



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2023xxx

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RE: African Heritage Month proclaimed in the Town of Amherst

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – The Town of Amherst has proclaimed the month of February as African Heritage Month.

Noting this year's theme is Seas of Struggle – African Peoples from Shore to Shore, Mayor David Kogon said we must all understand the role the sea played in the history of people of African Decent.

“It was over the Atlantic Ocean that people of African descent were brought to this continent against their will,” Kogon said, as he signed the proclamation, on behalf of the Amherst town council, on Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2023. “It was over the seas that many came to Nova Scotia, where they faced discrimination and hardship. Their struggles were real then and remain real today.

“African Heritage Month allows us to hear, share and learn from stories of our past as presented from the African-Nova Scotian perspective. It also allows us to celebrate and



COUN. HAL DAVIDSON, CHAIR OF AMHERST'S INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY COMMITTEE, AND COUN. GEORGE BAKER WERE ON HAND TO WATCH MAYOR DAVID KOGON SIGN A PROCLAMATION THAT DECLARES THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY TO BE AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH IN THE TOWN. (TOM McCOAG / TOWN OF AMHERST)





promote the culture, legacy, achievements and contributions people of African Decent have made to this town, county and province, both in the past and today.

“We must learn from our past. We must work together today so that we have a future where there is inclusivity, justice and equity for all.”

Amherst’s Black community has contributed greatly over the years, though its contributions have not always been recognized, Kogon said. This was one of the factors that led the town to create the town’s Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee.

The committee has been working to develop a strategy that will assist the town council and our diverse community on matters related to inclusion and diversity. It is expected to be presented to the Amherst town council later this year.

Hal Davidson, the chair of that committee, said he encourages all Amherst and area residents to join in celebrating African Heritage Month 2023.

“Our local African Nova Scotian community, historically and officially known as the Highlands, has made considerable contributions to the development of the Town of Amherst, our province and country,” Davidson said.

“One such exemplary person was the late Mr. Fred Parsons who was the Town of Amherst’s first street superintendent. He was largely responsible for the development of the Highland View Cemetery and current green spaces such as Curry Park.

“We are pleased to partner with the Cumberland African Nova Scotian Association (CANSAs) while promoting opportunities for full and equal participation of people of African descent in our community.”

As part of the African Heritage Month celebration, the Cumberland African Nova Scotian Association will be holding a ceremony on Monday, Feb. 6, 2023, at their offices at 71 Victoria St. E., beginning at 2:30 p.m.

The ceremony will include the reading of a proclamation, unveiling of the 2023 African Heritage Month poster and comments from several dignitaries.

The Cumberland County Museum and Archives will be hosting an exhibit by Darlene Strong during the month of February. It will explore her relationship with her African-Nova Scotian heritage. The display will feature items from Africa that she has collected as well as her own art work.





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Direct enquiries to:
Tom McCoag,
Corporate Communications Officer
902-694-6265
tmccoag@amherst.ca

