

KREC NEWSLETTER

Kingston Racial Equality Council

KREC CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

October 2003 will mark the biggest and best Black History Month in Kingston so far. Dozens of events have been organised and there is something for almost every day of the month. In this month's edition of KREC Newsletter we highlight some of the events we are organising. But first we would like to introduce BHM to those of you who do not know much about it.

The concept of Black History Month came from the USA. Carter H Woodson, a Black historian, created a week for people of African ancestry to celebrate themselves and their achievements to supplement the formal curriculum in which Black contribution and achievement was totally ignored.

The event has since travelled the Atlantic and arrived on our shores. In Britain Black History Month is held in October and has become as diverse in its celebrations as the ethnic population of the UK. So, as well as enjoying the achievements of people of African origin it also includes people from the Indian Subcontinent, the Far East, and traditional European and British customs. Since BHM

started in 1987 it has grown from strength to strength and now events to commemorate the event can be found taking place across the country.

BHM provides us with the opportunity to look back at contributions Black and Minority Ethnic people have made to Britain. It also recognises that we were here before Windrush.

Archaeologists have found evidence of African presence dating back to Roman times. There was also an African Roman Emperor battling for territory in 200AD. During the European Dark Ages, the Enlightened Moors from North Africa travelled across their Empire in the Mediterranean to Britain and their life here has been evidenced by documents from the courts of King James IV of Scotland.

Cities such as London, Liverpool and Bristol had large Black communities during the period of the slave trade. Many Black people came with slavers or their masters from the colonies to work as slaves or servants in Britain. One such person was Cesar Picton (see p3). Others escaped and Black people lived along-

side their white counterparts.

There has always been an Asian presence in Britain. Many sailors and traders came to Britain and a few settled. Indian scholars came to study at the universities during the nineteenth century.

Events taking place in Kingston are listed at the back of this issue. In London there are some brilliant events being organised by Greater London Assembly and the V & A Museum. These include talks by the relatives of some of the greatest Black leaders of the 20th century, including Malcolm X's daughter and Marcus Garvey's son. The V & A is hosting a variety of exhibitions, talks and workshops which are open to all.

Events give everyone the opportunity to learn about cultures and histories that are often sidelined in the Britain because they are a minority. We look forward to the day that Black History is part of the national curriculum and presented as integral to British history. After all Britain would not be the country it is today without the contribution of people of colour.



Issue 2

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Olaudah Equiano

Captured in Africa and taken to work as a slave in the West Indies. Olaudah became a freeman and a fierce advocate of the anti-slavery movement. In 1789 he published his autobiography which became a bestseller and travelled the UK promoting the abolition of slavery.

WEBSITES ON BLACK HISTORY

www.blackpresence.co.uk
www.channel4.com/history/B/blackhistory
www.movinghere.org.uk
www.pro.gov/pathways/blackhistory/default.htm

The Changing Colour of British Football

Today the presence of Black footballers within the country's favourite game cannot go unnoticed. For the first time in history the English team had more black players than white during the match against Brazil in the World Cup 2002.

But Black players have had to struggle to become part of the English team and participate at international level. Asian players are still beginning the struggle. Britain's first Black footballer, Arthur Wharton, was born in 1865 and played for a number of clubs including Darlington, Preston North End and Rotherham. Yet although his skill got him onto the football pitch to play alongside his white peers, his race still hindered his progress. In 1886 he was the first man to run 100 yards in under 10 seconds, but instead of using his speed his managers made him play in the position of goalkeeper!

Since Wharton there were a handful of black stars that made their name before large scale Commonwealth immigration to the UK from the 1940s. Names like Walter Tull, Egyptians Hussein Hegazi and Tewfik Abdallah, the Anglo-Indian Cother brothers, Indian Salim Baki-Khan and half-Chinese Hong Y Soo suggest that footballers including those of Asian descent were rare but present within the game.

Black players started appearing in greater numbers from the 1960s onwards. Players such as Clyde Best, Brendan Batson, Laurie Cunningham and Viv Anderson pioneered through to FA Cups and England's first team. These were the players who endured some of the most disgusting and overt

racism. Black players faced a torrent of racist abuse, missiles being thrown at them and even the indignity of being spat on by the crowd, not only from the opposition but from fans of their own team.

Yet their ability was undeniable even by the most racist of supporters. Against all the odds they triumphed and opened the door for a whole array of talented Black footballers that were to follow them. The fact that a quarter of Premiership players are Black is a testament to the earlier stars who's skills as footballers as well as their strength both physically and mentally began breaking the ground for Black people on and off the football pitch.

