



The ghosts of Ohio® Newsletter

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From the Spooky Desk of James Willis: the Future of the Field

If you ever get the chance to meet me in person and want to see me cringe, just ask me what I think of the current state of the field of paranormal research.

Having been in this field for close to 25 years, I have seen a lot of fads and crazes come and go. Over the past few years, however, I have become increasingly upset, angry and even depressed over what is becoming the latest fad—the paranormal reality show. These shows seem to have taken their toll on the field and it has gotten to the point where, sadly, a large segment of our paranormal community is spending more time on how to land their own TV or movie deal than with investigating, it

made me seriously begin to question the fate of serious paranormal research.

All that changed on the morning of August 15th, 2009, when I met the future of paranormal research. Having just arrived at the Hara Arena in Dayton, Ohio, to begin setting up The Ghosts of Ohio booth for the Ohio Paranormal Convention, I walked past the room where the speakers would be giving their presentations.

Even though the convention didn't officially start for another 90 minutes, I noticed there were already two people sitting in one of the front rows. As I looked closer, I could see it was a young boy, no older than 10, with his father.

My initial thought was that the father had dragged his son to this two-day convention, but I later found out that it was all the son's idea.

He had come across an ad for the convention in the local newspaper and decided he wanted to make it part of his father-son summer vacation. According to his father, his son "loved this" paranormal "stuff" and couldn't get enough of it.

During one of the breaks, the young boy came over to The Ghosts of Ohio's table and I had the chance to chat with him.

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A Hauntingly Educational Experience: The Ghosts at Denison U.



Just after dark on Sunday, August 2nd, "ghosts" roamed the old graveyard atop the hill at Denison University...The Ghosts of Ohio, that is. The evening began just as any library staff convention might—with

a meet and greet, dinner, and a keynote speaker—but ended in a ghostly graveyard hunt.

This unique adventure began when The Ghosts of Ohio were asked by OLSSI, the Ohio Library Support Staff Institute, to join their staff for the kick off of to a three-day work conference. The Ghosts of Ohio was asked to give a presentation and tour of the reportedly haunted campus of Denison University.

Ghosts of Ohio members diligently prepared a presentation, researched, and interviewed staff about supposed haunted locations on campus, and had quite the knowledge to share with the library support staff!

The evening began with a meet and greet where members of The Ghosts of Ohio met with the library support staff

and learned about personal stories, experiences, and interests they had in the paranormal field. After appetizers, the group then congregated for a delicious catered dinner, complete with a delicious cheesecake dessert.

Later in the evening, the staff eagerly gathered around to hear the strange and spooky tales of James A. Willis and learn about the equipment The Ghosts use when conducting an investigation.

After the presentation, The Ghosts of Ohio led the group on a tour of campus, complete with stops at the possibly haunted library, dining hall, campus bathroom, and cemetery. At the end of the tour, Ghosts of Ohio members assisted the curious and eager guests with a mini-investigation of the cemetery using only flashlights and handheld equipment such as EMF meters, K-II meters, temperature gauges, and dowsing rods.



The mysterious gravestone of the Unknown Infants.

In the cemetery, special notice was given to the gravestones of the "unknown infants" and the large "Chamberlain" headstone. Was there any connection between the gravestone and the reported haunting in the Chamberlain Lodge dormitory? The Ghosts of Ohio were not able to draw any conclusions just yet, but we hope to have the opportunity to investigate ever further one day.

Tracking Those Tricky Ghosts at the Dennison Train Museum



Wendy

In June, The Ghosts of Ohio were back at one of our favorite haunts, the Dennison Railroad Depot Museum. Not only is the staff welcoming, but the otherworldly inhabitants seem to like us too! This time, the middle car was

done up with all types of Presidential memorabilia from the ongoing tradition of campaign train trips. I love how the museum switches out its exhibits...this was something new to see, and of course I had to try on all the presidential hats!

After we arrived and set up as much equipment as possible, Jim began the evening with a Ghostly Ohio presentation. The theatre seating overflowed into the baggage area, with proceeds of the event going to help the museum with their continued work in refurbishing train cars and exhibits. Jim spoke about our group, our equipment, and our investigation rules and techniques. Then he showed some of the results we have gathered throughout the years, including some EVPs from the museum itself.

Afterwards, the attendees had a chance to buy a raffle ticket to become



Spirits are rumored to lurk in the baggage area of the Dennison Train Museum.

investigators for the evening. Our winners were friends Amber Hairfield and Farrah Caswell, and the grandmother/granddaughter team of Andie and Kathy Sullivan.

