

**APRIL-MAY 2019**



[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:** Our webmaster has been refreshing and updating our website over the last few weeks so it is worth checking to see the latest news of our activities. Many thanks to Fred for all his work but he does need our support to keep the website interesting and useful. Has your Group got any pictures or information that would add more interest? Spring has some great opportunities to enjoy sights around Reading – have you visited the University of Reading Harris Garden when the Japanese Cherry Trees are in blossom or the Forbury Garden when the Handkerchief tree is out? No charge and excellent for raising a smile. Enjoy.

**NEW MEMBERS' WELCOME MEETING**

As the usual date would be a Bank Holiday, the next Welcome Meeting will now take place on **Monday 3 June at 10.30 am ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH**  
If you have joined U3A in the last few months, this meeting is for you!

**MEMBERS' MEETING**

Thursday 11 April at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH  
**'Cooking for One (or More)'**

**OPEN MEETING**

Monday 22 April at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH  
**NO MEETING (Easter Monday)**

**MEMBERS' MEETING**

Thursday 9 May at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH  
**'Saving the Kennet Meadows' -**

**OPEN MEETING**

Monday 27 May at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH  
**NO MEETING (Bank Holiday)**

**Reminders**

**Ruth Ascher Masterclass: Sunday 31 March 2 pm St Joseph's College, Reading**

There is still time for you to get yourself a ticket for this superb event which was advertised in our last newsletter. Tickets are free. Please contact [webmaster@readingu3a.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@readingu3a.org.uk)  
Please do arrive in good time to take your seat for a prompt start at 2 p.m.

### **Interested in current affairs and what's in the news?**

There is just so much in the news every day these days, and so many different interpretations of what's behind the headlines. In response, we would like to start a Current Affairs group later this year, with each meeting offering the chance to review and analyse some of that month's news items. If you read a newspaper or a news magazine or follow the news programmes on the radio or television, this could be the group for you.

### **Spanish Conversation**

The Spanish Conversation group is proving popular and there are now two meetings each month – on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, at 2 pm, at RISC in London Street.

### **Travel Talks Group – help wanted**

Travel Talks is one of our most successful groups, thanks to the many Reading U3A members who like travelling and are happy to talk about their experiences. This year our presenters are taking us to Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and both North and South America. The group is looking for a new convenor.

### **New West Reading Lunch Group?**

We already have two very popular lunch groups on our list – in Emmer Green and in Woodley, Earley and Shinfield. Now a member has come forward to offer to coordinate something similar to the west of Reading.

### **Garden Visits**

As a result of our meeting in February we now have a programme of events covering the next few months. We are very grateful to those who volunteered to organise a trip and hope that more volunteers will be forthcoming as the year progresses. April's Group News highlights a trip to Oxford Botanic Gardens with the option of a guided tour. This needs to be booked in advance, so please take a look at that sooner rather than later. May's Group News details a trip to the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens near Romsey which should be very interesting.

**Wednesday 12 June: The Manor House Gardens**, Upton Grey, Hampshire, about 2 miles south east of Basingstoke. A once derelict Gertrude Jekyll designed garden lovingly restored by its owner Rosamund Wallinger. See <http://www.gertrudejekyllgarden.co.uk>. The garden was designed and planted in 1908-09 by Gertrude Jekyll and is the most accurately and fully restored of her gardens. The garden consists of a Wild garden where grass paths run amongst rambling roses, shrubs and trees to a planted pond. The Formal garden holds herbaceous borders with colours running from cool colours at either end to hot in the centre, a rose lawn, planted drystone walls, bowling and tennis lawns. This is surrounded by a nuttery, kitchen garden, and orchard with pergolas and arbours. Admission is £7 including the printed guide with plant lists and map.

### **Wednesday 10 July: a coach trip to Hidcote**

Hidcote is one of England's great Arts and Crafts gardens located in the north Cotswolds and created by American horticulturist Major Lawrence Johnston. Many of the unusual plants here were collected from Johnston's plant hunting trips around the world. The garden is divided into a series of outdoor rooms, each with its own character. There is a café. £23 for National Trust members, £35.70 for non members.

### **Mah Jong?**

One of our members has suggested setting up a Mah Jong group

### **Alternative Theatre Group**

**Thursday 27 June:** we are going to Woodley Theatre to see 'Emma'. Imagine Jane Austen's nieces acting out their aunt's book with Aunt Jane sometimes directing. Tickets £10.20.

