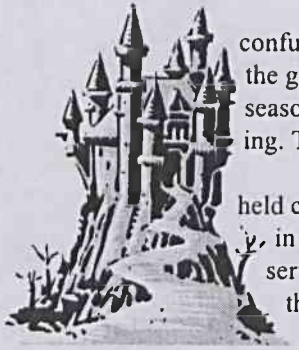


# GODS, DEMONS, AND PAGAN FESTIVALS, THE HISTORY OF HALLOWEEN

by: Jordan Welborn



Celtic religion is based on the worship of nature. When the seasons changed to winter the Celts were confused because the sun seemed to disappear. Their mythology tells of a war between the sun and Samhain, the god of the dead. The sun lost and was held as prisoner during the winter. Thus, winter was the season of death. Once a year, Samhain called the dead to come and walk among the living. They would choose those who were to die the following year.

Fearful of Samhain and his power over the sun, Celtic Priests, or Druids, held ceremonies in attempts to overcome him. They built huge fires and dressed up in costumes and masks. The fire was supposed to free the sun. The costumes served to scare away the dead and to keep the spirits from recognizing them, so they wouldn't be chosen for death.

When the Romans took over the Celts, they had two fall traditions of their own, a harvest festival and a festival to honor the dead. Eventually the two Roman festivals and the Celtic festival merged into one large affair.

Naturally, the Roman Catholic Church did not approve of the wild debauchery that took place each fall. So they attempted to change it into a religious holiday. November 1<sup>st</sup> was set aside as All Saints' Day, All Hallows' Day, or Hallowmas. This day was supposed to be reserved for the honor and recognition of all the Catholic saints. The day before remained as a pagan festival and became known as All Hallows' Even, eventually evolving into Halloween. And, this is why you celebrate Halloween the way you do today.



(Continued from page 1)

Deidre deWet, elected freshman class treasurer, is a graduate of the WCC Adult High School and is a native of South Africa. She is enrolled in the Associate in Science program.

Andrea Brason, elected as a freshman class senator, is a graduate of Wilkes Central High School. She is the daughter of Fred and Karen Brason and she is enrolled in the Associate in Science program.

Richard Brown, elected as a freshman class senator, is a graduate of West Wilkes High School. He is married to Tricia Shumaker Brown and is enrolled in the Associate in Science program.

Angela Martin, elected as a freshman class senator, is a graduate of West Wilkes High School. She is the daughter of Pat and Deborah Martin and she is enrolled in the General Occupational Technology program.

Timothy Wagoner, elected as a freshman class senator, is a graduate of North Wilkes High School. He is the son of Roger and Donna Wagoner and he is enrolled in the Information Systems program.

In addition to electing the freshman class officers, an election was also held for the Sophomore Class Secretary. Joanna Barel-ski was elected to this position and she is a graduate of North Wilkes High School. She is married to Pete Barel-ski and she is enrolled in the Associate in Arts program.

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