



The Essex County
Black Historical
Research Society



AMHERSTBURG
FREEDOM MUSEUM

2020 Windsor-Essex Black History Month Activity Schedule

Essex County is rich in Black history. Canadians of African descent have played important roles in the cultural, political, social, and economic progress of our communities. Our region has been populated by people of African descent from the 18th century, when free Black Loyalists as well as enslaved Africans were among the area's early residents; to the 19th century when formerly enslaved African Americans and free people of colour streamed into this area by the thousands, fleeing either bondage or oppression; to the modern era when immigrants from the continent of Africa and the Caribbean made this region their new home.

Here are some of the Black History Month events happening around our region.

January 31st: Join us on Friday, January 31st at 7:00 p.m. for the annual Windsor-Essex Black History Month Kick-Off, featuring Black history highlights, poetry, dance, and music. This free event is taking place at the Caribbean Centre, 2410 Central Avenue, Windsor, and is hosted by the Essex County Black Historical Research Society, the Windsor West Indian Association, and the Amherstburg Freedom Museum. We will publicly recognize the importance of Black History Month as well as encourage the community to participate in the array of Black History Month events happening locally.

February 1st, 2020: The Amherstburg Freedom Museum is partnering with the Windsor Express Basketball team to help kick-off Black History Month (BHM) celebrations at the WFCU Centre. Come join us on February 1st, with a 7pm tipoff! Tickets are \$30 each. The ticket includes admission to the **Pregame Pick-up Basketball Game** from 4-5pm and the **Courtside Mixer** from 6-7pm. \$15 from your ticket goes back to the Amherstburg Freedom Museum. Come out to support the museum! For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact the museum at 519-736-5433.

February 1 – 28, 2020: The Amherstburg Freedom Museum is offering \$1 off admission per person to celebrate Black History Month! In order to claim the discount, tell us when the Nazrey African Methodist Episcopal Church National Historic Site of Canada was built and by whom, when you purchase your ticket. This discount is only available in February and only if the correct response (in 1848 people fleeing American slavery built this church by hand to serve Amherstburg's growing Black community) is given. Hours of operation: Tues-Fri 12 pm – 5 pm, Sat & Sun 1 pm – 5 pm. FOR MORE INFO: Contact 519-736-5433 or visit amherstburgfreedom.org.

February 1st – April 19th: "Journeys" - The Amherstburg Freedom Museum in partnership with the Artists of Colour will back by popular demand host the exhibit opening for "Journeys", featuring original works of art plus new additions this year from a group of local Black artists who form the committee of the Artists of Colour. The opening will feature live entertainment, providing accompaniment to the exhibit. **Opening Reception Saturday February 8, 2020 from 4pm-7pm**, at the Amherstburg Freedom Museum (277 King Street, Amherstburg). Visit amherstburgfreedom.org for more information.

February 1st-April 30th: Eastern Star & Masons Temporary Exhibit on display at the Amherstburg Freedom Museum. Featuring artifacts from local Eastern Star and Mason groups.

February 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th: Every Saturday in February from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., the historic Sandwich First Baptist Church will open its doors for public tours. Tours are free although donations are gratefully accepted. The congregation of Sandwich First Baptist Church has been in existence since approximately 1840 and the church, built by hand by members of Sandwich's African Canadian community with bricks they made themselves from Detroit River clay, was dedicated in 1851. The church is located at 3652 Peter Street in Windsor.

February 6th: The Museum Windsor Volunteer Group invites members of the public to a presentation entitled *Chronicling Black Lives in Sandwich and Windsor*, February 6th, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the Duff-Baby Interpretation Centre, 221 Mill Street in Windsor. Author and historian Irene Moore Davis will be talking about the process of writing, researching, and seeking feedback for the upcoming publication: *Our Own Two Hands: A History of Black Lives in Windsor*. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. This is a free event. For more information, contact Craig Cappachione at 519.253.1812 ext. 2532 or ccapacchione@citywindsor.ca.

