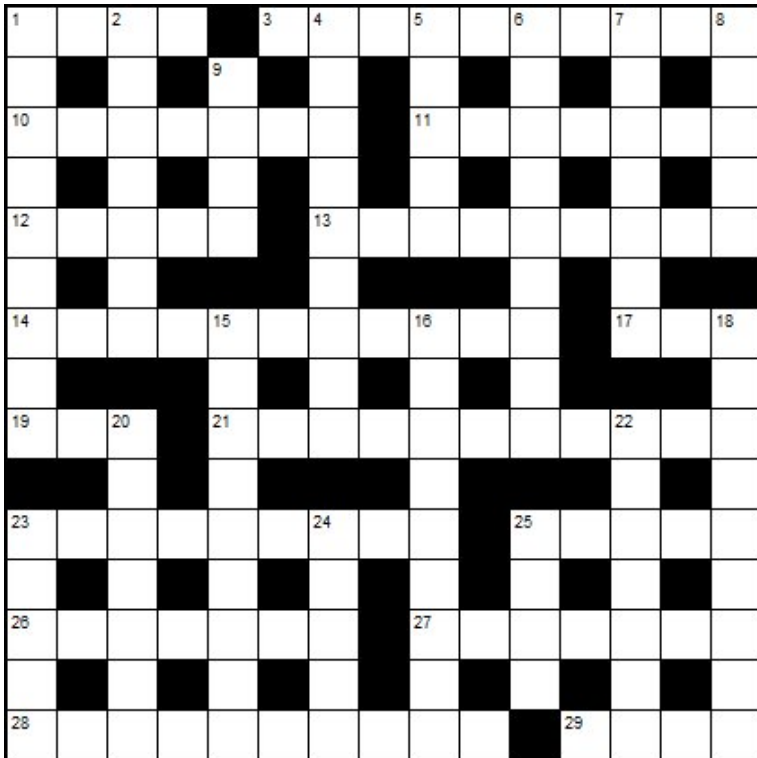


Puzzle by Mucky

This puzzle from Mucky is an excellent debut. There are all sorts of inventive twists and turns here, with misdirections galore – and he’s produced a set of clues with beautifully smooth surface readings. Favourite clues: 14, 21, 26 across and 25 down.



ACROSS

- 1 English china primarily rather white (4)
- 3 Externally check security on mutant lab rat (10)
- 10 Monstrous stink one granny bottles up (7)
- 11 Will I cite case for criminal? (7)
- 12 Tool for forging a six pound note impounded (5)
- 13 Child’s play to bounce tax check (9)
- 14 Watching musical chairs here, upstairs? (5,6)
- 17 My short rope (3)
- 19 Returning on board Concorde – fantastic flyer (3)
- 21 Start on chef’s cooked breakfast? (6,5)
- 23 Coach future queen about monarch’s temporary role at Palace? (9)
- 25 Small red heels? (5)
- 26 Dreadful count of motorists in dual crash (7)
- 27 What identifies the captain’s gun troop (7)
- 28 For a glow, firstly try alternative heating fun (10)
- 29 “Mum, I am badly hurt” (4)

DOWN

- 1 Royal couple briefly do the dirty (9)
- 2 The French have right to dock ferries here (2,5)
- 4 Sandwich now abominable “lite munch”? (9)
- 5 Fresh snack (5)
- 6 A particular bird, or a hundred others? (9)
- 7 Contraction after bad case of self-denial (7)
- 8 Other half of 18? (5)
- 9 Chief detective cycling mile (4)
- 15 Patsy’s gentle caress (4,5)
- 16 Spooner’s upset teacher – the little pest (9)
- 18 River creature’s obstruction in port (9)
- 20 Pirate recited rude shanty (7)

- 22** By degrees, the greatest thief of thieves? (3,4)
23 Young soldier acted rashly (5)
24 This colour for one Ferrari crucial, it's said (5)
25 Two plus one ring? (4)