

Travellers' TIMES

The national magazine for Gypsies and Travellers

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www.travellerstimes.org.uk

Class act

**A star turn
from Candis**

PAGE 3



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Big Fat Gypsy Weddings:

TV programme's portrayal
triggers new prejudice against
Gypsies & Travellers

NEWS SPECIAL: PAGE 2

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A big fat mistake

Controversial TV programme causes worrying backlash against Gypsies & Travellers

THE TRAVELLING COMMUNITY has been shocked and dismayed by Channel 4's programme *Big Fat Gypsy Weddings* (BFGW).

Reports of families being abused in the street, of racist comments on websites, and of Gypsy and Traveller children being pulled from school because of bullying soared in the wake of the BFGW.

"The series promised to show the 'rights of passage of a secret community'," said Candy Sheridan from Gypsy Council 2010. "We are a private people, but we are not secretive. This programme has set us back 50 years."

Over 3,000 people used Facebook to complain; others called TT. "We want to set up a reaction group for Gypsy rights," declared Joe Smith from Cheshire. He added that the programmes had made parents pull children out of school.

Amanda from Bromley said the BFGW was "causing real hurt. Many angry Travelling people have been hurt and shocked by the programme. They want to know: 'What can we do?'"

Amanda said she had been emailed by a fifteen-year-old who was being verbally bullied at school while two local women had reported they were being ridiculed in the work place and dreaded the day after each show.

Amanda went on: "On one website a blogger wrote that a nearby site (which he named) should be petrol bombed. He'd written: 'They are all living scum that would not be missed by any of the local community'."

At our Gypsy and Traveller Link forum Romany and Irish Traveller women have worked very hard to promote positivity and pride, especially for our local youth. The programmes have affected local community relations."

Right of reply

The Irish Traveller Movement in Britain (ITMB) has called on Channel 4 to give Britain's Gypsies and Travellers air time for a right of reply. They said the series had "left all of us extremely disappointed and angry at the very narrow portrayal of the Gypsy and Traveller communities. We are hearing distressing accounts from parents whose children are being bullied and venue bookings being cancelled. We are hearing about the deep sense of embarrassment and shame many have been left with by such a narrow, misrepresentative and unjust portrayal of their community and culture."

There is a deep concern over growing tensions between Irish Travellers and Romany Gypsies. But Candy Sheridan told TT: "This is all about unity now: it doesn't matter whether we are Gypsies, Irish Travellers or Roma, we have to signal to programme makers that this is unacceptable."

Several non-Travellers also contacted TT. One wrote: "We need to remind everyone that, as ethnic minorities, the words Traveller and Gypsy are proper nouns and require a capital letter just the same as any other ethnic groups."

Sarah G. called to say: "I'm shocked by the prejudice. I say: Good luck to all Travelling families. I hope you win your fight against the injustices you face."

Despite the outrage, Channel 4 looks set to cash in on its controversial portrayal of the Gypsy and Traveller community with a rumoured *Big Fat Gypsy Christmas* special. As a result some in the communities are now seeking legal advice over suing for compensation as a result of the series.

Inside your Spring TT



Gypsy war hero
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Portraits of pride
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boxing champ
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Celebrating
our culture
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Wedding belles

Readers sent in their own special day pictures in response to Channel 4's programme. Left: Bridesmaids head for the wedding of Billy Docherty (centre) who married Steven O'Driscoll in February last year. Top right: Mark Hunter and Kathy Hughes married at Lady St Mary's in Wareham, Dorset in August last year. Bottom right: Liverpool bride Winifred Delaney's dress is the centrepiece in a show at Sudley House Museum, Liverpool.



Stand up and be counted

THE TEN-YEAR CENSUS, where every man, woman and child in England and Wales is counted, comes around on March 27.

Census forms are being delivered to Traveller sites and this year, for the first time, people can mark themselves down as 'Gypsy' or 'Irish Traveller'.

"The only way we can argue for better services is to make sure they can see and hear us," argues Leeds Irish Traveller Eileen Lowther. "The best way to do that is to tick the Gypsy/Traveller box."

"When we did our own 'census' of 1,071 Leeds Travellers we found out that our life expectancy, on average, is only 50 years. It was a bad shock, but at least now the local health people are giving us the attention we weren't getting before."

Despite those who believe in keeping their heads down, Helen Bray from the Office of National Statistics says you can't plan services if no one knows how many Gypsies and Travelling people there are. "We really need Travellers to fill in their census questionnaires."



- The census happens every 10 years
- March 27 is the day to fill out your form
- It'll be 100 years before any personal census information can be looked at

www.census.gov.uk

Cover star: Candis Nergaard from Gravesend performed in January's *Romany Stories*, a sell-out play reading at London's Royal Court Theatre. *Romany* playwright Dan Allum worked with fellow writer Nell Leyshon to interweave interviews with *Romany Travellers* from East Anglia and Sussex into a play, directed by Indhu Rubasingham and sponsored by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation PHOTO: Damien Le Bas

news in brief

Empty seat

No replacement has been announced for Assistant Chief Constable Bill Holland, the Association of Chief Police Officers' man on Gypsy and Traveller affairs. Holland is standing down from the role.

No room for Noah

Noah Burton, the Meriden Gypsy trying to get permission for his home site near Coventry, was turned away from a public meeting called to discuss his plans.

Remembering Judith

Judith Waldron, who worked for the Norfolk Traveller Education Service for sixteen years, has died. "She had worked tirelessly with young Traveller people to improve the understanding of Traveller Culture," said colleagues.

No to 'bricks and mortar'

In a ruling described by lawyer Chris Johnson as a major decision for all Gypsies and Travellers, a Somerset council has lost its case to make a Traveller accept 'bricks and mortar' accommodation. The Traveller, supported by Sharon Baxter from the Traveller Advice Team and David Watkinson of Garden Court Chambers, won the case on appeal since the judge at Taunton County Court accepted that she had an aversion to conventional housing.

Bad boy turns good



Christian conversion changed Larry's life

LARRY HARVEY'S AUDIENCE is dressed in regulation prison green overalls and they are bored.

This is the reception area for young offenders and no one is excited at having to listen to the burly 48-year-old chaplain.

"I've been in prison myself," Larry tells them. "I've been to juvenile court for stealing cars – crashed into a wall once and went straight through the windscreen. At 14 I was smoking weed and doing amphetamines."

Some of the young lads sit up and listen: this is not what they expect to hear from a prison chaplain. But then Larry Harvey, ex-demolition worker, boxer, and, let's be honest, bad boy Gypsy, is far from 'average' in anything he does.

"In our prisons, Gypsies and Travellers are the smallest ethnic group in terms of numbers," Larry tells TT later. "Most stay well clear of trouble, but for some reason I was different."

Chromium Joe

The Bristol boy was born into an English Romany Gypsy family. His Dad, Joe Harvey, known as Chromium Joe because of his chrome-covered lorries, ran a scrapyard not far from Pucklechurch.

Larry worked in the family business and took up boxing, but he couldn't keep out of trouble's way. He ran away from home, lived in a squat and became involved in organised crime and fighting: "I must have had over 150 pub fights."

The young offender was sent to a government 'boot camp' for a 'short sharp shock'. "That meant a shave, a shower and the toilet in two minutes flat. And if you didn't do it you got a kicking from the staff."

But it wasn't the punishing regime that turned life round for Larry Harvey, a father of five who now goes to theological college and who, today, stands in front of a bunch of prison boys telling them: "You got your youth: now have some respect for yourselves."

Larry takes up the story. "After I got married and started a family, my daughter fell ill." She would recover after 30 hours of surgery, but not before Larry had fallen to his knees. "I saw this big cross: I begged for her to be saved. And she was."

That was in 1999. Larry became a Christian and turned his life round. Now he devotes himself to the welfare of the young men who, as he once did, find themselves on the wrong side of the prison gates.

Larry Harvey is deputy head chaplain at HM Prison Ashfield.



Life with a roller: Larry's Dad, Chromium Joe with Mum, Linda

"Most Traveller boys stay well clear of trouble. For some reason I was different."

Diary Dates

March 13
March 17

April 9 or 10
April 17
April 25
May 1

May 12
May 20
May 30
June 2 to 8
June 22
July 15
July 24
July 4 & 5
August 18

August 21
August 24
August 27 to 29

August 29

Langley Fair
Paddy Cosgrove Show, London
Dick Smith Show, Barnsley
Kenilworth Horse Fair
Holme Firth
Wisbech Horse Fair, Peterborough
Stow Fair
Wickham Fair, Portsmouth
Appleby Trots
Appleby Fair
Cambridge Fair
Seamer Fair, Scarborough
Kenilworth
Brigg Fair, Hull
Priddy Fair, Weston-Super-Mare
Beehive Fair
Lee Gap Fair
Eddie's Fair and Drive, Newcastle upon Tyne
St Mary's Hill, Wales

Thanks again to **Jim's Video's (07538 684204)** for our Fair Dates



EVENTS what's going on



Linda Taylor caught this line-up of Gypsy cobs at Appleby Horse Fair. This year the Fair runs from June 2 to 8. PHOTO: Linda Taylor

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Connecting Numbers





Digital dukkering

Rebekah looks ahead on eBay

COVENTRY CLAIRVOYANT Rebekah Markham is carrying on the family tradition of telling fortunes, but with one difference: she does it online.

Thoroughly modern Rebekah works on eBay. "Dukkering – fortune telling – is something you're born with," Rebekah tells TT. "It's a service, just like window cleaning."

