

# Travellers' TIMES

The national magazine for Gypsies and Travellers

AUTUMN 2010 | ISSUE 43 | £3.50



[www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk)

## Fair play

**Appleby 2010**

**PAGES 12 & 13**



**Win a beautiful  
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**Find out how it can be yours on PAGE 2**



## Gypsy site auction



### Homes were sold over their heads

RESIDENTS of a run-down Council site in Wales have been left 'seriously worried' after the Council sold the site over their heads.

Glynmil, built between the two lanes of the main A470 into Merthyr, was put up for auction recently by Merthyr Tydfil Council, asking price £150,000.

But residents were not consulted about the sale and campaigners mounted a legal challenge to try and force a consultation. They lost their case and the site was sold over their heads. "The High Court

found in the Council's favour and refused the application for a Judicial Review on the basis that there was no statutory obligation on the Council to engage with the site residents as regards to the sale," a Council spokesman told TT. But privately a Council worker told TT: "Vandalism is rife [there]. They've knocked holes in the walls to get access to electricity and there's been fly tipping. They [the residents] destroy everything we do: we can't afford to run it anymore."

The Glynmil site (left) and the mould in one of the washhouses (below)

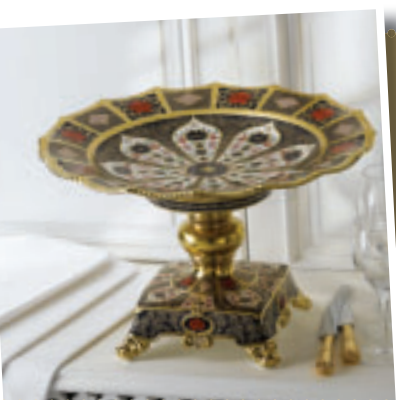


Some families, paying £27 a week for a pitch, claim the site has been badly managed for years. "The Council never come near the place. There was a warden, but there isn't one anymore. The site just went downhill after that. Washhouses are damp and cold and people come and dump rubbish outside."

TT was shown walls green with mould, blocked drains and rubbish piled up outside the site.

One of the older residents told TT: "I'm really worried. We all are. I'm too old to go on the road now. And I don't want to move into a house."

Glyn Mil is believed to have been sold to a Traveller for over £150,000.



## Win a complete, new Crown Derby dinner service

**To mark the launch of a new, hand-finished, gold-plated Comport, Royal Crown Derby and TT have joined forces with one of the best prizes ever: a complete dinner set of Royal Crown Derby worth over £2,000.**

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All you have to do is send us a photo of yourself with your favourite piece of Crown Derby. Crown Derby Chief Executive Hugh Gibson will pick the winner out of a hat in time for a special prize ceremony at Royal Crown Derby's showroom in October.

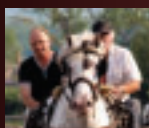
Send your name, address and phone number with your photos to: *Travellers' Times* (or email [travellerstimes@ruralmedia.co.uk](mailto:travellerstimes@ruralmedia.co.uk)) by Tuesday, October 5. See back page.

## Inside your big autumn TT



Focus on  
evictions

pages 8 – 9



Appleby Fair 2010

Cover image:  
Elisabeth Blanchet

pages 12 – 13



Holly wreaths in  
the 1960s  
**FAMILY ALBUM**  
pages 14 – 15



French evictions  
**EUROPE & THE  
WORLD**  
page 23

# Somerset handover



## Last of the few as Government scraps refurbishment budget

**CHANGING WORLD:** The council-owned Chubbard's Cross site at Ilton, Somerset has been handed back to Travelling families with five new Park Homes and six pitches with new utility blocks.

South Somerset Council have even added noise-reducing insulation to counter noise from the airfield next door.

Ric Pallister is the Council's Deputy Leader: "I hope that what we have done here will make other councils realise that there is a better way to improve things without destroying a 500-year ethnicity, culture, heritage and tradition. Our Gypsy community has worked with us to evolve their lifestyle without losing the values that are important to them: this is a changing world for all of us."

"I'm impressed with South Somerset's positive work on their Gypsy and Traveller sites. More councils should look at the good work they've done here," said Sally Woodbury, Chair of the South West Romany Gypsy Advisory Group.

The costs were met by the Government before the Gypsy and Traveller site refurbishment budget was scrapped by David Cameron's new Coalition Government (TT42). Improvements to Somerset's Tintinhull site should be finished by Christmas.

## We need your money! In 2011 you'll only get TT if you pay for it.

TT is going to be a subscription-only magazine from the March issue.

**Turn to page 22 and send in your subscription now.**



## news in brief Getting it right



PHOTO: Save the Children Wales

Young Gypsies and Travellers Jim, Sam, Courtney, Lara and Lulu (above) who worked with Save the Children to design *Travelling Ahead: Your Rights*. The booklet is designed to help Travellers overcome many of the problems that they face on a daily basis. Bullying, education entitlements and places to live are dealt with in an easy-to-read format, writes Shanterlena Knowles. Copies from Save the Children Wales, Phoenix House, 8 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9LJ (029 2039 6838)

**j.davies@savethechildren.org.uk**

## Goodbye Norbert

Lisa-Marie Smith from Watford sends a big thank you from Hertfordshire Travellers to Norbert McCabe (here with son Leon and daughter Karis) who has retired from the County Council. Good luck Norbert.



