

April - June 2004

Special points of interest:

- TLRC Conference
- Stow Fair Photos with the Cyber Pilots
- Policing: Reflections on Hungary
- Travelling Light: An Alternative Energy Initiative
- Watton Horse Fair
- Viv's Spares Files/Travels with Bat
- Permaculture Woodland Gathering

Management Committee-Meetings:
24th July
11th September
23rd October
4th December

AGM: 19th June 2004

Editor: Tammy Furey
Community Website
Manager
Email me on: Webmaster@Gypsy-Traveller.org



Friends, Families and Travellers



New National Co-ordinator at FFT

Due to the resignation of John Patman, for personal reasons, in autumn 2004 we are pleased to announce the appointment of Rob Whitehead as the New National Co-ordinator.

“A big hello to all FFT readers, just a quick introduction to you all, I've just taken over as the National Co-ordinator of FFT. I have previously worked at such organisations as Liberty and several other Law Centres and independent advice agencies, and hope the experience and contacts I have gained there will assist in the development of FFT.

Even after the short amount of time I've been in the job it is apparent that there are many significant challenges for the Gypsy and Traveller communities over the com-

ing months, with the progress of the Housing Bill & the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill, through Parliament; as well as consultations on ID Cards, and a New Commission for Equality & Human Rights; this is only the start of the work we have to do as the list of challenges we face goes on and on.

I hope that along with the very capable staff and the Directors at FFT, and importantly your participation; we will be able to make our voice heard and get the services, rights and respect we so richly deserve. If you would like to talk to myself or any other member of staff at FFT please email – fft@communitybase.org or telephone 01273 234777”

Rob Whitehead

All Welcome at the Annual General Meeting of Friends, Families and Travellers

Speakers:

**Noelette Keane, Irish Travellers Movement in
Britain**

Andrew Ryder, Gypsy and Traveller Law Reform

1pm, 19th June,
Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG



The Traveller Law Reform Coalition

- On the 7th of May the TLRC held a major conference in Birmingham, at which over 250 delegates attended, the great majority of which came from the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- On the 10th of May with Yvette Cooper MP, the Under Secretary of State at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister met with representatives of the TLRC who underlined the importance of the Government introducing a clear duty to provide/facilitate sites. The TLRC also called for the Government to create a Task Force, the majority of which should come from the Gypsy and Traveller community. Its function would be to advise the Government on its reforms and give an overview.

A progress report on the TLRC can be accessed on our website at:

www.travellerslaw.org.uk

In the report we receive some important endorsements

Ken Livingstone - Mayor of London

"Gypsies and Travellers are one of the most marginalized groups in our society. The TLRC has worked hard to increase the dialogue between the Gypsy and Traveller community and those in charge of the policies and services that directly impact upon the lives of this community. Only by consulting with Gypsies and Travellers can decision-makers ensure that the policies and services they develop will work to address the issues adversely affecting this community. The TLRC has made a valuable contribution to this process"

Trevor Phillips - Chair Commission for Racial Equality

"The Commission for Racial Equality firmly supports the work of the Traveller Law Reform Coalition, which is playing a critical role in driving improvements for Gypsies and Travellers, and pro-

viding a powerful voice to lobby for change. There are clearly huge challenges ahead - and we hope to work closely with the coalition in taking this and our own Gypsy and Traveller strategy forward."

Catherine Beard - The National Association of Gypsy Women

"When the Gypsy and Traveller people arrived here over 600 years ago we were the first asylum seekers and although we have been in the country for this long we have never really risen above refugee status. Now things are changing and Gypsy and Traveller people have a voice, the TLRC is not only bringing people together but making politicians more aware of the desperate need for sites".

About the TLRC

Our primary aim is to lobby the Government to address Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs. The TLRC mission statement opposes all forms of discrimination - racial, economic and sexual. We aim to have a gender balance on the committee. The TLRC does not have a Chair or President, the leadership is collective. The majority of the committee are Gypsies and Travellers, it is composed of the organisations, like Friends, Families and Travellers, that have been active in the establishment and campaign work of the TLRC.

**Join the TLRC -
Contact Andrew Ryder,
Policy Development Worker at:
25 Clarence Rd, London N22 8PG
07 985 684 921**

"Only by consulting with Gypsies and Travellers can decision-makers ensure that the policies and services they develop will work to address the issues adversely affecting this community.

The TLRC has made a valuable contribution to this process"

The Traveller Law Reform Coalition - Conference 2004

The Traveller Law Reform Coalition held a large and successful conference in Birmingham on the 7th of May. Over 250 people attended the event and a majority of them were Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers and members of other travelling groups. The majority of the speakers were also from the Gypsy and Traveller community. People came from all over the country and from as far away as Scotland.

Len Smith welcomed the conference delegates to Birmingham and noted that a majority of those present were women. He welcomed this and stated that such active involvement by women in campaigning will help bring forth tremendous results and enable the Gypsy and Traveller community to make real headway.

