

Interesting facts about William Shakespeare

1. William Shakespeare was a rather controversial figure, even his existence is questionable.
2. William Shakespeare was born in April 1564. The exact date of his birth is still unknown. He was baptized on April 26, so historians believe that he was born shortly before this date. No one knows how to spell his last name. There are almost 80 different ways to spell it: "Shappere", "Shaxberd". In his own signature he wrote such variations as "Willm Shakp".
3. An interesting fact is that to this day not a single lifetime portrait of Shakespeare has been preserved. It is still unknown what exactly the playwright actually looked like.
4. When he was 18, he married a farmer's daughter, Anne Hathaway. She was 8 years older than him. Their marriage was announced and performed quickly because Ann was already 3 months pregnant at that time.
5. William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway had three children: Susanna and twins Hamnet and Judith. Shakespeare repeatedly used the theme of twins in his works, since the poet himself was the father of twins. His son died in early childhood, but his daughter lived to be 77 years old.
6. Despite the fact that his works are still recognized as brilliant, Shakespeare had never attended university. Despite the brightness of their father, Shakespeare's children were illiterate.
7. Shakespeare was not a family man. The fact that he had three children by today's standards, makes it sound as though Shakespeare had a loving and close-knit family. In all actuality this wasn't the case, and Shakespeare did not demonstrate a close family connection with his wife or his kids. Once his son Hamnet (yes, HamNET) died, William spent very little time with his family. He moved to London where he had previously lived, and had little contact with what remained of his family. No letters or other forms of correspondence survive between Shakespeare and his wife from this point forward. Not to say that absolutely no contact existed ever again between his wife and himself, but there is a complete lack of any hard evidence of correspondence.
8. Shakespeare's will scarcely mentions his wife, Anne, who was probably entitled to one-third of his estate automatically. He did make a point, however, of leaving her "my second best bed", a bequest that has led to much speculation. Some scholars see the bequest as an insult to Anne, whereas others believe that the second-best bed would have been the matrimonial bed and therefore rich in significance.
9. Shakespeare began his career as an actor. He wrote his first play when he was

about 25 years old. When "Hamlet" was staged, Shakespeare played the shadow of the murdered prince's father.

10. Many of Sigmund Freud's works on the human nature are based on Shakespearean heroes, for example, on the psychology of Hamlet.

11. At that time «Macbeth» was unpopular due to its reference to witches who used to be a source of fear in the Middle Ages. There is still a superstition in the theater connected with the name "Macbeth".

12. The plays performed at the theater «Globe» had unique special effects, such as: hatches, actors raised by wires, smoke and fire. One of the special effects involved firing cannon that set the roof on fire. It burned the theater to the ground.

13. Queen Elizabeth I was a great admirer of Shakespeare's plays. She often hired his troupe to perform at the Royal court.

14. Many people are skeptical about whether Shakespeare was really the author of the plays. Apart from Church records and legal documents, most aspects of Shakespeare's life are circumstantial and nothing is known for certain. This means that no one knows how exactly Shakespeare's career began or how he was able to become famous so quickly.

15. There is no record of what Shakespeare was doing between 1585 and 1592. Historians consider these to be the "lost years" of his life, since no one knows where he had been. But in 1592 Shakespeare returned as an actor and playwright.

16. No one knows exactly how Shakespeare died, although typhus may have been the reason.

17. On Shakespeare's original tombstone he was depicted with a bag of grain in his hands. The citizens of Stratford replaced the grain bag with a pen in 1747.

18. Shakespeare penned a curse for his grave, daring anyone to move his body from that final resting place. His epitaph was:

Good friend for Jesus' sake forbear,
To dig the dust enclosed here:
Blest be the man that spares these stones,
And curst be he that moves my bones.

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