

3D Crossword March 2020 Newsletter 3

This edition covers the following items:

Apology

Review of February 3D Crossword

February Solvers' Comments

February Hints & Tips

Apologies to Sarah, for not noticing that her name had been wrongly amended by auto-correct in last month's Newsletter:

The winner of the January crossword is Sarah Bayley from Leicestershire.
Congratulations Sarah.

Review of the February 3D Crossword.

The winners of the February crossword are Alison Ramage & Andre Sonnet from Saltcoats. Congratulations Alison & Andre.

The rubric read; noting a 500th anniversary in literature.

A very short rubric and, unlike the January crossword, no indication of which answers mark the anniversary. A quick look at the picture clues might help. It looks like Day 12 will start with a K or an M and Day 4 end with an R. Yes, Day 12 is MASTER and, after a bit of a ponder, Day 4 yields COMMANDER. Straight to the commemorative words but unfortunately for me I was not familiar with these two as the title of a book. So the first picture clue was M plus an asterisk cut short. Still no real idea about the second. Back now to clue solving.

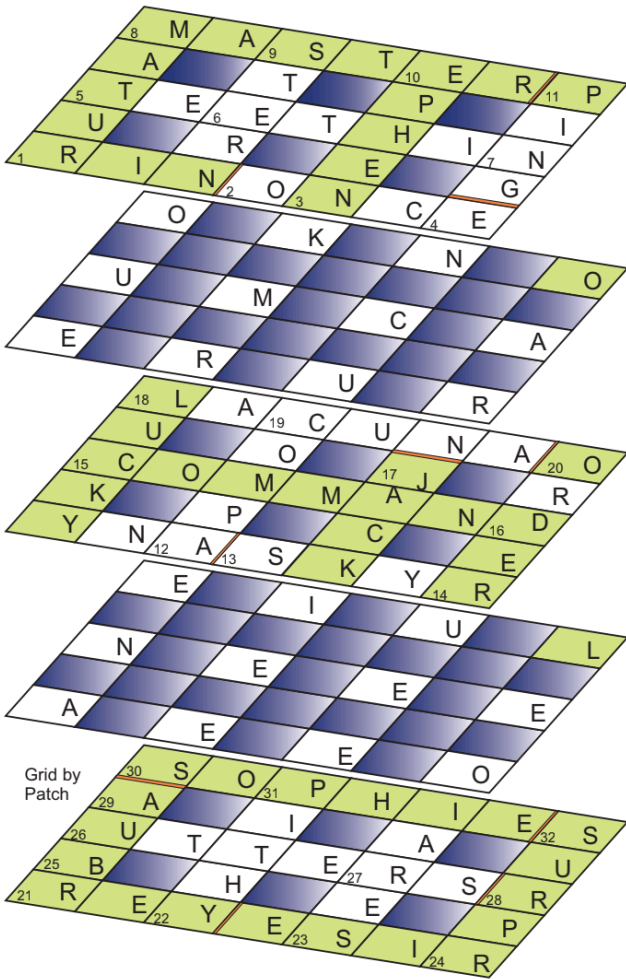
Pasquale is a setter in the Ximenian mode and as such sets very fair clues and I always enjoy one of his puzzles. I made steady progress and had almost completed the crossword without identifying any obvious theme words. I particularly enjoyed 14 MOLES (marks for underground agents) and 3 BUTTERS (Bishop delivers smears).

With only three clues to solve I was still trying to pick out the theme words. Two of these were clues 1 and 2. Overlapping as they did, and with a reference to "hero" surely they must lead to the theme. And sure enough, once I'd solved it, AUBREY under Wikipedia fictional characters gave a list of fictional Aubrey's. Luckily (no pun with his nickname intended) it did also mention MATURIN which triggered a solution to 13 (Hero's companion growin' up). Another nice clue. A bit more internet work and I discovered Patrick O'Brien's MASTER & COMMANDER. Hurrah!

I think that Patch cleverly linked these three solutions and Pasquale clued them with just a shade greater degree of difficulty. Just as it should be. Once again my education is enhanced as it regularly is with these 3D crosswords.

February 3D Crossword Solution

February
2020
Pasquale
Patch



'Master and Commander was the first in the series of stories by Patrick O'Brien about The Royal Navy in the early 1800s first published in the UK in 1970.

