

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY
FEBRUARY TO JUNE 2019

FEBRUARY

Friday 1st 7:30 pm **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** 21 Watergate Road
Newport ☎ 523294

MARCH

Friday 1st 7:30 pm **GENERAL MEETING** 21 Watergate Road
Newport ☎ 523294

Sunday 10th 2:00 pm **WALK & TEA** Bryn & Catherine
108 New Road
Brading ☎ 406125

APRIL

Friday 5th 7:30 pm **GENERAL MEETING** 21 Watergate Road
Newport ☎ 523294

Sunday 7th 2:30 pm **SPRING SONG & DANCE** Marie Sawle
Wootton Bridge Community Centre ☎ 291063

MAY

Friday 3rd 7:30 pm **GENERAL MEETING** 21 Watergate Road
Newport ☎ 523294

Sunday 12th 2:00 pm **WALK & TEA** Marion & Danny
Bay Tree Cottage
Ventnor ☎ 854102

JUNE

Friday 7th 7:30 pm **GENERAL MEETING** 21 Watergate Road
Newport ☎ 523294

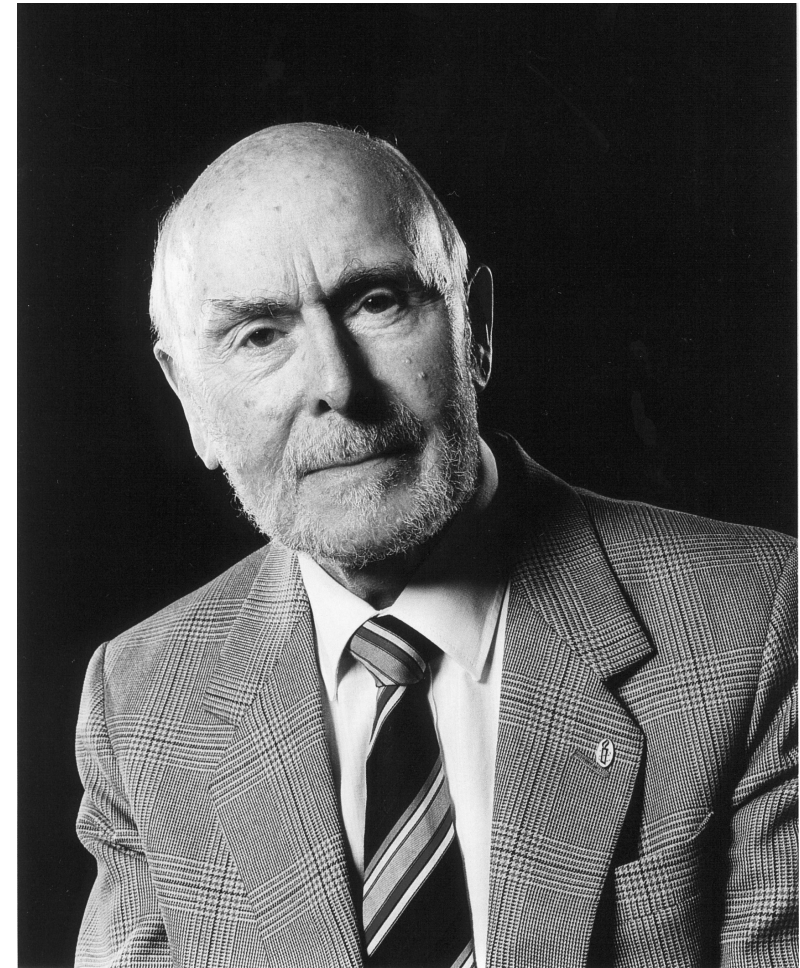
Sunday 16th 2:00 pm **MUSIC & TEA** Glen & Michelle
103a Marlborough Rd
Ryde ☎



**ISLE OF WIGHT
AMNESTY NEWS**



JANUARY 2019



Derek William Stirman

Founder and Life President of the
Isle of Wight Amnesty International Group
died on the 16th. December 2018. Aged 89
He will be sadly missed but fondly remembered.

DEREK STIRMAN

When Derek Stirman joined Amnesty in 1962 he learned that he was the only member on the Island. So, in December that year, he formed a group of like minded people, some of whom are still members today.

The early group adopted three prisoners of conscience, each one from a different part of the world, demonstrating political impartiality. As Amnesty's Mandate evolved, Derek ensured that we continued to focus on victims of human rights abuses.

He chaired monthly meetings with relaxed informality but from the start he insisted on accurate minutes being kept as they formed a detailed history of the group.

