was such an exciting moment, a thrilling time, and Mamu was so happy to share it.

He claims not to be musical but his work is so rhythmic, lyrical and perfectly paced you’d have to have a musical ear to be able to write like that. I read *Midnight’s Children* over and over, it was so important to me. When he saw my copy, which was dog-eared, he wrote in the front, “Mishka, stop reading this book!”

I was staying with him in New York soon after he met Eliza. She and I stayed up until 3am one night chatting over bellinis and I knew she was a perfect fit for him. We are all closer than ever now. His recovery has been long, yet in spite of what has happened to him, he is the same. He’s a person of immeasurably strong character, which can never be shaken. I admire him so much and am very grateful to have him in my life ■

Interviews by Caroline Scott.

Mishka Rushdie Momen’s album *Reformation* is out now on Hyperion. *Knife* by Salman Rushdie (Vintage £20): to order a copy go to timesbookshop.co.uk. Special discount for Times+ members



Official Fuel Consumption Figures for the Range Rover range in mpg (l/100km): Combined 24.1-23.5 (12.0 - 11.7), with EU legislation. For comparison purposes only. Real world figures may differ. CO₂ and fuel economy figures fitted. Model shown: 24MY Range Rover P615 SV with optional features.



OFFICIAL PARTNER

RANGE ROVER



CO₂ Emissions 266 - 272 g/km. The figures provided are as a result of official manufacturer's tests in accordance with the relevant regulations. Actual figures may vary according to factors such as driving styles, environmental conditions, load, wheel fitment and accessories.

I googled Dad's name.
That's when I found
out he had been
kidnapped by the IRA



A full-page photograph of Saskia Tidey, a professional sailor, standing on a large rock on a pebbly beach. She is wearing a white long-sleeved sailing top with 'GREAT BRITAIN' printed on the chest and dark blue/black wetsuit bottoms. Her hair is in a braid. The background shows the ocean, waves, and a sandy beach with some buildings in the distance under a clear blue sky.

Saskia Tidey is Team GB's most experienced female sailor. Her inspiration? Her 88-year-old father, who survived 23 days in a hole as an IRA captive

**INTERVIEW BY
DAVID WALSH**

**PORTRAIT BY
GREG FUNNELL**

Tidey on the beach in Portland, Dorset



The supermarket executive Don Tidey, Saskia's father, is supported by detectives in Ballyconnell, Co Cavan, after his rescue from IRA kidnapers in December 1983

If you happened to live or be in Ireland towards the end of 1983 you would have known the name Don Tidey. For more than three weeks he was front-page news. Born in London in 1935, Tidey was a successful Dublin-based businessman when abducted by the IRA and held captive in remote woodland. Bound to a tree with a sheet of plastic for shelter, he lay in the woods for 23 days until rescued. Two members of the state's security forces lay dead after the shoot-out. Three years before his kidnapping Tidey lost his wife, Jan, to cancer. Three years after the abduction he married his second wife, Barbara Dunne.

They had one child, who was Don's fourth. This late arrival was worth the wait.

Saskia Tidey is now 31 and a two-time Olympic sailor; first for Ireland at the Rio Games in 2016, then for Team GB in Tokyo three years ago. She is the most experienced female on the GB sailing team and with her partner Freya Black in the 49er FX class, they have every chance of being on the Olympic podium. Two months after that Tidey will be part of the GB team for the first ever women's America's Cup.

We spoke in late April about my wanting to interview her. I had just read a new book, *The Kidnapping*, by the Irish journalists Tommy Conlon and Ronan McGreevy, about her father's ordeal, and I mentioned

to Saskia that her dad struck me as a heroic figure. That could have sounded like an effort to ingratiate. It was actually true.

We meet at 9.30am at the Royal Thames Yacht Club in Knightsbridge. Having flown in from Barcelona the previous evening, her mood is buoyant. Not enough sleep but after two days on the Mediterranean trying out the team's America's Cup boat, she's feeling nothing but exhilaration.

"It was a beautiful 9 to 11 knots. I was trimming for Hannah Mills, the most successful female sailor of all time, and suddenly Ben Ainslie and his much bigger Ineos boat is alongside us. Pretty spectacular moment when you've got the

two best British sailors in this small space of water, pushing the limits of our sport.”

She talks about the sound of the boats, the deep grinding noise she likens to a mechanical bull. “I woke up this morning thinking, ‘I can’t believe that happened yesterday,’ and if I never set foot in one of those boats again — well, apart from winning the America’s Cup — I don’t really think you could top that. If you had told the 13-year-old Saskia this would happen in 2024, she couldn’t have imagined it.”

The 13-year-old Saskia had plenty on her plate. She was then a pupil at Rathdown girls’ school in Glengearry on Dublin’s Southside, the year was 2006 and this one day would separate itself from all the others. The girls were in computer class, getting used to Dell machines that whirred when turned on, and playing about on Google. They were looking up their surnames. As soon as Saskia keyed in “Tidey”, the name Don Tidey came up. Lots of stuff about Don Tidey. “What a weird coincidence,” she thought, because her dad’s first name was also Don. This Don Tidey, she read, had been kidnapped by the IRA ten years before she was born.

“I remember coming home from school that day and I think I said to Mum, probably over the kitchen table, ‘Oh, I googled our name and I don’t understand Dad’s name in this story.’ And Mum’s, like, ‘Ah, I knew this was going to come up at some point.’ Mum is practical and because it’s quite an emotional topic for Dad, I think she just laid it down pretty black and white for me. This is what happened. Everything to the point, matter-of-fact, no fluff.”

On November 24, 1983, Don Tidey left his home in Woodtown, in south Co Dublin, at about 8.15am. On his way to work as the chairman and managing director of the supermarket chain Quinnsworth, he would first drop off his 13-year-old daughter Susan at her school. Just 200 yards from his home, Tidey noticed a gardai checkpoint. Two cars with flashing blue lights were parked at the intersection between Woodtown Way and Stocking Lane. Three officers stood in the road.

Tidey rolled down the window and was asked his name. “Don Tidey,” he said, and then the IRA terrorist, in police uniform, pulled out a gun and dragged him from the car. Susan screamed as her dad was violently squashed into the space between the front and back seats of another car. Other terrorists emerged from nearby bushes. Susan was pulled from the car.

Nineteen-year-old Alistair Tidey, driving his own car behind his dad, stopped. He too was dragged onto the road at gunpoint before being rifle-butted to the ground. He and Susan were told to stay on the ground. One of the IRA men fired a shot

TIDEY ROLLED DOWN THE WINDOW AND WAS ASKED HIS NAME. THEN THE IRA TERRORIST, IN POLICE UNIFORM, PULLED OUT A GUN

into the air before all of them sped from the scene with their hostage. It would be more than three weeks before the Tideys saw their dad.

Don had grown up in the south of England. His parents were full-time officers of the Salvation Army doing pastoral work in east London. As a boy during the Second World War he was evacuated to the countryside to stay with relatives in Burgess Hill, West Sussex. He saw German planes on their way to bomb London and later saw British, American and Canadian soldiers pass by his relatives’ house ten miles from the English Channel.

After the end of the war he joined the Combined Cadet Force and took every opportunity to further his military training. After his two years of national service he joined the Marks & Spencer training programme in 1956, while rising to the rank of captain in the Territorial Army, in the 47th Infantry Division in Chelsea.

In 1965 Tidey left Marks & Spencer to work for the Irish businessman Ben Dunne, the owner of Dunnes Stores supermarket chain. With Jan and their two boys, Alistair and Andrew, he moved to Dublin. After four years working for the Dunne family he was headhunted by the Weston family to run the Stewarts chain in Northern Ireland, part of their Associated British Foods (ABS) empire. He later headed up Quinnsworth, which was acquired by ABS in the early 1970s.

Pat Quinn, the founder of Quinnsworth, described Tidey as “the most dynamic executive in the supermarket business”. It was because Tidey was so good at what he did that the IRA targeted him. Three months before his abduction, police had foiled an attempt to kidnap Galen Weston. The IRA believed the Weston family would pay whatever was asked to free their executive.

They took Tidey to Derrada Wood, a remote area in Co Leitrim, and put him into a hollow in the ground with hands and ankles chained together. A sheet of plastic tied between trees provided inadequate shelter against the cold, wet, winter weather. To maintain his strength he braced his arms, shoulders and torso, tensing all the muscles while holding his breath for as long as he could. He did the same with his legs, holding them fast and then releasing.

“I kept myself for an unknown period of time as fit as I could under extremely restrictive conditions,” Tidey told the authors of *The Kidnapping*. “The body is a remarkable machine. It meant that it was strengthened and maintained as if I was actually moving.”

On December 16, 1983, a joint gardai-army search party came upon the kidnapers who, without warning, opened fire. A gardai officer, Gary Sheehan, and a soldier, Private Patrick Kelly, were killed instantly. Once the shooting began, the IRA abandoned their captive. Tidey rolled down an incline into a patch of bracken. He heard an IRA ►

Saskia as a baby with her parents in 1993. Her father, who was widowed in 1980, married Barbara, her sister’s art teacher, in 1986



grenade explode and when he looked up, the barrel of a soldier's gun was pointing at his forehead.

"I am the hostage!" Tidey said. The difficulty for Private Patrick McLoughlin was that, after more than three weeks chained to a tree, Tidey no longer looked like a business executive. Two of McLoughlin's colleagues had just been shot dead, but the soldier held his nerve and assured himself the man was not armed. "By the grace of God, he didn't pull the trigger," Tidey said.

By then Tidey was already acquainted with loss. In July 1980, Jan, his wife of 19 years, had died from leukaemia at the age of 38. After the 23 days in Derrada Wood he would return to his three children and to his work. For almost two decades the family lived with a constant security presence. Tidey had to fulfil parental duties that Jan had once taken care of and while attending to a parent-teacher matter at Alexandra College in Dublin he met Susan's art teacher, Barbara Dunne. They got to know each other, fell in love and in 1986 they married. Seven years later, Saskia was born.

What was it like being the young Saskia, growing up in Dublin?

"Dad will be 89 this year," she says. "I remember thinking of Mum and Dad as older parents. It meant I was around a lot of older people because even though I had two brothers and a sister, they were much older than

me and getting on with their own lives, so I felt a little like I was an only child. Definitely different from my classmates. Mum and Dad would bring me to all the dinner parties in a pram. I would be sitting there with all the noise. I wasn't coddled, was never the child who needed to be in bed by 7pm. Much more like, 'She'll fall asleep in the pram or she'll be sat up chatting.' Very much included in everything, I would say."

Being dyslexic, she found school tough, but she was tall and very athletic and excelled at sport. Netball was her first love. Aged 15 she played for the Ireland Under-21 team and loved the speed, physicality and tactical challenge of the game. She was also drawn to people as competitive as herself. Had netball been an Olympic sport, she may not have ended up in a boat.

Don and Barbara liked sport. They both played golf and Don was an inveterate runner. Any room in the house with a television would have the cricket on. "Why do you have it on in every room?" his wife would ask, and he would say, "Well, I might happen to be in that room at some point."

Living not that far from the Royal Irish Yacht Club in Dun Laoghaire, a coastal suburb of Dublin, they enrolled 14-year-old

Saskia in sailing school. At first she hated not knowing which way the wind was blowing and being among peers who were more comfortable than she was in the sailing club. Then everything changed. "We did this small race. I knew not very much about racing and by luck or chance or I don't know what, I got a good gust and crossed the line first, having no idea how I did it."

She was "whisked away" to train one-on-one with the sailor Tim Goodbody, who represented Ireland at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. Soon there was an adult conversation with Don and Barbara.

"All of our important conversations happened in the kitchen. I was 14 or 15. Mum might have been chopping carrots, Dad reading the paper, and I said, 'I think I want to be an Olympian.'"

Her parents encouraged her to believe there were no limits to what she could be, but Don pointed out that it wouldn't just happen. "Go away and write down why you think you can do this," he said, "and how you're going to do it, then come back and speak to your mother and me. If we think that you've got a good set of stepping stones we will support you and we can work out how we can make this happen."

She wrote an outline of a plan to get to the 2016 Olympics in Rio. The key was to make the Ireland team for the 2009 World Youth Championships. Seeing it on paper, she didn't think it much of a strategy but when she talked it through with her parents it sounded more plausible. They were supportive. Sailing it was going to be.

Exceptional people in Irish sailing helped her. Goodbody, the talented Annalise Murphy and many others inspired her. At first there was a lot of progress, then it stalled. By now Saskia was 18, London 2012 was happening and she was four months into an arts degree at University College Dublin. "I just didn't fit in," she says. "I wasn't getting closer to what I had in my head."

Then an opportunity presented itself. "This girl Alex South wanted to make history by creating the first all-female 18-foot skiff crew. We'd met on the circuit and me being tall and athletic, she said, 'You are perfect for this boat. Come to Australia for a year, do semi-pro sailing and learn how to sail a skiff.'"

Saskia pitched again to her parents, who agreed. "It was quite a big step for an 18-year-old to leave Ireland, especially as I didn't have a clue how to sail this boat. I googled it at the airport, watched some videos and thought, 'What have I got myself into?' These boats are sailed by three 100-kilo men and we're about to have three 65 to 70-kilo girls on it in Sydney Harbour. It was an intense experience."

What she learnt on the skiff would prove invaluable. As fate would have it, the 49er FX class — previously an exclusively male two-handed skiff event — was opened up to females for the 2016 Olympics.



SHE JOINED A SAILING CLUB AND THEN EVERYTHING CHANGED. "I GOT A GOOD GUST AND CROSSED THE LINE FIRST, HAVING NO IDEA HOW I DID IT"



Tideo at the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy. She represented Ireland at the 2016 Rio Olympics in the 49er FX class

But her family had more tragedy to contend with. In 2015 she lost her brother Andrew to “a very severe cancer”. “We have had a lot of sadness in our family,” she says. “We’ve all experienced how life is so short. It’s definitely an underlying theme. You don’t know what tomorrow’s going to bring, so you better live today.”

Andrew’s death made her all the more determined to get to Rio. She and her sailing partner, Andrea Brewster, qualified. They finished 12th. “It felt like winning a medal because there were so many reasons why we shouldn’t have got there. I look back at the 22-year-old Saskia and I think, ‘Wow, I can’t believe you did that.’”

Soon after returning from Rio, Tideo stood at a crossroads. Her partner Brewster

had retired and there was no one coming through in Irish Sailing with the skillset to reach Olympic standard in the 49er FX class. Tideo desperately wanted to compete at the Tokyo Games. Around this time Stephen Park, performance director for British Sailing, contacted Tideo. “Would you be interested in trying out for the GB team?”

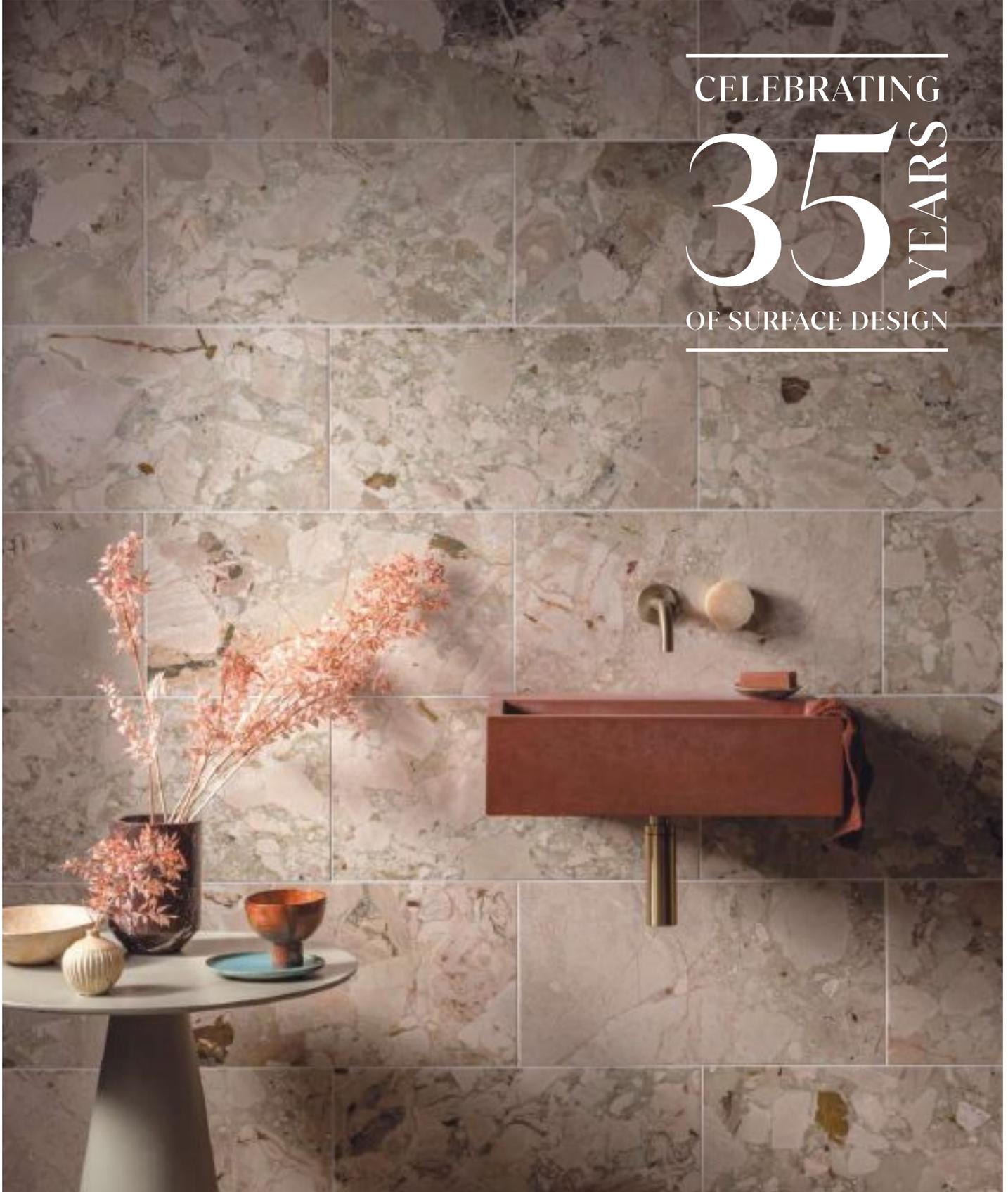
Her dad was English and though she had represented Ireland at netball and sailing, she wanted to say yes. But it wasn’t straightforward. “I thought, ‘How is this going to go down publicly and who is this going to offend?’ I remember feeling quite sick. I am 23 years of age. I went to Mum and Dad and said, ‘Everything in my body is telling me I want to do this,’ because this

was my opportunity to make something of my dream and I didn’t see another way.”

