

Diverse

The Newspaper of the Lancaster District Diversity Festival



lancaſter diſtrict

DIVERSITY

Festival

Festival Rap

Its the Festival in Morecambe
And you can see –
Belly dancing and its free
(I'd be doing that - if I wasn't quite so fat!)

Well look what's on the programme
Yes there's quite a range
We've got Lynne down in the corner
Watch out - she'll Press for Change.

If you walk a little further then
You'll find the Boys in Blue
(They say they've put the handcuffs away
And they want to talk to you!)

You'll find a Hindu stall
Where a sari hangs - upon the wall
(Move smartly by if you're a slob
Harsha gives every-one a job).

And pop along to see LU
Diverse with Andre and his crew
(They want you - for an interview
But their spellin' ain't too strong)

Eileen & Anne have got a stall
(A real old pair of vultures)
They're here to showcase Travellers
And celebrate their culture.

They say there's some Zoo-rop-tomists
(I can't even spell their name)
Declaring much fine poetry
And doin' good's their game

So wat's this Festival about?
What am I doing here?
I'm a member of a Task Group called
The Race & Eth-nic-ity

You'll find us in the Foyer
Doin' the Welcome Desk
(You can tell who is a member
By the badge upon our chest)

A special room you must not miss
Is the Temple folk for healing
All day long it's free of charge
(However bad you're feeling)

And don't forget to stop awhile
At Gina's stall -- give her a smile
Raising funds for the fam - ilies
Of the cockle pickers lost at sea.

And finally - there's hot Chai Tea
And Steiner cakes and pop
So have a good laugh - at the Global caf
Where the Indian chef is beamin' -

It's a very good time for my rap to STOP.
This Festival's really steamin'!



First Diversity Festival A Huge Success

The Start of Future Festivals

What is diversity in our district?

I'll tell you what it's not.

It's not a mix of religions. Nor is it a mix of nationalities. It's not a collection of disabilities, ages, sexual preferences or genders. It's not even all of those things combined.

Some would say it's about taking pride of ones group within the community and recognising other groups in our community. But I disagree.

Diversity in Lancaster is when all of us, as people of the district - no more and no less - come together, recognise our differences from those around us and celebrate the differences and rich contribution that others bring into the tapestry that is our community.

As much thanks as we owe to the stall holders at the opening and here today, as much thanks as we owe to the venues, performers, community groups and agencies that did things through out the festival... they are not celebrating diversity in the Lancaster district. - Don't get me wrong, this wonderful festival could not happen with out them. - But the celebration of

diversity takes place as visitors, performers, and stall holders alike attend other group's events and wonder past other people's stalls.

Celebrating diversity is a selfless act of not only accepting the rest of the community, but taking pride in them.

What is diversity in our district?

I hope what people take out of this festival is more than a recognition of the different groups in our community. I hope what you take away from this year's festival is a feeling that without these groups, not only this festival, but this community would be much the

poorer.

On behalf of the steering group, I'd like to thank you all for coming and for celebrating our diversity with us. May Lancaster, Morecambe and the district continue to be a tolerant, accepting and safe place for all members of our community and may we all take pride in that for into the future.

Between this festival and the next I hope we continue to celebrate our diversity and support one another. With this in mind, the second edition of the Diversity paper will be released next month with details of many of all the groups who have participated, articles on many of our festival events and if you give them to the editor, your thoughts, the thoughts of the people of the district on diversity, the festival and our Lancaster district. Steering may have had the platform, but the festival is yours and will continue to be for many years to come.

Welcome not to the end of the festival, but to the start of many more to come.

Andre Oboler, Diversity Festival Steering Group

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Thank You To... ... the Diversity Festival Steering Group for co-ordinating the festival, including:

Assistant to Hilton Dawson MP: Elayne Mallon

Global Link: Sue Garner

Green Party: Cllr Emily Heath

Lancashire Constabulary: Sgt. Paul Gooch

Lancashire Traveller Education Service: Eileen Mullervy

Lancashire County Council Youth & Community Service: John Gordon

Lancaster & Morecambe Hindu Society: Harsha Shukla

Lancaster City Council Arts & Events: Euan Smith

Lancaster Diocesan Faith & Justice Commission: Maggie McSherry

Lancaster University Students' Union & Jewish Society: Andre Oboler

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Avril Moncaster,

Ann Goodwin,

Laura Simpson,

Chris Hart,

Arton Medd,

Rosa Davies,

Edwin Jones

and

Amber Davies

... the many other organisations and individuals who have contributed to the fantastic programme of festival events:

... Raymond Chan for his winning design in our logo competition

... Satori at Virtual Lancaster for hosting and updating the website

... Graphic design for putting together the festival brochure

... Riverside Press for their kind donation towards printing costs.

Festival Budget

Revised 17th November 2004

Final report due end of November when all final receipts and payments have been processed.

CASH INCOME	£	RESTRICTIONS	£
Awards for all	5000	Artists / materials/ promotion/ running costs / salaries	
Lancs City Council (Arts& Events)	500	Artists / venues	
Lancaster University	1500	Diverse newspaper	
LANPAC	1000	Artists / materials / promotion / running costs	
MAPFED	60	Unrestricted	
Lancs CC (Youth & Comm): Contribution for stall	50	Unrestricted	
Lancs Probation Service: Contribution for stall	50	Unrestricted	
Faith and Justice Commission: Donation	43.86	Unrestricted	
Visitor Donations	45.11	Unrestricted	
Catering Income	283.14	Unrestricted	
TOTAL CASH INCOME	8532.11		
IN KIND CONTRIBUTIONS			
St Martin's: Venue & Equipment			250
Riverside Press: Discount on flyers			167.44
Various organisations: events throughout Oct			16800
Global Link: Fundraising & Co- ordination (45 days)			3944.43
Stg Group & vols: orgainisation (approx 79 days)			6912.09
EXPENDITURE			
Artists: Fees and expenses	2000		
Materials	800		
Venues	361.5		
PUBLICITY			
Full colour flyer	705.01		
Website	100		
Diverse newspaper	1500		
Opening & closing event posters and programmes	43.86		
RUNNING COSTS			
Phone / post / e-mail / office consumables	400		
Steering Group & volunteer travel & expenses	400		
SALARIES			
Festival co-ordinator (Global Link)	1300		
Management & admin (Global Link)	400		
TOTAL CASH EXPENDITURE	8081.37		
SURPLUS	521.74	Contingency fund	

The contents of this paper have been provided by members of the community. It represents and celebrates the diversity of the Lancaster District.

For more info about the festival, contact
Global Link, 24a New Street, Lancaster, LA1 1EG
Tel: 01524 36201; email: globallink@gn.apc.org
or visit <http://virtual-lancaster.net/diversity>

Diversity is Being Accepted When You Don't Quite Fit In Anywhere

When I was a child I tried to be a good little girl;
But I never was that little and I never seemed to be good enough.
In my teens I looked like an angel, acted like a hippy chick but felt like James Dean:
A rebel with too many causes;
I didn't feel anyone would accept me for who I really was and didn't really know who I was anyway.
At 20 I tried to fit into the role of perfect wife and mother; it didn't really work.
At 30 I left the marriage and kept my kids;
Children accept you for who you really are.
In my 30s I tried to fit into being a student and being a mother,
And being a lesbian (although I had been married and so wasn't 'real'),
And being all things to all people,
And being Jewish, although I wasn't "really" a Jew.
I didn't feel that I fitted anywhere.
I was starting to learn who I was;
But I believed no one would accept me if they knew who I really was.
I couldn't accept me for who I really was.
In my 40s I started to learn about diversity, and acceptance.
I stopped trying to fit as an academic, when I hate archives, and love people;

And became proud to call myself a teacher.
I learnt to take my place at Jewish services and celebrations,
Without apology for who I am and what I'm not.
I started to notice that all around me, there were people of different races and creeds And genders and sexualities and experiences,
Who all accepted me for who I was,
Just as I accepted them for themselves;
And I began to believe that the world is big enough for us all to fit.
Now I'm in my 50s I am learning to accept that I can be accepted for who I am and what I am,
And I am learning to accept myself.
I'm fat and not fit. I wear two hearing aids (one for each ear)
I have ME and seasonal and cyclical depressions every year
I am a teacher and a counsellor and a lesbian and a Jew
And a mother and a lover and hope one day to be a granny too
I'm a citizen of the world and a child of the universe
And a human being –
Just like you.

Robbie Smith, November 2004.

Diverse Thanks



The diversity festival was a huge achievement. Additionally I feel its worth stressing that this paper is a huge achievement. Very few festivals the world over have their own newspapers. The idea of a festival paper came to me during a steering group meeting as both a way of informing people about the festival and a way of informing them about each other. "Shouldn't be hard" I thought, having experienced daily papers at a Scout Jamboree many years ago. How wrong I was.
A paper like this one takes not only a huge amount of time from the writers, but also an even greater amount of time from the paper's editor and the sections editors. It falls to the editorial team not only to correct the articles, but to chase up late articles and find pictures to go with them. Each time a new version of an article is sent in by its author, all previous editorial work is lost.

Not only that but simply "laying up" the paper so it is ready for the printers takes days of solid work – and that's if nothing changes and nothing is missing.

A huge thank you is needed for this paper's editor, Amy Elliott (to the right in the above picture), who not only put this paper together, but did so voluntarily, unpaid and while working full time in a new job. Last year, Amy was the editor of SCAN, the Lancaster University Students' Union newspaper. This year she was our editor. Without her experience and professional approach this paper simply wouldn't

exist.

Thanks are also due to the section editors who gave up part of their holidays to put this paper together. They did so not from Lancaster but from homes and holiday locations all around the UK and the globe. Last edition's section editors were: Sophie Dixon, Tim Perkins, Louise Monk, Jude D'Souza, Cat Smith, Jacqui Bates and Naomi Oosman. This edition's section editors are: Sophie Dixon, Tim Perkins and Louise Monk. The editors were selected based on their work on behalf of diversity within the Students' Union at Lancaster University.

The final thank you must go to Lancaster University itself. Specifically Pro-Vice-Chancellor Alan Whitaker (to the left in the above picture), whose core areas of responsibility include student support and welfare, widening participation and increasing access, and equal opportunities – all themes themselves strongly related to the aims of the festival. Mr Whitaker not only supported the festival in principle, but got the university behind it. He organised the budget without which this paper would not exist. Rosemary Turner, Student Equal Opportunities Coordinator from Student Support also facilitated the university involvement with the festival.

Andre Oboler, Diverse Co-ordinator, Lancaster District Diversity Festival Steering Committee

No-one Can Pull The Plug On Diversity

It was the Diversity Festival's Closing Event at St Martin's College in Lancaster (Saturday the 30th October) and the list of events was even longer than the programme at the Platform Opening in Morecambe.

The 2004 Festival saw films and young film makers, the making of a Mandala for Morecambe, a Faith Share evening, a presentation on forgiveness by Morecambe school pupils and a formal Justice Day, global food and free workshops. The Community festival was a platform for community artists and a platform for people who want to tell us about the things they care about. It also encouraged public services to come out and talk to local people.

The variety of people who took part and the variety of the activities that were on offer is the most

distinctive and pleasing attribute of the Festival and an augur for the future of community festivals in the Lancaster District. It means that funders will want to help in future years and the people who have taken part in the Festival - musicians, stall holders, dancers, spiritual healers, singers, writers, campaigners, cooks and tea makers – want another Festival to happen.

Whether future Festivals turn out as a Mardi Gras or a WOMAD in the park doesn't matter as long as the local community is getting together to do what they enjoy and lots of people come along to see them doing it!

It's a free Festival. No-one can pull the plug on us! Thanks & roll on the next Festival – *The Race & Ethnicity Task Group, MAPJED.*



A Criminal Justice Story

The following story is adapted from the Lancashire Criminal Justice Board Road Show as presented at the closing event of the festival.

Think about your local newspaper shop, for the purposes of this event, run by Mr. and Mrs. Chang, a Chinese couple. At 8pm one evening, a youth enters the shop, looks round at the displays and takes a box of chocolates and walks towards the door without paying. Mrs. Chang shouts: "Stop!" The youth runs out of the shop. Mrs. Chang follows him into the street and the youth turns to her and shouts: "Get lost, you Chink!" as he disappears round the corner.

Mrs. Brown and her 13-year-old daughter, Sarah, witness the incident. Mrs. Chang, upset not only by the shoplifting, but also the insult, rings the police.

The characters are fictitious and any similarity to actual people or events is coincidental.

Continue to page 7 to hear from the police

Lancaster District's First Diversity Festival - It Rocks!

The Diversity Festival got off to a flying start with around 350 people turning out to the launch event at the Platform on 2nd October. They were welcomed outside the venue with a lively performance by Morecambe Community band 'Baybeat' whose repertoire ranged from samba to 'Bring me Sunshine'. Inside, 35 organisations were represented, with colourful displays and information about a whole range of diversity issues.

Highlights of the day included the Gujarati Temple Dance by a group of young women from Preston who 'looked straight out of a Bollywood film dance number' said *Virtual Lancaster*, erotic Belly Dancing by Kara Steele, the Activity table where children young and old could make Raku pottery and Tibetan flags, the 'Transsexual Women's Successes' presentation by Press for Change, free healing by the Temple of Light National Spiritualists' Union, delicious Indian food provided by Kamul and cakes baked by the local Steiner School.

On the day, I realised how special this event is. Where else do you see Catholic organisations together with Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Groups, the Police side by side with Unite Against Fascism, teens and grandmothers learning how to Belly Dance? I think the whole thing has been worthwhile if these people with wide-ranging backgrounds lifestyles, beliefs and ideas can get to know each other, see their similarities and welcome their differences.

Visitors reflected the themes of the festival, ranging across the spectrum of age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability and religion. Almost everyone seemed to have a thoroughly good time (except perhaps those who had to leave because of the ear-splitting loudness of Asian band The Dhamak Collective – sorry, they weren't amplified so we couldn't turn them down). Here are some of their comments: 'An excellent atmosphere. Bright and colourful' 'Not one dull moment. I liked the Indian dancers. Very enjoyable day' 'A great start but, as with so many events/initiatives, people with deep-rooted prejudice don't come. There needs to be regular events like this. More please!'

**Very inspiring
and
well thought
out**

'Cool!'
'Very inspiring and well thought out, as it grows it will only be more so'
'Do more'
'It rocks!'
'Keep it up'

Participating organisations felt that it was a good opportunity to meet the public and network with other agencies.

The following comment by a member of Traveller Education Services is typical of the feedback we received:

**a good chance to
share what we do
with other agencies**

'From TES's point of view it was very successful. A lot of people spent a great deal of time looking at the displays and talking to us - it was a good chance to share what we do with other agencies, voluntary groups and members of the public. We also learnt a lot about the work of other agencies and voluntary groups. (We) established a good contact with someone from the police re future contribution to training of new recruits. A few Travellers came across from Morecambe Market but it would be good to aim at encouraging more to come along to other events...'

A representative from Press for Change (a group representing the interests of Transgender people) had the opportunity to discuss Transgender issues with a doctor and felt that the day had been worthwhile if this one doctor went away with more knowledge and empathy. A representative of the Lesbian and Gay Switchboard said they had had some interesting discussions and one person felt able for the first time to talk openly about their homosexuality. There has been lots of positive feedback about other Festival events during the month. Particularly successful was the Faith Share Event at Morecambe High School on 13th October. Adrian Rose of Lancaster Society of Friends said that the evening had been enjoyable and informative and that participants of different faiths were hoping to do more together in the future. A local Buddhist got in touch with Global Link to tell us how fantastic the Faith Share event had been and to express how glad she was that the Diversity Festival was taking place. And Ruth Self, a Christian, said 'It was really inspiring and gives me hope for the future of the world'.

**... gives me hope
for the future of
the world**

This first Diversity Festival concluded on Saturday 30th October with an all day event at St. Martin's College. Although turnout was lower (about 200 people) and less diverse than we had hoped, the atmosphere was great and the range of activities on offer even more interesting

than the launch event. Participants were able to learn Indian dance with the charismatic Madura, take part in the Criminal Justice Roadshow, see locally made films 'The Forecast' about an upside-down world where heterosexual people are persecuted, 'The Price of Sugar' about Lancaster and the Slave Trade and 'Stronger than Fear' about racism, join a Disability Awareness Workshop or see Lizzy Hare's play about the relationship between lesbians and their mothers. A fascinating display about the work of Jewish artist, Hannah Frank, was organised by the Lancaster Chavurah. Desna Mackenzie's Egyptian dance performance was stunning and fun was had by all in Sista Slap's Gambian drumming workshop.

