

# PROUD OF OUR BLACK HISTORY

October 2021



Celebrating Hammersmith & Fulham's diversity and the historic figures who have helped make this such a special borough

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Picture by Justin Thomas

### Can you help us?

This booklet is not intended to be a complete guide to Hammersmith & Fulham's Black history. It's an evolving project and we know just how big a task it is given H&F's unique history and diversity. We're always searching for historic figures who deserve more recognition or remarkable locations that have had a big impact in the community. Can you help us? Do your family members have any stories about moving to H&F or living in H&F?

**Have your parents email us at: [press.office@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@lbhf.gov.uk)**

Thank you to the numerous residents and groups who have helped us get this far, including author Stephen Bourne and H&F Archivist Kath Shawcross.

# OUR BLACK HISTORY

## WE ASKED:

Which historical black individuals lived here?

Were we always a diverse borough?

How did that road get its name?

Did Hammersmith & Fulham play a part in the slave trade?

People love living in Hammersmith & Fulham. It's diverse, we care about our neighbours, and we don't like unfairness.

To ensure younger residents of the borough share in those values, we launched an investigation into H&F's own Black history during **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**.

We know in the past people haven't always shared the same opinions as we do today. In our investigation, we also discovered that Hammersmith & Fulham has been home to many brilliant and distinct ethnic minority people. The only problem was that, in the past, people didn't think they were important because of the colour of their skin. **We call these Hidden Figures.**

Today, we are putting them back into their proper place in our borough's history.

Over the coming months you'll see their names appearing near the buildings where they lived or worked as part of our new **H&F Black History Trail**.

**Be sure to keep an eye out!**

In the meantime, this booklet will help you learn their stories and their place in Hammersmith & Fulham's history.



**Cllr Sharon Holder,**  
H&F Cabinet Member



**Cllr Sue Fennimore,**  
Deputy Leader of H&F

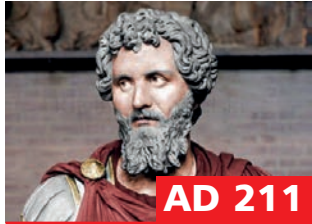


**Kim Smith,**  
Chief Executive of H&F Council



# BLACK HISTORY TIMELINE

# BEFORE 1900



AD 211

**Septimius Severus**, the first Roman Emperor of African descent, dies in York.



1241

Earliest known drawing of a black Briton is made in the **Domesday book**.



1507

**John Blanke** is a trumpeter in the court of Henry VIII. He is the only black Tudor we know was pictured.



1546

**Jacques Francis** is hired to retrieve the guns from the sunken Mary Rose. He later becomes the first African to give evidence in an English court of law.



1562

**John Hawkins** is the first Englishman to lead a slave trading voyage. Around 13 million Africans are forcibly taken from their homes in subsequent years.



1596

**Queen Elizabeth I** authorised a merchant to transport black people to Spain and Portugal, with their masters' consent. However, most refused permission, and more than 360 Africans continued to live in the British Isles.



1672

**The Royal African Company** is granted a charter giving it exclusive rights to carry slaves to the Americas.



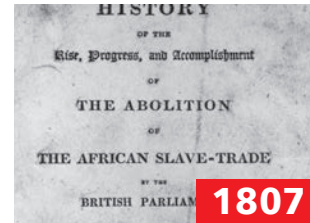
1688

**Aphra Behn** publishes her novel Oroonoko about African royalty. She is one of the first to attack the slave trade.



1700s

By the mid-1700s sugar is grown entirely by slave labour and is England's biggest import. It is why some don't want to abolish slavery.



1807

**The British slave trade is abolished.** However, it is still legal to own and buy slaves from slave traders across the Empire. Slave owners were compensated by the government for "loss of goods" for many years to come.



1834

**All slaves (except in India) are set free.** However, they must work for their old masters for free or for low pay until 1840.



1884

**European powers meet to divide Africa between them.** In many cases the new national boundaries do not take into full account the needs, history or language of the African people. These decisions often led to war and conflict later on.

# BRITAIN'S BLACK HISTORY TIMELINE

## AFTER 1900



1913

**John Archer** is elected Mayor of Battersea, becoming the first black mayor of London.



WW1

Black Britons took part in every part of the war effort. The most famous is former Tottenham Hotspur player **Lt. Walter Tull**.



1919

In **Butetown** 2,000 white people attack shops and homes associated with black people. Many are hurt.



