

Ghost Trackers Newsletter

The Official Paranormal Publication of the Ghost Research Society



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The Ghost Trackers Newsletter is the official paranormal publication of the Ghost Research Society. The GRS was founded in 1978 by Martin V. Riccardo and this publication soon followed in September of 1982. It is published and edited by Dale D. Kaczmarek, President and is put out in February, June and October.

The **Ghost Research Society** is a membership organization devoted to collecting, analyzing and researching all forms of the paranormal with an emphasis on ghosts, hauntings, poltergeists and life after death. Different memberships are available for those wishing to become more actively involved. We are also looking for officers, State Coordinators, Field Investigators and Area Research Directors for various states and countries.

Regular memberships are \$20.00 per year and include three issues of the Ghost Trackers Newsletter, GRS button, membership card, discounts to GRS sponsored events and tours, FREE photo analysis service and discounts on new and used books with FREE finder service available. Send wants! **Sustaining Memberships** are \$25.00 and include the above and the opportunity of helping with ghost research and attending field excursions (Midwest members only and subject to interview) at least twice a year. **Contributing Memberships** are \$30.00 and besides the above receive a free newspaper clipping service for your particular state (or country) sent on an irregular basis with your subscription. Multi-year, Patron and Lifetime Memberships are also available. If interested in those, please request further information.

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Editors page:



Well, the Halloween season is again upon us and I'm busier than usual with tours, lectures, interviews and personal appearances around the Chicagoland area. Recently we have started having our bi-monthly meetings at the Oak Lawn VFW Hall at 9514 S. 52nd Ave., in Oak Lawn instead of the Oak Lawn Public Library. The only thing with the change is the lack of attendance to these meetings. I am charged a \$50 per usage fee for each meeting and have started charging non-members and guests a \$3.00 cover charge to attend these events. Because of the charge, I have implemented a regular topic of discussion and a mini-presentation at each of the meetings so as to attract the public as well. The first part of the meeting is GRS business followed by either slides, audio/visual presentations and an open forum for questions, comments and relating of personal paranormal experiences.

So far, however, the new meeting location, although very convenient and close to the Oak Lawn Public Library hasn't attracted the amount needed just to break even for these meetings. If this lack of attendance continues, I will have to make a decision of either eliminating the meetings altogether or decreasing their frequency to quarterly instead of bi-monthly. I will keep all members posted as to my decision. If you would like to help with distribution of flyers in your area to help increase the number of attenders, please contact me personally for further information.

I would like to thank: Linda Haluska for the recent newspaper clippings and Halloween article which appears in this issue, Randolph Liebeck for the FOP card, Richard Senate for the cartoons and numerous articles, and Karmen Smith, Derek Sutphin, Neil Yoder, Elaine Dohnal and Dave for the paranormal pictures they submitted for analysis.

I wish to make a correction in the last issue of the newsletter under the article **Ghosts In The Machine** by Todd Womack. One of the Web Sites has an incorrect address. Number 9 should read: <http://fringeware.com/schwaRoot/schwa.html>. Originally it read fridgeware.... Sorry for any inconvenience!

Since the last issued we have added 7 new members and received renewals from 17 members. Thank you and welcome!

I am still in the process of making photo id's and updating the quality of the newsletter. If you are an Active member (Sustaining or above) and haven't submitted a recent photograph of yourself, you will not be issued a photo id when they become available. I also will need the Application For Active Research filled out and returned to me with any photographs.

I am looking for help in preparing a page on the World Wide Web for the GRS and any help would be appreciated!

Ghost Research Society

I would like to congratulate Ed Okonowicz as our newest State Coordinator! He will now be in charge of "The First State", Delaware. Mr. Okonowicz is well seasoned as a paranormal researcher and author of many books that have been reviewed in the last issue and this issue of Ghost Trackers Newsletter. He will be hosting the 1st Annual Ghost Gala on Saturday, October 5, 1996 beginning at 4pm at The Swiss Inn in Elkton, MD. on Route 40, about one mile west of the Delaware state line. Cost is \$25 per person which includes a served dinner, short program, introductions and door prizes and a ghostly storytelling for adults beginning at 7pm. For questions call: Ed or Kathleen at (410)398-5013.

Randy Liebeck, New Jersey State Coordinator for the GRS, has developed and is teaching a course titled *Ghosts, Hauntings and Poltergeists* at St. John's University in New York City and at Bergen Community College in Paramus, New Jersey. Both classes begin in October, 1996. Further information and details can be obtained by contacting: St. John's University, Continuing Education Office, 8000 Utopia Parkway, Jamaica, NY. 11439, (718)990-6103 or Bergen Community College, Division of Continuing Education, 400 Paramus Rd., Paramus, NJ. 07652-1595, (201)447-7150.

