

# Unit 1: Our heritage

In this unit you will find out 

## People and our heritage

- The people in the history of Trinidad and Tobago who have made significant contribution to our national heritage
  - our political icons
  - our arts and culture icons
  - our track and field sporting icons
  - our sports icons
  - our labour, environmental and science icons
  - our environmentalist icons
  - our icons in social work
  - our literary icons
- Explain the development of sub-cultures through fusion and syncretism
  - calypso
  - steel band
  - chutney
  - oral traditions

## Our heritage: conservation and preservation

- The value of conservation and preservation for sustainability and social living
  - threats to our heritage
  - illegal poaching
  - economic development
- Infusion of external cultures
  - legacy for future generations
  - sustainability
  - employment
  - cultural transmission
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- The role of the individual and state in conserving and preserving our national heritage
  - survival of the species
  - global cooperation
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  - state initiatives
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# People and our heritage

We are learning how to:

- identify the people in the history of Trinidad and Tobago who have made significant contribution to our national heritage: politics, arts and culture, sports
- describe how these persons identified above have made their contributions.

**National heroes/icons** are individuals (or groups and community activists) who are recognised for their significant contributions to our national heritage or the development of Trinidad and Tobago. These heroes have dedicated their lives and their talents to the fields of politics, science, culture (literature, music, dance, arts and social work) and sports. Above all else, they have served with patriotism and love for their country.

## Our political icons

Our political heroes/icons are individuals, groups or community activists who are recognised for their contribution to the development of Trinidad and Tobago. Some of our political heroes/icons include:

- Dr Eric Williams – the first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago after it gained independence from Great Britain in 1962. He would lead the government until his death in 1981. In addition to his career in politics, Dr Williams was a scholar, professor and historian, and he published many books on the history of the Caribbean. He was awarded the Trinity Cross, the nation's highest honour, posthumously in 2002.
- A.N.R. Robinson – has the unique distinction of having served as both Prime Minister (1986–91) and President of Trinidad and Tobago (1997–2003). He was one of the founders of the International Criminal Court, which was established in 2002.
- Dr Rudranath Capildeo – a politician and mathematician, who was leader of the Democratic Labour Party from 1960 to 1969, and leader of the opposition from 1961 to 1963.



Dr Eric Williams was the first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago after it gained independence from Great Britain in 1962.

## Exercise

1. In your own words, define national hero.
2. What contribution did the following people make to Trinidad and Tobago?
  - a) Dr Eric Williams
  - b) A.N.R. Robinson
  - c) Rudranath Capildeo

## Research

Choose one of the people discussed. Research their life, achievements and legacy, and write a short biography of 200 words.

## Our arts and culture icons

Many talented individuals from Trinidad and Tobago have made their mark on arts and culture. Here are just a few names of musicians and dancers that you may have heard of, from past and present:

- Winston 'Spree' Simon (1930–76) – a musician, who is credited with the invention of the Ping Pong steelpan
- Francisco Slinger (1935–) – a calypso singer and songwriter, better known as the 'Mighty Sparrow'
- Beryl McBurnie (1913–2000) – a dancer from Trinidad who established the Little Carib Theatre and who promoted the culture of Trinidad and Tobago all her life
- Michel-Jean Cazabon (1813–88) – seen as the first great Trinidadian painter, known for his depictions of Trinidadian scenery and everyday life.

## Our track and field sporting icons

Some of the most famous and beloved national heroes in any country are its sporting heroes.

There are well-known sports people from Trinidad and Tobago in many fields, including track and field events. In the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, Hasely Crawford won the 100 m. He was the first Olympic 100 m champion from the Caribbean.

Other famous recent track and field stars include Keshorn 'Keshie' Walcott, the 2012 Olympic javelin champion. He was the first Caribbean male athlete to win a gold medal in a throwing event at the Olympic Games.

At the 2012 Olympics, Trinidad and Tobago's men's 4 × 100m relay team won a silver medal. The team was consisted of Keston Bledman, Marc Burns, Emmanuel Callender and Richard Thompson.

