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KGS NEWS

Halloween in Orkney By Rebecca Dancy

Does Halloween still exist in Orkney?

The spooky season has finally arrived! The island is being covered head to toe with silky cobwebs, and skeletons are beginning to lurk within shop windows, but is Halloween still prevalent as it was before? This month, I have decided to let out my inner Sherlock Holmes to investigate the popularity of Halloween across the island. Over the past few years, I haven't been able to help but notice the silence on Halloween night and the lack of knocks at my door. I mean, sure, I selfishly enjoy having all the treats to myself, but I can't help but miss the sound of children giggling and nervously approaching the door. There was something special about opening it to see a group of kids in costume, each one expressing themselves through their outfit, makeup, or hair. For that one night, no one seemed afraid of being judged. They were just excited to become someone else, if only for a few hours. That simple joy used to fill me with warmth, and I didn't realise how much I'd miss it. Halloween has slowly drifted away from our reach. Fewer knocks on the door, fewer giggles in the night, and more unopened bags of Halloween treats left by the door.

So, what happened?

I believe there are three key factors as to why Halloween has become less popular. First, Social media. Don't get me wrong, I love a good doom-scroll from time to time, and I am not against social media. But, not too long ago, people dressed up for fun, not for the pressure of things like Instagram. It feels like there's this unspoken rule about having the most perfect and trending costume. All just for a few photos for a meaningless story. And what if it's not 'post-worthy'? Well, why should you even bother trying, right? Halloween should be a time where we can dress up how we want, as creatively as we want, without feeling like hundreds of people are watching us and judging each and every part of what we've dressed up as. I miss the creative aspect of Halloween; the smudged face paint, the lopsided witch hat, and the itchy wigs. Shouldn't we stop trying to live up to social media's unbelievably high standards?

My second factor as to why Halloween seems to be declining is because of parents being way more cautious than they used to be. I do think this is fair enough. I can understand that letting your child run around in the dark, knocking on strangers' doors, can be a bit intimidating and uncomfortable, but I still think it's crazy how different things were not that long ago. All I needed when I went trick-or-treating was a simple time to be back home, not to go too far away from town, and make sure I had a coat, so I didn't freeze to death. Then, after that, I was sent away with a plastic pumpkin to gallivant around the town with my friends to collect an outrageous number of sugary sweets. But now? It's like you need to have a tracker on, like a lost pigeon, constant texting on your whereabouts, and a full-blown investigation of your treats before you can even get a chance to sniff the chocolatey delights of heaven. (Chocolate donations from your trick-or-treating haul are appreciated dearly.) Whilst of course, safety is vital, it feels a bit like the magic and freedom are slowly slipping away from Halloween. My third and final factor is that life is just busy. With homework piling up, after-school clubs, getting rich from part-time jobs, and the occasional after-school nap; carving out time for Halloween can feel like completing Mission Impossible. Halloween also often falls on a school night, which means going to bed early (at least trying to) and having less energy to run around the neighbourhood like a chocolate-obsessed maniac. When you are already juggling a hundred and one things, sometimes an evening inside rotting away in front of the TV and a mug of warm hot chocolate is much more appealing than storming around in the cold hunting for doors to knock on. It's often hard to compete with a movie marathon and comfortable pyjamas when you're running on empty after a long, hard day of just being a kid. (Maybe an adult too, I won't leave you guys out)

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So, let's get the Halloween spirit back!

I began my Sherlock Holmes mission by interviewing people about what their plans are for Halloween! And despite quite a few saying they were probably doing "nothing" or that they had "no idea" or that they were "turning all the lights off and pretending I'm not home," or even just asking when Halloween actually was, etc. There were still some people prepping for the festivities: "I'm being Nick Wilde with my friend! She's being Judy Hopps" - Charley Overton "I'm being deer in the headlights with my friend Evie McMahon" - James Donald. "I'll be in Japan, but I'm also having a Halloween party with some people" - Emily Williams. "We have got the harvest home dance the next day, so we are thinking of having a massive Halloween harvest home and a friend's birthday party in one night" - Liv Walsh. "I'm being a clown for Halloween! And I'm gonna have a sleepover at my friend's house cause Halloween is on a Friday!" - Ruby Train. "I am hopefully gonna be playing with the Pipe band in the Halloween Parade on the twentyyyyyy... whatever day. Yeah, you can figure that one out... And I will also hopefully be meeting up with some of my friends to sit and watch Halloween zombie films." - Mr Maclean. "So, every year I have all my friends over, and if those friends have children, those friends come round at one o'clock and we have a huge Halloween party. We watch things like 'Beetlejuice' or 'Casper' or all the sort of cute Halloween films.

