

The rbital



The news which has dominated the last few weeks at Warwick has been the sad and unexpected death of our colleague Professor Mark Rodger. The memorial service, which was held in Coventry on Saturday April 1st and attended by over 230 people, was a fitting tribute to a man who was respected and admired by everyone who knew him. Mark had worked at Warwick Chemistry since 1999 where he had many roles in addition to his teaching and research work – notably as final year examination secretary and the Director of the Centre for Scientific Computing. He was a wonderful colleague to everyone in the Department.

Very recently, we welcomed Dr Mark Senn to the Department, and in June, our new Senior Administrative Officer, Donna McIntyre, will join us, with David Lewis leaving at the end of April. I'm sure we all wish Dave the very best in his new role and thank him for all the hard work he has done for the department over the last two years. As many of you will be aware, the ITR feedback was very positive with a number of recommendations which we will now follow up on, and with exams and the PG Symposium coming up, amongst other things – again another busy term ahead.

Professor Martin Wills, Head of Department

Awards and congratulations

[Vas Stavros](#) has been promoted to Professor and [Andy Clark](#) has been promoted to Professorial Teaching Fellow in the recent promotions process. Many congratulations to both!

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Congratulations too to [Dr Ann Dixon](#) who was recently awarded a grant for £470K from the Medical Research Council entitled "Structural and Functional Roles of Transmembrane Domains in B-cell Receptor Signalling".

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[Dr Mark Barrow](#) has been awarded an Institutional Links grant, under the Newton Fund, for research into the composition and stability of biofuels of differing origins using Fourier transform ion cyclotron resonance mass spectrometry (FTICR MS).

The award builds upon a collaboration with the Industrial University of Santander (Bucaramanga, Colombia) and will see the return of [Diana Catalina Palacio Lozano](#), who will be joining the [Barrow Group](#) as a postdoctoral researcher.

GibsonGroup at World TB Day event

Members of the [GibsonGroup](#) took part in the Annual World TB day on 24 March. The aim of the day was to raise awareness of TB in local communities and highlight research from Warwick in this area.

The event was organized by [Dr E Fullam](#) (Life Sciences) who the GibsonGroup are working with to create new diagnostics, treatments and chemical probes, to help understand TB. More than 300 people attended the event, held at Canon Park Shopping Centre, which was supported with funding from the Wellcome Trust and the MRC Cross-Council AMR initiative.

If you are wondering if this is important – last year 10.4 million new cases of TB were diagnosed globally, and nearly 2 million people died from it. ~100 people in Coventry are diagnosed per year.



Warwick-Brazil Collaboration

In February, a delegation from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG), Belo Horizonte, Brazil spent 2 days at Warwick to explore potential research collaborations in Chemistry. UFMG is one of the top Brazilian universities and is located in the capital of the state Minas Gerais, famous for its mineral resources. Talks from Warwick covered the range of our research activities, including organic synthesis and homogeneous catalysis ([Martin Wills](#)), polymers ([Guillaume Hédier](#)), graphene ([Jon Rourke](#)), mass spectrometry ([Peter O'Connor](#) and [Mark Barrow](#)) and Inorganic materials ([Richard Walton](#)).

From the UFMG chemistry professors we learnt about computer simulation of materials (Hélio Duarte), organic synthesis (Claudio Luis Donnici), biomedical materials (Rubén Dario Sinisterra), applications of coordination chemistry for new materials (Geraldo de Lima), and use of mass spectrometry in agriculture and drug detection (Rodinei Augusti).

The event was funded by Warwick's Brazil Partnership Fund/Santander and organised in collaboration with Professor de Lima from UFMG, who is spending a sabbatical year in Richard Walton's group funded by CAPES (part of the Ministry of Education in Brazil). Later this a year a return visit will be made by Warwick academics to UFMG to follow up on the initial discussions and to investigate possible student exchanges.



Salters' Festival

We have hosted a Salters' Festival of Science for many years now. This year, on 22 March, groups from 12 secondary schools attended our laboratories to work on two scientific challenges. The event is a little different to any of the other outreach events we organise owing to a competitive element and the very wide range of schools which participate on the same day.



Thanks to [Martin Wills](#), [Faaria Iqbal](#), [Brittany Harrison](#), [Maz Costa](#), [Ross Jagers](#), [Russ Kitson](#), [Lynne Bayley](#) and Heidi Dobbs (RSC) for being judges and supervisors, to [Ihuoma Arthur-Ibeneme](#) for her hard work in preparing the experiments and to [Sam Watson](#) for organising the whole thing brilliantly. It remains a pleasure to support the Salters' Institute and a good day was had by all (and thank you to [Nick Barker!](#)).



