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## August 2024

### Annual lecture by Judge Chris Nicholson Book launched about Paddy Kearney Support for the DHC from the UK Film festival focusing on lost voices



**Two people who  
knew Paddy  
well**



**Why is there a  
Hurley House in  
London?**



**A clenched fist  
or an open  
hand?**

### 6TH ANNUAL PADDY KEARNEY MEMORIAL LECTURE

Three days after what would have been his 82nd birthday, a Memorial Lecture was held to honour Paddy Kearney, the founder of the DHC.

Since his untimely death in Nov 2018, a number of organisations that were linked to Paddy have collaborated to deliver an annual lecture. This year the DHC worked with the Gandhi Development Trust, the Active Citizens Movement and the Durban University of Technology. It was hosted at the 1860 Heritage Centre, a beautifully curated museum which explores the role that Indians have played in the life of Durban and wider South Africa.

The chosen lecturer was Chris Nicholson one of the first new judges appointed after the 1994 democratic elections. Chris is well known for his judgements in cases that

protected the rights of prisoners to access HIV treatments and also various investigations into corruption.

His link with Paddy goes back to 1985 when Chris was a junior advocate and Paddy was detained without trial by the security police who claimed they had 'reason to believe' that he was engaged in subversive activities. Chris worked with Archbishop Hurley to challenge the security police to reveal their evidence, at least in a closed court; when they refused to, Judge Ramon Leon found that they therefore did not have sufficient 'reason to believe' and ordered that Paddy be released.

As Chris recalled in his lecture, this finding set an important precedent which helped other anti-Apartheid activists who were being threatened with detention by the Government and set an important limit on the powers of the feared security police.

In his wide ranging lecture, attended by about 150 people, Chris also shared anecdotes of his time with Paddy and how good it was for him as a young lawyer to have someone of the moral and physical stature of the Archbishop on his side: "In the hurly-burly, you can rely on the burly Hurley!" Chris' love of cricket and rugby helped him connect with the Archbishop, even if this was not one of Paddy's passions. But all three of them were committed to using (and challenging) the law to help those in need. The Legal Resources Centre that Chris set up still has offices in the Diakonia Centre where Paddy first gave them space over 40 years ago.

Chris focused on the huge economic inequality in the country as something that concerned Paddy in later years. He cited Joseph Conrad, Thomas Piketty, Lesetja Kganyago and Tom Burgiss and quoted Charles Péguy's words: "He who does not bellow the truth, when he knows the truth, makes himself the accomplice of liars and forgers." Paddy rarely bellowed but he certainly made sure the truth was heard.

Chris has done the same and he sub-titled his talk: 'You cannot kill the truth.' His own recent book, provocatively called "Who really killed Chris Hani?", looks at the role of multi-national corporations in preventing the enactment of a genuine economic revolution in South Africa. He used his lecture to remind us of uncomfortable truths about South Africa 30 years after Liberation: how 50% of people go to bed hungry, or that 51% of spend on healthcare is for only 14% of the population. He commended the work of the DHC in providing food and a clinic for poor people as an example of how faith communities respond to such injustice. But he also pointed out the slowness of many churches to respond to the injustices still perpetrated against women and the LGBTQI+ community.

Chris' closing tribute was a quotation from German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche: 'In your dying your spirit and your virtue shall blaze on like the after-glow of a sunset.'

The full text of the lecture is available on the DHC website. There were responses to the lecture by Raymond Perrier, Betty Govinden (whose poem in tribute to Paddy is attached) and Nora Saneka of the Active Citizens Movement (of which Paddy was a Patron) .

*Photo: (left to right) Prof Jairam Reddy (sometime Trustee of both GDT and the DHC who chaired the event), Raymond and Judge Chris Nicholson.*



### **320 PAGES TO DEMONSTRATE WHY PADDY IS IMPORTANT FOR US TODAY**

The formal title of Chris' lecture was 'Why Paddy Kearney is relevant today' and this theme is continued in Raymond's book about Paddy subtitled 'A Prophet for our Times'. The first chance to buy the book was at the Memorial Lecture and over 50 copies were sold on the day.

