KICKSHAWs

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Kickshaws is currently being assembled by a series of guest editors. All contributions should be sent to the editor in Morristown, New Jersey.

1977: Forecasts and Resolves

Since this is the first 1977 issue of Word Ways, it might be appropriate to predict some of the year’s major events and to make resolutions of good intent. Many people, of course, will be cracking arachnidic jokes and trying to predict how Jimmy Carter will serve the country as president. (Walter Penney of Greenbelt, Maryland reminded me that Carter got along swimmingly in Georgia’s gubernatorial office.) Let’s confine ourselves, however, to the field of recreational linguistics:

1) I predict that Dmitri Borgmann will publish either an article in Word Ways or a separate paperback on the 121 transposals of TRYXM. Mathematically, there are only 120 possible transposals, but Dmitri will find that extra word in someone’s decryption of the Voynich Manuscripts.

2) Almost simultaneously, Ramona J. Quincuncx will inform the Kickshaws editor of a rare Northumbrian word that rhymes with both ‘orange’ and ‘silver’ when pronounced with different stresses by a coughing Yoruba tribesman.

3) I predict that A. Ross Eckler will be promoted to B. Ross Eckler (but I suspect that no one wants to see a C Ross Eckler).

4) When on vacation in Maui later in the year, Jezebel Q. Xixx will discover a three-page Hawaiian palindrome containing only vowels. She will report that it is not, nor ever was, a part of the Hawaiian national anthem. (By the way, can you give the name of the Hawaiian national anthem?)

OK, now it’s your turn. How about you making the resolutions? Do that research and write that article you’ve always dreamed of:

1) A compendium of words not allowed on license plates, together with state rules governing selection of ‘special’ plates.

2) Reasonable, pronounceable combinations of letters which, for some reason or other, never made it as words. For example, why isn’t SPRENE a word?

3) A thorough frequency-count of words appearing on U.S. post-
age stamps (special attention could be given to names of engravers and famous Americans).

4) A detailed index of items which have appeared in Kickshaws.

5) A collection of verbs used by sports commentators to signify the defeat of one team by another (trounced, crushed, smashed, blitzed, etc.).

Double Palindromes

Not content with constructing single palindromic sentences, Jim Rambo at Palo Alto has crafted the following palindromic doublet:

NO DRAPE ROSE -- YES? ØRE? PARDON!
NOD, RAP EROS' EYESORE, PARD; ON!

The first, says Jim, refers to a Danish girl, Rose, who agrees to a rather daring display but only for a fee; the second gives one reaction to such professionals. Explanations for the following three Rambo pals are left as an exercise for the reader:

LIVE DASTARD, I DRAT SAD EVIL
LIVED, A STAR DID? RATS -- A DEVIL!

PART ASKS, "IRE, RISK SATRAP?"
PAR TASK SIRE, RISKS A TRAP.

EROS' ERA SPINS TILL IT SNIPS ARES' ORE.
EROSE, RASP, "IN STILL, ITS NIPS ARE SORE!!"

November Kickshaws Revisited

This column in the November issue (and earlier ones) prompted quite a bit of mail. For your enjoyment, here are samples of the comments received.

PENTABROMETHANE Update: Philip Cohen writes that he spent hours trying to find this word, but the standard seems to have been PENTABROMOETHANE since at least 1910. Maxey Brooke defends his rhopalic word by pointing out that C₂HBr₅ is a legitimate chemical compound which may or may not have been synthesized. If it has been, or in the event that it is, then the proper name according to the rules of chemical nomenclature will be PENTABROMETHANE. Ralph Beaman agrees to accept the word, noting that W3 refers to substitution by bromine with BROM- or BROMO-. He also notes that W3 gives DIBROM-, TRIBROM-, and TETRABROM-. "Thus ETHANE with five bromine atoms is correctly PENTABROMETHANE, despite the preference of most organic chemists for the BROMO- prefix".

Philip Cohen commented that the plural of SUMBITCH is SUMBITCHES, usually, not SUNZABITCHES.

