



# St. Michael's Catholic Grammar School

M A Y 2 0 1 7

## Year 12 History Trip to Paris March 2017



Just before the Easter holiday, St Michael's Y12 history students visited Paris. The group visited many sites relating to the French Revolution, such as the Conciergerie, the location of the Revolutionary tribunal, a key institution in the Terror. There was a lesson in art history at the Louvre. There was also time to climb the Eiffel Tower and to take a cruise along the Seine. A great way to see the city. We visited a typical French bistro to sample some artisanal fare. Some students were brave enough to try snails. The hostel reception was elegant and the rooms were functional. The best way to get to know Paris is to walk around the city and the group did plenty of that. Some students said watching Beauty and the Beast was the highlight of the trip, others seeing Parisians tango on the banks of the Seine. No one will forget dancing under a statue of St Michel, no less, on the last night.

*Mr Paul Ward.*

### **Year 7 Visit From Miss Ursula Morrissey (Headmistress 1995 – 2012)**



On Tuesday the 20<sup>th</sup> September year 7 were lucky enough to have a talk from the previous headmistress, Miss Morrissey. We all gathered in the school chapel where we were greeted by our special guest. Listening intently, we were all intrigued by her immense knowledge of St Michaels.

Miss Morrissey, having been here for 41 years, knew a lot of very interesting facts which she was willing to share with us about the history of both the buildings and the people of St Michael's Catholic Girls' Grammar School.

Ursula Morrissey had been at St. Michaels since 1971, for 41 years, therefore, she has many riveting stories to be tell.

We learnt about how the school site St Michael's has developed over time. She had prepared a presentation which was projected onto the screen. Within this power-

point, was a series of pictures of St Michael's through the ages, some of which we recognized as our classrooms, and some of which we could not identify. It was very fascinating to see what rooms have remained the same and how some rooms have been completely transformed. The Grotto was built in memory of the school's lucky escape from zeppelin raids. When the school managed to evade the zeppelin bombing, the nuns thanked Our Lady for their safety and, subsequently built The Grotto.

One other story was how, in 1939, the whole school had to be evacuated to Devon for just over a year as a result of The Blitz during World War II.

These are just a few of the many tales we were told.

We are very grateful that Mrs. Morrissey gave up her time to come and speak to us. The notes we took will be very helpful for our 'History of St. Michaels' project.

**By Isobel Harris 7M**



## Year 9 History visit to Covent Garden

In April 2017 all of Y9 explored Central London, on a history trip to the Covent Garden transport museum. In a matter of hours we had walked (a lot!) and visited both the transport museum and the museum of Medical history.

We started our day with an hour long walk through the old railways that had once taken up so much of London's culture back in the 1900s, Mr Ward beforehand giving a small talk of the history of the path we were about to follow. Along the way, we managed to see, and even walk in the old railways coated in graffiti and street art. We saw and learned a lot along the walk and I think personally that it was the walk, however tiring, was excellent especially to help deepen our understanding of the train tracks before we had even got to the transport museum!!



The first museum of the day was the museum of medical history, a museum that was vastly interesting and definitely of great interest to the girls in our class hoping for a future in medicine. There, we saw bones from every mammal that one could think of, skeletons and the especially interesting section on tumours and bone cancers. There were videos and interactive games, all of which

were very engaging. There we also saw the means by which tumours were removed through videos and accounts that been kept by early surgeons. This museum was very interesting and provided us with special insight on what life could have been like in the 1900s, and overall a fascinating museum that was a defiantly worth seeing.



Next we made the journey to the transport museum, that I think, surprised many of us with its modern and interactive displays. The museum was perfectly catered for school children and very spacious with exhibits that were interesting to all. There were even old buses and replicas that defiantly were a key part

of the trip. We managed to take loads of photos on the bus and coach displays and there was so much to explore that I think that the only downside of this museum was that we didn't have *enough* time there! The museum, whilst being great fun introduced us to the history of the expansion of the railways and the progression from the buses with a conductor taking tickets at the front to contactless and how these changes occurred.

