

Daunting Nights and Halloween Fun!

Ghouls, goblins, ghosts, witches, trick-or-treating, candy and costumes – is this what Halloween's all about? When I celebrate Halloween with my family, we have witches brew, mummy wrapping, and, instead of bobbing for apples, we hang them on a string. That's not all Halloween is about. Actually, it began centuries ago in Ireland and evolved into the way we commemorate it today. Do you wonder how Halloween began?

Halloween is an extraordinary holiday, when intimidating creatures or unusual characters come to life at your doorstep and ask for candy. Halloween is a shortened version of "All Hallows Eve". One of the most memorable traditions of Halloween is our costumes. For Halloween you can dress up as anything! In Ireland a man would wear a white robe embracing a horse's head to lead the procession on to people's houses looking for a well prepared meal. In the 1800's the commemoration spread toward America. From there adults resumed the tradition. It spread to children in the 1900's, and now people of all ages in the United States dress up for a night of fun on Halloween.

Trick-or-treating is a huge aspect of Halloween. It was said that spirits would come out in the night. To keep them happy, people set up tables with a Halloween meal. In the United Kingdom and in Ireland, adults would go from house-to-house wanting a bit of food and drink. They would only receive their

earnings if they were to perform or sing a song. In England, people went soiling. They would go place-to-place asking for miniature portion of bread, or soul cakes. They would exchange them for prayer. It was a European tradition in the 9th century and evolved into how we observe it today.

Around Halloween there is superstition lurking around. Halloween symbols are also symbols of superstition. Witches were said to be riding around in the sky with black cats on Halloween night. Fairies and ghosts were said to help cast spells on a brisk Halloween night. In Scotland, the Scottish lit massive bonfires to stay safe and keep evil spirits at bay. The same bonfires were lit throughout Europe for the remembrance of the dead. These days people don't light a fire, but put a single candle in a jack-o-lantern.

Lastly, what reminds me of Halloween is the notorious jack-o-lanterns. Now you see hollowed out pumpkins with a face carved on to the side of the pumpkin with a candle or something that resembles a candle inside. It all started when a devious man named Jack, who was exceptionally well at tricking people, tricked Satan to ascend up a tree. While he was up there, Jack carved a Crucifix into the tree trunk. He was trapped there, so Jack made a deal with him. If the devil wouldn't tempt him anymore, he would let him descend down the tree. When Jack died, he was denied to Heaven because of his evil life-style. He was also denied into Hell because he trapped the devil. Instead, the devil gave Jack a

lone candle to find his way through the obscurity. Today we honor the tradition of jack-o-lanterns with a hollow pumpkin and a candle.

Today, Halloween is very different than in the past. People don't believe in all the superstition that they used to. Here and there people do, but it is very different than it use to be. With my family we have jack-o-lanterns, costumes, trick-or-treating, and symbols, but we don't believe in what it was originally meant to be. All across America people carry on the customs of Halloween and we pass it on to generation-to-generation, so people after us can enjoy the same traditions we did. Halloween is one of the most daunting times of year. Whether you celebrate it or not, Halloween will always be passed on to people thousands of years after us. I will celebrate Halloween this year, and for many years to come! I love Halloween!