



Flag of Oxfordshire

Association of Open University Graduates Region 02 – The South

Edition 12

Spring 2018

Welcome

If you are a new member of the Association of Open University Graduates, welcome! Do let us know if you have any ideas for social events within the Region. Do enjoy reading about some of the recent events in the evening and our plans for visits over the coming months. If you plan to attend an event please let the relevant Local Contact, Colin or Mike, know.

Recent events

Portsmouth and South Downs Area

We enjoyed a guided tour of Winchester College in October. Unfortunately the original plan suffered a change of time, due to events at the College. Founded in 1382 Winchester College is believed to be the oldest continuously running school in the country. The tour concentrated on the older buildings of the College, most of which are medieval. The tour covered the Chamber Court; the 14th Century Gothic Chapel, the Hall, and the original sparse Scholars' dining room; in the School itself we saw the seventeenth century schoolroom and the medieval cloister. The College was founded William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester (hence former pupils being known as Wykehamists). Originally there were seventy Scholars; nowadays there are over six hundred Commoners and over eighty teachers (known as Dons). Many of the buildings are still being used for their original purpose, and the college became the model for other well-known schools founded much later, such as Eton and King's Cambridge.



Frontage of Winchester College – photo by Mike Bechley

Oxford Area

On 14th October the Group had an enjoyable lunch at the Mitre.in Oxford. We were pleased to welcome several members from Region 01, London, and made the most of the opportunity to chat and catch up with friends old and new. Events over the Winter months were confined to coffee mornings. The last of these, on 18th January in the Ashmolean Rooftop Café, provided an opportunity to arrange the Event Diary for the Spring and Summer months. After lunch, we visited the Museum's current exhibition – 'Imagining the Divine: Art and the Rise of World Religions'. This covered art and artefacts from five of the major religions – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism to the end of the first millennium. As usual, the Ashmolean provided an excellent exhibition.

It's Organised

This is our thirtieth year, our Pearl Anniversary and the Annual General Meeting and Social Weekend promises to be a great celebration. A full forty eight hours of activities so you can socialise fully or take time out as you please. There is still time to book any of the following four options, however we are afraid that you will now have to pay the full price straight away because we have passed the deposit date.

- **OPTION 1:** Saturday meetings with tea/coffee and Saturday lunch **£17.00**
- **OPTION 2:** Gala Evening - drinks reception, dinner, speaker, music **£70.00**
- **OPTION 3:** Gala Evening as above plus Saturday night B&B **£150.00**
- **OPTION 4:** FULL WEEKEND PACKAGE **£280.00**

The hotel is very comfortable and provides excellent amenities. You can take the full package and stay in the Norton Grange Hotel, in Castleton, Rochdale or come just for the day time to join in any of the activities in the hotel or just to join on an optional excursion to Robinson's Brewery, the Museum, the Hat Works or the Lowry. You can read all about it in the Winter OMEGA. Remember friends and family are very welcome too.

So go on treat yourself, celebrate with us and enjoy good company. Contact AOUG Office now for more details. AOUG Office, Walton Hall Milton Keynes MK7 6AA - 01908 653316 - aoug@open.ac.uk If you require accommodation or meals, please make sure you book with the AOUG Office before the end of March. Excursion only visitors can still book up to the end of April.

Pearl Anniversary Celebrations

Since the Association of Open University Graduates was officially endorsed by the OU in 1988, 2018 is AOUG's Pearl Anniversary (30th) and so a perfect time to celebrate all the friendships that have developed and the great support that members give to each other and our university.

The AGM in the North West will have extra celebratory features and all Regions and Nations are being encouraged to arrange their local celebrations. Our area has yet to organise events for local members to join together to remember and celebrate but we will be organising an event in Oxford and a further event in Portsmouth later in the year. Do look out for this in the Diary Dates in the summer newsletter. However in addition, AOUG is hosting an extra celebration based around Milton Keynes which will link with the annual Research Awards Ceremony and Foundation Lecture in the first weekend in October.

On the Friday after these traditional events, whilst the Executive Committee are holding their Workshop, other visitors will have the opportunity of a visit to either the OU Campus Observatory or the OU campus Library. Then whilst the Executive Committee have their main quarterly meeting, there will be walking tours around the campus's beautifully maintained grounds, including the Zen Garden and the Legacy Garden, whilst learning about the history of the campus's development and the varied geology of the stones used for buildings construction and on the way viewing the items on the campus sculpture trail. After a buffet lunch with your Executive Committee you can join a coach trip to Stoke Bruerne to visit a Blacksmith's Forge before a trip aboard a canal boat.

