

u3a Totnes
THE THIRD AGE TRUST
October 2023



Newsletter

Welcome to the October newsletter. The turnout for the groups/potential new groups event last Thursday was excellent, with over 70 people attending (be sure to read Bob's article). Remember, you can join or set up a new group at any time – last Thursday was not a 'one off' by any means.

Also, if you were not in attendance but would like to get involved with the Christmas Show and lunch in any capacity then please contact Gillian. Only 8 weeks away – where has 2023 gone?

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PROGRAMME



Speaker timetable for u3a Totnes

Totnes u3a Speakers 2023/2024		
Nov	Rosemary Griggs	A Tudor Christmas with the Lady Katherine
Jan 25th	Ken Basterfield	Clysters, Comfrey and Coiffs – the lives of the 17 th century
Feb 22nd	Ken Basterfield	Blackberry Farm. Bees and beekeeping.
March 28 th	John Ellis	The history of the Stover Canal

November Talk

Rosemary Griggs will be giving a performance called a Tudor Christmas with the Lady Katherine. Appearing in full period costume she brings the festivities, feasting and fun of a Tudor Christmas to life in a lively presentation interspersed from songs from the peasant David. Travel back in time as a guest invited to join Sir Philip Champernowne’s Christmas feast at the Court House in Modbury and discover the etiquette, the menu, and the customs of the twelve days of a sixteenth century Christmas.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEWS

Coffee Mornings

As with last year, it was suggested that members meet at Quayside Bistro for coffee on the **second Thursday morning of each month from 10 am**. Members can purchase, tea, coffee, and cakes if they wish to. This is not a formal, organised gathering, but an opportunity to meet for chat and socialising for anyone who would like to.

Regards,

Rosemary

New Members

We would like to welcome the following new members; Jean and Mike Craddock, Richard Allen, Mandy Race, Sandra Downing and Julie Talbot-Dunn.

Articles

When members submit articles for the newsletter (**always** welcome) can they please use the Calibri size 16 font? If this is not possible, please don't worry as it can be changed but submissions with these guidelines would be greatly appreciated.

Monthly meetings at St Johns

It was really good to see so many u3a members at the meeting at St Johns this past Thursday and to see how everyone was taking the opportunity to find out about other group activity. I have heard from several group leaders that they each had one or two members wanting to join their groups, and in most cases the groups will be delighted to welcome the new members at their next meeting. In a few cases it might be that the existing group has already reached

its maximum number usually dictated by the meeting venue. In this case there are a couple of options, with the members being put on a waiting list or they could form a new group. If you are in this position of wanting to join a group that is at its current limit, please contact Jacquetta groups@u3atotnes.uk who will try to help you. Also, if you have an idea for a new group activity, we would love to hear from you and again the contact is Jacquetta.

It was unfortunate that we were not able to see the speaker's slides at their best last Thursday but the controller for lowering the window blinds has gone missing. I am investigating with the church to try to ensure we can lower the blinds next time we use the projector.

Bob Dow (Chairman)

Christmas

Finally, another reminder that the monthly meeting in December will be on the earlier date of Thursday 14th December when we will have the delights of the annual Christmas Show followed by lunch. I am pleased that we again have Gillian Burchell organising the show and co-ordinating the various acts. I know the choir is rehearsing ready but if anyone else has an act they would like to be included in the show please contact Gillian very soon so she can plan the programme. Gillian can be contacted on show@u3atotnes.uk

Bob Dow (Chairman)

GROUP NEWS

Writing Group

Is anyone interested in a new Writing Group? My name is Rita Trotman and I am enthusiastic to start a new group of writers, including complete beginners.

Subjects could include:

Short Stories - how to construct them and where to sell them.

Memoir - how to get started and helpful guidelines.

Flash Fiction - what is it? How to write it.

Novel Writing - what are story arcs? How to find your 'voice'.

Self-Publishing - is it for me? How to start the process.

Maybe you have been 'slogging away for years' and need some inspiration to finish something. Perhaps you have a burning idea for a family memoir or maybe you have a novel waiting to evolve. All are better achieved in a supportive group where ideas can be floated, and new writing habits embraced. I learned my craft at the Arvon Foundation and South Deven College and have written six self-published books of various genres.

