

CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM

Newsletter: Issue Three — April 2008



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Cultural event to promote the European Year of Inter Cultural Dialogue, packed with first class entertainment delights the local community in Cambridge at the Junction on Sunday 30th March 2008.



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A large crowd had gathered in the lobby of the Junction to listen to the opening speakers, while sampling some culinary delights kindly supplied by The Management Board of the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum and The Curry Queen Restaurant, Mill Rd.

Ex-Mayor of Cambridge, Councillor Phillipa Slatter opened the event, Police Superintendent Simon Megicks welcomed guests at the start of the entertainment programme.



Introducing the special guests CECF Chair Hazra Awal said:
"In an increasingly globalised and interdependent world, where encountering cultural differences can scarcely be avoided, the ability to enter into a tolerant and respectful dialogue is a vital skill for nations, communities, and individuals."



Opening the event Councillor Phillipa Slatter highlighted the growing cultural diversity within Cambridge City and her work in the Council's Equality and Diversity group. She described the first Hindu wedding that had taken place in her village. She highlighted the fact that the first ethnic minority local officer for her village was Anil, and that following her retirement an ethnic minority candidate would be replacing her.



Police Superintendent Simon Megicks welcomed the guests and highlighted the fact that he was very pleased that such an event had been put together in Cambridge as it allowed an ideal opportunity to consult with the Diverse communities of Cambridge.



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The entertainment was opened by a spectacular Ghanaian Dance group called Tsui Anaa, translated means be patient. The energy and vibrancy of the group encapsulated the audience.



Tsui Anaa were followed by Boishakhi Cultural Association (Bangladeshi Folk Singers), who performed a delightful and melodious set of folk songs.



Indian Community and Cultural Association's over 50's club then put on a dance performance containing intricately choreographed movements set to traditional Indian folk music.



Little D. promotions, a group of young dancers followed the over 50's club. The energy and dexterity of these young dancers could only be marvelled at.



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Cambridge Black Men and Women's Family group put on an exciting Fashion Show of African Fashion (took me back many years).



Edelmira Bell then put on a performance of Cumbia, Colombia's most famous musical genre containing a number of musical rhythms including parra and puya, with its essence in African percussion.



The finale was the most amazing feat of Tsui Anaa, taking a back seat with the music and letting the audience dance on stage, incredibly it only took the audience a matter of seconds to get proficient or so they thought!

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Feedback on the day included the following....

"I am so glad it went so well and we certainly enjoyed it . As we were leaving another six of our church group arrived so we were well represented . There seems to be a need to have something like this to bring the different nationalities together as normally they would not mix like that except of course in a church setting where we believe that all people are accepted and loved by God. About three weeks ago we went to a conference in London in Catford where the theme was " Building a Multicultural church " .It was excellent and was emphasising the need to be all inclusive in our society so as to avoid the development of cultural enclaves which is happening around the country as you know . So well done you have made a step to wards encouraging people to be aware of one another's differences and respecting them, but seeing positives things we can share about our cultural backgrounds. Thanks for inviting us "

The event can be classified as a huge success at many levels and clearly establishes the rejuvenation of the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum. None of this would have been possible without the entertainers, the special guests, the audience and very strong support from our partners the Huntingdonshire Community Association. All the CECF Board Members put in a real effort to make the event into a total success, particularly Patricia Crampton who actually was the main individual behind the organisation.

Stalls were set up in the entrance lobby and Mezzanine floor of the Junction including:

Act Together - Women's Action for Iraq,
Elan Vital - Message of peace
Akashi Project - Climate Change: One World, many Voices
Mohila Shomity - Luthfa Khatun
Harambee - Specialists in Development Education

Workshops Global Voices and Bollywood Dance were also made available.

A very big thank you to all those mentioned above as we look forward to our next project.....

Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum Management Committee

Chair: Hazra Awal
Vice Chair: Redge Carpen
Secretary: Valerie Berkson
Treasurer: Joyce Andrade
Members: Odhavji Bharadwa
Jason Yao
Anil Soni
Patricia Crampton
Joseph Jabbie
Rajni Shah
Vincenzo Marino
Lileth Warford

Developing Partnerships with
MENTER
ABMEC
Huntingdonshire Community Association
Peterborough Council for Race Equality
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Cambridgeshire Constabulary
Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridge City Council

