

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Whether financial or in kind we thank the following for their invaluable support:

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- Salisbury Diocese Mothers Union
- West Dorset Parish Churches
- Rachel Davies
- FOGM Friends & Volunteers
- Guys Marsh Inmates charitable donations
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- Open Create Ltd

For partnership working

- *Nordcat (North Dorset Community Transport)*
- *Barnardo's*
- *Marie Waterman (Volunteer Centre & Clinks)*
- *G.M Chaplaincy Team*
- *Dr Sarah Lewis (Prison Reform Solutions)*
- *Brenda Birt (N.D. Mothers Union)*

OUR MISSION

FRIENDS OF GUYS MARSH PRISON MISSION STATEMENT

To promote and support for the benefit of the public at large (in partnership with staff and Governors) viable programmes and initiatives aimed at the rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders who are or who have been inmates of HMP Guys Marsh.



practical support • better futures

Charity No. 1168102

www.friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk

info@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk

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News *for* Friends

Newsletter of the Friends of Guys Marsh Prison No 15 - Spring 2018

Welcome to our Newsletter for 2018...

Firstly, I would like to thank all the Friends and supporters who continue to help us in our efforts to support those men who are coming to the end of the sentence and facing an uncertain future once released. Sadly, this process is fraught with difficulties, which many face without the necessary support.

Secondly, I would like also to thank the other trustees who work so hard to ensure that FOGM delivers.

This last year has seen a wide range of support both financial and in kind that we have been able to offer to the men in Guys Marsh. Guys Marsh has been lucky enough to be one of the pilot prisons, this has meant an uplift in staff numbers and budget which has been most welcome.

You will see some of our successes in the following pages but it is the less obvious, such as underwriting the bus for families from Gillingham station, the numerous yoga and well-being sessions we pay for, the food for families on visitor days and the photos the men can have taken with their families. It is this positive linkage with families that has such an impact in driving down reoffending and maintaining the critical family links and it is you that allow us to provide all this.

Finally, please do not be shy; if you would like to be more involved do get in touch.

Giles Fearn - Friends of Guys Marsh Prison Chair

Grow Your Own Success

During their recreation time, the men on the enhanced wing have developed a thriving garden around their dedicated area. They planted the borders with bushes and flowers and then turned to the open spaces. Over the months, led by one keen gardener, they have constructed raised beds, nurtured seedlings and cuttings, and planted out a wide variety of vegetables (including beans, potatoes and greens), herbs and strawberries.

The growth is really impressive with everything healthily productive. Now the summer is here the men are cropping the fruits of their labours with the intention of selling the surplus to raise money for charity.



THE CHAPEL GARDEN



Only a few months ago an enclosed area behind the prison chapel was a neglected space, wasted and overgrown. Marie Waterman, Manager of the Volunteer Centre Dorset, through developing a volunteer project for men has changed the area beyond recognition. She gathered a group of volunteer men, inspired them with a vision and by harnessing their various talents and knowledge organised her work party to transform it into a garden for quiet reflection, peace and contemplation. They laboured hard, cleared, designed, laid out paving, built a rockery and a pond, installed planters and a bird feeder, planted out, painted a mural to soften the red brick walls, and felt the satisfaction of their terrific achievement. The garden, secure and private will give prisoners and staff alike a safe place for quiet renewal during time out and whilst working on its upkeep.

The official opening ceremony was held at the end of May when Marie said that it is not finished but anyway, a garden is always a 'work in progress'. There will be plenty to satisfyingly occupy volunteers well into the future.

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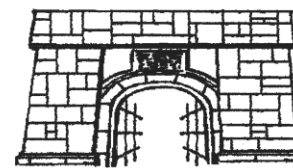
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Jailhouse Café

Visit the Jailhouse Café
open Monday to Friday
from 10 am to 3 pm

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

- I'd like to become a Friend of Guys Marsh Prison
 I wish to renew my subscription

Please tell us how you heard of Friends of Guys Marsh Prison.

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FUNDRAISING CONCERT

In February we were privileged to attend a concert held in The Quaker's meeting place in Shaftesbury, arranged and led by David Davies. David is a prison visitor at Guy's Marsh and his wife Rachel, a Quaker chaplain; both are heavily involved in the prison.

