

Diverse

The Newspaper of the Lancaster District Diversity Festival



The First Lancaster District Diversity Festival Soon To Be Launched

The Vision Statement for the Diversity Festival October 2004 :

A public event created by people of the Lancaster District

The Festival will :

Celebrate Diversity, Challenge Discrimination & Encourage Respect For All

The Steering Group seeks:

To involve all members of the community regardless of Age · Gender · Disability · Ethnicity · Sexuality · Religion · Race

As the date of the First Lancaster Diversity Festival draws closer, many people are saying they hope that the future of the relatively small First Lancaster District Diversity Festival will

be a much bigger and regular WOMAD- type festival in the summer months. But how did it all start?

The Race & Ethnicity Task Group (RETG) decided in January 2003 to help raise the profile of MAPfED and its work through an Outreach to Communities Programme. By May 2003 a work programme was in place with a proposal for an anti discrimination charter and a District-wide Diversity Festival on these aims:

To raise the profile of anti discrimination in Lancaster District.

To help the Partnership work effectively

To develop a sophisticated understanding of local communities.

To increase the influence of MAPfED

The Diversity Festival is described as an "Annual celebration day promoting the diverse cultures of the Lancaster District" – an "inclusive event, with all communities offered same opportunity to express their culture & image of diversity and how they would like to see the Lancaster District develop over the next 10 years".

RETG managed two well-attended public meetings In November and December 2003 to discuss the shape & organization of the Festival. From these meetings a Steering Group emerged, meets monthly, raises funding, manages the two headline events on Saturday 2 and 30 October

and remains open to all interested groups & individuals wishing to take part in the Festival.

We are now in September and the event heralded with a multi-coloured brochure of events through October 2004 is a unique cross-community opportunity to celebrate the work we do, the skills we have and the arts we produce in the Lancaster District. The underlying dynamic of the Festival and its ethnical framework is creating bridges between the mainstream services and local people so we can get on better with each other. One way of achieving this is to start to introduce minority values and ways of life to a majority audience.

By Pat England (MAPfED)

**The
First Lancaster District
Diversity Festival
Programme -
see pages 12, 13 and 14**

**The Diversity Festival
remembers the families
and freinds of those who
died in the Morecambe Bay
cockling tregedy**

Festival Themes

Age

There are 12,000 people in the Lancaster District over the age of 75, and 25,000 under the age of 16. Both generations have so much to offer to community life, but can sometimes feel that they are not valued or listened to enough, and feel that their needs are not being met. The festival will provide opportunities for younger and older people to get together and share their views and experiences.

Religion

Faith plays a big part in many people's lives. In the 2001 census, 76% of local people identified themselves as Christian, and 1.4% as Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Sikh or other religions. Interfaith displays in Lancaster and Morecambe libraries and events during the festival will promote better understanding of each other's beliefs and practices.

Sexuality

Many gay men, lesbians and bisexual people have experienced verbal abuse, harassment or violent attacks because of their sexuality. Events during Pride Week, in the middle of October will celebrate LGBT culture and seek to change homophobic attitudes. Look out for the rainbow flags flying over Lancaster and Morecambe Town Halls!

Race & Ethnicity

From the Romans (124 AD) to Iriah canal builders (1790) or Gujurali textile workers (1958), we or our ancestors all moved to Lancaster at some time. The University attracts students from more than 120 countries! But some people still experience racism - from verbal harassment to barriers to jobs and services. The festival will highlight these issues and celebrate the diversity of cultural issues in Lancaster.

Gender

Women outnumber men, but are under-represented in senior public and private sector jobs, and are paid much less (on average) than men. Most victims of domestic violence are women - 7 incidents are reported to the police each day in Lancaster and Morecambe! The festival will also raise awareness of problems faced by transgender people and celebrate their successes.

Age

14% of people have some kind of disability, such as a physical mobility, mental or sensory impairment. But it is society that disables people by failing to take account of their different needs. The festival celebrates the knowledge, skills and talents of people with disabilities and offers a range of activities which are accessible and inclusive.

Welcome

... to Lancaster District's first ever Diversity Festival. There are 134,000 people in the Lancaster District, each with their own talents, life experiences, social networks, and prejudices.

This eclectic festival encourages everyone to show off those talents, share those life experiences, broaden those networks, and challenge those prejudices!

Whatever your age, gender, sexuality, abilities, race, ethnicity or religion, we hope you will find the festival accessible, thought-provoking and fun.

The festival aims to:

- recognise and celebrate diversity
- educate and raise awareness
- challenge discrimination
- support long-term partnerships and programmes
- bring groups and individuals together
- link local and global issues

*"A positive attitude is contagious
but don't wait to catch it from others..."*

Diverse - The Festival Origins

The Preston and Western Lancashire Racial Equality Council is a charity organisation, working towards creating a just society, which gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination and prejudice and from the fear of racial harassment. The organisation covers the following eight district areas Preston, Lancaster, Wyre, Blackpool, Fylde, South Ribble, Chorley and West Lancashire. The service it provides to the community is free and confidential. It's centralised goal is to further community cohesion amongst all communities and deliver quality services to those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable to social exclusion. The services that are provided at present are the Racial Discrimination Service, Immigration and Legal Advice, Racial Harassment, Active Community Development and there is a Community Access Officer.

The Racial Harassment Project is a three-year project funded by the Community Fund for Preston and Western Lancashire Racial Equality Council. The aim of the project is to provide support to the victims of racial harassment and to ensure appropriate action is taken that serves the needs of victims and also develop strategies for reducing racial harassment. The project covers eight district areas in Preston and Western Lancashire.

Racial harassment can take many forms; it can be physical assaults, violence or threats of violence,

racist graffiti, verbal abuse or more seriously arson or murder. The experience of racial harassment can be extremely disruptive and damaging to victim's lives it is for this reason it is crucial that the victims have a reliable support mechanism. The project officers have developed systems in order to provide confidential advice and support to its victims and keep the victims informed of all actions that have been taken against the perpetrators. The officers work closely with key agencies and organisations such as the police and act as pressure points to effectively deal with client concerns and are actively involved in establishing confidential reporting centres with voluntary organisations to make reporting more accessible to victims. The project also aims to promote a wider understanding of issues relating to racial harassment. This will be done by ensuring that local communities and organisations play a constructive part in assisting in the elimination of racial harassment.

Publicity material can be obtained on request at the following address:

Preston and Western Lancashire Racial Equality Council,
Unity Community Centre
5 - 6 Shepherd Street
Avenham
Preston
PR1 3YD.

Thanks to

Many thanks to the following for making the festival a success:

- the Multi - Agency Partnership for Elimination Discrimination (MAPFED) for instigating the eplanning process
- the Diversity Festival Steering Group for co-ordinating the festival, including:
 - Sue Garner (Global Link)
 - Patricia England (MAPFED)
 - Donald Read (Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust)

- Euan Smith (Lancaster City Council)
- Cllr Emily Heath (Green Party)
- John Gordon (Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Service)
- Andre Oboler (Lancaster University Students' Union and Jewish Society)
- Harsha Shukla (Lancaster and Morecambe Hindu Society)
- Elayne Mallon (assistant to Hilton Dawson MP)
- Lynne Braithwaite (Press for Change)
- Maggie McSherry (Lancaster Diocese Faith and

- Justice Commission)
- Sgt Paul Gooch (Lancashire Constabulary)
- Eileen Mullevry (Lancashire County Council Traveller Education Service)

- the many other organisations and individuals who have contributed to this fantastic programme of events

- Raymond Chan for his winning design of the Diversity Festival logo competition
- Satori at Virtual Lancaster for hosting and updating the Diversity Festival website

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or visit <http://virtual-lancaster.net/diversity>

Local MP celebrates diversity



Hilton Dawson M.P. believes that we should celebrate the rich diversity of our local community and take every opportunity to remember that we are a small part of the whole world.

As well as enjoying attending many festival events Hilton will be hosting two discussions on 'New Policies for African Development' and 'Child Trafficking to the U.K.'. These will be held on October 22nd and 29th respectively, both at the Gregson and both at 7.30. All welcome.

LANPAC

The Lancashire Partnership Against Crime was originally formed in 1992 to assist in the county's crime prevention effort by creating links between Lancashire Constabulary and members of other public, private and voluntary organisations.

In the early years the Partnership was very much a "loose association" that raised funds to produce a host of crime prevention materials i.e. Vehicle Watch stickers, Help Call Police posters and How Secure Is Your Home leaflets. This information was then circulated countywide to Crime Prevention Officers. These initiatives, undertaken by LANPAC, were devised by the Board with little, if any, consultation with operational police officers. There was no evaluation of the effect on crime and the lack of involvement with the operational officers resulted in a lack of sustainability following the much publicised launch of the schemes.

In 1997 the Partnership changed considerably and became a company limited by guarantee and obtained charitable status, which enhanced the organisations fund-raising opportunities. At the same time a new company "LANPAC" was also formed to act as a trading company for the charity. A new "high profile" Board of Directors were appointed consisting of the Chief Constable, Chair of the Police Authority, Senior Probation Officer, High Sheriff of Lancashire and a number of senior business people from the private sector. One of their first tasks was the introduction of the Community Safety Initiative (CSI). This was a new approach that turned the process for the funding of crime reduction initiatives upside down as local operational officers became the ones tasked with developing their own initiatives aimed at finding local solutions to local problems.

Since 1997 the Partnership has provided over £400,000 to pump-prime hundreds of such schemes, which in turn has generated funding in excess of £1.6 million from other agencies. The bidding process invites members of Lancashire



Constabulary to submit bids for funding twice yearly (June & December), with the Chairman being authorised to support projects outside of this process in exceptional cases. A sub-group comprising of Tom Croft (Chairman), Katherine O'Connor (Vice-chairman), and the High Sheriff of Lancashire decide which bids should be supported and their recommendations are submitted to the full board for approval.

Evaluation is an important part of the bidding process and to identify best practice all successful Project Managers are required to submit a comprehensive evaluation report 12 months after receiving their funding. This information is vital to the LANPAC directors when considering future bids, it provides them with positive proof of the success of the scheme or alternatively it enables them to protect the Partnership's limited funds by ensuring that grants are not re-allocated to projects that have proven to be unsuccessful.

The Partnership's main source of income stems from annual membership fees paid by its 260 associate members and this is complemented by additional money raised from organising a number of fund-raising events and seminars.

For further information about the partnership please contact:

Lancashire Partnership Against Crime
Lancashire Police HQ
Hutton
01772 618733

Crimestoppers

**LANCASHIRE
CRIMESTOPPERS
0800 555 111**

What is Crimestoppers? Crimestoppers is the only National Charity aimed at detecting crime and arresting criminals.

Crimestoppers in Lancashire has recorded its most successful year since being formed in 1991.

For the year of 2002, Lancashire Crimestoppers received 3840 'actionable' calls, an increase of almost 50 calls a month. This has led to the arrest and charge of 210 offenders, an increase of almost 3 a month and £142,113.00 worth of drugs being recovered and approx. £196,153 worth of goods being recovered including vehicles. Of those eligible for rewards, only 6 totalling £775 were claimed.

How does it work?

Crimestoppers enables anyone to give information about those involved in or suspected of being involved in criminal activity, without ever revealing their identity. All information received through Crimestoppers is valuable and can lead directly to offenders being arrested and charged. Sometimes it brings new criminals to the attention of the police, in fact almost 25% of those arrested as a result of information given through Crimestoppers have never previously come to the attention of the Police. If your information does lead to the arrest and charge of an offender, you may receive a cash reward -when this is paid, your identity still remains unknown.

Crimestoppers is not an emergency response and if the call is of an urgent nature then callers should ring 999.

As Crimestoppers is an anonymous line, contact cannot be made with callers even if they leave a number.

The phone used has no 1471 facility and calls cannot be traced

Is it successful?

Since being founded in 1988 Crimestoppers Nationally has received over 533,440 actionable calls, which have led to 48,835 arrests, the recovery of property valued at almost £59 million and taken £68 million of drugs off the streets (since 1995).



Why should I ring Crimestoppers?

We all have some responsibility towards making our community a safer place in which to live. The police and other law enforcement agencies need as much help as they can get. The people who have information about who is doing what in their community are the people who live there. Don't assume that because you know who is doing something the police do! Ring Crimestoppers and pass the information on. The most important people in making a community safe are the people who live there.

There may be times when have information that may help to make our community safer, but for a number of reasons we don't want to pass it on to the police, it may be someone we know, someone we work with, a relative or we may just not want to get involved.

If you have any information about people committing crime call CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111

**Your call is free
You won't be asked your name
You could get a cash reward.
If you do not have a phone you can write to:-**

**L A N C A S H I R E
CRIMESTOPPERS
FREEPOST PR1117
PRESTON
PR45BR**

Victim Support in Lancashire

Victim Support is an independent voluntary organisation and national charity, which exists solely for the purpose of helping people cope with the complex and confusing consequences of crime. We work towards ensuring the acknowledgment and protection of the rights of victims of crime, witnesses and their families in all aspects of criminal justice policy.

The service offered is free and confidential.

Victim Support is committed to ensuring that minority or disadvantaged groups are positively welcomed and involved in all aspects of Victim Support. The Branch is a member of the Lancaster Community Safety Partnership.

MAPfED

Developing Anti-Discrimination and Community Cohesion in the Lancaster District

Multi Agency Partnership to Eliminate Discrimination

A partnership of minority & voluntary groups, agencies & statutory bodies act together to improve services to the victims of racism and other forms of discrimination. The work of the Core and Task Group is based on the themes of Age, Sexuality, Religion, Disability, Ethnicity, Gender, Race, MAPfED is a recognised leader on diversity, supports media and academic research and developed the First Diversity Festival for the Lancaster District. The Race & Ethnicity Task Groups specialises in:

building bridges to parallel communities
working with victims of discrimination, violence and harassment
case study work to improve services

Duke's Films

Black History Month –

Now in its fourth successful year, Acts of Achievement, organised by the Black Artists Alliance, is a celebration of Black art and culture during Black History Month. In recognition of the cinematic achievement of Julie Dash, Dukes Cinema has programmed her acclaimed *Daughters of the Dust*, named by Filmmaker magazine as “one of the 50 most important independent films ever made”.