**Friday 19 July:** we are going to Wokingham Theatre to see 'The Lady Killers'. Tickets are £12.

### **Theatre Group**

#### **'Everybody's Talking about Jamie': Wednesday 19 June 2.30 pm Apollo Theatre, London**

Once upon a time, there was a 16 year old boy who had a secret he wanted to tell. Jamie New lives in a council estate in Sheffield and he doesn't quite fit in. He is terrified about the future. He is going to be a sensation! Supported by his brilliant loving mum and surrounded by his friends, Jamie overcomes prejudice, beats the bullies and steps out of darkness into the spotlight. This musical is based on a BBC3 documentary first shown in 2011. See <https://www.everybodystalkingaboutjamie.co.uk/> for more information. Stalls tickets are £35.

### **‘Our Church’: Thursday 18 July 2.30 pm Watermill Theatre, Bagnor**

In some people’s lives there is a moment when something goes wrong, when they do something very bad, something that poisons their life for good. In a small village, the last remaining members of the dwindling church committee gather to discuss its future. At this critical meeting, Tom, a contentious nomination to join the committee, is put forward. Caught with indecent images of children on his computer, Tom has been to prison and is now on the sex offenders register. Whilst many of the community can’t forgive him, one committee member proposes that Tom is given a second chance.

When the impact of the past collides with the future of a village community, is forgiveness ever possible? A powerful and captivating new drama that explores, from multiple points of view, what it means to live a haunted life. See [https://www.watermill.org.uk/our\\_church](https://www.watermill.org.uk/our_church) for more information. Stalls tickets are £20.

### **TVN Study Days in 2019**

Various Study Days are in the planning stage for the summer and beyond:

- 3 April: Polar Exploration (part 2) – fully booked
- 30 April: Medicine & Art (repeat) – fully booked
- 28 May: History on Film (‘Harlots or Heroines’) (Abingdon) – places still available
- 4 July: First Aid (Benson) – flyer and booking form will be issued in April
- 30 August: Kelmscott Visit (the last visit before Kelmscott closes for refurbishment) – flyer and booking form will be issued in May
- 22 October: Ukulele (Benson)
- 26 November: Workshop – based on the Trustee Induction Paper (Benson)
- Geology: Date and venue to be confirmed
- Brandenburg Concert(s): Date and venue to be confirmed

As always, get your applications in ASAP to be sure of a place. More information at [http://www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk/Events\\_Programme\\_2019.html](http://www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk/Events_Programme_2019.html)

Possible Study Day topics for 2020 are Photography, the River Thames and its Boats, Genealogy, Architecture and Conspiracy Theories.

### **Citizens 800 Project: ‘Research Retreats’**

You will no doubt recall that a number of our members were involved recently in the Citizens 800 project in collaboration with Royal Holloway College. We are now moving on to the next stage – here is an extract from the project website:

*For phase two of the Citizens project's Shared Learning Projects we are hosting a series of Research Retreats where members of the U3A can help us delve into the archives to help us examine key milestones in the history of liberty, protest, rebellion and reform. Most Research Retreats will be held at Royal Holloway's campus in London and more dates will be added, so please do check back from time to time for updates.*

For more information about these Retreats, and how to apply, please go to <https://www.citizens800.org/u3a/>

**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.**

### **APRIL GROUP NEWS**

#### **Amble: Monday 15 April 10.45 am**

A linear Bluebell Walk of approx. 2.5 to 3 miles through Blundells Copse and Arthur Newbury Park. Flat to start with then one hill down and up.

#### **Amble: Monday 29 April 10.45 am**

A circular 3-mile amble commencing at 10.45 from The Crown and Garter pub in Inkpen, near Newbury, where we shall have lunch and park. The walk is along generally well kept paths through varied countryside, from light woodland to farmland and riverside, as well as some short stretches of quiet country lanes.

#### **Bird Watching: Thursday 25 April 10 am Theale Lakes**

We visit Theale Lakes today. This is a well-rehearsed haunt that I believe we all think is one of the best. Possible pub lunch after at The Fox and Hounds.

**Blanket Project: Monday 1 April 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 4 April 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Thurs 4 April: 'An Act of Treachery' by Ann Widdecombe.

Thurs 2 May: 'Gentlemen & Players' by Joanne Harris.

Thurs 6 June: '13 Minutes' by Sarah Pinborough.

New members are always welcome.