One of the speakers, Rodney Bickerstaffe, President of the Labour Campaign for Travellers' Rights, declared: "The battle to live your way of life has come at a cost to all members of the family, fathers have struggled with the predicament of making a living in spite of constant eviction on the road or the worries of long protracted legal wrangles to get planning permission for somewhere

to live. Children have been denied that most basic of human rights, the right to an education because of the constant cycle of eviction, to the shame of our society when some have found themselves within a school they have been subjected to vile and detestable levels of abuse and racial prejudice, with children from the settled community mindlessly mouthing the hate of their parents, who should know better but clearly don't".

For the mothers it has perhaps been the hardest, we know that Gypsy and Traveller women have the highest maternal death rates within our society and high infant mortality rates, upon their shoulders have lain the burden and demands of keeping the family together and steering it through the ordeals that are now sadly common place for many Gypsy and Traveller families".

Rodney Bickerstaffe felt that though that the hard campaigning, from the Traveller Law Reform Coalition, was now finally making an impression on the Government. He and other speakers, such as Lord Avebury and Charles Smith, repeated the necessity of the Government to introduce a statutory duty on local authorities to provide and facilitate sites.



Participants at a workshop



Charles Smith, Chair of the Gypsy Council

Successful workshops were held on issues related to youth, Scotland, the media, Gypsy and Traveller groups in the north, security of tenure on sites and planning. We hope to shortly place reports of these workshops and summaries on the TLRC website.

We hope to hold a conference again next year .

Andrew Ryder

Policing: Reflections on Hungary

By John Coxhead, Police Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer

I have just returned from a trip organised by the Foreign Commonwealth Office to look at police liaison with Gypsies in Hungary. This is a trip I would like to do again taking Gypsies and Travellers from Britain along.

Hungary has got some terrible problems. The poverty of some Gypsies is appalling, by this I mean starvation, with some getting into trouble for 'stealing' fallen twigs to keep their kids from freezing.

I can't say that all I saw and heard was good, some of it was sickening. As well as abject poverty, there are acknowledged problems with racism in the police towards Gypsies.

It was interesting to make international comparisons. In Hungary there is no 'movement' anymore since, as a Gypsy explained to me, they were 'assimilated' over a hundred years ago and now mainly live in flats and houses. Stories of travelling are now part of oral history.

The existing housing conditions vary, but the slum and ghetto area of District 9 in Budapest I visited was grim, having been designed by the architect of Aushwitz.

Gypsies make up a much bigger part of the population than in the UK. In Hungary, Gypsies are the largest ethnic minority, about 8% of the population.

I found there was some formal dialogue between Gypsies and Government in Hungary, maybe because of the size of the minority population. I attended meetings with Government officials equivalent to our Home Office *with Gypsies* to talk about things. This is something I am not aware of in the UK at that level.

I found some inspirational people who were making a difference. A couple of examples would be Gyorgy Makula and Janos Csoka.

Gyorgy Makula is a Gypsy police officer who isn't a 'token', although he is very brave and I for one admire him. Gyorgy is proud to be a Gypsy and proud to be a police officer, and has a life time of work ahead of him.

Janos Csoka, a Gypsy who works in the 4th district of Budapest with the Roma Minorities' Administration Office, is at the other end of the generation gap, and whose wisdom truly inspired me. He spoke of Martin Luther King, of Ghandi, and of equality.

So whilst there are some terrible problems in Hungary, the process of dialogue seems to be happening and I think this has the potential to be stronger on a pan European footing. It's also interesting to note that Gypsies are also the biggest ethnic minority as a whole in Europe.

There was much interest from the Gypsies I spoke to of closer ties with Britain, and from the National Hungarian Police in thinking more about best practice in policing.

Gyorgy Makula is due to revisit Britain soon, and I hope this further trip will help policing professionals to continue to consider the issues. There is no doubt to me that there is much work to be done in developing police liaison with Gypsies and Travellers, but I am also convinced that the way forward is in working together, changing attitudes and breaking down barriers.

John Coxhead can be contacted on
07791 365812 / 01773 572088

Or at
john.coxhead@derbyshire.pnn.police.uk

"Gyorgy Makula is a Gypsy police officer who isn't a 'token'proud to be a Gypsy and proud to be a police officer...."

Travelling Light - An Alternative Energy Initiative

Due to the large number of requests for funding to provide Travellers with solar panels and other forms of alternative energy, the Trustees will be launching a one-off Alternative Energy Initiative called 'Travelling Light' which will provide 100 free kits (made up of a solar panel, inverter and battery) to Travellers throughout the UK.

Although application forms and guidelines will not be available until the early summer, the Trust is keen to advertise this initiative widely to ensure everyone who might benefit from this scheme is made aware of it. In particular, the Trustees want to ensure that traditional Travellers, who might not otherwise apply to such an initiative, get to know about the scheme and its benefits.

In relation to this funding programme, the Trustees will be particularly keen to support applications from:

- People living on unauthorised sites or sites without access to mains electric
- Horse-drawn Travellers & Bargees
- Individuals or families experiencing hardships due to special educational, health or other needs where solar panels will be of particular benefit.

FFT Eviction Leaflet

FFT will be launching an Eviction Leaflet in June. The leaflet is designed as a simple checklist of Traveller's rights during an eviction.

