

# THE ARCHIVE



## Foreword:

Welcome to the first edition of *The Archive*, an exciting and informative addition to the History department, completely run by students! Over the past few months we have brought together a group of dedicated and creative writers in *The Archive* who, as you will see, have covered a wide range of historical issues, features and personal stories. We go from the story behind Marie Antoinette and her famous quote 'Let them eat cake', to the life of Giuseppe Garibaldi, an Italian Revolutionary Hero. We are also lucky to have some more personal articles where we are given an insight into life behind the Berlin Wall, as well as learning the fate of a tragic explorer on the *Terra Nova* expedition to the South Pole. We have covered a broad range of contemporary culture adding a historical aspect; our team have put together reviews on films such as *War Horse* and *The Pianist*, as well as on the *Hay Festival of Literature and Arts*.

History at King's has always gone beyond the syllabus and exams. We hope that in taking part in this student led magazine the contributors have been able to explore their personal connections with the past and the passion which many have for History has been allowed to come alive. What is exciting is that this first edition has not even scratched the surface of the diverse and all-encompassing nature of History; it is all still at our disposal for the editions to follow. We therefore invite any interested students to take part. Any topic, any period, anyone!

Thank you to all the hard work our team has put in during the past few months and also to the guidance of Mr P Neal, who without we would not have been able to get going. We hope you enjoy it and that you are able to learn from the wide range of History we have included; after all 'History is who we are and why we are the way we are' (McCullough, David).

***Josh Smith and Sophie Thomson***



# *Let them eat cake 'myth'- Marie Antoinette*

## Background

Marie Antoinette came to the public's attention after her marriage at the age of fourteen on April 19th 1770 to Louis XVI of France who himself was fifteen. She was born and bred in Vienna, Austria at the Hofburg Palace, but married out of diplomacy.

They lived in Versailles in France where she had a very luxurious lifestyle, with all the clothing and food she desired being available to her. She had four children with Louis XVI; first Marie Thérèse Charlotte who was born on December 19th 1778 at Versailles, second was Louis Joseph Xavier Franco who was born on October 22nd 1781 but died at the age of seven, thirdly Louis Charles, also known as Louis XVII who was born on March 27th 1785 (who became the Dauphin of France) but died at the age of ten alone in prison, and lastly Sophie Béatrix who was born in 1786 but died before the age of one.

Unfortunately their reign began in 1774 just as France was entering into turmoil with the revolution; their moves were under scrutiny of the people and aristocracy of France. In the revolution itself Louis XVI was executed by guillotine on January 21st 1793 and Marie was executed in the same way on 16th October, 1793; she was just a couple weeks short of being thirty-eight years old.



## The Myth itself

During the French Revolution, the people of France began to blame her for her previous expensive lifestyle and accused her of causing the current financial crisis in France. She was nicknamed "Madame Deficit," and became the subject of pro-revolutionary propaganda.

The idea that she exclaimed "let them eat cake" or "Qu'ils mangent de la brioche" was born to humiliate the monarchy further. There are no records of her ever uttering these words, but the myth became widely known and the people's hatred of her grew ferociously in France.

The phrase was prominent in history as it was the supposed response to the starvation in France from bread shortages. Marie herself did little to refute the quotation; she carried on with her lavish social lifestyle with her friends and children at Petit Trianon (which had been a wedding gift from Louis XVI).

Her later attempt to save her and Louis XVI's name when a mob descended on Versailles in 1789 demanding blood, did little to stop the raging mob. She faced the crowd alone, going out on a balcony with a bow and curtsy, while many continued to shout her supposed quotation: 'Let them eat cake'.



Olivia Tompsett -L6

# THE ROSENBERG CASE

## *INNOCENT OR GUILTY?*

**As the terror of communism was spreading worldwide and the American government was plagued with the idea of espionage, the Rosenbergs strove to prove their innocence in a battle for their lives. Is it any wonder they lost?**

Julius and Ethel Rosenbergs' case started in July 1950. They were accused of conspiring against the US government; America believed that the Rosenbergs were to blame for the passing of atomic bomb secrets to the Russians. They were also blamed for the rapid expansion of communism, and consequently sentenced to death, becoming the first Americans to die in the electric chair.

The Soviet Union had previously detonated their first atomic bomb many years earlier than expected. This created an outbreak of paranoia, and the illusion for many Americans that spies lived among them. A huge number of the US citizens blamed the couple for the war in Korea and other communist movements throughout America and the rest of the world. Unfortunately for the Rosenbergs their case arose at a fragile period in American history, when various communist groups were threatening their country and the world. The couple were a catalyst for people to focus their hatred and blame towards communism; making the case so controversial and ambiguous.

The case divided the USA. Those with strong opinions against the Rosenbergs conveyed their ideas persistently and convincingly to the media and general public. Judge Irving Kaufman, when sentencing the couple to death in 1951, said that their crime was "worse than murder" and that "millions more innocent people may pay the price for their treason". Those rooting for the Rosenbergs demonstrated in their hundreds, outside Sing-Sing prison. This created massive media attention that focused America's eye on communism and the power of the Soviet Union in Russia, consequently escalating the paranoid and up-tight mind set of the Americans.

The American President's evidence against the couple, similarly to other communist conspiracy trials, was weak and unclear. But Eisenhower did ask that Ethel's life be spared despite the divided opinion. Sadly Ethel's fate was secured by the Supreme Court oblivious to the President's request. President Eisenhower however had the power to impede the execution, but he wanted the American people to see him as being strong and intolerant toward communism. Manny Block was the Rosenbergs' lawyer and fought for them throughout their three years on Death Row. Manny Block attempted to stop the trial on many occasions. At one point he took a letter from Ethel addressed to the president to the White House but wasn't allowed in. The letter was delivered to Eisenhower, but the appeal was sadly declined and the execution went ahead.

Their execution took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 1953, exactly three years after their conviction. Julius was taken to the chair first and even when strapped to the chair, he did not offer any information or admit guilt at any point. When Ethel heard her husband had been executed she did not confess to any wrong doing and calmly sat in the chair soon after him. Their funeral was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> June 1953 and hundreds of mourners visited their grave afterwards. A year later Manny Block died of a heart attack, but before hand found another family for the Rosenbergs' two sons. Following their parents' execution, the boys persisted to plead their parents' innocence, until recently when Julius was proven guilty. But no information has been put forward to suggest Ethel was in any way accountable. To this day, supporters are still persistently trying to re-open the historical case. The case which changed American history.



#### **Ellie and Kate Robson - 4ths**







Ask about the period 1450-1700 to the general public, and you'll probably get answers like "Civil War" and "Henry VIII – the guy who had loads of wives". Ask our History Department, and you'll probably get slightly more educated answers! But the Renaissance probably still won't be the first thing that comes to mind for most people, even historians.

