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Association of Open University Graduates Region 02 – The South

Newsletter 21

December 2017

Welcome

We were sorry to hear that David Cox had resigned in October and appreciated all he did to coordinate the Region and put on events. This is the first time I've written a Local Newsletter for this Region, but as you may know, Philip Evans finished his term of office as Development Officer at the AGM in Darlington in May. As no-one has taken on the role, I am now supporting Executive Representatives and those Regions and Nations without Executive Representatives, as well as being Publicity Officer. We were pleased to welcome a new representative for Scotland in October, Nicholas McDonald-Lyons. If you are interested in taking over in Region 02 or would like more information about the role, please contact AOUG Office.

Please look at the inserts in the Winter OMEGA. We would particularly like to receive nominations for Officer posts. In 2018, there will be vacancies for Chairman and Publicity Officer, as the terms of office for Margaret Stobirski and myself come to an end at the AGM in May. There will also be by-elections for the Treasurer and Development Officer roles for the forthcoming two years. At present AOUG is run by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Publicity Officer and there should be five Officers. Any fully paid up full member may stand for an Officer position - 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, please contact the AOUG Office for further details.

Pam Pearce – Publicity Officer

Recent Events

Oxford and Area

This year is the bicentenary of the death of Jane Austen. On 28th July a small group went on a Blackwell's "Jane Austen" walking tour, covering places which had a sometimes tenuous connection with Jane. These included St. John's College, where her father studied; he became a vicar. Jane herself, as a woman, could not go to University, but did receive some private tuition in Oxford. Afterwards the group had a cream tea.

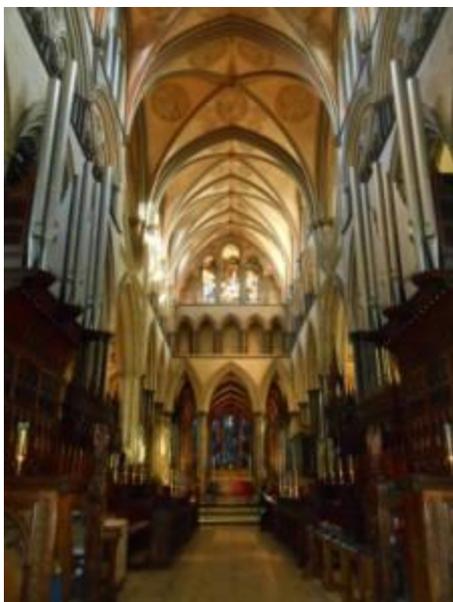
As a follow up, on 21st September, after coffee we went round the Bodleian's "Which Jane Austen?" Exhibition. Displays included manuscripts and a report of the trial for shoplifting in Bath of Jane's Aunt (not guilty).

On 14th October the Oxford Group enjoyed the annual Autumn Lunch. We were pleased to welcome several members from Region 01 (London).

Colin Reed – Local Contact

Portsmouth & South Downs Area

We in Portsmouth have continued our regular coffee meetings in the Toby Carvery in Copnor Road and at roughly two-monthly intervals outside the immediate area. Recently we've been to Winchester College (reputed to be the oldest school in England still in use), the Whitchurch Silk Mill and Salisbury Cathedral. All are welcome to join us at whichever event you choose. In January we'll be having our Annual Lunch, when we can look both back at 2017 and ahead to 2018. Please let the Local Representative know if you intend to come and join us.



We enjoyed a fascinating floor tour at Salisbury Cathedral in November. The Cathedral was built in only thirty-eight years from 1220, a major achievement of the time, although the spire, the tallest in Britain and weighing six thousand five hundred tons, was not completed until 1330. As well as the best preserved copy of Magna Carta in the Chapter House, the world's oldest working clock (dating from 1386) can be found in the North Nave Aisle. In the North Nave is a stunning font, installed in 2008 to mark the 750th anniversary of the Cathedral.

The nave and high altar
Courtesy of Mike Bechley

Mike Bechley – Local Contact

The Open University Chapel Choir

We are a group of singers who mostly have connections with The Open University, past or present students, graduates or tutors.



This photo was taken in the grounds of Christ Church College, Oxford, in August this year (courtesy of Jean Swetnam). Apart from leading the services at the Cathedral from Friday to Sunday we also celebrated thirty years of the OUCC. We enjoyed a celebration dinner with our founder Phil Baxter as guest of honour, together with other past and present members and four original members still singing with us!

We meet twice a year, usually the weekend after Easter and again during late July/August - when the resident choirs are usually on leave. We lead the Cathedral services for Evensong, Eucharist and occasionally Matins or any other service required whilst we are there. In Liverpool earlier this year the choir sang at both the Anglican and Roman Catholic Cathedrals. In 2018 we will be singing in Winchester and Portsmouth, in 2019 in Durham. A warm welcome awaits you if you are able to attend any of the services, please make yourself known.

