Lk/Et

23 April 2019

Dear parents and guardians,

Our final History Society Lecture for this year is taking place on Thursday 16th May, at 7pm in the Sixth Form Centre (please note change of location due to exams taking place in the Main Hall).

We have Dr. Louise Raw coming to speak to us on the topic of the Bryant & May factory strike of 1888 under the title, 'Striking a Light - the teenagers who changed history'. Dr Louise Raw is an historian of the strike, and author of the book *Striking a Light: The Bryant and May Matchwomen and Their Place in History*. She has spoken about the matchwomen throughout the UK and Europe, including in the UK Parliament for MPs. She has appeared on shows like ‘Who Do You Think You Are?’ and ‘The Victorian Slum’ and is resident historian for BBC Radio London. See the end of this letter for a more detailed blurb for the lecture.

As always, any students from any year group, along with their parents or relatives, as well as staff members are welcome to attend. The themes of protest, working conditions in factories and industrial action that will be explored during the lecture will be highly relevant to our A level students in their studies of trade unionism (Paper 1), as well as GCSE students intending to start the A level history course next year. It also will provide brilliant context to upcoming year 8 lessons on the Industrial Revolution. A level History students are expected to attend and should inform their history teacher if they cannot.

Tea and coffee will be served from 6.50pm before the lecture begins, and there will be questions from the floor before the evening ends at 8pm. There is no need to book.

The History Department hopes that you and your sons will join us for this evening event. Please direct any questions to me at alovelock@hitchinboys.co.uk

Best wishes

Mrs A. Lovelock

[Signature]

History Teacher
In the summer of 1888, girls and women working in a Bryant & May match factory in East London walked out of their workplace and into history. The men and boys who worked there soon joined them. Many were very young, in their early teens, but girls as young as 6 made the matchboxes, and young boys worked as ‘dippers’, a very dangerous job.

The match workers had been badly-treated for years - their employers put them at risk of ‘phossy jaw’ (jawbones decaying due to poisoning from white phosphorus), and wages were so low they risked starvation.

But few people cared about workers like this, considered the ‘lowest of the low’ and treated as if they were hardly human.

The teenagers and matchwomen in the factory changed all of that...