

3D Crossword February 2019 Newsletter 2

This is the third of this year's newsletters and covers the following items:

1. Review of the January 3D Crossword
2. Welcome to the 3D Calendar Puzzles for 2019
3. Correction to the 2019 Virtual Calendar
4. Tie-break and RPM Trophy 2018 Judging

1. Review of the January 3D Crossword

January crossword set by Patch and clued by Arachne

The winner of this month's puzzle was Sandra Weir. Congratulations Sandra.

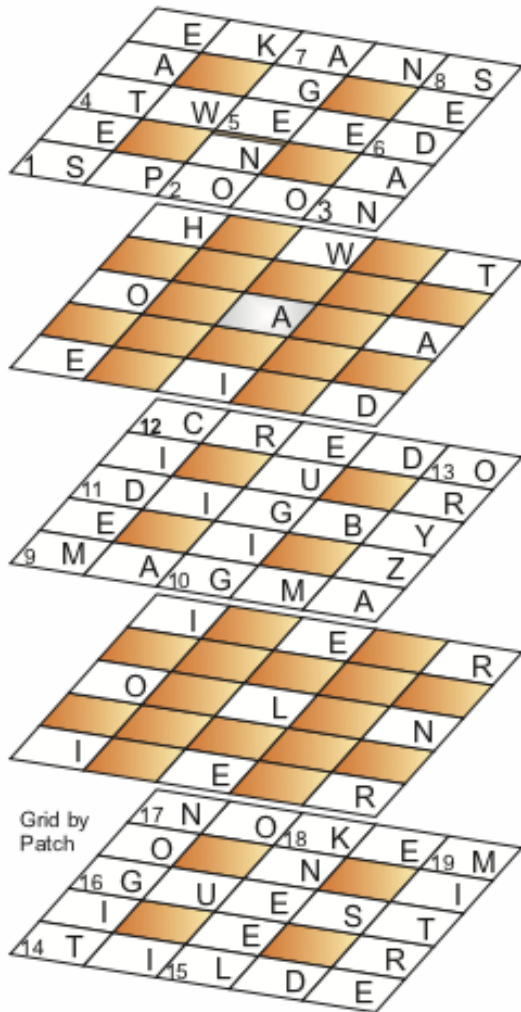
The crossword notes a 50th Anniversary. Clues are presented in alphabetical order of their solution

We like to start the year with a straightforward puzzle, one that gently introduces any new solvers into the mysteries of the 3D crossword and eases our regulars into a new calendar of 3D challenges. As many of you said in your comments Puck and Arachne's offering admirably met this stipulation and I guess, therefore, that all of us were off to a flying start.

I was rather pleased that we had normal clues to Day 4 DAN DARE and clue 7 EAGLE because, like some of you, I struggled somewhat with Frank Paul's cryptic drawings, which however I thought added to the fun. There are more of Frank's drawings to come. (Full explanations for these are given below). Both of these key solutions came right at the start which helped considerably with solving the rest of the puzzle fairly quickly and without too much agonising. Amongst the clues were some real gems. In particular I liked clue 1 A WEEK for Harold Wilson's 'A long time in politics' and clue 9 GODOT for the 'Chap waited for'. Coincidentally we (Lynn, my wife, and I) were in Cambodia cruising down the Mekong when we tackled the puzzle and so particularly enjoyed clue 15 MEKON.

So what anniversary were we noting. I think that there are two correct answers here. The puzzle was set to mark the final edition of the Eagle comic which was published in 1969. However some of you spotted that 1969 was also the 50th anniversary of the first manned moon landing. Astronaut Neil Armstrong spoke the phrase "The Eagle has Landed" to announce the successful landing of the Apollo 11 lunar module named "Eagle" in the Sea of Tranquility on the moon on July 20, 1969. An equally acceptable answer.

3D January Solution



**January
Solution set
by Arachne
Grid by
Patch**



This month's photograph, an eagle owl by Graham Fox, gave a good hint

We are attracted to the second drawing by the arrow. The first portrait of Gustav Holst and the third of 'Lili' Boulanger, are named with surnames first followed by an initial. They are both composers.

