

## Retired Staff Association Newsletter

**September 2015**

**Issue 36**

As I get my last Newsletter together I have very mixed feelings; relief that I no longer have to worry about getting material for the next issue and sadness that I will not have the opportunity to meet new people – especially the young Bursary winners and Music scholars. I am sure you will be pleased to hear that Richard Freeman (WRSA Music scholar) gained a First Class classification in his Masters and the team he led received a \$1000 prize having come first in the Innovation Category of the International Human Powered Submarine race.

I am sure you would all wish to join me in wishing our Chair our congratulations and good wishes on her marriage to Bill this summer. She will still be Joan Cole for University affairs!

You all should have received information about the appointment of the new Vice Chancellor and President - Professor Stuart Croft; he takes over in February 2016.

Volunteers came forward to lead the 2015 walks but Kay Rainsley (details are at the end of the Newsletter) would be delighted to get some new Members to organise walks in 2016.

The Membership Secretary is also leaving the Committee at the AGM and wishes to thank you all for your support and he hopes you will carry on giving your support to his successor.

You will note that the University has a new logo. The aim is to provide the image of a forward-looking establishment.

Road works around the University seem to be never ending making attending events on campus very tedious but WRSA members still support our events.

There are documents of interest to the WRSA members on the website: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/assoc/rsa>

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### Dates for your diary

**12<sup>th</sup> October;** AGM and Lunch, Scarman House:

Speaker: **Mike Shattock**, talk based on his book - **The Impact of a University on its Environment - The University of Warwick and its Community after Fifty Years**

**17<sup>th</sup> November;** Visit to Cardiff

**15<sup>th</sup> December;** Christmas Lunch, Scarman House

**October to December;** Student Concerts see page 19 for details

**Walks** see page 20 for details

## Spring Lunch and Talk, Scarman House,

27<sup>th</sup> April 2015

On a beautiful Spring day in April, 96 WRSA Members travelled to Scarman House for the annual Spring Lunch eagerly awaiting the talk by Professor Abhinay Muthoo, Chair of the Department of Economics. The staff at Scarman produced a large variety of savouries and sweets to delight the palates of the Members. This was enjoyed in the Courtyard room. After the very delicious buffet lunch there was time for a quick cup of coffee before going upstairs to the meeting room to listen to the talk.

Joan Cole welcomed the speaker Professor Abhinay Muthoo, Head of the Economics Department and the co-ordinator of the Warwick Policy Lab. His research interests include:



bargaining theory;  
conflict resolution;  
political institutions;  
and public policy.

The reason for inviting Professor Muthoo to address the WRSA Members was his involvement with the Warwick Laksh Foundation project in India. He works on this project

in conjunction with Lady Thrift, wife of the Vice-Chancellor. The Professor thanked Joan for her introduction and introduced his colleague Helen Knight, Research Administrator & Project Officer for the Warwick Laksh Foundation Project who would deliver part of the talk. She has first-hand experience of the impact that Warwick students are having in India. Professor Muthoo emphasised the need to get the entire University family involved in this project, including its retired staff. The project could benefit from the support of people with a range of skills and Professor Muthoo was sure that the collective experience and talents of WRSA members could be put to good use.

The University was developing a strategy for India, of which the Laksh project was a central part. Other activities included research and teaching collaborations and alumni events but there was potential for much more to be done and for many departments and colleagues to get involved. Raising Warwick's profile as a leading University in India would have benefits in terms of student recruitment, in particular of the highest achieving students.

Turning to the specific volunteering project that Professor Muthoo and Helen were presenting, the Laksh Foundation is a small NGO which is based in the hills outside Delhi. It started as an organic farm, which then developed a women's sewing co-operative offering employment to local women alongside its agricultural activities. Since 2013, it has set up a network of five tutorial centres which offer extra tuition to around 200 village children whose parents are involved in Laksh.

The Laksh project was initiated 5 years ago and in 2010 started with a pilot scheme of just three students helping out at one school. The programme has grown and now there are multiple groups of Warwick students volunteering for a month at a time during the summer

vacation, across a wider school network. Professor Muthoo believes that education is key to making things better in India and since the business of the University is education everyone has a role to play.

The Warwick Laksh Foundation Project has two aims.

- To help educate the children from the Laksh community, many of whom do not regularly attend state schools and often drop out early without gaining formal qualifications. The scheme seeks to raise their expectations, increase motivation and inspiring interest in school, education, knowledge and life in general.
- To help the development of the teachers themselves, particularly working on their spoken and written English and also introducing new and innovative methods of teaching to make lessons more exciting and fun as well as educational.

Professor Muthoo showed a video prepared in 2014. In the video two of the Warwick students gave their view of the project. They were both very enthusiastic about their



*Madan Sharma (Laksh Foundation Coordinator) with Sara Abassi, Kim Sturdy and Cat Padbury from Group 3, 2014*

involvement and it had been a life changing experience for both of them. This is exemplified in the quote, “Each experience like this, where you take yourself out of your comfort zone, has the opportunity to push your boundaries, has a positive impact on your confidence and improves your ability to deal with new situations”. The children enjoyed having the Warwick students with them. The Warwick students also appreciated that they had very privileged lives and took for granted things like flush toilets and a mattress to sleep on. The children all have responsibilities along with their studies, they have to work at home, e.g. helping with siblings or working on the farm. In addition, although the volunteers spent time preparing their material they often had to abandon it and adapt very quickly as the situation changed. They had to think on their feet.

