

Happy Halloween

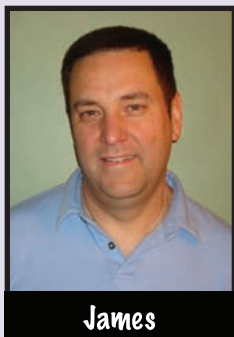
FROM THE GHOSTS OF OHIO!

OCTOBER 2014 NEWSLETTER



FROM THE SPOOKY DESK OF JAMES WILLIS:

...AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.



James

But first, happy Halloween! Oh yeah, and happy 12th anniversary to The Ghosts Of Ohio Newsletter! That's right, this very issue that you're reading marks the 12th anniversary of our newsletter.

Incredible, right?

Anyway, as many of you know, I decided to take this October off and cut way back on the number of presentations and public appearances I traditionally make (and don't panic, because The Ghosts and I are going to be back with a vengeance in 2015). Being able to spend this Halloween season focusing on my family and friends has really allowed me to relax and just soak in all the majesty that is fall in Ohio. And since most of my Halloweens past were spent running around all crazy-like, jacked up on Monster beverages, this year, I was able to really start practicing what I preach and look at things from new and different perspectives. That got me to thinking; what new and different things are going on in the world of the

paranormal that I could share with you, dear readers? And that's when it came to me: The Dyatlov Pass Incident!

For the uninitiated, the Dyatlov Pass Incident is a bizarre case that took place in 1959 in Russia's North Ural Mountains. What exactly happened remains a mystery to this day. What is known is that nine experienced ski hikers (yes, there is such a thing) died, some the result of bizarre, unexplained injuries. A few even had high levels of radiation on their clothing. The case files had been sealed by the Russian government for years and have now only recently been opened for examination. The files offer no clear explanation for the ski hikers' deaths.

Aside from the whole unexplained deaths, what first attracted me to the case was the fact that everything from a government cover-up/conspiracy and serial killers to UFOs and even a Yeti have had the finger of guilt pointed at them. Truth be told, there are more theories than answers to this case.

I originally mentioned the case at one of The Ghosts of Ohio's monthly meetings merely as an aside. But it wasn't long before the entire group was fascinated with the case and began seeking out more

information. Incredibly, while the case is still not very well known, it has spawned books, movies, and even something purporting to be a documentary. Talk about looking at things from different perspectives!

And what better way to help you all explore different perspectives than presenting the Dyatlov Pass Incident as the case appears in different forms? So within this newsletter, you will find reviews of a book, movie, and TV documentary, all claiming to have uncovered the truth about what happened back in 1959. Do I think one of them figured the whole thing out? I'm not saying! That's for each and every one of you to decide on your own. So read the reviews, maybe do some of your own research if you choose, and then let me know what conclusion you reach.

Until then, I'm off to try and snag a couple of Kit Kats from my daughter...I mean, Batgirl's Halloween treasure trove.

Cheers,

James A. Willis
Founder/Director

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!



Mark

BOOK REVIEW: DEAD MOUNTAIN

The Untold True Story of the Dyatlov Pass Incident

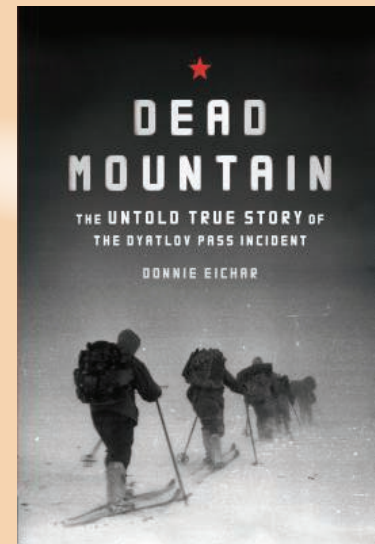
Author: Donnie Eichar
 ISBN: 978-1-4521-1274-9
 Publisher: Chronicle Books, San Francisco
 Copyright Date: 2013
 Author's Website Link to this Book:
<http://deadmountainbook.com/true-story>

