

BLACK CANADIANS

IN OUR HISTORY

Organized by Michelle C. Guy
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Black Canadians in our History

INDEX	Pg.
Historical	
Mathieu da Costa	2
Viola Desmond	3
Elija McCoy	4
John Wear	5
Medicine/ Science	
Anderson Ruffin Abbott	7
Clotilda Yakimchuk	8
Charles Lightfoot Roman	9
Dr. Eugenia Duodu (born 1989)	10
Law	
Abraham Beverley Walker	11
Violet Pauline King Henry	12
Politics	
Abraham Doras Shadd	13
Lincoln Alexander	14
Jean Augustine	15
Film & Television/Music	
Claire Prieto	16
Roger Cross	17
Kyle Jean-Baptiste	18
Vinessa Antoine	19
Music	
Oscar Emmanuel Peterson	20
Portia White	21
Measha Brueggergosman	22
Liberty Silver	23
Wesley Williams - Maestro or Maestro Fresh-Wes	24
Athletics/Sport	
Barbara Howard	25
Willie Eldon O'Ree	26
Françoise Abanda	27
Felix Auger-Aliassime	28
Donovan Bailey	29

Black Canadians in our History

Historical Figures

Mathieu da costa (artist's conception)

First recorded free black person to arrive in Canada.



Mathieu da Costa (sometimes **d'Acosta**) was a member of the exploring party of Pierre Dugua, the Sieur de Monts, and Samuel de Champlain that travelled from France to the New World in the early 17th century. He was the first recorded free black person to arrive on the territory of today's Canada.

There is little documentation about Mathieu da Costa. Of at least partial African ancestry, he is known to have been a freeman favoured by explorers for his multilingual talents. Numerous mixed-race African-Portuguese persons were part of the Atlantic Creole generation, often working as sailors or interpreters. His portfolio of languages is thought to have included Dutch, English, French, Portuguese, Mi'kmaq, and pidgin Basque, the dialect many Aboriginals used for trading purposes.

Commemorations

A domestic rate postage stamp honoring da Costa was issued by Canada Post on February 1, 2017, in conjunction with Black History Month.

A plaque at Port Royal, Nova Scotia commemorates da Costa's contribution. It is part of the Mathieu da Costa African Heritage Trail, a series of monuments marking African Nova Scotian history in the Annapolis Valley. It was unveiled in July 2005[11]

The Mathieu da Costa Challenge was an annual creative writing and artwork contest started in 1996 by the Department of Canadian Heritage. The challenge encourages youth to discover how diversity has shaped Canada's history and the important role that pluralism plays in Canadian society. A school in Toronto and two streets, one in Montreal and the other in Quebec City, have also been named after da Costa.

Source – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mathieu_da_Costa

Black Canadians in our History

Viola Desmond (1914 – 1965)

Canadian civil rights activist and businesswoman of Black Nova Scotian descent.



Viola Irene Desmond (July 6, 1914 – February 7, 1965) was a Canadian civil rights activist and businesswoman of Black Nova Scotian descent. In 1946 she challenged racial segregation at a cinema in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia by refusing to leave a whites-only area of the Roseland Theatre. For this, she was convicted of a minor tax violation for the one-cent tax difference between the seat she had paid for and the seat she used, which was more expensive. In 2010.

... There were no formal laws enforcing segregation in movie theatres in New Glasgow, and the theatre had no sign telling its patrons about the policy, but main floor seats were reserved for white patrons. Ms. Desmond was sold a ticket ...

... Desmond was granted a posthumous pardon, the first to be granted in Canada.

...Growing up, Desmond noted the absence of professional hair and skin-care products for black women and set her sights on addressing the need. Being of African descent, she was not allowed to train to become a beautician in Halifax, so she left and received beautician training in Montreal, Atlantic City and one of Madam C. J. Walker's beauty schools in New York. Upon finishing her training, Desmond returned to Halifax to start her own hair salon. Her clients included Portia White and a young Gwen Jenkins, later the first black nurse in Nova Scotia.

Commemorations

Cape Breton University established a scholarship campaign in the names of Viola Desmond and ...named a Chair in Social Justice after Desmond.

In 2012, Desmond was portrayed on a commemorative stamp issued by Canada Post.

On July 7, 2016, a Halifax harbour ferry was launched bearing her name.

On December 8, 2016, Viola Desmond was chosen as the first Canadian woman to appear on her own on the Canadian ten-dollar ... the Bank of Canada released a new design of the \$10 bill, celebrating Viola Desmond's achievements in the civil rights movement. ...Desmond was the first non-royal woman to appear alone on a regularly circulated note.

Desmond was named a National Historic Person on January 12, 2018.

Source – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viola_Desmond

Black Canadians in our History

Elijah McCoy (May 2, 1844 [2] – October 10, 1929)

Canadian-born inventor and engineer.



Elijah J. McCoy (May 2, 1844 [2] – October 10, 1929) was a Canadian-born inventor and engineer of African American descent who was notable for his 57 US patents, most having to do with the lubrication of steam engines. Born free in Canada, he came to the United States as a young child when his family returned in 1847, becoming a U.S. resident and citizen.

Elijah McCoy was educated in black schools of Colchester Township due to the 1850 Common Schools act which segregated the Upper Canadian schools in 1850. At age 15, in 1859, Elijah McCoy was sent to Edinburgh, Scotland for an apprenticeship and study. After some years, he was certified in Scotland as a mechanical engineer. ...

