



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES in EAST MIDLANDS

EDITION 11

WINTER 2015

Recent Events

In mid-July members from Region 07 joined us for a Handshake event to visit the famous plaque village of Eyam. The National Trust maintains the Hall which contained many historical artefacts on loan from the current owner who has downsized to another property nearby. Some members walked to the village boundary to see the famous stone where money was left in vinegar to be exchanged for food supplied by the neighbouring village during the plague.

Later in the month some members were met at the Heckington Village Show by the Show President, who just happened to be one of our members. The Show contained all the agricultural exhibitions you would expect and a vast variety of craft stalls as well as food and drink stalls and many activities for both children and adults. The highlight was watching the descent of the Red Arrows Parachute Team with their amazing accuracy in spite of a strong wind.

In August there were two visits arranged. The first was to Conisbrough Castle, now owned by English Heritage. The climb to the top, of one hundred steps, afforded great views of the surrounding countryside. In the middle of the month there was a visit to the Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre to watch a re-enactment of the death of Richard III. It was interesting to view the many and varied costumes worn by those attending in authentic dress for the period.

In mid-November the Assistant Director Student Services in the East of England made me very welcome at the Cambridge OU Centre when I went to present one of the AOUG Foundation for Education Awards. There is currently no Executive Representative for Region 06 so I had been asked by our Chairman to arrange this event. The winner of this Award was Robert Day and a large group of his friends and family had travelled to the Centre especially to join his celebrations. Robert's nominator made a very moving speech about Robert's determined attitude to overcome all his medical problems, following a serious car crash, to complete his degree and the Assistant Director Student Services, Martin Kenward was present and also asked to say a few words. The ceremony was made even more special by the attendance of over twenty of the Region's Support Staff who had been assembled for a meeting next door. Having presented the certificate, the group socialised over tea and cakes.

For our most recent event, on a very wet cold November morning, we met at Lincoln Castle to view the Magna Carta, recently rehoused in a new Visitors' Centre. We met for coffee in the Castle Café and at a convenient break, I was very pleased to be able to present another of the AOUG Foundation for Education Awards for the Regions and Nations to someone in our own area. Natasha Lee was a very worthy winner who had obtained her degree after overcoming many assorted difficulties. Natasha's family and friends were present and all

were very appreciative of AOUG's interest in new graduates. Local members, including a recently joined new member, were also present to share the celebration. After the presentation the group split with some viewing the exhibition, whilst other braved the elements and walked the full circuit of the newly restored castle walls, before meeting back up again for lunch.

Future Events

Our first visit in the New Year is to the Richard III Visitor Centre in Leicester, situated close by the cathedral. A glass floor has been placed directly above what was previously a car park, where the King's bones were found and there is a very interesting exhibition explaining how the body's true identity was finally established.

In February there is a visit to Wollaton Hall to view the Elizabethan Country House which houses a Natural History and Industrial History Museum.

Our March event is a day visit to Newark which boasts a twelfth Century castle situated on the river, a church with an enormous spire and more recently the Civil War Museum, opened this year, the only one of its kind in the country.

Association News:

Winter OMEGA

I hope you noticed the new logos in the Diary Dates pages of the Winter OMEGA and liked the one of Robin Hood suggested for our Region. I am now going to use this same logo for future Newsletters but if you have any other suggestions you would like to offer for different areas of our Region, please let me know.

In this edition there were three inserts. One was the AGM Booking Form, with available excursions listed on the reverse. The second insert was asking all our members to consider if they are willing to process for AOUG or to assist on the AOUG stand at any of the 2016 OU Degree Ceremonies (see list in OMEGA) The final insert included details of vacancies for the Executive Committee as well as space for you to answer a survey and to suggest any ideas as to the future direction of our Association as it approaches its thirtieth Anniversary. I do hope you have looked at all of these inserts and returned them to the AOUG Office. If you have not yet done so then there is still time.

