

HISTORY & SOCIAL ACTION NEWS

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Greta Brooks

It is with much sadness that I have to report that Greta Brooks, who I worked with 1984-9 in her capacity as Chair of the Panel of Lay Visitors to Lambeth Police Stations and then the Community/Police Consultative Group for Lambeth died on Boxing Day. A committed Quaker, she also founded the Lambeth Mediation Service. A memorial meeting will be held at Streatham Quaker Meeting House, Redlands Way, Roupell Park Estate, London, SW2 at 2.30pm on 6 February.

DEADLINE FOR SIGNING LONDON FREEDOM PASS PETITION 29 JANUARY - see story below

DIARY

2 February. 6pm. Lambeth Community/Police Consultative Group Monthly Meeting, Assembly Hall, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton Town Centre. London, SW2.

2 February. 7pm. The Radical History of the North East Project. Introduction by John Charlton. North East Labour History Society First Tuesday meeting. Tyneside Irish Centre, 43-49 Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne.

4 February. 4 pm. Global Labour History: What's New? Seminar by Marcel van der Linden. Labour and Society Research Group. Research Beehive, Room 2.22, Old Library Building, Newcastle University.

4 February. At Last! The New Wandsworth Museum. 7.30pm. The Brewer Building, St. Mary's Church (by Putney Bridge), Putney High St, London, SW15. Join the friends of Wandsworth Museum in celebrating confirmation of the new Museum location. Director Andrew Leitch will tell the news plus a showing of 'Send Them to the Country', DVD of the World War Two evacuation re-enactment – Beatrix Potter School project. War-time music singalong. Refreshments. Special

guests: Steph Neal, headmaster of the School and some of the original evacuees.

7 February. 10.45am. Tales and Trails of Tooting Town. A walking tour. Meet outside Tooting Broadway tube station. London Walk led by Rex Osborn, Chair, Tooting Local History Group. £7 (£5 over 65s, full-time students and Walkabout Card holders; under 15s go free if accompanied by parent).

8 February. 6.30pm. The Art of Fearful Imaginings. Lecture by Gail Nina Anderson at Kings Place, St Pancras. She's well known in Newcastle but not in London, For further information and to book go to: www.kingsplace.co.uk/spoken-word/talking-art. Thanks to Sue Ward up in Newcastle for this information.)

13 February. 2pm. Tooting History: A Fresh Look. Reg Osborn, Chair, Tooting Local History Group. Merton Historical Society meeting. Christ Church Hall, Christchurch Road, Colliers Wood, London.

15 February. 5.30pm. Crisis Music: The Cultural Politics of Rock Against Racism in the 1970s. Ian Goodyer. London Socialist Historians Group Seminar. Room G32, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

15 February. 6.45 for 7.15pm. About the Cinema Museum. A unique international resource - in Kennington! Illustrated talk by Martin Humphries, co-founder and director of The Cinema Museum (off Renfrew Road); plus short home movie made by Charlie Chaplin in the 1950s, showing local places he knew in his childhood to his bride Oona. Entry free to all. Suggested donation £2. Refreshments. Friends of Durning Library. Durning Library, 167 Kennington Lane, SE11.

20 February. 'Unfree' Labour in 18/19thC India - 20 February. Joint BASA/Equiano Society event.

24 February. 6pm. Carl Hylton. Positive African self-identity and the 2007 bi-centenary year. The seminar focuses on some of the psychological, philosophical, cultural and sociological issues that enable people of African descent to survive in a positive manner in the United Kingdom and the wider western diaspora. Arguments are illustrated by reference to the development of a 2007 bi-centenary African-centric community project based in Leeds. ICS/BASA Black & Asian Britain Seminar. Room G35, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

27 February. The Vote- What Went Wrong? London Socialist Historians Group Conference. Speakers include: Owen Ashton - 'W E Adams, Chartism and Republicanism'; Logie Barrow - 'Enfranchisement and Stupefaction: vaccination and the vote'; Ian Bullock - 'Gulfs, fissures and cracks. Democracy and the British Left in the early 20th Century'; Neil Davidson - 'Social Neoliberalism, "Regimes of Consolidation" and the Assault on Representative Democracy, 1989-2008'; Keith Flett - 'The origins of the electoral impulse in the British working class'; Mike Haynes - 'Parliament: The Return of Old Corruption'. Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet St/ Russell Square, London WC1. Advance booking advisable: send cash or cheque [made payable to Keith Flett] for £10 [£5 concs] to LSHG, 38 Mitchley Rd, London, N17 9HG

3-4 March. We Were There Exhibition. Great Hall, Guildhall, Northampton. Northamptonshire Black History Association shows Ministry of Defence exhibition on the contribution of Britain's ethnic minority communities to defence. NHBA would like individuals, including ex-service personnel and community groups to have an active part in this exhibition; contact admin@northants-black-history.org.uk; 01604 590967.

