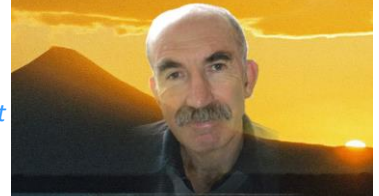


# READING SAN FRANCISCO LIBRE ASSOCIATION

*The Reading San Francisco Libre Association (RSFLA) is the organisation that facilitates the town-twinning link between Reading and San Francisco Libre, a small town in Nicaragua with rural outlying communities. RSFLA supports the Reading San Francisco Libre Trust (RSFLT), a registered charity. 100% of donated funds go to support the people, development and environment of San Francisco Libre. Many projects are implemented by the local NGO, APREDEN, which is also supported by the German town twinning association in Oldenburg. The David Grimes Trust, part of RSFLT, was established in memory of David Grimes, an RSFLT trustee and staff member of the Department of Meteorology of Reading University.*



**David Grimes Trust**

## Special edition: ten years of the David Grimes Trust

### David Grimes Trust

This December marks the tenth anniversary of the death of David Grimes, and also of the creation of the David Grimes Trust in his memory. Dr David Grimes was a Senior Lecturer in Hydrometeorology at the Department of Meteorology of Reading University. David died at the age of 60 from a rare neurodegenerative condition. Among his academic duties he had led an international research programme using satellite data (TAMSAT) to improve weather forecasting in tropical countries. David was a strong advocate for social justice and equitable international development. Since the 1990s he had been a trustee and active member of the Reading-San Francisco Libre Association and was editor of its Newsletter known as *Momotombo*.

Due to David's association with San Francisco Libre (SFL), his family and colleagues felt it appropriate to raise funds in his memory for San Francisco Libre at his funeral and subsequent events organised by members of the Meteorology Department. This fund raising has continued for the past decade, with colleagues and students providing regular monthly payments, sponsoring half-marathon runners and organising collections at balls, concerts and cake sales.



In this tenth anniversary year, Reading San Francisco Libre Association members are giving thanks for the life of David Grimes and his on-going legacy. We would like to express our profound appreciation of all who have been contributing to the David Grimes Trust, enabling it to support education, livelihoods and the local environment in San Francisco Libre.

This edition of *Momotombo* will summarise some of the achievements of the past ten years and some of the projects lined up for 2022 and beyond. We will also remind readers of the history of Reading's on-going relationship with its twin town in Nicaragua and urge our readers and supporters to help us to organise our work in the coming decade.

### How the David Grimes Trust supports SFL

The David Grimes Trust (DGT or 'the Trust'), in collaboration with APREDEN and NV Oldenburg, has provided funds for the new 'Biblioteca', 'la Guayabita', the 'Beca' scholarship scheme and many smaller projects in San Francisco Libre. Supporters of the David Grimes Trust, notably members of the Meteorology Department, have been highly successful in raising funds which have been transferred to San Francisco Libre to help education, build livelihoods and improve the local environment.



RSFLA has worked with the community of San Francisco Libre since the late 1980s, formalised by their official twinning in 1994. In the past decade, the Association and Trust have collaborated with APREDEN and NV Oldenburg. APREDEN is an NGO based in San Francisco Libre that manages three core projects: the *Beca* (school scholarship) scheme, *La Guayabita* environmental reserve and *La Biblioteca* community centre. They are funded by NV Oldenburg and the David Grimes



Trust, with support from other partner organisations.

We rely on the sustained support of our individual donors, the University of Reading Department of Meteorology, and generous individuals and organisations such as *Statistics for Sustainable Development*. 100% of funds we receive are used for projects.

