Adventists believe in freedom and the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act on 25 March 1807 gave Adventists across the country opportunity to show the meaning of ‘Amazing Grace’ in real life. Historic Westminster Abbey hosted a service on Tuesday, 27 March to commemorate the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. The occasion spoke of the reality of how Britain was a ‘major beneficiary of slavery’, yet it was also the British who ‘led the struggle to abolish the system’. The Adventist Vocal Ensemble, conducted by Ken Burton, were among those who led musically in a worship service attended by Queen Elizabeth II, Prime Minister Tony Blair, a congregation of 2,000, including descendants of former slaves, and a TV and radio audience of several million.

Burton said he looked at the commemoration service as an opportunity for healing and reconciliation. He said the group chose to perform the song, ‘There Is A Balm in Gilead’ with the hope that ‘as people listen they will hear that God is willing to heal, forgive our sins and make us whole’. Robin Taylor-Hunt, the great, great, great grandson of William Wilberforce, in a letter to The Times newspaper, complemented ‘the wonderful singing of the black Adventist Vocal Ensemble’ as part of ‘an outstandingly nuanced, balanced and creative act of worship’.

This followed a special edition of Songs of Praise two days earlier in which the Ensemble joined together with Antonia Francis of the Chiswick church and baritone Sir Willard White, in a moving programme that challenged the past and considered the importance of healing in the present. An especially touching part of the programme was an interview with Voretta Waters, a Barbadian descendant of slaves who had a particular hatred for slave trader John Hawkins. She had cursed him and his descendants, yet in a recent visit to Gambia she had met up with Andrew Hawkins, a descendant of the infamous sea captain. Hawkins is part of LifeLine Expedition and went to the Gambia to apologise personally for the wrongs of his ancestors. It was a profoundly moving moment when the two came together.

LifeLine was also active in
Pastor Don McFarlane interviewed for ‘Amazing Grace’

Zinc Increases the production of white blood cells that fight infection, the production of natural cells. Needed to fight wrinkles as well!

Seeds, vegetable oils, grains, nuts

Vitamin E An important antioxidant and immune-booster that stimulates the antibody that coats cell surfaces to block the entry of viruses.

Vegetables, nuts and herbs

Selenium Helps increase the number of natural ‘killer cells’.

Omega 3 fatty acids These help to boost immunity by increasing the activity of phagocytes, the white blood cells that eat up bacteria.

The table below identifies foods known to naturally occurring flora in the digestive tract in re-establishing themselves.

While it is best to eat food as close as possible to its natural state as often as we can, some foods are better eaten slightly cooked as it increases the absorption of nutrients to boost immunity. Foods rich in beta carotene are an example of this.

The table below identifies foods known to boost immunity, their food group and vitamin content and how they work to deliver good immunity to the body.

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As with the Holocaust, the Slave Trade is a blot on history’s landscape that we must never forget.

The instinct to enslave is still very much present in the modern world. It is as if slavery is a kind of compulsion for human societies, people go back again and again to treating people as objects, as possessions, and I don’t think we can simply sit back and say “it’s a thing of the past.” One of the most meaningful ways in which the United Kingdom and other developed countries can mark the 200th anniversary of the Act to abolish the Slave Trade is to seek to bring an end to present-day slavery.

As Under-class in the UK

• That economic slavery is a reality in sophisticated Western society today. To a large degree, capitalism is sustained by having a large work-force that is poorly paid. The experience of some recently-arrived workers from Eastern Europe illustrates this point clearly. They left their countries with promises of being paid the minimum wage here in the UK and being given accommodation at a fairly cheap rate. When they arrived, they found working conditions that were inhumane and degrading, were paid much less than they had been promised and were given filthy accommodation for which they paid an extortionate rent as much as they had previously been told. Then we cannot forget that many of these firms, some of which are UK-based, rely on people working in the most appalling conditions overseas and being paid abominable wages. Complex sub-contracting and supply chains, managed by agents elsewhere, often obscure the involvement of the major firms.

