



**ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATES in YORKSHIRE**



**NEWSLETTER 70**

**SPRING – JANUARY 2014**

**‘Climate and Vegetation, An alternative point of view on global warming’**

Our first Saturday Meeting of the year will be on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2014 and will be held at The Friends Meeting House, Friargate, York. YO1 9RL when our speaker will be Neil Wyatt, an AOUG Member, who has long wanted to put out an alternative standpoint to the Winter 2008 OMEGA cover article: 'Cretaceous Climate and Vegetation.'

Neil gained an OU 2-1 Honours Degree in 2006 from the Social Science Faculty in Geography and Politics. Since school days, Neil has had continued interest as an amateur Astronomer and Meteorologist. With a strong interest in finance and economics, Neil's presentation will include the subject of the cost to the nation. He also will refer to the government sponsored 2006 Stern Report, published 2007 which he states, 'suggests several times the value of any benefits if the associated models were proved correct', and which he feels, 'to date have been wrong!'

Meet 10.30 am for tea or coffee in the reception area prior to the speaker who will commence at 11.00 am. The talk and question time will be followed by a lunch break. There are plenty of little cafes and shops around to purchase a light lunch and members usually bring items back so that they can chat and eat together. Lunch will be followed by our usual Discussion Meeting on a topic relevant to AOUG members.

**Chairman's Letter:**

At our Saturday meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> of October the speaker was Christina Croft who entertained members with her talk on 'The Hapsburgs and World War 1'. Christina is a very eloquent and entertaining speaker who was able to give the whole of her talk without reference to notes and I am sure all in attendance found the meeting very entertaining and informative.

28<sup>th</sup> October saw members of AOUG in Yorkshire venture across the waters on what is becoming an Annual outing to our European neighbours. On this occasion our destination was Amsterdam where all in attendance had a very enjoyable break.

**Please note the change of Venue.** The venue for our Luncheon Outing on 22<sup>nd</sup> February will now be at the Dean Court Hotel, Duncombe Place, York, North Yorkshire YO1 7EF, where we need to be seated by 12.30 pm. Pre-booking and pre-ordering is essential so please contact me no later than 10<sup>th</sup> February if you are interested in attending. Friends and family are welcome as usual. The Hotel is across the road from York Minster with many other attractions within easy walking distance, as is the town centre for those who may fancy some retail therapy. (Menu on page 3 of this Newsletter).

Socially we are also looking for suggestions for activities that will enable us to get more members involved. If you are not an active member what could we do that would encourage you to join our social events? We would welcome any suggestions, particularly if they are family orientated as we are always pleased to welcome family or friends to any of our social activities.

**Derrick Franks**

DATE	EVENT
Saturday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 12noon	Lunch – Dean Court Hotel, Duncombe Place York YO1 &AF Meet at 12noon for 12.30pm. Pre-booking is essential so please advise Executive Representative. Friends and family welcome as usual.
Saturday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 10.30am	Saturday Meeting – The Friends Meeting House York – Meet 10.30 am for tea/coffee. 11am Speaker AOUG member Neil Wyatt – ‘Climate and Vegetation, An alternative point of view on global warming’
Saturday 12th April 11am	Meet at the entrance restaurant of the RHS Garden, Harlow Carr, Crag Lane, off Otley Road, Harrogate, HG3 10B to view these gardens which with herbaceous borders and woodland walks should be at their very best at this time of year. There is an entrance fee of £8.50 for adults.
Wednesday 21st May 7pm	Bowling evening – 7 for 7.30pm – Venue to be advised.
Sunday 1st June 11.30am	As a Handshake event with Region 05, meet at the restaurant of Belvoir Castle, Grantham, Leicestershire, NG32 1PE. This is the home of the Duke & Duchess of Rutland and is situated on land given to a Standard Bearer to William the Conqueror. The castle contains many treasures and there are extensive gardens to explore. Entrance charges apply.

