



History 2003/4



The Chivers History Cup



The Chairman of the Governors, David Chivers and Mrs Angela Chivers, have presented the school with a fine new trophy, the Chivers History Cup. Three of their sons have won the History Prize in the past and have all gone on to read history at university.

(from left to right Hugh, Edward and Oliver Chivers and Mr Whitehead)

The History Department has had another busy and successful year. Year 8 led the way with some excellent scholarship results and the CE results were a credit to the efforts of all the children. I am confident that many (if not all!) of them will be taking their history on to GCSE level. The department has taken visits to Westminster Abbey, the National Portrait Gallery and many local sites, we have joined in a History and Drama day at St Edward's, Witley and the History Club has had a full programme of voluntary visits through the year.

THE TOWNSEND WARNER HISTORY PRIZE 2004

As usual, we entered a team consisting of 7R and 8S. The papers consist of a first round of very tricky history general knowledge questions and the best two hundred candidates go through to the second round.

The second round consists of essay questions which require extensive historical knowledge and an ability to produce effective arguments. This is a very useful exercise for all scholarship candidates as it gives them a chance to tackle the kind of questions which they will face.

We managed to get fourteen candidates through into the second round. Yet again, we were runners-up, this time to Shrewsbury House. However, I cannot complain as it was a really excellent effort and our highest place was gained by Sam Gilbert who came a truly magnificent first place! This has not been achieved since Harry Smith won five years ago and I have to say that I wondered then whether we would ever win again, never mind in such a short time. Hamish Auld came a superb eleventh (another very capable young historian) and there is hope for next year as Christopher Goldsack from 7R came 26th. There were over 700 candidates so it is really encouraging to see our historians rising to the top against formidable competition.

Many congratulations to all our Round II candidates: Hamish Auld (11th), Charles Bridge (142nd), Hugh Cooper (158th), Christopher Doherty (39th), Sam Gilbert (1st), Christopher Goldsack (26th), Ben Huntingdon-Rainey (142nd), Katherine Rogers (130th), Andrew Rose (130th), Alex Todd (101st), Claudia Weston (94th), Max Weston (30th), Nicholas Weston-Smith (47th) and Ben Wright (130th). A.G.W.





The History Society

I have really enjoyed History Club this year but again I have had to contend with a changing group of young historians. Matches, visits to other schools and a number of other events have meant that my fellow young historians have altered from week to week, but we have always seen plenty and had a lot of fun.

The first visit of the year was to the Medieval Fair at Michelham Priory near Eastbourne. There was a lot to see, including the working water mill, the fortified gatehouse and numerous displays of armour making, archery, men in armour and the inevitable consumption of hot dogs and ice creams!

One early visit which is always a great success was to see H.M.S. Belfast. It is fascinating. We started at the top and worked down through the various decks until we ended up in the vast engine rooms. HMS Belfast was the last of the battle ships of the Second World War to be in use and is perfectly preserved. Excellent displays and reconstructions add to the interest and we could have spent much longer there.

Another of our London visits was to the Tower. There is so much to do here. The Crown Jewels are always a source of great fascination, as are the displays of armour, including the rather large sets produced for Henry VIII! We also saw the Bloody Tower, Traitor's Gate and the site of many executions Tower Green, where we had our photograph taken.



Fred with sword in hand at Michelham Priory's Medieval Festival



An ideal Lent Term visit is to Pevensey Castle. Here we saw the keep, remains of the Roman walls and the site of the Norman landings. The fascinating aspect of Pevensey is its constant use through the ages, so one ends up seeing the second World War gun placements, guarding the marshes.

History Club on the block at the Tower of London

Another popular visit was to the historic town of Rye. We started with a visit to the illuminated Rye Town Model. This gives a gentle twenty minute introduction to the history of Rye with the aid of a beautifully constructed scale model. The tales of smuggling and murders as well as the great literary tradition of writers like E.F. Benson and Henry James give the town a real feel of the past. We then set off through the streets and visited the church, climbing to the top of the tower. It is amazing how many local children have never visited these local sites.



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Another excellent London visit was to the Cabinet War Rooms. These have recently been extended and with the aid of 'walkman' guides, it is possible to see how Winston Churchill and his war cabinet conducted the progress of the Second World War. Further extensions are planned and I would recommend a visit there for all who are interested in that period of our history.

One visit of interest is to the Palmerstonian Gun Fort at Newhaven. Here we were able to tour the underground tunnels as well as seeing many displays about the Second World War, including a 'Blitz' experience and details of the D Day landings. This was very appropriate, as the Sixtieth Anniversary Commemorations were shortly to take place.

Our Summer Term day out was to Greenwich. We were dropped off at Greenwich where we walked up the hill to the observatory to see the Greenwich meridian line and the fantastic views over London. We then enjoyed a visit to the National Maritime Museum. The museum has been restructured and is very much more 'hands on', so much so that I had great difficulty getting the children out to get the boat back. The NMM is well-worth a visit. We were then able to have some excellent bagettes and cake in Greenwich before visiting the Cutty Sark and then sailing back down the Thames to Westminster.

Our last visit was to Mount Caburn. There is a brief climb up one of the chalk downs near Lewes, which in Iron Age times was one of the series of hill forts which covered the South Downs. It is still possible to see the ramparts and ditches and remains of hut circles. It certainly helps gain a picture of the difficulties of life at a time before the Roman Conquest when few people lived beyond the age of thirty. It was a breezy day but with ice creams and drinks at the bottom, we had a refreshing break after the dress-rehearsal for the play in the morning.

I have enjoyed taking the group round all the sites. My young historians this year have included: Tom Barton, Calum Bowie, Hugh Cooper, George Davis, Peter Overall, Stuart Flint, Christopher Goldsack, Felix Keeling, Fred Keeling, Anthony Moore, Edward Neill, Alexander Todd, Dilip Varma, Max Weston, and Nicholas Weston-Smith. Thanks also to Mrs Howorth and Mrs Cooper for accompanying me on our visits.

I look forward to welcoming a new group of historians next term for what should be another set of visits to some of the great historical attractions of this area.

AGW

I am delighted to be handing over the department to Mr Hudspeth after many years and am confident in the knowledge that we shall be continuing to inspire and challenge our young historians more than ever. AGW