

Headlight



Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community

www.mhsheadlight.weebly.com

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Grasse is Always Greener

Meredith Piela, Senior
Editor-in-Chief

This past fall, the AP French class at Marblehead High School had the pleasure of hosting our penpals from the Lycee Alexis de Tocqueville in Grasse, France, for two weeks. During last week's vacation, we were fortunate enough to visit our correspondents in France as part of the exchange. Over the course of the week, we strengthened our friendships and our French, and explored many beautiful towns in the south of France.

The first night we were there, I joined my penpal, Angelique, and some of her relatives for dinner. She had previously told me that no one in her family spoke English, so I knew I was in for true French immersion. Before dinner, I prepared myself by learning how to say "please speak a little slower" (*parlez plus lentement, s'il vous plait*) and the correct way to say "I'm not hungry" (*je n'ai pas faim*), because I had heard stories of people saying "I'm full" or "I'm finished," which actually translated to "I'm pregnant" or "I'm dying." Fortunately, dinner turned out to be a success with conversation, as we quickly realized music was a good topic. Although I naturally had a few speaking mishaps (when asked by Angelique's father what I would be doing one day, I misheard the question as "have a good day," so I said thank you), I found my French improving throughout the week.

Because we visited different towns and areas during the week, such as Cannes, Nice, and Monaco, there was a lot of transportation occurring. If you didn't already know, the French drive stick shift in order to start, stop, and drive quickly. In addition to the standard driving, there were also an enormous number of speed-bumps, which led to some herky-jerky driving. On our daily excursions, we usually took a coach bus, which did not fit in too well with the other cars, and sharp turns made by these busses on the narrow roads were usually taken in two tries.

Although I loved our daily excursions, such as touring museums and the palace of Monaco, it was great to have relaxing days when we got to shop, eat, and explore the towns. One of my favorite days was when we visited various small towns that

showcased France's beauty. Our first stop that day was to Gourdon, where we visited magnificent chateau gardens that offered a beautiful view of Southern France. We then left the gardens and made our way to the Confiserie Florian, a candy factory. After touring the factory and learning about how the French are known for candy-ing flowers such as rose, jasmine, and violet, we were able to sample and buy some treats for ourselves (my sweet tooth thoroughly enjoyed this visit). For the rest of the day, we visited beautiful historic towns such as Vence, Tournettes-sur-Loup, and Valbonne, where we had a chance to do some shopping, go to cafes, and even take a nap in a park. Having the opportunity to explore the different areas allowed us to really enjoy the beauty of France.

I have thought for years about how exciting it would be to go on a school trip to Europe. This experience was much more interesting than I had dreamed of, because instead of staying in a hotel as a class, we each stayed at a different home and were able to immerse ourselves in the French language and culture. Of course, this trip would not be possible without Mrs. Francois, our French teacher at the high school who helped organize the trip and bring back the French exchange after partaking in it when she was at MHS. Along with Mrs. Francois, we had the pleasure of being chaperoned by Ms. Greenburg, another language teacher at MHS, who is one of the organizers and chaperones of the World Challenge trips. Without Mrs. Francois and Ms. Greenburg, this trip would not be in existence, so a big "merci" is given to them.

It was quite a week, and I am definitely looking forward to being back with my family, friends, and pet, as well as being back in my own house. I am already missing the beauty and people of France, but I know it's time to say "au revoir" to this beautiful country.

Our hearts and thoughts remain in Nice with our friend and classmate Ben Farrar, who is recovering from serious injuries at the Saint Roch Hospital. Thoughts and well wishes can be sent to Ben and his family in France by using the website www.supportbenfarrar.com. This way Ben will be able to see your messages of support while he recovers from his injury. You can upload messages or images for him at anytime using the website.

THIS WEEKEND... Come down to Devereux Beach and support the Senior Class at the annual SENIOR CLASS CARNIVAL!

The Carnival runs from *Thursday to Sunday*. There will be *rides, games, food and lots of fun* for all ages!

Come on down to *Devereux Beach this weekend* and support the Senior Class in their *annual fundraiser*.

