### 2.3 February 2017 Newsletter

## Summary

1. January 2017 Competition
2. Clue Explanations
3. RNIB Pears Centre Cheque Presentation
4. Mqrch Answer Grid

## 1. January Competition

The January competition with 'The Big Four' railway themed grid by Bozzy and clued by Aracne was won by Michael Syrotinski of Glasgow. Excellent solving!

## Feedback included:

I find Arachne's settings very satisfying. As always toughish to get going. Shades of Araucaria. Thanks A! ET
.. a few new words but straightforward from clues. A nice offering for January. NI
What a nice train photograph. For those of us who spent far too many childhood days on station platforms with anorak and notebook, no need to google the pre-grouping companies!
Nice set of clues from Arachne. PA
A nice gentle start to the year. Thanks. JM \& DL
Not too difficult a start to the year. Nice level of thematic material in lights and clues.
It would be useful to have a cross-reference to dates, eg 1ac 33, 1aw 32, 2d 14 etc. At least it would save me having to construct my own. MJ One of the great things about a new influx of solvers each year is that the puzzles are viewed in a fresh light. Any thoughts on this suggestion from Max?
A really enjoyable start to the year with some fine clues and lots of trainy references. I particularly like 19aw, albeit non-railway, with its lovers etching their initials into trees. DH

Please find solution attached. I found it harder than I had hoped for January but once i got 'into it', it 'fell out'. Loved the theme. Trains are my favourite form of transport. From my sitting room window I can see a steam train in the distance travelling on the old GWR line from Kingswear to Paignton - but not in the snow, we rarely get any down here in Devon! CF


With thanks to Graham Fox for allowing us to use his beautiful photo 10106 Steaming into Oakworth
Ex LMS/BR 0-6-0 Class 4F Fowler steam locomotive 43924 built by the LMS railway company at Derby Works in 1920 as LMS 3924, the 'Big Goods'

I liked this one : a good solid grid (not too many going up or towards, and no snakes !), some cracking clues, and a nice easy (and I reckon fairly well-known) theme. A nice "safe" start to the year.

I liked all the references to railways and trains in many clues ... but I still await a crossword in which *ALL* of the clues manage to have a surface meaning relating to the theme ! HE

## There is a challenge here from Hugh?

I always wanted to be an engine driver. A nice straightforward start to the year. Here we go! PD

I managed the first one at least! AW
Here we go again with 2017. You are probably feeling the cold while we are sweltering.
This puzzle reminded us of the early days of the railway. We still use the trains, but now, of course, they are all electric! CH (Australia)

Thank you so much for the 2017 calendar, which was waiting for me when I got back to London after Christmas. It is beautifully produced, as always.

Here is my January solution, which had some very tricky parts, but was a good start to the year, reminding us of the good old days of the railway! DS

Enjoyable puzzle from the Spider lady and Nora. Gentle start to the year! JP
A gentle and enjoyable start to the 2017 collection. I can still fall for the obvious mislead, it took some time before the Swedish racketeer morphed from a gangster into a tennis player for BORGO. My favourite clue was 2AW LYING with solvers needing to extract a Female Caledonian and its strong loco theme. Lines serve Barking for VERSE was a nice succinct gem. One question for 17ac/19ac why isn't a bar needed between ELMS and TET? AG

## Thank you very much for the spot Alan. And apologies.

Nice easy start to 2017 which was very welcome with all the hard slogs elsewhere. Many thanks to Arachne for her humorous clues, particularly to Abyss, Borgo and Gouda. All the best, Eric, for 2017 and continued success with Calendar. PC

Here is the first one of the New Year. (Must have been easier than usual for me to finish so early in the month. Best wishes for a happy, prosperous and successful New Year. AG

