

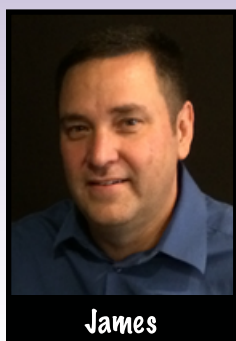


The ghosts of Ohio[®] Newsletter

www.ghostsofohio.org

Volume 18 Issue 4

Business as (un)usual at The Ghosts Of Ohio



James

I'm often asked about how The Ghosts Of Ohio managed to continue operating during the last year or so. My usual response is simply "we just did." I don't mean to sound trite when it comes to a global pandemic. Rather, it was a case of just finding a way to continue doing the things we

love. More importantly, how to find answers—not only for us, but our clients.

It wasn't easy. And when it came to conducting investigations, it went far beyond simply agreeing to wear masks. In fact, since almost every aspect of what The Ghosts Of Ohio does during an investigation involves close human interaction—from interviewing witnesses to the investigation itself—we had to rethink everything. That, surprisingly, was rather easy once I reminded myself of my oft-repeated personal paranormal mantra:

Until I have all the answers, I need to keep changing how I look for them.

Silly, right? But it works! And when it came to investigations, we just threw out the whole traditional way we've been doing them and moved in a different direction. Interviews are now done via Skype, as are walkthroughs of the residence or business. But the biggest change, and the one that has had the greatest positive impact, is how we changed up our investigations.

What we've done is to involve the clients even more. Traditionally, we would invite homeowners to be present during an investigation. Now, they are taking an even more active role. We will drop off audio and video recording devices, along with instructions on how to set them up. The homeowner sets them up and then we come back at a later date, pick up all the recordings, upload them to a secure server, and divide it all up for review. It's been working well, and along the way, we realized this new procedure was doing something we hadn't planned on: Empowering the clients.

For many of the people that contact The Ghosts Of Ohio, just reaching out to us is hard. The idea that there may be something in your home that you can't see, let alone control, can be very unnerving. That's why we always stress to our clients that this is your home—you are in control. Having them actively take part in an investigation to the extent that they are now only further drives that point home.

So in a weird way, I feel like I need to thank a global pandemic for reminding me that I don't have all the answers, so I should change things up. In this case, it worked!

Cheers,

James A. Willis
Founder/Director



THE CRYING HOLLOW

George C., Ontario, OH

First off, I really enjoyed James' website collection of crybaby bridge stories in Ohio. I never knew there were supposed to be so many of them. It was that page that brought me to The Ghosts Of Ohio website. I was trying to do online research on a patch of woods down in a hollow near Mansfield. This is going back 30 years, but everyone in the area called it crying hollow because you were supposed to be able to hear a bunch of babies crying down there at night. There wasn't any bridge down there. Just woods. I don't even remember the story except that if you went down there at night, you would hear babies crying. That was enough for me and a couple of my teenage friends to want to check out when we were bored one Saturday night.

To get there, you drove down this big hill and the road just stopped. Then you would have to walk through the woods a ways until

you came to this giant rock. That was what you were supposed to sit on in order to hear the babies crying. There were three of us guys, including me. So we parked my friend's car and walked into the woods. I don't remember how far back we went, but we had to walk for a while. We were about ready to turn back when we were like, "There it is," and we saw this giant boulder with spray paint all over it. So we climbed up on top of it and just hung out there for a while and waited.

I guess we were there maybe 30 minutes or so and there was nothing going on. The woods were really dark, I remember that. Then we started hearing what sounded like something walking or crawling around in the woods. First, we only heard one of whatever it was, but then we heard another and another. Pretty soon, it sounded like a couple of things were out there, almost like they were surrounding us. I can remember



thinking that some other people were coming out to check things out, but we never saw anything. None of us did.

Then the crying started. Just like the other noises, it started with just one crying and then more and more all around us. None of us said anything, but we all thought the same thing—run! So we took off running back to the car. When we made it back to the car and were safely driving home, we all talked about how when we were running, it sounded like something was right behind us. But not like chasing us. More like just sort of following behind us.

I still don't know what we heard out there that night. I never went back ever again. None of my friends did either. Closest thing I've ever come to an explanation was that maybe it was coyotes. But what we heard didn't sound like coyotes. It sounded like babies crying.



