

RUMBLE MUSEUM

Newsletter
Jan 19
2022

ABOUT US

The Rumble Museum at Cheney is run by educational charity The Iris Project and spread throughout corridors and rooms. We run regular projects, talks and events, and have two active student Museum Councils.

MUSEUM COUNCIL DISCOVER OXFORD STORIES

On Thursday afternoon the Year Eight Museum Council, and Sixth Form Museum Volunteers, set off on a journey to the Story Museum to discover some of the places in Oxford connected to well-known stories and authors.

We were greeted at the Story Museum by Isy Mead who started by taking us to a passageway next to St Mary's Church, where she explained that C.S Lewis had been inspired on a very snowy day in the 1940s by looking up the passageway and seeing a lantern, and looking at a door with what looked like a lion's face carving. We heard about how C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien and other writers met regularly at the Eagle & Child pub on St Giles and called themselves the "inklings". They would discuss their ideas for books there. We looked at the rooftops of the colleges, and heard about Philip Pullman's Northern Lights where a girl called Lyra would explore the rooftops as well as the world underneath people's feet.



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MUSEUM COUNCIL DISCOVER OXFORD STORIES CONTINUED...

We looked at some new gargoyles carved for the Bodleian Library and saw how they each featured different stories or people connected to stories in Oxford. We then made our way to Magpie Lane, where we heard about the ghost of a woman waiting for her fiance to come back from the war. Locals report still seeing her walking back and forth!

We walked past the locked gate of Christ Church college garden, which inspired Lewis Carroll to imagine Alice trying to get into a locked garden in his Alice in Wonderland. We walked past Pembroke College, where J.R.R. Tolkien taught languages and heard about how his experiences of World War One inspired some of his ideas in The Hobbit and Lord of the Rings, and how he invented his own languages and drew beautiful illustrations and maps for his works.

This fascinating trip kicks off an exciting new Museum Council project involving stories, The project itself is top secret except for those who are taking part, but all will be revealed on Wednesday 9th March! Thank you very much to Isy and the Story Museum team.



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STORYTELLER BEN HAGGARTY BRINGS GREEK STORIES TO LIFE

Last Friday, we were very lucky to be able to welcome Ben Haggarty to the Iris Classics Centre to deliver fascinating and engaging workshops to three different groups. In the first session, Ben encouraged the students to look at some classical objects, such as a Greek jar, and to think about the stories that might lie behind each object - how was it made, why is there a crack in it, how did it arrive. Then he asked the students to look at the designs and images on the object, and think about what they might be representing. He talked about how stories can arise from very ordinary things. He told the story of Erysichthon, a huntsman who cut down a tree in a grove sacred to Demeter, and who was cursed with a hunger that could never be satiated.

For the second two groups, Ben told the well-known story of Apollo and Daphne, but he started with the beginning of creation, and chaos, Gaia and Ouranus, before telling the story of Rhea and Cronus. He then moved on to the birth of Apollo and Artemis from their mother Leto (forbidden to give birth on mainland by Hera since Zeus made Leto pregnant). He introduced the story of Leucippus, a companion of Daphne, before telling the story of Apollo's love for Daphne, her fleeing from him and praying for help, and finally turning into a tree.

The stories were told with great artistry and skill, containing lots of fascinating extra details, and after each workshop, there was an opportunity to ask questions and discuss themes, and some really interesting strands of conversation about religion, fact and fiction, and the shapes of stories emerged. We are very grateful to Ben for introducing us to such gripping storytelling.

