

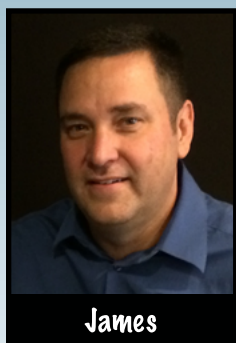


The ghosts of Ohio[®] Newsletter

Volume 17 Issue 1

www.ghostsofohio.org

17 YEARS LATER, WE'RE STILL LOOKING BACK



James

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

So yeah, this issue is the first in Volume 17, which means we've been cranking out this newsletter to you for 17 years. Crazy, right?

Every year, when this anniversary rolls around, we inevitably find ourselves looking back to the things we've done, not only in this newsletter, but within our organization, as well. You'll see the results of all that looking back in this newsletter as well as in upcoming editions.

For example, we've been having a lot of discussions within The Ghosts of Ohio as to what makes us tick. Things like what are we chasing after, what inspired us to go down such a dark and twisted path, and even what do we do when we need a break? To start to answer some of those questions, this newsletter is filled with articles about things that inspire us, including one about family superstitions and traditions that have been passed down through one of our team member's family. And we've even included a few articles about what we like to do for fun—ghost tours! I know, you're shocked, right? Well, then how about this: Since so many members of The Ghosts of Ohio like to read for fun, for the first time ever, this newsletter includes the first chapter of a work of fiction that's a throwback to the old pulp fiction magazines, written by one of our own!

And of course, no Halloween edition of The Ghosts of Ohio Newsletter would be complete without a ghostly look back, in photo collage form, of all the cool places we went and all the amazing people we got to hang out with, albeit briefly, on our annual Fall Tour.

But the best part of looking back was seeing how we could use the past to help guide our future. We've recently started incorporating new protocols and procedures into our investigations and have even started conducting experiments to see if we can make ourselves more "open" to having a paranormal experience. And initial results have been quite promising! But that, as they say, is another story for another newsletter!

OK, down to the basement I go. If I learned anything from watching *The Munsters*, it was that all the best experiments have to be done in the basement.

Cheers,

James A. Willis
Founder/Director



DISNEYLAND'S HAUNTED MANSION RIDE TURNS 50



Darrin

This past August 9th marked a very important event—the 50th anniversary of the Haunted Mansion ride at Disneyland. I am sure everyone knows

about this ride if not because of the actual ride at the park then for the movie starring Eddie Murphy that came out in theaters in 2003. Although I have to say I am not the biggest fan of the movie, I am a huge fan of the ride. It is not like the typical haunts you see pop up around this time of year, but you would not expect that type of attraction at Disneyland. It is, however, spooky in spots and full of fun and excitement. From the moment it opened, it was a very popular ride, it set a single day attendance record one week after opening. It was so popular that it was an “E” ticket attraction, which was reserved for only the most popular rides in the park.

Although the ride has been so popular, it had a long, troubled start. When



concepts were started for Disneyland in 1953, a ghost house was part of the plans. The “Old House on a Hill,” as it was originally referred to, was shown on a dead end off of Main Street at the top of a hill overlooking a turn-of-the-century Midwestern town. That plan was eventually scraped for other lands. After the eventual success of the park, Walt Disney decided to expand the park and in that expansion would be his ghost house.

Designs for the park expansion started in 1957 and in 1958, Walt went public with his ideas and his Haunted House was officially part of it. However, because of challenges with the story, look and feel of the attraction, it would take several years before anything would happen. In 1961, construction began on the New Orleans Square expansion, this would be the area

that the Haunted House would be in. By 1963, the exterior of the house was complete but that is as far as things would go for several more years. Disney had committed to creating four attractions for the 1964-65 New York World’s Fair. Until those were completed, no further work would be done.

After the fair was over, work started again on the mansion. Thanks to advances like audio animatronics that were made for the World’s Fair attractions, new possibilities opened up to the imagineers with what could be done. When Walt Disney passed away in 1966 another attraction redesign began. It took several more years, but in August of 1969, the Haunted Mansion was finally ready to open.

Because the Haunted Mansion was so popular, the attraction has been a part of every new park from their opening day. Over the years, it has gained a cult-like following which is why this past August 9th was such an important event.