Day 12 8ac (6)

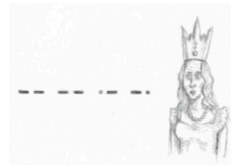


MASTER

M (Roman numeral for 1000) +
ASTER(isk)

Drawings by Frank Paul

Day 4 15ac,16to (9)



COMMANDER

MMAN in (Morse) CODE +
R (regina)

February 3D crossword, Clues and Explanations

	SOLUTION	Direction – Clue – Count	Explanation	Notes
1	AUBREY	29to 21ac Hero with gold alongside about to be buried (6)	Re in Au by	Surname of hero
2	BRAYER	25to 21up Ass perhaps making petition, wanting new head (6)	B for p in prayer	
3	BUTTERS	25aw-2 26ac Bishop delivers smears (7)	B + utters	
4	COMMANDER	15ac 16to Firm maiden meeting fellow, the German officer (9)	Co.+ M + man + der	Part of book title
5	COMPANY	19to 12ba Business guests? (7)	2 defs	
6	EMMET	6d What upsets me, having encountered tourist in Looe? (5)	me rev. + met	
7	ENNUI	10d Boredom brings end of the union, terribly loveless(5)	E + anag. less O	
8	ERROR	4d Component of famous comedy? That's wrong (5)	2 defs incl. Shakespeare play	
9	JACK	17to Flag as one adjacent to Queen? (4)	2 des, incl. card	First name of hero
10	LACUNA	18ac Gap in wood entered by copper (6)	Cu in lana	
11	LUCKY	18to Courageous leader emerging as our hero (5)	(p)lucky	Nickname of hero
12	MASTER	8ac Boy, son hugged by mother (6)	S in mater	Part of book title
13	MATURIN	8to 1ac Hero's companion growin' up (7)	2 defs	Surname of hero's companion
14	MOLES	8d Marks for underground agents (5)	2 defs	

15	NUKES	3d Weapons in modern UK essential? (5)	hidden	
16	ONCE	2ac Concert's quartet no longer (4)	hidden	
17	ORDER	20to Class control (5)	2 defs	
18	PICKS	31up Chooses tools (5)	2 defs	
19	PING	11to Noise comes from indoor game, not half (4)	ping(-pong)	
20	PITHY	31to Succinct description of orange (5)	2 defs	
21	REACH	27up Influence of preaching putting 19 off (5)	(p)reach(ing)	
22	REDAN	28up Fortification in more danger (5)	hidden	
23	SERAI	23aw Arise after getting drunk in inn (5)	anag.	
24	SKYRED	13ac 14aw-3 Broadcaster looking angry shone in Scotland (6)	Sky + red	Unusual word
25	SLOOP	32up Vessel is soaking – look inside (5)	lo in sop	Type of JA's ship
26	SOPHIE	30ac Hope is abandoned for ship (6)	Anag.	Name of JA's ship and wife
27	STEPHEN	9ac 10to Hero's companion – one celebrated just after Christmas (7)	2 defs, ref 26 Dec.	First name of hero's companion
28	STERN	9to Back not bending (5)	2 defs	
29	SURPRISE	32to 24ba Title and award said to be something unexpected (8)	'sir, prize'	JA's ship in later books
30	TEETHING	5ac 7to Like baby in pain? Gets support – disturbed night (8)	tee + anag.	
31	UNCUT	26up A Parisian fashion, full-length (5)	Un + cut	
32	YEARN	22up Long time before noon (5)	Year + n	

February Solvers' Comments

Pasquale's 3D was entertaining and very interesting. Read one of Patrick O'Brien's books years ago and may get into them again. PC

Nice puzzle - no time to write more - off to reread the books! AHH

The only clue that gave me pause was 18a - my (very relative) lack of age not letting me know about Lana Wood. Other than that a gentle and enjoyable puzzle. Thanks as ever for keeping the quality grids and clues coming. JN

A fairly gentle February to follow January. I've not read any of the books, but knew of them and some of the names. Wikipedia provided the rest. MJ

Nice puzzle with a helpful theme. Pasquale's clues very well crafted as usual. JP

Excellent puzzle, with more thematic material in it than I think I've ever seen. Thank you! JM

I haven't read Patrick O'Brien's novel but this puzzle helped me to learn more about it. However, I did have to use the internet to confirm some solutions that I gleaned from the wordplay, and guesses alone. Thanks to Pasquale and Patch. A clever puzzle. JA

Getting rather too easy? ML

A good puzzle that held my attention throughout. The series was not familiar to me, but the thematic elements led me there, and at least I knew of Patrick O'Brian. Abe

Great fun on a cool day. RE

I've only solved the puzzles up to April so far, but I'm enjoying them so far. AB

Super puzzle. I know absolutely nothing about these books! It's such a sense of achievement to complete the puzzle. Thank you to everyone. JJ

Remarkably swift for me of Pasquale's. ET

Very elegant, intriguing and informative. I appreciated both the extra picture clues. EF

This gave me some difficulty, as I've never read any of Patrick O'Brian's works - it wasn't until I found his fans' website (by searching for the sloop Sophie) that I could understand all the thematic material. PM