It was rewarding to see work that had taken place during the month completed or showcased at the closing event, such as the Sunflower Project's 'Mandala for Morecambe', the children's artwork organised by Lancashire County Council's Ethnic Minorities Achievement Team and the Raku Pottery Firing by the Adult College.

We asked people what they had learned or gained from the day. Here is what they said:

'Disability issues, refugee issues, race issues, about IMF and World Debt according to Cafod'

'Awareness of local Action Groups'

'How under-represented local 'born and bred' people are at such events. Interesting ... as if 'diversity' only affects the diverse'

'in particular the information about refugees/asylum seekers. Also Buddhist meditation (a new experience for me)'

'dancing'

'an understanding of the breadth of diversity in the area'

'as an adult nothing new but my children have been able to start to appreciate the diversity of the world we live in'

'Get together. Care and share'

'Appreciation and understanding of other minority groups and sense of positiveness'

'How to cook rice the Indian way'

This first festival has been a really good start and we hope it will grow in future years to become a highlight in the district's cultural calendar. We have learned a lot and there are things we would do differently and try to improve in the future.

Please let us know what you would like to see in future festivals. And if you would like to get involved in the planning or organisation of future festivals or if you have a skill, talent, piece of work – or cash – you would like to contribute, please get in touch with Sue Garner at Global Link: info@globallink.org.uk or tel: 01524 36201 by Sue Garner of Global Link, Diversity Festival Co-ordinator



A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

The CCTV tape is analysed and a picture extracted. He is identified by a police officer using a photograph taken from the video tape. The offender is William Green, aged 17 year, who lives on a local estate. He is arrested.

The law states that William Green must be taken to a police station as soon as possible. There, the arresting officer will tell a Custody Officer why William Green has been arrested. The custody officer is responsible for William's welfare whilst at the police station.

William Green denies his involvement in the offence, which means an identification parade must be held. Mean time, the custody officer will tell Green his legal rights whilst in custody.

More on William's legal rights on page 11

Continues on page 6 with the identification parade

Get Involved

Planning for future Diversity Festivals starts now and we need your help. If you attended any of the Diversity Festival events, please let us know what you thought by completing the Feedback Form.

We also want to know what you want to see at future Diversity Festivals and how we can make improvements.

Do you want to be involved in the planning process?

Or do you have skills, talents, cash or other contributions you would like to make?

If you would like to contribute or join the steering group for the next festival, email lddiversityfestival@yahoo.co.uk

Feedback Form

What Diversity Festival event(s) did you go to?

Did you enjoy it / them?

What did you learn / gain?

Do you think the event(s) addressed the following themes:

Recognising and celebrating diversity

Educating and raising awareness

Challenging discrimination

Supporting long-term partnerships and programmes

Bringing groups and individuals together

Linking local and global issues

Do you think the event addressed the following themes:

Age

Ethnicity

Religion

Sexuality

Disability

Gender

How did you find out about the events?

Do you think the festival (as a whole) helps to promote understanding and tolerance in the community?

Do you think the festival increases public accessibility to forms of art?

What would you like to see at future festivals?

What other suggestions would you make for the success of future festivals?

Would you like to be kept informed about plans for future festivals? If so, please give your name, address, email and telephone number

Please return to Sue Garner, Global Link, 24a New Street, Lancaster, LA1 1EG, s.garner@globalink.org

Being Muslim In Today's Political Climate

Scarcely a day goes by without hearing the words "Islamic fundamentalist/extremist/militant" on the news. In fact the prefix "Islamic" is no longer necessary as such terms now automatically conjure up images of Muslims. I wouldn't blame an average member of the public for thinking that Muslims are flag-burning, hostage-beheading, suicide-bombing fanatics.

However, Muslims are not wholly responsible for this frightening image which represents a microscopic minority of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims. The media, which is overwhelmingly concerned with the instantaneous, the shocking and sensational, rather than the details of causes and context, helps fuel an already negative historical stereotype of Muslims in the West. It is no coincidence that 600 years ago, Medieval European scholars also projected an image of Muslims as violent, backward and uncivilised. In the modern context, trying to explain away political turmoil and oppression as a symptom of an inherent Islamic disposition, smacks of BNP logic, but is a common theme in media reporting on the Islamic world. The assumption is that Muslims must secularise and de-Islamise so as to become modernised.

For Muslim minorities in the West, this is a constant debate: does being Western mean compromising your Islam? Is being a practicing Muslim compatible with Britishness? In a secular society where the social life frequently revolves around alcohol consumption, and faith in God is thought irrational, it can be very difficult.

Unfortunately those who fear the total loss of their values and way of life in the midst of an environment where it seems irrelevant are put on the defensive. Such communities fear all change and overlook the benefits of integration. This has led to some Muslim and non-Muslim communities to become more insular, leading to polarisation, which has increased

since September 11th. Those among our communities who join fringe groups to express anger at the political status quo are generally of the younger generation, caught between two worlds. But extreme political views only become appealing in times of uncertainty, desperation and fear. The answer is to combat ignorance and racism, and promote awareness, appreciation and respect.

The priorities and issues preoccupying the younger generation of Muslim Britons have come to differ from those of their elders. Although it is still important to strive to practice Islam, the new

generation is proud to be forging a new British Muslim identity which is not as tied down by their South Asian, Arab or other ethnic origins. The key to forging this new identity is being able to differentiate between cultural traditions and purely Islamic practices. This will result in a thoroughly British Islam.

By Alyaa Ebbiary



A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

Victim Support Introduction

Victim Support is an independent national charity, which helps people cope with crime. Trained volunteers based in local branches contact people after a crime, to offer free confidential support and information.

A volunteer makes personal contact by telephone or by a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Chang. The location of the visit could be the Chang's home, Victim Support offices, or a neutral venue of the Chang's choice. Victim Support will also offer assistance to Mrs. Brown and her daughter Sarah.

The purpose is to give victims of crimes the opportunity to talk to someone who is independent and can listen in confidence to how they feel. The volunteers will be able to support Mr. and Mrs. Chang, Mrs. Brown and Sarah to help them through their concerns, and to assist them in regaining their confidence.

Return to page 7

The Transgender / Transexuality Issues

For those readers whose sexuality and gender are not in conflict it must be very difficult to grasp what the “TRANSSEXUAL PERSON” is trying to say.

So, let me help if I may. Firstly by a short “English grammar” lesson and a few definitions:

SEX.

(I just knew that would get your attention)

SEX.

The word itself is really a verb, but has been misappropriated by the “Media” as a noun for so long that the common usage is now quite vague. This is NOT a designation of category it is purely and simply THE ACT.

SEX is: -

Doing it any which way?

By yourself or with another or others

With or without implements

With or without love

With or without consent (Rape)

(My Gender Workbook. Kate Bornstein 1998.) ISBN 0-415-91673-9 (paperback £12.99)

GENDER

This is how we perceive ourselves to be.

I.e. Our sense of male or female identity, a Gay male knows he is male, likewise a Lesbian female knows she is female.

Mostly our gender and sex are in agreement. But not always! Some individuals fall outside this generality and feel that they have been wrongly assembled! I.e. “Transsexuals”

GENDER ASSIGNMENT

Answers the question: “What do the authorities say I am?” In most cultures it is the male or female designation. It is a category decided by a doctor at birth, usually after a cursory visual inspection to determine the presence (male) or absence (female) of a penis. Generally cultures assign some permanent, immutable gender at birth. A few societies do allow people to change their gender assignment later in life. Gender assignment is something that is done to each and every one of us, long before we have any ability to have any say in the matter.

GENDER ROLE

Answers the question: “What does the culture think I should do with my life?” It’s the sum total of qualities, mannerisms, duties and cultural expectations accorded a specific gender as assigned.

GENDER IDENTITY

Answers the question: “Am I a man or woman or something else entirely?” Most people do not think about this very much. They let gender assignment stand in for gender identity. But identity is personal; it’s what we feel our gender to be at any given moment.

GENDER ATTRIBUTION

This is what we all do when we meet someone. We decide whether they are man or woman, or something indeterminable. We attribute a gender based on an intricate system of clues varying from culture to culture. The cues can range from physical appearance and mannerisms to context and the use of power.

TRANSGENDER

Now, a brief introduction to the groups of people that come under the umbrella term “Transgender”

TRANSGENDER

TRANSEXUAL

INTERSEX

TRANSVESTITE

Transgender - It is thought that there may be as many as 500,000 TG people in the UK

Encompasses all people, who may self identify as transgender, because they cross-dress some of the time, because they cross gender live much of the time, because they undergo SRS, (Sex reassignment surgery) or, just because their gender role/identity is not conventional (Safety in numbers)

However some transgender people will not be able to undergo SRS because of either their wish not to, or because of physical / biological limitations

Transsexuality - It is thought that there may be 10,000 in the UK (“TIP OF AN ICEBERG?”)

This is a term used by the medical profession for people who undergo medical intervention.

Transsexual people have a gender identity that differs from their anatomical sex., (their sense of maleness or femaleness). The medical term for this condition is “Gender Dysphoria”. This causes great emotional stress and pain that has got to be dealt with! Usually by Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) where possible. These people then live their lives in their new gender group. (If society will allow them) They go back into paid employment and pay their taxes. A transsexual is someone who was born with the unalterable conviction that they belong to the gender opposite to that suggested by their body.

The first thing I must stress is that we are all very individual human beings. But do I have to tell you that? There are all shades of gender, personality, race, colour etc. (Transsexuals are to be found in all classes & cultures, there are no barriers) We like everyone else can be hurt.

We all have our own likes, dislikes, phobias, fears, loves and hates. And yes we all have our sexual preferences.

On that point can I dispel a myth that seems to abound that all TS’s are GAY. Nothing could be further from the truth. Some may be. Some enter into male/female relationships and some are lesbian.

Intersexuality

XY chromosomes + testicles + penis + male

identity + masculine role.

= Man.

XX chromosomes + ovaries + vagina + female identity + feminine role.

= Woman.

If these criteria are not met then the individual has an Intersex condition.

There are many Intersex conditions recognised by medicine and it is now estimated that 1 in 200 children are born with one.

Hermaphroditism

A rare form of Intersex! Wherein the individual has both sets of genital organs

Transvestism (may occur in up to 1% of males.)

Mostly a male activity! A fetishistic practise, role-play often for sexual gratification. In later life this changes into a sense of personal well being and relaxation. It has little or nothing to do with gender identity.

Drag Queens.

Present caricatures of themselves as women but do not emulate women.

TRANSEXUALITY – FACTS

Transexuality is NOT a matter of choice.

Gender Dysphoria (Transexuality) is a biological/medical condition with which someone is born. This means that transsexuals begin life with the brain of one gender, but the body of the other. We know this because of research carried out in Holland. Post-mortem studies on the brains of M to F transsexuals (who were born with male bodies) were found to have a part of their hypothalamus that is the same size as that of genetic females. It is believed that this is caused by an imbalance of hormones in the uterus 6-9 weeks after conception.

I also understand that research is showing the aetiology is most probably genetic / Bio chemical in nature. With some sources quoting that a ONE TWELVE MILLIONTH OF A GRAMME difference in the levels of Oestrogen / Testosterone in the mothers womb can change the programming of the building of the foetus and in particular it’s brain. Because it is not possible to alter the brain of a transsexual by psychotherapy or any other method, a combination of hormones and surgery are used to bring the body into harmony with the brain. “There is a 97% success rate, which compares extremely favourably with the outcomes of treatment for other chronic conditions”. (Transexuality. The Current Medical Viewpoint ISBN 0-9527842-0-3)

The news that the default state of the human brain is female made my day.

SO EVE WASN'T MADE FROM ADAM.

Sexuality and sexual orientation

Transsexual people undergo sex reassignment without changing their sexual orientation. Some (a large minority) may change their preferences due to the configuration of the post op sex

organs.

To put it simply “SEX” is perceived in the brain therefore we all have the same size sex organ! What is between our legs is purely the physical connection

SEX DISCRIMINATION (GENDER REASSIGNMENT) REGULATIONS (1999)

“The Sex Discrimination Act 1975” includes the above regulations which came into force on the 1st May 1999.

The act is now also aimed at providing equal opportunities for the transsexual communities in the areas of pay, employment, self-employment, and vocational training.

Gender reassignment is defined in the Regulations as “medical procedures to change physiological or other characteristics of sex (as in the phrase, ‘men and women are different sexes’) in order to comply with the individual’s gender identity”.

This refers to any part of the procedure from seeking medical advice to convalescing from the surgical procedures. The majority of transsexual people undergo medical treatment only after careful assessment by medical professionals.

Gender Recognition Act 2004

The gender recognition Act was given Royal assent 1st July 2004

This Act will make the lives of thousands of “Trans-people” much more tenable with the issuing of a new Birth certificate.

Since 1971, when Judge L. J. Ormrod declared April Ashley’s marriage void. (ab initio – it never existed) transsexual people in the UK have been “Non People”. Not entitled to a job, in fact none of the rights that everyone else enjoyed. But of course don’t forget to pay your tax.

This Act however does not cover all groups of trans people. Married couples, where one partner is trans will have to divorce to enable the trans person to gain a new birth certificate. The fight goes on.

The current legal situation

The UK is 1 of only 4 out of 39 countries in the Council of Europe that fails to provide full recognition in their new gender role for transsexual people. The other three are: - ALBANIA, ANDORRA, IRELAND.

This failure causes countless problems for the TS people. If the production of a Birth certificate is required then this guarantees a breach of personal privacy (Many incidentally may have new driving licences, passports etc showing their new/true gender.)

The government insists that the birth certificate is NOT an identity document. However Civil service and Public sector employers insist that the birth certificate is part of the job application!

Prison Service

In theory, all prisoners are treated as normal NHS patients. But in practise it is almost impossible to obtain or continue hormone therapy with dire consequences.

The placing of a post op trans female in a male jail would cause mayhem and the possibility of sexual abuse. Conversely a trans male in a female jail would also cause problems. This can happen due to the unchanged birth certificate if the courts have not been made aware of the circumstances

NHS

Generally speaking the NHS is coming to

accept that Trans people are human beings. There were some health authorities who operated illegal blanket bans on SRS operations. However having lost some extremely costly court cases the issue is (as far as I am aware) now resolved. Remember the 97% success rate!

THE MAIN WISHES OF TRANSEXUAL PEOPLE

1) Not to have to disclose details of our gender reassignment unnecessarily. (Birth certificate change)

2) To have the right to marry a member of the opposite gender and to have ALL the benefits that everyone else takes for granted. (Tax, pensions, Wills, Adoption and many others.)

3) To have the right to retain a marriage celebrated before gender reassignment was undertaken.

4) To have the freedom to enjoy a job without fear of dismissal or harassment, because of our gender identity. Gender presentation or gender role change.

5) To have the right to use all the legal processes to protect ourselves in our new gender.

6) To have the right to a parental role and have it formalised legally in our new gender role.

7) To have the right to be acknowledged in death as being a member of our new gender at Registration of death, Wills, Intestacy and Inheritance.

LATEST UPDATE

There have been some quite dramatic new figures for the incidence of Transexuality emanating from the USA, which challenge the long held figures.

The UK TS population has been quoted as 5,000 for some years. BUT the research and calculations by Professor Lynn Conway (Professor of Computer Engineering) shows that this number could be hugely under estimated.

This information is available at her Internet site <http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/TS/TS.html> and other connected sites.

CONCLUSION

You must all be well aware that I have touched VERY BRIEFLY on the many facets of this topic.

I do sincerely hope however that I have awakened an awareness within each of you which will allow you, should you ever find yourself having to deal with any of these individuals in your course of duty, to perhaps be a little more understanding than you might perhaps have been.

I have to thank for their help in the compilation of this paper.

Dr Russell W Reid MBChB, MRCPsych Hillingdon Hospital London

Professor Stephen Whittle - Senior Lecturer in Law at Manchester Metropolitan University

NOTE

A valuable web site can be found at <http://www.pfc.org.uk>

This will give you lots of insight into the Trans issues and make you more aware BEFORE you formulate policy documents that can and do affect the lives of thousands of people.

PS From Lynne:

We are ALL members of the biggest lottery ever conceived.

NOT ONE OF US BOUGHT A TICKET! So let us all try to be kind to each other

By Lynne Janine Brailhwaite

A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

William Green is interviewed and denies the offences. He is granted bail to return to the police station in 2 weeks.

