

BARNSTAPLE u3a

NEWSLETTER

MAY, 2025

Issue 459



www.barnstaple.u3asite.uk

barnstaplethirdagegroup@rocketmail.com

Chairman: *Keith Luckhurst*

Business Secretary: *Ian Woodward*

Membership Secretary: *Julia Denton*

Groups Co-ordinator: *Laurence Hillel*

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Local Elections are being held at Roundswell Hall on Thursday 1st May. Our coffee morning is therefore being brought forward to Monday 28th April at 10.30am.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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

Mr Ian Knight

Mrs Julie Stevens Baddick

We also welcome back a returning member:

Mr Eddie Cornforth

And two affiliate members:

Mrs Elizabeth Craft, Mrs Wendy Roden

SPEAKER

Our next speaker is Ruth Croome and she will be talking about the work of the Mercy Ships. These are hospital ships that take medical care and training to some of the poorest countries.

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
Bridge	Fri. 2.30-4.30pm	Jane's house	Jane Keatley
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	2 nd Fri. of month 1.45pm	Fremington Meth Hall	David Dickinson
Heritage Explorer	Various	Various	Laurence Hillel
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
Nature Discovery	3 rd Wednesday with variation	Nature Trips and some talks	Laurence Hillel Deirdre Johnson
Poetry	2 nd Sat of month, 2pm.	Various	Margaret Ryan
Practical Gardeners	Last Thurs of month, 10.30am normally	Various	Andy Jones
Quarterly Lunch	Th 26 th June – details later	Williams Arms	Sue Thomas
Ramblers	2 nd Thurs 10.30	Various	Karen Wagstaff
Rummikub	See main entry		
Scrabble	1 st Wed 10am-12.30pm 3 rd Thurs 10am-12.30pm	Pam's house	Pam Harman
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. **This group is now at full capacity. Anyone interested in joining will be put on a waiting list.**

Contact Brian

Brian Steward, Group Leader



BONSAI – An introduction. Wed/7th May 2.00pm at the Vineyard.

May and Azaleas go together so well that for this month we will be looking at ways of working with them.

Please bring in trees of any type so that we all can have a look and natter about them. See you 7 May at 'The Vine'.

Nigel Wright, Group Leader



BOOK LOVERS

Last Wednesday in month 2-4pm. As the meeting is on the 30th April a report will be in the next newsletter.

Please contact Margaret for more information if you are interested.

Margaret Ryan, Group Leader



BRIDGE

Fridays 2.30pm to 4.30pm.

Members meet at Jane's house and if you are interested please contact her for details.

Jane Keatley, 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 run 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.

Contact Anne Young

Anne Young, Group Leader



EVENING DINING GROUP

Second Tuesday

14 members of the Evening Dining met for the second time at Clayton's & The Glasshouse on Tuesday 8th April. The noise and laughter coming from our table was a good indication that everyone was enjoying themselves. The food was generally agreed to be good, however, due to staff shortages service was a little slow. The next meal out will be at Tiffins (Indian cuisine) on Tuesday May 13th closely followed on June 10th by a visit to Lush.

The venue 'Tiffin' for 13th may is booked but a little earlier than previous occasions - table is booked for a 5.45 start!! They also require a £10 deposit per person - I'm more than happy to take your money!!! No food orders this time.

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

Mary Young, Group Leader



GARDEN DAYS

Wednesday June 25th: Kingston Maurward, Dorset: 35 acres of formal gardens including 2 National Plant collections, sweeping lawns, lakeside walks, plus a collection of livestock etc in the animal park, all set within Grade II listed parkland. 18th cent house not open to the public (part of ag coll). Coffee stop in Sherborne, a really lovely

town. **Bring a picnic as catering limited. Cost: £20.50**

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). Write pick-up point on back. If we don't already have phone (mob if poss), for security write on separate paper.

Wednesday May 28th: Tintinhull and Lytes Cary Manor, Somerset:

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 9th May at 1-45 for 2-00pm

On the last day in March we visited Hele Bay at an exceptionally low tide that gave us lots of rocks to examine then a trip to the Sawmills pub where we enjoyed a very good meal. Our speaker in April was Cherrie Temple from Wells U3A geology talking about the coastal damage at Blue Anchor Bay on the Bristol Channel in Somerset. The damage has been extensive and somewhat impossible to economically prevent reoccurring in the future.

On the 14th April we hosted 15 members of Wells U3A Geology group visiting Fremington Quay, they were delighted to view unfamiliar rock formations; 7 members of our own group were also involved.

The May speaker will be Mike Whitworth the CEO of a specialist earth stabilising company constructing Hinkley Power Station. The geology of the ground is sedimentary, Mike will talk about the ground stabilisation needed before concrete foundations are cast.

David Dickinson, Group Leader



HERITAGE EXPLORER

Our next visit will be later in the year – details will be published nearer the time.



HIKERS

No walk this month but we look forward to seeing you all in June.

New members very welcome.

Group Leaders: Pauline Markey & Karen Wagstaff



HOW IT WORKS

Friday April 25th 1.45 for 2.00pm.

David will give a talk on the science of our weather, showing how it is influenced by numerous and complex unseen controls.