Since *Momotombo 15* (December 2020) Nicaragua has faced a series of national crises, that have followed the March 2018 protests (and their political and economic consequences) and the 2018 United States NICA Act which imposed sanctions and financial restrictions on Nicaragua. The Covid outbreak that started in 2020 has continued to affect the country. The government has been accused of being increasingly autocratic and repressive, and the 2021 Presidential election continued the rule of Daniel Ortega, with many opposition candidates disbarred or absent. The on-going fallout from the 2018-2021 unrest has been the disruption of the social security system, tourism, commercial activities, the informal economy and the foreign aid sector, with resulting unemployment and food insecurity. Luckily, San Francisco Libre has been peaceful throughout, without critical Covid problems, and we are happy to report continued community development thanks to its resilience, the work of state services and the activities of NGOs such as APREDEN.

## DGT supported projects 2011-2021

With the launch of the David Grimes Trust, there was huge support from his colleagues in the Meteorology Department and from his family, with many people completing standing orders which are the backbone of the funding. There was also much additional support from the Met's fund-raising events and even generous requests that wedding present money should go to the trust.



RSFLA has promised that 100% of all such funds raised will go to support appropriate projects in San Francisco Libre, with no overheads at all being deducted by RSFLA whose volunteers and special grants cover our running costs. This assurance of 100% direct funding is possible thanks to our two main partners, the NGO APREDEN in SFL that manages the many community projects we support and our German partners in Oldenburg who regularly transfer funds to APREDEN to support agreed projects and costs.

## Our partners: APREDEN and Oldenburg

APREDEN is committed to environmental sustainability and community development. Led by its President Jimmy Zamora

and an elected committee, it consults transparently with the community, manages projects and collaborates with training and funding providers such as Obra Kolping, World Vision, the German Embassy and the Polytechnic University.

NV Oldenburg (the town-twinning organisation of Oldenburg) has worked with APREDEN since the 1990s and their collaboration with Reading SFLA started in 1991. Self-funded volunteers from NV Oldenburg had supported work in SFL since the 1990s and from 2008 four young people a year from Oldenburg were funded by the German government's Weltwaerts volunteers programme to spend ten months in SFL supporting APREDEN and its projects. Unfortunately, this volunteer programme was suspended in 2018 because of the civil unrest in Nicaragua and it has yet to restart.

## The *Beca* school scholarship scheme

The *Beca* scheme helps 106 young people from disadvantaged families attend school by means of a monthly allowance of about £8. Selection is achieved through a highly transparent, participatory process. This, together with stipend distribution, regular home visits, and encouraging information exchanges requires scrupulous management, provided for many years by APREDEN employee and former *Beca* recipient Josselyn Guevara and now by her successor Manuel Vallejos.

Four of the 2021 *Beca* recipients visited at their homes



RSFLA began contributing to the scheme in 2002 through the Peter Oakley Trust. Initial support to eight students grew to 16 in 2004, with the remainder funded by Oldenburg. In 2011 the DGT became responsible for the *Beca* funding. In 2013, the DGT increased its funding share to 20 (an annual commitment of about £1,700 a year) and this was doubled to 40 in 2020, thanks to our generous donors.

Having supported the *Beca* students for many years, we are now gaining the great satisfaction of hearing about previous recipients who have subsequently qualified as doctors, nurses, teachers and other professionals crucial to Nicaragua's development.

Former SFL *Beca* recipients who have since qualified





## La Guayabita environmental centre

Environmental degradation has been a huge problem in San Francisco Libre, and in the face of drought, overgrazing, deforestation and the large-scale sale of wood for fuel, *La Guayabita* environmental centre was established by APREDEN as a tree reserve and nursery for fruit tree saplings for free distribution to provide food and shade in the community. Subsequently it has developed as a community environmental education centre and a model of sustainable cultivation. It has been called 'the lungs of San Francisco Libre' (<https://www.facebook.com/centrolaguayabita>).

In 2011, the David Grimes Trust donated about £2,000 for the production and distribution of 12,000 seedlings. Over the next three years, fertile soil was collected, local tree seeds gathered and planted, and many thousands of seedlings were grown and distributed. Increased demand required a more powerful water pump and in 2013 the £400 cost was shared between the DGT and Oldenburg.

