

# Students visit historical sites bringing History lessons to life

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A group of thirty-six Meriden students from Years 9 to 12 spent three weeks in Germany and Italy during the school holidays in January. They explored key cultural and historical sites relevant to the Modern and Ancient History curriculum, providing the girls with a tangible dimension to their History lessons.

## Germany

After two long flights, the girls arrived in Munich, where they explored the city and visited a documentation centre situated at the site of the former Nazi party headquarters, and the former royal palace of the Bavarian monarchs. The girls experienced German delicacies including pretzels, sausages and vinegary potatoes.

The group visited the village of Dachau, where they had a very sobering experience visiting a concentration camp memorial.

“Seeing the concentration camp in person, not merely from the pages of a book, solidified the gross and catastrophic impacts of World War II,” the girls said.

The girls could see the scale of the Nazi party rally grounds in the medieval city of Nuremberg. They also visited the infamous Courtroom 600, where the Nuremberg trials were held.

Travelling north to Berlin, the girls learned more about the life of Hitler and the experiences of the city during World War II in an underground World War II bunker. The girls also experienced what it was like to live in East Germany during the Cold War at an interactive museum.

“It seemed everywhere we went in Berlin there was a piece of history left in its foundations – from remnants of the Cold War to the Reichstag and the enormous Brandenburg Gate.”

Many of the girls were delighted to experience snow for the first time in Berlin. However, snowfall was heavy, which delayed the tour, forcing them to stay an extra day in the city before leaving for Italy.

## Italy

Italy provided the girls with a glimpse of what ancient civilisation was like. The first stop was at Naples, where the girls explored the ancient Roman town of Herculaneum and investigated the town of Pompeii.

“We saw original roads and houses that were uncovered hundreds of years after the eruption of Mt Vesuvius, and explored some ancient houses that had beautiful bedrooms and very well-preserved frescos.”

In Rome, the girls marvelled at the Sistine Chapel and visited Vatican City and St Peter’s Basilica. They stepped into ancient Rome and learned about the everyday life of ancient Romans and their rulers, visiting the Roman Forum, the Colosseum, Palatine Hill and various museums.

“The Colosseum, while looking ginormous on the outside, felt quite quaint on the inside, and felt smaller than our sports stadiums of today,” the girls said.

Thank you to Mrs Cheryl O’Loan, Mr Richard Loane, Mr Kuhan Rajalingam, Ms Amy Wilson and Mrs Carleen Richardson for accompanying the girls on this trip. And *grazie* to Ilaria, the girls’ tour guide.





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