

The History Of Fireworks

I can't imagine the Fourth of July without fireworks! Fireworks displays actually have a history. According to scholars, war rockets and explosives were first made in China during the 6th century. The first fireworks were probably firecrackers, also known as Chinese crackers. Firecrackers are still used in China - and elsewhere - to celebrate weddings, births and Chinese New Year.

In the 14th century, Europeans began using gunpowder for weapons, as well as for pyrotechnics shows for entertainment; Italians and Germans were recognized as the masters of the fireworks game.

Some medieval fireworks featured living people holding sky rockets and other fireworks. They were called "green men" because they placed leaves and greenery all over their bodies to ward off burns.

In England, a fireworks display helped celebrate the 1486 wedding of Henry VII, and by 1749 fireworks were such the rage that composer George Friedrich Handel created a symphony called Music for the Royal Fireworks.

Fireworks finally made a big bang in the U.S. before the Revolutionary War and fireworks displays have been synonymous with the Fourth of July since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The biggest U.S. fireworks display ever was staged for the centenary of the Statue of Liberty in 1986, which brought together Zambelli, Grucci and Souza, the biggest names in modern-day American pyrotechnics.