

# DECEMBER 2019-JANUARY 2020



[www.readingu3a.org.uk](http://www.readingu3a.org.uk)

**This is an edited version of our usual newsletter, produced to give prospective members an idea of our activities**

**Letter from the Chairman:** December is always a busy month but I hope you are able to join in with our Christmas Lunch and/or Christmas Entertainment/Tea Party where some great entertainment has been arranged. These are popular events, but places are still available for the Tea Party, so come along and get into the Christmas spirit!

Getting ready for winter for me involves having my flu vaccination; I pop into my local pharmacy. My 2 and 3-year old grandchildren have just had a 'magic puff' in their noses. This was the children's flu vaccine and it should prevent them from being the super spreaders that children are known for.

2020 is a rather special number and I hope it will be an interesting and lively year for you as a U3A member.

**NEW MEMBERS' WELCOME MEETING  
NO MEETING ON MONDAY 27 JANUARY**

The next scheduled meeting is on Monday 23 March at 10.30 am BROOKSIDE ROOM,  
ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH

**READING U3A CHRISTMAS TEA PARTY**

Thursday 12 December at 1.30 for 2 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH

**We start with some Entertainment followed by the Tea Party.**

**YOU NEED TO HAVE BOOKED BEFOREHAND TO ATTEND THE TEA PARTY.**

**OPEN MEETING**

Monday 23 December at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH

**NO MEETING**

**MEMBERS' MEETING**

Thursday 9 January at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH

**Poetry to stimulate, poetry to amuse.**

**OPEN MEETING**

Monday 27 January at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH

**James Mather will give a talk on The Watlington Hoard.**

**He will talk about responsible metal detecting and the discovery of this nationally significant Viking Hoard, which is currently on display at the Ashmolean Museum. He will also bring with him a selection of exciting local finds and some high quality silver replicas of items from this history-changing Hoard.**

### **Travel Talks: a great big thank you**

As the Travel Talks Group draws to a close after over 30 years, we would like to express our very sincere thanks to all of you who have given presentations on the places you have been. It has been a fascinating experience and, thanks to our many presenters, we have all learnt so much about the geography, history, people, culture, wildlife and even cuisine of countries around the world. If you would be interested in relaunching the group in the future do please contact us: we will do what we can to help. Our best wishes to all the members of the group and, wherever you go, travel safely.

### **New Group: Shakespearean Films**

I am happy to confirm that this new group will be up and running from February. It will meet at 13.45 in Abbey Baptist Church, on the fourth Friday of alternate months, starting on Friday 28 February. It premieres with 'The Tempest' (2010) starring Helen Mirren, Russell Brand and Alfred Molina.

### **Possible new groups**

#### **1. Industrial Archaeology**

Reading has a rich industrial history, but many of its landmarks are disappearing in the continuing development of the town, not least in the conversion of many buildings and sites of previous industry into flats and houses. Would any of our members be interested in joining an Industrial Archaeology group in Reading U3A?

#### **2. Mah Jong**

A new member has offered to convene a Mah Jong group, which would be for everyone, whether you are an experienced player, intermediate, or a complete beginner/

### **U3A Day – 3 June 2020**

As you may already have seen from the articles in Third Age Matters, June 3<sup>rd</sup> next year will be U3A Day – a day when U3As from all over the country will be doing something “eye-catching” to grab the attention of local people and the local (and national) media.. This is all part of the Third Age Trust’s aim to “raise the profile” and get the name of U3A better known.

You can find more information on the U3A website at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/u3a-day> and there is a U3A Day Facebook Group at [www.facebook.com/groups/485363562065891](http://www.facebook.com/groups/485363562065891), where people are already exchanging suggestions on the kind of events they would like to organise – including open days, flash mobs, busking, exhibitions, craft displays – there seems to be no end to members’ imagination!

There will be more information in this newsletter as we get nearer the date – meanwhile, if you have any ideas for what Reading U3A could be doing on U3A Day, do please talk to a committee member.

### **Tai Chi**

The last Tai Chi classes for 2019 will take place on Friday 22 November.

There will be no meetings in December, or the first part of January, and classes will start again on Friday 24 January. There will also be additional classes on Friday 31 January.

