



## ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES LONDON 01 REGION

NEWSLETTER 7

SUMMER 2015

### **Executive Representative's Report**

Very many thanks to members who responded to the appeal for postage stamps and also to Margaret Brett for her unstinting support and for continuing to organise the regular lunches at Trattoria Verdi.

I am pleased to report that eight graduates have joined this Region of AOUG recently, and I will be contacting/have contacted them individually. If anyone is in touch with people with whom they studied, please encourage them to join to continue the fellowship of the Open University and perhaps reminisce about their experiences.

#### **Recent events**

A return visit was made in April to Wapping to follow in the steps of notorious characters such as the pirate, Captain Kidd, and "hanging" Judge Jeffreys, who was captured while trying to escape after his reign of terror at the Bloody Assizes following the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688. Appropriately our route took us past the headquarters of the river police, home of the Marine Support Unit of the Metropolitan Police and the oldest UK police force. As on the previous visit, the Prospect of Whitby again provided a tasty lunch and we returned by river bus, offering a different view of some of the historic buildings which we first passed on foot.

In June a group explored the Wellcome Collection in Euston Road to study the exhibition "Forensics: The anatomy of crime". This provided a fascinating review of the history, science and art of forensic medicine, travelling from crime scene to courtroom through photographs, paintings, scale drawings and models of crime scenes. Certainly a deterrent to anyone contemplating a career of murder and mayhem!

This Collection, described as "the free destination for the incurably curious", houses a library in which one can browse or carry out research and a permanent exhibition, "Medicine Man", which showcases the life and curios of the founder, Henry Wellcome. Additionally there are regular events and lectures many of which are free and some catering for the partially sighted or hard of hearing. For more information go to [wellcomecollection.org/events](http://wellcomecollection.org/events) or call 020-7611 2222.

Following the popular visit to the Imperial War Museum in February members might like to know that, in addition to the on-going presentation about World War One, there is currently an exhibition entitled “Fashion on the Ration” showing how the public found creative ways of remaining smart despite the limited resources available.  
(Small charge applies. Free to members of Museum.)

If anyone has an exciting event to narrate or has visited an unusual or far-flung area please write about it so it can be included in the next Newsletter. For instance I travelled to The Gambia, West Africa in March, primarily in search of sunshine, and was able to enjoy a day’s river cruise, visit the local market and take advantage of knowledgeable local guides during bird-watching expeditions. Normally this country is a mecca for “twitchers” but neither they nor tourists were visiting because of the fear of Ebola despite there never having been any cases in The Gambia or nearby countries.

I was able to travel cheaply because of this but it is a disaster for this desperately poor country whose economy relies on visitors. I took pens and pencils to a school attended by the son of my driver, but this was a drop in the ocean in a school with more than two thousand pupils who attended morning or afternoon sessions to accommodate them. Education in The Gambia is highly prized and everyone I met spoke English in addition to at least one or more local languages.

Another member has written about her fourteen day journey along the Silk Road, starting in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan, through Kyrgyzstan where the Nomad Games were taking place, to Kashgar. Her travels continued through deserts and mountains via the Dolon Pass (3,030ft) and the summit of the Torugart Pass (12,000ft) and into China.

One member was planning to take advantage of attendance at the Annual General Meeting to extend her stay in Wales. Some of you may have had interesting and unusual adventures nearer home, training for the Great River Race (see “Events” below), planning a camp for a youth organisation, undertaking voluntary work, starting a new course of study or language; it is always fascinating to learn about other people’s lives/hobbies.

So this is your next “assignment” – pen to paper!

*Rosemary Hammick*

## **Association News**

### **Social Media**

AOUG have resisted the use of social media for a long time, due to concerns over the possible content and the time involved for monitoring. However now there are more opportunities for pre-setting controls with ‘Corporate’ rather than personal sites, safeguards are much greater. Since this is the favoured method of communication for many people in today’s world, AOUG must move with the times.

Thus recently our Treasurer set up a Corporate Facebook page and our Chairman launched a Corporate Twitter account. Both are open to members and non-members and are monitored by the Officers. The intention is to raise the profile of AOUG among people who might otherwise not have heard of us, as well as enabling any OU graduates to study our website with a view to encouraging them to join our organisation. In order for this to happen, the

social media interactions must first be pitched appropriately but it is even more important that our own website be completely up to date at all times and be interesting enough to inspire them to join up. Once people have joined we need to ensure that all communications inspire them to keep involved with AOUG.

