



No 404 December 2023



www.crosswordclub.org



Words won't make the wheels of a mill go round.
Albanian Proverb

GRIDATORIAL

A further reminder that membership is free for 2024. See Member News for more information.

Many thanks to Michael Kennedy for expertly editing the November puzzles. A great job, Michael.

A feast awaits you in the following pages. Bogeyman presents a richly-checked Jesso-style half and half puzzle and KA has compiled a barred puzzle in slot 2, which is clearly clued but may contain some words that are unfamiliar to those who don't use Chambers. Isla makes a welcome return with a straightforward, cleverly constructed slot 3 that we're sure all will enjoy. A change in spots for Crowsman, with his intriguingly titled AJ - can you find the link? Zinzan has devised one of his polished puzzles in slot 5 and Robespierre is at his enigmatic best in slot 6. A vintage Crowsman fills his Corner in slot 7 and the month's quiz, which involves a set of words with fascinating characteristics, is also from his pen.

Thanks again to our compilers, adjudicators and all our members who work to present your monthly challenge. It really is a team effort.

Please note that the closing date for this month's competitions is **22 December**, a little earlier than usual, to make sure that we can provide our year-end offering before the festive season.

We wish you pleasure in your solving this month

Ian

FROM THE ADJUDICATOR

Once again, I have the pleasure of sitting in the adjudicator's chair. I have the same message I had last time I was here: some solvers lost unnecessary dots to **not spell-checking** their ACCOLADE submission! This simple 30-second action is simple insurance for the days of hard work in solving the puzzles.

Slot 1: The main error in this slot was THROW for 19dn (THREW). This did not match either the tense of the definition or the homophone indicator. One entry had TRANSPORTER ZOOM instead of ROOM for 17ac - possibly where we ended up after many COVID-19 meetings.

Slot 2: Twelve clues created difficulties in this slot, but 1ac (HOOVES) caused the most angst (12 times!). HOOVER removed the wrong letter [(r)ubbish first] and HOOVED/HOOFED were the wrong tense. HOOVES also got two votes for COTM. AS IS PROPER (14dn) is the correct form. In 20-across I can see how "STAIR" matches "See said ...", but the solution then ignores the "locks" element, required for the HAIR to make CHAIR.

Slot 3: Good misdirection on 1ac (TOURISM) caught some solvers - "Cruise" referred to Tom, not a Tour. I could not find a BINDI BEACH, the web search revealed lots of typos for BONDI BEACH - which is consistent with three solver's attempts.

Slot 4: YALES/HAREM and FOXED/JOBED are interchangeable, this has been taken into account. Noted errors are largely one-offs (spelling or wrong tense), NAGAS tripped up four solvers, but Mme SAGAN really was a French actress. Another source of errors was entries that did not match the given letter (COXED instead of FOXED, ZENOLITHS instead of XENOLITHS).

Slot 5: Seven one-off errors. But the Nina proved problematic within a pleasing but otherwise anonymous quote without known literary context that is also incomplete ("When witches go riding, and black cats are seen, **the moon laughs and whispers**, 'tis near Halloween."). Those who attempted to fill the blanks came up with CATS, BATS and HATS - all of which are logical. For fairness, the correctness of the quote will not be judged for the purposes of dots.

continued on p 2

LEADING FIGURES

Puzzle No.	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Entries received	88	85	86	63	77	389
Correct entries	78	66	66	51	73	327
Success rate (%)	89	78	77	81	95	82
Prizewinners	Brian Dowse	Danuta Rosendorff	Alison Martin	Caroline Mackay-Sim	Claire McClelland	from 92 members

Prizewinner: November Slots 1-5 correct: Lynn Jarman. Congratulations!

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November 2023 Slot 1

B	A	C	K	G	A	M	M	O	N	B	O	A	R	D
E	A	R	Y	V	O	V	I							
E	A	T	B	E	T	W	E	E	N	M	E	A	L	S
C	L	A	A	R	B	R	P							
H	E	A	L	T	H	A	P	P	E	T	I	T	E	
	D	A			O				C	N				
O	L	Y	M	P	I	C	S	W	I	M	M	E	R	S
U			E	O	E	I								
T	I	T	U	S	A	N	D	R	O	N	I	C	U	S
S	O			S					O	L				
T	R	A	N	S	P	O	R	T	E	R	R	O	O	M
R	S	T	L	H	S	S	E							
I	N	T	H	E	N	E	A	R	F	U	T	U	R	E
P	E	E	R	E	I	R	T							
S	U	R	P	R	I	S	E	W	I	T	N	E	S	S

November 2023 Slot 2

H	O	O	V	E	S		P	R	O	T	E	A	S	E
E	F	A	A	E	W	M	N							
A	N	A	E	R	O	B	I	C	I	D	O	L	S	
T	M	N	O	O	G	U	U							
P	A	I	L	A	V	A	N	T	G	A	R	D	E	
U	N	A	E	S	I									
M	A	D	A	S	A	C	U	T	S	N	A	K	E	
P	T	I	R	R	G	A	C							
	C	O	N	S	T	I	T	U	T	I	O	N	A	L
A		P	T	C	T	G	I							
C	H	A	I	R	L	I	F	T	S	G	A	F	F	
T	C	O	C	I	R	R	F							
S	C	R	A	P	I	R	O	N	E	D	O	U	T	
U	E	E	S	N	D	O	O							
P	A	S	T	R	A	M	I	G	O	S	S	I	P	

November 2023 Slot 3

T	O	U	R	I	S	M		G	R	O	U	C	H	
A	R		T					E	N	L				
X	M	A	S		Y	L	A	N	G	Y	L	A	N	G
I	L	F	O	R	E	X	M							
D	I	S	C	O	C	A	S	H	W	O	M	B		
E			R	U				S	R	U				
R	E	D	D	E	N	S		B	R	I	T	O	N	S
M	I	A	T	A	U	G	U	H						
I	N	S	E	R	T	S		B	A	N	D	S	A	W
S	R	M						B	A					
T	E	E	M	O	R	A	L	L	A	B	E	L		
	P	O	O	W	E	S	O	K						
B	L	U	E	P	E	T	E	R	S	A	N	T	I	
	T	U	O		P			D	N					
L	E	S	S	E	R			W	A	R	N	I	N	G

November 2023 Slot 4

G	X			W	Q	P	K							
F	O	X	E		A	R	B	U	T	U	S	E	S	
B	N			A	A	R	N							
E	A	T	O	N	S	P	L	I	T	E	N	D	S	
N	L	H	P	L	E	O								
R	A	D	I	C	A	T	E							
N	T	R	R	Y	V	O								
D	A	P	H	N	E	S	T	A	M	A	R	I	N	
S	S	M	Z	L	S	L								
				M	I	L	E	P	O	S	T	S		
N	U	I	L	S	M	A								
B	A	L	M	O	R	A	L	S	L	O	O	N	Y	
G	B	A	I			T	K							
C	A	S	E	A	T	I	O	N	J	O	B	E	D	
S	R	E	N			R	R							

November 2023 Slot 5

W	H	E	N	W	I	T	C	H	E	S	G	O	R	I
N	N	E	R	Y	C	P	D							
E	X	T	R	A	A	P	P	L	E	T	I	N	I	
E	E	T	P	E	P	N	N							
W	A	R	S	H	I	P	R	O	T	T	I	N	G	
O	O	E	I	V	I	O	A							
L	O	N	G	R	A	N	G	E	C	A	N	O	N	
L		F	G	N										
A	R	D	U	O	U	S	T	W	I	N	T	U	B	
H	E	R		I	N	R	A	L						
T	E	R	S	E	M	E	L	O	D	R	A	M	A	
S	I	C	O	A	U	D	C							
O	D	D	M	A	N	O	U	T	C	H	E	E	K	
M	E	S	S	E	E	R	C							
L	A	S	I	T	N	E	E	S	E	R	A	S	T	A

November 2023 Slot 6

L	O	U	V	R	E		V	I	C	T	O	R	I	A
Y	N	A	A	M	A	I	N							
I	N	F	U	N	S	M	A	R	T	C	A	R	D	
N	I	G	T	G	E	T	A							
G	U	G	G	E	N	H	E	I	M	D	A	H	L	
	U	R	M	N	P									
H	E	R	M	I	T	A	G	E	R	E	T	I	E	
O	E	D	N	O	W	R								
N	U	D	G	E	B	U	S	H	S	H	I	R	T	
E		R	U	O	C	T								
Y	E	T	I	T	R	A	F	F	I	C	C	O	P	
T	E	M	R	A	T	U	H	A						
R	A	N	D	O	M	I	S	E	T	W	E	E	D	
A	O	N	T	N	T	R	D							
P	E	N	T	A	G	O	N		D	O	R	S	A	

