



The ghosts of Ohio[®] Newsletter

www.ghostsofohio.org

Volume 10 Issue 3

From the spooky desk of James Willis:

February, the month for spreading the paranormal love



James

I figured that since we've all been ordered by the greeting card companies to spend the month of February expressing our undying love and devotion to each other, that I'd let you all in on a

little love secret. Namely, what I love the most about The Ghosts of Ohio. Truth be told, there's a lot for me to love about The Ghosts of Ohio organization; the unique places I've been able to investigate, the personal experiences, the thousands of people who have shared their ghost stories with me. The list is almost endless. But sitting atop that list is one thing—the diversity of The Ghosts of Ohio team members.

You see, when I first started The Ghosts of Ohio back in 1999, I purposely handpicked each and every member who joined. The reason for that was because I wanted a group that was comprised of people from all different backgrounds with different theories and viewpoints regarding not only ghosts, but the paranormal as a whole. For me, that has not only created a unique

organization, but it allows us as a group to look at everything differently and from all different angles, through all sorts of personal, religious, and philosophical lenses. Plus, it makes for some really good arguments when it comes to reviewing evidence!

In all seriousness, I think that it is our diversity that makes The Ghosts of Ohio so unique. And several months ago, when I was basking in the warm, loving glow that is The Ghosts of Ohio, I realized that it was time for us to share the love and allow all of you, dear readers, to reap the benefits of our paranormal diversity.

In order to do that, I simply took a look at the backgrounds of each and every member of The Ghosts of Ohio. And what I found there, along with a love of ghosts, was an interest in all sorts of paranormal things; everything from UFOs and cryptids to urban legends, time travel, and even things like ley lines and sacred sites. These are the sort of things we'll be sharing with you in this and future newsletters. Don't worry, there will still be plenty of ghosts, too. But admit it, as near and dear to you as ghosts are, who doesn't have a special place in their heart for Mothman and the occasional alien abduction?



We're starting this issue off with a famous UFO crop circle case as well as a visit to Kirtland, Ohio, to see if we can scare up some Melonheads. From there, who knows where the journey will take us. But if you've got something you'd like us to cover in a future issue, please let us know. Because in case you haven't figured it out yet, The Ghosts of Ohio is all about sharing the paranormal love...all year round!

Cheers,

James A. Willis
Founder/Director

The Hopewell Mounds Crop Circle: Created by ?



Wendy

As a paranormal investigator, I have an interest in things that are not just ghostly, but are paranormal in nature. I am a member of the Cleveland Ufology Project (CUP), and have a very high interest in

crop circles and cryptozoids. In the fall of this year, I had a chance to exercise my crop circle love when one appeared in Chillicothe.

It was located in a field of corn in the valley of the rise of the Hopewell Indian Mounds. Three members of the Cleveland Ufology Group; Director Aaron Clark, Co-Director Tom Wertman (who is also Ohio's Mufon investigator), and Dave Tribby were able to join ICCRA (Independent Crop Circle Research Association) for a day of investigating.

Once the aerial photos of the circle began to appear in the last week of September, ICCRA founding researcher, Jeff Wilson, contacted the farmer. The farmer was able to put him in touch with the landowner, who lives out of

state. At first, she didn't want to deal with any of it for fear of media frenzy. However, once she checked out ICCRA and realized she was dealing with a group of scientific-based researchers, she agreed to let a small team investigate the circle, with the plan to mow down the field the next day. (The field was harvested on October 1st.)

This January, I was finally able to sit down with Aaron and Tom to find out how an actual crop circle investigation takes place, and to see how similar it was to a ghost investigation. What tools do they use? Can you sense energy in the circles? Were there

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PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Maria H., Delaware, Ohio

I'd like to share a ghost story with you that has been in my family for many years. It is about my grandparents, Merle and Olivia. They were high school sweethearts and even though they were in their 60s by the time I came around, I remember them as always being madly in love with each other. They would always be over in the corner, giggling and hugging.

One of the things that my grandfather liked to do to show his love for my grandmother was to give her a dozen red roses every Valentine's Day. But he had to do it his own way, so he would always give them to her on February 13th. He used to tell her that he had to do it a day early just so that she could have the best roses out there before everybody else got theirs on Valentine's Day. He would always sign his card the same way. It used to say, "A Dozen Red Roses For My Darling."

My grandfather died suddenly from a heart attack in the summer of 2001 when he was only 63 years old. But I guess he decided he still wanted to make sure my grandmother got her roses for Valentine's Day because on February 13th, 2002, the day before the first Valentine's Day my grandmother would have to spend without her husband, she said that her whole house suddenly filled up with the smell of roses. It was as if my grandfather's ghost found a way to get those roses to her. My grandmother said that the first time she smelled them, the smell was so strong that she thought someone had snuck in her house and left her fresh cut roses. She looked all over but never found roses. She even went out and looked on the front porch to see if someone had maybe left a delivery out there, but no.

The weird thing is that the rose smell would stay in the house until February 15th and then it would suddenly disappear. Of course, every February 13th, the smell would come back again. Just like my grandfather was bringing another fresh bouquet of roses, always on the 13th, like he always did. It became something of a family tradition to go over my grandmother's apartment on February 13th to sit and wait to see what time grandpa would deliver his roses. We'd all get together in the apartment and wait to see who could smell the roses first.

My grandmother passed away on November 18th, 2011. The following February, my family and I decided to go out to my grandmother's apartment, which we were getting ready to sell, to see if maybe my grandfather's ghost would still bring the roses. So on February 13th, I went with my parents and my aunt and uncle to the apartment and waited. But nothing happened and we never smelled anything. I'd like to think it was because my grandfather didn't have to bring the roses. He was together again with my grandmother and he could give her the roses in heaven.

ROSES FOR MY DARLING



The Hopewell Mounds Crop Circle: Created by ?

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any definitive findings pointing to the circles being made by someone other than a human? I was able to get answers to pretty much all of this and more.

