



No 403 November 2023



www.crosswordclub.org



He who does not understand words, cannot  
understand people.  
Confucius, 5th c BC, The Analects, XX, Sect 3.

## GRIDATORIAL

We would normally be reminding you this month of the need to renew your subscription. Our free offer for members and their family and friends is open for the whole of 2004 and we have had a good response so far with about 30 new members from every part of the globe as well as Australia. You do not need to formally renew this year, as we'll automatically roll over your membership but do, please, let us know via the membership page on the website if you change your contact details.

Our feast of puzzles this month has been brought to you by Michael Kennedy, to whom my thanks are due. An excellent job, Michael. Fraz brings us his refreshingly different approach to the half and half and P-brane has provided a challenging slot 2. Lexi Conner has devised one of his polished puzzles for your slot 3 enjoyment and KA has excelled himself with a most challenging AJ. It can be solved, we promise you! A timely puzzle comes from the pen of InGrid with a title appropriate to the season. In slot 6 we have a themed puzzle from the archive left us by Nigrum Cattus and The Mythtics present a slot 7 that you may find a little easier than past offerings in that traditionally devious slot. The whole is rounded out by one of Valkyrie's expertly assembled quizzes. Have your periodic table at the ready!

It is most pleasing to report the achievement of another ACC milestone. This month saw the submission to the club of the three thousandth puzzle presented to us generously at no cost by our ingenious and cunning members. Thank you all, and keep them coming!

Happy solving

Ian

## FROM THE ADJUDICATOR

Only one postal entry this month, so the adjudicator's job allowed a lot of time for thumb-twiddling or more productive pursuits. In the end, there was a similar range of discrete errors across all five grids, but Slot 1 was by far the greatest annihilator of dots.

**Slot 1:** 48 solvers were so spellbound they opted for MESMERISED, when only MESMERIZED fitted the clue (ZED being a metal bar). However, ATOMIZE was accepted at 26 across. Closer attention to the clue (or geography) might have saved the six who had variants of FRAMED. MYCOSIS, OMEN and SING SING in other traps.

**Slot 2:** Variants of SENSATIONALISES from several solvers could not be accepted, since the clue required an anagram of ITALIAN SO inside SENSES. The wrong end of the Spooner, or the wrong anagram, caused a few problems with CIDERS and RESIN.

**Slot 3:** MINK seems to be out of fashion: 11 solvers had MANE, preferring fur in the wild, perhaps. There were five false GEMS, and three variants on CORKAGE (the triumph of screw caps?). A few misspellings lost dots too – do, please, use the spell check provided for you.

**Slot 4:** There were quite a number of single errors here, mostly misspellings (yet again!) or incorrect endings. It always pays to recheck the tense of the clue – as I have discovered with hindsight.

**Slot 5:** SHILL caused the most problems here, with seven solvers offering variants such as SKIRL (not bagpipe fane, obviously), SPIEL and STILL. One solver queried the use of 'hollow' to indicate removal of a single letter. SUNDRIES and DYEABLE each caught three hopefuls, with the former

continued on p 2

## LEADING FIGURES

Puzzle No.	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Entries received	84	87	85	89	69	414
Correct entries	29	70	63	77	51	290
Success rate (%)	35	81	74	87	74	70
Prizewinners	Keith Bettles	Jill Lankshear	Margaret Pyc	Mary Dodd	Kate Williams	from 92 members

Prizewinner: October Slots 1-5 correct: Lesley Carroll. Congratulations!

## CONTACTS

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October 2023 Slot 1

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

October 2023 Slot 2

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

October 2023 Slot 3

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

October 2023 Slot 4

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

October 2023 Slot 5

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

October 2023 Slot 6

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

## MEMBERS' RESULTS FOR NOVEMBER 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.		•		•				Gamble K.		•	•	•		•	•	Moline R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Allen W.		•	•	•	•			Garner P.		•	•	•	•	•		Parsons D.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Anderson C.		•		•	•			Glissan B.					•			Patterson A.		•	•	•	•	•	•
Audrins K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Grainger D.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Peach S.		•	•	•			•
Axelsen U.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Hagan R.		•	•	•				Pinder S.		•		•			
Barbour J.	•	•		•	•			Harper K.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Procter D.			•	•	•	•	•
Barnes J.		•	•	•	•			Hearn R.		•		•		•	•	Pyc M.			•	•	•	•	•
Batum C.		•	•					Heyes N.			•					Randall J.		•	•	•	•		
Bennett D.		•	•	•				Horadam K.		•		•				Rosendorff D.		•		•	•	•	•
Bettles K.	•				•			Howat S.	•	•	•	•	•			Roulston S.			•	•	•	•	
Blake M.		•	•	•	•		•	Jarman L.			•	•				Ryan W.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Carroll L.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Jarman R.		•	•	•	•			Shield A.			•	•	•		
Cockburn B.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Jones G.		•	•		•	•	•	Shipway S.		•					
Cockburn M.	•		•	•	•	•	•	Kennedy L.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Siegmán B.		•		•	•		
Cole G.	•	•	•	•	•			Lankshear J.	•	•	•	•	•	•		Simons A.			•	•	•	•	•
Colgan L.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Leigh J.		•	•	•	•	•	•	Simpson F.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Coote P.		•	•	•	•	•	•	Mackay-Sim C.			•	•		•	•	Skinner R.	•		•	•	•	•	•
Cornish W.		•	•		•			Madden J.		•	•			•		Steinberger M.			•			•	
Cromer H.		•	•	•	•			Martin A.		•	•	•		•		Storey N.		•		•	•	•	•
Crowe J.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Martin F.		•	•	•		•		Symons B.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Davis K.			•	•	•	•	•	Mason I.		•	•	•	•			Taylor R.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Dobele T.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Matthews S.		•	•					Thompson I.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Dodd M.	•		•	•				McClelland C.		•	•	•	•	•	•	Veress M.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Dowse B.			•	•				McKenzie I.		•	•	•	•	•	•	Wilcox C.	•	•	•	•			
Ducker R.		•		•	•		•	McKenzie R.		•	•	•	•	•	•	Williams K.		•	•	•	•		
Evans J.		•	•	•	•		•	McLeay T.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Wimbush R.		•	•	•	•	•	•
Ferguson J.		•	•	•				Meek D.		•	•		•	•	•	Wood J.			•				
Finemore M.		•		•				Miles A.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Woolston M.		•		•			
Flinkenberg C.				•				Millard A.		•	•	•	•	•	•	Young A.		•	•	•			
Fowler J.			•	•	•	•	•	Milton R.		•	•												

## From the Adjudicator - continued from p 1

overlooking the definition of 'assorted items', and the latter having a TREMBLE from too much whisky. Three others had their garden invaded by a NEWT or a PEST rather than a WEED.

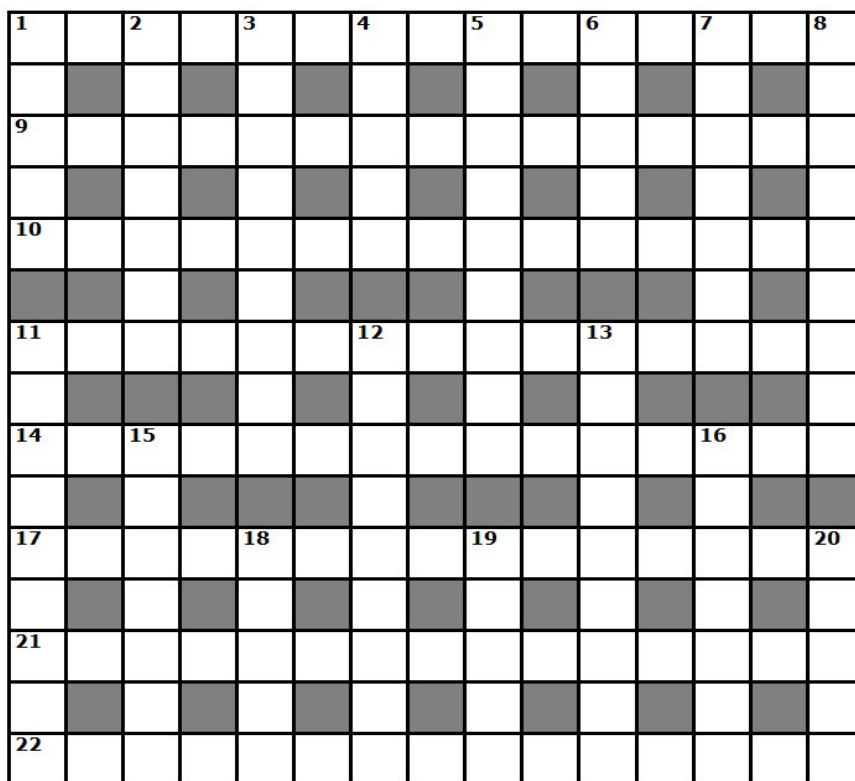
**COTM:** Votes were spread across all puzzles, with the highest total per grid going to Slot 3 (15 votes) and Slot 5 (19 votes). However, CLUELESS in Slot 1 was the outright favourite with 9 votes. This posed a problem for the adjudication team: how can you award a prize for the best-crafted crossword clue to one that doesn't exist? The solution was to give two prizes this month, one for Ulla Axelsen's non-clue, and one to Toby McLeay for CASHEW in Slot 3, with 5 votes.

