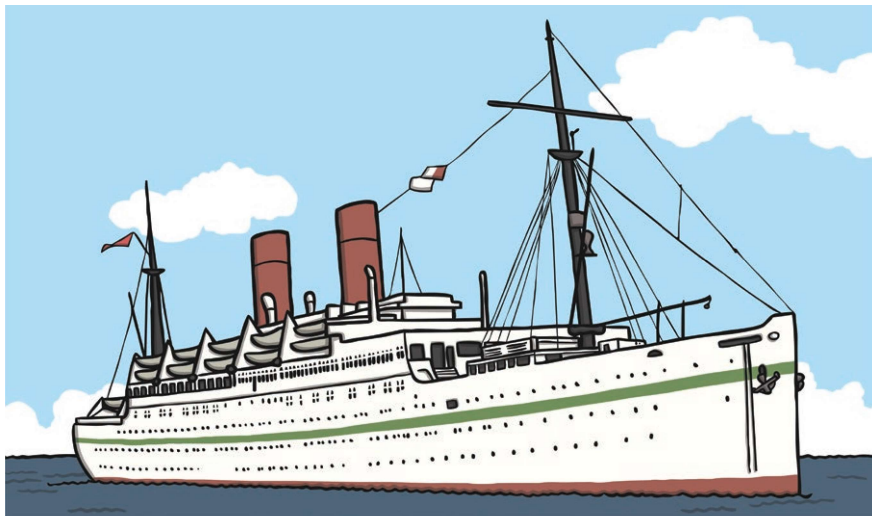


The Windrush

HMT (Her Majesty's Treasure) Empire Windrush was originally used as a cruise ship and passenger liner and began sailing in 1930. Her first name was actually MV Monte Rosa. However, during the Second World War, she was used as a **troopship** to transport German soldiers from country to country. At the end of the war, she was seized by the United Kingdom as a 'prize of war' and was used to transport British troops instead. It was then that she was given the new name Empire Windrush. She served as a British vessel until March 1954 when, on her way back to the UK, a fire broke out killing four engine crew members. Fortunately, all 1276 passengers survived but she could not be rescued and eventually sank in the Mediterranean Sea. The wreck still lies 2600 metres below the sea.



In 1948, Britain was recovering from the ravages of war. After losing so many soldiers and young men, Britain had a serious shortage of labourers. The British Government tried to encourage immigration to members of the British Empire by offering cheap travel to anyone who wanted to come and work in the UK. This attracted many African-Caribbean people. As a result, the Empire Windrush made one of its most famous voyages and transported 492 passengers from Jamaica to London. These people later became known as the Windrush generation. Although many only planned to stay for a few years, the majority of these **immigrants** remained in the UK permanently. Many of them worked in industries such as transport, rail and the National Health Service and created a large proportion of British workers.

Sadly, it was not plain sailing for many of the Windrush generation. A lot of white people did not welcome them to Britain and treated them as inferior. Caribbean immigrants struggled to find housing simply because of the colour of their skin. They felt excluded from much of the social and economic life around

them and faced much racial discrimination. Clashes between white people and black people was so serious at times that riots broke out in some major cities. However, despite facing these prejudices, the Windrush generation have played a vital role in changing British culture and by the start of the 1970s, British West Indians had become a familiar and established part of the population. In 1959, the Notting Hill Carnival was created as a celebration of **diversity** and is now an annual event in London, helping to bring people from different communities together and to promote social **cohesion**. It is famous for its colour, exotic dances and vibrant atmosphere.

Although things are getting better, many immigrants still suffer the effects of discrimination and racism today - in 2018, many people who had lived in Britain for years since immigrating were wrongly arrested, and sometimes even deported from the UK (even if they had been living there since they were a child). This has become known as the Windrush scandal.



Glossary

troopship	a ship designed for transporting troops
immigrants	people who come to live permanently in a country
diversity	having different things or different people
cohesion	the action of forming a united whole
vibrant	full of energy and life