

# 25th Anniversary Dinner

The Foundation celebrated its 25th anniversary in style on Thursday, July 27 with a dinner and awards function at the Sandton Sun. Our 120 guests included staff, members, donors, old friends and supporters, and a smattering of government officials who had attended the *Liberty and Prosperity: Principles of Good Law in a Complex Society* conference during the day (see 'Principles of Good Law' Conference).

Each guest received a limited-edition leather-bound copy of Louw and Kendall's *South Africa: The Solution*, enjoyed a sumptuous South African buffet, was entertained by the Entertainer Ensemble string trio, and was surrounded by flowers and candles and like-minded people in celebratory mood.

Temba Nolutshungu acted as Master of Ceremonies and Brian Benfield handed out the awards – perhaps the highlight of the evening (see *Special mentions* and *Citations* below).

Special thanks are due to ABSA who funded the dinner and who were represented at the event by Penny Tshongweni.

## Special mentions

Dr Benfield made special mention of the Foundation's longest-standing corporate and individual members present at the dinner:

- **Standard Bank** (1977) – represented by Richard Steyn,
- **Tupperware** (1977) – represented by Ian Maxwell,
- **Duncan Brodie** (1975),
- **Norman Davis** (1976),
- **Jim Harris** (1977)...

...and thanked those individuals who have made a special contribution to the work of the FMF:

- **Libby Husemeyer** – who has done a marvellous job of editing the Foundation's publications for many years.
- **Frances Kendall** – who worked for the Foundation in the early stages and wrote and co-authored some great books for the cause.
- **Terry Markman** – who is the Foundation's most hard-working Council member and indefatigable in his recruitment of corporate members.
- **Malcolm McIntyre** – who has been the FMF's Honorary Auditor from the beginning.
- **Duncan Reekie** – who has been our Publications Editor for many years and has ensured that we have a long list of excellent publications.
- **Marc Swanepoel** – one of the founders of the FMF who remains closely associated as a Council Member, member of the Executive Committee and through FEBDEV, the training organisation he established with **Norma James** that does training for the FMF.

He also expressed the Foundation's gratitude to Members, Patrons, Council Members, Executive Committee Members, Donors, Sponsors and staff who have contributed to the Foundation's success.

## Citations

The following received awards for long-service and outstanding contributions:

**Lyn Stidworthy:** A very young and somewhat rebellious Lyn joined the Foundation as a junior typist in October 1992. She gradually took on increasing responsibility as she gained experience. She is now a senior staff member who handles several portfolios with intelligence and consummate ease. Membership liaison and the updating of the website are included on her list of responsibilities. Lyn is loyal and tolerant of even the most unreasonable of requests, and is always pleasant even when she is under intense pressure.

**Joan Evans:** Joan joined the staff of the Foundation as a senior typist in March 1983 but later took over the books and subsequently became the Administrative Manager. She never had any intention of becoming an accountant – she has a BA degree and majored in English – but she does the job superbly.

Joan quietly and efficiently does everything that has to be done at the time it needs to be done – allowing the directors to concentrate on their job of selling ideas. That quiet efficiency does not always receive the recognition it should but we all know that the FMF would grind to a halt without her.

**Temba Nolutshungu:** Temba became a Director of the Foundation on 1 October 1991. He earlier joined the FMFs training division to teach basic business and economic principles. Taking up an appointment to teach employers and their workers about free markets is, on the surface, not a very remarkable thing to do. However, it is rather unusual if you happen to have been a dedicated socialist.

During the struggle against apartheid Temba was the leader of the Black Mamba youth movement. He was an activist involved in clandestine operations staying one step ahead of the security forces. He smuggled anti-apartheid activists out of the country for military training and to save them from being arrested. He and his movement were nurtured on the writings of Proudhon, Marx, Lenin, Trotsky and the military strategies of Mao Zedong. Their intellectual “bible” was *Wretched of the Earth* by Franz Fanon.