The Renaissance started in Italy (Italy was the centre of Western Europe and had good land and sea links) and spread over most of West Europe (reaching England c.1500). It was a radical change in the minds of people; a sudden new idea that took hold of everyone. The idea was that man was limitless in his talent for the Arts and Sciences – people could be and do what they wanted. This was the first change towards a modern viewpoint like ours, as before, people lived their lives, did their work and most people



did not even go to school. This means most people would not have had any knowledge of anything but their village or small town and their family and friends. But all that changed in 1450, when in Germany Johannes Gutenberg and a few others invented the printing press (the idea of printing had actually started in China but it had not spread to Europe). This meant a lot more books could be made much more easily, so their cost dropped and there were more to go around. Also, now making a book meant much less work. Scholars, writers and artists could now show their work to the world, as before only the Church had the resources to make books, meaning all books had a strict religious viewpoint. As these new,

fascinating creations spread through Italy, they became a craze throughout Europe – people wanted to write things, read, learn all the knowledge in all these books, and now it was actually plausible to do so. The Renaissance started to change the ideas people had about self-limitations. More people wanted books, this new insight into the world. As a result, schools had to open.

The thirst for knowledge had mushroomed: people started to study art and languages – it was a fashionable thing to do – and rulers started to look back to what the Ancient Greeks and Romans had done and what they had discovered. They found that these ancient civilisations had found out a lot of things they had never known – the knowledge had died out with the civilisation. The Renaissance (French for 'rebirth') is seen as the start of the Modern Age, where people started to learn more about science and so started to doubt the Church's teachings and find things out for themselves – unlike in the Middle Ages, where the Church was the ultimate source of hope, guidance and information.

Before, the only plays people ever saw were Bible re-enactments, but as Queen Elizabeth I enjoyed music, literature and drama, the door was opened for new playwrights, artists and writers. Being able to write and write well was seen as very important. John Milton and Shakespeare are regarded as two of the best British writers and were from this period.

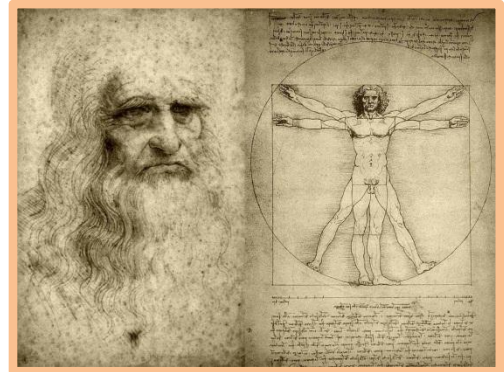
Middle Ages' portraits were 2D and flat as the point of the painting was often religious, but with the Renaissance, people began to paint the subject of the painting – to tell a story; make it realistic. Michelangelo (1475 – 1564) and Raphael (1483 – 1520) were such artists. People even tried out Greek and Roman classical techniques for architecture for important places.

Geography was also something that progressed hugely. Former misconceptions such as the myth that if you sailed around the world you would fall off the bottom of it change due to Ptolemy's ideas about a spherical world: that you could sail around the globe and that could be chartered. A nine volume



collection was discovered by Ptolemy, about his theories of the geography of the world (all very accurate) – and the ninth volume was a series of maps and lines drawn on them to help work out distance and area – the first atlas! And with perfect latitude and longitude lines! Various explorers set out to banish the old illogical fears of the world and to find new land. What was most interesting was ‘Mappa Mundi’ – Map of the World (one of the first real maps of the world that had been produced in Hertfordshire), which had been produced before the Renaissance, and a copy of a typical Renaissance map...you wouldn’t believe how much cartographers had progressed in fifty to a hundred years! The Renaissance map was an almost perfect copy of a modern atlas!

In the field of astrology – a subject with simple ideas that were debated fiercely – people plotted the positions of the stars every night by hand. Nicolaus Copernicus (1473 – 1543) proved that the planets moved around the sun, after the subject had been debated by the likes of Ptolemy, Pythagoras and Aristarchus for over 500 years! Galileo (1564 – 1643) was one of the first people to build his own telescope and support this theory (however, the Church pressured him because he had destroyed the idea of a geocentric Universe with God’s world at the centre and he renounced his ideas – religion was on the way out but it wasn’t gone yet). What was more; Robert Hooke invented the first compound microscope in 1665, leading to the discovery of cells.



Renaissance Men – as they were called – were men who fashionably practised the Arts and were learned in the Sciences. Henry VIII and Elizabeth I were both considered to be Renaissance people. But one man outstrips them both: Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1519). The man was a genius! This man was a fantastic writer, painted many wonderful pictures, composed music and even designed planes and tanks that were nearly five-hundred years after his technology, a brilliant philosopher AND a dedicated scientist. The more he found out, the more he wanted to know. He even wrote a list every day to keep him focused!

So as you can see, the Renaissance was truly the start and foundation of our world today. The Renaissance is not often thought of, but as the Shells have found out, our world would be very different without it today.

*Damayanti Chatterjee - Shells*



## Renate, my Grandmother in Berlin

**My grandmother Renate** was born in Berlin in 1928 and was seventeen years old when the Russian army invaded and took over control of Berlin. She lived in a large house in a well-off area, and as a young attractive woman was very vulnerable. Physical attacks from the Cossacks were among the risks she faced. When she was seventeen, four Cossack soldiers took over her house, and stole all of the food and drink. They occupied her house for five days, using the kitchen as their base. My grandmother, for safety reasons, was hidden in a concealed room which was a tiny room, barely big enough for a chair and a very small table, within the pantry/larder area. She survived for four days with very little water or food, fearing for her life from the Cossacks. She only felt safe to leave when they had left the house.

I once went to the Anne Frank Museum in Amsterdam and learnt her story. I learnt how she too stayed in a confined space hiding from enemy soldiers and ultimately paid the price: her life. When I went to this museum I was strongly reminded of my grandmother's story and the similarities between them both. When my grandmother was a young adult there was an air raid attack and the building she was occupying was hit. She was laying on a collapsed roof beam which was on fire and her friend Rolf Szymansky, rescued her from a sure death as she was unconscious under this burning beam. Rolf and his family subsequently became and remain friends with my own family, and my Dad is named after the man to which my grandmother owes her life.



When the Berlin wall went up, the wall separated several of my grandmother's friends from her, she was on the West side, but the other end of her street was East. There were some friends of hers who helped to hide East Berliners from deportation from East to West. This was a very dangerous activity to be involved in. The wall divided a city in two and when one visits Berlin now, one can see the difference between the West and East to this day.

Sadly my grandmother passed away when my Dad was nineteen so she was not able to tell me any of this firsthand. These are all things my Dad told me about her, I think they're really interesting and it is fascinating how history echoes itself through different stories.

Kate Rothwell - 4ths





# *'Kristallnacht'-the Night of Broken Glass*

On the evening of the 9<sup>th</sup> November 1938 Hitler was at a dinner commemorating the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch, when word reached him of the murder of Ernst von Rath, a German ambassador in Paris. The killer was a Jew. What followed would send shock waves around the globe and gave the world the first glimpse of the horrors that Jews would face under Nazi rule.

