



NEWSLETTER

News from the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre
and Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust

Issue 9 March 2009

Steve Cohen: An Appreciation

By Bill Williams

It is with great sadness that we announce the premature death, after a long and painful illness, of a man, Steve Cohen, who dedicated his life to the anti-racist cause, to Socialist ideals and to the welfare of immigrants and refugees, particularly to those seeking a way through Britain's draconian immigration laws.



A child of the 60s, his politics embraced a wide spectrum of those oppressed and the marginalised in British society. He also lived his politics. One of his early achievements was to play a role in the creation of Manchester's first adventure playground, so helping to create what has become an accepted part of British society. His legal work involved the welfare of the mentally-ill as well as that of newcomers to British society.

Steve chose to abandon a potentially lucrative and high-profile career as an Oxford-educated barrister to become a human-rights lawyer in Manchester, first at the Law Centre in Longsight, of which he was a founder, and then at the Immigration Aid Unit, which was his own creation and which still functions as a major agency to promote the rights of refugees. He was, so to say, a hands-on protector of immigrant communities, involving himself not only in their legal cases but in their street-based campaigns for justice and in their personal welfare. Those whose deportation he helped prevent were also his personal friends and have remained so. A founder and leading figure of the 'No One is Illegal' movement, Steve, as a true Trotskyist, did not see national borders as boundaries which ought to exclude anyone in need. He worked consistently against the notion of a 'Fortress Europe'.

By instinct a polemicist, he argued the cases of those sidelined in capitalist society in a series of highly readable pamphlets which drew particularly upon his own Jewish heritage and upon his awareness of the treatment once meted out to the Jewish immigrants who were amongst his forebears. Proudly Jewish and a life-long fighter against anti-Semitism in all its forms, he drew his identity as an immigration lawyer from his identification with the excluded of his own community. His fire-power was levelled against prejudice, whatever its source. One of his best pamphlets, *'That's Funny, You don't look Anti-Semitic'*, addresses the anti-Semitism of the Left.

Steve was a man of many parts – one might truly say, 'a man for all seasons' – a poet, a novelist (his political novel has yet to be published), a prolific writer on immigration law, an academic and a populariser, a loyal friend, a good father and a man whose charisma and intellectual acuity lit up many circles of companions and comrades. With his eyes on the preservation of a proud Manchester tradition of struggle against immigration restrictions, Steve deposited his large and unique collection of materials related to Manchester's anti-deportation campaigns to the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre.

Steve, himself a major contributor to this tradition, will be sorely missed and long remembered.

Steve's collection of anti-deportation campaign material can be viewed at the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre.

Manchester Past

At Crumpsall library, during April, we will be displaying 15 photographs dating from the 1940's and 1950's. The photographs feature members of Manchester's African community and are from the collection of Leslie Johnson, who grew up in the local Moss Side and Wythenshawe areas. The display includes a wonderful wedding photograph of Leslie's parents - Jide and Renee Johnson. Not only is it worth visiting the library to view these beautiful photographs but you may be able to help us identify some of the people pictured. Do you recognise anyone in the photos? We'd love to hear from you!



Ethnicity and Race in a Changing World: A Review Journal

Our new journal goes live with MUP

In January, the Centre celebrated the launch of its new online journal, *Ethnicity and Race in a Changing World*. The e-journal is published on the Manchester University Press website and the first issue featured some innovative and engaging essays by experienced academics including James Jennings, a Professor of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning at Tufts University and Willie J. Harrell, Assistant Professor of English at Kent State University, Ohio.

The first issue is available to download free of charge from the Manchester University Press website: <http://www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/journals/index.asp>.

****New** Manchester and Local Studies Book Box**

We've created a new Manchester specific book box for loan to schools and community groups. It includes many of our own unique publications : *Roots and Journeys*, *Strength of Spirit*, *A Long Way from Home* but also many other resources reflecting Manchester's diverse communities.

The box highlights the achievements of people such as Len Johnson, a local black boxing hero (*Never Counted Out! The story of Len Johnson*) and also shows the personal journeys people have made to become citizens of the area (*My Winward Side* tells how one woman came from St Vincent's to live in Stockport). The political and campaigning nature of Manchester people can be seen in books such as *A Fight to Belong*, which details the anti deportation campaign for the Okolo family, and in the video *We are Born to Survive*, an interview with Manchester political activist Kath Locke. Other books reflect the creativity of Manchester's ethnic groups - *Song for Carrying Water*, for example, is a collection of poems and stories written by Manchester Somali women.

Clement Cooper's photographic book *Presence* is a beautiful representation of the young people of Moss Side and Longsight and you can see further visual representations of Manchester and its people in a file containing photographs, including some from the Sikh and Roots oral history projects of the 1980's.

So, if you want to find out more about your local city and its inhabitants, or help others to investigate these rich resources, why not borrow this book box. To see further details of the contents of this box and all the other book boxes, please visit our website: www.racearchive.org.uk/projects/untold.htm

Archiving for All – Day School on Archiving Skills

Wednesday 13th May, 2009

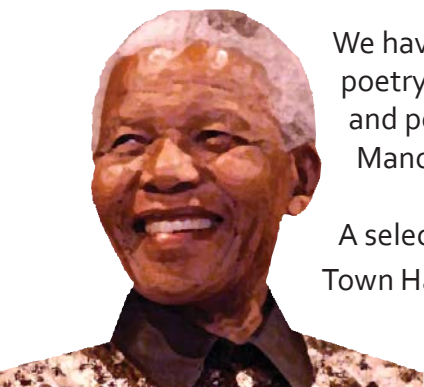
University Place

University of Manchester

Organised by the North West Branch of the Local Studies Group, CILIP, this is a training event on basic archiving skills. The day is aimed at organisations that hold archive material but lack the skills of a qualified archivist and at individuals wanting to learn more about this subject. Topics covered will include handling and classifying archive material, archiving photographs and a step by step account of how to create an archive. Come and learn from the experts in this field: Katharine Carter (County Archivist), Nic Raynor (Conservator) and Sharon Oldale (Senior Conservator).

