

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the many organisations and individuals for supporting and encouraging our work during the past year:

- The Hilden Charitable Fund
- The Valentine Trust
- The Tudor Trust
- Prison Technology Services
- The Miles Morland Foundation
- The Worshipful Company of Weavers
- Graham Cole
- Gillingham Rugby Club
- Sturminster Newton Rotary Club
- Dave Quinnell
- An anonymous donor
- Our anonymous 'Friend' accountant
- Geoffrey Spencer, FCA
- Christine Willis, Graphic Designer
- The Pitt-Rivers Charitable Trust
- The Tutor and students of GM IT Department
- Guys Marsh Catering Manager

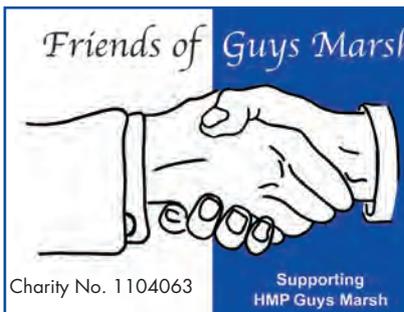
Guys Art Calendar



Through fundraising activities the prisoners support the charity Help for Heroes so we arranged with them to choose twelve seasonal images from art work they submitted and produced a calendar to raise money for FOGM and H 4 H. Our outlets were both Jailhouse Cafés and

some local shops and bookshops whose owners had kindly agreed to help us sell them. As a result we were able to make a modest donation to Help for Heroes. We have a few calendars left, which are now being offered in return for a donation, so if you would like one to take you through the rest of the year, please let us know or visit the Jailhouse Café at Guys Marsh.

Bridget Graham



www.friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk

Chairman: Joanna Kozubska
Acting Secretary: Bridget Graham
Treasurer: Roberta Primrose
To contact us please email
info@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk

Friends Committee

President: Dr. Fay Weldon
Vice President: Terry Francis
Hon. Vice President: Derek Ross
Hon. Vice President: Graham Cole

Trustees:
Joanna Kozubska Jonathan Davies
Linda Cowley Bridget Graham
Beryl Adams Roberta Primrose

Committee:
Jane Childs Leah Lowinger
Andy Chattaway Marcel Williams
Simon Godfrey Graham Woollard
Annie Henschel Adam Davies

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Christmas Carol Concert

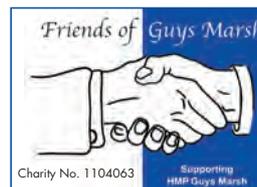
Celebrating our 10th Anniversary
at Sherborne School Chapel
7th December at 4pm

Spirit of Portland Fundraising Dinner

26th July at 7pm at The Verne

News for Friends

Newsletter of the Friends of Guys Marsh No 11 – Spring 2014



FOGM's new Chairman Welcomes you to our 2014 Newsletter



I handed in my keys to the Gate Officer at HM Borstal Bullwood Hall – for the last time – in 1977. I didn't imagine for one moment that I would ever have anything to do with prisons again or indeed, ever draw a set of keys again.

Thirty seven years later I was delighted to be invited to become Chair of the Friends of Guys Marsh. All the years have dropped away, although today's prison service is very different from the one I left many years ago. The growth of a widespread and pervasive drug culture within our society, terrorism and serious economic restraint have all prompted major change within the service. I have deep respect for my service colleagues as they deal with this very demanding environment.

I am in the privileged position of joining a very successful organisation! The Friends of Guys Marsh was founded over ten years ago and today, three of the original founder members remain very active within FOGM – Linda Cowley, Bobbie Primrose and Beryl Adams. Linda has Chaired FOGM for the last five years and has now stepped down but I am delighted to say that she will remain on the committee and will continue as a Trustee. We are very fortunate that her experience and knowledge are not lost to us. The commitment of these long serving members has been remarkable and FOGM is indebted to them for their work and enthusiasm over the years.

The context in which FOGM will work with the prison in the future is changing. The advent of the new Government initiative of designating some prisons with Resettlement status for which Guys Marsh is one, will impact upon some of our activities. These new arrangements mean that many of the responsibilities associated with the

prison in the past and to which FOGM has made significant contribution will now be outsourced to a private or charitable provider. However, FOGM will work alongside these organisations to aid the continuity of programme provision whilst still responding to requests from prisoners for practical help during sentence and for resettlement after release. FOGM often receives requests from prisoners for constructive improvements to their lives in prison and we will go on contributing to the wider prison community in this way. Activities which promote team work and personal commitment for example, are often new and valuable experiences for men in prison. Exploring strategies to support families as they visit their menfolk in prison is another important aspect of our rehabilitative work.

We hope to develop ways in which we can support prison staff even more effectively in the future.

Over the next few months we will be looking at different opportunities to contribute under the new arrangements and I look forward to sharing these with you in the next newsletter.

Mrs Anthony Pitt-Rivers CVO DL, who retired as Lord Lieutenant of Dorset earlier this year to our delight has agreed to become Patron of the Friends. We look forward to her involvement in our activities in the future.

As always we need more Friends! If you are not a member and would like to join us or if you know of anyone who wants to make a difference to prisoners lives – please do let me know.

I look forward to meeting many Friends in the near future.

