



## Dear Students, Parents, Carers and Friends of Wallington County Grammar School,

I must start by confessing that I am not writing this letter sat at my usual desk, looking out on the wrought iron gates of the School donated by the Old Boys in memory of those who gave their lives during World War II. Nor am I looking at the often missed gas lamp post that decorates our rockery, scarred by the explosion of a 1000lb bomb that landed in our playgrounds in 1944. Instead I am on my sofa, listening to my wife and daughter singing along to an online music lesson as we self isolate, once again faced by a threat so enormous that it is difficult to comprehend until it lands in one's own playground. I have now lost count of the number of parents and students who have spoken or written to me in the last few weeks to express their newfound appreciation of our motto, *per ardua ad summa*, through difficulties to the heights. As a school, we have only faced such difficulties once before in our history from 1939 to 1945. We passed with flying colours then, as we will during this episode, by looking after one another, forging on with our education and keeping our values front and centre in our hearts. I thought it worthwhile to reflect on these as I write this on 25th March 2020 as it may be that, when this is published, we need them more than ever.

### Courage

I have been staggered by the bravery displayed by every member of the school community during this entire episode. When the significance of the Covid 19 pandemic was becoming apparent, the staff of WCGS did not blink. In fact quite the opposite, they rallied around the cause, insisting on coming into school to support students until we were forced to close to the majority on Monday 23rd March. Their cheery faces in Monday briefings became ever graver as the weeks rolled by but they remained determined, as they still do, to provide education and support to all who would require it. Our students too have shown such grit, working through their fears of what is to come whilst remaining steadfastly focussed on their studies and on supporting one another, either in School or through the myriad of social networks which they are on at home. Finally, I must commend our parents who have dealt so admirably with the heightened levels of anxiety caused by this virus, always showing support for the School and passing on your confidence and reassurance to your children. Times like these show what we are made of and I can confidently say that that is tough stuff indeed.

### Creativity

Three weeks ago, our remote learning capabilities were functional but rudimentary with the majority of our staff being confident in how to set work on Show My Homework and a good number having set up learning environments on Google Classroom for their students to access resources at home. Fast forward to today and the rate of change has been staggering. We now have lessons occurring regularly over Google Meet, in fact I am due to meet the Senior Leadership Team on this app in the next half hour. Online quizzes and tests are being designed to aid students in their retrieval practice whilst many departments are using Seneca online to structure students' learning. I am in the midst of marking essays on Bk 19 of Homer's *Odyssey* digitally for Y10 whilst Mr Jones as duty leader in School today is busy devising ways to keep boys having fun during lunch break whilst staying 2m apart. The sheer capacity for learning and adaptation from staff has been astonishing and I thank each and every one of them for being so open to change.

### Compassion

For this I must thank the many, many parents who have written into the School with such kind and encouraging words for both staff and students. Each and every one of these has been passed on and have played a central part in keeping morale high. Staff have also been devoted to supporting our most vulnerable students with Year Leaders checking in on them each day and a team of duty teachers supporting children of key workers in this time of crisis. The catering team have diligently created food parcels for families of children on Free School Meals and we have a team of staff ready to respond should any member of our community need support during self isolation. I can honestly say that I have been moved to tears on more than one occasion by the kindness and generosity of spirit displayed by our community and I thank each and every one of you for your support.

### Commitment

This is perhaps the most important value for students to keep at the forefront of their minds in the coming weeks. As the vast majority of us stay at home for many weeks yet, it is vital that you remain committed to your studies. Y11 and the U6th still need to earn your predicted grades to see you through to the next phase of your education. Many of you may still need to resit exams within the next twelve months and you must keep the learning fresh in your minds to ensure success in these. Those of you in Y10 and the L6th are at the business end of your courses, learning the vast majority of the content that you will need to be successful in the summer of 2021. Y7-Y9 are learning the building blocks of knowledge necessary to reach success in both examinations and wider society.

Don't give up. Don't lose focus. Maintain your routines and your self-discipline. This will ensure you not only navigate this awful episode but that you come out the other side ready to reach those heights.