"I work off eBay and on a psychic phoneline: it's a good home-based job which I do 'as and when' – it's hard to work full-time with three children and lots of housework." So how good is she? "You get impressions, more than anything else. Sometimes you'll get a name as well. So far I've only ever had positive feedback," says the 34-year-old.

Rebekah's family hailed from Bridgend and Sussex. She believes she got her gift from her great-grandmother, Gentila Roberts, although she also has a very knowledgeable auntie, Carole-June, who reads jewellery and works with angels and crystals. "We have different interests in that respect, but it's lovely to know Gentila (and her ancestors) have passed the gift on."

(See Rebekah's daughter, Katia, off to school for her first day – page 10)

He's our man

A HUGE THANK YOU to all our readers who took part in the 'Big 2010 Survey'. Nearly 700 of you completed our questionnaire and told us what you thought about TT. People of all ages and from all different Traveller communities around the country took part. We also heard from many readers with family, friendship and work connections to the community. Our survey report should be completed by the end of May so we'll let you know the main findings in the next issue of TT magazine.

Survey prize draw cash winner, George Lee, might have a change of heart now he's in the money. George, who has worked since the age of 14, least likes the competitions in TT and most enjoys the lifestyle features.

Sixty-year-old George runs his own meat company in Kent and 'thanks to his mum and dad' went to University to study food technology and inspection.



Council eviction presses ahead

Two hundred letters – and still eviction looms

FACING THE PROSPECTS of a summer eviction Chorley Gypsy Mike Linfoot has appealed to the local council for help. But Chorley Council has told TT: "They have to go."

Mike and his family have been happily settled on their own land at Hut Lane since 2009. The children go to school while regular health care has helped medics to spot some health problems. "We'd never have known about this had we been out on the road," says Mike.

"We need a home for 6–8 families with 12 caravans. I have sent over 200 letters to estate agents across Lancashire but there's just no land available."



PHOTO: Jason Smalley

Reach for the Sky:

TT has been asked to point out that neither Keith Emmett, Michelle Emmett nor Cosgrove Lodge are associated in business with Liz Emmett.

Scottish care system 'violated our rights'

Death of two-year-old remains a mystery



THE SCOTTISH care system in the 1950s led to "serious violations of the human rights of Travelling people," says Scottish Traveller Peter Kelbie (left).

47-year-old Peter was taken into care in the 1950s along with his brothers and sisters. His sister Alexina died in care aged two and a half; an older brother remains in care, a victim, claims Peter, of the care regime.

Peter also lost his father, Alexander, who died in 1966 aged 33 in Croy, Inverness. The circumstances of Alexander's death were investigated by police but Peter believes the truth has yet to be told.

"We were taken into a care system that was brutal. We would have been better off in our camps than in those children's

homes. In some cases dogs were better treated than us. And baby Alexina was not the only Traveller child to have died in care."

Peter has met and spoken with many Scottish Travellers and linked up with many more on Facebook, but he has yet to be re-united with all his own family. "In the 50s and 60s many Travellers families were taken into care and they went through hell. Many never survived. It was a violation of their human rights.

"Dad believed baby Alexina was murdered and there should have been an inquiry: the only justice is when you find out the truth."

Peter contacted TT "because I want other Travellers to know what we have been through and because, through your magazine, we have a voice." However he thinks a full investigation may be too late because too many witnesses have since died. "I wonder if now is the time for forgiveness."



Best Will in the world

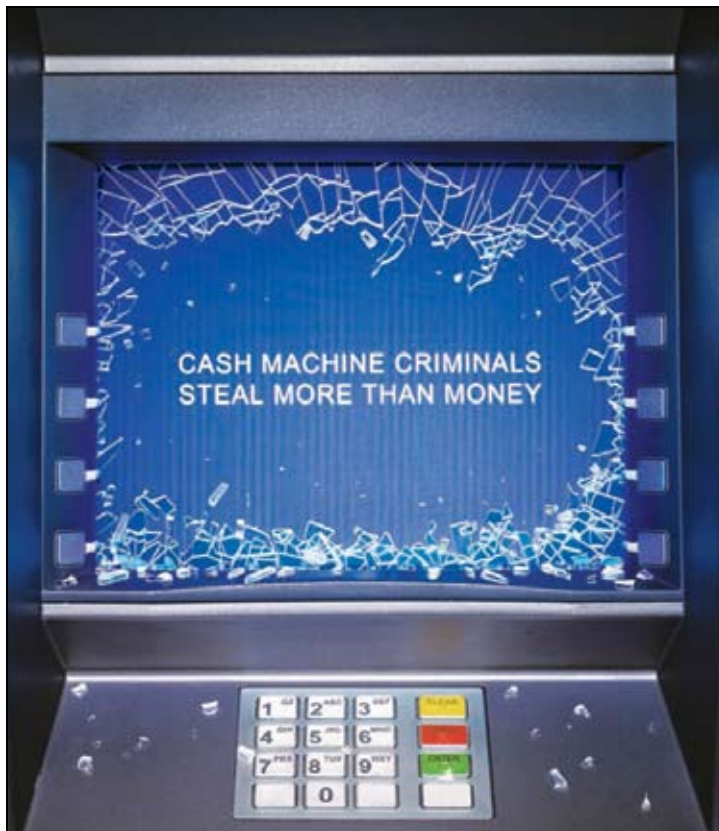
HE'S MADE A LIVING pretending to be the world's most eligible bachelor, and with a royal wedding this April, Marc Rattigan is going to be busier than ever. In between photo shoots and

