



Tales from the Trailer

The story of Gypsies & Travellers in Cardiff

Romany Timeline

Follow the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller journey throughout British History



53 B.C.E

Fairs are being held in Britain after the Roman invasion.

c.1000 C.E

Groups of Roma, originating in Northern India, reach modern Greece and Turkey.

1100s C.E

Travellers first recorded in Ireland. Travelling smiths mentioned in Scottish records.

1200s C.E

Many fairs are created by Royal Charter, including Bridlington (1200) and Hull (1299). By the turn of the 13th Century Roma begin to arrive in Western Europe.

1498

Four Gypsies travel to the New World with Christopher Columbus.

1505

King James the Fourth of Scotland pays seven pounds to "Egyptians" stopped at Stirling, who may have come from Spain. Parish records from around this time show that Irish Travellers are already living in England.

1714

British Gypsies are shipped to the Caribbean as slaves.

1660-1800

English Gypsies calling themselves Romanichals survive by working for trusted non-Gypsies who know them. Appleby Fair granted chartered fair status in 1685 by James II. Ballinasloe Fair receives its royal charter in 1722.

1650s

Last known hanging for the crime of being a Gypsy, in Suffolk, England. Gypsies are deported to America.

1570s

Scottish Gypsies are ordered to stop travelling or leave the country. First records of the Kale Gypsies in Wales. The first recorded Gypsy presence in Leeds is in the Leeds Parish registers of 1572.

1554

Queen Mary of England passes the Egyptians Act. Being a Gypsy is punishable by death, as is being found in "the fellowship or company of Egyptians". This is the only time that fraternizing with an ethnic community has been punishable by death.

1530

Gypsies are forbidden to enter England under Henry VIII. Those already there are deported.

1768

The first modern Circus is held in London.

1780

Some English anti-Gypsy laws begin to be repealed.

1800s

Fairs start to include mechanical rides, as they still do today.

1820s

Tents start to be used for fairs under George IV.

1830s

Covered horse drawn wagons begin to be used by Gypsies in Britain. Many Gypsies live in the more makeshift bender tents, and will continue to do so until the mid-late 20th Century.

1880s

Agricultural depression in England. Many Travellers and Gypsies are poverty-stricken and move to urban squatters' areas. Hundreds of Irish Travellers leave Ireland for Britain.

1945-60

Travellers start to use motor-drawn trailers, and some buy their own land to stop on with them.

1939-45

World War II. Nazis compose lists of English Gypsies to be interned. In Britain, the government builds caravan camps for Gypsies serving in the forces or doing vital farm work. These are closed when the war finishes. Roma, Sinti and other Gypsies are stripped of all human rights by the Nazis. As many as 600,000 are murdered in camps and gas chambers. This is Porrajmos (the devouring), the Roma holocaust in Europe.

1934

Django Reinhardt introduces "swing jazz" to the world. A major influence on the development of Jazz.

1930s-60s

Groups of European Roma come to live in Britain.

1908

The Children's Act makes education compulsory for Travelling children in England by The Children's Act, but only for half the year.

1889

Showmen in Britain form the United Kingdom Van Dwellers Association, later called the Showmen's Guild, to fight the Moveable Dwellings Bill, which restricts Travellers' movements.

1960

New private sites are banned from being built in England by The Caravan Sites (Control of Development) Act. Mass evictions and public harassment of Gypsies and Travellers. Irish Government "Commission on Itinerancy" begins a programme to assimilate Irish Travellers.

1968

Lord Avebury helps to pass the new Caravan Sites Act. From 1970, the Government have to provide caravan sites for Travellers.

1970s-1990s

People from the settled community start to take to the road and live in caravans. They are known as "New Age Travellers" in the media.

1989

Romany Gypsies are first recognised under the Mandla criteria CRE v Dutton.

1994

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act abolishes the Caravan Sites Act. This is disastrous for all Travellers living in Britain, and more than 5,000 families now have no legal home. Local councils became duty bound to identify land for private purchase by Travellers. Not one local council adhered to this.

1997

Slovak Romani refugees arrive in Dover, England. The media reaction is openly hostile.

2006

BBC starts Rokker Radio, the first programme for Gypsies and Travellers in its history.

2005

The Sun newspaper launches its "Stamp on the Camps" campaign against Gypsies and Travellers. The Conservatives try to get re-elected by targeting Gypsies' supposed flouting of planning laws.

2004

The Labour Government makes it a legal duty to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Traveller.

2003

12 Sussex Bonfire Society members arrested for incitement to racial hatred after burning an effigy of a caravan containing images of Gypsy women and children, and pained with inflammatory slogans.

2003

Irish Traveller Johnny Delaney, 15, is kicked to death in Cheshire for being "only a f***ing Gypsy", as Eyewitnesses report. The Judge at his murderers' trial rules that it was not a racially motivated attack and sentences the killers to 4 1/2 years.

2000

Irish Travellers are recognised as an ethnic minority under the Mandla criteria CRE v O'Leary v Allied Domecq. Scottish Travellers are still not recognised as an ethnic minority in Scotland. In England, Gypsy-led protests at the ban of the 600 year old fair at Horsemeden in Kent are successful and the ban is finally lifted in 2006.

2008

Britain celebrates the first Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month. But in Italy, Roma camps are firebombed by neo-nazis. Scottish Gypsy Travellers are recognised for the first time under MacLennan v GTEIP

2009

The Romani Cultural & Arts Company was formed in Cardiff, UK by Romani Gypsy Isaac Blake.

2010

After a successful debut, Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month enters its second year.

2011

The Romani Cultural & Arts Company is visited in Cardiff by the Latvian Ambassador

2012

The Romani Cultural & Arts Company is invited to visit the UK Prime Minister in London at 10 Downing Street.

2013

The Romani Cultural & Arts Company launches 'Tales From The Trailer' in Cardiff.