The Eviction Leaflet will be available to download as a PDF on the FFT website:

A letter of support from a recognised representative such as a health visitor, teacher, solicitor or member of one of the many Traveller organisations working throughout the UK will also be required in support of the application.

The Trustees also want to ensure that there is a relatively even distribution of the Travelling Light kits amongst the various different groups of Travellers as well as regionally throughout the UK.

Please check our website for further developments and information about this programme.

www.travellersaidtrust.org

To contact us:

Email: info@travellersaidtrust.org;

Phone:
01269 870 621;

or write to:
P.O Box 16,
Llangyndeyrn,
Kidwelly,
Wales,
SA17 5YT

'Travelling Light' will provide 100 free kits (made up of a solar panel, inverter and battery) to Travellers throughout the UK.

www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/evictions

The leaflet can be downloaded by organisations and individuals for use on sites and in an emergency.

Young Friends, Families and Travellers at Stow Fair

We went to Stow Fair and played in the big children's area provided by Gloucestershire Traveller Education Services



Young Friends, Families and Travellers at Roma Nation Day Football



This is the second year of the Gypsy Shield Cup, held on Roma Nation Day on the 8th April at the Hartley Centre, London. Teams of six-a-side competed for the Under 16 and Under 13 cups which were presented by the Gypsy Council.

Roma FC won the Under 16 Gypsy Shield Cup for the first time in the tournament's two year history. In a nail biting final, Roma FC scored in the final minutes to

bring the score to 8-7 to Roma FC against Delaney United in the Under 13 Gypsy Shield Cup

Permaculture Woodland Gathering, Sustainable Woodland Conference & Hill Holt Woodland Fayre

- A forum of networking, debate and learning for those interested in the future of our woodlands
- A showcase of the best examples in sustainable woodland management
- A meeting place for scholars, practitioners and enthusiasts for their mutual benefit

The overall aim of the event is to explore the current state & future of sustainable woodland management, and the possibility of establishing livelihoods from working woodland whose management is based on respect for and an understanding of its ecology.

In this context, the Permaculture Woodland Gathering will

- Highlight our current understanding of the ecology of woodlands and its related habitats
 - Look at possible markets for sustainable woodland products
 - Present case studies of successful projects
 - Celebrate the history as well as the existing culture of sustainable woodland management.
- We will have a wide range of presenters and participants, from successful woodland managers, ecologists involved in cutting edge woodland research, policy makers and product designers, to lobbying and marketing organisations for woodland products & issues. We plan to produce a report from the contributions to the gathering.

Permaculture Woodland Gathering Programme

Thursday 3rd June

Arrivals from 4pm,
Welcome & Introduction 7pm, followed by Case Studies & Informal Networking.

Sustainable Woodland Conference

Friday 4th June

We are inviting representatives of government bodies, NGOs and a number of presenters from permaculture and sustainable woodland projects around the country. There will be presentations in the morning, followed by two sets of workshops in the afternoon and closing after a plenary session.

Hill Holt Woodland Fayre, 9am-6pm Saturday 5th June

A Celebration of Woodland Life. Featuring crafts, demonstrations, stalls, kids activities, food & entertainment, with a showcase of sustainable woodland management.

Tickets are £5 Adults £2 Children ;
Vehicle parking £3.

Enquiries: tel. 01636 892 836 email
woods@permaculture.org.uk; during
event: 07963 827 456.

Networking & Futures Sunday 6th June

Looking back over the past three days, recall highlights and discuss ideas for the future.

Hill Holt Wood

The Hill Holt Wood project itself is worth the visit for a site tour alone. Nigel & Karen Lowthrop, the initiators, have established a thriving community woodland now owned by a co-operative consisting of residents from nearby villages and towns. They work together in an attempt to reconnect people of all ages and backgrounds with nature, and have created some amazing spaces in the process.

Bookings and enquiries

Woodland Gathering, BCM Permaculture Association, London WC1N 3XX;
Telephone: 0845 458 1805
Email: woods@permaculture.org.uk



Horse Fair cancelled - Travellers blamed

The Watton Horse Fair in Norfolk has been cancelled indefinitely. Travellers are being blamed for the decision. Reasons for closure have been cited increased violence, shoplifting, vandalism, petty crime human faeces littered nearby Wayland Wood, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and fields surrounding Hall Farm. In recent years residents have felt besieged by the large numbers of people flooding to the town. The fair on May 9 also caused terrible traffic queues and smeared the road with mud. Auctioneer Tyrone R Roberts, from Dereham, told the Eastern Daily Press "Over the last few years, we have attracted members of the travelling community who would roll up two days before the fair. While we have about 6000 people at the event, there have been about 30 people causing trouble and hassle. We have taken the decision to suspend the other two we've got booked for this year, on July 11 and September 5, in the hope we will discourage those people causing the problem. We will look at it again for next year". He added: "We are not prepared to put up with this level of anti-social

behaviour."

A spokesman for Watton Town Council said: "There was a considerable amount of damage and people told a recent public meeting they felt they could not leave their properties during the horse fair. They felt under siege in their own homes."

