

Travellers' Times

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER



Janie and Cliff Codona with Dr Boris Muntyanu, a Roma man battling to stay in the UK, and Josie Lee from the Gypsy Council outside Parliament in July this year. Janie and Cliff are fighting to be allowed to stay on their own land in Bedfordshire (see issue 12 Hall of Shame).

BILL NEEDS PROMOTION

The Traveller Law Reform Bill, which promises to improve accommodation, education, health, criminal justice and anti-discrimination services for the Travelling community, failed to get a second reading in Parliament this summer.

The Bill was given a first reading in the House of Commons by David Atkinson, Conservative MP for Bournemouth East in July. But its vital second reading was cancelled due to lack of parliamentary time before the summer recess.

The Bill will have to be reintroduced in the new Parliamentary year, which began this autumn.

The Traveller Law Reform Bill, drafted by the Traveller Law Research Unit at Cardiff Law School, is the result of more than four years of discussion, consultation and research by Gypsies, Travellers and voluntary and statutory service providers.

The Irish Traveller Movement in Britain (ITM) has agreed to co-ordinate a campaign to promote the Bill.

"It will require expert advice, professional lobbying and the support of members of relevant select committees, to discuss and promote the Bill," says Noelette Keane of the ITM. "Positive publicity is vital to the success of this campaign."

At a meeting in London on September 28 a Traveller Law Reform Coalition was formed to campaign for better caravan site provision and an end to evictions via the Bill. The new Coalition brings together a dozen leading Romani and Traveller organisations in Britain.

The Bill also needs your support. Contact Father Joe Browne, chair of the ITM, with any ideas or offers of support at the London Irish Centre, 50-52 Camden Square, London, NW1 9XB, ☎ 020 7482 5525.

FUTURE OF TRAVELLERS' TIMES

As the three year funding from Comic Relief comes to an end, and the Traveller Law Research Unit goes quiet (see back page) the future of Travellers' Times (TT) hangs in the balance. Founded five years ago to help Gypsies and other Travellers and related organisations share information and contacts, TT gives Gypsies and other Travellers the chance to put over their views (see Travellers Talk, page 4) and influence the way the media and non-Travellers see them. Our next issue (Issue 15) will be the last under Comic Relief and The Rural Media Company is actively seeking new funds for a new Travellers' Times. Would you miss TT? How? And why? We need your views. Details on back page.

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RESOURCES

WANDERING

A Wandering of Gypsies is the autobiography of two present-day Romanies by Tom and Julie McCready who travelled Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Cheshire, South Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire. They tell of the transition from old wagons to modern trailers, of their joys and sorrows and how they rose above persecution and prejudice amidst a host of real-life characters. The 80 page book (ISBN 1 903418 10 0) costs £8.95 (plus 85p p+p) from Robert Dawson, 188 Alfreton Road, Blackwell, Derbyshire DE55 5JH.

You can also get a complete catalogue of items about Gypsies and other Traditional Travellers free from Robert Dawson. They include booklets on crime and prejudice, genealogy, history, language, sociology and education; postcards, and reading games and puzzles for Traveller children. Mr Dawson stresses that payments for these publications go towards costs of research, materials and postage, and no profit is made.

LEARN FOR FREE

Something for nothing! Learn Direct was set up by the government to offer high quality learning at a time, place and pace that suits you. If people in your community wish to improve their English, maths, communication or information technology skills they can tap into free Learn Direct courses. Maybe a tutor can come direct to you or your local community centre with laptop computers or help you find a local learning centre. And it won't cost a penny - no course fee, training materials or venue costs. Find out more from Kaye Heyes, Workers Education Association ☎ 020 7613 7577 / 07763 074171 ✉ kaye_heyes@hotmail.com



Photo: Serafina Webb

YOU AND YOUR RIGHTS

Rights feeling breached? Go to Liberty's YourRights, the online guide to human rights law in England and Wales www.yourrights.org.uk. YourRights was launched in May at Matrix Chambers, Cherie Booth's workplace. The free site includes information on the rights of protest, privacy, discrimination, Travellers, property, victims and witnesses of crime. It also includes information on the Human Rights Act such as who is covered by the Act and how the Act can be used, and on the European Convention on Human Rights. If you need advice on a specific case try contacting info@liberty-human-rights.org.uk.

'REAL' GYPSIES?

Moving information about the experiences of Roma and Sinti under Nazi rule is available at the The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, Washington DC, USA. The material, some of which is all too familiar to Gypsies and Travellers even today, includes Himmler's chilling statement about the necessity of distinguishing between 'pure and part-Gypsies' in the solution of the 'Gypsy question'.

The Museum also produces useful learning resources. See ☎ www.ushmm.org for further details. Holocaust Memorial Day 2003 takes place on 27 January: see ☎ www.holocaustmemorialday.gov.uk



In Memory: Young Derbyshire Gypsies and Travellers remember the Holocaust victims.

HELP LINES

A free and confidential telephone advice line for Travelling People in legal difficulties is run by the Traveller Advice Team (part of the Community Law Partnership) in Birmingham. Funded for a year by The Community Legal Service (formerly the Legal Aid Board) the line is open from 10 am-1 pm and 2-5 pm Monday to Friday (except bank holidays). A local rate number, it costs no more than 4p per minute on landline calls within the UK. The legal line is ☎ 0845 120 2980.

