



# JFS STUDENT JOURNAL



## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK...

This is the last edition that you will see Year 13s have contributed to. Some of them have been writing regularly since they were in Year 9 and so it will be a great loss for us as they now go to focus on their upcoming A Levels. We wish them the best of luck! What you have in front of you is another jam-packed edition, with great variety, which will hopefully encourage and entice you!

*Ms Wolfson*



# Battle of Cable Street



In October 1936 Sir Oswald Mosley was getting ready to march his group of uniformed fascists through the heart of Jewish society in Britain. He had organised many marches before, nearly all of them ending in violence. This time, crowds had gathered to try and prevent the march from happening. Police patrolled the area, engaging in fights with anyone trying to cause a disturbance. This would be his biggest, and possibly most violent, march ever.

The march was designed to remind the Jews in the East End of London of who was in control and was supposed to stir up anti-Jewish hatred among regular British people. But the opposite happened; the march of Cable Street, as it became known, became a legendary symbol of anti-Fascist resistance. This march not only started the demise of the Fascists in England but it unified hundreds of thousands of people against them.



*a legendary  
symbol of  
anti-Fascist  
resistance*

Recently, two new plays have been running in London about the Battle of Cable Street. One was 'The Merchant of Venice', a remake of Shakespeare's play but set during the Battle of Cable Street. The other is called 'Cable Street' and is a musical. I was particularly interested because my great-grandfather played an interesting role in the battle. So, I asked myself, why is the battle suddenly being talked about again?

On October 4th 1936 Oswald Mosley, leader of the BUF (British Union of Fascists), had arranged a march across the East End of London. It was a time of unrest in Europe as the Second World War was on the horizon and Mosley very much admired Hitler. When he had planned the march, he fully expected the general community to join him but he underestimated the power of unity in the London East End communities.



Before the march had begun the Jewish Peoples' Council had created a petition calling for the march to be banned. Over 100,000 people signed this but even then, the Home Secretary at the time, a Jewish man named Sir John Simon, rejected it. Not only that but the police were sent to help Mosley through his march. Seeing that they had no support, the Jews were even more determined to stop Mosley from coming through.

During the march, the first major outbreak of fighting and resistance against the black shirts (a name given to the BUF based on their uniform) happened at Aldgate, where many people stood together in the street, blocking the path of the march. Some tram cars were abandoned in the road, possibly deliberately, to block the path of the BUF. The police were trying to secure a clear route but before long Aldgate was solidly blocked by a mass of people. The police were now forced to also look for alternative ways through.

On Cable Street a number of barricades were set up with anything that people could find. The police's attempts to remove the obstacles were once again met with hand-to-hand fighting. This time though, people threw objects like rotten vegetables and emptied chamber pots to try and halt the march. Jews, Irish dockers, trade unionists, Socialists and Communists all worked together to drive the Fascists out. People famously chanted 'You shall not pass' to the Fascist group.

Every single person had a role in this fight, even the children. My great-grandfather Mark Kosky, was there as a teenager and gave testimony years later, "There they would be in uniform and [there was] a continuous chant going up of 'We have got to get rid of the Yids'. Our job was to throw hundreds and hundreds, if not thousands,



of marbles under the hooves of the mounted police that were the escorts for Mosley's van with Mosley in it in order to ensure that if possible, his march could be stopped. And Mosley never succeeded in his objective of marching through the Jewish East End." Not only did the children have a role in the march, but it was possibly one of the most creative of them all.

The police, who feared an even larger outbreak of violence against them, instructed Mosley to head out of the East End. Mosley, who had planned the march thinking he could prove his power and intimidate the Jews, had failed thanks to a unified response.

On the 80th anniversary of the battle, Chief Rabbi Mirvis said, "It was here that we learned the lesson of the power of unity. So many individuals, groups and families gained added strength from

the numbers of people who poured on to the streets."

So, why is the battle being talked about again? Now, like then, we are under pressure from others trying to intimidate us. The events that happened on that day show how being united will always have a much bigger effect than being alone. Not only did unity drive the fascists out of the East End but it provided people with a sense of security that can't exist otherwise. When people know that others believe in what they believe and others agree on what they say, it gives them the power to stand up for their cause and not back down – an important lesson for today.

Eitan Bermant Y7





# The Moon Landing: Did it really happen?



On the 16 July 1969, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin travelled to the Moon. Apollo 11 was the first successful mission to land a man on the Moon. However, in 1976, a man called Bill Kaysing developed a theory that the Moon landing was just a big hoax. He published a book called 'We Never Went to the Moon: America's Thirty Billion Dollar Swindle'. I'm not here to convince you either way but just to introduce you to some theories about why it might not have happened.

Firstly, in pictures of the landing, we see the bleak, grey landscape of the Moon...but there are no stars. We should see stars in the sky if the sky is clear. But in pictures of the moon landing there are no stars. Why could this be? The answer is this: On the Moon, there are going to be so many

stars in the sky but when these photos were taken, it was daytime on the moon, so the stars weren't as bright. Also, the landscape and astronauts looked much brighter than the stars, so the stars simply didn't show up on the cameras.

