

Charters Chronicle



EXCLUSIVE



From Charters to Olympic podium

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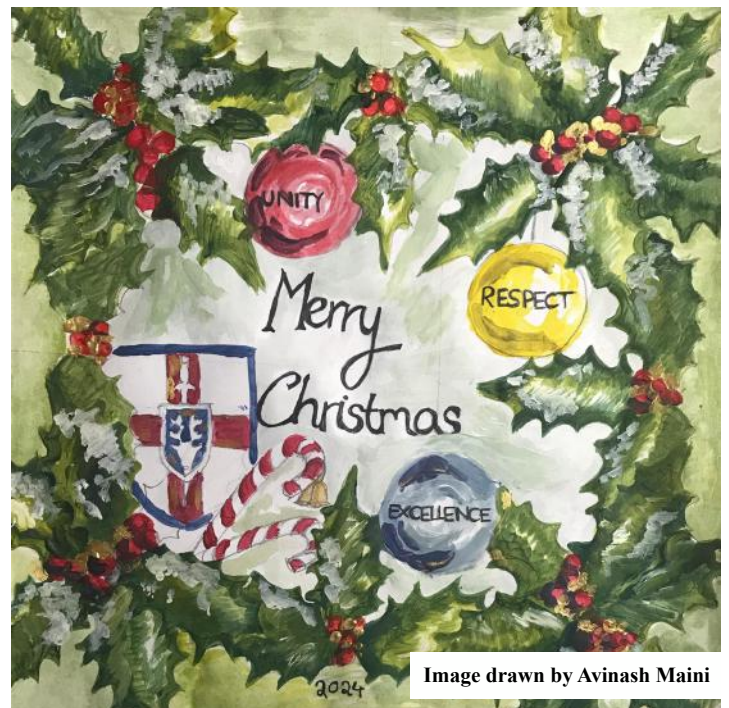


Image drawn by Avinash Maini

TAYLOR'S JOURNEY FROM CHARTERS TO THE OLYMPIC PODIUM

BY ELLA TONEY

It's been 12 years since Hattie Taylor left the Main Hall at Charters and took off on an adventure that would lead her to the Olympic podium in Paris. It's been a journey that has twisted and turned for the now 30-year-old, who recently returned to the school to recount her tale of perseverance and personal commitment.



It has been ‘one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences’ of her life but it hasn’t been without its struggles. She missed out on bronze at her maiden Olympics in Tokyo when an Irish crew beat them by just 1.1 seconds.

“My first six months in the GB senior team were tough,” she recalled.

“It was tough enough that I really considered quitting right there and then. I’d been left at home after not being selected for the World Championships that summer but I knew I was better than that.”

Since those darker days, she’s competed at several European and World Championships, winning a



gold medal at the World Cup in Lucerne in 2023.

She also claimed silver in an eight at the European Championships in Szeged this April.

She returned to Team GB's Olympic squad this summer, a nod to her perseverance and took to the water at Vaires-sur-Marne Nautical Stadium on the outskirts of the French capital.

Rowing in the women's eight, she helped her team win bronze, finishing just 0.67 seconds behind silver medalists Canada.

It's been some time since Taylor was in the stands at London 2012 and when asked what advice she would give her 18-year-old self, she offered simple but striking guidance.

"Go all in," she said.

"I really think that you have to back yourself to do anything, even when things don't look like they are going your way.

"Just believe you can do it because it's often the difference. You have to tell yourself you can do it, even when everything isn't working.

"I was doing badly for a while but I just kept telling myself 'I can do it, I can do it' until I believed it. It is hard to say to yourself, it was hard for me, but I think it's really important."

There were no shortage of admirers for her success after she spoke to pupils at the Celebration of Achievement evening in September.

There was a queue of students – and teachers – patiently waiting for a selfie and a glimpse of her prized medal.

“It feels weird because I’m just me,” she adds. “I understand what I’ve done, I’m proud of myself and what I’ve achieved, but I don’t feel massively different. It’s a bit surreal.”

It’s no secret that school can be tough, something that was no different for the Sunningdale raised athlete, who spoke of her struggles to balance training with her social life and studies.

“To be honest, I don’t think I did a very good job of balancing that,” she laughed. “I think you have to learn that you just have to do it.

