

# The Pathfinders - ATH 2018 Submission

---

## Theme and approach

The theme of this year's hunt was the life and works of Ian Fleming.

Page 1 of the hunt clues Fleming's life, family members, career etc. Page 2 contains the hunt instructions. Pages 3-14 each clue one of Fleming's twelve full-length James Bond novels. These are presented in the order of the corresponding Eon-produced movie. The initial letter of each question answer yields an instruction to reorder the pages by the original book publication dates. Doing this, and following the resulting route shown by the photograph on each page, leads from Joyce Grove via Grey's Court in Oxfordshire (both with their Fleming connections) to a wood called Famous Copse where the treasure box is buried. (Was Famous Copse perhaps chosen as a pun on Fleming & Bond in their roles as well-known intelligence officers?!) The main code - which we have not cracked - presumably provides more route details, including how to get from Nettlebed to Greys Court. There are other codes and clues throughout the hunt & poster, covered in more detail below.

## Hunt story and route

The story of our hunt could be thematically described as "You Only Live Twice". The team, bolstered by some new members, made great progress in the first few days, identifying many of the images and the Fleming theme, answering enough questions to find the sentence and put the pages in order, and confirming Nettlebed as the likely box location. At this point it felt like we'd be reaching for our trowels before Christmas Eve, but we struggled to identify the little kiosk that we felt sure must be somewhere near the pottery kiln, and which was essential for following the rest of the route photos.

So instead we switched focus to try to solve the code. In hindsight, this was a mistake, as it proved both unnecessary, and beyond us! Our hunch was that the World Weather (which features similar numbers) was a clue to the encoding method e.g. using the numbers as x,y or LWL coordinates. Or could the strange range of numbers – 10 to 39 and with those +1s too – be something to do with typewriter keys? The hint in the instructions was to use the letters – but we were undecided as to whether this meant the 6x6 grid on the front page, the question letters, the image letters, the book titles or even Fleming's letters in 'Golden Typewriter'. Progress dried up and, with only a week left, our chances of finding the box were as seemingly dead as Bond in Shatterhand's Japanese castle.

Resurrection came in the form of the route photos – we found the distinctive buildings of Forge Works on Google Earth/Streetview, and then the kiosk and fallen tree in Greys Court, confirming we were in the right area. Mitch and his wife Jenny headed up to Oxfordshire the next day; he takes up the story...

We drove to Grey's Court on (fortunately) a gorgeous winter's day (8<sup>th</sup> January 2019) and found the first route picture on the way into the car park.



We then made the mistake of going into the next-door reception office to check on parking fees. There is no charge for parking, but it's not allowed unless you're an NT member, or have paid to go into the house. I therefore paid £12.50 to go into the house (but didn't go in).

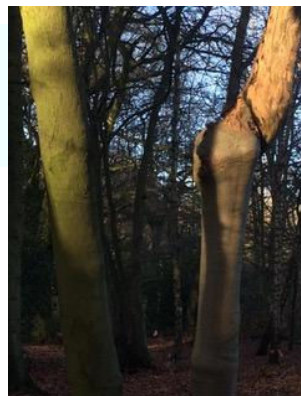
The next few stages were pretty much as expected. We left Grey's Court to the east on the path which eventually goes right round the property (and is the Chiltern Way for some of its journey), and found the fallen tree. We then made the slight mistake of following the CW to the north of Forge Works, but (as we thought would be the case) the next view was actually taken from the non-CW footpath to the south of Forge Works. (So our photo was taken on the way back!)



We rejoined the route at the kissing gate and walked across the field with pylons, to enter the woods.



As you might expect, this is where it got harder. We didn't find the next picture (the arrow on the tree) at first, and soon met a crossing of paths where, although the sign showed the CW going straight on, the CW map showed it turning left. We decided (correctly, as it turned out) to believe the local sign, and stumbled on. After quite a long time looking around, we thought we recognised the third picture below where a field corner meets the woods. So we returned to the entrance to the woods, and started that part again. Finding pictures 1 and 2 justified our confidence. The tree sign had worn since Mike took his photos and was extremely hard to spot (the CW was almost invisible even from close up). Picture 2 was after the crossing of paths.

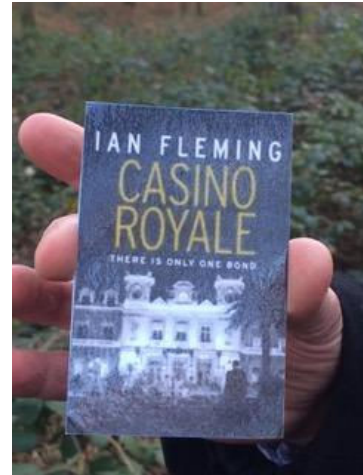


From that point it took about 30-40 minutes before Jenny found the stump we needed. We kept walking off in pursuit of promising views, but repeatedly realised that we'd gone too far - it had to be near the previous photo. At that point the CW turns 90 degrees right, essentially to follow the field. The stump turned out to be 90 degrees left, perhaps 60 yards away, and the treasure box was in a black plastic bag, under a pile of twigs. The angle of the picture below is rather misleading - the stump (a broken fence post really) is actually quite small, as we had realised by comparing it with the brambles and leaves in the Hunt photo.



If you're searching for PablosATH Treasure, congratulations, you've found it. If not, could you please put this box back where you found it so as not to spoil the fun for everyone else. There is no monetary value associated with the Treasure.

ATHers: one more puzzle: select the card that represents the earliest published from those enclosed and send a photo of it to 07889 089597 along with your team name (or e-mail to [mike.wood@cgi.com](mailto:mike.wood@cgi.com)). Take the card home with you and replace the rest and re-hide the box. Thanks, Mike.



There were about 20 cards, each of them showing the cover of a Bond book. Where there were 2 or 3 of one book, the covers were different. I chose the only Casino Royale card left, as that was the first of the Bond novels published. We subsequently wondered whether we were supposed to pick the earliest edition published - that would have meant choosing a different book as this is quite a recent (2012 Vintage) edition. Or perhaps the edition was only meant as a decider between different editions of the same book.

All in all, an enjoyable hunt, thank you Mike! Lots of interesting questions, pictures and puzzles, many of which we've been able to solve, some more easily than others! The last question we managed to crack was Bailey the dog, only after many dead ends involving the hundreds of basketball players called Bailey and their tenuous links to Barack Obama and Shaquille O'Neal. We still have no idea on the blue rectangle, or the cross & mallet carving. As with any hunt, we're kicking ourselves over certain things... that we didn't persevere with the route photos before Christmas, and that we didn't stumble across the method to crack the code. We look forward to discovering how that works, not to mention what we should have made of the World Weather/Index/Barcodes, and just exactly how Karl can be linked to Matt Pritchett and/or Ian Fleming!

Thanks again,

*The Pathfinders*

January 2019