



## ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES in the EAST MIDLANDS

EDITION 13

Winter 2016/17

*Happy New Year to all members!*

Do come and join me for lunch at 12noon in Lincoln on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January** to get 2017 off to a flying start. We will be meeting at the Royal William IV, Brayford Wharf North, Lincoln LN1 1YX but please give me a ring on 01246 414746 as soon as possible so that I can reserve a big enough table.

This offers a good opportunity for new and long standing members to get together for an informal lunch to chat and socialise and also to share ideas for the future of our Region.

### *Recent Events*

In mid-September, on a very wet day, we joined AOUG members from Region 04 for a Handshake Event to visit the National Memorial Arboretum, near Lichfield. Fortunately we were able to take advantage of a land train to view many of the interesting memorials. A further visit in the future could be considered as more memorial sites are being added regularly.



Then in October, some of our members met for a visit to the town of Gainsborough. We visited the very well preserved medieval manor house maintained by English Heritage. Some volunteers, dressed in appropriate costume, were sitting in the gallery and we had an interesting conversation with them regarding the crafts they were producing.

Our November visit was to the ruins of a once great Elizabethan house at Kirby Hall, near Coventry. The property is owned by the Earl of Winchelsea and a couple of rooms displayed original wallpaper. The gardens were in the process of being restored to their former glory.

### *Future Events*

As another Handshake Event with West Midlands, we are visiting Denby Pottery, near Ripley in February. Members wishing to be part of the official tour must let me know by 29<sup>th</sup> January. Then in March Yorkshire have arranged for a Handshake Event to visit the Derby Museum and Art Gallery. Please let me know if you wish to attend as the Executive Representative for Region 07 needs some indication of numbers.

In mid-March members are invited to gather for a visit to Stamford – famous for its preserved Victorian architecture. All of these are listed fully in the Diary Dates but if any member has suggestions for future visits please contact me and I will ensure that details are advertised.

### *Executive Committee Meeting – October 2016*

There was an interesting discussion over how the Resolutions for Associate Membership of AOUG, as carried at the May AGM, should be implemented. These made provision for any OU student who had signed up for a full OU Degree qualification or for an OU student who had already completed enough for an OU Ordinary Degree, but not having claimed the Award, to be eligible for Associate Membership. There was also an additional grouping for the spouse, partner or friend of a deceased former member to be eligible to be an Associate Member too, provided they were nominated by a current member. Several administrative issues needed to be addressed and then wide advertising of the options would need to be undertaken but it is then hoped that these categories could develop an increase in our membership. Associate Members, who would pay the same subscription as full members, would have all the full membership communications and opportunities with the exception of the right to vote or to stand for the Executive Committee.

The meeting was informed that a new Financial Administrator, Janet Present-Collins, was now in post and that she would be working 10am to 4pm on Monday to Thursday each week. Janet would be responsible for all Membership administration as well as the Association's finances, whilst Sandra Higgins, Office Administrator would undertake all Meetings and Project work.

Fraser Woodburn, the recently retired OU Secretary, joined us for lunch to be awarded with his Honorary Life Membership of our Association. In his acceptance speech he spoke of the high regard with which he always held for AOUG. We learnt that Kathy Wallwork had decided that she would not be standing for re-appointment as Editor of OMEGA in February 2017 and so a replacement is being sought in the Winter OMEGA.

### *Awards in the Regions and Nations*

At the end of last September, my wife and I, visited the OU Nottingham Regional Centre where I presented two Awards for the Regions and Nations. Pauline Haycock had suffered from Multiple Sclerosis for many years and in spite of this had obtained an Open Honours Degree. Her husband was so inspired by his wife's endeavours that he had had also signed up for an OU degree. Another presentation was made to Sarah Davis, on behalf of her mother Anne, who had sadly passed away only weeks before this presentation took place. Ann proudly showed us photos of her mother receiving her degree at the Ely ceremony. The newly installed Assistant Director Student Services, Linzi Moris, spoke of how proud she was to be part of our ceremony.



## *Nominations, Resolutions and Motions*

Nominations are requested for elections for the posts of Treasurer and Development Officer and a By-election for the post of Vice-Chairman. Such nominations have to be submitted by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2017 on the form included in the Winter OMEGA. Any fully paid up full members may stand for an Officer position but you will require six other fully paid up full members from any Region or Nation to act as your assenters.

Any ideas you have for changes for our Association can also be submitted either as a Resolution, (if it would change our Memorandum and Articles) or a Motion if it is simply a procedural change and these too need to reach the AOUG Office by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January.

## *AGM/ Social Weekend 2017*

The AGM/ Social Weekend this year runs from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May at the Blackwell Grange Hotel on the edge of Darlington. I visited the hotel last year and as you will see from the photos in the Winter OMEGA, it is a very interesting venue surrounded by well-maintained gardens.



The organisers have also ensured that there are interesting excursions. There is a visit to a Birds of Prey centre on the Friday afternoon and on the following day, for those not attending the

Executive Committee meeting another to a nearby Railway Museum. On the final morning there is a river cruise around Durham with great views of the cathedral towering above. Members wishing to attend should apply to the AOUG Office on the form that accompanied the Winter OMEGA.



## *Diary Dates*

### **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January. 12noon**

Meet at the Royal William IV, Brayford Wharf North, Lincoln, LN1 1YX to join with Lincoln group members for New Year lunch in this traditional public house. New members plus all family and friends are welcome. Please advise the Executive Representative if you wish to attend so that a table can be reserved.

### **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February. 11.30am**

Meet at the Bourne`s Restaurant, Denby Pottery Visitor Centre, DE5 8NX near Ripley, for lunch prior to an organised tour of the Denby Pottery which started in 1809. The Factory Tour is at 1pm at a cost of £6.95 (£5.25 for seniors) and lasts ninety minutes. Alternatively after lunch members may just spend time browsing the gift shop. If you would like to join the official tour, please book with the Executive Representative by 29<sup>th</sup> January. This is a Handshake event with Region 04.

### **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March. 11am**

Meet at the Javawocky café, 72, High Street, Stamford, PE9 2AW prior to following the ‘Victorian Trail’ led by the Executive Representative, around one of the finest local stone built towns. A preservation order in 1967 has ensured that the central area has remained mainly as it was in the Victorian era and with its many churches and interesting architecture, the town is well worth a visit. No prior booking is necessary.

## *Contacts:*

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