



CLUB HUNT 2010 – THE SOLUTION by Craig Jones

***** HUNT SOLVED – MATT EDWARDS & PAUL HARKIN, 25th JULY 2010 *****

I set out to try and create a hunt with a really obvious first step to grab your attention, followed by a number of small puzzles that would keep you hooked. Hopefully the majority of you spotted what needed to be done first quite quickly (you should have done... instructions to rip up the ransom note were even contained in the message text). All of the letters within the note can be rearranged into 27 different groups (plus the large orange word "ORDER"). Some of these groups were needed to solve the treasure hunt; others were deliberate red herrings with no purpose other than to mislead you.

ANAGRAMS

Four of the puzzles are simple anagrams. Group similar style letters together and then re-arrange them to form a word. (INTERPOSITION was a word I encountered for the first time while researching this hunt and thought it would be a sufficiently long anagram to hold you up for a short while!)



PICTURE PUZZLES

Five of the groups can be arranged to form a picture. COUNTY shows a blurred image of Derbyshire and TREASURE hides a blurred Middle England map from the Dan James book of the same name. Other images are the actor Michael YORK, the fashion designer Vivienne WESTWOOD (apologies for this little pun!) and a HERRING (which holds all the difficult letters I was left with at the end of the hunt!)



JIGSAW PUZZLES

Six of the groups can be pieced together like a simple jigsaw puzzle to form a word.



PUZZLES WITHIN PUZZLES

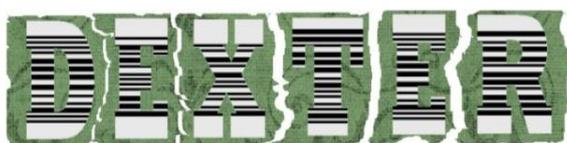
The remaining twelve groups formed mini-puzzles that could all be solved to produce another word.

• **The Scrabble Puzzle**

All of the numbers on the tiles have been changed from standard Scrabble. Move through the alphabet by the indicated number D+1=E, F+3=I, E+2=G, G+1=H, S+1=T. Answer: **EIGHT** (the total of all five numbers is 8, a confirmer to the answer)



• **The Barcode Puzzle**



Six of the letters have what appear to be a barcode on them, and can arranged to spell the word DEXTER. The barcodes are actually Morse code, and each 'bar code' spells out a word from the phonetic alphabet. Together these six phonetic letters form the answer. (DEXTER was a hint towards Colin Dexter, the author of the Inspector MORSE novels). HOTEL - ECHO - INDIA - GOLF - HOTEL - TANGO. Answer: **HEIGHT**

• **The Map Puzzle**



Five of the letters are printed on OS map segments. In ransom letter order, these spell EIEIO, a silly little hint towards farms (Old McDonald). Compare the map segments to the actual OS map and you will find that 'Herrings Farm' has been erased from the second square. Answer: **HERRINGS**

• **The Copyright Puzzle**

This is a substitution cipher – keyword COPYRIGHT (indicated by the © in the centre, plus the key image)
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z <- I E F G C B F S I
 C O P Y R I G H T A B D E F J K L M N Q S U V W X Z -> T R I G P O I N T
 Answer: **TRIGPOINT**



• **The Keyboard Puzzle**



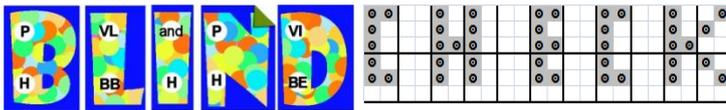
Nine of the letters can be rearranged to form the word KEYBOARDS (with larger letters spelling A KEY), hints to the required method. Find each letter on a standard keyboard (letters in ransom note order), and move in the direction indicated by the rip. Answer: **OF THREES**

• **The Masquerade Puzzle**

Six of the letters have been ripped directly from the pages of Masquerade. Find the word in the book that each letter has been torn from. RED HOT points you towards the red letter in each of these six words. (COLOUR, NIMBLE, DEEP, HIGH, ORDER, WATER) Answer: **CIPHER**



• **The Blind Puzzle**



Five of the letters can be arranged to form the word BLIND. This, combined with the dotty style of the letters, hints towards Braille. Write all of the smaller letters / word in Braille format to reveal the answer. Answer: **CHECK**

• **The Map Puzzle**

Six of the letters are styled like OS maps, and can be rearranged to spell PINK OS. Using the numbers in the top right corners, look at the relevant OS map covers and that take the initial letter of each place name on it. Chelmsford, Aberdeen, Scarborough, Kinston upon Hull, Edinburgh, Thames Estuary. Answer: **CASKET**