The volunteers also benefit from their placements, experiencing very different challenges to those encountered through their studies. For example, the Warwick Laksh Foundation Project offers volunteers valuable insight into another culture and an understanding and awareness of an education system that is very different from the one they experience in the UK. It provides a cultural and social experience through visits as well as an opportunity to

form new friendships. They had to adapt to teaching the different cultures, Muslim and Hindu. The Warwick students develop skills such as management and leadership which are outside the education they receive at the University.

The programme involves the volunteers working with 15-20 teachers in the morning: 8:30 to 11:00, then they go back to the farm for lunch and a rest. In the afternoon the Warwick students accompany the teachers to the teaching centres where they observe the teaching so that they can provide feedback and support the following morning.

They have dinner at 19:30 and carry out their preparation until bedtime at about 22:00.

Initially there was only one school in the farm village but now the project has expanded outside the boundaries of the village and there are 5 Tutorial centres: (Alampur Centre; Manger village; Manger Hill; Silakari and Dharij). Student volunteers work to improve the teachers' English skills, both oral and written. In addition the teachers are introduced to new teaching methods such as creative learning thereby taking them away from learning by rote. In addition the teachers are given the opportunity to develop their soft skills, project management, job application and CV writing etc. These are as valuable to them as subject specific skills because these teachers are very young usually in the 15-16 age group.

Currently the project sends 12 volunteers to India in the summer months. Each volunteer spends 4 weeks in India and is required to raise £500 towards their placement, but the majority costs of their flights, accommodation, visas, inoculations and transport to India are covered by philanthropic donations and fundraising events.



*Inger Verweij, Hannah Jones, Jessica Conrad and Julia Dobson from Group 1, 2013 take Laksh pupils to Delhi Zoo*

If anyone doubted the enthusiasm of the volunteers or the impact their presence had on the teachers and children there was no doubt after watching the video prepared by the students. There was a great deal of work and a lot of fun – the best atmosphere for learning. The beauty, music and exciting noises of India, very large elephants and of course the monsoon added to the excitement.

The momentum of the project is increasing but more help is required. There needs to be continuity throughout the year and that is why Professor Muthoo appealed to the WRSA Members to send him ideas, and any information they have about initiatives in India to which

Warwick students could contribute. Also he was looking for volunteers to go out to India to help with the project. Please send all your ideas to: [a.muthoo@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:a.muthoo@warwick.ac.uk). As with any brain storming activity he predicted only 20% would be taken forward but without input nothing can be taken forward.

Professor Muthoo invited questions and there was certainly no shortage of people with their hands in the air. There was a short discussion about the selection process for the volunteers; the use made of the enthusiastic applicants who were not successful; the co-operation with other projects involving overseas students, such as Warwick in Africa; and the possibility of volunteers going at a different time of the year when it is not so hot. After answering all the questions Professor Muthoo and Helen were thanked for the very entertaining and informative presentations and the Members showed their appreciation in the usual way.

### **Laksh Project Team 2015 Quiz Night**

In May the Members of the WRSA were circulated an invitation from the Warwick Laksh project Team to attend their annual Quiz Night. The Quiz Night took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> June in the Barn at Cryfield Farm House. The WRSA were represented by a team of eight called 'The Generation Gap'. The team was led by Elizabeth (Liz) Prichard and consisted of, Jean Norman, Georgie Hale, Pat and Jim Scott and Bill Prichard from the WRSA with some younger brain power supplied by Sarah Jane Bodell (Postgraduate from the History of Medicine group) and Dan Martin, Physics Department.

This wasn't just an ordinary Quiz night: along with the quizzing there was the traditional raffle and a very exciting auction with unusual items on offer, from the Registrar's time, tickets for the screening of Carmen from the ENO, dinner for 8 at Ninety one to a day's fishing on the Solent; very generous prices were paid for all. Half way through the evening we all enjoyed a delicious curry washed down with beer, wine and a variety of soft drinks.



The team certainly did not let the WRSA down; we were within a point of the winners. This was a very convivial evening and what is more the Warwick Laksh Project raised £2800.

The two young members of the team were recommended by Kyle Jackson (a Bursary winner) who had agreed to join the team but visiting Wales as part of his project prevented him from being present. What we did not know, until after the replacements agreed to join the team, was that Sarah Jane was a member of last year's University of Warwick University Challenge team!

## **WRSA Student Bursary Winners 2014-15**

This year the WRSA Committee approved three awards totalling £1300, two of these were presented on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014 in University House, the third recipient received his award later.

### **Report of Kyle Jackson, the value of archiving photographs**

The British Library's Endangered Archives Programme (EAP) is a global rescue mission for the world's most endangered historical documents. To date, the EAP has digitised and made available online some four million images generated by hundreds of projects operating around the globe (see [eap.bl.uk](http://eap.bl.uk)). Twentieth-century Bengali street literature, nineteenth-century Siberian photographic negatives, eighteenth-century Ethiopian church manuscripts—quite literally a world of privately held historical sources now also lead public, digital lives online.

