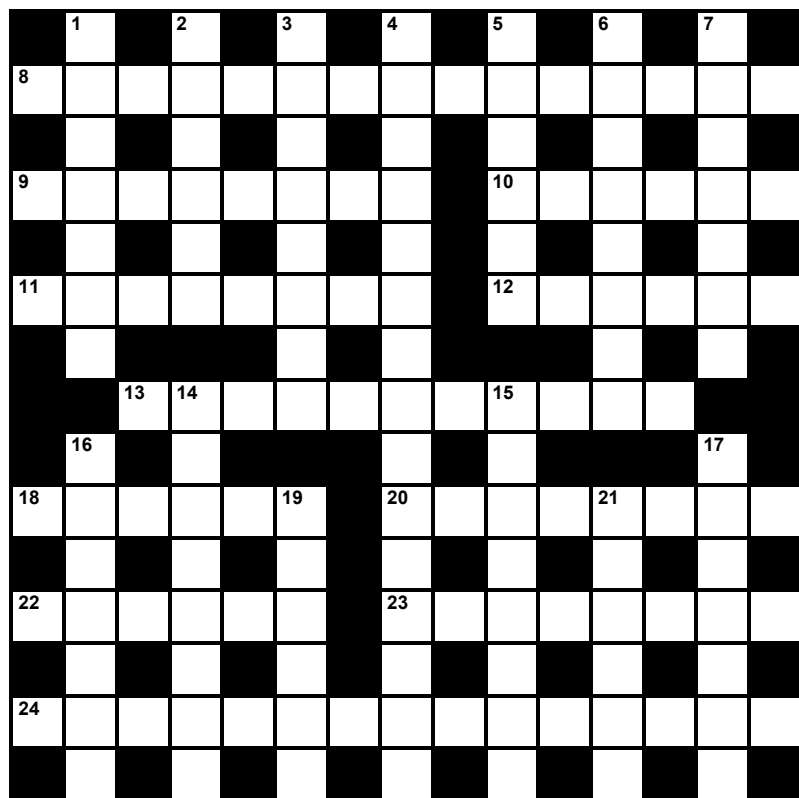


by



Across

- 8** Excuse to bank on me (with backup) before church is obliterated in Icelandic eruption (6,9)
- 9** Rambling Keats epic not about lunch? (5,3)
- 10/12** Excuse will do for high tea, perhaps (4,2,3,3)
- 11** Those people taking account (including note) of common thread (8)
- 12** See 10
- 13** Joy as I replace workers' leader at troubled shipwrights (4,7)

- 18/17** Excuse single poster featuring castle role model (3,3,3,4)
- 20** Spooner's obese flier in vicious squabble (8)
- 22** City's old power unit going into reverse has radioactive core (6)
- 23** Our silly mistake not being there (8)
- 24** Not unknown for early gains to help reorganise treatment centre (7,8)

Down

- 1/16** Excuse for fair has hen teeth on special (4,3,3,4)
- 2** Take the wind out of the sails of campaign leader spreading blame around (6)
- 3** Lens protector complicated, yet cheap (3,5)
- 4** To take a long view in miserly circumstances, epic closes spectacularly (10,5)
- 5** Stoned, out of head, in part a great success (3,3)

- 6** Industrious man from East Timor? (8)
- 7** Fuel delay on the rise around London area (7)
- 14** Find out about uncommon waves which can't be seen (8)
- 15** Badly hurt? Not quite so bad, though lacking pity (8)
- 16** See 1
- 17** See 18 Across
- 19** Irrational anger about a president (6)
- 21** Train the Italian to follow popular saint (6)