Philip Cohen has also written a computer program to find the longest n-longed abbrevi- longed abbreviations he has on hand. His last issue's territorial article there is a clack.

Perspective: SPOKESMAN

The 1976 edition of the magazine "Barbaro" London mentioned the following October re-mention of Can Do.

Personality

Speaking of personality, the following noted:

JACK

And so we have the jockey, the pores, and the jacks.

Which among the jacks were present? The jockeys were present, the pores, the hair, the jacks, the animals, the jacks, the jockeys, the pores, etc. As far as were concerned the jacks, there were present the jockeys, the pores, the jacks, etc. Eleanor was present. However, no one was present. No one was present. No one was present. No one was present. "Nope!"

Can Do Word Games

Backtracking over a couple of years, we had a valuable 2, ... , exercise in the 1976 mail of the earlier issues with this comment. However, the first letter, the value comment in the earlier mail, had a value.
Person words: Darryl Francis adds that CHAIRPERSON and SPOKESPERSON both appear in the recently-published 6000 Words. the 1976 supplement to Webster's Third. CO-CHAIRPERSON appeared in the (London) Times. LEGPERSONS was used by Time magazine, which also (in the January 3, 1977 issue) referred to "Barbara Walters, ABC's celebrated ANCHORPERSON ..." A London radio station used the term SCHOOLPERSONS, and a newspaper advertisement recently asked for a PERSON FRIDAY. And on October 10, 1973, the (London) Times came out with "The population of China (is) ... approaching one GIGAPERSON".

Personholes

Speaking of persons, R. Robinson Rowe passed on to us an amusing article on news bulletins we can expect to see in 1982, including the following:

JACKSON HOLE, Wyoming. Now that the department of streets and sewers has been liberated and half of the town's manholes have been labelled womanholes, the council heard and denied a demand from the Liberation League that all be called personholes. The council decreed that they be officially known as jacksonholes.

Which reminds me of the time during the big war when the Allies were preparing their push across the Alps into Germany. Sure-footed animals were needed to carry supplies across the treacherous mountain trails. Because donkeys were at a premium, all measures were taken to protect them from harm - even to the point of digging large trenches to save them from shrapnel and enemy air attacks. Eleanor Roosevelt was touring the lines one day as some poor GI was digging these trenches. "Are you digging a foxhole?" she asked. "Nope!" was the reply.

Can Do Words

Back in the distant past, Word Ways presented the idea of differencing words to produce other words. Each letter of the alphabet had a value corresponding to its position in the alphabet: A = 1, B = 2, . . . , Z = 26. The adjacent letters of any word could be differenced to give new values which would then be converted back to letters. However, differencing can be done in several ways: the value of the first letter subtracted from the value of the second letter (adding 26 if this comes out negative), the value of the second letter subtracted from the value of the first letter (with the same proviso), or the value of the earlier letter in the alphabet subtracted from the value of the later let-
ter (the method actually used). To eliminate this confusion, I propose that the values be added rather than subtracted; if the sum exceeds 26, then 26 is subtracted from the sum to give a value that can be converted back to a letter. For example, the three letter-values of the word CAN are 3, 1 and 14. Adding adjacent values results in 4 and 15, which converts back to DO. Below is a listing of all CAN DO words known to me; any additions would be most welcomed by the editor.

and, or Aves, wax oath, pub abyss, Carl
asp, ti brig, tap rang, sou docold, drap acold, drap
can, do butt, won rats, sum rats, sum alone, Macs
hen, is cola, ram Ruth, mob ashen, tams
dot, si cold, rap sand, tor acold, drap
fate, guy s网络游戏, toy brief, tank ashen, tams
lad, me floe, rat sloe, eat brief, tank
man, no girl, pad trio, lax brief, tank
ran, so give, pea trip, lay brief, tank
tid, am hold, wap vent, ash brief, tank
she, am lazy, may when, ems brief, tank
toe, it moth, bib brief, tank

The only three six-letter specimens known are AFFINE, GLOWS, ARPENT SHUSH and SANDED TORII.

