



**ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY
GRADUATES in YORKSHIRE**



NEWSLETTER 62

AUTUMN 2011

“Can you hear me Mother?”

SATURDAY OCTOBER 22nd 2011 at 10.30am – Friends Meeting House, York.

“Can you hear me Mother?” on October 22nd 2011, won't be much to do with Mothers, but it will be about some of the myths, history philosophy and biology behind deafness, and practical problem solving as to the best way to manage any hearing loss in a family.

As one in seven people in the UK have significant problems with deafness, but we don't as yet have “designer hearing aids”, or celebrities endorsing them, do come and explore this and other mysteries, in an interactive and fun way.

This Saturday Meeting talk is to be given by no other, than our very own, Carol-Ann Churm. Carol-Ann's stories have the depth and detail that allow you to imagine you were actually experiencing the situation for yourself and so I urge you all to attend what promises to be a fascinating insight into deafness, explained with the background of personal experience, in her unique, enthusiastic style. This is certainly a talk not to miss.

The Friends Meeting Room is down the small side street of Friargate, off Castlegate and just ten minutes walk from York Station, Park and Ride bus stops and the Clifford Tower car park. The Friends Meeting House, in York, always make AOUG very welcome and this is usually a popular venue, as there is a large cluster of local members but York's good transport links make it an easy venue to get to. Whether you are a regular, or new to AOUG events, just turn up or give the Chairman, Malcolm White a ring so that he can look out to meet you.

Following the talk, members usually gather for an informal chat over a “*Bring your own*” lunch (There are plenty of sandwich shops around) and then in the afternoon take part in a short Saturday Meeting to which non members are also welcome to stay. This will update you on current issues at both Regional and Association level and includes an informal discussion on current topics of interest. Please come and have your say. Topics this time will include the changes within The Open University and their effects on AOUG in Yorkshire.

Cruise to Brugge - Sunday 13th November 2011 to Tuesday 15th November 2011

AOUG in Yorkshire members are off to Brugges and there is still time to book to join the group. We meet at the quayside at 4.30pm in Hull, (Look for the blue AOUG Back packs), ready to sail overnight on Sunday 13th November 2011. Cabins are £73 inside cabin or £78 outside cabin, the same price, whether for single or double occupancy and once settled in, we plan to share the evening together – a meal in the restaurant, and then onto enjoy the boat's live entertainment, casino or cinema. On Monday morning we arrive in Zeebrugge, where we take the coach to Brugges, there to sample the delights of French cuisine, admire the canals, the cobbled streets, the historical buildings, lace making and of course the chocolate!. An optional bus tour of the city is available for £12.50 and the day is hoped to be enhanced by meeting up with European AOUG members. Then back to the boat for our return overnight trip with more food and entertainment in the relaxing atmosphere with friends. For more details, or to book a place contact Jean Hertzog 01246 414746 jrhertzog@hotmail.com

Executive Representative`s Letter:

It is Autumn already! Although after the last few days of beautiful weather, can we really be into October. I hope that you all had a good summer and maybe even a holiday. I was lucky enough to be able to stay with my brother and his wife in their home in the Aveyron region of Southern France. The highlight of the holiday was a trip to the village fete and motorcycle rally to hear live bands, travelling on my brother's motorbike and sidecar! If I hadn't lost my camera along with lots of my other belongings in Paris, I would have been able to include a photograph in the next OMEGA!

Following our Yorkshire AGM, we have some changes on our Committee, including a new Chairman and new Newsletter Editor and I am really grateful to Jean for 'volunteering' to step in and keep up the good work. Hilary has done a sterling job and we are sorry to lose her services.

Our organised events have continued through the summer, including Bramham Horse Trials, Shakespeare at Nostell Priory and the Heritage Open Day at The Moravian Settlement at Fulneck. Like myself, most people seem to know nothing of this historic Settlement. It has been there for over 200 years and has amazing written records going back to its earliest days. If any of you have the opportunity to visit it on a future Heritage Day, I would strongly recommend it and I would like to thank Hilary for suggesting it and helping to make it such an interesting day.