4 March. 5.30pm. Seeing Subject and Walking Zoo: Indian Women Tourists in 1930s Europe. Shompa Lahiri (QMUL). Reconfiguring the British: Nation, Empire, World 1600-1900 Seminar. Institute of Historical research, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

8 March. 6.30pm. The Colour Black. Lecture by Gail Nina Anderson, Kings Place, St.Pancras. For further information and to book go to: www.kingsplace.co.uk/spoken-word/talking-art.

9 March. 5.15pm. Commerce, competition and the War of the Spanish Succession in Jamaica. Dr Nuala Zahedieh (University of Edinburgh). British Maritime History Seminar. Institute of Historical research, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

11 March. 6pm. "The first music-seller in the land": the professional street ballad singer in pre- and early-industrial society. Dr Vic Gammon, Newcastle University. Literary & Philosophical Society, 23 Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1. 0191 232 0192. library@litandphil.org.uk. www.litandphil.org.uk/html_pages/LP_news.html.

10 March. 5.30pm. London Quakers in the Atlantic World before 1725. Jordan Landes. Metropolitan History Seminar. Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

11 March -2 June. The Indian Portrait 1560-1860 Exhibition. National Portrait Gallery.

15 March. 5.30pm. 'Don't You Hear the H Bombs Thunder; Youth & Politics on Tyneside in the late 1950s and early 1960s'. John Charlton, London Socialist Historians Group Seminar. Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

17 March. 5.15pm. David Bogue, Robert Morrison, and the planting of dissent in China. Christopher Daily (SOAS). Dr Williams's Centre for Dissenting Studies: Seminar in Dissenting Studies. The Board Room, Dr Williams's Library, 14 Gordon Square, London WC1.

18 March. 5.30pm. What difference does gender make to empire? A roundtable discussion: Jo McDonagh (KCL), Sonya Rose (Michigan), John Tosh (Roehampton). Reconfiguring the British Nation, Empire, World 1600-1900 Seminar. Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

19 March. 5.15pm. The Swedish East India Company and Britain, 1731-1813. Leos Muller (Uppsala University). Economic and Social History of the Pre-modern World 1500-1800 Seminar. Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

20 March 2 - 6pm. 'Politics and People's Power after Obama'. David Abdulah Logan Hall, Institute of Education, Bedford Row, London, WC1. For further info: info@georgepadmoreinstitute.org; www.georgepadmoreinstitute.org

24 March. 6pm. Who was "Black" in 18th century England? Kathy Chater. This paper examines linguistic, cultural and historical implications of the words and phrases used to describe dark-skinned people, not only those of African or Indian sub-continental origin, before the advent of 'scientific racism'. ICS/BASA Black & Asian Britain Seminar. Room G35, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

22 March. 6pm. Collingwood and Nelson: A Unique Friendship - Max Adams. Literary & Philosophical Society, FREE to members, £2 for non-members. In association with Tyne Bridge Publishing. 23 Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1. 0191 232 0192. library@litandphil.org.uk.

27 March. 9.30am-4.30pm. Discovering West London's History. 30th West London History Conference. The Musical Museum, High St, Brentford. Tickets £8 available *only in advance*, by post from J. McNamara, 31B Brook Rd South, Brentford TW8 ONN (please send SAE and cheque made out to West London Local History Conference). Talks Unearthing West London's history - *Jon Cotton, Dept of Early London History, Museum of London*; Rediscovering Gunnersbury Lodge: the Boddingtons' country house - *Chris Worthing History Research Group*; Battersea and Wandsworth through artists' eyes - *Patricia Astley-Cooper, former Curator, Wandsworth*

Museum; Under the microscope - some clues to West London's history Contemporary documents readings; Where was Chiswick's water mill? - a familiar place seen with new eyes - *James Wisdom, Chairman, Brentford & Chiswick Local History Society*; Anatomy of a Suffragette exhibition: dissecting the sources - *Irene Cockroft, co-curator* How the Vote was Won, *Museum of Richmond (1 May-4 Sept 2010)*; The Case of the Discarded War Memorial - *Neil Robson, Chairman, Wandsworth Historical Society*. The conference fee includes coffee and tea but participants should organise their own lunch or go to the nearby Watermans' Arts Centre or pubs.

