

Olaudah Equiano  
(c.1745-1797) -



# Abolition 2000

**Bristol 2007**

**HISTORY**

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**EDUCATION**

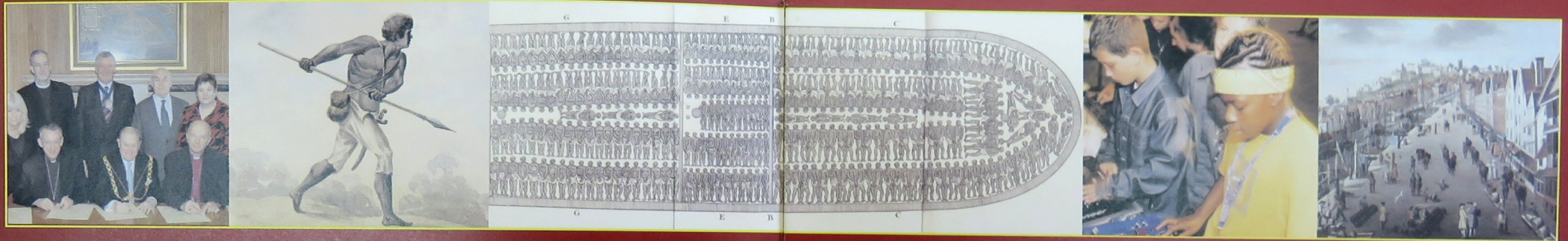
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**LEGACY**



# Bristol Commemorates the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act

*Throughout 2007 Bristol will be commemorating the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807. The Abolition 200 programme will raise awareness of the history of slavery, recognise its resonance today and act as a catalyst for positive change for the future.*



*“Until the colour of a man’s skin is of no more significance than the colour of a man’s eyes there will always be war.”*

Emperor Haile Sellasie 1892-1975

## Bristol’s History

As England’s second city throughout much of the eighteenth century, Bristol was a major trading port for the transatlantic slave trade. Between 1698 and 1807 Bristol’s merchants and banks financed ships that transported nearly 500,000 Africans from West Africa to the Caribbean Islands and the Americas. The campaign to abolish slavery found much support in Bristol amongst the non-conformist churches with Methodists like John and Charles Wesley. 2007 will also be the tercentenary of the birth of Charles Wesley.

## The Future

Abolition 200 aims to be a catalyst to provide a lasting legacy in improvements to the quality of life of Bristol’s residents of African and African Caribbean heritage including increased participation and representation in civic life. The year is also being themed as the Year of Black Achievement and will bring better provision of Black heritage resources to young people in schools and a focus on black attainment.

## Mary Seacole (1805-1881)

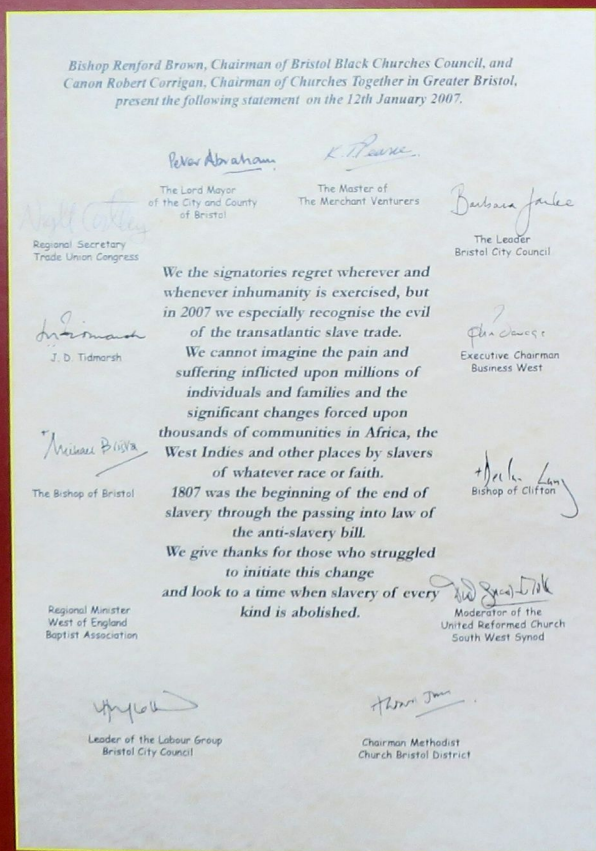
Mary Seacole was born in Jamaica to a Scottish soldier father and Jamaican mother. Mary learned nursing skills from her mother and on trips overseas. In 1854 Mary travelled to England and approached the War Office, asking to be sent as an army nurse to the Crimea. She was refused. Undaunted Mary funded her own trip to the Crimea where she established comfortable quarters for sick and convalescent officers. She also visited the battlefield to nurse the wounded, and became known as ‘Mother Seacole’.