Daughters of the Dust (11 Oct) - Set in 1902, this visually-stunning, award-winning film, depicts the decline of Gullah, an americanized West African community living on the sea islands situated off the coast of South Carolina and Georgia. Strong performances heighten the impact of a community faced with the loss of its African folk ways and indigenous identity.

Gay & Lesbian Double Bill in support of Pride Week –

The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (15) (18 October) - This cult, kitsch comedy classic, featuring two drag queens, a trans, a lavender bus, the Australian outback and Abba, has the potential to change the way you think and feel, and more importantly - the way you dress! *And - The Event* (15) - Arguably one of the most significant films about AIDS, *The Event* was the opening night gala film of this year's London Gay & Lesbian Film Festival. Exploring the question: should you have the right to choose the time and place of your own death? – this emotional and courageous drama reveals through flashbacks the profound effects of Matt's decision to take one final cocktail in the safe company of his family and friends when his HIV drug regime fails.

Latin American Cinema mini-season continues.

Motorcycle Diaries (15) (20 – 23 Oct)

At age 23, medical student Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara (played by Gael Garcia Bernal) and his friend Alberto Grandito left Buenos Aires on a motorcycle for a ‘road trip’ up the spine of South America. More than a road movie, this adaptation of Che's diaries is the coming-of-age story of one of the most iconic political figures of the 20th century. Through it we discover the sensitivity and adventurous spirit which would lead Che into the company of the Cuban rebels and ultimately into the Cuban government, but also the restlessness which would lead to his doom in Bolivia. Other releases are - *Anything Else* (15) (3 – 4 Oct) -

Free from the restrictions of being the romantic lead, Woody Allen has produced a touching, and romantic film in which he plays the older role model to a young writer embarking on a new and difficult relationship. Allen's usual dark neuroses are transferred to Ricci's seductive, clever and highly destructive character while he takes on the role, both as director and actor, of a sage-like mentor.

Blue Gate Crossing (15) (4 Oct)-

Blue Gate Crossing is a story of the difficult nuances of teenage romance and sexuality and of misguided love, all of which are handled with respect by this

young Taiwanese director, Chin-yen Yee Taiwan. Yuezhen convinces her friend Kerou to introduce her to the object of her affection, swimming jock Shihao, a message he misinterprets. When Kerou and Shihao start dating, her friendship with Yuezhan is damaged, but it is a friendship doomed by Kerou's uncertainty over her own sexuality, as is her relationship with Yuezhan. These innocent and complex relationships are typified by graffiti on a school wall simply declaring “I want”.

The Stepford Wives (12a) (10 – 11 October) -

After suffering a nervous breakdown, high-flying TV executive Joanne Eberhart and her husband decide to swap Manhattan for the chic community of Stepford, Connecticut, in this remake of Bryan Forbes' 1975 cult classic. It's not long before the couple suspect sinister goings-on behind the doors of the Stepford Men's Association that's somehow connected with their oh, so perfect wives.

Last Life in the Universe (15) (17 Oct)

Set in Bangkok, this bizarre, slightly magical tale revolves around a suicidal librarian who is brought into deadly contact with the Yakuza through his brother, and into contact with a young woman he'll fall in love with through the death of her sister. Director, Ratanuruang plays fast and loose with our concepts of time and imagination, introducing an element of abstract that lifts this well above your standard gangster fare.

Infernal Affairs 2 (15) (19 Oct) -

In this sequel – or rather prequel - to *Infernal Affairs*, Chen Ying Yan becomes a Triad as Lau Kin Ming joins the police force. No knowledge of the first film is required to enjoy this well-developed drama, which sees the Triads and police discover a common enemy in the form of a rival crime boss and deliver a few surprises intertwined in numerous subplots, along the way.

Stage Beauty (15) (20 – 24 Oct) -

Unmanned and unemployed by the King's decision to allow only women to play women's parts on stage, former leading lady, “Ned” Kynaston is saved from depression by his former dresser, Maria, the woman who has replaced him on stage. This period drama, set in the 1660s, is perfectly performed and offers a delightful twist to the usual historically-based scenario. With Billy Crudup, Claire Danes and Rupert Everett.

The Bourne Supremacy (12a) (31 Oct – 1 Nov) -

Continuing on from *Bourne Identity*, Bourne and Marie are forced out of their assumed lives by ghosts from the past. As the nightmare-plagued Bourne returns to his life as an assassin, the action kicks in again. The gritty, realistic car chases and action scenes make this a refreshing throwback to films of its type from the 70s and 80s. With Matt Damon and Julie Stiles.

To book or for more information please call the Dukes on 01524 598500 or visit the website: www.dukes-lancaster.org

Duke's Theatre

The theatrical delights kick off with Mike Leigh's *Abigail's Party* (24th Sept – 16th Oct). The play is centred on an evening of domestic entertaining in 1970s suburbia in the confined living room of the home of Beverly and Laurence, hosting a little soiree for her new neighbours. While the gin and tonics flow, Beverly subjects her guests to an excruciating evening of chilled red wine, olives and the music of Demis Roussos. Tensions mount, tongues and ties loosen and as the conversation turns from house prices and Leather Look settees to having a go at their other halves.

Following swiftly is Phyllis Nagy's adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's novel *The Talented Mr Ripley* (29th Oct – 20th Nov). Set in 1950s Italy with its exquisitely beautiful landscapes the play centres on a key encounter between the charismatic Tom Ripley, a smooth, sophisticated psychopath and young Richard Greenleaf, a wealthy playboy. Richard's parents have sent Tom to Italy on a mission to find their spoilt, wayward son, and then to persuade him to return.

The strands of the stories weaving in and out of time and place as he finds a way to a better existence - by assuming another person's identity and life. It is a thoroughly chilling and engrossing tale of deception, charm and murder.

The finale of the autumn season is the new Christmas show for adults and children, Neil Duffield's *The Lost Warrior* (26th Nov – 1st Jan). Oisín is a Celtic warrior who guarded the shores of Lough Leane a hundred lifetimes ago. Aideen is a modern-day Irish teenager. When fate draws them together, strange things start to happen. Stones talk. Horses gallop across the water. And an army of elves and goblins takes to the air. Can all this be real or is Aideen as peculiar as people make her out to be?

Complimenting the theatre bill will be a varied selection of stunning films and seasons.

If you would like to know more about these shows or book tickets please call the Dukes on 01524 598500.

Nuffield Theatre Shows

The Nuffield Theatre is the venue for showcasing and commissioning national to international professional and contemporary examples of dance, theatre, multimedia and live art. The theatre also supports up and coming artists and companies with its Emerging Artists Scheme.

Vincent Dance Theatre – Punch Drunk (UK Premiere)

Friday 8 & Saturday 9 October at 8pm. £8 / £5 concessions

An in-depth and blackly comic, choreographic piece focuses upon the role of an artist as a ‘worker’ over an ‘entertainer.’ The study of dancers backstage illuminates what creates a spectacular night at the theatre, from a little-explored perspective.

Baktruppen – Do & Undo
Wednesday 20 October at 8pm. £8 / £5 concessions

The Norwegian company of experimental and physical performance displays the European festival hit ‘Do & Undo’ and a new piece of work.

Only The Moon To Play With: Being in Love.

A piece in three parts by Qasim Riza Shaheen
Monday 25 October at 8pm. £8 / £5 concessions

The Manchester based artist continues his study which draws together philosophy and internal workings with his continuous study of the rhythms and language of Kathak and its musicality enhanced his live art practise. Placing a variety of art forms in conflict, from silence within chaos to gender within religion, maybe provocative ideas are set to be produced.

Ways to book

Call in: Box Office, Hylton

Music Rooms,

Great Hall Complex

Mon – Fri, 12 – 4pm

Telephone: 01524 594151

Fax: 01524 847298

Text phone : 0781 0082832

Email:

boxoffice@lancaster.ac.uk



the
DUKES

What Is Ageless?

What is ageless? Not in a numeric sense, for in those sorts of terms nothing is without age. I mean in terms of things we pick up or hear today, a book perhaps, that can be enjoyed without a cynical nod to the time it came from. What about things we read or watched on TV when we were little? Always an enjoyable conversation topic- but for all the nostalgia I doubt anyone could re-live *Noggin the Nog*, Enid Blyton, *Thundercats* or whatever transfixed your generation without, at the very least, cringing a little bit. Are there exceptions, then? Memories whose allure somehow remain frozen in time?

I think that Winnie the Pooh is ageless. In my opinion, clutching onto his blue balloon, he floats high above the ranks made up of other children's characters. Winnie the Pooh is someone who I would love to be. He is not stupid, but simple (in his own words a bear of very little brains), which means he is free of the messy, irrelevant thoughts that I fill my head up with; he lives in a tree with his precious honey and I really like honey; but perhaps most importantly he is a very humble bear. He admires his more intelligent companions, the likes of Owl, Rabbit and of course Christopher Robin, all of whom he tries to learn from in a very humble and understated sort of way. He is also extremely determined. After witnessing Kanga teaching Roo to bounce, Pooh spends hours in the sand pit convinced that committed training will make him a fine bouncer (in the jumping sense, obviously). It's a lovely thought that we could all be kangaroos if we just took the time to practice.

So that is why I think Winnie the Pooh is ageless. Because he has all sorts of attributes that too few people have today, and I firmly believe that if there were lots of people like him around, we would all be living in very peaceful and harmonious world.

However I'm not sure if this rule can



be applied so well to other literary figures. For instance, another fictional character I wouldn't mind being is Elizabeth Bennett - A product of rich, rural Regency England in *Pride and Prejudice*. Empire lines and country dancing certainly don't cut it in today's modern society, and yet there is a certain spark about young Lizzy and her story that definitely defies the erosion of time. I adore her sharp cynicism about almost everything and everyone she encounters, but yet I also enjoy her gradual realisation that the one person she has been the most cynical about is the person she loved the most all along. This getting-the-wrong-idea-about-someone-who-is-actually-very-nice-really is so easily applicable today that it could have been written very recently. Having said this, a few of the reasons I would like to be her are for the absolutely non-ageless things - Such as the empire lines and country dancing, a skill which is only slightly harder than jumping in a sandpit.

In fact, I admire Elizabeth Bennett as much for her complexity as I do Pooh for his simplicity. Although I can't really visualise a fusion of the two characters, for me they both manage to defy the passing of time very effectively indeed.

By Laura Goss

Scepticism, Apathy and Depression.... "This Is Our Youth"

The year could well have been 1939, and the hypothetical eighteen-year-old could have been someone who asked questions concerned with mortality and death, questions such as 'how is it all going to end?' or 'how long do I have left?'. Almost seven decades later, the eighteen-year-old in question, now a disgruntled octogenarian who always seems to be fighting World War 2 all over again so that he may be entitled to a seat on the bus, is perhaps not too pleased with the youth of today. Can he be blamed, when the questions that seem to concern today's eighteen-year-old are more akin to 'who should I vote out of 'Big Brother' this week?'

Yes, squinting disapprovingly at contemporary youth is an apparent part of the job description of the 'elderly', along with wrinkles, failing faculties and a conviction that things were better once upon a time, but the octogenarian on the bus may have a point as he lectures you on the sacrifices of yesterday and the nonchalance of today. He may even be merely pointing out the tip of the iceberg.

It doesn't take much to appreciate the differences between the choices of today and the choices of yesterday, but it may be more challenging to appreciate the difference in values. If you are in your early twenties, like myself, then the chances are that you have already taken everything written with a pinch of salt and a dash of indifference. It is, after all, another article ranting on about the evils of our youth, and how it has been wasted on the young in this day and age, and it will probably end with the rhapsodic conclusion that we should all appreciate what we've got just a little bit more. Far be it from me to argue with such an assessment, but it seems the likeliest conclusion of two sentiments that are prevalent in the so-called 'Noughties' - Apathy and scepticism.

The former appears to be the more daunting of the two. After all, where would we be without justified scepticism? Politicians are probably more transparent now than ever, lawyers aren't touched with a twelve-inch pole, and Hare Krishnas are ridiculed on the High Street. Evidently, scepticism has made us search for the wolf in sheep's clothing, although it has made us question an altogether too 'sheepish' sheep from time to time; the misgivings of scepticism often do lead to paranoia. However, the topic of contemporary culture in the United States is for a different

article altogether.

No, 'Apathy' is an overutilised word, one used to describe young people's attitude to a variety of topics, from the Royal Family to Stem Cell Research. The topic that has earned Youth's apathy the most, however, is undoubtedly the subject of politics. Did Tony Blair lie? Were there WMDs in Iraq? Is the War on Terrorism as abstract and as futile as the War on Drugs? What is the difference between New Labour and Old Tory? How misguided was Iain Duncan Smith's Compassionate Conservatism? Who is Iain Duncan Smith?! Politics, for better or worse, tends to generate more questions than answers, and our modern-day eighteen-year-old quite frankly doesn't appear to be too interested. When enquired, a partially raised eyebrow indicating impartiality and an ironic smirk is the usual physical reaction - One that incarnates the sentiments expressed by an old axiom growing more relevant with every generation: "The more things change, the more they stay the same".

There are, of course, young people who are very passionate about and indeed actually possess informed opinions about politics, but one needs no conclusive studies to discover that a young person is far more likely to know the vital statistics of another 'Big Brother' contestant than those of the current leader of the Conservative party. Perhaps it is easier to find an ill-mannered troglodyte more interesting than a dry old man, but at the end of the day, only one of them will make a difference in the society we live in.

Or will they?

It should not be forgotten that there is little that escapes the scrutiny of today's media. Indeed, the increase of the media's efficiency has seen to it that politicians become less and less credible, and more and more dubious. Yes, no one should, and I hope no one does, believe everything that they read - but who can honestly admit to implicitly (or explicitly, for that matter) trusting any politician unreservedly? Leaders are no longer stone-faced heroes leading men to battle or fighting the good fight, they are now caught in the mire of scandal and half-truths, independent inquiries and impeachment conspiracies. Is it any wonder a culture grows weary of it all, and youth is lost to apathy?

