

THANKS TO OUR BENEFACTORS

Our newsletter would have little to report without the generous approval of our supporters! To all our Friends, Volunteers and the following, please accept our heartfelt thanks:

- The Valentine Trust
- The Tudor Trust
- Anton Jurgens Charitable Trust
- Prison Technology Services
- St Michael's PCC, Pen Selwood
- Graham Cole
- The Hilden Charitable Fund
- Henry C Hoare Charitable Trust
- Waitrose Community Fund
- The Worshipful Company of Weavers
- St Georges Church, Bourton
- Supporters who have independently organised talks on our behalf.
- The kind ladies of the Mothers Union and our Rota volunteers on visiting days.
- Christine Willis for her time creating our professionally graphic newsletters.



Charity No. 1104063

Supporting
HMP Guys Marsh

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MP does Time in the Jailhouse



MP Robert Walter talked to the men about their work and future prospects during his recent visit to the Jailhouse Café.

Breaking News – FOGM is funding weekend Play Worker for Visits

Music therapy for beginners

This course ran all year for men with an interest in making music but no previous experience and was made possible by generous funding from the Anton Jurgens Charitable Trust. Tutor, Ann Hinchliffe, proved successful in helping many men to cope with their incarceration.

They attended the workshops to learn the basic skills of guitar, keyboard, percussion or voice work. With a new interest to focus on, learning a new skill and gaining the ability to interact as a group co-operatively, the course had many benefits; some of these

benefits quickly apparent and others developing over time.

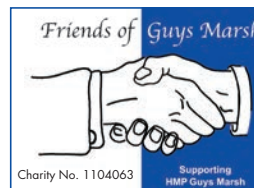
During the year students of these workshops performed to small internal audiences and at the Christmas Carol Service they accompanied the singing before an invited congregation. ■

News for Friends

Newsletter of the

Friends of Guys Marsh

No 10 – Spring 2013



Charity No. 1104063

Supporting
HMP Guys Marsh

Welcome to our 2013 Newsletter



Unbelievably I am coming to the end of my fifth year as Chairman of Friends of Guys Marsh. During that time we, as a committee, have seen many changes at 'our' jail but I am pleased to lead such a dedicated team, supported by our President Fay Weldon, keen to assist the Governor to 'break the cycle of reoffending'. The main object of our charity is "To promote and support the rehabilitation and resettlement of prisoners who are or have previously been prisoners of Guys Marsh Prison". Every decision we make has to fit with that objective. I'm sure that, as you read through our Newsletter for 2013, you will agree that we have managed to finance some very rewarding projects and we thank you all for your support, either financial or your time as a volunteer.

The most exciting new project is, of course, the Jailhouse Café where prisoners, who are out on daily licence and thoroughly risk assessed, work. Currently we are only open two days a week, but please accept this as an invitation to come along on a Tuesday or a Wednesday, from 10 am to 2 pm, to enjoy a light lunch and delicious home-made cakes. Our aim is to be

open five days a week very soon. The men working in the Café gain

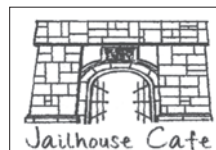
confidence in dealing with the public, as well as achieving their NVQ qualifications in catering and front-of-house duties. We are sure that this will increase their chance of meaningful employment on their release. We are extremely fortunate to have Mat Follas, the MasterChef winner in 2009, as a member of the Board of Directors of Expia Community Interest Company, which is the umbrella organisation overseeing the Jailhouse Café, so you can be assured of the quality of the food served!

I hope you will find time to view our updated website (www.friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk) and I look forward to meeting you at one of our events soon.

Linda Cowley, Chairman



Governor Williams launching the Café



Make a date to come to our Jailhouse Café

Unlock your Potential

Well, here at the Friends we do try to unlock our potential! Our latest play, the Jailhouse Café, where offenders on license – fully risk assessed and trusted to work outside the prison walls and hopefully on their way to catering jobs outside – serve excellent meals at low prices. (The outside world can be quite a shock when you've been incarcerated for a long time. Best if the move from prison life to self-determination is gradual.) And the food at the Jailhouse Café is great: the vegetables come from the Guys Marsh home farm, and the cheerful flowers from its garden. We're keen horticulturists. All kinds of potential are thus unlocked. We expect the Jailhouse Café to break even financially, and if we are lucky, to help out funding other resettlement projects.

