

Ru3a Cryptic Crossword Blog 2022

Week 108: Thursday 15th December 2022 at 10am via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

Six members were able to meet up via Zoom today and we were soon at work! Even so, we were still able to discuss some of the burning issues of the day especially relating to the state of the public's health!

- Anagram indicators today included: mixed, incorrectly, in, so changed, confused, devious, lively.

One clue answer was unknown to most if not all of us, Otiose. The clue? 'Is too confused to take note – so serving no purpose' (6)

The word 'otiose' can be used as an adjective to mean 'serving no practical purpose or result'. It can also mean 'indolent or idle'. All we need to do now is to find some reason to use the word and then we might remember it!

Next meeting: Thursday 5th January 2023 at 10am via Zoom Homework: SUN crosswords 116, 117, 118 & 119

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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107: Thursday 1st December 2022 at 10am via Zoom hosted by Sue B

This meeting was cancelled on the day as only three members were able to attend.

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Week 106: Thursday 17th November 2022 at 10am and hosted by Sue B via Zoom

We started with four and ended with 6 members. The first two crosswords proved to be quite challenging and frustrating but nevertheless the group worked diligently until the very end. The thought of a welcome coffee break always helps maintain motivation!

Anagram indicators today were quite numerous and included: revised, like this, irritates, silly, sorted out, mess, firm, has developed, badly, accident, rebuilding, frenzied stir, available, astutely and get attention.

Next meeting: Thursday December 1st at 10am via Zoom. The final meeting of the year will be on Thursday 15th December. Mince pies and a glass of sherry are encouraged!

Homework: SUN crosswords 113, 114 & 115.

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Week 105: Thursday 20th October 2022 at 10am via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

We had a busy session this morning and worked through our homework in almost record time!

Anagram indicators today included: devious, new, sort of, special, about, out of hand, perhaps, poor state, tricky, like this and wildly.

Interesting words:

- Osier: The clue? 'A lot of it could end up in baskets' (5). An osier is a willow twig used in basketry.
- Crates: The clue? 'They may be old but can still bear their burdens' (6). A crate may be a slatted wooden case used for transporting goods. It may also refer to an old and dilapidated vehicle.

Homework: SUN crosswords 107, 108 and 109

Next meeting: Thursday 3rd November 2022 at 10am via Zoom

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Week 104: Thursday 6th October 2022 at 10am via Zoom, hosted by Sue B

We had six members attending today and after a 'catch-up' we were soon working our way through SUN crosswords 101,102 and 103.

As always, many of the clues were anagrams, and all the indicators were well known to us. That's no surprise to us now – we have come across hundreds!

Only one word stimulated much discussion: 'Rankling'. The clue? Foul-smelling fish causing resentment (8). To rankle means to cause annoyance or resentment. It can also mean to fester, as in a wound.

Next meeting: Thursday 20th October 2022 at 10am via Zoom.

Homework: SUN Crosswords 103, 104 and 105.

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Week 103: Thursday 15th September 2022 at 10am via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

A satisfying morning working through our 3 crosswords.

Anagram indicators included: about, perhaps, arranged, conditioned, upset, misused, troubles, used, foolishly, deliver and roughly.

Two clue answers were of particular interest today.

- Banditry. The clue? 'Prohibit the use of dirty lawlessness' (8). Banditry is a type of organised crime committed by outlaws typically involving the threat or use of violence. Wikipedia
- Camera. The clue? 'Private in it' (6). Not the common use of the word. In essence, 'in camera' means private, in particular taking place in the private chambers of a judge.

Next Meeting: Thursday 6th October at 10am via Zoom

Homework: SUN crosswords 101, 102 & 103

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Week 102: Thursday 1st September at 10am via Zoom hosted by Sue.

There were only four of us today, so we decided to just work through one of our crosswords, 97.

Next meeting: Thursday 15th September at 10am via Zoom

Homework: SUN crosswords 98, 99 & 100

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Week 101: Thursday 18th August at 10am via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

Another busy morning working through our crossword homework.