The political ennui of our times may be symptomatic of the fact that modern culture is defined by its sometimes overwhelming

kaleidoscope of choices. Brand names and cut-throat prices, advertising campaigns and price wars; perhaps the world has never known a time when there has been as much choice as there is now, especially for our youth, and this by no means refers exclusively to products. The fact that one can smoke, drink, drive, vote and have sex at an earlier age than seven decades ago appears to show an increase in choice in most aspects of life. However, is increased choice better? Economists worship the idea of diminishing returns, and perhaps this can be applied to a social context; the inverse relationship between quality and quantity does seem to say that more is not necessarily better.

Whether more choice brings more happiness is just as debatable. According to countless surveys, today's youth is far more depressed than that of yesterday, and this is demonstrated with the increasing number of depressed young people, and the disturbing suicide rates. If we are more informed of more choices than ever before, why are we more apathetic and depressed?

What is perhaps less easy to do is to step back and appreciate the profile of modern culture in context. If one could do that, the picture would look a lot less daunting, and the octogenarian would seem more out of touch with reality.

Cultures, like anything else, change constantly. Should the media become more efficient at showing the shortcomings of politicians, one will inherently grow disheartened with politics, but one's judgement may also have become more accurate. Should choice increase to exaggerated levels, one will be overwhelmed and more often than not make the occasional wrong choice, which should prompt experience, something that today's youth may be lacking. Yes, modern youth does have more choice and are perhaps more susceptible to apathy, but they are also more weary of false marketing and empty promises. The transparency of materialism and politics has never been as well detected by youth as the youth of today, it would appear.

Is today's depression a cause for celebration? It is not. But perhaps in the long run, symptoms such as apathy and depression resemble the effect more than the cause. Maybe it's not a disease, after all. Maybe it's an evolution.

By Anthony Pino

Surestart

Sure Start North Lancaster will be present at the opening and closing events of the Lancaster District Diversity Festival. We support all families in the Sure Start North Lancaster area who have children under school age by providing access to health visitors, midwives and childcare experts who are always happy to help and advise families. Sure Start also organises various groups where parents can play with their children and meet other parents in a pleasant and sociable environment - over a cup of tea! We arrange fun activities during the school holidays, including trips out. This year we took over 300 children and parents to Gullivers World and to Dalton Zoo - managing to avoid the rain storms in every case! Sure Start also employs CAB advisors who are able to give advice about tax and benefits, and housing situations. Come along to the Sure Start stand at The Platform on Saturday 2nd October and St. Martin's on Saturday 30th October. There will be some fun activities for children, and our staff will be happy to give you any further information you require.



Breaking Down The Age Barriers

Whilst this Government and governments of the past have introduced legislation to combat sexism, racism and more recently, discrimination on the grounds of religion and against those with disabilities, another damaging prejudice - that based around age - is only now being tackled.

Changes in population structure mean that the labour market will soon contain more people aged over forty than under forty - Those sometimes seen as 'on their way out' will be in the majority, yet discrimination and the fear of discrimination still prevails: One in eight workers say they have been discouraged from applying for a job due to an age range, limit or description ('young' etc.) in the advert, and the government estimate that age discrimination costs the economy approximately £16 billion a year.

As combating this form of discrimination becomes more important both to government, business and individuals, we might hope to see significant reductions in age bias in the coming years, especially as a result of the Anti-Age Discrimination bill which the Government plan to introduce in 2006. This piece of legislation, which will be the UK implementation of the European Directive on Equal Treatment should be finalised soon following a

lengthy consultation lasting from 2001 and including everyone from Age Concern to the Confederation of British Industry.

Whilst exactly how far the new legislation will go remains to be seen, many are lobbying for it to abolish all differentiation based on age in employment and training - Ranging from the lower rate of minimum wage paid to those under 21 to the end of mandatory retirement ages. They argue that younger and older employees should only be treated differently if their health and well-being demands it.

Currently there only exists the slimmest of protection against age discrimination in the workplace, in the form of voluntary codes published by the Department of Trade and Industry. These have had some impact, reducing the number of firms using age as part of their selection criteria from 27% to 13% since 1999, but this is clearly not good enough - If one in eight employers discriminated on grounds of sex, race or religion there would be no serious calls for only loose legislation to be brought in, yet there are still a number of politicians and organizations who demand just that, claiming that regulations like these are anti-competitive and anti-business.

One area in which the Government has failed to face up to its own age discrimination is within Higher Education.

Despite stressing the financial advantages of gaining a degree to younger students, the message that government policy on financial support sends to those over 55 that it's "not worth it" for them to study. The total lack of loans (let alone grants) to those over 55 restricts University to those who can afford both the fees and their living costs for three years, and does nothing to encourage the 'lifelong learning' that the Government appears keen to promote.

Despite failure such as this and even though employment and training opportunities are far from the only type of age discrimination, changing practices and attitudes here can have a profound affect elsewhere. With only two thirds of women aged 50-59 in employment, many are excluded from all sorts of activities by cost alone, so creating conditions where those who want to work can be sure of finding a job free from discrimination will open up many more opportunities for a large proportion of this age group. One can only hope that steps to combat age discrimination gather pace from here and that individuals can be judged on their skills and personal qualities, not simply by their date of birth.

By Ben Soffa

YMCA in England

Last year 150 YMCAs in England reached over a million people from over 240 communities.

The YMCA is a worldwide movement, committed to meeting the needs of young people regardless of their gender, race, ability, age or faith, particularly in times of need, by providing high quality programmes in seven integrated areas:

Housing and Homelessness - The YMCA is the largest provider of safe, supported accommodation in England for single men and women in the 16 to 35 age

range

Sport, Health, Exercise and Fitness - More than 50 different activities available from 120 sites in England

Crime and Safety - Prevention work, work with young offenders, ex-offenders and those in prisons

Training and Education - Life skills, vocational qualifications and job search for 250,000 people

Personal and Social Development - Enabling young people to realise their potential

Parenting and Childcare - The YMCA runs a variety of parenting and childcare programmes designed to promote healthy parent and child relationships

Money and Work - YMCAs run a range of programmes covering everything from budgeting skills to job placements

International - Operating in 123 countries worldwide, the YMCA has more than 30 million members

For more information, visit www.ymca.org.uk

Marsh Age Link

The link between two older peoples groups based in Gulu, Uganda and Lancaster has been firmly cemented through the Lancashire-Gulu Link initiative based in Preston. Members of the 'Get Together' Group, the 'How To' Craft Group and the Community Peace Garden Group, all groups for the over 55's based at Marsh AgeLink in Lancaster, have a particular interest in horticulture and crafts and these interests inspired the choice of partner in Uganda.

They were matched with the Gulu Old Age Peoples Association. They are based in the north of Uganda which is currently suffering from conflict perpetrated by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army resulting in insurgence, a great deal of suffering and the destruction of their economy. The Gulu Old Age Association is therefore focusing primarily on developing a "Peace Building Programme to provide mediation and expertise in conflict management and resolution". The main target groups of their organisation are - the older person, the children - orphans and those with disability, widows and widowers.

Although the two partners in Lancaster and Gulu live in totally different environments in terms of stability and comfort, many of the principal aims of the two organisations are the same. Some of the Gulu Old Age Association principal aims and objectives are:

- To provide a forum where the elders can freely discuss, research and find solutions to their problems,
- To restore and rebuild the desired integrity, dignity and respect for the aged in society and to maximise advocacy

for the recognition of the elderly,

- To foster and encourage through sensitisation the spirit of self reliance and self confidence.

The theme of "peace" is central to the link between the two organisations. The Community Peace Garden that was developed with the help of the older members of Marsh Age Link is attached to the Marsh AgeLink Community Centre based on the Marsh in Lancaster. This garden consists of many areas that have been designed to reflect differing styles and interests. It has been planted with many flowers that reflect this theme such as a rose named "Spirit of Peace". The "mini gardens" include a wildflower garden that has, in part, been planted by local school children. There is also a scented rose garden surrounded by a lavender hedge. An Oriental Garden displays acers, bamboos and a ginkgo tree that leads onto the shrubbery. A central island bed contains herbaceous plants that provide a host of colour throughout the year. Most of the plants have been donated from people that use the Centre, once more illustrating the generosity and goodwill shown throughout the community project.

The garden provides a "green space" where people can reflect, pray for peace and enjoy horticultural and craft activities whilst remembering their friends in Gulu. The link between the two groups is very important to both groups, who have every intention to foster and develop their friendship in the years to come.

By Jo Drew

Folly

An exhibition made with the help of people from Lancaster and Morecambe will be showing until 22nd October at Folly. Distance Made Good: Flow Lines shows journeys made by people with the artists, Jen Southern and Jen Hamilton. It aims to make a new map of the area based on the lives of the people that live here. Folly is a non-profit media arts organisation promoting photographic, video and digital art. Folly also runs Contact, a community arts scheme, which aims to increase public access to and awareness of art and promote the therapeutic benefits of arts in public spaces.

Celebrating 125 Years In Our District

Founded on 22nd November 1879, Lancaster and District YMCA is a well established independent and local charity, focusing on the needs of our local community to raise the potential of individuals throughout the District.

The Lancaster and District YMCA delivers many projects throughout the District, meeting local needs as identified by the local community. We currently receive an average of 15,000 contacts through our various projects and we are supported by an excellent team of volunteers and trustees - all residents of our District.

Should you be interested in volunteering for the Association please contact us.

Our work includes the following projects:

Space4... Youth project, offering a venue for young people to meet socially and develop skills in a supportive atmosphere.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme - Offering access to the Award for all. This is the only open-access award scheme in the District.

Radio and Broadcasting Project - Providing access to broadcasting for the whole community from beginners

to advanced, giving a voice to our community.

Wise Up Project - Working with ex-offenders and those at risk of offending to reduce offending behaviour. This project has been hailed as one of the most effective nationally.

United - Anti-Racist Football Project Positive Activities for young people - Offering support and activities for young people out of school hours.

Floating Support - Providing support for local people in their own homes to maintain their tenancies.

Deposit Guarantee Scheme - Helping

local people into accommodation by guaranteeing a bond.

Mentoring Project - Providing positive role models for young people.

TRUCE - Family Mediation Project, building bridges between young people and parents.

Y Information Shop for young people - Offering FREE, impartial and confidential information, advice, advocacy and counselling for young people.

Virtual Info Shop - offering information and advice via text messaging - TEXT "info" to 07781472507

Virtual Youth Network - keeping

young people informed - TEXT "net" to 07781 472507.

For further information on these services please contact :

Lancaster and District YMCA, "Heart of the City", Fleet Square, Lancaster. LA1 1HA

Email - ymcalancaster@btconnect.com

Tel - 01524 32737

Information Shop - 01524 389696

TEXT - 07781 472507

Or visit www.lancasterymca.co.uk

Charity number - 250536

Looking On The Diverse Side Of Life

Presuming that most of us want to squeeze the pips out of our short spell on this mortal coil, being able to celebrate diversity when we meet it would appear to be one of the best ways of going about it.

Being able to accept different ways of being human (with a few, well-justified, unpalatable exceptions) means we can enjoy more situations, with more people, and in more places. It also means that we're likely to be a wiser, kinder people, who'll do less harm to other people over the years we're here.

Our collective record is, though, at best only patchy in understanding this pretty simple equation, and over the generations, men have had a particularly bad record in getting their heads around it. Quite apart from peoples of other creeds and colours, if it wasn't women that men were oppressing, they turned on their fellows and persecuted those of them who fancied each other, or who they thought fancied each other; or those who they couldn't quite pin anything on with certainty, but just found didn't fit the (current) norm.

Viewed from the beginning of the 21st century, however, things really do seem to be changing. More men now believe that it's actually rather nice, as well as just, to have a partner who is their equal, and are also beginning to realize that civilization won't crumble if men fancy men, or any of the other combinations that Blur taught us about.

Nonetheless, the male community are often still pretty bad at accepting the challenge that experience of diversity lays down. There can still be stigma attached to being not the 'right' kind of guy for your context – from being too feminine, to not 'facing up to the fact that you must be gay'

(happened to me...).

Could it be that one of things that hamper men's capacity to understand and accept more aspects of the world about them is that - for all sorts of historical reasons – they're still not very good at finding out how other people experience the world? Men are getting more touchy-feely, but it's a slow process, and as a member of this group, I think we've still lots to learn. Taking the time to listen to others, spending time with them, working out why they behave as they do - the means by which we come to be more accepting of other people's ways of being themselves, and (crucially) also put our own values and judgments in better perspective - all involve being receptive in a way that's been under-valued in a male culture which has always taken more pride in rather unquestioning self-assertion.

The rewards for developing this receptive aspect of ourselves are surely worth it, whichever way the situation's viewed. Firstly, it's likely to lead to less harmful relationships between us all. But it also offers a fantastic opportunity: we grow as individuals and as communities through being stimulated and challenged to see things from different perspectives and explore new dimensions of what it is to be human, a process which helps us understand and be accepting of ourselves and others. Being able to accept and even celebrate diversity, we allow ourselves to be more at ease with the world and less defensive. We can actually enjoy what's there around and within us, rather than fearing or hating it. And that, surely, makes for more pip-squeezing.

By P. Carr

Nuffield

The Nuffield Theatre at Lancaster University is one of the largest and most adaptable studio theatres in Europe. It programmes a range of professional contemporary performance across theatre, dance, live art and multimedia. The Nuffield also commissions new works from established national and international artists which often go on to tour widely, as well as supporting a number of young companies through its Emerging Artists Scheme. Recent projects involving the community include Ursula Martinez working with a group of local pensioners on her new piece "OAP" (soon to open in London), and artists Niki McCretton and Kathy Hinde working on "Relative", a cross-generational project in Morecambe. For more info see www.nuffieldtheatre.com
Email: boxoffice@nuffieldtheatre.com
Tel: 01524 594151

Personal Safety: An Issue For All

Over-hyped? Exaggerated? A female problem only? These are just some of the questions surrounding the issue of the date-rape-drugs. Men, before you dismiss this column, consider this: more than 1 in 30 men have been victims of rape or sexual assault as adults, and 12% people who reported drug-assisted rape to the date-rape drug charity The Roofie Foundation were male. A startling statistic given the fact that many people are not even aware male rape exists, or consider it to be relevant only to the gay community. Rape is not an act of sex, but of violent domination and power - which is why male rape is not referred to as gay rape. The risks of being victims of drug-rape are very real for both men and women.