...He invented an automatic lubricator for oiling the steam engines of locomotives and ships, patenting it in 1872 as "Improvement in Lubricators for Steam-Engines" (U.S. Patent 129,843).

Regarding the phrase "The real McCoy"

This popular expression, typically meaning the real thing, has been incorrectly attributed to Elijah McCoy's oil-drip cup invention. One theory is that railroad engineers looking to avoid inferior copies would request it by name,¹ and inquire if a locomotive was fitted with "the real McCoy system". ...

Source – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elijah_McCoy

Black Canadians in our History

John Ware (c. 1845—11 September 1905)

Black Canadian cowboy and rancher.



John Ware... was a Canadian cowboy who was influential in the early years of the burgeoning ranching industry in Southern Alberta. Remembered for his excellent horsemanship, he was among the first ranchers in Alberta, arriving in 1882 on a cattle drive from the United States and settling to ranch until his death in 1905.

... Ware was born into slavery on a plantation near Georgetown, South Carolina. After the American Civil War he left the Carolinas for Texas where he learned the skills of a rancher and became a cowboy. Ware's great stature and dedication to hard work made him a natural and allowed him to work his way up to Canada driving cattle from Texas to Montana.

... The story of John Ware is that of a remarkable figure in history who helped to lay the foundations of the ranching industry in western Canada and at the same time defying stereotypes. Born into slavery, Ware worked his way to being one of the most well-respected figures on Albertan frontier, and is still an important part of Alberta's history.

2) Commemoration

In southern Alberta, several places near the site of John Ware's first ranch are named for him. These include Mount Ware, Ware Creek and John Ware Ridge. Calgary is home to John Ware Junior High. At the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, the John Ware Building houses the 4 Nines Dining Centre.

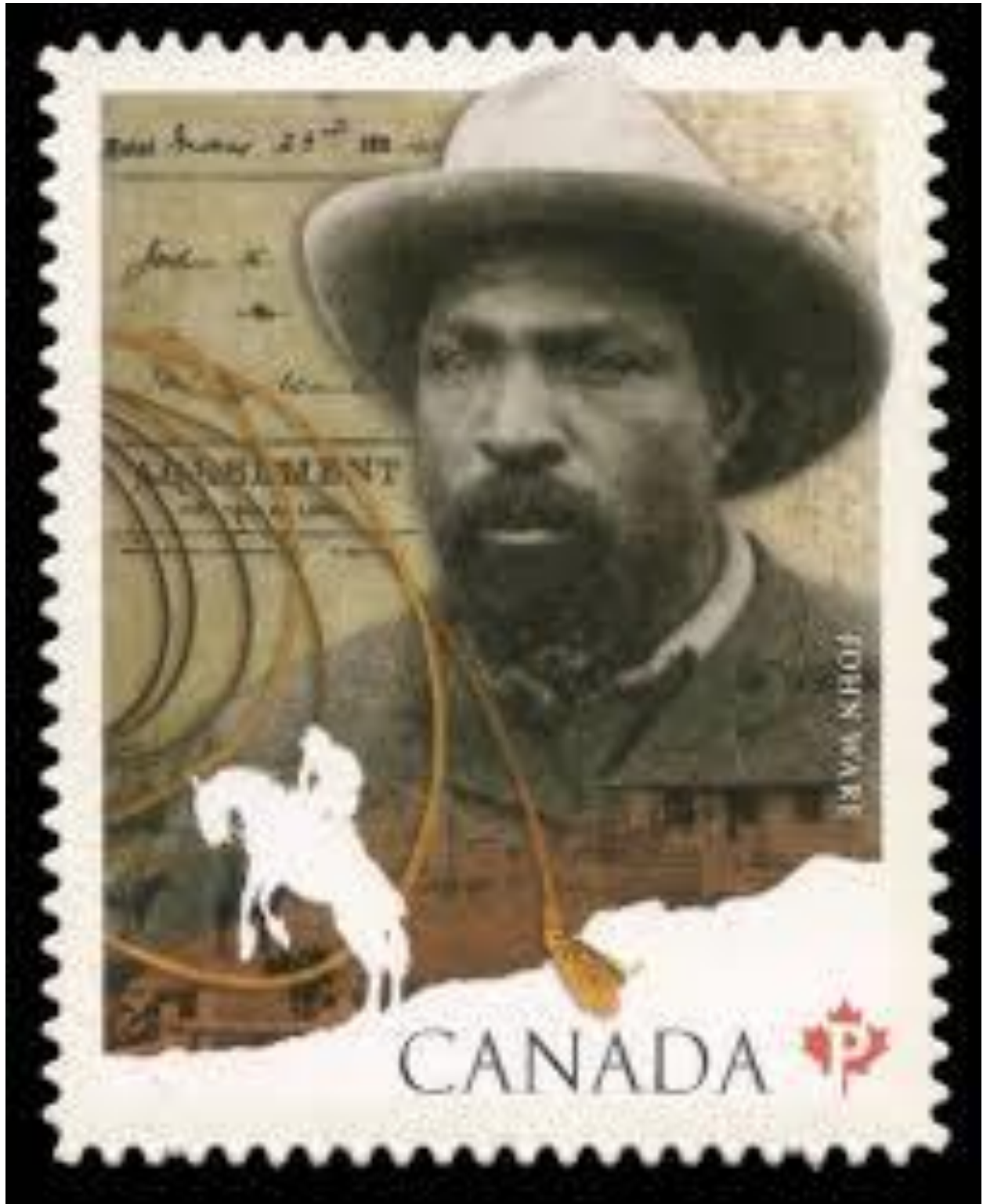
In February 2012, during Black History Month, Canada Post issued a stamp in honour of John Ware.

