

# **OUR HISTORY**

**If you look at history, if history is taught properly, people could see that Britain is made up of a rich tapestry of cultures that made the land richer and better. If you were to say ‘go back home’ to the people of Britain, most would say ‘Well, you don’t mean me. I’ve been here a long time’. But everyone came from somewhere else originally.**

– Baroness Floella Benjamin

Following on from our previous Black History Month themes of **Adding to History** and **Ancestors and Descendants** with a focus on Black British histories and local historical figures, we turn our attention this year to celebrating the long-standing Black history at the College. A group of pupils have been working on an archives and research project and have been researching a selection of Black OAs (Old Alleyneians) who attended the College between the 1900s to 2000s. A continual engagement with our history helps to give context to our present and future and a sense of belonging and a connection to both our personal and community identity. We are delighted to use the events of this month – and beyond – to celebrate **Our History**.

**Ms N Whittington, Head of Wellbeing and D&I Alliance**

# DULWICH COLLEGE BLACK HISTORY MONTH



At Dulwich College, **Our History** spans more than four centuries of records and individuals. In preparation for Black History Month, the African and Caribbean Society have been researching a number of prominent Black OAs using the archives, as well as considering the question “how far back do these associations go?” The very first page of Edward Alleyne’s diary lists the mysterious “black aylec” under a list of servants in 1617, although the adjective seems not to refer to skin colour. We know that by the Victorian period the College was noted for its relatively diverse student body, and academics have conducted research into the school’s Indian population. For various reasons – many obvious, some less so – uncovering Dulwich’s Black student body can prove challenging, but the more one looks, the more discoveries are made. Family history can even be traced, with generation after generation coming to the College from the same family. Famously, Baroness Floella Benjamin’s mother worked at the College, Floella became a Governor, and her son was a pupil. This programme presents a selection, but not the complete cast, for the records demonstrate that there has been a long and continuing Black history at the College.

**Mr F Witts, Archivist**

A curious phenomenon within the field of history is the problem of absence: the people who are missing from the narrative, even though they must have been there. For years, whilst preparing students to apply to Oxford and Cambridge, I have conducted an exercise whereby I have asked them to work through the index of a popular history of the Cold War and to count all the female names they can find. In a book of nearly 500 pages, there are fewer than a dozen women mentioned. Half of them are the wives of presidents or prime ministers. I have begun to carry out the same exercise with books on other periods of history, but this time looking for the names of people from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds. Astonishingly, even in books on the British Empire, on the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and on the American Civil War, they are often shockingly few in number. A principal aim for us is to put these people back, to move beyond the conventional narratives within which they have too often been marginalised and to tell their stories. This is an exercise that requires the historian to work hard, drawing upon material culture, folklore, literature and art alongside more conventional historical source material. Our theme this year – **Our History** – gives us a chance to reflect upon those who might not always have been prominent in our own institutional memory and, using innovative historical techniques, to bring them forward into the historical light.

**Dr B Snook, Head of History**

# OUR HISTORY

## OUR HISTORY ARCHIVES PROJECT

### George and Harold Bemand

George Edward Kinsley Bemand was born on 19 March 1892 and was the first of the Bemand Brothers to attend the College. While here, he was in the 2nd XI for cricket, the leader of the contemporary Engineering Society, and boarded at Ivyholme. He left the college in 1911 and went on study Engineering at UCL. This was cut short by the outbreak of the First World War when he joined the Officers Training Corps to help his country. He was then a part of the 2nd Brigade, Royal Field Artillery and travelled to France in November 1915. Unfortunately, he was killed by a shell on Boxing Day 1916 near Bethune.



G. E. K. BEMAND.

George's younger brother, Harold Leslie Bemand, was born on 17 October 1897 and joined the College in 1913 after going to Ealing Grammar. He played in the 4th XI for cricket. He was an aspiring lawyer, but when he left school the war broke out, strong arming him into joining the army. Harold completed his military training with the 56th Reserve Battery in Woolwich, after which he joined the 23rd division Trench Mortar Battery. After a year fighting in France, he died on 7 June 1917, aged just 19. He was buried at Bedford House Cemetery next to the Ypres salient.



