

1) Greatheed busts



Myrtilla's trail

Here lyeth the body of Myrtilla, Negro slave to Mr Tho. Beauchamp, of Nevis Bapt. October ye 20th, buried January ye 6th 1705

Myrtilla is buried in the village of Oxhill. Apart from her gravestone, she remains anonymous. Her story represents the millions of hidden histories of those people who were taken from Africa and sold to Europeans as slaves between the 16th – 19th centuries.

2007 marks the 200th anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. This made it illegal to trade slaves throughout the British Empire and for British ships to be involved in the trade.

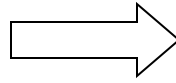
Follow Myrtilla's trail around the galleries to find out about local links with the Slave Trade.



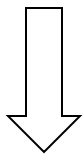
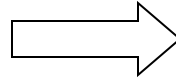
2) West African objects



3) Barbados coin



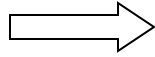
4) Cowrie shells



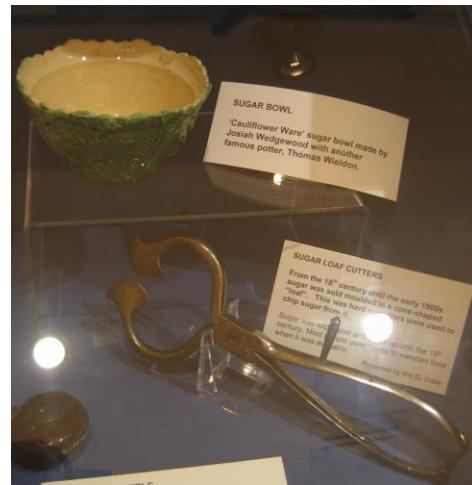
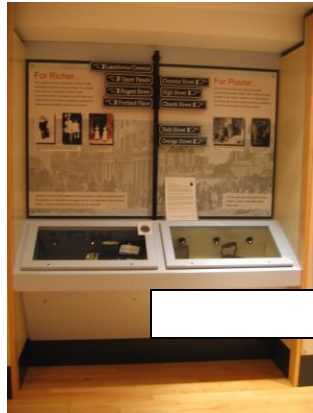
5) Gun



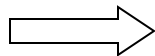
6) Teapot & coffee pot



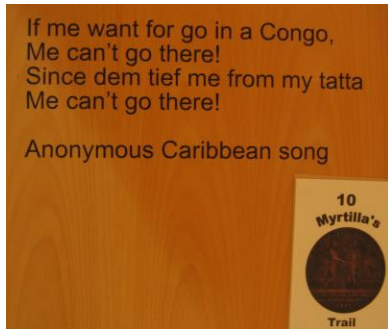
7) Sugar nippers & sugar bowl



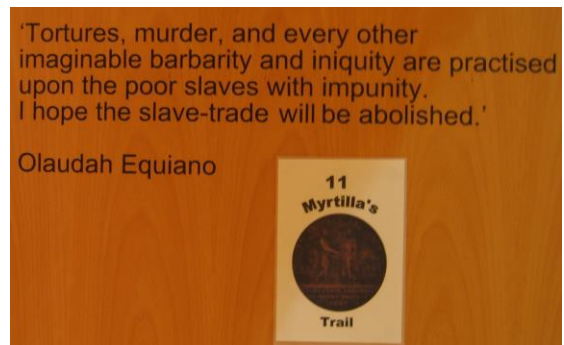
8) Anklet & 9) Whip



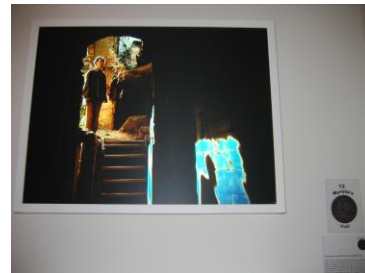
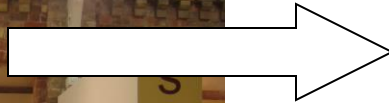
10) Protest song



11) Quote from Olaudah Equiano



12) Portrait: Guy's Cliffe II & IV by Catherine Yass



13) Mrs Priscilla Kemble



14) Spa water fountain



15) 19th century prints



Free Voices - Now

We imagined our world different.
Afterwards we became different,
weeping watered cane, wombs drained out
sorrow for sweetness,
desolation for opulence.

Sweat-wrapped skin, flesh of black gold
rocked, triangled in dungeoned ships,
What turned red legs, faces into beasts?

We imagined our world free, became
our freedoms, so plotted subversions,
practised, used, subtle fabrications
of flight, fight, of ferment;

played fools to mock the greedy,
while giving ourselves other
dignities.
Ancient tales we fashioned much-
memoried.
Our world was discord but we
could make it
soar with eloquence.

Enriched for our
histories
rhythms limboing legends.
From shadows we created
light, voices carolling our
souls, our souls.

Brenda Tai Layton
25th March 2007

