

**December 2010**

**Issue 27**

Welcome to the Winter edition of the Newsletter. Hope everyone has come unscathed through the recent weather challenge and is now looking forward to the seasonal celebrations. All good wishes from the Committee for Christmas and the New Year.

**LT (Ed)**

### **Autumn Lunch & AGM, Wednesday 29 September, Sports Pavilion**

Seventy-six members attended the autumn buffet lunch and talk which preceded the 2010 AGM. This year's talk, entitled **Warwick in Africa** was given by Mary McGrath, Director of Fundraising at the University. The project was the brainchild of Patrick Dunne, Warwick alumnus and Council member. Over the last 5 years the project has sent a group of Warwick maths students to work with children and teachers, first in South African townships and later in Tanzania, Botswana and Ghana. In 2006 12 'very special' students from Warwick took part – last summer the number had risen to 48. The scheme was initially funded solely by Warwick alumni and friends; but later gained generous financial support from Barclays Capital Foundation, as well as other banks and foundations. It has reached out to 20,00 young Africans over the last five years. The Warwick students have all had teaching experience, and have inspired children to greater goals and higher achievements in maths, and in the process have taught African teachers 'how to teach'. The brightest African 11-19 year-olds now also have access to IGGY – the International Gateway for Gifted Youth - and teachers from Africa have visited Warwick.

A short video film, **Warwick in Africa**, featuring an introduction by Honorary Warwick Graduate Lenny Henry, movingly illustrated the achievements of the scheme, for which ongoing fundraising is still vital. The video, together with additional information, is available on the University website.

Mary's talk was followed by the formalities of the AGM. The Committee was re-elected en bloc to serve for 2010-2011. A full list, with contact addresses, is printed at the end of this Newsletter. At the end of the meeting, a majority vote carried a proposal from the floor advocating the donation of £1,000 to **Warwick in Africa**.

**LT(Ed)**

### ***From the Vice-Chancellor***

Following the donation of £1,000 to the Warwick in Africa scheme, as agreed at the AGM, WRSA Treasurer Colin Brummitt received a letter of thanks from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nigel Thrift:

'Please could I ask you to thank the members on my behalf. I have been very pleased to watch Warwick in Africa grow from a laudable student volunteering project to a programme which five years later supports thousands of learners, very gifted learners and their teachers. None of this could have happened however were it not for the philanthropic support which the University has received. I am most grateful that the Retired Staff Association has chosen to support this valuable programme.'

## BURSARY NEWS

At the full Committee meeting held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November, the Sub-Committee for the 2010 Bursary awards (Steve Van Toller, Georgina Hale, Joan Cole and ordinary member Terry Kemp) made a case for a single award to be made this year. The suggestion was accepted by the full Committee and the award was made during a small ceremony held in the Atrium of University House on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December. The 2010 award was made to **Rich Clabon**, a fourth year Engineering student who was awarded £1,000 to be paid in two tranches. Rich is in the process of developing a new technology which involves **the creation of a seamless polo canoe**. Traditional polo canoes consist of two halves which tend to split along the top and bottom seams. In an early National Sports competition, Rich had reached the final five but was eliminated because it was felt that his ideas were unlikely to be ready in time for the 2012 Olympics. The original Sports competition was for an award of £25,000 and although our award is far short of this sum it was felt that ours could act as a priming award. Rich's idea is to develop a scaled down prototype by the Easter Holidays 2011.

Despite snow and ice a number of the Committee managed to get to the ceremony where a certificate and an initial cheque was handed over to Rich.

This year many fewer students applied for our grant but a new early publicity scheme and an increase in the value of the total award to £1,000 should result in the number of applicants increasing to former levels. Thanks are due to Terry Kemp who showed us the value of using our members to assist the Committee in reaching decisions.

**Steve Van Toller**



**The WRSA Chairman hands over the certificate to Rich Clabon at the award ceremony**

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This year's **Christmas Lunch** took place on 13 December in Scarman House, and was attended by 102 members. The varied menu offered something for everyone and the occasion was lively and enjoyable. Catching up with a year's news and gossip resulted in high consumption of coffee and mince pies. Many thanks once more to organizer Jean Norman.