### *Per ardua ad summa*

**Mr Bean**  
**Headmaster**



### PTFA Update by Shaq Arif , Chair WCCGS PTFA

A few weeks ago I expected that I would be writing about all of the wonderful events that the PTFA had worked on and raised money from over the last few months, but sadly, the term has been overshadowed by current events. The most important message is that the PTFA will endure, the school will endure, but that at the present time the safety of the students, staff and parents are paramount, so we will continue to follow school and governmental guidance with respect to planned events.

The annual quiz that had been prepared for, was cancelled when the scale of the pandemic became clear. My thanks to Mr Weston and Dr Young who had so kindly agreed to host it once again. I sincerely hope we are able to resume this event when the time is right.

One event that did go ahead as planned was House Music. Those that attended reported a terrific evening and thoroughly enjoyed the performances - many thanks to all those involved.

Behind the scenes, the PTFA continues to make improvements to operations. Our Treasurer and Secretary (Vinai and Jackie) have really moved on our banking procedures, which will make life easier for those that come after - my thanks go to them both for their tireless efforts. Additionally, we are now also in a position to take card and contactless payment at some of our events using the SumUp platform. I am really looking forward to being able to see this in action and I think it is an example of how the PTFA continues to evolve.

The familiarisation tests continue to increase in popularity and year on year, we see that sessions are selling out sooner. At the beginning of March, 2,078 seats out of 2,700 had sold, which is 200 more than the same time last year. Sales have currently been suspended and a decision about whether they will go ahead will be taken nearer the time. For the current status, please see the website at, <https://www.wccgs-sutton.co.uk/ptfa/familiarisation-tests>. I would like to thank the Familiarisation test team, ably led by David Herrick, for the effort that they have put in so far and I sincerely hope that it does bear fruit.

There are a couple of projects that the PTFA has recently agreed to fund from existing funds - ten chromebooks to be used by students with Special Educational Needs and a reading management system, Renaissance Accelerated reading, <http://www.renlearn.co.uk/reading/>. The intention is that the Renaissance system will be used by students in years 7 to 9, and it is really hoped that it will push on the literacy of the children, and improve their vocabulary and comprehension. Having spoken to a couple of teachers and seen the demo, I can see why the school is particularly excited about this.

Projects like this are really the bread and butter of the PTFA and this is what helps the school go above and beyond other schools. The PTFA has gone from strength to strength with your support, and I ask that you continue to support it through the generous giving of that most valuable commodity, your time. If you would like to get involved, please email Jackie Gardiner at [info@wccgsptfa.org](mailto:info@wccgsptfa.org) - we would love to see you at our next event.



The following was written by Mrs Martin,

We have just finished **House Music**, and Carew has won!

This was by far the best House Music I have ever seen, I am very proud of all the students who performed! They are so, so, talented! It was very close and very difficult to judge. Congratulations to everyone who took part.

Thank you also Miss Coe and Miss Boland, who helped me to judge and also to the Senior Leadership Team and everyone helping at the backstage and by the doors! Thanks to all staff for your support with the rehearsals for House Music.

- Best Performer this year was Ronak Boman in U6CA, his amazing solo performance gained him a standing ovation!
- Best original piece went to Dylan (Year 11) and Jose (Upper 6<sup>th</sup>) in Woodcote!

#### Final Results:

1. Carew
2. Woodcote
3. Radcliffe
4. Ruskin
5. Bridges
6. Mandeville



### Hello from the 16th Wallington!

At 3:15 on Thursday 27th February, Wallington County Grammar School saw its first Scout meeting taking place since 2003. Under the leadership of the group leader Mr Walsh, assisted by Mr Smith and Mr Avis, nineteen Year 7 students 19 met in the Science Block for their induction. The boys organised themselves into patrols named after legendary birds: Falcon, Harrier, Hawk and Eagle.



Week One saw the patrols making cars out of 'wonky' fruit and vegetables that had to roll down a track. Discussions were had and designs submitted but it was Hawk patrol's simplistic 'parsnip body and carrot wheel' approach that came in first place.

Week Two again witnessed triumphant team building exercises wherein each patrol had to make a tower out of newspaper. However, this was also a task of restraint as whilst the tallest tower would win, it had to also support 500g of chocolate which would be awarded to the winning patrol. The Eagle patrol came out top with their non-tower shaped design and took home the prize.



