



The ghosts of Ohio[®] Newsletter

www.ghostsofohio.org

Volume 21 Issue 3

IT'S ALL ABOUT PERSPECTIVE



James

The Ghosts Of Ohio organization has been investigating haunted locations since 1999. During that time, I've lost track of the exact number of places we've visited. Over the years, whenever I sat down and tried to come up with a number, it always ended up feeling like

math and math scares me more than anything, so I'd quickly abandon my efforts. But regardless of how many we've done, every investigation followed the same path post-hunt: We divide up the audio and video and each member reviews it on their own. Then, once a month, we meet together as a group and each person presents anything they came across in what they reviewed that they believe could be paranormal. And then we all discuss, usually in a civil manner, whether or not what was presented is paranormal. What I'm hoping for is that at the end of the meeting, there are pieces of "evidence" that we, as a group, couldn't explain. Those are the things that help guide where the investigation goes next. It's a pretty successful process, truth be told. And I'm not just saying that because I came up with the idea way back in 1999.

When I made the decision to start my own ghost-hunting organization, I gave a lot of thought to how I could assemble the best team possible. Back then, there weren't many paranormal groups around, but most seemed comprised solely of people who already firmly believed in the existence of ghosts. To me, it

meant that these people/groups were going into an investigation looking to validate the haunting as opposed to seeking explanations for the alleged activity. I didn't want that.

So I decided that The Ghosts Of Ohio would be comprised of individuals from across the Belief Spectrum, as I came to call it. So I assembled a group that included everything from true believers and those who believed they had psychic abilities to total skeptics and those who didn't believe in ghosts at all—they merely wanted to find rational explanations for the unexplained.

Initially, as to be expected, there were bumps in the process; some felt their psychic abilities were being unfairly "tested" while some of the skeptics began to feel they couldn't speak up lest they be labelled a "buzzkill." But over time, we as a group began to realize that while we were all coming at it from different perspectives, we were all seeking the same thing: Answers. And if we all took some time to examine the haunting from each other's perspectives, things not only ran smoother, but we got better results, too.

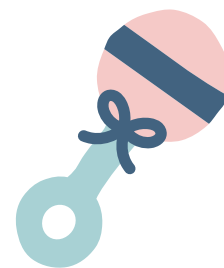
Seems to me that sort of logic could be applied to lots of things outside the paranormal world, too.

Cheers,

James A. Willis
Founder/Director



THE BABY IN THE WALL



Amber L., location withheld upon request

A while ago, I was digging through old photographs and came across one taken in my grandparents' old farmhouse that brought back memories. Specifically, it was a photo taken in their living room. Hanging from a hook on the back wall, way up almost to the ceiling, was an antique baby rattle.

Growing up, I can vaguely remember seeing that rattle hanging there and thinking it was a little weird. They had some artwork on the wall, but the rattle was way up there, all alone. Something didn't make sense. So the next time I was over my mom's, I showed her the picture and asked why her parents had that rattle hanging up there like that. I was shocked when she told me the rattle was up there "to keep the baby in the wall quiet."

According to my mom, her parents' house had been in my grandfather's family for generations, so it was old long before my mom ever lived in it. As long as my mom could remember that rattle was always up there. My mom said that one day, she asked my grandmother about it, she was told that when my great-grandparents owned the house, the roof was heavily damaged in a storm, which resulted in water damage to several walls, especially along the top. They started pulling off the damaged plaster and wood and at some point, an antique rattle fell out of the space between the walls. Nobody thought anything of it, and they just sort of threw the rattle to the side and continued working.

My great-grandmother couldn't remember the exact date, but said that shortly after they had finished fixing the wall, the family was woken up to what sounded like a baby crying...inside their house. My

great-grandfather claimed it was just an animal hanging around outside the house and refused to investigate. But after hearing the crying for several nights in a row, my great-grandmother managed to track the sound to the very wall where the rattle had fallen out of. As time wore on, she became convinced that it was the ghost of a baby, crying because it couldn't find its rattle. Try as she might, she could not convince my great-grandfather to rip open a perfectly good living room wall just to stick an old antique rattle back inside. I guess she finally wore him down because one night, my grandfather marched into the house with a ladder, climbed up, nailed a hook to the wall, and hung the rattle from it. Apparently, the spot he chose was close enough to where the rattle had fell out of the wall, so my great-grandfather thought was the close enough. Guess he was right because they never heard the baby crying after that.