At the identification parade 2 weeks later, Mrs. Brown is unable to identify Green, but Mrs. Chang and Sarah pick him out. The investigating officer now approaches the duty lawyer from the Crown Prosecution Service for pre-charge advice. He asks whether there is sufficient evidence to charge William. As William has been picked out at an identification parade, the reply is that there would be sufficient evidence. The lawyer then considers whether or not it is in the public interest to prosecute. As this is an offence aggravated by racial abuse towards Mrs. Chang, the lawyer decides a prosecution should go ahead.

Once a decision has been made to charge someone, the police can either bail the person to appear in court, or keep them in custody.

Continues on page 10 if you think William should be kept in custody

Continues on page 14 if you think William should be bailed.

Justice Day - What was it?

Double First! Justice Day is a first for the Lancaster District and the LCJB Road Show is a pilot having its first audience on 12 October. A free and informal event at a community venue in Lancaster, organisations will find the event useful as a training tool. Individuals attending can be part of an audience / take an active part in the proceedings / pick up useful information on how the criminal justice system works / ask questions. A major witness / victim event in the Lancaster District early in 2005 is anticipated as a follow up.

WHO ARE THE ACTIVE PARTNERS?

Lancashire Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) and Preston and Western Lancashire Racial Equality Council (REC). The Race & Ethnicity Task Group (RETG) co-coordinates Justice Day in the UK Justice Week 11 - 17 October as an event of the First Lancaster District Diversity Festival.

WHO WILL BE THERE?

A wide range of local and county organisations received the Justice Day leaflet, including voluntary & community groups and the attendance reflects the mail out. The event is open to the general public through the media and website publicity and leaflets handed out at the launch of the Diversity Festival on Saturday 2 October.

REC ROLE IN JUSTICE DAY

Delivering a workshop on case studies the objectives of which are:

- To bring a victim perspective to the forefront as well as multi agency working
- To improve service delivery to BEM Communities.

LCJB ROLE IN JUSTICE DAY

The LCJB Road Show is an interactive presentation, the objectives of which are:

- Share an insight into how the CJS operates
- To engage with black and minority ethnic communities
- To build relationships for potential future contact
- To raise awareness of opportunities for the community to get involved in employment / voluntary roles in the Criminal Justice Services.

ORGANISATIONS

LCJB

Launched in April 2003 the Board consists of officers of the local criminal justice agencies, the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Magistrates' Courts Services, the Court Service (Crown and County Courts), the National Probation Service, the Prison Service, Lancashire Youth Offending Team and Victim Support. LCJB exists to improve the local delivery of justice and to improve public confidence in the delivery of justice.

REC

Preston and Western Lancashire Racial Equality Council is a charity organisation, working towards creating a just society. The Racial Harassment Project is a three-year project to provide support to the victims of racial harassment, ensure appropriate action is taken that serves the needs of victims and develop strategies for reducing racial harassment. The two racial harassment officers from the project are members of the Race and Ethnicity Task Group.

RETG

RETG is a task group of MAPfED, the Multi Agency Partnership for Eliminating Discrimination established in April 2002. The task group leads in the development of MAPfED's Outreach to Communities Programme to celebrate diversity and reduce discrimination on the grounds of age, religion, disability, sexuality, race, gender, ethnicity.

- Justice Day lies at the heart of the terms of reference of the Task Group and MAPfED - meeting the directives of Equality legislation, Equality Standards, Community Cohesion and the objectives of the new Lancaster District Community Strategy.
- The aim of working with members of the criminal justice system is to refine and improve the work of the task group and integrate the knowledge gained from victims & vulnerable people in the Lancaster District.

MORE ABOUT THE

For more details
contact the coordinator
at 01524-851191 /
patricia@procomm.org.uk

Bringing Justice Information

Tuesday 12 October, Skerton Community Centre. A double first for Lancaster District in the UK Justice Week, the first District Justice Day hosted the first presentation of Lancashire Criminal Justice Board's interactive Road Show. The event provided opportunities for free training, learning about new initiatives and policies and an exchange of views and opinions across the Criminal Justice System. Justice Day began with a workshop from the Racial Harassment officers at the Preston Racial Equality Council bringing to the fore the perspective of victims and drawing on

the expertise of the participants. This was followed by a short presentation from the Race & Ethnicity Task Group on a rapid response proposal to for an in-depth voluntary support of front-line services. Named ROUTES, the pilot is developing from case studies in the Lancaster District. A buffet was provided for the 11-00 to 4-00pm even which was attended by a wide range of voluntary, statutory and agency sectors. The final event was the 'justice in action' Road Show which sets out to engage with an audience when representatives of all eight criminal justice services - courts, police, probation, prison etc -

create a comprehensive model of their responsibilities and the public services they provide. The narration provides opportunities for discussion and questions throughout the presentation. After the Road Show finishes the LCJB sets aside time for further interaction and refreshments. The Race & Ethnicity Task Group co-ordinated Justice Day as part of the first Lancaster District Diversity Festival. A report will be circulated to participants & to MAPfED where it will be available on public record. There are plans for a follow up Witness / Victim event.

**For more information on ROUTES,
please see pages 8**

Dancing Divas, Lavender Lounge and the Lancaster Lesbian & Gay Switchboard proudly present:

A Red Ribbon Extravaganza

an event for LGBT people and their friends to mark World Aids Day

Saturday 4th December 2004
doors open 8pm with cabaret starting 8.30pm

entry price £4/5 with all profits to be shared between the Switchboard and a HIV charity

Dress code: wear something red!

The Gregson Centre, Moor Lane, Lancaster

A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

Police Officer's report:

We received a call on the 999 emergency service, brief details of the call are assessed at our communications room. In this case, crimes of theft and harassment have been committed. The harassment is racially aggravated, so we treat it as a high priority and use the radio to send the first patrol available.

Once at Mr. and Mrs. Chang's shop, we seize any CCTV tapes as they may provide evidence of the offender's identity, and what he did in the shop. The offender used a racist insult to Mrs. Chang using the word "Chink". Although this word would possibly not be on the video, there is a chance that Mrs. Brown and her daughter heard or saw what happened. Their evidence will be an important part of the case.

Before leaving, the police officer will offer Mrs. Chang, Mrs. Brown and Sarah, the services of Victim Support.

More on Victim Support, see page 5

Continue on page 4 to review the tape.

ROUTES - an explanation

RAPID RESPONSE OUTREACH TEAM (EQUALITY STANDARDS)

KEY: RETG = Race & Ethnicity Task Group

MAPfED = Multi Agency Partnership to Eliminate Discrimination

WHAT IS ROUTES?

Many public services are supplemented by the work of volunteers and ROUTES is a rapid response initiative designed to help the authorities to provide a good service to the public in the Lancaster District. Based on the work of RETG, MAPfED, the aim of the initiative is simply to provide more help for more people in the Lancaster District when they most need it. ROUTES provides the type of in-depth response that individual front-line services cannot possibly offer. To give an example, ROUTES kicks in when the contingency services are stretched and cannot put into place quickly enough the kind of response required to prevent additional problems arising for those involved.

ROUTES kicks in when the front line services finish

WHAT DOES ROUTES DO?

ROUTES supplements the normal responses to a crime or a contingency. Most emergency situations call for a multi agency response and ROUTES can put this into place at the time it happens or a time to suit those involved. ROUTES is designed to back up the work of front-line public services such as the police and the Fire & Rescue Service. Having ROUTES in place means additional resources at and around the time of a crime, a flare up of disorder or an emergency situation to listen, to signpost the precise agencies reassure those involved and gather information to help the authorities and agencies in their work.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

ROUTES works closely with the public. ROUTES is a pool of civic-minded, experienced practitioners and trained volunteers. An independent body which will draw up an agreed code of conduct with the authorities and services, ROUTES automatically places the needs of the people in the Lancaster District at the centre of thinking and doing. ROUTES is also a friend to frontline services such as the police and the Fire & Rescue Service and will be called out by these organisations once they have completed the initial assessment of a situation and it is deemed safe

and appropriate for a back-up team to attend. When a call-out is made following a crime or emergency situation and the support of more than one service will be required, ROUTES will respond, sending out a small outreach team to advise, signpost, follow up, thus taking some of the weight away from the frontline services by helping them meet the demands and needs that arise from a crime / in a contingency.

WHAT DOES ROUTES NOT DO?

ROUTES kicks in when the front line services finish. ROUTES will not replicate or interfere in any way with the normal responses of the statutory and contingency organisations. ROUTES is an additional, bolt-on resource to the services people expect in a contingency / an emergency.

WHY DO WE NEED ROUTES?

ROUTES people are experienced practitioners and trained volunteers. Working closely with the public, ROUTES will in an individual case and over time, assemble a useful body of information showing what is being done well, what more needs to be done. One statement rarely heard from the front line services is they cannot do their job adequately at times because they are short of the resources to do so. Common sense tells residents that this is indeed the case when local people complain about the slowness of the response they receive, the quality of the response they receive when they call upon the authorities and agencies to help them. Local people say they lose confidence when they call on the police or other authorities and are not able to access services when they need to or if the service is poor. If this happens regularly, problems such as anti-social disorder build up and cost more to put right because it takes longer and requires more resources to put them right. Additional socioeconomic cost includes the legal costs when complaints about the public services are upheld.

THE POTENTIAL OF ROUTES

ROUTES works as an aid to the quality of response that all public services aspire to but are not always able to provide. Small trained outreach teams operate with two or three members drawn from a pool of volunteers. ROUTES is the potential which can be used to free up front-line services, allowing the police / Fire & Rescue to get back to base more quickly to deal with the next 999 call for help. Once the front-line services have done their job, ROUTES will step in to supply in-depth attention to the needs of the victims of crime and discrimination. The outreach team will ensure signposting is completed and reassurance that the correct services are alerted and will respond as

and when required. In other words, ROUTES is an additional, bolt-on resource. ROUTES people are very experienced; ROUTES is useful in all cases when the resources of the contingency services are stretched and when the victims of an accident or a crime require the services of more than one or two organisations, ensuring the person or persons involved receive the best support possible at that time and in the period following the incident. A rapid multi agency response reduces stress by addressing information needs more quickly and increasing confidence reduces the risk of secondary impacts.

AN ORGANISATION TOO FAR?

The interface where citizen and crime or contingency meet is a place where there is much to lose but also much to gain by drawing upon the resources (largely untapped) of 'the good citizen'. If 'Joe Public' seeing a clear benefit to be gained in the current crime situation with its perceptions and fear of crime and the hard reality of the indicators of crime is invited to take part in an initiative to improve the quality of life in local communities, Joe will. The converse is true in the formal authorities; they may experience difficulties getting their heads around the ROUTES concept; prove resistant to changing the way we do things; worry about the cost of ROUTES, turn out to be unwilling to accept and say that the service does not always meet the mission statement; they may simply say that ROUTES is too much work. One answer is to consider that communities are the bulwark against disorder and crime as well as hapless victims of disorder and crime.

The Function of the Case Study.

The Race & Ethnicity Task Group, established in November 2002 as a function of the Multi Agency Partnership to Eliminate Discrimination (MAPfED), has followed up a number of case studies for up to two years to identify the gaps in the delivery & provisioning of public services. Case studies show that the system of delivering public services sometimes falls far short of UK targets. Over and above mathematical models, the failure to meet the expectations on public services can destroy belief and trust in the services designed to help UK citizens. Case studies show the catastrophic effect of a violent attack and the gradual build up of damage to mental health and family life from repeat public disorder problems such as anti-social behaviour and harassment. ROUTES is a support for the existing services and the aim is two -fold:

- Free up front-line services to do their job (meet their duties / remit in the best way possible)
- Enhance the quality of response to local people at the time when help is most needed.

What is the

Starting Point?

RETG is an independent and unfunded task group with a broad membership of formal and community organisations and local residents reporting back to the large multi-agency partnership MAPfED. ROUTES can be tested as pilot in the Lancaster District. Initially, it will draw on the Race & Ethnicity Task Group to begin to develop the resource pool of ROUTES. In time the pool will fill with a membership from all walks of life so a diversity of the perspectives and priorities in the Lancaster District are represented; e.g. young and elderly, church leaders, agencies, minority communities, medical, Probation, Gay & Transsexual, City Council. In particular, it is vital that the community 'experts' who may be / 'ex-victims' / 'ex-criminals' etc. are invited to take part in the development and enactment of the pilot.

THE FUTURE

WITH ROUTES?

ROUTES is a friend to existing services, a prototype impacting on community cohesion though building trust and positive expectations in people with previous bad experiences. The add-on to the current structure of services, ROUTES is based on the successes and failures of RETG and will learn from those of the formal organisations if these decide they will look into the concept / work up a pilot scheme. ROUTES is a source of support, it is independent of the public services it works with and aids. ROUTES monitors service-delivery and gathers information based on the experience of those who suffer discrimination and crime and actively supports quality, access and delivery of public services. ROUTES looks out for those who may well become a victim a second time if the services set up to help them fail to do so by cutting short a good service that is provided.

Over time, seeing ROUTES arrive will become as normal as seeing a fire engine or the uniform of the police appear just when we most want & require the help of these vital public services.

ROUTES kicks in when the front line services finish

NOTE: ROUTES emerged out of the experience of the RETG but there is a precedent in USA which Lancashire Constabulary is aware of. The USA initiative draws on the help of hundreds of volunteers, greatly increasing the peace of mind and quality of life for residents in its community. It remains to be ascertained just what effect this service has on crime / recovery rates and civic relations.



Being Jewish in Lancaster... Being and Becoming A Jew

A Mother's Dilemma

Choosing primary schools...choosing secondary schools...Jewish education... Jewish food...Jewish friends...a Jewish life?

Obviously, living in Lancaster, (and having married out, too!) I have made a choice not to be part of a large Jewish community. It would be different if we lived in Manchester, Leeds or Liverpool. Or New York or Jerusalem. But I have always wanted my daughter Anna to know that she's Jewish, and to understand a little what that means. And despite having had mixed feelings about Judaism earlier on in my life, I'm now quite keen myself to 'hang out' with Jews for at least part of my life.

This has meant various things along the way.

It meant bringing my daughter to regular Jewish events at the University Jewish Society when she was one and a half – when a couple, David and Ruth Brauner, from Israel, were here for two years and created a fantastic Jewish community around them.

It meant taking her to Sunday School in St Annes for a couple of years from when she was five, where the Rabbi's wife ran a great class for the local children. Anna began to learn to read and write Hebrew, to learn about a few Jewish customs and festivals, and to meet other Jewish children. (It was actually her decision to start going – and it was her decision, too, to stop, a couple of years later).

It meant choosing Dallas Road primary school among all the primary schools in Lancaster – as being one where we were sure she wouldn't be the only non-Christian child in the school. We were surprised and pleased to meet several more Jewish families, and families of Jewish heritage, at the school – and we also met another Jewish mother with a daughter of the same age, who sent her daughter to Moorside. (And we thought it was funny when Anna and Natalie were both chosen to play Mary in their respective school's nativity plays!)

It meant choosing Central Lancaster High School as a secondary school: because Ripley St Thomas won't take Jews (! – strange but true – according to the terms of their trust they restrict their entry to practising Christians. They take in 15 per cent of non-Christians on academic references – but I didn't fancy a school where they would only take in non-Christians if they were clever ones.) And also by then, although Natalie had gone back to Israel, there was another Jewish family with children at Central, so Anna isn't the only Jewish child there.

It meant realising that I didn't know very much about Judaism myself, and bravely making a decision to take a more active part in the University's Jewish Society, so that I could find out more myself. It meant inventing a Committee post as 'Community Liaison Officer', standing for it, and undertaking it for the

last 3 years.

Wondrously, it meant that every time I said the words 'I'm Jewish', finding out that more, and more, and more people in Lancaster are Jewish than I could have ever imagined....

And it has meant that since July last year I've been helping, with Judith Keshet, to coordinate a group of Jewish people in the city, as a 'Havurah'. The Havurah movement [the emphasis is on the last syllable] comes from North America. Havurahs are non-denominational, egalitarian, Jewish organizations which welcome all Jewish people and their partners and other interested people; and accommodate differences in backgrounds, learning, and observance. Lancaster's Havurah now meets monthly and its membership is expanding each month... it has a range of members and a range of activities – including Jewish learning, Jewish festivals, discussions on aspects of Jewish culture – and very importantly, a chance to eat Jewish food! We have around fifty people on our mailing list and usually get around 15 people at meetings...and we try to tie in to the University Jewish society regular activities and encourage cross-fertilisation.

Funnily enough, it has meant that I have now embarked on a part time PhD at the Centre for Jewish Studies at Manchester University, looking at Jewish immigration to Glasgow, and transmission of Jewish culture through four generations over 100 years. For my research, I'm interviewing a whole extended family, and finding out all kinds of things about what it might mean to be Jewish.

