



Yaadein

Memories of South Asian Migrant Women

The Kite

*I close my eyes and dream of the past,
Sunny days with laughs upon laughs,
Family and friends together noon and night
Remembering childhood, flying high with our kites
Time passes by and days turns to years
I dream of returning to lands of my peers.*

By Naz Zaman
(Dedicated to my mum)

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“I wasn’t scared because I was happy I was going to see my husband. I travelled on my own from Pakistan.”

76 year old Pakistani lady.

Introduction } *to Yaadein* }

Lancashire Women's Network (LWN), a charity with the aim to empower women and young girls through education delivered a heritage project which captured the histories and memories of women who migrated from South Asian countries to England in the 1960's and 1970's.

Yaadein, funded by Heritage Lottery, was delivered from October 2013 to December 2014 and worked with over 150 women residing in Pendle, Burnley, Rossendale, Hyndburn and Blackburn.

This book takes you through the highs and the lows of the journey of these women who travelled thousands of miles in search of a better life.

All stories included in the book have not been edited in any way in order to preserve the essence of feelings and thoughts of the women who provided the stories.

We would like to thank everyone involved in the success of the Yaadein Project, especially the women for allowing us to re-live their journeys through their stories and pictures.

A special thanks to all volunteers who supported LWN. Also we would like to acknowledge Rubina Kauser, Nasreen Akhtar and Rupali Begum for their effort and dedication in supporting the project.

Project } Facts }

Areas the project was delivered:

- Pendle
- Burnley
- Rossendale
- Hyndburn
- Blackburn

Aim:

The aim of the Yaadein project was to capture the stories and memories of South Asian women who migrated to England in the 1960s and 1970s.

The project worked specifically with South Asian women from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh living across the communities of East Lancashire to gather their oral historical accounts of their migration experiences to the UK, how it impacted upon them culturally and how they adapted to life in the UK.

Capturing the heritage was not only important to those who arrived in the 1960s and 1970s but also to the generations that were born in the UK, as it would enable them to see how their elders experiences were similar or dissimilar to their own life in the UK.



Project Delivery:

Manager - Naz Zaman

Community Development Officer - Javiria Khan & Rehana Valli

Volunteers - Rubina Kasuer, Rupali Begum, Kubra Begum, Ruhela Khatun, Razina Ali, Soffina Khawaja

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are delivering an exciting project which will work with South Asian women who migrated to the UK in the 1960's and 1970's.

The aim of the project is to capture the stories, memories and experiences of these women who are now living in East Lancashire.

LWN is looking for volunteers who can support the delivery of the project.

Full training provided!

For more information please call:

01254 392974

Email: office@lancashirewomensnetwork.org.uk

WOMEN ONLY



Yaadein

LANCASHIRE
WOMEN'S
NETWORK



Open to: Women

FREE

Coffee Morning

Want to build confidence or gain new skills?
Looking for activities which will improve your health & wellbeing?

Want to meet other women and share interesting experiences, stories and memories?

Tuesday 7th January 2014
10:30am
Stoneyholme Primary School

For more information or to reserve your place please call:

Rupali: 01282 437190

Email: office@lancashirewomensnetwork.org.uk

BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL. DUE TO LIMITED SPACES
PROFITS ONLY

(Please see Terms & Conditions A4B1)



FREE Coffee Morning

LANCASHIRE
WOMEN'S
NETWORK



Activities:

LWN set up a variety of activities which were delivered over a number of weeks in order to build trust with the target group. Activities included seated exercise, aromatherapy, healthy cooking and massaging workshops.

During the activities, staff brought in items of significance such as cutlery from South Asian Countries, old beauty products and pictures of South Asian pop icons from the 1960s/70s. These items encouraged reminiscent dialogue between the women which motivated them to bring in old pictures and items that they had stored from the era.

As a result of these reminiscence sessions women volunteered for one to one oral history meetings which enabled LWN to capture in depth accounts of experiences and memories of their migration to the UK.

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PHOTOGRAPH OF BEARER



Handwritten text in blue ink, possibly a name or identification number, written on a perforated strip at the bottom of the page.

श्री
WIFE

PASS-PORT
OFFICE



Before the } *Journey* }

"The morning we were supposed to set off, I still remember my mum, bless, she made me a cup of tea in the morning and put it in a saucer. She was cooling it and giving it to me but I just couldn't even drink the tea properly. I was so upset and I cried all night, I still remember this." **68 year old Indian lady.**



"I was travelling from Zambia. The day I left it was awful, leaving my family behind, my parents, it was very sad. I had to leave my country where I was born and had to come to a strange country where I didn't know anybody except my husband." **61 year old Indian lady**

"I came with my husband and two daughters in 1974. There were four of us. It was a very sad feeling inside. I didn't want to leave the rest of my family behind, I didn't know what to expect, I had no idea what England was like."



Welcome to } *England* }

"In April, it was cold, raining and it was dull. Oh my god I thought to myself, how will we get use to this. We packed up from there (India) to come here. (lady laughs)"

"People were friendly. I went to town, there was no discrimination. The English people were very friendly." **68 year old Indian lady.**

“People were friendly. I went to town, there was no discrimination. The English people were very friendly.”

68 year old Indian lady.

"All the buildings looked the same. Everyone had coats on and looked the same to me, (client laughs). I feel silly when I think about it now but at that moment I couldn't tell who was who."

The houses looked the same. When I think about it now it sounds so silly but that's how it was. (pauses) and the days were short (lady laughs)."



