



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES in IRELAND

EDITION 5

WINTER 2013

Executive Representative's News

I was co-opted on to the Executive Committee on 5th October 2013 to be the Ireland Executive Representative until the next AGM in May 2014. At that time we will need a new Executive Representative for the following period. If you would like to fill this important position, please start giving it some thought.

In the meantime, I look forward to meeting you on the exciting events we have organised for early next year – Mary Niblett's visit to Tipperary County Museum, the local Heritage trail and lunch in Hearn's Hotel on 18th January. – Sean O'Broin's visit to Aras and Uachtarain and Farmleigh on 25th January. – My visit to The National Gallery on 15th February. – and John Ringland's visit to the Titanic Exhibition on 15th March.

Also, if there is any way you think we could make our meetings more relevant to you in particular, please let me know.

News of Our Association – Silver Celebration Weekend

The Silver Celebration Weekend was an immaculately organised celebration of 25 years of the AUOG, with opportunity to talk and eat with other Executive Representatives.

An important part was a comprehensive archive of previous activities and members. I was interested to see a photograph of Harold Wilson receiving his Honorary Life Membership of AOUG, and was happy to remember that it was him, when he was Prime Minister, who said 'Just do it!' when presented with the proposal to establish the OU - Thereby boosting enormously one of the great social developments of my generation. Formal, guided, and certified 'Life Long Learning,' and all the associated benefits of this, became an answer to the problems that resulted from poor performance at school influencing one's future.

Another important part of the celebrations, was a tour of the Library, which is largely digitalised, and hearing the Librarian guide say that it, 'Is a service which enables any student, no matter what they are studying, to keep up with all subjects at any time'. Every graduate's dream, I thought. Unfortunately, you have to be a paying student to avail of this!

Since I am only able to undertake the Executive Representative's role until next May, we are looking for an Irish member to take over from that time. A nomination form to stand for election will be included as an insert in the Winter OMEGA, so if you would like to be more involved in the decision making of your Association and the communications that are required in keeping a disparate group of members informed, together with trips to mainland UK for meetings in Milton Keynes (expenses paid), then this is the job for you - A great chance to make new friends whilst fulfilling a worthwhile role. For more information contact the AOUG Office – aoug@open.ac.uk

Nigel Orr – Executive Representative

Diary Dates

Members, friends and families are welcome to attend any Irish activities regardless of their actual home area and Local Contacts are requested for areas not currently covered.

DATE	EVENT
<p>Saturday 18th January 2014. 11.00 am</p>	<p>Meet in the reception of Tipperary County Museum, Mick Delahunty Square, Clonmel for an introductory get-together. Opportunity to explore the Heritage Trail, (weather permitting), and to lunch in Hearn's Hotel, Parnell Street, (Charles Bianconi established his coaching enterprise from here in 1815), to agree a way forward for group. Family and friends are all welcome. Look for the lady carrying a copy of OMEGA.</p>
<p>Saturday 25th January 2014. 12.20 pm</p>	<p>Meet outside Garda Headquarters near entrance of the Phoenix Park, Dublin 8 which is a short walk from Heuston Station (accessible by the Luas tram system). and then travel to the Phoenix Park Visitors Centre for free tickets to the Aras about 1.00 pm. The Aras (formerly the Vice Regal Lodge) is the Official Residence of the President of Ireland and Phoenix Park is a historic landscape of international importance and one of the largest designed landscapes in any European city. It was originally established as a Royal deer park in the 17th Century and comprises of 1,752 acres. If time permits, it might be possible to visit Farmleigh House, an estate of 78 acres also situated in the Phoenix Park. Please contact the Local Contact for Meath and West Meath, if you require assistance with transport.</p>
<p>Saturday 15th February 2014 11.15am</p>	<p>Meet in Bewley's Café, 78/79 Grafton Street, Dublin 2, James Joyce room on the 1st Floor for morning coffee, (For identification I will have a copy of OMEGA on the table), Thence to National Gallery, Merrion Square, Dublin 2. We should have in mind our three or four favourite paintings or sculptures, (Google National Gallery.ie – go to Collection – search 'on line collection', to see the important paintings and masterpieces). We can look for these individually and can each explain why they are important to us. We can interrupt this tour with lunch in the Gallery Restaurant.</p>
<p>Saturday 15th March 2014. 11.30am</p>	<p>Meet in the Galley Café on the ground floor near the entrance to the Titanic Exhibition, Queens Island, Belfast prior to exploring this new exhibition. This centre offers many related exhibitions including the fitting out, the launch, the maiden voyage, the sinking, the aftermath and all the assorted myths and legends. We shall also have the opportunity to explore the wreck or take a shipyard ride. There is secure parking charged at £1.50 for the first hour and £1 for each subsequent hours. Entrance to the exhibition is £14.75 for adults or £12.50 for seniors with a reduction if pre-booked on line.</p>

LOCAL CONTACTS

Executive Representative and Dublin and surrounding East coast areas – Nigel Orr 00353

596473122 imaal@esatclear.ie

Belfast and surrounding area – John Ringland 02891 468294

Longford, Meath, West Meath and Offal areas – Sean O'Broin 089 4294935

ssob3012@gmail.com

Munster area – Mary Niblett 052 61 85480 Mobile: 0831223796 maryniblett@btinternet.com

OU Degree Ceremonies in Ireland 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 Irish 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.

Saturday 12 th April	2.30pm	Croke Park, Dublin	12
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Saturday 17 th May	2.30pm	Waterfront Hall, Belfast	12
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Please complete both sides of this response form and return to: **Nigel Orr, AOUG Executive Representative, Ballinabarny, Knockanarrigan Donard. Co Wicklow.**

I can / cannot attend the visit to Tipperary Museum on 18th January 2014

I am interested in other activities around the Munster area

I can / cannot attend the visit to Phoenix Park on 25th January 2014

I am interested in other activities around the Longford, Meath, West Meath and Offal areas

I can / cannot attend the visit to the National Gallery on 15th February 2014

I am interested in other activities around the Dublin area

I can / cannot attend the visit to the Belfast Titanic Exhibition on 15th March 2014

I am interested in other activities around the Belfast area

I would prefer to attend activities around

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

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 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.

Please complete both sides of this response form and return to: **Nigel Orr, AOUG Executive Representative, Ballinabarny, Knockanarrigan Donard. Co Wicklow.**

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 am interested in information on being an Executive Representative for Ireland from May 2014

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