



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES in IRELAND

EDITION 4

Summer 2013

Developing AOUG in Ireland

Ireland is without an Executive Representative in post at the moment but the Officers are going to do their very best to ensure that you have opportunities to meet up, or to communicate via e-mail.

Ireland has geographical challenges, making working as a single unit difficult to achieve and so we aim to try to create several small local groups that will make travelling easier and in areas where even that is difficult, we could try to set up e-mail correspondence groups. With this in mind Ramsey Hertzog, your recently retired Chairman, and I, will be coming over to your beautiful country for a holiday and whilst over there we have arranged for get-togethers in Belfast, Dublin and Waterford. These are to be in well-known pubs/hotels and are designed as a chance to celebrate AOUG's 25th Anniversary year but also, for anyone within easy travelling distance, to meet together to exchange ideas to revive the area and for future meetings.

The plan is for local folk to then take ownership of the group and to arrange future meetings that are both informal and local, so you can feel part of a group with a common bond. We have several members who have already shown an interest in acting as Local Contacts but these will be confirmed after the forthcoming revival meetings. However the Officers will continue to support each of these local groups, and any more we manage to establish, and ensure that all their activities are well advertised in OMEGA, the website and in the Irish Newsletter. Maybe we might even find someone who would like to get more involved and become the Executive Representative to co-ordinate these groups and to attend meetings in Milton Keynes to represent you all but one step at a time for now. We just want you to get the full benefit of AOUG membership and to be able to share its fellowship.

All the information regarding these combined revival and Anniversary Celebratory events is listed in the Diary Dates at the end of this Newsletter.

Jean Hertzog

News of Our Association

Association Silver Celebration - 4th and 5th October 2013

The highlight of this year is of course our 25th Anniversary celebrations which have ranged so far from little gatherings in members' houses, through to special meals, celebratory boat trips and of course the AGM and Social Weekend in the West Midlands. Ireland was represented at that weekend by a small contingent of two members, who I know both enjoyed themselves, so hopefully more of you can be tempted to get more actively involved soon.

You will all see the write ups on our 25th Anniversary AGM and Social Weekend in the Summer OMEGA and, even if you were not able to attend, you will be able to tell what a wonderful celebration it was but the celebrations continue as over the first weekend in October AOUG Officers have organised another special event. As well as the extra special Award Ceremony on Friday 4th October with AOUG Honorary Life Membership presentations, along with the Olga Camm Bursary, and all the traditional Faculty Awards to research students and the Foundation Lecture, the event is extended over to the Saturday with various campus tours and a visit to Bletchley Park Museum on their special "Are you listening?" day.

Bletchley Park is now a Museum but, in World War II, was the base for the now famous secret code breakers whose work was responsible for making it possible to bring the war to an end. This special exhibition recognises communication through Bletchley Park's history, from the Post Office and pigeon carriers to radio waves and the first televisions, right up to the age of computers and the internet, but the usual displays relating to the first computers and the code breaking work are available to view as well.

Campus tours will include the OU library, the sculpture trail and a puzzle trail along with the opportunity to see the variety of buildings both old and new and the amazing garden planting in the extensive grounds. See the specially commissioned carved tree and AOUG own beech tree, planted in 1988 by Olga Camm when the Association was founded and the 21st Anniversary plaque which she proudly unveiled at the age of 90 years, in 2009.

Then keeping the best until last, we offer our Silver Celebration Anniversary evening meal. For this silver themed dinner in the OU campus VIP restaurant, we ask you all to dress smartly and to wear something in silver – a necklace, a pair of cufflinks or a whole silver outfit - the choice is yours but do come. All members and their friends and family are welcome but there is only room for fifty so confirm your places quickly. Twenty five years for a voluntary Association is certainly an achievement, so make sure you are part of it!

A booking form is included with this Local Newsletter so check your diary and book now.

AOUG's 25th Anniversary Trading

Then even if you cannot manage to get across to Milton Keynes, in this our 25th Anniversary year, AOUG have had special celebration merchandise produced in silver nickel. You may have seen these items pictured in OMEGA but the photographs are unable to do them justice and they really need to be seen to be appreciated. These special items of a badge, a tie pin, a stick pin and a pair of cuff links can be ordered via the order form in OMEGA, (or those of you who are receiving this Local Newsletter by e-mail have an extra copy will be sent to you) or by phoning the AOUG Office but if you attend the Silver Celebration Weekend in October you will be able to see for yourself just how good they really are. Be sure not to miss out on these elegant souvenirs. When they are gone – they're gone! So order now and wear your AOUG logo with pride.

Executive Committee Meetings

The Executive Committee met both during the AGM weekend in May and then again in Milton Keynes in July and many current projects were progressed. Plans are well developed for all the Anniversary celebrations, plans for the 2014 AGM weekend to be held in St Albans are being finalised and, even further ahead, research is underway for an AGM in Wales in 2015.

