

# The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept **THE** definitive answer. This week: actor and comedian Angus Deayton

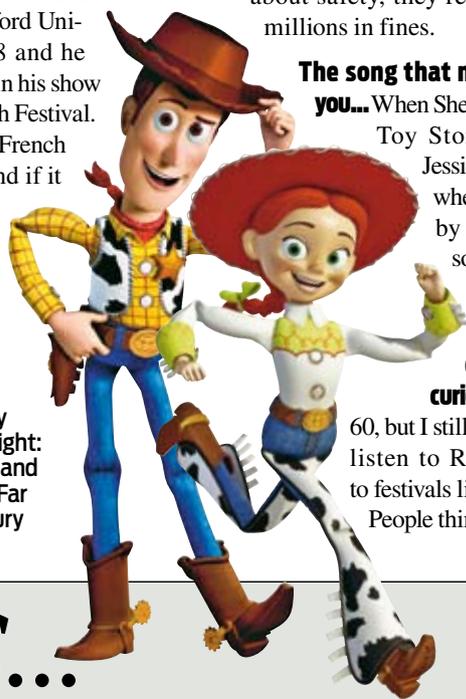
**The prized possession you value above all others...** George Best's table place card from a party hosted by David and Victoria Beckham in 2002. I'm a big Man Utd fan and I chatted to George there. He invited me to a party at his house and he wrote his address on the back of the card. The party never happened, then he died in 2005, but the card is framed and sits on my desk.

**The biggest regret you wish you could amend...** That I've never lived abroad. I always fancied the idea of being an ex-pat in Italy or France.

**The temptation you wish you could resist...** Watching an extra episode of a TV series late at night. Suddenly it's 2am and I think, 'Oh no, I've got to get up early for work.'

**The person who has influenced you most...** Richard Curtis. I met him at Oxford University in 1978 and he asked me to be in his show at the Edinburgh Festival. I was studying French and German and if it wasn't for him I'd probably never have got into show-business.

Right: Woody and Jessie in Toy Story 2. Above right: A Man Utd shirt and football boots. Far right: Glastonbury



**The book that holds an everlasting resonance...** I quite like 'chick lit', and I was engrossed by the characters in David Nicholls's novel One Day.

**The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint...** Duncan Edwards, one of the 'Busby Babes' who died in the Munich air disaster in 1958. Sir Bobby Charlton told me he was the best footballer he ever played with.

**The film you can watch time and time again...** I've seen This Is Spinal Tap six times. It's the perfect mockumentary.

**The pet hate that makes your hackles rise...** Speed cameras. They're not about safety, they're about making millions in fines.

**The song that means most to you...** When She Loved Me from Toy Story 2, sung by Jessie the cowgirl toy when she's dumped by her owner. It's so moving.

**The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity...** I may be 60, but I still love pop music, listen to Radio 1 and go to festivals like Glastonbury. People think it's odd.



**The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day...** I'd listen to the audience in the bar after one of my shows to hear what they *really* thought of it.

