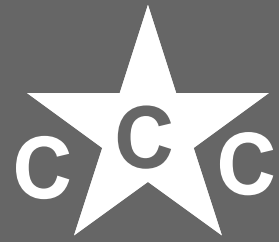


Colville

community history project issue 1 January 2013



COMMUNITY
COHESION

Rachman and Christie Local Horrible History Talks



Tuesday February 26 5.30-7.30pm The Real Rachman Lord of the Slums Radio 4 documentary presented by Joshua Levine with Rachmania slideshow by Tom Vague and discussion, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Profumo affair political sex scandal—including the Rachman slum housing revelations which began Colville community action—featuring interviews with Mandy Rice-Davies, Nicholas Van Hoogstraten, Fred Rondel, Shirley Green, Dominic Sandbrook, and local heroes Bill Richardson and Vee Davis.

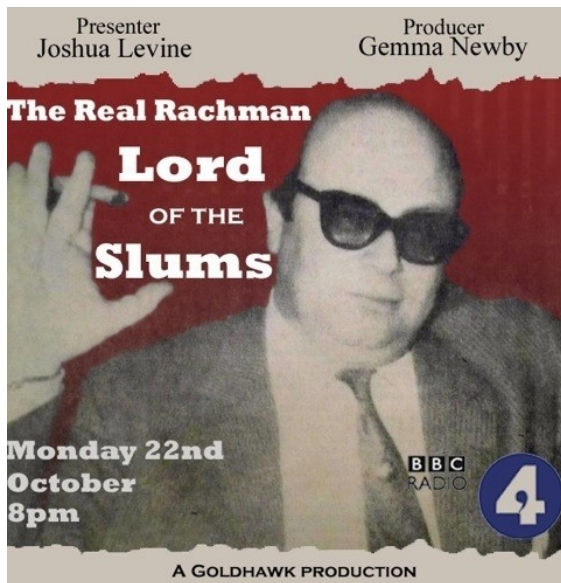


Tuesday March 5 5.30-7.30pm John Christie of Rillington Place: Biography of a Serial Killer by Jonathan Oates North Kensington launch on the 60th anniversary of Christie's arrest and trial, also featuring John Curnow of the 10 Rillington Place website's psychogeography report on the case. Although the site of the house is just over the Colville ward boundary, Christie was active in the old Lancaster Road cafes, the KPH and the Elgin along Ladbroke Grove, and his wife/victim Ethel was a North Kensington library member.

North Kensington Library February/March

108 Ladbroke Grove W11 1PZ libraries@rbkc.gov.uk 020 7361 3010

www.rbkc.gov.uk/libraries twitter.com/rbkclibraries Free—book a seat at North Kensington Library



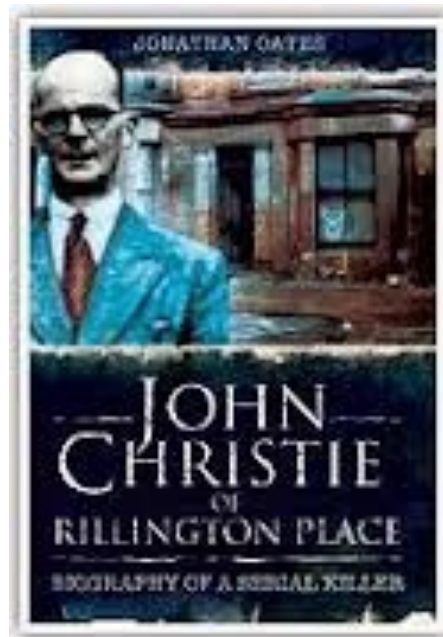
February 26 5.30-7.30 pm The Real Rachman Lord of the Slums by Joshua Levine/Rachmania slideshow

In the Rachmanism legend, unwanted tenants would be persuaded to vacate properties by such means as itching powder or dead rats left in beds, rubbish dumped in flats, or belongings thrown out into the street by his henchmen. However, the *Rachman* book author Shirley Green says he usually bought out sitting tenants and there is 'little evidence to suggest that he forced them out in any way.' Joshua Levine speaks to Rachman's girlfriend Mandy Rice-Davies, his follower Nicholas Van Hoogstraten, his sympathetic biographer Shirley Green and tenant Vee Davis, and his community activist adversary Bill Richardson. The documentary also features his most notorious associate Fred Rondel and the social historian Dominic Sandbrook.

