

Retired Staff Association Newsletter

September 2019
Issue 44

Professor Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya 1940-2019

The death was announced in March of Professor Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya, founder and chairman of WMG.

*Mike Shattock, Registrar, 1983-99,
has written this appreciation of his life
and work.*

Kumar Bhattacharyya died on 1 March. At the Thanksgiving Service for him in Coventry Cathedral the speakers included a former Prime Minister (Gordon Brown), Ratan Tata, founder of Tata Motors, a former Secretary of State for Education and Science (Lord Baker), the Director General of the Confederation of Indian Industry and the Deputy Leader of Coventry City Council; tributes were published from another former Prime Minister (Tony Blair) and by the then current Prime Minister, Theresa May, given in the House of Commons. It was an extraordinary occasion for an extraordinary member of the University.

Kumar was a Bengali (and a devout Hindu) from a wealthy Brahmin family (both his parents were university professors) who graduated in mechanical engineering from the first Indian Institute of Technology in Kharagpur and came to the UK to a graduate apprenticeship at Joseph Lucas Ltd in Birmingham.

While there he took an MSc and a PhD in production engineering from Birmingham University and became the Director of the Lucas Institute there, set up with Lucas funding to run short courses in manufacturing systems engineering for West Midlands industry. But his interest in manufacturing was not just academic: before he left India he had proved his own technical skills by building himself a car by hand.

Move to Warwick

Kumar's transfer to Warwick was, in a sense, fortuitous but was also an outstanding opportunity for Warwick which Jack Butterworth, the founding Vice-Chancellor, grasped with both hands. In 1980 Lucas offered Birmingham a funded chair in production engineering intended for Kumar but Birmingham passed him over – a disastrous failure to recognise talent on their part. Alerted immediately by a Warwick professor (David Whitehouse) who had been an external assessor for the chair, Jack acted: within a fortnight the Lucas board had agreed to transfer the funding for the chair to Warwick and Kumar was appointed a professor. The most significant proponents of the case for a university in Coventry had been the motor car engineering companies within and around the city, but the University Grants Committee had insisted that the University should develop engineering in the direction of engineering science. It had proved impossible for Jack to identify someone who could take a lead in the department to talk to manufacturing industry. Within a matter of weeks Kumar was installed in a professorial office in Engineering and had acquired the nickname of 'Batman' (coined by Arthur Shercliffe, his head of department); his 'Robins' had been transferred from Birmingham along with a major Science and Engineering Research Council (SERC) programme, the Integrated Graduate Development Scheme (IGDS) and various research grants; the civil engineers had been persuaded (with difficulty) to give up workshop space in the Engineering building (a very energetic cuckoo had arrived in that particular nest!) and work had started to convert Arden House at Westwood to replace the facilities provided by the Lucas Institute. The foundations of WMG were laid.

Innovation

Kumar proved to be a challenging appointment because he was always pushing to persuade the University to extend its activities outside its normal academic envelope: the conversion of Arden House for post-experience training

was a case in point but its success was the driver for building Radcliffe and then Scarman House. It was apparent from the start that he brought something different to the University and as a precaution I asked a succession of senior Registry administrators to act as a direct interface with him (Jim Rushton, Paul Bolton, Jonathon Nichols and, after my time, Ken Sloan). He would phone them sometimes twice a day, day and night, from his office, from his car (he always had a driver), from aeroplanes, from Hong Kong or Malaysia to keep them informed of the progress of a negotiation or to check that the University would approve of a particular new venture. He was academically innovative, turning the IGDS into a master's programme and then exporting it overseas to Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand, India, Singapore, South Africa, Turkey etc where he formed partnerships to deliver the programme, but kept the courses under his control. He pioneered the industry-based engineering doctorate which was pump-primed by SERC and also more latterly degree apprenticeship programmes, and established a full education pathway into higher education for entrants from age 14 through the two WMG Academies for Young Engineers he founded, one in Coventry and one in Solihull, which are run in association with engineering employers. WMG now has 30 professors in its 700 staff.

WMG

As a teaching organisation WMG grew rapidly but the academic profile was very different to any other department (as it became) in the University. In 2019 it taught manufacturing systems to over 200 full-time undergraduates and over 1,200 full-time master's students, to over 250 degree apprenticeship and nearly 400 part-time master's students, to nearly 250 PhD and EngD students and to over 1,500 short course participants. In research WMG's major fields are in digitally enhanced manufacturing, intelligent vehicles,



*The Prof. Lord Bhattacharyya Building,
The University of Warwick. Photo: Nick Dimpleby*

materials and manufacturing, transport electrification and health and wellbeing which together cover 34 specialist research areas nearly all addressing current and pressing issues relating to low-carbon mobility. It contributes over a third of the University's research grant income. WMG played a key part in the founding of the Government's High Value Manufacturing Catapult and led the consortium which won the £108m UK Battery Industrialisation Centre now being built at Baginton as part of the national Faraday Battery Challenge.