“School helped with the mentality and the perseverance in learning how to make things work.”

Her medal, safely stored in a Team GB pouch, was the highlight of students’ evening as she placed it round their necks and smiled for photos. She did later reveal that the 455 grams of bronze, with the hexagonal piece of iron from Eiffel Tower, spends most of its time on the... floor

“It’s actually on the bedroom floor – that’s really bad isn’t it?” she laughed.

“I will display it but I’m currently moving house so I don’t have the space.”

The big question though was her verdict on the famous Olympic Village chocolate muffins, one of the viral hits of the Games, alongside mascot Phyrge.

“They were delicious, really nice. I had about three a day whilst I was in the village, but only after I’d finished competing,” she said, while also recalling how bizarre it was to eat lunch next to US star

gymnast Simone Biles.

Taylor’s story is inspiring and, she believes, underpinned by five core beliefs.

“Hope is not a strategy,” she said. “Make friends with your failures, do not dare not to dare, back yourself and love what you do.”

They are key values we can all learn from, even if we aren’t all destined for the Olympic podium.



MUSIC TALENT

BY ABI CHOW

There are many music opportunities and clubs throughout the year, here is a summary of what has and will occur in this term.

Year 7 Concerts

All tutor groups in year 7 performed over two evenings experiencing their first taste in music at Charters.

Highlights from the evening were the Gospel Medley and their rendition of California Dreaming.

Autumn Chamber Concert

Students from Year 7 to Year 12 displayed a range of talents during the concert, from saxophone to vocals.

Music Assemblies

For a week Function Band, Jazz Band, Barbershop Group and daily soloists

performed in assemblies. The assembly depicted how some of the school values can be demonstrated within performing a musical instrument and what clubs students can join if they are interested.

Function Band Performing at Brocha Recreation Ground

One Friday evening, Function Band took part in the annual Christmas light switch-on in Sunningdale. One highlight piece was Wham's Last Christmas however... make it Whamageddon!

Christmas Concert

A fantastic night of music from all types of genres from A Winter Wonderland to (controversially) Monster Mash.

Carol Service

On the 17th of December a few ensembles will be taking part in the carol service at Holy Trinity Church. It will be a enjoyable evening and everyone is welcomed to come along!

REMEMBRANCE DAY

BY AVINASH MAINI

Monday 11th November marked Remembrance Day, the 106th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice, a day



on which the world reflects on the sacrifice made by countless soldiers in the World Wars. It is also an occasion to recognise the service of those veterans that survived the World Wars, and we hope many of you join us in admiring the highly respectable levels of courage and resolve that they showed. It is important that future generations

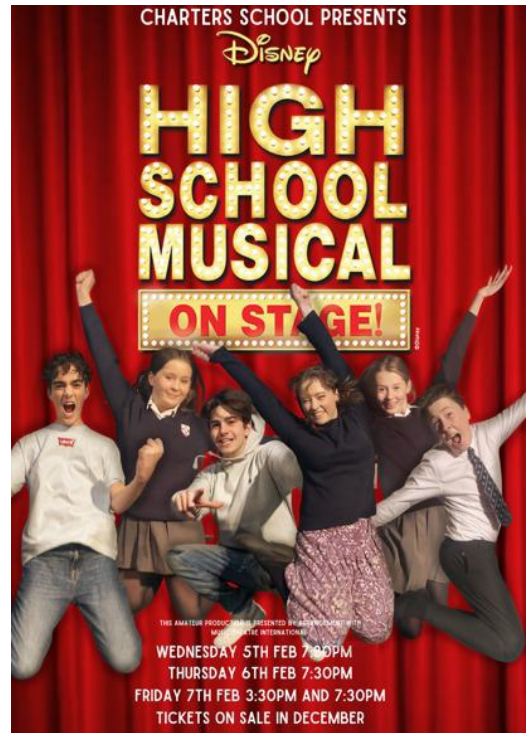
understand these sacrifices and struggles of the wartime generations, and never take them for granted. At Charters, we recognised this through a service of remembrance out on the astro. Like every year, a two-minute silence was held, and some poems were read.

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!

BY JOANNA YOUNG

Next term, the drama department is putting on a production of High School Musical.