The Friends' main task is to keep open lines of communication between prisoners and their families. It's proved that the better we do this, the more likely we are to effect a break in the alarmingly frequent cycle between a prison sentence and re-offending.

Are we saying 'All you need is love?' – well yes, up to a point, m'lud. Hard work, self discipline, and dedication is also required. Do-gooding has to be more than 'love' if anyone's potential is to be unlocked.

We at the Friends also do what we do, of course, because we're just plain sorry for what the wives and children have to go through on a visit – as those of you've been watching the BBC serial Prisoners' Wives will understand.

Guys Marsh is a training prison and we are very conscious of this. A training in family life is

often needed, as well as more formal skills. But if you train, educate and inspire, if you keep the father, son, husband in constant touch with his loved ones (the tendency is always to de-humanise; yes, really, prisoners do have loved ones, as well as the bad and anti-social habits which deserve punishment and retribution) then prisoners are much less likely to stay on that path to self destruction which is so unwelcome in the outside community. If prisoners step off it, do better, we all profit.

The Friends support the families in looking after the visitors. We provide and staff the visitors' centre at Guys Marsh so that wives, partners and children don't have to stand in the rain outside the prison walls until their number is called, in a place often completely strange to them; we provide a bus service to the prison so they don't have to find an expensive taxi; we pay for an officer to co-ordinate all the many charity services who work within Guys Marsh. (Most important, this.) And so forth.

Guys Marsh, by the way, is named by Her Majesty's Prison Service as a High Priority Prolific Offender Centre of Excellence. We're proud of that 'excellence'. The whole prison, Friends included, try to live up to the title.

At the end of last year, our excellent governor, Duncan Burles, made a speech to the staff at the new Union Training Centre. He talked about the phrase 'unlocking the potential.'

'I love the phrase,' he said. 'I often say it to prisoners, and I truly believe that as a phrase it captures what the Prison Service is charged to do on behalf of the



public. But I also use the phrase in my own and my family life because I believe that continuing personal development is one of the single most important aspects of happiness and wellbeing.' The development of the training centre, he said, fitted very neatly with other work done over the past two years 'partly to help prisoners live law-abiding lives in custody and on release, and partly because such relationships enhance our lives and our standing within our community.

'Lifelong learning is alive and well, and of course there is evidence that the pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons not only enhances social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, but also competitiveness and employability. Learning can no longer be divided into a place and time to acquire knowledge (school) and a place and time to apply the knowledge acquired (the workplace).'

The Friends of Guys Marsh are well aware that for the prisoner life-long learning, 'unlocking the potential', is not a matter of choice, but an imperative. Prisoners must learn how to live peacefully in a prison environment, where they are of necessity kept secure. The prison authorities go great guns

Barnardo's Family Support Role at HMP Guys Marsh

It is three years since I joined HMP Guys Marsh, as a Barnardo's Play and Family Support Worker, based at the prison. During those three years my role changed somewhat, but it still essentially involves helping prisoners maintain ties with their families and offering prisoners' families support through what is often described for them as a 'Hidden Sentence.'

Nationally, research shows that unfortunately 43% of prisoners lose contact with their families during their sentence. However, the importance of maintaining those family links is highlighted by other research that shows that offenders who have family support are between two and six times less likely to reoffend. They are also more likely to find employment and housing on release.

My role at Guys Marsh was

initially heavily focused on running the Play Area during Family visit sessions and liaising with families, offering them support and advice out in the Visitors Centre. Over the last year the role has become strategic, this has included engaging with outside agencies, encouraging them to recognise the support needs of prisoners' families and sourcing funding for my previous Play Worker role which has now been achieved, thanks to the Friends of Guys Marsh. Running 'Family Days' has always been part of my role at Guys Marsh, and this is probably the part of the role that I have enjoyed the most. Up to 10 prisoners and their families are offered an opportunity to spend time together in a far more child focused way. Plenty of craft and play activities are available for the families to engage in together and dads can get up and move

around with their children (they are not normally able to do this in a normal Visits session). A simple lunch is also provided for the families to share together, this is funded by the Friends of Guys Marsh. Families really value this time together and it really helps to strengthen their family ties.

