

# BARNSTAPLE u3a

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2025

Issue 460



[www.barnstaple.u3asite.uk](http://www.barnstaple.u3asite.uk)

[barnstaplethirdagegroup@rocketmail.com](mailto:barnstaplethirdagegroup@rocketmail.com)

Chairman: *Keith Luckhurst*

Business Secretary: *Philip Hawkins*

Membership Secretary: *Julia Denton*

Groups Co-ordinator: *Laurence Hillel*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We extend a very warm welcome to the following new members who have joined us recently:

Mr David Darch

Mrs Shirley Darch

Mrs Nikki Holland

Mrs Jacqui Ringrose

Ms Grace Wharton who has rejoined

## SPEAKER

Our June speaker is our own committee member Nigel Wright, whose hobby for the past 40 years, has been the study and production of many types of Bonsai.

He organised the recent Rosemoor Bonsai exhibition along with superb examples from all over the South West and South Wales. Nigel will talk and display some of his trees at our June 5th coffee morning. See you then.

## Barnstaple u3a Contact List – see groups entry for more details

| Group               | Date and Time                                                          | Venue                       | Contact Details                     |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Art                 | Tues 10-12am                                                           | Rhod. Ave.Methodist Church  | Brian Steward                       |
| Bonsai              | 1 <sup>st</sup> Wed of month – 2pm                                     | Venn Valley Vineyard        | Nigel Wright                        |
| Book Lovers         | Last Wed. in month                                                     | Various                     | Margaret Ryan                       |
| Canasta             | To be arranged                                                         | Ann's house                 | Ann Brand                           |
| Coffee morning      | 1 <sup>st</sup> Th of month - 10.30am                                  | R'ndswell Comm.Hall         | Any Committee Member                |
| Croquet Braunton    | Recommence April 2025                                                  | Bple Croquet Club           | Anne Young                          |
| Evening Dining      | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tue of month                                           | Various                     | Mary Young                          |
| Garden Days (Taw)   | Various                                                                | Various                     | Roxanne & Graham King               |
| Geology             | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Fri. of month 1.45pm                                   | Fremington Meth Hall        | David Dickinson                     |
| Heritage Explorer   | Various                                                                | Various                     | Laurence Hillel                     |
| Hikers              | Mon 10.30am                                                            | Various                     | Pauline Markey<br>Karen Wagstaff    |
| How it Works        | 4 <sup>th</sup> Fri of month 1.45pm                                    | Fremington Meth.Hall        | David Dickinson                     |
| Knit and Natter     | Second Mon of month                                                    | TBC                         | Sue Thomas                          |
| Literary Studies    | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tue 2.30pm                                             | Imperial Hotel              | Ellie Bray                          |
| Local History       | Restart September                                                      | Barnstaple Library          | Jackie Brayley<br>Yvonne Partington |
| Music               | 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed. 10.30-12.30                     | Fremington Meth Hall        | Doug Joslin                         |
| Mosaics             | Fridays 10am – 12.30pm                                                 | Rhod. Ave, Meth Church      | Jackie Brayley                      |
| Nature Discovery    | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday with variation                               | Nature Trips and some talks | Laurence Hillel & Deirdre Johnson   |
| Poetry              | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sat of month, 2pm.                                     | Various                     | Margaret Ryan                       |
| Practical Gardeners | Last Thurs of month, 10.30am normally                                  | Various                     | Andy Jones                          |
| Quarterly Lunch     | Th 26/6. 12 for 12.30pm                                                | Williams Arms               | Sue Thomas                          |
| Ramblers            | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thurs 10.30                                            | Various                     | Karen Wagstaff                      |
| Scrabble            | 1 <sup>st</sup> Wed 10am-12.30pm<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs 10am-12.30pm | Pam's house                 | Pam Harman                          |
| Singing for fun     | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed 10-12.                                             | Fremington Meth.Hall        | Patricia Hayhurst                   |
| Skittles            | Thurs, fortnightly 4-6pm.                                              | The Fox, Fremington         | Elizabeth Howson                    |
| Strollers           | 4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs. 11am normally                                   | Various                     | Bob Smith                           |
| Table Tennis        | Tuesdays 2-3.30pm                                                      | Tarka Tennis Centre         | Agnes Adams<br>Gabi Engels-Hearn    |
| Trekkers            | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of month, 10.30am                               | Various                     | Michael Elliott                     |
| Wine Group          | Last Wed. of month, 2pm                                                | Room 3b, Barnstaple Library | David Rowe                          |