If you are a musical fan or want to support your friends and other students then the show will be staged on February 5th, 6th and 7th - so make sure you save the dates in your diary. Tickets are available now via Trybooking, make sure you book before it's too late!



A VISIT FROM LORD THURLOW

BY AVINASH MAINI

On Friday 6th December, Lord Thurlow, a member of the House of Lords, came to visit students as part of the 'Learn with a Lord' scheme. He is one of parliament's elected hereditary peers. Prior to entering to the House of Lords in 2015, he had a career as a chartered surveyor.

He spoke to students about the role of the House of Lords and how the parliamentary system works, as well as his own experience. He touched on the decision to remove hereditary peers from

the house and admitted that their role in British democracy was 'not fair.'

'I do think hereditary peers bring a lot to the House of Lords but I can't see how it continues in the modern world,' he added.



He also spoke of the importance of trying to diversify the house, with women only making up roughly 30% of all members.

One student spoke of how it was an interesting and enriching experience, with Lord Thurlow's impressive firsthand knowledge deepened their understanding of politics, history and democracy.

STRAIGHT FROM OUR COMMUNITY...

A NEW SWEET SHOP IN TOWN

BY ABI C (Y7) and AMY H (Y7)

On August 31st this summer, a brand new sweet shop called ‘Scrumptious’ appeared on Sunninghill high street, delighting everyone around.

Its electric blue and hot pink making it jump out from the other shops on the high street, which draws attention from locals. These colours were chosen for their fun, uplifting and unique look-giving the shop a welcoming and playful atmosphere.

They wanted to be different- to stand out; and we believe these goals have been achieved by Zoe and Poppy, don't you? Scrumptious is a fun, welcoming place where people of all ages can enjoy being inside.

There were many different points of inspiration for Scrumptious, including traditional sweet shops and sweets, but the main inspiration was Willy Wonka's factory from Roald Dahl's classic book Charlie and the Chocolate factory.

The ever-growing number of sweets inside scrumptious are all carefully picked to encourage inclusion and excellent quality. The Scrumptious team wanted the sweets to cater to all dietary requirements and preferences such as being gluten free or vegetarian. They even have specific labels to show which foods are suitable for catering needs! As an additional fact, Zoe Howard was actually diagnosed with type 2 diabetes 5 years ago, which led them to add sweets with low amounts of sugar or even no sugar at all!



They also take into consideration other factors like how good the quality is for that price, or what the company stands for, and they try to buy products that are made by small or family run businesses. The Scrumptious team are always looking to help other businesses like theirs and will always be happy to help. They are currently hoping to get the shops on the high street closer and have already made an arrangement with Hullballoonza! Their end goal is to bring our community closer and do all they can to make the surrounding area an even better place.

They are even pulling their efforts towards saving the environment by only using recyclable plastic or none at all, meaning less waste will end up in oceans worldwide.

Considering all of this, we would say that Scrumptious sweetshop makes for a pretty unique experience, wouldn't you? So next time you find yourself on Sunninghill high street, don't forget to pay a visit to Scrumptious because after all – what's not to like?

OUR HOUSE CHARITIES...

CHAT CLUB

BY CHARLIE MILLER

This term Mr Metson has organised for a group of year 12s and 13s to participate in Chat Club every Wednesday after school. They talk to six children at the Children's Garden Home in Kenya called Victoria, Vivienne, Sam, Tabitha, Metrine and Bridget. They talk about life in the orphanage such as



playing lots of fun games like hangman. The students at Charters believe that it improves their communication skills and helps them learn about another culture for instance, learning how to speak Swahili.

Sam in Kenya said, "I have learnt that people in England care about Kenya and want to help us". Participating in Chat Club is a great way to develop unity, respect and excellence and builds the confidence of everyone involved. A typical day for them include waking up at 5am to clean the school themselves, help the younger children get dressed and have breakfast before going to school until 6pm. They go to church every weekend where they love to sing and dance but the most popular pastime is football. Another responsibility of the member of Chat Club is to organise fundraisers for the charity to improve things like science labs and toilets at the Garden Home.

DAISY'S DREAM

BY DAISY R (Y8)

Daisy's dream is an amazing charity that supports children and young adults that are going through bereavement.

As a school we have raised a lot of money for this fantastic charity. We have had many fundraising events including the Mamma Mia movie night, which was a blast, and an evening of pumpkin carving! We are going to have a Masked Singer fundraiser with lots of teachers! It is two pounds for entry so be sure to bring a friend.