Tickets will be available at the carnival for use on all rides and attractions.

Bunking with the Bordens (Part II)

Alicia Katz, Sophomore
Reporter

This is Part II of Alicia Katz's experience in the Borden House. Alicia spent the night there on January 31st with a spirit medium and a group of 27.

I first arrived at the house at roughly 6 p.m. to be greeted by laughter. Not my initial expectation for entering the house, but I went with it. I was undoubtedly shy at first, being that I was the youngest there and also did not know what I was walking into at first. My cousin was late, so I took it upon myself to explore the house. It definitely felt eerie, but so does my house when I walk through it alone.

At around 9 o'clock that night, Karen gathered everyone in the living room to talk about her personal experiences and some general guidelines. It was interesting to hear everyone talk about strategies for investigating the house. It felt like my soccer coach was giving me a pep talk before a big game. We all agreed that we should break up into groups of five or six so that way the four floors weren't too crowded. My first stop was the basement.

The basement was your stereotypical creepy basement, the kind that you tell the pretty blond girl in horror movies to not go near. My cousin and I went down with three other people, but I chose to stay by myself as much as possible. I did not want them to influence what I felt or saw. I stood in the center of the area where the most activity supposedly happened. The lights were out except for a small green light in the upper corner. If I'm being honest, I felt absolutely nothing. It was nothing more than a creepy basement. I waited for my cousin to finish up before we traveled upstairs to the attic.

The attic consisted of three bedrooms, one bathroom, and one sitting room. Only one of the bedrooms was original to the house, and that was the bedroom that belonged to Bridget. Randy and I went into the other two rooms first. In one of the rooms there was a "portal" in the closet. The thought scared me, but then I realized

I'm not Carol Anne and this wasn't Poltergeist. My cousin was very eager to enter the closet, so I sat on the bed. He claimed that he was seeing lights on the column that was directly in front of the closet. He wanted me to verify so I switched places with him. I stepped into the closet and saw no lights, but I could not move my feet to leave. I am still unsure of what I felt, but my breath was caught in my throat and it felt as if I was in someone's personal space, and this person was not happy about it. In a burst of energy, I ran from the closet telling my cousin to go back in the closet. He told me afterward he felt the same thing. While he was in the closet, I sat on the bed, at which point, I could have sworn a young child just faintly whispered in my ear. I cannot tell you what was said, because I was only able to feel it.

Throughout the night I ran into multiple people using a phone app called "echovox." I am still not entirely sure how it works, but what is supposed to happen is you ask a question and the phone spits out a series of words collected in a database. The response you hear is supposed to be a "spirit." It was fun to use. At some points people would hear the same response; at other times the interpretation of responses were hot and cold.

The night grew late and I still wanted to go into the guest bedroom where Abby had been killed. People had been in there all night, but finally at around midnight, I seized my opportunity. I grabbed my cousin and forced him in before he could object. In this room I had something happen to me that I cannot explain. After around fifteen minutes of trying to communicate, we asked, "Is there anyone in here?" We heard a knock from the far corner of the room. We asked again and heard another knock. For around five minutes we used this system, asking one knock for yes and two for no. After the responses stopped, we went over to the large armoire, which we believed to be the source of the noise. We deduced that the noise could have only come from inside the armoire. I still am not positive on what happened, but the mystery intrigues me.

The most common question I am asked after telling people about my time at the Borden's house is, "Do you believe in ghosts now?" and I always answer the same way. I do not know. There were things I felt that I will never be able to fully explain, but that does not mean that it cannot be explained. There were things I saw, but dismissed them as a draft or cars outside. That night was truly one of the best nights of my life. It was different; everyone walked away with their own stories. I walked away with unanswered questions, but a smile on my face.

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EDITORS-IN-CHIEF: Alex Kerai, Meredith Piela, and Liam Reilly

EDITORS' ASSISTANT : Joanna Rosen

REPORTERS IN THE FIELD: Riley Sugarman, Drew Faria and Becky Twaalfhoven

WEBMASTER: Alex Kerai

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