Happy 10th birthday, Word Ways! With this issue, the journal is 10 years old. It first appeared in February 1968 with Dmitri Borgmann as editor, succeeded in 1969 by Howard Bergerson. In February 1970 Ross Eckler took over the editorship and publishership as well, aided by his wife Faith as business and subscriptions manager. By my reckoning, this is the 33rd issue of Word Ways which Ross and Faith Eckler have put together -- a magnificent feat! I am sure they deserve the thanks of all the readers over the past years, and I am taking this opportunity to record my thanks. I only hope that they go on producing the journal for at least another 10 years.

Updates

Back in August 1970, Dave Silverman offered WETTISH as the longest word with its letters arranged in typewriter order (qwertyuop-asdfghjklzxcvbnm) and asked what was the longest word with its letters arranged in reverse typewriter order. I then proposed CHAPITRE, which Dave mentioned in the May 1971 issue. That word appears in both Webster's Second Edition and the Oxford English Dictionary as an obsolete spelling of "chapter". Can you find a longer word with its letters in reverse typewriter order? Or a commoner one of the same length?

In the May 1976 Word Ways, editor Ross Eckler presented an article "Must You Join the Queue?" in which he listed various words having a Q not followed by a U, or a QU not followed by a vowel. The words in the article were culled from several dictionaries, among them Webster's New Collegiate (Eighth Edition). One word in that dictionary which somehow got overlooked was BUQSHA, a monetary unit used in the Yemen. No other dictionary has this word.

In the February 1972 Word Ways, readers Aiden Myles and John Standish presented an article entitled "Brush Up Your Webster's". In this, they pointed out various odd and interesting items taken mainly from Webster's Third, though occasional reference was made to the Second. BRIGHT-FACED, in the Second Edition but not the Third, was offered as a word which uses the first nine letters of the alphabet.
A through I. They topped that by pointing out that the three-word term AZIMUTHAL EQUIDISTANT PROJECTION, in the Third Edition but not the Second, contains all ten of the letters from L to U inclusive. However, the authors could not point to a single word which uses ten consecutive letters of the alphabet, probably because the Webster dictionaries don’t contain one. Two such words do exist outside Webster, though: the Random House Dictionary lists both QUASI-COMPLIMENTARY and QUASI-IMPORTANTLY, both of which use the ten-letter sequence L-U. Can you find other words with ten consecutive letters? Or even eleven?

Electrical Units

In his May 1977 Kickshaws, Philip Cohen discussed various scientific units of measurement. At one stage, he mentioned the MHO and the OHM, the units used for expressing conductance and resistance. (Actually, he used the word 'conductivity' instead of 'conductance', but that’s something slightly different, corresponding not to resistance but to resistivity.) Besides MHO and OHM, there are two other pairs of mutual reversals taken from the terminology of electricity. Most dictionaries indicate FARAD as the unit of capacitance and HENRY as the unit of inductance. Chambers Dictionary of Science and Technology (London, 1971) also gives DARAF as the unit of elastance (the reciprocal of capacitance, and YRNEH as the unit of reciprocal inductance. Are there any others like these?

Twenty-One Different Letters

In the August 1977 Word Ways, Maxey Brooke lamented that he knew of no five-by-five double word square containing more than fourteen different letters. Digging deeply in the Oxford English Dictionary, Jeff Grant of Hastings, New Zealand came up with the 21-letter specimen shown at the right, an achievement most unlikely to be improved upon. The word definitions are

- thack to put thatch on houses
- revue a theatrical entertainment
- oxime a chemical compound
- wyzen Scottish form of ‘weasand’
- pleds Scottish form of ‘pleads’
- trowp an early spelling of ‘troop’
- hexyl the hydrocarbon radical C₆H₁₃
- avize early form of ‘advise’
- cubed early past part. of ‘come’ (see A.3. 1572 quote)
- keens wails, laments bitterly

Translingual Transposals

In the November 1975 Word Ways, an article of mine entitled "Cardinal Transposals" appeared. In it, I presented transposals for the names of the numbers ONE through TWENTY, and then in steps of ten up to ONE HUNDRED. As an extension of that work, I have been casually lettering a few more examples.  For example, one could give CONIC, and a possible five-letter word is GELIC.  Here are examples for five-letter names:

- 1 G eins/
- 2 S dos/s
- 3 F tros/er
- 4 S cuatro/s
- 5 I cinco/i
- 6 G sechs/
- 7 F sept/s
- 8 G acht/er
- 9 I neve/i
- 10 S diez/

All the English names of the numbers L to U inclusive are listed under "l" and "u" in the Webster dictionaries, but languages would have quite different transposals of numbers.

