

Messenger

News to the churches • 4 May 2007 • Volume 112 • 10

Souvenir Issue
Commemorating
Bicentenary 1807-2007
SLAVE TRADE ABOLITION



The Sound of Freedom

A news roundup of special events staged in Britain to commemorate the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade

by Victor Hulbert, Communication director, BUC

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 Vonetta Winter, 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 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

>2



Top left: Sir Willard White (centre), Ken Burton (right) and the Adventist Vocal Ensemble rehearse for Songs of Praise. Left: Wilberforce needed all his skills as an orator, plus a great deal of stamina, to present the case against the Slave Trade to a House of Commons of powerful, dug-in vested interests.

Britain during the bicentenary events including a 200 mile walk from Hull to London. Adventist Chris Rogers, along with wife Su and daughter Asha, joined the walk in Billingham, and were so impressed by the spirit of forgiveness and love being shared by the 14-strong team of marchers that they joined them for a day's marching on Sabbath 10 March and then again as part of the Walk of Witness from Whitehall to Kennington Park. Su said, 'Singing "Amazing Grace" in the cold outdoors with people united by the vision to see modern day slavery abolished was certainly exhilarating.' The walk also gave the family opportunity to be interviewed by film-maker, Michael Lienau as part of the LifeLine project.

During the journey, LifeLine passed by Hyland House Adventist school, taking morning assembly and sharing with the children what slavery meant and what had happened in the past. They explained the importance of forgiveness and looking to the future. Volunteers then yoked and chained both children and adults of the European members of LifeLine. It made an impression on the children. Genevieve, a Year 3 child, said, 'I feel really sad when I see what a yoke looks like and to

think that my great, great, great aunts and uncles and grandparents were chained up like this for no reason at all. But Jesus teaches us to forgive and I would like to forgive those who did this to my ancestors.' Daniela Charles, from Year 4, added, 'I don't think it matters what colour you are, the important thing is never to lose sight that God loves us all and that in his eyes, we are all special.'

On Sabbath 24 March, Adventist churches across the country joined in singing 'Amazing Grace'. In Beckenham Hope Community church the hymn instilled passion for community mission in the context of their inauguration as a church that very Sabbath. In multi-cultural Newbold, a saxophone rendition in both church services reminded worshippers of God's amazing grace to all of us. This was also emphasised by BUC President, Pastor Don McFarlane. In a video interview on the BUC website, downloaded or viewed over 700 times and shown in a number of churches, he stated, 'I am a product of slavery, and many members of our church here in the United Kingdom are products of slavery.' He continued, 'This makes the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade a very special event



Level Forum, 'Let My People Go'

for all Seventh-day Adventists and makes the hymn, "Amazing Grace" to be of particular meaning. I applaud the work of men like Clarkson, Wilberforce, and Newton. What was common to them all was that they were Christians . . . and without the efforts of these men perhaps I would not be here today.'

It was Thomas Clarkson who the Ipswich Adventist Gospel Choir had in mind as they sang the spiritual, 'Ev'ry Time I Feel De Spirit', in morning worship at St Mary's Church, Playford. Clarkson is buried in the local churchyard and was one of the great British Abolitionists who devoted his whole adult life to ending the African slave trade and slav-

ery. It was his essay on Slavery that enlisted William Wilberforce MP to be the public voice that led to the abolition of the Slave Trade. Their music ministry was appreciated by the many relatives of Thomas Clarkson and Granville Sharp in attendance at the service.

A Level 7 Evangelistic forum aimed at the business community in the London area focused on the role of the church as an oppressor or liberator of slaves. In a 3 April meeting at the London Docklands museum, specialist speakers tackled the topic, 'Has the church been more responsible for enslaving rather than emancipating Africans and what is the role of the church in dealing with



Equiano and the priest in a taster for Mervyn Weir's upcoming 'Nobody Knows'



(Above & below) Hull to London LIFELINE march x2 caught the attention of film-makers as well as TV crews



the legacy of Slavery?' It was an evening of hot debate which ended with a strong challenge by the evening's co-ordinator, Marge Lowhar, 'It's not enough simply to talk about these issues. We have to ask ourselves, *What difference am I going to make.*'

Those attending the lecture also got a taster from Mervyn Weir's production 'Nobody Knows' to be launched this September at the Drum Theatre in Birmingham. This will coincide with a brand new exhibition at the Birmingham Museum on the life of former slave and ardent abolitionist, Olaudah Equiano. The segment provided a thought-provoking illustration of some of the issues between church and slavery as a priest and freed slave dialogued together.

Many other events, lectures and promotions took place around the Union. However, events can best be summed up by London Adventist Chorale director, Ken Burton. After a heavy schedule this spring, including an especially commissioned BBC

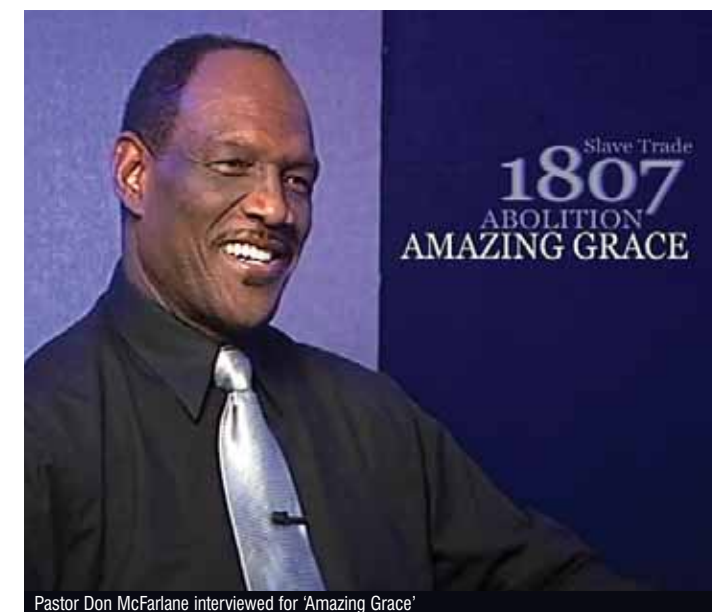
recording, 'Let the sound of freedom', performed by the Chorale along with St John's College Choir in a special programme from Cambridge University, appearing on BBC Radio 2's 'Good Morning Sunday' with Aled Jones on 25 March, and the Songs of Praise and Westminster events mentioned above, I asked Ken about his perspective on Amazing Grace and the current bicentennial. He replied, 'Freedom has always been at the top of God's agenda from the beginning of the world and will be a true reality when this world as we know it will give way to a new world where all will be peace and justice. This is my firm belief, and the very thing that gives me hope from day to day.'

That is the hope in the heart of every Seventh-day Adventist.

A more comprehensive report of Adventist participation in the events of the bicentenary is available on the BUC website, www.adventistnews.org.uk/news/abolition.



LIFELINE walk from Hull (home of Wilberforce) to London, reaches Hyland House SDA School, Walthamstow



Ipswich Adventist Choir with Playford Benefice Choir sing 'Amazing Grace'

Enhancing Health

by Sharon Platt-McDonald RGN, RM, RHV, MSc, Health Ministries director, BUC

THE IMMUNE SYSTEM (part 2)

Immune-boosting foods
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.