The Rejouissance group, Lyn Menzies and Pauline Gallear (Violins), David Copus (Cello) and David Davies (Spinnet and Chamber organ) (all members of the Salisbury Baroque) and soprano soloist Nicky Ogborn gave us a most enjoyable evening of music by eight composers from the late 16th to the 18th century which included work from a lesser known composer Joseph Bodin de Boismartier.

It was a very relaxed evening during which we were invited to inspect and ask questions about the players' Baroque instruments, some of which were authentic.

We are most indebted to David Davies for organising this most interesting and enjoyable concert and to all the musicians for giving up their time to perform for us.

Over £150 was raised for our funds.

JOIN US

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES ON THE FOGM COMMITTEE

New trustees would be most welcome to join our committee who meet monthly in the prison library for a couple of hours. If you have an interest in reducing the level of crime, are open minded and non-judgemental your skills in fundraising, bookkeeping, social media, public relations or IT would be used to rewarding effect. We are a friendly group who voluntarily give a varying degree of time, each according to their circumstances.

We would be delighted to hear from you if you would like to know more about our activities.

Contact us without obligation for details via our email address – info@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk – we will respond as soon as we are able. By visiting our web site you will find more about our charity and can read back-numbers of our annual Newsletter.

SATURDAY ROTA

Can you spare 2.5 hours around lunchtime on a Saturday just once every 2/3 months? Welcome the visitors in our little kitchen in the Visits Centre outside the fence and offer hot or cold drinks whilst they wait to make their visit inside. It's interesting and very easy.

Please contact us at info@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk if you are interested in our work, wish to learn more or would like to contribute in any way.

A DEDICATED CENTRE MANAGER

Marie Waterman, Volunteer Centre Dorset manager, has been awarded the South West Region Prison and Probation Staff Award for Partnership Work.

Over the last three years, Marie has delivered a volunteering project for men in custody at HMP Guys Marsh and has engaged more than 100 men into volunteering. Collectively the men have contributed in excess of 10,000 hours volunteering to improve prison life for others.

Mrs Waterman said: "It was such a lovely surprise to be nominated by the staff at Guys Marsh, and then to win the category was just brilliant, I feel so proud of the team of volunteers who have worked so hard to make a difference to the prison environment. I am thrilled that volunteering has been recognised especially in an area that isn't traditionally linked to the voluntary and community sector.

"Basically what we have done is to take the services of the Volunteer Centre and deliver them in a prison environment, which is exactly what we should be doing, enabling all people to have the opportunity to volunteer their time and skills."



Deputy Governor at HMP Guys Marsh, Steve Robertson, nominated Marie for the award.

He said: "Marie has worked tirelessly to set up a very successful volunteering project here at Guys Marsh. She has quickly become part of our fabric and is fully involved in the way that we are improving as an establishment.

Marie always has excellent and innovative ideas as to how we can support the men here and can often be found working on a variety of projects that intend to make life a little more bearable in a custodial setting. Marie continues to impress us all and I am confident that Guys Marsh would be a lesser place if Marie wasn't around to do the work that she so passionately believes in."

CHRISTMAS TOYS

HEAVEN SENT FOR CHRISTMAS - WOW!
Has Father Christmas spilt his sleigh?

We never know what kindness awaits and when an offer came of toys for prisoners' children just a few days before December's planned Family Day we had to move fast unaware of what awaited collection. What awaited was quite overwhelming; the parishioners of the west Dorset churches had gathered a fantastic quantity of new toys and games together, some already Christmas wrapped with the rest in large tied bags - then the loaded car, bulging with surprises, headed off to the prison!



The Sports Hall was prepared for the following day of seasonal family fun with many games and activities set out and a secret grotto waiting for Father Christmas' promised visit. Next a couple of the men got down to sorting everything into appropriate groups to suit the varying ages of boys and girls. With so many gifts to choose from they selected the most suitable to Christmas wrap for the children due to come the following day. That special day was a great success. With many visits around Christmas more toys were selected and wrapped ready to give to other children. This still left us in the enviable position of having a bounty of toys on hand for future occasions.

Our huge thanks to the parishioners for their most generous and thoughtful donations.