## Footloose and cared for

New research shows that the care system should be doing more to meet young Travellers' needs. PhD researcher Dan Allen (right) is calling for Travellers who have been in care to come forward and help lobby for more rights. "I started this project three years ago. I have learnt that the thought of a Traveller child having to live in care is so strange



to many people I speak to. But we need to help those people to come forward and be counted.

"Then we can lobby to the preliminary committee, and demand that the needs of Traveller children are recognised in legislation. I worked in children's homes for eight years. The staff are employed as substitute parents, but they were not trained to understand the needs of Travelling cultures.

"I started this project three years ago because I have witnessed the treatment of Traveller children within the care system first hand. They were taken from campsites and hostels and made to live in the institutions designed to accommodate children who could not be placed in foster care."

**If you're a Traveller who's been in care, you can get in touch with Dan Allen through Travellers' Times. Your call will be treated with total respect and confidence.**





*Sam Smith (left) of Brigg. Sam's new site has been given full planning permission by West Lindsey District Council "We must get fairly treated."*

PHOTO: David Lee Photography

## Government to ban bank holiday pull-ons

### Meriden refused: Brigg passed

NOAH BURTON has lodged an appeal against Solihull Council's refusal to allow planning permission at Meriden. The Council had turned down his retrospective plans for the site at Eaves Green Lane, Meriden. Noah moved his family onto the site on a bank holiday weekend earlier this year.

Meanwhile the Government has promised to ban bank holiday weekend 'pull-ons'. Minister Bob Neill promises to "tackle the abuse of retrospective planning permission. The public want to see fair play – everyone being treated equally and even-handedly in the planning process."

But Sam Smith, whose site at Brigg was passed 'for life' by West Lindsey District Council (see TT 42) says: "We're not proud about having to pull on. We are grateful to have got our permission. But if we get treated fairly in the planning process, the day will come when we don't have to get retrospective planning permission."

**Footnote: One estimate suggests that only 6% of all Traveller planning permissions are passed first time compared with 86% for the rest of the population.**

## Racist rise in Scotland

A SHARP RISE in racist remarks in the Scottish press is worrying Scotland's Commission for Race Equality and Human Rights.

The Commission has contacted Scottish newspapers and magazines to remind them that offensive web postings could break the law.

Yet in positive coverage by Aberdeen's *The Press and Journal* of a Light and Life Mission at Calder Park, a 'Minnie Mo' posted the comment: "If and when the 'travellers' can behave, don't leave a mess, old caravans, gas canisters, children's toys, and refuse from the jobs they do, then perhaps people would take more interest in finding them Decent human beings."

## news in brief

### Cambridgeshire

A religious meeting at Swavesey, Cambridgeshire has been attacked in the media. Light and Life, whose mission is to preach the gospel to Gypsies and Travellers, attracted 72 trailers and 260 people. But the national press spoke of "an estimated 200 [caravans] carrying some 1,000 people" putting "a village under siege" (Daily Mail). Despite the media stories, the meeting was a great success," pastor Jackie Boyd told TT.

## Norfolk

Traveller Cliff Jay says he will fight on for his land, repossessed by South Norfolk District Council. The Council later sold the land at Denton by public tender to a neighbouring household. Mr Jay, now living in Bungay, told TT: "The Council stole the property and sold it up. But I will fight on until the end of my days."

## Bedfordshire

Local Bletsoe resident Mary Cook has been handing out copies of TT after the granting of temporary planning permission for a small, six-pitch site in the village. Mary, whose grandmother was a Traveller, is encouraging her neighbours to read TT to increase their understanding of traditional Travelling family life.

## health check

### Health ambassadors



Travelling people in Nottinghamshire are being asked to spread the word about their culture to doctors, nurses and other health workers. You only have to be over 18 and have some spare time to become a health ambassador.

**Call Nickie on 07983 426477 to find out more.**

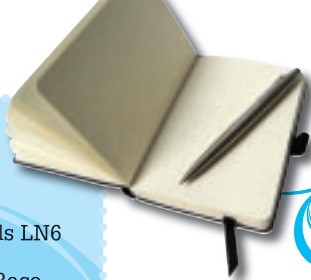
## Looking good?

Check your eyesight. Now. That's the message from the Kent Association of the Blind who say a simple eye examination can help detect early signs of glaucoma, high blood pressure, diabetes and some heart conditions. It doesn't matter if your sight is fine now – take the test. And that goes for the children too: 10% of Year 8 children have undetected problems with their vision.