*Goyo and Maria tending the fruits trees at La Guayabita*



By 2013 Oldenburg had supported the building of a visitor centre with funds from the German national lottery. As we had agreed in principle to support environmental education there, a major DGT project for 2015 was building of ecological toilets and storerooms, with Oldenburg funding a water tank. The toilets enabled group visits and the storerooms freed up space in the existing building for training and refreshments, so making *La Guayabita* a multi-purpose facility. A feature now is its regular use for children's environmental education, linked with the local schools.

For some years APREDEN had explored options for expanding the size and influence of *La Guayabita*. The Trust expressed its willingness to fund expansion if a suitable plot of land could be identified, and £2,000 of DGT funds were earmarked for this. In 2018, the Trust, facilitated by a generous private donation in memory of Jane Oram, funded APREDEN to buy 4.5 acres of land on the northern edge of *La Guayabita*. It was cleared and fenced, irrigated and planted with fruiting and indigenous trees. With the extra land came the need for more staff. It also needed a new well with a submersible electric

pump and a water tank, which the Trust funded. In April 2020, Trustees committed £205 for additional irrigation at *La Guayabita* and in August, following detailed proposals, they also agreed to contribute £525 for tree saplings to be grown as a fruit crop.

*Fruits from La Guayabita served to children in La Biblioteca*



The recent plantings of 500 fruit trees, including bananas, guavas, and papayas are due to be harvested next year and their fruits will be sold locally at affordable prices.

## La Biblioteca community centre

APREDEN opened *La Biblioteca* as a library and community centre in 1995. It was originally housed in a wooden building near *La Guayabita* and it was run by APREDEN staff, later joined by German volunteers. In addition to access to books (some provided by Alfred Sutton School, Reading), the centre was used for meetings and children's classes and activities. In 2012 the Trust funded materials to support children's art activities, with a further 500 USD in 2014. We continue to support craft work at *La Biblioteca* to develop children's skills and produce 'bisuteria' (simple jewellery) and friendship bracelets. To date, art and craft activities at *La Biblioteca* are flourishing alongside the range of other activities coordinated by Emma Ocon.

*Children's art classes at La Biblioteca*



In 2012, the DGT committed £1,000 for computers and peripherals to provide a low-cost community facility to access the internet. In June 2015, Quintiles UK in Reading donated seven recommissioned Thinkpads to *La Biblioteca*, which were delivered personally by Oldenburg members travelling to SFL.

## The new Biblioteca community centre

A major APREDEN project in 2014-15, co-funded by the Trust, was to move from the old, small *Biblioteca* to a much larger purpose-built centre on higher ground alongside the relocated secondary school, Colegio Concepcion de Maria.



# READING SAN FRANCISCO LIBRE ASSOCIATION

Once the roof was on (and before the building was plastered and painted), APREDEN began hosting courses, meetings, classes of students from the Colegio, and children's activities. The old *Biblioteca* building became a 'downtown' meeting place and a residence for volunteers and visitors. The Trust also provided funds to repair its ageing roof.

## La Biblioteca goes online

Wi-Fi was installed in the new *Biblioteca* in summer 2016, with funding from the Trust, at a cost of 845 USD for the router and installation, and an on-going contract of 120 USD per month. The internet hub and laptops have revolutionised access to information and teaching materials.



Having proved the value of the large new building for holding classes and events, in January 2019, APREDEN proposed completion of the structure with two covered entrances, the painting of interior walls and the waterproofing of exterior walls to prevent water penetration which was degrading the library. Visitors from Reading (Nick Byrne) and Oldenburg (Axel Kleinschmidt and Alexa vom Burg) had confirmed the community benefits of *La Biblioteca* and the need for completion and so trustees agreed to support the work and in May 2019, £7,900 was transferred for this purpose. In 2021, about £3,000 was provided to replace the old wooden bookcases with strong, wall-mounted shelves, to replace some of the laptops and to install a loud-speaker system.



