

Remember, remember the fifth of November

Frances Foster

PAST

In 1605, Guy Fawkes and a group of conspirators attempted to blow up the Houses of Parliament in order to kill King James I. The idea was to explode the gunpowder during the opening ceremony of Parliament on 5th November, when the King would be present. An anonymous letter was sent to one of the members of Parliament advising him to stay away on the day of the opening session. The letter was given to the King who ordered that the buildings be searched. Guy Fawkes was arrested in the cellar below the Palace of Westminster on 4th November 1605. When he was caught he admitted that he wanted to kill the King. Guy Fawkes and the other conspirators were tortured and executed.

*Remember, remember the fifth of November
Gunpowder, treason and plot;
We see no reason why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.*

PRESENT

This event is commemorated in Great Britain on 5th November every year with fireworks and the burning of effigies of Guy Fawkes. This is the only day of the year when fireworks are used in England apart from very special celebrations. On Bonfire Night, in gardens in every town and village in the United Kingdom, people light bonfires, let off fireworks which light up the sky and celebrate the fact that the king was not killed by Guy Fawkes. Preparations include making straw dummies, called "Guys". To make the body of the "Guy", children stuff old clothes with straw and for the head they sometimes hollow out a big turnip and carve a face on it. They place firecrackers in the mouth and ears so when the flames of the bonfire reach the firecrackers they go off. Some children still keep up the old tradition of carrying the "guy" in the streets and asking people for pennies. They say "A penny for the Guy". The children use the money they collect to buy fireworks. On the night of Guy Fawkes Day, the effigies of Guy Fawkes are placed on the bonfires and people gather around to watch the "Guy" burn.

GUY FAWKES DAY ACTIVITY



COLOUR THE "GUY"

Other Traditional Rhymes for Guy Fawkes Day

*Knock at the door, ring the bell.
Have you got a penny
a half penny will do.
If you haven't got a half penny
God bless you!*

*Guy, guy, guy!
Stick him up on high;
Hang him on a lamp post
And leave him there to die.*

*Ladies and gentlemen
you'll never grow fat,
If you don't put a penny
in the old Guy's hat.*