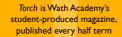




Volume 102 Number 2 November/December 2024

wathacademy.com/torch



You can contribute to *Torch* by attending the after-school club on Thursdays at 2:50 pm in G20 or by emailing articles to **torch@wathacademy.com** 

Published by Wath Academy, Sandygate, Wath-upon-Dearne, Rotherham, S63 7NW

Wath Academy is part of Maltby Learning Trust



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### Season's Greetings from Torch!



Welcome to this festive edition of *Torch*. Our Christmas issue's brilliant cover image is by A Level Art student *Erin H* in Year 12. We hope that all our readers have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you in 2025!

### HOUSE UPDATE



his term at Wath Academy has been one of triumph and generosity with students and staff coming together to excel in House competitions, whilst supporting important causes.

A highlight of the term was the recent response to the help provide clothes for a local homeless shelter. Our school community rallied together, donating over 80 bags of pre-loved coats, hats, and gloves. Thank you to all who donated so generously.

The Children in Need 'Rowshow' was another truly memorable event, where students competed fiercely on the rowing machines to race against each other and help raise a money. While Troy claimed victory, the real win was the collective



effort of rowing 169,506 metres – the equivalent of climbing 21 Mount Everests – and raising £235.64.



In another extraordinary act of generosity, Wath Academy's snowflake was lit on the Sheffield's Children's Hospital after raising an incredible £5,166.20 for the hospital charity. These achievements demonstrate the compassionate spirit of our students, staff, and wider school community.

As the term draws to a close, the House standings are tighter than ever. Rome leads the Work Cup and the Staff Cup, while Troy holds the top spot for the Games Cup. The last day of term promises even more excitement with festive family games and a creative challenge to craft a "trash wreath" from recycled materials, with valuable house points up for grabs.

Well done to everyone involved for making this term so impactful and memorable.

Mr Brown • Head of Thebes

# SPACE TO LEARN CAREERS CONFERENCE

# A group of Year 10s experience careers in the space industry.

he Space to Learn Careers
Conference on Wednesday 13th
November offered an insightful
look into the world of science and space,
and allowed students to explore career
opportunities across various space
industries. It featured interesting talks
about astronauts, satellites and art, as well
as shows using fire and light, making it an
experience to remember.

Upon arrival, we attended a talk all about linking science with the creative arts. We saw some amazing examples of how science can inspire art and design. We even got to try our hand at some creative activities ourselves.

After this, we watched the exciting show 'The Big Melt'. This massive show in the old steel works venue allowed us to spectate explosions, sparks; light and commentary on exactly what it would've been like working in the old steel works with the electric arc furnace.

The second talk was about satellites and how they are used to explore space. We learned about different types of satellites and how they are helping us to understand our universe.

We went around different career stalls and collected some free souvenirs whilst learning about different sectors of science and their impact on society. We also got the chance to tour around Magna. The repurposed steel works is a massive venue and we were able to tour around the fire element, watching fire tornadoes and exploring other activities within the segment.

The third talk was about how astronauts cope in space. We learned about the physical and mental challenges of space flight and how astronauts train to overcome them.

In conclusion, careers events like Space to Learn offer a wide range of different activities with one you are bound to enjoy.

Kassie W · Year 10



"Students explored career opportunities across various space industries."







# A Level History and A Level Politics students visited the capital to experience the places they have been studying in person.

On Thursday 12th and Friday 13th December, 30 Year 12 and Year 13 History and Politics students took part in an action-packed trip to London. The aim of the visit was to further their understanding of the A Level History unit on Britain 1951–2007, as well as developing political awareness and cultural capital.

The students met at Doncaster railway station for an early getaway to King's Cross. Following this, bags were dropped off at

St Paul's Youth Hostel before a visit to the Shard, where students were able to ride up 310 meters up in the elevator to see a panoramic view of London's main sights including the HMS Belfast, the London Eye and Tower Bridge.

Next up was a visit to Covent Garden via the busy London underground. Students soon learned how the Oyster card works and the protocols of travel in London – including always standing on the right on escalators and how quickly doors close when getting on board the trains!

