

THE CAFE HISTORIQUE presents its first Black History Month programme – open to anyone with an interest in Manchester's cosmopolitan heritage. All events are FREE.



The Black Communities of Ordsall + Greengate, 1896 - 1930

Speaker: Professor Bill Williams

02/10/11

2.00pm - 4.00pm

Victoria Baths, Hathersage Road, Manchester M13 0FE

Frederick Douglass: Claiming Egypt

Speaker: Dr Natalie Zacek

04/10/11

6.00pm - 8.00pm

The Ducie Arms, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6HS

Master Juba's Back in Town

Speaker: BLU

05/10/11

6.00pm - 8.00pm

Cafe Couture, the People's History Museum, Left Bank, Spinnigfield, Manchester M3 3ER

The Indefinable Florence Mills or Why Does Nobody Remember the Most Popular African American Performer of the 1920s?

Speaker: Professor Brian Ward

11/10/11

6.00pm – 8.00pm

New Black Arts Alliance (NBAA), opposite Band on the Wall, Swan Street, Manchester M4 5JZ

Len Johnson: Never Counted Out!

Speaker: Michael Herbert

12/10/11

2.00pm – 4.00pm

Working Class Movement Library, 51 The Crescent, Salford M5 4WX

Henry Watson, a Manchester Musician, Collector + Benefactor

Speaker: Ros Edwards

17/10/11

6.00pm – 8.00pm

The Brodsky, Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM), Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9RD

Charles White, Surgeon + Man-midwife: On the Politics of Health + Race in Early Industrial Manchester

Speaker: Professor John Pickstone

20/10/11

6.00pm – 8.00pm

The Manchester Museum, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL

The 1945 Pan African Congress: Manchester Contribution

Speaker: Dr. Washington Alcott

28/10/11

6.00pm – 8.00pm

(Venue to be confirmed)

Find out more at www.meethelocals.blogspot.com or cafehistorique@googlemail.com

The Cafe Historique would like to thank for their kind support: Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre, Cafe Couture, The Ducie Arms, The Friends of 84 Plymouth Grove (aka Gaskells House), The Manchester Museum, New Black Arts Alliance, The People's History Museum, Victoria Baths Trust, Victoria Baths History Group, Whitworth Art Gallery + all the speakers: Dr. Washington Alcott, BLU, Ros Edwards, Michael Herbert, Prof. John Pickstone, Dr. Mohammad Seddon, Prof. Brian Ward, Tony Watt, Prof. Bill Williams + Dr. Natalie Zacek.

#The Black Communities of Ordsall + Greengate, 1896 - 1930

Speaker: Professor Bill Williams

The first Africans known to have lived in Manchester were the domestic slaves purchased in Liverpool from slave traders or from the captains of slave ships. The earliest reference to their presence is from 1757. Between then and 1894 people of African or West Indian origin made an occasional appearance in Manchester as fugitive and freed slaves or in other capacities, but no 'black community' evolved.

An important landmark was the opening of the Manchester ship canal in 1894, converting Manchester into an international port. From then on black seamen began to arrive in Salford docks. Between 1894 and the First World War, a few took lodgings in the part of Ordsall closest to the canal, a district which became known to locals as 'Little Africa'.

During the First World War, when a number of British seamen and dock labourers were conscripted into the armed forces, West Africans from Ethiopia and Sierra Leone arrived to fill the vacancies. This led to the evolution of what became known to the local police as 'Salford's black quarter': the Greengate district of Salford, which remained the home of a close-knit black community (mostly West Africans, but a few West Indians and black Americans) until the eve of the Second World War.

The talk describes the evolution of these two 'colonies', what little is known of their way of life, and their relationship with the wider societies around them. It suggests also the first contacts between Greengate and what became the major black community of Moss Side.