MEMBERS' RESULTS FOR DECEMBER 2023 Slots 1 to 7

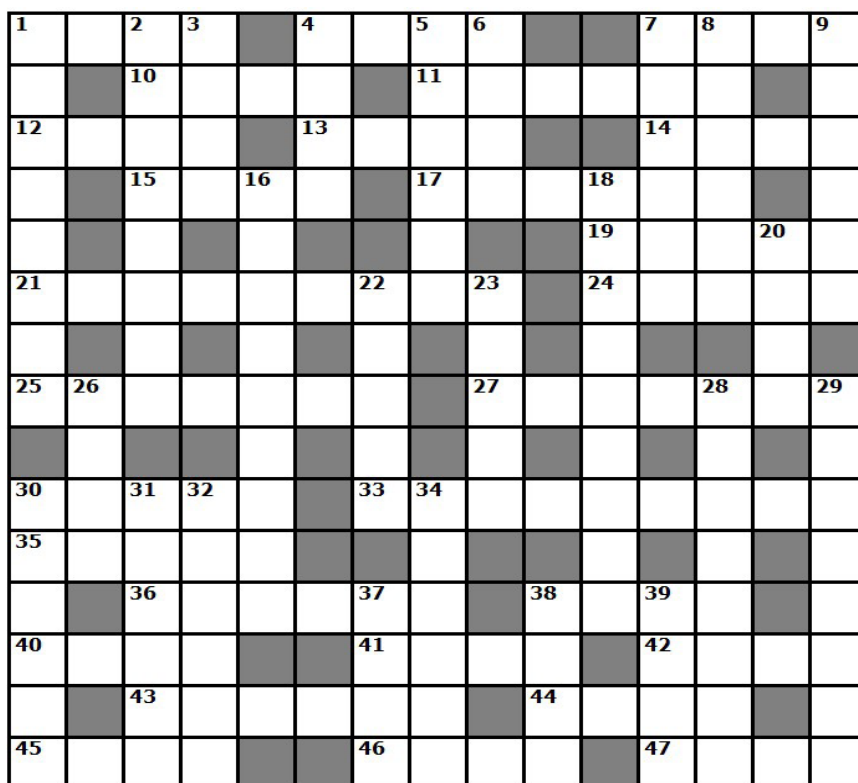
MEMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	MEMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	MEMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Abbott P.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Finemore M.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Moline R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Allen W.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Gamble K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Parsons D.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Anderson C.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Garner P.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Patterson A.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Audrins K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Glissan B.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Peach S.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Audrins K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Grainger D.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Pinder S.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Axelsen U.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Harper K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Procter D.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Barbour J.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Hearn R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Randall J.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Barnes J.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Horadam K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Rosendorff D.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Batum C.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Howat S.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Roulston S.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bennett D.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Jarman L.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Ryan W.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bettles K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Jarman R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Shapiro R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Blake M.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Jones G.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Shield A.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Callan K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Kennedy L.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Siegmán B.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Carroll L.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Kennedy M.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Simons A.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cockburn B.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Lankshear J.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Simpson F.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cockburn M.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Leigh J.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Skinner R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cole G.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Lloyd G.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Steinberger M.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Colgan L.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Mackay-Sim C.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Storey N.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Coote P.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Madden J.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Symons B.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cornish W.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Martin A.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Taylor R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Coulton L.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Martin F.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Taylor S.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cromer H.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Mason I.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Thompson I.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Crowe J.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	McClelland C.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Tickle B.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Davis K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	McKenzie I.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Veress M.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Dobele T.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	McKenzie R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Wilcox C.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Dowse B.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	McPherson T.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Williams K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Ducker R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Meek A.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Wimbush R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Dyer A.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Miles A.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Wood J.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Eaton L.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Millard A.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Woolston M.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Ferguson J.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Milton R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Young A.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

From the Adjudicator - continued from p 1

COTM: A total of 27 nominations was submitted for clues in all the month's puzzles. We have a tie for COTM, with 3 votes for TWITCHERS (Slot 6 18dn) and EIGHTH (

Slot 1

Half and
Half
by
Bogeyman

 Prize
\$50


Across

- 1 A wow of a 60's singer (4)
 4 Red, like a flower (4)
 7 Adherents need fine reply (4)
 10 Man is, but no man is! (4)
 11 Yellow fightin' fish! (6)
 12 In Spain, tree facing west is common (4)
 13 Southern Scottish river for a holiday (4)
 14 Light interior of rear layer of the iris (4)
 15 Improve ebbing flow (4)
 17 Sweet sounding animal (6)
 19 Courtyards need recycled air after a time (5)
 21 Provide accommodation for young lady - one with a knee? (9)
 24 VIP to arrest former pupil (5)
 25 Spiritual pisky - not even smart (7)
 27 Ruler has space for reporters ... (7)
 30 ... and host has space for openings in concert employing entertainers (5)
 33 Signal given by direction on chart flummoxed hero (9)
 35 Trounce vigorously, losing point in playing area (5)
 36 Repeat leap for cleric (6)
 38 Mass of good male sheep (4)
 40 Impressive selfie - to text perhaps? (4)
 41 About to enter abstainers zone (4)
 42 Moon in empty resort is a great success (4)
 43 Soccer organisation adopted Indian dress after game! (6)
 44 First of troubadours to behave with sensitivity (4)
 45 Female relatives - socially unacceptable workers (4)
 46 Once a path to animal home (4)
 47 Heard male to give praise (4)

Down

- 1 Title of respect (8)
 2 Safety apparatus (4,4)
 3 Spent (4)
 4 Remainder (4)
 5 Seafood (6)
 6 Toy (2-2)
 7 Parts of a cone (6)
 8 Part of speech (6)
 9 Beetle (6)
 16 Large frozen stretches of water (3,6)
 18 Bird (9)
 20 Charged particles (4)
 22 Bows (5)
 23 Fancy (5)
 26 Wrestling style (4)
 28 A great crime (8)
 29 Framework (8)
 30 Skin condition (6)
 31 Artist (6)
 32 Heaths (6)
 34 Liveliness (6)
 37 Propelling devices (4)
 38 Entrance (4)
 39 Chief (4)

For online entry, submission and adjudication of all slots via ACCOLADE click on the ACCOLADE button on www.crosswordclub.org home page.

By mail for Slots 1 to 5: Larry Kennedy 27, Honey Richea Road, Hellyer, TAS 7321 or (preferably) by email to larry1061@hotmail.com

By mail for Slot 6: Ian McKenzie 47 Ronald Avenue Greenwich NSW 2065 or (preferably) by email to ianmalcolmmckenzie@outlook.com

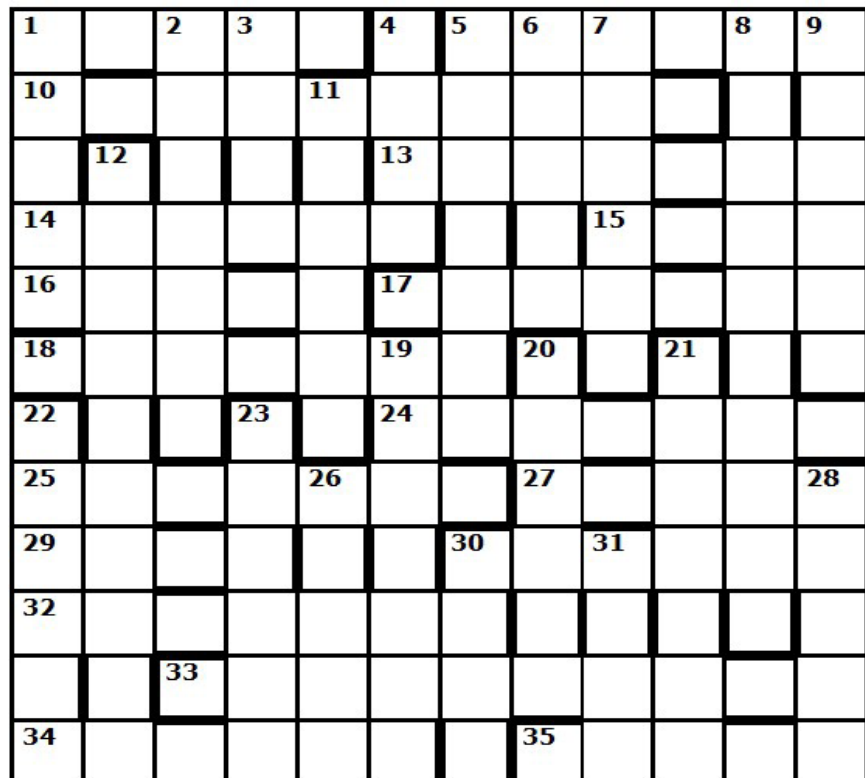
By mail for Slot 7: Len Colgan 1 Ailsa Avenue, Warradale, SA 5046 or (preferably) by email to Len.Colgan@unisa.edu.au

Closing mail date for all puzzles is 22 December 2023.