HAUNTED ROAD TRIPS: INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA



Wendy

While planning a visit to a friend in Lafayette, IN, the question came up, "What do you want to do while you are out here?" Of course, my first thought was to

look for some type of ghost walk. I didn't find any in Lafayette, but did find one in Indianapolis, just 1 hour away, so I booked it. On that Saturday night, we made the trip down to meet our guide at the Athenaeum building downtown for the Chilling Chatham Arch Lockerbie Ghost Walk.

Our tour guide was Michael Kobrowski, who along with his wife Nicole, has been giving ghost walks for over 10 years. Nicole has written many books on Indiana hauntings, and they created their walks because of their interest in the history of the buildings in Indianapolis. So, like *The Ghosts of Ohio*, they like their haunts with history, and they definitely back that up with this tour.

As we moved from building to building, Michael provided us with pictures of the people and newspaper clippings for several of the reported hauntings. We started our walking tour inside the building where we met, the Athenaeum Building, which was originally called *Das Deutsche Haus*. During World War I, the building was renamed the Athenaeum due to anti-German sentiment. Currently it houses the YMCA, the Rathskeller Restaurant, which is the oldest continually operating restaurant in

Indianapolis, and the Athenaeum Theatre.

One side of the building houses the YMCA, and the other side houses the Rathskeller on the ground floor, rentable conference/party rooms on the second floor and the Athenaeum Theatre on the third floor. The second floor of the building has many different rooms, one of which was formerly used by a medical school to teach dissection of human bodies. Unfortunately, those bodies were provided by grave robbers, until that was outlawed in the early 1900s. That may explain the apparition of a young man, and the cold spot and feeling of dread around the stage area of the room. Downstairs in the Rathskeller, workers who come in early in the morning sometimes hear the voices of people talking and singing in German.

From the Athenaeum building we moved down the street and around the block to a building now owned by the Salvation Army. In the corner of the building, a young German woman who came here to go to medical school kept her offices alongside her living quarters. Dr. Knabe worked with developing rabies vaccines until she was murdered on October 24,



Athenaeum Theatre

1911. Her ghost was seen and heard almost immediately. Neighbors in the building began hearing a woman's screams coming from her apartment within a few weeks of her death. Acquaintances who did not know of her death saw a person they believed to be her in that area and were curious as to why she didn't acknowledge them when they waved or called out to her. Michael showed us pictures of her, along with news articles about the crime and the court case, which took until early 1913 to prosecute. (Not telling whodunnit; go take the tour!)

Moving along we stopped at the Old National Centre, located at the back of

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HAUNTED ROAD TRIPS: INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA continued

the Murat Shriners Temple. Here we heard the story of Elias Jacoby, who was one of the original Potentates of the Shrine. In December 1935, he walked home to take a break before a performance that was happening in the evening in the Egyptian Room. While at home he had a heart attack and died. His spirit has been seen in and around the Egyptian Room ever since, and his portrait there has been seen by some people to change from an older man to a younger man. In the basement, tables and chairs have been found to stack themselves—table on top of table, with chairs shoved in between, truly a startling sight to the employees that encountered it!

The tour continued to several other stops, including the Real Silk Mill (now artists' lofts) and the St. Joseph's Brewery, which originally opened in 1880 as a Catholic Church. Here a priestly ghost was seen during



St. Joseph's Brewery

showings by a local realtor sometime in the 1970s, 30 years after the church had closed. The realtor who witnessed it saw the priest's lips moving as he soundlessly read from a book on a pulpit. He did note that the priest had no eyes. Needless to say, about a month later, a different realtor was showing that building! St. Joseph's current incarnation as a brewery began around 5 years ago and still has lots of activity.

The tour ended on Lockerbie street, where the street itself is still stone and sports the side lanes for horse and buggy pull offs to the mounting blocks at the street. I won't go into any more of the ghost stories, you will have to take the tour yourself to hear all the details of not only the history of these beautiful buildings, but also the



Murat Shriners Temple

hauntings. Michael was a good tour guide, but this is a long tour, topping out at 2 hours. There is a lot of standing and then walking (1.5 miles), and no breaks to use a bathroom or get water, so be forewarned. I think the tour could be shortened by about a half hour for the comfort of the guests, or, after the Athenaeum building allowing a short break at the gas station to use the bathrooms and get water, etc. Children under 10 are not permitted on these tours, not because of ghosts, but because they would not be able to stand still for as long as you do at some of these stops. Even the adults were constantly shifting and leaning against things. But learning the history of some of these buildings is worth a little discomfort for me and getting ghosts on top of it is just icing on the cake!