## 2009 Bursary recipients – extracts from their reports to the WRSA Committee

‘On further design of the hydraulic ram pump it was found that the flow rate of the proposed river was insufficient for the proposed system. However, Engineers Without Borders had a back up plan to achieve the same objectives as the ram pump project. The plan was to run a course for 16 students to build a 10m tall 1000W wind turbine and then install the turbine on the University campus and connect to the University grid. For reference, the turbine near University House is 500W, and the 1000W wind turbine would be one of the first homemade turbines to be connected to the grid in the UK. I am pleased to say that the course successfully ran: with all 16 students receiving invaluable tuition in welding, metalworking, wood carving, and electronics; planning permission has been granted; and that the turbine is to be installed over the weekend of 30-31st October. We are really pleased with the progress so far: not only have the 16 students benefited greatly from the course, but the turbine will hopefully go on as a research project next year at the School of Engineering, and will run as a maintenance and design course Engineers Without Borders intend to run to benefit future members. I hope this meets WRSA's expectations as the course and its future benefits would not have been able to run without your kind sponsorship. Many thanks again.’

**Adam Perrin**

The EWB-Warwick wind turbine is finally up and running, and feeding green energy into the National Grid! The construction started at the beginning of January this year, but we have only just been able to erect it due to planning permission, and availability constraints.

The wind turbine is situated on campus near the sports fields in Claycroft. [Click here for a map](#). It is based on the Axial Flux design by [Hugh Piggott](#), and was built with the help of [V3 Power](#). The turbine stands about 10 metres tall, and the blades have a 3 metre diameter.

Photos are up in the gallery!

*Taken from the EWB Warwick web page*  
[www.ewb.uwcs.co.uk/news.php](http://www.ewb.uwcs.co.uk/news.php)



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‘... We have had some issues with getting MTW Juniors on its feet, but don't worry, we are now beginning to write to schools in the area and get a solid curriculum together. The showcase will be around the end of our second academic term, so just before Easter, and we will of course let you know all the details so you can come along, we would love to have you there!’

‘.... Letters were sent out to 28 local schools this week and in the last two days I have had 11 children enrol, so that is very encouraging indeed! We will be looking to accommodate either one class of under 25 children, or two classes otherwise. With the money kindly donated to us, we are currently in talks with the Royal Spa Centre in Leamington to hire their studio theatre, which seats approx 160 people and would be a great venue for the children to perform in. We are looking to start workshops on 16th January. Many thanks’

**Emma Coffey**

### **Lake at Barston Walk – 7 August 2010**

The week before the walk, only 8 people had registered, and by 10am on the day we were 17 in number, a combination of those on the main walk and several who intended to walk round the lake and join us for lunch.

The scenery was totally different from the winter wonderland in January, the first field of maize was above our heads and later there were cattle with calves and horses with foals. There were many fields of clover where some members found the four-leaf variety. As the clouds rolled away, small blue butterflies flitted around the hedgerows where sloes were plentiful, and a larger comma butterfly flew past. After passing through the churchyard at Barston, a field of llamas came into view which had merged with the snow in January. Some splendid houses were passed in the outskirts of Hampton in Arden, and reaching the lake, we walked along the gravel path alongside the lake where a fishing competition was in progress. Some, however, had other interests, with wine glasses full and the bottle cooling in the lake, and sausages frying on a small stove. There was much very impressive, and presumably expensive fishing tackle. Lunch in the clubhouse was at two round tables, and the pre-ordered lunch was on the table as we arrived, an enjoyable end to the day.

