

A CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY



50 years ago this article would have been written it but might not have been published. Half a century ago it would have been unconceivable to celebrate the struggles, the hardships and the amazing achievements of black people across the world. Today Black History Month is celebrated in the month of October and reminds us that we should honour the history of the black community. However Black History should be celebrated all year round, as it is absolutely important to recognise the history of those around us. Most people look at the month of October as to a time to solely highlight the positive contributions made by black people but we shouldn't forget that it is also a time to acknowledge the journey that black people have made.

The Transatlantic Slave Trade

As young people we often hear about the transatlantic slave trade but how many of us actually understand what it was about. I know I didn't until I started to research this article. The transatlantic slave trade formed a triangle and it explains the movements of Africans into this country. It all started in Liverpool where white men would transport textiles and firearms in big ships to West Africa in exchange for captured black people. The captured people would be so squashed on the ships that some would even die before making it to the next port of call, America. For those that made it to America they would be sold off into to slavery to white families. The ships would then return to Liverpool with its many riches of sugar, coffee, cocoa, cotton and tobacco.

So how would you feel if you were sold for coffee?

Thankfully this form of trading was abolished 200 years ago; however the struggles that black people endured then is still a major part of our society. That big mansion that one of your wealthy ancestors owned was made through slavery. The inequality in the distribution of wealth is still very much a part of this society. However black people are starting to rise above what was once there faith and become strong contributors to the place that once oppressed them. Some people may say that black young people don't have enough role models to look up to, but my journey has highlighted otherwise. There are positive role models that appear on the TV such as Oprah Winfrey, Sir Trevor MacDonald, and Lenney Henry , but there are many more that we still need to recognise.

DIANE ABBOTT IRA AIDRIDGE DOUNNE AL
BARONESS VALERIE AMOS VIV ANDERSON
JOAN ARMATRADING JOHN ARCHER FRA
DAME JOCELYN BARROW JOHN BARNES C
DAME SHIRLEY BASSEY BRENDON BATSO
FLOELLA BENJAMIN PATRICK BERRY NIG
CHRIS EUBANKS PAUL BOATENG NANA BO
OSWALD BOATENG LEN GARRISON MIKE F
GABRIELLE NAOMI CAMPBELL BERNIE GR
JEREMY GUSCOTT CHRIS OFILI LENNY HE
ELLERY HANLEY PETER HERBERT PAUL IN
PAUL MCGRATH BARONESS ROS HOWELL
COLIN JACKSON LINTON KWESI JOHNSON
LEE JASPER CLAUDIA JONES JANET KAY
CARROLL THOMPSON KANYA KING
AL HAMILTON GEORGE BRIDGETOWER
OONA KING JENNETTE ARNOLD
ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING
ERROL BROWN DAVID CHASE
YVONNE BREWSTER OBE
FRANK BRUNO
JOHN CONTEH



LAW
LENN
MACDO
SIR BILL M
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PHILIPS COURTNEY PINE
TESSA SANDERSON SEAL IC

Positive roles models are breaking the chains everyday

One of these inspiring individuals is Viv Anderson who was the first black footballer to represent England. He pushed through all of the racist comments to fulfil his goal as an international footballer and his first game as part of the England team was against Czechoslovakia in 1978 with England winning 1 – 0. Viv won the European cup in 1979 and the European Super Cup in 1980. He played for Arsenal and Manchester United among others throughout his long career.

Another more obscure, yet still extraordinary woman was Floella Benjamin, an author, actress and political figure. However Floella is best known as a television presenter on the BBC's pre-school children's programme 'Play School', alongside her co-stars Humpty Dumpty, Jemima and Little Ted. She was born in Trinidad and immigrated to the UK as a child in the early 1960's, where her family settled in the South London suburbs of Beckenham. Also with the dream of becoming the first ever black woman to be a bank manager, Floella passed part one of her banking diploma, but her strong passion for acting won her over.