



*Established in 1984
Charity No: 1113012*

News

January 2008

Welcome

Welcome to BACCA News letter for 2007. The year started off with the sad demise of the next of kin of some of our members, but as time went on we are happy to report a year that turned out packed with events that were informative, interesting and enjoyable for BACCA members and friends.

AGE CONCERN BEXLEY

Grace Scott and Olga Beresford attended Age Concern Open Day event at Danson Youth Centre Bexleyheath on 4/4/2007.

This event was reported to be well attended, enjoyable; and all groups were supplied with table space to display their information and exhibits. Grace and Olga provided tasty Caribbean food for the event. Other groups attending the event provided English, Turkish and Asian foods.

BEXLEY HERITAGE TRUST....protecting Bexley's hidden history

Amisha Karia from Bexley Heritage Trust attended BACCA members meeting on 7/4/2007 to give a talk on the role of the trust and a brief history of Hall Place and Danson House. The trust runs various exhibitions, events and projects linked to Bexley's heritage and Arts.

The 2007 programme is an exciting and innovative line-up from an exhibition looking at African Asians at Hall Place to chocolate tasting sessions at Danson House. Plans are afoot to develop a travelling exhibition detailing Bexley's hidden history with the trans-Atlantic slave trade. It is proposed that the exhibition will be available free to community groups and schools to display.

VETERAN RETIRES

A veteran member of BACCA, having kept his membership for more than 20 years, Lloyd Rhule retired to Jamaica on the 18th April 2007. Lloyd still wanted his membership of BACCA to be ongoing and consequently has paid up his membership fee for the next 10 years. Eleven members and friends joined Lloyd for a farewell meal at the Vietnam Restaurant in Greenwich.

The evening proved to be most enjoyable with plenty of food, drinks and laughter. Lloyd was presented with a card from the members and a Celebration Gold disc with a plaque displaying one of his photos taken at the Annual Derby which he regularly attended.



GRACEFULLY DONE

BACCA sent best wishes and congratulations to Grace Scott (BACCA's vice Chair) and John Salmon who tied the knot at Northumberland Heath Baptist Church on the 21st April 2007.



The weather was excellent, the church service was very pleasant and the wedding party pictured above under a wild cherry tree in full bloom looked stunning.

The Bride and Bridegroom with their families and guests celebrated later at a lavish Wedding reception held at Slade Green Community Hall.

ANNUAL DERBY

Sixteen BACCA members got on board a comfy Mini bus for the annual Derby on the 2nd June 2007.



The attendance was down on last year due to member's commitment to a range of other engagements. Nevertheless, the day out was sunny and bright, the company was good, food and wine was flowing, we didn't have to worry about drinking and driving, so that all in all we had a truly fantastic time.

GRAND SUMMER BALL (9/6/2007)

This was the first time BACCA had organised such an event in more than 10 years, but the social secretary Monica Ambersley who staged the event, crossed her fingers and hoped that all the hard work put into making the arrangements would pay off.



We are pleased to report that in the end the ball was completely sold out with 209 tickets snapped up. Amongst the guests were some high profile people from the world of business, politics, academia, and the voluntary sector. The scene was very tasteful with people dressed in some stunning evening wear.



We were a little late in starting, but once the programme kicked in with the food and entertainers such as Sandra Rowland and the Samba Dancers everyone was ready for partying. The Sound system 'Five Star Road Show' was fabulous and about the only drawback was that people wanted more dance time.

A huge let down was the photographer who came, used out facilities, made sales, but reneged on a deal to donate some of his takings to BACCA. Needless to say we will not be using them again. We also produced a programme booklet with business adverts that raised over £700. This was well received at the ball and by those on our mailing list who were sent copies.

Feedback from people attending the ball is that it was very good and we should do it again.... and we will. So look out for details

Donations. Thanks to the proceeds from the Ball, the association was able to make donations of £450 to Cancer Research UK, £450 to Diabetes UK, £100 to Princess Royal Hospital in Grenada and £50 to Darfur emergency appeal.

