

BARNSTAPLE u3a

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER, 2025

Issue 465



www.barnstaple.u3asite.uk

barnstaplethirdagegroup@rocketmail.com

Chairman: *Keith Luckhurst*

Business Secretary: *Philip Hawkins*

Membership Secretary: *Julia Denton*

Groups Co-ordinator: *Laurence Hillel*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome the following new full Members who have joined us recently.

Mrs

Desni Botfield

Mr Ronald and Mrs Rose Frost

We also welcome the following new Affiliate Members

Mrs Maureen Fordham

Ms Janet NanceKivell

SPEAKERS

Our speakers at the coffee morning are Sue and Ivan Godfrey who will give a talk entitled "The Land of Ice and Fire" which is about their travels to Iceland.

Roundswell Hall entrance

The entrance door to the Roundswell Hall is equipped with a locking mechanism, which when closed cannot be opened from the outside.

The owners have adopted this arrangement, due to past and present theft and vandalism. They are anxious to eliminate this problem, and have requested us to maintain the hall's security, during our use, when the foyer is vacant. This results in the door having to be closed at 10.30 at our coffee mornings.

A Barnstaple u3a representative will remain in the foyer for a short period of time after 10.30 to allow latecomers to enter. However, it would be appreciated if you would arrive before 10.30.



CHRISTMAS IS COMING



WE WILL BE DELIGHTED TO WELCOME YOU AT THE
BARNSTAPLE HOTEL ON THURSDAY 4th DECEMBER 2025



2-Course carvery lunch with a vegetarian option available
plus tea/coffee at a cost per person of £24.00

TIME 12.15pm for 1pm.
There will be a raffle plus entertainment.

CONTACT SUE FOR FURTHER DETAILS

TICKETS WILL BE ON SALE AT OUR NEXT COFFEE MORNING ON THURSDAY 6th NOVEMBER. PAYMENT CAN BE BY CASH OR CHEQUE (MADE PAYABLE TO BARNSTAPLE THIRD AGE GROUP) OR MEMBERS CAN PAY BY **BACS** QUOTING "XMAS LUNCH" WITH RESERVATION CONFIRMED ONCE THE MONEY IS IN THE BANK, WHEN TICKETS WILL BE ALLOCATED.

Bank details: **Sort code 30 90 49**

Account No: **27598060**

Account Name: **BARNSTAPLE THIRD AGE GROUP**

AS THE CHRISTMAS LUNCH IS ON THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER
THERE WILL OBVIOUSLY **NOT** BE A COFFEE MORNING AT
ROUNDSWELL HALL ON THAT DATE.
THE NEXT COFFEE MORNING AT ROUNDSWELL
WILL BE ON **MONDAY** 12 JANUARY 2026
(NOTE CHANGE OF DAY)

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:

6 November Tom and Dee Street, Marjorie Keefe, Mary Young

Coffee rota co-ordinator is Dee Street.

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

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Mary (Barnstaple u3a) and Allison (Taw u3a) at the Lifestyle and Well Being Fair, representing all North Devon u3a's. It was held at the Cedars Hotel on Thursday 25th October

The joint event was most successful and was able to introduce u3a to many people.



REMINDER

BOARD GAMES

NEW GROUP

On the second Monday of the month, we are meeting at Fremington Methodist Church from 2pm to 4pm in conjunction with the knit and natter group.

The charge per person will be £3 to cover the cost of refreshments and hall hire.

A selection of traditional board games will be provided, so why not come along and join in.

Mary Young and Sue Thomas are the Group Leaders.

Barnstaple u3a Contact List – see groups entry for more details

Group	Date and time	Venue	Contact r
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Art	Tues 10-12am	Rhod. Ave.Methodist Church	Brian Steward
Board Games	Second Mon 2-4pm New	Frem.Meth. Hall	Mary Young Sue Thomas
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 May 2026	Bple Croquet Club	Anne Young
Christmas Lunch	Thurs. 4 th December	Barnstaple Hotel	Sue Thomas
Evening Dining	2 nd Tue of month	Various	Mary Young
Geology	2 nd Fri of 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	Frem. Meth. Hall	Sue Thomas
Literary Studies	3 rd Tue 2.30pm	Imperial Hotel	Ellie Bray
Local History	2 nd Wed. 2pm	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	Jo Archer
Poetry	2 nd Sat of month, 2pm.	Various	Margaret Ryan
Practical Gardeners	Last Thurs of month, 10.30am normally	Various	Andy Jones
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	Mondays 1pm	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-
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



BOARD GAMES **New**

Second Monday 2-4pm

Alongside the Knit and Natter group, we are running a board games afternoon. This is on the second Monday of the month at the Fremington Methodist Church Hall 2.00 to 4.00 p.m. The cost per person will be £3 to cover the cost of refreshments and hall hire

A selection of traditional board games will be provided so why not come along and join in.