She knew, too, that she would never have got this far without the support of people at Irish Sailing. Her dad told her she must be respectful of those who had helped her along the way. She had to ask the Olympic Council of Ireland to release her.

“I presented my case in a meeting room at a law firm in Dublin. I found it quite intimidating. Apart from my mum, who I brought along for support, I was the only female in the room and was the youngest by about 30 years. I had come from the gym that morning, looked at everyone dressed in suits and thought, ‘Wow, I probably shouldn’t have come in the gym kit. I probably should have showered.’ You ▶

CELEBRATING
35 YEARS
OF SURFACE DESIGN



Ceppo Sicilia Honed Marble

MANDARIN STONE

NATURAL STONE | PORCELAIN | DECORATIVE TILES

15 INSPIRATIONAL UK SHOWROOMS

mandarinstone.com



know that sort of feeling.” Tidey explained she felt nothing but gratitude for the support she had received from Irish Sailing but without a way to compete at Tokyo she would leave the sport. If she got the chance to progress with Team GB she would always feel she was representing two flags.

“It was so emotional standing there making my case. It was, like, ‘F*** it, I just want to sail, to compete in the next Olympics, and my future is in your hands.’ Afterwards my mum was, like, ‘I can’t believe you stood up and said all that. I didn’t know you had that in you.’ I said, ‘I can’t remember what I said. All I know is that I may not be an athlete next week.’”

Some days later James O’Callaghan, performance director at Irish Sailing, called to say the Olympic Council of Ireland had agreed to release her. O’Callaghan was one of many who had helped her and she understood he had to remain neutral during the hearing. They remain friends, as she does with many in Irish Sailing. “I really hope they know how much respect I have for their sailing, that I feel it was an honour to be part of the team. Just because I’m now under a different flag doesn’t mean I’ve changed as a person. The respect I have for both nations is immense.”

She filled her car with her belongings, took the ferry and began a new life in Portland, near Weymouth in Dorset. “At first I was part of no community, had no friends and wasn’t walking into open arms. There’s a hierarchy of phenomenal performances in British sailing and you are tested every single day. How good are you? What are you bringing? If you don’t perform, you’re out. It wasn’t a waltz.”

Charlotte Dobson, then her partner in the 49er FX class, took her under her wing. At the Tokyo Olympics in 2021 it could have been their moment. “It was the closest I will come to an Olympic medal without getting one. We wore the yellow bibs for three days but lost out on the podium on the last day, dropping to sixth. I guess that’s the sport — you are never really on the podium until you are on it. I feel pretty haunted by the loss of something we were



From top: Tidey competing for Team GB with Charlotte Dobson at the Tokyo Olympics in July 2021, where they finished in sixth place; with her father before the Rio Games in 2016

so close to and yet it’s mixed emotions, because at one point it seemed that because of Covid, Tokyo wouldn’t happen.”

A curious thing takes place when I ask about her dad’s ordeal. Where for the previous hour and a half she had looked directly at me, the mention of her family history causes her to turn slightly, no longer making eye contact. It seems an unconscious retreat to somewhere private.

After her mum explained about the kidnapping the 13-year-old Saskia tried to put it out of her mind. It happened ten years before she was born. She sensed her dad wanted to protect her, not feel any anxiety about the two gardai officers who provided security at their home. To her, they were part of the furniture. “I just thought they were great. They played with me in the garden.”

She talks about her dad. His exactitude, his belief in the importance of context, the way he ensured that nothing he said was misconstrued. The work ethic was a big thing for both her parents. They would say she should never be afraid to do the jobs that others might think they’re too good to do. “My dad is a risk-averse person, he would be, like, ‘Careful.’ Whenever he said ‘Careful,’ that made me want to do it more.”

How he has lived his life, that’s what inspires her. “I look at what’s happened and think, ‘But my God, he is still a normal person.’ He lost his first wife at a very young age, then went through the kidnapping, after that lost his son, my brother Andrew, to cancer. He comes through all of that and he is still incredibly positive and humble.

“He has kept in touch with the families of Patrick Kelly and Gary Sheehan, who lost their lives that day in 1983. For someone of that generation there wasn’t much support afterwards. Nowadays you would have a lot of psychological back-up. Back then there was a lot of just getting on with it. To me he is Dad, who still gives out to me because my shoes are all over the floor and the bed isn’t made. ‘You can’t have a second name called Tidey and be untidy,’ he’d say. I’d say, ‘You’ve got a point there, Dad.’”

It cheers her that Don and Barbara will be in Marseilles for the sailing competition and will get to see her compete at the Olympics for the first time. The zika virus stopped them going to Rio, Covid ruled out Tokyo but now they will be there. “I can’t imagine how amazing this is going to feel, having them watching what I do. It’s really easy to leave out Mum in all this, but she’s basically the backbone of the family.”

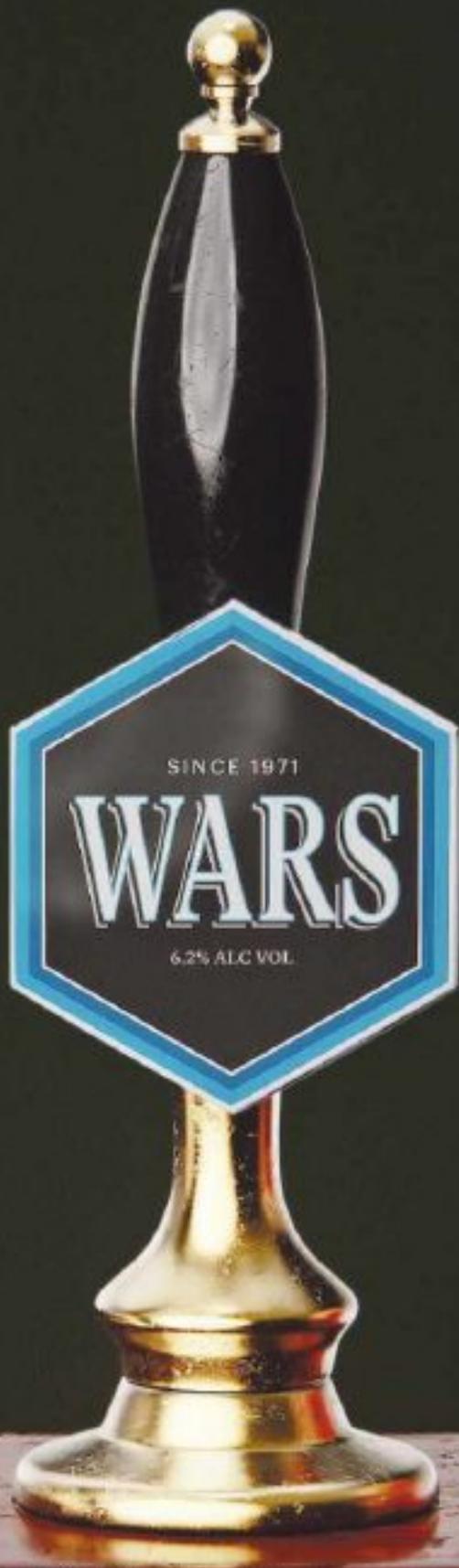
And Don, is he up for this? “The main thing I’ve taken from Dad’s kidnapping, and he says it himself, is that I don’t think anyone expected him, as a businessman, to be as fit as he was. When he was going through the three weeks, he felt his survival was down to his fitness. He still gets up in the morning and does his press-ups and sit-ups at 88.

“Mum had to confiscate his runners a few years ago because he was climbing hills, jogging, whispering afterwards, ‘I did five kilometres this morning.’ I’d be, like, ‘Dad!’ He’d say, ‘Don’t tell your mother.’

“I think his story shows how amazing humans are. How strong they can be. What he’s been through, to wake up every morning and the first thing he does is make a cup of tea, take it up to Mum with the digestive biscuits. To be like that at almost 89 is kind of amazing. But to me he’s just Don Tidey, my dad.” ■

The Kidnapping: A Hostage, a Desperate Manhunt and a Bloody Rescue That Shocked Ireland by Tommy Conlon and Ronan McGreevy (Penguin £9.99). To order a copy go to timesbookshop.co.uk





Founded by four blokes who knew nothing about beer, Camra — the Campaign for Real Ale — is one of the world's most successful consumer movements. But having fended off foreign fizz, it is facing new threats: from pub closures to hipster keg beer to accusations of going "woke". *Pete Brown* wades into a bitter row

CGI ILLUSTRATION BY
PETER CROWTHER



The foundation story of the Campaign for Real Ale has been mythologised. After all, a fair amount of drinking was involved. What's certain is that in 1971 four friends in their early twenties planned a beer-drinking holiday to the west coast of Ireland. There was just one problem: everywhere they went, the beer was awful — fizzy, tasteless and lacking in the boozy hit they were seeking.

Beer just seemed to be getting worse and they didn't know why. Somebody ought to do something, they thought. Drunk on the beach at Dunquin, Co Kerry, "we came up with the acronym Camra, which might mean the campaign for something-beginning-with-R of ale," Michael Hardman, one of the friends, recounted in 2021. "We couldn't for the life of us think of what the missing word could be."

The four founders — the newspaper journalists Hardman, Bill Mellor and Graham Lees and brewery office worker Jim Makin — all stepped away from direct involvement in the campaign within a few years. But 53 years later the organisation that began life as a catchy acronym has 150,000 members and a turnover of £8.2 million, made from membership subscriptions, a publishing arm and a string of beer festivals.

In 1977 Camra was described by Michael (later Lord) Young, chairman of the National Consumer Council at the time, as "the most successful consumer movement in Europe", and it has been emulated by groups of beer drinkers across the Continent.

It is credited with not just saving traditional British beer from extinction at the hands of European-style lager, but making it an icon of "Britishness" that is celebrated around the world. At the same time its critics say it is giving traditional British beer a bad name. The campaign is lauded for inspiring the global craft beer revolution, and accused of sticking its head in the sand and resisting that same revolution. It's vilified as a bunch of reactionary old men who hate anyone who is not like them and simultaneously accused by people who fit that description of having "gone woke". It needs urgently to modernise, but if it does so it will betray its core beliefs. Everyone I speak to in the organisation — from the chief executive down to grassroots members and former members — is unhappy with some aspect of the campaign. They seem to be at war with themselves as much as anybody else. Will the real Campaign for Real Ale please stand up?

Camra's astonishing success, and the headaches that success has spawned —



Camra's founders, Jim Makin, Bill Mellor, Michael Hardman and Graham Lees, celebrating its tenth birthday, 1981

more painful than any hangover — rest largely on the eventual winner of that "R" spot in the campaign's acronym. The founders may have loved beer, but they freely confessed that they didn't know much about it. They initially settled on the Campaign for the Revitalisation of Ale. Not as snappy as they would have liked, but it worked. Semi-seriously, they started sending press releases to newspapers and began to get some attention. Good old British beer was under threat. If the details were vague, the headline appealed to their fellow journalists.

Over the next year or so, beer aficionados taught them the secret that would define their mission. The traditional British beer they had been enjoying was served from *casks* — simple aluminium containers (formerly wood) with one hole for a tap and another for venting. The beer inside these casks was a living, breathing product. It still contained small amounts of the live yeast that had turned sugar into alcohol during

the brewing process. This yeast was held in a sort of suspended animation inside the cask when the beer was packaged in the brewery. When the cask was tapped in the pub's cellar the yeast began a slow, secondary fermentation in the container, a process known as cask conditioning. It didn't increase the alcohol much, but conditioning created a gentle, natural sparkle and rounded out the flavour and texture of the beer.

Meanwhile, modern beers — both British ales and lagers that originated in Europe — were increasingly being served from stainless steel pressurised *kegs*, first introduced in the 1930s. The beers had been filtered and pasteurised in the brewery, and contained no live yeast. That gentle natural sparkle was replaced by artificial carbonation, similar to soft drinks. Keg beers lasted longer and were easier to keep. But if you've ever noticed the difference between freshly squeezed orange juice and the pasteurised stuff on the shelves in cardboard bricks, the difference between cask and keg beer was just as stark.

Camra now had its focus. It ditched the clumsy "revitalisation" from its name and invented a snappier, more emotive term for cask-conditioned beer. From then

ONE BREWERY BOSS RAILED AGAINST CAMRA'S "GOBBY HOBBITS" AND "SANDAL-CLAD, WHISKER-STROKING STORMTROOPERS"

on the R stood for “real” ale, with keg beer the evil, artificial interloper.

The message landed more effectively because the culprits behind kegs were big corporations. Through the 1950s and 1960s, the British brewing industry had undergone a process of rapid consolidation. Sleepy little local breweries that owned a few dozen pubs had been bought by companies that were swallowed in turn by even larger predators. By the time Hardman, Mellor, Lees and Makin were trying to find a decent pint, 75 per cent of British brewing capacity was concentrated into a handful of corporations, known as the big six: Whitbread, Scottish & Newcastle, Bass Charrington, Allied Breweries, Courage and Watneys.

It was the big six who were pushing keg beer. The pattern was to buy a brewery for the pubs they owned, close it and replace local beers with their bigger brands that were gaining national awareness. Beers such as Double Diamond and Watneys’ Red Barrel were promoted with big-budget TV campaigns that received more care and attention than the beer itself.

Camra had the ball at its feet, facing an open goal. Its simple “cask versus keg” message got out quickly and effectively, thanks to the journalistic expertise of the founders, gained from local newspapers such as Hardman’s Express & Star in Wolverhampton and Lees’s Evening Post-Echo, based in Hemel Hempstead. It resonated because, despite all the details about cellar management and beer conditioning, it wasn’t really just about beer at all. It was about Britishness.

Three years earlier the Kinks had recorded *The Village Green Preservation Society*, a “national anthem”, in the semi-ironic words of Ray Davies, its songwriter, that included “draught beer” alongside strawberry jam, china cups and Tudor houses in its list of the very British “old ways” that needed to be protected.

CASK



A cask is a large barrel, wooden or metal, stored on its side, out of which beer can be poured via gravity, or pumped via a hand pump. Cask ale is “live”, as it contains active yeast. A good pub allows time for cask conditioning: when the cask is tapped the yeast begins a slow, secondary fermentation. Pubs that do this well win Camra awards.

The song was a reflection of a general unease at the pace of industrial and cultural change, fuelled by the “white heat” of the scientific revolution, as Harold Wilson had put it.

“Real ale” was obviously the drink of the village green pub, nut brown and foamy in its dimpled pint jugs. The big six weren’t just destroying cask beer, they were destroying Britishness. Britain struck back in the only way it could: from the grassroots up. Camra grew faster than

A funeral procession held in Tadcaster, North Yorkshire, after cask ale was discontinued at John Smith’s Brewery, 1974

V

KEG



Kegs are usually pressurised and made of stainless steel. In the pub, a gas pump is connected via a hose to a single bung at one end of the keg, which pushes carbon dioxide in and the beer out. A mix of nitrogen and carbon dioxide is used for smoother beers such as stouts. Real ale connoisseurs disapprove of the excess fizz, among other things.

anyone expected. The founders took what they knew from their experience with the National Union of Journalists and organised into a system of local branches and sub-branches, founded and run by volunteers. Demonstrations were held outside the headquarters of the big six breweries. Funerals, complete with coffins and mourning rags, were staged for beers and pubs that had been deemed no longer viable.

Steadily, the big brewers caved in. While keg beer would never disappear, and even as Brits developed a taste for the cool, crisp lagers they were discovering on European package holidays, cask ale, served from traditional wooden hand pumps, became recognised as a vital part of the great British pub, even by people who didn’t drink it.

