

WGAHK Newsletter 2006

Warwick Graduates' Association (Hong Kong) 英國華威大學香港同學會

Honorary President: Professor Nigel Thrift (Vice-Chancellor)

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Message from the Chairman

Edward Tan (MA International Political Economy 2000-01)

2006 is challenging, yet very memorable, to WGAHK. First of all, my warmest welcome and sincere thanks to Prof. Nigel Thrift, our new Vice-Chancellor, for accepting our invitation to be WGAHK's Honorary President. I would also like to express my gratefulness to Prof. David VandeLinde, our past Vice-Chancellor for his huge support to WGAHK over the years.

Thanks to our Executive Committee members characterized by their strong dedication and vitality, lots of events, such as the law networking event, boat trip, art appreciation tour and happy-hour gatherings, just to name a few, were successfully held and well-attended by lots of graduates and friends. This year also marks the 5th anniversary of the WGAHK scholarship. Since 2002, we have awarded five undergraduate students. Even more encouragingly - thanks to the generous support of our alumni - the scholarship award has been increased to HK\$20,000 this year.

We are determined to further strengthen the Warwick alumni network in Hong Kong and to reinforce the reputation of WGAHK as being one of the most active alumni associations. For all these, we count on your support. If you are not yet a WGAHK member, please send in your application form with no more delay. If you would like to contribute further, why not consider being our Executive Committee member or donating to our scholarship fund. Finally, do let us know if you have anything that may benefit the Warwick community, for instance, a discount card for Warwick graduates or a summer internship opening for our current undergraduate students.

Edward Tan, WGAHK Chairman (2006 session)



British Council UK Alumni Ball 2006

01.12.2006 + InterContinental Hong Kong Hotel

The two tables of WGAHK representatives at the Ball will fondly remember the evening in many ways. To start with, we are proud that the event Guest Speaker is fellow Warwicker Mr Tsao Chip (陶傑). We are also delighted that Mr Ron Gray, Director of Warwick Development & Alumni Relations Office, was there with us. And finally when the MC announced that our Mr John Tso has won the 2nd prize of the lucky draw, it was just like a perfect cadence to the entrancing evening.



WGAHK Scholarship 2006

Reported by Dr Albert Yip, Vice-Chairman (Scholarship & Student Welfare)

We are delighted to announce that Miss Ginnia Cheng is the winner of WGAHK 2006 Scholarship that is worth HK\$20,000.

The scholarship has attracted a record number of 32 applications. On 5th September, a panel comprised of WGAHK current & former executive committee members met at the Warwick Hong Kong Office to perform a difficult task: to screen applications down to just 5.

Candidates were evaluated based on their academic credentials, extra-curricular achievements, social contribution and their personal statement. After long hours of hard work & discussion, five outstanding students were short-listed:

Name	Warwick Course	Academic qualifications
Miss Queenie Chan	BA Law & Business	6As in Hong Kong A-level
Miss Ginnia Cheng	LLB Law	42 pts in the IB Diploma (out of possible 45)
Miss Percy Cheung	BSc Mathematics & Computing	5As in GCE A-level + 1A in another AS subject
Miss Beth Wong	BSc Management	Studied in top school in Canada. Top grade (5) in 4 AP subjects
Mr William Wong	BSc MORSE	4As in GCE A-level + 2As in two other AS subjects

On 9 September the short-listed candidates attended a panel interview at the Warwick Hong Kong Office. Members of the panel include:

WGAHK 2006 Scholarship Judge Panel	Warwick course studied
Ms Lisa Djeng, WGAHK Scholarship Founding Chairman (pictured middle)	BSc Economics
Dr Edmund Lee, Executive Director, HK Jockey Club Institute of Chinese Medicine (pictured right)	MBA
Mr Terry Yeung, WGAHK Founding Chairman (pictured left)	LLB Law



Students were evaluated in areas including their affiliation to Warwick, extra-curricular achievements, social contribution and personal qualities. After some tough time of discussion, the Judge Panel decided to award the WGAHK 2006 Scholarship to Miss Ginnia Cheng.