Goebbels took the lead, and in his address to his fellow party leaders after receiving the news said; *'the Fuhrer has decided that... demonstrations should not be prepared or organised by the party, but insofar as they erupt spontaneously, they are not to be hampered'*. In this one sentence he condemned the entire Jewish race to a life of ceaseless persecution under Nazi rule and had in effect ordered a pogrom to occur.

10:30pm, only two hours after the news of von Rath's death had reached Germany, the Gauleiters entered the first Jewish homes and Kristallnacht began (so named due to the amount of broken glass). The SA and SS joined in soon after, dressed in civilian clothes wielding sledgehammers and axes, they set about destroying Jewish property, burning synagogues and arresting and beating thirty thousand Jewish men. This destruction continued until the 11<sup>th</sup> November, although those Jews who had been sent to the concentration camps as a result of the Kristallnacht continued to be targeted for much longer.



The horrors that the Jews faced in the concentration camps were unimaginable. One incident that featured in a London newspaper told of sixty-two Jews who were beaten by police until they fell, where they were further beaten. Their cries were so horrific that the police, unable to cope, turned their backs. Twelve of the sixty-two died with their heads smashed in, the others were left unconscious and severely disfigured. Of the thirty-thousand that had been imprisoned over twenty-thousand never returned home.



Ninety-two people died in the two day riot, two-hundred synagogues were burnt down and over ten-thousand Jewish shops and businesses were destroyed or damaged. On top of

this the Jews were forced to pay a collective fine of one billion marks for the murder of von Rath and over six million Reichsmark worth of insurance payments, due to the Jews, which were instead paid to the government. The fine was levied by the acquisition of twenty per cent of all Jewish property by the state.

The Kristallnacht pogrom sparked international outrage, with some governments severing diplomatic relations with Germany in protest. The brutality of the riots laid bare the repressive, anti-Semitic nature of Nazi Germany to the rest of the world, while also marking a turning point in the Nazis' policy towards the Jews as it paved the way for the introduction of harsher anti-Semitic legislation. The Kristallnacht was the beginning of a seven year living hell for German Jews, only ended by the total destruction of the German state by the Allies in 1945.

By Jonny Verity-L6





## ART HISTORY IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Guernica, arguably one of Picasso's most famous paintings, was created in 1937 for the World Fair in Paris. It was to be displayed in the Spanish Republican Pavilion and was commissioned directly by the Spanish Republican Government. The monochromatic painting, which is oil on canvas spanning an imposing 3.5m by 7.8m, depicts the Basque town of Guernica being bombed by Nazi German planes 1936, which were supporting the Nationalist forces of General Franco during the Spanish Civil War 1936-39. Germany, at this time led by Hitler, had lent material support to the Nationalists and was using the attack as an opportunity to test out new weapons and tactics. Guernica was a quiet rural town which, at one point during the Civil War, was a base for Basque rebels, but all who remained there at the time of the bombing were mostly women and children, as the men were out fighting for the Republic. The painting shows burning



buildings, chaos and destruction.

There are six main features, or characters, in the painting, each possessing their own symbolism and meanings. The first, in the top centre of the

canvas, is an eye which looks like a light bulb. Some say this represents Franco watching this tragedy take place and doing nothing, whilst others say it is the rest of the world or even God looking on and noting Franco and the Germans' cruelty. Its jagged, spiked eyelashes show that it represents harshness and pain, whilst the fact that it is not the main light source in the painting speaks volumes about the courage and resourcefulness of the villagers, who despite the chaos, remain dignified by holding a bright shining candle, perhaps symbolizing the hope the Spanish Republic had in the spirits of their people. The figure holding the candle is one of three women. She is leaning out of the window in a burning building, distorted and stylized, her mouth open in a scream. The other two women also surround burning buildings, one in the window screaming with her arms in the air, and another in front of the buildings, running as if trying to escape, staring up blankly at the light bulb; she too is screaming. These three women are thought to represent important female figures in Picasso's life; his wife and mistresses. It is also thought that the three women could represent the three Fates. The central figure in the painting is a large stylized horse, rearing its head in disgust and seemingly braying in pain or fear. It is believed that the horse represented the people of

Guernica. In an early version, hidden under layers of paint, Picasso had painted the horse's head bent down to the ground in passive defeat, but in this final version the horse remains defiant, even in its dying moment. Also, throughout the history of painting, the horse has become the collective symbol of man's companion in war. The horse has a pointed dagger-like tongue, which emphasizes its screams and pain. It is also decorated in newsprint, which shows the media's influence over world affairs. The other most important figure in the painting is the bull, and of all the protagonists in the painting it is the only one that remains calm and dispassionate. Its human eyes watch the drama and destruction unfold, whilst its tail appears to look like flames, another destructive element. The bull is a dark and menacing figure in the painting, and some believe it represents Franco and his ability to overlook the suffering he had caused. Throughout the 1930s Picasso had often depicted himself in the semblance of a bull and the minotaur, so, are we to also see the bull as an embodiment of Picasso, an innocent witness? Below the bull sits a screaming woman, cradling her dead baby in her arms. On all the human-like figures in the painting we see fingers like sausages, hands carved with lines and an array of clenched, desperate fists representing all other women. Amongst the chaos next to the broken sword grows a small flower, a symbol of hope in this horrific scene.

Picasso was a very famous artist at the time of the 1937 Paris World Fair. Everybody knew his name and his talent, so the fact that the Spanish Republican Government had commissioned him to create this painting was largely due to the media attention it would receive. By showing the depiction of the bombing of Guernica to as many people as possible, the Republic hoped to overthrow Franco and re-live both his and the Nazis' inhumanity. At the exhibition, the Spanish Republic's pavilion had one wall which could be directly seen from the Germans' pavilion, and this is where they chose to display Guernica, as a direct message to the Nazis of their anger and refusal to let them get away with it unscathed. After the Paris exhibition, the painting went on tour, first to the Scandinavian capitals, then to London, where it arrived on 30th September 1938, the same day the Munich Agreement was signed by the leaders of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Germany. In the next sixty years, the painting moved around the world, being displayed in such galleries as MoMA, until 1992, when it was moved to the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid, where it still hangs today.

Guernica, a modernist (or post-cubist) mural, was created in response to the frightening times in which Picasso was living. Amid the Spanish Civil War and World War II, Picasso managed to highlight a tragedy to the world, which exposed the cruelty of both Franco and the Nazis, and in my opinion seems more effective than any amount of propaganda. The ability of art to convey true feeling and capture the experience of a moment in time is unrivaled, and I believe this is why Guernica is still such a provocative image, even today.



**NATALIE METCALF**  
- L6



# The British Empire: The Rise and Fall of a Nation's Glory

In the year of 1497, King Henry VII sent a band of daring pioneers to the new world, with the intention of forging an empire to rival the likes of Portugal and Spain. In this act, an empire was created that would last five centuries, and turn Britain into a dominant global power.