A freephone 24hr emergency help-line for victims of racial abuse and harassment is run by The Monitoring Group. A leading anti-racist casework, campaigning and training agency, The Group is based at 14 Featherstone Road, Southall, Middlesex. UB2 5AA Office ☎ 020 8843 2333 2 020 8813 9734 ☎ www.monitoring-group.co.uk The help line is ☎ 0800 374618.

A mental health helpline is run by the Community Advice and Listening Line (CALL), Staffed by volunteers, the line gives confidential information and support to anyone in need. CALL is sponsored by Kelloggs. The number is ☎ 0800 132737.



Right To Protest: Gypsies and Travellers exercised their legal right to campaign for the reopening of Horsmonden Fair in 2000.

RESOURCES

GYPSY UPBRINGING

A Gypsy Upbringing is a fascinating insight into the Gypsy's way of life. Published as part of Cambridgeshire County Council's Traveller Education Programme, the book should appeal to children aged nine and upwards, contains 100 black and white photographs, and includes step-by-step instructions on how to make paper and wooden flowers (72 pages, A5 size). The author, Tony Price, wants Travelling and non-Travelling children to share and enjoy the book and appreciate the Romani culture. Price £6.50 (plus £1 p+p, free for orders over 20; overseas orders £2 p+p); A Gypsy Upbringing is available from T. Price Gypsy Book, 17a Witham Drive, Chapel Hill, Lincoln LN4 4PY ☎/📠 01526 342031.

TAKE A SEAT

www.wantdontwant.com is a site where charities and community groups can get free used office furniture. There's a special section where you can check out offers of free stuff - or send in a list of unwanted items.

MAKE IT IN MEDIA

The Media Trust puts community groups and charities in touch with media professionals who will give free advice on media matters - everything from PR and marketing to press and video. You can sign up online for their matching service at the Trust website www.mediatrust.org.uk (click on the 'Voluntary Organisation' hyperlink on the home page).

Want to put your news on the internet but don't have a website or the resources to build one?

Free help is at hand at www.involveonline.co.uk.

ROMA IN IRELAND

The Roma in Ireland report profiles the Roma in Ireland and Europe and identifies action points for those working with Roma in Ireland. The report also provides an excellent model for those working with similar issues in the UK. The Roma in Ireland - An Initial Needs Analysis (ISBN 1 897598 26 2) was commissioned by the Roma Support Group in Ireland and Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, in association with the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) and FÁS Asylum Seekers Unit.

Another Irish publication is *Traveller Proofing - Within an Equality Framework*, especially useful now that UK race equality laws have been bumped up. Pavee Point Director Ronnie Fay says, in the Foreword, that the report 'addresses issues of self-identification; for the informed participation of the groups affected; the need for training and codes of practice to be in place in the various institutions or agencies if the data gathering are to be effective. Data needs to be disseminated through regular public reporting and informed by the analysis of the groups affected.' ISBN 1 897598 74 2.

For information on price and availability contact

Pavee Point Travellers Centre,
46 North Great Charles Street,
Dublin 1,
Ireland

☎ +353 1 8780255 📠 +353 1 8742626

✉ pavee@iol.ie www.paveepoint.ie/index.htm

YOUNG OPPORTUNITIES

The European YOUTH Programme aims to help young people especially those living in difficult circumstances. Launched 10 years ago to provide mobility programmes for young Europeans, it has stimulated the development of national and local initiatives involving young people, particularly the less advantaged.

Find out more from the Information Unit, Connect Youth-ETG, The British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN

☎ 020 7389 4030 📠 020 7389 4033

✉ connectyouth.enquiries@britishcouncil.org

www.britishcouncil.org/education/connectyouth

DRIVING TEST?

Edinburgh Council's Community Education Service, in conjunction with CityConnect, have put Passing the Driving Theory Test online. As a manual for tutors, it contains a selection of course materials and is suitable for learners with different literacy abilities.

www.edinburghlearning.com



Testing Times: Tameside's Martyn and Tom Joyce get in some early driving practise.

DERRY

"Every man, woman, boy or girl, regardless of culture, race, religion or tradition was part of the rich tapestry of life in Ireland," declared President Mary McAleese when she opened the new Derry Travellers' Centre at Ballyarnett Park.



Travellers Centre: The new centre will combine educational, play and child care support under one roof.

TRAVELLERS TALK

Diana Allen and Sally Chapman talk to Rachel Morris. Diana was Sally's lawyer in her planning case, heard at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

RM: Will this new policy of the government's work?

SC: It always did annoy me, they say "Gypsies, what are we going to do about Gypsies? We need more sites". Now, there's different kinds of Travelling People, just like there's different kinds of people in the houses. I mean there's some people in the houses prefer a high storey flat, they don't want to leave it, they love it. But then there's some like Diana Allen, she couldn't dream of living in one of those, she wants a garden. And it's the same with Travelling People, they don't all want to be trapped on a site. I wouldn't want to be on a site, never been on one. And then there's those who do want to be on a site.