On Friday 23rd May the speaker will be Keith Luckhurst talking about the “Industrial South West Industries”.

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. 20th May, Tue 17th June – Imperial Hotel 2.30pm.

Our last book was *Tidelands* by Philippa Gregory, and there was much to discuss! This is the first novel in Gregory's *Fairmile* series, where she turns her attention away from the Tudors and Plantagenets onto the common folk of England, but with real characters and events from the period cleverly interwoven. The setting is the remote coastal marshes of Sussex in 1648, and England is in the grip of civil war. In true Philippa Gregory form, we all agreed that this was a well-researched and beautifully crafted story, with realistic descriptions creating a truly atmospheric background. As if to confirm Gregory's commitment to factual accuracy, one of our group members spent many years in the area and was familiar with the landscape and place names. However, not everyone enjoyed the read. Some felt that, having introduced the demise of Charles 1st whilst captive on the Isle of Wight, the author could have transformed this novel into her more familiar (dare I say 'comfortable') format. But - change is not always bad, and this was a generally well-received change by a popular, prolific author. Final thought - this is a trilogy, so the end of the first book is not the end of the story, and some were keen to know more!

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

For our next excursion we will meet on Wednesday 21st May, 10.30pm, at Coombe Lodge NT Car Park beside Hillsford Bridge for a circular walk of about a mile to Watersmeet. Refreshments at Watersmeet. In June we will be visiting Braunton Burrows.

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

Because of insufficient numbers there was no group meeting in April. Margaret is hoping to hold a session in May.

Please get in touch if you would like to join our friendly group. Second Saturday of month 2pm. Please contact the Group Leader for details.

Margaret Ryan, Group Leader



PRACTICAL GARDENERS

In March we visited the Gardeners' Delight Nursery in Bideford Road, Barnstaple. We were welcomed by the owners, Hannah & Nick, and Hannah gave us a very interesting background to how they established the nursery c34 years ago, and how the business has changed over the years.

We were then shown around the greenhouses and tunnels, with all the plants they are growing for all the shows they are attending this year, including Chelsea for the first time!

And they also showed us and demonstrated their enormous potting machine!!

In April we will be visiting Marwood Hill Gardens, at Guineaford and a report will appear in the next newsletter.

On May 2nd, some of the group are visiting Powderham Castle, near Exeter, for Toby Buckland's Garden Festival. Anyone interested, please contact David or myself.

Our next group meeting, on May 29th, will be at Geraldine's garden, with some tips on taking cuttings.
Happy Gardening!!
Contact Andy

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



QUARTERLY LUNCH

Our next quarterly lunch will be on Thursday 26th June at the Williams Arms. More details later.

Sue Thomas, Group Leader



RAMBLERS

Thursday 8th May

We hope you are able to join us this month for a circular walk of approximately 4.25m/4.5m from Westward Ho! to Abbotsham. The walk is a gentle walk along the SWCP, through fields and along quiet lanes. New members very welcome.

Please let us know if you plan to join us so that we can send you further details.

Karen Wagstaff & Pauline Markey Group Leaders



RUMMIKUB

Owing to ill health Ann Brand has had to step back from organising the Rummikub group. If anyone would like to offer to host this group, please let me know.

Laurence Hillel Groups Co-ordinator



SCRABBLE

May 2025 Wednesday 7th 10-12.30pm, Thursday 22nd 10-12.30pm.

We now have a waiting list for new members who may be interested in joining. For further information contact Pam. 01271 377872 or 07769 803003 pamharman19@gmail.com

Pam Harman, Group Leader



SINGING FOR FUN

Second Wednesday 10-12noon

Another enthusiastic turnout in April saw requests for songs tried out only once before or those of which I had no copies with me, so guess who's going to be keeping busy.

My thanks to our accompanist Sue and all those who attended for their support: you make the Group what it is. I have noted the suggestions from the group and Sue, and hope that with John (our second accompanist) everyone will have a great time at our next meeting on 14 May.

Reminder folks: Money collection time on 14/05 - have already put my £6.50 in the collection box!
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

Crow Point Thursday 29th May 11 am.

Meet Crow Point car park - NB Charge is £2.50 - needs coins unless attendant present (unlikely).

Walk to beach entrance near old boardwalk. Walk along sands to old pill box (1 mile). Walk back along sands to Crow Point light (1.3 miles). Walk round light house and along sands to steps into car park (2.1 miles).

Lunch at Williams Arms

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.

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 & Agnes Group Leaders



TREKKERS

The next Trekkers Walk will be on Friday 16 May led by Graham, a circular walk from Withypool via Tar Steps. Meet at the Worth Lane car park in Withypool, postcode TA24 7RB, for a 10:30 start. About eight miles. 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 which they are interested in.

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

If you feel you could contribute, please do not hesitate to contact our Group Coordinator Laurence, or any committee member.

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 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 3rd June (the editor is on holiday) please submit any articles before the 28th May if possible.

Lynne Dickinson, Editor



Geology had a trip to Hele Bay on the 31 March followed by refreshments at the Sawmills Pub



Hikers – April in the Ashford area



Evening Diners Club at Claytons





Ramblers – April in Woolacombe/Putsborough



The Geology group were pleased to host u3a Wells geology group at Fremington Quay, 14 April.