As said above, the empire began in a bid from King Henry VII to compete with growing empires of his European cousins; thus he sent out his men with the intention of founding a colony in Asia. However, this attempt was a failure on all grounds due to the fact that not only did the colonizers reach the shores of Newfoundland, (rather than the desired Asia), but also failed to set up anything in the way of a settlement. Although a second attempt was made by the same group of explorers, it was not until the early 17<sup>th</sup> century that Britain placed its claim on a portion of the globe.

Prior to this, our only claim was that of our Irish plantations, a virtually worthless asset when compared with the Spaniards formidable Brazilian territories. This problem was increased by the fact that both Britain and Spain were locked in conflict; so all attempts of empire building would have to come as a second priority. By 1604 however, *The Treaty of London* had been signed, an act that put both nations on civil terms and allowed Britain to spread its wings and claim the colonies such as Jamestown (Virginia) and the Caribbean island of Bermuda.

These were generally in the possession of various privately owned companies, such as the Virginia and East India Company, who turned the people and land of colonies into profit. This predominantly occurred in the Caribbean which was soon smattered with British owned land used for growing sugar cane, (a comestible that was booming in popularity back in England), and that was harvested by imprisoned and enslaved Africans that had been captured merely for the purpose of being worked until death.

However it was on the back of this that the empire prospered, and by 1713 Carolina, Virginia, and Canada were being eroded away by the British, not to mention the ex-Dutch colony of New York, (or when under Dutch hands, New Amsterdam). However, the next real step to obtain global power for the British was through the dominance of India, a project that would be controlled by the British East India Company.

This was done by forcing trade with the Mughal Empire, (the current ruling force in India at the time), while attempting to break India's connections with the rivalling French.

The conflict of interests between the two forces of Britain and French India resulted in what were known as the Carnatic Wars, which saw Robert Clive attempt to lead his army to victory against the leader of the province of Bengal and his French allies, placing the company, (and thus the Empire), at the heart of Indian politics. From here, the Britons rule in India blossomed, expanding its territories through the use of both politics, and bloodshed, (victory on this front was a certain thing, due to the wealth of the Empire that was put towards the hiring of India's own army, thus allowing the forces that would fight by the empires side to grow hugely).

Soon puppet rulers and governments were put in place, allowing Britain to pull the strings while the Indian gentry were allowed to live in comfort and wealth, thus putting them at British



mercy. With India on side all Britain would do is prosper, and even a momentous event such as the American civil war and the loss of Britain's American colonies could not shake it. However, we should not forget the importance of the loss of *The Thirteen Colonies*, an occurrence that was said to mark the transition between the "first" and "second" British Empire. However the growing lands owned in Canada, the discovery -and thus colonization- of Australia, and acquirement of various global trading posts that ranged from Singapore to Panama, meant that by the 1850s, Britain's was officially the most powerful empire that had ever existed.

From this point till the 1950's, Britain's empire would be an ever expanding juggernaut on the world stage, and its only intention was to swell further. At the peak of its powers, (in the year of 1922), a fifth of the global population was ruled over by the British, the result of which was the famous sense of arrogance and pomposity, that has only recently begun to dissipate. But this global dominance soon began to fade. World War I had been damaging to Britain's budget, but World War II was near on crippling, and to uphold an Empire of such a vast magnitude as the British, the primary ingredient of its survival would be that of money; a luxury that at that time was not available in the necessary quantity.

Moreover, the unquenchable British morale and lust for conquest that had spurred the empire on, was now non-existent, for, after six years of bloodshed and slaughter on an international scale, it appeared that the world had grown bored of conflict, and now merely requested peace civility to be returned. And as such, over the decades that would follow, colony by colony, and nation by nation, the empire would be handed back to its rightful owners, sometimes with conflict, (the Suez crisis being a predominant example of this), and sometimes through politics, but either way, the result would always remain the same throughout- the greatest empire the world had ever seen was shrivelling away.

The final nail in the empire's coffin has always been seen as the handing over of the trading post of Hong Kong to the Republic of China, and although this area may once have been nothing more than another trading point in Britain's vast Empire, by the year of 1997, it was the largest gun in our arsenal, and with its return, any hope of the retention of an empire was quashed. Prince Charles himself, who attended the "Handing over ceremony", was reported to have said, that this was "*The end of the empire*".

What little land we had after this occurrence was given the new name of the British Overseas Territories, and still conflict reigns over the ethics of our owning of these. As a world power, we are now held in little regard, with nations such as China and India now lording over the economic scenario of the earth. It is my belief that although cause for some good, we must rid ourselves of any pompousness that the empire has given us, and move away into the modern era where our past achievements are nothing more than history.

**Barnaby Rule -  
Shells**



# MICHAEL COLLINS-A LIFE

## Early Life:

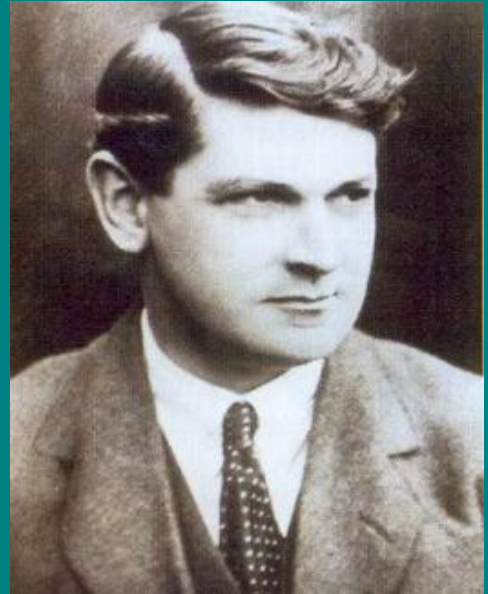
- Michael Collins was born in October 1890 in Clonakity, County Cork, Ireland.
- At a young age he was very passionate about nationalism. At fifteen, he left for London and while there studied at King's College.
- In 1909 at the age of nineteen Michael was introduced to the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), a secret society dedicated to achieving Irish independence.

## Easter Rising:

- When Michael returned to Ireland in 1916 there were plans for an armed uprising.
- Despite calls to abandon the plan, the Easter Rising went ahead and resulted in the destruction of large parts of Dublin.
- In the aftermath, the British who were ruling Ireland executed seven leaders of the rising.
- This act ended up working against the British and turned the tide in favour of the IRB for the first time. Public sympathy towards the executed men increased so much that Collins could see that desire for an independent Ireland was about to peak among Irish people.
- Collins and his fellow Irish Volunteers were rounded up and eventually ended up in a prison camp in Wales. This still caused problems for the British and they were forced to release the prisoners to help diffuse the unrest.

## Rise to Politics:

- Collins realised that it was a radical nationalist party that could defeat the British rule. He organised an effective intelligence-gathering group through the political party "Sinn Féin".
- The British arrested some nationalist leaders. This gained more support for the nationalist idea of an independent Ireland. It also left Michael Collins in charge of the Republican Party 'Sinn Féin'.
- Collins was elected for the South Cork constituency. On 21<sup>st</sup> January 1919, Sinn Féin's newly elected candidates assembled in Dublin's Mansion House to form the first national assembly in over a century. Collins became the Minister of Finance.
- This was also the start of the War of Independence set off by two policemen being shot by a group of Volunteers.