GROWTH PROJECT

The last six months has had its ups and downs, but I remain hopeful that Guys Marsh is developing a positive identity and beginning to promote personal growth for both staff and residents. We have held a number of staff and resident wellbeing days and received positive feedback. The difference this year is that the staff have, collectively, organised their own wellbeing days and the gratitude and appreciation from residents has been wonderful to see and hear. Each wellbeing day so far has been slightly different and yet the constant has been a real commitment to growth by creating a positive environment, which builds meaningful relationships. The staff are working incredibly hard to engage families and provide a more positive experience of visits, for those that come to the prison to see their loved ones. These are only two examples where staff should be recognised for their practices at Guys Marsh.

The Growth Team has recently recruited 8 more residents and 6 staff, to work together in promote growth across the prison. I am overwhelmed by the level of dedication of both staff and residents as they embark on this mission together. We have not been without our challenges, but I remain committed and passionate about prison reform. We are currently planning a community fayre in August, where we will spend a day as a community, taking part in challenges and experiences, which aim to promote the principles of growth. These include creating meaningful relationships and purpose, establishing a positive environment where people feel safe and investing in residents and staff to solve the inherent problems associated with the prison system. The appetite for change and drive for continuous improvement remains evident in the daily contact staff have with residents and their willingness to listen and learn as a collective.

If this continues, anything is possible.

Dr Sarah Lewis (Penal Reform Solutions)

A VALUED COLLEAGUE "RETIRES" FROM IMB

Our committee deliberations have always been assisted by the knowledgeable advice of a member of the IMB (Independent Monitoring Board). Over the past 9 years we have been fortunate to have had the benefit and consistent support of Jane Childs who, with 15 years' experience of Guys Marsh in her IMB role, has imparted an invaluable degree of insight to guide our decision making. Sadly for us this spring she reached the maximum time that the Home Office allows for Board service thus ending her close involvement with the prison. Typically, for Jane, before departing she made sure that her successor appreciates our work and is also equally committed to giving all the informative and friendly help she can; even so, we will miss her.

BARNARDO'S PARTNERSHIP

GET INVOLVED to reduce the impact of the 'HIDDEN SENTENCE' by joining as a Volunteer

Through our partnership with Barnardo's we may soon be able to supply a weekend Play Worker (PW) to help families to maximise the benefit of their visiting sessions. A variety of play items are supplied in the outside Visitors Centre and a well-stocked crèche is in the Visits Hall, which the PW supervises to give parents and children the opportunity to make the most of these prime time meetings. With many children of varied ages to tend to, help from a volunteer would be a great asset to the PW in order to keep activities running smoothly. Timing would be between 12.00 pm and 4.00 pm on Saturdays and/or Sundays. Volunteers would be working with children and they would benefit from the free training, which Barnardo's provides.

This training would also apply to anyone interested in giving their time during the week to help with any organised family events at the prison. In either case we would be delighted to hear from you. For details without obligation, please email FOGM at info@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk with subject heading 'Volunteer for Visits - FAO BP'.

A REFLECTION

One thing I have come to realise is that prison does not rehabilitate you; it is down to the individual to rehabilitate oneself. However, with that said I really admire Guys Marsh's encouragement of rehabilitation and attempts to create a positive environment for all the residents. I strongly feel that people like Dr Sarah Lewis, Sally Rainbowchild and Marie are really making a difference to the prison. I always say to my fellow residents that there are so many opportunities here; it is just a matter of knowing what you want to do.

I am about to start a 'life coaching and counselling' distance learning course, but the biggest change to my life and something I believe all residents should try is yoga and meditation with Sally and Noel. As well as it being an escape, it has given me the tools to understand myself better, especially by becoming more mindful. My life has completely changed and I have the people of Guys Marsh to thank for that. Due to the fact it has made such a difference to me that when Noel leaves us I have been given the privilege to offer 121 mediation and relaxation sessions to residents.

A Guys Marsh resident

THE MOTHERS UNION

FAMILY VISITING IS ENRICHED BY THE SALISBURY DIOCESE MOTHERS UNION

A surprise phone call brought about a great opportunity to broaden the scope of family bonding at Guys Marsh when an exciting offer was made to us.

The Mothers Union operate a cafeteria in the Salisbury Law Courts for the convenience of all users of the courts whichever side of the law they represent. Despite the café being run solely by volunteers a degree of profit is inevitable. They wish some of their profits to be directed into the criminal justice system and selected the two local prisons of Dorset and Wiltshire as benefactors. FOGM was delighted to research the best use of these funds with the result that we have organised a considerable number of large games for use during all future Family Day visits.