Dead Mountain takes its reader on a harrowing historical journey set in January 1959 alongside a group of nine youthful college students. These experienced hikers challenged the icy cold depths of a Russian winter wilderness high in the northern Ural Mountains and died under bizarre circumstances. It has remained a profound mystery for over half a century. Official investigation records closed in May 1959 summarily state that an "unknown compelling force" caused nine experienced hikers to abruptly abandon their only shelter and flee in scattered groups into the dark subzero cold of a Russian winter storm without proper clothing, shoes, or any of their gear. A tenth hiker in the group, Yuri Yudin, had left his friends due to debilitating pain just prior to their final push toward Otorten Mountain. Yudin later lamented, "If I could ask God just one question, it would be what really happened to my friends that night?"

When search teams finally found the hikers' tent nearly a month later, they found gear, boots, food, and clothing set out and organized, as if the hikers had simply walked out a few minutes earlier. But, curious knife cuts in their precious canvas tent were later proven to have been made from the inside, revealing the sudden severity of events leading to escaping the only shelter they had high on a treeless,

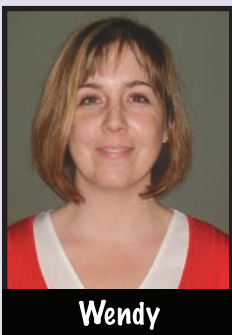
snow and windswept mountain pass. Deep snow and winter conditions impeded the search for the hikers' remains, delaying the recovery of their bodies for weeks to months. Autopsies revealed that while most of the hikers died of hypothermia, several others experienced major traumatic injuries caused by violent forces and death from internal hemorrhaging. Adding further to the mystery, radiological analysis showed above normal levels of radiation on the hiker's clothing. For decades, conjectured answers to the mysteries of the Dyatlov Pass Incident have ranged from attack by a Russian Yeti, classified Soviet-era space research, UFOs, attack by Mansi (a historically peaceful people), avalanche (which seems problematic, given the organized state of the tent when found), high winds (problematic for the same reason), armed men (no other tracks in the snow were found other than the nine hikers'), classified weapons testing, and many more theories.

Author Donnie Eichar delves into the deep mysteries of the Dyatlov Pass Incident, as it is known in Russia, traveling to the Sverdlovsk Region in 2012 to retrace in winter the same paths taken by the hikers, interview the few remaining witnesses with first-hand knowledge, including the only surviving hiker from the group (Yudin), and to study the historical records



released from secretive government archives. Eichar draws the reader into the story by interweaving chapters from the past, written in a historical literary style that brings the entire cast of characters in this drama to life, with chapters from his gripping personal experiences investigating the mystery in 2012. The story unfolds in parallel, with events in 1959 and 2012 blending in alternate succession and finally merging into a day-by-day account of what is known before their deaths and the secretive government-controlled investigation afterward. Eichar's fervent search for the truth will leave you turning page after page as you delve into the mystery to find an answer to a nearly incomprehensible event from long ago.

THE GHOSTS GO TO JAIL. PARAJAIL.



Wendy

It was about time for another Ghosts of Ohio adventure, so we packed up and headed out to the Licking County Jail, more informally known as Parajail. Located in Newark, Ohio, just east of Columbus, it is a beautiful building from the outside, with wonderful Victorian/Edwardian style architecture. But step inside and you are in a small jail, active until fairly recently. The cells are all in wonderful shape and you are still able to see the graffiti.

Parajail is much smaller in size than another notorious haunted prison, Mansfield Reformatory. The front part of the building houses what would have been the warden/jailor's quarters, along with the matron's ward which was added later when women and children were brought to the prison and needed to be kept separate from the male population.

(continued on page 4.)

There are several floors which housed the male inmates. The top floor, which has no windows and is extremely airless, housed the females and youth offenders. Down in the basement were what we would term “drunk cells.”

We arrived for a Friday night investigation on what must have been the hottest day of the year. We met at the Garlic Rose Eatery before heading to the jail to sign in and do a building tour. We learned about some of the tragedies that occurred here such as the lynching of a teenager and a woman who set herself on fire. Next, we split up into groups and began going through the building “old school” —no electronics, just handhelds and our senses. All of the areas are monitored on DVR camera, and Eric Glosser from United Paranormal Project was able to observe us via the monitors throughout the evening. He also scared the pants off us when announcing through the loudspeaker that we were going into lockdown!

