

NEWSLETTER

"We knew this would be a real spectacle, much of it still felt from a bygone era. This was Britain with all its pomp on show. Golden carriages, weighty robes of state and jewel-encrusted crowns."
BBC News

SCONES, EGGS, SPOONS AND COCONUTS!

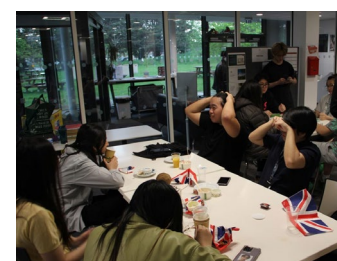


CORONATION – TRADITIONS OLD AND NEW.

At CATS Cambridge Friday 5th May 2023 saw us celebrating the upcoming Coronation of King Charles III. We celebrated with some very traditional activities ahead of a ceremony whose tradition and symbolism is rivalled by few others. The Coronation itself Saturday 6th May will be an event steeped in tradition and yet we are told by the extensive coverage by the media of this historic event, with some recognition that times have changed since Britain last saw a Coronation in 1953. Whilst this is true, with the modern working Royal family having perhaps more control over the causes they support and advocate for, many of these being charity based with an awareness of threats to climate, poverty and hunger, the public nature of their role although more intense due to modern social media remains the same. The British Royal family is a part of the notion of Britain. As we look ahead to Saturday and read about the symbolism of the crown, the uniforms of the many service men and women who will be involved, the carriage, the screen specially commissioned to hide the King from the media during the private anointing part of the ceremony, the detail and meaning as well as history that will make up both procession and ceremony is a fascination to many and undeniably a spectacular event.

At CATS Cambridge we embrace our diversity and share each other's traditions and celebration. It can be quite rare for us to share a British celebration but over the past twelve months we have seen a Jubilee, a funeral and now a Coronation. What can be seen as more British than an afternoon tea! This was provided by our catering team along with flags and tablecloths. For many of our student's traditional afternoon tea of scones, clotted cream and jam is something that they had not tried before. Perhaps to remind us all that time does not stand still, many of the students greatly enjoyed Nutella spread on their scones! Not very traditional! Alongside the afternoon tea we had some traditional British games. Egg and spoon races and a coconut shy. The student council took charge of some very competitive races involving some competitive adults as well as students. These events give us images of the village fetes, village greens and tea parties in the vicarage depicted in many old films. These cricket playing villages with a duck pond and thatched cottages, are surely the stereotype of traditional England. I live in one of these gentle villages. Currently covered in bunting and flags. I noticed too that we have taken on board a new tradition, that of knit bombing. This seemed to grow during the pandemic and our local post box has been dressed ready for the occasion of the Coronation!

Whether we understand the symbolism and meaning of all we shall see on Saturday, it will undoubtedly be a spectacular event. Followed by a Sunday dedicated to a "big lunch" event and Monday with a focus on charity and volunteering.



CORONATION – TRADITIONS OLD AND NEW. BUNTING, KNITTING AND EGG AND SPOON RACES!



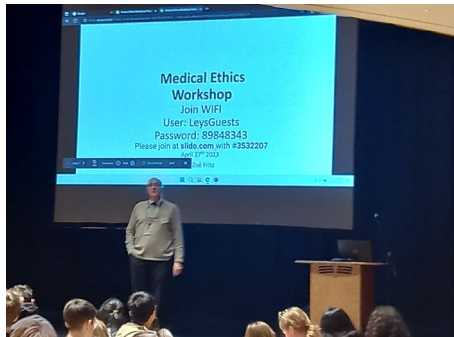
HIGHER EDUCATION - VISITS AND VISITORS



Our Higher Education Officer, Christine, has been very busy of late. Firstly, with a visit to the Leys school for a Medical Ethics workshop on 27th April. Year 11 and Sixth Form students attended from schools and colleges from around Cambridgeshire. Our students enjoyed meeting others from many and varied settings form across the county. They also enjoyed a fascinating talk given by Dr Zoe Fritz, Consultant Physician and Wellcome Fellow in Society & Ethics, University of Cambridge. This was followed by teamwork and workshops which our students greatly enjoyed.



Following this we had a university fayre in the Common Room on Wednesday 3rd May. This was attended by Canadian universities, who talked to our students about the courses on offer at their universities as well the entry requirements. The students asked meaningful questions which led to some excellent discussion about the nature of different qualifications from different education systems and how these influence the journey to university. Many of our students left the common room with clutching several prospectus'.