Rohyphnol, GHB and Ketamine are commonly used drugs that render a victim incapable and cause amnesia, in many cases full memory will never return. Rohyphnol passes through the body in 48hours, GHB in 12 so most people cannot prove that they have been drugged at all. They are mostly colourless and cannot be detected especially in coloured bottles. Both are tasteless and odourless. Victims may appear and feel very intoxicated very quickly and soon lose awareness of what they are doing. Victims won't remember events, but can wake up later to find bruising in the genital area, and pressure marks on the arms and thighs, be in pain and realise that they may well have been raped but know little or nothing of what actually happened.

Is the problem over-exaggerated? In 2003 998 people reported drug-rape attacks to the Roofie Foundation. This is an 86% increase on incidents reported five years ago. The age group 25-30 has the highest incidence of reports, followed closely by the 18-25 age group. Most people are administered the drug in bars and clubs but a staggering 10% were given the drugs on business premises and 21% in private houses. Since rape is the most unreported crime in the UK and police and The Roofie Foundation think allegations of drug-rape could be reported even less, the threat seems extremely real and it certainly seems that we need to be very cautious.

Is the issue over-hyped? The stories we read are almost certainly the most appalling, most terrifying or more unusual cases. This is quite disturbing, it means that it is a given fact that there are less hype-making, 'usual' cases of drug-rape, and although they are by no means less terrifying than those we read about in the media. People have been routinely drugged at home, by work colleagues, acquaintances, friends of friends, and in some cases even friends or dates. Short of becoming a paranoid hermit, how can we protect ourselves effectively without living in fear and being suspicious of everyone and every drink?

Most people resent a situation where you cannot accept a drink from a well-meaning soul but sadly the safest way to protect



yourself is to be suspicious of every drink. Only accept drinks from good friends, not merely acquaintances. If you don't know a person very well, accompany them to the bar or a place where you can see your drink being poured and handed straight to you. Never leave a drink unaccompanied for whatever reason, and if you do it is safest not to drink it than take a risk. There are ways of 'losing' or 'forgetting' drinks without it being obvious if you don't wish to drink it. Also remember not only alcoholic drinks are spiked.

If you feel drunker than you ought or more quickly than usual, or you know that you cannot be drunk tell a trusted friend that you need to go home. Do not tell your date or an acquaintance; you could well be informing a potential attacker that the drug is taking effect. If you are not with any good friends, ask a bar-owner or security staff to take you to a safe place, call a trusted friend or a taxi to take you home. A shortened night is far better than

risking an attack. A small detection device – drink detective - is also available from some chemists and Boots stores and can identify spiked drinks.

Never leave alone, or with a person you don't know, no matter how well you would like to get to know them. A moment of caution is better than regret, and finally remember that whilst date-rape drugs might be hyped there is an older date rape drug, completely legal that many of us take all the time - alcohol. Drink sensibly, know your limits, be careful that you are not being given more alcohol than you think you are and stay with friends to ensure you make the night a night to remember for all the right reasons.

For more information contact the Roofie Foundation (www.roofie.com) or their 24 hour helpline 0800 789 2980. Male survivors can also contact www.survivorsuk.co.uk 0845 1221201 Tuesday&Thursday 7-10pm.)

By Natalie Olden

That Takes Ovaries!

We live in an ever increasingly complex world, with the media bombarding us with images of 'perfection' while promoting the luxurious lifestyle, junk food and expectations of balancing an education, social life, family and a job. Despite these confused messages on the greater side of negativity, one woman has put together a book of positive and challenging stories.

The collection of stories - *That Takes Ovaries! Bold Females and Their Brazen Acts* - Rivka Solomon (Ed), will open your mind and eyes to a global perspective. In our western society we can vote, wear trousers to school, have the freedom to go to university and work, but this isn't the case for all women. Over sixty women tell enlightening and emotive tales. Smiles are produced by comical stories such as Mica Miro 'Yay for Hairy Women' in which a school girl shaves her leg hair in stripes. Many tales address the harder side of life, such as Mary Ann McCourt 'Not Minding My Own Bussiness' deals with saving a stranger from rape/abuse. To distinctly personal, such as D. h. Wu 'Saving Mommy' or 'The Night I Lost My Childhood' in which a six year old saves her mother from suicide.

The stories are an emotional rollercoaster, but the most important messages are that of possibility and inspiration.

In our ever evolving world, suppression still exists but so does resistance. The stories stand as models to work towards, to have a fire within, and to have the ovaries to react and be counted. The stories are all-encompassing, racially, culturally, socio-economically, representing all ages, sexual orientation, ability and disability, representing all women, everywhere.

THAT TAKES OVARIES!

Bold Females and Their Brazen Acts



Being a woman is defined in these tales, as a wide, constantly altering state, particular to that person. So what is it to be a woman? The answer - an individual.

Everybody is invited to a forth-coming play/open mic night, stories from men and women are needed about bold, brazen

females, to add to the event. Everyone who takes part will receive a golden ovary and there will be a prize for the best story.

Watch this space for further details.

By *Sophie Dixon & Janie Digby*

ADVERTISE HERE

A limited number of paid adverts will be accepted in the second issue of this paper (released mid November). Adverts must be from businesses in the Lancaster District who support diversity and the aims of the festival. Money raised from advertising will be used to produce more copies of the paper and fund new editions and other activities for the next festival.

The 2nd edition will also serve as a directory to community organizations in the district who support diversity and the people of Lancaster.

Small adverts for such organizations and community groups are free.

In both cases, please email andre@oboler.com before the end of the festival (30th October)

Action In Friendship

Soroptimist International is an independent non-religious, non-political organisation where women join together in friendship to serve the global community by using their skills to help others and campaign for better conditions of life for those who are less privileged.

We in the Morecambe & Heysham club really care about the environment. Regularly we organise a beach clean at Half Moon Bay, which we have adopted, and campaign for greater awareness of harmful rubbish disposal. Currently we are looking at Fair Trade products and their availability locally.

Further afield we continue to support financially a 'Partners in Education in Swaziland' (PIES) project where street and bush children with AIDS and HIV infection are clothed, fed and educated in very difficult circumstances.

At production stage we have a booklet called SKIRTS (Soroptimists Know Illuminating Routes To Services) which is a compilation of contacts both useful and interesting for women new to the area. Hopefully we can secure some sponsorship to enable us to have copies available in many public places.

Our members are actively involved in many other areas including Life Education for Lancashire, the mobile classrooms helping children to understand their own bodies in the

hope of preventing drug abuse in the future; the Credit Union; RUKBA (Royal United Beneficent Association); Limbs for Life; The Rosemere Foundation; the Air Ambulance; Teddies for Tragedies and Caring Whispers helping young women overcome serious eating disorders.

We in Morecambe & Heysham, along with 19 other clubs including the Isle of Man join together to form the north west region of Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland. As a region we are able to pool our resources and ideas and make a positive contribution to the achievements of the federation. In turn our federation is one of five combining together as Soroptimist International. Our efforts are channelled into 6 areas; Human Rights and the Status of Women, Education, Social and Economic Development, Health, International Goodwill and Understanding and Environment. In this way we can action the concerns of women world wide and influence decision makers in society from local government all the way to the United Nations.

All that we achieve is done in an atmosphere of fun and friendship. We are delighted to welcome new members and any interested woman could telephone 07776296271 for more information.

Caring Whispers

Caring Whispers is a charitable organisation set up to help those with eating problems, not just anorexia but also bulimia, binge-eating and obesity.

The charity aims to provide sufferers and their carers/families with help, care, treatment and support. The facilities of local Primary Care Trusts are inadequate to deal with the demands on the service and the head of Mental Health in Morecambe Bay Primary Care trust is interested in the progress of our work.

Sue Gardener, who has personal experience as a sufferer, and Sue Hind as a carer, are founders of the organisation. These remarkable women use their personal experience to help as they are able to identify completely with the stresses that accompany the conditions. They have run support groups for about four years. The first point of contact a sufferer should make is by telephone. From this an initial assessment and health profile can be made before a face-to-face meeting.

The aim of the charity now is to raise enough funds to set up a pilot scheme working with groups

of clients and to research into how holistic therapies can help to improve self-esteem and reduce anxiety. Ultimately sufferers should be able to stay in employment and continue with their studies, if they are students.

Long term the aim is to establish a centre which would have drop-in facilities and access to holistic and clinical therapies. The charity has a Board of Trustees and has been supported from its inception by the local Soroptimist group S. I. Morecambe and Heysham. At the moment we are looking for volunteers with particular to help us move forward. Skills needed are in local and national fund-raising, finance and law. Anyone who would like to help, should phone (01524) 400976.

The Charity has been nominated for Best New Charity of the Year Awards and has been short-listed down to the last four. The result of this will be known on September 3rd and it should raise our profile locally and nationally.

By *Margaret Paterson*

Press For Change

"Press For Change" is a political lobbying and educational organisation which campaigns to achieve equal civil rights for all Transsexual and Transgender people in the UK through legislation and social change.

To this end Ms Lynne J Braithwaite BEM (PFC activist and a advisor to the Lancashire Constabulary) and Ms Christine Harrison (Independent advisor to the Merseyside constabulary 2001 - 2004) are giving a continuous power point presentation titled "Diversity" on: Saturday 2nd Oct 2004 in the "Platform" in Morecambe and also on Saturday 30th Oct 2004 at St Martins College. They will also be available to answer any questions and if enough people are interested will be willing to take a short workshop on the subject.

The introduction is by kind permission of Professor Joan Roughgarden (www.ucpress.edu) author of "Evolutions Rainbow" with references to Diversity Denied, Animal Rainbows, Human Rainbows and Cultural Rainbows.

The main body of the presentation comprising four galleries of successful "Trans people" is by the kind permission of Professor Lynn Conway, Emeritus, at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA <http://www.lynnconway.com>. Galleries One to Three exhibits Transsexual Women's Successes and Gallery Four exhibits Transsexual Men's Successes.

Please join us and see for yourself the colours in the "Rainbow of Evolution"

Healthy Living Centre

Morecambe Healthy Living Centre aims to involve local residents in healthy living activities like Cook and Eat Sessions, Community Allotments and Women's Health Groups. While welcoming the whole community to our activities, we are particularly keen to work with those who are not yet plugged in to local networks, or who are isolated in any way. We are nearly 2 years in to a 5 year project funded by the lottery. We are guided by a Steering Group of local agencies and groups. Please contact Pete Armstrong, HLC Co-ordinator, on 425531 or email hlc@morecambehlc.bbfree.co.uk for more information.

Chinese Community

Earlier this year, the Lancaster and Morecambe Bay Chinese Community Association (LBCCA) set out to bring together the disparate communities of Chinese people living in and around the Lancaster District. We hope to foster a community spirit based on common cultural ground. Through education and leisure, the LBCCA strives to serve the wider community by supporting the Chinese community's needs in breaking barriers to better integration.

IF you are interested in finding out more about our organisation, please contact us at: First floor, 58 Queen Street, Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 5EP or call 01524 400161

Seedsavers

Lancaster Seed Savers is a group of local people working on preserving traditional and local varieties of fruit and vegetables and encouraging people to grow their own food - in gardens, allotments and window boxes. Seed Savers also organises events such as Apple Day and Potato Day, where people can buy and find out about different varieties of apples and potatoes, and how to grow and use them. Catriona Stamp, Lancaster Seed Savers c/o LaRC, 78a Penny Street, Lancaster, email seedsavers@gmx.net

MAPfED

MAPfED

The Multi Agency Partnership to Eliminate Discrimination was established during the Government's modernisation programme in April 2002 by two councillors wishing to explore local cultures and improve services to the victims of racism and other forms of discrimination. The City Council allow MAPfED to use rooms free of charge and provide an officer to take minutes of meetings but the responsibility for MAPfED lies with the Partnership of minority groups, voluntary, community and statutory bodies.

The terms of reference for the pilot programme place victims at the centre of thinking and doing. We can see from the current position that MAPfED was quick off the mark in broadening out the national emphasis on racial discrimination to cover all 7 Equality Standard themes of Age, Sexuality, Religion, Disability, Ethnicity, Gender and Race. The themes of the Diversity Festival are the same. The softer side of the work of MAPfED is its role in organising events to raise awareness to and celebrate the wide diversity of cultures throughout the Lancaster District. MAPfED is a recognised leader on diversity work and regularly helps in media and academic research.

Structure

The two tier system of Core Group and Task Groups is based on the Commission for Racial Equality model. Task groups report back to the monitoring and policy making Core Group. Both Core and task groups are managed by co-chairs and mentoring is used to encourage local people to join the partnership and take up influential positions. The two tier system allows task groups to reach out into local communities and membership remains open to local people and community organisations. In this way, relevant community ideas and opinion help the task groups form the recommendations which go directly through Core and task group membership to the ear of the most influential bodies in the Lancaster District. The idea of the system is to identify problem areas and build up trust to make progress as a partnership of equals.

Task Groups

A representative of each task group sits on the Core Group. When recommendations go to the Core Group from the task groups the organisations forming the Partnership work together to fill the gaps and try to improve the services to local people. Task groups are established on the MAPfED themes;

they work closely with local people to find out what is going right and what is wrong with the way public services are delivered. Task groups carry out research and confidential case studies, which means listening to, working with and building trust with people who experience crime and discrimination and are unhappy about the help they receive, afraid to approach the authorities or have lost confidence in the authorities.

Local Voices

MAPfED is a leader in connecting with the full range of community voices in the Lancaster District many of whom. The reward for this unfunded pilot work is the trust of people who are isolated or disenfranchised. Case study work has recently come under fire however, and there are moves to change the terms of reference of MAPfED. While all organisations must change & develop to survive and prosper, disassociating the two tier system must not mean less involvement and influence for local residents & community groups in an organisation designed to work directly with the community.

The First Lancaster District Diversity Festival.

Celebrating the skills & diversity in the Lancaster District and working to develop and raise the profile of MAPfED provided the driving force for the Race & Ethnicity Task Group to organise the First Lancaster District Diversity Festival in October 2004; a flyer is attached. The Festival is a vehicle to educate on diversity, promote equality, develop community cohesion, help organisations and groups to showcase what they are doing and simply get together to have a good time! The undercarriage of the Diversity Festival is the knowledge of the suffering and need of victims; a Justice Day event is designed to explore this topic area.