While Jim did a meet and greet with the attendees after his talk, the other Ghosts members did last minute tweaking of the equipment, and indulged in

some pizza and cookies. We spoke with our winners about the different ways we do EVP sessions, and showed them how to use our handheld equipment before heading to our first positions. We focused on the areas where we have had the best results: the baggage area, the dining car/ticket booth, and the nursing car. As we got ready to begin, I told Jim, "You know, since you didn't put a camera in the sports room, those pictures are going to move" (one of the purported paranormal events). He chuckled and said, "Yeah, I know."

When my team's turn to investigate the baggage area came, I walked them back through the model and sports rooms so they could see those areas even though we were not investigating them. As we walked into the sports room, fellow Ghosts member Stephanie and I stopped at the photograph display case. "Did that picture move?" I asked her. "It looks like it did," she said. We had both viewed the area earlier in the evening and it looked like both the picture in question and a business card on the shelf above it had tilted a further 10 to 15 degrees from their original tilt, while no other pictures looked affected.

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Certain pictures and items within this locked display case are believed to move when no one is present.

Spend the Night with The Ghosts of Ohio!

As part of the Spend the Night with The Ghosts of Ohio program, we are renting out some of the most haunted buildings in Ohio for an entire night. Unlike traditional "ghost hunts," where you are often forced to share the location with total strangers, every building we rented out was totally ours.

How do you get in on all this spooky fun? It's simple, really. All you need to do is sign up for The Ghosts of Ohio newsletter—which is free...and which most of you have already done!!

For each investigation, we'll be picking several names from our list of newsletter subscribers and giving them the first shot at spending the night with us. All they need to do is pay the same registration fee that the members of The

Ghosts of Ohio have to pay in order to rent out the building (dollar amount subject to change based on individual venue).

In addition, we'll be drawing at least one lucky Grand Prize winner who will get to come along for FREE!

That's all there is to it! Of course, we might want to take a few pictures of you on the investigation and post them on our site so you'll be the envy of all your friends. But hey, that's a small price to pay for the chance to spend the night with The Ghosts!

If for some reason you don't have your own subscription, what are you waiting for? <http://ghostsofohio.org/services/newsletter.html>.

The Newsletter is a Robot!

We'll stop reminding you when you stop sending e-mails to the newsletter address! If you send anything at all to the newsletter address, our surly robot will eat it... and that will make us all sad. So please don't do it, OK? Promise?



Confirmed Locations for the Spend the Night Program

Hard to believe that 2009 is slowly slipping away from us, but it is. Have no fear, though, as The Ghosts of Ohio is already hard at work scheduling Spend the Night locations for 2010. So make sure you keep checking out our website and newsletter for a big announcement coming soon!

From the Spooky Desk of James Willis

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And when I looked in his eyes, I saw a familiar spark—the same spark I had in my eyes as a child. I saw in that young boy's eyes the same spark and thirst for knowledge that I had many years ago.

When it came to the paranormal, he was filled with the very same sense of awe and wonderment that made me want to go roaming through the cemetery near my house at the tender age of eight, in a vain attempt to find Jessica Graham's ghost.

Throughout the weekend, I would occasionally see the boy at one of the many booths, flipping through books or admiring the eclectic collection of merchandise. But whenever there was a speaker giving a presentation, the boy was right up there near the front, sitting next to his father and soaking up every

word. He didn't care if the speaker was famous or had a television show—he was just there to learn. His desire to learn taught me something, too; the next generation of paranormal researchers will do us all proud.

Sure, I still get angry when I see previews for ghost reality shows that seem to hint that "hard core" investigators will be engaging in a cage match with Beelzebub and some of his buddies. But I sleep a little better at night now because I caught a glimpse of what the future of paranormal research holds, and I know now that everything's going to be just fine.

Cheers,
James A. Willis
Founder/Director

WHO'S SPENDING THE NIGHT AT BOBBY MACKEY'S WITH THE GHOSTS?

Darcey Keene, Troy Ball, Marie Pettiet, and Susan McCleary, that's who! They are the lucky people we pulled from our newsletter subscriber list. As such, they will have the chance to spend the night with The Ghosts of Ohio locked inside Bobby Mackey's on an overnight investigation...provided, of course, they pay the entrance fee like the rest of us have to. You should be receiving all the pertinent information via email shortly. But for now, congratulations!

Also, congratulations go out to Brian Stauffer, who was our Grand Prize winner and will be spending the night with us for FREE!

See you all on September 16th. As with our past Spend the Night excursions, we'll be sure to post pictures of the investigation on our website so you can be the envy of all your friends!

Investigations and Consultations: Continued Scheduling for 2009

The Ghosts of Ohio is continuing to schedule investigations for 2009. 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 now 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>.

Medieval Specters Beware: The Ghosts of Ohio Storm Loveland Castle



Kathy

July 10th marked The Ghosts of Ohio's first trip back in time to a medieval castle for our Spend the Night program. We were lucky to also have with us special guests from Dead

Air Paranormal Talk Radio and our Spend the Night winners.