Quiz Time

Below is a set of words having a common property which you must discover. Once that property is known, you should be able to add something to each word -- and think of several more words for the set.

vegetable education willing
lettuce wide white
book line rattle
bothered stock crackle
drink rank look
hope shillings dark
frankincense body women

If you give up, see Answers and Solutions.

Quickies

Bill Nucker once told me that the sober response to a young wife’s obvious query about the small tear in his trousers acquired from a see-saw whilst scooping up the small son who had just fallen, giggling, from it in startlement at a response to his ocarina playing from a passing bird was: No, ma’am, this is a teetotaler’s teeter-totter titter-totter tweeter twitter titter totter toter tatter. (Try saying that three times in rapid succession.)

A fellow named Johnson (which one I don’t know) is reputed to have said, with a tail and a minute upon fit in this case, one of the only one foxes I ever saw. This is startlingly so.

Pygmy LasSsenWord

Harry O. whose startlingly was for example, look/s, many opener/s, to fit in this case, none/s, 1/s, as pas/s, but

It Depends

Every composition examine an examine a new vantage the truth of

From a
From a
A hen is
The sun is
In the M
The tar is
Babe R
The war is
of the
In Russian Motto of you
Accord
How could

Forgotten

The annual Dinner men and women Dorado Rock president until the president a
have said, "It is an undeniable fact that if a fox terrier two feet long with a tail an inch and a half high can dig a hole three feet deep in 10 minutes, then to dig the Panama Canal in a single year would require only one fox terrier 15 miles long with a tail a mile and a half high. This is statistically true; yet one must seriously consider whether, after finding such a fox terrier, one could make it mind."

"To be is to do" (Nietzsche, 1867)
"To do is to be" (Fromm, 1929)
"Do be do be do" (Sinatra, 1968)

Pygmy elephants are the same things as jumbo shrimps.

LasSsen Words

Harry C. Lassen of Oak Park, Illinois esteems words which have startlingly different meanings when the letter S is appended to them. For example: hop/s, pant/s, preserve/s, arm/s, wood/s, tight/s, look/s, manner/s, spell/s, step/s, still/s, spirit/s, good/s, last/s, opener/s, shear/s, damage/s and western/s. Others which would fit in this category are: ha/s, physic/s, odd/s, dud/s, lee/s, doe/s, none/s, I/s, hi/s and a bunch of words which already end in S such as pas/s, bras/s and handles/s. There are certainly many more.

It Depends On Your Point Of View

Every once in a while it is a good thing to shake up your mind, to examine anew your basic view of the universe, to look at things from a new vantage point. As an exercise in doing just that, let's grasp the truth of the following pieces of wisdom.

From a clock's point of view the hands move counterclockwise
From a chicken's point of view every egg is poached
A hen is only an egg's way of making another egg
The sun never rises on the British Empire
In the Middle East oil is a source of friction
The tardy worm avoids the early bird
Babe Ruth struck out 1330 times
The way they're making things today, antiques will be a thing of the past in the future
In Russia, oysters P in season
Motto of the Garbage Collectors' Union: it may be garbage to you, but it's bread and butter to us
According to my weight and height I'm not as old as I should be
How come there's so much month left at the end of the money?

Forgotten Men and Women

The annual convention (three out of every four years) of forgotten men and women will be held again this year on 29 February at the El Dorado Room of the Amnesia Hotel in Atlantis. Old Queen Cole will preside until elections of new officers have been held. Candidates for president are: Countess Basie, Queen Kong and the Duke of Alba.
For vice president the candidates are: the Duchess of Paducah, Lord Godiva and Lady Haw-Haw. Uncontested for a repeat term as secretary is Mr. Malaprop. Also uncontested for a repeat term as treasurer is Mrs. Chips.