Mary Young & Sue Thomas 01271 Group Leaders



BONSAI – An introduction.

In August I had 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

Members meet on the last Wednesday of the month, which is sometimes too late for the following newsletter; therefore any relevant information will be in the next edition. Apologies from the Editor but as the newsletter takes a while to compile, get proof-read and circulated in pdf format it has to be finished a few days before circulation.

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, details below.

Ann Brand, Group Leader



CHRISTMAS LUNCH



Our Christmas Lunch will be held on **Thursday 4th December** at the Barnstaple Hotel, 12.15 for 1.00 p.m.

The cost per person is £24 and is for a two-course carvery plus tea/coffee with vegetarian option available. There will be entertainment and a raffle. Tickets will be on sale at the November coffee morning or by contacting Sue Thomas

Sue Thomas, Group Leader



CROQUET (BRAUNTON)

Croquet has finished for the season.

We will begin again in May 2026

Anne Young, Group Leader



EVENING DINING GROUP

Second Tuesday

Dinner at the Black Horse was fantastic! The way the food was presented was exquisite, the food was wonderful and the service excellent. Lots of chatting and laughter round the table and I think everyone enjoyed it; I didn't get one complaint which more than made up for the lack of parking which was 'challenging'.

Hi - just a reminder the November outing will be on the 11 Nov at LUSH at 6.30 pm no deposits required - but please if you are attending the Imperial Hotel Xmas evening on the 9 December may I have your £10 deposit ASAP! Thank you and new members are always welcome to come along - just let me know!!!

Mary Young, Group Leader



GEOLOGY

Next Meeting – Friday 14th November, 1-45 for 2-00pm

In October Prof John Winchester told us about his early life as a geologist in Australia during the hectic time of a mineral boom.

For the third time this year we visited Fremington Quay to view the rock deposits and dyke now exposed (probably was on previous visits but not seen) with only a short rain shower.

In November we have two group members talking about their experiences in the Alps, Agnes Adams who born there, and Robert Down who has climbed there. We will ensure that the heating is switched on before they commence, but we can console ourselves with hot drinks.

David Dickinson, Co-ordinator



HIKERS

Monday 3rd November

We would love you to join us for a 7.5 circular walk from Parkham. We will be walking across farmland towards the SWCP at Buck's Mill and through woodland to Peppercombe.

If you would like to come along please let me know so that I can send you further details. New members very welcome.

Group Leaders: Pauline Markey & Karen Wagstaff



HOW IT WORKS

Next meeting: Friday 28th Nov. at 1.45 for 2.00pm.

Our talk in October was by Dr Sarah Hotchkiss a noted specialist in Seaweed, its life story and uses throughout the world. I do not believe we will refer to it as that mess on the beach in future. Sarah's talk was exceptional we were impressed with her presentation and knowledge of the subject explaining how different species are used in foodstuffs, medicines and industries around the world.

In November we have a talk by our own member Marjorie Keefe on "LIGHTNING". We may love it or hate it but it is one of the Earth's most spectacular sights we experience. Don't miss this talk it is not all flashes and bangs, remember it fertilises your gardens.

David Dickinson, Group Leader



KNIT AND NATTER

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

The venue for this group has been moved to Fremington Methodist Church Hall to provide extra space and new members are welcome. The group meets on the second Monday of the month 2.00 to 4.00 p.m. The cost will be £3 per person to cover the cost of the hall hire and refreshments, and there is plenty of parking. If you would like to join, please contact Sue Thomas, or see her at the November coffee morning.

Sue Thomas, Group Leader



LITERARY STUDIES GROUP

Tue 18th November, Tue 20th January 2026 – Imperial Hotel 2.30pm

Our response to Girl, Woman, 'Other' by Bernardine Evaristo was very varied, ranging from "did not like it", to "not too bad", to "enjoyed it". However, we did agree on one thing - it was different! It was a very different style of writing, where the use (or not) of punctuation was a challenge, as was the book's structure - was it one story with tenuous links from start to finish, or, was it a collection of short stories - a genre enjoyed by some, but not all. The author introduced a wide range of characters, each with their own chaotic lifestyle, which some enjoyed, whereas others thought the overall theme of the book was somewhat tedious. This was the Booker prize winner in 2019; thus, our discussion also included the question: What constitutes a Booker prize winner?

Ellie Bray 01271 371506 Group Leader



LOCAL HISTORY

We meet 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.

On Wednesday, 12 November we have Philip Dalling talking about "Parson Jack of Swimbridge".

There will be no meeting in December.

The Speaker at the meeting on the 14 January will be Lucy Scarrott talking about Medieval and Tudor Barnstaple.