The cost of the day school is only £12.50. To reserve your place, or to find out more information, please contact Julie at the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre on 0161 275 2920.

Mandela Manchester



We have been working with Secondary Schools in Manchester to help students develop poetry about their personal experiences and life in Manchester. The Centre's Director and poet, Chris Searle, has run poetry workshops in 12 secondary and special schools in Manchester.

A selection of the poems will be turned into a book which will be launched at Manchester Town Hall in July, 2009.

The Man Who Caught a Magic Mermaid

The Man Who Caught a Magic Mermaid is a traditional Irish Traveller folk-story. The story tells us how a farmer captures a mermaid and stops her returning to the sea by hiding her magic tail-skin. Years later when their children find the skin, she is tempted to return to her ocean family. She protects her sons when they become sailors and it might be that her daughter becomes a mermaid too, but she has turned away from her life with the farmer.



This is the latest in our international folk-tale series: in which Manchester pupils retell and illustrate a story, and their work is then professionally designed and published. *The Man Who Caught a Magic Mermaid* was created by Year 4 children in St Brigid's RC Primary School in Beswick in a project in the Autumn term and published in December 08.

Coming Soon:

Over January and February, we have led another folk-tale project, this time linking 2 schools: Holy Name Primary in Moss Side and St Catherine's RC Primary in Didsbury. The Year 2 children of both have worked together to retell and illustrate a Polish folk-story. Greedy King Popiel is feared and very unpopular with the people. On the advice of an old woman, the people join forces with the town's mice. Armed with needles, the mouse army corners the greedy King and his Queen in a lonely tower. When they have finished, all that's left are two pairs of expensive shoes! The mice return to the town as heroes.

Celebrate Manchester's history with the Manchester Histories Festival at the Town Hall, March 21st, 2009.

The festival provides an opportunity for many of Manchester's community, voluntary and statutory bodies to present their knowledge and experience of Manchester's development. The event is open to everyone and is comprised of talks from historical academics and experts, history trails and will culminate in a celebration at Manchester Town Hall on March 21st. The festival represents a unique partnership between the University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University and the City Council who hope that the events will "inspire lasting pride" and reflect the diverse and unique history of the City.



The Resource Centre and the Education Trust have been working with the Jewish Museum, University of Manchester and Irish World Heritage Centre on a presentation, "The Peopleing of Manchester", which will be part of the display in the Great Hall on the 21st.

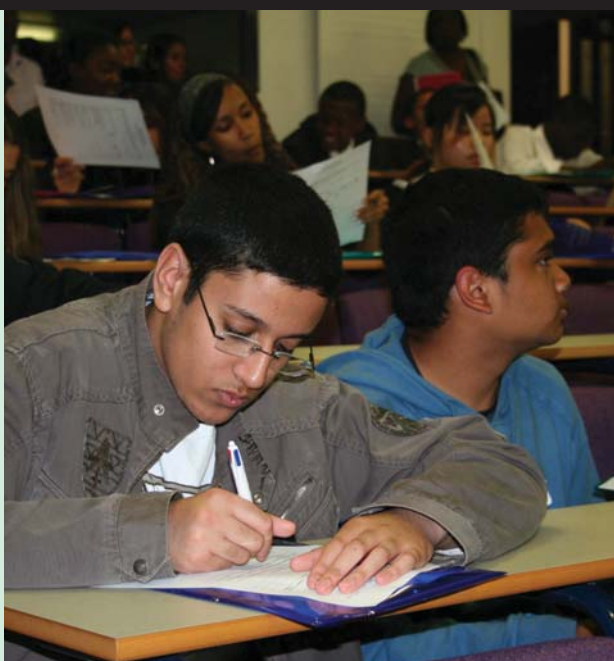
For more information visit the festival's website:

<http://www.manchesterhistoriesfestival.org.uk/index.php>



Your Future, Your Choice: 2009

The Resource Centre will host its annual Your Future, Your Choice conference for BME Year 10 from Greater Manchester. This year's event will take place on Tuesday, June 23rd, 2009.



How To Contact

The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre and Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust are open 9.30am - 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Address:

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tel: 0161 275 2920 fax: 0161 275 0916

Centre website: www.manchester.ac.uk/racerelations

Trust website: www.racearchive.org.uk

The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust is a registered charity. Its registration number is 1089257.

OTHER NEWS

DONT MISS:

Southern Voices: Weaving Stories Exhibition

The community group Southern Voices have launched an exhibition at MOSI (Museum of Science and Industry). The exhibition highlights Southern perspectives on the history of the cotton industry, drawing attention to the global impact of the rise of Manchester as 'cottonopolis'. This exhibition will be on display in the Station Gallery at MOSI until September. For further information contact Ehi Oboh on 0161 606 0129 or e.oboh@mosi.org.uk

Emory Douglas and the Art of Revolution

Emory Douglas, First and only Minister of Culture for the Black Panther Party exhibits his work in Urbis's UK premiere exhibition. Showing until April 19th, 2009