



Feminist Archive North

Newsletter No. 1 June 2007

Welcome to the first FAN Newsletter! We're mailing to everyone on our email list to try and reach as many friends and potential Friends of FAN as possible.

FAN is a fantastic resource of feminist material from the 1970s' women's movement onwards. We think it's important to raise awareness of what is here to be used by schools, colleges, researchers, and anyone interested in the struggles and achievements of women.

In this issue, we report briefly on some recent events, outline our plans for the rest of the year, and give you a flavour of our holdings in the first instalment of a series we're calling '*Treasures from the Archive*'. We also discuss the various ways you can get involved with FAN.

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We aim to produce the Newsletter three times a year. It's *your* newsletter, so do let us know what you think of this one.



¹ Various Feminist badges, c1970s – 1980s, Sandra McNeil Collection.



Events

International Women's Day – Women and Humour

Our third annual event held to celebrate IWD was well attended, and thoroughly enjoyed by all. First off was a showing of the hilarious *Get It Off Your Chest*, filmed by Vera Media in a local community centre. This was followed by Jacky Fleming whose talk, illustrated by a brilliant selection of her cartoons, reminded us how effective humour can be in exposing and deflating casual sexist attitudes.

As a result of the raffle, sale of refreshments and a generous donation from Jacky from the sale of her books and cards, we were able to boost our finances.



Outside events

At both FEM 07 Sheffield, and the Leeds Ladyfest, Sarah ran a stall with an exhibition of facsimiles from FAN holdings, and duplicate journals.

Upcoming Events

See you there...

What? *Open Morning*

Come and find out more about being a volunteer. Become a Friend; tour the archive and see an exhibition of material from the holdings. Coffee and biscuits too!

When? Saturday 9 June 10.30 – 12.30 am

Where? Special Collections, Brotherton Library, Parkinson Building.

Further information? Check our website:
<http://www.feministarchivenorth.org.uk/>

What? *FAN Workshop 'Women's Activism in Leeds, 1970s on...'* The People's History of Leeds Conference

When? Saturday 16 June, 10.00am – 4.30

Where? Swarthmore Education Centre, Woodhouse Square, Leeds.

Further information? Contact Steve Johnston at johnsts01@leedslearning.net

What? *FAN Workshop & Exhibition 'Herstory: the Feminist Antiques Roadshow'* at Hebden Bridge Arts Festival

When? Friday 13 July, 8 – 10pm

Where? Methodist Church Hall, Bridge Lanes, Hebden Bridge

Further information?
<http://www.hebdenbridge.co.uk/festival/>

There'll be more events happening later on this year – we'll keep you posted!



Special Projects

Under the terms of the Heritage Lottery grant, we are committed to developing two projects in particular. These are: -

The Education Pack

This is a great opportunity for FAN not only to raise its own profile and that of its collections, but also to publicise the Women's Liberation Movement and its achievements. We need to reach audiences that might not be aware of the impact of women's activism on how we live today.



Planning is now complete. We intend to create an online education pack, targeted at Key Stage 3 & 4 students, but also of use to other interested learners.

FAN's collections fit most closely with certain curricula for GCSE History and Citizenship subjects.

After some discussion with professionals within both the archives and education sectors, we decided to structure the Pack around the seven demands of the Women's Liberation Movement. Underlying themes

will stress the importance of collective action, and persistent struggle.

The Pack will be based on FAN holdings, using a variety of materials, and be largely focussed on activities in Leeds and West Yorkshire from the 1970s onwards. In the longer term, there will be a module covering each demand.

Realistically, we aim to complete the first module on Employment and Training based on the East Leeds Women's Workshop holding, by the end of 2007. Others will follow as time and staff permit.

Oral History Project

This project is essential to the continuation of FAN's work. By interviewing women who were active in the WLM, particularly in Leeds and West Yorkshire, we are able to contextualise and document histories that would otherwise be lost. This is particularly important for organisations and groups where no documentary evidence survives, such as local Women's Aid and Rape Crisis organisations.

...And not to put too fine a point on it, we need to record memories whilst women are still around to remember them.

We are also looking at how individual women became involved in the Women's Liberation Movement, and will be conducting a series of mini-interviews on the theme of 'Pathways to Activism'...

We still welcome help for both of these special projects. If you think you can contribute in any way, and would like to get involved, please get in touch (contact details at the end of this newsletter).

² Photograph, Reclaim The Night March, Leeds, 1978, Sandra McNeill Collection.



Treasures

1. Pavilion Collection

This collection was donated by Pavilion, with additional material recently deposited in April 2007. It contains organisational papers, as well as series of artwork, posters and promotional material advertising exhibitions developed and held at the Pavilion.



First set up in 1983, Pavilion began as a gallery-based organisation, initially housed in the Pavilion on Woodhouse Moor, Leeds. The photography on display engaged directly with feminist debate and activism. It provided facilities enabling women to train in photographic and media skills, and to exhibit their, and other women's work.

