

Winifred “Winnie” Lakin (1907- 2002)

Coventry Councillor, Mayor, and election agent (Labour Party)

Winifred Eva Lakin was born in Wrexham in 1907 and settled in Coventry with her husband Harry in 1930.

Winnie always described herself as a ‘true socialist’. In the early years of her career, she was an agent for Richard Crossman MP; in the ‘Richard Crossman Diaries’ he described her as an ‘astute businesswoman and a forthright politician’.

In 1955 Winnie became a Labour councillor for Upper Stoke Ward and could be seen travelling around Coventry on her Lambretta scooter. She served on Coventry City Council until 1967. In 1972 she was again elected and represented Longford Ward until 1988. She served as Lord Mayor in 1986-87 – this was also the year when Coventry won the FA cup, and Winnie thought it her best year!

She was a member of many committees and was governor of several schools. In 1988 she was awarded an honorary degree from the University of Warwick.

Winifred Lakin will be remembered for:

- Her dedication to Coventry and its citizens throughout her life in Coventry.
- Her down-to-earth attitude and constant readiness to do battle to help others.
- Her tremendous hands-on voluntary work for the people of Coventry.

She was tireless in her commitment to marriage guidance counselling, the Peace Movement, and the Soroptimists. She was the prime mover in the foundation of ‘The Haven’, a refuge for battered women. Coventry Soroptimists still support this charity today.

A life-long socialist, Winnie Laker is assured of a place in history because of her great service to the City of Coventry. She was a great lady who was not afraid to speak her mind and make sure things got done.

Acknowledgements

With kind permission from the present writers of **The Women's Research Group** and acknowledgements to previous writers of the group:

Lynn Hockton, Janet Jonas, Janet Done, Margaret Hobley, Surinder Madan, Dorothy Parker, Ann Whitehouse, Edna Moore, Tamar Edwards, June Hill, Joan Gloyns, Cathy Hunt (Group Co-ordinator), Jean Appleton, Angela Atkin, Christine Bromley, Ann Waugh, Elizabeth Draper

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