

The Listener Crossword Setters' Dinner 11th March 1995 : Eastbourne

The 1995 Listener Crossword Setters' Dinner was held on Saturday, March 11th at the Wish Tower Hotel, Eastbourne. The following setters were present: **Adam, Alban, Aldhelm, Arcturus, BeRo, Blod** (2 persons), **Brym, Bufo, Calmac, Caper, Columba, Corylus, Derek, Dimitry, Duck, Gos, Hellebore, Lato, Law, Llig, Macbu** (2 persons), **Machiavelli, Mespot, Mr. Lemon, MynoT, Nibor, Noggs, Obiter, Owzat, Pabulum, Phalarope, Phi, Phobis, Qadi, Radix, Third Man, Trev and Wolfram**.

Last-minute apologies were received from **Fawley** and **Politicester**. With a goodly complement of solvers, partners, spouses and other friends there were 74 in the company sitting down to a meal that was generally reckoned to be well above average.

Phi (in his role as organiser) had decided to limit the speeches and thereby increase the time for socialising. However, there were regular items to be covered. Sadly, the time since the last gathering had brought news of the passing of a number of setters: **Jac, Swan, Essem, Klick** and one half of **Fenrix**. **Phi** also passed on good wishes from a number of setters unable to be present: **Arepo, Ascot** (in Montego Bay, no less!), **Elefa, Hamamelis, Ix, Jago, Meursault, Mime, Monk, Ragtag, Ram, Sabre, Simian, Smokey** and **Symphonia**. Jane Owen, editor of *The Times Weekend* section, also sent apologies. **Fawley**, in his capacity as crossword editor of *Games and Puzzles*, sent word reminding solvers of the revived magazine: contact him on 0181-888-9966 for further details. **Ploutos** was missing his first dinner in many years, but sent news of the 1996 event: mark 23rd March 1996 in your diaries now! (For those looking further ahead: the 1997 dinner is almost certainly going to take place in Edinburgh, 1998 in the London area, 1999 may be South Wales, and plans are afoot for something special in 2000.)

The other regular features of the dinner are the presentations. The Solver Silver Salver is won by the solver with the best record over the year. Usually this is an all-correct, but this year **Amicus, Phi** and **Bufo** variously disposed of nine solvers all "one down". (Special mention here also of Ross "Poacher-turned-Gamekeeper" Beresford, who retired this year on 224 not out to become one of the veters – a target unlikely to be bettered in the near future.) It was decided to award the salver to the solver who had survived longest in 1994: James Leonard negotiated **Amicus** and **Phi**, and was finally felled by **Bufo**'s 'From One End to the Other' – a performance that secured him the salver.

For the second presentation, James then nominated his favourite puzzle: his runners-up included **Amicus**' 'Squaring the Circle', **Law**'s 'Torque' and **Piccadilly**'s 'The Properties of Numbers' – but he finally settled on the first puzzle of the year: **Dimitry**'s 'New Year's Resolution' (a very popular choice). **Dimitry**, receiving the Ascot Gold Cup (actually a silver rose bowl), revealed the impressive fact that the whole puzzle had been composed within 48 hours.

The formal part of the dinner was then concluded, and the informalities began. Here's to Leeds '96!