



MY HAVEN – MICHAEL DOBBS

The House Of Cards author and Tory peer, 67, in his study at the family home in Wiltshire

1 ONE FOR THE WALL
We've lived in our three-bedroom Georgian house for 12 years and this is my den – no one's allowed in without a prior appointment! It's full of my things, like these framed fragments of the Berlin Wall. I lived there for four months in 1968 when I was 19 because I was in love with a German girl. I was living in the West with a family from the East and I was able to get day visas to the other side, so I delivered messages for them and brought things back. A friend sent me these pieces after the Wall came down.

2 BEST BOYS
This bear represents my family, who are everything to me. I have four boys – Will, 28, and Mike, 26, from my first marriage – and my second wife Rachel's boys, Alex, 20, and Harry, 18. The bear belonged to Mike, who I stupidly named after me and thereby caused years of confusion! It reminds me of all the wonderful years of chaos and the joys of fatherhood. Harry will be off to university soon and the last to leave home, so things are a lot quieter now. I feel blessed to have such great kids.

3 SUPER MUM
My mother Eileen was a hairdresser from the age of 14 and these are her scissors. They're the only item of hers I have. She died from ovarian cancer when she was 50 and I was 26, which is the biggest sadness of my life. She was a marvellous woman who did everything possible to raise her four kids in poor circumstances. Whatever the Dobbs family is today, we owe to her. The bottle opener belonged to my father Eric and the cribbage board was my grandfather Theodore's. He used to take it to the pub.

4 MAGGIE AND ME
This letter from Margaret Thatcher is one of the first she wrote as Prime Minister. It's dated 5 May, two days after she won the 1979 election. I'd worked in her inner team since she became party leader in 1975 and she was thanking me for my support. I was the first person to tell her she'd won on election night, but we had a huge falling out a week before the 1987 election and I was sacked. It was a painful parting, but I didn't know then that it would be the making of me!

5 WALK OF LIFE
I used these boots for my charity walk last year to raise money for my neighbour Jack Fishwick, 27, who broke his neck catastrophically playing rugby in 2014. He's bravely rebuilding his life, but needs constant support. I walked for 180 miles from Stonehenge to Hertford in eight days and raised £40,000, which was split between Jack and the Rugby Football Union's Injured Players Foundation. It was so humbling to see how generous people were. I plan to do other walks, but I haven't told my wife yet!

6 ON THE CARDS
This first edition of House Of Cards from 1989 is a constant reminder of how that book completely transformed my life. I started writing it in a fit of exasperation on holiday after my fall-out with Margaret. It was like a form of therapy. It was a bestseller and has since been published in more than 30 languages. Now it's having an amazing second life with Kevin Spacey in the US TV series. I'm an executive producer on that, and it's been the happiest experience of my professional life.

As told to Rob McGibbon. Support Jack Fishwick and others in his position by donating to the RFU Injured Players Foundation at rfuipf.org.uk.

INSIDE

**HEADER
HEADER**

Some words in here for this blurb about a show in the magazine. Some words in here for this blurb about a show in the magazine.

PAGE XX

**HEADER
HEADER**

Some words in here for this blurb about a show in the magazine. Some words in here for this blurb about a show in the magazine.

PAGE XX

**HEADER
HEADER**

Some words in here for this blurb about a show in the magazine. Some words in here for this blurb about a show in the magazine.

PAGE XX

**HEADER
HEADER**

Some words in here for this blurb about a show in the magazine.

PAGE XX

FRANK WORDS On this day in 1947 the first version of Anne Frank's diary, *Het Achterhuis*, was published in Holland