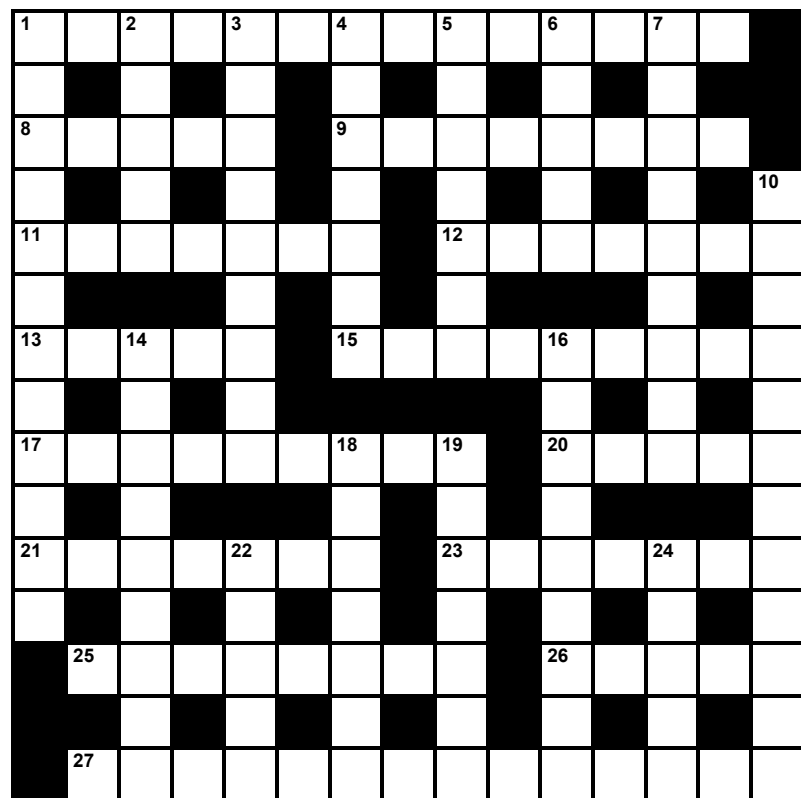


Alchemi 12 *by*



Across

1 Semi-pros are letdowns? (6,8)

8 Change at the stroke of noon (5)

9 Desire for small French mimic going around (8)

11 Worked and wanted to be heard (7)

12 Upstart raven, flapping wildly, surrounded by backup (7)

13 Passage from Rabelais - lewd! (5)

15 Therapist woman's mixing basil with a soupçon of tarragon (9)

17 Line replacing number in insoluble puzzle makes it damaging (9)

20 Cockney encouragement to execute woman showing this (5)

21 Approaching a circle on Tyneside (7)

23 Gateman turns to a captain of industry (7)

25 Beer causes Frenchman to slide backwards (8)

26 A quick drink at one end of Swiss mountain chalet (5)

27 What every colonel wants - and that is one (14)

Down

1 Bailing out of US city with a hundred thousand million - it's criminal! (12)

2 Awards as charade comes to an end are gross (5)

3 Led twice with new arrangement and turned out all right (5,4)

4 Dicky had ploy for making models (4-3)

5 Recorded propane spill (2,5)

6 Splintering centre of Bury (5)

7 Meets up in a German gallery: not bad really, considering... (9)

10 Star of Spooner's film of Little Big Horn (6,6)

14 Function featuring rumba danced underwater (9)

16 Freedom from pain, surprisingly, as a nail gets half chopped off (9)

18 South Africa supports newspaper's fine material (7)

19 Asia in turmoil: strange being held up for a Japanese aristocrat (7)

22 Subject even kisses Queen (5)

24 Sauce from oil spilled in road (5)