Sadly with the recent breakout of Coronavirus, traditional Scout meetings have been suspended for the time being in school. However, Scouting very much goes on and we are now completing 'The Great Indoors', a series of activities for each patrol to complete at home to earn their badges. Samarth Suneesh has submitted a fantastic black and white uniform and Siddharth Deb Roy has allowed us to remember London's landmarks with vivid paintings.



As we move into our Summer term - and hopefully back onto school grounds, we have many riveting adventures ahead. A treasure hunt along Wallington High Street will see patrols tested on their riddle solving skills, a supermarket sweep will examine who can save the pennies, and a barbeque in Beddington Park will put their cooking skills to practice. As Scouts say, "Be prepared"!

**By Mr Walsh**



### Pastoral Ambassadors Mental Health Training by Noor Fatima

This training was highly beneficial and we gained valuable knowledge which can be used to assist ourselves as well as others. I was able to understand various aspects, types of mental health and its impacts on individuals and the society holistically. I gained the skills and confidence necessary to support someone with mental health issues. We studied the symptoms and types mental health in great depth. Before attending this training I used to associate mental health with solely negative thoughts and an unstable state of mind. But now I know that it's also about a state of well being and one's ability to function at an adequate level. Just like physical illnesses require treatment so does our mind.

Moreover, another thing that particularly shocked me were the statistics. I would have never thought that mental health was such a massive issue, it can affect society economically and socially to a great extent. 1 in 3 will experience mental health at some point of their life. Accordingly it's a very serious issue and requires immediate attention. Most significantly though people struggle to ask for help, this might lead to dire consequences such as suicide in the worst case scenario. Unfortunately suicide rates especially in teenagers are rising.

We can utilise the skills gained through this training in a wise manner to prevent that from happening, in the wider community and our school which consists of teenagers from various backgrounds with different perceptions of mental health. We aim to resolve any dilemmas that exist around mental health and offer as much help as possible. To accomplish our goal we as pastoral ambassadors have planned on starting a club and society, its main purpose will be to offer help to anyone struggling with mental health. Grades, achievements everything aside, mental health comes first. Because lives matter.

#### 'A play for all the family'

by Henry Milne, Year 11

In February 2020, the drama classes in year 10 and 11 went to see the lively comedy named 'A Comedy About a Bank Robbery' at the Criterion theatre. A delightful blend of comedy and action makes this play an entertaining marvel of a performance.

Set in 1958 we follow the story of an escapee from jail who attempts to organise the biggest heist of the 20th century. From slapstick humour to musical numbers sung live by the amazing cast, everyone in any family is sure to burst into a standing ovation by the end of this magnificent performance.

Sean Carey, playing main character Sam, captures the perfect comedic acting and timing and combined with the witty writing and excellent timing from the other cast members, he leads the play to be a stunning watch. Furthermore, the stunning vocals of Ashley Tucker as Sam's mother enhance some of the wild and wonderful scenes with complex and innovative props and ideas

With amazing actors and fantastic lighting, it is a spectacle to behold and, in my opinion, is one of the greatest comedies produced in this day and age. Sticking to their humorous style, Mischief theatre company has made another comedy for the history books.



#### The Institute of Cancer Research

When we received an email from the Institute of Cancer Research inviting us to bring ten six-form students to their research labs; it was an offer we could not refuse! Setting off on a Wednesday afternoon; Mr Walsh took our lucky students up to Victoria and a walk through Chelsea to their labs near South Kensington.

Students were met by PhD students and given a talk on various career paths in Science, Research and Development. It was the hands-on learning that the students enjoyed the most; students were able to assist first hand with genetic testing on fruit flies, extract DNA from strawberries and observe how a vaccine can be produced and tweaked (all things considered!) quickly.

The evening finished with a Q+A and networking with leading Universities and employers in the field. Feedback was very positive and it is something we wish to do again!



### **Love by Bel Stublely**

How desperately I want you to look into the mirror and see what I see.

The absolute perfection in the light behind your eyes  
That seem to be blinded by loathing and doubt.  
Your determination to see beauty and goodness in a world crumbling to pieces  
Even when that world is yours.  
Little kindnesses that define you in the sea of ordinary  
You would brush away with a smile.

I suppose these are things that you cannot see.  
Perhaps you are too close to realise the effect  
On someone like me, who could never tell you all these things with words.  
Instead, I'll see if you made it home safely, I'll ask how your day was,  
or send you a song that makes me think of you.