H. L. BEMAND.

### Ivan Shirley

Ivan Owen Belgrave Shirley OA, known by friends and family as IOB, was born in Kingston, Jamaica on 6 July 1895. Arriving in the UK in 1911, aged 16, he was known for his subtle sense of humour and warm-heartedness. After enrolling in multiple independent and grammar schools, he was rejected from all of them on the grounds of the colour of his skin. In July of 1911, he reached out to the captain of cricket at Dulwich College (Carl Nunes, a former alumnus of his), who vouched for IOB's academic integrity. Ivan led a distinguished school career: a Christmas prize-winner for science in 1911, as well as achieving the (still current) public school record for runs in a cricket match against Brighton College – he started at 171 runs for 9 wickets and made it to 370 before declaring. Ivan served as an officer in the British West Indies Regiment during World War I, in which his brother was sadly killed in 1917. IOB then qualified as a doctor in 1930, going on to have five children, one of whom was tragically killed in Italy in 1945. He also had the opportunity to work with physician Dr Moody in Peckham, a prominent campaigner for racial equality within the medical world. He later set up a successful doctor's practice in Epsom, living as he saw himself - a middle-class English gentleman - with black and white friends and family. Ivan Shirley passed away in August 1964.



# OUR HISTORY ARCHIVES PROJECT

## Hutton-Mills Family

The family of the Hutton-Mills have had three generations attend the College and span across nearly nine decades. Their history with the College started with the first mention in 1913. This boy – John Edward – previously went to school in Germany. While at Dulwich he studied Science and he later went to Clare College, Cambridge. Along with his brother came Alexander. He started at the College in 1914 and previously studied at Accra Government High School; on leaving the College, he went on to Keble College, Oxford, and then to become a barrister in 1924. Later in the family tree – Alexander's son (Alexander 11) started at the College in 1952. He followed in his father's footsteps and also went on to study at Keble College, Oxford. He sadly died in a car crash leaving his wife to raise five boys. All five of their son's went on to attend the College. The first son was James, arriving in 1981. He went to school with his brothers, Alexander and Fredrick, James became a prefect. After leaving Dulwich, Fredrick became an accomplished creator in the film industry. Edmund and Clement came to school together with Edmund joining in 1991 and Clement in 1994. Clement went on to study Modern Languages at Oxford and went on to become the Managing Director at Goldman Sachs.



**JUNIOR COLTS 'A' XV 1992**

*A. R. Daniel S. K. Patel F. V. N. Hutton-Mills J. H. M. Guinness A. J. Crees J. C. Yearle J. N. H. Watt M. J. Shaw G. R. E. Deane Mr. S. M. James  
R. J. Gayford D. J. W. Hanna C. M. I. Hall S. J. Coleman (Capt) P. J. Ross Martyn N. A. Bhatti R. E. Sudds*

# OUR HISTORY ARCHIVES PROJECT

## Chiwetel Ejiofor

Chiwetel Ejiofor is a British-Nigerian actor. Ejiofor was born on 10 July 1977 in Forest Gate, East London, to middle-class Nigerian parents of Igbo descent. His father, Arinze, was a doctor, and his mother, Obiajulu, was a pharmacist. His younger sister, Zain, is a CNN correspondent. He attended the College between 1990 and 1995 and it was here that Ejiofor became interested in acting. He recalled in one interview for a British newspaper, 'I got a part in the school play. It was the most thrilling thing I'd ever done...I became involved in the Drama department. Being part of that community gave me this tremendous feeling of self-worth, which is probably the most important emotion that you can have...' In 1995 he won House Drama for *Sidney House*. He also had a love for football as well as his love for drama; however, a disappointing season in 1995 is recorded in *The Alleynian* of his final year! In 2008, he received the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Actor and a Critics' Circle Theatre Award for playing the title character in *Othello*, and he was awarded an OBE by Queen Elizabeth II for services to drama. Now, continuing as an actor, writer and director, Chiwetel Ejiofor is renowned for his portrayal of Solomon Northup in *12 Years a Slave* (2013), for which he received Academy Award and Golden Globe Award nominations, along with the BAFTA Award for Best Actor in a Leading Role. Ejiofor's feature directorial debut, *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, earned him the Alfred P. Sloan Prize at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival.



