

STRIP & DIP - Students strip off and skinny dip in freezing sea as traditional May Day celebrations t

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Plucky souls appeared unfazed by the icy temperatures as they made a splash in the North Sea.

STUDENTS were seen stripping off and skinny dipping in the freezing North Sea as traditional May Day celebrations took place across the country.

Brave souls were all smiles in St Andrews, Scotland, as they held hands to prepare for the bracing cold.

University of St Andrews students jump into the North Sea on the Scottish coast as they mark May Day in traditional fashion

Students at the University of St Andrews take part in the May Dip in a bid for good luck ahead of exams

The May Day dip is a tradition for many students across the country - but luckily, St Andrews has the icy North Sea right at hand.

These friends sensibly approach the sea with a brisk jog

Students enjoyed a glorious pink sunrise this morning as they celebrated the start of May

Bum's the word... plucky friends take on the North Sea, one step at a time

Some swimmers seemed to hardly feel the cold on a bracing May morning

Rock on!

Friends are left in stitches as they race out of the freezing water

Getting fired up... St Andrews students warm themselves up on the beach

Incredibly, the hundreds taking part appeared unfazed by the icy temperatures as they made a splash at East Sands beach this morning.

It's not clear if this plays a part in their enthusiasm, but the prestigious university says that the May Day dip is hoped to lead to good luck in exams.

A stunning pink sunrise accompanied the icy shenanigans, as others were seen warming themselves by a tremendous fire.

Meanwhile in the ancient city of Oxford, more than 13,000 gathered as choristers sang outside Magdalen College at 6am this morning.

The tradition, which dates back to 1505, was followed by Morris dancing and folk singing as students celebrated by staying up all night.

In the festival town of Glastonbury, Somerset, huge crowds dressed in green and enjoyed music and dance in the tradition of early Gaelic seasonal celebrations.

Participants could be seen gathering around the market cross in the town as the may-pole was presented to the May King and Queen, who with the Green men carry the may-pole to the Chalice Well.

The day has its roots in ancient pagan festivals marking the start of the summer, with ancient Celts calling it Beltaine.

It's since taken on a more secular nature in Europe, including the addition of maypole dances.

Since the 1880s May 1 has also marked International Workers' Day, with strikes and rioting often taking place on this day across Europe.

Revellers see in the spring during May Morning in Oxford with a can of cider

Musicians dressed head to toe in green perform for onlookers in Oxford

Datchet Border Morris provide a display of traditional Morris dancing at sunrise

A woman wraps herself in her robe AT Glastonbury Chalice Well, where people gather to observe a modern interpretation of the ancient Celtic pagan fertility rite of Spring

Revellers during the Beltane celebrations in Glastonbury

Beltane celebrations take place in Glastonbury every year between the Spring and Summer equinox, on May 1

The green men take part in the traditional celebrations of the may pole in Glastonbury, Somerset

Revellers see in the spring during May Morning as students and residents look on in central Oxford

Pagan rites are at the heart of these early Gaelic seasonal celebrations

You Gouda be joking... a man celebrates May 1 with a pint and a seasonal sprig

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