

## **Ross made right choice to keep Drake Boulevard**

Kudos and my sincere appreciation to the Ross Town Council for voting to keep the name of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. As a dedicated researcher of Drake's life and a 68-year native of Marin, I would like to remind the other public officials that will be making decisions on this important local issue about Drake as a man:

According to my research, after his brief, early ties with the slave trade, Drake dedicated his life to ending the oppression brought on by the continuing horrors of The Inquisition and evolved personally to become a great supporter for the respect and fairness of Indigenous people worldwide. According to research by historian John Sugden, this included his freeing of many Black slaves during England's long war with Spain.

As stated on my website ([sfdrakefoundation.org](http://sfdrakefoundation.org)): During his lifetime, Sir Francis Drake became a knight, a master navigator, a world circumnavigator, a leader against Spanish tyranny, a vice admiral, a major defender of England, a great explorer, a mayor of Plymouth, a member of Parliament and one of the most inspiring and forward thinking men of his era.

As a young man, Drake invested in his cousin's merchant fleet before (his cousin) John Hawkins began England's only involvement in Spain's slaving enterprise to the New World and was involved in it for only two of his over 40 years as a sailor.

According to Sugden's research, Drake and his crew (including his close friend Diego and two other freed Black slaves) established a close friendship with the Coast Miwok people during their five-week stay in Marin in 1579 and Drake was made an honorary chief by the native people.

Drake's name will always be remembered and honored here in Marin for the mature, experienced and dedicated man that he became.

— *Duane Van Dieman, Mill Valley*