

# CHARITY CHRISTMAS PUZZLE 2021

## A<sub>cap</sub> to Q<sub>cap</sub> & N-TO-S

### Welcome

This is the 31<sup>st</sup> year of my annual Christmas Puzzle. It should appeal to people who enjoy solving quality newspaper crossword puzzles and, unlike many puzzles that come out around this time of year, this one is designed to help you finish - the Puzzle has an underlying theme so that, when things start to get a bit tough, you should get more information to help you. So far, the Puzzles have raised almost £110,000 for various good causes, including £10,391 last year.

### Increased prize money – Every entrant could be a winner!

Everyone who enters will be entered into a draw to win one of six prizes, each of £10. In addition, I will award three prizes each of £50 to the three highest scorers; if there are more than three potential winners I will arrange a draw.

### Charities

I will forward all the money you donate, except for the prize-money, to charity. Donations may be made in cash, by cheque or by Bank Transfer. I was recently informed by my bank that from this year they will charge for cash and cheque payments so my preference is that you make your donations by Bank Transfer, please. The money will be distributed equally between **St Mary's Church, Eaton Bray**, where I am the Reader, and four other charities – **Make a Difference Schools, Mombasa, The Stroke Association, Water Aid, and Women's Aid**, All the charities have been nominated by Puzzlers from the UK. I do hope you will be generous in your donations, supporting the work of these charities (see next page).

### The Puzzle

As usual, the puzzle is made up of 40 clues that combine to narrate a story. Each clue contains three definitions that lead to three answers and for each of these answers you are given the position of some of the letters to help you. The number of remaining letters to be found for each word is indicated by dashes. An example could be as given below.

\_\_\_\_ ERR \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ RIN \_      \_\_\_\_ UTA \_\_\_\_\_  
Sea/sons / greetings

The answers being MEDITERRANEAN, OFFSPRING, SALUTATIONS although having markers to show where each definition begins and ends makes things easier than the actual puzzle.

All answers, except for various proper nouns, are as defined in Chambers Dictionary. (Don't expect to find all the words in Concise Chambers or Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary. Expect a few really obscure words - but 90-100 of the answers should be in most peoples' vocabulary.) In setting the puzzle I try to run one definition into the next; occasionally this has required the use of a linking word or conjunction. In most cases these should be fairly obvious - no clues in the puzzle start with a conjunction. Do not assume that punctuation, spacing or context can be relied upon to be helpful - it may be safer to assume the opposite.

Part of the pleasure for me in setting the Puzzle, and for you doing it, is to try to get you thinking so please don't be disappointed if the use of an electronic dictionary doesn't immediately provide you with all the answers.

As usual, I shall be strict on spellings that are not found in Chambers and will only mark the answer you present in the spaces provided; you won't be penalised for valid alternative words to those I am expecting you to find. You may find that some answers defeat you and you end up with what seems only a moderate score. Nevertheless, please send in your entry with a donation - otherwise you will have had your fun for nothing and the good causes will not benefit; whatever your score you could still be a prize-winner. Anyway, it's the taking part that matters, not the winning. In judging the entries my decision will be final - even when I am wrong.

### This year's theme

As usual, I hope to help you complete the Puzzle by providing information about the starting letters in the puzzle. Please read the introduction on Page 1 of the Puzzle – you will find the Puzzle more difficult (impossible?) if you don't use this information, which, once you have filled in enough

definite answers, should enable you to deduce the starting letters / characters of all 120 answers in their correct positions.

### **Christmas Puzzle on the Web**

Electronic copies of the Puzzle can be downloaded from <https://christmaspuzzle.uk>. This site will also be used to warn you of any errors found in the puzzle. You can also see some of the wonderful words the Puzzle has used over the years, the Rolls of Honour for 2020 and a record of your previous scores. Within 2 weeks of submitting your entry I will have marked your entry and you can find out your score for this year.