Personal Comments September 2004

Like most large organisations, MAPfED has great strength and weak areas. The Partnership became a building block of the Local Strategic Partnership in 2004 but it is not yet clear whether the new status will bring more support for MAPfED's work; the organisation remains unfunded and is not well-known by the public. A break down of activity since April 2002, shows that the support of the statutory authorities & agencies at Core Group level does not match the commitment put in by the Race & Ethnicity Task Group, the task

group putting in approximately 50% of attendance and work. Positive indicators for the Partnership show it has high impact potential. MAPfED helped change the race policy & practice of a national organisation, helped campaign for the first Domestic Violence policy in Lancaster City Council and is a consultant to the neighbouring Wyre Borough Council in setting up a MAPfED-type structure.

Strong arguments for supporting MAPfED:

- building bridges to marginalised groups & communities
- preventative work on discrimination, violence and harassment.
- research into victim perspectives and outcomes of services to the public
- trusted observer of process.

Multi Agency Working

Where agencies and statutory bodies say they lack the resources to meet their terms of reference they rarely say this to the public. They should speak out more; if key services lack the resources they need it means the public do not receive the service the organisations say they provide. MAPfED can be a casualty of this lack; authorities sign up to multi agency working and take places on committee structures, but may not be ready to share tasks, information or the centre stage, examples being the councillors, statutory bodies and agencies who have too many commitments and fail regularly to attend meetings, taking up places others could fill in the development of anti-discrimination work in the Lancaster District.

Biography

I work as a volunteer in community development in the Lancaster District, helping to establish community associations and groups and encourage local people to take a key role in the management of their living and working environments. An Honours Graduate of Warwick & Lancaster University & Director of a local Limited Company since 1991, I decided to stand for one term as an independent councillor from 1999-2003 to develop an understanding of local government. As a councillor I helped to set up MAPfED, stepping down as Co-Chair of the Core Group in May 2003 to make way for new people to move up the system. I am Co-Chair of the Race & Ethnicity Task Group established in November 2002.

Patricia England

Race and Ethnicity

While Lancaster has a high majority of white residents (97.8% of the community), it is also home to a diverse minority ethnic community that helps benefit the City economically and socially. The largest minority ethnic group in Lancaster is Indian; a community that numbers over 600 people. Other significant groups are the Chinese and Polish communities.

The minority ethnic population comprises migrant workers. Lancaster has fewer migrant workers than the national average, but the aftermath of the Morecambe Bay cockle-picking tragedy has led to increased awareness of the diverse communities in Lancaster. The Chinese community has, since the tragedy, been working closely with organisations in Lancaster to deal with the problems that the community faces.

Lancaster is fortunate to have a Race and Ethnicity Task Group (RETG), which works independently to help

tackle discrimination and increase public awareness of the positives that the diverse community brings to life in Lancaster. RETG is a 15-strong task group of the Multi Agency Partnership for Eliminating Discrimination (MAPFED), and works on active campaigns such as helping the relatives of those who lost their lives on Morecambe Bay.

Lancaster also has the support of Lancaster University and its Student Union in helping to promote equality on the basis of race and ethnicity.

Contact details for:

- RETG
01524 851191 mapfed@lancaster.gov.uk

- LUSU Race Relations
racrelations@lancaster.ac.uk

- LUSU Int. Students
n.oosman@lancaster.ac.uk

Tim Perkins, Joint LUSU Race Relations Officer

Lancaster University: A Window To Diversity - A Personal Experience

When I came to Lancaster University last year I came from an average sized town, which had very little ethnically diverse people. So, from that to living on a corridor of twelve students of which five where international students was an exciting change! I enjoyed hearing about different cultures and backgrounds whilst cooking in the shared kitchen. I became firm friends with one of my corridor mates who is from Mauritius. It was a refreshing change to hear about her background

compared to the typical British life story! One of the advantages of studying at such a diverse university is the way it challenges your stereotypes. It was partly this kind of experience, which lead me to stand for Equal Opportunities Officer on my college Junior Common Room. Through this I have become aware of some of the challenges for international students including the high tuition fees and visa fees they have to pay.

Cal Smith

International Evening

Dallas Road School is hosting an international evening in October as part of our international week celebrations. We are very proud of the rich cultural diversity that typifies our school. International evening is the key event in our international week, when we immerse ourselves in the cultural traditions that typify our school world. Particularly popular is the opportunity to sample foods from around the world, kindly prepared by our parents. This bringing together of the whole school community through music, food and festival is central to our "one world" philosophy.

Diversity and Policing

Lancashire Constabulary is committed to ensuring that no member of the public will receive less favourable treatment or service because of their gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion, colour, nationality, ethnic / national origins or age.

By working together against hate crime we can turn the tables; we can include the excluded and liberate the fearful. Joint

action across society can change attitudes and push racism, homophobia and other group hatreds outside the limits of acceptability.

If require further information please contact:

Sergeant Paul Gooch,
Community Safety Department, County Police Office,
Thurnham Street, Lancaster.

01995 607870

Lancashire Constabulary
"Our ambition – to be the best police service in the country"



Welcome....

... to Lancaster District's first ever Diversity Festival.

There are 134,000 people in the Lancaster District, each with their own talents, life experiences, social networks, and prejudices.

This eclectic festival encourages everyone to show off those talents, share those life experiences, broaden those

networks, and challenge those prejudices!

Whatever your age, gender, sexuality, abilities, race, ethnicity or religion, we hope you will find the festival accessible, thought-provoking and fun.

The festival aims to:
recognise and celebrate diversity
educate and raise awareness
challenge discrimination

support long-term partnerships and programmes

bring groups and individuals together
link local and global issues

*"A positive attitude is contagious
but don't wait to catch it from others..."*

LANPAC

The Lancashire Partnership Against Crime (LANPAC) was formed in 1992 to assist in the county's crime prevention effort by creating links between Lancashire Constabulary and members of other public, private and voluntary organisations.

Currently there are over 270 associate members who each provide a small annual membership fee. This money, along with finance raised through fund-raising days and donations, is used to support crime prevention & community safety initiatives throughout the county that would otherwise

have been delayed or lost altogether through insufficient resources. Since 1997 the Partnership provided over £400,000 to finance such initiatives and this has generated funding in excess of £1.6 million from other agencies.

LANPAC has minimum overheads as accommodation; management support and administrative services are provided by Lancashire Constabulary.

In 1997 the Partnership became a company limited by guarantee and obtained charitable status, which has

greatly enhance the organisations fund-raising opportunities. The combination of charitable donations and tax concessions together with contributions received from existing members will allow the Partnership to continue its work in making Lancashire a safer place in which to live and work. For further information about the partnership please contact:

Lancashire Partnership Against Crime
Lancashire Police HQ, Hutton
01772 618733

Sexual Orientation - Being Bisexual

A Brief Introduction

Where to begin when trying to explain homosexuality is difficult, particularly because nobody really knows why some people are homosexual and some people are not. There are many different theories about this, most of which predominantly centre on the nature or nurture debate. The nature argument follows that it just so happens that a random genetic pattern occurs in some people's genetic make-up, in the same way that one member of the family may have blonde hair. The nurture argument, however, asserts the notion that the way in which the child was brought up influenced their sexual orientation in later life. In recent years, there have been an abundance of both social and biological studies conducted into the concept of

homosexuality, with the weight of evidence from such investigations increasingly suggesting that homosexuality is due to a genetic component.

No one chooses to be homosexual, in the same way that a heterosexual person does not choose his or her sexual orientation. Being homosexual need not have an effect on your life other than the fact that your deepest relationships will be formed with people of your own sex. Lesbian and gay people can relate to others who are not homosexual, in every way except sexually. Homosexuality is not an illness and cannot be 'cured'. It is entirely natural for lesbian women and gay men to need to give love, and to have that love returned, by people of the same sex.

**Next issue
of Diverse
will be published
in mid November
reviewing the
events of the
festival**

Sometimes it feels like it would be easier to be totally gay or totally straight than to be bisexual! It feels like being 'stuck in the middle', not really fitting completely into the gay community or the straight community.

I had my first sexual experience with another man when I was 18. Afterwards I felt confused inside. I knew that he was assuming that I was gay but somehow I didn't feel completely gay. I had a girlfriend at the time and I knew that I loved her

and she satisfied me. Obviously she was less than happy with the situation but she always said she was bisexual and eventually she convinced me that I was bisexual too.

When I go out in regular clubs I tend to meet women but I am always very aware that if I look the wrong way at another man I am likely to get into trouble, and in the same way it is not easy to pull a woman in a gay bar! I have been thrown out of gay bars for pulling women even though I'm bisexual!

People are not as understanding when it comes to bisexuality. I have had gay men saying that it's just a stage on the way to being gay. I've had people saying that I am greedy or that I just can't make my mind up. But it's not like that! I just have no preference between men and women. I hope that when I meet 'the one' they'll understand, and as far as I know they could be either male or female.

Lifestyle - Personal Reflections

Gay people are no different to straight people when it comes to the desire to socialise and meet other people. However, the unfortunate fact remains that this may not always be possible in mainstream pubs and clubs: gay men may be met with aggression from others and heterosexual men have been known to gawp at lesbians engaging in public displays of affection. Bars, like Kampus on China Street in Lancaster, offer the gay community a safe space to express themselves without threats of violence or the unpleasantness of being frowned upon. Club nights like 'Juicy' at the Sugarhouse are also a good way for gays and lesbians to meet each other. Although the event is open to anyone regardless of sexuality, here Naomi Oosman recalls her first Juicy experience:

"Before entering my second year at

Lancaster University I had never paid attention to the fact that the Sugarhouse held an "attitude free night" one Wednesday a term. Even when I heard about it I assumed it was reserved to LGBT students and that others were not necessarily welcome. How wrong I was!! When one of my friends convinced me that it would be a fun night out, curiosity got the better of me, and I agreed to go. I was slightly reassured by the fact that there would be other straight students there but still quite apprehensive.

Once we got there we ended up having a great time, and nobody stopped me at the door to ask what my sexual orientation was before letting me in!! Everyone was welcoming and refreshingly 'attitude free'.

In retrospect when I thought about that initial feeling of apprehension, I

realised that it was a fear of rejection. I was worried about not fitting in, being different having to justify who I was and how I led my life. All in all I thought I'd stick out like a sore thumb! This helped me to understand the feelings LGBT students have to face everyday, waking up to a world that may not always be as open minded and accepting as the little world of "Juicy".

Going to "Juicy" was, for me, not only a fun night out, but also a chance to realise that we shouldn't always take for granted the fact that people accept us for who we are.

So if you are looking for a little introspection, or simply a fun night out, Juicy might be a good place to start!"

Coming Out - A Personal Experience

As people are often assumed to be heterosexual unless they specify that they are not it is often necessary for gay people to 'come out' as gay. This can mean coming out to family, friends and work colleagues, although not necessarily all of these. People often choose to tell close friends first and maybe never tell anyone at work or some family members. Coming out can be stressful and often it gets harder before it gets easier. There is a very real fear of being rejected and causing upset, particularly when coming out to parents. Everyone has different experiences, here are a couple:

"I first told my mother I liked girls when I was 16, but after she reacted quite hostile I didn't mention it again. Later I dated a guy for a while and she assumed it was just a phase. However, I wasn't comfortable with the relationship and he couldn't make me totally happy so we broke up just after I started at university. At university I was more open about my

sexuality to friends and had a brief relationship with a woman, which made me feel more comfortable with myself. It got harder and harder to keep the truth from my parents and while home I told my dad. It was scary and I remember being terrified about his reaction, although he didn't say a word. He was silent which upset me because I had no idea what he was thinking. A few hours later I told my mum (again) and she wasn't as shocked as I feared. She hadn't forgotten me telling her two years previously and her concerns were mainly for me. She had worries about my future because of this discrimination I will face. This was less than six months ago and things can still be difficult at home and it has changed my relationship with some family members. I hope that in the future things will be easier and I will be able to be honest to my family."

"I was conscious of my feelings for members of the same sex all the way through my school years, and

simply attributed it to the fact that adolescence can be a very confusing time for most people concerning their sexuality. After all, we all hear the standard line: "*It is entirely natural to experience feelings for members of the same sex during a period when your hormones are on overdrive; this does not mean you are gay!*".

By the time I went to college I knew that I was a lesbian, yet it took me until the age of 17 before I felt ready to tell a handful of my closest friends, all of whom turned out to be very supportive. I also had a brief relationship with a woman around this period, which only confirmed what I already knew: that I was gay.

Upon coming to University, I was 'outed' by another gay person I lived with; he had realised my sexuality in the first few days, and in order to deflect attention from himself (he was more extrovertly gay than I), told the rest of the people we lived with, thereby relieving me from the difficult task of 'coming out' to my

new friends.

Over the next 18 months I had various short and long-term relationships with women, but there was always the niggling feeling I got when I spoke to my parents; I didn't like that I was keeping them effectively in the dark about a really important part of my life, and became more and more desperate for them to know the 'real me'.

I made the decision to tell my mother when I was at home for Easter in my second year. At the time I was involved with a girl who had just come out to her mum, and the idea appealed to me. What I hadn't counted on was that my mother would not take the news nearly as well as my partner's parent had. Instead, I was asked to leave my family home just weeks before my second year exams, because my parents couldn't cope with the knowledge that I was gay; my mother, in particular, was very upset and blamed the fact that she had had a career and consequently I had been

raised with the lack of an 'assertive female role model'. My dad has never really spoken about to me about my sexuality, but seems instead to have accepted me in time; indeed, he has met and liked various girlfriends that I have brought home since.

It has taken my mother and I the past eighteen months to regain some sort of relationship, and even now we are not nearly as close as we once were. Hopefully, in time, she will be able to fully accept the fact that she has a lesbian daughter. The one positive aspect in this account is that the relationship I have with my younger brother has gone from strength to strength since I came out to him; he thinks my being gay is 'awesome', and my most recent girlfriend was 'hot!'"