There were quite a few anagram indicators today and a few were new to us – 'brewed' , 'being awkward' and 'dug up'.

Other anagram indicators included: figured, especially, in trouble, sort of way, mistakenly, somewhat, wrong, covering and no.

Next meeting: Thursday 1st September at 10am via Zoom

Homework: SUN crosswords 97, 98 & 99.

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Week 100: Thursday 4th August 2022 via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

Today marked our 100th session! Once again another busy session working through our crossword homework.

Anagram indicators today included : upset, covering, applies, thus, disintegrating, make.....

As always, several words especially interested us.

- Distaff: The clue? 'The side monopolised by women (7)'. It appears that a 'distaff' is a tool used in spinning. It is designed to hold the unspun fibres. It can also relate to the 'female side of the family'. Apparently the male side is sometimes referred to as the 'spear side'!
- Colliers: The clue? 'To make profitable moves, they must have fuel' (8). It seems that 'collier' is a French word. A collier is a coal miner yet the word also refers to a ship carrying coal.

- Prorogue: The clue? 'What pro needs to prevent meeting' (5)? A prorogue is the discontinuation of, say, a parliamentary session.

Homework: Complete SUN crosswords 94, 95 & 96.

Next meeting: Thursday 18th August at 10am via Zoom

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Week 99: Thursday 21st July 2022, by Zoom and hosted by Sue B

The group were soon at work. We easily worked through our homework and even managed to make a start on crossword 90.

Anagram Indicators: Today, these included: deteriorating, sort of, wrongly, broken up, somehow, handling, in, set-up, somewhat, confused, new, must use.

Normally, at least one or two words stimulate further discussion. Today they included:

- Manse: The clue? 'Fellow's got a point- it'll attract a good occupier' (5). A manse is a clergy house inhabited by , or formally inhabited by, a minister, usually used in the context of Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and other Christian traditions'. Wikipedia
- Inners: Some us, or maybe just me(!), did not know that 'Inners' refers in archery and shooting, to a division of the target next to the bullseye. Of course we knew that it referred to the inner part of something! The clue? 'Score on board could be wrongdoers (7)' The answer: 'sinners'.
- Amity: The clue? 'Friendliness – but the girl does hide it. (5). The meaning of 'amity' is friendship, especially between nations.
- 'Blue pencil': Some of us had forgotten that the use of 'blue pencil' means to censor or make cuts in, say, a book or manuscript.

Homework: Try to complete SUN crosswords 90, 91, 92 & 93.

Next meeting: Thursday 4th August 2022 at 10am via Zoom

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Week 98: Thursday 7th July 2022 via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

Today was our first meeting since early May and it was nice to be working together again.

We worked our way through SUN crosswords 82 to 86.

Anagram indicators included: 'of some sort', 'badly', 'carelessly', 'isn't right', 'wrong' and 'mixture'.

Several clue words interested us.

Gainsay: the clue? 'Deny this, say' (4) To gainsay is to deny or contradict, or to speak against or oppose someone.

Germane: The clue? 'Relative has letter from European?' The word 'germane' means 'pertinent to a subject under consideration'.

Card: Of course, 'card' has many everyday meanings! The clue 'Where to find droll man if about to introduce funfair'. A card is a still piece of paper, or a small rectangular piece of plastic containing personal data in a machine readable form i.e. a credit card. It can also be used as a verb 'to card' – to write something on a card, especially for indexing.

However, it is also an informal term – 'a usually clownish amusing person'.

Next meeting: Thursday 21st July at 10am via Zoom.

Homework: Complete SUN crosswords 87, 88 and 89.

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Week 97: Thursday 5th May 2022 via Zoom, hosted by Sue B

We were very busy this morning and completed three crosswords in record time!

- Anagram indicators included: puzzles, possibly, broken, varied, movement, like this, not-so-good.

Homework: SUN crosswords 82, 83, 84, 85, 86 & 87. Yes, 6 crosswords!