Communications, such as our OMEGA magazine, Local Newsletters and the AOUG website figure large too as do ideas for both the recruitment and the retention of members. Then as a result of many previous Executive Committee discussions, and detailed research by the Officers, several Corporate Governance policies have been drafted, along with arrangement for publicity of these policies and any necessary complaints procedures. A standardised review process has also been drafted. These policies, along with many others being drafted over the Summer months, are to be discussed and finalised at the October meetings. Once these are complete the related procedures currently in place are to be reviewed and redrafted in a standardised format for easy reference in the Executive Committee's Fact File, with copies to be available on request for members. All of this documentation will have ongoing reviews with more formal reviews annually. It should however be noted that AOUG has always had policies and procedures for all aspects of its governance but that these have not been in a standardised quick reference format previously and it is hoped that these will make implementation easier and Executive Committee's responsibilities clearer.

The consideration regarding the relationship with The Open University remains ongoing and this gained a significant boost at the AGM Gala Evening when Lucian Hudson, Director of OU Communications, attended and gave a very supportive speech along with a message of goodwill from Martin Bean, the OU Vice-Chancellor. Since then the new AOUG Chairman, Margaret Stobirski, new Vice-Chairman, Lesley Sleight and the Treasurer, Jean Hertzog have held very open and frank discussions with Lucian regarding ideas for the way forward. These ideas are to be further developed with Amanda Faulkner, the new OU Head of Alumni Relations and the relationship seems to be much more positive than in recent years, so future progress is promising.

One of the ways that AOUG support the OU is through our own charity, AOUG Foundation for Education that not only gives Awards each October to OU research students but also offers them to new graduates and you can get involved in nominating someone you know.

AOUG Foundation for Education Awards for the Regions and Nations

AOUG's own charity is offering one Award in each of the thirteen Regions and Nations plus an extra one for Europe and another for the Rest of the World. These Awards are given to a new graduate who has gained their first OU degree during the last twelve months whilst overcoming adversity of some kind, over and above that of the average student. They cannot apply themselves but nominations can be accepted from students, other graduates or any OU staff, so maybe you know someone worthy. Information, and an application form, is available on our AOUG website if you would like to nominate someone yourself. Just go to our AOUG website page entitled <http://www.aoug.org.uk/awards/application.html> to read all the details. The application date is now extended until 13th September, so apply now.

Contact Details

AOUG Office	Cheryl Cowley	Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA	01908 653316 aoug@open.ac.uk
Local Contact Belfast	John Ringland	No e-mail	02891 468294
Local Contacts Dublin Waterford	Nigel Orr Mary Niblett	imaal@esatclear.ie maryniblett@btinternet.com	003535 96473122 003535 26185480

Please complete both sides of this response form and return to the AOUG Office, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes. MK7 6AA or by e-mail aoug@open.ac.uk

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 being a Local Contact for area.

I am interested in information on being an Executive Representative

Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT
Sunday 15th September 1pm	Ramsey and Jean Hertzog invite you to join them for lunch to celebrate AOUG's 25 th Anniversary at the Hilton Hotel, 4, Lanyon Place Belfast BT1 3LP, overlooking the Lagan River. Chat and share ideas for future activities for the local area with John Ringland, a local member. This is to be an informal get-together for anyone within easy travelling distance of Belfast. It would be great if you could get in touch if you think you might be able to attend but there is no need to book. Just turn up and relax.
Tuesday 17th September 1pm	Take a break from work or shopping and join Ramsey and Jean Hertzog for an informal lunch at Dooley's Hotel, The Quay Waterford, Waterford City, to celebrate AOUG's 25 th Anniversary. Chat and share ideas for future activities for the local area with Mary Niblett, a local member. This is to be an informal get-together for anyone within easy travelling distance of Waterford. It would be great if you could get in touch if you think you might be able to attend but there is no need to book. Just turn up and relax.
Thursday 19th September 1pm	Join Ramsey and Jean Hertzog for an informal lunch downstairs at Ely Bar and Brasserie, Dublin 1, right on the Liffey's water's edge, near the Sean O'Casey footbridge, to celebrate AOUG's 25 th Anniversary. (NB. Not the Ely wine bar or the Ely gastro bar!!) Chat and share ideas for future activities for the local area with Nigel Orr, a local member. This is to be an informal get-together for anyone within easy travelling distance of Dublin. It would be great if you could get in touch if you think you might be able to attend but there is no need to book. Just turn up and relax.

Contact Ramsey / Jean Hertzog **01246 414746** up to 8th September or mobile **07908964816** between 9th – 20th September for any information. **This mobile number is only to be used for these dates.**

Please complete both sides of this response form and return to the AOUG Office, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes. MK7 6AA or by e-mail aoug@open.ac.uk

I can / cannot attend the celebration revival get together in Belfast on 15th September

I am / am not interested in other activities around the Belfast area

I can / cannot attend the celebration revival get together in Waterford on 17th September

I am / am not interested in other activities around the Waterford area

I can / cannot attend the celebration revival get together in Dublin on 19th September

I am / am not interested in other activities around the Dublin area

I would prefer to attend activities around

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