## ART

We meet at the Methodist church hall in Rhododendron Avenue, between 10 am and 12 noon, every Tuesday apart from the third Tuesday of the month. **This group is now at full capacity. Anyone interested in joining will be put on a waiting list.**

***Brian Steward, Group Leader***



## **BONSAI – An introduction. Wed 4th June 2.00pm at the Vineyard.**

The focus this month, along with member's trees brought in to review is to show how to do the first styling of an acer and a beech. Should be fun, however it goes!

***Nigel Wright, Group Leader***



## BOOK LOVERS

Last Wednesday in month 2-4pm.

Please contact Margaret for more information if you are interested.

***Margaret Ryan, Group Leader***



## CANASTA

If anyone want to learn canasta please contact Ann Brand, details below.

***Ann Brand, Group Leader***



## CROQUET (BRAUNTON)

**Tuesdays 2-4pm.**

Braunton U3A runs a croquet group during the summer and invite members from the surrounding U3A's to join the group.

The U3A Croquet Group will be starting on Tuesday 29th April

The group meets weekly at Barnstaple Croquet club, Raleigh Meadow, off St. Georges Road, Barnstaple, EX31 4UX.

Tuesday, weather permitting, during the summer from 2pm to 4pm.

No experience is necessary and all equipment and coaching is provided.

The cost is £4 to join or rejoin the group and £4 for every session you attend. Come along to meet friendly people for a fun afternoon. Contact the Group Leader for more information and to book your place.

***Anne Young, Group Leader***



## EVENING DINING GROUP

### Second Tuesday

The next meal out will be on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June at The Imperial Hotel at 6.30pm (Lush was fully booked). The hotel requires a £10 deposit per person; they may require pre-orders. I will confirm when I know and I'm happy to do the necessary folks!

Please contact the Group Leader if you are interested in joining this group

**Mary Young, Group Leader**



## GARDEN DAYS

**Wednesday July 23rd:** Abbotsbury Tropical Gardens and Swannery: 30 acres, the subtropical gardens are home to over 6000 species from across the world. This world-renowned paradise is unique and nestled on the edge of, and with fine views of, the Dorset Jurassic Coast. Nearby

Abbotsbury Swannery, established by Benedictine Monks who built a monastery here during the 1040s, is home to over 600 mute swans.

**Cost:** £34.50 for coach and entry to both sites.

**Pick up times:** Chilpark 09.30, New Inn 09.35, Ellerslie Rd 09.40, Newport Park and Ride 09.45

**Booking:** via our email. Once your place confirmed, please send cheque (**Taw U3A**) to our home address (*please see Taw's previously-sent list of all grp leaders' contact details*) by end of June. Write pick-up point and trip on back. If we don't already have phone (mob if poss), for security write on separate paper.

**Wednesday June 25th: Kingston Maurward, Dorset. Bring a picnic as catering limited.**

**Pick up times:** Chilpark 09.30, New Inn 09.35, Ellerslie Rd 09.40, Newport Park and Ride 09.45

**Roxanne and Graham King, Group Leaders**



## GEOLOGY

**Second Friday monthly. Next Meeting – Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June at 1-45 for 2-00pm**

The May speaker should have been be Mike Whitworth however, he was unable to give the talk due work commitments. David gave a talk about

Mining and the use and history of explosives.

