



CRYPTIC

ACROSS:

1. A small pointed tool for pricking holes in Scotland – it gets maggots back (4)
3. Projected into the air into prominence, a chair of state by the sound of it (8)
9. Brother takes in a woman, removing drug and making more active (7)
10. Half a jelly made for French cook (5)
11. Finished? It's not started. It's relaxed (5)
12. It's associated with a borough up north, it can make brother laugh (7)
13. A painkiller wanted – a top caramel perhaps (11)
17. Obstructed a Conservative getting recorded! (7)
19. An intuitive feeling it's time for new box (5)
20. A lot changing side, for an explorer (5)
21. Stick in the innermost part and get rust! (7)
22. French scientist gets to take out extra comments and sections of outlined text (5-3)
23. Red dollops left around. "Clear up!" – it's obvious! (4)

DOWN:

1. Satisfy royalty without one church and feel pain (6)
2. Non-English language in a word for "eggs" – it's foreign! (7)
4. See 21dn
5. Son leaves school for years, getting articles of dress (12)
6. A plant sometimes used for spinach and in some cases used for aching teeth (5)
7. The stone of a drupe; name, unknown; clue, a feeble anagram (6)
8. Roger and Henry cadged coarsely somewhere in Somerset (7,5)
12. Give up – leave out the first letter, replace with the second letter, for protection (5)
14. 2 notes in one excelled (7)
15. Engineers put on the head a cold covering (3-3)
16. He gets lids changed into a cover (6)
18. Idiots rarely remove the top of pieces of bread (5)
- 21,4dn. Reddish-orange butterfly and blue-bottle (6)

EASY

ACROSS:

1. See 23dn
3. Instructs, provides schooling for (8)
9. Minute organisms inhabiting the surface layer of fresh water (7)
10. Rounded convex mouldings (5)
11. The rim at the ends of a cask (5)
12. Final course at a meal (7)
13. Out of place (11)
17. Plant of the pink family (7)
19. Facing downward (5)
20. Cable, Liberal Democrat (5)
21. Bring to a temporary stop (7)
22. The area immediately surrounding a sporting event (8)
- 23,1ac. Lacking anyone entitled

to succeed when present possessor dies (8)

DOWN:

1. Insanity (6)
2. A lizard-like fossil reptile (7)
4. See 21dn
5. A contrary desired end (5-7)
6. Plural demonstrative pronoun (5)
7. Ruffled in temper (6)
8. Obstinacy (12)
12. Edgar, French painter (5)
14. An amphibian whose tail persists in adult life (7)
15. A papilionaceous plant affording rich pasturage (6)
16. A drunken spree (6)
18. Law or rule, especially in ecclesiastical matters (5)
- 21,4dn. Make sorrowful (6)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION (CRYPTIC) Across 1. Post-mortem 8. After 9. Creator 10. Dook 11. Heelball 13. Steaming hot 17. Hustings 19. Cedi 21. Padroni 22. Kotos 23. Jerome Kern
Down: 1. Puts out 2. Sura 3. Michelin Guide 4. Rheology 5. Entia 6. Wards 7. Brill 12. Makimono 14. Overton 15. Chaps 16. Cissy 18. Sadie 20. Akee

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION (EASY) Across: 1. Decisively 8. Pukka 9. Idlesse 10. Tods 11. Embussed 13. Impregnable 17. Exemplar 18. Agas 21. Distich 22. Loipe 23. Unbearable
Down: 1. Dukedom 2. Craw 3. Seismographer 4. Valvular 5. Lysis 6. Sputa 7. Perdu 12. Trip wire 14. Log line 15. Deedy 16. Issel 18. Eosin 20. Slub

The Iron Lady - stripped bare

In an election night special, burlesque performer Honey Wilde will be revealing a side to Margaret Thatcher that'll stop you in your poll station tracks, writes **Tan Parsons**

ELECTION night on May 6 promises to be one of the most exciting dates in recent times – not least because it's also when the 1 Mighty Craic comedy club launches its Edinburgh preview season.

The Belsize Park club will host performances in the coming months from the likes of Shappi Khorsandi, Perrier winner Phil Nichol, Simon Munnery and a host of rising stars.

Among them is Honey Wilde, who will take to the stage on the opening night to perform her politics-flavoured burlesque show. Her act involves an eye-opening depiction of Margaret Thatcher – imagining a somewhat soft and more feminine side to how the Iron Lady might have been behind closed doors.

"I'm interested in her as a political icon and an important figure," Wilde explains. "I decided to create the act because it hadn't been done in a burlesque sense before, which was surprising because she's a particularly good target for satire."

Wilde clarifies that burlesque does not mean putting on a strip show per se, it simply means to "send up" – to poke fun. In this sense, she is taking a direct interpretation of the art form: all she wants to do is turn people's expectations on their head.

"A lot of people did find her attractive in a powerful kind of way. I still find a number of people, mainly men, come up to me after the show and say that they have always had a thing for Margaret Thatcher, which is surprising and disturbing in equal measure.

"But I like the idea that, while she was this iron woman on the outside, there was this sexy lady trying to get out. But during the act, it's always Thatcher. It's not Thatcher-becomes-a-showgirl. I start with how she was seen publicly and end up with how she



True blue ... Honey Wilde as Margaret Thatcher.

might have been privately."

Wilde's choice of costume and music is deliberate. She wanted to depict Thatcher at the height of her powers, so she begins in the classic image of a blue dress suit and pearls, while Master and Servant by Depeche Mode pumps away on the stereo.

"I think the show definitely makes people think about politics but I don't know if it would change people's perceptions. The

sort of politics Thatcher represents have changed. I don't think anyone is going to watch it and then think right, I'm going to vote Tory now. I'd be very surprised by that.

"There aren't any real political icons at the moment – they're all quite wishy washy. I mean, what could you do in terms of burlesque with Gordon Brown?"

She is currently working on two acts in progress – one is a

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Dannii versus Kylie Minogue spoof, while the other is a Justin Timberlake drag act. She confides it has also been suggested she does Princess Diana.

In previous shows, she has also joyously sent up the stereotypes of Britishness – playing on the preconception that Brits are uptight and straight-laced while being sex maniacs underneath. In one scene, she does an act with a snake puppet based on the biblical tale of Eve and the serpent and examining who actually tempted who.

But, ultimately, all the characters she revives and imagines are essentially about comedy. She says the goal is out and out to entertain the audience and if she doesn't manage that then she hasn't done her job.

"Some people like me stripping, others like the characters and others like the comedy. As long as they are moved by it, whether they like it or not, then I'm happy."

□ *Honey Wilde: The Iron Lady Of Burlesque performs at the Edinburgh Preview Season launch night at the Mighty Craic in the Washington pub, England's Lane, on May 6 alongside presenter Alex Zane, sketch group Two Episodes of Mash and Maddy Nebraska. The show starts at 8pm and tickets are £7.50. To book, call 07523 520 368 or visit wegotickets.com.*



Stephen with added Extras

FRESH from his recent success co-directing the feature film Cemetery Junction with longtime collaborator Ricky Gervais, *The Office* and *Extras* writer Stephen Merchant is putting together a new stand-up show.

The Hampstead resident will be at Jackson's Lane Theatre in Highgate for a week to try out new material for his act, which showcases his geeky, fastidious comic persona.

The exclusive shows start at 9.45pm from June 14 to 19 at the Highgate venue. Tickets cost £12. To book, call 020-8341 4421 or visit www.jacksonslane.org.uk.