For more information on this and other ghost tours, along with available ghost hunts, see www.unseenpress.com

SECRET SYNCHRONICITY

The following is a work of fiction. All characters and incidents are products of the author's imagination and any resemblance to actual people or events is coincidental or fictionalized.



Mark

CHAPTER ONE: Sequence Initiation

Deftly typing the next command sequence into the keyboard as he had

countless times before now, Mark looked out at the shimmering metallic craft on the darkened laboratory floor below him. Showing no sign of age or physical deterioration, the spacecraft could be new or a thousand years old. The test chamber, built deep underground for this specific project, wrapped itself around the 10-meter diameter saucer like a glittering tapestry ornamented with glowing instruments and sensors. Hitting the return key, seven robotic systems mounted onto circular tracks around the craft all engaged their respective programs and servo-motors, ready for their final start cue. In the darkened command chamber, several scientists entered their own instructions into various workstations preparing for the massive data streams to follow. Overhead, a computer-generated voice announced the automated test sequence.

“Test Sequence India-Zulu 49 now cued for execution. Commencing countdown. 10...9...8...,” spoke the computer with calm authority.

Leaning back in the console chair, Mark wondered how the saucer would respond to this new set of

interactive tests. Middle-aged now, he had worked on this incredible project nearly his entire career. Though originally constructed by an earlier generation to contain and study a damaged spacecraft retrieved in 1947, Mark had been part of an exclusive team who upgraded this unique underground laboratory solely to study this sealed and seemingly undamaged saucer—retrieved from the ocean depths decades earlier. As heir-apparent mentored by an earlier generation of brilliant engineers, Mark became an ardent hands-on experimentalist deeply focused on unlocking this alien spacecraft’s secrets.

Recently, a team of linguists working in the language of symbolic mathematics had determined something new. Alien hieroglyphic symbols adorning a panel near the only perceptible door to the craft seemed to point to quantum physics and entangled-photons associated with five optical ports deemed to be sensors on the saucer. An optical lock requiring an optical key perhaps. Five of the track-mounted robots moved to precisely aim their highly controlled quantum-entangled laser beam projectors at the five saucer sensors, as the computer-automated voice concluded,



“...3...2...1,
Sequence Initiation Start.”

Five human-visible alignment lasers, emerald green in color, illuminated the craft’s sensor ports, initiating a rapidly shifting appearance in the mysterious metallic hull. It reminded Mark of how alien-like cuttlefish can rapidly change their color appearance in the blink of an eye. Responding to the injected photon codes, bright blue vertical lines suddenly appeared on the exterior hull and began rotating clockwise, slowly at first, then faster and faster. Other robots moved hypnotically around the craft, recording every aspect of this new reaction with specialized sensors crafted for this purpose.

“5 terabytes....10 terabytes,” one of the scientists called out, soon followed by another echoing “50% memory...75% memory... 100% maximum storage at 50 terabytes. Commencing shutdown!”

Immediately following the shutdown of the beam projection lasers, the saucer color shifted to angry red and flashed momentarily before resuming its normal shimmering metallic appearance as though

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SECRET SYNCHRONICITY *continued*

nothing had happened. “Wrong code. This time,” thought Mark, already studying layers of mathematical equations on an iPad defining the current experimental parameters. All of the robots began moving back to their original starting locations, preparing for the next test sequence.

“Excuse us, Dr., but we need to have a word with you,” said a new male voice from near the entry door to the command center. Without having to turn his head, Mark knew exactly who this speaker was and precisely how he and his companion were dressed. Dark black suites, crisply pressed, but probably not wearing their sunglasses this far underground, but you never knew. These were the Men in Black who oversaw all levels of the project, and they demanded your attention whenever they spoke. But Mark had long ago learned, from his slightly rebellious mentors, that a state of quiet detente existed between the MIB and the scientific minds they depended upon to solve their unique challenges.

“Can it wait an hour? We have 5 additional test sequences cued up and ready to go as soon as we complete the 50 terabyte downloads from run-time memory,” said Mark.

