

Summary

1. November Competition
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3. Presentations Part 1 2016 Championship
4. 2018 Calendar - £3,000+ to date

5. Bulletin Board - Huge thanks to Jos Tait for lending her time and expertise.

1. November Competition

The November competition with 'The Sorcerer' themed grid by Oberto and clued by Anax, was won by Hugh Brown of Penryn. Excellent solving!

Feedback included:

Nov grid attached. Still haven't managed to finish the December crossword! My, there have been some challenging ones this year, but excellent fun as usual. RE(Loved this crossword and the opera clips on You-Tube!)

I absolutely **loved** this puzzle. G and S are always entertaining, but I hadn't come across The Sorcerer before. We found some of the songs on You Tube and once John Wellington-Wells was in our our heads, couldn't stop humming it for hours! Definitely worth a visit to No 70 Simmery Axe, to add a gherkin to the eggs and the ham..... DS

More difficult 3D for which many thanks to Anax PC

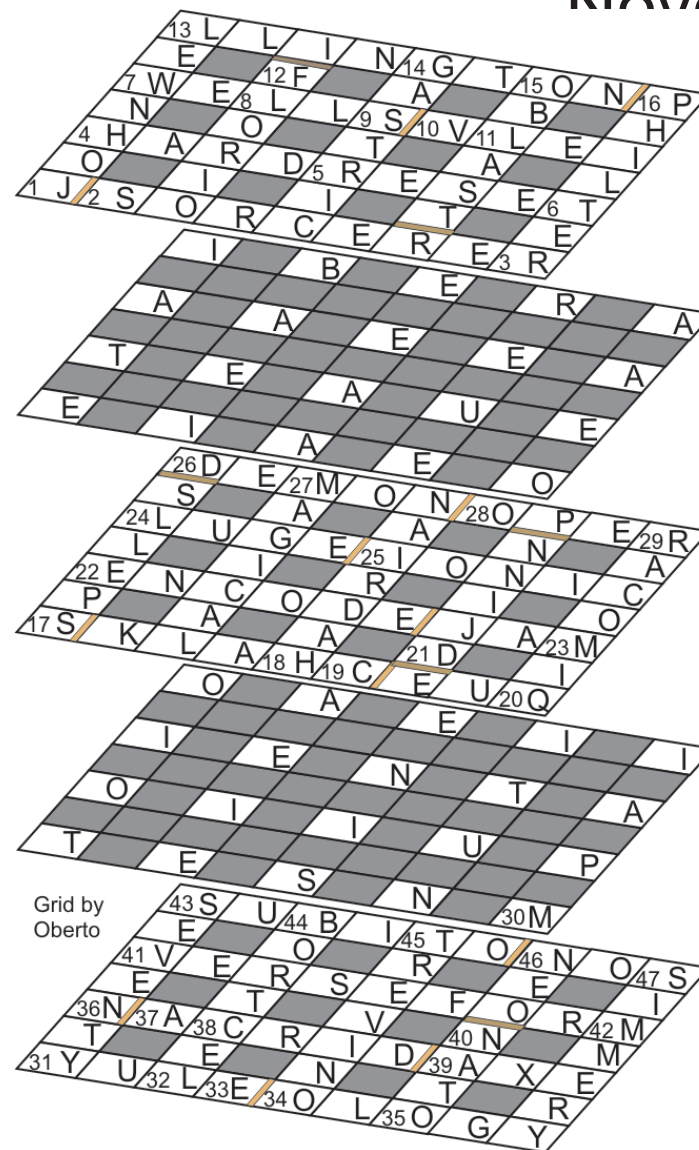
Coventry Canal Sutton Stop
Sirius



Best theme ever!, Though the song won't leave my head. Next time I stay with my sister she has promised a visit to Simmery Axe (though it *won't be in time to get a potion to help complete December's puzzle*) BB
(St Mary Axe – a road in London Ed)

Not quite as enjoyable as the more restrained 5x5x5 or 5x5x7 puzzles but thanks to the compiler and clue writer anyway. SC

November
2017
Anax
Oberto



The Sorcerer by Gilbert & Sullivan opened on 17 November 1877 at the Opera Comique in London.