Next meeting: Thursday 7th JULY 2022. *We are having a two month break as there are so many other activities, especially Jubilee events and holidays making it difficult for us all to meet up.*

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Week 96: Thursday 21st April 2022 via Zoom, hosted by Sue B

We were a busy group today, with almost full attendance. We completed three crosswords with not too much difficulty and it does seem we are slowly making progress! At the next meeting we will be starting on crosswords by a new compiler, so that will likely make a difference!

Anagram indicators today included: corrupted, variation, unusual, involved, badly, construction, scattered, in place of, unexpectedly and like this.

Today we came across several words that stimulated further discussion.

- 'Ambit' was the first. The clue? 'Scope, provided some can end in the morning' (5). It seems that 'ambit' means 'scope, extent, or bounds of something'. Several of us have taken a liking to this word and plan to make use it as soon as possible!

'Martinet'. The clue? 'Flyer in France (and disciplinarian) (8)'. A martinet is a person who demands complete obedience, a strict disciplinarian. Origin: late 17C named after Jean Martinet a 17C French drill master.

- 'Outré'. The clue? 'Dismissed again – being eccentric? (5)' From the French verb outrer, outré means 'unusual and typically shocking'.

Next meeting: Thursday 5th May 2022 at 10am via Zoom

Homework: SUN crosswords 79, 80 and 81.

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Week 95: Thursday 7th April at 10am via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

Six of us were able to sign in today. After initial greetings and catch-up news we settled down to work through our homework.

Anagram indicators included: falsely, becomes, available, moving, of a sort, about and make.

There were no especially interesting words today, but some of us did not realise that the outer part of an airfield is called an 'apron'.

Homework: SUN crosswords 76, 77 & 78.

Next meeting: Thursday 21st April at 10am via Zoom.

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Week 94: Thursday 17th March 2022 at 10am hosted by Sue B via Zoom

A busy group of 5 members met today and tackled the three homework crosswords with gusto!

Anagram indicators included: unworried, obscuring, as being, in trouble, in turmoil. Several words were found rather interesting today.

- Haft: Essentially, 'haft' means 'the handle of a weapon such as an axe or knife'. For example, 'he leaned on the haft of his axe'.
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/haft>.

The clue? 'Hot at the rear, it'll be taken in hand'.

- Fathead: The clue? 'Overweight, he is given notice – the idiot!' Quite simply, a 'fathead' is a stupid person. However, I must confess that this term is new to me!

Homework: SUN crosswords 73, 74 & 75.

Next meeting: Thursday 7th April at 10am via Zoom.

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Week 93: Thursday 3rd March 2022 at 10am, via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

Several members were away on holiday this week so just 6 members joined the meeting via Zoom.

All members found the crosswords challenging. One new word 'exigent' was 'marked out' as a matter of interest. The clue? 'Urgent way-out intelligence coming'. According to <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/exigent> exigent means 'requiring immediate aid', or 'requiring or calling for much'.

Homework: SUN crosswords 70, 71 & 72.

Next meeting: Thursday 17th March at 10am via Zoom.

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Week 92: Thursday 17th February 2022 at 10am via Zoom

A very lively meeting today! The recent crosswords are considered 'hard' by everyone and we are looking forward to a change of setter!

Today's anagram indicators included: diverted, out, perhaps, thus, maybe, odd, strange way, cover, arrange, unusual, stew, mixture.

Two words were of special interest today.

- 'Mendicant'. This word was not actually a clue answer, but a 'coffee time' clue, unfamiliar to some of us.

A mendicant is 'someone, especially a member of a religious group, who lives by asking people they do not know for money'.

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/mendicant>

- 'Lighter'. Obviously this word was well known to us, however, it was the answer to the clue 'uploaded boat'.