BRITISH CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION

The British Caribbean Association is one of the oldest established associations in Britain today. It usually has an annual tea party that is held at the House of Commons. This year the tea party was held on the 19/6/2007 in the members Dining Room, House of Commons, Westminster. The tickets were £20 and about half a dozen members of BACCA attended the party. MP's John Austin and David Lammy talked about African Caribbean's and the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Other speakers talked about the achievements and difficulties faced by BME groups in Britain today. The venue and food was pleasant and the meeting gave attendees the opportunity for networking.



The Co-operative Friends of Jamaica (CFJ) is an affiliated member of BACCA and they held their 18th Anniversary Social Evening and Quiz Night Fundraising event on 30/6/2007 at Mycenae House in Blackheath.

The event was well attended, and people reported that the quiz was engaging and enjoyable. A catering service was appointed to supply Caribbean food. As usual, CFJ had some talented individuals in their group who gave some really pleasing renditions to finish the evening. We all had a very pleasant time.

DANSON FESTIVAL (1/7/2007)

BACCA took part in the Danson Festival and exhibited a stand with leaflets, 'about us' and 'achievements' billboards in the Multicultural marquee provided by Bexley Council. We were also given £270 sponsorship to help with organising a carnival parade.

The costumes for the carnival were designed by Michael Ambersley and Gina Williamson and were cut and made to measure by Gina and Pauline Bennett.

Our parade was led by Drummer Chauncey Huntly from 'Ace Percussion', who we hired following a performance we heard at an event staged by CFJ. The costumes with head dress were vibrant and colourful and the participants looked even more spectacular when they had their face painted by Sim Pretava, and the children loved it.



The Mayor of Bexley Cllr Nigel Betts and the Mayoress Hilary Betts visited the multicultural

marquee and had discussions with many of the exhibitors as well as taking photographs with some of BACCA's youngsters prior to changing into their costumes.

We joined with other groups from the Multicultural marquee to parade around the show.



Mr Singh from the Anglo Asian Caribbean Friendship and Cultural Association and Mrs Rashid from Bexley Bangladeshi Women's Association, provided Indian food for the people exhibiting in the marquee .. and even visitors to the marquee were invited to share in the feast.

The organisers were very pleased with the event and indicated that they would like a repeat for next year with costumes for people in other groups.

Diabetes..The Silent Killer

Dr Ethan Harris-Faulkner, a GP in Swanley kindly accepted an invitation from BACCA member Sylvia Mclean to give a talk on diabetes and high blood pressure at a BACCA Members meeting on 7/7/2007. These two conditions greatly affect African and Caribbean people, which put them at risk of heart disease, stroke and kidney failure. Lifestyle factors, such as too much alcohol, smoking, salt-rich diet, lack of exercise, eating high processed and fatty foods have caused

diabetes and high blood pressure to soar out of control.

African and Caribbean people delay going to their GP and often wait until their condition is very serious. Once diagnosed with either of these conditions they were not very good at following the instructions on taking their medication, and are therefore more likely to see their condition worsen. NB: these two conditions cannot be cured but can be controlled by medication and a change in lifestyle.

Dr Harris-Faulkner encourages us to take the right action to reduce risk of developing condition or, if diagnosed, keep these conditions under control e.g. get regular check ups (perhaps six monthly), exercise at least three times per week, keep weight (especially around the waistline) within normal levels, eat five portions of fruit and vegetable per week, reduce the amount of salt, saturated fat, sugar, carbohydrates and alcohol in diet, give up smoking.

Sponsored Walk and Picnic (6/8/07)

The day started out cloudy, but everyone was in high spirits. This year's pack included members from BACCA, CFJ and Sylvia Mclean sister-in-law Heather and sister Wilma who came down from Leicester to join the walkers. During the walk we played cat and mouse with the rain, which eventually caught up with us nearing the end of the walk when people had to dash for cover under trees in Greenwich Park. This lasted for about 1/2 hour after which we tramped up to the meeting point in the park for the annual picnic.



