



Forum Factorum



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Catapult Day Catapults Away



One of the many projectiles launched by the glory-seeking participants.

First Catapult Day Memorable

By Elizabeth Esborn
Notre Dame Academy



Elizabeth loves pumpkin. A lot.

I've been hearing about how awesome the Catapult Contest is since I joined the JCL a few years ago. I mean, how could it not be fun? What

other group gets to use ancient battle weapons to compete with their friends? Needless to say, I was eager to go, especially since my school was competing for the first time, though with a particularly small marshmallow catapult.

Although the trip took 3 hours, it was well worth it once we arrived. After celebrating the fact that our catapult had shot 16 feet, 13 feet beyond what we had expected, we decided to wander around and see what other schools were up to. We saw presentations on ancient art and battle tactics, and competed in the Worm. My favorite part by far, however, was watching the large catapults and ballistae fire anything from weights and stones to pumpkins and frozen chickens. Aside from being awed by the sheer size and power of these weapons, I was impressed by the fact that high school students had built them. I'm hoping that my school will get even more involved and build a stronger catapult next year.

All in all, I had an awesome time at my first Catapult Contest. I even won the 50-50 raffle! I'm disappointed that I won't be able to go next year, but I'm so happy that I took the opportunity to go while I still could. Thanks to everyone who went for giving me an awesome day!

Historia Antiqua

Exploring Ancient Warfare

By Tien Le
Boston Latin Academy

Mass JCLers were filled with enthusiasm and school spirit as they entered the doors of Mount Greylock, to participate in the Mass JCL Kick-Off. The event began with "Historia", a lecture about roman weaponry and army life. There were various props that were created to resemble the armor that a Roman soldier would have carried about two thousand years ago. It was amazing to discover how immensely heavy the armor and weapons must have been for the roman soldiers to wear which altogether would have weighed over 70 pounds. The armor that soldiers would have worn consisted of metal shoulder and chest paddings that were strapped to the body using tethered rope. Accompanying the armor was a large and heavy helmet that would be worn over his head and a sword that was carried on the left side of the belt. A Latin student volunteered to wear the heavy armor for show. The student recalled that he felt as though he gained a couple of pounds just by wearing it, but said he appeared fit to be in battle.

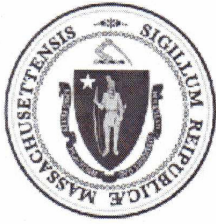
See ARMY, pg. 3

Mr. Ryan, explaining a Roman Ballista.



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The Forum Factorum is a state-sponsored, quarterly newsletter produced entirely by students of the Massachusetts Junior Classical League. Its mission is to inform members of important happenings, showcase and highlight achievement, and to create a forum for discussion of statewide issues.

If you have any comments or wish to submit an article, contact the Editor at the above email address.

Letter from the Editor

Now three months into my senior year, I have learned that it takes a lot of work to get something done. And it is not always something I do not mind, like rolling coins or tallying bagels sold. Most times it is organizing some event or doing paperwork. And what's more, it piles up, it doesn't go away. But by finally completing the necessary things I need to do, I am rewarded, with the ability to attend our events and such luxuries as free time. It is the essence of a leader to take charge, do the tasks that must be done. I am glad to be the one who has seized the initiative, both in my chapter as well as my own life.

It is this initiative I would like to pass on to each of you. I want to have many newsletters to read. I want to see what each and every one of your chapters have been up to.



I feel like such a tourist, hanging out with the armor of a Roman soldier.

However, I have only received one school's newsletter. I want to read more! So please, follow my lead, and send your creations out to me!

Christopher Chan

Thank You!

We would like to thank those who have donated their time and resources to JCL. Thank you very much for your support and generosity!



Schell Printing in Jamaica Plain for their generous work with JCL and this very newsletter!



Mr. Hannigan at Merrimax Web Mechanics for the donation of the State and many Local websites.

Captions (Opposite Page)

a. Display of Roman war machines, from left a siege tower, a catapult, and a ballista.

b. A Greek plate, depicting the sun-god Apollo.

c. An ornamental Etruscan comb.

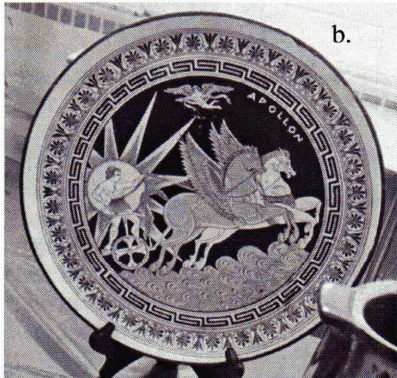
d. Mr. Ryan exhibiting a Roman crane. Inside the wheel a man would walk, bringing up the crane arm.