Maybe one day, somehow, you might just understand  
The feeling of the weight of worlds being lifted off my shoulders  
Knowing someone like you.

### **Author Visit**

We had the pleasure of welcoming best-selling author of the Summoner series, Taran Matharu, to the school in January. Taran enthralled Year 7/8 boys with his journey to becoming a writer and also fired up their imagination in creative writing workshops, demonstrating how to develop their own story. Taran's titles were already among the most popular library loans and some fans, like Chukwuemelie Eze, couldn't resist the temptation to buy copies of all the Summoner books!



Taran Matharu addressing Year 7 and 8



### **WCGS Essay Writing Competition by Mrs Bryan**

In January, the library's school essay writing competition received a flood of high quality entries from budding scribes in every year group, making an unenviable task for judges having to decide on a final four.

**The winners were,**

**Yusef Haque (7MA), Thomas Roselt (7CA) Syed Ali (10G) and Jamali Blair (L6MA)**

who all received a £15 Amazon gift voucher.

**LIFE IN THE SCHOOL 70 YEARS AGO**

(September 1949 to July 1950)

A long period of drought had not ended when the staff and boys returned in September after the summer holidays. Training for the inter-house sports took place under ideal conditions. However, the grass on the school field was pitifully thin and had barely managed to survive the struggle against the weeds. By contrast the heavy rains of late autumn had made the rugby pitches waterlogged and they had to be used with care. The school building had been redecorated in the latter part of the holidays and all was now spic and span and the envy of visiting schools.

During the spring term the ruins of the old woodwork room and the chemistry lab were cleared away, new drains laid and about 300 tons of soil excavated to make room for the new coke store. Brickwork for the new wing (which was to contain a bigger chemistry lab, two form rooms, the Headmaster's study, secretary's office and entrance hall) had begun to rise slowly around the boiler chimney, the only part of the old wing above ground not to be demolished. The bricklayers had to leave out one brick in the construction to ensure that the nest of returning water-wagtails was not disturbed.

Snow fell on the first two days of the summer term, at a time when there was no heating due to the rebuilding operations. A few weeks' later boys were seeking permission to remove their blazers owing to the heat. It was hoped that, once rebuilding had been completed, ceramics would take its place in the art and craft work of the school and, to this end, a gas kiln weighing three quarters of a ton arrived before the end of term. With some difficulty it was delivered through the roof of the workshop. The adjacent hut had been earmarked for woodwork.

*This is a further extract from 'Wallington County Grammar School – The First Fifty Years'*

*Copies of the book can be ordered from the author at [bnicholls74@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bnicholls74@hotmail.co.uk)*

**LSE Juniors 2020 Debate**

On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January, Miss Boland and Mr Beadle took eight students from years 7-10 to compete in the prestigious LSE Juniors 2020 debate. The boys faced three gruelling rounds, in which they weighed up the merits of allowing parents to withdraw their children from selected subjects, contemplated the future of nuclear power, and #imagined a world in which Oscar awards were gender-neutral.

Despite almost all students being complete novices, more than one of our teams managed to place first in at least one of their rounds. Please congratulate the following students, as we feel very hopeful about their future debating endeavours:

**Safwan Hasan (Y7)**

**John Stokes (Y7)**

**Riley Jein (Y7)**

**Henry Merivale (Y7)**

**Ibrahim Ali (Y8)**

**Maximus Meade (Y9)**

**Max Husaini (Y10)**

**Ken Tu (Y10)**



**House Art 2020 – Gender**

*By Mrs Donald*

Despite adversities, the House Art competition went ahead in March. Both WCGS students and staff allowed creativity to flow and were able to produce some amazing outcomes for this year's theme of Gender. Thank you to everyone who made a submission.

