

# ANGLOW

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Each Spring, Summer and Autumn, the bold experiments in colour and form in the topiary, the mixed borders, the exotic garden and the meadows attract horticulture enthusiasts from all over the world.

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**FOCUS: SPECIAL INTERVIEW****The Eclectic Gardener:  
an interview with Fergus Garrett, head gardener at Great Dixter**

*By Pauline LAVAGNE d'ORTIGUE*

The gardens at Great Dixter, in East Sussex, are often quoted as the epitome of English plantsmanship. They were originally laid out in 1910 by Edwin Lutyens, who started planning New Delhi shortly afterwards. What also makes these gardens extremely special is that year after year, they have been lovingly re-planted by their original owners, Nathaniel and Daisy Lloyd, and then more famously by their son, Christopher Lloyd, in close collaboration with Fergus Garrett, his head gardener.

Each Spring, Summer and Autumn, the bold experiments in colour and form in the topiary, the mixed borders, the exotic garden and the meadows attract horticulture enthusiasts from all over the world.

When the charismatic Christopher Lloyd passed away in January 2006, Fergus Garrett took the helm, with just as much charm and enthusiasm, in order to keep these extraordinary gardens alive and open to the public.

**. Why and how did you choose to become a gardener?**

It was accidental, I have always enjoyed outdoor life and have been close to the land but I wanted to farm more than anything. I went to college to study agriculture (at Wye College, University of London), became disenchanted with it and swapped courses to study horticulture. My grandmother was a great gardener, so it must have been in my blood.

**. What are the most interesting/surprising/influential experiences you have had in your training and your work since?**

First of all working for a Local Parks Authority in Brighton, to see green spaces in the landscape coming under real pressure.

And then my fabulous tutor Tom Wright at Wye College, who was an inspirational figure to many a student.

And then the brilliant Beth Chatto, who was so knowledgeable and creative.

And then above all Christopher Lloyd, who not only showed me how to act in and around the garden but also was so free with plants and ideas. He was a free spirit, experimenting all the time and pushing the boundaries.

. [How did you first come to work at Great Dixter ?](#)

I was in between jobs and Ken Rawson a garden designer who was a great friend of Christopher Lloyd suggested that I should work for him. I had known Christo for several years and then 'hey presto' he asked me to become his head gardener. One of the first things Christo and I did together was to rip out the rose garden and plant it up with tropical plants.

. [People often say that there can only be one cook in a kitchen. Does this apply to a garden as well ?](#)

Christopher Lloyd and I worked very closely together, and because we had a common goal and a respect and love for each other it worked exceptionally well. Everything was discussed and everything was out in the open. He was a grandfather figure, as well as a father, a teacher, a mentor, best friend, and an employer. Having said all this I never forgot whose garden it was — he was the boss.

. [What is quintessentially British in the gardens at Great Dixter? What is not?](#)

It's difficult to capture what is a British garden because they are so varied. Of course Dixter is romantic, and lovely, and cottagy, and has roses and lavender and meadows and all that but it is also unique and has its own character. It's a very dynamic place that is full of contradiction- it's modern but yet ancient, it's formal but yet very informal. It certainly is dynamic, and experimentative, and exciting. Great Dixter is full of atmosphere and spirit-its own individual spirit.

. [How does one relate to continuity and change when working in a garden which has such an outstanding history?](#)

The structure and history has to be respected but, the garden has always been dynamic and has changed and evolved and it is essential that it continues to do so. It shouldn't become a fossilized museum where everything is static but on the other hand it shouldn't change for changes sake. Plants and borders change for improvement sake — just as it has always done.

. [How do you preserve a plant collection such as Great Dixter's clematis collection for instance ?](#)

We only keep plants if they are earning their keep and not in order to keep a collection.

. [Seeds and plants are one of the oldest items exchanged on a global scale. Where do you get yours?](#)

The Dutch are a main player for mass production but we are not users of mass produced items. Of course we do get plants from wholesalers but they are usually the smaller specialist types. There are new and good plants being discovered or produced all over the place — USA, Holland, Germany, the UK.

These are made available to us through nurseries and inspirational people like Bob Brown of Cotswold Garden Flowers in the UK, John Massey of Ashwood Nurseries in the UK, Michael Wickenden of Cally Gardens, Scotland and Dan Hinkley formerly of Heronswood in Seattle.