First, take a look at the aerial photo **Figure 1** and then at **Figure 2**. Jeff created the map to give a better idea of where the formation lay in conjunction with Hopewell Mounds, the river, and the road. This is an area that is very hard to access, and next to impossible when you are considering the corn is eight feet tall.

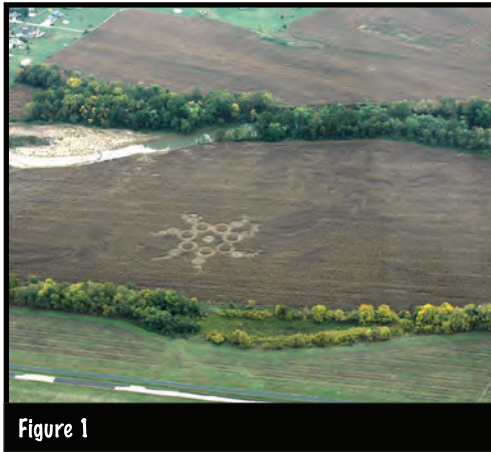


Figure 1

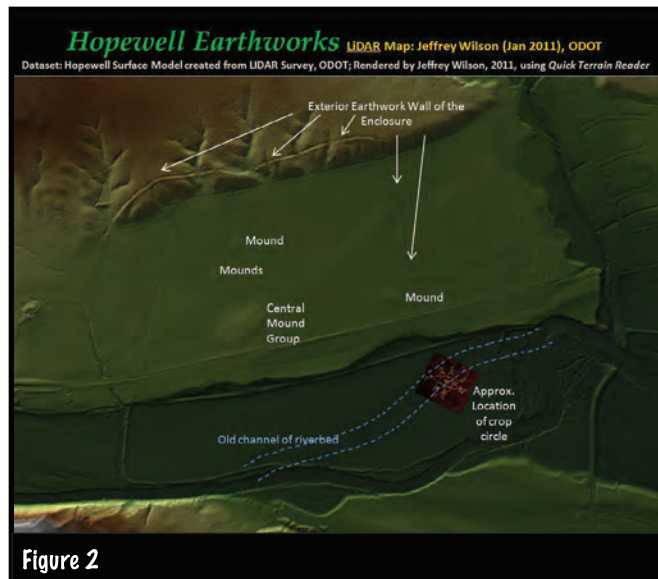


Figure 2

compass in one of the circles. There were no other signs of the circles being disturbed. The trail left by the trespasser came from the river, and it appeared to be a single person. Why just 1 person? Tom feels it would be impossible for a group of people to get in there without leaving a sign. “The damage done just by us walking through the bit of field we still had to go through to get to the formation was significant, and we were being very careful. Just stepping over downed stalks caused damage, so a group of people trying to create or visit this would be very noticeable.”

The first thing the investigators did upon arrival at 8 a.m. was split into groups to begin measuring the circles. There were 43 in total, and the formation took up over four acres. This formation has the second highest amount of circles within it ever recorded here in the states. Each circle was carefully measured from the center, and then at every 45 degrees. According to Aaron, there actually could have been more circles. “As you worked your way down the arms, the circles became smaller until they were three feet across. There could have been an even smaller circle in some

were not necessarily bent to the ground. “It could be anywhere from bent to the ground, to bent at 18-24 inches up from the ground. You can’t do that by dragging a board. It wasn’t uniform at all; it was random. You would have had to do this stalk by stalk,” Aaron said. “It was one of the first things we noticed when we went in, they were not uniformly bent.”

“Imagine the magnitude if this was a human job. Snapping stalks at 90 degrees, and in some cases snapping them again so the stalk formed a “U” shape aiming towards the ground for over four acres, and leaving no trace. This was not controlled, and it wasn’t done by boards,” added Tom.

As you look at **Figure 3**, you can see that within the rings, the stalks are laying down in four to five opposing directions within each ring. And to measure those rings, a person had to stand on a ladder in the center of the circle. In this part of the formation, those center circles held cornstalks that were as much as eight feet high, so you had to be able to see over the stalks to direct the person that was in the ring, helping measure the distance from the ladder to each swirling section.

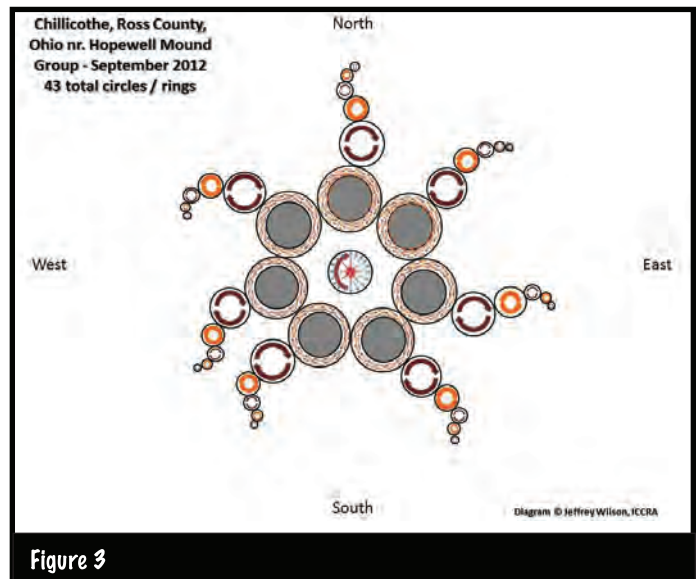


Figure 3

The formation can only be seen from the air. There was no way in or out of this field without leaving a trace. The night before the team’s arrival, the farmer cut a 100 foot wide swath up to the formation, so that the investigative team could get in. They still had close to 100 feet to get through the corn to actually get to the formation itself. The next morning they arrived and did find that someone had come in that night before, leaving behind a beverage cup, and a

places, but it is hidden by the fact that those circles would have ended up in one of the 18 inch rows between the fields. You wouldn’t have had stalks lying down at that point.”