Thankfully, the weather turned out fine for the remainder of the day and people enjoyed themselves eating, listening to music, chatting and taking part in a variety of activities including, bike riding, playing cards, dominoes, rounders and football.

The sponsorship raised from the walk was low compared to last year due to a lack in enthusiasm in going back to the same people who had generously supported the Derby and the summer ball for more money for this event.

SLAVERY-BEXLEY'S CONNECTION (1/9/2007)

Cliff Pereira a local historian was invited to our September members meeting to give a talk on "Bexley and the Slave Trade".

The fact that Bexley has a Slavery Connection was revealed through six years of research by local resident Cliff Pereira with the cooperation of Bexley Heritage Trust and Bexley Local Studies and Archive Centre.

This hidden history of world trade, slavery and antislavery has a strong physical legacy in Bexley – notably in the great houses, parks, and open spaces that are a feature throughout the borough. Some churches and even public houses are part of this story.



As a result of Cliff's work, a touring exhibition (until 2009) has been initiated and will be of great use to the educational and social sectors. The exhibition will tour Bexley borough for a two-year period starting from 14th October 2007 at Danson House, Welling.

Cliff emphasised that a great deal of the foundation of the borough was built from resources gained from the atrocities of slavery and this, the many African and Asian descendants and the populous of the borough should not forget.

A Grand Variety Concert ..was organised by **Co-operative Friends of Jamaica (CFJ)** at **The Forum Greenwich, Trafalgar Road, SE10 9EQ** on the 20th October 2007

The members of BACCA who attended this event reported that it was excellent. The show had some very talented people taking part including singers, live band and an aspiring group named 'UFO'. There was also a young saxophone player Andre Brown, who really got the crowd going, and he was rewarded with a standing ovation. It was recommended that BACCA should try and secure the service of Andre for our 2008 Grand Summer Ball.

Orbit Housing Social Event

Orbit Housing held an event on the 20th October 2007 at Trinity School, Erith. BACCA members who attended this event reported that it had a good turnout. There was African dancing and face painting. A mobile African Caribbean Catering Service was available for those who wanted food.

COMMEMORATION OF THE BICENTENARY OF PARLIAMENTARY ABOLITION OF THE TRANS ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

In February 2007, some members of Bexley Equalities Forum (comprising of: BACCA, Anglo Asian African Caribbean Friendship and Cultural Association, Bexley Art and Leisure Services, Bexley Assyrian Community Association, Bexley Bangladeshi Women's Association, Bexley Bangladeshi Welfare Association, Bexley Council Arts & Heritage, Bexley Council for Racial Equality, Bexley-Multi-Faith Forum) set up a working group to organise an event to mark the bicentenary of the abolition of slavery. BACCA was asked, and accepted to take the lead role and apply for funding because the lead organisation had to have charitable status.

The working group members then decided to feature this event in November 2007 with seminars, workshops and entertainment. It was also decided that a book/leaflet about slavery and a DVD of the commemoration event would be produced and distributed to members, schools and libraries within the borough.

BACCA in partnership with the other groups subsequently made an application to Connecting Communities Plus for a grant of £10,000 to stage the event and produce the book and DVD.

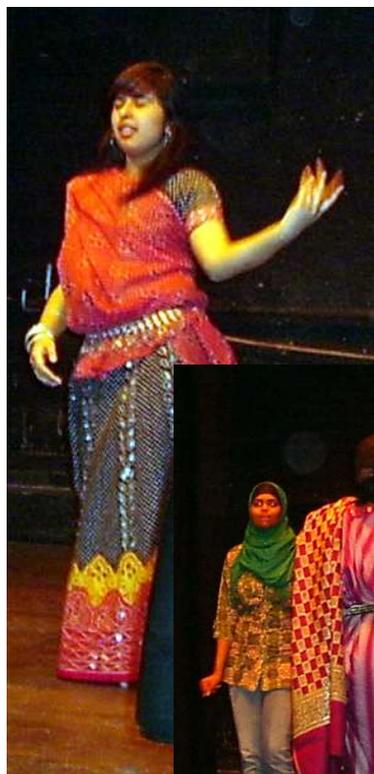
We were successful in obtaining the full amount of funding requested and the event was planned to take place on 10/11/2007 at Christ Church Hall, Victoria Road, Erith, Kent. The event was widely advertised in the press, amongst community groups and at public centres; and invitations were sent to VIPs and Schools.