A 'lighter' is also a term for 'a low, open boat used to move goods to and from ships in a harbour'. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/lighter>

Homework: SUN crosswords 67, 68 & 69

Next meeting: Thursday 3rd March 2022 via Zoom at 10am

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Week 91: Thursday 3rd February 2022 via Zoom hosted by Sue B

We had a full house today and we worked hard on completing the three crosswords set at the previous session. It was generally agreed that these crosswords had been found more of a challenge than normal.

Today, several words which were considered to warrant further development seemed to follow a loose theme.

- Firstly, 'Censor'. The clue? 'He sees much others don't!' (6)

According to <https://www.lexico.com/definition/censor>a censor is 'an official who examines films, news, etc. that are about to be published and suppress any parts that are considered obscene, politically unacceptable, or a threat to security'. In ancient Rome, a censor was one of two magistrates who held censuses and supervised public morals'.

- 'Blue Pencil' also started a group discussion. It means 'to censor or make cuts'. It can be used as a noun for example, 'holding up each paragraph for preliminary blue-pencilling'. Another example: 'Also, true excellence in writing will be quickly blue-pencilled into oblivion'.

<https://www.lexico.com/definition/censor>

- Another word was 'obviate'. The clue? Get round at (and above) it perhaps?' (7).

As a verb, obviate means to remove a need or difficulty, as in 'the presence of roller blinds obviated the need for curtains', or 'a parachute can be used to obviate. <https://www.lexico.com/definition/obviate>.

Anagram indicators today included: ripe, scrambled, poor, perhaps, breaking, awkward, somewhat, modified, enmeshed, frantically, eccentric and not quite.

Homework: SUN crosswords 64, 65 & 66.

Next meeting: Thursday 17th February at 10am via Zoom

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Week 90: Thursday 20th January 2022, via Zoom, hosted by Sue B

A happy band of Cryptic Crossworders met again via Zoom. Great to see you back again Meg! Meeting via Zoom works very well for this group! It means that we can receive deliveries, take and make calls and still participate in the crossword solving!!

We worked hard, had a coffee break and still managed to work through all our homework.

- We agreed that 'augured' was a word worth exploring. The clue: Foretold rude outburst after a month'.

The noun 'augur' refers to an official diviner of ancient Rome (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/augur>). Their role was to divine

whether the gods approved a proposed undertaking i.e a military move. The noun generally refers to one held to foretell events by omens. As a verb auger means to 'give promise of', i.e 'this decision doesn't auger well. 'Augur' is from the Latin verb 'augere', to increase'.

- Anagram indicators today included: wild, possibly, not fully, somewhat, intends, mad, great if, for example.

Homework: SUN crosswords 61, 61 and 63.

Next meeting: Thursday 3rd February 2022 at 10am via Zoom.

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Week 89 : Thursday 6th January 2022 via Zoom hosted by Sue B

A keen group met up today and busily worked through our crossword homework. It was nice to get back into our regular routine.

Anagram indicators: Today's anagram indicators included: devious, badly, using, weird, not exactly, about involved, unusual, somehow, new, wild.

Today's 'interesting' word was 'prelate'. The clue? 'Quietly tell Bishop'. Quietly (p) tell (relate) = Bishop (Prelate). Not everyone was familiar with the term 'prelate'.

According to <https://wikidiff.com/bishop/prelate>

As nouns the difference between bishop and prelate is that bishop is (Christianity) an overseer of congregations: either any such overseer, generally speaking, or (in eastern orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism, etc) an official in the church hierarchy (actively or nominally) governing a diocese, supervising the church's priests, deacons, and property in its territory while prelate is a clergyman of high rank and authority, having jurisdiction over an area or a group of people; normally a bishop.

As verbs the difference between bishop and prelate is that bishop is (Christianity) to act as a bishop, to perform the duties of a bishop, especially to confirm another's membership in the church or bishop can be (uk-colloquial-obsolete) to murder by drowning while prelate is (obsolete) to act as a prelate.

Next meeting: Thursday 20th January 2022 at 10am via Zoom

Homework: Complete SUN crosswords 58, 59 & 60