

THE GATEWAY GARDENS TRUST

The Gateway Gardens Trust creates and pays for special tailor-made visits to historic parks and gardens in Wales and the West Midlands for a diverse range of community groups, schoolchildren and Lifelong Learners.

For more information about **Bittersweet** or our other visit programmes contact: Jeanette Hill 01558 669158 or Anna Shakespeare 01758 770544

Additional information about the history of the slave trade can be found on the following websites: www.antislavery.org, www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/abolition, www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/slavery, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/slavery/

In 1801 the British were using 17lbs of sugar per head.

It is estimated that some 11-12 million Africans were transported across the Atlantic Ocean into slavery.

The Pennant family received £14,683 in compensation for lost assets, after slavery was abolished in the British Empire in 1833. The freed slaves received nothing.



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Helpu Pobl i Ddarganfod Gerddi



THE
GATEWAY GARDENS TRUST

Helping People Discover Gardens

www.gatewaygardenstrust.org

BITTERSWEET



Canolfan Felin Fach

visits

Penrhyn Castle

on

Thursday 25th October 2007

2007 commemorates the 200th anniversary of the **1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade Act** in Britain. This meant that British ships would no longer be allowed to transport slaves, but slavery continued in the New World: in the British Empire until 1834, in the French Empire until 1848, and in Brazil until the 1880s. Our new **Bittersweet** Project looks at the links between the slave trade and historic gardens, their makers, what they planted, Welsh abolitionists and the wider links with the local community in Wales.

Throughout Britain, grand houses and gardens were built from wealth linked to slavery, whether from building ships used in the trade or buying slaves using Welsh produced copper pans as currency. Ordinary people would have drunk rum, tea, coffee and chocolate sweetened by slave sugar, or smoked plantation tobacco. Some families and properties, had even more direct links..

Penrhyn Castle was built by the wealthy **Pennant** family, who are famous for owning slate quarries in North Wales, but most of the family's vast fortune came from the **Caribbean**.



Richard Pennant (1737-1808) was a slave owner and an **anti-abolitionist**. He made a vast amount of money from his slave plantations producing **sugar** and **rum** in Jamaica. This money was crucial to his development of the slate industry in North West Wales.

In 1767 he became one of two MPs for Liverpool, which was by this time the major slave trade port. Pennant was related through family or business connections to nearly every major absentee plantation owner in Britain, and was, therefore, part of a very powerful and influential pro-slavery network.. He was chairman of the West India Committee, which was an organisation of merchants and plantation owners who were opposed to abolition.

Richard Pennant owned hundreds of slave labourers. He never actually visited his plantations in Jamaica, but he requested that his managers treat his slaves well. Was this kindness or was he just protecting his investments? In Jamaica there is still a community called Pennants, named after the Pennant family.

The castle is now cared for by the **National Trust** with acres of parkland and wooded walks containing beautiful plants. There are also extensive kitchen gardens, and a Victorian walled garden. At present, within the castle walls you will find an exhibition called **'Sugar and Slavery'** showing its connections with the horrors of the slave trade: sugar barrels, slave chains, double neck braces and iron wrist bracelets.

