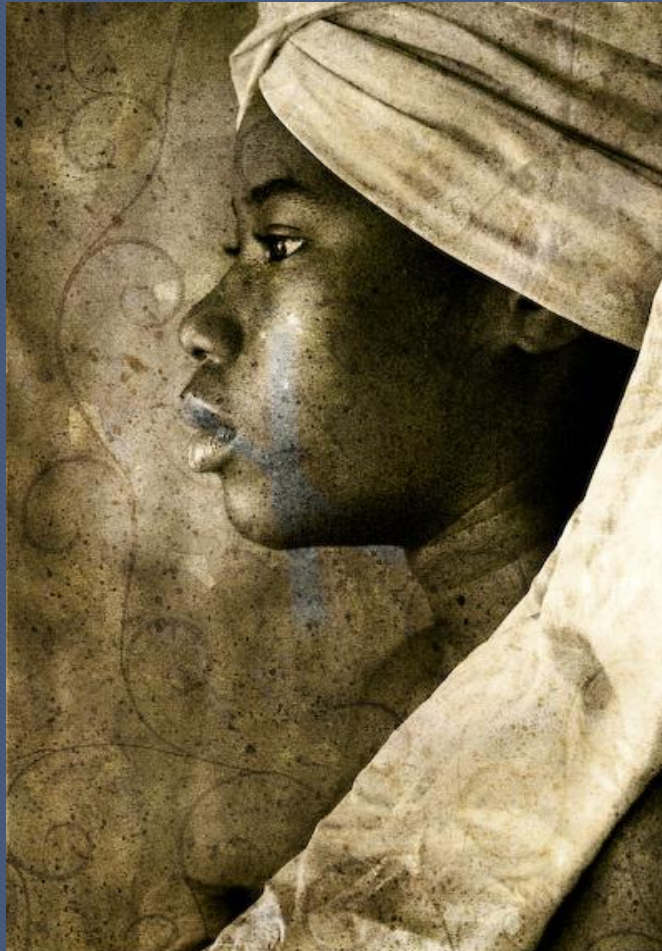


Black History Month Salutes All



Black Women
who
Inspire
&
Empower

Viola Desmond: 1914 - 1965



Image Source:
http://www.capebretonpost.com/media/photos/unis/2010/04/14/photo_667709_resize.jpg

Desmond was a proud, strong and defiant Nova Scotian who in 1946 unwittingly sat in the “Whites only” section of a movie theatre in Nova Scotia. When she refused to move as she was asked to do, she was arrested, dragged out of the theatre and thrown into jail for one night. During the arrest, she was injured and subsequently required medical attention. To add insult to injury, she was fined \$20.00 and charged and found guilty of defrauding the Nova Scotia government of 1 cent which was the tax she would have paid for sitting on the main floor of the theatre. Undeterred, Desmond began to fight for an end to segregation and racial inequality in the province and all of Canada. She was posthumously pardoned and to mark Black History Month 2012, a commemorative stamp has been issued to celebrate this remarkable woman who without intending to helped change the course of Canadian history. Before there was a Rosa Parks, there was a Viola Desmond.

Maya Angelou: 1928 -



Image Source: http://mayaangelou.com/images/Maya_Angelou.jpg

Educator, Poet and civil rights advocate. In many of her poems and books such as I Shall not be Moved, Angelou deals with some of her experiences growing up in a racially divided US. However, in her poem “Still I Rise”, she inspires and engenders confidence that anyone can rise above suffering and pain, even the kind of pain inflicted by segregation and discrimination.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali: 1961-



Ali is a Somali-Dutch feminist and activist. Born and raised in a Muslim family in Somalia, she has become an avowed atheist. She is a writer and politician and an outspoken supporter of the rights of women particularly those of Muslim women in the west. She is strongly opposed to and campaigns for the eradication of all forms of female genital mutilation (FGM), a procedure which she herself had to endure at the tender age of five.

The Right Honourable Michaelle Jean: 1957-



Born in Haiti and raised in Quebec, the journalist and broadcaster became Canada's 27th and 1st black Governor-General on September 27, 2005, a position she held until October 1, 2010. In November 2010, she became Unesco's Special Envoy for Haiti, following the massive Haiti earthquake which wreaked devastating destruction on all aspects of Haitian life. As of February 1, 2010, Ms. Jean becomes the 13th Chancellor of the University of Ottawa.

Image Source:

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/51/Michaelle_Jean_1_11072007.jpg/426px-Michaelle_Jean_1_11072007.jpg

Wangari Maathai: 1940-2011



Maathai worked tirelessly for conservation and women's rights in Kenya. In January 2004, in recognition for her work in sustainable development and her efforts to foster peace in her homeland, she received the Nobel Peace Prize, thus becoming the first African woman to win this coveted prize.

Image Source:
<http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/WangariMaathai.jpg>

The Honourable Mayann E. Francis: 1946 -



Mayaan E. Francis is the first African-Nova Scotian to become Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Nova Scotia. She took office on Sept, 7 2006. Before assuming this office, she was the first female director and CEO of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission and the first female Nova Scotia Ombudsman. She has performed community service in Canada and in several other countries including the US, Brazil and Canada. Ms. Francis has written extensively on community based and women's issues and continues to work tirelessly in support of these issues.

Image Source:
<http://lt.gov.ns.ca/her-honour/biography/>

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf: 1938- & Leymah Gbowee: 1972-



Image Source:

http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2011/johnson_sirleaf_gbowee_slideshow.jpg

Johnson is the 24th president of Liberia and Gbowee is a peace activist. In 2011, they shared the Nobel Peace prize with Karman of Yemen for their “non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women’s rights to full participation”.

Rosa Parks: 1913-2005



This Civil Rights activist & pioneer has been variously described as “the first lady of Civil Rights” and the “mother of the freedom movement. Her iconic, defiant act of refusing to give up her bus seat to a white passenger gave rise to the Montgomery bus boycott led by Martin Luther King, and which was in turn instrumental in the dismantling of racial discrimination in the United States.

Sojourner Truth: 1797-1883



Truth (given slave name was Isabella Baumfree) was a strong advocate for women's rights and for civil rights. She was born to a slave father from the Gold Coast now Ghana and a mother whose parents were slaves from Guinea in West Africa. In 1851, at a convention on women's rights in Akron, Ohio Sojourner gave her fiery and classic speech "Ai'nt I a woman" in which she made it clear that given all she had been through in life such as giving birth to thirteen children who had nearly all been sold into slavery, and toiling from morning to night on slave plantations, she could think of no man who was superior to her. The NASA built rover which roamed on mars in 1997 was named after Sojourner.

Image Source:
http://stmwilliamsport.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/SojournerTruth_jpg.jpg

Maxine Tynes: 1949-2011



Image Source:

http://www.dal.ca/content/dalhousie/en/home/news/2011/09/14/in-memori--maxine-tynes-/_jcr_content.image.jpg

Maxine was a proud African-Nova Scotian teacher and a great poet. Her poems reflect themes such as poverty, love, feminism, beauty and also what it means to be physically challenged like she was. Some of her best known poems include “The Profile of Africa” and “Borrowed Beauty”