From the beginning WMG was voracious in its demand for building space, starting with what was then called the Advanced Technology Centre, built alongside the Engineering building and paid for by industry, embracing companies such as British Aerospace and Rover Cars. A further complex of buildings has been developed across the road (the International Manufacturing Centre, the International Digital Laboratory and the International Institute for Product and Service Innovation) culminating in the huge £100m National Automotive Innovation Centre, funded substantially by JLR and Tata Motors, which faces you as you enter the campus and which now carries Kumar's name. WMG has changed the face of the Warwick campus.

From a standing start Kumar Bhattacharyya thus created an extraordinary academic conglomerate which both sought to create an outstanding academic department but also to help reinvigorate UK manufacturing and improve its competitiveness. He had a genius for marrying academic knowhow with industrial problems through partnerships with major manufacturing companies like Tata and JLR and the vision to apply whole system solutions (it was through his agency that Tata bought JLR). But his interests were not just with internationally recognised companies - WMG worked with some 1,800 SMEs. But critical to WMG's global standing was his advice to governments on manufacturing strategy whether in the UK direct to prime ministers and secretaries of state or to the UK Technology Board but also in India, China, Malaysia and South Africa which earned him public recognition, successively a CBE, knighthood and a peerage in the UK (he was also a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, an FRS and WMG had been accorded the title of a Regius Professorship by the Queen), but also the Padma Bhushan Award in India, the Chinese Government Friendship Award in China (the premier award to a non-Chinese national), the Honorary Freemanship of the City of Coventry and many honorary degrees from around the world. He put himself through an incredibly punishing travel schedule to keep up these many commitments.

A force of nature

Within the University, as Registrar, I found him to be the most demanding of my academic colleagues simply because he was non-stop in his pressure of new ideas and unorthodox ventures. (A particularly challenging task was, at his request, to conduct his appraisal because he declined to submit himself to any of his academic colleagues.) The diversity



of WMG's operations was also a testing area for financial management and it was much to the credit of all parties that relations were always close between Kumar and successive Finance Officers (Colin Brummitt, James Hunt and Rosie Drinkwater) and their staff. He was deeply loyal to the University (and gave a gift to it of £1m from his own pocket 'to support the stimulation and facilitation of research of the highest quality') but he was also very loyal to the people he worked with and was concerned about their welfare. (Ken Sloan recalls waking up in hospital after an operation to find Kumar sitting at the end of his bed.) A genial colleague, he was a convivial and generous host. Perhaps most remarkably he never lost the enthusiasm and zest which characterised his arrival at Warwick.