**Janet Dale**

### **Harbury Walk – 7 September 2010**

Thirteen walkers assembled at the Crown Inn in Harbury on a bright day after heavy rain the previous day. After a walk through this small town with some interesting old properties, the fields were entered by way of the first of many galvanised iron kissing gates. The recent drought was in evidence, with fields of sheep looking in vain for anything green amongst the yellow wispy grass. Arriving at the small hamlet of Chesterton, a local road led to the interesting church which was open to the public, and we viewed the substantial marble memorial to local mediaeval dignitaries and other interesting history. Some ploughed fields followed, cloying to our boots due to the overnight rain, instead of the dust of the week before. Rising pasture led to a road, and ultimately then to the rear of the playing fields where the party enjoyed the crossing of the optional, and only, stile. Allotments were passed where the brassicas seemed to have an ideal environment, and some scrumping of windfall apples took place. The Crown was reached, and a roast lunch prepared by the new owners was enjoyed by most of us.



**Malcolm Wilding**

### **Fillongley Walk – 6 October 2010**

The day started grey and damp but the weather forecast was reasonable, and as we drove to the start near Fillongley there was a band of blue sky approaching from the west. Sixteen members and friends assembled in the car park of the Cottage Inn, and by the time we had pre-ordered our lunches – not straightforward as the landlord had “gone shopping” leaving only a contract electrician in the pub! – it was dry and the sun was beginning to get out. After a short time, there was a blue sky with cotton-wool white clouds to set off the glorious north Warwickshire countryside to perfection. As an experiment a choice of walks - 3¾ miles or 5½ miles - was offered, but in the event only

three members of the group walked the lesser distance, leaving the main group at Manor House Farm. The rest of us walked to Stone House Farm before joining the Heart of England Way, avoiding the filthy farmyard at Barrat's Farm by a diversion which took us almost to the M6, and then onwards back to Fillongley. Having walked through the village, past the church and the village school (land given by Lord Leigh), we crossed a few small fields to bring us back onto our outward path and so quickly to the pub.

Once seated at our reserved tables the service was efficient and it was generally agreed that the food was excellent and good value. A number of those who had done the longer walk said they much appreciated the amount of exercise that they had undertaken: no-one admitted that they would choose the shorter on a future occasion!

### **Eathorpe Walk – 9 November 2010**

Sixteen walkers assembled in the car park of the Plough Inn at Eathorpe in good weather. A deluge the previous day or two had created some early morning anxiety that the walk would suffer the same fate as the abortive walk some two years previously, with a flooded river Leam making the anticipated circuit impossible. The route took us via the outskirts of Hunningham village, then to Wappenbury via the footbridge over the Leam where the churchyard and church offered some interest. Heading towards the Fosse Way, the short way home was offered but there were no takers, and the whole party committed itself to the full 5 ½ miles. On the way to Marton, we encountered a point where the river had marginally burst its banks, and the footpath marker sign was knee deep, but fortunately there was a way past. We viewed the old bridge over the Leam at Marton which had been restored to perhaps a mediaeval pattern when the new bridge was built in the 1990s. A route through the churchyard of the unusually named St Esprit church took us into the older part of the village, thence via an old bridleway back to the Plough. We were joined by two non-walkers for an excellent lunch, to complete a very successful day.



**Malcolm Wilding**

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### **VISIT TO BATH - 27 October 2010**

Once again we all enjoyed another marvellous day out, this time at Bath, in perfect Autumn weather.

On arrival at the very convenient coach park our members soon dispersed to savour the delights of the magnificent Georgian townscape, from the Roman Baths, the Pump Room and the Abbey to probably the most majestic street in Britain, the Royal Crescent.

A number of members opted for the open-topped bus tour to explore the more popular areas away from the city centre. The traffic-free heart of this lively city was full of street musicians, entertainers, enticing shops and cafes, the most popular of these being 'Sally Lunn's', in one of Bath's oldest houses. Here a welcome drink and one of the famous Sally Lunn Buns was sampled. Another excellent day enjoyed by all.

**Alan J. Foster**

## VISIT TO WADDESDON MANOR – 24 November 2010

With the sun shining brightly on a very cold November 24, a group of 40 people from the University of Warwick Retired Staff Association, set off for a visit to Waddesdon Manor near Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire. Waddesdon was built by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild from 1874 to display his outstanding collection of art treasures and entertain the fashionable world. It combines the highest quality 18<sup>th</sup>-century French decorative arts with magnificent English portraits and Dutch Old Master paintings and one of the finest Victorian gardens in Britain, famous for its parterre and ornate working Aviary. They generated their own electricity and even had central heating! It was bequeathed to the National Trust in 1957 and is now managed by a family charitable trust under the chairmanship of Lord Rothschild.

