

Parsing Notes for - Surprise Surprise! Published May 2021 on madryncrosswords.com.

Clues consist of 'definitions' either at the start or end of the clue which I underline in these notes and 'wordplay' which I explain below the solution.

Surprise Surprise! - a number of solutions are expressions of amazement.

Across

1 In good health? One has not experienced it, would you believe? (4,1,5)

WELL I NEVER

In good health - WELL. One has not experienced it - I NEVER.

5 Listen to me expressing surprise (1,3)

I SAY

Double definition. This old fashioned phrase was used to attract attention as well as express surprise.

9 Give up after a tiny amount is a goal. It's hoped (4-4)

DROP-KICK

Tiny amount - DROP. Give up - KICK (as in kick the habit)

A drop-kick involves dropping the ball and kicking it immediately it touches the ground. Something I never had the skill or co-ordination to manage. In Rugby Union, a drop-kick that goes over the posts is called a drop-goal and worth three points, so is what a player is hoping for when drop-kicking.

10 US broadcaster eats odd scraps (6)

CRUMBS

US broadcaster - CBS around (eats) RUM - odd.

Crumbs are scraps of food, though it's a theme word here of course.

12/17 Most amazing power unit, they say, in the world (4,2,5)

WHAT ON EARTH

Homophone (pun!) WHAT - Watt - The SI unit for power. In the world - ON EARTH.

Most amazing! is a very cryptic definition admittedly, though it could be an expression of surprise.

13 Unauthorised below the knees (8)

BOOTLEGS

Sort of a double definition!

18/27 Old web libel spread, to my exasperation (3,2,6)

I'LL BE BLOWED

Anagram, indicated by 'spread' of OLD WEB LIBEL

20 Wandering a muddy cave with me, no day for a handbook! (4,5)

VADE MECUM

Anagram indicated by 'wandering' of A MUDdy CaVE and ME but without day.

It's apparently latin for 'go with me' and means a handbook carried all the time and often referred to. Not a word I had seen before but I needed something to fit in here and hope it can be worked out from the wordplay.

23 Unreliable diviners came over from America (5-3)

DRIVE-INS

Anagram indicated by 'unreliable' of DIVINERS.

Another pretty cryptic definition I suppose. Drive-in cinemas were familiar in my youth from various American films but I am aware of a few (temporary) ones in this country since then.

24 In stitches at big band music with added energy (6)

SEWING

Big band music - SWING around (with added) energy - E.

28 Trendy jargon among workers? (8)

BUZZWORD

Cryptic definition? Just a silly joke really. The workers concerned are bees obviously.

29 Euphemistic interjection during quango's hearing (4)

GOSH

Hidden in quanGOS Hearing.

30 Record going round can change score, switching sides sharply (10)

DISTINCTLY

Record - DISC, going round (surrounding) can - TIN, so DISTINCT. Followed by score - TrY but with the R replaced by L (Changed - switching sides from right to left)

Try as score is a second rugby reference of course.

Down

1 Lost world on the internet? It's an extensive network (4,3)

WIDE WEB

Internet - world WIDE WEB (lost world)

Wide web is hardly a well known phrase or saying I admit but again, I could get nothing else to fit here and hope the clue is reasonably clear.

2 Recall a boob seen in bathroom (5)

LOOFA

Reversal, indicated by 'recall', of A FOOL - boob is more familiar today as a foolish act (most familiar as something else entirely of course!) but can also mean a foolish person.

This is an alternative spelling of course, my dictionary lists Loofah, loofa or luffa.

3 Irritating smirk affected with extreme overconfidence (7)

IRKSOME

Anagram, indicated by 'affected' of SMIRK and the first and last letters (extreme) of OverconfidenceE.

4 Get rid of leader to make an impression (4)

ETCH

Get - fETCH rid of leader (first letter)

6 Sometimes you make openings, without cables, chains or stone by being reflective (9)

SYMMETRIC

Openings - first letters of Sometimes You Make. Cables, chains, stone - all imperial measures, so without them - METRIC.

The usual word for me is symmetrical but symmetric is also used and has a specific meaning in logic and mathematics. The definition here is again cryptic and refers to the general meaning.

7 Red-eye session includes those in favour (5)

YESES

Another hidden answer - red-eYE SESion. No more allowed in this crossword!

8 Author penning heroic leader in struggle (6)

WRITHE

Author - WRITE (as in author a book) penning (as in penning an animal) leader (first letter) of Heroic.

11 Sound of contented cattle cut down when water is distant (3,4)

LOW TIDE

Sound of contented cattle - LOW. Cut - EDIT. Down - reversed in a down clue.

14 Hurl opposing sides to kingdom come (7)

HEAVENS

Hurl - HEAVE. Opposing sides North and South.

16 Sweet and sticky pill turned up in loops (9)

LOLLIPOPS

Reversal of (turned up) PILL in LOOPS

19 Viewer tolerated hole (6)

EYELET

Viewer - EYE tolerated - LET

21 He calls me about hearing you snore at home (7)

MUEZZIN

ME with U homophone (hearing) of 'you' in the middle (about) Snore - ZZ, at home - IN.

The Muezzin calls worshippers to prayer at a mosque.

22/26 Dumbfounded outburst from unbalanced relation (2,5,4)

MY GIDDY AUNT

Another 'cryptic' definition.

23 Prepare to stop listening to fault finding procedure? (5)

DEBUG

Double definition.

I've always assumed that debug, as a fault finding procedure for software, takes its name from the removal of parasitic insects etc but the word can also mean the removal of bugs, as in listening devices.

25/15 Incredible setter distrusts technology (1,4,7,2)

I DON'T BELIEVE IT

Setter - I, distrust - DON'T BELIEVE. Technology - IT.

No way to work Victor Meldrew into this clue.