The directional flow of each circle was different. Some ran clockwise, some ran counter. The rings that surrounded the center circle were very unique. The corn ran in both directions within the same rings. Each direction was measured, sometimes hours being spent on just one ring. And these stalks

According to Aaron and Tom, each ring was approximately 50 feet across. While almost all of the time sounds like it was spent on measuring circles and rings, there were other investigations going on concurrent to this. “We used magnetic compasses and iPhones or other electrical devices to see if magnetic north still held. Odd thing was, a lot of those iPhones would just shut down and have to be restarted, if they were able to restart at all. And one circle did seem to have all of the

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The Hopewell Mounds Crop Circle: Created by ?

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compasses running crazy,” Tom told me. “Jeff and I also took radiation readings using an old style machine and new style machine, and we didn’t get anything other than typical background radiation levels,” added Aaron. “Then again, we have to remember we went in at least one week after this formed, possibly two. It’s possible that any initial radiation and high EMF had since dissipated. I can usually feel energy, and I didn’t feel anything.”

Also present that day was ICCRA founding researcher, Dr. Charles Lietzau. “He spent almost the entire day crawling on the ground, measuring the growth nodes of the stalks,” Aaron said. “He would measure several nodes on the plant, and also measured nodes on plants further into the field, outside of the



formation, as his control group.” What did he find? Many of the nodes on the “circle” plants were positive for LNEAT—the Levengood Node Elongation Anomaly Test. In simple terms, it means that the node on the plant within the circle was elongated, and larger than the nodes on the plants outside of the formation. I previously discussed this in Volume 8, Issue 1 of The Ghosts of Ohio newsletter. The elongation is believed to be caused by microwaves or some other radial means. In English, it means this was not done by a human.

ICCRA were not permitted to take anything out of the field that wasn’t “down” but they were able to get some corn samples to send to Dr. William Levengood, who specializes in crop circles and seed germination. We have no news on those findings yet.

I asked if there were any after effects from being in the circle. “I got really sick,” said Aaron. “I had a cough for about a month, he continued.”

I came down with the flu, and I believe Dave did also,” said Tom. But whether that was just from being in the corn all day breathing in dust and dirt particles, or something more

anomalous, neither of them could say. But it sounded like this area was ripe for a crop circle forming. Jeff Wilson looks at the geology of every area he travels to, adds it up with things like high-tension wires, Indian mounds, the presence of water, and high radiation fields, and tries to locate areas that he feels are ripe for crop formations. The area near the Hopewell Mounds fit his criteria, so it was vindication that he was able to pinpoint where a formation would occur just from his research and documentation.

Another thing that has caught Jeff’s attention is that this formation fits the Heptagonal Hyperbolic Planar Tessellation. According to Wikipedia, a tessellation is the process of creating a two dimensional plane using the repetition of a geometric shape with no overlaps and no gaps. A good example is **Figure 4**, which is Marrakech tile. Or, think of a soccer ball. All those little shapes fitting together to create one seamless object. This crop formation seems to be a two-dimensional representation of that hyperbolic shape. And it explains why the arms of the formation are not all pointed to the same direction. It enables it fitting in with a like shaped formation. Some physicists believe the seven-sided figure in hyperbolic space can explain the nature of the universe. Jeff created a diagram of the circle to show this in **Figure 5**.

I asked Tom and Aaron if they sensed anything “strange” in the formation when they first got there. First impressions can tell you a lot. And that is when Tom volunteered some interesting information “When we first walked into the circle, Aaron and Dave started just wandering around haphazardly, arguing about what to do, where to start, who should do what job. This is out of character for both of them.” (I can vouch for that. The members of CUP have a tendency as a whole to be rather calm and pragmatic.) “I stepped outside the circle and just watched them wandering around like they had no clue what to do. After about 10 minutes, they calmed down. But it really got me wondering.” Aaron doesn’t remember that at all, but does admit he was sleep deprived and had just eaten at McDonald’s.

So what could be to blame? Hash browns or environmental shifts? So what is the result of the findings? So far, with just the way the formation was formed, and the positive result of the LNEAT, it definitely looks like this formation was not the result of human intervention. Once the results of the corn samples (and we believe dirt samples were also taken) are in, we can give a more complete analysis.

How does it compare to a ghost investigation? Surprisingly, they are similar. Timeframe is important. The use of environmental equipment, such as EMF, compasses, and radiation detectors are important. But also important is the nitty gritty of crawling around physically searching for something. Where we sit in a room and run EVP sessions, or crawl around searching for EMF leaks or apported objects, the crop circle investigators also need to do time consuming physical work. People on ghost investigations report feeling unwell, feeling dizzy, and sensing energy, just as they do in crop circle work. It is interesting how all aspects of the paranormal world seem to tie in neatly together.

For more on crop circle information and to learn about formations in your area, see the Independent Crop Circle Research Association’s website at www.iccra.org.

And for interest in that and Ufology, join us at our monthly meetings for the Cleveland Ufology Project— we just celebrated our 60th anniversary, making us the oldest Ufology group on earth. For more information, visit us on the Web at www.clevelandufo.com.

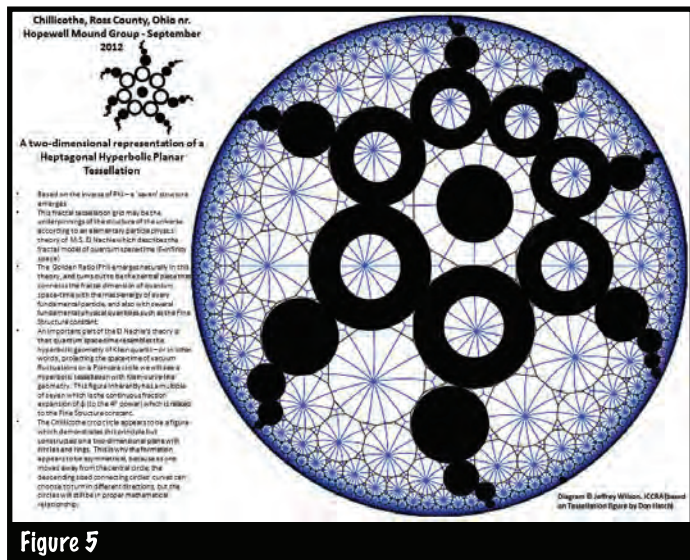


Figure 5 A larger version of Jeff’s diagram is available at <http://iccra.org/bystate/Ohio/images/ross-diagram1.jpg>