The changes at Regional Office in Leeds are now in place, but we have yet to see how they will finally affect us. I still attend the Yorkshire Regional Committee and we are still invited to assist at Open Days so there is a lot of positivity for which we are grateful. We were able to make a presentation to Nick Berry before our Yorkshire AGM and I would like to thank all those who contributed to the barometer and AOUG items that we were able to present to Nick to say thank you for his support and to wish him well in the future. I look forward to seeing some of you at our York Saturday meeting on the 22nd. We usually get a good attendance at York events.

Lesley Sleigh

Chairman`s Letter:

Since taking over the Chairmanship of the Yorkshire Committee, I have been getting up to speed as quickly as possible. This has been assisted by help provided by the outgoing Chairman Jean Hertzog. As also the new AOUG Vice Chairman for the Association, this has been a very busy period.

There have been ups and downs. There was a problem with the "Shakespeare on the Lawn" at Nostell Priory where the handout date for the play was incorrect. Difficulties were also experienced (despite checking with the Yorkshire Playhouse) with regard to my Committee Meeting as Chairman when the Playhouse venue was not available. Fortunately the Committee had a "fallback" venue.

The outline of a full programme for 2012 was decided on at the committee meeting with members undertaking to fill out the details as soon as they became available. The latest information on these events can be found elsewhere in the Newsletter.

This is a challenging period for AOUG and The Open University with the combination of the country's financial situation and government policy with regard to higher educational funding. The need to coordinate with The Open University at both Regional and Association level has never been more important and this is being actively pursued.

Malcolm White

Not Goodbye, we hope!!

Thanks, and Good Luck for the future, go to Val Kendall, who served on the AOUG in Yorkshire Committee, who has now left us to move up to Cumbria. Our loss is The North's gain! She's already inviting us over to view her cottage so maybe a handshake event coming up!! Get the kettle on Val!!

Changes within The Open University

Goodbye Nick Berry, and Congratulations to Billy Khokhar!! During the lunch break at the AOUG in Yorkshire AGM, we presented a barometer as a Thank You present to Nick Berry, The Open University Regional Director for Yorkshire, for all his support to AOUG in Yorkshire over the years. Nick has now retired from the OU and intends to spend a lot more time, out on the moors indulging in his love of walking. Thus, to ensure that he does not forget us, we also gave him a backpack with the AOUG logo and with several “useful walker’s items” inside – hand gel, tissues, first aid kit and of course Kendal mint cake. Val Mirfield, Nick’s ever helpful and patient, PA. has now also left the OU. She stays over the Summer in order to assist in the transition period.

The Open University’s re-structuring programme has meant that all the roles of the English Regional Directors have now gone and in their place we have “Assistant Director, Student Services”. The Nations of Wales, Ireland and Scotland retain their Directors and now with two English Directors, based in Milton Keynes, covering the whole of England, The Open University is now working on a four Nation system. Each Regional “Assistant Director Student Services” will be responsible for the overall running of their Region but now under the linked management from Milton Keynes. Thus gone are the roles of Yorkshire’s two Assistant Regional Directors, Martin (who is now working under another role at Milton Keynes) and Billy Khokhar who has stepped up to the new Assistant Director Student Services role - “Congratulations Billy”.

It is early days as to how this will all affect AOUG in Yorkshire, but we have worked well with Billy in the past and hopefully once all the new systems have settled into routines, this good relationship will continue into the future. As Lesley says in her letter, she is still going to RCC meetings and AOUG is still being invited to help at events for possible new students.

Over the last few months various meetings have been held by the Association Officers with senior members of the OU staff. How we deal with AOUG Foundation for Education Awards for Yorkshire and arranging Civic Receptions may however change. We met Will Swann, Director Students, who has suggested various new ideas as to how these might work with The Open University advertising our Awards to students and staff through their electronic systems, so that nominations could be made direct to AOUG Office and then passed to the Executive Representative. He has even suggested that maybe the Award winner might be presented with their Award at a degree ceremony, not in the ceremony itself but during the VIP lunch prior to the ceremony. We await news on the progress of this idea. Will is also considering ways that all Regions and Nations might be assisted to hold Civic Receptions. The actual organization of these is done by the Executive Representative in conjunction with local Mayoral Offices, but it is the Data Protection issues of the Open University’s new graduate contact details that is currently presenting a problem.

