

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilish questions – and only accept **THE** definitive answer. This week: Good Morning Britain host Ben Shephard



'People don't expect it of me, but I love classical music. I played the piano and clarinet in orchestras in my teens'

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... That I didn't propose to my wife Annie sooner – we'd been together nine years. Marriage gave me calmness.

The temptation you wish you could resist... That extra glass of wine at the end of a boozy night. It's the one that really hurts in the morning.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... The Tao Of Pooh. It uses the characters from Winnie The Pooh to explain Taoist philosophy. The simplicity is magical.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... I get impatient with people who take life too seriously.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd follow political leaders to hear what they're *really* planning.

The film you can watch time and time again... The Sting with Paul Newman and Robert Redford. The chemistry between those two is electrifying.

Right: Bobby Moore with the World Cup. Above right: A Bremont MBI watch. Far right: Sydney harbour

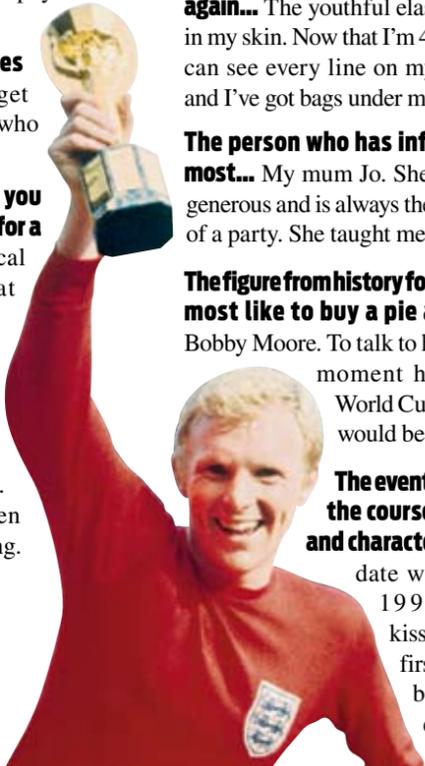
The prized possession you value above all others... A Bremont MBI watch. You can only get one if you've been ejected from a plane in a Martin-Baker ejection seat. My mate is an RAF fighter pilot and he and his passenger had to eject from a Tornado. The passenger didn't want his watch so I bought it. It's unique.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... The youthful elasticity in my skin. Now that I'm 40 you can see every line on my face and I've got bags under my eyes.

The person who has influenced you most... My mum Jo. She's incredibly generous and is always the life and soul of a party. She taught me so much.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Bobby Moore. To talk to him about the moment he lifted the World Cup at Wembley would be amazing.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... My first date with Annie in 1995 when I kissed her for the first time. We've been together ever since.



The unending quest that drives you on... To live by a beach, so I can kite surf every day.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Playing classical music. It's not exactly unusual, but I don't think people expect it of me. I got a scholarship when I was 12 for piano and clarinet. I played in orchestras and bands throughout my teens but stopped in my 20s. I'm coming back to it now because my kids are learning piano.

The poem that touches your soul... I love Jerusalem by William Blake as a hymn. I'm very patriotic.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... My son Sam passed this on to me after he came back from nursery with a grazed knee. He said, 'The most important thing about falling over is learning to pick yourself up!'

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm short! People meet me and always say, 'You're much taller than I expected.' I'm 5ft 10½. The half's *very* important!

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd do an ingenious con against bad people to right an injustice, just like in The Sting.

The song that means most to you... Górecki by a band called Lamb. A friend introduced Annie and I to it not long after we got together and it always reminds me of our early days together.

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

I'd wake up in Sydney with Annie and our boys – Sam, nine, and Jack, eight – and have a fry-up for breakfast at a cafe by the harbour. Then we'd hang out with my godmother Auntie Chris and my cousins who live there. After that, I'd go to Queenstown in New Zealand for a few hours of extreme sports, such as bungee jumping and river surfing. I'd stay there for lunch and have roast lamb with a decent bottle of red wine. In the afternoon, Annie and I would check into Burgh Island Hotel in Devon where we got married in 2004. We'd have a few whisky sour cocktails in Gary's bar at sundown. Guests usually dress up for dinner, so I'd be

in black tie and Annie would wear a 20s dress. In the evening, all my family and friends would gather at the Golden Lion pub in Port Isaac, Cornwall, where my parents live. We'd have fish and chips and too many pints of Doom Bar bitter. We'd end the night staggering up the hill to Mum and Dad's for a nightcap before crashing out.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Watching West Ham win 2-1 against Blackpool at Wembley in 2012 in the play-off final to get into the Premier League.

The saddest time that shook your world... When our Jack Russell Daisy disappeared when I was 13. She went off hunting rabbits in Epping Forest and never returned.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To hit the winning shot in the Ryder Cup.

The philosophy that underpins your life... There's always tomorrow to sleep, so grab every opportunity now.

The order of service at your funeral... I'd have a church service with hymns. There'd be a game of football followed by a big party. Annie's reserved two plots for us at a church near our home in London. It's a bit macabre – but at least I know where I'm going to end up!

The way you want to be remembered... He brought out the best in people.

The Plug... Ben Shephard presents the new gameshow Ninja Warrior starting tonight on ITV at 8.30pm. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



PHOTOGRAPHS: IAN DERRY/CHILLI MEDIA, GETTY, ALAMY, REX

PS...

Kate Winslet is the gardener hired to create the gardens at Versailles in *A Little Chaos*, in cinemas from Friday. Damian Lewis stars in David Mamet's *American Buffalo* at London's Wyndham's Theatre from Thursday. And Paul Simon: *The Ultimate Collection* is out Monday



NEXT WEEK

- MasterChef's John and Gregg on 11 years of madness and mishaps
- The fascinating story behind the UK's own Jurassic Park
- Monty Don on how to grow asparagus
- Britain's best TV listings