New Contributing Members include: Bobby Britz, Karmen Smith, Ellen Robson, E. Smith, Mark Weaver and Derek Sutphin. New Sustaining Members are: Arsenio Mendez, April Smithers and Chris Roberts. New Lifetime Member is Cinda Eagon.

The newsletter of the Quarter is: Ghostwatch at PO Box 54, Birkenhead, L43 7FD, England. This issue includes reports on spooks from Romania, Bad Vibes, TV Watch and much more. Write for information and subscription rates and mention this newsletter when replying!

I am becoming increasingly frustrated with the lack of attendance at recent Field Excursions and Special Investigations that I have planned. Recently we investigated a haunted house near the Quad cities and only had one investigator actually make it there. Most recently, August 3rd, I planned an all day affair at haunted Decatur and only two Active members were able to attend. While I realize that not everyone can make everything, I do expect to get a better turnout for all my time and effort in setting these Field Excursions up than simply one or two members! Special and Haunted House Investigations are a mandatory part of Active membership and should be attended if at all possible! If the current trend continues, Field Excursions will not be held as often as they currently are. It does take a lot of planning, phone calls and route making for these trips to work and we cannot properly investigate the sites with only a few investigators.



The Ghosts Of Arlington House

By

Richard Senate

My wife is distantly related to Confederate General Robert E. Lee and maybe that's how I happen to stumble upon the stories of ghosts at the old Custis-Lee mansion that stands in majestic beauty overlooking Arlington National Cemetery on the Virginia side of the Potomac River, not far from Washington D.C. The pillared mansion was built by George Washington Parke Custis in 1802. When the home was completed in 1817 it was the social center of the area and one of the most attractive homes along the Potomac. Custis' daughter, Mary, married Robert E. Lee in 1831 at the mansion. As a military officer Robert was called away for long months, so Mary continued to live at the mansion. She raised her seven children and when her father died he left the house and the estates to her in 1857. When the Civil War broke out, the Lee family were forced to leave when Union troops occupied the site. It was too close to the Capital for Confederate troops to defend, so it became an early victim of the war. In a move to seek some form of revenge on Robert E. Lee, then leading the Armies of the Confederate States, the federal government confiscated the property in 1864 for a national cemetery. After the war Mrs. Lee attempted to regain her land but when the lands and house were returned in 1883, the family sold them back to the government for a fraction of their real worth. The home was restored in time and in 1955 the house was opened as a monument to Robert E. Lee.

A visitor to the house in the mid 1970s, during a tour, reported seeing the image of a little boy dressed all in brown rush past a doorway, briefly look in the seemingly embarrassed, vanished away. The visitor who has had other encounters with ghosts believed that it was the spirit of a young boy who may have died at the old mansion. In doing some research on the place I discovered that this wasn't the only time such things have been reported over the years. Park Service Staff have heard the unmistakable sounds of children laughing and playing in the dark and deserted home. A guide searching the house before closing heard the sounds of children in the mourning room, and as she drew near the sounds faded away so that when she entered, the room was deserted. The employee searched everywhere believing the children had somehow hidden themselves, but there was no sign of anyone. When she left, the sounds returned with greater force! She backtracked to the room for a second search only to discover nothing. This time she locked the doors to the room. As she moved on with the rest of her duties, the now frightening sounds returned, still coming from the mourning room. She refused to spend more time chasing shadows and

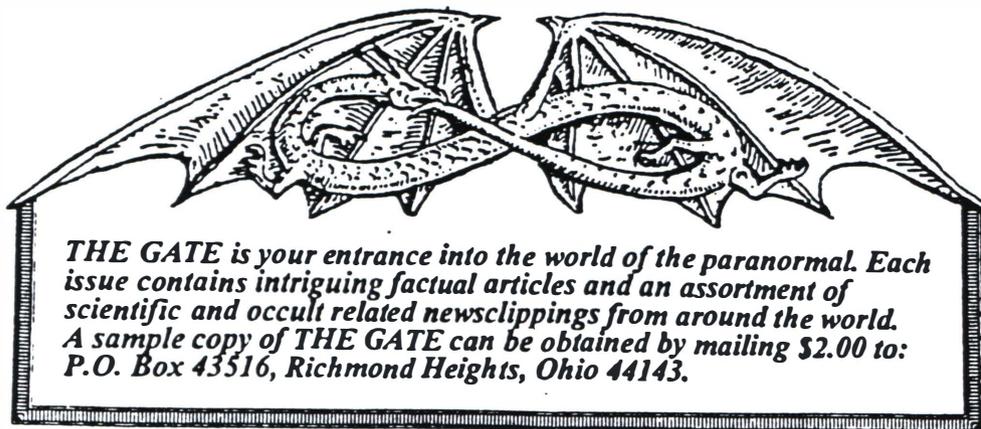
left. "The park service wasn't going to pay me overtime to look for noises, so I went home." The next day she called in to the staff who opened the house just to see if anyone had been locked in overnight. The house was quiet and secure with nothing out of the ordinary. She called to explain why the door to the mourning room was locked--they were surprised by this--none of the doors inside the mansion were locked. Someone or something had unlocked the door!