## Microenterprises or 'microempresas'

APREDEN has encouraged the formation of 'microempresas' autonomous small-scale enterprises, that can be important for local income generation. In 2015, six members of APREDEN, including four experienced beekeepers, initiated a honey co-operative at *La Guayabita* and in 2016 the DGT donated £2,000 for 36 beehives and other essential equipment. The initial success of the cooperative won the support of Obra Kolping who worked with APREDEN to produce a business plan to meet organic standards, market the honey, and provide practical training and self-sustaining financing for hives, clothing and processing equipment. There are now 40 members, producing honey and products such as beeswax soap, candles and 'vino de miel' (mead). A 20-litre

drum of honey sells for about 60 USD and members can produce up to seven drums per harvest. There is strong local demand for the products.



In 2020, the Trust provided £1338 for a *Costura* (tailoring and dressmaking) workshop at *La Biblioteca*. Seven women completed the course, and now have their own sewing machines and can provide services to the community making or repairing clothes. APREDEN see training in income-generating microenterprises as a high priority for future projects and plans to equip two classrooms at *La Biblioteca* for such courses. Crucially, the polytechnic university (UPOLI) will provide official certification for successful participants.

## Shorter-term projects

In addition to the three main projects, the Trust has responded to specific requests for small projects, including the purchase of two handcarts for the maintenance of the secondary school. A good quality digital camera with video capability (about £300) was taken by our Oldenburg colleagues to San Francisco Libre, and this has greatly enhanced the supply of photo and video information we are receiving. In 2013, the Trust provided £1,200 to complete a new primary school for Los Tiesos, a village about 4 km from the main town of San Francisco Libre.



In 2014, the Trust provided £1,100 to buy play equipment for four pre-school groups and in 2016, APREDEN extended the scheme to six more schools in outlying communities. The Trust has also supported initiatives supporting travelling libraries and the starting of school gardening clubs. At the beginning of the Covid outbreak, the Trust provided funds for PPE and cleansing materials for people using *La Biblioteca*.



## 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of RSFLA

2014 marked the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the town twinning link and this was well celebrated with a visit to Reading by Jimmy Zamora, President of APREDEN (a visit made possible by volunteers and special funding). Jimmy had a busy visit with many engagements, culminating in a reception and informative meeting hosted by the Mayor of Reading and RSFLA and attended by the family of David Grimes, members of the Meteorology Department, colleagues from Oldenburg and the Nicaraguan Ambassador.

*Axel (Oldenburg), Mayor Livingston and Jimmy Zamora (APREDEN)*



The day before this event, David Grimes' sister and twenty-six members of the Meteorology Department (led by the head of department) had taken part in the Reading Half Marathon, jointly raising £3,000 for the DGT.



## The next ten years

Looking ahead, the DGT remains committed to projects that we have been supporting in the past ten years in collaboration with APREDEN and NV Oldenburg: the *Beca* scheme, *La Biblioteca* and *La Guayabita*. We will also welcome other educational and environmental proposals that promote environmental recovery, socially-beneficial income generation and self-sustainability. For example, for 2022 we are discussing a proposal to extend *La Biblioteca* with two new classroom buildings equipped for vocational training. We are also discussing further micro-enterprise vocational training courses in hairdressing and dress making. We are considering suggestions for further staff training at *La Guayabita*, and the expansion of the banana plantation with an additional water tank and irrigation with a protective structure for the tank and well. Los Tiesos village (whose primary school was completed with DGT funds) is suffering from water problems, with an inefficient old hand-operated pump. We will fund APREDEN to provide an electric water pump for that communal well.



There is also a proposal to increase the local production of eggs and chickens, using low-input, extensive, organic methods and robust local breeds of chickens. Our next newsletter will provide updates on our continued support to the people of San Francisco Libre.

