



generations

Celebrating 50 years of Caribbean recruitment

MAYOR OF LONDON

Transport for London





London Underground trainees
at the White City school, 1971
LTM 1998/83758

Foreword

In response to labour shortages following the Second World War, London Transport had to look way beyond Britain's capital to keep London moving. At the invitation of the Barbados Government, it began a recruitment drive in the Caribbean in February 1956. As a result, many thousands of people made the decision to emigrate from the Caribbean to Britain and begin a new life working on London's public transport system.

This is part of a history of migration which has seen employees join us from all over the world including; Ireland, the Indian sub-continent, Cyprus, Malta, and eastern Europe to name but few. At TfL we are extremely proud of this heritage and the contribution that our workforce has made to the rich diversity of London. Today it is the most diverse city in Europe, with 300 languages spoken, over 14 faiths practised and 42 communities of over 10,000 people born outside Britain. Leading London's equality agenda is one of the Mayor of London's key aims and underpins the work of Transport for London and the rest of the Greater London Authority family. It is therefore fitting that we should celebrate the contributions of the many women and men who came from the Caribbean to work for London Transport half a century ago.

This booklet celebrates the 50th anniversary of that direct recruitment scheme in the Caribbean. It is part of a wider initiative – called the Generations project – that aims to preserve an oral and pictorial history of the people who joined us from around the world and the impact they had on London.

To achieve this, TfL asked people to come forward and share their experiences of what life was like when they joined London Transport in the 1950's and '60's. We also heard from current employees whose parents and other relations joined from abroad; these second generation employees have helped us bring our story up to date. We have also drawn on the London Transport Museum collection.

Our job at TfL is to keep London moving every day, as well as planning and building the transport systems for the future. But we are keenly aware that everything we do today is only possible thanks to the efforts of previous generations. This booklet is an acknowledgement of that history and some of the people who made it.

Peter Hendy CBE
Commissioner of Transport
Transport for London



Canteen assistants training at Baker Street, 1967
LTM 1998/85733

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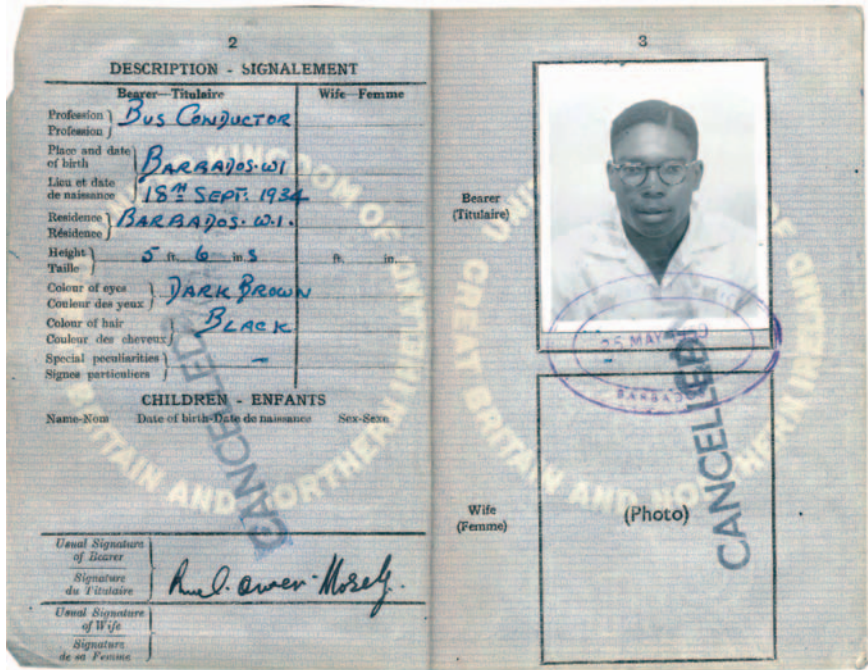
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Britain and the Caribbean

After the Second World War, London Transport (LT), like many other employers in the UK, had a severe recruitment problem. It became especially hard to fill the lower grade, poorly paid jobs that could be dirty and difficult, involving shift work and long hours.

In the British West Indies however, populations were growing and in some areas jobs were scarce. The strong migratory tradition in the West Indies prompted many to go abroad to study or seek work, looking for better pay and advancement. From the late

1940s onwards thousands of Caribbean people made the long journey to the 'mother country'. As the first wave of Caribbean immigrants settled in London, some found work with LT.



British passport, No 54301, issued to Mr R O Moseley in Barbados, 1959. Mr Moseley became a LT bus conductor.
LTM 1995/570

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Advertisement for cheap passage to England. Jamaica, 1950s
LTM 2006/15852

Recruitment



Charles Gomm and Barbadian recruit, 1956
LTM 1998/83756

London Transport (LT) advertised for staff in northern England and Scotland in an attempt to ease the staff shortages and by 1950 had also begun to actively recruit in Ireland. But staff shortages continued and so in 1956, the organisation began to recruit further afield.

At the invitation of the Barbados Government, men and women were recruited directly from Barbados to work as bus conductors, Underground staff and canteen assistants. As with other sponsored schemes run in conjunction with British Rail and the National Health Service, the Barbados government lent recruits the fare to Britain. This was then paid back over two years.

LT recruited in Barbados until 1970, extending the scheme to Jamaica and Trinidad for a year in 1966. In later years the number of recruits fell, hampered by the restrictions imposed by the Commonwealth Immigration Act, 1962.



Recruitment poster, Come and Join Us, artist unknown, 1953
LTM 1983/4/6633

‘As a youngster I was thinking of going to sea and went to the job exchange at home (Barbados). I didn’t want to go the USA, so I jumped at working for London Transport. The government paid for the fares then we would have to pay it back over time.’