This suggests that the arrowed, second drawing is also of a composer whose name should be written in the same way. This second is Edward Elgar to be written ELGAR.E. The portrait is inverted suggesting we might reverse the letters to get ERAGLE.

The arrow contains a sign to bar the letter 'R'.
The answer is EAGLE.

The old penny denotes the letter 'D'.

The figure in the map of Italy is on the go.

Italian for 'to go' is ANDARE.

The answer is DAN DARE

Solutions and Clue Explanations for the January 3D Puzzle

Day	SOLUTION	Direction Clue Letter Count	Explanation	Notes
1	A WEEK	7d Reduced reverence, I'm afraid, for Wilson's long time in politics (1,4)	AW(e), EEK	
2	AGE	7to Laughed regularly in advancing years (3)	(l)A(u)G(h)E(d)	
3	CREDO	12ac He refuses to fight, holding socialist beliefs (5)	RED in CO	
4	DAN DARE	6to,3d 7's Pilot of the Future destroying Andromeda, disregarding order (3,4)	*ANDR(om)EDA	
5	DAYNT	6d Edmund's elegant and extremely neat after 24 hours (5)	DAY, N(ea)T	
6	DIGBY	11ac Like vacuous lad, 4's batman (5)	DIG, B(o)Y	
7	EAGLE	5d Boadicea gleefully besieging 4's home (5)	(boadic)EA GLE(efully)	
8	GIGUE	10aw Dance event with posh drug (5)	GIG, U, E	
9	GODOT	16up Chap waited for match point (5)	GO, DOT	
10	GUEST	16ac 4's controller Sir Hubert speculated out loud (5)	Homophone "guessed"	
11	KNEEL	18to Frank Hampson made 7 exceptional - finally show reverence! (5)	(Fran)K (hampso)N (mad)E (Eagl)E (exceptiona)L	Frank Hampson was creator of Dan Dare et al
12	LEGION	15up,2aw-2 Sgt "Tough" Luck's lot in 7 perhaps stopping fierce fellow (6)	EG in LION	

13	MAGMA	9ac Mum swallowing last of strong, hot fluid (5)	(stron)G in MAMA	
14	MEDIC	9aw Doctor, knight and soldier perhaps shunning mendicant (5)	ME(n)DIC(ant)	
15	MEKON	19ba 4's arch-enemy cut flower in SE Asia (5)	MEKON(g)	
16	MITRE	19to Spies half of Treen's in joint (5)	MI, TRE(ENS)	
17	NICHE	17up Market place covered in macaroni cheese (5)	(macaro)NI CHE(ese)	
18	ORYZA	13to Oddly disregarding Rob Roy's zeal for rice (5)	(r)O(b)R(o)Y(s) Z(e)A(l)	
19	SEDAN	8to Unhurriedly walks away, half-cut, in US saloon (5)	<(prome)NADES	"away"=reverse of "to"
20	SETAE	1aw In recession consume last couple of potatoes and bits of moss (5)	<[EAT, (potato)ES]	
21	SNAKE	8ba Beginning to shiver, almost starkers in wind (5)	S(hiver), NAKE(d)	
22	SPOON	1ac Nitwit put droppings in tin (5)	POO in SN	
23	STORM	8d 7's Nelson, close to Siam, goes off northwards (5)	<(sia)M, ROTS	
24	TIGON	14aw Cross, articulate couple left (5)	Homophone "tie gone"	
25	TILDE	14ac What señora has lifted, not loudly but furiously (5)	*LI(f)TED	
26	TIMES	14up No news in tinmen's newspaper (5)	TI(n)ME(n)S	
27	TWEED	4ac 7's Agent Harris affected disdain at first (5)	TWEE, D(isdain)	

January 3D puzzle comments from Solvers

The January puzzle was a delightful reminder of the dear old Eagle and its many unforgettable characters. A lovely easy canter into a completely different world. JM