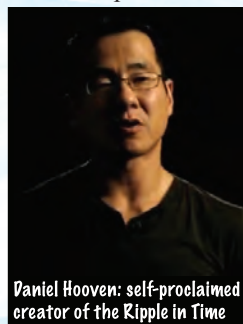
RIPPLES IN TIME THAT CAUSE WAVES OF QUESTIONS



James

Late last December, I was flipping through the channels and came across a ghost reality show I hadn't heard of before, Haunted Encounters: Face To Face. It was only a few minutes

into an episode and despite my initial eye roll over the fact that the group they were following around went by the name of the Paranormal Syndicate, I decided to stick with it and ride the episode out. I was glad that I did because I got to see the team conduct what they termed a "Ripple in Time" session. Essentially, the team donned costumes and tried to re-create scenes of events that took place in a specific location in an attempt to get ghosts to react. In this particular episode, which took place inside Eastern State Penitentiary, the audience is led to believe that the "Ripple" was successful. To be honest, I was intrigued with the idea, but I wasn't really convinced. Of course, that's when the emails started, asking me what I thought about the practice of creating Ripples in



Daniel Hooven: self-proclaimed creator of the Ripple in Time

Time and how successful I thought they could be. It was then that I decided to take a closer look at this whole Ripple in Time.

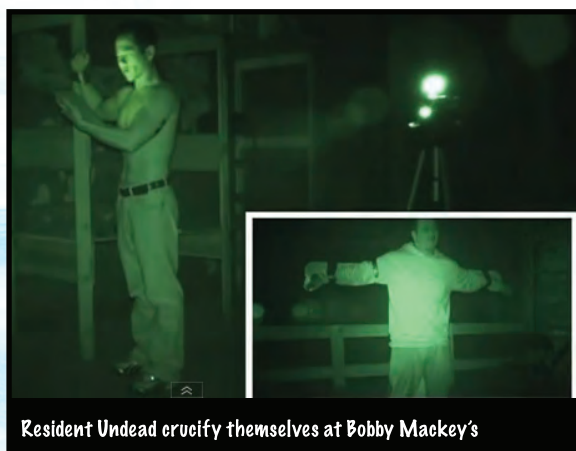
The first thing that I discovered was that the main person who was pushing this Ripple in Time notion was a man named Daniel Hooven, one of the members of the Paranormal Syndicate. Prior to his joining the Paranormal Syndicate, Hooven was a member of another group, Resident Undead, who posted videos of their investigations online beginning around 2010. While Hooven and the other members often created Ripple-like scenarios (including one head-scratching event at Bobby Mackey's where Hooven had a bulls eye drawn on his back and then tied his one arm to a metal pole while he read aloud from the Book of Revelation on his iPod. Another member was taped to a cross to create a "mock crucifixion"), they refer to what they are doing as a "quarantine." It does not appear

to be until the Haunted Encounters: Face To Face episodes began running in late 2012 that the term "Ripple In Time" started being applied.

So what exactly is a Ripple In Time? Basically, you take a look at a location and try to determine what, if anything, could have happened there that might have created a haunting. For example, a murder that took place there in the 1940s. What you would then do is try to recreate that murder to see if any ghosts are stirred up by your activity. In essence, the Ripple in Time is recreating a past event to see if any ghosts react to it. It's certainly out-of-the-box thinking, but despite the fact that Hooven's own website claims that it has "revolutionized the paranormal field," the truth is that people have been doing the same exact thing Hooven and his team does for years.



Resident Undead at Bobby Mackey's. Personally, I think a ghostly "kick me" sign would have been a lot simpler.



Resident Undead crucify themselves at Bobby Mackey's

We just didn't have a cool name for it. At The Ghosts Of Ohio, we often referred to it as Ghost Bait and have longed toyed with the idea of dressing the part when we attend certain locations, like dressing like a Confederate soldier and marching around

Gettysburg. Most of the time, groups won't actually push things to the extreme such as dressing in costume, but I think it's safe to say that putting groups of women in a room where a ghost is said to only interact with women is a type of Ripple In Time.

But my main reason for taking a closer look at the Ripple In Time wasn't to determine who came up with the idea first. Rather, I wanted to get to the bottom of things regarding how valid the practice was in terms of getting ghosts to respond. After watching a few episodes of Haunted Encounters: Face To Face, it was clear that the show wanted me to believe it works. In other words, that by my dressing up in period costumes, speaking with accents or regional dialects, and/or recreating and acting out scenes of past events, I could cause ghost activity to increase. If that's the case, then the burning question I need answered is "why does this work?"

The explanation that is usually given seems simple enough. Namely, that the ghosts are identifying with what you are doing and responding to it. Perhaps the ghosts of Confederate soldiers will take your attempt at a Southern accent to mean that they are among friends. Or that by re-enacting a famous murder, say at the Lizzie Borden House, it will make the spirits of the assailant and the two victims return, literally, to the scene of the crime. On the surface, I get that and it makes total sense. It's only when you do something that most people are neglecting—taking a closer look at that explanation—that more and more questions start to pop up. For one, if we accept that explanation then we have to assume that the spirits in question are intelligent as opposed to residual. In other words, the fact that the spirits are reacting to what we are doing means that they can see and hear us and adjust their activity and behavior accordingly, unlike

residuals who, no matter what, continue to repeat the same exact "scene" over and over again without deviation. This leads us to the \$1,000,000 question; do we become more gullible when we die?