Festival

Mon 27th Sept	Dukes Lancaster 7.30pm	Litfest, in collaboration with the Slave Trade Arts Memorial Project (STAMP), is proud to present Kamau Braithwaite, a giant of world literature, in discussion with SuAndi OBE. A unique opportunity to connect with one of Caribbean poetry's most inspired sons, in a rare UK performance.	£8/£6 (£1 off for booking 2 weeks in advance) Box Office 01524 598500
Sat 2nd Oct	Platform Morecambe 11am-5pm	DIVERSITY FESTIVAL LAUNCH EVENT A day of activities and entertainments to bring everyone together. Including music by Burnely based Asian band Dhamak and Morecambe's own Baybeat; screening of 'Stronger than Fear' (a fictional tale based on personal experience of local Asian young men's response to racism); presentation by 'Press for Change' (representing transgender people); stall and display about migrant workers to raise funds for the survivors and families of the Morecambe Bay Chinese cocklers; workshops on personal safety, crafts, music, Indian dance and more; a wide variety of stalls; launch of 'Diverse radio' - a new community radio station; and scrumptious food from the Global Cafe.	FREE
Mon 4th Oct	District wide project	'Beyond The Mirror Image' - launch of a project for young women, exploring identity, self image and status in society through fashion, design and make-up - from historical and contemporary perspectives. The project will run until Christmas with a presentation in January 2005	Young women wishing to participate should contact Maureen Cronin at the What Now? info centre, 831978
Wed 6th - Fri 8th Oct	Arndale Centre Morecambe	Mandala for Morecambe - mandalas (sacred symbol) designed by local schools, individuals and organisations will be combined to create one large mandala for Morecambe, which will be displayed in a shop window space in Morecambe	
Fri 8th Oct	Platform Morecambe 7.30pm	'Perfecting Eugene' - Ludus Dance presents a humorous, yet poignant, exploration into the science of human genetics, which asks the question 'How far will human genetics go?'. How will society's desire for perfection affect decisions regarding who can be born, and influence how we deal with difference? Suitable for ages 8+	£3 / £2 / £7 (family) Box Office 01524 582803
Fri 8th Oct & Sat 9th Oct	Nuffield Theatre, Lancastere University	'Punch Drunk' - Vincent Dance Theatre Performance and Integrated Disability Workshop	£8 / £5 Box Office 01524 594151
Sat 9th Oct	Platform Morecambe 8pm Gregson Centre Lancaster 12 - 4pm Gregson Centre 8-12pm	Marta Sebastyan and Muzikas - Hungarian folk ensemble Apple Day - 40 apple varieties to taste, apple cooking competition, crafts, kids' activities, apple-pressing, talks and more. We welcome entries for the apple-cooking competition using recipes from all parts of the world. Prizes in adults' and children's sections. Judging at 3pm Apple Day Ceilidh - including English, French and Swedish folk dances, with the 'Calvadossers' celidh band. Organic cider on sales	£10 / £8 Box Office 01524 582803 Adults £1, accompanied children FREE (apple juice tasting including) £5 / £4
Mon 11th Oct	Dukes Cinema 8.30	Film screening as part of Black History Month: Daughters of the Dust (PG). Dir. Julia Dash USA 1991 1hr 52min with Cora Lee Day, Alva Rogers, Barbara O Jones. Set in 1902, this visually stunning, award winning film, depicts the end of Gullah - an Americanized West African community living on the sea islands situated off the coast of South Carolina and Georgia. Strong performances heighten the impact of a community faced with the loss of its African folk ways and indigenous identity	£4.20 / £3 Box Office 01524 598500
Wed 13th Oct	Morecambe High School 6-9pm Lancaster Sugar House Lancaster 10pm - 2am	Faith Share - an opportunity for people of different religions to get together, eat together, and talk about what their faith means to them. Open to all. Launch of Sharara Radio project - over the enext two weeks a group of Asian young women will write, record and present a community radio programme about Ramadan and Eid Il Fitre - one of the 5 pillars of Islam. Ramadan this year begins on Fri 15th Oct and ends on Sun 14th Nov. Observant Muslims do not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset during this period. 'Juicy' - Lesbian and Gay disco. Open to all.	FREE event, including food. Tickets available from Faith and Justice Commision Tel: 01524 383081 Further information from Sue Doherty, 01524 389259 Admission charged
Fri 15th Oct	Dukes Youth Arts Centre Lancaster 7.30pm	'The Last Composition' - performance by Shattering Images, a theatre company for young adults with learning difficulties, about the rivalry between Mozart and Salieri. An introductory workshop precedes the performance	FREE Places limited- ring Helen Clugston on 6485 or 581171 to book

Events



Sat 16th Oct	Platform, Morecambe 10.30am - 1.30pm St Peter's Cathedral 8pm	One World Week event promoting unity in diversity through Corrymeela's support of peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and throughout the world. Performances include Irish dancers from Heysham Russian singers Russicum will offer a selection of Russian sacred music	FREE info: heather.bennett1@btopenworld.com Tickets £10 from Lancaster tourist office or the cathedral (384820)
Sun 17th Oct	Toast nightclub Lancaster	Lush - gay and lesbian night	Tickets £2 01524 842444
Mon 18th Oct	Dukes Cinema 6.15pm 8.30pm	Gay and lesbian double bill in support of Pride Week The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert (15) Dir Stephan Elliott Australia 1994 (1hr 44min) with Terence Stamp, Guy Pearce, Hugo Weaving This cult, kitsch comedy featuring 2 drag queens, a transsexual, a lavender bus, the Australian outback and Abba, has the potential to change the way you think and feel, and more importantly - the way you dress! The Event (15) Dir Thom Fitzgerald, Canada 2003 (1hr 52min) With Olympia Dukakis, Don McKellar, Parker Posey, Arguable one of the most significant films about AIDS, the emotional and courageous drama reveals the profound effects of Matt's decision to take one final cocktail in the safe company of his family and friends when his HIV drug regime fails.	Tickets £4.50 / £3.50
Tues 19th Oct	Venue tbc	The Forecast - made by 3 lesbian, gay and bisexual groups, including Lancaster based PYRO, this hard hitting mockumentary depicts a world where straight people are bullied and persecuted. welcome to our world...	Tickets 07717 301821
Wed 20th Oct	Nuffield Theatre, Lancaster University 8pm Chaplaincy Centre Lancaster University 7-9pm	Do and undo. Baktruppen are one of Scandanavia and Europe's most renowned and experiemental performance groups. These older dancers 'expose their imperfect physiques to put across the true joy of life.' Gospel Choir workshop - informal vocal workshop open to everyone, regardless of ability! Come and join the Lancaster University Gospel Choir, have lots of fun, learn a couple of songs and perform to family / friends at the end of the evening	Box Office 594151 Tickets £8 / £5 FREE
Thurs 21st Oct	Chaplaincy Centre Lancaster University 7.30pm	'The Jewish Sabbath, a day of rest' Talk and Shabbat dinner (vegetarian), with guest speaker Rev Malcolm Wiseman OBE. Book by 19th vis jsoc@lancaster.ac.uk or JSoc, LUSU Building, Lancaster University, LA1 4YA	Donations of £4 welcome
Fri 22nd Oct	10am - 4pm £5 (unwaged) - £75 (stat. org) St Paul's Church Scotforth Road 7.30pm Gregson Centre Lancaster	Pride not Prejudice workshop by the National Coalition Building Institute (Lancaster). Working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and heterosexual allies to challenge heterosexualism & homophobia. Special service with guest speaker Romy Tiongco from The Philippines, who will talk about his involvement in the struggle to overthrow the Marco dictatorship and establish a Muslim Christain Agency for rural development. World songs by the Christian Aid Choir Northwest New policies for African development - briefing and discussion with Hilton Dawson	Booking only: 383899 FREE FREE
Sat 23rd Oct	Gregson centre Lancaster 8.30pm Salt Ayre Leisure Centre	Off the Rails gig - dance the night away to this lively community band playing rock, reggae, jazz, folk, samba, blues and world music. The band features trumpets, trombone, French horn, saxes and tuba, funky percussion, groove-driven guitars and coquettish flutes, all led by charismatic multi-instrumentalist Ben McCabe. LCC Disability Sports and Leisure Multi Club. Children and young people age 5 - 25 yrs who have a disability, their parents, guardians, carers and friends can meet and have a go at a range of sport and leisure activities including archery, kurling, boccia, table tennis, foftball and kwik cricket. Frim swim after each session. For info or volunteering, call 582638	Tickets from Chris 840530 £5 / £3.50 £2 (5-16yr olds) £3.50 (17-25 yr olds)
Mon 25th Oct	Nuffield Theatre Lancaster University 8pm	Anokha Laadla presents: Only the Moon To Play WITH: Being In Love. 3 part piece by Qasim Riza Shaheen - a Manchester based dancer. His ongoing study of the language and rhythms of Indian Kathak and its musicality enhances his live art practice, drawing on deep rooted philosophies to develop an internal approach to movement based work.	Box Office 594151 Tickets £8 / £5
Fri 29th Oct	Gregson Centre Lancaster 7.30pm Platform, Morecambe 8pm	Child Trafficking - a problem for the UK - briefing and discussion with Hilton Dawson MP Dennis Rollins: Griots t'Garage - part of Black History Month, this is a musical history of the African Diaspora, a mesmerising extravaganza combining thematic soundscapes, beats and samples with his own compositions	FREE Box office 582803 Tickets £8 / £6

Diversity Festival Events ctd from centre pages

Sat 30th Oct	Princess Margaretha Hall St Martin's College Lancaster 11am - 5pm Kampus Bar Lancaster 8pm	DIVERSITY FESTIVAL FINALE Celebration to close the festival. Featuring 'Escape to Safety', a multimedia interactive exhibition challenging media myths about asylum seekers; the 'Criminal Justice Show'; 'Sharara radio project' presentation about Ramadan and Eid; Ludus Dance, 'Welcome Stories' initiative, music by Mollie Baxter, Lizzy Hare play about relationships between lesbians and their mothers, Jewish music & exhibition, creative arts, workshops, displays and tasty food from Global Cafe Halowe'en disco organised by Lancaster Lesbian and Gay Switchboard Disco - 'Don't be scared to come out'	FREE Info 847437 Donation
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THIS TIMETABLE WAS CORECT AT THE TIME OF PUBLICATION. EVENTS MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AFTERE THE PUBLICATION OF THIS PAPER

I'm Not Disabled

"I am not disabled, society simply will not enable me", I stare blankly at the man telling me this, wondering quietly what on earth he is prattling on about. He is blatantly disabled, he is in a wheelchair, and everyone knows that means that he is disabled. Over the course of the next few weeks I am haunted by these words wondering what they mean, trying to make sense of them, then finally it hits me that he may actually have a point.

If you asked a right handed and a left handed person to cut a piece of paper in half then they should find it as easy as each other, however the left handed person would find it much harder if they were given a 'normal' pair of scissors because these are designed for right handed people. Instantly they are disabled through no fault of their own.

Yet very few of us will ever think of a left-hander as being disabled. So why do we feel differently about wheelchair users? Their situation is exactly the same

only they are disabled by more things such as stairs, small toilet cubicles, buses that don't lower for them etc. all of these things could be altered if awareness was raised and everyone was taken into account. While a left-handed scissor is easy to purchase and is now supplied in most offices and schools, good disability access comes at a higher price. This means that all to often we fail to make the world as diverse a place as it should be because we shut out those who are disabled.

Diversity is not just about embracing people's differences or thinking about the cosmopolitan nature of the society in which we live. It is also about realising that parts of life that we may take for granted as a society are in fact preventing others from having as diverse a life as they might want to. Surely true diversity can only come about when all members of society can partake in it on an equal basis.

Quiz Time

1. What percentage of university students have disabilities?
2. How many people of working age consider themselves to have a disability?
3. How many people with disabilities are wheelchair users?
4. What percentage of people are born with disabilities?
5. What is the spending power of people with disabilities in the UK per year?
6. Out of the top 100 companies in the UK how many have websites which meet basic standards for people with visual impairments?
7. What percentage of the general population have dyslexia?
8. What is likelihood of someone with a disability not having educational qualification due to lack of access to appropriate educational opportunity?
9. What percentage of companies claim that other peoples attitudes are a reason for not employing people with disabilities?
10. How many people in the UK have some sort of hearing impairment?

Answers
 1. 4%
 2. 1 in 5
 3. 1/2 million
 4. 3%
 5. £40 billion
 6. 10
 7. 10%
 8. Twice as likely as the general population
 9. 20%
 10. 7.5 million

Crimestoppers

LANCASHIRE CRIMESTOPPERS
 0800 555 111

Crimestoppers enables anyone to give information about those involved in or suspected of being involved in criminal activity, without ever revealing their identity. If your information does lead to the arrest and charge of an offender, you may receive a cash reward -when this is paid, your identity still remains unknown.

Crimestoppers is not an emergency response and if the call is of an urgent nature then callers should ring 999.

If you have any information about people committing crime call CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111

If you do not have a phone you can write to:-

LANCASHIRE CRIMESTOPPERS
 FREEPOST PR1117
 PRESTON
 PR4 5BR.

Lancaster Diocesan Faith and Justice Commission

Rooted in God's life and love the Faith and Justice Commission come together to be active in promoting justice, love and peace; identify the tensions experienced by people as they live their faith; support, nurture and celebrate each other. From the bible to today's Church teaching we are encouraged to do whatever possible for justice. Activities of faith and justice groups in the diocese include letter writing, prayer, petitions, vigils, raising awareness, services, displays, discussion groups and practical help.

Faith & Justice Commission, St Bernadette's Parish House, Bowerham Road, Lancaster

tel: 01524 383081 Email:lfj@fish.co.uk

Unity in Diversity

The Corrymeela Community is a dispersed community of people of all traditions who, individually and together are committed to the healing of social, religious and political division initially in Northern Ireland and now throughout the world. As part of the Diversity Festival and to celebrate One World Week, The Lancaster, Morecambe and District Corrymeela Support Group will be hosting an event at the Platform, Morecambe on Saturday 16th October from 10.30am to 1.30pm. There will be drama, music and Irish dancing on stage including presentations by schools and community groups. Displays will promote the work of different local organisations on the themes of diversity and movement. This will include information on The Corrymeela Community's Cohesion Programme currently used in their conflict resolution work. Fairtrade goods and refreshments will be on sale and entry is FREE. Accompanied children are welcome.