## Chris Jordan

Chris Jordan, was born in the Christ Church region of Barbados on 4 October 1988. He began his studies in Barbados where he went to The Combermere School in the capital of Barbados, Bridgetown. Chris Jordan moved to England after he earned a sports scholarship at Dulwich College. During his time at the College he had numerous outstanding performances during the 2006-07 season - a great all-rounder but preferably a bowler. He left in 2007 in Year 13 as he signed a contract with Surrey. He went on to have a great test career for England and played numerous ODI and T20 matches. His key games include the T20 World in 2013 and 2015 World Cup where many claimed he made his legacy, even comparing him to the great bowler Malcom Marshall.



# OUR HISTORY

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Baroness Floella Benjamin  
Tuesday 11 October  
5pm  
Great Hall  
Dulwich College and SSLP schools

As part of October's Black History Month events, we are delighted to be joined by Baroness Floella Benjamin on Tuesday 11 October. She was born on the Caribbean island of Trinidad in 1949 and came to England in 1960 as part of the Windrush generation. She has enjoyed a successful career as a children's presenter, and has also worked as an actress, writer, producer, working peer and an active advocate for the welfare and education of children. Floella has an OBE and was appointed a Baroness in the House of Lords in 2010 and a Dame in the 2020 New Year Honours List.

She has also been a Governor at the College. As she recalls in her autobiography: 'One of my mother's three jobs when I was a little girl was to do the laundry for the College's boarders at this school. Then her own grandson had gone to Dulwich College. And finally, there was I, her daughter, on the governing body. The same year, 2001, I was awarded an OBE for my contribution to television, so when I opened a new wing of Dulwich College, the inscription on the wall recorded that award.' Floella was a Governor for ten years.

She will be sharing extracts from her autobiography 'What Are You Doing Here?' published in 2022. The book describes her arriving in London as a child and the pain caused by racism she encountered. But this pain was offset by the love of her parents, who gave her a lasting self-belief, confidence and pride in her heritage that have carried her through life.

Floella will share the lessons that she has learned through her joyful and positive outlook whilst also sharing aspects of the social, cultural, political, and personal history that have shaped the world around her.



# EVENTS AROUND COLLEGE

## SENIOR SCHOOL

### Libraries

Libraries across the Junior, Lower, and Senior School are celebrating Black History Month by spotlighting non-fiction, exploring Black history, the experience of Black Britons, and the Black identity today, and fiction, recommending favourite novels by Black authors.

### Black History Month Pop-Up Library

Tuesday 11 October, morning break in the Lower Hall (Wodehouse Library books)

Friday 14 October during lunchtime in the Christison Hall (Wodehouse & Raymond Chandler library books)

Come check out a selection of the library's best Black History Month reading, including fiction by Black authors and non-fiction about the history and present of Black Britain

Browse our displays in the Raymond Chandler Library and Wodehouse Library, and/ or explore our reading (and listening!) lists to view recommended titles:

- [Lower School fiction & non-fiction](#)
- [Middle & Upper School fiction](#)
- [Middle & Upper School non-fiction](#)
- [Recommended podcasts](#)

Follow our [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) all month for staff recommendations of their favourite Black History Month reads

**Black History Month: a selection of non-fiction for Junior School pupils**

[Go to this Sway](#)

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN THE LIBRARIES

- Browse displays
- Explore reading lists
- Visit pop-up libraries



# ACADEMIC AND SOCIETY EVENTS

## Lower School House Art Competition

For the Lower School House Art Competition Our History, the Art department in collaboration with the Diversity and Inclusion Alliance have set a creative challenge for all lower school students. From the chosen prominent Black OAs who attended the College between the 1900s and 2000s, George and Harold Bemand, Ivan Shirley, the Hutton-Mills Family, Chiwetel Ejiofor, and Chris Jordan pupils will refer to a wide range of references, and take inspiration from the recent exhibition at the Hayward, 'In the Black Fantastic'. Our young artists have been given until 4 November to respond to the brief and present their own research and artwork. Artists including Nick Cave, Ellen Gallagher, Hew Locke, and Wangechi Mutu will inspire their creative responses.



## Year 8 Pottery and Year 13 Liberal Studies

Year 13 Liberal Studies classes and the Year 8 'Make' club will be investigating the ceramic work of both Magdalene Odundo and Theaster Gates. Kenyan-born Magdalene Odundo OBE is an acclaimed ceramic artist, whose vessels are reminiscent of the human form, often following the curves of the spine, stomach, or hair. Theaster Gates is an American community activist and artist whose work, which has included multimedia projects, installations, and performance art, questions issues of racial and economic inequality.