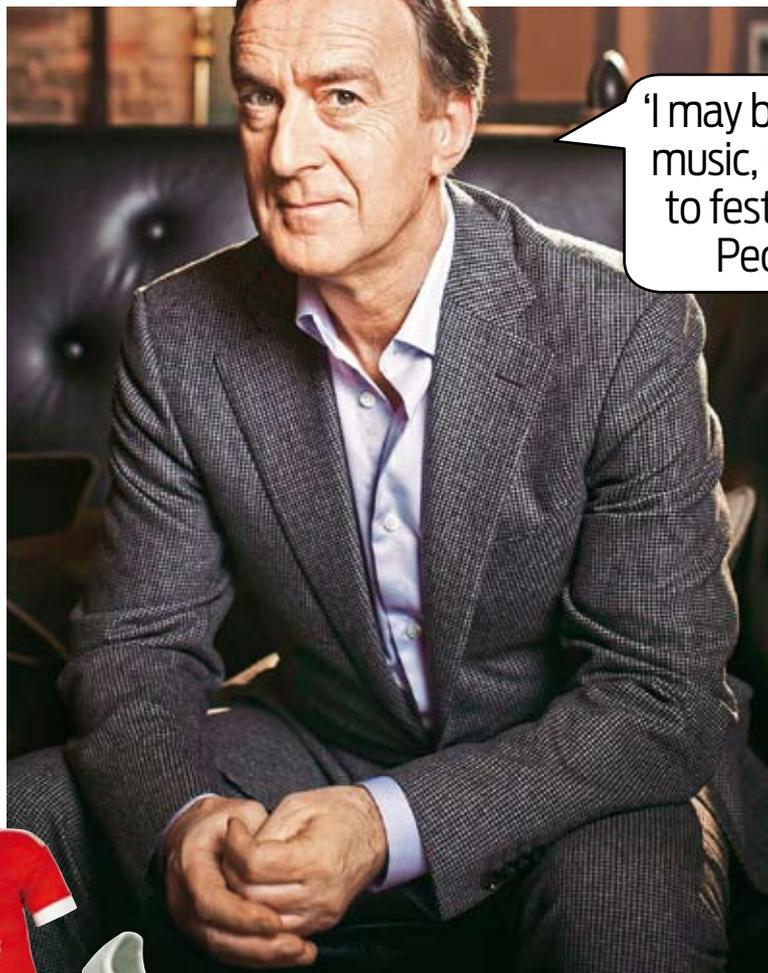
**The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child...** Be yourself. Everyone else is taken.

**The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again...** Each of the three dogs I've owned. The last one, Biba, a mongrel, died last November – I was devastated.

**The unending quest that drives you on...** To keep playing football until the day I die. I play every Tuesday night with a bunch of friends in north London. It's the highlight of my week.

**The poem that touches your soul...** The lyrics to What A Fool Believes by The Doobie Brothers are as good as any poem. They're about unrequited love.

**The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it...** I'd obliterate a chunk of Chelsea inhabited by the awful Sloane set, who try to emulate aristocracy and correct you for saying 'dinner' when they think it's 'supper'.



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Anderson; afterwards, as always, we'd all go for a curry. I'd end the day back at home in north London watching the Italian mafia TV drama Gomorrah.

**The happiest moment you will cherish forever...** Telling Isaac two years ago that he'd got a scholarship to his secondary school. I was a very proud dad.

**The saddest time that shook your world...** Losing my parents – Roger, who died in 2012 aged 94, and Susan, who died last year aged 92. They'd had long lives, but it was still very sad.

**The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you...** To score in Robbie Williams's Soccer Aid match. I've played twice, but no longer get the call!

**The philosophy that underpins your life...** Everything is for the best in this, the best of all possible worlds. Voltaire wrote it in Candide and it reflects my own optimistic approach to life.

**The order of service at your funeral...** I'd want my son to sing Tim Minchin's Prejudice – better known as 'Only a ginger can call another ginger, ginger'. Isaac is ginger and it's his party piece. Then my friend Philip Pope will sing Nessun Dorma and Richard Curtis will give a speech.

**The way you want to be remembered...** He could have played for Man Utd!

**The Plug...** Angus Deayton's sketch show Radio Active is on at The Pleasance during Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 3-28 August. Visit [edfringe.com](http://edfringe.com). ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

**The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase...** That my surname is pronounced 'Dayton', instead of the correct way, 'Deeton'. People still get it wrong all the time.

**The event that altered the course of your life and character...** When my sketch show KYTV was commissioned by BBC2 in 1988 after I'd been doing radio for nearly a decade. After that, everything really kicked off.

**The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...** I'd have pancakes with maple syrup for breakfast in New York, then play doubles on Wimbledon's Centre Court with my friends Annabel Croft, Andrew Castle and Alistair McGowan. Afterwards I'd take my son Isaac, 15, to Doyles in Sydney for lunch. I'd have oysters and John Dory, with white wine. We'd then ski in Courchevel, and I'd pop into Le Bel Air restaurant for an egg liqueur called Bombardino. In the evening I'd play football with our team the Snakepit Strollers, which includes David Baddiel and Clive



PS...

The Legend Of Tarzan with Alexander Skarsgard swings into cinemas on Friday. Alan Ayckbourn's How The Other Half Loves comes to London's Duke of York's Theatre on Thursday. And Carole King performs at London's Hyde Park tomorrow



**NEXT WEEK**

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