On Saturday evening there will be a Celebration meal. Then on Sunday there will be another coach trip, this time to Bletchley Park. All aspects will be individually priced so you can do as much or as little as you please. Full details and booking arrangements will be in the Spring OMEGA, so do watch for this and book early as unfortunately places will be very limited.

Can you help us award a Pearl Anniversary Bursary?

The Executive Committee would like to offer a special Bursary to an OU Research Student to mark our 30th Anniversary.

- We need your assistance to raise the £1,000 traditionally presented.
- Bursaries go to exceptional final year PHD students, to allow them to undertake additional research, attend a related conference or publish papers about their research.

If you would like to contribute to this important aspect of our AOUG's charity work, please send a cheque made out to:

'AOUG Foundation for Education (Bursary)'
to AOUG Office, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA.

Thank you in anticipation for your support.

We need to increase our membership and we need your help!

AOUG has a supply of posters that might encourage OU graduates to join our Association.

- Do you go to your local library?
- Has your local supermarket a community notice board?
- Would you be prepared to place one of our posters on their notice board?

Your Executive Representative has a supply of these posters and can provide you with some.

If you have no current Executive Representative, you can contact the AOUG Office and they will post you some out.

Please remember to take in down if it gets damaged and replace it with a fresh one.

Thank you, in anticipation of your help!

Future events

Portsmouth and South Downs Area

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. Meet at the entrance. This is to see the world-renowned Sea Survival Centre, with Wave Tank and Lifeboat simulator. Lunch afterwards in the College restaurant. The admission charge is £7.50 (no concessions). The College is about one mile from Poole Railway Station, and there is 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, to discuss further events for the rest of the year.

Friday 10th to Sunday 12th August, various times

The OU Chapel Choir will be leading services in Portsmouth Anglican Cathedral, High Street, Old Portsmouth, PO1 2HH. For details, please see the Cathedral website:

<https://www.portsmouthcathedral.org.uk/vistor-info>.

Oxford and Area

Thursday 26th April. 12noon:

Visit to the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Park Street, Woodstock, OX20 1SN. Entry fee £4.50 (concessions £3.80). Enter and meet through The Oxfordshire Museum reception. Meet in the Café. The S3 bus, which runs half hourly from Gloucester Green, takes about thirty minutes.

Tuesday 29th May. 12noon.

Meet at The Bell, Market Square, Aylesbury (HP20 1TX) Join one of our coffee/lunch gatherings in Aylesbury. This is an opportunity for local members to get together at one of our occasional social events in Aylesbury. There will be a copy of OMEGA and an AOUG backpack on the table.

Thursday 21st June. 1pm.

Meet at the main entrance to Bletchley Park, Sherwood Drive, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK3 6EB, to find out more about the home to British codebreaking and the first computers. Visit what is often regarded as the best kept secret of World War II. Entry is £17.75 with a £2 discount for seniors. National Art Pass holders and English Heritage members also get discounts. Tickets are valid for one year, so those of Members who visited last year with AOUG will still be valid (just). .

Saturday 7th July. 1.45pm.

Tour of Brightwell Vineyard, Rush Court, Shillingford Road, Wallingford, OX10 8LJ. Meet at the entrance. The tour, which starts at 2.00pm, lasts for two hours; one hour for the actual tour, then a 'tutored tasting of wines'. Tickets are £12.50. Please advise the Local Contact, as he has to confirm numbers before **30th June**.

Saturday 18th August. 11.15am.

Annual Oxford Walk. Meet outside Oxford Station. The intention is to walk along the Thames Path to Wolvercote, then lunch at The Plough Inn. After lunch, return along the Canal Path. Alternatively, catch the No. 6 bus back to Oxford. This is the reverse of the walk the Group did three years ago.

Lunch Time Organ Recitals:

These are held in most months, usually on the third or fourth Wednesday, in the Oxford Town Hall, St Aldates, on the world famous Father Willis organ. 'Bring your lunch and enjoy'. The recital is from 12pm to 1pm. Admission, on the door, is £4, which includes tea/coffee and biscuits. For dates, ask the Local Contact, or go to www.oxford.gov.uk/townhall.

Contacts

Executive Representative: Vacant

If you are interested in learning more about this role please contact the AOUG Office for details
AOUG Office 01908 653316 aoug@open.ac.uk

Local Contacts

Oxford and Area – Colin Reed - Home Telephone: 01235 815548

Mobile: 07752 932182 (Event Days Only)

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Portsmouth and Area – Mike Bechley – Home Telephone: 023 92552087

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