Pride and prejudice: stories of love against the



The National Lottery-funded Colour of Love project captured the poignant stories of mixed-race couples and their families in 1940s–1970s Nottinghamshire. Here are some of our favourites.

Page last updated: 5 July 2022

After the Second World War, thousands of people emigrated to Britain from the Caribbean to help rebuild an exhausted country. Many of the Windrush Generation, named after the first ship that made the journey in 1948, settled in Nottinghamshire.

> "Word got around that two people had gone into the registry office… one black and one white. When we came out there were around 200 people waiting, staring at us."
>
> *George Leigh*

While many found a new home, tensions simmered between communities. In 1958, a reported 1,000 people were involved in the St Ann's race riots in Nottingham, said to have been triggered by a mixed-race couple being barred from entering a pub.

Many mixed-race couples had to fight to be together.

The Colour of Love project

The Colour of Love project recorded memories and collected photographs of 16 such couples and their families.

These were deposited in the Nottinghamshire Archives - the first records in the archive to explore this heritage. An exhibition was held at Nottingham's New Art Exchange in February 2019, followed by a celebration event at the Nottingham Playhouse.

Here are some of the stories:

George and Dorothy Leigh

Written by daughter Cheryl.



George and Dorothy Leigh's wedding day, 1949

I recall my dad telling me: "Word got around that two people had gone into the registry office… one black and one white. When we came out there were around 200 people waiting, staring at us. I was nervous, I thought: ‘Are they going to lynch me?'"

They said it would not last.



George and Dorothy's diamond wedding anniversary, 2009

Christine and Stanford Francis

Written by daughter Coleen, Colour of Love project founder.



Christine and Stanford Francis's wedding, Shakespeare Register Office, 24 December 1957

Their parents were unhappy with the relationship, but love prevailed and they married anyway. They had 37 years of marriage and six children together before my mum Christine passed away.

Stanford's mother-in-law (my grandmother) “thought the world of him” eventually:



Stanford with his mother-in-law at Queens Walk Community Centre, 1979

Sue and Andy Anderson (main picture above)

Written by Sue Anderson.



Andy photographed in 1962????

Andy posing - as usual! Trousers wide at the knee and narrow at the ankle - very fashionable at the time.

Our first child was a home birth, despite living in one room in a house of multiple occupation. We'd always lived in private rented rooms, as did many others like us. Our second child came in 1971, this time a home birth by choice!

