



Association of Open University Graduates
Newsletter 3

Region 02 The South
March 2012

This is the third newsletter covering past, present and future events in the South. Firstly I'd like to welcome new members and those who have moved into the Region – please let me know if there are any particular activities in which you would like to participate in your area, and I will do all I can to contact other members, and perhaps we may be able to get discounted entry to events.

With a region such as ours, there are many one-off happenings, especially this year; again, if there is something for which you have a particular interest and may wish to have company, please let me know and I will circulate as appropriate. If agreeable, I will also let the readership know if you are to be involved, say, as an Olympic Ambassador, or in any of the celebrations connected with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

The onset of winter has necessarily curtailed outside events, and in both the northern and southern parts of Region 02 activity has largely been confined to meeting for coffee in Oxford and in Portsmouth. These are always well attended – details at the end of this piece.

On 12 February a large party of us walked through the woods at Warnford (near Fareham) to admire the snowdrops in their millions. This is part of the Warnford church and estate; the whole Meon Valley was the last part of England to convert to Christianity in the 7th Century, and all of the churches have displays of some of the 60 or so varieties of snowdrops in their grounds. Much of



Mike Bechley,
Helen Clarke and
Jean Swetnam in
the middle of
snowdrops on a
verv cold dav...

the estate (including the lake) was frozen, but refreshments afterwards were not!

Our meetings for coffee in Portsmouth and Oxford will continue right through until the end of the year – see the diary dates in OMEGA or the website for details. In Easter week the nautical side are hoping to have a cruise on the Chichester Canal (very close to Chichester Rail and Bus stations) followed by a pub lunch – if you're interested, please let me know as the booking availability won't be known until late March. More immediately, on 19 April, (1100) a visit has been organised to the Bodleian Library Exhibition in Oxford; there are still a few places left for the visit to the Royal National Lifeboat Institute College at Poole on Saturday 28 April – meet at Poole station at 1040 (trains arriving from both directions) and walk to the College (5 minutes) or meet there by 1055 (limited car parking available). I'll be carrying a copy of OMEGA. On Thursday 14 June, we'll

be visiting the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum near Chichester, to explore six centuries of life around the South Downs; on 16 June we'll be visiting the alternative choice for country activity, the Vale and Downland Museum in Wantage (about 8 miles from Didcot).

Two members of AOUG will be attending each of the OU degree ceremonies in the Region as part of the procession - at Milton Keynes on 8 June at 1100, and at Portsmouth on 27 October at 1430.

You should have received an insert with the last issue of OMEGA relating to the AGM to be held in May, in Liverpool. On behalf of the Officers of AOUG, I'd ask that you send back your votes/intentions before the closing date indicated on the form.

As before, I'd ask that you keep me advised of any changes in your addresses (e-mail or postal); obviously e-mail is the preferred method of contact due to rocketing postal costs. The website now has a secure facility to keep your subscriptions in date by means of an easy-to-use direct debit form, so I'd encourage as much use of this as possible.

Whilst I am the main point of contact (until 2014), you may also wish to contact

Carol Lamb (carollamb@wordproc.co.uk) Pendarves, High Field Park, Marlow, SL7 2DE (for Berkshire and Buckinghamshire)

or

Collin Reed (colin@crv-reed@demon.co.uk) 211 Broadway, Didcot, OX11 8RU (for Oxfordshire and other northern parts of the Region)

if there are any events or places that interest you.

Mike Bechley, Executive Representative for Region 02
2 Westcliff Close, Lee-on-the-Solent, Hampshire PO13 9JS. Home telephone: 023 92552087, mobile 07812915458 (not always on, as coverage is very poor at home)