



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES IN THE NORTH WEST

Edition 7

Spring 2015

Our last meeting in the North West in January was the visit to the Lowry Centre in Manchester. This area has been heavily developed in the past twenty years culminating in the move of the BBC from London to Manchester. This has really injected a busy area of waterside flats, large buildings, one of which is the War museum, and many belonging to the BBC. The Lowry centre houses cafés and theatres together with an impressive gallery of L.S. Lowry's art work. AOUG members were pleasantly surprised at the very enthusiastic art lecture offered here free of charge. Not all people are fond of Lowry's paintings, some saying that he couldn't paint at all. The visitor can't help to be impressed with the presentation of the paintings and the technology that supports them.

Lowry was born in Stretford, an area in Manchester, in 1887 and died in a hospital in Glossop in 1976. He considered himself as a self-taught artist even though he did attend a Municipal College of Art in Manchester followed by attendance at the Salford School of Art. Lowry used to collect rent in the Manchester area and walked around many of the streets, passing the mills and schools at various times of the day. He was particularly observant of daily life in Manchester and he has left us with a wonderful historical account of life in his living years. He shied away from being famous and rejected many awards offered to him. The lecture included an anecdote that he would get on a train from Manchester Piccadilly, go a few stops and return, just to get away from callers at his home. This was a lovely visit and if you get a chance to go yourselves it is well worth it. There is a Designer Outlet Mall very close by which can make it an excellent day out if you enjoy shopping.

This will be my last letter Newsletter to you all as I finish my Executive Representative role in May, I have enjoyed looking after the North West and hope that a member in this area might consider to continue the work. Please contact the Office for more details. Thank you all for your support and I wish you all well. Don't forget to join us in May when we are being taken around Manchester Cathedral. A visit not to be missed.

Peter Williams - North West Region 08 Executive Representative

Association News

AGM and Social weekend in Caernarfon, North Wales.

There is still time to book for the Association's annual get together which this year will be held at the Celtic Royal Hotel, right in the heart of Caernarfon, just five minutes' walk from the famous castle. Full board package from after Friday lunch until after Sunday lunch is £270 and this includes all the evening entertainment on both Friday and Saturday evening. The Gala Dinner on Saturday is a real chance to dust off your finery and enjoy a relaxing evening with a pre-dinner drink, a three course dinner, an after dinner speaker and then musical entertainment. This year we have a 'twmpath' – the Welsh equivalent of a Scottish Ceilidh.

In addition there are the optional excursions starting on Friday afternoon with a train ride up Snowdon and weather permitting, a chance to take in the views from the top. Then on Saturday afternoon, there is the chance to visit the National Slate Museum, based on the site of the Dinorwic Quarry, and on Sunday morning, a unique opportunity to take a bus ride deep inside the mountains to experience the Electric Mountain Power Station. All the excursions and other activities are open to all OU graduates, friends and family whether they are AOUG members or not. Everyone is very welcome. So come on your own or bring a group, the choice is yours but do come!

Voting

If you are not able to attend this year's AGM, under Company Law, you are entitled to a proxy vote, the appropriate insert being in the forthcoming issue of OMEGA. Do please cast your vote both for the Executive Committee elections and for any Resolution or Motion to be considered at the AGM.

Summary of Executive Committee Meeting at Milton Keynes

At the meeting on Saturday 7th February the Executive Committee re-appointed Trevor Taylor as our OMEGA Editor for the next twelve months and it was also noted that the Spring edition of OMEGA would be produced in full colour. Lesley Sleigh was also re-appointed for the coming year as Company Secretary. Unfortunately due to family commitments, Violet Rook has had to resign as Development Officer and so all her areas of responsibility are now being shared out amongst the remaining four Officers.

Cheryl Cowley our Clerical Officer has had a request for a reduction in her hours approved and so from the start of February, Office hours will be 10am until 4pm Monday to Friday. You are still able to leave messages on the answer phone when Cheryl is not available, and she will respond to you as soon as is possible on her next working day. It has been approved that AOUG advertise through Reeds Employment Agency for a Clerical Assistant to work just one day a week alongside Cheryl to learn the Office procedures.

The AOUG Foundation for Education Awards for the Regions and Nations are once again to be widely advertised. Nominations for any new graduate who has gained their OU degree within the last twelve months despite overcoming adversity over and above that of the average student need to be received at the AOUG Office by 22nd June 2015. Information will also go out in March to all OU research departments to encourage nominations for our AOUG Foundation for Education Research Awards. The presentations for these will take place as usual on the first Friday in October on the OU campus and will be followed by our

Annual Foundation Lecture which this year is going to be by Paul Catley, the Head of the Law School. Tickets, for any or all of the day, including a buffet lunch, are priced at £10 each and can be obtained from the AOUG Office (01908 653316). If you have never been to the OU campus before, then this is your perfect opportunity to explore the beautiful grounds.