studying to be a radiographer, life has never been more hectic. Lookalike Mark was first noticed in 1997. "My family were watching the televised funeral of William's mother, Princess Diana," he says. "At school the following day everyone, including the teachers, greeted me with 'Your Royal Highness' or 'Will'."

Marc has travelled the world, donates a part of his fees to a children's hospice and never forgets his ancestry. "My father was born in Athlone, Eire, and comes from a long line of traditional Irish Travellers. I am very proud of my Irish Traveller roots and I would not swap them for the world." Marc is happy to talk about the controversial Big Fat Gypsy Weddings.

The show was "pure sensationalism". He knows what his granny, the late Lizzy Gavin, would have made of it. "If she were alive today, she'd be kicking up a fuss because it has nothing to do with the traditional influences of the Irish Traveller way of life."

Read Marc in full at www.travellerstimes.org.uk



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Gypsy John VC, RIP February 1941

*John 'Jack'
Cunningham
was only
17 when he
received the
highest military
honour, the
Victoria Cross*

Postcard courtesy of Wilberforce House
Museum, Hull

Jack VC

I am your Gypsy warrior
Of me you can be sure
I'll wear your ribband coat
And I'll fight your foreign war.

You train me up in Dalton
You send me off to France
I was only there a short while
Before you ordered the advance.

My comrades they'd all fallen
The Germans thought they'd won
But they'd not beat this Gypsy
From no man I would run.

So I gathered up the weapons
Moved forward on my own
And I killed those German soldiers
I killed them every one.

So you're sending me back home now
Say the King I have to meet
He wants to pin on me a medal
And I'm carried through your streets.

But when the war is over
And my soldiering days are done
I go back to hawking carpets
And I throw away your gun.

But you bang me up in prison
You say that I am bad
But it is not surprising
For a war-scarred Gypsy lad.

And when my days are over
You push me in the ground
With no head stone above me
No flag no bugle sound.

Yet I was once your hero
Of me you could be sure
When England needed heroes
This Gypsy heard your call.

I won your highest honour
I won your Victoria Cross
But now I lie in unmarked ground
And you don't grieve my loss.

So listen all you Gypsies
You Traveller boys heed well
Should you fight and die for England
She'll just leave you where you fell.

For we don't have a country
That we can call our own
As we travel down the highways
With a trailer for our home.

Joe Wilson

John's story

JOHN CUNNINGHAM died 70 years ago. Amanda Reed, a Cunningham by birth and descended from a long line of Gypsies and Travellers, first heard about John from her Uncle Jimmy. Eventually, and with the help of John Colam from Linconshire Family History Society, she unwrapped the following story.

John's parents, licensed hawkers who sold oilcloth and carpets, were stopping in Swains Yard, Scunthorpe when John was born in 1897. After school he too became a hawker before volunteering, aged just seventeen, for the East Yorkshire regiment. He was sent to fight on the Somme.

On November 13, 1916 during the Battle of Ancre, he was in a bombing party when all his mates were killed or injured. John picked up their bombs and attacked the German trenches. He returned for a second attack killing ten Germans.

John returned to a hero's welcome (although his Gypsy background was rarely if ever mentioned) and after marrying and having two children he settled in Hull.

From Amanda's
own family album:
Amanda's dad
and brother (right)
and Amanda on
her mother's
knee (bottom)



Mary May & Bridey's Fashions



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YOUNG TIMES

Great little reader: Jasmine Hargreaves listens to sister Jamima reading all about Spot the Dog on the Leeds' City Mobile Library Van. The library is a regular visitor at Jasmine and Jamima's site, Cottingley Springs in Leeds. (Congratulations to Jamima for winning her award in last year's GRT History Month.)



Truth About Youth

TRUTH ABOUT YOUTH is a project that acknowledges just what young Gypsies and Travellers in Cardiff can do and achieve. They're working on a 'myths' book, which promises to include lots of local families' traditions and beliefs. What to know more?

Contact Platform 51, on 02920 444077.

Katia's off to school

FIRST DAY OF TERM last autumn saw four-year-old Katia Markham off to school for the first time. What a smart young lady!



