

BLACK HISTORY

365

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A SMART PUBLICATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH: www.black-history-month.co.uk

VOL. TWO, ISSUE ONE | SUMMER 2008



WINNER OF THE BLACK HERITAGE AWARD 2007



WINDRUSH: NEVER THE SAME AGAIN

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HELLO AND WELCOME

When we launched *Black History 365* in October in partnership with Smart Publishing to complement www.black-history-month.co.uk, we had no idea it would become such an instant success.

After being inundated with letters, emails even greeting cards in praise of the publication, we were delighted to be named one of the winners of the Outstanding Contribution to Black Heritage 2007 award from the Black History Foundation.

At a prestigious ceremony at the ThinkTank, Millennium Point, Birmingham, in December, Mia Morris, owner of www.black-history-month.co.uk, received the glass plaque award on behalf of the *Black History 365* team. It was one of 12 regional awards, and the publication was judged to be the best of the London nominations.

Mia said, 'We are delighted that so many people enjoyed reading

the publication as much as we enjoyed putting it together. 'We called the magazine *Black History 365* to underline the fact that black history happens everyday and not just during one month. It is about our past, present and future.'

That's why Smart and www.black-history-month.co.uk have brought out this Spring edition.

As 2008 marks the 60th anniversary of the iconic arrival of the *Empire Windrush* to Britain, our theme is what has come to be known as the 'Windrush generation', those early migrants who contributed to the foundation of contemporary Britain.

In a society obsessed with youth and the 'now', it is easy to overlook their collective and individual achievements and how they helped shape the way we are.

But there is plenty more of interest to read so, once again, sit back and enjoy

Mia Morris with the Heritage award



Any comments or queries about the edition email: info@wellplaced.co.uk or write to Wellplaced Consultancy, Suite 46, 34 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1R 0RH

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This edition is dedicated to Trevor Carter, Angela Szentirmay

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What people said about Black History 365

"Just wanted to say how much I liked your publication for quality and content. Wish you much success with it."

Menelik Shabazz founder for BFM Festival and Black Filmmaker

"Thank you so much for having given me a copy of the first issue of BLACK HISTORY 365. It was good to read; full of positive stories and images, and packed with information. It deserves to be disseminated widely, especially in schools. It is a fantastic resource. All congratulations to you for having got the concept off the ground and produced something of such quality."

Berenice Miles, Consultant, education and equality

"Black History 365: Congratulations on the excellence associated with your work. All good wishes."

Lord Herman Ouseley

"Black History 365 is a first class publication. I totally enjoyed reading it. The information is comprehensive, well written and researched, and is of the highest standard. Congratulations on this

achievement. I pray with you that it will be a very successful venture."

Donna, Director Marcus Garvey Centre Liberty Hall Jamaica

"I was quite amazed at the detail in the listings of the Black History Month newspaper. And then to get the actual hard copy and be able to see the quality of the production, the number of interesting articles and the quality of writing in the articles as well. In just this one issue there is much to learn about fantastic people of African and Caribbean heritage who have made amazing contributions to this country' history. For all those who say the Black community don't have role models -this paper is mandatory reading. Well done."

Rev. Dr. M. Rosemarie Mallett

"Just to say many congratulations on the Black History 365 publication. A wealth of content, and really a very high quality publication all round."

Catherine Bromley Press Officer National Portrait Gallery

Front cover shows: Three Jamaican immigrants (left to right) John Hazel, a 21-year-old boxer, Harold Wilmot, 32, and John Richards, a 22-year-old carpenter, arriving at Tilbury on board the Windrush
Photo credit: Douglas Miller/Getty Images

COMING TO ENGLAND

The poet **James Berry** arrived in Britain from Jamaica in 1948 as a young man of 22. But, as he recalls here, it was poverty rather than adventure that saw him join the Windrush generation

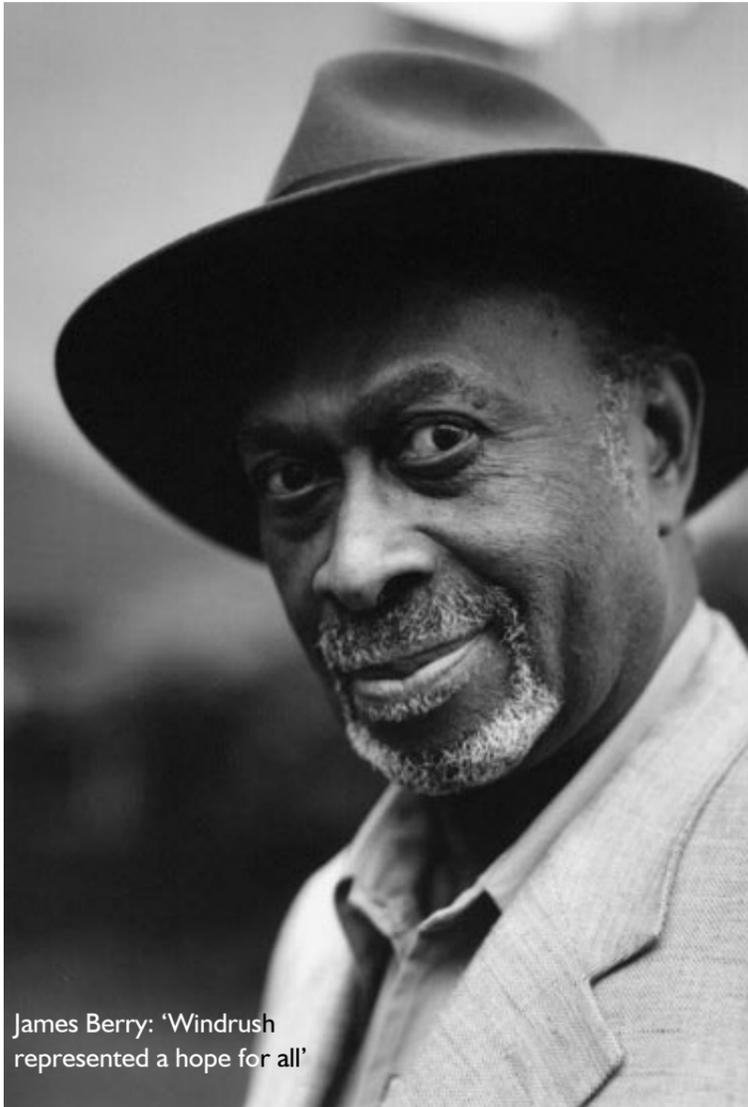
The *Windrush* came at such an important time for me and young men of my generation. To find yourself having left school in Jamaica with no prospect of further education, desperate to develop yourself and without any hope of a job, was devastating. We were left stranded, with an overwhelming sense of waste.

None of us wanted to grow up poverty stricken. We didn't want to grow up without knowledge of the world. We certainly didn't want to grow up like our fathers who were stuck there, with a few hills of yams, a banana field and a few animals. And here we were, hating the place we loved because it was on the verge of choking us to death.

That was the state of the Caribbean at that time. The culture was suffering from its history. It was in a state of helplessness. In fact, we had not emerged from slavery; the bonds were still around us. There were no government initiatives to improve the people's situation – the government was ineffectual.

I escaped from this situation for a brief while during 1942-1946. America had run into a shortage of farm labourers and was recruiting workers from Jamaica. I was 18 at the time. My friends and I, all anxious for improvement and change, were snapped up for this war work and we felt this to be a tremendous prospect for us.

But we soon realised, as we had been warned, that there was colour problem in the United States that we were not familiar with in the Caribbean. America



James Berry: 'Windrush represented a hope for all'

Photo Credit: Sai Idries

was not a free place for black people. When I came back from America, pretty soon the same old desperation of being stuck began to affect me.

When the *Windrush* came along, it was godsend, but I wasn't able to get on the

boat. I simply could not meet the expenses. It was some time before I was able to get myself together and sell the few pigs and goats I had to gather up the money. But I had to wait for the second ship to make the journey that year, the *SS Orbita*.

War changed a lot of things. It took people away from their home circumstances; it showed them a wider world. After the war, people knew that you could travel and change your life. It had far-reaching consequences.

We were going to England. Despite the aftermath of slavery, there was still a respect for England and a sense of belonging. We knew that in England, you could continue education while you worked, you could go to evening school. But England was also the home of the slave masters, and we retained a general distrust of the white man. However, England was the nearest thing we had to a mother country; we saw in it some aspect of hope.

Africa was hopeless, there was no expectation that Africa could do anything for us. We felt a tremendous disappointment, even hatred, for a mother country which could sell our ancestors as slaves. On the *SS Orbita* we talked about the horror of slavery and how it happened. We talked about the years of no-pay workour ancestors had done for the English. We talked about our own voyage and how we were going to see the England we'd read about in our schoolbooks, where everything was good and shining and moral. We felt part of the possibility of a new way of life, a democratic way of life, in which we would be equal human beings.

Life on the boat brought people together from different islands – I had never had any contact with

people from the other Caribbean islands. It was a time of meeting, to talk about our different customs, our island foods, our stories. We also shared a sense of opportunity and expectation about our journey; we were extending our experience as black people in the world. But there was apprehension too about what we would find in Britain, and mock panics about whether the boat would be sent back.

When we arrived in England we were well received. There had been a war and there was a tremendous drive to rebuild the country and clear up the mess, so there was no trouble in finding work. We frequently encountered fairness and humanitarianism among the English. But we would also encounter racism and prejudice, the difficulty of finding a lodging, the difficulty of being seen as an ordinary decent young man, just because you had a black skin. To be a black person in the British way of life has sometimes been a wearying experience; coping with white people's inward dread of a black face is a daily business.

The bigger meaning of the *Windrush* was that it brought changes to two peoples: those who had come from a background of slavery in the Caribbean, and those whose society had benefited from that slave labour. Movements of people bring change and opportunities for development and enlightenment.

The world before *Windrush* was not civilised and fair enough; too many people were left out and disregarded, despite the great contribution they and their ancestors had made. The coming of these Caribbean people has moved things on and made an impact on British society. Our coming together is a challenge and a hope for all.

Beginning in a city, 1948

Stirred by restlessness, push by history,
I found myself in the centre of Empire.
Those first few hours, with these packed impressions
I never looked at in all these years.

I knew no room, I knew no Londoner.
I searched without knowing.
I dropped off my grip at the 'left luggage'.
A smart policeman told me a house to try.

In dim-lit streets, war-tired people moved slowly
Like dark-coated bears in a snowy region.
I in my Caribbean gear
was a half-finished shack in the cold winds.
In November, the town was a frosty field.
I walked fantastic stone streets in a dream.

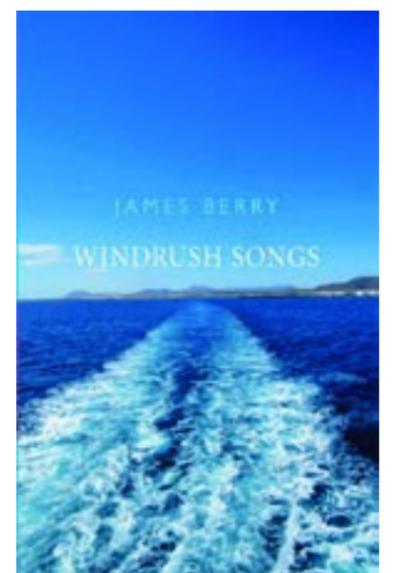
A man on duty took my ten-shilling note
For a bed for four nights
Inflated with happiness I followed him.
I was left in a close-walled room,
Left with a dying shadeless bulb,
A pillowless bed and a smelly army blanket –
All the comfort I had paid for.

Curtainless in morning light, I crawled out of bed
Onto wooden legs and stiff-armed body, with a frosty-board face that I patted
With icy water at the lavatory tap



I walked without map, without knowledge
From Victoria to Brixton. On Coldharbour Lane
I saw a queue of men – some black –
And stopped. I stood by one man in the queue.
'Wha happening brodda? Wha happenin here?'

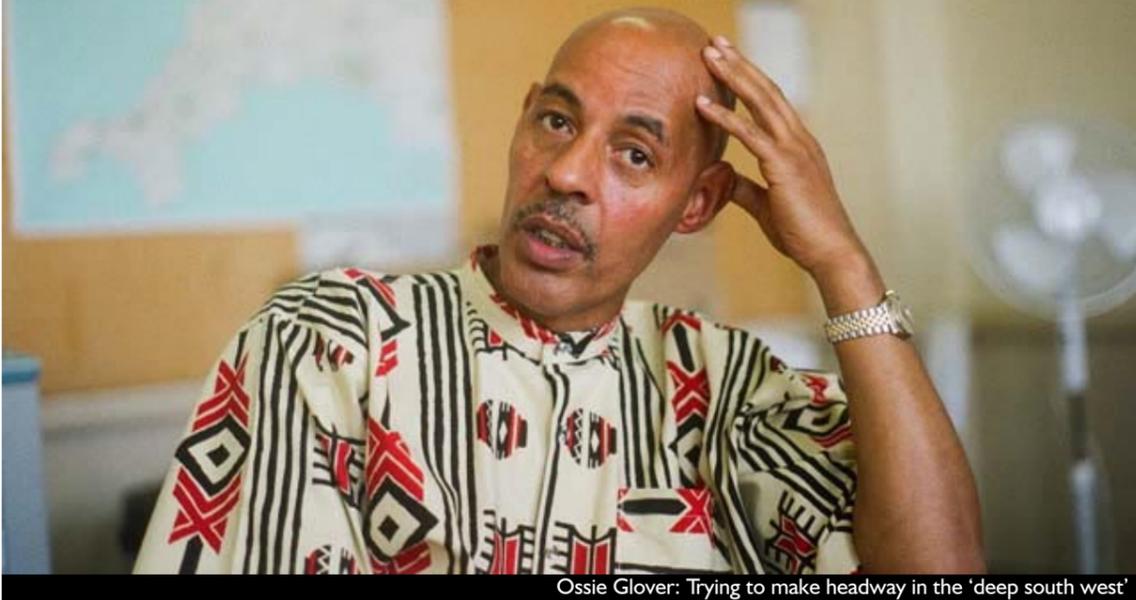
Looking at me he said 'You mus be a jus-come?
You did hear about Labour Exchange?' 'Yes – I hear.'
'Well, you at it! But you need a place whey you live.'
He pointed. 'Go over dere and get a room.'
So, I had begun – begun in London.



Above, and extract of poem, left, taken from James Berry's *Windrush Songs*, published by Bloodaxe Books, 2007

ALL AT SEA

Plymouth community worker Ossie Glover talks about life in the city where the English slave trade began



Ossie Glover: Trying to make headway in the 'deep south west'

When Ossie Glover arrived in Plymouth 35 years ago, he came across only five fellow black people, and they were all in the armed forces like him.

'It was a bit of a cultural shock, coming from Notting Hill in London,' he recalls.