My role at Guys Marsh has now been taken on by my Barnardo's colleague Alison Cowley. Alison and I really value the support prisoners and their families are given by the Friends of Guys Marsh – providing the bus to transport visitors from Gillingham station to the prison; providing the visitors refreshment service; funding the new Play Worker role and providing the food for Family Visit days. We thank you!

Jackie Woon

NEW GIRL'S EARLY IMPRESSIONS OF FOGM

The first impression came even before meeting with the committee. I had met with Linda Cowley through her involvement in some of Sturminster Newton's social activities. Whatever it was, it was always successful, enjoyable and effective. Her invitation to do something useful for Guys Marsh intrigued me. It would be in a different context to all my previous voluntary work and that it had the possibility of being fun as well as constructive was a bonus.

I'm glad to say that it has developed pretty much as I had expected. I am now enthusiastic

and motivated. However, it was very difficult at the beginning as our meetings were held in a room that had appalling acoustics. I couldn't hear, therefore I couldn't understand, (so I became anxious), therefore I couldn't learn and I despaired of ever being able to 'get' what the committee was up to. I planned to give it one more meeting before resigning.

By general consensus, the following month we changed rooms and things had changed dramatically by the end of that next meeting; I could understand all the deliberations and clearly heard Toby Langton-Gilks tell us of

the fabulous support the prisoners were giving to the project he had initiated in memory of his brave son. Among other topics at subsequent meetings, people from The Forgiveness Project detailed their stunning work, particularly interesting for me as a psychologist; and I learnt about the Chris Donovan Trust and was glad to be able to vote in favour of supporting it.

I'm looking forward to my involvement in all FOGM's new initiatives.

*Leah Lowinger
Committee Member*

TRAINING the TRAINER

The criminal justice system as a whole is slowly introducing the practice of restorative justice (RJ) but training for it to be implemented nationally is only in the planning stages. However, here at Guys Marsh we are ahead of the game. Governor Garman, Head of Residential Services, approached our committee for support. Guys Marsh has one officer qualified to work as a facilitator in the RJ field and needed to attend a course to gain the further qualification which would enable him to train others. We unanimously agreed to cover the costs and are well assured of the value. The RJ method of resolving disputes in a calm and reasoned manner is now being encouraged throughout the prison; to achieve this as standard practice, staff have to

be properly trained.

Since completing the course the officer has already trained 20 staff to Level 1 which allows them to give local intervention in incidents such as drug use, adjudications and staff issues, and 14 staff to the higher Facilitator Level 2, enabling them to complete full conferences between victim and offender. Some of our committee attended one of the early training sessions and learnt the basic principles of resolving issues between two parties.

There have been noticeable improvements in attitudes of prisoners after engagement in this process and some successful conferences between victims in the community and their offenders have been held in the prison. These have resulted in the victims being able to put their stress behind them and move forward in

their lives, whilst the offender has owned up to and faced the reality of his crime with real remorse. The offenders have all stated that they will not offend again and we can only hope they can keep their resolve.

Further developments are the running of courses for other establishments enabling them to train facilitators, and linking with Dorset Probation so that RJ practice can follow on after release. Plans are also afoot to link with community projects and police initiatives.

The RJ Function Lead said *"I am extremely positive about the initial work coming out of our approach to Restorative Justice intervention. We could not have come this far in such a short space of time without the help of FOGM."* ■

developing the other skills that prepare prisoners for a return to the outside world – often including the very basic skills of reading, writing and social interaction – so that there should be no bar to unlocking their potential, even when in prison, even when, as for some of the prisoners, they are in their seventies. In the same way the Friends aim to develop family skills – so when the return to the family eventually occurs, it is a truly welcome event for all concerned.

If you are not already a member I do invite you to join us, to contribute your ideas and energy to what we are trying to do. You'd be most welcome! If you're not in a position to contribute these, you could always substitute money to help keep us going – always needed and always welcome too.