Exploitation

• The Joseph Rowntree Foundation, in an article entitled, ‘Modern Slavery in the United Kingdom,’ says that there are three essential elements of an exploitative relationship which constitute slavery: severe economic exploitation, the lack of a human rights framework, and control of one person over another by the prospect or reality of violence. The article goes on to say: ‘Many relationships of enslavement do not involve actual physical violence but the nature of the relationship – appalling working and housing conditions, the withdrawal of passports or ID documents, deceit and abuse of power, the use of physical intimidation – renders the possibility of flight remote. There is much evidence that those who do protest about such conditions may be beaten, abused, raped, kidnapped, or even killed.’ (February 2007 - Ref 2035)

The Enslavement of Sin

• That the severest enslavement of all is that caused by sin, which has condemned us all to death. Speaking of this enslavement, the apostle Paul says, ‘We know that the law is spiritual, but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do...’ (Romans 7:14, 15, 24, 25). The Bible in Transition – a Forum for Change in the Church and Culture, Spring 2007

However, the apostle goes on to say, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:1, NIV.)
The Legacy of Olaudah Equiano, the African Abolitionist

by Keith Davidson

Introduction

The success of the transatlantic Slave Trade abolitionists’ movement of 200 years ago helped determine the course of history. The outcome of their effort changed the nature of world trade, commerce, politics, international relationships and our attitude and perceptions to racial equality and justice.

Thus, this bicentenary celebration of the 1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade Act should not just be an occasion to acknowledge a significant and major historical event. Rather, in addition, it should be seized upon as a time for us to ponder and reflect on how best we can invest the legacy of the abolitionists to inspire our vision and mission as we ourselves are engaged in shaping the future for the twenty-first century.

African Writers

As a contribution to this reflection and visioning, this article focuses on the life and work of Olaudah Equiano. He was one of a number of free African writers in the eighteenth century, along with other Christian leaders such as William Wilberforce, who led the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade and slavery.

Whereas Wilberforce mobilised the parliamentary forces that eventually passed the passage of the famous Act, Equiano and other African writers such as Ignatius Sancho and Quobna Ottobah Cugoano were very instrumental in providing: (a) the factual accounts of the moral degradation of the trade (from their experiences as victims of the Slave Trade); and (b) the intellectual arguments from their writings to support parliamentary campaigners.

Equiano’s classic work entitled The Interesting Narrative provides a unique firsthand account of the Transatlantic Slave Trade experience from the perspective of the slave. In reading his narrative, you are listening to the authentic voice of a victim and his journey to freedom. His narrative, which by any standards is a great piece of literature, suppressed for centuries, charts his experiences through three phases: (1) his struggle under the brutality of slavery; (2) his adventure and travels as a seaman; and (3) his spiritual development and work as an abolitionist.

As a slave

Equiano was born around 1745 in what is now South-eastern Nigeria. At age 10 (1755) he was kidnapped from his village and, after seven months of passing from one native slave owner to another, he finally came to the sea coast. In his book he describes this moment. The first object which salute[d] my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave-ship . . . waiting for its cargo. . . . When I looked round the ship too, and saw . . . a multitude of black people of every description chained together, every countenance expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate. . . .

Equiano was eventually taken to the West Indies for a few days before being brought to Virginia, USA. He was sold to a local planter but stayed there for only a month before being bought by Michael Henry Foscaul, an officer of the Royal Navy. He served Foscaul until 1762 when he was again sold, this time to a merchant captain who returned him to the West Indies. However, Equiano was able to purchase his freedom in 1766 from his master on the island of Montserrat, paying him £40.00.

Freedom

As a free man, and now in the second phase in his life, Equiano remained for a while in employment with his former master as a seaman, making several trading journeys to Georgia, Philadelphia and Pennsylvania. Then between 1767 and 1773, based in London, he worked on commercial vessels sailing to the Mediterranean and the West Indies. He also joined a pioneering expedition to the Arctic in 1773, but on his return to London he embraced the Methodist faith as a response to a spiritual yearning in his life. This brought him into the third stage of his remarkable life. Later, in the 1780s, he joined forces with Christian abolitionists and other Afr-Britons such as Ignatius Sancho and Quobna Ottobah Cugoano to campaign for the abolition of the slave trade and an end to slavery.

Equiano’s Legacy

In considering Equiano’s legacy to us today, it is clear that his own experience, and those of his fellow African friends, had a profound impact on the debate and the campaign to abolish the Transatlantic Slave Trade. They effectively used the power of the pen successfully to influence the process of political change in Britain and its colonies. Thus, the power of a determined intellectual argument should not be underestimated as a great tool to conquer the forces of inequality and injustice.