All in all, the trip we had to Covent Garden and the many activities we did on the day made what we did very enjoyable, it was defiantly a trip worth remembering.




By: Eleanor Doyle 9T

## St Michaels Goes Paintballing

On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2016 a group of St Michael's A Level history students went paintballing. We set off from St Michael's in the mini bus with a road trip feel. Before long we were in leafy Hertfordshire at the Warren Wood paintballing site. With overalls, goggles and paintball gun we felt ready for action. We were the blue team and had to take on the black team who looked scarily good. Despite that it was first victory to St Michael's and our other Blue Team comrades. St Michael's held their trenches at the top of the hill against an onslaught of paint balls from the Black Team. Special mention goes to Nicolle, Morgan, Anna and Sasha who were still alive at the end of the defending slot.

Notable victims were Mr Ward who retired 'shot' with a paintball to the mouth. Ouch. Leah managed to avoid friendly fire, the result of a rotten tree falling next to her. Leah's guardian angel, St Michael, was certainly doing his job there. After lunch we moved to a different battlefield. This time blue had to fight black for control of fortresses, indicated by the raising of a flag on a captured fort. Both sides had their own base fort to where 'shot' team members retired to restart fighting. Evie took a paintball hit to the neck. That hurt. It was tight, it was tense but in the end black came out on top with a narrow victory of 3 forts to 2. St Michael's had to lick their wounds and prepare for the final decisive battle that would decide the fate of the teams on the day.

 warren wood Paintball Hertfordshire... >



The final battle was a question of simultaneous attack and defence. Blue and Black players took up positions across the battlefield. Some were practically invisible in the undergrowth. Despite some good



hiding and valiant attacking, Black had more surviving players on the battle field when the whistle was blown. Bad luck Blue Team and St Michael's. Next time, try being the Purple Team. Music on the mini bus helped to keep spirits up for the journey home. Thanks go to Mr Ward for organising a fun day out for the 'The History Girls and Boys'.

**Anna Ward Y12**

## St Michaels Participates in the Barnet Dance Festival March 2017

This year, as every year, about 50 schools took part in the Barnet Dance Festival. The St Michael's Dance Troupe consisted of Emma Sakakibara, Alessia Moruzzi, Amelia Reeks, Sarah McDaid, Lucie Murphy, Katie Quinn and Emma Breslin. There were strong performances from many schools. St Catherine's pupils (Y5 and Y6) covered the mature theme of 'First Love'. They set the scene beautifully with a clever recreation of an idyllic garden. They interpreted the music of Ellie Goulding with balletic skill which was all the more impressive given the young age of the dancers. The Artsdepot auditorium was full and the audience, mainly parents, enjoyed every school's performance. The St Michael's dance performance was truly stunning. This is a group of very talented and dedicated dancers. Their performance was accompanied by the song 'Cry'. The theme of the performance was the plight of refugees. The group designed their own costumes to express the themes of suffering and resilience. The choreography was conceived and produced by the group themselves without external direction. Every dance move was highly expressive, balletic and dynamic. The sequence expressed the idea of meeting obstacles and overcoming them. The dancers showed solidarity with each other. They lifted each other ever higher to stand clear of their troubles and somersaulted onwards to their destination. The performance concluded with a flight to light and safety and a plea not to be abandoned. The packed audience was impressed and privileged to see such a professional performance. St Michael's school is blessed and delighted to behold such a talented generation of dancers. Well done on such a brilliantly executed dance. When can it be shown to the whole school?

**Mr Paul Ward**



## Articulate-Art Competition

Around January every year a competition is held by the Roche Trust, where students are able to share a passion and love for a particular piece of artwork.

