



## ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES REGION 01 – LONDON & SOUTH EAST

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2017

### Executive Representative's Report

This is my last Newsletter as Executive Representative for Region 01 as my period of office ends at the Annual General Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May. I would like to thank all who have expressed their appreciation and who have been able to participate in the outings which have been arranged from time to time.

#### Lunches

Margaret (and Don) Brett continue to organise these popular occasions which so often attract diners from other Regions as well as regular and new members from London and the South East. As will be seen from the list of dates, the next lunch is on **Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> April** and it is greatly appreciated that members arrive promptly by 12noon so the staff can take and serve the drinks orders. I confirm that the cost is **£15** which includes a glass of wine, beer or a soft drink. Diners are reminded to bring the **exact money (notes only) in an envelope bearing your name** as this makes it so much easier for Don to check his list and hand over the correct sum when paying the bill. Margaret is very grateful for advance notice from those wishing to attend in order to arrange with Georgiou the configuration of the tables for ease of conversation at these social events.

#### People and places

Vacancies still exist for the positions of Executive Representative for the enlarged London and South East Region and Local Contacts to come up with ideas for social interaction between members. The period after the excitement of graduation particularly can leave a feeling of anti-climax and isolation and Local Contacts organising monthly coffee mornings or lunches are always welcome. The efforts of Marie in Eastbourne and Paul in Hastings are greatly appreciated but there can never be too many Local Contacts.

#### Out and about

After the lunch last October a few people took the opportunity to make the short journey to the Wellcome Collection to view the exhibition "Bedlam: the asylum and beyond". This was a sobering experience as one studied examples of the often barbaric treatment of mental illness over the years and made one appreciate all the more the enlightened approach which now prevails. As always, the Wellcome Collection leaves one with food for thought.

Still on a medical theme, a party met at the City Information Centre (opposite St Paul's Cathedral) to explore the subject of **Plague, Pestilence and Pathology**, walking streets once stalked by death and disease and uncovering London's medical history. The route passed the Hall of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London on the former site of the Blackfriars Priory, pausing to admire the figure of Apollo, the god of healing, slaying the dragon of disease. Above him stands a rhinoceros, whose ground horn is sadly still considered by some to have curative properties. The Stationers' Hall, rebuilt in 1673 after the Great Fire, bore testimony to the work of medieval scribes and illustrators who produced medical textbooks. The Cutlers' Hall displayed a terracotta frieze showing cutlers manufacturing surgical instruments once the demand for weapons had diminished. The Watch House next to the church of St Sepulchre without Newgate emphasised the need to guard graves from body snatchers, who plied a lucrative trade with the adjacent St Bartholomew's Hospital where bodies were needed for dissection.

A pause for lunch near Smithfield, site of executions of William Wallace and Protestant martyrs, coincided with the onset of rain (and weary feet), leaving many wonders unexplored and opening the way for future walks on a medical theme.

The next outing ventured further afield to **Walthamstow** for the **William Morris Gallery** and the **Vestry House Museum**, both of which revealed many treasures. As the name implied, the Gallery displayed examples of the varied art of William Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites, designs for wood block printing, wallpaper and exquisite stained glass. The Gallery is housed in an elegant Georgian villa which was the childhood home of William Morris and is set within Lloyd Park, which has been a public recreation ground for over 100 years. The gallery was also marking the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the artist Frank Brangwyn RA, which examined his love of Japanese art and who donated his collection of Japanese prints and paintings to the Gallery.

By contrast, the **Vestry House Museum** was once a workhouse, with illustrations of life therein and the type of work undertaken by the inmates. The Museum contains examples and artefacts from local history and includes a reconstruction of a prison cell when the building was used as a police station. The surrounding area is known as Walthamstow Village and nearby alms houses present a contrast to the bustle of the newer town and famous market.

