## 3D Crossword April 2019 Newsletter 4

A warm welcome to this month's edition which covers the following items:

1. Review of the March 3D Crossword
2. An Insight into the work of the Creator of our Picture Clues; Frank Paul
3. Two years of Hints and Tips from Adam Saille
4. Winners and Prizes

## 1. Review of the March 3D Crossword

January crossword set by Gin and clued by Vlad.
The winner of this months puzzle was Dave Miller from Stoke-on-Trent. Congratulations Dave.

The crossword celebrates a 130th Anniversary of a tour de force. Clues are presented in alphabetical order of their solution. On Day 22 we go over the river to Day 31 and can literally celebrate on Day 10. Yellow squares yield a birthday girl's nickname in the parlance of the grid.

This month's picture clue isn't related to a day so its probably related to the overall theme. Perhaps just as well that it's nigh on impenetrable; we do want to earn our prize. Vlad's excellent clues unburden their mystery reasonably steadily and in due course METRO for clue 22 and TROCADERO for clue 31 emerge. It slowly dawns that the parlance of the puzzle is French and that the theme relates to Paris. With my almost non-existent french this is going to prove tricky. I'm not getting anywhere with the cunningly partially unchecked up, across and down clue 10, apart from the central D. So with little option I cudgel my mind on the letter mix given by the yellow square's which eventually resolve to LE DAME DE FER. The iron lady? What has Mrs Thatcher to do with this? Nothing it transpires. For want of anything better I play around with Champs Élysée and clue 10. Ah 'winner' is CHAMP plus an anagram of 'dreams' which eventually yields CHAMP DE MARS which the web concedes is a key Parisian park. A bit more webwork and we're there; with the Eiffel Tower doubling as a second iron lady. The end game took longer than the solving but well worth the effort. And the picture, well it beat me, but LADA ME DEFER works. Well done to those who who solved it from scratch.

Some of you had trouble with the mezzanine floor aspect of the grid and entry of CHAMP DER MER for clue 10. A word of assistance at how to look at this from our technical expert Adam Saille is set out below.


LA DAME DE FER: a picture of a LADA; a self-portrait by Frank Paul drawing this very clue to represent ME; and a box with "Later" ticked to indicate DEFER.


## The Mezzanine Floor

The mezzanine floor aspect of the grid is best thought of as a lift which does not stop on every floor. In this instance a lift travelling up/down the right hand side of the grid does not stop at either the top or third tiers, which are both shorter in across-length than the others.
As such, the entry for Day 10 runs from cell 28 , cell 21 , bottom right cell of the fourth tier and then jumps to cell 11, before continuing the remainder of its journey.

Adam

Eiffel Tower 130th anniversary:
The main structural work was completed at the end of March 1889 and, on 31 March, Eiffel celebrated by leading a group of govemment officials, accompanied by representatives of the press, to the top of the tower.
All words appear in both English and French dictionaries. An anagram of highlighted cells gives 'La Dame de Fer'.

Gin is our man in Paris.

## Solutions and Clue Explanations for the March 3D Puzzle

|  |  |  | Explanation | Notes |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 1 | ACTION | 7d Pulling out of Turkey? <br> It's done (6) | Traction less TR |  |
| 2 | ADORES | 4d Worships God over <br> party(6) | Ares round do | I/vb, to adore, 2nd per: <br> tu adores |
| 3 | AGREE | 19d-2,24ac-4 Match <br> official not finishing in time <br> (5) | Re(f) in age | I/ accepted or <br> consented |
| 4 | ALIEN | 2aw Article about story <br> not familiar (5) | An round lie |  |
| 5 | ANIMAL | 4ac Creature setter's <br> obsessive about (6) | Anal round I'm |  |
| 6 | ASTER | 15aw Gallic stripper <br> dropping 9's plant (5) | Asterix less IX | ref to comic strip |
| 7 | BASKET | 1d Little Elizabeth frames <br> question for carrier (6) | Bet round ask | // basketball or pl. <br> trainers |
| 8 | BRANCA | 1ac Fancy cabin's <br> occupied by American <br> woman(6) | A in cabin* | girl's name in both <br> languages |
| 10 | CHAMP DE <br> MARS | 1aw Defy third of Labour <br> Party (5) | 28up,11aw,13d Winner's <br> shattered dreams for tour <br> location (5,2,4) | Champ + dreams* |