You've got to move with the times. You don't have to live in them exactly, but they've got to know computers and that, it's the day and age we live in. There's still lots of Travelling People on the road, living with a horse and wagon and all that. You go to Stow Fair and places like that you'll see them all. It might take them three or four months to get to them places. They're part of today too. It's the life they want. They just need a chance to get on with it. Travelling has been a refuge of love for some house children ...

RM: In a radio interview last week the presenter said "Why don't they all just go and live in a house?"

SC: I'd have said "Why don't you all go and live in a caravan?"

RM: Then she said, "Well, if we've got to build sites for them, why should the rest of us pay?"

SC: If you did a survey and talked to the majority of Travelling People they don't want handouts. My Dad brought up twelve kids without any help from the State. He never even drew child allowance for any of those kids. They just want the same as other people get, no more or less. And Travelling People have helped people from the houses!

I'll tell you a story, from when I was growing up, there's place near Cambridge, near a hill, and a great big mansion and lots of trees and green. We used to stop by there three or four times a year when we were travelling through the area. And there was this bloke used to come by, he was a tramp. Whenever he walked past, my Dad, Bill Hedges, used to give him a drink. And one day we were pulling out and a lady handed my Dad this letter. It was a thank you from the tramp, who knew he was dying. And he was a barrister, and he'd lost his wife and child in an accident and couldn't take the life he was living. So he took to the roads. And he was so grateful to Dad and other Travelling People who'd always give him a drink of water and a kind word. And my Dad said: "That bloke could be more happy than ever they'll be in that mansion, because he might have had peace of mind". Every time I pass that layby I think of his words.

DA: We got to be friends long ago, before I first acted for her, to help keep her on her land. Seventeen years it's been going on, a long struggle. Still going on.

SC: When we were first moved off our land was the hardest. Peter [her husband] had just lost his Mum, we were moved off a few days after the funeral, we moved onto the side of the road nearby, then I had a phone call that my sister was dying. Then the police came along and said: "You've got to move". I said there's no way, and the police were alright, got the council bloke to back off. He came back with a bulldozer the day of the funeral. I got one of my girls to phone the newspaper people! I've still got a clipping - there's a photo of me all dressed in black! We were given a few more days, then moved on and on for about sixteen months.



Photo: Rachel Morris

Fighting On: Sally Chapman and Diana Allen.

DA: They got an enforcement notice against a mobile home. But I was fairly certain that in law that wasn't the same as a caravan! So eventually I persuaded them to move back on, and the Council had to start again. And so their four thousand pound fine wasn't enforceable.

SC: Then we lost the next application for permission in 1992, the day my son died in an accident, just before Christmas. He was only eighteen. The Council bloke came down that day, I'll never forget it, and said: "I'm going to issue you another enforcement notice". I said alright, I couldn't care about anything. And then he said: "I know you've lost one so how many is that left now?" I said: "I will stay on my land one way or another. Now you get out of that gate!" They used to just turn up, no warning, having coffee with next door, staring in the windows. It was just like being on the side of the road! No privacy at all.

DA: The whole issue has been, because it's a double plot, they say it doesn't count as in-fill!

SC: Yet there's a bloke up the road putting stately homes in! Oh, it's a long haul and it's cost us an awful lot over the years, but it would have been loads more if it weren't for Diana giving lots of time. I'm glad we got to Strasbourg, but I didn't like the court there because you're not allowed to speak for yourself.

Sally Chapman lost her case, but despite ill health, both women battle on. For a summary of the Chapman decision see www.cardiff.ac.uk/claws/tiru/publications



Next Issue: Serafina Webb talks of her Kentish childhood (above) and puts across her views in Travellers Talk along with Jo Rogers argument that 'travellers are condemned from conception.'

HALL OF SHAME

NO GRANT FOR TRAVELLER VANS

The Disabled Facilities Grant is being extended to cover houseboats and caravans - but not Gypsy and Traveller caravans. The DFG department say: "DFGs will be available for mobile homes and houseboats as from 18 July 2003. The definition given for mobile homes is 'a caravan, within the meaning of Part 1 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960(d) disregarding the amendment made by section 13(2) of the Caravan Sites Act 1968(e)' and would only include those that fall within the Mobile Home Act." A few years back the law was amended so that home repairs assistance grants could be made to Gypsy site residents as well as those in other forms of caravan, and houseboats. The law had previously excluded, and therefore discriminated, against Gypsy Site residents. A Sheffield health visitor and others campaigned for the change in the law by writing to Members of Parliament - you may want to ask your MP why only Gypsy and Traveller caravans are to be excluded from the new DFG scheme.

BEHIND ON RACE

Under the Race Relations Act 2000, all local authorities (and local education authorities) must publish a race equality scheme which sets out how they intend to meet their legal duty to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations. According to Community Care magazine (6-12 June 2002, ☎ www.community-care.co.uk), only five out of a third of English councils had produced such a scheme by the statutory deadline of May 31. In the same week, a report by the Audit Commission found that a shocking 40 per cent of councils have failed to reach the first of five levels of the Commission for Racial Equality's good practice standard ☎ www.audit-commission.gov.uk/publications/lfairequality.shtml.