## The Treaty:

- In June, Lloyd George invited the Irish President De Valera to London for talks. De Valera accepted and a truce was set for 11th July 1921.
- When the peace talks were set for October, Collins was unexpectedly chosen to lead the Irish team of negotiators. On Saturday 8th October, while the rest of the peace delegation travelled to London, Collins became engaged to Kitty Kiernan.
- Three months into the negotiation the British forced them to either sign or the war would resume.
- Collins signed and declared "I have signed my death warrant."
- On the January 14<sup>th</sup> 1922, the Irish Parliament ratified the Treaty, establishing southern Ireland as a Free State.
- Michael Collins was elected Chairman of the Provisional Government. The Provisional Government had to take over the evacuated British posts.



## Death:

- On August 22nd, 1922 Michael Collins was shot dead at the age of thirty-one. His death brought the country to a standstill.
- Conspiracy theories have surrounded his death.

## Sam Narici – L6





## ***Felix Mendelssohn- In Wales***

Mendelssohn contradicts the image many of us may have of an early 19<sup>th</sup> Century German composer; he was handsome, quite a flirt, had a great sense of humour (!) and came from a wealthy background. He grew up in a house with forty rooms set in seven acres of park land. At the age of six he started having piano lessons, taught by his mother with a five in the morning start! Music education was very important to Mendelssohn, although he didn't enjoy teaching and only had a few private pupils. He was a superb pianist and accompanist, famous for his improvisations. Schumann once said, 'Mendelssohn accompanied like a God!'. To add to this he was also an amazing conductor.

Mendelssohn made ten visits to Britain from 1829-47. During his first visit at the age of twenty, he initially went to Scotland, where he found much inspiration; he travelled through the Lake District and also to Liverpool. On entering Wales he stayed in Llangollen but his first impressions of local music were rather unfavourable and he wrote:

*"Ten thousand devils take all national music! Here I am in Wales, and, heaven help us! A harper sits in the hall of every reputable tavern incessantly playing so-called folk melodies - that is to say, dreadful, vulgar, out-of-tune trash with a hurdy-gurdy going at the same time! It has given me toothache already. Anyone who, like myself, can't stand national songs ought to come to Wales and hear them bellowed by rough nasal voices to the crudest accompaniment - and then try to keep his temper. As I write, a fellow in the hall is playing this (scribbled notation) It's making me so angry I can't go on! "*

Next Mendelssohn stayed with John Taylor, a wealthy mining engineer who was renting a house near Rhydymwyn in North East Wales. He was entranced by his environment and the family he stayed with. Three fantasies for piano were composed as gifts for Taylors' daughters, Anne, Susan and Honora. The third fantasy was composed as Mendelssohn recalled his horseback rides along a rivulet with the sisters.

Anne Taylor's memoirs relate the tale of his visit:

*"It was in the year 1829 that we first became acquainted with Mr. Mendelssohn. He visited us early in the season in Bedford Row, but our real friendship began at Coed Du, which was a house near Mold in Flintshire, rented for many years by my father, Mr John Taylor. Mr. Mendelssohn came down there to spend a little time with us, in the course of a tour in England and Scotland. Soon we began to find that a most accomplished mind had come among us, quick to observe, delicate to distinguish. We knew little about his music, but the wonder of it grew upon us; and I remember one night, when my two sisters and I went to our room, how we began saying to each other: Surely this must be a man of genius, we can't be mistaken about the music; never did we hear anyone play so before. Yet we know the best London musicians. Surely by-and-by we shall hear that Felix Mendelssohn is a great name in the world".*

Queen Victoria also met him several times at Buckingham Palace and they became good friends. She sang for him as Prince Albert played the organ. Mendelssohn sadly died on the 4th November 1847, aged only thirty-eight, leaving two nations mourning. Queen Victoria wrote in her diary that she was *horrified, astounded and distressed*", by the news of his death. Mendelssohn had become the 'toast of Victorian England'. His visit to Wales is commemorated by a plaque in the village of Rhydymwyn, in North East Wales.



Anna Lloyd - Removes

# My Great Great Great Great Uncle, Petty Officer Edgar Evans

Petty Officer Edgar Evans was born on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 1876 and was a member of the polar Party on Robert Falcon Scott's ill-fated *Terra Nova* Expedition to the South Pole in 1911–1912. He was born in Middleton, Rhossil, Wales, the son of a seaman. He enlisted in the Royal Navy in 1891, and in 1899 began service on HMS *Majestic*, where Scott was serving as a torpedo lieutenant.

Evans then joined Scott's first Antarctic expedition in the *Discovery* expedition of 1901–1904. Along with William Lashly, he accompanied Scott on his "furthest west" sledge journey to the interior of Victoria Land in 1903. Scott's biographer Roland Huntford described Evans as "a huge, bull-necked beefy figure" and a "beery womanizer" who was "running a bit to fat" by the time of Scott's second expedition in *Terra Nova*. Evans was nearly left behind in New Zealand when he drunkenly fell into the water while boarding the ship. However, held in high regard by Scott for "his resourcefulness, his strength and fund of anecdotes," Scott decided to overlook the incident.

Scott chose Evans as a member of his polar party, together with Lieutenant Henry Robertson Bowers, Lawrence Oates and Dr. Edward Adrian Wilson. Scott described Evans as "a giant worker—he is responsible for every sledge, every sledge-fitting, tents, harness, and when one cannot recall a single expression of dissatisfaction with any one of these items, it shows what an invaluable assistant he has been". Eleven weeks after setting off from base camp, the Polar party reached the South Pole on 17th January 1912, only to discover that Roald Amundsen's five-man party had beaten them to the Pole by five weeks.

Their return journey soon became a desperate affair. Evans had cut his hand in an accident as they were nearing the pole, and the wound did not heal properly. During the return journey Evans began to deteriorate mentally as well as physically, suffering from frostbite to his fingers, nose and cheeks. As they descended the Beardmore Glacier, he is thought to have suffered a head injury in a fall into a crevasse on 4th February 1912, sustaining serious concussion which caused his condition to rapidly worsen. During the whole descent his condition delayed the party, and the surplus food gradually diminished.

On 16th February 1912, nearing the base of the glacier, Evans collapsed. The next morning, unable to keep up, he was left behind while the others went ahead man-hauling the sledge towards the next supply depot; they had to make a return journey to fetch him. 'He was on his knees, clothing disarranged and hands uncovered and frostbitten and with a "wild look in his eyes". By the time he was placed in a tent at the camp later, he was comatose. He died in the tent that night. It was not recorded what was done with his body, and none of the other members of the polar party survived the return journey. His widow, Lois (they had married in 1904 and had three children), had a plaque placed, in his memory, in the Norman church at Rhossilli. It reads "To the Glory of God and in memory of Edgar Evans 1st Class Petty Officer, R.N., and a native of this Parish, who perished on the 17th February 1912, when returning from the South Pole with the Southern Party of the British Antarctic Expedition under the command of Captain Robert Falcon Scott, C.V.O., R.N. 'To seek, to strive, to find, and not to yield.'"





