

The Listener Crossword Setters' Dinner 5th April 1997 : Edinburgh

The 1997 dinner, held in the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, saw thirty-four setters represented, in the persons of thirty-six individuals, namely **Aragon, Arcturus, Ark, Bandmaster, BeRo, Blank, Blod** (2 persons), **Calmac, Corylus, Derek, Dimitry, Elefa, Gos, Hamamelis, Hellebore, Kea, Law, Macbu** (2 persons), **Machiavelli, Mespot, Monk, Mordred, Obiter, Owzat, Oyler, Phi, Phil Brindall, Ploutos, Politicaster, Salamanca, Simian, Third Man, Trev and Wolfram.**

Apologies for absence, coupled with warm good wishes for a successful event, were received from **Bufo, Esrom, Jago, Leo, Llig, Mr Lemon, MynoT, Nibor, Plausus, RadGraDeg, Virgilius** and **Zander**.

A further twenty-two guests attended the function, including – most appropriately, as our celebration brought us this year for the first time ever to Scotland and the home of Chambers – our guest of honour Catherine Schwarz, Managing Editor of *The Chambers Dictionary* 1993.

After setters and their guests had done justice to the excellent productions of the chef and his team, including such locally-flavoured delights as vegetarian haggis and a dessert confection laced with Drambuie, Catherine entertained the company with a fascinating account of Chambers from – and even prior to – the earliest ventures into publishing by the Chambers brothers. She brought us fully up to date by offering some hot tips for possible new entries in the next edition of the dictionary, including “bad hair day”, “unshop” and “pibloktoq”, which last apparently denotes a form of depression affecting females in certain Inuit communities.

There followed a report from the organisers informing fellow setters of the sad loss of **Cuth** and **Flea** during the past year.

It was then time to pay tribute to the three people who had correctly solved all the Listener crosswords of 1996. Yet again, Henry Blanco White achieved an all-correct year, and yet again waived his right to receive the Silver Salver. This led to the salver and its attendant right to nominate the puzzle of the year passing to the solver with the next longest unbroken all-correct run, Glen Mullineux. The third all-correct solver of 1996 puzzles was John Green. All were accorded a most appreciative and admiring round of applause.

In announcing his choice of puzzle of the year, Glen Mullineux paid tribute to two puzzles which he felt deserved special mention as runners-up, these being *Mixed Grill* by **Arcturus** and *MA* by **Law**; the puzzle on which he conferred the accolade, however, was *Up and Down* by **Doubleshooter**. Careful examination of the correctly completed grid of *Up and Down* revealed that **Doubleshooter** was in fact a meta-pseudonym of **Peeker**, and the Ascot Gold Cup was therefore received by the half of **Peeker** actually present, alias **Corylus**, who undertook to see that the half of **Peeker** not present, alias **Bufo**, would also give the trophy a polish before next year's dinner.

At the end of the proceedings **Phi** took soundings from the company about possible venues in the south or south-east of England for next year's event, and is to proceed with arrangements for a setters' dinner which will probably be held in April 1998.

After this, the company dissolved into informal camaraderie which lasted until a little before 4 am, when **BeRo, Calmac, Dimitry, Hellebore, Macbu/2, Monk** and **Salamanca** finally quit the bar.