



# TALKING HISTORY

Secondary School Edition - No 4

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**Elvy Morton came to Britain from Nevis in 1959 to work as a nurse, and moved to Leicester from Birmingham after she got married. This is an extract from a recent interview with, Cynthia Brown, one of a series that EMOHA is conducting with African Caribbean women in Britain.**

In the Caribbean there was no such thing as racism. We knew nothing about racism. So we weren't trained to handle the situation when we came here. I mean, when I came here first, even though I came to the hospital, I still had to go to the Labour Exchange to show my passport... and to fill a form out. And when I fill this form out, because she didn't see me fill it out and put my signature, she asked me to fill one out in front of her, because she didn't think I could write THAT good! You see, that was the sort of racism we met, and we didn't experience those things in the Caribbean, and we weren't ready for those things. I mean, even on those days you come here, you see another Black person, and it doesn't matter how far away that Black person is, you're moving closer and closer to get to know, and just to be near that person, because you feel a little bit safer.

I mean, you go into the Market, and you stand in the queue and you wait, and they will pass over you, and serve everybody at the back, and then they will tell you 'what do you want, me duck?'. Well, I got so annoyed one day, I call for two pounds of everything on this stall, and then walk away, you know, because I was really annoyed that these things could happen, when you've been taught everything about England, and England knew nothing about you. We had the Union Jack, we flew the flag, we had Empire Day, 24<sup>th</sup>



*Elvy Morton  
pictured in  
2002*

of May. We had Prince Charles' birthday. We had everything that's going... We knew everything about England... And yet they know nothing about us.

To be told 'why don't you go back where you come from was really hard. We had the extended family. We had to save for our family, send something back home. It was ten years before I got back home to see my mum and dad. The Caribbean women, the Black women from the Caribbean, we were the ones who paved the way... We were the ones that put the first stone down, and from that stone, we are quite satisfied with our lot, because we know we have brought our children up not to hate. We have had that hate, we have asked them not to hate... The amount of things we have been through is worth telling. We need to say what really happened to us here when we came to this country.

*Why not use this extract in a citizenship lesson to get students thinking about the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding? [KS3 Citizenship Strand 1b]*

**Help needed:** Oral testimony is a unique source of historical evidence, and is ideal for supporting learning and teaching across the curriculum. For example, in History, oral accounts provide a contrast to traditional sources of evidence, and offer listeners the opportunity to understand events from a different perspective. In PSHE and Citizenship, oral history can be used to challenge stereotypes, to promote tolerance and respect for others, and to enhance a sense of identity and belonging.

The East Midlands Oral History Archive is currently developing learning and teaching materials for use at Key Stages 3 and 4. The resource is intended to encourage students to explore issues surrounding diversity and identity, and the need for mutual respect and understanding. In order to ensure that these aims are met, we would like interested teachers to advise us on our materials as we develop them. If you wish to get involved, please contact, Sarah Ferrier, our Education Officer, on (0116) 252 5065, or by email at [sjf17@le.ac.uk](mailto:sjf17@le.ac.uk), or by writing to Sarah Ferrier, EMOHA, Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RH.



Black History Season celebrates the contributions and achievements of black people and the expression of their diversity, culture and heritage. Leicester Black History Season 2002, launched at the start of October, has lots of events and activities that people of all ages can take part in. Of particular interest to students and teachers are:

**Thursday 21st  
November  
(1.30-3.45pm):  
A Message from  
our Ancestors.  
Untold:  
Britain's Slave  
Trade.**



Phoenix Arts, in association with De Montfort University's Cultural eXchanges Week, presents an exciting schools event for Black History Season.

Trevor Phillips OBE, Chair of the Greater London Assembly and one of Britain's rising political stars, will be talking about issues relating to his series 'Untold: Britain's Slave Trade' an episode of which will also be screened.

This cross-curricular event will be held at the Phoenix Arts Centre, Leicester and is designed to address the Knowledge, Skills and Understanding elements of History at Key Stage 3, and Citizenship at Key Stages 3 and 4. It will cost £2 for each student, but accompanying teachers go free. For more information, contact Adam Clarke, Phoenix Education and Outreach Officer, on 0116 224 7706 or e-mail [adam@phoenix.org.uk](mailto:adam@phoenix.org.uk)

**My England Video Launch:** An invitation for Secondary Schools and Youth Groups to attend the launch of the 'My England' video resource launch. Following the

successful national tour of the play, ARC Theatre Ensemble's offer a moving and challenging experience, to help young people confront racism, extend their thinking about nationality and heritage and develop their understanding of other peoples viewpoints. Neville Lawrence, Father of Stephen provides commentary for the video and will be a guest speaker at the launch, which is one of six in regions around the country. The launch will be lead by the Foxes Against Racism working group. For further information call Steve Humphries, Sports Services on 0116 233 3052 or Clive Billington, Multi-Cultural Education Services on 0116 222 2617.

For more information about other Black History Season Leicester 2002, see <http://www.blackhistoryleicester.co.uk>

#### Finding out more

The East Midlands Oral History Archive's catalogue is now online, and currently includes details of 263 recordings. To view the catalogue, visit the EMOHA website on <http://www.le.ac.uk/emoha/catalogue.html> and search for more information about the various collections we have in our archive.

The EMOHA website also contains dedicated teachers pages, on-line exhibitions, downloadable information sheets and teachers bulletins. Find it at <http://www.le.ac.uk/emoha>.

## Resources on the web

Tristram Hooley, EMOHA's Computer Officer, has been reviewing a range of websites aimed at supporting the learning and teaching of Citizenship and History. Here are three which are worth taking a look at:

<http://www.britkid.org> - this is a website about race, racism and life - as seen through the eyes of the *Britkids*, a group of nine imaginary characters in their mid-teens, from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Users are invited to 'hang out' with one of these characters, meet their families and learn about them and their lives. The characters discuss issues such as harassment, relationships, the words and 'jokes' they like and don't like, public attitudes about race, crime, and discrimination. These discussions end either in a quiz, or a 'truth/dare/kiss/promise' option, where they have to engage with the material and give answers that may be factual, moral, or a matter of opinion. The site is entertaining and has good, structured navigation.

<http://www.citfou.org.uk> - the Citizenship Foundation's website that provides news, training and resources for teachers, and includes case studies and examples of good practice.

<http://www.activehistory.co.uk> - a history and politics website, full of useable ideas, hints, worksheets, interactive games, timelines, facts and much more. There is a lot of content which is presented in an imaginative way.

