



ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES in THE REST OF THE WORLD

EDITION 1

July 2012

LOCAL NEWSLETTERS RETURN

Welcome to your first, of what we hope will be a regular, e-mail newsletter. All Regions and Nations in the UK, 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 have re-established these newsletters three times a year. However this is not being restricted just to the UK and so, in what might seem isolation, distant from the UK, in what is collectively referred to as “**The Rest of the World**”, you are also to have your own official communications, direct from the AOUG Officers.

What classifies as “The Rest of the World”? you might ask. Well strictly speaking it is anyone living outside the UK who is in a country, not officially recognised as a member of the European Union. Newsletters are also being produced by our Local Contact in Europe and you may have been included in the mailing for these Newsletters yourself. If you would like to continue to receive the Local Contact for Europe’s Newsletters, as well as those especially designed for you by the AOUG Officers, then you should contact Patricia Cowling directly on cowling@wanadoo.fr and she will ensure that they are e-mailed out to you. Also if you would like to receive any of those from the UK, (from any area you once lived in, or an area where friends live maybe) please contact the Executive Representative for that Region or Nation.

The success of The Rest of The World e-Newsletters will depend firstly on members ensuring that their e-mail addresses are up to date on the AOUG data base and secondly that Rest of the World members show an interest in receiving them and support for the AOUG Officers by sending them items for inclusion. These newsletters will be more informal than our magazine OMEGA and can allow for more articles of local interests.

Developing AOUG in The Rest of the World

The Rest of the World is of course a vast area, but members must not be forgotten, so we are looking for AOUG members to act as Local Contacts to form small e-mail group to keep in touch, share stories and to support one another. Maybe if numbers and distance is not too great, even to organise any activity that interests them and to let us know so that I can advertise it for you, in the hope of creating a local group. Simple activities to get started without any advanced financial outlay work best, starting small with just a handful of members but who knows what this might grow into.

Contributions to these Newsletters are also requested as only you know what it is like studying and living in your various areas and your experiences would make interesting items for others to read. However there are many other topics you might want to address, academic discussions related to your areas of interest, discussions about The Open University and its place in the World’s Education system, our Association and ideas for development or maybe your hobbies, items about the local area or its culture – everything that interests you is sure to be of interest to someone else. Even if you have never written anything for publication before, just have a go – you’re an Open University graduate and that alone should give you the confidence – and remember you are amongst friends!

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 Nation. 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. There is also a section for Europe and The Rest of the World which until recently have been shared pages, with input from the European Local Contact but now this is being changed so that two different sets of pages will be available, one set for Europe and the other for The Rest of The World. All contributions for these pages should be sent to the AOUG Office on a special communications e-mail address just for OMEGA or website contributions: aoug-website-omega@open.ac.uk Watch out for your special pages shorter and find the link from the drop down menu on the www.aoug.org.uk Home Page.

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 bringing 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 **0 (44) 1908 653316** to check directly.

Then very shortly we are intending to make online facilities available for the purchase of our AOUG merchandise. Trading is currently only available by post or telephone but you soon be able to purchase items direct from the website through a secure facility. We are therefore hoping that it will not only increase the sales we take but will then allow AOUG to develop its range to incorporate a much larger selection of gifts. As you will see in the next OMEGA we have just introduced a storm umbrella – perfect for the dreadful Summer that the UK is having and no doubt for a lot of you too, but if your weather is currently a lot hotter and dryer than ours, then it will double as a sunshade too. Please let us know what sort of Trading items would really interest you, and we'll research the possibility for you.

News from the Association's Executive Committee

For UK members, their local Executive Representative is their link for passing information to and from the Executive Committee, but since you, as a Rest of the World member, do not have an Executive Representative, your link is either the AOUG Development Officer, Violet Rook violetrook@btinternet.com or AOUG Chairman, Ramsey Hertzog ramseyhertzog@hotmail.co.uk and this newsletter will give them the opportunity of keeping you up to date with issues that may affect the membership. At the AGM in May, the new Executive committee was formed with some members still continuing in their term of Office, whilst other were newly elected or co-opted to the roles. Full details of all the Executive Committee are on the EC page in OMEGA. Would you like to be a Local Contact for your area? If so please get in touch with Ramsey Hertzog and he'll be able to talk over ideas for the role, with you.

AOUG Membership Annual Subscription

Can we take this opportunity to remind some of you that AOUG subscriptions went up last year on January 1st 2011? This was advertised in advance of the date, and then again in each edition of OMEGA since. However some members are still paying at the 2010 rate. Also due to the vast difference in postal costs for sending out OMEGA, it was necessary to introduce a new membership category. Those of you in The Rest of the World no longer come under Europe, and now have a separate Rest of the World Subscription rate. We therefore ask that each of you, check your payments to ensure that you are paying the correct price of £ 28 (UK pounds) If you are unsure about this, please contact Cheryl Cowley aoug@open.ac.uk or via the membership section of the website www.aoug.org.uk

Life Membership

However have you ever considered Life Membership? This is a really good option for Rest of the World members as it has two flat rates regardless of where you live - £600 (UK Pounds) for those of you under the age of 60 years and £400.(UK pounds) for those aged 60 years or above. If you decide to do this, Cheryl can explain it for you. Then if you send a passport type photo (head and shoulders on a pale background) suitably verified by a person currently employed in a professional occupation, we can arrange for a special Life Member membership card to be produced for you.

