



Historic battle brought to life

On 12 October, hundreds of people gathered in East Sussex to re-enact the Battle of Hastings. The Battle of Hastings was fought on 14 October 1066 between an invading Norman army led by William, the Duke of Normandy, and an English army led by King Harold II. The Normans were a group of people from Normandy in northern France. A re-enactment is held every year on Senlac Ridge, in East Sussex, where the battle took place.



Video game played in church

Exeter Cathedral held a special service on 13 October, which included a video game. The idea was to bring the Bible story of Jonah to life, by displaying an underwater adventure game called Abzu on a large screen with a controller so people could play it. At the same time, the story of Jonah and the Whale was read out. In the tale, Jonah is thrown into the sea but is saved by a whale who swallows him and later vomits him out onto dry land.



World's best porridge chefs

The winners of this year's World Porridge Making Championship have been announced. The contest was held in Carrbridge, Scotland, and welcomed entries from across the world. Lisa Williams, from Suffolk, won in the best traditional porridge category, in which entrants can only use oatmeal, water and salt. She said her secret was to keep stirring while cooking. Nick Barnard, from London, won the speciality title with his maple pecan porridge.



Royal Mint celebrates 50 years since the launch of the 50p coin

On 14 October, the 50p coin turned 50 years old. To celebrate this milestone, the Royal Mint revealed the rarest 50p coins ever made. The Royal Mint is the part of the UK Government that makes new coins.

The first 50p coin was introduced on 14 October 1969. Made in the shape of a heptagon, it was the world's first seven-sided coin. The initial reaction to it was mixed – one newspaper at the time called it “a monstrous piece of metal”.

The coin was introduced as part of a process called decimalisation. This is when a currency is changed to be based around multiples of 10 or 100. Before this, the UK's currency was made up of pounds, shillings and pence. There were 12 pennies to a shilling and 20 shillings to a pound. On 1 March 1966, the UK Government announced that a new system would be introduced, with 100 pence to the pound. This was done in order to make calculations simpler and to follow the example set by

other countries. It was declared that 15 February 1971 was Decimal Day. On this date, all the country's currency was changed to the new system.

To mark the 50th anniversary of the 50p coin, the Royal Mint has released a list of the top 10 rarest 50p coins currently in circulation. The rarest is one that was made in 2009 to mark the 250th anniversary of the founding of Kew Gardens – a garden in London that has one of the biggest collections of plants in the world. There are only 210,000 copies of this coin. Seven of the top 10 were made to mark the 2012 London Olympics. These include special designs for some of the Olympic sports: football, goalball, judo, shooting, tennis, triathlon and wrestling. The rarest of these is the wrestling coin – there are just over one million copies in circulation.

The final two coins on the list are more recent additions, having been made in 2018 to celebrate the work of the children's author Beatrix Potter.

They feature designs of the characters Peter Rabbit and Flopsy Bunny.

WOW!
The rarest 50p coin is so rare that some people have paid more than £500 to get one.

THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

“Goat breaks into house through glass door for bathroom nap” *irishnews.com*



50 years of 50p

Read the article and then try the following activities...



Hold a debate

Is it time to get rid of coins and notes for good? We have the technology to make every payment electronic, if we wanted to. Wouldn't it make life simpler? It would also save a lot of metal which could be used for other things. Or is it important to have different ways of paying for goods? Are electronic payments too at risk from criminals? What if there are power cuts or computer problems? Should we respect the views of people who actually want money they can hold in their hands? What do you think?

Writing challenge!

Choose one of the following writing warm-ups.

1 Write a persuasive article proposing a famous person or special event that you think should be commemorated (remembered) on a 50p coin. Make sure you explain what you have chosen and why it is so important to our country (not just to you). You might even argue how it is more worthy of celebration than some of the other things that have had 50p coins released in their honour.

or

2 Look at the poem 'Halfway Down' by A. A. Milne. Discuss how it takes a wistful, child's perspective of a special place. Now rewrite that poem about a 50p piece, as if it is a child's favourite coin, suggesting reasons why that might be. Try to follow the rhythm and rhyming pattern of the original if possible.

Investigate

The 50p coin was released in 1969. Research five other significant events from 1969. Put them in order of importance (in your view) and give a brief, two- or three-sentence explanation of what happened for each.