29 March. 7pm. Green and Pleasant Land. Talk and launch of pamphlet Kennington Park's horticultural history. The booklet outlines the park's rich horticultural history and is the platform for an appeal for funds to redesign and restock the flower beds to the north and south of Prince Consort's Lodge. Friends of Kennington Park. Durning Library, 167 Kennington Lane, SE11.

12 April. 6.30pm. The Miner in Art. Lecture by Gail Nina Anderson at Kings Place, St. Pancras. For further information and to book go to: www.kingsplace.co.uk/spoken-word/talking-art.

21 April. 3-4.30pm. Promoting Racial Equality in Higher Education. Prof. Andy Pilkington, Prof of Sociology, Univ Northampton. Further information: equality@northampton.ac.uk; 01604 893887.

8 May. Mary Seacole Wreath Laying Service. Mary Seacole Memorial Association and Royal College of Nursing ceremony in the Chapel in St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery, London. Further details later.

12 May. 6pm. Caroline Bressey. White Women and Black History: the case of Catherine Impey. ICS/BASA Black & Asian Britain Seminar. Room G35, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

2 June. 6pm. Daniel Whittall, Black West Indians in Britain and the politics of empire, c. 1931-1948. This talk will focus on the expanding and alternative 'black public sphere' of 1930s and 1940s Britain, focusing in particular on the important place of public speaking and periodicals in the formation of political critiques of imperialism by black West Indians in Britain. ICS/BASA Black & Asian Britain Seminar. Room G35, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT LIBRARY EXHIBITION & TALKS

Invisible Histories: Salford's Working Lives exhibition at the Working Class Movement Library in Salford is now showing. Themes include Chartism, mining in Salford, the life of Friedrich Engels, the Battle of Bexley Square and Salford Docks. Open Wednesdays to Fridays 1-5pm. The following talks accompany the exhibition.

27 January. 2pm. 'Salford in Love on the Dole'. Chris Carson will present an illustrated guide to Walter Greenwood's 1933 novel, using period photographs of Hanky Park. Mention will be made of the Battle of Bexley Square in 1931 when unemployed men from Salford marched to the Town Hall and were repeatedly attacked by the local police force.

10 February. 2pm. The power to get things changed. The story of Ellen Tooley, Salford's first woman councillor - Veronica Trick

24 February. 2pm. Salford stories. Recorded memories from local people and discussion of the issues they raise - Jane Wood and Mike Scantlebury.

10 March. 2pm. Lost coal mines of Salford. An Agecroft miner's recollections of the mining industry - Paul Kelly.

24 March. 2pm. Local participation in the Spanish Civil War. The response of people from Manchester and Salford to the conflict in Spain 1936-39 - Chris Carson.

14 April. 2pm. The Co-op in Salford. The history of the local co-operative movement - Gillian Lonergan.

28 April. 2pm. Salford pubs. The story of how Salford's licensed premises have dwindled from 1,000 in 1900 to under 50 today - Roy Bullock.

12 May. 6pm. The gangs of Victorian Salford and Manchester. Tales of scuttling and knife-crime on 19th century streets; asks what can be learned from Victorian attempts to deal with youth gangs - Andrew Davies.

26 May. 2pm. A celebration of Kersal Moor. From racecourse to Chartist meeting place to Salford's green lung - Alice Searle.

9 June. 2pm. Salford Lads' Club. Following on from our 12 May talk, the story of one way in which the gangs were tackled - Leslie Holmes.

23 June. 2pm. No compensation. Mining mishaps in the Salford coalfields during the Victorian period - Glen Atkinson.

7 July. 6pm. Re-tracing Salford. A project using family snaps, oral histories and street maps to rekindle memories of urban life - Lawrence Cassidy

21 July. 6pm. Salford Star. The story of the independent magazine, written and produced by people in Salford for people in Salford - Stephen Kingston.

4 August. 2pm. Trades union memorabilia. Badges, emblems and certificates - Cliff Stockton

BRITAIN AT WORK 1945- 1995 TALKS

This spring's series of talks presented by HistoryTalk (Kensington Community History Group) will be exploring some of the key issues in Britain at Work 1945- 1995, the nation-wide oral history programme that was launched in June 2009. The four talks will focus on different aspects of work and trade union activity in west London and more widely.