Sam Watson and Russ Kitson

"The Salters' Festivals of Chemistry are an initiative of the Salters' Institute, whose aim is to promote the appreciation of chemistry and related sciences amongst the young.

The Institute is delighted that the Royal Society of Chemistry is working in partnership with us again this year. This Salters' Festival of Chemistry is one of fifty-one Festivals which are taking place at Universities/Colleges throughout the UK and Ireland between March and June 2017. "



Laura from Salters with Nick Barker

Safety first

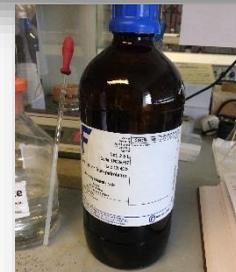
Following the recent inspection on housekeeping, [Andrew Marsh](#) summarises some of the findings.

"Laboratory housekeeping is one of the most effective ways of preventing some of the incidents and accidents, frequently glassware-related, that unfortunately happen around the department. It also prevents large quantities of flammable solvents being left out on benches, or worse on the floor as a trip, fire or other obstruction hazard.

With many MChem projects also coming to an end, please ensure that surplus lab coats are taken to Stores for laundering and then stored in a drawer or cupboard unless being used, in which case they belong either on somebody, or a coat hook!

There were plenty of examples of good practice and well-kept labs but in our recent inspection the Safety Committee found poor adherence to Personal Protective Equipment in certain laboratories.

Now is a great time to **carefully** tidy up your lab and please make sure you continue to use safety spectacles, lab coats and appropriate footwear as we enter the (hopefully!) warmer months of the year."



Careers update from Charlie

We are putting on a number of events in the next month that will help you consider how you are feeling about the future generally and also what sort of opportunities you might want to consider after your PhD.

Friday 28 April, 2pm-4pm PG Hub – **PhD Wellbeing and Careers Drop-in**. If you are worried about what's next for you, are feeling stress or pressure about current and future plans, or just want to check-in with a range of support specialists, please come along to this drop-in session. More details are at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/pghub/social/destinations/>

Tuesday 16 May, 5pm-7pm, Digilab, IDL Building – **PhD Employer Networking Event**. There are a range of employers here interested in PhDs, not just for your subject knowledge, but for the general skills you bring. Why not book and come along to find out more and meet employers in a relaxed setting? Search "PhD Employer" at <https://myadvantage.warwick.ac.uk/students/events>

Finally, Charlie has written a log about **"How to deal with imposter syndrome as a PhD"** – you can have a read of this and other useful articles at <https://careersblog.warwick.ac.uk/>

Over the vacation period, please contact Charlie direct on c.cunningham@warwick.ac.uk if you want to meet up for a chat about careers.

Chris joins SCI Materials Chemistry Committee

[Chris Stubbs](#), a 2nd year PhD student in the [GibsonGroup](#), was recently invited to join the materials chemistry sub-committee of the society of chemical industry. This is a group comprised of PhD students, post-doctoral researchers, and early career academics as well as recent graduates and post-doctoral staff from within the materials chemistry industry.



The intent of the sub-committee is to be responsible for representing the materials division of the SCI on social media, whilst also increasing its representation within universities, and encouraging collaboration between their industrial partners and early career principal investigators. The sub-committee is currently arranging social events, conferences and talks which engage final year undergraduates and PhD students, with the intention of encouraging them to pursue careers within the chemical industry. At the most recent meeting, Chris gave a talk entitled "Synthetic Polymers to Mimic Antifreeze Proteins". 2

Big Bang Fair March 2017

For the second year running, the Warwick Science Faculty had a stand at the Big Bang Fair at the NEC and the chemistry department was an enthusiastic partner. The Big Bang Fair is a HUGE national science and engineering fair for 7-19 year olds, taking over 3 halls at the NEC and attended by about 70,000 visitors with the support of over 200 organisations.

It's a fantastic opportunity to inspire the next generation of scientists and make sure children, teachers and parents are aware of Warwick's science offering. The Warwick Science Faculty stand was made up of three departments: physics, engineering and chemistry.



Ricky Cain in action



The chemistry activity used an FTIR spectrometer to solve a mix-up in a Formula 1 garage, as well as exploring the colours within a black pen using chromatography. The support from the department was great and we had 18 volunteers across the 4 days of the event, ranging from undergraduates to HoD.