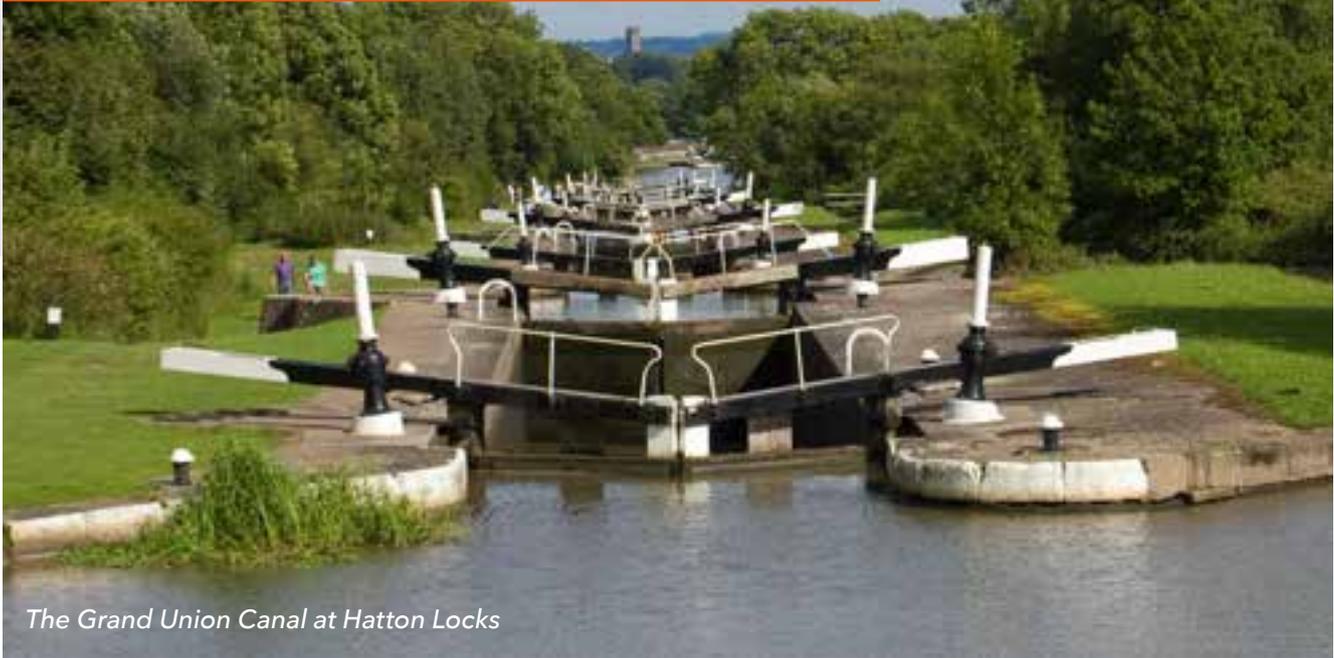
Kumar's prime outside interests were cricket (he played to a high representative level in Bengal), music and his fine art collection, some of which he inherited from his mother, but the dominating interest in his life, apart from his family, was in manufacturing and the contribution it could make to society. He was probably the most articulate and persuasive advocate of a policy to invest in manufacturing within Whitehall from Margaret Thatcher's Prime Ministership onwards, and although he sat on the Labour benches in the Lords, he commanded attention for his views from all sides of the political divide. His belief in the priority that should be given to manufacturing predisposed him to be dismissive about the value of business schools and their outputs and until recent years the University was never able to achieve much more than armed neutrality between WMG and WBS; it is an irony that their two main buildings dominate the entrance to the University on opposite sides of the campus. But the great success of WMG, in addition to the honours awarded to Kumar himself and the global reach of the enterprise he created, was that it repositioned the University's relationship with the heartlands of West Midlands industry and the key drivers of the region's economy.

Kumar Bhattacharyya was a force of nature and has left an indelible mark on the University and the industrial community around it.

Mike Shattock

WRSA BURSARY WINNERS, 2018-2019

THE LIVING CANAL PROJECT



The Grand Union Canal at Hatton Locks

One does not ever walk along the same canal twice. Even when one walks the tested towpaths by the canal, the canal changes, revealing a new dimension. Anything can be responsible for this change - the light, the season, one's own expectations - anything but the water itself. The water lies stagnant, unfazed, waiting to be moved by ongoing narrowboats.

In that flux, between still water and the ever-encroaching vegetation and human settlement, one witnesses the many pasts of the canal: the cornerstone of industrial development in Britain, the handmaiden to its coercive imperial vision in the colonies, provincial navigation and the sedimentation of a unique vegetal life, with ivies and weeping willows. The formative impulse of this project was to take stock of these histories and align them with the present experience, finding oneself beside the Romanian bistro on Clemens Street, Leamington Spa, from where one can climb down to the canal that stretches as far as London on the one end and Birmingham on the other. In the last few months, with the help of the WRSA bursary, I made several walks around Leamington arm of the Grand Union Canal collecting material (literally, material objects like old moorings, dried flowers), making notes and

preparing a visual archive of the canal in different seasons. Since the canal system now bears the all the attributes of an industrial ruin, combined with a natural and artificial ecosystem, my walks there were a way to come to terms with this singular sense of space. A foreigner amidst a foreignness. The poem that I set out to write about the canal has taken a more definite shape since:



Everything Must Go

Nothing to see here.

The road goes straight and so does the water.
Your vision, trained in unevenness, finds no dent to
latch the moment on. No jagged grooves for the
needle to set in, and dish out the song of tomorrow.
Everything enclosed.

Walking beside water – the
very vanguard of free movement – in a straight,
straight line,

and the irony is retained.

Past is written in invisible movements but longing is
writ large in neon light –
See it.

Water is without noise like a blank window
on a summer day. Unchecked into
silence. Pushing against it
are joggers, cyclists, fighting for their territory. There
would have been more noise if there was no noise at
all –

silence is too dangerous to be harboured let alone
made to pass through those godfearing households,
reminding of death –
so it's better if something happens and silence
is allowed its place in the intersections of noise.
You cannot find the word that will
speak this silence; you only know that
you know –
Say it.

You slowly pass the town to come to the canal.
The canal cuts through the town.
And the cut is not deep enough,
and most of the town, unscathed,
does not even register the blood
that was spilt. You attach too much pain to it
and clearly do not take the water.
You rather take to the water.