'We stuck out like a sore thumb yet at the same time, we were completely invisible.'

Glover was a 17-year-old recruit in the Royal Marines and despite feeling like one in a million, he decided to eventually settle in the Devon city.

The decline of the Devonport Dockyard, the city's main employer, has turned Plymouth into an economic backwater, deterring any large-scale migration.

But the expansion of the city's university and its designation as a dispersal centre for refugees and asylum seekers means the population profile has changed considerably.

Between eight to 10,000 of what are termed black and minority ethnic people now live there, but by far the largest group are people of mixed heritage.

In response, Glover set up Fata He, or Inclusion, to campaign on behalf of the city's small ethnic community, particularly in the areas of health, housing, education employment and crime.

'In many ways Plymouth is 50 years behind a place like Bristol,' says Glover. 'Because we are small in number the attitude is – no problem here.'

Although there have been no serious racial attacks on individuals, people still have to grapple with routine prejudice and isolation, particularly asylum seekers.

'Those of mixed race may also have identity issues, and we try to offer them support,' Glover adds.

Fata He's work is not confined to Plymouth, but the whole of Devon and



John Hawkins: Line engraving by Willem and Magdalena de Passe after unknown artist, 1620

© National Portrait Gallery

Like father, like son

Claude Miller: Country's oldest councillor at 92



The Miller family from Plymouth has a distinguished record in the city's political life – producing one of the Britain's first black councillors and the country's oldest.

The son of a Sierra Leonean seaman, William Miller was elected in 1925 and rose to the position of deputy mayor, playing a pivotal role in the ambitious post-war housing programme that saw thousands of new homes built in the bomb-damaged city.

An ardent socialist who began his working life in Devonport Docks, he was on close terms with leading figures in the 1945 Atlee government and in 1958 became housing chair of the Association of Municipal Corporations. In Plymouth, where there is a street named after him, he was often referred to as 'Darkie Miller', an indication of the kind of attitudes he was up against despite his prominence.

Miller's son, Claude, has followed in his father's footsteps and in 2004

he was appointed Lord Mayor, crowning a political career spanning three decades.

Re-elected last year at the age of 92, he has entered the record books as the country's oldest councillor.

'My grandfather came to Plymouth from Sierra Leone in the 19th century,' he explains.

'His father was a freed slave.' Claude Miller, who was awarded an MBE for his services to local government in November, was raised in Stonehouse, one of the oldest districts of the city and the place where his grandfather settled down with a local woman.

'I never knew him because he died before I was born, but I knew all about him,' he says.

Cornwall, an area known officially as the far south west. 'Or deep south west,' quips Glover.

'The situation for black people in Cornwall is even worse because it is so rural. In Cornwall, even people from Devon are regarded as outsiders so imagine being the only black person in a village of 400 people.'

Fata He has also helped highlight the fact that it was a local man, John Hawkins, who kicked off England's slave trade, first sailing from Plymouth in 1562 for the West African coast but raiding a Portuguese slave ship on the way.

Future expeditions to Guinea and Sierra Leone involved similar acts of piracy as well as the direct kidnapping of Africans, who were trafficked in the Caribbean for luxury goods. About 3,000 captives in all were sold.

Made Lord Mayor of Plymouth and knighted by Queen Elizabeth, Hawkins was also granted a special coat of arms, which has a bound slave as the crest.

In the 1960s, Town Hall chiefs erected a commemorative plaque to the

'merchant adventurer' and also named a small square after him. Both can be found in the Barbican, the Elizabethan port from where Hawkins set sail.

A few hundred metres away on the city's most prominent landmark, the Hoe, stands a statue of Hawkins' cousin, Sir Francis Drake, who accompanied him on his slave raiding voyages before becoming a naval commander.

'Hawkins and Drake were both pirates,' Glover says pointedly. 'For years, Plymouth just wanted to see them as romantic heroes. They didn't want to talk about the thousands of Africans they enslaved or killed.'

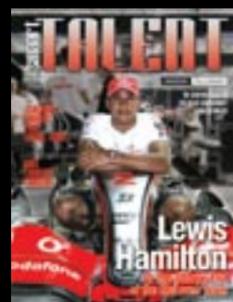
Although the city council has recently acknowledged the duo's role in the trade on a section of its official website, it is reluctant to consider erecting a monument or remembrance to their victims, he claims.

Despite Hawkins' activities, Plymouth never developed into a slave-trading centre. 'This was not because of any moral scruples,' observes Glover, 'but because its port was small and unable to provide safe anchorage.'

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A DASH OF COLOUR

Fifty years ago, the Trinidad-born textile designer Althea McNish became an overnight sensation with her brightly coloured floral prints, writes Angela Cobbinah

When she was a child, Althea McNish would love to walk into the bush and delight in the tropical vegetation about her. 'I was attracted by the beautiful colours and would paint everything,' she says dreamily.

'My mother used to say I was born with a paintbrush in my mouth.' A gifted artist who had her first exhibition at the age of 16 in the Trinidad capital Port of Spain, McNish's vivid sense of colour and pattern was to turn her into an overnight sensation in 1950s Britain.

A graduate of the Royal College of Art, she had decided to specialise in textile design. The result was bold splashy prints that were immediately snapped up by upmarket store Liberty. England, then shrouded in post-war gloom, had never seen anything like it. 'The place was so bloody cold and grey – I wanted to give people some colour,' she laughs.

Now in her seventies and the likely subject of a V&A retrospective, she still exudes the same quirkiness of spirit and *joie de vivre* that mark out her work. The first black British designer of international repute, she proved immediately influential, helping to establish new furnishing trends as well as inspire more adventurous fashion designers further down the line like Zandra Rhodes.

Her output will be familiar to even those who have never heard of her by way of classic wallpaper and fabric designs. They include the popular

Golden Harvest print, inspired by a day out in the Essex countryside.

'In Trinidad, I used to walk through sugar plantations and rice fields and now I was walking through a wheat field. It was a glorious experience,' she beams, still delighting in the memory. 'I can feel it now, how the sun was shining down on me and how I seemed lost in the wheat. Nobody could see me!'

McNish also created wall hangings and murals and massive laminate panels for passenger cruise liners. Later in her career, she reverted to fine art – textile prints in her view being merely 'repeated paintings' – with a solo exhibition in 1997 in London's Hockney Gallery.

The only child of well-to-do parents, McNish showed a precocious talent for art at her mother's knee. 'My mother made clothes, but she didn't draw,' she explains. 'She would say "I want a round collar" and I would draw it. I was only four or five.'

Her forays into the bush near her home in Port of Spain fuelled her

imagination and a few years later she landed a dream job as an entomological illustrator with the government. 'I had to go into the field and do detailed drawings of insects to help in the sugar and cocoa pest control programme,' she says, chuckling at the thought of working for the colonial service.

At the time, Trinidad was at the centre of a Caribbean cultural renaissance, propelled by the struggle for independence and the need to forge a national identity. This would throw up an extraordinary array of talent that would produce some 50 novels between 1948 and 1958 and several internationally renowned artists. As McNish says, 'There was quite an artistic thing going on at the time.'

By now a junior member of the prestigious Trinidad Arts Society, it was inevitable that she would fall under the spell of its leading lights, the painters Sybil Atteck, Boscoe Holder and MP Alladin. She also enjoyed European modernists like Van Gogh and Gauguin. 'Van Gogh was one of my favourites – he was very tropical,' she says by way of explanation.

When she travelled to England in 1951 at the age of 18, it was to study architecture rather than art. However, this was quickly abandoned in favour of a course at the London College of Printing, where she

discovered textiles in her final year. She took an extra course at the Central School of Art taught by the sculptor and pop art pioneer Eduardo Paolozzi, who encouraged her to specialise in textiles.

She learnt how to screen print and it was this technical skill that was to give her the edge when she ventured into industry. 'I knew how to preserve the integrity of my chosen colours so whenever printers told me it couldn't be done, I would show them how to do it.'

Her talent was honed by the Royal College of Art where Hugh Casson, then professor of interior design, gave the headstrong McNish a free hand to experiment with her ideas.

The day after graduating in 1957, she approached the West End store Liberty with her portfolio and was commissioned on the spot by the head of the firm, Stuart Liberty, to design a new collection. 'He thought Britain was ready for colour and it was,' says McNish, who is married to the jewellery designer and architect John Weiss

On that same day, Liberty despatched McNish in a taxi to fashion supplier Zika Ascher, who likewise immediately booked her to create a new collection, this time for Dior. This enabled her to indulge in her favourite fabrics, silk and velvet.

Later there were collaborations with industrial print manufacturers like Hull Traders and Heals. Working

Althea McNish: Her fabrics brightened up threadbare Britain



Work in progress: Casino, acrylic on canvas, 1991, for cruise liner mural

from her studios in the London home she has lived in since the 1950s, McNish would experiment with dyes and surfaces in order to faithfully replicate the sensations of nature.

Gaudy flowers and fruits painted with broad brush strokes, bearing exotic-sounding titles like *Bousada* and *Savina*, were her stock in trade, while *Bezique*, a cascading pattern of 'free' stripes, that is non-geometric, is an example of one of her abstract designs.

'As far as possible, the richness and the vibrancy of colour must remain,' she declares on a final categorical note.



Tropique: One of McNish's prints for Ascher

HOUNDED TO DEATH

The author Kester Aspden succeeds in restoring some dignity to the tragic life and death of a Nigerian living in post-war England, writes Isaac Nyang

Forty years ago the body of David Oluwale was fished out of the River Aire in Leeds. Oluwale was a rough sleeper with a history of mental illness and his death was quickly dismissed as either an accident or suicide, despite bruises and cuts about the face and head. Two years later it was to make front-page news when two police officers stood trial for his manslaughter.

Nationality: Wog – The hounding of David Oluwale is the story of Oluwale's descent from a bright-faced youngster from Nigeria to a shambolic vagrant who was subjected to a systematic campaign of abuse by members of the Leeds City Police. Beyond the unfortunate title, which is based on what was written on a police charge sheet relating to one of Oluwale's arrests, this is a gripping and disturbing read.

The British journalist Kester Aspden, using archive material released under the UK's 30-year confidentiality rule, as well as interviews with trial witnesses and those who knew him, forensically reconstructs Oluwale's miserable life and death and lays bare the implacable racism of British post-war society.

David Oluwale arrived in Britain from Lagos in 1949 at the age of 19 as a stowaway. As a British subject, he was allowed to remain in the country after serving a routine 28-day prison sentence in Armley Prison in Leeds. Once released, he struggled to find his feet in a city notoriously hostile to those it deemed outsiders. But he managed to find work and carve out a life of sorts amongst the tiny community of West Africans that had settled there. Standing at only 5ft 5ins tall, Oluwale was nicknamed Yankee



because of his swagger, and was by all accounts well liked.

But four years after his arrival, he found himself in Armley jail again after being involved in a minor scuffle in Leeds city centre. While serving a two-month sentence, he was judged to be acting strangely and taken to a

local mental asylum. Oluwale was to emerge eight years later, effectively driven mad by the various treatments he had been subjected to. Regarded as violent and of low intelligence, he found himself abandoned by those meant to support his release back into society and was left to fend for himself.

A pitiful figure, Oluwale would have probably lived out the rest of his days sleeping in shop doorways of Leeds city centre were it not for the unwelcome attention of two police officers, Sergeant Ken Kitching and Inspector Geoff Ellerker. In 1968, the two took it upon themselves to drive Oluwale off the streets, giving him frequent beatings, dumping him in woods outside the city and arresting him for assault whenever he fought back. On one occasion they urinated on him.

After a year of such treatment, Oluwale descended into an even more pathetic state but continued to defend himself, with the inevitable consequences of arrest, followed by jail. Then one night, two police officers were seen chasing a man towards the river. Kitching and Ellerker's colleagues had witnessed the harassment against the diminutive Oluwale and had their suspicions of how he met his death. However, they said nothing. But two years down the line, a rookie cop decided to break the code of silence.

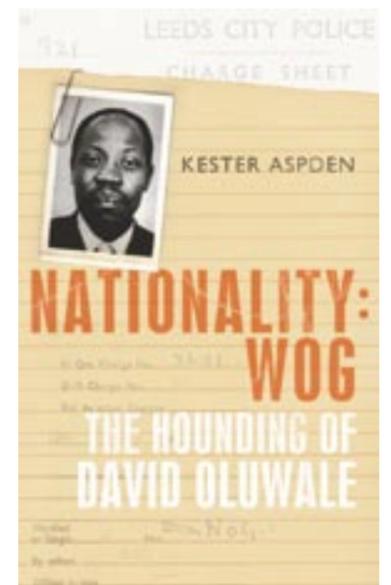
After Oluwale's body was exhumed from his pauper's grave, Kitching and Ellerker were sensationally charged with manslaughter. In the witness box, Kitching admitted to 'tickling Oluwale with his 'boot' and punching him, saying he was a 'wild animal, not a human being.' Another witness described him as a 'mini Mr Universe'.

But the prosecution decided to play down the racism element of the crime and failed to call witnesses who would dispute the authorities' assessment of Oluwale as deranged and violent.

The trial judge himself, referring to Oluwale as a 'nothing but a dirty

vagrant', directed the jury to deliver a not guilty verdict and the two officers were eventually sent down for the lesser charges of assault. It would be the first and the last time that police officers were to be disciplined in connection with a death in custody.

Aspden's book often makes stomach-churning reading. In the face of such systematic racism and having no one to speak up for him, Oluwale never really stood a chance. To the police, the mental health system, the welfare services and the courts, he barely registered as a human being. Aspden has ensured that in death, at least, Oluwale is given the dignity so denied him during his brief life.



This article appears courtesy NewsAfrica, Lagos. *Nationality: Wog – The Hounding of David Oluwale* by Kester Aspden is published by Jonathan Cape, London

BRINGING YOURSELF TO BOOK

Avid reader Rasheed Ogunlaru talks about the power of books in shaping our destiny

When I was a child my earliest memory of what I wanted to be was an author. From the age of eight to 12 I was an avid reader, and I wrote long stories and novels that I intended to publish. In fact, one afternoon I set off to a local bookstore store that I heard published books. The store and those early scripts have since been lost in the mists of time – but not the dream of the boy who wanted to share his sense of wonder with the world.

Back then you'd find me in Camberwell Library, south London, almost every Saturday. I had a thirst for magic, knowledge and adventure. I was enchanted by Roald Dahl, the Greek myths and the Star Wars books. But I especially loved *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe*. Once I won a competition held by the library of who could read the most books over the summer holidays. I read over 100 –

impressive but I confess that I cheated a bit.

In my teens, I read only a handful of books. But one that sticks in my mind, *How to Get Where You Want to Go*, had a most profound effect. This early self-development book by JH Brennan shared the insights of mastering your mind and setting your own destiny. I've no doubt that it helped me build a successful career in the media and then go on to pursue another of my dreams, to become a singer-songwriter.