We not only want these new plants in our garden but we also want to use them well and grow them in the right place.

But on the whole we get plants from absolutely everywhere — from specialists to village sales. You are always on the lookout. The Royal Horticultural Society's Trials which take place at Wisley is a also good place to get ideas.

We also exchange plants and like to share them with people and will continue to do so.

. According to you, what and where are the most interesting specialised plant collections in the world today?

The ones in the wild — we must preserve wild habitats as much as possible. I come from Turkey and find it very sad what has happened there with certain habitats that have been spoiled. The same in England, especially with the wildflower meadows.

. What are the most recent experiments in gardening and landscape design which have attracted your attention?

Although this is not an experiment or a trend or trendy, I have been fascinated by the Royal Horticultural Society's Floral trials at Wisley. It appeals to the stamp collector in me. I enjoy seeing plants side by side and working out which are the best ones. This is one of the most important work the RHS does. Also I have been fascinated by the recent work going on in the meadow gardening world.

. To what extent has global warming changed your work as a gardener ?

It has made me think about wasting resources – not only in the garden but everywhere. Everybody can do something to try and solve this problem and we all can play our part.

. Apart from the weather, what has changed most in your work in the last ten / twenty years?

I have been interrupted more since I have become better known. I have become slower as I have become older and I hope that I have become wiser. Certainly as I have learned more I have been able to pass on more — which is something I truly believe in.

**For details, pictures, Great Dixter nursery's wondrous catalogue, articles by Christopher Lloyd & more, please visit: <http://www.greatdixter.co.uk/>**

## POLITICS & SOCIETY

### [The Ku Klux Klan, alive and kicking ?](#)

By Guillaume LEFEVRE

#### **The debate over immigration in the US might have prompted the resurgence of the KKK.**

The Ku Klux Klan was created in 1866 by Confederate Civil War veterans. Since then, the KKK has been a generic brand name for a hotchpotch of living and defunct fraternal organizations that advocate white supremacy, anti-Semitism, racism, homophobia and nativism. There is no centralized organisation, so that membership figures are and have always been estimates.

According to Professor Brian Levin, Director of the Center on Hate & Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, the Klan numbered about 4.5 million members in the 1920s. Its membership dropped to an estimated 60,000 during the civil rights era (1954-65) and had bottomed out at fewer than 2,000 members by the mid-1970s.\* However, after years of irrelevance, the group is currently seeing an increase in activity. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) has issued a report claiming that today KKK membership could be anything between 5000 and 8000, organised in as many as 179 local Klan groups. The KKK is reported as active in nineteen different states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

The debate over legal and illegal immigration has proved a major recruiting tool. It has triggered a return to the KKK's nativist origins. Demonstrations organised by the KKK and other hate groups to protest against illegal immigration are on the rise. For instance, the Empire Knights of Texas organise frequent rallies in border towns, attracting more journalists and on-lookers than actual supporters. But even if they fail to gather cheering racist crowds, their mere existence is a cause for concern among civil rights activists.

The ADL report also explains that the KKK has changed strategy and now operates increasingly in the open. KKK clans tend to advocate cooperation with neo-Nazi groups, they use the Internet to broadcast ideas and advertise meetings, they meet up with militias that "protect" the border from illegal immigrants, and distribute racist literature. Although some members still wear robes and pointed hoods at rallies and some even still burn crosses, younger recruits tend to look more like skinheads or neo-Nazis.

However, some consider that this is a storm in a tea cup. David J. Garrow, Senior Fellow at Cambridge University, claims that the Klan's structure remains very weak and fragmented, and that the organisation is "still dead".\*\* He describes the ADL's report as alarmist and over pessimistic: according to him, such reports give credibility to minority hate groups and end up helping rather than harming them.

Sources : \* "Anti-immigrant sentiments fuel Ku Klux Klan resurgence" *The Christian Science Monitor* 9 February 2007.

\*\* "The Klan is still dead," *The LA Times* 27 February 2007.

"Hundreds watch KKK rally in Texas town," *Associated Press* 17 March 2007.

"KKK threaten to protest in Hazleton," *The Scranton Times-Tribune*, 23 March 2007.