Banquet Menu

T	H	E	E	G	G	S	T	H	E	H	A	M	A	N	D
T	H	E	S	T	R	A	W	B	E	R	R	Y	J	A	M

Here comes my attempt at the very difficult November puzzle. On the whole I enjoyed doing the puzzle and like all good ones it made me delve into something I was unfamiliar with. One or two clues left me wondering whether I'd got the right answer:

- 3 must be BAMBI but the only explanation I could think of was that BA = British Airways, M = miles and BI reversed = Iberian Airlines
- 29 is NOETH but this doesn't appear in Chambers
- 45 seems to be SPELLS but I can't see that SPELLS = PROMISES JM

This was a lot of fun to do! However there are a few answers that I was unable to justify as well as I would like to ... so we shall see whether I have got them right or not.

December's is another bundle of trouble all on its own. I have the theme and understand the principle of what I am trying to do but with the xxxxxx xxxxx changing xxxxxxxx it does not leave much in the way of letters to assist with the answers to those difficult clues. (*Comments on active puzzle blocked!*)

Here's to hoping I get it sorted in time! CF

That was a struggle and I felt it shouldn't have been. I left the easiest ones for the end. Many thanks.ET

November solution attached. I can't believe we're nearly at the end already! This one wins the prize for most obscure words. I don't know what I would have done without Wikipedia. JT

There was a problem with the November grid where two squares were missing in levels 1 and 4 respectively. I hope it's sufficient for me to say I know that the two letters belonging to these squares are A and I from the answer to 16d, PARIS.

Many, many thanks for a year of excellent puzzles, although modesty forbids that I include the July puzzle in that remark! EL

A thing of shreds and patches. An anniversary worth celebrating. HB

I am a G and S fan and had been to see The Sorcerer quite recently, performed by our local operatic society. PD

Another teasing puzzle to solve. Fingers crossed! T&CH

This was quite tough: a few unfamiliar words and we don't know 'The Sorcerer'! An enjoyable struggle! N&SI

November's entry attached. Pretty tough with a couple of obscure Welsh words in it, but it all fell together once I got the theme. Not one of G&S's most well-known works, and I'd never come across it before, but somehow had still heard of John Wellington Wells! I tried looking up Harry Potter characters before I found him though. AW

I guess this is the largest 3D crossword to date. What-a-lot-a-clues! And it's an Anax - Oh dear - it may take some time ...

... after completion I can say that I have seen (much) harder Anax puzzles, so I think he was being gentle with us here. Still, it was not a push-over. The theme plus 3-way checking plus alphabetic answers provides so much more opportunity to get at the answers. At each of several sessions tackling this beast I made some progress.

Clearly there is a very large percentage of thematic answers, but some of the "in-fill" were extremely obscure. VLEI and WAVIL needed deep dictionary delve.

The other thing I noticed was the number of "Up" answers. I'm alright with the other 5 directions, but trying to visualise "Up" in the grid seems to defeat me and I always have to write out what I have so far separately.

Biggest chuckle came when I finally stumbled over SIMMERY AXE (for St Mary Axe) in the Sorcerer's details. I'd been tinkering with that anagram for ages and been looking at "Simmery" as the only sensible word but didn't twig it was a contraction of St Mary. Of course "30 St Mary Axe" is The Gherkin and as it is only about a mile from work I had a look at what's at "Number 70" now ... a massive modern "Corporate Office" for unspecified corporation. Happily, round the corner there is a bar called The Alchemist - I wonder if there is a Sorcerer link there? They do "Experimental Cocktails" - so maybe.

Nora has my sympathy trying to check all these answer sheets. I had to concentrate to write the letters legibly (almost) in the reduced size squares necessitated by the massive 9x7x5 grid. Also the larger it is, the more chance of stupid mis-transcribing. Also, also, I might easily have some wrong - there are 2 or 3 wordplays I don't get so will be expectant for the explanations. AJR

Here's my entry for the November 3D Crossword. The Sorceror is not an opera with which I'm familiar so it was a steep, but enjoyable, learning curve.