In the midst of adversity and exploitation, Equiano displayed a spirit of enterprise. While a slave, he found creative and industrious ways of earning the money needed to secure his freedom. Thus, the will to succeed cannot be forever suppressed or blocked by obstacles, nor by the combined forces of injustice and inequality.

As we contend with the struggles faced by this generation of the descendants of African slaves in our society today, Equiano’s experience, quoting again when he says, ‘By the experience of the Negro Spirituals composed by slaves that they retained hope and endurance from their traditional musical heritage.

Finally, as a Church committed to the Gospel truth, let us go forward with boldness like Equiano and the early Christian abolitionists, and confront, through persuasion and reason, oppression and injustice. For Isaiah 58:6, NIV, says: ‘Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and the yokes of oppression; to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?’ To champion the cause of the downtrodden is biblical.
The Abolitionists and ‘The Accursed Thing’

The story of John Newton – the slave trader who became a hymn writer – is well known. It is popularly believed that Newton’s conversion occurred during a storm at sea and that after he abandoned – and campaigned against – the Slave Trade. Newton was twenty-eight years old when he abandoned the slave trade. At the time of his conversion Newton had been a slave captain for three years. For the next six years he continued to ship enslaved Africans to Caribbean plantations. In his cabin Newton read the Bible. On deck he conducted Sunday services for the crew. Below deck was a human cargo in chains. When Newton did finally abandon the slave trade to begin training for the Anglican ministry, the reasons given related to his health, not his ethics.

Granville Sharp, however, was what played the major role in awakening British opinion to the evils of (his words) ‘The Accursed Thing’. Sharp was one of the fourteen offshoots of Archdeacon Thomas Clarkson. The whole highly cohesive family was both enlightened and gifted. One member of this Yorkshire family became an influential bishop in the North. The other family members lived in London within a few streets of one another. Each one excelled in music. A wonderful painting of the whole bolting of them, with their musical instruments, appears in the National Portrait Gallery over the title ‘The Sharp Family’. They met most evenings to discuss and practice their music. On summer evenings they made up a small orchestra and played from a barge on the Thames. Vast crowds met on the embankment to be entertained by them. Among them, from time to time, were King George III and Queen Charlotte.

Following the American Declaration of Independence in 1776, Granville Sharp resigned from his post in the civil service in protest at British Government policy. Among Sharp’s close friends was Benjamin Franklin. His commitment to freedom was uncompromising. More so, in fact, than that of Franklin, as became evident as the American War of Independence proceeded.

Granville Sharp’s ‘Thoughts upon Slavery’ published in 1774, an impassioned appeal to slavers, merchants and plantation owners to abandon ‘the iniquitous trade’ – if only to save their own souls.

The sheer, dogged persistence of Granville Sharp was also very much a matter that he was descended from a long line of Yorkshire Puritans. Part of his legacy from the Puritans was a religious obligation to defend English freedom – and to extend that freedom to all of humanity.

The London in which Sharp lived was a city with a large black community. Sharp believed that, through lawyers bent the law to favour the wealthy, the Common Law of England provided for ‘the equal protection of the King’s laws’ to be extended to ‘all men, women and children of whatever colour’. His further belief that, under the Common Law of England there could be ‘no property in persons’. The principle he sought to establish was that if, by some chance, a person categorised ‘slave’ overseas came to England, that person became free. Sharp believed that so passionately that repeatedly he was prepared to test the principle in the courts. Escaped slaves sought out Sharp knowing that he would champion their cause.

In such case, that of James Somerset in 1772, Sharp achieved a landmark judgement from Lord Chief Justice Mansfield upholding the principle he held dear. Among Sharp’s valuable friends was that of Thomas Clarkson. Below: Thomas Clarkson, the son of a Wisbech schoolmaster, won a prize at Cambridge for his essay, ‘Is it lawful to enslave others against their will?’ Clarkson did this and left his data in print. To reduce Clarkson’s contribution to a collector of data for others to use is to underestimate the passion and extent of his commitment. Both Clarkson and Wilberforce had been at St John’s College, Cambridge. If Wilberforce had a higher profile as an abolitionist it was because he came from a wealthier background and had the political and social clout. Both men, however, had connections with the major political figures of the day: William Pitt, Charles James Fox, Edmund Burke, and others.

