



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES LONDON 01 REGION

NEWSLETTER 5

JANUARY 2015

Executive Representative's Report

Happy New Year to you all. I hope you had an enjoyable Christmas and look forward to meeting some of you at our events during the next few months.

Firstly, may I thank all of you who have sent greetings and good wishes, and also those who have sent stamps and/or envelopes – these are greatly appreciated. May I again ask anyone who has acquired an e-mail address and is prepared to receive communications electronically to let me or the AOUG Office know in view of the astronomical cost of postage and stationery; alternatively stamps and/or stamped addressed envelopes would be appreciated.

It was most interesting to visit Oxford in October for a “handshake” lunch with Jayne Littlejohn, the Executive Representative for Region 02, Local Contact Colin Reed and other members of the Oxford Group. Colin regularly attends our lunches in London and it is always a pleasure to meet members from other areas.

The lunchtime “English” carol concert in December in the delightful City church of St-Mary-at-Hill was presented by singers from the St. Mary-at-Hill and Square Mile Community choirs and was received with enthusiasm including some hearty audience participation. These talented musicians offered an interesting selection of music, some familiar and some not so well known, and in the two subsequent weeks would be performing “European” and “American” carols. The church is tucked away in one of the intriguing little alleys near the Monument and by its location was one of the first to be destroyed in the 1666 conflagration and subsequently rebuilt by Wren.

The lunches at Trattoria Verdi, organised as always by Margaret Brett, continue to be popular and well attended. The next one will be on 13th January (see Diary Dates).

Regretfully I have not managed to attend any of the recent Institute of Engineering and Technology lectures but these continue to be held at 2pm on the last Friday of each month at the Imperial College campus in Exhibition Road. An excellent self-service lunch is available in the Senior Common Room from 12 noon. (Full details from Jean Grout, Region 06 (xraytec1@hotmail.com) 01727-846818).

Six Regions received nominations for the AOUG Foundation for Education Regions and Nation Awards 2014, offered to candidates who had completed their Open University degree in the previous twelve months despite encountering adversity above the average during their course of study. The Award Winner for Region 01 was Katharine Reynolds. Katharine had originally attended Surrey University, studying

for a BSc Business Management degree, but then began to have debilitating health problems which necessitated two operations, throughout which she continued to study. However she eventually had to leave Surrey and, after obtaining credit transfer, she began studying with the OU and achieved a Business with Accounting degree (First Class) despite undergoing two further operations and completing assignments from her hospital bed. She has now fulfilled her ambition to work for a charity and is Fundraising Events Organiser with Age UK.

As her office is in Camden she asked to receive her award at the London (01) centre of the OU in Camden Town and the Assistant Director for Student Services, Michelle Hemming, kindly made a room available. Margaret Brett and I were privileged to attend the occasion, at which Katharine was presented with a Certificate and cheque. Katharine was accompanied by her mother and grandfather, both of whom had studied with the Open University, so it was a great family event. Plants were presented to Michelle for all her help and to Katharine's mother, Jan, while Michelle's colleague, Alexandra Bower, the Senior Regional Services Assistant, kindly took photos, which it is hoped will be reproduced in the next edition of OMEGA.

Local Contacts

Following the appeal in Newsletter 4 one member from Teddington has offered to be a local contact. It is hoped that more volunteers will come forward who will have special knowledge of their areas.

Rosemary Hammick

New Vice-Chancellor announced



Martin Bean stood down as Vice-Chancellor at the end of December and has returned to his native Australia to take on the same role at RMIT University. The Open University has announced that it has appointed Peter Horrocks, currently Director of the BBC's World Service, to be its new Vice-Chancellor. Professor Tim Blackman, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Scholarship and Quality), has taken up the role of Acting Vice-Chancellor to lead the University until May, when the new Vice-Chancellor starts.

Professor Tim Blackman

Association News

AOUG Research Awards and Foundation Lecture

The AOUG Research Award Ceremony was held on 3rd October at Milton Keynes when our charity, the AOUG Foundation for Education, presented four of the nine Research Awards. The recipients were research students who had been nominated by their Faculties and who were accompanied by their families and friends. Research covered such varied topics as 'Crete and the Cretans of Euripides', 'Low Frequency ARay (LOFAR) studies of the Galactic Plane', Attitudes towards teaching in the national language in Zimbabwe and, finally, 'Structural analysis of Java Identifier names'. Displays of their research work had been prepared by our Publicity Officer and their supervisors gave glowing reports on why these students had been nominated. Members from AOUG and dignitaries from the OU all enjoyed the Ceremony, which concluded with lunch and the opportunity to socialise.