22 February. The 1976 Trico Equal Pay strike on the Great West Road in West London. Barbara Humphries (Labour Heritage Bulletin Editor who was a supporter of the Trico strikers.)

1 March. The West Midlands car industry in the 1970s. Roger Kline. Roger worked for 8 years as a fork- lift truck driver at Massey Ferguson's Banner Lane factory in Coventry. He was a TGWU senior shop steward and later worked at the Birmingham Trade Union Resource Centre and now works for ASPECT.

15 March. Trade Union Studies. A panel discussion with three speakers on *how* we do trade union studies and *how* we study trade union history with Christine Coates (TUC Library Collections), Richard Temple (Senate House Library archivist) and Pam Singer (TU education organiser, West Thames College).

22 March. Women and Work 1945- 1995. Professor Mary Davis. Mary's book *Comrade or Brother?* has just been re- issued. She was Head of Trade Union Studies at South Bank University and co-director of the Working Lives Institute.

All talks start at 6.30pm in the Community Room at HISTORYtalk, 240 Lancaster Road, London, W11 4AH. Tel 0207 792 2282 or email Rima rjoebear@historytalk.org to book a place. Nearest

tube Ladbroke Grove: 5 mins walk from the station. Car parking opposite.

SOCIALIST FILM CLUB SHOWINGS

14 February. Meeting Resistance; Waiting for Mordechai with J Corbyn MP.

14 March. The Brits Who Fought for Spain; The Long Road to Spain

11 April. American Sandinista; To Play and to Struggle (Tocar y Luchar)

9 May. Raimunda: a Quebradeira; Black Gold: Coffee and Trade

13 June. La Cécilia; Tower Colliery with Carl Levy and Stan Newens

Socialist Film Club. 10.30 for 11am. Screenings at the Renoir Cinema, Brunswick Square, London. WC1. Admission £9, concessions £7. Discount to annual members £3. Card payments cannot be accepted. www.socialistfilm.blogspot.com.

NEWS

Wandsworth Working Lives. On 18 January I gave a talk about Wandsworth Working Lives to Wandsworth U3A's Local History Group. 70 people attended, including several new attenders. Penny Corfield will be talking to the group about Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens next month.

Wandsworth Heritage News. I am now a member of the newly formed Heritage Wandsworth Partnership initiated by Wandsworth Council and involving the civic and historical societies and the new independent Wandsworth Museum. A diverse and interesting programme of events is being planned for the Heritage Festival from 30 May to 13 June. It will include: talks on the fight to save Wandsworth Common by Shirley Passmore, Price's Candles by Jon Newman, Battersea riverfront from Battersea to Vauxhall by Penny Corfield, Battersea Education by Andrew Saint (Survey of London), Chartism in Wandsworth and Music in Wandsworth by me, workshops and lots of walks, including several to be led by me.

Tooting Local History Group. This group, which I am a member of, is growing in numbers and developing an active programme of walks and talks and other events. Details can be seen on: <http://ja-jp.facebook.com/group.php?gid=107304007024>. See also events on 4 and 13 February.

T-Mobile. If you have a contract with T-Mobile you might be interested in this story from the Labour Start. 'Some companies are very nice to their workers where unions are established and powerful, but the moment they don't have to deal with such unions, they turn nasty. T-Mobile is a case in point. In Germany they brag about how well they get along with unions and what a great employer they are. But in the USA, they harass and intimidate workers who are trying to form a union. American Rights at Work (together with the Communications Workers of America, ver.di, and UNI Global Union) has launched an online campaign urging T-Mobile to respect workers rights everywhere: http://action.americanrightsatwork.org/campaign/tmobile_abuse

Labour Film and Festivals Database. The trade union Labour Start website is co-sponsoring the online labour film database together with the DC Labor Film Fest. It includes no fewer 1,465 union films and videos. It has been put together by Chris Garlock and the Washington DC Metro Labor Council. Labour Start is also co-sponsoring the online labor film festival site now featuring thirty such festivals around the world -- featuring festivals in Argentina, Canada, Ireland, Korea, Norway, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, and the USA. You can help keep this list up-to-date and inclusive by emailing cgarlock@dclabor.org.

