



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES REGION 01 – LONDON & SOUTH EAST

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2016

Executive Representative's Report

There has been a good response to the letter from the Chairman to members of Region 13, with a steady flow of completed slips giving details of email addresses, interest in events and, for those who do not have email, sending stamps for postal delivery of newsletters. It continues to be a matter for regret that we are unable to keep in touch with all members but fortunately electronic communication is now more widespread.

Lunches

Margaret Brett continues to work tirelessly organising the popular periodic lunches, ably assisted by her husband Don at the receipt of custom. These regularly attract diners from other Regions as well as old and new members who have not hitherto had time to attend.

After many years at the same reasonable price it has been decided that the cost should be increased to **£15** (including wine) from January 2017 and diners are asked to bring the **exact money (notes only) in an envelope bearing your name**, which will make it much easier for Don to check his list and hand over the correct sum when paying the bill. Margaret is very grateful for advance notice from those wishing to attend in order to arrange with Georgiou the configuration of the tables for people to converse easily with as many as possible as these lunches are essentially great social occasions.

People and places

Anyone who has telephoned the office at Milton Keynes will have had the pleasure of speaking to Sandra Higgins, the Office Administrator, who has helped reorganise the office. She has now been joined (since October) by Janet Presant-Collins who fills the role of Financial Administrator.

Regions and Nations Awards

In September I had the pleasure of meeting Jackie Doorne, one of the recipients of the Regions and Nations Awards. She had to undergo an operation for thyroid cancer in 2007 and subsequently suffered from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and ME, at times being unable to walk, or stand upright even, for more than three minutes, which was particularly difficult as she lives on her own. In addition she had to deal with the terminal illnesses and funerals of four close family members, with the physical and emotional drain this entailed.

To keep her mind active she started studying with The Open University in 2008 and in 2015 she gained a Distinction in Psychology and Computing. Her final project was in Interaction Design, in particular the evaluation, improvement and re-design of on-screen controls for an existing computerised recording system. Jackie's ability to improve human-computer interaction will lead to her working from home in checking and evaluating the design of systems and websites.

As her health is precarious she decided it would be too exhausting to travel far for the presentation, apart from the difficulty of finding a suitable venue, so she heroically offered to host the event in her small flat in West Malling in Kent. In fact she was so popular that 32 friends and relatives came bearing refreshments and/or drinks. It was lovely to meet everyone and I felt privileged to present the Award; I can only wish her well for the future as she undergoes further medical treatment.

Out and about

After consultation with Marie Linwood, Local Contact in **Eastbourne**, the visit to that Region arranged for September had to be postponed due to industrial action on the railways but it is hoped to reschedule this for next summer, when perhaps Southern have resolved their difficulties.

A number of members were able to travel to Oxford to meet with Region 02 for the autumn lunch of the Oxford Group and this **handshake event** was well attended and greatly enjoyed.

Recently a small group met at Victoria Railway station for a short walk to the **Queen's Gallery** in Buckingham Palace Road to view their fascinating exhibition of portraits. Everyone was so impressed with the venue and the exhibition that they opted to buy a one-year pass giving twelve months' complimentary admission to subsequent exhibitions, of which there are at least three a year.

Executive Representative – Region 01 – London & South East

At a meeting of the Executive Committee in October the Chairman pointed out that a number of roles would become vacant at the next AGM in May 2017, including Region 01, and readers from this Region are invited to consider nominating candidates of their acquaintance to fill this role (first of course obtaining their permission). The Committee meets four times a year and, apart from dealing with matters arising from reports and discussions, these gatherings provide a pleasant social opportunity to meet Representatives from other Regions and compare news of people and events.

Local Contacts

Regions as large as 01 find it invaluable to have Local Contacts as they provide a social link between members, who can otherwise feel isolated and out of touch. We are fortunate to have Marie in Eastbourne and Paul in Hastings but there are no limits to the opportunities in other areas when one considers the Region stretches from Greater London through Surrey, Sussex and Kent, all huge counties full of interest. If possible they should attempt to arrange three events per year within their locality and pass details to the Executive Representative; these events will then be advertised in OMEGA, on the website and in the Regional Newsletter which is produced three times a year, thus reaching as many members as possible. Events can take the form of regular coffee mornings (always popular), lunches at a local pub (even more popular) or visits to places of interest and the publicity can stimulate interest in areas within easy reach but previously unknown and un-visited.

Local Contacts do not have to stand for election or attend any formal meetings, nor do they need to write reports or take on additional responsibilities unless they wish to do so.

Don't be a "shrinking violet" – enjoy taking this giant leap!

DIARY DATES**

**** (Please check with organiser for last minute change of arrangements)**

Tuesday, 10th January 2017 -12 noon

HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

Meet at the Trattoria Verdi Restaurant, 110 Southampton Row, Holborn, WC1B 4BL (020-7405 8001) for excellent lunch (cost for two-course meal with wine **£15** per head – see earlier paragraph). Booking in advance to Margaret Brett on 020-7387 4975.

After lunch (approx. 2.30pm) anyone interested may like to proceed to the **Wellcome Collection, 183 Euston Road, NW1 2BE (opposite Euston Station)** for last chance to explore the free exhibition **Bedlam: the asylum and beyond** (ends 15th January).

Wednesday, 15th February – 11am

Meet **City Information Centre, Ludgate Hill, EC4** (opposite St Paul's Cathedral) to encounter **PLAGUES, PESTILENCE & PATHOLOGY**, dissecting London's medical history and exploring streets once stalked by death and disease.

Wednesday, 15th March – 11am

Meet **Walthamstow Central Station (rail/tube/bus, last stop on northbound Victoria Line)** for visits to the **VESTRY HOUSE MUSEUM, Vestry Road, E17 9NH** for local history and **WILLIAM MORRIS GALLERY, Lloyd Park, Forest Road, E17 4PP**. Both museums are a short walk from the station and the William Morris Gallery recommend their Tea Room to visitors.

(Input would be appreciated from residents of Walthamstow.)

Tuesday, 11th April, 12noon

Meet at Trattoria Verdi Restaurant (details as Tuesday, 10th January).

Bookings to Margaret Brett on 020-7387 4975.

Eastbourne Group

This group meets on the **FIRST WEDNESDAY** of each month at **12.30pm at The Ship Inn, 33-35 Meads Street, Eastbourne, BN20 7RH**. The dates are as follows:

Wednesday, 4th January

Wednesday, 1st February

Wednesday, 1st March

Wednesday, 5th April

Wednesday, 3rd May

Members from other Regions are always welcome.

ADVANCE INFORMATION:

*EASTER: 14-17 April

*29th April-1st May – “**Canalways Cavalcade**”

This unique and colourful waterways and community festival traditionally takes place annually at Little Venice in London over the May Bank Holiday. Admission free, including pageant of boats, Morris Dancers and wide variety of food. Further details nearer the time.

***19th-21st May – Association of Open University Graduates AGM**

The 2017 AGM will be held in Darlington and provisional accommodation has already been booked. Full details in Winter OMEGA.

Executive Representative - Rosemary Hammick

T.020-8688 6629 / Mob.07908371529 hammick.ros36@talktalk.net

LOCAL CONTACTS

London Lunches

Margaret Brett - 020-7387 4975

Eastbourne Group

Marie Linwood: 01323 722144

Hastings Group

Paul Emerson: 07789 564102

NOTE: All those who participate in events are responsible for their own safety and join entirely at their own risk.