

Thur 23 March 2023 at 7.30pm
(Tea/Coffee from 7pm)

FREE ENTRY

Venue

**Meadow Suite, Park House,
Whiteknights Campus, RG6 6UR
(Follow signs to Car Park 10)
See [https://www.reading.ac.uk/
about/visit-us.aspx](https://www.reading.ac.uk/about/visit-us.aspx)**

Contact

**Professor Richard Mitchell
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EC3 Specialised Section**

Book your place at
<https://localevents.theiet.org/3c85ce>

theiet.org/communities

#ForThoseWhoDoMore

EC3 Specialised Section

James Lovelock and Cybernetics at Reading

**Richard Mitchell, Professor of Cybernetics,
University of Reading**

James Lovelock, an independent scientist, a designer of various scientific instruments, best known for his Gaia Theory and work on the environment, died on his 103rd birthday in July 2022. Gaia Theory states that the Earth is a self-regulatory community, that is, it is a cybernetic system. As such he became visiting Professor at the University of Reading's Department of Cybernetics from 1967 to 1990. This talk reflects on Lovelock and his connection with, contributions to and influences on, Cybernetics at Reading.

Specifically, it will introduce Cybernetics, discuss Gaia Theory and how it fits with Cybernetics and so explain how Peter Fellgett made him Visiting Professor of Aeronomy. It will then discuss how he helped develop the 'animal' side of cybernetics, leading to George Whitfield's flying Pteranodon (an appearance on TV long before Kevin Warwick). Also covered are Daisyworld, his influence on teaching, and how daisies appear in the Begin Robotics MOOC! A video demonstrating Cybernetics featuring Lovelock will also be shown.