## **“Italy's Revolutionary Hero”**

### **Early life:**

- Giuseppe Garibaldi was born in Nice in France on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1807. His father was a fisherman.
- When Garibaldi was a child, Nice, which had been ruled by Napoleonic France, came under the control of the Italian Kingdom of Piedmont Sardinia. Garibaldi's great desire to unite Italy was rooted in his childhood experience of essentially seeing the nationality of his hometown being changed.
- Resisting his mother's wishes, Garibaldi went to sea at the age of fifteen.

### **From Sea Captain to Rebel and Fugitive:**

- Garibaldi was certified as a sea captain by the age of twenty-five, and in the early 1830s he became involved in the "Young Italy" movement led by Giuseppe Mazzini.
- The party was devoted to the liberation and unification of Italy; large parts of Italy were still ruled by Austria and the Catholic Church.
- A plot to overthrow the Piedmontese government failed and the government sentenced him to death. Garibaldi was forced to flee. Unable to return to Italy, he sailed to South America.

### **Fighter and Rebel in South America:**

- For more than twelve years Garibaldi lived in exile, making a living at first as a sailor and a trader.
- He was drawn to rebel movements in South America, and fought in Brazil and Uruguay.
- Garibaldi led forces that defeated the Uruguayan dictator, and he was credited with liberating Uruguay.



### **Return to Italy and exiled (again):**

- As revolutions broke out in Europe in 1848, Garibaldi returned from South America.
- He landed in Nice, along with sixty loyal fighters that he called his "Italian Legion". Garibaldi commanded troops in Milan before having to flee to Switzerland.

### **Became an Italian Military Hero:**

- Garibaldi intended to go to Sicily, to join a rebellion there, but was drawn into a conflict at Rome.
- In 1849 Garibaldi, taking the side of a newly formed revolutionary government, led Italian forces battling French troops who were loyal to the Pope.
- He was encouraged to leave Rome and escaped to Tuscany and, eventually, to Nice.
- The authorities in Nice forced him back into exile, and he crossed the Atlantic yet again. For a time he lived quietly in Staten Island, a borough of New York City

### **Military Hero Returns to Italy (again):**

- He was eventually allowed to return to Italy in the mid-1850s.
- Never far from his mind, of course, was political movement to unify Italy. This movement was popularly known as the 'risorgimento' ("the resurrection").
- In May 1860 he landed in Sicily with his followers, who became known as the "Thousand Red Shirts."
- Garibaldi defeated the Neapolitan troops, essentially conquering the island, and then crossed to the Italian mainland.
- On the 7th September 1860, Garibaldi took control of Naples and he declared himself 'dictator'.
- Seeking a peaceful unification of Italy, Garibaldi turned over the land he had captured in the south to the Piedmontese King.

### **Garibaldi Unifies Italy:**

- The eventual unification of Italy took more than a decade. Garibaldi made several attempts to seize Rome in the mid-1860s, and was captured three times.
- As a result of the Franco-Prussian War, the Italian government took control of Rome, and Italy was united. He died in June 1882.



# 60 Interesting Facts



- 1) The Queen is 5'4"
- 2) As well as sending telegrams to people who have reached one hundred, she also sends telegrams to couples on their Diamond wedding anniversary
- 3) She served in the armed forces (the only female royal member ever)
- 4) She has seen ten Prime Ministers over her lifetime
- 5) Queen Elizabeth II is the fortieth monarch since William the Conqueror obtained the crown of England.
- 6) Since 1952 the Queen has conferred over three hundred and eighty-seven thousand, seven hundred honours and awards.
- 7) The Queen speaks fluent French and often uses the language for audiences and state visits.
- 8) The Queen has received over three million items of correspondence during her reign.
- 9) Over the course of her reign, around one million one hundred thousand people have attended garden parties at Buckingham Palace or the Palace of Holyrood house (the Queen ended presentation parties in 1958).
- 10) Tony Blair is the first Prime Minister to have been born during the Queen's reign. He was born in early May 1953 - a month before the Coronation.
- 11) The Queen is patron of more than six hundred and twenty charities and organisations.
- 12) During her reign, the Queen has undertaken over two hundred and fifty-six official overseas visits to one hundred and nine different countries.
- 13) The Queen has visited Australia sixteen times, Canada twenty times, Jamaica six times and New Zealand ten times.
- 14) During her reign, the Queen has received many unusual gifts including live animals. The more unusual animals have been placed in the care of the London zoo, among them jaguars and sloths from Brazil, and two black beavers from Canada.
- 15) The Queen's real birthday is on April 21<sup>st</sup>, but it is celebrated officially in June.
- 16) The Queen has attended thirty-four Royal Variety performances.
- 17) The Queen has opened fifteen bridges in the United Kingdom.
- 18) The Queen has given over ninety State banquets during her reign.
- 19) The Queen has launched twenty-three ships in her lifetime.
- 20) The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh have sent about thirty-seven thousand Christmas cards during the Queen's reign.
- 21) The Queen has given out about seventy-eight thousand Christmas puddings to staff continuing the custom of King George V and King George VI.
- 22) The Queen learnt to drive in 1945 when she joined the Army.
- 23) The Queen was a Girl Guide (1937) and Sea Ranger (1943).
- 24) Princess Elizabeth travelled on the London Underground for the first time in May 1939.
- 25) The Queen is a keen photographer and enjoys taking photographs of her family.
- 26) The Queen was born at 17 Bruton St, London W1 on 21st April 1926, and was christened on 29th May 1926 in the private chapel at Buckingham Palace.
- 27) With the birth of Prince Andrew in 1960, the Queen became the first reigning sovereign to have a child since Queen Victoria, who had her youngest child, Princess Beatrice, in 1857.



