



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES in THE REST OF THE WORLD

EDITION 4

Spring 2014

Looking back - AOUG Silver Celebration

Last year was the Association's second special 25th Anniversary celebration event, (the first being part of the May AGM and Social Weekend in the West Midlands in May), and it was declared another overriding success. As well as the usual Award Ceremony which was held on Friday 4th October with research Award presentations, there was also the Olga Camm Bursary Award and the AOUG Honorary Life Membership presentations. Officers had worked in Milton Keynes, all the week prior to the event to ensure that all the display material was prepared and mounted ready for the displays of the Award recipients' work and that everything was prepared for the AOUG Anniversary archive display. An illuminated sign at the entrance to the OU campus announced our event in the Michael Young Building and over eighty people, including the Award winners' families and many OU dignitaries, attended the Award presentations. AOUG was especially pleased to welcome Lucian Hudson, Director of OU Communications Department, and Linda, the daughter of the late Olga Camm, who attended along with her husband.

Six research Awards were presented to OU research student in their final year of their project, who had been nominated by their Supervisors in the various Faculties and the range of research was not only fascinating, but it was of an extremely high standard too, breaking into new areas within their different fields and gaining the OU international recognition for their achievements. The work and enthusiasm of the Bursary candidates has shone at the interviews but the presentation by Natalia Kucirkova had made her an outstanding winner. You would have seen more information about all the Award recipients in the Winter OMEGA and all their academic articles are in editions of OMEGA throughout 2014.

After the Award Ceremony, the lunch period allowed attendees to study the numerous display boards and archive artefacts before the afternoon Foundation Lecture on the Life and work of Handel during his time in London. A most interesting and stimulating lecture interspersed with samples of Handel's music. Then a guided tour of the OU library: a first visit for many and a chance to compare the facilities with those of the previous Jennie Lee Library for others. Saturday brought more chances for members to explore the OU campus on a GeoWalk, or Sculpture Trail, whilst the Executive Committee held their final meeting of the year and then a visit to Bletchley Park Museum. The site was packed for their special "**Are you listening?**" day and after a guided tour to get the feel of the place, we explored in small groups to discover the areas that interested us most.

Then finally the Silver Celebration Anniversary evening meal, with Cheryl Cowley, our Clerical Officer, as our guest of honour. This was a more intimate group with the Mulberry Suite, the OU VIP restaurant presenting the perfect elegant dining with soft classical music playing in the background.

Looking ahead to AGM 2015 in Caernarfon -

The AGM and Social Weekend, to be held in May 2015, will be at Caernarfon in North-Wales. The Hotel is The Celtic Royal in the middle of Caernarfon, within easy reach of the Castle, built by King Edward 1st in 1283. Note that the Castle is not a ruin and is in a very reasonable condition. The Hotel has a fully equipped gym and a pool, as well as the usual facilities of a bar, lounge and restaurant. The website is: www.celtic-royal.co.uk

The full details and booking form will be available on the AOUG website over the Summer and then a paper copy will be available as an insert in your Winter edition of OMEGA.

On the Friday there is to be an optional trip to the top of Snowdon by train which should be a very interesting one for anyone who likes looking at scenery or taking photographs of views. In effect, it is a photographers' paradise. The scenery is magnificent, when viewed from the peak on a clear day. You can see right over Ynys Mom and along both the North and West Wales coasts, right out beyond Penrhyn Llyn. There is a modern viewing area and café right at the peak where the train pulls in and this building has all the modern facilities. This gives the impression that the building is connected with the public utilities but this is not the case, as both water for drinking and other uses, along with oil for the generator, has to be brought up by the train daily.

Saturday offers a visit to the Llanberis Slate Mine Museum. This is in the site of the Dinorwig Quarry where slate was mined until 1069. The Victorian workshops built in the shadow of Elidir Mountain allow you an insight into the work and daily lives of the men who once worked there. The site has been designed to look as though the miners and engineers have just finished their shift, put down their tools and left for home and gives the visitor a realistic view of quarry life. The slate was dressed in the workshops, that is, to have their edges trimmed and split into the thin sheets, which we see on roofs today. The slates are split by a worker knocking a chisel into it, between the layers with an hammer. This is a skilled function requiring a good eye and a steady hand. The trimming is undertaken by the use of a guillotine to produce the different sizes of slate required. Depending upon the time one makes the visit, one may see many aspects of the work being undertaken, in the form of talks or demonstrations. There is a café and shop on site, where one can acquire different items, made of slate.

The third optional excursion, which will be on the Sunday morning, is a trip to the Electric Mountain, which it is the Hydro Electric power station. From the centre, a First Hydro bus will transport us to the Power Station itself. Descending deep inside ancient Elidir mountain's labyrinth of dark and imposing tunnels, to experience one of man's greatest engineering achievements. From the main inlet valve gallery, you can then witness Dinorwig's massive pump/turbines in action and from the viewing gallery an underground film show explains the building and commissioning of the Power Station. There are two lakes in this Hydro system. one above the Power station and one below it. I have been told that, during the night, when the load on the power system is reduced, the surplus is used to pump water from the lower to the upper lake.