– Grantley Best, recruited in Barbados as a bus conductor, 1961

Arriving in London

‘I was so cold I slept in pyjamas, trousers and socks. The only thing I didn’t sleep in was shoes.’

– Sam Springer, came independently from Barbados to work as a station man, 1959

The direct recruits from Barbados were met on arrival and taken to temporary accommodation close to their workplace in London. Some Caribbean men and women had served in Britain in the armed forces during the Second World War and so knew what to expect. Younger immigrants though were not prepared for the climatic and cultural differences they found.

Many recruits found London a cold and unwelcoming place, with the additional difficulty in many cases of adjusting from rural to city life. Some found it hard to find accommodation, and others were disappointed that they had to accept basic jobs in spite of their skills and education.

‘When I first came over it was a bitter winter, 1963. It was icy and there were no buses or trains so I walked from Teddington to Kingston covered in snow.’

– Vince Leacock, recruited in Barbados as a bus conductor, 1962



Station staff clear snow at Leytonstone station, 1963
Copyright TopFoto

‘There weren’t many black people with houses and there weren’t many white people who would rent to black people. Even though there were “To Let” signs outside, the owner would say the room had gone.’

– Chris Hope, recruited in Barbados as a bus conductor, 1961



‘The accommodation was heartbreaking at times... it deflated you. Word of mouth got you into places... It was the first time I encountered prejudice. The word came up in a conversation on a bus and I looked it up.’

– Vince Leacock, recruited in Barbados as a bus conductor, 1962

Left: New arrivals finding their way around London
Copyright Museum of London, Henry Grant Collection

Right: Looking for accommodation, Notting Hill, 1955
Copyright Museum of London, Henry Grant Collection



Working for London Transport

New recruits were quickly placed in jobs as bus conductors, station staff and canteen assistants, and in track maintenance and building work. Bus crews were trained at Chiswick and Underground staff at Acton. There were new skills to learn, a new currency to deal with and a strange city to become accustomed to.

Many recruits were skilled and well educated but accepted lower status jobs, hoping to gain promotion or to move to other employment. Despite the many vacancies some white staff felt threatened by the newcomers. Trade unions at first tried to place a quota on the number of immigrants recruited and the type of work available.

Gradually the new workforce became an established part of LT, and although some recruits left, those who remained slowly gained promotion within the company.

‘At Chiswick Training Centre, when a conductor arrived late for the second time he was told by the inspector “Mr-, if you arrive late again we won’t want you”. He was not late again. Lateness was frowned upon, time was money. We had arrived!’

– H A Downes, recruited in Barbados as a bus conductor, 1960

‘There was one driver who was really bad to me... I went to the Supervisor and said I couldn’t work with him and I was leaving... The Superintendent asked if I thought the driver’s behaviour was because of my colour. I didn’t know. A few days later they told me he had been dismissed and asked me to stay. I’d been the fourth person to complain about the same driver... and they didn’t want to lose me!’

– Desmond Dennis, came independently from Jamaica, worked for Central Distribution Services delivering supplies, 1956



Staff working on track maintenance, 1957
LTM 1998/27447

‘Promotion was offered but when recruitment in the Caribbean began it did make things easier for those that were already here – we were not just sweeping the platform. The next stop was to become a guard then a motorman (train driver) then an inspector.’

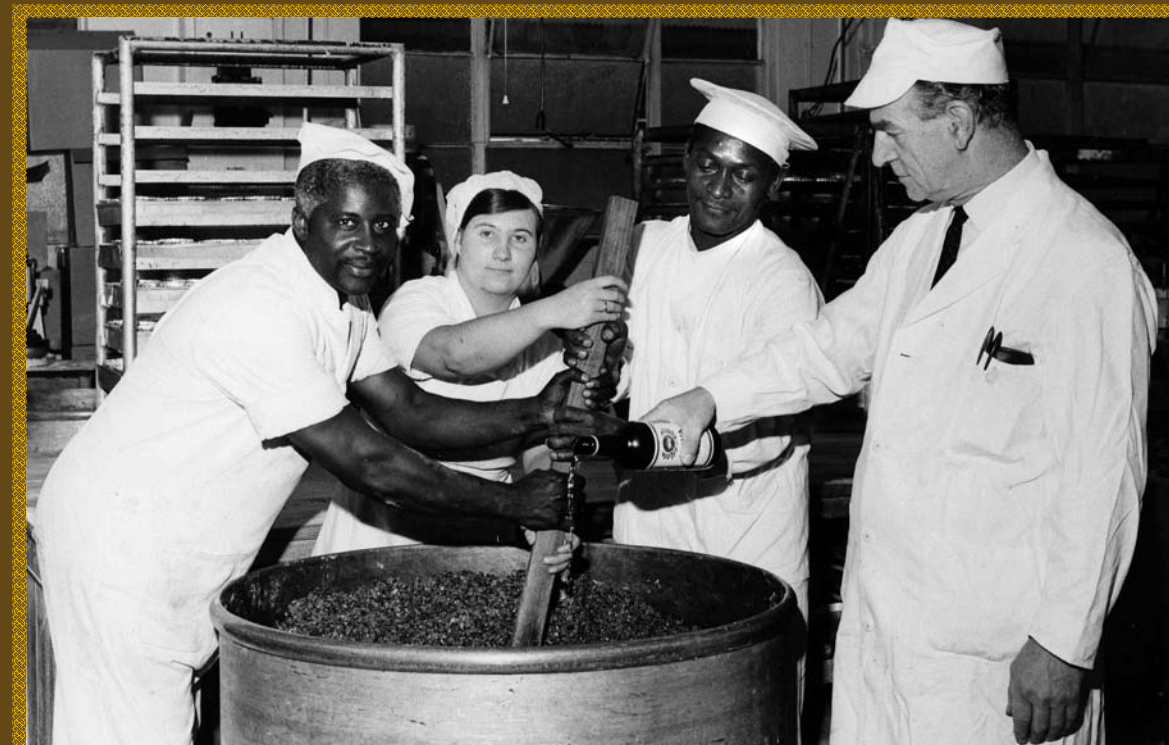
– Eric da Costa Thompson, came from Barbados to study and work, 1955



Stephen Tharpe, came independently from Jamaica, pictured at Shepherd's Bush Green, 1957



Jack Hickman training Nona Roberts (boarding the bus) and other bus conductors for decimalisation, 1970
LTM 2003/21206



Staff at the food production centre in Croydon stir the Christmas pudding as the manager pours in the sherry, 1971
LTM 2005/5576

‘There was more of a relationship between us West Indians than across the board, but when you get to know people it was ok. The relationship between colleagues was good and we were helping each other.’

