



## *South African Newsletter*

July/August '10

### *Initiatives of Change*

#### ***An African Answer' - Kenya***

The recently launched film, *An African Answer* is a bid to bring healing and reconciliation in Kenya's largest province, the Rift Valley.

Kenyan Joseph Karanja, an advocate with his own small law firm, has during the past weeks, been actively using this film in several areas of the Rift Valley. He writes from Suswa. "Suswa is near Narok, in Maasai land. I had been invited by Maasai, Kikuyu and Kalenjin youth to show the film and have a discussion thereafter. We had the show last night with 122 youth attending. Earlier yesterday, I had a showing in Gatundu (former President Kenyatta's home area) for all secondary school head teachers. Thirty-two of them and four Ministry of Education officials attended. This evening, we have a show in Nakuru, organized by the Muslim youth and inviting Christians as well."

At one of the showings a Maasai youth by the name of Ole Ntinaiyo was in tears. The following day Joseph took him to a Kikuyu family to confess and apologise for stealing a goat at the height of post-election violence. He offered to pay back the goat. The Kikuyu family was equally moved.

"I never thought the launch of this (film) was lighting a fire. In short, people are thirsty for reconciliation and there is an insatiable craving for this film."

Invitations with fixed dates for showings have come in from a further 13 towns across Kenya.

#### ***Caux 2010***

Some 1,400 participants from 81 countries took part in the various conferences on offer this year since 2 July until the international Initiatives of Change (IofC) conference closed on 17 August. This is a 4% increase on 2009 and there has been a 14% increase in Swiss participation, writes Andrew Stallybrass.

The season started with a conference on 'Learning to Live in a Multicultural World: Fundamental rights and multiculturalism in Europe'. It was followed by the third Caux Forum for Human Security 'for peace-builders at all levels, and from varied sectors, around the world'. Then it continued with 'Everybody Counts - A dialogue across generations and cultures' (the youngest participants were two seven-month old babies and the oldest was 93 years of age) with a large participation from Scandinavia.



*A puppet show during the 'Everybody Counts' conference*

"This last of the six weeks of the conferences in Caux under the theme 'Leading Change for a Sustainable World' brought together business professionals, social entrepreneurs, representatives of NGOs and people from the food industry, from every continent, to develop actions directed at creating a fairer economy." reports Andrew Stallybrass.

"An African woman banker noted the 'fantastic combination of spirit and structure here.' The development bank where she worked operates on 'a very political basis, using hard-core mainstream techniques'. 'A more personal spirit needs to get into our lending processes,' she suggested. 'We don't see the faces of the people. I saw here that there are faces behind the numbers.'"

#### ***Colwell Brothers visit 'Home to the World'***

The veteran country and western group the Colwell Brothers from California, now in their seventies, gave a musical odyssey from around the world. They had last performed in Caux, in 1961. Their first visit to the 'home for the world', as

the Initiatives of Change centre in Caux was described, had been in 1953. Now they were back, with composer, pianist and xylophone player Herbie Allen, to give a magnificent performance before a packed international audience in Caux's main hall on 14 August.



*The Colwell Brothers and Herbie Allen*

Many in the audience had not been born at the time of the Colwell Brothers' last visit. Yet they took the musicians to their hearts, won by the sheer vitality and versatility of the three brothers, Steve (lead and rhythm guitar), Paul (lead guitar, mandolin and banjo) and Ralph (bass guitar), and joined by their physician brother Ted on rhythm guitar.

Their music was the international language of the heart and young and old in the audience were moved. The evening, hosted by their long-standing Dutch friend Maarten de Pous, had been billed as '*A Song for the World*'. They sang songs from around the world and the representatives of the 40 countries gathered in Caux took the Colwell Brothers and Herbie Allen to their hearts.

A DVD is being made of their concert. Watch this space for costs and ordering details and addresses.

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A number of South Africans took part at different times during the six weeks of Caux conference this year.

**Cleopadia Mohlaodi**, preschool teacher from Kagiso, west of Johannesburg was an intern for four weeks, assisting with the practical running of some of the Caux conference facilities. Cleo shares:

"As I packed my bags and left home to be part of an interns programme at Caux my



*Cleo Mohlaodi*

expectations were to experience and explore the global IofC family while also being on a inner journey to attain spiritual growth.

