



The days are getting longer and the sun is shining, temperatures are rising; these are all signs that winter will soon be over. Spring is upon us, let us all be grateful for the new season and all that comes with it; A period of fruition, fulfillment, happiness and beauty. Although we are all very excited for the spring to arrive here are some things you might have missed during the winter months here at the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia.

Annual Christmas Gospel Dinner/ Concert at the Black Cultural Centre

This year the Centre celebrated the Christmas season by hosting a full course turkey dinner buffet and gospel concert in the main auditorium of the Centre on December 13th. Featuring musical guests such as; Cole Harbour District High School Vocal Harmony Group, The Preston Harmony Group. The Revival Tabernacle Choral and Marcell Symonds.

The funds raised from this special event will assist the Black Cultural Centre in replacing its aging heating and air handling systems. A Special thank you goes out to Charlotte Simmonds for preparing a delicious meal for all of our guests (Charlotte’s Sensational Taste Catering). To the performers and all of you who joined us for a delicious and festive evening. Hope to see you all here again next season.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Event

We honoured the life and accomplishments of the Civil Rights activist Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on January 16th. Inviting schools from around the province to join us for the commemorative ceremony that shared the life of Dr. King, his family and friends, his influence during the Civil Rights movement as well as his non-violent boycotts and protests.

The assembly brought over 190 students, teachers and chaperones to the Black Cultural Centre. Pastor Brian Johnston, President of the Black Cultural Society gave a exceptional reading of Dr. King’s historic “I Have a Dream” speech from 1963 during the March on

Washington. Pastor Johnston let freedom ring as he recited the speech with the same intensity and passion as Dr. King. Giving the students the opportunity to understand the power of words.

Sgt. Craig Smith of the RCMP spoke to the students on the important subject of non-violence and how important it is to keep the peace.



We ended the assembly with some final words from Pastor Johnston and headed upstairs for cake and refreshments.



Cole Harbour District High School Vocal Harmony Group

The Preston Harmony Group

The Revival Tabernacle Choral

A Note From The Executive Director

Russell Grosse

The past year at the Centre has been an incredible journey as we have made great progress in realigning the mandate and mission of the organization to meet the needs of the community.

African Nova Scotians have a lot to be proud of. A rich history that is steeped in stories of passion and the strength and faith to overcome obstacles. This past year we saw the epic mini-series produced by CBC & BET on the Book of Nergoes aired not only across Canada but in the United States, bringing an unparalleled audience the ability to learn and discover the unique history of African Nova Scotians. This year also saw the celebration of Nova Scotia's first Heritage Day holiday, which in 2015 was in honor of civil rights leader and business woman Viola Desmond. The Centre also saw record numbers and record requests during the month of February.

As we head towards the summer season we celebrate the opening of the Black Loyalist Heritage Centre on June 6 in Birchtown, Shelburne Co.; the No. 2 Construction Black Battalion Remembrance Ceremony in Pictou (July 11); The Africville Reunion (July 24-27); as well as many other community events during the course of the next few months.

The Black Cultural Centre has recently updated our website, which now includes a community calendar this will allow visitors to submit events and activities that are taking place in the various African Nova Scotian communities to be

shared. As well, over the next few months the site will offer more historical information and resources. We also want to improve communications with our community and stakeholders, to that end we have re-established our quarterly newsletter "the Preserver", which you are now reading with a fresh new look, as well as the development of a periodic email notice with the latest news. You can subscribe to the email newsletter on our website (www.bccns.com).

The Centre operates: Monday—Friday 10am—4pm and will resume Saturday hours starting in mid June for the summer months.

The Black Cultural Society, the parent organization of the Black Cultural Centre is also embarking on a new journey. This year our annual general meeting will take place on July 18, 2015 at 9:30am, during this time we will be enacting our recent provincial legislation changes. These changes will reduce our board size while still keeping an effective representation of the province. We are also seeking volunteers to serve on our board and welcome you to apply or nominate someone to serve.

In closing, I would like to thank you for the support you have shown me, as well as the staff: Carry, Rielle and Roland. We appreciate the confidence you have placed in the Black Cultural Centre in Protecting, Preserving and Promoting the rich history of African Nova Scotians.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Centre this summer or at one of the many events taking place. Remember to take out or renew a membership to support the Centre. www.bccns.com/membership

African Heritage Month RBC essay writing finalist ceremony

During the month of February we celebrated African Heritage Month. This year we partnered with Royal Bank (RBC) for an educational afternoon to celebrate African Nova Scotian History. During the assembly the four finalists from RBC's National Black History Month Essay Writing Contest took the podium and read their essays. The four national finalists from Nova Scotia each received a scholarship towards their future education goals.

The Nova Scotia finalists were; Zoe MacEachern from Auburn Drive High School, Cole Harbour, NS. Preston Simmons also from Auburn Drive High School, Conor Hubley who attends Sir John A. MacDonald High School, Tantallon, NS and lastly Ruby-Anne Fines from Halifax West High School, Halifax. These students did a wonderful job expressing the importance of not only the individuals they chose to write about, they also brought attention to the significance of African Canadian history as a whole. On the national level Nova Scotia finalist Preston Simmons also finished second place. It was something special to hear the youth express their interest in our history and their enthusiasm in sharing the stories of African Canadian men and women who made great strides in the progression through segregation. Whose stories of perseverance and strength give us a sense of pride today.

