

North Shore libraries present Hidden Histories: The local impact of slavery on contemporary society

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The Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 officially ended slavery in Canada in 1834, but its ramifications are still felt throughout private institutions and corporations. June Francis, an associate professor and special adviser to the president at Simon Fraser University, will explore how contemporary society continues to benefit from slavery in this special, virtual lecture Wednesday, June 27 at 7 p.m.

Francis is a co-founder of the [Co-Laboratorio at SFU](#) and Chair of the [Hogan's Alley Society](#), an organization dedicated to advance the economic and cultural wellbeing of people of African descent through the delivery of housing, built spaces and programming.

The lecture comes in the wake of new research revealing the North Shore's own sordid history with slavery. [A February 2022 North Shore News article](#) explained how fortunes amassed by through the Atlantic slave trade laid the groundwork for much of the infrastructure namesakes in the area. Slave traders and brothers Arthur Heywood and Benjamin Heywood owned ships that transported slaves between Africa and North America until 1790. A handful of generations later, their collective wealth, inherited by Henry Heywood Lonsdale, helped establish Lonsdale Estates — the footprint of the City of North Vancouver.

Francis is expected to discuss the City of Vancouver's reparations for Hogan's Alley, a historic Black neighbourhood destroyed in 1957 for construction of the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts, what libraries can do as curators of knowledge systems, and what individuals can do to create inclusive, equitable societies.

“I want to look at some of the structural problems seeded from wealth inequality and how we can address that through reparations and redress. We need to now invest deeply in the communities that were hurt, acknowledge and amend the historical record.” she said.

This presentation is jointly presented by North Vancouver City Library, North Vancouver District Public Library and West Vancouver Memorial Library.

[Watch the video](#)