

Site brings *Empire's Children* back together

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Illumina Digital has created a user-driven website to complement Channel 4's six-part history series, *Empire's Children*. The series – to be broadcast from July 2nd – examines how the dismantlement and legacy of the British Empire have impacted on modern Britain and shaped our national identity.

The site was created by BAFTA award-winning digital production company Illumina Digital, who worked with series producers Wall to Wall, to create an online space that enables anyone with connections to the Empire to trace, record and share their own family history online.



The *Empire's Children* site features the personal experiences of ten members of the public with their own end-of-Empire story to tell. Driven by user-generated content, the site will act as a forum for more shared memories and experiences from the general public and allow users to share useful family history tips related to this period of British history.

The Web site will reflect a broad range of perspectives on the Empire, showcasing the stories of families who left Britain to make lives for themselves out in the Empire as well as those who came to settle in Britain from the colonies.

The *Empire's Children* series will uncover the family histories of Diana Rigg, Chris Bisson (*Shameless*), Adrian Lester (*Hustle*), Shobna Gulati (*Coronation Street*), former SDP leader David Steel and comedian Jenny Éclair, whose stories will also be made available online as each episode is broadcast, offering an extraordinary insight into the history of the end of the British Empire and its fall-out on Britain right up until today.

As a specialist online resource the Web site will contain a research guide with advice and information on tracing Empire lineage, alongside country histories and an interactive map to guide users through the rise and decline of the Empire. Anyone with an interest in the history of the Empire will also have access to a wealth of archive images and videos from the British Empire & Commonwealth Museum.



Andrew Chitty, Managing Director of Illumina Digital said: "For *Empire's Children* online, our mission has been to combine Wall to Wall's brilliant TV show with a user-generated content site that allows the audience to contribute their own family stories. The participatory approach is a real step towards true, cross-platform commissioning for Channel 4 and independent production companies."

Actor Chris Bisson, who features in the programme added, "Most people with parents and grandparents from the former colonies wouldn't have the first clue how to go about tracing their ancestry, despite the fact that so many remarkable records do exist. I had a huge production team behind me to find mine.

"The *Empire's Children* Web site remedies that... it's a fantastic online resource, helping people take their first steps as they embark on their journey back in time and place in search of their lost ancestry."