It has also meant that I made friends with another Israeli couple who were visiting Lancaster for a year – and stayed with them recently in Haifa, where I discovered what it was like to observe the Shabbat in a big way: and also I discovered that it isn't all doom and gloom in the synagogue! (For years I've attended shul regularly on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, when there's no eating and drinking, and you spend the day thinking about the bad things you've done all year. But when I was in Israel, it was Simchat Torah, the celebration of getting to the end of the yearly cycle of reading of the Torah, the five books of Moses – and there was drinking, dancing, and celebration in the synagogue like you wouldn't believe!)

So, as you can see, it has certainly meant a long, and ongoing Jewish 'journey' for me and my daughter, which isn't over yet....

If you'd like to come with me on this journey, or start on one of your own, email jsoc@lancaster.ac.uk, or phone Lancaster University on 01524 65201 and ask for the Jewish Society rooms; and the University J-Soc will let you know what's going on both in the city and at the University.

Fiona Frank

I was born in South London in 1952, to parents from working-class backgrounds who were trying to leave their working-class roots behind and join the ranks of the suburban middle classes. They succeeded to some extent. We moved to Orpington, in Kent, when I was six, then to Maidstone when I was 11.

I was always aware, from the age of being aware of anything, that we had "Jewish blood" on my mother's side. It was all anecdotal and by way of a closely guarded secret that sometimes slipped out, a reference to a past not talked about openly, a joke or reference to some stereotypical (and anti-Semitic) supposed Jewish trait that one of us was exhibiting.

I never knew whether my grandfather was wholly Jewish, or had one Jewish parent, and it was only toward the end of his life that he began to speak more openly about being a Jew. Unfortunately, this was when I was still in my teens: still too young and self-absorbed to suppose that the elderly had anything to say that was worth listening to. Even then, he did not give any clear information about his parentage or cultural/religious heritage. After his death, my aunt referred directly to "the Jewish uncles" and made other references to a past, completely lost to me but perhaps known, at least in part, to her. One day, I hope to start piecing together the fragments of the past, tracing the records for my genealogy and rediscover my lost history.

It wasn't until several years after my father's death in the late 1980's, that I heard from his sister a history of Jewish heritage on that side of my family too. After I recovered from the shock of discovering that my ultra-racist, virulently anti-Semitic father was, himself, part Jewish; I was intrigued to learn that one of my great-grandmothers had been the daughter of a wealthy south London Jewish family, who had "married out" (or "in", depending upon which side of the religious divide you are standing) to a Christian. I was saddened to learn from my aunt that, for the rest of her life, my great-grandmother was never called by name by her new family, but referred to only as "Jew-girl". I wanted to learn more about what my aunt remembered of the visits to her childhood home by "men in skull-caps"; but she would not talk further.

On the face of it, we were all White, Anglo-Saxon, Christian; and had been for at least the 2 generations before me. I was christened, confirmed at 13 and married at 20 in the Church of England. Despite this, I always "felt Jewish" and, by the time I went to Grammar School, was introducing myself as such to my friends (although not to the teachers, who were having none of such nonsense. My registration form for the school clearly identified me as 'C of E'). At school, in Scripture lessons, I was always far more interested in the Old Testament stories and the adventures and misadventures

of those people whom I regarded as "my people", than in the miracles and ministry recounted in the Christian New Testament. When the so-called 'Six Day War' came in 1967, I wished I had left school, so I could go to Israel and volunteer to fight. (Never mind that I didn't have a passport, couldn't speak Hebrew, was a self-proclaimed pacifist, and had only a hazy idea of what the war was about).

I didn't really do much more about being Jewish, or being or becoming a Jew, until I came to Lancaster University as a mature student in the 1980s. For the first two years as an undergraduate, I was too afraid to approach the Jewish Society, fearing that I would be refused membership, as I was not 'really' a Jew. Eventually, I mustered sufficient courage to approach the J-soc stall at the societies' bazaar. I was welcomed, and became a member.

Gradually, and with much hesitation, I became more involved in Jewish activities, both religious and cultural. I began to light candle and recite the blessings at home on Friday evenings, and to cook a special meal in honour of the Sabbath. Sometimes I attended Shabbat services and meals on Friday nights in the Jewish Rooms. I started to follow the Jewish calendar of festivals and celebrations, introducing this new regime to my children by way of the attractiveness of delicious special foods and presents appropriate to the festival or season.

Over the years I have met countless people who have welcomed me, taught me, encouraged me and helped me in my learning and understanding of what it is to be a Jew and to live a Jewish life. I have begun to learn Hebrew and to try to observe Jewish dietary and other laws. I have read a lot, listened as well as I am able, asked a lot of questions and strengthened my sense of myself as Jewish, in both being and becoming.

Eventually, I reached the decision that I wanted to convert to Judaism, to "match the outside to the inside" and to declare publicly what I have already felt privately. The big sticking point for me was that I am a lesbian; and having come late to my sense of self as Gay, had no desire to renounce, lie about or keep secret my identity with regard to my sexual identity, in order to gain acceptance into the religious community I wished to join, as I believed I would be required to do.

At Chanukah last year, I was explaining this to the then co-chair of Lancaster University's Jewish Society, Flora Hoori. I must mention her by name, as her actions have been so significant in shaping what happened next. Flora told me about Liberal Judaism, put me in touch with a Liberal Rabbi, and within a few months I had attended a national Liberal Judaism Conference and met the Rabbi of Birmingham Progressive Synagogue, who is to be my teacher



and mentor through the process of conversion.

At Birmingham Progressive I have been met with welcome, kindness, hospitality and acceptance, just as I have found in the Jewish Society at Lancaster University and in the Lancaster Havura group. It seems that everyone is eager to help a new student to learn and understand, to welcome a proselyte into the community and to celebrate the return of an exile to their cultural and religious home.

So, what is a Jew? This is a profound question and one that has been (and continues to be) debated by scholars, teachers, religious and community leaders and political factions. Is one a Jew by race, or religion, or culture? For the religious leaders, a Jew is anyone (whatever their racial or cultural background) who follows the Laws of Moses. But there are, of course, numerous secular Jews, who regard themselves as fully Jewish, by virtue of their racial heritage, although they are non-practising in terms of religion, even atheist.

It is an interesting and complex question and one that demands more attention than I have space and time to devote to it here. It is also one that reminds me of the debates within lesbian-feminist academic theory in the 1980s about 'what is a lesbian?' although, similarly, there is not the space to explore the similarities and differences between the two debates here; and I apologise if my comparing the two groups has caused anyone offence.

Speaking for myself, "being a Jew" has always been part of my personal identity. I have always "felt Jewish", even when I had little idea of what being Jewish or the religion of Judaism meant. I may have some claim to a racial or cultural heritage as a Jew. I am learning to live as a Jew and my religious and spiritual life is that of a Jew (albeit a not very developed one, as yet). In a year or so, I am hoping that my process of conversion will be complete. At the ceremony of my acceptance into the community, I shall be able to stand in front of the Ark at the Birmingham Progressive Synagogue and my adoptive community and say, with Ruth:

"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." (Ruth 1:16);
so both being and becoming a Jew.

Robbie Smith

Modern Community Policing and Diversity

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.

Lancaster and the county of Lancashire are proud of their diverse communities. The wealth of heritage and history brought to the area by many people create a positive and progressive community. A successful and cohesive society needs all communities to work together; we each have common ideals and by focussing on this commonality we can combat the most corrosive of all crimes - Hate Crime. The police service alone cannot be effective in this and requires the active support of local authorities, other partner agencies, groups, leaders, communities, witnesses and victims to change attitudes, prevent and investigate crime.

By working together against hate crime we can turn the tables. The police service is committed to making a significant contribution by taking positive action against racist and other hate behaviours.

Hate crime victims feel the added trauma of knowing that the perpetrator's motivation is an impersonal, group hatred, relating to some feature that they share with others. This factor may be greatest where the hatred is directed against a visible feature such as skin colour, physical disability, life-style, religion or being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. A crime that might normally have a minor impact becomes, with the hate element, a very intimate and hurtful attack that can undermine the victim's

quality of life.

The police service advocates a positive arrest policy for hate crime. This means that where there is sufficient evidence of an offence with a power of arrest, the suspect(s) will be arrested, unless in the circumstances an arrest at that time is clearly inappropriate to deal with the allegation. Further investigations will always be made into these serious allegations and in fact police performance in this area is subject to continual review.

The police service is committed to giving all victims of crime a professional and sensitive service. Victims of hate crime will, as indicated above, often require and deserve an enhanced response. This is not special treatment, but appropriate, proportionate treatment.

Being the victim of a racist, homophobic or other hate attack is a unique and frightening experience.

Lancaster police work in partnership with various voluntary and statutory groups developing and reviewing policies and procedures designed to improve community cohesion.

If require further information please contact:

Sergeant Paul Gooch,
Community Safety Department,
County Police Office,
Thurnham Street, Lancaster.
01995 607870

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

Information regarding crime and criminal behaviour may be passed to the police anonymously or otherwise by telephoning;

'Crimestoppers' 0800 555111



A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

William has the right to bail, however this right depends on the seriousness of the offence. Bail may be refused if it is believed William will fail to surrender to custody, commit an offence whilst on bail or interfere with witnesses or otherwise obstruct the course of justice.

Bail conditions can also be imposed to help ensure none of the above happen. In this case it is decided to grant William bail, but on condition that he does not go near the Chang's store or approach either the Chang family or the Brown family,

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Diversity FM

Diversity Radio 107 FM transmitted across the Lancaster district throughout the month of October as part of an ongoing Community Radio project funded by the North West Development Agency and managed by St Martins College Business and Community Enterprise Unit.

The broadcast was a partnership between St Martin's College, Lancaster and Morecambe College, Morecambe High School and the Lancaster District YMCA, but its success was mainly down to the enthusiasm of the volunteers, especially the small group who have met weekly for months, identified the YMCA as a studio base, approached Lancaster and Morecambe College and loaned equipment for the studio. 61 people had their debut as radio presenters and another 22 people were involved editing material, creating new computer programmes, interviewing people and generally helping out with the

organisation of the station.

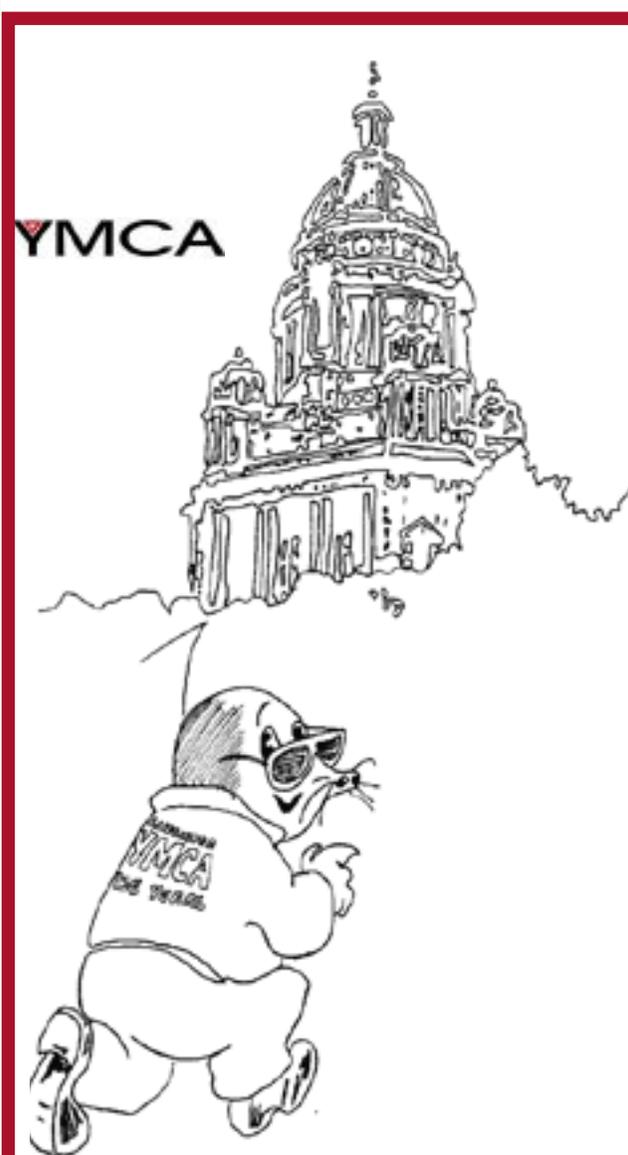
Diversity FM was a truly diverse radio station, with programming ranging from interviews with local politicians, council officers, football club managers and local organisations, to music from pop to reggae, blues to Japanese. Formats included comedy, children's shows, chat shows, interviews, phone-ins and documentary. Over 40 local organisations were interviewed or otherwise involved. As a reflection of the diversity of our district, however, it was only partly successful. The most obvious lack was in women presenters.

The feedback we've received from participants and listeners has been excellent and we intend to be back on air in March, as part of our plan to develop a permanent Community Radio Station for the district. In the meantime we are investigating internet broadcasting, which

we hope will be up and running before the end of this year. Our experiment with internet broadcast during the last few days of the festival brought responses from Australia, New Zealand, North and South America and Ireland and we are looking at e-links with community radio in Greece, Sweden and South Africa as part of our future plans.

This is an ongoing project and there's still a chance to become involved, with lots of workshops and training available in the studio at the YMCA, as well as an opportunity for us to come out to groups and centres to help you develop your own ideas for broadcast. Just ring the YMCA (01524 32737) or e-mail m.macdonald@ucsm.ac.uk and leave a message. We'll definitely get back to you!

Matt MacDonald



**Lancaster and District YMCA and
Williamson Park
celebrate 125 Years of Service.**

**COMMUNITY
FESTIVAL
22nd May 2005.**

**An opportunity for local
Community Groups,
Services, Charities,
Schools, Churches, etc.**

**Lancaster and District YMCA aim
to celebrate by organising a
Community Festival that will be
held at Williamson Park on
Sunday 22nd May 2005. Local
Groups are invited to take part
by organising stalls, group
fundraising activities,
promotional activities and
showcasing their work.**

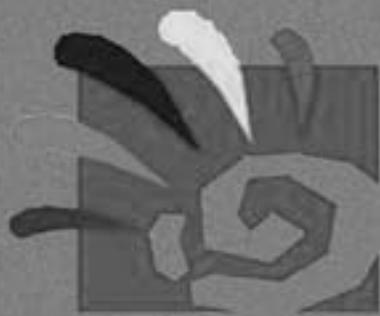
**If your group wish to be involved
then please contact:
Phil McGrath,
General Secretary,
YMCA,
Fleet Square,
Lancaster.
LA1 1HA**

Tel. 01524 32737

**email -
ymcalancaster@btconnect.com.**

Come and Join the fun !

CONTACTS



lancaster district

DIVERSITY

Festival

DIRECTORY

A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

One of William's rights while in custody is to have a solicitor appointed free of charge to represent him. The solicitor may be one he knows, or a duty solicitor. The solicitor's job is to make sure that Green's legal rights are upheld, and that he is treated fairly and within the law. The solicitor will advise Green about his legal position and can be present during questioning. They may represent Green all the way through the courts.