Over 160 people attended the bicentenary commemoration at Christ Church Hall on the day and enjoyed a full programme of Events. All attendees were given a programme sheet and a leaflet "Hidden Histories" by local historian Cliff Pereira.

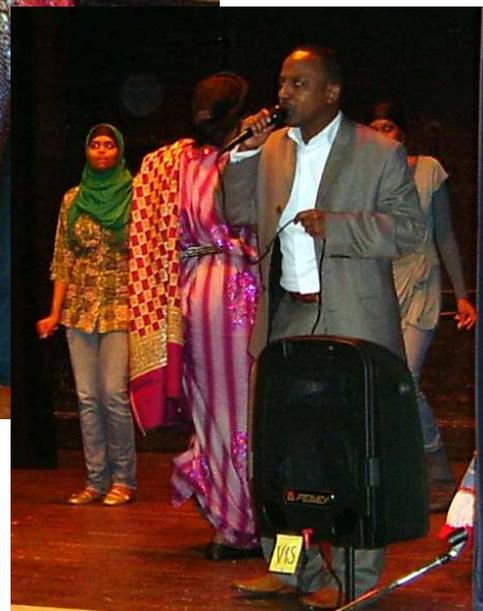
In the morning session, attendees listened attentively to enlightening, encouraging and sometimes entertaining presentations from a number of speakers including: The Deputy Mayor of Bexley Cllr Nick O'Hare, John Austin MP, David Evennet MP and keynote speakers Koffi M. Klu (on the African Connection), Donald Hinds (on the Caribbean Connection), Cliff Pereira (on the Afro-Asian Connection), Peter Ashan (on Contemporary Slavery) and Madonna Johnson (Memory Lane.....her grandfather was a freed slave).

The morning session did not end without controversy as a proportion of the audience felt offended by some of keynote speaker Koffi M Klu views and condemnation of the Europeans for the slave trade.

In the afternoon session the audience enjoyed drama, music and dance from a range of performers from across the community groups, including:



Dance and music by the Somali Community Group



The Bangladeshi Rebellion Dancers, Bangladeshi Folk Dancers, African Drummers and Dancers, and the Bangladeshi Classical Dancers.



Caribbean groups conducted a range of performances including: Drama and a Caribbean Folk Dance.

There was also a group that displayed icons of their black heroes and gave interesting recitals of why they admire their heroes.



Further performances were given by a group of Gujerati Samaji Dancers and finally by a Group of Punjabi Dancers to round off the session.

In addition to the commemoration event, the working group also initiated research into the opinion of young BME on slavery. Research was conducted by telephone, email and personal interviews by asking a candidate the following question.

'What is the first thing that comes into your head when I say "slavery"?'.

The sample group for this research was 35, but only 15 responded.

The top response was "black people", then, of equal proportion was "sad", "still around" and generally speaking "shackles". The bottom tier responses were "forced separation from family", "slave ships", "sweat and tears", "servitude" and "exploitation".

Although the number of people surveyed was low, it would appear that when slavery is brought to the attention of young BME, the main thought that comes to mind is the impact on **black people**.

However, black people were not the only victims, and as detailed in Peter Ashan's presentation, some forms of slavery still exist today. The commemoration presentation has highlighted Asian slavery and the Afro-Asian connection; and consequently has enhanced the inter-cultural understanding amongst the groups.

The work of Cliff Pereira in-particular has shown that the slave ancestors of all groups concerned have, through the fortunes made off their labour contributed to Bexley's heritage in terms of its economic, cultural and religious status. The ethnic groups in the borough should therefore be at ease with a sense, or right of belonging; and it is that sense of belonging that leads to an enhancement of community cohesion.