I asked my mom if she had ever heard the baby crying and she said "no", but that the rattle was always hanging on the wall, so the ghost baby had no reason to cry. I then asked if my mom had ever been tempted to climb up and pull the rattle down. She said that she was always too scared to do that.

My grandparents passed away years ago and their farmhouse was sold off. It still stands, though, and there's a family living in it now. I haven't gotten the courage up yet, but I am just dying to knock on the door and ask if there's a baby rattle hanging in their living room. And if there's not, are they ever woken up to the sounds of a baby crying?

WOMAN IN WHITE



There are some hauntings that are ubiquitous in the US, like crybaby bridges or the ghostly hitchhiker. Today, let's look at the phenomenon known as the Woman in White, or White Lady. We'll just refer to her as the Lady to keep consistent. She is not unique to the US but was very likely brought over in tales and folklore by European settlers. She can be found in

pretty much every country, from La Llorona in Hispanic communities, to Yurei in Japan.

In keeping with the Valentine's Day month, the Lady is usually indicative of a woman who died or killed herself due to a broken heart. Whether she is waiting for a lover to return, or mourning the loss of a child or lover, she can usually be seen walking, searching, and sometimes wailing. I did some digging and found the usual nameless Ladies, along with some who represent a real person. She doesn't necessarily wear a long white dress, but that does seem to be in keeping with folklore.



The Avenel House—from Historicavenel.com

Bedford, Virginia has a Lady who paces the porch of Avenel House. She is believed to be the spirit of Mary Frances Burwell, who was often seen on the porch waiting for her husband to come home from the Civil War. He never returned, and even after death, she continues to wait for him.

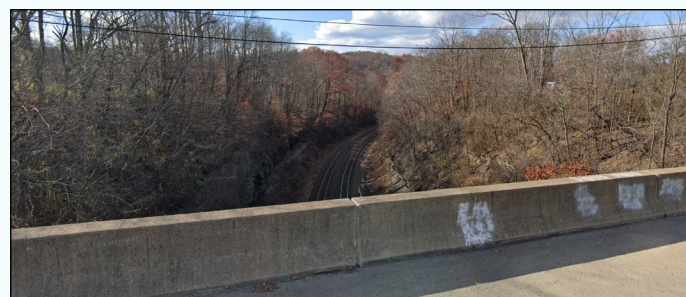
Pennsylvania has a host of Ladies, most of them nameless. One that does appear to be known is the Lady who haunts the Fulton Theater in Lancaster.

According to a stagehand, he encountered a woman in early 1900s dress, all in white, and when he asked her who she was, she said 'Marie' before disappearing. A Broadway actress named Marie Cahill performed at this theater in the early 1900's, so the Lady is believed to be her.



The Fulton Theatre—from thefulton.org

Also in Pennsylvania we encounter a Lady who walks the Summit Cut Bridge at Big Beaver. Some say she is a woman who took the curve too fast in her car in the late 1940's early 50's and careened off the bridge, to a woman who jumped from the bridge. She usually appears at midnight, whether to warn or to wait for another person to make that fatal turn and join her in her eternal walk.



A view from Summit Cut Bridge—from Google Maps

A more frightening Pennsylvania Lady is the one who will jump on the hood of your car when you travel the backroads near Pond Bank in Franklin County late at night. Sometimes she will simply appear in the middle of the road in front of the car. While it would be interesting to see a Lady in action, I really don't need her to jump on my car!

Altoona, Pennsylvania has another Lady, known locally as the White Lady of Whopsy. She wanders

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WOMAN IN WHITE CONTINUED

the road near the Western mountains, including Wopsonnock (“Whopsy”) Mountain, coming into Altoona. According to folklore, she was killed in a car crash there, and on foggy nights can be seen looking for her husband, who was with her in the crash. But be careful, this ghost can also hitchhike!!

The ‘hitchhiker’ Lady is the type I would not like to run into. The thought of thinking a living person has gotten into my car, only to disappear would definitely give me some sleepless nights. So if you’re like me, you might not want to drive around near Poland, Maine at night. Here a Lady appears on the side of the road on Route 11. If you stop to ask her if she needs help, she may ask for a ride to the church up the road, because she is late for her wedding. Upon arrival at the church, the needy bride then disappears.