We went to Chateau Laroche, also known as the Historic Loveland Castle. Located in Loveland, Ohio, just outside of Cincinnati, this castle was built over 50 years almost single-handedly by Sir Harry Andrews. Sir Harry pulled most of the rocks from the bank of the Little Miami River that runs alongside the castle grounds.

Sir Harry longed for the times of knights and medieval valor and founded the Knights of the Golden Trail (KOGT). The KOGT was actually the name that he gave to a group of boys from the Sunday school class he taught. After parents from the group donated the land where the castle stands today to Sir Harry, he began his quest of building his knights their own castle.

Tragically, Sir Harry passed away at the age of 91 after a trash fire on the property got out of control and burned him severely. Such devotion could definitely lead to the belief that Sir

Harry has never left his beloved castle and that his spirit can still be felt there today. Along with the spirit of Sir Harry, there are stories of other ghostly apparitions, such as the lady in white that floats up the river beside the castle.

After setting up all of the equipment, The Ghosts of Ohio split into five teams and began the investigation. We were able to cover the castle grounds, the first floor and dungeon, both halves of the second floor, and the roof. The groups rotated through each of the areas in 45-minute investigation sessions.

While several people in the group experienced some strange things, such as odd noises on the second floor and some activity with dowsing rods, one of the most curious events of the night occurred when one of the groups decided to head down Sir Harry's walking path to the riverbank. Sir Harry must have travelled this path thousands of times while bringing rocks up from the river to build his castle. At the end of the path there was also a campfire area where the KOGT may still meet.

It was along this path and at the campfire area where the K-II meter the group was using started showing a lot of



The spectacular main entrance of Castle Laroche.

activity. At points it appeared to even be responding to questions. The group checked to make sure there were no electrical lines or other power sources located in the area that might have affected the K-II unit and nothing was located. The event was recorded and the evidence is still being reviewed, but it certainly provided some excitement for the team!

Is Sir Harry still haunting his former home? Are there other spirits in the castle that were brought there along with the authentic antiques? The Ghosts of Ohio still has a lot of evidence to review before deciding the answers to those questions. To be certain, though, everyone had a great time at Loveland Castle.



Ghosts of Ohio members and friends get casual at the Loveland Castle.



Does Sir Harry still roam this corridor?

Tracking Those Tricky Ghosts at the Dennison Train Museum

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Leaving the rest of my team there, I headed up to command central to see if we had another camera to set up. I ran into Jim in the baggage area.

“Jim, the pictures moved.” “Yeah, yeah, real funny.” “No, seriously, the freaking pictures moved.” He followed me into the command center where we pulled out an extra camcorder and headed back to the sports room where Jim agreed that it looked like the pictures had moved. Of course nothing moved the rest of the night ‘cause ghosts are tricky like that.

So while we again accumulated some possible evidence, we still have no evidence to support the pictures moving. Was there actual movement? Or was it the power of suggestion? What we all saw could just have been a trick of memory...with nothing physical to support it, we have to throw it out as evidence.

Of course, next time we will have all the cameras trained on that display case, and in the meantime, the spirits of a soldier and a canteen girl will be jitterbugging in the theatre. And that is the crux of a paranormal investigator’s life...always one step behind!



Ghosts of Ohio members and contest winners at the Dennison Train Museum.

Spooky Social Networking

Need a spooky friend? If you have a MySpace account, swing by and add The Ghosts of Ohio to your friends list: www.myspace.com/ghostsofohio.

And for those of you who use Facebook and/or Twitter, you can now find The Ghosts of Ohio on those sites, too:

Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Columbus-OH/The-Ghosts-of-Ohio/60704381381?ref=mf>

Twitter

<http://twitter.com/ghostsofohio>

Whichever online community you prefer to use, you can always find us!



Our Dennison Train Museum Contest Winners’ Comments:

After splitting the cost of a raffle ticket with her friend Amber, “My name was picked and I felt like I had just won the lottery. Never did I dream we would get to experience a ghost hunt. Everyone was so helpful in explaining how all the equipment worked. I had some unexplainable experiences happen to me so that was really cool. Amber and I can't wait to find out if there were any findings in the material we collected from that night.”

“We have lived in the Twin City area all of our lives, so to have this opportunity was a great honor. The team was great to work with. I wish there was one in the area because I would be chomping at the bit to join. I just want to say this was a highlight of my summer and I will have the memories for a lifetime. Thank you Ghosts of Ohio!”

— Farrah Caswell

“We've always said that we wanted to do one of the overnights at West Virginia State Penitentiary or Mansfield Reformatory or Waverly Hills Sanitarium, those are like our top three. Since we got to do this with The Ghosts of Ohio, it definitely ranks up there with them and we wouldn't trade it for the world. Thanks again for the opportunity and keep on investigating!!!”