GOT A SCARY STORY TO TELL?

Have you had a ghostly encounter in Ohio? Want to see it featured in a future issue of The Ghosts of Ohio Newsletter? Then here's all you have to do: Just write down your story and send it to info@ghostsofohio.org with the subject line "Newsletter Ghost Story." Be sure to also include your name as you'd like it to appear with the story. We'll take it from there and send you out an e-mail letting you know which issue it is going to appear in. That way, you can get all your friends to sign up for the newsletter so they can see how famous you are!



MEET HAROLD

Christine S., New Richmond, OH

I was a teenager back in the 80s and would hang out all the time with my best friend, Marie. We grew up in a pretty small town in the middle of nowhere, so there was really nothing to do in the summer but hang out. One day, Marie said her parents were making her go stay at her aunt's house for a week but that I could go if I wanted to. So I said, "Sure."

I didn't find out until we were driving out to the aunt's house that everyone thought that she was the weird aunt and that she lived all alone in an old farmhouse. When we got to the house, the aunt seemed a little kooky but harmless. She did live out in the boonies, but there was a small lake with a dock and endless woods to play in, so it was cool.

The first night we were there, we were laying in our sleeping bags on the floor of the bedroom at the back of the house. Marie's aunt had gone to bed, and we were just sort of hanging out talking. All of a sudden Marie said, "Look at how bright the moon is." I looked and from where I was in my sleeping bag. I couldn't

see straight out the window, but I could see that outside did look a little bit brighter. But as we watched, the light seemed to dance around a lot, so we both got up and went to the window.

It wasn't the moon that was glowing. It was something in the shape of a person with one of those tall Abe Lincoln hats on. It was walking out of the woods toward the house, right toward our bedroom window.

We both dove into our sleeping bags, and I put my pillow over my head. Then I don't know why but I just had to peek. So I sat up and looked over at the window.

There was the face of a man in the window, looking right at me. The face appeared to be glowing. I could see everything. His eyes, his nose, his mouth, even his beard and hat. He was smiling at me, but it was the kind of smile that made him look even creepier. I screamed. Then Marie screamed.

Marie's aunt came running into the room. We told her what we had seen, and she

just laughed and said, "Oh, that's just Harold." When we asked, "Who's Harold?" she said, "Harold is the man who used to own this property. His ghost stops by to check on things sometimes." Then she went back to bed, leaving us wondering what just happened.

The next night we slept in the same bedroom, but we pulled the blinds down. Nothing happened that night or the next. But the following night, Marie woke me up and said, "Harold's back." And even though the blinds were pulled, you could see some white light coming through the bottom and sides of the blinds.

We slept in the living room on the other side of the house the rest of our visit.



CLARIFICATION ON MY SEARCH FOR HAUNTED OBJECTS

James Willis

In the December 2020 newsletter, I spoke about my desire to acquire a "haunted" item that I could use for research—basically, monitor it 24/7 with all sorts of audio, video, and ghost-hunting gadgets. I've gotten a few responses that have offered to sell me a haunted object. With that in mind, I feel the need to clarify that at this point in time, I am not interested in purchasing anything simply because it is alleged to be haunted.

If you're interested in knowing why, just go to eBay and do a search for "haunted." You'll get roughly 150,000 items, all alleged to be haunted, going for anywhere from \$20.00 to several hundred dollars. There are even sellers who appear to specialize in haunted items, some with literally dozens of "possessed" dolls for sale.

Put another way, I am far too old (and cheap) to drop some cold hard cash on a creepy-looking clown doll simply because someone says it's haunted.

What I'm looking to do is to borrow an alleged haunted item so that I can study it and hopefully gather empirical data that proves there is indeed something unexplained going on with the item. If and when that happens, I think you can safely assume I would be more than willing to purchase the item from you. Although, let's be honest, if you end up being the owner of a fully documented haunted item, the sky is the limit in terms of the amount of money you could get for it. I know of a certain paracelebrity out in Las Vegas who'd take it off your hands, sight unseen.

As for me, I'm just looking to borrow an object that is alleged to be haunted. I will sign paperwork saying you are still the owner and that I will not damage or alter the object in any way so that when I return it, it will be in the same condition as when you gave it to me. I will put the object under 24-hour surveillance and may be able to set things up so that you would be able to check in on the item and study it whenever you like. Finally, you will receive copies of any and all "evidence" I manage to document.