And then we have tons of food and snacks and stuff. And then later, my friends that don't have children come round and we watch horror films. Like PROPER films. We stay up until 2am... And sometimes we even have sleepovers, which is

cute! I love hosting," - Ms Melrose. "I am hopefully going to be Belle at a Halloween party" –Abi Casey.

"I am going to have a Halloween party. Which you are NOT invited to because it is actually VERY select. It is SO select that it will just be me and my dogs." - Miss Brooks-Taylor. "We are going to the Lynnfield Luxe. So hopefully going dressed up to the Lynnfield Luxe" (As what?) "Well, I don't know. I might go as the sugar skulls. Picture that!" - Ms Slade "At Halloween, I will be sitting in the house, answering the door to all the little children that are coming past our door looking for trick or treats. That's the only thing you can put in the paper... After that, if there's teenagers coming up with eggs... No (evil cackle)" - Mr Harvey (We are all terrified) "I am going out to a VERY fancy dinner at the Lynnfield Hotel with Mrs Slade and Mr Slade and my husband, and some other people. We are going to sample lots of lovely wine and lots of lovely food! And possibly Halloween things as well, I am not sure what we are planning..." - Mrs Tait. "Roller Darby are doing a stand and we're all dressing up" - Michael Lewis. "I'm going out on the first of November in my Halloween costume!" – Laura Henderson. "Celebrating everyone turning up to rehearsals and having a really good time." – Kate Irving-Lewis We also have some lovely people giving back to the community this season! "I will be running a kids' Halloween lunch party at the café I work at." - Ryan Bliss-Davis. "In my shop, we are going to be having a fundraiser for Barnardo's, a charity for children. We will be doing dressing up and events with prizes." - David Dancy. "I always buy sweeties for my grandbairns, and I always buy sweeties anyway in case you get anybody by the door" (Are you dressing up?) "Me?! No, I am not very interesting that way," - Bobby. "I don't know. Cause I'm taking each day as it comes. But I would imagine I won't be doing much except for staying at home with lots of sweets waiting for people to come to our house and giving them out while my kids go out with their mum and have a good evening with friends and family. I think I will just be at home with my pyjamas on!" - Mr Berry.

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Our KGS winner of the Christine Harcus Memorial Competition for Excellence!

Taking a step back from the Halloween spirit, let's take a look at school spirit. What is school spirit? It's taking pride in the place we spend most of our time and representing it to the community with the best of our abilities. And what better way to represent our, essentially, second home than proving our talent. This year, our very own KGS student, Jack Mowat, won The Christine Harcus Memorial Art Competition with his beautiful landscape of Orkney for Excellence in Art! This incredible piece of art, drawn with ink and bleach, is a meaningful reminder of the complexities of our Island and how things might sometimes feel bleak, but there is beauty in everything, and no matter what happens, this is home. And for someone so young (Jack only being in S3) to be able to capture this feeling is even more remarkable. We couldn't be prouder of this great accomplishment here at KGS News, and wish him the very best in his future endeavours. We hope to see more of his works in the paper soon.

Now back to the spooky stuff!

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Orkney's Ghastly Past By Amelie Lewis

The Halloween season has finally arrived in Orkney, and while the shops are jazzing themselves up with spooky decor. I think we should hop on our broomsticks and take a trip back in time to look at Orkney's history. The witch trials. While more prevalent down in much more well-known areas like Salem, they did indeed plague Orkney for a dark spell. What made a witch? Witchcraft was considered so severe that it was treated as a capital offence in Scotland, punishable by death. Because of this, witchcraft was actually mainly used as a ploy to get rid of anyone you simply didn't like! Has someone really gotten on your nerves recently? Say she could predict the weather! Needing to keep someone's mouth shut? Say she could magically take the fat out of the milk of other people's cows and the food out of their grain. As silly and ridiculous as these accusations sound, these are true examples, and happened to real women who had to suffer under the court. Women (and even some men!) who were skilled in herbal remedies, predictions, and advice on diets were often the ones most vulnerable to these accusations and very often faced the cruellest of torture methods.