“No, I’m afraid it cannot wait. We have a problem,” the voice commented. No one else in the control room said a word or even looked at the dark-clothed visitors.

“OK. Paul, please take over and proceed with the next photon lock engagement sequence. I’ll be back as soon as I can,” sighed Mark, not wanting to leave, but really having no choice. Handing off the tablet to

his colleague, Mark turned and followed the MIB into the adjacent conference room. A solid, heavy door quietly slid out of the wall and securely sealed the room from all outside ears.

“What’s the problem?” Mark asked, taking a seat at the sleek conference table.

Opening a briefcase, one of the MIB took out a black-covered book featuring a giant basket built as an office building on its cover.

“You’re problem is a giant basket?” Mark humorously quipped. Their only reaction, executed in near unison, was the slight arching of their right eyebrows. It was so hard to get these guys to laugh.

“No, our problem is page 72,” they flatly replied, opening the book to that page.

“Oh, I see. Well, that is interesting. In all this time, no one has ever gotten this close to the truth hidden in plain sight,” noted Mark.

“Precisely,” stated the second MIB. Deep conversation was clearly not his forte.

“Well, what do you need from me?” asked Mark. “This is really your area of expertise, normally.”

“Simple. We want you to meet one of the contributing authors of this book who directs a paranormal investigation group. His name is James. We want you to find out what he really knows, or thinks he knows. We have had him under surveillance for quite some time now,” spoke the first man in black. Not surprising, thought Mark.

“Arrangements have been made for you to meet him at your old Freshman dormitory in Oxford before it is torn down,” said the second man in black, sliding a document with instructions across the table. Now it was Mark’s turn to be surprised.

“Umm... OK, but what am I supposed to do?” asked Mark.

“Get to know him, get to know his investigative group, become a solid member of his team, and keep us informed of what they know. And how they know,” said the principal MIB, standing up and closing up his briefcase preparing to leave.

“I’m really not sure about all this,” replied Mark, “but I see your dilemma. And I don’t think this James person would likely tell you anything relevant, if you just showed up knocking at his front door. Let me think about this further,” said Mark, ending the conversation for now and stepping back into the control room deep in thought.

**COMING IN
THE DECEMBER
NEWSLETTER**

**Chapter Two:
Backstage**

MY FAMILY'S SUPERSTITIONS



Josh

Whenever summer's over and fall season arrives, I always get excited! Cooler weather, football, bonfires, and, of course, everything that goes along with Halloween! What isn't there to be excited for right?

I was having this almost exact talk with a co-worker today when superstitions were mentioned. I was instantly taken back to my childhood and hearing many various ones. I spent countless hours sitting around kitchen tables, front porches, and fires just listening to stories. My family loves to sit and talk, as long as we have coffee and some snacks, life is good! As odd as some may seem, I embrace it and try to carry some of them on with me today. Some of these superstitions have quickly become almost tradition-like. Although, I think some of them were told to me to keep me out of trouble and from aggravating my elders.

Before I go any further, let me paint the picture of where my family calls home: Hitchens, Kentucky, a small coal mining community. Today, the main road (or holler for those of us from Kentucky) is called Coal Camp Rd. Only one way in and out. Back when my grandparents were kids, the coal company owned everything including the houses. In fact., they were more like cabins. Eventually the families were allowed to purchase them and the land by payroll deduction. There was also a tram road that ran parallel with the town that set above it. At the entrance of the road was a company store. Workers could run a tab and pay it at the beginning of each month. Also, there was a community well where water had to be fetched in buckets. For recreation, men bred beagles and would fox hunt on the weekends. Most of the women had a homemakers club which would include making crafts and quilts. There wasn't much extra money so clothes and toys for the children were usually part of the crafts. Though religion was very important at this time, a lot of superstitions had been passed down. Nowadays, some of these might seem downright silly, but back then, the belief in these were very, very real. Even with time quickly passing and most of the community long forgotten, the superstition and lore still lives on. My aunt Bernice and grandparents come to mind first. I've heard many of these firsthand from them and a few they even swear by.



Never go out a different door than you came in or bad luck will follow you. I still do my best to abide by this one today.



Hanging a horseshoe over a door or fireplace open end up will bring good luck. Ask my wife Sarah and she will tell you how adamant I was about this one. Our horseshoe is from Churchill Downs and is attached to a bourbon barrel stave. Not sure how much more good luck that brings but hey it looks awesome!