The day after our fayre we had an excellent talk given by Professor of vascular pharmacology, Iain Greenwood [below], St George's University of London. The students were given a fascinating overview of the courses on offer at St George's and the routes that these could lead into in terms of careers. The talk was attended by our students hoping to follow medical or biomedical paths at university. The talk was extremely engaging, and the courses were fully explained.



NEW YEAR CELEBRATION - MYANMAR

Mon [top right], one of our A level year two students, has shared an article on the celebrations that took place for Myanmar New Year earlier in the term.

Thingyan, or the Myanmar New Year, is celebrated every year in April. Every year, people flock to the streets for a water festival where people would pour water at each other as a sign of blessings. The Padauk flower is the national flower of Myanmar and is also associated with the festival as the flower blooms the most during Thingyan. The traditional story is that the King of the Celestial Realm visits the Earth every year at the new year to record if humans are doing good deeds or bad deeds, encouraging people to do good deeds in this period. Similar festivals also occur in neighbouring countries such as Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos but with different names for the festival; Songkran, Sangkranta and Pi Mai respectively.



CIFE AWARD

Here at CATS Cambridge, we have for several years been members of CIFE, the professional organisation for Independent Sixth Form Colleges. CIFE has a particular set of expectations from its member colleges. These include small classes, excellence in pastoral care, effective communication and teachers who deliberately engage in active teaching methods. We are proud at CATS Cambridge to be able to say that we offer all these important aspects of an effective and vibrant learning environment. As a member of CIFE each year we are able to nominate one of our students for a CIFE award.

This year our Principal, Dominic, joined our winning nominee Woyintnadou Sarah Waribagha, for afternoon tea at the House of Lords, Tuesday 25th April. Sarah was with us at CATS Cambridge from 2019 to 2022. Sarah was nominated by her teachers who praised not only her hard work throughout to achieve her grades but also her community involvement, positive influence on all around her and constant kindness.

Sarah is now following her dream of moving towards a career in medicine. Going on to study Medicine at Brunel University London in September 2022.

The award is presented by Lord Lexden OBE, (pictured with Sarah below). The afternoon is a very special occasion likely to stay in the hearts of the recipients and their families for some years. We are delighted to have been able to nominate Sarah, a deserving recipient of this year's award.





Whose crown is it anyway?

**Dominic Tomalin,
Principal**



I write in anticipation of a weekend full of pomp and ceremony. I have no doubt at all that the coronation of King Charles will be a colourful spectacle entirely appropriate to mark the transition from the Elizabethan to the Carolean. For all that, it has been a seamless and trouble-free appointment for a new head of state.

This Saturday's calm celebratory anointment of a new King for the UK, stands in stark contrast to the tumult that has arisen in other domains when a new head of state comes to power. The last two presidential elections in the USA have been far from smooth, this despite the stultifying of political process whilst the country decides. It is also worthy of note that France has had five republics since its revolution in 1789. Some commentators have started to suggest that the Fifth Republic is looking relatively fragile in the wake of civil unrest arising from President Macron's proposed revisions to the pension policy, perhaps the Sixth Republic is on its way. It is the UK's constitutional monarchy that has allowed it to evade such uncertainties for the last 360 years.

Of course we should not forget that the present constitutional monarchy in the UK was a born a blood drenched civil war in the 17th century that saw the English beheading its King, then operating under parliamentary rule with a Lord Protector (Oliver Cromwell, whose enlarged image occupies a prominent place on the Elizabeth House's first floor) for 6 years, before the restoration of the monarchy, as a constitutional monarchy, with the coronation of King Charles II in 1661.

Despite the ebb and flow of parliamentary politics, some of which has been relatively dramatic, the constitutional monarchy has provided stability. Though the monarch's powers are limited, the monarch still meets and is able to convey their views in private to the prime minister of the day. Arguably, they are also able to act as the last ditch fire break, safety net, a voice from beyond the fray, likely to be heard more clearly for it being a step away from the adversarial discourse between politicians.

The British monarchy is not without critics. Many of whom will point out that it is a position of immense privilege. They will note that it's wealth is derived from past endeavours for which apology and contrition are more apt than applause and celebration. Irrespective of where one stands on such matters, the role of King is one which comes with a metaphorical cage, albeit it one that has been cast out of gold. Becoming the monarch is undoubtedly an act of great service that comes at the expense of the personal freedoms that most of us would find abhorrent.

So, it without reservation that I wish King Charles III well in his new role.

Your majesty, congratulations, sir!

In answer to my initial question, whose crown is it anyway, my strongly held view is that it actually belongs to me and to all the other people in the UK, Northern Ireland and the Commonwealth.

And as is traditional from a loyal subject, I close with a hearty typing of, 'God save the King!'