Please can we gently remind everyone to wear their lanyards with their emergency phone numbers please?

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).

If you would like to join the group or have a try at Mosaics please phone our new Group Leader, Jo.

Jo Archer, 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

In October our topic was Children- poetry written for them or about them.

Diane kindly shared her own charming poems and stories such as Daisy Clock inspired by children she has known. Roger McGough's First Day at School, Ted Hughes' animal/creature poems, Lewis Carroll's Jabberwocky, D.H. Lawrence's Piano and T.S. Elliot's Macavity the Mystery Cat were firm favourites. We also heard the sad poem The Loner (at school) by Julie Holden and a sweet poem by the painter Lawrence Alma-Tadema If No One Ever Marries Me.

Our thanks to Diane for kindly hosting. For November our theme is Irish Poetry and the venue is yet to be confirmed. Please let me know ASAP if you are unable to attend. Our meetings are held on the second Saturday of the month at 2pm.

There are still places for new members. We are a small friendly group.

Margaret Ryan, Group Leader



PRACTICAL GARDENERS

September saw 16 members spend a delightful morning at the home in Lake of Ron & Yvonne Bimson, which has been called "Dahlia Paradise". With 150 varieties of dahlia displaying a full range of colours, and requiring daily picking/deadheading, we were not disappointed. The entire garden was immaculate and a cream tea capped a lovely morning in the autumn sunshine. I'm sure we'll be back soon!

Our visit to Rosemoor will now be on Thursday 30th October and our November meeting will be on Wednesday 26th at 10.30am at Fremington Methodist Church as Thursday 27th is not available.

Contact Andy for further information.

David Green, Andy Jones, Group Leadership Team



RAMBLERS

Thursday 13th November

We hope you will join us for a 4-4.5m walk around Landkey. Our route will be along footpaths and quiet lanes with some gentle ups and downs. It would be lovely if some joined us for lunch at The Castle Inn afterwards. If you plan to come along please let me know so that I can send you further details.

New members always welcome.

Karen Wagstaff & Pauline Markey - Group Leaders



SCRABBLE

Wed 5th November Thurs. 20th November Both 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



SEATED EXERCISE

Weekly on Mondays at 1.00pm

The seated exercise sessions have been really good; we exercise to music and those of us who have the breath left sing along and even sometimes find time to laugh with the trainer! Everyone who attends says they really enjoy themselves and with the added benefit of trying to get fitter. The coffee and chat after the session seems to be popular as well. There are some seats left so if you want to come along to the Tarka Leisure Centre at 1.00pm on a Monday let me know – Maureen.

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

We had an excellent turnout on 8 October, with Sue taking us through numerous songs plus a selection of those leading up to Christmas.

It's money collection time on 12 November, when I look forward to seeing all of you again. We should have a new song plus more Christmas favourites. Thank you all for your support. Any queries please get in touch. 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 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 27th November - 11 am.

ROUNDSWELL Meet outside Costa Café in Roundswell Retail Park (close to Dunelm Store).

Walk towards Aldi, down steps, cross road down to path next to stream. Turn left to walk path till end (close to new Roundswell school), turn left up path until you come to Queen ELIZ playing field, then past this road and turn left. Along road till "Buses Only" road on right. Go up this then next road up and turn left onto Fishleigh Road. Proceed along this till meet Roundswell Retail Park on left. Go down to Costa Café. Suggest lunch either at Costa (I will probably go here) or McDonalds nearby.

Distance 1.8 miles.

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.

We meet at the Tarka Centre on Tuesday afternoons from 2.00pm. We have three tables and play doubles for one and a half hours. Games are stimulating, competitive and fun. New members welcome.

Contact Agnes or Gabi.

Gabi & Agnes - Group Leaders



TREKKERS

The next Trekkers walk will be on Friday 21 November starting from the Brownsham car park near Clovelly. We will head towards Clovelly along the coast path and return inland. More details to follow, so just ask me to add you to the Trekkers email list if you are interested.

As usual, a 10:40 start, ending mid-afternoon. Bring snacks, lunch and plenty to drink, and be ready for any weather.

If you would like to be added to the Trekkers email list to receive further information about our walks, please send me a message.

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

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

The list of activities on Page 4 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 28th November, please submit any articles before the 24th November if possible.

Lynne Dickinson, Editor

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**Practical Gardeners
Ron and Yvonne**



**on a visit to the garden of
Bimson in Lake**



**Evening
at The Black
Braunton**



**Diners
Horse,**



Hikers on a wonderful walk from Berrynarbor along the South West Coast Path



Trekkers at Dunkery Beacon

Geology on a field trip to Fremington Quay



Ramblers – A beautiful day at Hartland