The scholarship award dinner was held on 14 Sept. It was a very memorable evening where all the 5 students received a WGAHK certificate and a HK\$500 book coupon. We were all deeply impressed by these bright young people, and are delighted to have them as WGAHK ambassadors in the coming year.



The WGAHK scholarship was set up in 2002. It is the first Warwick scholarship established by local alumni associations outside the U.K. If you would like to support the scholarship with donations and/or suggestions, please write to us at scholarship@warwick.org.hk, or fill in an online donation form on the WGAHK website.

WGAHK Activities Highlights

WGAHK Annual Dinner 2005 in celebration of Warwick's 40th Anniversary

03.12.2005 + World Trade Centre Club, Causeway Bay

The WGAHK Annual Dinner 2005 was a precious opportunity for Warwickers across decades to have a big reunion and to celebrate the University's 40th anniversary. The annual dinner was a remarkable success with more than 100 Warwickers and friends. Amidst the laughter and leisure chitchat among tables, the evening came to an end after the lucky draw. Everyone had an enjoyable and memorable evening.



Bi-monthly happy hour gathering

First Thursday of every ODD month + ARIA, Exchange Square II

The bi-monthly happy hour gathering held at ARIA, Exchange Square II, continuously attracted our fellow alumni and their friends to take an evening rest every other month from their busy schedule, to gather around the warm comfortable private room at ARIA, catching up with each others. This year, Warwick exchange students in Hong Kong, staff from the Warwick International Office, as well as the University's Beijing and Shanghai representatives were among the attendees. A relaxing tradition like this is simply irresistible.



Warwick Celebration Dinner in Honour of Honorary Graduates in Hong Kong

02.06.2006 + JW Marriott Hotel, Central

On 2 June 2006 Professor David VandeLinde, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Warwick and Honorary President of WGAHK, came to Hong Kong and hosted a celebration dinner at JW Marriott Hotel in honour of the three Warwick honorary graduates in Hong Kong. It was a memorable evening attended by 120 alumni and friends. While we were enjoying dinner, Mr. Edward Tan, Chairman of WGAHK, gave a speech on behalf of the alumni to thank Prof. VandeLinde for his continuous support and presented him a Chinese tea set, a symbol of Chinese culture and hospitality.



Law Networking Event

03.06.2006 + Dot-Cod Restaurant, Central

Kicking off this hot summer, the first-ever Warwick Law Networking Event was held on 3rd June at Dot-Cod Restaurant, Central when the former Warwick Law School Chairman Professor Lee Bridges made a brief visit to Hong Kong. The event brought Warwick graduates in the legal field from 80's to 90's together and was a great success.



Boat Trip

22.10.2006

On 22 October 2006, WGAHK organized a boat trip to some of the most scenic areas in Hong Kong. 30 Warwickers and friends gathered at Ma Liu Shiu Pier where the boat took sail. We went to Grass Island (塔門), Ping Chau (東平洲) and also Crooked Island (吉澳). We all had a good time to meet old and new friends and had a relaxing and enjoyable day.



Art Appreciation Tour

18.11.2006 + Hong Kong Museum of Art, Tsim Sha Tsui

This year, Marco Szeto, a Warwick Graduate and a professional curator, brought us into the likeness and unlikeness world of Qi Baishi (齊白石), one of the most renowned figures in modern Chinese painting. In addition to touring us around the famous shrimps and crabs of Qi Baishi, which earned him the name of "people's artist" by the Ministry of Culture in 1953, Marco introduced to us the history of this People's Artist and his trip to Hong Kong. After that, Marco shared with us his experience as a curator: the difficulties in gathering information, researching and obtaining all sorts of approval when organising such a large-scale exhibition. At the end of the tour, forty two Warwickers, their family and friends were deeply impressed by Qi Baishi's artistic works as well as the efforts of Marco and his enthusiastic attitude toward Chinese art.



WGAHK Basketball Team

WGAHK Basketball Team was established in 2005 and was formed by ex-team members of the Warwick Hong Kong Society (WHKS) Basketball Team.

