



'When I was nine I gave a girl a box of Milk Tray. She ate the lot then went off with the hardest lad in school'

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's actor Robson Green's turn

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint...

George Stephenson, creator of the Rocket steam train. I'd like to know how you go from being a cobbler and miner to an expert in steam locomotion. How does that happen!?

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... The most ordinary life can be extraordinary, not because of what you are given, but because of what you are able to achieve.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity...

Fireworks. For my 40th birthday [he's now 48] I was given a course in pyrotechnics. I even spent £25,000 on a display for New Year's Eve 2005. Boys love a bang!

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... Muhammad Ali's autograph, which my mum got for me when I was 12. She was a cleaner at the Holiday Inn in Newcastle and he came to stay. It was lost during a move.

The unending quest that drives you on...

To go into space. I tried to sell a TV series following me on Richard Branson's spaceship, but it was turned down – because Branson's doing one!

The poem that touches your soul... Wilfred Owen's Dulce Et Decorum Est because it sums up the horror of war.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... People often say to me, 'You're one lucky Geordie!' I say, 'The harder I work, the luckier I get.' It's no fluke to survive in this business for 30 years.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... My dad's death from an aneurism in 2009. He was also called Robson. I lost a sense of self for a while. Dad worked down the pit and taught me what real work is.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... Well, I've already got away with serious crimes against music – my three number ones with Jerome Flynn!

The song that means most to you... Bill Withers' Lovely Day lifts my spirits.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... In December 1973 when Malcolm MacDonald, the legend of Newcastle United, came to our school.

The saddest time that shook your world... When HMS Sheffield was sunk during the Falklands War in 1982. I remember sobbing at the footage.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To play Hotspur in a Royal Shakespeare Company production of Henry IV Part One.

The philosophy that underpins your life... There are wonderful folk in the world, meet as many as you can.

The order of service at your funeral... Just bury me in the Northumbrian hills while Kathryn Tickell plays The Cliffs Of Old Tynemouth on the pipes. Then I'd like a knees-up at Crusoe's with re-runs of Soldier Soldier on the TV.

The way you want to be remembered... He was alright, him.

The Plug... Robson's Extreme Fishing Challenge, Monday, 9pm, Channel 5. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

The prized possession you value above all others...

A family tree of my ancestors going back to a David Robson in 1851. He was a putter – the guy who pushed the carts of coal from a pit – in Rothbury, Northumberland. It hangs in my home in Northumberland and gives me a sense of place and value.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... In 2007 I was filming in South Shields and paid a security guard £10 to keep an eye on my black Range Rover Vogue. I came back and it was smashed up. I went into a rage and said, 'You'd have to work ten years to afford a car like that!' He said, 'That's not your car!' Mine was round the corner.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...

I'd spend all morning circling Earth in the space shuttle with the American astronaut Jim Lovell telling me stories about the Apollo 13 mission. We'd ditch in the North Sea and I'd meet my 12-year-old son Taylor [Robson separated from Taylor's mum Vanya two years ago] for haddock and chips at Robinson Crusoe's restaurant in Tynemouth. We'd find a pub and watch Newcastle beat Manchester United in the FA Cup Final, while discussing the meaning of life with Professor Brian Cox. Then Taylor and I would hang out at home watching Family Guy DVDs and looking at the stars through my telescope.

The temptation you wish you could resist... I'm addicted to Rowntree's Randoms and can eat five bags a day.

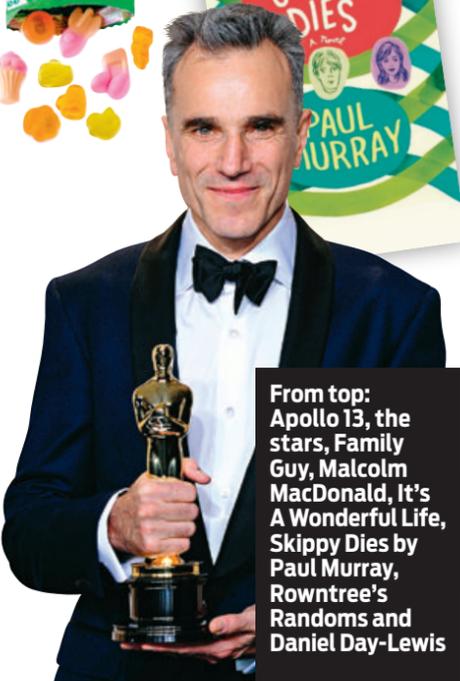
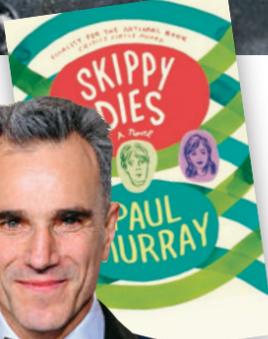
The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Skippy Dies by Paul Murray. It's about unrequited love and takes me back to when I was nine and gave a girl a box of Milk Tray. She ate the lot then went off with the hardest lad in school.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd watch Daniel Day-Lewis preparing for a role.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Reality TV shows like Big Brother. Those people have an attention-seeking disease.

The film you can watch time and time again... It's A Wonderful Life with Jimmy Stewart. I watch it every Christmas Eve and it always makes me cry.

The person who has influenced you most... Max Roberts, who was the artistic director of my youth theatre when I was 15. He gave me the encouragement to stick with acting and I've never forgotten it. We're still in touch.



From top: Apollo 13, the stars, Family Guy, Malcolm MacDonald, It's A Wonderful Life, Skippy Dies by Paul Murray, Rowntree's Randoms and Daniel Day-Lewis

PS...

James McAvoy leads the cast in Danny Boyle's new thriller Trance – in cinemas from Wednesday. Neil Pearson stars in Noises Off, starting a national tour at Bath's Theatre Royal this week. And Eric Clapton's new album – called Old Sock – is out on Monday



NEXT WEEK

● Jenna-Louise Coleman on romancing a Time Lord ● Behind the scenes on The Syndicate with Alison Steadman ● Jamie Oliver's quick, tasty and unique sweet snacks ● PLUS Britain's most detailed TV listings guide

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