Everyone seemed to have some sort of experience that night, especially with audible sounds. Several people heard the sound of a man clearing his throat. My group heard an odd scream growly noise that I have on recorder and still need to upload for further inspection. There were also some loud knockings. We repeatedly noted that there were only 11 of us in the building, and yet the noises were coming from areas we were not in, and that no one could get to without passing us. All in all very strange.

Up in the female ward, I had the experience of having the probe on my EMF meter tugged from my hand. This was followed by the feeling of someone standing next to me, and the sound of swooshing garments...as if someone was walking past me. In the cell where the teenager was lynched, I have another odd sound on my recorder that needs to be dissected.

As we ended our night, we stopped to chat with Eric about our experiences. Before we investigated, we had asked that we not be told where paranormal events were occurring, so that we were going in untainted. I told Eric about the tugging of the EMF meter, and I explained which cell it was, asking if that was where the one woman had tried to burn herself to death. He said it was not, but that they had recently had a rash of activity in that particular cell. I think we both appreciated that my experience was able to validate what Eric knew was already occurring without me having known about it before hand.



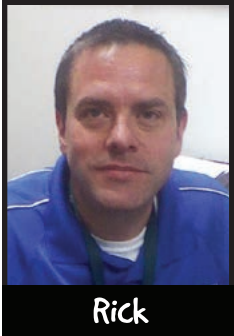
All in all, it was a good (though very hot) night of investigating. Eric and his group were fun and very knowledgeable about the jail and its inhabitants, both alive and dead. You too can do a ghost hunt at the Licking County Jail. Just head to www.parajail.com.



LICKING COUNTY JAIL



MOVIE REVIEW: DEVIL'S PASS



Rick

GENRE: Thriller/Horror

STARRING: Holly Gross, Matt Stokoe, Luke Albrigh, Ryan Hawley, and Gemma Atkinson.

DIRECTOR: Renny Harlin (*A Nightmare on Elm Street 4, Die Hard 2, Cliffhanger*)