The world's best

"Mrs Maher – she's the best head teacher in the world!" exclaims nine-year-old Lisa Flynn as she writes about how fantastic her friends and teachers are at St Mary's Primary School in Dudley. On St Patrick's Day Lisa enters her first Irish Dancing competition. "I started Irish Dancing seven weeks ago, and I have learned very quickly." Young Times wishes her good luck!

Pimp my wagon

A BIG WELL DONE to the pupils at John Masefield High School in Ledbury, Herefordshire for completing the 'Pimp My Wagon' project. Travellers and non-Travellers joined forces to restore the old wagon. Want to see it? They've parked it on permanent display in the school grounds.



Help for home learners

You Choose helps with GCSEs

FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLDS Sam and Sherry (pictured right) were both home educated. After working on the ELAMP project for eighteen months, they're now making the most of a new, nationwide scheme: You Choose Bridge Builder (YCBB).



YCBB, launched on the back of the old ELAMP project, promises to help young Travellers get a couple of GCSEs. The exams could be anything from customizing clothes on a budget to gardening or hair and beauty, enough to get the qualifications that would help the young person get onto a college course or into work.

Sherry says she enjoyed the challenge and made lots of new friends. Find out more through your local school, the Traveller education service or direct from Victoria Griffith on 0121 236 5100 (victoria.griffith@ormistoneducation.co.uk).

Boxing boys



YOUNG TIMES wishes Colin and Mark Stewart good luck as they compete in the Scottish Boxing Championships. The brothers are hoping to follow in their cousin Donald Stewart's footsteps as he is both British Silver Medallist and Scottish Champion.

TELL US ABOUT IT

YT editor Shanterlena Knowles says: "Keep those stories coming in!"

Call Shanterlena on 01432 344039 or email shanterlenak@ruralmedia.co.uk



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Proud of who we are



*Romany Gypsy Shirley Conde
from Grays, Essex.*

As the census asks: "Are you a Gypsy or a Traveller?"
photographer Josh Cole presents a series of community portraits.



Above left: Shirley with her family, Joe (also top right), Mum Shirley Smith, Little Joe and Lydia outside their trailer in Essex. Shirley Smith, was born and bred in Bedford. Above and right John McCarthy and Mum Mary Ann from Dale Farm in Essex.

Left 20-year-old Londoner and Gypsy jazz guitarist Ben Czureja. (Catch him at www.myspace.com/romanydiamonds)



Why are **you** proud?

TT subscriber Susan Reidy has given a prize for young Traveller boys and girls on the road. Thanks to her we have five prizes of £10 each to give to Travelling children who can tell us why they are proud (please write or phone, see inside back page for contact details).

Family Album

Snapshots of your life

Champion boxer Joe

Why, when referring to famous Gypsies, does the 1920s British Boxing Champion Joe Beckett never get a mention? My gran, Sophie Birches and my great-grandparents stopped with his mother, Charlotte Birch. I've been told my great-granddad, Tom, even sparred with him in the ring. Joe's marriage is on Pathé News. I wonder if family children realise they have Romany backgrounds.

Caroline Holland

Old ones are the best

Put more old photos and stories in TT because it reminds us younger chavvies how it used to be, writes Billy Pearce. By the way, I'm on page 85 of Dominic Reeve's book, *Beneath the Blue Sky* and I'm proper enjoying it. I'm not the best with reading or writing, but this book is easy to read.

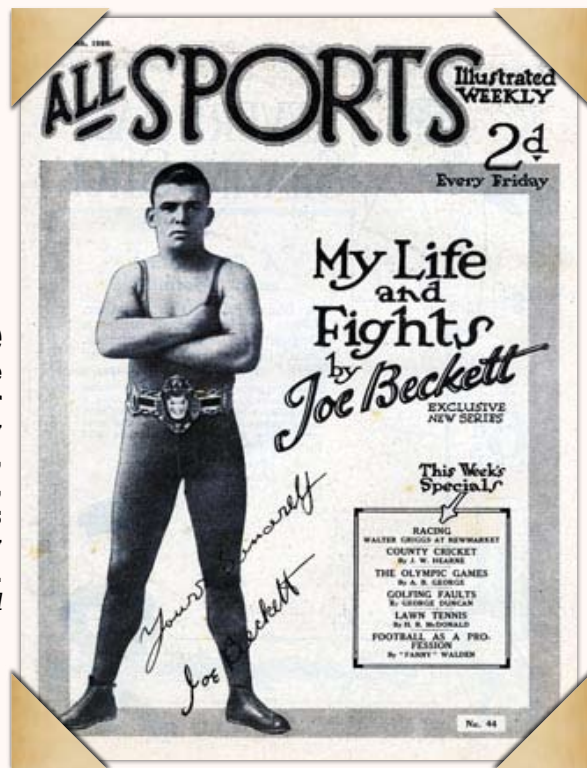
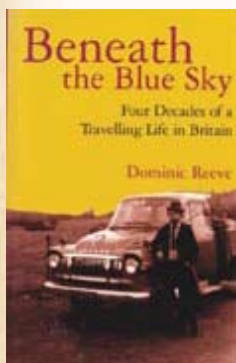


