BRAUNTON & DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

December 2026

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 1ST DECEMBER 2026
10.00 – 12.00 – PARISH HALL

SPEAKER:
Ashley Jones MBE

Chairperson: Beryl Lloyd 01271 812121
Dave20000@tinyworld.co.uk
Membership Secretary: Judi Walker
membershipbrauntonu3a@outlook.com
Newsletter items to Julia James:
Tel: 816884 email: jjdevon45@gmail.com
January Newsletter deadline
15th December 2026
Website: https://braunton.U3Asite.uk/

SPEAKER FOR DECEMBER

Is Ashley Jones MBE. You may remember that Ash gave us a wonderful talk on *The Animals' VC* earlier in the year, and this time he is talking to us about David Niven. Should be a good one!

MEMBERS STORIES

Articles and photos (if available) to be submitted to our Newsletter Editor, Julia

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Braunton & District U3A Committee: Beryl, David, Rosemary, Julia, Sue, Anne, Joan, Barbara, Sandie, Marg, Pippa, Judi and David A



'Rosemary Littlewood no longer has a landline, so use 07811892686'.

Welcome

Philip Thorn
Sue Fearnley

BRAUNTON & DISTRICT U3A MEMBERS REMEMBERED

Sadly, in the past few weeks three of our members have passed away.
John Moore and Keith Leiper both members of the poetry group run by Gillian Kerr.
Also Mary Brodie who was a member of Rosemary's exercise Group. She had previously been a member of Barnstaple U3A
where she had been the Chairperson and was well known for her musical and local theatrical activities.
Our thoughts are with their families.

PAPERBACK BOOKS

On behalf of the Rotary Club of Braunton I would like to thank the U3A members that kindly donated paperback books and foreign coins in the past few months.
I am pleased to report that £456 was raised and this will be donated to various local charities.
We will be placing books at various North Devon camp sites from Easter 2027 so further donations are always welcome.
Thanks again Beryl

MEMBERS STORIES

A Day in The Life of A Helicopter Pilot
By Chris Lobban

LOCKERBIE

The pager in my pocket proclaimed
That 21,12,1988 was to be renowned
For its grim tale of retribution. Pan Am 103.
As duty crew we flew to pick up surgeons
From Ely hospital RAF and NHS twinned,
To fly them to a downed 747,
The third to enter service with any airline.
The flight was through rain, ice and hurricane
Reducing progress to fifty knots over the ground
Making haste to the Lockerbie school field.
As we approached fires were still flaming
And rescue helicopter crews were searching,
Their floodlight arrays probing the ground
Where bodies lay in bunkers of their own making.
When daylight came we took an SIB team
To video the whole scene so systematic search could begin.
And we flew from the tail section west of Lockerbie
To the east coast where the debris stream drowned.
Margaret Thatcher came and we talked.
She wanted to know what we had done
And asked what we should be doing.
I told her the costs of flying needed control
And she understood. But a decade later
The military aid to civil ministers still argue.
I was there and I told her it would.

GARDENERS UNLIMITED

Following a successful visit to St John's Garden Centre in Barnstaple this week, where one of the gardeners kindly spent time with us advising and explaining, on 18 December we are going (weather permitting) to Bicclescombe Park in Ilfracombe. Car share so that there is no long walk to the park from bus stops. For further info, or to join us, please contact Barbara Watson on 07740941263. Leave a message if no reply, or WhatsApp.

BRAUNTON & DISTRICT U3A

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Thursday 3 December 2026 at the Williams Arms Wrafton
GUEST SPEAKER- Gary Reed with "NOTORIOUS NATIVITIES"
The cost per person is
Carvery only - £20
Or
Carvery and sweet - £24
Prices include gratuity and speaker fees but NO drinks which should be paid direct.
OPTION A - £20
Carvery only – choice of Turkey, Pork, Beef or Nut Roast
OPTION B - £24
Carvery as above plus a choice from the Sweet of the Day.
Please advise your choice when you book at the November or December meetings. Numbers are limited.
The correct amount of payment IN CASH would be greatly appreciated.
If you are unable to attend the monthly meeting and would like to book a ticket, please contact Beryl Lloyd on 01271 812121.