– John Watson, came independently from Jamaica, worked as a station man, 1960

Caribbean women at London Transport



Merna Miller being crowned canteen queen, 1971
LTM 1998/18599

From the beginning of the direct recruitment scheme, a small number of the recruits to the operating grades were women, coming to work as bus conductors, station women and canteen staff. At first it was LT policy to recruit single people. In reality many unmarried couples and single parents left children behind to be looked after by relatives until they could bring them over to England. So families were split in the search for a new life. Others brought children with them and tried to manage families and shift work.

In 1968, London Transport estimated that they had about 9,000 black staff employed in a workforce of 73,000. This included around 2,000 in departments such as catering, many of whom were women. As in the capital as a whole, West Indian foods and flavours were gradually introduced into the canteen menus.



Nona Roberts, bus conductor, 1979

‘When I started, we were doing 44 hours. Starting at 6.30am till 3.30pm. We worked on a rota basis. I got on with customers; sometimes people would complain about the portions. Most staff in the canteen were from Jamaica and Barbados and people from the different islands used to mix. It was hard work. They had beauty contests, and things like that used to help. The first canteen queen was from our canteen.’

– Sybil Campbell, came independently from Jamaica, worked as a canteen assistant, 1961

‘The canteen ladies made rissoles from leftovers, and they were so delicious, everyone would go for them. Some of the guys would even buy them to take them home. They brought over the use of spices and different flavours and this was a definite change for us (white colleagues). And I remember they used to make up the most delicious puddings.’

– Desmond Davies, bus driver, 1962

‘I was living in Brixton. I rented a room with a woman I was working with. There was another woman from Trinidad who lived there. So when I would work early, she would look after my daughter and give her breakfast and when I worked later, she would help her in the evening and put her to bed.’

– Ismay O’ Neil, came independently from Guyana, worked as a canteen assistant, 1962



Canteen workers being
trained at Baker Street, 1968
LTM 1998/47267

New communities, new friends

Caribbean immigrants soon founded their own communities. Newcomers to London joined local churches or established new congregations. Clubs and 'blues dances' were popular meeting places for some while others found friendship and support through their work, social and sports activities.

London Transport also had a whole network of sports clubs and societies to join. Many Barbadians, with their well known cricketing tradition and skills, were in demand in local neighbourhood teams where they lived. They also met up with each other and socialised in London Transport teams such as the Central Road

Services (CRS) cricket team, which included the best players from the bus garage teams. They were unbeaten in tournaments for 26 years.



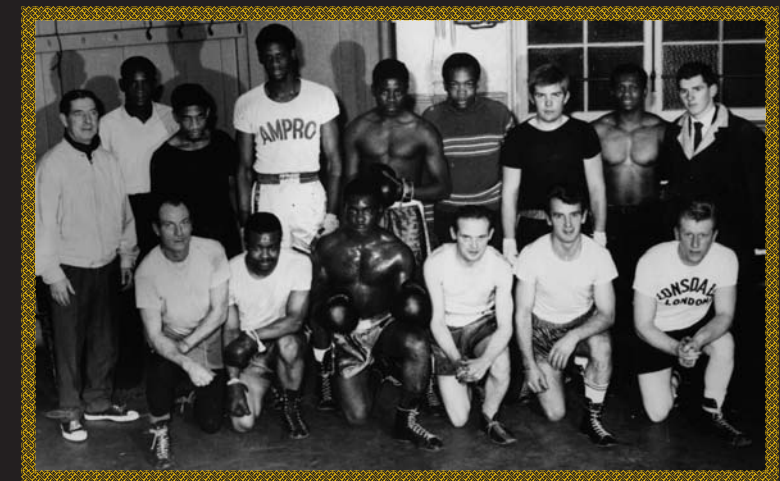
Paul Charles, motorman and athlete, LT sportsman of the year, on front cover of LT magazine, March 1972
LTM 1998/83759

'A friend of a friend got me my room and it was easy to make friends. There were loads of house parties. You had ska, twist and blue beats. Cars would pull up to you and they would ask if you were looking for a party and you'd say yes and they'd take you out and bring you back, with no strings attached. You were drinking your Cherry B, VP wine – you'd get up with a headache but you'd still go to work!'

– Sybil Campbell, came independently from Jamaica, worked as a canteen assistant, 1961



Staff from Peckham bus garage enjoying a day out, c 1957
LTM 1999/9477



Eugene Small, weightlifter (second from the right, back row) with LT staff boxing club at Camden gym, c 1967
LTM 1998/83748

‘There was cricket, snooker, table tennis teams. We had a lot of house parties within the community, Jamaicans, Trinidadians, Guyanese and Dominicans.’

– Lorenzo Daniels, recruited in Barbados as a bus conductor, 1960



CRS Cricket team pose for the camera after winning another tournament, 1984
LTM 2006/15877

‘Most Barbadians were into cricket and Central Road Services cricket team had 3 or 4 venues such as Langley Park and Osterley. That’s how we passed our time. Apart from that we used to have parties over the weekend. The music originated from Jamaica with Reggae and Ska and Calypso from Barbados. The Caribbean islanders used to mix and you were glad to see other black people, to be honest.’