The abolitionist campaign was out of the courtroom and into the headlines.

Clarkson Thomas Clarkson, the son of a Wisbech schoolmaster, won a prize at Cambridge for his essay, ‘Is it lawful to enslave others against their will?’ Clarkson was as dead set against slavery as he was against the rule that made it possible. Clarkson and Wilberforce embraced the abolitionist cause. Both men with Granville Sharp and ten other Christians formed a ‘brotherhood of Christian politicians’ dedicated to ending the infamous trade. It has often been said that Clarkson’s contribution to ‘The Cause’ was his limitless diligence in gathering factual data. Certainly Clarkson did this and left his data in print. But to reduce Clarkson’s contribution to a collector of data for others to use is to underestimate the passion and extent of his commitment. Both Clarkson and Wilberforce had been at St John’s College, Cambridge. If Wilberforce had a higher profile as an abolitionist it was because he came from a wealthier background and had the political and social clout. Both men, however, had connections with the major political figures of the day: William Pitt, Charles James Fox, Edmund Burke, and others.

Wilberforce Wilberforce came from a wealthy background. He had worked as a clergyman among the plantations and a mercer (i.e. slave ship) merchant. Thomas Clarkson and, eventually, William Wilberforce.

The Quakers At least as important, it was at Teston that Sharp and Clarkson began to learn campaigning techniques from the Quakers. The Quakers pioneered modern campaigning techniques: petitions, networking, the consumer boycott, images, songs. The image they relentlessly put before the public was the engraving of The Brookes, a fully-laden Liverpool slave ship. The logistics of inhumanity banked thousands of minds and won tens of thousands of converts to the abolitionist cause. The Quakers cared for the mass distribution and publishing needs of the mass campaign. Josiah Wedgwood provided the logos: a slave encircled by the words, ‘Am I not a man and a brother?’!

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slaves were taken across the Atlantic to farm and work. They were usually sold in British ports.

Slavery had been endemic in the ancient world, but there had been no true slave trade on a large scale. The conditions in which the African slave traders operated were horrific, with hundreds dying in the process. In 1807, the British Parliament passed the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, which prohibited the slave trade in British-owned territories.

The transatlantic slave trade began with the Spanish and Portuguese explorations of the fifteenth century. England became involved in the slave trade around the eighteenth century. The profits from the slave trade were immense, and many wealthy individuals and companies were invested in it.

Sojourner Truth — American abolitionist and women's rights activist, born into slavery.

Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African Royal Society in 1783, and tenaciousness with which Wilberforce, year after year, introduced bills and motions against the slave trade, showed that he was a leader of his time. The campaign culminated in the passing of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807.

The Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of York, and the Duke of York's eldest son, the Prince of Wales, were among the most prominent supporters of the abolition movement. In 1806, the Prince of Wales, who was then a member of the British Parliament, introduced a bill for the abolition of the slave trade.

The long-term effects of the slave trade in contemporary British Society.

The traumatic experiences of slavery still affect the lives of those whose families were enslaved, even now. The Department of Education published an official report in 2006, which showed that African-Caribbean children are three times more likely to be excluded from school because of their ethnicity. The report also found that girls from Bangladeshi and Pakistani backgrounds had the lowest exclusion rates.

On some occasions Wilberforce's celebrity supporters, like Wilberforce himself, lived in Clapham during this period. Hence they were sometimes called 'the Clapham Sect' or 'The Saints' by their various detractors, in recognition of the Christian commitment that drove them.

Ironically it was the death of Wilberforce's greatest supporter, Lord Granville, that led to the passing of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807. The Act was introduced by the Duke of Wellington, who had been a consistent supporter of Wilberforce's work.

The Abolition of the Slave Trade Act was at its height in the 1780s. 794,000 African men, women, and children were transported to the Americas to work as slaves.

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Abolition and Traditions in the British Slavery Trade

by Beulah A. Plunkett

The transatlantic slave trade covered the 300 year period from the 16th through to the 1800s. My great grandfather and my great grandfather were both members of the slave trade, and they were both very influential in the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

The transatlantic slave trade is defined as the forced transportation of African people from Africa to the Western Hemisphere, primarily to the Americas, in the context of the Atlantic slave trade. It was conducted over a period of several centuries, from the 16th to the 19th centuries.