# A Declaration of Regret

At a full council meeting in December 2006 the city council placed on record its severe regret for the actions of past Bristol citizens engaged in the slave trade and the consequential crime against humanity. In January 2007 many of the city's prominent leaders signed a statement of regret. From March this statement will be available in libraries and churches for members of the public to sign.

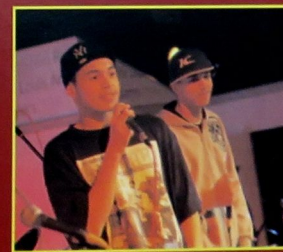


# Community Projects

A large number of community projects have been funded by Abolition 200. Here is a flavour of some of the projects happening this year.

## H.I.P.E (Health, Integration, Participation and Education)

The Walter Tull Foundation will be using sport, music and arts to engage and educate young people in a range of projects throughout the year in schools and community organisations. Workshops will focus on the importance of dance and verse in Black history and offer a chance for young people to express their heritage through dance, music and verse.



## Breathing Fire on 2007

Bristol Black Women's Playback Theatre company will work with local communities to devise and tour a form of improvisational theatre enabling audiences to share their stories and see them being recreated using movement, dance, music and song.

## Our History Our Heritage

A series of artist performances and workshops will take place with community organisations, supported by new learning resources focused on citizenship and British history.

## Bristol & the Transatlantic Slave Trade

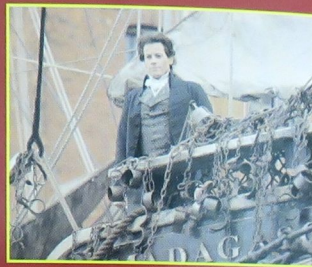
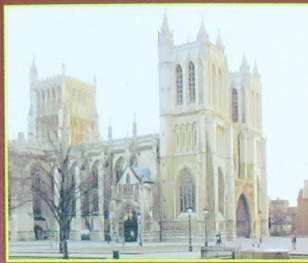
A new book by Pip Jones, published by Past and Present Press, will examine Bristol's role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. A series of workshops will encourage debate and foster understanding.

To find out more visit [www.bristol.gov.uk/abolition200](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/abolition200)



# Events and Exhibitions

Bristol along with Liverpool, London and Hull will be leading on national events commemorating the bicentenary. Here are some of the highlights of the Bristol programme.



## Fairtrade Fortnight February 26 to March 15

"It is simply immoral that people should be allowed to suffer in order to provide us with luxuries." That was the message of the slave trade abolitionists 200 years ago and is the message of promoters of fairtrade today. A series of events, concerts and promotions will take place to promote fair trade.  
[www.bristolfairtradenetwork.org.uk](http://www.bristolfairtradenetwork.org.uk)

## Black Atlas Kuumba Arts Centre March 3

A touring performance inspired by George McDonald Fraser's celebrated novel Black Ajax, Black Atlas tells the true story of two slaves. One, William Richmond from Africa, is given the benefit of an English education, learning to read and write: the other, Tom Molineaux, isn't, and became the first famous black prize-fighter in Britain.  
[www.kuumba.org.uk](http://www.kuumba.org.uk)

## Black Heroes in the Hall of Fame Colston Hall March 11

Black Heroes in the Hall of Fame tells the unwritten story of the great Black heroes and heroes with a compelling mix of dance, music and colour, and shares with its audiences, the triumphs and struggles of African people over the past 5000 years.  
[www.colstonhall.org](http://www.colstonhall.org)

## Amazing Grace PG Watershed March 23 to April 5

The story of William Wilberforce and the community of abolitionists fighting to end the slave trade in the UK. Ioan Gruffudd stars as Wilberforce.  
[www.watershed.co.uk](http://www.watershed.co.uk)

## Service of Remembrance and Reconciliation Bristol Cathedral March 25

Bristol Cathedral will host a commemorative service to mark the date that King George III signed the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act.

