



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

Nation 11 - SCOTLAND

Edition 12

August 2016

Local News

In June the Edinburgh group met outside John Knox's House, the Scottish Storytelling Centre, on the High Street to explore a little-known side of Edinburgh's Old Town – the hidden gardens of the Royal Mile. Behind the historic buildings can be found a surprising number of gardens and green 'nooks and crannies', all with a story to tell. We first visited Sandeman House garden, a circular garden with a beehive sculpture and 'pocket handkerchief' tree, in full bloom. Next came Moray House, circa 1625, garden recently recreated as part of a development of Edinburgh University's campuses. The next two hours were spent in brilliant sunshine touring many of the grand gardens of the past and productive community gardens created by today's residents. The tour was led by Jean Bareham, who founded Greenyonder Tours in 2008, and who, with the aid of old photographs and town plans, brought the past to life.



Previously in May the Edinburgh group, led by committee member Helena Pettie, enjoyed a guided tour of the outdoor sculptures situated at Edinburgh Park on the west side of the city, the little-known and surprisingly varied outdoor sculptures, part of the designed landscape of this industrial and commercial district.

Edinburgh Local Contact – Lewis McKay

Vacancy

There is an immediate vacancy for the position of Executive Representative.

Would you be willing to be co-opted to serve until May 2017?

The perfect opportunity to see if this is something for you, with the knowledge you're only committed to next May.

Contact the AOUG Office if you'd like to know more, without committing yourself!

AOUG@open.ac.uk

Friday 7th October 2016

OU Campus, Michael Young Building, Room 1

AOUG Foundation for Education Research Awards at 12noon

Followed at 2pm by

AOUG Foundation Lecture

"An Astronomer's view of the Birth, the Life and the Death of the Stars"
to be given by **Glenn White,**
Professor of Astronomy

£10 for full or part day including a buffet lunch - Admission by ticket or invite only.
Tickets available from AOUG Office
aoug@open.ac.uk or 01908 653316

"If you have never been to the OU campus before, then this is your perfect opportunity to explore the beautiful grounds."

Executive Committee Meetings

Executive Committee Meetings have been held in February, May and July this year and normally the Executive Representative attends to report the opinions of their members and to take part in discussions to shape the Association's future, but unfortunately for several years, Scotland has had no representation. To ensure your area's voice is heard, it is really important that a volunteer is found very quickly to fulfil this role. Could this be you? The next meetings will take place over the first weekends in October '16 and February '17.

Following the AGM Weekend in Buxton, Derbyshire, Mary Niblett and Mervyn Ward were welcomed as new Executive Representatives for Ireland and the North West respectively. Rosemary Hammick was co-opted for the newly amalgamated London and the South East.

Philip Evans was welcomed as the new Development Officer and Derrick Franks was co-opted as Vice-Chairman, whilst Jayne Littlejohn was appointed as Company Secretary, in addition to her continuing role as Executive Representative for Region 02.

Fund raising for the AOUG Foundation for Education charity

Every year the Association's own charity offers nine Awards to Research students, in their final year, who have been nominated by OU staff from their Faculty or Research Centre and they go forward for consideration to be selected to receive an Award. The successful recipients are then presented with their Awards at a prestigious Ceremony on the OU campus on the first Friday in October. Each Award comprises of a framed certificate and a cheque. All Award amounts are agreed by the Trustees annually.

Occasionally a Bursary is also offered and although they can be nominated by their supervisors as with the Awards, Research Students also have the option to self-nominate. These Bursaries usually offer a monetary Award, in addition to their framed certificate. This money is not to be used as a grant to complete their Research project but it can be used in any way the recipient wishes in order to develop their research further than originally planned, be it extending the area of research, attending a conference, or publishing papers.

AOUG Foundation for Education also funds Awards for new graduates in the Regions and Nations who have gained their first degree whilst overcoming adversity over and above that of the average student. There have been some amazing new graduates nominated for these Awards and during 2015 seventeen such Awards were approved. These new graduates also receive a cheque, along with their framed certificate.

However, in order to continue presenting these Awards each year, AOUG has to ensure that there are sufficient funds to cover them and this is where you come in as these Awards rely on the generosity of you, the members, as it is mainly your donations (with a little help from bank interest) that enables us to continue with this good work.

Your ideas wanted!

The annual commitment for these Awards is several thousand pounds and so we are constantly looking for new ways to maintain funds.

Following the Executive Committee meeting in February, the Committee had a workshop to discuss ideas for other ways to raise funds for the AOUG Foundation for Education and we are busy researching all possibilities.

Do you have any ideas?

If so please let us know so we can research your suggestion too.

You will have seen in the Spring OMEGA that we are offering an AOUG 2016 Ted Castle Bursary this year. Ted was an amazing long standing member who remained happy despite extremely adversity and his name has been chosen as symbolic of all the other amazing members who have died over the last twelve months. We invite you to make a special donation of as much as you like, or as little as one pound, in memory of Ted or alternatively, any other sadly missed AOUG member that was dear to your heart. If you wish to assist our work further, you might consider making an annual covenant to help ensure that this good work is able to continue for many more years. Covenant and Gift Aid forms are available from the AOUG Office.

AOUG Website updated

As those of you who visit our website regularly will have seen, it has recently undergone some subtle changes. The navigation has been redesigned and the Home Page has seen some updates to layout, including a new dynamic Upcoming Events section. The News and OMEGA pages have also been redesigned and we have a new Google Custom Search. However, the most significant changes have occurred behind the scenes with the whole site being re-coded to behave responsively, making it more user-friendly for visitors on mobile devices of all shapes and sizes. At the same time, we've also done a lot of housekeeping, removing out-dated material and tidying up links. If you have not visited the site for a while, now is the time to take a look at www.aoug.org.uk –The Officers would really appreciate your feedback, so please let the AOUG Office know what you think.

Diary Dates

Edinburgh Group

Saturday 24th September. 11am

All AOUG Members, their friends and families are welcome to meet with the Edinburgh Local Contact for the annual Doors Open Day in Edinburgh. Institutions normally off-limits to the public open their doors and allow their staff to explain the history and function of many fascinating establishments. Please advise the Local Contact of your intention to participate as several properties will be chosen and participants informed by email or a stamped addressed envelope.

Other Local Groups

There has been a group in Edinburgh since our Association first began but other Local Groups that were previously active in Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee are currently without a Local Contact. Edinburgh welcomes members from all areas but since many of our members are unable to travel easily to Edinburgh, it would be really good if we could re-establish the other Local Groups again.

If you live in any other area of Scotland and can suggest ideas for activities local to you, please consider volunteering as a Local Contact. We only ask you to commit to attending three events a year and we will advertise them for you.

Contact Details

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