The transatlantic slave trade began with the Spanish and Portuguese explorations of the late fifteenth century. England became involved in the slave trade around the eighteenth century. The profits from the slave trade were immense, and many wealthy individuals and companies were invested in it.

The transatlantic slave trade ended with the British Parliament's passing of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807. The Act was introduced by the Duke of Wellington, who had been a consistent supporter of Wilberforce's work.

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The Role of Women in Abolition

by Sharon Platt-McDonald

Women of integrity and emotion
strength were at the grass roots
movement against slavery. Although
they had no political power, women
were able to influence the movement
through lobbying for change. Women
also had the ability to inspire others
with their commitment and dedication.

Hannah More (1744-1833) is
honoured for her story for opposing
the movement for the abolition of the
British slave trade. As a writer, she
reformulated her public achievements
and had her work published in a
new book, entitled, *The Rise of
Abolition*. It was her first
publication and was published in
1788. In this book, she wrote about
the slave trade and its effects on
humanity.

Valerie Amos, leader of the
women's campaign, is a powerful
black woman. She renews her
commitment to the fight against
slavery. In her speech, she mentions
the terrible conditions that existed in
the slave trade.

Rt. Hon. Baroness Amos of
Brondesbury on the Ghana Castle
Slave Trade

Valerie Amos, leader of the
House of Lords, is classified as
Britain's most powerful black woman.
She renews her commitment and
voluntary work for the fight against
slavery.

Sarah Bennet was the first African-
American woman to address mass
mixed audiences. She became very
popular in her time for her lectures and
writings covering both anti-slavery
and women's rights. She wrote, 'I have
been more than twice admired here as the
sister of the white woman.'

Emmeline Pankhurst's fearless
involvement in women's suffrage was the
result of her being involved in the
campaign for the emancipation of
women. She was influenced by the
women's anti-slavery societies that
organized women in the United States
and Canada to fight against slavery.

The campaign for the abolition of
slavery was not just a struggle for
freedom for the slaves, but also a
struggle for the rights of women.

Adventists Against Slavery

by Anne Pilmoor

"Twenty-seven million people are still in
slavery," says Anne Pilmoor. "Rather
more, even that in Wilberforce's time.

My maternal sensibilities on high alert, I
was grateful for his one oversight in
mentioning the names of the towns; Google
could certainly be trusted to find everything
I require. He noted that there are
still more slaves today than there were in
Wilberforce's day! The real shame is that
more people are not aware of it.

I received an email from my son
recently telling me that he would be
monitoring projects in four different
regions in Sudan. He named the places
and then wrote, 'I'm not going to get into
detail (a) for the sake of my own sanity,
and (b) because you will only fear the
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Contemporary forms of slavery include
practices such as forced labor, debt
bondage, child labor, and forced prostitution.

Human trafficking, a rapidly growing
problem, can involve the smuggling of
immigrants, which is often referred to
as "modern-day slavery." It is estimated
that 8.5 million people are currently
in the global slave trade.

God still uses women of strength and
stamina to carry forward the cause of
abolition. We do not like to talk about
these things. We are embarrassed.

I don't want to admit that people
could treat each other in such an inhuman
way. Every time I visit these slave castles, I feel the weight of
that history...

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"Twenty-seven million people are still in
slavery," says Anne Pilmoor. "Rather
more, even that in Wilberforce's time.
As a young child, I was fascinated with art, music and poetry. The ability lovingly to create something out of nothing still fascinates me. As a teenager, my teacher in art, music and poetry changed and I began to appreciate the strong ‘matriarchal voice’ that is evident in these disciplines. Emancipation narratives have been around since the time of the Biblical Exodus, when Miriam and Moses sang: ‘Sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted, the horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea’. Exodus 15:1-2.

For me, one of the more powerful emancipation narratives is the painting, ‘Slave Auction, Virginia’, a watercolour by a Lefevre James Cranstone who lived in my town, Hemel Hempstead. After visiting America for nine months from September 1859 to June 1860, he completed his impression of a slave auction in 1862. Richmond, Virginia was second only to New Orleans as a slave trading port. In the three decades before the American Civil War, more than 300,000 slaves were traded there.