Recently I took advantage of an invitation from the **Oxford** group to join their Spring Equinox stroll through Christchurch Meadow (in fact four days before the Equinox). I had time to widen my knowledge of Oxford before joining the walkers, afterwards adjourning to The Mitre for cream tea or something more substantial. A most enjoyable day.

Margaret Brett, Paul Emerson, Jayne Littlejohn and David Cox joined me at the Barbican to support Jean Hertzog and Margaret Stobirski for the **The Open University Graduation Ceremonies** held there over two days. It was a privilege to again don a hired gown and mingle with representatives from different Regions processing on to the platform to applaud new graduates as they received their degrees, and to chat with them and their families afterwards. Margaret and Jean toiled tirelessly from early morning on both days and recruited a number of graduates to the Association, with others taking away information packs to study at their leisure. Margaret Brett also spoke to some useful contacts at the Ceremony.

## **DIARY DATES\*\***

**\*\* (Please check with organiser for last minute change of arrangements)**

### **Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> April -12 noon**

Meet at the Trattoria Verdi Restaurant, 110 Southampton Row, Holborn, WC1B 4BL (020-7405 8001) for excellent lunch (cost for two-course meal with wine **£15** per head – see earlier paragraph). Booking in advance to Margaret Brett on 020-7387 4975.

### **(EASTER 14-17 APRIL)**

### **Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> May (Bank Holiday) – 11am**

Meet Paddington U/G Station London W1 (exit to Paddington Basin) for “**Canalways Cavalcade**”, a unique and colourful waterways and community festival traditionally taking place at Little Venice over the May Bank Holiday weekend. Admission free, including pageant of boats, Morris Dancers and wide variety of food.

### **(19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> May – Association of Open University Graduates AGM and Social Weekend in Darlington)**

### **Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> June – 11.30am**

Meet on the forecourt of Eastbourne Station, Sussex, BN213QJ for coffee, then walk/bus to the Ship Inn, 33-35 Meade Street, Eastbourne BN20 7RH to join members of the local group for their monthly lunch (12.30pm). (Alternative plan, lunch in Eastbourne.) In afternoon return to centre of town to visit the **Towner Art Gallery**, Devonshire Park, College Road, Eastbourne BN21 4JJ for current exhibition and afternoon tea in the Gallery’s delightful café. The Gallery is open until 5pm and admission is free.

### **Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> July – 11.15am**

Meet at East Grinstead BR Railway Station, East Sussex, RH19 1EB. A **half-hourly** main line service operates by Southern Rail from London Victoria (journey time 55 minutes), East Croydon and Oxted (Surrey). Coffee on arrival in the Grinstead Buffet Carriage followed by a return trip from East Grinstead to Sheffield Park on the volunteer run Bluebell Railway (one of the first preserved heritage steam train lines in the country, commencing train services in August 1960). Stops are made at Kingscote and Horsted Keynes en route to Sheffield Park Station, restored to the Victorian livery of the London Brighton and South Coast Railway. All Line tickets provide unlimited travel for the day between East Grinstead and Sheffield Park and allow passengers to stop off at any station on the way. Adult fares (3<sup>rd</sup> Class) £19.00.

### **Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> July - 12 noon**

Meet at Trattoria Verdi Restaurant (details as Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> April). Bookings to Margaret Brett on 020-7387 4975.

### **Eastbourne Group**

This group meets on the **FIRST WEDNESDAY** of each month at **12.30pm at The Ship Inn, 33-35 Meade Street, Eastbourne, BN20 7RH**. Members from other Regions always welcome. Bookings to Local Contact, Marie Linwood.

Dates are as follows:

**Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May**

**Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> June**

**Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> July**

**Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August**

**EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVE** - Rosemary Hammick

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### **LOCAL CONTACTS**

#### **London Lunches**

Margaret Brett - 020-7387 4975

#### **Eastbourne Group**

Marie Linwood: 01323 722144

#### **Hastings Group**

Paul Emerson: 07789 564102 (**new email address: paul.emerson184@gmail.com**)

**NOTE:** All those who participate in events are responsible for their own safety and join entirely at their own risk.