The field trip to one of the largest stone quarries in Europe at Moon Hill in Somerset was an outstanding success and viewing 80,000 tons of rock being blasted was a highlight. The visitors centre staff are exceptionally knowledgeable and helpful, driving the group in a large minibus around the quarry to view the 100-ton dump trucks, crushing plant and machinery.

At our June meeting we have Prof. Malcolm Hart talking "Bio Blitz", Mary Anning her life in Lyme Regis, Triassic cliffs at Budleigh Salterton and the hominin jawbone (41,000 years' old) in Kents Cavern (English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark).

**David Dickinson, Group Leader 01598 710480**



## HERITAGE EXPLORER

Details of our next visit will be published later

***Group Leaders - Laurence Hillel & Keith Luckhurst***



## HIKERS

**Monday 2nd June**

We hope you are able to join us for a beautiful 6m circular walk following fields, footpaths and quiet lanes, beginning in Sheepwash and passing through Buckland Filleigh.

Parking is limited so car sharing recommended.

BYOFAD and wear suitable footwear and clothing.

If you plan to join us please let us know so that we can send you further information.

New members very welcome.

***Group Leaders: Pauline Markey & Karen Wagstaff***



## HOW IT WORKS

**Friday June 27<sup>th</sup> at 1.45 for 2.00pm.**

On 19th of May Jim Jones took a group of 16 members on a very interesting and stimulating walk through inner Barnstaple. He reminded people to look up to see the best of the features of some of the historic houses. Barnstaple's history as an important port, producer of goods such as wool, pottery, gloves etc became evident. Many historic buildings revealed themselves. Unfortunately, because of lack of money, there is little restoration of listed buildings.

At the meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May, Keith Luckhurst gave a talk on the extensive industrial heritage of the South West, which included a variety of many different industries. He tabled some samples of the Marland brick company, Bideford black, basket weaving and many others. The 25 members present thoroughly enjoyed Keith's talk.

The June talk is by three members of our group, Gerry, Dale and David. Who knows what they will talk about but we are sure that it will be stimulating.

***David Dickinson, Group Leader***



## KNIT AND NATTER

**Second Monday at 2pm-4pm**

Bring your current project with you and exchange tips and ideas over a cup of tea. Due to limited space this group is now full

***Sue Thomas, Group Leader***



## LITERARY STUDIES GROUP

**Tue.17<sup>th</sup> May, Tue 15<sup>th</sup> July – Imperial Hotel 2.30pm.**

Our last book was *A Terrible Kindness* by Jo Browning-Wroe. This moving fiction novel is about William, a newly qualified embalmer who, at the age of 19, offers his services to help with the aftermath of the real-life 1966 Aberfan disaster. We were divided in our opinions about this book, questioning whether the use of such a harrowing event should be the subject of a novel. However, this was about more than the real-life disaster; the story focused on the young man, William, who having to face so many grieving families and so many young victims, was deeply affected by the events of that day. He found himself forced to revisit the past that he fought so hard to forget. This was a strong picture of someone suffering from PTSD during a time when mental health wasn't ever discussed. At times, the phrasing used was clumsy, and the author created such powerful images that the content was difficult to read. We also thought that the author left it too long to tell the reader what 'past' William was trying to forget! However, we did agree that it was thought-provoking and that the author handled the subject matter sensitively and respectfully.

***Ellie Bray Group Leader***



## LOCAL HISTORY

We have now finished this season of talks and will start again in September. We are always pleased to receive suggestions for topics or speakers and we will then do the research and hopefully include it in the next session. Please contact either of us by phone or at the monthly coffee morning. Thank you, Jackie and Yvonne.

***Group Leaders: Yvonne Partington & Jackie Brayley***



## MOSAICS

We meet at the Methodist Church Hall in Rhododendron Avenue on Friday Mornings from 10 to 12.30 (apart from the last Friday in the month).