Secondly, in a picture taken of the landing, we see Buzz Aldrin saluting the American flag, which is waving in the wind. But how is it moving in the wind? The lack of atmosphere means there is no wind on the Moon. Look at the image closely, in particular the top edge of the flag. A telescopic pole has been extended along the top in order to make the flag fly proudly (yes, NASA really did think of everything). "Because it's been set up like this, it appears to be waving in the wind," Anu Ojha, a famous space scientist, explains. "All the wrinkles are there

because it's literally been screwed up for four days in a box en-route to the Moon."

Thirdly, the last mission to the moon was 52 years ago in 1972, so how come we haven't been back in the meantime? Maybe because we never went there in the first place? Apollo 17 wasn't meant to be the end of the story, of course. Throughout the 1970s there were ambitions to set up a permanent lunar base before turning to the next major space exploration challenge: Mars. It never happened. But this was no grand conspiracy; this was geopolitics. "The answer is we changed our priorities," Ojha says. "From a combination of the Vietnam War, but also there was this geopolitical element of thinking, 'We've won the race'. Just as we'd got good at doing science on the



Moon, we abandoned it.” Instead, attention turned to the Space Shuttle programme and, latterly, the International Space Station, which has been permanently inhabited by teams of astronauts since November 2000. But that doesn’t mean humans couldn’t return to the Moon in the future...

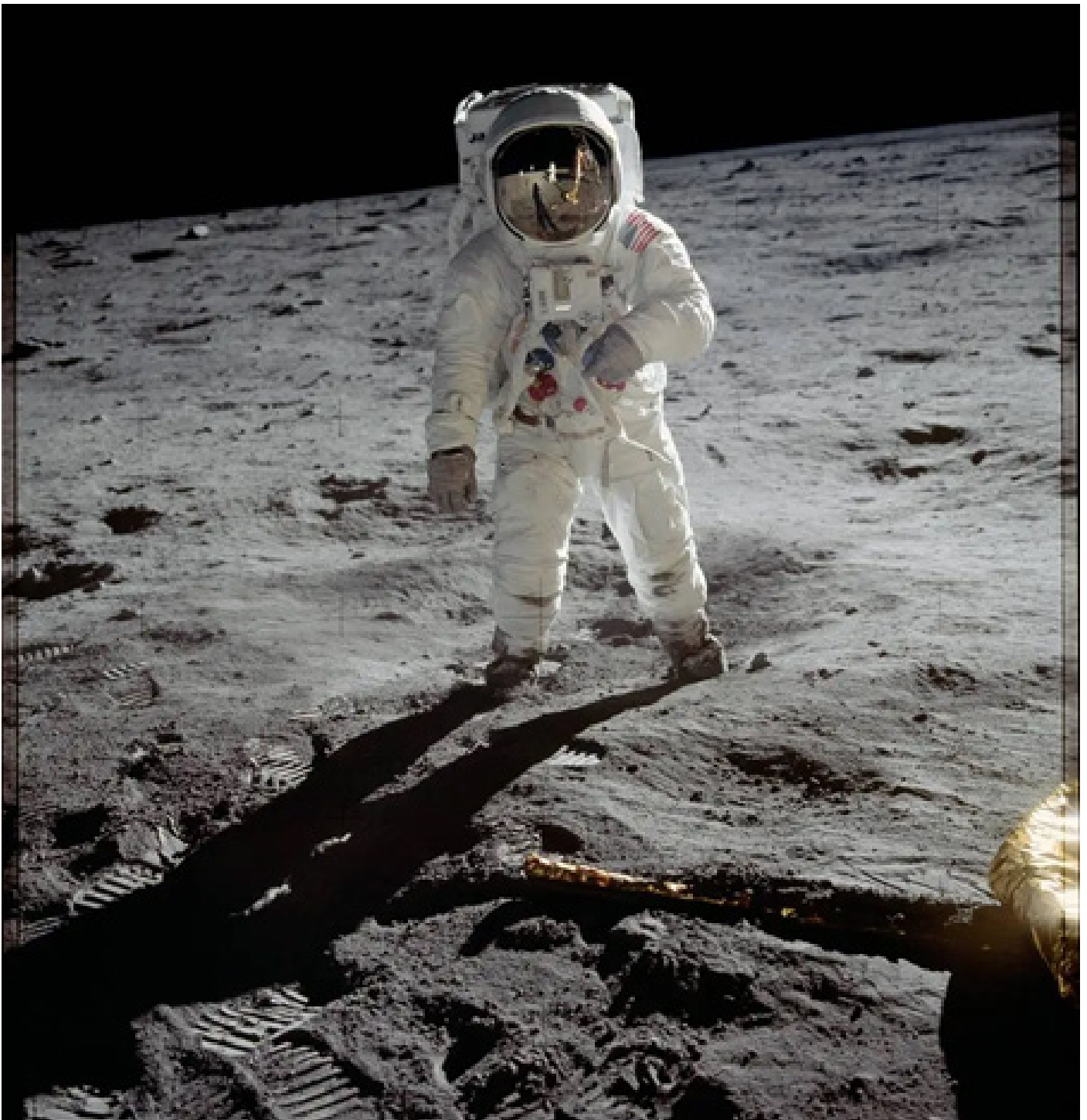
Lastly, here are two theories which are yet to be debunked. There are videos and pictures of Neil Armstrong walking his first steps on the moon and saying the famous line, “The eagle has landed.” How does this

work because, if he was the first man to take steps on the moon, who videoed him doing so? Another theory is that in the same video of Neil Armstrong walking on the moon for the first time there are footprints in the dusty landscape. How does this work?