I suggest meeting fortnightly as this keeps a better momentum than monthly; the day and time are yet to be agreed. The venue will be within walking distance of Totnes centre but is yet to be decided upon. Everything relies on a good response from members. Do get in touch if you are interested to start after Christmas.

Please write 'group' on the subject line: tolhouse47@gmail.com

Natural History Group

We are continuing to meet monthly in assorted interesting places; suggestions for possible other places to visit, especially in the near future, are always welcome. We'll have some indoor event over the winter.

Descriptions of our last two trips (for August and September) follow, both written by Jenny Galton-Fenzi.

New members are always welcome.

Tony Cooper

On Monday 21st August 2023 a small party visited the 24-hectare Devon Wildlife Trust Reserve at Bovey Heathfield, which is on the edge of a large industrial estate (and very hard to find!) The weather was overcast, but it was a pleasant temperature for walking. This large open area of heath is clothed in Western gorse and heather, with some silver birch, goat willow and alder.

We saw no snakes, lizards or slow-worms, although the terrain looks perfect for them. There were very few birds, but we saw a Swallow, a Stonechat and a Green Woodpecker. By the entrance to the reserve was a patch of wildflowers which included Common Vervain, StJohn's Wort, Great Mullein in seed (not sure about this - the plant App is giving it as Weld), Teazle, Ragwort, Bristly Oxtongue, ?Wild Parsnip and Scarlet Pimpernel.

The reserve itself has a fairly limited selection of wildflowers, but we found Marsh Cudweed, a few clumps of Common Centaury, Thyme-leaved Speedwell, Mouse-eared Chickweed, Rough Hawkbit, Autumn Hawkbit, Tormentil, Scentless Mayweed, and Wild Carrot. Three sorts of heather - ling, bell-heather and cross-leaved heath - grow on the reserve. There was a clay pond with a couple of water-lilies. Buff-tailed bumblebees, and a few honeybees, were busy on the heather, and we also saw Small White Butterflies, Gatekeepers, Meadow Brown, and a beautiful yellow Brimstone as we were leaving. Some of us went on to lunch at the excellent Home Park Cafe at Parke.

Jenny Galton-Fenzi

On Saturday 9th September 2023 three intrepid members of U3A Nature Group (Helen B, Paul Sand Jenny GF) set out for Dawlish Warren. This trip had been postponed earlier because of the heat, so we thought we would go for it this time, although the day was, if anything, even hotter! It was a good decision, as there was plenty of interest at Dawlish Warren. What we saw and recorded is as follows:

Plants: mallow, common storks bill, evening primrose, smooth hawksbeard, bramble, common centaury, rosehips, eyebright, fairy flax, wild rose gall, plantain, common reed, wild radish, woody nightshade, hare's foot clover (seedheads), yellow rattle (seedheads), St John's wort, wild mint, birch, red bartsia, lesser trefoil, bird's foot trefoil, buttercup, aster, gipsywort, rowan, marsh cudweed, autumn hawkbit, goatsbeard, ragwort, herb Robert, melick grass, wild carrot, hare's tailgrass, common rush, asparagus, feverfew, purple loosestrife, restharrow, lesser centaury, common polypody fern, fat hen, montbretia, field mushroom.

Birds: robin, chiff-chaff, magpie, blackbird, coaltit, stonechat, a mystery bird that may have been a blackbird in moult, pigeon, thrush, wood warbler. Other: common darter (a sort of dragonfly), meadow grasshopper, meadow brown butterfly, small copper butterfly, small white butterfly, clouded yellow butterfly, marmalade hoverfly. Our trip concluded with a pleasant lunch at the Powderham Cafe - tuna sandwiches and drinks, with excellent chips.'

Jenny Galton-Fenzi

Walking Group

Sixteen of us (15 walking group members and a visitor) set off in glorious autumn sunshine from just above Fishcombe Cove in Brixham to take the coastal path round into Brixham and out onto the harbour breakwater. The walk was kindly organised by Sue and David Wilks.

The path takes one quite steeply downhill to the water's edge and as one goes around the corner suddenly Brixham is before one. We stopped for a few moments while Roy gave us a brief fascinating history of the building that I still think of as the Astra Zenicca laboratory, where he had had occasion to work in one of buildings iterations. It is now part of the University of Plymouth. The amazing setting must surely make it ripe for re-development as a hotel or apartments sometime in the future.