Book Group

The book group has two vacancies.
Anyone interested should contact Brian on
816911 or 07876308317
briangilbert8@gmail.com

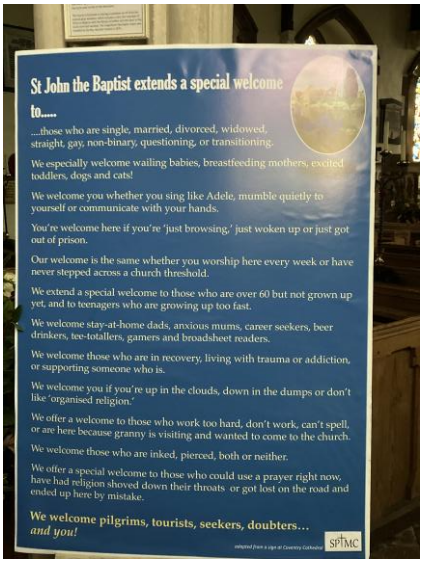
Walking Group

Group A and Group B walked the canal/round the village of Sampford Peverell. Beautiful church and beautiful kingfisher. Even the rain stopped for us. Then a great lunch at The Globe. And the number of dogs increases slowly - four today.









27th October. Group A Walk from St Anne's chapel over the top and down to Croyde. We managed to miss any rain and it was a lovely bright day for walking. Group B went from the chapel, into Croyde village by car and then walked up towards Baggy where we all met up for refreshments at the NT cafe. These two-level walks seem to be working well for different abilities and we still feel like one group.





INTEREST GROUPS

ART APPRECIATION
Jane Casey – 816893
Jackie Osborne – 813317
We take a light-hearted look at the work of a different artist and then have a go at working in their style.
2nd Tuesday of each month 10am – 12pm

BOOK GROUP
Brian Gilbert
816911 or 07876308317
briangilbert8@gmail.com
2nd Tuesday of the month, 2.00pm in the Library

CINEMA GROUP
Barbara Watson 07740941263.
barbingledene@gmail.com
Sue Gilbert 07969150318
suegilbert46@gmail.com
Please contact by email or WhatsApp to register and for details of films.

COUNTRY DINERS
Group 1 - Ray and Lola Hanson 817681
lolahanson@btinternet.com

Group 2
Jean Barnes 890927 jeanb68@btinternet.com
3rd Friday of each month

CRAFT
Sue Gilbert – 816911
suegilbert46@gmail.com
Third Wednesday of each month, 2pm at the Countryside Centre

CROQUET
Anne Young 813255
amcyoung2003@yahoo.co.uk
Croquet has finished for this summer back again in April 2027!

DISCUSSION GROUP
David Kent 816042
drandjgkent@btinternet.com
Meets the last Monday of the month for discussions on various subjects.

EXERCISE - Medau Movement
Rosemary Littlewood 07811892686

Braunton Parish Hall,
Weekly classes on Mondays .
12.30 – 1.20 and 1.45 – .2.35
£1.00 per session
Unfortunately classes will not run until the Spring of 2027.

Rosemary's ramblings
' In this complex world, try to live simply & with love. Never forget that an act of kindness, is in itself an act of happiness. '

FLORAL ART
Jan Evans 812852 janetevans6@icloud.com
Meeting third Tuesday of the month 10.00 - 12.00 at St Brannocks Rooms

GEOLOGY
First Wednesday of each month, 2 - 4pm, at 1A Lower Park Road; plus occasional local field meetings.
Please contact Paul in advance at **madgett@hotmail.com or on 01271 812617** for details.

