

# ... for a new world

The foundation

Nov 1, 2019

Dear friends near and far,

## Short version or abstract

Our long-held dream of creating a website that would bring as much as possible of Frank Buchman's heritage to a world audience is advancing towards a more public launching in the second half of next year, 2020. We hope that you've already had a look around the work done so far. If not, click on this link: <https://foranewworld.info> and then type in, for both the user-name and the password: *foranewworld*

We already offer:

- Over 100 films online, including 'For the love of tomorrow', the story of Irène Laure, in 17 languages. And it's already the most important bibliography of publications, with word-searchable .pdf full text files of 99 books. Its multilingual feature is one of the major challenges;
- Portraits and biographies of some 300 of the pioneers.
- An introduction to all the major public archives holding material, and links to their indexes.

But we need help:

- In telling the stories that should be told. We need you to look at what is already on-line, and giving us your suggestions;
- In locating material that needs to be scanned, digitalized, up-loaded;
- In actually doing the scanning and uploading;
- Digitalising and correcting audio files
- Subtitling and captioning digital video files.
- And in finding or contributing to the finances needed. We estimate that we need another SEK 600 000 (£50 000) minimum before the launch, in the coming months. This is on top of the SEK 240 000 (£20 000) already received in gifts.

In putting together what is available so far, we have logged over 8,000 hours of work, 7,500 of them by volunteers. The paid work has been billed below the full rate, and those doing it have worked many more hours pro bono.

We look forward to hearing your ideas, and we especially hope to enlarge our core team. Thanks to modern technologies, you can be part of the team from anywhere in the world, as we can offer online coaching, and regular support.

Do pass this on to anyone you think may be interested. And if you have names and addresses of people who you think would like to be kept informed, please let us know.

Signed:

*Sylviane Borel, Fabiana Duarte, Anthony Duigan, Pieter & Meryl Horn, Rosmarie Lilliehöök, Eva Måsén-Duckert, Bhav Patel, Edward Peters, Monica Pettersson Gunnar & Sylvie Söderlund, Leif Söderlund, Andrew & Eliane Stallybrass, Ann-Kristin Särnbrink, Peter Vickers.*

PS. For those who want more background on the genesis and the thinking behind this venture, please read Gunnar Söderlund's 'A vision coming to life' attached.

## Long version

### **A vision coming to life**

Oct 3rd, 2019

We are beginning to see the fruition of over 20 years of thinking, hoping and ultimately, commitment. Different threads are coming together in one defined project.

Some of these threads are:

- 20 years ago, when I was seeing Jean-Marc Duckert for the last time, in the hospital where three days later cancer ended his life, we talked of many things. He had been my closest friend and confidant for nearly 30 years.

One thing that concerned us both very much was the course taken by MRA, the framework within which we both had given our best and deepest thinking and living for decades. There was much to be grateful for, but also things that worried us, and we did not have a lot of answers. As I was about to leave the room for the last time, he said:  
*"Gather those who drink from the same source"*.

It was not clear what he meant, but I felt I had been given a commission of sorts.

- A few years later the MRA home in Stockholm was sold. A place where I had been as a boy and young man. And where later I lived nearly 20 years with my own family. Where I had met ordinary and extraordinary people. Laughed at songs describing the humorous side of human nature and cried because of the pain that was shared. Heard from industrial delegations from Japan and shared the birthday of a friend's daughter who has Downs Syndrome.

Taken individually these experiences may not have marked me dramatically. But the combined impact shaped much of my thinking and attitude in life. It also set my feet on a path from which I may have wavered at times, but never abandoned.

- Having Sylvie (born Haller) as wife and colleague, but also as singer and co-responsible for much of the development of Renewal Arts, I began to research how much of the musical and artistic heritage over the decades in the Oxford Group and MRA had been archived and made available. Going through the homepages of several IofC legal bodies I realised that there was very little. Sometimes you could read about it, but not hear or see something.

- A while back, some friends were sitting around trying to describe what the thing was about MRA that actually made people change radically? One person put forward the thought of "osmosis". You are immersed in stories and experiences, as well as care, for long enough and you "absorb it" as a plant does water. There are precious few places around the world where this kind of "osmosis" can happen now. And many of the stories and experiences may soon be forgotten.

- Several friends in various countries have been working on the essential, physical archiving of material from years past. Focus has naturally been given to the printed word, but not so much to other media.

Having said that, we are grateful that, spearheaded by Eliane Stallybrass, many of the films have been digitised and made available. Over 100 can be accessed via the platform so far. But for the rest, little of the vast amount of material is available to people who are not academic or doing research. And the material is spread in many places around the world!

### **Short history**

- *Renewal Arts – Sweden* was given 15% (or 4.300 000 SEK) of the proceeds after the sale of the home in Stockholm in recognition of the importance of the arts and music in the implementation of the programme for Moral Re-armament. During the following years many ideas and projects were carried

out, but seven years ago those of us involved felt we were meant to take a more radical path.