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| 17 | GLOSS | 17to Put shine on government defeat (5) | G + loss | // as in "lip gloss" only |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 18 | GREBE | 24to Bird in garden occasionally - black with white tail (5) | $\begin{aligned} & \mathrm{G}(\mathrm{a}) \mathrm{r}(\mathrm{~d}) \mathrm{e}(\mathrm{n})+\mathrm{b}+ \\ & \text { (whit)e } \end{aligned}$ |  |
| 19 | HATER | 21aw Negative person's pride you twice ignored (5) | Hauteur less u twice | //vb to hasten |
| 20 | HOSPICE | 21ba Doctor chose to have Private Eye in care home (7) | Pl in chose* |  |
| 21 | IMAGE | 20aw Picture in current publication a little extreme (5) | $1+$ mag + e(xtreme) |  |
| 22 | METRO | 18to Passengers on it in some trouble (5) | Hidden | Parisian underground/tube |
| 23 | MISTRAL | 6ba-2,5d It blows one away hearing that's bad (7) | Mistrial less I | Strong wind down Rhône valley |
| 24 | NURSES | 9d Poles keeping Rex in employment - they do care (6) | $N \mathrm{~S}$ round ( r in use) | //nannies [children's nurse(s) ] |
| 25 | OCTETS | 16ac Musicians round court set to play (6) | O + ct + set* | // byte(s) |
| 26 | PIRAYA | 27up Old man catches one fish . . . and another unusually (6) | Pa round I ray | Unusually = less common spelling of piranha |
| 27 | PRIMER | 29up Paint proper partner to Queen (6) | Prim (and proper) + ER | //vb to award (a prize to) |
| 28 | RARE | 26ba-4 Back Spain to come last - remarkable (4) | Rear with $E$ at the end |  |
| 29 | ROOFS | 25to They're on the house for some but not me sadly (5) | For so(me) * | //alt.sp. of rouf(s) the roof on the cabin of a boat. |
| 30 | SLALOM | 14ac Look into hardly close race? (6) | Lo in slam |  |
| 31 | TROCADERO | 23ba,22up-3 Ear doctor refurbished place in capital (9) | Ear doctor* | Place du ... (also metro station) Popular spot for view and photos of Eiffel tower. |

## March 3D puzzle comments from Solvers

Mon Dieu! HB
Excellent puzzle with a very entertaining theme. I believe that Gin's assertion is correct. JM
I loved the ‘LADA - ME - DEFER’ picture clue. BB
Confirmation of the theme took a bit of searching (e.g. 10 and 31). Is the picture clue (unfathomable as usual) meant to help - it has no day number. Are all the entries also French words - ROOFS seems unlikely. MJ

I look forward to reading the justification for Gin's assertion that every entry can be regarded as thematic. Yes, there were many which could be connected but not all, Shirley :) . I was also confused by the 2 layers of $6 \times 5$ and 4 of $7 \times 5$ when the instructions mentioned 5 conventional levels. This was a particular problem when entering Day 10's 'Champ de Mars'. Those were my reservations. On the whole I thoroughly enjoyed the puzzle and the Google search to check facts and locations. Vlad's clues were superb although l'm a bit bewildered by Day 1 and a lacrosse stick is not the same as a hockey stick (Day 12) I am left bewildered by Day 25's, PIRAYA, if that is indeed the correct answer. PA catches 1 RAY to give another fish, unusually. OK, it's an unusual spelling for a piranha but why even use that word in the grid? Cicada or pirana would be more familiar and would fit. It's not as though the Y was relevant anywhere else. I suspect something fishy between Vlad and Gin!" JB (Every word can be found in an English and in a French dictionary Ed)

It was good to see one of our French 'dignatories' appearing as a heroine. SC
C'est magnifique! l'm not sure how every solution is thematic though. Would each word be found in a French dictionary peut-être? My favourite piece of legerdemain was Day 10, which managed to misdirect even the usually astute Adam. The 'tour' in this clue is not, as the surface implies, Le Tour de France, but La Tour Eiffel. The bike race does laps of the ChampsÉlysées, and the thematic tower is located in the Champ de Mars. JT

Very nice conducted tour round the french capital culminations in La Dame le Fer. Impressive grid and excellent puzzle. EL

It took me a while to see how the entries for the 10th and 13th were affected by the mezzanine level, but I think I've got them right now. I'm not sure that I have found the parlance referred to, as although most of the entries could be regarded as French, that doesn't seem to apply to every one. However, I've not been able to think of anything, so am submitting that. PM

It took a while before the penny dropped with 6 . We enjoyed this Eiffel Tower construction but haven't understood the visual clue yet. NI

