

BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH

Black History Month 2022
Booklet produced by
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Introduction

This booklet has been composed and put together by Doreen Davies, who researched various sources of information, for you to recognise roles and values of our Black Community, of a journey that is never ending.

It is a strong foundation that should empower our next generation. There have been many struggles, even today, which must not prevent our relevance in life.

It is hoped that this small booklet will build from year to year, for those wishing to add to this volume. We have left space below for you to write your struggles, your history, of which one day you may share:

The Origins of Black History Month

Black History Month was established in the United States of America by the Harvard educated African American scholar Dr Carter G Woodson. In the US, February has been recognised as black history month since 1926. It was thought that such a month was necessary in an effort to celebrate and acknowledge the achievements of African Americans in keeping alive their heritage, traditions and histories.

The Father of Black History Month, Carter G. Woodson, was born in 1875 near New Canton VA. He was the son of former slaves. In 1907, he obtained his B.A. degree from the University of Chicago. In 1912, he received his Ph.D. from Harvard University.

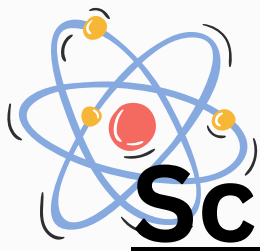
In 1915, he and friends established the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. A year later, the Journal of Negro History, began quarterly publication. In 1926, Woodson proposed and launched the annual February observance of Negro History Week, which became Black History Month in 1976. It is said that he chose February for the observance because February 12th was Abraham Lincoln's birthday and February 14th was the accepted birthday of Frederick Douglass.

Dr. Woodson was the founder of Associated Publishers, the founder and editor of the Negro History Bulletin, and the author of more than 30 books. His best known publication is *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, originally published in 1933 and still pertinent today. He died in 1950, but Dr. Woodson's scholarly legacy goes on.

Black History Month In England

In England, Black History Month is celebrated in the month of October. It was first celebrated in 1987. The introduction of Black History Month was facilitated by the former Greater London Council. The Council had selected October because the month coincided with the Marcus Garvey celebrations and London Jubilee. The first Black History Month celebrations formed part of the African Jubilee celebrations organised by the London's Race Equality Unit. From the London boroughs the interest in black history month soon spread to other cities like Bristol, Leeds, Manchester Nottingham and Birmingham.

In the UK, Black History Month has been used to highlight the histories and contributions of the 'Black' communities. There has been some debate as to whether or not Black History Month should be exclusive to those from the African Caribbean communities. However, in the UK, Black History Month celebrations have remained inclusive to all Black minority ethnic communities. Therefore the word 'black' is used in the generic sense.



Science and Technology



Dr. Patricia Bath (1942–)



Bath's laser tool has helped restore or improve vision in patients worldwide

Background: Born in Harlem, N.Y., Bath developed an interest in science early in her life. She attended medical school at Howard University and completed a fellowship in ophthalmology at Columbia University.

Invention: In 1981, Bath invented the surgical tool that made her famous: the Laserphaco Probe, which she continued to perfect and later patented in 1988. The tool was used during eye surgery to correct cataracts, an eye condition that clouds vision and can lead to blindness. Cataracts usually affect older people. Bath's laser tool was more precise, less invasive, and less risky than previous devices, and has been used around the world.

Did You Know? Bath claims many "firsts": She was the first African American to complete a residency in ophthalmology; the first woman to chair an ophthalmology residency program in the United States; and the first African American female doctor to secure a medical patent. She also co-founded the American Institute for the Prevention of Blindness.

Lydia O'Newman (1753 – 1853)



African American, Lydia Newman of New York, New York patented a new and improved hair brush on November 15, 1898. Lydia Newman designed a brush that was easy to keep clean, very durable and easy to make, and provided ventilation during brushing by having recessed air chambers.

Little is known of Lyida Newman's life, she was living in Manhattan when her patent was granted. Some historians claim Newman invented the first hair brush with synthetic bristles, however, nothing in her patent indicates that was true.

Winifred Scott (1917-2009)



One of Britain's First Qualified Black Nurses

Picture this: a baby born in London's Docklands, mother English, father Jamaican. Nothing unusual in that – except Winifred Scott came into the world almost 100 years ago, spending her infancy in the shadow of the Tate & Lyle factory in Silvertown in the East End before being placed into care.