The WHKS Basketball Team was formally formed by a group of Hong Kong students in Warwick University in 2001. It was then further expanded to include some talented players from other Asian Societies in Warwick University such as Malaysian and Chinese Societies. At the early stage, they participated in friendly games with other universities in West Midlands. During 2002 to 2003, they participated in the basketball tournament organised by UMIST Chinese Society and won the first basketball tournament championship for the WHKS.

They were invited to 12 basketball tournaments in England from 2002 to 2005, and won 9 champions and 1 runner-up out of the 12 tournaments and was well-known among UK universities in London and the Midlands.

The last game of the Amateur League that the team played was in September 2006 in which they came 8th in the first division - among 26 teams divided into three divisions. One of the team members, Alan Ho, got an individual prize for the most rebounds in the first division. Congratulations on the good results in the season!

Warwickers in Feature

Interview with Jack Shu 舒志義 (MA Drama Education & Cultural Studies, 1998)

by Manita So and Clement Chan

The Hong Kong education system used to be criticised as rigid and exam-oriented, and students were often seen as rather passive and lack of independent thinking skills. This seems to be changing. Jack Shu, a Warwick graduate in Drama Education & Cultural Studies, shared with us how drama education plays a part in the change.

Jack studied English Literature and Translation in a Hong Kong university and developed his interest in drama during his university years. He was involved in script writing, acting and translation. Upon graduation he started working as an editor – for an adult magazine and a children magazine at the same time as both housed under the same publishing company. ‘I was an editor, photographer – only for the children magazine - and writer all-in-one. My training in drama helped. I’m good at playing different roles.’

After two and a half years however Jack decided that it was time for him to go back to the university. He quit his job and completed a Master’s degree by research in cultural translation. He then worked for a year as the editor/translator for *Oxford Children’s Encyclopaedia* at the university’s Centre for Translation.

He thought about studying abroad at that time. Though he had been an editor for some years, it was not suitable for him. ‘Deep inside I long for freedom and dislike all rules. I’d always wanted to study abroad and experience a different culture.’ At that time he knew nothing about drama education. He was interested in drama and had two months’ experience in teaching, and the course title “sounded right” to him.

‘I chose Britain because I felt it had a good tradition in drama. I knew nothing about the University of Warwick then. The decision was made based on the ranking tables,’ Jack said.

This almost random choice ended up to be what Jack described as “*something very very good*”. He had been involved in drama production and acting for many years but he never thought of it as such an important part in education. ‘Drama is not just a teaching tool. It should be a discipline. One needs to be good at it in order to use it as a tool.’ Jack pointed out that students can learn and be inspired in a number of ways in drama through creating, expressing, communicating, negotiating and even comparing with each other. Drama enables them to think more deeply and this is very important in personal development and learning about interpersonal relationships.

In a few years’ time, drama will be introduced in the New Senior Secondary Chinese and English Language curricula. All-round development of students is an important direction in the education reform, and drama can help.

Jack’s Warwick life was more than just a discovery of an academic subject and a meaningful path. During his study, he met his other half. His wife, Amy Lee, was doing her PhD at the Centre for Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies at that time. Jack and Amy shared similar interests and they got married a few years ago. Amy is now Assistant Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Hong Kong Baptist University.

When asked about his career, Jack was still a bit uncertain. He has worked as a Drama Teaching Artist for the Education and Manpower Bureau for a few years and is now a full-time drama teacher in a local secondary school. ‘I’m completing my PhD thesis at the moment. After that I’d like to get an academic job in a local university. In the long term, I wish to be involved in teacher education but this depends on how many resources the government’s willing to put into drama education.’

Since his Warwick days in 1996, in ten years’ time Jack has changed from someone who knew nothing about drama education to somebody who believes in it, is actively promoting it and making a real difference in local education. Jack was able to break away from his past experiences and move on to a whole new world. He encourages Warwick students to do the same: make good use of the excellent resources at the University, think critically and explore what can be discovered.