WW2

10,000 men and women from the Caribbean come to the UK to help with the war effort.



1948

**The Empire Windrush** brings one of the largest groups of post-war immigrants to the UK. British Caribbean people who came to the UK are known as the Windrush Generation.



1950s

After WWII the British Empire granted India independence in 1947 and split the country into two: India and Pakistan. The split left between 10 and 20 million people without a home and created a large refugee crisis. Many of those refugees fled to Britain to help fill labour shortages after the war.



1962

**The Commonwealth Immigrants Act** restricts black entry to the UK. The Act is updated in 1968, 1971 and 1981.



1963

**Bristol Bus Boycott:** West Indians and white supporters refused to use the Bristol bus service until the service lifted their colour bar. A colour bar is when a company refuses to employ a person because they are not white.



1965

**The Race Relations Act** makes racial discrimination illegal in public places. Protections are extended in 1968 and 1976.



1966

**The Notting Hill Carnival** is launched by activist Rhaune Laslett to celebrate diversity and help soothe tensions after the 1958 Notting Hill Race Riots.



1970

During a peaceful protest against the unfair police targeting of The Mangrove Caribbean restaurant in Notting Hill, the **'Mangrove Nine'** were arrested for causing a riot. The sensational trial lasted for 55 days before a judge ruled against the police and found the activists not guilty.



1972

**President Idi Amin** of Uganda ordered 60,000 Asians to leave the country within 90 days. More than 30,000 with British passports fled to the UK. Here, the government explored different ways to stop them from staying, including giving them money to surrender their British passports.

# BRITAIN'S BLACK HISTORY TIMELINE

## AFTER 1900



1980s-1990s

The UK has been home to Somalis since the 19th century when Somali sailors and ship builders migrated to find work in the Royal Navy. However, when the civil war broke out the population quickly grew as women and children fled the fighting at home. By 1999 53% of Somali refugees applied to come to the UK. It is thought the UK is now home to the largest Somali community in Europe.



1981

**The Brixton Riots** occur as tensions rise between the black British community and the police over alleged police brutality. Rioting lasts for three days and spreads across the UK.



1987

The UK elects four black MPs including **Diane Abbott**, the first black female MP.



1991

Author **Stephen Bourne** published a book of interviews with Esther Bruce, his mixed-race adopted aunt from Fulham. It told her life story, including her work as a seamstress as well as her experiences during the Second World War when her father was killed in an air raid. The book is titled *Esther Bruce – A Black London Seamstress: Her Story 1912-1994*. It won the Raymond Williams Prize for community publishing and was described by the Caribbean Times as inspirational and enlightening.



1998

The first black manager of a UK national football team, **Hope Powell** was, Hope was in charge of England Women from 1998-2013, twice reaching the quarter-finals of the Women's World Cup. Her 20-year playing career included two years in Fulham, during which she appeared in the Women's FA Cup final. In 2003 she became the first woman to achieve the Uefa Pro Licence... the highest coaching qualification. Widely regarded as one of the finest technical coaches in the country, she's now the Brighton Women's manager.



2000

**The Race Relations (Amendment) Act** is passed requiring police, universities and public authorities to promote race equality.



# BRITAIN'S BLACK HISTORY TIMELINE



2001

**Former Children's Laureate Malorie Blackman** shot to fame in 2001 with the first book in her Noughts & Crosses series, later a TV series featuring her superfan Stormzy. Malorie, 59, whose parents were both from Barbados, addresses racism head-on in her books. "I wanted to show black children just getting on with their lives, having adventures and solving their dilemmas, like the characters in all the books I read as a child," she said. She was made an OBE in 2008.



2004

A prolific composer and conductor of Jamaican descent, **Shirley Thompson** has written for film, TV and theatre as well as creating operas, concertos, symphonies and ballets. Shirley Thompson has combined her own creativity with teaching others as Professor of Music at the University of Westminster. Shirley became the first woman in Europe to compose and conduct a symphony in the last 40 years with the 2004 work *New Nation Rising*, a celebration of 1,000 years of London history.



2012

From humble beginnings in Somalia, **Mo Farah** arrived in West London aged eight and barely speaking English. Geared along by his PE teacher, he came 9th in the U13s race at the London Youth Games in 1994, then went on to do the long-distance 'double double' at the 2012 and 2016 Olympics – winning gold at 5,000 and 10,000 metres. Knighted for service to athletics, he switched to the marathon and still trains in H&F with his wife and four children.