The judges had a difficult task and the results are as follows:

**1st Carew**

**2nd Mandeville**

**3rd Ruskin**

**4th Woodcote**

**5th Bridges**

**6th Radcliffe**

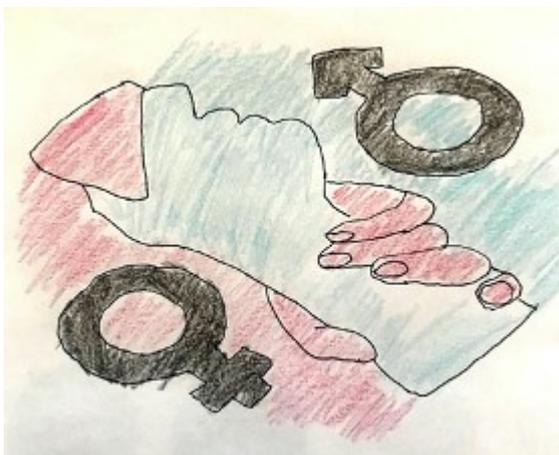
**Special recognition goes to the following students:**



Krish—8CA



Reuel — 9CA



Luis—10CA



Noah—8MA



James—9MA



Tom—L6CA



Zarish—L6RU



Salmana—U6RU



Aafrin—L6WO



Ivie—L6WO



## My Thoughts on the Interpreting Workshop

By Rendani Ranwashe

On Wednesday January 29th 2020, all sixth form Spanish students had the pleasure of attending an exclusive workshop on Spanish Interpreting, run by Nuria Llanderas. Nuria is a very talented, experienced interpreter who has provided her services at many important conferences and events. She has interpreted for some famous faces in Parliament and even Cristiano Ronaldo!

It was brilliant. We started off with an introduction and Nuria showed us an impressive demo of two different types of interpreting: simultaneous and consecutive. One thing that really fascinated me was her note-taking system for the consecutive interpretation. What may have seemed to any other person a series of incoherent symbols and letters, was in fact an extremely effective and efficient way to remember the general sense of what she needed to translate. The simultaneous interpretation was rather entertaining to watch. As Nuria jokingly commented herself, it really requires that you disregard the typical etiquette of waiting for other to finish speaking before you start. Yes, it feels awkward and uncomfortable at first - a bit like you're having an argument; you'll read later that she had us try it - but it's absolutely vital, since you need to keep up with the speaker.

I've had an interest in interpreting for a few years now, and the workshop cleared up a few misconceptions that I had, for example that translating and interpreting are similar.

[Cue interpreters, laughing in the distance]

They're not.

After this, we had the pleasure of actually watching Nuria live in action, for none other than Theresa May. For me, although I already knew what the importance of having an interpreter was, it triggered an emotional understanding of just how key effective communication is when you have two people who cannot speak the same language. Nuria's role was of great importance. How she chose to relay her message would affect how it was interpreted by both parties and thus, how they would respond. I realised very quickly that interpreting is an art, one which requires the utmost trust of both parties.

To conclude our session, Nuria had us try some of the exercises ourselves. We tried out consecutive translation in pairs, one in English and one in Spanish. Our first exercise involved listening to a pretty long story that Nadia told us and then relaying it in Spanish. It was quite...chaotic, to say the least.

Nonetheless, after switching to English, a lot of us regained our footing and it became somewhat easier. We were given more exercises to interpret - I particularly remember listening to an audio about women who love shopping, and another about dogs - and you could really hear the general sense of improvement from each pair. Although I think it's fair to say that we weren't quite yet good enough to be working in Parliament, it did get our brains going and I can confidently guarantee that every student thoroughly enjoyed it.

Since that day, I've been watching videos of real interpreters at work and having a greater think about whether it's something I would seriously consider doing in the future. The workshop was extremely fun and insightful, and Nuria, our presenter, was lovely. My one complaint? I wish it could have been longer.



## Year 8 Employer Event

On Friday 13th March, six employers were scheduled to come into school to share insights into their current job and career journey with our Year 8 students who were in the midst of considering their option choices. Two of our employers were unable to attend, one due to the evolving situation with Coronavirus which was already impacting her work quite significantly at the Institute of Cancer Research, she wrote to our students,

*'I am sorry not to be there today...one of the main parts of my job is overseeing the safety reporting in our clinical trials. Ensuring the safety of patients participating in research is the number one priority, and it is very tightly regulated in law. We are having to make a number of changes to how we work to make sure we can carry on with this reporting and it is keeping me very busy this week. Our regulator issued new guidance yesterday, and unfortunately I need to be in the office today to help implement it.'*

**Note:** Year 8 students, I have uploaded the rest of the information Lisa shared about her job role as a notification onto SMHW, please have a look if you have not done so already, as it is very interesting.