Jake Bowers, spokesman for the National Romany Travellers Alliance (NRTA), said: "Horse fairs are a part of English culture. There is a lot of racism across the eastern counties, stereotyping the 'thieving traveller', but these are old stereotypes. and sometimes some do commit crime, because that is the same with any community – before events like horse fairs are cancelled" he said. "I am sure it is a knee-jerk reaction and would encourage organisers to think through their reactions."

The Watton Horse Fair cancelled originally appeared in Eastern Daily Press, May 20, 2004.

The Northern Regional Network of Gypsies, Travellers, Showpeople & Circus People

Founded in June 2003 by a group of 5 individuals from Sheffield, Bradford & Leeds. The network now has members from Middlesbrough, Stockton, Doncaster, Darlington, Manchester, Hull, Bury, Derbyshire, Blackpool, Lancashire, Merseyside, York and the National Showman's Guild.

Aims and Objectives of the Network:

To raise awareness by:

- Training the wider community on the issues and cultures of all members
- Create an awareness training pack, which has relevance to the network, i.e. can be adapted by each group if needed;

- Create a leaflet looking at the 'myths and truths' of issues and assumptions.

To give members the knowledge and support to deal with and challenge issues and to play an active role in decision making, to achieve resolution.

To hold a North of England Conference

..and much more!

For more details, please contact

Helen Jones, Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange: 0113 2346556

Rachel Ingham, National Association of Gypsy Women: 01325 240033

"Horse fairs are a part of English culture. There is a lot of racism across the eastern counties, stereotyping the 'thieving traveller', but these are old stereotypes. It needs to be determined if travellers did cause those crimes.....before events like horse fairs are cancelled"

The Adult Homefinders Scheme

The Adult Homefinders Scheme is a department of West Sussex and Caring Services that looks to help adults, who need care, to find long or short-term placements. Often people needing care remain at home with their families and these families need well earned breaks from caring. The Adult Homefinders Scheme recruits and supports people to become carers for others in their communities.

The Scheme is currently looking for carers within and working for, Traveller and Gypsy communities in West Sussex. It is hoped that if this project is successful it could be adopted in other parts of the country.

Adult Homefinders' carers and their families open their homes to provide people with a place to stay with the support they need. They can help people for short periods during the day, welcome people to stay in their home for short breaks or provide long term home to someone who needs one. It is also possible for an approved carer to move into the home of a person requiring support whilst the regular carer has a short break.

The Scheme is working closely with: The Gypsy Council; Friends, Families and

Travellers; and the Gypsy Liaison Officer for West Sussex, to determine how to recruit volunteers so that the Scheme can offer short breaks to adults who are full time carers. To ensure that people have the right skills to take on the responsibility of caring, the Adult Homefinders Scheme will recruit, support, monitor and offer training, on site, before someone would be placed as a new carer. People need to know that if someone comes to stay in their home it will be a positive experience for the person needing care, the carer and both families.

Initial research has shown that there are currently people who need this service and the Scheme would be interested in hearing from any people interested in becoming carers on the Scheme. Payments will be made to people who become approved carers for the Scheme; they will be paid for the hours that they care for someone placed through the Scheme.

For more information about this service or if you are interested in becoming a carer, please contact:

Luke Evans, Adult Homefinders Scheme
on 01444 254463

“The Scheme is currently looking for carers within and working for, Traveller and Gypsy communities in West Sussex.”

Delegation of Gypsy Women seek justice

A delegation of Gypsy Women, including Janie Codona and Sylvia Dunn (National Roma Women's Association) left for Strasburg, as this newsletter goes to press (26th of May), to seek justice for Gypsies and Travellers in the UK. They carry with them a 150 dossier and two video films of the Meadowlands eviction. The delegation aim to highlight to plight of Kathy Buckland (see previous FFT newsletter) and ask the EU Human Rights commissioner to investigate the Meadow-

lands eviction and other evictions throughout the UK. The delegation will argue that continued evictions, in the face of no structured Government policy, is deplorable. Evictions should stop until there is a comprehensive Government policy and adequate site provision.

Preparations are being made for Human Rights case concerning Kathy Buckland.

Travellers' Voices (a year on)

**A Regional conference hosted by
Ormiston Children and Families
Trust.**

**Friday 11th June 2004
9.45am - 3.30pm**

**Qton Farm
24 Cambridge Science Park
Milton Road
Cambridge
CB4 0FN**

This event will celebrate and promote best practice in work with the Travelling community and service providers. It will also mark the achievements since last year's conference of the same name. It will have a regional focus providing an excellent opportunity to network and find out more about local initiatives.

The price is £95 per place to include lunch and refreshments. Free places are available to members of the Travelling Community. A small number of low cost places are also available to organisations working with Traveller communities. Unfortunately, due to health and safety, children under 16 cannot attend.