At the same time, the campaign was ensuring that more people were drinking it. The first commercially available edition of *The Good Beer Guide* was published in 1974, having been researched painstakingly by members across the country, as it still is today. The first national beer festival, held at Covent Garden in London, came a year later, with pints costing about 15p. Each became bigger with every year that passed.

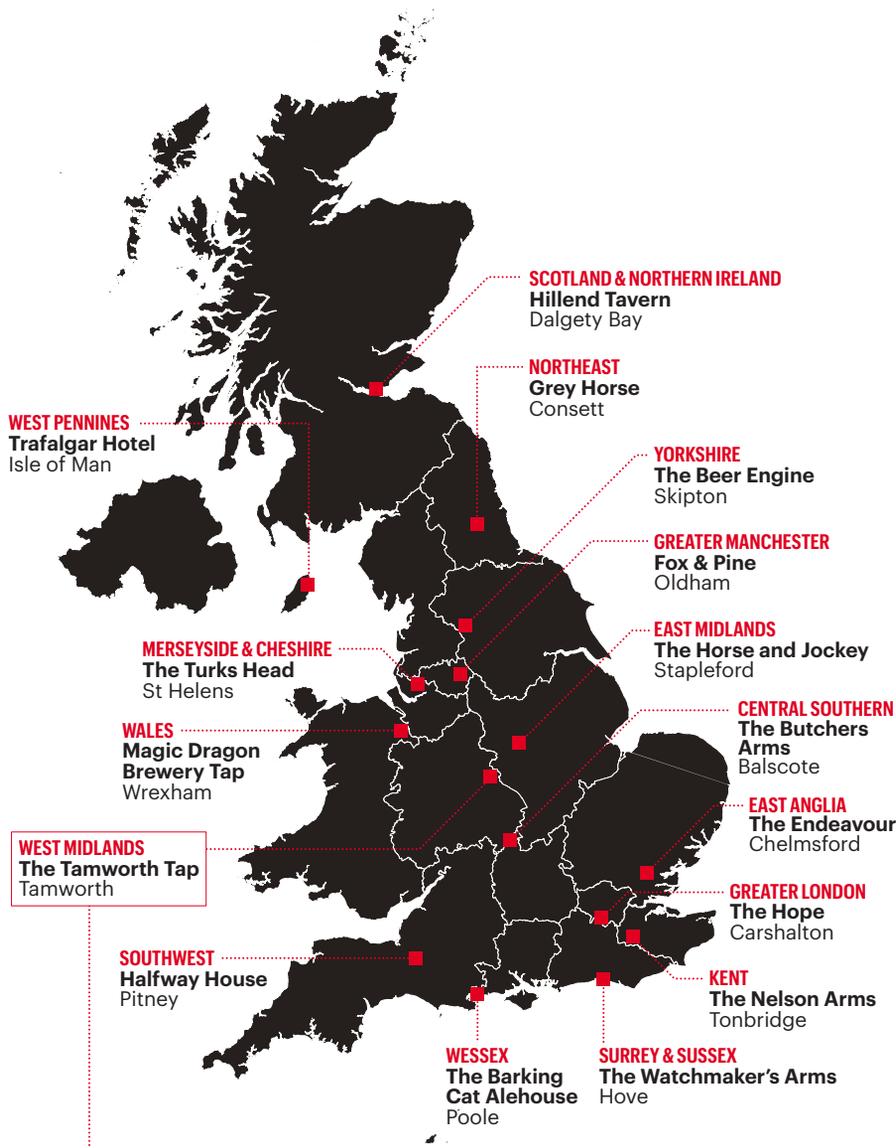
Camra had won. And that’s where its problems began.

It’s human nature that when an underdog wins a fight, the power can sometimes go to its head. While Camra saved real ale for its fans, the majority of British drinkers in the 1970s were switching from keg bitter to lager, or “Eurofizz” in Camra-speak. Some, such as Heineken and Carlsberg, were weaker versions of decent continental lagers to suit the British preference for drinking ►



CAMRA'S PUBS OF THE YEAR 2023

Pubs are not able to nominate themselves for these awards and the judging is carried out by Camra volunteers



The Tamworth Tap was named pub of the year for the second year in a row in 2023

larger quantities of lower-alcohol beers. Others, such as Skol and Harp, were British or Irish imitations of these.

Through the Seventies and Eighties, Camra went national. Each branch published a magazine that ran the rule over their local pubs, letting members know which ones served good real ale and sometimes pouring scorn on those that didn't. Articles and books argued that anyone who drank lager had been "brainwashed" into doing so. Reading Camra publications from the Nineties, one could feel that the enemy was not the big brewers, but the mindless, moronic mass of drinkers who Camra members clearly saw themselves as superior to.

In 2006 Camra's first chairwoman (Camra's reputation as a boys-only club is not entirely deserved), Paula Waters, opened the Great British Beer Festival at Earls Court in London by shouting that the event was definitely "not for lager boys" — echoing a slogan on volunteers' T-shirts sponsored by Wychwood Brewery. Even today one long-time member tells me that, in his view, "the whole point of Camra" is to "save real ale and therefore it makes sense to casually insult other beers in an attempt to put people off drinking them". (The same person queried whether it was appropriate for me to write this piece, given that I have previously admitted to drinking lager.)

Many publicans have encountered the kind of Camra member who comes into their pub expecting discounts, some even making veiled threats that "we spread the word about places like this". Some pubs are happy to offer discounts to card-carrying members and others take the money-off coupons that are distributed. But some feel the expectation of a discount runs against the organisation's committed aim to help save struggling pubs.

Every Camra branch aims to have a brewery liaison officer who keeps tabs on which cask ales are being brewed locally. One newly established brewer speaks for many in saying, "the majority of encounters I've had with Camra have been that of a self-entitled bunch of twits who feel the beer world owes them a favour. I got an email from their local liaison officer basically wondering how we had the temerity to start brewing beer without asking their permission."

There's no doubt that such entitled members are in a tiny minority. But one encounter with them can, and often does, turn people away from the entire organisation. In 2009 a trade press article railed that it was impossible to please Camra's "gobby hobbits" and "sandal-clad, whisker-stroking stormtroopers". If that wasn't bad enough, the author of the piece was Stephen Oliver, the managing director of Marston's at the time, one of the country's largest and most dedicated cask ale brewers.

The Great British Beer Festival, postponed until 2025, is usually held at London Olympia in August, attracting 60,000 people

Such insults still sting Camra's own CEO, Tom Stainer, who took the reins at the campaign's headquarters in St Albans in 2019 after more than a decade editing the organisation's *What's Brewing* newspaper and *Beer* magazine. "The [beards and sandals] stereotype is the biggest frustration we face," he says. "It's a punchline. But it causes real reputational damage. Our reputation lags behind our image. The truth is that brewers and industry bodies now say, 'We can talk to Camra because they're reasonable.' Influencing someone's opinion is proving far more effective than attacking them."

Some, of course, prefer the fiery Camra of old. "Today's Camra doesn't take up cudgels and fight," says Colston Crawford, 65, a veteran Derby branch member. "It passes careful, watered-down comment on the industry, fearful of treading on toes. Part of the problem is that, once the initial battle was won, Camra wasn't sure where to go."

Others object to the fact that what was a campaigning organisation seems to have transformed into a drinking club. Camra does most of its recruitment at beer festivals and lures in new members with those money-off coupons, which can be redeemed on pints of cask ale in thousands of pubs. The most consistent criticism of Camra I hear is that its partnership with JD Wetherspoon in this scheme contradicts its aim of supporting independent pubs — even though the budget chain was dropped from the scheme in 2019. Remember Stainer's point about perception lagging behind reality?

As if the Campaign for Real Ale encouraging more people to drink real ale wasn't bad enough for its critics, Camra also diversified from its original mission. In the eyes of its detractors it doesn't campaign enough, and when it does, it campaigns about the wrong things, such as cider and perry (since 1985), or pubs more broadly — even those that don't sell cask.

For some, the belief in real ale approaches religious levels of dogma: any beer that isn't hand-pumped or served directly from the cask, and doesn't still contain live yeast, is seen as not "real" and is therefore outside the scope of the campaign. That Camra began as a quest for better beer, and took a year to discover what cask ale was, before inventing a term to describe it, is an inconvenient detail forgotten by the zealots.

For every member or former member who feels Camra has drifted too far from its



CAMRA CHAMPION BEERS 2023

<p>Supreme champion Elland 1872 Porter</p>	<p>Mild Harvey's Dark Mild</p>
<p>IPAs Bragdy Twt Lol — the Trefforest Brewery Diablo Dragons</p>	<p>Session pale, blond and golden ales Swannay Island Hopping</p>
<p>Session bitter Salopian Darwin's Origin</p>	<p>Premium (best) bitter Greene King Abbot</p>
<p>Premium pale, blond and golden ales Baker's Dozen Electric Landlady</p>	<p>Bottle conditioned beers Green Jack Baltic Trader</p>

roots, there's at least one who believes the campaign hasn't changed enough.

Cask ale is now sold in most pubs. And for people who just want a decent pint, as Camra's founders did, there's now a wide range of beers in other styles that didn't originate in the cask tradition but still taste great. Chief among these is the global phenomenon of "craft beer". For most drinkers, "craft" and "cask" are often interchangeable terms, because most cask ales tick every box in any attempt at a definition of craft beer, which usually centres on flavourful, interesting beer from small, independent producers.

But to the Camra old guard, craft beer is overcarbonated, overhyped, overhopped, overexpensive and over here, when it should have stayed in the United States. If it comes in kegs, they say, it can't possibly be good. Craft fans respond that real ale is dull, flat and twiggy. The sad irony is that, almost without exception, the founders of first-generation American craft brewers such as Sierra Nevada, Anchor, Goose Island and Brooklyn were directly inspired by British cask ale and began brewing in attempts to mimic it.

In 2018 Camra tried to change how it worked and what it stood for. At that year's annual general meeting a motion was proposed for the organisation to "act as the voice and represent the interests of all pub-goers and beer, cider and perry drinkers". It may not have mentioned keg beer or craft beer by name, but the goal was to free Camra to promote any beer its members enjoyed drinking.

The motion received a whopping 72 per cent support. The problem was, it needed 75 per cent to pass. Everyone — traditionalists and modernisers, inside and outside the campaign — was left angry and frustrated. Today the nearest you'll get to keg beer at a Camra festival is something ➤



21ST JUNE TO 21ST JULY

SUMMER SALE

15% OFF ACROSS
THE ENTIRE COLLECTION *

* Exclusions apply. ligne-roset.com

ligne roset[®]
depuis 1860

called KeyKeg, where the beer is not pasteurised or filtered but is still served under pressure. Some Camra members see this as a useful compromise, others as heresy. Some festivals allow it, some don't, but it's gaining ground.

Every month seems to bring with it a new reason to bash Camra. In 2022, after years of being criticised as a clique of beardy men who sniggered at beers with names such as Old Slapper and Sheepshaggers Gold, pilloried in the *Viz* magazine strip *The Real Ale Twats*, Camra undertook an inclusion, diversity and equality review to explore whether its meetings and events were welcoming enough to all.

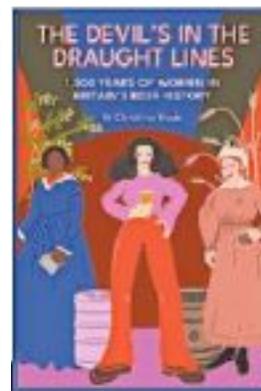
Yet the simple act of running a survey that asked people if they felt comfortable at beer festivals was criticised by some commenters online as Camra having “gone woke”. *The Devil's in the Draught Lines: 1,000 Years of Women in Britain's Beer History* by Dr Christina Wade now sits at the top of the books page on Camra's website.

Some older white men interpreted Camra's offer of a renewed welcome to women, gay people and ethnic minorities as a sign that they themselves were no longer welcome and resigned their memberships. The fact that the vast majority of members — older white males included — welcomed the review was drowned out by howls of indignation.

Last year the White Hart in Grays, Essex, made headlines when police removed a collection of golliwogs that had been displayed in the pub. When it emerged that the pub was featured in *The Good Beer Guide*, Camra was condemned for supporting racism. When it swiftly removed the pub from its guide it was attacked yet again for going woke.

Camra awards are another area ripe with controversy. When the champion beer of Britain was announced at the Great British Beer Festival last year, winning gold in the premium bitter category, and silver overall, was Greene King's Abbot ale. Beer Twitter was near-unanimous: there was simply no way a boring, traditional beer churned out by a corporation with an annual revenue of more than £2 billion and 2,700 pubs in its estate could have won fairly. The judging process had to be corrupt, critics said.

It takes Laura Emson, Camra's campaign and national awards director, about 40 minutes to walk me through the process that whittles 10,000 beers down to the eventual handful of winners. “There's no beer in there that Camra members haven't voted for in large numbers,” she says. A beer must then convince at least three different panels of judges, none of whom know what they've been drinking until the scores are tallied by a different team in a separate room, who never see the beers being judged. “We even codename the beers by random letters from the middle of the



BRITISH CULTURE EXISTS, AND IT'S IN THE PUB. IT'S PART OF OUR IDENTITY. CAMRA SAVED THAT CULTURE IN A UNIQUELY BRITISH WAY

The Camra-member stereotype, as seen in the comic *Viz*, and a history of women and brewing, for sale via Camra's website

alphabet — R1, P2 and so on — to avoid the unconscious bias that, for example, A is better than B or C,” Emson says.

Camra's founding fathers sometimes turn up to speak at anniversaries. Hardman remained involved in the beer industry long after he left the organisation. Mellor emigrated to Australia. Lees and Makin returned to their day jobs. Meanwhile Camra marches on, riddled with, in Laura Hadland's words, “conundrums, complexities and contradictions”.

Hadland, who wrote the official history of Camra for its 50th anniversary in 2021, says, “You can't have unity of opinion in something so big. The people who slag off Camra more than anyone else are Camra members themselves.”

It's still those members who set its policies and goals, put beers and pubs forward for *The Good Beer Guide* and run events. “The Great British Beer Festival has a thousand people running it,” Hadland says. “Many take two weeks of their annual leave from work to do it. It's insane the amount of work they do.”

For Hadland, Camra's main achievement is not the preservation of cask beer but the British pub itself. “Pubs were the Cinderella of British heritage properties — beautiful but ignored and taken for granted,” she argues. “Bodies like Historic England didn't look at them before. That's changed. It has made a huge and tangible impact on Britain.”

So why did this movement happen in beer and not cheese or Sunday roasts? Why was the “draught beer appreciation society” the only organisation to jump from Kinks lyrics to reality?

As a nation, British people are often uncomfortable talking about national identity. It slips too easily into jingoism and xenophobia, or heads in the opposite direction towards guilt, self-effacement or even self-ridicule. But beer and pubs define us. Less so than they used to, perhaps, but they represent an aspect of British culture that appeals across the world. “British culture exists, and it's in the pub,” Hadland says simply. “It's part of our identity.”

And Camra saved that culture in a uniquely British way. Whatever else cask ale is, to thousands of campaigners and volunteers it's a hobby. And as George Orwell once observed, we are a nation of hobbyists — “of stamp-collectors, pigeon-fanciers, amateur carpenters, coupon-snippers, darts-players, crossword-puzzle fans”. Camra is an organisation of amateurs and enthusiasts. Some are eccentric, some are bores, some are cliquy. But they always turn up. Others are charismatic, engaging and keen to welcome anyone who might be persuaded to share their interests. Everyone I speak to inside the organisation describes Camra as a family. If they're frustrated with it, for most, it's the type of frustration you feel for an annoying sibling who you will defend to the death.

Real ale sales may be down. Pubs may be closing. People may prefer to order pizza on Deliveroo rather than a pint across the bar. But Camra, an idea formed in a pub to preserve a threatened British tradition, has itself become a venerable British institution, in all its quirky, contradictory, confounding glory ■



American boys were sent by their parents to a “troubled teens” facility in Jamaica to be “fixed”. Instead, they allege they were systematically abused — and Paris Hilton has taken up their cause. *Decca Aitkenhead* reports from the Caribbean

The loss

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ABBIE TOWNSEND



st boys

Three of the teenagers
wait outside the first
court hearing in
Jamaica on March 15

On

the south coast of Jamaica lies a remote fishing village called Treasure Beach. Peaceful, sleepy, beautiful, its shoreline is fringed with palms and potholed lanes. Goats graze the verges; farmers grow scallion in the blood-red soil of the surrounding hills. I've spent a lot of the past 30 years there. It's the loveliest place I know.

One day last summer my teenage son began playing basketball with some American boys on the village court beside the cricket pitch. A Jamaican man quickly approached and shouted at them to stop talking to my son and his friend, who had a mobile phone. The man hit one of the American boys and led them roughly away.

This ugly little moment, which my son related to me later that day, would lead to the most astonishing story I've ever worked on. Every day it grew stranger, and with each new twist even wilder, featuring greed, legal confusion, lies, parental denial, the Kardashians, arrests, a high-profile Republican politician and Paris Hilton flying in by private jet to hug seven traumatised American boys in a Jamaican courthouse car park. The story would have unfolded very differently had it not been for this chain of chance connections.