– Chris Hope, recruited in Barbados as a bus conductor, 1964

Stay or return? Connections with home



CRS cricket team on route to Barbados, 1975
LTM 1998/83760

‘I came over so young and settled down here. I made this my life. This is my home. Barbados is the place where I was born.’

– Vince Leacock, recruited in Barbados as a bus conductor, 1962

Many of those who came to Britain from the Caribbean had expected to stay for a few years, but remained for most of their working lives. Many maintained strong links with home, as well as making new friends at work and in the community.

While some returned to the Caribbean, it was difficult for others who had families with roots in Britain.

On retirement some West Indians are torn between remaining with children and grandchildren born and educated in Britain, or returning to a very different Caribbean from the islands they left. Returning residents’ associations have been set up in several islands to help people cope with the pressures and expense of resettlement, and to keep a social network of friends and former colleagues.

‘I said I’m going to give it five years here, and I told my mum I would stay five years and then I’d come back home. But the first time I’d be back down there (Barbados) was ten years later, and then I’d only gone because I was on a cricket tour. I captained them, we went on four or five tours to Barbados and that was good!’

– Harold Blackman, recruited in Barbados as a bus conductor and captain of CRS cricket team, 1963

‘Mum used to dry sorrel early and send it for me so I could have it for Christmas. We’d have roast pork. You’d go to the butchers and get goat meat. You’d have plum pudding and make it like home and steam it... My parents would collect newspapers, roll it and put it in the post because you didn’t have Jamaican news.’

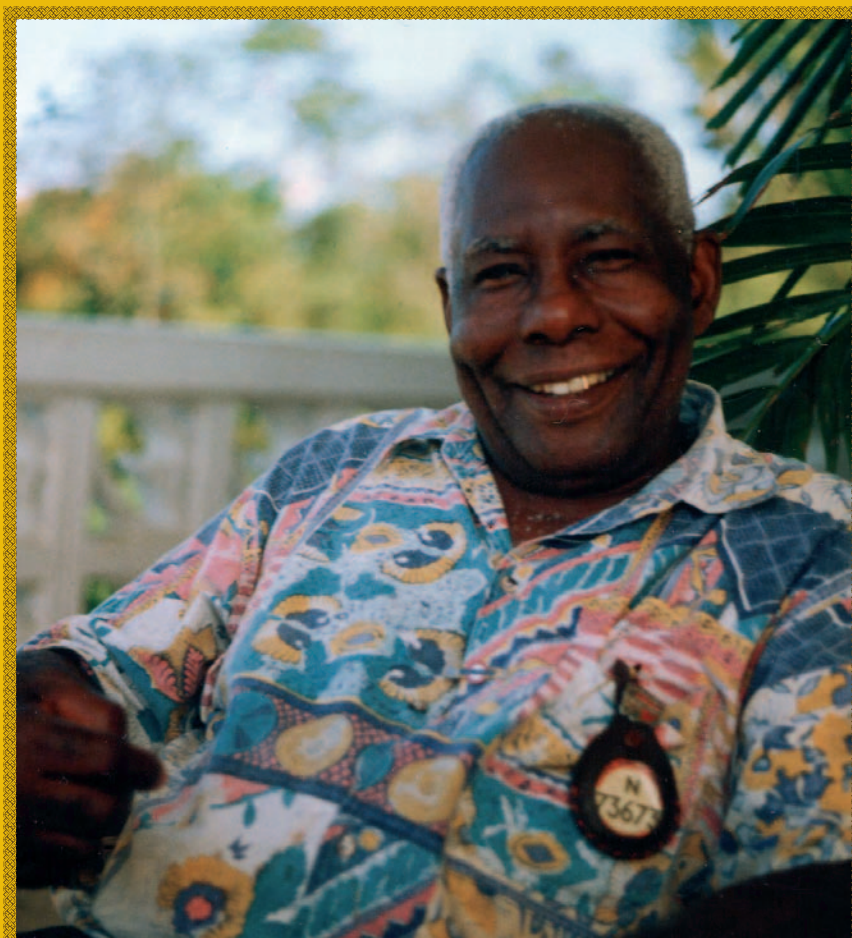
– Sybil Campbell, came independently from Jamaica, worked as a canteen assistant, 1961

‘Some of the people from back then [in the canteens] are my friends up until now. And when I go back home to Grenville in Grenada, I meet up with them.’

– Sanita Christopher, came independently from Grenada in 1964, worked as a canteen assistant

‘I took the whole family to Jamaica in 1983... but the children wanted to come back and go to school in London...’

– Desmond Dennis, came independently from Jamaica in 1956, worked for CDS delivering supplies



‘Dad took us all to Treasure Beach, Jamaica in 1983... it was very, very different living in the country... the school was much stricter, and things you take for granted like water you had to be careful with for cooking and everything.’

– Deborah Dennis, bus driver, daughter of Desmond Dennis

Aston Wilson, came to London in 1951 to work as a bus conductor, back home in Jamaica, 1992
LTM 1999/2472



Desmond Dennis, formerly with CDS, preparing for a six month stay in Jamaica. At home in Kennington with his son, and friend Jenny Salmon (LT Catering), 2006

Lloyd Ellis, former track worker, with his grandson in Jamaica, 1992
LTM 2004/16833

Changing times

Over the years, changing travel patterns and technological advances have meant that fewer staff were needed to run London's public transport. In 1956, LT had a staff of 87,000. By the end of the twentieth century there were fewer than 35,000. During the last decades of the twentieth

century, restructuring and the privatization of services, including buses and catering, brought new working practices and with them, redundancies. Transport for London (TfL) was created in July 2000 as the integrated body for transport in the capital. In July 2003, London Underground Ltd

(LUL) with its new Public Private Partnership (PPP) partners also became part of Transport for London.

