

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2019



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

**Letter from the Chairman:** Although not as hot as last year we are enjoying a long warm, dry spell as I write this. Gardens are looking very good and have been enjoyed by many members, especially during the Gardens Group outings. This summer has been a great time to get outdoors – if only to water the thirsty pot plants. The annual meeting of our Group Convenors is on July 29 so I am looking forward to letting them know how much we appreciate their continuing hard work. Their organisation of activities in the interest groups makes Reading U3A a success. I am sure a lively discussion of U3A matters will also take place. Our AGM takes place at the end of September so please come along and hear about this year. Please read the information in this Newsletter about the meeting. Cake of some sort usually makes a pleasant end to the proceedings.

The annual membership subscription renewal form is also in this Newsletter – we hope you will all continue to enjoy your membership activities.

**NEW MEMBERS' WELCOME MEETING**

**On Monday 23 September at 10.30 am BROOKSIDE ROOM, ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH**

If you have joined U3A in the last few months, this meeting is for you! Come along and learn more about the U3A locally, nationally and internationally. The talk starts promptly at 10.30 and when it is finished you can meet and chat to other new members over a cup of tea or coffee. I look forward to seeing you there.

**MEMBERS' MEETING**

Thursday 8 August at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH

**'Reading's link with San Francisco Libre, Nicaragua'.**

**OPEN MEETING**

Monday 26 August at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH

**NO MEETING as this is a Bank Holiday**

**MEMBERS' MEETING**

Thursday 12 September at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH

**'Australia – what it's like to actually live there' (warts and all).**

**OPEN MEETING**

Monday 23 September at 2.15 pm ABBEY BAPTIST CHURCH

**READING U3A ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**S T O P   P R E S S**

**French Film: 'Le Château de Ma Mère' on Friday 26 July – DATE CANCELLED**

Screening rearranged for 1.30 pm on Friday 23 August at Abbey Baptist Church

**Reading U3A Annual General Meeting:**

**Monday 23 September 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

**Please note** that our 2019 AGM will take place on Monday 23 September - this is your opportunity to question your Committee in open session about the management of Reading U3A.

### **Refreshments for Open and Members' Meetings**

Tea and coffee makers for these meetings will be drawn from the Church Buildings Group in August and the Circle Dancing Group in September.

### **Reading U3A Holiday to Liverpool and the North West – April 2020**

Is it too early to think about a Spring holiday next year? No – of course not! Have a look at the Flyer and other paperwork attached to this newsletter for all information. Hope you can join us! Don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions.

### **'They Get Everywhere!'**

The date is seared on my memory, 9 July. I was on holiday and visiting Highclere Castle (aka Downton Abbey). I asked a badged official-looking person a question about the room we were in. It transpired the lanyard and badge about her neck was actually U3A. Interestingly she was the leader of a 'GADABOUT Group' from Locks Heath U3A, near Portsmouth.

We laughed and discussed the merits and benefits of U3A in general and I passed on greetings from Reading. YES, U3A members really do get everywhere.

### **Ambling Group planning meeting**

We shall be having a meeting on Thursday 15 August starting at 10.30 to plan our ambles for the winter.

### **Climate Repair interest group**

This group is for anyone concerned about saving the children's future. It is no longer enough to 'do less harm' to the Earth; now we must also repair it.

To begin, we will establish what Climate Repair means to us (no science knowledge needed). We'll record this for the benefit of later group members and anyone else interested, such as friends, family (of all ages) and the local community.

The upside of any repair is that it is inherently focused, optimistic, constructive and practical – in sharp contrast to the generic doom and gloom about climate matters in the media.

Anyone can do their bit for climate repair, rather like the WWII war effort. Therefore we'll go on to uncover and study what is already being done in our town and around. As we gain knowledge, we will be increasingly able to look at what could and should be done in addition, for example, to scale up small successes.

The long term vision, for those who want to continue, is to put what we learn into practice. While a few climate repair actions can be solitary, most are best done with other people. Some actions, by their nature, also address social problems like fuel poverty and food insecurity, which might provide extra motivation.

### **Urban Sketching**

I have decided that, owing to losing numbers as people rearrange their priorities and change their lifestyles, it has become time to call it a day with Urban Sketching, so there will be no more meetings of the group. I am very happy to join anyone interested in meeting to sketch on a personal basis, at any time but not on fixed days. Thank you for the times we have had together.

*Our thanks go to Judith for organising this group and we wish all our sketchers success in their future projects.  
The Committee*

### **Alternative Theatre**

#### **'Hansel & Gretel': Thursday 12 December 6 pm 21 South Street**

Reading Between the Lines Theatre Company's production still has tickets for this 12 December play – not a panto - which has interesting music and some puppetry

**Advanced notice:** Reading Between the Lines will be putting on a play about Hugh Farringdon, the last Abbot of Reading in the Abbey ruins next summer. The researcher is the same person who did the research for 'Matilda' etc, working with Reading University. Details available nearer the time.