We then continued on past the Fish Market and the bustling harbour to the old covered fish market where we took over virtually the whole space for a quick coffee. Suitably refreshed we walked on out to the end of the breakwater. The weather being especially kind, sunshine, and little wind, it was an ideal day. Some members felt they wanted to do a bit more cardiac workout and so strode

out ahead with the slower of us bringing up the rear. After meeting up at the end of the breakwater we wandered back, enjoying the sun and the atmosphere, to the bistro on the breakwater where nine of us had lunch. The rest of the group unfortunately had other commitments. The meal turned out to be splendid.

The gentle walk back took us to the base of the hill where the walk up to our cars gave us all some cardiac exercise!

The next walk on the 3rd of November will be around Avon Dam. All U3A members are welcome to join us, and we always try to organise lifts for those without transport. Please give me a call if you are not a member of the walking group and would like the details sent to you.

Richard Scheffer t 07966 178 279





80 Bites 3

We are sorry to report that Helen Barbera passed away in Torbay Hospital on Tuesday 24th October, following a long illness. Many of you knew her as a lovely, bubbly, kind, energetic and inspirational person, (short in stature, but huge in personality). She was a member of many different groups in the U3A and set up the 80 Bites Around the World groups. She will be sorely missed by all.

TOTNES u3a GROUPS

&

Meeting Dates

TOPIC	MEETING DATE
Around the World in 80 Bites 1	Monthly meeting in members' houses
Around the World in 80 Bites 3	Monthly meeting in members' houses
Book Club	First Thursday 2.30p.m. in a member's house
Bridge	Tues weekly 1.30 p.m.
Chess	2 nd Monday 2.30 p.m. Quayside
Choir	Alt. Weds 10.00 a.m.
Digital Photography	2 nd Monday 10.30 a.m. Dartmouth Inn, Totnes
Discussion Group	2 nd Monday p.m. & 4 th Monday on Zoom
Folk Band and Recorders	Tues fortnightly 10.00 a.m.
French Conversation	3 rd Tuesday 2.30 p.m. Quayside
Gardening 1	2 nd Mon p.m.
Gardening 2	1 st Thursday at 2.30 p.m.
Gardening 3	2 nd Wednesday
Geology	Dates variable
Luncheon Club	2 nd Thurs lunchtime
Music Appreciation	1st Thurs 10.30 a.m. Quaker Centre
Natural History	
Petanque	Wed & Thurs 11:00 a.m.
Play Reading	2 nd Fri a.m.
Play Reading 2	2 nd and 4 th Fridays from 1030-1230 at Quayside
Psychology	2 nd Tues 10 30a.m – 12p.m. St. John's Church, Bridgetown
Walking	1 st Fri?
Women's Interest Group	2 nd Thurs at 11.00 a.m. Various venues

TOTNES u3a GROUPS
&
GROUP LEADERS

STUDY/SOCIAL

Around the World in 80 Bites 1
 Around the World in 80 Bites 3
 Book Club
 Bridge
 Chess
 Choir
 Digital Photography
 Luncheon Club
 Discussion Group
 Folk Band and Recorders
 French Conversation
 Gardening 1
 Gardening 2
 Gardening 3
 Geology
 Music Appreciation
 Natural History
 Petanque
 Play Reading
 Play Reading 2
 Psychology
 Walking
 Women's Interest Group

LEAD

Helen Barbera
 Sue Collyer
 Alison Sale
 Howard Burchell
 Roger Porkess
 Jeremy Doyle
 Bob Dow
 Rosemary Gillam
 Keith Smith
 Jess Price
 Marie Moore
 Mavis Schindler
 Liz Allen
 Jane Smith
 Caz Donovan
 Barry Northam
 Tony Cooper
 Gillian Burchell
 David Wilks
 Edwina Ratcliffe
 Amy Summers
 Richard Scheffer
 Ros Hills

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discussion@u3atotnes.uk
folkband@u3atotnes.uk
frenchconversation@u3atotnes.uk
gardening1@u3atotnes.uk
gardening2@u3atotnes.uk
gardening3@u3atotnes.uk
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playreading@u3atotnes.uk
playreading2@u3atotnes.uk
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YOUR COMMITTEE

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