



GEORGE PADMORE INSTITUTE

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Our five-year Dream to Change the World project has moved into its fourth 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

In 2013 we have again been very busy on outreach activities.

'Dig my Archives': This project moved into its final stages with a shared experience meeting of all the participants hosted by the British Library in December 2012 and culminating with the planned mobile pop up 'Schools' Exhibition' designed by Sarita Mamsari which has been busily moving around different parts of London all year! Both the project's participating schools – St. Martins in the Fields High School for Girls and Stoke Newington School – displayed the exhibition and it has also been loaned to the Clapham, Finsbury, Hackney and Marcus Garvey libraries and Bernie Grant Centre.

The Bookman Research Project into the early origins of the publishing work done by John La Rose with New Beacon Books started in October 2012 and is now nearing completion. Ruth Bush, the project researcher, has written her seminal essay plus all her background material. We are now working to load a modest interactive programme with Ruth's work onto the GPI website.



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A wonderfully successful offshoot of this project was the 'Book Club', initiated by Ruth, which ran monthly March to June and looked at John's first collection of poetry, critical writings by Wilson Harris and Wally Look Lai, Bernard Coard's *How The West Indian Child*

Is Made Educationally Sub-Normal in the British School System and finally Martin Carter's poetry. The idea of the Book Club was to explore the content and relevance of New Beacon's early publications to current generations. The positive response to the 'Book Club' has encouraged us to continue this initiative in 2014 possibly to look at John's writings.

Publication of Writings by John La Rose is another of the outreach elements of the DTCW Project. This year we have been organising and digitising John's numerous writings. He never wrote long books but produced a mass of essays, articles, tributes, speeches in addition to his poetry, and as any one who knew him will be aware he always distilled his thought provoking ideas in as accurate and concise a way as he could. The GPI will be producing a short publication that will give the reader an idea of his range of interests and concerns. A more complete volume waits for a future date.

Open Days The GPI carried out four Open Days between April and July with exhibitions, tours of the archive and detective trails for children. We received positive feedback from visitors and were especially popular on a snowy day during the Easter holidays!

2015 Exhibition The GPI continues to plan for its 'Dream to Change the World' exhibition, which will sum up the work of this five year project. We are grateful to Islington Museum who have agreed to host the exhibition between March and June 2015.

Archiving work

Over 700 of the priority correspondence files relating to John La Rose, New Beacon publishing and other significant individuals have now been catalogued on our CALM database and selected files can now be made available to the public for research. In a few weeks time, following careful conservation work, we should hopefully discover the contents of John's mystery briefcase, which travelled with him to the Havana Cultural Congress in 1967! We have unearthed and catalogued several boxes of manuscripts rejected by New Beacon for publishing – but were they ever published elsewhere? The prospect of finding hidden gems makes this an exciting part of the collection to be working on. We have continued with in-house production of mp3 and WAV files for the audio collection and the majority of this material is now catalogued. Although we still have plenty to do, we are reaching the stage where a number of strands are coming together as we look towards our final 18 months and essential design work for our exhibition in early 2015.

Volunteers

We have continued to expand our team of volunteers. Our total tally of new volunteers since the start of the project has reached 34 and we have worked with over 10 people this year (13 if you include Trustees working in the archives). These include Phoenix Alexander, Peter Ashan, Zuleika Dobson, Lelieth Dunkley, Kerstin Hegarty, Abimbola Johnson, Sumaya Kassim, Heiba Lamara and Chris Moffat. Gaetan Phillips and Alison Okuda were able to spend a few days with us whilst Takai assisted us by undertaking a two week school placement. We don't have the space to list everyone here but 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. We are happy to report the success of two of our volunteers and wish them well – **Sumaya** will be working on the Andrew Salkey manuscripts at the British Library and **Phoenix** is doing a PhD at Yale University.

Website

The GPI website was rebuilt earlier this year after we finally linked up with New Digital Partnership, a small independent company, to take over the site's support and maintenance.

Staff News

We are delighted to have found some funds within our budget to continue to employ Kate Duncan during the forthcoming year. Kate has been an extremely valuable member of our team over the last two years and will be working on the online publication of the Bookman essay, development of our website and audio/visual archives. We also wish to acknowledge the tremendous contributions from Sarah Garrod, our Project Archivist, and Nicole-Rachelle Moore, our administrator.

Other Archive Collections

Work has continued on a number of collections alongside the DTCW project: NAME – the National Antiracist Movement in Education; Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners in Kenya; Carnival material (accruing); selected journals (accruing). The GPI was unexpectedly gifted the archives of the late Geraldine Connor, who died in 2011, but the collection is too large for us to house in the long-term and we are currently negotiating transfer of the material to a suitable archive.