Today, TFL's workforce includes a new generation of black Londoners, some of whom are sons and daughters of the first Caribbean recruits.



Harold Blackman and Carl Hoyte on the front cover of Metlife (staff magazine), holding photographs dating from their earlier days with LT
Photo: Metroline

‘Quite a few second generation kids ended up on the Underground. Dad’s retired now but my godfathers are still there. Working as an operator, I came into a male orientated world, but I think I had a better insight because of the people I grew up with. A big part of my life was around the Underground, back then it was a real community.’

– Kelly-Anne Grosvenor, born in London, worked as a station assistant, 1998



Lance Ramsay, General Manager of East London and Waterloo and City Lines, at home in 2006. His father and grandfather both worked on the Underground

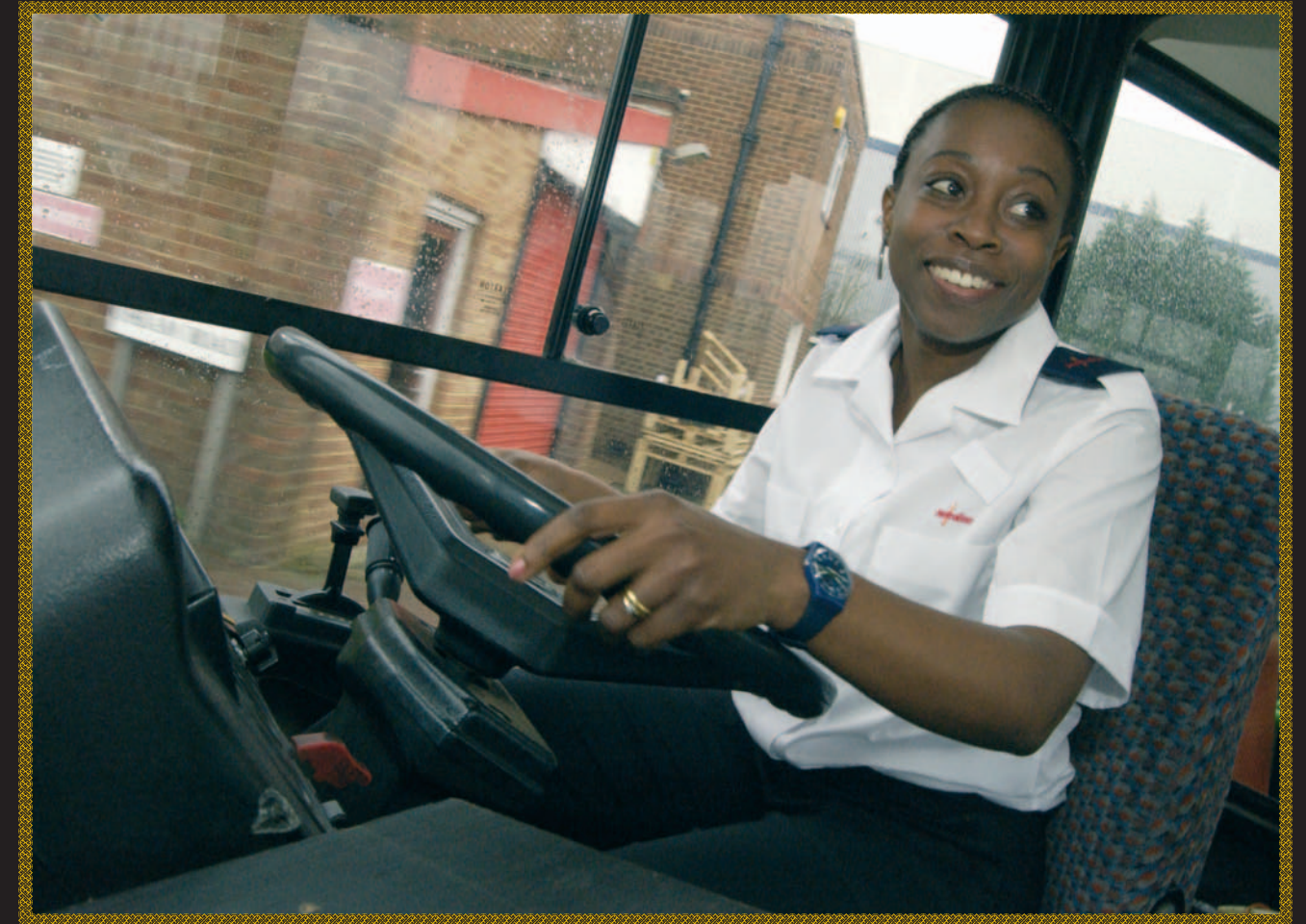
‘My mum didn’t see London Transport as a career. Initially she wanted me to be a computer programmer because it had more status than LT... I started as a bus conductor, became a driver but transferred to the Underground.’

‘Dad used to take me to the canteen at Thornton Heath bus garage on Saturdays because I liked the cherry pie there! I didn’t consider working for transport as a teenager. I wish I had now. I really, really like my job as a bus driver and look forward to going to work... There are some miserable people out there, but I believe you can make your own day.’

– Deborah Dennis, bus driver, daughter of Desmond Dennis who worked for central distribution services at LT



Andrew Smith, Instructor Operator, 2002. His parents emigrated from Jamaica and his father ran a business servicing black cabs. LTM 2005/15642



Part of present day campaign to attract more women bus drivers into the industry
Photo: London buses

Biographies

Harold Blackman and Carl Hoyte

Harold Blackman was recruited in Barbados in June 1963 as a bus conductor. He started at Harrow Weald garage, where he still works as a driver today. He was one of London Transport's most successful batsmen in the Central Road Services (CRS) cricket team, winning over 130 trophies.