## Alexa vom Berg: a tribute

Since 1989, Alexa vom Berg-Kleinschmidt had been a very active member of Nicaragua-Verein Oldenburg and a good friend of San Francisco Libre and Reading, which she visited several times, together with her husband, Axel. Sadly, on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021, she died at the age of 71 after a brief illness. In 1990, she was a member of the first group from Oldenburg to visit San Francisco Libre and she helped to initiate several early projects. In 2006/2007 she lived for a year in Nicaragua, mainly in San Francisco Libre. She was President of NV Oldenburg for several years. The young members of the NV Oldenburg steering committee are grateful to Alexa for her mentoring, as they prepared to go to Nicaragua, her views on politics, culture and society and also her inspiring anecdotes. She is greatly missed, but not forgotten, and RSFLA sends its sympathy and support to Axel.

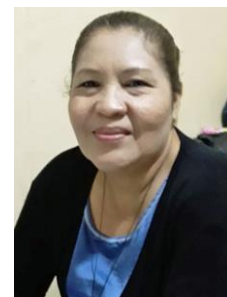


## Message from the Deputy Mayor of SFL

"Greetings colleagues

I am Albina Conde Vasquez, Deputy Mayor of the municipality of San Francisco Libre. I value the links you have with APREDEN that is helping to advance the development of our municipality. I am particularly aware of the support you provide to assist students and to improve our environment.

Thank you for your dedication to our community I reinforce my greetings to you all". *(Translated from Spanish).*



## Message from the Mayor of Reading

Councillor David Stevens wrote: "In Reading we cherish our links with our twin towns. Our relationship with San Francisco Libre is very important to us. We appreciate how devastating the Covid epidemic must have been in a country like Nicaragua and are pleased to see how well you have seemed to have risen to the challenges that it imposed. I am delighted to see that the Twinning Town Group continues to thrive.

David Grimes followed the spirit of Phoebe Cusden<sup>1</sup>: outward looking, foresighted and generous. Whatever challenges we are facing, they recognised that others had even greater and



more pressing problems. David represented the best of Reading, and I am very proud to call him a citizen of our town.

I wish you the very best in this 10th anniversary of the formation of the Trust to honour him."

<sup>1</sup> Phoebe Cusden (1887-1981) was a socialist activist and peace campaigner who became Mayor of Reading and initiated Reading's first Town Twinning with the German town of Düsseldorf soon after the second world war.

## Thanks to Josselyn Guevara Amador

As a schoolgirl at the *Concepción de María* school, Josselyn received an APREDEN *Beca* award. In 2010 she started working part-time for APREDEN assisting the running of the *Beca* programme. In 2012, she took on the work full-time and then led the programme selecting families and supervising monthly payments and the distribution of scholastic materials. She visited participating families to review progress and school attendance and she encouraged the writing of Pen Pal letters to our supporters. This was scrupulously and transparently documented in her regular reports and excellent PowerPoint presentations. In March 2021, she moved on to the post of coordinator of the Municipal children's nursery *Jardín de la Alegría* in San Francisco Libre. We send her thanks for all her past assistance and our best wishes for her future.



## Thanks to Nick Byrne

In 2017, Nick Byrne, a Meteorology Department post-doctoral researcher, contacted RSFLA as he planned a six-month visit to Nicaragua. He wanted to visit San Francisco Libre, having heard about it from the DGT fund-raising. He was given names and introductions and met Jimmy Zamora and saw many aspects of APREDEN's work at first hand. On his return, he provided excellent details of the work of *La Biblioteca*, *La Guayabita* and the *Beca* programme, and subsequently became an invaluable 'link person' while working as a scientific programmer within the Met Department. He became a Trustee in 2020. However, in September 2021 he embarked on a new life in Germany and an exciting post with Cervest Earth, headquartered in London. Nick contributed to the work of the DGT most effectively and while we are sorry to lose such a valued friend we will stay in touch and all wish him the very best for his future.