NUTRIENT	HOW IT HELPS	FOODS TO EAT
Beta carotene	Converted to vitamin A in the body and is a key antioxidant, helping to dispel 'free radicals' that cause disease.	Yellow / orange and dark green vegetables & fruits
Bioflavonoids	This group of phytonutrients aid the immune system by protecting the cell membranes against incoming infection.	Fruits and vegetables
Carotenoids	Natural plant chemicals, such as beta carotene, increase the amount of infection-fighting cells and are powerful antioxidants.	Sweet potato, orange fruits and vegetables
Glyconutrients	Act as a natural immune-boosters by enhancing 'killer' and 'T Helper' cells to fight infection.	Garlic, onions, yams, sweet potato, parsnip, carrots, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, tomato, berries, pineapple, pawpaw, rice bran and aloe vera
Omega 3 fatty acids	These help to boost immunity by increasing the activity of phagocytes, the white blood cells that eat up bacteria.	Seeds, in particular linseeds (flax)
Phytonutrients	Health supporting compounds acting as antioxidants, cholesterol fighters and immune-boosters.	Vegetables, nuts and herbs
Probiotics	Supplements that contain 'good' bacteria. They assist the body's naturally occurring flora in the digestive tract in re-establishing themselves.	Yoghurt
Selenium	Helps increase the number of natural 'killer cells'.	Brown rice, sunflower seeds, Brazil nuts, (egg yolks, cottage cheese for ovo-lacto-vegetarians)
Vitamin C	It increases the production of infection-fighting white blood cells and antibodies, while increasing levels of interferon, the antibody that coats cell surfaces to block the entry of viruses.	Kiwi fruit, citrus fruit, strawberries, tomatoes, green peppers
Vitamin E	An important antioxidant and immune-booster that stimulates the production of natural cells. Needed to fight wrinkles as well!	Seeds, vegetable oils, grains, nuts
Zinc	Increases the production of white blood cells that fight infection, as well as increasing 'killer cells'.	Nuts, seeds



Lest We Forget

Don W. McFarlane

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

One could be forgiven for thinking that too much is being made of the 200th anniversary of the Act to abolish the Slave Trade, when the history of the world is littered with the enslavement of people in different times and places. The enslavement of the Hebrews by the Egyptians readily springs to mind as an example of such historical realities. Additionally, 'Slavery was deeply embedded in the ancient Near-eastern and Greco-Roman worlds. . . .' (Carl Saunders, 'The Bible in the American Slavery Debates: Text and Interpretation,' *The Bible in Transition – a Forum for Change in the Church and Culture*, Spring 2007). However, the transatlantic Slave Trade, with its attendant dehumanising practices, stands alongside the Holocaust as an indelible stain on modern history and a scar on mankind. It is right, then, that the bicentenary of the Act to abolish the Slave Trade be celebrated enthusiastically and extensively.

Olaudah Equiano, a slave who had purchased his freedom and who played a major role in the abolition of the Slave Trade, gives a graphic description in his autobiography of his trip from Nigeria to Barbados:

'The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This produced copious perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respiration, from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died, thus falling victims to the improvident avarice, as I may call it, of their purchasers. This wretched situation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains, now become insupportable; and the filth of the necessary tubs, into which the children often fell, and were almost suffocated. The

shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable.' *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African, London, 1789*, from chapter 2.

As in the case of the Holocaust, we now look back and ask: How could this have happened? How could it have been allowed? These two questions are even more pertinent when one remembers that the Slave Trade was initiated and maintained by Christian nations whose missionaries were to 'preach' to the world the freedom that the Gospel engenders. The Church of England itself owned slaves in the West Indies, who were freed in 1833. Many Christians ' . . . believed that the Bible legitimated both the institution and the practice of slavery. . . . They quoted extensively from the Old and New Testaments, they argued lucidly and convincingly, and they were able to integrate scriptural teaching into a coherent system.' (Carl Saunders, 'The Bible in the American Slavery Debates: Text and Interpretation,' *The Bible in Transition – a Forum for Change in the Church and Culture*, Spring 2007.)

While it is a matter of regret that many of those who were deeply involved with the Slave Trade were Christians, it is encouraging to know that those who worked tirelessly for its abolition were also Christians. The latter were Christians who understood the meaning of the brotherhood of all men and the Fatherhood of God. Wilberforce, Clarkson, Equiano, Sharp, eventually Newton, and others realised that slavery was incompatible with the most basic Christian principle – love for God and love for our fellow men. They set about working for its abolition as if their very lives depended on it.

It is also heart-warming to know that the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church understood the



Olaudah Equiano, a slave who had purchased his freedom and who played a major role in the abolition of the Slave Trade

injustices that resulted from the enslavement of Africans and took steps to end it. Joseph Bates, the former sea captain who had so much to do with Adventists accepting the Sabbath, helped found the Abolitionist Society in his home town. (Joseph Bates, *The Autobiography of Elder Joseph Bates* (1868), pp. 232, 233, 236-238.) Ellen White said that Adventists should not obey the law which required escaped slaves to be returned to their masters and openly advocated disobeying Federal statutes with regard to the unjust treatment of slaves. (*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 202)

As we celebrate the abolition of the Slave Trade, is important not to forget:

The Crimes of 'Christians'

- That there is potential for evil in the heart of every person. The

unconverted heart of even those who claim to be Christians is capable of planning and executing unbridled evil. While we berate others for unbelievable acts of violence and crimes against humanity, we must not forget the pages of history littered with the crimes of 'Christians.'

Slavery in Today's World

- That slavery is still prevalent in the world today. It is estimated that there are at least 12 million people worldwide who are working as slaves. They are forced to work against their will and are bought and sold as if they were mere chattels. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, in his *Online Reflection – Slavery Still with us*, 14 March 2007, says that the instinct to enslave others is a contemporary reality:

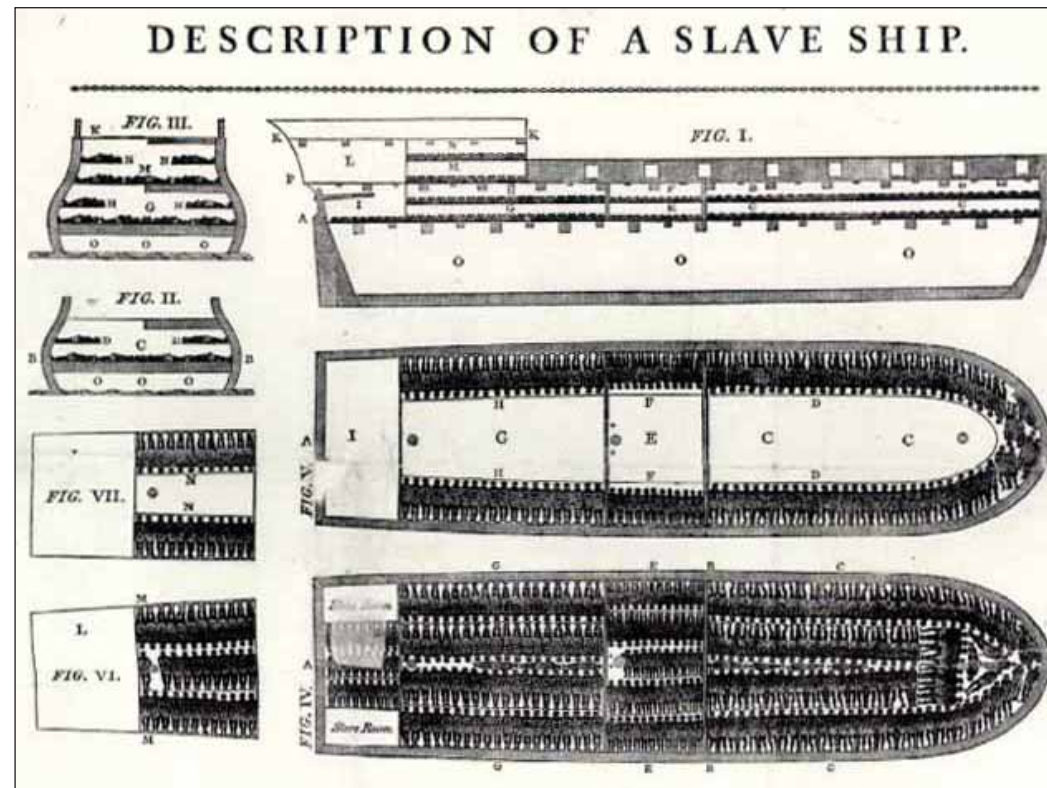


Captain Joseph Bates

'The instinct to enslave is still very much present in the modern world: it's 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.

An 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 had to pay nearly twice as much as they had initially been told. Then we cannot forget that many major 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.



Only two images were ever officially sponsored by England's Abolitionist Society. One was the Society's emblem. The other was this plan of the Liverpool slave ship, the Brookes. Wilberforce House, Kingston upon Hull City Museums and Art Galleries, UK

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, deported or even killed.'** (February 2007 - Ref 2035)

Oneness in Christ

- That the denial to others of the rights we enjoy can be seen as a form of enslavement. Whether that denial is based on educational, economic, cultural or gender differences, it is most likely

the perpetration of injustice. The Bible is quite clear about our equality and oneness in Christ, whatever our gender, social position, or ethnic background: 'For all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.' (Galatians 3:27- 29, NIV.)

