

October 2007 Issue: No. 7

Dear Friends.

REMEMBERING OUR PATRON ANITA RODDICK

Many of us who have been connected with The Forgiveness Project from its inception four years ago were deeply shocked and saddened to hear of the sudden death of Anita Roddick



Anita meeting Archbishop Desmond Tutu at The F Word launch in January 2004 at the Oxo Gallery, London.

It is almost certainly true to say that without Anita The Forgiveness Project would not exist. In 2003, I began collecting stories of forgiveness as a personal response to the growing thirst for revenge in the build up to the invasion of Iraq. When I showed Anita the raw material she was so moved by the stories that she offered to fund the printing, production and launch of what then became The F Word – an exhibition she described as 'truly an education of the human spirit'.

EVENTS

In February and October we took part and supported events involving young people from the Middle East, Indonesia, America and London with Encompass – an organisation which promotes understanding between people of different cultural backgrounds.

To commemorate the second anniversary of the London bombings, on July 4th we held an open discussion in association with St Ethelburgas Centre for Reconciliation and Peace. Gill Hicks and the Rev. Julie Nicholson – whose lives were forever changed by the terrorist attacks – discussed in front of an audience of 65 people whether forgiveness can ever stop the cycle of violence. Musicians, Hugh Burns and Andy Kane, performed 'Roses' – a beautiful interpretation of the Irish ballad about the futility of revenge.

We also took part in the annual One World conference at Littlehampton Secondary school; in the Annual Justice and Peace Conference; and in October The F Word exhibition was used to enhance the NAPO annual conference and took part in St Wilfrid's Catholic School Ethics Conference.

PROMOTIONAL DVD

We have made a short film which currently can be viewed on YouTube via our website. It gives an authentic flavour of the work. In its first month it has received 450 viewings and the number is rising daily.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLozrICkisE

THE F WORD EXHIBITION

During the past three years we have been collecting a body of new and powerful stories from America, South Africa and the UK, many of these stories now comprise our second F Word Exhibition which launched at The Greenbelt Festival this August. This exhibition is free-standing and available for hire.



The F Word at the Greenbelt Festival

This November The F Word exhibition will for the first time be in Scotland. Ginn Fourie and Letlapa Mphahlele have been invited to tell their stories in person. To find out more visit: www.crieffadventist.org.uk/fp

MEDIA

In May we were fortunate to be featured on the Oprah Show in the US. Gill Hicks flew from London to be interviewed and Oprah spoke enthusiastically about the project and linked her website with ours. The programme prompted over a hundred people to email us with their stories. Many emails pointed to the power of the on-line testimonies.

Articles about the project also appeared in the Saudi Magazine Viva, the German magazine, Geo and on the Storyteller and Listener Online – a non-commercial essay-based blog that affirms those who use story and narrative in their work for purposes of peace-building.

NEW STORIES

A recent story posted on the website is a powerful illustration of the healing nature of Restorative Justice. Anne Marie Hagan's story tells of her journey from hatred to understanding having witnessed her father's brutal murder. Read more -http://www.theforgivenessproject.com/stories/annemariehagan

Another powerful new story of that of Richard McCann. Richard's mother was the first victim of Peter Sutcliffe and Richard has worked with TFP in three UK prisons in the past six months, sharing his story and helping prisoners take responsibility for their lives.



Read Richard's story:

http://www.theforgivenessproject.com/stories/richard-mccann

PRISONS

We are currently piloting our improved prison programme at HMP High Down. The first day at High Down in Sutton received overwhelming support from prisoners and the prison governor who has invited us back in November for three days. We will also be working in the Open Prison, Blantyre House, in December. In June we were invited to the therapeutic prison, Grendon Underwood, where we worked with a group of lifers.

We are currently in the process of securing accreditation for our workshops in conjunction with the Open College Network whose stated purpose is to widen opportunity for disadvantaged or non-participating individuals, disenfranchised from traditional qualifications.

USA

In America the F Word exhibition has been part of an exciting series of events and seminars in Massachusetts and in the White Plains area of New York during the months of September and October.

SOUTH AFRICA

The F Word has continued to be touring with the highly acclaimed play, 'Truth in Translation', about South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The exhibition – recently accompanying the tour in the US and soon to be in Ireland - has given audiences an opportunity to explore many of the themes and issues raised in the play.



On 04 October The Forgiveness Project went on show at a gala event celebrating South African innovation heroes. The 2007 iHero Awards attracted VIPs, members of the media and celebrities to a glittering ceremony which featured a broadcast from business legend and philanthropist Richard Branson, and a live satellite link to lateral thinking giant Dr Edward de Bono in London.

TRUSTEES

On the 11th of November in London we are planning to interview anyone interested in becoming a trustee of The Forgiveness Project. Skills we are particularly looking for are finance, fund-raising and voluntary sector management and governance. See our advert in 3rd Sector:

http://jobs.thirdsector.co.uk/jobs/jobDetails/313404/board-trustees

FUNDING

As always, The Forgiveness Project relies on the generosity its donors to continue operating. If you would like to contribute -- it's easy. Just go to our website and click on 'donate online'.

Many thanks to our funders – including The Kevin McGrath Charitable Fund, The Forster Company, Rank Foundation, 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust.

It was great news that Camilla Carr's 'Pause For Thought' about forgiveness won a Jerusalem award in the 'Shorts' category for the best radio broadcasting with Christian content in the UK. The prize money was split between Camilla and The Forgiveness Project.

Lastly, our sincere thanks to Phyllis Rodriguez who generously donated a significant proportion of her Quadriga prize money to The Forgiveness Project. Die Quadriga award is Europe's first prize to honour individuals for their contribution to the promotion of democracy, freedom and peace.

Best wishes

Marina Cantacuzino
Director
www.theforgivenessproject.com