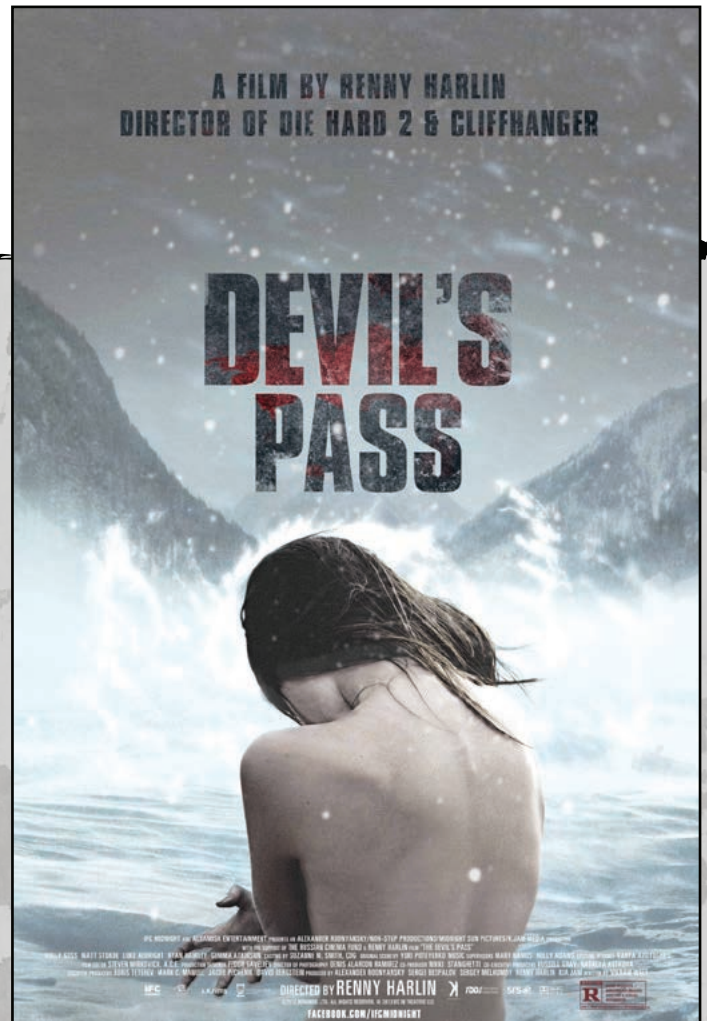
RATED: R

RUNNING TIME: 1 hour and 40 minutes

RELEASE DATE: August 23, 2013

AVAILABILITY: Streaming on Netflix or Rental

RATING: 1.5 out of 5 skulls



This film is based on a true event known as the “The Dyatlov Pass Incident.” This true event took place in Russia in 1959 in which a group of nine experienced hikers mysteriously disappeared while on a hiking expedition and were ultimately found dead under very bizarre circumstances. What happened to them is a mystery that has baffled investigators and researchers for decades. This film takes that true event and fast forwards to modern day in which a group of aspiring filmmakers pay a visit to the location to finally solve this 55-year-old mystery.

Our main characters are issued a grant to return to the site in the belief that they can uncover the truth of what happened at Dyatlov’s Pass. But what they find is more shocking than anything they could have imagined. Their trek is plagued by strange and terrifying events, all of which suggest that in spite of their desolate surroundings, they are not alone.

Ideas of human experimentation and time travel/teleportation are not off the table. Expect to see some wild, creepy and violent creatures running amuck, and yes, they just so happen to be able to teleport. How can you defend yourself against a threat that stands in front of you one moment, and disappears in the next?

This film is about as cliché and robotic as one could imagine. Each character delivers their lines with little emotion, sounding as if they’re reading directly from the script. These clueless morons insist on carrying out their mission despite the realization that danger is indeed imminent. We’re treated to a few jolting shots that, for a brief moment, leave us a little stunned. The brief glimpses and the shadowy shots work well to disguise the mediocre digital work, but there just aren’t enough of those moments to wrap on an impressive note.

Devil’s Pass isn’t great and but it isn’t revoltingly awful either. It’s got a few redeeming moments, but in the end it is The Blair Witch Project meets Bobo from *Finding Bigfoot* on the Animal Planet.

TV SPECIAL REVIEW: RUSSIAN YETI: THE KILLER LIVES



Samantha

In 1959, nine college friends embarked on a mountaineering expedition in the remote Ural Mountains of western Russia. None of them made it home alive. The

translator. Together, they conduct numerous interviews, examine all hard evidence (including previously classified documents), and attempt to retrace the steps the hikers took in an effort to determine what may have happened.

After the lowdown on the basic mysteries of the case, the documentary didn't waste any time showing viewers the grisly photographs of the crime scene, including

force." Mike's response to this finding was, in my opinion, priceless: "What the hell is a 'compelling natural force'?"