Turkish Workers. In the days before Christmas 10,000 workers in Turkey were in their fourth week of protests in near-freezing temperatures. For details see <http://cms.iuf.org/?q=node/157>. They are employed by Tekel, the former tobacco monopoly, and are protesting against a snap government decision to close their workplaces at the end of

this month. They face either unemployment or work at lower wages and fewer benefits. Their protests began in November when over 100 buses brought them to Ankara to demonstrate in front of the ruling party's headquarters. But police drove them away, forcing the workers into a nearby park. Police then put up barricades around the park and used water hoses and tear gas against the workers. Police violence escalated, workers were beaten with clubs, and many were hospitalized. The demonstrators have since moved their protest to outside the headquarters of the Turkish union confederation, where they hold daily demonstrations. Some went on hunger strike.

Manchester's Radical History. The writers on the Manchester's Radical History website are collecting accounts of different strands in Manchester's history, with the aim of making them available to as wide an audience as possible. They state that they 'share an interest in the city's radical and grassroots history - the local struggles and campaigns that have shaped the city of Manchester and the towns that make up Greater Manchester, and the people that live in them. And we're inspired by the way that Manchester's people have maintained a spirit of independence and resistance which has endured down the years'. Recent postings include 'Anarchists on Ardwick Green, 1893' and 'Fascism and anti-fascism in 1930s Manchester'. <http://radicalmanchester.wordpress.com>.

NCVO Campaigns Against Music Licences. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) is campaigning against the Government's decision to make charities and other not-for-profits pay for a licence when they play recorded music in their own premises. To date, charitable organisations have been exempt from these charges and NCVO believes this should continue. To find out more and to support the campaign go to www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/policy-research-analysis/our-campaigns/dontstopthemusic.

WEA Campaigns for Adult Education. The Workers' Educational Association campaign for life-learning learning will continue up until the General Election. To find out more go to: www.wea.org.uk/weanews/supportlearningforlife.htm.

Friends of Sadiq Khan. Ann and I were guests of friends at the Friends of Sadiq Khan Gala Dinner fundraising for the Tooting born Muslim MP who is now Minister of Transport. About 400 people were there from a wide range of backgrounds: white British, black Africans, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, Tamils, Muslims, Hindus, Sihks, Christians and Jews. The pre-food grace was led by an Iman. The event was held just over the Borough border in the Memon Community Centre in Lambeth's Weir Rd. A Tooting Indian restaurant provided the food. Speakers included David Miliband and Sir Iqbal Sacranie. It was a pity that Miliband's speech was boring with him withering on about why Labour needed to a Party of greater change than the Conservatives. Dozens of people had their photos taken with Ken Livingstone.

Ambitions for Bloomsbury. I used to be all in favour of planning frameworks, but as we have seen in London over the last few years they are largely about how to make it easier for developers to make large sums of money providing buildings that add nothing architecturally, and with little benefit for local people. In addition to the massive strategic framework proposals for Vauxhall, Nine Elms and Battersea, we now have the proposed 'Midtown' for Bloomsbury, St Giles and Holborn areas on either side of Southhampton Row and Kingsway, from Tottenham Court Rd to Chancery Lane Tube stations, from Russell Square to the bottom of Lincoln Inn Fields. Apparently 200,000 people work in this area every day, but it is said to be neglected, with some parts crime and drug ridden. Now 370 businesses backed by Mayor Johnson have launched their vision for create a brighter future. It includes a clampdown on crime, traffic reduction, a network of cultural walks, and extended shop openings. Soon the result of a vote among business people to set up a formal Business Improvement District (BID) with £2m a year levy on members firms will be known. The number of residents in the area is small. A major problem with BIDs is that they give commercial businesses and other employers a key say over the way public spaces are used.

Communist Party Our History Pamphlets Now on Line. A selection of titles of the dozens of pamphlets published by the CP Historians Group are now available online:
www.amielandmelburn.org.uk/collections/shs/index_frameset1.htm.

Web based Socialist Reminiscences. Socialist History Society series of reminiscences on its website includes: Martin Gilbert's 'A Socialist All at Sea' about working in shipbuilding in Sunderland during and after the War. www.socialisthistorysociety.co.uk/memoirs.htm.