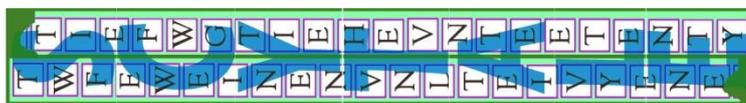


• **The Flagpole Puzzle**



Eight of the letters can be arranged to form the word FLAGPOLE. Each letter is filled with the design of a country flag - take the initial letter of each country (in FLAGPOLE order) to spell the answer: Oman, Niger, Ecuador, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, Rwanda, Ethiopia. Answer: **ONE METRE**

• **The Scytale puzzle**



Seven similar letters can be arranged to spell Scytale, a Greek cipher that involves wrapping a long strip of letters around an implement to reveal a hidden sentence. Make one long strip from the two lines of letters and wrap

them around a four sided shape (as hinted at by the squares) to spell the following: TWELVE FIVE TWENTY TWENTY FIVE EIGHTEEN NINETEEN. Now use A=1, B=2 to convert the numbers to words. Answer: **LETTERS**

• **The Bingo puzzle**

Five of the letters can be rearranged to spell the word HOUSE, a hint towards the Bingo theme of the puzzle. Each image represents a bingo call (David's Den 10, Two little ducks 22, Key of the door 21, Legs 11, Heinz Varieties 57). Count the appropriate number of letters in the original Ransom Note. Answer: **WRONG**



• **The Chocolate Puzzle**



Twelve of the letters have been cut from chocolate wrappers, and can be rearranged to spell CHOCOLATE BAR. By moving forward or backwards through the chocolate bar name (based upon the number on the coloured dot and whether they appear on the left or right of the letter), the answer can be found. Answer: **SUBSTITUTION**

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER TO SOLVE THE HUNT

The key to solving the hunt is to realise that there must be some instructions within the hunt that tell you which puzzle answers are relevant, and what order they need to be used in. Hopefully the large orange **ORDER** stood out in the middle of the ransom note message (the only word that has been 'ripped' from one source). How do you make orange? You mix together yellow and red... an anagram of the red letters (EVEN) and yellow letters (POLE) in the ransom note spells out **ENVELOPE**, and it is the hunt logo on the envelope which provides the correct order to proceed. I quite liked the idea that the main solution to the hunt had been staring you in face all along! (There was a second clue for those people that managed to solve the DEXTER puzzle – the Morse code on the letter S reads CLUE, again pointing you towards the hunt logo itself).

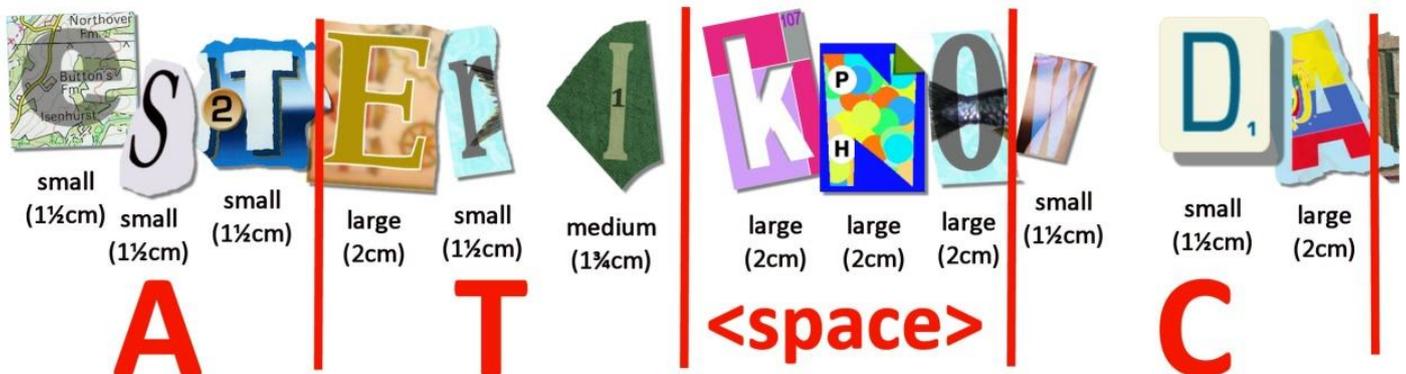


By listing the relevant answers in order based upon the style of the letters in the logo, the following message is revealed (note the small gaps in the logo between R and S in ESTERS and between A and N in RANSOM – this was to show where breaks should appear in the message).

