



# Black History Month: Lilian Bader

Citizenship & History

**Related FlashAcademy® lessons:**

Intermediate > History > The Second World War

Intermediate > History > Reading Lesson 7, The Second World War

Advanced > Art, History & Tradition > A world at war

Lilian Bader was born in Liverpool in 1918 to a Barbadian-born father and mother who had Irish **ancestry**. When she was around 7 years old, she moved to Hull with her father and two older brothers.

In 1939, when World War Two **broke out**, Lilian was keen to help the war effort. She joined a Navy, Army and Air Forces Institute **canteen**, serving food to servicemen. However, after 7 weeks, she was asked to leave because her father was born abroad. She worked for a family whilst looking for other opportunities to help the war effort. When she heard that West Indian men were being accepted into the Royal Air Force, she applied for the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF). She was accepted in March 1941. Lilian was one of the first black women to join the Royal Air Force.



Lilian **progressed** through the WAAF, first learning how to check the pipes for leaks and then becoming an Acting Corporal after passing her Aircraftwoman First Class course. She also met her husband during the war; they were married in 1943. It was a traditional war-time wedding with a cake that had a plaster of Paris cover to **disguise** the ginger or chocolate cake as a big **iced** cake. After the war, she studied for a BA from London University and became a languages teacher.

## Match the words with a definition:

<b>ancestry</b>	•	•	to look like something or someone else
<b>to break out</b>	•	•	to continue moving to higher and more important roles within an organisation
<b>war effort</b>	•	•	to be decorated with icing
<b>canteen</b>	•	•	the origins of a family
<b>to progress</b>	•	•	a restaurant in an organisation
<b>to disguise</b>	•	•	the use of a country's resources to support the military
<b>iced</b>	•	•	to start suddenly

## Read the text again and answer the questions:

- 1 Where was Lilian Bader's father born?
- 2 What was Lilian's first job during the Second World War?
- 3 Why did Lilian have to leave that job?
- 4 What course did Lilian have to pass to become an Acting Corporal?
- 5 How did the war affect the design of wedding cakes?
- 6 What did Lilian Bader do after the Second World War?



### Discuss with a friend, teacher, or your class

How might someone's ancestry hold you back from different roles? Why might this be relevant to jobs in the military?

There was a sudden increase in weddings during the Second World War. Why might this be?

Which adjectives would you use to describe Lilian?



### Curriculum link: History

Research how the Second World War impacted life for everyday people. Write a diary entry for someone during the Second World War.