The best-known victim of the Orkney witch trials was Janet Forsyth. She was said to have always been a quiet person and had a knack for predicting the weather. In 1629, she was buried in accusations including: Slaying four pigs and poisoning their flesh, plaguing both women and men with an illness, and cursing anyone who refused to give her food when she asked. Janet was sentenced to death. She was to be tied to the top of the Clay Loan, tied to a stake, strangled, then burned. Barbara Boundie was another infamous case. Found fainted on the side of the road with no recollection of how she got there, nor the strength to talk.

Many suspected she was 'off with the Faries' (A phrase commonly used to allude to one who had ties to the devil). She was taken into custody and had to face the brunt of many hours of torture till she cracked and made a false confession; that she and 99 other witches were deceived and danced with the devil at the links of Moaness in Hoy. It's important to remember the victims of the Orkney witch trials. It's reckoned that throughout the time, there were around 70 innocents accused, many unjustly sent to their death in the most cruel of ways. There has been a memorial constructed at the top of the Clay Loan. Whenever you walk past, take the time to remember who lost their lives during this spooky era.

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December 16th 1594 By Anushka.J.Thombre

Body tender and black like burned meat, stinging as the biting cold and gentle snow kissed it, like a welcome from the heavens. From God himself apologising for his creations' faults and the injustice bestowed upon the faithful. My name forever tarnished. My children forever scarred. Their innocent bodies and memories turned into puzzles with missing pieces.

The rope pulled tighter as I fought it, my heels pushing against the ground; slipping as we walked to the place that was from now on to be home to confused spirits, like me, whose bodies would roam the skies, in the wind they were said to control, questioning why they had spent their lives as healers. Curing their community of death when the same cursed them to fates worse than death.

Crowds roared, faces of men and women, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters; Some with rage and pride, while others with tears running down their frostbitten cheeks, all now cemented permanently into history. To be questioned and judged like the Stones of Stenness that my daughter and I will never see again together, with our baskets of love, not hate.

If I confessed, if I gave them their false truth, I was promised my freedom: My family's safety, but instead, my wrists are tied together by the rope they'll use to hang me. If I were one of the devil's whores, wouldn't they be dead by now? If the skies and the storms were my domain, wouldn't I have called for lightning this very moment and have them burn, their ashes scattered, enduring lesser pains than I had felt in the past days leading up to what would now be remembered by future generations each time they passed this bare land on a hill.

My cheeks stained with tears, but my eyes dry as I'm made to walk up the half-built wooden steps to the gallows, my final resting place. But I will not rest. If only it were between them and me. I would have taken the inhumane contraption in silence.

My cheeks stained with tears, but my eyes dry as I'm made to walk up the half-built wooden steps to the gallows, my final resting place. But I will not rest. If only it were between them and me. I would have taken the inhumane contraption in silence.

As they finished tightening the noose around my neck, they announced it was time for me to repeat my confession, exposing my ‘guilt’ for all to hear. Admit to denouncing God and promising my soul to the Drow. But it is not my guilt that needed to be confessed; it's theirs, and I was going to make sure their sins would be known by all that had anticipated mine. Even with my final breath. My skin blazed as hot as it had when the caschielawes had been heated by the sizzling furnace. As I stood before the eager and hungry crowd waiting for me to be burned so that they could be safe once more, I knew some would never believe me and that it was only a matter of time before more children of God were brought up to the very place I stand now, to be looked upon by such disgust with no way out but death. I look into their eyes, fiery pits of Hell, as I shout the truth; how I had been taken and hurt till I lay unconscious, just for it to happen again when I opened my eyes. How, when that wasn’t enough, my gentle and kind husband was made to bleed, and my son was made to never walk again. And my daughter, oh my sweet little child, only seven, but as she was dragged into the room and her fingers placed in that monstrosity, that unholy machine, her eyes remained brave. She looked at me, her stare unwavering, to tell me she was fine and I was not to worry.