LONDON FREEDOM PASS UNDER THREAT

The London Freedom Pass could be under threat. The three-year funding deal for the Freedom Pass agreed between Government and London's Councils in 2008 has been re-opened by the Department for Transport which is seeking ways to cut costs. As a result, London is set to lose £29m (half its agreed funding for 2010-11). Leaders of London's Boroughs are opposed to this re-opening of the previously agreed three-year funding deal, and have said that, although they will endeavour to protect the Freedom Pass, the money will have to be found somewhere. There is concern the axe may fall on the freedom pass, or at least some aspects of it. A Petition has been organised to demand that the Prime Minister intervene to protect the Freedom Pass's funding, and every London resident who might be affected is urged to sign it. It has been submitted by Barry Macleod-Cullinane of London Councils, and the wording on 10 Downing Street website reads-

'We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to intervene to secure the Freedom Pass by protecting the previously agreed level of concessionary travel funding for London, for 2010-11, from the proposals currently being consulted on by the DfT that would cut £29m of agreed funding for the boroughs, following the DfT's re-opening of a 30 year funding deal in its third year.'

The deadline for signing this Petition is January 29. Go to <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/29m4freedompass>

BOOKS AND ARTICLES

Untold Histories. Black People in England Wales during the period of the British slave trade, c. 1660-1807. (Manchester University Press. October 2009. Hbk £60.) Kathy is a member of the BASA Committee and is giving the ICS/BASA Seminar talk on 24 March.

Black 1919. Riots. Racism and Resistance in Imperial Britain. Jacqueline Jenkinson. (Liverpool University Press. 2009. Hbk £65. www.liverpool-unipress.co.uk). Jacqueline was the lead speaker at the BASA/Equiano Centre Race Riots 1919 Symposium on 23 January.

Darwin and Race. In their book *Darwin's Sacred Cause: Race, Slavery and the Quest for Human Origins*. (Penguin. £12.99) Adrian Desmond and James Moore argue that Darwin was opposed to scientific racism and showed that all species had a common ancestor.

Real England. Paul Kingsnorth explores the onslaught against non-commercialised, non-corporate life in Britain. From the closing of local shops to the death of the farming communities, the author focuses on the human cost of these changes. Housemans bookshops says that the book 'serves as an important reminder of what's at stake with the corporate takeover of Britain, and also leaves us with some optimism by showing green shoots of resistance, as people begin rising to the challenge of resistance against the onslaught.' £7.99. You can buy on line at www.shop.housmans.com/BookItem.aspx?item=9780285638587

Disaporic Theatre 1940s and 1950s. The current issue of *Key Words* (7, 2009),

www.spokesmanbooks.com/acatalog/Key_Words_Journal.html), a journal of cultural materialism published by the Raymond Williams Society, contains an article by Colin Chambers is called "*Ours will be a dynamic contribution": the Struggle by Diasporic Artists for a Voice in British Theatre in the 1930s and 1940s*". Colin is the historian of Unity Theatre.

Working Stiffs. Tom Zaniello has written a guide to 350 labour movement films from around the world: *Working Stiffs, Union Maids, Reds and Riffraff: An expanded guide to films about labour*. He describes all the films in detail, tells you whether they're available for rental or purchase, and, if so, where. Fiction and nonfiction, the films are about unions, labour history, working-class life, political movements, and the struggle between labour and capital. Each entry includes critical commentary, production data, cast list, suggested related films, and annotated references to books and Web sites for further reading.

Ireland, India and empire. Indo-Irish radical connections, 1919-64. Book by Kate O'Malley using previously unpublished sources from the Indian Political Intelligence collection, it chronicles the rise and fall of movements such as the Indian-Irish Independence League and the League Against Imperialism. (Manchester University Press. December 2009. Hb. £50; pbk. £15.99).

The Impact of the Co-operative Movement on Communities in Britain, 1914-60. Nicole Robertson. (Ashgate. Studies in Labour History. May 2010. Hbk £65. www.ashgate.com/history)

Pauper Capital. London and the Poor Law, 1790-1870. David R Green. (Ashgate, March 2010. Hbk £55; ebook)

The Ordeal of Peace: Demobilization and the Urban Experience in Britian and Germany. Adam R. Seipp. May 2009. (Ashgate. May 2009. Hbk £60. Ebook)

Order Through Your Library. Given the expense of some of the above books please order them through your Library in the hope that it will purchase a copy.