I would meet many singers who needed the self-confidence to become masters of their own lives and careers. So I decided to retrain as a life coach and today I help people develop the vision and self-belief to achieve.

For me, books have taught me that wisdom actually resides in our own hearts. Every book that I have been

drawn to, from *The Lion the Witch And The Wardrobe* to the profound spiritual classic, *I AM That*, has reminded me that life's magic resides within you.

Now having just self-published my first book, *A Zest For Business*, co-written with four other business experts as a guide to what it really takes to start and succeed as an entrepreneur, I have become the author that the young Rasheed always knew he could be.

The five books that have shaped my growth, in chronological order, are *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe* by CS Lewis; *How to get where you want to* – JH Brennan; *The Alchemist* – Pablo Coelho; *Long Walk to Freedom* – Nelson Mandela; *The Way Of The Peaceful Warrior* – Dan Millman.

Significantly, the list includes *Long Walk To Freedom*, which points to the lesson

Ogunlaru: Loved books from an early age



that humankind must learn in order for us realise our highest potential personally, collectively and for our planet. As a coach, I know that this begins with each and every one of us raising our level of consciousness and compassion.

Rasheed Ogunlaru is a leading life coach, motivational speaker and business coach. *A Zest For Business* is published by Zestworks (price £6.99 plus postage and package £2.75). To order a copy visit: www.rasaru.com / www.zestworks.co.uk

ROOM WITH A VIEW

A familiar and comforting sight in the West Indian household in the 1960s and '70s was the front room furnished with pride and reserved for guests and special occasions

The West Indian front room was marked out by its colourful wallpaper and carpet, elaborate crocheted doilies and artificial flowers, a reproduction of The Last Supper above the fireplace, the radiogram playing Jim Reeves, and the drinks cabinet. It was, says Michael McMillan, creator of the exhibition The West Indian Front Room, a creolisation of English working class domestic interior design. That exhibition at London's Geffrye Museum (2005-06) struck a nostalgic chord, attracting more than 35,000 visitors. It is currently touring the Netherlands as a new exhibition, Van Huis Uit or That's the way we do it! using Moroccan, Indonesian, Surinamese and Antillean migrant domestic styles. McMillan, whose parents came to Britain from St Vincent, elaborates



That room: The pride and joy of the West Indian home

The West Indian front room as a shrine to devotional desires, religious values and aspirations such as education was created in the context of migration. West Indians only realised that they were West Indian when they migrated to Britain and met other West Indians from other Caribbean islands and countries.

They were all here for very much the same reason: to confirm the myth they had been taught as part of their colonial education, that the 'Mother Country', the centre of the British Empire, had streets paved with gold. The myth soon evaporated once they encountered Britain's post-war dull and polluted urban landscape. How many West Indian migrants mistook chimneys for bakeries or thought their mouths were on fire as they breathed out steam in the cold air of their first winter? How many dreamt of getting the first ship back home?

And yet on arrival, their hats were set at angle with style, suits and dresses neatly pressed as if they were going to church. And packed deep within their

'grips' was a sense of dignity and social respectability expressed through 'good grooming'. And it was this representation they maintained when having their formal portraits taken to send 'back home' along with the remittances, which said to family and friends that they were doing well in England.

Initially, it was predominantly men who came. They often shared a single room, unknown to the landlords and landladies. In the morning, one man slipped in to sleep from a night's shift work, while the other slipped out to a day job. Sometimes, three had to share a bed, regardless of gender.

Many did find work as soon as they arrived. Finding somewhere to live was a different story and the "partner hand"/ "susu", an informal localised

saving scheme, was often the only way to raise a deposit for a house. Signs in windows saying 'No Irish, No Dogs, No Coloured' are a painful memory of the cramped and squalid conditions many of my parents' generation had to experience.

Even in those one rooms with paraffin heaters, certain items of furniture such as settees, drinks cabinets and radiograms were bought as 'put downs' through saving and hire purchase, or "HP", for when people had their own homes. And if they had space in a home, the front room came to life, usually dressed by the woman of the house.

Consequently, the front room became a space in the domestic interior where black women could express their femininity and mothering through the

fruits of their labour and financial acumen. She also marshalled the prescribed social behaviour and maintenance of the front room: children were not allowed in unless there were guests, and yet they had specific roles for cleaning it on a weekend.

The front room had a multi-purpose function: it was where West Indians would gather to socialise, drink and dance to music played on the Blue Spot radiogram. It also provided a venue for christenings, weddings, prayer meetings, "Nine Night" funeral wakes, attended by the pastor, the policeman, the teacher, the insurance man, the Avon lady, and where a coffin might be opened.

But the formality of the front room shifted once television became the

focus of family viewing of iconic programmes such as *The Black & White Minstrel Show*, *The Fosters* and *Roots*. This was also when children became teenagers and began to "answer back" with an attitude that reflected a different identity than their parents'.

Eventually, the front room was perceived by the second generation as a museum of 'hoarding' for a tomorrow that never came and grown-up daughters and sons began to negotiate or impose their own consumer desires in 'upgrading' the front room. Yet the legacy of the front room is that it represents a moment of inter-generational identification that still resonates today in the shaping of the black British experience.

© Michael McMillan – February 2008

FROM TORMENT TO TRIMUPH

Best-selling US author Cupcake Brown brought the inspirational story of her life to Cardiff in March as part of a number of events held in the city to mark International Women's month.

Brown, whose harrowing memoir *A Piece of Cake* told her journey from trash can drug addict to successful California lawyer, paid a visit to Radio Cardiff where she did a live radio interview.

Later in the day Brown held two talks in the Wales Millennium Centre (WMC) and attended a drinks reception hosted by the Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Councillor Gill Bird, who said she saw the event as 'an opportunity to bring people together.'

The talks were co-sponsored by Cardiff Council, WMC and the Welsh Assembly government, which meant they could be held free of charge for the more than 500 people who clamoured for tickets.

Brown, whose first name came from a misunderstanding by a nurse when her mother asked for a cupcake just after her birth, was in Cardiff as part of her first tour to Britain that also took in Bristol, Liverpool and London. It was organised by Mia Morris of Well Placed Consultancy.

At the University of East London (UEL) more than 200 people heard Brown read from her 2006 autobiography,

which describes her descent into the nightmare of prostitution, violence, and drug and alcohol addiction after she was placed in the care of sadistic foster parents.

But after a particularly horrific crack cocaine binge, Brown managed to turn her life around, eventually winning a place at the San Francisco School of Law and working as a lawyer at one of America's largest law firms.

Marsha John, diversity manager at East Thames housing group, which sponsored the UEL event, said, 'Cupcake's talk provided a tremendous source of hope and inspiration for everyone present.'



Cupcake Brown (first left) during her visit to Radio Cardiff

HIDDEN HAND OF WAR

A forthcoming exhibition marking the 60th anniversary of the *Empire Windrush's* arrival in Britain reveals how the Second World War influenced early Caribbean migration

The *Empire Windrush* arrived at Tilbury Dock on a summer's day 60 years ago with almost 500 passengers on board, most of them Jamaican. Each had paid the £28 10s fare to make the month-long voyage to Britain in search of work.

The grainy black and white Pathé film footage of the men filing off the gangplank on June 22 1948, smartly dressed in their zoot suits and trilby hats, has come to symbolise the start of mass migration to Britain from the Caribbean.

In fact, smaller numbers of West Indian passengers had arrived on other ships throughout the previous year without fanfare. But anxiety over the 'substantial' number of unknown West Indians aboard the *Windrush* prompted the Colonial Office to organise a reception for its 492 passengers that included temporary accommodation in a converted air raid shelter on Clapham Common in London. The press was on hand to record them every step of the way.

Famous archive film footage shows one of the passengers, Aldwyn Roberts, aka

Lord Kitchener, the Trinidad calypsonian, giving an impromptu performance of his latest composition, *London is the place for me*, in a way that unknowingly captured the naïve hopes and longings of all those on board. Kitchener had boarded the *Windrush* in Kingston following a short tour of the Caribbean to try his luck in London.

But a forthcoming exhibition at the Imperial War Museum in London shows that if it hadn't been for the Second World War, Kitchener and his fellow passengers might not have made the journey at all.

During the conflict, around 10,000 Caribbean men and women had been recruited to serve in the armed forces, from bomber pilots fighting in the Battle of Britain to technicians working

at British air bases. Thousands more served as merchant seamen. When they went back home after the war, the cost of living had doubled and unemployment was widespread.

A new exhibition, *From War to Windrush*, at the Imperial War Museum explores how many former Caribbean servicemen and women and civilian war workers chose to return to Britain. When the *Windrush* stopped in Jamaica to pick up servicemen who were on leave from their units, many of their former comrades decided to make the trip in order to rejoin the RAF. Others were skilled tradesmen in search of work in the 'Mother Country', which they heard was suffering from an acute labour shortage.

Their way was paved by the 1948 Nationality Act, which granted all

subjects of the British Empire British citizenship and the right to settle in Britain.

Using historical material and personal memorabilia, the exhibition, held to mark the 60th anniversary of the *Windrush's* arrival, explores the involvement of black men and women from the Caribbean in the Second World War and how this led to the establishment of Britain's black community and the profound cultural changes this brought about.

Ten years after *Windrush*, 125,000 Caribbean migrants had settled here. But more were to follow in greater numbers following the tightening up of US immigration rules and anticipation that the same would happen in the UK.

Going back further in time, the exhibition also tells the experiences of the approximately 16,000 men from the West Indies who volunteered to fight for Britain in the First World War.

Among the exhibits on display are pages from the *MV Empire Windrush* passenger list; the telegram announcing the death of Walter Tull, the first black British Army Officer from the First World War; the RAF flying logbook of actor Cy Grant, a navigator in Bomber Command who was shot down over The Netherlands during the Second World War and spent the rest of the war in German Prisoner of War camps; and the MBE belonging to Sam King who returned to Britain on the *Windrush* after serving in the RAF and was later the first black mayor of Southwark in London.

All pictures courtesy of Imperial War Museum.
From War to Windrush opens at the Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Rd, London SE1, on June 13.



June 22 1948: Jamaicans reading a newspaper on board the *Windrush*



Kitchener's 'London is the place for me' was eventually recorded in 1951



July 1 1948: Settling down for the night in the ex-air raid shelter on Clapham Common in London, which was turned into a temporary hostel for newly arrived migrants.



Abel Seaman Ramazani: A proud recruit of Britain's war effort



One of Britain's elite RAF pilots

Photo Credit: Douglas Miller/Keystone/Getty Images

Photo Credit: Chris Ware/Keystone Features/Getty Images

Photo courtesy of Imperial War Museum

VERSE SPRINGS TO LIFE

The first monument to black women in England was inspired by an epic poem, writes *Mia Morris*

When a sculpture is unveiled at a London park later this year it will be a dream come true for Cecile Nobrega. Forty years ago the Guyanese-born teacher wrote an epic poem in honour of black women called the *Bronze Woman*.

But she wanted to bring it to life for a wider audience and in 1995, well into her seventies, launched a campaign for a work of art to be created based on the verse.

The result is *The Bronze Woman*, a three metre high statue depicting a

woman holding a child up to the sky. Said by organisers to be the first monument to a black woman in England, it will take pride of place in Stockwell Memorial Gardens, close to where Nobrega lives in Lambeth, south London.

It was crafted by Aleix Barbat who took over the project following the death of the original sculptor, Ian Walters, the creator of Nelson Mandela's statue in Parliament Square. 'It is a symbol of our life here, our struggles, our hopes and our striving towards a brighter future,' says Nobrega, a sprightly 89-year-old

who is well known in Guyana for her plays, poems and songs.

The success of the project has been down to a combination of Nobrega's own indomitable spirit and support from a range of bodies, including her landlords, Presentation housing association.

In 2002, having already successfully raised £25,000 from a target of £60,000, Nobrega visited Mohni Gujral, Presentation's chief executive, seeking support. In addition to pledging £1,000, Presentation also offered to coordinate fundraising via its community investment arm, Olmec.

The former leader of Lambeth Council, Linda Bellos, became chair of the Bronze Woman Monument Committee eight years ago. She says the statue is to all Caribbean women, and to those of African, Indian and Chinese origin who helped to sustain their families and communities when they came to the UK. 'Despite nearly 60 years of significant contribution to the UK, there is little or no public recognition of these women. That is why the Bronze Woman is so important.'

Nobrega's labour of love may have resulted in a first for England, but Scotland installed a similar monument more than 20 years ago. The *African Woman and Child* has stood in Festival Square, Lothian Road, Edinburgh, since 1986, as a statement of the city's stand against apartheid.

Cast in bronze, the larger than life figures were created by Ann Davidson after city chiefs ran a competition to find a sculptor. 'I was stunned and thrilled to receive the commission,' she says.



Photo Credit: Olmec

Labour of love: Nobrega and a model of the *Bronze Woman*



The *African Woman and Child* statue became a meeting point

'I was very moved by the plight of South Africans, particularly women, and I wanted to create a statue that would resonate with that period of total hardship and desolation.'

Above the legend 'Victory is certain', an inscription at the base of the statue reads, 'To all those killed or imprisoned for their stand against apartheid.'

The *African Woman and Child* was unveiled during the city's hosting of the Commonwealth Games and quickly became the equivalent to Speaker's Corner in London's Hyde Park. 'People used the statue as a meeting point and a place for hearing passionate speeches,' says Davidson.

Talking about my generation

Fresh from his tour of Barbados, Victor Richards' ever popular *Streets Paved with Gold* is returning to the UK for three special one-night performances to mark the 60th anniversary of the *Empire Windrush's* arrival.

In this one-man show, Richards plays Augustus Cleveland Johnson who takes us on a poignant journey through the decades as he struggles to build a new life, beginning with his arrival as a wide-eyed youngster from Barbados in 1948 to the present, when he starts packing his battered 'grip' to return home.

Leicester-based Richards wrote the play in 1996, drawing on his own family history to tell the story of the Windrush generation. 'My mum came from Barbados and my dad from Trinidad,' he says. 'They met in London and lived in those one room flats. Mum was a nurse and my father was a bus driver. They lived as so many people did and had difficulties with jobs and things like that.'

The play has certainly struck a chord over the years and, as well as touring theatres, schools and colleges up and down the country, it has gone around the world, including Ghana, the US, South Africa and now the Caribbean. 'When I started I never dreamed how it would develop and where it would take me,' says Richards.

On June 21, to mark the exact day of the Windrush's arrival at Tilbury Dock in 1948, *Streets Paved With Gold* will be performed in Tilbury itself, June 13. But before that there is an opportunity to see it in London (Thursday, May 30, South Lambeth Library, 180 South Lambeth Road, London SW8, 7pm); and Ipswich on Friday, June 13.