**Church Buildings: Wednesday 17 April**

We will be visiting 2 churches near Newbury. Details will be sent to members nearer the date.

**Coffee Morning & Quiz: Monday 8 April**

There will be no meeting in April. We will meet on 13 May instead - please see May Group News.

**Collectables: Monday 15 April 2.30 pm 'Old Photographs'**

Please bring along your old photographs, even if damaged. **Best ones will be those that tell a story about a place, person, event or long-lost trade** (but please realise a mere photo of your beloved great aunt Nellie may not be of interest to everyone!).

**Enjoying Opera: Thursday 4 April 1.30 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Today we have the 2-4-1 offer that is 'Cav & Pag'.

**Cavalleria Rusticana by Mascagni is a story of love, jealousy and revenge set in the Sicilian countryside and Pagliacci by Leoncavallo is about a travelling circus wherein life imitates art.**

**In both productions, the tenor is Plácido Domingo. Total running time is 140 minutes.**

**Family History: Friday 12 April 10.30 am Family History Centre, LDS Church, Tilehurst**

Mike Cooper returns with a talk entitled 'Alfred the Great - local lad made good'.

**Garden Visits: Monday 29 April 10.10 am**

**University of Oxford Botanic Garden with possible guided tour**

The Oxford Botanic Garden is the oldest in the UK with over 6000 different types of plant - an oasis of biodiversity in the heart of the city. Entrance is £4.00 (65 or over) or £5.45 (under 65). There is the option to have a guided tour lasting between 1 and 1.5 hours which costs £10, but **includes** your entrance fee.

**Heritage Group: Wednesday 3 April 10.35 am Design Museum, Kensington**

**History of Art: Thursday 25 April 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Victorian society was beginning to see children in a new light – their views shifted towards empathy and an awareness of vulnerability surfaced. We will complete our review of the works featured in an exhibition 'Seen and Heard' at The Guildhall, supplemented by works by other Victorian artists.

**Photography: Wednesday 24 April 10.30 am Greyfriars Church Centre, Friar Street.**

Table-top 'black and white' photography. Please bring a small item to photograph. You can either take 'black and white' straight from your camera, or change it on the computer later. More details nearer the meeting date.

**Science & Technology Topics: Tuesday 23 April 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

'The Periodic Table – Putting Order into Inorganic Chemistry'. The origins and construction of the periodic table will be described, together with the ways in which it helps the understanding of the chemistry of the 90+ elements.

**Seated Exercise: Thursday 12 & 26 April Seated by 10.30 am for Prompt Start. Abbey Baptist Church**

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: 'Tartuffe': Wednesday 24 April at 2.15 pm Lyttleton Theatre, London**

If you have booked for this show then meet near the information desk at Reading Station at 11.00 to catch the 11.12 train to Waterloo (arrives 12.34). Buy an off-peak ticket costing £12.95 with senior railcard. With this ticket you must travel via Staines. There will be time for lunch at a venue of your choice before the **14.15 start**.

**Travel Talk: Thursday 18 April - NO MEETING**

No meeting this month because the venue is unavailable, but we look forward to seeing you all on 16 May for 'Essence of Japan'!

**Walk: Monday 1 April 11 am**

Meet at Carfax Tower at 11.00 to enjoy a 5-mile urban walk round Oxford including University Parks, River Cherwell, Headington Hill and Christchurch Meadow. Lunch is your own choice.

**Woodley, Shinfield and Earley Lunch: Monday 15 April 12 noon  
The Waterside Inn, Fairwater Drive, Woodley**

*MAY GROUP NEWS*

**Amble: Monday 13 May 11 am**

A short amble of about 2 miles, but with two hills, between Spring Wood and Peppard Common.

**Amble: Friday 31 May 10.30 am**

A 2-mile circular amble from The Bull (an old coaching inn on the former road to Bath) on level paths over Theale Golf course to the hamlet of North Street, with its variety of old houses and cottages, then back across the field to Holy Trinity Church and the High Street. Lunch at The Bull.

**Bird Watching: Thursday 23 May 10 am Coley Pastures**

This is a return visit after our successful outings last year. A circular walk in the lovely countryside behind the Coley Park estate that can be as quick or as long as we like (max 2 hours).

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

Thurs 2 May: 'Gentlemen & Players' by Joanne Harris.

Thurs 6 June: '13 Minutes' by Sarah Pinborough.