Indeed, Cranstone was so moved by what took place in that ‘auction house’ that he sent his page to the local newspaper, the Hemel Hempstead Gazette, about what he had witnessed in America. Although Cranstone painted many other scenes, ‘Slave Auction, Virginia’ is his most famous and is housed in the Virginia Historical Museum.

Poetry is another medium for political expression in terms of emancipation. Many of the psalms talk about freedom from oppression, none more than Psalm 137.

In the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. There on the poplars we hung our harps, for there our captors asked us for songs; our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said: “Sing one of the songs of Zion!” How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?” (vv.1-4, NIV).

The imagery used in this piece is moving. We see a sorrowful people, crying and weeping, who are then literally forced to sing ‘songs of joy’. One cannot help being moved by their predicament.

Such is the tone of the piece. Ain’t I a Woman by Soujourner Truth. Soujourner Truth was originally christened Isabella Baumfree in 1797 and was one of thirteen children born to slave parents. At the age of 9, she was sold at a slave auction and suffered terribly at the hands of a cruel slave-master. Her poem seeks to challenge the concept of womanhood:

That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud puddles, or on any other kind of thing. And ain’t I a woman?

I have plowed, and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me – and ain’t I a woman?

I could work as much and eat as much as a man (when I could get it), and bear the lash as well – and ain’t I a woman?

I have borne thirteen children and seen most all of them sold off to slavery and when I could not bear my mother’s grief, none but Jesus heard me – and ain’t I a woman?

Negro spirituals are described as ‘The true musical expression in song of the enslaved African assuaging the pain of the horrific situation he endured in his every day existence. Not all negro spirituals are easily understood as it is suggested that many of them contain secret codes and languages relevant only to the slave community. We do not know the composers of many of the well-known spirituals, but these songs were handed down through the oral tradition, as most slaves were unable to read or write. However, no one can deny the power and dramatic re-enactment of the life of a slave that a well-sung spiritual evokes. And in the den the longing for emancipation in these lyrical narratives.

The spiritual that always moves me is ‘Deep River’. The song speaks of the pain and suffering of the earthly life and the longing for the heavenly home where all is peace.

Deep River, Deep River, Lord, I want to cross over into Camp Ground.

Many people, through art, poetry and music, campaigned for the end of the slave trade. We often only cite those like Wilberforce who were politicians and great orators. However, daily as the slaves sang their ‘spirituals’, they championed freedom’s cause. These like Soujourner Truth, Black women with fire in their blood, expressed their views of emancipation by poetic comparison. Still others, like the privileged Lefevre James Cranstone were able to document visually their narrative for posterity.

The use of art, poetry and music, though so trivial by many, I believe greatly assisted in the fight to make slavery a thing of the past.

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Celebrated in Wales by John Surridge, Welsh President

O n Sunday evening 25 March sixteenth representatives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Wales were among the guests at St David’s Hall in Cardiff to commemorate the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act.

‘Valuing Freedom’ was the Wales national event to mark this historic act which ended the slave trade in Britain and banned British ships from involvement in the trade.

Guests at the event included representatives from a wide cross-section of Welsh society and all were invited to reflect on their past and unite in condemning a practice that is still in existence today. In a joint statement, the Right Honourable Rhodri Morgan AM, First Minister for Wales, and Rodneyerman, the leader of Cardiff Council, said: ‘We join together to pledge our support to promoting equality, justice and dignity among all people to create a world where everyone, whatever their race or background, is given an equal chance to live free from fear of discrimination, prejudice and racism.’

In a wide-ranging programme included: music from a Welsh choir and several gospel choirs, soloist Sian James who accompanied herself on the harp; and popular folk singer Tracey Curtis whose hard-hitting ‘Sasha’s Song’, was specially commissioned for the event and told the story of a young girl trafficked from a quiet country village to a life of abuse and prostitution on the streets of a western city. Amazing Grace was performed several times in different ways and extracts from the film of the same name, starring Welsh actor Ioan Gruffudd as William Wilberforce, were shown on a big screen.

Wales’ role in the slave trade was highlighted by a number of speakers who pointed out that much of the industrial revolution in Wales was financed by slave traffic in the West Indies. Welsh industry helped to power the trade by providing raw materials for slave ships which sailed frequently from Newport and Cardiff.