Other strange events have been recorded over the years but the guides do not talk very much about them with the public, some simply because they don't wish to be thought of as peculiar.

The most persistent ghost story linked to the Custis-Lee Mansion is that of a phantom cat. The guards who walk the grounds and buildings have called in "General Lee's Cat" though there is no evidence that it is linked to the famed Confederate Leader. It could have belonged to his wife Mary or to one of the Lee's slaves. The striped cat has been seen on both floors of the house and in each sighting it was taken for a real cat and staff attempted to catch the stray animal only to have it vanish into thin air. The cat has its own file with the staff with each sighting logged in along with a description of the large tabby.

One ghost story told by a reluctant guide centers on an old candle stick. During a historic re-enactment an employee lit the candle only to have it blown out. All the windows were closed at the time and the doors shut! The employee distinctly heard the sound of someone blowing at the time yet he was the only person in the room! I am sure that with a little persistence many more stories of the old Arlington House could be recorded. If you have visited this historic place and have had an odd feeling or two there, please let me know through this newsletter. If you visit this place, you must ask the guides for the tales of ghosts, they are not part of the general tour.

Submitted by: Richard Senate, 3127 Trinity Dr., Ventura, CA. 93003.



The Tragic Story of the Ghost Slayer

By

Todd Womack

Almost 60 years ago, the attention of the nation was briefly diverted from happy Christmas celebrations in December of 1937 to that of a very strange and tragic case of murder which had, as the newspapers said, "premonitions and forebodings, death tokens, shadowy spiritism, and ... the bizarre touch of the supernatural."

The tale began on Christmas Eve, in a small, dark, cold-water flat above a diner in the tiny village of Vesper, Wisconsin. There, a 19 year old day laborer named Henry J. Nead, his 15 year old "child-wife" Luella, and Earl Albert, a six-week old infant who had been fathered by another man, lived and tried to eke out an existence in Depression America. They had just settled down to go to sleep when they heard three eerie knocks coming from the bottom of their bedroom door (these were referred to as the token knocks or death-tokens). Henry froze and soon saw the ghost of his father, who stood at the foot of the bed mocking him. "I got you coming!", the ghost cried. Then everything went black for Henry and when he came to he found himself standing over the baby's crib beating the infant in the head. The couple tried to bring the baby to with water, but nothing happened. Henry dressed and ran to phone the family doctor who was out of town.

He then found two friends with a car to drive the young couple and dead child to his parent's house in the nearby town of Arpin. Once there, now around 7am, Henry phoned Dr. Wright, the County Coroner, to make arrangements for the baby's burial. The couple was soon taken into custody by the local Sheriff.

Henry was the first to be questioned and afraid that the police wouldn't believe what happened, he came up with a new alibi. He now said the infant had died after falling from a high, home-made, canvas swing. The Sheriff didn't bite and continued to grill Henry for two more hours. Finally, Henry broke down sobbing and told them his story of a "spirit-haunted life".

"My father appeared to me - he never liked me because he always thought and said that I really wasn't his own son. He always said what I put down in my confession ('I got you coming!') and that he'd make trouble for me all my life.

"He died of a stroke six years ago, and when he died our dog got under the table and howled three times, just like those three knocks last night we heard. My father died at ten o'clock - the

same time at the knocks. When he died, my father said he hoped and prayed the Lord would let him come back to haunt me."

The Sheriff probably shook his head and silently laughed to himself until a few minutes later when Luella confirmed Henry's story. In addition she related that "once when Henry had the mumps his father came and mocked him at night." Further, she said she should have known something was going to happen that night because as the couple ate supper she felt "something hit me in the lap and it rolled off my legs onto the floor". The same feeling had occurred when her uncle had died years before.

Mrs. Schmidt, Henry Nead's mother now remarried, was questioned next. She too said Henry's tale was true. "He always hated Henry, I don't know why. Maybe he still hates him."