SIAS rural tour

Selina Kermode, RSC education coordinator for the Midlands, spent a week bringing Spectroscopy in a Suitcase (SIAS) to 6 rural schools in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, delivering 13 workshops to 230 students – 6 of the workshops took place at Hereford Sixth Form College.

Selina was assisted by **Georgia Thornton** and **Alice Partridge**, 3rd year undergraduates, who volunteered their time to lead some of the sessions.



Selina said: "The workshops have been really well received so far and I think it helps the A-level students especially. It's something they study in their textbooks but it can be a bit abstract. With this equipment they can get hands on and see what's happening.

It's very modern equipment, so the teachers get quite excited about the new technology as well!"



Jamie Lok and Ricky Cain

Bliss Bake Sale

As usual, the Department of Chemistry did a fantastic job and raised a staggering £400.81 in aid of Bliss. Thank you all for your amazing efforts, with special thanks to all the creative BAKERS (Donna Corcoran, Nicola Cross, Ann Davies, Rocco Fornari, Julie Hage, Mareike Herrmann, Sheila Hope, Sukhbinder Kaur, Selina Kermode, Sophie Larnaudie, Laura MacDougall, Annie Morton, Peter Scott, Sukhjit Takhar, Dianne Walsh and Tom Wilks), and to all the EATERS, TREATERS, FEEDERS & DONATORS!



RSC Thursday Lectures

The Spring/Summer term schedule continues as follows (4 pm start in PLT unless otherwise stated):

- Week 30: 27 April
- Week 31: 4 May TBC
- Week 32: 11 May TBC
- Week 33: 18 May (C521)
- Week 34: No seminar
- Week 35: 1 June TBC

Please check [here](#) for updates.

What's happening?

For an update of all future Chemistry events, please see [here](#).

Updated committee membership and meeting dates for 2016/17 are available on [ChemIntra](#) (for staff view only).

Arrivals

We extend a warm welcome to the following:

Staff

Mrs Zoe Ayres – Research Assistant
Dr Samya Banerjee – Visiting Fellow
Mr Ed Cant – Research Assistant
Miss Denise Clarke – Accounts Assistant
Dr Edward Greenough – Teaching Fellow
Mrs Donna McIntyre – Senior Administrative Officer
Dr Ruth Patchett – RSC Co-ordinator (maternity cover)
Dr Hannah Prydderch – Research Fellow
Dr Mark Senn – 1851 Research Fellow
Mrs Sarah Thomson – Accounts Officer
Dr Ina Wilkening – Research Fellow
Mr James Williamson – Research Assistant
Dr Charlotte Zammit – Research Fellow

Visitors

Mrs Bingzhen Li – Visiting Fellow
Dr Lucienne Otten – Associate Fellow
Dr Victor Quan – Research Fellow
Dr Joaquin Sanchis – Visiting Fellow
Ms Pingyu Zhang – Research Fellow

.... and Departures

We say thank you and goodbye to:

Dr Dave Day – Research Fellow
Dr Abraha Habtemariam – Senior Research Fellow
Dr Rob Johnson – Marie Curie International Fellow
Mr David Lewis – Senior Administrative Officer
Professor Alison Rodger – Head of Department
Professor Ale Troisi – Professor of Physical Chemistry

Wedding congratulations!

Dr V Venkatesh (known to us as Venkat), a Royal Society Newton Fellow in [Peter Sadler's](#) laboratory for the last 2 years, returned home to India in December.

Now he is married, and he has been selected as a member of the DST-INSPIRE Faculty Scheme.

This prestigious award will support him in India for the next 5 years whilst he establishes himself as an independent researcher.



Having a 'ChemSoc' Ball

After a year in the planning, the beginning of term saw the annual ChemSoc Departmental Ball. This year, ChemSoc went to the Carnival, so Chesford Grange Hotel was transformed into the perfect setting for such an event, with balloons, ribbons, bunting and lights. Guests donned suits and gowns for a spectacular evening full of entertainment, including a delicious three course meal, stunning photography and photobooth, exciting fairground games and a DJ that got everyone on the dancefloor.



The Ball was the largest event ChemSoc has had, bringing students from across all years, alumni, postgrads and academics together for a night to remember. It was a fantastic event that we, as Ball Coordinators, are proud to have finally pulled off. It's been a brilliant experience, but after two years, we're letting go of the role, and are very much looking forward to next year's ball!

A Partridge and A Godfrey