



Association of Open University Graduates Region 02 – The South

Newsletter 11

Summer 2014

Welcome

This is my first Newsletter since being appointed as the Executive Representative for the South. If you would like anything in particular to be included in this Newsletter please let me know. Please enjoy reading about the social activities that have been organised in the Oxford and Portsmouth areas, courtesy of Colin Reed and Mike Bechley. If you would like to set up a local group please let me know. Hopefully we will see some new faces at one of our events over the coming months.

Reminder about e-mail addresses

If you have received a hard copy of this Newsletter by post, please be aware of the increasing cost of postage. If you do have an e-mail address that could be used please either let me know directly or pass on your e-mail address to the AOUG Office. Please send it to *AOUG@open.ac.uk*

Processing at Degree Ceremonies

We have adopted a new system for selection of AOUG processors next year. If you would like to be part of the formal academic procession party, representing the AOUG at one of the Degree Ceremonies in 2015, please complete and return the application form attached. Gowns are provided. If you haven't processed before, it's a very special experience. You may choose a venue near you, or a Degree Ceremony in another part of the country, subject to availability. The full list of Degree Ceremonies for next year will be in the Winter issue of OMEGA.

AOUG Foundation for Education Awards in the Regions and Nations

The AOUG Foundation for Education sponsors an annual Award in each of the Regions and Nations, which was first introduced in 1997. All recipients receive a cheque and a framed certificate, presented at a ceremony in the Region where they live. Nominees must have overcome some adversity over and above that of the average student. If you know someone who may qualify, we'd like you to put their name forward using the attached form. Please note the closing date for nominations.

AGM 2015 in Caernarfon

Have you ever been to an AOUG AGM and Social Weekend? It's an opportunity to meet up with other OU graduates and is in a different Region or Nation each year. We're pleased to be visiting North Wales on the 8th – 10th May 2015, staying in the Celtic Royal Hotel in the middle of Caernarfon, within easy reach of the Castle. The Hotel has a fully equipped gym and a pool, as well as the usual facilities of a bar, lounge and restaurant www.celtic-royal.co.uk It would be good to see some more people from Region 02 there. A booking form will be in the Winter copy of OMEGA and will also be available from www.aoug.org.uk .

As usual there will be some interesting trips over the weekend. On the Friday there is to be an optional trip to the top of Snowdon by train. The scenery is magnificent, when viewed from the peak on a clear day. Saturday offers a visit to the Llanberis Slate Mine Museum. This is on the site of the Dinorwig Quarry where slate was mined until 1969. 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 third optional excursion, which will be on the Sunday morning, is a trip to the Electric Mountain, which is the Hydro Electric power station.

Recent events

Oxford and Area:

In June the annual Oxford walk took place in beautiful weather. After meeting at Folly Bridge the small group walked south along the Thames path, taking in the wildlife and stopping off to look at a historic church. There were many people on the river including many rowers. After a walk of about one hour, we stopped for lunch at a pub. After the refreshing break some of the group walked back along the river whilst the remainder took the bus back to the city.



Photo courtesy of David Cox

In August a small group met at Blenheim Palace (see picture above). The weather was mixed but this did not stop us exploring the beautiful grounds. After a coffee and cake stop the group split with some exploring the house. The 'Blenheim Palace: The Untold Story - 300 Years of Enticing Tales' had videos and moving mannequins. The long library was impressive being one hundred and eighty feet long, though many of the books in the library have only been there for around a hundred years. The others taking in the Pleasure Garden which included a maze which we did manage to conquer, finally finding the middle!

Portsmouth & South Downs Area

A group from the Portsmouth and South Downs area visited the Sea City Museum in Southampton in April. The museum opened in 2010 largely to commemorate the centenary of the sailing of the ill-fated RMS Titanic, but also to incorporate items from the former maritime museum in the old part of the city. When the Titanic entered service there were seventeen thousand unemployed in the city, and many, despite no seafaring experience, applied for work on the Titanic. The ship carried almost six thousand tons of coal, burned at about one ton every two minutes – shovelled by hand - when at speed. Just before midnight on 14th April 1912, the ship hit the fatal iceberg, and within three hours had sunk, with the loss of more than one thousand, five hundred lives – only two hundred and twelve of the crew lived.