Students enjoyed a pleasant two hours in the festively decorated Covent Garden area. Some visited the British Museum whereas others opted for a bit of Christmas shopping and a bite to eat.

After a busy afternoon, it was back to the youth hostel for a dinner before we were off again to the theatre to see Les Misérables — a real highlight of the trip. Students are currently completing a non-exam assessment on the French Revolution, so the musical really enhanced their understanding of the period. Students were particularly impressed with the fantastic vocal performances — not a dry eye in the house. Then it was back to the hostel for a much needed sleep.

Day 2 started with a full English breakfast before heading to the Notting Hill area, where the students took part in a guided walking tour. They marvelled at how



The Sondheim Theatre



Outside Buckingham Palace

affluent the area is today, took in the key sights from the Notting Hill movie and discussed the key events from the area's past, including the development of multiculturalism such as the arrival of the Windrush generation, the Notting Hill Riots and the development of the Notting Hill Carnival.

A walk through the key sights of the Westminster area was next up. Students saw Big Ben, called in at Buckingham Palace, saw the famous Christmas tree from Norway at Trafalgar Square, and attempted to see if Keir Starmer was in at 10 Downing Street. Politics students then had the chance to visit the Supreme Court before all the group took part in a tour and workshop of the Houses of Parliament.

Another highlight of the trip was the guided tour of Westminster Hall where the late Queen Elizabeth II recently laid in state, followed by the opportunity to enter both chambers – the House of Commons and the House of Lords – where two actual peers were spotted. Students then took



Notting Hill



Before the performance of Les Misérables

part in a very informative workshop where they created their own political party and developed their own slogans and policies.

Finally, we were off the King's Cross station for the journey back to Doncaster. An exhausting but enjoyable time was had by all.

Mrs Champlin • Subject Leader History



Westminister Hall

### Do You Know What the Christmas Golden Ticket Events Will Be?

# The end of every term means it's Golden Ticket Event time!

his half term we have got Christmas themed golden ticket awards! For example, you can take part in ice-skating, wreath pizza making, starbooks and driving range! I have already chosen ice-skating and I'm so excited.

For the ice-skating, everyone who will be going will go by coach to the ice arena in Sheffield. Hopefully, it will be really fun as I will be going.

For wreath pizza making, everyone who has signed up will be decorating pizzas in the shape of a wreath. This one seems like

a fun and tasty one – as well as being very festive!

For starbooks, they will be making baubles, reading books and drinking hot drinks.

For the driving range, they will be going to Waterfront Golf Club and using the driving range.

These are all worth 50 praise points which we will get from our teachers if we have done something exceptional.

Eva R • Year 7



# IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

### Some picture highlights from the autumn term.



The whole school gathered on Sandygate to watch the Tour of Britain cycling race on 5th September.



Wath Academy's Better Learners Better Workers ambassadors visited Esh Construction in Rotherham on a sunny day in late November. They spoke to employees about their roles and discovered the range careers in the construction industry. They also donned hard hats to see a working building site in action.



The Department of Media Studies celebrated 10 years since it was established in September 2014.

### From the Archives

Each edition of *Torch*, we reprint an article from Wath Academy's extensive collection of old school magazines (available online at wathacademy.com/torch). Just before Christmas 1991, Wath Comprehensive School students conducted a survey to find out the people of Wath-upon-Dearne's feelings about Christmas and published the results in *The Wathonian*.



### A Christmas Survey (1991)

ur survey consisted of four questions inquiring the likes, dislikes and opinions on Christmas. It's all very well preaching to the public that your shop provides the perfect gifts for all your relations and friends. In the midst of all this fun and frolics, do we really forget what Christmas is all about? We took to the streets to find out!

#### Is Christmas too commercialised?

How many of you are sick of dragging your screaming brats to see numerous Santa Clauses, ho-ho-hoing in wellies? Or enjoy queuing for hours just so your child receives a painful squat on Santa's lap and cheap plastic necklace or truck. Well if you're looking for a solution to this pointless activity year after year than I'm afraid I can't offer one, but I can tell you how many share your opinion and how many actually enjoy this money-grabbing season. Our results showed that as the customers got older they began to agree that Christmas is over-commercialised and prefer a quieter traditional Christmas.