In 2011, I travelled throughout Mizoram, a mountainous state at the southernmost tip of India's easternmost frontier, directing a pilot-project under the EAP. Our task was an urgent one. Much of the historical, village-level material we came across was already damaged or destroyed by heat, bugs, rodents, human neglect, or - in one case - by bombs exploded during a 1960s political insurgency. Humidity was our worst enemy of all. Illegible, mouldy historical documents were stark reminders that Cherrapunji, sometimes billed as the wettest place on the planet, was only 200 kilometers to our northwest. History is lost as these sources are lost.

Across three months our team worked to digitise hundreds of rare books, letters and diaries. But the region's earliest photographs were our biggest find of all. Dating from the 1890s, these compelling visual sources capture the exceptionally rapid transition of the Mizo people from an oral and stateless society following clan-based religious practices to an overwhelmingly Christian and literate society that is today an ultimate state borderland, almost completely surrounded by international borders.



The photographs are also unique in the history of India's northeast, not only because few ever landed abroad in European archives, but also because there were hardly any visits by trained anthropologists and photographers to this particular

region. In Mizoram, photographs were taken, produced and stored locally, largely by amateur foreign missionary photographers and, later, by Mizo photographers and villagers themselves.

This May I curated a two-week exhibition at the University of Warwick's Modern Records Centre (MRC) that showed a selection of these beautiful, rescued images (and others drawn from fieldwork in regional archives) publicly for the first time. Images were specially chosen to bring viewers face-to-face with historical agents often underrepresented in the region's written historical record. I thus featured Mizo women, children, nurses, farmers, female British missionaries and migrants. Photographs can carry traces of pasts and of everyday life that written material might not, and these rescued images can be used as windows into decaying and often forgotten pasts.

The photographs were custom printed onto papers handmade by my wife and I from materials deeply imbued in the colonial history of Mizoram itself. Potatoes (the introduction of which was contemporaneous to the advent of photography in the region), rice (so fundamental that in the Mizo language the term is coterminous with the word for *food*) and bamboo (baskets of which Mizos were born into, and coffins of which they were buried within) formed our base media, along with salt, tea, lentils, bananas, coffee, cotton and jaggery (or cane sugar).

The gallery was supported by a vivid collection of material culture from the region, some of which was generously loaned to us by Mizo expats now living in Britain, many of whom were present at the project's diverse and well-attended opening launch. This launch also featured a talk by the MRC's Helen Ford, who provided insights into the preservation of digital files, as well as the varied conservation strategies underway at the University's own archive.



*Showing accelerated degradation*

In the exhibition's second and final week, the gallery did its conceptual work not only in space, but also in time. Daily heat and humidity treatments gradually warped and crumbled the wholeness of the photographs, simulating in fast-forward the effects of time. Viewers were brought face-to-face with the chemical decomposition and loss of history, with the ailment and death of powerful documents. They were invited to engage with themes of ephemerality, loss, organic process, historical stewardship and the death of marginalised pasts. 'I popped in on Friday,' responded one visitor, 'and in a way it was heart breaking to see the decayed images.' Others wrote that it was 'a shock to see the photos decaying.'

Many thanks are due to Helen Ford, Elizabeth Prichard, Sheilagh Holmes, Gracy Lebeau-Sailo, Romy Pachuau, P J Enns and the intrepid staff of the Modern Records Centre, especially Nuala Clarke. I'm most grateful to my partner Lindy Jackson, who probably didn't know quite what she was getting into when she helped convert our flat into a veritable papermaking factory. It was soon flooded with bamboo leaves, cotton pulp, bags of calcium carbonate, and rogue honeybees investigating the stovetop melting of kilograms of cane sugar. Her assistance and patience were indispensable. Finally, this project would not have been possible without the bighearted support of the Warwick Retired Staff Association (WRSA). The WRSA Bursary is a unique award that empowers creativity within the Warwick community. It has provided me with an opportunity to engage with my historical source material in interdisciplinary and innovative ways within the broader community. Thank you!

'A beautiful and thoughtfully curated exhibition, full of interest.'

'Makes history, geography, and archiving come to life.'

'A really interesting view of an area & culture I knew little of. As a photographer myself it will be fascinating to see how the images progress.'

'...a colourful and engaging exhibition...'

'A very informative and interesting display. Learned a lot today.'

## **UniBrass WRSA Bursary Report – by Ernest Appleby**

UniBrass, the National University Brass Band Championships returned to Warwick for the second time on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2015. UniBrass is an all-day entertainment contest for University brass bands, with each band given 20 minutes and a stage to do the most entertaining performance possible. This year's event was a substantial improvement over last year's event with ticket sales rises of 62% and participation increasing by 56%. Alongside the main contest as part of UniBrass' education programme there were several masterclasses and workshops available for participants and the general public. After the main contest there was a Gala concert from students from the Warwickshire county music service students with Jaguar Land Rover Band one of the best bands in the Midlands.

After a successful event last year the general operation of the event was in place meaning that this year's organisers only needed work to improve and grow the contest to make it the best experience possible for the participants and audience. The work for this year's event began in March 2014, when it was imperative that we start to make preparations for the coming year as we knew a great deal of work would have to be done. One of the earliest things that we did was to form a partnership with The Cory Band, the World number 1 ranked Brass Band, who came on as an education partner to provide tutors for the masterclasses that we would be hosting.