"Little did I know that I would meet everything beyond my expectations and return home with a family - far by distance but very deep in my heart. A family that allowed me to find my inner me and develop some unknown skills that I was not aware were my strengths, while allowing me to be part of their lives.

"Having gone through this experience, I believe more than before that it is possible to live in a world free of hate, anger and all that is negative, and live by giving humility, respect, responsibility and care back to the world.

"I found it humbling and challenging when working in the conference centre dining room, especially when I had older people on my team. They showed enthusiasm to serve with trust and complete selflessness, while following my leadership and team's rules. This improved and inspired my leadership skills to another level of understanding and handling of situations.

"Coming back home I have a renewed sense of responsibility in all I am and all that surrounds me - from nature to humanity, appreciation of real and honest communication and the splendour it can build; respect for every culture and person for there is a reason behind how we all behave; and lastly the moral and value wheel of life to shape and determine our future.

"My conviction is to be a bridge of hope, using the tools gained, especially with the youth that I feel need grooming in leadership and trust."

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Musician and full-time worker with IofC, **Sam Pono**, was also at Caux for some of the time. He writes:

"I participated in the first two-day training sessions offered by Alice Cardel, Director of Training for IofC.

"What interested me most was the interaction with people from high-powered non governmental organisations and a Ugandan diplomat from Geneva. They were impressed by the training and asked Alice to arrange further sessions for their friends. The personal stories of change which emerged during these two days had a powerful impact on them.

"The IofC International Department of Training, based in Geneva, is responsible for developing new training modules which express and communicate the core values, the 'DNA' of IofC.

"The second four-day course I attended was 'Education for Peace: Learning respectful approaches to teaching' given by

Jonathan Levy. He is currently employed as education specialist for the IofC France programme 'Education for Peace' and is Vice President of the French Jausz Korczak Association.

"Jonathan involved me in the facilitation of the course and I learnt much which will help me in my IofC work as well as teaching life skills at Ntonga Music School in Guguletu, Cape Town."

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Capetonian full-time worker with IofC, **Vilma Maritz** had this to say about her time at Caux:

"The training course I was assigned to after the initial two-day training was 'Spirituality in Public Office' offered by Dr Monica Bouman from the Netherlands. Dr Bouman has written a book called 'Dag Hammersjöld , 'Citizen of the World'.

"She compared the IofC philosophy to some of Dag Hammersjöld's writing in his book 'Markings' and we reflected on these similarities and discussed his work at the United Nations and his vision for how it was intended to serve the world. He died in a plane crash in Ndola, Zambia in 1961 and these spiritual reflections were only found after his death and then published.

"**Ryland Fisher**, a former editor of *The Cape Times* and now Director of the Cape Town Festival, joined us for a week at Caux. He has written three books, one called 'Race'. Alice Cardel interviewed him on stage about his book and his views and vision for the future of South Africa.

"Ryland, who is also a media consultant and has his own training company and Alice, who has been invited back to Lesotho to train civil servants, are designing a training course which they will offer in October and November in South Africa. We are planning to have the IofC training hub for Southern Africa based in Cape Town."

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Sowetan, **Portia Mosia** who has been working with Jackie Euvrard this year on Peace Circle workshops was in Caux for 10 days. She says of her experience there:

"The whole experience of facilitating a Circle with people from different cultures and faiths was great because I learnt to appreciate even more that we are different but that doesn't have to divide us.

"I have learned that history can play a very important role in beginning our healing as a country, if we can

look at creating a space where people can share their good and bad experiences from the past that will enable us to have a deeper understanding of where we are coming from as a country. I reckon each group or person has a story to tell and it needs to be acknowledged.



*Portia Mosia*

cultures and faiths without feeling we have to change who we are.

