

the history van

Newsletter no.1

Four New Sessions

The recent changes in the school curriculum and 2015 having a number of major anniversaries – 350 years since Plague came to this area from London, 75 years since the WWII Sheffield Blitz - have provided plenty of opportunities for new History Van themes.

So, here are 4 new History Van sessions to support your children's learning

'Anglo Saxons – Peace at Last': your children discover life in this area in the year 829 when a battle took place on the border of Sheffield and the Peak District, which brought about peace and created the first King of All England. Through it your children discover the Anglo Saxon Chronicles which told the story of this time. They use quill pens to write the Chronicles, make ink from tree galls, parchment from animal skins, create illuminated letters, forge and engrave swords, spin wool and weave on a loom, farm 'sheep' and 'cows', grind corn on a quern, make wattle and daub walls, set up and keep house and practice fighting skills as the armies of Wessex and Northumbria face each other at Dore. The children love the huge variety of activities and thoroughly engage with being scribes, farmers and forgers. A really good day!

'1066 and the Coming of the Normans': the children meet Countess Judith, (named in Domesday as Tenant-in-Chief of Hallam and niece of King William) and her wayward husband Lord Waltheof. The children become scribes collecting information for the Domesday Book and discover the responsibilities of swearing Homage and Fealty to King William. They test Trebuchet Siege Engines, have their daily archery practice, make and wear Chain Mail, spin and weave woollen cloth for the

Bayeux Tapestry, use old Sheffield tools to engrave swords, make herb medicines for protection from disease, and discover life in and around the newly built Castles. But if they stray, then they're in the Stocks. 'It's a really great start to our topic - just what we wanted. The children are buzzing!' – *teachers from Stocksbridge School.*

1665 London, Eyam, The Plague and The Fire: 350 years ago Plague came to this area from London. Discover life, homes and medicines at that time – scrub the houses to prevent Plague, become Plague Doctors, use pestles and mortars to mix medicines, write Samuel Pepys' diary entries for the Plague, then use masses of costume and artefacts to act out playlets of death and survival in 1665 Eyam, our local Plague Village.

I Survived the Blitz: Prepare to put out incendiary bombs, scrub the house after an air raid, pack for a night in the shelter, be ready for evacuation, survive on your rations, deal with toy factories closing - so many challenges in the 'Surviving WWII' day.

Don't forget the other topics – Stone Age, Egyptians, Vikings, Castles, Toys and Games, School Days, Medicines, Victorians, Famous Local People – Florence Nightingale and George Stephenson – World War 1 and much more.

Looking forward to working with you and your children soon.

Jenny Bland

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