Kathleen Harper

## Slot 1

Half and  
Half  
by  
Fraz

Prize  
\$50



## Across

- 1 It has 24 points (10,5)  
 9 Snack (3,7,5)  
 10 What people should bring to the table (7,8)  
 11 Thorpe, McKeon, and others (7,8)  
 14 Late 16th-century tragedy (5,10)  
 17 "Beam me up" destination, usually (11,4)  
 21 Soon (2,3,4,6)  
 22 Prosecutor's ace up the sleeve (8,7)

## Down

- 1 Tree site with a lot of sand, we hear (5)  
 2 Female feline fancier sprinkled talc by break of day (3,4)  
 3 Possibly gorillas each time splitting vine fruits (5,4)

- 4 Sinatra hit from quirky new opera company, finally (2,3)  
 5 Conquer love, dropping line to crew member keeping quiet (9)  
 6 Remain behind unruly group that's overturned frozen dessert (5)  
 7 A bad habit describes a religion's initial sin (7)  
 8 Distributes insults about ballpoint (9)  
 11 Goes past stout eccentric with tears (9)  
 12 They comfort jailbird and assorted losers (9)  
 13 Clubs, e.g. involved in tourism (5,4)  
 15 One raising a glass appliance (7)  
 16 Ending certainly after three o'clock (7)  
 18 Guide ranch animal (5)  
 19 Tossed to the end in auditorium (5)  
 20 Assembles New York team possessing energy (5)

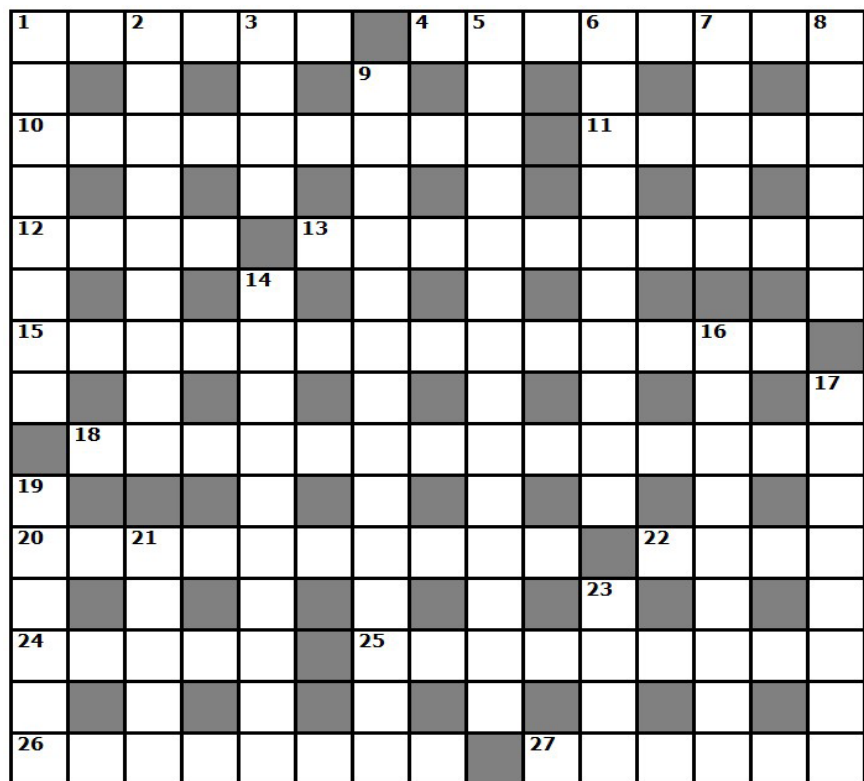
SEND  
SOLUTIONS  
TO:

For online entry, submission and adjudication of all slots via ACCOLADE click on the ACCOLADE button on [www.crosswordclub.org](http://www.crosswordclub.org) home page.  
 By mail for Slots 1 to 5: Alan Dyer PO Box 162, Bungendore, NSW, 2621, or (preferably) by email to [alan@thedyers.id.au](mailto:alan@thedyers.id.au)  
 By mail for Slot 6 and 7: Kay Williams 12 Lindrum Crescent Holt ACT 2615 or (preferably) by email to [ianw@webone.com.au](mailto:ianw@webone.com.au)

BLANK  
GRIDS  
PAGE 12

Closing mail date for all puzzles is 24 November 2023.

## Slot 2

Cryptic  
by  
P-branePrize  
\$50

## Across

- 1 Cleans carpet removing rubbish first... maybe got walked on? (6)  
 4 Expert to separate out individual strands of an enzyme (8)  
 10 Bicarbonate reformulated removing limits to beat living without oxygen (9)  
 11 Religious icons only oddly covered by papers of authenticity (5)  
 12 Scuttle reportedly light (4)  
 13 Innovative ant ravaged concoction (5-5)  
 15 Furious. Very angry with a shortened plumber's pipe cleaner (3,2,1,3,5)  
 18 Essential walk (14)  
 20 See said locks raise small elevators (10)  
 22 Overheard diplomatic faux pas - it will land you a big fish (4)  
 24 Fight over garbage (5)  
 25 Club expresses unease as Australian knocked unconscious (6,3)  
 26 Father's one without transport to get smoked beef (8)  
 27 Leave before second taste of mud-slinging (6)

## Down

- 1 Fossil fuel - a rounded mass, according to Spooner's thermal device (4,4)  
 2 Inclined to cook Australian food with mint (2,1,4,2)  
 3 Make gain. It was close until leader dropped to last place (4)  
 5 Repair corners cut into restoration (14)  
 6 Achieving insight into small stick trap with good information technology (8,2)  
 7 Dream ourselves covering up a secret love affair (5)  
 8 Developed from English partners university education (6)  
 9 Superior judge is human at heart and irreproachable (5,9)  
 14 Socially correct pro aspires to run amok (2,2,6)  
 16 Australian bounders perhaps in dubious trials without legal council (9)  
 17 Bluff summit no place for lemmings? (8)  
 19 With performances running properly, carries on (4,2)  
 21 Area right in the best service section (5)  
 23 First: recite poem backwards; then again (4)

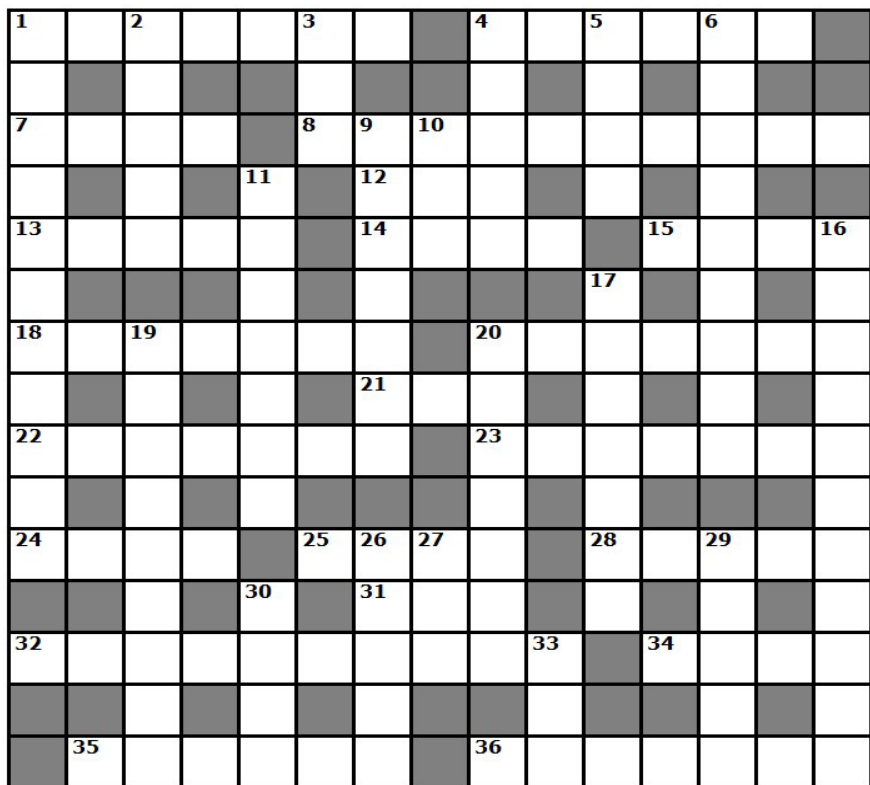
## General Feedback for October

- Co-incidentally; two neat clues for OLIVER this month. *Nea Storey*
- Many thanks to the Club for the unexpected but welcome Slots 1 - 5 prize last month. *Tony Dobe*
- Two OLIVERS and two OZONES this month. *Mal Cockburn*
- It never ceases to amaze me; given the number of words in the English; and other languages; that the puzzles in CrozWorld often contain repeated words. This month we have "Oliver" (slots 1 and 6); "ozone" (slots 4 and 5) and "sheath/e" (slots 5 and 7). Coincidence? [*Totally, Ed*] *Ken Davis*