## Measles

Measles pose a real risk especially to pregnant mums. And there's a lot of it about. Safeguard yourselves and your family with an MMR jab. **Find out more about measles from NHS Direct 0845 4647.**

# Diary Dates



## EVENTS what's going on

### SEPTEMBER

- 10th-11th Whisby Horse Fair and stalls LN6 9BY (07990 958817)
- 16th Shopping event, Leicester Race Course (07788 592746)
- 12th Garford Fair
- 12th Horsmonden Fair
- 17th Latter Lee
- 18th Cowper Day Horse Fair (Kirkby Stephen)
- 19th Lincoln
- 26th Kenilworth
- 29th Bridgwater

### OCTOBER

- 1-4th Ballinasloe Horse Fair, Eire
- 1st Gypsies and Travellers Cultural Awareness Day, Aberdeen (01224 522506)
- 10th Wisbech Fair
- 16th-18th Builth Wells cob sales
- 17th Langley Fair
- 21st Stow Fair
- 23rd-24th Gypsy & Country Fair, Milton Country Park, Cambridge (078997 23177)

### NOVEMBER

- 21st Langley Fair

**A special thank-you to Jim's Videos (07538 684204) for our Fair Dates**



**Fair favourite:** *Jim of Jim's Videos* hails from Lancaster way and has been selling at the fairs for 25 years. "We started doing china and fashion wear then went into videos," says Jim, who's seen a lot of changes over the years, "some for the best, some not. There's more people about as Travelling families grow," says Jim, himself the father of four, grandfather of 11 and great-grandfather of four. But, he says, the police are more heavy handed than they were. Jim knows a thing about running a fair – he helps organise Kenilworth and Wisbech. So what are his favourites? "Horsmonden and Appleby," says Jim. (See Appleby 2010, pages 12 and 13)

PHOTO: Chris Preece



## SITE FOR SALE

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**Religious revival:** Danny Connors at this year's Appleby Horse Fair. One of the leaders of the Catholic Travellers' Renewal, Danny has given land for the first Travellers' UK church. They are now raising the funds to build it.

PHOTO: Elisabeth Blanchet



## AJ in the USA

### From failing at school to Student of the Year

WE WANTED a new photo of 'AJ', a volunteer at Worcestershire's Hartlebury Museum. But when we called, he'd left for America.

2009 was a good one for AJ Bannister from Kidderminster. The 17-year-old who once expected to be kicked out of school was made Student of the Year, Sportsman of the Year and won the Diana Award for services to the community last year. And now he is in the States on a football coaching scholarship.

AJ became a museum volunteer three years ago working with wheelwright Ced Lewis on Hartlebury's wagon collection in a deal brokered between his old school and the Museum. "It's amazing to work with a man of Ced's calibre," says AJ. "You learn so much just from watching him."

AJ went on to build his own two-thirds scale wagon, the Bitu Rawni. It should look good alongside the Museum's collection that includes the wagon in which AJ's own grandfather once lived.

"We're very proud of AJ," says Hartlebury's Sue Pope. "He's taught many of the staff and volunteers a thing or two about Gypsy culture."



## Spinning a yarn

### Story-telling Traveller is a schools' hit

THE POET AND STORYTELLER Diane Nicholson (here with her sister Ellen Howard) has been sharing her life and times with Darlington school children.

With her mini-wagon, wood flowers, pegs and neckerchief just like her old Dad's, Diane has been touring schools telling stories and reciting poems.

"She's a very good storyteller," Christine Boyce, head teacher of St Teresa's school told TT. "We have a lot of Traveller children in our school and her visit was a great opportunity for them to share their way of life."

"I like to get all the kids involved," explains Diane, a committed Christian.



Diane (left): spinning a tale.  
PHOTO: Hilary Smallwood

### My Life

*Four brick walls and wooden doors*

*That's not the life for me*

*Houses all in grand attire*

*I wouldn't want to see*

*I love the Gypsy lifestyle*

*Great riches at my door*

*The trees and birds and pretty flowers*

*Who could ask for more?*

*To waken up at sunrise*

*Another lovely day*

*The farmer working in his field*

*Gathering in the hay.*

*The moon lights my path at night*

*The fire crackles burning bright*

*Soon in my bed I'll go to rest*

*My Romany life is for the best.*

© Diane Nicholson

**Diane can be booked for schools:  
call her on 0781 8888 065**



Star potential:  
Dee with  
daughter TJ.

## Film success for Dee



A scene from the *Romany Me* film.