So? What do you think? Do you think that we did go to the moon 55 years ago or was this just one big scam? I personally think that there’s too much evidence against these theories that it must have happened.

By Zach Bokobza Y7

 ***So...  
What  
do you  
think?***





# From Bristol Beginnings to a Pirate of Legend:

## Unfolding the Tale of Pirate Blackbeard



When we think about pirates, we imagine the legendary Jack Sparrow from Disney's hit movie franchise 'Pirates of the Caribbean' (a personal favourite of mine). However, there was another legendary pirate who practically ruled over the Seven Seas, and this time, he was real. This was, of course, the legendary 'Captain Blackbeard'. Not much is known about the merciless outlaw; however, scraps of his origin have surfaced over the years. We know that his name was most likely Edward Teach or Thatch, and he operated on the seas during what is now dubbed the 'golden age of piracy', a period spanning from 1650 to around 1730.

Teach was born in England, possibly in Bristol, and is believed to have come from a wealthy family, as there is recovered evidence that he could read and write, something only available through private tutoring at the time. Some sources suggest that he may have started his maritime career as a 'Privateer' during Queen Anne's War as it became known, from 1702–1713. After this, he is thought to have turned to piracy. Teach built up a fearless image, and with long black hair, he is infamous for lighting fuses under his hat to project an image of strength and brutality!

Blackbeard owned many pirate ships during his time swashbuckling on the sea, yet his most famous and favourite ship was called the 'Queen Anne's Revenge', originally a French slave ship which he captured in November 1717 named 'La Concorde'. Interestingly, despite his ruthless and cold-hearted nature, torturing his own crew if they defied him, Blackbeard freed many slaves whilst on his journeys, and whilst he was no abolitionist, he



did believe that keeping slaves was wrong and would often choose the strongest slaves to become part of his crew and gave them money to join his adventures.

Blackbeard personally oversaw the modification of this ship, he increased the number of guns from 16 to 40, likely to reinforce the hull for durability in battle, and improved its navigational equipment for effective operation across the Caribbean and Atlantic. To accommodate his plunder and a larger crew, modifications were also made to expand cargo space and living quarters, ensuring the ship could carry ample loot and provide for the crew. These impressive upgrades helped to cement Blackbeard as one of the fiercest pirates on the sea.

One of Blackbeard's boldest moves was blocking the port of Charleston (once called Charlestown), South Carolina, in May 1718. He led a strong group of pirate ships, reaching five in total, with 'Queen Anne's Revenge' leading the way. Blackbeard blocked the port for almost a week, not letting any ships in or out. This move really hurt the town's business, and life in the town was thrown into chaos. Whilst usually desiring treasure and riches, on this occasion Blackbeard wanted something unusual: a chest full of medical supplies. This was due to the practical needs of treating diseases and injuries amongst his crew, ensuring their health for continued raiding activities. The standoff of Charleston ended when the Governor of the town agreed to Blackbeard's demands, and handed over 300 pounds of medicine. After receiving his prize, the pirate departed, leaving a long-lasting impact on the colony and further cementing his reputation as one of history's most feared and legendary pirates.

Despite his fearsome reputation, Blackbeard's career as a pirate was relatively short-lived. He was killed in battle with British naval forces who were led by Lieutenant Robert Maynard in November 1718, just months after his raid on Charleston.