### **Climate Repair Group**

We have held our first two meetings and our modus operandi is taking shape. We have two projects under way, investigating Tree Planting Schemes and Refrigerants (Why them you may wonder?) and hopefully a third on Carbon Gardening to follow.

You can read more about us and our work on our website, <https://climaterepairreading.org/> See if any of our projects or interests also interest you, or indeed any of the list of 80 (!) climate solutions waiting to be discovered by those who follow the website's links carefully.

We meet at 14.15 on the second Monday of each month at RISC, London Street. New members are always welcome, but please contact the convenor first.

### **Computer Group: change to meeting schedule**

When the group met in October, we decided to change our meeting schedule. From 27 November 2019 we will meet at 10 am (an earlier start time) on the fourth Wednesday of the month, between October and June, with no meetings in July, August or September.

The first 30 minutes will be spent on individual members’ computing-related issues and presentations will start at 10.30.

## Walks in December and January

At the time of going to press, I have had no offers to lead walks in December and January, but if any leader would like to do so at short notice, please let me know. I will then email the group and arrange for details to be posted on the website.

## Alternative Theatre Group

Two slightly different plays which I hope people will find interesting.

**Monday 24 February:** to the Progress Theatre, Reading to see a classic American gothic horror story, 'The Haunting of Hill House'. Dr Montague hopes to find scientific evidence of the supernatural. He hires Hill House and invites people with experience of the paranormal.

**Friday 20 March:** to Wokingham Theatre to see 'Anne Boleyn' a play originally written for The Globe. James I discovers papers showing that Anne was a religious conspirator in love with her religion as much as the king.

## Theatre Group

**'Touching the Void': Wednesday 15 January 2.30 pm Duke of York's Theatre, London**

Directed by the award-winning Tom Morris and based on Joe Simpson's best-selling memoir, this extraordinary story charts Joe Simpson's and Simon Yates' struggle for survival on the perilous Siula Grande mountain in the Peruvian Andes. Life-affirming and often darkly funny, David Greig's thrilling adaptation takes the audience on an epic adventure that asks how far you'd be willing to go to survive. **WARNING contains frequent very strong language.** Stalls seats are £35.

**'Educating Rita': Thursday 6 February 2.30 pm Oxford Playhouse**

When married hairdresser Rita enrolls on a university course to expand her horizons, little does she realise where the journey will take her. Her tutor Frank is a frustrated poet, brilliant academic and dedicated drunk, who's less than enthusiastic about taking Rita on, but the two soon realise how much they have to teach each other. Written by Willy Russell and starring Stephen Tompkinson as Frank and introducing Jessica Johnson as Rita.

Stalls seats are £20.

**'Tina': Thursday 26 March 2.30 pm Aldwych Theatre, London**

The Tina Turner Musical is a jukebox musical featuring the music of Tina Turner, and depicting her life from her youth in Nutbush, Tennessee, through her tumultuous relationship with Ike Turner, and comeback as a rock 'n roll star in her 40s.

I have booked a coach to take us to and from the theatre which will depart from Valpy Street at 11.00 and return there after the show, probably around 19.00, depending on the traffic.

A front stalls seat combined with the cost of a coach and tip for the driver, is £65. Sorry this is more than we usually pay but theatre tickets are getting more expensive even with our group discounts. There may be a small refund depending on final numbers.

## Thames Valley Network (TVN) Study Days planned for 2020

Wednesday 18 March: The History of The Thames and its boats. The River & Rowing Museum, Henley.

Wednesday 8 April: Cyber Crime 'Protect Your World'. King's Church, Amersham.

Thursday 23 April: Understanding Historic Buildings. Benson

Friday 29 May: Geology of the Thames Valley and why we don't have volcanoes. Benson.

Wednesday 24 June: Visit to RHS Wisley.

Friday 3 July: The Environment and Biodiversity. Benson.

5 to 11 October: TVN holiday to Istanbul.

There will also be a quiz day, date and details to be announced.

## Other possible events for 2020/2021

Genealogy/Forensic Anthropology/Genetics.

Climate Change.

DNA/diseases/tailored treatments.

Photography.