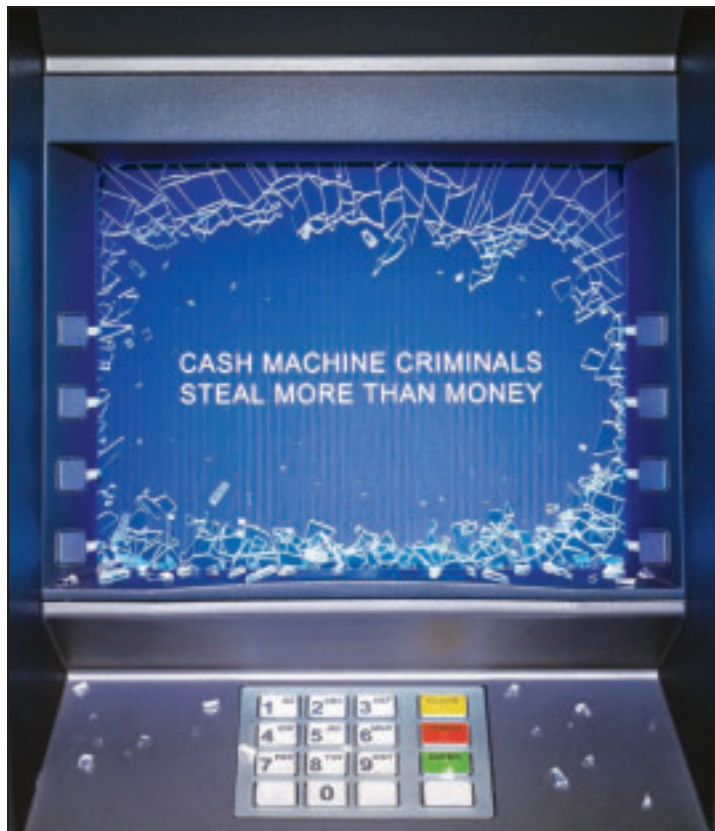
*ROMANY ME*, a low budget film made by a Romany mother and daughter from Sutton, Surrey could be screened on TV.

Adele 'Dee' Gregory and her 15-year-old daughter TJ made the 16-minute short based on a true story: their own. It tells how a Gypsy teenager copes with being badly bullied at her dance club.

The film features members of Dee's own family including daughter TJ and husband Chris. Made on a budget of only £5,000, *Romany Me* was nevertheless shortlisted at the Happy Soul Festival and is now being sought by a major TV company for screening.

Dee, whose family come from the famous Wardley Street in Wandsworth, says she devoted 14 months of her life on *Romany Me*. "People should be filming things how they are – there is so much talent out there in the community: the best we can do is tell the story they way it is."

Dee runs her own non-profit dance and drama club, *Ambitions* in Sutton.



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With the Government expected to announce yet more police powers to force families off their land, evictions are set to rise. "We are already seeing a rise," reports Candy Sheridan. In this TT Focus, Cardiff Gypsy Laurel Price and daughter Emma look back to the dark days of the 1970s and the Cardiff evictions.

FORTY-FIVE YEARS AGO Laurel and her family lived with around 60 other Romany people on Leckwith Common, Cardiff.

"We were Gypsies and that was our life," recalls Laurel who has ten surviving children. "There was no gas cookers; you had to make your fire outside. Everything had to be done by hand. When you bathed the children you used the kettle from the fire and you washed them one after the other.

"You had to go up the common to get the water with a saucepan, dipping it in the stream and pouring it in a churn on wheels. If you had an onion you cut it in half to share: people were better than what they are today. Today they got too much.

"Anyway we had to be moved. We had an Eccles trailer, a small Roma and a Roadstar lorry. My Emma was only six weeks old, but they pulled us all out on the road, with the police there, watching. The small children would go under the trailer but the bailiffs just pulled them out.

"Bad names they called us: we had no rights to live because we were Gypsies.

### Lydia wrote to the Queen

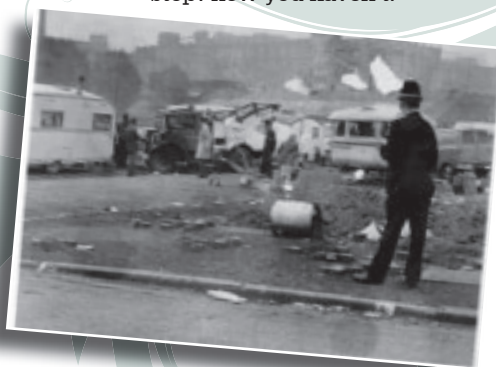
"Lydia Lee was with us. Lydia was a nice person: she wrote to the Queen asking for help."

The families were evicted from Leckwith Common to Speedway, and from Speedway to Rover Way, one of Cardiff Council's two Traveller sites.

Emma remembers protesting at City Hall Cardiff when she was eight or nine. "There were two teachers, Marlin and Jane, used to come to teach us. Then we were evicted off there: I remember Dad made us sit on the tow bar, but it didn't stop them."

After the evictions Laurel and her family were moved from place to place until a plot came up at Rover Way. "You had to pay £50, which I didn't have, to come here. So I saved and saved my Family Allowance and then came on the site.

"Rover Way was a good site then, thirty-five years ago. But it's not any more. In the old days everybody had a place to stop: now you haven't."



### Footnote

Lydia Lee with her son Pompee was said to have been fined £10 every week by Cardiff magistrates for staying on Leckwith Common.