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RIPPLES IN TIME THAT CAUSE WAVES OF QUESTIONS

(continued from page 5.)

Allow me to explain. We'll return to the Paranormal Syndicate's "ripple" that they did at Eastern State Penitentiary. Hearing noises coming from the infirmary, which once held patients suffering from tuberculosis (TB), the four-member team decided that would be the ideal place for their Ripple in Time. For the Ripple, one team member dressed as a doctor, the two female team members dressed as nurses, and Daniel Hooven played the role of a TB-infected prisoner/patient, although he didn't have a costume and just sort of laid on the gurney and moaned a lot when the



Bringing in the patient

"doctor" pretended to "operate" on him. To put it bluntly, all three of them make horrible actors (one of the "nurses" didn't speak, so it's not fair for me to judge her acting skills). And yet, the ghosts apparently responded. But why? Because if we are to assume that these intelligent spirits could hear and see the investigators/actors, then why wouldn't they be able to tell they were being duped? The doctor and nurse outfits didn't appear to be period and part of me wonders if perhaps prison healthcare professionals wore a different type of uniform. Regardless, I don't think it would take more than a cursory glance by any ghost, even one who hadn't been incarcerated, to be able to tell these people were just "faking it." Personally, I might have been more inclined to believe that ghosts had responded if, during the "operation," the team had gotten an EVP of people laughing and saying things like "Look! He's not even touching that guy and he's screaming like he's being cut open!"

The evidence the team presented as proof that the Ripple worked were all in the form of EVPs. The one they felt was most compelling came after the doctor said

"I don't know why it took them so long to get you in here with us. There you go, there you go." Immediately after that, an EVP was recorded that the team believes is a ghost saying "Help him, he's coughing." Hooven even goes so far as to say "These are intelligent responses, right on the spot. They are reacting to this Ripple."

But was it really? Sure, they make reference during the Ripple to the "patient" having TB, but at no point does the patient, or anyone else, for that matter, cough. Just to be clear, I am not disputing the notion that they had captured a real EVP. Rather, that it doesn't seem to be one that is giving an intelligent response based on the scene they were acting out. And if that's true, did they really need to do the Ripple in order to get the response?

Another example of the Ripple in Time comes from the Haunted Encounters: Face To Face episode where the Paranormal Syndicate investigates the church and burial ground of St. Mark's in the Bowery. There is an infamous incident that took place in this New York burial ground in the 1870s. In April of 1876, Alexander Turney Stewart, who was one of the richest men in New York at the time, passed away and was interred in a burial vault on the church grounds. A little over two years later, in November of 1878, unknown assailants broke into the Stewart burial vault and absconded with Alexander's body. A ransom note eventually showed up, demanding a large sum of money for the return of Alexander's remains. Stewart's widow, Cornelia, paid the ransom and human remains were returned. Without even

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Prepping the patient



The operation

RIPPLES IN TIME THAT CAUSE WAVES OF QUESTIONS

(continued from page 6.)

verifying they were the remains of her husband, Cornelia simply had then reinterred... at another cemetery.

It was decided that a Ripple in Time should be done to see if they could stir up the spirits that may have been involved with the stealing of Alexander Stewart's body. Three team members were chosen, Helmey, Daniel, and Jordan. For the Ripple, which would take place in the basement of the church, Helmey and Daniel would play the roles of the grave robbers who stole Stewart's body while Jordan would act as Mrs. Stewart. The team decided to mix things up a bit and act out a scene where the two grave robbers meet Mrs. Stewart, return her husband's remains, but refuse to take the ransom money.

For the Ripple, their costumes consisted of nothing more than two hats, which the two "grave robbers" wore. Helmey, while he speaks not a word during the Ripple, is still the one most in character, even with his wearing what appears to be an ill-fitting plastic New Year's Eve top hat. That's because Daniel, playing the part of the second grave robber, appears to be wearing the same paperboy-style hat he's worn in other episodes while touring the building. And as for Jordan, who was playing the role of Mrs. Stewart, didn't feel the need to wear a hat and simply acted out the scene in her street clothes.

Regardless, the Ripple appeared to have worked as they walked away with several EVPs, including one that told them to "get out." But once again, what exactly are these ghosts reacting to, especially since, in this case, the team was recreating an event that never actually happened. Historical documentation states that while Cornelia Stewart did indeed pay the ransom for the return of her husband's remains, she never met with the grave robbers face-to-face. In fact, no one was ever formally charged with the crime and the money never recovered. So in essence, this Ripple is recreating a scene that is not only historically inaccurate in every sense, but never even took place. And yet, ghosts are responding to it?

So when all is said and done, do I think there's something to the idea of creating Ripples in Time? Surprisingly, yes, I do. I just don't think reality TV shows have



The arrival of the grave robbers



"Somebody call for a couple of grave robbers?"



Passing off Mr. Stewart's remains

convinced me that it works...yet. For me, if ghosts have the ability to respond to things we are doing, then they have the intellect to know when we are just faking things, too. And if that's the case, do we really need costumes or would simply sitting down, introducing yourself, and offering the ghost a seat at the table be enough to get a ghostly reaction? These are the things that separate the casual ghost hunter from the true researcher and investigator. Put another way, if creating a Ripple in Time is, as it would appear on

Haunted Encounters: Face to Face, something that is almost guaranteed to get results, then shouldn't we be moving towards incorporating them into more controlled-type experiments? For example, do Ripples only have to be performed at haunted locations or will simply acting out a scene literally draw the spirits closer to you? As you can see, we are probably years of research away from drawing any real conclusions. But we're off to a good start!

DEADWOOD'S HAUNTED HISTORY: THE BULLOCK HOTEL



Samantha

Saloon #10. When I decided to visit South Dakota in August, I insisted on spending a couple of days in Deadwood to soak up the history and maybe even seek out a few ghosts. Surprisingly, Wild Bill isn't the only name dominating the not-so-sleepy town. In some ways, he takes a back seat to a man by the name of Seth Bullock, who was responsible for not only bringing justice and prosperity to Deadwood, but tourists today can't go anywhere without hearing stories about his ghost that reportedly haunts his hotel: The Historic Bullock Hotel.

