

PRESIDENT'S REPORT by Chris

We've come to the end of another successful year at the club, averaging ten to twelve players most weeks. Thanks to everyone who has contributed in different ways from opening up, to providing food or just being there to play. The club's finances are in good order and condition, to the point where our treasurer, Genelle, made the call that until further notice, Tuesday evenings will be free. Thanks to Baulkham Hills Primary School, who provide the venue at no charge, making it possible to remain in a healthy financial position. Genelle also attended the school's awards ceremony, being on hand to announce this year's winner of the Baulkham Hills Primary School creative writing award, a shield donated by our club for the first time last year.

CHRISTMAS PARTY



Once again, our Christmas party was held at the Seven Hills-Toongabbie RSL where the food and company were truly delightful. All, our members were able to come along, with partners if desired, without worrying about the cost as it is covered by the money we raise during the year.

The buffet boasts an "all-you-can-eat" menu and quite a few of us took advantage of the offer! It was good to get together socially and discuss things other than Scrabble, although it did get a mention from time to time.

And which group was last to leave at closing time? Guess!

The highlight of the evening was undoubtedly Alice Pullen's creation of a special fruit cake for the party, complete with Christmas decorations and with icing spelling out the club's name. Thanks, Alice.



CHANGE ONE LETTER AND MAKE A NEW WORD by Robin

My enjoyment of life improved when I discovered competitive and club Scrabble back in 1988. Along the way there have been many highlights. Here is my latest miniscule highlight. Starting with the letters in the word MAIEUTIC which means, pertaining to the Socratic method of enquiry; by changing one letter, we can make six more obscure words. Changing an I to an L we can make AMULETIC. Similarly changing an I to N, P, R, S or T, we can make NEUMATIC, PUMICATE, MURICATE, AUTCISM and MUTICATE.

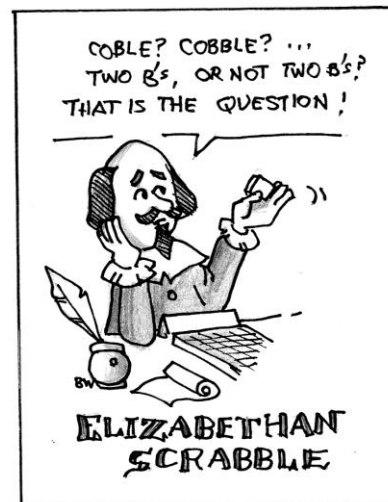
(And you expect us to remember this? Chris)



WELCOME TO THE CARTOONIST STUDIO



English painter and social critic William Hogarth (1697-1764) is credited with creating the first cartoons. His efforts were mainly aimed at satirizing political figures and it was much later before more modern cartoonists used the medium for entertainment as well as social comment. Enjoy these very entertaining efforts from **BOB WILLIAMS**, our own resident cartoonist.



A POLISH CHRISTMAS by Chris

You never forget your heritage. When my parents left Poland after World War II, mainly to get away from the suppressive Communist regime, they brought with them many traditions and customs to their new country of Australia.



Like many other European countries, Poland celebrates Christmas on Christmas Eve, known as Wigilia. The word is the same as the English "vigil" or keeping watch for an event. One of the most significant rituals was the sharing of *oplatek* or host, the same as when Catholics receive symbolic bread at Holy Communion. Every member of the family had a small sheet of this and we all went to each other, broke off a piece of the *oplatek* and wished each other the best for the coming year. In our family, the *oplatek* was always sent from Poland. I'm not sure if Customs would have approved!



Naturally, food played an important part in the ceremonies. I believe there are twelve or so traditional courses in Poland but we only had five or six. This included items such as red borsht or cold beetroot soup, lightly grilled fish, small dumplings and poppy seed cake. I still remember how we, as children, would spend over an hour crushing and re-crushing the poppy seeds six or seven times through a hand grinder.

Of course, it was Dad's job to leave the table occasionally to see if Santa's sleigh could be spotted in the darkening skies. There did seem to be some distinctive shuffling sounds behind the doors to the lounge room where Dad had gone to look through the window but it also happened to be the room where we would soon discover an array of presents under the Christmas tree where none had been just an hour before.