## AFTER 1900

2016

Man Utd footballer **Marcus Rashford** turns 24 in this Black History Month, yet is a household name as a campaigner against child poverty and racism. From humble beginnings (his mother skipped meals to make sure the family ate) he joined the United academy at the age of seven, and scored twice on his full debut in 2016. That year he became part of England's Euro squad. His campaigning was key to a government U-turn on providing free school meals during summer holidays.





# HISTORIC FIGURES

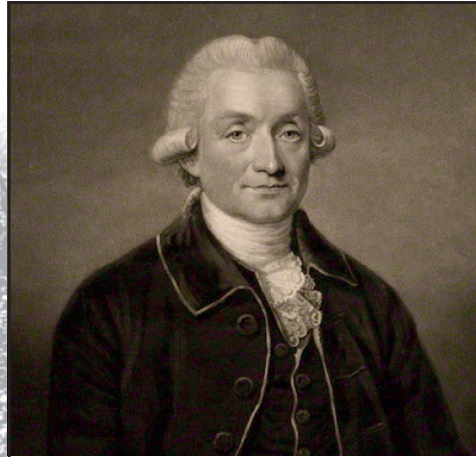
Did you know a lot of famous people who had an impact on Black history worked, lived or are laid to rest in Hammersmith & Fulham?

Sadly they often get left out of history lessons, but it is important - especially during **BLACK HISTORY MONTH** - to remember them. Here are just a few examples of the **Hidden Figures** who have helped influence and shape our borough for the better.



**Beilby Porteus, 1731-1809**  
**Lived at Fulham Palace between 1787 and 1809 while Bishop of London.**

Porteus began battling the slave trade as Bishop of Chester. He pressed the Church of England, owner of a Barbados plantation, to set an example and teach slaves Christianity. In a 1783 sermon he asked fellow bishops to back him, and was disappointed when they refused. In the House of Lords he championed the 1807 Slave Trade Act which ended the British trade in enslaved people... a stepping stone to total abolition.



**Granville Sharp, 1735-1813,**  
**lived in Fulham, Buried in All Saints Churchyard, SW6**

Sharp was a lawyer and abolitionist who became famous for protecting Black slaves who had run away from their masters. He studied laws about slavery and used what he learnt to help slaves win their freedom, among them Jonathan Strong and James Somerset.



**Mary Seacole, 1805-1881,**  
**Buried in St Mary's Catholic Cemetery, 679-681 Harrow Road, NW10 5NU**

Seacole was a nurse during the Crimean War. She came to London at the age of 50 and asked if she could tend to the sick and wounded in the Crimea. She was rejected. Determined to help, she paid her own travel costs and set off to help. There, she built her own hospital and even went to help soldiers on the battlefield during the fighting! The men wrote to the newspapers about her heroic efforts. When Mary returned from the war, she was very poor but the soldiers she helped hadn't forgotten her. They threw a big festival and raised a lot of money to help her.



**Ellen & William Craft, 1820s-1900,**  
**Lived at 26 Cambridge Grove, W6 0LA**

The Crafts were ex-slaves who escaped from the American South to the North, with Ellen dressed as a man to avoid detection. They made their way to the UK, settling in Hammersmith after the Fugitive Slave Act was passed in America. Ellen was a part of the Women's Rights movement.





**Fanny Eaton, 1835-1924,**  
**Lived at 19 St Dunstan's Road,**  
**SW6 6AR**

5

**Buried in Margravine Cemetery**

Eaton was born in Jamaica then moved to London in the 1840s. She became a famous model for the Pre-Raphaelites - a group of English painters, poets and art critics.

She appears in many famous pieces of art including William Richmond's *The Slave*, which can be found in Tate Britain.



**Edmonia Lewis, 1844-1907,**  
**Lived at 154 Blythe Road,**  
**W14 0HD**

6

Lewis was the first African-American sculptor to gain national and then international fame. On her mother's side she was descended from Native Americans and her native name was "Wildfire". In her work she focused on both Black and Native American people and their history.



**Lolita Roy, 1865,**  
**Lived at 77 Brook Green,**  
**W6 7BE**

7

Roy was an Indian social reformer and suffragist who fought for women's rights in Britain and India. During WWI she set up a fund for Indian soldiers and raised a lot of money through auctions and clothing sales. After the war she continued speaking out for women's rights across the British Empire.