Seth Bullock was born in Ontario, Canada, in 1849, and ran away to Montana when he was in his late teens. Early on, he expressed an interest in politics. He unsuccessfully ran for Territorial Legislature, but was later elected to Territorial Senate, where he served from 1871 to 1872. It was during this time that he helped to establish Yellowstone as a National Park. After serving in the Senate, he was elected Sheriff of Lewis and Clark County in 1873; and it was around this time that he met his business partner, Sol Star.

Bullock and Star began their business relationship by opening a hardware store in Helena, Montana, called the Star & Bullock Auctioneers and Commission Merchants. Realizing that there was a greater demand for hardware in the gold rush mining camp of Deadwood, South Dakota, they relocated there in 1876. They purchased a lot on the corner of Main and Wall streets (the current location of the Bullock Hotel), setting up shop in a tent. Their business thrived, and it wasn't long before they built a one-story building on the property.

During this time, Deadwood was a rough and lawless place to be. It was primarily comprised of brothels, saloons, and gambling halls, and there was no one to maintain order. In fact, the day after Bullock and Star moved into Deadwood, Wild Bill

Hickok was shot dead. The town desperately needed law enforcement. Because of Seth Bullock's background as a sheriff, the governor appointed him as the first sheriff of Lawrence County in 1877. This was a job Bullock took very seriously. He deputized several residents to aid in his efforts to bring civilization to the camp; and it was said that he didn't carry a gun because his no-nonsense glare was enough to maintain order. He was quite a powerful figure, and his contributions to the town didn't end there.

Bullock and Star were responsible for bringing the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad to the area, which contributed to Deadwood's economic development; and they founded the town of Belle Fourche, which later became the county seat. Bullock invested in ranching, mining, and other growing industries in the area; and despite his imposing, steely-eyed demeanor, he was well liked by nearly everyone. One of his best friends was future president Theodore Roosevelt, who not only invited Bullock to his inauguration, but also appointed him as the U.S. Marshal of South Dakota.

They were such good friends, in fact, that when Roosevelt died in early 1919, Bullock constructed the first monument in the United States dedicated to him on top of Sheep Mountain (later renamed Mt. Roosevelt). Bullock even insisted that upon his own death, he was to be buried at the highest point in Deadwood's Mt. Moriah Cemetery so that he could sit up in his grave and say "hi" to Teddy. Today, visitors to the cemetery have to hike a winding, uphill trail to find Bullock's grave; and even though trees obscure the view of Mt. Roosevelt, the view is truly breathtaking.

Seth Bullock was a very productive man in his lifetime, and was always looking for ways to bring about prosperity. When his hardware store was destroyed (again) in the Deadwood fire of 1894, he decided that it was time for a change. Instead of another store, he tried something new and built Deadwood's finest hotel on the site.

The three-story Bullock Hotel, completed in 1895, was the most luxurious hotel in western South Dakota. It featured 63 rooms with steam heat, oak furnishings, and a full bathroom on each floor. The 2nd and 3rd floors had a library and parlor, and the main level had a restaurant that could seat 100 people. The lobby was decorated with plush velvet carpets, brass chandeliers, and a Steinway grand piano. Bullock even added a Gentleman's Bar in 1900. The Bullock Hotel was truly a luxury in its time. Today, it is the most photographed building in Deadwood.

Unfortunately, the building that exists in Deadwood today is not entirely original. While the exterior is the real deal, the interior has been through several



Sam standing in front of the Bullock Hotel

renovations due to changes in ownership and years of neglect. In 1991, the property was purchased by new owners, Bullock Properties, who sought to renovate and restore the hotel to its original appearance, albeit updated for modern life. Instead of 63 small rooms, the hotel now has 28 larger rooms, each with private baths. (Personally, I was surprised at how large my room was. It was the biggest hotel room I've ever stayed in!) The woodwork, wallpaper, light fixtures and other decor are now in keeping with the hotel's original Victorian style; and the kitchen and pantry have been converted into Bully's, a restaurant & bar named for Teddy Roosevelt.

Before my arrival in Deadwood in August 2012, I did some research and chose to stay at the Bullock Hotel for two reasons. First, I have been infatuated with the Old West for a long time, and the Bullock is, in fact, the

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DEADWOOD'S HAUNTED HISTORY: THE BULLOCK HOTEL

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oldest hotel in Deadwood and has the richest history. The second reason, which was the icing on the cake, was that it is a haunted hotel. It was featured in a 1992 episode of *Unsolved Mysteries*, and the hotel currently gives ghost tours on weekends. (It goes without saying that I took the tour!) Based on research I've gathered on the Internet, in books, and at the hotel itself, it's clear that the ghost stories are as varied as the thousands of visitors that pass through Deadwood each year.

The reported paranormal activity at the Bullock includes a lot of the standard fare, as well as some unique encounters. Both staff and guests have reported hearing footsteps in the halls, whistling, classical music, and sometimes their names uttered by an unseen man. The smell of cigar smoke is attributed to Seth Bullock's ghost, as rosewater and lilac is attributed to his wife Martha. People have reported being tapped on the shoulder or being tugged on the elbow. Water, lights, and appliances turn on and off by themselves, and a non-working antique clock in one of the rooms chimes when a staff member enters. Staff and guests both report feelings of being watched and seeing shadows out of the corners of their eyes. Orbs and mists are common in photographs, and people claim to see writing or faces in the mirrors on the 2nd and 3rd floors. Unseen hands have tidied rooms after guests make a mess; and a staff member saw a roll of toilet paper unroll itself after he replaced it. It is common for items in the hotel to move on their own. Bottles, plates, and glasses fall or fly across the room in the bar area; and bar stools and cleaning carts get moved with no one around.

