

The 100th Anniversary of the UNIA

The Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) was founded on July 20, 1914 when Marcus Garvey recruited its first member, Miss Amy Ashwood, and held the organization's first meeting at 121 Orange Street in Kingston.

A month later the UNIA began holding weekly public meetings at the Collegiate Hall on Church Street and by 1920 the UNIA was the largest pan African organization ever established in history. Marcus Garvey would become the undisputed Father of Pan-Africanism and Jamaica's first national hero. This year marks 100 years since he conceptualized and launched this historic and global confraternity of the race. The Kingston Division in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth & Culture will be recognizing this milestone with a number of events and activities beginning on Sunday July 20, 2014 with a Centennial Church Service at the Saint Andrew's Scots Kirk, home of the Collegiate Hall where it all began, at 10:00 am. This will be followed by the MYC Festival 2014 Signature Conversations series at the Institute of Jamaica at 2:00 pm where there will be a panel discussion with the UNIA President and other "Garveyites" on the topic of "Garvey & the National Agenda". Activities will continue throughout the month of August and will include the UNIA's presence at the Emancipation Jubilee in St. Ann as well as the unveiling of several heritage signs dedicated to Garvey and the UNIA in Kingston & St. Andrew. The UNIA will also participate in the Festival Activities at the Ranny Williams Centre on August 3rd and 5th which will see the debut of a UNIA film by Amy Ashwood Garvey at the Auntie Roachy Film Festival. There will be a special segment devoted to the UNIA in the Grand Gala on August 6th which will include presentations by the UNIA Juveniles. The August celebrations will culminate with the 6th staging of the annual UNIA Marcus Garvey Awards on the East Lawns of Devon House at 3:00pm on Sunday August 17, 2014.