**SEND
SOLUTIONS
TO:**

**BLANK
GRIDS
PAGE 12**

Slot 2

Cryptic
by
KAPrize
\$50

Across

- 1 Meal for prophet with daughter (5)
- 5 Rather distant with regard to shark, for one (6)
- 10 Marine left with reconstructed alvine vessel (6,4)
- 13 There is some show of emotion at low return from restaurant (7)
- 14 State Company holds island material (6)
- 15 The summer leaves hide old bird (4)
- 16 Mission for a city doctor (5)
- 17 Amateur best film comeback for The Goddess (7)
- 18 Penalises opponents with tact (7)
- 24 Compensate footballer for retaliation (7)
- 25 Number one in pool? (7)
- 27 Ban recycled amber (5)
- 29 Pedigree of Thailand bird (4)
- 30 Once again mix safer drug (6)
- 32 Fashion allows skirts of armour (7)
- 33 I was told to select a flower for the relish (10)
- 34 Revise thoughts about food (6)
- 35 Perhaps a bit of lobster for the quiet boy (5)

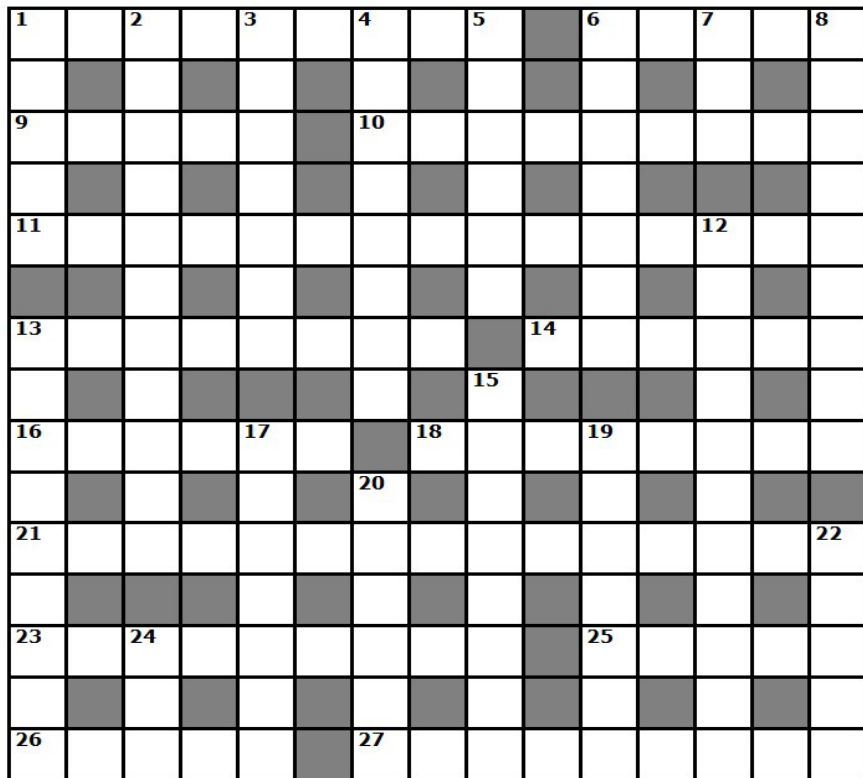
Down

- 1 Bandage for the star (5)
- 2 America in 1925? (3,4)
- 3 Container for Eastern bird (4)
- 4 Pacino returned religious work to singer (4)
- 5 Deliveries to Environmental Agency across the Tasman? (7)
- 6 The party includes a banquet (5)
- 7 Order railway employee to give up drug (6)
- 8 Radio commentary for actors following games (10)
- 9 The Prince is a little bit of a pig (6)
- 11 Approach Bill with expenditure (6)
- 12 Noon is one (10)
- 19 Blemish for student in situation at church (7)
- 20 A good look at a pretty woman (6)
- 21 Talk with famous model about tax (7)
- 22 Right animal for louse? (6)
- 23 Grab Eli and hide plant (6)
- 26 Are Baldwin and Guinness smart? (5)
- 28 Bird loses acceleration in German river (5)
- 30 A fish from Swedish sub-glacial streams (4)
- 31 Support for bird (4)

General Feedback for November

- Tricky but satisfying. *Mark Woolston*
- A few unusual grids added to the challenges this month. *Kath Harper*

Slot 3

Cryptic
by
Isla

Across

- 1** It's wrongly said extravagant jewellery is debilitating (9)
6 Turn up chasing timid rodent (5)
9 Shield oddly veils alternative (5)
10 Hearty fare - Spooner's not real slim! (4,5)
11 Number of the beast? (12,3)
13 Galloped about before signal to stop (8)
14 Popular opinion of new students (6)
16 Extra wealthy person with everything (2,4)
18 Most flimsy charge officially approved (8)
21 He and I see profit sag disastrously in capital investment once (3,5,2,5)
23 Ribaldry as returning US sailor eats inside (9)
25 Foolish person cut short maiden's use of language (5)
26 Join sweetheart and run (5)
27 Force metaphysicist's daughter to return some films (9)

Down

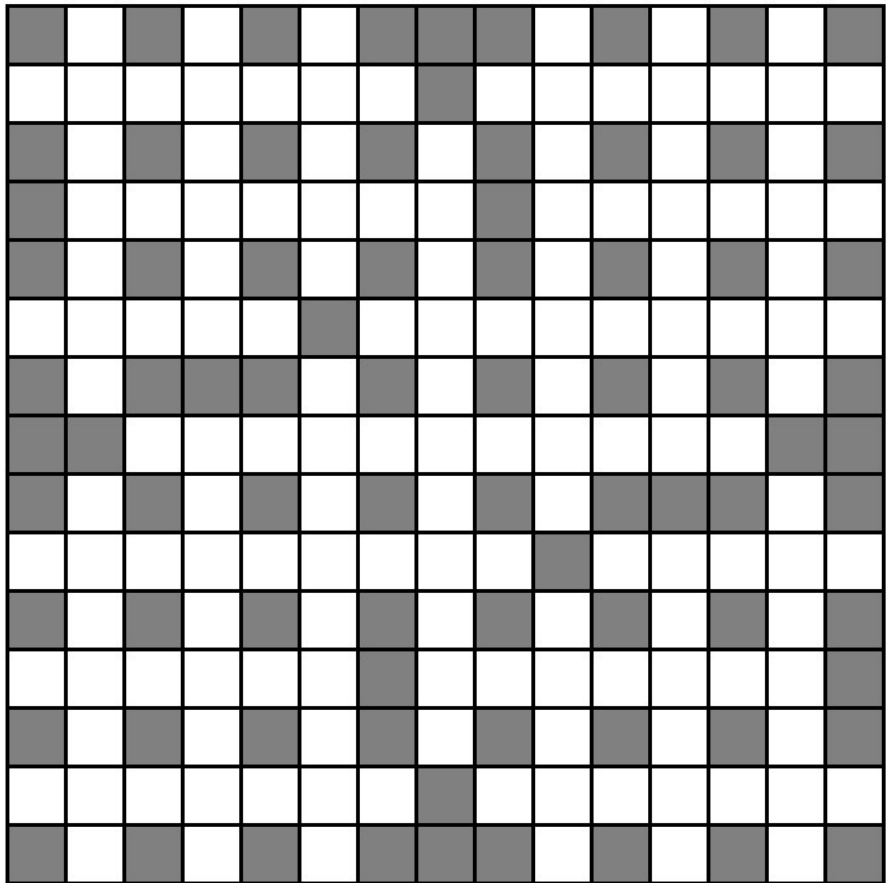
- 1** Ovid's raised over time as a dirty sod! (5)
2 Eco-friendly fur has universal mark inside (11)
3 Nothing in boat is overly ornate (7)
4 Tandem - it'll injure, losing front and back wheels at an inopportune moment (3-5)
5 Good range in opening strategy (6)
6 Acid's filling rear tank (7)
7 Short term indeed! (3)
8 Cruellest peacekeeping type is from France (9)
12 Citrus in pie rug rats demolished, eating loudly (11)
13 Policeman: group of criminals is above board (9)
15 Gets to the heart of love with European - lust, perhaps? (6,2)
17 I'll shortly raise disarray, raise Cain (7)
19 Religiously ducking the issue? (7)
20 A deadly sin, no? (6)
22 Add extra lines for drainage pits (5)
24 Old driver briefly in court (3)

Slot 4

A Quizzical AJ? by Crowsman

**Prize
\$50**

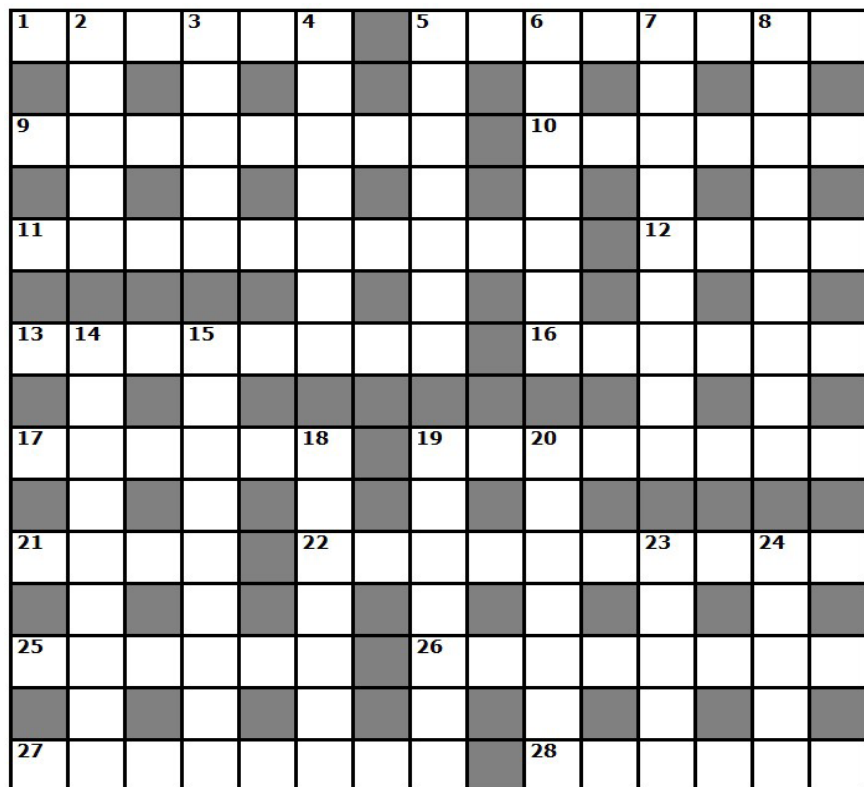
Solutions begin with the
given letter. Place them in
the grid jigsaw-wise,
where they fit.



- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>A Violently stir - it split stone! (7)
 B Obtain refined carbon associated with plants (7)
 C Accepted dubious coin inside channel (9)
 D Spread out around a backtracking duck, worn out (11)
 E Cut back bomb test (7)
 F Lots coming around evoke compliments (11)
 G First person is wearing instinctive range (5)
 H Test follows murmur relating to body fluid (7)
 I Improperly made it twice, and took off! (8)
 J Germanic people show fibre with strong leader (5)
 K Entered details of blood covering saw (5,2)
 L Lifting devices for Carl and Jerry perhaps (7)
 M Strategically optimised with apothecaries' weight cut (9)</p> | <p>N Register holds bird name (8)
 O Antelopes provided in preference to bird (6)
 P Officer cut back <i>Top Gun</i> rival (9)
 Q Countryman visiting in another land headed west (6)
 R Cover wall anew, whichever way one looks (7)
 S Old cats' comeuppance, having scratched female (6)
 T Self-reflective teaching (5)
 U Association holds small concert (6)
 V Container brands identifying lubricants (9)
 W Spencer joined an English town (5)
 X Inquisitor cardinal imprisoned foe endlessly, all in retrospect (7)
 Y Capital provided before splitting sailors up (7)
 Z Oaxacan overturns church stone (7)</p> |
|--|---|

Slot 5

Cryptic
by
Zinzan

 Prize
\$50


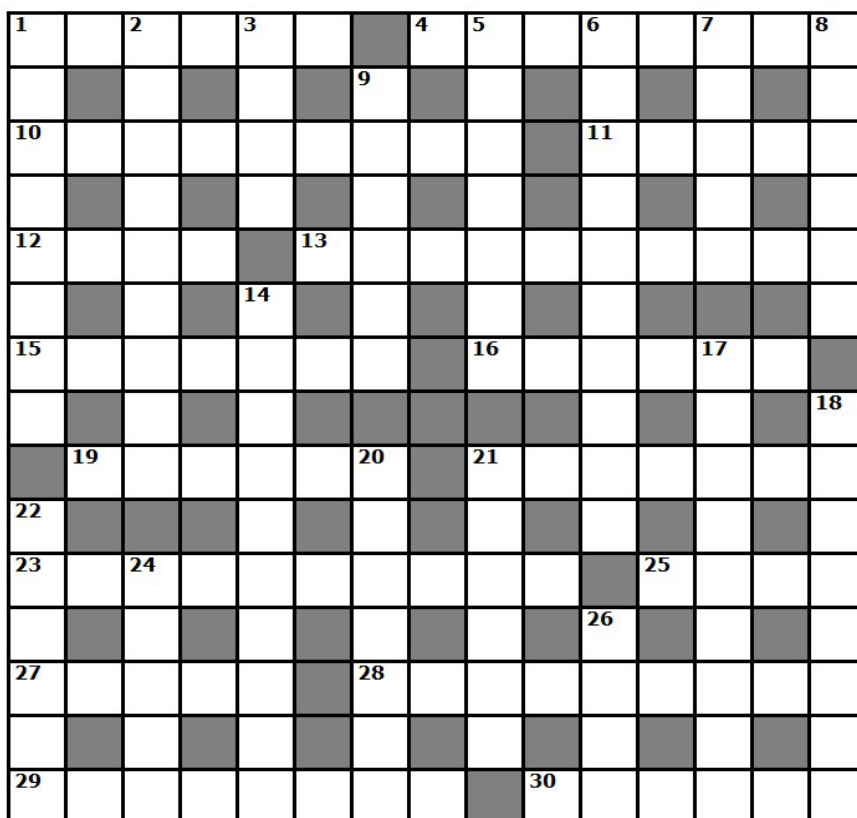
Across

- 1 Ones facing serious trouble regarding electrocution and minor burn (6)
 5 Odd time for washout? (3-5)
 9 Peculiar old tapir having three legs (8)
 10 A couple finding the time ... (6)
 11 ... to sermonise endlessly about education method ... (10)
 12 ... that is contracted for one day a month (4)
 13 Scuttles ship carrying male involved in escapade (8)
 16 Still life repositioned in Soutine's frame (6)
 17 Deviate soldiers sitting in second-best seats? (6)
 19 It may be important hearing cassette played ... (4,4)
 21 ... before November, it's said on the radio, through this? (4)
 22 One side has a 25-ball century playing alongside small children? (2,3,5)
 25 The French invade at nearly 10PM! (6)
 26 Things that bring comfort to groups of workers, caught inside ... (8)
 27 ... loose struggle with English program costing no one anything (8)
 28 Goes from one piece to the next piece of unwise guesswork (6)

Down

- 2 Court shoe occasionally placed on end of elephant's trunk! (5)
 3 Recording turned over by one living abroad (5)
 4 Slow swimmers at sea amused everyone originally (7)
 5 Holds a hint of nostalgia, no less exceptional (7)
 6 Negative director yearns for extra pieces of footage (7)
 7 Destructive group of people embroiled in civil unrest ... (9)
 8 ... removed covers on gun in series of places for good people (9)
 14 One in vocal company tries out after hard work almost finished (9)
 15 Stupid one splitting 1000 in French city on the Med (9)
 18 Assistance in throwing court matter out, tort case dropped (7)
 19 Rubbish paintings returned by leader of Italy (7)
 20 Puts together regular selection from supply increase (7)
 23 Outstanding sport needs no introduction (5)
 24 Took charge of a light bulb company's collection (5)

Slot 6

Cryptic
by
RobespierrePrize
\$50

Across

- 1,9** Idler has breather, having no way to embrace outspoken "do-little" woman! (6,6)
4 Student once being briefly with nothing to eat in state of obscurity (8)
10 Apron cut up - piece together to make a sign (2, 7)
11 One setter (left-leaning) after another is a chip off the old block, say. (5)
12 Lamented head-on prang in rain (4)
13 Origami item that's all bark and no bite? (5,5)
15 In stitches with fat protestant (7)
16 Search for food, turning to large caviar sandwiches (6)
19,30 Mechanic's musical brother adopts the old-style backing (6,6)
21 Dog's breakfast is very much rib chops essentially (7)
23 Crime boss seen with door-opener arranging veto for simple preference (6, 4)
25 Hard to avoid guide for someone on horse? (4)
27 Vacuous French refusal in Brussels initially instils feeling of lethargy (5)
28 Crystal derived from heavy metal slags refining (4,5)
29 Convulsions from drinks when fish is eaten (5-3)
30 See 19

Down

- 1** Perverse fellow rounding on one who shuns company (4,4)
2 Ring up pal involved in silly run-out! (9)
3 Know-all to regret sticky stuff, according to Spooner (4)
5 Pet hate: a problem in IT support (7)
6 Wally to get onto prompt service for presenters (5,5)
7 Throttled by lunatic in gory murder (5)
8 Passed on some recessive pheromones (2,4)
9 See 1 Across
14 Make sweet stuff to accompany priest in box (10)
17 One taking excessive interest in allegedly single nurse (4,5)
18 Try out travelling round islands full of sightseers (8)
20 Ring number, interrupting woman in garden, then cut off (7)
21 Moneybags in sporting organisation rejected discretion (3,3)
22 Containers in stock may be handfuls for farmers! (6)
24 Contradictory responses from Berlin, then expulsion of Eastern spy (5)
26 In the past, yours truly trousered money-changing fee (4)

Submit solution via ACCOLADE button on www.crosswordclub.org home page
 or see page 3 for adjudicator and closing mail date