Programme:

- 09.45 Coffee and Registration
- 10.15 Welcome and Introduction
 - *Diana Read, Chief Executive, Ormiston*
 - *Jake Bowers, Romani Journalist*
- 10.45 A National Perspective
 - *Cliff and Janie Codona*
- 11.15 Coffee
- 11.35 Workshops:
Sharing Best Practice:
 - i. Drugs and the Travelling Community
 - ii. Advocacy and the Travelling Community.
 - iii. Youth Consultation
- 12.35 Lunch
- 13.35 Discussion Groups:
 - i. Accommodation
 - ii. Children and Young People
 - iii. Health and Well-Being
- 14.35 Workshop Feedback
- 15.10 Close of the conference and tea
- 15.30 Departure

For further information please contact Jyothi Unni, Ormiston Children and Families Trust, 7e High Street, Fenstanton, Cambridgeshire, PE28 9LQ. Telephone: 01480 496010.

“This event will celebrate and promote best practice in work with the Travelling community and service providers.”

Sussex Traveller Women's Health Project

The Sussex Traveller Women's Health Project is Funded by the Department of Health. Our main objectives are to:

- Establish a model of Traveller Participation in the promotion of health.
- Develop the skills of Traveller Women in providing community based health services.
- Assist with dialogue between Travellers and Health Service providers.

- Reduce inequalities in existing services and highlight gaps.

We work with Travellers to identify their own health needs and provide opportunities for Traveller women to train as Community Health Volunteers for their own families and community. If you are interested in any aspect of the project then please contact the Health Project Manager:

Zoe Matthews on 01273 234796

Viv's Spares File



Hello Folks,
I happened to blink sometime around the end of winter and zap! I was immediately catapulted into summertime. Did you know that the 25 year span between 1987 and 2012 is only one mere "nanosecond" in galactic time reckoning? And that we are spinning through it towards a brand new cycle of at least 26,000 years? It'll be upon us before we know it, and hopefully by then "clean up planet earth" and free energy projects will have to be two top-of-the-list priorities. Pipedream? I'm backing it all the way and I'm not putting any bets on because money and the whole way we live our lives are two key factors in the big shake up which is now well under way.

The prime factor which I hope most people now cannot disagree with is that changes are necessary and that is exactly what we are all going to experience. So get ready – and enjoy it! And now back to more mundane matters of life. See you next issue, have a great summer.

Avalon alternative autos – breaking Dodge 50's, D50 spares + repairs and bought for cash. Mechanical services + part finding for old British buses + trucks. Felix 07751 338757

In July 2002 it became the first garage in the UK to sell blended Biodiesel to the general public. The product, Greenenergy Globaldiesel currently accounts for almost 30%+ and rising of all garage diesel sales.

The Green Shop, Bisley, GL6 7BX (01452 770629) whose stocks include energy saving gadgets, composters, solar power outdoor lighting, as well as locally produced items such as honey and body care products. Also green literature and demos of solar power and rainwater harvesting systems. Online and mail order services across the UK. 01452 77200 for rainharvester systems.

Mobile caravan servicing, tourers, statics – Corgi Registered. Gas safety checks, certificates issued. Tel:01963 440735/ 07866 234750

Corgi H.Q Basingstoke 01256 372200

Steve, Glastonbury based, may still be doing some auto electrics. 01458 834980 / 07855680017

"Wild about Woods" leaflets, CDs, Cassettes. Free phone 0800 026965

Maddox Metals. Scrap, old farm machinery, garage scrap, cars, sheets, caravans. 01267 232171. Mobile 07812245694 (May sell caravan windows, parts etc). South Wales.

Lories wanted for export/breaking/resale: Merc. 1617/814/811/508/608/207/307/etc. Bedford T.K/ T.L/ AWD/ Leyland/ Dodge/ plus many others.

Second-hand spares sold. 07971 634988. Mobile 01269 822320, Carmarthenshire, S.Wales.

Readers please note:-

The new contacts address for Viv's File is
c/o Sunnybank,
Rhydlewis,
Llandysul,
Credigion,
S.Wales, SA44 5SL.



**Solar & wind
energy systems**
Design
Installation
Equipment
Service

Simon Harwood - Mobile: 07967 713724
E-mail: simozia@hotmail.com

Holbrook Garage, Bisley, Nr. Stroud, Gloucs, was the first (or so I am told) in the county of Gloucs. to sell unleaded fuel.

viv



Travels with Bat Chapter One- "Spring Fever" (part two)