Joanna Kozubska

Great News

Mrs Anthony Pitt-Rivers CVO DL has agreed to be our Patron

Unsung Heroes

Five years ago Linda Cowley replaced retiring Admiral Sir Barry Wilson as chairperson of Friends of Guys Marsh. This month Linda retired in her turn, together with our secretary Beryl Adams. Both have been and remain trustees of our charity since it was started ten years ago, as has Roberta who continues as Treasurer. I've been honoured to be President almost since the beginning, and have constantly marvelled at the example of what a small group of inspired and dedicated people can achieve, working tirelessly – and unpaid – to make good what government agencies leave undone. Call it what you like – the 'third sector', 'the civil society', 'the Big society' – it's what does so much to make this country what it is.

It's been said you can judge any country by the state of its prisons. For our part we do what we can to make life more tolerable for the families of Guy's Marsh inmates. It's estimated that in the course of one year 200,000 children see a parent imprisoned. It does their mental health and prospects in life no good at all, and all too many follow in parental footsteps. According to the Prison Reform Trust's 2013 report, 40% of prisoners say that support from their families, and seeing their children, would help them stop re-offending. Certainly, the stronger we can keep the ties between prisoner and family, the more chance we have of breaking this vicious generational cycle, and reducing the rate of recidivism, which now, alas, runs (following a custodial sentence) at some 45%. Anyone concerned with the state of our prisons would do well to take a look at the Trust's report

and see just what we are up against: <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Prisonthefacts>

In the meantime the Friends do what they can. We started at a time when families who'd managed to travel, sometimes hundreds of miles, to the prison gates had to queue outside in the cold and wet to be let in. Now they can sit while they wait in a visitors' centre, have a cup of tea, go to the loo, let the children play – and the visit, painful enough for grown ups, bewildering for children, will go better.

There's a bus to take them from the station to the prison. We helped fund Story Book Dads, where men can record bedtime stories for their children. We co-ordinate the efforts of the many charities who work inside the prison, funding important anti addiction and attitude/behavioural programmes – so prisoners no longer fall, as they used to, between the meshes of the nets of the various welfare organisations concerned. Now we even have the Jailhouse Cafe – once an unthinkable idea – open to the public, where prisoners on day-release can work towards their CVQ's, while customers drink their coffee and eat their lunch: this has been very much Linda's achievement. To raise money we organise art shows, social evenings, jazz nights, even bridge nights – we do what we can, where we can. So, next time you come along to one of our 'do's', please bring a friend, or two or three. Perhaps they will join us too? Look us up on our website to find out about all the things we do.

We do our best to get on with



the prison authorities. I met with the Governor, the valiant Duncan Burles, together with the courteous John Garman, Head of Reducing Re-offending, the other day. They struck me as two men facing great difficulties with fortitude and common sense. A

prison these days has many functions – to keep us temporarily secure from the depredations of determined villains, but also to give a helping hand to the hapless victims of a modern society, washed up by our justice system, all too often illiterate and innumerate, unable to cope with the complexities of a fast-changing world, and requiring help and support to get them back onto their feet. For those in charge the task requires a hard head and a kind nature.

An increasing prison population, recent cuts in funding and constant reorganisation do not make things easier: but manage prison staff must, and manage they do. And by the way, those rumours in the press about Chris Grayling, Justice Minister, banning books for prisoners – it's simply not the case. Untrue. Books abound in Guy's Marsh. And who supplied a teacher for the Guy's Marsh 'get into reading' workshop? The Friends.

So congratulations, and well done to Linda and Beryl and Roberta for their many achievements and their quite remarkable innovative energy in bringing them about over the last ten years. For Sir Barry Wilson, whose gleam in the eye all this once was, three cheers; and all courage to the Governor and staff.

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

Weavers Open Day: Shared Experience

The Worshipful Company of Weavers invited FOGM to take part in their Shared Experience Conference, as we are recipients of their £6,000 grant which allowed us to fund 4 in-prison Restore Programmes run by the Charity, The Forgiveness Project. Linda and I attended and a very brief description of the day follows.

The Company broadly focuses its donations on education but, more specifically, on trying to help men and women who have or who are about to break the law, young offenders, serving prisoners and those about to be released. Their aim is to help them to rehabilitate successfully back into society.

The Shared Experience Conference, chaired by Giles Ridley, Chairman of their Charities Committee, was held in London last November. Some three dozen charities, large and small, all recipients of funding from The Weavers, met to learn about each other, exchange contacts and ideas, with the intention of expanding and improving their own performance. The key idea was 'Replication'. The Experience's focus was in three parts – (i) Young people who are going wrong pre prison, (ii) prison projects, and (iii) ex-offenders.

Delegates from the Orpheus Project, Keep Out, Clinks and Fine Cell Work gave presentations. We also heard from

Toby Gaddum of The Weavers and a Home Office mandarin who explained their backgrounds relevant to the day's subjects.

The sessions closed and were replaced by a wide-ranging discussion before the Chair wound up the Shared Experience Day which had been extremely interesting and informative.

Jonathan Davies

FRIENDS OF PORTLAND PRISON

Friends are spreading!

We were more than happy to assist Erlestoke prison to set up a Friends organisation a few years ago, and were flattered to be asked again by Portland YOI to help them as well. Three of us had a most interesting tour of the prison on 3rd July '13 and were most impressed with the amount of meaningful training/work places there were, from working on railway lines to recycling. We then met with the Deputy Governor and people from the local community on their fact finding discussion. We were able to tell them how we had gone about setting up Friends of Guys Marsh ten years ago and all that we had achieved in that time. They are now established and working towards gaining charitable status, and we wish them well.