**Details of all TVN events are posted on the TVN website, <http://www.u3atvnetwork.org>.**

More details of some of our activities are to be found in a separate section called *Group News*. In the full newsletter these sections contain contacts, telephone numbers, and further instructions where applicable.

## DECEMBER GROUP NEWS

**Alternative Theatre Group: 'Hansel & Gretel': Thursday 12 December 5.30 pm 21 South Street, Reading**

**Amble: Thursday 5 December 10.45 am**

A circular amble of 3 miles through Shinfield village and Ryeish Green. The route has good level pathways with no stiles or hills through urban areas and open fields with views looking north beyond Reading to the Chiltern Hills. Some small areas maybe muddy after rain, so bring sticks and suitable boots.

**Blanket Project: Monday 2 December 3 pm Primark's café**

Please bring your completed blankets, squares to sew up and any donations of wool to share. New members and contributors are very welcome.

**Books: Thursday 5 December 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Thurs 5 Dec: 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens.

New members are always welcome.

**Coffee Morning & Quiz: Monday 9 December 10 for 10.30 am Abbey Baptist Church**

We meet at 10.00 for coffee/tea and biscuits and a chat, and start the Quiz at around 10.30. We are a lively and sociable group - the quizzes are good fun, not too taxing, and a great opportunity for new members to meet people. You could also win a prize!

**Enjoying Opera: Thursday 5 December 1.30 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Gaetano Donizetti's 'L'elisir d'amore' (The Elixir of Love). Adina is sung by the soprano Anna Netrebko and Nemorino by the tenor, Rolando Villazón. Nemorino, a poor peasant, is in love with Adina, a beautiful landowner, who torments him with her indifference. In an effort to win her affections he joins the army. Running time is 130 minutes.

**Family History: Friday 13 December 10.30 am Family History Centre, LDS Church, Tilehurst**

December's meeting will be our usual quiz and social event.

**Heritage Group: Wednesday 4 December Oxford**

To the Ashmolean Museum and an exhibition called 'Last Supper in Pompeii'.

**Seated Exercise: Thursday 12 December only. Seated by 10.30 am for Prompt Start. Abbey Baptist Church**

Numbers are restricted to 30. If you are new, please contact me. Please also tell me if you no longer wish to attend so that your place can be given to someone else. Many thanks.

Please wear loose clothing (trousers) with bare feet or non-slip socks/soft slippers. The hour-long session of exercises provides a top-to-toe workout with tips for daily-living activities in the home or street.

Newcomers are always welcome to come along to a taster session.

**Theatre Group: Thursday 19 December 'Guy Barker's Friendship Matinee' 3.30 pm Royal Albert Hall (RAH)**

## JANUARY GROUP NEWS

**Amble: Wednesday 22 January 11.15 am**

A 2.5-mile circular amble around the lakes of Dinton Pastures Country Park. Good stony paths with no stiles. Meet at 11.15 at the Dragonfly Café

**Bird Watching: Thursday 23 January: 10 am Dinton Pastures**

We return to the bird hides near Dinton Pastures, Winnersh. Wear stout shoes or boots as some of the access paths are prone to mud. Last year we were there in January and July and we saw a large number of birds.

**Books: Thursday 2 January 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Thurs 2 Jan: 'I am Malala' by Malala Yousafzai.

Thurs 6 Feb: 'Transcription' by Kate Atkinson.

New members are always welcome.

**Church Buildings: Wednesday 15 January 10.30 Abbey Baptist Church**

This is our annual planning meeting when we review previous events and plan our programme for the coming year. There will be a selection of photographs from our visits during 2019, recalling highlights and the many unusual features we have come across. We will also plan our programme for 2020.

**Collectables: Monday 20 January 2.30 pm**

**Coins & Medals update from 3 years ago, plus Working Models or Interesting Items that move**

Some of you will have coins/medals that were not seen some 3 years ago and there are new coins (eg 50p) all the time. Or, do you have some kind of gadget/model that 'does something', it can be new or old, eg a Meccano crane? Bring something if you can but you are also very welcome to come along empty handed!

New members are VERY welcome

**Debating Group: Tuesday 21 January 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Given the secret talks between civil servants and American pharmaceutical companies and the need for a trade deal with America if Brexit takes place, is there a risk of encroachment into the NHS despite vigorous denials by politicians?