One of the seven boys, whose names we have changed, had been sent to Treasure Beach in May last year from rural Wisconsin. Then 15, Logan hadn't been getting along with his mother's new boyfriend. Windows were broken, furniture trashed, police called out sometimes three times a day. "I love my son," his mother would tell exasperated officers. "But I don't always like him."

Desperate, she called multiple "troubled teen" programmes across the US and one recommended the Atlantis Leadership Academy (ALA) — 2,000 miles away in Jamaica. The "structured boarding academy" promised "empathy and love"; that "your son will always be treated with respect and dignity at all times". She completed an online application and the next day ALA's American founder and director called to say he could take Logan within 96 hours. The fee would be \$6,850 a month.

"That sounds," she thought, "like a deal." It was sealed with the director's promise: "No matter what Logan does, I will not send him back." She called a teen transportation company, which dispatched two guards to escort her child to his new home.

For nine months she did not speak to Logan. ALA's rules forbade phone contact



until a boy had advanced to a level that earned telephone privileges, which would typically take more than a year. Her only contact was with its director, who assured her over WhatsApp that her son was making slow but steady progress.

So she was surprised to answer her phone on Valentine's Day this year and hear Logan's voice.

"Mom, ALA got raided." He sounded highly agitated. "It got closed down."

"Logan," she asked, "did the people at Atlantis hurt you?"

"Yes."

The troubled teen industry

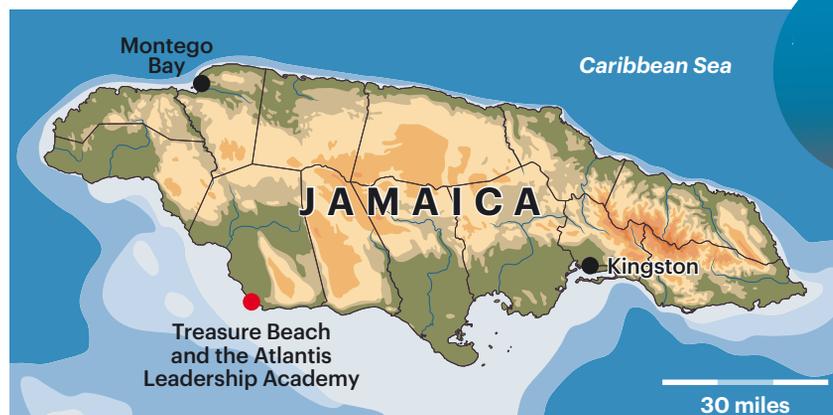
There is a highly lucrative, multibillion-dollar market of residential "behaviour modification programmes". It does not exist in the UK but is big business in the US, where an estimated 50,000 children are placed by their parents in troubled teen facilities against their will every year. All operate in closely guarded secrecy. There are more than a hundred in Utah alone, but some are based offshore in remote, low-regulation, low-cost foreign locations such as Samoa, Costa Rica, Mexico and Caribbean islands. I am one of the very few

journalists to have ever seen inside one — and only happened upon it by chance.

In 2000 I was living in Treasure Beach, a three-hour drive from Kingston and two and a half hours from Montego Bay, when I became aware of a facility on the outskirts called Tranquility Bay, which imprisoned 250 American teenage boys and girls. It took three years to persuade its director, from Utah, to grant me access. In June 2003 I wrote about it for *The Guardian*.

Housed in spartan conditions, the children were subjected to a byzantine regime of rules. Even looking out of the window was forbidden, as was eye contact with the opposite sex. Any child who disobeyed was taken to a punishment room where they were forced to lie on the floor on their stomachs, allowed to sit up and stretch for ten minutes once an hour. One boy I saw in the room had been "lying on his face", as the staff put it, for six months straight. They told me that was nothing; a girl had recently done 18 months.

Most of the children had been kidnapped from their beds at home in the US by armed guards hired by their parents to transport them there in handcuffs. Parents told me they had sent them, at \$33,000 a year, for





bunking off school, wearing inappropriate clothes, swearing, experimenting with cigarettes or alcohol or, in one case, “being disrespectful to his mom”.

A sizeable number of the children had been adopted by parents who had then changed their minds and didn’t want them. Some had been in trouble with the police for drugs; many more had been diagnosed with oppositional defiant disorder, whose symptoms — refusing to do what an adult asks, always questioning rules, doing things to annoy adults — sound indistinguishable from typical adolescent behaviour.

Tranquility Bay was affiliated to an umbrella organisation in Utah called the World Wide Association of Speciality Programs, or WWASP. The pioneer of modern troubled teen programmes, its operating model — total isolation from the outside world, physical brutality — is the industry standard. WWASP had officially disbanded by 2010, but its executives continue to work in the industry and, owing to their complex ownership structure, facilities forced to close often reopen under new names. A recent Netflix documentary, *The Program: Cons, Cults and Kidnapping*, reveals jaw-dropping abuse in another former WWASP facility, the Academy at Ivy Ridge in upstate New York, which closed in 2009. Allegations of neglect and abuse have forced countless others to close — including, in 2009, Tranquility Bay.

Years later I met an American called Randall Cook at a dance in Treasure Beach. Cook seemed affable enough. He told me he owned and ran a boarding school in the village for American boys, but didn’t mention that he used to work for WWASP. Surely, I thought, it couldn’t be anything like Tranquility Bay. Nothing like that could ever happen there again, could it?

When my son told me what he saw on the basketball court last summer I began to wonder. Then in February I received an

Above: photographs of the building that housed the Atlantis Leadership Academy until last autumn. The school was forced to move after a health inspector threatened to close it down

IN THE US AN ESTIMATED 50,000 CHILDREN ARE PLACED IN TROUBLED TEEN FACILITIES AGAINST THEIR WILL EVERY YEAR

email. It had happened again — only this time it was even worse.

Handwritten testimonies

In late January a boy called Troy had been released from ALA and reunited with his biological aunt in Illinois. Troy had been adopted by a woman who then decided she didn’t like his behaviour and had sent him to ALA. What Troy told his aunt about ALA was so shocking that she contacted the US embassy in Kingston, which alerted the local Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA). On February 8 three cars pulled up at ALA’s gate for an unannounced visit.

The CPFSA and embassy officials found eight American boys aged 14-18 confined in primitive conditions without soap, toothpaste, lavatory paper or even running water in one bathroom, displaying signs of abuse and neglect. All eight were removed immediately and transferred by court order the following day into the interim legal custody of the CPFSA.

One, having already turned 18, was returned to his parents in Texas. Before he left the other boys gave him handwritten statements cataloguing horrific allegations.

“I don’t know how I made it out alive,” one wrote. Another wrote, “I am willing to take a polygraph... If they ever send me back I will honestly kill myself because I would rather be dead than ever go back.”

They wrote that they had been starved, waterboarded and brutally beaten with broom handles, rakes, belts and metal water bottles. They said they had been sleep-deprived and relentlessly insulted — “faggot”, “pussy”. Boys who self-harmed reported having bleach and salt rubbed in their wounds; others wrote that they were threatened with knives and kept in solitary confinement for months on end.

According to their statements, one boy was punched unconscious by staff; another boy’s nose was broken, another’s shoulder dislocated. Staff would get drunk at work, force the boys to fight each other for their entertainment and threaten to kill them. Many reported that Logan was beaten for screaming in his sleep and wetting the bed.

Logan’s mother knew nothing of this until her phone rang on Valentine’s Day. Shortly afterwards the embassy and CPFSA contacted the parents with more details. Logan’s mother then googled “Atlantis Leadership Academy”. Her search brought up WWASP Survivors, a support forum for alumni of troubled teen facilities.

It referred her to a woman in Atlanta, Chelsea Maldonado, who was released ➤

from Tranquility Bay aged 18 in 2001 and has campaigned against the troubled teen industry ever since. Four years ago Paris Hilton, the hotel heiress, revealed that her own parents had sent her to troubled teen facilities. She has since become a formidable campaigner against the industry and Maldonado now works as a researcher for Hilton's media company.

Maldonado had read the article I had written in 2003 and knew of my long relationship with Treasure Beach — so in February she emailed me.

The mother

Who would send their child to be imprisoned by strangers in a foreign facility they had never even visited? On March 6 this year I go to meet Logan's parents on their Wisconsin farm. They are churchgoing, conservative, prosperous potato farmers with lots of dogs and, although they're separated, they're still close. The walls of their large farmhouse are adorned with framed photos of their three children — their two older daughters, 23 and 20, and Logan. These photos are interspersed with folksy aphorisms: "Family is the greatest blessing", "Love with an open heart", "You are a child of God".

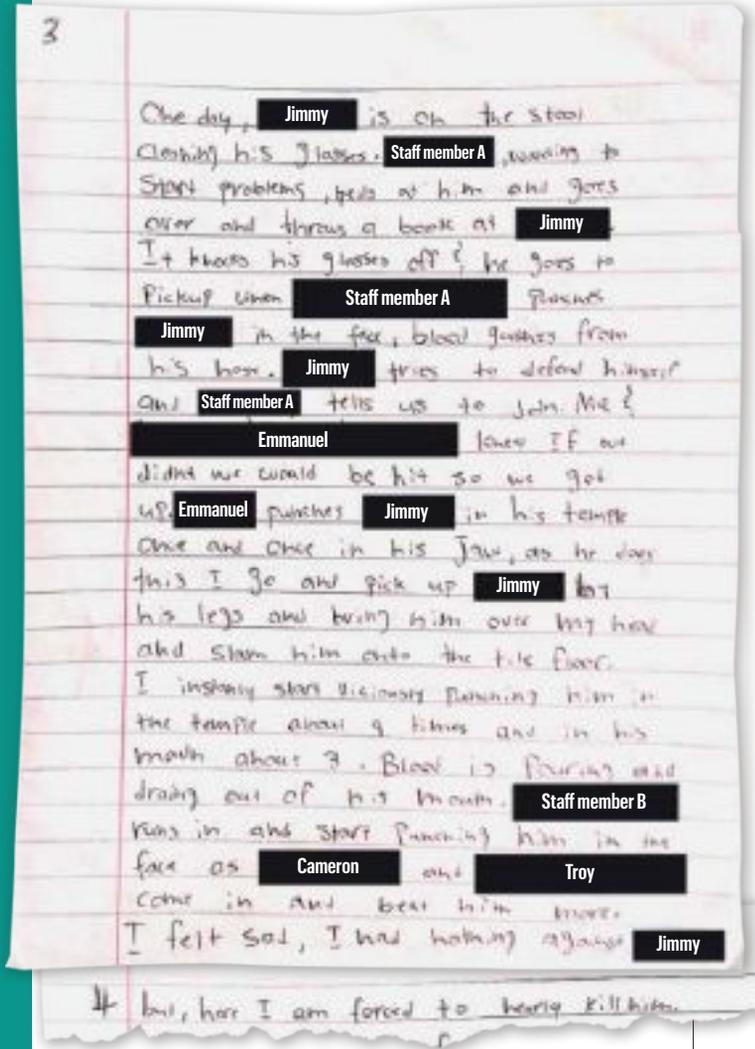
A large man of few words, Logan's father, David, says he always had reservations about Randall Cook — the man I'd met at the dance. Logan's mother, Tarah, birdlike and chatty, is anxious to justify why they sent their son to him. She says Logan's problems began in kindergarten, since when he has been variously diagnosed with attention deficit disorder, Tourette's syndrome, autism and oppositional defiant disorder, and heavily medicated. Tarah couldn't cope with him at home, so placed him aged nine in a local facility for children with behavioural issues, from where he bounced through several more in different states before returning home in February 2022, aged 14.

By then Logan's parents had separated and Tarah was living with a new boyfriend. She drives me to their home and, over a Midwest pot roast and apple pie lunch, the couple tell me how "impossible" Logan was to live with. The tone is long-suffering.

"I tried discipline," her boyfriend, Jack, says. "I'm good at fixing stuff — I had my own automotive repair business for 28 years. But Logan? You'll never fix him." Tarah is indignant that local state services kept telling her the problem was her parenting style. "It was very frustrating. It always felt like, 'It's you guys.' And I'm, like, 'This is mental health!'"

There had been some "red flags", as Tarah puts it, about ALA's probity. Her bank refused to wire the admission fee because its US business address looked "sketchy". Cook often missed scheduled update calls. In the video he sent of Logan at Christmas, her son looked deathly pale and had lost at least three stone. When ALA was raided

An account of alleged abuse written by Cassius, 17, one of the boys at the Atlantis Leadership Academy. Children gave handwritten testimonies to an older boy, 18, to smuggle out when he returned home to Texas. Below: a card left among the debris at the former ALA site, vacated last autumn



Cook did not inform any of the parents, who found out only when their sons called them from the children's home where the CPFSA had housed them. On a conference call a week later Cook told all the parents he hadn't wanted to "upset" them.

Despite all this, Tarah's boyfriend was still reluctant to believe the boys' allegations. Tarah had read them but thought they might be "lies and exaggerations" and couldn't decide whether to bring her son home.

She and the other parents had received confident updates from Cook. Their "challenging" sons, he wrote, had "intentionally and aggressively manipulated available levers to them, to both be in

control and to harm or punish you, as a parent". He told them the CPFSA had been duped by the boys and was already regretting its intervention, and shared an email from the whistleblower boy's adoptive mother, who assured them he was "a very, very, very naughty, manipulative boy" who had "schemed" with the other boys to make "Outlandishly False!!!!" allegations, and that ALA's staff were "Amazing, Dedicated, Christian Men!!!!" Cook claimed to be in close dialogue with community leaders in the village and to enjoy their full support. He had hosted a barbecue jerk chicken event for them, he wrote, and villagers had signed a petition calling for ALA to be reopened.

Tarah had found all this so persuasively plausible that when Cook sent her a form for the court stating that "ALA is to retain custody and care of Logan and to return to its [programme] as soon as possible", she was going to sign and return it — until she hears what I have been able to establish.

ALA's premises were not the lovely big white building displayed on its website. In 2021 Cook was forced to relocate it to smaller, older premises outside the village, after running up significant debts in unpaid rent, for which he was taken to court and which remain unpaid. His business was struck off Jamaica's register of companies in the same year and he moved to Kingston,

leaving ALA in the unsupervised hands of haphazardly recruited staff with neither training nor qualifications to care for a child with complex mental health needs. I could not find anyone who had seen Cook, whose own qualifications were questionable, in Treasure Beach since 2021. He had met Tarah's son precisely once.

ALA was not even licensed as a school and a health inspector threatened to close its second premises last year, forcing it to move again. The building raided in February was a basic, tiny, two-bedroom cottage I'd once rented myself as a tourist.

Tarah looks bewildered to hear that Cook's alleged glowing endorsement from local community leaders came as news to them when I'd phoned around Treasure Beach to check. I'd also failed to find a single person who had seen a petition or heard about any barbecue jerk chicken event.

Tarah's manner is guileless, but I think her inventory of Logan's misbehaviour was motivated by fear of being judged for sending him to ALA without researching it. As culpability now pivots — "So Randy [Cook] lied to me!" — she becomes less beleaguered and more maternal.

"Do you think I should go to Jamaica and get Logan?"

I tell her I think a child in a foreign court would want his mum.

The hearing

Nine days later, on March 15, Tarah and I arrive at a courthouse in Santa Cruz, a market town 20 miles from Treasure Beach. In the shade of trees beside a peeling old timber-frame, two-storey building, Jamaicans waiting to pay taxes look puzzled to see more and more foreigners gather on the courtroom balcony upstairs.

Two US attorneys alerted by Chelsea Maldonado have flown in to offer the boys their pro bono services. The US embassy's consul-general from Kingston is here, Paris Hilton's media company in LA has sent a camera crew and Maldonado has returned for the first time since her own release from Tranquility Bay. A bus pulls up and CPFSA officers escort seven bemused-looking



Life at the ALA, according to its website. Below: the school's founder, Randall Cook; at Tranquility Bay, which closed in 2009, some children were forced to lie on the floor for months

THERE HAD BEEN "RED FLAGS". THE BANK REFUSED TO WIRE THE ACADEMY ADMISSION FEE. IN A VIDEO LOGAN LOOKED DEATHLY PALE AND THIN

American teens upstairs, where Tarah is reunited with her son.

"Why did you send me to ALA?" Logan asks. Upset and confused, he looks pale and thin. "Who is the president now?"

None of us has a clue how this hearing will work. Even the court clerks look nonplussed. They call in the seven boys, Tarah, the US attorneys, embassy counsel and CPFSA officials, and hours pass. The only thing clear is that not a single other parent has bothered to show up.

When the court rises, everyone adjourns to the blazing sunshine of the car park. Maldonado and the embassy have brought the boys candy, which they inhale ravenously while recounting highly detailed reports of abuse. One demonstrates stress positions he says he'd been forced to hold for hours; another describes being beaten around the head with a metal chair; another being forced to kneel on upturned bottle tops.

They all tell me about "the stool", on which one boy spent four months. "The stool was the punishment for anything," he tells me. From dawn until bedtime every day, he says, he had to sit in isolation on the stool, legs dangling, "just facing the wall, not allowed to speak, doing nothing. I started to go crazy. I started to see things moving on the wall, like little specks of dust, and I'd see them form into animals and start dancing." He says he was fed a baby cup of water and two minuscule bowls of plain boiled rice a day.