## Year 10 & 12 Half Term Research Projects

Students will be offered a series of artists to research and explore during half term responding to the theme of **Our History**. Looking at artwork's such as Yinka Shonibare's 'Cheeky Little Astronomer', or Arthur Jafa's 'Love is the Message', pupils will present a narrated time-based response using video, animation or a combination of the two.





# ACADEMIC AND SOCIETY EVENTS

## DT Jewellery Project

In DT Year 12 pupils are working on a brief to make a collection of jewellery that will be sold as part of the Kakuma Collection.

The students are taking inspiration from the creative work, culture, heritage and experiences of refugees from a range of countries in East Africa including DRC, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Congo. All profits from this initiative will go directly to creative educational learning and enterprise in Kakuma refugee camp through our collaboration with the charity MyStart project. [www.mystartproject.co.uk](http://www.mystartproject.co.uk)

The project requires the pupils to design, prototype and manufacture a run of four identical pieces of jewellery, this builds their fine and accurate motor skills as they are working to a very high level of detail. To help them achieve this goal they take part in two-day long masterclasses from award winning jewellery makers who ensure the quality of the end product.



# ACADEMIC AND SOCIETY EVENTS

## Creative writing

Lines of poetry/Lines of history

Tuesday 4 October, 4-5.15pm

Wodehouse Library

A practical poetry workshop for Upper School Creative writers, in which participants will collaborate to produce a jointly authored poem exploring our histories and their shared meaning.

## Politics

Throughout October, Year 12 Politics lessons will have a heavy focus on UK racial equality during Black History Month – starting with the history and current reality of our system of representative democracy, assessing how ‘representative’ it really is, then considering Black Lives Matter as a case study of social movements’ impact on society. Meanwhile, Year 13 will study US civil rights, considering their constitutional protection – or lack thereof – by the Supreme Court.



## MFL

In German lessons, in Lower and Middle School pupils will be learning about well-known Germans figures with African heritage, and in Upper School pupils will explore the troubled German colonial past.

Probably the most well-known figure would be Gerald Asamoah who having come to Germany from Ghana as a child and became the first African player to be a member of the German national football team and in retirement has become the patron of a charity called “Schule ohne Rassismus, Schule mit Courage” – “School without racism, School with courage”.

We will also be doing activities in French based around famous French figures of African origin and their role in the Francophone world. There are some amazing stories! Bessie Coleman is a really interesting and empowering example:

[www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/bessie-coleman](http://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/bessie-coleman)

Year 9 will be exploring the Haitian Revolution, and Toussaint Louverture in History lessons throughout the month.

# SOCIETIES

Upper School Film Club presents

*12 Years a Slave*

Screenings will be on Thursdays throughout October - further details to follow through tutors

1.45-2.30pm

N202

Upper School Film Club will be screening the 2013 Oscar-winning film *12 Years a Slave* directed by Steve McQueen. It stars OA Chiwetel Ejiofor and is the harrowing true-life story of Solomon Northup, a free man kidnapped and sold into slavery in 1841.

Economics Society

Location and background effects in Economics

Thursday 6 October

1.45-2.25pm

S102

Econ Soc will be looking at the deprivations maps of Southwark Council and Enfield Council and making comparisons between growing up in these different areas.

History Society

Celebrating Black OAs

Friday 7 October

4-5pm

Masters' Library

We have a special History Society session for Black History Month. Freddie Witts from Archive along with a group of current students will present on the experiences of Dulwich's three Black students who fought in World War One.