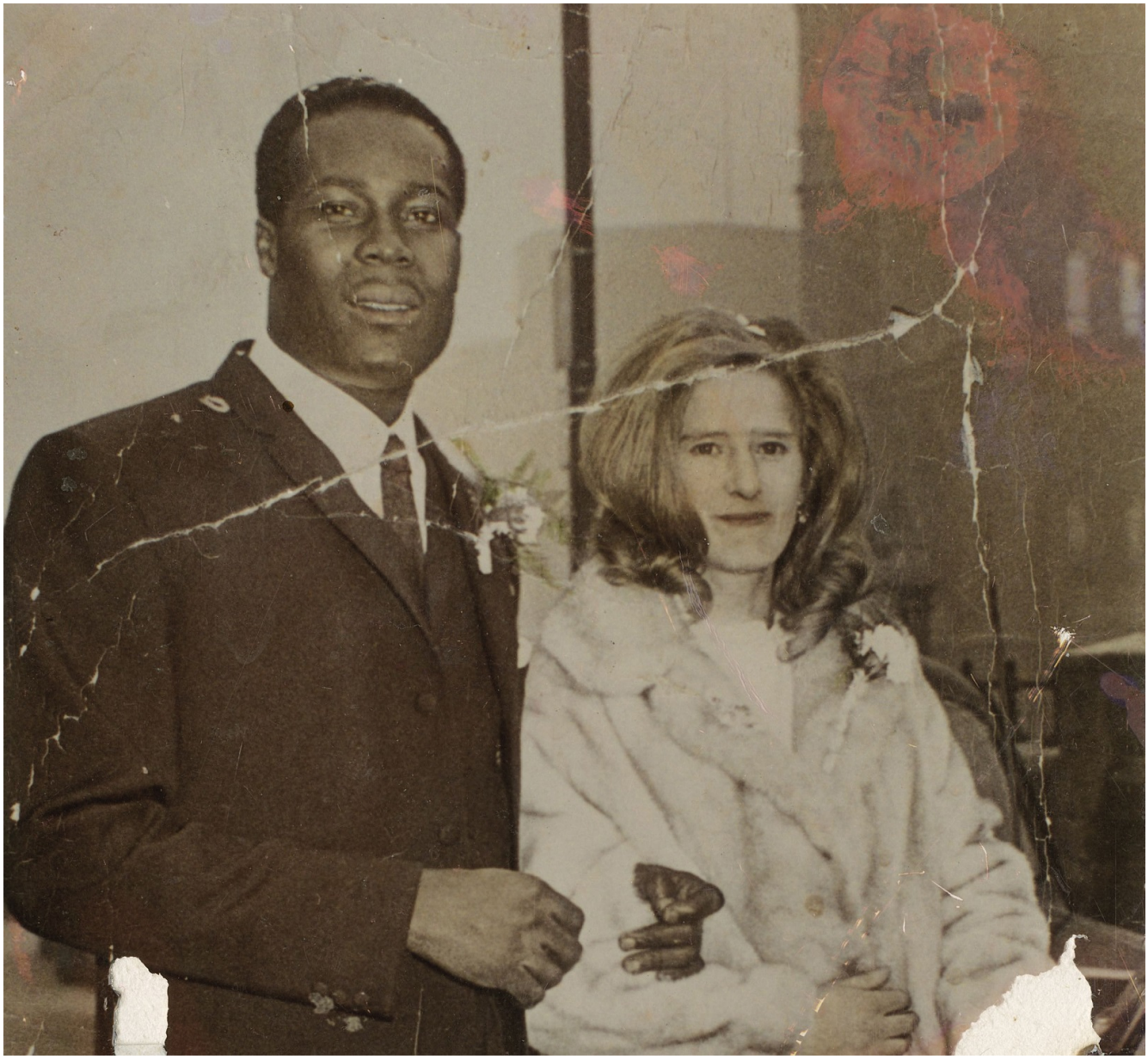


Sue and Andy together in 1991

This is us looking happy on a sunny day. I was trying to show my best side, if there is one! We were married 23 years, till death did us part when Andy passed away in 2007. Many happy memories.

Glenys and Tony Walters

Written by daughter Karen.



Glenys and Tony's wedding day, Shakespeare Street Register Office, 1969

Tony arrived in Nottingham from St Kitts and was known locally as "Firewater", a drink that he produced similar to Wray & Nephew overproof rum! Very sadly, Glenys passed away in 1975, leaving four children.

Great-grandma’s house was second home to Glenys and Tony’s grandchildren:



Glenys' mother with her grandchildren,1990

Brenda and Auvil Graham

Written by Brenda.



Brenda in Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire, 1980s??????

This is where we met, both serving soldiers. I have fantastic memories of hard physical training, freezing cold weather and lots of great experiences, fun and laughter.



Auvil Graham in uniform

We also experienced racism from our training officers and fellow soldiers, but that made us more determined to be together.

We decided to marry quickly in 1983 before Auvil was posted away. Two friends attended the wedding and we told our parents afterwards. Twenty-five years later we finally had the chance to celebrate with family and friends. We had a lovely night in the heart of Nottingham.

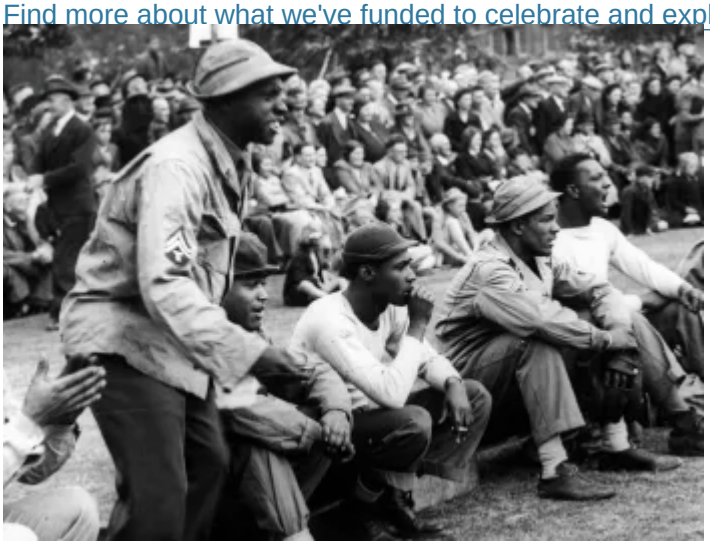


Brenda and Auvil at their Silver Wedding anniversary, West Bridgford, 2008

Read more stories

A Colour of Love book is available at New Art Exchange, Nottingham Contemporary and Five Leaves bookshop in Nottingham, and through the project's Facebook page.

Find more about what we've funded to celebrate and explore the lives of generations of black British people.







Jamaicans

Every voice matters - collecting black stories