## Theatre Group

### **'9 to 5 The Musical': Wednesday 16 October 2.30 pm New Victoria Theatre, Woking**

With an Oscar, Grammy and Tony award-nominated score by the Queen of Country herself, Dolly Parton, and a book by the iconic movie's original screenwriter Patricia Resnick, this hilarious new production is about teaming up, standing up and taking care of business! See <https://www.atgtickets.com/shows/9-to-5-the-musical/new-victoria-theatre/> for more details.

### **'Prism': Thursday 14 November 2.30 pm Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford**

The astonishing true story of the man who made Hollywood's greatest divas beautiful. Jack has retired to the sleepy village of Denham, Buckinghamshire. His days of hard work - and play - on some of the most famous film sets in the world are now long behind him, as are his secret liaisons with some of the most famous women in the world... Surrounded by memorabilia from a lifetime of 'painting with light', the writing of an autobiography should be an easy matter - were it not that Jack would now rather live in the past than remember it. Robert Lindsay stars in Terry Johnson's delightfully witty and poignant play based on the extraordinary life of a double Oscar-winning cinematic master, Jack Cardiff. See <https://www.yvonne-arnaud.co.uk/production/prism> for more details.

### **'Guy Barker's Big Band Christmas': Thursday 19 December 3.30 pm Royal Albert Hall**

A swinging, soulful celebration of big band music with a Christmas twist! Guy Barker's mixture of jazz classics, unearthed treasures and Christmas oddities will put a swing in your step as the festive season kicks off. With Barker's musical mastery and illustrious guests raising the roof, Guy Barker's Big Band Christmas can convert even the grumpiest bah humbugs to the joy of Christmas. See <https://www.royalalberthall.com/tickets/events/2019/guy-barkers-big-band-christmas/> for more details.

## **Travel Talks: Living in Africa**

A number of Reading U3A members have lived in Africa, and the Travel Talks Group's September meeting will find out what it was like. We have invited three members, who have lived in various African countries for a joint total of over 50 years to talk about their experiences – and there will be chance for others to contribute.

## **History of Woodley – Shared Learning Project**

A number of our members are involved in the History of Woodley Project which is being run by Ann Smith from Wokingham U3A. As well as including members from Reading and Wokingham, some people from the new Woodley U3A have also joined. We met recently to discuss the progress of the project and heard about a number of different lines of research, including information on how a local railway accident in 1841 led to the first regulation of the conditions on third class trains.

As part of the project, St John's Church, in Church Road, Woodley (RG5 4QN), together with the former primary school and head teacher's cottage, will be open to the public as part of the Heritage Open Days – this will be on **Saturday 21 September**, from 1100 to 1600. As well as a display about the project, there will be tours conducted by members of the congregation and former pupils. This is a free drop-in event – no need to book – and tea and cakes will be available.

## **Older People's Day, Broad Street Mall**

Reading Council, together with a number of organisations in Reading, is holding an Older People's Day on **Monday 30 September** between 10.00 and 15.00. The theme will be 'Age-Friendly Reading'. The event will take place in the central square of Broad Street Mall and possibly use the upstairs walkways as well. Details of the programme are yet to be confirmed, but will include information stands, demonstrations and musical interludes. Look out in the next newsletter (and of course on our website and Facebook page) for more information, and meanwhile make a note of the date.

## **Ruth Ascher Masterclass**

Don't forget to make a note in that bit in the back of your diary which has the calendar for next year – there will be another Masterclass in memory of Ruth Ascher on **Sunday 29 March 2020**.

The Masterclass team were recently told, by an eagle-eyed member, of a number of books which had been spotted in a local charity shop. The inscriptions inside the books showed that they had at one time belonged to Ruth. One of the team rushed off to the shop and was able to acquire a number of the books – and tucked away in one of them was a lovely piece of personal correspondence, which we hope to add to our display of Ruth Ascher memorabilia at the Masterclass.

## Thames Valley Network (TVN)

**Thames Valley Network Study Days** planned for the rest of the year:

- Friday 30 August: Kelmscott. *This visit is now full with a waiting list.*
- Tuesday 22 October: Ukulele. (Benson).
- Thursday 21 November: Britain's Ancient Past. (Benson)
- Tuesday 26 November: Workshop (Benson) – based on the Trustee Induction Paper (especially useful for new committee members)
- 2020 Study Days: Possible topics are Photography, the River Thames and its Boats, Genealogy and Conspiracy Theories.