## Looking back: the early years of RSFLA

After the 1979 Sandinista Revolution overthrew the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua, many solidarity groups were

formed around Europe. These groups were involved in sending health and educational materials and in initiating town twinning. It was clear that the new solidarity relationships should be of equals, and the groups were grateful to the Nicaraguan people for the inspiration provided by the Sandinista government, especially in:

- Health care (notably the eradication of polio)
- Literacy (increase from 47% to 87% in two years)
- Schools (1,400 new schools built in four years from 1979)
- Land reform and redistribution
- Community engagement and women's organisations.

In Reading, the first proposal for a twinning with a Nicaraguan town was approved by the local Labour Party in 1984. In 1987 meetings were held in Reading and in Germany to explore the possibility of Reading sharing with Düsseldorf (already a twin town of Reading) the town of Ciudad Sandino, close to Nicaragua's capital of Managua. However, the Nicaraguan Embassy in London objected, and suggested Reading twinned with the rural municipality of San Francisco Libre.

Meetings in Reading during 1988 supported the twinning proposal. David Sutton facilitated the establishment of the Reading San Francisco Libre Association (RSFLA) and the RSFL Trust, with many supporting groups including the Reading Oxfam Group and the Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC). In 1989, high-profile local fund-raising events were established including the Sandinista Splash at Central Pool and the San Francisco Libre Cycle Ride. Funds were sent to San Francisco Libre for various building works projects, including bridge-repair and schoolroom construction. In 1990, two members of RSFLA, Chris Baird and Tom Weatherhead spent time in San Francisco Libre and reported back on the projects. Several other visitors followed in these early years.

In the early 1990s, the priest of San Francisco Libre was the charismatic Father Bismarck Castro whose influence and style encouraged some of Reading's churches to raise funds for projects including the repair of the community bus.

There was less organisation and more free-lancing within the twinning link in the earliest days. For example, one Reading University student was determined to show footballing solidarity with San Francisco Libre and took a net of fully inflated footballs on the aeroplane with him. RSFLA benefitted from better organisation and greater professionalism in the 1990s when David Grimes took over as the RSFLA Secretary. The Momotombo Newsletter was



## NEWS FROM SAN FRANCISCO LIBRE

### Twin Towns

San Francisco Libre is a small Nicaraguan town, standing on the edge of Lake Managua (also known as Lake Xolotlán). A twinning arrangement between Reading and San Francisco Libre was first discussed in 1986-87, was established in 1988, and is being consolidated in 1989. Reading Borough Council has voted to support the link.

One of our members, Chris Baird, presently based in Managua, has visited San Francisco Libre several times. Extracts from one of his letters were published in *Solidaridad* 12. Another member,

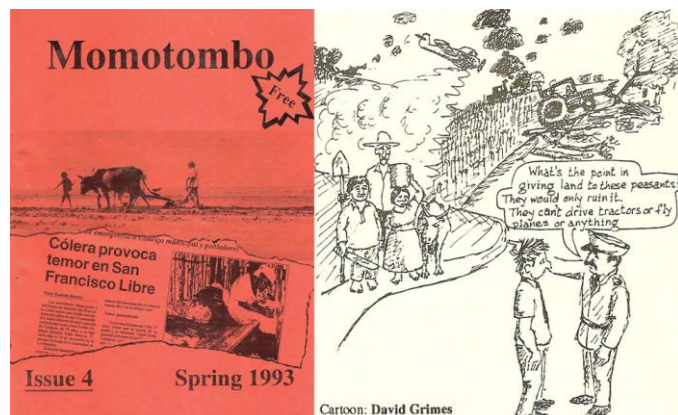
### Fund-Raising Projects

The people of San Francisco Libre are urgently making plans for the arrival of the rainy season in May. Where the bridge was destroyed, the river is at present almost dry and can be forded, but when the rainy season comes the town will be cut off.

The Mayor's Office in San Francisco Libre has asked for our help in raising money to buy a boat, so that supplies and emergency services can reach the town across the lake. So far, following a very successful street-collection on March 11th and appeals to trade unionists and others, we have managed to raise \$1200 for this purpose.



launched then, with David Grimes providing articles and some thought-provoking cartoons.