Recommended Reading

Quite some years ago, I had prepared a list of books which could help a crossword puzzle maker to find transposals of names or lower case words. Although I don’t have a complete list, here is one which was culled from a couple of very large dictionary books.

The Poet’s Miscellany (Thames and Hudson, 1976) contains over one hundred thousand lines of quotations in that and other languages for which we have dictionaries. Walker’s dictionary of synonyms and antonyms (London, 1975) contains over eleven thousand items together with synonyms and antonyms. The same books contain thousands of French, German, and Italian words, many of which were not apparent to me from English dictionaries. Cassell’s Crossword Dictionary (London, 1975) contains over 120,000 words, many of which are not found in the standard crossword dictionaries. That should be enough to fill the crossword puzzle maker’s needs.
been casually looking for transposals of foreign number names. For example, CINCO (Spanish for 'five') can be transposed to give CONIC, and DREI (German for 'three') gives RIDE. Here are examples for most of the first twenty cardinals (the letters F,G,I and S denote French, German, Italian and Spanish):

| 1 | G | eins/sine | 11 | F | onze/zone |
| 2 | S | dos/sod | 12 | S | doce/code |
| 3 | F | trois/riots | 13 | S | trece/erect |
| 4 | S | cuatro/turaco | 14 |  |
| 5 | I | cinque/quine | 15 | F | quinze/zequin |
| 6 | G | sechs/chess | 16 | F | seize/sieze |
| 7 | F | sept/pest | 17 |  |
| 8 | G | acht/chat | 18 |  |
| 9 | I | nove/oven | 19 | F | dix-neuf/unfixed |
| 10 | S | diez/zide | 20 | I | venti/vinet |

All the English words are in Webster's Third, with two exceptions: ZIDE and SIEZE are in the Oxford English Dictionary (the latter being listed under "seize"). Perhaps readers with a knowledge of other languages would care to fill in some of the gaps, or search for transposals of numbers above 20.

Recommended Reading

Quite some while ago, Dave Silverman asked me to let him have a list of books which were essential to the word enthusiast, the word puzzler, and the logologist. I never actually got round to sending him such a list, as it was quite obvious that it would contain hundreds, if not thousands, of items. (One has only to look at the size of Dmitri Borgmann's bibliography in Beyond Language eleven years ago!) Instead, here is a brief description of three reference books which have had some interest for me. Why not look out for copies in your library or book store?

The Poet's Manual and Rhyming Dictionary, by Frances Stillman (Thames and Hudson, London, 1966). This is a true rhyming dictionary in that rhyming words and phrases are listed together, regardless of how they are spelt. (Other rhyming dictionaries, such as Walker's Rhyming Dictionary, are in reality reverse alphabetical dictionaries.) For example, Stillman's book lists the following items together: baby - maybe, Bombay - disobey, parfait - Santa Fe, grandpa - faux pas - oompah, bourgeois - schwa - je ne sais quoi, chickadee - Kennedy - fiddledee - Ph. D., Italy - fleur-de-lis - appellee - Beverly - Rosalie.

Cassell's Crossword Finisher, compiled by John Griffiths (Cassell, London, 1975). A basic vocabulary of 21,000 words (from 3 to 7 letters) was fed into a computer. The computer then produced over 120,000 combinations of those words based on the position of any one or two letters in a word. For example, as an unfinished item in a crossword you have a word ...N-G... . This book tells you that the words fitting such a pattern are ENIGMA, KNIGHT, ONAGER...
and SNUGLY. This book is a significant addition to the many alphabetical and positional word lists put out by various US puzzle contest organizations, such as Robert Spence Publications of St. Petersburg, Florida. The similar book Funk & Wagnalls Crossword Puzzle Word Finder ($8.95) may be easier to find in the American marketplace.

Webster's Collegiate Thesaurus (Merriam-Webster, Springfield, Mass., 1976). A completely new thesaurus structurally different from Roget and all those based on Roget. It is much easier to use than Roget, having dispensed with complicated cross-references and confusing indexes. The inquirer can go straight to the word he or she is interested in and find there synonyms, related words (near-synonyms), idiomatc equivalents, contrasted words (near-antonyms), and antonyms. The thesaurus is based on Webster's Third Edition and Webster's New Collegiate (Eighth Edition).