*Set to rise? An eviction in Birmingham in the 1960s. The photo above comes from the great Irish Traveller campaigner, Tommy Doherty. Read about Tommy's life story in **Gypsies and Travellers in Their Own Words***

[www.grtleeds.co.uk/ourService/tommyStory.html](http://www.grtleeds.co.uk/ourService/tommyStory.html)





**Laurel and daughter Emma at Rover Way in Cardiff. "We were Gypsies and that was our life. They just kept moving us from place to place."**

## Government scraps sites targets

Plans for 8,000 new sites in England have been scrapped by the Coalition Government. "We have abolished all the targets," said the Department for Communities and Local Government spokeswoman. "It [providing sites] is now up to each local authority."

Gypsy campaigner Candy Sheridan told TT: "The new Government is about local democracy and local communities: we are a community and we clearly have a local need. Councils still have a duty to tell us where we can go."

Thanks to the authors of *Unequal Britain* (editor: Pat Thane, Continuum, [www.historyandpolicy.org](http://www.historyandpolicy.org)), the Cardiff Gypsy and Traveller Project and the Rover Way residents.

**3,500**

**TT's estimate of the number of families with nowhere legal to live**

**£18m**

**The money councils waste every year evicting Travellers with nowhere else to go**  
(At *What Cost?* Morris and Clements, The Policy Press, 2002)

**100%**

**The cut in Government money for new sites in England**



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# YOUNG TIMES

## Facepaint fun!



Linda Boswell left Hollywood, Birmingham for a day out at the GRT History event at Hartlebury Museum in June. "It was great," says Linda, seen here with (left to right) Chanel, Chantel, Leo, Linda herself, son Jim, Rocky and Logan.

## Inspirational Monkton

BRILLIANT! That's what Keith Towler, Wales' Children's Commissioner, thinks of the Traveller children at Monkton Priory CP School after his recent visit.

The youngsters, along with learning support assistant Gypsy Kirby Jones, told Keith Towler about their culture and showed him a DVD they've made.

He enjoyed it all. "The DVD is good because it tells people about Gypsy Traveller culture. Just like the children who made it, it's inspirational," said the Commissioner.

(He spotted a note pinned to the staffroom walls during his visit: "When the wind of change blows, some people build walls and some people build windmills.")



The inspiration team: Andrew Probert with Keith Towler and Peter Price, Billy Roberts and Rocky Price (front). Bev Stephens, Teigan Price, Walter Probert, Ieuan Probert and Monkton head, Shelley Morris.

PHOTO: Martin Caveney



Sophie with dog handler PC Jill Snook and trainee police dog Quest.

SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD Sophie Burnside from Wolverhampton has ambitions: "I want to be a police officer," she tells TT. West Mercia Police took her at her word in July and gave her a day out with the Force at their headquarters in Worcester. "My favourite part was seeing the dogs - I'd like to be a dog handler."

"We hope she's been inspired to become a police officer one day," say West Mercia Police.



**Moving books:** Children from the Oxcliffe Road site check out what's on offer on the mobile library as it visits their site at Morecambe.

PHOTO: Alison Chapman

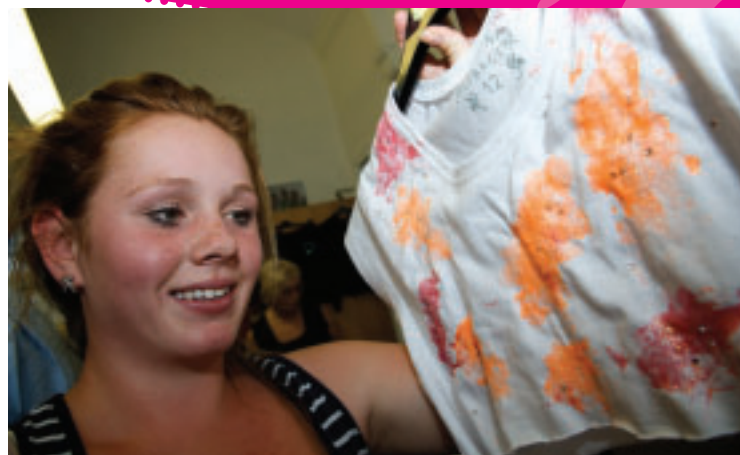


**Jazz guitar:** Fourteen-year-old Anthony Johnston from Edinburgh (pictured left, here with his mate at Appleby) has been playing Gypsy jazz since he was ten. "Gypsy jazz is my favourite and Barbie, the Christian singer, is the best," says Anthony. Anthony, who works with his Dad, Anthony Colin, on landscaping, also plays every Sunday night at the Light and Life Mission in Edinburgh.



# Gainsborough's Young Travellers

Gainsborough's and Lincoln's young Travellers have been speaking up for themselves. They've been doing everything from Raqs Sharqi (belly dancing) to making fashion clothes with Lincoln-based arts group, *Cultural Solutions* supported by Arts Award. The Travellers even published their own book about what life's like for the modern Traveller. Taking part were Maryann, Rhodeann, Laura Jane, Jane, Annalise, Alice, Darren, Helen, Theresa and Bridget from Washingborough, Lincoln and Summergangs site, Gainsborough.