Image courtesy of the Lord Price Collection

Tony Boxall

Tony Boxall, bookie, photographer and author of *Gypsy Camera* (1992) died in December. He was best known for the stunning photographs of Gypsies that he took between 1964 and 1968, writes Brian Raywid. Most were of the Vincents (left), the last family on the Surrey-Sussex borders to travel with horse-drawn wagons. (Thanks to TT, Jane Vincent and Tony were recently reunited). Tony also photographed a number of other horse-drawn and motorised Travellers and his shots, taken in a large stopping place near Lewes, Sussex, show families who lived in trailers, but still cooked over wood fires, and women who still went hawking. Inside the trailers, however, little black and white TVs were luring people away from the fireside in the evenings and into a different world.



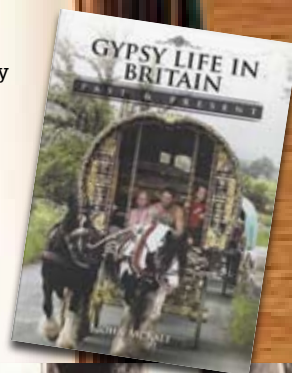
Walsall Dolphy

My father, Dolphy Smith, born in 1893, travelled south and mid Wales and the Midlands dealing in horse harnesses, saddles carpets and rugs, writes Dolly Horan, right on horseback with Dolphy holding the reins. He'd go to Walsall to buy harnesses and around 1930 bought a house, yard and stables there and settled down. Although he'd still go to the fairs, he also opened a carpet shop in town, traded motor cars and started a breaker's yard. Dad, who died in 1975, was always happy when he was doing a deal. Me and my husband, now retired, still keep a few horses for old times' sake.



Have you anything to share from your Family Album? Check out www.travellerstimes/familyalbum

Gypsy Life in Britain Past and Present is a new book about Romany and Traveller life from Victorian times to the present, put together by John McCale. He dedicates his book "to the memory of the Gypsy people who have gone from us." **Gypsy Life in Britain Past and Present** (Gypsy Publication, £25 inc P&P) 07769 660194



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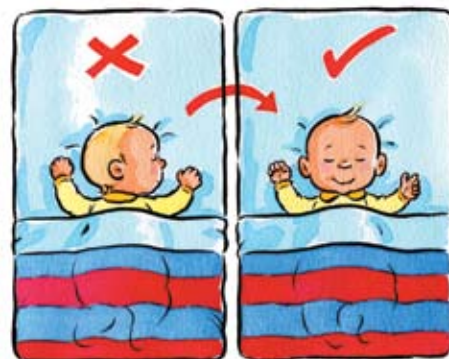
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Cot death: cut the risk

THE TV NATION MOURNED when EastEnders' Ronnie Branning lost her baby. But the storyline prompted Chobham Gypsy Leanne Loveridge to find out for herself about cot death risks. She persuaded The Foundation for the Study of Infant Death to share its advice with TT mums:

1. **Don't smoke – that's you too, Dad!**
2. **Breastfeed if you can**
3. **Sleep Baby on her back, in a cot in Mum and Dad's room**
4. **Use a dummy at the start of sleep**
5. **Keep Baby cool and keep her head uncovered.**
6. **Be really, really careful if you've been drinking.**



300

babies die in cot deaths every year

2 – 3 months

The key killer time for babies

Under 20s

Young Mums are at greater risk over cot deaths

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Sharon's cracked it

WHEN SHEFFIELD TRAVELLER Sharon Piggot hit 37 she decided to do something about her reading.

Frith Park Library told her about the Sheffield group, SAVTE, that helps people to read. But when she arrived there she didn't know where to go. Manager Sarah Saxon, outside having a ciggie, asked her what she wanted.

"I can't read," Sharon told her.

She can now and she wrote to TT to tell us how it boosted her confidence and her self-esteem. "If there's anything like SAVTE near you, you want to try it."

"We're so proud of her," says Sarah.

Young Travellers in Lancashire can get reading help through the Catch Up Foundation: Graham Sigley, 01842 752297.

Amanda Martin has produced a handy card, H.E.L.P, in memory of her grandfathers Harold Jones and Francis Commons. It reads: Please Note I will need help with reading, writing and form filling. Thank you for your discretion.



Catching up: reading has given me confidence and self-esteem

Gypsy blood

IS BETTERIDGE a Traveller name? asks Andrea Nyssen (nee Betteridge) from Sydney, Australia. She's sure there's Romany blood in her family. "We're a very artistic family: my grandfather, Harold Betteridge, was a composer and musician who made a film about his friend, Charlie Chaplin. My Mum, Dukie, knew Peter Ustinov and Charlton Heston.

