



**ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES (AOUG)
in the SOUTH WEST (03)**

Newsletter 8

Winter 2013

The Silver Weekend in Milton Keynes in early October began with the Awards Ceremony: the Olga Camm Bursary, Faculty Awards to research students and six AOUG Honorary Life Memberships. In the afternoon, Professor Donald Burrows gave the Foundation Lecture, “Handel in London”, about his current project: Collected documents of George Frideric Handel, to be published in five volumes by Cambridge University Press. Professor Burrows is Professor of Music at The Open University, and is recognised internationally as a leading scholar on the life and music of Handel. The weekend also included tours of the OU library and campus, a visit to Bletchley Park and a Celebration Dinner, where AOUG Clerical Officer, Cheryl Cowley, was the Guest of Honour.

There will be more about the weekend in the Winter edition of OMEGA. Also look out for details of the AGM/Social Weekend 2014 in St Albans and the nomination form for Officers and Executive Representatives. I’m pleased to say that Bristol member, Janet Savin, is interested in being nominated as Executive Representative to take over from me in May, when my three years are up. If anyone else would like to put their name forward, please do, as there will be an election in this Region, however many candidates there are. At the same time, I’m looking for two new Local Contacts to take over from Ann Reed in Exeter and Margaret Venn in Bath & Wiltshire. There’s an item about Local Contacts in this Newsletter, please let me know if you think you could take on either role. We do appreciate what Ann and Margaret have done to make both groups successful and will miss them – I hope that they will carry on coming to events (and that we will find successors). Margaret would like to organise some sort of regular venue possibly in a restaurant in Keynsham, for which members would drop in and need no reminder! Her contact details are under Diary Dates – please get in touch with her if you’d like to join her.

AOUG PEOPLE IN THE SOUTH WEST



I photographed Elizabeth Mount (left) at the Awards Ceremony after she received her Honorary Life Membership from AOUG Chairman, Margaret Stobirski. The inscription on the scroll read: “For exceptional service to the AOUG above and beyond the call of duty”.

Did you see the advertisement for a new OMEGA Editor in the Summer edition? The post became vacant when Margaret Stobirski was co-opted as AOUG Chairman in May. The next OMEGA will be produced by Trevor Taylor, another South West member, who has been appointed on a trial basis to the post of Editor.

BATH LIBRARY EXHIBITION AUTUMN 2013

What happens to our library's book stock when a book can no longer be displayed on the shelf? Katie Whelan-Jones of Bath Libraries tells me this happens after around 60 borrowings. The aging book, if still in reasonable condition, is offered for sale. Some however remain unsold. In past years, the volumes have been sent to be recycled into loft insulation. In 2012 and again this year, somewhere between three and four hundred were offered to various groups and individuals throughout Bath and North East Somerset for their transformation into something unique and sometimes extraordinary! This year's



collection has proved extremely popular with library visitors, with its one hundred entries.

Margaret Venn

THE LIBRARIANS' REACTION!

First prize 18+ Paper Aeroplane by Laura O'Brien



Both Margaret and I have worked in libraries and I still belong to CILIP (the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals). I first heard of unwanted books being turned into works of art in **CILIPUPDATE** in February this year. It explained that Katie Whelan-Jones was inspired by a similar art event run by Gwinnett County Public Library in the US. The article provoked a few letters in subsequent editions of the journal. One librarian suggested that "Librarians with any true respect for books would never encourage people to view them as mere physical objects or materials, and certainly would not facilitate their vandalism". Another described how she had made Easter eggs and chicks from old book covers and Christmas tree decorations from a discarded copy of *Alice in Wonderland*. She sees herself as "someone who respects the books so much that I want them to be reused, so their beauty (be it their cover image, illustrations inside, or the print on yellowing pages) can still be appreciated". What do you think?

Pam Pearce

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.

OU DEGREE CEREMONIES IN 2014

Every year The Open University holds Degree Ceremonies for new graduates and their family and friends to share and celebrate their success. 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 me or the AOUG Office 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. The Degree Ceremony for this Region will be on Saturday 10th May at 2.30pm in The Riviera Centre, Torquay. 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.

Pam Pearce

AOUG WEBSITE www.aoug.org.uk

AOUG Officers have started work on a mammoth task of both updating and of modernising 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 other 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!

Have a Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

Pam Pearce, Executive Representative

DIARY DATES

Bath and Wiltshire Group:

Please book with the Local Contact prior to the event.

Wednesday 12th March 11.30am

Want to learn something new about Bath? Take the "Treasures Trail". Meet for brunch in the Cosy Club Bath (Southgate Centre BA1 1AP, on the first floor opposite the main entrance to Debenhams). The idea is to interpret the clues provided, moving from one place of interest to the next, until finally reaching our destination. A small prize will await the first one home.

Bristol Group:

Wednesday 27th November 7pm for 7.30pm

Pub meal at The Plough Inn, High Street, Congresbury, Bristol BS49 5JA.

Thursday 27th February 7pm for 7.30pm

Pub meal at The Dovecote, Ashton Road, Bristol BS41 9LX.

Cornwall Group:

For details of events, please book with the Local Contact prior to the event. The Garden Visit starts up again in March.

Friday 22nd November 7.30pm

Book club at The Punchbowl and Ladle, Penelewey TR3 6QY. This month's book is *Before I Go To Sleep*, a thriller by S.J. Watson that won the thriller of the year award in 2011.

Tuesday 10th December 12.30pm

Christmas lunch at Mannings in Truro TR1 2QB. If there are any last minute additions or subtractions, now is the time to let Liz know! Booking essential.

Exeter Group:

Friday 31st January

Bi-monthly lunch in Exeter – venue to be confirmed.

Friday 28th March

Bi-monthly lunch in Exeter – venue to be confirmed.

LOCAL CONTACTS:

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