**BRIGHT SPARK:** Young Traveller Jane Smith with one of her clothing designs. PHOTO: Cultural Solutions

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CALL US FOR OPENING TIMES

# Appleby Fair 2010



The little Westmorland town of Appleby was packed with Travelling people from across the country for this year's horse fair. TT's photo team (Alison Chapman and Chris Preece) was there to capture the action.







# FAMILY ALBUM

## snapshots of your life

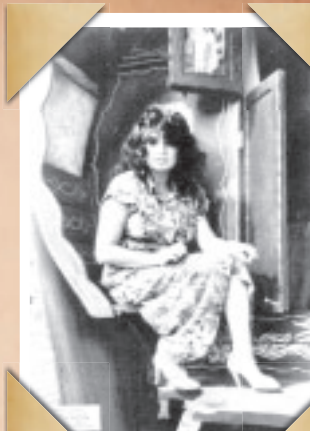
Travellers' TIMES  
ONLINE

[www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk)

PHOTO: Rosie Smith and Lindsey Marsh



**Celebration:** Aaron Smith makes his holly wreaths (left) while in earlier days, 'Gypsy Ivola' (© Robert McDougall) prepares to tell fortunes on the South Promenade at Blackpool. The pictures come from the spring issue of *Romany Road*, the non-political, non-profit-making group that celebrates our Traveller and Gypsy heritage. Help them to keep going and subscribe: it's only £9 a year. Call Mary Horner on 01432 760930 or visit [www.romanyroad.co.uk](http://www.romanyroad.co.uk)



Readers familiar with leading amateur photographer Tony Boxall's book *Gypsy Camera* will be interested to see his new book, *Negative to Positive* is out now - telling the story of his life. "... Not all of it, just the important bits; the highlights, the turning points and the achievements." Growing up in the 1930s, it's not all beach holidays and ice creams. At 13, Tony was earning a living at a local rocket factory (though he did return to education later).

His interest in photography stems from the 1960s and he spent four years roaming the countryside photographing Gypsy families - an interest which earned him a fellowship with the Royal Photographic Society. This led to an interest in the Gypsy way of life, which developed into *Gypsy Camera* (successful and sold out). Tony's new book, again with a strong Gypsy leaning, is available from Blurb in soft cover at £16.95. See [www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1376141](http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1376141)

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Kerry Hawkins from Borden, Hampshire opened up his family album for TT. He and Kathleen Black were married in 1984 at Alton in Hampshire (above left).

"I'm the proud great-great grandson of Romany Gypsies Sam Ayres (reputed to have had 300 convictions when he died in 1936) and Phoebe Smith," says the 45-year old landscape gardener. Sam's younger brother, Billy Ayres (1881-1949), is pictured here in the family business, hawking refreshments to troops.

"All eight of my wife, Kathleen's, great-grandparents came from large Gypsy families including the great-granddaughter of Ambrose Smith.

"And we have five chavvies: Samuel, (who served five years in the Royal Navy), James, Fredabelle, and Reuben, (christened at the Gypsy Church in the Wood, Bramdean, Hampshire) and Leanda, pictured, who has just been awarded her Bachelor of Arts degree at Plymouth University."

Thanks for the memories: a free, signed copy of *Pinnies & Pegs* by Ryalla Duffy and *Our Forgotten Years* by Maggie Smith-Bendell are in the post to the Hawkins family.

Have you anything to share from your Family Album?  
Check out [www.travellerstimes/family\\_album](http://www.travellerstimes/family_album)

## CLASSIFIED

**Place a Classified advert for £23.50 inc vat.**

**BEAUTIFUL MANOR PARK HOME CHALET FOR SALE** 60x24 £89,000 ono delivery and sightings can be arranged also advertised on the land and property pg of [www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk) under classifieds.

**LEICESTER RACE COURSE SHOPPING DAY!** Event is inside and outside, seafood stall, bar, fair rides, rugs, children's clothes, Waterford, buckets, and bowls. All stalls must be pre booked as pitches are marked out. For more information please call Tammy or Lisa on 07788 592746 or look at the events on face book.

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# IN TOUCH your letters and emails

## Finding my family

My husband's Romany great-granddad came to England from the Black Forest in the mid-1800s. His son, John William Cox, was born here and the families seemed to settle around Middlesex, especially Dartford and Harlesden. How can we trace his Romany roots further?

Mary Cox

**Try the Romany and Traveller Family History Society at**  
[www.rtfhs.org.uk](http://www.rtfhs.org.uk) and  
[www.romanygenes.webeden.co.uk](http://www.romanygenes.webeden.co.uk)

## Romany-ville

**I am not of the Rom, but I have always had great respect for them. If the government can build a whole new town, such as Milton Keynes, why can't it give permission for a Romany Town, which could become a cultural centre? There must be a place in this world for Romanies to settle down.**

Patricia Roberts, Kent

## Remembering Nelson



Nelson Smith from Little Acre, Luton passed away in July this year aged 66 leaving his wife Eileen, sons Tony, Nelson and Dean, daughter Julie and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. "Our thanks to Shirley and Sally for the Rooms of Rest as we recall Nelson's catch phrase: 'See you later'."

