

FOR YOUR DIARY

Friends of Westminster Productions

Saturday, October 11, 3 pm at 24 Greencoat Place

A MUSICAL MEDLEY directed by Paul Knight and including some of the cast of *Jotham Valley in Concert* at Caux last summer.

Followed by tea. All those not going to the Forum in Derbyshire are welcome!

Monday, October 13

7 pm at Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, London SW1

A fund-raising concert for *Renewal Arts*.

Some of the artists who took part at Caux last summer will perform. The programme includes STAGES ON THE WAY TO FREEDOM, five musical meditations on poems by Dietrich Bonhoeffer with the Jazz ensemble *Symbiosis* from Berlin: String Quartet no. 12 by Dimitri Shostakovich, performed by The Fitzwilliam String Quartet; and an introductory lecture on Dietrich Bonhoeffer by Bishop Michael Marshall.

Tickets £12, students £8 on the door.

THE GREENCOAT FORUMS

6.30 on Tuesday evenings at
24 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1RD

Tuesday, October 14

Dr Yaw Adu-Sarkodie will speak on *Tackling the AIDS crisis in Africa*

Dr. Sarkodie from Ghana is an AIDS specialist at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Tuesday, November 18

In search of leadership
Personal presentations by graduates of *Learn to Lead*
Sheffield based, *Learn to Lead* is a national leadership programme focusing on the development of young people.

Tuesday December 9

Hilary Belden will speak on *Excellence and enjoyment for all? Goals for 21st century education*.
Hilary Belden is Project Director, Ealing Excellence in Cities Education Action Zone and a former secondary headteacher.

And in France

Saturday, October 18, 2 – 6 pm
Open Day at the new centre for *Initiatives et changement* at La Maison des Acacias, 92130 Issy-les-Moulineaux.



“LET LIFE BE AN OFFERING”

The audience at the 23rd September Greencoat Forum heard a relaxed and lively panel of six speakers talking about *Action for Life*. This is a training programme for an international group of 30-40 people who will meet in India from November 1st for five months before they embark on a series of visits to other SE Asian countries. Their aim is to “Let life be an offering” – an offering of service, of working for healing and justice and for inspiring others to become change-makers.

Oleg Emurati (Moldova), Dang Thi Hai (Viet Nam), and Nigel Heywood (Australia) told about the first Action for Life (which began in Sept 2001) and then new participants Christina De Angelis (Australia), Zoriana Borbulevych (Ukraine) and Laura Trevelyan (UK) spoke of their convictions in joining the next one.

Standing at the Border

Oleg Emurati said that for an Eastern European to go to India is unheard of in the first place, but what he had experienced in that ten months changed his life direction. He related that standing at the border of North and South Korea and being told that if he acted suspi-

ciously either side could shoot him was a lesson for him in the barriers that people build between themselves.

Dang Thi Hai spoke of her history in growing up in Vietnam and Cambodia and then going back to meet the younger generation. Through slides she showed the many groups of people that they met – politicians, princes, farmers, orphans, Buddhist monks and students. Through *Action for Life* enabling long lasting friendships to be made, she has a great conviction to help with the rebuilding of relationships between the two countries.

A travelling community

Nigel Heywood, who is also returning to help with the next programme, saw it as a chance for young people to let go of all the things they were attached to in their lives back at home and to begin the journey of finding their own faith. He spoke of the struggle within himself as he learnt what it was like to work and serve together in a travelling community.

Zoriana Borbulevych from Ukraine, who has been studying in London, said her family thought that she was crazy to go. However,

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with layout by Blair Cummock.

Please send material for the November issue by October 27 to
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she feels at this point she needs to experience the challenge of finding her own calling.

Christina DeAngelis said she first came from Australia because she felt God calling her to Britain, where she has been a social worker. She now feels that *Action for Life* is the next step – which was as big a surprise to her as it was to her family.

Laura Trevelyan is also joining the support team because she feels

a deep conviction that this is helping young people search deeper within themselves to find what God has for them to do.

Generous support

Those attending the Forum gave generously in support of all they heard about this imaginative programme, for which the team is very grateful.

Nigel Heywood

Dynamic District – A Nottingham story

A community centre created by the people of the local area of St Ann's was the venue for the second Nottingham Dialogue organised and facilitated jointly by Hope in the Cities, Cross Cultural Networks and the Racial Equality Council. Twenty-seven people representing different cultural backgrounds, local community workers, young people, the police and long-term residents met from Friday evening, September 12, and through the following day. Lawrence Fearon and Joe Pearce facilitated the Dialogue discussions.