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. . . . What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.' (Romans 7:14, 15, 24, 25, NIV.) If the story ended here, we would be without hope.

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.)

Jesus is Emancipator Supreme. His death on Calvary paid the purchase price for our freedom and those who accept his offer of salvation stand in the liberty that his righteousness provides and look forward to his return to earth to establish a kingdom free of sin and its consequences. Like John, I feel inspired to shout, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."



Ellen G. White with her husband

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 ensured 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 decadence 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

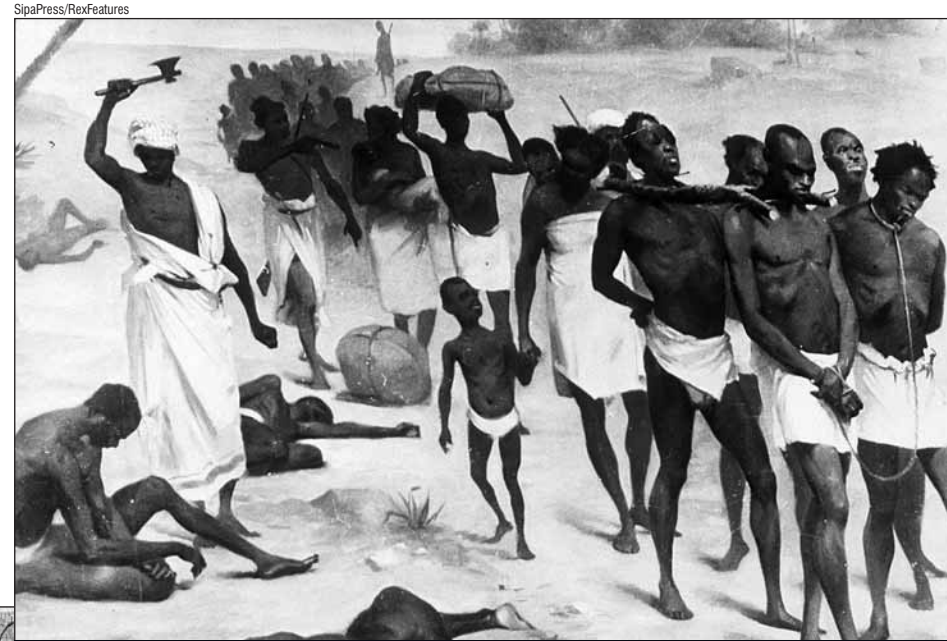
Equiano was born around 1745 in what is now South-eastern Nigeria. At age 10 (1755) he was kidnapped from his village and, after seven months of passing from one native slave owner to another, he finally came to the sea coast. In his book he describes this moment: 'The first object which saluted my eyes 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



Equiano's character in the recent film *Amazing Grace*

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 Pascal, an officer of the Royal Navy. He served Pascal until 1762 when he was



Eighteenth century engravings showing (above) recently enslaved Africans being led to the 'Slave Coast' of West Africa, (below) slaves being offered at auction in Virginia

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 Afro-Britons such as Ignatius Sancho and Quobna Ottobah Cugoano to campaign for the abolition of the slave trade and an end to slavery.

He and his friends took the argument for emancipation to the highest political and constitutional levels. Writing to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons of the Parliament of Great Britain, he said: 'Permit me with the greatest deference and respect, to lay at your feet the following genuine Narrative; the chief design of which is to excite in your august assemblies a sense of compassion for the miseries which the Slave Trade has entailed on my unfortunate countrymen. By horrors of that trade I was first torn away from all the tender connexions that were dear to my heart. . . .' His representation did not only rest with parliamentarians, he also wrote to Her Majesty the Queen, saying: 'I supplicate your Majesty's compassion for millions of my African countrymen, who groan under the lash of tyranny in the West Indies . . . what is inhuman must ever be unwise.'

Equiano's Legacy

In considering Equiano's legacy to us today, it is clear that his writings, 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.

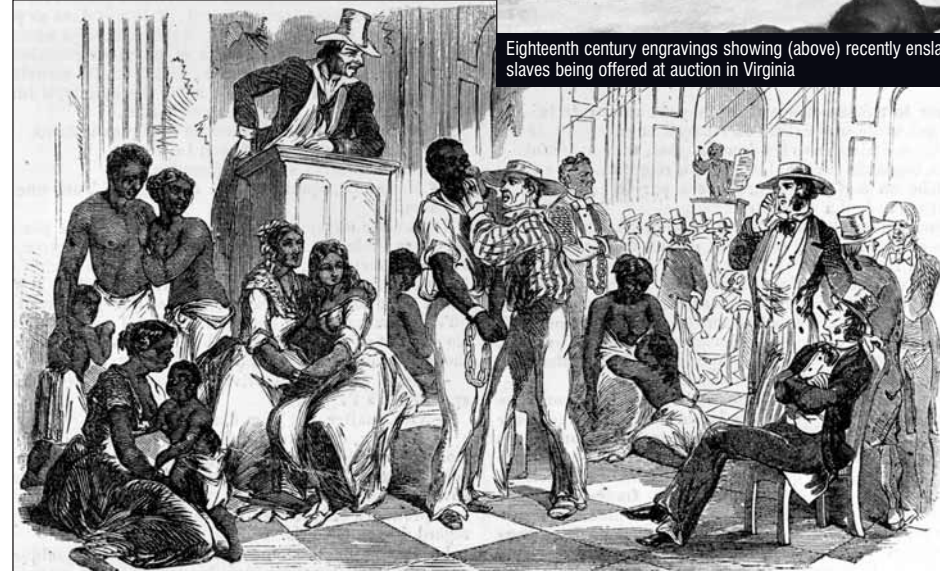
As we contend with the struggles faced by this generation of the descendants of African slaves in our society today, Equiano's experience, quoting again when he says, 'By horrors of that trade I was first torn away from all the tender connexions that were dear to my heart. . . .' suggests that there could be a link between a person's motivation (the inner spirit of hope) and his/her history and identity in life. It seems apparent that Equiano drew on the positive aspects of his early upbringing as he endured the gruesome experience of slavery. And we know from the richness 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 untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?' To champion the cause of the downtrodden is biblical.



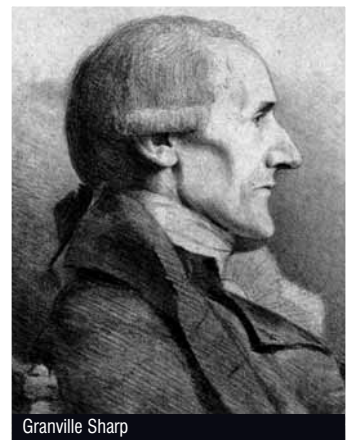
SipaPress/RexFeatures



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 that he abandoned – and campaigned against – the Slave Trade.

What Newton abandoned at his conversion was swearing, not 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



Granville Sharp

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.

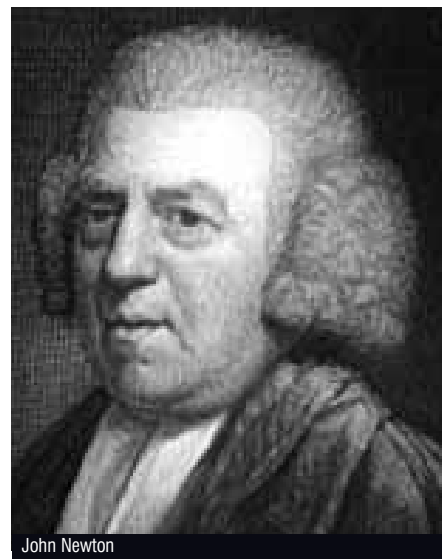
Until the Abolitionist campaign of the 1780s Christians across the spectrum kept slaves. When Granville Sharp published *A Representation of the Injustice and Dangerous Tendency of Tolerating Slavery* in 1769 he was appealing to the sensitivities of Christians with regard to a barbarous institution. When Anthony Benezet published *An Inquiry into the Rise and Progress of*

the Slave Trade in 1772, he knew that slaves in the American colonies were kept even by some of his fellow Quakers.