Never leave your shoes pointing the same direction at your bedside, it's believed that "spirits" use the direction of the pointing shoes to track you down in bed. Sounds spooky enough and here people thought I was just unorganized!



Never rock an empty rocking chair or leave a rocking chair rocking. Many different beliefs on this, but I was always told not to rock an empty rocking chair because it welcomes

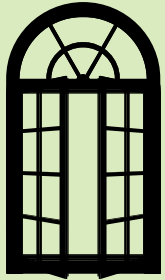
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MY FAMILY'S SUPERSTITIONS CONTINUED

unwanted spirits into the house. As many times as "unwanted spirits" were talked about in my household, it's a wonder I became fascinated with the paranormal, right?



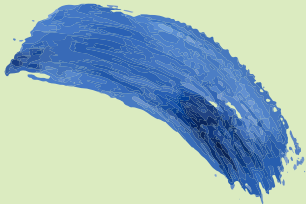
My grandpa remembers being told as a child to put an apple in his armpit until it's soft. Then you eat it and find true love! Sounds crazy I know, but it had to work for someone. Things like these just don't start up on their own.



Cover all the mirrors and open the doors and windows in the house when someone dies, it's believed to help the spirit leave this earth and move on. It's always such a somber sight to see in person. But it is amazing what families do for their loved ones even as they leave this world.



A dog howling outside of your window means a death is coming soon, especially if you chase the dog off and he comes back and howls again. Again, just sounds creepy.



Painting your porch ceiling Haint Blue to ward off evil spirits. This one is an old Deep South one that even to this day most "modern" homes down south still stick to it. Say what you will, but it's still around!

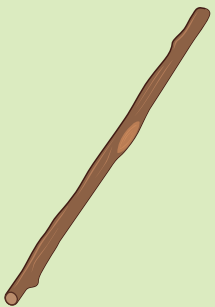


When it thunders and lightnings in February, that same date in May will bring a frost. I was forbidden to plant anything until June at the earliest.



Put your hand over your mouth when you yawn to keep evil out of your soul. Not only is it polite, it also keeps the devil out.

As I close, I'd like to remember all of my family members who are no longer with us. Although you might be gone from this world, a little piece still lives on in each of these. Some of my happiest memories from just from listening.



Measure a kid who has asthma with a sourwood stick. Hide or bury the stick. When the child outgrows the stick, the asthma will be gone. My uncle Dewey actually did this when I was a baby. I like to think he used a pretty big stick, probably a branch, but as I got older, my asthma did subside. My grandpa swears it works; he recounts seeing this firsthand.



SPIRITS APLENTY AT BUFFALO TRACE



Josh

Bourbon. One of the most interesting and fascinating things to come out of our country. It has a much-debated start as far as the who and when's are concerned. It

has played a significant part in almost every early American war. Prohibition tried to kill it and yet it rebounded. The late 70s and early 80s again almost destroyed the industry. Young people didn't want to drink bourbon. Vodka, gin, and rum became the dominant players of the day. Bourbon was thought to be an old man's drink. Yet somehow, somehow, bourbon survived and not only that—it's thriving! Right now in the state of Kentucky (where 95% of it's produced), they have more barrels aging in the warehouses than they actually have living people! Another fun fact for you, the Bottled in Bond Act of 1897 was the first consumer protection law of its kind and helped lead to the Pure Food and Drug Act. If you haven't noticed by now, this thing called "bourbon" really excites me. After all, I come from a family of moonshiners and bootleggers! And you can't have good bourbon with your shine or white dog. So pour yourself a nice glass and get comfortable because I want to tell you about another "spirit" that's still at Buffalo Trace. Myself, along with my wife and two of our best friends had the chance to tour Buffalo Trace after dark and it was awesome!!

Right on the banks of the Kentucky River sits Buffalo Trace. It's one of, if not the oldest, continuously operated



distilleries in the USA. This place has survived just about everything and anything. They produce some of the most sought after brands as well as having some of the most well-known and influential men in the bourbon business working there. One of them being Colonel Albert Bacon Blanton. He started to work at the distillery at the age of 16 and by the time he was 24, he was the CEO. Blanton lead the distillery through the Great Depression, prohibition, war, and the biggest expansion. So keep that in mind later. This guy was very hands on and he loved this place. So much in fact he built a mansion on a hill that overlooks the distillery.

