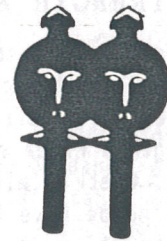


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BLGCC NEWS

March 1988

Tottenham Green Community Workshops
Unit 4, 2 Somerset Road, LONDON N17 9QP 01-885 3543

SAM AKINLADE

Sam Akinlade died on 24 February at the age of twenty-four. A member of the NUS Executive, Sam had been active in anti-racist and lesbian and gay rights campaigning, and helped to found the Black Communities Aids Team. With dedication and courage, he continued to work for our communities even when seriously ill until, suffering greatly from cancer and HIV-Related Conditions, he took his own life. He was widely respected & loved, & details of a remembrance meeting are enclosed. NUS is also organising a tribute; to find out more, contact Patrick Younge on 272 8900.



Sam Akinlade

BLACK & MINORITY ETHNIC CAUCUS

The Organisation for Lesbian & Gay Action (OLGA) has a Black & Minority Ethnic Caucus. If you have any ideas/suggestions about what OLGA should be doing, contact me on 241 2263 (evenings), leave a message on 833 3860 or write to me at OLGA, Box 147, London SE15 3SA. Watch this space for details of meetings etc.

Kris Black

CLAUSE 29

Clause 29 (until very recently Clause 28) of the Local Government Bill continues to pass through parliament. The clause makes it illegal for local authorities intentionally to 'promote homosexuality', whatever that means.

Work is going on to alert the black communities to the dangers of the clause in London and in Sheffield; if you know of any other areas where this is happening, please let us know at the BLGC office.

Afraid of getting into trouble, some councils, schools and community groups are dropping their commitment to lesbian & gay rights or thinking of doing so. London Voluntary Service Council is calling on all voluntary organisations to pledge to carry on making their work 'both relevant and accessible to all communities in London including lesbians and gay men'. Perhaps you could persuade a community group to which you belong to sign. Copies are available from Steve Wyler, LVSC, 68 Chalton St, NW1; tel 388 0241.

The Stop the Clause Campaign Education Group (Box 147, London SE15 3SA), which puts out a newsletter, is drawing up a declaration of commitment to lesbian & gay rights for groups of young people, parents, education workers and governors to sign. A briefing on the effects of the clause on young black people is available from BLGC.

FUNDRAISING

A BLGC fundraising group is now starting up. Anyone interested in, enthused about or got energy to assist with it? Contact BLGC. Our future is as important as that of any other group threatened by the clause - get involved! Phone us on 885 3543 for details how. Don't let this project fold.

STRENGTH AND PRIDE 1988.

Haringey Lesbian & Gay Unit is working with officers from Camden, Hackney & Islington to co-ordinate Strength & Pride events this year. By and large, black & minority ethnic lesbian & gays' needs have been poorly catered for during this major festival. We are determined to redress this imbalance. We have therefore volunteered resources to facilitate the organisation of a special event for black lesbians & gays. There will also be special events for Irish lesbians & gays and Cypriot lesbians & gays.

Obviously we do not want to go ahead & organise the event on our own, without asking your opinions, so here are a few questions for you...

Is it O.K. that we have the event at the West Indian Cultural Centre in Haringey? What kind of entertainment would you like?

Would you like a particular D.J.

Do you know any Blackgay performers who would appeal to a cross-section of revellers?

Should it be an evening event?

We really do want to know what you think. If you want to be involved please give us a ring on 802 8981.

Gilli and Femi

ABORIGINAL SOLIDARITY GROUP

Australia's bicentennial celebrations carry on. If you are fed up with this attempt to glorify the mass murder of black people & the theft of their land, and want to do something about it, you may be interested in joining the Aboriginal Anti-Bicentenary Solidarity Group, which meets at 7pm every Wednesday at 21 Bonnington Sq, London SW8.

FUNDS URGENTLY NEEDED

Lesbians & gays with disabilities are hoping to hold a national conference from 15-17 April in Manchester. But the organisers are desperately short of money - and if the conference is delayed it may not happen at all, thanks to Clause 29. If you can make a donation, please send it to LANGUID, c/o LAGU, 48 Grand Parade, Green Lanes, N4 (cheques should be made payable to Lesbian and Gay Rights Legislation Campaign (Staff Account)). To find out more, or if you could help to organise a fundraising event in a venue with good access, ring Kirsten Hearn on 802 8981 or Nola Parke on 639 9246 or write to LANGUID.

