

MY ENGLAND

CAPTAIN SIR TOM MOORE

He captured the nation's heart during the pandemic and raised nearly £33 million for the NHS

YOU'VE raised a wonderful amount of money and inspired the nation through a very difficult time. How did the idea come about of walking lengths of your garden to raise funds for the NHS?

Following a hip replacement I was trying to walk regularly as part of my recuperation, and at a family barbecue my son-in-law said he would sponsor me per lap for charity . . . and the rest, as they say, is history.

Were you surprised by how the nation got behind you?

Never for one moment did I anticipate that. We tried to raise £1,000, and look what happened. It was absolutely amazing. Throughout the world people were donating to the cause and it got bigger and bigger and bigger. I'm extremely humbled and grateful for the love and gratitude we have received from far and wide.

How did you celebrate your 100th birthday?

Well, this is going to sound rather grand and I assure you it was way beyond the quiet day my family and I had planned; but the celebrations ended up including an RAF flypast, an honorary England cricket cap, a number one hit record, over 200,000 birthday cards including a very special one from Her Majesty The Queen, and I've never seen so much cake!

What would you say is the secret to living a long and happy life?

I've always been a very hopeful person and it's true I've never despaired, even in wartime. I've always believed that things would get better and live by the mantra "tomorrow will be a good day".



Captain Sir Tom Moore

What trait do you most value in others?

Loyalty and truth.

What advice would you give people who are worried about the current situation regarding coronavirus?

For all those finding it difficult: the sun will shine on you again and the clouds will go away.

We understand you've written an autobiography and a children's book. Did you enjoy the writing process?

Yes. It has brought back so many memories.

Where would you say is England's loveliest spot?

I'm a big fan of Yorkshire!

What would you say is the most

wonderful thing about this country?

The climate – the lovely four seasons.

What is your earliest memory?

Learning to ride a bicycle with my mother.

Can you describe a character-building experience from the war?

Being under fire for the first time.

If you could invite anyone to dinner from the past, who would it be?

Can I have three? Sir Stirling Moss, Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela.

What is your favourite food to eat for dinner?

Fillet steak, crisp roast potatoes, Yorkshire pudding, petit pois, lots of gravy, Worcestershire sauce and a glass of Asti spumante.

Is there anywhere you'd like to travel when restrictions are lifted?

I would like to go back to India and Barbados, and do Route 66.

Can you share with us a lesson in life that's been hardest to learn?

Taking my dog, Harry, to the vet for the last time.

What is the best thing about getting older?

I can remember yesterday, and look forward to tomorrow.

What do you hope for the future?

I hope there can be more trust in the world. At the moment so much time is wasted as countries don't trust one another and I believe it could be so much better.

And that my message of hope becomes an enduring legacy, and that people remember "Tomorrow will be a good day".

Tomorrow Will Be A Good Day (£20, Michael Joseph) and the children's picture book *One Hundred Steps* (£12.99, Puffin) are both out now.



Captain Tom Moore turned 100 on 30 April, 2020. His birthday cards numbered over 200,000, and were displayed at a school in Bedford



Receiving his knighthood from HM the Queen



The Nightingale Hospital in Harrogate was opened by Sir Tom



With the medal for his knighthood on 17 July, 2020