Our tour started at Stony Point Mansion. Blanton

built this for his wife and they resided here until Albert Blanton's death in 1959. He passed peacefully in the sunroom of Stony Point. Shortly following his death, his wife reported still seeing him around the house, prompting her to move out. Upon moving out, she turned the house over to Buffalo Trace, which today they use for offices. Here's one pretty interesting story from a lady who received a promotion to the marketing



(continued on page 10.)

SPIRITS APLENTY AT BUFFALO TRACE *continued*

team: It was a Friday afternoon and she wanted to get all of her belongings moved to her new desk so she was ready to start working on Monday. She walked up the pathway to the house when she noticed movement coming from the front parlor window. Upon looking a little closer, she noticed a man in a full suit with a bowler hat. He looked up and she waved but he didn't wave back. She thought to herself that was odd but continued on into the house. Upon entering the house she noticed how silent it was and after calling out "Hello" several times and receiving no response, she put a box of belongings on her desk and left. On Monday, she started telling all of her new coworkers about this and she thought maybe it was all in her head since everyone confirmed that no one was in the house on Friday at that time. She started to describe the man because she said he stuck out so vividly to her that she was certain she could pick him out of a police line up. She mentioned the suit and a coworker brought her over a picture of a young Albert Blanton in a suit complete with his famous bowler hat. She was very emotional and confirmed with everyone that is who she did, in fact, see! A couple other reported haunts and goings on are of a dog and the smell of cigarette smoke. A lot of facts have been confirmed by Albert Blanton's niece who lived up until this year at the age of 101. She provided pictures of Albert Blanton with his dog and did confirm that Mrs. Blanton did smoke in privacy of her powder room. At the time, a lady of her class and place in the community would not dare to be caught smoking. Both little known facts outside of the family. We didn't experience anything odd in the house but let me tell you, this place is

gorgeous! They don't offer many tours to see the inside of this place and I'm glad we did it!

In 1885, Warehouse C was built and it's our next and last stop on our tour. Walking into this one was extremely exciting! This place smells of vanilla and oak! It's really a bourbon-lover's paradise to be surround by 24,000 barrels that they have aging in here. The reports here are mostly people seeing a man in a suit. Leak hunters (it's a real job) report everything from hearing a man's voice, to seeing someone pass by them to being touched while repairing barrels. Another tour guide was giving a 2pm tour and while waiting for a few stragglers in his group to finish taking pictures, he noticed a man in a suit standing off to his left. He called out to the man to please join back up to the group so they could get moving. The man appeared to have his hands in his pockets and was inspecting a barrel. He called out again this time a little more loudly and the man looked up rather annoyed like and walked straight into the rack of barrels. The most famous ghost story about this building comes from Freddie Johnson, he's a third generation employee of Buffalo Trace and this man is full of knowledge! He says his grandfather was in charge of getting a crew together to move out rows of barrels either to and from another location or just to a different building in general. But this is an important job because the warehouse operates off weight and location of each barrel and since they weigh around 550 pounds, it's very important to understand what you are moving. Taking too many barrels out of one row or area is like taking out a support wall or load-bearing wall in your house. You do that and the whole thing falls. So his grandfather

was instructed to take a whole center section of barrels out, he insisted it was a bad idea but his boss told him to do the job or go home. He gathered his crew and started working. He said the whole time he felt very uneasy and uncomfortable doing this when he heard a voice say, "Get them out." Ten minutes or so went by and while he was continuing to work he felt a breeze rush by him and the voice louder in his ear this time said, "Get them out now!" He then made his decision to have his crew take a break and go outside. The third floor did end up collapsing and this voice ended up saving many lives. We didn't get any sort of experiences here but just the overall feeling of standing in a building with that history is truly amazing!

Ask almost any worker at Buffalo Trace and they will tell you that they have seen this man in the suit with the bowler hat. It's pretty hard to argue the fact that it has to be Albert Blanton. For a man who poured his life and soul into a place, I think it's fair to say if he loved it that much while he was alive why can't he love it that much in the afterlife?