And, walking with your difference inscribed
on you,
you see the burden any refusal initiates, the burden
lingers, sinks,
does not dissolve –
Sort it.

Apart from making notes and writing the poem, I
have also, as part of the project, created a visual
archive of the canal, some representative examples
of which are attached to this report. The idea behind
this archive is not to recreate the canal or to preserve
its natural value, something that has been widely
done, but to hopefully engage with water itself in
a more fundamental way. This led to photographs
that focus on the intersection between the canal
water and the river Leam, water collected on the
towpath after rain and the water that is drained and
fertilizes the vegetation nearby. As the project has
developed over the last few months, water really
became the centre of attention and keeping this in
mind I designed two long walks across the Grand
Union canal, both starting from the Leamington

arm and ending near the Stockton Locks and Hatton
Locks respectively. Both these walks, taking almost
three hours each, have partial bus routes along the
way making the return trip after the walk easier.
Currently, I am trying to create an interactive version
of these walks to be put on a public platform online.
Besides designing a few other focused walks, in the
coming months I also plan to make the visual archive
public and furnish it with a historical account of the
Leamington canal that I have gathered after looking
at the canal records.

Mantra Mukim

THE BARKING AND DAGENHAM COMMUNITY SCHEME

**The Barking and Dagenham Community
Scheme has successfully launched and
come into fruition in November 2018.**

The first social mobility workshop took place at
Barking and Dagenham Technical Skills Academy,
whereby Chioma Abazie, Nifemi Ojo and myself
carried out this session to college students to
provide insight into finance as a career and also
our experiences at University. I am very grateful
for the bursary as it allowed me to reimburse the
volunteers that attended.

The second workshop took place this year in
January at Riverside Sixth Form, where Nifemi
Ojo, Augustina Adjei, Tolu Akin, Maatin Adewunmi
and myself carried out an interactive session for
Year 12 students around the topic of personal
development and discussions around different
career options. All the volunteers and myself
were able to share the professional experiences
we have gained in finance and technology to
demonstrate to these students that it is possible to
get into what are deemed prestigious careers and
institutions. Alongside this, the interactive session
also allowed students to voice their thoughts
about where they see themselves in the next
few years and also their goals for the future. I am
grateful once again for the bursary as it allowed
me to purchase resources for this interactive
session and also reimburse all volunteers.
Following this, the feedback from the students was
very positive and they enjoyed the session.

I look forward to continuing to impact the wider
generation around me to show that anything is
possible, regardless of one's background, and I
am very grateful to have received the bursary to
do this.

Naomi Elliott

VISIT TO TYNTESFIELD 14 MAY 2019



Whilst the turnout was a little disappointing with only 33 members, we set off from Memorial Park on time and arrived at Tyntesfield, which is about 7 miles from Bristol, at around 11.00 am after a slight diversion into the outskirts of Nailsea as the brown tourist sign into Tyntesfield was obscured by foliage. We were met by National Trust staff on the coach who gave us a brief introduction to the house and grounds, a map each, a meal voucher for the coach driver and then we all went our separate ways. Most headed for the coffee shop in the converted Home Farm buildings.

Tyntesfield was acquired by the Gibbs family in 1844. There was a house on the site before but the three generations of Gibbs have left their mark. William Gibbs, the original purchaser, made his money from guano imported from Peru from around 1842. He enlarged and developed the site and house and created a Victorian Gothic Revival residence which, as it has hardly changed since, is unique. There are 60,000 possessions and artefacts which belonged to the family. Many are on display but many more have yet to be found a place. The Trust acquired the estate in 2002 and has carried out numerous repairs and renovations whilst preserving the integrity of the original house. The Library is considered to be one of the finest examples and best preserved of any Victorian residence. Much of the house is still not open to the public but hopefully over time, more rooms and spaces will be made available. The house was one of the first to have electricity which was provided by steam engines housed some way from

the house. Cragside, another National Trust property in Northumberland, had it installed in 1878 but theirs was produced using water power. Of course, it was DC so when electricity arrived nationally, the existing system became obsolete.

Perhaps the most magnificent part of the house is the Chapel, built in the last two years of William's life between 1873 and 1875. Religion was the guiding feature of life on the estate and prayers were said everyday by staff and family alike. The estate had its own chaplain who lived in one of the estate cottages. For a private chapel, it is a vast building and it has not changed since it was built. The family accessed it from the first floor of the house. There is a crypt below although it was never consecrated and therefore never used for family burials. The chapel contained an organ located at the east end on a gallery. The motors powering the bellows were electric but DC, so obsolete once Alternating Current electricity came to the house. The organ was removed in 1945 and its components were used to restore other organs by a local firm.



