



The ghosts of Ohio[®] Newsletter

www.ghostsofohio.org

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Another year over, a new one just begun



James

As I write this, the world is preparing to say goodbye to 2020 and ring in 2021. This is usually when I reflect upon the year that was and what I'm most looking forward to in 2021. Obviously, COVID-19 impacted us all and brought the idea of ghost hunting to a standstill. So it would be quite easy for me to complain about all the places I didn't get to visit and all the events that had to be postponed. But I found something lurking in 2020: Hope.

Not being able to venture outside my home caused me to turn inward to get my ghostly fix. I emptied my DVR of all the paranormal programs that I'd stockpiled but never got around to watching. I was able to determine that the bottomless pile of paranormal books and magazines alongside my bed really did have a bottom after all. I reorganized all my equipment cases. And I was able to archive over 15,000 photos from my investigations over the years. Most of all, I spent time honing my craft and pondering new ways to conduct investigations. I still don't think we're even remotely close to getting back to "normal" when it comes to paranormal research and investigation. But man, when that time comes, I'm more than ready to burst out with a renewed sense of purpose.

See? 2020 wasn't all that bad.

So here's wishing you all a happy new year. I can't wait to see what ghostly adventures await us all in 2021.

Cheers,

James A. Willis

Founder/Director

2021

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Marbles

—Carol W., Mansfield, OH

A few years back, my husband and I purchased an old house. Good bones, but it needed a lot of work. But it's just the two of us, so we figured we would move in and then take the renovations one room at a time. When the COVID lockdown started, we both ended up working from home full time. It was then that we started to hear what we both thought sounded like marbles being rolled across the floor of the room we were intending to turn into a formal dining room. It didn't always happen, but when we would hear it, it would be during the middle of the afternoon. Never at night. Initially, we both thought it was a case of the house making normal noises that we didn't hear because we were away at work during the afternoon. We'd never be in the room when we'd hear the noise, and it would stop before we got to the room. Of course, when we would sit in the room and wait for the noise, it never

happened. But when it did, it always sounded the same. It was like marbles being rolled across the floor one at a time.

A few months ago, the time had finally come to move on to remodeling that room and turning it into our formal dining room. The first task was to rip up the old flooring. When we did, guess what we found under the floor and all along the baseboards? Old marbles. About 20 of them, and they looked to have been there forever. We'd never seen a single marble anywhere in our house, let alone in that room. Of course, wouldn't you know it, we haven't heard the sound since we found the marbles. So maybe a ghost wanted us to find them. But just to be on the safe side, we keep all the found marbles in a jar in the same room that we found them in.



THE GHOSTS OF OHIO NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE

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!



DESPERATELY SEEKING HAUNTED OBJECTS



James

I've been spending a great deal of time during this whole global pandemic thing creating my Paranormal Bucket List.

You know, a list of all the places I want to visit and things I want to do once that New Normal I've been hearing so much about finally makes its way to Ohio. And one of the things that has made its way to the top of my list is to be able to study an honest-to-goodness haunted object.

From my perspective, while haunted objects were always sort of a "thing," they didn't become all that popular until about 10 years ago. And now, they are supposedly everywhere. Heck, there are even "haunted museums" that claim to hold dozens, if not hundreds, of objects that walk, talk, and generally wreak havoc. It's nearly impossible to turn on any paranormal show on the Travel Channel or Destination America and not find at least one reference to a haunted object.

And truth be told, I've acquired more than a few haunted objects over the years. I've studied them, too. But there was not a single instance where any of those objects did...anything. And some of them have been in my collection for over 20 years. Now, that's not to say these objects aren't haunted.

Maybe the ghosts just didn't like me enough to want to hang around the objects once they came home with me. And they have provided me with incredible insights, such as everyone who gave me a haunted object claimed the ghostly activity stopped once the object left their residence. So there's something to be said for the possible psychological aspects of removing an object that is perceived to be haunted from someone's home (and life). But where is the research regarding haunted objects themselves?

You would think that with so many of them floating around (sorry, couldn't resist) out there, there would be plenty of research. Nope. In fact, there is very little, which, for me, raises serious doubts to the validity of the stories surrounding these objects. True, you can find all sorts of videos where an object appears to move on its own (and some websites even allow visitors to watch live video feeds of haunted objects), but why isn't anyone digging deeper? Why does it appear that no one is attempting to collect empirical data on these objects? Not even a simple "this is the date and time when the object moved"? I would hazard a guess that it's because, despite what these ghost shows want you to believe, ghosts and haunted objects do not perform on command. So if you're going to be waiting for a haunted object to do anything, chances are there's going to be a lot of down time. But I'm

willing to put in the time if anyone out there is willing to help: I want to borrow your haunted item.