New members are always welcome.

**Church Buildings: Wednesday 15 May**

We plan to visit 3 churches, venturing over the border into Buckinghamshire.

**Coffee Morning & Quiz: Monday 13 May 10 for 10.30 am Abbey Baptist Church**

**THIS REPLACES OUR USUAL APRIL MEETING**

We meet at 10.00 for coffee/tea and biscuits, and a chat, then the Quiz begins at around 10.30. We are a lively and sociable group - the quizzes are good fun and a great opportunity for new members to meet people.

**Collectables: Monday 20 May 2.30 pm 'Bears, dolls, mascots & favourite cuddly toys'**

If they're tattered and torn or missing an ear, then that may be a story in itself?!

**Debating: Tuesday 21 May 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Illegal Drugs: how should we as a country be dealing with this problem, and what can any government do to manage/control it more effectively?

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

Today's offering is 'Tosca' by Giacomo Puccini, set in early 19 century Rome, and starring Catherine Malfitano as Tosca, Plácido Domingo as Cavaradossi and Ruggero Raimondi as Baron Scarpia. Running time is 114 minutes.

**Family History: Friday 10 May 10.30 am Family History Centre, LDS Church, Tilehurst**

a talk entitled (something like) 'No such thing as an ordinary life' - the reminiscences of fairly 'ordinary', many aspects of their lives are extraordinarily interesting.

**French Films: Friday 24 May 1.45 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

'Untouchable' (2011). A quadriplegic Parisian millionaire strikes up an unlikely friendship with a young man from a deprived area, who has been hired as his carer. A comedy with pathos. Starring François Cluzet and Omar Cy. Directed by Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano. Length: 107 minutes. French with English subtitles. **Reminder: our film for Friday 22 March will be 'Les 400 Coups'.**

**Garden Visits: Wednesday 22 May 9.35 am Sir Harold Hillier Gardens, near Romsey**

A visit to the world famous 180-acre Hillier Gardens. Discover the longest border after Kew's magnus opus, as well as art in the garden and a photofusion exhibition. Excellent cafeteria in situ. Entrance fee (senior rate) is about £9.

**Heritage Group: Wednesday 1 May 10.50 am River and Rowing Museum, Henley**

where there is an Exhibition of William Morris's work relating to the River Thames and surroundings. The entrance fee is £11.50 for concessions, valid for 12 months.

**History of Art: Thursday 23 May 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

The four men known as the Scottish Colourists share one thing. None is as well-known as they deserve to be. They play with light and colour in different ways but always with consummate technical skill, making each picture an eye-opener. We will show a DVD which will bring their work and their times to life.

**Photography: Wednesday 22 May 10.30 am**

A member has offered her home in Leibenrood Road for a photography shoot and it is in close proximity to Prospect Park for photo opportunities. Details to be confirmed; you will receive an email nearer the time.

**Science & Technology Topics: Tuesday 28 May 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

How the Immune System protects us from the assaults and insults of daily life will be discussed with particular reference to vaccination. The young and the elderly benefit from some support of our natural defence mechanisms.

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

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: 'Amelie': Thursday 2 May 2.30 pm Watermill Theatre near Newbury**

**Theatre Group: 'Abbaphonic': Wednesday 29 May 3 pm, Royal Albert Hall**

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

Our researchers for Hampstead and Highgate will today report on Hampstead. Talks will cover Significant People – past and present; Keats' House and Burgh House; Fenton House and 2 Willow Road; the Village and The Spaniard's Inn. We will also start an 'expression of interest' list regarding our site **visit on Wednesday 12 June.**

**Town Study: Wednesday 29 May 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Further researches on Highgate in readiness for our **visit in two weeks time on Wednesday 12 June** when the coach will leave at 09.15 from Valpy Street.

**Travel Talk: Essence of Japan: Thursday 16 May 2.15 pm, Abbey Baptist Church**

A country of contrasts, ancient and ultra-modern, where high-paced cities have sprung up around the hushed shrines and serene gardens.

**Walk: Monday 13 May 10.05 am**

A 6.5-mile linear walk from Wargrave to Henley encompassing hills and several stiles. It may also be muddy. Lunch is at The Catherine Wheel in Henley.

**Woodley, Shinfield and Earley Lunch: Monday 20 May 12 noon The Rustic Café, Maiden Place, Kilnsea Drive, Lower Earley**

## READING U3A GROUPS TIMETABLE

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