

# Halloween in Ireland

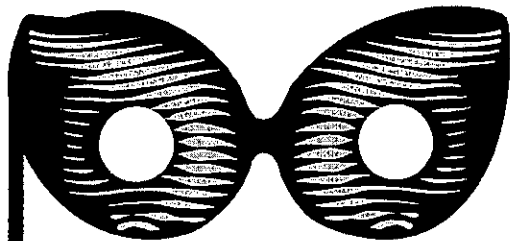
Ireland is believed to be the birthplace of Halloween! The traditions started in Ireland are celebrated in the United States and Canada today.

In rural areas in Ireland, bonfires are lit as they were in the days of the Celts, and children dress up in costumes to spend the evening "trick-or-treating" in their neighborhoods.

After the visiting, most people attend parties with neighbors and friends. At these parties, many games are played, including "snap-apple," in which an apple on a string is tied to a doorframe or tree, and players attempt to take a bite out of the suspended apple. In addition to bobbing for apples, parents often

arrange treasure hunts with sweets or pastries as the "treasure." The Irish also play a card game where cards are laid face-down on a table with sweets or coins beneath them. When a child selects a card, he or she receives whatever prize might be found there.

A traditional food is eaten on Halloween called "barnbrack." This is a type of fruitcake which can be baked at home or store-bought. A muslin-wrapped treat is baked inside the cake which, so it is said, can foretell the future of the one who finds it. If the prize is a ring, then that person will soon be married and a piece of straw means a prosperous year is ahead.



Children are also known to play tricks upon their neighbors on Halloween night. One of which is known as "knock-a-dolly," where children knock on the doors of their neighbors but then run away before the door is opened.