The AGM/Social Weekend is a perfect chance for overseas members to have a holiday in the UK, to meet with like-minded folk from all over the World and then to explore the beautiful countryside. Why not plan now for a couple of weeks in the UK with the AGM as your middle weekend, giving you plenty of time to explore other areas or to meet up with friends or relatives. That way you get the best of both worlds whilst keeping your travel costs down.

'Members only' AOUG Forum on the AOUG Website

The AOUG website is continuing to develop and last year, we have introduced a new-style of Home Page, as well as an on-line Membership facility and an on-line Trading section. Now we have taken it one step further with a Members Only AOUG Forum. AOUG does not endorse the use of Facebook, or Twitter, or other similar social media sites, in the name of AOUG, as they are impossible for a volunteer organisation to monitor and thus too greater risk, to the reputation of AOUG. Obviously what individuals, who also are AOUG members, decide to do, is their own responsibility. However a Members Only Forum is within the Association's control and this can more easily be monitored, with improper items being removed, or prevented. Since we want all members to have the confidence to take part, we are now including a step by step guide to registering and being authorised. We apologise to all of you who are very familiar with these things already. Once authorised the site will give you guidance on using the various features and if you have any problems at all you are very welcome to ask the Officers for help.

Step one: Ensure that you have internet access on your computer, or equivalent, and log on in the usual way.

Step two: Type www.aoug.org.uk into the address line at the top of the page. The AOUG website should now appear with our logo clearly at the top left hand-side.

Step three: Click on the word Forum along the bottom of your screen. This will open a new window which you will need to enlarge to fill your screen

Step four: You will now be asked for your **Username** and a **Password**. Your user name can be your own name or a shortened version or nickname. Your password can be anything you like but we advise a mixture of numbers and letters about 12- 15 characters in length. Now click on the word **Register**

Step five: The screen will now show you the **Terms and Conditions**. Take as long as you like to read these but in order to progress you need to click on **Accept** at the bottom of the screen.

Step six: You will now be asked to complete a form with Username, e-mail address, password, (these must be the same as you used on the first page) first name and surname (These must be your names as used as a member of AOUG) PI Number (the number you used at the top of all those OU assignments!) your preferred Region or Nation, your gender and your date of birth (day and month and year). Finally click on the word **Save**

Step seven: You will need to confirm your **password** yet again and copy a **Registration code** (to prove you are human!!!)

Step eight: Then you will need to come out of the website and go to your **own e-mail account** where you will see an **e-mail acknowledging** your application for the Forum.

Step nine: Wait until you receive a **second e-mail** which will acknowledge you as authorised – (this may be within a few minutes or a few days, depending on if an Officer is currently on line to see your request) and then go back onto the **AOUG website** – click on **Forum** at the bottom of the **Home Page** and the forum will open and allow you to sign in with your **User name** and **Password** and then you can start exploring the instant communications possibilities.

Step ten: If you need more help just ask! **Have Fun !!!! Jean Hertzog – Association Treasurer**

The Forum is a great way for distant members to keep in touch but we could also consider e-mail groups.

It would be really good if we could find some way of developing contact between members in the Rest of the World, so if you would be willing for your e-mail to be released as an e-mail group co-ordinator, please let the AOUG Office know.

AOUG`s 25th Anniversary Trading

The Anniversary year is now over but don`t let it pass into history without a memento of this achievement. The special Anniversary silver nickel 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 by phoning the AOUG Office but now they can also be ordered via our brand new on-line Trading. This is a secure site using payment via Nochex, as for on-line membership. 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.

Your Newsletter

Please remember that this is your Newsletter, especially produced for AOUG members outside Continental Europe and the UK and you have a say in what it contains. If you would like to contribute an article, a poem or a letter, that you think would be of interest to other Rest of the World members, send it to the AOUG Office and then the Editor will consider it for the next edition.

If you would like to be more involved in your Association, and would consider organising an e-mail group, please write and supply you contact details to the AOUG Office and the Development Officer will arrange to advertise your group and to support you with any ideas you might have. Please note that due to Data Protection issues we cannot supply you with other members` details but we can advertise your details and ask other members to contact you direct.

Association Dates

Friday 3rd October 2014 – Research Awards Ceremony and Foundation Lecture. OU Campus. Tickets £10 each for all or part day.

Friday 8th May – Sunday 10th May 2015 – AGM & Social Weekend in Caernarfon, North Wales. See Summer OMEGA for details or contact the AOUG Office.

Contact Details

AOUG Office	Cheryl Cowley	Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA	00 (44) 1908 653316 aoug@open.ac.uk
AOUG Chairman	Margaret Stobirski	1, Walton Heath Road, Walton, Warrington, WA4 6HZ	00 (44) 1925 263161 mags@stobirski.com
AOUG Development Officer	Violet Rook	5 Wallington Court, Kingston Park, Newcastle-upon-Tyne	00 (44) 191 2861396 viola.rook@btinternet.com

Remember if you change your contact details to please contact the AOUG Office, (aoug@open.ac.uk) so that Cheryl Cowley can update the Data Base for you and ensure that you do not lose communications.