Interview with Jo Ngai 魏綺珊 (MA International Relations, 2002)

by Manita So, Dominic Fung and Eastman Cheong

It is an interesting interview, and in fact, a challenging one. Sitting with us is Jo Ngai Yee Shan, a well-known journalist and a TV news anchor prior to being the Communication Manager of Airport Authority Hong Kong (AA). We feel pressure to interview an experienced and gorgeous journalist like Jo, but we try to act like professional reporters so as not to embarrass anyone. It turns out the meeting is joyful and informative, in which we talk about Jo's study at the University of Warwick, her responsibilities at the AA and her enthusiasm about drama. We now have a deeper understanding of her personality, beyond what we saw her on television.

We starts with her avocation: drama - a hobby she has developed since she was a student. She and her classmates founded The Nonsensemakers (糊塗戲班) after they graduated from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The Nonsensemakers, an independent production with no sponsor from the government, has won many outstanding performance awards over the past years. Jo sometimes plays a part in the dramas, or is responsible for the scripts. "The theme of my dramas is usually related to current affairs or a hot topic that the public is concerned about. We aim at delivering some messages to the audience," she says.

"The unique characteristic of drama is its direct contact with the audience. We have different feelings in every performance because different groups of audience will respond differently," she describes her fascination with drama. Jo is preparing a new drama to be released in the Summer of 2007.

In 2001, she was awarded the British Chevening Scholarship to study a master degree in International Relations at the University of Warwick. She was recommended the course by a Warwick graduate, who was also her colleague at the Television Broadcasting Ltd. Upon arriving the campus, her first impression of Warwick was its modern buildings and facilities, which were in contrast to her preconception of British universities.

She has not only taken advantages of the knowledge she has gained from the course, but has also won the friendship with her classmates, who come from various parts of the world. "In the class, students are outspoken and express freely their opinions," she recalls her enlightening classmates. "This helps students to develop their independent thinking," she continues when comparing the differences between postgraduate study in Hong Kong and overseas. Indeed, Jo is outspoken too, judging from our conversation with her. "We do our research together in the library," she adds to reflect their team spirit.

Jo names several lecturers who have impressed her because of their excellent teaching. "Professor Peter Ferdinand raised interesting and thought-provoking questions in the class to inspire us," she remarks. "Besides, Prof. Shaun Breslin, my thesis supervisor, and Dr. Chris Hughes were also very good." Jo completed her degree with a thesis on the relations of China, the U.S. and Japan.

Besides learning, her student life was fraught with pleasure: cooking dinner with her flatmates, seeing dramas at the Arts Centre or at the theatres in London on weekends.

"Do you miss Warwick?" we ask. "I have not come back to Warwick since my graduation," she smiles, alluding she will manage to return someday. She will continue to choose England for further study if there is another window of opportunity. "Probably I will get a second Chevening Scholarship," she muses. "I am interested in studying another postgraduate course in cultural studies or translation."

Now being the Communication Manager of AA, Jo's responsibilities are twofold: communicating with the media and performing contingency management. "I am busier than when I was in the electronic media and I have a lot to learn," she describes. Her job is around the clock, standing by beyond the office hours.

Her previous experience in media entails her to understand what the media are interested to know and to answer the media enquiries skillfully. Her job duties require her to maintain constant coordination with various departments of AA. She also gets involved in the precautionary measures and plans for in case of a hiccup or a serious problem. She needs to keep the high quality of communication with the media and helps resolve quickly the problem with minimum disruption. Jo is 'touching wood' by tapping the table as she speaks, expecting consciously not a chance for any contingency program to take place. In fact, Hong Kong International Airport was awarded 'Best in Class' for 'Sense of Security' and 'Security Inspection' by the IATA (now AETRA) Global Airport Monitor Survey.

We joke that we now have a channel to make complaints through her about the AA, she correctly reminds us, "My role actually acts as a channel to hear your opinions about the airport. And what are your suggestions to improve the operation of the airport?" she asks. We answer that the airport should facilitate more PCs with Internet access. She nods and says she will make sure to reflect this to the management.

These examples exemplify her professional attitude towards her job. So, the next time when you depart from or arrive at the airport, you now know there is a Warwick graduate behind the scenes helping to build and reinforce the image and the smooth functioning of one of the top airports in the world.

- * *Prof Peter Ferdinand is a Reader in Politics and International Studies (PAIS), and Director of the Centre for Studies in Democratisation.*
- * *Prof Shaun Breslin is Professor of Politics and International Studies.*
- * *Dr Chris Hughes is Senior Research Fellow and Acting Co-Director at the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation, as well as concurrently Reader in International Politics in PAIS.*



A Bridge Too Far, a Dream Not Too Far:

Interview with Professor Edward Ng 吳恩融教授 (MBA, 2003)

by Elaine Hung and Clement Chan

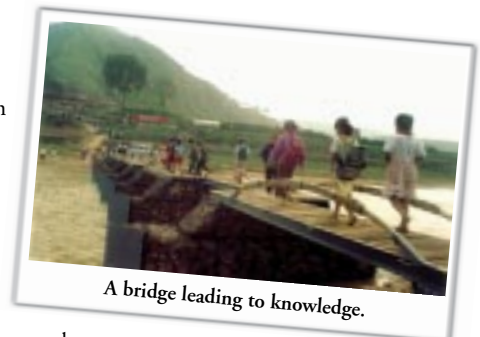
Born in Hong Kong and educated in the UK, Prof. Edward Ng did his MBA at the University of Warwick by distance learning and passed with distinction in 2003. He is currently teaching in the Department of Architecture, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and is actively involved in the charitable project “A Bridge Too Far” which helps school children in a village in China by building a safe and durable bridge.



When Prof. Ng sat down right across us in the café, it was hard to imagine that this mid-age gentleman in casual wear carrying a rucksack is a university professor and a professional architect.

Prof. Ng began his education in the UK as early as the late 1970s. After having lived and worked in different countries, he came back to work in his birthplace and this marks a beginning of his involvement in the project “A Bridge Too Far”.

This project, which gets its name from a movie on WWII, originates from a visit of Prof. Ng to the Yellow River Plateau in the 2000. Far in Maosi Village (毛止村), Gansu, children had to cross the river every day on their way to school. A temporary and primitive bridge made of mud and tree logs were built every winter as an expedient for the villagers to cross the river. Yet, this fragile bridge would be washed away during summer months and students were forced to venture across the river. As a result, sad news of injuries and accidents were often heard. This inspired Prof. Ng to bring into use his expertise and designed a permanent bridge for the villagers in the hope of facilitating students going to school and helping the sustainable development of the humble village.



A bridge leading to knowledge.

After painstaking years of planning and fund-raising, the group with enthusiastic professionals and dozens of Hong Kong and mainland university students, travelled afar to Maosi Village in summer 2002. Amidst the intense heat and with the help of local villagers, it only took the team an amazingly six short days to finish building the “*Wu Zhi Qiao*” (無止橋).

Prof. Ng gave us a detailed recount of the building process which was blended with both hard labour and happiness. He also recalled an interesting episode: one day the village children helped in lifting the rocks which would be used for building the foundation of the bridge. The older children wittily picked the smaller rocks while the younger children indiscriminately picked the bigger ones. Prof. Ng thus concludes that the size of rocks one lifts reverses one's IQ: the higher one's IQ, the smaller the rock one picks.

Apart from setting a good example towards sustainable architectural design and communal participation, this project has also won prestigious awards including the renowned Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) International Award. This worldwide recognition is no doubt a strong boost to the team's confidence. To them, *Wu Zhi Qiao* is not only a bridge leading studious students to school; it also symbolizes the road to development and prosperity of the village.

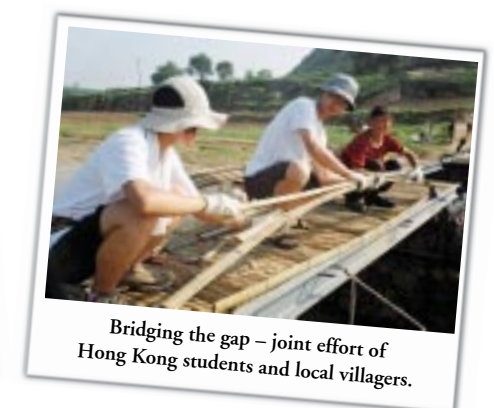
In the meantime, Prof. Ng is busy preparing and raising fund for “A Bridge Too Far II” in which the team is planning to construct another bridge in the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomy prefecture (甘孜藏族自治州) of Sichuan Province where villagers are facing similar problems as those in Maosi Village did. To him, apart from a charitable architecture project, “A Bridge Too Far” is nevertheless an education for the younger generation in Hong Kong. Looking ahead, Prof. Ng would like to help in the infrastructure building for those in need in the mainland.

With the passion and effort of enthusiasts like Prof. Edward Ng, the construction of more infrastructures shouldn't be too far away. However, as Prof. Ng remarks, there is still a long way to go in improving the livelihood of villagers in the remote areas of mainland China and in educating our future generations. For details about the project “A Bridge Too Far”, please visit: www.bridge2far.info

Photos: courtesy of Prof. Edward Ng and A Bridge Too Far.



View of Maosi Bridge in 2006.



Bridging the gap – joint effort of Hong Kong students and local villagers.

Our new Vice-Chancellor



Professor Nigel Thrift became the University of Warwick's fifth Vice-Chancellor in July 2006, joining Warwick from the University of Oxford where he was Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research. Professor Thrift was born in Bath, educated at Aberystwyth and Bristol and is an international research figure in the field of geography.

During his academic career Professor Thrift has been the recipient of a number of distinguished academic awards including the Royal Geographical Society Victoria Medal for contributions to geographic research in 2003. Professor Thrift is an Academician of the Academy of Learned Societies for Social Sciences, and was made a Fellow of the British Academy in 2003.

Commenting on his appointment, Professor Thrift said: "Warwick is one of the UK's most respected and influential universities. It is a dynamic and exciting institution which has already made a profound mark on the international stage. I look forward to working with academics and all Warwick's staff to enhance Warwick's research base and to develop the University's international reputation still further."

We are delighted to welcome Professor Thrift and honoured to have such a distinguished scholar and university leader as WGAHK's new Honorary President.

2006 University League Tables

Warwick is once again confirmed as one of the leading academic institutions in the UK. In the Sunday Times University Guide, published in September 2006, Warwick was the highest ranked campus university in England, being placed 6th overall. In the other surveys published this year - the Times Good University Guide 2006 and the Guardian Newspaper University Guide - Warwick continues to be placed firmly in the top 10 UK universities on a variety of measures.

Warwick International Office Highly Commended at Times Higher Awards

The University's International Office was highly commended at the Times Higher Education Awards on the 15th November 2006. Staff in the International Office were honoured in the Outstanding Support for Overseas Students award and were particularly praised for the range and scale of its support services for international students.

For more information on the International Office, visit <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/international/>

New Representative Offices in Beijing and Shanghai

The International Office has a network of representatives and offices in various countries around the world. Besides the Warwick Hong Kong Office, new representative offices have been recently set up in Beijing and Shanghai. The three offices will work closely together to provide information and support to prospective and current Warwick students, as well as alumni in the whole of China.

For contact details, please visit: http://www.warwick.com.hk/main_cont.html



China team meeting in HK, Nov 06.
From left: Alan (Beijing), Danni (UK), Shirley (Shanghai), Manita & Nancy (Hong Kong)

"Tony Blair praises Warwick's Digital Lab"

Warwick Manufacturing Group is creating a Warwick Digital Laboratory - a £50 Million pound project which will provide a high quality research environment that will allow researchers to develop techniques that will place consumers right inside a "mass customization" production process for a vast range of future products.

Speaking about the lab Prime Minister Tony Blair said:

"When we talk about ground-breaking science with practical applications, we need look no further than the West Midlands. The Warwick Digital Laboratory will provide a high quality research environment for multidisciplinary teams. One aspect of this research is creating realistic virtual environments for the training of surgeons or the design of new operating theatres. This is research which will position the UK at the forefront of medical technology."

For more latest news, please visit: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/newsandevents/>