

It's all About **STEM**

BLETCHLEY PARK

On Friday 18th October, fifty Year 8 students headed off early to visit Bletchley Park to discover all about the world of the secret World War II codebreakers.

Codebreaking at Bletchley Park first took place in 1938 when the government decided that they needed a top secret location for the Government Code and Cypher School.

The Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS) devised methods to enable the Allied forces to decipher the military codes and ciphers that secured German, Japanese, and other Axis nation's communications.

Mathematicians led the race to break these codes and in 1940 Alan Turing and his team had a major breakthrough in cracking the German Enigma code. This was a huge feat given the many millions of possible encryptions that the machine had been designed to produce.

The Turing Bombe was designed to check these encryptions daily and at their peak dozens of Turing Bombes were operational at Bletchley Park. The Bombe was one of the first computers in use and its legacy paved the way for the modern computer age.

During our visit the students learnt about the history of Bletchley Park during a guided tour by a very informative guide who was very passionate about the history of the site and the people who worked there.

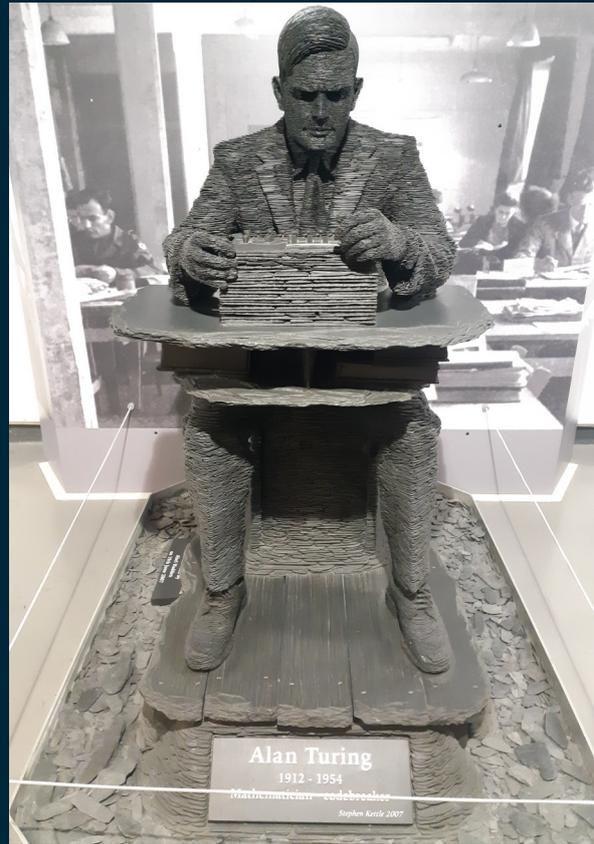
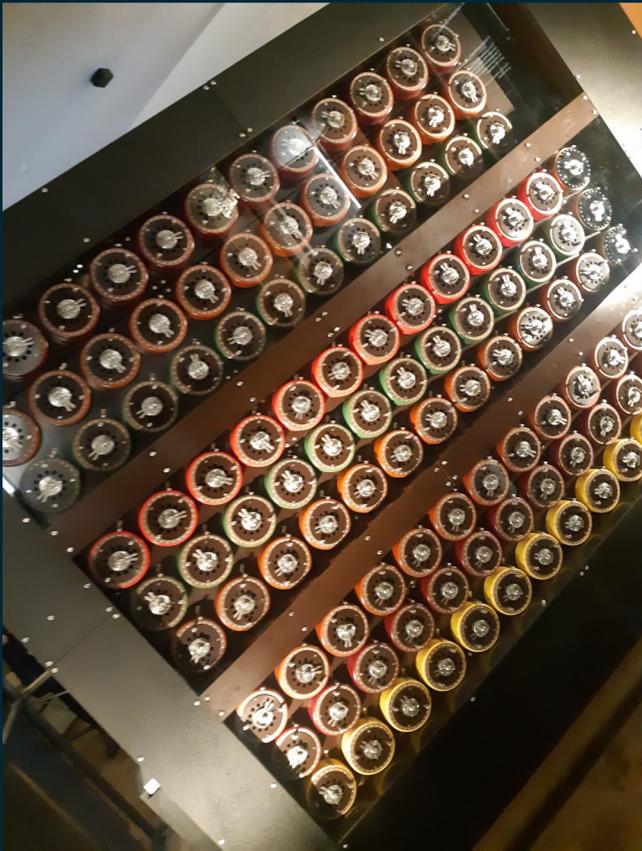


They visited some of the huts that were used in the war and experienced what it must have been like to work there. They were surprised to discover that everyone's role was top secret and was never discussed with the person working in the next room or desk to you. The Bletchley Park workers even had to keep their role secret for many years after the war ended.

They witnessed the working of a reconstructed Bombe machine as the original machines were all destroyed after the war and their existence kept top secret until the 1970s.

They also discovered that women were hugely important to Bletchley Park as many of the roles were taken by women who at that time were not allowed to enter into combat.

Women held roles as diverse as: motorcycle dispatch drivers who ferried messages from listening stations along the coast to Bletchley Park dozens of times a day, WRNs who operated the Bombe machines and women who were at the forefront of codebreaking.



During the day the students also took part in a Codes and Ciphers workshop where they discovered the difference between a code and a cipher and their role throughout history. They were able to develop their understanding of the role that ciphers played during WW2, with specific reference to the Enigma machine and the wider operations of Bletchley Park.

The workshop was very hands on and they were able to use and develop their team working, problem solving and mathematical thinking skills, by applying them to a practical codebreaking task.

Bletchley Park is a hugely informative and interesting place to visit and both the students and staff really gained a lot from their visit.

Our students represented themselves and the school so impeccably that we had wonderful feedback from the Museum staff and more personally from our guide.

CAREERS

This year Lymm High School has joined as a Partner school for the InvestIN Education programme of courses.

As a benefit of this partnership our students qualify for a 10% discount on courses. Bursary places may also be available depending on circumstances.

If you are interested in enrolling your child, please contact Mrs Dowdall – bdowdall@lymmhigh.org.uk for the discount code and more details.

<https://bit.ly/2MJTaOQ>