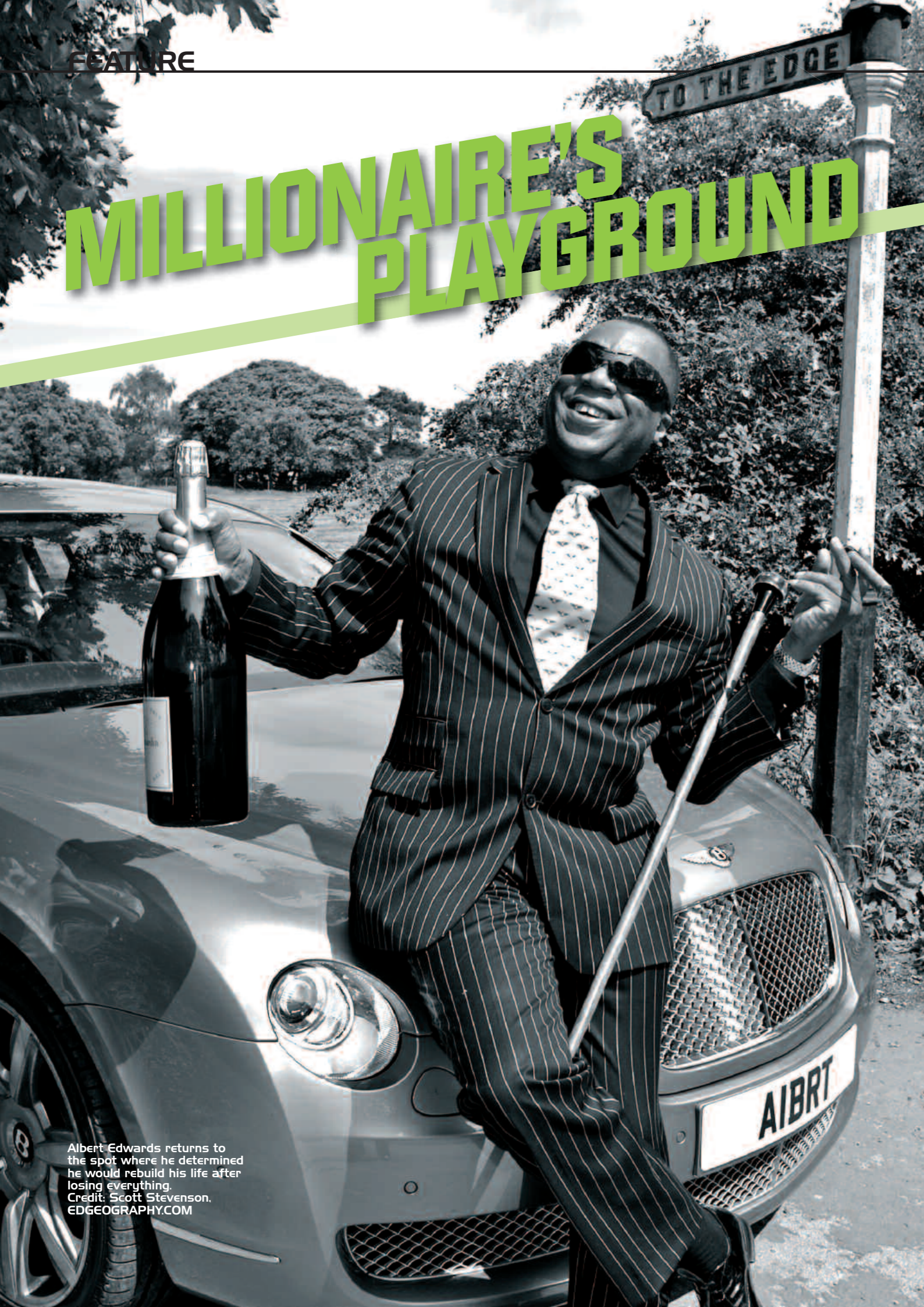


MILLIONAIRE'S PLAYGROUND



Albert Edwards returns to the spot where he determined he would rebuild his life after losing everything. Credit: Scott Stevenson. EDGEGRAPHY.COM

What's the secret behind the success of Britain's richest square mile? City caught up with author Malcolm McClean who reveals all in a new book.

