Hallowe'en

When did Trick or Treat subtly integrate itself into the British psyche? It seems the norm now to associate it with Hallowe'en yet only around the 1920's this aspect was known purely in the USA.

Halloween itself dates from 2,000 years ago, called Samhain. This celebrated the end of harvest and was a mix of Celtic, Roman and Christian festivals. It then became associated with the return of a deceased person's spirit to their home, guided by a light in a pumpkin – originally turnips - or so they say. Houses were and sometimes are decorated with autumn themes and nowadays, ghostly images and worse. Children in particular revel in yet another opportunity to dress up and irritate curmudgeons like myself.

I do all I can to avoid such annoyances. I make sure that there is no sign of life in my house as dusk falls. No lights are turned on. The television and radio are silent. No evidence of anyone – dead or alive – must be shown, no decorations, pumpkins and so on are visible. And certainly no bags of sweets or chocolates are purchased!! I am not going to be held to ransom by someone's little dears.

Should the worst happen and a giggling mob press my door bell (which incidentally often sticks, hence causing further annoyance by repeatedly dinging for far too long) I make sure I am literally lying low.

I am not against the actual day at all, and any celebrations such as in Mexico where it is known as the Day of the Dead. It is nice to think of wandering souls being welcomed back home. It is the commercialism and pointlessness of the pursuance of free sweets that annoys me!

Thankfully there are very few small children in my street so the chances this year of anything happening are not large. I am probably on the blacklist (can we use that word?) of the locals for my disinclination to "join in" or possibly known as an actual grumpy urban witch – but I am very relieved when the 31st of October is passed and every trace of pumpkins, cobwebs, ghost costumes, face masks and so on are erased for another year.

370 words.

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