Fay Weldon C.B.E., President Friends of Guys Marsh

PORRIDGE TO CAVIAR

How one man gained inspiration from his sentence

The Managing Director of EMAP (Email a Prisoner) served 6 years under custody, all the while harbouring a revolutionary dream which changed his life and made the biggest advancement in prisoner communication since telephones were introduced into prisons some 30 years ago. Phone contact is often difficult, unsatisfactory and time limited, and the post is a slow method of communication; none of which helped families to stay united or solve urgent problems. Emailing was the obvious answer to Derek Jones but an unconceivable concept to anyone else.

For two years after his release he beavered away on the idea, working out secure ways to operate the system and contacting all the relevant authorities, battling on despite being ridiculed at the idea of prisoners accessing the email network. With his plan finalised he needed a prison to trial it and after sending out 136 letters, only HMP Guys Marsh responded favourably by inviting him to make a presentation. It obviously impressed Governor

Dave Quinnell who bravely decided to give it a chance, perceiving a realistic potential and, against general opinion, in 2006 email a prisoner took off.

EMAP is now operational in 95% of prisons under strictly secure provision; it has opened the lines of communication for over 150k users here and abroad; delivers 10,000's of emails per week; has become a vital tool in maintaining family ties and reducing re-offending.

From this Derek has developed and introduced further innovative communication technology into the prison system. He says 'I am indebted to all at Guys Marsh who have given the service, and me as an individual, an opportunity to change my life and turn from criminal to company director. We need more Guys Marshes, prepared to investigate alternatives.'

Derek has shown his deep appreciation to Guys Marsh by helping FOGM to fund restorative justice projects and has assured us of his continued support in the future. ■

All that Jazz for Guys

The liquor was legal, not bootleg, the setting was a barn not a speakeasy, and the profits went towards rehabilitation, not to racketeering, at 'Jazz for Guys', our main fundraising event for 2012, staged at the Tithe Barn, Hinton St Mary. Not only that, but the High Sheriff, the former High Sheriff and the Deputy Governor were present.

The Bell Street Jazz Band treated us to Dixieland and swing jazz delights from the '20s, and '30s, including some brilliant solos. Those who knew their jazz and loved to dance seized the chance during particular numbers. And if you weren't a particular fan of jazz before, the Bell Street Jazz Band had an irresistible way to win you over with their wit, pzazz and superb musicianship.

During the interval speeches, Alan Frost, past High Sheriff of Dorset, gave us fascinating insights into the history and role of High Sheriffs, originally the 'Shire Reeve' whose powers in the early medieval period covered tax collection as well as law enforcement. Deputy Governor, Dave Quinnell, told us about the



latest projects at HMP Guys Marsh and explained how effective prisoner rehabilitation is key to reducing re-offending with its high cost to the tax-payer.

The evening was enormously enjoyable and raised over £1,200. The trustees and committee of FOGM would like to thank Mr Anthony Pitt-Rivers for his kindness in allowing us to use the Tithe Barn for the occasion, our informative speakers and the Bell Street Jazz Band for making the event such a success. ■



Jute bags for sale in the Jailhouse Café along with mugs, Tee shirts, chutneys and puddings.



Come and sample the tempting delights in the Jailhouse Café, at present open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays 10 am to 2 pm, for coffees, teas, cold drinks, soups, baguettes, pasties, filled jacket potatoes and cakes. Opening hours will be increased as soon as possible and will be posted on our website.' www.friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk



Come Jive with us

WINDOW ON THE YEAR

Yet again a full agenda of activities kept us on our toes and made the year speed by. It had its uncertainties with the March announcement that the education contract for prisons in the south west was up for tender; this was awarded to Weston College who took over in August. With this came reduced funding, inevitably necessitating reductions in course provision, affecting us to a degree, uncertain where our input would be required or to what extent. By the end of December the new system had fallen satisfactorily into place; in the meantime we beavered on with the essentials.

Firstly, with Marcel in his third year and his ambitious plans only part way through, the bidding process began in earnest to secure his PERC's position after 2012. Eventually, in December, FOGM and North Dorset CAB in their joint partnership application, successfully gained two further years through the Tudor Trust for Marcel to complete his work. Joy all round!