I agreed to confess to their made-up truths, on the condition that I’d be free to take my family and go. My end of the bargain was fulfilled while theirs was never truly made. But I will not be unjustly killed while they triumph in their victory. No, one day they’ll accuse a woman, but this time no false confession will need to be made, and they will truly know what it is to be in the presence of such power that they lay charges against me for. One day, she will avenge us, her innocent sisters and brothers, and God will stand there, proud to be rid of true evils.

As I let my curses leave my lips in a rage that has been buried in me, the wind stops, and Nature turns quiet as I fall. A crack and screams, not mine, are all the noises that are being made as gravity calls me to the ground. My vision is slowly poisoned by black clouds until I no longer see the audience’s faces, and I know I am dead.

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KGS NEWS COMIC- Halloween Edition

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Jen Olsen and Sophie Stanton's Animal Facts

KGS Geographic

Bats

Bats' scientific name is Chiroptera, which comes from the Greek language meaning 'hand wing'. There are over 1,300 species of bats. However, they all fit into two types: Microchiroptera (microbats) and Megachiroptera (megabats). The difference between the two is, microbats rely more on echolocation, while megabats primarily use sight and smell to find food in the dark. Some prime examples of microbats are vampire bats, leaf-nosed bats, and ghost bats. Some examples of megabats are flying foxes, the Egyptian fruit bat and tube-nosed bats

-Vampire Bat

Bats don't have specific names for female and male, but baby bats are called pups. Bats spend a large majority of their time grooming themselves, just like cats; it helps them control parasites. They are the only mammals that can fly; there are a few mammals that can glide, but they are the only ones that can actually fly. The giant golden-crowned flying fox is the largest bat in the world. They can have a wingspan of more than 5 feet and can weigh up to 1.40 kg.

- Some species can weigh less than a penny
- They can fly at a variety of speeds; the Mexican free-tailed bat can reach up to speeds of 99 mph, while others can only fly at around 12 mph.
- About 40% of all bats are on the endangered list

-Ghost Bat

Did You Know?

Bats are associated with Halloween due to multiple reasons, such as the famous book 'Dracula' by Bram Stoker, but bats can also be linked to the Celtic festival of Samhain, which had an influence on Halloween.

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How to Make a Bonfire Cake! By Brooke Moar

You will need:

☆Two medium sponge cakes (use your favourite recipe, or there's a standard one on BBC Goodfoods. I recommend using a plain/vanilla sponge or a chocolate one.)
(Link: https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/sponge-cake minus the optional filling and icing
sugar dusting.)

☆A tub of chocolate icing (or alternatively, make your own!)

☆Some Digestive Biscuits.

☆Chocolate Finger Biscuits.

☆Boiled Fruit Sweets (Coloured orange-you can add red, yellow, and clear too.)

Equipment:

☆A plate/board to put your cake on whilst decorating (It's going to get messy!)

☆A plate/board to serve the cake on.

☆A knife/spatula to apply the icing.

☆A pot for the sweets

☆A spoon for the sweets

☆A small hammer/alternative to crush the sweets.

☆A bowl to crush the sweets in.

☆Baking Tray and Baking Paper.

☆A candle.

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Method: 1. Place your cooled cakes on a plate. Open your tub of icing and sandwich the two cakes together. This only needs to be a thin layer. With the remaining icing, coat the top and sides of the cake. Put your cake in the fridge to set.

2. Whilst your cake cools, on a low heat, place the sweets in a pot on the hob, an stir until they melt. Once they've melted, pour the mixture onto the baking tray covered with baking paper. Leave this tray to cool until it becomes hard.

3. Take your cake out of the fridge and place it on the plate you're serving on. Ta some chocolate fingers (I typically use eight) and place them on top of your cake to resemble logs for the fire. I arranged them at each quarter of the cake, then in between.

4. Crumble up a couple of digestives until they're like dust. Sprinkle these around the logs, and at the bottom of the cake if you wish. These mimic the ash from the fire.

5. Once the boiled sweets have hardened, snap pieces off. These don't have to b even, as flames aren't even, but make sure they're tall enough

6. If you're not serving the cake immediately, do these steps:

6.1. Put the cake in the fridge.

6.2. Put the "flames" in the fridge too, but not on the cake.

7. If you're serving immediately, do these:

7.2. Stick the "flames" in the middle of the cake

7.3. Set a candle in the middle of them. 8. Light the candle, and the light should reflect off the flames!

9. Cut, serve, and enjoy.

NOTES!: Don't leave the candle lit too long, as the "flames" will begin to melt onto the cake.

