



Sussex LRC



May Day Memories – Tell Us Yours

**There ain't no place like Sussex, until you goes above,
for Sussex will be Sussex and Sussex wunt be druv**

Presented by

Sussex LRC & The Labour Representation Committee



Inspired by a Sussex nurse's memories of World War 2 and the 1945 election, we collect stories from May Days, struggles and protests, past or present. Any era welcome – just drop in to add your tales to the "Not Soft, Just South" archive.



12noon - 5pm Saturday 4 May 2013
Community Base (South Wing entrance)
113 Queens Road, Brighton BN1 3XG
NUJ contributors especially welcome
Free event
Contact us if you need a set time



The LRC is an open, democratic and socialist organisation on the Labour left.

Contact: Claire Wadey

Email: sussexlrc@hotmail.co.uk

Web: www.sussexlrc.com



Email: sussexlrc@hotmail.co.uk
www.l-r-c.org.uk
Facebook.com/sussexlrc
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Notes for editors

May Day is celebrated internationally as a day of solidarity between workers and oppressed peoples. 1st May is a public holiday in many countries, while the UK has observed its official May Day bank holiday on the first Monday in May since 1978.

The **origins** of the May Day holiday lie in the American struggle for an 8 hour working day and the “Haymarket martyrs” of Chicago: eight workers’ leaders who were unjustly convicted for murder in 1886 as they led the struggle for workers’ rights. Four were hanged and one committed suicide.

Sussex has a **long history of protest and struggle** going back to the Wealden Peasants’ revolts in 1381 and 1450. Lewes is famous as the home of Tom Paine, whose writings inspired the American and French Revolutions of the late 18th century. Brighton, not Rochdale, was home to the birth of the co-operative movement, with the formation of early co-operatives and the publication of The Co-operator by Dr William King in the 1820s. Sussex was also a centre of the Swing riots of the 1830s, when agricultural workers revolted across the county against low wages, the enclosure of common land and inadequate social security. One blaze lit in Worthing was so ferocious it is said to have been visible from the Isle of Wight to Arundel. Worthing also saw the formation of the Skeleton Army in 1884, resulting in 4,000 locals rioting in protest against the Salvation Army’s attempt to ban the sale of alcohol. Mugsborough, the scene of Robert Tressell’s 1914 socialist classic The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists, is based on Hastings. During the 1926 General Strike, Brighton workers experienced particularly bloody repression when strikers were attacked by “Black and Tans” during the infamous Battle of the Lewes Road, with 22 strike supporters being imprisoned for an average of 3 months each in order to break workers’ spirits.

Nowadays Brighton has become known as a home for those seeking an alternative lifestyle, Lewes retains a strong independent spirit and seaside towns like Hastings suffer intense deprivation. Yet Sussex remains overlooked by those who view the South East of England as a homogenous Tory heartland. **Sussex LRC is recording folk memories in order to counter this.**

The **Labour Representation Committee (LRC)** is an open, democratic and socialist organisation on the Labour left; see: www.l-r-c.org.uk . Sussex LRC is the Sussex branch of the Labour Representation Committee; see: www.sussexlrc.com

Brighton Fringe is the largest open-access multi-art form festival in England and runs from 4 May – 2 June 2013; see: www.brightonfringe.org . For Brighton Fringe logo, images or further press information please contact Kata Gyöngyösi, Marketing and Communications Manager, via kata@brightonfringe.org or call 01273 764902.



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