Most say they met Cook just once, always on landing in Jamaica, never at the facility. Cook had apparently been updating parents on the progress of boys he didn't know. Several give me their parents' numbers and ask me to call them. Some haven't heard a word from theirs since the raid.

In the dusty confusion of this car park, their surreal new legal limbo becomes clear. Some parents are refusing to take their sons back. Some boys don't want to be returned. Logan is distraught. Even though his mum showed up, the court has ordered that all seven boys stay in CPFSA custody until ►



officials in the US have assessed their parents and the homes they would return to.

For legal reasons nothing said inside the court can be reported. However, it is very clear that Jamaica's authorities and court are taking their duty of care to the boys extremely seriously. A tiny country, it has limited resources yet shows greater diligence towards these foreign children's welfare than their own US state authorities have displayed.

That night Tarah gets drunk and tearful. A few hours in her son's company have diminished her resolve to bring him home. "I just don't know how to handle him." Time and again, to Maldonado, the attorneys, the camera crew and a random family at the next table, she offers Logan up for adoption.

No one can blame her for unravelling. Coming to terms with what has happened to her son is painful; she bitterly regrets falling for ALA's promises and feels that Cook exploited her desperation. Sometimes she seems almost childlike in her vulnerability — but she is the only ALA parent who took the trouble to search beyond Cook's reassurances to find out what had happened and come for her son.

The former governor

On March 20 Tarah flies home to organise her home assessment, while Maldonado and the US attorneys compile information on the other boys and work out how to navigate the international bureaucracy of their return to the US. Their detective work is complicated by the CPFSA's jumpiness about security. Rumours swirl that one boy's parents are so incensed by the home assessment of their parental fitness, they are plotting to kidnap the boys and smuggle them back into the US by boat. At the secret location where the boys are housed guards are stationed round the clock.

Like Logan, three of the other boys, all white, were sent to ALA by their biological parents. Jimmy, 15, was sent from Florida by his social worker mother and cosmetic surgeon father because he self-harms. Brad, 14, from Colorado, was sent due to drink and drug abuse. Cameron, 17, has been in troubled teen programmes since he was 13, including one in Tijuana, Mexico, where he was kept in solitary confinement for weeks, sometimes in handcuffs. Cameron's father, a business manager in California, is unimpressed by the allegations against ALA, and Cook shares his emailed endorsement with the other parents: "Better than any other [programme] I have dealt with. My son needs a strict regime with strong men running the show." Cameron is so frightened of where his father will incarcerate him next that he wants to apply for asylum in Jamaica.

The other three — Emmanuel from Haiti, Cassius from Illinois and Noah from Ethiopia — are all 17 and black, and were adopted by white Christians who then

Outside the first hearing to decide the boys' fate in Santa Cruz on March 15. Far right: Paris Hilton, who spent time in a similar facility, brings gifts and makes a speech about the boys to the Jamaican media on April 3



changed their minds. Popular with pro-lifers, adoption in the US has an estimated failure rate of up to 25 per cent. For adoptive families in the public eye, troubled teen facilities can offer a face-saving solution.

The identity of the adoptive mother of the whistleblower released to his aunt in January comes as a big surprise. She is Pam Behan, the author of a book called *Malibu Nanny: Adventures of the Former Kardashian Nanny*. She worked for the reality TV star family for five years, helping raise Kourtney, Kim, Khloé and Robert.

The identity of Noah's adoptive parents is an even bigger bombshell. The couple, who already had five children of their own, flew to Ethiopia in 2012 and came back with five-year-old Noah and three more. In 2015 Noah's new father, Matt Bevin, was elected governor of Kentucky.

A Tea Party, Bible Belt, Maga Republican, Bevin plastered his social media feeds with boastful photos of his huge family in the governor's mansion, while, as first lady of

The former Kentucky governor Matt Bevin with Donald Trump in 2019. One of the abandoned children is Bevin's adopted son



Kentucky, Noah's new mother advocated for child abuse prevention. In 2018 Bevin shared an Instagram quote: "There should not be any child in Kentucky, or America, ready to be adopted who does not have a home," adding: "Every child in Kentucky deserves the love and support of a family."

After losing the governorship in 2019, Bevin sent Noah away to a facility in Florida, and then last year to ALA. He did not respond to any of my emails. Nor do any of the other parents I contact.

The staff speak up

Friends in the village introduce me to former ALA staff members, who are fearful of repercussions for talking. Some of their former colleagues are scary, they say — but they meet me in secret and corroborate everything the boys have said. Paid a below minimum wage of £1.30 an hour, in cash, the staff had no employment contract, training or supervision. They tell me the violence got seriously out of hand when the manager Cook left in charge hired a former Tranquility Bay staff member. One boy was kept on the punishment stool for so long he became delirious. They tell me they tried to smuggle protein into his rations of plain rice, but it would be scooped out.

With no teachers at ALA, the boys were supposed to do online schooling, but this was highly haphazard and several did none at all. Players from a local football team would be invited to drop by and beat the boys for fun. The visiting nurse would have to give the boys glucose sachets because their blood sugar levels were so low. Often there would be just one chicken and a little rice with which to cook breakfast, lunch and dinner for all eight teenagers plus three staff members. The former staff members bought the boys fruit and lavatory paper out of their own wages.

The premises raided in February are locked up, but on March 17 I visit the



building that housed ALA until last autumn, still — the landlord tells me — in the condition in which it was left. Doors and windows are missing, a lavatory lies on its side on the landing and the swimming pool is filled with khaki green sludge. In the yard I find a mildewed suitcase crammed with documents including an old Tranquility Bay job application form that has been copied for use at ALA. Heartbreaking journals and Father’s Day cards, unsent, lie soaked in rats’ urine. “I miss my dad,” one reads.

By my calculations ALA received about \$50,000 a month in fees and spent on rent, wages and food a lot less than \$10,000, yet sometimes staff wages were paid weeks, even months late. Where did all the money go? This is one of the many questions I want to ask Cook — but he has disappeared.

When I’d messaged in early March to say I was coming to write about ALA’s closure, he told me to get in touch on landing — then stopped answering my calls. Ordered to appear at the first court hearing on March 15, he did not show up. The judge insisted he appear at the next hearing.

Back at court — with Paris Hilton

On April 3 we all reconvene outside the courthouse. The father of the 14-year-old from Colorado has co-operated with the home assessment process and sits on a bench looking wary, waiting to be reunited with his son. Tarah isn’t here, having not managed to organise a state-certified assessment of her home. In a bureaucratic Catch-22, Wisconsin is refusing to conduct one until Logan is back in its jurisdiction, but he can’t get home until it takes place. Cook does not show up — but someone else does.

Every head turns as a blue-light police motorbike escort pulls into the car park. A vision of blonde perfection emerges from a car, wearing the serious expression of a woman who means business. The boys get out of their bus, stunned, and one by one

Hilton hugs them. She listens as they tell her about what they suffered at ALA before they are filed into the courtroom. Outside in the blistering sun, Hilton and her husband, Carter Reum, sit patiently beside piles of presents they have brought them.

Court clerks sneak astonished peeps from the courtroom windows. The couple look as if they’ve stepped out of a Ralph Lauren advert — but Reum is as relaxed as if sitting on a yacht and chats to me while Hilton confers with the attorneys. He says people seldom realise how shy his wife is.

“This is my life’s mission,” Hilton tells me quietly. “What I went through as a teenager, I think it gave me my calling. I feel like I was meant to do this work.” Three months later she testifies before Congress in Washington about the abuse she suffered in troubled teen facilities.

To everyone’s confusion, the judge releases not just Brad, the Colorado boy, but also Logan. No one understands why,

least of all his mother when I call her with the news. “What?” She sounds panicked. “I was not expecting that.” She has no support in place for him. Could the decision be reversed? It cannot. The judge has granted the CPFSA custody for just five more days, so Logan returns to the children’s home. Tarah must come and get him.

A helicopter flies Hilton to Treasure Beach, where she, Maldonado and the US attorneys make speeches to Jamaican media about the boys’ alleged abuse. “I honestly thought I’d seen it all until recently,” Hilton says. “There is nothing these children could have done to deserve this torture.” As she swoops away across the ocean, locals struggle to absorb what they’ve just seen and heard.

There is very little crime in this village. ALA’s closure has not been reported in the Jamaican press and they had no idea what was taking place inside its walls. They are horrified when I relay what the boys told me, that staff threatened to beat them if they breathed a word to villagers. Some boys were told that the village had heard allegations of their mistreatment but believed they deserved it, so there was no point trying to report it.

Logan and Tarah

Hilton’s visit is on Jamaica’s front pages the following morning. ALA is now big news. The Jamaica Observer quotes at length from her speech: “Several of these boys are adopted and were promised better and more stable lives. One of these boys is even adopted into a former governor’s home in Kentucky. The life these children were promised has not been upheld.” The very next day four ALA staff members and a football player are arrested; all five have been variously charged with assault and child cruelty. Appalled by the allegations, the village is also worried about how Treasure Beach will look — but this isn’t a story about Jamaican wrongdoing. ➤

**THE BOYS GET
OUT OF THEIR
BUS, STUNNED,
AND HILTON HUGS
THEM. SHE LISTENS
AS THEY TELL
HER WHAT THEY
SUFFERED AT ALA**

NEVILLE JOHNSON

HANDCRAFTED BESPOKE FURNITURE



The Beauty of Bespoke

REQUEST A BROCHURE NEVILLEJOHNSON.CO.UK 0161 873 8333

STUDIES

BEDROOMS

LIVING SPACES

LIBRARIES

One of the teenagers
outside the hearing in
Santa Cruz on March 15



Anywhere in the world, behind closed doors and under the wrong circumstances, children's care can go wrong. This is a story about an American industry exploiting Jamaican trust, high unemployment, low wages and underresourced state scrutiny for American parents who want their children to effectively disappear.

Five days later, on April 8, Tarah arrives to collect Logan. Her expression fills with alarm when he appears. Visibly traumatised, his mental health has deteriorated, which may explain why the court released him. "I don't think this is going to work," she says, panicking. The depths of her helplessness and his need are heart-wrenching to witness.

Guardianship

The clock is now ticking for the remaining boys. The original court order granting the CPFSA interim custody is about to expire and cannot be extended. The attorneys are frantically trying to find safe homes for them in the US; Hilton's team are trying to gather evidence. I drive Hilton's head of impact, a young woman from LA, miles along country lanes to find a late-night dance, where she peels a young man away from go-go dancers to try to persuade him to share the video footage I've heard he has on his phone of the boys being beaten.

Maldonado has an idea. Having campaigned against the troubled teen industry for more than 20 years, she knows that American courts are usually supportive of parents who use it. But one of the boys, Cameron, has been moved to a new location with access to a mobile phone and she and he are in close contact. His father still wants the court to return Cameron to Cook's custody. So Maldonado submits an application to a Californian court for emergency legal guardianship of Cameron.

"It's a crazy long shot, right?" she says.

On April 10 Maldonado and Cameron join the guardianship hearing in a Californian

court by Zoom. His father is there in person. It is the first time Cameron has seen him since he was sent to Jamaica last autumn. When the hearing concludes, Maldonado knocks on my door. "You're not going to believe this." The judge has granted her emergency guardianship of Cameron.

There is still no sign of Cook at the final hearing in Santa Cruz the next day. The 15-year-old's mother has come from Florida to bring him home and greets her son with a watery, one-handed hug. She intends to put him straight into another programme.

Maldonado is checking her phone urgently. Documents proving her guardianship drop into her inbox seconds before she is called into the courtroom.

She and Cameron emerge euphoric 20 minutes later. When we had first shown up, Cameron tells us, he'd thought we were in on some kind of plot with the parents. Only now does he believe he is really free. Maldonado wells up. "If my 18-year-old self getting out of Tranquility Bay could see us now." The photographer drives them back to Treasure Beach, once the place of their imprisonment, where they plunge into the ocean before going out to celebrate.

The lost boys

No one is here for the three adopted boys. Noah, the former Kentucky governor's son, is unsurprised. I ask why he thinks Bevin adopted him. "Public image," he mutters. Darkness has fallen before the court finally rises and they emerge looking dejected. The judge has had to make them wards of the Jamaican state. As they trudge back across the car park to their bus, CPFSA officers try to rally their spirits. Now that they have full custody, they can work with the US attorneys to find them new homes back in America. The boys stare at their feet, broken and lost.

How many other American children have been sent to programmes abroad and then abandoned is impossible to know. No

parent has ever been prosecuted for paying a facility to inflict cruelty they would be jailed for inflicting on their child at home. Prosecutions of abusive staff are rare and new facilities continue to open. The five men charged in Jamaica await trial. Civil lawsuits against ALA are being prepared in the US — but plaintiffs' credibility is often undermined in the eyes of the American courts by the very fact that their parents had seen fit to institutionalise them.

Cook remains at large. The Jamaican police wish to interview him as a person of interest, but he returned to the US in April. He has updated the ALA website with a puzzling new "prospectus video", advertising it as open for business even though the facility remains closed. To my surprise his new prospectus includes photographs of my own son on the Treasure Beach basketball court.

He finally replied to an email in which I listed, in detail, the allegations contained in this article, and invited him to comment. This was his gnomic reply: "We have developed a healthy, vibrant and unique ecosystem for our young men and their families for years. The young men that have been afforded the opportunity to participate have an unmatched advantage to participate in community, culture and calm within their spirit.

"The dynamic offered to our young men that choose to explore and expand on some of the many positive dynamics have gone on to create very special results for those around them, as well as themselves. We do not operate as a consequence-based environment, nor do we subscribe to the temperament that a boarding school must feel like a punishment. We do not break down to build up, we simply build up."

On April 13 I board a flight from Jamaica to the US with Cameron and Maldonado, who must take him to California for a month and undergo background checks to finalise the guardianship before she can take him home to her husband and daughter in Atlanta. She is breathtakingly calm. She left her family in March for what she had thought would be a week away, and will be returning three months later with a new family member. But her husband and daughter aren't, she says, entirely surprised. For Maldonado, this is a vocation.

Still dazed by his freedom, Cameron worries right up until take-off that someone will spring out and take him away. When we touch down on American soil he looks weak with relief.

After four years in troubled teen programmes his new life is about to begin. As we say goodbye, we are all thinking of the three boys left behind ■

Luxury residences available across 5-star resorts in the UK



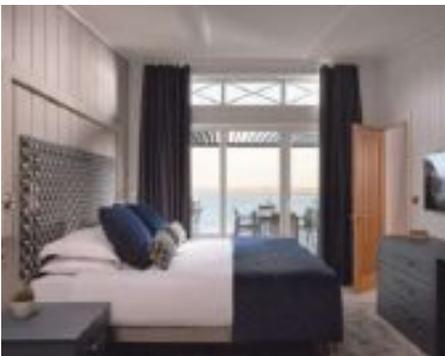
LUXURY LODGES

ESCAPE THE ORDINARY

Invest from £295,000



Up to £83,454 over two years guaranteed return based on historical success



Own a luxury coastal lodge in Cornwall or Wales, offering sea views, private beach and 5-star amenities. All within a private gated community.

Benefit from our sublet plan with guaranteed returns and enjoy unforgettable holidays, all with a dedicated concierge service, seamlessly blending lifestyle and investment.

Get in touch today to make it possible.



SCAN FOR
MORE INFO

0808 304 3104

TABLE TALK



Plus: 33 wine questions answered by our expert



AMBER GUINNESS

Living in Florence I'm spoiled for good food, but Italy is very regional and it is only by exploring other areas that you can get a taste of all the country has to offer. That's why I've spent the past years exploring the coastline from Tuscany down to Sicily, which abuts the Tyrrhenian Sea. You'll find not just all the wonderful fish dishes you'd expect, such as my favourite — sea bass with pistachios from Sicily — but pasta courses fragrant with Amalfi lemon and, of course, wonderful vegetables from all over.

Sea bass with pistachios, pine nuts and sun-dried tomatoes

I often serve this with the simplest potatoes. One large potato per person cut into super-fine discs, tossed with a tablespoon of olive oil and a generous pinch of sea salt and roasted in a hot oven for about 20 minutes.

Ingredients

(Serves 4)

- 50g unsalted pistachios
- 2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for brushing
- 4 large sea bass fillets
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 6 large sun-dried tomatoes in oil, drained and finely chopped
- 2 tbsp pine nuts

1 Heat the oven to 180C fan/gas 6. Blitz the pistachios in a food processor to a chunky, coarse consistency.

2 Line a roasting tin with baking parchment and brush with a



little olive oil. Add the fish fillets, skin side down, and season with salt and pepper. Evenly sprinkle a heaped teaspoon of ground pistachio over each fillet and top with a teaspoon of sun-dried tomato, a few pine nuts, a little salt and pepper and a drizzle of olive oil.

3 Bake for 10-11 min or until the fish is white and flaky. Remove from the oven and serve immediately with potatoes or garlicky grilled tomatoes.

Garlicky grilled tomatoes

I am always looking to get the most out of bland supermarket tomatoes and this dish is it. It looks beautiful and impressive, and somehow elevates a boring beef tomato into something rich, sweet and full of flavour.