As well as Study Days to look forward to, the following events are also planned:

- Sunday 25 August: Summer Jazzfest for any jazz fans. Organised by Chiltern U3A Jazz Appreciation Group. Details will be on our notice board at meetings, or you can download the poster and form here: [http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/IMG\\_20190510\\_0001.pdf](http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/IMG_20190510_0001.pdf)
- Brandenburg Christmas Concert(s). Date and venue yet to be confirmed, but possibly near Paddington.

As always, get your applications in as soon as possible to be sure of a place. All study days are posted on the TVN website, <http://www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk>.

**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.**

### AUGUST GROUP NEWS

#### **Amble: Wednesday 14 August 10.30 am**

A short amble plus a visit to Ham House (NT), via Richmond.

#### **Amble: Monday 19 August 10.05 am**

A linear amble of approximately 2.75 miles from Lower Shiplake to Henley along the Thames Path via Marsh Lock.

#### **Bird Watching: Thursday 22 August 10 am Southcote (Hatford Road)**

We meet at the east end of Southcote Linear Park. This gives us a nice choice of grassy paths and there should be plenty of twitterings in the trees

#### **Blanket Project: Monday 5 August 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 1 August 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Thurs 1 Aug: 'All Among the Barley' by Melissa Harrison.

Thurs 5 Sept: 'Cartes Postales from Greece' by Victoria Hislop.

Thurs 3 Oct: 'Pachinko' by Min Jin Lee.

#### **Church Buildings: Wednesday 21 August**

We expect to visit two churches in Berkshire, East Woodhay and West Woodhay, both of which sound extremely interesting.

#### **Coffee Morning & Quiz: Monday 12 August 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.

#### **Debating: Tuesday 20 August 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Should the UK intervene in Hong Kong's affairs?

#### **Garden Visits: Sunday 11 August, Harris Garden**

As many of you will know the Harris Garden is situated on the Whetknights Campus of Reading University. Although you can visit at any time we have decided to organise a Sunday visit as, on the second Sunday of each month during the summer, the garden is opened to raise funds for a local charity.

**Garden Visits: Wednesday 7 August, Danesfield House Hotel Open Garden Day**

The Heritage Group will be visiting Danesfield House Garden between Henley and Marlow which is open as part of the National Garden Scheme, so please take a look at their entry directly below for more details.

**Heritage Group: Wednesday 7 August, Danesfield House Hotel Open Garden Day**

It is free to visit the gardens on this day. You cannot picnic in the gardens and refreshments will be in the hotel only. If you would like to book a garden tour you need to phone 01628 891010. Tours are at 10.30, 13.30 and 15.00 and cost £4.50 which you pay on the day.

**History of Art: Thursday 22 August 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

The life and works of L S Lowry – was he more than matchstick men?

**Photography: Wednesday 28 August 10.30 am Greyfriars Church Centre, Friar Street**

‘Free Websites’ – Look for photography-related websites which may be useful to us, whether it is for loading your photographs and enhancing them, making gifts, or just looking at other photographers’ work.

**Seated Exercise: Thursday 8 & 22 August. Seated by 10.30 am for Prompt Start. Abbey Baptist Church**

**Theatre Group: ‘The 39 Steps’: Thursday 15 August 2.30 pm Theatre Royal, Windsor**

**Town Study: Wednesday 14 August 2.15 pm**

Our double bill of Jordans and the Chalfonts continues with reports back on the Chalfonts and Milton’s Cottage.

**Travel Talk: Oman: Thursday 15 August 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Land of Sultans, Sultanas and Sindbad, of camels and crenellations, of doughnuts and dhows. An illustrated talk will show highlights of an enjoyable visit to the Sultanate of Oman, a land of ancient heritage, long allied to Britain, which occupies a strategic role in the Middle East but is governed by an increasingly frail ruler.

**Walk: Monday 12 August 10.15 am**

A 5.25-mile circular walk on mainly level ground through woods and country lanes around Woodcote, College Wood, Hook End and Hammonds. One stile.

**Woodley, Shinfield and Earley Lunch: Monday 19 August 12 for 12.30 pm Toby Carvery, Lower Earley**

**SEPTEMBER GROUP NEWS**

**Amble: Wednesday 4 September 11 am** A 2.6-mile circular walk around the lanes and fields in the parish of Binfield. The walk is mostly flat but does have a couple of inclines. It follows field edges which may be very muddy after wet weather. There are no stiles but a number of chain gates.

**Amble: Monday 16 September 11 am**

A 3-mile circular amble starting in Wallingford, then through fields to Benson Lock returning on the Thames Path. Catch Thames

**Bird Watching: Thursday 26 September 10 am Theale Lakes**

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

Thurs 5 Sept: ‘Cartes Postales from Greece’ by Victoria Hislop.