For details of the Ipswich and Tilbury venues and times please email www.vjaytheatre.net



Richards in character in his one-man show

ADIEU AU POÈTE

Tens of thousand of people attended the funeral in Martinique of one of the Caribbean's most important cultural and political figures, Aimé Césaire, writes Joy Fraser

When the esteemed Martinican poet and politician Aimé Césaire died in April at the age of 94, his passing should not have come as a surprise. Yet when it was first announced – from the Elysée Palace in Paris – Martinicans were stunned by the fact that “Papa Aimé” was no more. Town hall workers in the capital Fort de France, where he had been mayor for 56 years, told broadcasters of their ‘profound sadness’, and days later thousands of people attended his funeral.

Outside of France and Martinique, most people will remember Césaire as both a celebrated poet and passionate advocate of “Negritude”, an ideal of African identity which he developed in 1930s Paris in collaboration with fellow students, Léopold Senghor, future president of Senegal, and the French Guyanese poet Leon Damas.

His tour de force, *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (Return to my native land), a powerful mixture of poetry and poetic prose, remains the definitive illustration of Negritude and helped establish his reputation as one of the greatest writers of the French language. His fervent anti-colonialism and emphasis on the need for black pride formed the connecting thread of his poetry, dramas and essays. Fellow Martinican intellectual Frantz Fanon, whom he taught in the 1930s during his brief career as a teacher, was particularly influenced by Césaire's *Discours sur le colonialisme* (Discourse on colonialism), written in 1955 and considered a classic of French political literature.

But it is mostly as an ‘homme politique’ that his compatriots will remember

him. As well as having been their most eminent mayor, serving from 1945 to 2001, and their representative in Paris – as a deputy in the French National Assembly – Césaire touched the lives of the poorest people, leaving an indelible mark on the destiny of his beloved Martinique.

During an extraordinarily long political career, Césaire helped create the ‘Departments d’Outre-Mers’ (DOMS), which included Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guyana. This meant that Martinique was every bit a part of France as Paris, with the same rights and benefits. He saw this status as a just reward for his people who had suffered slavery and oppression but laid down their lives for France during the Second World War.

After breaking with the Communist Party, Césaire established the Progressive Martinican Party (PPM) in 1958 with the objective of achieving decentralisation and eventually greater autonomy for the island. But over the last 30 years, proponents of independence and successive younger generations have criticised Césaire's departmentalisation policy as being assimilationist and damaging to Martinican identity, saying it disregarded their Caribbean reality in the misguided pursuit of French culture.

Despite the contradictions in his political vision, Césaire remained forever Papa Aimé. Calls from France for his remains to be interred at the Pantheon in Paris alongside the likes of Haiti slave leader Toussaint L'Ouverture and novelist Alexandre Dumas were rejected in favour of a state funeral in Martinique. Césaire's



Césaire (front centre) was revered by Martinicans of all ages

body was laid in state in an open casket, prompting a seemingly unending procession of people filing past to pay their final respects over three days.

The funeral ceremony, held in the Stadium Pierre Alikier, was one of the greatest events the country could remember. Tens of thousands of Martinicans of all ages, descended on the stadium to join with personages of every persuasion from literature and politics the world over. They included French President Nicolas Sarkozy, whom Césaire clashed with in 2005 because of the then minister of the interior's endorsement of a

bill citing the ‘positive role’ of colonialism. The offending reference was subsequently dropped.

The tributes were generous and heartfelt. The most touching homage came from Dr Pierre Alikier, whose distinction had little to do with the stadium, which bore his name. At age 101, he had been Césaire's oldest friend and comrade in the PPM. His words resounded in the hearts of those present: ‘Aimé Césaire is dead and Martinique has lost her best son.’

In the weeks since his passing, Aimé Césaire remains the subject uppermost in his compatriots' mind.

Some even claim to have been ‘rene’ (reborn) as a consequence of his death. Renewed interest in his work and philosophy has seen a resurgence in the sale of his books. His legacy both as politician and poet will no doubt continue to be debated in years to come, but what is clear is that he leaves behind him an example of exceptional dimension, both in his poetry and political action.

Joy Fraser is a teacher who has lived in Martinique

Photos and videos of Aimé Césaire's life and funeral can be seen on www.rfo.fr and select Martinique

ARCHED RIVALS

Two monumental arches, separated by 1,800 years, commemorate key events in black history, writes Rosie Hopley

It's not every day you can wander through an ancient landscape and touch the fabric of history. But if you visit the Roman Forum in Italy, you'll find a magnificent arch that was built at a time when Rome was expanding its borders, waging campaigns in Britain, Europe and Iraq and Iran. The monument was erected in 203AD to mark the triumphal campaigns of one of Rome's most successful emperors – Septimius Severus, also known as the African Emperor.

The 80-foot-high arch, which is made of white marble, is one of the last monuments to survive in the Forum, ancient Rome's business and civic centre. The man in whose honour it was built came from Leptis Magna, present day Libya. Severus rose from the rank of soldier to the ultimate position of power and authority in

Rome – the head of a rapidly expanding empire thanks to his skilful but brutal campaigns, and a bloody civil war. Historians Herodian and Cassio Dio referred to him as ‘a man of such energy... wise and successful... that he left no battle except as victor.’

When Severus came to power in 193AD, he was the first emperor who was not born in Italy. In 208AD he travelled to the north east of England to wage war north of Hadrian's Wall, a Roman fortification marking the extent of the empire. York, or Eboracum, as it was known then, became Severus' seat of power and for three years he directed his campaign to repel the “barbarian” tribes invading from Scotland. He reinforced his brutal reputation, destroying everything and everyone in his way.

After reigning for 18 years, he died in York in 211AD aged 65. The Roman arch remains to this day, a permanent marker for posterity.

Separated by 1,800 years, another commemorative arch brings us much closer to home, to the Gloucestershire market town of Stroud in the south west of England. There a wealthy local businessman and member of the Stroud Anti-Slavery Society wanted to mark the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire in 1833.

Henry Wyatt was the new owner of Farm Hill Park House, a Georgian mansion that he bought in the same year as the abolition act was passed. He was determined to honour the occasion, choosing to do so with a substantial arch at the entrance to his carriage drive.



The Septimius Severus Arch, one of the Forum's last surviving monuments

Inscribed ‘Erected to commemorate the abolition of slavery in the British Colonies’, the

arch is unique in that it is the only monument of its type in Britain marking the emancipation act.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Alexander McLean's groundbreaking project to improve the lives of African prisoners is beginning to make waves

Alexander McLean: a beacon of hope



Photo credit: Andi Bray

When Alexander McLean travelled from Britain to Uganda four years ago as part of his student gap year a chance visit to a prison was to become a life changing experience.

Three thousand prisoners were packed into a prison built to hold 600 and lack of basic health facilities and poor sanitation meant that many of them were needlessly sick and dying.

The appalling conditions he witnessed at Luzira Maximum Security Prison prompted him to set up the African Prisons Project (APP), which saw him carry out voluntary work in prisons during his university vacation to improve conditions and facilities. First stop was Luzira itself where McLean installed plumbing and lighting and refurbished the hospital.

In another initiative, at Kamiti Prison in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, he renovated a library, supplying it with 34,000 books collected in the UK, as well as bookshelves, computers, desks and chairs. Cells were also made more comfortable with donated sheets, pillows and blankets. At the Pademba Youth Detention Centre in Freetown, Sierra Leone, where girls and boys as young as eight are held, the APP also established a farming scheme to grow fruit and veg to help supplement the poor prison diet. Helping him implement the projects, were fellow Nottingham university students, whom he personally recruited.

Last year, the inspiring work of the APP won the 24-year-old Londoner the £30,000 Beacon Prize, considered the charity world's equivalent of the Nobel Prize, as well as Graduate of the Year award.

Now with a law degree under his belt, he is back in Uganda where he will continue his work to improve prison education and health care facilities. Later in the year there are plans to travel to Zambia to build a day care centre for inmates' children and a 100,000-book central prisons library in partnership with the British High Commission.

'When I first saw conditions at Luzira I never seen anything like it,' recalls McLean. 'I didn't think anyone needed to suffer such overcrowded, unsanitary conditions, whatever crimes they had committed. At the time, I had no intention of starting a charity, but the work just escalated as we responded to need.'

With cash-strapped African governments unable or unwilling to invest in the prison service, McLean knows he has an uphill task. 'There are 220 prisons in Uganda and we have done work in just seven. It is very challenging but also very rewarding.'

McLean also wants to draw attention to those he feels shouldn't be behind bars at all. 'It's very difficult seeing 10 and 11 year-olds in prison for committing crimes like loitering. We came across one prisoner who was jailed for 12 years for stealing a dozen eggs. Another prisoner, a woman, was jailed because she owed £60.'

He wants governments to make greater use of community service punishments as an alternative to custodial sentences, saying that this would be more beneficial to society in the long run.

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ONCE UPON A BUS

A chance encounter on a bus led Donald Hinds to work as reporter for Britain's first black newspaper, launched 50 years ago this month, writes Angela Cobbinah

It was a usual day on the buses as Donald Hinds went about collecting fares from passengers, deflecting their curious stares with a smile, when a young black man handed him a newspaper instead of money.

'It was a copy of the *West Indian Gazette* and he asked me whether I would like to buy one,' he remembers. 'This was about a month after it first came out so I had never heard of it. I bought one, adding that I would also like to write for it. He said fine, come along to the offices. That's how I got my first job as a reporter.'

Hinds, then 24 and one of the first people from the Caribbean to be employed on the London buses, had always thought of himself as writer. As a schoolboy in Kingston, Jamaica, he was an avid reader and loved to write poetry. By the time he was 19, he had filled eight exercise books with the start of a novel.

But when he came to Britain in 1955 to study for a degree, he found himself cut adrift in a strange and hostile land and, like many, was forced to set his sights lower to make ends meet. Now he had a chance to put pen to paper again.

The very next day, he hurried along to the cramped *West Indian Gazette* offices in Brixton, south London, to meet the editor, the civil rights campaigner Claudia Jones who had been deported from the US in 1955 at the height of the McCarthy witch hunts. Hinds had never heard of the woman who was to change his life forever. But he was immediately struck by her elegance and grace.

'She got up from her desk and shook my hand, saying if I wanted to write then I should simply do so. Two days later I brought an article to her based on interviews I did with migrants along Brixton Road. She read it and said, "You can write".'

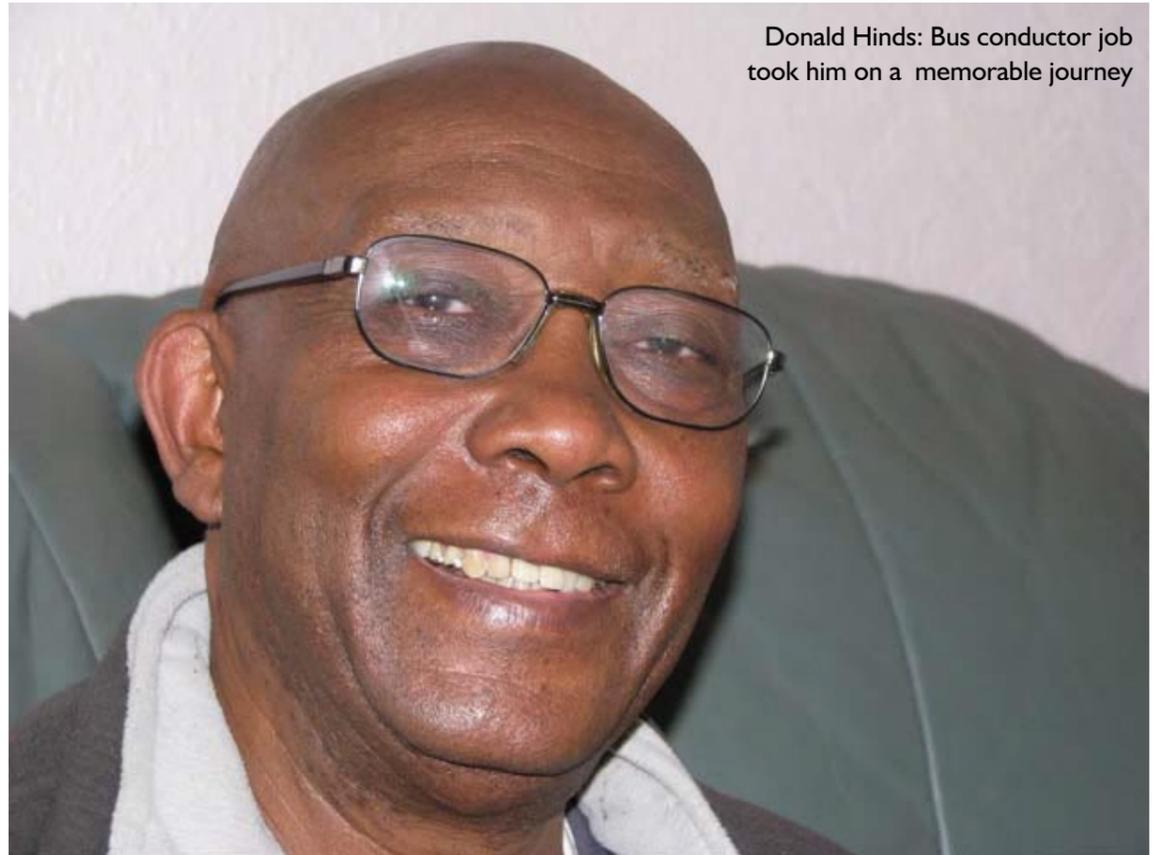
Indeed he could. Apart from supplying the BBC World Service's *Caribbean Programme* with stories of his encounters on the buses, years later he would go on to write for a national newspaper and see his first book published.

For now though, he lived a strange parallel existence of working as a bus conductor and being a reporter on a paper which was run on such a shoestring budget that it could not afford to pay him: 'If I was on the late shift I would be down there in the morning. To be on the safe side I would wear my bus conductor trousers. If I was on early, it would devote the afternoon and evenings to the *Gazette*.'

Designated as the paper's "city reporter", Hinds never knew quite what to expect. One day he would be reporting on how a local Brixton butcher was going to start selling goat meat for its West Indian customers, the next he was suddenly whisked away in a cab to attend a plush Nigerian independence conference in central London with the world's press.

In 1959, he travelled to Vienna for the Seventh World Conference for Youth and Students and heard Paul Robeson sing *Ole Man River* on the banks of the Danube. Another highlight was an interview with James Baldwin, who had come to Britain to promote his latest book, *Another Country*.

'To interview one of the best-known black people alive at the time was an



Donald Hinds: Bus conductor job took him on a memorable journey

awesome experience,' Hinds recalls. 'He was so easy to talk to and interviewed me at the same time to find out what life was like in the UK for blacks. He realised it was no easy ride.'