The official twinning ceremony took place in the Reading Council Chamber, on 19 September 1994, in the presence of the Deputy Mayor of San Francisco Libre, José Cruz Bermudez, and other Nicaraguan guests. San Francisco Libre joined Düsseldorf as a twin town of Reading.

## 1995-2010 Hurricane Mitch and follow-ups

It was important to develop links between the twin towns, and before electronic communications, the best method was to encourage visits, which were self-funded from Reading and community-funded by Reading to allow Nicaraguans to visit Reading. Reading Mayor David Geary visited San Francisco Libre in early 1998 and was shown around by the dynamic Mayor José Cruz Bermudez. The travel costs and the language differences were obstacles that could be overcome.

1998 had been a drought year in San Francisco Libre and the rain-fed maize crop had largely failed. However, in October, Hurricane Mitch swept into Central America and stayed four days to release more than a metre of rain over Nicaragua. San Francisco Libre is on the shores of Lake Managua which rose by an amazing four metres, flooding houses, inundating the main street and cutting off access roads.



Some people were stranded on the roofs of their houses. Reading, with its contacts in Nicaragua's capital, managed to purchase a boat to cross the lake and start rescuing stranded people and to distribute food.

The Mayor of Reading launched a special fund, and Reading responded giving generously through street-collections, and community group action (often involving churches) facilitated by Sue Errington. The funds were first used for emergency food aid and then to assist with rebuilding costs, including helping to develop new housing areas on higher ground. Despite a high death toll in Nicaragua, miraculously no lives were lost in San Francisco Libre, whose mayor specifically thanked Reading for its important and timely support.

The publicity of Hurricane Mitch led to greater fund raising for San Francisco Libre, and Reading supported the construction of a community centre built on higher ground above the main town. In 2000, Mayor José Cruz Bermudez visited Reading, gave several talks and visited the 'Millennium Dawning Exhibition' of Paul Starkey's photos of life in San Francisco Libre.

In 2002, there were several visits to San Francisco Libre by Reading volunteers, and an SFL teacher, Milton Antonio Orozco, was sponsored to visit Reading, participate in the half-marathon and give talks to schools. In 2002, the Peter Oakley Trust was established in the memory of a great supporter of RSFLA, and started funding projects implemented by the local NGO, APREDEN, including assisting disadvantaged school children and providing computer equipment to schools. RSFLA was active in informing WOMAD participants about development issues and had a major photo exhibition at the Hexagon venue providing stories about life in Reading's Twin Town. Funds were raised to support a young carpenter from San Francisco Libre, Jeyserd Torrez Martinez, to spend a year at Reading College. He also gave talks and sang with his guitar at concerts. On his return, he was assisted to start a small carpentry business in SFL which employed several staff.

2003 was the 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the charter of Reading, and the mayors of Reading's Twin Towns were invited to join the festivities and activities. SFL Mayor José Ángel was hosted by the RSFLA and took part in many meetings and events. In the meantime, Reading's fund-raising through activities and standing orders continued allowing more children and APREDEN projects to be supported.

*Mayor Skeats, Jeyserd, Mayor José Ángel and Dpty Mayor Stainthorp*



2004 was the tenth anniversary of the town twinning link, and this was marked with a workshop, and a visit to SFL by Mayor Richard Stainthorp and a visit to Reading by our liaison person in SFL, Alina Briceño. There were also several visits to SFL by volunteers and fund-raising activities include nine people

running the Reading Half-Marathon. Among the projects supported were assistance to schools, bicycle and tricycle schemes and the construction of some bus shelters.



In the following six years, the town twinning and fund-raising activities continued, with emphasis on support to the student scholarships and environmental activities implemented by APREDEN, with support from German volunteers from Oldenburg. In Reading, some of the Spanish-speaking volunteers who had been extremely active moved to other jobs away from Reading, and events were held in Reading to attract new members who could participate in fund-raising activities. Indeed, just a few weeks before his untimely death, David Grimes was at a meeting in South Street to attract more people to play active roles in supporting RSFLA and raising the profile of San Francisco Libre within Reading. No one knew then that within a few months, the David Grimes Trust would be established and many members of the University of Reading Meteorology Department would be supporting San Francisco Libre through standing orders, Half Marathons, Mets got Talent and many other initiatives.

