

Chapelton News

Editor : Clinton Cameron, 2 Avenue Hill, Leeds 8

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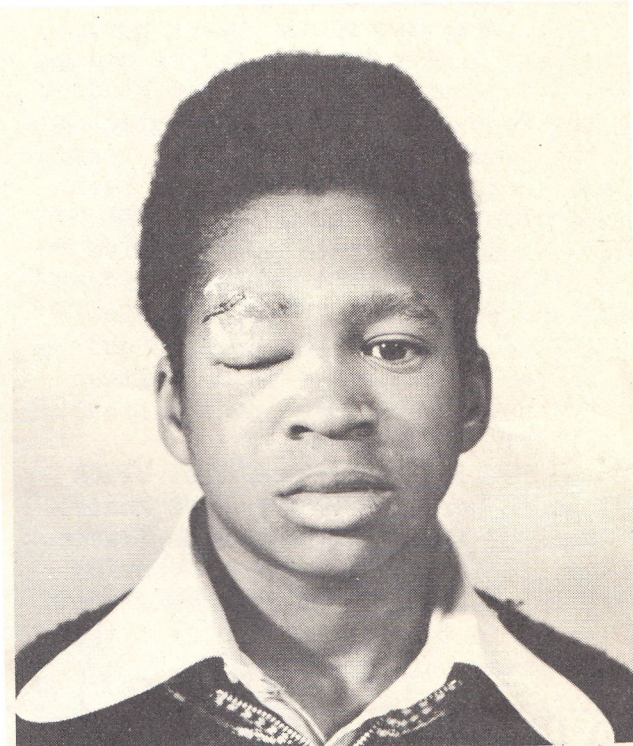
PARENTS NOT INFORMED

On 10th June Rodwell Gentles went on trip from Cowper Street School to a field centre near Durham with 13 other children. On 14th June he returned with a cut above his eye that needed 16 stitches.

Rodwell's father told Chapelton News: "On 14th June Rodwell had a minor squabble with Ralston Maynard, a friend of his, and the two boys were rolling on the floor together. A student teacher separated the two boys, in the scuffle, Rodwell received a blow on the eye."

Rodwell has received 16 stitches to his eye and eyebrow, and has been asked to return to the hospital for further visits in case of any side-effects.

The group of children were due to return to Leeds on 14th June, and when the injury occurred it was only superficially treated with TCP. Rodwell was only taken to hospital ('St James') when he got back to Leeds. Mr Strover, one of the teachers, took Rodwell home in Avenue Crescent at 6.30pm. Neither of his parents were in. Rodwell's 17year old sister was given little or no explanation of what happened to Rodwell's eye. No message



was left for Mr or Mrs Gentles. No-one from the school subsequently made any effort to contact Rodwell's parents to discuss the matter, even though they live near the school and are on the telephone.

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PRIMROSE FAIR



The well attended Summer Fair held at Primrose Hill High School on 29th June



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Exchange 'biased'

Dear Editor,

Due to the cunning meanderings of Mr Larry Lowton and company, pupils from Primrose Hill High School and pupils from St Kitts/Nevis have exchanged visits. The pupils from St Kitts Nevis are now in England and it appears that there is a deliberate attempt to prevent the students from having contact with the Black community.

Only two Black students went to the West Indies (a West Indian and an Asian) and conveniently only two student from the West Indies have any contact with the Black community. This is very minimal because the students have been crammed with a very 'heavy programme'. There is a deliberate attempt to give the West Indian students a very white-washed and biased opinion of Britain. Many of the students had messages and parcels for Black people in Chapeltown and they have been given much difficulty in contacting these people.

It is important that Black people both here and in the West Indies are aware of these types of conspiracies by individuals who claim to be working in the interests of good race relations, but are in fact nurturing the lies that have enslaved our people for 400 years.

These West Indian students should see the reality of the existence of Black people in Britain.

They should know about the mis-education and brutality that Black children suffer at school in this society. They should know that Black people who came to England did not find gold, but police brutality, hot furnaces, funky houses and racist insults. They should also know that Black people are organizing and resisting this oppression. They should also, see their benefactors for what they are!