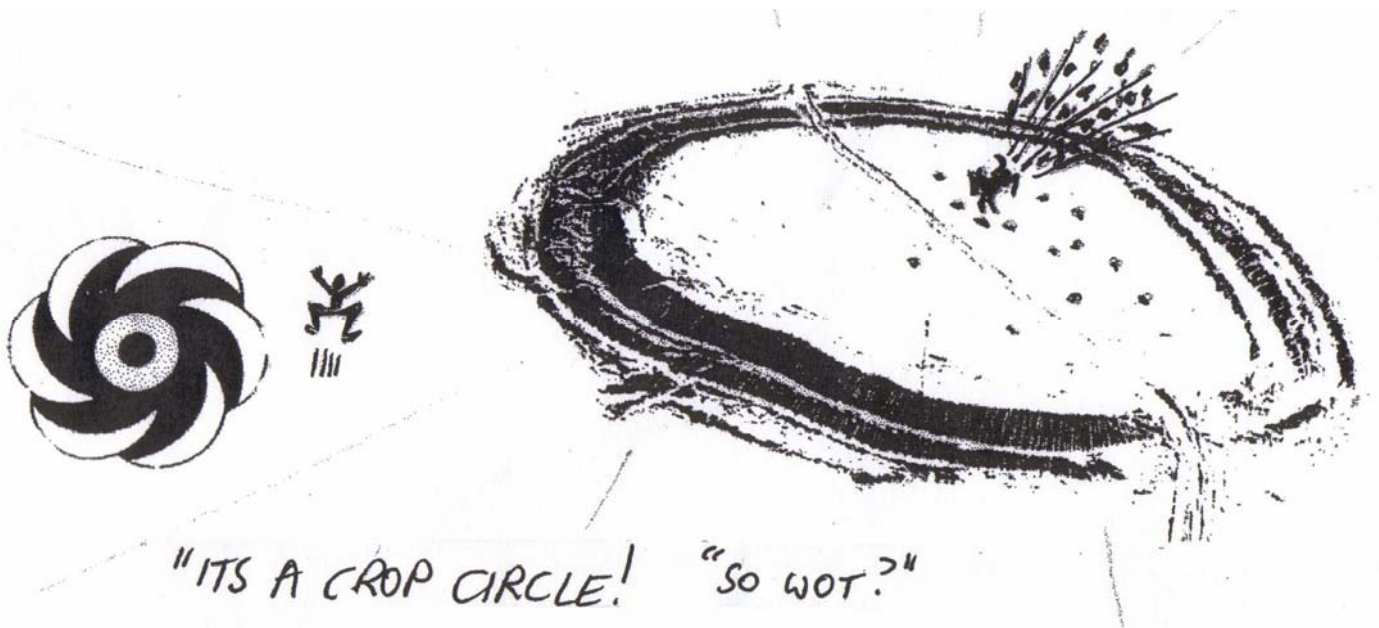
"Well folks, here we iz, ramblin' round't ramparts o' Barkbury Castle, Woofshire. Fresh breeze waftin' my ears, prick't fer rabbit-scrabble, pong-o-cow an' sheep oop me nose. An' alla sudden an' 'orrible piercing shriek cuts through my dog-bliss as HER goes straight over't ramparts, down an' down, until SHE becomes a little dot below. I watch her cross road an' go into a big yellow field. In't middle of it is a whirly-thing. Spying many mole hills on top of t hillfort, I forget 'bout HER an' dive on 'em, buryin' my nose in crumbly-earthy smells of moleness....."

* * * * *

here. I walk carefully along the tramlines, getting soaking wet. There has been heavy rain – and now huge black clouds are threatening a storm. The carpark on top of the hillfort closes its gates for the night soon. I don't want my van locked inside. And Bat is still up there on the ramparts. I hurry back up the ridged slopes of Barbury Castle.....

* * * * *

The crop circle has filled me with an incredible energy. And an appetite, I soon pull into the carpark of "The Bell" on the A4361 to Avebury. At the bar I phone a friend who is interested in crop circles to be told this



* * * * *

I am surprised and thrilled to see a crop circle and hurry down the steep South-West slope of Barbury Castle and cautiously skirt the rape field. The rape seems to have a strange luminosity – dazzling yellow flowers and bluish-green stems and leaves. I can't relax. The countryside all round is very open. Military planes buzz across the sky – and I don't know if the farmer who owns this field wants me in

one appeared on April 20th so it is already two weeks old. They also tell me that the first one this year appeared on January 31st at Sennen in Cornwall – in a grass field!

"We get lots of 'em round here!" retorts the barman, "and many are fakes, made by folk with nothing better to do! One appeared behind this pub three days ago. The farmer who owns the field is going spare trying to straighten out his crop before it attracts too much attention". A huddle of local men

Travels with Bat

Chapter One-

"Spring Fever" (part two)



around a corner table all nod their heads, roll their eyes, then sip their beer. One man, large, fifty-ish, with ruddy outdoor face, sidles up to me at the bar. Adopting a conspiratorial air, he winks, leans close and mutters: Have you got any blow?"

forces envelope us and we surrender to the magic of Avebury.

* * * * *

©Viviana Nomad

More of Bat's incredible adventures with "HER" in't next issue



* * * * *



"HAVE YOU GOT?"

* * * * *

Later, I am parked up in one of my favourite Wiltshire places – Avebury – for the night. I realise that in the space of ten hours I have travelled from a rainbow circle, to a crop circle and finally to a stone circle.

It is 11pm. Heavy rain falls from a blanked-out sky. Bat and I wander amongst the massive stones. We are drawn to one that looks and feels like the head and shoulders of a huge, sombre woman. She looms suddenly out of the inky wet gloom. The powerful magnetic

Editors notes: I admit to making some typos last edition - apologies to everyone. Here are the corrections:

- Page 13: Line 11: out = our
- Page 13: Line 31/32: begun = began
- Page 14: Line 40: through = thought
- Page 14: Line 47: dog = dogs
- Page 15: Line 06: pint = point
- Page 15: Line 11: stretched = stretches
- Page 15: Line 38: programs = pictograms



Noticeboard: For Sale, News, Events and more.

