



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES in the EAST MIDLANDS

EDITION 14

JUNE 2017

Recent Events

I am pleased to report that a very enjoyable meal was held at the William IV pub on the waterfront at Lincoln in early January this year. Our members put forward some very interesting ideas for future events and the catering staff were most accommodating. It was agreed that we should hold regular seasonal meals there and so in May we held our Spring Lunch.

As a Handshake event with the West Midlands Region our members visited the Denby Pottery in February. The tour was fascinating and as a keepsake each of us was able to make a small frog figure by pressing clay into a mould which was allowed to dry as we toured the factory.



Denby Pottery



Stamford

In March there was a visit to the historic town of Stamford – a town much used for film sets on account of its many surviving Victorian buildings. I had prepared a tour from the various brochures previously obtained but in the event this was abandoned as there were so many buildings of particular interest.



Canons Ashby

Our April visit was to Canons Ashby, owned by the National Trust. On a sunny day we really enjoyed the very well-manicured gardens surrounding what was once a medieval priory.

Future Events

At a member`s suggestion, there is to be a visit to the Gibraltar Point Nature Reserve, near Skegness, in mid - June. Another local member has arranged for us to have an introductory talk before viewing the many birds on the site. Then as a Handshake event with Region 07, our July event, is to visit the Welbeck Estate, near Worksop. At the venue there is a gallery with changing exhibitions throughout the year and a collection of artefacts collected over hundreds of years by the Dukes of Portland.

In August there will be another chance for members in the Lincoln area to meet as we will be holding our Summer Lunch at the William IV pub on the waterfront. At present I am hoping to arrange a Handshake visit into Yorkshire to visit in Hull, the other side of the Humber Bridge as the city is celebrating being the City of Culture this year. Details will be in the next OMEGA.

Executive Committee Meeting –February 2017

The most important report at the annual February meeting was the setting of the budget for the ensuing year. The Treasurer had to base this on the membership subscription receipts for the last year. Due to a fall in membership numbers and thus a lower amount of monies available it was agreed that Executive Representatives would not have an allocation of money this year and that any Newsletters were only to be sent electronically unless a member sent in stamps for postage.

AGM/Social Weekend 2017

This was held at the Blackwell Grange Hotel, near Darlington from 19th to 21st May. There will be reports on all aspects of this enjoyable weekend in the Summer OMEGA. At the AGM there was one Resolution and one Motion, both relating to Associate Members – both were carried. Friends and family are now eligible to become Associate Members provided that an existing full member is prepared to nominate them. We are already getting interested students signing as a result of the offer of Associate Student Membership from last year`s Resolutions so hopefully this new category will prove as successful.

The Chairman reported that there were ongoing meetings with senior OU staff, and the full implications of the university stating they would be `withdrawing support for AOUG` were still awaiting clarification. The outgoing Treasurer explained that staffing costs had been higher than expected during 2016 due to some staff leaving and then an overlap of staff in the Office and the fees payable to the employment agency to recruit them. Income from subscriptions was also lower than hoped as membership numbers had been falling and thus the overall money available for 2017 was lower than anticipated.

It was announced that the AGM/Social weekend in 2018 is to be held at the Norton Grange Hotel, near Rochdale. This event is being organised by the North West and as it will celebrate our Thirtieth Anniversary, it will be a special event. Details will be in the Winter OMEGA and I would love to see support from our East Midland members as I can assure you they are always really enjoyable events.

Following the AGM and lunch, as an Executive Representative, I attended the Executive Committee meeting. It is such a pity that there will now be only three Officers as both the Treasurer and the Development Officer have completed their Terms of Office, and no one has as yet come forward to undertake these roles. If any member would be willing to take up the vacant posts, or is able to suggest another member, please contact the AOUG Office for more details. It was reassuring that those attending voted to co-opt an Executive Representative for London and the South East, an Executive Representative for the East of England and an Executive Representative for Wales, meaning that only the South West, North West and Scotland are currently without Executive Representatives but each of these areas have active Local Contacts working hard to arrange activities within their areas.