Think of the richest square mile in Britain, and your thoughts immediately turn to the City of London or Chelsea. In fact, a small village, 15 miles south of Manchester is home to more millionaires per square mile than anywhere else in Britain.

The place is Alderley Edge; a leafy green part of Cheshire where, according to credit agency, Experian, 20 per cent of residents have a seven-figure annual income and one in 20 homes sell for more than £1million.

It is also the focal point of what has been described as Britain's 'Golden Triangle', an area formed by joining the dots between Wilmslow, the pretty village of Prestbury and the jewel in the crown, Alderley Edge itself.

The media coverage of this area tends to focus upon the glitz and glamour, the celebrity residents and proliferation of Bentleys and Ferraris. It creates an image of a shallow nouveau riche.

In fact, that's not the real story. The success and the wealth have been hard-earned. These millionaires are self-made people. Entrepreneurs with amazing stories – triumphs, tribulations, disasters and incredible recoveries.

So who are these people? Where have they come from? And most importantly, why are they so damn wealthy?

All is revealed in a new book called *To The Edge* in which 13 of these self-made millionaires share the secrets of their success.

The author, Malcolm McClean, 50, lives alongside the rich baker's dozen in Britain's most affluent square mile and wrote the story of these movers and shakers to "inspire" people who want to make money from what they love.

"A factor all these people share is that they didn't chase the money," he said. "Stick to the passion, it's a theme that goes right through the book."

City takes a ride out to the 'Golden Triangle' to meet a cross section of the colourful characters who feature in the book.



Tim Bacon pays a visit to Est Est Est in Alderley Edge, one of 34 establishments owned by Living Ventures

The Soapstar

Tim Bacon cut his teeth as an actor in Australian soap, *Sons and Daughters*, and headed for the UK to become a star. Whilst waiting for his big break, he worked as a cocktail waiter at TGI Friday's.

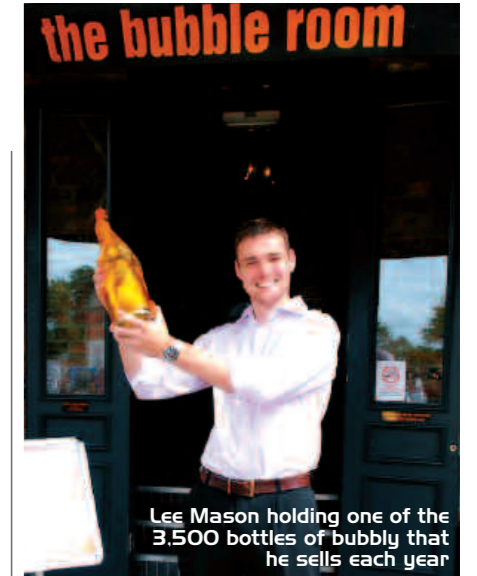
"I loved it. It was like a performance. You got six weeks training and then you were allowed to project your own personality – something I've always tried to take on board in my own businesses."

Tim realized that there was money to be made and set up a consultancy business to go into new start-up restaurants. It mushroomed, but he was hungry for more. "It was a lifestyle business and I wanted something that I could really grow."

It was time to get hands-on and do something of scale, and that's exactly what he did. Now the boss of Living Ventures, Tim owns 34 restaurants including the successful chains *The Living Room* and *Est Est Est* and his business turns over more than £50million a year.

The Bubbleboy

Lee Mason is perhaps the youngest and newest recruit to this area of the enterprising world. In business terms, he is barely out of nappies, yet he has established a thriving business right in the heart of Alderley Edge. It is called *The Bubble Room*, an exclusive



Lee Mason holding one of the 3,500 bottles of bubbly that he sells each year

restaurant and bar which he set up at the tender age of 20.

"I am working 90 hours a week. I don't have to. I just love it. I love being here."

The business has exceeded everybody's expectations, including Lee's own and now, he's thinking big.

"The plan is to get another one, in the right location, another affluent area."

The Prince

As he stared into the darkness of the 500 foot sandstone escarpment that is Alderley Edge, his business troubles weighed heavily on his shoulders and he wondered, 'Is this the way out?'

