

From: [L.D](#)
To: [Executive Committee](#)
Subject: My comments for 2022.EX34.6 on July 12, 2022 Executive Committee
Date: July 11, 2022 9:25:23 PM
Attachments: [Letter - David Duncan Dundas to Mayor and Council - July 11 2022.pdf](#)

To the City Clerk:

I am submitting this letter at the request of the family of David Duncan Dundas, the hereditary chief of the Dundas Clan.

1. Please include this in communication for tomorrow's meeting on item 2022.EX34.6, A New Commemorative Framework for the City of Toronto's Public Spaces.
2. As well, please include a hyperlink to this document in the agenda.

I understand that these comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that the name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and the name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Thank-you.

Linda Dundas
On behalf of David Duncan Dundas



Kitchener, Ontario, Canada

July 11, 2022

Your Worship, esteemed Councillors,

As the hereditary chief of the Dundas Clan and its global diaspora, I write to advise that I support the work of the Henry Dundas Committee of Ontario and pray that you will give their submissions your full attention. It is a sad day when a family name is sullied on the basis of undeserved accusations, especially such horrific allegations as those levelled against Henry Dundas, and so it concerns me greatly that your advisers have given you incorrect information.

Like other Canadians, we too were sickened by the murder of George Floyd. Black people deserve justice. This is undeniable. I hope we can also agree that there can be no justice without truth. I fear that Toronto is rushing past the truth in its haste to rename the street that bears the Dundas name. I have enclosed a factsheet concerning our famed forebear's professional and personal life to give you a better sense of the man.

The Dundas Clan is one of Scotland's most ancient clans. Most of our Ontario members are descendants of hard-working Scottish families whose lives were shattered by famine and the cruel Clearances that deprived them of land and livelihood. Hundreds made their way to Canada in the 18th century where they rebuilt their lives. Their descendants, who number in the thousands, now contribute to communities across this good province as dentists, firefighters, medical professionals, day care workers, teachers, legal professionals, members of school boards, municipal councillors, coaches of every sports team imaginable, and much more. They have distinguished themselves as stewards of their communities. They do not deserve the carelessness that your advisors have shown to their good name.

I therefore ask that you suspend your decision to rename Dundas Street while you take steps to ensure that you are correctly informed about our forebear.

Respectfully,

David Duncan Dundas of Dundas
31st Hereditary Chief, Clan Dundas
Kitchener, Ontario

Encl.

Fact sheet: Henry Dundas, The Man

From 1776-78, Henry Dundas represented a young Black man who was taken to Scotland as a slave, and who, with Dundas's skillful advocacy, won his freedom in Scottish courts. It was landmark case that freed every slave in Scotland. Henry's respect for all people, regardless of race or other innate differences, can be seen in his personal life as well:

1. Henry's brother Thomas went to India where he fathered a child out of wedlock in 1769 with an Indian woman. Thomas died the day before his daughter's birth, and the mother died a short time later. Henry and his wife Elizabeth brought their bi-racial niece, Maria, to Scotland, where they raised and educated her alongside their other four children.
2. Regrettably, Elizabeth deserted Henry and the five children nine years later to marry an officer of the British Army. Scottish laws of that day mandated that husbands assume control of the wealth that wives brought into the marriage. Elizabeth left with nothing. She later divorced her second husband, and faced a life of poverty. Despite the public humiliation, and without legal obligation, Henry paid her spousal support after her second divorce, every month, until he died.
3. Henry's closest friend and political ally for over two decades was a man believed to have been gay, Prime Minister William Pitt (the younger). Pitt had his own bedroom in Henry's home on the outskirts of London. He was Henry's most frequent social companion during the 15 years between his divorce and his second marriage.
4. Henry befriended the famed abolitionist William Wilberforce early in their political careers. They socialized together for two decades in private gatherings that often included other abolitionists, including in 1792 at the peak of the most heated debates over abolition. Wilberforce was a frequent guest in Dundas's home, where he enjoyed himself so much it was not unusual for him to stay for several days at a time.

Henry Dundas and Abolition:

1. Henry Dundas proposed abolition of the slave trade and slavery together in 1792. Abolitionists rejected his plan, but by the 1820's, they had made no progress towards abolition of slavery and regretted their rejection of Dundas's advice.
2. In 1792, a motion for immediate abolition of the slave trade was facing certain defeat until Dundas intervened and proposed an amendment to achieve abolition "gradually." His amendment won over the moderates and made it possible for Parliament to endorse abolition for the first time in its history.
3. A few years later, Dundas learned that Sir George Yonge was smuggling slaves into the Cape Colony of Africa where he was governor. Dundas went to King George III and had Yonge fired.

Henry Dundas and Social Justice in Canada:

1. Henry Dundas commissioned an ardent abolitionist to be the first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada. John Graves Simcoe then went on to oversee passage of the first anti-slavery legislation anywhere in the British Empire.
2. Dundas ordered lieutenant governors in eastern Canada to respect the rights of Black Loyalists. These officials had denied Black Loyalists the land and equal rights that Britain had promised in recognition of their service during the American Revolution. Dundas also offered the Black Loyalists free passage to Sierra Leone if they preferred to leave Canada, and ordered the lieutenant governors to provision the ships out of their own budgets.
3. Dundas gave orders that ensured that the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Quebec be conducted in French and English. At the time, Anglophone politicians were demanding English-only proceedings. His order ensured the preservation of the French language at a critical time in Quebec's history.
4. When Upper Canada was fortifying its defences against American border raiders in the early 1790s, Dundas ordered Governor Dorchester to protect the lands of the "Indian Nations," which were being targeted by the American marauders. He referred to the Indigenous ancestral lands as their "countries," an implicit recognition of sovereign interest.

Henry Dundas and Social Justice in Scotland and Britain:

1. Although a Presbyterian in his personal life, Dundas backed legislation to enfranchise Irish and Scottish Catholics in 1778. The result was rioting in Edinburgh, protest bonfires being lit throughout the countryside, and Dundas being hanged in effigy. Only after the rioting brought Scotland to the verge of anarchy, and led to an assault on his mother's house, did he relent and agree to withdraw the bill.
2. In 1792-73, Dundas was able to shepherd passage of legislation for the enfranchisement of Scottish Catholics. He was unable to do the same for Irish Catholics, to his great regret. He and Prime Minister Pitt resigned from cabinet over this impasse in 1801.
3. In the 1780s he ensured the return of land to Jacobite families that had been wrongfully seized from them in 1745 as punishment for participating in a rebellion.
4. He supported legislation to liberate Scottish coal-miners and salt-panners from the oppressive conditions of serfdom.
5. He blocked William Wilberforce's plan to send Christian missionaries to convert and "civilize" the people of India, even though it put a further strain on their friendship.