



Association of Open University Graduates Region 04 West Midlands

Edition 11

Summer 2015

Welcome to our Summer Local Newsletter. I hope you have been enjoying the weather recently.

There has been a lot going on in the Association since the last Local Newsletter. We now have a presence in the social media world. Please see page 3 for more details. We had our AGM weekend in Caernarfon. Please see page 2 for a digest of the Executive Committee meeting that was held after the AGM.

Further developments are planned in the future. The first is to encourage each Region to have a more unique identity with a Regional Logo for our Local Newsletters. Please see page 2 for more information.

We have had some really well attended events since the last Local Newsletter. I have included some photographs from our visit to **Gladstone Working Pottery Museum** and the visit to Hereford Cathedral's **Chained Library and Mappa Mundi Exhibition Centre**.

We have several events over the next few months. Please see page 4 for more details.

Philip Evans
Executive Representative



Above: Members gathered at the Gladstone Pottery Museum

Friday 2nd October 2015

**AOUG Foundation for
Education Research Awards**

Followed by

AOUG Foundation Lecture
to be given by **Paul Catley,**
Head of the **OU Law School**

£10 for full or part day including a buffet lunch
- Admission by ticket or invite only.

Tickets available from AOUG Office
aoug@open.ac.uk or 01908 653316

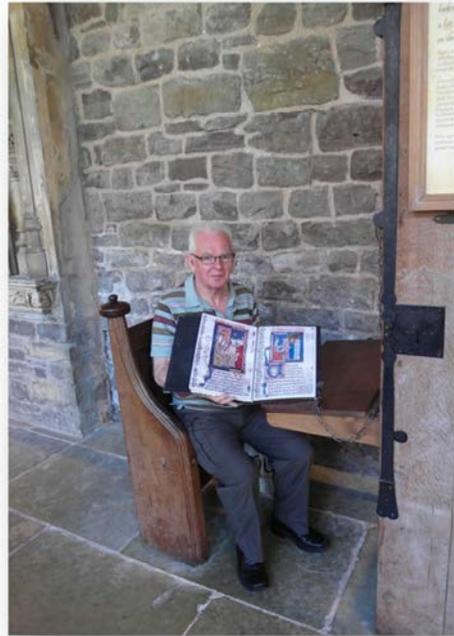
*"If you have never been to the OU campus before,
then this is your perfect opportunity to explore the
beautiful grounds."*

Competition time!

Local symbol or motif:

Now that 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 what would really make each area's Local Newsletter distinctive would be to have a unique symbol or motif that was representative of the area for that particular Newsletter, in addition to the AOUG logo. Yorkshire has always had a Yorkshire Rose in addition to the AOUG logo and that was an easy choice for those members as there is only Yorkshire within Region 07. However what about Regions or Nations with many counties, what would represent the whole area?

I am therefore asking you to put on your thinking caps and send in suggestions or images to me of any simple design that you think would be suitable to represent the whole of our area which covers Herefordshire, Worcestershire, most of Staffordshire and West Midlands. I will then consider all suggestions and choose the one that I feel is most suitable and this will appear as our motif on the Winter Newsletter and it might also be used in OMEGA too.



Above: Keith Ward at Hereford Cathedral

Digest of the May Executive Committee meeting

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

If you have any issues or ideas that you would like me to raise at a future Executive Committee meeting, please let me know.

Philip Evans

Executive Representative

Joke Corner

Q: What do Eskimos get from sitting on a block of ice?

A. Polaroids



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 and especially with 'Corporate' sites rather than personal sites, the safe guards are much greater. Thus since Social Media is the favoured method of communication for the majority of people in today's world, AOUG must move with the times.

Thus a few weeks ago, our Treasurer set up a Corporate Facebook page and then very recently, our Chairman launched a Corporate Twitter account. Both of these are open to members and non-members and are monitored by the Officers. The intention is to raise the profile of AOUG amongst people who might otherwise not have heard of us. Then it is hoped that after a period of interaction through these mediums, that any OU graduates that we have reached may decide to view our website. The ultimate goal is to encourage them to join our organisation. In order for this to happen, the social media interactions must firstly be pitched appropriately but even more important is that our own website must be completely up to date at all times and be interesting enough to inspire them to join up. Then once these people have joined us, we need to ensure that all communications inspire them to keep involved with AOUG for the future.



Thus you now have several electronic opportunities to engage directly with AOUG:

- the AOUG website aoug.org.uk managed by our Publicity Officer.
- the special 'Members' Only' Forum, which can be found by clicking on the word Forum at the bottom of the AOUG website Home Page and creating your own password for future access.
- Corporate Facebook – You can find this through your own Facebook account if you have one and typing in [Association of Open University Graduates](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Association-of-Open-University-Graduates/710287149081499) or if you do not have a Facebook account, you can just use the direct link <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Association-of-Open-University-Graduates/710287149081499> which will allow you to view it like any other website
- Corporate Twitter - You can view this by going to <https://twitter.com/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**

Region 04 Directory

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Diary Dates

Saturday 25th July. 12noon

Staffordshire Hoard Exhibition

Meet at the main entrance to the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery in Chamberlain Square, Birmingham, B3 3DH at 12noon for an opportunity to share lunch together in The Edwardian Tearooms. Following lunch we will visit the Staffordshire Hoard exhibition. General admission to the Museum is free. Enquiries to the Executive Representative.

Saturday 22nd August. 12.30pm

Summer Meal

Meet at The Malt House, 75 King Edwards Road, Birmingham, B1 2NX (next to Symphony Hall, overlooking the canal). Standard menu prices apply. Booking is essential – please contact Philip Evans for more information or to reserve a place (before 15th August).

Saturday 5th September. 12noon

Farmers' Market and Onny Meadows

Meet at the main entrance to the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, School Road, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 9RS to visit the Farmers' Market and afterwards explore the adjoining 30 acre Onny Meadows, or wander into the town of Craven Arms. For lunch we will enjoy the delicious, locally sourced food in the Centre's Café. This is a free event (normal menu prices at the Café). Please contact Philip Evans for more information.

Friday 2nd October.

12 noon – AOUG Foundation for Education Research Awards – *Please see the advert*

2pm – AOUG Foundation Lecture – *Please see the advert*

Saturday 31st October. 10.45am

Back Stage Tour of The Birmingham Repertory Theatre

Meet in the foyer of The Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Centenary Square, Broad Street, Birmingham, B1 2EP for the 11am "Back stage tour". Tickets are priced at £6 (£4.50 concessions). Please contact Philip Evans for more information. To book tickets please send a cheque made payable to AOUG in the West Midlands to Philip Evans. Please note that spaces are limited so book as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Saturday 21st November. 11.45am

Tour of National Trust's Greyfriars' House and Garden

Meet at the entrance to Greyfriars' House and Garden, Friar Street, Worcester, WR1 2LZ for a tour around this National Trust property. Entrance is £4.75 per person or FREE for National Trust members (please remember to bring your membership card with you). For more information, including access from public transport and convenient car-parks, please contact Philip Evans.

Your ideas for places to visit or other events are always welcome. Please drop me an email, give me a ring or post any leaflets to me.

Philip Evans
Executive Representative—Region 04