Sometimes, objects like jewelry and watches go missing, only to turn up behind the piano in the basement, which is currently a bar called Seth's Cellar. The staff attributes this to the ghost of a little girl named Sarah, who supposedly died of smallpox in the basement, where Star and Bullock had set up a temporary health clinic during an outbreak. Ninety-five

percent of the people who contracted smallpox died of it, and several died on the Bullock property. Sarah seems to be the only victim that people have actually reported seeing, and she will sometimes attempt to play with children who are guests at the hotel.



Seth Bullock's grave



View from Bullock's grave toward Mt. Roosevelt

Probably the most interesting paranormal activity in the hotel is attributed to Seth Bullock himself. While several reports claim that Room 211 is a hotbed of activity because Bullock died there, the truth is that Seth Bullock died of cancer on September 23rd, 1919, at his home on a side street in Deadwood. Regardless, his presence is felt throughout the hotel. It seems that even in death, he is still looking out for his business and his guests. If a staff member seems to be lazing about while on the

clock, ghostly activity increases as though saying, "Get to work!" When a young boy got locked out of his room while his parents were downstairs, Bullock led him back to the room and opened the door. The boy's parents later found out what happened when he saw an old photograph of Bullock and exclaimed, "That's the guy who let me back in the room!" It isn't often that Bullock is seen, but when he makes an appearance, it's unforgettable.

While I wish that I could report experiencing some of the Bullock Hotel's ghostly activity first-hand, I have to be honest and say I didn't. Each night, I left a recorder going throughout the night, hoping to hear a ghostly voice. Nothing happened. I took pictures down hallways, staircases, and in mirrors in hopes of seeing an apparition. Still nothing. I can only say that I slept very well each night, only awakened by the plumbing when a neighbor decided to take a shower at 3 a.m. Did I mention that Deadwood is like a mini-Vegas? There are casinos, bars, and gift shops everywhere—it's a town that doesn't seem to sleep! Maybe it was like that during Seth Bullock's time, too.

Fortunately, the history of Deadwood hasn't been lost amid the souvenirs and slot machines. While I was certainly in the minority (since I was there for history, not gambling), I did get to experience much of the history that Deadwood is known for. I visited the Adams Museum and took a bus tour to learn more about the history. I participated in a re-enactment of the death of Wild Bill Hickok, which was a hoot; and I walked Mt. Moriah Cemetery, where I visited the graves of Wild Bill, Calamity Jane, and yes, Seth Bullock. It's interesting to think that I went to Deadwood because of Wild Bill, but came away from it thinking about Seth Bullock. His contributions to the American West far outweigh those of a gunslinger who died playing cards! And you know what? I never once heard anyone mention that they saw the ghost of Wild Bill.



TRACKING DOWN OHIO'S URBAN LEGENDS: THE MELONHEADS



James

The name given to one of Ohio's most enduring urban legends might elicit more than its fair share of snickers. But make no mistake about it; the Melonheads are not something to be trifled with. For while most people

simply shake their heads and smile when they hear the legend of the Melonheads, there are many others who swear they were lucky to escape the woods surrounding Kirtland, Ohio, with their lives when they had the misfortune of running into a Melonhead one dark and stormy night.

While the legend of the Melonheads have, so far, only been traced back to the early 1970s, its origins are said to date back to the 1800s. There are two main versions of the legend, both of which include a mysterious figure known only as Doctor Crowe (sometimes spelled "Crow" or "Kroh"). In the more popular version of the legend, the good doctor lives in a small boarding house-type building in the woods of Kirtland. Dr. Crowe had devoted his life to helping children afflicted with hydrocephalus—a medical condition more commonly known as Water on the Brain. While it's not really water—it's cerebrospinal fluid—it is true that the heads of people with hydrocephalus will often swell in size due to the increased levels of fluid in the cavities of the brain. Hence, the term "Melonheads" being used to describe these children. Ostracized from the community due to the size of their heads, Dr. Crowe took mercy on these poor children and allowed them to live with him in the woods, where he studied them and searched for a cure.

Unfortunately, Dr. Crowe died without finding a cure. One morning, the children came to wake him and found him dead in his bed. Unsure of what to do next, the Melonhead children simply decided to hang around the old building...and there they have remained to this very day. The house is now nothing more than ruins, but legend has it that if you can find your way back there, you might encounter a Melonhead or two. But no worries; if you do spot a Melonhead, chances are they will just stand there and stare blankly back at you.

That is, of course, unless you find a Melonhead that's related to the second version of the legend. In this telling, the Melonheads' oversized heads are not due to hydrocephalus. Rather, they are the result of Dr. Crowe himself, who, in this version, is not a very nice man at all. In fact, it's his bizarre, hellish experiments that have caused the swollen heads. And in this version, the place where they are all housed is not a boarding house. Instead, it's referred to as an asylum or mental hospital (or even a prison). No one was ever really sure what the goal of Dr. Crowe's experiments was. Some even said he did it just for kicks. Whatever the reason, making sure his subjects were comfortable and free from pain was the last thing on his mind. It was said that sometimes the woods around Kirtland would echo with screams of agony from the patients. One night, the Melonheads decided they had had enough and rose up as one against Doctor Crowe. They murdered him in his bed and then set fire to the building. After watching it burn to the ground, they were suddenly struck with the realization that they had nowhere else to go. So they decided to stay in the woods and live among the ruins of the old asylum, surviving on whatever wild game wandered close enough for them to grab. Some say the Melonheads aren't opposed to snatching up a human or two if they get the chance. Just something to keep in mind should you decide you want to go wandering around in the woods at night looking for the Melonheads.

As for where you are said to be able to see a Melonhead in Ohio (believe it or not, there are Melonhead sightings in Michigan and even Connecticut), there are reports of people running into them all around Kirtland in Lake County. The main location, though is the section of Wisner Road that winds its way through the woods and alongside the East Branch of the Chagrin River. Follow Riser Road until it crosses over an old bridge (which is said to be a Crybaby Bridge, by the way, but more on that in a future newsletter) and you reach the dead end. Once there, you have officially entered Melonhead Territory as the remains of Dr. Crowe's facility (in both versions of the legend) are said to be back in these woods. And around those ruins, lurk the Melonheads.

