



## ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES in the EAST MIDLANDS

EDITION 16

OCTOBER 2017

### Recent Events

For our September visit members met at what has been described as a classic 'E' shaped dwelling at Belton House, near Grantham. Inside we admired a large collection of porcelain, silver and tapestries as well as a famous library. Outside there were deer roaming on the surrounding land.



On yet another sunny October day, members met at Newstead Abbey, once an Augustinian monastery, later destroyed by Henry VIII. For the next three hundred years the ownership remained in the Byron family. Most famous was the sixth Lord Byron who inherited the property aged ten in 1798. Because of the enormous debts he accrued, and following various scandals, he sold the property twenty years later to an old friend from Harrow Schooldays. Many stories abound about George Byron who did little to improve the house and he used to keep his pet bear and dog in the chapel together with hedgehogs and many other small animals. The property, by then vastly improved, was donated to Nottingham Corporation shortly before WW2 and receives help from many volunteers who look after the house and extensive, well-manicured gardens.



## Future Events

Hull is currently the City of Culture and in November 05 members will cross the Humber Bridge, as a Handshake Event and join members from Region 07, to explore part of the city. We meet initially at the newly refurbished Ferens Art Galley to view exhibits for the Turner Prize before continuing to some of the other many museums located around the central square.

In December we have our Christmas lunch at a waterfront pub in Lincoln. I hope that plans for possible events in 2018 can be made. Although this waterfront area should be relaxed, the city itself will be very busy as our visit coincides with the Lincoln Christmas Market and members may wish to climb up towards the cathedral after lunch to visit this famous bustling Christmas Market.

Early in the New Year there is a visit to the caves under the Nottingham streets which sounds very interesting. This is an archaeological journey under the cobbles of Nottingham to discover how Nottingham dwellers once lived. You will have the chance to see the caves as they have never been seen before as they are stripped back to their original historical state. Members will be able to purchase a joint ticket to the sister attraction of the Courts of Justice should they wish to explore more.

At a visit to the Newark Air Museum, on the World War II airfield of Winthorpe, near Newark on Trent in March, members can view a wide range of aircraft and hopefully gain more knowledge about the contribution that aviation has made in history.

This is your Association and I would welcome any suggestions as to events or how we can engage more with each other in the Region. It may be that next year we may have a special visit to add to the other celebrations held in other Regions and Nations for AOUG's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## October Award Ceremony / Foundation Lecture:



Every October, on the first weekend, there is an Award Ceremony held on campus whereby OU PhD students in their final year, proposed by their Supervisors and approved by the

Foundation for Education Trustees, are recognised for their outstanding achievements to research. This year seven such Awards were given, the highest number ever presented in a single year. Being ex-police I was asked to host a winner, a serving CID Officer, who had written her thesis on the impact of Governmental measures on organised criminals. The event was very well attended and after a buffet lunch we were treated to a lecture by Tamsin Waterkeyn who was the winner of the Bursary last year.

## Executive Committee Meeting - October '17

On the day following the October Award Ceremony there was the Executive Committee Meeting. A number of Agenda items are worth reporting on. Scotland has been without an Executive Representative for a good number of years but at this meeting a new Representative, Nicholas McDonald-Lyons, a previous winner of one of our Awards for the Regions and Nations and a regular attendee of the Edinburgh AOUG Group, was co-opted.

As you may recall the OU has stated that as from the start of the New Year they will `withdraw` support for AOUG. The Chairman has requested more details but nothing further has been received other than AOUG can no longer have stands at Degree Ceremonies.



Next year's AGM/Social weekend is all booked and will be held at the Norton Grange Hotel in Rochdale in the North West Region from 18<sup>th</sup> May – 20<sup>th</sup> May. The planned optional excursions will be to 'Robinson's Brewery' with time to sample the beers, 'The Hat Works' and a visit to the Salford Quays with an opportunity to visit the Imperial War Museum or the Lowry exhibition. Rochdale was the birth place of the Co-op and non-members, not wishing to attend the AGM, may also visit the small intimate Co-operative Museum.



You will see that in the next OMEGA readers will be asked to submit any Resolutions or Motions for the next AGM. This is your chance to offer ideas to change the way AOUG works. There will also be notification of vacancies arising after the AGM for the positions of Chairman, (our Chairman, Margaret, has served in that role for the last five years) and Publicity Officer both for the next three years. There are also by-elections open for the Treasurer and Development Officer roles for the forthcoming two years. At present AOUG is only run by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Publicity Officer and ideally there should be five Officers. Any fully paid up full member may stand for an Officer position but you will require six other fully paid up full members from any Region or Nation to act as your assenters. If you or any other AOUG member is interested in filling any of the vacancies, please contact the AOUG Office for further details.

2018 is the thirtieth anniversary of AOUG and so as well as making the AGM/Social weekend a little more special, it has been agreed that following the October Award Ceremony and Lecture members might wish to celebrate the Pearl Anniversary by staying at the Ramada Hotel, Newport Pagnell for the Friday and Saturday nights. Extra events, such as a visit to Stoke Bruerne canal and the World War II code breaking Bletchley Park are being arranged together with a special celebration meal. Full details for this will be in the Spring 2018 OMEGA.

In 2019 the OU will be celebrating its fiftieth Anniversary but although AOUG, as at other similar Anniversaries, has offered to assist no information has, as yet, been forthcoming.

### **Foundation for Education Award for the Regions and Nations:**

I am glad to say that in our Region we have a winner for one of these Awards – she obtained her degree in spite of adversity beyond that of the average student. The event is to be held at the OU Regional Centre in Nottingham (one of the few remaining such centres) and the Assistant Director Student Support will be making a verbal contribution. If you would like to attend this presentation please get in touch with me for full details.

### **Diary Dates**

#### **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December. 12noon**

Meet at the Royal William IV, Brayford Wharf North, Lincoln, LN1 1YX for our Christmas Lunch for any local members and friends. Please can members wishing to attend pre-book with me so that a suitable table can be reserved.

#### **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January. 11am**

Meet at the café at the City of Caves, Upper Level, Broadmarch Centre, Nottingham, NG1 7LL for an archeological tour beneath the streets of the city. Time permitting we could then

visit the nearby National Justice Museum. Current admission to the cave tour is £7.95 (concessions available.)

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. 11am**

Meet at the café at the Newark Air Museum located on a former RAF airfield, Drove Lane, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG24 2NY, to view the many complete, or restoration, aircraft on the site. The current admission price is £8.

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March. 12noon**

Meet at the Royal William IV, Brayford Wharf North, Lincoln, LN1 1YX for the Spring Lunch for any local members and friends. Please can members wishing to attend pre-book with me so that a suitable table can be reserved.

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