Ohio has its own share of Ladies, including one in Portsmouth who is known by name. She is believed to be Mary Fisk, who was murdered in her cabin in what is now Alexandria Point Park. When the crew of a boat heard her screams, they went to investigate, finding her body in a cabin full of blood, her small son missing. People see her in the park, walking with outstretched hands, screaming for help.

Warren, Ohio hosts a Lady in the Belmont Park Cemetery. This Lady is said to be the spirit of a Civil War widow who threw herself in the river. Every year during the winter months, she is seen walking in a white gown, sometimes with blood on it. Her cries can also be heard.

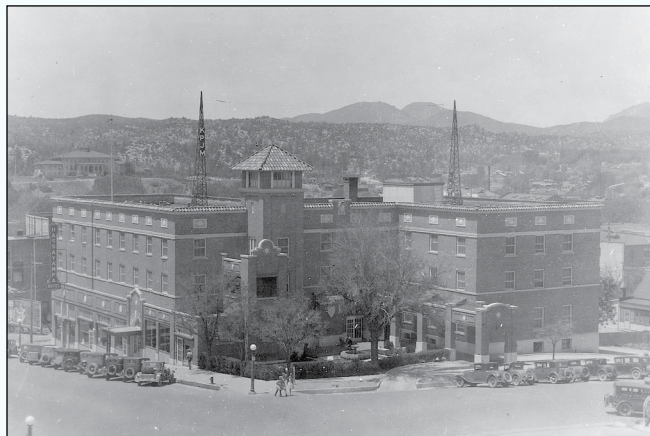


Cincinnati Music Hall—from Cincinnatiarts.org

The Cincinnati Music Hall is also said to be the home of a Lady in White, who apparently turns chair seats up and down. No one knows who she is, but

she may be connected to human remains found during various renovations throughout the years.

Our final ghost is Faith Summers. She was married on the square in Prescott, Arizona in 1927 and she and her husband were spending their wedding night in the Grand Balcony Suite 426 of the just opened Hassayampa Inn. Her husband went out to get cigarettes, but never returned. No one knows what happened to him, but after several days, Faith hung herself from the bell tower. She has been seen looking out of the balcony, and is sometimes encountered in the hallways, wearing a long pink nightgown. Be careful, she is known to show her displeasure by smacking things out of guests’ hands!



Historic photo of the Hassayampa Inn—from Hassayampainn.com

So these are some instances of the Woman in White here in the US. Check out some of these sites, or just keep your eyes open. You never know when you will encounter one!

THE ABNER GAINES HOUSE: GROUP RECAP

With most of our public overnight hunts, when it's done, someone either volunteers (or I gently coerce them) to write a recap for this very newsletter. With Gaines House/Tavern, Wendy hit on a brilliant idea; why don't several of us write our thoughts about the investigation? This way, it creates a fuller picture of what happened and each individual's opinions on what paranormal events did and didn't occur while we were there. Enjoy and let us know if you think Wendy was on to something and you'd like more of our ghost hunt recaps to take on this format.



Frank

I was the one who initiated contact with the City of Walton and made arrangements to go down and check the Abner Gaines House out before The Ghosts Of Ohio committed to a group investigation.

The property maintenance man met me at the Gaines House and offered me a brief tour. He basically said, "this place is definitely haunted" and then went on relate several experiences he had. One of the strangest was the time he was working on the outside of the building, and a visitor walked up, asking if they could get a drink of water. He said "sure", and went with the visitor up to the Gaines House's front door. Immediately after opening the door, the 2 men were greeted by a voice demanding they "Get out!". The voice was so loud that it was as if it was coming from right in front of the men. Except there was no one there and the house was empty. Needless to say, the visitor left without the water.

As I toured the house, the maintenance man pointed out some 'hot spots' and continued to mention the different kinds of activity he had experienced—from disembodied voices, footsteps to even an apparition of a little girl. He also said the police don't even respond to motion alarms anymore, they call him to go inside to see what's going on.

On the night of our investigation, the Gaines House docent let us in and said she was convinced the house was occupied by 3-6 spirits. She related all kinds of activity she had personally experienced as well. As far as the investigation itself, I admit that I thought it was a bit of a dud with nothing much happening, despite the heavy rain and thunderstorms that night, which really helped set the tone for the night.

Turns out there were paranormal prizes waiting for us on our recordings from that evening. I could not believe all the interesting evidence we collected—things that we didn't hear in real time: Voices, footsteps and more. I am anxiously awaiting the opportunity for us to go back to Gaines for another investigation.