## POLITICS & SOCIETY

### Can Ghana relaunch Pan-Africanism 50 years on?

By Nicolas CHEVET

**On 6 March 1957, Ghana, a former British colony, became independent. Under its first president, Kwame Nkrumah, it paved the way for the emancipation of the black continent and the dream of a United States of Africa. Fifty years later, Ghana is once again at the head of the African Union, but times have changed.**

At the end of January, John Kufuor, the current president of Ghana was elected chairman of the African Union (AU) for the 2007-2008 session. Fifty years after its independence, Ghana is once again being handed the keys of the Pan-African organization.

Choosing the Ghanaian president as chair of the AU Assembly of Heads of States in 2007 is an obvious political symbol: Ghana was the first African country to become independent in 1957 and in 1964, its charismatic leader, Kwame Nkrumah, created the Union of African States, the forerunner of the AU. Nkrumah was a champion of Pan-Africanism, a political and cultural movement aiming at unifying both native Africans and those of the African diaspora in order to regenerate the continent.

However, the AU's political gesture could also be deemed slightly anachronistic at a time when the concept of Pan-Africanism seems virtually dead. Apart from the Libyan leader Mouammar Kadhafi, no one seems to truly believe in the old dream of a United States of Africa. Today, the AU, consisting of 53 states, strives to promote democracy, human rights, peace and a sustainable economy. Creating an effective common market with a single currency is much higher on the agenda than political unity.

Next July, the ninth AU summit to be held in Accra, the capital of Ghana, will surely commemorate the Pan-African dream and ideology. But times have changed and great expectations are long forgotten.

Today, Ghana is one of the poorest countries in the world, with an annual per capita income of US\$500. In the 1950s the country had much better prospects than say South Korea (which now has a US\$16,000 annual per capita income). Nkrumah's over-ambitious industrialisation programme decimated the cocoa industry, and quickly ruined the country's economy. Nkrumah's political radicalism and authoritarianism eventually alienated his peers. Ghana then faced isolation, corruption and anarchy until 2000 when John Kufuor was elected president, and managed to run the first peaceful transition of power since independence.

Sources: "Ghana celebrates 50 years that changed Africa" *The Washington Post* 6 March 2007.

"An Inspiration for Independence" *The Washington Post* 6 March 2007.

"Door of no return opens up Ghana's slave past" *The Washington Post* 8 March 2007.



## ARTS & BOOKS

### The youngest off-spring of the Guggenheim family

By Elodie LECADIEU

**A new Guggenheim museum will open in 2012 in Abu Dhabi, bringing to six the number of such art-cum-business ventures.**

The Guggenheim Foundation has signed an agreement with the Abu Dhabi emirate to build a new museum on Saadiyat Island. This will be the sixth Guggenheim museum after those of New York, Berlin, Bilbao, Venice and Las Vegas.

It will be part of a vast complex, and is destined to become “the centre piece of a cultural and financial quarter”\*. Saadiyat means happiness in Arabic, but in the case of this project, its sponsors hope it will be synonymous with delight and sumptuousness. The complex will be composed of three other museums, a concert hall, art galleries, luxury hotels, two golf courses, and even an indoor ski slope. To build this “upscale cultural district”\*, the emirate’s capital is planning to set aside \$27 billion, of which \$400 million should be devoted to the construction of the new Guggenheim.

The museum will be designed by the famous American architect Frank Gehry, who already has one Guggenheim commission under his belt, having designed Spain’s highly-acclaimed Bilbao museum. Construction work on the 30 000 square meter building is set to last five years, and when finished, it will be the biggest of the group’s six museums.

The aim, according to Thomas Krens, director of the Guggenheim Foundation, is to reconcile the modernity and daring of contemporary art with the cultural and religious values of the Emirate. The museum will acquire its own collection before the opening, planned for 2012, and will also exhibit works belonging to the Guggenheim Foundation. Contemporary art from all over the world will be displayed, alongside Near and Middle Eastern art, in order to foster cultural exchanges and interactions.

This project will enable the oil-rich but museum-poor Persian Gulf Emirate to develop tourism, and compete with neighbouring Dubai. Sheik Sultan bin Tahnoon al-Nahyan, chairman of the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority, said the Emirate’s ambition was to “reach an arts and architectural level never before achieved”\*\*. The fame of the Guggenheim Foundation, created in 1937 and renowned worldwide, will surely help.

#### Sources:

\*“The race for art island : Louvre and Guggenheim battle it out,” *The Guardian* 22 November 2006.

\*\*“Plans for “Desert Louvre” provoke outrage in France,” *The Washington Post* 11 March 2007.

