



Thursday 2 June 2011

Historically important Runnymede Collection moves to Black Cultural Archives

The Runnymede Collection, which documents the development of multiculturalism and race-relations in contemporary Britain from 1968 – 2001, will move to Black Cultural Archives (BCA).¹ This unique collection of cultural and political importance will be transferred from the Cat Hill campus at Middlesex University in June 2011.²

The extensive library and archives explores the Runnymede Trust's work effecting policy and cultural change and includes books, reports, press cuttings, monographs, pamphlets, official documents, journals and articles. The Collection reveals the diverse sources of information that the Runnymede Trust has used in its research and campaigning spanning the anti-immigration speeches of Enoch Powell in 1968, to the 1981 Brixton uprising and the fall-out following the publication of Salmon Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*.³

The Runnymede Trust is the leading policy 'think tank' on race relations in Britain. Since its inception in 1968, Runnymede has produced many landmark reports, including *Colour and Citizenship* (1969) and the *Commission for Multi-Ethnic Britain* (2000).⁴

BCA will open the doors to the country's first Black heritage centre in 2012.⁵ The £6.5 million capital project, £4m of which is from the Heritage Lottery Fund, will transform the derelict Grade II Raleigh Hall in Windrush Square, Brixton into an inspiring learning experience of research, exhibitions and events.

The BCA archive will be at the heart of the heritage centre, which will include a library and reading room, providing public access to its unique collections. The Runnymede Collection will serve to augment the centre's research and educational potential and enhance readers' experience of BCA's collections.

Professor Stuart Hall, said:

"I am delighted that the Runnymede archive – so critical for an understanding of post-war migration and the responses to it – will still be available. The Black Cultural Archives is an excellent and well-chosen site for its preservation. I know they will continue to develop it and make it accessible to researchers, scholars and, most important of all, the general informed and concerned public"

Dame Jocelyn Barrow⁶, Director for Development at Focus Consultancy Ltd, said:

"This unique historical collection will enable the BCA to fulfil one of its major purposes as an educational and research centre, covering the history of black people in the UK in the 20th century and up to the present time."

Paul Reid, Director of BCA, said:

“The Runnymede Collection is a fantastic addition to the archive. This superb collection significantly increases BCA’s capacity to tell the story of Black people in the UK. The collection will increase the scope of learning possibilities for users of the archive and is perfectly timed in the build-up to opening the new Black heritage centre.”

Rob Berkeley, Director of Runnymede, said:

“We are delighted that the BCA is to host our peerless collection of racism and race equality-related material. For more than forty years we have built up an archive of documents that charts the history of race relations in this country. The 6000 item-strong collection of primary resources has incredible historical value. It is entirely apt that such a resource should be housed yards away from the site of the 1980s scenes of race-related unrest and uprisings in Brixton. We hope that people up and down the country with an interest in race equality and the history of the struggle for it will visit the Runnymede Collection at the BCA.”

Sue Bowers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund London, said:

“As the main funder of BCA, the Heritage Lottery Fund is delighted that it will now be housing the Runnymede Collection. This is a hugely important collection and once installed in Raleigh Hall it will be viewed by a much wider range of people and in an entirely appropriate setting.”

Ends

Notes to Editors

¹ BCA was founded in 1981 as a grassroots community organisation. The registered charity now collects, preserves and celebrates the history, stories and culture of Black people in Britain.

The Runnymede Collection will move to BCA on 2 June 2011. The related collection of the Commission for British Muslims and Islamophobia Archive will be transferred from Middlesex University at the same time. A further part of the Runnymede Trust archives will move from the Trust to BCA after the opening of the new heritage centre in Brixton.

² The Cat Hill campus at Middlesex University is closing 3 June 2011.

³ The Runnymede Collection includes a complete range of key texts and documents in subject areas such as employment, education and training, housing and the inner-city, immigration and law, racism and ethnic minority communities, women, religion, politics, social services, health, policing and criminal justice.

⁴ The Runnymede Trust has worked to challenge racial discrimination and promote a successful multi-ethnic Britain by providing the facts of racial discrimination and the techniques for overcoming it, stimulating debate and suggesting strategies in public policy. Its principal function in the early years was to provide briefs, background papers and research data for MPs, civil servants, local government and others concerned with policy. It

provided a means of responding swiftly and authoritatively on key issues as media attention to the subject of race relations increased. In later years, Runnymede published reports designed to interpret government policy to a wider audience at the same time as briefing government on public opinion. Through the 1990s, Runnymede's role shifted from that of providing position or interpretative papers to working more closely with government in an advisory capacity. All of this work is documented in the Runnymede Collections.

⁵ The Black heritage centre capital development project is generously funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) with a £4m grant and the Mayor of London, through the London Development Agency, with a further £1m. The London Borough of Lambeth is also providing a financial package of £910,000 over five years, and has gifted a 99-year lease for Raleigh Hall. The project is also funded by Foyle and Garfield Weston.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 30,000 projects allocating £4.5billion across the UK. Website: www.hlf.org.uk. For more information, please contact Katie Owen, HLF press office, on 020 7591 6036/07973 613820.

⁶ Dame Jocelyn Barrow, a Patron of BCA, was a founding member and General Secretary of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD), the organisation responsible for the Race Relations Act of 1968. She was the first Black woman Governor of the BBC, and was Deputy Chair of the Broadcasting Standards Council. In 1972, Jocelyn Barrow was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for work in the field of education and community relations. In 1992, she was made a Dame of the British Empire (DBE) for her work in broadcasting and contribution to the work of the European Union as a Member of the Social and Economic Committee, representing the UK in Brussels. She chaired (2003-2005) The Mayor of London's Commission on African and Asian Heritage.

Further information

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Please also see:

<http://www.bcaheritage.org.uk>

<http://www.runnymedetrust.org/>

<http://www.web.mdx.ac.uk/runnymede/>