PLAQUE TO CHARTISM IN LEEDS REFUSED

A suggestion that a blue plaque be erected on the site of the offices and printing works of Northern Star (the great Chartist newspaper) has been turned down by the Leeds Civic Trust's Plaques Group. The site adjoining Market Street Passage in Briggate, Leeds's prestigious shopping street, is occupied by a 1960s shop premises, currently scheduled for redevelopment. The reason given for rejecting the suggestion is that it is Trust policy that plaques should be erected only on the original buildings to which the subject of the plaque relates. While the Trust accepts that there are many exceptions to this policy, it has not explained the circumstances in which exceptions are accepted.

Malcolm Chase, one of the leading historians on Chartism, who works at Leeds University, has been invited to contact the Trust again in the future if he can provide more information that might further support the proposal. "We are always prepared to reconsider suggestions." Malcolm considers that he has exhausted all the information he has available.

If you believe that it would be appropriate for Leeds publicly to celebrate what was the biggest selling newspaper of its age, in the city where it was produced (and whose name it bore as its subtitle); or the highly innovative newspaper of what, effectively, was Britain's first civil rights movement deserves commemoration then Malcolm asks you to consider writing an email to the Leeds Civic Trust indicating your support, politely suggesting that the case for a Northern Star plaque be reconsidered. If you expand on why Chartism and Northern Star are worth commemorating, even better. Emails can be sent to both these addresses: office@leedscivictrust.org.uk; dlk@kaye-estates.co.uk.

DLK is the Plaque Group's Secretary David Kaye. He has explained:

'We discussed the proposal at length but concluded that a plaque is not appropriate in this instance.

You have given me instances of plaques on modern buildings and I can give you more - the plaque on Tesco's in Oakwood (for the Blackburn aircraft factory site) always comes to my mind as an example. The importance of these sites resulted in the Plaques Group reluctantly straying from its criteria.

As far as your suggestion is concerned we are aware of redevelopment where a Northern Star plaque would be erected.

I read with interest your comments about the enthusiasm in Chartism and suggest that you contact me again in the future if you can provide more information that might further support your proposal. We are always prepared to reconsider suggestions.'

Malcolm points out that there are plaques on replacement buildings including the Philosophical Hall on the HSBC building, the Leeds Co-operative Society plaque in Marshall Street, Holbeck, and that the Midland Engine Works in Hunslet.

The Northern Star is one of the most written-about newspapers in C19th British history (after *The Times* and *Manchester Guardian*. Kaye has indicated : 'The group agrees that the importance of the Northern Star should commemorated and feels that perhaps a book would be the most appropriate method.'

BATTERSEA HISTORY NOTES

Michael Walker informs me:

- that W J Brown MP (Labour, Independent and ex-New Party and Civil Service General Secretary) was born in Battersea, stood in Hayes, won at the byelection at Rugby during the War supporting second front. Michael says that Brown tried to split London busmen by out-leaving the TGWU and supporting expelled CPers around *Busmens Punch*.
- that the report London District Congress of the Communist Party held at Hammersmith Town Hall on 4 and 5 October 1947 used a picture of the then two chimneyed Battersea Power Station on the front cover.

COALITION SLAMS THE NEW COMPACT

I have always thought that the amount of time spent on the Compact agreement between the Government and other agencies and the community and the voluntary sector was largely a waste of time and resources given that when it suits them the authorities ignore what they sign up to. The National Coalition for Independent Action has press released an open letter to NCVO, NAVCA, ACEVO, DSC and Volunteering England, criticising their endorsement of the revised Compact.

The Coalition's main points are:

- 'The Compact is still a fig leaf for unequal power relationships.'
- that it see a different picture from 'The relentless orthodoxy that there is only good news out there; that the sector is thriving and partnerships with government and their agents at local level are harmonious, successful and effective; and, that any disagreement with this version of events is seen off as misinformed, mischief-making or ignorant.'
- The revised document draft only received 79 responses from 179,000 charities - 'never mind the hundreds of thousands of non-charitable community groups'
- It 'involved ignoring the views and recommendations of some of those most closely involved

- in the process (via the Compact Refresh Panel)
- It 'has ended up with a worse document to the one that preceded it, which focuses on the procurement/contract/privatisation agenda, marginalises (again) the community sector, and totally dumps equalities issues.'
- it retains the voluntary code idea that all good people will, of course, take their Compact obligations seriously, so obviously flying in the face of the evidence'
- and, to add a chilling Orwellian echo, promotes the reclassification from the Single Equalities Bill of 'people with protected characteristics'.

Meanwhile the Coalition accuses state agencies of ignoring or flouting Compact compliance. The 'bulk of the sector remains quite unsurprised by all this, having long since realised that the Compact, despite its tactical use by a few plucky local activists, is hardly at the cutting edge of helpfulness in their relationship with statutory agencies.'