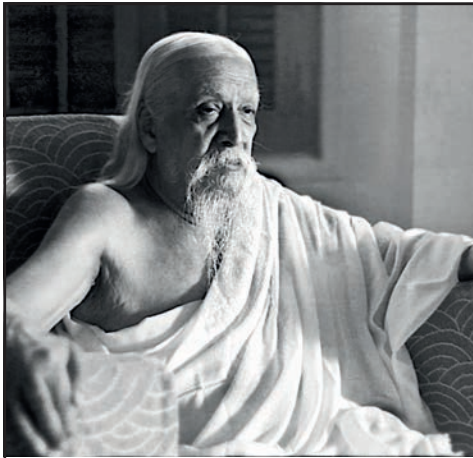
**Mahatma Gandhi, 1869-1948,**  
**lived at 20 Barons Court Road**  
**- there is an English Heritage**  
**blue plaque to him there.**

8

Gandhi is most famous for his peaceful protests against British rule in India. For three years, while he studied law at University College London, he lived in Fulham. During his time in London he worked with London's poorest to try to improve their health and treatment.







**Sri Aurobindo, 1872-1950,  
Lived at 49 St Stephens  
Avenue, W12 8JB**



Aurobindo was an Indian spiritualist and poet who wanted Indian independence. As a teenager he went to St Paul's School in Hammersmith where he became inspired by rebels such as Joan of Arc and Giuseppe Mazzini and learnt how India was ruled by Britain. This is what later made him join the fight for Indian independence.



**Marcus Garvey, 1887-1940,  
Lived at 53 Talgarth Road,  
W14 9DD**



Garvey was a Pan-Africanist who founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). The organisation was designed to strength bonds between Black people all around the world, including Africa, and advance their rights. The UNIA was one of the largest anticolonialism groups in Jamaica and had a big impact on the country.



**Amy Jacques Garvey,  
1895-1973,  
Lived at 53 Talgarth Road,  
W14 9DD**



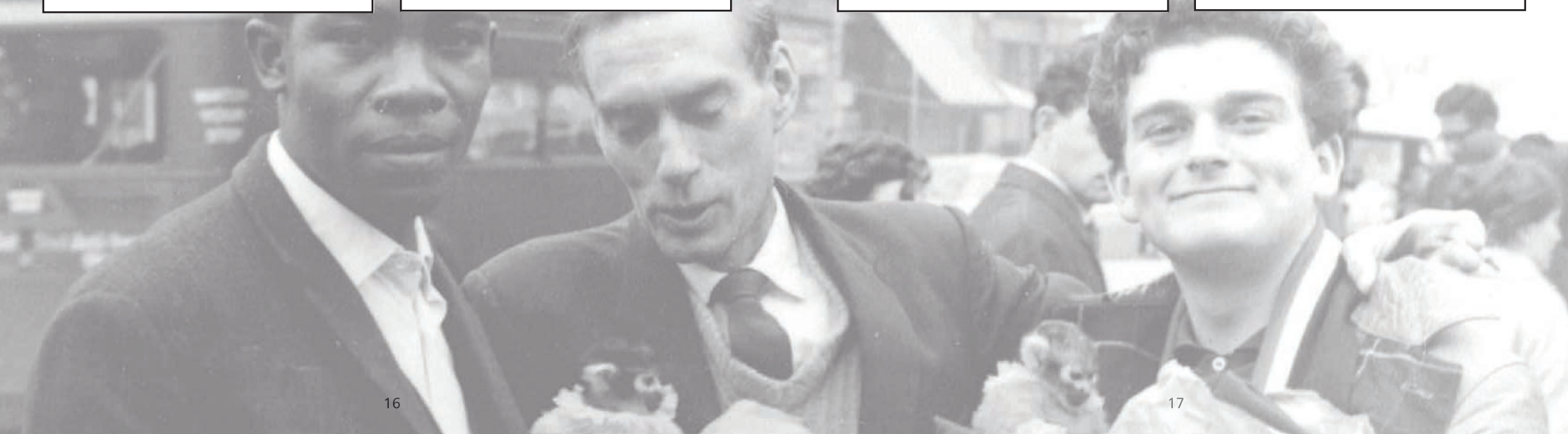
AJ was a famous journalist and speaker for the Pan-African movement. In the UNIA she was as important as her husband Marcus, and ran the organisation alone when he was in prison. She edited The Negro World, a paper which was used by the Harlem Resistance to promote art, culture and political articles.