This competition starts internally, where each school choose one person to represent their school in the next round. Every A level art student in St Michaels had to pick an artwork that fascinated them, and then we all had to present this to our class and teachers. The piece I had decided to present was called 'Old Person's Home' by two controversial Chinese artists Sun Yuan and Peng Yu. It was an immersive piece that featured aged UN members in wheelchairs slowly and carelessly moving around the room in a random, bumper car like collision course. I was extremely passionate about the work, as I am fascinated with politics and the role and responsibility of governments to protect innocent civilians in international conflict. I was picked to go through to the next round by my two art teachers.

I then went on to represent St Michael's in the Whitechapel Gallery, where I performed the same talk. This was rather nerve racking as I hadn't done much public speaking before and I suddenly found myself talking up on a stage in front of a large room of people. However, I buried my fears and it paid off because I won that heat.

Therefore I went on to perform in the National Gallery in the second London heat. I was up against even stiffer competition there and unfortunately did not make it to the regional final round. However, I was definitely proud of myself to get that far in the competition.



Furthermore, I was still able to attend the regional finals in Cambridge University with my teacher, Ms Shepherd and two of my classmates. This was an amazing experience as I got to listen to everyone else's presentations without the fear of having to present my own. Moreover, the renowned artist Anthony Gormley gave a

talk about his artwork, which was inspiring. We were also given a tour of Cambridge University and able to attend a university fair for art history. Overall, the experience of articulate has opened my eyes to the art world and the many opportunities there. I have developed a whole new appreciation for art that I will take with me for life.

**Ella Burningham**

## Y9 visit to Finchley Reform Synagogue February 2017

In February 2017 St Michael's Y9 pupils visited Finchley Reform Synagogue. FRS synagogue is near St Michael's School. This visit commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day. This act of remembrance is held every year on 27<sup>th</sup> January, the day in 1944 when Auschwitz was liberated by Russian soldiers. The volunteers at Finchley Reform Synagogue made all of Y9 welcome. For most pupils this was the first time they had visited a synagogue. Rabbi Miriam welcomed everyone to FRS. There are female Rabbis in the reformed and liberal traditions of Judaism. Rabbi Miriam said that it was a good idea for all people to take opportunities to visit places of worship which belonged to traditions other than their own, to demystify those places and establish friendships between all people.



The central theme of HMR was the continuation of life amidst and after the horrors of the Holocaust. We heard the story of one individual escapee. Her name was Ellie Weis. She was a German Jew, part of a Jewish family in the Rhineland. After the Nazis came to power in 1933 life became unbearable. The low point was in November 1938 when their home was

burnt out by Nazi thugs. Ellie's youthful confidence and luck meant she approached a Gestapo officer to retrieve her father from detention in a camp, following the detention of thousands of Jews as part of Kristallnacht. This event forced Ellie to decide that she had to escape from Nazi ruled Germany. She applied to be a domestic servant in the UK on a special visa. Luckily a British citizen sponsored her, guaranteeing her welfare. About 20,000 Jewish women escaped Nazi Germany in this manner, similar to the number of Kindertransport children who escaped from Germany. Ellie used her situation in London and the fact that she had smuggled out a quantity of money from Germany to bring her parents to London. These acts of escape saved their lives. Almost every relative left behind in Germany was murdered when the war broke started and the systematic programme of mass murder was carried out. Ellie lived a good and useful life in London. Ellie died in 2015. Her story was told by her daughter using film footage interspersed with readings of her story.

In the interval, St Michael's pupils were shown the Torah Scrolls which form a central part of Jewish worship. This is not just for readings but as a link to God's eternal word and covenant for Jews.



The next activity was based on the selfless actions of Irena Sendler. She was a Polish health worker in Warsaw during WW2. She used her position, at great risk to herself, to take orphaned Jewish children and place them with Polish, Christian families. In the process the children were given false identities, as Catholic Polish children. This was to save them from the attention of the Nazi authorities. It is estimated that she smuggled 2,500 children out of the Jewish Ghetto to safety. Whilst giving the children fictitious identities, Irena went to great lengths to preserve their real identities. She recorded what information she could, their names and those of their parents. This enabled the children to rediscover who they really were after the war. Irena Sendler recognised the importance of identity to each individual. The Y9 pupils carried out the 'Glass Jar Activity'. This involves the 'creation' or characterisation of a person. Their name, age, background, family, occupation, interests, personality and hopes. This creation of an individual is an activity in focusing on each life rather than the statistics of all murders in the Holocaust. It makes us remember those we do not know, but respect as a person each with his own life to lead, so cruelly ended in so many cases.