#Frederick Douglass: Claiming Egypt

Speaker: Dr Natalie Zacek

This talk will look at two aspects of Frederick Douglass's life: his sojourn in the North West in the late 1840s, and his ongoing intellectual interest in Egypt (which he visited in the 1880s) and its role in the cultural heritage of people of African descent. It will emphasise the importance of Douglass's time in Manchester, as the city was in the mid-19th century a centre both of the anti-slavery movement and of popular and scholarly interest in the emerging field of Egyptology.

#Master Juba's Back in Town

Speaker: BLU

A fascinating talk by BLU on Master Juba, considered as the Father of Jazz + Tap Dance. His first Manchester performances (17/10/1848) with Pell's Ethiopian Serenaders were described in the local press as "well worth a visit". Born William Henry Lane in Providence, Rhode Island, Master Juba's extraordinary dancing style combined African steps + Irish jig.

#The Indefinable Florence Mills or Why Does Nobody Remember the Most Popular African American Performer of the 1920s?

Speaker: Professor Brian Ward

At the time of her premature death in 1927, Florence Mills, an African American singer, dancer, comedienne and social activist, was probably the most successful and well-known African American entertainer in the world. Outlining her career and focusing on her extraordinary celebrity in Britain, this talk considers why Mills inspired such unusual levels of devotion in Europe as well as in the US, from white as well as black audiences, from the social elites and the masses, from royalty and commoners, from men, women and people of all sexual orientation. And it seeks to answer the question of why, given this unprecedented transatlantic celebrity during the Jazz Age, Mills is now virtually forgotten.

#Len Johnson: Never Counted Out!

Speaker: Michael Herbert

Len Johnson was born in Clayton, Manchester in 1902. His father was William Benker Johnson, an African seaman, and his mother was Margaret Maher. Len was one of the finest middle-weight boxers of his day beating many British and European title holders, but was never allowed to fight for an official British title because of his colour. In the 1940s he joined the Communist Party, fighting against racism and discrimination with the same skill and determination that he once shown against his opponents in the ring. He died in 1974.

#Henry Watson, a Manchester Musician, Collector + Benefactor

Speaker: Ros Edwards

The inspiration behind our Black History Month programme, “Henry Watson, a Manchester Musician, Collector + Benefactor” was first presented on 02/02/11 . This talk looks at the life of Henry Watson, a self-taught musician who started his life as a “errand boy in a Blackburn music shop”. The Henry Watston Music Library, part of Manchester Libraries + Archives, is today “one of the largest collections of music in any public library”.

#Charles White, Surgeon + Man-midwife: On the Politics of Health + Race in Early Industrial Manchester

Speaker: Professor John Pickstone

As a young surgeon, Charles White was the effective founder of the Manchester (Royal) Infirmary, which stood in what is now Piccadilly Gardens from 1755 to 1908. He became a national expert on midwifery as male surgeons pushed to take over a traditionally female role. In the Manchester Infirmary ‘Revolution’ of 1790, White was ousted – so he founded the midwifery charity which became St Mary’s Hospital. In 1799 he published his book on The Gradations of Man – an argument for the separate origins of the human races which was attacked as giving support to slavery. All the while he ran a large house on Cross St which was also a surgery, a museum (with a modern mummy), and a training ground for young surgeons.

The talk and discussion offers a chance to explore the intertwined politics of health, religion and race when Manchester was attracting attention as a new kind of city.

#The 1945 Pan African Congress: Manchester Contribution

Speaker: Dr. Washington Alcott

Local Mancunians were intimately involved in the historic 5th Pan African Congress which took place in Manchester in October 1945. This congress, attended by over 200 delegates, was instrumental in changing British Colonial Empire after the Second World War. It was at the Congress that the important consensus were reached on how to develop a new and different type of struggle for African self determination in managing the national and international affairs of their respective states.

What part did the local people play? How were they involved in the planning of the congress and ideological decisions that reshaped the future governance in Africa and the Caribbean?

COMING SOON at www.meethelocals.blogspot.com: further information + Black History events