This is the man who responded to an FMF Training Division advertisement. He told the manager that he was a socialist but he wanted to see what they were teaching anyway. She gave him books to read and videos to view. For Temba this was a life-changing experience. He had never before been exposed to such material. As he says, he discovered what true freedom is.

If you ask him today what finally convinced him and fundamentally changed him – from dedicated socialist to free market proponent - his likely reply will be: “It was that damned video”. The video in question shows Walter Williams, a black American economist, talking about his book *The State Against Blacks*. “He was the most liberated person I had ever come across” says Temba “and he was black”. He watched the video over and over again, not believing that Williams could be real – trying to find flaws in what he was saying. Of course, Williams merely reinforced the doubts that had already crept into Temba’s mind – questions like; why was capitalist West Germany an economic miracle while communist East Germany remained mired in poverty. And then a profound and cruel realisation – apartheid was a socialist and not a capitalist system.

Temba is passionate about liberty and compassionate towards those who do not understand its true meaning. He believes that all they lack is information. His task, as he sees it, is to help provide that information.

**Eustace Davie:** Eustace was drawn to free market ideas during the years when socialism was the dominant world view when, as happened to so many others, he discovered Ayn Rand’s books. This meant that he became intellectually isolated in Harrismith where he was an entrepreneur and a partner in a firm of auditors.

In 1976, he met Leon Louw at a conference in Johannesburg and there and then joined the Free Market Foundation as one of its first few members. He became a Council member in April 1977 and a full-time Director in October 1981.

Eustace is truly the Foundation’s unsung hero. He never seeks recognition, nor does he need to be in the limelight. Behind the scenes he is enormously productive not only managing the FMF’s day-to-day affairs, but writing a great deal – often for others.

There are many anecdotes that illustrate Eustace’s willingness to stop what he is doing to come to the assistance of his colleagues. Once Leon was phoned in his car and told there had been a miscommunication about arrangements. He was supposed to be addressing a NAFCOC meeting on Credit Bureaux – about which he knew very little! Leon changed direction and headed for the conference venue – phoning through an SOS to Eustace – who dropped everything – researched the issue – and provided information as Leon drove. The result: Leon was complimented on his expert knowledge and commissioned to draft a policy document on the subject.

Although he is a formidable generalist, Eustace is the FMF’s specialist on monetary and fiscal policy, education, and health.

He is a rare combination of idealism and pragmatism and is valued at the FMF as a strategist. Here are some of his achievements:

- In 1985 he arranged for Leon to give a series of workshops on how to solve South Africa's racial and constitutional problems. He had the proceedings transcribed and through his persuasion Leon's wife, Frances, turned the raw material into the famous book, *South Africa: the Solution*.
- More recently, it was Eustace who initiated one of the FMF's current priorities: highlighting the need to understand and respect the rule of law.
- He played an important role in getting the Reserve Bank to reduce inflation by printing less money, and the Treasury to relax exchange control.
- He works closely with authors of FMF publications who are uniformly impressed by his ability to contribute expertise and unique insights on a remarkably wide range of issues – as an example, Eustace writes the bulk of the FMF's submissions to government departments and parliamentary Portfolio Committees.
- He is the architect and co-ordinator of the FMF's enormously successful and influential Laws Affecting Small Business series.
- He is responsible for the FMF's participation in the production of the internationally significant Economic Freedom of the World publication.
- He manages the Foundation's impressive new website.
- And it was he who suggested opening the FMF's Cape Town office, which has increased the Foundation's efficacy enormously.

His intellect and ability have ensured that he is internationally recognised – Eustace is one of the few South African members of the prestigious Mont Pelerin Society.

**Leon Louw:** Leon was one of the original six who started the Free Market Foundation. He participated in all the negotiations leading to its reconstitution and served as Honorary Secretary until he became Executive Director on 1 January 1977.