**For full details of any of the activities of the Walking Group, please contact Ginny Feeney. Members and their friends and families are always welcome to join any or all of these walks. Some are long distance but other liker the T-shop walk are ideal for those who are not so physically able.**

DATE	Walking Group
22 <sup>nd</sup> - 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	<b>Derbyshire</b> - Saturday a six mile Peak Park Rangers walk in the Hathersage area and Sunday a similar distance around Langsett reservoir, further east.
17 <sup>th</sup> - 24 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>Weardale</b> - Staying for a week at cottages in Frosterley where we stayed last June. Accommodation already booked.
19 <sup>th</sup> - 20 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>North Yorkshire</b> - The last two legs of the Six Dales Trail, from Pateley Bridge to Middleham. Approximately eleven miles a day, staying in Masham.
10 <sup>th</sup> August	<b>The Wakefield Way.</b>
19 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> September	<b>Whitby</b> - The Esk Valley Way. Using the train to walk this route, up to twelve miles a day for three days.
25 <sup>th</sup> October	<b>Stanza Stones</b> - Local T-shop walk on Ilkey Moor

### Contact Details

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Secretary	Lesley Sleigh	6, Rockcliffe Mount, Luddenden Foot, West Yorkshire. HX2 6AJ	01422 883337 <a href="mailto:lesleigh@live.co.uk">lesleigh@live.co.uk</a>
Walking Group	Ginny Feeney	8 Sandy Gate Hebden Bridge. HX7 8HZ	01422 847008 <a href="mailto:ginnyf@talktalk.net">ginnyf@talktalk.net</a>



## Executive Representative's Report:

Once again I am asking if there is any member who is prepared to take on the role of collating and editing the Regional Newsletter. As no one responded to my request in the winter newsletter I stepped to fill the gap but I do not want it to become a permanent arrangement.

We wish to increase the membership within the Region, but as has been previously been pointed out we do not have the opportunity to meet new graduates as we had in the past. Do you know of anyone having already graduated, or due to graduate in the near future who may be interested in joining us? Only recently I was putting a poster on the notice board at a meeting of another group to which I belong, unknown to me the lady standing beside me at that time was an OU graduate, and when I had displayed the poster turned to me and said 'I did not know there was an AOUG either Nationally or in Yorkshire'. Do you have any thoughts on how we can get the message across to others who may also be in ignorance of our existence?

For various reasons my activities have been limited within the Region over the Winter but on 9<sup>th</sup> November I, along with Lesley Sleight, did represented AOUG in Yorkshire at the open day at the Open University Leeds Office and found out more of what the OU is currently offering. Are you aware that there are free courses available for study on line? - known by the acronym MOOCS (Modern Open Online Courses). More than twenty universities are already on board with FutureLearn, and below are extracts from The Open University Annual Report 2012/13 which refer to the involvement of the OU.

*'A decade and a half after The Open University made history by launching an exclusively online course, its latest offering, FutureLearn, shows that not only has the OU been ahead of the learning technology curve in the past, but it remains at the forefront of online education today. FutureLearn is the first UK-led provider of massive open online courses (MOOCs), the new model for online learning offering unlimited and interactive learning to all. Wholly-owned by the OU, FutureLearn combines OU content with that of partner universities, carrying other courses to enhance the learning experience. It enables learners all over the world to follow and complete courses from top universities and institutions – and is entirely free.'*

*'FutureLearn is at the forefront of a new wave of MOOCs. They are a completely new way of learning, and are being described both as education's saviour and its nemesis. Like all well-known industry disrupters, such as Amazon for publishing and Napster for record labels, the underlying concept is simple: university courses online, for free, for anyone, anywhere. While there are no qualifications at the end, people can use MOOCs for continuing professional development, general learning, or for assessing prior, or work-based, learning.'*

**Derrick Franks**

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Please return this slip to: Lesley Sleight, 6, Rockcliffe Mount, Luddenden Foot. HX2 6AJ

My current e-mail address is .....

My home phone is ..... My mobile is .....

I am interested in events near ..... or talks on .....

I am willing to arrange a Yorkshire event .....

**Did you receive this Newsletter by post? If so, do you have an e-mail address we may use?  
Or maybe you would be prepared to donate some stamps to assist with postage costs?**