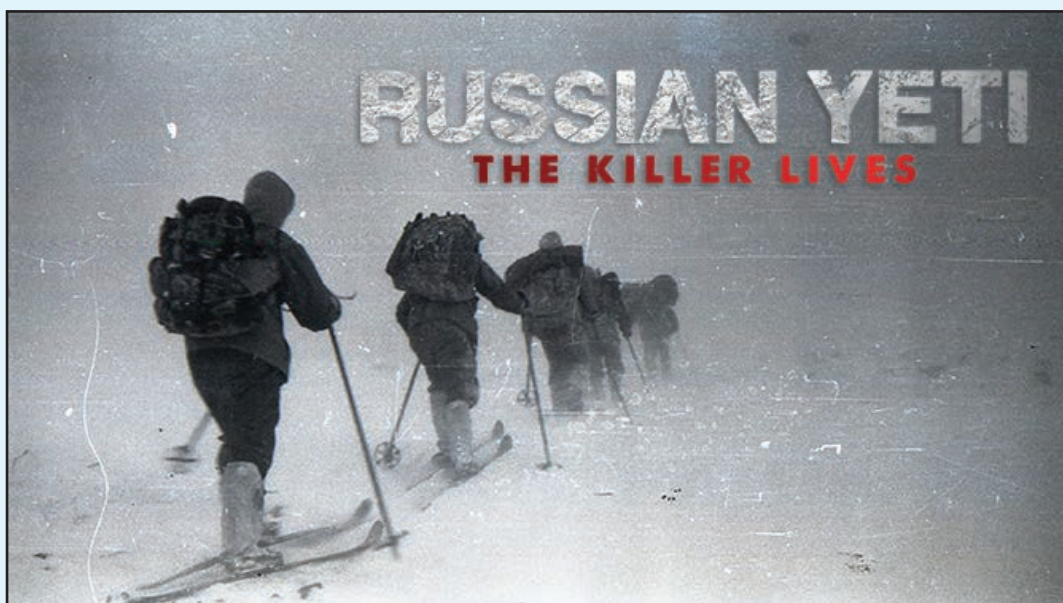
Photographs of the ravaged campsite only deepened the mystery. Despite the subzero temperatures, the hikers abandoned everything in their tent, including their winter coats and boots. They had also cut (from the inside) what seem to be lookout slits in the side of the tent that faced the

evidence left behind—photographs, footprints, a destroyed campsite, and the hikers' damaged bodies—seems to suggest that something truly horrific happened, giving rise to a whole host of conspiracy theories. Was the government involved? Or extraterrestrials? Or Bigfoot, otherwise known as the Yeti? This Discovery Channel special sought to uncover the truth behind what is now historically known as "The Dyatlov Incident."

Let me begin my review by stating that I have not yet read any books or conducted any of my own research into the details of this case. I had

originally heard about it at one of our group meetings, and was excited to see that the Discovery Channel was airing a two-hour documentary on the subject. It's an incredibly fascinating mystery, and it's one that I hope to read more about in the near future. For now, however, my knowledge of the case is limited to what I saw on television June 1st, 2014. In other words, take it with a grain of salt—or a mound, if you prefer.

In January 2014, American Mike Libecki and a film crew traveled to Russia to investigate the Dyatlov Incident. Mike is a "world-class climber and explorer" for National Geographic with over 45 expeditions under his belt. After learning about the case and the mysteries surrounding it, he became obsessed with finding the truth out of empathy for the hikers. With him is Maria Klenokova, a Russian journalist as well as Mike's



the various states of injury the frozen bodies were in. The hikers were found within a mile radius of their campsite. Two were found wearing only their underwear at the edge of the forest under a tree, evidence showing that they may have tried climbing to safety. Three others were found facedown along the mountain slope between their tent and the forest, evidence suggesting that they had defensive wounds and that they'd been running. The remaining four hikers were found half a mile away in the forest two months later, buried under four feet of snow. They were partially clothed and huddled together as though they'd been hiding (and, I would add, probably trying to keep warm). They had suffered crushed ribs, internal injuries, a fractured skull, and one of them was missing its eyes and tongue. A Soviet pathologist reported that no human could have inflicted such severe injuries and that they all died due to a "compelling natural

forest. What were they watching for? There was also a larger cut that seemed to be an escape hole, as though they needed to cut their way out. In an interview with one of the last living eyewitnesses to the crime scene, it was revealed that a strange set of large footprints was near the tent, but that this fact was omitted from the original report. (Mike & Maria found a photo of these prints in a previously classified file.) Another interesting omission was revealed by a tenth hiker who survived because he had taken ill early in the expedition and had to turn back. He'd been called in to identify the deceased hikers' belongings, and there was one item he couldn't place: a military boot cover. According to him, it didn't belong to any of the hikers, so where did it come from? Was there a military presence before the hikers were even found?

(continued on page 7.)

TV SPECIAL REVIEW: RUSSIAN YETI: THE KILLER LIVES (CONT.)

