

## George Singer & Coundon Court, Coventry

On Sunday 29th April 2007 four WIAS members took advantage of the kind invitation from the Kenilworth Society to take part in a conducted tour of Coundon Court, now the administrative centre of Coundon Court School - a Specialist Technology College. Our enthusiastic guide was Richard Hoare, a former teacher at the school for over 30 years.

The three storey house of red brick with some stonework incorporated was built in 1891 for the cycle, motor engineer and entrepreneur George Singer. He died there in 1901. Designed by Charles Gray-Hill, the Court is externally rather severe but the interior is heavily decorated in an imposing style, with much elaborate woodwork. The keen-eyed spotted evidence of under floor heating in the form of circular brass plates which could be simply moved to an open or closed position. The mature grounds provide a fine setting for the main facade of this late Victorian building which has stood up to the obvious heavy demand of wartime service as a maternity home, and then as a busy school, with many of its features remarkably intact.

In its heyday the estate comprised of over 50 acres complete with 3 cottages, stabling for 7 horses and an impressive lodge at the gated entrance called Holly Lodge which remains. It is believed that a Monastery once occupied the same site.

Richard A Storey



George Singer as Mayor of Coventry in 1901 and early shots of the house with the Singer family on the terrace. © R. Hoare