As part of our promotions for UniBrass and the education programme, we ran a relay around the UK to the different Universities taking part. UniTour, as it was called, was a chance for UniBrass to engage with its participants before the main event, but we also used the opportunity to film and record "UniTed" a piece given to UniBrass by last year's composition prize winner Dave Collins. UniTour, along with its mascot Ted, went to 11 universities as well as our education partner The Cory Band's home in the Rhondda valley in Wales.

This year the 17 places for entrants had all gone in 6 hours after applications opened. This meant that the main contest had 575 participants including 3 new bands, Leeds, Nottingham, and Bristol who all took part for the first time this year. Over the day, 12 hours of music on stage treated the audience to a variety of creative, lively and entertaining performances from individual bands. The most memorable and winning performance was from Manchester, who carried out a very humbling set dedicated to UniBrass's charity partner, Brass for Africa.

UniBrass 2015 also had a much appreciated collaboration with LA1.TV from the University of Lancaster and RaW based on campus who together recorded the events in the main hall and punditry throughout the day. This live stream reached out to 5044 people in countries all over the world. We are glad that the event this year could reach out to so many people who could not physically come on the day. The performances will also be uploaded onto YouTube so that they can be enjoyed in future years.

Another major addition to this year's event was the performer's platform that we had running parallel to the event. We wanted to give local performance groups the opportunity to play and be heard, and the people coming to UniBrass a pleasant break from Brass Banding inside the Arts Centre. We had a variety of performances ranging from groups from the University Music Centre to the Coventry based Belles of Three Spires Barbershop choir all performing throughout the day.



*The Belles of Three Spires in song at the performers' platform*

Our intention was to build on the workshops that were held at last year's event courtesy of WRSA. This year our new partners, Cory Academy, would be running the education programme on the day of the main event. We offered 2 free, publicly available masterclasses for both children and adults following the feedback we received from last year. In total 66 people took part in the masterclasses culminating in the lunchtime concert on the main stage in the Butterworth Hall where they played magnificently even though they only had one morning together.



*The Cory masterclass participants at the lunchtime concert.*

This year's education programme has solidified the initial aims that UniBrass wanted to achieve by improving the knowledge of university brass banding across all aspects of the brass community.

UniBrass had an additional collaboration this year with Warwickshire County Music Service and their "Day of Brass" event. This consisted of workshops taken by players of the Jaguar

Land Rover Band, the most prestigious brass band in the local area, and were hosted in the Arts Centre parallel to the main event. As well as providing top quality tuition the participants of these workshops played with The Jaguar Land Rover Band in the Gala Concert that came after the main contest. The concert was not to be missed with a riveting fanfare of 81 students, having as much of a presence on stage as their tutors and the other members of the Jaguar Land Rover band.

The WRSA Bursary has made a real impact in solidifying our relationships with UniBrass' education partners for years to come. The programme has exposed Warwick to an eager community of brass players from the local area who will keep coming back for years to come and has allowed us to impress the tutors providing their expertise on the day. The most exciting prospect for us and probably for them is how high is the potential that this programme could reach in the near future if it continues to grow at this rate.

### **Thomas Karikari report on his WRSA Bursary Outreach project**

Firstly, I would like to register my appreciation to the WRSA for supporting my project, "Development of on-line resources for teaching biology in resource-limited settings". This is a continuation of an initial project I have been implementing, focused on building educational relationships between scientists and local schools through outreach activities conducted in Kumasi, Ghana, in May – June 2014. Beneficiary schools included the Kotei Metropolitan Assembly (M/A) Primary and Junior High Schools 'A' and 'B' and Great Dafco Senior High School. The outreach project (which was designed and implemented together with a student-led outreach team in Ghana, called Dynamic Research Access Media) helped to reach out to about 250 students across primary, junior and senior high schools (and their teachers) in Ghana with biology activities developed using inexpensive resources. Similar activities were conducted for secondary school students in Tanzania in August 2014 (together with the



*Nat Yawson presenting materials to Headteacher of Kotei M/A Basic School in Kumasi, Ghana after outreach event, Miss Bernice Tali also present*

outreach team from TReNDinAfrica) when we visited for a neurogenetics training course.

After the WRSA award, I sought to understand whether the already-developed low-budget resources were effective in facilitating inquiry-based learning among young students. This step was important in order to test the usefulness of the resources for the

intended users.

For this reason, I analysed data from the Ghana outreach project during which these identified that scientists-in-the-classroom visits using these experiments led to statistically significant improvements in students' understanding of the subject matter. These findings have provided an initial verification of the effectiveness of the developed resources in helping to improve science education in the developing world. Importantly, this also suggests

that the developed resources are age-appropriate for the intended learners. A manuscript on these findings has been submitted to PLOS ONE, and another is in preparation.

Subsequently, I focused my attention on improving the initial library of activities. This was done by editing and re-writing some of the activity protocols to improve clarity. These activities focus on areas such as basic brain anatomy and physiology; information transfer in the brain; the neuron as a basic unit of brain structure; constructing neuron models from cheap; everyday materials; creating brain models using playdough, styrofoams, recycled food; and brain charades. New activities in molecular biology and genetics have also been developed recently. These activities cover the following areas: functions of proteins and DNA in the cell; DNA structure and replication; the molecular biology of how genes influence traits, including transcription and translation; the molecular biology of mutations; genetic engineering; and DNA extraction from fruits.