Good afternoon. Please see attached my entry for the January 2017 3D crossword puzzle.
Should I wait until the end of each month to submit (given the dates of the clues) or is it acceptable to submit early?
Thanks for the fun puzzle! JN
Nora replied to jack saying that entries could be sent in at any time.
being last in as I'd been trying to think of an actual town in Italy. Apart from that, the wordplay was sufficient to make it clear what was needed for the less familiar words, though I'm glad that it hadn't been necessary to use many. PM

A satisfying puzzle to solve and even my husband enjoyed this one with its railway theme. We liked the geographical clues of Day 10 and 25. Thank you. JB
Congratulations to both ladies on an excellent puzzle noting the ! 923 railway groupings - sadly missed by trainspotters when, around 1950, they were merged into the amorphous British Rail.
With several hard nuts to crack, it was not a piece of cake as the 3D trophy makes clear. With that as a curtain raiser, I'm not at all sanguine about my chances of being on the stage when the curtain comes down. Yours aye MC

A grand start to the year. Liked the 'wingless tern' on $16^{\text {th }}$, Stoke (nearish to where I was born) on $24^{\text {th }}$ Zebra - No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency on $32^{\text {nd }}$ and CHIRU such a nice word I'd never heard of on $6^{\text {th }}$. Thank you. BB

A very nice grid by Bozzy and a fantastic set of clues from Arachne. Her clues are so consistently good that my expectation level is high but she never fails to impress me. Arachne's 3D clues seem to be especially good. I marked all but 5 clues as particularly good and those 5 were all good. Plus there was an amazing amount of thematic material in the clues. Those which I have marked GOOD in extra large letters and with at least double underlining include those for ABYSS, BRIDGES, RAILWAY STATION, TORSI, VIZ, and ZOLLNER. Those last ones are breathtaking!

Sorry to keep the feedback short, words pretty much fail me anyway when it comes to Arachne's clues! Many thanks to her, Bozzy, and yourself. BL

Super puzzle, not too taxing to start the year, some ingenious clueing. MLJ
Thank you and your team for another year (2016) of entertaining and engrossing puzzles.

## Great to have the 2017 Calendar back in printed/physical form.

Wishing you all the very best of health for 2017.GS

| SOLUTION |  | Direction 0 Clue - Enumeration | Explanation |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ABYSS | 1 | 23up Inside-out Y-fronts cutting into sailor's nether regions (5) | Y(-front)s in AB's |
| ALGATES | 2 | 8ac Finally Toshiba, Dell and Microsoft founder, always outmoded (7) | (Toshib)a, (Del)l, Gates |
| AXELS | 3 | 8d Cuts ac ross lake and jumps on ice (5) | L in axes |
| BORGO | 4 | 5d Swedish racketeer meeting Mafioso at last in Italian market town (5) | Borg, O |
| BRIDGES | 5 | 5ac British Rail, one would guess, regularly cancelled connections (7) | BR, l'd, g(u)e(s)s |
| CHIRU | 6 | 12aw Antelope knocking stuffing out of hippopotami in vineyard (5) | h(ippopotam)i in cru |
| EDITING | 7 | 22up,6aw Train ignited in cutting (7) | *ignited |
| ELMS | 8 | 17ac Sources of timber beam one cut and turned (4) | <sm(i)le |
| EQUAL TO | 9 | 16ac Capable of extracting poor Ibsen from questionable loco ( 5,2 ) | *questionable minus <br> *Ibsen |
| GOUDA | 10 | 9d Travel over central Sudan, a change from Cheshire? (5) | go, (S)uda(n) |
| GOWER | 11 | 7d One who leaves nets with former England batsman (5) | w in goer; ref David Gower |
| INLET | 12 | 25 up Sound of insolent son leaving (5) | Insolent minus son |
| LAY TO | 13 | 14aw Amateur pair reportedly stop ship (3,2) | lay, homophone two/to |
| LOCUM | 14 | 2d Person standing in engine endlessly hums, ignored by guards (5) | loc(o), (h)um(s) |
| LYING | 15 | 2aw Female Caledonian banned from legendary loco for dishonesty (5) | (F)lying (Scotsman) |
| MOERA | 16 | 18aw Fate of wingless tern - boring bird, recently extinct (5) | (t)er(n) in moa |


