



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES in EAST MIDLANDS

EDITION 1

Spring 2012

LOCAL NEWSLETTERS RETURN

Welcome to your Region's first, of what we hope will be a regular, local newsletter. All Regions and Nations used to have local newsletters some fifteen years ago but the increased postal costs meant that most of these stopped production many years back. However now with the ability to use the internet, and the greater realisation of the need for members to feel more connected to other graduates, all Regions and Nations are intending to re-establish these newsletters three times a year. However the success of these will depend firstly on members ensuring that their e-mail addresses are up to date on the AOUG data base and secondly that local members will offer support to their Executive Representatives and send them items for inclusion, or offer to assist in the newsletter's production or circulation. These newsletters will be more informal than our magazine OMEGA and can allow for more local interests.

Currently East Midlands does not have a local Executive Representative but you have a candidate nominated in the forth coming elections who, if elected, will take up office from the end of the AGM on May 19th 2012. Please look out for the inserts in your next edition of OMEGA and use your vote, not only for your local election but also for the Officer positions that are up for election on the ballot form and (if you are not attending the AGM) to cast your proxy votes for the many Resolutions on the Proxy Voting form. The candidate for your Executive Representative's position is David Bellaby, whose contact details are at the end of this newsletter in case you would like to talk to him about your ideas for this Region's future.

Association AGM in Liverpool

There is still time to book for the Annual General Meeting and Social Weekend to be held this year at the Britannia Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. Even if you can not manage the whole weekend, you may choose to attend for just part of it.

How about going for the Saturday to the meetings? There is so much change going on within the Open University that is affecting AOUG, that you can be assured of plenty to talk about. Maybe you might consider joining the optional excursion to Speke Hall, a National Trust property. National Trust members can book for just £7.50 (non members £14.50) for transport to and fro and a guided tour of the grounds, with plenty of time to explore the hall at your leisure with guides in each room to answer any questions.

Then why not extend your day and brush off your "glad rags" to meet up with friends old and new at the Gala evening. The evening begins with a drinks reception at 7pm and is followed by a three course meal with a guest speaker, music and dancing. Being in Liverpool the theme for the speaker and the music is The Beatles and the Association has booked, Peter Piper, (an OU tutor and AOUG Member), to be both the speaker and the musical entertainment along with his partner Christine. We can therefore be guaranteed a really good lively evening.

Contact AOUG Office on 01908 653316 or aoug@open.ac.uk to book quickly.

News from the Association`s Executive Committee

Your local Executive Representative is your link for passing information to and from the Executive Committee and this newsletter will give them the opportunity of keeping you up to date with issues that may affect the membership. However in the absence of a current Executive Representative, let me, as your Association Chairman give you a little flavour of the current situation.

The Open University is currently going through major reorganisations to meet the challenges of the technological and economic world and many of these changes have an affect on our AOUG`s organisation. OU Directors still are in charge in the OU centres in Scotland, Wales and Ireland but all the Directors for the Regions have now been replaced with “Assistant Director, Student Services”, a lower ranking, with coordinators for all the Regions being based on campus in Milton Keynes. East Midlands` Assistant Director, Student Services, is Mrs Juliet Bishop and it is they that the Executive Representative will approach to offer volunteers for local OU events, for requests the use of rooms at Regional Office, or to discuss any other local issues. However the organisation of the AOUG Award for a local graduate, or an AOUG Civic Reception for new OU graduates will now be covered centrally from Milton Keynes and thus will require the Executive Representatives to work via AOUG Officers for some organisational aspects.

Many OU Campus departments are being “streamlined” and most of the old school OU staff with whom AOUG has had very close mutually supportive links have now left and the OU systems now require AOUG to involve the Alumni staff in all our campus communications. This is discussed in more depth on another insert in OMEGA, to which I hope you will respond.

Ramsey Hertzog AOUG Chairman

AOUG Website – aoug.org.uk

AOUG website has a large selection of pages to view including Association and OU news and many archive sections for those interested in our history, but more importantly for local members it has several pages dedicated to your own Region. Each Region or Nation has a Welcome page, a Newsletter page and a Diary Dates page with recently added Memory Lane photos and the facility to add Booking forms as required.

However the Association`s website now has a new on-line membership facility so that you are able to renew your membership on-line and prevent any risk of lapsing and thus missing out on receiving your OMEGA and all the other communications being you information about your Association. If you are not sure when your renewal is due, how much to pay or what method you normally pay by, then the on-line facility allows you to contact AOUG to find out. Alternatively you can always give Cheryl Cowley a ring on 01908 653316 to check directly.

Jean Hertzog AOUG Publicity Officer

Newly formed group meets in Lincoln

On a fine January day, I drove cross country to join some other members for a New Year`s lunch at a traditional pub, the Royal William IV, on the waterfront in Lincoln. The food was good, the company was good and we enjoyed putting the world to rights over a leisurely meal.

With no Executive Representative currently in place, I have assisted various local members to arrange differing events over the summer and winter months but this first event of 2012 was so successful that it has been decided to make this a regular meeting place in the hope of establishing a local group for this city. It is hoped that such groups can be established in other areas of the Region shortly. If you would be willing to act as a local group contact, or to suggest a suitable meeting place, please let me know.

Ramsey Hertzog

“The Lost Railways of Lincolnshire”

On 11th March, a very sunny Sunday, a group of members met at the Petwood Hotel, in Woodhall Spa and enjoyed a traditional Sunday lunch in elegant surroundings with a view of the magnificent grounds. This hotel is famous for being the Officers` Mess for the 617 Squadron, (The Dambusters), in World War II and the building and grounds are well worth a visit in their own right. However after lunch we had other plans and drove over to the home of Alan Stennett, a renovated, once busy railway station at Woodhall Junction just ten minutes away, to hear him speak on “The lost railways of Lincolnshire.” His station home is at the end of the disused track, (which is now used as a cycle trail), and houses many railway memorabilia. Railway benches, luggage trollies railway signs and replica fire buckets (made by his wife) adorn to “platform” and inside displays of original noticeboards, signal levers, posters, tickets and other items.