St Ann's has a reputation in the city for violence, drugs and gun crime. But this negative image of the area was countered by the many

positive and affectionate views expressed by those who lived or worked there. There were no rose-tinted pictures painted of the needs or problems involved, but discussions produced ideas and convictions for long-term community building. Some people had a new insight into the opportunities they have to make a difference. One woman who works in the area realised the privileged position she has in being able to make a



The Nottingham Dialogue in progress

He concludes on an optimistic note, arguing that there is considerable evidence to suggest that the tide is turning and suggesting that "if enough people are seized by the vision of a world based on integrity and are ready to pay the price involved, it (eliminating corruption) is achievable... The choice is before us."

Copies available from Grosvenor Books, 24 Greencoat Place. Price: £5.50 + £1 p&p.

A String of Pearls

In our June issue we featured the book about Ethel Roberts, *A String of Pearls* – a collection of anecdotes compiled by her friends.

Jeanne Faber writes: "Copies have gone far and wide. A friend in a war-torn country in Asia, whose life had been threatened because of his work of reconciliation, picked up the book when feeling particularly low. He read the very first quote from the prophet Isaiah. 'Do not be afraid ... When you pass through deep waters, I am with you. Your troubles will not overwhelm you...!' He said he felt restored and uplifted."

Another quote that meant a great deal to one of our readers was, 'Never compare yourself with anybody else. You are unique, one of a kind, an original. Don't settle for being a copy.'

Copies: £2 from John & Jeanne Faber, Pythouse, Tisbury, Salisbury SP3 6PB or from 24 Greencoat Place.

IN THE PRESS

From 'Letters to the Editor', *The Times*, September 25, 2003

Sir, The Archbishop of York has called for the restoration of the "quiet time" for prayer and reflection (report, September 22).

I suspect that this is still more wide-spread, in homes if not in churches, than at first appears, not least among Christians and Buddhists, as well as in other traditions. In my own experience I have found that, in this age of information, real inspiration comes in times of silent reflection.

The question is when is the best time to practise the quiet time. Some do so at the end of the day, as a means of stocktaking. Others, like the Quakers, do so collectively.

Many, like myself, have followed the practice of Frank Buchman, founder of Moral Re-Armament, now known as Initiatives of Change, who advocated the quiet time first thing in the morning on the ground that you tune a musical instrument before a concert rather than when it is over.

Yours faithfully,

Michael Smith

(member, co-ordinating group)

Initiatives of Change

was challenging to young people. My skills increased dramatically working on the publications and I learnt a trick or two in dealing with printers.

I am grateful for more things than I can mention about being in the UK, and for the provision made for me. And there are too many people to thank for friendship and guidance. I am also grateful for the opportunity to have gone to Moldova – which is all another story!

This time has been a blessing. It has launched me well into the next *Action for Life*. I hope that other people coming to Britain may experience the same kind of friendship and hospitality that I had..

Nigel Heywood

NEW BOOKS

Met Along the Way

The author of *Met Along the Way*, described by friends as "an Irish story teller", claims that his trustworthy wife, Rita, has certified the contents as "being amongst Jim's true stories". Australian Jim Coulter, journalist, WWII pilot, and lifetime sports buff, has been a friend to a lot of ordinary people who went on to do extraordinary things. Having survived three aircraft crashes he felt God had saved his life. He decided to give a year to try and do something about the peace – but it has turned

out to be a life commitment.

Pictured on the front cover are some of those in *Met Along the Way*. They include Aboriginal leader Margaret Tucker, Australian Prime Ministers John Curtin and Harold Holt, Wimbledon winners Stan Smith and Arthur Ashe, Brownlow medal winner Haydn Bunton and West Indies cricketer, Conrad Hunte.

(Books arrive mid-October. Enquiries: Grosvenor Books, 24 Greencoat Place.)

Corruption: Who Cares?

Transparency International, an NGO with 90 branches around the world, is committed to fighting corruption. Grahame Leonard, chief executive officer of TI in Australia, reviews British journalist Brian Lightowler's recent book.

...Brian Lightowler cares sufficiently to have written this very readable and informative book which should be required reading for all. A long time campaigner for integrity, Lightowler forcefully argues that corruption is a "clear and present danger (and)... should be seen as an issue of national security."

He supports this conclusion with a wide range of summarised case studies from across the globe. These are balanced by a summary of responses from government and official organisations (such as The World Bank, NGOs, business and individuals).

difference. There are plans for a series of dialogues, the training of facilitators, and events to celebrate the true values of this multi-racial, multi-faith, dynamic part of our city.

Richard and Meili Hawthorne



Participants in the Nottingham Dialogue

Keswick – Looking Back

An article by How Michael on the Keswick Convention in Cumbria's weekly *Times and Star* begins: Keswick Convention has always had the power to change lives. It changed Frank Buchman's life back in 1908.

Just one man's change of heart, but it was to bring about the creation of an organisation of international significance some years later, MRA or Moral Re-Armament..."