Nevertheless, so influential was Benezet's publication that, though it was published in London, within five years no American Quaker owned slaves. Similarly influential was John Wesley'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.

Sharp

The sheer, dogged persistence of



John Newton

Granville Sharp, however, was what played the major role in awakening British opinion to the evils of (his words) 'The Accursed Thing'.

Granville was one of the fourteen offspring of Archdeacon Thomas Sharp. 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 boiling 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 practise 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. Sharp was quick to point this out. Franklin and the American 'Founding Fathers' were not prepared to extend the 'inalienable right' of freedom to black people. In Granville Sharp's words, 'The home of the brave will continue to be the home of the slave.'

The grandson of an Archbishop of



Thomas Clarkson.
Below: Thomas Clarkson monument in Wisbech

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.



York, Granville Sharp was also very much aware 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, though 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'. He further believed that, under the Common Law of England there could be 'no property in persons'. The

In one 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 friendships was that with self-liberated ex-slave Olaudah Equiano (aka Gustavus Vassa). Sharp worked with Equiano to expose the iniquity of the *Zong* affair in which an insurance fraud revealed that slavers had drowned part of their human cargo because they believed that it paid them to do so.

The *Zong* case served to put Sharp and Equiano in touch with Sir Charles and Lady Middleton at whose home at Teston in Kent he encountered James Ramsay (who



William Wilberforce, played by Ioan Gruffudd, on board the slave ship, the Madagascar, in the film 'Amazing Grace'

had worked as a clergyman among the plantations and a medic on slave ships), 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 methods: petitions, networking, the consumer boycott, images, logos.

The image they relentlessly put before the public was the engraving of *The Brookes*, a fully-loaded Liverpool slave ship. The logistics of inhumanity boggled 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 logo: a slave encircled by the words, 'Am I not a man and a brother?'

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 trade 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 tireless 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 skills. Both men, however, had connections with the major political figures of the day: William Pitt, Charles James Fox, Edmund Burke, *inter alia*.

Wilberforce

Wilberforce came from a wealthy



The statue of William Wilberforce outside his home in Hull



The Sharp Family, by Johan Zoffany, 1779-81. From left to right, the Sharp brothers, James playing the serpent, and Granville leaning on the piano, William in Windsor uniform with hat raised and John dressed in black.

merchant family in Hull. Family connections in Wimbledon put him in touch in his youth with John Newton, by then an evangelical preacher. The evangelical Christianity of Newton was deeply unfashionable in the circles in which the Wilberforces moved, and William was removed from the sphere of his influence to a typical country grammar school in East Yorkshire. Only years later, by which time Wilberforce was a Member of Parliament and had inherited the Wimbledon house, did he renew his connection with Newton. Hence it was as a rising young politician, moving in the most exalted parliamentary circles, that Wilberforce experienced the Christian conversion that was also a conversion to the Abolitionist Cause.

The Slave Trade was at its height in the 1780s. 794,000 African

slaves were taken across the Atlantic, half of them in British ships.

Slavery had been endemic in the ancient world, but there had been no 'slave trade' on that scale. Nor had there been anything to compete with the dehumanisation resultant from conditions in the West African slave forts, where Africans were kept prior to shipment, and conditions on board the slave vessels in which the Africans lived and died in the (minimum four week) passage to the Caribbean and the Americas.

African slave traders sold Africans to slave captains in West Africa; the evidence brought to the attention of Parliament by Wilberforce indicated that some were prisoners of war and others the victims of raiding parties.

The transatlantic slave trade

began with the Spanish and Portuguese exploration and colonisation of the late fifteenth century. England became involved in the late sixteenth century, Sir John Hawkins being the first Englishman to build a fortune on the trade. By the eighteenth century the Trade had become a major source of investment capital for the Industrial Revolution. In addition it financed the purchase of vast country estates and huge, extravagant houses bought and built by the English aristocracy, gentry and the emerging class of industrial entrepreneurs.

That meant that men like Wilberforce and Clarkson had taken on the largest, most powerful vested interest in Britain. The West Indies sugar industry and the transatlantic slave trade had disproportionate support in both houses of parlia-

ment, but more especially the Lords.

We cannot but admire the energy and tenaciousness with which Wilberforce, year after year, introduced bills and motions against the slave trade and, after impassioned speeches of more than three hours duration and early signs of hope, saw them fail, but came out fighting.

Thomas Clarkson had a nervous breakdown, lost heart and withdrew from an isolated home in the Lake District. Wilberforce's political allies, including Pitt, prioritised the war with France. Fox retired for some years. Wilberforce, often struggling with health issues, toiled on.

Outside Parliament there was massive support for Abolition. Hundreds of petitions against the slave trade were presented to Parliament annually from Yorkshire

cities (where Wilberforce had his greatest support). Wilberforce's celebrity supporters, like Wilberforce himself, lived in Clapham during this period. Hence they were sarcastically referred to as 'the Clapham Sect' or 'The Saints' by their various detractors, in recognition of the Christian commitment that drove them.

Before his breakdown, Clarkson was responsible in whipping up the support of 300,000 for a boycott of West Indian sugar.

On some occasions Wilberforce's bills passed the Commons and came to grief in the Lords. On two occasions the Duke of Clarence, the King's son who would one day be King William IV, played a pivotal role in ensuring the failure of Wilberforce's efforts.

By 1800 the abolition committee

had folded, Ramsay and Equiano were dead, Sharp was in his 60s, Newton in his 70s, and Clarkson had withdrawn to Lakeland solitude.

In the early years of the new century, Wilberforce and his 'Clapham Sect' found time to found the British and Foreign Bible Society (Sharp was chair) and the Church Missionary Society which financed the sending of missionaries to India.

Ironically it was the death of Wilberforce's close friend, Prime Minister Pitt, that created the political context in which Abolition was, first, revived and, then, succeeded.

For Pitt, abolition was a personal ambition: one among many. For Pitt's successor, Lord Granville, it was a political priority. He had been Wilberforce's most consistent supporter in the Lords.

For a few months prior to his untimely death, Charles James Fox came out of retirement to give vital support to the Cause.

In October 1806 a general election was fought, in part, on the issue of the slave trade. The political nation showed how it stood.

The Duke of Gloucester, the King's nephew, broke ranks with the royals and, following Lord Grenville's introduction of the Abolition Bill in the Lords, said, 'My Lords, I cannot find language sufficiently strong to express my abhorrence of this abominable traffic in human blood.'

The fact that the Lords passed the bill first helped to win 'a terrific list of doubtfuls' over to Wilberforce and the Cause of Abolition in the Commons.

When George III gave his assent to the Abolition of the Slave Trade

Act on 25 March 1807 Wilberforce's righteous cause had reached a significant stage. Closure was officially called on British involvement in 'The Accursed Thing' on 1 January 1808.

Only in 1833, after many more years of campaigning, did a government led by one of the proposers of Wilberforce's Bill, Charles, Earl Grey, preside over the Abolition of Slavery itself in British-owned territories.

Only two days later William Wilberforce passed to his rest. 'Thank God that I should have lived to witness a day in which England is willing to give 20 millions sterling for the abolition of slavery,' he said.

That such a day dawned owed much to a tight-knit group of friends who now, without Wilberforce, continued the fight against slavery in the wider world.

Their work is by no means done.

Abolition and Legacy of The Transatlantic Slave Trade

by Beulah A. Plunkett

Slavery resulting from the transatlantic Slave Trade covered the 300 year period from the 1560s through to the 1860s. My great, great grandfather and my great grandfather were enslaved Africans. My father knew his grandfather and knew of his great

grandfather, so these people were real family. As I reflected on this reality, I asked the question: How did my great, great grandfather and my great grandfather cope with slavery back then, and what part did they play in its abolition? They survived slavery, because I am here, but how did they do that? It is important to know your history and to learn how with love, determination, altruism and courage others before you and, consequently *you*, can 'make a way out of no way' through God's love.

I met William Wilberforce's great, great granddaughter at the service for the commemoration of the 1807 Act to Abolish Slavery, which was held on 27 March 2007 at Westminster Abbey. She sat next to me during the service, and proudly introduced herself at the end. I could not tell her who my great, great grandfather was as precisely as she could tell me about hers.