Ingredients

(Serves 6)

- 100ml olive oil
- 2 mild, long red chillies, deseeded and finely sliced
- ½ tsp chilli flakes
- 10 garlic cloves, finely sliced lengthways
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- A handful of flat-leaf parsley, leaves and stalks separated
- 4 beef tomatoes, sliced crossways into 5mm discs
- 1 tsp fine sea salt

1 Put the olive oil, fresh and dried chilli, garlic and oregano in a small saucepan and cook gently over a medium heat for 5 min, allowing the flavours to infuse the oil. Reduce the heat, add the parsley stalks and cook for another 5 min, being careful not to let the garlic get too

brown — it should be golden and sticky. Remove from the heat for a minute or so if you're worried it's getting too dark.

2 Set the pan aside while you prepare the tomatoes. Heat the oven grill to high. Place the tomato discs in a roasting tin large enough to accommodate them in one layer. Brush liberally with the garlicky spicy oil and sprinkle evenly with the salt. Put the tin on the highest shelf of the oven and grill for 15 min.

3 Remove from the oven and leave until cool enough to handle, then transfer the tomatoes to a wide serving plate. Spoon over the garlic, chilli and herbs and drizzle with the remaining infused oil.



Serve slightly warm or at room temperature.

Linguine with anchovy, breadcrumbs and lemon zest

In southern Italy they often use breadcrumbs in place of parmesan, but with the addition of lemon zest this dish puts me in mind of wonderful lunches spent on the Amalfi coast.

Ingredients

- (Serves 4)
- 40g fine breadcrumbs
- 25 good-quality anchovy fillets preserved in oil
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- 100ml olive oil
- Sea salt
- 400g linguine
- Grated zest of 2 lemons
- A handful of flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped

1 Toast the breadcrumbs in a small frying pan over a medium heat for 3 min or until golden brown. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.

2 Tip the anchovy fillets and their oil into a small bowl and stir in the garlic. Add to a frying pan large enough to toss all the cooked pasta, along with half the olive oil. Reduce the heat to low and gently cook for 3-5 min, allowing the anchovy fillets to melt and disintegrate into the warm oil. Add the rest of the oil and continue to infuse, being careful not to let it sizzle too much and burn.

3 Meanwhile, bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil. Add the linguine, give it a good stir so it doesn't

stick together and cook until al dente (about 9 min, but check the packet instructions). Halfway through the cooking time, add half a ladleful of the starchy pasta water to the anchovy oil and let it bubble and amalgamate while the pasta cooks.

4 Using tongs, transfer the pasta to the frying pan and toss through the anchovy oil, then add the lemon zest. Divide the pasta among four bowls, sprinkle with the chopped parsley and finish with the golden breadcrumbs ■

Extracted from *Italian Coastal* by Amber Guinness (Thames & Hudson £29.99). Order from timesbookshop.co.uk. Discount for Times+ members

Tasted! The best supermarket CHOCOLATE DIGESTIVES



OUR PICK

McVitie's
Tesco, 266g, £1.90 Too good to dip into tea. An even layer of chocolate tops a snappy biscuit **5/5**

Essential
Waitrose, 300g, £1 It's hard to distinguish between these and McVitie's. Thick milk chocolate tops a golden wheaty biscuit **5/5**

Sainsbury's
300g, 85p The smallest of the lot, but I like the ridges of chocolate on top and the digestive has a good crunch **4/5**

Belmont
Aldi, 300g, 69p Were they short of chocolate at the Aldi factory? It runs out as it gets to the edge **3/5**

Asda
300g, 77p Expect an explosion of crumbs and biscuit dust as soon as you tuck in **3/5**

Tesco
300g, 85p These don't scream "eat me". They didn't taste too sweet, but they crumbled at first bite **2/5**

M&S
Ocado, 300g, £1.25 Sugar is the main taste thanks to the pale milk chocolate. The biscuit is anaemic too. There's lots of chocolate on top, but it's messy **1/5**

Hannah Evans

33 wine questions you were too embarrassed to ask — answered!

Sorry for my ignorance, but why is rosé pink? And why, for that matter, is red wine red and white wine white?

No need to apologise! The colour of a wine comes from the skin of the grapes. We tend to refer to wine grapes as red and white, but in reality they're bluish-purple and green, and both have clear juice inside. To make a white wine you press the white grapes and run off the clear juice, extracting no colour; for red, you leave the skins of the red grapes to soak in the juice, which extracts that deep purple hue. Most rosé is made by gently pressing the red grapes and allowing them to rest in the juice for a short time to get that wonderful salmon-pink blush. You can actually make a white wine from red grapes (think of champagne) by gently pressing the grapes, avoiding skin contact and running off the juice.

Oh, and what's orange wine? Any good?

Well, it's not made of oranges. It's named after its amber colour, which occurs when white grapes are crushed and left to soak on their skins, sometimes for many weeks. This draws out the colour and also the tannins, which gives orange wine a uniquely dry texture — I once described it as white wine that thinks it's red. This is a Marmite style: you either love it or hate it. My top tip is to serve orange wine at room temperature, as when you chill an orange wine you accentuate the bitter flavours. It can have very attractive aromas of orange pith and apricot and goes superbly well with charcuterie.



Is "natural wine" always worse than normal wine?

There is no proper legal definition of natural wine, but think of it as the third step along the road of organic wines. Organic wines do not involve man-made fertilisers or pesticides and are produced to standards required for organic winemaking. The next step is biodynamic wines, which are produced from grapes farmed on a philosophy based on the work of the Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner. This can involve treating the vine with herbal preparations made from various ingredients, from cow horns to stinging nettles. Natural wines take it a step further, harvesting by hand, using only wild, natural yeasts for fermentation and in some cases not adding sulphur. The latter is controversial, as wine without sulphur might spoil. They can taste unlike wine at all — think notes of bruised apple and cider.

I used to think £8 was the sweet spot for value, but it has moved up now to between £10 and £12

How much does a decent bottle cost these days?

Just as you can enjoy listening to the Beach Boys one day and a Bach concerto the next, there is pleasure to be found in almost all wines, from a simple vin de table to a priceless grand cru — depending on the context, your mood and expectations. In the UK we now pay £2.67 duty on every bottle of wine, irrespective of its selling price; and this could increase further

from February 2025. Add to that VAT, the cost of packaging, transport and the retailer's margin, then if you are spending £6 the actual cost of the wine in the bottle is minuscule — about 25p. But as the duty is fixed, if you double your spend to £12 the cost of the wine shoots up and you reach that magical moment when you're spending more on the wine than duty. I used to think £8 was the sweet spot for value, but that has now moved up to between £10 and £12.

What is the mark-up on wine in restaurants?

Eye-wateringly high in this country. Broadly speaking, they tend to treble the cost price of a wine and then add VAT.

How do you know if a wine is corked?

You'll know. It will immediately smell off. Like a damp dishcloth or a mouldy old shed. And it will get worse once opened. Leave the bottle open for an hour and it will smell even nastier.

Can you send a wine back if you just... don't like it?

If the wine is faulty or corked you can certainly ask for a replacement bottle and the restaurant should be happy to oblige. But if you don't like it? I doubt it. Would you send your food back if you didn't like it? You can always ask.



Do vintages really matter, and how do you know which is good?

No two growing seasons are ever quite the same, so the character of a wine will change depending on the year it is made — what we call the vintage. But with modern viticultural techniques the differences in vintages is becoming narrower and narrower. In terms of knowledge, there are no shortcuts I'm afraid. If you want to know which vintage is good you'll have to read my column, specialist magazines or speak to your local wine merchant.

How do you know if a wine can be "laid down"?

Most wine is made to be drunk within a few years of it being bottled — it is only fine wine that benefits from years of bottle ageing. As a rough rule of thumb, I would describe this as anything that has been made in a classic wine region and costs more than £20 a bottle.

Is decanting just pretentious nonsense?

There is a lot of etiquette around wine that feels unnecessary and overly pedantic, but it has evolved for a reason. I like to decant wine, especially young fine wine, as more exposure to the air unfurls the complex layers of flavour in wine. A wine that is restrained in flavour and difficult to taste opens up as the fruit comes to the fore and the bitter-tasting tannins subside. Wines that throw a sediment, such as red bordeaux and vintage port, should be decanted. Some whites too, including old rieslings and young rioja.

What about swirling it around the glass?

Yes to swirling; anticlockwise if you're right-handed. This helps the hundreds of aroma compounds escape from the liquid's surface. Try it at home by taking a sniff of a wine that is flat in the glass. Now give it a good swirl. Take another sniff — you'll be able to detect much more of its aromatics as the molecules vaporise.

Why do all wines seem to be 14 per cent these days?

Annoying, isn't it? A warming climate has meant that grapes contain more sugar, which in turn produces more alcohol. But there is a style choice here

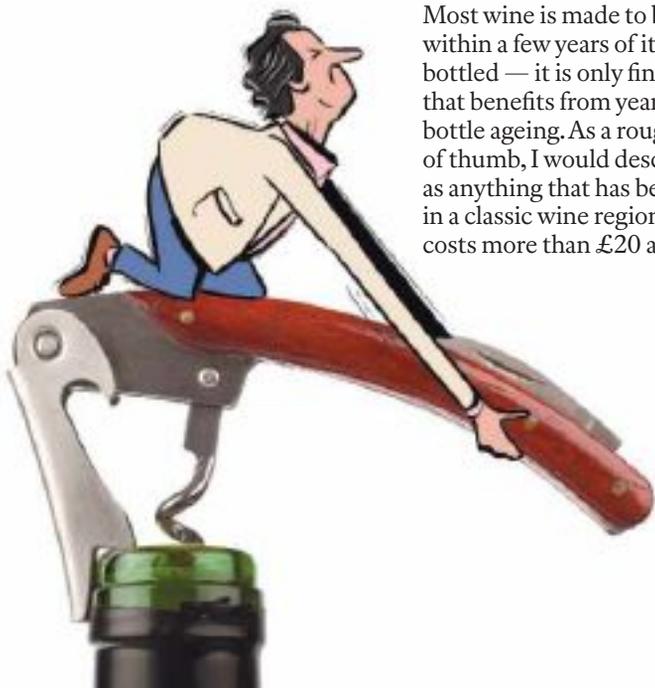
as well. These wines taste more supple, are easy to drink and tend to sell well. Fortunately, the tide appears to be turning and in the past year or so I've been tasting more wines around the 11-12 per cent mark. This is a welcome development.

Should I choose wine by region or grape?

As a very rough rule of thumb, in Europe select by region and in the southern hemisphere choose by the variety of grape. But remember, with wine there are always exceptions.

What are the wine regions and grapes I really should know about?

To impress your sommelier friends you'll need a good understanding of the classic regions of Europe, especially France. But if you really want to appear in the know, swot up on the new wave of red wines being made in the Loire Valley, the chardonnay and crisp pinot noir being produced in Sonoma in California, and malbecs from the high-altitude Uco Valley in Argentina. Mention syrah from Swartland in South Africa and drop into conversation that you're enjoying the elegant rieslings and pinot noir from the Waipara Valley on the south island of New Zealand. Oh, and one more thing; beaujolais is the new burgundy. ➤



If a wine is a mix of grapes, does that make it inferior?

Quite the opposite — in many cases it makes it superior. Think of the grape varieties as a cast of characters, each adding a slightly different flavour. The blenders' art is weaving them all together to create a wine of more interest and complexity.

Can I put ice in my wine? Or soda? Or lemonade?

One of my favourite summer drinks is inspired by an early newsletter from The Sunday Times Wine Club. "Take a dry white, add a splash of Campari, a touch of soda and a slice of lemon. Serve in a deckchair, hammock or in the shade of your own drawing room." Wine is above all a pleasure, so of course you can add ice, although it will dull the flavour and dilute the taste. Far better is to follow the advice of my old Wall Street Journal wine colleague Lettie Teague, which is to pop an ice cube in the glass, swirl it round for a few seconds and fish it out. This cools your wine and solves the problem of melting ice diluting the taste.

At what temperature should I serve my wine?

I once had, when I was going through a gadget phase, a French machine that chilled both red and white wines to their optimum serving temperature over several hours. It taught me that I was serving my reds too warm and whites too cold. In an age where many of us are cranking up the central heating, room temperature can be about 22C, which is too warm for wine. For reds, the outside of the bottle should be cool to the touch; serve light reds at 12C and heavier, full-bodied reds at

15C. A domestic fridge will chill white wines to about 5C after several hours, which is really quite cold. I would serve sparkling wine at 6C, light whites at between 6C and 8C and full-bodied whites a little warmer at 10-15C. Light, refreshing reds with plenty of fruit, such as pinot noir and beaujolais, can be served chilled.

Does the glass you drink out of actually matter?

Yes. After temperature, this is the single most important factor in affecting the taste and flavour of a wine. The best wine glasses should have glass that is as thin as possible, a large and airy bowl and a rim that allows for the wine to flow into the mouth with ease.

How long will a bottle keep after opening? And how can I make it last longer?

A bottle of wine will generally last two to three days once opened, although in my experience fine wine lasts considerably longer and is much more robust than we give it credit for. There are a few things you can do to prolong the life of the wine. Whether it is red or white, decant it into an empty half-bottle or similar-sized container, seal it and place it immediately in the fridge. With red wine, you will need to bring it out a good 30 minutes before serving to let it warm up. But one of my favourite gadgets, which I use all the time, is my Winesave Pro: a small canister of argon gas that, when squirted into an open



bottle, forms a protective layer to prevent oxidation. Pop the cork back in the bottle and, whether it's red or white, stick it in the fridge. A good wine can keep for several weeks this way — my record from squirting the gas to reopening and enjoying the wine is three weeks.

Can you ever drink red wine with fish? White with steak?

Spectre's agent in Ian Fleming's *From Russia with Love* ordered a bottle of chianti with his lemon sole and James Bond gave him short shrift. But I drink red wine with fish all the time — from an aged rioja with grilled turbot to a light red such as valpolicella or pinot noir with tuna steaks. Think of the texture and the weight of the dish and pair that with the weight of the wine — the lighter the fish, the lighter the wine. White wine with steak is more counterintuitive and I would only recommend it if you're having salad with the steak. But if you really want to attempt this pairing get a chilled glass of fruity sauvignon blanc and, just before serving, take a fresh lemon, cut it in half and squeeze it over your steak. You'll find the acidity of the lemon marries with the wine.

What's the most surprisingly good wine-producing country right now?

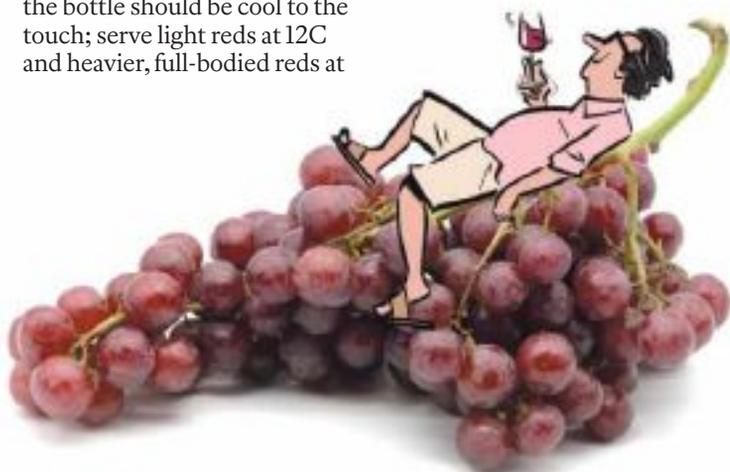
Greece. Despite its ancient winemaking history, by the mid-Nineties its wines were a laughing stock. Not any more. It's now making some of the most elegant and delicate wines in Europe, very much in the white burgundy style — look out for assyrtiko as an alternative to chablis. There are some good reds too. Although not a country, the island of Tasmania is also worth a look for fine wine lovers. Surrounded by the sea, its cool climate is ideally suited to sparkling wine but there are also some very interesting chardonnays, rieslings and pinot noirs.

And which countries and grapes are the best value?

In terms of value, Portugal and South Africa are the two most exciting wine-producing countries in the world right now. I think South Africa just edges it as they have value at all price points, from £5 up to £50. It may not be the cheapest, but the most underappreciated and best-value grape variety is riesling. Nothing can match its fruity acidity, its ability to age and reflect the character of the site from where it is grown.

I've seen Sideways. Should I really not be drinking merlot? Are there any other grapes that are beyond the pale?

Ignore Miles — you should be drinking merlot. At its best, it has intense red fruit aromas and a medium-weight structure. It also has far more culinary versatility than other grapes such as cabernet sauvignon. Oh, and Pétrus in Bordeaux is 100 per cent merlot; the 2005 will set you back a mere £3,000 a bottle. Sorry Miles, you're not having any. I think there might be a class in every wine school that teaches people to detest ubiquitous and popular grape varieties such as chardonnay, sauvignon blanc, merlot, cabernet sauvignon and pinot grigio. Ignore the haters — it's OK to like everything. I haven't yet found a grape variety I don't like.



Which wine goes best with a curry?

If it's really spicy, stick with chilled lager but if it's a mild, meaty curry I favour a soft, fruity, supple red like a shiraz or merlot. For any other curries, think light, aromatic whites: off-dry riesling, pinot gris, viognier. The sweetness of the wine reacts well with the heat of the dish, while the acidity pairs with the light texture.