Josh Kitchen and Freddie Johnson

Evolution of Investigation



Samantha

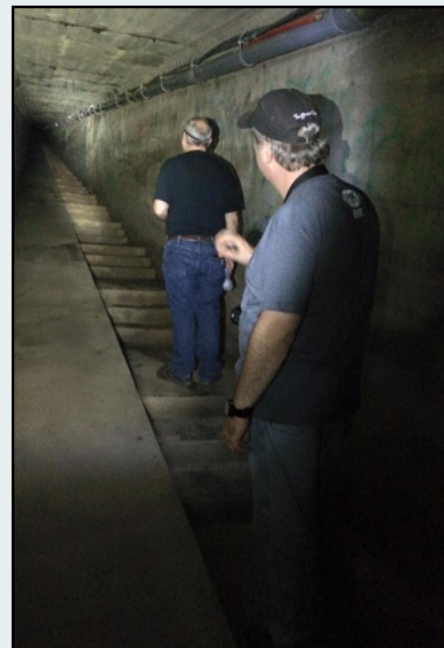
I have never been one to “sense” things on investigations. From what I understand, the ability to feel, see, hear, and communicate with spirits is like tuning into a radio station. Some people can get a clear, uninterrupted signal, while the rest of us just get static. Since most members of The Ghosts of Ohio are in the same boat as me, it makes perfect sense that we have always relied on research and equipment like recorders and atmospheric and electrical sensors to try to document evidence of the paranormal.

Which isn’t to say that we don’t play around with new, unconventional ideas. On the contrary! We relish opportunities to incorporate new tools or techniques we’ve never considered before. We’ve tested a lot of the latest gadgets (thanks to certain members who can afford or build them) as well as old school ones, like pendulums, dowsing rods, and Zener cards. We’ve experimented with our cell phones and compared different brands of audio recorders. We’ve also tested our own abilities with activities like sensing people around us while blindfolded, moving a candle flame with our collective minds and automatic writing. I mean, let’s face it—the paranormal field is mysterious, and anyone who claims to know exactly how it all works is a liar. We simply don’t know what the best equipment or methods are for successfully finding and communicating with the dead.

After years of research, trial and error, there are three discoveries (so far) that hold great significance for me, and maybe for the rest of the group as well. The first is the fact that we seem to capture more paranormal activity during the in-between moments on investigations, when we’re all relaxed and enjoying idle chit chat. We’re not sure why, but we guess it’s because a bunch of people sitting around in a dark room in silence isn’t very interesting. If I was a spirit, I certainly wouldn’t want to hang around such boring people answering their repetitive questions. I mean, where’s the party? We definitely have more success when we’re not trying to investigate.

The second discovery that fascinates me has to do with electromagnetic fields. The theory was (and still is) that spirits draw upon all available energy around them in order to manifest in some way. This could be from electricity in the building, the batteries in devices, even the energy in the human body. Years ago we heard about investigators using “EM pumps” as a kind of ghost bait. (An EM pump is a device that’s only function is to produce an electromagnetic field.) It is theorized that placing one in a reportedly haunted area would provide an energy source for a spirit to draw upon, making it easier to capture evidence of their presence on sensors and recording devices. While we truthfully didn’t seem to see much of a difference on investigations when using them, we did conduct an experiment at Jim’s house that proved to be very intriguing.

We wondered how it is that some people can sense spiritual activity while others can’t. Did it have



Investigating inside Waverly Hills’ Death Tunnel

something to do with energy fields? Could we somehow develop the ability to sense energy fields through practice? We decided to hide an EM pump somewhere in Jim’s basement to see how many of us could locate it just through sensing it. It turned out that only a couple of us correctly identified the spot where the pump was hidden behind books. I was one of those lucky people, which completely blew my mind! I never thought I could have the ability to sense anything. I was further excited when, some time afterward, Jim put Wendy and me to the test by having us walk through a reportedly haunted basement to try and identify the area where a spirit had been seen. Since Wendy’s one of the few members who can actually sense things, I didn’t really think I had much of a chance. After taking a few minutes to walk around to try to “feel” something odd, I pointed to an area that I suspected was the spot. I had

(continued on page 12.)

Evolution of Investigation continued

remembered what it felt like to locate the EM pump from before (my heart sort of flutters when I get near high EMF), so I identified an area that gave me that feeling. To my complete shock, Wendy identified the same spot; and Jim said that, yes, we were correct! Did it have something to do with the fact that there was higher EMF in that spot, or was it actually a spirit standing there? Was it both? The jury's still out on that one. But ever since that day, I go into every investigation trying to tune into that "fluttery" feeling. It's exciting to realize that there's so much potential here! Which sort of brings me to our third useful discovery: Meditation.