Discrimination

It is sad but all too often experience for gay people to experience discrimination. This can range from disapproving looks for holding hands in public to being physically attacked for being gay. The discrimination can be very blatant, like laws not allowing gay men to give blood, to more subtle discrimination such as denying lesbians smear tests, or holiday companies specifying that couples must be comprised of one male and one female. Homophobia comes in many forms: it can be verbal abuse, damage, bullying, assault,

harassment or graffiti. Discrimination because of sexual orientation in the workplace is illegal, and yet it still occurs. If you experience problems it is a good idea to contact your union. You can also report homophobic abuse to the police or on-line at www.report-it.org.uk.

“I worry that I may have been discriminated against at work, but I can't prove anything. Once I 'came out' to colleagues I was given less and less hours. I don't think I'll be telling anyone I work with at the moment.”

Venues and Contacts

Kampus (China Street, Lancaster)

Kampus opened its doors to the LGBT people of Lancaster less than a year ago, but since then it has proved popular with both students and locals alike. It promotes itself as being Lancaster's only LGBT-friendly venue, and hosts events ranging from regular quiz nights to fancy-dress parties.

'Juicy' at The Sugarhouse (Sugarhouse Alley, Lancaster)

If you are not yet familiar with the University's very own nightclub, you soon will be. Averaging at twice a term, The Sugarhouse hosts an LGB-friendly night, which has quickly become a raging success amongst the gay population of Lancaster. Held on a Wednesday night, the first Juicy of 2004-2005 is due to take place in the middle of October, so keep your eyes open for details of this event.

'Lush!' at Toast (North Road, Lancaster)

Lush! advertises itself as the soon-to-be-gay-night at Toast nightclub. Catering for both students and non-NUS, this event is sure to be both a massive hit and a valuable addition to Lancaster's ever-growing gay scene. The first Lush! is scheduled for Sunday the 17th October, so remember to put it in your diaries.

Baroque (Marine Road Central, Morecambe)

Morecambe's most popular LGB-friendly bar is open seven nights a week and is a refreshing alternative for gay Lancastrians. The pub/club boasts a 'chilled out and stylish' atmosphere, which will appeal to most, and the guest drag acts are not to be missed!

Flamingos (Talbot Road, Blackpool)

Flamingos is Blackpool's premier gay club, boasting no fewer than six bars. Although it is straight-friendly, Flamingos is undeniably the place to go for a good gay night out in Blackpool, especially on a Saturday when there is a second dance floor offering alternative music.

The LGBT Switchboard (switchboardlancs@hotmail.com, 01524 847437)

Lancaster's LGBT Association will always attempt to provide information and support for students in the Lancaster area. However, an alternative source which LGBT people in Lancaster may find useful is the LGBT Switchboard. For nearly thirty years voluntary members have supplied the LGBT population of Lancaster with information, support and advice. Feel free to get in touch with the switchboard if you wish to receive information about local gay social events, for advice about relationships, break-ups, 'coming out', or simply if you should have any questions concerning homosexual issues. (NB: This service is only available on Thursday and Friday evenings).

Lancaster University Student Union's LGBT Officer

– for students at the university, will provide support or advice for students regarding issues about their sexuality as well as organising trips to places such as Manchester's Canal Street. sulgbt@lancaster.ac.uk www.yourlgbt.tk

FFLAG (Family & Friends of Lesbians and Gays) – (www.fflag.org.uk info@fflag.org.uk 01454 852418)

National helpline supporting family and friends. They have a Manchester support group

Building Pride, Not Prejudice

One Day Workshop with the National Coalition Building Institute (Lancs)

Working Together to End Homophobia and Build Safer Communities

22 October

NCBI is a not for profit organisation, dedicated to ending mistreatment, prejudice and discrimination in its many forms, for example racism, sexism, homophobia etc, and to building bridges between groups.

NCBI is a world wide organisation established for over 20 years. We have teams in England, Germany, Bosnia, USA, Switzerland and South Africa. The Lancashire team has been going for 5 years. We train volunteers in the skills of prejudice reduction, conflict resolution, coalition building and we are involved in community projects eg anti bullying work in schools and conflict resolution in communities. We are committed to

ending homophobia and other forms of mistreatment in diverse settings.

“Building Pride Not Prejudice” is a one-day workshop designed to build even stronger alliances between lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered people and heterosexuals. Working in small groups we will hear each other's stories and dialogue across groups to increase our commitment to each other. Sharing together, taking risks together, laughing together, crying together and listening together – these are the skills needed for ending homophobia and creating safer communities. In the past workshops have been attended by participants from a range of backgrounds, including the LGBT partnership, local councillors, health service, small business, voluntary sector, counsellors, police and youth and community service.

Previous participants have said of the workshop:

- I appreciated the supportive space, clear agenda, openness of group, supported and aided by the facilitators.

- It was great having heterosexual people participating in a workshop on LGBT issues. It gave me hope.

- I enjoyed the level of participation and the opportunity to be visible.

- I learnt to celebrate my identity and be proud.

- I enjoyed the friendship amongst strangers.

- I learnt how to deal with conflict and oppressive behaviour constructively and how techniques can empower people to challenge prejudice.

To find out more and to apply for a place contact NCBI (Lancs) on 01524 383899, or email info@ncbilancs.fsnet.co.uk

The Church

As a Christian I believe in God and I trust in God. On the whole I have found the majority of people to be very liberal towards issues of sexuality. But as a lesbian woman I have occasionally been upset by narrow-minded attitudes voiced by some of the Christian community.

When I was a young I wrestled with the seemingly conflicting feelings and emotions of learning to accept my sexuality and reconciling it with my faith. I was a committed practicing Christian and was deeply involved with my church but I was also denying my feelings towards women because I believed them to be wrong. This raised the question; would I choose to be gay when it conflicted with what I believed and had the potential to destroy the life that I knew? So, anyone who thinks that I can control my sexuality is wrong! Did you choose to be straight? I think not. Sexuality is natural and given

by God, so let's embrace homosexuals as much as heterosexuals in the church.

Like most Christians, I turn to the Bible when life presents me with challenges, and coming to terms with my sexuality was no different. However, I found that it was not a topic that was really explored. There are a few mentions of it but not as much as I expected considering how seriously some Christians condemn it. In fact, Jesus never once mentioned homosexuality! So, if it wasn't a big deal for him then why is it to Christians?

Jesus was radical in his attitudes towards the people that society rejected; he spent his time with the sick and the poor. He didn't judge people but loved everybody, and the power of his love is available to everybody (Mark 9:33-37). However Jesus does not make any teachings on homosexuality – positive or negative.

I have never formally 'come out' in my

church but I often socialise with members of my church so consequently they all know that I am a lesbian. None of them have ever given me any homophobic remarks and I feel welcome and loved in my church.

I hope that I have not offended anyone, as that was not my aim. I want to highlight the need for both the LGB community and the Christian community to share what we can offer each other and help, support and love each other in the way that Jesus Christ intended. Both communities have so much to offer; there is no need for the friction between them. In the past many homosexuals have felt driven out of church but it is also important for them to realise that Jesus loves them and they have just the same right to the Kingdom of God as a straight person.

Internalized Homophobia

Perhaps an even more disturbing notion is that of 'internalised homophobia', or in other words, gay people discriminating against other gay people. The practice of homosexuals criticising other LGBT people can be due to many reasons, and it is common to find that the main perpetrators of internalised homophobia are closeted and attempting to deflect attention from their own sexuality. Perhaps the most famous example of this is J. Edgar Hoover, a man who ran the FBI for almost 50 years, and openly persecuted gay and lesbian members of the American armed forces during this time; Hoover, it should be noted, was himself homosexual, and reportedly involved in a long-term, serious relationship with a male colleague during his time with the FBI.

The concept of such rigid stereotypes concerning what a homosexual ought to look like or how they should behave can

cause monumental problems when it comes to prejudice and discrimination, especially discrimination from other LGBT people. The following account is an example of internalised homophobia:

“I have been 'out' as a lesbian ever since I came to Lancaster University, and whilst I have been comfortable with my sexuality for a long time now, I have never felt unhappy with my physical appearance or any pressure to 'look more gay'. That was the case until I began working in The Albert, Lancaster's former pre-Kampus gay bar. Not only did many of the regulars not believe I was gay, I was often reproached for not adhering to their internalised stereotypical image of what physical attributes constituted lesbian status. I apparently looked 'too feminine', and was often mistaken as being either straight or bisexual. Similarly, there have been numerous times when I have been

informed by doormen on Canal Street that I am about to enter a gay club; the assumption that I am heterosexual seems to follow me around simply because I have long blonde hair and wear make-up.”

From this account, and many like it, it appears that many of us have very stringent ideas of what gay men and lesbian women ought to look like, most of which are very detrimental to the notion of gay liberation. It is not up to anybody to dictate to the homosexual community how they should dress, or wear their hair, or even speak, and just because a person self-identifies as gay themselves does not give them the automatic right to discriminate against other LGBT people for simply not being coerced into maintaining outdated stereotypes of what constitutes a homosexual.

Diversity at the Chaplaincy Centre

From its very birth, the Lancaster University Chaplaincy Centre has celebrated and encouraged diversity. Over 30 years ago, different religious traditions worked together and funded the building of the chaplaincy. Now, various religious traditions work together to continue to serve the community of the University in a variety of ways. The Chaplaincy staff team seek to enable people of all faiths and none to gather and explore truth, life and meaning; to support those in need and to celebrate with those who are joyful. Our Mission Statement declares our commitment to diversity:

Chaplaincy - embraces all the friendships and hospitality which are shared across this campus.

Chaplaincy - accompanies and enables people, and communities, to journey in faith.

Chaplaincy - reminds us of the blessed value of prayer, the human individual and human endeavour.

Chaplaincy - encourages all people of faith to share their treasured beliefs.

Chaplaincy - is built on the equal worth of people, and tries to overcome fragmentation and help people to find wholeness.

I recently found a poem (which had been published in Centrepoints, the chaplaincy magazine) which sums up what the Chaplaincy is all about: There is a place to talk, and a place to be silent; a place to pray and a place to serve; a place to work and a place to play; a place to laugh and a place to mourn; a place to dream and a place to plan; a place to eat and a place to drink; a place to find help and a place to offer help; a place to sing and a place to dance; a place to meet and a place to be alone; a place to praise and a place to love; a place for each and a place for all It has a name ... the Chaplaincy Centre.”

Shabbat

The concept of a Sabbath is almost as old as the earth; give or take a day. In Genesis it is written that G-d created the world in six days, “and on the seventh day he rested from all the work that he had made” (Genesis 2:2) then “G-d blessed the seventh day and made it holy” (Genesis 2:3). This is the first time something was declared holy. In Judaism the Sabbath (or in Hebrew “Shabbat”) is held in such high esteem that any fast day (bar Yom Kippur) that falls on Shabbat is automatically moved so the Shabbat can be enjoyed.

The commandment to “remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8) comes from the 10 commandments. Right before giving the tablets to Moses G-d says “the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever; for in six days G-d made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and rested.” And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of speaking with him upon mount Sinai, the two tables of the testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of G-d.” (Exodus 31:16-18) A powerful image, and an apt place to begin.

The Jewish Shabbat takes place from shortly after Sundown on a Friday night until sunset on a Saturday night. On Thursday the 21st of October the Jewish Society (of Lancaster University) and Jewish Community of Lancaster invite anyone interested in learning more about Judaism, and the Shabbat in particular, to a talk and model Shabbat to be held at

the chaplaincy centre of Lancaster University.

Guest Speaker: Rev Malcolm Wiseman, O.B.E.

Rev. Wiseman is a member of the Chief Rabbi’s Cabinet, Senior Jewish Chaplain to Her Majesty’s Forces, Hillel National Student Counsellor, Member of the National Executive of the Council of Christians and Jews, and Chaplain to various Jewish Student Societies across the UK. In addition to his work in the Jewish community, Rev Weisman is also a Barrister-at-Law; Recorder, South East Circuit; and Special Adjudicator, Immigration Appeals.

Rev Malcolm Wiseman: “In 1922 Ahad Ha-am, one of the leading cultural thinking of the Jewish people wrote that “more than Israel has kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept Israel”. The observance of the Sabbath is more than the observance of an age old law. It is fact not only a day of rest from the work of everyday life, but a day of rest from its stresses as well. It is a time when the family gathers together, and when Jews far from home are embraced by the community they are passing through. The Shabbat exists out of time. Take a break from the stresses of your week and join us as we explore the nature of Shabbat and its meaning to the Jews in a Shabbat-like atmosphere.”

As a meal (Vegetarian) will be provided, booking are essential. To book please E-mail jsoc@lancaster.ac.uk or mail “JSoc, LUSU Building, Lancaster University,

Lancaster, LA1 4YA” with numbers by the 19th of October. Donations of £4 per attendee are kindly requested to help cover the costs.

Salaam

The Muslim-Jewish Dialogue group at Lancaster University was created just over a year ago to expand on the already good relations that existed between the two communities on campus. The central aim of the group is to educate and inform one another of our different religious and cultural traditions and to promote a spirit of cooperation and understanding. We hope to tackle any misconceptions that we have about each other’s faiths and counter any stereotypes that may exist. The best way to do this, we have

found, is through discussion. A topic is chosen in advance, then we talk about it informally for about an hour. This has proven to be very productive.

The meetings have been very successful so far, with all participants contributing enthusiastically. Anybody wishing to take part is welcome to; please email us at mjdialogue@hotmail.com for details of our meetings. Salaam aleikum/Shalom aleichem!

By Amro Ahmed-Ebbiary

Ramadan Mubarak

As-salamu-’alykum-wa-rahmatullahi-wa-barakatuh! (may the peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you!) On the 15th or 16th of November, the Lancaster University Islamic Society (and Muslims worldwide) will be celebrating Eid-ul-fitr, which marks the end of the month of Ramadan. The exact date is determined on the first night of the new lunar month, when the new moon is sighted.

During the 29/30 days of the month of Ramadan all Muslims must give up food, drinking, smoking and sexual activity during the hours of daylight, between dawn and dusk. The elderly, unwell, children, pregnant/menstruating women and travellers are not expected to take part in the fast. The fast is broken at sunset, traditionally with dates, however any food or drink can be used to break the fast. The first meal after sunset is called iftaar (literally, breakfast). Before

sunrise, some Muslims (those who can be bothered to get up at 5:00 in the morning!) cram a meal in before the fast begins. This meal is called the suhur.

