



**ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY
GRADUATES NEWSLETTER
REGION 08**

EDITION 3

WINTER 2013

Executive Representative's Report

The Silver Celebrations

The Silver Anniversary dinner and this year's Awards took place on the Friday and Saturday, the 4th and 5th of October. The event was most enjoyable with the highlight of the day being the Foundation Lecture by Professor Donald Burrows; Professor of Music at The Open University and Director of the Handel's Document Project. It was a very interesting lecture providing one with an insight into the private world of one of Europe's leading composers of the period 1685 to 1759. Handel was born in Germany but came to the UK in 1712 and became a naturalised Briton in 1727.

On display was a series of photographs of people and events. Naturally there was our Olga, who was a Northern lass and a founder member of AOUG. We must remember the amount of effort she put in and the encouragement one received from her. It was a pity that she did not survive to see the 25th Anniversary year celebrations but we can be assured that she was with us in spirit.

There was, of course, a picture of the gentleman who made the OU possible; that of Lord Harold Wilson, who, as Prime Minister, authorised the establishment of the OU when he was M.P. for Huyton, an area of Liverpool. It must be admitted that were it not for him and his associates that we would not have received a second chance.

Local News

Some members made a trip to Norton Priory at Runcorn, Cheshire, which was built to house Augustinian Friars. This is an historical site which incorporates its own Museum. Norton Priory is now a ruin, which was extensively excavated between 1971 and 1983. What had commenced as a six-month archaeological investigation of the site, developed into a twelve year operation. Dr. Patrick Green found himself in charge of the biggest ecclesiastic archaeological operation in Europe.

The Priory construction commenced in 1134 and took approximately fifty years to be constructed. The Church was known as "The Holy Church of Mary". In 1332 Edward II paid it a visit and in 1391 it was raised to Abbey status, but in 1536 it was closed under the orders of Henry VIII. A house was built on the site in 1545 but was replaced by a Georgian House in 1740, where in 1839, Gladstone spent his honeymoon. This house was demolished in 1928 and the site is used today by visitors and re-enactment groups. During our visit there was a group who, for the weekend, had established a village site showing the different crafts of the 1500s and who were cooking on open fires. Also there was another group who were re-enacting the Battle of Norton.

Peter B. Williams – Executive Representative

Being a Local Contact

Often members ask what being a Local Contact for a small area within a Region or Nation involves and so we have decided to give you an idea of the role. A Local Contact is an AOUG member who volunteers to be a link between other local members within a small area of any Region or Nation. They need to sign a Data Protection form to give them permission to receive contact details of other local members and then agree to have their own contact details printed in OMEGA and on the AOUG website. Their one responsibility is to arrange at least one event within their small area, three times a year and to pass all the details to their Executive Representative (or the Development Officer) before the OMEGA submission date so that it can be advertised in OMEGA and on the website. They then need to ensure that they attend their event in time to welcome other members. During the event it would be helpful to take some photos and then after the event to send brief feedback and photo to the Executive Representative. Local Contacts do not have to stand for election or attend any formal meetings, nor do they need to write any formal reports or take on any additional responsibilities unless they wish to do so. A Local Contact role is simply to try to maintain links between other members who live close to them.

Association News and Requests

AOUG Website www.aoug.org.uk

AOUG Officers have started work on a mammoth task of both updating and of modernizing the AOUG Website. In the first phase of this work they have introduced On-line Trading for AOUG products which now operate under Nochex, the same secure payment system as used for the On-line membership renewals, and so you no longer need to wait until you receive OMEGA to order your gifts.

However the AOUG Home Page is the one we are most proud of as thanks to all the creative work of Adam Jefferson, our Web Designer, we have moving images that can be clicked on to take you straight through to the related item. This will need to be updated regularly so if you have any high quality photos that we might use please let the AOUG Office know.

Although monitoring issues make it impossible for AOUG to offer social media like interaction, we can offer you lots more opportunities to get personally involved with your site. We are asking members to send in their write up or reviews on lectures, films, plays, visits etc or to contribute items on specialist interest subjects. Do you want to get involved in a science group to debate various theories, an arts group to discuss techniques used in sculpture or maybe the symbolism in paintings? Do you write poetry or short stories you want to share? Or maybe mathematical questions or puzzles inspire your thoughts. All of these opportunities are now available for you to submit your items for uploading.

