

BARNSTAPLE u3a

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER - 2025

Issue 463

www.barnstaple.u3asite.uk

barnstaplethirdagegroup@rocketmail.com



The Coffee Morning folk enjoying a demonstration of seated exercise in August. The new group commences in September. Doesn't look like many seated but all seem to be having fun. – Editor.

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:

Mrs Lynda Heard

Ms. Nikki Taylor

SPEAKER

Our speaker at the coffee morning on Thursday 4th September will be Ashley Jones and he will be talking about the Dickin Medal. This is considered to be the VC for animals and he will be retelling accounts of some of the worthy recipients of this award.

Coffee rota at Roundswell - Reminder

Many thanks to those who have volunteered to serve the refreshments at the u3a coffee mornings.

The rota is as follows:

4 September Mike Pagram, John Vooght,

2 October Pam Harman, Rita Granger, Liz Craft, Marjorie Keefe

Coffee rota co-ordinator is Dee Street

If you feel you can help on other days, please contact Dee or Tom - your help would be appreciated.

A note from your Chairman and Group Coordinator

At a recent coffee morning, quite a few people were in support of a Spanish and Italian language learning group being set up for Barnstaple u3a members.

The committee had several leads to suitable persons, but all are too busy or unable to help.

If you are aware of anyone, willing to form a group, please contact Laurence, our group coordinator.

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 inception.

If you feel you could contribute, please do not hesitate to e-mail our group co-ordinator Laurence, or contact any committee member.

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 st 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 st 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 nd Tue of month	Various	Mary Young
Garden Days (Taw)	Various	Various	Roxanne and Graham King
Geology	2nd Fri month 1.45pm	Frem.Meth.Hall.	David Dickinson
Hikers	Mon 10.30am	Various	Pauline Markey Karen Wagstaff
How it Works	4 th Fri of month 1.45pm	Fremington Meth.Hall	David Dickinson
Knit and natter	Second Mon of month	TBC	Sue Thomas
Literary Studies	3 rd Tue 2.30pm	Imperial Hotel	Ellie Bray
Local History	Restart September	Barnstaple Library	Jackie Brayley Yvonne Partington
Music	1 st & 3 rd Wed. 10.30-12.30	Fremington Methodist Hall	Doug Joslin
Mosaics	Fridays 10am – 12.30pm	Rhod. Ave, Methodist Church	Jackie Brayley
Poetry	2 nd Sat of month, 2pm.	Various	Margaret Ryan
Practical Gardeners	Last Thurs of month, 10.30am normally	Various	Andy Jones
Quarterly Lunch	Thurs. 25 th September	Williams Arms	Sue Thomas
Ramblers	2 nd Thurs 10.30	Various	Karen Wagstaff
Scrabble	1 st Wed 10am-12.30pm 3 rd Thurs 10am-12.30pm	Pam's house	Pam Harman
Seated Exercise	From Mon 8/9 1pm New	Tarka Leisure Centre	Maureen Penny
Singing for fun	2 nd Wed 10-12.	Fremington Meth.Hall	Patricia Hayhurst
Skittles	Thurs, fortnightly 4-6pm.	The Fox, Fremington	Elizabeth Howson
Strollers	4 th Thurs. 11am normally	Various	Bob Smith
Table Tennis	Tuesdays 2-3.30pm	Tarka Tennis Centre	Agnes Adams Gabi Engels-Hearn
Trekkers	3 rd 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. The group is now full, if anyone is interested in joining, they will be put on a waiting list. Please get in touch with the Group Leader.

Brian Steward, Group Leader



BONSAI – An introduction.

On the 31 August I shall be having surgery on my duff hip where some arthritis has truly made itself felt! That means due to the long and careful recovery required I shall not be able to do our u3a Bonsai group for a few months. December and January dates will not be available as we are going away. So, in practical terms, if all things go well, we should be able to meet on 4 February 2026! Clearly, I shall keep you all posted of events. I apologise for this interruption but I have come up with an alternative. A competition!!!