Today the challenge has moved from the pitch to the boardroom. Here it is very difficult to find any Black faces. Maybe, as so many managers are ex-footballers, when today's black footballers retire we will see a rise in the number of Black people in this area of the game. Here we see women leading the way. Hope Powell became the first Black manager of the England women's team in 1998.

The FA has recognised that racism exists in football both towards its players and fans. Action has been taken in the form of the 'Let's Kick Racism Out of Football' campaign which was started by the Commission for Racial Equality and the Professional Footballers' Association in 1993. It is supported by all the game's governing bodies, supporters' organisations and local authorities, and works to challenge racism at all levels of the game.



Arthur Wharton—Britain's First Black Footballer

Although racism has been an unwelcome part of football for many years, football be used positively to tackle racism. As the nation's sporting obsession football captivates the interest of many people.

On Tuesday 28th October KREC is organising an All Nations Five-A-Side World Cup at Kingsmeadow football grounds.

We are using football positively to bring together different communities within the Borough and showcase talent that exists beyond the lines of colour.

The event is open to all, there will be food, drink and prizes and is being run in association with Fulham FC so expect well known football stars as well. Entering a team will cost £10 and for more information contact KREC.

KREC CONFERENCES

On 16th September 2003 KREC held a conference for the British Federation of Racial Equality Councils at the Council House in Westminster.

The conference examined the future challenges facing Racial Equality Councils and Partnerships. Issues included the Single Equality Body, RECs relationship with the CRE and future sources of funding.

The conference was chaired by Milton Crossdale OBE and Beverley Thompson

OBE. Guest speakers included Bruce Gill Head of Race Equality Unit at the Home Office and Trevor Philips Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality. The conference was well attended by Directors of RECs from across Britain. KREC would like to thank Julie Reay who in the capacity of consultant organised the whole event.

KREC and Kingston Centre for Independent Living is planning another conference on a Borough level which again

will be organised by Julie Reay. The conference will look at the issue of Ethnicity and Disability. The conference will examine the double discrimination faced by people of colour who have a disability and ways to promote their voice and needs within the Borough of Kingston. A date is yet to be set for the conference though it is expected to happen late November or December.

Information about the conference will be available from KREC nearer the time.

CARNIVAL IS COMING TO KINGSTON!

The colour and energy of carnival will soon be gracing the streets of Kingston. On 4th October KREC, in association with the Met Police, RBK, Kingston University, Kingston Arts Council, Kingston Asian Arts Forum, KCIL and AFSS, organises Kingston's first street carnival.

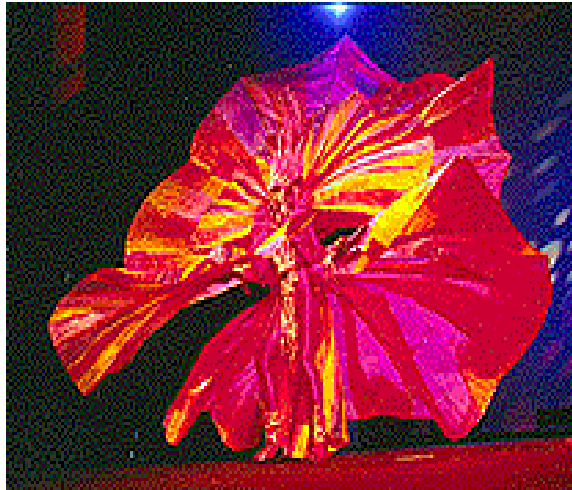
The procession will begin at the top of Clarence Street at 10.45am leading to the Market Place for 11.45am where there the stage will be officially opened by the mayor.

The processions will be lead by carnival mas band Beerahaar Sweet Combination. There will also be many other artists performing on the day, many from Kingston's wide variety of multicultural arts associations.

Carnival originally came from the Catholic countries of the Mediterranean. It began as a celebration before lent the time where certain foods were used up before the fast. As no meat eating was permitted during lent it would have to be used up before, hence the name 'carnival' or *carnevale*.

When the Americas were colonised

by Europeans, they brought their festivities with them including car-



nival. Some of the African slaves that laboured for the Europeans were allowed their own celebrations at this time of year. They made their own costumes, often out of natural objects, often taken from African traditions and with their own representations. Many of the slaves were mimicking the masters and mistresses when they painted their faces for their celebration.

When slavery was abolished carnival became a means by which

many Black people expressed and celebrated their liberation and this is why carnival is today seen as an event celebrating the culture of Black people whose ancestors were enslaved.

There are many famous carnivals that take place annually all over the world. They all originate from the fusion of Catholic Europeans and Black African culture. For example the huge Brazilian carnival, the Mardi Gras in Louisiana, but carnival came to Britain from Trinidad and Tobago in the Caribbean.