Linda Cowley

NEW APRONS FOR THE JAILHOUSE CAFÉ



Last autumn we held an enjoyable social evening in the Jailhouse Cafe at which the President of Sturminster Newton Rotary Club was present. Afterwards the Rotary Club very kindly donated a set of smart black waiters' aprons,

incorporating their logo. Please accept this as an invitation to pop in and see for yourself. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 10am to 2pm, for light lunches, hot and cold drinks, and delicious cakes. ■

*Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer you can make a Gift Aid declaration which will increase the value of your subscription/donation to Friends of Guys Marsh by almost 30%. This is because it enables us to reclaim the basic rate of tax on it from the Inland Revenue, benefiting us enormously but not affecting you at all.

(This is only allowable provided you have paid at least as much tax as we are reclaiming, either as income tax or capital gains tax).

If you are a higher rate taxpayer you can reclaim the difference between the higher rate of tax you pay and the basic rate of tax we reclaim when you complete your self assessment tax return.

Subscriptions should be sent to:

The Treasurer
FOGM
Lymburghs Farm
Marnhull
Sturminster Newton
Dorset DT10 1HN

Please use this form for yourself or a friend by cutting along the dotted line.

EXPIA TAKE OVER THE VISITS CANTEEN

Expia, the Community Interest Company that has been the umbrella organisation overseeing the operation of the Jailhouse Cafe, has now taken over the running of the Visits Canteen in the main Visits Hall inside the prison. An employee of Expia, Jane, orders the stock and runs the Canteen with the able assistance of two prisoners. Having witnessed the whole operation recently, I was impressed with the efficiency and speed with which the three of them work together – real team work.

The prisoners receiving visits are not allowed to move from their seats but there is a constant queue of visitors at the counter buying food and drinks. Keeping in touch with their families is so important and goes a long way to help a prisoner's resettlement. Sharing food with members of their family helps the visit to be a success for all concerned.

Linda Cowley



A Royal Invitation

Representatives of our Jailhouse Café were invited to meet HRH The Princess Royal when she visited our sister Café at HMP The Verne.

First impressions of The Verne were unpromising on a windy December day: up the winding road into the old fort and past a series of derelict buildings to the car park for the Jailhouse Café. But once there, the view over Portland Harbour and Chesil Beach were magnificent if somewhat bleak. A whole throng was gathered to await the arrival of HRH and we assembled quite naturally into groups such as our own, the contingent from Guys Marsh. Each group eyed the others, wondering in many cases who everyone was. Some of us also eyed the mountains of food on the tables, for we had had an early start. As time passed – quite a lot of time in fact – barriers broke down, inter-group contact was made and I had some interesting conversations with representatives of The Verne about its change from prison to immigrant holding centre, and with loyal customers of the Jailhouse Café who said how nice it was to eat outside in the summer. Everyone had a name badge, each with one or more



Guys Marsh Jailhouse Café representatives with HRH The Princess Royal



The Expia CIC Verne Jailhouse Café Committee meet HRH The Princess Royal

coloured dots to denote whether it was worth Princess Anne talking to its wearer. I had only one dot on my badge: it was not worth Princess Anne talking to me.

Eventually a frisson passed through the crowd, for Princess Anne's helicopter had been spotted and she was about to arrive. We were instructed to re-assemble into our groups to await her entry into the Café, many of us practising our pronunciation of Ma'am (rhymes with ham, not palm). Princess Anne passed from group to group saying good morning to everyone and conversing with the multi-dotted. She was clearly well briefed and showed interest in everything. Moreover, she demonstrated an ability to converse while eating a Jailhouse Café Christmas pudding in a very elegant way, no mean feat.

After the helicopter had departed for her next engagement, we too dispersed. I was left with a lasting impression of the role that such Royal visits can play in recognising the contribution made by volunteers (in our case) and in boosting the morale of those employed in the prison service. It is well known that Princess Anne works extremely hard and carries out very large numbers of such visits each year,

in addition to her other activities. I was very pleased to see one such visit at first hand.

Simon Godfrey

OSG Lynn Hennis and OSG Sandy Cockburn



Both Lynn and Sandy are staff volunteers who give their spare time to help make the Family Days, organised by the Barnardo's Family Project Worker, run smoothly. They interact with the family groups, assisting with the organised activities so that the full benefit is gained from the day. This is the first time we have recognised two people for our award but felt it was well earned and thoroughly justified. ■

APRIL to APRIL

Another spring has arrived after a turbulent winter. For the Friends, the previous seasons, although less eventful, have been just as disruptive. With the new education provider settling in, and the Governments' announcement that Guys Marsh had been chosen as a future Resettlement Prison, the view ahead has been decidedly misty with many decisions lying in the balance. Nevertheless, fresh initiatives have born fruit along with the continuation of our long established proven ones supporting family ties and prisoner rehabilitation.

Nordcat safely transports Saturday visitors thanks to the Valentine Trust; our Mothers Union and the Friends rota's ensure a friendly welcome at weekends; due to the generous grant from the Worshipful Company of Weavers a further four workshops have run with ever increasing impact on the participants.

Toby Langton-Gilks' Urban Beat Shops which FOGM funded for 6 months is again an established music provision, now guaranteed to run well into the future thanks to the financial support of The Miles Morland Foundation; we remain involved by administering those funds. Toby has now set up a further initiative teaching technical aspects of music production through the backing of another funder, whose anonymous grant we also administer.

