



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL Bromley & Orpington Group December 2014 Newsletter



Our thanks to Neville White of Orpington for sponsoring this month's Newsletter

COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 9th December

Tuesday 13th January

Tuesday 10th February

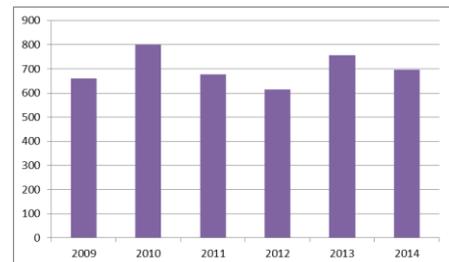
Greetings Card Campaign – 'Send a Message of Hope'
Campaign Meeting

Speaker: Shane Enright of Amnesty UK

'Send A Message of Hope'
Amnesty Greetings Card Campaign
Tuesday 9th December at 7.30 pm
Bring Mince Pies & Cards. All Welcome.

Street Collection

We were able to collect over two weekends in October at three supermarkets raising £646.96 or £15.27 per box-hour. As recent results show (right), the collection has held up well during recent times, raising just over £4,000 since 2009. We thank Margaret for all her hard work organising the collection, and to all our willing rattlers who gave their time making it happen.



Monthly Action



This month marks 25 years since the adoption of the **Convention on the Rights of the Child**, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 20 November 1989 and entered into force on 2 September 1990. It was the first treaty that sought to address the particular needs of children and provide a minimum standard of protection for children's rights. It has become the most widely accepted human rights treaty, having been ratified by almost every member state of the United Nations. However, despite having signed the Convention in 1995, the USA has still not ratified. We wrote to the US Ambassador urging the US to ratify the treaty.

**We are proud to announce the return of
Amnesty Jazz**

The Nic Beston Quartet with Sue Rivers

Friday 6th February 2015 at 7.30pm

Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road

Tickets £10 from David Howkins on 01689823793 or £11 on the door

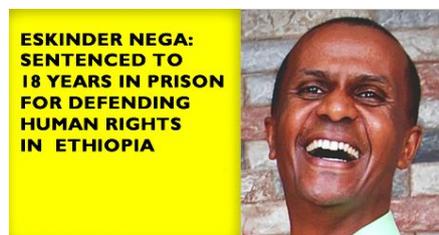
Film Night: We dedicated our November meeting to a showing of the film documentary 'Blood in the Mobile.' Danish Film maker, Frank Poulsen, set out to challenge mobile manufacturer Nokia about the origins of the minerals used in mobile handsets, and to see at first-hand how these are fuelling conflict in DRC. When the film was made (2008) companies hadn't begun to tackle the issue of conflict minerals. We collected six mobile

phones at the meeting which Amnesty recycles to raise funds. If you have a phone that can be recycled please let us know – we'll send you an envelope!

Chairman's Appeal: *Our Newsletter is sent monthly to over 150 supporters and friends. It costs us about £20 a month to run the Group, and we are asking once again if you can help us by **sponsoring a Newsletter**. An appeal letter is enclosed with this mailing. If you can, please help us to keep our costs as low as possible so that as much money as possible can go to Amnesty. Our donations this year have already exceeded £4,000. Thank you!*

Monthly Letter: Ethiopia

Journalist **Eskinder Nega** was arrested in September 2011 after he wrote articles calling for freedom of expression and association to be respected. He was charged with terrorism offences and declared guilty in June 2012. The following month Eskinder was sentenced to 18 years in prison. This marks the eighth time he has been arrested and prosecuted for his journalism. A key part of the most recent evidence against Eskinder was an impassioned speech he gave at a public meeting shortly before his arrest. He talked of the need to struggle peacefully for reform, and expressed his hope that "this could be the year when Ethiopians will no more be imprisoned for their political convictions". Amnesty believes Eskinder is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for his peaceful and legitimate activities as a journalist. His trial was marred by serious irregularities, including being denied access to his lawyer and to family members in the initial stages of his detention. Please sign, address and post the attached letter. **This will cost 97p to post.**



Group Finance

Balance brought forward	£1,398.17
Income	£674.96
Expenditure	£919.64
Balance at 11 th November	£1,153.49
CHANGE	-(£244.68)

Income included Street Collection monies of £646.96, and one private donation (£20). Christmas card sales raised £8. We sent £900 to Amnesty bringing our total for 2014 so far to **£3,572**. The healthy balance means we can comfortably hit our 2014 budget of £4,000 of donations to Amnesty, and we gave David authority to send up to a further £1,000 to Amnesty.

Group Campaigning Actions

We sent a further letter on behalf of our Chinese Nobel Peace Prize winner **Liu Xiabo** and we circulated a letter for everyone to take away on behalf of the **disappeared of Syria**. The letter unusually was sent to the Russian Ambassador urging the Russian authorities to use their influence with the Assad regime. We received a reply from **Jo Johnson MP** regarding the current level of asylum support. Johnson noted that 'asylum seekers are provided with an essential living allowance and free accommodation, are exempt from council tax, and have access to free healthcare'. He noted that the 2013 settlement was challenged in court, and certain irregularities were found – but the amount was not deemed too little to avoid destitution. He concludes 'the current level of cash payments is sufficient to meet essential living needs'.

Present on 11th November: Neville White, David Howkins, Vivien Glanz, Patsy & John Paine, Ted Burke, Wendy Simmons, Shirley & Alex Henderson, Waltraut Gilchrist, Peter Martin, Simon Nash, Gladys Edmonds, Rindy Baaker, Mariela Quaranta. **Apologies:** Rene Eastwood, Joan Williams, Eleanor Ivens, Margaret Coppard, Chris Purnell.

Meetings are held in the Wesley Room, Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington commencing at 7.30pm. **E-mail** amnestybromley@gmail.com **Website:** www.amnesty.org.uk/bromley

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