## ARTS & BOOKS

### [A new Tarantino-Rodriguez diptych](#)

By Thomas BORDIER & Marie-Dominique BEAU

***Grindhouse* is the latest cinematographic product of a long and fruitful collaboration between directors Quentin Tarantino and Roberto Rodriguez.**

The Tarentino-Rodriguez connection goes back fifteen years now. In 1992, Mexican director Roberto Rodriguez wrote and directed his first movie *El Mariachi* on a very low budget. At the time, American director Quentin Tarantino became world famous thanks to *Reservoir Dogs*. After seeing *El Mariachi*, Tarentino approached Rodriguez and asked him if he would agree to collaborate on a sequel to *El Mariachi*. Within three years, the pair had written and shot *Desperado*, starring Antonio Banderas and Steve Buscemi.

Given their initial success together, they carried on and in 1996 they co-authored the screenplay of *From Dusk Till Dawn* to be later directed by Rodriguez. Then they decided to part ways. When in 2005 Rodriguez adapted the comic book *Sin City* on screen, Tarantino wanted to collaborate but in the end his schedule was too full. Eventually they decided to produce a science fiction film in two parts entitled *Grindhouse*.

*Grindhouse* is a diptych composed of *Death Proof* by Tarentino and *Planet Terror* by Rodriguez.

*Death Proof* stars Kurt Russell and Rosario Dawson and focuses on a psychopath named Stuntman Mike, who kills women with his car.

*Planet Terror*, starring Rose McGowan and Freddy Rodriguez, tells the story of a little town invaded by zombies and defended by a woman who has a machine gun in place of a leg. (See picture for anatomy details)

In English-speaking countries, *Grindhouse* will be screened in one go. In most other countries, the movie will be separated in two parts which is a source of major disappointment for the directors.

So far *Grindhouse* has not fared so well in the US box office. The length of the movie might have something to do with it: 3 hours of psychopaths and zombies can seem a little daunting.

#### Sources :

"I was a teenage grindhouse freak," *The Guardian* 3 March 2007.

[www.grindhousemovie.net](http://www.grindhousemovie.net) official website.

## BUSINESS & MEDIA

### Goodbye cash ?

By Marija BARIC

#### **Why coins and bank notes are becoming an endangered species.**

If you do not have a mobile phone yet, it is high time you get one since these devices are about to revolutionise our daily life. Soon the day might come when you will need one to buy a loaf of bread or a pint of milk.

Credit and debit card use has increased dramatically over the last 20 years, while cash transactions have been declining. However, UK banks and retailers still spend an estimated £4bn a year on running cash transactions. It should come as no surprise that they should try to find cheaper alternatives.

This is why mobile phones are now encroaching on the traditional territory of credit cards. In London, the daily Congestion Charge, a train ticket, a newspaper, or a cup of coffee can now be purchased via a mobile phone. And the list is about to expand. No need to queue in front of a cash machine, and definitely no need to carry a chequebook around. Soon all you will need for a day out will be your mobile phone.

Later this year, mobile phone companies will launch the so-called smart-card technology on the British market. Based on the "nearfield communication" technology (NFC), once built into a mobile phone, the "smart-card" reacts when it is near or in contact with a reader. The NFC device is then activated and enables the transaction. The NFC technology can be placed into all kinds of mobile phones at a very small cost. When the customer is about to pay, he or she receives a SMS text message sent by a separate payment system. The customer must then reply by typing in his or her personal PIN number--all that is needed before the account is automatically debited. This technology is much cheaper to operate than credit cards and cash, and according to analysts, more consumer-friendly.

Such contactless card payments have been on trial in Scandinavia and Asia. Consumers will eventually decide if they feel comfortable and safe using them. Specialists are optimistic; according to Jemma Smith of Apacs, the UK payments association, "Two-thirds of all personal payments are still made in cash, but that's in terms of volume, not value. There's a huge gap in the market for new ways of paying for things, and there are a number of ways that the gap is being filled".\*

Sources : "A cash call," *The Economist* 17-23 February 2007.

\* "How chips and cards will put paid to coins," *The Independent* 11 April 2007.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### [Towards a new transplant scheme in the US](#)

By Romain DONDELINGER

**Four states in the USA have recently adopted a revision of the human organ donation law. This should facilitate donations and help fight both the shortage and the traffic of human organs.**

Transplantation is an increasing problem in rich states where waiting lists are growing faster than donors' lists. For instance only 25 000 kidney transplants are performed every year in the US on the 95 000 people who are waiting for such transplants.