The funding from the Tudor Trust over the past five years for Marcel's work as our PERC, setting up prisoner resettlement and rehabilitation pathways, was due to end in December '14. We are most grateful that the trust



recognises the importance of completing this essential work by awarding their grant to ensure that all systems are in place for it to then be completely self-supporting.

The role of the Barnardo's Family Support Worker includes organizing regular Family Days for selected prisoners to which the Friends give an allowance for them to share a simple lunch together. Thanks to a flexible grant from The Hilden Charitable Fund and in co-operation with Barnardo's we answered a call to provide the means to employ a part time Play Worker during weekend visiting. This appointment has been so successful that Barnardo's agreed to pay for extra hours themselves to enable her to assist with the busy Family Days, and several volunteers have also been recruited for visiting sessions.

The Jailhouse Café has developed into an important and happy hub for the community to meet. We take much pleasure in supporting it by raising funds for some developments and providing a supervisory role whenever needed. Our involvement in this venture was rewarded with the honour of an invitation to be presented to HRH Princess Anne during her inspection of the Verne Jailhouse Café after its commendation by The Butler Trust

of which she is President.

For the past year we have been striving for the re-opening of the Barber Shop which has lain dormant since the prison was unable to cover the cost of employing a trainer Barber. It has taken tenacious endeavor to pursue our aim of opening up opportunities for prisoners to gain employable barbering skills. We are edging nearer to possibility of success.

Due to the grant from The Worshipful Company of Weavers we have been able to continue welcoming The Forgiveness Project programme to deliver their powerfully thought provoking workshops on four occasions during the year.

Prisoners' small requests to us for provision of materials have been given whenever possible to encourage and nurture interests, hobbies and education. We are able to sell some of their crafts in the Jailhouse Café which further encourages the men and raises money for the running of the café. We have also supplied work tools for ex-prisoners to gain employment.

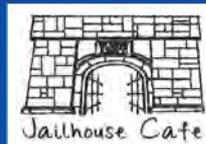
Some major changes have taken place within our committee affecting the roles of both Chairman and Secretary. Linda Cowley has confidently guided our pathway for over five years,

FRIENDS and VOLUNTEERS

Several new Friends have joined us over the past 12 months adding to the valuable support you all give financially and in kind. Many of you give your time as volunteers for which we are most grateful and of course are always looking for more! Last spring the prison organised a Volunteers' Day where some of the charities who are connected with the prison displayed their details and were pleased to enlist some willing helpers.

Apart from a Secretary our main need for volunteers is manning the refreshment kitchen in the Visitor Centre each Friday and Saturday to welcome visitors and supply them with hot or cold drinks and biscuits. The Mothers Union covers the Friday rota whilst the Friends are responsible for Saturdays. It is not an onerous commitment as the duty only falls about 4 or 5 times a year for about 3 hours in the middle of the day. Love to hear from you if you would like to join the rota; it is important to keep the numbers up to replace the inevitable loss from time to time. ■

Contact details by email or phone are on the back page.



Visit our Jailhouse Café any Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, open from 9.30am to 2pm

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

I would like to become a Friend of Guys Marsh*
I wish to renew my subscription*
**(delete as appropriate)*

Please tell us how you heard about Friends of Guys Marsh

Name:

Address:

email:

The information you provide on this form will be stored on the Friends of Guys Marsh database and will not be passed to or shared with any other external organisation.

Annual subscription: £5 £10 £25 Other

I enclose a cheque for: £..... made payable to "Friends of Guys Marsh".

I wish to pay by standing order – please send me a form.

Date:

*Gift Aid declaration: I am a UK taxpayer and wish Friends of Guys Marsh to reclaim tax paid on my donations (see explanation on reverse): Yes/No (delete as appropriate)

Signature:

With a little help from ...

Friends of Guys Marsh is just one of several charities that partner with HMP Guys Marsh on a variety of rehabilitation and resettlement projects. These include Alcoholics Anonymous, Barnardo's, the Prince's Trust and the Footprints Project, a Dorchester-based local charity that is fast becoming regional with its 'through the gate' mentoring work with prisoners (both men and women) in Dorset, Somerset or Hampshire. By pairing up prisoners (or those serving a community sentence) with trained volunteers who mentor and assist them with the practical concerns of reintegration (e.g. finding accommodation, training and employment) Footprints reduces the risk of re-offending.

In summer 2013, Footprints approached Friends of Guys Marsh about help for one particular prisoner, Mr J, Previously a scaffolder, he had a home, partner, children and supportive parents to return to (which many former prisoners don't) and with Footprints' help, he also had a job offer with a local building firm. However, he couldn't afford to re-equip himself with his personal set of scaffolding tools and steel-capped boots that were essential to securing the job. Friends of Guys Marsh agreed to fund both.

When Mr J heard this news from his Footprints mentor he was almost speechless. "SO SO thrilled and SO SO grateful." One of our committee sourced the equipment and liaised with the Footprints mentor to meet to hand over the kit. Later, Mr J wrote to FOGM

to say *"a very big thank you to all for supplying me with a set of scaffolding tools. You have helped me on my way towards getting me back into full time employment. I am working as a labourer at the minute but now with tools and a CSCS card (a construction industry qualification), I can go back into my old role as a scaffolder fixer."*

The cost of this small intervention was all of £150.00 but it made a big difference. As for the boots, these weren't an omission. It was just that Mr J decided that he would make do with an old pair of his brother's although they were on the small side for him. ■

"Just take a few notes"



I was invited to attend the inaugural meeting on 10th October 2003 of a group of people interested in forming a "Friends of Guys Marsh" charity. The chairman asked me if I would "just take a few notes" at the meeting. I had recently retired from working in the prison and was naturally curious and interested in what the "Friends" were planning and wanted to achieve. Little did I think then that this would lead to my involvement as Secretary and a Trustee of FOGM for the next ten years!

