

In October a group of 14 students from William Aberhart went on a ten-day exchange to the Netherlands and France with students from Maurick College. While in Holland, we stayed with a host family and went to our exchange partner's school in Vught. We traveled to different cities and monuments during our visit, including Amsterdam, Kamp Vught (a concentration camp), 's-Hertogenbosch (which is the provincial capital of North Brabant). After Netherlands, we took a two-hour train ride to Paris. In Paris we visited various landmarks, like: *la Tour Eiffel*, *le Château de Versailles*, *l'Arc de Triomphe*, *les Invalides*, *Musées Louvre & d'Orsay* and *les Catacombes*. Our experience in Paris especially, improved our French tremendously. When you are submerged in a completely French environment, it forces you to use the language in a way that not even the immersion program can. You order food in French, you communicate with the locals in French and all the advertisements, road signs and stores were in French. Throughout the entire trip, we developed lasting friendships with not only the Dutch exchange partners and their families, but also with the other students from Canada. While staying in their houses we had the opportunity to learn about their family and its traditions, as well as the Dutch traditions, like Sinterklaas and biking *everywhere*. This trip was a fantastic experience. We gained a new appreciation for our second language and our linguistic abilities have certainly improved. We were awed by the history of everything around us; for them all of the heritage is just commonplace. It was a phenomenal experience that we will never forget. We would definitely recommend this experience to anyone who may come across the opportunity.