'Back in our country as a youngster, you say "Morning" that's how we were brought up. I was walking all the way to the garage from Hindes Road one Saturday morning and I was speaking to everybody and not one answered and I did look so silly!'

Carl Hoyte was recruited as a bus conductor in May 1962 in Barbados. A good friend of Harold's, he was well known as one of the best bowlers in the CRS cricket team. Today



he works as a bus operative trainer at Harrow Weald bus garage.

'For a start they make you think it (England) was a rich country, you earn lots of money... that's what all of us were here for, to earn lots of

money – my idea was – and the other fellows as well, was to come here for five years, get as much money as you can and go back... I'm still here after 44 years and I still ain't got the money!'

Ismay O'Neil and Eugene Small

Ismay O'Neil came from Guyana in 1962 with her mother and siblings, to live with her aunt in Croydon. She applied to work as a LT catering assistant in 1968 and then moved on to work on the Underground where she met Eugene. She worked as a ticket collector at Victoria station until 1983.

'When we first came over we never knew we had to get special clothes for winter. One day I wasn't well and had to go to hospital and had to walk in some shoes to get there and a white man stopped me and said "let me give you some advice... next time, always get a decent pair of shoes and socks."'

Eugene Small flew to London to start work as a bus conductor, when he was recruited in April 1961. He then transferred to the Underground, where he worked his way up to become manager of Brixton station and also Duty Manager of the Vauxhall Group, until his retirement in 1995.

'I was more scared of the Teddy Boys when going home at about 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning. I knew a colleague... a ticket collector... and a group of 12 came through, he confronted one of them who didn't have a ticket and got beaten up!'



Jack Hickman, Phil Lawrence and Nona Roberts

Jack Hickman joined LT in 1946 as a bus conductor after driving for the RAF during the Second World War. He ended up training thousands of conductors and direct recruits at Chiswick Training School. He soon became Chief Instructor and retired in 1985.

‘The trainee conductors did 3 days at Chiswick, 5 days at the garage and another 2 days back with us. The Barbadians had one extra day which we called the Geography bus! They had a whole day and stopped somewhere for their meal relief. It gave them an idea of the size of London.’

Phil Lawrence trained as a bus driver in 1974 to work at Peckham garage. Throughout his career, he became a Senior Driving Instructor for LT and is still a trainer today for East Thames buses.

From 1976 to 1979, he worked as a crew with conductress, Nona Roberts.

‘The instructors were always immaculately dressed. Their shoes were toe-capped and they were so shiny, you could see your reflection and comb your hair in them!’

Nona Roberts came from St Ann’s, Jamaica in 1959 and started working as a bus conductor from 1965 to 1994. She was trained by Jack Hickman at Chiswick and later worked with Phil Lawrence for three years. They still remain good friends today.

‘He (Phil) was marvellous. He was ever so good to me. Him and his dad would come and pick me up when I was still in my rollers at 3 or 4 in the morning.’



Lance Ramsay

Lance Ramsay emigrated to England from Grenada with his family as a five-year old child in 1965. He started working for LT as a bus conductor in June 1983 and then went on to work for the Underground, following in his father's footsteps. Today, he is General Manager of the East London and Waterloo & City Lines.

'All I remember is that mum was in the NHS and dad was a driver at east Finchley, then he became a supervisor. At the time my granddad was a ticket collector at Osterley. I was always baffled because he was well-respected in Grenada – I remember a photo of him in his clothes and gun by his side – then all of a sudden he was in a ticket collector box in Osterley. I didn't understand the dynamics at all.'

'I became duty manager... I was well known for my



dreadlocks. I was outspoken; I had attitude, so I was well known. If there was any friction, it was from my own people, when I got promoted

to duty manager... They thought I cut off my dreadlocks because I got the duty manager job but the truth is one dreadlock fell out at a party.'

Lorenzo Daniel



Lorenzo Daniel, was recruited in Barbados, and started work in July 1960. Training first as a bus conductor in Balham, south London, he is now an inspector controller for bus routes 72 and 283.

'My objective was to watch and learn. We came from the same culture... the British culture... I watch and see how people operate, for example, the English mannerisms, because I didn't know anything about how they operate.'

'At Christmas I would go to friends'. The first year I stayed at home. I had to learn how to cook. It wasn't like Christmas the first two years. The ladies I knew from back home came over and I would go and visit.'

Linford Wong and John Mascoll

Linford Wong left Clarendon, Jamaica, in December 1960, to start a new life in Kilburn, north London. Applying for a bus driver vacancy at Cricklewood garage when he arrived in the country, he trained at Chiswick and drove for LT until his retirement in 1987.



‘I really did enjoy it and was easy for me to adapt and make friends... People come and people go, so you just tried to get on with everyone because you were living in a strange country.’

John Mascoll, was 20-years old when he boarded the plane for England in January



1965. Leaving Barbados on the Sunday, he was at White City by the following Tuesday, training to work on the Underground. He started as a station man, became a guard, then a driver and eventually a Duty Station Manager at Edgware until he retired in June 2005.

‘The city was disgusting and grimy. The grime on the building was black and it reminded me of the smoke coming out of the sugar factories at harvest time. London today bears no resemblance.’

‘I found people ok. It was interesting that they wanted to know who you were and where you come from. The geography was bad – I told them (people) I came from Barbados and they’d ask me where in Jamaica is that?’

Ralph Straker

Ralph Straker was born in St Michael, Barbados and at 21-years old, was recruited to work as a bus conductor for LT at Finchley bus garage in 1956, where he worked for nine years. He later worked as Community Relations Advisor in Hackney and Race Relations Advisor in Haringey. He now serves as a verger for St Paul’s Church in Finchley and St Clements Danes.