Piano Words

In Language on Vacation (Scribner's, 1965), Dmitri Borgmann very briefly examines what he calls "piano words" -- ones that can be spelled out using the musical notes A, B, C, D, E, F and G. He lists seven examples having eight letters or more:

bebedded  cabbaged  beaded-edge  cabbage-bed
bedeafed  debadged  face-bedded

Dmitri indicated that the last word was a coined term. Not so! The Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary (published in 1933) has the term CABBAGE-BED appearing under the main entry of CABBAGE. The term is supported by an illustrative quotation dating from 1840. A Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary, A-G (published in 1972) supplies an even earlier illustrative quotation, one dated 1816.

Let's look at some further long piano words. Some fairly common seven-letter examples are ACCEDED, BAGGAGE, CABBAGE, DEFACEED and EFFACED. At the eight-letter level, there are BAGGAGED (in the OED), BEDAFFED (Webster's Second), BEDEADED (in the OED) and DEBAGGED (Webster's Third). Three nine-letter hyphenated words, all in Webster's Second, are BABE-FACED, BAG-BEDDED and BEEF-FACED. Can you add any further long piano words to this admittedly meager collection?

Elementary

In September 1977, a satirical version of some adventures of the detective Sherlock Holmes was shown on British television. Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, Holmes' intimate friend and recorder of his adventures, were the inventions of the British writer Arthur Conan Doyle. In Doyle's works, a frequent remark made by Holmes to Watson is "Elementary, my dear Watson!" (This phrase had sufficient currency to be considered Unconventional of which was picture, there was a crossword puzzle reading out the most amusing.

1. A large plant
   - A lemon
2. In the manner
   - A la Marie
3. A Conservatory
   - Almone
4. A pale-yellow color
   - A lemon
5. A type of golden eagle
6. A door made with various trims
7. Enlightened
8. A double seal

Caroline

Have you ever used the first names -
Lenora, Nicol, -

Websterian Fruits

I was playing with letters of that small collection -

I considered DATED, but rejected it.

TOLLED? At the start I looked for EXTEND, but rejected it.

What did I play? Did I hold the letter "E" to be a small?
many al-
lons of St.
ngfield,
different
ight to the
asted words
used on Web-
g. He
1933) has
ating
ny, A-G
otation,
BAG-
ED,
ber long

1.	A large plant, having a woody trunk and bearing citrus fruit (1,5,4)
- A lemon tree, my dear Watson!

2.	In the manner of a certain city in western California (1,2,8)
- A la Monterey, my dear Watson!

3.	A Conservative politician paying an allowance for supporting his wife after her divorce from him (7,4)
- Alimony Tory, my dear Watson!

4.	A pale-yellow-colored flat-bodied fish (1,5,5,3)
- A lemon manta ray, my dear Watson!

I have dreamed up four similar examples. See if you can solve them -- indeed, see if you can add further examples to the collection:

5.	A type of canal (10)
6.	A door made from a soft yellowish plastic resin obtained from various tropical trees (5,5)
7.	Enlightening (12)
8.	A double sulphate of aluminum and potassium on a platter (4,2,4)

Caroline

Have you ever realized what a versatile name CAROLINE is? The letters of that name can be arranged to spell out scores of different first names -- for example, Al, Ron, Leon, Colin, Claire, Carole, Lenora, Nicole and Arline. How many can you find? Some of the commoner names appear in Answers and Solutions.

Websterian Funnies

I was playing Scrabble. The first move in the game was mine, and I held the letters DEELOT* (where * represents a blank tile which may be used to represent any letter). What was the highest score I could make? Obviously, I was looking for a seven-letter word, in an attempt to score 50 bonus points for using all of my letters in one go. I considered DOMELET, HELOTED, HOTELED, NODELET and OLEATED, but rejected all of them as being unlikely to appear in the dictionary. (In fact, as I found out later, none of these is in Webster's Third.) I pondered EXTOLED -- could it be a variant spelling of EXTOLED? At the time I rejected it, too, but after the game was over I looked for EXTOLED in Webster's Third. That spelling doesn't appear in the dictionary, but EXTOLED appears twice. Is one of these a misprint for EXTOLED? Why else would EXTOLED appear twice? Checking other dictionaries, I wasn't able to find EXTOLED anywhere. So what did I play as the first move? I chanced DOVELET, assuming it to be a small dove, and was upheld by Webster's Third. It's not
every day in Scrabble that one uses a blank to represent the letter V; normally, V's are awkward letters to play.

Last summer, I spotted another error in Webster's Third which I haven't seen documented anywhere. In my copy (a 1961 printing), the term BOX PEW has been misspelled as BOW PEW, and appears between the entries BOX OYSTER and BOX PLANT.