The visit ended with the lighting of memorial candles and a prayer. This was a final act of commemoration for the Holocaust and all acts of mass killing since the Holocaust. FRS has received about 1,000 pupils this year as part of their hosting of Holocaust Memorial Day. St Michael's pupils benefitted greatly from the commemorative activities presented by FRS. All the pupils and their teachers expressed their gratitude. May this valuable work long continue.

**Paul Ward**

## St Michael's Spring Concert March 2017

This concert was a wonderful showcase of St Michael's musical talent. The Junior Choir of 27 singers was accompanied by Mr Godfrey, making the most of the school's newly bought grand piano and conducted by Mrs Broadbent. The choir sang emotionally of the fond remembrance of a season which has gone along with a day's glorious spring sunshine. The hall was alive with the sound of music. The brass group played, 'Hedwig's Theme'. The guest player played a strange looking instrument, like a telescopic trumpet.



Songs from the Wizard of Oz and Harry Potter gave the brass group ample opportunity to show its virtuosity. The animals came to life in the Junior Orchestra's rendition of Peter and the Wolf. Catriona Gilmour played a gentle and captivating guitar solo. Tara Munnely stretched her range and repertoire with an operatic piece from Purcell. It would not be out of place at the Royal Albert Hall. Ryzard Tan's piano solo had the audience amazed at the speed and musicality of his playing. Jason Mui's offering was a heartfelt ballad to love and the loss of love. Mr Friel introduced a piece which he had composed himself. It was first publically performed at the Seoul Music Festival. It was a very jazzy number. The chamber choir produced a strong and melodic sound, as strong as an oak tree, as melodic as the birds in the trees. The piano trio played an impressive,

fast, lively, thrilling and exciting piece with a hint of danger. The Sixth Form band played two Beatles numbers and did justice to them. Thank you for playing my favourite music. The Chamber Orchestra ended the concert with a fitting finale. The strings, percussion, woodwind and brass grew and grew in volume, wrapping Beethoven's notes in blankets of sweet sound. The orchestra lifted us wordlessly, with the flute raising us still higher,

till at last at the summit we arrived. Greatly deserved tribute was paid to the range and ambition of the concert's programme. The headmaster commented upon the large numbers of participants, over 100 students, who had shown such talent and dedication. It was musical entertainment of the highest quality and an evening most enjoyably spent

**Paul Ward.**



## EWE Spanish Exchange March 2017

In March 2017, nine year 12 A Level Spanish students met at Stansted airport ready to embark on a cultural, and enriching journey that would help us gain an insight into Spanish life in the city of Málaga as well as a profound new experience that would aid us in improving our language and speaking skills in a thoroughly active and unforgettable manner.

We had already been living with our individual exchanges for a week in London, getting to know them and forming close bonds with the rest of the group. Our exchange took place with Los Olivos, one of the biggest schools in Málaga, teaching students from the age of 3-18. The majority of us had work placements within different classes and year groups of Los Olivos, with two students working in La Universidad Laboral, helping students with particular learning difficulties. It is safe to say that we were all extremely nervous about our placements especially because we knew that it would involve intense Spanish speaking for a whole week. I was especially nervous as I knew that I would be working with children in the Infantil class, who were just four years old, meaning that they would be energetic and active in their communication. We also had to be aware of the way to address our host families, adopting a formal grammatical stance and being respectful all whilst speaking Spanish. I was nervous to say the least, however once we



arrived in Málaga with our exchanges and began exploring the city, we soon found speaking Spanish a lot easier and a lot less intimidating, when it came to beginning our work placements.