"There is a saying 'One stick does not make a strong fire'. Things can happen faster if we can come out of our comfort zone and be ready to take a risk of starting new friendships with other

"I felt also that my time in Caux helped revive the importance of quality time of reflection everyday because that's where to get the sense of what needs to be done next and to give a chance to look at how far I have gone. I had some questions that I was asking God about the work of Peace Circles. I shared that with my morning team and a day later God brought an answer. So for me this was a very important time – a time that one can use with our families when faced with difficult times where we have to make decisions and choices about our lives."

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**Pieter Horn**, full-time IofC worker from Pretoria describes some of the workings behind the scenes:

"Apart from the plenary meetings on various topics and themes, Caux is also a place where many planning sessions take place for programmes of IofC around the world.

"One of these planning meetings was for the next Harambee leadership training programme that will be hosted by IofC Nigeria. It will take place during the second half of 2011. Friends from the neighbouring countries of Cameroon and Ghana with whom we met are keen for participants from their countries to take part. Interest has also been expressed from other African countries.

"Some of the co-ordinators will meet with the Nigerian hosts early in the New Year. We are also grateful for the growing number of Harambee alumni who are carrying this programme.

"Ways of raising the €94 000 (US\$ 124 000) needed for this programme is also being looked into. Your prayers and

support in this whole venture in faith will be much appreciated."

An eight page colour report of the recent Harambee programme in Ethiopia is available from the address below.

Pieter continues, "Another outcome of one of the many planning meetings is the establishment of a IofC Website for Africa. Ann Njeri from Kenya has agreed to be the Webmaster and she is being assisted in setting up the site by Carole Khakula and Mbindio Kimanthi from Kenya and Shaneesa Nazseer from Canada."

For a fuller picture of what took place at Mountain House, Caux this year please visit the following website: [www.caux.iofc.org](http://www.caux.iofc.org)

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## ***Turning points***

John Mallory, son of the late mountaineer George Leigh Mallory, turned 90 on August 21<sup>st</sup>. With this milestone in mind he has been penning some memories – significant and profound events which changed the course of his life. He shares the following:

"Let me give you some background. I was about two months short of four when my father was lost attempting to climb Mount Everest. This led to us moving to my mother's family home and living with my grandfather, then a little over 70, and my aunt.



"I attended two boarding schools where we attended chapel regularly. When I was at Cambridge University during the first year of World War II I committed my life to God.

"After only the one year at Cambridge, I was called up for service with the Royal Engineers. I applied to be considered for a commission and was sent to India for the needed training. At that

***John Mallory*** time the Indian Army was growing from peacetime 200 000 to about two million and they were looking for officers. In due course I was commissioned and posted to the Bombay Sappers and Miners with it's headquarters at Kirkee, a suburb of Poona (as it was then called).

"During this period a friend lent me a book entitled 'Innocent Men'. Two things especially struck me in the book. It spoke of receiving God's guidance, of being quiet and allowing God to put thoughts, instructions, into your mind. It also gave me a vision of something far greater than personal salvation – a vision of a world rebuilt as people discovered God's plan for themselves, for their families, their businesses, their nations. So I asked my friend how I could be a part of this, well knowing I must, at least, make a new commitment of my life to God, for I had slid back a long way from my Cambridge new beginning.

## ***Follow three steps***

"He invited me to visit Don and Ann Robertson, previously medical missionaries in India for quite a number of years. Don was then serving in the Indian Army's Medical Service. He gave me three steps to follow:

1. Take time to let God show you all the places where your life fails to live up to the standard of absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness and absolute love, and write down what He shows you.
2. Share this all with someone you trust, then ask for God's forgiveness, and then surrender all you know of yourself to all you know of God.
3. Then take time every morning to listen to God who will show you where you have gone wrong and he will show you what He wants you to do, thus giving correction and direction.

"I did all that and my life was considerably changed. At a time when few British officers in the Indian Army got to know any Indians apart from those serving under them and the few Indians who became commissioned officers, my new friends were enabling me to meet and get to know civilian Indians.

"One of the first I met, was Krishna Prasada. He had been a member for India's Davis Cup tennis team and was, when I met him, Director of Post and Telegraphs for Bombay province, and before long was promoted to the Director General of Indian Post and Telegraphs for the whole country. He asked me to visit a nephew of his in Poona and see if I could help him find for himself that sort of change which he had experienced. I, with others who knew MRA (as IofC was previously known), got to know Ragunath and his wife, Tosh.