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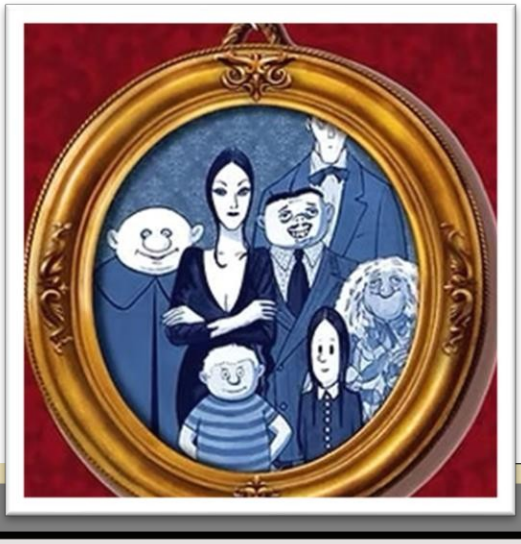
The Addams Family The Musical

THE SCHOOL SHOW IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER…

The 2026 school show can now be fully disclosed as ‘The Addams Family’, the musical!!

“Wednesday Addams reveals she's in love with a seemingly normal boy, Lucas, and asks her father, Gomez, to keep it a secret from her mother, Morticia, until their families meet at a dinner party. The core conflict arises as Gomez tries to keep the secret while the two families, the eccentric Addams and the conventional Beinekes, collide during the dinner, leading to chaos, revelations, and eventual understanding and acceptance between the families.”

Auditions will be taking place soon, so keep an eye out for more information in the bulletin! Backstage crew members are also needed, so if you have any interest in non-acting-related activities, keep your eyes peeled, too!



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Name: _____

Halloween Word Search!

L G T K N M W H A L L O W E E N V Z X M K U Y
X C D S G T Z O B S V D A S B L P L A M I X I
D Z G U S F S Y B T W D Q Q Q A W Z V F Q D H
E Q C H P Z E Z E E M A V U T R E A T B T V N
T V C G O M M G I E G R A V E Y A R D N D A V
N N I N O S U Z B W B K C R U X H B L O X M A
U H I F K A T E M S H N J I W E B E V T Z P I
A R E B Y A S R O S N E F S O Z A W W E K I H
H J S P H R O A Z P Y S C E T M T B T L C R S
E W R Y K E C M G E J S W N W S H O G E K E K
W I U M C T B T D L O D Q O W W C C W K D T U
K T C Y I S L H M L J D D B R Y P A J S R T L
C C X V R N O G N I K P M U P P Y U R M C V L
M H N I T O O I T D V M A J Z U L D Y Y R N B
U J L C Z M D N A W Z M Z C R E D I P S C A V
G F O W X T G C B X N N O R D L U A C I C D H

Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden ↑, ↓, →, ←, and ↘.

BAT
BLOOD
BONES
CAULDRON
COBWEB
COSTUMES
CURSE
DARKNESS
GHOST
GRAVEYARD
HALLOWEEN
HAUNTED
MONSTER
NIGHTMARE
PUMPKIN
SCARY
SKELETON
SKULL
SPELL
SPIDER
SPOOKY
SWEETS
TREAT
TRICK
VAMPIRE
WITCH
ZOMBIE

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This wordsearch is all ready for the spooky season!

Find all 27 Halloween related words and send a picture of the completed wordsearch to kgsnewsteam@gmail.com
Maybe you'll get a Prize?

Last Month's winner was

Ryan Logie

Well done for getting it sent in!

We know our school is full of incredible talent, both students and teachers, deserving of being represented in the KGS newspaper. If you have done anything you're particularly proud, of such as;

- Winning or doing well in a competition
- Making an achievement in your sport
- A piece of art or craft
- A comic of your own
- A piece of writing
- A good test score

Or anything else you want to display, then email us at kgsnewsteam@gmail.com with your name and school year for a chance for your achievements to be featured in the next month's paper!