## Slot 3

**Cryptic**  
by  
**Lexi**  
**Conner**

**Across**

- 1** Cruise around futuristic hub constructed for the travel industry (7)
- 4** Critic rejected Marx's love (6)
- 7** Season emerging by degrees (4)
- 8** Givenchy's final gift to Canadian singer doubling up on fragrance (5-5)
- 12** 27 reports of rock formation (3)
- 13** Dance venue discovery is very deficient (5)
- 14** Leader of choir has reproduced notes (4)
- 15** Burrower abandoned at place of conception (4)
- 18** Rose studies blushes (7)
- 20** Cambridge Centre not backed by southern UK citizens (7)
- 21** Greek character only half instructed (3)
- 22** Introduces new inspectors; unhappy cop quits (7)
- 23** Musicians spotted power cutter (7)
- 24** Pour out of returning sports event (4)
- 25** Using speech to elicit morale as half-time is gone (4)
- 28** Small workshop required by founders of electric light brand (5)
- 31** Be under obligation to a central power (3)
- 32** Impending departure flags fight comes to nothing (4,6)
- 34** Opposed to a proclaimed stake (4)
- 35** Inferior fluid cleansers can be discarded (6)
- 36** Ran amok in part of building with a danger notice (7)

**Down**

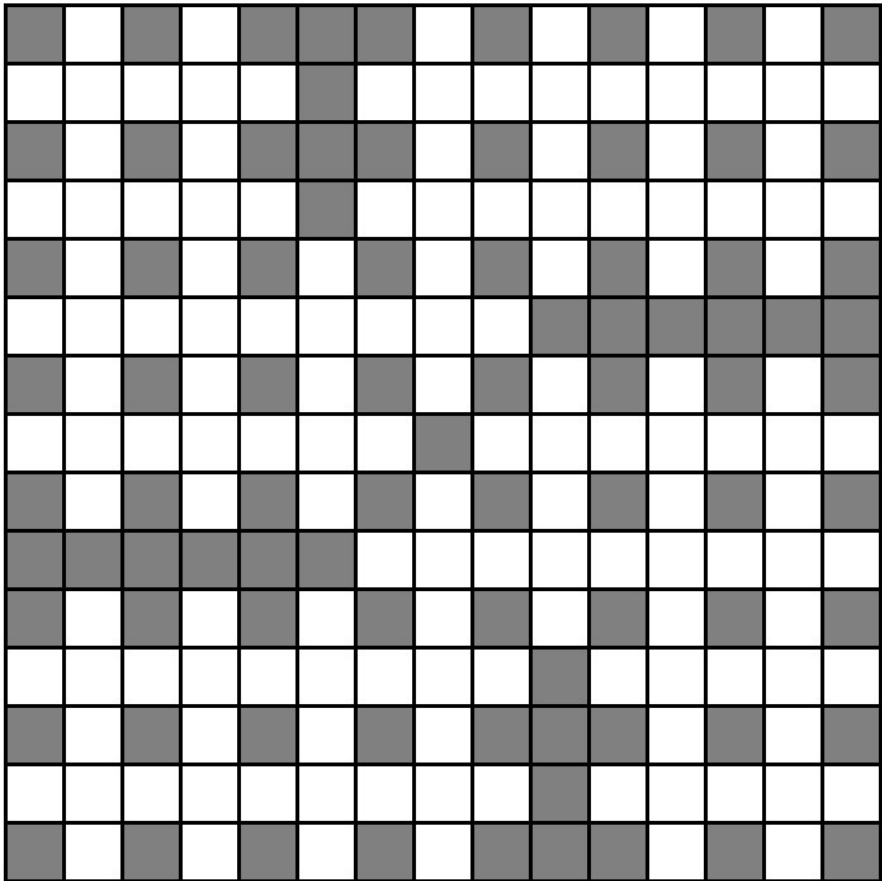
- 1** Preservationist in vehicle missed call after rose got upset (11)
- 2** Angry Tito cancelled tutorials on Russian geographical feature (5)
- 3** An overturned, out of the way, nasty, filthy place (3)
- 4** Pants declared to be heredity units (5)
- 5** Stone held up by proxy nominees (4)
- 6** Strident response to glamorous new head (9)
- 9** Appetites absorb extremely opportunistic insects (7)
- 10** Scorpius' neighbour sheltered by Aldebaran (3)
- 11** Prepare in advance to be a part-member (7)
- 16** Shaw unhappily gripped by increasing muscle mass as a leisure activity (11)
- 17** Slang is reflected in gestures (7)
- 19** Argue about respite without malice and shame (9)
- 20** A source of water for drunk blubbering there's no gin! (7)
- 26** Blades spinning up or down (5)
- 27** Within the law, everyone gets respect (3)
- 29** Tie one on at the beach (5)
- 30** Telco dumps its core creative work (4)
- 33** Spring emerges from winter's passing (3)

Slot 4

AJ  
by  
KA



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



- A** Shrubs are different USA tubers (9)

**B** Shoes to roam around in social occasions (9)

**C** Tissue degeneration of patient next to radioactive element particle (9)

**D** Scandinavians accept alkalinity level of flowers (7)

**E** King leaves famous comedian to continue dining! (3,2)

**F** Drunk newspaper employee follows attractive woman (5)

**G** American sailors eating fruit become crazy (2,7)

**H** Hurry to male living quarters? (5)

**I** Angry thief is beheaded (5)

**J** Tediously reprimanded Little Woman with litter (5)

**K** Australian artist lost directions to some martial art (5)

**L** Bird with first young is weird (5)
- M** Significant events for Pole injured in fog at South Head (9)

**N** French actress returns to snakes (5)

**O** The ship has no rat-like disturbance (3,6)

**P** Unadulterated Eastern nutriment (5)

**Q** The Bard's whore is game (5)

**R** Destroyed, without English becoming firmly established (9)

**S** Hair problems for N.Z band, by the sound of it (5,4)

**T** Monkey drops dead from tree (7)

**U** Colour of Eastender's car (5)

**V** This cerebral centre has duct with room to adapt (9)

**W** Garment for Western performer (7)

**X** Ten very old tools containing new rock fragments (9)

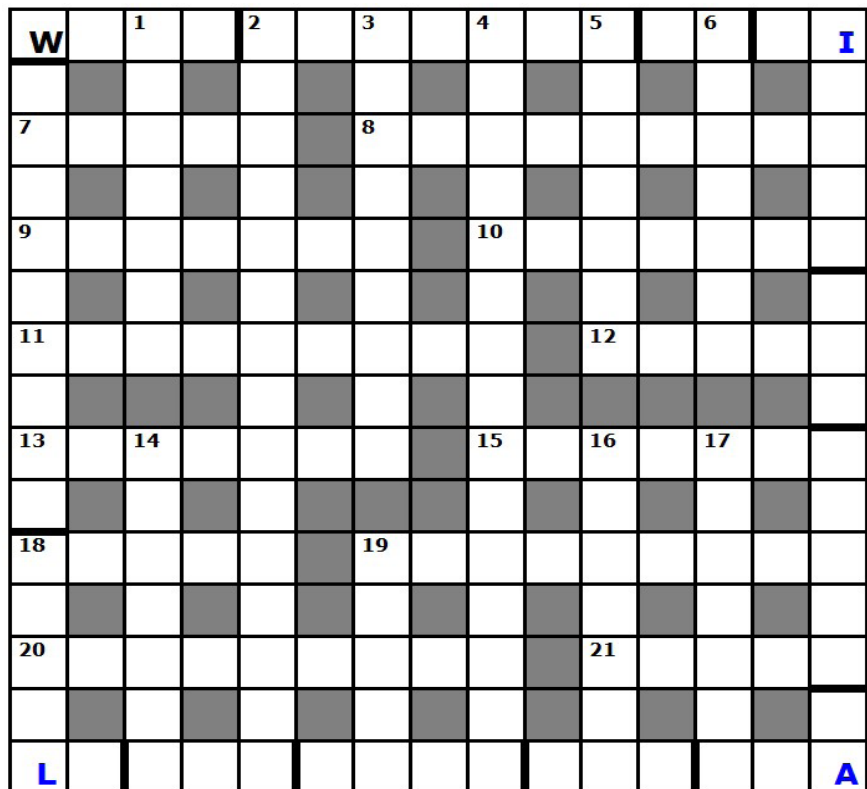
**Y** University's mythical beasts (5)

**Z** A great number are sick in Middle East city (7)

## Slot 5

**Beware!**  
by  
**InGrid**

**Prize**  
**\$50**

**Across**

- 7** Additional examination of odd throat (5)  
**8** Apparently, the French can introduce one to this cocktail (9)  
**9** Spooner's confident punishment on dreadnought perhaps? (7)  
**10** Don't start running when corrupt (7)  
**11** Far reaching anger lost following desire (4-5)  
**12** Moral standard contrary to weapon being discussed (5)  
**13** Difficult couple of turns in winding roads (7)  
**15** Stump back over victory with washing machine (4,3)  
**18** Brief bitter sentence partly served (5)  
**19** Short refrain, initially reflecting a mood, precedes a sentimental play (9)  
**20** Strange amount goes astray with this square peg? (3,3,3)  
**21** Effrontery just part of vice (5)