The journey took about one and a quarter hours. The coach could only just get up the drive because of cars parked each side. We were dropped off right outside the front of the house and issued with maps of the grounds and tickets for our tour of the house, plus a voucher which offered a discount for purchases in the Plant Centre – certainly a very business-like organization. We had time to walk in the grounds, visit the Plant Centre, Stables shops, wine cellars etc, and have refreshments, before our pre-booked tour of the house at 1.15 pm.

The theme for the Christmas decoration in the house was French style with characters from French history, fairy tales and well-known children's stories – I didn't know that the story of Cinderella was by the French writer, Charles Perrault, in 1697. There were several Christmas trees, all real, some over 18 feet tall, grown on a local farm. Tables were laid for Christmas and the whole house, to me, had a welcoming feel to it although apparently it had hardly ever been lived in for any lengthy period of time. However, not all the rooms are open during the Winter. Although there were a lot of people it never felt too crowded, except the shop, which you had to go through to get out of the house.

The views from the back of the house across the Vale of Aylesbury were spectacular, especially in the sun. Unfortunately all the statues in the gardens looked a bit like ghosts as they were wearing white protective covers for the winter.

For those needing a sit down, there were chairs in the Generator House in the garden where, to continue the French theme, the film Gigi was being shown. I did notice a bit of humming along to the music as memories were jogged.

The coach was waiting for us at the front of the house at the arranged time, 4 pm, and it was good to have a comfortable seat and be driven back. Due to the problems with the Coventry South Park and Ride (possible lack of parking spaces) the Westwood Heath Allotment and Leisure Garden Association kindly made their car park available for which I was very grateful. As the organizer, the fact that everyone was on time both to leave and return, was very much appreciated.

**Pat Scott**

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## NOTES AND DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The **Spring Lunch** takes place on **Wednesday 12 April 2011**, when the guest speaker will be Professor Hilary Marland on The History of Medicine.

## WRSA Membership

I would like to thank all the Members who have already renewed their subscriptions for 2011. For those who put it aside for dealing with later but cannot now lay their hands on the form, just contact me and I will send you another by post or by email. Closing date for renewals is 31 March 2011.

Membership of the Association keeps you in touch with the University and gives you many concessions; use of the Library, reduced membership fee for sporting activities, discount in the Book shop and invitations to many social events throughout the year. For those who already have membership of the Sporting facilities please note that there was an increase in the fees in October 2010.

**Bill Prichard, Membership Secretary, 02476474524**

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### ***MANGO THE MARMALADE CAT and other animals with attitude***

#### **MARMALADE CAT HELPS ANIMAL CHARITIES**

Jenny Hare (an artist and *Women's Weekly's* former Agony Aunt) and Eleanor Nesbitt (***Professor in Religions and Education, Institute of Education***) are launching *MANGO THE MARMALADE CAT and other animals with attitude*, a must-have gift book supporting animal charities. Meerkats, turtledoves and Jerome the giraffe are among the creatures featured in witty verses and delightful illustrations. Adults and children alike will find much to enjoy. The collection germinated from Eleanor's encounter with iguanas in Panama. Limericks and other rhymes started to flow and she teamed up with her schoolfriend, Jenny, to produce *MANGO THE MARMALADE CAT*.

Mango, the marmalade cat,  
Decided he looked rather fat.  
So he went without dinner  
Until he was thinner

And worked out each day on his mat.

*MANGO THE MARMALADE CAT and other animals with attitude* is available from September 2010 via Amazon, bookshops and selected giftshops and galleries (recommended price £4.99). Look out for the arrival of Mango mugs and T-shirts too!

ISBN: 978-0-9566468-0-4

20 page gift book on high quality card, wire bound

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