Pavilion became a women's only membership enterprise in 1986, when it was renamed Pavilion Women's Photography

³ Silk Print, 'Espiritu De El Salvador: Heroines, Martyrs and Patriots' by the Taker Sin Fronteras Artist Collective, USA, 1992

Centre. The company was especially proactive in its commitment to local community arts and black women artists.

Funding from the European Social Fund and the Arts Council of Great Britain helped widen Pavilion's brief, from pure photography to an interdisciplinary approach and enabled it to deliver training for women in the visual arts and new digital media. By 1998, the organisation had shifted from its focus on women, to a partnership role in the regeneration of Leeds. Its revised charitable status now extended its remit to men.

Recent donations to FAN include many boxes of slides and negatives from commissioned projects and hosted exhibitions; WLM posters in mint condition; and a wide range of material from the Pavilion's education and training programme for women.



A catalogue is currently being created, and will shortly be available on website.

⁴ Photograph, 'Looking for Sheba: celebrating women's contributions to Leeds West Indian Carnival', July 1990



2. 'Crimes Against Women' LCC Women's Committee conference Collection

The collection was donated to FAN by Jalna Hanmer, along with other papers. The collection contains notes, minutes, correspondence and associated publicity material relating to the conference.

The first Crimes Against Women conference was held in January 1985, organised in reaction to a police seminar on 'Crime and the Community' held in Leeds in 1984 which had dealt largely with crimes against property.



According to Nanette Sloane, then Chair of the Women's Committee, the conference was developed in order to 'look at why women often do not report crimes against them; and at what happens when they do; what police attitudes are and how seriously they take these matters compared to, say, crimes against property'.

⁵ Press cutting, article describing LCC Conference, Leeds Weekly Citizen, Feb 1985

It included workshops on Violence in the Home, Rape, Pornography, Racism and Older Women, from which various working groups were developed. The housing workgroup was instrumental in the development of 'Violence Against Women in Leeds' work, including the Leeds Inter Agency Project. 'Crimes Against Women' was followed by a second conference in May 1985.



The conference originally received national publicity after a Leeds councillor, commenting on the conference, described Lesbians as 'sexual misfits'. In reply, Sloane remarked that 'It is also a sad reflection on the state of the national press when the insulting and offensive remarks of one individual are considered more newsworthy than a successful, worthwhile and, in some ways, unique conference on crimes against women' (LCC Press Release, 08 Mar 1985)

⁶ Promotional poster for LCC conference, Jan 1985



Getting Involved

Your participation is vital to the continuation of FAN. There are two main ways to get involved.

Become a Volunteer



Although Leeds University's Special Collections department of the Brotherton Library has given us a home and much other practical support, until the beginning of 2007, FAN was run entirely by volunteers.

Thanks to a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, we now have funds to employ for one year only, our professional archivist Sarah Prescott. Sarah is bringing order and coherence to FAN, and advice and training to volunteers. But volunteers are still needed. We can use as much time as you can spare, whether it's on a regular basis, or just a few hours intermittently.

A wide range of skills are welcome. Volunteers so far (from students to retired people) have helped to develop our website, created the database – and started the enormous task of inputting data. We have worked individually and as a team, on cataloguing material, advised on applications for funding, ensured the preservation of visual material, helped organise and staff open events, and helped

put together this Newsletter. There are currently two small groups working on the Education Pack and the Oral History Project.

Everyone's commitment and enthusiasm, whatever their background, also makes coming in to FAN very enjoyable. You just have to be careful not to get too engrossed in browsing the holdings!

Become a Friend

We also need to build up our finances. Apart from the HLF grant for 2007, we have no regular funding at all. Our income is entirely self-generated, from holding events like the IWD celebration, donations, and from Friends' membership fees.

Friends' Membership costs £10 a year (£5 unwaged). For this you'll get the Newsletter, advance notice of open events, and invitations to special events. All ideas on how to involve Friends are very welcome.

Donations and Gift Aid Declaration

From 6 April 2000 the minimum limit for Gift Aid Donations was abolished. FAN can now claim tax relief on your charitable donations to us, no matter how large or small, whether regular or one-off. You only have to be a UK tax-payer for this to apply.

To allow us to reclaim the tax on your donation, we need each FAN Friend to make a Gift Aid declaration. This is a once-only declaration. It does not need to be repeated each time you renew your subscription to us. We are even able to reclaim for a subscription or gift you made to us in the past. So if you have given to us since 6 April, please email or post us the declaration below (even if you do not wish to make any further payment).



Feminist Archive North Gift Aid Declaration

Date

I want the Feminist Archive to treat all donations I have made since 6 April 2000, and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations.

Details of FAN Donor

First Name.....

Last Name.....

Address.....

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Post Code.....

Donations include the Friends membership fee.

Please send this declaration by post or by email to us, as soon as possible, so that we may reclaim your tax from the Inland Revenue. This costs you nothing, but it could make an enormous difference to us. Thank you.

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