On one occasion, he was dismayed to find that Jones had rejected one of his articles. It was an interview with Amy Jaques Garvey, Marcus Garvey's wife, which he considered quite a scoop. Hinds smiles as he takes up the story. 'Claudia said, "Donald, I can't print this. Take a look at our masthead". I did and saw that Garvey's first wife, Amy Ashwood Garvey, was on our editorial board. Apparently she always referred to the new wife as "that woman"!'.

Sometimes his two worlds collided: 'Once I took a fare from someone I

interviewed a couple of months back. She was really astonished. "I thought you were a journalist," she said. "I am, but I'm also a bus conductor", I replied.'

Looking back, Hinds wonders why he never got round to interviewing Jones herself. 'Claudia was a wonderful person and it was only after she died that I realised that I was in the presence of history. If I were to call anyone my mentor it would be her,' he declares with quiet passion.

'Even now I hear her voice: "Donald, I asked for 300 words. This is far too long." And then that smile, "But if I ask you to cut it, you would only make it 500. What am I going to do with you? Give it here."

Once in Britain, Jones, though in poor health after being imprisoned for a year by the US authorities, had thrown herself into the anti-racist struggle and in 1958 set up the *West Indian Gazette* as a campaign organ. It was, says Hinds, Britain's first commercial black newspaper. 'It was a kind of house journal for migrants. It debated, detailed and explained what was going on in the black community at a time when many of us felt confused and lost.'

Hostility towards black people was spilling over into violence, culminating in the 1958 riots in Notting Hill and Nottingham. That month, August, the *Gazette* sold a record 30,000 copies before reverting to the normal 3,000 to 4,000.



Jones with William Dubois: The great and the good gathered at the Brixton Road offices

© Donald Hinds

Route master

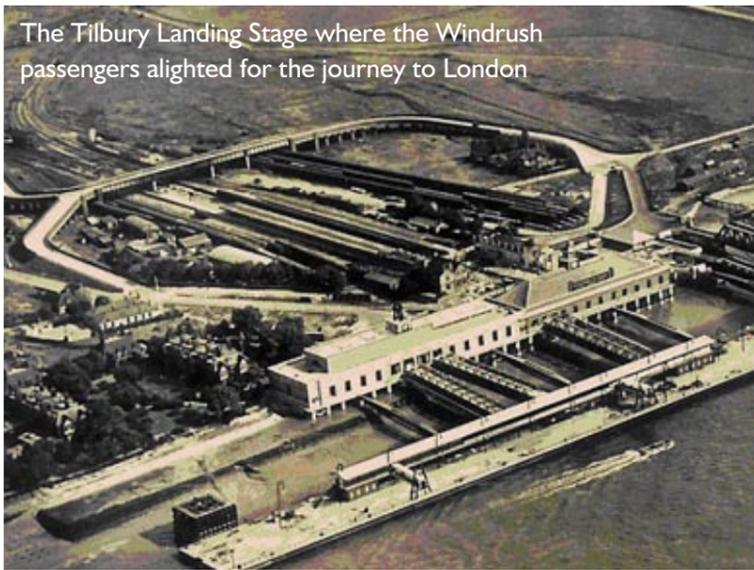
Ten years ago when you gave a passenger his change and a ticket, besides marvelling at the fact you actually spoke English and you gave him the correct change, he would also grab hold of our hand and then shout to all the bus that your hands are warm. Some, of course, gave your hands a vigorous rub to see whether it was dirt which made you black. All these things sound incredible, but they are true. So many people put their hands on my hair for good luck in the first year of my working on the London buses that I was in fear of going bald prematurely. I think that gave some people a brief chance of talking – you would be surprised at the amount of things people can talk about during a ten penny ride. Naturally it did not cure all the ills, but it helped to erode some of the myths about coloureds for a few people. On the other side, it gave a few of us an opportunity to study the idiosyncrasies of the British.

The sudden transfer from the West Indies to Britain had unnerved me. If I had gone into a factory to work, I might not have got over some of my inhibitions about the British. While working on the buses I met an average of 800 people per day. That restored my confidence.

Taken From *Journey To An Illusion*

FROM TOWER HILL TO TILBURY

The Tilbury Landing Stage where the Windrush passengers alighted for the journey to London



pic credit: Thurrock Council

It was a defining moment in modern British history - the day the *Empire Windrush* docked at Tilbury on June 22, 1948.

The ship brought nearly 500 people from Jamaica, Trinidad and other Caribbean islands and their role was to play a part in the reconstruction of Britain, as it emerged from the shadow of the Second World War.

Though the climate may have been a shock to the system, and the welcome was often not as warm as they might have hoped, the *Windrush* passengers were about to make a deep and lasting impression on the national culture.

To mark the 60th anniversary of the *Windrush*'s arrival, the Port of Tilbury with the Thurrock Festival Group will be hosting a special event, which will see the *Windrush* Ferry bring *Windrush* survivors and many of the

descendants of the *Windrush* generation back to Thurrock.

The celebration begins on Sunday, 22 June, when the ferry leaves Tower Hill with its guests who will travel along the Thames to Tilbury Docks. On board will be the rhythms of the Caribbean, food, and stunning visual imagery reminiscent of the spirit of those that made the long journey to the United Kingdom.

The *Windrush* Ferry will be received in Tilbury by the Mayor of Thurrock. A reception and exhibition will be followed by a dinner and contributions from guests.

The event will mark perhaps the last time that the survivors of the *Windrush* and the generations that followed will be able to share their hopes and aspirations for the island that they now call home.

For details of the day's programme telephone (01375) 652652 or email www.thurrock.gov.uk

SUPREME DRESS SENSE

The performance costumes of *The Supremes*, one of the most successful groups of all time, are on display at the V&A

On show will be over 50 outfits that chart the changing image of the group from their dresses in the early days when they were known as *The Primettes* to the glamorous Hollywood designs they wore at the height of their fame.

Set against the backdrop of the meteoric rise of Motown Records, and the turbulence of the US civil rights movement, the exhibition will explore the inspirational role *The Supremes* played in changing racial perceptions and their influence on today's performers.

The Supremes recorded 12 US No.1 hits between 1964 and 1969, including an unprecedented five consecutive chart toppers. There will be an opportunity to see costumes worn by the original Supremes – Mary Wilson, Diana Ross and Florence Ballard, as well as the '70s Supremes. It will examine how the group was carefully styled by Berry Gordy and his Motown associates to appeal to the widest possible audience.

Based on the collection of Mary Wilson, the display will feature the group's music, album covers and archive footage of them performing.

In addition, original photographs, footage of television appearances and magazine spreads will examine *The Supremes* as black role models in the 1960s. Appearing on radio and television screens across the world, the group broke down racial barriers and enjoyed unprecedented success.

As the 50th anniversary of Motown Records approaches in 2009, the display also looks at the company's history from lowly beginnings in Detroit, a city more famous for car production than music, to the largest independent



record label in the US. *The Supremes* epitomised the vibrant, sophisticated crossover appeal of the label.

A set of costumes worn by *Destiny's Child* will be also exhibited and there will be a specially commissioned video interview with radio and television broadcaster Trevor Nelson who will discuss the *The Supremes* and today's generation of girl bands.

Mary Wilson said, 'I have kept these dresses in storage for over 30 years; it was my dream that that one day I could share them with the world. I am delighted that they are going on display at the V&A and on tour around the UK.'

The Story of the Supremes from the Mary Wilson Collection runs until October 19 at the Victorian and Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7. Admission charge applies

REMEMBERING SLAVERY

The International Slavery Museum is the only national museum in the world to deal with transatlantic slavery and its legacies. Liverpool, central to the transatlantic slave trade in the 18th century, is a fitting location for this groundbreaking museum.

Containing multi-media displays on the horrific trade, the museum uncovers the largely hidden account of the exploitation of Africa and Africans.

A gallery on the legacy of transatlantic slavery, from colonialism to civil rights, music and cuisine, reflects issues that are relevant to the world today. The museum regularly holds events for all the family. They include

African beats workshop, May 27, 1.30, 2.30 & 3.30pm

Feel the beat with an afternoon of African drumming and tribal dance

African batik workshop, May 28 1-4pm

Drop in for a fun-filled afternoon of craft activities and learn all about the art of African batik



Picture credit: National Museums Liverpool

Chief Angus (r) performing last year's libation ceremony with George Etogo

African arts and crafts workshop, May 29/Jun 8, 1-4pm

Try your hand at African art and make your own mask to take home

Destination freedom, June 1/29, 2 & 3pm

Based upon the true story of William and Ellen Craft, this performance tells of Ellen's personal journey from enslavement to freedom

Keep your eyes on the prize, June 15, 2 & 3pm

This new performance tells the inspiring story of Diane Nash and her involvement with the civil rights movement

Life in West Africa, June 22, 1.30, 2.30 & 3.30pm

Tales of everyday life in Nigeria

Slavery Remembrance Day, August 23

Join annual commemoration of slavery, which includes traditional libation ceremony conducted by Chief Angus Chukwuemaka. Phone/email museum for details

The International Slavery Museum, Albert Dock, Liverpool, is open daily 10am-5pm, admission free. Telephone 0151 478 4499 or email www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

www.black-history-month.co.uk



The premier all year round independent comprehensive portal; Celebrating and highlighting Caribbean and African activities, with profiles, articles and news plus an Amazon Media store with a range of DVD's, Videos, Books and Posters, plus e bulletin with visitors special offers.

JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY



Photo Credit: Museum in Docklands

Linx member Asia Bharj, 19, at the exhibition's opening

School children in Jamaica love to hear tales about the Maroons, runaway slaves who escaped to the hills and forests of the island and waged a fierce guerrilla war against the British in the 18th century.

Queen Nanny, one of the Maroons' leaders, is now a national hero whose portrait appears on \$500 Jamaican dollar bill, while the exploits of her brothers-in-arms, Cudjoe, Accompong, Johnny and Quao, have all become the stuff of legend.

Mainly descendants of Akan-speaking captives from the Gold Coast, present day Ghana, the Maroons' favoured method of attack was ambush, having been warned of the approaching enemy by sharp-eyed lookouts blowing an *abeng*, a kind of bugle made from a cow's horn.

Expert marksmen and fearless in battle, they caused great losses to British forces, who were eventually forced to grant the Maroons their freedom.

Although, the British were later able to gain some ground against the free Africans, the Maroons managed to preserve some of their territories, which to this day are largely independent of government.

The largest is Accompong Town situated in the remote hills of St Elizabeth parish, where every January 6, the 600 or so villagers celebrate the anniversary of Cudjoe's 1739 victory over the British.

With eating, drinking, singing and dancing to the beat of the *akete* drum and the blowing of the *abeng*, they remember their glory days.

Accompong, past and present, is now the subject of stunning exhibition of photographs at the Museum in Docklands in London in an attempt to draw wider attention

to the history of the Maroons. Comprising more than 50 photographs in a montage and a short film, *Journey to Accompong* is the result of work by photographer, Jennie Baptiste, and six London school children.

Calling themselves the Linx, the youngsters, aged 14-19, researched the history of African resistance to slavery and accompanied Baptiste on a visit to the Accompong Maroons. Baptiste said, 'This project has sparked an interest among the public in the Maroons and the whole issue of slavery and how it shapes our lives today.'

'It's been very educational for the young people involved and they have learnt so much through things like visiting libraries, plantations and the Maroon community.'

The exhibition is part of the museum's *London, Sugar & Slavery* gallery's rolling community exhibition space. '[This] was designed with the flexibility to allow members of the public to put a spotlight on part of the story they think is important through displays they've created,' said museum director David Spence. 'This inspiring project gives young people a chance to speak to others visiting the gallery in their own style and language.'

The London borough of Brent funded the project to the tune of £40,000. Natasha Reynolds, the council's senior youth participation worker, said: 'The Linx has done a fantastic job in raising awareness of a previously little-known part of black history and they [the youngsters] should be really proud of themselves.'

Journey to Accompong runs at the Museum in Docklands, West India Quay, Hertsmere Road, London E14, until August 31

MERSEY SKIPS TO A NEW BEAT



Pupils at St Silas Church of England Primary School in Liverpool get into the swing of things

Photo Credit: Pidgin

A traditional children's skipping game has now become a sport in its own right thanks to resurgence in popularity that has its roots in hip-hop culture.

Double Dutch or Jump Rope has its own national and international tournaments and is to be showcased at the 2012 London Olympics.

In January, Liverpool, the European Capital of Culture 2008, launched its own initiative to get more children involved in the sport.

Double Dutch Liverpool is primarily aimed at girls aged 11-19 years to form teams of up to six players. These will then showcase the sport throughout the year at various events across Merseyside, including Urban Youth Festival and The Hub street culture festival, both in July.

Meanwhile, the world Double Dutch champions, Japan, will be demonstrating their skills at the Brouhaha International Street festival, which starts on July 18 for three weeks, as well as holding workshops in the city in August.

Bea Freeman of Pidgin, the company behind the initiative, said, 'By September 2008 we estimate that Liverpool should have a least six teams. There will be a competition held between these players and the winners will treated to a trip to the World Double Dutch Championship, due to be held in South Africa in November.' The ultimate aim is to ensure Liverpool is part of the British 2012 squad.

Double Dutch is played with a minimum of two spinners and one jumper, and the only equipment required is a pair of three-meter long ropes.

The ropes are rotated in alternative directions and one person jumps in, often doing tricks involving fancy footwork, gymnastics and breakdancing.

Popularised last year by the Disney film *Jump In*, Double Dutch was once part of urban street culture

in the US when competitions were often seen at block parties.

Its place in early hip-hop culture was acknowledged when Frankie Smith's *Double Dutch Bus* raced to the top of the charts in 1981 and stayed there for several weeks. Smith sang, 'The Double Dutch Bus is on the street/ You'd better get off the curb/ Move your feet.' At the time, the game was big among kids in the Philadelphia neighbourhood Smith lived in.

Although Double Dutch declined in popularity in some areas once hip-hop began to lose its urban edge, it has enjoyed a recent revival in cities like San Francisco and Seattle.

Double Dutch is thought to have been devised by ancient rope makers as a spin-off leisure activity, and passed down from generation to generation.

It was so named after being brought to the US by 17th century Dutch settlers in New Amsterdam, present day New York, and then taken up by the English.

The game became a favourite pastime down the years, with children traditionally singing rhymes while turning and jumping ropes.

In New York it was often played on street pavements. In the early 1970s, two detectives, noting that fewer of the city's children were playing it due to lack of space, decided to develop Double Dutch into a competitive team sport by setting up a league and tournament.

Six hundred youngsters took part in the first, in 1974, and today the National Double Dutch League holds yearly camps and a Holiday Classic, in which teams from all over the world compete.