Thurs 3 Oct: ‘Pachinko’ by Min Jin Lee.

**Church Buildings: Wednesday 18 September**

We plan to visit 3 sites today. In the morning we will visit the Grade 2 listed church of St Mary the Virgin in Wheatley (Theresa May's father was once the vicar here). Part of its churchyard is looked after by the War Graves Commission as men from both World Wars are buried there. Then we will visit a URC church which was once a tanning barn. After lunch we shall visit the very old chapel at Waterperry, and there should be time for people to go round Waterperry Gardens if they wish.

**Current Affairs: Thursday 12 September 10.30 am Abbey Baptist Church**

This will be the first meeting of the new Current Affairs Group.

**Debating: Tuesday 17 September 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

Have Trump's actions and those of some of his hawkish staff made the world a less safe place?

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

Today will be a research day where we can use the extensive facilities at the Family History Centre. Help will be available for those needing it. Please let me know if you will be coming along so that computer seats etc can be sorted out.

**French Film: Friday 27 September 1.45 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

'Les Choristes' (The Chorus) 2005. A new teacher at a strict boarding school for boys tries to enrich his pupils lives through music. Starring Gérard Jugnot. Directed by Christophe Barratier. 97 minutes long. French with English subtitles. **Reminder:** 'Le Chateau de ma Mere'. **The original date of 26 July has had to be cancelled.** It has been rescheduled for Friday 23 August.

**Garden Visits: Saturday 14 September RISC Edible Roof Garden**

The Roof Garden in London Street was developed to demonstrate sustainability and our dependence on plants. All plants in the garden have an economic use for food, clothing, medicine, etc and come from all over the world. Not usually open to the general public, the garden opens up most years for Heritage Open Days and also from time to time as part of the NGS Open Gardens Scheme. On Heritage Day entry is free and the garden is open between noon and 16.00. There is no need to book. You will be able to get tea and cake in the global café after your visit.

**Heritage Group: Wednesday 4 September Chiswick House and Gardens**

Entry to the gardens and conservatory are free and entry to the house is £5.30 for concessions. There is a café there.

**History of Art: Thursday 26 September 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

A look at some of the artists, paintings and galleries in New York.

**Photography: Wednesday 25 September 11 am Green Park, Reading**

We will be organising a meeting at Green Park. There are many areas to photograph, from buildings to wildlife. Buses run frequently, and there is also parking

**Science & Technology: Tuesday 24 September 2 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

'Energy for the 22<sup>nd</sup> century – Nuclear Fusion?' Sharing knowledge and thoughts on this long-promised source of energy. Will it really happen?

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

**Theatre Group: 'An Inspector Calls': Thursday 19 September 2 pm Mayflower Theatre, Southampton**

**Town Study: Wednesday 11 September - NO MEETING**

However, please note that **our next visit is on Wednesday 9 October**, to Jordans and the Chalfonts, departing from Valpy Street at 09.15.

**Travel Talk: Living in Africa: Thursday 19 September 2.15 pm Abbey Baptist Church**

What is it like to live in Africa? Is it really the 'Dark Continent'? How do people cope with the heat, the dust, the wildlife, the different languages and cultures? Three of our members have between them spent over 50 years in a number of African countries and their illustrated presentation will give us a flavour of what it is like to live, work and play there.

**Walk: Monday 9 September 10.35 am**

A **linear** walk of around 4.5 miles, from Loddon Bridge to Arborfield Cross via Sindlesham Mill. Easy walking, with several stiles, plus the usual mud here and there.

**Walk: Friday 27 September 10.20 am**

A 5-mile **linear** walk from Mapledurham Playing Field to The Sun at Whitchurch Hill. Good views, with some uphill bits.

**Woodley, Shinfield and Earley Lunch: Monday 16 September 12 for 12.30 pm  
The George, Loddon Bridge Road**

## 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 LUNCH CLUB	COMPUTER GROUP	SEATED EXERCISE CURRENT AFFAIRS (from September 2019)	ART WORKSHOPS FAMILY HISTORY PLAY READING TAI CHI
	PM		SPANISH CONVERSATION YOGA	TOWN STUDY	MEMBERS' MEETING	CRAFTS SINGING FOR PLEASURE
<b>THREE</b>	AM	LUNCH CLUB	BRIDGE CLUB BRAIN TEASERS	CHURCH BUILDINGS FRENCH CONVERSATION	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
<b>FOUR</b>	AM	NEW MEMBERS **	LUNCH CLUB MEDITATION PHILOSOPHY	COMPUTER GROUP 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