Throughout my week in Los Olivos, I formed close bonds with every child in my class, due to the fact that I was able to communicate with them effectively and effi-

ciently. I was made to observe the teaching of the class, help with organising activities, and interact with the students in every way possible; there was no way out of talking in the target language. For me this helped with communicating with the other exchanges on our evenings out, as well as being able to talk respectfully with my host family easily. The whole experience was completely invaluable and unforgettable as I have made friends for life both with the students from St. Michael's as well as with our exchanges in Málaga. I have become a more confident and fluent Spanish speaker as a result and would encourage participation for anyone considering Spanish or any language at advanced level, as it is an experience that will stay with you always.

I followed a teacher around their classes aged 9 and 13 and was able to help and converse with the students and also observe their classes. I found that Los Olivos was a very welcoming and comfortable environment where I was able to practice my Spanish without feeling nervous or pressurised. In the evenings, we usually went out with the other exchanges into different areas in Málaga and were able to experience many aspects of Spanish culture, such as tapas and other features of Spanish cuisine, music, dance and architecture. I feel the experience has truly helped me to improve my confidence in my Spanish speaking and therefore feel it is a vital experience for everyone studying Spanish even if they are uncertain about continuing it to A Level.



On behalf of all of the students who took part, we would like to thank Mrs. Scarato for organising the trip and Señora Zinchiri and her husband for taking care of us on this trip to Spain. ¡Muchísimas gracias!

**Claire Biek & Sana Ranawat**



## Y8 History Visit to St Paul's

In May 2017 Y8 History pupils visited St Paul's Cathedral, Wren's masterpiece and the focus of England's spiritual life and resting place to many of the great and the good of England's history. Pupils travelled by underground, ever mindful of the need to make the smallest impact possible on the environment.



At St Paul's pupils watched the image sequence called 'Occulus'. This revealed that St Paul's has been the site of Christian worship since 604, witnessing Christ to the nation for over 1,400 years. Through invasion, pestilence, fire and war, St Paul's has stood proudly and gloriously as a symbol of the ties between England and the Christian message. St Paul's has risen from the ruins on a number of occasions, bringing a message of hope and renewal, a mirror to the message of resurrection and hope which we celebrate every Easter. After the Great Fire of 1666 a stone was recovered bearing the words, 'Resurgam', 'I Will Rise Again'. Wren took this as an inspiration for the design and construction of his great Church, today's St Paul's Cathedral. Pupils climbed the Dome to the Whispering Gallery to hear the words spoken on the other side of the Dome. Pupils lay below the Dome, on the Cathedral floor, to drift above in the holy space created by Wren's design. Pupils visited the tombs of heroic figures, such as Nelson, Wellington and Florence Nightingale. Wren's tomb, in



contrast, is unadorned. Instead it bears the following inscription. 'Lector, si monumentum requiris, circumspice'. 'Reader, if monument you seek, look around you.' Wren needs no lavish tomb, the splendour and holiness of St Paul's is testament to his achievement.

Pupils drew an artwork located in St Paul's. Many chose the stone sculpture by Henry Moore, 'Mother and Child'. Its abstraction captures the essence of oneness between mother and child, both separate but at the same time beginning and ending with each other. The Dean of the Cathedral asked us and all visitors to pause each hour and reflect on Christ's unending love and salvation. We all joined him as he led our shared prayer, the Our Father. Pupil and teachers were pleased and grateful for the opportunity to visit one of the greatest sites of Christian worship and history, here in the heart of London and England.

Well done to all Y8 Pupils. As we travelled back to Woodside Park on the tube your behaviour was praised by teachers from another school group. At one stop the train was very busy. A school group of primary pupils boarded. Many St Michael's pupils offered their seats to the younger pupils. Their accompanying teachers were impressed with your caring actions and polite and considerate behaviour. Well done for displaying the typical characteristics of a St Michael's pupil, calm conduct and consideration for others. Your teachers and school are proud of you.

**Paul Ward**

