

CAIF Review of the Year 2023

Coventry Association for International Friendship

A profile of a human head facing left, with a light blue background. The head is semi-transparent, revealing a colorful, abstract brain. The brain is composed of various colored spheres and shapes, including red, yellow, green, blue, and purple, arranged in a complex, organic pattern. The text "In the time of Artificial Intelligence" is written in a white, serif font in the bottom right corner.

In the time
of
Artificial
Intelligence

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Cover Photo

“AI”

There is a reason why CAIF’s Review of 2023 is fronted this year by a representation of *Artificial Intelligence*, as we came into contact with this new technology in a controversial, and expensive, way in 2023.

We fell victim of a ‘bot’, a device which crawls through the archives of the internet, searching through everything that exists there and tracing the use of any image published by an original owner but which has been downloaded and used by another party.

Once an owner/organization finds an image on your server, they may send a demand letter for payment for breach of copyright, even if the usage has been made in a quite innocent, non-commercial way.

This is what happened to CAIF and it cost us hundreds of £££s for what was claimed to have been unauthorized “use” of a small number of images, most of which related to the city of Mosul, a city in Iraq for which CAIF has been supporting its restoration following the years of destruction which culminated in the battle to take it back from the murderous clutches of ISIS.

One might wonder why the multi-national photo agencies would want to insist on their copyright income against our noble intentions of bringing the story of Mosul’s suffering to the attention of a wider audience through publication on our website, but, unfortunately, such is the mercenary world in which we all have to live today.

We have no issue with the original owners of the images – the several photographers whose work we used – but we doubt very much whether they will benefit from our payments.

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JANUARY

Holocaust Memorial Day



The last week of January saw Holocaust Memorial Day in Coventry, held in St Mary's Guildhall. A very moving story was recounted by a survivor of the Holocaust and of the Kindertransport, John Fieldsend, who made his life in the UK.

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FEBRUARY

On 13th February the Mayors of Coventry and Dresden commemorated the bombing of Dresden. This ceremony traditionally ends with the citizens of Dresden joining hands and forming a circle around the city centre.

On 15th February, Reverend Andy March's book, "Loving the Enemy", was launched in the Frauenkirche, Dresden. 130 people attended the event.

The book had been translated into German by Rainer Barczaitis, our friend from Dresden.



CAIF's secretary and her assistant attended a talk in the Herbert Art Gallery on the painting by Milorad Bata Mihailovic, which was a gift from Belgrade to Coventry in 1953 prior to the twinning link between the two cities.

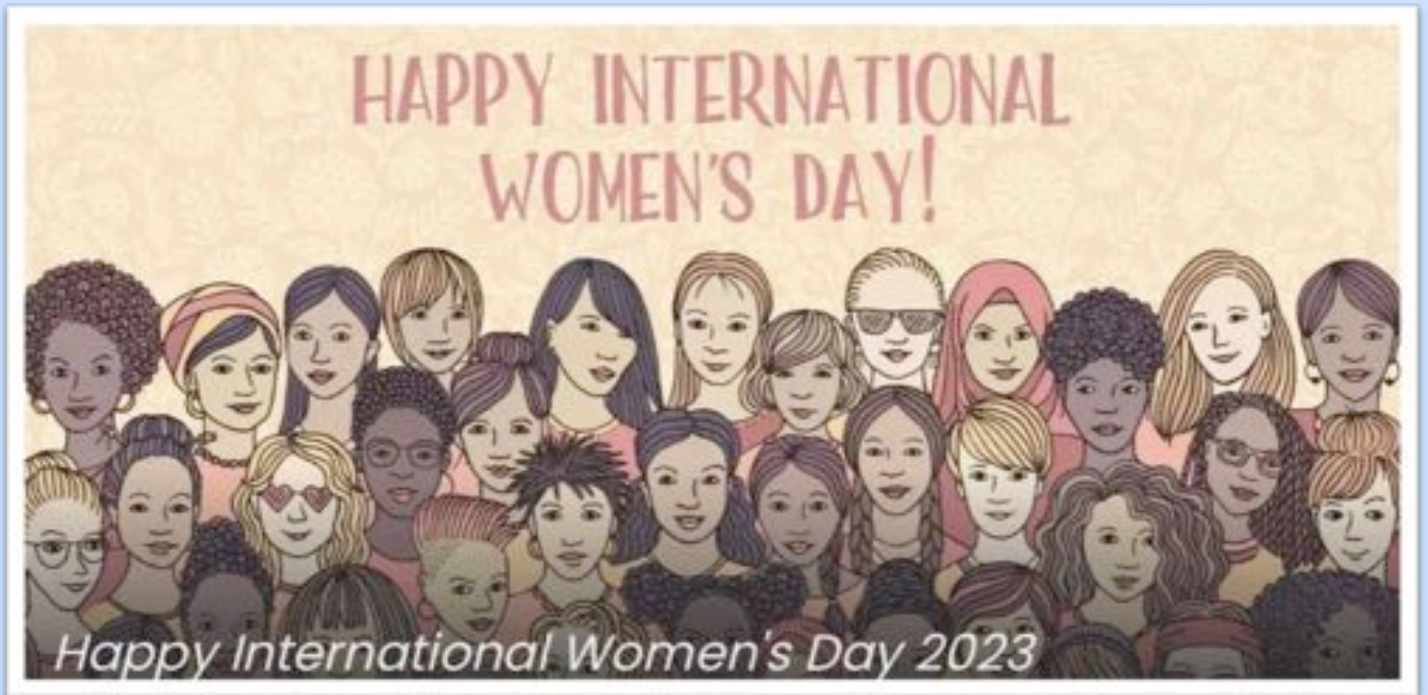


There was a catastrophic earthquake in Turkey and Syria on 18th February. CAIF made a donation to the appeal.

CAIF members attended a candlelit vigil held in the ruins of the old Cathedral on 24th February to mark the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

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Pru Porretta - a CAIF member - as Lady Godiva, celebrated International Womens' Day with some of the Godiva Sisters.

On 15th March the Multi-faith Partnership was launched.

CAIF members attended the Lord Mayor's annual concert which took place at the Albany Theatre on 13th March celebrating local talent, particularly that of the City's young people.

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APRIL



On 4th April CAIF welcomed artist/poet Christian Manss and his family to Coventry as part of the Coventry-Dresden Arts' Exchange. Christian performed poetry and music at 'Fire and Dust' and held an exhibition of his artwork at Common Ground in Fargo Village. CAIF donated to his travel costs.



On 1st April there was a Poetry Event in the Carnegie Room at Earlsdon Library in support of Autism, with local poets Antony Owen and CAIF member, Zsafia.



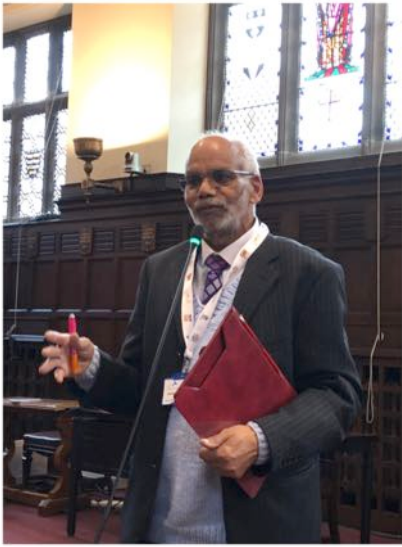
We also welcomed Reinhard Pontius from Dresden, once again, as he came to collect the 'Angel, Michael', to transport it to Cornwall.

CAIF member, Mary, attended a Poetry Event in The Japanese Memorial Garden, Coventry Memorial Park. Rebecca Bollands, Deputy Head of Earlsdon Primary school, whose pupils took part, reported - *"I would like to let you know that the poetry event in the Japanese Peace Garden today was very successful. About 50 young people came with their families to perform their poems in the beautiful setting of the peace garden. We had some taiko drumming and origami, as well, which were very popular"*.

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APRIL/cont'd



Councillor Ram Lakha, O.B.E., Chair of CAIF, introduced Equality Day.



A Declaration was endorsed by Coventry City Council to have Equality Day annually on 14th April.



Performers from many different cultural groups in Coventry took part.

Visitors from Kiel

On 21st April, our friends from Kiel arrived to spend a few days with CAIF members and friends. Here (left) they can be seen having a short rest in the shadow of Warwick Castle.



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MAY

In May CAIF held two meetings on Zoom. Firstly, on 9th May a meeting took place to celebrate 'Europe Day', and, on 16th May, we held a Zoom meeting to discuss the future visit to Dresden to be made by poet Ann Atkins (of Coventry's "Fire and Dust").

CAIF supported Ann with a donation towards her travel costs.



A further Zoom Meeting was held to discuss a possible project linking young artists in Coventry with similar young people in Kiel and Dresden.

"WOMAN LIFE FREEDOM: THE SOUNDS OF A REVOLUTION"

On 20th May CAIF representatives attended a presentation in Coventry Cathedral of music, poetry, film and talks, by Iranian women and representatives, in response to the state killing of 22 years-old Mahsa Jina Amini.

RIISING GLOBAL PEACE FORUM "Peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland: It is what it is: How could it be different?"

Chaired by the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University.

The Coventry International Peace Prize was awarded to Lord Paul Bew and Mark Durkan for their work on the Good Friday agreement in 1998.



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MAY cont'd/-



CAIF Annual General Meeting with guest speaker, Neslihan Ozar, of Coventry University's Centre for Trust, Peace & Social Relations, who spoke about the earthquake which had recently occurred in Turkey.

JUNE

POSITIVE IMAGES COMMUNITY FAIR, 17th June, Broadgate, Coventry.



Spreading the idea of International Peace and Friendship to the people of Coventry.

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JUNE cont'd/-



Councillor Ram Lakha O.B.E (Chair of CAIF) attended the 75th Anniversary of "Windrush" which took place in Coventry Cathedral.

JULY



CAIF members enjoying time together at their 'Summer Lunch' in the Cosy Club Coventry.

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AUGUST

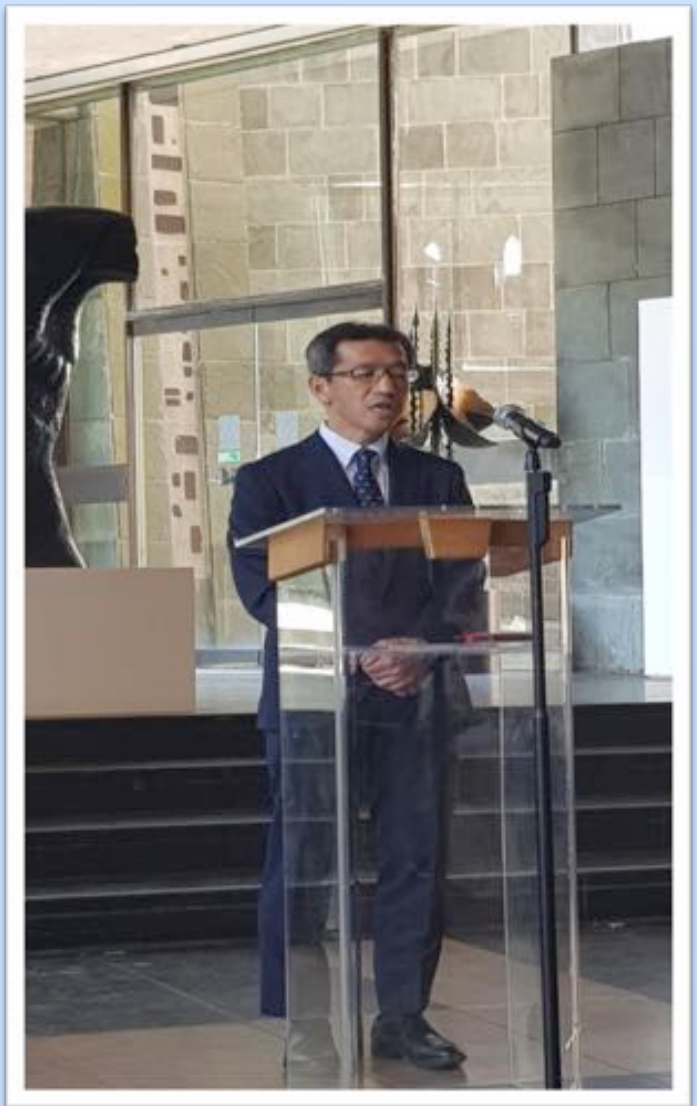


Ann Atkins, from Coventry's "Fire and Dust," performed at a 'Poetry Slam' in Dresden as part of a Poetry Exchange.

As with previous poetry exchanges, CAIF made a donation in support of the poet's visit.



"Warriors Cry", an immersive exhibition of photography, video and sound exploring the impact on fathers who have been separated from their children, curated by Emmanuelle Henry-Cottrell (Artist and CAIF member) with support from other artists.



HIROSHIMA DAY
6th August, Coventry Cathedral

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SEPTEMBER



CAIF members attended a talk by Mehru Fitter in St Mary's Guildhall. This focussed on the story of her family through textiles from South Asia, particularly her mother's saris.



This was part of the exhibition "What We Wore", curated by Hardish Virk.

'Godiva Day' is held every year in September and is led by our own Lady Godiva, Pru Porretta, with her Godiva Sisters and members of Coventry's diverse communities.

Poets Devjani Bodepudi and John Watson took part in the Coventry-Cork Poetry exchange. CAIF supported this visit with a donation towards their travel costs.

Monika and Nikolai visited Dresden and met up with friends of CAIF while Michael visited one of Coventry's twin cities, Lidice, in the Czech Republic.

CAIF members visited our friendship town of VANNES, 23rd - 30th September.



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OCTOBER



CAIF members were joined at their monthly breakfast meeting at the Cosy Club by Dresden sculptor, Reinhard Pontius.

Also present were local sculptor, George Wagstaffe, and textile artist, Michaela Gytevai, both of whom visited Dresden in August when George was given a lifetime Achievement Award.

Coventry poets, Devjani and John, came to CAIF's monthly meeting to report on their exchange visit to Cork while Ann Atkins also attended to report on her exchange visit to Dresden.

The three CAIF-supported poets performed a selection of their poetry at the meeting.

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CAIF



Memories of Yesteryear Sessions

Tuesday 24 October, 21 November, 19 December 2023.

11.30am - 1.30pm.
60+, but all are welcome.
£4.50 per person, £3.50 with Go CV
Tea and biscuits (coffee will also be served).

No need to pre-book, just turn up and pay on the day.

Each month we will be hosting a 'memories of yesteryear' themed session, and this will be a chance for older people to join us for a different theme each time including talks, handling session with objects from our collection, film showings of the Blitz and Coventry then and now and much more whilst enjoying a nice cup of tea and a biscuit or two.

Herbert
Art Gallery & Museum

CAIF's Secretary and her Assistant were invited by the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum to give a presentation on twinning and the work of CAIF as part of the new 'Memories of Yesteryear' programme

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NOVEMBER

LORD MAYOR'S PEACE LECTURE
10th NOVEMBER - ST MARY'S GUILDHALL, COVENTRY
"Lessons from Genocide Twenty Nine years on"



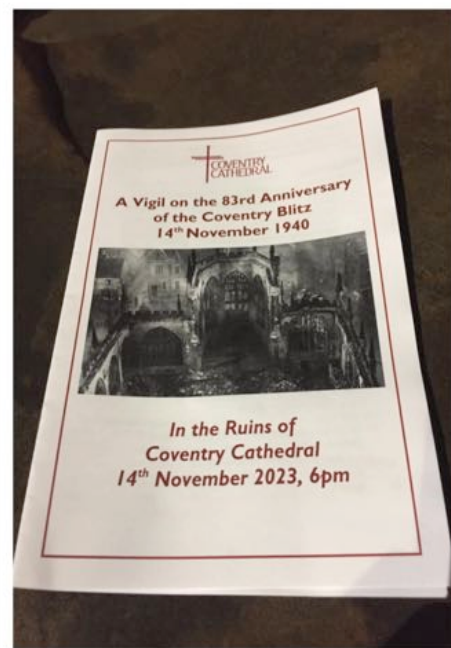
Marc Gwamaka, from Rwanda, spoke on this topic, giving a different perspective than the one promoted by the West.

Marc leads the AEGIS Youth Champion Leadership programme.

Here Marc is seen meeting CAIF's Secretary, Linda.

On 12th November, CAIF members attended the Annual Service for Remembrance Sunday which was held in Coventry's Memorial Park.

On 14th November there was a candlelit vigil in the Cathedral ruins on the anniversary of the November 1940 bombing of Coventry.



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DECEMBER

In Memoriam

Sadly, Colin Scott, the “heart” of the Positive Images Festival group in Coventry and friend of CAIF, passed away this month.

Colin will be greatly missed by many people.

On 2nd December ‘The Nightingales’ performed a concert in memory of their founder, Pat Trickett, former secretary of CAIF, at St Andrew’s Church, Eastern Green.



CAIF Christmas Meal at Metropolis.

This photo was sent to our friends at home and abroad wishing them a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.



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CAIF

We hope and intend to continue our work promoting Peace and Friendship in 2024.

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CAIF's Committee:

President: The Lord Mayor of Coventry
Chair: Councillor Ram Lakha OBE
Deputy Chair: Mary Goodwin
Treasurer: Paul Fernandez-Montes
Secretary: Linda Hirons
Assistant Secretary: Dave Hirons

The majority of the photographs in this publication were taken by CAIF members:

Linda Hirons	Ram Lakha	Pru Porretta
Dave Hirons	Monika Campbell	Nikolai Press

All other images came to CAIF from our contacts who shared them with us for our interest, distribution and advertisement

Thanks to CAIF members for their continuing participation and commitment

CAIF

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