

New Yorkers celebrate Garvey with cultural show, parade

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) by Jamaican national hero and international political activist the Hon Marcus Mosiah Garvey.

The UNIA was created in 1914 to mobilise and empower black people across the globe. To celebrate the centennial, a flurry of Garvey tributes will take place across the United States, including a special cultural presentation tomorrow at the Jamaica Performing Arts Center in Queens, New York.

The Queens tribute is the brainchild of Michael Duncan, Jamaica-born businessman, community leader, political activist and noted Garveyite in New York. Duncan leads the UNIA/ACL (African Communities League) Division 432 in Queens, and for years, the organisation has been promoting the philosophies of Marcus Garvey in New York. Duncan has himself incorporated some of the themes of unification for empowerment in his own business practices, and he has been looking forward to this important milestone to spread the word of Garvey to a new generation of Caribbean Americans in New York. "The UNIA/ACL was the largest black mass organisation in history, with membership in excess of six million members, more than twice the size of the current population of Jamaica, with branches in 38 states in the USA and in 41 other countries around the world", Duncan said. "We are in the process of re-introducing the UNIA to our residents here so that we can uplift our people to economic prosperity through discipline, collaborations, partnerships and entrepreneurship, as were the wishes and the teachings of the late, great Marcus Garvey", he continued. **VARIED PERFORMANCES** The celebration in Queens, New York, will run from 4 to 8 p.m., and the keynote speaker will be Dr Julius Garvey, son of national hero, Marcus Garvey. The event will also feature a robust mix of entertainers including Scepta, George Edward Tait, poet laureate for Afrikan Nationalism, poetry by Ja-Man and the Blaze Craze Poets, Asagyfo, drummers and other spoken-word performers. Some 40 other regional UNIA chapters across the United States will also be celebrating the July 20 centennial. Additional activities will continue and culminate in Harlem on August 17 when the national chapter of the UNIA will stage a Marcus Garvey Parade on the hero's (August 17) birthday. The parade will begin at Marcus Garvey Park at 124th Street and 5th Avenue, and will work its way through the major streets of Harlem. The now trendy and rejuvenated Harlem, was the residence and headquarters of Marcus Garvey during his American sojourn.