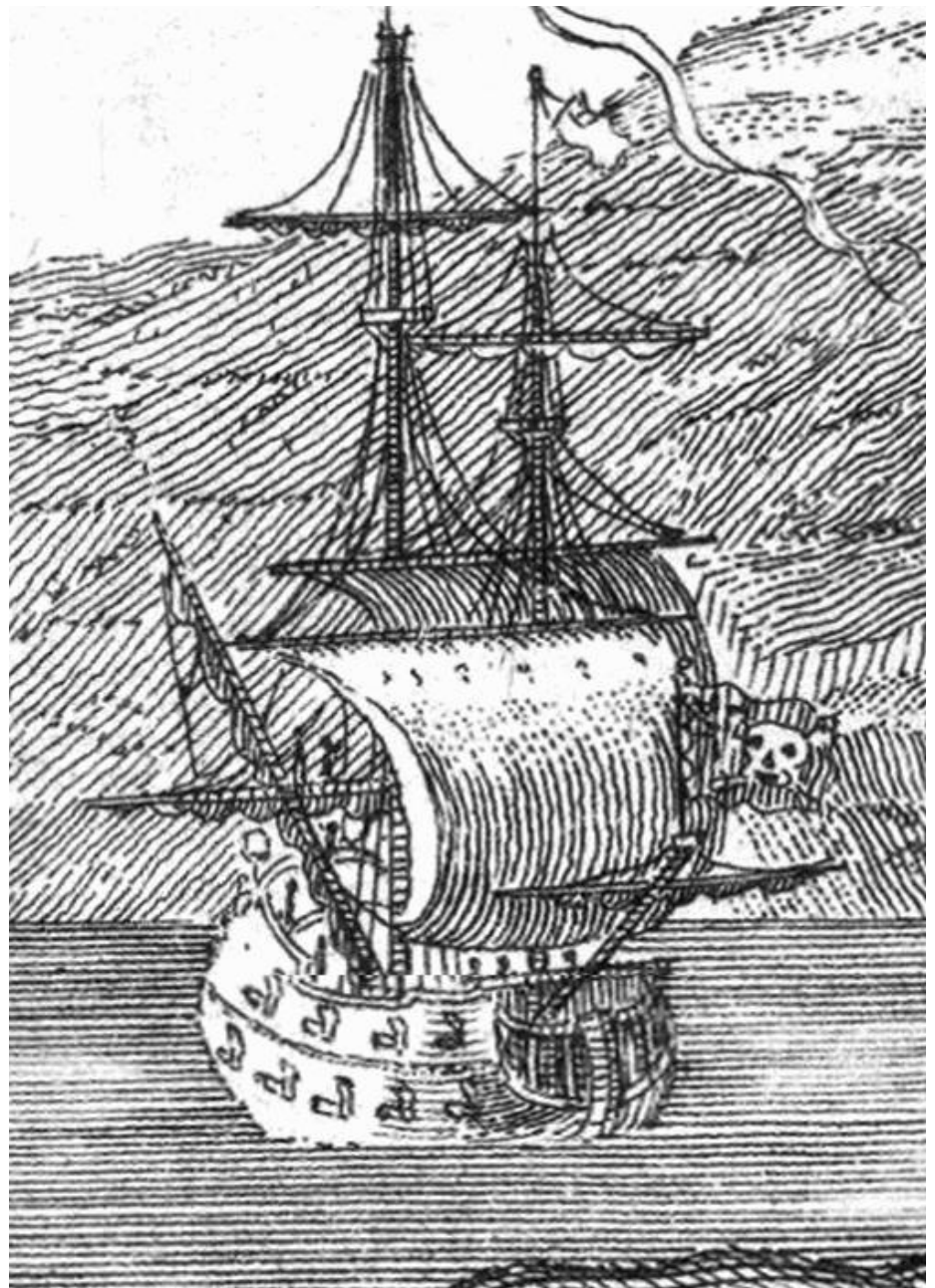
He was around 40 years old when he died.

Today, Blackbeard is remembered as a legendary figure, and his life and exploits continue to inspire books,

movies, and folklore, contributing to the use of pirates in pop culture. Although supposedly originating in the small city of Bristol (again, he may have been born elsewhere), he is now known worldwide and will be remembered as the most legendary pirate to rule over the seven seas. One thing his reputation is most commonly associated with was this flag which is typically described as having a horned a skeleton, holding an hourglass in one hand, and a spear piercing a heart with three drops of blood in the other; however, there are no actual records of this in historical accounts, which I think only adds to the legend of the pirate even more.

By Louis Morrison, Y12

## ***Blackbeard freed many slaves whilst on his journeys***





# Welsh Jewry and the Town in the Valleys

In the middle of the Valleys of South Wales, just north of Cardiff, lies a town called Merthyr Tydfil. Known for its history as an industrial town, Merthyr was once considered to be the Iron Capital of the World. But unbeknownst to some, in the 19th Century, Merthyr Tydfil housed the largest Jewish community in all of Wales, with around 400 Jews living in the town at the height of the Jewish presence. Since then, the town has completely lost its Jewish population, with most moving out to the nearby Cardiff or Swansea, or, in the case of my Bubbe, London, Cape Town, Brooklyn, and then back to London, never losing her Valley's accent.


Merthyr Tydfil provided a much-needed home to many Jewish refugees from Central and Eastern Europe from the 1830s. In 1848, despite the community being made up of a mere 40 Jews, the first Synagogue of Merthyr opened up on Victoria Street, providing a space for prayer and connection within the town. Little history of this Synagogue is known, and a second one was opened up

in 1853 on John Street, reportedly housing between 60 and 70 Jews in prayer. Soon after, a Jewish cemetery was established in the area of Cefn Coed, northwest of the Synagogues, with a small Ohel, which sits in the middle of the graves. By 1866, a Hebrew school had opened, one of the very few Jewish schools not to be in London. Despite only having 23 students, not all of whom were Jewish, the school was highly regarded within the community.

A third Synagogue had to be opened up in 1877, at the top of the hill between Bryntirion Road and Church Street, due to a large

increase in the Jewish population, to the point where the old Synagogue on John Street could not fit in the entire community. The Synagogue, designed as a Gothic building, consisted of an entrance area, a men's floor, a women's floor, and even had a Mikvah fitted into its basement. Views of the town could be seen from every inch of the Synagogue. A new Jewish school was even established within the Synagogue. Between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th Century, the Merthyr Jewish community thrived, creating social clubs, societies and hosting events, to which everyone was able to attend.