Liverpool now hopes to achieve a similar feat. Said Freeman, 'We hope that, following a big take up of the sport in Liverpool, we could be ready to host the European Championships here in 2009 or 2010.'

THE WRITE STUFF



Henry Bonsu will be in the chair at the British Museum's Word From Africa

The British Museum is the venue for a one-day celebration of African literature and languages. The Word from Africa programme includes discussion on the book *Sozaboy* by executed Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, and the launch of the latest anthology of African fiction together with readings from contributors. They include Tony Adam Machoma (Kenya), Mamle Kabu (Ghana), Gitta Sumner (Sierra Leone) and Ken Kamoche (Kenya).

Prizewinning women writers Karen King-Aribisala (Guyana/Nigeria), Sade Adeniran (Nigeria) and Molar Wood (Nigeria) will read from their works, while later on in the day there will be readings from three new books of African poetry in translation.

There's also a chance to see leading African musicians and poets in performance including Madagascan singer and guitarist Modeste Hugues and Zimbabwean poets Zodwa Nyoni and Dana Chinyanga.

An African market place will have stalls of books, artifacts and textiles, while Somalian and Ghanaian storytellers will be on hand to keep the children entertained.

Broadcasters Henry Bonsu and Nkechi Ebite present and chair events throughout the day. Word from Africa has been organised in collaboration with SABLE LitMag and is supported by the British Museum and Arts Council England.

Saturday May 31, British Museum, Museum St, London WCI, 1pm-8.15; admission free.

For more information email info@sablelitmag.org

The Word from Africa is followed by a number of smaller events, including, African Writers Evening presented by Nii Ayikwei Parkes from Ghana.

Thursday, June 12, 8pm, Blue Room, Spirit Level Southbank Centre, London SE1; admission £6

Westminster Library Services with African Writers Abroad (PEN) Centre present Sulaiman Addonia reading from his debut novel, *The Consequences of Love*, about the travails of an Eritrean immigrant in Saudia Arabia.

Monday, June 30, 6.30-7.30 Victoria Library, 60 Buckingham Palace Road, Victoria, London SW1; admission free

Southbank artist in residence Lemn Sissay will be in the line up of *Talking In Tongues, Africa Beyond's* contribution to the London Literature Festival.

Sunday, July 13 at Purcell Room, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre, London SE1; 6pm, admission £7

In *Undressing Empire 2: Lost Writers*, the focus is on three influential black authors who have nevertheless largely slipped off the radar – Rudy Kizermann, Una Marson and Joan Riley. Chaired by Kadija Sesay, publisher of SABLE LitMag.

Museum in Docklands, No1 Warehouse, Thursday June 5 at 7pm. London E14; admission free

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Chow Mien reflecting the influence of indentured Chinese workers in the late 1800's

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Testomonal

We have just returned from our honeymoon and wanted to thank you for helping to make our wedding reception so special. It was perfect! We would not have changed a thing. We really appreciated your work behind the scenes with the flowers and venue. Not forgetting to mention the effort and commitment you put into making sure that the day ran smoothly. Thank you for your help and support in the run up to the event. Thank you for everything!!!

Ron & Irene Lawson
Catford London

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EXPOSING AUSTRALIA'S APARTHEID



A powerful exposé on Australia's hidden apartheid.

Taking the Australian government's controversial 2007 Northern Territory Intervention as its starting point, *This is Our Country Too* is a hard-hitting documentary into Australia's woeful treatment of its indigenous peoples, and a rare depiction of their unrelenting struggle for justice, equality and self-determination.

In June 2007, the Australian government took the

unprecedented step of repealing its race relations act to introduce the Intervention – a series of draconian, federal-backed laws designed to control the flow of alcohol and pornography into 'prescribed communities' in the Northern Territory. It was a reactionary response to endemic alcoholism and supposedly endemic child abuse in these communities, though there is little data to support the latter accusation.

Featuring interviews with prominent Aboriginal leaders Pat Turner (niece of 'Australia's Mandela', Charlie Perkins), Pat

Dodson (the spearhead of the reconciliation movement), actor/artist David Gulpilil and the Minister for Indigenous Affairs Jenny Macklin, *This is Our Country Too* once again puts the world's focus on the Indigenous peoples forgotten plight and advances the question: How will Australia reconcile with its indigenous people?

This is Our Country Too, made by independent filmmakers riceNpeas, receives its UK premiere at the Tricycle Theatre, 269 Kilburn High Road, Kilburn, London NW6 on Thursday June 19th at 7pm, followed by a Q&A attended by several special guests including Aboriginal rights campaigner Walter Shaw For more information about other screenings, please contact riceNpeas on 020 7243 919 or info@ricenpeas.com

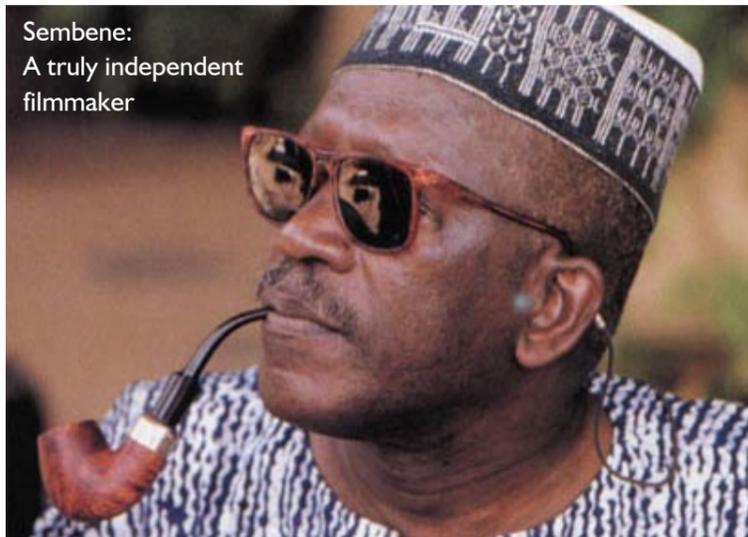
PASSING OF A MASTER

The man regarded as the father of African cinema, Ousmane Sembene, died last year at the age of 84. Korkoh Duah offers an appreciation

Docker, trade unionist, novelist and filmmaker, Ousmane Sembene was all of these during an extraordinary career that saw him crowned as the father of African cinema. For it was as a film director that Sembene was best known. With Hollywood dominating the way film tells stories, even Africa's stories, Sembene was like a breath of fresh air. He saw film as a way of championing Africa's poor and dispossessed as they struggled against the triple yokes of colonialism, tradition and corruption.

His first feature, *La Noire de...* (Black Girl), made in 1966, focuses on the plight of a woman from his native Senegal who finds work with a French family in France. Although taken on as a nanny, she finds herself reduced to general dogsbody and falls into despair. His last, *Moulaade* (2004) was equally hard hitting, dealing with female circumcision and a village woman's defiance of the brutal practice.

In between were films like *Mandabi* (The Money Order, 1968), which tells the story of a proud villager who finds himself helpless against the new political system when he tries to cash a money order; *Xala* (Impotence, 1975), a hilarious dig at post-colonial Senegal; *Camp de Thiaroye* (1987), which lifted the lid on the brutal treatment of African Second World War conscripts in the Free French Army; and *Guelwaar* (1992), a satire on religious hypocrisy.



Sembene:
A truly independent
filmmaker

The use of regional languages like Wolof and Bambara, strong female characters and a biting socialist critique of colonial and neo-colonial society are all hallmarks of his work. His output, aesthetically influenced by French new wave cinema and Russian social realism, stands in stark contrast to the Hollywood dream factory which even when it focuses on Africa tends to use it as a backdrop to individualised white characters.

'My first intent is to reach the African public. Europe and America are not my references – they are not the centre of the world,' he once said. Sembene described his films as 'evening classes' for ordinary people, which have to entertain as well as educate. 'A lot of people in the film are

speaking in their own language, expressing themselves in their own way.' In this way he took on the role of a traditional African griot, passing on his insights of the past, present and future to those whom Caribbean intellectual Aimé Césaire called 'les bouches qui n'ont pas bouches' (those mouths without a mouth).

But it was as a writer that Sembene first made his mark, starting out first as a poet in the mid-1950s before going on to produce five novels and five collections of short stories. His early literary works reflect his personal history and his own political awakening as a committed socialist.

He was born in 1923 in Casamance, southern Senegal, the son of a

fisherman. He grew up under French colonial rule, was conscripted as a teenager into the French army during the Second World War. He then worked on the Dakar Niger line and helped organise the epic rail strike that paralysed French West Africa in 1947 and 1948. This became the basis for what is regarded as his finest novel *Les Bouts de Bois de Dieu* (God's Bits of Wood, 1960).

Sembene moved to France and worked as a docker in the Mediterranean port of Marseilles. There he became an active trade unionist and a member of the French Communist Party. This experience inspired his first novel, *Le Docker Noir* (Black Docker, 1956), the story of Diaw, an African stevedore who faces racism and mistreatment.

Even as he won literary acclaim, Sembene realised to his dismay that his readership was restricted to the minority of Africans who could read, thanks to the chronic neglect of the education system. Deciding that film was a way of reaching the widest possible audience, he took a crash course in at the Gorky Studio in Moscow in the early 1960s. In 1962 he made his directorial debut with *Borom Sarret*, a short film chronicling the day in the life of a poor Dakar cart driver. But he continued to write and several of his films were based on his literary works, including *Xala* and *Le Mandat* (The Money Order).

Although winning much international acclaim, Sembene's principled stand against colonialism, corruption and hypocrisy in all its forms meant that he was bound to make enemies from many quarters. For example *Xala* was heavily censored by the Senegalese authorities while *Camp de Thiaroye* was not shown in France for ten years.

This did not deter him and he remained a truly independent filmmaker to the end of his days, producing films on shoestring budgets and without much of the technical back-up taken for granted in Hollywood. At the same time, he despaired of the lack of governmental support for the cinema. 'African leaders and politicians are not keen to develop cinema,' he said. 'They work to promote muscles through soccer or bodybuilding, or your butt from dancing! But when it comes to scientific and cultural development they don't want to touch it.'

African and Caribbean film curator June Givanni worked with Sembene over the years. She said, 'His contribution to African cinema is truly enormous. He touched on so many issues, not just the big issues like Africa's political development but those concerning the lives of ordinary people. The role of women in his films was phenomenal.'

'His passing leaves African cinema richer because of the example he set and the roots he laid down.'

OPINION: RESTITUTION NOW

Repairing the wrongs of slavery should involve the government delivering a radical package of measures both at home and abroad, argues Gus John

The late Bernie Grant MP spearheaded a campaign for slavery reparations, which did not earn him too many friends in high places. There appears to be the view that because the logistics of reparations are mind-boggling, nothing should be done, except, of course handing out grants to various black projects around the country. Frankly we should not get so deliriously happy about these sums of money that we fail to hold the British state and corporate Britain to account, even 200 years after the abolition of the slave trade.

I am more interested in what the British state and corporate Britain will do now to make restitution to those who are still being made victims daily. And that is because chattel slavery may have been abolished finally in 1838, but capitalism simply changed its clothes and relocated itself. When we became surplus to its requirements in the Caribbean, it relocated us here. Now we are increasingly surplus to its requirements here, it relegates us in



Gus John

increasingly disproportionate numbers to its prisons, young offender institutions and mental asylums.

I want to see a huge investment in leadership programmes for young African heritage men and women here in Britain to rescue them from the nightmare of gun crime, the worst schooling outcomes, an almost total absence among young entrepreneurs, an almost total absence among doctors and dentists, among scientists

and engineers, among airline pilots. I want to see our economic base extending beyond barbing, car valeting and fast food outlets, beyond pop music production and promotion.

I want to see a massive investment in the Caribbean to put an end to ignorance and illiteracy, to tackle unemployment and hopelessness among the young, to make potable water and functional sewerage systems a reality, to rescue our people from the scourge of Aids and the orgy of gun violence; to grow technical expertise; to use Caribbean countries' natural resources for sustainable development and to underpin their economies such that their populations don't see a future for their country only being a playground for tourists.

This society has denigrated the values and mores that sustained generations before them and substituted the values of individualism, greed, me, myself and I, and the bling culture. We now have

a generation that has little emotional connections with itself, a generation systematically stripped of self-worth and self-respect, whose parents are themselves products of the same system. They are typically disconnected from any knowledge or understanding of their ancestral roots and of their identity as holocaust survivors.

The more we buy into pathological explanations about the numbers of black boys who grow up without their fathers, the less empowered we are to act collectively and confront the way the system structurally damages our children.

So as part of our restitution package, let us demand that the government gives us the money to enable us to establish an academy school in each of the major cities and towns we have settled in over the last 60 years, run professional black educators and managed by a consortium of mainly black governors.

Let us develop tertiary centres of excellence for growing leaders and managers in our communities, and for rapidly increasing the 'role models' that we keep being told we don't have enough of. Let the government fund us to establish our equivalent of Moorhouse, Spellman and Howard and let us name Claudia Jones, CLR James, John La Rose...

If the government can build more prisons to contain more of our children, they can build schools and colleges for us to run and rescue our young people from guns, gangs and goads. Given the unquantifiable wealth we generated for this nation during slavery, is that too much to ask?

This is an edited extract of an article that appeared in *Emancipate Yourself...Choose Life!* published by the *Gus John Partnership*, 2007

Ruth Bundy - Research Associate Profile

Ruth Bundy is a Research Associate at Imperial College in the department of Biosurgery and Surgical Technology at St.Mary's Hospital in London. She is currently involved in several projects relating to understanding the molecular mechanisms underlying cancers of the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract and non-invasive diagnosis of cancer in exhaled breath. She helped setup the SIFT-mass spectrometer for measurement of exhaled breath of patients as part of an international consortium involving sixteen different departments across Europe, with the common goal of identifying key signature gases or pattern of gases characteristic of specific cancers. The current findings are exciting and may provide a future non-invasive tool for not only specific cancers, but other disease states. She is also in an exciting position of working closely with clinicians therefore linking the clinical aspects of cancer with possible footprints of disease in the exhaled breath, metabolites in blood, body fluids and tissue, to the molecular reactions taking place within the tissue and cells. Therefore, this large project has the potential to further understanding of the mechanisms underlying the disease and potential identification of targets for therapy. Prior to working on cancer Ruth pursued research into mechanisms underlying vascular proliferative diseases and mechanisms of inflammation associated with open heart surgery. The results of her studies have been presented in peer reviewed journals and at more than twenty international meetings.

I enjoy and value my role in Imperial College as a Research Associate in translational medicine, directing the essential link between the understanding of molecular science with the clinical disease. Within Imperial College I have encountered and worked with many talented and driven students and staff from all nationalities, class, culture and gender. Together we have embraced science as a common theme and have established lasting friendships. With the plethora of activities, workshops and lectures provided by the college, nobody should be at a loss for educational and entertainment diversity. I myself successfully competed for the 'A' team in Ballroom dancing, where Imperial College reigned top of the university league.