Slot 7

Cryptic
by
CrowsmanPrize
\$50

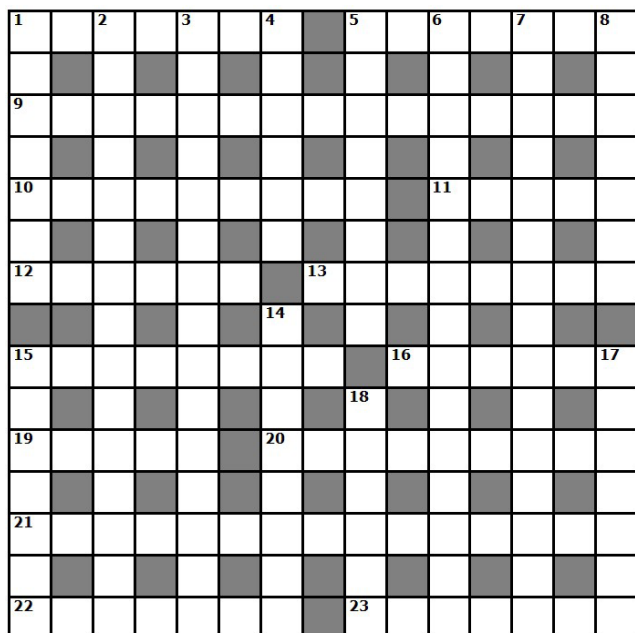
Crowsman's Corner

Down

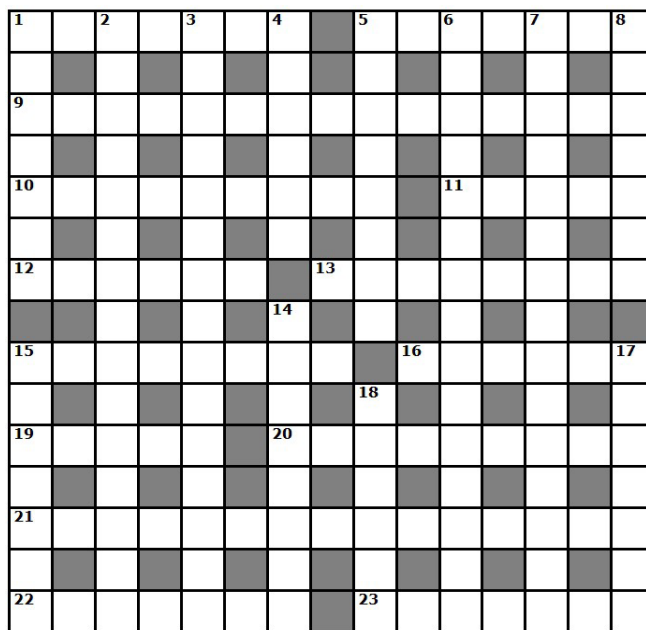
- 1 Routine's buzzing beat (7)
- 2 Misuses fitting amidst rising criticism (15)
- 3 The pair in skimpy briefs, drunk! (5,3,7)
- 4 This pig is much smaller, just over a pound (6)
- 5 Denied is obtaining relief (8)
- 6 Margin cut - overshadowed by mean part-payment (7,8)
- 7 Check on champ - exploitation is admitted by an old exaggerating German (5,10)
- 8 Ben perhaps embraces trudge through snow heading north. He leads polar journeys (7)
- 14 Old lights are short fixes (3-5)
- 15 Sandal of Indian male friend (7)
- 17 Princess Anne is giving up ochre pigments (7)
- 18 Grab a customer inside counter (6)

Across

- 1 City having processed meat food rejected (7)
- 5 G. Greer, for example, is more fluent (7)
- 9 Learned about boy, small, being mishandled (15)
- 10 Press disc received by con men (9)
- 11 Doctors learn of the kidneys (5)
- 12 Damage inhibited, like waterlogged ground (6)
- 13 Queensland's Hercules carries upper-class boaster (8)
- 15 Bark of an oak species framed a bench. It's seen at a bullfight (8)
- 16 Talk about tossing out small fish (6)
- 19 Soul left out of brute! (5)
- 20 Oil subarticle, without first being edited? (9)
- 21 Kibosh hoax involving those Australians? (3,3,7,2)
- 22 They shine with extraordinary results (7)
- 23 Reunion location is positioned in westerly direction around retreat (2,5)



Slot 7: NAME:



Submit your solution via the ACCOLADE button on www.crosswordclub.org home page, or for mail entries see page 3 for adjudicator and closing mail date.

A	C	C		
	R			
	O	Z		
O	Z			
	W			
N	O	T	E	S
	R			
	L			
	D			

Explanations for November slots 1 to 5 Note: cd = cryptic definition; dd = double definition; rev or < = reversal; homophones are noted as "homoph" and words from which they are derived may be shown in quotes; anagrams as anag. if straightforward, or (NNNN)*. "Heads" or "Tails" are first or last letters of part of a clue; letters forming solutions are normally written as capitals and removals as lower case; hw or hidden = hidden word. Explanations provided by individual compilers may vary from this format.

Slot 1 Fraz. Down: 1 BEECH (beach hom.), 2 CAT L + ADY (talc anag.; day anag.), 3 GR(EA + T) APES, 4 MY WAY (hidden: last letters), 5 (I)OVE + R(P)OWER, 6 BOM + BE (mob rev.), 7 A + V(A + R)ICE, 8 DIS(PEN)SES, 11 OUTST + RIPS (stout anag.), 12 CON + SOLERS (losers anag.), 13 MINOR SUIT (anag.), 15 TOASTER (2 defs.), 16 CLO(ck) + SURE, 18 STEER (2 defs.), 19 THREW (through hom.), 20 ME(E)TS.

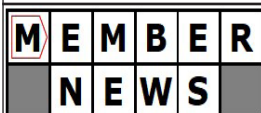
Slot 2 P-brane. Across: 1 cd, 4 PRO + TEASE, 10 (b)ICARBONAtE)*reformulated, 11 ID {OnLy} S, 12 homophone(pale>PAIL), 13 (ANT RAVAGED)* concoction, 15 MAD AS + A + CUT + SNAKE, 18 dd, 20 (see>C) + HAIR + LIFT + S, 22 Homophone(gaffe>GAFF), 24 dd, 25 homophone(iron doubt>IRONED OUT), 26 PAS {TRAM} I, 27 GO + S + SIP. Down: 1 Spoonerism (peat hump), 2 (A FOOD MINT)*fresh, 3 [n] EAR {N}, 5 (CORNERS CUT INTO)*repair, 6 TWIG + GIN + G + IT, 7 hw, 8 E + NS + U + ED, 9 ABOVE CRITIC + IS + huMan, 14 (PRO ASPIRES)*to run amok, 16 KANGAROO [court]S, 17 cd, 19 ACTS UP, 21 AC {R} E + S, 23 R + reversal(ode>EDO).

Slot 3 Lexi Conner. Across: 1 TO (futURIStic)M, 4 GROUCHo, 7 X + MAS, 8 givenchY + LANG x 2, 12 homoph awe, 13 DISCOvery, 14 Choir + has*, 15 WOMBat, 18 RED + DENS, 20 camBRIDGE + not< + S, 21 TAUGHT, 22 (inspectors - cop)*, 23 BAND + SAW, 24 meet<, 25 mORALe, 28 LAB + EL, 31 pOWER, 32 BLUE + PETERS, 34 homoph ante, 35 (cleaners - can)*, 36 W (ran*) ING. Down: 1 TAXI/DER>/MIST*hom, 2 (tutorials - tito)*, 3 naSTY, 4 homoph jeans, 5 proXY NOminees <, 6 CgLAMOROUS, 9 L (Opportunistic) USTS, 10 aldebARAn, 11 dd, 16 BU (shaw*) LKING, 17 slang is<, 19 DIS (REspite) PUTE, 20 (blubbering - gin)*, 26 >ROTOR<, 27 IAW Everyone, 29 BOND + I, 30 OPTUS, 33 winterS Passing.

Slot 4 KA (Karl Audrins). A anag, B bal(anag)ls, C case+At+ion, D da(ph)nes, E (k)eaton, F fox+ed, G gob(anana)s, H hare+m, I (p)irate, J Lo+bed, K ken do(ne), L loon+y, M mi(anag)st+s, N rev, O anag, P pure+e, Q dd, R (e)radicated, S hom, T tamarin(d), U (h)umber, V vas+anag, W w+rapper, X x+e(n)oliths, Y dd, Z z(ill) ion.

Slot 5 InGrid. Across: 7 EX+ThRoAt, 8 app+le+tin+i, 9 sounds like sure whip, 10 (t)rotting, 11 long+anag anger, 12 sounds like cannon, 13 anag roads+uu, 15 butt backwards+win, 18 bitTER SErved, 19 melod(y)+Reflecting+A+Mood+a, 20 odd+anag amount, 21 dm. Down: 1 enter+on, 2 anag, 3 part backwards+pings, 4 sounds like hi+per+ventilate+s, 5 s[con]cept[ion]ic, 6 o+pinion, 14 der+ides, 16 anag discounters-toss, 17 dart backwards+er+s, 19 moo+se.