Physics Society

Friday 7 October

1.45-2.30pm

PH02

Refraction practical's inspired by the work of Edward Bouchet (the first Black scientist to achieve PhD in Physics)

Chemistry Society

Thursday 13 October

1.50-2.30pm

CH04

Investigating the reactions of carboxylic acids inspired by the work of St Elmo Brady (first Black scientist to achieve a PhD in Chemistry)

## Junior Doctor's Society and African and Caribbean Society

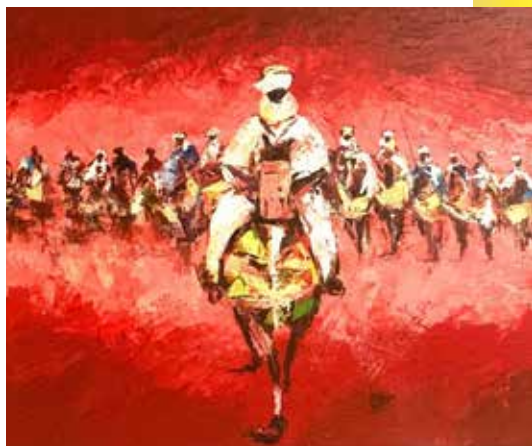
Dr Isi Obuaya OA

Thursday 13 October

1.45-2.30pm

Wodehouse Library

Dr Isi Obuaya OA has had a 25 year career in medicine including general practice and itinerant medical jobs for the FA (working with the blind, cerebral palsy all the way through to a stint with West Ham). He has also worked with Transport for London and even at a London prison. Isi has now moved into the world of writing and literature, having his first novel 'The Durbar's Apprentice' published in May of this year. He will be joining us to share his vast experience of the medical profession and also to share readings and a discussion of his novel set-in pre-colonial 17th century Nigeria.



## Economics

Robert Ottey OA

Thursday 13 October

1.50-2.30pm

LG1

Robert is a Regional Head of Auditing at Standard Chartered. He has also taken leading roles within Standard Chartered on the staff network focussed on Origin, Nationality and Ethnicity. In particular, he has successfully highlighted some of the UK-specific workplace experience and career opportunities for Black talents and the need to encourage and nurture home grown British Black talent in the financial industry.



## LitSoc

The Veil: Exploring Post-Slavery Black Representations in American Literature

Thursday 13 October

4-5pm

Masters' Library

WEB DuBois described the lived Black experience as being 'born with a veil... It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity.'



Join us to explore how a range of artists and writers used their creativity to share what an existence with a veil was like. Through this we will also start to celebrate the multitude of Black identities and representations.

### MFL Culture Society

Friday 14 October

1.50–2.30pm

N107

“Similarity and difference”

Black and Indigenous stories from the French, German & Spanish-speaking worlds.

### Biology Society and Climate Change Society

Dr Robert Holdbrook OA

Friday 14 October

1.45–2.30pm

BY01

Combined Science and Climate Change Society talk. Dr Robert Holdbrook OA is a senior scientist for Advanced Bacterial Sciences and leads the development of bacterial products for sustainable management of urban and agricultural waste.

### GeogSoc

Rurality and Ethnicity in the UK

Friday 14 October

1.45–2.25pm

S102

A talk on rurality and ethnicity in the UK, exploring why rural areas are not as ethnically diverse, rural othering and racism, and how rural spaces are changing.

### Classics Society

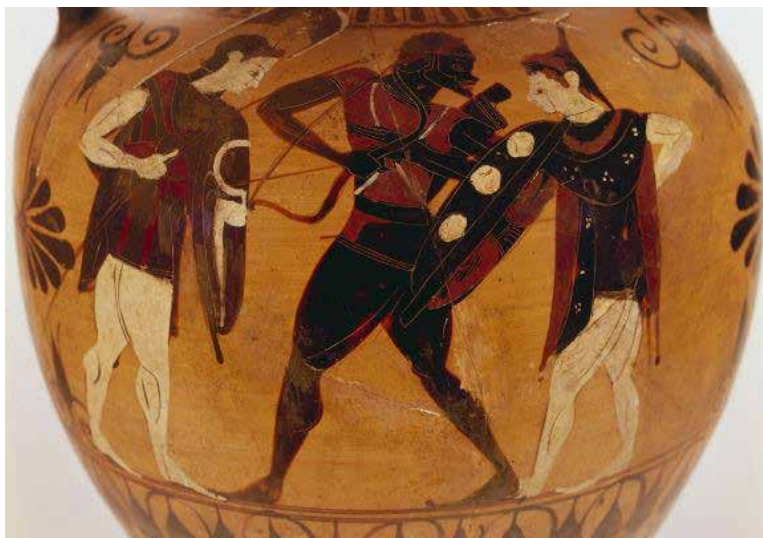
Africa and the Near East

Friday 14 October

1.45–2.30pm

C001

Dr Croally will be chairing a panel discussion with special guests, aiming to interrogate the discipline of Classics itself. Has Classics been too focused on European identity? Can such a traditional discipline change its priorities?