**Jomo Kenyatta, 1897-1978,  
Lived at 57 Castletown Road,  
W14 9HG**



Kenyatta was Prime Minister of Kenya and was later its first President. He was the first indigenous (born in Kenya) leader, and helped Kenya transform from a British colony to an independent country. He lived in London for three years, making friends with communists and other anti-imperialists (people who didn't want to be ruled by Britain).



# FAMILY TREE

Me

## ACTIVITY

- Can you draw your family tree?
- Put your parents below and keep going back to oldest relatives
- Ask your parents for help and see how many people you can include.





**Indra Lal Roy, 1898-1918,  
Lived at 77 Brook Green,  
W6 7BE**

13

Son of the famous Lolita Roy, Indra Lal Roy achieved his own fame by becoming the first and only Indian flying ace in WWI. When war broke out, Roy was still at school. He applied to the RAF, but was turned down due to poor eyesight. Keen to help the war effort, he saw an eye specialist and had the decision overturned. In 170 hours of flying, Roy won 10 battles. Sadly he was killed in 1918 in France.



**Adelaide Louise Estelle Hall  
1901-1993  
Lived at Fairholme Road, W14**

14

Born in New York, Adelaide became one of the best-loved jazz and cabaret singers and tap dancers, and performed with legends such as Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, Josephine Baker and Louis Armstrong. In 1941, she was Britain's highest paid entertainer. She was one of the first Black performers to top the bill at the London Palladium, and played to full houses at the Hammersmith's Riverside Studios and the Hammersmith Palais. She frequently appeared on the BBC as well as recording extensively for Decca Records. In the early 1950s, Hall and her husband Bert opened the Calypso Club in Regent Street. She lived in Fulham from 1980 until her death at 92 in Charing Cross Hospital.



**Esther Bruce, 1912-1994,  
Lived at Dieppe Street, W14**

15

From a young age, Bruce was taught by her father to take pride in her Black heritage and stand up to racism. During WWII she volunteered as a Fire Watcher – people who stood on rooftops during air raids and helped put out fires caused by bombs. She also united her community by writing to her family in Guyana for food parcels and sharing what she was sent with her neighbours.



**Reginald Charles Foresythe  
1907-1958  
Lived in 15 Hetley Road, W12**

16

The jazz pianist, composer and bandleader was born in Hetley Road, W12, growing up in the area's west African community. In the early 1930s, he was established in the American jazz scene, writing arrangements for Earl Hines and recording with Benny Goodman and Gene Krupa. Louis Armstrong and Fats Waller recorded his tunes, and he later became the accompanist to American singer Elisabeth Welch when she visited the UK. In the Second World War, he served as an intelligence officer. He died, aged just 51, after a fall at his home in Paddington.





**Fela Kuti, 1938-1997**  
Lived at 12 Stanlake Road,  
W12 7HP



Fela Kuti was a Nigerian singer, multi-instrumentalist, bandleader, political activist and regarded as the founder of the influential musical style 'Afrobeat'. He moved to London in 1958 and studied at Trinity College of Music (his parents wanted him to be a doctor!). He married his first wife, Remilekun (Remi) Taylor in 1960, and had three children (Femi, Yeni, and Sola). In 1963, he moved back to the newly independent Federation of Nigeria and attempted to run for its first presidency. In 1984, he was jailed for 20 months in Nigeria for his political views.



**Dr John Alcindor 1873-1924**  
Buried in St Mary's Catholic  
Cemetery, 679-681 Harrow Road,  
NW10 5NU



Originally from Trinidad, Alcindor was a talented and popular doctor who worked in London. When WWI broke out, he was eager to help and in 1914 he applied to join the Royal Army Medical Corp. Sadly he was rejected because of his "colonial origin". Instead of being sad, Alcindor was determined to help and signed up as a Red Cross volunteer where he helped soldiers returning from the front line. He was awarded a Red Cross Medal for his life saving work. After the war he became a senior district medical officer for Paddington and became known for his excellent patient care no matter their origin or race. He became known as the "Black doctor of Paddington."