A further feature on the website is the ability for you to register to receive next year's Puzzle electronically. You can do this at any time during the year by submitting your E mail address and you will automatically be sent an electronic copy of the Puzzle on 8 December. Once you have registered you will receive a copy each year unless you notify me otherwise – obviously if you change your E mail address you will need to re-register.

### **Distribution to friends**

The aim of the Puzzle is to raise as much as possible for the good causes so please feel free to distribute it to your friends - take a photocopy, download a copy from the website or contact me.

### **Returning your entry**

Please try to ensure that I receive your entry by **Sunday 30 January, 2022**; the draw to select winners will be made on the following Sunday and all entries received by 6 February will qualify. I aim to return marked entries, with solutions, by the end of February. Best wishes to you all for a happy and peaceful Christmas and a successful New Year, not least in solving the puzzle.

### **My health**

Regular Puzzlers may remember that last year I suffered a stroke at the beginning of January; I am very pleased to say that I have been blessed by a recovery of both physical and language skills and I am most grateful to all of you who have asked after me.

## **CHARITY DETAILS**

**Make A Difference Schools, Mombasa:** We are a small registered charity who have built a special needs unit in the grounds of the Utange school near Mombasa. It is a ground-breaking initiative that will, for the first time, offer technical training to children who would otherwise have no training and no future. We are offering catering, tailoring, craft work, carpentry, welding, IT and life skills to up to 150 children. With your help we will continue to support the running of the unit for the next 3 years whilst the school puts their self-sufficiency plans in place.

Charity No. 1170814, <https://www.makeadifferenceschoolsmombasa.org.uk>

**The Stroke Association:** Strokes can affect anyone of any age, and The Stroke Association is the only UK charity that focuses exclusively on stroke research. But the pandemic has cut the research budget in half, putting vital improvements in treatment and care at risk. Stroke research is already chronically underfunded and this cut in budget will have a catastrophic effect on stroke research, setting the field back years. Thanks to breakthroughs in stroke research, many people have been spared the most devastating effects of stroke and benefitted from innovative treatments and care. Charity No.211015, <https://www.stroke.org.uk>

**Water Aid:** Water Aid is an international charity whose mission is to overcome poverty by enabling the world's poorest people to gain access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene education. Registered numbers 288701 (England and Wales) and SC039479 (Scotland).

<https://www.wateraid.org/uk>

**Women's Aid:** is the national charity working to end domestic abuse against women and children. The charity has been at the forefront of shaping and coordinating responses to domestic violence and abuse through practice for over 45 years. It empowers survivors by keeping their voices at the heart of our work, working with and for women and children by listening to them and responding to their needs. Charity No: 1054154, <https://www.womensaid.org.uk>

**St Mary's, Eaton Bray:** The church where Gordon is Reader.

Charity No.1129952. <https://www.stmaryseatonbray.org.uk>

# CHARITY CHRISTMAS PUZZLE 2021

## A<sub>cap</sub> to Q<sub>cap</sub> & N-TO-S

**This year's theme:** The starting letters, reading left to right in each row, spell out 17 proper nouns with a common theme.

Answers to the Puzzle include 2 words (both proper nouns) that do not have a definition in Chambers.

The Puzzle once again includes homophone definitions; for example, an answer might be defined by 'pair'; possible answers could include 'COUPLE', 'AVOCADO' and 'SHAVE'. In total the Puzzle has 8 homophone definitions – Questions 1 to 5, 6 to 10, 11 – 15, etc., each contain one such definition.

\_\_\_ SUT \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ PTI \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ OPA \_\_\_  
1. A hairy NE African spotted animals ...

\_\_\_ URI \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ ENG \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ TIV \_\_\_  
2. ... like lizards and Reynard's wolf wandering in the night as ...

\_\_\_ KAB \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ LUE \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ TIC \_\_\_  
3. ... an Australian kingfisher flew across ...

\_\_\_ ARI \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ ARD \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ RIN \_\_\_  
4. ... the coastal part of Hauts-de-France. There was a weird atmosphere ...

\_\_\_ TUR \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ BUB \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ BOR \_\_\_  
5. ... belonging to the night – a confused sound of voices carried by the air; ...