A government cover-up is one of the conspiracy theories, and I have to admit that some of the evidence is compelling. In addition to the boot cover and omissions in official reports, Mike and Maria uncovered a previously classified document regarding a government-run Yeti expedition developed in 1958 called the "Snowman Commission." Its purpose was to find and capture a living Yeti. However, no findings were ever released, and the Commission was shut down in January of 1959—around the same time the hikers went missing. This seems more than coincidental to me, especially when a hiker's journal included the statement, "Now we know the Snowman exists." Is it possible that they may have been secretly working for the government? Did they actually find a Yeti in those mountains?

More evidence left by the hikers suggests that they may have encountered something strange, even before the fateful night they were killed. Throughout their expedition, they took photos as anyone else would do while on vacation. They took pictures of each other, of the landscape, and of interesting things along the way, including (forebodingly) warning signs tacked to trees by an indigenous tribe in the mountains called the Mansi. Supposedly, the hikers encountered the Mansi and were warned against going to the "Mountain of the Dead." The hikers disregarded the warning and continued on. The day before they died, their photos took an interesting turn. Instead of taking pictures of themselves and their journey, they focused on the forest and trees. One, in particular, stood out from the rest. It was taken on a path in the woods, and although the photo was blurry, a large, dark humanoid figure stood in their path, made clearer by all of the white snow surrounding it. Mike and Maria discovered that this photo was unaltered from its negative, so it appears to be a genuine photograph. What was that figure in the woods? Was it stalking them, or just curious? Whatever it was, this photo was taken in such a hurry that the photographer had no time to focus the camera. One other photo – the very last one the hikers took – stands out as well. It's extremely blurry, but seems to be dark except for a couple of bright spots or streaks. What were they trying to take a picture of? Was it taken at the moment when all hell broke loose?

In light of all of this evidence, Mike and Maria started to wonder if the Yeti really does exist. There have been thousands of reported sightings in the Siberian wilderness. They interviewed some eyewitnesses, spoke to Yeti/Bigfoot experts, and even spoke with a few of the Mansi people to get a better understanding of the creature. The eyewitnesses shared photos of footprints and video footage that they claim is a Yeti. Yeti experts showed Mike and Maria castings of the creature's footprints and said that the Yeti likes to eat soft flesh, like tongues and eyes. It has the strength to tear apart a bear with its hands. A Mansi woman described what her people call a "Menk" as the forest giant, measuring two to three meters high. Mansi children and adults have mysteriously disappeared and dead deer have been found with their tongues missing, all blamed on the Menk. She also said that it makes a "whistle-like noise" that is unlike any other known creature. Armed with all of this information, could Mike and Maria possibly find a Yeti themselves?

Unfortunately, this is where the documentary gets absolutely ridiculous. Mike decides that they should track down a Yeti to find out once and for all if it exists. His idea is to set up camp (and by this, I mean a simple tent) in a cave in the remote Kemerovo region, where many sightings have been reported. The cave supposedly contains evidence that a Yeti lives there. Here are Mike's exact words: "As crazy as it sounds, the only real way to find out if a Yeti's slept there was to camp in the cave and wait for him." Um, Mike? Not true. Maybe you could just set up some cameras to record activity and go someplace safe? There could be a Yeti or even a bear in that cave that would be more than happy to rip your face off for invading its space! Even the camera crew left for a safer spot! Ugh. Anyway, the only thing that happened was Mike and Maria hearing the whistling noise that the Yeti is known for. After hearing it a few times, they freaked out and fled the cave for the safety of wherever the camera crew was staying.

Mike's next bright idea came after Maria's research revealed that although there have been thousands of sightings, the Yeti has rarely attacked anyone—only when cornered or provoked. One of the conspiracy theories they uncovered involves the last photo taken by the

hikers—the one with the supposed bright lights in the night sky. Perhaps the military was testing missiles, and the bright lights and noise startled the Yeti into attacking the people who were in its territory. If you haven't guessed already, Mike decided to test this theory. He, Maria, and an armed guard (a guy with a shotgun) set up camp (again, a tent) on the exact spot where the hikers had set up their camp in 1959. They hung a dead pig in a tree (as an offering?), and Mike set off a series of flares to draw the Yeti out. When they started hearing sounds in the forest, Mike dove in, with Maria and shotgun-guy in tow. Although the pig remained untouched, they did encounter a dead, bleeding deer, and they heard the whistling Yeti noise getting closer. They wound up fleeing the scene after shotgun-guy decided to run.