A nice grid with not to many words outside our comfort zone. We did have to do some googling around the theme. Mais tat va bien. JH

This whole puzzle was a tour de force in many ways. Thank you Vlad and Gin not forgetting Frank Paul. JB

Another great puzzle. I'm not sure I could work out the thematic connection for all the answers. MP The puzzles are getting harder already. Some lovely clues here. Took me a while to find the variant PIRIYA so I hope it is correct. Loved GALLIC STRIPPER for Asterix ML-J

Some nice clues here ASTER, FRANCE, G--, PIRIYA though i did consider PIRANA first. Didn't get the Eiffel Tower (doh) until I looked up LE DAME DER FER. DM

As a real Francophile (and Europhile, I should add), this was a very clever and enjoyable puzzle for me, and fell into place quite quickly. I loved the preamble and instructions, and reference to the nickname, which I had forgotten about, and forgotten this was the origin of Thatcher's 'Iron Lady' moniker.Like Adam, I not entirely convinced by Gin's claim that every entry could be considered thematic, unless it is in a rather loose sense, and in terms of general imagery or characteristics associated with Paris and France, as opposed to actual words (some of which work only as 'faux amis', I reckon). MS

Intriguing grid. Had to concentrate to put the answers in the correct cells. Vlad a good deal milder than when he sets for the Guardian - almost finished at one sitting. AJR

Had to do this very quickly after being sidetracked by $\mathrm{B}^{* * * * *}$ for the last few weeks. Not confident about "grid parlance" since HATER has no French root and GLOSS is not a French form. On verra bien! AC

Et Viola! AR

Mystified by much of this and there are several I cannot explain. ET
Didn't know she (La dame der fer) had a nickname. My nickname is "Top always closed when I try to visit" RE

It brought back fond memories of our last visit to Paris - many years ago! CH
I found the mezzanine floor idea in this grid confusing. I also didn't understand the vertical lines etc.... Never mind I enjoyed learning about the French exposition event etc. JA

Enjoyable puzzle with some challenging clues. Took a while for the Asterix penny to drop! JP
I really struggled with the grid with the mezzanine floor. Being a relative newcomer to 3-D puzzles, I find it hard enough to cope with the normal grid without one of the levels being off-centre. I'm afraid I cannot say that I am a fan. Enjoyed the wordy bits, though and look forward to an explanation as to how/why every entry can be regarded as thematic. SW

After a shaky start with the m misleading grid I got there in the end SB
Please find appended my effort this month. I thought it was a very clever concept and had me guessing until the last moment. I'd never heard the Arc de Triomphe called La Dame de Fer! Always learning ..... SF

La dame de fer - clever drawing by Frank Paul. Not sure about 17ac." AS

## 2. An Insight into the work of the Creator of our Picture Clues Frank Paul

I was intrigued by the new cryptic picture clues as soon as I saw them. I had heard of good reviews of the Cryptic Pub Quiz book which Frank had written and with this article in mind I looked it up on-line. The book is cram-full of Frank's eloquent drawings together with questions which take the form of word search poems, jokes, rebuses and pictorial dingbats amongst others.

Frank's book is a wonderful potpourri incorporating the very best of his Mill quizzes employing the logic and wordplay of the cryptic crossword as well as Frank's amazing drawings. Of the different quiz types in the book rebuses best match the picture clues we include in our 3D crosswords. Here are two examples from the book. Both are games, one the favourite of our leader Eric, and one a homophone (answers at the end):


Because I have personally found solving the picture clues quite difficult I was keen to ask Frank how he decided on the difficulty level for his picture clues. It turned out that he didn't really consider levels of difficulty, his approach was to simply try to imagine a visual representation of the solution that worked. So it's not as if these clues are deliberately pitched at the tough end of the scale. Having said this where they reveal the theme of a crossword it's as well that they are difficult.


Frank is not just a quiz setter he is also a top performer. The picture is a screenshot of Frank appearing in the series 13 final of Only Connect where he, together with his team, the Escapologists, won the 2018 final. The show's host, Victoria Coren-Mitchell was much taken by Frank's all round skills.

