

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

KING HERITAGE & CULTURAL CENTRE

FEBRUARY 1, 2021



WHY BLACK HISTORY MONTH?

The origins of Black History Month stem back to 1926 when African American historian, Carter G. Woodson proposed "Negro History Week" to celebrate the accomplishments of African Americans. A week in February was chosen because it corresponded with both the birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and famous abolitionist, Frederick Douglass.

In the 1970s black rights advocates expanded the week to a month, and changed the name to "Black History Month." The government of Canada first recognized Black History Month in 1995 after a motion introduced by the first black woman elected to the Canadian House of Commons, the Honourable Jean Augustine.

Image: The Honourable Jean Augustine, jeanaugustine.ca



BLACK HISTORY IN KING TOWNSHIP

Black history has a long legacy in King Township. As early as 1836 black Canadians have called King home. The effect these early black settlers have had on our community continues to this day. They have been labourers, post masters, teachers and homemakers.

Learn more about black history in Canada and King Township:

- From the KHCC:
 - **Walter Rolling Online**, kinglibrary.ca
 - **Railroad to Freedom**, launching on February 8 as part of a new online exhibit, *Stories of King*, hosted on treasured.ca
- From other sources:
 - **Ontario Black History Society**
 - **Archives of Ontario**
http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/access/black_history.aspx

Image: Nellie Barnhart Smith, one of King Township's earliest black settlers, in front of her home in Laskay, c. 1900.