The money was placed in a charitable foundation with the single purpose of safeguarding our documented past as far as possible and making it available. (Aims and purposes are noted on the platform) We felt a particular responsibility to the arts and music, but soon found that we were meant to care for all the aspects of our common heritage.

The sum available was big in our eyes, but small in view of the task ahead. We had 2 800 000 SEK at that point. Approx. £ 230 000. The capital was, and still is, invested against collateral in the farm Lundby Gård, and the commercial interest paid covers the running costs of storage, office, monthly payments for internet etc, as well as most of the fees for the, by law mandated, chartered accountant. In other words, the money for “keeping it going”, but not developing it.

The board of the foundation at present is made up of Ann-Kristin Särnbrink, Eva Måsén-Duckert and Monica Pettersson. We will now begin to include others (who may or may not speak or read Swedish) world-wide to fill the total of 11 places available on the board, in order to reflect the transnational aspect of this heritage.

The board has chosen not to have an executive role, but acts as the moral and spiritual guarantor and sounding board for those of us who are actually involved daily.

- **The pivotal element** of making this adventure become reality was when Edward Peters, Eliane and Andrew Stallybrass felt to give their mind, heart and hand.

Apart from them we are daily working with Meryl and Pieter Horn as well as Helen and Anthony Duigan in South Africa.

Rosmarie Lilliehöök is putting her meticulous mind and generous heart to the physical archives and the digital transfers. She has now scanned more than 8 000 documents including brittle press cuttings from the late 30's and 40's.

Sylvie is a natural member of the team. We have been joined by Sylviane Borel – daughter of Regula and Serge Borel, who adds knowledge of design together with Leif Söderlund, our son, photographer, who also brings his professional, organisational skills learnt working as a project engineer at the Scania truck company.

Vitalie Cracan in Romania is our technical fall-back.

**Others** have been included ad hoc as they offer to help. Fabiana Duarte in Montevideo is working on the Portuguese version, and others are getting trained to do likewise in a few other languages. John Azzopardi, photographer from Malta, spent several weeks in Caux this summer together with Eliane and Andrew Stallybrass in order to scan the many photographs that are there. At the moment of writing he is back in Caux for another two weeks.

Elisabeth Tooms will spend time in Green Coat Place, London in view of listing and scanning photos that are stored there, as well as some material regarding the outreach and work of the Westminster Theatre. She will also give a hand in finding some of the audio material, as it is especially hard to locate many of the sound recordings of songs and musicals made over the years.

**So far**, the core team has logged over 8 000 hours. Of that roughly 7 500 are voluntary work. A few of the team need to have some of their work hours paid in order to survive, but they charge low fees, and often do many hours pro bono. All the “ad hoc” people work at this point without logging time!

The actual time spent thinking, talking, discussing and doing research within the core team is likely a lot more than 8 000 hours! Probably twice as much.

**Our vision** and sense of responsibility for the past has grown with the deepening understanding of how much is still to be done in order to give as full as possible a picture of the extraordinary events, people and experiences that make up the moral and spiritual heritage of Frank Buchman. And our common history.

We are trying to make sure that things are gathered and archived whenever we have the chance. Without that there will be nothing for us to present digitally! In some cases, we assist with direct help or contribute the archiving experience of Eliane Stallybrass in particular.

Another side to this has been the beginning of building our own digital storage ( on our own machines, independent of the internet) of material that may or may not end up being made public. This will be used as

1. Back up
2. Temporary storage
3. High resolution copies of everything to insure the possibility to be able to present everything in the future, when standards may be higher than today.
4. Source material for academic research work. (Strongly password protected)

We have, for instance, many written accounts of moves into places and situations around the world. These are not ready “stories”, nor would most of us be helped by having access to them. A person studying a particular issue or situation may, on the other hand, find helpful material there.

Two friends, who for nearly 30 years have made inroads into Somalia have with the help of a third person written extensively about this. That will be available for academics.

Word has just reached us of much material around the Sudan, which will be scanned and made available for academic work in our password protected digital archive before the actual papers are placed with an appropriate body, like the Bodleian library.

One family has given us the quiet time books of the father of the house from the late 30’s until his death early 2000. Obviously not for public consumption, but precious for research.

One important aspect of the platform will be to be able listen to any of the recorded meetings in Caux over 50 + years.

- **We are not aiming to give one picture or to tell one, correct story.** We decided very early on that this was open to all material that there is, illuminating the growth of any of the branches that have sprung from the roots of Buchman’s life and work. This will include material that is critical, painful and to some, maybe provocative. We will do our best to ensure that no material goes up that hurts somebody. If we make a wrong choice, we will take it down immediately.

**As we pursue ideas and people,** we realise how many different things have indeed sprung from our common roots. OG/MRA/ IofC is obvious, and most of us are aware of Alcoholic Anonymous. Others will add The Findhorn foundation. The OJC in Germany ( Offensive Junge Christen) under the leadership of Horst-Klaus and Irmela Hofmann is another example. Markus Hofmann, their son, pointed out nearly 30 different “groups” of people who have built their philosophy, communities and life after meeting the Oxford Group, Buchman and MRA. Sing-Out and Gente que Avanza are further examples.

