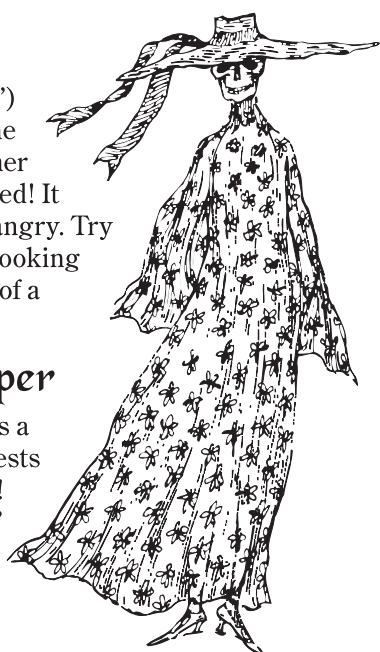




## Ghosts

Ghosts (or “guests”) are said to haunt the places of their former lives. Don’t be scared! It might make them angry. Try and see ghosts by looking through the edges of a white feather.



## Dumb Supper

The dumb supper is a meal where the guests of honour are dead! It’s called a “dumb” supper because dead guests can’t actually speak.

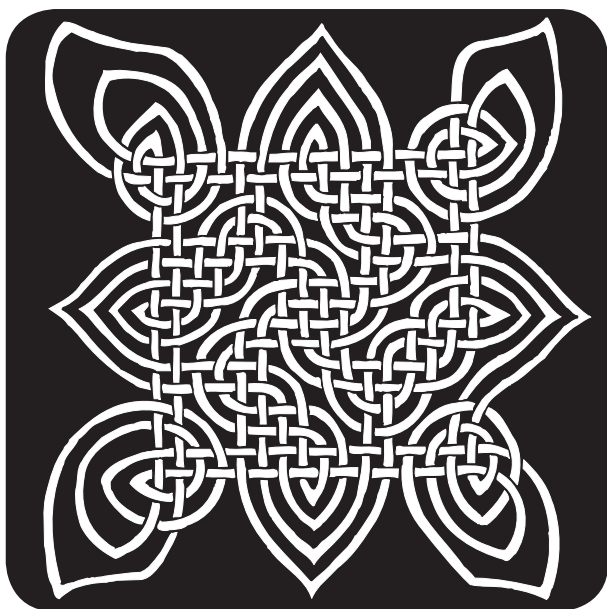


You can invite relatives, close friends, your ancestors, or even pets who have departed. Leave your doors open so that your guests may freely enter. Set out places at the table for them. You might also set out objects cherished by your guests, or prepare their favourite dishes. Toast your guests and give a proud account of their lives. It’s a time to remember ancestors and loved ones.

Skeletal illustrations by Edward Gorey, lifted from *Amphigorey*, and *Amphigorey II*.

October 31, 2001





“All Saints Knot” from *The Book of Kells* (c. 800).

**H**allowe’en, All Saints Eve or “Samhain” is Celtic New Year. Celts were the tribal peoples of Europe — fierce warriors, skilled horsemen, successful farmers and talented artists. United by a common culture, Celtic tribes once spanned from Ireland to Turkey. After the fall of the Roman Empire, centres of Celtic culture remained in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Brittany, Cornwall and the Isle of Man.

Hallowe’en is exactly half-way between Fall Equinox and Winter Solstice. The Celtic calendar, based on the Sun, has 13 months. The last month is only three days: October 31 – November 2. Celts believed that the veil



which separates our world from that of the dead is at its thinnest during this time. Celts sought wisdom and guidance from their ancestors in the realm of the dead.

According to myth, on Samhain the old god (the Sun) dies, and the old mother goddess (the Earth) mourns him deeply until his rebirth on Winter Solstice, when the days start to get longer again. Hallowe’en night, souls return from the dead to the crone’s cauldron of life and death, seeking rebirth. This last harvest festival of the year celebrates the eternal cycle of the seasons. It’s a time for the living to remember the dead, and for the dead to check in on the living.