Then the issues over AOUG’s presence at Degree Ceremonies are of ongoing concern. Despite winning back our right to our own AOUG stand in 2008, we then lost it again to first share facilities with Alumni and now in 2011 to work for Alumni on their stand, whilst still “promoting” AOUG with our banner and literature. This has been a frustrating situation and the arrangement is confusing to new graduates, (and some of our AOUG members), and extremely detrimental to the number of recruitments of new graduate to AOUG. However to try to improve the promotion, Alumni Relations have offered to send out an e-mail mailing on our behalf to all new graduates. This is to go out later this month. Then the AOUG Association Officers (all currently Yorkshire folk!) meet with OU Vice Chancellor Martin Bean, and Edith Prak, Director of Development and Alumni Relations this week to try to re-establish our status. We will then meet with Roz Allison Director of Alumni Relations, within the next month to negotiate the degree ceremony details. So things are changing within the OU and this is affecting AOUG but we keep optimistic that all will be resolved soon.

Ramsey Hertzog – Association Chairman

DIARY DATES – 2011

Date	Event
Sat. 22 nd Oct.	“Can you hear me Mother?” Deafness and hearing impairment – exploring the myths. T/C 10.30am at Friends Meeting House, York. Talk 11am BYO lunch. Saturday informal discussion meeting 1.30pm
Wed. 26 th Oct.	Bowling at Doncaster Dome Bowling Alley – Challenge to OUSA Meet in the bar area at 7pm All welcome No skill required just a sense of fun. Contact Derrick Franks 01977 62 0192 or just turn up. Look for the copy of OMEGA on the table.
Sun. 13 th Nov.	Visit to explore Hull. Meet at Ferens Art Gallery at 11am. Contact Barbara Derych or just turn up. Look for AOUG back packs.
Sun 13 th Nov – Tues 15 th Nov.	Meet 4.30pm at quayside for “Cruise to Brugges” – handshake event with European AOUG Members. Contact Jean Hertzog 01246 414746 for full details. Booking is essential.
Sat 3 rd Dec.	Beauty and the Beast at The Carriage Works, Millennium Square, Leeds. (20mins walk from bus station) Performance starts 2pm Book your own tickets 0113 224 3801 Meet up with others for the performance, followed by a chance to look around the Millennium Square German Christmas Market and a snack tea. Please contact Joyce Johnson 0113 2824068 so she can look pout for you.

DIARY DATES – 2012

Date	Event
Sat. 14 th Jan	Royal Armouries Museum, Armouries Drive, Leeds LS10 1LT. At Clarence Docks. Meet 11.30am in entrance foyer. FREE entry. Charge for parking. Contact Malcolm White 01226 700264
Sat 18 th Feb.	The Hepworth, Wakefield, Gallery Walk WF1 5AW. Meet 11.30am in foyer. FREE entry. Charge for parking.
Sat 24 th March	Saturday Meeting. Meet 10.30am for T/C Speaker and venue to be confirmed. Contact Malcolm White. 01226 700265
Sat 21 st April	Eden Camp, near Malton North Yorkshire. Meet 11am at the entrance. Look for AOUG back packs. Recreates life of World War II through light, sounds, smells and smoke. Contact Ramsey Hertzog 01246 414746
Sat 26 th May	Handshake event to Lancaster. Water front, Maritime Museum, Castle, Toy Museum, Park, Butterfly House etc. Meet Region 08 AOUG members at 11am in cafe (TBA) for T/C before exploring. Contact Jean Hertzog 01246 414746
Sat 9 th June	AOUG in Yorkshire AGM - Meet 10.30am for T/C Speaker ad venue to be arranged. Contact Malcolm White 01226 700264
Sat. 7 th July	Brodsworth Hall and Gardens near Doncaster. Meet 11.45am near Ticket Office. Next to the car park at the top of the drive. 203 bus from Doncaster stops near the entrance. English Heritage members FREE. Adults £9, Concessions £8.10 Contact Peter Turvey 01246 410835

CONTACT DETAILS:

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