Sources

- 1) – [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Ware_\(cowboy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Ware_(cowboy))
- 2) – <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/john-ware>

Black Canadians in our History

John Wear – Stamp



Black Canadians in our History

Medicine/Science

Dr. Anderson Ruffin Abbott (7 April 1837 – 29 December 1913)

First Black Canadian-born doctor.



Anderson Ruffin Abbott (7 April 1837 – 29 December 1913) was the first Canadian-born Black Canadian to be licensed as a family physician. His career included participation in the American Civil War.[1][2] Significant roles included coroner of Kent County, Ontario, and surgeon-in-chief.

In 1866, Abbott resigned from service to the Union Army and returned to Canada. He attended primary medical classes at the University of Toronto the following year. Abbott received a license to practise from the Medical Board of Upper Canada, in 1861, thus becoming the first Canadian-born Black physician.[1]

...From 1873 to 1880, he fought against racially segregated schools as president of the Wilberforce Educational Institute and was appointed coroner for Kent County, Ontario, in 1874,

Black Canadians in our History

Clotilda Yakimchuk

First Black person to graduate from the Nova Scotia Hospital School of Nursing.



Clotilda Yakimchuk became the first black graduate of the Nova Scotia Hospital School of Nursing in Dartmouth. She is a native of Whitney Pier, N.S. She later earned a post-graduate midwifery diploma in Grenada, a post-graduate psychiatric nursing certificate, and a diploma in adult education from St. Francis Xavier University.

In 1988, she became the first and only black person to be elected president of the Registered Nurses Association of Nova Scotia (now called the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia) in the organization's 100-year history.

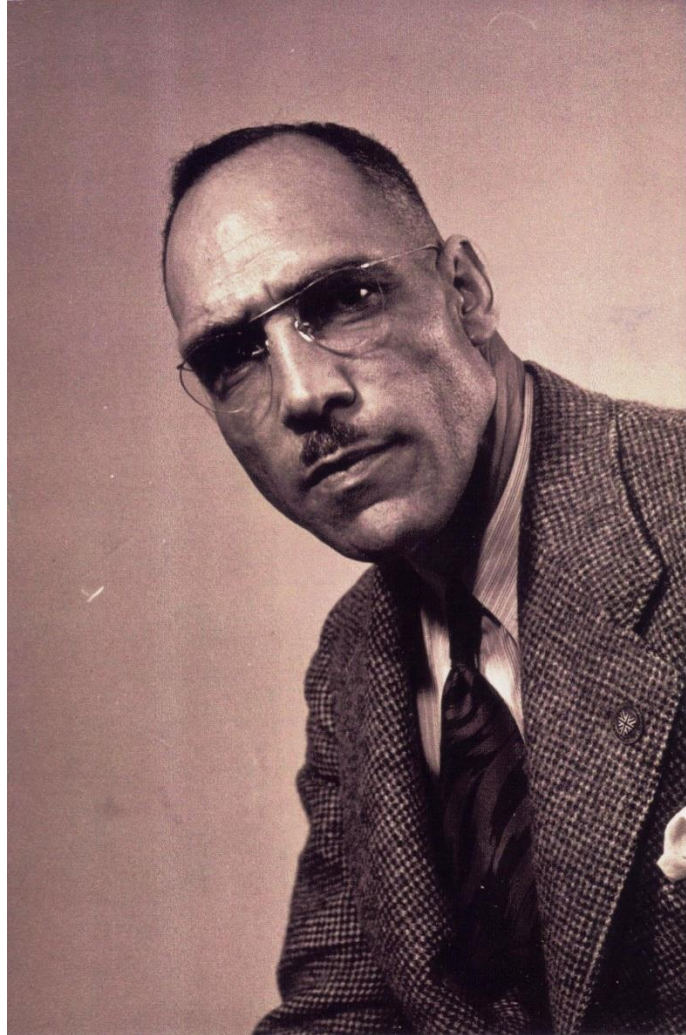
She received the Order of Nova Scotia in 2018

Source – <https://www.capebretonpost.com/news/local/whitney-pier-woman-celebrating-birthday-with-award-274841/>

Black Canadians in our History

Charles Lightfoot Roman (1889 – 1961)

One of the first Black Canadians to graduate from McGill University's Faculty of Medicine.



Charles Lightfoot Roman was one of the first Black Canadians to graduate from McGill University's Faculty of Medicine and became a recognized expert in industrial medicine. He was also one of the first Black Canadians to enlist for service in the First World War, and was the only known Black person to serve with the Canadian General Hospital No. 3

Black Canadians in our History

Dr. Eugenia Duodu (born 1989)

Canadian chemist and the CEO of Visions of Science Network for Learning (VoSNL).



Duodu grew up in a Toronto Community Housing (TCH) development in Etobicoke.[1][2][3] She credits her teachers and past TCH mentors for fostering her passion in science, but also notes that as she further progressed through science training, she was one of the few remaining black women or from community housing.