## "Breaking the Chains" exhibition British Empire and Commonwealth Museum April 23 2007 to April 2009

'Breaking the Chains', is a ground-breaking exhibition about Britain and the slave trade, that will act as the centrepiece of Bristol and the South West's commemoration programme. In a series of bold and dramatic galleries the exhibition will explain the realities of the slave trade, the world in which it thrived and the means by which it was brought to an end. It will also allow visitors to reflect on the ongoing legacy of the slave trade and the realities of modern-day slavery.  
[www.empiremuseum.co.uk](http://www.empiremuseum.co.uk)

Date	Abolition 200 Events & Venue
Feb 26 to March 15	Fairtrade Fortnight <a href="http://www.bristolfairtradenetwork.org.uk">www.bristolfairtradenetwork.org.uk</a>
February 27	Launch of Abolition 200, Cabot School <a href="http://www.bristol.gov.uk/abolition200">www.bristol.gov.uk/abolition200</a>
February 27	African Soul Rebels, Colston Hall <a href="http://www.colstonhall.org">www.colstonhall.org</a>
February 28	An evening with Andrea Levy, Council House <a href="http://www.smallisland.com">www.smallisland.com</a>
March 3	Black Atlas, a performance at Kuumba Arts Centre <a href="http://www.kuumba.org.uk">www.kuumba.org.uk</a>
March 5	Play Fair concert, Colston Hall <a href="http://www.colstonhall.org">www.colstonhall.org</a>
March 10	Lecture by author Adam Hochschild, British Empire & Commonwealth Museum
March 11	Black Heroes in the Hall of Fame, Colston Hall <a href="http://www.colstonhall.org">www.colstonhall.org</a>
March 14 to 19	HMS Cattistock, Bristol Harbour
March 24/25	Weekend of Commemoration at the Pierian Centre <a href="http://www.pierian.co.uk">www.pierian.co.uk</a>
March 25	Service of Remembrance & Reconciliation at Bristol Cathedral <a href="http://www.bristol.gov.uk/abolition200">www.bristol.gov.uk/abolition200</a>
April 23	'Breaking the Chains' exhibition opens at British Empire & Commonwealth Museum <a href="http://www.empiremuseum.co.uk">www.empiremuseum.co.uk</a>
April 26	Abram Wilson 'Ride! Ferris Wheel to the Modern Day Delta,' St Georges <a href="http://www.stgeorgesbristol.org.uk">www.stgeorgesbristol.org.uk</a>
May 5 to June 17	Adisa Project's Afrikan footsteps exhibition, Bristol's City Museum and Art Gallery <a href="http://www.bristol.gov.uk/museums-and-galleries">www.bristol.gov.uk/museums-and-galleries</a>



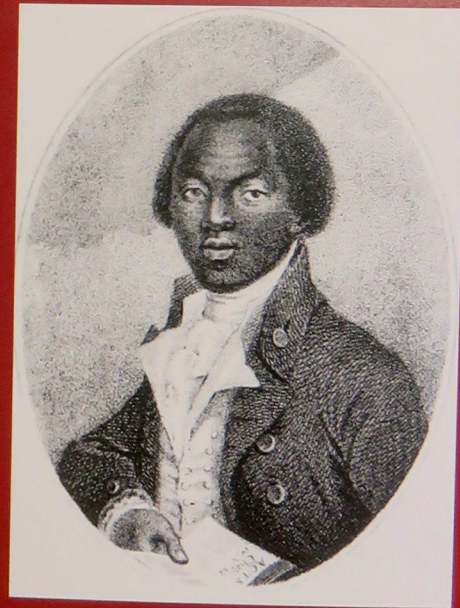


**“Emancipate yourself from mental slavery,  
none but ourselves can free our minds.”**

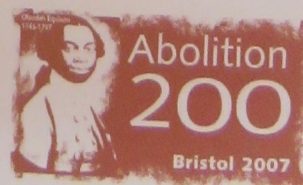
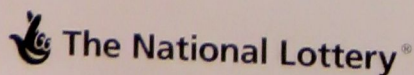
*Bob Marley, Redemption Song*

### **Olaudah Equiano (c.1745-1797)**

Olaudah Equiano was a slave to a captain in the Royal Navy, and later to a Quaker merchant but eventually earned the price of his own freedom. In London, he became involved in the movement to abolish the slave trade, which led to him writing and publishing “*The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa the African (1789)*” a strongly abolitionist autobiography. Equiano died in March 1797, before the Slave Trade Act was passed however his narrative played an important part in bringing it about.



The images of the slave ship, the African and Equiano on page 2 & 3 are courtesy of the City Museum & Art Gallery. The images of the signing of the statement of regret on page 2 & 3 are courtesy of The Bristol Evening Post. The image of slaves on a ship on page 6 © Rod Brown and the images of music workshops on page 3 & 5 © M. Simmons. The image of Mary Seacole page 3 is © Helen Rappaport/National Portrait Gallery. Image of women on page 5 © Paul Bullivant.



To find out more visit [www.bristol.gov.uk/abolition200](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/abolition200)