MESSAGE TO STUDENTS

Dear Sisters & Brothers,

To ensure that the needs of Black lesbians & gay men were met. I, a Blacklesbian, was selected on to the NUS Lesbian & Gay Committee. As I realised that there are many among you who do not feel that your gay soc at college at college is not catering for your needs or is prioritising those of white lesbians & gays, and choose not to join as a result.

Yet we do exist & are members of NUS, and therefore with your help & communication I shall try to get NUS leadership to take note of our concerns, whether they are of your local college area or of national significance.

Please write to me in confidence, c/o BLGC, stating where you are so that I can go into committee meetings with figures & the confidence that you, like me, want something done for Black lesbian & gay students.

Janet

INTERVIEWEES WANTED

A black women studying social sciences, Diane Ashley, is doing a project on black lesbians & gays. If you are willing to be interviewed by her in strict confidence, you can write to her at 49A Wilson Rd, SES.

West London Cyrenians

are seeking a

Black Lesbian Resource Worker

to complete a team of 8 providing accommodation for 30 homeless single people until permanent accommodation is arranged. Approximately 60% of the people we work with are black & 60% women. Another house is currently being developed.

The worker will share responsibility for policy development & housing management, & in particular for gathering relevant information & imparting it to the team.

An understanding of the support needs of young homeless women, especially black women & women leaving prison, is needed. Experience of housing/hostel work and/or work in the statutory sector is important.

A commitment to non-hierarchical and anti-discriminatory working practices is essential.

36 hr week, 30 days annual leave. Optional pension scheme. Salary £11,466 p.a. (under review).

For more information contact West London Cyrenians, 240 Lancaster Rd, W11 4AH; tel 727 6772.

Section 7(2)c of Sex Discrimination Act & Section 5(2)d of Race Relations Act apply.

(or might be in the future), please come.
Details from 885 3543.

Fri 25 Mar

8pm Lesbian & Gay Black Group, 62 Marchmont St, WC1. Details from 737 8237.

Sat 26 Mar

10am-5pm Men In London; Being Gay & Black, workshop led by Jeff Sawyerr of National AIDS helpline & Black Communities AIDS Team, London Lesbian & Gay Centre, 67-69 Cowcross St, EC1. Issues will include sexuality, racism and internalised oppression, relationships with black & white men, and HIV/AIDS. Wheelchair access. To book ring PACE, 251 2689.

6-11pm Black Lesbian Open Evening, with performances, exhibitions, video & food. Camden Lesbian Centre, 54-56 Phoenix Rd, NW1. Access details above. For further information ring BLGC, 885 3543; or Camden Black Lesbian Group, 383 5407.

Sun 27 Mar

10am-4pm Self-defence for lesbians (10-noon lesbians with disabilities only), workshop at Camden Lesbian Centre, 54-56 Phoenix Rd, NW1. Access details above. To register ring 278 0120.

Mon 28 Mar

10am-1pm Lesbian mothers writers' workshop, Camden Lesbian Centre, 54-56 Phoenix Rd, details as for 14 Mar.

Tue 29-Wed 30 Mar

Mail-out, BLGC office, Unit 4, Tottenham Green Workshops, 2 Somerset Rd, N17. Black lesbians & gays are urgently needed to help type, paste up & photocopy the news-sheet, stuff envelopes etc. If you can spare a couple of hours to help, please ring the office by 22 Mar on 885 3543.

Tue 29 Mar-Sat 16 April

The Story of Kufur-Shamma, a play performed by Palestinian theatre group El Hakawati, will be at the Almeida Theatre. Access details from 359 1666; for further information ring 359 4404.

Tue 29 Mar

6.30pm Coffee evening to raise funds for LANGUID conference, Camden Lesbian Centre, 54-56 Phoenix Rd, NW1. Access details above.

Fri 8 April

8pm Aerobics & dance lesson, Lesbian & Gay Black Group, 62 Marchmont St, WC1. Get fit under the guidance of Helen A. Bring loose and comfortable clothing in which to work out.

**Black Communities Aids Team
seeks**

Counsellor/Advice Worker

to give advice & information on all aspects of HIV infection to members of the black communities & to undertake work that may arise in establishing new supportive systems. Circa £12,500 p.a. Ref CA001.

Administration/Information Officer

to carry out day-to-day administration of centre & to initiate & develop literature & information specifically addressing needs of black communities in relation to HIV infection, Related Conditions & AIDS. Circa £12,500. Ref AI001.

