

This has been another full year of events, most of them combining ACTSA's twin aims of remembering and explaining the dire legacies of apartheid with assisting the understanding and the building of the new South Africa.

Justice for South African Miners: The first of these events was the visit by Peter Bailey of the South African National Union of Mineworkers for one very full day at the STUC's annual Congress in Perth. Peter was in the U.K. to attend the AGM of Anglo-American to call for justice for the thousands of former miners now suffering from silicosis because of the total neglect of safety precautions for black mineworkers throughout the apartheid era despite the well-known deadly risks. ACTSA has been campaigning in support of miners taking legal action against the mine-owners, and Mark Beacon from ACTSA's London staff brought Peter to Perth. As well as addressing the full Congress Peter also met with the Scottish NUM and with a range of other senior people in the Scottish trade unions, answering questions about the background to the Marikana troubles as well as the Anglo-American court cases.

We had our own usual stall there, with the addition of the photo-exhibition of silicosis sufferers, and the collection of signed postcards to Anglo-American. We also distributed information about Mandela Day, and the STUC's help with our book collection.

Denis Goldberg had been invited to Congress but had been unable to come at that time so sent a recorded video message which was played to Congress.

The stall went straight on to the Scottish Labour Party conference in Inverness, still with the silicosis photographs, handouts and postcards, though without Peter. Other ways of assisting the miners' case were discussed there.

Denis Goldberg: As well as sending that video message, Denis also visited Scotland in person twice this year. It must have sometimes seemed he was here for nearly as long as he managed to spend at his home in Cape Town, since he spent much of the year travelling despite a very painful hip.

As part of his 80th birthday fundraising trip he came to speak at a well-attended Community HEART dinner in Glasgow at the end of May, with which ACTSA members were quite deeply involved. The following day we arranged a more public "Audience with Denis Goldberg" as an ACTSA Scotland event in the STUC's premises, where there could be more of a discussion format. In the course of this tour he also paid substantial visits to both Armadale Academy and City of Glasgow College to develop the strong connections already made with both institutions.

As a result of an invitation issued during that visit Denis was back in Scotland again last month (October) to open the Edinburgh World Justice Festival. He also spoke at a reception in the Riverside Museum in Glasgow to mark the 20th anniversary on 9th October of Nelson Mandela's visit to receive the Freedom of the City and of eight other U.K. local authorities. The press conference and photo-call earlier that day generated a great deal of media coverage of the anniversary. Visits to Glasgow Caledonian University, Currie High School and Glasgow's Lord Provost were also fitted into the programme before he headed off to a further speaking tour in Germany.

We have been collaborating with his German friends in producing an English language version of a new book of special pieces about Denis and his times which was first published in German to mark his 80th birthday. The translated version should be published early next year.

Trevor Huddleston Centenary: The centenary of Trevor Huddleston's birth fell in June this year, and we held two events to mark the anniversary. On 19th June we had a recital in Glasgow by tenor James Slimings and piano accompanist Susan Holmes, who donated their services. The funds raised at this concert were in aid of Kronendal Music Academy of Hout Bay, a project of which Denis Goldberg is Patron and a strong supporter.

A week later we had a celebration meeting in Edinburgh, with Richard Holloway and a strong panel of other speakers who had known Trevor at different stages in his life. A collection was taken for Kronendal and for ACTSA, and a further link with our current work that emerged at this meeting was that Craft Aid, the producer of cards from Mauritius that we sell on our stalls, was founded by Trevor Huddleston during his time as Archbishop there and has a room in its premises named after him.

Nelson Mandela International Day: Following the successful launch of Mandela Day in Scotland in July 2012 a working committee was set up to co-ordinate wider participation in the Day in 2013. We convened this committee with the support of the Scottish Government, and it was agreed to spread the idea of 67 minutes of voluntary service on Mandela Day widely through the voluntary sector. This proved more difficult than had been hoped, but we think we can see a route to making it happen more effectively in 2014. However, the STUC and ACTSA Scotland between us did make sure that the Day was well marked, with a public collection of children's books at trade union offices in a number of towns and cities across Scotland, and through all of Glasgow's public libraries. A celebration event that evening, hosted by Glasgow City Council and with some funding from the Scottish Government, saw short speeches, a programme of music and a closing ceilidh.

The collection of donated books to establish local libraries is a big feature of Mandela Day in South Africa, so linking our own (slightly different) book appeal with the Day in Scotland is very appropriate and we expect this link to continue next year. Other preliminary plans for next year are under active discussion with a variety of prospective partners.

Other Work: As well as all these special highlights and the planning and preparation for them, our normal programme continued and the very first event of the year, as always, was our annual ANC anniversary social with George Reid and his ceilidh band at the STUC's premises. We knew that the 101st anniversary would not attract quite the same exceptional (and alarming) interest as the 2012 centenary, but numbers were still well up on the years before that high point. We are grateful for the faithful attendance every year of the musicians, who always play such a large part in the success of this event. They travel from a distance in all weathers on the same voluntary basis as everyone else involved, and we do very much appreciate their contribution.

A less happy occasion was the funeral of Jane Wilford, a longstanding member of AAM and ACTSA and a former active member of our Scottish Committee. The funeral in London was conducted by Brian Filling, and a number of members attended. Copies of an appreciation of Jane were circulated.

We have recently started the process of working up an application for funding to develop the Scottish Anti-Apartheid Movement archives held at Glasgow Caledonian University. A similar project with the AAM's UK archives is already in full swing, and we are hopeful that a modest amount of funding might be available to make the archive more accessible to researchers and anyone else interested in the history of the AAM in Scotland.

Our routine and regular activities continued throughout the year. Book sorting and packing go on at Hillhead Library week by week, and book donations still come in or are fetched from all kinds of sources – school collections, library surplus stock, churches and individual donations – though not in huge quantities. Volunteers are organised to work with the Workers Beer Company at Glastonbury and other music festivals to raise funds towards the cost of shipping the books.

Our stalls operate month by month at conferences, Mayday celebrations and other events all through the year, including 18 days of the two big Fair Trade sales in Edinburgh at the Fringe and before Christmas. One new stall venue this year was the Dundee Together anti-racist festival where our stall generated an astonishing level of interest. We have continued our longstanding relationships with producers Streetwires in Cape Town and with Fair Trade importers Just Trading Scotland in Paisley and Shared Earth in York. Support for the local producers in Southern Africa is the primary purpose of our stalls, as well as increasing awareness both of Southern Africa and of our own work.

As every year, ACTSA's work has depended on a small core of activists, a bigger circle of volunteers who help with books, stalls, festivals and other specific tasks, a wider circle still of people who turn up regularly to events and help us with funding and in other ways, and a quite large number of people who see themselves as supporters, wish us well and help us occasionally as the opportunity arises. We are grateful to all of these, and would get nothing done without them.

John C. Nelson