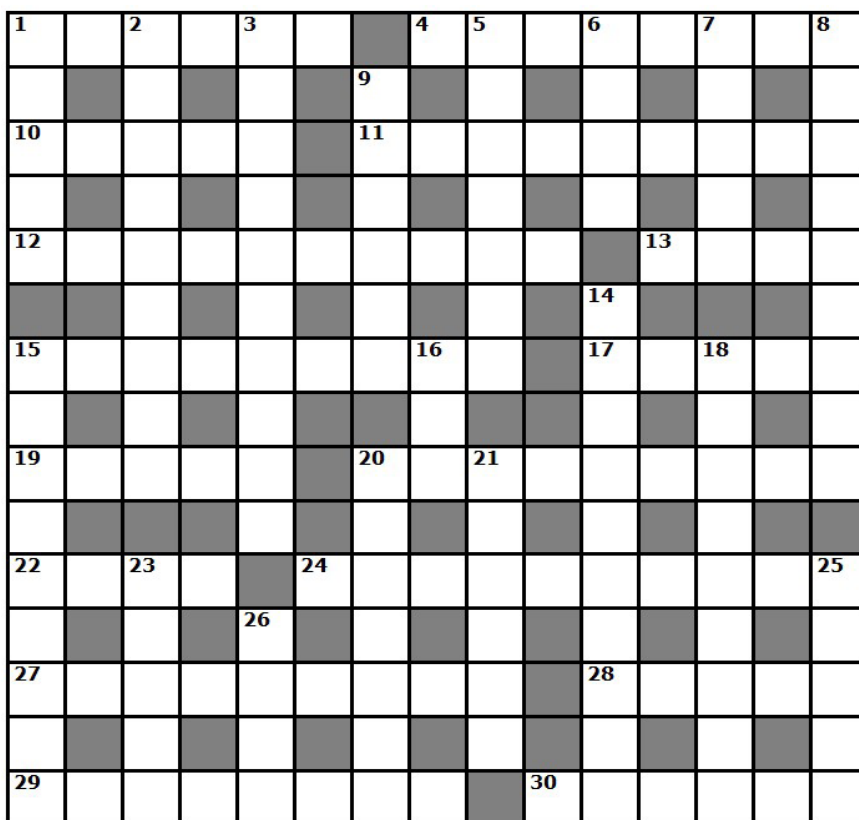
**Down**

- 1** Take possession of working alimentary tract (7)  
**2** Orchestrate a few changes in prediction (7,8)  
**3** Separate over noises made by paraphernalia (9)  
**4** Exhibits fast, deep breaths when noisily greeting each expose of school head (15)  
**5** Disbeliever set upon over core conception (7)  
**6** Duck wing subject to estimation (7)  
**14** Mocks derivation of certain days (7)  
**16** Someone to bring on or toss out discounters awkwardly (7)  
**17** Dealers dash back before King Edward becomes head of state (7)  
**19** Elk sounds like a cow at this point (5)

## Slot 6

# Recollections by Nigrum Cattus

**Prize  
\$50**



## Across

- 1 Traditional learning encompasses light form of cultural aggregation (6)  
 4,8 Diction, a verbal art form in royal display establishment (8,3,6)  
 10 Popular pool with no depth as a joke (2,3)  
 11 Witty joker had pliable memory store (5,4)  
 12 Curiously hugging me with ecstasy. What an exhibition! (10)  
 13 Fodder for storyteller (4)  
 15 Preserved assets, including money, passed down to treasure-house (9)  
 17 Once more draw current into network (5)  
 19 ... and undo geegaw evenly with a gentle poke (5)  
 20 This shrub, after processing, produces a cotton garment (4,5)  
 22 Still one creature needs classifying (4)  
 24 Trade business getting pressure from highway patrol officer (7,3)  
 27 Mix up a sermon I'd prepared (9)  
 28 Tesla with double the energy attracts director - a European banker (5)  
 29 Figure swan identification is working (8)  
 30 Collection of gold in Germany perhaps (6)

## Down

- 1 Speeding, but missing the headstart, is stretching the truth (5)  
 2 Gunfire unleashed over Ukraine, initially dead is not numbered (9)  
 3 Cowboy wielded a derringer (5,5)  
 5 Think about wise men in the east (7)  
 6 Notate unnumbered display (4)  
 7 Lariat cut before reknitting is still a lariat! (5)  
 8 4-across  
 9 Assets: home and oddly malfunctioning organ pipes in bad condition (6)  
 14 Preserved meat in soup mixed with ricotta, mostly (10)  
 15 Set-up on therapy reviewed (5,4)  
 16 Beast of the savanna begins to graze near Uganda (3)  
 18 Wing nuts, perhaps, covering taps with elaborate twister (9)  
 20 Our Brit ordered a wrap (7)  
 21 Succeeded frequently to moderate (6)  
 23 Saw joint (5)  
 25 Spend about 500 pence on a rice field (5)  
 26 Academic carries on in risqué display (4)

Submit solution via ACCOLADE button on [www.crosswordclub.org](http://www.crosswordclub.org) home page  
 or see page 3 for adjudicator and closing mail date



## Slot 7

Cryptic  
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## Across

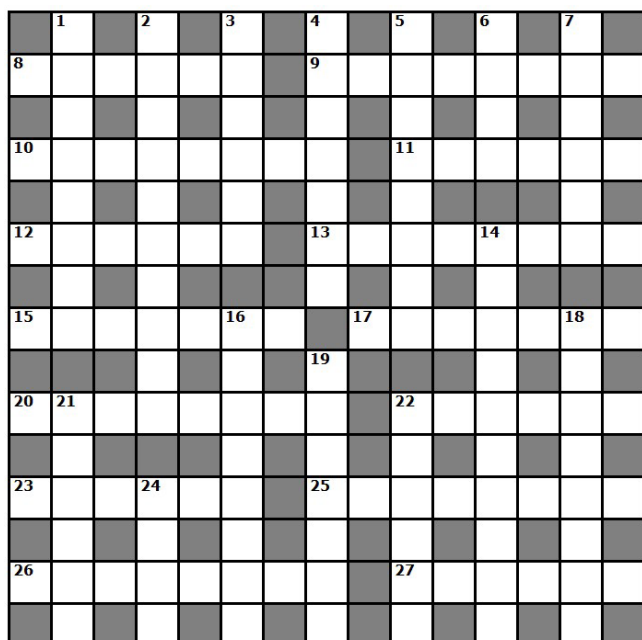
- 8 When silt is removed, restoration of millstones is awe-inspiring (6)
- 9 Harm done to cut flower when knocked now and then (8)

- 10 Those who long for time with foremost of new, exciting, romantic seducers ... (8)
- 11 ...or amateur bygone lover after "Yes!" replaces onset of ennui (6)
- 12 Unfashionable, diminutive lover of Aeneas excelled (6)
- 13 Busy officer commanding vessel to die tragically (8)
- 15 Old fop needing two girls (7)
- 17 Development of family trait by relation (7)
- 20 Source of anxiety when altered roster involves second son (8)
- 22 Chaperone expected before Ann's return (6)
- 23 One-third of a day required to create a different fraction? (6)
- 25 One applying shellac without runs may disappear! (8)
- 26 Unafraid to assert oneself vigorously without notes (8)
- 27 Fair description of "bombshell"? (6)

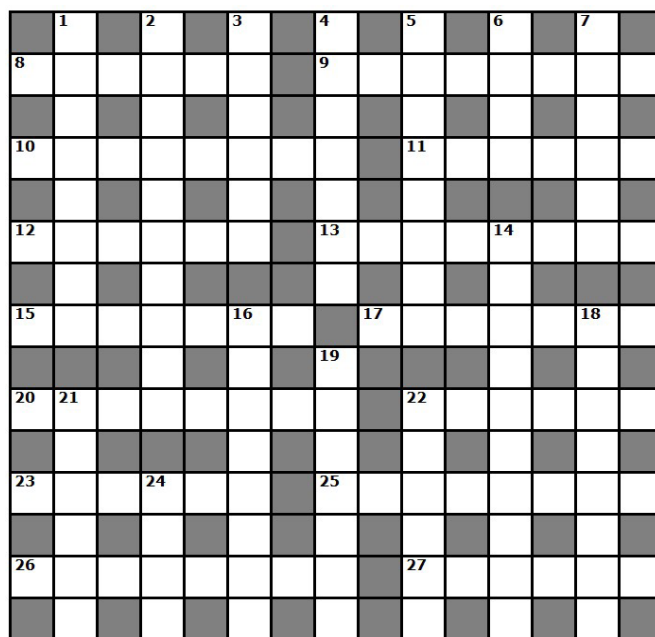
## Down

- 1 Certainly trouble is but rued now and again (2,2,4)
- 2 Credit rescue uncertain, with cut interest limits to flare up again (10)