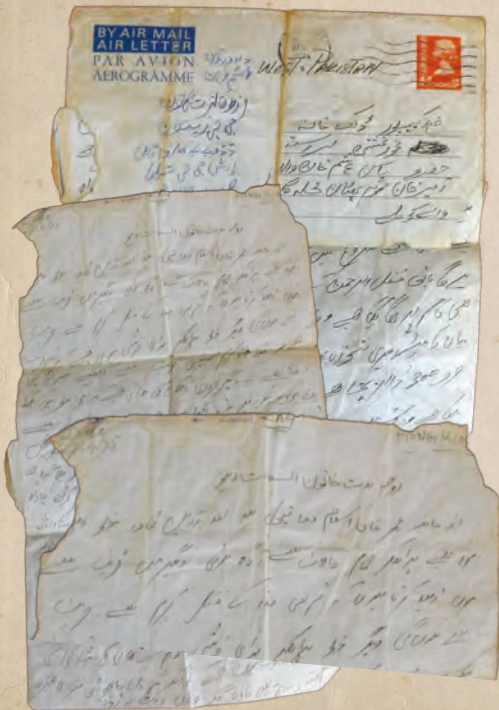
"I came from Africa in November 1976, it was snowing, the weather was awful. It was a tough experience, very very tough. New people, new faces, different atmosphere and a different country. I found it very difficult for the first few years, I don't want to go back and remember the bad memories." **68 year old Indian lady**

"I remember thinking the houses are so small, where is the garden, it was so small. In Pakistan our houses were very big, we had big open gardens. I was lucky that I had my own house in England but I know some people I knew had to share houses with other families." **65 year old Pakistan lady**

A day out in } *Blackpool*

"This is me in Blackpool. I went to Blackpool in 1968. I didn't know what was going on or why I was there, I was just looking around. My husband then said climb on that (rides), I just laughed, I was scared." 78 year old Pakistani lady.





Letters from } Abroad }

"Your uncle sent me letters all the time. Asking me how I was and telling me what he had been up to. He was living in Hong Kong and I was in Pakistan.

This letter is from 1975, I have still kept this letter. When he visited me in Pakistan, he bought me small gifts. He worked at a bank in Hong Kong.

I went to Hong Kong and then I came to England from Hong Kong.

I do miss Pakistan. I am going Pakistan tomorrow to visit his grave. I go there every year to pray."

65 year old Pakistani lady.

“Your uncle sent me letters all the time...This letter is from 1975, I have still kept this letter.”

Funny } Stories }

"The nurse gave me a bottle for a urine sample. I didn't understand her so I went to the toilet and put water in it and gave it back to her." **76 year old Pakistani lady.**

"I was in the hospital ward, I needed a spoon to eat my dinner but I didn't know how to say spoon in English so I got my fingers and put them in my mouth making spoon gesture so the nurse would understand. The nurse laughed and said OK you want a spoon" **65 year old Pakistani lady.**



Life in } *England* }

"There were two ladies who helped me in hardship, anything I needed help with they were there for me and they still are. I had a good support when I came to England. If they had not been there then I would have gone mental and depressed. I would have gone to a mental hospital because I was suffering depression, very severe depression. The ladies use to look after my children when I was not feeling well. I thank them so much from my heart (client starts crying and wanted to stop talking)" **61 year old Indian lady.**



"I couldn't speak English, I was scared, my husband had to go everywhere with me." **76 year old Bangladeshi lady.**



"The first time I went out alone I was so confused and scared but so happy at the same time. I felt like I was free and I didn't know what to do with the freedom. When I first moved to England my husband didn't let me go because he was scared I would get lost but then I started getting really depressed so he let me go out whenever I wanted to. In Pakistan we had big gardens with big, very big, open houses so I was outside all the time. In England I felt like I was stuck in the house." **65 year old Pakistani lady**



“We lived in a terraced house which had one room. The bedroom had a leak, I still remember (client laughs).”

67 year old Indian lady.



Wish You Were Here...}

"I liked England a lot but I missed my parents. I went back to Pakistan after 18 years. My parents were dead then. Going back to Pakistan, everyone was grown up, the houses in Pakistan looked different and it felt strange." **80 year old Pakistani lady.**



"I missed my parents a lot. When someone from England was visiting Pakistan I would record messages on a cassette and they would take it for my mum, my mum use to send one back. This is how we use to communicate, we didn't speak on the phone. I got so upset when I heard my mum's voice. I would keep the cassettes and listen to them when I missed my family." **65 year old Pakistan lady**

Then
and Now } }





“I am so happy because my life is better now. My children have grown up and they have made me proud. I tell them education is important because I never had the chance.”

Life Four *Decades On* }

"England was nice and clean when I first came, it isn't as clean now."

"I have been living in England for 44 years now. I like England because there is justice in this country."

"I wasn't scared when I was coming to England because I was going to see my husband (client laughs) so I was happy even though I travelled on my own from Pakistan." **76 year old Pakistani lady**

"For a very long time I didn't go out anywhere. I stayed at home all the time. I didn't know what the town centre looked like, what the shops were like, nothing."





Bradford



Bazaar



Celebration } *Trip*

Upon completion of activities, LWN arranged a celebration outing to Bradford Bazaar and Canon Mills, which were requested destinations by the project participants.

The trip encouraged social capital as women from across Lancashire came together to enjoy a fun filled day. Women had the opportunity to spend time with their friends, go shopping and browse around the markets. Additionally the women were able to discuss the project and the outcomes it achieved.

Feedback from those involved in the project was positive and it was obvious from the evaluation that the project would have a lasting impact on the lives of those involved.



"This is the best day of my life."

"I have never been out with my group of friends, I had so much fun."

"It was so nice to meet women from other towns. Everyone was so friendly."



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