

October 2023 Black History Month

1. Jack Johnson



2. Alhaji Grunshi



3. William Cuffay



4. Joseph Bologne



5. Neil deGrasse Tyson



6. Miss Lou



7. George Horton



8. Rev. Jessie Jackson



9. Samuel King



10. Eno Mfon



11. Deanna Rodger



12. Tony O'Connor



13. Robert Donaldson



14. Hattie McDaniel



15. Beryl Gilroy



16. Naomi Osaka



17. Roger Henry



18. Thomas Mensah



19. Maya Angelou



20. Kamala Harris



21. Kobe Bryant



22. George Carver



23. Trevor Noah



24. Malone Mukwende



25. Oprah Winfrey



26. Simon Woolley



27. Michaela Coel



28. Richard Renwick



29. Beryl McConnell



30. Michelle Bateman



31. Mitchell Food Stores



Personal Information

1st October - Jack Johnson

After becoming the first black heavyweight boxing champion, Jack Johnson faced the undefeated white boxer James Jeffries in 1910. Jack knocked his opponent out and handed Jeffries the first loss of his career. The result triggered riots across the U.S.

2nd October - Alhaji Grunshi

Alhaji Grunshi, DCM, MM, serving in the Gold Coast Regiment, was the first soldier in British service to fire a shot in the First World War. First World War. At the start of the First World War, Germany's West African colony of Togoland was isolated from the rest of the German Empire.

3rd October - William Cuffay

Cuffay was a leading figure in the Chartist movement, the first mass popular political movement in Britain. He was transported to Australia for allegedly planning an uprising against the British government.

4th October - Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges

Dubbed 'le Mozart noir' ('Black Mozart'), the Chevalier de Saint-Georges is remembered as the first classical composer of African origins. Born to a wealthy plantation owner and his African slave, Saint-Georges was a prolific composer who wrote string quartets, symphonies and concertos in the late 18th century. He also led one of the best orchestras in Europe – Le Concert des Amateurs – and former US president John Adams judged him “the most accomplished man in Europe”.

5th October - Neil deGrasse Tyson

One of America's best-known scientists, astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson has spent much of his career sharing his knowledge with others. He has a great talent for presenting complex concepts in a clear and accessible manner. After studying at Harvard University, he earned his doctorate from Columbia University in 1991. Tyson went to work for the Hayden Planetarium in 1996 before becoming its director.

6th October - Miss Lou

Louise Simone Bennett-Coverley or Miss Lou, OM, OJ, MBE was a Jamaican poet, folklorist, writer, and educator. Writing and performing her poems in Jamaican Patois or Creole, Bennett worked to preserve the practice of presenting poetry, folk songs and stories in patois, establishing the validity of local languages for literary expression. was regarded

by many as the “mother of Jamaican culture” for her efforts to popularize Jamaican patois and to celebrate the lives of ordinary Jamaicans.

7th October - George Moses Horton

George Moses Horton, was an enslaved African-American poet from North Carolina. His first collection, *The Hope of Liberty* (1829), was intended to earn enough to purchase his freedom, but failed to do so. He did not become free until 1865. Horton was the first African American to publish a book in the United States. Horton’s poetry displays a keen ear for rhythm and rhyme and a circumspect understanding of human nature.

8th October - Rev. Jessie Jackson

The first African American to context for nomination as a Presidential Candidate for the office of the President

of the United States of America was Rev. Jesse Jackson. Rev. Jackson was involved in civil rights movement while he was doing his undergraduate course. He joined Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. to march during the protest in Selma, Alabama. He later became a worker in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

9th October - Samuel King

Samuel King is a Host & Poet / Spoken Word Artist from London who has hosted and performed at various shows and venues across London and the UK. Having received media attention from the likes of the Guardian, Huffington Post and the Camden New Journal, Samuel is often recognised for his thought provoking, impactful poems ‘Fatherless Britain’ and ‘What I Wasn’t Taught In School plus witty ‘Smart Phone.

10th October - Eno Mfon

Mfon’s Check the Label poem sheds light on the ongoing issue of skin

bleaching within the black community. Not only is the title powerful, but the sub-themes she depicts explores the link between colourism, rivalries between the black community as well as family members with certain complexions.

11th October - Deanna Rodger

Deanna Rodger is well-known for her protest poem which provides a voice for many young people who feel unheard, making her poems highly relatable. Raw emotion and passion are present in her tone of voice, body language and facial expressions which makes her performances so stellar.