He looked across at the distant lights of the city, where as a boy he dreamed of glory and the grand life his Jamaican mother left behind. There was a way out and this was not it. He decided at that moment that in life, and business, you should never, ever, give up.

Life has been a rollercoaster for Albert Edwards. He went from being an independent financial advisor with a growing property portfolio to losing everything.

These days Albert knows who his true friends are and he's back on a roll. Now he takes on property projects that are way too messy or risky for normal developers. His extraordinary resilience towards risk has seen him go from pauper to prince and it is one incredible story. →



Brad Friedel overseeing construction of his Premier Soccer Academy in Ohio



The Hippies – Jean and Stewart



Karen Coleman takes a rare moment off work

The Rover

Football legend **Brad Friedel** is at the top of his game. He cannot hot desk or log in from home to do his job. He has to be there.

The last line of defence for one-time Premier League champions, Blackburn Rovers, he has earned enough money never to have to work again. Yet he always will. With an enterprising nature and a genuine desire to help people, he is proving that making money and doing good can be symbiotic.

His soccer academy in his home town of Ohio, USA, has helped him to get planning permission for retail and commercial developments on a portion of the site.

Part of the profits from the development in turn feed into the soccer academy helping to make it a self-sustaining, not-for-profit outfit, which is as much about helping people to find their way in life as it is about finding the stars of the future.

The Hippies

Stewart and **Jean Pickering** lived in a commune, married in kaftans and have been driven by passion ever since they can remember.

They set up a childcare business in 1983 because they were dissatisfied with traditional pre-school provision and today it turns over £30million. To them, setting up the nationwide nursery chain 'kidsunlimited' was nothing more than an incidental statistic in their story.

It was never about the money. It was about love, passion, creativity, people, music, poetry and togetherness. It was about breaking with the established way of doing things.

The Carer

Karen Coleman screamed as she looked

at the reddened mess where she had slashed the razor across her wrists. Fortunately this was not to be her end. Neither was it to be her beginning. Her turning point came much later; but only after she had endured physical abuse, become a teenage mum, twice, tried to take her own life, had a financial fall out with her mother and her husband, and lost the love of her life in a tragic accident.

Remarkably, not only has she survived, she is the charismatic owner of a business which is attracting the attention of serious buyers and today is valued for sale at £8million. If ever there was a role model for women entrepreneurs, Karen is it.

The Hustler

Selwyn Demmy took possession of his bus pass nearly a decade ago. He has sold three businesses for more than £50million at today's prices, yet he still works seven days a week. At the age of 74, he has had more comebacks than Frank Sinatra.

Selwyn has spent his life surrounded by the media and in the company of the rich and famous. This and his Midas touch in building one amazing business after another have focused attention on the glitz and glamour. He is an incredibly successful businessman, but behind Sammy Demmy, there is a very intriguing story and just where it will end, nobody knows.

The Alchemist

Karl Massey has an amazing knack of turning business base metal into gold by buying companies for a pound and transforming their fortunes.

His love affair with sales started when he was 13-years-old, when he agreed to help his father out in his clock shop.

"I used to set myself a target of selling at least two Timex watches when I was there on the day."

At the age of 15, Karl quit school to go full time. Within months his father had purchased Cottrill's jewellers in Bramhall and Karl was using his initiative to develop the corporate side of the business which was already bringing in contracts worth millions.

Today, Karl's company, Nimogen Ltd, owns numerous businesses and the revolutionary new Wilmslow branch of Cottrill's has been voted one of the 100 most inspirational stores in the world next to Louis Vuitton in Paris. Karl says he thought about the concept over a couple of pints. Whatever it is the Alchemist is drinking, it certainly hits the spot.

• **To The Edge by Malcolm McClean is published by Capstone and is out now priced £12.99.**



COMPETITION

City has five copies of the book to give away. To be in with a chance of winning, just answer the following question: How many entrepreneurs feature in the book? Send answers on a postcard to: 'To The Edge' Competition, City magazine, RMC House, 5 Broadfield Court, Broadfield Business Park, Sheffield, S8 0XF. Alternatively, email your details to rachel.metcalfe@regionalmagazine.co.uk. Closing date: 1 December