RANSOM LETTERS INTO GROUPS OF THREES. HEIGHT SUBSTITUTION CIPHER. CHECK EVERY EIGHT LETTERS.

Every single letter in the ransom note is one of three heights – 1 ½ cm (small), 1 ¾ cm (medium) or 2cm (large). The original note needs to be split into groups of threes as instructed, and the height of each letter recorded. Every block of three then forms part of a substitution code:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Small – small – small = A | Medium – small – small = J | Large – small – small = S |
| Small – small – medium = B | Medium – small – medium = K | Large – small – medium = T |
| Small – small – large = C | Medium – small – large = L | Large – small – large = U |
| Small – medium – small = D | Medium – medium – small = M | Large – medium – small = V |
| Small – medium – medium = E | Medium – medium – medium = N | Large – medium – medium = W |
| Small – medium – large = F | Medium – medium – large = O | Large – medium – large = X |
| Small – large – small = G | Medium – large – small = P | Large – large – small = Y |
| Small – large – medium = H | Medium – large – medium = Q | Large – large – medium = Z |
| Small – large – large = I | Medium – large – large = R | Large – large – large = [space] |



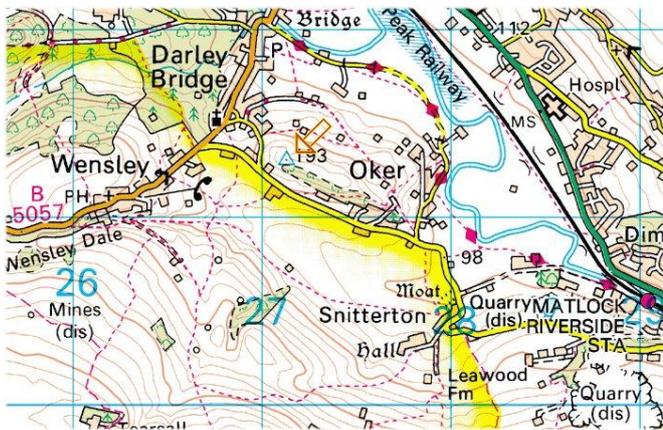
Using this key, the letter heights spell out the following message:

AT COPYRIGHT BLIND FOR PINKOS FLAGPOLE FOLDED TOP RIGHT CORNERS

Some words within this phrase should look familiar – they were words that were formed when splitting the ransom note letters into groups earlier on. These words should be replaced by the appropriate puzzle solution to reveal the final burial position:

AT TRIGPOINT CHECK FOR CASKET ONE METRE NORTH

Finally, use the remaining part of the hidden message – “CHECK EVERY EIGHT LETTERS” – on the phrase above to find the burial location: **OKER**



The casket was buried one metre north of the trigpoint on the summit of Oker Hill, Derbyshire...

Obviously a hunt with easier steps also comes with the risk that it will be solved much, much quicker than the average treasure hunt and I know that lots of you solved a good proportion it very quickly. However, there can only be one winner (or in this case, two!), so...

CONGRATULATIONS TO MATT EDWARDS AND PAUL HARKIN

I was especially pleased to hear that Matt turned the whole solving process into a family event, and even managed to convert his wife to treasure hunting in the process! Matt is going to write up an article about his success for the next newsletter (unfortunately he just missed the deadline for this one).

There were a number of people who contacted me with major breakthroughs throughout the course of the hunt, and most seem to have been on my wavelength (which is something you should seriously worry about!). I know of at least one person that downloading barcode reading software to their phone in order to try and scan the DEXTER code, which I was particularly pleased to hear. (Actually, it wasn't a million miles away... originally I *did* plan to include barcodes that needed to be read, but I couldn't get the print quality good enough).

I expect quite a few of you feel that you came within a whisker of solving this hunt, which is exactly how I wanted it to be. Commiserations to Jonathan Wolff, who cracked the height substitution cipher back in June when the hunt was only ten days old, before he even had the word ordering from the envelope... a truly remarkable piece of code breaking.

I would like to thank everyone for their positive feedback regarding the hunt and also for keeping me updated with their progress as the hunt unravelled. I am still not too sure if the feedback related to the quality of the hunt or the fact that you were given an excuse to regress to your childhood again – hours of fun with scissors and glue!

I have really enjoyed setting my first full club hunt. Who knows? Maybe Ester will return one day in the future ☺

Craig Jones (28th July 2010)