

## **David Kee Team Biog**

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I was working for Logica at NatWest in Aldgate towards the end of 1986. We had been there for several years and were finally gaining some acceptance. This was the second year of Pablo's Hunts and in those days they were only published on the noticeboards of Logica's central London offices or left as a photocopy around coffee points. Someone must have taken a copy and given it to me. I remember looking at it and thinking "*this is too hard for me; I can only answer one question*". However, it was a good tool for social interaction with client staff and soon the answers were rolling in. I started to involve my friends and their friends and a team was born. I had got a bit interested in codes because of work for the client and on the last day of the hunt I finally cracked the code describing the route to the treasure. We couldn't go out that night because the snow was so bad and Pablo kindly agreed to extend the deadline until the weekend. We set off for Northaw (after the pubs shut), completely misunderstood the directions, went around in circles for a while but eventually got there – only to find that Pablo had forgotten his extension and taken the treasure away. I must confess to being rather short with Pablo over the phone in the immediate aftermath but he never seemed to hold it against me.

In the early years, before the internet, it seemed to me that libraries, reference books and access to well-read and rounded people was the way to win. So my team expanded, I included more clients, more friends, more friends of friends. We had some success, winning best solution three years in a row in the early 1990s. At the time we were probably the largest team by some distance but the coordination by late night telephone calls was problematic and we were never close to being first to the treasure.

With the coming of the internet, friends and colleagues in foreign parts could take part and even carry on working whilst the rest of us slept. The team continued to expand and now contained friends of friends who I had never met.

The current composition of the team is now a mixture of ex-Logica staff, one current CGI employee, friends and friends of friends. Most of the team is London based but there are members contributing from France and Saudi Arabia as well as the rest of the UK. For a typical hunt the team size is 10-15 registered for the team web site with degrees of involvement ranging from a couple of questions to full 24/7.

As noted above we have never been first to the treasure and it may be that that keeps us going. We have set it a few times and there is some truth in the rumour that "*...since we cannot find the treasure then we will make sure that no one else does*". The first hunt that we set was so hard (or was it competitor weakness?) that no one found it.

Pablo's Armchair Treasure Hunt is now a great Christmas tradition for me, my team and their families. For many of us the 24/7 commitment required for the ATH is eagerly anticipated, even if it usually brings frustration and heartache. Although some of the old timers in the team are increasingly baffled by the codes they stay involved because of the interesting questions. All of us live in hope that one day we will be first.