- 3 Regularly turn, twist, relax (6)
- 4 Mounting clamour over Vatican City - American subterfuge (7)
- 5 Strong, old liquid lubricants initially agitate lice where hair starts to grow (8)
- 6 Depend entirely? Not half! (4)
- 7 Enthusiastic eagerness provides setting for long, cold period (3,3)
- 14 Continental boarding house adopting Republican and French pomposity (10)
- 16 Crossbreeding fish and mice resulted in an unfavourable outcome (8)
- 18 Local university design, base of video slur (8)
- 19 Condition for permit? None for Australia (7)
- 21 Capital tax cut by a third put international pressure on East Indies (6)
- 22 A small chunk found in Delaware river (6)
- 24 Launch web address after hours (4)



Slot 7: NAME:



Submit your solution via the ACCOLADE button on [www.crosswordclub.org](http://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 October 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 Valkyrie.** [Across clues are all one-word film titles] **Down: 1** GR+EASE, **2** A(LIE)N+S, **3** Hidden, **4** Double, **5** (EARLY BAT)\*, **6** (HAMMER+TACK)\*, **7** POSE+IDO+N, **8** SPA in TRESS, **14** (MR SMEE)\* + I + ZED, **16** MAROON + rED, **18** SING+SING, **22** FR+A+MED, **23** O+LIVER, **24** (FANTASIES - FAN)\*, **27** O(MEn)N.

**Slot 2 Leprechaun.** **Across: 1** AB+(IS< in RAVE), **5** Spooner "dicers", **10** NOCAB<, **11** TOAD+STOOL, **12** cd, **13** LIB in AI, **14** dd, **15** RATIO+NS, **18** dd, **20** hidden, **22** heads, **24** RUIN+O+U+S+L(egalit)Y, **25** OB+SESSION, **26** homoph "sly go", **27** anag, **28** homoph: "buy sickles". **Down: 1** Heads<, **2** RACKET+(RE+E)<, **3** (ITALIAN SO)\* in SENSES, **4** anag, **6** INSTANT+(ANYLOUSE)\*, **7** heads, **8** allIES in SILT, **9** dd, **16** OVER+SPILL, **17** BED+ROOMS, **19** anag, **20** CHI+ANTI, **21** hidden, **23** anag.

**Slot 3 T-boy.** **Across: 6** ROCK\* + AGE, **7** A + GAIN, **9** heads, **10** CAST + RATING, **11** cd, **13** hidden, **15** diSTurbeD, **17** hidden, **18** M + INK, **19** [Catherine Helen] SPENCER (she's on the old \$5 note), **20** (ENCHILADA -L)\*, **23** BOOMER + (SANG)\*, **26** BITCH, **27** LOG + I + C, **28** SHEA + RE + R. **Down: 1** ARM + AGED + DON, **2** NC in RAID, **3** GERMS, **4** LA + (SCORES)\*, **5** TRAM<, **6** (LANCE)\*, **8** NAN + KEEN, **12** GALAHad, **14** SOMME + LIE + RS, **16** SPOT< + OIL, **17** DIET + RICH (famous actress), **21** CASH + WE<, **22** hidden<, **24** dd, **25** NO + SH.

**Slot 4 St Jude.** **A** homophs: "app+post+trophies", **B** B(ABY)ISH, **C** CO+ZEN+AGE, **D** DRY+(SAD)\*, **E** (SITE)\*+MATED, **F** FR+(QUEEN)\*+TED, **G** GYM+KHAN+A, **H** HOW+DIES, **I** anag, **J** JACK(AN+APE)S, **K** K(N)EELED, **L** L+dINGOES, **M** MASTER + PIECE, **N** dd, **O** OZ+ON+E, **P** PAT+RIOT, **Q** (ALIQuid)\*, **R** R(AVA+G)ED, **S** dd, **T** TROPICAL, **U** U+SIN+G, **V** anag, **W** cd (WARD+SHIPS), **X** X+ReAdY, **Y** (I[one]DAYOUTIS)\*, **Z** Z(INN+I)A.

**Slot 5 Robespierre.** **Across: 1** Spooner "hog douse", **5** cd "un-dies", **9** MIS(NOM)ER, **10** E + N + SIGN, **12** hidden, **14** homoph "miss" + CUE, **16** (BLEArYeYED)\*, **19** P + UNG(u)ENT, **21** (BAS...LLY)\*, **23** (A LAST CARD)\*, **25** SHrILL, **26** (GROUpIES)\*, **27** CATS< + CATO, **28** TIN< in SAY, **29** cd as rev. anag. of SHRUB. **Down: 1** DEMItasSE, **2** (PROGNOSTICATE - CROP)\*, **3** Formula is O-O-O (O3), **4** S(HEAT)HE, **6** NON + P + (RE) in AIL, **7** hidden, **8** cd "sun dries", **11** dd, **15** CHEEr + SIESTa, **17** (A BANDIT SO)\*, **18** SPEC(IOUS), **20** homoph "taught", **21** (S + BELT + OR)\*, **22** cd - Fly off the handle, **24,13** DO + GIN + THEM + ANGER, **25** StACKS.

### A leopard cannot change its spots

The proverbial saying 'A leopard cannot change its spots' expresses the notion that things cannot change their innate nature. It is normally used to suggest that people who have done bad things will always be bad people. origin

'A leopard cannot change its spots' is found in the Bible, Jeremiah 13:23 (King James Version):  
"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."

The expression has been used in English since the early English versions of the Bible. However, the text doesn't appear in Wycliffe's 1384 bible and the earliest biblical use that I know of is in the Geneva Bible, 1560:  
Can the blacke More change his skin? or the leopard his spottes?

This is pre-empted by Johan Bale's First Examination of Anne Askew, 1546:  
Their olde condycyons wyll they change, whan the blackemoreæne change hys skynne, and the catte of the mountayne [leopard] her spottes.

This is clearly almost identical to the biblical text, but which came first isn't clear. It could be that Bale took his lead from an existing Latin bible or it could be that the Geneva bible writers copied his text.

We thank A Phrase a Week (<https://www.phrases.org.uk/a-phrase-a-week/index.html>) for permission to reprint this article.

M	E	M	B	E	R
	N	E	W	S	

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

**Donations to the ACC Prize Fund:** Many thanks to our members, who have generously made donations to the Prize Fund this month.

**Double congratulations** this month to our (relatively) new compiler T-boy for the double success for Clue of the Month and the Clue-Writing Competition. Well done, Toby.

**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.

Find us on 

**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.**

**October 1: Valkyrie (Ulla Axelsen)**

- Every down answer a single-word film, Berlin and Omen a bit obscure. A few of the across words are, too. Mesmerized was a heffalump trap, who knew ZED was a bar and SED wasn't? Clueless... what can one say except..... *Rob Moline*
- A fun start to the month. The ZED at the end of MESMERIZED almost tripped me up. I originally put MESMERISED. *Fraser Simpson*
- 17dn led me to report a gremlin until it hit me. *David Bennett*
- CLUELESS was an amusing answer (assuming I'm correct). Initially I put in CHURLISH and was expecting an announcement about a gremlin. *Ian Thompson*
- CLUELESS was clever. Maybe a bit more difficult than the usual Slot 1? *Ann Millard*
- Favourite clue: CLUELESS. *Ian Mason*
- I liked your clueless clue! *Robyn McKenzie*
- I liked CLUELESS after thinking it was a typo until near the end the penny dropped. Very clever! *Toby Mcleay*
- I enjoyed the joke for CLUELESS but really liked the deception of TRESPASS, *Con Flinkenberg*
- Nearly COTM for the very cheeky CLUELESS. *Roy Taylor*
- Had a chuckle at CLUELESS. *Richard Skinner*
- A couple of tough ones. Liked FRAMED, and OLIVER was clever. *Michael Finemore*
- I thought the across clues were very tricky. *Lynn Jarman*
- CLUELESS has to be the best clue I have (not?) seen ever. *Betty Siegman*
- This was a tough one! Thank you, Valkyrie. *Sally Shipway*
- CLUELESS was smart! OLIVER and FRAMED appealed too. *Kathy Horadam*
- A good brain workout to start with. MEZMERIZED was tricky! *Bev Cockburn*
- As always, the straight clues are the most challenging. *Mal Cockburn*
- Some great clues enjoyed MATCHMAKER. *Jean Evans*

**October 2: Leprechaun (Larry Kennedy)**

- Nice puzzle, although I am not sure that RATIONS and ERRANDS qualify as double definitions as they are too close in each case. *Len Colgan*
- I have entered ERRANDS for 18ac but am very doubtful about it [No problem - Adj] *Con Flinkenberg*
- Liked SLIGO and SILLIEST. *Michael Finemore*
- An interesting puzzle with well thought-out clues. *Lynn Jarman*
- I liked the clue for BICYCLES. *Robyn McKenzie*
- DICERS/CIDERS - neat Spoonerism. *Nea Storey*
- BACON, BICYCLES and ABBOTS were my favourites, thanks Leprechaun. *Kathy Horadam*
- Enjoyable, straight-forward puzzle. Thanks. *Ulla Axelsen*
- Very nice, neat clues, thank you! Particularly liked RESIGN, CIDERS and SLIGO. *Bev Cockburn*
- I feel a little silly that I don't fully understand Clue 8. *Mal Cockburn*
- Liked the clue for BICYCLES. *Jean Evans*