In 2010, Duodu completed a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry and biology at the University of Toronto Mississauga. Duodu then pursued a PhD in medicinal chemistry at the same campus, ... thesis focused on developing ... agents for disease detection and treatment.

Black Canadians in our History

Law

Abraham Beverley Walker (23 August 1851 – 21 April 1909)

The first Canadian-born black lawyer



A. B. WALKER, B.A., LL.B., D.C.L.,
President and Promoter of The African Civilization Movement.

Abraham Beverley Walker (23 August 1851 – 21 April 1909) was a New Brunswick-born lawyer and journalist. He was the first black lawyer in New Brunswick, the second black lawyer in Canada, and the first Canadian-born black lawyer ...

...In 1882, Walker was called to the bar. He opened a law practice in Saint John. ... After suffering numerous setbacks in his career as a lawyer and painful racial snubs at many levels, he was admitted as a solicitor to the Supreme Court of New Brunswick. In 1892, when the Saint John Law School opened, he was the first non-white student.

In 2019, Walker was successfully nominated to receive the Order of New Brunswick “for his inspiring achievements as Canada’s first black lawyer admitted to the bar and for his commitment to civil rights in New Brunswick and across North America

Source – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham_Beverley_Walker

Black Canadians in our History

Violet Pauline King Henry (October 18, 1929 – March 30, 1982)

First Black woman lawyer in Canada



Violet Pauline King Henry (October 18, 1929 – March 30, 1982) was the first black woman lawyer in Canada, the first black person to graduate law in Alberta and the first black person to be admitted to the Alberta Bar. She was also the first woman named to a senior management position with the American national YMCA.

When King started her law degree, there were just three women in a class of 142.[1] King graduated with her law degree at the University of Alberta in 1953 and was admitted to the Alberta bar in 1954. ...

King practiced criminal law in Calgary, articling with E.J. McCormick. She later moved to Ottawa, around 1956, to join the federal civil service in a senior administrative role at Citizenship and Immigration Canada, where she was promoted twice. She served during the time that Ellen Fairclough was named Canada's first woman member of cabinet and Minister of Immigration. By 1962, the Department had taken major steps to eliminate racism and respect the new Bill of Rights.

Black Canadians in our History

Politics

Abraham Doras Shadd (1801–1882),
First Afro-Canadian to hold public office



Abraham Doras Shadd, the first Afro-Canadian to hold public office, was born in Wilmington, Delaware on March 2, 1801. He was the grandson of a white German soldier from Hesse Kassel, Germany and a free black woman. Shadd was free born and earned a respectable living as a shoemaker, supporting his wife and thirteen children. His passion, however, was obtaining civil rights for African Americans and later Afro-Canadians and he devoted his life to the abolitionist movement which sought the immediate end of slavery.

By the late 1820s Shadd was a “conductor” on the Underground Railroad ... Shadd hid escaping slaves and provided them with food, clothing, and guidance as they made their way north.

... In February 2009, Canada Post honoured Abraham Doras Shadd with a commemorative stamp.

Source - <https://obvc.ca/story/abraham-shadd-became-the-first-black-man-in-canada-to-be-elected-to-a-municipal-government/>

Black Canadians in our History

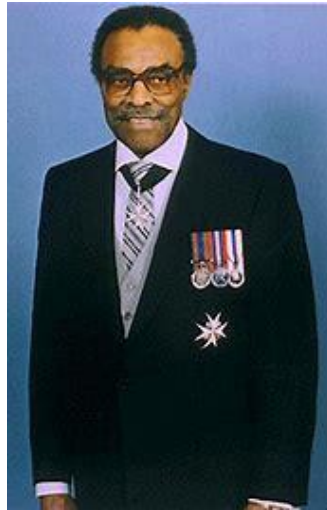
Lincoln Alexander -(1922 - 2012)

First black Member of Parliament in the House of Commons

First black federal Cabinet Minister (serving as federal Minister of Labour

First black Chair of the Worker's Compensation Board

24th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario



Lincoln Alexander... was a Canadian lawyer who became the first black Member of Parliament in the House of Commons, the first black federal Cabinet Minister (serving as federal Minister of Labour), the first black Chair of the Worker's Compensation Board, and the 24th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario from 1985 to 1991. He was the first person to serve five terms as Chancellor of the University of Guelph, from 1991 to 2007. Alexander was also a governor of the Canadian Unity Council. ...

... was born on January 21, 1922, in a row house on Draper Street near Front Street and Spadina Avenue in Toronto, Ontario. ... Alexander went to Earl Grey Public School where he was the only Black child in his kindergarten class.

Alexander then attended Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto...After articling for Sam Gotfrid, Q.C., the only job offer he received was from Helen and Edward Okuloski, a brother and sister who had started their own practice in Hamilton when they were unable to find jobs with existing firms. ...Two years later Alexander partnered with Dave Duncan, forming the firm Duncan & Alexander, which he claimed was the first inter-racial law partnership in Canada.

In 1965, Alexander ran in the Canadian federal election as the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada candidate in the Hamilton West electoral district but was defeated.[6] He ran again in the 1968 federal election and on June 25, 1968, he won the seat, becoming Canada's first black Member of Parliament.

Black Canadians in our History

Jean Augustine (born September 9, 1937)

First Black Canadian woman elected to the House of Commons



Jean Augustine (born September 9, 1937) is a Grenadian-Canadian educational administrator, advocate for social justice, and politician. She was the first Black Canadian woman elected to the House of Commons.