TOUGH NEW POLICE POWERS

The Gypsy style is in fashion right now – except in Whitehall. In July the Government announced a "radical overhaul of policy on unauthorised traveller encampments" to tackle "public concern about nuisance and disorder arising from such encampments". And the Government promised "tough powers for police to move on unauthorised traveller encampments" together with "improved local site provisions". Whitehall would provide "initial funding to facilitate the provision of temporary, transit and emergency stopping place sites for travellers" and produce new guidance on managing unauthorised camping, the guidance "informed by views both from the settled communities, including residents, business people and farmers, and travellers."

"Our strategy is balanced and fair," insisted Housing and Regeneration Minister Tony McNulty. "The standard of behaviour of travellers should be the same as that expected of the settled community. However, this does not mean turning a blind eye to anti-social behaviour."

But Rachel Morris of the TLRU said the new policy "sent a message to settled society that it's okay to be horrible to and about Travelling People, regardless of what they're like as individuals, purely because of their membership of a group. "The policy of blanket evictions from an area following minimum site provision is a form of quota formerly known, under the 1968 Caravan Sites Act, as 'designation' or, in South Africa, as 'apartheid'. This is illegal and racist, which is precisely why the Northern Ireland government rescinded designation there in 1997. The Government are, to be charitable, disingenuous if they seek to convince the settled population, including those who have genuinely had negative experiences with the minority of Travelling People who do cause problems, that their 'policy' will end them. The best way to reduce encampments is to ensure that there are sufficient, lawful and appropriate stopping places."



High Fashion: But not in Whitehall.

'BOGUS' ASYLUM SEEKERS

"It is clear to me that there is a general concept 'out there' that Roma are economic migrants, coming here in the hope of finding work; whereas the general concept of other asylum seekers is that their lives would, genuinely, be in danger if they returned to their country of origin. The assumption is therefore that Roma are 'bogus' asylum seekers. I meet asylum seekers and I hear the same stories again and again - stories of being prevented from working, marrying, getting children educated, because of ethnicity or political beliefs. Stories of men being beaten and shot, of women and children being beaten and raped. Stories of being burned out of house and home, of being falsely imprisoned, of police ignoring reports. All the asylum seekers and refugees say they have come here because they want to stay alive. All are dreadfully homesick. They miss their homes, their people, their language. Roma are no more or less likely to be genuine or bogus asylum seekers than any other group I have met."

THE WORKING WORLD

The world of work has changed as these photographs, mostly by Gypsies and Travellers, show.

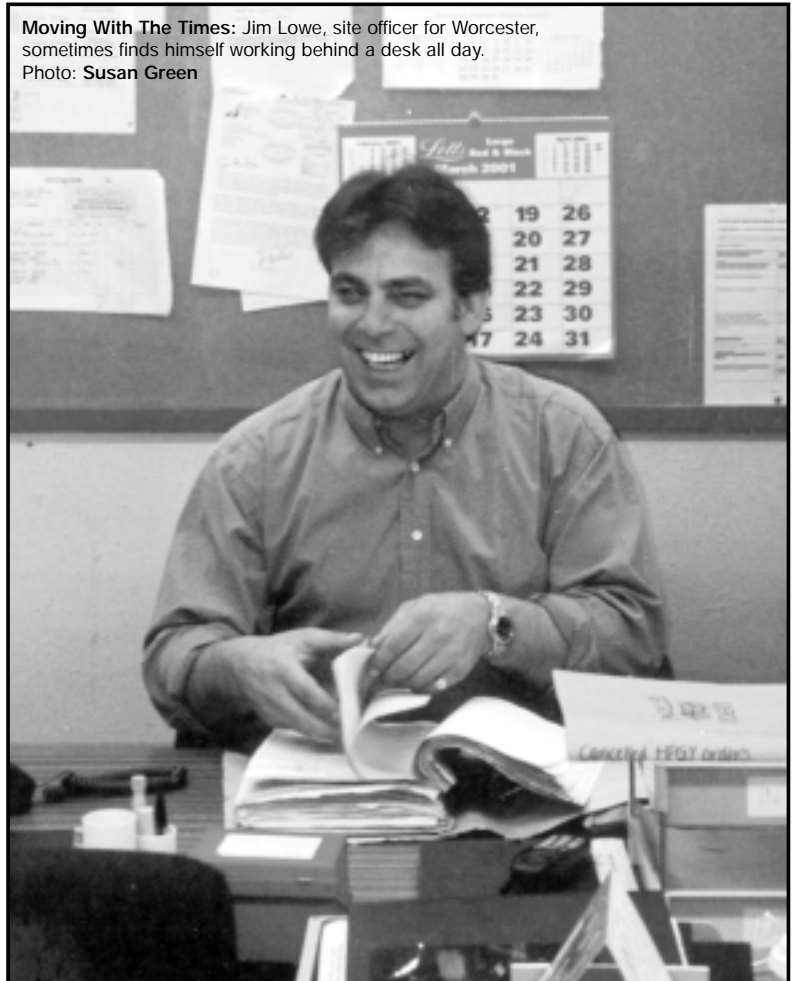
Fit For The Fair: Maintenance still matters for the fairground workers (below and bottom), although the technology has changed radically. Photos: Olivia Jenkins



Water Aid: a shared view of domestic work. Photo: Michael Collins.