On we go to the last challenge of 2017....it could make a serious dint in my Christmas preparation time! JB John Wellington Wells seemed vaguely familiar and careful study of the song led to many answers. Some straightforward clues enabled me to work and verify formerly unknown words such as MACAI, ORFIN, and OSHAC JB

I enjoyed the theme, once I found it - and I must take this opportunity to recommend Tom Holt's series about alternative world in which the firm of JWWells is flourishing to the present day (The Portable Door etc. I did need Google to confirm the 'Banquet Menu' and also the goalie in the 49th, though the clue was clear enough about what was needed. By the way. my first thought at the 7th was ARIEL, which sent me up a blind alley, as it would need all the previous answers to be earlier in the alphabet - so couldn't find any after the 1st.

I do have a couple of queries - there's a stray yellow square under the preamble, and one on the right side of the answer grid - I don't see any indication of how to fill them as the ones in the menu are sufficient for the theme.

And thanks for the calendars, as good as ever ! PM

I am a fan of neither Gilbert nor Sullivan but I found it very involving and enjoyable and quite challenging in places; fairly so, with the exception of 29 (36 up). Noeth is not in my Chambers nor Oxford nor Collins and even One Look does not recognise it.

I would like to make a donation to your nominated and very worthy charities in recognition and support of your continuing and very creative work on their behalf but I do not need a printed calendar because I work with what is available from the calendarspuzzle website, which is perfect for me. How can I best make such donation? MC

The most difficult this year by some margin.I have a copy of the Savoy operas but the internet is much easier to search.
2, 38, and 50 a bit puzzling. MJ

I really didn't enjoy this one, even having to resort to a Welsh translator! Have you posted my 2018 Calendar? It seems to be taking longer than usual to arrive. JB's

Good morning, Mr Westbrook.

I received the 3D calendar puzzles 2017 as a birthday present from my sister. As my birthday is in March, I was something of a late starter – but I greatly enjoyed the puzzles from April to October inclusive. They were just enough of a challenge to energise my brain cells – but the November puzzle, which incidentally includes more clues than there are days in the month, has me flummoxed. So congratulations to whoever set it for unfathomability!

I would like to join the community and receive a newsletter – maybe with some helpful hints!

Many thanks, and "happy solving" – or in my case this month, failing to solve! CB

I had many .. before deciding to look up John Wellington having no GBS internet. Clears up many assumptions!

Last two - over-obsessed with goalkeepers rather than feet, still not completely parsed.

Finally MOCHI is only word fitting from Wordhippo b8t the OCH? DM

I liked the extra addition of the Eggs & Ham couplet and G AND S appearing therein

- I liked the huge number of thematically-related entries

- 10 (12to) - I didn't understand this clue

- 50 (10ac) - shouldn't the clue have ended in "during six", not "during sex" - because "six" indicates V I ?

- 5 (38up) - do I really see "beloved" being used to indicate "take the O off the end" ?? That's very obscure - Chambers doesn't give any indication that "beloved" means "deprive of love". "Deloved" - if there was such a word - would work better ! HE

Superb puzzle, great for G&S fans. Took a while to recall Paris Hilton (how soon we forget !) and a few minutes to parse BAMBI. Typical Anax sauce! I'm sure I am not the only Welsh solver to appreciate NOETH and Macai. Nadolig Llawen!! MLJ

another lovely puzzle rich in thematic material. Had me humming along as I completed it. TH

It took a while for the theme to emerge. Clue 43 was clearly an anagram which proved elusive. In the end it emerged from googling sorcerer's address number seventy which led to SIMMERY AXE and thence to the opera. The Banqueting Menu provided a nice confirmation of Gilbert and Sullivan. There were a good few unfamiliar words including MACAI (thank you to Oberto for introducing me to Word Hippo), NOETH, CICER, OSHAC and ORPIN. Anex is, for me, at the more difficult end of the setter spectrum and his cluing in this crossword was, I thought, no exception. I thought Clue 4 CHALK was very clever as well as very tricky and Clue 5 CICER with 'beloved' used in the same way as 'beheaded' was novel. Clue 49 VERSE FORM was perhaps the most abstruse clue. All in all a very enjoyable solve and no doubt an excellent warm up for Enigmatist in December. AG

I found this fairly tough and was held up for a long time parsing a couple of clues, or rather verifying the answers. The clues for NOETH and MACAI were fair and led directly to the solutions although only the latter had any indication of not being in Chambers etc. It took me a while to realise that I had to do more than just search for definitions in wordhippo.com but that was my error. I realise that employing more bars in the grid would add to the clue total of 52 which is already large, but I do think non-English words which are neither common in English nor thematic should be avoided, or at least noted as such. If I have missed some significance in those answers or their position in the grid I apologise.