The Charity provides support for children and young people who have been affected by bereavement, either supporting them in a loss or working with them following the death of someone important to them. They know it is vital for children and young people to be surrounded by supportive networks and so also provide advice and guidance for parents, carers, schools and other professionals involved in their lives.



Without any of their lovely volunteers they would not be able to help us today. We as a school, wanted to say a massive thank you to the Teachers, parents and students who have organised our fundraisers and donated money to this awesome charity.

SEBASTIAN'S ACTION TRUST

BY ORLA C (Y7) and
MEHHER J (Y7)

Sebastian's Action Trust believe that "Lives, however short, should be lived to the fullest." They provide bereavement support and have parent events when they can get away from stress and talk to others who understand how they feel.



Fundraising:

Sebastian's Action Trust isn't funded by the government so they must rely on donations from others. They have fundraised through participating in many events, including helping at the Crowthorne Carnival and providing prizes for the winners of the raffle at the Purefoy Arms Quiz Night.

How do they support families?

- They run sibling support groups for children aged 5-8 and 9-12 years old. They "create a fun, safe space for children to talk openly."
- They have music therapy sessions; these run online by Zoom and help

children develop their social skills while having a lovely time.

- They have an art and gardening group. This takes place at one of their accommodations- Bluebells. This lets children enjoy themselves and get involved with the outdoors and make pieces of art or crafty inventions based on nature, using a wide range of materials.

Bluebells

Bluebells is one of the only purpose-built facilities in the UK offering breaks to the families of seriously-ill children. They also offer them, where and when possible, to those who have recently experienced a loss.

A stayer at Bluebells said, "A break at The Bluebells has given us an opportunity to spend four days together as a family having a fun, relaxed time, away from our daily stress."

Bluebells can provide a holiday for two families at a time in two separate apartments. The families staying get the chance to have a fun time and relax, while staying off screens and having quality time.

Events coming up:

- 26 January- cold water challenge at Horseshoe Lake Activity Challenge.
- 19-24 February- Sahara Desert trip.
- 7 March- Dinner Dance.

In conclusion, Sebastian's Action Trust has helped many families across the UK by bringing joy and happiness back into their lives, letting them feel carefree and calm, without the extra weight of stress on their backs.

CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

DIWALI

BY AVINASH MAINI

Between 28th October and 3rd November 2024, Hindus enjoyed Diwali, which celebrates the story of when Rama, an incarnation of the god Vishnu, returned home to the kingdom of Ayodhya after 14 years of banishment, alongside his wife, Sita and brother, Laxman. The kingdom celebrated by lighting oil lamps, hence why Diwali is known as the festival of lights. Although the festivities reach their climax on the Lakshmi puja (worship of the goddess of wealth), Diwali is a six-day festival, and Hindus celebrate each day with different traditions. Below is a brief description of a few.

VASU BARAS (GOVATSA DWADASHI):

Vasu Baras is a day when Hindus perform rituals to honour and worship cows, which are considered sacred for a variety of reasons

(28th October 2024)

DHANTERAS (DHANATRAYODASHI):

The second day of Diwali is Dhanteras, a festival of prosperity, a day on which Hindus worship the Goddess Lakshmi, goddess of wealth, and Lord Kubera, seeking blessings for their families' fortunes for the year ahead.

NARAK CHATURDASHI:

The anniversary of the defeat of the demon Narak. Hindus take a special bath and when they get out, they step on a fruit to symbolise the defeat. Hindus celebrate with a variety of traditional festive foods.

LAKSHMI PUJA:

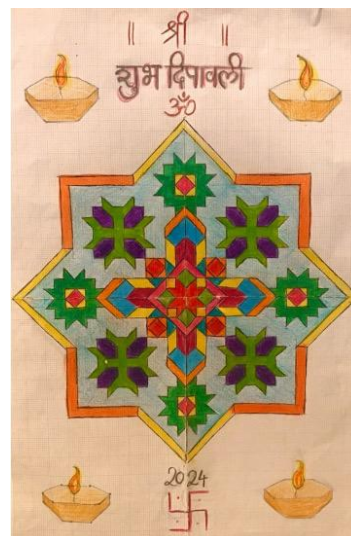
A day on which Hindus worship the Goddess Lakshmi. They celebrate with extended family, wear new clothes, and draw rangolis – a colourful pattern made from sand. (An example design is shown). Fireworks displays and sparklers are also common. At night, an oil lamp is left outside homes alongside rangolis, to light the Goddess Lakshmi's way towards them.