# HORRIBLE HISTORY

Unfortunately, not everybody who lived in Hammersmith & Fulham thought that Black people and other ethnic minorities should have the same rights as white people. When they were alive these opinions were not uncommon, but today we know they are wrong. Below are examples of famous local **Historic Figures** who played a negative role in the UK's Black history



**Sir Nicholas Crisp,**  
1599-1666

Crisp was a wealthy merchant and royalist who supported Charles I during the English Civil War. He is famous for his brickworks. Crisp was also involved in the Slave Trade. Using glass beads he made on site at his house, Crisp bought and sold slaves across the Atlantic.



**Frederick Marryat,**  
1792-1848

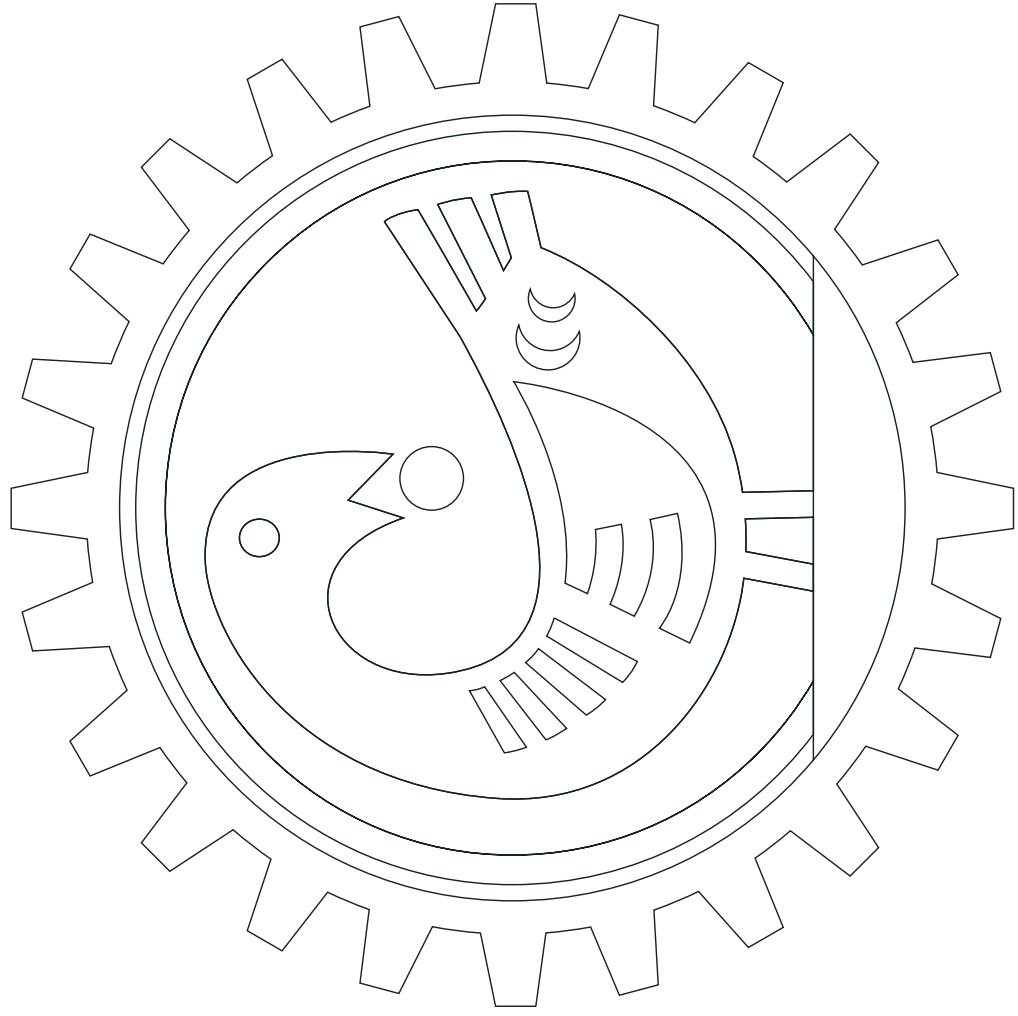
Today, Marryat is famous for his children's stories about naval adventures during the height of the British Empire. His father, Joseph Marryat, was a known slave-owner and fought against the end of the Slave Trade. Like his father, Frederick defended the Slave Trade and believed that Africans were not ready to be free. His stories also contained wrong and hurtful descriptions of Black people.





