



**ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES (AOUG)
in the SOUTH WEST (03)**

Newsletter 7

Summer 2013

During the Summer, the South West has hosted two Silver Anniversary lunches, one at the Hartnoll Hotel in Bolham (followed by a visit to the National Trust property Knightshayes) and the second at San Carlo's in Bristol. The celebrations continue, as AOUG Officers have organised a special weekend based at the Open University campus at Milton Keynes from 4th – 5th October 2013. See this Newsletter for further details. The Programme includes presentations to AOUG Honorary Life Members – my predecessor as Executive Representative, Elizabeth Mount, who belongs to the Exeter Group, will be one of the recipients. A booking form is included with this Newsletter.

Also in the Newsletter is an article by Pam Day, another extract from Justin Olver's blog and news of the AOUG Foundation for Education Awards for the Regions and Nations. I'll be pleased to receive items for the next Newsletter – please send them in.

Pam Pearce

TRAVELS OF A GRADUATE

Early in 2013 I took a holiday in the Southern Hemisphere, New Zealand, Australia and Singapore (strictly speaking Singapore is on the Equator!) The visit enabled me to see many natural features but I highlight but a few.

North Island, New Zealand has volcanic islands, an 800 year old tree and glow worm caves at Waitomo near Auckland. This is not only an ancient labyrinth of limestone caves but another world of twinkling light from the glow worms.



On South Island I was struck by the scale of Mt. Cook and its associated glaciers, however it was the Moeraki Boulders (left) that were certainly the most unusual feature. Geologists call them septarian concretions that have developed over 60 million years.



In Australia the size and varying colours of Uluru (Ayers Rock), walking in Walpa Gorge, Mt Conner and the Kings Canyon (left) were great experiences. Particularly difficult to comprehend is the fact that the roots of Uluru go down 6000m!

In Singapore it was probably their history both in World War Two and since independence that was most interesting. Their ethos for work, (no benefit payments here) and a range of ethnic backgrounds and religions living amicably together was thought provoking.

So whatever your chosen OU degree path, I hope these reminiscences will prompt you to use a search engine to find out more or take the long flight and see for yourself.

Pam Day

ANOTHER EXTRACT FROM JUSTIN OLVER'S BLOG

How AOUG members viewed Jupiter and the Galilean Moons through the Kensington Dome, on their tour of the Norman Lockyer Laboratory in March.



Initially the image just seemed to be a white disc. As the eye adjusted, the familiar bands and great red spot became visible. The clarity of the image would vary with the turbulence in the atmosphere. However, the planet remained dead-centre in the field of view. This was because Vic had set the clockwork motor running, which makes the telescope rotate on its mounting at the same rate as the Earth - but in the opposite direction. This is very convenient, but does mean the eye-piece may move out of reach during observation.

To solve this problem the dome has an essential extra piece of equipment - a stepladder.

When the image was particularly clear, something new became visible - three tiny pin-pricks of light on either side of Jupiter. These were the Galilean Moons. There are actually four, but one was out of sight behind the planet. When Galileo Galilei first observed these moons, four centuries ago, he was so fascinated he watched them night after night through his telescope. He soon deduced from their changing positions that they were *orbiting* Jupiter - reinforcing the idea that not everything orbits the Earth.



Vic then took us to the McClean dome, which houses the even larger McClean telescope (left). This is also a refracting telescope (collecting light with a lens). The lens is a foot wide, compared with the Kensington's ten inches. The telescope was originally commissioned by Frank McClean, a wealthy entrepreneur and keen amateur astronomer. His son Francis McClean supported Norman Lockyer in building his observatory at Salcombe Hill in 1912, and donated the telescope.

The telescope was made in Dublin by Sir Howard Grubb in 1894. This is the same model as the one used for the International Astrographic Survey of 1896. With an eye for a bargain Frank Grub had ordered a second identical telescope - special offer, half price. After his father's death, Francis gave one to Norman Lockyer, and one to the Radcliffe Pretoria Observatory in South Africa.

The whole post is published on my blog:

<http://classicaljourneyphonic.blogspot.co.uk/2013/04/open-university-graduates-observe-night.html>

Justin Olver

CORONATION EXHIBITION AT BISHOP'S PALACE

On their visit to Wells in July, members of the Bath and Wiltshire Group were interested to see the Coronation cope worn by the Bishop of Bath and Wells at the Queen's Coronation, sixty years ago. By tradition, the Bishop has supported the Monarch at the ceremony since the Coronation of Richard I in 1189.