However, it has been an interesting and exciting ten years. I was fully involved in the monthly meetings and one of our early projects was the furnishing of the kitchen in the new Visitors Centre. Funding was sought for the provision of a bus from NORDCAT, on Saturdays, to meet the visitors at Gillingham Station and return them there after their visit. I organised a rota of volunteers who served tea and

coffee and soft drinks to the visitors whilst waiting for their visit. Some visitors travel a long distance, either by road or train and welcome the provision of refreshments whilst waiting for their visit.

To this day the charity has continued to offer both these services.

In our first year a Newsletter was produced and this has continued annually keeping our "Friends" informed of what the charity achieves each year. Innumerable projects have been funded due to the generosity of Trusts, and by fund raising events organised by the committee.

Last November I moved away from the area and so resigned as the secretary "just taking a few notes" though I remain a Trustee for a while.

Looking back over the last ten years FOGM has achieved much due to the generous funders, subscribers, volunteers and a hard working and enthusiastic committee of which I was privileged to be a part.

Beryl Adams

attending regular internal meetings and keeping us well informed of happenings. She felt ready to move to a less demanding position and Joanna Kozubska, who joined us as a Trustee in December with very relevant credentials for the Chairmanship, agreed to take up these reins, to the delight of us all. Beryl Adams who has been our efficient, knowledgeable Secretary since FOGM was formed ten years ago, moved away from Dorset in November. Although remaining as a Trustee and a supportive distant member of the committee, her reliable nearby presence is much missed. We are most grateful to Bridget Graham who has temporarily stepped in to fill this important role whilst we search for a new super volunteer Secretary. Due to pressure of other commitments both Trustee Pauline Batstone and committee member Jackie Woon have unfortunately had to leave our team. Staff movements have given us a new Deputy Governor representative who is as supportive as his predecessor, and a change of prisoner representative sees us with yet another new face on the committee. We are honoured that the recently retired Lord Lieutenant of Dorset, Mrs Anthony Pitt-Rivers CVO DL, has agreed to become



Some of the committee with Sir Barry Wilson at our December social

our Patron having been a great supporter of our charity over the years.

Members have enrolled in appropriate training opportunities and attended conferences and lectures. Other prisons are keen to set up their own Friends charity and by visiting them to give advice the Trustees gain interesting insight into different establishments. An essential aspect of our work is bidding for grants in an increasingly competitive market, and producing our Annual Report to the Charity Commission (available to all on request).

In both our commitment to raise funds and to highlight to the community the excellent rehabilitative work of our prison,

committee members and the Governor have given talks to Rotary clubs, WI. branches, and the Soroptimists; sold prisoners' art in a calendar and cards; held two events; kept our web site updated and published our newsletter.

In all of this we do not forget the dedication of the staff and show our appreciation by awarding our FOGM shield twice annually for outstanding work and invite all staff to a buffet lunch around Christmas time. We consider any requests and give assistance whenever we are able. The coming year promises many changes which will challenge us in several directions- I wonder what new initiatives the 2015 newsletter will have to report! ■

FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER

It was with much sadness that we heard of the death in February after a short illness of Alison, Barnardo's Project Support Worker, who replaced Jackie at the end of last year. When she took over the role it was redefined, obliging her to set in place new priorities. Alison organised a most efficient and appreciated service to unite and support the families. She was instrumental in FOGM providing Nicola as part time Play Worker, and training her to assist with family visits and also for recruiting volunteers as extra help during these sessions. We have received prisoners' letters of thanks which are testament to her work in the

building and bonding of relationships, so important for their futures. An extract from one:

"... thank you very much for organising the family visit. It was a good visit my family enjoy there self it could not be better. My son 10 and my cousin 7 had a good time we play and take photo together. I don't know how to thank you this is the best time I ever have..."

It is also testament to Alison that her training enabled Nicola to successfully take over the responsibility of all the family sessions they had planned. ■

Kainos Community, challenge to change

Inspired by Christian values of social concern, The Kainos Community aims to reduce reoffending and to enable people to live purposeful and stable lives both during their sentence and after release. Given the right circumstances, individuals can positively change their behaviour away from offending, increasing their quality of life and those of others around them.

The Challenge to Change programme was originally set up in 1997 at HMP The Verne and some of our committee were able to see it in action there. We were very impressed with the calm and considerate manner in which the Community operated, and were delighted when the programme was introduced to Guys Marsh as well. The programme addresses offending behaviour through course work, individual assessment, community living, team building, and social interaction.

There are some volunteering opportunities and a look at the website of Kainos will tell you all you need to know about this rewarding programme.

Linda Cowley

FOGM NEEDS A SECRETARY...could this be you?

We are looking for a Secretary to keep our scribing up together having lost Beryl to the wilds of Hampshire! This mainly involves taking the Minutes at our monthly meetings held at 4pm on the second Monday of the month. It is an interesting voluntary job with a view into prison life that is not often available to the general public. To discover more about FOGM's activities and achievements take a look at our web site. For full details on the position contact our email address info@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk or speak to one of the Trustees for a friendly chat without any obligation. ■

New Music Technology Course at Guys Marsh

Toby Langton-Gilks continues to run his very popular Urban Beat Shop music course at Guys Marsh. He's been running it since October 2009 and during that time, many of his students have asked to be taught how to use the laptop and software to make their music –saying it would help to keep them on the straight-and-narrow, on release. Since last November and thanks to some more funding, Toby's been able to start running a practical Music Technology course, on top of his existing Urban Beat Shop sessions. The men can now learn how to use the music software and hardware and then experience it in action when they attend Urban Beat Shop sessions.