The Christmas tree, of course, had to be a real tree. Dad would actually find one in his travels as an agronomist, or pasture expert, so he had the opportunity to visit pine forests to find a perfect specimen. Once discovered and brought back, the family fun would begin. Apples would weigh down the branches to spread the tree, Christmas lights were next, then dozens of baubles and lollies in their wrappers would add colour. We would then cover the tree in snow made of cotton wool balls, then rows and rows of sparkling tinsel would be methodically arranged (Dad was like that!) until finally, placing the star on top announced that all was complete.

I must admit that by the end of Christmas Day, the lolly wrappers mysteriously lost their contents but were replaced with more cotton wool balls and re-wrapped to make them look as if they hadn't been touched. But somehow, I suspect Mum and Dad knew!



After all presents were opened, it would be off to Polish Church (yes, the one in the picture) for midnight Mass. And so would end another memorable Christmas!

ALL YEAR ROUND

It's a pity we can't use the days of the week or months of the year as Scrabble words. After all, the French don't capitalize these words so why do we? In any case, if you see the following tiles on your rack, here are the longest legitimate words you can make from them.

2017 Calendar

January 2017							February 2017							March 2017							April 2017												
W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		5			1	2	3	4		9			1	2	3	4		13							1		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14		6	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		10	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		14	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15	16	17	18	19	20	21		7	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		15	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
22	23	24	25	26	27	28		8	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		12	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		16	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
29	30	31						9	26	27	28						13	26	27	28	29	30	31		17	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
																									18	30							

May 2017							June 2017							July 2017							August 2017										
W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
18		1	2	3	4	5	6	22			1	2	3		26						1		31		1	2	3	4	5		
19	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	23	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	27	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	32	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	24	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	28	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	33	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
21	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	25	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	29	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	34	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
22	28	29	30	31				26	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	30	31						35	27	28	29	30	31			

September 2017							October 2017							November 2017							December 2017											
W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	W	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
35					1	2		40	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	44			1	2	3	4		48							1	2
36	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	41	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	45	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	49	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
37	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	42	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	46	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	50	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
38	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	43	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	47	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	51	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
39	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	44	29	30	31					48	26	27	28	29	30			52	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
																								1	31							

www.blankcalendar2017.com

SUNDAY SANDY SDAYN YAUDS
MONDAY DYNAMO NOMADY
TUESDAY STAYED STEADY
WEDNESDAY DESYNE DEEWANS DEADENS
THURSDAY STURDY
FRIDAY FYRD FARD YIRD FAIR FIAR
 ARID DARI RAID RIAD
SATURDAY DATURAS

JANUARY UNARY ANURA RUANA
FEBRUARY RUBEFY REFURB REBURY FAURER
MARCH MARCH CHARM
APRIL PILAR PRIAL
MAY MAY YAM
JUNE JEU JUN
JULY YU
AUGUST AUGUST
SEPTEMBER BERSEEM BEMETES BETEEMS
 BEEPERS
OCTOBER CORBE COOER
NOVEMBER NOVEMBER (yes, that's right!)
DECEMBER EMCEED DECREE RECEDE MEERED
 REDEEM REMEDE

(Sorry about the formatting breakdown: the final column is on the next page).

I'M DREAMING OF A WEIRD CHRISTMAS

There are some truly strange ways to celebrate Christmas around the world. Here are two that deserve mention.

In South Africa, a delicacy enjoyed(?) by many people is the deep-fried caterpillar of the Emperor moth.



In Austria, children are terrified of the Krampus, an evil devil who beats naughty children with a stick.



An Aussie Christmas barbeque seems pale by comparison!

SEASON'S GREETINGS

I'd like to wish everyone in the Baulkham Hills Scrabble Club all the best over the break. Continuing the Polish connection from earlier in this newsletter, the board below is made up of the Polish colours of red and white, it also displays the Polish eagle and has my name in Polish.

A puzzle: Scrabble-wise, what is wrong with the message?
A \$25 Westfield voucher for the first correct entry!



We begin again on Tuesday 9th January at 7pm. Till then, enjoy the rest of the festive season. Happy Scrabbling!