HINDU NEW YEAR:

Hindus celebrate the New Year with a variety of festivities, with celebratory dinners, visiting family, fireworks and sparklers.

BHAU BEEJ:

A day on which brothers visit their sisters for a special dinner and a religious ritual is performed – the sister will put a tikka (a red coloured powder) on her brother's forehead, and they would exchange gifts.



The writing translates to Happy Diwali.

The aum (looks like a 30) represents the holy energy/spirit of the universe.

The traditional symbol below the 2024 represents health, wealth and prosperity.

THE BEST FROM THE LIBRARY...

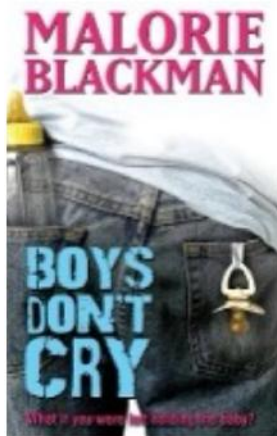
BY ABI CHOW and JOANNA YOUNG

Within Charters School reading is an important factor in our education. We have a brilliant library with a plethora of genres and books ranging from graphic novels to non-fiction literature. We decided to compile some of our top books and series of this term for students to explore.

TOP THREE GENRES

Mystery and suspense
Adventure
Fantasy

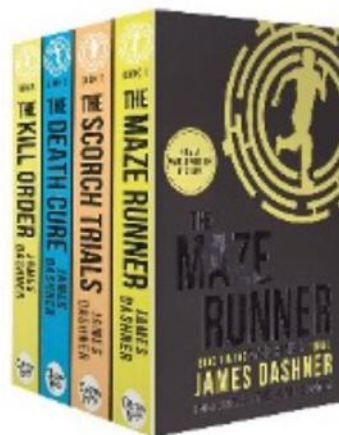
TOP TWO STAND-ALONE BOOKS



We recommend **Malorie Blackman's Boys Don't Cry** which explores the experience of Dante as he discovers that he is the father of a child by his ex-girlfriend and **Michael Scott's 'The Magician'**, a brilliant sequel to 'The Alchemyst' and the second instalment in the six part book series, The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel.

TOP THREE SERIES...

There are so many great series to enjoy but the three we recommend are **Alice Oseman's Heartstopper**, **James Dashner's Maze Runner** and **Katie Kirby's Lottie Brooks**. Add them to your Christmas list today!



TRIPS OF THE TERM

HALF A WORLD AWAY IN JAPAN

BY ABI CHOW

During the autumn half term 35 students, from Years 9 to 13, and 4 teachers went to Japan - an 11-day trip consisting of various activities.

They visited 4 major cities and 13 different sites:

- Meji Shrine - Tokyo
- Shibuya Crossing - Tokyo
- The Dawn Avatar Robot Café - Tokyo
- Tokyo National Museum - Tokyo
- Hakone – close to Tokyo
- The SC Maglev & Railway Museum - Nagoya
- Nagoya Castle - Nagoya
- Arashiyama Bamboo Forest and Monkey Parl - Kyoto
- Kinkakuji (the Golden Temple) - Kyoto

- Fushimi Inari Shrine (with endless red Torri Gates) - Kyoto
- Hashima Island (a location from 007 Skyfall) - Nagasaki
- Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum - Nagasaki
- Peace Memorial Park – Hiroshima

The students also visited the Kwassui Senior and Junior High school in Nagasaki interacting with their second-year English students. They made general conversations and then toured the school and even got taste of lunch from their cafeteria. Later on, they saw the Shiroyama Elementary school and Urakami Cathedral.



The panoramic view of Nagasaki from Mt. Inasa

A WEEKEND IN BERLIN

BY JOANNA YOUNG

During the first half term, a group of sixth form students from both Year 12 and 13 travelled to Berlin for three days. They were joined by Berlin expert and tour guide Tony. After a short flight they spent the day travelling around Berlin, learning about historic buildings and going up the TV Tower.