What I am looking for is a bona fide haunted object. I will borrow it for as long as you are comfortable with me having it—and I will sign paperwork saying I will return it undamaged to you at the appointed time.

Once I get it home, I will put it under 24/7 observation using IR cameras, multiple audio devices, motion-triggered still cameras, and a variety of handheld devices. I will NOT take samples from the item or in any way change its shape or form.

You will also receive any and all evidence I manage to obtain. And if nothing happens, no worries. As I said, just because nothing ghostly happens in my house, that doesn't mean it's not haunted.

Finally, all of this will be conducted with the highest regard to confidentiality. So no one will even know of our little experiment unless you decide to tell people.

Interested? Then drop me a line at jim@ghostsofohio.org with the subject line "Haunted Object" and I'll get the ball rolling on this end.



MOVIE REVIEW: RARE EXPORTS

James Willis

Rare Exports: A Christmas Tale (2010)

Starring: Onni Tommila, Jorma Tommila, Tommi Korpela

Director: Jalmari Helander

Studio: Oscilloscope

Available: Streaming on Amazon Prime, Vudu, Hulu, and YouTube.
Also on DVD and Blu-ray



If you're new to this newsletter, you might not know that it has become something of a tradition at our end-of-year Merry Scary Christmas Party for me to subject everyone to my collection of bizarre holiday films. I feel that it's my civic duty to ensure no one goes through life without knowing the existence of such holiday chestnuts as *Santa Claus And The Ice Cream Bunny*, *Santa's Magic Kingdom*, and even *The Shanty Where Santy Claus Lives*.

Of course, COVID-19 forced us to cancel the Merry Scary this year. So rather than replay all the old favorites, I decided to do a little digging to see if I could find a new "weird" Christmas movie. It took a while, but I finally stumbled across a flick that I'm ashamed to admit I hadn't seen before—*Rare Exports: A Christmas Tale*.

Rare Exports can probably best be described as a horror-comedy movie from Finnish director Jalmari Helander. With subtitles. And with all that, it's easy to see how the movie might have not

shown up on many people's radar. But if you can handle subtitles, *Rare Exports* will take you on a unique thrill ride.

Using the beautiful and foreboding Arctic North as a backdrop, the plot of *Rare Exports* is fairly simple. A young boy, Pietari (played by Onni Tommila), lives on a reindeer farm with his father and a small group of workers. As Christmas nears, Pietari becomes aware of a group of Americans conducting a covert operation on a nearby hillside. Seems as though they are digging deep into the earth, as if they were looking for something. And that something may or may not be Santa Claus. Oh yeah, and this Santa is not the one we've come to know and love. This one's a massive creature that more closely resembles Krampus than jolly old St. Nick.

That's really all you need to know and, truthfully, the less you know about the movie going into it, the better. Just know that as the film progresses, mayhem ensues in

ways that are both shocking and comical. And yes, the movie does finally explain its odd title in a very weird and satisfying way.

Many have described *Rare Exports* as a cross between *Christmas Vacation* and John Carpenter's *The Thing*. I would tend to agree. What I found most satisfying about *Rare Exports* was that it was an independent flick featuring a cast of unknowns. The script was also fresh and seamlessly bounced back and forth between comedy and horror. *Rare Exports* clocks in at a tick under 90 minutes, but there's hardly any down time, and the film moves along at a brisk pace.

All in all, *Rare Exports* is well worth a watch and while it most certainly would be considered a Christmas movie, the cold, snow-covered setting make it the perfect film to snuggle up with on a cold winter's night. So don't feel like you need to wait until next Christmas to add it to your queue.

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 SEVEN: “INTO THE LION’S DEN, PART 2”



Approaching the National Road gate into Area B, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Jim and Darrin awaited their turn in the

traffic entry queue in “Old Blue,” Jim’s well-traveled and faithfully reliable automobile. Darrin handed Jim the guest entry paperwork that Mark had arranged for them to present for base access, saying, “Well, here we are. I do hope this goes smoothly.” They both glanced nervously back toward the rear storage area of Old Blue and the half-dozen professional-grade cases that contained select equipment from The Ghosts of Ohio paranormal investigative inventory. That would take some fanciful explaining, if asked.