The grounds are beautiful with views towards the Blackwell Hills east of Nailsea. The gardeners were busy planting up the formal beds but much of the grassed areas contain vast quantities of wildflowers so the grass is not cut until after the seeds have set. The Rose Garden to the west of the house never contained vast numbers of roses as the local deer population used to devastate the display. Today it is divided into formal beds with box hedges between. Unfortunately, they are currently suffering from box blight which is a problem nationally.

To the south east of the house is a magnificent vegetable garden which also supplied cut flowers for the house as well as exotic fruits, popular with the Victorians. The National Trust is preserving the Victorian methods of gardening and the produce is used in the restaurants. I wish our soil at home was as nice as that in the walled vegetable garden! The Orangery is a magnificent example of its type and now fully restored. Citrus fruit now thrives in it, again. The greenhouses to the west of the Orangery are now in use and there was a magnificent display of pelargoniums.

To the north of the house lies the plantation: 52 acres of wonderful woodland. There are rides through it with cedars, beech, yew and box trees. There is a summer house and the sawmill where the steam engines which produced the electricity were housed. Just to the south east of the plantation are the stables. Parts have been converted into holiday accommodation but some of the loose boxes contain catalogued artefacts abandoned by the family which await display. There is a small horse drawn carriage which has yet to be restored.



The last member of the Gibbs family, Richard (1928-2001), took over the house in 1949. He lived there alone with a daily help rather than the original 150 domestic staff and estate workers. He devoted the

rest of his life to managing the house, the kitchen garden and the estate generally until his sudden death at the age of 73. He left it to 19 beneficiaries which is why it was put on the market in 2002. The National Trust was able to purchase the house and the immediate grounds following public donations and grants. The rest of the estate, farms etc were sold separately.

All in all, it was a very worthwhile visit which everyone seemed to enjoy. I found all the staff very helpful and friendly, particularly the gardeners who are obviously proud to be working on the restoration and clearly enjoying the task. The weather was very kind to us which was a bonus. I would recommend anyone with a day to spare in the Bristol area to take the time to visit Tyntesfield.

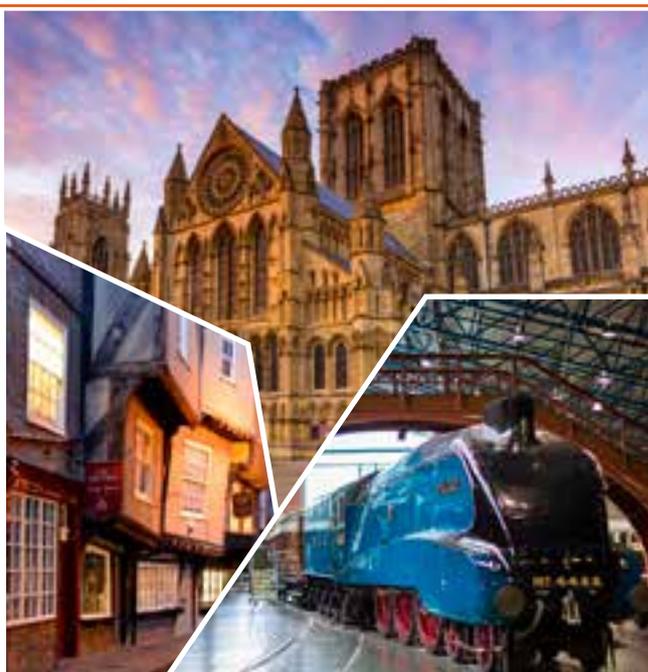
Denis Welchman



Proposed Visit to York, Tuesday, 19 November 2019

Denis Welchman is planning a visit to York for WRSA members in November - a visit with multiple choices of things to do. The Christmas Market will be in full swing but you may choose to visit the Mansion House, the Minster, the National Railway Museum, York's Chocolate Story, the Jorvik Centre, walk the Walls of the City, visit the York Castle Museum, the Yorkshire Museum and many more. Sample one of the restaurants overlooking the river - you choose! The coach will depart from the Memorial Park, Coventry, at 8.30 am.

An application form with further details is enclosed with this copy of the *Newsletter*.



WALKING GROUP NEWS



Walking for Pleasure

With another year of walks under our belts we have explored various areas of the countryside and a myriad of eating establishments. It's a simple arrangement but it works. The walk leader chooses one of their favourite walks to share at a future date with the walking group. They then decide on the day and date of their walk.