And to bring to a barbecue?

If it's a meat feast then opt for a bold, fruity and opaque red that can stand up to the smoky flavours of the grill. You don't need to be original: fish out your best Argentinian malbec. If meat isn't your thing, go for a dry, uncomplicated rosé from the Languedoc. For super-posh barbecues take an English sparkling rosé, which has more fruit and instant appeal.

Screwtop or cork? Does that matter any more?

For the vast majority of young, lively, fruity wines, screwcaps are ideal. There's no need to search for a corkscrew and the wine retains its fresh fruit flavours. But I still like a cork, especially for wines that can age in the bottle for decades. Can they live side by side? Of course they can. It's perfectly acceptable to see the benefits of both.

What should champagne be served in?

Anything but flutes, which do nothing except funnel a jet stream of carbon dioxide into your nose. Serve your bubbles in a wide-rimmed tulip-shaped glass and take an air rifle to the flutes.

Is English sparkling better than champagne now?

As good as. We now have a handful of estates that are making world-class sparkling wine, in some cases on a par with champagne, thanks in part to perfectly suited conditions and a warming climate. Keep an eye out for Nyetimber, Ridgeview, Camel Valley, Breaky Bottom, Gusbourne, Harrow & Hope, Langham, Roebuck and Wiston.

If I take a nice bottle to a party, I want to drink some of it. What's the etiquette?

I would take two bottles — one (unopened) that I would offer as a gift, and the special bottle (opened) with the cork jammed back in. Explain that you just needed to taste it to make sure it wasn't corked, as others in the case have sadly succumbed to cork taint. I won't tell anyone.

Should you cook with good wine, or will any bottle do?

One friend returned a rather pricey bottle of corked bordeaux in a restaurant and sheepishly suggested to the waiter that perhaps the chef could use it in his sauce. A few moments later the waiter reappeared with a message: "Chef says, if I use that wine in the sauce I will get

corked sauce." I always cook with the leftovers of good wine — it has far more flavour.

Can you ever judge a wine by its label?

Never. There is an old truism that is worth revisiting when faced with an array of expensive and famous bottles or elaborate, graphic-designed hipster labels: "We are only interested in what

we taste inside the bottle rather than the label outside of it, however impressive it may be." Ignore the frog on a bike smoking a cigar and focus on the juice in the bottle.

If I wanted to spend £50 on one special bottle, what would you recommend?

Head to the world's largest fine wine region, Bordeaux. There is a château surrounded by much more famous and expensive estates that sells beautiful wine for about £50 a bottle. It's called Château Grand-Puy-Lacoste and its wine offers the hedonistic taste of blackcurrant, cedar wood and the intensity that is characteristic of traditional bordeaux. And guess what? It's a fraction of the price of its more famous neighbours, which include Latour and Lafite Rothschild. I would go for a mature year such as 2008. It's the insider's choice — although, after this is published, perhaps not any more ■ **Still have a burning wine question for Will Lyons? Email magazine@sunday-times.co.uk or comment online**



If you want to drink the nice wine you've brought to a party, open it first and stuff the cork back in


THE SUNDAY TIMES
Wine Club

30% off at The Sunday Times Club

Make use of your new-found knowledge with The Sunday Times Wine Club, which is offering 30 per cent off orders and free delivery for new customers. Visit sundaytimeswineclub.co.uk and use the offer code 30OFF at checkout. Terms and conditions apply. See website for details



Maximise your property portfolio's potential!

The North West is expected to deliver the highest 5-year growth at 28.8%*.

Book in for a **FREE** portfolio review and gain access to new opportunities before they hit the market.



+44 (0) 330 822 1450

UK Buy to Lets - HMOs - Holiday Lets - STL

A precocious younger sister in my favourite bit of Edinburgh



ARDFERN EDINBURGH



Off to Leith, Edinburgh, for dinner — the neighbourhood where *Trainspotting* is set. Not usually an auspicious sign for a decent evening out. At least, not an evening out that includes dinner. But this area has gone up in the world since the Nineties. Now it's perhaps my favourite part of the city, home to all sorts of lovely pubs and fancy brunch places, as well as the Little Chartroom — a chic, buzzy place that is a classic in the locally sourced, modern European plates, minimalist decor genre that I find irresistible despite pretty much every restaurant in the UK doing this right now.

Joyfully, a few weeks ago the team opened a new restaurant — Ardfern. So I was there like a shot, hammering the address gleefully into Google Maps. But hang on, damn it. This street looks familiar — I've come to the Little Chartroom instead.

No, false alarm. It's next door, and basically identical. The difference is there if you squint: it's a bit less formal, a bit less fancy. But from the outside you'd be forgiven for not noticing Ardfern even existed, walking straight past to its famous older brother.

In fact, that seems to be exactly what people are doing. "We were quite busy for the first couple of days when we



opened, but it's been pretty quiet since," says our waitress, Ellen, as we look around at the empty tables. Hmm, yes. But Ardfern should be busy. And Ellen is a big reason why.

God, she was excellent. It's hard not to be excited if the waitress is so thrilled to be asked a question. "Would you help us choose a wine?" I said, and the reaction was as if we had offered to lend her our superyacht.

"I'm going to talk your ear off," she grinned, and then didn't, which is a blessing because there is indeed such a thing as too much wine chat. Instead we got a quick and passionate canter through the "exciting" and then "incredible" choices, ending up with a lovely peachy Davenport Horsmonden white from East Sussex.

With the food, we needed no such guidance. I'd have happily ordered everything. We took an earthy mushroom hash brown: crisp oblongs of potato with a dollop of creamy king oyster mushrooms and a scattering of truffled pecorino. Alongside, a mustard yellow kedgeree fritter. Picture some arancini, but arancini that would have any Sicilian throwing up their hands in confusion: the unmistakably Scottish taste of haddock permeating the rice. The whole thing retains a pleasing edge of hangover cure in fancy form.

Both plates are blissful: crunchy and sticky, small enough to be a delicate taste of decadence rather than a dousing in oil. "The Scots will deep-fry everything," say those who don't know Scottish food. Perhaps here we have proof that they should.

Up next, a little plate of cured sea trout and fennel — bright and pretty in taste and looks — plus a fregola and courgette salad covered with a truly extraordinary amount of Landana Rosso: a nutty, hard goat's cheese. So many shavings of the stuff you couldn't make out the salad, which again feels like something rude a philistine might say about Scottish cooking. The tourist board should put it on a poster.

To finish, a chocolate and peanut-butter cookie tart, the only dessert on the dinner menu apart from an affogato, which feels delightfully chic. I like a short menu. It implies confidence, perhaps even arrogance. "We know what's good for you," it seems to say. At Ardfern, they definitely do ■ **Dinner for two with wine, £126**

HEALTH

My wincingly honest guide to prostate cancer

How the Radio 4 comedian *Jon Holmes* got his all-clear — while keeping a sense of humour

A good friend presented me with a badge. “Here,” she said, pinning it to my shirt. “Now you’re one of us.” Some years ago she’d been diagnosed with — and recovered from — breast cancer and now, as my new badge proclaimed, I had joined “the club that no one wants to be a part of”.

One in two of us will get cancer, but I’d never given that much thought because cancer is, of course, what happens to other people — until I was on a Zoom call with an oncologist in March 2023.

I was diagnosed with stage 2 prostate cancer but I can’t remember much about it because I was too busy thinking “I’ve got cancer” while a man outlined options and held up helpful leaflets. I went with the leaflet marked “surgery”, but others may be offered chemotherapy, radiotherapy and other treatments, depending on their diagnosis and postcode. Just over a year on I am cancer-free. And almost inevitably I’ve created a BBC podcast series, *Jon Holmes Says the C-Word*, in which I talk to other men, including Stephen Fry, about their experiences with all kinds of cancer.

It has been a hell of a learning curve. This is what I learnt.

1 You’ll feel a bit of a prick

First, literally, as there’s a lot of needlework — and not the hobby kind. Blood tests, which I’m still having regularly, anaesthetics, cannulas and, most unpleasantly, 23 needles fired from a hydraulic gun up through my perineum, to take

samples of living tissue from my prostate during the biopsy. As Fry — who was treated for prostate cancer in 2018 — puts it in the podcast, the procedure is “a nasty, nippy little thing”, and was the most uncomfortable half-hour of my life, not least because I was naked from the waist down, tackle taped out of the way, legs in stirrups while — worst of all — Heart FM played on the radio. Just one of many undignified occasions where I metaphorically felt a bit of a prick. And then we’re back to “literally” again, because it also transpires...

Stephen Fry called the biopsy a “nippy thing”. It was the most uncomfortable half-hour of my life



Holmes recuperating in hospital after his prostatectomy last year

2 One’s prostate has quite a lot to do with one’s penis

In all honesty, until medically qualified people started fiddling with mine, I didn’t really know where the prostate was, let alone what one does. In a nutshell (and it is approximately walnut-sized), it produces the fluid that sperm travels in and

then helps to expel the resulting semen during sex. If it’s removed, it’s goodbye to ejaculation and hello to dry orgasms. Not only that, but the nerves that control your erections are attached to the prostate, as my surgeon Ben put it, “like pith on an orange”. With luck, the surgeon will perform a “nerve-sparing” operation that may eventually allow them to heal. The chances of getting a decent erection again can be helped by penis pumps, medication and self-administered injections into the hapless fellow.

3 Catheters

Post-surgery, I woke to discover a bright green pipe inserted into my man-pipe, with the other end connected to a bag. It was there for two weeks and at first it was uncomfortable and inconvenient, but after a while it was uncomfortable and useful because I didn’t have to get up to go to the toilet at night: the bag fills as you sleep. That said, if you move without careful choreography, there will be a sharp tug that’ll make your eyes water. Removal is no fun either.

4 Incontinence can be an expensive business

The prostate sits below the bladder, which means that, to get it out, all manner of tubes are cut, tied and reconnected. Also, the bladder is sewn into the gap where the prostate once

was. The result is incontinence. Pelvic-floor exercises are key (there’s an exercise app called Squeezy Men). Again, if you’re lucky, the situation will be temporary, but not before you’ve spent a fortune on Tena pads (£40 a pack in some places!) and wondered what to do with them in pub toilets, where you’re unlikely to find a sanitary bin.

5 Teachers and civil servants

“We recommend around three months’ recovery,” Ben the surgeon said early on. Well, this was awkward, because I had planned to take precisely one day off. “I get it,” he said. “You’re self-employed. I performed a prostatectomy on a farmer recently and he was back on his tractor the next day. The only people that take the full 12 weeks are teachers and civil servants.”

6 Work

It’s possible to work from your hospital bed just two and a half hours after your operation, providing, a) like me, you don’t have a proper job, and b) you’re using a laptop not a tractor. And that’s largely thanks to...

7 Robots

My five and a half hour operation was done using the da Vinci surgical system, which involves VR goggles and a five-armed robot. It’s available on the NHS, depending on the hospital, and results in faster recovery. I can’t change a washer on a tap and here surgeons are altering your plumbing with a robot. It truly is the rise of the machines. And speaking of rising...

8 The human body is a marvel

Of all the things I’ve learnt, the fact you can orgasm without an



erection was the most WTF. Post-op, one is encouraged to, shall we say, “massage” oneself to help recovery — and who was I to argue? And while erections might initially be some way off, it turns out you can have an orgasm without one. Surprised and delighted, I consulted my surgeon. “Ah yes,” he said. “That’s because the nerves that control orgasms are separate from those that control

erections, and we haven’t touched those.” Who knew?

9 And talk about it!

For me, the hardest part was telling people. After the initial shock, friends and family were incredibly supportive: a mix of sympathy from female friends (although very little regarding pelvic-floor exercises from those who’ve had children) and knob jokes from male ones

(once we’d established over a pint that I wasn’t going to die). My daughters, ten and thirteen at the time, took it all in their stride and rolled their eyes every time I said, “Can you pick those towels up off the floor, because I’ve got cancer.”

The main takeaway was that talking about it all is crucial, and that’s why I decided to do the podcast. You also need to retain a sense of humour. Shine a light

into the dark corners by noting the absurd things that happen throughout, such as when a hospital plumber cheerfully fixed the sink in my room and used my Tena pads to mop up the leak: £40 a pack! I wish I’d hidden them. Lesson learnt ■

Jon Holmes Says the C-Word is on BBC Radio 4 on Tuesday at 11pm, with episodes released weekly on BBC Sounds



DRIVING • Nick Rufford

It's still sensible and slightly annoying — and we'll buy loads



REVIEW NISSAN QASHQAI

Wherever you go on Britain's roads there's a good chance you'll bump into a Nissan Qashqai — figuratively, at least. So ubiquitous is this family-friendly soft-roader, you're never more than 500m from one on average. It's a success story for British manufacturing:

made in Sunderland and selling by the shipload while holding off strong competition from Kia, Skoda and Peugeot. Since its launch in 2007 it has spawned so many lookalikes that a new category — the crossover — was eventually created for the tall hatchbacks that now account for half of all family cars sold in the UK. In fact the Qashqai and its imitators have stolen the middle ground from the likes of the VW Golf, which was once the affordable car for every occasion. More than any other vehicle, detractors blame the Qashqai for the planetwide plague of SUVs clogging city streets and adding to urban pollution, though it occupies no more road space than a Ford Focus.

The revamped model — Nissan calls it a new Qashqai

but it's really a collection of tweaks — features a panoply of dashboard gadgets as well as a remodelled exterior to give it a sharper look. It has four 360-degree cameras that provide a drone-style view to help with tight parking or width restrictors and a computer simulation that shows the position of the front wheels, useful for serious off-roading but a little superfluous on a car that will never stray far from asphalt. The restyled hexagonal grille is plated in scales inspired by samurai armour and inside there's lots of au courant piano black and Alcantara faux suede. Oh yes, and rear lights that are flashier — literally. Nissan has added more visible red LEDs that won't sear your eyeballs.

Underneath, the latest Qashqai is very similar to the

previous generation, with the same choice of engines and transmissions. Gone are the smoky diesel engines of the first-generation Qashqais. The choice is now between a mild hybrid and an "e-power" set-up that uses a petrol engine as a generator to drive a battery/electric motor combo. Our favourite is also one of the cheapest — the mild hybrid, four-cylinder petrol. The starting price is a shade over £30,000 for a slightly feeble 138bhp and manual gearbox, but £32,455 buys you a more spirited version with an extra 20bhp plus an auto gearbox. The hybrid bit does little more than provide a small electrical shove to the engine under acceleration, but there's enough oomph overall to reach 62mph from standstill in 9.2 seconds

Even by crossover standards it's magnolia, but that's its strength. It just gets on and does the job



and cruise comfortably at motorway speeds.

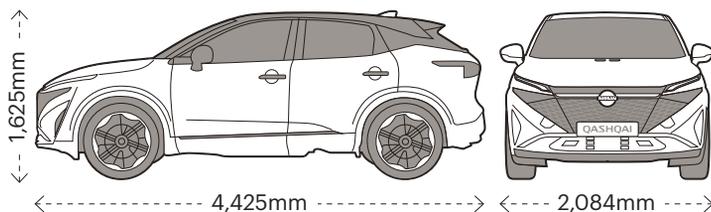
For fuel-sipping “e-power” technology, consisting of a 1.5-litre three-cylinder engine and a 187bhp electric motor, you'll have to stump up £36,600. The advantages are low emissions and electric car levels of torque and acceleration, plus the ability to drive as far as you normally could on a full tank of petrol. The drawbacks are that the petrol engine revs, sometimes noisily, even at low speeds or when it's stopped in traffic. And the set-up requires your car to lug around heavy extra batteries and magnets that

you don't really need. Even Nissan admits the technology won't survive the UK ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars in 2035.

There's a case to say that Nissan could have achieved a bigger sales boost by using the money it spent on the makeover to drop the price of the old Qashqai. But there's another reason for the revamp — the controversial GSR2 regulations. These EU rules ostensibly make cars safer by forcing manufacturers to warn drivers of hazards. The problem is the barrage of alerts is also distracting. Trying to make progress through city streets

The Ruffometer

Nissan Qashqai DiG-T 140 Mild Hybrid



Engine 1332cc, 4 cylinders, turbo, petrol, plus electric motor **Power** 138bhp @ 5500rpm **Torque** 240 lb ft @ 1650rpm **Acceleration** 0-62mph: 10.2sec **Top speed** 122mph **Fuel** 44.8mpg **CO₂** 142g/km **Weight** 1,347kg **Price** £30,135 **Release date** On sale now

Nick's rating ★★★★★

becomes a bongathon of speed warnings and other intrusions. The car tugs at the wheel unnecessarily when you cut the corner of a bus lane, thinks you're nodding off when all you're doing is turning your head to check a blind spot and has a conniption when you pass a parked car and it wrongly anticipates a collision. Many of these systems can't be turned off under EU strictures that British manufacturers — Nissan included — have signed up to. Some pundits have noted the irony that Sunderland, where the Qashqai is made, is the region that voted decisively to “take back control” in the 2016 Brexit referendum.