Through College I am currently taking part in an impressive black and minority ethnic Leadership and Management programme aimed at further developing and empowering participants to reach their unique and full potential. I have also recently joined Imperial as One, the College's race equality advisory group, which gives BME staff the opportunity to be supported in reaching their ambitions as well as socialising, learning, and networking at interesting and informative race equality events, seminars and workshops.

I am proud of my multi-cultural background of having South American/Caribbean and English heritage. This has made me value people of all nationalities and has given me a greater understanding of cultural differences, life history experiences, which affect peoples' views, beliefs and behaviours. Cultural diversity extends further to my husband who is Hungarian and to my daughter. Interestingly, this has revealed many similarities between the hospitality of Guyanese family life with that of Hungarian warmth, genuine heartiness and family-orientated nature. My genuine nature of being an includer and relator to people is also expressed outside work through church activities, where I help lead a Sunday club for teenagers. My strong Christian beliefs support, guide and empower me in my life's quest. I also owe my breadth of talents and excitement to learning to my parents and husband. They have provided me with every opportunity and inspired me to nurture creative ideas, which is advantageous in the world of science and medicine. The value of this is exemplified in my mentoring of research fellows so they too can experience the excitement of medical scientific research.



To find out more about Imperial College London go to
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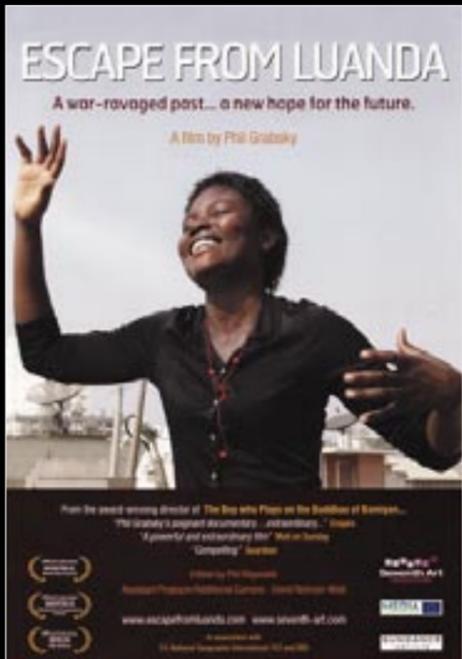


TALE OF HOPE

The award winning director Phil Grabsky documents a year in the troubled life of the Music School of Luanda, the capital of Angola, and one of the world's poorest and most dangerous places. Following three central characters, *Escape from Luanda* reveals not only their struggle with their country's war-ravaged past, but also their musical passion and ambition.

Joana yearns to establish herself as the first international female rock 'n' roll drummer in Angolan history but is distracted by worries about her two children who live her estranged partner; Alfredo spends hours practicing on the school's not so grand piano in the hope of pursuing career as a classical concert pianist despite his family regarding all musicians as 'low life'; and 42-year-old Domingas, fresh from walking out of her unhappy marriage, attempts to put herself through school and raise her five children as a single parent.

Like their classmates, they often



go without food in order to attend school and are haunted by memories of the country's 27-year long civil war. In the meantime, the school must battle with chronic lack of funding that temporarily shuts it down.

For information on screenings for *Escape From Luanda* email info@seventh-art.com or telephone +44 (0)1273 777678

IN THE FRAME

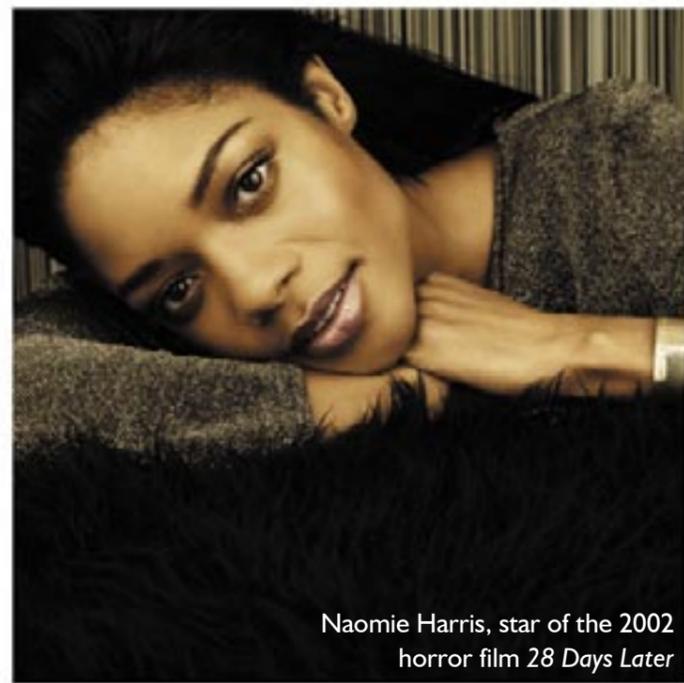
A striking new series of portraits of black British film actors by photographer Donald MacLellan takes pride of place at the National Portrait Gallery this month.

Want to see more of me? includes images of Colin Salmon, Naomie Harris, Ashley Walters, Mona Hammond, Sophie Okonedo and Chiwetel Ejiofor.

MacLellan, an established portrait photographer whose work has appeared regularly in national and international magazines over the past 15 years, said, 'I did a number of test shots which helped me determine the look of the series and I knew I wanted a good cross section of well established actors, new comers and those who are in the later stages of their career.'

The exhibition has been funded by the UK Film Council as part of its drive to ensure people from all backgrounds cathe film industry.

John Woodward, the UK Film Council's chief executive, said, 'We think that celebrating some of the UK's most successful black actors is a brilliant reminder of what is possible.'



Naomie Harris, star of the 2002 horror film *28 Days Later*

Pic credit: Naomie Harris by Donald MacLellan, 2007 © Donald MacLellan

Meanwhile, there's an opportunity to see portraits of 30 black British actors via a dramatic plasma screen installation as part of the the National Portrait Gallery's participation in the *UNDEREXPOSED* arts programme. The photographs by Franklyn Rogers include the veteran actor Rudolph Walker and *EastEnders* star Angela Wynter.

Want to see more of me? runs at the National Portrait Gallery until September 7. Room 38a. Free admission

UNDEREXPOSED: Photographs by Franklyn Rodgers runs at the National Portrait Gallery until June 8 in the Ondaatje Wing Main Hall. Free admission

OUT OF MANY WE ARE **ONE** SAVE A LIFE IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

If you are from the Black & Minority Ethnic community by joining the Anthony Nolan Register and donating bone marrow, you could save the life of someone in your community.

To join the Anthony Nolan Register you need to be between 18-40, in good health, weigh over 8 stone and willing to help anyone anonymously. **We need people like you!**

Illnesses that require a bone marrow transplant are not inherited.

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DONNA BENJAMIN

'In October 2004 I was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. The doctors told me that the only cure for this type of cancer is a bone marrow transplant. Most people find a bone marrow match from within the same ethnic community – I'm black and there simply aren't enough black people on the register.

I was on dialysis for two months and then almost immediately went into chemo for six months. I lost my hair but I expected that and they told me it would grow back – when you know what to expect it makes it easier.

I started campaigning to get people to join the Anthony Nolan bone marrow register and made a documentary for Channel 4 with London DJ, Brian Daley (DJ Swing). Brian and I were the same age and were diagnosed at the same time – the documentary followed us through our treatment.

After chemo I went into remission, but the cancer wasn't altogether eradicated. I went back to work for a while but in October 2005 the hospital offered me an autologous transplant – where they take some of my bone marrow, clean it up and then put it back in. I was in hospital for almost three months.

Autologous transplants work for a while but the cancer cells do come back. I'm now in slow relapse: there's no question that if I don't find a donor I will die. Since we made the documentary together, Brian has sadly died; it could be me tomorrow.

It's not difficult or particularly painful being a donor but you're giving the gift of life. I know my donor will be someone from the black community – we need to help ourselves, it's only us that can do it for each other – step up and do something about it! One day it could be your wife or your son, your mother or your best friend.

For details about how you can join the Anthony Nolan bone marrow register visit www.anthonolan.org.uk

Funding opportunity

The Young People's Fund 2 local grants programme is now open. The programme will make available £38m to support projects lead by young people across England.

The aim of the programme is to ensure that organisations that provide young people's services involve young people in the development, running and review of their policies and services. Projects funded must also help young people to achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

The local grants programme will give young people the opportunity to lead on developing services and activities in their local areas, helping them to change their lives and those of other young people by improving the delivery of services.

The programme focuses on young people aged 10-18. Projects working with young people up to the age of 25 that are finding the change to independent living difficult will be supported.

The programme is open to voluntary and community sector organisations to apply. Grants of between £10,000 and £500,000 will be awarded to projects and will be available for up to five years.

Organisations that wish to apply to the fund need to fill in an outline proposal and send this to the Big Lottery by 16 October 2008. If the project meets the aims of the Young People Fund 2 then the organisation will be sent an application form to be returned to the Big Lottery by 2 February 2009.

For further information and to apply visit:

www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/ypf2local

WIN TICKETS FOR: ENGLAND VS SOUTH AFRICA

We have 2 tickets for the 1st day of the 3rd npower Test between England and South Africa at: Edgbaston on the 30th July 2008 plus 6 runners up prizes of a bottle of Cockspur Rum. Simply send us a postcard with your name, address, email address, Date of Birth and answer to: BH365, Smart Publishing, Marlborough House, 159 High Street, Wealdstone, HA3 5DX for a chance to win a pair of tickets. All answers must reach us by 1st July 2008. The competition is only open to over 18's

COMPETITION QUESTION:

Which National Cricket Squad is Touring England this summer between July 10th and Sept 3rd, playing a 4 Test Series, a 20/20 match and 4 ODI's

a. SOUTH AFRICA, b. INDIA, c. AUSTRALIA

* Proof of age may be required when the prize winners are contacted.



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Strawberry Daiquiri

45ml **Cockspur Rum**
15ml strawberry liquor
15ml lime juice
6 strawberries
crushed ice
extra strawberry for garnish
Place all ingredients into a blender and mix well



Cockspur Bajan Sunset

50ml **Cockspur Rum**
50ml cranberry juice
50ml orange juice
Serve over ice and garnish with a slice of lime or orange



Cockpit

50ml **Cockspur Rum**
50ml pineapple juice
50ml orange juice
½ lime juice
Shake with ice, strain into glass, garnish with lime or orange



Red Rooster

25ml **Cockspur Rum**
25ml maraschino cherry juice
25ml tonic
Pour over ice, garnish with cherry



The Bridgetown

25ml **Cockspur Rum**
50ml sweet vermouth
25ml cherry juice
Shake with ice. Serve in cocktail glass with cherry



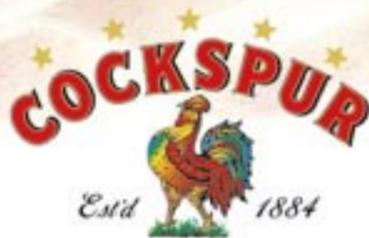
The Cockspur Cocky

25ml **Cockspur Rum**
25ml brandy or cognac
25ml triple sec
Pour over ice and top off with sour mix



Zombie

80ml **Cockspur Rum**
15ml apricot brandy
15ml cherry brandy
60ml orange juice
15ml lime juice
Fresh fruit to garnish
Place all ingredients into a shaker, shake well and strain into glass



ALWAYS DRINK COCKSPUR RUM RESPONSIBLY

TRAIN TO TEACH

Not sure how you're going to fund a move into teaching? A range of incentives and financial support schemes are available both during and after your training. Visit www.teach.gov.uk/funding for full details and eligibility criteria.

What funding can I get?

Eligible postgraduate trainee teachers are entitled to a tax-free bursary of £4,000 to £9,000. The value of the bursary depends on the subject and phase you train to teach and when you start your course.

Will I get a golden hello?

When you have successfully completed your initial teacher training (ITT) course and accepted a newly qualified teacher (NQT) position, you may be eligible for a one-off taxable golden hello payment of between £2,500 and £5,000. The value of the golden hello is dependent on the subject you train in and go on to teach.

What will my starting salary be?

Newly qualified teachers start on a minimum annual salary of £20,133 (£24,168 in inner London). This figure is set to rise from September 2008.

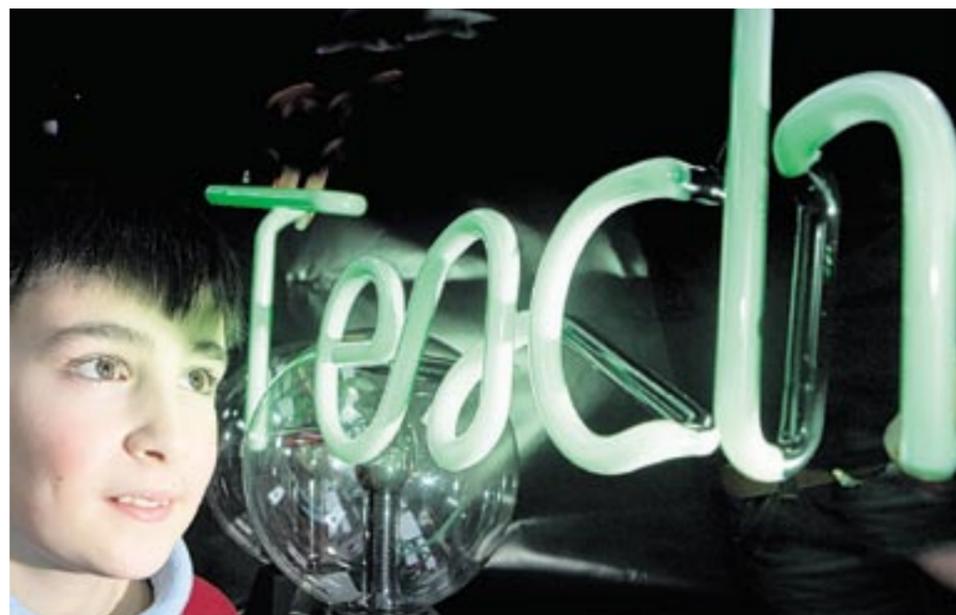
What are the opportunities for pay rises and promotions?

'Teachers can progress very systematically now,' says TDA chief executive Graham Holley. 'And the pay is really quite competitive.' The average pay across the country for the classroom teacher is £36,000; head teachers at big secondary schools can earn more than £100,000 a year. But you don't have to leave what you do, which is teach a class, to earn more. Now you can become an Advanced Skills Teacher and, because you're excellent at what you do, part of that is helping other teachers become as good as you are.

Are there opportunities for further training?