“You and me both,” replied Jim, lightly drumming his fingers on the steering wheel to the song now playing softly in the background; this one, from Queen, Jim’s favorite band, began:

*“Is this the real life?
Is this just fantasy?
Caught in a landslide
No escape from reality
Open your eyes
Look up to the skies and see...”*

As if prompted by Freddie Mercury’s lingering lyrics from the album, *A Night at the Opera*, one of the amazingly large transport planes maintained by the 88th Air Base Wing passed them by, sweeping out an elegant arc just several thousand feet above them. Even at that distance, that aircraft looked huge. It was. The Boeing C-17 Globemaster III featured a highly reconfigurable cargo bay that could become a flying emergency aeromedical transport for wounded soldiers, deliver over a hundred soldiers into battle, or carry tanks and cargo weighing up to nearly 165,000 pounds. At maximum take-off weight, the C-17 required over 8,000 feet of runway, still well within the over 2-mile lengths of the 05L/23R runways maintained in the active flight line in Area A, known earlier in time as Patterson Field. Home to the Air Force Materiel Command, Area A of WPAFB also held the National Air and Space Intelligence Center, filled with, some might say, legendary secrets pertaining to matters quite extraterrestrial.

While Area A publicly claimed the lion’s share of media attention, today Darrin and Jim were about to enter the less remembered part of WPAFB known as Area B. Originally named Wilbur Wright Field, honoring the legacy of the

earlier-deceased brother of world-famous inventors from Dayton, Wright Field underwent an astounding transformation during World War II to support the massive war effort. In 1940 dollars, the federal government poured over \$300 million into improvements, including the construction of over 250 new buildings and the completion of three aircraft runways, forming a giant triangle. That massive upgrade in capability left its lasting imprint on today’s landscape many decades later.

Pulling up to the manned checkpoint, Jim lowered the window on his side of the car and handed the paperwork to the armed guard at the National Road entrance gate. “Hi, there!” Jim cheerfully spoke as the guard took the papers and electronically scanned the barcode, which quickly returned a green checkmark on his handheld scanner verifying the access code.

“May I see both your IDs please,” the guard instructed.

“Certainly,” replied Jim, as he and Darrin dug out their wallets and handed over their driver’s licenses.

Glancing at both their faces, the gate guard handed back their IDs and asked, “Do you know where you are going?”

(continued on page 6.)

SECRET SYNCHRONICITY *continued*

"Yes, we do," Jim confidently replied. Nodding, the guard concluded with, "Enjoy your visit, and have a nice day."

"Thank you sir," answered Jim, immensely relieved at having passed this checkpoint. Both he and Darrin breathed a huge sigh of relief as Old Blue rolled on.

"So, do you really know where we are going?" asked Darrin, once they had cleared the gate.

"Sort of," stated Jim without much confidence. "But it shouldn't be too difficult. We just need to find those five old hangars connected in a row on the old flight line. Mark told me to park in front of the second one from the left."

As they crested the hilltop, Jim and Darrin looked out for miles across this part of the Miami Valley. Most of the buildings and other support structures in Area B populated a gently sloping hillside dropping down to a landscape-flattened airfield several hundred feet below them. From this vantage point, the enormous hangars comprising the National Museum of the United States Air Force sprawled over the northwest part of the original airfield. The museum's long parking lot and entrance now covered over 3000 feet of original runway.

"Impressive," stated Darrin taking in the scene, which, for him, was quite the expressive statement. Darrin's ever even-tempered emotions required careful discernment by his friends in the paranormal group. If you ever heard Darrin say, for example, "Oh my" or "That's odd," the group had learned to approximately translate his words into "OMG!" or

possibly "Run!" or "Get over here!" depending on the paranormal circumstances and locale under investigation.

"Yes, it is!" replied Jim. "I can hardly believe we are here!"

Several Queen songs later, Darrin chimed in again. "You know, I think we are lost," as he watched the same building pass by them on the left side of this repeated run back up the hillside.

"Maybe," acknowledged Jim with a slight pause, "but at least there isn't a black SUV following us with Men in Black ready to pounce on us if we make the wrong turn!"

Glancing rearward to convince himself what Jim had just said was true, Darrin concurred, then added, "At least not yet, but after a few more loops that might change."

"Loop! That's it!" exclaimed Jim excitedly. "Now I remember! Mark said to take the road that partly loops around the older section of Area B, starting near something he called the Twin Tower."

Looking up, they both saw in the distance a large concrete structure rising high into the sky, looking very much like it must have been the original traffic control tower when Wright Field maintained active runways. It was not a control tower at all, but rather built as a sort of "sky laboratory" for the Sensors Directorate of the Air Force Research Laboratory. Still, the unmistakable landmark provided Jim and Darrin with a critical navigation point, and they promptly headed in that direction.

Not far away, in a softly illuminated control room featuring a large high

resolution video display, Orion watched Old Blue finally head toward the Twin Tower landmark in Area B. "Finally! I was getting dizzy watching them flail about," he remarked to MIB Agent Arcturus standing near him.