As always our Saturday visitors' transport has ferried families and friends from Gillingham (with help from The Valentine Trust) whilst the refreshments rota welcomed visitors arriving on Fridays and Saturdays, thanks to the Mothers' Union and Friends. Family Days organised and run by the Barnardos Family Support Worker and staff, are much valued and we are always delighted to be able to contribute towards their success by supplying the craft materials for prisoners to engage



Committee's Presentation of December Award

actively with their children and partners. The Music for Beginners workshops have run continuously due to the Anton Jurgens Charitable Trust. We provided bricks for prisoners to learn building skills to help in the estate's garden landscaping project. Individual requests from prisoners have been answered often for materials for in-cell hobby work or course books for private study. Letters of thanks from grateful recipients are much appreciated; those being received after release often give us an insight into progress and achievements. With the ball on the other foot, the students in the higher level IT class help us by printing our newsletter.

The Forgiveness Project was delivered in May and December with record numbers completing the courses and responding ever more positively to its impact. A typical comment from one of the participants – "I'd just say 'think'. I like to think about my actions now. And just think about the wider picture, who, who else am I going to affect, 'cos I'm thinking 'yeah, I'm just going to affect myself.' No, you affect your community, most of all you affect your family." In January we had to search for more funds and are most grateful to The Worshipful Company of Weavers who have

granted us an award to cover courses for the next year.

At the request of the Head of Residential Services we paid for an officer to complete a course which qualified him to train staff throughout Guys Marsh in Restorative Justice practices. This is already reaping benefits in overall attitudes in the establishment.

Many readers will be aware of a song written and composed by Guys Marsh prisoners and produced as a single in appreciation and respect for their tutor, Toby Langton-Gilks, who lost his son to a long fought battle against brain cancer. The proceeds from downloading this single (Song for DD) go to 2 charities, HeadSmart and CLIC Sargent. This action highlighted the goodness and compassion Toby inspires in his students through his Urban Beat workshops. FOGM's input was called upon for the programme to continue in 2013, as the new education contract could no longer include it in its curriculum. We are acting as a bridge until July when generous private funding is stepping in to secure future provision. The workshops have proven invaluable as a way to engage with otherwise reluctant learners who then display good musical abilities, often leading to worthwhile progression in other

THE POWER OF MUSIC

Toby Langton-Gilks' Urban Beat Shop (UBS) music course was previously run under Education provision but when the new education contract started in August it no longer met the reduced criteria. This is when we were approached, and being aware that the workshops have always been in great demand, with a long waiting list to join, we agreed to support it for 6 months, giving Toby time to find a sponsor.

Toby is currently running two 3 hour sessions a week with groups of 3 to 6 men, who are coached and encouraged by him to develop their lyrical and musical skills. At the end of three sessions, each man receives an audio CD of their work to play on the wing, or send home to their families. Much of their output is both powerful and emotional and often conveys a sense of regret for what they have done in the past.

On the few occasions when men have put their UBS work in for Koestler awards, they have won prizes. One inmate even went on to secure a recording contract on his release, as a result of the work he took away from Toby's workshop. As a gesture of support to Toby and his family, when the men heard his son David (DD) was dying of Brain Cancer last summer, entirely on their own initiative, the men got together to write, perform and record a charity single, "Song for DD". It received national BBC television coverage and went to No. 11 in the independent Singles Chart! There can be no doubt as to the effectiveness of the UBS workshops.

We have ensured that the Toby's workshops will run until

VERNE VISIT... the Sequel... GUYS MARSH JAILHOUSE CAFÉ



Several months on from our Verne visit, with the full backing of our Governors, our FOGM committee and Di James' support, we have our own Jailhouse Café here at Guys Marsh, organised under Expia's company umbrella! It is on course to deliver those same benefits to our trainee prisoners and staff; to be a welcoming venue for our surrounding population of individuals; for clubs and societies to hold meetings, conferences or events.

At present it is open two

days a week, offering tempting morning and lunchtime choices for staff, visitors, Friends and invited guests. As soon as 'change of use' is granted the café will be able to advertise to the general public. Eventually it will be open all week providing full catering services, but first the kitchen has to be updated and expensive equipment bought. FOGM and the prison are working hard to raise the funds for this and eagerly await the day we can announce 'Full Service'! ■

the end of June. However, we are delighted to hear now that a new private backer has come forward

who will be supporting his work at HMP Guys Marsh for a further 3 years. ■



Steve Butler (Head of Catering) with his gastronomic kitchen team

WHY do we rate THE FORGIVENESS PROJECT so highly?