Historia Antiqua

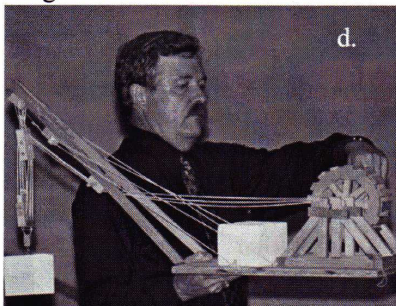
Ancient Art & Weaponry

Cont'd from ARMY, pg. 1

More interesting and quite hilarious facts were discovered in the lecture. Mass JCLers were fascinated by the swords and weapons that Roman soldiers used during battle. The lecturer horrified Mass JCLers as he rubbed the sides of the

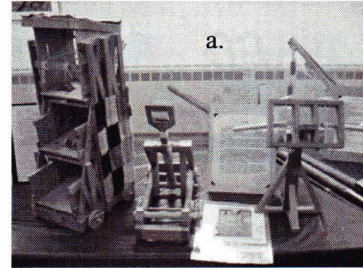


the sword against his hand carelessly. Yet he merely did this to show how dull the side of the sword was. The point of the sword however, was sharp and "ominous" as the lecturer recalled and could easily penetrate the skin on a human body. The sides of the swords were purposely made to be dull so that the sword could easily stab the enemy and be taken out of the flesh. They are fairly small – roughly less than 2 feet long so that the Roman soldier



quickly draw out his sword and attack the enemy. The gladii were without a doubt, dangerous and fierce weapons.

In particular, the Romans made their spears carefully-making sure that once their weapons were thrown at the enemy in battle, the enemy could not use them again. Spears over 90 inches in length were thrown at the enemy in battle. Since the top portion of the spears was made out of soft wood, the spear would break as soon as it hit the ground so that the enemy could not reuse the spear again. Catapults which of course were the main area of competition in the Kick-Off event were used in real battles and could do much destruction. Catapults were ancient military devices used to hurl or throw objects at the enemy. Clay balls or wooden balls called missilia and objects that could be set on fire were thrown by catapults. One would expect large rocks, arrows or heavy objects to be thrown by the catapults. Surprisingly, the Romans went as far as using their catapults to throw chickens, mud, human heads and even corpses at the enemy - Not your typical dinner table conversation yet something one can try to imagine. Another interesting fact to think about is that the springs and ropes of the catapult were made out of animal and human hair. Long hair was fashionable yet important for other reasons. Army wives would purposely grow their hair long, cut it and donate it to the military for use. Human hair, believe it or not, has an elastic quality to it, and can be used as a substitute for rope. The lecture continued with a power point presentation of



detailed battle tactics that the Roman army would have used in wars. The Romans had very clever battle formations, one of them including the "testudo". In this battle formation, Roman soldiers would hold up their shields to create a battle formation that resembled the shell of a tortoise. The testudo would protect the roman soldiers from flying arrows and weapons that would have been thrown at them as they walked across enemy territory. Such battle formations could account for why they were victorious in many wars.



The lecture ended with amusing pictures from the lecturer's vacation to the Black Sea and to Egypt where he visited the tombs of ancient pharaohs. Altogether, I found the lecture equally fascinating and captivating and a great way to start off the Mass JCL Kick-Off event.

Profile of a National Officer

Carissa Williams, National Parliamentarian, weighs in on the effect JCL has had on her life

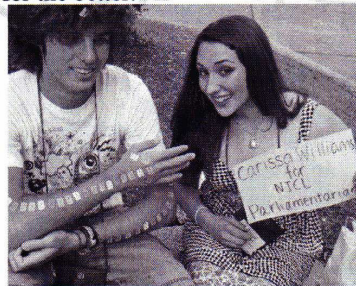
My first National convention was in Virginia, in 2004. There I met the most fascinating people, and participated in breath taking events. Just before Nationals I had lost my first State election for Historian, to none other than the fabulous Ms. Rebecca Gwaltney, current MassJCL President. After that summer, my personal view of the JCL changed, and surprisingly enough, I was addicted. Soon after the convention I began studying Roberts Rules of Order and familiarizing myself with the State and National Constitutions, I had found my true love of Parliamentary procedure. After completing my State terms as 2nd VP and Parliamentarian, I knew running for National office was something I wanted to do. Watching the National Officers on stage every year and listening to stories that they had to tell convinced me.

And so, after 5 years of JCL I decided to go for it. This past summer I finally had the opportunity to run for NJCL Parliamentarian. The week was exhausting, and in the end I came home with the office I sought. Since then, my life has been just as busy, but well worth the effort. My duties as Parliamentarian revolve around officer elections and JCL constitutional business. I send out reports at the end of each month and I attend planning meetings in the fall and spring, but the job entails much more than it shows. Getting to know my fellow board members at first seemed to be an awkward



Carissa performs her NJCL duty of passing out sashes at the end of the 2007 National Convention

awkward situation gone wrong, but now I am proud to call each one a close friend. They are all unique in their own way, bringing their talents and quirks to the group, forming one giant mass of Latin love. As officers we have had the chance to talk to so many people across the country, either answering their questions, or just getting to know them as fellow JCLer's, convinced that in some way, we have had an effect on them. I am honored to have this chance of being an officer, and I recommend taking the chance, and running for an office; because whether it is local, state, or national, it will change your life for the better.