Arcturus nodded and sent a quick text message to Mark over the MIB's highly encrypted comm channel reserved for times such as these. In the Hangar 4 complex, Mark heard their distinctive annunciator chirp and glanced at his cell phone. The ephemeral words, "VIP Arrival Imminent," floated into view before being digitally obliterated by the accompanying erasure worm.

A few minutes later, Old Blue rolled up and parked in front of the aged Hangar 4 complex. Jim and Darrin excitedly took in the historic view before them. Faded emblems of the US Army Air Corps adorned the solid buttresses between each connected hangar arch. Built entirely out of concrete at the height of WWII, the complex had been architecturally designed to accommodate the state-of-the-art bomber of that era: The B-29 Superfortress.

"Can you believe that we are actually sitting here?!" exclaimed Jim, as excited as a kid in a candy shop. He quickly texted a message to Mark announcing their arrival.

"Remarkable," answered Darrin as he gazed back and forth along the hangar fronts.

Shortly thereafter, Mark appeared at the small entry cubicle that protected the human-size entry door fabricated into the 30-foot-tall hangar door panel, now

(continued on page 7.)

SECRET SYNCHRONICITY *continued*

permanently fixed in place. Walking to Old Blue, Mark waved at his friends. Jim and Darrin exited the car, now finally relaxed for the first time since driving onto the base.

“Welcome to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base,” Mark told them, gesturing broadly around them.

“Thank you,” said Darrin. “It was touch and go there for the last 20 minutes, but we finally figured it out.”

“Listen, before we go inside, would you two be interested in a short driving tour of Area B. At least the parts you may not have seen or understood?” asked Mark.

“Sure!” replied Jim. “So long as you are driving!” Darrin nodded affirmatively at that statement.

“Of course. Hop in!” answered Mark. The trio loaded into Mark’s nearby car and set off to explore.

Driving south along the front of the Hangar 4 complex, Mark pointed to the old aircrafts, or parts thereof, scattered about the front tarmac area. “All three of these hangars belong to the Air Force Museum. Retired aircraft enter the restoration process here before they move into the museum for public display.”

“Wasn’t the famous Memphis Belle aircraft moved to Wright-Patt a few years ago?” asked Darrin.

“Indeed. She sits right there, in that hangar,” said Mark, pointing to their immediate left, “and she’s been there a long time. It’s really a labor of love, and volunteers handle much of the restoration work. My theory is that they just are not ready

yet to share her with the public—not until every historical detail has been perfected. The Memphis Belle will be a wonderful new addition at the museum one day, I’m sure.”

Leaving the flat tarmac in front of the Hangar 4 complex, they turned eastward onto Loop Road and headed up the hill. On the way, Mark pointed out the not-too-distant and often overlooked prehistoric Indian mound overrun with honey suckle and brambles located just east of the complex. Once you realized what you were looking at, taking in its gentle shield-volcano look, so symmetrically situated on the sloping landscape, one wondered how it stood there all this time hidden in plain sight. During the impromptu tour, Mark explained how there were once many such mounds on the sloping hillside, though only a few remained today, destroyed over time by farmers in the 1800s, then the explosive base expansion in WWII. Along the crest of the hill nearer the National Road gate, a smaller Indian mound revealed itself near a major intersection. Further north, a half-dozen smaller ancient burial mounds rose up from the hilltop near the Huffman Prairie overlook.

“So, I take it that much of Area B is actually built right overtop a prehistoric cemetery?” questioned Jim.

“Yep!” replied Mark. “The Mound Builder culture lies thousands of years in the past. They all vanished without a trace long before later Native American cultures emerged

in this vast, once continuously forested part of the country. Certainly, long before frontier pioneers ever ventured into Ohio.”

“Fascinating juxtaposition,” remarked Darrin, “the ancient remains of these few preserved burial mounds against such high-technology.”

“Yes, I agree entirely,” said Mark, adding, “the buried secrets here run deep.”

As they made their way down the hill and back to Hangar 4B, Mark silently added this follow-up thought: *And far deeper than you ever dreamed possible. The truly uncharted capability of the ancient star gate powered up within it.*

**Coming in the
February Newsletter**

Fire and Ice



A YEAR WITHOUT A MERRY SCARY

For the first time in almost 20 years, The Ghosts Of Ohio were not able to celebrate the end of the year with our Merry Scary Christmas Party. And while Willis Woods certainly looked festive enough, it just wasn't the same without some severed feet in stockings over the fireplace, caroling werewolves, and all of our family and friends.

But don't worry: We're already in the planning stages for Merry Scary 2021, where we'll be back merrier and scarier than ever!

Until then, please enjoy some pics from past Merry Scary gatherings.



Investigations & Consultations

COVID-19 has most certainly changed the way we conduct business. 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 photo interviews and begin background work in preparation for the time when the Stay At Home Order is lifted. 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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