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Age Concern Contact: John Barnes Provides practical support to older people	88 West End Road, Lancaster, LA4 4DY Tel: 01524 416006	
The Adult College Contact: Catherine Fatkin	White Cross Education Centre, Quarry Road, Lancaster, LA1 3SE Tel: 01524 60141	e-mail: catherine.fatkin@ed.lancsc.gov.uk
Amnesty International UK Contact: Hugh Probyn Local branch of Amnesty International. Supports human rights. Encourages people to write letters to help free prisoners of conscience and to investigate cases of torture and persecution	95 Dorchester Road, Garstang, PR3 1EE Tel: 01995 603547	
Baxter, Mollie & Daniels, Rob Contact: Kathryn MacDonald Singer / songwriter	c/o More Music in Morecambe, 13-17 Devonshire Road, Morecambe, LA3 1QS Tel: 01524 831997	e-mail: kathryn@moremusic.net
Baybeat Contact: Kathryn MacDonald Community band	c/o More Music in Morecambe, 13-17 Devonshire Road, Morecambe, LA3 1QS Tel: 01524 831997	e-mail: kathryn@moremusic.net
Beaumont College Contact: Sue Beresford Specialist F.E. College for young people with physical disabilities and learning difficulties	Slyne Road, Lancaster, LA2 6AP Tel: 01524 541400	e-mail: sueb_beaumont@hotmail.com
Catholic Caring Services Contact: John Gildert Provides day, outreach, advocacy and support services for people with learning disabilities. Community development services and services for deaf people	218 Tucketh Road, Preston, PR2 1ES Tel: 01772 732313	www.catholiccaringservices.org.uk e-mail: johngildert@catholiccaringservices.org.uk
Chenrezig Kadampa Buddhist Centre Contact: Kelsang Chokga Offers lunchtime and evening meditation classes and retreats. Shares an approach to Buddhist meditation as a method for developing inner peace by working with the mind	93 King Street, Lancaster, LA1 1RH Tel: 01524 596108	www.meditationinlancaster.org e-mail: info@meditationinlancaster.org
Christian Aid Contact: Arton Medd Local branch of Christian Aid. organises talks, exhibitions etc relating to our responsibilities to those in poorer countries (e.g. Fair Trade, Trade Justice Movement, Jubilee Debt Campaign)	65 Winchester Avenue, Lancaster, LA1 4HX Tel: 01524 64730	e-mail: arton@fish.co.uk
Corrymeela Support Group Contact: Heather Bennett Working for peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and throughout the world	c/o Friends' Meeting House, 30 Seaborn Road, Morecambe, LA4 6EF Tel: 01524 422972	e-mail: heather.bennett1@btopenworld.com
Crown Prosecution Service Contact: Liz Crossley	Lancashire Area Scretariat, 1st Floor Guild House, Guildhall Street, Preston, PR1 3NU Tel: 01772 272786	e-mail: liz.crossley@cps.gsi.gov.uk
Dallas Road CP School Helen Belbin (Head) School committed to its multicultural dimension and fostering a One World culture. Organises an annual International Evening	High Street, Lancaster, LA1 1LD Tel: 01524 64520	e-mail: head@dallas.lancsngfl.ac.uk
Dawson, Hilton MP Contact: Elayne Mallon (secretary)	15a Moor Lane, Lancaster, LA1 1QD Tel: 01524 380057	e-mail: mallone@parliament.uk
(The) Dhamak Collective Contact: Kathryn MacDonald Burnley based Asian band	c/o More Music in Morecambe, 13-17 Devonshire Road, Morecambe, LA3 1QS Tel: 01524 831997	e-mail: kathryn@moremusic.net
Disability Sports and Leisure Multi-Club Club with range of sport and leisure activities on offer for children and young people aged 5-25 years who have a disability, their parents, guardians, carers and friends	Salt Ayre Sports Centre, Lancaster Tel: 01524 582638	
Diverse Newspaper Contact: Amy Elliott Special edition newspaper covering the Diversity Festival, diversity issues and articles by organizations and individuals involved in diversity work	c/o Lancaster University Students Union, Lancaster LA1 4YA	e-mail: editor@oboler.com
Diversity Radio Contact: Matthew MacDonald Community run local radio station	c/o St Martin's College, Bowerham Road, Lancaster, LA1 3JD Tel: 01524 384519	e-mail: m.macdonald@ucsm.ac.uk
The Dukes Contact: Lesley Anne Rose Producing theatre and independent cinema. Provides theatre, cinema and youth arts for audiences and the community	Moor Lane, Lancaster, LA1 1QE Tel: 01524 598505	e-mail: larose@dukes-lancaster.org
Farmer, Ben Musician	Tel: 01524 64084	e-mail: ben@farmerboymusic@fsnet.co.uk
Furniture Matters Contact: Sarah Stimson Recycling, re-use and training charity. Redistributes used household items to disadvantaged people in Lancaster district. Provides training and work experience to people with low qualifications	Old Grange Garage, Thornton Road, Morecambe, LA4 5PB Tel: 01524 427300	e-mail: alison@furniturematters.freeserve.co.uk
Global Link Contact: Gisela Renolds Provides workshops in schools and teacher training on global issues using innovative methodologies such as interactive exhibitions and theatre. Organises public awareness events.	24A New Street, Lancaster, LA1 1EG Tel: 01524 36201	www.globalink.org.uk e-mail: info@globalink.org.uk
Hare, Lizzy Playwright and performer		e-mail: fromlizzy@hotmail.com
Hindu Society, Lancaster and Morecambe Contact: Mrs Harsha Shukla Society of people with Hindu faith. Organises social, cultural and religious discussions and offers support to ethnic minority groups. Encourages inter-faith dialogue/discussion	Tel: 01524 68939	e-mail: hindusociety2004@yahoo.co.uk
Lancashire Constabulary Community and Safety Unit Contact: Sgt Paul Gooch & Chief Inspector Bob Eastwood 'Policing is not imposed on a community, it is something the police and the people do together'	County Police Office, Thurnham Street, Lancaster, LA1 1YB Tel: 01524 63333	e-mail: paul.gooch@lancashire.pnn.police.uk
Lancaster Diocesan Faith and Justice Commission Contact: Maggie McSherry Promotes justice, love and peace. Organises talks, workshops, listening and reflection days and interfaith events.	St Bernadette's Presbytery, Bowerham Road, Lancaster, LA1 4HT Tel: 01524 383081	e-mail: lfj@fish.co.uk
LCC Ethnic Minorities Achievement Team Contact: Denise Dent	LPDS Centre, Southport Road, Chorley, PR7 1NG Tel: 01995 607870	e-mail: ddent.lcc@virgin.net

LCC Youth and Community Services Contact: John Gordon	White Cross Education Centre, Quarry Road, Lancaster, LA1 3SF Tel: 01524 581171	e-mail: john.gordon@ed.lancsc.gov.uk
Lancashire Criminal Justice Board Contact: Stephen Little	PO Box 77, Hutton, Preston, PR4 5SB Tel: 01772 412947	e-mail: stephen.little@lancashire.pnn.police.uk
Lancashire Probation Services Contact: Roger Frankland	41 West Road, Lancaster, LA1 5NU Tel: 01524 63537	e-mail: roger.frankland@lancashire.probaton.gsx.gov.uk
Lancashire Youth Association Contact: Tracy Cowle Supports and develops high quality youth work and educational opportunities for all young people in Lancashire	10 Fishergate Hill, Preston Tel: 01772 208597	www.lya.org.uk e-mail: tracyc@lya.org.uk
Lancaster and District Coalition Against the War Contact: Billy Pye		e-mail: ldcaaw@aol.com
Lancaster and District Green Party Contact: Emily Heath 'The political party for real progress on social justice, peace and the environment'	4 Rossmoyne Road, Lancaster, LA1 4SN Tel: 01524 380169	e-mail: emilyheath@cleanmail.org.uk
Lancaster and District Women's Aid Aims to relieve the distress and suffering of women who are / have been victims of domestic violence. Provides talks and training to agencies and advice to victims and their families	PO Box 669, Lancaster, LA1 1ZP Tel: 01524 389637	e-mail: ldwa.outreach@lineone.net
Lancaster and District YMCA Contact: Phil McGrath Provides programmes of activity and interest for young people (male and female) and adults. Outreach at Marsh and Lancaster Farms Young Offenders Institute	Heart of the City, Fleet Square, Lancaster, LA1 1HA Tel: 01524 32737	e-mail: ymcalancaster@btconnect.com
Lancaster and Morecambe Bay Chinese Community Association Contact: Sam Moi Chan	58 Queen Street, Morecambe, LA4 5EP	e-mail: sammoichan@hotmail.com
Lancaster and Morecambe TUC Contact: Steve Metcalfe	60 Palatine Avenue, Lancaster, LA1 4HE Tel: 01524 60072	
Lancaster City Council Arts and Events Contact: Euan Smith	Station Buildings, Marine Road, Morecambe, LA4 4DB Tel: 01524 582802	e-mail: esmith@lancaster.gov.uk
Lancaster City Council WE and Poulton Street Wardens Contact: Alan Winters Aims to work for the residents in these areas to create a cleaner, safer and more pleasant environment	Morecambe Town Hall, Marine Road, Morecambe, LA4 5AF Tel: 01524 582860	e-mail: awinters@lancaster.gov.uk
Lancaster Jewish Havura Contacts: Judith Keshet and Fiona Frank Jewish community group meeting monthly in Lancaster to celebrate festivals and Jewish culture and learning, with close links to the University Jewish Society	Tel: 07778 737681	e-mail: judithkeshet@onetel.com e-mail: fionafrank@soundboard.f9.co.uk
Lancaster Lesbian and Gay Switchboard	Tel: 01524 847437	
Lancaster Seed Savers Contact: Catriona Stamp Aims to preserve traditional and local varieties of fruit and veg to support struggles of people of various cultures to have the right to save seeds		www.gytu.net/seedsavers e-mail: catriona@artistbooks.org
Lancaster University Chaplaincy Centre Contact: Steve Charman	Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YW Tel: 01524 594071	e-mail: s.charman@lancaster.ac.uk
Lancaster University Gospel Choir Contact: Alice Goose		e-mail: alicegoose@hotmail.com
Lancaster University Jewish Society Contact: Andre Oboler	LUSU Building, Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YA	e-mail: jsoc@lancaster.ac.uk
Lancaster University Student Equal Opportunities Contact: Rosemary Turner	Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YW Tel: 01524 594028	e-mail: r.e.turner@lancaster.ac.uk
Lancaster University Students' Union	LUSU Building, Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YA	e-mail: su-womens@lancaster.ac.uk
Langton, William Contact: Eileen Mullervy	c/o Traveller Education Service Tel: 07919 227479	e-mail: emullervy@btinternet.com
Light Productions Contact: Bryony Rogers		e-mail: bryony@lightproductions.org
Litfest Contact: Andy Darby	26 Castle Park, Lancaster, LA1 1YQ Tel: 01524 62166	e-mail: andy.darby@litfest.org
Lonsdale District Carers Contact: Julia Reay	4-6 Regent Road, Morecambe, LA3 1QG Tel: 01524 833456	e-mail: lonsdale@dcarers.freeserve.co.uk
Ludus Dance Company Contact: Cath Sims	Assembly Rooms, King Street, Lancaster, LA1 1RE Tel: 01524 35936	www.ludus.org e-mail: cath.sims@ludus.org
Mackenzie, Desna Belly Dancer	Tel: 07790 129684	e-mail: desna_mackenzie@lineone.net
Multi-Agency Partnership for Eliminating Discrimination Contact: Patricia England To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion and sexuality in the Lancaster District, through effective joint-working		e-mail: patricia@procomm.org.uk
More Music in Morecambe Contact: Kathryn MacDonald Community music organization working across the district, offering opportunities for people to participate in a wide range of music making activities	13-17 Devonshire Road, Morecambe, LA3 1QS Tel: 01524 831997	e-mail: kathryn@moremusic.net
Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust Contact: Donald Read	Public Health Department, Slyne Road, Lancaster, LA1 2HT Tel: 01524 386128	e-mail: donald.read@mbpct.nhs.uk
Morecambe High School Contact: Stuart Langhorn	Dallam Avenue, Morecambe, LA4 5BG Tel: 01524 410207	e-mail: slaghorn@nasuwt.net

Nat Merriman Trust	PO Box 99, Lancaster, LA1 4NW Tel: 07803 598214	e-mail: natmerriman@hotmail.com
Supports young people aged 11-25, resident in the area with travel bursaries to see, participate in or experience any form of art here or abroad		
National Coalition Building Institute (Lancashire)	Cameron House, White Cross, SOuth Road, Lancaster, LA1 4XF Tel: 01524 383899	e-mail: info@ncbilancs.fsnet.co.uk
Contact: Liz Neat		
Charity which works on creating safer communities, building coalitions with different groups, conflict resolution, and reducing prejudice. Delivers training and develops community projects		
Nuffield Theatre	Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YW Tel: 01524 593777	e-mail: julia@nuffieldtheatre.com
Contact: Julia Carradus		
Paylor, Sue		
Speaker		e-mail: sussanahflamingpen@yahoo.co.uk
The Platform	Station Buildings, Marine Road, Morecambe, LA4 4DB Tel: 01524 582815	
Contact: Mary Lucas		e-mail: mlucas@lancaster.gov.uk
Press for Change		www.lynnesdiaries.freeseve.co.uk
Contact: Ms L. Braithwaite		e-mail: lynnebraithwaite@lynnesdiaries.freeseve.co.uk
Recognises the identity and rights of transexual and transgender people. Offers talks on transgender issues		
Preston Hindu Temple Dancers / Gujarati Hindu Society		
Contact: Mr Ishwar Patel	Tel: 01772 253901	
Race and Ethnicity Task Group (MAPfED)		
Contact: Patricia England	Tel: 01524 851191	e-mail: patricia@procomm.org.uk
Working to build community cohesion and create greater social stability by outreaching tot he community to explore the needs, concerns and solutions offered by local people		
React	Marion House, Beech Grove, Ashton, Preston, PR2 1DX Tel: 01772 732313	www.catholiccaringservices.org.uk
Contact: James Hughes		e-mail: jameshughes@catholiccaringservices.org.uk
Ripley St Thomas CE High School	Ashton Road, Lancaster, LA1 4RS Tel: 01524 64496	
Contact: Kate Webster		e-mail: webster@repiley.lancs.sch.uk
Language college offering a varity of lingusitic and cultural experiences		
R K Sweets		
Contact: Kamul Parekh	Tel: 01772 200505	
Indian Catering		
St Peter's Cathedral	Cathedral House, Balmoral House, Lancaster, LA1 3BT Tel: 01524 384820	e-mail: dean@cathedral.plus.com
Contact: Bernadette McGlone		
Signposts Multi-Agency Resource Centre	58 Regent Road, Morecambe, LA3 1TE Tel: 01524 419021	www.signposts.org.uk
Contact: Pamela Beswick		e-mail: signpostmarc@signposts.org.uk
Working to empower the community in the West End of Morecambe		
Sista Slap		
Contact: Shelia Brown	Tel: 0775 9686452	e-mail: shelia@cardboardcitizens.org.uk
Women's Gambian Drumming group		
Slave Trade Arts Memorial Project	The Platform, Station Buildings, Morecambe Tel: 01524 582803	
Contact: Pete Courtie		e-mail: pcourtue@lancaster.gov.uk
Soroptimist International (Morecambe and Heysham)	28 Main Road, Bolton le Sands, Carnforth, LA5 8DL	
Contact: Clare Long		e-mail: clare@blspostoffice.freeseve.co.uk
Women who join together for friendship and work together on programmes. Campaigns for better conditions of life for women, children and less priviledged locally, antionally and internationally		
St Martin's College	Bowerham Road, Lancaster, LA1 3JD Tel: 01524 384384	
Contact: Dr Neil Kendra / Lesley Houfe		
Steele, Kara		
Belly Dancer		e-mail: karastele2000@yahoo.co.uk
Steiner School Cafe		
Contact: Julia Russell	Tel: 01524 32064	e-mail: juliaandedenrussell@hotmail.com
Sunflower Project	Community Offices, Slyne Road, Lancaster, LA1 2HT Tel: 01524 386128	
Contact: Shelia Lowry		e-mail: shelia.lowrey@mbpct.nhs.uk
Looking at ways of improving both our mental health and our attitudes to health in the community of Poulton		
Sure Start	Ryelands House, Ryelands Park, Lancaster Tel: 01524 382218	
Contact: Ann Bailey		e-mail: ann.nailey@ed.lancscc.gov.uk
Works with families who have children under 5 within Skerton, Ryelands, Vale, Beaumont and Scale Hall area to strengthen families and communities		
Temple of Light Spiritualist Church	9 Brendjean Road, Morecambe, LA4 5SE	
Contact: Joan Lines		e-mail: lines@joan37.freeseve.co.uk
The Sanctuary	Tel: 01524 422643	e-mail: admin@sanctuaryuk.org
The Sugarhouse Nightclub	Lancaster LA1 1NW Tel: 01524 63508	
Contact: Louise Davies		e-mail: a.m.davies@lancaster.ac.uk
Toast Nightclub	Lancaster, LA1 1NS Tel: 01524 66900	
Contact: Becky Gordon		e-mail: info@illustriouslounging.co.uk
Tong-singren (Join Heart)		
Contact: Gina Tan	Tel: 01524 413827	
Friend of the Chinese cockle-pickers who died in the Morecambe Bay tragedy. Fundraising for the families of the victims.		
Traveller Education Service		
Contact: Eileen Mullervy	Tel: 07919 227479	e-mail: emullervy@btinternet.com
Aims to ensure that Gypsy and Traveller children have access and equal opportunities to educational entitlement and experiences. Challenges misconceptions and prejudice.		
Unite Against Fascism		
Contact: Ketlan Ossowski	Tel: 01524 34296 / 840074	e-mail: zen26144@zen.co.uk
Local branch of national organisation fighting the rise of fascism in the UK		
Victim Support		
	Contact: Bob Conway	Tel: 01524 859044
		e-mail: victimsupport@nlancs.fsnet.co.uk
	Provides victims of crime, witnesses and their families and friends with recognition, support and information. Ensures rights of victims and witnesses are acknowledged and advanced	
	Virtual Lancaster	
	Contact: Satori	e-mail: satori@virtual-lancaster.net
	Website with information about events, issues and happenings in Lancaster District. Hosting Diversity Festival website	
	Welcome Stories	
	Contact: Paul Speight / Sandy Staplehurst	e-mail: speightpaul@hotmail.com

A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

William Green is bailed and returns to the police station with his solicitor and is charged with theft and a racially aggravated public order offence, and is again bailed to appear at the local magistrates the following day. The next day at court William Green is given bail to appear at the Magistrates Court at a later date for a trial to take place.