"On one visit to their home it was evident all was not well between them. Ragunath would spend most of his time working on their car. We suggested we all be quiet and take time to listen to God, and write down what we believed He was telling us. I remember well the thought I had was 'Ragunath loves his car more than his wife'. I thought I could not possibly share such a thought. But the thought was clear and strong that I must indeed share this thought.

So I did. Ragnath was quite shattered. Tosh said that that was what she suspected! But God knew exactly what was needed and that day was the beginning of a much happier marriage.

"During my last year in India the Prasadases invited some of us to spend Christmas with them. Being Hindus they did not know what would be the appropriate way to celebrate Christmas. Well, I am sure we had a good meal, and, I think exchanged presents. We also did something I have not done at any other Christmas party. We all got to our knees to pray together.

"Ragnath later became head of the engineering faculty at Alexandria University in Egypt and to end his career in India he rose to become the Director General of Civil Aviation. I had the joy of visiting him in his retirement home, back in Pune (as Poona is now called) 43 years after I had last seen him.

### ***An engineer in Africa***

"My decision to surrender my life to God and to work in fellowship with MRA people led to my spending most of life – nearly 60 years of it – in Africa."

After some years, using his engineering qualifications, John was sent to Montagu (Western Cape) to be in charge of building a dam. John recounts: "Two incidents stand out from this time as I sought God's guidance and each time a man's life was saved from a serious problem.

"The first: One day I had an unexpected visit from a policeman accompanied by an official from the bank. They wanted to question one of my most hard-working men because, they said, he had changed a cheque for R8.00 to R80.00. So I sent someone to find him, but sensing trouble, he had already disappeared.

"About two weeks later I received a telegram from the resident engineer building a dam at Pongola (northern Kwa Zulu-Natal) asking if I had any objection to them giving him a job. After much thought I replied, 'He absconded after being required by police regarding a fraudulently altered cheque. Please urge him to return and put right what needs to be put right. He was one of my best workers and if he will return and put right what was wrong, I promise I will gladly reinstate him.'

"Before taking him back, I suggested he go to apologise to the bank manager for the trouble he had caused, which he did and he got an uncle to help him repay the bank."

The second incident, John recalls, regarded a senior member of staff who had used a company vehicle to go on a drinking spree and then insisted on driving the vehicle back to the camp. "I warned him that any further such behaviour would have serious consequences. Then, I believe, God gave me the inspiration, and I said to him that a man whose problem is that he gets vertigo must establish safe margins - he needs to know how far he needs to keep from the cliff edge.

"Before long our ways parted, till some 20 years later I was visiting one of the Department's construction sites and this man came out of the office to greet me. After the initial greetings I said, 'If I may ask, how is the drinking problem?' 'No problem,' he replied. 'I have never forgotten what you said about the cliff edge!' Praise God!"

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### ***In Memory***

Dr (Prof) Chris Greyling passed away in June in his 69<sup>th</sup> year. The memorial service was conducted by his son Christo and it was clear from all that was said and sung that Chris was a man of God.

Chris was a member of the first synod of the Dutch Reformed Church serving the Indian community, for whom he had a special care. He was one of four Afrikaner students from the University of Pretoria who paid a visit to Dr William Nkomo, in his home in the black township of Atteridgeville in the early 1950's.

In his early years Dr Nkomo was the first vice president of the African National Congress Youth League. This visit so touched Dr Nkomo at a time when apartheid was being developed, that it led to him making a fundamental decision to change his life. He became a revolutionary under the guidance of God to bring forward healing and change to all in South Africa. The story is told in the film of his life called '*A Man for all People*'.

I had only a short touch with Chris during a car journey, and during that time the Ten Commandments came up, and specifically the one which says 'Honour your father and your mother, that you may live long in the land which the Lord your God is giving you'. This, Chris pointed out, was the only one of the commandments which has a promise attached to it. This was a fundamental issue in my own life and it rang a chord with me."

***by Ralph Travers***