Moving With The Times: Jim Lowe, site officer for Worcester, sometimes finds himself working behind a desk all day. Photo: Susan Green



Flower Sale: One of a series of postcards from the Redbridge Traveller Women's Support Group.



Day Off: Rest and relaxation as Charlie Smith takes a river trip past the London Eye. Photo: Mayor Charles Smith



Homework: Whether it's keeping the kettle on the boil or preparing the dinner, homework is still as time consuming as it ever was. Photo: Michael Collins



Work And Play: The world of work lies ahead for these West Midlands youngsters enjoying their Jubilee party. How many of them will follow in their parents' working footsteps? Photo: Mary Collins

OFF TO THE ZOO

UNITE is the Under Nineteen Initiative for Traveller Education, set up by Cornwall Traveller Education Support Service for young Travellers who have no school places. High mobility, disaffection with school, fear of bullying and a shortage of school places in particular year groups are among the reasons for the young people missing formal schooling.

When UNITE visited Newquay Zoo and Conservation Park with Education officer Mark Morris and photographer Hilary Smallwood, they photographed each other before heading off for the local leisure pool.

"This is not an alternative to school but rather a short-term stepping stone to opportunities to which these young people are entitled and which they are missing at the moment," explained Virginia Harrison-White from UNITE. If you want to know more about the Cornwall Traveller Education Support Service call her at 16 Carlyon Road, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 4AJ.

☎/📠 01726 77113

✉ gharrisonwhite@cornwall.gov.uk



Off School: "I've enjoyed today. I don't go to school. I just don't like it. I need to work. I do anything. I'm doing tree cutting. It's money in my pocket," says Charley (far left).



EARLY YEARS

Save the Children (SCF)'s Herefordshire Early Years Project has established a National Forum for Early Years' Workers, from the statutory and voluntary sectors, working with Traveller children. This provides a meeting place where workers across the country can meet informally to share ideas, resources and models of good practice. The Project is a partnership initiative between SCF, the West Midlands Consortium Education Service for Travelling Children (WMCESTC) and the Countryside Agency and is a three year research and development project exploring the inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller children in mainstream education and the effect of this on access to local early years provision. Results and recommendations will be passed to the Government's Social Exclusion Unit and, in order for the best and most effective recommendations to be made, it would be helpful to have input from Early Years projects nationwide. An inaugural event took place in Leicester in September. For further information contact Sarah Donnelly at SCF, Herefordshire Early Years Project, 41a Bridge Street, Hereford HR4 9DB ☎ 01432 274467 ✉ m.kaye@scfuk.org.uk Photo: Susan Green

SEE YOU THERE

Vera Norwood, Mayor of Stow-on-the-Wold writes: In the year 1476 AD King Richard the Fourth granted a Royal Charter for two fairs to be held in Stow-on-the-Wold on two feast days of the year (those for St Philip and St James), to begin two days immediately preceding that feast and to last two days immediately following; and a second fair to be held and kept on the feast of Saint Edward, King and Confessor. The dates in the church calendar have changed, but for as long as anyone can remember these fairs have been held on the nearest Thursdays to May 12 and October 24. In older days there was a lot of trading in sheep and cattle as well as horses. Farmers and the gentry used to hire workers and servants. A groom wanting employment would brandish his whip, a housemaid would carry a mop and broom and a carter would have a piece of straw stuck in his hat. People used to walk for miles to attend Stow Fair if they did not own a horse. Any Stow householder could make a bit of extra money by selling liquor on the day, displaying a bunch of greenery about their door. Despite present Council regulations, the Gypsy community still manage to enjoy good company around the wood fires and visiting friends in their vans. Goods are sold – both beautifully handcrafted and commercially made. Horses are trotted and change hands. Young men and boys show off their riding skills. The girls look beautiful all done up for the big day and, who knows, there might be an engagement or two! All the folk who attend should be thanked for keeping these ancient fairs alive, after all these years. I love Stow Fair. It is unique and part of our cultural heritage. Tourists and visitors enjoy the spectacle and it brings a bit of colour into every day life and most important of all it is a TRADITION. So see you all there.



Skills Share: 'Young men and boys show off their riding skills.' Three Gypsy Travellers, Rose, her brother and Dean, with horses at Bideford in 1984.

TRAVELLERS IN SCHOOLS

My name is Mary McCarthy and I am 18 years old. With me is Cindy McCarthy who is 17 years old. We both work for the Ealing Travellers Education Service in Southall, London. We support Traveller children in schools. I have worked in about six different schools as we change schools every term. I have worked here for about eight months and I enjoy helping Traveller children learn because I think it's important for them to have a good education. I went to school until I was in Year 9 and Cindy until Year 7. We have both lived in Southall for the last nine years. The teachers like us coming to schools because they can learn more about Travellers and they ask us questions which is good. Where we live there are quite a lot of Travellers in houses and there are a few camps, but they are evicted very quickly. Traveller children like us coming to schools too because we can talk to them like a Traveller and they will feel more relaxed because teachers can't talk to them like that and they understand more from a Traveller person. Me, Margaret and Cindy are the only Traveller girls who work with the service, but Ealing has had over ten or twelve Traveller girls working in education over the past four years. There are four country people who work with us and I think it's good that they have employed a Travelling person in education. **Mary and Cindy McCarthy.**

Teaching Assistance: Cindy, Margaret and Mary –
'they ask us questions which is good.'