A documented, (i.e. just with photos of the start), Bonsai that you have created from scratch. This could be from dug up material (yamadori) – please ask the owner - or bought starter material that you have styled. There will be a prize for the tree that is considered to be the best at the showing on the rather apt Wednesday, 1 April. We will learn the rules for showing trees, so everyone can make their own suggestions. You therefore have about 8 months to produce a Bonsai from scratch – simples.

Nigel Wright, Group Leader



BOOK LOVERS

Last Wednesday in month 2-4pm.

- Margaret Ryan: I Leap Over the Wall by Monica Baldwin
- Christine Doe: The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter by Hazel Gaynor
- Maggie Charters: An Occupied Grave by A G Barnett
- Jo: Winter Of the World (2nd book of trilogy) covering world events from 1933-48) by Ken Follet
- Dale: The Patient by Alex Michaelides
- Margaret Ellis: Feminina by Janine Ramirez
- Gillian: The Fear Index by Robert Harris
- Christine Lovelock: The Correspondent by Virginia Evans
- Charles: Oldenland by Roger Clough

Our thanks to Jo and Christine Doe for kindly bringing biscuits. Next month Dale has kindly volunteered to host.

Please contact Margaret for more information if you are interested in this group.

Margaret Ryan, Group Leader



CANASTA

If anyone want to learn canasta please contact Ann Brand.

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 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

Hi evening diners - just a reminder that 9 September at 7 pm - is the date and time

The venue is the Fulham Chinese in Barnstaple again - it proved very popular last time. If you are coming - please could I have £10 per person deposit by Friday, 5 September so I can pass it on to the restaurant - thank you - hope you are all having a good summer

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

Mary Young, Group Leader



GARDEN DAYS

Roxanne and Graham King, Group Leaders



GEOLOGY

Next Meeting – Friday 12 SEPTEMBER, 1-45 for 2-00pm
Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace

Two of the greatest minds of the 19th C were Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace. David will talk about their life and influence on science.

In August seventeen members visited Fremington Quay viewing the changes that had occurred over the last 300 million years. The SSI was unfortunately overgrown due to the local council's failure to maintain the area.

A new supply of Tunnocks biscuits has been obtained for the pleasure of group members.
David Dickinson, Co-ordinator



HIKERS

No walk this month due to our Walking Holiday. We look forward to seeing you all in October.

Group Leaders: Pauline Markey & Karen Wagstaff



HOW IT WORKS

Next meeting: Friday 26 SEPTEMBER at 1.45 for 2.00pm.

In September Dr Sarah Hotchkiss will talk about the global seaweed industry. Around 38 million tonnes of seaweed are grown or harvested around the world every year, but why?

Sarah is a local marine biologist with a lifelong interest in seaweed. She is a research consultant to the seaweed industry on many different aspects of the supply chain and adding value. The talk will be about how this seaweed is used, touching on some of the research that she has been involved in and also how the industry is developing in the South West.

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.16th September, Tue 21st October – Imperial Hotel 2.30pm

Our last book was *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* by Arundhati Roy. The majority did not enjoy this, and not everyone managed to read to the end. It was generally agreed that it was too long with far too many characters. The 'story' appeared to be in three parts, but the link between the beginning and the end was very tenuous, as was the connection between the many characters. The middle section appeared to become a political attack on events in Kashmir, which was confusing and, as one of our members suggested, it seemed that the author may have forgotten that she might actually have readers! In conclusion, a lengthy, chaotic story about life in India, incorporating a broad spectrum of characters, and although the author had previously won the Booker Prize for *The God of Small Things*, we were not impressed.

Ellie Bray - Group Leader



LOCAL HISTORY

We start our new season of talks on Wednesday, 10 September
Keith Denby will be telling us about 'Shipwrecks Around Lundy'.

We will still be in Room 2A on the second floor of the Barnstaple Library and start at 2pm. As before, please ring either Yvonne or Jackie to book a place.

We look forward to seeing you again and welcoming new members.

Yvonne and Jackie

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).

We currently have a vacancy so please contact me if you are interested in joining our group.

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



POETRY

Our group will resume in September on the second Saturday of the month at 2pm as before. I will be hosting. We now have 8 members.

For more information, please contact Margaret

Margaret Ryan, Group Leader



PRACTICAL GARDENERS

Nine members of the PGG enjoyed a warm and generally sunny day at the Taunton Show on Saturday, 2 August. We used the excellent Park and Ride facility which required only a short walk to Vivary Park.