As well as the notorious Colvillains Rachman, Christie, Mosley and Michael X, there will be forthcoming talks about local heroines Rhaune Laslett, the 1966 Notting Hill Carnival founder, Amy Ashwood-Garvey and the locally associated Claudia Jones, Mark Olden on his *Murder in Notting Hill* investigation into the killing of Kelso Cochrane, and readings by local fiction writers Mo Foster from *A Blues for Shindig*, Cathi Unsworth from *Bad Penny Blues* and Stewart Home from *Tainted Love*.

Colville ward community activists, including Vee Davis, Marie Kamara, Bob Pandey, Bill Richardson and Barbara Shervington, have been interviewed for the Colville oral history project and transcription is underway. In conjunction with the project, Blanche Girouard has interviewed market traders for her Portobello oral history book. The Colville Community Forum and PortobelloLand websites are being updated with history timeline sections. The CCF site will have an interactive map to key ward sites and access to the oral history interviews.

March 5 5.30-7.30 John Christie of Rillington Place: Biography of a Serial Killer by Jonathan Oates In 1943 Christie met his first victim, Ruth Fuerst, in the Lancaster Road corner café on the site of the flower stall opposite the library. He also frequented the café across Ladbroke Grove down from his local, the KPH. The landlord of the Elgin recalled Christie in the early 50s, after the execution of Timothy Evans for the murder of his daughter, always looking around as if he was haunted by his ghost. Christie's 'personal particulars' sent to Gems waxworks on Basing Street for his Madame Tussaud's exhibit included his Portobello Road tailor Reg Fair. For more psychogeographical detail go to John Curnow's www.10-rillington-place.co.uk site.



Leading on from the History of Colville photo exhibition at the Tabernacle in Powis Square (highlights on the box office corner), Colville history events at the Tab are planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Profumo affair Rachman revelations Colville community action, featuring the Rotten Hill Gang and the Trojans, and the 1963 Claudia Jones anti-racism march from Ladbroke Grove to the US embassy, the launch of Ishmahil Blagrove's 1966 Rhaune Laslett Carnival photo book and Blanche Girouard's Portobello market book, another photo exhibition of the history of the Tabernacle and a Colville photo history booklet.

The Colville Community History Project is part of the Colville Community Forum RBKC City Living Local Life community cohesion initiative. project co-ordinator tomvague@gmail.com www.colvillecom.com in association with the North Kensington Community Archive Local Studies Kensington Central Library Hornton Street time-machine blog <http://rbkclocalstudies.wordpress.com>



31/8/63 Claudia Jones anti-racism march quiz

This year's Carnival will be around about the 50th anniversary of the Claudia Jones-led march against racial discrimination, in solidarity with the Martin Luther King "I have a dream" demonstration in Washington, from Ladbroke Grove station to the US embassy in Grosvenor Square. Where is the march in the John Hopkins photo? Answers to tomvague@gmail.com



Vee Davis was on the Claudia Jones march with Pearl Prescod—but she doesn't remember the route. On her arrival in Notting Hill in 1957, the year before the race riots, Vee became a Rachman tenant in Powis Square and rebuffed Michael de Freitas's attempt to be her pimp. After working as a nurse Vee got into acting, most recently appearing in Alicia Keys' 'Girl on Fire' video.