The Crown Prosecution Service will prosecute the case. William's allocated lawyer will defend him. The case will be heard by a panel of Magistrates, who are volunteers from the local community. Because they are not legally qualified, Magistrates receive regular training to assist them in their role which is to listen to the whole case and make a decision. If there are any legal issues, they will ask for guidance from their legal advisor.

William has the option to be tried by a judge and jury of 12 people in the Crown Court instead of the Magistrates court if he wishes. He decides not to.

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Building Pride, Not Everybody Has The Right To Read Prejudice

**“My sleeping activist woke up.....”
at NCBI’s BUILDING PRIDE NOT PREJUDICE workshop....**

Sixteen people attended NCBI’s workshop on October 22nd, which aimed for people to work together to end homophobia; build safer communities and

build strong alliances between lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender men and women and heterosexuals.

We celebrated our diversity; the age ranged from teenagers to people in their 50s; we were asian, white, black, dual heritage; Jewish, Christian and Muslim; mothers; men and women; heterosexual, bisexual, gay and lesbian; raised poor and middle class; physically disabled and managing mental health conditions.

We looked at the things that divided us as a group of individuals, as families and as communities. We looked at how homophobia divides the gay community and what it costs us to try and fit into other people’s frameworks of what is

“good”, “correct”, “acceptable.”

We enjoyed sharing what we loved about being gay or lesbian or bisexual or heterosexual and recognised that for some groups this was harder to do than for others.

Heterosexuals explored their privilege, one person said,

“I have never been aware of the heterosexual environment before. I suddenly realised I was like a fish in the sea, taking heterosexual privilege for granted. This workshop has really changed my perspective.”

We were moved by poignant stories of mistreatment from a lesbian mum and a young gay man and we learnt how to deal with homophobic remarks.

One participant summed it up by saying,

“Personal experiences and sharing stories is really useful. I have never had so many strong emotions on a training event. It has given me lots of things to think about. The whole day was very interesting and has made a real difference to me.”

Liz Neat NCBI Lancashire 1.11.04

N.C.B.I.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.. indeed it is the only thing that ever does.” Margaret Mead

Do you want to do something about

- Bullying in schools
- Making your community safer
- Ensuring that people from different places feel welcome
- Sorting out conflict in your family or with your friends
- Taking a principled and courageous stand about prejudice
- Feeling guilty
- Waking your sleeping or disillusioned activist

Then join in with some of the things that NCBI Lancashire does in the local area.

NCBI is an international not-for-profit organisation dedicated to ending mistreatment of all groups, whether because of nationality, race, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, occupation or life circumstance. NCBI sees diversity work as changing the culture of society to be more inclusive and welcoming of everyone regardless of their identities. NCBI is unique in combining social activism with the need to heal our personal and collective experiences of mistreatment.

Tel: 01524 383899 or e mail info@ncbilancs.fsnet.co.uk

Workshop dates: January 23rd; March 22nd; May 14th; June 11th and July 9th.

A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

Weeks later, William Green appears in court and pleads guilty. The case is postponed for something called pre-sentence reports to be prepared.

The reports are prepared impartially by the Youth Offending Team, and will assist the court in deciding the most suitable way of dealing with William. William and his parent or carer will be interviewed. The report will contain his explanation for committing the offence, whether he accepts responsibility, and has any feelings of guilt or remorse. It will also include his attitudes to the victim, his character, and past criminal behaviour. His personal circumstances will be explored. The report will only contain information that is relevant to the sentencing decision. Mrs. Chang, the victim, will be contacted and asked how the offence has impacted upon her and these comments will also be included.

Continues on page 16



Whether it is reading the latest best seller or studying for a degree, most of us enjoy reading. For those who can't read, the Government is pouring billions of pounds into literacy initiatives. However, three million people with sight problems or print reading disabilities in the UK are being denied their right to read or benefit from the Government's literacy initiatives according to a new report 'Written Off' published by RNIB (Royal National Institute of the Blind). New figures show that a staggering 96 per cent of books are never published in formats that people with sight problems can read like large print, audio or braille.

RNIB is part of the right to Read Alliance, which is calling for publishers, booksellers and libraries to greatly expand the number of books available in large print audio and braille. The Alliance is also calling on the Government to set up an Access to Reading Fund to support the production of more material in large print, audio and Braille, also to abolish VAT on audio books, bringing them into line with print books. The campaign is supported by a number of authors including Jacqueline Wilson, currently the most borrowed author in the UK and Michael Palin.

The Right To Read Alliance is calling on everyone to sign their Right To Read Charter, promoting the demands outlined above. The Charter along with details of RNIB's other current campaigns are available from www.rnib.org.uk/campaigns or the Campaigns Hotline 020 7391 2123.

Nicholas Russell

Nicholas was the first Disabilities Officer at Lancaster University Students Union in 1992-3 and is now the Campaigns Officer for the Royal National Institute of the Blind.

A booklet of the articles in this paper reproduced in large font is available from Lancaster Central Library.

Traveller Education Service

Lancashire Traveller Education Service are a group of teachers, learning support assistants and education access officers who work across Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen. We aim to ensure that Gypsy and Traveller children have access and equal opportunities to educational entitlement and experiences. We work with schools to help Traveller children settle back in after travelling and to catch up. We also work with families to help them overcome any difficulties they may face in accessing and maintaining school provision.

We get involved in lots of projects and work with many other agencies in order to counter misconceptions and stereotypes, challenge prejudices and raise awareness about the culture and lifestyles of this ethnic minority group.

Eileen Mullervy, North Lincs Teacher/Area Coordinator said: "It's been a fantastic experience being involved in The Diversity Festival. I've worked on the festival steering group and as a member of MAPED's Race and Ethnicity Task Group. There's been so much interesting stuff going on and it's been great to see so many different groups taking part and working together. From my own point of view I was particularly pleased to help with The Schools Art Event with Denise Dent from the LEA. Lots of local schools

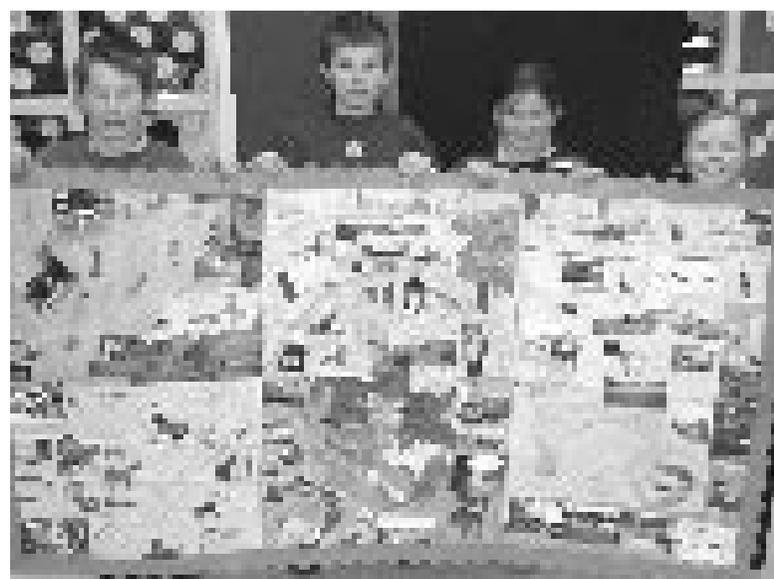


created fantastic artwork, which we exhibited across the district.

Traveller children from Grosvenor Park Primary School really threw themselves into the project. They took photographs of Mellishaw Park site, where a number of them live, and made a huge collage of the site, incorporating artwork about their culture, Appleby Fair and their love of horses. This was exhibited alongside pieces from other schools in the empty Shoefayre shop in Lancaster shopping centre. It was gratifying to see so many people stop and take time to look at all the work. The children were delighted to have their work exhibited publicly here and at

the closing event.

Skerton and Dallas Road Primary schools took things even further by holding a four day culture swap between the two schools. Traveller children from Skerton and Muslim children from Dallas Road held workshops at each others schools which they delivered to all the junior classes, to raise awareness of both Traveller culture and Islam. It was wonderful to see both groups of young people talking and sharing their experiences. We all learnt lots of new things."



WELCOME

A welcome can be with open arms or clenched fist....

A welcome can be with kisses or with spitting...

A welcome can be positive or negative.....

WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WELCOME IN THIS AREA??

NCBI Lancashire in partnership with the Welcome Project want to hear your stories of welcome to the area. Positive or negative ..both sides matter we want to hear your version.

Send your stories to NCBI Lancashire, Cameron House, White Cross, South Road, Lancaster LA1 4XF

Local Children Speak Out Against Injustice

Local groups of musicians and dancers came together to perform at the platform in Morecambe on Saturday October the 16th. The theme of the event was peace and justice, and it began with a thought provoking drama by pupils from Dallas Road School. As well as the performances, there were stalls throughout the morning including a fairtrade stall and a table

where people were given a chance to decorate squares which will form part of the world's biggest dress. 23 colourful squares were made by the performers and their families and friends, and the squares have been sewn together and sent to London to be added to the dress. When the big dress is complete it will be more than 4 storeys high and will form a creative petition to bring attention to unjust working practices in

the garment industry. Current trade rules allow child labour and unsafe working conditions to affect millions of people worldwide, and put the profits of large fashion companies before the well-being of workers. The Big Dress will be launched in London in February and is being created by Christian group SPEAK (www.speak.org.uk), who campaign for trade justice.

A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

William is sentenced to do a number of hours of community service in reparation. He has shown remorse and expressed the desire to make amends, and the Lancashire Youth Offending Team will endeavour to see William completes his reparation Order in a way that compensates the Chang's and as far as possible provides William with skills and training as well.

If things had been a little different....see page 17

Multi Agency Partnership for Eliminating Discrimination

GETTING TO KNOW MAPFED

mapfed@lancaster.gov.uk
Multi Agency Partnership for Eliminating Discrimination

The two tier MAPFED structure of Core & Task Groups puts victims & vulnerable people at the centre of its thinking & doing. It enables a wide range of formal and informal organisations to work together to improve an understanding of communities, check the standard of the services to the public, learn about and celebration diversity to reduce discrimination and help build stable communities.

Core Group

The core business of the Core Group is:
 Monitoring the implementation of the Race Equality Schemes (RES) of the members of the MAPFED Partnership, recommending policy changes where appropriate

Proactive assessment of the research & recommendations from task groups which link to the community in order to improve policy & practice in the Lancaster District

MAPFED uses the input from communities to develop strategic solutions,

create active networks and co-working: the month long 2004 Diversity Festival with over 80 organisations involved is an example.

GETTING TO KNOW THE RETG

THE RACE & ETHNICITY TASK GROUP

Facilitation * Specialist Support * Community Cohesion

AIM: Act positively and effectively to end discrimination on the grounds of race and ethnicity. Work to build community cohesion and create greater social stability by outreaching to the community to explore the needs, concerns and solutions offered by local people. The Race & ethnicity Task Group is also the arena for celebrating and raising awareness to the positive benefits of diversity.

RETG has stable and diverse membership across a range of skills. The task group is known as a trusted

body. Specific case studies are our strong work; local people, who may have been through bad experiences at court or with the authorities, trust the task group to help them. The people we work with say that contact with RETG helps them to cope, they value an independent structure, it helps to know that their bad experience is reported to statutory & agency organisations & is used to help them when they need it and to help other victims in the future.

Long Term Projects

Travellers From November 2004 – Current
 Consultation & outreach within & outside the District.

Monitoring discrimination and tense relations / between ethnic group and mainstream population

Monitoring conditions on the Mellishaw Park Traveller Site.

Weekly visits with update reports led to formation Cabinet Traveller Liaison Group to move issues forward.

Walkabouts with City Council.

Working exchanges with Traveller Education Service

Establishing responsibility for site & duties of Wardens

Recording vandalism, intimidation, standards of services, environment / location problems.

Confidence and trust established.

Chinese From February 2003 – Current

Contact with persons of Chinese heritage at Lancaster University requesting more opportunity to communicate and enjoy friendships with local residents.

Links to, facilitation, support work with local Chinese Community following loss of workers in Morecambe Bay in February:

Multi agency and case study work

Acting as observer, administration on behalf non-English residents, raising awareness to cultural aspects, impacts on immigration & migrant workers of the tragedy and the May 2004 legislation.

Facilitation and partnership in events including presentations, memorials, benefits around the

Morecambe Bay & beyond.

Links to Morecambe & Lancaster Chinese Community Association.

Established 'Co-operation & Understanding Meetings' with local authorities to articulate perspectives in the aftermath of the tragedy

Managing media & research interest & signposting.

Wyre Borough Council From May 2003 – Current

Assistance, advice & consultation setting up a MAPFED-type anti discrimination body for Wyre Council.

Sharing documentation / philosophy of MAPFED / examples case study working.

Meetings with outside bodies, travel to venues in different parts of the Wyre District.

Wyre exploring options for a Hate Crime Panel to meet December 2004.

Community Cohesion From May 2003 – Current

MAPFED Action Plan 'Outreach To Communities Project'

First Lancaster District Diversity Festival.

Meetings & communications include agencies, statutory, voluntary, community, education, organisations, residents, families.

Artists, Dukes Theatre, bands & belly dancers, caterers, schools, Ethnic, Minority & Faith Communities

Polish, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Faith & Justice Commission, Tong Xiu Ren, Methodist, Council of Churches in Lancashire, Baptist Church, Travellers & Gypsies, Lancaster & Morecambe Hindu Society, Students, Jewish Society.

Co-Working examples:

Local Strategic Partnership, Foyer, Diversity Task Group, Salvation Army, Domestic Violence Forum, Disability Steering Group, Signposts, Traveller Education Soroptomists International, Preston Racial Equality Council, Police, County Education Service, Youth & Community, Victim Support, Schools, Foyer, Press for Change.

Summer 2004

Links to Min Quan Chinese Monitoring Group

London

Meetings with Criminal Justice services & partnership working with Lancashire Criminal Justice Board

West End / Kite Festival

Support at meetings & over the July weekend of these festivals

Autumn

October 12 Justice Day

October 13 Faith Share Event; culmination of work from November 2002 as Task Group on Religion to create a District interfaith event and encourage faith leaders to support a Charter for Lancaster District.

Partnership & Co-operation.

Lancaster & District Women's Aid, Faith & Justice Commission, Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire County Council, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation, St Martins, Preston Racial Equality Council, Lancaster City Council, Min Quan, Lancaster campaign groups, Sunflower Project

Future Work 2005

Criminal Justice – repeat racism, improving RETG capacity.

Foyer mini festival with young people & minority groups.

One Year On, Tong Xiu Ren (Joined Hearts) Benefit

ROUTES rapid response team project

What do you think of the work of MAPFED and RETG are doing? What else could they do help address the issues? If you have any comments or suggestions you would like to make, please contact Pat England on patricia@procomm.org.uk

Holocaust Memorial

Holocaust Memorial Day
 Building Bridges
 January 27 05

Do you know anyone who is Jewish, disabled, gay or lesbian, a trade unionist or communists, Jehovah's Witness, Traveller, Gypsy or Roma, or someone who has learning difficulties?

During the Holocaust in Europe, they would have been singled out by the Nazis for persecution. Millions like them were murdered in the concentration and death camps during the 2nd World War. Many had to flee their homes for safety.

NCBI Lancashire, an organisation dedicated to ending all forms of prejudice and oppression is co-ordinating a number of events, in the local area to remember the Holocaust and its relevance for today.

Sunday January 23rd 10 - 4pm Building Bridges

A workshop exploring anti semitism, how it operates today, how Gentiles can be a better allies to people of Jewish heritage and how Jews can have effective Gentile allies.