In the evening, they discovered the Reichstag, Germany's parliament building, before watching the festival lights show at the Brandenburg Gate. It was a composition of stop motion artwork by new artists from around the world.



On the second day, they went to the Victory column admiring the mosaic covering the first level and the sights, before walking to the Soviet War Memorial.



They also spent some time at the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, saw the Berlin Wall Memorial and Checkpoint Charlie. The day filled with lots of steps was topped of with an evening of bowling. On the final day, their itinerary included a poignant visit to the concentration camp Sachsenhausen and a tour of the Olympiastadion which was used during



the 1936 Olympics, concluding a jam-packed weekend in Berlin.

TERM ONE SPORTING SUCCESSES

BY LOIS HERMON

There were many outstanding sporting results from term 1 that highlight the dedication and talent of students across all year groups, setting the tone for further success this year

NETBALL TEAMS SHINE ACROSS THE BOARD



The netball courts were alive with energy this term as our teams delivered outstanding performances in the Furze Platt League.

The Year 11 Girls showcased their skills, securing a strong second place finish among five schools.

Equally impressive, the Year 10 Girls dominated the competition, earning the champion title by topping the table of seven schools.

Match highlights further demonstrated the depth of talent across year groups: the Year 7 Girls celebrated four wins out of six games, while the Year 8 A Team proved unbeatable, going undefeated and conceding no goals.

The Year 10 Girls claimed victory in five out of six matches, with the Year 11 Girls triumphing in three of their four games.

Beyond the league, the U14 Girls shone on October 12th in the National Schools County Round, finishing third in their pool of six schools.

ON THE FIELD

On the Rugby field in the Winston Churchill League, the Year 7 Boys exhibited a remarkable defence. They won 4/4 games without conceding a single try.

All football teams in the ESFA Cup progressed. Highlights include the girls 5-0 win over Salesian School while the Year 7 Boys dominated Westgate 6-1 and Year 11 Boys overwhelmed Sir William Ramsey School 7-3.



NEWS IN BRIEF

The U16 Boys put up a strong fight against Oratory School but narrowly missed victory in their opening match in badminton's School Sport Magazine national competition.

In Cross Country Athletics, the Junior Boys qualified for the Regional Round in the ESAA Schools Cup. Notable performances included Reuben Webb finishing sixth out of 30 in Junior Boys while Freddie Fisher placed third out of 28 in Intermediate Boys.

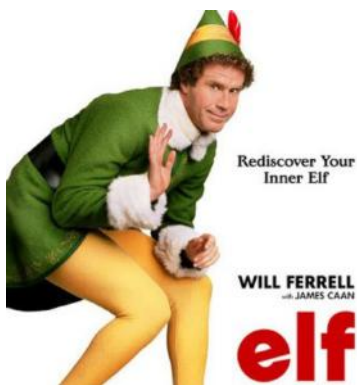
MEET YOUR CHRONICLE TEAM



Alongside our Sixth Form team - Ella Toney, Avinash Maini, Abi Chow, Joanna Young, Charlie Miller and Lois Hermon - meet the Year 7 and 8 Chronicle editors of tomorrow - Lexie, Mehher, Amy, Abi, Orla and Daisy.

THE BIG ISSUE ...

Each edition we are asking our editorial team to tackle one of the big questions of the moment ... this month we asked: *'What's your favourite Christmas film?'*



Daisy was in no doubt it was the Will Ferrell classic **'Elf'**, she told us: "Who wouldn't want to eat spaghetti and syrup" and Joanne backed her up too.

Charlie disagreed, preferring the animated version of Dr Seuss **'Grinch'** while Amy prefers the Apple TV special **'Spirited'**, another Ferrell film in which he stars alongside Ryan Reynolds.

Avanish and Orla went for the iconic **'Home Alone'** and Mehher agreed saying that "the warmth of Kevin's character is exactly what a Christmas movie is all about."

Abi (Y7) prefers **'Christmas Chronicles'** but Abi Chow is a fan of **'Nativity'** telling us: "It still makes me laugh every time I watch it." Ella couldn't decide her favourite but settled the biggest argument of all, insisting: "**Die Hard** is DEFINITELY a Christmas movie."