LOOK OUT FOR LEWIS

A project in North East England to help young Travellers aged 13 to 19 find out how much fun learning can be has been launched by Community Service Volunteers. Working across Newcastle, Gateshead and Sunderland, the Traveller Youth Project aims to support young Travellers with education and a range of informal activities. Project Worker Lewis Stokes knows first hand some of the difficulties Traveller children can face with education and learning and has already taken some action. He contacted Sunderland City Council's Learning and Information Access Zone Bus called 'LIAZe', and has arranged for it to visit young Travellers on winter grounds at Hutton-le-Hole and Houghton-le-Spring in County Durham. "The bus is just a small part of the Traveller Youth Project and we are keen to contact other young Travellers and bring them together to plan more activities," says Lewis. Interested? Contact Lewis on ☎ 0191 232 6616.

WORKALÓ

The Creation of New Occupational Patterns for Cultural Minorities – The Gypsy Case is a three year joint European research project being carried out by the University of Surrey. The project is about examining the barriers that Gypsy Travellers face in accessing education and employment opportunities in the UK as well as seeking agents and mechanisms to transform experiences of exclusion in these areas. Visit www.neskes.net/workalo/ or contact project officers Jenny Daly and Linda Townsend at ☎ 01483 562142 ✉ J.Daly@surrey.ac.uk or L.Townsend@surrey.ac.uk

GYPSY CHURCH

My name is Michael Coverdale. I am the Pastor of the Gypsy church in Bolton in Lancashire. There is also an Assistant Pastor, Lawrence Young, and together we look after the church. Our fellowship started over 11 years ago with two or three people in a trailer. We now have a congregation of over 60 or 80 people depending on the season. We are part of a bigger movement called Light and Life Missions which, in the last 10 years, has planted 16 churches and worked in 44 countries around the world, including children's homes and churches in India. If anyone is interested in our work feel free to call me on 07890 875786 or Lawrence on 07970 396364. We will be able to put you in contact with the nearest Gypsy church or minister in your area.



Holy Rollers: working in 44 countries around the world.

REACHING OUT

The Team for Traveller Education in Cambridgeshire is one of a number of organisations involved in the European Social Funded 'Reaching Out' project. The project has now been running for over a year with a number of success stories happening in the Traveller community. One such story is that of Violet Lee (Junior) of Gamlingay in Cambridgeshire. Due to circumstances, 40 plus year old, disabled Violet has never been to school and until coming onto the 'Reaching Out' programme could only write V. Lee.

"I had to have a piece of paper with me which had my address on. I could not even write my full name," Violet said recently. "I cannot put into words what this programme has done for me." The benefits are not just Violet's for she now encourages her nieces and nephews to attend school regularly and work hard at their studies. In her own words, without help, Violet has written what she enjoys most about learning to read and write: "I wanted to read, write. I had no time to go to School. The Police wanted us to move on all the time. Shirley help me to read."

COURT PROTECTS GYPSY WAY OF LIFE

Mr Clarke is a Romany Gypsy who lives with his family in a caravan. In October, 2001 Mr Justice Burton upheld Mr Clarke's appeal against the decision of a planning inspector to refuse his application for planning permission to station a caravan on his land. The Judge decided that in a case where a Gypsy family could show that they adhered to the Gypsy way of life and had "a settled and immutable antipathy to conventional housing rooted in their Gypsy culture" then the offer of "bricks and mortar" would be just as unsuitable as an offer of a "rat infested barn" and it would be contrary to both Articles 8 and 14 of the Convention to expect them to accept conventional housing. Having noted that the planning inspector appeared to accept that Mr Clarke and his family had "an aversion to bricks and mortar" the Judge concluded that if, and in so far as, the planning inspector took into account an offer of conventional housing that had been made to Mr Clarke's family then he had breached both Articles 8 and 14 of the Convention. In May, 2002 the Court of Appeal upheld Mr Justice Burton's decision and dismissed the Borough Council's appeal.

The Court of Appeal's decision has helped protect the right of Gypsies to live in caravans in accordance with their traditional way of life. In particular the decision is likely to assist Gypsies and Travellers who seek planning permission and/or defend planning enforcement measures taken against them, providing of course that they can show that they adhere to the Gypsy way of life and have "a settled and immutable antipathy to conventional housing rooted in their Gypsy culture".

If the decision in Clarke is of more general application then it may also assist Gypsies who approach local authorities seeking homelessness accommodation in the form of a pitch for their caravans. In my view it is clearly arguable that: a local authority would act unlawfully and in breach of Articles 8 and 14 if it made an offer of conventional housing to a Gypsy with "an aversion to bricks and mortar" whom it considers to be unintentionally homeless; a local authority would have a duty to make an offer of a caravan pitch to such a person. The Traveller Advice Team are currently taking a case on this important point, which will probably be decided sometime in 2003. If I am right then local authorities may find that they are forced to provide more Gypsy caravan sites!

