

## Diary of our excursion to the south of England – the first day and the second day, September 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 2010

One day before the school year started, on the evening of September 13<sup>th</sup>, a crowd of 45 excited students and three of their teachers met at the bus stop of our school. Our destination was the south of England.

At the sight of the mountainous heaps of luggage nobody thought it possible that all this could be loaded into our coach. But our bus driver Andy overcame that difficult task and carefully stored our belongings into the spacious boot of this coach.

After three stops we finally arrived at Calais, where we got onto the ferry, some of us rather reluctantly. Gale-force gusts of wind and a heavy swell made for a rough crossing of the English Channel. Yet nobody got sea-sick or even had to vomit.

Straight off the ferry we visited “Shakespeare Cliff”, where we had the privilege to listen to a highly remarkable report on its geology and on its literary references.



Getting hungry and slightly impatient, we couldn't wait to get to Brighton. But we were sadly disappointed to realize that our next stop was Battle. Right after our arrival there some of us tasted their first fish and chips, while others recharged on their lunch packets from home. Revitalised we took a tour round the famous battlefield of 1066 and listened to an illuminating talk presented by two of our good-looking classmates, Tina and Jule.

Storm-tossed Brighton was our next destination. Strolling along Brighton Pier some of our lightweights were nearly blown into the foaming sea, while those, who had so far been able to maintain a hairstyle of sorts, finally gave up trying.



Exhausted we left the pier and were led into downtown Brighton. We stopped at the “Royal Pavilion” where Jana and Rebecca delivered their talk on everything worth knowing about Brighton and its history

Vanessa



After this tour we were quite happy to have some time on our own. Most of us had a bite and finished an exciting day with one or two pints in a pub.

### **Third day, September 15<sup>th</sup> 2010**

After a slightly uncomfortable night at our hostel in Brighton, where fifteen of us had to sleep in one room with bunk beds, we just about managed to get our gear together, have breakfast and get on our coach in time.

We left at 9.30 a.m. and arrived at Salisbury after a bus-ride of about one and a half hours. Our cathedral guides were already waiting for us and succeeded in arousing our interest in the gothic architecture of Salisbury Cathedral. Especially the girls immediately took to the overwhelming charm of our guides, who conveyed the architecture, history and singularity of that cathedral intelligibly and with a great sense of English humour. Our tour reached a climax when we were allowed to have a look at Magna Charta in the Chapter House. After that we had lunch in a cafeteria near the cathedral.

Our next stop was Stonehenge, where we arrived at two p.m. There Katja and Theresa gave a report – impaired by gale-force gusts of wind - on the history of the mysterious stones. Then we got the chance to explore Stonehenge on our own. Unfortunately the crowds of people removed some of the mystery of the place.



Off we went to Avebury, where we arrived after some twenty minutes. Again we saw masses of big stones. The great circle consists of a grass-covered chalk-stone bank, which is 1,396 feet in diameter (427 meters) and 20 feet high (6 meters) with a deep inner ditch having four entrances at the cardinal compass points. Just inside the ditch lies a grand circle of massive and irregular sarsen stones. This

circle, originally composed of at least 98 stones but now having only 27, encloses two smaller stone circles. If you look twice you can recognize a pattern, possibly a serpent.

Laura



### **Fourth day: September 16<sup>th</sup>; Oxford → City-walk and Country-walk**

When we woke up in Oxford in the morning knowing that we would be staying another night in this nice Holiday Inn Hotel, we were quite sure that this day wouldn't mean sitting in the coach for hours, but this proved to be a grave error. After a delicious breakfast we were told to meet at the bus to have a city-walk through Oxford including the visit of a place we only can dream of studying and living there: the University of Oxford.

After about an hour on the bus – due to a traffic jam - we were finally dropped off to meet our very friendly guides and after getting split into two groups the walk immediately started. Our way was straight towards the University - or to be more precise - Trinity College, but we could not get in, because it was too early. So we went on walking and finally arrived at the Museum of History and Science with the beautiful Sheldonian Theatre and the Bodleian Library where we saw a famous writer whose book was the basis for Philip Pullman's trilogy “His Dark Materials” including the famous book “Northern Lights” better known as “The Golden Compass”. After all we walked back to Trinity College and were allowed to enter. The tour through the complex was very impressive and after visiting the dining hall and the garden of the College it ended in the church of the college. Finally we were taken to the shopping mall of Oxford where our tour ended.

