



Souvenir Feature

COMMEMORATING THE ABOLITION OF THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE



"It gives me great pleasure, as EREC's Chair, to introduce this special souvenir feature on the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. I have lived in Enfield for over 30 years and have been involved with EREC for over 10 years and have never been more proud as I was when witnessing the unveiling of the long awaited plaque to commemorate the abolition at the Enfield Civic Centre.

This historical event was held on Saturday 1st October in partnership with Enfield Council, as part of the Black History Month celebrations. Cllr Christiana During, the first Black African Mayor of Enfield unveiled the plaque in the Conference Room in front of a fascinated audience of over 100 attendees, including the Leader of the Council, Cllr Doug Taylor, who also addressed the meeting.

Christiana During said that she was honoured to unveil the plaque, particularly as the opportunity took place during her mayoral year, and she herself being from Sierra Leone, one of the main countries affected by slavery.

Guest speakers, including High Commissioners from Jamaica, Sierra Leone and Angola gave an educative insight into the dreadful legacy of slavery, which not only impacted on the enslaved themselves but on the generations that came after and continues to have an adverse effect on the development of those countries even today.

In February 2007 at a meeting with the Council, I raised the issue of the Black History events around the country to mark the bicentennial month of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. I explained that we at EREC would like to mark the occasion with a permanent fixture to serve as a reminder in the Civic Centre, Community House and at other community venues. It is with heartfelt thanks to see that the new Council Administration is still steadfast in its commitments towards social cohesion within the borough by marking this commemoration" My special thanks go to everyone who was involved in bringing this idea into fruition".

Bevin Betton, EREC Chair

Photographs from the event on 1st October 2011



Doug Taylor, Council Leader



Bevin Betton, EREC Chair



Martin Garner, LBE Equalities Officer



Sam Bell and Chandra Bhatia next to Ken Allen



Michaela Alfred-Kamara



Gospel Singers: Omar and Rohan from the Church of God IN Christ



Desmond Davies



His Excellency, Mr Anthony Johnson, High Commissioner of Jamaica



John Sobah-Green



Ken Allen, Chair of the Enfield Caribbean Association, (pictured right) said, "Although it took so long for Enfield Council to bring this event about, the efforts of all those concerned have been rewarded, including the many individuals from the community who signed a petition and voiced their concerns. Young people in Enfield will be able to learn about slavery, its adverse effects and the bravery of those who stood up against it".



Chandra Bhatia, Chief Executive of EREC added, "This successful event was a culmination of hard work and persistence over a number of years by many individuals. As far back as 2007, EREC worked with community representatives and the Enfield Museums Service to hold an informative and educational exhibition at Forty Hall to mark the bi-centenary. The resources from the exhibition are still available for use by community groups to raise awareness of this very important subject. The plaque displayed at various sites, including at Community House where our office is based, will be a permanent reminder and feature of great interest and will hopefully inspire people to combat slavery wherever it exists".

Photos: Left above: Exhibition Display
Left below: Andy Love MP and Cllr Kate Anolue

EREC would especially like to thank -

Guest Speakers: His Excellency Mr Anthony Johnson, High Commissioner of Jamaica; Eduardo Sanguene, speaker on behalf of the High Commissioner of Angola; John Sobah-Green; Desmond Davies; Michaela Alfred-Kamara;

Cllr Doug Taylor; Ken Allen

Mayor of Enfield, Christiana During for chairing the event

Richard Garland (EREC trustee) for the kind donation of £500 from his company Sandwood Design and Build

Martin Garnar (LBE Equalities Officer), Sam Bell (EREC trustee) and EREC staff for their invaluable help in organising and co-ordinating this event

Gospel Singers: Omar and Rohan

Pimento Grove of Edmonton Green for providing the glorious Caribbean buffet

Important milestones leading up to the abolition

In 1805 this noble deed was accepted after being blocked by the House of Lords eleven times in 15 years. Finally, the Bill made its ascension to royal approval on the 23rd August 1807. The transatlantic slave trade, which spanned four centuries, **finally ended in 1807** although the practice of slavery was not outlawed until 1834.

- 1562: First English slaving expedition by Sir John Hawkins
- 1619: First recorded cargo of Africans landed in Virginia
- 1625: First English settlement in Barbados
- 1626: First boatload of enslaved Africans to St Kitts
- 1631: Charles I granted monopoly on guinea trade to a group of London Merchants
- 1655: British capture of Jamaica as part of Cromwell's Grand Design
- 1672: Royal Africa Company granted charter to carry Africans to the Americas
- 1772: Slavery declared illegal in England, Wales and Ireland
- 1778: Slavery declared illegal in Scotland
- 1781: Over 100 enslaved Africans thrown overboard from the slave ship Zong
- 1783: Committee on the Slave Trade established by Quakers' Meeting for Sufferings
- 1787: Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade founded: Granville Sharp as president of a mostly Quaker committee
- 1791: 23rd August – St Dominique (Haiti) slave revolt
- 1792: Resolution or gradual abolition of the slave trade defeated in House of Lords
- 1805: Bill for abolition passed in Commons, rejected in House of Lords
- 1807: 25th March – Slave Trade Abolition Bill passed in the British Parliament
- 1808: US abolished the slave trade
- 1833: Abolition of Slavery British Empire Bill passed with effect from 1834 and providing for up to six year 'apprentice' transition £20M voted as compensation to slave owners
- 1838: 1st August – enslaved men, women and children in British Empire became free
- 1842: Britain and US signed Webster-Ashburton Treaty, banning slave trade on high seas
- 1848: Emancipation by the French of their slaves
- 1850: The Fugitive Slave Law passed in the United States
- 1865: Slavery finally abolished in United States territories
- 1888: Slavery abolished in Brazil



The plaque designed and crafted by **Sculptor, Les Johnson** (pictured above with the Mayor) is an etching on acrylic which has been displayed on a pillar in the conference room at the council's civic centre. An extract of its text reads:

"Over hundreds of years, millions of African men, women and children were captured, kidnapped and forced to undertake a journey that led to a lifetime of misery and exploitation.

Today we all accept that slavery is abhorrent and repugnant. The bicentenary gives us the opportunity to remember the millions who suffered and died as a result of slavery, and to pay tribute to the courage and moral conviction of all those – black and white – who campaigned for abolition.

The spirit of freedom, justice and equality that characterised the efforts of the abolitionists is the same spirit that drives our determination to fight injustice and inequality today."