

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL SERVICES

SUNDERLAND REMEMBERING SLAVERY

**EVALUATION OF THE BI-CENTENARY OF THE ABOLITION OF THE
TRANS-ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE**

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the events held to mark the anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 2007 marks the 200th anniversary of the Parliamentary Act to abolish the slave trade within the British colonies.

The Parliamentary Act was passed on 25 March 1807 and marked the beginning of a very long journey to the eventual abolition of slavery within the British Empire in 1833. It still took until 1838 before enslaved Africans gained their freedom and from there a further 50 years before slavery was officially abolished in the Americas in 1888.

The effects of the slave trade still resonate today in the form of modern day slavery in such guises as bonded labour, forced recruitment of child soldiers and human trafficking.

The bi-centenary has given us the opportunity to remember the millions who suffered; to pay tribute to the courage and moral conviction of all those who campaigned for abolition; and to question why today, in some parts of the world, slavery still continues two centuries after the argument for abolition in this country was won.

3.0 AIM

- 3.1 Sunderland City Council has been working with a number of partners across the city and the region to support the Government's agenda to commemorate the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. As part of this agenda a steering group was established at the end of 2006 to develop and deliver a wide and diverse programme of activity.

The steering group consisted of representatives from Culture and Tourism, along with officers from the Office of the Chief Executive, Children's Services, Tyne and Wear Museums and representation from Canon Steven Taylor.

The over arching aim was to ensure a diverse programme of initiatives and to engage audiences on a number of levels.

4.0 PROGRAMME

4.1 The programme commenced in March with events taking place to commemorate the bi-centenary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade with the main focus of the programme taking place throughout October and incorporating a number of international, national and local initiatives. These included Year of Slavery, Black History Month, National Bookstart Day, National Poetry Day and Houghton Feast Literature Festival. Working with partners from across the region Sunderland City Council has provided a programme of activity including:

- Exhibitions
- Storytelling
- Craft Activities
- Author Visits
- Poetry
- Dance

4.2 For a full programme of activity across the city see Appendix I and II.

4.3 In addition to the activity programme an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund was made in partnership with two community groups, Washington Art Collective and Washington Youth Theatre, which was to look at aspects of Slavery using Drama, Music and Dance; unfortunately the application was not successful.

5.0 WASHINGTON DC FRIENDSHIP AGREEMENT

5.1 Building on the Friendship Agreement currently in place with Washington DC, partnership working with colleagues from the USA resulted in Public Records Administrator and Historian Clarence Davis from Washington DC visiting Sunderland. As part of his visit he presented a lecture on emancipation and the trans-atlantic slave trade at a study day developed to incorporate the North East perspective on slavery which took place at the Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens.

5.2 Clarence, who has very personal links to the history of the slave trade, was also invited to officially open the Remembering Slavery Exhibition at the Museum.

5.3 The Office of Public Records, the official repository of historical records for DC, kindly agreed to provide copies of records related to slavery in Washington DC to the City of Sunderland that were included in the Remembering Slavery exhibits, programmes, projects and activities.

- 5.4 Links to George Washington continued through the information included in his will, in which he stated that upon the death of his wife his slaves were to be freed. A separate Exhibition was devised in the City Library and Arts Centre which incorporated the links of slavery between Sunderland and Washington DC and also featured work which had been ongoing by local school JFK Primary around their thoughts and feelings on slavery. This was intended to compliment the main exhibition in Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens.

6.0 MARKETING

- 6.1 Sunderland City Council has publicised the ongoing programme linked to Slavery through a variety of publications, these have included:

- Sunderland Remembering Slavery Leaflet (5000)
- Tyne and Wear Museums Publication - Remembering Slavery (2 published throughout the year)
- Switched On
- Sunrise
- Tyne and Wear Museums Exhibition Flyer
- MLA North East Publications
- Culture North East

In addition to the above, editorial coverage was included in the following:

Slavery expert launches exhibition	Northern Echo	Thursday 27 September
Archivist to launch slavery exhibition	Journal	Thursday 27 September
Special role for U.S guest	Sunderland Echo	Saturday 29 September
Culture Magazine		October 2007

7.0 PROGRAMME EVALUATION

- 7.1 All events which were part of Sunderland City Councils' programme were evaluated using an event evaluation form, which aims to gather information including attendance, audience feedback and improvements for future activity. In total there were 68 events which took place during March and October 2007 with 1,313 children and 332 adults participating in the programme. For a full breakdown of activity and attendance see appendix III.

Comments from the events included:

- "Very good retelling of old stories"

- “Excellent would really like to bring the cubs back – I really enjoyed coming to the library”
- “Storyteller was excellent, the stories were interspersed with children interacting and playing drums”.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The overall programme was well received by those who attended events. It was felt that programme such as Houghton Feast Literature Festival did not have the impact of previous years due to the amalgamation of the varying initiatives. All evaluation has been noted and will be used in the organisation and preparation of such festivals within the Directorate in the future.
- 8.2 Work is now to be progressed with partners to discuss the development and collection of an archive which will enable access to the material which has been developed across the year. Discussions with Tyne and Wear Museums are to take place in order that the Exhibition developed and displayed within the Museum can be adapted and circulated across the city for the future.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report for information.