‘For the (LT aptitude) test, we had to do a written test in arithmetic, and I can’t remember if we had to do an English test... but the arithmetic didn’t come as a problem for us because at school, although we used dollars, at every level at school we had to calculate how to change pounds, shillings and pence into dollars and the reverse.’



‘Oh, I’m ready to retire tomorrow morning and I have a house already waiting on me there. But my wife isn’t quite ready yet. She’s waiting on the grandchildren... I am waiting

to put my foot on the sands and sip my rum punch. I’m looking forward to the day when we can do that.’

Stephen Tharpe



Stephen Tharpe came from Jamaica in 1956 and initially trained as a psychiatric nurse. He soon left to work on the Underground as a signaller and went on to become an executive assistant

in staff relations for London Underground at 55 Broadway. Two of his sons currently work for TfL.

‘The reason I stayed for so long is when you get married

and children start to appear, you sober up and start to think about laying down the roots and London Transport was that for me.’

Sybil Campbell and Sanita Christopher

Sybil Campbell was born in Westmoreland, Jamaica, and travelled to England in December 1961 to join her cousin in West Kensington. Six months after arriving, she started working at LT as a catering assistant; a job

she would stay in for over 30 years.

‘I had the choice of catering assistant and booking office assistant. The interviewer told me a lot of my people were working as catering assistants. I thought about

the free uniform and free food, so I thought I should choose the canteen.’

Sanita Christopher from Grenada took up a position as a machinist, when she first came to England in 1964. She then applied for a job at LT as a catering assistant in Hammersmith in 1975. She has also worked at canteens in Southall and finally Ashfield House, where she met Sybil; they have remained close friends for over 20 years.

‘Ashfield House was very hard work. There were a lot of people. You had to cook three main meals plus a vegetarian meal. You had to cook the gravy and vegetables and there was a snack bar, so you had to make sandwiches. You had to be quick and prepare stuff the night before and put it in the fridge – it was hard but very enjoyable.’



platform
art

Platform for Art

Platform for Art commissioned artist Othello De' Souza-Hartley and acclaimed writer Courttia Newland to work in collaboration with Transport for London staff past and present as part of the Generations project. This commission, entitled Connected, has resulted in an exhibition at Westminster Underground station.

Platform for Art invited four individuals to share their stories with the artist and writer. They journeyed with the participants to revisit and explore memories that had special meaning for them.

Leaflets with more information about this project and the stories in full are available in the ticket hall at Westminster Underground station. The exhibition is on show 5 December 2006 - 30 April 2007.

Platform for Art is the art programme for London Underground. Find out more and leave your comments at tfl.gov.uk/pfa

Courtia wrote these memories as abstract 'micro stories' providing a fleeting, yet insightful glimpse into their personal and working lives.

Live readings of the stories by actors, directed by Nadine Hoare also took place at Westminster Underground station ticket hall as tube customers looked on.

The TfL staff that took part in the project do not know one another but are connected by their inspirational journeys. They have helped to staff the vital transport network that enables today's Londoners to make their own unique journeys.

Cricket Driver

I used to love watching Dad step up to bat. He would play for his workmates in the Underground Cricket Club from '67 until '96. There was a real community feel back then. There would be regular excursions, dinner dances, Caribbean food and kids playing. Everybody was your Mum and Dad because everyone was someone to you. We were all connected.

Kelly-Anne Grosvenor
Train driver 1999 - present





Canteen Queen

We would have a big ceremony in a gigantic hall with hundreds of balloons, and all the London Transport bosses would judge. At the end of the night, the winner would get her sash, a tiara, and a prize. I always did want to be Canteen Queen.

Sybil Campbell

Retired catering assistant for TfL 1962 -1992.

The Route Controller

He stands in the midst of channelled confusion, the wind in his hair, swift vehicles rushing past him on all sides, feet planted firm against concrete. He is the centre of his world. Around him, bodies and wheels turn in noisy revolutions, a ceaseless motion which has become the very rhythm he dances to.

Vince Leacock

Service controller, 267 bus route 1962 - present.





The Brixton Rock

I was a qualified train driver at Morden. On my first day I felt like an airline pilot! I was shivering with excitement and scared, but nothing bad happened... I moved up to become Station Manager at Brixton. It was very different back then. When I come back to Brixton I think it looks very impressive, even though everything's changed. I don't recognise anybody anymore.

Eugene Small

Retired Duty Station Manager
1961 -1995.

About the artist and writer

Othello De'Souza-Hartley is an artist and has worked commercially as a fashion and portrait photographer. Recent commissions include a residency at The National Trust's Sutton House to produce a film and photographic installation exploring Caribbean heritage and a solo exhibition at Camden Arts Centre in 2005. He is currently working on a portrait commission for the National Portrait Gallery.

Courtia Newland is the author of three critically acclaimed novels, *The Scholar* (1998), *Society Within* (1999) and *Snakeskin* (2002). He has co-edited *IC3: The Penguin Book of New Black Writing in Britain* and is a co-founder of the Tell Tales collective, a short story initiative. His own short stories have been published in many anthologies and several of his plays have been performed in venues all over London. A novella, *The Dying Wish* (Abacus) was published in 2006 as part of the Quick Reads Series and his first radio play, *Hands*, was broadcast on BBC radio 4 in April of the same year