Furthermore, I have invited contributions from other outreach providers in Africa. Sharing ideas about how they have been conducting their science outreach activities would be useful in bringing diversity into activities that will ultimately be posted on the e-learning website. Lastly, I have been discussing website design and building with a web developer. I do hope that this process will be completed soon so that the e-learning aspect of the project will commence. While I have been unable to make it to the e-learning stage yet, I do believe that the resource organisation and development and concept verification done will provide a strong backing to the future of this project. In conclusion, I am grateful to the WRSA for their kind support without which the achievements made so far on this project would not have been possible.

## **End of an Era**



email addresses.

Over the years many of you will have had dealings with Suzanne Keene who was the University face / voice of the WRSA. She was the person WRSA Members contacted about their University Smartcard or when they were unsure about contact details of the Committee. She was responsible for copying all the documents and circulating them to all the members. If information needed to get out quickly she sent an electronic message to all those with

The Committee said goodbye to her at their meeting in June. Suzanne was thanked for the support she provided over many years and was given a gift voucher as a token of the WRSA's appreciation.

Some of the Committee past and present attended Suzanne's retirement party in University House. She will be a very hard act to follow. I am sure all Members wish to join the Committee in wishing Suzanne a very long and happy retirement.

## **Walking Group News and Walks Reports**

### *Welcome Wanderers*

Anyone with an interest in keeping fit whilst enjoying good company, views over the open countryside, and appreciating local wildlife would be well advised to try the WRSA walking group outings.

A selection of walks is offered from a variety of starting points with a range of walk leaders. Sampling local pubs, alehouses and inns at the end of the four to five mile excursion is an option which most walkers are happy to embrace.

Please feel free to contact me should you wish to organise a new walk, join an existing outing or just meet us for lunch. Newcomers welcome.

**Kay Rainsley, Walks Co-ordinator**

### **Walks Reports**

#### **Report on Multi – faith Coventry Walk, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March eighteen of us explored some of Coventry's rich religious heritage. We met at Holy Trinity church and looked especially at the 15<sup>th</sup> century Doom Painting (in which the dishonest ale-wives – and a priest – are heading into the jaws of hell) and the 16<sup>th</sup> century Bishops' (or 'Treacle') Bible.

Next we saw the nearby site of the early 11<sup>th</sup> century Benedictine priory of St. Mary, which Lady Godiva and her husband Leofric endowed after King Canute's Danes had destroyed the earlier nunnery of St. Osburg. We walked by the Bluecoat School building and on to the Swanswell Gate (one of the few vestiges of the city wall) and then to Swanswell itself, the pool that once supplied the Benedictine priors with fish.

Our next stop was Coventry's first mosque, the Jamia Mosque in Eagle Street, where a former Lord Mayor got back from canvassing to welcome us and answer our questions. In



Harnall Lane West we visited two places of worship: the Shree Krishna Temple, built by the Gujarati Hindu community, and the Sikhs' Guru Nanak Parkash Gurdwara. In the temple, the women's weekly satsang (devotional gathering) were singing, we saw the images of the gods and the priest made us welcome. In the tradition of distributing 'prasad' (a sign of divine grace) to all who come, he gave us each an apple as we left.

In the Gurdwara we looked at religious pictures and symbols and finished with langar (the free vegetarian hospitality that Sikhs provide). By the time we walked along the blue walkway over Lady Herbert's Garden into Millennium Place the cloud had given way to bright sunshine and we had glimpsed Mediaeval England as well as something of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh tradition. We appreciated the friendly welcome everywhere we went.

*Eleanor Nesbitt*

### **Report on Meriden walk, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

As forecast, at 8 o'clock on the morning of the walk the rain was torrential. It was also predicted that by 10 it would have cleared up: happily this part of the forecast was also correct, and by the time 21 walkers assembled in the car park of the Queen's Head in Meriden, the weather was cool but dry with a hint of sunshine. The route away from the pub took us on lanes, a bridge across the A45, paths across and up the edges of fields. The lanes and tracks encouraged conversation, the narrow paths did not. We reached the brow of a hill at SP250837 from where we had extensive views across the fields and woods towards Birmingham. Also prominent was Lord Aylesford's rubbish mountain, from which the Packington estate makes money by selling the methane produced by the decomposing material below the surface.

Leaving the view we entered Church Wood, where clumps of bluebells indicated that this had once been deciduous woodland before the conifers had been planted. In this wood, about half-way round our walk, we paused where we were close to the highest point in North



Warwickshire (the Burton Dassett hills are slightly higher) for a photograph. Then we descended to the road and thence by a narrow country lane that in due course dwindled to a track, taking us to the top of Meriden Shafts. By now the sun

had come out and we caught the scent of the bluebells which formed a carpet of blue under the trees. We dropped through the wood, and by two fields came to a quiet road that passed under the A45, completing a loop round this highway. The only stile on the walk gave access to fields by which we returned to the lane only a few yards from the pub and our lunch. There we had a good meal and more conversation.

*Chris Hall*

## Report on Bubbenhall walk, 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015

The May walk centred on Bubbenhall - the Malt Shovel pub to be precise. Sixteen of us started off in strong winds and intermittent rain which gradually died out. The 5 mile walk



was through a mixture of woodland (Burnt Hurst coppice and Wappenbury Wood) and, on the return leg, farmland skirting Bubbenhall wood, which is mentioned in the Domesday book.