## Rubbish gets bad press

I realise that the Travelling community gets a bad press and don't wish to fuel the fires of prejudice, but I am curious about the problems of waste disposal, which seems to typify short- and long-term camps. I am genuinely looking for a real answer, not trying to stir up trouble.

Richard Smith



An abandoned TV outside Glynmil, Merthyr: "People come and fly tip here," says one resident.

## Need to pull together

Well done to Zoah Hedges-Stocks (TT 41). I've read various issues of TT over the years and it's very interesting. I was hoping you might include some New Traveller articles as, although the various groups are all different, we have a lot in common and need to pull together. I saw a brilliant display on New Travellers by the Children's Society in Bristol.

Victoria Hatfield, Yatton



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## Education for our future

'For us to be seen as equal citizens we must educate our children.'

I was pleased by TT's article regarding the education of two young Traveller boys (TT 42, Picture This). Education has been such a taboo subject amongst Travellers for many years and seen by many as 'shameful' and 'acting like gorgios'. I'd say well done to the parents of these boys and hope they continue their education and do well in the future.

I hope this helps other Traveller families realise that in order for us to be seen as equal citizens we must start by educating our children, thus giving them the tools and opportunity to challenge oppression towards this very bright community.

Kealey Sly (was Price)

# LEARNING for a lifetime

## Traveller education

### *Traveller Education in the Mainstream: The Litmus Test*

Brian Foster and Anne Walker, Hopscotch  
ISBN 978 1 90539 062 5. Tel: 020 7738 5454

Anne Walker and Brian Foster have drawn on their long experience in Traveller education to produce this book aimed at anyone from school receptionist to directors of Children's Services, at home, in the classroom and in the community. Read Damian Le Bas' review at

[www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk)



## Get online with TT

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PHOTO: The Magistrates' Association

Magistrates come from all walks of life, all social backgrounds and from all cultures, but I don't know of any Traveller magistrates, writes Justice of the Peace Anita Atkins.

Travellers can apply to become a magistrate just the same as anyone else.

So, how, why and who? The latter is easy, says Anita, as long as you are of good character, are not an undischarged bankrupt and are 18 years old or over, you are eligible. You must be able to commit to at least 26 half days a year and are required to swear the Oath of Allegiance to Her Majesty The Queen.

The how is easy too. If you have access to the Internet then you can complete the application form online at

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/crimejusticeandthelaw/becomingamagistrate/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/crimejusticeandthelaw/becomingamagistrate/index.htm)

Or paper application forms can be obtained from Malcolm Johnson, Magistrates Recruitment Coordinator: **020 3334 3286**

[malcolm.johnson@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:malcolm.johnson@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

(Check with your local court first as to whether there are any vacancies in the area.)

PHOTO: www.festivals.co.uk



**Family affair:** The Hungarian Gypsy orchestra, *Sentimento Gypsy Paganini*, performed to rapturous applause at this year's WOMAD Festival. After their performance at Charlton Park, Wiltshire in July, the classically trained, family band spoke to TT. "We send a good hello to all the Gypsies of Britain," says the band leader, Gyula Horvath, who has been playing violin since he was six years old. "Gypsy music," he says, "is an ancient family tradition: the music is in our blood."



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## Magical tale

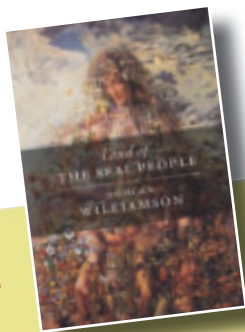
*Land of the Seal People*, Duncan Williamson  
(Birlinn, £8.99 ISBN 978 1 84158 880 3, [www.birlinn.co.uk](http://www.birlinn.co.uk))

'Duncan gasped for breath – just then his head appeared above the surface. And the great powerful stranger swam to the shore, and he pulled Duncan on to the rocks ...'

Enchanting beings from a magical world where the sea meets the land: the legend of the 'silkies' has been part of the fabric of Scotland for generations.

Scottish Traveller Duncan Williamson knew over 3,000 stories by heart and was one of Scotland's greatest storytellers. He collected these stories over a lifetime on the road, meeting fishermen, crofters and other Travellers. These are beautiful stories with a very special place in Scottish Traveller history.

Reviewer: Damian Le Bas



## The pursuit of people

*Roma in Europe*, Jean-Pierre Liégeois  
(Council of Europe Publishing, €30, ISBN 978 92 871 6051 5, [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int))

This book will be a revelation for people who are new to the subject. Liégeois has warned: "Travellers and Roma/Gypsies will cease to be pursued only when they have finally been immobilised and stabilised."

In this brand-new edition of the classic 1985 book *Gypsies and Travellers* the author puts modern Gypsy politics in its historical context. The new version features updated statistical and legal information and takes recent Roma migrations into account.