R (on the application of Thomas Clarke) v Secretary of State for Transport Local Government and the Regions and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (2002) EWCA Civ 819 **Marc Willers, Barrister.**

Our Way Of Life: Gypsy Travellers pictured outside their caravan.
Photo: **Joey Smith.**



WELSH REVIEW

A review of the provision of services for Gypsy-Travellers in Wales is being conducted by the National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee. The review will look at services provided for the Gypsy-Traveller community including education, health, accommodation, employment and the role of local government. Further information is on the Assembly web site in English and Welsh (www.wales.gov.uk/keypubassemequalcomm/index.htm: click on 'Current and past agendas and papers' in the left-hand column, then on 'Policy Reviews' towards the bottom of the next page), or contact Howell Rees, Clerk to the Committee (029 2089 8155). Following consideration of written submissions received by April, the committee may hear further oral evidence later this year.

WHAT'S A PUBLIC AUTHORITY?

A public authority cannot violate a person's human rights under the Human Rights Act 1998. But what is a 'public authority'? For example, since the privatisation of many public authority functions, are private bailiffs bound by the Act? Or private companies running a Gypsy site for the public authority?

According to the Act, a 'public authority' includes private bodies which 'exercise functions of a public nature'. Now The House of Lords is to decide.

This follows a Court of Appeal ruling over a residential home for older people. Although run by the Leonard Cheshire Foundation (LCF), residents were placed and funded there by social services. The Court held that LCF was not a public body and therefore not bound by the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. The case, *Heather v Leonard Cheshire Foundation (2002)*, will be reviewed by the Lords later this year.

The applicants complained that if LCF was not a public authority then it would create a loophole, enabling local authorities to divest themselves of responsibility by merely delegating their functions to private contractors. The Court of Appeal rejected this argument and held that a local authority would remain responsible for the acts of the private body, and so could be sued if any infringement of the Human Rights Act 1998 occurred. It also held that it would be negligent for an authority to fail to include in its contract with the private organisation a condition requiring it to comply with the Human Rights Act 1998. No doubt there are many local authorities urgently reviewing their contracts with the private sector to make sure they are covered.

EUROPE & THE WORLD

WOMEN

Five hundred Gypsy women in Norway were sterilized under a 'racial purity' program between the 1930s and 1950s. These days, Roma women still face prejudice and discrimination. The Network Women's Program, in collaboration with the Roma Participation Program (part of the Soros Foundation) has built a database of Romani activist women and organises seminars. Contact the co-ordinator at your local office (www.soros.org/women/html/network.htm) or Network Women's Program, Open Society Institute, H-1397 Budapest, Pf. 519, Hungary ☎ +36 1 327 3139 ✉ womenpro@osi.hu

CZECH REPUBLIC

More than 14,000 pigs now live in Lety, Czech Republic. Lety's previous incarnation was as a concentration camp where thousands of people – mostly Roma – were beaten, tortured and starved. 90% of Czech Roma were murdered during World War II. Despite the Helsinki Agreement (ratified by the Czech Republic) that WWII death camps should be preserved, the government built the pig farm - perhaps trying to hide the fact that the camp was Czechoslovak-run and established before the Nazi invasion. Sign a petition to remove the pig farm: contact Remember the Lety Concentration Camp, PO Box 85, 110 01 Prague 1, Czech Republic ☎ +42 02 9614 3636 ⌘ www.members.tripod.com/lety_site

EGYPT

The term 'Gypsy' probably comes from the word 'Egyptian'. More than a million Roma live in Egypt today, where they're known as Dom. For more information on the Dom in North Africa and the Middle East check out the Dom Research Centre, 9A Tefkrof Street, Office 3, Larnaca 6011, Cyprus ☎ +357 4627 087 ⌘ www.domresearchcenter.com

INDIA

The Romani word 'gadjo', meaning non-Rom, may date back to Mogul ruler Mohammed of Ghazni. During 17 invasions of India he took thousands of slaves (many of them Banjara), mostly from northwest India, to accompany his invading armies and carry their provisions. When the slaves were freed, they migrated to Europe via Syria, Iraq and Egypt. Even today in India, the Banjara word for 'outsider' is 'gazo'. For information about Banjara in India, contact Ranjit Naik, All India Banajara Seva Sangh, Building 53, Near MHADA, Gandhi Nagar, Bandra East, Mumbai 400 051, India ☎ +91 22 641 6777

ROMA NEWS

Don't miss the Roma news – log onto www.RomNews.com. In addition to providing news and links, they can translate English, French, Italian and German into Romanes. RomNews Network, P O Box 304145, 20324 Hamburg, Germany * editorialoffice@RomNews.com

The first Romani newspaper is 100 years old, but the first Romani TV show wasn't broadcast until the late 1980s, in Pristina, Kosovo. What the Roma need now, says Orhan Galjus of the Roma Media Fund (RMF), is to "get networked". RMF aims to support, train and network Romanes journalists. For further details about grants, etc contact the Open Society Institute Network Media Program, RMF, Oktober 6. U. 12, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary ☎ +36 1 235 6123 ✉ galjus@osi.hu ⌘ www.osi.hu/exhibition/RMF.htm

IRELAND

The Equality Authority in Ireland has recently published its 2001 Annual Report, available under 'publications' at www.equality.ie. In 2001 the Authority's caseload increased by over 800%, with 661 claims under the Equal Status Act and 405 under the Employment Equality Act. 441 new cases of discrimination were brought under the grounds 'membership of the Traveller community', 435 of these under Equal Status (the majority regarding access to pubs, nightclubs, shops, and provision of services).