The book is a condensed version of Raymond's PhD about Paddy – shortened from 240,000 words to a more readable 80,000. (Nevertheless, the full text with 1,885 footnotes is [available on the DHC website](#) for any reader who wants to dig deeper into anything they read in the book.) The approach on both cases is the same: Raymond looks at different aspects of Paddy's life through the lens of the documents of the Second Vatican Council which were so influential for both Archbishop Hurley and on the young Paddy. The book has a Foreword by former Minister Pravin Gordhan, who in fact delivered the Memorial Lecture in 2022.

Raymond describes it as being not a conventional biography but rather 'Biography as Theology': an attempt to understand what motivated Paddy as he re-created himself as a Christian activist across more than five decades. Moreover, this was a period in which the Catholic Church and South Africa were both undergoing major challenges and change. The book contains some striking historic photographs plus appendices that explore particular areas such as Paddy's devotion to Gandhi and his sense of racial identity. The content draws from Paddy's own archives and also interviews with 70 people who knew and worked with Paddy, plus an exploration of authors who influenced him.

Raymond paid tribute to a number of his interviewees who were present at the Memorial Lecture and most especially to Prof Philippe Denis, a Belgian Dominican brother who was the Supervisor for the PhD (*pictured at the top*). Philippe had himself known Paddy for many years and in fact worked with him (and Jane Argall) on an edited set of Hurley's letters that was published just a few weeks before Paddy died. Philippe pointed out at the lecture that one of the key reasons that we should learn from Paddy's life was that – although he worked with Archbishop Hurley and many other Church leaders – he was a lay man who never sought a title or the limelight.

At R320, the book can be bought [on-line directly from the publisher](#), Anivesh Singh who has been a great supporter of our StreetLit book project. It will also be available to buy in Durban from the Paulines Bookshop in Musgrave and the Lutheran Publishing House at Diakonia. A signed and dedicated copy can be obtained from Raymond at the DHC and also at upcoming talks in Westville, Umhlanga and Howick. ([Email for information](#) about these talks; and also where to buy the book in other parts of South Africa and how to purchase overseas).



*Photo: Some of the 150 people who attended the Paddy Kearney lecture and the first signing of the book about Paddy. See our Facebook page for more photos.*



## **REPORT BACK FROM OUR UK FUNDRAISING ARM**

For over 10 years, the DHC has benefited from the hard work of the DHA – not the Department of Home Affairs (sadly!) but the Denis Hurley Association. This is a UK-registered charity which makes it easier for donors in Britain to support the DHC and give in sterling, and also enables us to transfer money to South Africa at an optimal rate.

The DHA's annual general meeting was held on-line recently and attended by Trustees and supporters in the UK as well as DHC managers from Durban. We were especially pleased that one of our UK Patrons, Archbishop Bernard Longley of Birmingham, made the time to attend the meeting.

Chair of the Association, Michael Perrier, was pleased to report back that in 2023 the DHA had raised £27,517 (over R640,000!). This came from church appeals but also from individuals who make a monthly pledge or give one-off donations. Sometimes they are people who knew Hurley or have learnt about the work of the DHC by visiting Durban; often they are people originally from Durban who are now in the UK (and earning in pounds!).

There were almost 150 donations with an average value of £187 each (R4,300). One particular focus, organised by Trustee Sheila Bailey, was the 'Big Give'. This is an initiative that connects UK charities with organisations that are willing to match donations and so effectively doubles the value of every pound that is given. This alone raised £2,330 (R54,000) in 2023; email the DHA for information on how UK-residents can support us through the 2024 Big Give.

In addition, by being UK-registered, the DHA is able to boost most donations by 25% through a tax rebate we can claim from the UK Government! Gift Aid money of about £11,250 (R260,000) is expected soon.