Noticeboard

A Romany way of life video online

The idea from David Allum for his daughter Pamela and Diana to give an insight into the views of Romany girls in 2002 are contrasted with the words for Pete Mercer MBE from the East Anglia Gypsy Council and David Gosling Traveller Liaison Officer for Suffolk. View the video at <http://comshowcase.mediabridge.org.uk/flash/index.html>

New exhibition at Hertford Museum

In conjunction with Hertfordshire Traveller Education Project, called 'Passing Places, A Look at Hertfordshire's Traveller Communities'. Opens 1 May until 30 Oct, admission free. The exhibition covers a wide variety of issues such as work, living space, historical facts and traditions and customs. There are two listening posts so that visitors can listen to local Travellers talking about family, fairs, work etc. Also a virtual tour of a Showman's wagon on display as well as objects lent by local Travellers. A lively series of events compliments the exhibition to cater for all ages and interests, including a talk by Charles Smith, Chairman of the Gypsy Council, Storytelling Days with Pan Box Stories in May and July, Richard O'Neill from Gypsy Expressions will be in the museum in June and August with the 'Rokkering Dakker'. For more details contact the museum on 01992 582686 or see the website, www.hertfordmuseum.org

I'm writing to ask for your help in promoting a couple of **Traveller led best practice seminars** that the National Romani Travellers Alliance have organised in cooperation with Fenland District Council.

They are a perfect opportunity for policemen, social workers, health workers, housing professionals, teachers, or anybody else involved in delivering other services to the Romani community to get the inside story on Britain's oldest, but least understood, ethnic minority. Any money raised from the seminars will go

directly to supporting Romani activists.

Working With Travellers cultural awareness seminars will be held the Oliver Cromwell Hotel in March, Cambridgeshire on the 16th and 17th of June. Contact David Bailey, Traveller Services Manager on: 01354 622481 Email: dbailey@fenland.gov.uk for more details.

Alternatively you can get more information, including a PDF leaflet which includes all the necessary information from:

www.englishunlimited.co.uk/traveller.html

Visit our virtual noticeboard at:
www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/fft/noticeboard.htm

FFT welcomes letters and articles from all our members - so get writing! - we look forward to hearing from you

Contacts

Local FFT Contacts

Brighton:

Judy Pointing -
01273 698531

Cornwall:

Sue Burton -
01736 752036

Worcester:

Sheila Wells, Worcester -
01905 821 302

Lincolnshire:

Rob Torkington -
07971 542 108

Somerset:

Tony Thomson -
07779 310 577

Surrey:

Franqui Wolf, Dorking -
01306 883254

Other Gypsy and Traveller Organisations

The Traveller Law Reform Coalition,

Andrew Ryder, Policy Development Worker, Banderway House, 156-162 Kilburn High Road London NW6 4JD 020 7625 2255 email: romani-stan@yahoo.com www.travellerslaw.org.uk

Travellers Aid Trust

Small Grants to Travellers PO Box 16 Llangyndeyrn Kidwelly SA17 5YT email: travellersaid-trust@yahoo.co.uk www.travellersaidtrust.org

Travellers Consultancy Service

Freelance consultancy services in all areas affecting the Gypsy & Traveller Community in the UK www.travellerscs.co.uk info@travellerscs.co.uk

The Travellers' School Charity

PO Box 2, Goodwicke, Pembrokeshire, SA64 0ZQ 01437 532 432 www.travellersschool.plus.com

Educational Advice for Travellers

Fiona Earle, P.O. Box 36, Grantham, Lincs., NG31 6EW

The Gypsy Council

Charlie Smith / Anne Bagehot - 01708 868986

The Association of Gypsy Women

Sylvia Dunn - 01268 782792

New Futures Association (NFA)

c/o 42 Wade Court, Lings, Northampton, NN3 8ND, Tel: 07880 753 713 Email: cal-nfa@hotmail.com or mail@newfutures.fsnet.co.uk

BIAS Irish Traveller Project

Banderway House, 156-162 Kilburn High Road London NW6 4JD 020 7625 2255

National Travellers Action Group

Cliff & Janie Codona 01767 689736

Irish Traveller Movement in Britain

Banderway House, 156-162 Kilburn High Road London NW6 4JD 020 7625 2255

York Traveller Project

01904 630526

London Gypsy and Traveller Unit

020 8533 2002

Scottish Gypsy Traveller Association -

0131 650 6314

Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group (DGLG) -

Ernest Bailey Community Centre, Office 3, New Street, Matlock, DE4 3FE. Tel/Fax 01629 583300

Irish Traveller Movement

4/5 Eustace Street, Dublin 2, Ireland - 00353 1 679 6577

Labour Campaign for Travellers Rights

0113 248 6746

Europe Roma

0208 802 7496 - 07812 694 347

Pavee Point

North Great Charles St, Dublin 1 00 353 1 878 0255

Robert Barton Trust

3 Silver Street Glastonbury Somerset, BA6 6BS Tel: 01458-833797



FFT Contacts

Contacts can also be found at:
www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/contacts.htm

FFT contacts, other Gypsy and Traveller organisations, legal assistance, planning advice and more.....