The shortage of donors has fuelled a global black market in human organs which threatens the traditional legal framework for organ donation. Whereas selling human organs is illegal in the US and in Europe, the world traffic in organs is booming. Poor people sell their organs for very little money to intermediaries who often sell them again with a very high profit margin. "A New Yorker paid \$60,000 to receive a kidney in a South African hospital from a Brazilian who was paid \$6,000 for it,"\*\* explains Francis Delmonico of Harvard Medical School.

Ending this "medical apartheid" is not easy. The idea to create a regulated market for human organs has been rejected so far as it would be a step towards the commercialisation of human organs. "If kidneys have a [monetary] value, all organs have to have a value. But nobody can sell his heart."\*\* said Bert Vanderhaegen, ethicist at University Hospital in Ghent, Belgium.

Organ donation is a sensitive and intricate issue, both ethically, emotionally and legally. The revision of the organ donation law tackles many tricky problems but not all. "The idea behind this is to facilitate organ donation as much as possible,"\* according to Robert M. Sade, the American Medical Association's representative to the committee that drafted the measure. For instance, it makes clear that if someone wants to become a donor, his or her family cannot override his or her decision, i.e. when a donor's family refuses to allow the removal of organs on the dead donor, the revised law imposes to respect the decision of the donor.

The idea is to get this revision adopted nationwide. "What we're trying to do is come up with a set of uniform rules that will encourage more donations,"\* says Sheldon F. Kurtz, a University of Iowa law professor. About 20 states are interested in the new donation system. Virginia, Idaho, Utah and South Dakota have already adopted the measure but the signatures of other states like Arkansas, Indiana, Iowa and New Mexico are shortly awaited.

Sources:\* "States Revising Organ-Donation Law," *The Washington Post* 4 April 2007.

\*\* "Human organ trafficking threatens donation schemes," *The Washington Post* 2 April 2007.

## ENVIRONMENT & TRAVEL

### Record corn plantings and ethanol hopes

By Julie LE COZ & Nicolas TREVILLOT

**Why are Americans planning to plant more corn this year than they have since the Second World War? The rising demand for ethanol (rather than a renewed culinary interest in corn on the cob) is the answer.**

At the end of March, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) forecasted that American farmers would plant 90.5 million acres of corn, a 15% increase from last year and the highest figure since 1944. The rush to plant corn naturally comes at the cost of other crops. Nationwide, soybeans are forecast at 67.1 million acres (the smallest seeded area since 1996), and rice at 2.64 million acres (the smallest seeded area since 1987).

This corn craze is directly linked to the rising demand for ethanol, a corn-based fuel additive. As the war on greenhouse gas emissions fuelled the demand for ethanol, corn prices doubled in the last year, with prices rising above \$4 a bushel in some futures markets. The Bush administration welcomes this trend and encourages Americans to produce and use nationally-produced ethanol through various fiscal incentives. It hopes ethanol will help to reduce the nation's dependence on fossil fuels.

However, weaning Americans from their oil-addiction might take some time...

There are only 114 ethanol distilleries currently in operation across the country. Out of 170,000 gas stations, only about 1,000 sell E85, which is a blend of 85% ethanol and 15% gasoline. This means there is about one such station for each 1.2 million Americans. In California, which has more cars and trucks on the road than any other state, there are only four ethanol stations.

Hybrid cars are currently still a minority interest in the US. Today there are about five million flex-fuel cars on American highways. But by 2012, half the vehicles made by Chrysler, Ford and General Motors could be able to run on bio-diesel or E85.

It remains to be seen whether ethanol is truly an environmentally friendly energy source, or whether it is just a sop to our consciences. Corn is a needy plant and is very hard on soil. It also requires more synthetic nitrogen and more petroleum-based pesticides than most other farm crops, thus causing severe air and water pollution. Moreover, corn-based ethanol releases less energy than standard gasoline, so that engines must use more ethanol than gas to go the same distance. Ethanol could substitute for a small percentage of imported fossil fuel, but it is far from being an all-green energy source.

Sources: "Ethanol still a long way off in U.S.," *Los Angeles Times* 10 March 2007.

"U.S. farmers aim for record corn crop, ethanol riches," *The Washington Post* 30 March 2007.