***Jackie Brayley, Group Leader***



## MUSIC

We meet on the first and third Wednesday of the month 10.30am – 12.30pm. at Fremington Methodist Hall. Please contact the group leader for more details.

***Doug Joslin, Group Leader***



## NATURE DISCOVERY

On Wednesday 18th June at 10.30 am, we will meet at Sandy Lane car park Branton for a walk on Branton Burrows to explore some of the wild flowers etc.

**Please note that because of family commitments and other issues we will not be able to carry on leading the group beyond the Summer. If anyone is willing to consider taking over this role, even on a temporary basis, please let me know.**

If you are interested in joining our group and being put on the email list, please contact Laurence Hillel

*Group Administrators: Laurence Hillel & Deirdre Johnson*



## POETRY

One member has attended our poetry meetings for over 26 years, but recently numbers have dwindled somewhat – so we're inviting new members to join our friendly and informal group – and to bring your favourite poems/poets! Each month we choose a theme, idea or poet and then choose appropriate poems to share.

Recently, 'Dust if you Must' by Rose Milligan stressed what's really important in life:

Dust if you must, but there's not much time,  
With rivers to swim and mountains to climb,  
Music to hear and poems to read,  
Friends to cherish and life to lead!"

In other words, join the Barnstaple poetry group and do the dusting after!

Second Saturday of month 2pm. For more information, please contact Margaret on  
*Margaret Ryan, Group Leader*



## PRACTICAL GARDENERS

We had a really good turnout of 16 for our Marwood Gardens visit. After an introductory talk from Head Gardener, Malcolm Pharoah, we had a couple of hours wandering around the gardens, and sampling the delights of the tearooms!

The trip to Powderham Castle for Toby Buckland's Garden Festival saw three intrepid members make the trip, to explore not only the various stalls & marquees, but also the surrounding gardens. They also attended the talk/discussion between Toby Buckland and Victoria Graham, BBC Spotlight presenter. All agreed it had been a very enjoyable trip.

Our latest meeting on 29th May, was at a group member Geraldine Eacott's garden, and she lead a discussion on taking cuttings, with which she has had much success over many years.

Contact Andy for further information.

*Jackie Smyth, David Green, Andy Jones, Group Leadership Team*



## QUARTERLY LUNCH

Our next quarterly lunch will be on Thursday 26th June 12noon for 12.30pm at The Williams Arms, Wrafton. The cost per ticket for a carvery lunch will be £14.00, and they will be on sale at the coffee morning on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June. Any queries contact Sue.

***Sue Thomas, Group Leader***



## RAMBLERS

**Thursday 12th June**

This month we are venturing into the beautiful countryside of Mid Devon for a lovely 5m circular walk beginning in Bickleigh and passing through the village of Cadeleigh. There are some stunning views throughout with a steady climb and one longer steep climb which we will take slowly whilst admiring the scenery.

Please bring plenty to drink and wear sturdy footwear. Poles recommended.

If you plan to join us please let us know so that we can send you further information.

New members very welcome.

***Karen Wagstaff & Pauline Markey Group Leaders***



## SCRABBLE

**June 2025** Wednesday 4th 10-12.30pm, Thursday 19th 10-12.30pm.

We now have a waiting list for new members who may be interested in joining. For further information contact Pam

***Pam Harman, Group Leader***



## SINGING FOR FUN

Second Wednesday 10-12noon

We had a healthy turnout on 14 May to welcome our other accompanist John to our group. After starting off with a war time favourite, we went through various songs including a new arrangement of one we'd sung before: we'll find out next time if this is popular with the group as a whole! The focus is always on what 'the group' enjoys.

On 11 June, we expect to see Sue again and may sing some new songs. My thanks go as usual to all those who come to take part and make the group such a friendly and welcoming one. Well done, all of you! If you are interested in this Group please contact the Group Leader.