PAVEE POINT

The Pavee Point Travellers' Centre (Dublin) newsletter for July 2002 is now out - see www.paveepoint.ie. The stories covered include news of, and concerns about, the recent and sudden passing of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2002, which outlaws stopping on private and public property; the massive and well-organised Traveller response to it; the publication of the National Traveller Health Strategy; and news of Rosaleen McDonagh, the first Traveller ever to run for election to the Irish parliament, Seanad Éireann.

TLRU ON HOLD

The work of the Traveller Law Research Unit (TLRU) at Cardiff Law School is being put on hold following the departure of co-ordinator, Rachel Morris.

Rachel leaves in December 2002 after six years co-ordinating the work of the TLRU. Unit Director Luke Clements is also moving on to other opportunities and the TLRU will be mothballed for the time being.

Rachel plans to travel around the States for six months or so and write a travel book. ("Watch this space for an announcement on its publication, so you can all contribute to my Greek Island House Fund," says Rachel.)

Rachel hopes to keep the TLRU website at www.cf.ac.uk/claws/tlrug going, not least so people can continue to access Unit publications, including the Traveller Law Reform Bill.

In the meantime, TLRU will host the 4th Conference on Traveller Law Reform in London on November 29 2002. See the website for details or email TLRU-L@Cardiff.ac.uk, and book quickly to avoid disappointment. Rachel and Luke say: "It's been a pleasure working with and for you all, and we hope to do so again, until Gypsies and Travellers at last have an equal place to stand."

£18M – THE COST OF MOVING ON

Government policy on Gypsy and Traveller encampments wastes millions of pounds annually. A new book by the Traveller Law Research Unit (TLRU) at Cardiff Law School states that local government, the police, landowners and Travelling People spend at least £18 million annually on moving Gypsies and Travellers from unauthorised encampments; and that this is not 'best value'.

"It is at least as expensive to evict people as it would be to ensure that there are adequate lawful stopping places," says co-author of the report, Rachel Morris. "The law was changed in 1994 so that there was no duty on local authorities to make such places available. At the time it was said that public site provision was far too expensive. This Government has kept the law as amended in place but has never checked how much it costs not to provide sites".

The book recommends that, in keeping with Best Value principles, the obvious costs of unauthorised encampments should be accounted for by local authorities, police authorities and central government departments; that less obvious costs to private landowners and Travelling People should be estimated; and that local and national policies formally justified or amended by reference to them.

At What Cost?: The Economics of Gypsy and Traveller Encampments by Rachel Morris and Luke Clements is published by The Policy Press, and available from Marston Book Services, PO Box 269, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4YN (01235 465500

☎ 01235 465556 ✉ direct.orders@marston.co.uk
price £18.99 (£2.75 p&p).



Rachel Morris: "Thanks and best wishes to all our supporters."

TRAVELLERS' TIMES

Travellers' Times was founded five years ago to help Gypsies and other Travellers and related organisations to share information and contacts. Travellers' Times enables Gypsies and other Travellers to put over their views and influence the way the media and non-Travellers see them.

And it needs a wider audience, according to a group of Gypsies and Travellers and workers who met in Edinburgh recently to talk about the magazine's future.

Roseanne Maughan said TT gave the Travelling community a better profile, but she wanted to see more in-depth articles, for example on Traveller projects. She enjoyed past coverage of youth issues such as the Singers Knoll group's work (TT Issue 13).

Lizzy Johnson also supported the idea of more in-depth features "but not too long and wordy. If Travellers are to write these things up, they should do it in their own words." Lizzy also supported more European coverage: "A lot of Travellers are going abroad to work these days."

Nadia Foy is a past contributor to Travellers Talk. "We need to broaden the road a bit," she said. "There's all sorts of sites, all sorts of Travellers, but TT pictures show too much of the poverty. We want more on the positive side."

Other suggestions included a Youth Page, A Problems Page, better regional coverage and more basic legal information. What do you think?

Contact Hilary Smallwood at The Rural Media Company for a questionnaire. Details below.



Future Features: Organised by Michelle Lloyd from Save The Children Fund, Gypsies and Travellers and workers with Gypsies and Travellers talked through the future of Travellers' Times at an autumn meeting in Edinburgh. From left: Roseanne Maughan, Bill Laws from the Rural Media Company, Nadia Foy, Missy Foy and Michelle Lloyd.

THE RURAL MEDIA COMPANY

works throughout the UK. We combine community and informal education, training and advocacy with the professional skills of the media industry. The results are effective, high-impact, high-quality media projects and educational materials at the cutting edge of current policy and debate.

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**The copy deadline for the next issue of Travellers' Times is Friday December 13 2002.
And remember – we fill up fast!**

**For editorial enquiries contact Bill Laws at The Rural Media Company; for photographic/Picture
This and questionnaires, call Hilary Smallwood at the Rural Media Company.**