- 1 Bishop Beilby Porteus
- 2 Granville Sharp
- 3 Mary Seacole
- 4 Ellen & William Craft
- 5 Fanny Eaton
- 6 Edmonia Lewis
- 7 Lolita Roy
- 8 Mahatma Gandhi
- 9 Sri Aurobindo
- 10 Marcus Garvey
- 11 Amy Jacques Garvey
- 12 Jomo Kenyatta
- 13 Inra Lal Roy
- 14 Esther Bruce
- 15 Adelaide Louise Estelle Hall
- 16 Reginald Charles Foresythe
- 17 Fela Kuti
- 18 Dr John Alcindor

**Historic Figures**  
 Where they were born,  
 lived, died or were buried  
 in Hammersmith & Fulham



**SANKOFA**

**ACTIVITY**

The word Sankofa comes from the Akan people of Ghana. One of the Adinkra symbols for Sankofa depicts a mythical bird.

Colour in the mythical bird symbol.



# HISTORIC LANDMARKS IN LOCAL BLACK HISTORY

Want to see the historic landmarks of H&F's Black history for yourself? Use the map on page 30 and 31 to visit the spots on the trail.



## 1 Hammersmith Palais 242 Shepherds Bush Road, W6

The Palais was a dance hall and entertainment venue that was open from 1919 to 2007. It was the first of its kind to be built in Britain and quickly became known to many as the mainstay of dances and later the punk and reggae scene in London.



## 2 Hammersmith Odeon (now the Eventim Apollo) Hammersmith Broadway, W6

Built in 1932 as a cinema, the Odeon took on an exalted place in London's music folklore. Bob Marley played a series of gigs in 1976. It is now re-branded as the Apollo and is still one of London's major live entertainment venues.



## 3 Greensleeves Records 44 Uxbridge Road, W12

Opened in 1977, this reggae shop was home to the number one label for the sound of the Caribbean, and for Caribbean influenced Black British music. Musicians such as Shaggy and Sean Paul had pop crossovers with this record label.



## 4 Shepherds Bush Market Between Goldhawk Road and Uxbridge Road, W12

Opened in 1914, the market is home to a diverse range of traders selling everything from food and fabric to household goods and electronics. In more than a century it closed only once, in 1915, due to the First World War. It reopened in 1918 when ex-soldiers from across the Empire were offered stalls to help restart their lives.



## 5 Goldhawk Road fabric district near Shepherds Bush Market, W12

Home of the famous fabric quarter, the shops here are over 150 years old and businesses have been passed down through the generations. From Swedish rag rugs and Scottish tartans, to bold African prints and Indian silk shawls, shoppers can find imported fabrics from across the globe.



## 6 Peckings Records 81 Askew Road, W12

Reggae music pioneer George 'Peckings' Price was one of the first to import the sound of the Caribbean to London. He set up a recording studio in Kingston, Jamaica, before moving to Shepherds Bush where he opened a shop in 142 Askew Road in 1972. Peckings Records is still a thriving business in its new location at 81 Askew Road, and is run by his two sons, Chris and Duke.



## 7 Island Records 22 St Peter's Square, W6

Chris Blackwell, the founder of esteemed record label Island Records, brought the sound of Jamaica to Britain. In 1973, the growing label opened a small basement studio here in West London where artists such as Bob Marley and the Wailers and Steel Pulse recorded some of their most famous work.

## ACTIVITY

- Visit these sites yourself! Swing by on your way
- home from school or take your whole family
- out for a walk at the weekend using our handy
- map on the next page. →