Despite our fears there were very few muddy patches to

negotiate until we had to cross the quarry road on our way back. After two and a half hours we were back at the Malt Shovel for well-earned refreshments!

*Malcolm John Cooper*

## Report on Radford Semele walk, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015

June's walk took fourteen intrepid walkers on an easy route south from Radford Semele, along farm tracks and skirting grain-fields, past the trig-point atop Crown Hill - where there were magnificent views over Leamington Spa, Warwick and the Warwickshire countryside - and thence to Lower Fosse Farm. From here the route swept north again, passing through or skirting more fields of wheat, barley and oats, with a final detour through a wood and back to The White Lion pub. The entire route took two and a quarter hours.



In many ways the weather was ideal - sun but a cooling breeze; conditions underfoot were dry and firm; gradients were gentle, stiles circumventable and company congenial. All in all said to be an excellent walk.

*Stan Ireland*

## Report on Ashby canal walk, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015

On the hottest day of the year to date, 11 members of the WRSA walking group met at 10.30 am at the Dog and Hedgehog in Dadlington for (thankfully, in view of the heat) a fairly leisurely walk encompassing a section of the Ashby canal. Starting along Stapleton Lane from Dadlington and then joining the Leicestershire Round, we walked to Sutton Cheney

Wharf where we paused for a group photograph. The route doubled back and continued southwards along the canal towpath for around 2.5 miles.

We all enjoyed the flora and wildlife we encountered, including what we thought was a



second brood of seven very young ducklings. At the point where we joined the canal, an enterprising young farmer had installed a box containing his home-produced eggs, and a couple of members of the group bought them, leaving the cash in the box. Another picked elderflower heads for making elderflower champagne. On the edge of Stoke Golding village we left the canal and walked up a lane leading back to the Dog and

Hedgehog, arriving punctually just before 1.00 pm where all enjoyed the excellent food and hospitality in this delightful pub.

*Margaret Birch.*

## Visit Report

### **Report on visit to Bletchley Park, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

On a very wet Tuesday morning 47 WRSA members boarded the coach in Coventry Memorial park. We set off through the Coventry rush hour traffic heading for the M1 via the infamous Tollbar island roadworks.



We arrived on schedule at 10.30 am in glorious sunshine and once the formalities were completed, most headed for the café for refreshment. The electronic guide took us around the lake to the Mansion with its beautifully decorated ceilings and oak panelling. The mansion houses

mementos from the set of the new Turin film, The Imitation Game but is in the process of development including the creation of the new bookshop. From there we went to see the cottages where some of the staff were accommodated. Next on to the famous Huts which had at one stage, almost fallen into total disrepair. Now they are reasonably well restored. Block A, built as a permanent structure, was not available to view but had housed people from various Huts as the work grew. Block B, also a later permanent building, had a very interesting selection of Enigma machines as well as a reconstruction of the Turin - Welchman Bombe which researchers are actively working on. It



was interesting to note that the original Enigma machines were manufactured by a Dutch company and sold commercially. Both the UK and Germany bought examples but it was the Germans who developed them and added the fourth wheel.

Unfortunately the National Radio Centre was not open and the National Museum of Computing is the subject of a separate entry system. I do not think we would have had enough time anyway.

We departed just after 4.00 pm. and arrived back at Memorial Park after hitting very heavy traffic as we approached Coventry. The driver took us on a mystery tour after leaving the A45 out on the Oxford Road down to the Sky Blues roundabout, down to Bubbenhall, across to Stoneleigh back up towards Finham back down to the Stoneleigh cross roads, over the A46, up Gibbet Hill Road before getting back on Kenilworth Road !

It was a most enjoyable and interesting day. My thoughts are turning to the next trip which will probably be to Cardiff in the Autumn and then, possibly, the Imperial War Museum Churchill War Rooms in Whitehall, next Spring unless anyone has a better idea!

### *Denis Welchman* Visits Co-ordinator

## University of Warwick Music Centre

The Music Centre at the University of Warwick is a non-faculty department. It exists outside of academic courses to enable students and staff from across all disciplines and areas of campus to enjoy and make music in their spare time. It is based in the Arts Centre and consists of practice rooms, a larger Ensemble Room, offices, a library and store rooms. There are around 25 established societies that we assist in finding members, rehearsal and concert venues, equipment, music and musical leadership, while still allowing these groups to be directed by the student committees that are elected by the members each year. We have a very open mind when it comes to music making and have successfully helped students to form groups such as our world music group, ukulele group & many chamber groups – the latest being a recorder ensemble “wreck order” which has been met with great enthusiasm! Plans for a beginner wind group are well under way (under the umbrella of the Wind Orchestra) following the successful model of the beginner brass group which has been running for a few years now, led by more experienced members of the band, who enjoy teaching their friends and fellow students a new instrument.