From 1993 to 2006, Augustine was a Liberal member of the House of Commons of Canada, representing the riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore in Ontario. She served as a member of Cabinet (2002 to 2004). Before her election, she had been a school principal. Augustine served as the Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien from 1994 to 1996; she was Minister of State for multiculturalism (and the status of women) from 2002 to 2004.

Augustine ... immigrated to Canada in 1960 under the West Indian Domestic Scheme. She studied at the University of Toronto where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Education. After university she worked as an elementary school principal with the Metropolitan Separate School Board in Toronto. She was also actively involved in Toronto's Caribbean community, sitting on the first committee to organize the Caribana Festival in 1967.

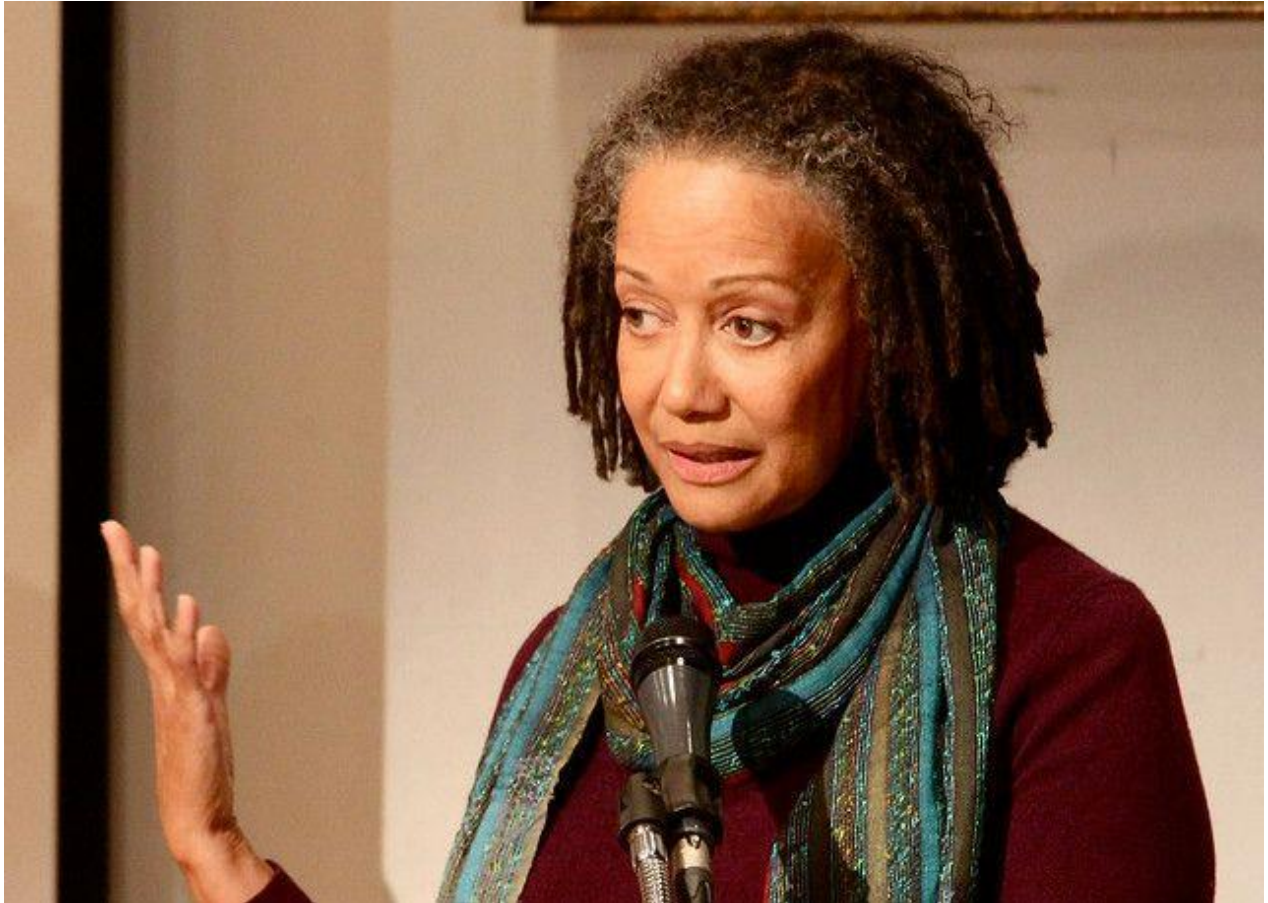
Source - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Augustine

Black Canadians in our History

Film & Television

Claire Prieto

One of the first black filmmakers in Canada



Prieto was born in Trinidad in 1945. She immigrated to Toronto with Roger McTair in 1970.[3]

As one of the first black filmmakers in Canada, Claire Prieto helped to open doors by mentoring numerous emerging creators and developed the Black Film & Video Network (BFVN) as a platform for writers, producers and directors. In 1977, Prieto produced and directed *Some Black Women*, the first film made by independent black filmmakers in Canada. She also produced the first Caribbean-Canadian sitcom...

