



Newsletter of AOUG in the West Midlands.

Edition 3

Winter 2012

Welcome.

Many of our members know that AGM 2013 will be hosted by our Region. Also, this year, AOUG will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary. Many of our older members will remember celebrating the 21st Anniversary in 2009. Hence, it is a great privilege for us to have an opportunity to host both the AGM 2013 and 25th Anniversary celebrations, and I pray that everyone will make use of their membership benefits and participate fully. There will be regular updates posted on AOUG website [www.aoug.org.uk] and in OMEGA, please check these. All members should make every effort to attend as many events as possible. Please sign up for AGM 2013.

The History of AOUG in brief.

The formation of The Open University in 1969 is regarded as the best invention of 20th century. Many students wanted to get degrees, but could not because of the very high levels of entry qualifications demanded Universities. The creation of The Open University by the Labour Government produced a new dimension of learning at degree level through the use of modern technology, although many academic dons and politicians were very opposed to the idea of The Open University. Nonetheless, The Open University provided degree level courses to students without any formal entry qualifications, the only requirement being the strong determination to seriously study to achieve a degree. When the first new The Open University students graduated successfully, they surprised the academic world tremendously. These success stories of very early graduates brought enthusiasm to many thousands of students to enrol with The Open University's courses. These new graduates began to spread their success stories in their local communities and became the first Ambassadors to The Open University. Many small groups were formed by these new graduates in different Regions and Nations, and in 1988, these small groups united to form the Association of Open University Graduates [AOUG]. The Open University approved this formation and a tree was planted in the Mulberry Lawn at Walton Hall to commemorate the launch of AOUG. Since then, the Officers and Executive Representatives of all the Regions and Nations have worked very hard to develop benefits for our members.

21st Anniversary of AOUG.

Our 21st Anniversary was celebrated along with the 40th Anniversary of The Open University at Walton Hall on Saturday 27 June, 2009. The Open University had by then become Britain's largest university. The 40th Anniversary celebration at Walton Hall played a very significant role in bringing visitors from all Regions and Nations of United Kingdom as well as from Europe and rest of the world. This Open Day was called "The Open Unlimited". There were four Registration & Information points and nine Visitor's Zones at Walton Hall. There were childrens' activities, quizzes for adults and many refreshments stalls set up there, as well as many displays of course materials and demonstrations. Tutors were present to answer questions on course materials and registrations.

The AOUG displays were mainly concentrated in the AOUG Office, and depicted memoirs of

members, Foundation for Education Awards, activities & events in different Regions and Nations, website materials and copies of OMEGA. In addition, the AOUG Office provided childrens' activities and refreshments. There was a sponsored walk. At 2.30 p.m., everyone attended a ceremony on Mulberry Lawn, when the late founder of AOUG, Olga Camm unveiled a plaque next to a tree which she and the former Vice Chancellor, John Horlock had planted in 1988. This event was well attended. Jean Hertzog, who was Chairman at the time made a speech, and a DVD was made of Jean's speech.

AOUG Officers and Executive Representatives volunteered to help The Open University at different Visitor's Zones and car parks. It was an excellent day with marvellous weather. These anniversaries were jubilant celebrations. Members who attended these anniversaries will recall the unique pride of studying with The Open University. They learnt about how The Open University delivered their courses from Walton Hall and the use of modern technology which opened up new dimensions of successful study leading to graduation. They met tutors, visited Faculties and the library, met student friends who studied the same courses and attended the same Summer Schools as well as making new friends. They saw the AOUG Office and learnt about its administration. A few members found their photographs and memoirs amongst these displays. These anniversaries were fantastic memories and history treasured by members for ever.

25th Anniversary of AOUG.

All Regions & Nations will celebrate the 25th Anniversary locally, but nationally, AOUG Officers are planning a dinner at Bletchley Park, Milton Keynes in Autumn, 2013. There will be updates in OMEGA and the AOUG website [www.aoug.org.uk].

AGM 2013.

A very good update on the AGM 2013 is uploaded on the AOUG website. Please browse it and sign up for the AGM and excursions.

Diary Dates.

Please check AOUG website and OMEGA for Diary Dates of our events. The next event is the New Year's Dinner at Britannia Hotel, Wolverhampton on Saturday 19th January, 2013. Please reserve your places now. No deposit required.

Contact Details.

Please inform the AOUG Office if your contact details have changed. Please make sure that you have given your correct email address, telephone and mobile numbers.

Membership Renewals.

Please check that your membership renewals are updated because of the change in membership fees. Please consider paying your membership fees by Direct Debit.

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