

Patrons: Rt Hon the Lord Woolf, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Anita Roddick, Lord Stone of Blackheath, Tim Newell, Emma Thompson, Jilly Forster, Simon Fanshawe,

The **forgiveness** project

February 2005

Issue: No. 3

Dear Everyone

Welcome to our third newsletter.

Since I last wrote I have been to South Africa to open "The F Word" exhibition in Johannesburg; to America to collect more stories for a future American tour; and to Northern Ireland to speak at a Restorative Justice conference. As you can see the level of interest in this project continues to grow – which is extremely gratifying as well as, at times, being overwhelming!

PRISON PROGRAMME

The first stage of our pilot prison programme is now complete thanks to sponsorship from The Allen Lane Foundation. Working in partnership with John Podmore, governor of HMP Brixton, and Kate Quigley, special projects coordinator, we have developed an innovative programme exploring issues around forgiveness and rehabilitation.

Initially a three stage programme (1. exhibition 2. Q&A with panel of F Word participants 3. two-day Healing of Memories workshop*) had been envisaged. However, due to feedback from staff and prisoners, we completed our programme at Brixton with a fourth stage - a 2-day Restorative Justice workshop led by Alistair Little and Deborah Watters from the Alternatives restorative justice programme in Belfast. We are also in discussion with Brixton about how to put this preliminary work on a sustainable long-term footing by training up (ex)-prisoners as facilitators and working in the community with families, thereby creating a transformational self-help programme which can lead to effective social reintegration .

We are about to enter the second phase of the pilot at HMP Bullingdon near Oxford which will repeat our four stage programme, with a launch on Monday 7th March at 2.30 pm.

***The Healing of Memories workshop was developed by Fr Michael Lapsley from The Institute for the Healing of Memories, South Africa (www.healingofmemories.co.za)**

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

We have continued to take the exhibition into schools. Salimata Badji-Knight delivered a successful seminar at Purbeck College, Dorset, while Camilla Carr and Alistair Little spoke to sixth formers at Tonbridge School. The Senior Master at Tonbridge wrote: "The presentation was brilliant - moving, sometimes devastating emotionally, and thought-provoking throughout. The boys were absolutely 'there' with it. Most comments have been along the lines that this was the most powerful and compelling seminar session this academic year."

STORY COLLECTION

Thanks to sponsorship from Anita Roddick I travelled with "F Word" photographer Brian Moody to the US in February to collect additional stories as a prelude to a significant tour in the States. We are lucky to be working with the American-based organisation, The POP who are helping us to raise the necessary funding, formulate a tour and execute our vision.

TOURING EXHIBITION

On Dec 16th to mark South Africa's National Reconciliation Day "The F Word" launched at Constitution Hill, Johannesburg. The event was organised by Khulumani and Fr Michael Lapsley gave the keynote address.

In Holland 'The F Word' continues to be on display at unions related to Women For Peace or to the Museum of Peace and Anti-Violence.

On the 5th March 'The F Word' launches at The Glencree Centre for Reconciliation in Ireland.

Separate to our prison programme, this March the exhibition plus a panel discussion will be held at HMP Wayland, followed by a similar event at HMP Holloway women's prison in April.

UK F WORD TOUR DATES

- Romsey Mill Trust, Hemingford Road, Cambridge, CB1 3BZ
Thurs 10 Mar - 7pm - 12th,13th,14th Mar - 10.30-5.00
Tel: 01223-566091 www.romseymill.org.uk

- The Mill Bridge Rooms in Hertford, Hertfordshire. 21st-28th
March 2005; Tel: 01992 582951.

- St John, Lord Mayor's Walk, York, YO31 7EX
Opening Tuesday 3 May (evening) 2005
4 May – Sunday 15 May 2005 (9am – 5pm) Tel: 01904 624624

FUNDING NEWS

At the end of last year I was delighted to learn that I had received a level 2 award of £15,000 from the UnLtd Millennium Awards Scheme. Having worked in a voluntary capacity pretty much full time for most of last year, this was an extremely welcome end of year reward.

Thanks also to CIT - a small charitable trust that supports the initiation of new work - for allocating TFP a grant of £10,000; and to the Body Shop Foundation for giving us £12,000 towards story collecting.

OTHER NEWS

- In November the second Healing of Memories in the community (funded by The Funding Network) took place at Charney Manor House.

- During November and January Alistair Little was invited to talk on behalf of TFP at The Jewish Film Festival in London, Belfast and Glasgow. He also spoke to Glasgow A'level students at an event organised by Sense Over Sectarianism.

- In November TFP was invited to mount 'The F Word' exhibition and speak at a conference in Belfast called "Restorative Justice: The Next Decade".

- Also in November we had a presence at two legal conferences- CLSA and SAHCA – with the view to attracting support from the legal profession. Our goal is to raise £100,000 a year to provide a solid foundation for our prison programme. This could be achieved by getting 200 legal practices, or sets of chambers, to provide £125 a quarter for the three-year period.

- In January the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in St John's Wood, London, mounted the exhibition. The launch was opened by Carol Buck MP and on the 26th Jan, to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, a panel discussion. chaired by TFP patron Simon Fanshawe, was held at the Synagogue. The panellists were: Jo Berry, Alistair Little, Mary Kayitesi Blewitt, Director of SURF, the Rwandan Survivors' Fund, (whose story can now be read on our website), alongside Helen Bamber (founder and former director of the Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture).
- We would like to thank one of our funders, Kevin McGrath from The McGrath Charitable Trust, who had the inspiration to suggest and make possible the display of TFP promotional materials at the QPR football stadium and in the club's programme. And many thanks also to Intelligent Print Solutions of Tonbridge, in particular to Managing Director Andrew Balcombe, for printing our third consignment of catalogues for us. This kind of support is greatly appreciated.

FINAL NOTE

With the first anniversary of The Forgiveness Project, came the very sad news of the sudden and untimely death of Brian Wall. Brian designed all TFP's logos, letterheads and exhibition boards. He will be greatly missed.

With best wishes

Marina Cantacuzino

www.theforgivenessproject.com

If you would like to donate to The Forgiveness Project, please send a cheque to The Forgiveness Project, 34 Summerfield Avenue, London NW6 6JY, or email info@theforgivenessproject.com

Thanks to our funders: The Allen Lane Foundation, Anita Roddick Books, The Body Shop Foundation, CIT, Clicks (South Africa), The Findhorn Foundation, The Forster Company, The Funding Network, Manny Cussins Foundation, McGrath Charitable Trust, Passion Pictures, UnLtd Millennium Awards Scheme.