Yours respectfully,
IMRHU

P.S. Only Mr Lowton and his colleagues seem to know the anonymous donator who financed the trips. If the question was put the answer given might be that the Lord moves in mysterious ways, but the brothers and sisters are beginning to think that whoever supplied that money is probably exploiting a lot of Black people.

.....
This is not the view of the editorial group. We do not have evidence to prove all these statements. But the letter represents the views of a significant section of the community.

CARNIVAL DANCE

Check out the Grand Dance for the Super Finalist of the 1974 Carnival Queen Contest. Music by WIBERFORCE STEEL BAND
20th July 8pm-2am 65p
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MECCA HAS NO SOUL

On Monday 13th May the Mecca Locarno Ballroom in the Merrion Centre displayed a notice to the effect that in future strictly pop music would be played, and that the playing of Soul and Reggae music would be discontinued.

Not surprisingly, this has had a considerable effect on black people in Chapeltown and elsewhere. Up to May Hunter Smith and one other DJ, who for the past two years have been employed by Mecca on Monday and Tuesday nights, had made a point of playing a lot of Soul and Reggae. This was in response to a growing demand for this music from black and white alike. The two nights concerned became popular with kids of 15 years and upwards, and attendance reached around 1000, about 150 of whom would be black. None of those attending ever complained about the music. Many said how much they liked it.

Mecca, however, obviously do not like giving any encouragement to black people. In addition to changing to 'pop music only' they have sacked Hunter Smith. When Hunter was sacked from another Mecca club (Samantha's) in 1973, he was told that 'it was not good Mecca policy to have a lot of black people in Mecca dance halls'.

This 'subtle' policy of banning Reggae makes it impossible at the present time for any black person to complain about Mecca to the Race Relations Board, since technically he or she can go in and spend the evening listening to David Cassidy. He or she might find that as he enters a 'clicker' at the door records his entry and a list is then compiled 'for statistical purposes' of black attendance. And recently Mecca have decided to ban the wearing of hats. Quite by chance, of course, all those wearing knitted hats or stetsuns inside the ballroom were black.

Chapeltown News raised these points with Jack Allison, the manager of Mecca Locarno. He was not prepared to comment on Hunter's sacking. About the clicker counting West Indians he said "I don't know anything about this". He said "We have not banned Reggae, we have reverted to the original policy of playing pop only on Monday and Tuesday. On the hats issue, he was more forthcoming: "This is not a coal mine, you know, We have certain standards. We allow ladies to wear hats at tea dances, but not in the evening. We are not having a go at West Indians, but hats are untidy, and may not be worn in the ballroom." Racism comes thinly disguised these days.

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p.3

Rodwell Gentles "PARENTS NOT INFORMED"

cont. from Page 1

Mr Gentles went to see the headmaster, Mr Clarke, on Monday 17th June. He says that he was treated discourteously, as if the matter was of no importance, and eventually shown the door. Mr Gentles has now written to the Town Clerk claiming injury benefit since Rodwell's injury in school time whilst in the care of teachers. He may also issue a summons against the student teacher concerned.

Chapeltown News asked Mr Clarke for his comments. He said:

"A boy who witnessed the fight said that the student teacher did not strike Rodwell. I do not know how the cut occurred. It was treated by a man experienced in First Aid, and I am certain Mr Strover did all he could to look after Rodwell"

WE SAY : Whatever the circumstances of the injury, the very least that the school could have done after the event would have been to visit Rodwell's parents to explain and apologise to them. But the school thought no visit was necessary. Just when can parents expect to be considered over the welfare of their children?

THE

VOICE OF

YOUNG CHAPELTOWN

UHURU ARTS GROUP

"By culture we understand all material and immaterial works of art and science plus knowledge, manners, education, a mode of thought, behaviour and attitudes accumulated by the people both through and by virtue of their struggle..." Ahmed Sekou Toure.