Of course, they don't always just hang around the ruins. Sometimes, they make



their way out to Wisner Road and wait for cars to go by. If you subscribe to the first version of the legend, you're more than likely to just see a group of Melonheads standing silently on the side of the road and they will simply watch you drive by. Of course, if you believe the second version of the legend, best step on the gas if you see a Melonhead on the side of the road. That's because, in this version, they've been known to jump on the hood and start scratching and clawing at you as they attempt to get inside the car.

So is there any truth to this legend? Let's be honest; the idea that there is a pack of people with oversized heads that have been living in the woods, undisturbed, for over 150 years, seems really, really farfetched. Sure, the woods around Wisner Road are creepy enough. In fact, I've driven down that road numerous times, even in broad daylight, and the place still gives me chills. But despite the isolated appearance of the road, there are people who live along Wisner Road (which might make this a good place to point out that a good portion of the woods is posted "No Trespassing," so please stay out). Based on all the houses along Wisner, as well as the vast number of people who have been searching for proof of the Melonheads for years, these bigheaded creatures have proven more elusive than Bigfoot. To date, I have not come across a single photograph, not even a blurry one, which claims to be of a Melonhead. Of course, that hasn't stopped people from telling me all about the time they encountered (or were attacked by) a Melonhead on Wisner Road. But I'm just saying that, being the hopeful skeptic that I am, I need something a bit more concrete if I'm going to accept that there are Melonheads roaming around Northern Ohio.

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TRACKING DOWN OHIO'S URBAN LEGENDS: THE MELONHEADS



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Regarding the only person in the Melonheads legend to have a name, Dr. Crowe, there has yet to be any evidence that he ever existed, let alone owned and operated some sort of orphanage/prison/asylum in the woods. In fact, we don't even have a first name for the doctor! Although, several years ago, someone using the name Ryan Orvis posted a message online claiming they while they were "investigating" the Melonheads legend, they had found an old newspaper article about a



Gregor Mendel

"Dr. Kroh" conducting experiments on children to try and enlarge their heads. According to Orvis, the article said Kroh was doing this because he was "influenced by Gregor Mendel." When Kroh's experiments failed, he simply piled all the "melonheads" into his car and dumped them off on the side of the road in Kirtland, where they have remained to this day. And while Orvis' post claimed to have "solved" the mystery of the Melonheads, it really did nothing more than add another confusing layer to the tale.

For one, the things described in this alleged newspaper article—experiments conducted on children, the abandonment of said

children, etc.—are far too sensationalistic to have appeared in only one newspaper. If something like that had actually taken place, regardless of the time period, it would have been a national scandal. But most telling of all is that the newspaper article has all the ear markings of an urban legend. Namely, that it provides just enough specifics (where the children were dumped, who influenced the doctor to conduct his experiments, etc.) while totally ignoring some of the most important information...like Dr. Kroh's first name, for example.

There is also the whole curious inclusion of the idea that Kroh's experiments were inspired by Gregor Mendel. On the surface, it might make sense since Mendel is considered the founder of what we now refer to as "genetics." And Mendel was conducting his experiments in the mid-1800s, which certainly fits into the timeline of the Melonheads being "created" in the 1800s. However, Mendel's work was, by and large, rejected and essentially ignored by the scientific world until well after his death. In fact, it wasn't until the early 20th century that people starting taking a second look at Mendel's work. Oh yeah, and Mendel didn't conduct any experiments on human subjects. He used pea plants.

For me, until the newspaper article actually surfaces, I'll continue to believe that if it exists, it is merely another Halloween-style retelling of the legend as opposed to a statement of facts. Of course, just like the Melonheads themselves, there have been no

confirmed sightings of the newspaper article

Orvis makes reference to. But that hasn't stopped other online websites and forums to pick up the Orvis post wholesale and reprint it as being factual.

So how about you? Where do you stand on this whole Melonheads legend? Are there really humanoid creatures with giant heads hiding in the woods of Kirtland, Ohio? Or was this story, like so many others, created just to give people traveling down a spooky old road something else to be frightened about? If you're like me, you might be somewhere stuck in the middle; really skeptical but not quite yet ready to totally dismiss it. If that's the case, then perhaps a late-night ride down Wisner Road is in order for you. Just don't forget your camera because if a Melonhead should attack your car, I'd love to see pictures!

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 email 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!

GOT GHOSTS?

REQUEST FOR MORE INFORMATION

From time to time, The Ghosts of Ohio learns about a haunted location that, try as we might, we just can't seem to dig up any additional information on. That's when we turn to one of the largest group of Ohio ghost experts out there; our newsletter readers! That's right, we're asking you to let us know if you have any information (or better yet, have had a personal experience) at any of the following locations. If you have, shoot us an email at info@ghostsofohio.org. And who knows? You just might get the chance to investigate the location along with The Ghosts of Ohio!

Black Mary Ann (Cleveland/Cuyahoga county)

Buffington Island (Portland/Meigs county)

Buckeye Belle (Beverly/Washington county)

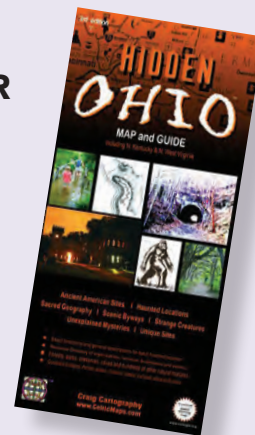
New London Road Jogger (Hamilton/Butler county)

Watkins Road Bridge (Columbus/Franklin county)

COMING IN THE APRIL NEWSLETTER

Hidden Ohio &
The Serpent Mound

Taking A Closer Look
At Elizabeth's Grave



Investigations & Consultations

The Ghosts of Ohio has already begun scheduling investigations for 2013. 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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