Over the years we've had several discussions involving our mindsets during investigations. It seemed that every outing involved hauling our equipment into a place, hurriedly setting it all up so that we could maximize our investigative time, then basically hitting the "GO!" button. We were hopped up on adrenaline and caffeine, excited to get to each of our designated locations. We gave ourselves little to no opportunity to relax and get the feel for a place. This just didn't seem to be the best way to attract paranormal activity, nor did it allow us to be more "receptive" if activity was, indeed, happening. If we took the time to calm down and get centered, would we become more in tune with the environment around us? Supposedly everyone is born with some measure of extrasensory ability, so could this lead to enhancing those perceptions? As with everything else, we decided to give it a try.

For the past several investigations, we've started taking 10-15 minutes

(after the equipment is set up) to participate in a group guided meditation. We then take time to walk around the location to see what we sense in different areas. Then when the investigation officially starts, we choose where we want to sit based on those feelings. Remarkably, since we stated doing this, we've had a number of inexplicable things happen, the likes of which we haven't experienced before. Doppelganger voices of members of the group, audio interference that, according to the manufacturer, shouldn't be possible, etc. One of the most memorable for me was when I decided to attempt some automatic writing, where I'd clear my mind and invite the spirits to share words or ideas with me. I'm not a diehard believer in that kind of thing, but I was curious to try it. Amazingly, one of the words I wrote down directly correlated to something that other people were doing on the floor below. As if that wasn't enough, a short time later we recorded an unknown voice whispering something into a microphone, and it seems to be referencing my name and the word I had written. So weird, but super cool! I think this is a great example of how conventional and unconventional methodology can bring about something intriguing. Does it give us any answers? No, but it may serve as proof that we might be able to enhance our "sixth sense" through practice. One thing's for sure, it gives us plenty of fodder for discussion and possible new procedures going forward.

It's funny to think that, not so long ago, we would have never have considered incorporating

non-scientific methods into our investigations. I mean, let's face it, anecdotes involving "feelings" aren't exactly the hard evidence we need to prove the existence of paranormal phenomena. People outside the group would never believe it. However, I think we're getting to the point where we realize that convincing other people is moot. There is no Holy Grail piece of evidence that will convince the masses that this stuff is real. All we can do is seek our own answers to our own burning questions. For me that involves using meditation and my senses to try to experience something, and also using equipment to validate any experiences. After all, my reception's still fuzzy, even though I'm working on it.



The Ghosts Of Ohio at The Anchorage in Marietta Ohio



THE ANNUAL FALL TOUR

Well, our 2019 Fall Tour is almost officially in the books. And what an amazing tour it was! Thank you to everyone who came out to see us! It's always a thrill to get to see so many smiling faces, knowing that we're all brought together by a love for all things strange and spooky!



ONE LAST STOP ON THE ANNUAL FALL TOUR

If you're reading this newsletter hot off the cyberspace presses, there might be one last chance for you to get strange and spooky with us!

Our Fearless Leader, James A. Willis, will be giving people a glimpse inside his strange and spooky world in a special presentation at the Ohio Wildlife Center on Saturday, November 2nd from 6-8pm.

In addition to hearing and seeing all about Willis' favorite investigations over the years, some of the Wildlife Center's Animal Ambassadors will be on-hand for an extra special meet and greet. Best of all, the evening's proceeds will all go to the Ohio Wildlife Center!

Tickets were going fast, but as of this writing, there were a few seats left. To purchase tickets, follow this link: <https://one.bidpal.net/strangeandspookyworld/ticketing>

Investigations & Consultations

The Ghosts of Ohio are beginning to schedule investigations and consultations for 2020. 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>

The Ghosts are now on Instagram

It took a while, but The Ghosts of Ohio have finally stumbled our way onto Instagram. We're just getting started, which means you can start following us now, and years later, you can tell are your friends that you were one of the first Cool Kids who Followed The Ghosts of Ohio on Instagram.

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:

 [FACEBOOK](#)

 [TWITTER](#)

 [INSTAGRAM](#)

Administration

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