Source <https://www.cbc.ca/arts/7-african-canadian-female-filmmakers-you-need-to-know->

Black Canadians in our History

Roger Cross (born October 19, 1969)

Jamaican-born Canadian actor



Roger Cross ...is a Jamaican-born Canadian actor who has made numerous appearances in several films and television series, mostly on productions shot in Canada. He is known for his work as CTU Agent Curtis Manning in the popular American television series 24. His other notable television roles include First Wave, Continuum, Motive, and Dark Matter.

Cross was born in Christiana, Jamaica. At age eleven, his family emigrated to Canada, settling in Vancouver, British Columbia. He graduated with a degree in Aviation and General Studies from Trinity Western University. Before his acting career, Cross was a professional pilot.

Source - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Cross

Black Canadians in our History

Kyle Jean-Baptiste (December 3, 1993 – August 29, 2015)

First black actor, to play the role of Jean Valjean in Les Misérables on Broadway



Kyle Jean-Baptiste ...was an American actor. He was the youngest, as well as the first black actor, to play the role of Jean Valjean in Les Misérables on Broadway.

He was also slated to be a cast member of the revival of the musical The Color Purple. On August 29, 2015, a day after departing Les Misérables and two days after his final performance as Valjean, he died, after accidentally falling from a fire escape in Brooklyn, New York. Scholarships in his name exist at Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School and at Baldwin Wallace University

Source - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyle_Jean-Baptiste

Black Canadians in our History

Vinessa Antoine

First Black Canadian woman to star in an hour-long Canadian series.



CBC

Vinessa Antoine (born July 21, 1983) is a Canadian television actress. She is best known for her roles as Judith Winters in the CBC comedy-drama *Being Erica*; Jordan Ashford in the ABC soap opera *General Hospital*; and Marcie Diggs in the CBC drama *Diggstown*.

In, (2019) Toronto-born actor Vinessa Antoine made television history as the first Black Canadian woman to star in an hour-long Canadian series – yes 2019.

“It feels great to be the first, but it also gives me pause and question a lot of things,” Antoine told us in 2019. “Growing up, I didn’t see a lot of me reflected on TV; I didn’t see the world I lived in. It’s about time. Hopefully this is the beginning of a bigger change.”

Vinessa Antoine 2019

Source - <https://www.ellecanada.com/culture/movies-and-tv/>

A native to Toronto, Ontario, Antoine grew up with her younger brother and parents in the suburbs of Toronto. She started studying classical ballet at age 4. At age 18, she studied for three years with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.[2] She also toured with P. Diddy for six months. In her final year at Ailey, Antoine decided to focus her studies on acting.

Source - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vinessa_Antoine

Black Canadians in our History

Music

Oscar Emmanuel Peterson (August 15, 1925 – December 23, 2007)

Canadian jazz pianist, virtuoso and composer.



Oscar Emmanuel Peterson, ... was a Canadian jazz pianist, virtuoso and composer. He was called the "Maharaja of the keyboard" by Duke Ellington, simply "O.P." by his friends, and informally in the jazz community as "the King of inside swing". He released over 200 recordings, won seven Grammy Awards, as well as a lifetime achievement award from the Recording Academy, and received numerous other awards and honours. He is considered one of history's great jazz pianists,[3] and played thousands of concerts worldwide in a career lasting more than 60 years.

Peterson was born in Montreal, Quebec, to immigrants from the West Indies;... Peterson grew up in the neighbourhood of Little Burgundy in Montreal. It was in this predominantly black neighborhood that he encountered the jazz culture. At the age of five, Peterson began honing his skills on trumpet and piano, but a bout of tuberculosis when he was seven prevented him from playing the trumpet again, so he directed all his attention to the piano. ...

Source - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar_Peterson

Black Canadians in our History

Portia White (June 24, 1911 – February 13, 1968)

First Black Canadian concert singer to achieve international fame.



Portia May White ... was a Canadian contralto, known for becoming the first Black Canadian concert singer to achieve international fame. Growing up as part of her father's church choir in Halifax, Nova Scotia. ... In 1941 and 1944, she made her national and international debuts as a singer, receiving critical acclaim for her performances of both classical European music and African-American spirituals. ...

White has been declared a person of national historic significance by the Government of Canada,[17] and she was featured in a special issue of Millennium postage stamps celebrating Canadian achievement.

Source - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portia_White

Black Canadians in our History

Measha Brueggergosman (June 28, 1977)

Canadian soprano opera singer and concert artist.



Born in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Brueggergosman started singing at age seven. She went on to receive a B.A. in Music from the University of Toronto, and, in 1998, received the lead role in *Beatrice Chancy*, an opera about an enslaved African-Canadian woman in 19th-century Nova Scotia. Following the success of her debut role, the singer – who combined her and her husband’s last names to get Brueggergosman – has gone on to perform across Canada and the world. In 2005, she won the Juno Award for Classical Album of the Year: Vocal or Choral. She can be seen both on and off stage as a performer and music education advocate.

Source - <https://www.ellecanada.com/culture/society/inspirational-black-canadians-to-know>

Black Canadians in our History

Liberty Silver 1961/1962

First Black Woman to receive a Juno Award



Liberty Silver was born to a Jamaican-Irish mother and a Hawaiian father, who first met while competing at the Commonwealth Games. Not long after her birth, Silver was placed for adoption by her birth parents and was adopted into an Ontarian household in Canada. ...