The article describes Buchman's background and the profound religious experience he underwent during the sermon by a young woman evangelist at a small Methodist chapel in the town. He re-visited the town several times in later years with the sole aim of seeing again the chapel which had so changed his life.

"It is still worth recording," concludes Michael, "that a few inspired words in a tiny Keswick chapel back in 1908 brought about the cre-

ation of such an influential world organisation. Great oaks from little acorns grow."

Walkerswood, Jamaica – Looking Forward

The front page of the *Jamaican Observer*, August 11, featured the Governor-General, Sir Howard Cooke with the Walkerswood Managing Director, Woodrow Mitchell, as new ground was broken for a large expansion of the world renowned food processing company.(see UK Newsletter May 2003)

"The Walkerswood story is a success – a success story on community-building," declared Sir Howard. "It needs to be spread throughout the world as a form of encouragement and example of what can happen when citizens use their resources unselfishly and in the building of a vibrant community for the common good of all"

FROM AUSTRALIA

Barbara Williams writes:

This year John and I had the privilege of attending the Caux conference and then going on to visit many family and friends in England and France. I had not been for more than 12 years because of ill health and other factors, so it was great to look at things afresh.

At Caux, the title of the first session we participated in was "The Spiritual Factor in Secular Society: Can religions be partners in peace-building?" It was a theme close to my heart.

Here in Australia at the MRA-IC conference in Sydney in April we had representatives of all faiths participating and we felt led to embrace the concept of "Open Homes Open Hearts" as one of our aims for this coming year. So many from other lands have come to make their homes here, and there is a great need to build trust and respect throughout the community, irrespective of our faith background. So it was good to be with others working along the same lines in Europe.

It stretches your heart

In the Caux session on Peace-Building Initiatives, we were moved to meet many from all parts of Africa who are struggling courageously to bring healing and build a network of trusted colleagues with whom to build a safe, peaceful future for their nations. It stretches your heart. We also met people

from Israel and Palestine who are doing the same, and we realized that newspaper headlines do not give the whole picture.

I had been a little apprehensive about how I would cope with the pace of events at Caux. I need not have worried. What struck me most was the large number of young people from all over the world who take part either as interns, Caux Scholars or just participants. I met one young woman who had come for the fourth time to work as a translator and who brought her sister this year. There is a deep hunger to make a meaningful contribution to the future, and this is most encouraging. There is also a hunger to understand fully the depth and background of MRA-IC and to learn.

London centre

In London I was thrilled to be in 24 Greencoat Place and experience how life works there. What a wonderful, flexible, welcoming place it is! When we lived in 26 Catherine Place we dreamed so much about what a future centre might look like, and to see it up and running was very encouraging. It brought home to me again – whether our work focuses on Agenda for Reconciliation, Hope in the Cities, 'For a Change', reaching out to school students or whatever – our greatest calling is to bring fresh purpose, life and healing to individuals and our nations.

Nigel Heywood (Australia) has spent the last year in Britain. He will soon leave to join the Action for Life programme (see Page 1)

Being in Britain for the last year has been a great time of learning and friendship. Arriving from *Action for Life* in August 2002 I needed to stop and get some space for awhile. Oxford turned out to be perfect for this.

Oxford

In the last year there has been a great mix of families, the older generation and young people from all over the world living in Oxford. At one stage we had six people working in the office (which was a shed in Edward and Elisabeth Peters' backyard) and we had to constantly feed each other tea and chocolate in order to get through the friendships. Recently the office has been moved and the new hub is now at the home in Norham Road.

Downstairs at Norham Rd there were usually, give or take, three young lads of which I was one. Jitmun Chong (Malaysia), Chris Lancaster (Australia) and now Vitalie Cracan (Moldova) all lived together, with the Riddell family upstairs and numerous guests coming and going in between. Each week on a Monday the team met for lunch and a catch up, and at Friday lunch some of us meet for

prayer. On Thursday nights Rev Leslie Marsh held an historical bible study and every couple of weeks we would gather for story-sharing or to discuss a topic over dinner on a Friday night.

London and elsewhere

I have also made some great friends through the Wednesday night meetings in London and attending a bible study with Stanley Kiaer once a week. There are many things that I could mention but I have picked out the above list for two reasons: these are the main things which formed a community for me and developed my faith.

All these things were consistent enough in my life to start ringing in the change that I needed. In this community I was getting constant care and support in the natural way that comes through friendship. If something was not quite right with me usually somebody knew fairly quickly. There were also people thinking about what I should be doing while I was here so that I was not just stuck in one job all the time. I was able to go out and to meet people around the country (where I gained some great wisdom).

A blessing

Working with Laura Trevelyan on the magazine *Global Express* was brilliant and a great learning curve in trying to make a publication that