

Dear Parents

The second half of the Autumn Term has again been a busy time in the run up to Christmas, terminating in our Christmas Lunch and our Annual Carol Service which many of you attended, and enjoyed. The kitchen once again put on a superb “seasonal spread” after the Carol Service which was much appreciated by all. The PTA Bottle Raffle was a great success and I am sure they will let you know how much was raised in their next newsletter. Heartfelt thanks for all the bottles sent in – at one point Jenny had so much alcohol under her desk I was beginning to think she might have a problem!



I would like to thank all the pupils and staff who took part in the Carol Service in St.Mary’s which was a lovely service and a credit to all the hard work done throughout the term by all those involved.

Mrs Crutchley has been working hard with all the Food Technology pupils producing Christmas goodies ranging from Star Biscuits for the juniors to Christmas Cakes for the BTEC pupils, all of which were to a very high standard and will grace the Christmas table in many of your homes.



Visitors!

We were delighted to welcome Denis Hosgood, a WW2 Veteran, who spoke to selected Year Groups about his war time experiences. Denis had our boys completely enthralled by his stories of real-life danger, near-misses, deep friendships and human compassion on both sides of the War.

Denis was thirteen years old when war broke out. He left school when he was fourteen to work in a factory that made submarine detectors and by the time he was fifteen, determined to do something to be part of the war effort, he had joined the Home Guard for those men too old or too young to join the regular Army. At sixteen he tried to get past the officers at the Acton Recruitment Office but was told, as he was still too young, that he had to wait a bit longer, until he was seventeen and a

half. Finally, Denis was accepted for Primary Training in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders as an Infantryman. He volunteered for this regiment as his brother had previously joined them and Denis thought the uniform, complete with kilt, was particularly stylish. We all agreed, as the photograph of him resplendent in full kit was passed around the class, that he did indeed look very impressive!

After ten weeks of Advanced Infantry training, experiencing live ammunition and acclimatising to battle conditions, Denis was placed with the Liverpool Scottish Regiment and was ready to begin his career in the Army. He was soon at the Front, seeing action whilst fighting during the invasion of Normandy and the Battle of Le Havre. Battles that should have taken five days, took five weeks, in terrible conditions and being 'stonked' as Denis put it by the enemy. Stonking was the Army word for shelling. Whilst taking German Prisoners of War to a holding 'cage', Denis suffered a severe head wound, with shrapnel lodging in his jaw. The German POWs got help for him and their swift action probably helped to save his life.

Denis was sent back to Cardiff, Wales for hospital treatment to fix his jaw. It was an emotional moment for Denis and all of us as he talked about the nurse on the flight home who helped to prop him up so that he could see the white cliffs of Dover and know for sure that he was back in 'Blighty'. The Army medical officer decided Denis didn't need surgery to get his fused jaw apart and simply stuck his fingers in his mouth and separated the top from the bottom. Staff and students winced alike at this point! From there, Denis was sent back to his regiment and served in India and Japan, visiting Hiro and seeing the impact of the Allied bombing on Hiroshima. In total, he spent four and half years with 'the Colours' and five years in the Reserve. Despite the fact that Denis is now 89, the memory of his experiences and the people he met and served with remains as fresh and powerful as when he set out as a young man to do his bit to protect his country.

Our students had the opportunity to ask Denis searching questions about what day to day life and conditions had been like on the Front. They were moved by his stories of hand-to-hand combat with bayonets and once, in disbelief, having to dodge 'stonking' by their own artillery who were firing on British soldiers by mistake. They were interested to hear in detail about the weapons and tanks used and the medals and commendations that Denis had earned. Despite his protestations that he had not been brave, our boys clearly felt very differently by the end of the talk and realised that they had met someone really rather special. They wanted to salute him and shake his hand as a mark of their respect and understanding.