AEIOU

From a set of Scrabble tiles, extract the sixteen letters AAAE EEEIIIOOOUUU. Place them one at a time on the lettered square shown below, in such a way that like letters are never placed on top of or next to each other, even diagonally. Your success will depend on the order in which you place the tiles, as you may ignore the printed letters on this page once they have been covered.

An Anagram Problem

The letters of the word ANAGRAM can be added to the letters of many other words and the total collection transposed to make a new word. For example, if ANAGRAM is added to LIE, you end up with the word MANAGERIAL. Below are 15 words, each of which can be combined similarly with ANAGRAM to produce a new word. See if you can come up with the 15 new words. Some are two-word terms and others are hyphenated, but all can be found in Webster's Second.
Some words don't look right; and other words, which look right, have meanings which are totally different from what you might guess when first meeting them. Perhaps you will be able to add to this list of words which look like misprints or illiterate spellings:

- **HOUSEBOTE** is not a misspelling of 'houseboat', but is wood allowed to a tenant for repairing a house.
- **ROADEO** is not a misspelling of 'rodeo', but is a contest featuring events that test driving skill.
- **TECNOLOGY** is not a misspelling of 'technology', but is the study of children.
- **WAREHOUSE** is not a misspelling of 'warehouse', but is the plural of warehou, a fish from Australia and New Zealand.
- **WARFARIN** is not a misspelling of 'warfarin', but is a chemical compound used as a rodenticide.
- **ZILWAUKEE** is not a misspelling of 'Milwaukee', but is the name of a town in Saginaw County, Michigan.

And now for the words which look as if they ought to mean something different from what they actually mean:

- **BARGUEST** is not a guest at a bar, but is a ghost or goblin, often shaped like a large dog.
- **CARLOT** is not a place for parking or displaying cars, but is an obsolete term for a book.
- **NUNLET** is not a small nun, but is a small South American bird.
- **PREDIAL** is not a verb meaning 'to dial before', but is an adjective meaning 'having land'.
- **REDIAL** is not a verb meaning 'to dial again', but is an adjective meaning 'pertaining to a redia, a type of larva'.
- **TONITE** is not a slang spelling of 'tonight', but is a blasting explosive.

**Autosuggestion**

In *Beyond Language* (Scribner's, 1967), Dmitri Borgmann posed 2 problems, one called The Autological Phenomenon and the other Suggestive Words. The former was concerned with words which describe themselves -- examples given included ENGLISH, SHORT, ADJECTIVAL, POLYSYLLABIC and UNYPHENATED. In the latter article, Borgmann points out that in ordinary English there is no outward resemblance between the written or printed appearance of a word and the object or idea for which it stands. He indicated that various words could be represented in such a fashion as to connect them with the thoughts they express. He gave examples for bomb, puncture, bow tie, empty, gallows, nail, guillotine, hysterical, mommy, daddy and soldier, amongst others. For typographical
reasons, we shall not attempt to reproduce Borgmann's suggestive words here.

I believe that Borgmann overlooked the fact that self-descriptive (or autological) and suggestive words are connected. Consider the following dozen specimens:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNSOFISTICATED</th>
<th>MISPELLING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HUMILITY</td>
<td>Decembrrr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twogether</td>
<td>D&quot; TTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILLIONHEIRS $</td>
<td>IMPERFEKT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>erroneous</td>
<td>DEFECT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neveredin</td>
<td>SECreterary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can readers add others to this list? Are some of these words autological and some suggestive? Are some words both autological and suggestive? Do these two terms overlap, or are they exactly the same thing?

Fidel Castro

A name which has tantalized me for many years is that of Fidel Castro. That name, using only common letters and having none repeated, ought to be transposable to some other dictionary-listed word, name, or term. However, as much as I have tried, I cannot convert the letters ACDEFILORST into a genuine dictionary-sanctioned term. Can you? In an attempt to effect a valid transposition of those letters, I have noted numerous coined terms, each of which can be endowed with some sort of meaning. Here are 25 of the coined terms:

Ascot rifled costal fried fiord castle for citadels loaf credits
calf editors croft aisled float dicers Ford Castile oiled crafts
calf steroid direct foals Florida sect for dialects roiled facts
coda filters disc floater florid caste forties clad self arctoid
colder flats field actors focal stride Frisco delta tidal fresco

The nearest that I have managed to get to a genuine transposal of FIDEL CASTRO is TOLFRAEDICS. The word TOLFRAEDIC appears in Webster's Second Edition, the Oxford English Dictionary, and Funk & Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary; the word is an adjective defined as "duodecimal; pertaining to the ancient Scandinavian system of reckoning". I have added an S to the adjective, creating thereby a noun, which I define as "the study of the ancient Scandinavian system of reckoning".