Future events

Portsmouth & South Downs Area

Tuesday 9th September. 11.00am

Meet for coffee Copnor Road, Portsmouth Carvery, PO3 5HS. Lunch will be available for those who wish to stay (and breakfast for those who arrive earlier.)

Saturday 20th September. 10.45am

Visit to the Mid-Hants Railway (Watercress Line) for the Open and Members' Day. Meet at Ropley Station SO24 OPL. Parking is free either in the adjacent field, or in the overflow car park (check for details with the Portsmouth Local Contact, or the railway website (www.watercressline.co.uk) for details.

Tuesday 14th October. 11.00am

Visit to Exbury Gardens, near Beaulieu, SO45 1AZ, to admire the Autumn tints, Nerine display and the Wild Autumn art exhibition. The Maples, Sweetgums, Dogwoods and the National Collection of Nyssa and Oxydendrum should be in full seasonal colours. There is no regular bus service!

Tuesday 11th November. 11.00am

Meet for coffee at the Toby Carvery, Copnor Road, Portsmouth Carvery, PO3 5HS

Tuesday 9th December. 11.00am

By popular demand, we'll be re-visiting the Sea City Museum, Havelock Road, Southampton, SO14 7FY. Car parking is expensive in the vicinity, but Southampton Railway Station is a five minute walk away. Admission is £8.50/concessions £6. An excellent lunch is available in the Museum.

Tuesday 6th January 2015. 11.00am

Meet for coffee, and lunch, and the local AGM at the Toby Carvery, Copnor Road, Portsmouth Carvery, PO3 5HS

We will attempt to set the programme for the first half of 2015.

Sunday 22nd February 2015. 2.00pm.

The annual Snowdrop walk at Warnford Church, Warnford Road (the A32, between Fareham and Alton), SO32 3LA. Be prepared for mud, as we walk through the Snowdrop woods surrounding the church, which dates back to 1190.

Local Contact - Portsmouth & Area:

Mike Bechley 023 92552087, Mobile 0781 915458 m.bechley@ntlworld.com

Oxford and Area:

Thursday 18th September. 11.30am.

Meet in the foyer to visit to the newly refurbished Oxford University Museum of Natural History, Parks Road, Oxford. Admission is free.

Saturday 11th October. 12.00noon

The Autumn Lunch is to be held at The Mitre, corner of Turl Street with the High Street. Members and friends from any Region or Nation will be welcome to join us. Please book with the Local Contact in advance.

Thursday 20th November. 11.00am.

Coffee morning in the Ashmolean Museum's rooftop café.

Thursday 18th December. 11.00am.

Coffee morning in the Ashmolean Museum's rooftop café. It is anticipated that the annual Oxford Christmas Market will be taking place nearby.

Local Contact - Oxford and Area:

Colin Reed 01235 815548, Mobile 0775 2932 182 (Event days only)
colin@crv-reed.demon.co.uk

Reminder

On behalf of the Committee, I'd ask that if you are not already doing so, to transfer your subscription method to Direct Debit (as opposed to Standing Order), as it ensures that you keep in date and will receive your OMEGAs and Newsletters promptly. This can be arranged securely through the Milton Keynes Office, or the AOUG Website. Naturally, if you change your postal or e-mail addresses, please inform the AOUG Office. Current Association finances may mean that future Local Newsletters can only be sent out via e-mail so please make sure you don't miss out. If you have not advised the AOUG Office of your latest e-mail address, please would you do so, as this will help considerably or donations of stamps would help in reducing our postal costs and ensure you continue to receive your copy.

Jayne Littlejohn - Executive Representative

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