UK Traditions : Guy Fawkes / Bonfire Night

DID YOU KNOW.. ?

- Bonfire night is about Guy Fawkes trying to blow up the Houses of Parliament
- Fireworks can travel at speeds of 240km/h
- King Henry VII's wedding saw the first recorded British firework display in 1486
- Sparklers burn between 1000°C – 1500°C
- Toffee apples, baked potatoes, hot soup and hot chocolate are often enjoyed around the fires



BONFIRE comes from **Bone Fire** where in the Middle Ages they were made for burning bones. Now they are mostly associated with Guy Fawkes night where an effigy of the infamous conspirator or other more modern political figure is burned on top of the bonfire.

CATHERINE WHEEL a spinning **firework** named after a wheel torture device used in medieval times; St Catherine was said to have caused this to miraculously fall to pieces.

SPARKLERS are hand held sticks that burn giving out sparkles until they run out. They are sometimes also used to decorate special occasion cakes.

"PENNY FOR THE GUY" a children's chant from the recent tradition leading up to **Bonfire Night** where an effigy or **Guy** is made from old clothing and transported in a wheelbarrow in the quest for money.

COMMEMORATION POEM

Remember, Remember,
the Fifth of November,
Gunpowder, Treason and Plot.
I no of no reason,
Why the Gunpowder Treason,
Should ever be forgot!

by John Milton, 1626

WHY IT IS CELEBRATED

The 5th November is widely known for its fantastic **firework** displays and **bonfires**. On this day in 1605, **Guy Fawkes,** one of 13 English Catholic conspirators, plotted to replace the protestant king, James I with a catholic queen. He was arrested for **treason** while guarding 36 barrels of explosives placed in a cellar beneath the **Houses of Parliament** and condemned to death.

Since then bonfires and firework displays are held to celebrate the fact that the king survived the failed assassination or ***Gunpowder Plot***.

The Houses of Parliament are still ceremonially searched by the **Yeoman of the Guard** each year in November.

Out of respect for their former pupil Guy Fawkes, **St. Peters school** in York is the only place in England not to celebrate bonfire night.



QUIZ

- When is Guy Fawkes night ?
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- What is another name for this occasion ?
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- Where were the explosives placed ?
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- How fast can a firework travel ?
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FIREWORK COLOUR CHEMISTRY

Copper produces **blue** ; Copper and Strontium make **violet** ; **gold** sparks are produced from iron filings mixed with small pieces of charcoal ; Strontium gives deep **red** hues ; Titanium, Zirconium and Magnesium alloys make silvery white glitter ; Barium produces vivid **green**

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