

FEMINIST LIBRARY
Hungerford House
Victoria Embankment
London WC2N 6PA

01-930-0715
BLACK LESBIAN AND GAY CENTRE (PROJECT) NEWSHEET - FEBRUARY 1986

B.L.G.C., Annexe B, Tottenham Town Hall, Town Hall Approach, High Road,
London N15 4RX.

Tel: 01-885 3543+(Ansaphone)

PREMISES

We are still continuing our search for suitable premises. We again repeat our request - do you know of any empty building in reasonable condition which we might lease from a Local Authority or share with a community group?

CONFERENCE '86

BLGC together with Black workers from LAGER/LER, GALOP, Waltham Forest Blacklesbian Group, individuals, and the EMU of the GLC co-ordinated a one day Conference entitled "Black Communities: Living & Struggling together". The Conference took place on Sunday 16th February at Brixton Recreation Centre. "All too often we are too caught up in activities to stop and discuss how we relate to one another. The results are often disastrous." At this Conference we had an opportunity to confront some of the things that divide us, as well as reaffirm the links and solidarity that already sustain us. Between 100-125 people attended. Workshops examined "myths" and "cultural differences" around our sexualities, and relationships: lovers, friends, and family. A document is to be produced in the forthcoming months. For more information contact BLGC on 01-885 3543 or "Erika" or "Suneel" at GLC/EMU 01-633 1640.

REPORT BACK FROM ST. LOUIS (USA!)

The National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays held their first National Conference in St. Louis, Missouri at the end of November 1985. The theme was "Black Pride and Solidarity: the new movement of Black Lesbians and Gays". BLGC sent two representatives, one of our women workers, and a man from our management committee.

The Conference was held over two and a half days, at the Sheraton Hotel, Downtown, St. Louis. An introductory 'Keynote address' was given by Henry Chinn, under the title "Under the Shroud of Colonialism will we choose Death or will we choose Life?". After a short break the entertainment for that evening began with Irare Sabasu - a poet from New York City, George Bellinger - a dancer, and Gwen Avery - a well-known singer from the West Coast.

Workshops covered included "Spirituality as a liberating Force" (- this was an exciting and stimulating talk given by Myrna Bain; and "Black Lesbian and Gay Oral History" - which gave us the opportunity to talk with Mable Hampton.

Another keynote address was made by Gwendolyn Rodgers. Gwen had attended the conference in Nairobi, Kenya that marked the close of the United Nations Decade for Women, and re-confirmed 'our' presence at 'that' conference and in that part of the world.

A banquet was held to honor Mable Hampton who is an 83year old Blacklesbian. Ms Hampton was presented with a special award, which is named after her and will be awarded annually for contributions to the struggle. Entertainment after the conference included a fantastic line-up of one of our Reps., personal SHERoes, and the opportunity to experience an evening of Blacklesbian and Blackgay talent. There was poetry reading/performance, excerpts from plays, and singers. It was at the banquet that our Rep's., introduced themselves, and briefly outlined recent events in London re: Black Peoples' March and surrounding events.

The Sunday workshop on "Black Lesbian Leadership" was inspiring and exciting, with input from various sistahs on the herstory of organizing and maintaining groups. In the plenary session, we had an opportunity to thank the conference for their warm welcome, and deliver messages of solidarity.

Once again we would like to thank those who supported the fundraising events which helped to pay air fares and expenses.

So far articles covering the conferences have appeared in "Capital Gay"; and will be in " WE ARE HERE: Black Feminist Newsletter"; "OUTWRITE" and hopefully other publications.

ILIS CONFERENCE

International Lesbian Information Service is holding its eighth annual conferenc in Geneva, Switzerland on 28-31 March 1986. They have informed us that there will be Lesbians from Mexico, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Kenya, Nigeria, Thailand and Blacklesbians from the U.S.A., as well as Blacklesbians from London and hopefully Liverpool.

The workshop "Lesbians in the 'Work'-World" will be facilitated by a Black woman, as well as one on "Inter-relationship of 'ism's" (e.g. Racism, Anti-semitism, Heterosexism and Classism etc.)

There will also be a workshop "on Third World Lesbians, following the proposition of a lesbian from Thailand.". BLGC is not involved in anyway with this event other than that we have been circulating information as we've received it to groups in London as well as Sheffield, Leicester, Liverpool and Manchester. We are organising a meeting, in London for sistahs planning to attend, to share information and to co-ordinate our presense and impact. For further info contact Dorothea/Savi at BLGC (project).