Yet, for all its flaws, the Qashqai has democratised motoring by bringing an affordable, practical car to the masses. Nissan's design team — based not in Japan but at a restored concrete building in Paddington Basin in London — has been mindful to preserve the features that made it Britain's bestselling car in 2022 and has kept it comfortably in the top five since. The wide-opening rear passenger doors ensure parents can strap toddlers into their seats without incurring back injuries. Its elevated driving position helps nervous drivers feel less intimidated by vans and lorries, especially on motorways. Prams and dogs can be bundled in the back and the high tailgate makes it easy to reach in with the shopping.

It may be the target of SUV jibes, but it's actually a faux-by-four, so described because three quarters of all those sold are actually two-wheel drive with miles per gallon in the 40s — hardly gas-guzzling monsters. If there's a criticism, it's that it is brilliantly insipid. The car is unlikely to set your pulse racing when you see it on your driveway or when you're behind the wheel. Even by crossover standards it's magnolia, but that's its strength. It just gets on and does the job — Mack'em proud, as they say in Sunderland.

One thing: if you already own one you may want to hang on to it. You'll save yourself the cost of upgrading and won't have to put up with the bongs ■

COLLECTORS' CLASSICS

Mercedes-Benz S-class 126



The S-class 126 wafted smoothly into showrooms in 1980, ushering in an era of upward mobility, yuppies and new romantics. The luxurious German saloon was all about success and, thanks to the new politics of privatisation and the financial “Big Bang”, there was more of it about. Anyone still got a Filofax? The S-class was the first mainstream production car to bring with it a host of new safety features including antilock brakes and driver airbag.

At £15,875 it remained beyond the reach of most — unless you'd invested big in British Gas shares after Margaret Thatcher's “Tell Sid” ad campaign in 1986 and doubled your money.

Yet it was not a symbol of wealth in the style of a Rolls-Royce or a Maybach. It was designed to make the lives of its owners more agreeable by offering the quietest, most relaxing and discreet way of getting from home to office, or ski lodge to beach house. In doing that job of work it was pretty well unsurpassed.

To stay at the forefront of innovation, many owners tended to sell on while the car was in good condition — or even in its prime, given that at a few hundred thousand miles an S-class is barely run in. A great opportunity for second-hand buyers, then. An S500 V8 with only 18,000 miles on the clock can be yours for under £15,000. A chauffeur costs extra ■

By Nick Rufford



FREE CONSULTATION PACKAGE

includes
CONSULTATION,
FLIGHTS AND
ACCOMMODATION

OUR PRICES
ARE TYPICALLY
70% LOWER
THAN UK PRICES

GET YOUR BEST SMILE IN 2024

KREATIV DENTAL HAS OFFERED UNRIVALLED WORLD CLASS DENTAL TREATMENT IN BUDAPEST SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ITS FIRST CLINIC IN 1996

- ✓ Our focus is always on quality and customer satisfaction
- ✓ We invest constantly in the latest technologies
- ✓ We offer the most extensive guarantee available from any dental clinic in Europe
- ✓ Highly advanced dental surgery and on-site laboratory
- ✓ Our **Free Consultation Package** offers amazing value to our patients

DENTAL CLINIC OF THE YEAR

*See website for details

20 YEARS TREATING UK AND INTERNATIONAL PATIENTS

Holder of two 'BEST IN EUROPE' awards 80,000 plus satisfied patients



T. 0203 6530 331

www.kreativdentalclinic.co.uk



Summer Sale Now On

Alice 3 seater sofa WAS £2200 NOW £1559

**SPECIAL SUNDAY TIMES
MAGAZINE PRICE £1404**



sofasofa

www.sofasofa.co.uk
01495 244226

USE
CODE:
STM147

Refresh your kitchen with a simple but stunning makeover



Joe's Doors can simply transform your kitchen by replacing the doors, panels and trims.

With a huge range of kitchen styles to choose from, this cost effective, fuss free service, can be completed in under two days and best of all you don't even need to empty the cupboards!

Call now to take advantage of a **free survey, free quote** and **free design** service....with no pressure selling.



- ✓ No need to empty cupboards
- ✓ No mess, no fuss
- ✓ Most fitted in a day
- ✓ Made to measure



FREE SINK
SUMMER ONLY OFFER
WORTH OVER £229*

Present this voucher to our Home Consultant on the day of your Quartzize survey.

AS SEEN ON TV • PROUDLY MADE IN THE UK



Transform your worktops with Quartzize stone overlays

Why replace your worktops when this unique quartz overlay simply fits over your existing surface. Here are some of the amazing benefits:

- **Timeless** - Looks clean and modern.
- **Hygienic** - A perfectly smooth surface.
- **Easy care** - Wipe with a neutral cleaner.
- **Durable** - Tough and scratch resistant.
- **Easily Installed** - Fitted in less than a day.



Just three simple steps to transform your existing kitchen:

- 1** We'll pop along and take some measurements...
- 2** You choose from our range of doors and worktops...
- 3** Our fitters will arrange a convenient time to come back and transform your kitchen.

JOE'S DOORS & OVERLAYS

0800 862 0322 • joesdoors.co.uk



FREE SURVEY
FREE DESIGN
FREE QUOTE
FULLY FITTED
NATIONWIDE

Lines Open: Mon - Fri: 8.30am - 8.00pm, Sat: 8.30am - 6.00pm, Sun: 9.00am - 5.00pm. Over 30 years experience. Family run business.

*Limited period promotional voucher. T and C's apply.

HOTTER®

Comfort never
looked so good

Metallic Multi
Leather

SAVE
£40

SWITCH

Step into cushioning thanks to a leather covered OrthoLite® foam insole along with a padded collar for feel-good comfort.

NOW £49



3 FITS



HALF SIZES



LEATHER

White/Pastel
Leather



Denim Navy
Multi Suede/
Leather



ORDER TODAY AND SAVE £40 with code **SWC40D**

Call 01695 79 79 79 Mon - Sun (24hrs) visit hotter.com

This offer entitles the customer to purchase selected colours of Switch at £49, a saving of £40 off RRP when code SWC40D is applied at checkout. Offer excludes Charcoal/Blue Multi colour, and any already discounted colours. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or promotion, and is subject to availability. A minimum spend of £30 is required to qualify for this promotion. Offer valid until 13th Aug 2024. We reserve the right to amend or withdraw this offer without notice or liability. For full T&C's, visit hotter.com/terms

Julius Bahn
OAK BUILDINGS



03444 171 400 | FREE BROCHURE & DESIGN SERVICE | JULIUSBAHN.CO.UK



“I only wish I'd bought my Stannah stairlift sooner”



With a stairlift from Stannah you can travel smoothly from one floor to another and continue to do all the things you want to do.

So if you or a loved one are finding the stairs a challenge, there's no need to struggle on, limiting how many times you use your stairs or worrying about having to move from the home you love. We'll do whatever it takes to keep you safe and independent at home.

Customers often tell us they wish they had their Stannah stairlift installed sooner when they realise what a big difference it has made to their life. Give us a call to find out how our stairlifts can make life easier for you too.

Put your trust in Stannah

- ✓ Large range of stairlifts for all types of staircases
- ✓ 30+ fabric choices, the widest in the industry
- ✓ Buy new or reconditioned models
- ✓ 14 day money back guarantee for complete peace of mind
- ✓ 2 year warranty and 2 free services on all new products
- ✓ Locally-based engineers always there for you 24/7
- ✓ Support from our UK based call centre 365 days a year
- ✓ British family-run company with 150+ years of lift expertise

Homelifts



Just like our stairlifts, our homelifts make life that little bit easier

- Choose from a range of designs and sizes to suit your needs
- Smooth, quiet and energy efficient
- No major structural work required

Call us today
0800 715 403
stannah.com

Stannah



FORD

DIESEL CAR OWNERS

YOU COULD CLAIM UP TO **£10,000**
IN COMPENSATION

BMW & VAUXHALL CLAIMS NOW RE-OPENED

Now more car manufacturers are being held to account over dieseldate. Is your manufacturer listed?

✓ **BMW**

✓ **CITROEN**

✓ **FORD**

✓ **JAGUAR**

✓ **LAND ROVER**

✓ **NISSAN**

✓ **PEUGEOT**

✓ **RENAULT**

✓ **VAUXHALL**



SCAN FOR INFO

In 2015, the DieselGate scandal sent shockwaves through the automotive industry, revealing the use of Diesel Cheat Devices to bypass emission regulations in both the United States and Europe. Volkswagen Audi Group (VAG) paid a substantial £193 million in May 2022 as compensation. To date, they've disbursed over €40 billion in settlements, all without any admission of guilt. Our legal partners are now checking vehicles

across 9 manufacturers and your vehicle could be eligible. If you have leased or owned a diesel vehicle from; BMW, Citroen, Ford, Jaguar, Land Rover, Nissan, Peugeot, Renault and Vauxhall, between September 2009 - 2018, you could be eligible for compensation.

To determine whether your vehicle was affected, simply input your registration into our Reg Checker.



DIESEL CLAIM
NO WIN, NO FEE COMPENSATION

www.check-my-vehicle-reg.co.uk

Check Any Vehicle | 100% No Win, No Fee | Get a rapid online decision

Our Emission deadline extended to **30th September, 2024**. Act now! Cars affected manufactured between 2009 - 2018.

Homelifts by pollock

Homelifts



AS SEEN
ON TV

THE LUXURY BRITISH HOME ELEVATOR

- Market leading technology
- Smallest lift on the market
- Quick and easy to install
- 12 month warranty
- Certified to the British Standard 5900:2012



Homelift specialists since 1983

Call
0800 472 5002
www.pollockhomelifts.co.uk



JAMES BARCLAY

Assessments & Valuations . Hand Cleaning . Repairs & Restoration . Uplift & Delivery

At James Barclay we have many years experience in preserving and restoring all types of handmade carpets and rugs. We recommend your Persian and Oriental carpets and rugs are cleaned every 5-7 years and repaired every 8-10 years. Our team of specialists will appraise your rugs and offer expert advice and guidance. From small prevention repairs to large scale restoration, we can advise you on all types of repair work.

Call us now on **0203 174 2427** for uplift and advice, we collect daily in London and weekly throughout England and Wales.

Head office: 47b Welbeck Street, Marylebone, London W1G 9XA
Workshop : 12 Oliver Park, Park Royal, London NW10 7JB
info@jamesbarclay.co.uk jamesbarclay.co.uk

ORANGERIES & GARDEN ROOMS THAT TRANSFORM YOUR HOME



David Salisbury

Request our brochure & complimentary design consultation

01278 764444 | dauidsalisbury.com



*You Could
Be Owed
Thousands!*

REVEALED

The Great British Car Finance Rip-off Which Could Reach **'£16 BILLION'** in Refunds.

Millions of British drivers stand on the brink of massive payouts which has been described as 'PPI scale'.

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) launched an investigation into claims of overpriced car finance.

It means the car finance scandal could reach over £16 billion.

The new enquiry centres on allegations that car dealers, incentivised by higher commissions, manipulated interest rates, potentially fleecing consumers by driving up costs on their vehicle loans for cars, vans, motorbikes, caravans and motorhomes.

The average
claim is
£5,318.25*

This controversial commission model, which was banned by the FCA in 2021, is said to have unjustly enriched dealers at the expense of millions of consumers, costing drivers an estimated £165 million annually.

It's been reported that nine in ten customers pay for new cars on finance in the UK, but people who bought second hand cars on finance agreements, either PCP or HP, can also claim.

One way to check for a car finance claim, and to **see if you could be owed £1,000s** is to contact The PCP Experts; find out in as little as 60 seconds.

The **PCP** Experts



FREE ELIGIBILITY CHECK HERE

Text
'TIMESPCP'
to **88 44 0**

Scan me with
your mobile
phone camera
for more
information



*This is our average claim value as of 29/05/2024.

NEED A LADDER? THEN YOU NEED A

HENCHMAN®

WITH OUR REENGINEERED LADDERS,
THE BEST JUST GOT BETTER.

FULLY ADJUSTABLE TRIPOD LADDER

Available in heights 5ft - 12ft
Prices start from just £299

Designed to keep you safe on uneven ground,
the Fully Adjustable includes even more
features than our original models:

- Secured with new pins for fast and ergonomic adjustment.
- Increased guardrail height allowing you to tuck in to work hands free.
- Extra strength due to the reengineered legs which are 15% stronger.
- Now up to 80% more adjustable.

**SPECIAL
OFFER!**

**FREE set of
Gardening
Gloves**

(WORTH £25)

Simply add to
order and apply
promo code
ST724B in basket



Platform rung
reduces risk
of slipping



**NEW hedge-proof
locking pin**

**3 adjustable
legs to tackle
uneven ground**

Model shown:
10ft Fully
Adjustable
Tripod Ladder



**Wide clawed
feet for grip on
soft ground**



**SEE FOR
YOURSELF!**

Scan here to
learn more about
our full range

 **INCLUDES FREE DELIVERY***

To order or for more information visit
www.henchman.co.uk
or call today on **03333 444 229**

*UK Mainland only



4.9



Based on over 3,500 reviews

A LIFE IN THE DAY

Adrian Newey

Departing Red Bull Formula 1 design chief, 65

Newey grew up in Stratford-upon-Avon and studied at Repton School in Derbyshire — in the year above Jeremy Clarkson — until he was expelled aged 16. He studied aeronautics at the University of Southampton, later working as a motorsport engineer. Designing Formula 1 cars for Williams, McLaren and Red Bull, he has won 12 constructors' and 13 drivers' championships. In May he said he was quitting Red Bull after 19 years. Married three times, Newey has four children. He and his wife, Mandy, a sports marketing manager, live in Berkshire.

It's that curiosity about engineering that gets me out of bed in the morning. I'm up around 6.30am. I have a lifelong passion for racing cars and how to make them faster, although girls and motorbikes did cause a bit of a wobble in my teens.

I was always in trouble at Repton, either caught in the pub or with the music teacher's daughter. The final straw was after O-levels in 1975, when I organised a summer pop concert with the band Greenslade. We smuggled in gin by strapping bottles to our shins, hidden inside baggy trousers. Not surprisingly I got hammered.

When the roadie went off to the loo I crept into his booth and slid the sound controls up to the max. It later transpired the deafening noise damaged some ancient stained-glass windows, so my parents were called in and I was asked to leave.

Jeremy Clarkson was a year below me at Repton. We didn't mix but nowadays we're good



friends. He still remembers the noisy go-kart I built and tested in the school grounds. I had no idea about engineering back then. I doubt Jeremy would have dreamt he would eventually become a farmer either.

Breakfast is boring — granola, yoghurt and berries — then I set off to the Red Bull factory in Milton Keynes. I might drive a special car from my own collection, like the Lamborghini Miura, or the Aston Martin Valkyrie, which I helped design.

I resigned from the Red Bull F1 team in May but kept the same office, although now I'm working on an F1-inspired hypercar for the company that anyone can buy. The RB17 is a unique challenge: it's designed

for drivers from those with a low level of experience right up to somebody used to a racetrack. Just 50 are being built — I've already ordered mine.

I still eat lunch in the canteen with Christian Horner, the team principal of Red Bull F1. Pasta in a creamy mushroom sauce is a favourite. It certainly feels more relaxed now I've stepped away from motorsport. After lunch I work at my drawing board. I've always designed with a pen and paper rather than a computer.

It wasn't a big surprise when other teams showed an interest after I announced I was leaving, but I won't make a quick decision about my future. I need a break to work out if I want to have another go in F1. I also didn't want to risk going stale.

There are some drivers, like Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso, who I would have loved to work with, but so far it has not been the right place or time in terms of us coming together. I got on extremely well with Nigel Mansell at Williams, even though he had a Marmite character, and Max Verstappen, who was a tremendous pleasure to work with at Red Bull.

I don't know what my future holds, but instead of dashing around the world to grand prix races this summer, I'll be able to see my family. In June Mandy and I took our two Bernard doodles, Yogi and Benji, on a drive along the south coast for a week, which was great fun.

It can be quite late by the time I return home. I might pick at what's left in the fridge and can just about rustle up a TV dinner. I used to make a decent cheesecake too. We relax watching television — a series like *Colin from Accounts*.

After decades working in Formula 1 I've become used to the nonstop pressure. If you're not winning you're trying to understand why, and if you are winning you are trying to stay there. That's a relentless schedule but motorsport has always been in my blood ■

Interview by Jeremy Taylor.
The RB17 will be at Goodwood Festival of Speed this weekend

WORDS OF WISDOM

Best advice I was given

If you can't make up your mind over two things, say no to both

Advice I'd give

Look before you leap — don't stumble blindly in

What I wish I'd known

Everything!

Peace and relaxation? Yesssss please.

Book Happy with TUI-owned hotels
designed just for adults.



Wake up
to a new view
every day



HOLIDAY LIKE
NEVER BEFORE



14 night Caribbean
Transatlantic holidays from

£1,099_{PP}

Based on Inside cabin cruise K522¹



P&O CRUISES

¹Early Saver price of £1,099 per person is based on two adults sharing the lowest grade of Inside cabin available on Arvia cruise K522, inclusive of economy class flight to London and transfer. Book by 2 September 2024. Prices may vary for other arrival airports, are subject to availability and may go up or down. All flights are subject to availability. For up-to-date prices and full T&Cs applicable to Early Saver prices, please visit www.pocruises.com.