**Enjoying Opera: Thursday 2 January 1.30 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Today's choice is Giuseppe Verdi's 'Simon Boccanegra' with Vladimir Chernov, Kiri Te Kanawa, Placido Domingo and Robert Lloyd, by the Metropolitan Opera, directed by James Levine (1995).

The plot is deeply set in the historical political turmoil of Genoa in the years 1339-1363 but, at its heart, it is a story of familial love and grief which transcends history. Running time is 141 minutes.

**French Film: Friday 24 January 1.45 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

'Les Demoiselles de Rochefort' (The Young Girls of Rochefort) (1967). A romantic musical comedy starring Catherine Deneuve and Françoise Dorléac (real-life sisters) as two sisters in search of love. Director Jacques Demy. 120 minutes. French with English subtitles.

**Photography: Wednesday 22 January 10.30 am Greyfriars Church, Friar Street**

The subject today is 'INSPIRE – ATIONAL'. We will discuss this further at our November meeting and hopefully come up with ideas over Christmas.

**Science & Technology Topics: Tuesday 28 January 2 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

The convenor of the newly formed Climate Repair Group will talk about a surprise Number One in the Top 100 Global Solutions to Climate Breakdown, and what you can do to help.

**Seated Exercise: Thursday 9 & 23 January. Seated by 10.30 am for Prompt Start. Abbey Baptist Church**

**Theatre Group: Wednesday 15 January 'Touching the Void' 2.30 pm Duke of York's Theatre, London**

**Town Study: Wednesday 8 January 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

We will hear back from our researchers who have been busy over Christmas producing our first report on Romsey, its history and buildings, the Abbey, Museum and transport. Our visit on Wednesday 11 March (departing Valpy Street at 09.15) will include a guided tour of the town and Abbey.

**Woodley, Shinfield and Earley Lunch: Monday 20 January 12 noon**

### READING U3A GROUPS TIMETABLE

		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
ONE	AM		BRIDGE CLUB	HERITAGE	LINE DANCING	GERMAN IMPROVER TAI CHI
WEEK	PM	BLANKET PROJECT**	FRENCH STORY READING TABLE TENNIS	WRITING FOR PLEASURE	BOOKS ENJOYING OPERA MADRIGALS	SINGING FOR PLEASURE
TWO	AM	QUIZ**	MEDITATION POETRY TILEHURST LUNCH CLUB		SEATED EXERCISE CURRENT AFFAIRS	ART WORKSHOPS FAMILY HISTORY PLAY READING TAI CHI
WEEK	PM	CLIMATE REPAIR	SPANISH CONVERSATION YOGA	TOWN STUDY	MEMBERS' MEETING	CRAFTS
THREE	AM	WOODLEY, SHINFIELD & EARLEY LUNCH CLUB	BRIDGE CLUB BRAIN TEASERS	CHURCH BUILDINGS FRENCH CONVERSATION	LINE DANCING	GERMAN IMPROVER PLAY READING TAI CHI
WEEK	PM	CHESS COLLECTABLES FOLK DANCING	DEBATING FRENCH STORY READING TABLE TENNIS	WIT AND HUMOUR	MADRIGALS	A GOOD READ SINGING FOR PLEASURE
FOUR	AM	NEW MEMBERS **	EMMER GREEN LUNCH CLUB MEDITATION PHILOSOPHY	COMPUTER GROUP PHOTOGRAPHY	BIRD WATCHING ITALIAN LEVEL 1 SEATED EXERCISE	ART WORKSHOPS CIRCLE DANCING TAI CHI
WEEK	PM	OPEN MEETING	SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY SPANISH CONVERSATION YOGA		HISTORY OF ART ITALIAN LEVEL 2	FRENCH FILMS** SHAKESPEAREAN FILMS**

\*\* alternate months

Some groups have dates, times and locations which vary - see full Newsletter for details:

*AMBLES/WALKS, GARDENS GROUP, THEATRE VISITS, ALTERNATIVE THEATRE VISITS*

ALSO – THIRD SUNDAY – SOLO SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB