ANNUAL REVIEW 2015
About the photography in this publication

The images of Birmingham in this year's annual review were taken by local professional photographer Verity Milligan. Her work has been licensed globally, and commissioned by companies such as Carillion PLC and Taylors of Harrogate. Her stunning landscapes of the city and eagerness to create a positive image of Birmingham have attracted a large following on social media, awards and national press coverage. She is keen to connect with people in the city and is available for commissions.

To contact Verity or find out more about her work, visit veritymilliganphotography.com
Stimulating ideas and catalysing action

The ethos of The Lunar Society is to ensure that those issues likely to affect us in the years ahead are the subjects of today. The Society exists to stimulate ideas…broaden debate… and catalyse action.

The past year has been no exception, writes the Chairman of The Lunar Society, Waheed Saleem.

During the past 12 months, the Society has engaged with prominent speakers from all walks of life and added to the debate on issues as diverse as the European Convention of Human Rights, the preservation of our heritage, community engagement in schools, technology in vehicles and macro and micro economics – to name but a few.

We have done so impartially, apolitically and independently – with the interests of the people of Birmingham and the wider area at our heart, true to the beliefs of our founders.

This is my last review as chairman of the Society. It has been a privilege to serve the Society and Birmingham and to be part of an organisation that can be not only proud of its heritage, but also take pride in the contribution The Lunar Society makes to our society.

One of my proudest moments has been when honorary member of the Society, Birmingham’s Lord Mayor Cllr. Shafique Shah, lead the Westminster Abbey service for Matthew Boulton, one of the Society’s founding members. It was fantastic to see Boulton’s huge historic contribution to the city, and indeed the nation, being recognised.
Another proud moment was the awarding of the prestigious Lunar Medal to the Lord-Lieutenant of the West Midlands, Paul Sabapathy CBE who formally received the medal at our annual dinner in November. The medal is awarded by the Society to those who have recorded outstanding achievements and contributed significantly to the Society’s aim of furthering social and economic improvements in the West Midlands.

There could not be a more worthy recipient. As the Lord-Lieutenant, Mr Sabapathy is her Majesty the Queen’s representative in the West Midlands. Throughout his time in the UK – he was born in Chennai, India and moved here in 1964 – he has worked tirelessly in industry, healthcare, for charity and with the community. His efforts embody the values of the Society.

The presentation coincided with a keynote speech at the Society’s annual dinner in November by the Attorney General, Jeremy Wright, QC, MP who spoke and answered questions on a range of topics including the European Convention on Human Rights. He told nearly 200 guests that a future Conservative government would be prepared to withdraw from the European Convention if Britain failed to secure a new approach from the European Court of Human Rights.

Human rights were also central to the Society’s discussions about an issue that generated international debate – the so-called ‘Trojan Horse issue’. Mark Rogers, Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council, chose a Lunar Society event to make his first public statement on the issue since the publication of reports from separate enquiries. In an open discussion, attended by a good representation of Birmingham’s diversity, he was clearly confident that “opportunities would arise from adversity”.

The Society has continued to provide a forum for debate with a further joint event with the Birmingham-based equality charity BRAP and supported by Barrow Cadbury Trust (whose support of the Society we gratefully acknowledge).

Nearly thirty participants from a range of fields attended – including headteachers, school governors, voluntary sector staff, academics, parents, and activists.

Meanwhile, local MP Andrew Mitchell and former Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury and Chief Whip, spoke at an event hosted by the Society’s business and economy group, on his vision for Birmingham and its economy. This group also hosted a dinner at which the principal speaker was Lord Stevenson of Balmacara, shadow spokesperson on business, innovation and skills.

We have partnered extensively with the city’s universities. Dr Tim Haughton, reader in European Politics at the University of Birmingham, together with MEP Siôn Simon, spoke as part of a pre-election debate on ‘The role of the UK in Europe’ – an issue that is likely to dominate the headlines throughout the coming year.

“The Society exists to stimulate ideas, broaden debate and catalyse action.”

Meanwhile, in conjunction with Aston University, Prof George Feiger, Executive Dean of Aston Business School, delivered the Society’s 2014 Boulton and Watt commemoration lecture, ‘If Wishes Were Horses, Beggars Would Ride’. He spoke of the complexity of global finance, the lack of effective controls, and the risks of institutionalising incentives that encourage rather than discourage excessive risk taking.

In our annual lecture held at Birmingham City University, global connected car director at Jaguar Land Rover Dr Mike Bell spoke about the role of advanced technology in vehicles – and how this technology is vital in furthering our road safety.

Health issues were the focus of corporate partnerships – we worked with Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Trust to provide a discussion on its Healthy Villages programme, held a visit to Birmingham Women’s Hospital and conducted important debates about health issues in our local area.
Heritage has also been to the fore with our history group taking a lead role in the development of a new Heritage Trail. The Trail provides an introduction to the Lunar Society and 18th century Birmingham by following in its founding members’ footsteps. The Trail is co-sponsored by Birmingham Museums Trust and The Lunar Society, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of Birmingham Museum Trust’s Birmingham: its people, its history gallery project.

Over the year, we have become increasingly conscious that it is not always possible for members to attend every meeting. Therefore, we have increased our digital communications with members, particularly through e-mail and the website. Our quarterly, more detailed newsletters are supplemented by periodic bulletins to update members on events, issues and activities. Meanwhile, the blogs on our website and our social media channels are designed to encourage debate and discussion.

We have considerably increased our exposure in the media too through issuing press releases and comment, where appropriate, on the issues of the day. Such exposure has helped encourage higher levels of attendance at events – including by non-members, a number of whom have become members.

“The Lunar Society needs to work closely with the community it serves.”

We have now conducted a thorough appraisal of our membership. Although this reduced the total number of registered members, but I’m pleased to report that from that reconciled base, we are now in a position where our total membership is increasing. Nonetheless, it continues to be a significant priority to ensure that we have a wide and diverse membership base that adds to representation.

Although we’re not a charitable fundraising organisation, we do support the Lord Mayor’s annual charity appeal and I’m very pleased that we have presented a cheque for £1000 to support the work of Fisher House, MS Society, Cancer Research UK, and Birmingham Trees for Life.

The Lunar Society cannot work without the support of the community it serves. We have forged relationships with a number of organisations including No5 Chambers, Birmingham City University, Midland Heart, Mills and Reeve, Deloitte, Barrow Cadbury Trust and BRAP. Special thanks also go to University of Birmingham, Birmingham City University, Aston University, Birmingham Metropolitan College and Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Trust, all of whom have supported events and activities. We are most grateful for their support.

The executive, membership and programme committee members have also worked tirelessly whilst our history and business and economy groups contribute significantly to our events. Secretariat and communications support from our new partner Clarke Associates has also proved invaluable with a team committed to the long-term success of the society.

My thanks go to them all, but above all, thanks must go to our members who not only attend events but more importantly, contribute their valuable input, thoughts and reflections on those issues that matter to the Society – and which underpin the ethos of The Lunar Society.

Waheed Saleem
Chairman, 2013 - 2015
The Lunar Society
Clarke Associates is an integral part of our team providing all our marketing and communications functions in the UK and in overseas markets. The team handles all media, social media, overseeing our websites, creative output and on-line/print advertising. We receive hugely enthusiastic support and they always go the extra distance.

Steven Greenall,
Warwick Music Group

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Steven Greenall,
Warwick Music Group

The Old School House, Chapel Lane, Birmingham B47 63X, t: 0121 702 2525, e: hello@clarke-associates.co.uk
In the late 18th century, the world was changing beyond recognition. The Industrial Revolution was powering Britain and the world and influencing almost every aspect of daily life – and with it came huge changes in production, wealth and society.

In Birmingham, the meetings of a few fertile minds helped to change an age. The original Lunarmen would gather together for lively dinner conversations, the journey back from their Birmingham meeting place lit by the full moon.

The Society’s founding members continue to be honoured in the present day - in 2015 a memorial to honour Matthew Boulton was unveiled at Westminster Abbey.

2016 has been designated as the 250th year of the founding of the Society – and promises to be a fitting year.

It will include a full calendar of events, activities and initiatives that will be in the traditions of the Society: stimulating ideas, broadening debate and catalysing action.

Details of our 250th anniversary events calendar will be updated throughout the year at www.lunarsociety.org.uk/events
Sharing our expertise to promote growth

Birmingham City University successfully combines practice-led teaching, learning and research with innovative student support, and is growing its partnerships base with some of the country’s leading employers to drive new innovation.

Our dedication to supporting Birmingham as a hotbed of innovation and ideas stretches back as far as 1843. Over the past 170 years we have continued to improve the prospects of the city and its people by providing highly-skilled graduates, working with employers and carrying out ground-breaking research.

We use creative and design-led thinking to innovate and transform practice, particularly in the creative economy, industries driving sustainability agendas, and the health sector.