Pam Pearce

AOUG SILVER CELEBRATION - 4TH AND 5TH OCTOBER 2013

You will all see the write ups on our 25th Anniversary AGM and Social Weekend in the Summer OMEGA and, even if you were not able to attend, you will be able to tell what a wonderful celebration it was but the celebrations continue as over the first weekend in October AOUG Officers have organised another special event. As well as the extra special Award Ceremony on Friday 4th October with AOUG Honorary Life Membership presentations, along with the Olga Camm Bursary, and all the traditional Faculty Awards to research students and the Foundation Lecture, the event is extended over to the Saturday with various campus tours and a visit to Bletchley Park Museum on their special “**Are you listening?**” day. This recognises communication through Bletchley Park's history, from the Post Office and pigeon carriers to radio waves and the first televisions, right up to the age of computers and the internet. Then keeping the best until last, we offer our Silver Celebration Anniversary evening meal. For this silver themed dinner in the OU campus VIP restaurant, we ask you all to dress smartly and to wear something in silver – a necklace, a pair of cufflinks or a whole silver outfit - the choice is yours but do come. All members and their friends and family are welcome but there is only room for fifty so confirm your places quickly. Twenty five years for a voluntary Association is certainly an achievement, so make sure you are part of it! A booking form is included with this Local Newsletter so check your diary and book now.

AOUG'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY TRADING

In this our 25th Anniversary year, AOUG have had special celebration merchandise produced in silver nickel. You may have seen these items pictured in OMEGA but the photographs are unable to do them justice and they really need to be seen to be appreciated. These special items of a badge, a tie pin, a stick pin and a pair of cuff links can be ordered via the order form in OMEGA, (or those of you who are receiving this Local Newsletter by e-mail have an extra copy as an attachment now) or by phoning the AOUG Office but if you attend the Silver Celebration Weekend in October you will be able to see for yourself just how good they really are. Be sure not to miss out on these elegant souvenirs. When they are gone – they're gone! So order now and wear your AOUG logo with pride.

AOUG FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION AWARDS FOR THE REGIONS AND NATIONS

AOUG's own charity is offering one Award in each of the thirteen Regions and Nations plus an extra one for Europe and another for the Rest of the World. These Awards are given to a new graduate who has gained their first OU degree during the last twelve months whilst overcoming adversity of some kind, over and above that of the average student. They cannot apply themselves but nominations can be accepted from students, other graduates or any OU staff, so maybe you know someone worthy. These Awards are being widely advertised via the OU but information, and an application form, is available on our AOUG website if you would like to nominate someone yourself. Just go to our AOUG website page entitled <http://www.aoug.org.uk/documents/awards-application-2013.pdf> to read all the details. The application date is now extended until 13th September, so apply now.

DIARY DATES

Bath and Wiltshire Group:

Please book with the Local Contact prior to the event.

Wednesday 9th October 11.00am

The Bath Aqua Theatre of Glass – Glassblowing Demonstration (starts at 11.15am), exhibitions and “Wall of Fame” 105-107 Walcot Street, Bath BA1 5BW
www.bathaquaglass.com followed by lunch (choice of eating places nearby).

Saturday 26th October 12 noon

Lunch at the Royal Pavilion Restaurant, Victoria Park, Bath BA1 2NR. After this, there will be a break for the winter – the lunches will start up again on Saturday 26th April 2014.

Bristol Group:

Wednesday 25th September 12.15pm

Arnos Vale Cemetery www.arnosvale.org.uk “Makers of Bristol” tour starts 1.30pm, cost dependent on numbers (minimum £5). Meet at the Atrium cafe, next to the Spielman Centre, at 12.15pm for lunch.

Wednesday 27th November 7pm for 7.30pm

Pub meal at The Plough Inn, High Street, Congresbury, Bristol BS49 5JA.

Cornwall Group:

For details of events, please book with the Local Contact prior to the event.
A Garden Visit, Book Club and Lunch take place every month.

Exeter Group:

Please contact Exeter Local Contact.

Friday 27th September

Bi-monthly lunch in Exeter – venue to be confirmed.

October event to be confirmed

Friday 29th November

Bi-monthly lunch in Exeter – venue to be confirmed.

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