Tuesday 25th January the Dukes will be showing the Pianist

Thursday 27th January 6.45 – 9.00

"Light a Candle" 6.45pm onwards, in the Memorial Gardens next to Lancaster Town Hall will commemorate groups targeted during the Holocaust and affirm the ability not to let this happen again. There will be a candle lighting commemoration. At 7.15pm there will be a torchlight procession to the Town Hall where there will be music, culture and food.

If you are not able to join us at the Memorial Garden please light a candle on January 27th at 7pm in your window or on your doorstep to remember the Holocaust and its lessons for today.

Councillor Catriona Stamp said about the events,

"I think it is important to remember the Holocaust for its continuing relevance of its lessons in the world today. It shows how necessary it is to work towards creating and maintaining societies based on equal rights and tolerance."

For further information contact NCBI Lancashire on 01524 383899

A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

Had William been 18, the Probation Service would have become involved instead of the Youth Offending Team. In another example, where William was 18, the crime was of a violent nature and William was considered a danger, the Prison Service may also have become involved. The prison service has 3 main roles:

- 1) To ensure William remains in prison until he completes his sentence
- 2) To provide a safe environment for both William and staff
- 3) Rehabilitation

As William's offence involved an act of racism, then the anti-racist strategy will be implemented. Whilst serving his sentence, William could gain skills with a view of getting a job when he gets out of prison. If there is evidence of William using drugs, then support and help will be offered.

The Lancashire Criminal Justice Board aims to improve the delivery of justice to all the people of Lancashire. By dealing with offenders effectively, all the agencies seek to reduce the risk of William Green and other offenders re-offending in the future.

The End

Shattering Images

Shattering Images Theatre Company were delighted to be invited to take part in the Lancaster Diversity Festival this October. The company performed its latest piece 'The Last Composition' to a packed audience at the Dukes Youth Arts Centre. Prior to the performance the company presented a short workshop. This introduced the audience to the themes of the play contained in the music of Mozart at the court of Joseph II of Austria. The play looks at the impact of Mozart's genius on the society of that time, in particular the effect of Mozart's musical vision on Antonio Salieri, the much favoured court composer.

In 'The Last Composition' we see the torture of Salieri as he is eventually driven to poison Mozart. Whether or not this is a true story it does make a wonderful fiction for dramatic conflict and contains a striking metaphor for the struggle of those individuals who bring to the world a unique, sometimes revolutionary perspective which challenges the established social mores and cultural conventions of the day.

The purpose of the Shattering Images project is to create a theatre company for young adults with learning difficulties and disabilities and give them an opportunity to work creatively and artistically as actors, performers and musicians in a professional theatre environment. Key to Shattering Images development is the encouragement to embrace the wider cultural heritage which equally belongs to them as to others.

Corrymeela

This ecumenical group started in 1981, following a visit to the Corrymeela Community's Centre at Ballycastle, Co. Antrim, N. Ireland by Revd. Richard Smart of St. John's church, Sandylands. Together with Fr. Leo Kelly of St. Patrick's church, Heysham, a common commitment was found.

Corrymeela is a Community of Christians of all ages and traditions, committed to the healing of social, religious and political divisions that exist in Northern Ireland and throughout the world. Founded in 1965 by Revd. Ray Davey, he felt compelled to put his faith into action and help heal divisions. The Corrymeela Community remains a place where people from opposing backgrounds meet, learn about one another and share common ground. Volunteers from many countries come to help and learn about the spirit of peace that is Corrymeela.

In 1982 the local support group held its first annual supper to raise funds for Corrymeela. This has remained a tradition, held during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January. Churches Together in Heysham and Morecambe West End have continued this event – the next being held at Wesley Methodist

The group was established in 1997 and has had many opportunities to perform in schools, colleges, theatres, at professional conferences, promenade venues and concert events. The range of Shattering Images work is wide and varied, from productions of Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', Lorca's 'Blood Wedding' and Brecht's 'A Threepenny Opera'

All Shattering Images productions have a workshop element to accompany the theatre piece either pre or post performance. The group devises the workshop to enable both audience and participants to gain a deeper insight into the meaning of the text or the play. Many observers have remarked how crucial these workshops can be in the breaking down of barriers and facilitating understanding of the group and its work.

Louise Bryning in her review of 'The Last Composition' for the Lancaster Guardian wrote: 'There is still a lot of ignorance and prejudice about. That is why I hope that 'The Last Composition' and any future Shattering Images productions could be seen by a wider audience. It would be a theatrical experience they would never forget.'

We hope Shattering Images will continue its work both locally, nationally and internationally, and will inspire others with learning difficulties and disabilities to do the same.

The project is funded by Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Service, in partnership with the Dukes and the Adult College.

Church, Heysham on 21st January 2005 at 7pm.

In 1996 Revd. Smart made a special appeal to raise £10,000 for Corrymeela and this was achieved prior to his retirement, enabling Corrymeela's work to continue with the refurbishment of the kitchen at the Centre.

Current members have organised Corrymeela Sunday Worship (held the nearest to St. Patrick's Day) in churches, at college and at Lancaster Cathedral. Concerts and video presentations have raised both awareness and funds. In 1999 member, Eddie Brady, successfully ran the London Marathon for Corrymeela.

This year the group attempted to reach out to new members from all faiths or none through promoting a One World Week Event at The Platform, Morecambe in October. Corrymeela's Community Cohesion Programme was promoted at the launch of the Lancaster District Diversity Festival and it is hoped to continue this through video presentations and events throughout the year (info.tel.01524 422972).

Heather Bennett

Letter from the Lancaster Association of TUC

Dear Bros, Sisters, Comrades, Friends

On behalf of the members of the affiliated unions of the Lancs. Association of TUCs, Lancaster/Morecambe TUC and the NWTUC, representing 34% of the working population of this region, I would like to present this brief article for the next issue of the 'Diversity' newspaper, which you are preparing.

We are pleased and encouraged to endorse the initiative of the organizations and individuals behind 'Diversity' Month and hope it serves as an example for all Lancs and NW constituency areas to follow in future. So long as sectarian sectionalism is avoided.

The Trades Unions have been fighting against the six main areas of discrimination outlined by 'Diversity' for over two centuries, from the main viewpoint that the ruling capitalist class has always used the perceived divisions amongst the general population (the working class mainly) to 'divide and rule' us all for their own selfish interests.

The Chartist movement in the 19th century were mainly trades unionists fighting for votes for all and comprised men and women of all races, nationalities, religions (and no religion!). Their heartland was amongst the workers of Lancashire. They fought also against all forms of prejudice even then, such as colonialism, sexual exploitation and child labour and imperialist warmongering. For example, William Cuffay from St. Kitts in the West Indies, who was 'transported' to and died in Australia. Also, John Doherty, generally seen as the founder of the Trades Councils movement who was from Ireland, like Fergus O'Connor and later James Connolly, a leading militant in Scotland, the USA and Ireland who died in 1916.

The Pankhursts were from Manchester and led thousands of mainly working class women in their fight for the vote. And don't forget thousands of Jewish, German, French, Italian, Polish and Russian refugees and immigrants who became prominent in British workers' struggles, not least Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, who spent much of their lives in and amongst the miners, cotton and rail-workers of Lancashire. Remember too that the cotton workers of NW England selflessly supported the anti-slavery forces of President Lincoln against the Southern racist slave-owners in the US Civil War (1861-65) and also welcomed Indian nationalist Gandhi on his visit to Lancashire in 1932.

Fierce struggles continue today, as we know, but this time often from a higher level in that many of the basic rights our ancestors had to fight for now have 'only' to be defended from those who still wish to deny us of them, not least the NHS, civil liberties, pensions and the right to free assembly, political asylum and travel from one part of this planet to another.

We wish the 'Diversity' campaign, alongside the TUC's 'Equalities' networking programmes every success now and in future. To contact the TUC, ring (or fax) Lancaster/Morecambe TUC on 01524 413600 or Lancs Association of TUCs on (Sec.) 01254 391423 (for speakers, literature etc).

Fraternally yours

S K Metcalfe

President: Lancaster/Morecambe TUC

President: LATUC

Exec Member: NWTUC

60 Palatine Ave, Lancaster LA1 4HE. Tel: 01524 60072/0770 213 3288



A Criminal Justice Story

Starts Page 3

The witness service is part of Victim Support. Trained volunteers offer free confidential support and information regarding court procedures to victims, witnesses (whether prosecution or defence), and also the family and friends of victims and witnesses while they are at court.

Shortly after the trial date has been set, Mrs. Chang, Mrs. Brown, Sarah and any other prosecution witnesses required to give evidence, are sent a letter from the police asking them to attend court. Victims and witnesses will be given the opportunity to visit the court where they will be shown an empty courtroom and have explained to them who sits where and who does what.

On the day of the trial, Mrs. Chang, Mrs. Brown and Sarah will receive support. Once they have given evidence, further support will be available if needed.

Continues on page 15

Contemporary Heathenry One World Week

Contemporary heathenry is a reconstruction of the pre-Christian religion and magic of the Germanic speaking peoples of north and western Europe. These peoples lived in the lands around the North Sea over a thousand years ago and called their world Midgard, the Middle Yard, or Middle Earth.

'Germanic' is used in the linguistic sense, and contemporary Germanic languages include English, German, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. 'Reconstruction' because there is no evidence of a direct line of heathenry descended from the pre-Christian world. However, we do have historical documents written by and about ancient heathens, as well as archaeological resources, and a wealth of poetry, folklore and custom.

Pre-Christian European paganism, of all sorts, was polytheistic, which is to say it recognised many different and discrete gods, goddesses, land-wights, ancestors and other spirits. Heathenry continues in this tradition, in contradistinction to some contemporary paganisms which may have no literal belief in the gods, or may be duotheistic (having only a god and goddess). Heathens recognise the gods of other pantheons, but do not consider them directly relevant to themselves and their communities, although they are by and large respectful. In particular heathens see a strong kinship to other polytheistic European groups, such as the Roman, Gaulish, Irish, Cymric and Slavic.

Heathenry is not just a magical path, but a social

and religious one. The gods inspire the full spectrum of human actions, so some heathens may work magic, while some may concentrate on crafts, some on healing, some on teaching, some on brewing, some on storytelling, etc. Holding gods and values in common binds the communities of heathens together, and these ties are honoured and reinforced at blots, or blessings, when offerings are made to the gods and wights.

For those who are so inclined, I should say that there are many different ways of working that may be described as magic. Gods and goddesses may be petitioned at blots held for the deity in question. Seid (shamanistic trancework) may be worked to travel to the otherworlds and negotiate with gods, giants, wights and other spirits. The ancient 'alphabet' of the runes may be studied and used. As heathenry draws on an entire culture, there are many approaches. Some even choose to develop their own personal might and main and stand independent of any other wights... although such individuals would not be so foolish as to deny the existence of the gods.

To learn a little more I would heartily recommend the essay on the BBC Religion & Ethics web site: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/paganism/subdivisions/heathen.shtml>

Some local heathens can be contacted via the university Pagan Society. The society's web site can be found at: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/socs/pagan/>

By Jez

This year's theme was Your Move – exploring Movements for Change, Movements of people worldwide and Moves to bring peace. Thanks to additional publicity through Lancaster District Diversity festival, The Platform, Morecambe, hosted about 200 people on 16th October for this promotional event, sponsored by the local Corrymeela Support Group. An appeal for local groups to participate resulted in well-rehearsed performances by Ripley St. Thomas School, St. Patrick's School of Irish Dance, Pupils of St' Paul's School, Brookhouse and Torrisholme County Primary School and to start and complete the event we enjoyed music played by Milnthorpe Steel Band. Ripley School presented their dramatisation of 'A Fair World' and the primary schools were brought together under the conductorship of the composer, Andy Whitfield, to sing choruses from his choral work 'For Every Child'.

The traditional costumes worn in the Irish

Dance performances added to the variety of artistic expression demonstrated throughout the event, and much appreciated.

Contributions by Welcome Stories, Skills for Living, Christ Church, Broadway – Commitment for Life, Quaker Friends, Corrymeela Community, Global Link, Fairtrade and Speak – 'The Big Dress', all added to the One World Theme of movements to bring change for a more just and peaceful world.

A display of the One World Week themes portraying world issues and attracted interest from older members. Whilst children were kept busy blowing up One World Week balloons.

Throughout the event refreshments were enjoyed at tables around the venue and added to the relaxed atmosphere. There was a real feeling of Unity in Diversity – a fitting way to begin One World Week 2004.

Heather Bennett

'Here I am'

25 children, 16 countries, 3 continents

'Here I am' - a beautiful new book for children was launched during the Diversity Festival month by Global Link. It contains interviews with 25 children, ranging in age from 5 to 16, living all over Lancashire and with origins all over the world.

The book also contains fascinating and concise country profiles. One thing that may at first strike the reader as unusual is the way that information about UK countries is presented in exactly the same way as information about other countries.

The purpose of the book is to celebrate the diversity of Lancashire and to show in the personal stories of the 25 children how much we have in common and how little divides us.

Here I am! is on sale at £9.95 from Global Link, 24a New Street, Lancaster LA1 1EG.

Tel: 01524 36201.

info@wwwgloballink.org.uk



Flight

A new book which forms a permanent record of the work one of the twentieth century's important female Jewish artists will be launched on the last day of the festival. *Hannah Frank: A Glasgow Artist - Drawings and Sculpture*, has been completely revised and updated by the artist's niece, Lancaster-based Fiona Frank.

Fiona has also spearheaded the setting up of a four-year long touring exhibition of Hannah Frank's work. This began with an exhibition at Lancaster City Museum this Spring where around 70 Hannah Frank-related works were on show along with a mini-exhibition on Jewish immigration to Glasgow, put together by the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre (SJAC) who have published this new book. Smaller Hannah Frank exhibitions have been held at Lancaster University and The Gregson Centre, Lancaster.

Hannah, born in 1908 to Jewish parents who emigrated from Lithuania, was the oldest of four children. The only girl in the family, she was one of very few Jewish women who attended Glasgow University and Glasgow School of Art in the late 1920s. Her work has been exhibited in the Royal Glasgow Institute, the Royal Academy and the Royal Scottish Academy, and she has recently been given the rare accolade of Honorary Membership of the Glasgow Society of Women Artists.

She uses Jewish themes surrounding emigration conveyed though rather ghostly, elongated figures in many of her distinctive black and white drawings some of which have a sense of foreboding. 'Flight' (see

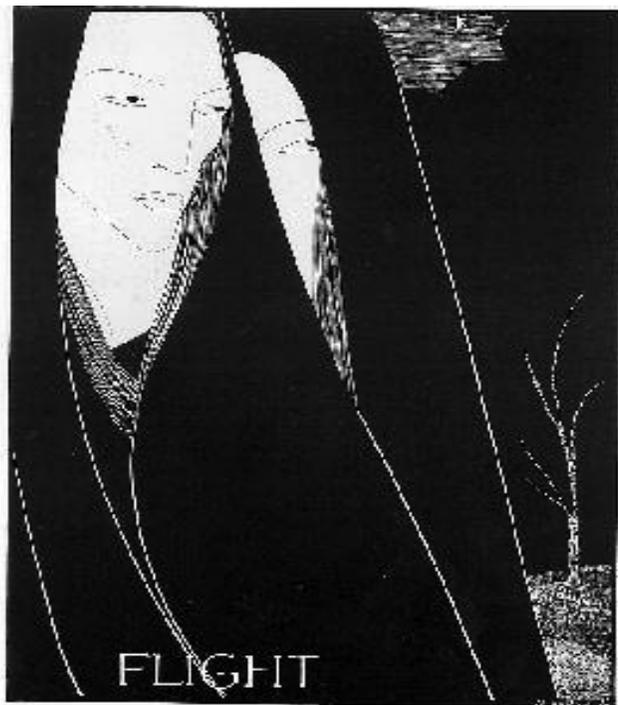
picture) from 1939, and featured on the front cover of the book, evocatively links the flight from Egypt with the flight of the Jews from Nazi Germany.

Harvey Kaplan, Director of the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, said: "Hannah illustrated posters and leaflets for nearly every Glasgow Jewish institution from the late 1920s to the 1950s. She was an early supporter of the Archives Centre which used many of her drawings for its newsletters. We're pleased to help bring Hannah Frank's work to a wider audience."