The essays can be read online at: <http://www.rbc.com/essay/>

Special thanks also goes to Terry Sampson who helped organize the schools who attended as well as our guest speaker Dr. Graham Reynolds; author, professor as well as the Viola Desmond Chair in Social Justice. Dr. Leslie Oliver joined our list of presenters speaking on the importance of



preserving history properly. Sgt Craig Smith was also in attendance, once again laying precedence on preserving, promoting and protecting history as he does through his published literature which showcases the African Canadian cultural history as well as the experiences of our African Canadian Law Enforcement Officers. We are grateful for the support of the Royal Bank Canada and representatives: Ms. Lori Smith and Mr. Merv Broome.

Dignitaries: Judge Corrine Sparks and Hon. Geoff Regan, MP were in attendance.

- Written by: Ms. Rielle Williams



(l-r) Dr. Graham Reynolds, Laurie Smith RBC, Sgt. Craig Smith



(l-r) Ruby-Anne, Judge Corrine Sparks, Zoe MacEachern, Conor Hubley, Hon. Geoff Regan, MP for Halifax West.



(l-r) Pastor and Mrs Edward Simmons receiving their son Preston's award from Mr. Merv Broome, RBC



Have A Event You Want To Share?
 Try our website FREE community calendar
www.bccns.com/community-calendar/

Permanent Sports Exhibit @ BCC

Wilfred Jackson, President, Black Ice Hockey and Sports Hall of Fame Society in partnership with the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia developed a sports exhibit to remember and honor the Colored Hockey League of the Maritimes. On March 27th, 2015 an unveiling ceremony was held at the Black Cultural Centre. The Black Ice Society's main goal is to keep the memory of the 1895 Colored Hockey of the Maritimes alive. Black Ice Society holds an annual commemorative CHL game using local Black hockey players. To learn more about the Black Ice Society, visit their website: www.blackicesociety.ca



Events Hosted at the Centre

The Centre also played host to many events over the past few months. Events organized by other groups or organizations.

- **“You’d better be White by 6am”** Second edition; written by Sgt. Craig Smith was launched to the public November 27th. The event was hosted by the Black Cultural Centre and many were in attendance including Brigadier – General the Honorable J.J. Grant, CMM, ONS, CD. Along with Sgt Craig Smith’s friends, family and fellow RCMP officers.
- Marcell Symonds released his gospel album on December 20th. Many friends and family members were there to show their support and enjoy the show.

What’s New @ The Centre

- **Interactive Educational Program**
This summer the staff has been working hard to create an Interactive Educational Program for youth who come to visit the Centre. This program consists of a variety of games / activities, scavenger hunts and quizzes. Our most recent interactive activity is “Build your own Display”. This is a fun way for students to learn and engage with the Centre as well as each other. Bring your students by before the school year is out!
- **Sports Exhibit** :The Sports Exhibit along with the new Black Ice Hockey display has been relocated to the upstairs area of the Centre. Come drop by and take in some Nova Scotian sports history, everything from table tennis to ice hockey.
- **Together as One**: The Black Cultural Centre in partnership with Together as One Planning committee, and the city of Halifax, have come up with this unique project to develop there distinct street art designs . There will be one piece of art work in each community; Cherry Brooke/ Lake Loon, East

Preston and North Preston. This artwork will represent the rich history and celebrate community spirit and togetherness.

- **Culture Camp** :Attention parents and guardians!! Once again the Centre will be hosting a week long day camp. This camp is meant to inspire and educate Nova Scotian youth. To help them develop an understanding of Nova Scotia’s rich history. The day camp will offer culturally relevant programming and guest presenters who will incorporate elements of reading, arts and crafts, writing, mathematics, sciences and technology. Further information will be available soon.

Recipe Corner

Mafe

What you need

Cooking oil to sauté meat and onions
1 or 2 pounds of your choice of meat
1 or 2 onions, finely chopped
2 tbs tomato paste
2 or 4 tomatoes, peeled, cut into sections
Salt & pepper
1 hot chile pepper
Chopped vegetables of your choice
1 cup peanut butter
1 or 2 cups water, or beef broth or stock

What you do

Heat oil in a large cooking pot. Sauté the meat and onions over high heat. Reduce heat and simmer for a few minutes. Add all remaining ingredients except the peanutbutter and water/stock. Simmer until all ingredients are tender (approx. 30mins) Add water if it becomes completely dry. Reduce heat. Add the peanut butter. Stir. Add water or broth as needed to make a smooth sauce. Serve over rice.



Upcoming Events

May 22, 2015 - 4 pm

Summer employment application deadline

June 13, 2015

Start of Summer Hours at the Centre: Mon - Fri: 10am - 4pm,
Sat: 12 noon - 3pm

June 26, 2015

Board of Directors, Nomination deadline.

July 1, 2015 - 11am - 2pm

Annual Canada Day BBQ

July 11, 2015 - 11am

Annual Black Battalion Remembrance Ceremony
DeCoste Centre, Pictou

July 18, 2015 - 9:30 am

Annual General Meeting of the Black Cultural Society

August 17—21, 2015

Black Cultural Centre Summer Culture Camp

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Communities, Culture and Heritage