February 7th-13th: Afrofest 2020 takes place at the University of Windsor, presented by the University of Windsor Students' Alliance, featuring guest speakers, vendors, discussions, and a showcase of Black student/community talent. The African Diaspora Festival (Afrofest) is a weeklong celebration that commemorates the history and work of the African diaspora and the contributions of Black people globally and locally. The year 2020 marks the 5th year—the halfway point—of the United Nations' Declaration of International Decade for People of African Descent and February 2020 marks Afrofest's 15th anniversary. The intended focus will be on the Black radical tradition and its many facets in Black life related to the post-secondary experience and beyond. Through various analytic points, such as academia, activism, scholarship, literature, creative industries, and community organizing, Afrofest puts forward innovative, ethical, and rigorous discussions of anti-Black racism and resistance in relation to mental health, politics, legal education and practice, immigration, social work, media, and arts. It does so with a critical look at Blackness along the intersections of gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, self-love, the body, and notions of belonging. To view the complete Afrofest 2020 schedule, visit <https://uwsa.ca/afrofest20/>.

February 7th-14th: The Coalition for Justice Unity and Equity will present "HALLS OF FAME." Stroll through the halls which will be adorned with poster size photos of some of our everyday leaders in recognition of their contributions to Windsor and region. The exhibit will run Friday, February 7th through Friday, February 14th, Monday to Friday, 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm, at Sandwich Teen Action Group, 3735 King St. in Windsor.

February 7th: The Coalition for Justice Unity and Equity will offer a youth event entitled "The Genius and Meaning of the Underground Railroad Quilt to the Freedom Movement," Friday, February 7th at 6:00 p.m. at Sandwich Teen Action Group, 3735 King Street in Windsor. The event will feature beautiful quilt patch creations, readings by youth, and historian Elise Harding Davis. Refreshments will be available.

February 9th: Local historian Irene Moore Davis presents "Contested Memory, Complicated History: Reflecting on the Earliest Black Lives in Essex County" during the Sunday morning service at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Olinda, 2953 Olinda Side Road, Ruthven, ON N0P 2G0, Sunday, February 9th, 10:30 a.m. All are welcome. For information, contact uuolinda@gmail.com or 519-326-4352.

February 9th: Sunday, February 10th: The Windsor West Indian Association's annual Black History Brunch is happening on Sunday, February 9th, 12:30-5:30 p.m. at the Caribbean Centre, 2410 Central Avenue, Windsor, featuring delicious Caribbean cuisine. For information and tickets call (519) 945-0213 or e-mail

wwiavp@bellnet.ca. Tickets are also available at the door. Adults \$20.00 per person; children 12 and under \$10.00.

February 15th: The Unifor Local 444 Aboriginal Workers of Colour Caucus Committee invites everyone to its annual Black History Month Celebration, "The Unity of Our Community," to be held Saturday, February 15th, 1:00-5:00 p.m. at Unifor Local 200-444, 1855 Turner Road. This event will feature soul food, performances, poetry/spoken word, guest speakers, displays, vendors, prizes, and more. Featured contributors will include historian Elise Harding Davis with a tribute to her sister, the late Shelley Harding-Smith, Canada's first African Canadian female master electrician, historian Irene Moore Davis, and author, spoken word artist and drummer Teajai Travis. All are welcome. Admission: \$15. For further information contact Local 444 Hall at (519) 258-6400 or Yvonne Browning-Coates, Chair, at (519) 819-5342.

February 18th: Vanessa Shields of Gertrude's Writing Room presents a Black History Month Ekphrastic Writing Workshop in collaboration with Talysha Bujold-Abu, Gallery Manager & Membership Coordinator of the Arts Council, Windsor Region. This ekphrastic writing workshop is a celebration of contemporary artists of colour. Our two-hour workshop will present an artist's work without context followed by a written response to the art guided by a writing prompt (any style of writing is welcome in response to the art – poetry, scene, dialogue, free-write, etc.), and then a discussion about the artist, the history of his/her/they work, and sharing of the written work. We will offer information about the artists so writers can further interact and respond to the art beyond the workshop. The intention of this workshop is to engage with visual art through writing and discussion. Bujold-Abu's expertise with contemporary artists of colour will enable writers to discover new artists, to learn about these artist's rich creative lives, to write in response to this art, and finally to celebrate the intersection of visual art and writing with contemporary artists of colour. Black History Month Ekphrastic Writing Workshop Tuesday, February 18th, 2020, 6:30pm-8:30pm, Teachers: Talysha Bujold-Abu & Vanessa Shields, Cost: \$50.00. Location: Gertrude's Writing Room, 1899 Niagara Street, The Stable Yard at the Coach House, Willistead Park, Windsor ON N8Y 1K3. Register by Sunday, February 16th, 2020 at www.gertrudeswritingroom.com.