There are now several electronic opportunities to engage directly with AOUG:

- The AOUG website [aoug.org.uk](http://aoug.org.uk) managed by our Publicity Officer.
- Corporate Facebook – this can be found through your own Facebook account if you have one and typing in Association of Open University Graduates or, if you do not yet have a Facebook account, your direct link is <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Association-of-Open-University-Graduates/710287149081499>.
- Corporate Twitter – you can view the Twitter page by going to <https://twitter.com/theaoug> without the need for an account, or once you have your own Twitter account you can find us on @TheAOUG.

We would like as many as possible to get involved with these electronic communications, but you can of course continue to write to us by ‘snail mail’ or phone the AOUG Office 01908 653316.

### **Local symbol or motif**

As all Regions and Nations are producing three Local Newsletters a year we are looking for ways to develop a more local feel for each of the AOUG areas. Some Executive Representatives are considering more local content and some are experimenting with different layouts or fonts. However anything making an area Newsletter distinctive would have to be a unique symbol or motif representative of that particular area, in addition to the AOUG logo. Yorkshire has always had a Yorkshire Rose in addition to the AOUG logo, an easy choice for those members as there is only Yorkshire within Region 07. However, what would represent a Region or Nation which covers several counties?

I am therefore asking you to don your thinking caps and send in suggestions/images of any simple design which you think would be suitable to represent the whole of your area. I will consider all suggestions and choose one most suitable; it could then appear as our motif on the Winter Newsletter and might also be used in OMEGA.

### **Executive Committee Meeting Feedback**

The Executive Committee met in Caernarfon, after the AGM meetings, for what was the one-hundredth meeting, and the Vice-Chairman treated everyone to celebration cake at the coffee break. Before progressing to other business the meeting welcomed Margaret Stobirski, Pam Pearce, Ramsey Hertzog and Jean McKenna back to the Committee and received the Resolutions passed at the AGM. Marian Corns was co-opted as the new Executive Representative for the North West (08) but unfortunately there were no nominations for co-options to any of the other vacant positions.

## Diary Dates

I append a list of future activities and suggestions for your consideration/inclusion in your diaries. Any other ideas will be most welcome for future programmes.

### **Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> August 12 noon**

Meet at the Trattoria Verdi Restaurant, 110 Southampton Row, Holborn, WC1B 4BL (020-7405 8001) for another great Italian lunch (cost for two-course meal with wine remains at £13 per head). Bookings to Margaret Brett on 020-7387 4975.

### **Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> September 10.30am**

Meet by the Monument (nearest Underground Monument, District/Circle line) for coffee and then to London Bridge to watch the **GREAT RIVER RACE**, London's annual River Marathon. This attracts over 300 crews of rowers from all over the globe and all levels, for those who enjoy fun, fancy dress and charity stunts to serious sportsmen/women. The course covers 21.6 miles and starts at Millwall Dock Slipway at 10.45am on the basis of 'slowest first, fastest last' to give all crews an equal chance. The first should pass Tower Bridge at 11.15am.

Those who are interested may then wish to travel to Richmond to cheer the winners as they reach Richmond Bridge at about 1.35pm and are welcomed with a cannon broadside at the riverside below Ham House. Richmond's selection of pubs, some dating to the 1600s, are worth exploring, as are the winding cobbled streets and **Ham House**, 17<sup>th</sup> Century mansion and gardens, is a short walk away.

(Richmond U/G District Line).

### **Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> October – 11am**

Meet at the Museum of London **Docklands** and discover the story of London's trading history in this Grade I listed former warehouse overlooking the quayside.

There is a daily opportunity to study a particular object from the museum at 12noon and 1pm and a daily guided tour at 2.15pm. Café/Restaurant.

U/G Canary Wharf (Jubilee Line): Docklands Railway (West India Quay):

Buses 15, 115, 135, 277, D3, D6, D7, D8.

### **Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 12 noon**

Meet at the Trattoria Verdi Restaurant, 110 Southampton Row, Holborn, WC1B 4BL (020-7405 8001) (cost for two-course meal with wine remains at £13 per head). Bookings to Margaret Brett on 020-7387 4975.

## CONTACTS

**Executive Representative** - Rosemary Hammick

T.020-8688 6629 / Mob.07908371529 [hammick.ros36@talktalk.net](mailto:hammick.ros36@talktalk.net)

### **Lunches**

Margaret Brett - 020-7387 4975

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