

## Trick or Treat?



Halloween is one of the oldest holidays still celebrated today. While millions of people celebrate Halloween without knowing its origins. Some people consider this holiday a time for fun, fancy dresses, trick-or-treating. Others consider it as a time of superstition, ghosts, goblins and evil spirits.

Halloween is celebrated on October the 31st, the last day of the Celtic Calendar. It was originally a Pagan holiday and it was referred to “All Hallows Eve” and dates back to over 2000 years ago. Allow Eve is the evening before “All Saints day”.

Halloween can be traced back to the Druids, a Celtic culture in Ireland.

The original holiday was the “Feast of Samhain”. Samhain means “summer’s end” and it was a Celtic festival, marking the end of Celtic calendar.

The Celts believed that the souls of dead haunted the streets and villages at night. Since not all spirits were thought to be friendly, gifts and treats were left out their doors to pacify the evil ghosts.

Two festivals of Roman origins were organised with the Celts. The first was “feralia”, a day where the Romans commemorated the passing of the dead. The second was a day to honor “Pomona”, the roman goddess of fruits and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple and it explains the tradition of “Bobbing”.

The tradition of dressing in costume for Halloween has both European and Celtic roots. On Halloween, when it was believed that ghosts came back to the earthly world, people thought that they would encounter ghosts if they left their home. To avoid being recognised people would wear masks so that the ghosts would mistake them for fellow spirits.

**Andrea P. 2G**

The word Halloween comes from the name of a Christian celebration all hallows’ eve, brought to Ireland by pope Boniface IV in the VII century. However, it is not a Christian festival, but a Celtic one. 31st October in fact, was very important for the people who lived in Ireland at the time, the Celts. They believed that, on that night, the summer finished and the winter started. The sun left Its place to the darkness populated by the spirits of the dead. When the Irish emigrated to the USA, they brought this tradition whit them, and we imported it from American people. Last Thursday 31st October some guys of our classroom had some scary parties or sleepovers. They wore costumes and watched horror films and they played “trick or treat” on friends and neighborhoods they got sweets, chocolates and candies and... stomachache!



**Class 2H**

## Ireland, Learning and Fun



My school, Carlo Porta, usually plans a summer residence holiday in an English speaking country. This year Ireland was chosen! I was there with two of my school friends. We left from Milano at night and we had a nice 2.5 hour flight to Dublin.

Then we got a bus to our final destination: St. Patrick's College in Maynooth, thirty minutes from downtown. As we got there, we immediately went to sleep in our rooms because it was late at night and we had an English test the day after.

As we woke up in the morning, we had an orientation tour of the College. It was a very big green area with lots of trees, meadows, sporting facilities, swimming pool and... disco! I performed my test and got a good mark so I entered an high-intermediate class: what a pride! We had lessons in the morning or in the afternoon: several teachers followed us in speaking, writing and understanding. I'm sure I improved my English a lot. Every class had about ten students from all over the world: I had Turkish, Spanish, Russian mates. We had a very nice time even in study hours. And now: our free time! We could play different sports: football, rugby, tennis, badminton or we could relax talking with new and old friends. Food: we ate in a large canteen with big tables where we gathered for our meals: breakfast at 8, lunch around 1 pm, dinner at 6.30! Most of us weren't accustomed to this early time for dinner but we discovered that, this way, we had a lot of time after. Evening time: we could do different activities, sports, film viewing, chatting, disco. Many students used to go there and dance together: it was very funny. What I liked most were trips: the longest to Belfast, Northern Ireland, took 3 hours drive. We visited the Titanic Museum and learned a lot of things about this famous ship that sank in 1912 after impacting an iceberg. The nicest trip was to Kilkenny, a beautiful medieval town with a castle we visited. Dublin: the capital of Ireland. It's a big city we could easily reach by bus. We visited the Guinness factory where one of the most famous beers is made since 1759. Trinity College, a prestigious University since 1592, with the ancient wooden library. One night we had dinner at Hard Rock café and we had time for shopping too. We had two wonderful Irish weeks that flew in a moment. It was my first experience abroad without my family. I enjoyed it a lot, because I felt independent and grown up. I can't wait for the next experience we'll have in July 2014, destination still unknown, maybe England. I want to thank my teachers, Mrs. Mutti and Mrs. Barni who encouraged our interest and helped us to solve any problem!

**Giovanni S. 2H**



Kilkenny Castle