12th October - Tony O’Connor

Tony O’Connor did much to improve race relations at a difficult time in Smethwick’s history. The man who was believed to have been Britain’s first black head, Tony O’Connor, was appointed as head teacher at

Bearwood Primary School in Smethwick, West Midlands, in September 1967. He would spend 16 years in the job.

13th October - Robert 'Dip' Donaldson

A familiar name around the West Midlands and beyond, 'Dip' Donaldson helped to put Coventry Crusaders on the NBL map in the mid-90s. Following stints in the BBL with Leicester and Manchester, averaging 17.5ppg in 1988/89, Donaldson led the Crusaders to an NBL league and playoff double in 1993/94 at the age of 34. Coventry would remain a force for a number of years as Donaldson continued to wow NBL fans, before the talented forward eventually moving into an off-court role.

14th October - Hattie McDaniel

In 1940, the actress and performer won an Oscar for Best Supporting

Actress for her portrayal of Mammy in the film, *Gone with the Wind* (1939). McDaniel made history that evening as she became the first Black to win an Academy Award. However, she was forced to sit at the back of the small venue and neither herself nor her black co-stars were permitted to attend the film's premiere, because of the colour of their skin.

15th October - Beryl Gilroy

Beryl Gilroy was a successful author, as well as a popular head teacher. When Beryl Gilroy, who was head teacher at Beckford Primary in Camden, London from 1969 to 1982, arrived in the city in 1951 from her birthplace in Guyana, she stepped into a world that was both familiar and forbidding. Prof Gilroy sees her legacy as being instrumental, alongside her fellow ethnic minority head teachers, in shaping the country we know today. "These teachers created something like a living cosmopolitan culture," he said. "It was constructed in the

most difficult of circumstances and that probably makes us unique in Europe."

16th October - Naomi Osaka

Naomi born October 16, 1997 is a Japanese professional tennis player. She has been ranked No. 1 by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) and is the first Asian player to hold the top ranking in singles. She is a four-time Grand Slam singles champion. At the 2018 US Open and the 2019 Australian Open, Osaka won her first two Grand Slam singles titles in back-to-back Grand Slam tournaments. She also became the first woman to win successive Grand Slam singles titles since Serena Williams in 2015.

October 17th – Roger Henry

In 2008, Roger Henry established Real United Community Football Club to steer young people away from substance misuse and criminal

activity, to increase their self-confidence and help them progress into education, work and training. Since then, he has set up and helped run a programme of lunchtime football and music coaching activities, educational workshops to a selection of 11 to 14-year-old students in a local school and established a community mentoring scheme. Roger also helps to organize 'Taken Too Soon' – an annual event in Nottingham which remembers the young people who have died from violence. Henry has won the Nottingham Evening Post Sports Hero award in 2014 and the Black Achievers Award in 2013.

October 18th – Thomas Mensah

Thomas O. Mensah (born around 1950) is a Ghanaian-American chemical engineer and inventor, who contributed to the development of fibre optics and nanotechnology. He has 14 patents, and was inducted into the US National Academy of Inventors in 2015. Mensah improved the manufacturing process through a series of innovations,

While a professor at Tuskegee Institute, Carver developed techniques to improve soils depleted by repeated plantings of cotton. He wanted poor farmers to grow other crops, such as peanuts and sweet potatoes, as a source of their own food and to improve their quality of life. The most popular of his 44 practical bulletins for farmers contained 105 food recipes using peanuts. Apart from his work to improve the lives of farmers, Carver was also a leader in promoting environmentalism, receiving numerous honors for his work. In 1941, Time Magazine dubbed Carver a "Black Leonardo".

October 23rd – Trevor Noah

Trevor Noah is a South African comedian, television host, writer, producer, political commentator, and actor. He is the host of The Daily Show, an American satirical news programme on Comedy Central. Born 1984 in Johannesburg, Noah began his career as a comedian, television host, and actor in South

Africa in 2002. In November 2016, Trevor released his first book Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood, an instant New York Times bestseller. Trevor's performance on the audiobook version made it Audible's highest-rated audiobook that year, and has since held its position as a popular release on the site.

October 24th – Malone Mukwende

Malone Mukwende, 21 years-old born in Zimbabwe, developed Mind the Gap: A Handbook of Clinical signs in Black and Brown Skin, with the backing of university St George's,

University of London where he is currently a medical student. He noticed disparities and the lack of teaching on identifying conditions on darker skin-tones. He wanted to create something that would benefit the medical profession globally. Mukwende has himself spent hours each week researching various medical conditions for his book, on top of his medical course's workload.