AGM and Social Weekend 2016

As you will now be aware, our Region is hosting the 2016 AOUG AGM/Social Weekend in Buxton from Friday 13th May to Sunday 15th May. This is our chance to show the rest of the membership the hospitality of the East Midlands and so I am calling on as many local members as possible to attend either for the full weekend or as a day visitor. I shall need your support as volunteers are required to donate prizes for the Saturday Gala Dinner raffle. These do not need to be large items as small items are grouped together in types, (toiletries, food, giftware etc) and displayed as composite prizes in baskets. Then on the evening I shall require four local members to assist in the selling of the raffle tickets and in preparing the tickets for the draw. At the end of the evening all money raised will be given to back to our Region as a thank you for our work. This money will then go into a local bank account for future use for the benefit of local members.

We have three excursions arranged – to Poole Cavern, to Chatsworth House and Gardens and to the plague Village of Eyam and you are all very welcome to bring your family and friends to any of these but you must make sure that you have booked in advance using one the inserts you would have found in your OMEGA. Family and friends are also welcome to attend any other part of the weekend they wish, provided they attend with a member but again advanced booking is essential.

Executive Committee Meeting – October 2015

I was unable to attend this meeting as I was on the AOUG stand at the Belfast Degree Ceremony day. As I was already there I was very glad, on behalf of AOUG, to present yet another AOUG Foundation for Education Award for the Regions and Nation, this time to an Irish recipient. The Director for Ireland had agreed for the presentation to Julie Richmond to take place immediately after the morning Degree Ceremony and despite this being an extremely busy day for him, he left his VIP guests to spend a short time with us to take part in the presentation.

At the same weekend as the Executive Committee Meeting the Research Awards Ceremony and the AOUG Foundation Lecture were held, which I am told were both very successful

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Name : PI number

Tel: E-mail address:

I enclose a donation of stamps to receive my Newsletter by post

I enclose an article on a local issue for the next Newsletter

Diary Dates

Saturday 16th January. 11am

Meet at the restaurant of the King Richard III Visitor Centre, 4A St. Martins, Leicester, LE1 5DB to stand above the exact spot where the King`s bones were discovered and to view the very interesting research that finally established the true facts. Admission, at present, is £7.95 (Concessions £7.)

Saturday 27th February. 11am

Meet at the café of Wollaton Hall, Wollaton, NG8 2AE to view parts of the Elizabethan house, now owned by the local authority and which houses the Nottingham Natural History Museum and the Nottingham Industrial Museum. Entrance is free but there is a small car parking charge.

Saturday 19th March. 11am

Meet at `Gannets` Day café, 35 Castlegate, Newark (directly opposite the castle) to start a day visit to the interesting town where we can walk around the very old castle, visit the church with its enormous spire and end with a visit to the brand new Civil War Museum.

Saturday 16th April. 11am

Meet in Redwood Restaurant at Anglesey Abbey, Lode, Cambridge, CB25 9EJ for coffee prior to exploring the 17th Century House, built on the site of a priory. The house is surrounded by over a hundred acres of gardens and arboretum. There is a fully functioning three floor watermill with demonstrations. This is a National Trust Property. This is a Handshake event organised by both Region 05 and Region 06 members, families and friends.

Saturday 23rd April. 10.40am

Meet in the Coffee Bar at the entrance to the National Brewery Centre, Burton on Trent, DE14 1NG for a Handshake event to join Region 04 members for the 11am guided tour and handshake with members of Region 05. We will learn about how beer was brewed in the past, see a Rodley steam engine and have the opportunity to taste the beer (if desired). The site is wheelchair friendly and set within Grade II listed buildings. Please note, this is not the only brewery museum in Burton on Trent. This museum is situated on the edge of the town, is well signposted from the A511 and clearly indicated on approaching the building. There is a large free car park at the rear of the Museum. Alternatively there is a railway station nearby. Tickets are priced at £8.95 (£7.95 concessions), although a Group Discount might be applicable dependent on numbers. Booking is essential before 1st April with the Region 04 National Brewery Centre organiser.

Executive Representative –Ramsey Hertzog

I/we will be attending the Richard III visit : the Wollaton Hall visit :

the Newark visit: the Cambridge visit *Please tick all that are applicable.*

I/we have booked with the 04 organiser to attend the Brewery Visit.

I should like to know more about being a Local Contact

I am willing to assist as a volunteer at the Buxton AGM Weekend