#### What do you like about Christmas?

OK, so you hate shopping in the crowds, you hate Santa Claus and absolutely draw the line at kissing some creep under the mistletoe! So what do you actually enjoy about the festive season?

### What are your favourite Christmas traditions?

The 12- to 16-year-olds liked best the gifts they received and I think many of them know that Santa Claus comes through the front door and not the chimney! 16- to 25-year-olds preferred the presents as well (aw!). You see they're all just big kids really. They also very persistently suggested socialising was their favourite Christmas tradition. One person also admitted he liked the mistletoe (well, well, well)!

#### What do you dislike about Christmas?

We ask you! 12- to 16-year-olds said they disliked their grandma coming (oh deary me) and the Queen's speech (well, come on now, it is a bit dreary). 16- to 25-year-olds were a money-cautious lot and complained the only drawback of Christmas was spending money. 25- to 35-year-olds agreed that things were too expensive and too much fuss was created about Christmas (party poopers!). The older ones didn't say anything new apart from those cats' choir carol singers that always turn up without fail year after year. Well don't you sound boring.

Come on you ravers and ragers, it's Christmas so let's party!

# Wild in Wath

5 Fascinating Animals to Spot in Wath This Winter

Phoenix D Year 8

1

#### **Robins**

These cheerful little birds are easy to spot with their red breasts and melodic songs. Male robins are more vibrant in colour than females, who rely on duller tones for camouflage while nesting. Hang fat balls in your garden, and you may attract these festive visitors.



#### **Squirrels**

Contrary to widely held belief, Grey Squirrels do not truly hibernate in the UK. They remain active, scampering around and digging up food stores they buried earlier in the year, even during the coldest months.

I usually spot these on winter walks in Wath Woods near the Wath hospital.



3

#### Deer

A little bit further away, the Wentworth Estates are home to herds of hundreds of Red and Fallow Deer. Red deer are the larger of the two, with reddish-brown coats, while fallow deer are smaller and have white spots on them in winter.



### Sparrowhawks

Sparrowhawks are small birds of prey with striped breasts and sharp talons, usually found soaring above RSPB Old Moor, scanning for prey to pounce on. Winter's scarcity of food makes them bolder, venturing into gardens all over Wath.

As I type this, one is perched in my garden, eyeing up my chickens and trying to figure out a way through the protective net!



<del>\_</del> .

#### Turtles

Turtles are not native to Britain, but a small family has made Manvers Lake their home. They can often be seen basking on their favorite floating log on the far side of the lake. Originally pets released into the wild, they have managed to survive the winters thanks to the warmth from thermal vents rising through the submerged mine shafts below.



### Has Christmas Lost Its Meaning?

Ruby looks into whether the original meaning of Christmas has been lost.

as Christmas lost its meaning? It's a question which is always asked around this time of year. In recent years, the people who celebrate Christmas do it for the gifts or the food, which isn't what it was made for.

Historically, Christmas originated from a pagan holiday, which was developed by Christianity who used the day to celebrate the birth of Christ. The reason it has been celebrated for so many years is as a way to thank Christ for all of his contributions during his life and for God who has blessed us with life. However, nowadays, Christmas has mostly lost its religious meaning. But the fact it is still celebrated shows that the growth of secularisation hasn't removed some of the most important holidays many people feel the need to celebrate.

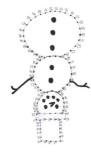
For many, Christmas is the only time of year they can see their loved ones and give to the people they appreciate the most. They have celebrations where people who don't normally spend much time together can all come together at once. Food is shared among the masses and charities give to those during the times they most need it. Even other cultures celebrate Christmas to show their respect for the other people in their society and how they appreciate some of the things that Christmas brings to the world.

So even though Christmas has lost a lot of its religious significance in society, in some ways, it has created other important reasons as to why we still celebrate it today.