Overall the event went very well and it is hoped that the people who attended have gained an increased understanding of slavery.

The members of the Equalities forum and the working group expressed gratitude to Connecting Communities Plus, for the financial support given, and to Grace Scott for taking the lead role in making the grant application and staging of the event.

ORBIT HOUSING WORKSHOP

On the 17/11/07 Orbit housing ran a workshop entitled 'CONQUERING HEROES' that was aimed at confidence building for young people.

Professionals heading workshop sessions included:

- **Cliff Pereira**on 'Hidden Histories' surrounding slavery
- **Banji Adewumi**.....on Determination and persistence. Having a goal and focusing on achieving success.
- **Gorgeous**....an inspirational speaker. Challenging the listener to depict/describe/find the best in themselves

BACCA members attending this event were very enthusiastic about the workshop with Gorgeous.

It was suggested that BACCA should invite him to one of our monthly meeting to give one of his inspirational presentation.



BACCA folk group, pictured above at the 10/11/07 commemoration of slavery event also performed at the workshop and was well received with rave responses from the audience.

BACCA Christmas Party (8/12/2007)

Our annual Christmas party was held at Christ Church Hall, Victoria Road, Erith Kent. The tickets were priced at £7 and Monica Ambersley secured a donation of £200 from P C Stanmore Ltd to help with the arrangements. The event was well attended and it was wonderful to see a number of children lined up in fancy dress for a parade. There was plenty of food, good music and plenty of time to dance.

Unfortunately, due to insufficient manning at the door, some of the members and guests did not pay for their tickets. Consequently, although we had budgeted to break even, we ended up with a deficit of £250 on the event.

Now for some brighter news. BACCA member Gordon Applewaite celebrated his 60th birthday on the night and he was presented with a card and a gift from BACCA. It was his wife Grace who arranged this surprise celebration with BACCA for Gordon and he was delighted with the party and thanked BACCA and kissed Grace for making the occasion a memorable one for him.

EXTERNAL EVENTS

There were a range of other events during 2007 that BACCA members might have attended, but we have had no feedback to report on any of them in depth, so we mention them here in brief:

Grenada Benevolent Society UK, Annual Dinner and Dance at the Thistle Hotel on 23/6/2007

Grenada Voluntary Hospital Committee 40th Anniversary Celebrations, 30/6/2007 at the Holiday Inn, Kensington.

Bexley Labour Group Caribbean Evening, hosted by Cllr Harry Persaud at Woolwich Catholic Club, 81-88 Beresford Street, London SE1 on 30/6/2007.

Thamesmead Festival at Birchmere Park on 14/7/2007

Dr Roselle Antoine Foundation "Fund Raising Dinner and Dance" in Wembley on 20/7/2007

Jamaica Basic School (UK), "Fun in the Park" at Crystal Palace Park on 22/7/2007

Jamaica 45th Anniversary of Independence at Southwark Cathedral, London Bridge, SE1 on 4/8/2007

Association of Jamaican's (UK) Trust, Summer Ball in Wood Green on 4/8/2007.

Mauritius Community presents, the "Open Air Mauritian Cultural Show" Clapham Common, SW4 on 19/8/2007

Greenwich African Caribbean Women's Organisation (GACWO – a Saturday School operator) Chaired by Mavis Best MBE, AGM in September 2007

Norlington School, Leyton E10, Contact Sylvia Mclean, "Celebrating Black History" on 8/11/2007.

Kiwanis International (South London Branch) Annual Presidential Ball at the Holiday Inn, 97 Cromwell Road SW7 4DN on 20/11/2007

RHS Food and Crafts of the Commonwealth Exhibition on 20/11/2007

Dr Roselle Antoine "Essence of the Caribbean event" on 20/11/2007.

Grenada High Commission featuring "Pat's Fund Raising Party" at Kenton, Harrow on 24/11/2007

Bereavements

Sharon Stewart's mother Olga Maud Stewart died on 19/12/2006

A number of BACCA members attended her funeral on 12/1/2007 and a sympathy card and cheque for £50 was sent to Sharon who expressed her thanks.