LANGUAGES
GERMAN
Sheila Higdon 812585
higdonsheila15@hotmail.com
Wednesday 10.30am – 12.00

SPANISH IMPROVERS
Christine Delve 07884 944297
Email: cdelve55@gmail.com
Monday 10.30am - 12.00 noon

LOCAL HISTORY
Anne Young 813255
rayvyoung2000@yahoo.co.uk
There is no meeting in December. Our next meeting is on Tuesday 12th January 2027! Amanda Gratton will be giving us a talk about The Appledore Maritime Museum.
We meet at St Brannocks Rooms, Church Street, Braunton, EX33 2EL, at 10am for refreshments with the talk at 10.30am. Everyone welcome, there is a charge of £2 and parking at the venue

LOCAL LUNCHES
Shirley Fry 813944
12.15 for 12.30 pm on the second Friday of each month

MAH JONG
Peter Barnes 07477599381
peterbarnes1958@hotmail.com
Meeting on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 2pm.

POETRY
Gillian Kerr 549150
Every second Wednesday of month 2. – 4.30.pm approx..
We now have a vacancy in our friendly group due to a member leaving the area. If you are interested, or would like more information, please contact Gillian.

POETRY – Penners
Bill Hitchcock wfh1951@me.com 07736671440
Meet Monthly at The Countryside Centre on Wednesday 12.30 to 1.30
If you like writing the odd poem or enjoy hearing / reading your own or favourite poem, you will be most welcome.

RUMMIKUB (BOARD GAME)
Marg Abbott. 07710 201396
margabbbott@icloud.com
Meeting on the third Wednesday at members' homes from 2 till 4pm. This group is full at the moment but if anyone else would like to play do get in touch so I can put you on a waiting list.

INTEREST GROUPS

SOCIAL SCIENCES
Lora White 870171
lora@planetmail.com
Come and join the Social Sciences group, learning about interaction and developments in society through Computer & TV presentations with Lora, provoking and sparking new ideas. We would love to hear your views. Meeting once a month, on the 4th Tuesday. 10.30am – 12.30pm at member's homes with Lora, unless otherwise arranged.

STROLLERS
Countryside Wellbeing Walks
11th and 26th November and 9th and 23rd of December.

TRIPWIRE
Beryl Lloyd 812121
If you have any ideas where you would like to go on a trip in 2027, please get in contact.

WALKING GROUP
December Walks
Although we have recently split into two groups (A and B, easy and more challenging) we always meet up for coffee/lunch at some point as we are still a 'happy band of wanderers'! All walks are adjusted to take account of walkers' abilities.

Tuesday 8 December
Local, Braunton/Ashbarton,
A group Braunton to Ashbarton – about 2 hours.
B group – local village walk – route to be decided
Both groups – meet up again at The Worx about 12.30 for coffee/ snack/ lunch.

Tuesday 15 December
Car share to Arlington Court. Meet Caen Car Park 10.30am.
A group walk around Arlington via Loxhore Cottage – about 2 hours.
B Group Walk around Wilderness or Deer Park.
Lunch in NT café about 2.00pm, then into "Arlington After Dark" (in House) before returning home.

Tuesday 22 December
Lynton and Lynmouth with a chance for last-minute shopping. Further details to be decided with regard to distance depending on abilities/what everyone wants to do.
A group – Lynmouth walk maybe Watersmeet (how far to be decided by group) and Lynton.
B group – Lynton wander. Distance to be decided
Both groups Lynton for lunch in local café.

Tuesday 29 December
'Walk it Off' walk along Saunton beach.
A group walk from Braunton via Crow Point to Saunton beach car park.
B group bus to Saunton Sands – stroll along beach to meet up with A group, then all back to Saunton Beach café for lunch (yes, it will be open). Return to Braunton by bus.

For further information on all walks, please contact Phil Watson on 07740941263 or phillippwatson@gmail.com.

WINE APPRECIATION
Anne Young – 813255
rayvyoung2000@yahoo.co.uk
2nd Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm

U3A MONTHLY RAFFLE PRIZE
We have a new sponsor for our monthly meeting raffle prize, and it is a thank you to Roger Byrom and his team from L Clarke & Sons who are donating a £15 Tesco voucher as the prize.

L. Clarke & Sons
Independent Funeral Directors