**October 3: T-Boy (Toby McLeay)**

- Nice concise clues. SPENCE had particular significance for me as my daughter-in-law was

awarded the prestigious Catherine Helen Spence Memorial Scholarship in 2019. *Julie Crowe*

- Nice to learn about Lady Spence and clever clue with having to split doughnut. *Stephen Peach*
- I loved the tricky clue for CASHEW. *Roy Taylor*
- Lots of lovely clues in this slot 3 by T-boy. *Caroline Mackay-Sim*
- 'Shattering' denoting an anagram was a challenge in 6ac, as was 'consumed' in 13ac. Once solved, I liked many of the clues. Well done! *Lynn Jarman*
- Some lovely clues. I liked UNDERDOG and ARMAGEDDON! *Robyn McKenzie*
- CASHEW was a bit tricky. Very enjoyable. *Ulla Axelsen*
- A very cleverly clued puzzle with some outstanding - clues for CASHEW, BOOMERANGS, STUD and GEMS. *Bev Cockburn*
- Loved CASTRATING (but not for its formal meaning LOL). A tricky puzzle but fun to solve. *Mal Cockburn*
- Liked the clue for CASHEW. *Jean Evans*
- Harder than expected! I enjoyed CLEAN; CASHEW and UNDERDOG particularly. *Kathy Horadam*

**October 4: St Jude (Drew Meek)**

- A very enjoyable AJ--thanks! *Fraser Simpson*
- Some refreshing answers, but I do not think NAIL is a true double definition as they are too close. Also, the little words "of" in L and R, plus "is" in T, inside the wordplays, are inactive and intrusive, and need to be eliminated somehow. *Len Colgan*
- An enjoyable puzzle! Thanks, St Jude! *Caroline Mackay-Sim*
- BABYISH (if correct) was the toughest. *Michael Finemore*
- What a 'masterpiece' to find a way to use 'jackanapes' in this slot. *Lynn Jarman*
- Very fair clues. Liked it! *Nea Storey*
- I liked the clue for MASTERPIECE. *Robyn McKenzie*
- B's construction was from words new to me. I liked L and A particularly. *Kathy Horadam*
- A few tricky words, but that adds to the enjoyment of the hunt. *Ulla Axelsen*
- Pleasing AJ. Liked TOPICAL and PATRIOT. *Bev Cockburn*
- A fun puzzle as always. *Mal Cockburn*
- Some tricky clues. My favourite puzzle. *Jean Evans*
- COZENAGE was a new word for me. *Mary Dodd*

**October 5: Robespierre (Ian McKenzie)**

- Tricky puzzle. Favourite clue was DOG IN THE MANGER. *Fraser Simpson*
- Some challenging clues but that was great. I especially liked 5ac UNDIEN, 11dn WEED and 20dn TORT. Thank you! *Ann Millard*
- Nice puzzle, but I don't see how ICING is understated. *Ian Thompson*
- Very enjoyable clues. *Mark Woolston*
- I always like a good Spooner's clue. Nice. *Stephen Peach*
- Some demanding clues, but not keen on "hollow ear-piercing". I gave COTM to BALLSY. *Len Colgan*
- Excellent clues, some unexpected and tricky, like WEED for went. *Roy Taylor*
- Had to toss up between UNDIEN and SUNDRIES for clue of the month, but SUNDRIES won. *Judy Randall*

Continued on page 16







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

The words below are made up of 4 chemical elements each.

For example: The study of the physical properties of light

= O / P / TI / CS. They are in alphabetical order.

Send your solutions to Ulla Axelsen ullaaxelsen@hotmail.com or mail to 6 Maud Street Donnybrook Qld 4510. Closing mail date is 24 November 2023.

- 1 Person who lives a life of austerity (7)
- 2 Showy and loud (6)
- 3 Scrabble (7)
- 4 Very energetic person (6)
- 5 Unpredictable in behaviour (7)
- 6 Fixation (6)
- 7 Cake filling (7)
- 8 Lizard (5)
- 9 Woman's accessory (7)
- 10 Outrageous (8)
- 11 Bundle of wood (6)
- 12 Generosity (8)
- 13 Dispute legally (8)
- 14 Change of posture (6)
- 15 Family favouritism (8)
- 16 Kiss (8)
- 17 Tit for tat (7)
- 18 Rehearsal (8)
- 19 Nonsense (7)
- 20 Slight wound (7)
- 21 Thickener (8)
- 22 Emoticons (7)
- 23 Public house (6)
- 24 Imaginative person (7)
- 25 Wart (7)
- 26 Densely populated dwelling (6)
- 27 Old silver coin (7)
- 28 At a distance (6)

### Solutions to QUIZ 9 – 2023 Playing Around by Fortuna 48 (Nea Storey) Entries 36

**Results:** 27 P Abbott, U Axelsen, J Crowe, M Finemore, C Flinkenberg, P Garner, B Glissan, D Grainger, K Harper, L Jarman, R Jarman, J Leigh, I Mason, C McClelland, R McKenzie, D Meek, A Miles, A Millard, A Patterson, S Pinder, D. Procter, M Randall, D Rosendorff, B Siegman A Simons, M Steinberger, B Symons, R Taylor, M Veress, C Wilcox, K Williams, R Wimbush 26 D Bennett, H Cromer, W Ryan, 25 W Allen

**Prizewinner: Drew Meek Congratulations!**

**Answers:** 1 Ace 2 Albatross 3 Birdie 4 Bogey 5 Brassie 6 Bunker 7 Caddie 8 Chip 9 Driver 10 Eagle 11 Els 12 Fairway 13 Golf 14 Handicap 15 Hole 16 Iron 17 Niblick 18 Nine 19 Par 20 Plus Fours 21 Pro Shop 22 Putter 23 Sandtrap 24 Twitcher 25 Wedge 26 Wood 27 Yips

### Compiler's Observations:

This quiz was popular with golfers and non-golfers alike, members appreciating the bit of light relief after tackling *Potpourri of Flowers*. Only 4 errors out of 36 entries (but I did not deduct for typos). One member questioned if TWITCHER was an accepted golf term. Perhaps not, but if you have the YIPS you TWITCH, and a golf course is a good place to look at birds – and BIRDIES! Most common comments were "fun" and "enjoyable". A selection of comments follows:

### Solver's Comments

- Every slice of this quiz suited the club to a tee. I am hooked but too green to have found it easy. I hope that I have pinned it – I certainly had a ball. *David Bennett*
- Many thanks for your wonderful quizzes. As an ex golfer, I particularly enjoyed this one. *Julie Crowe*
- Thank you for a terrific quiz – a collection of clever clues, with lots of fun tracking down the answers. CADDIE is my clubhouse leader for COTM! (Not sure if the quiz is eligible for COTM – Adj.) *Ron Jarman*
- A fun quiz with ACE making me think it could be any sport. *Ann Millard*
- An educated guess for TWITCHER which happily answered the clue. *David Pritchard*
- Thank you for this gold quiz – it was, refreshingly, a 'gimme'. My first solution for "part of a freight ruck" was EIGHT – also unwanted on a golf course! *Andrew Miles*
- I'm not a golfer but hopefully managed to track these terms down correctly *Max Randall*
- Took me 5 minutes to realise the theme and I was delighted. I've had 27 on and off for years. *Roy Taylor*
- Not a golfer but this was fun *Kate Williams*
- What a relief after last month's 'stinker' to be able to complete the quiz! *Patricia Abbott*
- Like many people I guess, I was misdirected by No. 1. Aces in golf? I moved on and it clicked, so many thanks for an enjoyable quiz. *Robyn Wimbush*
- Although I am not a golfer, I managed to complete the quiz without too much external reference. *Warren Allen*
- Having enjoyed several games of this sport, I was in my comfort zones for this quiz – mostly! *Lynn Jarman*
- Golf seems to have a whole language of its own (and that's not counting the swear words). *Betty Siegman*
- At last, putting (sorry) to use the years as a hack golfer. A most enjoyable quiz, thank you. *David Grainger*
- I have never played golf, my husband reckons it spoils a good walk. Thanks for an interesting puzzle, not too difficult. *Claire McClelland*
- I am a golfer (of sorts) so am hoping I have "nailed" this one. Did enjoy it. *Cheryl Wilcox*
- A most enjoyable game of golf. Hole 18 took a bit of thinking. *Ulla Axelsen*
- I thoroughly enjoyed your quiz, all those years I spent taking my son to Junior Tournaments finally paid off! *Pat Garner*
- I'm 91 but I still remember the playing days. *Ian Mason*
- I liked clues 5, 7, 15 and 20 in particular *Michael Finemore*
- I should have twigged from the title, but I got there I the end. Not being a player I couldn't celebrate at the nineteenth hole, but I still enjoyed the exercise. *Kath Harper*
- As usual, an entertaining quiz. Thank you. *Barbara Glissan*



**October 2023 Slot 6 Cryptic by Crowsman**  
**Entries received 57; Correct 44; Success rate 71%** (for solution see page 2)

**Prizewinner: Anne Simons. Congratulations!**

**Compiler's observations:** If a Crowsman puzzle has no answers anywhere around the perimeter, then something is going on. The only repeated error was to enter WOMANIZER instead of WOMANISER. "Land covered by more experienced" must be OMAN in WISER.