Notwithstanding that quibble I thought it was an impressive grid with a lot of thematic material and a fun extra grid. all of which I enjoyed solving a great deal. I am not overly familiar with the works of Gilbert and Sullivan so it took me a while - and the solving of 17 - to be able to discover the theme and the significance of the anniversary. I enjoyed reading the relevant parts of the libretto - I don't know if I will have time to watch or listen to the whole thing for a while!

I could not parse 2 - "china" seems to be for "JU" in the clue and I am obviously missing something.

5 (CICER) seems to be a clue for CICERO (which would fit in the grid with a snake)?

Best clues for me were those for BAMBI, DEMONOLOGY, ELECTROBIOLOGY, GASTRIC, HADRIAN, HARD RESET (non-dictionary), JOHN WELLINGTON WELLS, OLOGY, OPERA COMIQUE, RADII, SEINE, VERSE FORM, VLEI. As always from Anax the clues were generally excellent with very natural surface readings.

Many thanks to Anax, Oberto, and yourself as always. BL

3. Presentation 2016 3D Crossword World Championship

Ben Lovering was presented with the BBC Children in Need Appeal 3D Crossword World Championship 'It's Not a Piece of Cake' trophy by Eric Westbrook, 3D Crossword designer, on Wednesday 15th November 2017, at The Chesil Rectory, Winchester

Ben's innovative grid design won the 2016 Ray Parry-Morris trophy - a constantly developing conceptual sculpture under continuous construction, reflective of Ray's industrious, continually unfolding creative designs. Members of the luncheon party, Ben Lovering, mother Sharyn Lovering, Keith Williams (second in the world) and Eric Westbrook (Sirius), were held spellbound by the constantly changing diamond molecular framework, miniature polycarbonate tall-boy, drawers of colourful mini-socks by Mrs Sirius, housed in a Seven Dials cylinder ... before being whisked away for further construction. Ben will receive a memento to keep.



Ben Lovering
3D Crosswords
World Champion
2016
Sirius right)
presents
'It's Not a
Piece of Cake'.

Keith Williams 2nd
in The World 2016
(2015 Champion)
presented with a
Colin Dexter book
signed by the
original Morse and
3D Crossword solver,
Sir Jeremy Morse
RIP



2. Clue & Explanations Nov 2017

ACRID	1	37ac First note to deliver after C sharp (5)	A + RID after C
AU JUS	2	39up Like keeping posh china so meat may be served (2,3)	AS around U JU
BAMBI	3	44up In cartoon they fly miles, going both ways (5)	BA M BI
CHALK	4	19ba Soft rock from Gypsy Kings leader (5)	CHAL K[ings]
CICER	5	38up Roman orator's beloved vegetable genus (5)	CICER[o]
DEMONOLOGY	6	26ac,34ac "Service" good – only bad without them (10)	GOODONLY* around 'EM
Changed to EWdone		17's Diabolical service area bad – only good without them (10)	
DJINN	7	21aw Spirit pronounced "spirit" (5)	"GIN"
ELECTROBIOLOGY	8	33ba-2,32aw,44ac-2,34ac Get cooler oil by changing in "service" (14)	Anag
Changed to EWdone		Get cooler oil by changing in 17's current service area (14)	
ENCODE	9	22ac Scramble, with this letter, some lines (6)	ENC. ODE
FLORID Apologies	10	12to Female ruler will stop one blushing (6)	F LOR(I)D
FLORIO - English Writer lexicographer		12to Man of words lost parts for satellite (6) F(L)OR IO	F(L)OR IO
GASTRIC	11	14to Sort of band using wind & fiddle, you might say (7)	"GAS TRICK"
GENET	12	14d Info on alien creature (5)	GEN E.T.
HADRIAN	13	18aw Henry Mole, wall builder (7)	H ADRIAN
HARD RESET	14	4ac There's a novel way to block this PC operation (4,5)	THERESA* around RD
IONIC	15	25ac Satellite condition not quite charged? (5)	IO NIC[k]
JESTY	16	1d Apparently playful old cricketer (5)	Whimsical DD
JOHN WELLINGTON WELLS	17	1aw,13ac,7ac WC successfully found in Boots (maker of potions) (4,10,5)	JOHN + WELLINGTON(WELL)S
LAGER	18	8d Beer, all a German drinks (5)	Hidden
LELIO	19	32up Left priest with old Berlioz work (5)	L ELI O
LENTO	20	11d Slowly fill house with books (5)	LE(NT)O
Changed to		11d Fast time, or initially slow (5)	LENT O[r]