Crossword Centre News. Robert Teuton, organiser of the Centre's monthly clue-writing competition, has written an interesting account of The Times 2024 Crossword Competition. You can read his account [here](#). For those who would like a blow by blow account of solving one of the competition crossword, David Webb has explained how he tackled the final puzzle on his Dweebovision channel [here](#), and Simon Anthony On Cracking the Cryptic examined the final puzzle in a video [here](#).



Welcome to our new members. We look forward to your contributions.

Find us on

Donations to the ACC Prize Fund: Many thanks to our members, who have generously made donations to the Prize Fund this month, directly or by declining a prize.

Clue-writing - November Competition: After a flurry of entries the flood has abated. There is still time for you to write a clue for the word **QUARTER (7)** complete with explanation. Send your entries to Drew Meek email to drewski1@hotmail.com - Entries do not close until 11 December 2023.

New compilers welcome! We welcome puzzles from new compilers. The easiest way to start is with a slot 1 Half and Half puzzle, which only involves cryptic clues for half of the solutions. If you're hesitant, some of our more experienced compilers will be delighted to pair with you and provide advice and assistance. Do let Ian know if you are interested.

Subscriptions for 2024. Just a reminder that your membership of the Club is free for the whole of 2024 and you can enrol friends and family for the same bargain price! There is no need for members to do anything - we will roll over your membership automatically to assign to you all member benefits for 2024.

Join our Facebook group and discuss anything to do with words and puzzles. (No discussion of current prize puzzles please.)

Search for [Australian Crossword Club](#) or click the above hyperlink.

November 1: Fraz (Fraser Simpson)

- I really enjoyed solving the 8 fifteen-letter solutions and the clues for AVARICE and MINOR SUIT. *Brian Tickle*
- Clever new idea for a slot 1. Most enjoyable. *Ian Thompson*
- Fifteen letter answers are always a great start. *Ann Millard*
- I liked CLOSURE but possibly it should have been certain rather than certainly. *Toby McLeay*
- Magnificent Slot 1 puzzle, Fraser. Best is MINOR SUIT. *Len Colgan*
- Excellent slot 1. Clues tricky but fair. *Roy Taylor*
- Good fun - easier than it appeared at first glance. *Nea Storey*
- Loved Slot 1! That's what that spot should be! (Surely, briefest clue word-count in history!?) I'll make one of them COTM... *William Ryan*
- Interesting set-up with eight fifteen letter clues. Thanks Fraz. *Robyn Wimbush*
- A refreshing variation on the usual half & half and the clues were a joy to solve. Well done, Fraz. *Mal Cockburn*
- I liked CLOSURE very much, and that all Acrosses have 15 letters, neat! *Kathy Horadam*
- Awesome grid with lovely clues! I really enjoyed it! *Bev Cockburn*
- I enjoyed the long phrases. *Robyn McKenzie*
- A very enjoyable solve. I like this type of wackiness. *Tony Dobe*
- I liked having the across clues as cryptics with long answers. Great idea Fraz. *Lynn Jarman*
- What a fun grid. *Ulla Axelsen*

November 2: P-brane (Roger Hearn)

- My favourite clues were those for HOOVES and EARN. *Brian Tickle*
- Colourful entries and fun clues. *Fraser Simpson*
- PROTEASE was the last to get. It was a real Eureka moment (love them!) when it clicked. *Michael Finemore*
- 3 words top left were last to solve. *Roy Taylor*
- I liked the clue for REDO. *Nea Storey*
- I enjoyed IRONED OUT and ENSUED, thanks P-brane. *Kathy Horadam*
- Got the Spoonerism back to front for a while, otherwise no issues with this fine puzzle. *Mal Cockburn*
- I had to smile at HOOVES! I wonder how many Brand names have become verbs! *Bev Cockburn*
- Some compilers cause a worried frown for me, but not P-brane. It's a smile and slot 2 did not disappoint. I particularly liked EARN and CHAIRLIFTS. *Lynn Jarman*
- A challenging slot 2. Top left corner took a while as I was trying to use 'coal'. Always love a good Spoonerism. *Ulla Axelsen*

November 3: Lexi Conner (Ron Shapiro)

- Lots of great clues in this puzzle. My favourites were those for GROUCH, WOMB and OPUS. *Brian Tickle*
- Not an easy workout with some excellent clues. *Roy Taylor*
- So many removals! ARA was new to me and OP(t) US unexpectedly timely! *Kathy Horadam*
- ANTI has me scratching my head. Otherwise, a grand puzzle. *Mal Cockburn*

- Great clues, as usual. Loved clue for WOMB! *Bev Cockburn*
- Peters comes to nothing. Doesn't that have to be PETERS OUT? *Tony Dobe*
- I liked the clue for TOURISM! *Robyn McKenzie*
- This wasn't a straightforward slot to get into and I have question marks against several clues, for example 36ac. *Lynn Jarman*
- Good, straight-forward clues, although 1dn was a challenge. *Ulla Axelsen*

November 4: KA (Karl Audrins)

- The placement of YALES & HAREM can be interchanged. Ditto for FOXED & JOBED. *Ian McKenzie*
- Good to have a more challenging grid. Thanks, Karl. *Ann Millard*
- Bit of an unfriendly grid (actually two unlinked grids) that required nearly all answers to be solved first. *Andrew Patterson*
- Clues easy to solve but a fascinating challenge to put in. HAREM and YALES interchangeable. *Roy Taylor*
- Not confident but gave it a red hot go! *Patricia Abbott*
- This grid was an absolute pain! But the T clue did stir a nice memory of the time Betelgeuse came to stay with us, and brought me a tamarin tree. *Nea Storey*
- HAREM and YALES seem interchangeable. *Mark Woolston*
- Y and H, and F and J clues are interchangeable. *Brian Symons*
- With an uncooperative grid and some rather obscure words, I struggled with this slot for quite a while and it was the last one I completed for the month. Managed to find a place for every answer in the end. Well done, KA. *Mal Cockburn*
- Hardest grid for an AJ ever! Fortunately, MOST of the clues were fair which helped a bit! *Bev Cockburn*
- Whew!! *Tony Dobe*
- A much harder grid than usual with no interlinking initial letters and only three lengths of words!! *Hilary Cromer*
- This puzzle took me ages to solve and then to fit in! A great challenge. *Robyn McKenzie*
- Whew, what a workout! I don't think GO is an American sailor, though. I note Y and H could be swapped, also F and J. It took me ages to realise V was not Ventricle. I thought the clues for D, T and U were clever. *Kathy Horadam*
- I realized fairly early that I needed to solve the 7-letter words. However, they changed places several times before staying put. *Lynn Jarman*
- I decided it was best to solve the 7-letter words first, but the big problem was determining where they should go! If you planned Slot 4 being a nightmare KA, you certainly succeeded with me!! *Lynn Jarman*
- Thanks KA. An enjoyable puzzle, but I had trouble with the word starting with N. If it is Nagas, then the reverse is Sagan. As far as I know, she was not an actress. *Caroline MacKay-Sim*
- A very unkind grid. Would almost be impossible without solving most of the clues to begin with. A real challenge. *Ulla Axelsen*

Continued on page 16

Name

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Clue of the Month

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Quiz 12-2-23 Alternates by Crowsman. Each answer (all in Chambers) contains consonants and vowels alternately, such as CAPE CANAVERAL, EVAPORATIVE, GENERALISED.

In some cases, more than one spelling will be accepted. Answers are in alphabetic order. Send your answers via email to Len.Colgan@unisa.edu.au or mail to 1 Ailsa Avenue, Warradale, SA 5046 Closing mail date 22 December 2023

- 1 Yankeefied (12)
- 2 Covered with asphalt (11)
- 3 Absolute and without exception (11)
- 4 Removed forces from (13)
- 5 Run-down (11)
- 6 Desktop gadget to provide diversion for business manager, such as Newton's Cradle (9,3)
- 7 Having the effect of making easier (12)
- 8 Fund-raising home events (6,5)
- 9 Partly living off its host, like mistletoe (13)
- 11 Not working, out of order (11)
- 10 Conifer suitable for bonsai (8,5)
- 12 Made horn-like (11)
- 13 Romance language speaker, south of the Rio Grande (5,8)
- 14 Sanctioned (11)-
- 15 Crafty and contriving (12)
- 16 Cupboard for pharmaceuticals (8,7)
- 17 Relating to the occult significance of numbers (13)
- 18 Egg-laying organ in female insects (10)
- 19 Medication for aches and pains (11)
- 20 Extra compensation awarded in retribution against a defendant (8,7)
- 21 Summed up (13)
- 22 Tending to make fit again after illness (14)
- 23 Half of the boundary length (13)
- 24 Relating to poisons and their antidotes (13)
- 25 Not regretful (12)
- 26 Predictable and dull (13)
- 27 Statement merely appearing to be true (14)
- 28 Using insulting language (12)
- 29 Béarnaise sauce ingredient (4,7)
- 30 Supposed generation of offspring totally different to the parent (11)
- 31 AIDS drug AZT (10)

Report on Quiz 2023-11 It's Elementary by Valkyrie (Ulla Axelsen)

Entries received: 22 Correct: 11 Success Rate 50%

Winner: Ann Millard. Congratulations!