Art Society  
Presents Obi Okigo 'Meltings and meeting points'.  
Friday 14 October  
11.30am-12.15pm on zoom

Obi Okigo will join us as part of BHM to discuss her journey from Nigeria to Kent, from architecture to painting. Initially practicing architecture in London, Rome and Paris until 1995 when she moved to Brussels and pursued her passion for painting. Obi's training as an architect left a strong imprint on her work, expanding her reach through new media and support, ranging from "Indian ink on linen" to oil paint on canvas and collage.



*Like the alchemist who skilfully combines different elements to produce one unified material form, I conceive of each piece as a meeting/ melting point. My work summons the land of my ancestors my hopes desires regret failures my strength my craft my belief & my favourite things. Layered temporalities distilled into a single moment - Anchored to the present. Doth manifest bear fruit and in turn multiply. In a going and coming. That goes on forever*

Art Society  
Presents Alex Bowie from the DPG discussing Anthony Daley 'Son of Rubens'  
Friday 14 October  
1.45-2.30pm  
Masters' Library

We will be joined by the Dulwich Picture Gallery's Alex Bowie who will be discussing their current exhibition by Anthony Daley 'Son of Rubens'. Daley came to the UK from Jamaica in 1972, studying at Wimbledon College of Arts in 1982 and Chelsea College of Arts in 1983.



*Son of Rubens* is curated by Lisa Anderson, Managing Director of the Black Cultural Archives. This display is part of the Gallery's new *Unlocking Paintings* series, which presents new perspectives on the Gallery's collection.

# OUR HISTORY

## Junior School

During Black History Month, pupils in the Junior School will have many opportunities to learn about and explore the theme of **Our History**.

### Assemblies

In Assemblies over the two weeks, Junior School pupils will be introduced to the theme of **Our History**. A group of Senior School pupils will present their research on seven black Old Alleynian's and their impact on the community. 4G's Class Assembly will teach Junior School students about the civil rights movement in the US and celebrate the stories and achievements of significant people throughout history.

### Lessons

In Humanities and Wellbeing lessons throughout Black History Month, Junior School pupils will delve deeper into the lives of black Old Alleynians. They will also look at their current topics through a Black History lens, discussing what actions this generation can take to create an inclusive future.

### House Competition

Before half term, we will launch the **Our History** House Competition, in which the students will research their own family histories and design a family tree.

### Breaktime activities

During these two weeks, Junior School pupils will be invited to attend a range of break time screenings and podcast listening parties, following the theme of **Our History**. This will include the documentary 'Everybody's Game' featuring OA and rugby player Beno Obano.

## OUR HISTORY

### DUCKS

During Black History Month, pupils in DUCKS will have many opportunities to learn about and explore through the theme of 'Our Planet'.

#### Assemblies

In assemblies over the two weeks, DUCKS pupils will recognise and begin to understand Black History Month both as a concept and its significance. We will do this through celebrating the culture, history and achievements of Black people in Britain as well as learning how important it is to talk about and recognise Black history and to learn about Black role models in society.

#### Lessons

In Understanding the World, Humanities and Wellbeing lessons throughout Black History Month, DUCKS pupils will look at their lessons with a Black History lens, delving deeper into the lives of Black historical figures, such as Rosa Parks, Nelson Mandela and Katherine Johnson. We will also encourage children to talk about themselves and understand others, including what we look like, our emotions, making friends and the routines of the school day. Year 2 will extend by learning about the significance of 'voice' and democracy and how this can aid equity. Alma Woodsey Thomas we be a catalyst for examining and discovering art by Black artists. Inspired we will then create our own interpretations through a variety of medium.



# Beyond DC Black History Month

- Events to get involved in over Half Term... and beyond

There are a number of events taking place around Southwark during October. These include arts and crafts; theatre; workshops; and talks.

You can find details of these events at:

[www.southwark.gov.uk/events-culture-and-heritage/search?c=308](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/events-culture-and-heritage/search?c=308)

Celebrating...

**BLACK  
HISTORY  
MONTH**

Southwark  
Council  
southwark.gov.uk

**DULWICH COLLEGE BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**OUR HISTORY**