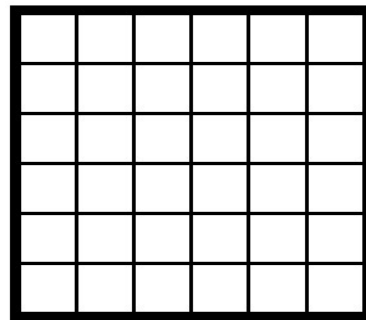
**Explanations: Across: 8** SPOONS< around ER, **9** hidden<, **10** RE(CON)NAISSANCES, **11** RARE< in (I + TINY), **12** homoph "through", **14** IS in (A + RING), **16** SPAT< + HOE, **19** (u)P + OURS, **21** W(OMAN)ISER, **24** (SON IS LATIN SMART)\*, **25** mAdE + RIAL, **26** A + CHILL + (h)EA(t). **Down: 1** raT in (A + NEATER), **2** COCO + ON, **3** E in RENT + RANT, **4** (TO SYRIA)\*, **5** dd, **6** S + TENCHES, **7** (t)AMPERE(d), **13** MARTHA around (AN + A), **15** S + P(RITZ)IG, **17** O + LEANDER, **18** COBS + WAN, **20** O + LIVER, **22** I + CIRcle, **23** CALL + A.

#### Solvers' Feedback

- 23 down seemed a bit open ended but the Nina helped out. Hopefully 'calla' fits the brief. *Greg Jones*
- Some great clues. The Nina of course, giving the direction for Slot 7 'Across answers are anagram pairs'. My last in was 12A. I just couldn't work out why, until I said it aloud! And I loved the 'eavesdropper in the arctic', giving it my COTM. *Julie Crowe*
- Some wonderful clues, and a NINA!! 5d SALSA was looking like TANGO for a while. Interesting that both OZONE and OLIVER appear twice this month. Thanks, Len. *Ann Millard*
- Great wordplay, as usual! *Fraser Simpson*
- Hmm! Why do I only notice the Nina when I am entering the answers online? *Julie Leigh*
- Eavesdropper brilliant clue for ICICLE. *Roy Taylor*
- Looking forward to Slot 7! Thanks Len. *Robyn Wimbush*
- The impossible overcome with persistence! *Toby McLeay*
- Great clues all through and the Nina to work on with number 7 was fun (and helpful) *Robyn McKenzie*
- At least the instructions for Slot 7 confirmed that I began and ended well. *Kath Harper*
- Some clever misdirections in definitions. A good challenge. *Ulla Axelsen*
- Another great puzzle from Len; with so many misleads; it took me ages to solve? Finding the message around the edges helped with a few answers and of course set me up for Slot 7. *Bev Cockburn*
- POURS; COCOON; ICICLE & ANTEATER were terrific clues. A pleasure to solve. *Mal Cockburn*
- Some interesting clues thanks Len and some headaches too!! *Jean Evans*

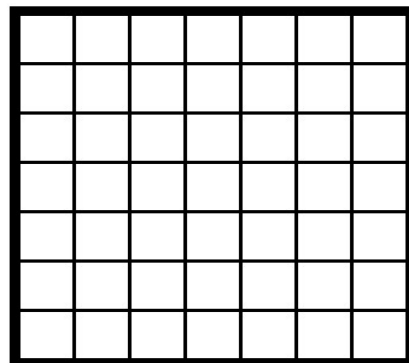
**FRAZ WORD SQUARE 6-Nov** (Solution on p 15)  
 Identical words read across and down in this square.  
 Clues are not listed in order.

- Cad almost takes a turn
- Cute Russian conceals development site
- Fancy chair tossed in the auditorium
- Joined doctor in duet
- Leif's father keeps returning to aphrodisiac
- Withdraw date around December in retirement



**FRAZ WORD SQUARE 7-Nov** (Solution on p 15)  
 Identical words read across and down in this square.  
 Clues are not listed in order.

- Antigone's mom flipped orange juice and threw piece of apple
- Disturb marble, grasping it
- Fish sandwiches to bring forward (2 wds.)
- Maintains a reversal of pressure
- Musical Mama eating in old buildings in Macau
- Politician takes part in wise NATO resolution
- Untamed equines crushed oranges



**October-2023 Slot 7 Cryptic by Crowsman**  
**Entries received 52; Correct 46; Success rate 89%.**  
**Prizewinner: Jean Evans. Congratulations!**

**Compiler's observations:** The intended answer for 1 Across, an anagram of PRAISE, was the well known PERSIA. However, PERAIS, apparently an obscure alternative spelling of piranhas in Chambers, also fits, and so both answers were accepted. But, honestly, would Crowsman ever use a word like that? The only repeated error was SHEETS instead of SHEATH. Here, "Shakespeare's leading character = S", "Moor = HEATH", with neither having any connection to Othello.

**Explanations** – The sixteen Across answers form eight anagram pairs. **Across:** 4 PRES(id)ENTS, 11 NO(R)SE, 13 RE-COUNT, 15 ASK + WE<, 21 GREEN + homoph "tee", 27 P + ROM(IS)E, 29 VERSA + TILE, 31 PR(A)ISE. **Down:** 1 PRIESTS\* around S, 2 ESPAL(i)ER<, 3 INTE(r)STATE, 5 dd, 6 SO NICE, 7 (RUT + RUN)< + E, 8 S(hakespeare) + HEATH, 9 O + VARIES, 16 (SO GETS)< + AUR(a), 17 D(RAPE)RY, 18 SHAME\* + ERE, 20 (a)ARO(n) + USER, 22 (vi)SIBILITY\*, 23 dd, 24 VERVE + T, 26 N + VERVET.

#### Solvers' Feedback

- More terrific clues from Len. I thought GREEN TEA delightful, and loved VERVET - beautifully concise. *Julie Crowe*
- Another excellent puzzle from Crowsman with the pairing and positioning of the anagram answers *David Procter*
- Most enjoyable! Thanks; Len. *Ann Millard*
- Solving 6 certainly helped a lot with 7. Great pair of puzzles, Len. *Fraser Simpson*
- Slots 6 and 7 once again the best, from Crowsman. *Roy Taylor*
- Perseverance pays off - an enjoyable puzzle! *Judy Randall*
- That must have been so hard to compose. It was great fun to solve. Keep them coming please Crowsman. *Julie Leigh*
- So clever and I loved the tie-in with Slot 6. *Robyn Wimbush*
- It wasn't until I spotted a couple of anagrams, that I understood the directions from Slot 6. Some delightful clues, GREEN TEA, DRAPERY. *Nea Storey*
- I loved the clue for GREEN TEA. *Robyn McKenzie*
- Another brilliantly conceived and executed puzzle pair by Crowsman. *Kath Harper*
- Slots 6&7 provided an enjoyable and challenging combination. Thank you, Crowsman! *Caroline Mackay-Sim*
- I found NE corner a bit tricky. Very clever compiling *Ulla Axelsen*
- Very clever concept which took ages to solve but so satisfying when there was a letter in every square! Loved NURTURE! *Bev Cockburn*
- A marvellous pair of puzzles with Slot 6 supporting Slot 7. Always challenging. *Mal Cockburn*
- I'm a bit worried about NOSER. *Jenny Madden*
- Anagram pairs linked back to the Slot 6 Nina - two very clever and imaginative puzzles. *Laurence Kennedy*
- Thanks Len for a fascinating puzzle. Really great fun. *Jean Evans*

#### Solution to October Slot 7

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

#### Solution WORD SQUARE 6-Nov

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

#### Solution WORD SQUARE 7-Nov

S	T	R	E	S	S	A
T	U	O	T	O	R	T
R	O	T	A	N	E	S
E	A	T	E	I	G	A
S	O	N	I	S	A	C
S	R	E	G	A	N	O
A	T	A	S	C	A	J

**Members Feedback Slot 5****- continued from page 10**

- Loved WEED and TORT. *Robyn Wimbush*
- BRUSH OFF no real definition. SHILL: 'hollow' isn't good enough to remove one letter. *Andrew Patterson*
- So many good clues here. I particularly enjoyed DOGHOUSE, UNDIES, SUNDRIED and WEED! *Nea Storey*
- I liked SUNDRIES! *Robyn McKenzie*
- Some very clever play on words. It always amazes me how often the same word comes up in 2 different puzzles. *Ulla Axelsen*
- So many beautiful clues, my favourites being for UNDIES, BALLSY, MISCUE and my COTM WEED! *Bev Cockburn*
- It took way too long to realise that WEED was a synonym of went. Gets my COTM. *Mal Cockburn*
- Shill was a new word. Lots of interesting clues. *Jean Evans*

**Surface readings**

One of the problems faced by all compilers is to ensure that clues have an appropriate surface reading. An effective surface may be a witty comment, an interesting juxtaposition of two words, or may tell a (brief) story. The following is taken from a website ([here](#)) that we have mentioned before in CrOZworld, developed by Alberich before his unfortunate death, which contains excellent advice on many aspects of compilation and is happily still available on the web.