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THE ABNER GAINES HOUSE: GROUP RECAP CONTINUED



Samantha

When it comes to anything paranormal, I take the stories I hear with a grain (or sometimes a *mound*) of salt, especially when a location has been featured on TV. In many cases clever editing can make literally anything seem spooky and unexplainable, potentially giving that location

the false moniker of being “haunted.” That’s what I was thinking when Frank first told us about the Gaines Tavern. It had been featured on an episode of *Ghost Hunters*, and Frank’s excitement about it was so palpable that I couldn’t help but be skeptical.

That being said, I think I can speak for everyone in the group when I say that *none* of us expected the Gaines Tavern to be the paranormal hotspot we discovered it to be. We experienced and recorded numerous inexplicable sounds; some of which were

audible to our naked ears during the investigation. For example, we all heard the sound of someone loudly clearing their throat from just outside a room in which we were sitting. And in another area, we clearly heard slow, creaking footsteps of someone walking in the attic, even though no one was up there. Incredibly, we also discovered numerous EVPs on our recordings, including voices, musical tones, and an assortment of unidentifiable squeals, whispers and breathing sounds. I can honestly say that, out of all the investigations I’ve been on, the Gaines Tavern produced the most aural/audio phenomena. It was incredible!

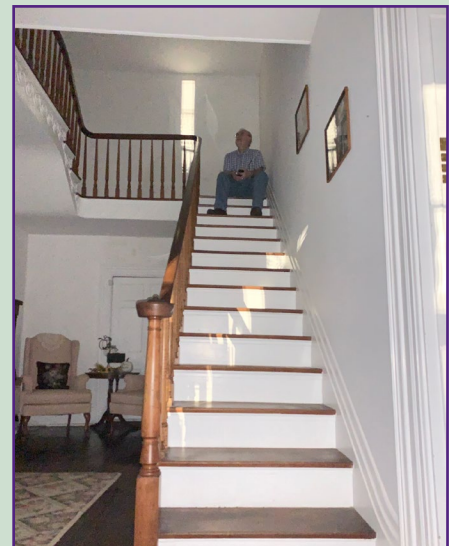
Fun side note: When I reviewed my recordings and discovered so many EVPs, I was fully prepared for some of them to be explained away by other members of the group. However, that’s not what happened. Instead, no one could explain them. The question we kept repeating: “What was *that*??!”



Mark

One of the common denominators of our investigative team in the Ghosts of Ohio is that we all enjoy experiencing the historical nature of many of our venues regardless of paranormal activity documentation. Gaines House is truly an historic and well-preserved home that fits this description. In researching the property, we found several old newspaper

articles that provided important context for past events. These long-forgotten news articles often provide enough clues to identify specific locations on a modern map using Google Earth as a reference tool.



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THE ABNER GAINES HOUSE: GROUP RECAP CONTINUED



Wendy

This turned out to be a very productive investigation. While nothing seemed to happen while we were there, other than the cat toys lighting up and Frank's mysterious light source, we found a bunch of stuff on review. One of the incidents at the Gaines House that I

wanted to try recreating was the story of the woman who set herself on fire in the orchard, then ran to the house, arriving at the kitchen door. I put on a floor-length dress and went out into the dark field next to the house. Turning on my recorder, I then ran as fast as I could toward the kitchen door. I tried it two more times. Upon review, the only thing my recorder picked up was me talking to the woman, asking questions, then huffing and puffing as I ran to the kitchen.

After that, I walked back into the house via the back door and was investigating the closet there as Jim and Frank were talking. I said to Jim 'check this out' as he turned to me, still talking to Frank. At that time I heard what sounded like a child giggling. So my 'check this out' turned into 'did you just hear that?' Everyone stood still but we didn't hear anything else. My recorder at that time does pick up Jim talking, and just beneath his voice is a sound, but we are unable to identify it.

The last interesting thing that happened was an audible noise. I had been sitting on the couch in the front parlor, next to the piano, playing some piano concertos by the Masters on my phone to entice the little girl to talk. I hoped my recorder had captured

something. Next, I moved to the 'tv room' and laid on the floor for some meditation. I then heard a chime, and turning my head to where Frank was sitting in the kitchen watching our video screens I said 'Frank, was that your phone?' No response. I then repeated it louder. He turned and looked at me but said nothing. In his defense, he did have the headphones on at the time.