And 67-year-old Padraig Maccamara from Chapel Allerton writes: "I wasn't born a Gypsy, but I'm always more at ease in their company. Thirty years ago I met up with a Gypsy couple at Bradford fairground and ended up working for them and moving around with them. Now I take them as my family. I wonder, have I some Gypsy blood in me?"

Knowles & Stewart

CAN ANYONE HELP find family member Martha Stewart from Northern Ireland? She married into a Traveller family, the Knowles, around 1920. My Grandfather, who married five times, had five sons and a daughter, Robina, with a Traveller lady called Smith in Birmingham. Robina married into a Traveller family called Dalrymple from Birmingham. Angus Stewart

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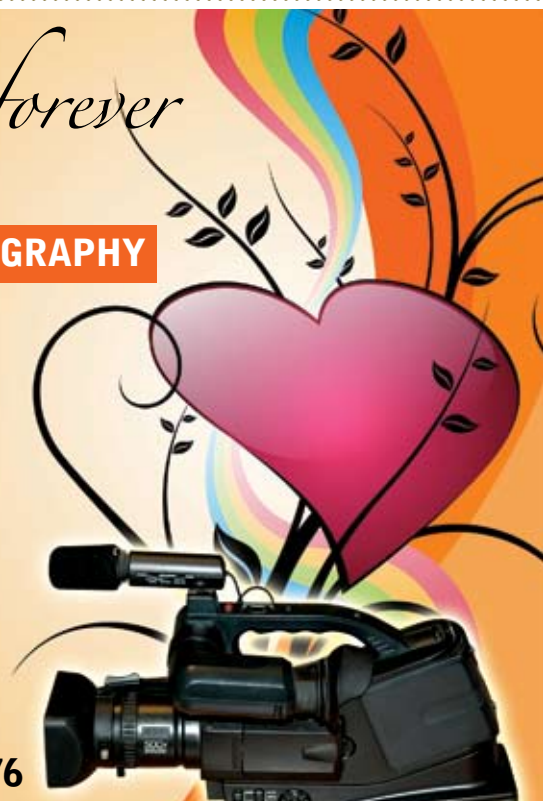
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Fine Work

Malcolm Boulton wants TT readers to know about Fine Cell Work, the charity that teaches needlework in prisons. "Here's one I made," says Malcolm. (www.finecellwork.co.uk)



This land

**When God made me a Romany Gypsy
He told me I did not need a house
He said that this land is yours to roam.
My Traveller's pride
I will not hide
My Travellers' race
I will not disgrace
My Travellers' blood
Flows hot and true
My Gypsy folk will stand by you
Through thick and thin
Until the day I die.**

Jennifer Isaacs, Somerset

Remembering Tommy

I just want to say 'Rest In Peace' to Tommy Maguire from Newcastle, writes grandson Luke from Hexham, Northumberland. "He is always in our thoughts."

**I think TT is fantastic and very artistic.
I hope it brings you lots of customers.**

Dan Hunter

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To help us improve our services to you, it would be of great help to us if you would complete a short questionnaire... **and by doing so get the chance to win high street vouchers!**

**1st prize £60
2nd prize £40
3rd prize £20**

Question 1:

How important do you think vaccinations are?

1. Very important ☐
2. Important ☐
3. Not important ☐

Question 2:

Do you feel you know enough about the recommended vaccinations for children and adults?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (If no, what could we do to improve this?)

.....
.....

Question 3:

In order for you to receive your vaccinations, we can visit you at your sites, at your GP practice, or at various Clinics in both Retford and Worksop areas.

Were you aware of the above? Yes ☐ No ☐

Question 4:

If you chose not to vaccinate a member of your family, what would be the reason?

- ☐ Do not agree with vaccinations at all
- ☐ Not had enough information about the injection
- ☐ Worried about side effects
- ☐ Unable to travel to clinic/GP practice
- ☐ Against beliefs

Question 5:

If you wanted more information or advice, how would you like to be contacted?

- ☐ By post
- ☐ By telephone
- ☐ By text
- ☐ By a visit from a nurse

Your name:

Your address:

Phone number:

In order to enter the prize draw, please complete all the questions, cut out and send the questionnaire back to us in the FREEPOST envelope provided, by 31st March 2011, to:

**Donna Ramsden
Health Promotion Unit
C/O 38 Watson Road
FREEPOST NEA15989
Retford DN22 7BR**

Thank you and good luck!



RESOURCES

celebrate our culture



John Carter and his Mum from Basingstoke ran their Roma trailer up to Hartlebury Museum for GRT day 2010.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month June 1 – 30

ENGLISH GOVERNMENT SPENDING cuts have meant no more funding for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) History Month, but communities across Britain look set to celebrate it anyway.

Launched in June 2008 the GRT History Month has grown from a handful of events to a nationwide celebration.