Let's consider these two clues for SLEIGHT.

- (1) Hits leg breaks, showing dexterity (7)
  - (2) Leg this meanders, showing dexterity (7)
- Both clues are technically sound anagram clues; there are no superfluous words, all the parts of speech are correct, both use acceptable anagram indicators and the definition is accurate. But let's forget about the cryptic element and just read the two clues as English sentences. Clue (1) instantly evokes an image of a batsman making short work of a spin bowler's efforts. What about clue (2) though? What image does this suggest? The answer of course is none at all; there is no conceivable context in which this gibberish could possibly mean anything.

What we are looking at here is the surface reading, or literal meaning, of a cryptic crossword clue. A competent setter tries to ensure that his or her clues will evoke some picture in the solver's mind, and clues which fail to do this are usually considered unsatisfactory even if the cryptic grammar is perfectly correct.

It's quite reasonable to ask why surface reading is important. One of the first things you're told as a rookie solver is that you have to ignore the surface reading of a clue and look for the cryptic elements underneath. Experienced solvers won't be misled into thinking that clue (1) is about cricket, despite the rather neat combination of "leg breaks" – they'll barely register the surface meaning as they dissect the clue into its cryptic elements. So why do setters bother about surface reading at all? And why do solvers care about surface if they're going to ignore it?

It's partly a matter of aesthetics. A series of clues,

each of which tells a mini-story, is far more pleasing than incoherent strings of words. Look at this way – when you dish up the Sunday roast, you try to put the meat, vegetables and any trimmings neatly on the plate, rather than slopping it all on in one heap. It'll taste the same either way, but somehow it's more enjoyable if the food's presented tidily. Likewise, clues are more appealing when they have a sense of order about them than when they're just a mish-mash of words.

Related to this is the idea that if clues were all of the clue (2) variety, how much point would there be in solving them? There are plenty of people who think that cryptic crosswords are a pointless exercise anyway, and not all of them are the sort that consider gossip about the Kardashians to be important news. I know plenty of intelligent people who feel that their time could be better spent on things other than crosswords (if I've just spent four hours struggling to finish a fiendish Listener puzzle, I tend to agree with them!) yet are fascinated by the idea that an ordinary phrase or sentence can be interpreted as a set of instructions to find a word. I somehow doubt that anyone but the most addicted crossword fiend would see any point, or pleasure for that matter, in learning that

- Leg this meanders, showing dexterity (7) can be interpreted to reveal the word SLEIGHT. In fairness, I've never seen anything quite as bad as this example (which I made up), but you do see, especially at amateur level, clues which make some rational sense but still mean nothing in any possible context. An example would be:

- Doctor and the Queen hold four for motorist! (6) as a rather dubious clue for DRIVER. This is the epitome of a "crosswordy" clue – a combination of words that isn't total nonsense but would never appear in any context outside a cryptic crossword puzzle. This is a poor clue because despite it making some literal sense, it conjures up no picture of an imaginable situation in the solver's mind. A tip here – sticking an exclamation mark on the end of a nonsensical clue to make out that you're being wacky and surreal doesn't cut it. Wacky and surreal is best left to the drug-fuelled lyrics of certain pop songs from the 60s.

There's more to surface reading than aesthetics, though. The stronger the mental image evoked by the clue, the harder it is to break the clue down into its constituent parts. Take this example:

- Saw dog wearing lead (7)
- This clue may have a chestnut flavour these days, but how many solvers encountering it for the first time will spot straight away that "lead" indicates the metal, symbol Pb, and that "saw" is another word for a PROVERB? Very few, I would suggest. The image conjured up by this simple but elegant clue is so strong that it's hard to get past the notion of a four-legged friend being taken for walks. There are some dissenters (aren't there always?) about the importance of surface reading. An obnoxious poster on one of the blogs used to complain constantly that the crosswords by at least one Guardian setter were too easy. When someone responded and said that a set of clues he'd dismissed as being no challenge to his towering intellect read beautifully on the surface, his comment was something like "I don't want smooth surfaces! I want a puzzle!" Well, as far as the aesthetic appeal of good surfaces goes, he's entitled to his opinion, but he's plain wrong if he thinks that smooth surfaces play no part in making clues more challenging.

.....to be continued



**September 2023 Clue-writing Competition**

- Write a clue for **ELASTIC (7)** - Adjudicated by Andrew Patterson

*Some definition from Collins:*

**ADJECTIVE 1.** (of a body or material) capable of returning to its original shape after compression, expansion, stretching or other deformation. **2.** capable of adapting to change

**NOUN 1.** tape, cord or fabric containing interwoven strands of flexible rubber or similar substance allowing it to stretch and return to its original shape

This time round, 11 entries were received for September's judgement. For a relatively simple word like ELASTIC, I was looking for the extra trick or diversion. A smooth clue and correct grammatical forms always sit well with me. Humour and creativity will certainly help.

The entries are listed in alphabetical order.

**Buoyant lei cast at sea \*\*\***

An anagram of 'lei,cast'. Top marks for surface and brevity. The clue is particularly sound. 'Buoyant' may be in the thesaurus but it seems distant. 'At sea' screams anagram so it's not that deceptive.

**Financial agreement is returned with 50% penalty \*\***

Here we have 'sale' reversed with half of 'ticket', so sale<,tic. While the wordplay does indeed work, I think a definition is missing! Probably was meant to be before 'financial' buuut . . .

**Flexible electronic credit cards for example, not popular initially \*\*\*\***

This clue is e-(p)lastic. I don't think we need 'for example' as 'plastic' is synonymous with 'credit cards' and it disrupts the surface reading a little. If 'for example' wasn't there, this clue would be hard to beat as it has a big tick for creativity. It still might win! . . .

**Fluid discovered inside the last I checked \*\*\***

Another device used, a hidden, giving -e last I c----. It reads well but a comma after 'inside' would've really helped. The definition again isn't as tight as I'd like but that's just me.

**Resilient backflip of citizen following reversal of sale \*\*1/2**

Two reversals, sale< then cit<. I've never seen 'cit' for citizen. I'd either have to take it on trust or pull out a dictionary, both options being an effort! Is 'resilient backflip' a sensible surface idea? I'd suggest they're opposites.

**Resilient survive in beginnings of environmentally inhospitable conditions \*\*\*\***

A different construction idea with e-(last)i-,c-. I think the clue reads well and is structured well. My only quibble is having 'resilient' as a noun definition. You might say 'the resilient' but that affects the clue. Cryptic clues often sound clipped but they don't have to be. Still, it's a contender.

**Salt and ice at sea make it buoyant \*\*\***

A very similar clue to the first listed - (salt,ice)\*. My main problem is with 'it'. On surface reading, I want

to know what 'it' is! In the construction, the anagram would 'make buoyant' but the sense is lost. Again, I see how it works but it doesn't quite flow.

**Stale cake is originally tight and springy \*\*\*1/2**

A slightly different twist with a (stale,c-,i-)\* anagram. The clue reads well and is sound in construction. My only reservation is that 'tight' is a weird description of a cake and if it was, it's probably not 'springy' at the same time. In amongst a puzzle's worth of clues I may not have noticed but as a one-off, I do.

**Stretchy supple top swapped for bare bottom \*\*\***

In this clue, the first letter of 'plastic' is swapped for the last letter of 'bare'. The surface has some humour but I wonder if 'bare' could've been improved as a '-e' word.

**Swallowed by spaniel - a sticky, springy material \*\*\*1/2**

The first clue to go for a nounal definition, we have a hidden of -----el a stic-. Good surface alluding to the stupid things that dogs do. The construction is fine as a simple clue.

**This type of band is likely to make a comeback \*\*\*\***

The setter noted that 'likely to make a comeback' is the definition. I would've seen the whole clue as a cryptic definition, diverting us to a musical group that is not yet finished. If it was a double definition, 'this type of band' would be too similar the other. In a sense, too much information from the setter. Will that cost them the win?

The winner for this month is Toby McLeay, just, with **"Resilient survive in beginnings of environmentally inhospitable conditions"**. The three four-star clues were quite different and a different adjudicator could easily have selected them. Congratulations, Toby.

**Clue-Writing Competition Scoring System**

	Poor	Proper	Perfect
Definition	0	1	2
Secondaries	0	1	2
Fairness	0	1	2
Surface	0	1	2
x-factor	0	1	2
Total score	Star Rating		
1 or 2	*		
3 or 4	**		
5 - 7	***		
8 - 9	****		
10	*****		

**Clue-writing - November Competition:**

For the next competition, please write a clue for the word **QUARTER (7)** complete with explanation. Send your entries to Drew Meek email to drewski1@hotmail.com Entries close 11 December 2023.