February 20th: Did you know that Underground Railroad travelers sometimes sought their liberty in Mexico, south of the U.S. border, rather than heading north to freedom? Join the Essex County Black Historical Research Society for a fascinating talk by visiting Fulbright scholar Maria Esther Hammack (University of Texas at Austin.) Hammack will present her research regarding the experiences of enslaved and free Black women, men, and children who formed Black communities *in Mexico* in the Underground Railroad era. In her presentation titled "Destinations of Freedom in North America: Bridging Histories of the Underground Railroad," Hammack will highlight journeys and experiences that enslaved and free Black people, from the United States, undertook as they fled South, to Mexican destinations in search for freedom. She will showcase some of the channels of liberation engineered by freedom-seekers and describe how she has been able to reconstruct some of their journeys. Additionally, Maria will speak briefly on how she reconsiders the *Underground Railroad* to be inclusive of experiences, geographies, and freedoms North and South of US slavery. These narratives not only connect Black liberation histories, but the African Diaspora in North America. This lecture is free to the public and is taking place on Thursday, February 20th at 7:00 p.m. at the Chmuczuk Museum, 401 Riverside Drive West in Windsor.

February 23rd: The Windsor West Indian Association's annual Black History Tea is happening on Sunday, February 23rd, 2:00-5:00 p.m. at the Caribbean Centre, 2410 Central Avenue, Windsor. Come for tea and vibrant Black history discussion! Admission by donation. For information call (519) 945-0213 or e-mail wwiavp@bellnet.ca.

February 26th: Black Kids in Action and the Youth Connection Association present "It's Us," February 26, 2020 at the Capitol Theatre, 121 University Avenue West in Windsor. Doors open at 6 pm; show starts at 7 pm.

Adults \$25.00, children \$15.00. For tickets or info, call 519-566-8791, 226-246-6155, or 519-792-7857, or email bkiayouths2019@gmail.com. Tickets are also available on Eventbrite.

February 27th: Kimberly Simmons will tell the story of her ancestor Caroline Quarrls Watkins' epic journey from slavery in Missouri to freedom in Sandwich, part of the monthly Green Bean Reads series at the Green Bean Café, Thursday, February 27th, 7:00-9:00 p.m., 2320 Wyandotte Street West, lower level. There will also be an open mic for those who wish to read passages from the great treasure trove of Black and African Diaspora literature. The Green Bean Reads series is presented by the Windsor Storytellers Collective on the fourth Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m.

February 28th-29th: The Nigerian Canadians for Cultural, Educational and Economic Progress (NCCEEP) will be hosting a two-day Black History Month Event. On February 28th, you are invited to explore Black history at Uncle Tom's Cabin in Dresden Ontario, the Amherstburg First Baptist Church and the Amherstburg Freedom Museum. Seating is LIMITED so please RSVP to reserve your seat on the bus. Pick-up time 9:00 a.m., drop off time 6:00 p.m. Location: 3176 Walker Rd, Windsor ON, N8W 3R5. Saturday, February 29th will mark the last day of Black History Month and NCCEEP will be celebrating at Mackenzie Hall, 3277 Sandwich Street West in Windsor, 2:00-5:00 p.m. Join in a celebration of the past as well as the history we are creating today for future generations with historical presentations, dance, poetry and more.

February 29th: Good People United against Racism and Intolerance will host a Unity Gala at Caesars Windsor, Augustus Ballroom, 377 Riverside Drive West, Saturday, Feb. 29th at 7:00 p.m. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. This year's event will feature red carpet interviews, a three course dinner, award presentations, live entertainment, a silent auction and more. Tickets \$85.00. The gala is an opportunity for all good people from all ethnic groups, religious backgrounds, organizations, unions and the entire spectrum of movements for social and economic justice to come together in unity and take a stand against racism and intolerance. Tickets are available at <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/2020-unity-gala-at-caesars-palace-windsor-augustus-ballroom-tickets-85055831281>.



Keep up to date on 2020 Black History Month events happening in Windsor-Essex County!

Visit amherstburgfreedom.org for the latest and most accurate information.



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Look for updated listings at the **Black History Month Windsor-Essex** Facebook page.