- 28) The Queen has thirty godchildren.
- 29) The first football match the Queen attended was the 1953 FA Cup Final.
- 30) The Queen has sat for one hundred and thirty-nine official portraits during her lifetime,
- 31) There have been eleven sculptures of the Queen.
- 32) The Queen has opened Parliament every year except 1959 and 1963, when she was expecting Prince Andrew and Prince Edward respectively.
- 33) The Queen was the first British Monarch to go to China when she visited in 1986.
- 34) The Queen sent a message of congratulations to Apollo eleven astronauts for the first moon landing on July 21st 1969. The message was micro-filmed and deposited on the moon in a metal container.
- 35) The Queen has had five astronauts visit her at Buckingham Palace.
- 36) The Queen sent her first email in 1976 from an Army base.
- 37) There have been six Archbishops of Canterbury during the Queen's reign
- 38) History was made in 1982 when Pope John Paul II visited Britain, the first Pope to do so for four-hundred and fifty years.
- 39) The Queen once said 'grief is the price we pay for love'.
- 40) The Queen has owned more than thirty corgis during her reign.
- 41) The Queen also introduced a new breed of dog known as the "dorgi" when one of the Queen's corgis was mated with a dachshund named Pipkin which belonged to Princess Margaret.
- 42) As well as corgis and dorgis, the Queen also breeds and trains labradors and cocker spaniels at Sandringham.
- 43) The Queen takes a keen interest in horses and racing. The Queen's racing colours are: purple body with gold braid, scarlet sleeves and Black velvet cap with gold fringe.
- 44) The Queen's wedding ring was made from a nugget of Welsh gold which came from the Clogau St David's mine near Dolgellau.
- 45) The Queen has visited the sets of a number of British soap operas including Coronation Street, East Enders and Emmerdale.
- 46) In 1997, the Queen launched Buckingham Palace's first official website.
- 47) In June, 2002, the Queen hosted the first public concerts in the garden of Buckingham Palace to celebrate her Golden Jubilee.
- 48) The Queen is the first member of the Royal Family to be awarded a gold disc from the recording industry. One hundred thousand copies of the CD of the 'Party at the Palace', produced by EMI, were sold within the first week of release.
- 49) In November 2004, the Queen invited the cast of Les Misérables in the West End to perform for French President Jacques Chirac at Windsor Castle. It was the first time the cast of a West End musical had performed at a Royal residence.
- 50) In 2005 the Queen claimed ownership of eighty-eight cygnets on the Thames. They are looked after by the Swan Marker. The first Royal Swan Keeper was appointed around the 12th Century.
- 51) Technically the Queen still owns the sturgeons, whales and dolphins in the waters around the UK.
- 52) She was crowned at the age of twenty-five.
- 53) The Queen had eight bridesmaids at her wedding.
- 54) The Queen has had six shots fired at her.
- 55) The Queen was the first monarch to send her children to boarding school to escape the public frenzy.
- 56) The Queen joined Facebook in 2010.
- 57) She is known well for her hats.
- 58) The Queen wore yellow to the Royal Wedding and has been criticised for looking like a lemon.
- 59) The Queen probably doesn't know half of these fun facts herself!
- 60) *The Queen apparently likes watching Doctor Who.*



Natalie Metcalf and Josh Smith - L6





# Thomas Becket

**T**homas Becket is a very famous man. He is known for being murdered in Canterbury cathedral. However, there was a lot more to him than that.

**T**homas started out as King Henry's very good friend. So much so that Henry made Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury. Henry did this because he was not happy with the way the church's court laws worked. He hoped that by putting Thomas in charge of the churches, he could get the church courts to run his way because he assumed that his friend would do what he wanted. However this was not meant to be. Thomas got a lot of criticism for the way he behaved so he changed. He became very holy and slept on the floor and wore an itchy goat hair shirt. Henry and Thomas started to argue. Thomas fled to France after one particularly nasty argument. When Thomas came back, Henry and Thomas argued again. Henry shouted out "Will no-one rid me of this turbulent priest!" Henry's knights overheard this outburst. They went to Canterbury to fulfil the King's "wish".

**T**he monks tried to tell Thomas to escape, but he stayed. The knights entered and tried to pull Thomas out of the cathedral. Thomas held on to a pillar. The first knight hit Thomas, but Thomas held on. A second blow knocked him to his knees. Then the top of his head was chopped off. The fourth knight scooped out his brains and scattered them all over the floor. Then the knights fled from the cathedral.

**W**hen Henry heard, he was horrified. He walked through the streets barefoot. When his feet were bleeding, he went to the cathedral. He slept on the spot where Thomas was killed. He also got the monks to whip him. The Pope forgave him after he had done this. Henry felt so bad for what had happened.

**T**he knights were sent on a voyage to the Holy Land. None survived.



*Megan Gareh, Bethan Hill and Anna Lloyd - Removes*



# The War without a face



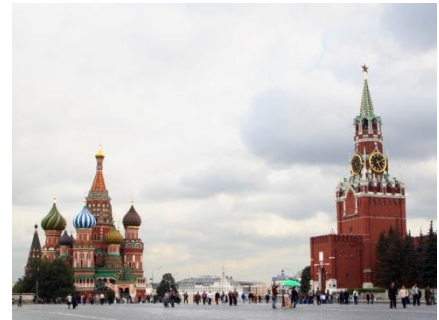
The Cold War is very much a part of modern History. The fall of the Berlin Wall on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 1989 was perhaps the most memorable day of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Steeped in mystery, the Cold War was a war of fear and of mutual suspicion. The United States and the USSR with their respective ideologies of capitalism and communism formed a bitter rivalry spanning nearly fifty years.

The Roots of the Cold War lay at the end of WW2. Joseph Stalin met the President, Harry Truman and Prime Minister, Clement Attlee at the Potsdam Conference. There was an utter lack of trust on deciding the future of Europe. However they were united by one fear: that one superpower would turn on the other.

Over the following years, the USA's fear seemed to be justified when the Soviet government gained control of a large proportion of Eastern Europe. The border between these satellite states and Western Europe formed the infamous 'iron curtain' (Churchill's words).

Tensions grew at the capital Berlin became the focal point of conflict. It had been divided by the allies after the War so one half was communist, the East, and the other capitalist, the West. Open hostility first broke out here during the Berlin Blockade. Stalin had wanted a purely communist Berlin so blocked off all possible supply routes that could maintain West Berlin (apart from the sky). Stalin was thwarted by a monumental effort by the Allies. For almost a year planes landed in Berlin every ninety seconds with supplies. Stalin had to eventually call off the Blockade as it was deemed pointless. This failure further embittered the communist and strengthened the East-West divide.

After Stalin's death in 1953, there was hope that it would spell the end of the Cold War. Disastrously, within nine years the world was on the brink of a nuclear holocaust. The Cuban Missile Crisis saw American and Soviet troops prepare for war on October 25<sup>th</sup> 1962. American forces had formed a naval blockade around the island of Cuba where Soviet missiles were placed; it was Cuba's immediate closeness to the mainland of America that caused this hasty action. Both sides packed an arsenal of nuclear missiles, enough to destroy the world several times. An American spy plane was shot down two days later and a war seemed almost imminent. At the last moment, America and the USSR made a desperate deal to save their nations, initiated by John F. Kennedy.



The Cuban Missile Crisis was a turning point in the Cold War. Afterwards, the Soviet Union struggled to compete with America. Its economy had stagnated, soon it simply would not be able to keep up with the USA. The Arms Race was slowly emaciating the Soviet economy. By the 9<sup>th</sup> of November, the Berlin wall was torn down after the USSR's realisation that it could no longer compete with the mighty Yanks. Communism had in this case failed and this meant an end to the cold relations.



# Hay Festival 2012

Over half term I made my first visit to the Hay Festival of Literature and Arts not really knowing what to expect; I was majorly impressed! This Hay Festival is held in Hay on Wye in Wales; however there are Hay Festivals throughout the world. There were over nine-hundred events at this year's festival in Hay on Wye, which was held from the 31st May to the 10th June and it is, as Bill Clinton called it, 'The Woodstock of the mind'. It brings together writings from all kinds of people, from poets to scientists, comedians to historians- there is something for everyone!