JOIN IN SOLIDARITY

with the
Hundreds of Thousands Marching
to Washington against

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

MARCH

with us in London
to the American Embassy
on
SATURDAY AUGUST 31, 1963
Assemble at 3 p.m.
at the Ladbroke Grove tube station

JOIN US—
AND HELP SMASH BIGOTRY

Organised by the Committee of Afro-Asian and Caribbean Organisations,
 3 Collietham Gardens, S.W.5.
 Printed by Columbia Printers (T.U.), Holborn 4442

Marie Kamara was brought up in Notting Hill in the 30s, on Blechynden Street by Latimer Road station, where the '58 riots started. She recalls, "We were the only black family in our neighbourhood but I didn't experience any problems; I had lots of friends, who were all white, and I wasn't aware that I was different or black." After being evacuated to the west country during the war, Marie returned to work at Painting and Pottery on Talbot Road and went on to be a member of the Ballet Negre.

Barbara Shervington's husband Andre was an associate of Michael de Freitas aka Michael X and Michael Abdul Malik during his community activist phase. She worked with Rhaune Laslett, the organiser of the first London Free School Notting Hill Carnival in 1966, at her pioneering neighbourhood centre on Tavistock Crescent, also featuring 'the shanty town' adventure playground, visited by Muhammad Ali at the time of his second Henry Cooper fight. Barbara, Vee and Marie are all still involved in the Carnival Village at the Tabernacle.

In the Colville beat poem by Michael Horovitz and Pete Brown 'Blues for the H.-h. Dead: Last Chorus of Thirty Three' from 1963: 'It was three stories in Notting Hill—The ground floored by working people On Her Majesty's Service... The first housed thirteen exiles all sizes shapes and colours... And as for the couple on top—well, they were just plain degenerate—Why those two were all ways in out up-stairs downstairs in the middle—yes, they had a lot of truck with the bloody foreigners above the basement and below the stairs... and now the bomb has fallen and broken all our hearts.' Horovitz is the longest-running Colville Michael—from the beats to Blur. There's also Michael Moorcock, the sci-fantasy author Hawkwind member, and John Michell, the Michael X-associate X-files expert.



1965 Malcolm X meeting in Notting Hill

In 1963, at the time of the Rachman slum housing revelations of the Profumo affair, the Notting Hill Housing Trust was founded by the Methodist missionary Bruce Kenrick at 107 Blenheim Crescent, to provide decent housing in the Colville and Golborne wards. The following year the local Young Communists organised a petition calling for the Council to acquire the Powis Square gardens for use as a public space. In 1965 the Notting Hill Community Workshop and the London Free School community action group were formed. The most famous/notorious Powis Square resident after Michael X was Brian Jones of the Rolling Stones.

It's also the 50th of the opening of the Colville film *West Eleven* by Michael Winner, adapted from *The Furnished Room* novel by the long-standing Portobello market trader Laura del Rivo. The classic North Kensington kitchen-sink melodrama is partly set on Colville Terrace. Alfred Lynch stars as the archetypal local anti-hero 'Joe Beckett', who is offered £10,000 to commit a murder. In the opening sequence he walks through Powis Square to his bed-sit on Colville Terrace, passing the future location of Mick Jagger's house in *Performance*.

A young David Hemmings appears as a local hooligan in Powis Square and Diana Dors as a beat girl. Halliwell called it a 'dingy but not very convincing 'realist' melodrama with jazzy style which induces weariness.' The *West Eleven* theme is by the jazz clarinetist Acker Bilk. Michael Winner's grandfather had a tailor's shop at 167/9 Portobello Road, next to the Portobello Star bar. In the 30s JD Winner & Co were 'noted as the largest tailors' trimming dealers in the trade.'

Who's that girl? and guy? and where is it? John 'Hoppy' Hopkins was at most things in the 60s—but he doesn't remember the exact geographical details. Hoppy recalls 'a small meeting addressed by Malcolm X or in support of him in late '65 in Notting Hill in a hired hall about two months before he was assassinated.' Is it the old All Saints church hall community centre on Powis Gardens? Michael de Freitas gave Malcolm X a guided tour of Colville, as the American Black Power leader inspired him to become Britain's version Michael X. The X was bestowed by Malcolm when he told the press he was going to Birmingham "with my brother Michael."

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