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Other Archive Connected Public events

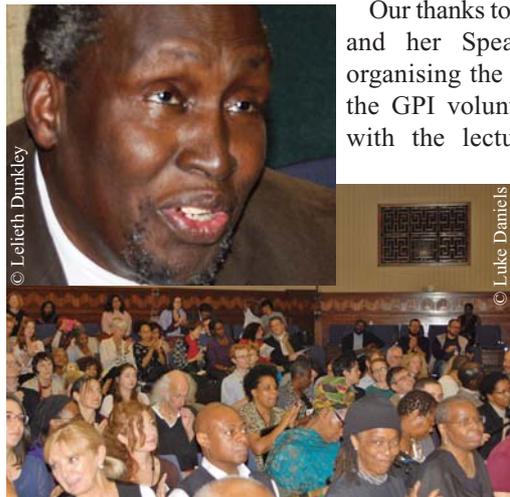
Selected GPI archives have been incorporated by Hackney Museum into their current exhibition titled *Sankofa* (open until 4 January), which focuses on the truth behind Black History Month. This has been a valuable chance to meet and work with the curators. We are participating in a multi-media project *Every Cook Can Govern: Documenting the life, impact and works of C.L.R. James* organised by WORLDWrite, the charity providing free film and media training for the WORLDbytes online Citizen TV channel. We have also been invited to contribute to a *Handbook for Social Justice Organising* as a follow-up to the work we did with the grassroots So We Stand organisation last year.

Other events have included showings of the 'Dream to Change the World' film and a QMUL workshop at the GPI on the Caribbean Artists Movement archives. We continue to receive many invitations to participate in external projects, which is very beneficial for our experience but, regrettably, we have had to turn some down as we don't want to stretch ourselves too thinly on the ground to the point where our core work suffers.

The Third John La Rose Memorial Lecture took place in partnership with the 4th AfroEuropeans Conference, being held in London this year. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, the Kenyan writer and activist, gave a lecture on 'Resisting Metaphysical Empire: Language as a War Zone' to a receptive and impressively large audience at University of London's Senate House. He also visited the GPI during his time in London and was excited to see our archives on the 1970s Campaign to Free Ngũgĩ From Detention and on the work of the 1980s Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners in Kenya. New Beacon Books provided a bookstall throughout the four-day conference.

Our thanks to Sharmilla Beezmohun and her Speaking Volumes team organising the Conference and to all the GPI volunteers who helped out with the lecture and bookstall. It

reminded us of the work and spirit of the Book Fairs, only we were all 20 years older! Our thanks also go to the Hilden Trust which has provided a grant for the publication and dissemination of the lecture text and dvd.



The Inaugural Bocas Henry Swanzy Award was given to John La Rose (posthumously) and Sarah White for their pioneering publishing work and contribution to Caribbean letters through the work of New Beacon Books. In April Sarah travelled to Trinidad at the invitation of the Bocas Literary Festival organisers and gave a short presentation on the history of New Beacon illustrated with images from the GPI archives at the Award Ceremony.

Tribute to Jayne Cortez The African American poet, who gave the Second John La Rose Memorial Lecture in 2010 and was a good friend of the GPI, died last December. The GPI organised 'A Tribute to Jayne' in July. It was a very special evening of poetry, music and memories with contributions from John Agard, Jean Binta Breeze, Margaret Busby, Zena Edwards, Khadijah Ibrahiim, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Michael La Rose, Grace Nichols, Zodwa Nyoni, Deirdre Pascall, Rheima Ibrahiim Robinson, Kadija Sesay, Keith Waithe and Val Wilmer. The evening culminated in moving contributions from Jayne's husband, the sculptor Mel Edwards, and her son, the drummer Denardo Coleman.

Selma James on George Padmore and Dorothy Pizer Selma, together with her husband CLR James, knew Dorothy and George when they all lived in London in the 1950s and were active in the Pan African and anti-colonial independence movements. On 19 March Selma gave a fascinating talk at the GPI about her memories of the period.

Trustee and Supporters News Round Up

Deaths

We are very sad to announce the following deaths: *Jessica Huntley*, the leading political and cultural activist who together with her husband Eric was involved in over 50 years of work and campaigning in the UK, including founding Bogle L'Ouverture Publishers. The Huntley archives, which are very much a sister and complementary collection to our own, are managed by the London Metropolitan Archives and there is an annual Huntley Conference to look at different aspects of the collection in more detail. We do not have space to list all Jessica's achievements here but there is much more information on our website.

Teddy Belgrave A long standing Trinidadian comrade active in radical politics, the trade union movement, carnival and education. Again more information is available on the web.

News

Ali Hussein, the SPLM(N) representative in Europe, has continued campaigning for the release of political prisoners in the Sudan. *Remi Harris* published an online guide *Easy Money? The definitive UK guide to funding music projects* and was conference manager for *You are in Control* an annual international conference held in Iceland exploring digital business developments in the creative industries.

Linton Kwesi Johnson has performed his poetry at numerous events including A Tribute to Nelson Mandela and the Shambala Festival. His LKJ Charitable Educational Trust based in Jamaica is now up and running and awarded bursaries to six local students. *Ian Macdonald* celebrates the 30th anniversary of the publication of *Macdonald's Immigration Law and Practice*, in December 2013. *Sarita Mamseri*, our inspiring schools outreach work coordinator, established BookStop Sanaa, a specialist visual art library and learning hub in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. www.bookstopsanaa.org; info@bookstopsanaa.org. *Ann Phoenix* stepped down from her co-directorship of Thomas Coram Research Unit after six years in the saddle, to spend more time on her own research. *Sarah White* received Special Recognition from the 2013 Haringey Adult Carer of the Year Awards

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 this group should email Milverton Wallace on milverton@gmail.com.

Friends of JLR UK Crisis Group has continued its work discussing and networking around political and social issues. Subjects of interest this year have been the shorter working week, mental health and education. The group is aiming to publish some documents in 2014.

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 1st 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