'Even the evident focus on public service privatisation and the sector's assumed role in this, is naïve and will be seen to be ironic, for 2010 will see the beginning of savage public expenditure cuts. Even now, Government lawyers, civil servants and officers at all levels of the statutory sector will be busy identifying any devices that can be used to remove or reduce funding, interfere with operational 'efficiency', require increased outputs and outcomes, tighten performance management, defer or avoid paying for necessary cost increases, or drive a harder bargain in new contracts. Voluntary organisation contractors will feel this thumb on their collar. Many will experience for the first time the double whammy of losing their independence and finding themselves legally responsible for providing public services without the means to do so. Moaning then about what isn't in the Compact, or lack of compliance with what is in it, will not get them very far.'

'The effects of the recession will also be felt by the largely unfunded, volunteer-based, community sector, which has remained marginalised, despite the lip service paid to empowerment and citizen involvement. These groups, involved with deprived or marginalised communities, will find an increase in demand for their support from people and neighbourhoods experiencing hardship. The new Compact has absolutely no relevance at all for this vast and valuable national resource.'

'The relationship between the state and our world of voluntary action is in crisis right now.'

www.independentaction.net

USING EMPTY SHOPS AND OFFICES

As small businesses shut up more and more shops and offices become empty. This is giving opportunities to develop projects which can use these empty shop buildings and keep some life and interest going in otherwise declining and depressing shopping parades and high streets. This is being done in the covered market in Brixton: arts, training, start-up traders. There is a proposal for an arts exhibition in Middlesboro'. Jareh Das, at mima Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, has been looking for artists to take part in a proposed group show that will make contemporary art more accessible and will allow audiences to experience an alternative and new gallery space; a sort of happening and evolving space over 4 weeks. An initial thematic idea is to respond to the meaning of the name Middlesbrough i.e. this could be a literal interpretation of the pre-Anglian name Mydilsburgh, taking the *Mydil*, part of the word to be identified as a development of the Old English *middel* which subsequently means morphing into *middle*? supposedly a tribute to the settlement's position between the great Christian centres of Durham and Whitby? www.artistesonly.blogspot.com. There must be scope in every city and town for imaginative ideas like these. The North East also has the Empty Shop Community Interest Company. It is planning its second open exhibition for artists based in the North East from Saturday 30 January in its new premises in Durham. All artists based in the North East may submit pieces for inclusion with work of any size or media considered:

HISTORY & SOCIAL ACTION PDF MONOGRAPHS
by Sean Creighton

No. 10. Wandsworth & the Edwardian Roller-Skating Boom. Extended version of talk at launch of Wandsworth Heritage Festival, 1 June 2009.

No.9. Bloody Sunday Extended version of talk at Archives for London Conference Revolting London, 3 October 2009.

No.8. Battersea Friendly Societies. Paper used for talk at Sheffield University's Centre for Research into Freemasonry seminar, December 2002.

No.7. From Exclusion to Political Control. Radical and Working Class Organisation in Battersea 1830s-1918. Revised talk at Public Record Office Conference "Voice of the Multitude", Radicalism and Unrest in Britain, 1790-1918. 1998.

No.6. Black Emancipation and the Working Class. 1815-1838. Talk at HistoryTalk July 2009.

No.5. Sharing Knowledge. This paper was prepared for use in connection with the Arts & Humanities Research Council event held in Birmingham on 5 May 2009, which I attended on behalf of Black & Asian Studies Association.

No. 4 - Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens. Its Continuing Historical Influence. This monograph started off as a review of the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens Conference held in July 2008, and over the year has slowly expanded into a discussion on issues relating to the spread and management of pleasure gardens, their appeal, and their lasting legacy down to the modern day. It also attempts to integrate aspects of the black experience in Britain: Ignatius Sancho, Juba, William Wells Brown and the Fisk Jubilee Singers.

No.3. John Archer and the Politics of Labour. Talk at Belonging in Europe Conference organised by the Equiano Centre, Department of Geography, University College London, 8/9 November 2007

No. 2. Black Abolitionists and the North East. Talk at Liberating Sojourn 2 Conference, Liverpool University, 23-25 April 2009.

No 1. Progressive Battersea: Radicalism and Socialism 1880-1914. Basis of talk at West London Local History Conference, 21 May 2009.

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