

Samhain



Happy Halloween

Drink of the Day by Bill Elliott

Fresh Apple Cider with Pumking Whiskey



Samhain

Scottish Gaelic: ['sãũ.ɪŋ]



Celebrating Samhuinn at University of Edinburgh
- 31st October 2016

A Gaelic festival marking the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter or the "darker half" of the year. Traditionally, it is celebrated from 31 October to 1 November, as the Celtic day began and ended at sunset. This is about halfway between the autumn equinox and the winter solstice.

Dating over 2,000 years

The Bonfires

Samhain was the only day spirits could walk the earth.

Huge fires warded off bad fortune for the coming year and evil spirits.

Reigniting your home fire with an ember from the bonfire was good luck.

Ashes were spread across farm fields to ward off bad luck

The bonfire encouraged dreams, especially of a future husband or wife. Drop a cutting of your hair into the embers of the fire the identity of your first husband would be revealed.



Jack-o-Lantern or Ted-o-Turnip?

Two stories:

1. An ancient Celtic tradition. To carry home an ember from the communal bonfire, the people would hollow out a turnip so they could walk home with the fire still burning.

2. An 18th century Irish blacksmith, called Jack, colluded with the Devil and was denied entry into Heaven. Condemned to walk the earth for eternity he asked the Devil for some light. He was given a burning coal which burned inside a hollowed out turnip

When the Scot-Irish emigrated to America, they adapted the tradition and used pumpkins instead as it is more difficult to find turnips.



Trick or Treat



Originated centuries ago.

In Ireland, the poor would go from door to door at rich people's homes and ask for food, kindling, or money.

They would then use what they collected for their celebrations on Halloween.

Barmbrack "Bairín Breac"

Traditional Irish Halloween cake

A sweet bread with fruit through it as well as some other treats. Shop-bought barmbracks still contain a ring but if you make it at home add your own treats it's even more fun.

Each member of the family gets a slice and each prize has a different meaning:

- The rag: your financial future is doubtful
- The coin: you will have a prosperous year
- The ring: impending romance or continued happiness
- The thimble: you'll never marry



Blind-folded Cabbage Picking



Blindfolded local girls would go out into the field and pull up the first cabbage they stumbled upon.

If the cabbage had a lot of clay attached to the roots their future lover would have money.

If the girl ate the cabbage the nature of their future husband would be revealed, bitter or sweet.

Colcannon



The traditional dinner on Halloween night before going out fun and mischief.

Made with boiled potatoes, curly kale (a type of cabbage) and raw onions.

Traditionally coins were wrapped in pieces of paper and slipped into children's colcannon for them to find and keep.

Whoever finds a hidden ring will be married within the year.

Fairies and Farm Animals

Fairies and goblins were believed to collect souls as they trawl the earth on Halloween night. If you threw dust from under your feet at the fairy they would release any souls they kept captive. However, over the years this legend was changed.

Farm animals would be anointed with holy water to keep them safe through the night. If animals showed ill health on Halloween they would be spat at to try to ward off the evil spirits.



That's All Folks!