Yet by 1937, the number of Jews in Merthyr had diminished to 175, which fell even further to just 20 in 1979. Many Jews, including my own family, saw that other places in Britain could provide them with greater opportunities for jobs and education than their town in the Valleys. So just like that, after just over 100 years, in 1983, the Synagogue on Bryntirion Road and Church Street was sold. In 2004, it lay completely empty, and the once lively building was left there to deteriorate.

 *Merthyr Tydfil housed the largest Jewish community in all of Wales*

That was until 2019, when the Foundation for Jewish Heritage bought the building, in order to restore its history and turn it into the Welsh Jewish Heritage Centre. The new centre, once it is rebuilt, will aim to display the life of the Welsh Jewish community and celebrate their past. Despite the planning process being in its early days, the Foundation sees the centre as being home to exhibitions, archives, school programmes, cultural events, Interfaith work and outreach activities to the whole of Wales. Patrons and Ambassadors of the project include famous Jewish comedian David Baddiel, whose father was a Welsh Jew from Swansea and has relatives buried in the Cefn Coed cemetery, and Gerald Jones, the MP for Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney, who is passionate about restoring the Jewish history that his constituency so proudly holds.

So, despite the presence of Jews in Merthyr Tydfil now being part of the past, it is clear that they will be remembered in the future too.

By Emily Bunder Y13





# One Life



The movie 'One Life' honouring Nicholas 'Nicky' Winton's heroic actions before the start of WW2 where he saved 669 children from Nazi clutches is available to see in cinemas now.

This is a one hour and fifty-minute film, based on the book 'If It's Not Impossible ... The Life of Sir Nicholas Winton' by Barbara Winton, his daughter. Anthony Hopkins plays Nicky Winton in the movie and perfectly encapsulates his humility and his regret of those who he was unable to save.

The movie is set approximately 50 years after he saved several hundred (predominantly Jewish) children. In the film Nicholas Winton reminisces and is still plagued by the memories of numerous children he was unable to get onto the trains leaving Nazi Germany. The audience is transported back in time to a younger version of Winton, played by Johnny Flynn, and we see his entire unrelenting process he and others carried out. These people were his mother Babette (Helena Bonham Carter) and members of the British Committee for Refugees in Czechoslovakia,


Trevor Chadwick (Alex Sharp) and Doreen Warriner (Romola Garai). We see his hard work to save as many children as possible from the terrible conditions and possibilities, managing to organise eight trains full of children to leave Germany and Nazi occupied areas. Unfortunately, the ninth (last train) with about 250

and this moment. He also meets and reconnects with the lives he's saved, celebrating life, freedom and hope.

As well as this powerful movie being released the National Portrait Gallery has a series of 11 portraits of children who were saved by Winton and his team through the Czech Kindertransport. These were photographed by Simon Hill and can be viewed on the National Portrait Gallery website alongside filmed testimonies of the survivors.

One person who watched the film said, "It opened my eyes to how heroic Winton actually was and how one man can make such an impact." This shows that if you will it and want it no matter how small your team or project is, anything is possible. Therefore, if you have not already had the chance to see, Nicholas Winton's or the stories of 'Nicky's Children' I urge you to watch, read or listen to them and be able to continue to honour Winton's astonishing work and celebrate the many lives he saved.

By Hannah Pillemer Y11

 ***perfectly  
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children was halted at the platform, just as it was about to leave due to the outbreak of the war. This was an issue that haunted Winton, but throughout the film he relives his past



# In Bloom: The Hidden Emerald of the Barbican

Deep amongst the skyscrapers and office blocks of the City, lies a hidden oasis, where greenery flourishes. This lesser-known spot for 'Instagramers' is the Barbican Conservatory, the second biggest conservatory in London (after Kew Gardens). What began as an idea to decorate the rather ugly concrete Fly tower (used for theatre productions at the Barbican) has now bloomed into an indoor rainforest of over 2,000 tropical plant and tree species.

The Barbican Conservatory was originally just a couple of plant pots to add some colour. Planting began in 1980 and it opened as a conservatory in 1984. The conservatory is split into two segments: the great, sprawling, Tropical House, characterised by lush giants such as palm trees and monstera; and the Arid House, much smaller, home to only cacti and succulents.

But it's not just plants that define this place. One of the star attractions is a pond at the far end where colourful Koi Carp swim peacefully. In addition, there is a Terrapin pond with a rather interesting backstory. Wildlife on Hampstead Heath in the ponds was suffering, and when investigated, it was discovered that the Terrapins in the pond were terrorising other animals. They were moved locations to have their own private spot in the Barbican. Hopefully they are more placid now!

Over the winter holidays and into March, a new exhibition has been set up in the conservatory, poetically named Cloud Songs on The Horizon. Five abstract sculptures are suspended throughout the conservatory, blending in with the foliage of the Tropical House. The installation was created by an Indian artist, Ranjani Shettar. The twisting shapes of the sculptures evoke what Shettar calls 'adaptations', the

imperceptible change in every living thing, constantly metamorphosing and 'adapting' over time. The designs of each installation, in Shettar's words, "Persuade us to recognise the cycles of transformation embedded within each plant, flower and tree; and, just like the clouds above us, to know that they are always quietly shapeshifting."