The University has almost 40 professional accreditations and a well-established reputation for delivering in-company training and development programmes, working with some 5,000 of the country’s leading employers. We are constantly looking for new ways to enhance the learning experience, and are currently investing £260 million in our estates and facilities in the city.

www.bcu.ac.uk/business

0121 331 5252  |  business@bcu.ac.uk

#BCU4biz  BCU for business
Be part of a Society that ensures the issues of tomorrow are the subjects of today

The Lunar Society, founded by some of the 18th century’s finest thinkers, was re-founded more than 20 years ago to encourage debate around all aspects of the development of Birmingham, the West Midlands and beyond. The Society does not itself take positions, but provides a forum for stimulating ideas and broadening debate on issues critical to the future of the city and the region, inspiring its members to influence change.

The topics it tackles include a wide range of subjects from science, medicine, the environment to technology, manufacturing, economics and the social sciences. It is non-party political, and past keynote speakers have included Professor George Feiger, Sir Mervyn King, Vince Cable, David Milliband and Michael Heseltine.

2015 has seen the Lunar Society consider three major themes – poverty and social exclusion; science and technology and social consciousness. The Society chose issues that are particularly relevant to the future of the city and region, and has taken opportunities to both influence thinking and provide solutions to tackling these key areas. It also remains involved with the City’s Social Inclusion Agenda.

For more information about the Society and for details of our prestigious events, please visit our website: www.lunarsociety.org.uk

If you would like to know more about the Society and becoming a member please email info@lunarsociety.org.uk or call 0156 482 1582.
Ellis Conway & Co., Chartered Accountants

Our directors and staff are all joining the new company whilst our address and all contact details remain the same. In doing this, like The Lunar Society, we are looking to the future, enabling us to broaden our range of services to new and existing clients.

Our services include:

- Entering and retaining business records – and doing VAT returns
- All payroll and auto-enrolment services
- Controlling creditor and sales ledgers
- Preparing management accounts
- Preparing year end accounts
- Preparing business plans and cash flow analyses
- Preparing and submitting all HMRC business returns
- Preparing personal and partnership tax returns
- Dealing with all HMRC enquiries and detailed investigations
- Undertaking tax planning
- Undertaking company formations and company secretarial work
Joining the Society

As well as being part of a uniquely influential neutral forum for ideas, there are many reasons to join The Lunar Society:

- Meet, talk and debate issues of the day with lively, informed minds
- Contribute to shaping decision-making in the region
- Priority information about and discounted booking for all Society events
- Opportunities to join the various Society committees and thematic groups
- Access to exclusive content on the Members’ Only section of the website
- Voting rights at the AGM
- Play a part in the Society’s activities and future development
- Corporate members are also given the first opportunity to sponsor Lunar Society events

There are four main types of membership:

- Associate Membership is designed to facilitate/encourage the participation of younger professionals of thirty-five years of age or lower, who are developing their careers.
- Full Membership is designed for those who are thirty-six years of age and above and are more established in their chosen professions.
- Joint/Spouse Partner Membership is designed for those who wish to join the Society together as full members and attend events together.
- Corporate Membership is designed to facilitate the needs of business or educational institutions that have expertise across different areas of interest and would benefit from registering several members to attend events. Corporate members also have the first opportunity to sponsor Lunar Society events.

To find out more about becoming a member, please visit: www.lunarsociety.org.uk

Executive Committee

The Executive committee is elected annually at the AGM.

Those serving the Executive Committee 2014 – 2015 were:

* Chairman: Waheed Saleem  
* Vice chairman: Alan Wenban-Smith  
* Honorary Treasurer: John Ellis  
* Honorary Secretary (acting): Peter Mayer  
* Membership Committee Chair (acting): Astakhar Ahmed  
* Programme Committee Chair: John Charlton

Saqib Bhatti  
Sally Hoban  
Kate King  
John Rainford  
Jacqui Smith

*Administration and communications:*  
Clarke Associates UK Limited

THE LUNAR SOCIETY

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This year Midland Heart is celebrating 90 years of making a difference... providing great quality housing, care and support services.

We are one the largest registered providers in the Midlands, working for over 70,000 customers, managing and maintaining 33,000 homes.

We deliver over 350,000 hours of care and support within Birmingham every year – for older people, homeless people, individuals with learning difficulties and those with mental health issues.

We work locally to invest in our neighbourhoods and provide opportunities which aim to help a person and their community to flourish.

We are proud to support The Lunar Society.