

PIE MASH

mutual aid



february 2022

"OUT OF THE ASHES I WILL REBEL. SO I DID, I DID REBEL"...

Uttered Sybil Phoenix after the National Front burnt down Moonshot; the youth club she had set up in New Cross in the late 70's. These powerful words echo the very essence of Sybil, a community activist in Lewisham.

Sybil arrived in London from Guyana in the mid 50's and moved to Lewisham in 1962. As Sybil became a foster parent for mostly girls and young women, her house in Brockley became the home of over 100 children over the next decade. Dinners were busy, food shared and beds fought over.



In 1971, Sybil set up one of the first Black youth clubs in the UK called Moonshot. It was a hot spot for young people to hang out. Parties happened every Friday night, with no less than 100 people dancing to the sounds of Jah Shaka. Sybil started a library of Black books and educational classes. There was a group teaching young women about food, a mother and babies project, workshops in mechanics, wood-work and photography.

But with the rise of the fascism and racist attacks in the 70's, Moonshot youth club was gutted in a firebomb attack during the Fireman's strike by the National Front in November 1977. Sybil promised it would be rebuilt, and in 1981, Moonshot was reopened and is still running today.

Many also celebrate Sybil for her being the first Black woman to receive an MBE in 1972. But the real cause of celebration is her instant refusal for the award. She was uninterested in receiving recognition. In her true rebellious nature, Sybil asked if she could trade in the award for a big house, extra beds, a wardrobe with dressing gowns and a cabinet with pillow slips. The Mayor of Lewisham was so adamant for her to take the award that they agreed to her demands. This signalled the birth of Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust in 1979; a supported housing project for young women experiencing homelessness, in memory of her daughter

Marsha who died in a car crash. Sybil's unwavering care for her community, her vision of love, and education, her determination and ability to mobilise others, must be recognised and remembered in our own community.



GET INVOLVED

Everyone at Pie N Mash is a member of the community and shares their time freely. The more people involved the more we can achieve.

To learn more or get involved, fill in the application form on our website, or contact us.

DONATE

We always welcome financial support - we'll take cash or you can donate via our website at this link:



The Field Reading Group continues with...



**Lessons
From
Rojava**

February 24th
6-9pm
@ The Field

SQUARES UPDATE

Getting down to the local squares was one of the first things we did at the advent of the covid crisis, and alongside the food deliveries have been the biggest part of what we do as a group.

It's been 2 years, and things have continued to change and improve as we have spent more time with everyone who comes to figure out what it is that we all want from our weekly gatherings.



In Deptford we recently started up a Discussion Group, a space for us to chat while the food is being distributed, to discuss some of things that come up when doing this kind of activity. *What are people's aims when they come to the square? What do terms like solidarity mean to people?* We come from all walks of life, and it's good to explore different perspectives within the context of the politics of what we are doing.



self-portrait, by Riley, age 7



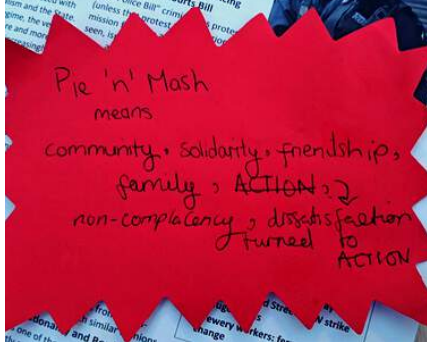
In Peckham, the Felix Project has been supplying us with such an abundance of food lately.

Everybody is helping set up, we've got hot food and drinks stations where people can chat and eat the delicious home cooked food made by our members. We have meetings every week where we discuss what went well and how we will organise for the next week.



Often if things seem not to work one week, we try and change the way we organise the week after until we find the best way to do it. We ask everyone what they think could be different so we don't just make decisions for people. This is how we practice non-hierarchical organising at the squares and it's really working!

One of our favourite comments from people involved in the squares:
HERE AT PIE 'N' MASH WE TURN OUR DISSATISFACTION INTO ACTION!





ABOUT US

Pie N Mash began as a squatted cafe in Deptford and has branched out to become a neighbourhood-wide organisation that has provided food for many across south-east London through the Covid crisis. We run food distribution stalls in both Peckham and Deptford each week, as well as providing a delivery and collection service from our base at The Field for those struggling to make ends meet. We also host reading groups, gardening days, and exciting community events.

ABOUT MUTUAL AID

Mutual aid is the anarchist notion that, in a world of competition, co-operation is the key to our survival. Rather than charity, we are people from our local neighbourhood coming together to meet our immediate needs in a non-hierarchical and directly-democratic way. We do so to foster relationships that allow us to explore and challenge the structures that oppress us, and build and create toward better futures for everyone.

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