Ruby Eleanor R • Year 12

### Write for Torch!

Attend the afterschool club on Thursdays at 2:50 pm in G20 or email torch@ wathacademy.com



7. Bauble	۱4. Green	
6. Snowman	13. Red	20. Mistletoe
5. Ornament	12. Reindeer	l9. Grinch
4. Snowflakes	II. Nativity	18. Festive
3. Santa	ləsniT.01	<ol> <li>Gingerbread</li> </ol>
7. Elf	9. Christmas tree	16. Candy cane
l. Sleigh	8. Star	<ol><li>Presents</li></ol>

Christmas Anagrams

Puzzle Solutions

Features

# Santa Claus Revealed

# Mischa W delves into the history of Christmas's most iconic figure.

anta Claus is arguably the most prominent figure of the festive season worldwide, despite being viewed as a different figure in every culture. In England, we trace Santa Claus back to a prominent monk named St. Nicholas, believed to have been born around A.D. 280 near Myra in modern-day Turkey and was the most

popular saint in Europe during the Renaissance period. From then, figures resembling Santa Claus began to work their way into play productions with the first recorded being Ben Johnson's Christmas, His Masque performed for the royal court in 1616 wherein the character of Christmas (named 'Old Christmas') appeared in old fashioned clothes with a long beard. Moving through the 1900s, the jolly, humanised version

Features

of Father Christmas began to appear as a painting, illustrated by Haddon Sundblom and commissioned by none other than the Coca-Cola company, emerged presenting St Nicholas as we know him today. Though Sundblom is said to be responsible for the distribution of this jolly and rosy-cheeked Santa Claus, his inspiration is said to have arisen from the 1822 poem by Clement Clark Moore known as 'Twas the Night Before Christmas'.

While in England the thought of Santa Claus brings us back to a large, jolly man in a red suit, Italians believe their stockings are filled by a friendly witch named La Beffana. One could only imagine the punishment for being naughty if Santa Claus was a witch! German and Swiss children receive their gifts at Christmas from a man named

KrisKringle or Christkind, meanwhile, Spain believes their presents are brought by the three wise men (or the 'Reyes Magos').

For all those sceptics who question the existence of Santa Claus, these stories of real-life Santa sightings may change your mind. In Scotland, a sighting was reported in the 1970s of Santa flying very fast and low above the home of a young boy named limmy,

followed by the sound of bells. For Jimmy's sake, let us hope this was Santa! However, this was not an isolated incident with another sighting being recorded in England in 2000 as a boy named Alex heard the large footsteps of a figure downstairs and, upon investigating, found a man dressed in red placing presents under his tree.

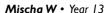


Illustration: Kenny Meadows, Illustrated London News, 1847



# How to Make a Snowflake Garland

Making paper snowflakes is a classic Christmas tradition and they look really pretty when they are finished. However, getting the folding and cutting just right can be tricky. So let Poppy G in Year 7 be your guide to making your snowflakes perfect!



Features

Fold the paper as though to make a card.



Then fold down, make sure they are tight folds, and you can see the crease.

Step 2

Step 4



Step 3
Unfold the last step.



On the left, fold to the middle crease.



Step 5

On the right, fold the paper to the crease closest to the left.



Step 6

On the right, fold the paper to the crease closest to the left.

Features



Step 7

Turn your paper around .



Step 8

Fold the right side over to the left – make this as neat and even as possible.



Step 9

As one side will have an uneven top, chop it off.



Step 10

Draw this pattern onto one side of the paper.



Step 11

You will then need to cut it out, once again as neat as possible



Now you will have a snowflake! If you are wanting to turn this into a garland, punch a hole at the top (with a hole puncher) and run some ribbon

Poppy G • Year 7

through!

# Snow Is Falling

Are you dreaming of a white Christmas? Jasmine S in Year 7 is certainly hoping for snow this festive period. Here she outlines some activities you can do if we are lucky enough to have a flurry.

uring Christmas time, snow comes falling down, piling up and causing great fun and games for all children and adults of any age. I will list a few of the fun games and things to make and enjoy while the white snow is fresh.

First, will be a snowball fight. Make sure not to compress the snow too much as it will turn into ice and hurt when is thrown. Otherwise, this can be a great game to take part in and win or lose.

