



# Flora Day and Local Celebrations

Enquiry question: Why do we celebrate Flora Day in Helston?

## Key Information

Helston townsfolk have celebrated and enjoyed the wonderful tradition that is Flora Day. This ancient festival is usually held on 8th May. A spring festival to celebrate the end of winter and mark the arrival of the new vitality and fertility with the trees and flowers bursting into life. The houses and shops of the town are decorated with greenery and floral arrangements to express the spirit of renewal. There is an early morning dance, a children's dance, a midday dance and an evening dance. The Hal-An-Tow is also performed throughout the day. There are many theories of the history of Flora Day, one being that a "Fiery Dragon" (possibly a large meteorite) is reputed to have appeared over Helston many centuries ago and dropped a large stone on what is now known as the "Angel Yard". More than a century ago, this great stone was split up to be used for building; a portion was built into the outside wall of the Angel Hotel in Coinagehall Street. The inhabitants of Helston, after fully expecting the town to be destroyed, celebrated their deliverance by dancing through each others houses.

## Key concepts:

Religion and Beliefs  
Historical Figures



What happened many centuries ago that started Flora Day?



Why do St Michael's children celebrate Flora Day?

## Key Vocabulary

<b>Hal-An-Tow</b>	The celebration includes dancing, loud chanting and singing, folk stories such as St Piran's journey to Cornwall and St Michael defeating the Devil
<b>Flora Day</b>	A spring festival to celebrate the end of winter and mark the arrival of the new vitality and fertility with the trees and flowers bursting into life.
<b>Furry Dance/Flora Dance</b>	It is a celebration of the passing of winter and the arrival of spring. It takes place in Helston, in May, every year.
<b>Lily of the Valley</b>	A European plant of the lily family, with broad leaves and arching stems of fragrant white bell-shaped flowers. We wear this plant on Flora Day.
<b>Spring</b>	The season after winter and before summer, in which vegetation begins to appear, in the northern hemisphere from March to May and in the southern hemisphere from September to November. "in spring the garden is a feast of blossom"

## Key People

St Michael



St Michael is the leader of all of the archangels and is in charge of protection, courage, strength, truth and integrity. St Michael is often depicted as carrying a flaming sword to protect and safeguard humanity.

Dragon



St Michael defeated a dragon and won. Symbolising that good will win over evil.

St Piran



He is the Patron Saint of Cornwall... and of tin miners. He had miraculous powers which is why a group of kings threw him into the sea in Ireland in the first place. However, he washed up on the shores of Perranporth and began working his magic in Cornwall instead.

St George



St George isn't just the Patron Saint of England! He is the Patron Saint of farmers, soldiers, archers and even... scouts! The scouts and guides often take part in a parade on St George's Day because of this.