

Project to Document the Lives of Jamaicans in the UK Launched

A project to encourage persons of Jamaican heritage in the {mosmodule phpinc=ttpopup.php,United Kingdom}(UK) to learn, share and document the legacy and achievements of their elders, has been launched in the UK.

Dubbed the 'Charmed Life Campaign' the initiative is being spearheaded by founder of the 'Every Generation' black history website, Councillor Patrick Vernon, and was unveiled at the Jamaican High Commission in London recently.

Councillor Vernon, who represents the London Borough of Hackney, said that the project acknowledges the importance of recording the country's history through film and books, to educate and inform young people about such history, and to celebrate the achievements of the Windrush Generation. He said that the present generation has a moral obligation to ensure that the history of Jamaicans in Britain was not lost. "I am really very worried that there are a lot of Jamaican elders, particularly men who are living on their own, who are not telling the stories about their lives, about the key lessons and values that Jamaica taught them, and why they came to Britain. I am concerned that in 2018, when the next (major) Windrush celebration in Britain comes, all these Jamaicans, who came to Britain in the 40s and 50s would have passed on and we have not properly recorded their stories," he lamented. Councillor Vernon said that young people of Jamaican and Caribbean heritage need to know that their elders paid a vital role in the development of British society. "The key thing is that Jamaicans have made a significant contribution to the life of Britain, but a lot of Jamaican youngsters don't know that history," he said. The 'Charmed Life Campaign' takes its name from the film by Councillor Vernon on the life of Jamaican-born Eddie Noble, who left Jamaica during World War II to join the Royal Airforce. The film was recently screened at a special event at the Jamaican High Commission, which included the launch of two books about the lives of Jamaicans and other ethnic minorities, who served in the British Armed Forces in the World Wars. The books are 'Life According to Maas Roy' by Yvonne Archer and 'Under One Flag' by Erica Myers-Davis. In her book, Mrs. Archer tells the story of her Jamaican-born father Stanley Roy Archer, who lived in post-war Britain, his military experience in Cyprus and his subsequent return to Jamaica. Mrs. Archer co-wrote the book with her father. Mrs. Myers-Davis' book highlights the contribution of people of colour to Britain during World War II. She said she was concerned that not much was being written about this aspect of British history. Royalties from 'Under One Flag' goes to the Royal Commonwealth Ex-services League, which supports ex-service men and women in 48 countries including Jamaica. Mrs. Myers-Davis informed that in Jamaica, the funds, which amount to some \$3 million annually, are managed by the Jamaica Legion, which operates the Curphey Home in Manchester. -JIS