The Group

The UHURU Arts group has developed with the intentions of involving the mass of the black community in Chapeltown and also for the group to become involved in community activities throughout the country. The history of the group dates back to 1972, its members are from the community, they being brothers and sisters who felt it was necessary to establish a cultural and political link with the rest of the community, in order to show clearly our position in relation to this society.

So far we have produced three plays all of which relate to black people working, living and dying in Britain. In London we have contributed to events directly connected with the struggle for liberation in Africa. At Primrose Hill School in December, the group organised a week of drama and theatre involvement, poetry, art exhibition and slide show.

As a group we see art in terms of education, but this does not mean school or university. Black art should relate to black people looking at themselves critically in relation to the conditions under which they live.

Grounding

With the aim to encourage the black community of Chapeltown towards recognising the strength of their culture and unity of the black experience, June 2nd saw the presentation of "Grounding" at Cowper Street School.

To be Grounded as the rasta man would say, is to become aware of oneself, ones relation to others and to the environment; to be

The setting up of the U.C.A. Supplementary School in 1971, was not a sudden happening. It was a gradual realization that something was terribly wrong with the education of Black children. How did we become aware of the miseducation of Black children?

It started with individual complaint. Complaints like 'My child is ten years old and can hardly read. My boy is 12 and cannot add or subtract. My little girl told me that the teacher had called her a black bastard. My teacher says that Chapeltown is filthy, therefore nothing good can come out of it. My teacher is always putting me out of the classroom.' One can go on and on.

conscious of being part of the black entity, conscious of the struggle for freedom, for self expression and fulfillment; conscious of the processes by which the struggle continues.

An important part of the struggle is the need for expression through music, poetry, dance, participation and involvement, as borne out by the programme for the Cowper Street event.

Participation

For the people who attended "Grounding" it proved to be an interesting and worthwhile experience.

We believe the objectives of the event were not fully realised, due to the lack of involvement of the black youths and adults in Chapeltown, even though the day was well publicised. Indeed, a point worth noting is that not even the children from the U.C.A. Saturday School, who made an unforgettable contribution to the programme, did not receive the support they deserved in terms of how many of their parents bothered to attend.

The question of participation or the lack of participation of a large portion of the black community is one to which solutions are gradually being found. Through continued organisation of activities we shall carry on with our work in the community.

UHURU for I.

SATURDAY SELF EDUCATION SCHOOL

SURVEY

A house to house survey project was launched to determine how widespread was the feeling of discontent over the type of education meted out to Black children.

FINDINGS

The findings of the survey were staggering. In every home visited the complaints were as listed above plus more new ones. 'The teacher kicked my child. The teacher suspended my child. The teacher does not bother to answer my child's questions.' What was more astounding was the feeling of helplessness amongst the Black parents. This feeling came about primarily because of repeated complaints made to the education department without receiving any real satisfaction. There is evidence that on occasions Black parents were less than well received by Leeds education dept officials.

The Joseph Case

Some parents even accuse them of deception. Brother Joseph's child was wrongly identified as the cause for a toddler (who had no reason to be on the playground) falling over. This resulted in Brother Joseph's child being shuttled between the school, the education dept and the educational psychologist for about a year.

The headmistress dragged the boy into her office and threatened to pour a bucket of water over his head if he did not shut up (stop pleading his innocence). Mr Joseph's

visit to the school only made the teacher more hostile and the child was suspended and recommended to see the educational psychologist. Mr Joseph took the matter to the education dept on several occasions but was each time approached by a different person all claiming to be Mr Taylor the chief education officer

at that time. After about a year the child was readmitted to the school only to be inflicted with more psychiatric tests. This only came to an end after Mr Joseph had contacted his lawyer and Black organizations in Leeds.

ESN

Any doubts we may have had concerning Black children in schools, evaporated with Bernard Coard's 'How The West Indian Child is made Educationally Subnormal by the British School System.'

SCHOOL

Very early on it was recognized that a supplementary school was not the ultimate answer to the mis-education of Black children in Leeds or anywhere else, but it was felt that something immediate had to be done, plus, it gave us an opportunity to get to know the children and help them to develop a positive attitude towards themselves also supplementing their academic skills. The school is run on a Saturday from 1.00p.m.-3.30p.m. There are 160 children on our register with an average of 80 attending weekly. Their ages range from 5 to 13 years old. Due to the short time available a fair amount of organizational control had to be implemented, while at the same time maintaining a degree of flexibility that would suit both pupil and teacher.