***Patricia Hayhurst, Group Leader***



## SKITTLES

Second and fourth Thursday of the month. 4-6pm

The skittles is going along very well, and we still have room for more players. We meet at The Fox at Fremington and all newcomers are welcome.

***Elizabeth Howson, Group Leader***



## STROLLERS

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June 11 am. Barnstaple – Tarka Trail**

Meet at BARNSTAPLE MUSEUM.

Cross road at pedestrian traffic lights; turn left over Long Bridge. Take first right turn after bridge and walk alongside River Taw to Tarka Trail. Turn right towards Fremington and walk along trail up to end of trees on right (Trail kinks slightly here). Turn around and retrace steps past turning on left and proceed along Trail under main road and along path past ASDA on left. Cross road to ASDA at traffic lights and walk back over Long Bridge to pedestrian traffic lights crossing them to return to start. Distance 2.0 miles. Lunch at Museum or Wetherspoons.

***Bob Smith, Group Leader***



## TABLE TENNIS

Tuesday afternoon from 2.00 to 3.30pm at the Barnstaple Tarka Centre.

The Table tennis group has continued to play weekly. Good, competitive, but friendly games seem to be enjoyed by everyone.

Attendance has been high and this is okay now as the Tarka Centre is providing us with an extra (new!) Table. Thus, we play on three for the one and a half hours. The waiting list is gone and new Members are again welcome. Contact Agnes or Gabi.

***Gabi 01271 375479 Agnes 01271 267103 Group Leaders***



## TREKKERS

The next Trekkers Walk will be on Friday 20 June, kindly led once again by Graham. A Valley of Rocks Walk starting at Lynton Town Hall and returning via the Coast Path. Total 7.2 miles/11.6 km with a total ascent of 481m, with brilliant sea views.

There is a bus that leaves Barnstaple Bus Station at 09:50, so the walk will start when the bus arrives at Lynton Town Hall at 10:43. The bus also stops at the Blackmoor Gate free car park at 10:20. The bus is free with a pass or £3.00 each way with the capped fare. Parking in Lynmouth is expensive making the bus a good option. Meet at the Town Hall and as usual bring snacks, lunch and plenty to drink, and be ready for any weather.

If you would like to join the group just let me know and I will add you to the email list.

***Michael Elliott, Group Coordinator***



## WINE

The group continues to meet on the last Wednesday of the month in Room 3b of Barnstaple Library at 2pm. We are an open and welcoming group with a wide range of knowledge and interest in wine from beginners to those with in depth knowledge of specialist areas.

If you fancy giving the group a try just to see if it would be of interest to you, please drop me a line

***David Rowe, Group Leader***

## WHY NOT START A NEW GROUP

Barnstaple u3a encourage all members to start a new group on any subject in which they are interested.

The group leader or multiple leaders can be modestly helped with finances where applicable and be provided with helpful details for its conception.

### NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

The list of activities on Page 2 of this edition is to help members by showing the venue, day, time and contact numbers.

Please keep communicating by contacting the Editor.

If you have any group photographs please send them to the Editor as well.

Group Leaders: Please note that the next edition will be circulated about the 27<sup>th</sup> June, please submit any articles before the 23<sup>rd</sup> June if possible

Lynne Dickinson, Editor

### COMMITTEE

As Ian and Norma Woodward have now left the area, new committee members have been appointed:

Philip Hawkins – Business Secretary,

Lynda Southgate – Minutes and Speaker Secretary

Mary Young

Some pictures of bonsai to promote the talk by Nigel at the coffee morning  
on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June



## ***Practical Gardeners Group – Powderham Castle Garden Festival***



## ***Ramblers – May visit to Westward Ho!***



***Trekkers visit to Withypool and Tarr Steps***



***Some of the photographs of the Geology Group on their visit to Moon Hills Quarry***



***Watching 80,000 tons of rock brought down  
using 15 tons of explosive, very spectacular.***