During Ramadan, Muslims try to pray more during the night. After the regular late evening prayers, additional prayers especially for Ramadan are given. These are called the Tarawih prayers. They are also expected to do their best to avoid evil thoughts and deeds. This month emphasizes the awareness of Muslims that God is watching them all the time, hence one cannot eat stealthily even when away from people. By the end of the month,

Muslims feel spiritually stronger, and praise God in a special prayer on the first day of the new month. I wish all Muslims and non-Muslims a happy Ramadan and Eid Mubarak!

By Amro Ahmed-Ebbiary

Festival of Sukkot

In addition to the start of Lancaster district’s first Diversity Festival, October also marks the start of another far older festival. Beginning on evening of the 29th of September and continuing until the 6th of October, the Jewish festival of Sukkot commemorates the final stage of the exodus from Egypt when the Jews dwelt in the desert for 40 years. One of the main commandment of Sukkot is to live in a sukkah (booth) for seven day to remember how the Israelites had to live in sukkot when G-d brought them out of Egypt (Leviticus 23:42-43).

Today Jews across the globe still live in (or at least take meals in) their sukkah. The sukkah itself is a temporary dwelling with a roof of branches though which one can see the stars (this is a requirement!) and at least 2.5 walls (again a rather exact requirement). A typical sukkah consists of a rectangular wooden frame with canvas walls and palm branches for a roof. The inside is decorated (usually by the children) with fruit, drawings and pictures relevant to the holiday.

The other main commandment of sukkot relates to the Arba Minim (four species). These are four types of plant, specifically an Etrog (an Israeli citrus fruit), a Palm branch, Willow branches and Myrtle branches. These are waved East, South, West, North, Up and Down to signify that G-d is everywhere. This is a

ritual from the temple that has been carried over to modern times. The plants signify the land of Israel.

Sukkot is one of the three pilgrimage festivals in Judaism, the others being Passover and Shavuot. All three relate both to the seasons and the story of the Exodus from Egypt. During each of the pilgrimage festivals Jews from across Israel would gather at the Temple in Jerusalem. Sukkot, also known as Hag Ha’asif (festival of gathering in the harvest) and Z’man Simkhateinu (the Season of our Rejoicing), was a time of celebration and thanksgiving for the harvest of the past season. The festival was so central that in some of the later books of the bible it was referred to simply as Ha Hag or “The Holiday”. Important celebrations (for example the consecration of Solomon’s Temple) were timed to coincide with Sukkot.

The season of our rejoicing is indeed a perfect time to celebrate and share our diversity, both locally and globally. This first festival’s timing will hopefully signify the start to something that will strengthen the Lancaster community and give us all a chance to share our experiences in the future.

Andre Oboler & Ben Caspi

Lancaster University Jewish Society



Unity in Diversity

The diversity of people within a religion is a beautiful feature that unites individuals from almost any race, culture and creed with a common belief. This fact, in our opinion, demonstrates one of the fundamental principles and practical achievements of a religion – it unites people and generates love and fellowship. Furthermore, it can be argued that religion is the highest form of unity amongst people, as it is able to bind them together in their deepest level of identity. For most people on this planet religion is one of the most essential aspects of their lives. Due to that fact, two individuals despite their different backgrounds, customs and characters can be bound through their religious beliefs in a very personal relationship, sharing a similar vision and outlook in life.

Does this mean that members of different religions cannot be united as they seem to have a different belief and vision? Tragically, organized religion has all too often caused more conflict than unity through fanaticism and exclusivist claims. Moreover, is it not

a matter of fact that every religion, in its essence, promotes unity through love and fellowship? “[...]religion must be the cause of unity and love, that it must be the means of binding hearts together, the cause of life and illumination” (Shoghi Effendi). In this case it should not matter what religion we belong to as long as we all treat each other in the spirit of our respective religion to create a harmonious environment.

The point we are trying to make is that we should not look at our differences but rather celebrate our diversity and remember that all of us are fostering the advancement of humanity. It should not matter what direction we come from so long as we work with each other and support one another. Otherwise we, ourselves, despite pure motives, become obstacles in each others’ efforts to contribute to the progress of humankind. *The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established* (Baha’u’llah).

Lancaster University Bahá’í Society, 2004

Faith Share

An opportunity to meet, eat & share together at an event based on a commitment to a personal faith has been arranged as part of the Diversity Festival. The evening called Faith Share will be held on 13 October from 6-00pm to 9-00pm; entry to the free event is by ticket.

It is important for the Festival aims that representatives of the local faiths are able to work with each other and support anti-discrimination work. Organised as a partnership of the Faith & Justice Commission and MAPFED’s Race and Ethnicity Task Group, the Aim of Faith Share is to increase stability, goodwill and an appreciation of the diverse range of people living, studying, working and worshipping in the Lancaster District.

The event is a celebration of faith and is likely to include stalls and entertainment

The Faiths we intend to contact are:

1. Buddhist –
2. Jewish –
3. Catholic –

4. United Reformed –
5. C/E –
6. Hindu –
7. Chinese –
8. Methodist –
9. B’Hai –
10. Sikh –
11. Quaker –
12. Muslim –

Please tell us if we have missed out anyone.

The interfaith group is planning the Faith Share event. This group is open to anyone who is interested in the issues described above. The next meeting will be held at 3-30pm on Wednesday 1 September.

Please contact Patricia England on patricia@procomm.org.uk or 01524-851191. Maggie McSherry on 01524 383081 if you wish to attend the Faith Share meetings / help plan the event / take part in the event Please include a little background information.

We look forward to meeting everyone.

Cath Soc

Catholic Society (Cathsoc) is a society of students who meet together each week for a wide variety of meetings, such as prayer, talks, discussions, socials and other activities. The society is run by students, but receives much support from the Catholic Chaplaincy here at Lancaster University in which it is also involved. The society is not exclusively for Roman Catholics, but is open to all students, of any faith, or none. We usually meet every Tuesday evening at 7.30pm in the Chaplaincy Room, which is off the central lounge in the Chaplaincy Centre. For more information you can e-mail us: lanc_cathsoc@hotmail.com or visit <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/socs/cathsoc/>

Bahai Society

The Baha’i Society is a group of students who seek to enrich University life through activities viewed as a service to humanity. As Bahá’ís, we believe in the togetherness of mankind and religions, the establishment of world peace, and the significance of the spiritual nature of the human being. For those who want to relax and meditate, we offer tranquillity zones. For those who like to talk and to share ideas we offer discussion groups. And for those who want to study the Bahá’í Faith more into depth we offer study circles. Everyone is welcome take part as he or she wishes.

Jewish Society

Formed in 1960, Lancaster University Jewish Society is a society aiming to satisfy any interests students - and others - may have concerning Judaism. We have a consecrated synagogue, a kosher kitchen, and a warm and comfortable meeting and eating space based within the University’s purpose-built chaplaincy centre. Regular events like Friday night meals are run alongside other Jewish festival celebrations and speaker/educational events. We are in contact with Jewish student societies on other campuses and occasionally host visits by other J-socs, or arrange visits to other campuses ourselves. We are also involved in interfaith activities, both on and off campus - so members can mix with a wide range of people.

To go on a mailing list for information about all these activities, email: jsoc@lancaster.ac.uk

Hindu Society

The Hindu Society of Lancaster and Morecambe is a forward thinking, inclusive group which was formed 25 years ago. It consists of 30 families living in Lancaster and Morecambe. Hinduism is the world’s oldest living religion, over 8,500 years old. It is also the most tolerant, most resilient, most peace loving of all religions. Its roots lie in the vast Indian subcontinent in the Indus Valley. Hinduism is all inclusive and peace loving and has encouraged a high level of social and scientific advancement. We meet at regular intervals for Indian cultural activities such as Indian Games Night, including an Indian form of snooker called Carrom as well as more physical activities such as Yoga, which is integral part of Hindu Culture. We also meet to celebrate Festivals such as Diwali (festivals of lights) which will be held in November this year. If you would like to be part of the Hindu Society please contact: HARSHA SHUKLA
PRESIDENT OF HINDU SOCIETY OF LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE .
01524 68939

Islamic Society

Lancaster University Islamic Society (ISOC) exists to provide an environment where Muslim students can practice their religion, Islam. A mosque is available inside Grizedale college where anyone is welcome to join us in our five daily prayers and various social activities are held throughout the term. We also seek to educate and inform interested non-Muslim students about the religion of Islam as a complete and balanced way of life. For more information please visit www.lancs.ac.uk/socs/islamic
If you wish to get involved, please email us at islamicsoc@lancaster.ac.uk

Buddhist Centre

Chenrezig Kadampa Buddhist Centre, 93 King Street, Lancaster, is a beautiful residential Buddhist meditation centre, which holds meditation classes, courses, and retreats. The classes and courses taking place in the large meditation room offer a great way to learn to meditate and to improve your meditation practice. Buddhist meditation is simply a method for developing inner peace by working with the mind, which everyone can learn and benefit from. Drop-in Meditation evening and lunchtime classes are designed to give a broad introduction to Buddhist meditation, ideas, and practice.

Wednesday/Thursday evenings 7.30pm | Sunday 7pm (Chaplaincy, Lancaster Uni’) Tuesday Lunchtime 12.15 - 1pm
Call 01524 59608 or visit www.meditationinlancaster.org for details.

PUZZLE

Diversity

Y T I T N E D I S H A B B A T
 V U U B S Y H C H I F Y Q Y Y
 L A N O I T A N R E T N I T E
 K S H M I S G Y S O G R I I X
 N Z E A U A E T O E D S H L B
 I O F E Y L I X N U R K F I R
 R R I H K V Y D U E T G N B E
 D A Y T A E E S V A N H N A L
 N M E L A R R I A I L X R S I
 Y A O L D T D S K E G A E I G
 M D I E T H N I C I T Y C D I
 C A A B Q I P E F M D I N B O
 A N X M S S Z J I I J X O Z N
 P N X A P E S H A R E H C N L
 M A A L A S L W A U O P S A J

**Can you find the
 words in the puzzle?
 They are all to do
 with the festival**

AGE
 ASYLUM
 BISEXUAL
 CONCERN
 DISABILITY
 DIVERSITY
 DRINK
 ETHNICITY
 FAITH
 FESTIVAL
 GAY
 GENDER
 IDENTITY
 INTERNATIONAL
 LESBIAN
 ORIENTATION
 RAMADAN
 RELIGION
 SALAAM
 SEEKERS
 SHABBAT
 SHARE
 SPIKING
 YMCA
 YOUTH

FUN

Can you solve the code?










A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
7																									

<u> A </u>		<u> A </u>																							
16	7	24	10	7	15	5	22	17	18	11	15	5	17	11	10	5	18	11	19	22	17	15	11	5	6
										<u> A </u>															
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Maths Time

	X		-		-		-		16
+		X		-		+		-	
	+		X		-		+		200
-		+		/		+		+	
	X		+		+		+		264
-		+		-		X		-	
	-		+		+		+		48
X		-		+		+		X	
	-		+		+		+		23
-497	195	-6	144	2					

Religious Symbols

SYMBOL	RELIGION	DESCRIPTION
	BAHÁ'Í	Nine Pointed Star – the number nine has particular significance for Bahá'ís, being known as “the number of Bah”. The Arabic letters of the word “Bah”, the first part of the title of the founder of the Bahá'í faith, Baháulláh, add up to nine in the Abjad notation.
	BUDDHISM	Wheel of Law and Truth - An eight spoked wheel with the spokes symbolising the eight-fold path, the Middle Way, propounded by the Buddha. By following the Middle Way a Buddhist may obtain Moksha and thus escape the cyclical nature of rebirth.
	CHRISTIANITY	Cross - Of prime significance to the Christian church because of the belief that the crucifixion of Jesus was the ultimate expression of God's love for humanity. Crosses can be found in a variety of forms and may depict the Crucified Christ or may be plain - symbolising the resurrection.
	HINDUISM	Om (Aum) - The utmost sacred symbol in Hinduism. Regarded as bija (seed) of all mantras. The three phonetic elements (AUM), connected but remaining distinct are said to represent Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma, respectively the destroyer, the creator and the sustainer.
	ISLAM	Crescent moon and star - Introduced as an emblem of the Islamic faith by the Ottomans, the constantly regenerating moon is a reflection of God's everlasting purpose and control. Portrayed with the star the symbol represents divine authority and paradise. Just as the moon and stars are guiding lights so too is Islam.
	JAINISM	Palm - The raised hand is a symbol of protection and blessing. In Jain belief there have been twenty-four great teachers <i>Tirthankaras</i> . Thus the wheel is divided into twenty-four segments. Central to the wheel is the word <i>ahimsa</i> , meaning non-violence and reverence for life, one of the five principles of Jainism.
	JUDAISM	Menorah - Mosaic seven-branched candelabrum which indicates divine presence. According to Josephus the seven branches represent, the sun, the moon and the planets and also the seven days of the week. The Star of David, an equilateral hexagram, originally known as the Seal of Solomon, is found on the base of the branches.
	SIKHISM	Khanda - The double edged sword in the centre signifies truth, strength, freedom and justice. The circle or chakkar represents the eternal and the two swords (Miri and Piri) represent political and spiritual sovereignty.
	ZOROASTRIANISM	The Winged Figure - The winged disc, representing divine protection is the symbol of Ahura Mazda. Some argue that the figure is not of Ahura Mazda but symbolises the divine grace men seek. In the left hand of the figure is a ring, representing cosmic sovereignty whilst the right hand is raised in a gesture of blessing.

Symbols take on different meanings for different people. What may be seen as being a ‘pretty picture’ or object for one person may be seen as being something which invokes a feeling of reverence in another, in that it is a symbol which serves a religious purpose to people of a particular community. Religious symbols can be found across all religious communities, in their beliefs and practices and their arts and cultures. Indeed some religious communities may share particular symbols but will probably attach a slightly differing meaning to it. Therefore symbols are not and cannot be definitive, in that many symbols have a slight variation of form depending on context in which they appear. In many cases, however, the basic form of certain symbols have become synonymous with particular religions. The religious symbols found on the front cover of the directory come from a wide range of religious symbols and are some of the most common religious representations found among the world religions.

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