During the lunch period there was an informal presentation of flowers by the Chairman to Karen Bradbury as a personal thank you from the Officers for her support of AOUG for many years. She is a senior member of staff who works for OU Estates and who has also acted as the Returning Officer for the AOUG election count and who was due to retire at the end of December.

AOUG members and their guests, including some Award winners and their supervisors, stayed to hear the Foundation Lecture entitled 'Personalisation in Early Years – Processes and Outcomes', given by Natalia Kucirkova, winner of our 2013 Olga Camm Bursary. She described the research that had led to her Doctorate, which had been inspired by her relationship with her grandfather when she was a child and by looking at how the interactive creative process of producing their own books using photos, pictures and their own words could positively affect children's motivation to engage with the stories and gain pleasure from communicating and reading together with adults.

Summary of Executive Committee Meeting at Milton Keynes

At a meeting on Saturday 4th October the Executive Committee co-opted a new Executive Representative for the East Midlands, Ramsey Hertzog who, although having affiliated to Yorkshire for many years, actually lives in Derbyshire. The responsibilities of the different Executive Committee roles were discussed and ways of mentoring and creating smoother handovers were being tried. Many of the Executive Committee positions will be up for election after May 2015 so please consider getting involved and complete the nomination form to reach AOUG Office by 13th January to ensure your application is accepted.

Degree Ceremonies were discussed, and especially the success of having an AOUG stand at four of this year's venues which resulted in the raising of awareness of the Association and recruitment of some new members. A new system for selection of AOUG processors is being introduced for 2015. Gowns can be provided and if you have not processed before, it is a very special experience. The Committee are also looking for volunteers to learn how to be part of our Meet and Greet team from our own stands, so why not consider that too. If you would like to be part of a formal academic procession party representing the AOUG, or to work on our stand, please look for the application form in the 2014 Winter OMEGA.

OUSA Conference



Several AOUG Officers attended the OUSA Conference which was held in Milton Keynes during the Summer. Our stand was situated in the Jenny Lee Building. This gave the opportunity to meet and talk to many students, some who had already graduated but were continuing their studies and others who will hopefully be future graduates in a few years' time. All of these are potential future members so specially designed information packs had been prepared and these were handed out, along with copies of OMEGA, to any who showed an interest.

Diary Dates

Tuesday 13th January. 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.

Tuesday, 10th February. Meet 11am in main Museum entrance

Tour of Imperial War Museum. Admission free. Nearest underground station Lambeth North.

Tuesday, 10th March. Meet 11am inside main entrance

London Wetlands Centre, Barnes (Wildlife & Wetland Trust). Entrance £13.85 (concessions £9.20). Groups of 12+ £10.35/£7.85. (Free to WWT members.) Nearest underground station Hammersmith (Piccadilly and District & Circle Lines). From there the no.283 bus from adjacent Hammersmith bus station (stand K) goes direct to the Centre.

(NOTE: Easter weekend Friday-Monday, 3-6 April)

Thursday 16th April. 11.30am

*** Back by popular request *** Pirates of Wapping

Meet London Bridge main line station concourse by Marks & Spencer (venue subject to alteration because of station re-building).

3-4 mile stroll along the Thames Path re-visiting famous alehouses such as Town of Ramsgate, Captain Kidd, Prospect of Whitby, The Grapes. Lunch at convenient hostelry, returning to London Bridge by Clipper Boat or Jubilee Line from Canary Wharf. **Comfortable shoes and waterproofs recommended.**

2nd-4th May (May Bank Holiday) – General interest

“Canalway Cavalcade”. This annual unique and colourful waterways and community festival is held at Little Venice. Admission is free and includes a pageant of boats, Morris Dancers and a wide variety of snacks and food.

Association AGM 2015

The 2015 AGM will be held on 8th -10th May in Caernarfon, North Wales. Accommodation is in the Celtic Royal Hotel in the middle of the town. Full details and booking forms can be found in the Winter OMEGA.

Suggestions for future events

- * William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow (closed Monday/Tuesday)
- * Capel Manor Gardens, Enfield
- * Valentines Mansions and Gardens, Ilford
- * Bentley Priory, Stanmore

CONTACTS

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Lunches

Margaret Brett - 020-7387 4975

GENERAL INFORMATION:

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