Gladstone Samuels also saw the loss of his brother and the Association sent him a sympathy card and a cheque for £50. Gladstone sent BACCA a thank you card and told us at the members meeting in march 2007 how much his family appreciated BACCA's thoughtfulness.

Annis horribilis is perhaps a description of the year for Olga Beresford, BACCA's assistant Social Secretary. Olga first lost relatives in every month from January to March 2007. She then lost her

sister Harriett in May 2007, and other friends and family in-between to September 2007 when she sadly lost her husband.

The funeral of her husband Berry was held on 19/9/2007. BACCA sent a sympathy card and a donation for £50. A number of members attended Berry's funeral and helped with the catering. Thank you cards were received from Olga, her daughter, son-in-law and their children to thank BACCA members for their phenomenal support, generosity and kindness following the death of Berry.

NOT FORGOTTEN

The Information Centre, later renamed the Community Resource Centre at Harrow Manor Way London SE2 9XH has been the home for BACCA members and AGM meetings since 1986. BACCA has also used the centre for some of its Christmas parties and other social events. Sadly our members meeting on 2nd December 2007 will probably be the last we will see of this venue because we have been given notice to quit, as the site is earmarked for re-development.

Undoubtedly, many BACCA members and friends will remember some of the many events and sometimes heated exchanges that have taken place during our 21 years use of the centre.



The new meeting place that we have secured for the foreseeable future is BroadWater Village Hall, 1c Goosander Way, West Thamesmead, London SE28. We have used this venue in the past when repairs were in progress at the Harrow Manor Way Community Resource Centre and trust that we will feel comfortable here.

EDITORIAL

Started in 1984, the association provide a forum through which members can be supportive, make new acquaintances, enrich their lifestyle, improve social cohesion and work in partnership across communities within Bexley and surrounding boroughs.

On the 16th February 2006 we obtained charitable status, which has opened up many opportunities for us. BACCA is a mainly self funded organisation and is run from membership fees, donations and fundraising

activities. As a charity we are now able to seek and succeed in getting external funding to stage large functions such as the celebration of diversity and achievements in Black History month.

We have organised many activities – Saturday School, Dinner and Dance, Black History events, Sponsored walk, Christmas parties, trip to Thorpe Park, and sport events such as rounders, cricket and football. Many of the events and social trips organised has provided us with great and memorable experiences along with bundles of enjoyment and laughter.

We have had theatre visits to central London, Hackney and Lewisham, weekend trip to Scotland, weekend trip to Paris, day trips to France, weekend trip to Cornwall, trip to Bruges & Amsterdam, annual outings to Epsom Derby; and a trip to Dublin for the St Patrick's Day Parade.

Over the years we have made donations to a variety of charitable concerns including: Cancer Relief, Sickle Cell Anaemia Foundation, Famine in Africa, Kentish Times Famine Appeal for Africa, Aids in Africa & World Hunger, and to Oxfam/LBC Rwanda Appeal.

We have also provided education sponsorship in Africa and the Caribbean.

To be a member of BACCA you do not have to be African Caribbean or live in the borough of Bexley, but you do need to have the interest to be involved with the work and the aims of the Charity.

Needless to say, we could do with your help and support; and would welcome your membership. It looks like this is going to be another eventful year so.....

JOIN BACCA NOW

Membership fees are renewable annually, £10 per adult. Please make cheque payable to BACCA and send with your name, address and contact details to:

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Bacca is compliant with the Data Protection Act and will not pass your details to any third party without your prior consent.

Editor & Photographer: M D Ambersley

BACCA Trustees for 2007 were:
Chair: Miss Gina Williamson (MAAT), Vice-Chair: Mrs Grace Scott-Salmon, Treasurer: Mr Michael Ambersley B Tech (Hons), Grad.I.CERAM,
Secretary: Ms Pauline Bennett, Social Secretary: Mrs Monica Ambersley (MAAT), Assistant Social Secretary: Mrs Olga Beresford.