The new MT Course runs once a week for small groups of musicians that Toby has "targeted" from the Urban Beat Shop (UBS). It runs in the Chapel Area Music Room using the UBS equipment, so the men are already familiar with both the surroundings and existing studio setup. This helps to bind the two courses together seamlessly.

Having only one laptop to work with still limits the number of men that can be tutored properly. However, the recent addition of

a large flatscreen TV (donated by a friend of Toby's) means that, whilst students take their turn at the laptop under his guidance, the others engage with the learning process via a large screen.

As with UBS, the new MT Course is in great demand and has a very long waiting list. Recently, the apparent increase in short-term "guests" at Guys Marsh means that sadly, some men that have applied to join the course leave the establishment before they can even get onto the course. However, the feedback from those who have attended has been unanimously very positive.

Ideal MT Course applicants are men who've demonstrated a musical aptitude, eagerness to learn and are also nearing their release date. Toby's real aim is that they get some practical tutoring with him at Guys Marsh and then go straight out and put it to use, once they're released. So far, the men who've attended the course, have all been really fired-up and enthusiastic about developing their music either as a hobby or professionally, once they leave Guys Marsh.

So, hopefully the new MT course will, alongside the UBS course, play a small part in the battle to reduce re-offending. ■

Christmas Carol Concert

7th December – 4pm
Sherborne School Chapel

To help raise funds for its activities, FOGM is organising a Christmas Carol Concert on 7th December, which will be held in the historic chapel of Sherborne School. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served in the school dining hall afterwards. The service will be taken by Lindsay Collins, the school chaplain, and in addition to carols for everyone to sing, there will be solo items by the renowned school chamber choir and the school brass ensemble.

We have arranged an interesting group of speakers who will give short addresses during the service. Commitments in principle have been given by Lord Fellowes (best known for his authorship of *Downton Abbey*), actor Jeremy Irons and the recent Lord Lieutenant of Dorset, Valerie Pitt Rivers. There will also be three speakers directly connected with Guys



Marsh: FOGM chairman, Joanna Kozubska, Duncan Burles, the Prison Governor, and Peter Miles, who since his release has made a huge contribution to the resettlement of other ex-prisoners.

Tickets will be on sale in September so please make a note in your diaries now.

The Guys Marsh Barber's Shop: Plans for re-Opening

For nearly 3 years FOGM's monthly Committee Meetings have taken place in the Education section close by the library. Every time we walk past the well-equipped Barber's Shop with its doors closed, lights off, chairs empty looking sad and uncared for. This situation came about when central government cuts to the prison service led to a situation where there wasn't enough money to employ the training barber to come in three days a week.

We felt it was such a waste of resources, prisoners have to cut their own hair or get fellow inmates to do it as best they can; it seemed inefficient, mildly degrading and, as importantly, removed a genuine educational training opportunity for work that

remains unaffected whatever the technological advances made elsewhere in society.

FOGM's Committee decided to take up the challenge of getting the Shop re-opened. We have been greatly helped by the very positive attitude and practical assistance of Weston College, who saw the opportunity to get the hairdressing/barbering course re-established. As important has been the arrival from HMP Channings Wood of Andy Chattaway as Deputy Governor. HMP Channings Wood has two successful Barber's Shops in operation so the advantages for Guys Marsh were immediately clear to him.

The Friends have acted as the oil to start and keep the wheels moving. Plans are now afoot

to enlarge the existing Shop to accommodate 6 working positions. To achieve this walls and bars will have to come down, plaster and paint applied to make good; plumbing and new electrics will have to be sorted out and additional haircutting equipment obtained.

At the moment all parties are fully committed to achieving these requirements and the intention is to have the new teacher in place in the new, enlarged Shop by the first of August. Six prisoners in training, attendance on a full time weekly basis, four twelve-week courses a year and two dozen men emerging annually with a really relevant NVQ2 qualification to use on release. Plus the prisoners remaining inside, all with proper haircuts as well!

Jonathan Davies

Fine Cell Work – coming from HMP Guys Marsh some time soon

We thought it would provide Newsletter readers with a greater insight into life at Guys Marsh if, from time to time, we include mention of the work of other charities that are involved with rehabilitation at the prison. Fine Cell Work, the prison embroidery social enterprise, will be working with prisoners at Guys Marsh for the first time this summer, starting a fortnightly group at Guys Marsh. They will be trained by two volunteers who taught groups at HMPs Kingston and Shepton Mallet until their closure in 2013. There is already a strong Dorset connection with Fine Cell Work. Its founder was the remarkable and determined Lady Anne Tree, who lived until her death in 2010 not far from Shaftesbury. How fitting then that Fine Cell Work will be starting up at HMP Guys Marsh and we shall look forward to seeing the results of the men's work in months to come.

