

This is the third successive AGM we have held on Zoom because of the Covid situation, and the pandemic has certainly still affected our work all through this year. The legal restrictions may have gone, but there is still a good deal of caution about mixing with other people, felt especially by those more vulnerable due to other health problems. However, the situation has certainly improved, and made some aspects of our work much more straightforward.

**Stalls:** One area of work that is now much closer to normal is our programme of stalls at events. Our Castle St. stall in Edinburgh during the Festival did continue every year, with safeguards, but this year the tourists had returned as well as local people being out in force, and sales were more like a Christmas stall than a summer one. The weather was better than average, which helped, but the return to relative normality was the key factor.

Our stalls at trade union and other conferences were nearly all back up to normal, with all the advantages of opportunities to catch the attention of delegates that we had so missed in the two previous years. The benefit of these contacts over a number of years was certainly felt in responses to the work and appeal around the Mandela Memorial, as it has been in the past for other initiatives, and intertwines with our other trade union connections and support, not least our very longstanding history of close links with successive General Secretaries of the STUC, now successfully carried on with the fairly new and current holder of that post, Roz Foyer. A stall at a World Fair Trade Day concert in Edinburgh was an extra event this year.

We had bought a lot of stock just before the Covid shutdown and have had ample for this year, but will need to think soon about re-stocking. ZUZA Trading, one of our sources, appears not to have re-opened after Covid. Bob Bruce's posters continue to sell, especially the 1993 Mandela visit one, both on Ebay and at stalls.

**Events:** The annual ANC anniversary social in January has remained a Covid casualty so far. Nelson Mandela International Day, however, was marked this year by a physical, in-person reception, hosted by the new Deputy Lord Provost of Glasgow (who showed great interest), and with music funded by the Scottish Government. Something over 100 people attended, despite early misgivings expressed by some, and showed great enthusiasm. The focus was very much on the Mandela Memorial and the progress being made on that, and many were encouraged to be supportive of the next stage of the project. A short video was produced of clips of the speakers, with a longer version including the musicians as well.

**History:** We have continued to co-operate very closely with the Nelson Mandela Scottish Memorial Foundation, with its work on much active fundraising, the production of a series of very informative videos (which are still in active use) before the very sad death in April of our communications wizard and friend John Stevenson, and with work also on preparations for the trial trenches to test the statue site for unexpected obstacles (frustratingly held up by long delays with the permits for opening the footpath), on planning of the sculptor competition (dependent on the results of the trenches), on arrangements for the granite block for the statue plinth, and to find the best contractor for the eventual bronze casting. Groups taking part in two Kiltwalks (with the invaluable top-ups from the Hunter Foundation), plus the recent six-week Crowdfunder campaign and a related appeal to trade unions, have all contributed to the raising of some £36,000 from January to mid-November 2022, despite the current very difficult circumstances for many people and therefore for all fundraisers. Fundraising continues, both for the balance of the statue itself and for the Foundation's educational work, in both the short and longer term.

The schools resource pack "When Mandela danced in the Square" was revised slightly in its section on understanding racism to update the present day references and examples. The Hugh

Fraser Foundation has very recently given NMSMF a £4000 grant for work relating to resources for schools and young people.

Two old friends of the AAM and ACTSA Scotland, Wally Serote and Marah Louw, have recently become Patrons of the NMSMF, along with the new Glasgow Lord Provost Jacqueline McLaren and the new South African High Commissioner H.E. Kingsley Mamabolo.

With whatever hats, we have continued to collaborate with others on recording and remembering Anti-Apartheid history. Chris Fevre and Matt Graham have been interviewing old AAM activists about their experience and recollections, and they have produced and displayed a substantial exhibition – long-delayed by Covid but shown twice this year. Our own exhibition on the AAM in Scotland has likewise been lying dormant for quite some time, but Brian Purdie has been working on technical improvements such as framing and re-framing, Duncan McLeod has been working on display boards and storage cases, and Brian Filling has discussed with the High Commission the possibility of funding for at least one venue in 2023.

Brian Filling has been involved with the Liliesleaf Trust and its historical project based in the old ANC and AAM offices in Penton St., London, which has led to some joint working such as promoting our schools resource pack. He has also been interviewed for chapters on AAM in a couple of books about historic campaigning more widely, for a video on South African jazz musicians in Scotland, and other media interviews about the NMSMF. The National Trust for Scotland has also been in touch about possible collaboration on historical links with South Africa.

**Bain & Co.:** Arising out of Peter Hain's work on reacting to the Zondo Commission report and the resulting decision by the U.K. Government to refuse to award Government contracts to Bain & Co. because of the activity reported by Zondo, ACTSA Scotland wrote to the Scottish Government to ask for a similar decision here. The slightly odd, and unsigned, reply stated that the Scottish Government had been unable to identify any contracts Bain & Co. had with Scottish public bodies, including the Scottish Government. It said also that individual public bodies awarding contracts could exclude, on a case by case basis, any company guilty of grave professional misconduct and not having taken any self-cleansing measures to address the misconduct. The Scottish Government would consider this if Bain & Co. made any bid for contracts, and had drawn this matter to the attention of other public sector bodies in Scotland. This seemed like progress, even if not quite as emphatic as the UK Government's position appeared to be.

Our thanks, as always, to all the many folk who have helped our work in any way over the course of this year.

John C. Nelson