

Belly Up! Bulletin

October 2021

A note from the editor:

We've been back in the office for a full month and we all hate it. Faculty and staff alike are dropping like flies... to other jobs, not to Covid. So many are either retiring, or quitting, it seems we'll be short handed forever. Good thing I have the lovely fall colors to take my mind off all the blech going on at work.

October is officially my favorite month of the year. Brisk fall weather, jack-o-lanterns grace porches, and mini ghouls and goblins race around the neighborhood in search of sweet treats. I live in the boonies, so I don't get mini ghouls, but the thought is there. And since i don't get mini ghouls... I wanna see yours!! Post pics to your FB page, so I can live vicariously through you city dwellers.

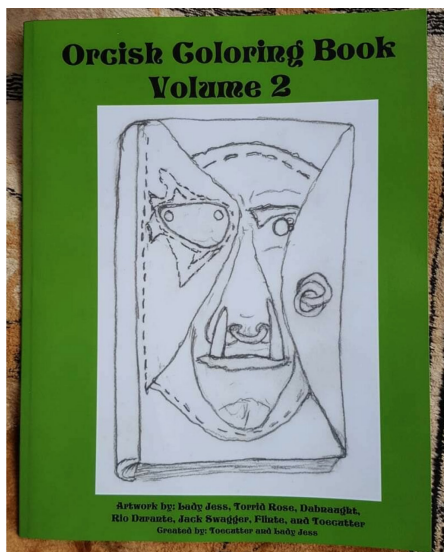
Have a happy and safe holiday, whichever you choose.

--Rio Durante, Editor

Samhain is a pagan religious festival originating from an ancient Celtic spiritual tradition. In modern times, Samhain (a Gaelic word pronounced "SAH-win") is usually celebrated from October 31 to November 1 to welcome in the harvest and usher in "the dark half of the year." Celebrants believe that the barriers between the physical world and the spirit world break down during Samhain, allowing more interaction between humans and denizens of the Otherworld.

Happy Samhain!!

Featured Item of the Month



Orcish Coloring
Book Vol 2
\$25

Available for purchase at: orcbelly.org>Shop>In-House

Ancient Samhain

Ancient Celts marked Samhain as the most significant of the four quarterly fire festivals, taking place at the midpoint between the fall equinox and the winter solstice. During this time of year, hearth fires in family homes were left to burn out while the harvest was gathered.

After the harvest work was complete, celebrants joined with Druid priests to light a community fire using a wheel that would cause friction and spark flames. The wheel was considered a representation of the sun and used along with prayers. Cattle were sacrificed, and participants took a flame from the communal bonfire back to their home to relight the hearth.

Early texts present Samhain as a mandatory celebration lasting three days and three nights where the community was required to show themselves to local kings or chieftains. Failure to participate was believed to result in punishment from the gods, usually illness or death.

October Birthday's

Liam Drake - Oct 4
Jen Jamara Vincent - Oct 4
Melissa Sink - Oct 4
Sara Marinucci-Seevers - Oct 11
Obi Obiwan - Oct 11
Audra Stragel - Oct 13
Serenity Otep - Oct 14
Lisa Ruthkowski Plymale - Oct 15
Shirley Singh - Oct 21
Jeremy Craft - Oct 25
Nicole Page - Oct 29
Bobby Chance-Gentry - Oct 29
William Wing - Oct 29
Grace Maclaine - Oct 30

There was also a military aspect to Samhain in Ireland, with holiday thrones prepared for commanders of soldiers. Anyone who committed a crime or used their weapons during the celebration faced a death sentence.

Some documents mention six days of drinking alcohol to excess, typically mead or beer, along with gluttonous feasts.

Samhain Monsters

Because the Celts believed that the barrier between worlds was breachable during Samhain, they prepared offerings that were left outside villages and fields for fairies, or Sidhs.



It was expected that ancestors might cross over during this time as well, and Celts would dress as animals and monsters so that fairies were not tempted to kidnap them.

Some specific monsters were associated with the mythology surrounding Samhain, including a shape-shifting creature called a Pukah that receives harvest offerings from the field. The Lady Gwyn is a headless woman dressed in white who chases night wanderers and was accompanied by a black pig.

Upcoming Events...



The Dullahan sometimes appeared as impish creatures, sometimes headless men on horses who carried their heads. Riding flame-eyed horses, their appearance was a death omen to anyone who encountered them.

A group of hunters known as the Faery Host might also haunt Samhain and kidnap people. Similar are the Sluagh, who would come from the west to enter houses and steal souls.

<https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/samhain>