Historians have tried to blot out the records of slavery and so the mass of the population, both black and white, are only just reading about it in 2007. Some of us are shocked, some are in disbelief or just want it to go away. But no matter how painful it is to look at the truth, and slavery is a true story, it must not be brushed aside; it is a reality that must be acknowledged so that its legacy can be addressed. The crucifixion of Christ must not be forgotten, as painful as it is to reflect on that terrible time. Christ rose again and thus we who believe in him are saved. Christ's sacrifice teaches us to forgive and to love one another, even those who hurt us, so, as we reflect on the reality of slavery, we forgive.

There follows a very brief synopsis of the contributions enslaved Africans made to the abolition of the transatlantic Slave Trade. Olaudah Equiano, Sojourner Truth and Sam Sharpe, are just three of the thousands of Africans who contributed to the abolition of the Slave Trade. Because of racist attitudes today, their contributions are not as readily acknowledged as those of Wilberforce and Clarkson. I will also give a brief account of the social and psychological legacy of slavery. Sadly, there are many other forms of slavery, but my focus is on the European enslavement of Africans, as this year marks the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade in British-owned territories in 1807. That Act, in turn, heralded the Abolition of Slavery in British territories in 1833.

Dates and Figures

The enslavement of Africans by the English started with the first English slaving expedition by Sir John Hawkins in 1562. When slavery was abolished in 1833, £20 million was voted as compensation to slave owners for loss of property. Nothing at all was for the enslaved Africans. It is estimated that between 9 and 12 million Africans were transported to the Americas, and an equal number to the Caribbean and other places by European slavers between 1560 and 1807. There are no accurate figures for the myriad numbers smuggled across the Atlantic to avoid regulations, and no accurate records of those born into slavery.

The contributions of Africans to the abolition of their enslavement

From the onset of slavery, millions of Africans gave their lives to end their individual slavery by attempting to run away. That was *their* attempt at ending slavery, and we must remember them. Then there were those who, as time went by, sought ways to end slavery, one of the world's greatest evils, by working with others, both black and white.

Olaudah Equiano, or, Gustavus Vassa, the African

Olaudah Equiano, 1745 – 1797, is well-known for his contribution to the abolition of the Slave Trade.

Olaudah Equiano was born in Essaka, an Igbo village, in 1745. His father was one of the province's elders. When he was ten, Equiano was kidnapped and sold to slave-traders; he was then transported to Barbados. After a two-week stay in the West Indies, Equiano was sent to the English colony of Virginia. He was later purchased by Captain Henry Pascal, a British naval officer. Equiano saved whatever money he could, and in 1766 purchased his freedom. Then, having moved to England, he worked closely with Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson in the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. In a letter written by Equiano to Gordon Turnbull, who in 1788 had published his book on slavery entitled *Apology for Negro Slavery*, Equiano, made this statement and asked this question:

'To kidnap our fellow creatures, however they may differ in complexion, to degrade them into beasts of burthen, to deny them every right but those, and scarcely those we allow to a horse, to keep them in

perpetual servitude, is a crime as unjustifiable as it is cruel; but to avow and to defend this infamous traffic required the ability and the modesty of you and Mr. Tobin. Can any man be a Christian who asserts that one part of the human race were ordained to be in perpetual bondage to another?'

In 1792 Equiano married Susan Cullen of Ely. The couple had two children, Anna Maria and Johanna. However, Anna Maria died when she was only four years old. Olaudah Equiano died on 31 March 1797, aged only 52.

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

Born in 1797 in Hurley, New York, Sojourner died on 26 November 1883 in Battle Creek, Michigan. Originally named Isabella Baumfree, in 1843 she was inspired by the Millerites, a religious group who believed the world would end that year, to take her new identity. She changed her name to Sojourner Truth and became an itinerant evangelist. After the Great Disappointment in October 1844, Truth became a member of the Northampton Association, a utopian community led by George Benson. The Association's reformist-minded members (including Frederick Douglas and William Lloyd Garrison) exposed Sojourner Truth to liberal concepts such as abolitionism and feminism.

In a speech at a women's rights convention in Akron, Ohio in 1851, Truth proclaimed, *'I could work as much and eat as much as a man . . . and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen 'em most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?'* With this statement Sojourner demanded that white feminists broaden their vision to include the suffering and strength of black, enslaved and poor women in the category of woman and in the fight for equal rights. In 1865, following the Civil War, slavery was finally abolished in United States territories.

Sam Sharpe- Samuel 'Sam' Sharpe was an African who had been enslaved

Sam Sharpe taught himself to read and write and, because of his education, he became highly respected

by other slaves and was well-known as a preacher and leader. Sharpe also became a deacon in the Burchell Baptist church in Montego Bay, Jamaica. As he travelled to different estates in the St James parish, he would educate the slaves about Christianity and freedom. In a mistaken belief that emancipation had already been granted by the 1807 Abolition of Slavery Act, Sharpe organised a peaceful strike across many estates in western Jamaica. 'The Christmas Rebellion' began on 25 December 1831 at the Kensington Estate, but was halted within two weeks and approximately 300 slaves, including Sharpe, were hanged. The Rebellion caused two detailed Parliamentary Inquiries, which contributed to the 1833 Abolition of Slavery across the British Empire. In 1975, the government of independent Jamaica proclaimed Sharpe a national hero with the title Rt Excellent Samuel Sharpe.

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

The traumatic experiences of slavery still affect the lives of those Africans whose families were enslaved, even now. (DeGruy Leary, 2005). The way in which slave owners tortured and dehumanised Africans has left them with psychological scars that have been passed down through generations in the form of low self-esteem, fractured families, a fragmented culture, and the absence of a vernacular language. Africans had to abandon their languages, the vestiges of their cultures and even their names in the process of enslavement. Racism was the conduit by which this was justified and perpetuated. Racism now ensures that many freed Africans still find no place of comfort. Racism is one of the most destructive social legacies of slavery. Slavery was based on the assumption that the African races were inferior to whites. This view was passed on through the norms, values and culture of each society and its educational institutions. This created serious social and psychological problems for all peoples of African heritage; as they are often stereotyped as less intelligent, lazy, savage and incapable of governing themselves. The Race Relations Act, which outlawed overt discrimination on the grounds of race, is evidence of the reality of racism and the need to curb it. What we have now is covert racism, which is hard to prove, but causes just as much damage to the lives of black peo-

ple. This is the last obstacle that both black and white peoples can join together to tackle and eradicate.

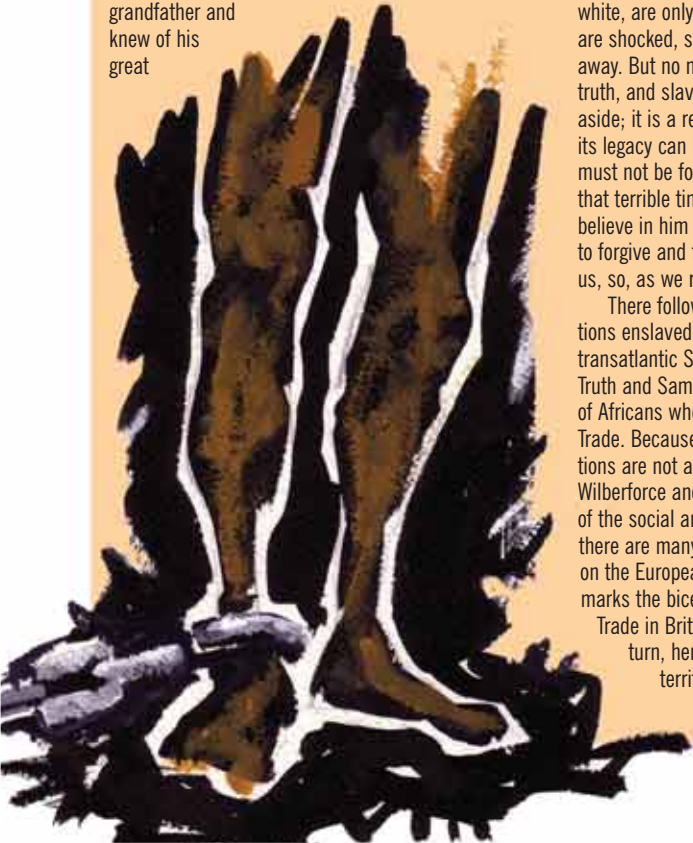
The Department of Education published an official report in 2006, which showed that African-Caribbean children are three times more likely to be excluded from school because of 'systematic racial discrimination' against them. Figures published by the department in 2005 showed that the rate of permanent exclusions for African-Caribbean children was four in 10,000, compared with around 1.3 for white British pupils. However, the rate for black African children was similar to the white British figure at around 1.5. Chinese pupils had the lowest exclusion rate of 0.2, followed by Indian children at 0.5, Bangladeshi at 0.8 and Pakistani at around 1.

