

# Crossed Wires A light hearted look at language

## Word Pic

Can you work out the saying depicted below?



## Wrap Up

In our July issue, I asked readers to come up with “overcoat” words (thanks to M Gray for the idea), i.e. taking the outside letters of a name to make a word. **Heather Presotto** has sent in these:

<b>Auburn</b>	Audrey Hepburn
<b>Bilby</b>	Bill Cosby
<b>Bobbin</b>	Bobby Darin
<b>Tanks</b>	Tom Hanks
<b>Baron</b>	Bart Simpson
<b>Roman</b>	Ronald Coleman
<b>Primary</b>	Princess Mary
<b>Shone</b>	Sharon Stone
<b>Babble</b>	Barney Rubble
<b>Dock</b>	Donald Duck

## Weather Patterns

In reply to May issue’s piece on weather **Marjorie Dennert** has sent us this piece.

*If the evening is red and  
the morning is grey  
It is the sign of a bonny day  
If the evening is grey and  
the morning is red  
The lamb and the ewe  
go wet to bed*

## Man to Man

There should be a **MAN**ual or **MAN**uscript to **MAN**age a **MAN**datory **MAN**date on the **MAN**y types of **MAN**ic **MAN**ia that persist concerning the **MAN**ner in which the **MAN**nerisms of **MAN**kind are **MAN**ipulated.

## Alone But Not Dried Up

A **deserted island** (also known as a ‘desert island’) is an uninhabited island: the word ‘desert’ in this context is an adjective meaning ‘desolate and uninhabited’ and does not imply arid weather.

Desert islands are commonly found in literature and popular culture, such as in the long-running BBC radio show, **Desert Island Discs** where guests choose the pieces of music they would take to a deserted island. What would your desert island essentials include?

## One In A Hundred

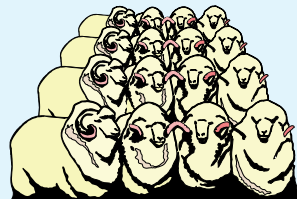
Today in **English** a hundred is always taken to be equal to **100**, but before the **18th century** it could mean other values, depending on the objects being counted. Sometimes the value of **100** was referred to as a **small hundred**, the larger value was known as the **long hundred** or the **great hundred**. But a group of a hundred sheep, fish or other goods could vary in number from 100 to over 200.

The word **hundred** came from the W Germanic *khundrath*, from *hund* and *rath* meaning ‘the counting of 100’. There’s one theory that **hundred** is derived from the number of sheep that a dog can guard.

To the **Teutonic** tribes that invaded **England** after the **Romans** departed, their *Hundert* equalled 120.

The 100 Years’ War went for 116 years.

Until 1851, a **Hundred** was an administrative divisor used to indicate an area of a county which contained one hundred families.



## Did You Know?

Two thirds of all people who have made it to **65** in the history of mankind are alive today?

Life expectancy could reach **100** in the next 60 years, apparently. It is estimated that by 2036, Britain will have 39,000 people who have reached the age of 100.

## Long, Longer, Longest

When Mark Twain’s *Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur’s Court* uttered a bogus magic spell, he used a long German word: **Constantinopolitanischer Dudelsackspfeifenmachersgesellschaft**. It means an “guild of bagpipe makers from Constantinople.” Is this really six words or just one?

In the German language, rules allow words to be strung together, forming compound words. As such there is no longest word in German. In 1999 the word of the year had 63 characters and referred to beef labelling regulations. It was **Rindfleischetikettierungsüberwachungsaufgabenübertragungsgesetz**.

## The Power of Dots

Who says punctuation doesn’t matter?

An English professor wrote the words :

**"A woman without her man is nothing"**

on the chalkboard and asked his students to punctuate it correctly.

All of the males in the class wrote:

**"A woman, without her man, is nothing."**

All the females in the class wrote:

**"A woman: without her, man is nothing."**

**Punctuation is powerful**

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