Second, **building a snowman**. This can be wonderful fun as it is a family and friend activity to spread joy. The amazing fluffy

substance can be rolled up tight to create balls of snow toppled upon one another to make a terrific snowman.

Third will be **snow angels**. These can be great because you can lay in the freezing cold but get an amazing outcome of a beautiful snow angel. Make sure you don't get too cold so put on plenty of layers to stay warm in the cold and icy weather.

I hope you enjoy my three ideas for enjoying the Christmas snow and make sure to spread the Christmas spirit and joy.

Jasmine S • Year 7

Features

### New Year Festivities

### How is new year celebrated around the world?

'm sure you all will be celebrating new year by watching some fireworks, whether that is on television or somewhere locally. Other countries have different celebrations so I will explain a few.

and red clothing. Money in envelopes is often given to children. The purpose of this tradition is to bring forward the new year's fortune and pass the old one.

#### **USA**

American families and friends, often with a singalong along, gather to share a meal welcoming the New Year. Watching festivals from Times Square is also a tradition they enjoy. New Year's Day is a national holiday for all Americans.

#### China

Chinese family members' celebrations include fireworks, firecrackers, decorations

#### Peru

Peruvian celebrations contain a common tradition and many others that aren't that common through the whole of Peru! The most common tradition is to eat 13 grapes while thinking of 12 wishes. For more definition, Peruvians eat the 13 grapes to represent the past 12 months and the 13th for good luck. The 12 wishes are to greet the new 12 months for the following year.

Jasmine S • Year 7



# Christmas Movies

# Trying to get into the Christmas spirit? An easy way to get jolly is a cosy movie night!

In this article, you will be given many recommended movies to watch, along with the overall plot to narrow down your variety of films, to choose which one to watch.

### The Grinch (2018)

Entertainment



The Grinch is a very famous Christmas movie, for a range of different ages, due to the fact it is a family comedy, perfect to watch with your siblings (if you have any). The Grinch is overall about a creature (the Grinch) who hates

Christmas and everything enjoyable about it. Because of this, he tries to destroy and ruin Christmas, and you follow him on the journey!

#### The Christmas Chronicles (2018)



The Christmas Chronicles is another great family film, once again, especially with family members you are close to in age, e.g. cousins and siblings. The Christmas Chronicles is about to siblings, who

stay up on Christmas Eve and meet Santa. They then sneak onto the sledge and travel across the world and get into a bit of trouble along the way!

### **Elf** (2003)

As a baby, Buddy is taken to the North Pole and is raised by elves as one of their own – while being horrible at the job. When fully grown, about 10 times the size of the actual elves, he is taken back to America



and tries to find his father, while spreading the Christmas spirit (and trouble).

#### Home Alone (1990)

Looking for a traditional Christmas film? This is the solution! When Kevin and his massive family are about to go on holiday they all wake up very late for their morning flight and, in a rush, they forget



little Kevin. Alone by himself, he has to face some troubles, but how?

#### Deck the Halls (2006)

A Christmas-obsessed man is now living next to a 'don't care about Christmas' man. During the holiday season, it is his duty to help him love Christmas and all the things that come along with it!



Poppy G • Year 7

### **REVIEWS**

### The Christmasaurus by Tom Fletcher

This book is called *The Christmasaurus*. It is all about a boy called William who has lost his mum. Him and his dad are poor. Then his dad meets another woman and the next thing he knows he has a sister called Brenda Payne, who is very annoying. Then he asks for a dinosaur for Christmas and Father Christmas gives him a real dinosaur for Christmas, rather than a toy dinosaur. William falls in love with the dinosaur who is called the Christmasaurus.

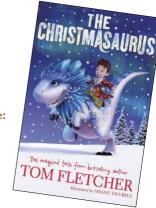
This is a very good book to read if you like fantasy books. I found this book a very interesting book to read because of the way the characters lived their lives:

Brenda Payne: she is a very lively character William: he is a toned down character and not as lively

Pamela Payne (Brenda Payne's mum): she wants William and Brenda to have the best bond anyone could ever have William's dad: all I can say is he loves Christmas

The Christmasaurus: a very adventurous character and will do anything for William

Ruby B • Year 7



### **How the Grinch Stole Christmas** (currently available on Netflix and showing on ITV2 on Sun 22nd Dec at 4:40 pm and Christmas Day at 2:05 pm)

This Christmas film from the year 2000 is a classic and I am going to review it! This film has been made as an animation and a regular movie. This film has been



watched by many people including myself and you should definitely consider watching it.