Jean Swetnam –Region 02

2018 AGM

Next year's AGM/Social Weekend is to be held in the Greater Manchester area at The Norton Grange Hotel and Spa, Castleton, Rochdale from 18th to 20th May 2018. This will be our thirtieth Anniversary year, so why not join us to mark this very special event. Booking forms are available in the Winter edition of OMEGA or via the AOUG website at www.aoug.org.uk . There will be optional visits to Robinsons Brewery and the Hat Works, and a walk around Media City/The Lowry. If you don't know this area, why not explore while you're there, or just take advantage of the spacious hotel facilities. The weekend is open to all AOUG Members and your family and friends, as well as any interested OU Graduates, OU students and OU Staff.

Ideas for Fund Raising

We are always looking to find ways to increase the funds for our Charity. The Yorkshire Region held a 'Friends for the Foundation' fundraising day, raising £150. How about a Car Boot, Sponsored Walks, selling unwanted items on eBay or filling Smartie boxes with pennies, 20p pieces or even pound coins! This idea provided by a member from Region 05 recently resulted in 63 one pence pieces, £4.25 in five pence pieces, £5.50 in ten pence pieces and £12.20 in twenty pence pieces - £22.58!

Future events

Portsmouth and South Downs Area

Wednesday 10th January. 12noon

Meet for our annual lunch at the Toby Carvery, Copnor Road, Portsmouth, PO3 5HS. There is no need to book, but please advise the Portsmouth Local Contact by 3rd January if you intend to come.

Sunday 18th February. 2pm

Meet at the entrance of the Church of Our Lady of Warnford, Warnford Park, SO32 3LA for our annual walk through the Snowdrops. The church has been in use continuously for almost 1,300 years, and has one of the largest fields of Snowdrops in Southern England. The church is situated on the A32 between Fareham and Alton.

Wednesday 14th March. 11am

Meet for coffee at the Toby Carvery, Copnor Road, Portsmouth, PO3 5HS. We will discuss events for the Summer. Lunch will be available afterwards for those who can stay.

Friday 6th to Sunday 8th April.

Meet at Winchester Cathedral, 9, The Close, Winchester, SO23 9LS on any of the above dates to hear The Open University Chapel Choir, who will be leading the services. For times, please see the Cathedral website www.winchester-cathedral.org.uk . Any AOUG members will be made very welcome.

Saturday 14th April. 10.30am

Meet at the Admissions Hall, adjacent to the Museum for a visit the village of Buckler's Hard, SO42 7XB where some of the ships from Nelson's fleet were built. We will call in at the museum and the Shipwright's Cottage, and then adjourn for lunch either at the Master Builder's House, or in Beaulieu village. Admission £6.75. There is a very irregular bus service, so if you need a lift from Brockenhurst Railway Station (9 miles away) please advise the Portsmouth Local Contact by 2nd April and arrange to arrive by 9.45am and then he will meet you there (on the South side of the station, nearest to platform 4.)

Wednesday 9th May. 11am

Meet for coffee at the Toby Carvery, Copnor Road, Portsmouth, PO3 5HS.

Saturday 23rd June. 10.45am

A repeat visit to the RNLI College, West Quay Road, Poole, BH15 1HZ, to see the College, the world-renowned Sea Survival Centre, with Wave Tank and Lifeboat simulator. Lunch afterwards in the College. The charge is £7.50. The College is about 1 mile from Poole Railway station, with ample parking on site. It is essential that members wishing to join this event let the Portsmouth area contact know by 9th May at the latest.

Wednesday 11th July. 11am

Meet for our summer get-together at the Toby Carvery, Copnor Road, Portsmouth, PO3 5HS.

Friday 10 to Sunday 12 August, various times

The OU Chapel Choir will be leading services at various times in Portsmouth Anglican Cathedral, High Street, Old Portsmouth, PO1 2HH. For details, please see the Cathedral website (<https://www.portsmouthcathedral.org.uk/visitor-info>)

Oxford and Area**Thursday 14th December. 11.15am**

Meet at the Ashmolean Museum's rooftop café, Beaumont Street, Oxford, OX1 2PH for a coffee morning. It is anticipated that the annual Oxford Christmas Market will be taking place in nearby Broad Street.

Thursday 18th January. 11.15am

Meet at the Ashmolean Museum's rooftop café, Beaumont Street, Oxford, OX1 2PH for a Coffee morning. There is an exhibition that members may find interesting: "Imagining the Divine: Art and the Rise of World Religions, exploring Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism". This major exhibition will be the first to look at the art of the five world religions as they spread across continents in the first millennium AD. The exhibition is on from 19th October 2017 – 18th February 2018. Tickets are £10 (concessions £9).

Thursday 15th February. 11.15am

Meet at the Bodleian Library café, Weston Entrance, Broad Street, Oxford, OX1 3BG opposite the old Bodleian. Either visit the Bodleian Library's current exhibition, details not yet available, or visit the Museum of the History of Science, just across the road. Both events are free. Afterwards, adjourn to The Mitre, corner of Turl Street with the High Street, OX1 4AG for lunch.

Thursday 15th March. 2pm

Meet at the gate to Christchurch Meadow, in St Aldates, Oxford, OX1 1DP for a leisurely walk - the now traditional Spring Equinox stroll and cream tea. (Actually, five days before the Equinox.) The intention is to finish up at the Mitre at about 2.45 pm, to enjoy a cream tea. If the weather is too bad, please go directly to The Mitre, corner of Turl Street with the High Street OX1 4AG.

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Executive Representative – Vacant

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