As the first Black woman to receive a Juno Award, Liberty Silver is widely known for paving the way for future generations of Black female artists in the Canadian music industry. She won two 1985 Juno Awards, one for Best R&B/Soul Recording of the Year ("Lost Somewhere Inside Your Love") and the other for Best Reggae/Calypso Recording ("Heaven Must Have Sent You" with Otis Gayle). She has been nominated for a Juno Award a total of five times, from 1985 to 1989.

Other awards Liberty has been credited with include: five Black Music Awards, three Rock Express Awards, the Shuremic Award for Vocals, the Bob Marley Memorial Award, the Chin International Songwriter Award, three Genie Nominations for acting, Top Female Jazz Singer Award, and most recently the 2005 African Achievement Award for Arts and Entertainment. She was also nominated for the Best Female Vocal and Original Composition Award at the Canadian Smooth Jazz Awards, honouring George Benson.

... prominent figures Silver performed for include: Former U.S. President Barack Obama, Celine Dion, Desmond Tutu, former President of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev, among many others.

Sources

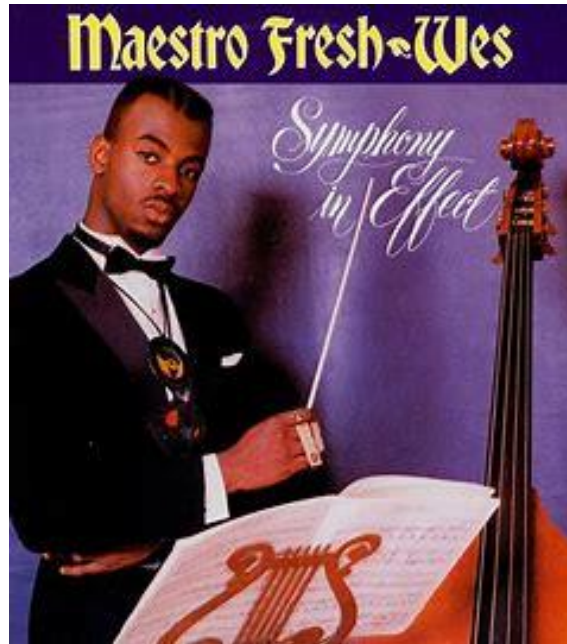
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty_Silver
- <https://pennantmediagroup.com/2010/09/01/>

Black Canadians in our History

Wesley Williams - Maestro or Maestro Fresh-Wes (born March 31, 1968)

First Black male artist to win a Juno

First certified platinum album by a Black Canadian artist



The first Black artist to receive a Juno in 1991 was the Toronto rapper Maestro Fresh ...

...Wes, Wesley Williams ... better known as Maestro or Maestro Fresh-Wes, is a Canadian rapper, record producer, actor, and author. One of the earliest Canadian rappers to achieve mainstream success, he is credited as the "Godfather of Canadian hip hop". His debut album, *Symphony in Effect* (1989), was the first certified platinum album by a Black Canadian artist.

...He attended Senator O'Connor College School and then moved to L'Amoreaux Collegiate Institute for the remainder of his high school career. He attended Carleton University in Ottawa, studying law and political science for one year.

Williams was nominated for a Gemini Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Dramatic Role for his performance on the television series *The Line* on HBO Canada.

In 2010, co-wrote a self-help motivational book with his wife called *Stick to Your Vision: How to Get Past the Hurdles & Haters to Get Where You Want to Be*. It is part of the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) curriculum and a mandatory reading for high school students in Nova Scotia.

Source - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maestro_\(rapper\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maestro_(rapper))

Black Canadians in our History

Athletics/Sports

Barbara Howard (May 8, 1920 – January 26, 2017)

First black woman to represent Canada in an international competition.



Howard was born and raised in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Barbara Howard ...was a Canadian athlete and sprinter. She won two relay medals at the 1938 British Empire Games. She competed for Canada at the 1938 British Empire Games held in Sydney, Australia, and she is believed to be the first black woman to represent Canada in an international competition.

Only 17, she posted a time of 11.2 seconds at the Western Canada British Empire Games trials.

She later became a teacher, and was the first member of a visible minority to be hired by the Vancouver School Board, where she taught for 43 years.

Source - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_Howard_\(athlete\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_Howard_(athlete))

Black Canadians in our History

Willie Eldon O'Ree (born October 15, 1935)

First Black player in the National Hockey League



Willie Eldon O'Ree, ... is a Canadian former professional ice hockey player, best known for being the first black player in the National Hockey League (NHL). O'Ree played as a winger for the Boston Bruins. O'Ree is referred to as the "Jackie Robinson of ice hockey" for breaking the black colour barrier in the sport,[1] and has stated publicly that he had met Jackie Robinson when he was younger. He was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in November 2018.

Also in 2018, the NHL instituted the annual Willie O'Ree Community Hero Award[4] in his honour, to "recognize the individual who has worked to make a positive impact on his or her community, culture or society to make people better through hockey."

From 1998 on, O'Ree has been the NHL's Diversity Ambassador,[11] traveling across North America to schools and hockey programs to promote messages of inclusion, dedication, and confidence.

Source - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Willie_O%27Ree

Black Canadians in our History

Françoise Abanda born February 5, 1997

Black Canadian Changing the face of Tennis



Françoise Abanda is a Canadian professional tennis player. She reached her highest WTA singles ranking of 111 on October 9, 2017 and her highest WTA doubles ranking of 197 on September 8, 2014. She achieved a career high junior rank of No. 4 on April 29, 2013.

