



Association of Open University Graduates Region 09 - North

EDITION 9

SUMMER 2016

Local News

Welcome to all AOUG members. Summer is a time for exploring the coast; visiting historic sites; cream teas; gentle walks in the countryside and an opportunity for wildlife enthusiasts to spot, identify and learn about the amazing flora and fauna that surrounds them. Coastal walks are a passion of mine whilst the poetry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow provides a visual interpretation of the movements of the sea and also a reminder that time and tide wait for no man.

“The tide rises, the tide falls,
The twilight darkens, the curlew calls;
Along the sea-sands damp and brown
The traveler hastens toward the town,
And the tide rises, the tide falls- - -

The recent AGM at the Palace Hotel in Buxton, Derbyshire summed up the significance of change and progress that is like the sea in its constancy; various resolutions were passed and AOUG members presented their views which assisted in the decision making process. It was altogether a very exacting and interesting voyage into understanding issues and generating ideas. I was impressed by the splendour of the Palace Hotel which was built in 1868 and designed by Henry Currey, architect to the 7th Duke of Derbyshire, and stands majestically on the hill above the railway station. He was articled to Decimus Burton for five years who was the foremost English architect of the 19th Century and an exponent of the Greek revival, Georgian and Regency styles. His works include Hyde Park, Wellington Arch in London and many more architectural developments throughout the United Kingdom.

We are quickly moving through the year and there are several events that have been arranged for AOUG members as the summer months give way to autumn. In early September members can enjoy a conducted tour around HMS Trincomalee, the oldest of the British Royal Navy warships in existence which will celebrate its bicentennial in 2017. It is important to appreciate the degree of restoration work that has been achieved over a period of many years in order to preserve this wonderful vessel. In July 1987, HMS Trincomalee (TS Foudroyant until 1992) was transported to Hartlepool from her Portsmouth berth on a chartered semi-submersible barge. Two years of planning, fund-raising and negotiations followed with an estimated cost of £5 million for restoration work. The Trincomalee Trust

restoration organisation commenced work on 1st January 1990. In restoring the Trincomalee, the Trust had to balance modern and traditional approaches, retaining some original 1846 fittings and structures such as the iron capstan and making the best use of available historical material. The Trust decided to restore the ship as an 1817 frigate and after massive restoration work it was completed in the year 2000. The ship is a living historical source which is permanently berthed afloat in the Hartlepool Maritime Museum attracting many visitors both locally and from distant shores.

Jean McKenna – Executive Representative

Association News

Gathering in the North for 2017

The AGM/Social Weekend for 2017 has already been booked with the Blackwell Grange Hotel in Darlington. This means that it is to be in Region 09, the North. It is a long time since the Association weekend was held in Region 09, the last time being situated in Ambleside, in the Lake District. Transport links were limited into the Lake District but this time there will be no such issues as we are to visit the East of the area. Just off the A1 and with its own railway station, Darlington offers easy access either by car or public transport.

The dates booked are 19th - 21st May 2017, so mark this down to note in next year's diary. Then look out for the article and advert in the Winter OMEGA which will give you more details. The booking form will be an insert and also available on line from October for you to complete to reserve your place. Remember that all family and friends are welcome to join you for any, or all, of the weekend, including children, provided they are supervised and you consider the activities age appropriate for them.

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 for £300. 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 of £1,000 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 received £100 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. You will see in the Spring OMEGA that we are offering an AOUG 2016 Ted Castle Bursary this year and you can therefore make a special donation of as much as you like, or as little as one pound, in the memory of Ted or any other deceased AOUG member that was dear to your heart. Or you might consider making an annual covenant to help ensure that this good work is able to continue for many more years.

AOUG website updated

As you will have seen, the website has recently undergone some subtle changes. The navigation has been redesigned, the home page has seen some updates to layout, including a new dynamic upcoming events section, the News and OMEGA pages have been redesigned and we have a new Google Custom Search. However the most significant changes have occurred 'under the bonnet' 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 outdated material and tidying up links. Why not take a look at www.aoug.org.uk – we'd appreciate your feedback.

Members' Feedback

If you would like any questions or opinions raised at the Executive Committee on your behalf please let me know. I am here to represent you.

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Local Contact

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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 10th September 1:30 pm

Meet at the entrance to Hartlepool Historic Quay, Maritime Avenue, TS24 0XZ. Enjoy a conducted tour of HMS Trincomalee, the oldest of the British Royal Navy warships in existence which will celebrate its bicentennial in 2017. Explore the museum, delve into maritime history and absorb the atmosphere of yesteryear. Relax and enjoy afternoon tea in the Café afterwards.

Saturday 15th October 11:30 am

Meet at the entrance to Tynemouth Castle and Priory, Tynemouth, NE30 4BZ. Enjoy an exciting tour of the site and discover its history from fortified medieval monastery to Tudor stronghold to gun battery placement in both World Wars. Explore the castle defences, stunning priory ruins and underground bunkers. Visit the Gibraltar Rock restaurant for lunch.

Thursday 10th November 1:30 pm

Meet at the main entrance to Gibside country estate, Rowlands Gill, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE16 6BG. Experience the atmosphere and culture of this grand estate, set amongst the peaks and slopes of the Derwent valley which was previously owned by the Bowes-Lyon family. The main house is now a shell but, the property is famous for its chapel; the stables, walled garden and Banqueting house are also intact. Discover Gibside's past, explore the landscape and stroll through the gardens soaking in its beauty.

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I/we will be attending the visit to Hartlepool Historic Quay.....

I/we will be attending the visit to Tynemouth Castle and Priory

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I/we will be attending the visit to Gibside.....

I should like to know more about being a Local Contact