If interested, send an email to jim@ghostsofohio.org with the subject line "haunted object" and I'll take it from there!



SECRET SYNCHRONICITY

The following is a work of fiction. All characters and incidents are products of the author's imagination, and any resemblance to actual people or events is coincidental or fictionalized.

CHAPTER EIGHT: “FIRE AND ICE, PART 2”



Mark

Protecting workers and visitors from the elements, the modern-looking entry enclosure to the hangar framed a single man-

sized door containing the facility's only unsealed window to the outside world. It was not the original personnel entry door of solid steel built into the massive, retractable hangar door. This door eased the abrupt transition from old hangar exterior to a modern entry lobby showcasing past technological gadgets, colorful logos and pictorial displays lit by track lights overhead.

Crossing that windowed threshold, the showcase lobby transitioned to fully contained hallways and laboratory areas nested like Russian dolls in buildings within buildings. Erased from mind and view was any notion of being inside a large hangar space. Indeed, the lab complex layout immediately drew you into a different world, not unlike walking onto a theatrical stage filled with artistically detailed scenery ready for its players. This theater of science served a similar purpose, though in full three-dimensional, not to mention functional, detail.

“Welcome to Hangar 4B,” said Mark, as Jim and Darrin glanced around at the lobby displays in wide-eyed amazement.

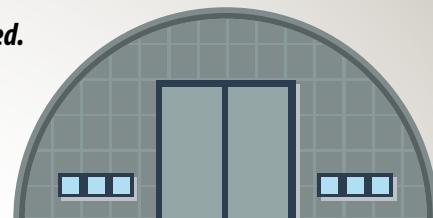
“Not sure what I was expecting. Maybe a dimly lit hangar space but certainly not this,” remarked Darrin as he surveyed the bright lobby.

“Personally, I would have been satisfied seeing racks of instrumentation surrounding a flying saucer in the middle,” added Jim half-jokingly, his attention focusing on a small figurine from the movie *Gremlins* hiding in a nearby display case. Stripe, the lab's informal mascot, often appeared in unusual places.

“Something akin to the Flight of Fear ride at King's Island amusement park?” asked Mark smiling.

“Well, yes, that would have been especially cool to see,” noted Jim, returning a grin.

Mark led Jim and Darrin into a nearby long-running hallway filled with over a dozen doors on either side. Every door featured either a mechanical cypher lock or a biometric fingerprint reader. One door led to an administrative area. After signing them into the visitor's log and handing them official ID badges to wear, Mark led them across the hall to another door



equipped with a biometric reader. Using his finger as the key, Mark opened that door and led them into his warm and inviting office filled with college textbooks, a safe, a large marker board filled with equations and vector diagrams, and two desks, the larger decorated with tall LED candles, statues, wand reproductions, and whimsical sculptures from the *Wizarding World of Harry Potter*, the *Lord of the Rings*, and other fun genres. An artistically created lamp featuring two golden-colored, flowering light fixtures illuminated a simulated underwater scene of rocks, shells, and replica Spanish doubloons. A full-scale detailed rendition of Gandalf's wizard staff leaned against a tall storage cabinet. Three large computer monitors on the computer desk tiled a 5-foot-long, high-resolution display workspace. Lastly, the soft-white ambient LED lighting created a charming and relaxed atmosphere, replacing the need for the brighter, less friendly overhead fluorescent lights.

“Cool!” proclaimed Jim, adding, “I think I could get used to not having a window if I had an office like this.”

“Indeed, I have been most fortunate,” replied Mark. “The landlords have allowed me to

(continued on page 5.)

SECRET SYNCHRONICITY *continued*

adapt my office space over the decades, a small token of appreciation for the tens of thousands of hours spent here over the years.”

Darrin picked up a perfect replica of Thorin Oakenshield’s key to Erebor displayed on the desk and asked, “Does this key lead to a vast underground treasure guarded by a dragon?”

“It might, though finding the hidden door itself was always the real problem,” replied Mark.

Leaving the cozy office through a second door, they entered into the interior lab space, and Mark began leading them around on a technical tour of the functional topside laboratory complex. Occupying over 5,000 square feet of laboratory floor space, the trio visited the automation command and control center, the long path corridor with its three massive industrial robots, one on a 40-foot-long track. Two robots each held large 24-inch-diameter mirrors, looking a bit like warriors equipped with very shiny shields.