Donations in 2024 to date are, moreover, looking good with over £30,000 (R700,000) already 'banked'. We are grateful to the family of the late Eileen York, the mother-in-law of +Hurley's niece Mikaela, who kindly requested for donations to the DHA in lieu of flowers at her funeral; and also to a couple who were recently married in London and asked for money for the DHA instead of gifts. If you are inspired to support us in a similar way, wherever you are in the world, contact us.

One of our most enduring fundraisers is Phil Perrier who, aged almost 86, annually runs a tombola across the four Catholic churches in Chelmsford, Essex as well as cooking Indian food for dozens of people as a way of raising funds. Her (English) summer initiatives this year raised over £2,100 (almost R50,000).

And just recently two of our longest standing Trustees, Helen Coleman and Sr Marie-Henry Keane OP, gave talks at a London Catholic parish that also brought in over £2,000. The parish was Sacred Heart Kilburn (*pictured below*) which is run by the OMI's, the same religious order of which +Hurley was a member. In fact, the registered address of the DHA is 'Hurley House' opposite the church on Quex Road, which recalls how many times he stayed there when visiting London. The photo at the top shows the house being named in 2015 by among others the late Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor.

The Denis Hurley Centre is a Durban response to Durban problems and there is more than enough money in Durban to fund us many times over. We are, nevertheless, grateful to overseas donors in UK and further afield, who reach out and support us. We hope that this also inspires people closer to home to think about how they can support us too.



## FILMS CELEBRATING INCLUSIVITY AND REPRESENTATION

Across a weekend towards the end of August, the first ever Power 24 International Film Festival took place at the DHC and other sites around Durban. We were chosen as a venue because we are especially accessible for vulnerable and marginalised groups. This aligns with the festival's mission to make film available to those often overlooked, particularly individuals with disabilities.

The festival was born from the vision of Buhle Khumalo, a 33-year-old woman from kwaNongoma's Thokazi area. Earlier this year, she defied the odds to become the first black woman with a disability to win the Best Actress award at the Africa USA International Film Festival in Los Angeles. Her own journey inspired her to create a platform that would amplify diverse voices in filmmaking. The films at Power 24 come from previously marginalised filmmakers such as women, people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ people and rural filmmakers, as well as films dealing with historic and religious themes and other voiceless stories and sectors.

At the DHC they showcased a variety of films, including:

- 'Thulebone' by Lwazi Duma, which was voted the best low-budget film
- 'The Promised Land' by German filmmaker Jurgene Brauns, awarded the best religious film, addressing the issue of land in Palestine
- 'Breaking the Silence' by Sabelo Khomo, recognized as the best social awareness film, focusing on gender-based violence



- 'The Story of Capital Radio 604', a standout documentary

Other notable films included 'Tears', the best student film, and 'Entropy' by Dan Chen from the US, which won the best international short film. See the [Power 24 website](#) for more information about these films and also which films are available to stream on-line.

The festival provided a platform for both established and emerging filmmakers to showcase their work and connect with a global audience, celebrating and promoting diverse voices in the film industry. There were also workshops so that existing and aspirant filmmakers could learn from each other's experience. A ceremony at the end of the 3-day festival saw awards presented in a number of categories. Symbolically the award (*pictured at the top*) is in the shape of a clenched fist – the traditional symbol of Black Power. But it has fingers that can be opened so the hand is also a symbol of filmmakers giving stories to others and receiving stories from others.

*Photo: Some of the VIPs at the Award Ceremony including (2nd from left) DHC Empowerment Officer Stuart Talbot and (3rd from left) Shakila Maharaj (a visitor to the DHC) who was celebrated for her work in promoting audio description in films to make them more accessible to people who are blind.*



Director: Raymond Perrier ([raymond@denishurleycentre.org](mailto:raymond@denishurleycentre.org) )

Bookings: Leanne Banks ([leanne@denishurleycentre.org](mailto:leanne@denishurleycentre.org) )

If you wish to support our work, you can donate by EFT:

First National Bank Durban Main branch 221426

Account: Denis Hurley Centre Trust A/C No. 622 0426 1002

For more information, and to donate from outside South Africa, see:

[www.denishurleycentre.org](http://www.denishurleycentre.org)

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