It should be a gala affair with entertainment provided by a super galaxy of stars. The Andrews Brothers will sing a medley of their hit tunes. Duchess Ellington will tickle the ivories. Monsieur Lazonga, Senora Wences and Pops Mabley will also make guest appearances.

Inspired by the painting that was created during the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, Grandpa Moses has agreed to put on canvas a memorable portrait of Whistler's father.

Catering for the event will be handled by Mr. Murphy -- except for liquid refreshments, which will be provided by Old Grandmom.

Food Cliches for the New Age

Philip Cohen contributes the following from the Cornell Linguistics Circle:

Let them eat Ding Dongs
The Cremora of the crop
You can't have your Twinkie and eat it, too
Cyclamate-daddy
Cheez Whiz it, the cops!
The Sanalac of human kindness
The car salesman sold me a Real Lemon
You're a Frito off the old block
You're the Cranapple of my eye
Bringing home the sodium nitrite

Falling out of favor, of course, is the Christmas carol "Joy to the World" -- Joy has too many phosphates.

Stapless Stapler

A recent ad in the New York Times offered the title item. Ralph Beaman was inspired to write, "The parson removed his cloak and, Bibleless, preached a garbless sermon about the Jews in Arabless lands who called on the bugless Gabriel to aid them since their plows were handless and their women needless." He further comments that W3 gives WALL to WALL-LESS which looks better than W2's WALLLESS. But W3 also gives SKILL to either SKILL-LESS or SKILLESS; hence, one may drop an L when appending -LESS to some words. How many? Probably only SKILL in W3, but Ralph has also found ILL to either ILL-LESS or ILLESS in W2.

Quiz Time Again

Below is a set of words having a common property which you must discover. On something to...

Great
Kid
Bald
Menace
Red
Horse

Much easier to say animals than to related to the animal.

Management

The following management...

... For one...

All the 12 necessary cut. If a...

Much effect...

...be round...

The condition...

Parting Tho

If I were...
aducah, ~at term as ~at term as

bought by a super
tency of their
monsieur La-
uest ap-

1976 Olympic
in canvas a

vy -- except
Grandmom.

ull Linguist-

Joy to the

 discover. Once that property is known, you should be able to add something to each word -- and think of several more words in the list.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great</td>
<td>Terrible</td>
<td>Elder</td>
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<td>Kid</td>
<td>Obscure</td>
<td>Riveter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bald</td>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>Sailor</td>
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<td>Menace</td>
<td>Magnificent</td>
<td>Man</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Knife</td>
<td>Weeper</td>
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<td>Horse</td>
<td>Hermit</td>
<td>Greek</td>
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Much easier this time, wasn't it? I'm sure you can explain how the animals Tuna, Cow, Cat, Bull, Lion, Fox, Bear and Tiger are related to the above list. Details are in Answers and Solutions.

Management Survey

The following (from Hospitals, March 1954) is the report of a management survey of a philharmonic orchestra:

... For considerable periods the four oboe players have nothing to do. Their number should be reduced and the work spread more evenly over the whole of the concert thus eliminating peaks of activity.

All the 12 first violins were playing identical notes. This is unnecessary duplication. The staff of this section should be drastically cut.

If a large volume of sound is required, it could be obtained by means of electronic amplifier apparatus.

Much effort was absorbed in the playing of semi-quavers. This seems an excessive refinement. It is recommended that all notes be rounded up to the nearest quaver. If this were done, it would be possible to use trainees and lower grade operatives more extensively. There seems to be too much repetition of some musical passages. Scores should be drastically pruned. No useful purpose is served by repeating on the horns a passage which has already been played on the strings. It is estimated that if all redundant passages were eliminated, the whole concert time of the two hours could be reduced to 20 minutes and there would be no need for an intermission.

The conductor agrees generally with these recommendations, but expresses the opinion that there might be some falling off in attendance. In that unlikely event it should be possible to close sections of the auditorium entirely, with a consequent saving of overhead expense, lighting, salaries for ushers, etc.

Parting Thought

If I were punished for every pun I shed, I should not wish a puny shed for this punnish head.