



The Simmering Cauldron Newsletter

Samhain
2017

A mystical and magical resource based in Mid Wales

Shop address – 7 Shortbridge Street, Newtown, Powys, SY16 2LW

Halloween/ Samhain

Halloween or Samhain sometimes receives a lot of bad press nowadays, especially with the perceived Americanisation of the festival. Yet it is a very important Celtic festival and to my mind any practice that ensures its survival in the hearts and minds of Celtic people cannot be a bad thing. Christianised as All Hallows, originating in the seventh century, many themes from that time are reminiscent of current

practices and must hark back to earlier, Pagan times. Themes such as divination (particularly concerning marriage and death), the lighting of bonfires, lanterns, going from house to house begging favours and the appearance of spirits have all played a part over the centuries.

In many parts of Wales it was believed that spirits were to be seen on every stile. Sometimes these would take the form of a *ladi wen* (white lady) or a *hwch ddu gwta* (a tailless black sow). Bonfires were lit after dark, having been prepared during the day and young people would compete to see which bonfire would last longest. Many superstitions were attached to the roasting of apples, potatoes and stones in the ashes. The next morning, people who had placed stones in the fire would return to search diligently for them. Finding them indicated good luck in the coming year, but failure to do so was taken as an omen of bad luck; even of death!

In Montgomeryshire a traditional supper of *stwmp naw rhyw* (mash of nine sorts) was cooked in which a wedding ring was concealed. All participants sat round with a spoon and the first to find the ring, it was believed would be the first to be married. In Carmarthenshire, each person threw a nut into the fire and it was believed that if the nut burned brightly, that person would be alive a year hence; if not, then death would come his



way. In Llandysul, a brightly burning nut indicated marriage within the year.

The much maligned 'trick or treating' also has its place. In Llansanffraid, men called from house to house dressed as an old man and woman (*gwrachod*), asking for fruit and nuts. In Llanfyllin working men would dress in old sheepskins or rags begging coppers, fruit or ale in ale-houses. *Gwrachod* means 'hags or witches', indicating that fiends, witches or fairies were about their business on this night. These people would often light their way with lanterns hollowed from turnips or swedes; the precursor of the hollowed out pumpkin.

I think it would be well to consider that although we may dismiss some modern practices as Americanised and therefore trivialised, many of them can be found in the folklore of England and Wales and many of them have their origins in ancient Pagan practice.

Oh and by the way; we welcome trick or treaters!

Angela

www.thesimmeringcauldron.co.uk

Exhibition of Healing & Complementary Therapies

Sunday, 2 November, 2014

11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

FREE ENTRY

OVER 60 EXHIBITORS & SPEAKERS

Priory School, Longden Road,

Shrewsbury, SY3 9EE

It'll be great to see
you at this
wonderful event



Yuletide opening

Make a note of these special shop opening times for the season; these are in addition to our normal opening days/times.

Friday November 24th

Late opening till 7.00pm

Mondays 11th and 18th December

Extra opening days (10 – 5)

Sunday 24th December

Extra opening day (10 – 2)

We will then close on Monday 25th
December and reopen on Tuesday 2nd
January



**Cauldron Card
offer**

for 'the Season'

**£1 off
every £10 spent**

Don't forget to flash your CC when you shop!

(Offer subject to conditions)

Vegan pumpkin soup

Ingredients

380g pumpkin diced

1 litre of water

1/2 onion chopped

1 clove garlic minced

10 plum tomatoes



1 vegetable cube

Black pepper

10g parsley

Method

Sauté the garlic and onion.

Add pumpkin and other
ingredients except tomatoes.



Cook for about 10 minutes,

stirring occasionally.

Add water, cook for 15 minutes.

Turn the heat off, add the
tomatoes and blend the
ingredients with a blender.

Enjoy!

Our Diary

Newtown shop opening hours

Tuesday – Friday 10.00 – 5.00 Saturday 10.00 – 4.00

Sunday 12th November

Exhibition of healing and complementary therapies
(see advert above)

Friday 24th November

Newtown Lights switch on evening
(late opening till 7 with seasonal drinks and nibbles)

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