Inside the 22 January edition

Weekly at the grassroots; an unexpected front page; diacritics and diversions

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You folks are full of surprises.

We know you love the newspaper. You read it cover to cover. Worldly, intelligent, outward-looking, we know you're passionate about all things international. No surprises there.

But now we're learning just how much you want to discuss and debate. From Canada's west coast, to Europe's smaller cities, from Perth, and across the Nullarbor Plain to Adelaide, and embracing other points Australian, you're telling us how you meet fellow GW readers to chat things through.

It has been great fun to hear about where you gather and what you discuss, over coffee or cake, a beer or a barbecue. In Austria, it's crosswords, with four continents represented on a Friday morning. In Adelaide, it's the state of the world, deeply dissected in a pub on a Thursday. In Bodalla, New South Wales, it's lunch on the terrace (by the look of the photo) where, I suspect, there's a focus on Notes & Queries!

And next month, in Fremantle, this edition's featured Good to meet you reader is planning a Western Australia gathering of the like-minded at a local community centre.

Do you meet other GW readers? If so, where? And what's on the agenda? Please do drop me a line. I'd love to hear more!

It was difficult to decide just what to feature on the front page of this week's edition. Iran came in from the cold, global financial markets careened, and Islamic State continued its bloody rampage in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

We wanted to give you something fresh and unexpected this edition, so we've splashed out on Pakistan's hopes of evolving one of its coastal centres into a node of world commerce, with a bit of help from China. It's an interesting read about strategic aspirations from an unlikely location, and I hope you enjoy it.

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Elsewhere, Taiwan elected a its first female leader, a politician who aims to put some distance between Taipei and Beijing. Watch this space for fallout and further implications.

In the US, with the starting gun for this year's presidential election set to be fired at the Iowa caucuses on 1 February, we catch up on President Barack Obama's State of the Union address, and dip into both Republican and Democratic candidate debates.

Norway is sending back cycling refugees, the United Nations is sounding an alarm over killings in Burundi and Brazil rethinks some aspects of its famed Carnival as the economy stalls. That's a lot of the world in one small sentence!

Our Comment & Debate section hones in on global finance, British politics, and Nigerian religion. And we said farewell to English actor Alan Rickman, who died of cancer at the age of 69, and who claims our In praise of space.

The deeper-read Review has a compelling piece on crowdsourcing organ donations in the age of social media. This is a fascinating issue of life -and-death importance. And we profile the Mexican mayor murdered after just a day in office.

On the Discovery pages, partner paper Le Monde reports on IVF procedures that are helping save endangered species, Books reviews the story of a man and his Magellanic penguin, and Culture chats with actor Gillian Anderson on her X-Files return, empowerment and ageing.