Details are distributed to the group via email or *Newsletter* (or both) and walkers contact the group leader to express their interest in sharing the experience. The walk leader organises a suitable pub for meeting up in and eating after the stroll and liaises with the venue regarding numbers. Walkers need only to turn up, exercise whilst traversing four or five miles of our wonderful countryside or towns, and eat lunch in a pleasant atmosphere. They can meet up with existing friends or meet new ones whilst enjoying themselves discovering areas of interest and hostelryes. Tips, hints and points of interest are shared with the group. What could possibly go wrong?

This is my final year as walks co-ordinator as, after seven years in post I am ready to hand over the baton in October. I have enjoyed fulfilling the role and fully intend to continue leading walks and walking with the group for many years to come.

If you are interested in taking over the position please don't hesitate to contact me and I will be happy to discuss the role with you.

Kay Rainsley

Kay.Rainsley@live.co.uk or 02476 404044

WALKS REPORTS

A Dip into the Past Allesley

30 January 2019

The first walk of the year took us through the village of Allesley and its surrounding area. Twenty-two walkers set out from the White Lion pub to explore the countryside.

Allesley is set on the western edge of Coventry and is semi-rural. We followed country lanes through ancient farmland crossing the River Sherbourne twice on our travels before arriving at Allesley church.

The Norman church was built in the reign of Henry I (1100 - 1135) for the 'use of the poor people of Allesley'. Roger de Clinton was consecrated Bishop on 22 December 1129, having been ordained a priest the day before. It is here that the road dips down considerably where it was lowered to ease the gradient for the stage coaches passing through the village.

Almost opposite the church is the black and white timbered Rainbow public house which is strategically placed for celebrating before and/or after weddings!



Franc Buxton

We wandered back along the lanes to the White Lion where we mused over the buildings that we had observed during the walk and dipped into the past whilst enjoying our excellent lunches.

Kay Rainsley

Coventry Political Walk

19 February 2019

On 19 February, sixteen WRSA walkers set out from Broadgate to discover some of central Coventry's wealth of clues to our political history – local, national and international. One theme was Coventry's recurrent sequence of destruction and resurgence which inspired local sculptor, George Wagstaffe's, 'Phoenix' statue in Hertford Street.



Phoenix Statue

First, we imagined Coventry castle (held against King Stephen in the twelfth century) and then looked at the excavated traces of the priory that was established in 1043 on the site of the nunnery that King Canute had destroyed. We thought of Parliament meeting there twice, in the century before Henry VIII had the priory demolished.

The nearby 'walk of fame' reminded us of two significant politicians: Northern Ireland Secretary, Mo Mowlam, once a Coventry school girl, and Sir Henry Parkes, a Canley farm labourer's son, who was five times premier of New South Wales.

From there we went to the old grammar school

where we visualised Queen Elizabeth I's arrival. Later in the walk we pictured her – and other monarchs – feasting in St Mary's Guildhall. We also remembered how she had her less happy cousin, Mary Queen of Scots, detained in Smithford Way and then in the Guildhall. From two centuries earlier, Queen Isabella featured too – in relation to St John the Baptist's church (which she endowed), Cheylesmore Manor (where she stayed) and the garden of Ford's Hospital where the body of her lover, Roger Mortimer, was briefly interred, after his execution for killing her husband, King Edward II.

Apart from royal shenanigans, our walk featured Coventry's post-World War 2 twinnings: our route took in the Belgrade theatre, Lidice Place and Dresden Place. The Jacquard loom in The Herbert reminded us of the vicissitudes of the ribbon-weavers in Coventry and, in Cuckoo Lane, we thought of Mary Bell who was hanged there in 1849. Lunch in nearby Bayley Lane helped us recover from an overdose of very local history.

Eleanor Nesbitt



Old Grammar School

Coughton

13 March 2019



Coughton Court

Nine undaunted souls assembled on a very blustery Wednesday morning in the car park of the Throckmorton Arms, opposite the entrance to Coughton Court.

After sorting out the lunch arrangements, we set off at 10.15, walking through the grounds of Coughton Court, over (by a raised footpath!) the nearby ford, which was in full spate after overnight rain. We then followed the River Arrow through National Trust land

to Spernall. Here there is a little church dedicated to Saint Leonard. It is now closed to worship, but, because of its historic interest, it has been bought and preserved by the Ancient Monuments Society. The first rector was recorded in 1270, but the origins of the church may be 12th century. In one of the many bursts of sunshine during the walk, it provided a good place for a short break. Leaving Spernall we walked along the lane towards Morton Bagot, then over open fields and past a farm towards Windmill Hill. Around us on the Spernall estate we could see evidence of a huge amount of tree planting, part of Felix Dennis's wonderful legacy – the Heart of England Forest. From here we dropped back down to the ford at Coughton again, passing on the way three small caravans grouped together with what looked like an earth closet nearby. The view was splendid and we thought that if Brexit made the continent less attainable there could be the basis here of an inexpensive and very peaceful holiday break! By one o'clock we were back at the Throckmorton Arms where we enjoyed a splendid lunch and in some cases a glass of their own Throckmorton bitter.

