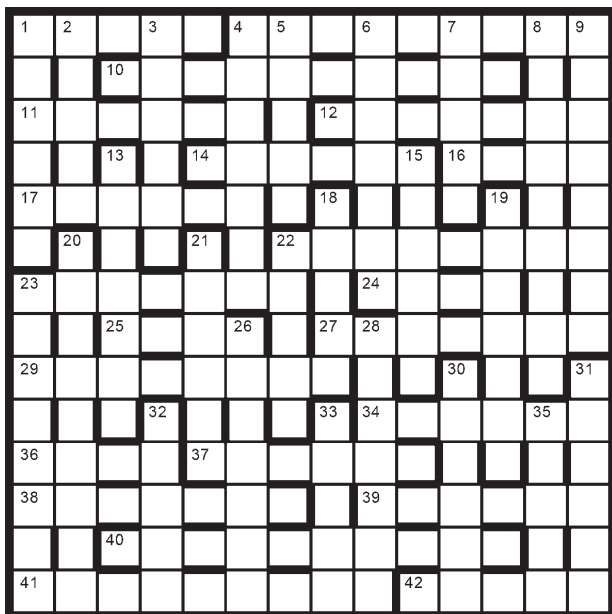


2639:

Spelling the end

by *Fieldfare*

22 said '29 11' (five words, ignore an apostrophe), suggesting the placing of the other unclued lights.



Across

- 1 Once rush from county, as ire subsides (5)
- 4 Essential component of maximum break for players (3,6)
- 10 Open to sympathy as a barrel breaks cabinet (10)
- 12 Two ancients drinking a gallon in the shade (3,4)
- 14 In hospital, digesting a meal of blood (6)
- 16 Give preliminary payment for some guitar lessons (4)
- 17 Tidy number consumed (6)
- 23 In Ibsen role, book fast speaker (7)
- 24 Bills from Bible Society (4)
- 25 Anxious to drop a bore (4)
- 27 Aid poet to be quirky like Coleridge (7)
- 34 Lord, one after a sweetheart (6)
- 36 Over in Oban, with seaweed around (4)
- 37 Building material's key element (6)
- 38 Not in practice, I dawdle to save energy (7)
- 39 Half idle talk leads to minor stroke (6)
- 40 Still bony, and without a hair-band? (10)
- 41 Person in service always carrying weapon (9)
- 42 Mule such a beast, of burden (5)

Down

- 2 Crazy meal includes unleavened bread (5)

- 3 Elects contralto: I've made a mistake about tenor (2-4)
- 4 Sceptically question a new engineer (7)
- 5 Good for nothing, squander pounds (5)
- 7 Seaweeds a big bird won't finish up (5)
- 9 I rode off into deplorable street (4,4)
- 13 Sort of carp, beginning to lift heavy weight (7)
- 15 Go mad, seeing large number eating whale (4,2)
- 18 One not reacting as judge is lost in legal terminology (5)
- 19 Cut from the neck, born nuisance losing head — death! (4,3)
- 20 Stranger will adopt candle (6,3)
- 21 Dress circle, divine (6)
- 22 By the edges, plan to hold green sort of cracker (5)
- 26 Almost pink mixture in cordial (7)
- 30 One going ahead wanting herring, putting line out (6)
- 31 Say, purchase mushrooms for a bender (6)
- 32 Resources and title for woman about to give birth (5)
- 33 Parking space at ends of large barrier (5)

A first prize of £30 and two runners-up prizes of £20 for the first correct solutions opened on 19 February. Please scan or photograph entries and email them (including the crossword number in the subject field) to crosswords@spectator.co.uk, or post to: Crossword 2639, The Spectator, 22 Old Queen Street, London SW1H 9HP. Please allow six weeks for prize delivery.

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