The Show was busy without being uncomfortably crowded and provided plenty to see and hear. The huge Competition Marquee contained some extremely high-quality entrants in the many categories of flower and vegetable arrangements. There were plants to buy, an array of retail outlets, an artisan village containing some tasty and unusual food and an arena which entertained an appreciative audience, including our very own Barnstaple Youth Marching Band who did Devon proud.

In August we are visiting an NGS garden in Yelland and our report will feature in the next newsletter and website. Contact Andy for further information

David Green, Andy Jones, Group Leadership Team



QUARTERLY LUNCH

The next Quarterly lunch will be Thursday, 25 September at Williams Arms.

On this occasion, diners can choose from the menu if they do not want the carvery. Everyone will pay for the meal they order on the day. Please let Sue Thomas know at the next coffee morning if you will be going so that she can let the restaurant know numbers for table planning.

Sue Thomas, Group Leader



RAMBLERS

No walk this month due to our Walking Holiday.

We look forward to seeing you all in October.

Karen Wagstaff & Pauline Markey Group Leaders



SCRABBLE

Thursday, 18 September	10.00 -12.30pm.
Wednesday, 1 October	10.00 -12.30pm
Thursday, 16 October	10.00 -12.30pm

We now have a waiting list for new members who may be interested in joining.

For further information, please contact Pam.

Pam Harman, Group Leader



SEATED EXERCISE

New group. Weekly on Mondays from Sept. at 1.00pm

At the recent coffee morning we had a demonstration of what seated exercise would be like, most seemed to enjoy making the effort with lots of laughter and a few giggles and if you are anything like me exhausted at the end of the 15-minute trial.

The first session will be held on Monday 8 September at 1.00pm at the Tarka Leisure Centre and then on a weekly basis. The cost will be £6 per session.

You must bring along your u3a membership card to participate.

As places will be limited please contact Maureen so that I can make sure we have enough seats! Thank you

Maureen Penny, Group Leader



SINGING FOR FUN

Second Wednesday 10-12noon

Despite feeling really rough, I managed to open up and prepare as usual on 13 August, when I discovered how wonderfully supportive the group members could be. They could see I wasn't well, and took over all the admin and other tasks thus enabling me to get through the session: with Andy and Lyn's help, I left after the time ended earlier than I ever have before. I am so very grateful to you all.

Accompanist John - with us for the 4th time this year - entered into the spirit of the group, and sang the late Dame Cleo Laine's words 'He/She was wonderful' for us before the group sang it themselves. They made some really good sounds - they could have been a choir, highlighting the fact that if folk actually 'sing for fun' they get better results! John enjoyed the session, and I hope, despite my being poorly, the members of the group did too.

I look forward to seeing Sue again, and all those who can come along, on 10 September, and thank you again for being so lovely. Any queries please get in touch. If you are interested in this Group please contact *Patricia*.

Patricia Hayhurst, Group Leader



SKITTLES

Second and fourth Thursday of the month. 4.00 – 6.00pm

The skittles is going along very well, and the group is now full. We meet at The Fox at Fremington. If you are interested, please contact the group leader for information.

Elizabeth Howson, Group Leader



STROLLERS

Thursday, 25 September, 11.00 am.

Meet in CAEN CAR PARK, Braunton (pay/display with plenty spaces) in front of MEDICAL CENTRE. Walk to Tarka Trail past Tesco then Quay Café on right, Vellator Pond on left (closed just now) to Chivenor airfield entrance. Turn left here onto path behind the houses and follow this to the road from Wrafton to Braunton. Continue on road, then pavement after bridge (Braunton pump track on right) till re-access Tarka Trail. Past Quay Café and Tesco, now on left, back to Caen Car Park – 1.9 miles.

Suggest lunch at The Worx, Square, Braunton – does sandwiches, toasties, baguettes, light bites.

Please email me if going - in case circumstances force a last-minute cancellation.

Bob Smith, Group Leader



TABLE TENNIS

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

On the 16 August our bring and share summer party was a great success. Huge thanks to Lynne and Marc for hosting this event.