ACTIVITIES

The subjects we concentrate on are mathematics, Afro-Caribbean history and English. We also run a dance group made up of youngsters from the school who have performed with distinction at various functions. Included in our curriculum are trips and outings to airports, zoos, museums and other places of interest. The teaching pool consists of 18 members of the community and Black students from Leeds University and Polytechnic who have been very helpful.

ENCOURAGING

The feedback from parents and teachers has been very encouraging. Teachers have noticed an increased confidence, alertness, and academic sharpness in the children's response during classes.

Parents have told us that the children are taking more interest in their homework and consequently show an improvement in their school records. They show a new consciousness, a new awareness and a new found confidence. The children are showing that they are now able to look at their state schools more critically,

It was from such evidence that we were able to single out Earl Cowper Middle School for special treatment. This resulted in a one day strike last year.

A critical look at the future

Just as these gains do not mark the high spot as far as the re-education of Black children is concerned, likewise the U.C.A. Supplementary School is not the most we can do as a community to ensure that our children grow up to be capable and efficient human beings.

It is therefore important to look at the direction and development of the school critically, particularly it's relationship to the community.

Should the community decide the direction of the school and how it should be run? Can it, or should it continue at Elmhurst School from 1-3p.m. on Saturdays? Should it continue as a supplementary school? Should it develop as a serious alternative to the state school?

All these questions are being considered since the community benefits from the school. It is therefore evident that these questions must be dealt with immediately.

PARENTS' MEETING

There will be a meeting
ON : SUNDAY 14th JULY
AT : 3pm COWPER STREET SCHOOL
for parents to discuss the UCA Saturday school.

liasion committee:

a personal view

This was set up by the corporation as part of the 'Help the Council plan the new Chapeltown' campaign. There are sixteen residents elected to this committee, and we have so far held two meetings with Corporation officials.

Both these meetings have been confidence tricks.

no answers

At the first meeting it was impossible to get any direct answers to key questions, and our questions about finance were not even recorded in the minutes. We therefore requested, and got, an official from the Finance Department to attend the second meeting. He told us how complicated the matter is, and did not give us a single direct answer to any question about finance.

As a gesture, at the first meeting the officials promised immediate action in seven matters in order to demonstrate their sincerity. They promised immediate attention in cutting hedges, shed demolition, pedestrian crossings, maintaining play areas, repairs procedures and rebuilding walls. All that has happened is a few hedges have been cut, and one or two white lines painted. Residents experience the usual delays and difficulties in getting repairs done.

repairs

The second meeting ended on a note of high farce. Having made it clear that we expected a big improvement in the speed and quality of repairs carried out, in reply, Mr. Hawkins, the Assistant Director of Housing, said that he thought Mr. Remmer was doing a difficult job very well, and it was a fact that 80% of repairs were done within three weeks.

In other words they refuse to answer any questions about finance and they are convinced that repairs are being done adequately. On this basis they want us to join them to plan the future!

As a West Indian friend said to me recently, 'They are the riders, and we are the donkey'. I think it is time we put an end to this and refused to carry them further. If we don't, then at the end of the journey they will turn round and blame us for the dung in the stables.

John Onyett

dominoes team



A lull in the action during the dominoes match between a team from Bilston, near Wolverhampton, and a local team, on Saturday 29th. June at Roundhay Road School. Playing, from L-R, John Crawford (Bilston), Gordon George, Bill Grant (Bilston), and Mr. Phillips, secretary of the Leeds team. Looking on is Mr. E. Watson.

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RECORD !!!SCIENCE

JUDGE DREAD-- BIG NINE

BIG SHOT - PI 626

Mr Dread has added another number to his collection (wonder what number he will get to before things fizzle out !) a more pronounced backing beat but still the usual suggestive lyrics. A record that will sell well, but not for the lovers of more ethnic reggae.