The sculptures were commissioned by the Head of Visual Arts, Shanay Jhaveri. Since being appointed, Jhaveri has sought to mix the human art forms with the multitude of plants and nature, with abstract exhibitions such as these. Fairly regularly the installations are updated, and over the years has showcased a diverse and colourful array of art to complement the greenery.

Having visited it in January, this vast jungle in the heart of urban London is the perfect antidote to your winter blues. The current installation will remain up until March 2024, so best book soon to get the full experience. It is almost a surprise that this conservatory is free entry, as it is such a delightful and curative destination.

By Natasha Alexander Y10

 **the  
perfect  
antidote  
to your  
winter  
blues**





# Japan - Myths to Manga Exhibition



After a seven-year makeover, Japan - Myths to Manga is the first temporary exhibition at the Young V&A. The moment you step into the exhibition you feel transported to Japan. Glass cases line walls, the objects inside each telling captivating stories. Pictures decorate walls accompanied with Japanese traditional folk stories and interactive activities like origami tables catch the corner of your eyes. As you venture inside you encounter the first interactive activity which are sets of traditional plastic drums that stand in the centre of the first part of the exhibition.

As well as playing the drums you can also read traditional Japanese folktales. One folktale I found interesting was about animals and the moon. One day the ruler of the heavens (Taishakuten) came down to earth disguised as a beggar and was hungry so he asked a fox, a monkey and a rabbit to find him something to eat. The fox gave him fish, the monkey gave him fruit but the rabbit could find

nothing else, so he offered himself. Taishakuten saw how the rabbit was willing to sacrifice his life for him so in return he placed the rabbit on the moon. And today, if you look closely, according to this folktale you can see a rabbit grinding rice on the moon. Did you know that the famous anime character 'Sailor Moon' was inspired by this traditional folktale. Her name

 **You feel  
transported  
to Japan**

Tsukino Usagi means 'Rabbit Field Moon' but sounds exactly like the Japanese phrase rabbit on the moon.

As you walk down the room you will be mesmerised by paintings telling enchanting folktales and beautiful art installations. The next station was an

Origami one. Whilst it was very fun it reminded me how difficult Origami is!

After looking at Japanese porcelain, clothes, and mini figures I ventured upon the next interactive activity, a cute little reading station full of Japanese stories and Manga comics. As well as some TV's lining the walls playing famous Japanese anime movies such as 'My neighbour Totoro', there was even a miniature model displayed of the theatre set for 'My neighbour Totoro' which was so fascinating to look at.

In the back wall of the exhibition were cool unique clothes designed by Japanese fashion designers such as a blue pair of heelless shoes!

Overall, it was a really cool, interactive experience in which I learned an incredible amount about Japan. I would definitely recommend it and you can visit this experience until the 8th of September 2024.

By Roline Pillemer Y8



# The Lunar New Year Celebrations: London Welcomes the Dragon



The Lunar New Year is an ancient celebration of Spring and Spirituality. In Chinese culture the new year is celebrated with a week-long festival composed of many traditions.

The origins of the Chinese New Year began with a legend. Thousands of years ago, a monster named Nian 'Year' attacked villagers at the beginning of each new year. The monster was afraid of loud noises, bright lights and the colour red which were therefore used to chase the beast away. Therefore, the celebrations to steer away the old year and bring forth luck and prosperity for the new one, include firecrackers, fireworks, red clothes and decorations. Young people are given money in colourful red envelopes.

The New Year celebrations are centred around removing the bad and the old, and welcoming the new and the good! In Chinese culture, the New Year is

always linked to one of the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig. And your specific sign will be determined by the year in which you were born:

- Rat: 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008, 2020
- Ox: 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009, 2021
- Tiger: 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010, 2022
- Rabbit: 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011, 2023
- Dragon: 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012, 2024
- Snake: 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013, 2025
- Horse: 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014, 2026
- Goat: 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015, 2027
- Monkey: 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016, 2028

- Rooster: 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017, 2029
- Dog: 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018, 2030
- Pig: 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019, 2031

In 2024, the Lunar New Year has welcomed in the year of the dragon. The dragon is one of the most admired zodiac signs in Chinese culture. It is said that those born during the year of the dragon will find great success and good fortune. Because Chinese New Year is based on the Lunar cycle, its dates on the Gregorian (Western) calendar will vary from one year to another. This year the Lunar New Year began with the New Moon on 10th February and ended at the Full Moon on 24th February.

While it has been celebrated with various forms of activities around the world, London has hosted a spectacular parade from



Trafalgar Square to Chinatown. The folkloric event was full of traditional decorations, delicious food and impressive performances. It all started at 10.00 am, and up to until 5.00 pm. It featured a traditional dragon, a flying lion dancing around Trafalgar Square, incredible entertainments including: opera, ancient magic, acrobatics and martial arts.

However, it's not the only event that has happened in London. There were a number of other festivities held around the city to welcome the new year. One of these was the 'Lunar New Year at the Museum of London Docklands' which featured lots of activities from Chinese calligraphy to Dragon Kung Fu and ribbon dance workshops.