“Incredible! What do you do with this stuff?” asked Darrin staring up at the tall, massive robots.

“It’s all smoke and mirrors,” said Mark truthfully, “though, we tend to frown on smoke in an optics laboratory. Mirrors provide virtual portals that we can command and control. By reflecting a large and specially made beam of light sequentially off both these mirrors, with robot-controlled precision motion, we learned how to ‘fly’ a remarkably useful thing around the test chamber, something otherwise impossible to do.”

The inner laboratory definitely evoked a “Theatre of Science” feel. At the end of the black, theatrically curtained long corridor, Mark introduced them to the advanced optical setup that he simply called the “beam projector.” He tried to explain it in broadly non-technical terms, but Jim and Darrin were not engineers or scientists, and so, to them, it all seemed rather mystical and a little magical. The details of quantum cascade laser principles and quantum entangled photons were far removed from their everyday professional lives in the business and advertising world. That did not matter though. Rather, it made the tour all the more immersive and fun. In fact, they both chuckled at Mark’s professorial attempt to teach them a little optical physics knowledge. They settled on the notion that this all seemed to be a seriously complex puzzle, one worthy of Gandalf’s wizarding staff.

Leaving the core lab area, Mark led them through adjacent lab areas filled with technician benches, instrumentation racks, another room of large black robots and a smaller control room (for overflow work capacity), and another large lab space filled with glass-door cabinets, optical benches, and dark blue curtains surrounding more lasers and beam guidance optics. Arriving at a nondescript gray lab door, Mark paused a moment before opening it. Jim and Darrin’s eyes-wide-open expressions captured it all as they walked through the door into the cavernous hangar space that arched overhead.

“Welcome to what I like to call Backstage,” announced Mark, his voice echoing a little. From this new perspective, they could now see the nested layout of buildings constructed inside the large space, with plenty of square footage left over in this “high bay” work area outside the laboratory complex they had been walking through. Large storage racks 15-foot tall lined the outside of the lab along one long wall. Equipment and supplies surrounded an enclosed machine shop, and pallets of sealed containers littered the original concrete slab of the hangar. A gray floor-to-ceiling wall completely sealed off a third of the hangar space to the east. Thick, humming power conduits raced here and there around the walls of the exposed hangar space. Some conduits ran past massive, red-painted plumbing fixtures still supporting the original overhead fire suppression system, designed to release flood waters onto burning aircraft.

“Holy cow!” exclaimed Jim as he wandered around the open space. “This hangar is really huge! It seems so much larger on the inside than one might expect from the outside. Remarkable!”

“Yes,” replied Mark, “it’s all quite the illusion.” He had become accustomed to speaking the truth for secrets hidden in plain sight. Unaware of the deception, no one questioned what he really meant.

Along the western exterior perimeter stood the interconnected panels of the enormous hangar doors. All of the original windows had been sealed over, preventing spying eyes,

SECRET SYNCHRONICITY *continued*

satellite or otherwise, from seeing anything beyond this guardian wall. Stenciled brightly in yellow and black on the backs of the two central panels, a message read "CAUTION – DO NOT CLOSE DOORS WITH TAIL DOOR UP." Looking high overhead at the framed concrete opening, Darrin asked, "Exactly how long has it been since that tail door was last opened?"

"Probably before any of us were born, actually," answered Mark. Those central doors are fastened together with welded bonds, and only a few of the retractable hangar panels actually function now. Above the caution warning, white stenciled letters on freshly painted gray paint identified the facility as "HGR 4B" and listed the tail door height as 39 feet, main door height, 25 feet, width of hangar as 160 feet, and length of hangar to be 212 feet. Dimensions built to accommodate B-29 Super Fortress bombers.

"And yes, that is freshly painted, and it looks exactly as it did in 1944," added Mark. "We had some door work done a few years ago, and the base required us to restore the original historic markings. The Hangar 4 complex is on the historic register. Apparently, it did not matter that no planes were ever going to be inside here anymore."

"Fascinating!" said Jim. "What are those?" he added, pointing to painted yellow disks, now greatly deteriorated and scattered about the hangar concrete slab space.

"Static ground coupling points for parked aircraft, originally. You really don't want static electrical sparks

flying around fueled and fully armed aircraft," answered Mark.

