

RICHARD BRANSON 'IN LIFE, SAYING YES IS MORE INTERESTING THAN SAYING NO'

The megabucks man, 67, on hanging with Obama, not being keen on Trump, and why he loves an adventure



2002
I don't have a massive amount of respect for Donald Trump.

We're just different kinds of individuals, and I have found that quite strange and therefore was quite nervous about the idea of him becoming President. I met his first wife Ivana once, who I thought was absolutely delightful. I've been saddened by a lot of the things that have come out of his mouth since he won the election and worried about somebody like that being President of America.

2017
The day after he stepped down as President, Obama came and stayed with us on Necker Island



for a couple of weeks, just to relax, which he hadn't been able to do for eight years. We'd just been in a friendly kite-surfing competition and I decided if I couldn't beat him on the kite-board, I'd strangle him. He is delightful and natural, a charismatic man who genuinely cares about other people. Will I invite his successor in the future? That's extremely unlikely.

2013
This picture suggests that to win at tennis, Boris Johnson needs to lose a bit of weight.



It was a fun charity match at Queen's, and we were playing with Andy Murray and Tim Henman. I play a set of singles every morning to stay fit and Boris was actually a surprisingly good player, but it was a short game. If I'd known at the time what sort of stance he was going to take on Brexit, I'd have hit the ball a lot harder, and a bit lower, and knocked him out of the tennis match and off the court altogether.



1996
I was in the music business for many years, and I knew John Lennon and Yoko Ono quite well.

They agreed to do a single for the front cover of my first magazine and used the recorded heartbeat of the baby they had just lost. I decided not to use it, but we stayed friends. This picture was taken after John Lennon had been shot. They were both ahead of their time when it comes to campaigning more for love than war.



1953
At my favourite grandparents' house in Devon.

They had a loft above a barn, and that was me going to bed with a candle in my hand. My granddad was very, very loving. He moved from London when he was about 28 and we'd pick apples and get the honey from the bees. I was already showing early signs of entrepreneurial spirit. I started catching budgerigars and tried to sell them and planted Christmas trees and tried to sell them too. And no, it's not the last time I wore a dress.



2011
Kate Winslet carried my mum out of a burning fire and saved her life on Necker. She had her kids in the house and there were 200-foot flames... they had to get out fast. It was like a real-life Titanic. The even happier side of the story is that she was meant to be leaving the next day, but she stayed on to help and fell in love with my nephew, Ned. They got married, and have two children, so she's become part of the family. As well as being an exceptional actress, she's an exceptional person.



2016
I was cycling down a hill and hit a sleeping policeman in the Virgin Islands. I went over the handlebars... People say to me, 'Isn't it about time you stopped these crazy stunts?' But I find in life saying yes is far more interesting than saying no. I'm nearly 68 and the reason my body can still do it is because I still do these things. If I put my feet up and watch other people do it, my body will slip into a comfy armchair, which I wouldn't enjoy so much.



2017
It looked like a nuclear bomb had hit Necker Island after Hurricane Irma.

Fifty of us were in the bunker and heard what sounded like a high-pitched female voice screaming for five hours. There was a deathly hush as the eye went over us - we stuck our heads out and saw the devastation. Then the other side of the storm hit us and we dived back in. I knew the bunker would withstand it, and luckily it backed onto a wine cellar, so we broke into that to calm our nerves.

Words: Nick McGrath. Pictures: Reuters/Getty/Splash News.