Godfrey and Caroline Carr

Binley Woods to Coombe Park

25 April 2019



Franc Buxton

The glorious sunshine and heat of the Easter weekend had gone and we met on a cool, grey morning with the threat of showers. The walk along the bridleway through Binley Woods was accompanied by much birdsong and glimpses of bluebells, anemones and clumps of primroses. We passed several dog walkers, some with very friendly dogs. As we left the shelter of the woods with open fields on either side of the path we were caught in a heavy shower. Fortunately it was the only one that morning and our waterproofs soon dried off. After crossing the busy Brinklow Road we entered Coombe Park passing by the Visitor Centre and playgrounds which were busy as the children were still on school holiday. Walking by the Abbey gardens we crossed a bridge and stopped to look at the new 'Go Ape' attraction which was partially open with the second stage still being constructed. Up amongst the tree branches participants climbed rope ladders and whizzed along zip wires over our heads. We grouped around the new wooden carving whilst Franc took our photo with Les getting into the spirit of the event! Following the path through the woods, where many close-ups of English bluebells were taken, we came to the far end of the lake and spent a while in the bird hide. There is a large heronry at Coombe but only one heron made a circular swoop across the lake and landed in a tree too far away for a clear photograph. There were plenty of swans, mallards, Canadian and greylag geese on the lake. Returning along the lakeside path, we retraced our steps from Coombe Park back to the cars. 12 walkers enjoyed a good lunch at The Royal Oak in Brandon, taking advantage of their weekday lunchtime 2-4-1 offer.

Hazel and Alan Colliver

FORTHCOMING WALKS 2019

Thursday 26 September - Nuneaton (from The Cedar Tree), led by Kay and Les Rainsley

Thursday 17 October - tba, led by Sue Beech

Thursday 21 November - tba, led by Marie and Barry Lucas

Leek Wootton

29 May 2019

Fourteen cheery walkers set off for a leisurely four mile stroll from the Anchor in Leek Wootton. It was a good day for walking being warm and cloudy but luckily without rain. There was plenty of chatter to accompany the group as they progressed through the countryside. The walk, which bounded Warwickshire Golf and Country Club, was mostly flat with no stiles. Returning to the Anchor Inn we all enjoyed an excellent lunch and shared our thoughts on the walk. Josie and Lynda would like to thank everyone who attended and offer our grateful thanks to Stan and Helen Ireland who brought up the rear.

Josie Brown and Lynda Helmsley



Campus Walk

8 June 2019

Flaming June - well, after weeks of dry weather the rains arrived and it was 14 hardy souls (plus a dog) that set off from car park 8 to tour the new buildings and surrounding countryside of the campus. The rain had enforced multiple changes of route, and on the day it was decided to maximise the buildings, starting at the Prof. Lord Bhattacharyya Building (NAIC - the National Automotive Innovation Centre) before moving on to Academic Square, which now holds many of the new science and WMG departments: IIPSI (The International Institute for Product Service Innovation), Maths, Computing, the new Mathematical Sciences Building, the International Digital Laboratory, and the Phytobiology Building with its energy-efficient glasshouse. From there we moved on to the Oculus, being used that day for the graduation of the Warwick Sutton scholars, and from there, skirting Heronbank, we reached the new Sports Hub, packed with a Squash Tournament and runners in the Octavian Droogers Orientation Club. At last we headed off into the countryside via the Sports Pavilion till we reached Cryfield Grange Road, where I had discovered the day before that to progress further would have meant ploughing through a field of rape that was overwhelming the pathway, followed by one of wheat in soil that stuck to boots like glue. So, we had little choice but to retrace our steps: through the Lakeside Residences, past the Nursery and the Slate (Warwick Conferences' new venue) and to head to a hearty lunch at the Varsity Pub. Despite the weather, spirits remained high; for this is what retired staff do.

Stanley Ireland



Warwick research inspires new work by international artist

Research by Professor Vicki Squire of the Department of Politics and International Studies has inspired a new artwork by international artist and campaigner, Salma Zulfiqar. In *Crossing the Mediterranean Sea by Boat*, Professor Squire and her team used in-depth interviews to collect stories of people from the Middle East and Africa making the dangerous journey to safety in Europe. Salma Zulfiqar focussed on ten of these stories in *Routes to Peace?* in which each refugee is represented as a 'peace dove' carrying its story. The work was displayed at an exhibition in Birmingham Library.