Weeks later during our review meeting, Frank's phone went off, which we all heard. I had Jim play what I had caught on the recorder. It wasn't Frank's phone. It was the first 3 notes of Brahms's 'Lullaby'. Perhaps a response from the little girl? I'd like to think so.

Postscript to Wendy's account of hearing Brahms's Lullaby being played:

We recently confirmed with the Gaines House that while there is currently a music box in the house, it was not there during our investigation. Also, the music box does not play Lullaby.

*In fact, **nothing** in the house plays that tune.*



HOPPING ON DOWN TO LOVELAND

If you're one of our readers who have to read our entire newsletter as soon as it comes out (thank you!), you have a couple of days to grab your tickets and join me at the 2024 Frogman Festival in Loveland, Ohio, on Saturday, March 2nd.

This is the second year for the festival and if last year is any indication, this year's going to be hopping (see what we did there?). The day is filled with amazing speakers and even more amazing artists and vendors. Oh yeah, and our fearless leader will be there, too, speaking about his 24-year obsession with the Loveland Frogman and the timeline of sightings he's created. Tickets and more information about the Festival can be found [here](#).

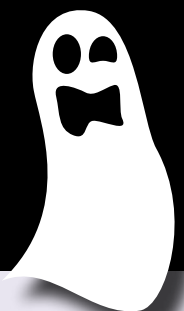
EQUIPMENT REVIEWS

Got a piece of paranormal equipment you've always wondered how it works? Does it really do what it's supposed to be doing? Or maybe you've created some paranormal equipment you'd like field tested? Either way, let us know because The Ghosts Of Ohio would love to help! Drop us a line at info@ghostsofohio.org with the subject line "Equipment" and we'll take it from there!



WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR GHOSTLY EXPERIENCES!

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!



FILLING UP OUR 2024 CALENDAR



We're not even through the first quarter of 2024 and our calendar is starting to fill up. The following are only the confirmed dates—much more are in the works. Also, while the following dates, times, and topics were current when this newsletter went to press, it is all subject to change, so please check with the individual location to be on the safe side. Additionally, we post any changes to all our social media accounts, so give us a Follow/Like to stay in the loop.

As always, unless an event is marked with a "\$", it is free and open to the public. But in all cases, seating may be limited, so it's always a good idea to check with the venue regarding the need to pre-register.

Saturday, March 2nd: 9:30 am—6:00 pm
Frogman Festival (\$)

Oasis Conference Center
 902 Loveland-Miamiville Road
 Loveland, OH 45140

[More information here](#)

Friday, March 8th @ 6:00 pm
Weird Ohio Road Trips presentation

Miami University: Middletown Regional Campus
 Verity Lodge
 4200 N. University Boulevard
 Middletown, OH 45042

[More information here](#)

Saturday, May 11th @ 11:00 am
Weird Ohio Road Trips presentation

Public Library of Steubenville and
 Jefferson County—Main Library
 407 South 4th Street
 Steubenville, OH 43952

Thursday, May 23rd @ 6:30 pm
Bigfoot In Ohio presentation

Dayton Metro Library—New Lebanon Branch
 715 W. Main Street
 New Lebanon, OH 45345

Thursday, June 20th—Sunday, June 23rd
Haunted America Conference (\$)

Lewis And Clark College:
 Benjamin Godfrey Campus
 5800 Godfrey Road
 Godfrey, IL 62035

[Tickets on sale January 8th](#)

Thursday, October 10th @ 6:00 pm
Creatures At The Ohio Border presentation

Tuscarawas County Public Library—Main Library
 171 Fair Avenue NW
 New Philadelphia, OH 44663

Saturday, October 19th @ 11:00 am
Ghosts & Legends of Defiance County presentation

Defiance Public Library
 320 Fort Street
 Defiance, OH 43512

Friday, December 6th—Sunday, December 8th
GalaxyCon Columbus (\$)

Greater Columbus Convention Center
 400 North High Street
 Columbus, OH 43215

[Tickets on sale](#)

Investigations & Consultations

The Ghosts Of Ohio are continuing to schedule investigations and consultations for 2024. 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>

Interact with The Ghosts Of Ohio

In addition to our website, here are a couple of places where you can find The Ghosts Of Ohio lurking online:

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 [TWITTER](#)

 [INSTAGRAM](#)

Administration

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