| NEWEL | 17 | 13aw Feature of stairs from modern high-level railway (5) | new, El |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| NIGHT TRAIN | 18 | 3aw,20aw Silly thing heading to tracks drops sleeper (5,5) | *thing, t(racks), rain |
| NONET | 19 | 3d Review part of joint opus (5) | <tenon |
| OLEARIA | 20 | 21ac Daisy Bush beginning to organise a European rail trip (7) | o(rganise), *[a E rail] |
| RAILWAY STATION | 21 | 15ac,24ac Share sandwiches - it always worked for Paddington, for example $(7,7)$ | [it always]* in ration |
| RELIT | 22 | 4d Again set fire to front of locomotive blocking northbound line (5) | I(ocomotive) in <tier |
| ROSES | 23 | 4aw Bloomers revolted son (5) | rose, s |
| STOKE | 24 | 24 to Add coal to furnace in trains to Kent (5) | (train)s to Ke(nt) |
| SWOON | 25 | 10d Faint from love for Indian in Wiltshire railway town (5) | O replacing Ind. In Swindon |
| TET | 26 | 19ac New Year in Vietnam, and in France after time (3) | t, et |
| TORSI | 27 | 19aw Trunks of trees often reveal smitten individuals' initials (5) | t (rees) o(ften) r(eveal) <br> s (mitten) i(ndividuals) |
| VERSE | 28 | 11aw Lines serve Barking (5) | *serve |
| VICINAL | 29 | 11ac Individual stops Calvin getting drunk in local (7) | I in *Calvin |
| VIE | 30 | 11d Periodically avoided jockey (3) | (a) v(o)i(d)e(d) |
| VIZ | 31 | 11 up Comic not given to good taste - or to wit (3) | Double definition |
| ZEBRA | 32 | 1 aw Utilize Bradshaw, describing type of crossing (5) | (utili)ze Bra(dshaw); ref. Bradshaw's railway guide |
| ZOLLNER | 33 | 1ac Lines dividing area, ultimately peculiar type of optical illusion (7) | Il in zone, (peculia)r (\& a sort of \&lit?) |

## 3. Cheque Presentation RNIB Pears Centre



Photograph by Ann Hughes, Secretary RNIB Pears Centre Fundraising Group.

Mustafa with carer, Estelle, accepts the $£ 1,350$ cheque from Sirius on behalf of 3D Crossword solvers at RNIB Pears Centre's Tasty Treats Café.

It was Mustafa's birthday. When I asked how old he was, Mustafa replied two hundred thousand and fifty four million, seven hundred and thirty-five thousand, four hundred and ten. Mustafa's smile became broader and broader with each digit.
"That's not quite true is it Mustafa?" cautioned Estelle.
Impossibly, Mustafa smiled even more broadly and then, very proudly, and on behalf of students at RNIB Pears Centre gave a very serious "Thank you."
The cheque will go towards equipment for the new Hrdrotherqapy Centre.

## 4. March Answer Grid

With thanks to 3D Pioneer Jack Nichols, the error on the Answer Grid in the final anagram count has been corrected at $(8,3)$. This is a requirement in the solution to the puzzle, enabling the grid to be completed.

Answer grids can be downloaded from the website and then completed and posted, or scanned and emailed.

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Finally, thank you everyone for your support of our project to help youngsters in need.
Competition deadlines revert to the more normal midnight of the last day of the month. February Shark deadline midnight 28th Feb.

An early start on March is advised with a March Extra by Puck appearing mid-month.

Best wishes

## Eric Westbrook

## Registered Blind RNIB Member \& Public Speaker

 3D Crossword Designer Sirius