London Transport recruitment key dates

1946 - 1947	Women conductors and station staff recruited during the Second World war to cover absent male staff are dismissed. The pre-war staffing policy which allowed women in limited roles only is reinstated
1946 - 1947	Only months after being dismissed, women are invited to return as conductors and station staff on a permanent basis. This is prompted by post-war staff shortages
1949	Staff shortages continue. The London Passenger Transport Board (LPTB) centralises recruitment and seeks recruits outside London in Scotland, Liverpool and Lancashire
1950	The recruitment drive is extended to Northern Ireland
1950	Staff are recruited from the disbanding Polish services at Whitley Camp, near Aldershot. 'We took a large number of recruits in the Polish Army when it was being disbanded in 1950... and they were extremely good types. In fact I remember personally interviewing the previous Secretary of State for Poland for a booking clerk's job!' – Charles Gomm, Recruitment Officer LT
1951	War-time policy of employing women as conductors on equal pay with men resumes
1952-3	Recruitment in Eire begins
1954	Staff recruitment continues in the provinces and Northern Ireland. 'Intensive measures were taken to counteract the staff shortage. In addition to widespread advertisement of staff vacancies in road and rail vehicles and in stations and other premises owned by the Executive, and in the press for local requirements, staff were especially recruited in the provinces and Northern Ireland.' – London Transport Executive (LTE) Annual Report 1954

1956 7 Feb	First Barbadians are recruited directly to LTE in Bridgetown, Barbados. Barbados Advocate, 7 February 1956
1956	Recruitment continues in Ireland
1962	Commonwealth Immigrants Act, 1962 is passed.
1963	Bus drivers are recruited in Malta. Fewer recruits are drawn from Barbados and Ireland. 'The recruitment of staff in Ireland and Barbados continued but on a reduced scale because the lack of drivers restricted the need for conductors. Early in the year, recruiting staff visited North-East England but despite heavy local unemployment the response was poor, largely, it is thought, because of housing in the London area. At the request of the Maltese Government, a visit was made to Malta in August and a small number of road and rail operating staff was engaged' – LT Annual Report, 1963
1963	Small number of bus drivers and rail staff are recruited in Malta.
1964	Limited recruitment in Ireland, Barbados scheme continues. 'The recruitment of staff in Ireland continued, but few applications were received. Operating staff were again recruited in Barbados' – LT Annual Report, 1964
1965	Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962 imposes restrictions on recruiting in Barbados. 'Recruitment of rail and road staff in Ireland and Barbados continued: and catering assistants were also recruited in Barbados. Because of the small quota permitted under the Immigration Act, the number of selected applicants recruited from Barbados was greatly reduced towards the end of the year. This situation will continue so long as the present restrictions remain in force.' – LT Annual Report, 1965

1966	Direct recruitment scheme is extended to Trinidad and Jamaica. Limited entry due to Commonwealth Immigrants Act, 1962. 'The recruitment of staff from Barbados continued on a greatly reduced scale owing to the limitations imposed by the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962. Local recruitment of selected applicants in the West Indies was extended to Trinidad and Jamaica, but no recruits from these schemes are expected before mid-1967. Recruitment from Ireland continued, though the number of applicants fell' – LT Annual Report, 1966
1966 30 November	Barbados gains Independence from Britain
1967	Entry permits delay the arrival of staff from Trinidad and Jamaica. 'The recruitment of staff from Barbados and Ireland continued, but on a much reduced scale. Potential recruits accepted in Trinidad and Jamaica under arrangements made in 1966 were awaiting entry permits, and none of them arrived in this country during 1967' – LT Annual Report, 1967
1968	Commonwealth Immigration Act 1968
1968	Reduced number of overseas recruits 'The recruitment of road and rail staff continued but on a much reduced scale' – LT Annual Report, 1968
1970 October	Formal recruitment scheme in Barbados ends. Over 4,000 staff have been recruited from the Caribbean since 1956.

Further reading

All the items listed here can be found in the library at London's Transport Museum.

James Barry (et al...)
Sorry no vacancies: life stories of senior citizens from the Caribbean
 North Kensington Community Series, No.6, 1992

British Transport Commission
Annual reports
 1948-1953

Dennis Brooks
Race and labour in London Transport
 Oxford University Press, 1975

Kaybee Browne
The social aspect of colonial immigration from the West Indies to the UK between 1948-1962
 Dissertation for MA twentieth century historical studies degree, 1989

The Caribbean at War
 North Kensington Community Series, No.5, 1992

Madge Dresser
Black and white on the buses: the 1963 colour bar dispute in Bristol
 Bristol Broadsides, 1986

Nancy Foner
Jamaica farewell: Jamaican immigrants in London
 Routledge and Kegan, 1971

Peter Fryer
Staying power: the history of black people in Britain
 Pluto Press, 1984

London Transport
Annual reports
1953-1970

London Transport
Staff magazines

Nick Merriman (Ed.)
The peopling of London: fifteen thousand years of settlement from overseas
Museum of London, 1994

Pamela Mordecai (Ed.)
From our yard: Jamaican poetry since independence
Institute of Jamaica Publications, 1987

Susan Okokon
Black Londoners 1880-1990
Sutton Publishing, 1998

Felicity Premru
Sun a-shine rain a-fall: London Transport's West Indian workforce
London Transport Museum, 1994

Felicity Premru
Oral history at work: London Transport's West Indian workforce
in Business Archives Principles and Practice, No 67, May 1994, pages 57-71

Samuel Selvon
The Lonely Londoners
Longman, 1956

Samuel Selvon
Moses Migrating (Longman, 1983)
Moses Ascending (Longman, 1984)

Tony Sewell
Keep on moving: the Windrush legacy
Voice Enterprises Ltd, 1998

John Western
A passage to England: Barbadian Londoners speak of home
UCL Press, 1992

Mary Williams
Social and historical analysis of London Transport's recruitment policy with regard to immigrants in the 1950s
Unpublished, 1996

Robert Winder
Bloody foreigners: the story of immigration to Britain
Little Brown, 2004

Websites

Connections: hidden British Histories
www.connections-exhibition.org

London's Transport Museum, Sun-a-shine Rain-a-fall exhibition
www.ltmuseum.co.uk/virtual/online.shtml

Moving here
www.movinghere.org.uk

Library

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