For those of you still coming to terms with pictorial clues here is a straightforward example which is also shown on the 3D crossword website:


Written Clue:


In this example the pictorial clue is a straightforward representation of the final solution. As you will have noticed in his 3D crossword clues a lot of Frank's pictures are built up from the wordplay elements of the written clues. In fact, Frank tells me, it is quite difficult to fully clue pictorially and include both elements of a normal clue (Wordplay and Definition) without making the definitions either to obvious or to obscure. Despite this, Frank is genuinely excited by the prospect of producing a special for our pleasure. His initial thoughts on this were for a mix of standard and picture clues with the picture clues possibly being thematic to avoid the definition conundrum. If this idea comes off it will be something genuinely new.

Ideas for the 2020 calendar are still very much in the planning stage but I for one very much hope that Frank's picture clues form part of the offering.

A final word from Frank is that he really does sympathise if his clues are too difficult. He'll aim to ease them a little without losing the clue's integrity. Frank is a nice man. I would say maybe not too much easier after all we do have normal clues and we'll all get more familiar with practise.

Frank's book is currently out of print but he does have a few copies. Please contact me at alangoddard100@gmail.com if you would like to obtain a copy. And the answers to the two rebuses: Backgammon and Archery.

## 3. Two years of Hints and Tips from Adam Saille

This month marks the second anniversary of Adam Saille's Hints and Tips for helping us solve our 3D Calendar crosswords. If you have never looked at Adam's hints and tips I can tell you that they are superb fun in their own right whether or not you've completed the puzzle. Adam doesn't give you the answer, what he does is lead you right up to the trough from which you can chose to drink. To illustrate this l've chosen Adam's introduction for this months crossword and my favourite clue from Gin and Vlad's truly splendid crossword. They are pitch perfect:

## The (occasionally) Sagely Witterings of Adam Saille

BOINGGG! Spring is in the air, flowers are emerging, the sap is rising and 3D crossworders are well under way as we enter the third month of our puzzle extravaganza.

The picture selected here alludes to the nickname of the theme celebrating the $130^{\text {th }}$ anniversary with this puzzle, albeit not necessarily in the correct language.

Solvers may well complete the puzzle without fully grasping Gin's assertion that every entry can be regarded as thematic. You would not be alone, as your correspondent thinks there is some doubt on this, but has only a well-thumbed dictionary to support this, whereas Gin is known to be much more wise (not to say resident) in this part of the world.

Let's go....


6 Gallic stripper dropping 9's plant (5)
As someone who grew up with the adventures of the indomitable Gaul pictured here (By Toutatis!), this is meat and drink to your correspondent, but cultural references are only easy if you know them. So, a stripper in this context is not someone with an adversity to retaining clothing, but a character who appears in a comic strip. The use of numbers in clues is deliberately misleading. Some refer to the clue solution so numbered, others to the number itself; here we have the latter albeit in roman numeral format. The whole is a daisy-like flowering plant.

Plant = Comic character (7) -9 (2)

To subscribe to Adam Saille's monthly 'Hints \& Tips'. Just email adamsaille3D@gmail.com and let him know you'd like to receive them.

## 4. Winners and Prizes

Eric Westbrook writes: In the beginning, Araucaria suggested that we offer a modest prize for winning the monthly competitions. I was sceptical at first, thinking that it should be the participation in a noble cause and purely kudos. I was wrong of course. It is about those things, but a prize, even a modest one, adds a little sparkle. There have been many solvers who have written to say that they had never won anything until starting on the 3D Crosswords! How wonderful to see such delight.

Winning solvers in early years would often give their thanks but ask to forego their prize in order to help the project. My response would be grateful thanks but then a plea to accept the prize after all, for two reasons.

Hearing about prizewinners in the newsletter encourages solvers to send in their solutions. And send them in again. This increases confidence and enjoyment and commitment. This might start communications that can feed into project development and/or be shared with other solvers. This helps to form our community. A second reason is to do with the source of funds for the prizes. The money does not come from calendar sales. Every penny we receive is split equally and donated to BBC CiNA and RNIB for the benefit of youngsters in need. The prizes come from generous backgammon opponents. There is a story about probability here but not now.

The first name out of the virtual hat of successful March solvers had been a recent winner and wanted to donate the prize.

Another 3D dilemma to resolve!

I mean, if we concede ground on this, the few drops through the dyke could become a deluge and then where would we be? Up to our necks in soggy Chambers dictionaries, that's what. But this is a human problem. So I caved in straightaway! We can't insist on the postie ramming the Chambers through the nailed-up letterbox. No, this calls for the kind of imaginative thinking that produced the toilet bag and zipped bread. A lucky double six on the backgammon board and we were able to pass Prize One on to RNIB, and had sufficient funds to award Prize Two to the excellent Dave Miller!