Spirited and self-possessed, she became one of Britain's first qualified black nurses, married a political activist and counted Paul Robeson among regular guests at her Hampstead home.

“My mother was one of those unsung heroines, an extraordinary woman, whose life offers an insight into a little-known era of Black Britain,” says her daughter Penny Klees, who is researching the family history.

“She experienced a lot of prejudice and hardship, but rather than let it get her down it made her more determined to get on.”

Born in 1917, when the sight of a black person on the streets of London would have excited a range of reactions, from curiosity to hostility, Winifred seems to have inherited her gutsy determination from her mother, Isabella, who defied convention by marrying Charles Scott, a merchant seaman from Jamaica.

But Charles returned to the Caribbean, leaving his wife to bring up their baby alone.

Deepika Kurup (1998-)



Deepika Kurup was a 17-year-old teenager when she was awarded for her work in developing a new and inexpensive method to clean water using solar powered water purification system – photocatalytic composites - providing clean fresh water worldwide.



Culture and The Arts



Claudia Smith

(15 February 1915–24 December 1964) founder of the Nottinghill Carnival



Claudia Jones was born in Belmont, Port of Spain, Trinidad on. Claudia went on to become a Trinidadian journalist, political activist and black nationalist through Communism. Jones believed that "people without a voice were as lambs to the slaughter." Therefore, in 1958 above a Barber's shop in Brixton, she founded and thereafter edited the anti-imperialist, anti-racist paper, The West Indian Gazette And Afro-Asian Caribbean News (WIG). Jones's most well-known lasting contribution in the UK is considered to be the Notting Hill Carnival. Four months after launching WIG, racial riots broke out in Nottinghill, London and Robin Hood Chase, Nottingham; followed a few months later by the murder of young West Indian carpenter Kelso Cochrane by six white youths in a racially motivated attack.

As a result, Jones identified the need to "wash the taste of Notting Hill and Nottingham out of our mouths". It was suggested that the British black community should have a carnival; it was December 1958, so the next question was: "In the winter?" claudia used her connections to gain use of St Pancras town hall in January 1959 for the first Mardi-Gras-based carnival, which headlined the Boscoe Holder Dance Troupe, jazz guitarist Fitzroy Coleman and singer Cleo Laine;^[2] and was televised nationally by the BBC. These early celebrations were epitomised by the slogan "A people's art is the genesis of their freedom". Funds raised from the event were used to pay the court fees and fines of convicted young black men.

Maya Angelou
(4th April 1928 – 28 May 2014)



Born Marguerite Ann Johnson on April 4, 1928 now known as Maya Angelou she is an American author and poet. She has been called "America's most visible black female auto biographer" .

Maya Angelou is best known for her series of six autobiographical volumes, which focus on her childhood and early adult experiences.

The first and most highly acclaimed, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969), tells of her first seventeen years. It brought her international recognition, and was nominated for a National Book Award.

She has been awarded over 30 honorary degrees and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for her 1971 volume of poetry, 'Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'Fore I Diie'.

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Some Examples of Maya Angelou Poems

Madam C. J. Walker

(23 December 1867 – 25 May 1919)



Madam C. J. Walker tells her own story: “I am a woman who came from the cotton fields of the South. From there I was promoted to the washtub. From there I was promoted to the cook kitchen. And from there I promoted myself into the business of manufacturing hair goods and preparation... I have built my own factory on my own ground.”

Madam C. J. Walker was born on a Louisiana plantation in 1867 as Sarah Breedlove. Her parents, former slaves, died when she was seven. After several years of farm labour, she married; when her husband died, she moved to St. Louis, to join four brothers who worked as barbers. After marrying Charles Joseph Walker—and taking the name Madam C. J. Walker—she developed and began marketing a hair product that gave African American women’s hair shine and lustre. Marketing her product by traveling across the South to sell it door-to-door, she saw success. She built a factory in Indianapolis to manufacture her products and hired hundreds of black women as “Walker agents” to sell her wares across the country. Later she expanded the sales effort to other countries. Walker was not just a successful businesswoman but also active with philanthropies and political causes. She joined the anti-lynching campaign that was active in the early 1900s and took part in a delegation of African American leaders who went to the White House in 1917 asking for a federal law banning lynching. Her daughter, who carried on the business after her death in 1919, also continued her mother’s interest in cultural affairs: her home became a gathering place for African American writers during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s.