\_\_\_ ANS \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ ANA \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ ISY \_\_\_  
6. ... deep moans flowed out from some source, clamorous, the ...

\_\_\_ NDI \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ BES \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ BRA \_\_\_  
7. ... waves glowing red as a contrast between high lights and deep shadows. The ...

\_\_\_ ENT \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ UMI \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ YAR \_\_\_  
8. ... bright lights of Kerala cast ...

\_\_\_ END \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ CHR \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ SON \_\_\_  
9 ... a mixture of a yellow pigment and dark purple / plum ...

\_\_\_ ROA \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ OSP \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ BLI \_\_\_  
10. ... toward the scene making it possible to...

\_\_\_ GAS \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ ANT \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ GUE \_\_\_  
11. ... see large hairy spiders at a distance of 3.456 statute miles. ...

\_\_\_ ANT \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ ADD \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ GER \_\_\_  
12. ... At a particular moment something like a very large orange animal of the otter / weasel family was ...

\_\_\_ SER \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ TER \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ NES \_\_\_  
13. ... discernible to a native toad and a Red Admiral butterfly and...

\_\_\_ EIT \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ YAN \_\_\_                      \_\_\_ OPT \_\_\_  
14. ... although the North African who studied butterflies and moths and only ...

1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			
32			
33			
34			
35			
36			
37			
38			
39			
40			



\_\_\_ ITH \_\_\_\_\_ RME \_\_\_ LIN \_\_\_\_\_  
33. ... despite the pain my preference was to ...

\_\_\_ ERT \_\_\_ OSS \_\_\_ EGA  
34. ... verify the explanation for words used in the last letter she had ...

\_\_\_ MPO \_\_\_ EMY \_\_\_ ELY  
35. ... written from school, that is to say "he was ...

\_\_\_ LAM \_\_\_\_\_ BRA \_\_\_ MAI \_\_\_\_\_  
36. ... her beloved one and a loving hug awaited him (Spenser)." He ...

\_\_\_ KON \_\_\_ MAZ \_\_\_\_\_ ULK  
37. ... thought this was wonderful and ...

\_\_\_ STL \_ TED \_\_\_ ELI \_\_\_\_\_  
38. ... the letter raised the probability ...

\_\_\_ END \_\_\_ ION \_\_\_\_\_ TLE \_\_\_\_\_  
39. ... his fiancée theoretically could with a clear conscience ...

\_\_\_ KLE \_\_\_ NAN \_\_\_ ALS  
40. ... begin to deal in earnest with the arrangements of their wedding ceremony.

-----  
**ENTRY FORM**

Please try to ensure that I receive all entries by Sunday 30 January 2022.

To: Gordon Gray, Oakins, 9 Eaton Bray Rd, Northall, Dunstable, Beds, LU6 2EU

From: NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

(Block capitals please) .....

POSTCODE .....

E Mail address .....

Entry may be by CASH, CHEQUE or ELECTRONIC TRANSFER (**Please circle the method chosen**).

I will be grateful for any donation, but, for your information, the average donation last year was over £25.

My donation is .....

Make cheques payable to 'Gordon Gray Charity Account'.

Electronic Transfer to SORT CODE: 40-28-12, ACC NO: 51495550, REFERENCE: Your postcode

Please tick this box if you would like your marked entry, a copy of the puzzle solution, names of winners etc. and have enclosed a s.a.e. for that purpose. The solutions will be distributed around the end of February. Note: the answers will not be posted on the website.

Please tick this box if you have registered (or are already registered) on [www.christmaspuzzle.co.uk](http://www.christmaspuzzle.co.uk) to receive an electronic copy of next year's Puzzle

Please tick this box if you would like to receive a paper copy of next year's puzzle and have enclosed a s.a.e. for that purpose

Please tick this box if you have a friend or relative who would like to take part next year and have enclosed a s.a.e. with his/her name and address for that purpose.

**N.B. Self-sealing envelopes are very helpful to me.**