

HGF BRIEFING NOTES

FRIDAYS

During the summer and autumn the Friday afternoon and evening meetings at Mandeville Place have continued to be the main regular activity in London. At the afternoon Library Group meetings, arranged by Tommas Graves, a variety of talks and discussions have taken place among the small group of enthusiasts who continue to attend. The evening meetings arranged by Bart Dunlea have enjoyed rather more support as the group have continued to explore the common ground underpinning both Plato's *Laws* (with Joseph Milne and Richard Bolton) and the works of Henry George (with David Triggs). The Friday evening programme has also been enlivened by larger meetings when Phil Anderson provided further insights into economic cycles with emphasis upon their impacts upon stock market share prices. When, in response to a question at the end of his presentation he startled many present by suggesting that they could form the basis for an equitable sharing of land rent, Phil agreed to a return visit to clarify. On his return Phil explained how the widespread evidence of corruption in government and public officials throughout the world and down the ages persuaded him that neither could not be trusted with such an important responsibility and that the private sector free market should provide a better way of sharing the rent. Following vigorous debate, few present were convinced that Phil's remedy would provide a viable antidote to dishonesty in public or private affairs.

BOOKS

For some years since the closing of the Foundation's Edinburgh office in 2005 the Foundation's stock of books was looked after by HGF member Graham Blackbourne and sales made available through The School of Economic Science's branch in Edinburgh. Changes in Graham's accommodation arrangements this year gave rise to a need to relocate the stock and Michael Learoyd generously volunteered to organise a move to his home in London. Michael has also organised a selection of books to be held at Mandeville Place for sale during Foundation events.

OUTREACH

The schools poster competition based upon *The Taxing Question of Land* film we co-sponsored marked a successful start of a new outreach initiative. Some seventy five entries were received from a number of schools from around the country. The winning entry came from Harry Nash at Charterhouse School and the five runners up prizes all went to members of Blackpool Sixth Form College. Chairman, David Triggs, presented the prizes at the respective schools and was encouraged by the enthusiasm shown by staff and pupils alike for the scope such competitions provide to get the Foundation's message across. Plans are now being laid to repeat the competition format in a manner that would engage the interest of a broader range of students.

The 'Rethinking Economics' movement that is taking place in universities around the world provides another opportunity to engage with a number of intelligent young people who will be the decision makers of tomorrow. Several HGF members attended the 'Rethinking Economics' held at University College London over the weekend 28/29 June where we also provided a book and pamphlet stall. Useful contributions and contacts were made that provide scope for further engagement.



At this year's AGM/Open Day event in September a number of members provided an interesting array of presentations and scope for discussion. One however is worthy of special mention since it has led to a significant new twist to the Foundation's programme for outreach. The day before the AGM and out of the blue, David Triggs received a telephone call from one Gareth Whelan. Gareth said he was interested in introducing people to the idea of collecting of public revenue based on land value and asked if HGF might be able to help in finding a venue for suitable workshop. David invited him to the next day's event suggesting that he would have the opportunity to learn more about the Foundation and present his ideas to those present. This led to an HGF sponsored

workshop at Mandeville Place attended by thirty or so people interested in exploring ways in which our cause may be better promoted. Participants were challenged to initiate further events devoted to introducing the 'land value/public revenue' issue to groups of people who had never heard about it before. Since then several such events have taken place with promising results but Gareth's ambition extends for this process to be repeated by persuading a small fraction of those that 'get it' when they come to an 'introduction' to do likewise. Pyramid selling comes to mind but 'selling' participants in this case receive nothing more than the satisfaction of introducing people to a 'good idea'. It is 'inverted pyramid giving'. After careful consideration the HGF Council of Management have decided the approach is worth a try and have agreed to contract Gareth to undertake work that includes not only this aspect of outreach but also the Schools competition activities and fund raising through contacts with small and medium sized businesses that would stand to benefit from the changes in fiscal policy we promote.

The Council have also approved funding for the publication of a new book by Roy Douglas *Why Land Matters Today* that is aimed at introducing our message to a new, young audience. The finishing touches to the book are being made as this edition of Land&Liberty is going to print.

From the above it will be apparent that following an extensive period during which the Council has felt it prudent to limit expenditure and garner financial resources circumstances are now such that the Council is able and willing take advantage of what they judge to be worthwhile opportunities to promote the Foundation's object.