Results 28 J Crowe, R Jarman, A Miles, A Millard, A Patterson, D Proctor, D Rosendorff, W Ryan,

A Shield, M Veress, R Wimbush **27** K Bettles, P Garner, D Grainger, L Jarman, C McClelland, R McKenzie, D Meek **26** W Allen J Leigh **25** K Williams **22** D Bennett

Answers: 1 as/ce/ti/c 2 br/as/s/y 3 cl/am/b/er 4 dy/n/am/o 5 er/ra/ti/c 6 fe/ti/s/h 7 ga/na/c/he 8 ge/c/k/o 9 ha/nd/b/ag 10 in/fe/rn/al 11 k/ni/tc/h 12 la/rg/es/se 13 li/ti/ga/te 14 mo/ti/o/n 15 ne/po/ti/sm 16 os/cu/la/te 17 pa/yb/ac/k 18 pr/ac/ti/ce 19 rh/u/ba/rb 20 sc/ra/tc/h 21 se/mo/li/na 22 sm/i/li/es 23 ta/v/er/n 24 th/in/k/er 25 v/er/ru/ca 26 w/ar/re/n 27 xe/ra/f/in 28 y/o/nd/er

Compiler's Observations Thank-you to the 22 people who braved the elements. I received the first entry before I had even downloaded my copy of Crozworld. The next entry however, did not come till a few days later. All the elements came from Chambers Crossword Dictionary. I accepted 'handbag', 'hatband' and 'hosiery' for #9. #22 caused a few problems as the plural of 'smiley' can be either 'smileys' or 'smilies'. Unfortunately 'ey' is not a real element. I accepted 'semolina', 'silicate' and 'silicone' for #21. I could not however accept 'brashy' for #2 as it just doesn't have the correct meaning ('brash' would have been correct but has the wrong word length). There were a few errors where the answer just did not meet the given criteria.

Solvers' Feedback

- Thank you for your quizzes and crosswords. I was in my element solving this quiz. *David Proctor*
- Thank you for an entertaining quiz which had me scratching my memory for Elementary abbreviations. I couldn't find Ha Hahnium in my periodic table but later discovered that it had been replaced by Db Dubnium in recent years. *Keith Bettles*
- It was a fun quiz, thank you for the variety. *Julie Leigh*
- Thanks for an enjoyable quiz. *Drew Meek*
- Many thanks for your fascinating quiz. The lovely word knitch was a new one for me. I'm not sure I'll be able to fit it into everyday conversation very often though! *Julie Crowe*
- As an old BSc (UNSW), loved this Quiz. Well, the concept, anyway... (I think they may have invented a few new ones, since 1982!). Tantalum, as always. *William Ryan*
- Seemed a straightforward concept but the last half-a-dozen were tricky to find. I had to scan Chambers of SE and SI words and discovered SEMOLINA had "thicken soups". That'll do me!! *Andrew Patterson*
- Another of your fab quizzes. *David Grainger*
- A very challenging but entertaining quiz. I started off with handbag for number 9 (Ha - hahnium; Nd - neodymium; B - boron; Ag - silver) as hahnium is still listed in my 2015 edition of Chambers Crossword Dictionary but then discovered it's been renamed dubnium. *Alison Shield*
- A challenging quiz around the Periodic Table. Great, thank you! *Ann Millard*
- I took a while to get #9 because hahnium (Ha) was never officially the name for element 105. It is now called dubnium (Db). *Michael Veress*
- Thanks again for a very interesting puzzle. Took me right back! The emoticon/emoji one had me puzzled for a bit. *Robyn Wimbush*
- Thanks for another interesting puzzle. I love your clue for 'warren'. *Claire McClelland*
- This tied me up in knots for a bit, though I feel that I finally beat it. Thank you again for all you do for our Club. Keep up the good work. *Pat Garner*
- Thank you for this quiz. "Semolina" was quite hard to find. *Andrew Miles*

continued on p 14

November 2023 Slot 6 Recollections by Nigrum**Cattus****Entries received 63; Correct 48; Success rate 76% (for solution see page 2)****Prizewinner: Larry Kennedy. Congratulations!**

Adjudicator's observations: The themed puzzle from the late-lamented Ray was much appreciated by solvers. Some problems were experienced with MONA, well known to Tasmanians, which had accurate wordplay but a definition that depends on one's perspective (even though shared by Roy Taylor - see below). D'Orsay in 30-across lost some solvers their dot and was perhaps a little naughty, given that only the term "Orsay" Googles. Although strictly the Musée d'Orsay, none of the variations offered satisfied the accurate wordplay.

Explanations: Across: 1 LO(UV)RE, **4,8** (DICTION+A+VERBAL+ART)*, **10** IN/FUN(d), **11** DD, **12** (HUGGING+ME+E)*, **13** DD, **15** HER(M) ITAGE, **17** (RET(I)E, **19** aNd UnDo GeEgaw, **20** (THIS+SHRUB)*, **22** YET+1, **24** TRAFFIC/CO/P, **27** (ID+A+SERMON)*, **28** T/W/EE?D, **29** PEN + TAG + ON, **30** OR in D SAY. **Down: 1** f(LYING), **2** GUNFIRE*(U)D, **3** (A+DERRINGER)*, **5** I(MAGI)N+E, **6** NO(-NO)TATE, **7** L(ARIAT)*, **9** AsSeTs HoMe And , **14** SOUP/RICOTT(a)*, **15** (ON+THERAPY)*, **16** G.N.U, **18** TWISTER* (CH), **20** (OUR+BRIT)*, **21** S+OFTEN, **23** DD, **25** PA(DD)Y, **26** M(ON)A.

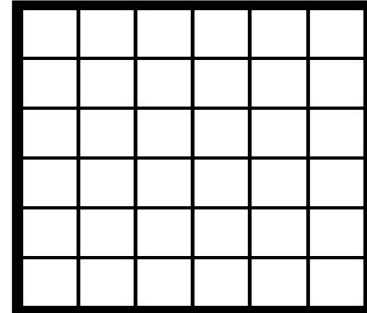
Solvers' Feedback

- Good anagram of VICTORIA AND ALBERT. *Ian McKenzie*
- 19ac and 9dn appear to have extra alternate letters that are unused. 23dn is much the same definition. *Andrew Patterson*
- KAIL is an author and an alternative spelling for KALE. I hope that was wanted for 13 ac. I have been to just a few of these collections; last one being MONA which was indeed risqué. *Roy Taylor*
- The theme wasn't memories after all! (Unless one was lucky enough to have memories of visiting all those museums/art galleries) *Nea Storey*
- A lovely collection of galleries and exhibition spaces to add further interest. *Julie Crowe*
- I can proudly say I've been to at least one of the galleries mentioned albeit too briefly. Great theme. *Mal Cockburn*
- Great theme! *Bev Cockburn*
- Lovely theme and great clues. *Robyn McKenzie*
- Lots of lovely anagrams. I was always under the impression that odd or even parts of a clue referred to a whole word. *Ulla Axelsen*
- As the title clearly stated: Re Collections. The penny finally dropped after Louvre and Hermitage. *Keith Bettles*

FRAZ WORD SQUARE 6-Nov (Solution on p 15)

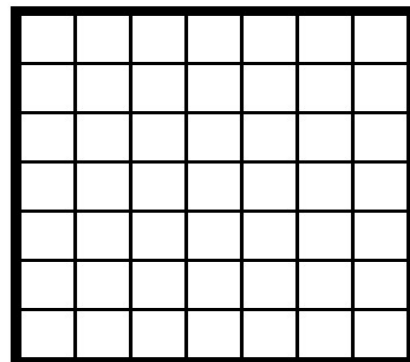
Identical words read across and down in this square. Clues are not listed in order.

- Bereft *Whip It* band with security pass, e.g.
- Birds squawk
- Exaggerate victory in sketchy rodeo
- Look down at German tenant
- Lying across bed is one inventor
- Stick and net entangled mouse, maybe

**FRAZ WORD SQUARE 7-Nov** (Solution on p 15)

Identical words read across and down in this square. Clues are not listed in order.

- Caver is breaking stuff inside
- Comes up with 500 new sieves
- Coming or going, our teen jogged (2 wds.)
- Finally square with paltry sum, tenants put escorts off the premises (2 wds.)
- Front tooth one's filling incorporated gold
- Lifted the curtain on headliner Theodore
- Renowned rapper mostly not disheartened

**Results of Quiz 11-2023 It's Elementary by Valkyrie - continued from page 13**

- Chemical elements have never been on my radar because the extent of my knowledge of chemistry comes from three years of General Science at High School which merely fuelled my determination to quit chemistry forever. But let not this lack of knowledge detract from enjoyment of this great quiz. A generous librarian printed off for me a colourful alphabetical list of chemical elements and together with my helpful nephew I did it. *Lynn Jarman*
- It took me ages to get #21. It was fun to see my name in the answers, *Warren Allen*.
- Who knew diving into the periodic table could be some much fun - thanks Ulla! *Ron Jarman*
- Thank you for your quiz. You have such a wide variety of ideas! I found when looking up my old list of elements that it was quite out of date. New ones get added! *Robyn McKenzie*

November-2023 Slot 7 Cryptic by The Myythtics
Entries received 64; Correct 55; Success rate 86%.
Prizewinner: Ken Davis. Congratulations!