Politics and Civil Rights

Rosa Louise McCauley Parks

(February 4, 1913 – October 24, 2005)



Rosa Parks was an African-American civil rights activist, whom the U.S. Congress called "the first lady of civil rights", and "the mother of the freedom movement"

On December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, Parks refused to obey bus driver James F. Blake's order that she give up her seat in the coloured section to a white passenger, after the white section was filled. Parks was not the first person to resist bus segregation. Others had taken similar steps in the twentieth century, including Irene Morgan in 1946, Sarah Louise Keys in 1955, and Claudette Colvin nine months before Parks. NAACP organizers believed that Parks was the best candidate for seeing through a court challenge after her arrest for civil disobedience.

Parks' act of defiance and the Montgomery Bus Boycott became important symbols of the modern Civil Rights Movement. She became an international icon of resistance to racial segregation. She organized and collaborated with civil rights leaders, including Edgar Nixon, president of the local chapter of the NAACP; and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a new minister in town who gained national prominence in the civil rights movement.

Baroness Amos

(1954-)



Baroness Valerie Amos of Brondesbury was appointed a Labour life peer in 1997 and was the first black woman to serve as a Minister in the British cabinet and in the House of Lords. She has consistently sustained an interest in, and a commitment to, development issues, and to equality and human rights. Valerie was an adviser to the Mandela Government on leadership and change management issues and was Chief Executive of the Equal Opportunities Commission between 1989 and 1994. She has also held high office as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office between 2001 and 2003 and also held the office of Secretary of State for International Development in 2003. After a further period in the Lords as spokesperson for the Northern Ireland Office she became Leader of the House of Lords and Lord President of the Council between 2003 and 2007.

Valerie served as UK High Commissioner to Australia before joining the UN in 2010 as Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Her work in the voluntary and charity sector and in other non-governmental organisations has gone hand in hand with her policy and political work. Valerie has served as a Trustee for Voluntary Service Overseas, the Windsor Leadership Trust, Project Hope, and the Institute for Public Policy Research. She has also served as Deputy Chair of the Runnymede Trust.

In 2015 Valerie became the ninth Director of SOAS

Diane Abbott

(1953-)



Diane Julie Abbott (born 27 September 1953) is a British Labour Party politician who has been the Member of Parliament (MP) for Hackney North and Stoke Newington since 1987, when she became the first black woman to be elected to the House of Commons

Abbott's career in politics began in 1982 when she was elected to Westminster City Council serving until 1986. In 1987 she was elected to the House of Commons, replacing the deselected serving Labour MP Ernest Roberts as MP for Hackney North & Stoke Newington. Along with Keith Vaz, Bernie Grant and Paul Boateng she became part of the first black and Asian intake in Parliament for almost 100 years.

Abbott's speech on civil liberties, in the debate on the Counter-Terrorism Bill 2008 won The Spectator magazine's 'Parliamentary Speech of the Year' award and further recognition at the 2008 Human Rights awards.

Abbott has served on a number of parliamentary committees on social and international issues. For most of the 1990s she also served on the Treasury Select Committee of the House of Commons. She went on to serve on the Foreign Affairs Select Committee.

Abbott chairs the All Party Parliamentary British-Caribbean Group and the All Party Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Group.

Still I Rise

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may tread me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.
Weakened by my soulful cries.

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own back yard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds

At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise

I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

Phenomenal Women

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.
I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size
But when I start to tell them,
They think I'm telling lies.
I say,
It's in the reach of my arms,
The span of my hips,
The stride of my step,
The curl of my lips.
I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

I walk into a room
Just as cool as you please,
And to a man,
The fellows stand or
Fall down on their knees.
Then they swarm around me,
A hive of honey bees.

I say,
It's the fire in my eyes,
And the flash of my teeth,
The swing in my waist,
And the joy in my feet.

I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Men themselves have wondered
What they see in me.

They try so much
But they can't touch
My inner mystery.
When I try to show them,
They say they still can't see.

I say,
It's in the arch of my back,
The sun of my smile,
The ride of my breasts,
The grace of my style.

I'm a woman
Phenomenally.

Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Now you understand
Just why my head's not bowed.
I don't shout or jump about
Or have to talk real loud.
When you see me passing,
It ought to make you proud.

I say,
It's in the click of my heels,
The bend of my hair,
The palm of my hand,
The need for my care.
'Cause I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.