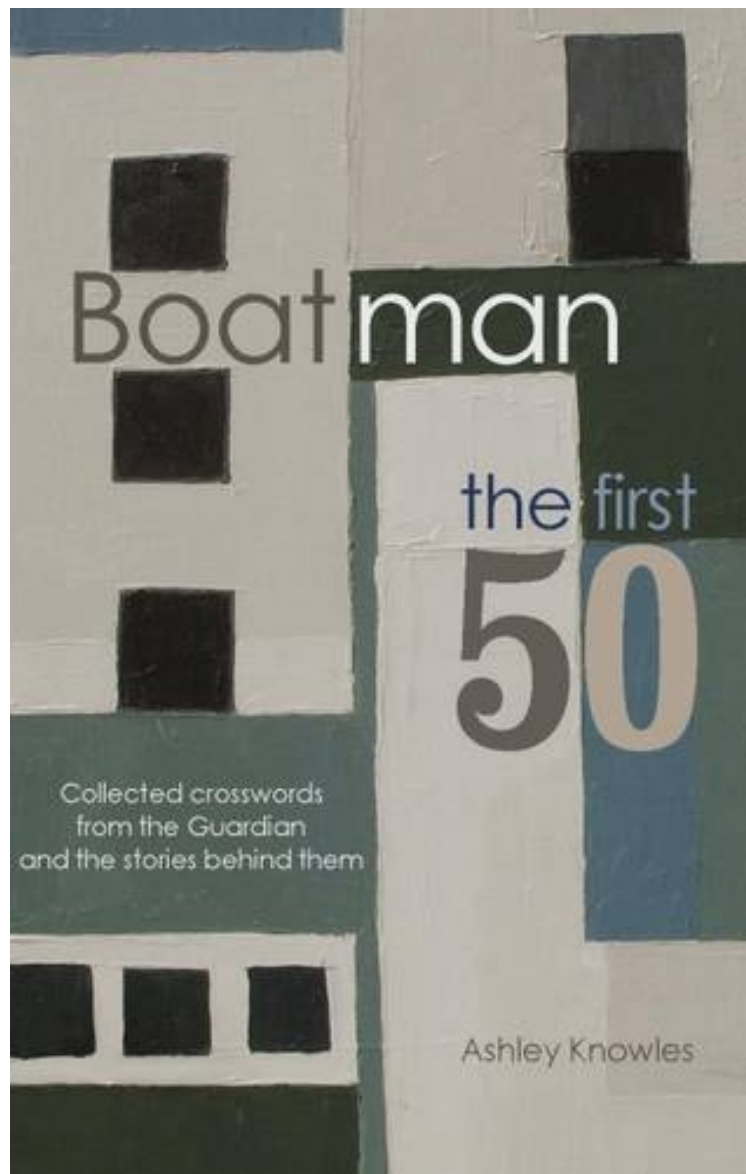


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Boatman - The First 50: Collected Crosswords from the Guardian and the Stories Behind Them

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First 50: Collected Crosswords from the Guardian and the Stories Behind Them:

Fiendish and inimitable, Boatman is widely regarded as one of Britain's most challenging and innovative compilers of cryptic crosswords. In this book, you'll find fifty of his puzzles from the Guardian, with an additional bonus crossword that was first published online in the Genius slot. So much more than a puzzle book, here Boatman tells the story in his own words behind the development of each crossword: how he thought of the theme, the ideas that didn't make it into print and the unlikely coincidences that emerged afterwards. You'll discover his working methods and the lively relationship between setter and editor, be able to enjoy extra teaser clues and hear from the solvers who took the time to comment on the puzzles when they were first published. All the crosswords in this collection have been freshly typeset to make solving them an even greater joy, with full solutions and explanations of all the wordplay. Expect many hours of pleasure here, whether you're coming to Boatman's puzzles for the first time, looking for older pieces you may have missed in print, rediscovering half-forgotten favourites or returning to try again with a few that may have defeated you the first time round.

This is one to savour. Boatman's puzzles are witty and ingenious - and he never forgets that his job is to delight the solver. It is now an extraordinary pleasure to read how his unique mind works. The First 50 is a book I never knew I needed in my life. Gift it to yourself and to the word-lovers in yours - Alan Connor, Question Editor of BBC2's Only Connect and crossword columnist for the Guardian

About the Author Boatman began compiling crosswords for his own amusement in 1999: his first puzzle was about Mrs B's dog. Pieces for 1 Across magazine followed in 2001, then unwavering support from Tom Johnson at 1 Across and persistent badgering of crossword editor Hugh Stephenson led to Boatman's first crossword for the Guardian, which appeared in October 2008. His fiftieth followed seven years later. Having lived literally on the sea in Brighton Marina, Boatman can now be found on the other side of the Downs, in Keymer, next to the creative village of Ditchling, with his artist wife, a teenage daughter, one very lazy greyhound and several unappreciated fish. During the week, he is a reluctant commuter; look out for him on the London to Brighton line in the evening, though, and you may find him in his own world, happily compiling.