— Amber Hairfield

“My grandma and I had an absolute blast with The Ghosts of Ohio team at the Dennison Train Depot Museum. We never expected either of our names to be picked to spend the evening there. We really enjoyed learning about and using all the different equipment and hearing the previous recordings taken from the museum. That night was definitely the highlight of my summer and it was an experience we will never forget.”

— Andie Sullivan

A Decade of Ghosts: The Ghosts of Ohio Jamboree 2009



Sheri

It is hard to believe that a decade ago James A. Willis and his two Ghosts of Ohio comrades would pack up their two cameras, one EMF, one infrared thermometer, and VHS-C video camera and head out on a private investigation.

Today, it is hard to decide which of the 32 Ghosts of Ohio members will attend the investigations and how to fit all of our equipment into only two SUVs. The Ghosts of Ohio has come a long way since 1999. This year we celebrated our 10th anniversary and made sure it was special at our annual summer jamboree.

This year, we selected the Hocking Hills region for the annual jamboree.

The Ghosts of Ohio and our families arrived Friday evening, where we “camped” in a string of five finely furnished log cabins. The evening activities included a pie iron campfire dinner, an attempt at creating pie iron funnel cakes, and ghost stories—some

real, some legend. We all enjoyed the time to relax and share stories with one another.

Saturday afternoon was the official jamboree. Members packed up their coolers and headed to Hocking Hills State Park for a cookout. After the delicious meal, we trekked down to the Devil’s Bathtub and Old Man’s Cave, obviously of interest to those of us who love all things weird. Late in the afternoon, everyone headed back to camp for several intense rounds of potato sack races and a competitive game of kick-ball.

Saturday evening consisted of more fun, games, and campfire stories. It was great to spend the weekend reminiscing about where our group began, how far we have come, and where we are headed in the future.



Group members displaying their new limited edition Ghosts of Ohio caps at Old Man’s cave, site of the 2009 jamboree cookout and festivities.



Fire-crafting and meal preparation were just two of the numerous events at this year’s Jamboree. Although no merit badges were awarded, the group did enjoy a tour of Old Man’s Cave the Devil’s Bathtub (pictured above).

Ghosts on the Go: The Lighter Side of The Ghosts of Ohio



Ghosts of Ohio members take a moment to reflect in style while high atop Castle Laroche in Loveland, Ohio.



Night vision goggles are always more effective when enhanced with attitude.



Crime scene of a bigfoot slain while signaling a taxi at The Ohio Paranormal Convention.



Paranormal shenanigans were encountered in the Ghosts of Ohio booth at The Ohio Paranormal Convention.



Proper care of equipment is of paramount importance, display mannequin included.



Competitive potato sack racing is a crucial cross-training technique used by paranormal investigators to enhance awareness and physical prowess.



Every angle of Castle Laroche was subject to scientific scrutiny, leaving little room for any spirits to hide in their Midwestern fortress of solitude.

Have Spirits, Will Travel: Come Out and See The Ghosts!

Fall is upon us, and The Ghosts of Ohio's calendar is already filling up with public appearances throughout the state of Ohio for yet another spooky season.

So if you're interested in finding out more about our organization, what sort of evidence we've uncovered over the

years, or just want to swing by and say "hi," have a look to the right and see when we're coming to your town!

NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, all appearances are open to the public. Those listings with a "\$" denote venues with admission fees. All others are free.

Seating is often limited, so please call the venue beforehand to reserve your seats.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 19th – Sunday, September 20th
8th Annual Mothman Festival
Pt. Pleasant, West Virginia
<http://www.mothmanfestival.com/>

OCTOBER

Thursday, October 8th @ 6:00 pm
Meet The Ghosts of Ohio presentation
Wellsville Carnegie Public Library
115 9th Street — Wellsville, OH
<http://www.wellsville.lib.oh.us/>

Saturday, October 10th
MiamiTown Paranormal Convention
State Route 128—Cleveland, OH
<http://www.miamitownghostours.com/feature.html>

Saturday, October 17th
Delaware Ghost Walk (\$)
Delaware, OH

Thursday, October 22nd @ 6:30 pm
Meet The Ghosts of Ohio Presentation
New Lebanon Public Library
715 W. Main Street—New Lebanon, OH
<http://www.daytonmetrolibrary.org/branch.cfm?ID=30>

Saturday, October 24th (time TBD)
Meet The Ghosts of Ohio presentation
Litzenberg Memorial Woods
6100 US 224—Findlay, OH

Wednesday, October 28th @ 7:00 pm
Meet The Ghosts of Ohio Presentation
Upper Arlington Public Library
2800 Tremont Road — Upper Arlington, OH 43221
<http://www.ualibrary.org/>



Check out The Ghosts of Ohio at an upcoming presentation near you!

ADMINISTRATION

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