Reviewer: DLB



# RESOURCES

## great books and CDs

## Kom-puter rokkers Romanes!

Travellers all know how sad it is that our languages aren't spoken as fluently as they used to be. But it's not all bad news. Manchester

University's Romani Language Project has given a boost to the Romani language, particularly in England where the English Romani dialect has been under threat. This CD explains the history of the Romani language and gives examples of how it's spoken all over Europe. Children will learn from it as well as adults. There's video and animations. It's a great resource. To find out more go to [www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/Research/Projects/romani](http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/Research/Projects/romani), or just Google Manchester Romani Project for a copy.



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# A Fool's Place to be

That was what Jimmy Connors called prison. A Fool's Place it may be, but it's worse when your ethnic status as a Gypsy or Traveller goes unrecognised. In this TT Special we hear from **serving prisoners** and review some of the **groundwork** that's going on.

“ One of the things you should get across is that people in prison do change! ”

## SERVING PRISONERS

### HMP Wayland

I'm doing a life sentence. Me old father passed away when I was 15 which sent me down the wrong road with gavvers and in and out of prison. As Travellers we celebrate our history every June. We were promised a number of things from food to having a game of football and we got nothing at all.

**Billy Pearce**

### HMP Littlehey

I am a Gypsy. After being here for a while I realised that I wasn't alone and there was not much help for Gypsies or Travellers so I started up a support group. I have a lot of members now; I help them with letters and paperwork. TT has lots of helpful information in it.

**Bobby Lee**

### HMP Guysmarsh

Just like our ancestors hunted down the work when the time came, me and Marley another Traveller go hunting in the library for the new issue of TT.

**Neil Falconer**

## GROUNDWORK

### Support Groups

Groups like Bobby Lee at HMP Littlehey are starting up round the country including Everthorpe, Edmonds Hill, Feltham, Lowdham Grange and Woodhill. These groups can provide help, support and comradeship in difficult times.

### HMP and YOI Moorland

Doncaster Diversity Officer Glen Shipley has been running a support group for five years. Inmates Paul, Luke, Danny, Terry, Tommy and Tony talked to TT's Bill Laws about how it's helped them: "If you tick the box saying who you are, it can be an excuse for them [the other inmates] to get you. Now, when a Traveller comes in, you get to see him," said one.

### Lincolnshire

Lincolnshire Gypsy Liaison Group support Travelling people in the county prisons when they can. **01427 619521**

**Ryalla.lglg@hotmail.co.uk**

### HMP Full Sutton

Father Ged Barry set up one of the earliest support groups at HMP Durham and now runs one at Full Sutton because "I was fed up with burying young Travelling men," he told TT.

### Full count

A project has been launched to find out just how many Irish Travellers there are in prison. Conn Mac Gabhann of the Travellers in Prison Project says: "The huge problem is we have no idea of the numbers of Travelling people in prison. It's not being monitored."

### Prisoner grants

The charity Prisoners Education Trust (PET) gives grants to prisoners wishing to take distance learning courses in subjects and at levels not available in prisons. Their Learning Matters project advocates for the importance of learning in helping to change lives.

Do you have a prison project going? Call TT or email us **travellerstimes@ruralmedia.co.uk** and tell us about it.

### What you can do

Make yourself known to the chaplain, diversity officer or whoever deals with ethnic minorities. Think about setting up a support group. "Once the numbers [of Travelling people] in prisons are established then the prison service will have to follow in meeting the needs," says Conn. Write letters to TT or the prison magazine *Inside Time* (Sorry: we can't print them all.)

## Readers' Problems

### No funeral rights

**"They wouldn't let my boy out for his Dad's funeral"**

When his father died, my son who's in prison was told he would be let out to attend the funeral. Then they changed their minds and said he was likely to escape. What could I have done?

A grieving mum

**Problem? Call or write to TT**

Any prisoner may apply for permission to attend the funeral of a close relative, that is a father, mother, brother, sister or people who have acted as their parents. But permission to attend is not automatic. Each individual is subject to a risk assessment which takes account of any escape potential and any risk to the escorting staff and prisoner who go with them. This risk assessment is for all prisoners irrespective of their background.

**Janice Eaton, Diversity Manager, HMP Channings Wood**



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## Direct action

### Gypsy protest blocks road bridge

FRENCH GYPSIES responded to a series of evictions by blocking a major road bridge near Bordeaux in August.

According to the BBC 250 trailers took over both carriageways on the Aquitaine Bridge holding up traffic for five hours after police closed a camp at Angelet.

Tensions have risen in France this year with the French President, Nicolas Sarkozy promising to crack down on illegal camps. Sarkozy has promised to deport 700 Roma to eastern Europe.

France is home to an estimated 400,000 Gypsies and Travellers and a further 12,000 Roma from Romania and Bulgaria. As EU citizens the Roma have a right to travel, but the French government insist on them carrying work or residency papers. Few Roma are eligible for the passes.

Earlier in the summer a 22-year-old Roma, Luigi Duquet, was shot and killed by a gendarme in Saint-Aignan. The shooting triggered a riot.

**Go to [www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk) for more on this story.**



PHOTOS: Gaelle Girbes



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