

London

Penn State Harrisburg honors students live it up and get credit

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Spring break for several Penn State Harrisburg students meant getting a chance to experience international travel while getting credit for it. Honors 401, which was offered to members of the honors program and criminal justice majors, consisted of touring and studying in London.

The trip included tours of some of the most fascinating areas of London: the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey, Inns of Court, and the area of Whitechapel where the notorious serial killer, Jack the Ripper, lurked the streets. There were also many lectures pertaining to all areas of criminal justice, which included meeting with the Law Commission, Crime Concern, and the Bulvaria Police Department.

While visiting the Tower of London, the students learned about the many different buildings and towers of the 900-year-old establishment and the fascinating history behind it. The Tower of London was once a castle, palace, fortress, prison

and the site of seven of the most famous executions in English history. Construction began in 1066 by William I of England, better known as William the Conqueror.

Students stood at the site where monarchs such as Ann Boleyn, Catherine Howard and Lady Jane Grey were marched through Traitor Gate to be mercilessly beheaded centuries ago. It was considered an honor to be executed inside the gates of the Tower of London. Most people were executed on Tower Hill located outside of the Tower of London's walls.

Today, the Tower of London mainly serves as a museum. One of the most memorable displays is the Crown Jewels, which consists of a 530 carat diamond. Many royal crowns are also displayed there.

The students also had the opportunity to witness the breathtaking exterior and interior of Westminster Abbey. There are roughly 3,300 noted people buried at Westminster Abbey including kings, queens, statesmen, warriors, scientists, musicians and poets. Elizabeth I and Henry VII are buried here, as well as, Geoffrey Chaucer, Charles Dickens, Isaac Newton and Charles Darwin. Many sacred

chapels, monuments, sculptures, artwork and tombs are laced throughout the medieval architecture giving it a holy atmosphere.

Westminster Abbey is also the location of every coronation since 1066 and Princess Diana's funeral. It is known as the "place of worship and house of kings." Today, Westminster Abbey has become a place of daily worship.

For the criminal justice majors interested and considering a future in law, the tour of Inns of Court was a worthwhile experience. This establishment consisting of four inns: Lincoln's Inn, Inner Temple, Middle Temple and Gray's Inn, has the exclusive right of admission to the bar.

Inns of Court is architecturally magnificent and lush with fountains and gardens. Before the 14th century, Inns of Court used to be schools of law. Today they are more like clubs.

The highlight of the trip for many students was the Jack the Ripper tour. The students got to walk the eerie streets of Whitechapel at night where Jack the Ripper stalked and killed at least five prostitutes back in the 1880's. The real identity of the killer was never proven due to the undeveloped science of forensics at the time. The unsolved nature of the crimes is what makes the story of Jack the Ripper so fascinating.

Before arriving in London, the students



photo by Karen Plott

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