

The Great Fire of London

In 1666 the City of London looked very different from how it does today. The streets were narrow and the houses and shops were built from wood. Some homes were so close together, people could reach out of their windows and shake hands.

After a long hot summer, the timber houses were very dry. It would not take much for a fire to start.

Thomas Farryner was a baker who lived and worked in Pudding Lane. All day Saturday he worked hard to make biscuits for the Navy. That night he was so tired that he forgot to sweep out his oven.

And so it was that in the early hours of Sunday morning, September 2nd, the great fire of London came alive and began to eat everything in its path.

By 3 o'clock in the morning, all of Pudding Lane was ablaze, and the flames of the hungry fire could be seen far away.

The following day the flames of the greedy fire were so high that night looked like day. By Tuesday they were so hot and angry that nobody could go near enough to throw water on them.

So how would the people of London kill this dangerous beast?

On Wednesday, the wind that was helping to feed the fire dropped. Gunpowder was used to blow up houses and shops to stop the fire from spreading. With no wood for food, the fire would soon die down and by Thursday many people were fighting the flames with water.

By Friday the fire was getting smaller and smaller. The fiery monster was starving and would soon be dead.

The houses and the shops were all gone and it took a long time for London to stand up and be proud again. Thirty years in fact.

Today you can still walk down Pudding Lane with its modern shops. And if you look closely you might even see the plaque that points to the very spot where the great fire of London began.

Casualty List:
9 people dead
400 streets gone
13,200 homes destroyed