If you become a Life Member you never need to worry about renewals or subscription increases ever again and you will also be showing your support and belief in your Association.

News of Association Events

The Annual General Meeting and Social Weekend was held in May this year at the Britannia Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool and was ranked on the feedback forms from the attendees, as one of our best to date. Excursions included visits to the Maritime Museum, the New Museum of Liverpool, Speke Hall, the Beatles Story and we also rode on the “yellow duckmarine” around the streets and water front of Liverpool. Being in Liverpool the theme for the speaker and the music was The Beatles and the Association booked, Peter Piper, (an OU tutor and AOUG Member), to be both the speaker and the musical entertainment along with his partner Christine. We were therefore guaranteed a really good lively evening and found many hotel staff, and visitors from other events within the hotel, coming to stand and listen at the door to our function room. Members travelled from all over the UK and we also had members from Southern Ireland, from France and another from Malta, so please don't think this is just for UK members. We would really love to see you all.

One of the many discussions at the official AGM sessions, was that of the AOUG's current relationship with the OU. AOUG is going through a difficult time for recruitment as we no longer have our own stand at degree ceremonies, nor are AOUG as an organization, invited to work on the alumni stand at these events. Thus we have lost that vital face to face contact with new graduates and thus the ability to pass over the enthusiasm we have for our Association, and our passion for our University, which in the past has encouraged new graduates to want to join us. Now we face the challenges of only being able to have very limited contact via OU electronic communications. This is therefore an area that you, who may yourselves never have met face to face at degree ceremonies, and yet still joined AOUG, can suggest ways to present AOUG in the most positive light through these electronic methods. All your suggestions will be greatly appreciated. Your stories about your OU study and why you joined AOUG are always of interest. A full report on the current AOUG/OU situation is included as an insert in your next OMEGA so please let us have your thoughts. AOUG needs to embrace new technologies and develop for the challenges ahead.

25th Anniversary Year - 2013

Do you remember The Open University's 40th Anniversary in 2009, when AOUG itself also celebrated our 21st Anniversary. Celebrations were held the length and breadth of the UK and it was a great opportunity for a party, which I know some of you came over for. Well AOUG likes any excuse for a party and so when 2013 comes around we are going to do it all again, this time for our 25th Anniversary. Our Silver Anniversary – that calls for something even more special so we are asking you all to start thinking now about how to celebrate. Would you be able to get to the UK or maybe a bit nearer to something in Europe or how about organising a virtual get together for other Rest of the World members. You may be small in numbers, but you are just as important and we want you to be able to share the celebrations too.

All your ideas will be researched, and if financially and logistically viable, will be advertised in OMEGA, on the AOUG website and via these local Newsletters.

Association Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT
Friday 7 th – Sunday 9 th September 2012	<p>European Weekend in Rouen – organised by the Local Contact for Europe.</p> <p>A two night stay with B&B at the Hotel Ibis, Rouen, Normandy plus a tour of Rouen included for £99 (UK pounds) /13 euros per person for those sharing a bedroom or £156 (UK pounds) /179 euros for single occupancy</p> <p>Extra nights and additional extras can be arranged such as visits to : Monet`s Garden, in Giverny, visit to Bayeux or tour of the D Day beaches.</p> <p>Contact immediately to see if places are still available : Patricia Cowling, cowling@wanadoo.fr Deposit of £40 (sterling) /50 euros required. Booking form available from www.aoug.org.uk/Europe</p>
Friday 5 th October 2012	<p>AOUG Foundation for Education – Faculty Award Ceremony and AOUG Foundation Lecture with buffet lunch.</p> <p>Arrive by 11.30 hours (UK time) ready for Ceremony at 12.00 hours. Presentation of Research Awards for candidates from 8 different research areas. Hear and view displays about the variety of fascinating research currently being undertaken within the OU. Buffet lunch included at 13.00 hours when you can meet and talk with other AOUG members, research students and their supervisors, and OU dignitaries,</p> <p>Then reassemble for the Annual AOUG Foundation Lecture at 14.00 hours to hear Dr James Bruce speak on “A little light chemistry” giving a chance to here explained the importance of light in all aspects of our lives from gaining energy fro the sun to treating diseases such as cancer.</p> <p>All of this for just £8.00 (UK pounds) with tickets purchased in advance from AOUG Office. Friends and family are all welcome.</p> <p>Then why not stay a little longer and use the OU Library or explore your OU University campus with its peaceful atmosphere of beautiful, gardens and sculptures surrounding the academic buildings. Ask Cheryl in our Office to recommend suitable accommodation if you wish to stay over in the area.</p>
Friday 17 th – Sunday 19 th May 2013	<p>AOUG 25th Anniversary AGM Holiday Inn, Walsall, West Midlands – All information on the AOUG website very soon. Keep checking on www.aoug.org.uk</p>

Contact Details

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AOUG Chairman	Ramsey Hertzog	43, Barnard Avenue, Coal Aston. Dronfield S18 3BP	0 (44) 1246 414746 ramseyhertzog@hotmail.com
AOUG Development Officer	Violet Rook	5 Wallington Court, Kingston Park, Newcastle-upon-Tyne	0 (44) 191 2861396 violetrook@btinternet.com

Remember if you change your contact details to please contact the AOUG Office, (aoug@open.ac.uk) so that Cheryl Cowley can update the Data Base for you and ensure that you do not loose communications.