SKIN FLESH & BONES - BUTTER FE FISH

HARRY J - HJ 6670

The band that backed Al Brown with one of the many versions of the successful song "Here I Am" It is a heavy dub type instrumental with plenty of base and drive for the sound systems.

BILLY CAMPBELL - STAND BY ME

Billy a London based singer, who has written one or two of the recent Honey Boy hits, has come up with a reggae version of the old Ben E. King soul classic. It's pleasant, but well worth turning the record over to hear Billy sing one of his own songs.

from HUNTER SMITH

JIMMY CLIFF - LOOK WHAT YOU DONE TO MY LIFE, DEVIL WOMAN.

A track taken from his excellent album "House of Exile" I like the song but don't think it is as strong as his last two singles. I feel they could have pulled a stronger tune from the album.

JOHN HOLT - MY DESIRE

LORD KOOS - KOO 34

A more earthly sound coming from Mr. Holt without all the strings and trappings that we have been used to hearing on his last few records.

THE THREE DEGREES - WHEN WILL I SEE YOU AGAIN

Some sweet "Philly" soul from some sweet "Philly" chicks. A record that takes a few plays before it sinks in, but I don't think it will get the same success as "Year of Decision."

GEORGE Mc CRAE - ROCK YOUR BABY

JAY BOY - BOY 85

As I write, this record has jumped into the national charts at 45. A record for every collection and a monster disco sound for 74.

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WE DEMAND GOOD HOUSING

People in Chapeltown are sick and tired of not getting their repairs done quickly and efficiently by the corporation housing department, so the Community Association has set up a legal action group to inform people of their rights and help them get things done.

If you are a private tenant and you have a statutory nuisance, eg. excessive damp in your house, you can complain to the Public Health Department, and they will make your landlord do the necessary repairs or take him to court for you. BUT if you are a corporation tenant the public health department will not prosecute the housing dept. because they are both part of the same local authority. However section 99 of the Public Health Act 1936 gives power to a tenant (or other aggrieved person) to make a complaint to a Justice of the Peace and from there to follow the legal courses which the public health dept. would follow in taking a private landlord to court and the court can order the Local Authority to get rid of the nuisance.

Legal force

In other words if the corporation wont do your repairs willingly you can use the law to force them to do whats necessary.

With help from the Shelter Community Action Team we have produced some forms that tenants can fill in and send to the public health department. This is the first step. After the public health inspector has visited the house and made his report, if the repairs are still left undone we will have an independant done and then you have the right to take the corporation to court which can force them to do the repairs. When you fill in the form you are saying that you have repairs that need doing and that you know that

you have a right to have them done THAT IS ALL. If any case comes to court in Chapeltown the Community Association will give all the help possible to the tenants (most of whom will be entitled to Legal Aid)

Possible subsidence

So far we are handling three cases, the first is a flat in Nassau Place which has a ceiling falling down. This has been repaired. The second is a house in Louis Street which the tenant had very good reason to believe was subsiding but although she expressed her concern repeatedly for several months the rent man AND the counter clerks AND the housing manager (Mr. Reemmer himself) and although her house is almost on the doorstep of the rent office nothing was done until we took up the case, now she can sleep easily again knowing that the house wont fall down around her. The third case concerned several outstanding repair jobs and a possible case of overcrowding. This house is on Reginald Street and if the repairs haven't been done within a very short time the tenant may be forced to go a step further in her fight for her rights

YOU HAVE A RIGHT to get your repairs done just like the landlords have a RIGHT to collect your rent. If you didn't pay your rent you know they would bloody soon take you to court so why not beat them with the same stick?

If you have any housing problems or you know anyone who has (for example pensioners who often have no-one to back them up) please let us know. We all want decent homes - we've all had enough of bad conditions - now lets get together and do something about it. For further information contact Margaret Scott, Chapeltown Community Association, 26, Sholebroke View.

STREGA club

Roundhay Road

RESIDENT D-J

monday to saturday 8pm _ 2am

sunday 1pm _ 3pm