LIBRARY

BLGC have began work on their library. Our primary focus is work by/about Blacklesbians and Blackgay men. We will also cover work that relates to other spheres of our lives. We have purchased a small selection and had donations, of magazines/articles of interest from several sistahs. Our library will be open to "MEMBERS". Membership is being designed in three categories. Full/Supporting/and Institutional, watch out for further details.

CONVERSE PICTURES

Is a film and video production Co-Op. It was set-up by 4 members of the Lesbian and Youth Video Project which produced the video "Framed Youth" ('Revenge of the teenage perverts'). Currently CONVERSE has two members, a White lesbian and a White gay man. They are looking for two or three new members, particularly Blacklesbian and Blackgay man. All members have equal pay - when there is money to pay wages! They are not receiving regular funding. Anyone interested should contact Jeff/Nicola on 01-274 4000 asking for "CONVERSE PICTURES". (If no-one is in the office please leave your name/contact no. with the switchboard.)
Converse Pictures Ltd. BonMarche Building, 444 Brixton Road, SW9 8EJ.

NEW GROUPS

Black Lesbian Group - Every Thursday 7pm 01-701 2651
Venue: Peckham Black Lesbian Group
St Giles Church Hall, Benhill Road, Camberwell SE5
CRECHE available

"Ma Je" (Sisterhood of Women)
A group for "Gay Women and lesbians of colour" - Every Sunday 7pm
Venue: London Lesbian and Gay Centre
67-69 Cowcross St., EC1.
Contact: Aairin 01 274 4718

BLACK PEOPLE IN BRIXTON HOUSING CO-OP (BHC)

In an attempt to implement an Equal Opportunities Policy BHC have closed their membership to all - except Black people. "Co-Op" means just that. In exchange for some voluntary work in a variety of roles (depending on skills - technical or intellectual) and with patience you can acquire your own flat! Currently there are vacancies for committed volunteers on all sub-committees (Development, Finance, Membership, Maintenance) and the Management Committee. There is a long-standing community of White gay men. Come and hear more at a BLACK PEOPLE ONLY meeting on Sunday 2nd March at 3pm - No. 1 Lohman House, Bowling Green St/Magee St, SE11 (Junction) off 'Kennington Oval' opposite 'Oval' tube station (3mins).

AUTHOR! AUTHOR!

We are eager for copies of your short-stories/poetry/photographs so that we can consider them for our forthcoming NEWSLETTER. Apart from the Baldwin's - there are no novels published by 'Blackgay men'! (Prove me wrong, please?) BLGC will be pleased to either review your unfinished manuscripts (or those written by women); alternately we could help you to get in touch with a 'publisher of repute'.

PENPAL: "Sandip", 20yrs old Indian (male) in Calcutta: wrote to LGBG "desperate to have someone to talk to". Please write "Sandip": c/o BLGC.

REMEMBER RUGBY?

"Stockport (Manchester) City Council have refused to include lesbians and gay men in their Equal Opportunities Policy! Three times the issue has been taken to a full sitting of the Council, three times it has been refused. It is necessary to stage a national demonstration in protest:"

cont..

SATURDAY, MARCH 15th 1986. BLGC is keen to form a contingent with any Brothers and Sistahs who are new to protest. Contact BLGC 01-885 3543 +Anspnone; or the official organizers via Robert Pacitti on 061-273-5111.

WOMEN-ONLY BENEFIT

International Lesbian Conference Benefit organised by the Blackwomens Co-ordinating Group. On March 4th "MARTINAS" at the Market Tavern (Market Towers, Nine Elms, Vauxhall SW8. 2mins. from Vauxhall tube) Featuring "Ranking Josie!" DJ, with reggae and funk sounds. Admission £1.50/£1 (UB40). 9pm-2am

L.G.B.G. (Lesbian & Gay Black Group)
presents

"Bedereo'bwite"

a Meet & Eat session (Vege-a-swell)

NUFF SPACE IN DE PLACE! All London gathering

28TH FEB - Friday ~~7th March~~; 7.30pm+

Marchmont St Community Centre

LONDON WC1 (Russell Sq/ TUBE)

£1.00 + Bring a bottle