Applicants from Afro-Caribbean, Asian or African Communities with background in community work, organisational skills & preferably experience of HIV-related issues should send c.v. or get application form from BCAT, c/o Room 203, Southbank Hse, Black Prince Rd, SE1; tel 771 4248.

Closing date 11 Mar; interviews probably 25 Mar. LBGS funded.

Race Relations Act Section 5(2)(d) applies.

London Lighthouse

seeks about 40 workers for

Administration (including clerical/
secretarial work & finance)

Caretaking & security

Cleaning & domestic services

Nursing

Reception & switchboard

Training (counselling, health programmes/
education, equal opportunities etc.)

If interested, contact London Lighthouse, 178 Lancaster Rd, W11; tel 727 2018 or 221 6513.

COURSES

Counselling

A weekly course for black lesbians and gay men to develop counselling skills is

to be arranged. For further details contact PACE at the Lesbian & Gay Centre, 67-69 Cowcross St, EC1M 6BP; tel 251 2589.

Pregnancy advisors

The Pregnancy Advisory Service is running a Counsellor Training Course on 9-13 May and 25 May. Black women interested in working as sessional counsellors are particularly welcome to apply. No qualifications or previous experience are necessary. If you are interested contact PAS before the end of March at 11-13 Charlotte St, W1P 1HD; tel 637 8962.

Sound recording

The Minority Arts Advisory Service is offering an introductory course to black/Third World persons who want to pursue a career in sound recording. To find out more, contact Steel an' Skin on 328 6992 or MAAS Training Unit, 25/31 Tavistock Place, 3rd Floor, WC1H 9SF; tel 388 6440.

ACCOMMODATION

April Housing Co-op

The waiting list for April Housing Co-op is still open to black lesbians and gay men. April was set up in 1981, and gets a number of short-life houses and flats in Hackney from the local council.

Applicants to join April must be lesbian or gay and in genuine housing need. Though many of its properties are in poor condition and have limited access for people with impaired mobility, April will if possible pay for the refurbishment of properties to meet the specific needs of lesbians and gays with disabilities.

If you would like a copy of the application form, information sheet and equal opportunities policy, contact the BLGC office, or April at Unit 41, Metropolitan Workshops, Enfield Rd, N1; tel 254 8129.

A room to spare?

Are you seeking a flatmate? Do you belong to a housing co-op which encourages black lesbian and gay applicants? Do you want someone to water your plants or feed your cat while you are on holiday?

Occasionally, people searching for somewhere to stay contact the BLGC office. So if you know of any accommodation available to black lesbians and gays on a temporary or permanent basis, please give us the details.

LIBRARY

In prose and poetry, fact and fiction, books in the BLGC library touch on many different aspects of our lives. Some deal openly with black lesbian and gay themes, while others do not (you won't have to hide them under your bed when homophobic relatives visit!).

The tragic intensity of James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* is far removed in tone from the imaginative light-heartedness of Suniti Namjoshi's *The Conversations of Cow*, but both novels explore the pleasures and pitfalls of love.

Works from various parts of the world can be found on our shelves, from black British writer Barbara Burford's much-acclaimed *The Threshing Floor to Now the Volcano: An Anthology of Latin American Gay Literature*. Audre Lorde's autobiography *Zami* has become a modern classic, while *The Life of Langston Hughes* tells of another great Afro-American writer who never fully 'came out'.

In *Gay and Gray*, elderly gay men talk about their lives. The interviewees in *Talking About Young Lesbians* are from a different generation.

The struggles of black people throughout the world are described in works such as Peter Fryer's *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* and Kumari Jayawardena's *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*.

On a lighter note, *Turning the Tables* is a cookbook with a difference.

Handbooks range from *Your Rights and the Law* to *Caring for the Sick*. There are works on dealing with a range of common - but sometimes embarrassing - problems, like *Jealousy! Suddenly Single* is about coping with loss, whether by bereavement or by the break-up of a relationship.

There are magazines, too, including *Blackheart*, published by black gays in the USA, and *Woman of Power*. Unfortunately we do not yet have items on cassette or in large print.

Whatever your interests, there will be something in the BLGC library to intrigue, inform, move or entertain you. Only members can use it, so return your form now (if you have lost your or not received one, more copies are available). Please ring before you visit the office to ensure that a worker or volunteer is there.