Alan`s powerpoint presentation gave us an insight into the development of the Lincolnshire railways both for passenger and for freight brought to life by very interesting old images. He explained how the railways enabled the seaside towns to flourish and explained the effects that Lord Beeching`s cuts had on the area.

Future Events

Kedleston Hall.

Your next event is to be on Saturday 28th April to visit Kedleston Hall, near Quarndon, just north of Derby. Kedleston Hall was built for Sir Nathaniel Curzon by Robert Adams as a deliberate attempt to rival the nearby Chatsworth House. Although the main house was to be the family home, Sir Nathaniel wanted it also to be a place to display all his extensive collection of paintings and sculptures each providing a backdrop to his elaborate furniture. Here he was to entertain the gentry of the age.

All of this grandeur can still be seen within Kedleston`s state rooms. The house also displays items from many part of the world but especially items from his time as Viceroy in India, which are exhibited in an “Eastern Museum”, and includes a “peacock dress” that belonged to Lady Curzon, worn by her in 1903.

Just like at Chatsworth, Kedleston Hall`s landscaped parkland gives another outward show of his wealth and offers a wonderful setting for this magnificent building. Here we shall have the opportunity to view lakes and water cascades.

We may also get the opportunity to join a tour by “Mrs Garnett”, the 18th century housekeeper, dressed in full costume, as she shows visitors around the Kitchens or we could venture around the Pavillion or the Stables. As a National Trust property, this is just part of their new policy to allow a more “hands on“ experience for visitors.

Handshake Event - Hardwick Hall

Later in the year on Saturday 21st July, Yorkshire members are coming to join East Midlands members at Hardwick Hall, another National Trust property. This was built around 1590 for Bess of Hardwick, as a place of escapism from her husband, the Earl of Shrewsbury, who lived at Chatsworth and is famous for its extensive collection of tapestries.

Hardwick have just opened their new development, the “Hardwick Stableyard Project”. They have completely re-roofed the stable block, repaired stonework on chimneys and gable ends and have installed a biomass boiler to provide the heating and hot water. It is now accessible to wheelchairs and all these new areas are fitted with hearing loops. There are restaurant facilities in the Great Barn Restaurant and shopping in the Ox House shop. This area houses the new car park and buggies are available from here to assist visitors up to the House.

Look for AOUG backpacks and meet at 11am for coffee in the new restaurant to join up with the others. Contact Ramsey Hertzog if you are interested in attending as then he can know to expect you.

Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT
Sat 28 th April	Meet in the restaurant at 11am in Keddleston Hall, near Quarndon, Derby, DE22 5JH - the famous National Trust property, designed by Robert Adam as a house to rival Chatsworth House. The Hall is often used as a film set for such films as 'The Duchess'
Sat 5 th May	Join other members at 12.30pm at the newly formed Lincoln group, for a pub lunch at the Royal William IV, Lincoln's favourite traditional Public House on the Waterfront, Brayford Wharf North, Lincoln. This is open to members from any area, who like good food, and relaxing chat.
Fri. 18 th – Sun 20 th May	Association AGM at the Britannia Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. Last chance to book – end of March. Contact AOUG Office 01908 653316 quickly!!
Sat 21 st July	Meet at 11am in the Great Barn Restaurant, Hardwick Hall, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S44 5QL in the new £6.5m project only opened this year. Tour the property and marvel at the incredible story of how Bess of Hardwick acquired her enormous wealth. This is a Handshake event with nearby Region 07.
Sat 18 th August	Join other members at 12.30pm at the Lincoln group, for a pub lunch at the Royal William IV, Lincoln's favourite traditional Public House on the Waterfront, Brayford Wharf North, Lincoln. This is open to members from any area, who like good food, and relaxing chat.

Activities in Surrounding Regions

If you live near any of the boundaries of this Region, you may find it easier to join activities in the neighbouring Regions, West Midlands, or East of England. However it is advisable to contact the appropriate Executive Representative in advance, to welcome you.

West Midlands - Saturday 14th April 2.00 pm A guided tour of Heliflight UK Ltd at Halfpenny Green Airport, Bobbington, DY7 5DY to look at helicopters.

Executive Representative - Mohammad Motawalla 01902 771328 mamotawalla@yahoo.co.uk

East of England - Saturday 28th April noon. Meet in Shaw's (George Bernard) Corner car park for walk around Ayot St. Lawrence, approx 1 ½ miles and a bar lunch at The Brocket Arms.

Executive Representative - Jean Grout. 01727 846818 Mob. 077911 45749 xraytecl@hotmail.com

Contact Details

AOUG Office	Cheryl Cowley	Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA	01908 653316 aoug@open.ac.uk
AOUG Chairman	Ramsey Hertzog	43, Barnard Avenue, Coal Aston. Dronfield S18 3BP	01246 414746 ramseyhertzog@hotmail.com
Candidate for 05 Executive Representative	David Bellaby	12, Carnarvon Court, Bretby Hall Park, Bretby, Burton on Trent DE15 0UA	01283 214017 dhiba@gmail.com

Did you receive this Newsletter by post? If so, do you have an e-mail address we may use?

Please contact the AOUG Office, (aoug@open.ac.uk) with your details. Thank you for your cooperation with this. Alternatively if you prefer a postal version, then please consider donating stamps to keep reduce our costs.