Compilers' observations: It was pleasing to see few errors in this reasonably difficult puzzle. A small number of solvers plumped for "genetics" in place of the intended GENESIS in 17-across, where "relation" provided the SIS. Jessamy, the old fop, can be found lurking in Chambers. A number of solvers approved of Valkyrie's inspiring Nina.

Explanations – Across: 8 (MILLSTONES - silt)*, 9 VIOLEt + kNoCKEd, 10 YEAR + heads, 11 LEMAN with AY for E, 12 OUT + DIDo, 13 OC + CUP + DIE*, 15 JESS + AMY, 17 GENE + SIS, 20 SS in ROSTER*, 22 DUE + ANN<, 23 cd - EIGHT Hrs, 25 VArNISHER, 26 (ASSERT + ONESELF - notes)*, 27 cd/dd.
Down: 1 Alternate hidden, 2 (CREDIT RESCUE - IT)*, 3 tUrN+BEND, 4 (V+A) in NOISE<, 5 F+O+L+L(LICE*), 6 entiRELY, 7 IC+EA+GE, 14 (R+ET) in PENSION, 16 (FISH + MICE)*, 18 INN+U+END+O, 19 PRO+VISA replacing A with O, 21 TAX + I + P + EI, 22 (A+NUB) in DE, 24 H+URL.

Solvers' Feedback

- I thought EIGHTH was a clever clue and voted it COTM. *Roy Taylor*
- Had never heard the word JESSAMY before. Will I remember it? Probably not. "True friends are one of life's joys" *Ann Millard*
- Not sure about LAYMAN and Bessamy (Lord Arthur Bessamy in the Paper Princess novel? 2 girls' names at least) *Michael Finemore*
- Took a while to find the 'bygone lover'; but worth the effort when the Nina cropped up. *Len Colgan*
- I only spotted the Nina when I was typing my entry in Accolade - and I had to amend one of my answers match the Nina; so perhaps it gained me a tick! *Nea Storey*
- True friends are one of life's joys. Once again; I only spotted the Nina after I had completed Slot 7. One day!! *Julie Leigh*
- I love a puzzle with such precise clues. And of course; the Nina. True friends are one of life's joys. I loved EIGHTH - after spending ages nutting it out; and gave it my COTM. *Julie Crowe*
- I only spotted the Nina as I was submitting in Accolade. I must learn to check for them earlier as it would make solving a little easier! A great sentiment & and great puzzle. *Mal Cockburn*
- A truer Nina was never written. *Robyn Wimbush*
- Very clever to get the unexpected Nina around the edge. Well done! *Bev Cockburn*
- "True friends are one of life's joys" *David Parsons*
- "True friends are one of life's joys" - yes indeed. *Michael Veress*
- I especially like the Nina about 'True friends'. *Laurence Kennedy*
- A timely reminder of what's important in life. *Kath Harper*

Solution to November Slot 7

	T	R	U	E	F	R	I	
S	O	L	E	M	N	V	I	O
B	C	B	A	L	L	E		
Y	E	A	R	N	E	R	S	L
S	U	N	I	I				G
O	U	T	D	I	D	O	C	C
R	E			N	L	R		
J	E	S	S	A	M	Y	G	E
		C	I	P			T	N
S	T	R	E	S	S	O	R	D
A				C	O	A	N	U
E	I	G	H	T	H	V	A	N
P	U	I	I	U	I	N		
F	E	A	R	L	E	S	B	L
I	L	F	O	E	N	O		

Solution WORD SQUARE 6-Nov

T	N	E	D	R
N	S	I	D	E
E	S	U	O	G
D	I	O	V	D
O	R	D	E	O
R	G	D	L	O

Solution WORD SQUARE 7-Nov

D	E	T	A	R	S
E	T	U	O	R	N
T	O	S	E	S	E
R	O	S	I	C	N
A	R	E	C	S	V
T	N	E	N	I	E
S	E	S	I	E	D

Members Feedback Slot 5**- continued from page 10****November 5: InGrid (Jean Barbour)**

- This was a lot of fun with a cracker of a NINA. My favourite clues were those for TWIN TUB and MELODRAMA. *Brian Tickle*
- Magical. *Kate Williams*
- An amusing puzzle for the spooky season! *Fraser Simpson*
- When witches go riding and black cats are seen tis almost Halloween! *Ann Millard*
- Nice and challenging Halloween puzzle. *Roy Taylor*
- When witches go riding and black cats are seen tis almost Halloween. *Danuta Rosendorff*
- Very clever Halloween theme emerged around the perimeter! Nina strikes again! *Nea Storey*
- Lovely ! "When witches go riding and black cats are seen tis almost Halloween". *Julie Crowe*
- APPLETINI must be a rare drink as it was so hard to find. Most have never heard of them. I would love to try one. *Mal Cockburn*
- Most ingenious and entertaining. Thanks, InGrid. *Robyn Wimbush*
- Timely puzzle with excellent clues. Loved clue for ARDUOUS. *Bev Cockburn*
- WOW! *Jenny Madden*
- Cleverly done. *Ian Thompson*
- A crossword with a difference is always fun. *Hilary Cromer*
- It was great fun finding your message and it must have been a mission to fit in around it! *Robyn McKenzie*
- Such (topical) fun, thanks InGrid! When witches go riding... I liked ARDUOUS and CHEEK. *Kathy Horadam*
- When witches go riding and black cats are seen 'tis almost Halloween. *Ken Davis*
- At first glance I thought I would never complete this slot, but got there finally. *Lynn Jarman*
- Strangely enough, I started this on the 31st October. Didn't manage to finish it that day though. Had to Google to find quote. *Ulla Axelsen*
- Thanks, Ingrid, I enjoyed this one! *Caroline MacKay-Sim*

Surface readings

Continuing the article from the website ([here](#)) giving some excellent advice on surface reading of a clue.

Surface grammar vs cryptic grammar

It's desirable that in addition to creating some sort of imagery, the surface reading of a clue should contain reasonable English syntax and grammar. It's best to avoid Yoda-speak and obviously the more fluently your clue reads, the better. It is vital to remember however that the grammar of the cryptic element must always take precedence over the grammar of the surface reading. In practice this means that when read literally, your clues may often have to be fragments of sentences rather than complete, self-contained constructions containing a subject, object and verb. For example, my cricket clue:

Hits leg breaks, showing dexterity (7)

needs a noun or pronoun as the subject to be a complete sentence, but as a clue it works perfectly well because (a) it puts a clear image in the solver's

mind and (b) it is quite acceptable grammatically as a sentence fragment. A common mistake among new setters is to insert redundant words as padding – in this case perhaps by putting "He" at the start of the clue – in an attempt to tidy it up.

It's not good practice to use faulty or inaccurate cryptic grammar in order to improve the surface. For example

Criminal pockets one's money (4)

for COIN. This reads beautifully, is impressively concise and, of course, suggests an image of some poor sap having his money nicked. But when you look at the cryptic reading, things aren't so rosy. If you expand the "apostrophe S" the clue reads as *Criminal pockets one is money (4)*, which doesn't work.

Some "libertarians" may argue that the clue reads so neatly that the clash of verbs is justified. I have to part company with them. In any case, the clue is easily rescued (as is often the case with verb clashes) by substituting a present participle:

Criminal pocketing one's money (4)

You may say that this revision reads slightly less well than the original, and you'll get no argument from me about that. It still reads well enough, however, and by making this small change we've now got a clue with perfect cryptic grammar, and that's the most important thing.

Where possible, it is best to avoid the kind of clue which is often described as "clunky", but if the surface reading has to take a small hit to protect the cryptic grammar, it doesn't matter. You're not setting out to write a piece of immortal literature after all, and on occasions you have to make certain stylistic concessions. You may not like splitting infinitives, but sometimes you have to grit your teeth and do just that to make a clue work. You may even need to use the passive voice, which good writers do their best to avoid (e.g. "she is loved by him" rather than the active form "he loves her").

To summarise so far: the cryptic grammar of a clue should always come first, but it is also important that the surface reading of a clue suggests some sort of image and reads as smoothly as possible as English. The ability to consistently write fair clues which also read well on the surface is perhaps the major factor which distinguishes a good setter from an average one.

Perhaps the biggest test of a setter's ability to provide good surface readings is when there are other constraints on the clues, and the most notable of these is when some or all of the clues have to conform to a theme. When writing a normal clue, there are all sorts of different surface readings that the setter can use, but that range becomes seriously limited when all the clues have to have surfaces relating to Shakespeare or Hitchcock or whatever theme you've chosen. It doesn't help that forcing the names of plays or films into the wordplay for ordinary words usually involves using theme words with bits chopped off or just their first/last letters, and without due care the result can be some very clunky and unwieldy clues indeed.

.....to be continued