This is one of my favourite Christmas films because it has lots of funny scenes and is very heartfelt towards the end.

A summary of this film is a creature called the Grinch absolutely despises Christmas and tries to ruin it. Everyone in Whoville, the local village, is always in the Christmas spirit so they absolutely hate him. But then this little girl steps up and invites him to the town's Holiday Cheermeister. The Grinch's heart then grows three times as big he then is in the Christmas spirit and celebrates with them every year!

What do you think is the true meaning of Christmas?

Miley W-L • Year 7

### **Sum 41 – Tour of the Setting Sum** (28th October 2024 at Co-op Live, Manchester)

At the end of October, I made my way to the Co-op Live in Manchester to see one of my favourite bands on one of their last shows they will play in the UK. For those who aren't aware, Sum 41 are a Canadian pop-punk band formed by Deryck Whibley, previously from the band Kaspir.

Once I had arrived at the concert. I had quickly realised that it was very crowded due to the heaps of people waiting to get inside. As I got in, I was pulled into the flow of the people. After grabbing a drink, I made my way to the floor as I had heard the opening act begin. The Bronx were amazing despite my unfamiliarity with their music. I always enjoying seeing opening artists I don't know as it is a great way to discover new music. As they shortly made their way off stage, there was a rather long intermission.

Lead singer Deryck Whibley (Image: 2eight, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons)

Lots of pop-punk and punk songs came on, which the crowd sang along to as if they were performing in real time. Songs by the likes of Green Day, Rancid, The Offspring and many more were being sung by the

masses of people gathered in the arena. Soon, 'TNT' by AC/DC came on, with the lyrics booming all around and the lights on stage began to change. As the song reached the end, the band could be seen getting their instruments ready to start the show, as the curtain dropped as a crossfade

between the recorded tracks and the live music was created.

Then, a long time of great songs and loss of voice was enjoyed. Songs such as 'Fat Lip'. 'Pieces' and 'We're All to Blame' were played, as well as 'Machine Gun', a song they hadn't played live in 20 years, was performed. I never thought I'd see so many middle aged men jumping around and flailing their arms around. but it sure was a site to see. All of the songs were amazing and the

crowd created an amazing atmosphere alongside the music.

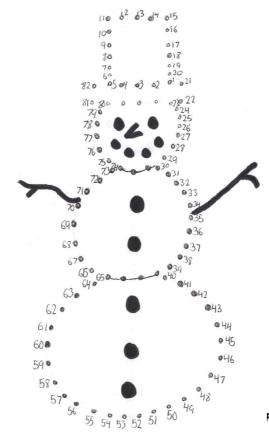
I recommend that if an artist you enjoy has a final tour before they retire, take the opportunity to go if you have it. You won't forget it.

Ruby Eleanor R • Year 12

### Puzzles







Poppy G • Year 7

### Christmas Anagrams

- I. IHLESG
- 2. FEL
- 3. ASTNA
- 4. KSWLOANSF
- 5. TANEONRM
- 6. NOASWNM
- 7. BLAEBU

- 8. ASTR
- 9. SIAERHTRM SECT
- 10. ETNLSI
- II. TNYIAVTI
- 12. EDERIENR
- 12. LDLN
- 13. EDR
- 14. ENGRE

- 15. ESNPTRES
- 16. NYCDE AENA
- 17. EIDERAGRNBG
- 18. ETEFISV
- 19. CINGHR
- 20. TMSEIOLT

Jasmine S & Ruby B • Year 7

# MOVEMENT **EVENING**

28,29 & 30 JANUARY | 6:30PM

Tickets -£5.00 | MAIN HALL



**BOOK ONLINE** 



Wath Academy

www.wathacademy.com