Carnival in Trinidad reflects the many immigrants that have come to the island and includes Indian, American Indian and Chinese culture as well as African and European.

The arrival of Trinidadians in Great Britain provided the spark which has now become the internationally famous Notting Hill carnival and from this beginning many other carnivals have been ignited around Britain. We look forward to Kingston Carnival becoming as successful and well known as the others.

Cesar Picton Continues His Progress

Although there were many Black people scattered across London from the Elizabethan times before the 1940s there are few records that can tell us about their lives in Britain. One resident that we do know wore about was Kingston's very own Cesar Picton.

In 1761 Cesar Picton was brought from Senegal, West Africa, aged six by Captain Parr and presented as a gift to Sir John Philipps of Norbiton.

In the eighteenth century it was a fashion of the upper classes to have black servants. Portraits from the period often depict the lady of lord or whosoever with their adoring young black servant in a position resembling that of a much loved pet.

It is clear that although Cesar Picton was a servant the family treated him like one of their own. When Lady Philipps died she left Cesar a substantial sum of money. With this he set up as a coal merchant and become a respected business man amongst the local community. He owned two houses one in Thames Ditton and one near Kingston Market Place. A blue plaque about Cesar was unveiled at Picton House in 1998.

In honour of Cesar Picton's memory Kingston University holds a lecture every year during Black History Month. This year it is being held on 30th October and guest speaker is Peter Herbert the Chair of the Society of Black Lawyers. For more information about the

lecture speak to Helen Trott at Kingston University or contact KREC.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS

Wednesday 1st October

International Film Festival

The Rotunda. Korean film
'Chihwaseon' (Drunk on Women and Poetry)

Tel 0870 5050007 for more details

Thursday 2nd October

Jane Elliott *The Anatomy of Prejudice*

Kingston University Seminar

Tel Jan Stow 020 8547 7157

Saturday 4th October

Kingston Carnival Market Place

Tel Sabrina George 020 8547 2332

Performance Poetry Nii Ayukwei Parkes &
Zena Edwards @ Borders Book shop

Tel KAAF 020 8974 9444

Monday 6th & Tuesday 7th October

Informal discussion with Chief Superintendent
Jeff Brathwaite

@ Kingston Museum

Tel 020 8547 6756 or 6462

Wednesday 8th October

'Open House Party' celebration of Sierra
Leone and Kenyan culture

Tel 020 849 3377

Thursday 9th October

Paul Crooks talks about his book
'Ancestors' @ Kingston Library
Tel 0208 547 6400

Friday 10th October

Patrick Naylor's Jazz Service Tour

The Grey Horse Richmond Rd

Tel 020 8287 7047

Wednesday 15th October

Chinese Exhibition

Newent House Resource Centre

Tel 020 8390 0285

Saturday 18th October 2003

Fulham V Wolves

Free tickets celebrating Anti-Racism Week
of Action In Football

Tel KREC 0208 547 2332

Wednesday 22nd October

'Standing in the Shadows of Motown' @
Odeon cinema

Tel 0870 5050007

Friday 24th October

Cultural Dress Day @ Guildhall

Tel 020 8547 5008

Sunday 26th October

Classical Chinese Dance

@Surbiton Assembly Rooms tickets £7.50

Tel 020 8287 7047

Monday 27 -Tuesday 28th October

Museum Fun Day

@ Kingston Museum

Tel 020 8547 8754

Tuesday 28th October 2003

All Nations 5-a-side World Cup

football tournament @ Kingsmeadow

Tel 020 8547 2332

Wednesday 29th October

'Harvest Festival Around the World'

@Tolworth Library

Tel 020 8339 6950

Story Time with Jan Blake

@ Borders Book Shop 1-1.30pm

Tel 020 8974 9444

Party Day @ Amy Woodgate

Celebrate African Caribbean culture

Tel 020 8549 2614

Thursday 30th October

Taiko Drumming (Japanese)

@ Surbiton Assembly Rooms £7.50

Tel 020 8547 5592 or 020 8287 7047

Cesar Picton Lecture

@ Kingston University 7pm

Tel 020 85747 2000

Mayor Ken Livingston visits Kingston

Tel 020 8547 5030 Mayor's Office

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KREC News Round Up

Festival of the Faiths Calendars 2004 will be available from November. Please contact Maureen for more details.

New Laws On 19th July 2003 the Race Relations Act 1976 was once again amended. The new law amends indirect discrimination and provides a statutory definition of harassment. For more details please contact Jasmin.

Tenants of Local Authority Housing. RBK Housing Services are looking at a stock transfer of property to Housing Associations. If you are a Black or Minority Ethnic tenant with views you would like to express on this matter please contact our office