Regular readers of our newsletter will be familiar with The Forgiveness Project for which we have regularly raised funds for the programme to be delivered three or four times a year. You will also be aware of the potent effect on prisoners – the following story illustrates that better than we could ever relate.

PETER'S STORY

'I would not be where I am today if I had not done the Forgiveness Project in Guys Marsh'

My name is Peter Miles and I have spent at least half my life in prison in England and America. My last sentence was in England for seven and a half years.



I was arrested on January 14th in 2009. While in prison I spent time in Guys Marsh and had the chance to participate in the RESTORE programme run by The Forgiveness Project (TFP) and funded by Friends of Guys Marsh. This was a turning point in my life. Whilst in the programme we explored the word forgiveness and I had a chance to hear other people's life stories and I realised that they related to my own and it gave me a chance to see what it was like to stand in someone else's shoes. This had a profound effect on me and it was then that I knew that The Forgiveness Project was going to be that change that

I needed in my life. The founder of TFP, Marina Cantacuzino, was present when I shared my story. Afterwards she asked me if

I would be interested to become a speaker for the Forgiveness Project on release.

From this moment on I wrote to her every month for 2 years and once in open

prison I was able to call her every 2 weeks. I was released in April 2012 and since this time I have been working with the Forgiveness Project as a speaker and a mentor. I feel so privileged and honoured to be part of this programme. I returned to Guys Marsh in December 2012 but this time I was no longer a resident of HMP, I was a speaker of TFP. This felt unbelievable, as if it was a dream. People that I had served time with that were still in Guys Marsh said to me 'Pete I thought you weren't coming back?' and I told them 'I'm not back, I'm leaving at the end of the day'.

Today I am a speaker for TFP

and also a mentor, mentoring men in Guys Marsh and other prisons.

Alongside this I am setting up my own company called 'Inside Out Half Way House' www.insideouthalfwayhouse.co.uk. This is a safe house for older men and women coming out of prison and I plan to get a property and open my doors this May. I set this company up as I believe men and women need a safe place to come out to, where people understand them, don't judge them and a place they can call home. When I came out I had a few people that helped me and I would like to give other men and women the chance that I had.

I believe that my journey that I am on has only been possible because of the Forgiveness Project and the funding from the Friends of Guys Marsh. I feel very proud of where I am at today but most of all I feel proud of me.

I have now heard that Friends of Guys Marsh have just secured further funding to allow the continuation of the RESTORE programme in Guys Marsh.

Peter Miles

A GASTRONOMIC JOURNEY!

I was privileged to be invited to lunch in the prison kitchens recently – and it was delicious. Stephen Butler, Head of Catering, periodically organises lunches in the NVQ classroom, which becomes a dining room for the day. Prisoners studying for NVQ 2 certificates in catering prepare the food for the guests, under the watchful eye of Head Chef, Felix Durrant. On this occasion we were served with Prawn and Avocado Cocktail, Beef and Mushroom Pudding served with Caramelised Red

Onion Marmalade, Horseradish Mash and fresh vegetables, and Baked Alaska served with a Berry Sauce. One of the guests was Mat Follas, the 2009 winner of MasterChef. He was impressed with the quality and presentation, as was Fanny Charles, editor of the Blackmore Vale Magazine. This sort of experience is vital for prisoners wishing to make a career out of catering and we wish them every success in their future employment.

Linda Cowley, Chairman



areas, even to employment in the musical field on release.

Our latest and most exciting venture is involvement in the birth of the Jailhouse Café! Already open on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings (10am to 2pm) for anyone connected with Guys Marsh, it will eventually serve hot and cold lunches each weekday and be open to all. It is a great training opportunity for Cat. D Prisoners to gain qualifications in catering and front of house skills in a genuinely run commercial enterprise, as it will be outside the jurisdiction of the prison and under the umbrella of Expia CIC. Before the Café can function fully the kitchen has to be refurbished and suitably equipped. The Friends role is in fund raising towards this, having made a good start with our Johnny Cash evening and donations from generous supporters of the project. The prison is staging its own fundraiser in May, a fun evening 'Jailhouse Cook-off' between Mat Follas (proprietor of the Wild Garlic Restaurant and Masterchef Champion) and Felix (Prison Catering Manager) to an invited audience. In the planning stages are a garden centre, and shop selling produce from the prison's horticultural department, jams and chutneys from the kitchens, and unique jewellery and crafts, all made by talented inmates. One step at a time though!