Consonant Strings

If all vowels (AEIOU but not Y) are deleted from words, and only the remaining consonants considered, various words are reduced to the same string of consonants. For example, DESTRUCTION and DISTRACTION both become DSTRCTN; COMPILATION and COMPLETION both become CMPLTN; IMPASSABLE and IMPOSSIBLE both become MPSSBL; and ADULATION, DEALATION, DELATION, DE-
LETION, DILATION and DILUTION all reduce to DLTN. Can you find similar groups of words? Would any reader care to categorize the words and consonant strings in some way? There must be a Word Ways article in the offing here.

Synopsises

Who remembers the 1973 film "The Way We Were", starring Barbra Streisand and Robert Redford? I recently saw this film for the second time, and spotted an oddity which I had obviously missed the first time around. Somewhere in the film, Streisand or Redford (I can't remember who) uses the word SYNOPSISES. This is meant to be the plural form of the noun SYNOPSIS. This set me to wondering if this plural had ever appeared in any dictionary as an alternative form of SYNOPSIS. So I checked.

The First, Second and Third Editions of Webster's New International all spell out SYNOPSES in full, and indicate no other plural form. The Oxford English Dictionary, the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, the Century Dictionary, all editions of Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary back to 1901, and Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary all do exactly the same. The Random House Dictionary doesn't spell out the plural in full, but indicates, by the use of "pl. -ses", that this is the only plural form. Funk & Wagnalls has a similar entry: "-ses pl.". The Eighth Edition of Webster's New Collegiate says "pl. -ses"; and the new 5th edition of the Concise Oxford Dictionary says, complicatedly, "synops/is (pl. -es)".

So, no major dictionary published in the past 80 years even hints at SYNOPSISES. I continued my search by turning to Mencken's The American Language which I thought would be bound to show it if it had ever appeared. But no, not even Mencken includes it. Interestingly, the second supplement of his book does include the plural forms ANALYSISES, AXISES, CRISISISES, PARENTHESESISES, SYNTHESISES and THESISES.

It appears that SYNOPSISES is a totally illiterate form. Only when enough people become illiterate will the dictionary-makers get round to putting it in the dictionaries. After all, usage rules.

Death

Did you know that DEATH is a surname? The name can be found in various dictionaries of surnames such as Reaney's A Dictionary of British Surnames. People bearing this surname often adopt variant forms in an attempt to dissociate the name from its morbid overtones. For example, I noted the following eight forms in the February 1977 London Telephone Directory: De'Ath, De'ath, de'Ath, De Ath, D'Eath, De'ath, De-Ath and Death. I had hoped that Mencken would have something to say about these "disguised" forms (and perhaps add to the list), but he is silent. Can readers unearth other variants in United States telephone directories?
Consecutive Letter Strings

If one ignores spaces, apostrophes and similar punctuation, what is the largest number of consecutive identical letters that can be inserted in a grammatically-correct phrase or sentence? I started the ball rolling back in May 1973 with the 5-L JILL' LL LOVE ME, which Maxey Brooke matched in February 1975 with BURGOO 'O OOZE. Joan Jurow of Wanaque, New Jersey has elevated this pastime to an art form with the following collection of sentences:


The farmer's wife shouted at her son, "Stop shooting, Robb; BB bullets can injure the chickens!"

With unemployment rising, the USA needs a program of public service jobs such as those the energetic C. C. C. completed in the 1930's.

Wagner's music is full of loud stuff; fff figures prominently in many of his compositions.

I used to enjoy concerts by the family Von Trapp; ppp passages as well as fff ones were both possible for this talented ensemble.

Her best effort, however, is the following 7-E sentence:

Lucinda was struggling to remember how many E's there were in the first syllable of tepee; E? ... EE? ... "Eney-meeneyminey-mo," she muttered to herself, and picked the wrong one.

To forestall arbitrarily long strings, let's rule out stuttering, hissing, snoring, shoe sizes and companies leading off telephone books.

Lydia Kane Again

Inspired by Alexander Bogart's stunt in the November 1977 Kickshaws, Boris Randolph recently dashed off the following acrostic paean to Lydia Kane:

Light as a butterfly and just as brave
You litc. a fire on my heart and there took reign
Delighting me with all that will engrave
I tself upon my soul. Castles in Spain
A rise out of the dreaming you
K eeping me captive with love's grand appeal
A nd holding me from all that might be vain.
N ow with a rediscovered fond sweet zeal
E ach move I make is forged out of your steel.