I found this one quite easy - I was brought up on The Eagle. HB

My knowledge of Dan dare is not very great and that of the Eagle even less so. So it was quite enjoyable to go researching all of the elements involVed here and I think I learned a few things! Many thanks to Arachne and Patch for an excellent puzzle. EL

I think the 50th anniversary has to be 'The Eagle has Landed'. My mum's birthday in 1969. Great start to the year. RE

Even though I new nothing about this theme and had to be helped out by google, I really enjoyed this puzzle. Arachne is a wonderful setter and very clever clues abounded. I particularly liked 'LION' as part of Day 12, as I discovered LION took over the Eagle comics in 1969 JA

We liked this gentle start to the year and particularly appreciated the fact that the grid was mostly composed of 5 and 7 letter words with very little turning of corners etc. Of course Arachne's clues were of her usual high quality. SC

Keep up the good work please. MM

Breaking us in gently. I actually had the first edition of the Eagle in my youth! Brought many memories! ML

The first 3D of the year was very entertaining and quite challenging. My treasured memories were for the Rover, Adventure, Hotspur and Wizard between 1947 and 1955 or so. So engrossed with Smith of the Lower Third, Baldy Hogan, Captain Braddock, Limp Along Leslie et al often chastised for not attending to more mundane things! The Eagle promised more but never, IMHO, reached the heady heights of aforementioned. PC

Completed despite the blur caused by tears of nostalgia AG

Well this is Arachne's offer - Spyder Light! No less enjoyable and aimed at my age group though I'm not sure where 1969 comes in. ET

Not my specialist subject so looking forward to a 'Bunty' themed crossword sometime in the future. All the best to all entrants and thanks for a great puzzle. SW

Not a familiar theme, but Boadicea gleefully provided me entry to it and Andromeda pointed the way from there. I couldn't figure out how to get the initial E in EAGLE from Frank's clue. Elgar backwards minus the R is clear enough, but what have Holst and Boulanger got to do with it? The (old) penny dropped easily enough with his representation of DAN DARE though. Andare, andare! Onwards to February! JT

This was a nice one! My brother used to read The Eagle, so at least some of the names were vaguely familiar! DS

This was a lovely puzzle to start the year. BB

The traditional gentle start to the new year. Like many baby boomer boys, the EAGLE was the first print publication that I regularly read, or at least followed the artwork. Great fun it was too, although with passage of time only DAN DARE, DIGBY and the MEKON come without prompting to mind. Happily the Spiderwoman clued Patch's other references fairly, though I had some senseless trouble, er, guessing GUEST. With the picture clues, the upwards ELGA(R) E was no problem - indeed this came before any of the written clues and gave me a hint for the theme (together with the magnificent photograph! Talk about laying it on with a trowel ...!) but Italian isn't my thing, so the walking man meant nothing to me. PA

It wasn't too hard to see that it was mostly about Dan Dare, so the reference to a 50th anniversary didn't seem to be relevant until I discovered that it presumably referred to the last issue of the original Eagle. I was already over the age of the target audience, so don't remember the other strips referred to, but I do remember meeting Frank Hampson once. I haven't worked out the wordplay for the the 19th or the 24th, although the definition is clear enough. PM

A relatively gentle start to the year. Day 4 pictorial is presumably D + ANDARE, go or travel literally. I thought that there might be an East Italian resort of the same name. Day 7 pictorial completely baffling. I haven't found a 50th anniversary for this month. Eagle ceased April '69. Frank Hampton, creator of Dan Dare, had his centenary last month. MJ

It was a long countdown before we caught on to the theme, but then we blasted off on this unexpected take on 1969 space themes - boosted by the subtle photo clue. We anticipate more space and just as much fun later in the year. JH

A friendly January Arachne. I had to look up the thematic ones to check, since 5d was never part of my childhood. Looking at how well the characters and the plots were devised, I think I missed out. The Chad Varah connection is fascinating too. AC

Please find attached my January entry. Once I'd received Adam's tips I was away. The theme had stumped me this month (so thank you Adam), having never read Dan Dare nor had any interest in it. Sadly this also means that I found the crossword not so enjoyable, but you can't win them all, after all a couple of years ago you did an Astronomy based theme and I loved it. I had to guess 3 answers as follows:

Day 9 Godot - from Waiting for Godot (and then match is Go (?) - well it is a game, and point is Dot). Day 16 Mitre - Why is this a joint? But Spies MI (5,6...) and Tre is half of Treen. Day 21 Shake - no idea why, but it fits and could have something to do with shiver. It's good to be back doing these again. SB

Nice comparatively simple grid and mainly straightforward clues to start the year. my favourite clue was Day 21 (SNAKE) and Day18 (ORYZA) taught me a new word JB

One or two tricky ones as you'd expect with the spider lady! JP

Notes the 50th anniversary of the moon landing by Neil Armstrong who commented "The eagle has landed" CH

Thrown initially but unravelled DAN DARE, EAGLE and MEKON but others needed checking. (Hotspur, Victor and Dandy were my comics) DM

Great photo - having that guy staring at me forced me to concentrate AR

Only one of us is old enough to remember Dan Dare but we were delighted to be reminded of him and introduced to other Eagle characters NI

Excellent little puzzle to kick off the New Year! Many thanks Arachne, whose puzzles are always delightful MS

An absolutely wizard puzzle - oops wrong comic. Apart from the ingenious themed clues I particularly liked GODOT. The cryptic drawings are a nice addition ML-J

This was subject matter not entirely up my street, but my husband enjoyed reminiscing. But, as always, the exercise widened my knowledge and for that I am most grateful to you all for providing the interest and stimulus. SF

2. Welcome to the 3D Calendar Puzzles for 2019

Nora writes; We always give a little extra time for the January puzzle submission date and instead of the normal end of month, you have had until 15th February 2019. Even though you've missed the deadline, if you are new to 3D puzzles and haven't submitted your January grid because you aren't sure if some answers are correct, be brave and submit it anyway - past winners are amongst your number and a correct grid will start you on the road to being a World Champion.

The first 3D is always the trickiest for all of us and just getting used to where things go can take a bit of working out when it is all unfamiliar. To help you over the line if you are getting stuck you can subscribe to Adam Saille's monthly 'Hints & Tips'. Just email adamsaille3D@gmail.com and let him know you'd like to receive them.

When submitting, we ask that you attach a scan or a photo of your grid but for those of you uncomfortable with attachments, just email a typed list of your answers or post your grid to the address on the Answer Sheet.

In any event we would still like to hear your feedback, even if you haven't finished the puzzle. It is your feedback that guides the project, so speak freely and email your thoughts to us at sirius@calendarpuzzles.co.uk.

3. Correction to the 2019 Virtual Calendar

In the original 2019 virtual calendar shown on the website the rubric (guiding rule) for the April crossword referred to 7 asterisked clues. One of our eagle eyed solvers spotted that there were only 6 asterisked clues. The virtual calendar rubric has now been amended and refers to only 6 asterisked clues.

4. Tie-break and RPM Trophy 2018 Judging

Thank you for submitting another rich harvest of hard work and creative ideas in the Tie-Break 2018. This will provide some super grids and the prospect of some great puzzles for 2020

Sirius has been wandering around your grids for some days and weeks now marvelling at the architecture. He draws all the grids and sets out the solutions. This is for the purpose of checking designer accuracy of directions, thematic percentages, correct use of conventions etc as well as getting an insight into the challenges the designer has faced. It also prepares the grids and word lists in the form they might be used in the puzzle calendar and to send to the setters.

It is a bit of a grinding process, but time taken is a measure of respect for the time invested by solvers fermenting such brilliant designs. Some grids have taken two or three days to get their measure. Some with exceptional presentation in requested formats, perhaps only half a day.

Sirius hopes to have completed the grid judging by the end of February.

Standards are still rising! More designers are giving more thought to puzzle instructions, special treatments for themed solutions, grid completions without further clues etc. And designing their grid with this in mind. More solvers, whilst having missed out on 100% success in 12 puzzle solutions, have designed creatively and entered the Ray Parry-Morris Trophy Competition. (all grids are entered for RPM) Excellent!

Alan Goddard