Play will restart at the Tarka Centre on Tuesday afternoons from 2.00pm on the 2 September. We play on three tables and in Doubles for one and a half hours. Games are Stimulating, Competitive and Fun. New members welcome.

Contact Agnes or Gabi - *Group Leaders*



TREKKERS

Trekkers' Awayday Walk 19 September

The Haytor Granite Tramway is unique in the British Isles (and the world!) in consisting of 8 miles of shaped granite rails from the Haytor quarries. On Friday, 19 September, Dale will lead a 7-mile walk visiting the best sections of the tramway, the quarries, Haytor's twin rocks (climb one?), and Saddle and Hound tors as well as a medieval village – with a picnic lunch at Hound Tor (there's no café en route, but the Moorland hotel is welcoming afterwards).

There are two significant climbs, but most of the walk is easy on gently undulating open moorland with wonderful views to the coast and in all directions.

Meet near Haytor at 10:30 for departure by 10.45. The best route is via the A361, M5, Devon Expressway (A38) and then the B3387 from Bovey Tracey uphill to Haytor. Allow about 1.5 hours to drive to Haytor. Let me know if you're interest and we'll send more details by email.

Rendezvous Directions

As you approach Haytor on the B3387, pass the Moorland Hotel and Visitor Centre on the left. (Note: toilets at the Visitor Centre.) Then pass three paying car parks on your left as you drive to the top of the long hill beside the rock. Continue about half a mile to a smaller free walkers' carpark on the right to meet there.

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



Notes From The Editor

The list of activities on Page 3 of this edition is to help members by showing the venue, day, time and contact numbers.

Please keep communicating by emailing the Editor at:

barnstaplethirdagegroup@rocketmail.com

If you have any group photographs please send them to this address.

Group Leaders:

Please note that the next edition will be circulated about the 27 September; please submit any articles before the 23 September if possible.

Lynne Dickinson, Editor

Practical Gardeners visiting Taunton Flower Show on the 2nd August

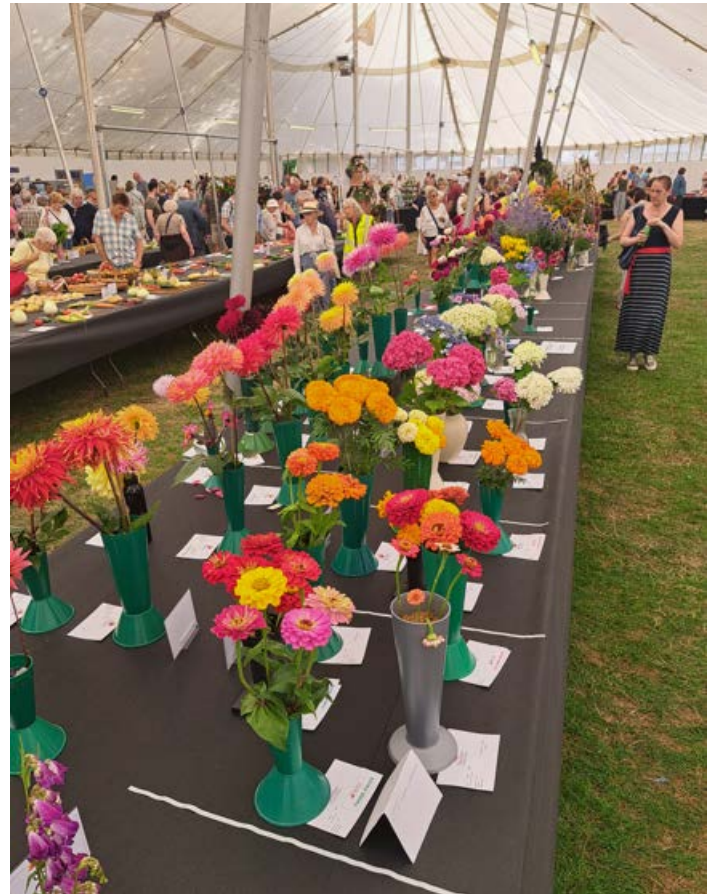


Table Tennis bring and share summer party



Joint Hikers and Ramblers summer walk August 2025



Geology field trip to Fremington Quay in August