The Music Centre has always welcomed students and staff of all abilities, from complete novice to the much more experienced. Many students choose to study at Warwick because of its musical reputation. There are very talented musicians who choose to study (for example) maths, or economics, or a language, but who could easily have attended a conservatoire, or another university offering a degree in music. They realise that they have just as many opportunities to perform and continue their musical training at Warwick, alongside their chosen degree as they would have at a university with a music degree, but they have the added advantage of enjoying the music without the academic pressure of it. As a result, quite a number of our alumni have gone on to postgraduate courses in music, or become professional musicians. In the autumn term we welcome back Soprano Lorna

## ADMINISTRATION

Hut 6 was headed by Gordon Welchman, who set it up to operate as a codebreaking production line. Each stage in the decryption process needed staff with particular skills, working in three separate shifts to provide 24-hour cover. By 1941 Welchman was desperately short of staff and equipment, including Bombe machines to speed up decryption.

James to perform in our free Lunchtime Concert series. Lorna studied here and had singing lessons from both Gaynor Keeble & Richard Whitehouse, before completing her postgraduate diploma at the Royal Northern College of Music. She has performed with Opera North & Diva Opera. We also enjoyed the talents of Warren Mailley-Smith back in the summer term, a successful concert pianist, and a great advocate of the Music Centre. Warwick alumni are also appearing in the west end – Nadim Naaman, Leo Miles, Stewart Clarke and Lizzie Holmes are all currently performing on stage in London and I am sure would agree that their experiences through Music Theatre Warwick and Opera Warwick helped them along their journey.

To help talented students reach their potential, the Music Centre offers a scholarship and bursary scheme. Auditions for this take place at the end of October each academic year and all undergraduate students, whatever their background, are given the opportunity to audition. The bursary scheme aims to give opportunities to students who show potential, but would benefit from some lessons with visiting peripatetic tutors, so they are given discounts. A scholarship is awarded to a student that shows considerable talent in their chosen instrument or voice, and who is willing to be committed to enhancing and embracing the musical life of the University of Warwick during their time here. There is a financial award of £500 per annum for each scholar, as well as reduced lesson costs. Having music scholars as part of ensembles and musical projects can really benefit other students, through inspirational leadership and guidance, as well as giving the scholar a real sense of purpose and commitment to their chosen societies. One of our current scholars, Jenny Wheeler, was able to purchase a new, lightweight Guo flute with her scholarship money, which enabled her to continue to play with the Symphony Orchestra, Wind Orchestra and chamber groups despite her deteriorating health. The money enables students to make improvements to instruments, attend master classes and pay for lessons, while the scholarship title gives them extra opportunities for solo performance, including taking part in our music scholars' Lunchtime Concert.

One of the many things that make being a part of the Music Centre such a great experience is the diversity of activities available. For many people who bring their instruments along in their first year with the hope that they can sit and play relatively unnoticed at the back of the Wind Orchestra, the idea that this un-auditioned group they play in goes on to win awards at the National Concert Band Festival, and travels abroad every 2 years is quite astonishing. Most societies tour each year, or biannually, both within the United Kingdom, and abroad, which can be a great way to see the world with your friends but in an organised and structured way that involves lots of playing too! Unusual and unique opportunities are never far away either – the Symphony Orchestra have now performed at 3 Indian weddings (Lucknow, New Delhi & Monte Carlo) and in the University's 50<sup>th</sup> year the orchestra desk shared with the RPO in a performance of Gershwin's *An American in Paris* as part of the gala concert in May. Also in May the Chorus sang with the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra as their choir for Beethoven's *Choral Symphony*, part of the Warwick Arts Centre concert series.

We are always looking to find opportunities to involve students with the community, bringing their talents and love of music to a wider audience. Many of our events are free, such as our annual Free Concert (this year with a red carpet theme of Hollywood glamour), an excellent opportunity for students new to the university to take on a performance in just the first couple of weeks of term, and to showcase to the local community the kind of music on offer at Warwick. Throughout the year events such as Warwick Student Arts Festival encourage people onto campus to watch a huge programme of events involving music and drama. The Brass Band, Wind Orchestra and chamber groups often take to local parks (Memorial Park

in Coventry, Abbey Fields in Kenilworth & Jephson Gardens in Leamington for example) during the summer to provide free entertainment to hundreds of park-goers and the Big Band visits schools to perform to local schoolchildren, a project the Music Centre is hoping to expand over the next 12 months with the help of the student societies. Our Free Lunchtime Concerts now include a "My First Concert" which is aimed at a much younger audience and seeks to encourage families to attend more classical music with an informal and educational presentation format. The bi-annual Christmas Spectacular is set to return this Autumn season with even more sparkle and seasonal cheer than ever before! As well as having fun, the societies also work hard to raise money for charities, in particular the Brass Band, who raise funds for Brass for Africa, who make a positive change to the lives of disadvantaged children, young people and their communities in Africa through brass music and brass music education.

We believe that music is very important to the social wellbeing and happiness of a huge number of students and indeed staff who come to Warwick. Our focus is on social music making in higher education, and we aim to provide wide reaching, diverse and inclusive opportunities for all students, staff and members of the local community. Our aim is to enhance the student experience by providing access to equipment, professional administrative support & facilities for the practice and performance of music & offer high quality musical leadership and a shared, aspirational environment for musicians.

*Lucy Griffiths*, - Music Centre Administrator

### Stonebridge Golf Offer

The University of Warwick Golf Society are pleased to announce that for the 2015 - 16 Golf Season, Stonebridge Golf Club (Meriden) are offering the following fantastic deals for the entire University Community - past and present:

- Student Membership for just £195;
- 25% off all 5 or 7 day memberships for staff, retired staff and alumni;
- Why not just swing by for a game? Tee times available for just £12.50 Monday to Friday & £15 at Weekends after 1 pm.