From Pavée (Irish Traveller) ceilidhs to exhibitions of the Romany Holocaust,

from Travellers Got Talent to prize-winning poets in performance at Lewes Town Hall, and from music making to museum specials such as Hartlebury's Gypsies Who are ya? GRT History Month is alive and kicking.

Gypsy woman Ann Wilson has been involved in Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month since its beginning. "It's very important that our Gypsy culture

continues to be celebrated," says Ann.

Ann has started a new Gypsy-run group, the Barvalipen ('heritage' in Romani) Community Interest Company (CIC).

Look out for Barvalipen at Epsom Downs on Derby Day featuring wagons, a stage, traditional food, music and dancing on June 4.

Check out www.grthm.co.uk

Blowing TV stereotypes apart

YOUNG GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS from Cardiff will be learning hip hop street dance skills with Newport-based Urban Circle and youngsters from the Shirenewton site for a GRT History event in Newport on June 30.

"Gypsy and Traveller children don't get many opportunities to do things like this," according to Isaac Blake of Romani Arts who has brought back Irish Traveller Daniel Flynn to work with them.

"I'm looking forward to having the stereotypes of life on the Shirenewton site to be blown apart by these young people," says Urban's Loren Morris. "I'm not taken in by some of the negative images of Gypsies and Travellers portrayed on recent TV programmes."

The Shirenewton site also plans to present a film made with animation company, Cinetig.



She's shining through

CONGRATULATIONS to Denise Smith (above), 'Niecy' to her friends. She won a Shining Through Award at Colegrave Primary School in Newham, East London. The celebrations were a great success and Niecy's enthusiasm and pride for her culture shone through during last year's celebrations for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History month.



Stitching history

BRADFORD TRAVELLER WOMEN Lucy Pratt, Mary McDonagh and Dollars Ward are doing their own bit for GRT History Month. Stitching away during Artworks' art and craft sessions they've produced a wall hanging and cushions that reflect their history and culture.

Now their work is being put forward for the GRT History Month competition run by Bradford's Education Services for New Communities and Travellers. More information from Horton Housing on 01274 379741 (www.hortonhousing.co.uk)

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IDEA**

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- Invite a Traveller family into your school
- Arrange a Traveller Talent competition
- Organise a family photo exhibition

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"I subscribed to TT to catch up on things and see what's going on in the Community – I enjoy keeping in touch with distant family through the pages"

ALFRED COLEMAN





Paul Polansky
 PHOTO: Huw Powell

Sad memorial

THEY SAY THAT war history is written by the winners, but author and activist Paul Polansky simply refuses to accept it. For decades his work has highlighted every wrong committed against the Romany people.

But no place better symbolises his refusal to let the losers' story remain buried than the Romany Holocaust camp at Lety in the Czech Republic.

When Polansky arrived in Lety the Holocaust site's true history was buried and covered up. He found to his disgust that the very barracks the victims had lived in now housed 20,000 pigs. "The fact the pig farm still remains is a symbol of how the Czechs still view Gypsies," says Polansky. "Nothing at all has changed."

Over the decades he has shamed the Czech government into remembering the atrocities committed at Lety, but says the greatest insult remains – the pig farm. In a new film produced by British filmmakers Ioana

Contaninesco and Huw Powell called *Let Lety Be*, Polansky revisits Lety and goes after the Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg whose father started and operated the camp. You can view both an interview with Polansky and the new film he has made at: www.travellerstimes.org.uk. Winners may well write the history books, but Polansky breathes life into an old African proverb. "Until the lions speak the hunter's tale is always glorified." And this lion is roaring louder than ever. Czech Ambassador to the UK, Michael Zantovsky said he regretted the fact that a pig farm still remained on the site, but told TT: "Expropriation of the property in public interest would be very difficult both from the legal and financial point of view. Several Czech governments took up the issue with the aim to secure the site of the camp for memorial purposes. So far, the issue has not been resolved."

My Hungarian home



Second-year photography student at UCA Rochester, Nicole Macfarlane, has been documenting her own Hungarian Roma culture because, she says, "I want to concentrate on it and on how Western influences have changed or even destroyed parts of it." She has the support of family and friends (left) in her home village where her Mother hopes to set up a support group and art studio. More at www.nicolemacfarlane.com

Bill & Barbie

TRAVELLERS' TIMES is saying a sad goodbye to editor Bill Laws and Advertising Manager Barbie Smith. Bill is leaving us to pursue his career as a writer and street musician and Barbie has gone to develop her family business. "Working with Gypsies and Travelling people has been a rare privilege and I have thoroughly enjoyed every moment of it," says Bill.

Final thought

"There's a lot of publicity about Travelling people just now. Well, years ago it was all bad. Yet in those days our families used to work in the fields in all winds and all weathers. I tell you what: it put the next generation in good stead: today lots of Traveller boys and girls go to college or they hold down nine to five jobs. And where I come from, in the south west, most of the Travellers are as honest as the day's long."

Larry Harvey



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