If academic ideals do not currently inspire you, how about more down to earth aspects? If you go to the Memory Lane pages of the Regions and Nations you will find a selection of photos just waiting for you to contribute captions – something funny about the event maybe or a particular memory it provokes. Maybe you have some other suitable photos about people or places in our area to contribute. The AOUG Office is just waiting for all your contributions to aoug-website@open.ac.uk

So come on get involved with your AOUG website.

OU Degree Ceremonies in Manchester in 2014

Every year The Open University holds Degree Ceremonies for new graduates and their family and friends to share and celebrate their success. I'm sure you will remember how special your Degree Ceremony was for you and how important some of those people looked sitting up there on the platform as you prepared to walk across the stage.

Well now you have a chance to don an OU gown again and re-live all those very special feelings but as one of those very special people sitting up on the platform. AOUG are invited to send two AOUG members to represent our Association at every one of the Degree Ceremonies throughout the season and so we are inviting you to volunteer to undertake this honour. Names need to be submitted very early and so if you are interested please contact either the AOUG Office or your Executive Representative before 20th December 2013 stating your name, your PI number, your height and your OU degree level and your address, telephone number and e-mail address, plus of course the ceremony that you would like to be considered for.

Our Region 08, ceremonies are listed below but if you prefer to volunteer for another area then please consult the full list in your Winter OMEGA. Members will be advised in February 2014 if their name has been chosen and then the relevant gown will be ordered for you and details of your ceremony will be sent out to you shortly before the event.

Degree Ceremonies 2014

Friday 10th October	10.45am	Bridgewater Hall, Manchester (AM)	08
	3.00pm	Bridgewater Hall, Manchester (AM)	08

Please complete both sides of this response form and return to: **Peter Williams, 2, Sycamore Avenue, Newton-Le-Willows, Merseyside. WA12 8LT**

Name PI Number

My current e-mail address is

My home phone number is My mobile is

I am interested in writing an article for these Newsletters

I am interested in being part of an AOUG members' e-mail group

I am interested in information on being a Local Contact for area.

I would like to volunteer to process for AOUG at the Degree Ceremony.

Diary Dates

Friday 13th December. 1.00pm

A Christmas Lunch at the Owls, Rectory Lane, Standish, Wigan WN6 0XD A non-refundable £5 deposit is required to be sent to the Rochdale Local Contact. (overall cost is about £13)

Saturday 25th January 2014. 11.00am

Join colleagues at the “U-Boat experience” Woodside, Birkenhead, There are several ways of visiting the site, including by Mersey Ferry from the Pier Head. Admission £6 but there are concessions.

www.u-boatstory.co.uk

Friday 21st February 2014. 7.00pm

An evening meal with graduates, friends and families at the Hoghton Arms, Blackburn Road, Whitnell, Chorley, PR6 8BL (M65 Junction 3). Meal starts 7.30pm. Booking is not required. This is a very welcoming public house, with good food, at a reasonable price.

Saturday 29th March 2014. 11.00am

Meet in the on-site café for visit to the British Commercial Vehicle Museum, King Street Leyland. For directions and location, please see the website. www.bcvmt.co.uk

LOCAL CONTACTS

Executive Representative - Peter Williams, 01925 223200, peter@cynwyd.freeseve.co.uk
Rochdale - Margaret Stobirski 01925 263161 mags@stobirski.com

Please complete both sides of this response form and return to: **Peter Williams, 2, Sycamore Avenue, Newton-Le-Willows, Merseyside. WA12 8LT**

I can / cannot attend the visit to Christmas Lunch at the Owls

I am interested in other activities around the Wigan area

I can / cannot attend the visit to “U-Boat experience” Woodside, Birkenhead

I am interested in other activities around the Birkenhead area

I can / cannot attend the evening meal at the Hoghton Arms

I am interested in other activities around the Chorley area

I can / cannot attend the visit to the British Commercial Vehicle Museum

I am interested in other activities around the Leyland area

I would prefer to attend activities around

I would prefer weekends..... weekdays morningafternoon ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, evening