Year 11 were delighted to welcome Mrs Sue Rudge to their Food Technology lesson to learn more about decorative icing techniques. Sue brought along some samples she was working on including some delightful penguin figures; she demonstrated a number of useful skills including using a piece of spare icing rolled into a ball to roll over the iced cake to give a beautiful sheen and a faultless finish. She will be returning next term when she will share her expertise in modelling with chocolate, just in time for Easter.



Lewis Boyall has successfully completed a six week National Skills Academy course on Hospitality, at Chichester College at weekends. Well done Lewis, and we look forward to seeing you on Masterchef in due course!



Our thanks go to **Charlie Barton**, who is studying A Level Graphics in our 6th Form, for re-designing and producing all our stationery with a more modern approach, but retaining our “believe, inspire, succeed” logo. Watch out for this next time you receive an “actual letter”!



Congratulations to Max Bird !



Max participated in his first car race in the Ginetta Junior Winter Series at Snetterton in November. This was a two day event and Max started 10th on the grid for the final race of the weekend, which was very closely fought and resulted in 8th place overall and a podium position as the leading Rookie and 2nd overall in the Rookie championship. Max will now compete in the 2016 Ginetta Junior championship which takes place at all the major circuits in the UK, including Brands Hatch, Silverstone, Thruxton, Croft, Rockingham, Donnington, Oulton Park and Snetterton between April and October. Watch this space!

NEWS FROM MOTOR MECHANICS DEPARTMENT.

Motor Mech were delighted to receive a gift from Mrs Mapp's husband who kindly donated his Ford Fiesta to us. Mr Burbidge and Mr Sargeant will work with Year 10 in the New Year to remove the engine.

A past Slindon pupil, David Richardson recently paid us a visit. He left Slindon in 1995 and this was his first time back! David is now Head of Motor Mechanics at Fareham College and will be advising Mr Burbidge and Mr Sargeant on the future development of the department.

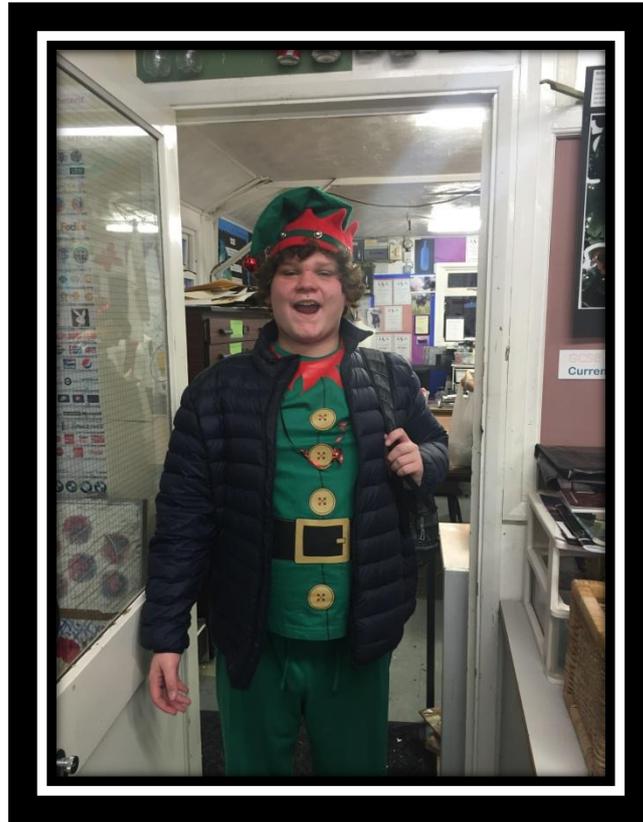
YEAR 7 – HISTORY PROJECT

This half-term, Year 7 have been studying castles during the Medieval period. They constructed their very own castle to demonstrate structural changes during this period. A grand team effort!



CHRISTMAS JUMPERS!

A great deal of effort was made by all to make our Christmas Jumpers/Mufti day a huge success. Amid much fun and laughter we also managed to raise over £137 for Kids for Cash. Well done everyone!



And finally, it leaves me to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year, and I hope you all enjoy your Christmas celebrations as much as we have done at Slindon.



David Quick
Headmaster.

