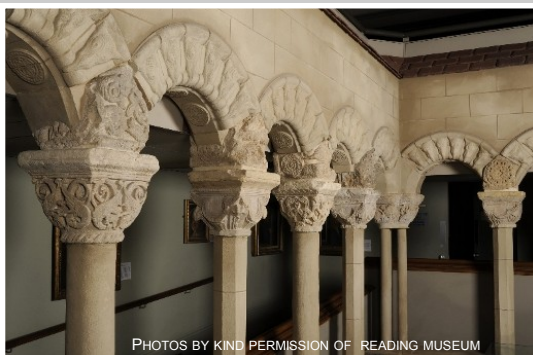
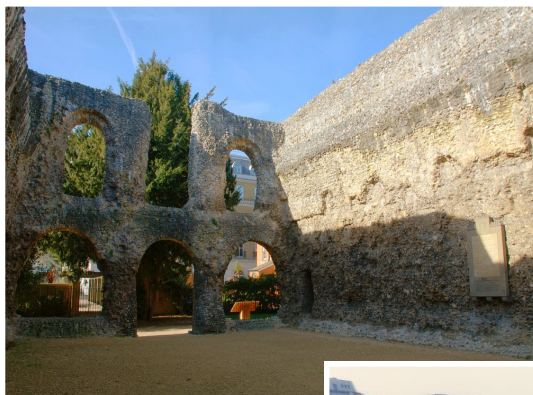


PHOTO © LESLIE



PHOTOS BY KIND PERMISSION OF READING MUSEUM



About The Friends of Reading Abbey

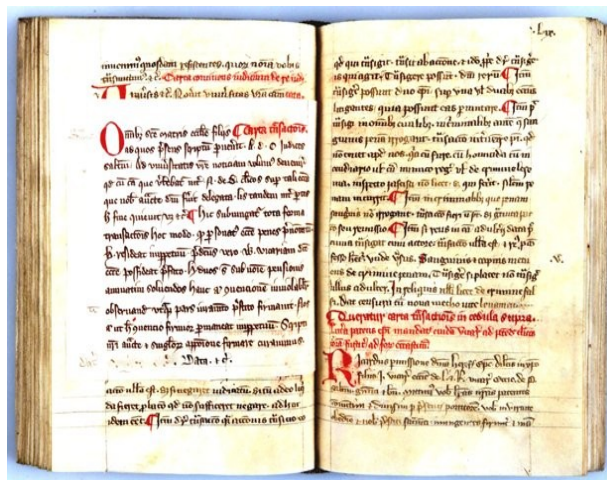
President: Professor Brian Kemp FSA

The Friends of Reading Abbey was founded to promote awareness of the Abbey's importance, to encourage interest in and understanding of its history and architecture, and to support the preservation of the ruins.

It sponsors public lectures on subjects associated with the history of the Abbey twice a year; publishes a regular newsletter and organises a summer outing.

Since 2011 the Friends have been represented on Reading Borough Council's Abbey Quarter Board, which is working to raise funds to restore the ruins and allow public access to the site once more.

In 2013 the Friends helped to purchase a rare fourteenth-century Abbey Manuscript, pictured below. This is held in the Berkshire Record Office.



You can support this work by joining the Friends.

Visit our website: www.readingabbey.org.uk



Friends of Reading Abbey



PHOTO © CHRIS WOOD

Supporting and promoting the Abbey

A Brief History of Reading Abbey



Model of the Abbey as at 1500 (Reading Museum)

Reading Abbey was a famous royal abbey of Benedictine monks, founded on a lavish scale in 1121 by one of the greatest of medieval English kings, Henry I. It contained the tomb of that king and remained under royal patronage until its dissolution in 1539.

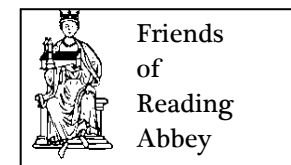
Conveniently situated on major communication routes, it witnessed many important royal and other historical events, including the marriage of John of Gaunt to Blanche of Lancaster in 1359, and the publication of Edward IV's secret marriage to Elizabeth Woodville in 1464.

The abbey was richly endowed by the royal family and others, and held estates and churches in many English counties. The abbey's presence helped the little town of Reading, which was under its lordship, to grow and prosper. Monastic life came to an end in 1539.

The last abbot, Hugh Cook *alias* Faringdon refused to surrender his abbey to Henry VIII and was found guilty of treason and executed near the abbey gate in November, 1539.

Why is Reading Abbey Important?

- Founded by Henry I, it was among the wealthiest and most significant abbeys of medieval England
- Renowned for its nationally important Romanesque carvings (some of which may be seen in Reading Museum)
- The famous round 'Sumer is icumen in' was written here in the thirteenth century
- A venue for Parliaments and Church Councils
- An important influence on the development of the town of Reading
- Impressive and evocative ruins



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Title: _____ First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

Memberships run from 1 Sept to 31 Aug and current subscriptions are:

- Family: £10.00 p.a.
- Single: £ 7.00 p.a.
- Society/Commercial £15 p.a.
- Life: £105.00

Please send your completed form and subscription to:

The Honorary Treasurer, Iris Hunt
3 Mitchell Lodge
269 Bath Road, Reading
RG30 2BN
treasurer@readingabbey.org.uk

With your support we can keep working to promote Reading Abbey

Cheques payable to 'The Friends of Reading Abbey'