The report concludes that: 'The exclusions gap is caused by largely unwitting, but systematic, racial discrimination in the application of disciplinary and exclusion policies. Even with the best efforts to improve provision for excluded pupils, the continued existence of the exclusion gap means black pupils are disproportionately denied mainstream education and the life chances that go with it.' Arthur Torrington, President of The Equiano Society, believes this to be a legacy of slavery.

My own research examined black parenting and the issues faced by black parents living in the UK (Plunkett, 2004, *Raising Your Child in Two Worlds*). My conclusions were that black parents, while dealing with the same demands of parenting as most other parents, have the additional task of having to deal with the racism that they and their child will experience, which can hamper their emotional, educational and social development. The government report above confirms that black children experience racism at school; a legacy of slavery.

Another legacy of slavery is that it causes separation between black and white peoples to continue to exist. There is still a need for us to come together and address these issues so that we can fulfil the law of God; 'Love thy neighbour as thyself.'

To remember the injustices of slavery is to acknowledge those who lost their lives and support those for whom the sacrifices of others have brought freedom that is yet to be grasped.



THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN ABOLITION

by Sharon Platt-McDonald

Women of integrity and emotional strength were at the grass roots movement against slavery. Although they themselves lacked even the right to vote at that time, they played a vital role in the campaign to abolish slavery using techniques which, a century later, were effective in the struggle for women's suffrage.

Hannah More (1745-1833) is one deserving honour for supporting the movement for the abolition of the British transatlantic slave trade. As a social reformer, her practical achievements and the moral influence she exerted through her writings were exceptional.

In 1787 Hannah More first met the 28-year-old MP for Hull, William Wilberforce. Sharing commitment to evangelical Christianity and an abhorrence of the slave trade, they established a firm friendship. They had a crucial role in giving the cause of abolition an urgent and public voice together with other key abolitionists, including Thomas Clarkson, James Ramsay and Sir Charles Middleton.

Using her writing skills, Hannah publicised the campaign with 'Slavery, a Poem' (1788), which dramatically depicted the predicament of an enslaved woman, ill-used and separated from her children. This theme was repeatedly emphasised by women campaigners and also used as part of Wilberforce's parliamentary campaign to achieve abolition. Even though her efforts met with fierce opposition, she was determined to succeed.

Lady Margaret Middleton, like More, was a member of a group of evangelicals associated with the abolitionist campaign. Although she had no direct political power, Middleton was able to cajole her influential friends. She is credited with encouraging both the group's leaders, Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce, to take up the cause in the abolition of slavery. She also provided the setting at her home at Teston, Kent, for all the key meetings of the anti-slavery committee.

The 1807 Act ended Britain's involvement in the slave trade but did not emancipate those enslaved in British territories overseas. Women were conspicuous in their support for the Anti-Slavery Society founded in 1823 that succeeded in bringing about emancipation in 1833.

Elizabeth Heyrick, a Leicester Quaker, published a document: 'Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition', in 1824 which proposed the immediate emancipation of

slaves in the British colonies, rather than the gradual abolition suggested by establishment figures. Women's societies took up the call all over England. In 1830, the Anti-Slavery Society, as a direct result, abandoned the notion of gradual abolition.

The women of the Birmingham society adopted an original Wedgwood cameo image as their campaign logo. It featured a kneeling female slave and was captioned 'Am I not a Woman and a Sister'.

With the strengths of growing campaigns and the growth of women's political voice, the reformed parliament passed the act to end slavery in the British colonies in 1833.

The act became law in 1834 and

imposed a period of 'apprenticeship' on slaves that concluded in 1838. On behalf of the apprentices, a national women's petition was organised and addressed to Queen Victoria. The petition bore 700,000 signatures of women, which was described as 'unprecedented in the annals of petitioning.'

Women joined the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (BFASS) to fight slavery throughout the world and attended the first World Anti-Slavery Convention held in London in 1840.

By the 1850s, there were more women's anti-slavery societies than men's. American women were invited by women's societies to lecture in Britain. Several African-American women, including former slaves, also lectured.

Sarah Remond was the first African-American woman to address mass mixed audiences. She became very popular through her lectures and writings covering both anti-slavery and women's rights. She wrote: 'I have been received here as the sister of the white woman.'

Emmeline Pankhurst's tireless involvement in women's suffrage was the result of her being raised in a family which campaigned for the emancipation of slaves. She was influenced by the involvement of fellow abolitionist campaigners in the US women's rights movement.

It's interesting to note that sugar grown on plantations was dependent on the labour of enslaved people and thus a product of slavery. Yet with the stance of strong women objecting about the conditions of the plantations, they appealed to both working- and middle-class families, encouraging them instead to buy sugar produced in the East Indies using free labour. This proved effective, and more than 300,000 people signed petitions and joined this boycott of sugar grown on plantations using slave labour.

These petitions, spanning several feet, can be seen in the British Parliament's archives today – a testament to the strength of these ordinary women campaigning and lobbying for change.

Today, as we acknowledge a very shameful part of our British history, we are also mindful of the legacy of slavery, demonstrable in the racism, the prejudice and the discrimination that exist world wide. We are reminded of the reality of modern-day slavery which still impacts women and children today through forced domestic slavery and child labour.

God still uses women of strength and stature today to bring hope and value to lives. We see it in the prominence of the matriarchal families worldwide in households where fathers are absent or deny their responsibilities. We see women's strength of leadership and determination that the suffering of their foreparents will not be the portion of their offspring for generations to come. We see it in the self-sacrificing of their own needs for the comfort, security and progression of their families in order to cushion them from undue suffering and pain and propel them into a future of hope. We experience it through the emergence of successful and positive individuals from homes where vision and bright dreams replaced the nightmare of past hurts and torture to embrace a future where the best is within their grasp and not in the hands of another.



Blessing Okoko tells Newbold students about slavery in the chocolate industry of present day Africa.
Jeremy Cedenio/Helen Pearson

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 go into detail (a) for the sake of my own sanity, and (b) because you will only fear the worst.'

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 wanted to know! The short search, however, threw up unexpected, horrifying accounts of twenty-first century slavery. There were examples of girls as young as five being abducted to work in the homes and fields of their captors; of fathers going on desperate journeys in search of their missing children, only to become victims of the same fate; of slaves, now frail and 'no longer fit for purpose', being sold at the cattle market or hung in trees to die. In reality, although slavery is not legal, it flourishes; the odds are that there are more slaves today than there were in Wilberforce's day! The real shame is that more people are not aware of it.

Contemporary forms of slavery include practices of forced labour, debt bondage, child labour and forced prostitution. Human trafficking, a rapidly growing problem, may conjure images of smuggling, but it is far worse. Victims are coerced or deceived into agreeing to their relocation. They are denied their basic human rights and are forced into exploitation by the trafficker, most commonly in the sex trade but also in sweatshops, construction sites and commercial farming. In truth, human trafficking is modern-day slavery. Easy movement across borders has made it possible for modern-day slavery to reach into every continent. In affluent countries, trafficked women and children from Mexico, countries in the former Communist Block, and Thailand feed the sex trade. In the Near East, the largest category of slavery is domestic servitude fed by thousands of women from South Asia. On the Indian subcontinent, the largest category is bonded labour slavery of the lowest castes in rice mills, carpet factories and brick kilns. In parts of Africa and Sri Lanka, the largest category is proba-

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.'

bly child soldier slavery. Most of the victims are female and a large percentage is girls, making modern-day slavery more gender based.

