FIFTY FUN HALLOWEEN FACTS

1. Halloween is held on October 31\textsuperscript{st} which is the last day of the Celtic calendar.

2. The Halloween custom has evolved from the ancient Celts belief that the border between this world and “the Otherworld” becomes thin on All-Hallows-Eve. People wore costumes to disguise themselves and avoid harm.

3. The day after Halloween is called All Saints Day. Christians dedicate this day to all those saints who don't have a special day of their own.

4. All hallows is another way to say all saints. All-Hallows-Eve means the night before All-Saints Day.

5. The first evidence of the use of the word Halloween comes from Scotland in the early 16\textsuperscript{th} century. It was slang for All-Hallows-Eve.

6. The colours orange and black represent Halloween because orange is the colour of pumpkins (and autumn) and black is associated with death.

7. The tradition of carving a jack o' lantern started in the United Kingdom. They were carved on All Hallows Eve and left on the door step to ward off evil spirits.

8. The original jack o' lanterns were carved from a swede or a turnip.

9. Jack o' lanterns were named after the phenomenon of strange light flickering over peat bogs.

10. Carving gourds into elaborately decorated lanterns dates back thousands of years to Africa. They were intentionally brought to the New World via prehistoric migration through Asia.

11. A record for the most simultaneously lit Jack o' Lanterns was set on October 21, 2006 when 30,128 jack-o'-lanterns were simultaneously lit on Boston Common.

12. The world's largest jack o' lantern was carved from the world's then-largest pumpkin on October 31, 2005 in Northern Cambria, Pennsylvania, United States by Scott Cully. The pumpkin weighed 1,469 lb (666.33 kg).

13. Today the record for the world's largest pumpkin is held by Nick and Kristy Harp whose pumpkin weighed in at 1,725 lbs (782.45 kg).

14. Trick-or-treating is the Halloween custom where children dressed in costume
go door to door asking for candy with the question, "trick or treat?" The "trick" is a (usually idle) threat to perform mischief on the home-owners or their property if no treat is given.

15. Many people believe, Trick or Treating evolved from the Middle Ages custom of giving freshly baked soul cakes to children who went door to door on All-Hallows-Eve offering prayers.

16. Each soul cake eaten represented a soul being freed from purgatory.
17. In Sweden, children dress up as witches and go trick-or-treating on Maundy Thursday (the Thursday before Easter).

18. In Northern Germany, Norway and Southern Denmark children dress up in costumes and go trick-or-treating on New Year's Eve in a tradition called "Rummelpott".

19. In Scotland, the children are only supposed to receive treats if they perform tricks for the households they go to. This normally takes the form of singing a song or reciting a joke or a funny poem which the child has memorised before setting out.

20. For a number of years (in the late 18th century and early 20th century) Halloween in the U.S became synonymous with vandalism.

21. In 1912, Boy Scout clubs and other community organisations came together to encourage a safe Halloween celebration. School posters at this time called for a “Sane Halloween”.

22. In an effort to prevent damage to their properties, householders began to offer children treats if they promised not to play “tricks”.

23. By the end of the 1930's trick or treating had become widespread.

24. Research done by the U.S National Confectioners association in 2005 revealed that 80% of adults and 93% of children went trick or treating on Halloween.

25. The first screen depiction of Trick or Treating was in Disney's cartoon, “Trick or Treating”. In this cartoon Huey, Duey and Louie try to trick their Uncle, Donald Duck into giving them candy.

26. In 1964 a New York housewife annoyed by Halloween started giving out packages of inedible objects to children whom she believed were too old to be trick-or-treating. The packages contained items such as steel wool, dog biscuits and ant buttons (which were clearly labelled with the word "poison"). Though nobody was injured, she was prosecuted and pleaded guilty to endangering
children.

27. In 1970, the New York Times published an article that claimed that "Those Halloween goodies that children collect this weekend on their rounds of ‘trick or treating’ may bring them more horror than happiness". It provided specific examples of potential tamperings. The examples were speculative but led to a ground swell of fear.

28. By the 1980s, US and Canadian parents fear that trick or treating children could be in danger of eating candy that had been tampered with reached a peak. In 1985, an ABC News/Washington Post poll that found 60% of parents feared that their children would be injured or killed because of Halloween candy sabotage.

29. Apart from one incident—actually an act of premeditated murder by a trick-or-treater's father—there have been no recorded incidents of malicious and deliberate tampering of candy during Halloween.

30. In 1970, a 5-year-old boy from the Detroit area found and ate heroin his uncle had stashed. The boy died following a four day coma. The family attempted to protect the uncle by claiming the drug had been sprinkled in the child's Halloween candy.

31. In 2008, candy was found with metal shavings and metal blades embedded in it. The candy was Pokemon Valentine's Day lollipops purchased from a Dollar General store in Polk County, Florida. The candy was determined to have been manufactured in China and not tampered with within the United States.

32. In the U.S, Halloween accounts for 25% of the year's candy sales.

33. In the U.S, nearly $2 billion is spent each year on Halloween candy.

34. Candy corn is the most popular Halloween candy in the U.S.

35. Candy corn was created by the U.S Wunderle Candy company in the 1880's.

36. Snickers bars are the most popular candy bar sold on Halloween in the U.S.

37. Snickers bars were created in 1930 by the Mars family. It was named after their family horse.

38. Research conducted by the U.S National Retail Federation found that in 2005 – 53% of Americans bought a Halloween costume, spending an average of $38.

39. The first mass produced Halloween costumes appeared in the 1930's in the
Originally Halloween costumes were scary characters like vampires, ghosts, skeletons, witches and devils.

Today, Halloween costumes are often inspired by science fiction, television, cinema, cartoons and pop culture.

According to the U.S National Retail Federation the most popular Halloween costume themes for adults are, in order: witch, pirate, vampire, cat, and clown.

In 2009, the most popular Halloween character for Adults and Children was Michael Jackson. Michael Jackson died on June 25, 2009.

In 1966, The TV series Batman was so popular, a fabric company issued patterns for children's costumes in 1966.

Apple bobbing is a traditional Halloween game. The game is played by filling a tub or a large basin with water and putting apples in the water. Because apples are less dense than water, they will float. Players then try to catch one with their teeth.

Apple bobbing is becoming less popular, possibly because some people regard it as unsanitary.

Girls who place the apple they bobbed under their pillows are said to dream of their future lover.

On 19 February, 2008, New Yorker, Ashrita Furman, bobbed 33 apples in one minute to establish a world record.

Agatha Christie's mystery novel, “Hallowe'en Party” is about a girl who is drowned in an apple-bobbing tub.

New York City hosts the United States' largest Halloween celebration, known as The Village Halloween Parade. The evening parade attracts over two million spectators and participants.