'Teachers now have an entitlement to training on the job,' Holley says. 'So that, for any concerns, from managing a class to developing any given subject knowledge, they're entitled to the development that helps them to grow and improve as teachers.'

For more information on teaching or teacher training, call the Teaching Information Line on 0845 6000 991.



GLOSSARY

The teaching world abounds with abbreviations. Here are some of the more important ones you will need to get to grips with:

AST: Advanced Skills Teacher
 D&T: Design and Technology
 GTP: Graduate Teacher Programme
 ICT: Information and Communication Technology
 ITT: Initial Teacher Training

NQT: Newly Qualified Teacher
 OSP: Open schools programme
 PGCE: Post-graduate Certificate in Education
 QTS: Qualified Teacher Status
 RTP: Registered Teacher Programme
 SCITT: School-Centred Initial Teacher Training
 TTT: Train To Teach

See www.teach.gov.uk for more definitions.

GRAHAM HOLLEY



Chief executive of the Training and Development Agency for Schools, talks about how teaching has transformed to meet modern education needs

Has the perception of teaching as a career changed?

As a career, teaching isn't an occupation any longer. It's a challenging, stimulating and rewarding profession. Ofsted say that teachers coming into the profession now are the best ever because they've been so well trained. Partly because of that, research shows we've gained the esteem of the public and that teachers think more highly of themselves in comparison with other professions. The days of the teacher who stood at the front of the class and just administered learning is over.

What are the differences between teaching in the past and teaching today?

In the past, teachers tended to teach what they themselves were interested in. Nowadays, the national curriculum and the style of training means teachers know how to teach young people not only what they need to know but what they want to know and in a way that they can use that information not only to gain future employment but in life, generally. The focus is very much on the child.

How have approaches to teaching changed?

In the past, some teachers considered some of their students un-teachable. I don't accept that. I believe it's simply a question of finding the right way. Teachers are now given many different approaches so that no child is left behind.

What kind of support can teachers expect?

Teachers today work as part of a team. The numbers of support staff have doubled over the last ten years. They're in every school now and they're part of a multi-professional team with the child as the central focus.

Are better salaries attracting more people into teaching?

Lots of people from jobs such as accountancy or finance are becoming teachers because they feel they want to try something more personally rewarding and challenging. In fact, our NQT of the Year, who won at the Teaching Awards in London a couple of months ago, gave up a salary of around £150,000 a year to become a teacher. We know from research that, while it helps that the salary is now competitive – in that it doesn't really prove to be a barrier any longer – the main attraction, however, is the opportunity to shape young minds. One of our advertisements talks about 'working with the finest raw materials in the world'. People can indulge their passion for their subject, certainly at secondary level. If they really love science for example, they can find really creative ways to convey their passion to other people.

Find out more about teaching by visiting www.teach.gov.uk



www.beds.ac.uk

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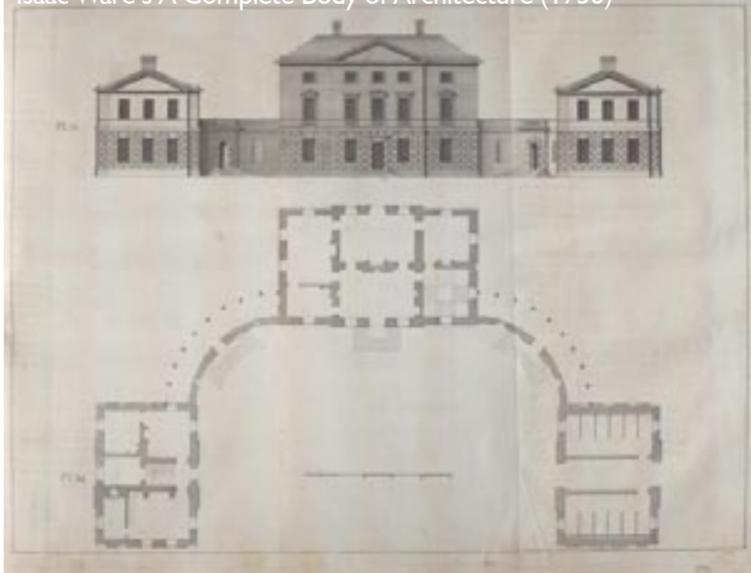
or contact us on:

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admissions@beds.ac.uk

HOUSES THAT SLAVERY BUILT

Social historian *Frances Wilkins* reveals Scotland's little known links with slavery by focusing on the plantocracy of Dumfries and Galloway

Plan and elevation of a house built for Alexander Johnston, from Isaac Ware's *A Complete Body of Architecture* (1756)



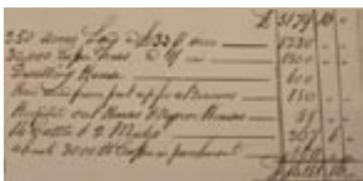
Dumfries and Galloway, a region in the southwest corner of Scotland with strong maritime links with the Irish Sea and beyond, had extensive involvement in what was known as the 'Americas trade'.

One of its main towns, Castle Douglas, was built by Sir William Douglas of Gelston, in the late 18th century. The Douglasses made their money in the Americas, owning several plantations, as well as a store in Savannah, Georgia, which supplied them with goods

Another merchant, John Graham, named a settlement in Virginia after his hometown, Dumfries, building it on 60 acres of the Graham Park sugar plantation in 1749. Another Dumfries sprang up in the tiny island of Carriacou in the Grenadines. Founded in the 1770s by William Tod as a sugar and coffee estate, it is now a village with remnants of its plantation past all around it. Tod's other plantation, Laurieston, ran alongside it and now lies underneath the island's airport. Graham died in Virginia but Tod returned home. Research continues into the links between Tod and Laurieston Hall near Castle Douglas.

In his *History of Jamaica* (1774), Edward Long wrote that people from Scotland went to the 'island less in quest of fame, than of fortunes; and such is their industry and address, that few of them have been disappointed in their aim.' One of them was James Stothert who owned the Dundee sugar plantation in the island's Trelawney parish, and several divisions of land at Montego Bay.

The land was sold in the 1790s to cover losses due to incompetent management



Extract from the Granton Plantation inventory, from Dumfries Archives Centre

of the plantation after it was left in the hands of successive overseers. On his return home, Stothert purchased Cargen, a large estate just outside Dumfries. Despite major rebuilding, his wife yearned for a house at Edinburgh and one was built in Castle Street costing more than £1,000.

In 1754 John Murray went to South Carolina as Secretary of the Province. He lived in Charles Town with his brother William and cousin John. In 1757 the brothers purchased a plantation 'situated on a noble navigable river' only 10 miles from Port Royal. They employed two carpenters who had arrived on a boat from Leith in Scotland to build their house.

Both brothers had ambitions to build properties back home too. William purchased land while John decided to rebuild the family house of Murraythwaite, near Dumfries. Robert Irvine drafted the plan in 1767 and the house was built by the mason Robert Scott, possibly for £500.

The Dumfriesshire man, Alexander Johnston owned the Granton coffee plantation in Grenada. It is possible that this estate gave its name to Granton House, near Moffat. Another Alexander Johnston made his fortune from the slave trade in London. He purchased Carnsalloch House near Dumfries, which was rebuilt between 1754 and 1759, based on a plan provided by the English architect Isaac Ware.

Frances Wilkins won the most Outstanding Contribution to Black Heritage in Scotland award, 2007, for her exhibition **Dumfries and Galloway and the Transatlantic Slave Trade**. A book of the same name was published to support the exhibition. *Frances Wilkins'* other publications include **Manx Slave Traders and Bittersweet: A Story of Four Jamaican Sugar Plantations**, both published by Wyre Forest Press

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Joan Jones, 38, taught in FE for seven years before moving to Bournemouth to start a GTP programme with Dorset TEP. She has a degree in Electronic Engineering, is both a qualified Cisco Instructor and a CAG Electronic Engineer and has been known to fix washing machines as well!

Joan wanted to be a school teacher because she could make a difference and become a role model for the younger generation. When I first started teaching, she says, I had no idea that I would enjoy it so much. Teaching young adults in FE was a good experience and there I encountered a student who had a big impact on my feelings towards teaching. As an under-achiever he was about to give up college but I managed to help complete his studies, retake his self-esteem and go on to gain a Computer Engineering degree. Later he thanked me for encouraging him to see things through.

The satisfaction I gained from that experience made me decide that I wanted to help younger students feel good about themselves and to raise their self-esteem before they get to college. Young students need to see how important education is and show their teachers that they aren't all monsters with horns growing out of their heads. I believe that every one has the potential to shine, it just takes someone to believe in them, motivate and encourage them.

I chose a school-based training route because I think it will give me an excellent foundation for secondary teaching, and because I am already settled in the school where I have enjoyed working as an unqualified ICT teacher for the last year. The atmosphere in the school is great, I have a good working relationship with the students and staff and it seems right to do my QTS training here. The GTP route is also an attractive route for me because I have a family to support, and I need to be employed and receive a salary.

As to Bournemouth, I have always loved the sea. Living in Bournemouth gives me the best of both worlds - training as a teacher and enjoying beach life. Joan Jones, GTP Trainee at Oakmead Technology College, Bournemouth. Jan 2008

Contact:

Bournemouth and East Dorset SCITT (Early Years)
www.bedsctt.org.uk

Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset East SCITT (Secondary maths, science, D&T and MFL)
sheila.ryan@twynham.dorset.sch.uk

Dorset Teacher Education Partnership (GTP, RTP, OTTP all ages/subjects)
www.dorsetforyou.com/gtp

Dorset Teacher Training Partnership SCITT (Primary)
jmosborne@thomas-hardye.dorset.sch.uk



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*The Boredom Index", Training and Development Agency

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Courses email:
pgce.enquiries@ioe.ac.uk
 Fees and funding email:
pgce.funding@ioe.ac.uk

EXHIBITION

When you think of the Black family what do you see?

Often, when we look at images – portraits, sketches or photographs – we can read from them visual representations of ourselves and confirmation of our ideas of others. These ideas, however, do not always reflect accurate accounts of the Black family experience.

In this exhibition, the depiction chosen reflects 'people of colour' – those of African and Asian heritage. Understanding of the Black family has often been constrained by a lack of acknowledgement about the diverse origins, histories and traditions of people of colour; and of how Black communities have adapted and survived in new environments, and their contributions made to society as a whole.

This collection of family pictures has been chosen to challenge old perceptions about what families are and our ideas about family relationships. You cannot always tell from the viewing alone just which family relationships are being represented, or where in the world people are from. The captions could show you some lovely surprises.

The collection shows the rich diversity of the Black family experience, and the importance of tradition – in the sacred relationships between older and younger members of the family, and the continuity of the family's place in the community, in the familiar ways that have been passed down by the ancestors.

This exhibition tells interwoven stories of families with roots in diverse parts of the world; of movement and migration; and of the determination to maintain family links and traditions.

FOR HIRE

The **Imaging the Black Family** exhibition can be hired from Healing Image – please phone or email for further details.

0208 465 0027 – healingimage@ukonline.co.uk
 View exhibition panels at www.healingimage.com/ibf

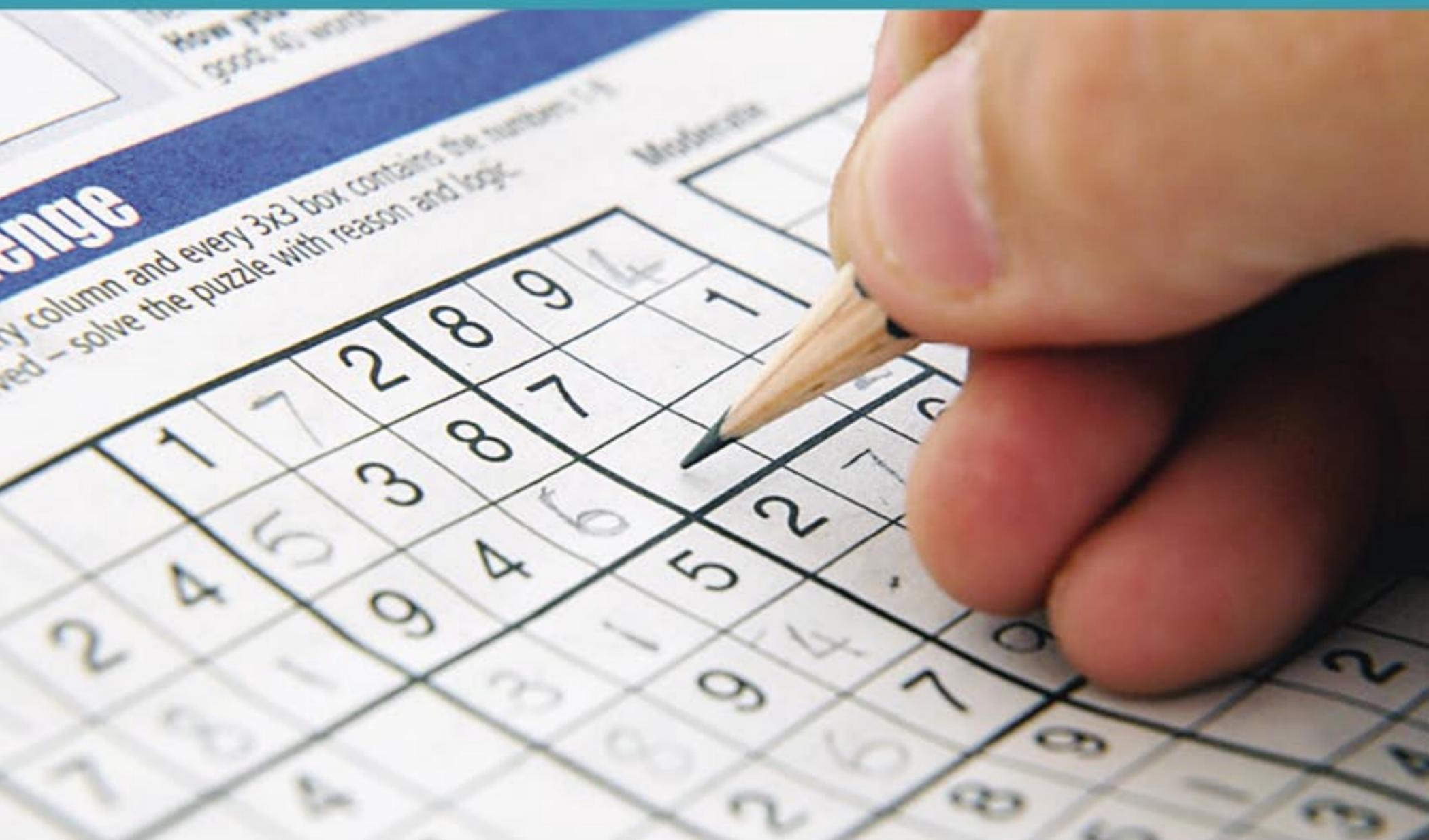




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