Montreal-born Françoise Abanda is a tennis superstar. She started playing when she was just seven years old and has quickly climbed the professional ranks, achieving a career-high junior rank of fourth in 2013. She told Global News in 2018 that she has faced racism in the tennis world in the past, but she maintained a positive and hopeful outlook that things can change. “Beyond tennis, we’re all human and we should all treat each other with respect, first of all, before even playing tennis.”

Source - <https://www.ellecanada.com/culture/society/inspirational-black-canadians-to-know>

Black Canadians in our History

Félix Auger-Aliassime - Born August 8, 2000
Black Canadian Changing the face of Tennis



Félix Auger-Aliassime ...born August 8, 2000) is a Canadian professional tennis player. He has a career-high singles ranking of No. 6, which he achieved on November 7, 2022, making him the second-highest-ranked Canadian man in Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) rankings history and the fourth-highest-ranked Canadian player in history.

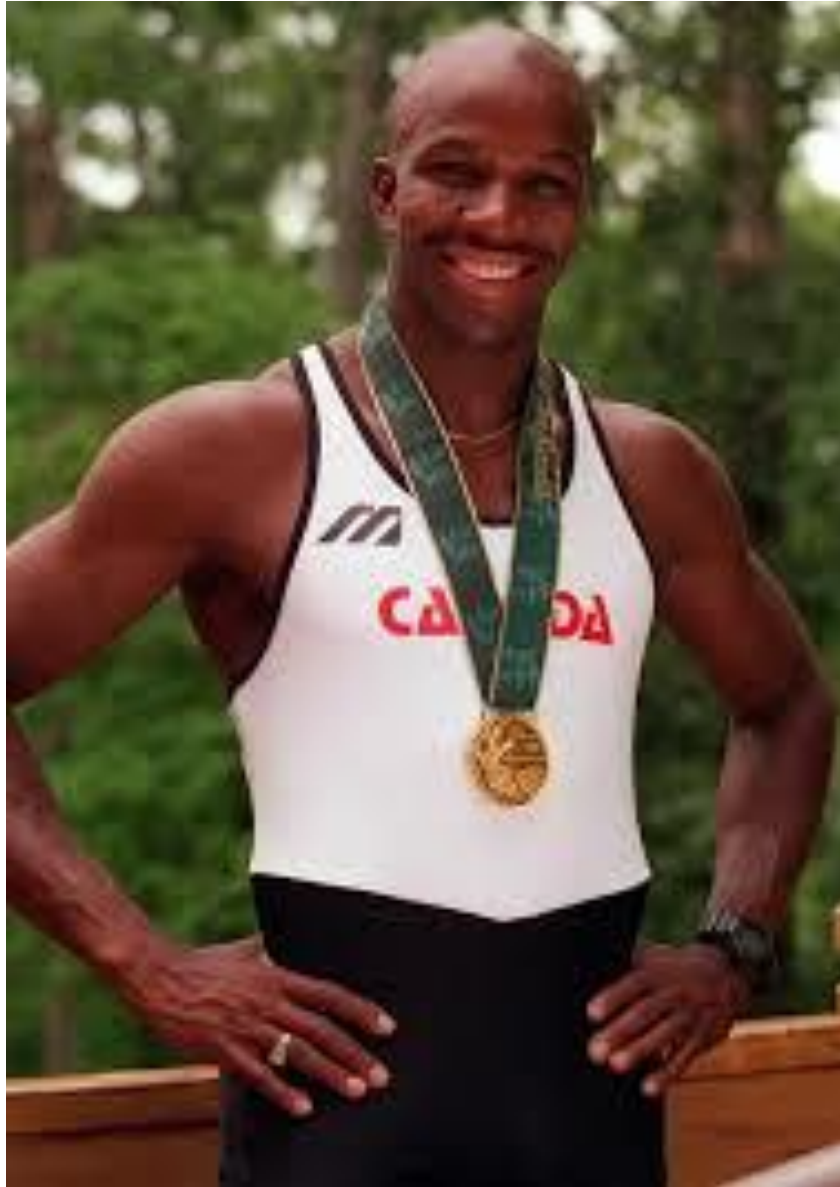
Auger-Aliassime was born in Montreal and raised in L'Ancienne-Lorette, a suburb of Quebec City. His father Sam Aliassime is of African descent and emigrated from Togo, and his mother Marie Auger is of French-Canadian descent.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F%C3%A9lix_Auger-Aliassime

Black Canadians in our History

Donovan Bailey (born December 16, 1967)

First Canadian to legally break the 10-second barrier in the 100 m.



Donovan Anthony Bailey, ... is a retired Jamaican-Canadian sprinter who is regarded as the greatest Canadian sprinter of all time. He once held the world record for the 100 metres. He recorded a time of 9.84 seconds to win the gold medal at the 1996 Olympic Games. He was the first Canadian to legally break the 10-second barrier in the 100 m. Particularly noted for his top speed, Bailey ran 12.10 m/s (43.6 km/h; 27.1 mph) in his 1996 Olympic title run, the fastest ever recorded by a human at the time. He was inducted into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame in 2004 as an individual athlete and in 2008 as part of the 1996 Summer Olympics 4x100 relay team. In 2005, he was also inducted into the Ontario Sports Hall of Fame.

Source - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donovan_Bailey

Always be learning!

Thank you.