I have not yet had the pleasure of reading Patrick O'Brien's books - one day!. SKYRED and REDAN were new to me. A very enjoyable puzzle. AM

The solve went smoothly despite my all-but-total lack of knowledge of the Master and Commander series. Certainly, the likes of MATURIN were not much more than speculation

on my part until, grid finally full, I went onto Wikipedia to find out what I had been missing. Thank you Patch and that master of clueing unlikely words Pasquale. PA
I mastered this one quite quickly, having become a commander of some of the abstruse corners of the dictionary while attempting earlier crosswords in the series. HB

This was slightly more challenging for me especially as I only got the theme on my 23rd answer! This was 13 (Maturin) which was such a strange word that googling it gave me the Master and Commander theme (yes I had already solved Master and Commander, I just didn't know the books at all).

In fact on getting the theme I then had to go back and change 25 from Snoop to Sloop! I'd gone for Snoop from crossing letters and "look inside" but it hadn't felt quite right and on review I realised the error...Vessel was the definition.

Keep up the good work. SB

Though not an aficionado of the theme, this was not too challenging thanks to the clarity of the clues. AG

First thoughts after five minutes: it's tough; it's Pasquale; have I left it too late in the month. Then got SOPHIE and realised what it was all about, and they flew in, like shot into the Cacafuego.

This creation of a most singular character (R.P.Russ aka Patric O'Brien, not Pasquale) has given me and my family more unalloyed pleasure than anything I can think of, though pies and cricket come close. AC

With no apparent theme and many clues completed, a couple of ship words and commander, then noticing master let me to the film not having read Patrick O'B. However, my wife could confirm Aubrey, Jack, Stephen and Maturin! all well clued. Thanks to all. DM

A theme I knew absolutely nothing about. Luckily a year living in the South West of England meant I was familiar with the answer to Day 6. JB

I soon found the theme and moved fairly well through the clues until only Day 6 remained. I tried to find an anagram of IAM plus ET (tourist?) which got me nowhere. I then looked for words that fitted and I only found EMMET, but this didn't help because I only knew it to be a small ant! However I eventually realised that I wasn't taking account of "in Looe" so I tried looking up Cornish dialect words and came across EMMET as Cornish slang for a tourist. It's always good to have at least one clue that requires a bit of research. Well done Pasquale and Patch! ST

A clever and engaging puzzle pitched at just the right level of difficulty for a smooth voyage! I particularly liked the all-in-one clue that led to Jack Aubrey's nickname, Lucky. ML-J

This was really fun to do - I knew of the books, so that helped. I thought it was a good mix of easier and more difficult clues, but was able to parse all of them. Looking forward to March! BS

We enjoyed this nautically-themed voyage. N&SI

Thanks to Pascale for introducing me to something new. Great fun. RR

An interesting solve not being familiar with the theme and then googling the names to see how many related answers there were. RC

Well, we took a while to get started and a while to get finished, not having read any of the books in the theme. This has since been rectified by a visit to the online library. The clues were terse and tough but fair with the double meanings particularly well judged. J&JH

I was interested to learn more about this series that I had not read (or seen!). What a lot of names and references were squeezed into the grid!

But where would we be without 'scots' words to fill the spaces...? SB

The usual excellent puzzles. I was too familiar with the theme but Mr Google is my friend. Thank you to everyone. SW

Enjoyed the 'commander' drawing this month! JG

Great fun, liking these a lot! SC

Nice references to the anniversary signalled in the rubric. And helpful to have clues in alphabetical order of solutions :-). CW

Another very sound offering, which will surely serve to have hooked any new solvers for the year to come.

Pasquale is a master of elegant concision and the grid managed to include a high proportion of thematic material with a minimum of snakes. Very satisfying all round. KMcD

February Hints & Tips

A beautiful photograph from Graham Fox with boat and sea put me in nautical mood. It doesn't take much. There is a 50th anniversary to note. Will it be well known and already referred to in the press crosswords. Or will it be less well known but well worth the effort to unearth? Our first world champion invested in a tome recently on the strength of this grid from Patch.

We take a keen interest in solvers having a go at designing 3D grids. Patch has developed from strength to strength since her first publication.

Then I took a look at the name of the setter. Pasquale! It could just as well have been, Duck, Quixote, Giovanni, Bradman all of which are Dons. Don Manley is a great friend of the 3D project. Loving his puzzles from The Guardian, I asked Dom in 2008 if he would consider writing clues to our grids. He said 'Yes' immediately and joined us to help gather funds to build a new national RNIB home and school for vision impaired youngsters with complex needs, and for BBC Children in Need Appeal. Pasquale has featured splendidly in every puzzle calendar to the present time. Don Manley wrote the crossword classic,

Chambers Crossword Manual, which deals in some detail with the solving and devising of cryptic crosswords.