The first talk I listened to was given by Bettany Hughes on 'Divine Women' which, similar to her recent television programme on BBC2, traced the role of women through religion, amending the view that women have always been the inferior sex; in fact we can see that by looking at the depiction of women through religion it was not until the 4th century that women became marginalised. I learnt that women have previously been bishops and priests which shed an interesting light on the current debate of whether women should be allowed to take on the currently male role of being a bishop. Hughes showed women in the past to have been innovative and powerful, such as the Chinese Empress, Wu Zetian, who made use of printing around seven- hundred years before it was first introduced into Europe in the 15th century. Through her talk Hughes debated that the general perception of women as the repressed sex throughout history should be reconsidered and that by observing the way women have been portrayed through religion we are able to understand their role within their culture. Thus does the fact that in the majority of our contemporary religions women are secondary to men tell us something about our culture?

The next two talks I went to were based more on modern day issues, however it was interesting to see how the speakers frequently drew on the past to either illustrate or give strength to their arguments. For example Mark Tully in his talk 'India- The Road Ahead' argued that the issue which is hampering India's successful development is the fact that the Indian government has not been restructured since the British left in 1947, and consequently the Indian government is corrupt and any attempt to develop in a way which would allow India to become the country it has the potential to be is hindered. Simon Schama and Kate Williams, along with four others, debated four big contemporary questions, such as 'Are you happy?' and 'If you were in government and could change one thing what would it be?' In answering these questions they consistently drew on the past, arguing that education, particularly in History, is imperative.

The final event I had time to go to was a talk given by the historian Max Hastings on his book 'All Hell Let Loose', which focuses on the varying experiences of individuals during World War II. He argues, among many other points, that rather than the recognised view that it was the US army that helped the allies to win the war, it was in fact the industrial contribution from the US that made such a difference to the allied victory. He maintains that 'the cliché is profoundly true...The world between 1939 and 1945 saw some human beings plumb the depths of baseness, while others scaled the heights of courage and nobility'.

I would unquestionably recommend a visit to the Hay Festival and next time I go it will definitely be for more than just a day!



Sophie Thomson - L6





These words are roughly what a soldier said in the film War Horse – the plot of which you can probably guess from the title: a film about World War I. There are many films about the World Wars out there. Many depicted in different ways: from the English side, French, German, the view of a soldier, a general. Thus maybe Michael Morpurgo's theme of a horse's view of the war isn't as common, yet it's still got the one, alarmingly important similarity with all the other war films, sadness. Death. It is expected. But somehow, we all still want to see it – maybe because we want to see the great tragedy that we escaped – we want to see the fighting, the carnage, the life-altering bonds and the bittersweet ending.

The story begins in Devon, where a boy, Albert (Albie to his friends) from a poor family is tricked into buying a horse in the village. This is how most countryside families lived – in small, tight-knit communities, mostly as farmers. We see how World War I has already destroyed the relationship between the boy and the father. For a lot of soldiers in WWI, it would have been the worst and toughest thing they had ever endured, and their lives had been forever changed by it. And then war strikes.



I think the film represents very accurately the confusion and terror people would have felt, and the way the people would have behaved towards it – the film is accurate in terms of history and it is also a great storyline. The soldier's horse, Joey, goes through the war, and we are given a rare viewpoint– while others focus on humans, Michael Morpurgo focuses on a horse. Joey makes a lot of difference in the war and meanwhile Albie is finding his own way to get his beloved horse back who has been wrenched away from him by the War. For me personally, the most striking scene comes near the end where again, Joey helps bring together two people who would have never made friends otherwise. I think this scene represents a lot of Michael Morpurgo's views about war, and we are certainly shown a side they we would never have considered. It is thoughtful and provokes the viewer's own opinion well.

In the end, after a struggle, Albie finds his happy ending...but can you really call it a happy ending? Morpurgo hammers home his last point, and the film ends in a heart-stopping climax with the events of the whole film leading up to it – it also proves the point: war or no war, lives don't revolve around one thing. People can heal. The film is a must-see. With an amazing and accurate take on a popular subject – with guaranteed tears! My parents sobbed the way through it whilst I held on for most of it, but the ending caught me out and I walked out with wet eyes, and I'm not ashamed to say it!

**Damayanti Chatterjee- Shells**



# Fashion in the Second World War

Restrained clothing to match the economic atmosphere. Less fabric, tighter and shorter skirts and fitted jackets.

'Make Do and Mend' – women turned their old garments into new, more practical items.

Hair tied back during the day.



'The Wartime Wedge' was a sturdy cork soled footwear favourite.



Cloth, clothes, footwear and wool were strictly rationed.

'Siren Suits' were the original jumpsuit and the all-enveloping, sometimes tartan, cloth garment was a huge hit especially at night when sirens called citizens to the air raid shelter for cover. The Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret both owned siren suits as did Winston Churchill and others.

Over the siren suit some would have donned a Kangaroo cloak coat so called because of its huge, roomy kangaroo pockets. The oversized pockets were ideal to stack with essential items as people ran through the house to an air raid shelter.



Natalie Metcalf - L6



# THE PIANIST: A REVIEW

Whether or not you have an extensive knowledge of The Nazi Regime does not matter when it comes to watching Roman Polanski's 'The Pianist'. Preparation and understanding cannot prepare you for how matter-of-fact and callously inhumane life as a Jew in Nazi Germany is encapsulated. Perhaps the ruthless and unforgiving approach to this film comes from Polanski himself. Both his parents were sent to concentration camps, his father to Mauthausen-Gusen in Austria and his mother to Auschwitz where she was murdered. At the age of seven, Polanski managed to escape Krakow ghetto and spent the following five years completely alone, during which he was subject to a nearly fatal beating and also a capture by Nazi soldiers who forced him to hold targets whilst they were shot. Of course these events do not translate directly into 'The Pianist' but they do however relate to Władysław Szpilman himself who reacts in the most extreme and heart wrenching of situations cold and detached as a self-defensive means of 'barricading emotion', much the same as Polanski himself who said that he could not film his own experiences as it was "too much to bear".

Adrein Brody has been criticised (be it by very few) that his performance verges on boring due to the "lack of emotion". I would have to argue that it is this same fact that makes Brody's performance so captivating. Yes there are no Nicholas Cage-esc mental breakdowns although one could be easily justified, instead Brody holds the audience through a subtle yet completely unpredictable portrayal of Szpilman, the smallest of eye movements and even a change in breathing pattern leaving you utterly transfixed and emotionally engaged. Polanski does not direct this film towards a disheartening end, nor does he film it in such a way to promote tears. They are simply the bi-products of his authentic and passionate exposé.

Despite undeniably being the central focus of the film, Szpilman acts for the most part as a spectator whose talent as a pianist is ultimately the thing that protects him. He is a passive fighter and survivor who witness the most unfathomable acts of malice which Polanski by no means attempts to explain or excuse. This film is not merely a recollection but an insight into the human condition.



Grace TSP -L6





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