The most important function of the Spring EC Meeting is to set the budget for the ensuing year. Money is always extremely tight and priorities for the year have to be agreed. Executive Representatives' budgets increased over the last two years to enable the production of the Local Newsletters, but this has now been reduced back down to just £100 for most areas for the year. You may recall that in the Winter 2014 OMEGA members' attention was drawn to the ever spiralling cost of sending three Newsletters annually by post. I cannot promise postal versions unless you can help by sending in postage stamps. Please do check that AOUG Office has your current e-mail address so that you do not miss out.

Diary Dates

Friday 17th April. 7pm

Meet inside the entrance area at The Harvester - "The Sir Winston Churchill" 710, Bury Road, Rochdale OL11 5HW for an evening meal at 7.30pm with friends and family.
www.harvester.co.uk Please come and join us. There is no booking required.

Tuesday 28th April. 11am

Meet in the tearoom of Bodnant Gardens, Tal-y-Cafn, near Colwyn Bay, Conwy, LL28 5RE for a Handshake event to join members and friends for a stroll around to view the beautiful Rhododendrons combined with a visit to the 'Poem'. The 'Poem' is a mausoleum which was built by Henry Davis Pochin as a last resting place for him and his family. It is situated in the centre of the garden perched high above the River Hiraethlyn. It has beautiful interior features including ornate stained glass windows. Bodnant Gardens are situated above the river Conwy and look across the valley towards the Snowdonia range of North Wales. There is a small shopping area with a Woollen Mill and National Trust shop, so don't forget your National Trust Membership Card.

Saturday 23rd May. 11am

Meet in the 'Proper Tea Café', opposite the entrance to Manchester Cathedral, Victoria Street, M3 1SX before visiting the Cathedral and Collegiate Church of St Mary, St Denys and St George in the City of Manchester. This is the mother church of the Anglican Diocese of Manchester, seat of the Bishop of Manchester, a centre of Christian mission, a historic civic institution, a place of worship and learning and a medieval visitor attraction. Admission is free but the Cathedral would like a donation of £3 per head please.

www.manchestercathedral.org

Name : PI number

Tel:E-mail address:

I enclose a donation of stamps to receive my Newsletter by post

I enclose an article on a local issue for the next Newsletter

Friday 26th June. 7pm

Meet inside the entrance area at The Harvester -“The Sir Winston Churchill” 710, Bury Road, Rochdale OL11 5HW for an evening meal at 7.30pm with friends and family.

www.harvester.co.uk

Please come and join us. There is no booking required.

Saturday 11th July. 11am

Meet at the entrance of Eyam Hall, Main Street, Eyam, Derbyshire S32 5QW for a Handshake event organised by Yorkshire members to explore the Hall and Gardens. Admission is £7.40 for an adult, £3.70 for children or free for National Trust members with your card. There is also a Craft Centre and Buttery Café where homemade cakes and light lunches are available. Please note the car park is on the opposite side of the road to the Craft Centre. A village trail can also be provided to learn more about this famous plaque village.

Saturday 25th July. 11am

Meet in the ‘Timber Yard Café’ at Lyme Park House and Garden, Disley, Stockport SK12 2NS Admission is £9.90 each for adults for the whole property. Lyme Park was once home to the Legh family and, in its heyday, a great sporting estate. There is an opportunity to step back in time to the Edwardian era - Lyme's 'Golden Era' - and enjoy the lavish interiors. You can have a go on the piano or read a book in the library and although photography is not permitted in the display rooms, the stage in the Long Gallery can be used to take pictures of visitors of all ages in fabulous fancy dress. The 1,300 acre estate, offers a medieval herd of red and fallow deer, an Edwardian rose garden, a ravine garden and luxurious herbaceous borders next to the reflecting lake where a certain Mr Darcy met Miss Bennett in the BBC production of 'Pride and Prejudice' and all around are fantastic walks and stunning views.

Friday 14th August. 7pm

Meet at “The Stretton Fox” Spark Hall Close, Stretton, Warrington WA4 4NU for an evening meal at 7.30pm with family and friends. www.vintageinn.co.uk/thestrettonfoxstretton Booking is essential by Monday 3rd August with the Local Contact.

Executive Representative (until 9th May) – Peter Williams 01925 223200
peter@cynwyd.freeseve.co.uk

Local Contacts

Warrington Group and Handshake events – Margaret Stobirski 01925 263161
margaretstobirski@gmail.com

Merseyside – Glenys Hibbert 01519 283954

.....
I /we will be attending the April / June / August meal

I /we will be attending the Bodnant Gardens visit

I /we will be attending the Manchester Cathedral visit

I/we will be attending the visit to Lyme Park

I should like to know more about being a Local Contact