As decoration is a big part of the Chinese New Year celebration, people put in a lot of effort to decorate their houses in order to welcome the 'Gods of Wealth'. This was exceptionally well portrayed at the museum with a lantern making workshop. The lanterns were all made with card of different shades of red and orange which happen to be the colours used to fight off the evil monster in the original legend, and so became the best colours in Chinese culture, with 'red' in Mandarin, translating to 'auspicious'.

Another tradition that was celebrated at the Museum of Docklands was the lion parade. It started off with an Asian woman all dressed in traditional clothes who introduced the show by recounting to us the significance of the lion and the legend behind it, thus paving the way for the lion's entrance. Traditional music was played as the lion entered, performing various acts such as standing on its hind legs and parading around in circles, blinking its eyes while chomping its teeth. It was huge and had a multicoloured mane of red, orange and yellow. Its face was gold with red tattooed patterns on the cheeks and wide kind eyes making it look approachable and mellow. It was very entertaining and pulled the entire audience into an authentic Chinese ambience. During the show, the lady invited a few children from the crowd to try and wake the lion which created a great moment of laughter caused by



the reaction of the annoyed lion. After a long 20 minutes of pure entertainment, the show ended as the lion uncovered itself and revealed two men working together as the mascots while the crowd cheered for them.

Later, as the night started to fall, beautiful fireworks took place various places such as Westminster, near the London Eye and Big Ben. Huge crowds gathered to take part in and witness the show. What a spectacular way to conclude such a fun-filled and culture-discovering day!

By Anaëlle Choukroun Y8

**Its face was gold with red tattooed patterns on the cheeks and wide kind eyes**



# A Wonderland for the Swifties at the Super Bowl 2024



The Super Bowl 2024 was a triumph for not only the City Chiefs who won the match, but also for the 'Swifties' who were there for the surprise appearance of Taylor Swift. 'Swifties' are the fans of popstar and Grammy Award winner, Taylor Swift, who attended the Super Bowl to support her boyfriend, the professional American footballer Travis Kelce. She flew from performing in Tokyo for her ERAS tour to arrive around two hours before the famous Super Bowl game. The nail-biting game saw an epic win for the Kansas City Chiefs in which Taylor and Kelce stole the spotlight.

Taylor had an overwhelming 54 seconds of screen time, although brief, her appearance was rather memorable for the 'Swifties'. A recent poll from Seton Hall University in New

Jersey found that around 21% of Americans and 41% of 18-34-year-olds, who planned to watch this year's Super Bowl said Swift's presence influenced their decision, or that someone in their household was influenced by her presence.

Swift's outfit was no disappointment to the fans, with a red jacket that encapsulated her famous album 'Red', all eyes were drawn to her street style as she strutted around the stadium. Finishing her look off with a glamorous black corset top from Dion Lee, she once again embraced her true style to of course match the Chief's famous colours!

Taylor was spotted walking into Allegiant Stadium with celebrity friends including Blake Lively and Ice Spice as they all cheered, laughed

and enjoyed the game, with cameras often darting between Swift and Kelce.

After the Chiefs winning victory, the two stars shared a tender kiss on the big screen and proud girlfriend Taylor, yelled to the fans, "Chiefs Nation!" and screamed the chorus of 'Viva Las Vegas'. The wonderland for the 'Swifties' didn't just stop there, fans were mesmerised by her, where she was featured in a chugging contest. Swift slammed her cup down whilst a wave of cheering from the crowd filled the air.

Travis Kelce, her supportive boyfriend, highlighted that, "She's rewriting the history books herself." This memorable remark will of course make 'Swifties' proud and thrilled, the Super Bowl 2024 was truly a wonderland.

By Izzy Gee Y12



***She's  
rewriting the  
history books  
herself***



# My Trip to Disneyland Paris

In September last year, I was lucky enough to spend three days in Disneyland Paris in Chessy, a town near Paris in France, and thought I would share my trip if any readers are ever planning on going there.

The resort first opened as Euro Disney in 1992, it consists of two theme parks with rides, character meetings, shows and other attractions, as well as hotels, restaurants, shops and entertainment. It was the second Disney resort to be opened outside the USA after Tokyo Disney Resort (Japan), and it is also the second largest out of all the resorts, after Disney World (Florida, USA). Additionally, it is the most visited theme park in Europe.

We arrived by train which took us straight from the centre of Paris to the resort. There was a place in the train station where we could leave our luggage so it could be taken to our hotel room, meaning we didn't have to carry our suitcases through the park.

The two theme parks are called Disneyland Park and Walt Disney Studios Park. Each attraction is housed in a different themed 'land'. The Studios Park has many lands, but in Disneyland there were five lands: Main Street, U.S.A. (American themed), Frontierland (Wild West themed),

Adventureland (jungle and pirate themed), Fantasyland (fairytale themed) and Discovery land (retro futuristic themed).

