



Arthur's revival

Arthur was largely forgotten after his death until the 1980s when Ray Jenkins, a history lecturer from North Staffordshire Polytechnic, started researching his life. Sadly, Jenkins died before finishing his work but in 1996, FURD teamed up with historian, Phil Vasili, to continue researching Arthur's achievements. Key events:

- In 1996, Sheila Leeson, Arthur's great-niece, also believed to be his granddaughter, replied to a letter from Phil Vasili in the Rotherham Advertiser asking if anyone remembered Arthur. Having found some photos and newspaper cuttings about Arthur that had belonged to her mother, Sheila contacted Vasili with her findings. Shortly after, she discovered that Arthur was buried in an unmarked pauper's grave in Edlington near Doncaster, South Yorkshire.
- Also in 1996, FURD launched an appeal to raise money to pay for a headstone for Arthur's grave and, in May 1997, they unveiled a headstone at a special ceremony attended by members of Arthur's family, local residents, and representatives of FURD and the wider football community.
- In 1998, Vasili's book, 'The First Black Footballer: An Absence of Memory' was published and shed detailed light on Arthur's story and achievements.
- In 2003 Arthur was inducted into the Hall of Fame at the National Football Museum.
- In 2007, a campaign was launched by shopowner Shaun Campbell to erect a statue of Arthur in Darlington, and in 2008 a model of the statue was created by sculptor Vivian Mallock. The campaign was then developed into a charity, the Arthur Wharton Foundation, which has since presented bronze mini-statues of Wharton to the FA, UEFA, FIFA, PFA and Ghana FA.
- In 2011, a ceremony was held at Wembley Stadium to honour Arthur before the first full international between England and Ghana, attended by representatives of FURD, the Arthur Wharton Foundation and Arthur's family.
- In 2011, FURD received funding from the Heritage Lottery to carry out school, community and wider awareness-raising work about Arthur's story and achievements. See www.arthurwharton.info for more details of the Arthur Wharton Heritage Project.



Arthur Wharton: 1865 to 1930

The World's First Black Professional Footballer

www.arthurwharton.info

- In September 2012, a blue plaque in honour of Arthur was unveiled at the Tameside Stadium, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire.
- In October 2012, Arthur's British-born family members, Sheila Leeson and her daughter Dorothy, along with representatives from FURD and the Arthur Wharton Foundation, travelled to Accra in Ghana, where Arthur grew up. The trip came about as part of a documentary about Arthur being made by the BBC for its 'Inside Out' series. During the visit, Sheila and Dorothy met some of their Ghanaian relatives for the first time. They also made links with the Ghanaian government, the Ghana FA and Arthur's school to spread awareness of Arthur in his homeland.
- In October 2012 the film documentary produced by the Heritage Project, 'The Arthur Wharton Story' was premiered in Sheffield
- In December 2013 FURD launched the educational materials produced by the Heritage Project.