Back at the bus we realised another point on our schedule: a country-walk. We rode for about two hours through the Cotswolds and at last were dropped at - as I would call it - a dirt track. We jumped and climbed over fences, walked through pastures with cows and finally through a forest with no real path underneath our feet and asked ourselves: “What the hell is Mr Schmidt doing and where is he leading us? Does he really know the way or are we lost and will never see dear Dinkelsbühl again?”



But after about an hour of walking and nearly fighting our way through the forest and nearly impenetrable brambles we arrived at the remains of an old Roman Villa with a beautiful mosaic, which was very impressive there in the middle of nowhere.



We started our trip back to the coach and sitting in the bus we all were tired and totally wiped out but all of us knew: "Now we have some free time, now the real day starts!" =)

Vini

### Fifth day, September 17<sup>th</sup> 2010

On our 4<sup>th</sup> day we woke up in our Holiday Inn Hotel in Oxford and enjoyed a great breakfast. After that we drove to Windsor. There we had the possibility to go shopping and buy some souvenirs or visit Windsor Castle. Later, we moved on to London to the King Solomon Hotel. In the following hours



we had a guided bus tour through London where we got a lot of impressions of London's sights and its history.

In the evening we had the option between the "Jack the Ripper Walk" and several musicals like "Lion King", "Billy Elliot" or "Phantom of the Opera". The walk started at the Tower of London (where we met our guide) and took us to the places where some of his victims (mostly prostitutes over the age of 40 years) were killed.

Showing in three different theatres, each of the musicals was fascinating and unique in its own way. All of them were worth watching!

After our evening activities we had some free time to do things on our own like going to an English pub. Finally we went home by tube and thought about our amazing day in London.



Anna, Kim, Solveig and Andrea, Q12

## Sixth day, September 18<sup>th</sup> 2010

September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010 the last day of our educational journey to the southern part of England, thus all of us were in two minds about leaving. While we loaded our suitcases - whose weight seemed to have doubled after several shopping tours to Top Shop and all the other absolutely marvellous and very British shopping facilities – into the bus for the last time all of us looked back on the last days full of adventure with nostalgia, but on the other hand we were looking forward to getting home, too. Nevertheless, we were thankful for having the opportunity of staying one more day in London and visiting the famous Globe Theatre which had already been topic of our English lessons a year ago. Having put everything into the fully loaded bus, we took the tube to the city of London and crossed the river Thames over the Millennium Bridge.



When we arrived at the Globe at 10 we did not get a very friendly welcome and were told by our guide that the stage was being prepared for a new play. Although we were promised that this should not be a problem, the construction noise made it difficult to understand and follow the information given by our guide.

However, here are some facts about the famous Globe Theatre:

It was first constructed in 1599 outside the city of London, where all of the other places of entertainment, for instance Bear Baiting, were located, too. On 29 June 1613 the Globe Theatre went up in flames during a performance of "Henry the Eight", as a cannon, set off during the performance, mis-fired, igniting the wooden beams and the thatch. Because of its great popularity before this incident it was already rebuilt in the following year. However, like all the other theatres in London, the Globe was closed down by the Puritans in 1642 and pulled down only two years later.

The famous Globe Theatre fell into oblivion until an American actor called Sam Wanamaker decided to rebuild it in 1949. 48 years later, in 1997 was the reopening of the Shakespeare's Globe. Every year since then it hosts several of Shakespeare's performances from May till September. The notable thing about such a visit is above all the layout of the Globe Theatre which is typical of a so-called Elizabethan theatre. From what we know the old Globe Theatre was a three-storey, open-air amphitheatre that could house up to 3000 spectators. At the base of the stage, there was an area called the pit where, people could stand on the floor to watch the performance for only about one penny. A rectangle stage platform thrust out into the middle of the open-air yard. Around this yard were three levels of stadium-style canopied seats offered for the wealthier visitors.

In the rebuilt Globe Theatre almost everything remained the same with a few exceptions, for instance only 1500 visitors per performance are allowed today. In addition it should be mentioned that the modern reconstruction of the Globe was built approximately 230 metres from the side where the original theatre had been located.

After a short farewell our thirty-minute tour came to an end and we finally realised that this was the last one we had listened to on our England trip. Most of us were glad that we could ease our pain of parting by doing some real hardcore shopping as we were given some free time in London. Some others used their leisure time in order to provide themselves with food to be prepared for the long journey home.

At 5.30 p.m. the group - fortunately no one was missing - set out on their journey back home to Dinkelsbühl after having had a wonderful time in the southern part of England.

Daniela