LIDOS	21	13d Covering huge swimming pools (5)	LID OS
LUGE	22	24ac Rush to abandon new winter sport (4)	LU[n]GE
MACAI	23	42up Welsh grub I am eating about to be thrown up (5)	I A(CA)M<
Changed to		42up Welsh grub I am eating about to be thrown up (5)	
MAGICAL	24	27to Soldier in coat, almost completely like 17aw (7)	MA(GI)C AL[I]
MAJ	25	23ba Officer briefly has trouble turning (3)	JAM<
MY	26	30d Whose name on calling card from your nurses? (2)	Hidden
Changed to		30d Crumbs from your sandwiches (2)	
NATO	27	40to Military alliance's function – turning over (4)	TAN< O
NEO	28	46to Drama about Spain's recent introduction? (3)	N(E)O
NOETH	29	36up Naked in Wales, on the rocks (5)	ONTHE*
NOSOLOGY	30	46ac,34ac "Service" that rebounds, so record's broken (8)	YON< in SO LOG
Changed to EW		17's classy service area that rebounds, so record's broken (8)	
OBLAST	31	15to Explosion to east of old Russian province (6)	O BLAST
Changed to		15to Explosion finishes old Russian province (6)	
LOGY	32	34ac Science is dull – love comes first (5)	LOGY after O
ONE-ER	33	35up Expert on English royalty (3-2)	ON E ER
OPERA COMIQUE	34	28ac,29to,20ba Heading off for cameo, equip cast for theatre (5,7)	*[f]ORCAMEOEQUIP
ORPIN	35	15d Soldiers secure plant (5)	OR PIN
OSHAC	36	34up Ammoniac plant, thus climbing, cut short (5)	SO< HAC[k]
PARIS	37	16d Location popular with couples, even singles (5)	PAR IS
Changed to		16d Talk about one's capital (5)	RAP< I'S
PHILTER	38	15to 16d's not on in a love potion from America (7)	HILT[on] in PER
		Corrected to 16to	
RADII	39	5d More than one spoke of wicked couple (5)	RAD II
ROQUE	40	3d-3,20ba Version of game using rake, without question (5)	RO(Q)UE

SEINE	41	9d It's in 16d – all there is to be said (5)	“SANE”
SEVENTY	42	43to 47to,39ac address, dirty place around flat (7)	S(EVEN)TY
SIMMERY AXE	43	47to,39ac Sexy mermaid almost lost location of 2ac (7,3)	SEXYMERMAI[d]*
SORCERER	44	2ac 1aw,13ac,7ac's careless errors outside church (8)	*ERRORS around CE
SPELLS	45	17aw 2ac makes these promises? (5)	Double meaning
		Letter count corrected to (6)	
SUBITO	46	43ac On the spot loan – it's nothing (6)	SUB IT O
TEMPE	47	6d Endless nature in vale of Thessaly (5)	TEMPE[r]
TREVINO	48	45to Public backing secures trendy golfer (7)	OVERT< around IN
VERSE FORM	49	41ac Goalie keeps moving, frees use of feet (5,4)	VORM around *FREES
VLEI	50	10ac It can be wet and extremely loose during sex (4)	L[ooS]E in VI
WALIV	51	7d How a Liverpudlian takes in town in Maharashtra (5)	Hidden
YULE	52	31ac Noel Edmonds introduced after Mr Brynner (4)	E. after YUL

4. 2018 Calendar - £3,000+ to date

Since the 11.1 November Newsletter we have raised a further £2,000 with more crossword websites and blogs giving their endorsements. I am grateful to Guardian Crossword Editor, Hugh Stephenson for his glowing support, as well as Brian Head - Crossword Club, Derek Harrison-Crossword Centre, Christine Jones - One Across, Pears Fundraising Group, Nora, Puck, Enigmatist, many 3D solvers putting posters up, solvers making bulk orders to supply friends with a year's entertainment or pleasurable torture Thank you everybody so far ...