However, we were fortunate to be joined by an engineer working for Skanska, a senior policy adviser for The Royal Society, a Chief Investment Officer for TfL pension fund and a Project Manager working on HS2. Students listened to their talks and after break we held a mini careers fair during which students were able to go around to individual employers (including some teachers who gamely stepped in), in order to ask further questions. Students gained valuable insights into the world of work and heard useful advice including the fact that things do not always go to plan and all jobs have their pros and cons. Huge thanks to all the employers who were able to attend, despite the evolving situation with Coronavirus.



## Remote Clubs & Societies by Mr Barwick

**Week 1** saw 13 clubs running remotely, a real mixture of staff and student led clubs and some great work,

- Photography Society
- Touch typing
- Dr Who Society
- Pygames Society
- LGBTQ+
- Taskmaster society
- Warhammer Society
- Space Exploration Society
- Rubik's Cube Society
- Brass Ensemble
- Computer Science Society
- Scouts - The Great Indoors Programme
- Star Wars Society



**William Howe's Battle set in the Death and Order realm for Warhammer Society**



**Dinesh Raja's brilliant stop motion animation to win first challenge in Mr Garrod's taskmaster society - 'Throw a piece of paper into a bin'**



**Oscar Sims' has done a fantastic job of running the Space Exploration Society, with great discussions through Google Classroom and Hangouts**

**Week 2** has seen 8 additional clubs and societies started up, again a real mixture of staff and student run societies.

- WCSG Debate Team
- Cooking Club
- Music Society
- U12 Cricket
- Logic Puzzle Society
- Politics Society
- Junior Hutchins Society
- African Caribbean Society



**Mark Hanly and Siddharth Deb Roy's chocolate brownies in Cooking Club**



Other highlights include,  
**Divij Dhingra's spin and catch practice in the garden for U12 Cricket!**

**William Frost's AMAZING piano covers for Music society.**

**Bruno Taiga Zanchi winning this week's competition in Warhammer Society**



### Oliver! the School Musical 2020 by Will Frost, Year 8

In March 2020, the school production of Oliver took place in the main hall. The experience as a whole was amazing and I will never forget it.

The auditions began on Thursday, the third of October, after school, and from then on actors were picked and rehearsals began. In each rehearsal from October, right up until March, I got to know many people from my year, as well as from higher and lower year groups and found it really fun and enjoyable working with them. Rehearsing, I could say, took a lot of effort and time from teachers and actors, and in the end, it all paid off when we got to perform two shows - one to year seven, and another for year eight.

Unfortunately, all our evening performances were cancelled due to the virus, but it was brilliant that a professional photographer and videographer recorded the show and gave us memories to keep such a wonderful experience. I'd just like to thank everyone who took part in this, especially huge thank you to Mrs Hackett, Mrs King, Mr Rhodes-Brandon and Mrs Martin for organising it from start to finish and I will never forget that feeling I had when performing and after the show.



Reminder, our school production of Oliver! that took place just before school closed is now available to buy on DVD and USB. We were really lucky to get a last-minute videographer in to film the show professionally and it is now ready for distribution. It looks fantastic!

These will be available to purchase on ParentPay for two weeks at the following prices:

- DVD's: £12.30
- USB's: £16.40

### ANS Youth Art Exhibition

By Mrs Donald

The Youth Art Exhibition is an annual event and is a celebration of arts and crafts from Sutton's Secondary Schools. Arts Network Sutton is a registered charity and organise events with the hope of engaging local residents in culture and art within the Borough. By bringing together local artists and creatives they aim to promote a rich local arts scene.

WCCGS are fortunate to have some very talented artists within our cohort. Eleven such students had an opportunity to showcase their work in the Exhibition, which opened on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Unfortunately, the Exhibition was removed after only two days following Government advice on the Coronavirus.

**Congratulations to all artists who exhibited.**





**Under the Arms of the Trees**  
*by Bel Stubleley*

The trees are anchors in time,  
Peacefully sculpting the horizon  
With their stories.

Bearing scars of loving remembrance,  
Immortalising a forgotten history  
in the fleeting glance of a stranger like me,

Keeping the secrets of sinners  
Murmured with a dying breath  
and tears and deceitful smiles.

They bring life, sustained by celestial light  
And whispers of old souls,  
now succumbed to sleep.

The etchings of hidden lifetimes remain  
protected by those who take shelter  
Under the arms of the trees.

We remember their stories.