While the following chilling statistics help us to appreciate the scale of the problem, they fail to provide the miserable, dehumanising detail of every account:

- There are 27 million slaves world-wide.¹
- 600,000 people are trafficked across borders each year.²
- 250 million children (5 – 14 year-olds) are currently working as child labourers, half of these are in full-time work, and 179 million are in hazardous jobs.^{2 & 3}
- 300,000 children have been forced to serve as child soldiers in more than 30 conflicts.⁴

In the UK alone:

- At least 5,000 children are currently being forced to work as sex slaves.⁵
- Over 4,000 trafficked women are working as prostitutes.⁶
- 10,000 gang masters are working across various industrial sectors.⁵
- Since the 2004 Asylum and Immigration Act, there has not been a single prosecution brought for trafficking for labour exploitation.⁷

Information of this type leaves us feeling uncomfortable. It compels us to ask, 'What are we going to do?' 'Can we do anything?' 'Can our efforts ever make a difference?' 'What is our Christian duty?' 'Where do we start in this huge mess?'

I recently read about a young teenager, Zach Hunter who, at the age of twelve, asked similar questions. It was during 'Black History Month' that he learned about the great campaigners such as Wilberforce and Harriet Tubman and the grim truth of the 27 million people still in slavery. His study stirred him deeply, leading him to start the campaign 'Loose Change to Loosen Chains'. With the help of friends, he collected £6,000 to fight slavery, making him our youngest modern-day abolitionist. *Be the Change*, his first book, released in March 2007, is the only book written by a teenager for teenagers ever to be published by Zondervan.

Zach believes that his youth is his greatest asset. 'I think as you get older, you become more familiar with reality, it doesn't seem realistic that you can abolish slavery. That's why this movement had to be student-led, because adults, as nice as they are, can sometimes be wet blankets. But since students are resource-poor and have passion, and adults are passion-poor and have a lot of resources, together we can be a deadly combination.'⁸

Just how do we capture that same passion and

optimism when our cynical voices convince us that we have little influence to end this 5,000 year-old practice? Our cynicism subsides when we recall the gospel accounts of Jesus affirming the dispossessed, the exploited and the hopeless. We see how he reaches them with a tenderness they have never known, bestowing on each the value of his own priceless life, the dignity that only he can give. It is in this divine, compassionate image of deliverance we find and root our passion for the enslaved. In our context, it means speaking and acting against gang and gun culture; against the sex trade that insidiously infuses so many areas of life; against corporate globalisation that entraps millions in poverty and unfair trade. While governments pass laws to deal with and control the problem, they will achieve nothing more in a world increasingly bereft of Christian values. It is only when hearts and minds of slave-lords and slaves are touched by the Divine Hand, when they come to know the true value of a human being, that the struggle will end.

Here are a few suggestions of ways we might contribute to the twenty-first century abolitionist movement:

- Admit that there is a problem here in the UK and worldwide.
- Support the various organisations that focus on programmes in countries supplying slaves, e.g. education programmes that warn potential victims and support economic alternatives. (ADRA runs many programmes of this type.)
- Call national hotlines when we see suspicious activity.
- Choose not to travel to tourist destinations where governments are not taking the problem seriously.
- Encourage local churches to help victims around the world.
- Encourage our MPs to pass appropriate, enforceable laws and to keep monitoring high on the agenda.
- Encourage the news media to report on the struggle.
- Commit, as far as possible, to buying goods endorsed by Fairtrade and Ethical-trade. You can find more on their websites: www.fairtrade.org.uk and www.ethicaltrade.org.uk

¹UN Publication, Issue 3/0305. ²Set All Free statistics. ³Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour. ⁴CS Monitor. ⁵Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report: Modern Slavery in the UK. ⁶Home Office Figures. ⁷Sir Menzies Campbell, Address in Birmingham: We must tackle Modern Day Slavery. ⁸Religion Bookline, 21 Feb 2007.

'Students are resource-poor and have passion. Adults are passion-poor and have lots of resources. Together we can be a powerful combination.'

Rt. Hon. Baroness Amos of Brondesbury on the Ghana Slave Castles



Ray Yang/Rose Features

Valerie Amos, leader of the House of Lords, is classified as Britain's most powerful black woman. She recounts her experience of visiting slave forts in Ghana to commemorate the end of a trafficking in humans that still impacts the world today. She states:

'I saw the places where slaves were kept before being shackled onto slave ships. Many were marched hundreds of miles across the African continent in chains. They'd arrive at the "slave castles" on the Ghanaian coast, where they

were kept in filthy, disgusting, inhumane conditions. I was shown one cell where the excrement would have come up to between your ankle and your knee. They couldn't lie down. The slaves were kept there for up to three months, then chained on slave ships. If they died on the passage, they were simply thrown into the sea. We don't like to talk about these things. We're embarrassed. We don't like to admit that people could treat each other in such an inhuman way. Every time I visit those slave castles, I feel the weight of that history. . .'



Elmina slave castle, Ghana.

David Lay

Slavery Narratives

by Catherine Anthony Boldeau

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 tastes in art, music and poetry changed and I began to appreciate the strong 'narrative voice' that is evident in these disciplines. Emancipation narratives have been around since the time of the Biblical Exodus, when Miriam and Moses sang, 'I will sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted, the horse and his rider he has hurled into the sea.' Exodus 15:1, NIV.

For me, one of the more powerful emancipation narratives is the painting, 'Slave Auction, Virginia', a watercolour by one 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 post. 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 also wrote a four-page letter 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: 'By 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 us 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 Sojourner Truth. Sojourner 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 gives me any best place, 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 sold off to slavery and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me – and ain't I woman?"

Negro spirituals are described as 'The true musical expression in song of the enslaved African assuaging the sorrows 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



Slave picking cotton, Florida, America



Olaudah Equiano (Youssou N'dour) & William Wilberforce (Ioan Gruffudd), from a scene in the film *Amazing Grace*

know the composers of many of the well-known spirituals. These songs were handed down through the 'oral tradition', as most slaves were unable to read or write. However, no one can deny the pathos and dramatic re-enactment of the life of a slave that a well-sung spiritual evokes. And no-one can deny the longing for emancipation in these lyrical narratives.

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

Deep River,
My home is over Jordan,
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. Those like Sojourner 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, thought so trivial by many, I believe greatly assisted in the fight to make slavery a thing of the past.

Celebrated in Wales

by John Surridge, president, Welsh Mission

On Sunday evening 25 March sixteen 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 made it illegal to trade slaves throughout the British Empire 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 Rodney Berman, 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.'

The wide-ranging programme included: music from a Welsh choir and several gospel choirs; soloist Siân 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

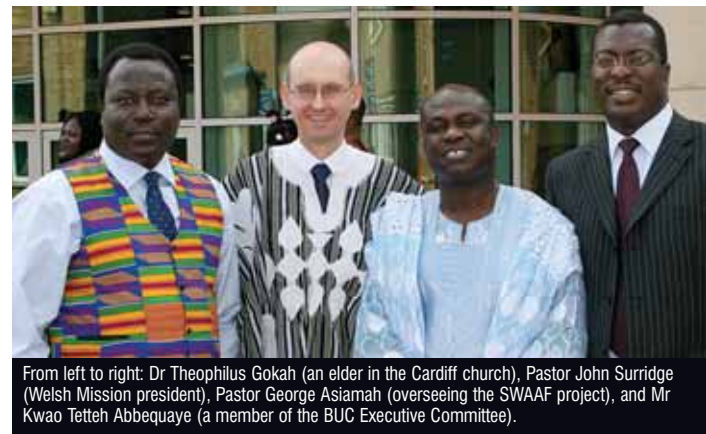
of abuse and prostitution on the streets of a western city. 'Amazing Grace' was performed several times in different ways and extracts from the film of the same name, starring Welsh actor Ioan Gruffudd as William Wilberforce, were shown on a big screen.

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 trafficking. In turn, Welsh industry helped to power the trade by providing raw materials for slave ships which sailed frequently from Cardiff and Newport.

However, there was also evidence of Welsh opposition to the slave trade, including poetry from Iolo Morganwg, founder of the Gorsedd 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 slaves. She told the story of how Richard Pennant, the first Baron Penrhyn, gained his fortune from slave plantations in Jamaica – a fortune which enabled him to build Penrhyn Castle and a massive slate industry in North Wales.