The theme parks all contain walk-through attractions, such as 'Alice's Curious Labyrinth', dark rides such as 'Phantom Manor', boat rides such as 'It's A Small World', roller coasters such as 'Big Thunder Mountain', and more. There are attractions for all age groups, and many are wheelchair accessible too, and each attraction has a unique theme, and, while most rides were themed about a Disney movie, there were others such as 'Autopia' which had its own original theming. Also, while I had the advantage of speaking French, I wouldn't say it's a necessity since almost all attractions had voiceovers that alternated between English and French, and I think you don't need to have seen all the movies to still enjoy them, for example, I have never seen the movie 'Dumbo', but still enjoyed the two Dumbo-themed rides.

At night, there were light shows when the park closed in both resorts which was themed for Disneyland Paris' 30th anniversary celebrations which were going on during our visit, these contained drones, light projections, music, dialogue, and quiet (but not silent) fireworks. Food was generally themed with the land its restaurant was in, or themed for a ride, for

example, the Ratatouille-themed restaurant was located right next to the Ratatouille ride, and there were also snack stands and cafes throughout both parks.

Overall, I would definitely recommend the resort to anyone ever planning on going as it has a wide variety of attractions and is great for almost every type of person. Also, for anyone wondering, I would personally say that my favourite attractions were either 'Big Thunder Mountain', 'Star Tours' or 'It's A Small World'. We managed to visit most of the attractions, even though we visited our favourites more than once.

By Judith Mailer Y9

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# A Little Darts for Littler



For the people who follow the Darts, Luke Littler won't be a stranger among many iconic names. However, his astonishing rise to fame has been a case study in itself, to the extent that even non-darts fanatics tuned into the historic final between him and Luke Humphries at Alexandra Palace on January 3rd.

Littler joins an elite rank of people to hit the ground running in competitive sports at the age of 16, with former England forward Wayne Rooney making his debut just 49 days earlier, over 21 years ago. Or he can be compared to Daniel Radcliffe, who was in his fifth year of performing as Harry Potter at Littler's age. However, the Warrington-based phenomenon is now consistently amongst the top in the world of darts, a feat that not many 17-year-olds can say they are doing at the moment in any industry.

A regular 17-year-old would be in between Year 12 and Year 13, studying for their upcoming A Level exams to decide their future. However, Littler's future was decided for him arguably at 18 months old, when his father bought him a magnetic dart board for the first time.

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His development has been what can only be described as insane. Littler hit his first 180, a manoeuvre consisting of hitting the treble 20 (arguably the hardest to do) three times successively, at just the age of six. He then managed a nine-dart finish at age 13, something many professional dart players have still not accomplished. He was playing darts in the U21 leagues at only 10 years old, when there was no doubt that he was one of the largest prospects in the world of darts.

However, it was the recent World Championship at Alexandra Palace where he was finally recognised on a national level. Just a month prior, Littler, had won the 2023 PDC World Youth Championship convincingly. He was amongst 'the creme de la creme' of darts superstars. First came Christian Kist, who he demolished. Then came Andrew Gilding, then Matt



Campbell, again demolishing both. Up next was one of his role models growing up, the iconic Raymond van Barneveld.

Sky Sports and other sports media outlets were very quick to jump on the coverage, securing footage of the 'Nuke' celebrating as a child with van Barneveld's famous celebration. The Dutchman is far from his best now at 56, but his legacy will always be remembered for the records he broke. Meanwhile, Littler was timid, but confident in himself. He had broken social media with his down-to-earth, resonating character. After his win against Kist in his debut, he told fans that he was off for a kebab, before posing online with the meal for Instagram.

To no one's surprise, he flew past van Barneveld and then another experienced professional in Brandon Dolan at the quarter-final stage. What surprised so many people was that the 16-year-old had only allowed his opponents to take four legs combined, while he had taken a total of 19.

While another astonishing win against Rob Cross saw him become the youngest player to reach the PDC World Darts Championship final ever at 16 years and 347 days, the fairytale ending wasn't to be. Littler lost 7-4 to Luke Humphries, and the £500,000 dream was ultimately not achieved.

However, following the incredible amount of coverage and pressure, Littler was immediately booked onto the Premier League Darts competition; a tour that sees eight of the best face off against each other across the UK and Europe.

At the time of writing, Littler has had some excellent bouts against the best in the world, Michael van Gerwen. He has won his first World Series tournament in Bahrain and will undoubtedly pose a huge threat to those in the Premier League. Of course, he also faces a lot of criticism. He was in the centre of a 'darts boom' which saw close to five million people tune into the final. However, the 17-year-old remains calm, composed and focused on making sure that he

carries the momentum on from the tournament.

In an exclusive interview with GQ (yes, the British GQ), he responded to a question about receiving criticism by saying, "When I'm preparing for a game, I just put my AirPods in and just don't go on social media while I'm just focussing on my darts. When I'm finished I'll check my Instagram followers, check who's following me, but any negatives I don't bother with."

The 17-year-old is living the life at the moment, playing FC 24 on TikTok Live on a Monday while impressing on Sky Sports Live in the Premier League on a Thursday. He has even hung out with other sporting superstars such as James Maddison and internet sensation KSI, while also being spotted amongst Arsenal pair Declan Rice and Aaron Ramsdale. It has been a whirlwind of a start for Luke Littler in his professional career.

By Aaron Jaffe Y13







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