We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions — and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: TV scientist Lord Robert Winston

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Think the best of every one and you’ll get the best out of them.

The uniquely interesting that engages your curiosity... I have been into building Gauge One-sized model steam engines for 30 years. They go around my garden on a 45mm track.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... I don’t become too attached to things. If I lose something, I simply move on.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... Not keeping in touch with old friends and nurturing those human contacts. I miss not knowing what they are doing with their lives.

The poem that touches your soul... To His Coy Mistress by Andrew Marvell. It is a beautiful poem about love and the brevity of human life.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... I don’t know what misapprehensions there are of me. People are nice and I don’t get negative reactions. Maybe they think I am nicer than I really am, but I wouldn’t want to erase that!

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Marrying my wife Lira in 1973.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I’d shoot Sepp Blatter, preferably painfully, with several shots. It is shocking how he has managed FIFA and brought a very important game into disrepute.

The song that means most to you... Come In Que’s ‘Ora Bruna from Verdi’s opera Simon Boccanegra. It is Verdi at his absolute refined best. It is a wistful, evocative song that captures the spectacular light of Venice.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Leaving St Paul’s School in London when I was 18. I enjoyed it there but leaving was an extraordinarily interesting moment. I suddenly felt grown up and, above all, free.

The saddest time that shook your world... My father’s death when I was nine in 1949. He was a mathematician. He played the violin, was a championship chess player and was larger than life.

He died of a brain abscess at only 42, having lived a life that most would not achieve by 62.

The unfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To build a model steam engine that is big enough to pull me around the garden.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Value what you have and do not strive for things you cannot obtain. That is a sure way to unhappiness.

The order of service at your funeral... Jewish funerals are fairly unshowy affairs. I don’t really think about mine.

The way you want to be remembered... As somebody who valued humanity, children and our society.

The Plug... Lord Winston is at the Harrogate Summer Festival on 7 July, the first leg of his Clive Conway Productions UK tour. Visit www.harrogate-festival.org.uk.

As told to Rob McGibbon

PS... See Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts team up in Larry Crowne.

Book to see Yes, Prime Minister in London’s West End, with Richard McCabe starring as the PM. And for soulful sounds, get Beverley Knight’s new album, Soul UK, out Monday