Motivated by his leadership, the group became increasingly active raising funds through flag days, auctions and the highly successful book sales. When Derek conducted humanist funerals he donated his fees to Amnesty. In 1999 A.I.U.K. named the Island group as the Group of the Year.

During a four month exchange with the Minister of the Unitarian Church in Denver, Derek founded what was, at that time, only the second Amnesty group in the USA.

Derek's ideals of free speech and the peaceful expression of religious and political beliefs were given practical expression through his work for Amnesty. This is the legacy that Derek has left for our Island group to follow.

THE GROUP AND ITS ACTIVITIES

FUND RAISING

The Flag Day in August raised £451.65 so thanks to all who participated. The ever-popular social events at members' homes raised £322 and a further £196 came from a performance of Asylum Monologues at the Ventnor Fringe.

SPRING SONG AND DANCE

Acts to be confirmed

Wootton Bridge Community Centre

SUNDAY 7th. APRIL 2:30 PM

**Free Admission with
Retiring Collection**

Refreshments will be available.

CAMPAIGNING.

NORTH AFRICA CAMPAIGN focused on Egypt.

Photo journalist Mahmoud Abu Zeid known as Shawkan has had to spend an additional six months in prison. He is now expected to be released on 16 February.

A court in Cairo ordered the release of Amal Fathy, the activist who was arrested for posting a video on Facebook highlighting the prevalence of sexual harassment in Egypt.

We urged that all charges against Azza Soliman should be dropped. She is the Egyptian women's rights lawyer.

Aser Mohamed, arrested at 14 years, was threatened with further torture after denying the charges brought against him.

WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN

The recent "My Rights My Body" campaign featured the Guatemalan total ban on abortions. A worldwide appeal asked for a change in the law and for clemency for those women and young girls who had been raped or had suffered miscarriages.

We asked for the protection of those brave women human rights activists who put their lives on the line to bring into effect changes to the appalling living standards of the people they represent. Their rights are ignored by the authorities. Many activists are harassed, threatened with violence or falsely

convicted and imprisoned. A lawyer, Karina Riquelme, has been intimidated by Chilean intelligence agents because of her legitimate work defending the rights of Mapuche indigenous people.

A worldwide appeal for clemency against the death penalty for a child bride, Noura Hussein Dauod, of Khartoum, Sudan, was successful and her conviction was commuted to imprisonment for five years for killing her husband whilst he attempted to rape her. Noura tried to protect herself with a knife. During the scuffle the husband was fatally wounded.

ANTI DEATH PENALTY Our team of writers has dealt with 23 cases during the last six months, involving four countries.

Iran 1 case; USA 5 cases, resulting in two people being executed; Saudi Arabia 16 cases and Egypt 1 case.

PUBLICITY

The Amnesty Christmas tree was on display at the Brighstone Festival. Messages of support were sent to a number of persecuted women worldwide and signatures were collected on large cards for four of them. We were pleased with the public's response.

The Human Rights Tapestry was exhibited in Newport Minster during August. A Tree of Life was also there for people to hang messages on behalf of Japanese Matsumoto Kenji who has been kept on death row in solitary confinement for 25 years.

There was an exhibition in the Lord Louis Library on the theme of the Human Rights Act and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Glenn and Michelle gave a talk on Amnesty to the Bembridge Windmill W.I.

LGBTI There was a lot of interest at the UK Pride event which was held in Ryde this year with a focus on campaigns for Sakris Kupila and Alejandra. Although there has been a lot of progress in many countries for the LGBTI community, in other places the situation has deteriorated with many people still facing intolerance, threats and violence.

REFUGEES. We have taken urgent action for a number of refugees. The Asylum Monologues event at Ventnor Fringe was well attended by an appreciative audience. With many countries concerned about their own internal issues, negative attitudes towards refugees and asylum seekers have led to increasing difficulties and ill treatment of those seeking safety.

CAN YOU HELP?

Amnesty is well supported on the Island but the group would welcome more active members.

The group meets on the first Friday of each month to plan future campaign activities and fund raising events. It is not essential to attend group meetings to take part in any of our campaigns, as they can be effectively undertaken from home. Full details will be sent with each action.

If you would like to receive your copy of the Isle of Wight Amnesty News via e-mail or require information on any event or any aspect of Amnesty's work, please contact one of the Officers listed below or e-mail us at:

stubbsrw@btinternet.com

For further news and latest updates visit our website at:-

www.amnesty.org.uk/isleofwight

CHAIRMAN: Bryn Davis 406125

TREASURER: Bob Stubbs 883095