On the fund raising front we have successfully bid for grants for the bus transport, TFP, the PERC and other planned projects. Our two events have swelled our account and several Friends have passed donations to us from talks given to groups, whilst a local church and a parish council made us their chosen charity. Money has been donated via The Big Give and Easyfundraising. Every penny counts!

Outstanding work by staff members has been rewarded by our 6 monthly shield award, and we recognise all the excellent work done with a buffet lunch for all staff around Christmas time.

We welcomed three new people to our committee who replaced two who, although stepping down, will still help from a distance. Members have received training; attended both internal and external relevant



OSG Pete Mullen receiving our shield at the Staff Appreciation Buffet Lunch in December during the opening launch of the Jailhouse Café. Pete has worked extensively to the benefit of the whole establishment, in particular by arranging the installation of a new radio system and training staff in its use, all in his own time.

courses and lectures; enjoyed the Guys Marsh Carol Service; and presented FOGM information at the SturQuest community mornings. Our website has been redesigned – please use it to keep abreast of our activities (www.friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk). We have gained valuable publicity

in the media which all helps to demystify the prison and spread understanding and support for the rewarding rehabilitative work we strive for. The coming months look full of promise. ■



Canapés before an event

GUYS ART

Last year, Friends of Guys Marsh mounted GUYS ART at The Exchange, Sturminster Newton, a highly successful exhibition of art by prisoners and prison staff that attracted visitors from Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire during the month it ran.

A change of format for prisoners' art classes this year has meant that it is not possible for us to repeat a show of that scale in 2013. However, we are keen to exhibit the best examples of prisoners' art at the Jailhouse Café when it opens to the public. We hope that we will be able to mount GUYS ART again next year and in the meantime, we are developing ways of supporting prisoners' personal art that they do in their cells.

Before then, we will be producing a calendar for 2014 featuring prisoners' creative work. We hope this will both encourage the men's enthusiasm for art and creative writing and once on sale, help raise funds for our projects. The calendar is anticipated to cost around £8.00 and will be on sale in September. Please visit our website for more details or email treasurer@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk ■

PERC and PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

The three year funding for the PERC position finished at the end of December with the first stage of aims completed, but a further period was necessary to secure the second stage of the programme. Through Marcel's partnership work, men are made aware of their family's potential coping difficulties during and after the sentence; debt and housing problems are faced and dealt with; contact with the family during sentence prepares them for the likely hurdles ahead, assisting them to smooth, as far as possible, the road towards integration back into family life and society. Strategies have been put in place to encourage men to take more responsibility for their futures. With the implementation

of a network of information and guidance for independent access they will be able to take control of their own arrangements prior to release. A screen has been installed in the Visitor Centre with a video package designed by Marcel giving helpful information for visitors.

The Project Steering Group worked throughout the year on a successful bid which materialised in time for Marcel's appointment to continue for two further years. The grant was awarded by the Tudor Trust which has generously supported this project from the outset.

Preliminary progress has already been made in setting up community networks to link prisoners with the agencies in their release areas but much more

work has to be done. Adequate support from the professional and voluntary sectors is vital to ensure continuation of rehabilitative work, to sustain housing provision and help with finding employment. The process of releasing prisoners straight into the community with no back-up except £46 in their pockets is, unbelievably, the normal practice which is a recipe for re-offending; that cycle must be broken. When Marcel's work is complete we are confident that the release process will be secure and self supporting.

