



<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/word-street/bonfire-night>

All around the world, festive days like New Year's Eve are celebrated with fireworks. But here in Britain, there is one night that is very special.

It's November the fifth, Bonfire Night, and I'm wrapped up warm for some autumn fun. Tonight's the night for lighting bonfires and setting off fireworks. Here in Winchester, preparations for the celebrations are under way and tonight it's all going to get very noisy!

Bonfire Night parties take place in towns and cities across Britain. The Winchester event is free and attracts over twenty thousand people. Steve Lewis of the charity 'Round Table' is the volunteer in charge.

**Joe:** Steve, what's the plan for tonight's celebrations?

**Steve:** OK, tonight actually kicks off at 6pm in the city centre by our Guild Hall. There's a torch-lit procession where thousands and thousands of people follow a band through the city and we all process down to the fields here. And then we'll follow that by the lighting of the bonfire about 7.15. At 7.45 the fireworks will go off and the crowds will cheer.

**Joe:** It sounds like a hectic night. How many people does it take to organise this?

**Steve:** On the night itself, we have a hundred and eighty volunteers and many, many other people to help us out. So it's hundreds of people involved in an event of this size.

**Joe:** And be honest, is this about history or is it just an excuse to have fun?

**Steve:** Bonfire Night is about history. It all comes from history of England and the Houses of Parliament. But it is great fun, too – great fun for us to organise and put on and great fun for everybody who turns up.

So how did this all start? Four hundred years ago, a man called Guy Fawkes planned to kill King James by blowing up the Houses of Parliament. It was called the Gunpowder Plot. It failed and to mark the event rag doll 'Guys' are burnt on the bonfire and fireworks are set off. Fireworks are made using gunpowder.

Leon's probably got the best job in the world. He lets off fireworks for a living.

**Joe:** Leon, talk me through the sort of display you're going to put on.

**Leon:** There's about four thousand fireworks which all create different effects. Some will go up and go bang, some will spin up there, some will crackle, there's whistles...

**Joe:** What do you think it is about fireworks that the British public just love?

**Leon:** It's a great tradition that we have here. If it wasn't for Guy Fawkes we wouldn't be stood here today. You know, it's a great... I love tradition.

It's six o'clock and time for me to join the procession.

OK, it's almost time for the fireworks now.

Well, I thought that was fantastic – but what did the public think?

**Woman:** Well, it was really nice to come up and meet up with my friends - and watching the fireworks, they were beautiful.

**Girl 1:** I thought they were really good. They were even better than last year.

**Girl 2:** They were really good and they were really colourful and they looked really cool.

That's Bonfire Night over for another year – but there's always time for a final bit of sparkle.