"Ethanol demand boosts corn plantings," *Chicago Tribune* 30 March 2007.

"Record corn planting forecast for Illinois," *Chicago Tribune* 30 March 2007.

"US farmers plan biggest corn plantings since 1944," *Chicago Tribune* 30 March 2007.

"Farmers to plant largest amount of corn since '44," *New York Times* 31 March 2007.

"The ethanol solution," *CBS News* 7 May 2006.

"Global warming threatens – corn – based ethanol not solution," *Aberdeen News* 4 March 2007.

## ENVIRONMENT & TRAVEL

### Acidic oceans: a major environmental hazard.

By Sébastien GERBAULT

**Scientists have issued yet another alarming verdict on the state of the seas. Acidity is now threatening a vast array of sea-life.**

In February 2007, at the yearly meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in San Francisco, marine experts delivered a most disquieting verdict on the increase of oceanic acidity. According to them, increased atmospheric emissions of carbon dioxide (one of the main greenhouse gases driving climate change) is causing the world's oceans to become more and more acidic.

Oceanic chemistry has been changing for some time now. Scientists have been issuing such warnings for decades. According to them, the acidity of the oceans has increased 30% since industrialisation began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They predict that, unless carbon dioxide (CO<sup>2</sup>) emissions are reduced, a 150% increase of the oceanic acidity rate is to be expected by 2100.

The carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is absorbed by the ocean, and then reacts with sea-water to produce carbonic acid. This acid consumes the carbonate that many marine creatures use to build their shells and mineral structures.

Coral reefs are among the organisms most severely hit: corrosive waters undermine their skeletal structures, which in turn undermines the marine ecosystem and harms other species.

According to Charlie Veron, of the Australian Institute of Marine Science, more than half of the existing coral reefs will be exposed to such waters by 2100.

Reducing carbon dioxide emissions is vital to preserve life in the oceans. Marine scientists have been striving to warn the general public, industrialists and politicians alike—so far, to no avail.

#### Sources:

"Acid oceans threatening marine food chain, experts warn," *www.nationalgeographic.com* 17 February 2007.

"Acid oceans spell doom for coral," [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) 29 August 2004.

"Acidic oceans threaten marine food chain," *The Guardian* 29 September 2005.

## SPORTS

### [The 2012 Olympics: faster, higher, stronger ? or simply pricier ?](#)

By Benjamin SAFAR

**The full cost of the London Olympics will be over £9 billion. British tax-payers have thus added another adjective to the official Olympic motto, and are still puzzled as to who is actually going to foot the bill.**

In 1984, Los Angeles was the only city willing to organise the Olympics. Twenty years later, it was a different story altogether : London had to defeat eight other contenders, the last of which was Paris which London finally overtook in July 2005.

The initial cost put forward by the steering committee was £2.4 billion. But this quotation was calculated back in 2003. Then, little by little, figures increased and currently the estimation is around £9.35 billion. Public works, infrastructure upgrades, rising security costs, and a controversial tax bill that had mysteriously been left out of the first estimates have all added up. However, with another 5 years until the opening ceremony, most think the final bill will be even higher.

Solving this financial conundrum will not be easy. Many Londoners fear they will have to foot the bill and they sorely remember that it has taken thirty years for Montreal inhabitants to pay off their debt for the 1976 spectacular ! The Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, who was one of the most active supporters of the project, said he would not raise more taxes for the Olympics. Yet he needs to find an extra £300m.

The Treasury which knows all too well that Britons are more often than not allergic to taxes, has yet to explain how it will pay for the rest.

An easy and somewhat painless solution consists in high-jacking lottery kitties. This can be done by organising special Olympic lottery games and/or by diverting more money from other lottery-funded causes.

The poor management of the Olympic budget does not look good for Blair's government. The lack of transparency has opened up a divide in the public opinion, with some thinking the Olympics will be a masquerade and others still believing in the project.

Sir Roy McNulty, acting chairman of the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), tried to abate the mounting storm by saying that the budget, which has trebled since London was awarded the games, was now "realistic".

Ironically, it seems that the London Olympics will break at least a few records: they will be the most heavily subsidised games of all times, and potentially the most expensive games at that.

Sources: "Record-breaking," *The Economist* 17 March 2007.

"Olympic problem should not be too taxing," *The Observer* 18 March 2007.