We are on course to break sales records!

There's never been a better time to buy!

Most of all, thank you for supporting our project to help youngsters in need.

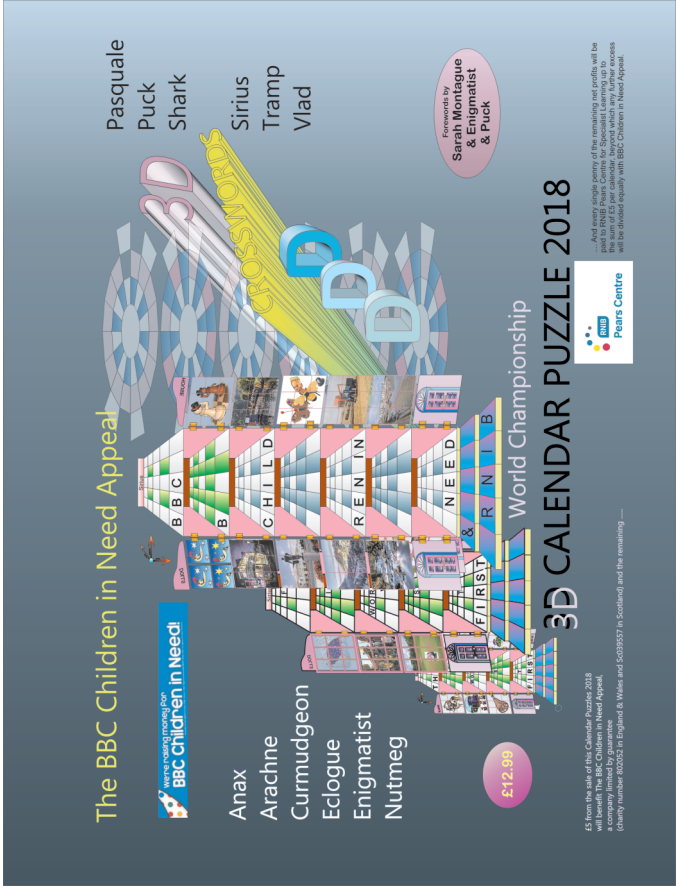
Very best wishes for a Happy Christmas,

Eric Westbrook

Registered Blind RNIB Member
& Public Speaker

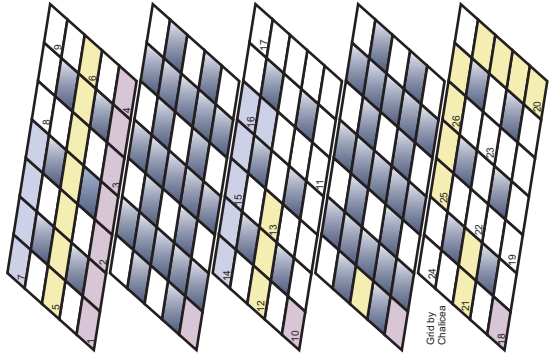
3D Crossword Designer *Sirius*
Software development for
independent blind crossword solving



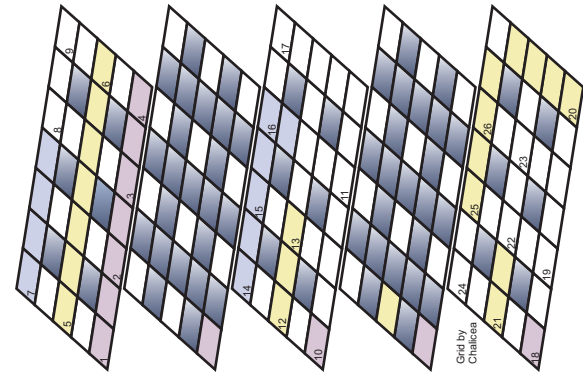


A Posh Puzzle Calendar

Cryptic Crosswords in



Three Dimensions



Google:

BBC 3D Crosswords