For further information please email: [sales@stonebridgegolf.co.uk](mailto:sales@stonebridgegolf.co.uk) or telephone 01676 522442.

### **Terms & Conditions**

Current staff and students must show their University ID Card (SmartCard).

Alumni must show proof in the form of an Alumni swipe card.

Retired staff must contact the club prior to playing [sales@stonebridgegolf.co.uk](mailto:sales@stonebridgegolf.co.uk) or telephone 01676 522442.

### WRSA Membership

This is my last year as your Membership Secretary so I would like to thank everyone for the support I have received over the last 10 years.

The number of Members of the WRSA remains fairly constant in spite of all the effort we put into getting new people to join. Currently we have 267 Members, 15 new members have joined since January; of the members we had last year 3 have passed away, 8 resigned and 3 no-response to correspondence.

For those who already have membership of the sporting facilities please note that the renewal date for this activity may not be January (it depends on the date your subscription

started). For those wishing to join please contact Tim Wilkinson (Human Resources, telephone 024 7652 2244).

Correspondence reaching Members depends on the accuracy of the details contained in the WRSA database; please inform the Membership Secretary of any changes to your personal details (address, telephone number and/or email). Please check your details in the circulated list.

It would be very helpful you could provide the Committee with a current email address as information about events and opportunities for Members often comes to light outside normal posting schedules.

*Bill Prichard* - WRSA Membership Secretary

## Farewell

### **Mrs Frances Wiles**

Sadly we have to say a sad farewell to a WRSA Member who died in April. She contributed a great deal to the University of Warwick; she will be known to many and sadly missed. Our condolences go her family especially her husband Harry also a Member of the WRSA.

## Forthcoming concerts

**Free Concert, Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> October, 4 pm**, Butterworth Hall, Warwick Arts Centre  
University of Warwick Symphony Orchestra, Wind Orchestra, Brass Band and Chorus, including The Big Sing!

A glamorous concert of toe tapping classics from Tinseltown and beyond, performed by the Music Centre's larger ensembles. Presented in the style of an opulent Hollywood Awards Ceremony, the audience is encouraged to attend wearing glitzy and glamorous outfits

### **Wind and Brass Festive Jamboree, Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 7.30 pm**

Fine Arts Brass Quintet, Warwick School Brass Company, Warwick Foundation Wind Orchestra, University of Warwick Brass Band and Wind Orchestra.

Conductors Simon Hogg, Paul McGrath & Jennifer Wheeler.

A festive jamboree of brass and woodwind, this massed gathering of players will be joined by the internationally renowned Fine Arts Brass Quintet as guest 'soloists'

Butterworth Hall £7 (£6) Students £4.50

### **Christmas Spectacular, The Countdown Begins – Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> November 4 pm**

University of Warwick Chorus, Chamber Choir, Wind Orchestra and Brass Band.

Conductors Lucy Griffiths (Christmas Tree), Simon Hogg (Chief Elf), Paul McGrath (The Turkey).

The Christmas Spectacular is back, and this year it's bigger, funnier and more sparkly than ever before! This year, there will be prizes for the best Christmas outfit, so don your best festive attire and come on down for an unforgettable afternoon of Christmassy music making for all the family. Programme includes singalong carols.

Butterworth Hall £7 (£4.50) Under 16s (£3)

### **British Popular Classics, Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> December, 4 pm**

University of Warwick Symphony Orchestra and Chorus.

Conductors Lucy Griffiths & Paul McGrath

Britten Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Holst The Planets, Elgar The Music Makers. Britten's celebrated orchestral piece is a great introduction to the instruments of the orchestra.

Butterworth Hall £9 (£7) Students £4.50

**Lunchtime Concerts – Free 50 minute concerts every Thursday during term time.  
1.10 pm, Ensemble Room, Warwick Arts Centre**

<b>Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> October</b> Megan Henwood (Singer-songwriter) & Matthew Forbes (Cello)	<b>Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> November</b> Lorna James (Soprano) & Chris Pelly (Piano)
<b>Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> October</b> Coull Quartet	<b>Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> November</b> Colin Druce & Charles Matthews (Piano duet)
<b>Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b> Polaris Duo Elinor Nicholson (Harp) & Gillian Blair (Saxophone)	<b>Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> November</b> Unslient Movies: Ric Elsworth (Percussion) & Andrew James Shirtliff (Piano)
<b>Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> October</b> TBC	<b>Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December</b> The Gildas Quartet with Jack McNeill (Clarinet)
<b>Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> November</b> Adelina Ensemble Caroline Mitchell (Violin), April Frederick (Soprano) & Alice Turner (Piano)	<b>Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> December</b> Gaudeamus

**Latest Walks Information – September to December 2015**

<b><u>Day/Date/Area of walk</u></b>	<b><u>Walk Leader(s)</u></b>
<b>Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> September Lapworth</b>	<b>Kay Rainsley</b>
<b>Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> October Berkswell</b>	<b>Marie and Alan Lucas</b>
<b>Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> November Warwick area</b>	<b>Lyn and Neil Owen</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>NO WALK</b>

**COMMITTEE 2014/2015 CONTACT DETAILS**

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