

The Times Listener Crossword Setters' Virtual Meeting — 2021

Because of pandemic restrictions, the Listener Dinner was not possible this year. As an alternative (and hopefully, one-time only), Jane Teather organised a Zoom meeting on the evening of Saturday 20 March. This was primarily to share the standard announcements, and also the results of a quiz that John Henderson had circulated to all participants 24 hours ahead of the call (soon to be available at listenercrossword.com).

The on-line nature of the meeting was in no way a substitute for the usual conviviality of the Dinner, but it did have the advantage of bringing together geographically dispersed individuals who might not have otherwise attended. Over 105 people joined on the call.

A brief record of the proceedings follows:

Obituaries

Jane Teather noted the passing of **Atlas** (Mick Polley), **Macbu**($\frac{1}{2}$) (Chris Butler), **Symphonia** (John Dawson), **The Tall'n** (Terry Allen). Don Manley also gave a tribute to **Merlin** (Richard Palmer).

Prizes

Shane Shabankareh (**Tiburon**) announced the winner of the Radix Auditorum claret jug — James Leaver, who first entered with #4594 and achieved 43 correct entries from his 46 submissions in 2020. James, a solicitor based in Sydney, joined the call and expressed his thanks to all involved in producing the Listener puzzles, which had been a great source of enjoyment to him during lockdown.

Currently top of the consecutive All-Correct rankings, on 209, is Peter Blayney; he is followed by John Grimshaw (**Dimitry**) on 156, Piers (**Pilcrow**) & Elizabeth Ruff on 109, Tristan & Lucie Melen on 107 and Simon Melen on 107. The Solver Silver Salver passed to Peter Blayney, who stated that, in customary fashion, the all-corrects had voted for the Ascot Gold Cup winning puzzle.

Overall 26 of the 52 puzzles were awarded points with the top five being (4=) *Where Next?* by **Harribobs** and *Selfie* by **Sabre**, (3) *Isolated in May* by **Dysart**, (2) *Head-start Clues* by **Elgin**, and (1) *Tip-top Condition* by **Twin** (Colin Thomas). In accepting this accolade, Colin mentioned that he had won the Radix Auditorum jug for 2016. Shane noted that Colin now only needed to aspire to the Solver Silver Salver to achieve the first hat-trick of the top trophies.

Quiz

Jane then went through the quiz answers and carried out an online poll for the winning clue.