You know you are in for a treat. The puzzle will be absolutely fair. Once solved, the clues are crystal-clear. It's the bit before the solving, that's the problem! They always yield eventually and with very few or no complaints from the solver. There is a gentle humour. We know we are being treated by *The Don*. You will find a couple of less well known words, one from Cornwall, and another from Scotland. Pasquale clues these two words impeccably and with appropriately more gentle clues.

Day	Clue	Hint
1	Hero with gold alongside about to be buried (6) EW	Tough to solve not knowing the theme and without checking letters. 'gold' abbreviation (which one?). Short word for 'alongside'. 'about' abbreviation. 'Buried' suggests an insertion somewhere. First clue so solution could start with A or B or ... Don't dwell too long. Wait for letters and emergence of theme perhaps?
4	Firm maiden meeting fellow, the German officer (9) GS	For old hands, this is an easy clue to solve but for newcomers it contains three tricks of the trade that you may not be familiar with. 1. 'Firm' here is code for CO (as in company). 2. 'maiden here is M (cricket abbreviation) 3. The best however is yet to come . It is tempting to consider "German Officer" as a complete unit and the definition of the answer. But it's not! The compiler wants the German word for "the" and the definition is officer all on its lonesome. So do watch out for things like a French relic or the Spanish boy and so on. So we have:- Firm (2) + maiden (1) + another 3 letters (3) + the German word for "the" (3) = synonym for officer (9 letters) A morceau de gâteau when you know how.
6	I am upset having encountered tourist in Looe? (5) JP	Another personal pronoun rather than I 'upset' or turned over starts the answer followed by a word for encountered. Looe tells you that you're looking to Cornwall for a (sometimes pejorative) word used by locals for tourists.

10	Gap in wood entered by copper (6) N&SI	It's not too hard to see how this might work: we'd like a short abbreviation for copper inside a word for wood to get a solution meaning gap. The abbreviation for copper is the obvious chemical one, but the 4-letter wood is rather obscure (it turns out to be the wood of the genipap tree, which according to Chambers has wine-flavoured fruit - yum!). Try looking for a 6-letter gap or hiatus containing CU. Like hiatus, it's a Latin word.
11	Courageous leader emerging as our hero (5) JP	The theme will help you on this one as 'our hero' refers to the main character and how he is sometimes known. Leader emerging suggests the first letter 'coming out' of (being taken away from) another word for courageous.
13	Hero's companion growin' up (7) N&SI	You're probably goin' to need the theme for this one. The solution is a surname (of the hero's companion) and is a an 8-letter synonym for growin' up, or ripenin', but droppin' the final G.
15	Weapons in modern UK essential? (5) GS	Once the penny drops, the answer to this kind of clue is screamingly annoying. All the letters of the solution are found consecutively within the clue. Athe answer is 'hidden' - that is to say it is staring you in the face. A morceau de gâteau once you have recovered from the humiliation!
23	Arise after getting drunk in inn (5) N&SI	Drunk suggests an anagram: it's too late in the alphabet to be an anagram of IN INN, so it's an anagram of ARISE. This unfamiliar inn might be patronised by people travelling with camels. It also coincidentally sounds like the place whence Mozart's Die Entführung occurs.
24	Broadcaster looking angry shone in Scotland (6) JP	Two parts of this clue - other words for 'Broadcaster' and 'looking angry' lead you to a Scottish dialect word for 'shone'
29	Title and award said to be something unexpected (8) JP	The use of 'said' in the clue suggests that you are looking for an answer that sounds like the two parts - Title and award and when said produces the answer - 'something unexpected'
31	A Parisian fashion, full-length (5) GS	Now ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls. Please don't tell me you have forgotten what I warned you about on Day 4. This is a short but clever clue from Pasquale leading you to think it is about dress sense, but of course, it isn't. You would do well (in the first instance) to think of the word fashion as a verb rather than a noun. A morceau de gâteau once you see the complete picture.!

I am grateful to the Hints & Tips Team of Nick & Sarah Ingles (*etc* and current BBC CiNA3D Crossword World Champions), Jim Pennington (*Philostrate*), Garry Stripling (*Gin, our man in Paris*) for selecting one or two clues and giving us the benefit of their insights. We wish Alison Ramage (half of *Aramis*) a speedy and full recovery from what she calls a

minor op. Craftily I made the first entry in the table above and then waited for some help from my friends.

Happy solving!

Best wishes,

Eric Westbrook

Sirus 3D Crossword Designer

Le President

Editors Note: This newsletter is a shortened edition concentrating on puzzle solutions. The editor is away on an extended break to Australia.