He's set up a 'virtual library' where patients and medical professionals can contribute images of symptoms on black and brown skin tones. This site will also collate new and appropriate terminology when describing these conditions.

October 25th – Oprah Winfrey

Oprah Gail Winfrey (born January 29, 1954 in Kosciusko, Mississippi) is an American talk show host, television producer, actress, author, and philanthropist. She is best known for her talk show, The Oprah Winfrey Show, broadcast from Chicago, which was the highest-rated television program of its kind in history and ran in national syndication for 25 years, from 1986 to 2011. Dubbed the "Queen of All Media", her first name was spelled 'Orpah' on her birth certificate after the biblical figure in the Book of Ruth, but people mispronounced it regularly and "Oprah" stuck. A genetic test in 2006 determined that her matrilineal

line originated among the Kpelle ethnic group, in the area that today is Liberia.

October 26th – Simon Andrew Woolley

Simon Andrew Woolley, Baron Woolley of Woodford, Kt (born 24 December 1961) is a political and equalities activist. He is the founder and director of Operation Black Vote and trustee of the charity Police Now. Woolley has been a crossbench member of the House of Lords since October 2019. He was Chair of the Government of the United Kingdom Race Disparity Unit Advisory Group until July 2020. As a political and equalities activist, he became the first black man to be elected head of an Oxbridge college. Woolley grew up on a Leicester council estate and left school without any A-levels. The cross-party peer, who was fostered and adopted as a child, later returned to education and gained a degree and a masters.

October 27th – Michaela Coel

Michaela Ewuraba Boakye-Collinson, known professionally as Michaela Coel is a British actress, writer, director and producer. Born and raised in East London to Ghanaian parents, Coel went to study English Literature and Theology at University of Birmingham. She then later transferred to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She has produced and starred in critically acclaimed E4 sitcom Chewing Gum. The widely praised BBC and HBO drama series I May Destroy You screened in 2020, is a story influenced by Coel's first-hand experience of sexual assault. Both Chewing Gum and I May Destroy You have won multiple BAFTAs, and Coel has been decorated with multiple awards for her performances. Last year, Coel was ranked 4th out of 100 influential people of African or Afro-Caribbean heritage in the UK.

October 28th – Richard Renwick, MBE

Richard has been Chief Executive of Tuntum Housing Association since 1994. In addition, Richard has worked as a freelance Management Consultant, a Regulator with the Housing Corporation and as a senior officer in the Ethnic Minorities Unit at the former Greater London Council (GLC). In the past, Richard has held the positions of Chair and other portfolios on various boards within the voluntary sector including housing associations, representative bodies and training agencies.

He is currently chair of Nottingham Carnival and The East Midlands Caribbean Carnival Association (EMCCAN) and a trustee of the UK Centre for Carnival Arts and the Nottingham Council for Voluntary Services (NCVS). In 2007 Richard was awarded the MBE for his services to social housing and the Caribbean community in the East Midlands.

**October 29th – Beryl
Louise McConnell,**

BA (Hons), Barrister-in-law
Beryl has been in private practice as a barrister in Nottingham since 1989. In her early years she practised in crime, family and civil work – predominately housing. She has represented tenants and landlords, including the Local housing authority, in contractual disputes and disputes relating to breaches of statutory duties under housing legislation. In more recent years she has specialised in family law and care work, including cases involving asylum seekers and their children. Beryl is a member of the bar council equal opportunities committee, is deputy head of her chambers and equality officer with regular exposure to equality and diversity issues.

**October 30th – Michelle Bateman,
MSc, BSc (Hons), RGN, RM,**

RHV: VICE-CHAIR
Elected in 2013, Michelle is Chief Nurse/Director of Quality for Derbyshire Community Health Services. Michelle has held a variety of posts

which have all centred on clinical leadership, quality, risk management and patient experience. She has also achieved an MSc in Health Policy in Organisations. Prior to her current job she was the Associate Director of Nursing for community and mental health services within Nottinghamshire. She was awarded the Queen's Nurse title and is currently the Regional Lead (Midlands and East) for the Chief Nursing Officer's Black and Minority Ethnic Strategic Advisory Group.

**October 31st – Mitchell Soul
Food Stores**

Based in Nottingham, Mitchell's Soul Foods has been established since 1955 as a family-run business. Specializing in authentic Caribbean foods, the store has plenty to offer, things such as: Asian & Caribbean Foods, A wide range of hair products and is also a linked shipping agency throughout the Caribbean. Colin Mitchell runs a store on Alfreton Road and his sister Claudette Mitchell runs a store on Ilkeston Road.