WELCOME TO Hallowe’en in Greenfield Village

What’s the most enchanting, nostalgic and fantastical Halloween adventure? It’s The Henry Ford’s Hallowe’en in Greenfield Village, Michigan’s premier outdoor October celebration.

From fall themes to costumed storybook characters and ghostly performances, our 40-year-plus Hallowe’en tradition is one of a kind, showcased within the bewitching setting of Greenfield Village after hours.

HALLOWE’EN HISTORY

The Hallowe’en celebration has ancient Celtic origins. A colorful union of customs evolved from a pagan festival that celebrated the end of the summer and the harvest season — a time when the boundaries between the living and the souls of the departed were believed to be thinned. The old rituals eventually became associated with the Christian feast of All Saints’ or Hallows’ Day. The night before this feast — All Hallows’ Even — was abbreviated as Hallowe’en, a spelling that remained in place well into the 1930s.

Hallowe’en has not always been a night of ghoulish and garish trimmings, candy and trick-or-treating. Celebrations in the early 1900s were occasions for young adults to gather and peer into the future for love and marriage, fate and fortune. The holiday was an opportunity to host a “frolic” with a romantic theme. But the autumnal fruit, cornstalks, witches, ghosts and goblins, the wearing of costumes and even the carved pumpkin jack-o’-lanterns we still decorate with today all have symbolism rooted in the age-old Celtic traditions.

For additional reading on this fascinating subject, we suggest Halloween: Romantic Art and Customs of Yesteryear by Diane C. Arkins.

PHOTOS: EE Berger
Hallowe’en Experiences

The Witches of Greenfield Village
You’ve seen their broomsticks, pointy hats and black cats. Now is your chance to meet perhaps the most iconic Hallowe’en figure in our history: the witch.

The Welcoming Witch
Near Front Entrance

The Wizard of Oz
Follow Dorothy along the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City. Along the way, see the Scarecrow and Tin Man, or ask the great and powerful Oz to grant your own wish. Be wary of the Wicked Witch of the West and flying monkeys.

The Dancing Skeletons
The skull and crossbones have long symbolized death and danger. Our dancing skeletons take things to the lighter side. Stop by and shake your bones.

The Vampires
The vampires of Greenfield Village merely want things to the lighter side. Stop by and shake your own bones.

The Headless Horseman
The Headless Horseman rides again in pursuit of the witch.

The Pumpkin Quartet
Grown from magical seeds in a secret and enchanting garden in Greenfield Village, the Pumpkin Quartet springs forth each year to bring the delight of all who encounter them.

Dunk-9-30, Noah Webster Home Front Lawn

The Village Graveyard, Woodland Cemetery
Our graveyard is not only the turf of our friendly neighborhood undertaker but of those who are with us in spirit after death.

Near Martha-Mary Chapel

The 1913 Herschell-Spillman Carousel
Greenfield Village’s carousel is a delight any time of year. This Hallowe’en season, we have some very fun themed music played by our original Arbanon band organ and our skeleton crew.

Made possible by

The Woman in White
High upon her balcony, in search of her lost mate, stands a woman in white, tormented by her fate.

6-9-30, Robert Frost Home Balcony

The Headless Horseman Ride
The Headless Horseman rides again in pursuit of the unfortunate Ichabod Crane.

6:30, 7:30, 8, 9, 30, Mill Road

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow
Enjoy a presentation of Washington Irving’s classic story

Storytelling Times: 6:15, 6:45, 7:15, 7:45, 8:15, 8:45, Liberty Craftworks Arch

Little Red Riding Hood
Join Little Red Riding Hood on her journey through the woods to her grandmother’s house.

Storytelling Times: 6:15, 6:45, 7:15, 7:45, 8:15, 8:45, touring bus Birthplace

Hansel and Gretel
Transport yourself to this sinisterly sweet domain with a few surprises thrown in.

Storytelling Times: 6:30, 7:30, 8, 8:30, 9, McIlhenny Birthplace

The Jack-o’-Lantern
Throughout the second half of the 19th century, Greenfield Village’s jack-o’-lanterns have an ancient and storied history. As you will see, do far more than just light the way.

Storytelling Times: 4-8:30, Detroit Central Market

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For more details, visit the Welcome Center or thf.org/mediasite to learn more.