In so far as any of them want to recognise our common roots, we will make space for them.

**We launched a first test version** of the internet platform in January this year to give people a sense of what we are trying to do.

In order to get there, we formulated a Project Plan, ( available on request). We managed to do what we set out to do with phase I within the strict economic confines of a fairly low budget.

We are now preparing Phase II of the platform. It will need a lot of thinking and we consult widely with people in the business. Few in the world have done a multilingual project on this scale, and at times we are in very unknown territory. We hope to launch Phase II sometime in the second half of next year.

### **Painting the bigger pictures.**

Though many of us daily use the internet, we are beginning to realise how much we can do via this medium. It is not only a list of things that people can look at or listen to. We can weave together material of all kinds and complement a fairly one-dimensional picture with sights and sounds.

We can add levels to stories that we have “known” for decades. Like the many different moves of the welcoming back into the family of nations of the Germans, which is more than Irene Laure (important as her story is). An example of this is the book “Stepping Stones” by Hansjörg Gareis. We are trying to get permission to have it on the platform. (We also need to add the story of Maurice Nosley. Because without Maurice Nosley – no Irene Laure.)

We can, for instance, combine different people’s accounts, photos and songs from the miracle around the independence of Cyprus that already exists, leading up to the first flag of the free island hanging

outside its national borders, in Caux, making an already extraordinary tale even more interesting.

Over the last days we have been in touch with Peter Everington, who has copies of letters from various people (Makarios, Denktash and others) commenting on what was happening at the time!

We can also offer places like Asia Plateau to have their own “entrance” to all the material, rather than ours. In other words, they could point people to a different “door” of their design and choosing that use all the same material “behind it”. Caux could do the same, for instance.

**And this is not only a project about the past,** important as it is.

As lives are changed and histories evolve, they can be recorded and added in the years to come. New songs will be written. New art created. There will be space for all.

### **Help needed**

- We are continuously on the lookout for things and are encouraged by how much material is still around in boxes, drawers and on bookshelves.

When it comes to books we list where there is a hard copy anywhere in the world, in case somebody would like to get hold of one. Our objective is that most books will also be available directly on the platform in several readable formats. The possibility of printing-on-demand of a few copies will also be explored.

- We would welcome anyone who would be ready to set aside an hour or two a week to help check, proofread or translate.

- And if you don't know what you could do, but would like to help, please let us know and we will work something out, together.

- We can do a lot of things with unskilled, voluntary help, but there are some aspects for which we will need to find more money.

For instance:

- Some material is so old that it needs special care in order to scan it. Newspaper print, for instance, is made of fairly low-quality paper and deteriorates fast. We have already experienced this.

- Some audiotapes have become so brittle that they risk breaking before one can do a copy.

- The Phase II version will have an extremely powerful search engine, but we will need additional, professional help to do this.

- For some printed and audio material, the sheer amount is so big that at times we may need to hand it over to a commercial enterprise in order to have a chance to get it done in a reasonable timespan. (some of us are not getting younger). Series of monthly or weekly publications belong in this category. We now have all the “For a change” magazines available and word searchable. New World News is also on the immediate list. The weekly Indian publication Himmat is in many ways part of our common history, and there is a complete set – in Lausanne! We would like to make this available if at all possible.

- In some places in the world there is nobody around who could lend a hand, and we may need to pay somebody to help.

### **Gifts of money so far.**

We have to date received approximately SEK 240 000 (£ 20 000) in gifts, that has made it possible to get this far. SEK 60 000 (£ 5 000) is from the Oxford Group in the UK, and SEK 180 000 (£ 15 000) are private gifts. Some money has been given in the memory of somebody. We note gifts in one place on the platform.

Peter Vickers, Leeds, one of the donors writes:

*"The work of "...for a new world" captures and makes available much of my own personal heritage, including the culture in which I grew up and which continues to shape my thinking to this day. It is, in that sense, a chance to return "home"."*

For anyone wishing to contribute financially there are several ways, also noted on the platform, as well as below.

**Budgets are tricky things.** We estimate that we need a minimum of 600 000 SEK (£ 46 000) before we can launch the platform publicly. It is in some ways not a lot of money. But the fact is that with the different things that have been added (see above) we believe we might need at least half again (300 000

SEK/£ 23 000) as much in the coming year to achieve what we believe will make this platform a unique contribution.

We have in mind to look for public support when it comes to archives etc. But that is easier said than done, and many people are hoping for a slice of that particular cake.

We would be grateful for any further ideas of where and how we could find support.

Stop Press!

As we began to circulate this draft to those who are signing, there came the very unexpected word of promises of gifts for SEK 350 000. Just over half of the immediate budget! It is with amazement and deep gratitude that we acknowledge these gifts, encouraging us in the belief that we are doing something worthwhile.

Sincerely,

*Gunnar Söderlund*

**The foundation for a new world**

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