### Exercise

3. What contribution did the following make to Trinidad and Tobago?
  - a) Winston 'Spree' Simon
  - b) Beryl Mc Burnie
4. Who was the first Caribbean male athlete to win a gold medal in a throwing event at the Olympics?
5. Create a timeline of all the individuals on these two pages, adding their achievements.
6. What qualities do you think someone needs to have to be a national hero or icon?



Keshorn 'Keshie' Walcott with his gold medal for javelin at the London Olympic Games in 2012.

### Discussion

Have a classroom discussion about the contributions made to Trinidad and Tobago by one person from each category of politics, arts and culture and sport. Do you think their contributions influenced people in future generations?

### Key vocabulary

national hero/icon

# Our national heroes and icons

We are learning how to:

- identify the people in the history of Trinidad and Tobago who have made significant contribution to our national heritage: sports, trade union movement, science and the environment, and arts and culture
- describe how these persons identified have made their contributions.

## Our sports icons

Some of the most famous and beloved national heroes in any country are its sporting heroes. Examples of nationally recognised individuals in these sports include:

- Cycling – Gene Samuel represented Trinidad and Tobago at four consecutive Olympic Games from 1984
- Golf – Stephen Ames is a two-time European golf tour winner (1994 and 1996)
- Javelin – Keshorn ‘Keshie’ Walcott was the 2012 Olympic javelin champion and the first Caribbean male athlete to win a gold medal in a throwing event at the Olympics
- Shot put – Akeem Stewart is a paralympic athlete, and holds the world records in javelin, discus and shot put
- Swimming – Dylan Carter (1996–) is one of Trinidad and Tobago’s finest swimmers; competing in the 2011 Commonwealth Games, the 2015 senior World Championships and the 2016 Rio Olympics; tipped to win an Olympic gold medal one day
- Cricket – Brian Lara is recognised as the world’s greatest batsman, scoring the highest individual score in 1994 (501) and, in 2004, the highest score in one day (390)
- Football – the Trinidad and Tobago football team reached the first round of the 2006 World Cup, and is the smallest country ever to have qualified for the World Cup.



Brent Sancho of Trinidad and Tobago, and Wayne Rooney of England at the World Cup in 2006.

## Exercise

1. Which athlete represented Trinidad and Tobago at four consecutive Olympic Games?
2. Which athlete currently holds three world records?
3. Who was the first Caribbean male athlete to win a gold medal in a throwing event at the Olympics?

## Activity

Create a timeline of all the sporting achievements listed on this page.

## Our labour, environmental and science icons >>>

Many talented individuals from Trinidad and Tobago have made their mark on the trade union movement, science and the environment, and in the arts and culture.

### Our labour icons >>>

- In the 1920s, the labour movement began to emerge. Led by Tubal Uriah 'Buzz' (TUB) Butler, together with his partners – notably Adrian 'Cola' Rienzi – the movement aimed to unite the working class and agricultural labourers in order to have a better standard of living.
- Arthur A. A. Cipriani (1875–1945) was a politician and leader. As mayor of Port of Spain, he helped to pass a law in 1927 which put an end to the employment of children under the age of 12. He also persuaded the government to pass a law which made it compulsory for parents to send their children to school.

### Our environmental icons >>

- Gary Aboud helped to form the Fishermen and Friends of the Sea (FFOS) in 1997. This environmental group wanted to make the government and public aware of environmental issues that were affecting the north coast of Trinidad and how it affected the local fishermen.

### Our science icons >>>

- Dr Joseph Lennox Pawan worked at Port of Spain General Hospital and as District Medical Officer in various parts of Trinidad. He was the first person to **isolate** the rabies virus and show that it was **transmitted** by fruit and vampire bats.

### Exercise

4. Name some of the achievements of the labour movement as overseen by TUB Butler and A. A. Cipriani.
5. Why do you think Gary Aboud helped to form the Fishermen and Friends of the Sea (FFOS)?
6. What was significant about the discovery by Dr Joseph Lennox Pawan?



Fishermen and Friends of the Sea (FFOS).

### Project

Choose one of the persons discussed on these two pages and use the **internet** to research their life, achievements and legacy. Collect photographs, draw pictures or create a poster. Then, as a group, create your presentation on your computer and present it to the class.

### Key vocabulary

.....  
**isolate**  
**internet**  
**transmit**