You can buy a Fine Cell Work piece such as needlework or embroidered cushions, bags or quilts online or at one of their selling exhibitions held around the country from time to time. Fine Cell Work will also complete a piece of needlework that you



don't have time to finish. You can also commission quilt or cushion to a design of your own. Working in prisons around the country, with 97% of its stitchers in the male prison estate, Fine Cell Work trains prisoners to stitch high quality needlepoint and embroidered cushions as well as quilts. They may then continue this work during the long hours when they are locked in their cells. Soft, quiet and colourful, stitching provides a therapeutic oasis in the prison world. The work not only gives prisoners the embroidery skills but it also equips them with the softer work skills that they will need on release - discipline (being able to produce a piece to a deadline as well as turn up for training), collaboration (sharing knowledge and materials between fellow stitchers), as well as building self-esteem and self-worth.

Importantly, Fine Cell Work stitchers are paid for their work. They earn a third of the sale price of each piece (the other thirds going on materials and administration), which is kept in their prison account. Many prisoners use their earnings to send money home, pay for children's school trips (both key to maintaining family ties) or else save for clothing and accommodation on release.

Ex-prisoner Carl explains what Fine Cell Work meant to him. "I was in prison for seven years. When you are in prison, you are angry with everyone. You are sitting in a cell, thinking about what has been taken away from you and you are angry about what has been taken away. I first



started tapestry cushions to earn some money so I could contact my children. It was just about the money at first, but it's not a lot of money. In the beginning, one cushion could take me six to seven weeks, working seven to eight hours a day. In the end, I could finish one in just eight days. When I started, there were not many people doing this. It was regarded as a bit 'girlie', but I'm a big fellow, so I didn't get too much stick! After a while, I found that the work helped calm me down – was a calming influence. It's a great thing to do to rejuvenate your life. Once you have done it for a while, it's second nature and you can think about anything you want. I also made some cushions and quilts for my children. I think it teaches you that you have to make an effort in life, to achieve anything."

If any readers have embroidery skills they feel they could use to train our prisoners please contact us – details on back page.

For further information about Fine Cell Work visit www.finecellwork.co.uk

Bridget Graham

MY ROLE WITH THE FAMILIES

I started as Barnardo's Project Play Worker for Guys Marsh last June 2013. My role was initially for 3.5 hours which is funded by the Friends Of Guys Marsh (FOGM), to open up the play area in the Visits Hall and encourage children and their families to choose age-appropriate toys, activities and games which they might like to take over to their tables and engage with their fathers, uncles, brothers or whoever it is they are visiting and therefore be able to strengthen their relationships through the use of play.

I had never worked within a prison environment before as all my past experience has been within childcare settings. So I was slightly anxious to begin with as I wasn't sure what to expect. I had to get used to using keys, and remembering to lock every door and gate after myself and get used to all the extra security measures that come with working within a prison.

It was clear when we first started that a bit of work was needed in getting the play area started again as it hadn't been used properly for a while and there was not a huge amount of things for the children to do. We managed to resource lots of new toys from various Barnardo's projects which has made a big difference within the play area, and because of the original funding put forward by FOGM I was able to have my hours increased and am now able to open the play area every weekend for 2 out of the 3 visits. This has made a huge difference to the atmosphere within the visits hall and families have said how great it has been that the play area is open and that their children have a place to come

and choose toys and games. We have also organised many family visits which take place every couple of months, in which families can come in over a whole morning and spend time with their dads. These visits are much more informal and relaxed, where the families can move around the visits hall together and take part in many organised activities which are helped run by many volunteers; activities include music, art, face painting, bowling with skittles and much more.

We have also been able to recruit 2 volunteers who help out in some of the weekend visits. They are both fantastic giving up their free time to come in and help out. Having the help of volunteers is so great as it means the children have someone else who can help them get what they want from the play area as it can be very busy at times with over 20 children visiting.

I have really enjoyed my working as Play Worker at Guys Marsh and being able to provide any support and advice to families. I also feel it is such a positive role in making visits for

families a much more relaxed, enjoyable and meaningful visit. This can only help in strengthening the family bonds and in building better family relationships.

Since I started in June, I worked very closely with Alison Cowley, who was part of the Barnardo's team working at Guys Marsh. Alison very sadly passed away this month and this is why I felt it was important to highlight the huge role she had in enabling me to do my role as play worker. She was a great support and without her hard work and dedication to her role we would not have achieved half as much as we have so far.

I hope that I can continue all that we have done so far and make visits for families as positive as we can. I have seen many dads who have been so excited to see their children. Some have been amazed at seeing their sons or daughters walk for the first time, or see them writing their name, and being able to hear face to face what they are doing at school, home etc.

Nicola Pyke



As part of the Spirit Festival this year and to celebrate Exipa's Trip advisor "Certificate of Excellence" award we are holding a fundraiser dinner at the Jailhouse Café, The Verne, on 26th July.



Enjoy a great 3 course meal with outstanding scenery for only £25. Wine will be available to buy. Tickets from Rachel Barton, on 01305 826440.

Forgiveness – its meaning and consequences

FOGM, having received a grant from the Worshipful Company of Weavers to fund The Forgiveness Project's 'Restore' programme, were requested to write up a report on the way these funds had been employed. In order to be able to do this accurately I requested to attend and actively participate in the 3 day course held at HMP Guys Marsh in the autumn of last year. I would like to share with you my experience of that course albeit in a drastically shortened summary.

The broad aim of the Programme is to explore the role of forgiveness in the lives of participants by personal testimonies, film and structured discussion to engage with what forgiveness and restorative justice can mean both generally and individually. It is interesting to note that the dictionary definition of the verb 'to forgive' is 'to stop feeling angry and resentful for an offence or mistake made'; in other words it is up to the perpetrator of the offence or mistake to look in on himself/herself and to stem the anger and resentment involved. As Terry Waite put it 'bitterness is like a cancer that enters the soul. It does more harm to those that hold it than to those who it is held against'.