His accomplishments have been truly remarkable yet largely unrecognised. He deserves to have them chronicled in detail. We could describe his participation in the Dakar conference, his Nobel Peace Prize nominations and many more. However, time allows us to mention a mere sample:

- In the early years Leon opposed apartheid by attacking its soft underbelly: its economic components. He worked long and hard to persuade the apartheid government to honour its claims that black South Africans were "separate but equal". He insisted that this meant that the laws applicable to blacks in so-called "black" areas should be the same as those applicable to whites in "white" areas. His logic was irrefutable. He argued against the licensing laws, transportation permit (taxi) laws, zoning laws, and all the other laws that prevented black people from making economic progress. As a result of his tireless campaign many laws were repealed or changed to allow black people to enter the economy. The resultant economic tide was unstoppable.
- In the mid-eighties Leon, together with his wife Frances, turned his attention to the form a non-racial democratic South Africa could take. They wrote *South Africa: The Solution*, which analysed the turbulent socio-political history of this country – but then most importantly – offered a constitutional dispensation for the creation of a non-racial democracy that would allow South Africa's people to live together in peace and harmony. The book sold many thousands and the ideas were propagated widely. It provided hope to people of all races that there were solutions where none had seemed possible. All the ideas were not adopted – but many were – and participants in the subsequent negotiations were more reasonable than they might otherwise have been.
- For many years Leon has been campaigning for simplification of the procedures for the transfer of title to land. He has consistently maintained that relatively inexpensive land does not require expensive survey and registration formalities in order to provide secure title – what is required is simple but formal recognition of ownership. This path-breaking idea was partially utilised in the past but has now finally been adopted to speed up the granting of title to the landless – another idea he has been pushing for many years. He asked the apartheid government to transfer all government-owned housing to the people at low cost or free of charge. He urged and continues to urge the

current government to utilise the millions of hectares of government land to give plots of land to the people. He has also urged that members of traditional communities should be given secure title to their properties without interfering with the overall sanctity of the property rights of those communities – all to be accomplished using the suggested low cost methods. At the same time he maintains that private property rights must be respected at all times – especially for the sake of those who were denied property rights in the past. To a large extent these ideas for transforming the lives of the poorest South Africans have received general acceptance.

Leon has made many more important contributions that we hope one day to read about in his autobiography. His goal, always, a free and prosperous South Africa and a free world. His method, always, arguing eloquently for the rights of the individual and against tyranny in all its forms. We can say without any hesitation – Leon has made a difference – a very big difference.

**Michael O’Dowd:** Michael O’Dowd was elected to the Council of the Free Market Foundation on 9 March 1977. Before that he played a leading role, together with the late Mr Dirk Hertzog, in re-constituting the Foundation and gaining the support of the major South African institutions for the then fledgling organisation. His involvement was vital in getting the Foundation off the ground. At the time he was the Chairman of the Anglo American and De Beers Group Chairman’s Fund.

On 12 September 1978 Michael became the Chairman of the Foundation. Now, 22 years later, he remains Chairman by popular demand. For the FMF he wrote various books and monographs, including *Industrial Revolution: Myth and Reality*, *The World Revolution in Economic Policy*, *South Africa as an “Open Society”*, *Liberal Reflections*, and *The O’Dowd Thesis and The Triumph of Democratic Capitalism*. The latter book republished Michael’s 1966 prediction, with subsequent updates, that economic progress would end apartheid. In a 1991 address to the South African historical society he had this to say:

*What we have to do is first of all accept ourselves for what we are. Wherever we are going, we have to start from here, and it is no use wishing we were somewhere else. Then we have to learn from history. We must pay careful attention to the facts, all known facts, we must beware of grandiose over-ambitious theories, and, while being aware of our essential uniqueness, we must not make too much of it.*

Michael O’Dowd is a man of great intellect and foresight – a lawyer by training but a student of history and economics by preference. His unique qualities allowed him to guide the Foundation in its intellectual endeavours as well as in the ordering of its day-to-day affairs. The two decades of association with him have greatly enriched everyone in the Free Market Foundation.

(The citations are reproduced in full for the information of Council Members who could not be present.)