For more contacts, please visit

www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/contacts.htm



Contacts continued.....

The Children's Society
Rachel Grant & Debbie
Harvey - 92b High Street,
Mid-Somer Norton, Somers-
set - 01761 411771

TravellerSpace
c/o Henjy, Canonstown,
Hayle. Kernow. TR27 6LZ.
01736 711 378
traveller-
space@linuxmail.org

Helen Jones
Leeds Gypsy and Traveller
Exchange
7 Shafton Lane
Holbeck
Leeds LS11 9LY
01132346556
07974574889

**Cardiff Gypsy Sites
Group,**
114 Clifton Street,
Roath,
Cardiff, CF24 1LW

**Save the Children
(Scotland)**
Michelle Lloyd - 0131 527
8200

PressWise -
Mike Jempson
0117 941 5866

Groundswell
- 0207 737 5500

**National Association of
Boat Owners**
01749 677195

**Commission for Racial
Equality (CRE)**
020 7828 7022

Justice?/Schnews
- 01273 685913

Planning Aid - 01963
230045

Education Otherwise -
0870 730 0074

Land Registry Office -
01705 768 820

**The National Small
Woods Association,**
3 Perkins Beach Dingle,
Stiperstones, Shropshire,
SY5 0PF, - 01743
792644

**Legal Advice and
Representation**

**Traveller Advice Team
(TAT) (Community
Law Partnership)**
24hr. mobile: 07768
316755; Advice Line for
Travellers: 0845 120
2980; and Landline:
0121 685 8595

Public Law Project -
020 7467 9800

**Squatters Advisory Ser-
vice**
020 7359 8814

Legal Aid Head Office
020 7813 1000

Chapter 7
The Potato Store,
Flaxdrayton Farm, S.
Petherton, Somerset. Tel:
01460 249204.
Email: chap-
ter7@tlio.demon.co.uk

*FFT contacts, other Gypsy
and Traveller
organisations, legal
assistance, planning
advice and more.....
For more contacts,
please visit
[www.Gypsy-
Traveller.org/contacts.htm](http://www.Gypsy-
Traveller.org/contacts.htm)*



Educational Advice for Travellers (EAT)

We still have Tess the Traveller books available. Tess can be bought from the main FFT office.

We have a pre-school outdoor play area suitable for events. It is equipped with

push along toys, building bricks, Wendy house and other toys. The play area will be at the Northern Green Gathering and HES FES. For more information, please contact: EAT, Fiona Earle, P.O. Box 36, Grantham, Lincs NG31 6EW

Friends, Families & Travellers was established in response to the passage through Parliament of the 1994 Criminal Justice & Public Order Act.

It has since grown into a nationally recognised voluntary organisation which serves the whole spectrum of the Traveller community, both traditional and new, settled or on the road.

The majority of work promoted by FFT is carried out by an Advice and Information Unit based in Brighton and covers evictions, harassment, planning, employment, benefits, education, health, civil rights, discrimination and legal representation. The Unit is also active in research, monitoring, mediation and policy development at local and national levels.

In 1999, FFT was one of five organisations short listed for the Human Rights Award, part of the United Nations International Day of Human Rights.

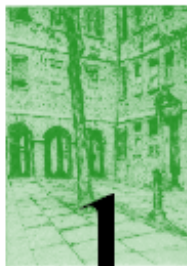
FFT became a company (non-profit voluntary organisation) limited by guarantee on the 14th of July 1998, no. 3597515. The company is run by a management committee made up of directors elected by the membership. Management committee meetings are held every six weeks and are open to all members.

FFT
Community Base
113 Queens Road
Brighton BN1 3XG

Tel: 01273 234 777
Fax: 01273 234 778

fft@communitybase.org
www.Gypsy-Traveller.org

This newsletter is kindly sponsored by



Pump Court
Barristers Chambers
Temple
LONDON EC4Y 7AB

www.1pumpcourt.co.uk



*The Telephone Helpline
for Travellers: Evictions,
Site problems and other
issues on
0845 120 2980*

Telephone Helpline for Travellers

0845 120 2980

This advice line is open between

10.00am—1.00pm and 2.00pm—5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Travellers can speak directly to experienced advisers on questions of eviction, planning matters, issues involving official caravan sites and other matters.

It is run by the Travellers Advice Team at the Community Law Partnership.

**If you believe that all members of society should have the right to travel and to stop
without constant fear of persecution because of their lifestyle:
JOIN FRIENDS, FAMILIES AND TRAVELLERS NOW!**

I would like to join Friends, Families and Travellers. I understand that this will enable me to vote at the Annual General Meeting,
attend Management Committee Meetings and receive copies of the newsletter.

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ I enclose my subscription:

Waged-£8.00 Unwaged-£3.00 Family Waged-£12.00 Family Unwaged-£5.00 Organisation-£20.00 / or Donation

I do not wish to join FFT, but please accept a donation towards the work you carry out

Please state if you wish to remain anonymous.

I do not wish to join FFT, but would like to receive newsletters (subscription costs as above)

Please make cheques payable to FFT and return to: FFT, Community Base, 113 Queens Rd., Brighton BN1 3XG.