"Ahh, yes. That would be bad," acknowledged Darrin.

Continuing their walk about Backstage, it certainly was not quiet. The mechanical drone of large air handlers on top of the interior laboratory complex rooftop and the blowers on the original massive steam heaters for the entire hangar space filled the air with a constant low rumble. Near the machine shop, along the southern wall, an old door about 14 feet square hung on a slanted track, blocking any further advancement beyond. An old and dusty padlock secured it along one side. It certainly appeared as though this door had not opened in many decades. Jim walked up to read a small original brass tag attached to the door. It read, "Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. INSPECTED FIRE DOOR -- FOR OPENING IN FIRE WALL" along with the stamped date of 1944.

A barely discernable number embossed the tag along with, presumably, the inspector's initials.

"What do you suppose this protected?" asked Jim.

"Dragons, most likely," mused Mark without hesitation and a chuckle.

"Well, shall we start setting up for tonight's off-the-record paranormal investigation?"

"Yes, I'm all for that. Let's get started," answered Jim, as they walked away from the south wall.

Beyond this cleverly concealed entry, deep underground in TANIS, two elusive black dragons guarded the real treasure, a saucer-shaped

craft of immense power discovered in a frozen sea of ice. The warm-up countdown of the Daedalus device reached T-minus 15 minutes and counting.

Next Issue:



THE NIGHT THE GHOST GOT IN

November 17th: The night the ghost got in.

Doesn't ring a bell? Then hang your head in shame, especially if you're from Ohio.

"The Night The Ghost Got In" is a short story by Ohio author James Thurber. The story chronicles the events that took place inside the home the Thurbers were living in on the night of November 17, 1915. Specifically, what happened when James believed he encountered a ghost. As with most of Thurber's works, the story can be read as non-fiction or a fictionalized account, leaving many to debate exactly what did and did not happen inside the Thurber residence. One thing is for sure, though: James Thurber really did believe he heard a ghost that night as he made mention of it several times in his personal papers.

Today, that very house is known as Thurber House and operates as both a literacy center and a museum. And since they are a non-profit (and I am a huge James Thurber fan), every year for the past several years, we have done a raffle where the winner and a guest get to spend the night inside Thurber House on the anniversary of the night the ghost got in to see if we can experience what James Thurber did over 100 years ago.

Late last year, Thurber House ran a charity auction of artwork

and experiences. Since we weren't able to do a "spend the night" in 2020 due to COVID, I decided to offer up one for 2021, with the hopes that the ghosts would miss us.

When all the bidding was done, I was overjoyed to see that the winners of the 2021 Thurber House Ghost Investigation was none other than Kristen and Doug Everman. If you were lucky enough to be at my 2019 presentation at Thurber House when I revealed the results of the 2018 Spend The Night—the odd banging noises, footsteps, and voices, all of which came from an empty room—the couple with us that night were Kristen and Doug. Seems that when it comes to cool ghostly

excursions, nothing stops or outbids these two!

But what has all of us here at The Ghosts Of Ohio so excited is because of all the evidence we've collected over the years at Thurber House, none was as compelling as what we got the night with Kristen and Doug. It's almost as if the ghosts could sense how excited the Evermans were to meet them, and the feeling became mutual. So we can't wait to see what happens on November 17, 2021 at Thurber House!

In the meantime, if you're lucky enough to go on a ghost hunt with Kristen and Doug, my advice would be to stick close to them. I think the ghosts really like them!



Investigations & Consultations

Until further notice, The Ghosts Of Ohio is not permitted to conduct investigations within private homes and businesses based on the current Ohio Stay At Home Order. However, that does not mean we cannot conduct video interviews and begin background work in preparation for the time when the Stay At Home Order is lifted. We can also make arrangements to drop off ghost-hunting equipment at your home or business and walk you through how to set it up yourself. So if you or someone you know is experiencing something unexplained in a home or place of business, contact us at info@ghostsofohio.org or visit our website to fill out an investigation request. All investigations are offered free of charge, and confidentiality and discretion are assured.

Not sure if you want or need an investigation? The Ghosts Of Ohio also offers consultations. Let us sit down with you to discuss your current situation and what help we may be able to offer. For more information, please visit <http://ghostsofohio.org/services/investigations.html>

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