However, there was also evidence of Welsh opposition to the slave trade, including poetry from Iola Morgan, gardener of the Gorsed of Bards, who was a major anti-slavery campaigner.

African and African-Caribbean participation in the programme highlighted the lasting legacy of slavery and its continuing influence in society today. This was brought home most poignantly by Diane Pennant, a descendant of the Pennant family. She told the story of how Richard Pennant, the father of William Pennant, gained his fortune from slave plantations in Jamaica – a fortune which enabled him to build Penrhyn Castle and a massive slave industry in North Wales.

Although initially apologetic in nature, ‘Valuing Freedom’ also celebrated the efforts of these millions of people, slave and free, whose early and forced marriage, slavery by class or caste, trafficking and child labour, are still practised throughout the world. In their closing prayers, Rev. Aled Thomas, highlighted by a number of speakers who pointed out that much of the industrial revolution in Wales was financed by slave traffic in the West Indies. Welsh industry helped to power the trade by providing raw materials for slave ships which sailed frequently from Newport and Cardiff.

The film’s story is the campaign of William Wilberforce to outlaw the slave trade by Act of Parliament which, after twenty years, was successful.

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Freedom Day at Newbold
by Helen Pearson

Newbold joined the rest of the UK in marking the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. On Tuesday 27 March, a day-long celebration at the College included a Freedom Day Service and drop-in sessions featuring exhibits of aspects of slavery past, present and future. In the evening, a programme of conversation offered poetry and reflections of people from around the world about their concepts of freedom, together with lively debate over a plate of Caribbean food.

The day looked not just backwards but around the contemporary world. The Freedom Day Service featured contributions from staff and student representatives from parts of the world where slavery was and is in a reality: Africa, the Caribbean, and the Deep South of America. Pastor Gifford Rhamie prayed for the 81 million children still in slavery and remembered that ‘divine intention without human action has little effect’. Dr Daniel Schramm encouraged staff and students to recognise that being ‘too nice’ can encourage injustice. ‘Being good but doing nothing is not enough,’ he said. A present-day story from contemporary Mali, ‘Chunga and the Chocolate Factory’, exposed the evil of child trafficking in the chocolate farms used by major chocolate companies. The storyteller, Blessing Okoko, a Nigerian Theology student, encouraged the members of the audience to buy Fairtrade chocolate which does not use trafficked children. Musical renditions of Amazing Grace and ‘By the Rivers of Babylon’ gave the audience further opportunity to reflect on the evils of captivity and the delights of freedom.

Throughout the day participants were encouraged to make donations to Stop the Traffik, a global coalition against people-trafficking. Stop the Traffik key rings, Fairtrade chocolate, and a prize draw to win two tickets to the award-winning film, Amazing Grace, were all on offer. Tabitha Cummins, co-ordinator of Communication and a Theology student at the College organised the event. She says: ‘Newbold is a diverse community with representatives from countries around the world – most of them places where slavery in modern form still exists. The goal of the day’s events is to encourage everyone to think about the freedom of others not as fortunate as ourselves, living today in horrible conditions everywhere from Africa to Asia and also right here in the UK.’

Newbold principal, Dr David Penner, said: ‘Forgotten the past condemns us to prolong if not to repeat its evils. Freedom is more than getting our own way. It is something we must work for both for ourselves and others.’

ADRA-UK Situations Vacant

Finance officer


Key responsibilities include providing day to day support to ADRA-UK implementing partners on financial management processes, financial compliance, and adherence to donor requirements and ADRA policies. Additionally, the Finance Officer will be responsible for supporting the ADRA-UK executive director and Programme director in staff and finance training and meeting donor financial reports, preparing and monitoring financial statements, preparing ADRA-UK cash flow and developing project budgets.

Applicants should have the right to work in the UK prior to submission of the employment application.

A full application pack and application form is available on the ADRA-UK website at www.adra.org.uk

Applications deadline for this post: Friday 25 May.

 Interviews for Finance officer: 30 May.

Trainee Programme


ADRA-UK is offering again the possibility for a trainee to work for a year with one of our implementing partners in different locations around the world in preparation for a possible career in international development.

Applicants should have the right to work in the UK prior to submission of the application.

A full application pack and application form is available on the ADRA-UK website at www.adra.org.uk

Applications deadline for this post: Friday 25 May.

Interviews for Trainee programme: 30 May.