Some of the large floor games



Football table, one of the table games

These were added to the limited equipment supplied by the prison which turns the Sports Hall into a most exciting area for children to experience fun time with their mother and father; a rare treat through no fault of their own. We show some photos of the Hall prepared for the visit in May.

Another area the M.U. were happy to support was by providing a Weeping Willow tree for the prison's recently opened Sanctuary Garden where staff and residents can reflect to find peace and renewal.

Our local North Dorset branches of the M.U. have a long history of supporting our prisoners' families in a variety of ways, not least in manning the Friday visitors' refreshment rota. Guys Marsh is indeed fortunate to have the whole of the Salisbury Diocese now involved in the improvement of the community within its confines.

AWARDS CELEBRATION

The Achievements award celebration was well attended again this year with nearly a hundred people in the chapel. It was pleasing to see so many men being recognised for their hard work, many had qualifications having completed courses over the past months and the comradeship shown amongst them was rewarding, amid a great atmosphere we applauded the many achievements of the men nominated.

Inspired by the following statement

Recognise, Reward and Rehabilitate

We know prison is not the first choice for most but for those who are in this situation, lets maximise the opportunities and encourage them to get involved. It can only build on the future they all hope for and one day they will be proud of what they achieved in custody.

It was so pleasing to be there representing FOGM and witness the relaxed relationship, without any loss of respect, that is encouraged between the staff and men across the estate. These programmes will continue as a regular part of life at Guys Marsh.

CAROL SERVICE 2017

Always a joy to attend this service, the chapel was well filled with many men from Guys Marsh alongside representatives from all aspects of life on the estate.

The choir supported us well and the effort the men had put into the nativity activity was much appreciated, they have a wonderful way of expressing a Christmas story with an element of humour and this year their modern version of 'No Room in the Inn' was well received, somewhat self-deprecating and taking the mickey out of themselves and their situation. We all left the chapel with smiles on our faces!

FOGM trustees are always welcomed at these occasions and coffee and chocolate cake was offered after the service, which gave us the opportunity to chat informally with many of the men.

Times like these offer an atmosphere of normality, relieving tension and allowing for banter between the officers and the men without losing mutual respect. We all appreciate the informality alongside the spiritual content of the service.

A GOVERNOR'S VIEW

It is an exciting time for HMP Guy's Marsh as we continue our performance improvement plan to exit the "Special Measures" process. One of the key ways in which we are improving is working closer with the men in our care to understand what needs they have. What has been clear is that many have large areas of unmet need and organisations like the Friends of Guy's Marsh can provide real and practical help in addressing these. The work they continue to support engages hard to reach men, like the music programme so ably run by Toby, or purchase specific work related items, like chef's knives or yoga mats, which opens up the realistic possibility of employment for men on release.

Charities like FOGM are much lighter on their feet than a large, bureaucratic Government department like HMPPS. I have been so impressed with both the results of the projects they support and their diverse and innovative nature. We will be showing off the good work that the Friends do when we are next inspected by HMIP as we feel this is a model, which other prisons could learn from. I am excited to see what projects they will fund this year and hope we can work together on creative projects to harness the talents of our population.

James Lucas - Governor Guys Marsh Prison

FAREWELL TO A FRIEND

Farewell to our Friend Beryl – her life lived well.

Beryl was one of FOGM's founding trustees whose sound knowledge and organising expertise was instrumental in ensuring our charity's legitimate structure. Beryl served as Secretary until 2016 when she moved with her husband to Andover to be nearer their family. Beryl and Brian kept in contact from a distance but always gave us their support as 'Friends'.

It was a shock to hear In January that a sudden return to a previously overcome illness had taken her life. Beryl was a very positive and practical person and the cremation service, very moving but uplifting, was full of the love she gave and received. The service was attended by family, friends and colleagues from far and near, mirroring the varied and happy life she had enjoyed.

The Adams family invited all to the hotel gathering afterwards to remember and celebrate Beryl's full life. It was heartening to hear that Beryl and Brian had recently spent many happy months travelling abroad revisiting friends in countries where they had spent much of their working lives. Beryl worked in administration at Guys Marsh a few years prior to retirement and a large contingent of ex-colleagues shared good memories of their 'good old days' together with Beryl. Brian has a strong family around him and we will continue to keep in fond contact.