



GEORGE PADMORE INSTITUTE

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Our five-year Dream to Change the World project has moved into its third year; and we also bring news of other exciting work, partnerships and programmes we have been involved with

The Dream to Change the World Archive Project

Outreach element

A big element of our work this year has been outreach activities. *'Dig my Archives'*: Year 2 of the schools project is currently underway. Our wonderful education officer, Sarita Mamseri, has been running sessions with Key Stage 3 pupils in two secondary schools – Stoke Newington and St Martins in the Fields High School for Girls in Tulse Hill – and with Key Stage 2 pupils in St Johns Church of England Primary School in Upper Holloway. The focus has been on specific campaigns – the New Cross Massacre Campaign and the Black People's Day of Action with Stoke Newington pupils; the Tesco Anti Apartheid campaign with St Martins pupils and the Carnival Development Committee with St Johns. The sessions have been covering all aspects of the archival collection and considering the various skills required to achieve the campaigns' objectives. A major theme has been leadership and management – how were John La Rose and others able to raise awareness of important and sometime controversial issues? At Stoke Newington School, we also ran a popular book stall for pupils, teachers and parents. A big thank you to Sarita and the volunteers who have assisted her, for making this challenging project such a success, as well as to Linton Kwesi Johnson and Alex Pascall for their valuable contributions at Stoke Newington. The schools will come together in December for a shared experience day at the British Library.



Alex Pascall giving his firsthand accounts of the media and the anger in the Black community over the New Cross Massacre which stimulated many thoughts, questions and points from the Stoke Newington students.

The Bookman Research Project into the early origins of the publishing work done by John with New Beacon Books began this October. After our summer recruitment process that brought in over 30 applications, we appointed Ruth Bush as our Bookman researcher. She is working one day a week and will produce an on-line booklet at the end of this academic year. She is also hoping to do some public sessions. Welcome on board Ruth!

The 'Dream to Change the World' Exhibition is due to take place in 2015 at the end of our five-year project. We are currently looking to finalise our venues. We have sent a proposal to the Museum of London. We are also talking with Islington Museum, Bruce Castle in Haringey and the 198 Gallery in south London.

Archiving work

We have been concentrating this year on John La Rose's individual files (some 900 in all) and prioritising those relating to the Bookman and schools projects. John La Rose's personal correspondence is currently awaiting data entry on CALM. We have also listed all the audio and visual material in John's collection (some 300 items in all). We have sent the most fragile material to be professionally digitised: several cassettes were mended and a set of compact discs produced. The GPI has also had software installed in-house to help with the production of mp3 files.

Volunteers

We have continued to expand our team of volunteers. Our total tally of new volunteers since the start of the project has reached 27 and we have worked with over 10 people this year in the archives (13 if you count in trustees). These include Sharmilla Beezmohun, Jeannie Davidson, Zuleika Dobson, Kerstin Hegarty, Emily Hogg, Abimbola Johnson, Alison Okuda, Thushari Perera, Barney Spigel, Adam Tulloch, Rob Waters. We would like to thank all those who have given their time to help us with multiple aspects of the project, including those who have had to leave us. Together we have achieved work in cataloguing, cleaning, repackaging, conservation, transcription, research and outreach.

Other Archive Connected Public events

In March we were invited by the Heritage Lottery Fund to put on a joint showcase event at Bruce Castle Museum. This was attended by some 50 people representing organisations either interested in applying to the HLF or already in receipt of a grant. There were presentations from the GPI, the HLF, London Metropolitan Archives and a lively panel discussion of GPI staff and volunteers being interviewed by Wesley Kerr, chair of the HLF London Committee.

This October we have been extremely busy throughout Black History Month. The film *'Dream to Change the World'* was screened at the British Museum on the 6 October and the Trinidad & Tobago Association on 27 October. Sarah White presented an 8 minute edited excerpt from the film as well as archive images from the Caribbean Artists' Movement and the International Book Fair of Radical, Black and Third World Books at the Victoria and Albert Museum on the 19 October. The GPI participated in the film 'The Importance of Black History?' by Nosa Igbinedion, which was screened at King's Place on the 23 October. Sarah Garrod led two archive workshops in the local area – helped by volunteers Pat Harris and Thushari Perera – one with a primary school at the Alexandra Park Library on 22 October and the second at a Bruce Castle "Munch n Listen" session on 29 October. Sarah Garrod is also booked to carry out two student workshops during November.

Website

The GPI website was rebuilt earlier in 2012 and we are now in the process of finding someone to take over the support and maintenance of the site. We have been experiencing some teething problems with the archive catalogue but are confident these will be ironed out in the near future!

Our thanks to the HLF for their funding of our 'Dream to Change the World' project



LOTTERY FUNDED

THE THIRD JOHN LA ROSE MEMORIAL LECTURE

will be given by
NGUGI WA THIONG'O
Writer, activist and a close
friend of John La Rose
On Wednesday 2 October 2013
in London
In partnership with
Afroeuropa@ns IV

AFROEUROPE@NS
**4th International Conference
on Black Cultures and
Identities in Europe:**
Continental Shifts, Shifts in
Perception
London, UK 1-4 October 2013
Afroeuropa@ns is an
international research and
development group. Check
their website for details and
their call for conference papers.

