



## 'IN THE SPOTLIGHT'

Each month we put a different person 'in the spotlight' and pose 12 wide-ranging questions to them. This month, we feature TV producer, David Parker.

**1. Tell us an interesting fact about yourself that not many people know.**

I left school when I was 16. I had just passed a few GCE's and thought I had done my bit at school. I got a job (or was found a job) in a railway drawing office in Crewe, my home town. I lasted six months and found the experience so awful (I could not draw to save my life) that I approached my old school head master and asked if I could return. He said yes and I went back to school, determined to stay out of work for as long as I could.

**2. What book made most impact on you as a child?**

I do remember reading Enid Blyton's 'Famous Five' series but the only thing I can recall about any of them was something that always puzzled me. Why did they always come home from school by train? I walked to school, why didn't they, why didn't everyone? The first book that had an impact on me was 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer'. I remember the freedom I thought Tom had. He was the boy I wanted to be, leading the life I wanted to lead.

**3. What is your favourite film, and why?**

The Graduate. I saw it when it was first released in early 1968. I was an undergraduate at the time and the film made a huge impression on me. We were a rebellious, cantankerous group and Dustin Hoffman seemed to embody the feelings we had at that time. I love folk music and the sound track by Simon and Garfunkel just added to the brilliance of the piece. It is timeless, and very, very funny.

**4. What are your main hobbies/interests, apart from reading, of course?**

Walking, tennis, cycling and talking with friends I grew up with.

**5. What would be the three things you would like to have if you were stranded on a desert island?**

No contest. An endless supply of leaf tea and the tea pot, china cup and milk to enjoy endless cups of the stuff. A combination of Assam, Ceylon and Darjeeling please.

**6. What would a look at your bookshelves tell us about you?**

That I am chaotic and messy. You would see Hilary Mantel sitting alongside a book about canal history, an anthology of poems written by a friend next to a couple of books about the history of World War Two and CP Snow's Strangers and Brothers (which I am half way through) dotted all over the place. It is not surprising that I can't find anything.



**7. If you could invite any three people, dead or alive, to a dinner party, who would they be, and why?**

My mother, father and brother. They all died within four years of each other. I miss them all terribly and I would love to bring them back together once more.

**8. What kind of music do you like, and is there one favourite soundtrack?**

I was 18 in 1966 and was lucky enough to see The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and an acoustic Bob Dylan. My early musical tastes were shaped by that period. The Bob Dylan concert at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester on May 7<sup>th</sup> 1965 was unforgettable. I still remember most of the songs but the one that made the greatest impression on me was 'The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll'. The deaths of George Zimmerman and more recently George Floyd and the 'Black Lives Matter' movement illustrate that this astonishing song resonates as much today as it did in the early 1960's.

**9. What are your favourite charities/good causes, and why?**

My brother died relatively young (65) of a heart attack and the British Heart Foundation does as much as any charity to tackle the still high death rates from heart disease. Locally, a friend of mine established the charity 91 Ways, to bring the 91 languages spoken in the city of Bristol together around food: preparing it, cooking it and sharing it.

**10. Who is the person who has influenced you most/you most admire?**

Can I have two? If so, my parents. They had, in different ways, the most profound influence on my life. I learned my politics from my mother and everything I understand about being a father I learned from my dad.

**11. What is your connection to Evesham?**

Apart from walks in the area and making television programmes that featured home movies shot in the Vale, my main connection to the town is the Festival.

**12. What would you list as your greatest achievement to date?**

Fathering and parenting three sons who (as far as I know) don't take drugs and who have grown up to be the sort of men I enjoy spending time with.