Royal honours for Warwick people

Two members of the Warwick community were included in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours. Professor Sudesh Kumar, Dean of Warwick Medical School and Director of the Institute of Digital Healthcare was awarded an OBE, and Matthew Scott, Senior Warden in Residential Life, was awarded the British Empire Medal.

'Warwick Scholars' programme announced

In May, the University announced a transformational new £10 million social mobility programme: Warwick Scholars. This targets young people who live within a 30 mile commute to campus, and who face educational, financial and social barriers to a Warwick education. It focuses on prospective students from disadvantaged backgrounds or groups underrepresented in higher education, with a full programme of support beginning in Year 12, enabling them to achieve the best possible A level grades, and continuing through their time at Warwick. The first Warwick Scholars, identified this summer, will enter the University in 2020.

Warwick ranked in UK Top Ten and World Top 100 Universities

Warwick has been placed ninth in the UK by The Guardian University Guide, and 14th in Europe and 62nd in the world by the QS World University Rankings.



Warwick in Africa education programme extended to Kenya

The University's tried and tested educational project, Warwick in Africa, combining student volunteering and peer-led teacher training, is to be extended to Kenya, thanks to support from the COSARAF charitable foundation. Since 2006, Warwick in Africa has worked with 600,000 learners and 5,000 teachers in sub-Saharan Africa, helping to raise standards in Maths and English.

The COSARAF grant will support the programme for four years, funding training for 260 Kenyan teachers, supporting them to develop their classroom skills and learn the latest professional tools and techniques; it will also support 24 Warwick students volunteering in Kenyan classrooms over the same period, delivering high quality Maths and English lessons.

The WRSA COMMITTEE, 2018-2019

Chair	Robert Dyson	r.g.dyson@warwick.ac.uk
Secretary	Brenda Wilson	secretarywrsa@gmail.com
Minutes Secretary	Charlotte Billing	charlottebilling@btinternet.com
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University Support	Tim Wilkinson	rsa@warwick.ac.uk

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

As at August 2019, the Warwick Retired Staff Association (WRSA) has 228 members which is a slight decrease on the previous year. Despite an influx of 15 new members since last year, 20 members have decided not to renew their membership, six formal resignations have been received and, sadly, we have been notified of five deaths. We extend our condolences to the families of these past members.

We would very much like to increase our membership and would ask existing members to encourage any former colleagues about to retire to join the WRSA to take advantage of the buffet lunches with a speaker at Scarman twice a year and the Christmas lunch. The programme of monthly walks continues and visits are organised to various places of interest during the year, the next outing being to York on 19 November 2019.

Further details of how to join can be found at warwick.ac.uk/assoc/rsa or email membershipwrsa@gmail.com for more information.

Members of the Committee will also be present at the forthcoming University Pensions Information Day event on 16 September 2019, so prospective new members are invited to come along in person to find out more about the WRSA.

Helen Wollerton

A committee member's reflections

Jean Norman is standing down after 16 years of sterling service on the WRSA committee.

Making the decision to stand down from the committee of the Retired Staff Association after 16 years has given me cause for reflection. For 13 of those years I was secretary, taking up the post after one year on the committee at the time when Margaret Wallis found herself in the Chair a year earlier than planned. The Association was in its infancy and although to begin with we muddled along, an annual pattern soon began to establish itself. Over the years we have enjoyed some very interesting speakers at our Spring and Autumn lunches, some wonderful days out, an extremely varied walks programme and some delicious Christmas lunches. However, above all else I have enjoyed friendship, both by keeping in touch with work colleagues but also by making new friends, especially from being on the committee. So it is with a little reluctance that I am stepping down - but it jolly well is about time! I heartily recommend being on the committee and would encourage all members to give it some thought. It is not onerous but it is good fun and it gives an opportunity to shape the WRSA of the future - an Association of the University I feel very proud and privileged to have worked in.

Jean Norman

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Walks - see page 10 for details

Monday 7 October 2019

AGM and Autumn Lunch, Scarman House. **Speaker: Doreen Foster, Director, Warwick Arts Centre, 'Warwick Arts Centre: 20:20 and beyond'**



*Doreen Foster,
Director of
Warwick Arts
Centre*

Tuesday 19 November 2019

Visit to York

Monday 16 December 2019

Christmas lunch

warwick.ac.uk/assoc/rsa