Although initially apologetic in nature, 'Valuing Freedom' also celebrated the efforts of those millions of people, slave and free, whose



From left to right: Dr Theophilus Gokah (an elder in the Cardiff church), Pastor John Surridge (Welsh Mission president), Pastor George Asiamah (overseeing the SWAAF project), and Mr Kwao Tetteh Abbequaye (a member of the BUC Executive Committee).

Grounds Manager needed for Newbold College
Newbold College is seeking to appoint a Grounds Manager to commence 1 July. For further details and job description see the Newbold website, www.newbold.ac.uk. Deadline for applications is 11 May. Contact: Berit Lisle, Bursar, email: blisle@newbold.ac.uk, phone: 01344 407403, Fax: 01344 407406.

dogged opposition and campaigning eventually brought about the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. Illustrated musically through blues, jazz and gospel, and verbally through poetry and prose, the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act marked a major turning point in the world's history.

However, the programme went on to point out that while the Slave Trade may have been officially abolished, it is still very much alive today. Bonded and forced labour,

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 Edwards, General Secretary of Cytun, and deacon J. C. Earle of the Bethel Apostolic Church, asked for forgiveness for the evils of slavery in the past and the present, and for God's grace and power to be shown in the world today through the eradication of slavery in all its forms.

Amazing Grace – the film

Review by Susanne Kirlew

'Amazing Grace' is a hymn by former slave trader turned Christian minister, John Newton. It is also now a film directed by Michael Apted and released in British cinemas to coincide with the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade in March 2007.

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

John Newton's hymn 'Amazing Grace' became the anthem of the Abolitionist campaign. It was written by Newton following his conversion.

The film provides insights into the slave trade and the massive

vested interests in British society (disproportionately represented in the House of Lords and the House of Commons) against which Wilberforce had to fight and which, in 1807, he vanquished.

Wilberforce is played by Welsh actor Ioan Gruffudd. The film also contains memorable performances by Albert Finney, Michael Gambon and Romola Garai.

It is a refreshing change to see Christians portrayed in a positive light. I attended the premier of the film in London and did not know what to expect. I was surprised that not all the people leading the campaign were African or of African descent.



From a scene in the film *Amazing Grace*, William Wilberforce (Ioan Gruffudd), presents a petition to the members of Parliament.

North England Conference Community Services Rally Day

Sabbath 12 May
Harper Bell School, Birmingham

Guest speaker:

Pastor C. Murphy, BUC Community Services sponsor

A full day's programme starting at 10am
All welcome

Contact Pastor C. Sweeney
0115 9606312 or csweeney@necadventist.org.uk

Aberdaron Advent Campsite Housekeeper Required Part-time

Duties include cleaning, laundry work and occasional meal preparation. The ideal candidate should be willing to work flexible hours. Salary in line with North England Conference denomination pay scale. For a fuller job description and hours required to work, please contact Les Simpson on 01758 760281 or email enquiries@aberdaroncamp.com.

Closing date for applications: 11 May.

Teaching Vacancies: Stanborough School

Mathematics teacher

As a result of the introduction of the International Baccalaureate we require a full-time Mathematics teacher to teach from Key Stage 3-5 (1.B).

Art teacher

Due to the retirement of the present teacher, Stanborough School requires an Art teacher (part time 0.7 at present with the possibility of full-time work).

The teacher will teach Key Stage 3 & 4 and possibly Key Stage 5 (1.B).

Applicants should hold a degree in the subject, a teaching qualification and experience. Salary as per denominational scale.

Applications should be sent to Judy McKie, PA to Head Teacher, or emailed to jmckie@spsch.org by 14 May. Stanborough Secondary School, Watford, WD25 9JF; Tel: 01923 673268; Website: www.spsch.org.

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 discussion 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 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 evil 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



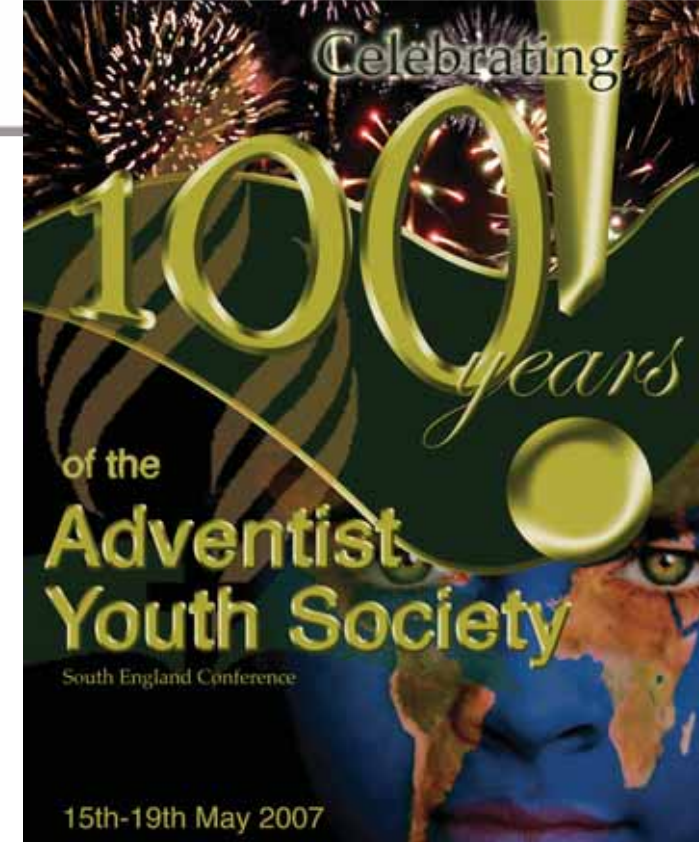
Jeremy Cedenio/Helen Pearson

Sunday 2 September
Stanborough Press Open Day

Guest Speaker
**Adventist Review editor,
 Dr Roy Adams**

Music from Oasys and Jennifer Phillips

Plenty of offers on food and books, and of course fun for the children



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: 'Forgetting 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.'

ABC BOOK SALES

May

13 John Loughborough 10.30am-2pm

June

10 Camp Meeting
 17 Camp Meeting

Messenger

Volume 112 • 10 – 4 May 2007

EDITOR: D. N. MARSHALL

DESIGN: DAVID BELL

COPY FOR No. 12 – 14 May 2007

Copy should be sent to the Editor, MESSENGER, The Stanborough Press Limited, Alma Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 9SL. Tel: (01476) 591700.

Fax No: (01476) 577144.

Email: Editor@mac.com

Send high resolution pictures to:

dbell@stanboroughpress.co.uk

ABC Sales line: (01476) 539900

Mon-Thurs only, 8am-6pm.

The Editor may alter, clarify, précis or expand articles sent to him if he thinks it necessary. Published fortnightly on Fridays by the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Printed in Denmark.

Visit the BUC website at: www.adventist.org.uk

ISSN 0309-3654

Sunset

Sunset times are reproduced with permission from data supplied by the Science Research Council.

	London	Card	Nottingham	Edinburgh	Belfast
May 4	8.28	8.40	8.37	8.57	9.02
11	8.39	8.52	8.49	9.11	9.15
18	8.50	9.02	9.00	9.24	9.27
25	9.00	9.12	9.11	9.36	9.39

MESSENGER SUBSCRIPTIONS

Cost to member supplied in bulk to churches £6.

Single copy subscription by post £13.

Overseas airmail £27.50

ADRA-UK Situations Vacant

Finance officer

Gross salary: initially £30,012 (inclusive of London Weighting). Location – Watford, Herts.

Key responsibilities include providing day to day support to ADRA-UK implementing partners on financial management processes, financial compliance, and adherence to donor regulations and ADRA policies. Additionally, the Finance Officer will be responsible for supporting the ADRA-UK executive director and Programmes director in drafting and revising donor financial reports, preparing ADRA-UK financial statements, planning 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

Salary: stipend based.

Location – Watford, Herts.

ADRA-UK is offering again the possibility for a trainee to work for a year with our office (starting September 2007). The ADRA-UK programme will offer the trainee the opportunity to work within a high profile development and relief agency in programme development. The trainee programme is designed to give individuals practical experience 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.