Following the Executive Committee Meeting there was the Gala Evening with Pre Dinner Drinks Reception and then the Gala Dinner which was very enjoyable with both an After Dinner Speaker and a band, later in the evening. A raffle was held and the hosts from Region 09 donated the proceeds to the Foundation for Education. The weekend was completed by a leisurely river trip at Durham providing great views of the beautiful cathedral.

Associate Membership

The AGM 2017 at Darlington has overwhelmingly voted to allow friends and relations to join our organisation as Associate Members. They will not have any voting rights or be able to join our Executive Committee, however they are very welcome to receive the OMEGA and Newsletters and join our organisation to benefit from our social activities. Previously at the AGM in 2016 we have allowed Students from the OU to join us. The cost is £20 per year (£24 for Continental Europe and £28 for the Rest of the World), the same as a full member. They have to be nominated by a full member of AOUG. So let's welcome as many people as we can to allow our organisation to grow in strength.

We have had a great deal of interest and have already had Associate Membership applications, so please spread the word. Please request Associate Membership forms from the AOUG Office 01908 653316 aoug@open.ac.uk

Foundation Funding

Every year, the AOUG Foundation for Education offers nine Research Awards and fourteen Awards in the Regions and Nations for new graduates who have overcome adversity to obtain their degrees. You will have read about previous winners in OMEGA. The Awards for 2017 have been advertised and soon the nominations will be coming in. However, this year there is real concern that there will be insufficient funds to be able to give the same monetary value as usual.

As in the past, interest from investments has been added to your donations and at our recent AGM in Darlington, we were pleased to receive money from the raffle and the piggy bank (which is on display wherever possible) to boost the income. However, we are also looking to members in the Regions and Nations to offer their support to help us give the full recognition that these Award winners deserve.

These Awards are highly regarded by The Open University and we are proud to be able to acknowledge the students' achievements. Could you organise a small fund raising event with your friends and family or consider sending a personal donation to AOUG Office if you can spare it? No amount is too small. Cheques should be made payable to "AOUG Foundation for Education Limited" and sent to AOUG Office, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA. Payment can also be made by phone 01908 653316 or by annual covenant and there is also the option of gift aiding your donation (please request a form). Thank you.

AOUG Foundation Lecture

At 2pm on Friday 6th October 2017, at The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, Tamsin Waterkeyn will be delivering the AOUG Foundation Lecture.

Tamsin, an Open University postgraduate student, is currently researching for a Doctorate in Education whilst working full time in Saudi Arabia.

aoug@open.ac.uk or by phone 01908 653316 before 8th September.

The subject of her lecture is “The Socio-Cultural Impact of Globalisation and English in Saudi Arabia: A Narrative Enquiry”. This promises to be a very interesting and informative lecture deserving of full support and, for those who have not been to the campus in recent years, it also gives the opportunity to see how things have changed. Members who have not been to one of the Lectures before will be particularly welcome.



Tamsin Waterkeyn

Admission is by ticket only at a cost of £10.00 which also includes a buffet lunch, tickets available from AOUG Office –

Diary Dates

Saturday 17th June. 11am

Meet at the new Visitor Centre at the Gibraltar Point Nature Reserve, off the A52, Gibraltar Road, Skegness, PE24 4ST, which is three miles South of Skegness itself, to view the many species of wildlife. Admission is free but donations are very welcome.

Saturday 8th July. 11am

Meet at the Harley Café on the Welbeck Estate, Mansfield Road, Welbeck, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S80 3LW, which is on the A60, prior to visiting the Harley Gallery with its different exhibitions changing throughout the year (Handshake with 07). The Portland Collection, on the same site, displays many works of art amassed by the Dukes of Portland, owners of the estate for over four hundred years. Entry is free but donations are requested.

Saturday 5th August. 12noon

Meet at the Royal William IV, Brayford Wharf North, Lincoln, LN1 1YX for our Summer Lunch and now regular get-together for Lincoln local members, friends and families. Newcomers and those living further afield are also invited to attend. Please pre-book with the Executive Representative so that a suitably sized table can be arranged.

Contacts:

Executive Representative – Ramsey Hertzog 01246 414746 ramseyhertzog@hotmail.co.uk

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