Fiona, who is currently undertaking a PhD which looks at the experiences of second generation Jewish immigrants to Glasgow, said: "This new version of the book, which was originally compiled by Hannah's brother, Arthur Frank, in 1988, includes private diary drawings as well as 15 'new' drawings discovered via internet contacts and through Glasgow University Magazine. We found several works in an old suitcase. Photographs of 16 'new' sculptures, never previously published, are revealed as are early family sketches and self-portraits."

The launch took place on Saturday 30 October at St Martin's College on the Jewish Community stall where visitors could also enjoy traditional Jewish food and music.

You can buy *Hannah Frank: A Glasgow Artist - Drawings and Sculptures* at the launch and it is also available from bookshops. Price: £21.50. Also via www.hannahfrank.org.uk at £21.50 plus £6.00 p&p. Telephone orders: +44 (0)7778 73768. Also available on www.amazon.co.uk



The School's Art Project

Lancashire Education Authority along with the Traveller Education Service organised a school art project as part of the Diversity Festival. Pupils were asked to respond to one or more quotations about diversity and produce a piece of artwork that reflected their responses. 14 primary schools and nurseries in the district took part in the project and the resulting pieces of artwork – paintings, batik, collages, photographs, drawings and a cardboard sculpture – will be displayed in several venues around the town until the end of October.

The artwork can be seen at Morecambe Library, Lancaster Library, Lancaster Junior Library, The Gregson Community Centre and the empty Shoefayre shop in St Nicholas Arcade. Some of the pieces were then put up at the closing event of the festival at St Martin's College on 30th October, much to the delight of many.

The 4 quotes the children were sent are:

"We all live with the objective of being happy: our lives are all different and yet the same." (Anne Frank)

"We have become not a melting pot, but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams." (Jimmy Carter)

"I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and the windows to be stifled. I want all the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." (Gandhi)

"One day our descendants will think it incredible that we paid so much attention to things like the amount of melanin in our skin or the shape of our eyes or our gender, instead of the unique identities of all of us as complex human beings" (Franklin Thomas).

By Denise Dent

The Price of Sugar

The young people of Dukes Den, a performing arts group led by youth arts workers Alan Fitzgerald and Guy Morris, developed this short film around the theme of Lancaster's role in the slave trade. Fitz became interested in the idea after attending a training day run by the LEA and the Maritime Museum, and the film gradually evolved over the following year through a creative process that involved the young people at every stage. "It was a challenging process," he recalls, "The group did a lot of research in the library, the museum and particularly on the internet so we had a good factual framework to set the story in. Then we had to consider what we could actually film. We obviously couldn't film on board a ship or represent Africa in any way, but we did have access to the Judges Lodgings and Lancaster itself. At the time, we had no black children in the group either so we couldn't even try to dramatise an African's experience. In the end we decided to stay with Lancaster's relationship to the subject and look at it through the eyes of a Lancaster family. I think the group did a good job getting across a range of perspectives, including a particularly unpleasant argument that presented a case for the better treatment of slaves from a very dispassionate economic point of view." The film was being shown at the Diversity Festival's closing event.

"There is no place you or I can go, to think about or not think about, to summon the presences of, or

recollect the absences of slaves; nothing that reminds us of the ones who made the journey and of those who did not make it". Toni Morrison 1989

The Slave Trade Arts Memorial project was inaugurated in September 2002 by representatives from local organisations who feel it is important that Lancaster remembers its involvement in the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

In the eighteenth century, Lancaster merchants were responsible for the forced transportation of approximately 24,950 Africans across the Atlantic and into slavery, making Lancaster the fourth largest slave port in Britain with around 200 voyages leaving the city.

The project will see a range of artists, led by lead artist SuAndi OBE, working with schools and community groups across the district to explore the Lancaster hidden history.

The project will culminate in the creation of a commemorative memorial to African peoples who suffered in Lancaster's slave trade. This permanent memorial created by artist Kevin Dalton-Johnson will be sited on the Quayside in Lancaster.

The project has been funded by Arts Council North West, Lancaster City Council, Lancashire County Council & the Millennium Commission

By Denise Dent



Education Development Centre

Global Link works with schools and the wider community to promote awareness of global issues such as human rights, diversity, fair trade and sustainable development, through workshops, training and public events.

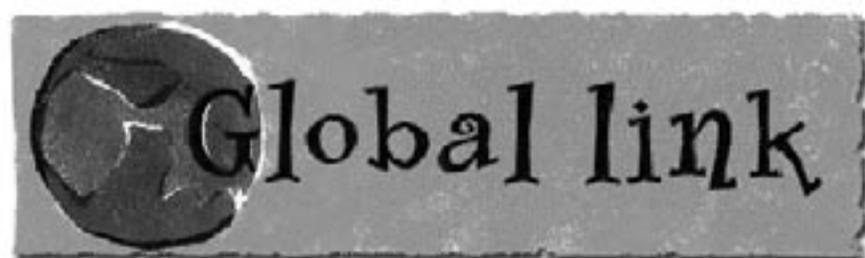
We specialise in developing and utilising innovative approaches, such as interactive exhibitions and participatory theatre. Escape to Safety – our multi-media exhibition about asylum constructed into a 40ft lorry – contributed to the Diversity Festival closing event on 30th October and our new book 'Here I am! – Children from Lancashire and around the world' was launched during the Festival month.

Our schools work includes anti-racist theatre

workshops, simulated Earth summits and facilitation of North-South School Linking. In the community, we organise public awareness-raising events and initiatives about global issues. This has included co-ordinating the achievement of Fairtrade District status in March and co-ordinating the launch of the Diversity Festival.

We have a resource centre, with books, videos and teaching resources about diversity and a range of other global issues available on loan.

For further information see www.globallink.org.uk or tel: 01524 36201



Escape to Safety

What might it be like to be in fear for your life ... to have to leave your home ... escape to another country ... apply for asylum ... What if you are sent back?

Visitors to the Closing Event of Lancaster District's Diversity Festival had the opportunity to find out by taking part in Escape to Safety – a nationally acclaimed multi-media interactive experience developed by Lancaster-based Global Link.

Escape to Safety is a 40 foot lorry, partitioned into 8 stations to simulate different stages on a refugee's journey. Participants must leave their homeland, pass through border control, travel to another country, interact with immigration officials, live in a detention centre, then a bed-sit and then wait for the decision about their fate. The exhibition contains video footage and a soundtrack with the voices of Maria, Afif and Ahmed - refugees from Rwanda, Afghanistan and Palestine. The exterior has been colourfully painted by refugee artist Rebwar Saeed.

Gisela Renolds of Global Link said 'Escape to Safety is an emotional experience, combined with facts and figures, which aims to promote a better understanding of the asylum issue and to challenge misinformation, stereotyping, prejudice and scape-goating of asylum-seekers'. Participants who went through the exhibition at St. Martin's on 30th October found it powerful and moving and even those who were reasonably aware about the issue confirmed that they had learned something.

Did you know?
that the movement of asylum-seekers is intimately linked with war and that the largest groups of refugees in this country come from areas of war - Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia?
that the amount spent on refugees

by the government costs the taxpayer a mere £1.79?
that Einstein was a refugee?
that refugees constitute approximately 2% of the UK population? (a recent survey showed that the average UK citizen believes it is 23%)
that immigrants (refugees, economic migrants and others) contribute £2.5 billion a year more to the state than they receive?

All the facts and figures that we use are either from UNHCR or the Home Office.

Since its launch in September last year, Escape to Safety has attracted national media attention – with positive reviews from the Times Educational Supplement and not-so-positive reviews from the Mail on Sunday and the Daily Express! It has travelled throughout the United Kingdom, where it has been hired by schools, Local Education Authorities, Youth and Community services and other organisations. Approximately 20 000 people have been through it. Here are some of their comments:

"It's good to know the real facts"

"The human face behind the headlines. The terrible injustice we are allowing to be committed in our name. More people should see this"

"Realised how little we actually support refugees when we constantly complain about them 'leeching' on our society. Pretty incredible what you can do with a lorry!"

"The method of presentation is very powerful.

A lot of information in an easy-to-absorb way, in a short space of time. A good reminder of the issues we face and peoples' fears"

Escape to Safety is available for hire. For information, visit www.globallink.org.uk. Tel: 01524 36201.

Faithshare

Morecambe High School was the venue for the first ever Faithshare Event in the Lancaster District. The event was opened by the Head of Religious Education at the School and hosted by Lancaster University student Amro Ahmed-Ebbiary. Each religious group from the district had a stall where representatives talked about their religions and their ways of life. There was also an opportunity for individuals to tell a story that was key to their faith. The Sultan of Lancaster provided food during the interval, and the Drama Department at Morecambe High School performed a short play about faith.

Lancaster has a very diverse community, and the Faithshare Event aimed to promote this with representatives from the Muslim, Jewish, Quaker, Christian, Hindu, Sikh and Baha'i communities. Further to the religious communities, there were stalls from the Lancaster Diocesan Faith and Justice Commission, the Religious Education Department at Morecambe High School, the Zambian and Angel Tree Projects and a memorial to the Chinese cockle pickers who died last year. The event was, therefore, not just religious, but also cultural and educational.

Tim Perkins, Religion Section Editor





The New Anti-Semitism

Today, we confront the ugly reality that Anti-Semitism is not just a fact of history, but a current event” - Colin Powell, 2004

“This is a good time to discuss the issue because Anti-Semitism is on the rise and we must combat it as we do all forms of racism” - James Purnell, House of Commons, 2004.

“Anti-Semitism? What Anti-Semitism?” I hear you ask. Look closer and you’ll see it’s all around us. Rabbi Dr Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the Commonwealth said he was “shocked that so few non-Jews in Europe have recognized it and denounced it”. The Anti-Semitism around us today is well-disguised, so well-disguised in fact that it drags even organisations whose sole purpose is anti-racism into its midst as unwitting allies. I am speaking not in the abstract, but with knowledge of four local organisations unknowingly ending up in this situation since the start of October. How have we allowed this to happen? How could anyone be so blind? I’ll let the Chief Rabbi explain:

“What we are witnessing today is the second great mutation of Anti-Semitism in modern times, from racial Anti-Semitism to religious anti-Zionism... It uses all the mediaeval myths - the Blood Libel, poisoning of wells, killers of the Lord’s anointed, incarnation of evil - transposed into a new key and context. This could not have succeeded, however, without one mutation - a mutation so ingenious, demonic and evil that it paralyses the immune systems of the West built up over the past half-century. The mutation is this: that the worst crimes of Anti-Semites in the past - racism, ethnic cleansing, attempted genocide, crimes against humanity - are now attributed to Jews and the State of Israel, so that if you are against Nazism, you must ipso facto be utterly opposed to Jews. I regard this as one of the most blasphemous inversions in the history of the world’s oldest hate.”

A recent e-mail circulated on a mailing list at the university encouraged people to attend a talk hosted by a supposedly politically neutral group on campus. The post referred to the “Israeli system of terror” and described a Pro-Palestinian Israeli political campaigner as “proof that not all Israeli’s think that a ‘good Palestinian is a dead Palestinian’”. The group hosting the talk (itself purporting to be involved in Human Rights) ran three anti-Israel talks (including this one)

in as many weeks. The group’s obsession with Israel is most concerning.

The official information about this particular group of speakers was of equal concern. It mention one speaker as involved in a “German Campaign against the Apartheid Wall”. To return to Colin Powell, “It is not anti-Semitic to criticize the policies of the state of Israel. But the line is crossed when Israel or its leaders are demonized or vilified, for example by the use of Nazi symbols and racist caricatures.”

The e-mail ends: “note that the organisation [the speakers are from] is not politically active (as a party or anything), but rather as a human rights organisation.” The reality of this situation is that the group that the speakers are from has been so discredited as an NGO they couldn’t even use their name in the publicity of the event, perhaps due to their well known and enthusiastic support of suicide bombers or the view often expressed by them that Israel has no right to exist.

The “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights” and the “International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights” (a key part of the UN Human Rights Commission) have a common first article which states: “All peoples have the rights of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.” This right is regularly considered to apply to all peoples except the Jewish people.

In 1975 the United Nations declared Zionism (the Jewish right to self determination and statehood) to be racism. “The United Nations itself is still living with the legacy of the unfortunate resolution... even though the General Assembly revoked it in 1991.” - Kofi Annan, 2004. The director general of the UN may understand the deeply depressing reality of this situation, but some people haven’t caught on. I saw a website of a supposedly respected foreign scholar “Why Zionism Is Racism: Zionism is a racist and irredeemable movement, like Bolshevism, Nazism, and Apartheid.” The article said the revocation was the low point for the United Nations and was brought about by political pressure from Israel. I shan’t spin off into the Anti-Semitism of stereo typing Jewish people or conspiracy theories. They belong to the old form of Anti-Semitism, “protocols of the elders of

Zion” style. I hope everyone recognised this familiar form of Anti-Semitism. What is deeply troubling is the inability, even from academics to split one subject from another. Criticism of Israel is legitimate, being Anti-Zionist on the basis that you don’t believe in religion and state being mixed, or in statehood at all, but then singling out Israel and labelling both Israel and Zionism in these terms (as the academic does) is unequivocal Anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism is not however just a foreign concept. It is in and around town and on campus. “The Jewish state is evil.” “The Israeli government is evil.” “The people elect the government, therefore the people are evil.” “The claim for a Jewish homeland is itself racist.” “Jews want a Jewish state and support the evil state therefore all Jews are evil.” “We’re involved in human rights and the fight against evil therefore we must proclaim this self evident truth to the world.” “And you call us racist? We’re a human rights group, you run around every where calling our work anti-Semitic, it’s you who are evil!” this skewed logic is unfortunately commonplace, and Lancaster is not free from it.

Can a discussion be had without being anti-Semitic? Certainly. It’s just that it must be done in a fair way. Having a token Israeli or a token Jew present doesn’t absolve the organiser’s responsibility. Especially if the token people themselves are not clear on the dangers of this new form of Anti-Semitism.

A statement by the Joint Presidents of the Council of Christians and Jews (including the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbi) said “We acknowledge that criticism of government policy in Israel, as elsewhere, is a legitimate part of democratic debate. However such criticism should never be inspired by Anti-Semitic attitudes, extend to a denial of Israel’s right to exist or serve as justification for attacks against Jewish people around the world.”

The Holy See through one of its committees noted its position of “total rejection of Anti-Semitism in all its forms, including anti-Zionism as a more recent manifestation of Anti-Semitism.”

Earlier this year Kofi Annan said, “Criticism of Israeli policies is one thing. But it is quite another when such critiques take the form of attacks, physical or verbal, on Jewish individuals and the symbols of their heritage and faith... No-one should be allowed

to use criticism of Israel’s actions as a mask for Anti-Semitism. Nor, on the other side, should Israel’s supporters use the charge of Anti-Semitism to stifle legitimate discussion.”

Unfortunately we see very little legitimate discussion occurring in Lancaster outside of the Jewish community. In Lancaster the environment is uncomfortable with Israel of all the nations in the world singled out for special treatment by numerous groups at the same time. As Lord Janner (leading Labour peer and long-standing human rights activist) put it in 2001, “The singling out of one state is called discrimination; when it is the Jewish state, it is called Anti-Semitism”. Elsewhere in the UK the predicted rise in Anti-Semitism is even more evident.

On the 4th of November a window at a synagogue in Reading, Berkshire was deliberately broken and a lit firecracker dropped inside. There was damage to the floor, a freezer, photocopier and the walls. On the 5th of November a Jewish woman leaving a park in Edgware, Middlesex was verbally abused. A woman said to her, “You fat, ugly Jewish woman, you should have been gassed.” On 7th of November a group of Jews in Leeds on their way to a synagogue were verbally abused when a vehicle doubled back after passing them and a passenger got out and said, “What the f*** are you looking at, you f***ing Jewish bastards”.

I’ll end with the Chief Rabbi, “Anti-Semitism is a crime against humanity - not because Jews are human beings (I hope that much will be conceded) but because human beings are Jews, by which I mean difference is the essence of our humanity... A world that has no room for Jews, has no space for difference; and a world that lacks space for difference has no room for humanity. That is why Anti-Semitism is not a, but the, paradigm of a crime against humanity... Anti-Semitism begins with Jews but never ends with Jews. Now is the time for those who care about humanity to join in the defence of humanity, by protesting this newest mutation of the world’s oldest hate.”

Andre Oboler

Jewish Society Co-Chair

Lancaster University

Reader feedback welcome, please e-mail your comment to oboler@comp.lancs.ac.uk



We hoped we enjoyed it!



WM MITCHELL'S of Lancaster

Supporting local communities throughout the Lancaster area



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Morecambe
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The Bowerham Hotel
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www.mitchellsoflancaster.co.uk

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