## Call for support and volunteers

We hope this Newsletter encourages you to support our work in SFL. In the past ten years, fundraising through events with one off donations to the DGT has been exceptional and greatly appreciated. However, regular standing order donations remain the bedrock of our activities and allow us and APREDEN to take a long-term vision of investments and development. So, if you do not do so already, we ask you to

consider making a regular monthly donation, however small, by completing the attached standing order form. Remember that every pound you donate is committed to projects in SFL and if you 'gift aid' it, that increases the amount by 25%.

Over the years RSFLA has enjoyed the talent and energy of many wonderful volunteers of all ages. This has been to our benefit and, we believe, theirs. People have helped with events, the website, social media, newsletters, exchanges with people in SFL, and giving talks to people in Reading. Typically, our friends move on in their lives after a few years and so there is now a real shortage of people to help organise our social media, activities in Reading and communications with San Francisco Libre. We always welcome help with fund raising and we also have specific roles that would benefit from your talents, especially in terms of the website, social media and school and community engagement. Your roles and commitment could be flexible and tailored to what works best for you. You will be doing something worthwhile, and we think you will benefit greatly from the experience. Please contact Jon Roberts ([jonrr45@gmail.com](mailto:jonrr45@gmail.com)) or Paul Starkey ([p.h.starkey@reading.ac.uk](mailto:p.h.starkey@reading.ac.uk)) for more ideas and information.

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**Instagram:** @ReadingSFLA  
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**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SYuj-iv4ajc>

**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYfj1SeNd1wliBPuzlRAzqw>

**Please play your part: Check out these pages. 'Like' them. 'Share' them. Spread the word! Thank you!**

Please return this form to **David Grimes Trust** c/o Paul Starkey (RSFLT Chair), 64 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, RG2 7HQ  
 (or request larger standing order/gift aid form from [p.h.starkey@reading.ac.uk](mailto:p.h.starkey@reading.ac.uk))

<b>Reading San Francisco Libre Trust</b> <b>Gift Aid</b> Gift Aid can boost the value of your donations by 25%, at no extra cost or trouble to you! To make a Gift Aid declaration to RSFL Trust, please complete the box below – and we can reclaim tax on all future donations. To qualify you must pay income or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount to be reclaimed on your donation. RSFL Trust, Registered Charity No.1006736	<b>STANDING ORDER MANDATE</b> To The Manager ..... Bank/Building Society Address..... Postcode.....
Please treat all my donations as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise <b>Details of donor</b> Full Name..... Address..... ..... PostCode..... Date.....	Please pay The Co-op Bank, Reading <span style="float: right;">Sort code: 08-90-16</span> For the credit of Reading San Francisco Libre Trust <span style="float: right;">Account No. 50415108</span> The sum of £..... (Amount in Figures) ..... (Amount in Words) Commencing ..... (date) and thereafter every..... (Frequency) Until ..... Or until you receive further notice from me/us in writing <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-end;"> <div>                     .....                      Name of account to be Debited                 </div> <div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 20px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span></span><span></span><span></span><span></span><span></span><span></span> </div>                     Sort Code                 </div> <div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 80px; height: 20px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span></span><span></span><span></span><span></span><span></span><span></span><span></span><span></span><span></span><span></span> </div>                     Account Number                 </div> </div> Signature(s)..... Date..... Please ensure signed in accordance with account mandate Note: The Bank will not undertake to: (i) make any reference to Value Added Tax or other indeterminate element (ii) advise payer's address to beneficiary (iii) advise beneficiary of inability to pay (iv) request beneficiary's banker to advise beneficiary of receipt.