To start, the three person team from TFP introduced themselves and outlined the format of the non-judgemental workshops, emphasising that for the participants there were no 'rights or wrongs' and no 'good or bad comments'. The 12 prisoners introduced themselves by first names only. They were a racially mixed group of young and older men, some seemingly confident, others, at this point, less

so. All had however previously completed the Prison's Victim Awareness programme and had requested to come on this course.

The sessions involved the men listening to the three harrowing but very different life experiences of the team and their ability to rise above them and move on, told either in person or on film. The first story was of the cruel, inhuman hostage situation of Aid Workers in Chechnya. This Presenter explained during her talk that 'I decided that I would not take on the role of victim' and that 'freedom is a state of mind'.

The men had broadly similar reactions to what they had heard. Whilst they couldn't really relate to the reality of war, they nonetheless felt that they had been privileged to hear the story and they certainly could relate to her experience of incarceration and the appalling things inflicted upon her. They also understood the passages of severe boredom she and her companion had gone through, the lack of family contact they had had to endure. But above all they were survivors, they had got through it all and that was what the groups really admired.

A short film was shown about Jill, who had lost both her legs as a result of being on the London underground when the suicide bomber blew the tube train apart in 2005. She made the point that we never ever expect it to happen to us and goes on to say that she doesn't hate the bomber, rather she wants to understand why it was done – 'I want to understand better', and she ends with the amazing conclusion that a disaster such as this can enrich one's life. 'My love is greater now, smells are stronger, colours are brighter.'

Another member of the team

recounted the story of his life. Although academically bright, with a deprived start in life his path led him into petty crime developing into serious offences. At the age of 21 he was in HMP Wandsworth on a long sentence and regarded himself as a 'professional criminal'. It was at this point that he took a grip on his life. He went to see the prison's Education Department who suggested he pursue a course on radio journalism – 'they didn't see me as a criminal'. He studied (often in his old criminal stamping ground) and worked hard and despite threats of all kinds from former 'friends' he completed his course eventually gaining a BA and an MA in journalism. He now works as a successful freelance journalist. He spoke most appealingly with humour, clarity and complete honesty.

As can be imagined Jason's story had a significant impact on the group. They could see obvious similarities and immediately began to identify with his experience of a dysfunctional family background, the frequent moving from place to place, the lack of guidance and a role model and no support with schooling. They were full of admiration for the discipline and resolve that Jason had shown to turn his life around whilst in prison. Jason's message to them was summed up as 'everyone thinks you're bad but doors can open, things can change'.

During the evenings in their cells the prisoners were asked to complete a series of questions in the Work Books provided to them, relating to their reactions to the team's stories. The group expressed mixed feelings about the undertaking but the next

morning surprised us with the depth and intensity of what they had written. Typical answers were: 'I hate myself for letting others down'; 'I feel ashamed of the things I've done over the years'; 'I cry when the past catches up with me'

A long session was held on the men individually charting their lifelines by using pictures, symbols and words in order to review their lives and be prepared to reveal and discuss their frailties in front of the others. The men were reluctant to reveal their own stories but after knuckling down to the exercise an amazing change of attitude took place. Without exception, they all spoke well. There were common threads that could be found in nearly all stories – broken homes, frequent moves around the country, no lasting interest shown in them, generally a lack of involvement in school, the very negative influence of older youths on leaving education, all leading to drink, drugs and an early entry into petty crime.

Inevitably, they found the going difficult when they came to tell of the crimes they had carried out, which had led them to being in prison for some significant sentences. It was poignant to hear young men in their early 20's admitting what they had done wrong, but equally it was uplifting to hear them talk about their plans for the future and their absolute determination to set their lives straight on release.

It was also moving to hear men who had committed very serious crimes and were in for long stays expressing the desire on their eventual move to an open prison to be allowed to meet with local youngsters and, as they put it, 'tell them what it's like to be banged up and the need to sort out their lives'.

The three days of the course were really insightful. One witnessed considerable emotion at times as the men in the group came to terms with what had taken place in their lives and the mistakes that had been made.

One was left in no doubt that participation in the Restore programme had been of real benefit to them; the positive attitudes shown suggested that they had every intention of turning their lives around and, as a result, they might have a real chance of eventually rehabilitating successfully back into society.

Jonathan Davies

Shop within & beyond the Café



Whilst visiting the Jailhouse Café be sure to look at the items we have for sale. The high quality soap is produced by the women in HMP Eastwood Park who have a dedicated workshop where they organise, make and manage these products for sale to the public. All revenue they raise provides a fund to support their ex prisoners to make a new start in life. The bags, mugs and T shirts go towards the running of the 2 Jailhouse Cafés, and the cards, calendar and jewellery are for FOGM's funds.

By attending local Fairs and displaying the above items on our stall we publicise our work and raise the profile of the Friends in the community. ■

John Murray



In December John Murray was joined by his family who came over from the Isle of Wight to enjoy his being awarded our Staff Shield. We chose him for his volunteering work in educating young people in the realities and consequences of criminal activities. Believing that prevention is better than cure John and his colleague, Chris Hukins, dedicate their off duty time to travelling all over the country visiting youth groups in schools and clubs to alert them to the dangers of taking decisions which could ruin their futures. ■