Appendix I - March 2007 Activities

The following sessions took place at libraries in Sunderland to celebrate the abolition of the slave trade. Educational and informative sessions took place involving local schools. Nkosana Mpofu and Inno Sorsy (Africa Experience) introduced children to the history of slavery and how slaves used storytelling, art, music and poetry to maintain their cultural identity.

Nkosana Mpofu:

Library	School	Date	Number of Children
Doxford Park	Benedict Biscop Primary	9/3/2007	27
Sandhill Centre	Grindon Primary	9/3/2007	30
Bunny Hill	Bexhill Primary	14/3/2007	29
Washington Town Centre	St John Boste Primary	14/3/2007	30
City	Bishop Harland Primary	20/3/2007	25
Houghton	Burnside Primary	28/3/2007	28
Hetton	Eppleton Primary	28/3/2007	30
Total			199

Inno Sorsy (Africa Experience):

Library	School	Date	Number of Children
Washington Town Centre	Albany Primary	21/3/2007	49
Houghton	Bernard Gilpin Primary	21/3/2007	57
Total			106

Appendix II - Sunderland Remembering Slavery Oct 2007

Please see attached Leaflet: Sunderland – Remembering Slavery

Appendix III – Event Evaluation

Library	Event	Children	Adults	Comments	Event Rating
Bunny Hill	National Bookstart Event	4	2		Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	15	6		Very Good
	Adam Bushnell	24	5		Very Good
	Nkosana Mpofu	30	3		Very Good
CLAC	African Poet	20	5		
	Drummed Up	23	12		
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	14	5		Very Good
	Junk Music	14	9	Staff very helpful	Good
	National Bookstart Event	20	6		Very Good
	Nkosana Mpofu	25	2		Very Good
DP	National Bookstart Event	15	5		Very Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	7	6		Very Good
	Adam Bushnell	34	4	Storyteller was excellent, stories were interspersed with interaction and playing drums	Very Good
	Nkosana Mpofu	27	3		Very Good
EL	National Bookstart Event	30	5		Very Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	6	1		Very Good
EH	National Bookstart Event	0	0	no-one attended	Poor
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	33	11		Very Good
FH	National Bookstart Event	0	0	no-one attended	Poor
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	14	7		Very Good
Fulwell	National Bookstart Event	52	6		Very Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	20	8	Parent thought Library selling ethnic arts and crafts	Good
Fulwell Mill	Gary Cordingly	3	2		Good
Hendon	National Bookstart Event	44	4		
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	5			
Hetton	National Bookstart Event	18	6		Very Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	7	3		average

	Nkosana Mpofu	30	3		Very Good
Houghton	National Bookstart Event	5	3	lots of imaginative games and music	Very Good
	Chris Connaughton am	48	6		Very Good
	Chris Connaughton pm	26	9		Very Good
	Chris Connaughton eve	11	6	held same time as fireworks	Very Good
	Gary Cordingly am	38	6		Good
	Gary Cordingly pm	45	2		Good
	Kate Fox Poetry Slamming	25	2	event well received	Very Good
	Homicide in Houghton		25		Very Good
	Booster Cushion Theatre am	46	4	Children loved it	Very Good
	Booster Cushion Theatre pm	51	6	Children loved it	Very Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	10	5		Very Good
	Nkosana Mpofu	28	2		Very Good
	Inno Sorsy	57	5		Very Good
KR	National Bookstart Event	17	4		Very Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	2			Good
Monk	National Bookstart Event	24	6		Very Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	5	1		Good
Ryhope	National Bookstart Event	50	38	was excellent	Very Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	1		only 1 child had a great time	Very Good
Sandhill	National Bookstart Event	0	0		poor
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	18	4		Very Good
	Gary Cordingly	12			Very Good
	Nkosana Mpofu	29	3		Very Good
SR	National Bookstart Event	3	2		
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	9	4		
	Liz Million	7	2		Very Good
SI	National Bookstart Event	6	3		
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	9	4		Average
S	National Bookstart Event	16	10	Push chairs got in the way	Very Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	14			Very Good
WG	National Bookstart Event			School did not turn up	
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	8	5		Very Good
WMC	National Bookstart Event	10	6		Very Good
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	6			Very Good
	Tony Wilson	29	2		Very Good
WTC	National Bookstart	8	6		Very Good

	Event				
	Ethnic Arts and Crafts	12	10		Very Good
	Junk Music	15	5		Very Good
	Nkosana Mpofu	30	3		Very Good
	Inno Sorsy	49	4		Very Good
Total		1313	332		