After this experiment Mike and Maria brought their investigation to an end, which begs the question, "Does the Yeti exist?" Maria's answer: "I'm not sure what to think." Mike's answer: "I believe that it's possible a Yeti exists." As for my opinion, I'm afraid I've got to agree with Mike. There have been too many sightings and unidentifiable pieces of evidence to say that the Yeti (or Bigfoot) doesn't exist. I prefer to keep my mind open on the subject.

As for what happened in the Dyatlov Incident, it's hard to come to a definitive conclusion based on this documentary. On one hand, it reveals a lot of evidence that makes a compelling case for the government cover-up theorists as well as Yeti believers. On the other hand, however, the program went completely over the top with sensationalism. Did Mike really need to pull the whole Zak Bagans act by setting up a flimsy tent in a Yeti cave or trying to make the Yeti attack by setting off flares? Did the program have to constantly show viewers phony "home videos" of the hikers' experiences on their expedition, including their terror at an unseen attacker? The answer is undeniably no. While sensationalism may boost ratings, it damages credibility. Personally, I was fascinated by the hard evidence and interviews included in the program, not the scare factor. Unfortunately, it's the sensational junk that makes me doubt everything else I saw. I'll definitely have to do some of my own research about the Dyatlov Incident. As for this documentary, pass the salt, please...

SPOOKY READS FOR TEENS

By Samantha Nicholson



The Murmurings

by Carly Anne West

Everyone believes Sophie's older sister Nell committed suicide because she heard voices in her head. But what kind of suicide involved hanging upside down from a tree by your toe? Now, Sophie is hearing the "murmurings," and she's terrified of what it could mean. Is she going crazy, or is it something supernatural?



Jackaby

by William Ritter

It's 1892 and Abigail Rook has just arrived by ship to New England. She's always longed for adventure like her paleontologist father, and she hopes to find it in America. However, with her money running low, her first "adventure" is finding work. After being turned down by nearly everyone, she finds a notice for someone seeking an assistant. His name is R.F. Jackaby, and his business is policing the supernatural creatures that no one believes exist. If you love the quirkiness of Doctor Who and Sherlock, then this is for you!



Shadowlands

by Kate Brian

After surviving an attack by a notorious serial killer, Rory Miller and her family are placed into Witness Protection until the killer can be caught. However, there's something strange about their new hometown. People disappear and no one seems to remember them, a mysterious fog settles over the town that is both fascinating and frightening, and a group of teenagers has taken an immediate interest in Rory, who is used to being overlooked as a nerdy wallflower. It's not only irritating, it's frustrating, and Rory's determined to get to the bottom of it. Unfortunately, the truth is darker and bleaker than she can imagine.



Anna Dressed in Blood

by Kendare Blake

17-year-old Cas Lowood comes from a long line of ghost hunters—in the literal sense. While most ghosts are harmless, some of them become dangerous to the living. It's Cas' job to travel the world, eliminating these threats through the use of a special blade that has been passed down through his family for generations.

He hopes to one-day face whatever evil murdered his father, but until then, he seeks the biggest, baddest spirits to eliminate. His current target: Anna Dressed in Blood, whose head was nearly cut off on prom night in 1958, staining her white dress with her own blood. The urban legend says that she kills anyone who dares to enter her old house. With the help of his witch mom and a few newfound friends, he will face his biggest challenge yet.

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!

Dalton Cemetery (Dalton / Wayne county)

Hell House (Lockbourne / Franklin county)

Stage's Pond (Ashville / Pickaway county)

Witch's Pyramid (Ridgeway / Hardin county)

Zombie Land (Ohio-PA border / Mahoning county [OH])



COMING IN THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Christmas Eve With A Ghost

Merry Scary Holiday Wishes
From The Ghosts Of Ohio



Investigations & Consultations

The Ghosts of Ohio are still actively scheduling investigations for 2014. 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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<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Columbus-OH/The-Ghosts-of-Ohio/60704381381?ref=mf>



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<http://twitter.com/ghostsofohio>

Administration

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