# WHITE CITY ESTATE

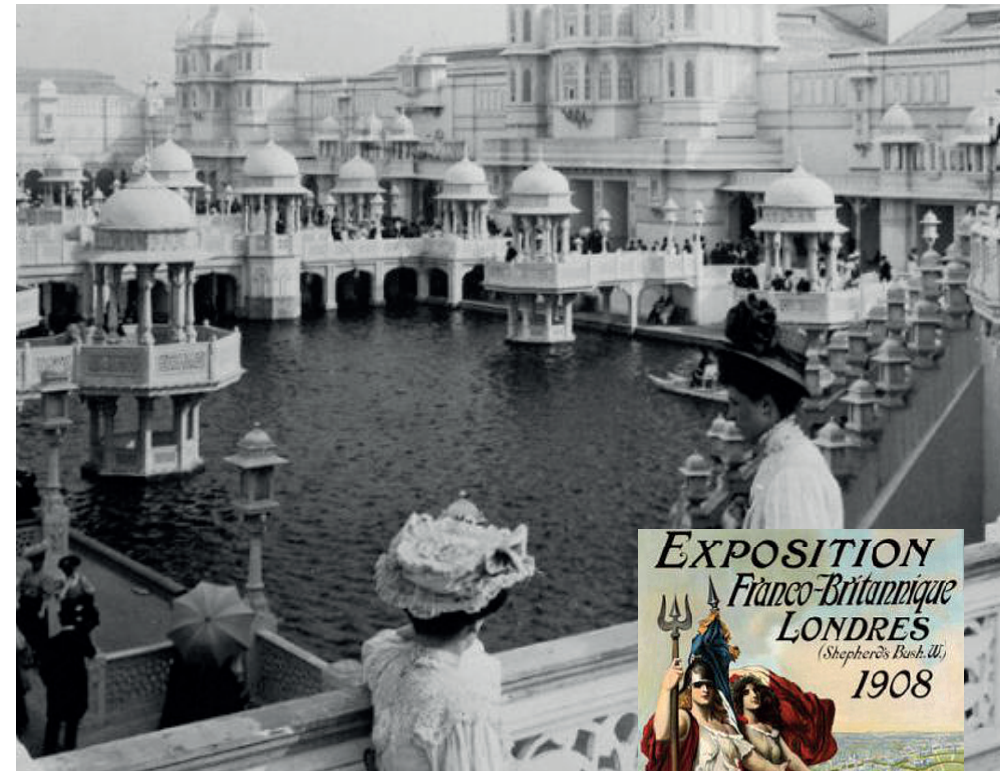
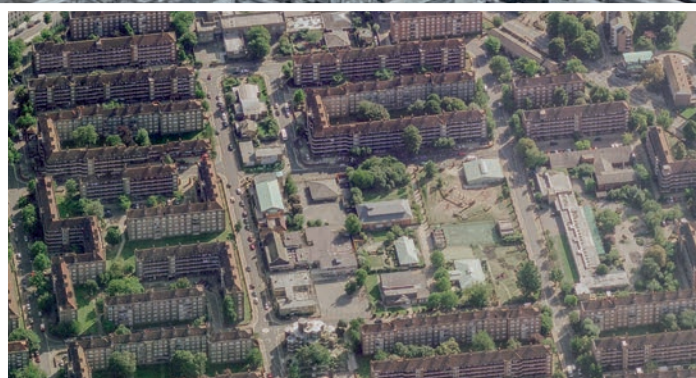
The construction of the White City Estate began in the late 1930s and was finished after the Second World War. It is named after the White City Exhibition that took place on the site in 1908.

The estate was built by the London County Council. Twenty-three blocks were completed by the outbreak of the war, with the rest completed afterwards.

Most of the names of the buildings on the White City Estate are named after men who served the British Empire in various colonial settings – mainly in India.



'Aerial view of the White City Estate, Hammersmith' from The County of London Plan (1943) – showing the Estate as completed by 1939.



**The White City Exhibition of 1908** was a huge 200-acre site with palaces, halls, stadium and canals. It looked very similar to Venice! The buildings were covered white stucco (decorative plaster), but the name didn't just come from the exhibition's white buildings.

Entertainer Imre Kiralfy was the mastermind behind the project and 'borrowed' the White City name from Chicago.

The first exhibition was open from May to October 1908. It attracted more than eight million visitors and celebrated Britain's friendship with France after the signing of the Entente Cordiale in 1904.

Today, many of the roads in the area are named after African locations and countries that had displays at the White City Exhibition including South Africa Road, India Way, Bloemfontein Road, Loftus Road, Australia Road and New Zealand Way.

# LOCAL STUDIES & ARCHIVES

Thank you to the numerous residents and groups who have helped us get this far, including author Stephen Bourne and H&F Archivist Kath Shawcross.

## **Get in touch with the Local Studies & Archives**

Are you interested in tracing your family history, house history or researching the changes in your local area over the years? Whatever your interests, the staff and volunteers will be happy to assist your research, either in person at Hammersmith Library (pictured below) or via post or email.

The Hammersmith & Fulham Local Studies and Archives Centre holds the archives and local history collections for the borough, including documents, books, maps, photographs, old newspapers and other sources for family and local history. These records come from the council and its predecessor bodies, local institutions such as churches and schools, local businesses, local organisations and individuals.

**For more details, please visit: [www.lbhf.gov.uk/archives](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/archives)**





# WHO ARE YOU

Your name

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Class name

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