Joel Lacey of Dorset Life recently interviewed Marcel about his work in the prison. The resulting excellent article is in the April issue – well worth reading. ■

TRUSTEES' DAY OUT

HMP The Verne is one of Dorset's cluster of three prisons with a very interesting history. Like Guys Marsh it is a Cat C Training prison for adult males. Our Trustees were offered an inside tour with the opportunity to compare the differences between prisons. On a dry summer's day we approached the former military barracks built to house Napoleon prisoners of war with the job of building the Prison Breakwater. Within two years they had made and laid three million bricks to enclose the original Citadel of fifty-six acres. The estate now covers some 456 acres, laid around a huge hollowed area in the top of the hillside, and although very light and airy, the inmates have no sight of the glorious views around.

Despite its age the prison delivers modern and innovative practices with excellent facilities to encourage rehabilitation and personal responsibility. We were shown the wings, some of which are in dormitory form with curtained cubicles: living in such close proximity the men soon learn toleration and respect for others privacy. We witnessed the obvious success of the self-help wing run on democratic lines by the occupants themselves; visited the Community Centre called Time Out, specifically for men aged over 50 (the fastest growing age group we were told) and a welcome quiet place for them to relax and socialise; we looked into the very popular and well stocked library and admired the outdoor gym which encourages healthy exercise.

Around the outer ring of the grounds where the work experience and training

workshops are situated we came upon the Horse Whisperer teaching men who find difficulty communicating in an acceptable manner to connect with the horse and respond to its needs: amazing results are achieved (we have experienced these benefits in Guys Marsh as a few years ago the same charity visited to help our prisoners.) Further on some permanent livestock were penned in large areas where free range hens are managed by selected prisoners. We were all impressed by the quiet calm everywhere we went, the orderly dignity of the prisoners and dedication of the staff.

More revelations awaited us outside the secure walls when we were taken by Di James to the new Jailhouse Café for an appetising lunch where we chose from a menu prepared and served by prisoners working towards NVQ catering qualifications. This imaginative enterprise is a newly opened community interest company set up by private individuals associated with The Verne in collaboration with the Governors, and with the co-operation of local people and businesses. Inevitably we discussed the possibility of a similar enterprise at Guys Marsh. Later, mulling over the idea, we stood in the garden overlooking the fantastic view of Portland Harbour and the coast stretching round beyond Weymouth Bay, all of which gradually disappeared as the mist enveloped it. By that time though our sights were firmly set to a vision beyond The Verne! With plans forming and thanks to our hosts we headed home after a most enlightening day. ■



July Staff Award

Elva Longfoot being awarded our staff shield during the July Full Staff meeting. During the time Elva has worked in the Education Dept. she has created, piloted and steered to success two powerful and effective courses: 'Becoming Victim Aware' and 'Stop the Violent Act'. BVA is now the most popular course in the prison and leads to participation in The Forgiveness Project, which is currently funded by FOGM. This year she started to introduce a new course 'Generating a New Goal', which is aimed at prisoners who were gang members. She works closely with the RJ team and has been described as 'a powerhouse of creativity' and 'the jewel in the crown of the Education Department' – Worthy praise indeed!

'JOHNNY CASH' plays Guys Marsh

Over £1,100 was raised in March when Jack English and Ben Court, a.k.a. Jack and a Box, two talented Dorset musicians, played the Jailhouse Café at HMP Guys Marsh. About sixty guests enjoyed their music, including many covers of Johnny Cash songs such as 'Folsom Prison Blues', 'Ring of Fire', and 'I Walk the Line', as well as his 2002 cover of 'Hurt'.

A Johnny Cash programme was an appropriate choice for the evening: though Cash never spent more than a night in prison for any of his own misdemeanours, he understood the many problems in prisoners' lives – especially drug addiction – and played in

both San Quentin and Folsom Prisons in California.

Jack, on vocals, guitar and harmonica, sang in a rich bass-baritone that captured well Johnny Cash's songs and together with Ben, playing kazoo (replacing Cash's trumpet) and the 'Box', a T-chest bass, would speed the tempo up, lift the mood and raise smiles all round. As always, our guests enjoyed the famed FOGM canapés and were also able to buy Jailhouse Café products such as Jailhouse jute bags, jams and pickles.

The Jailhouse Café is one of FOGM's major projects for this year, not least because catering equipment is not cheap. FOGM



trustees are very grateful for the support of everyone who came, to the committee of caterers and to Jack and Ben for their impressive and enjoyable performance. It was a great evening. ■

Check www.friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk for further events