*Hot off the press – we
recently found out that this
small block of flats has
been named after John!*



Staff Changes

The GPI does not have a large number of staff but those we do make up an extremely hardworking and helpful team. Our Project Archivist, Sarah Garrod continues to provide excellent work on all fronts. Our invaluable Archives Assistant, Kate Duncan, has been able to continue working with us for a second year much to our delight and profit. Sadly, GPI administrator Ayisha de Lanerolle left in September after three and a half years with the GPI, though it was for the happy reason that she needed more time to pursue her own creative projects. A big thank you to her for all her hard work during her time with us. And welcome to Nicole-Rachelle Moore, long time supporter of the GPI and good friend of John La Rose, who took over the post at the beginning of October.

Other events through the year

In March 2012 the GPI hosted **Tayo Aluko's** presentation on **Paul Robeson** called 'This Little Light of Mine'. It was a successful well attended evening focusing on the life, ideas and songs of Robeson. In April the British Film Institute showed the *Mangrove Nine* film which was produced by Franco Rossi and John La Rose in 1973. Michael La Rose, the GPI's chair led the post-film discussion. June and July saw the collaboration between the GPI and the grassroots **So We Stand** organization headed by Dan Glass. 'Reclaiming the Riots & Insurgencies' was a lively debate, chaired by Remi Harris, held at Caxton House on 28 June. On 11 July Sarah Garrod and Janice Durham ran a workshop on 'Recording Black History' as part of the **So We Stand Summer School** for young activists. There was good attendance at both events and new interest in the GPI and its work.

Recently, in partnership with New Beacon Books, the GPI has hosted two book launches. In August *Mixed Company* a book of three early Jamaican plays edited by Yvonne Brewster was introduced by Linton Kwesi Johnson. He also read the poem 'Mi Caan Believe It' by Michael Smith, while Alistair Bain and Yvonne acted a short excerpt from one of the plays to the delight of the audience. In October before a large and appreciative audience, Lawrence Scott was in conversation with Anne Walmsley and read from his new novel *Light Falling on Bamboo*, an imaginative portrayal of the life of the 19th century Trinidadian painter Michel Jean Cazabon.

Trustee and Supporters News Round Up

This year trustee **Ali Hussein**, the SPLM representative in Europe, has been very busy running the international campaign for the release of political prisoners in the Sudan. Over 100 SPLM activists in the north have been imprisoned since the independence of South Sudan in 2011. **Michael La Rose** has helped to set up the **Friends of JLR UK Crisis Group** to share and network information and issues arising out of the riots and death of Mark Duggan in August 2011. Anyone interested in this group can contact Michael at 76 Stroud Green Road. **Azim Hajee** was invited by the Oilfields Workers Trade Union in Trinidad & Tobago to attend the International Conference they had organised to mark their 75th Anniversary and also to be the keynote speaker for the OWTU's 73rd Delegates Conference. **Linton Kwesi Johnson** was a special guest at a Conference on Caribbean Poetry organised jointly by Cambridge University and the University of the West Indies. He has

also been busy on the road with the Dennis Bovell Dub Band and with solo poetry performances, including the Back to Black Festival at Old Billingsgate. **Remi Harris**, thanks to an opportune redundancy, found herself working with visual effects company, 59 Productions, on Danny Boyle's wonderful Olympic opening ceremony. Lucky girl!

Our congratulations to former GPI administrator **Sharmilla Beezmohun** who together with Sarah Sanders, has set up 'Speaking Volumes' a live literature production company. They worked with GPI supporters, such as the Cuban poet, Pedro Perez Sarduy, in the Poetry Parnassus UK tour.

Two GPI supporters have produced excellent films this year which we hope we will soon be able to show at the Institute – *Jai Bhim Comrade* directed by **Anand Patwardhan** deals with the untouchables and other oppressed groups in India over a ten year period; *Man on Ground*, directed by **Akin Omotoso**, is an imaginative treatment of the tensions between the township populations in South Africa and the newly arrived immigrants from other parts of Africa.

We are sad to report the death of our old friend **Gerry German** on 3 May at the age of 84. A rebellious Welshman, teacher and tireless champion of equality, diversity and social justice Gerry spent his last years as director of Community Empowerment Network defending in particular young black boys excluded from schools.

Friends of JLR: The web-based mailing list **Friends of JLR** set up after the death of John La Rose continues to provide for the exchange of information and ideas from members around the world. Anyone interested in joining should email Milverton Wallace on milverton@gmail.com.

Snail mail and Email: Like all organisations the GPI is trying to use email as much as possible to send out information about its events. This both saves money and is quicker. If you are happy to receive information about GPI events by email, and are not already doing so, we would be grateful if you could send us your email address for use in the future.

Become a Friend of the GPI

This is our fundraising appeal for regular standing order donations paid on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis to raise core funds to sustain our archive and educational work. Small regular contributions can make all the difference to help us develop as an independent and sustainable organisation.

Fundraising Christmas Lunch

Our usual enjoyable and delicious Fundraising Lunch will be held on Sunday 9th December between 1.00pm and 4.00pm. We look forward to seeing you there. Tickets can be bought on the door or in advance from the GPI or New Beacon Books. Price £15; children £7.00