**Remembering Aug. 23: International Day Of African Resistance Against Enslavement**

(knowledge exchange workshop) Aug. 21 2017

Kwaku’s Presentation

Harrow BHM Campaign has formed a campaign to display a bust of Hon. Marcus Mosiah Garvey permanently in Willesden Library. With this in mind, the **Annual Marcus Garvey Lecture** took place on Thursday 17 August 2017, and was attended by an audience of over 100 people led by the Jamaican High Commissioner to the UK and the Ghanian Deputy High Commissioner.

The significance of August 23 as the **International Day of African Resistance Against Enslavement** in global African history, was elucidated upon by the facilitator of the event Kwaku. To begin with 1987-1988 was designated as **African Jubilee Year** by Pan Africanists, as it marked the 180th Anniversary of the Abolition of enslavement of Africans in the Caribbean. It was also the 100th anniversary of the birth of Marcus Mosiah Garvey, and 25th anniversary of the founding of the OAU. It is therefore necessary to locate **African History Month** (otherwise known as Black History Month) within the African Jubilee Year on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of African History Month in the UK. Our Story is a book which documents the history of African History Month in the UK. The facilitator of the evening’s event Kwaku stated that Linda Bellos has stated with hindsight she agrees with him that the correct name should be African History Month.

In the USA, the White House website refer to **African American History Month**, which is celebrated in February. In Harrow, African History Month has been celebrated since 2012, as it is felt that it is better to be clear that “we” are in fact talking about African History Month. In Harrow, the decision was also made to refer to the United Nations **International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition** as the **International Day of African Resistance Against Enslavement**. This step was taken as it was felt the African diaspora should take agency in correcting history, e.g. celebrating our resistance to enslavement rather than the falsehood that it was handed to us. The day has also been referred to as **Slavery Remembrance Day**.

**Timeline of African Resistance to Enslavement**

Ignatius Sancho **1729-1780** is the first known Black Briton to vote in a British election, and in the UK became a symbol of the humanity of Africans and the immorality of the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade, which saw millions of enslaved Africans trafficked to Europe and the Americas.

**1791** Dutty Boukman and Cecile Fatiman planned the Haitian Revolution (which started on the night of August 22) on August 14, 1791 and carried it out on August 23, 1791. Haiti was subsequently liberated under the leadership of Toussaint L’Ouverture and also liberated Africans in neighbouring Santo Domingo from enslavement.

**1803** Denmark was the first European country to declare trafficking of Africans for slavery illegal, and abolished the enslavement of Africans in 1803.

**1807**  In 2007, in celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the Abolition of the enslavement of Africans in the Caribbean, the UK government agreed to mark August 23 annually as National Slavery Memorial day. In 2014 is a new movement started by a gathering at the Ghana High Commission, on August 1 known as African Reflection Day to mark the anniversary of Emancipation Day, and now takes place annually in London, with a Reparations March from Windrush Square in Brixton to Parliament Square. The March is partly about beginning the process of reparations, awareness and self-repair.

**1825** William Wilberforce, M.P. dies before slavery is abolished in the British West Indies.

**1838** The date of the emancipation of enslaved Africans in Britain’s colonies, as only children under six years of age were effectively emancipated in 1833; enslaved adults were kept enslaved for a further four years. Pan Africanists refer to the continuum of enslavement, colonialism and white supremacist oppression as the Maangamizi; the Maafa refers to the the Trans Atlantic African Holocaust.

**1920** The United Negro Improvement Association African Communities League (UNIA-ACL) held a month long conference, which articulated a Declaration of the Rights of Negroes globally. One of the articles of the Declaration states that children should be educated in Negro History.

**1934** U.S. occupation of Haiti ends in August 1934.

**1963** Dr Martin Luther King’s **March on Washington for Jobs** in the USA**,** took place on August 28 which was the same date which the **Bristol Bus Boycott** ended**.**

Other notable events taking place in Mosiah Month (August)

Kwamina and his son Jack Gladstone were leaders of the Demerera Rebellion in British Guyana.

Nat Turners Rebellion August 21-23

Emmett Till lynched in Mississippi, USA on August 28

See also

<http://harrowbhm.co.uk/>

[www.stopthemaangamizi.com](http://www.stopthemaangamizi.com)

[www.parentsactiveresource.org](http://www.parentsactiveresource.org)

Ade’s then made the presentation: ***How Can the International Decade for People of African Descent be used to move Africans forward ?*** followed by a Q & A from the audience.

Questions made arising included:

*What exactly is meant by Afro-phobia/Afri-phobia ?*

*How can activists concerned with education use this information as a platform to hold the government to account; e.g. how can educators explain this to ordinary parents.*

These questions were answered by Kwaku and Ade. E.g. in relation to the first the need for a term which specifically refers to structural racism and discrimination encountered by people of African history and the historical, psychological, and other barriers to universal human rights they face. In relation to the second question Ade signposted the questioner to the IDPAD Coalition UK project on education, reports published by the Runnymede Trust (on inequality in primary and secondary education in the UK), and the Equality Challenge Unit ( which leads in the Race Equality Charter Mark in higher education institutions.

Statement

We need to do things and not wait for the state to officially recognise the Decade, e.g. by building on what has gone before. Have an idea of recognition of the IDPAD, and what it entails meaningfully, e.g. by internally recognising who we are. We need Garveyite principles e.g. to continue work done before and entail its continuity for future generations.

See African Voices by Ms Serwah & Kwaku

“We fight these battles but we have to fight them again” Coretta Scott King