Carissa Williams, making friends wherever she goes. On the left, Travis Sturgill-Trahan of Florida

News Tidbits

Sharing our local excursions into the Classics

Barnstable HS

November 9, we had our very first 'Latin Social.' Many students came for the festivities, which included a movie, quite a spirited game of Certamen amidst students from middle school all the way up until senior-level AP Latin, and, of course, free pizza. We ranged from Latin II questions up to AP level, and most surprisingly, the third year class surpassed all others with flying colors. There were students there not only from Latin, but some coming from our Greek program as well. It was great to see everyone together as one group having so much fun. The whole evening was a general success and caused a great deal of excitement, and something that I'm sure other schools would have some fun with as well if they were willing to give it a try. I highly recommend it!

Alexa Wall

Tewksbury Memorial HS

We have been very active, turning our club into a lively community. We began the year with a very profitable car wash, and then held a freshman social, introducing newcomers by showing a movie about last year's activities. We have started a bagel fundraiser that has raised over \$800 for our club. In addition, the bottle and can drive from a few years back has returned as a community service project.

We, of course, are not all fundraising, and so we have had a Laser Quest trip and a Halloween party. We look forward to a very eventful year.

Christopher Chan

Catapult Day Winners

Champions of the Siege Engines

1-lb. Arrow Shooters

- 1st – Mount Greylock
- 2nd – Westford Academy
- 3rd – Boston Latin Academy

8-lb. Trebuchets

- 1st – Westford Academy
- 2nd – Mount Greylock
- 3rd – Turkey Hill Middle School

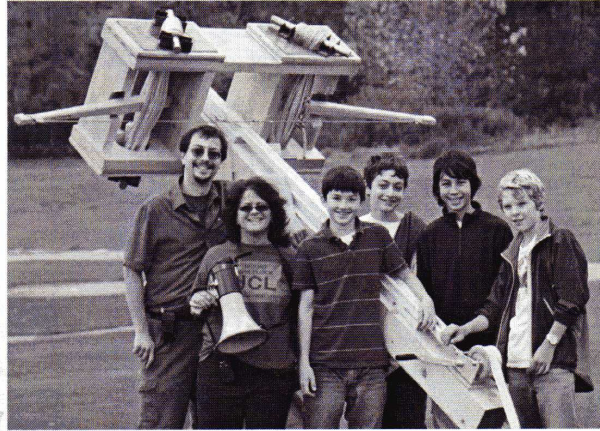
Marshmallow Shooters

- 1st – Boston Latin Academy
- 2nd – Catholic Memorial
- 3rd – Abby Kelly Foster

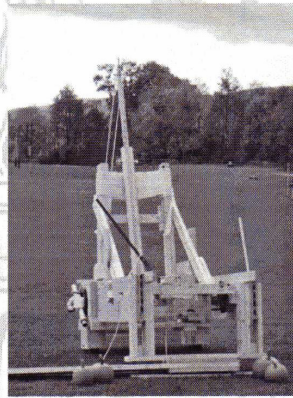
Marshmallow Shooter Name Contest

- 1st – *Yesterday, a Pine Tree*, Mount Greylock
- 2nd – *Icarus Possit Volare*, Boston Latin Academy
- 3rd – *Fac Me Cocleario Vomere*, Abby Kelly Foster

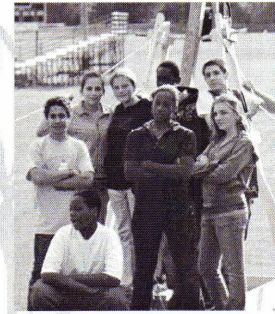
Congratulations!



The first place arrow shooter winner, Mount Greylock. Mrs. Keeley knows well that "siege weapons are built to kill"



First Place trebuchet, Westford Academy



Serious contenders Abby Kelly Foster with their trebuchet

Calendar

State Board Meetings

All Members of JCL are invited to attend Executive Boards. These are tentative dates. Simply email our President at president@massjcl.org to RSVP, confirm, and get the location.

- February 2nd (Snow date February 9th)
- May 4th
- May 24th

MassJCL Events

Remember these dates! Everyone is encouraged to attend.

- **JCL Snowball** – Tentatively planned for March
- **BLA Certamen Scrimmage** – January 30th (Snow date February 6th), Boston Latin Academy
- **State Convention** – May 9th – 11th, Barnstable HS

Tempus Fugit

Part Deuce!

