



# NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2015

**Patrons:**

*The Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire*

*The MP for Reading East*

*The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Reading*

*The MP for Reading West*

*The Right Reverend the Bishop of Reading*

*The Vice Chancellor, Reading University*

*The Abbot of Douai*

**President:** *Professor Brian Kemp* **Vice Presidents:** *Janet Bond* *Leslie Cram*

You are invited to the  
**Annual General Meeting**  
of the Friends of Reading Abbey  
**Saturday 24 October 2015 at 2.30pm**  
*(doors open at 2.00pm)*

**The Wroughton Room**  
**Berkshire Record Office, 9 Coley Avenue, Reading RG1 6AF**

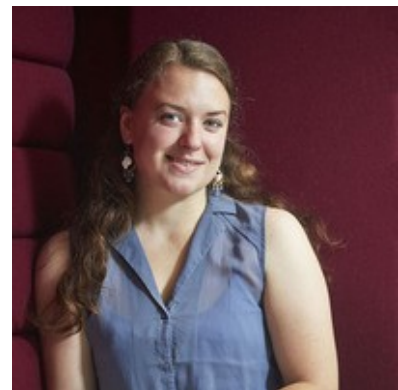
Following the AGM we welcome Harriet Mahood from the University of Reading, to give this year's lecture on

## **READING ABBEY GATEHOUSE**

Harriet won the Berkshire Prize at Reading University in 2011 for her undergraduate dissertation comparing Reading and Paisley abbeys. Now studying for a PhD, her research is into the design and function of medieval ecclesiastical gatehouses, and their place at the meeting of the monastery and the outside world.

In her lecture, Harriet will discuss Reading Abbey's gatehouse in the wider context of monastic gatehouses in medieval England.

*All members are welcome to come along to the AGM, free of charge, as are interested friends and colleagues.*



*Harriet Mahood*

*Refreshments .... Parking On Site*

**Friends' Summer Party  
Caversham Court Gardens 21 June**

Friends of Reading Abbey, Caversham Court Gardens and Reading Museums held another very successful event in June. The many visitors to the gardens enjoyed the entertainment and showed great interest in the displays of each organisation. Again, the summer party proved to be an effective way to spread awareness of the Abbey and its importance. Local businesses kindly donated prizes for the raffle which was drawn by the Mayor, Councillor Sarah Hacker. We are indebted to all the local supporters and helpers, and in particular to Dr & Mrs Fahami (pictured below, right) for their sponsorship of this event.



The Barberettes in full voice



Pangbourne Silver Band



Members of the Friends' Committees, with the Mayor



The Progress Theatre Players

## Reading Water Fest

13 June 2015

This popular event is held in Reading's Chestnut Walk, with further entertainment in the Forbury Gardens. Reading Museum's tours of the Abbey Ruins were fully subscribed and 24 tours took place on the day, enabling some 288 eager folk to access the ruins. Friends of Reading Abbey assisted with the tours and helped on the Museum stand. You will find more photos on our website & Facebook pages.



## Friends of Reading Abbey Outing 8 July 2015

There are connections between Reading Abbey and a number of Oxford colleges and the Friends' 2015 annual outing focused on exploring some of these.

*Christ Church College* was chosen as an exemplar of a medieval religious building - how Reading Abbey might have looked before the Reformation. The Friends' president, Professor Brian Kemp conducted the tour.

*Merton College* The chapel at Merton was built upon land formerly owned by Reading Abbey. The college still has the seal recording the conveyance in 1255, and the artefact enjoys the status of being item Number 1 in the catalogue of Merton College's possessions. Professor Kemp had negotiated with Merton College authorities for the seal to be available for the Friends to view.

*Magdalen College* After lunch the Friends assembled at the lodge of Magdalen College. Dr Robin Darwall-Smith, College Archivist, led the way to the Great Hall to view the linenfold panelling, reputed to have originally been installed in Reading Abbey.

*Balliol College Archive* The final visit of the day was to the College's Archive where the Friends were met by Miss Anna Sander, College Archivist. The main item of interest for the Friends was of course the seal of the Abbot of Reading, Nicholas of Whaplode, dated 1328.

Our thanks to Dr Julia Walworth and to Dr Julian Reid, (Merton College); Dr Robin Darwall-Smith (Magdalen College) and to Professor Brian Kemp for conducting the tours and to the authorities of the colleges for permission to view these remarkable items related to the history of Reading's Abbey. Thanks also to John Painter for organising the day so well.



Linenfold panelling at Magdalen College



Viewing the Great Seal at Balliol College

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 24 October 2015 2.30pm  
Wroughton Room, Berkshire Record Office, Coley Place, Reading

### AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of the AGM held on 25 October 2014
4. Matters Arising
5. Chairman's Report
6. Secretary's Report
7. Treasurer's Report
8. Election of Officers and Committee Members:  
*President and Vice-Presidents*  
*Chairman*  
*Secretary*  
*Treasurer*  
*Ordinary Members of the Committee*
9. Constitution:  
*Proposal to increase the number of ordinary members on the committee from four to five and to amend the rule relating to the Chairman's casting vote.*
10. Appointment of Independent Examiner
11. Membership Subscriptions 2015-16
12. Any Other Business

*(The Annual Lecture follows the formal AGM)*

#### **OTHER NEWS:**

**Heritage Lottery Fund** - Reading Borough Council has made its second round application to the lottery fund and if successful, the council anticipates that work to restore the Abbey Ruins would begin next year. A detailed programme of conservation and repairs for the Abbey Ruins and the Abbey Gate has been developed by the project's architects. The Heritage Lottery Fund's decision will be announced in the new year.

**St Laurence Churchyard Wall Restored** - Works to the Grade Two listed wall are complete, allowing the footpath to be reopened after 30 years. Many original bricks were reused, plus traditional materials such as lime mortar and handmade bricks.

**Reading's own VC—Trooper Potts**— Funds have been raised to erect a memorial statue to Trooper Potts VC (awarded the VC for bravery during the Gallipoli campaign in **1915**) and Trooper Andrews, of the Berkshire Yeomanry. The memorial outside The Forbury, opposite the Forbury Hotel, will be unveiled on 4 October at 11am by The Lord Lieutenant for the Royal County of Berkshire, Mr James Puxley. Details on Trooper Potts Memorial Trust website [www.pottsvctrust.org](http://www.pottsvctrust.org) (69 Baker Street, Reading RG1 7XY). The ceremony is public but space is limited.

#### **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**

There will be no change to our annual subscription rates for 2015-16. Subs for the new year are payable from 31 August 2015 to our Treasurer: Iris Hunt, 3 Mitchell Lodge, 269 Bath Road, Reading RG30 2BN.

**NB** - You can now pay by electronic transfer or standing order - more details are given on our website, [www.readingabbey.org.uk](http://www.readingabbey.org.uk) - look under Join the Friends / Renew Membership.