As his mother and wife backed up Henry, the Shaws, Luella's parents, had no doubt that Henry was to blame, but they soon related their own paranormal tale.

"I'm not given that way myself but my women is," stated Mr. Shaw about the supernatural. "Let me tell you about this. She and I were sitting at our house on Christmas Eve. She was eating peanuts and all of the sudden she said, 'Look at the light! The lights in the front window, Willard.'

"Well, we looked outside for an automobile, because that was what I thought it was. But there wasn't no car around there. And then my wife said, 'That light means that something is happening to our Luella.' And sure enough it did."

Luella was released into the care of the Shaws and Henry was held in jail until the 29th when his court-appointed lawyer entered a plea of not guilty due to insanity. His legal counsel and the Judge reasoned that the Nead boy must be insane to hold to the ghost story. That evening Henry was sent to the Waupun State Hospital for the Criminally Insane for a period of observation to end around March 7, 1938.

After Henry was found to be sane, his trial was set for March 14th. On that day however, his lawyer changed his plea to guilty of second degree murder because he thought no jury would believe Henry's haunted alibi. Henry was then convicted and sentenced to serve 14 to 20 years at the state penitentiary.

So ends the strange story of Henry "The Ghost Slayer" Nead who pleaded that the ghost had made him do it, but did it? Henry's tale does follow the now well-known pattern for apparitional sightings as put forth by G.N.M. Tyrell in 1943, by Andrew MacKenzie in 1982, and by Dale Kaczmarek, the president of the Ghost Research Society. Henry and his family's *bedroom episodes* or their dream-like "at home-feeling secure" state do fit, but the death tokens are a different twist. They could be a death omen, the howling of the dog is typical as is the appearance of the ghost. The three knocking or ticking sounds coming from the wooden door do somewhat correspond to the old belief in the dreaded wood-boring deathwatch beetle which is doubly direful if it ticks loudly three times.

Submitted by: Todd Womack, Georgia State Coordinator for the GRS, Amberwood Apt. Q-1, Douglas, GA. 31533.

Questioning The Unknown

By

David L. Goodwin

As the study of Paranormal Phenomena gains more and more acceptance by the public, it seems the very enigma of the unknown and the methods used to investigate it, are drawing more and more criticism from various members of the scientific community.

As a deputy sheriff for a rural county in Missouri and as an investigator of the unknown, I have had the opportunity to interview and question both witnesses and suspects alike. I have found that for a witnesses statement to be valid in the eyes of the court or more importantly, to be believed by a jury of the 'People', the statement must be true, factual, and unbiased by the investigator and his or her method of questioning.

Most witnesses will tell the truth just because it is basic human nature to do so. The key to the validity of their statements however, is the line of questioning used by the investigator in search of the truth. The key stumbling block in questioning a witness that will cast doubt about your credibility and reliability of your witness, is if the investigator asks *leading questions*.

A leading question fills in the gaps for a witness when he or she is unsure of the facts or events that they witnessed or experienced. The following is an example of leading questions used by many investigators:

"Tell me what the ghost looked like?"

"When you saw the spirit, what did you do?"

By using the line of questioning, the investigator subconsciously tells the witness what he or she observed. The witness who has just experienced something out of this world, may not know anything about the supernatural. Their minds are scrambling to quantify and qualify what has occurred, and then they are confronted by a professional investigator who has just inadvertently filled in the blanks for them. The witness now begins to subconsciously associate their experience with that of the paranormal when in fact, the whole event could have been easily explained through further in depth investigation.

When a scientist is presented with this type of information, he or she immediately comes to the conclusion that the information gathered by the investigator is false because it is evident that the investigator perpetuated the subjects psychosis by asking leading questions.

I have developed a few unbiased, fact gathering questions that have served me well on the street and in court of law. I have modified these questions to be used by paranormal investigators.

"I have understand that you have recently experienced

something extraordinary. What did you see? Please describe it in your own words."

"What was your physical/emotional reaction to what you saw?"

"What do YOU think it was? Why?"

When an outside critic reviews this type of information gathered in an unbiased manner, he or she cannot say that you the investigator put crazy ideas about ghosts and goblins in the witnesses head. The skeptic scientist will see that the witness drew his or her own conclusions from their respective life experiences and knowledge, and it shows that the investigator ruled out the possible natural causes behind an event.

As the study of paranormal phenomena becomes more common place in our modern society, the paranormal investigator must be prepared to present his or her findings to scientists outside the field who may not believe in the existence of ghosts or spirits. These scientists spot the obvious use of leading questions, and they will use this fact to debunk an investigators work. When the investigator reports factual, unbiased information in his or her reports, it adds ever needed credibility to the field of paranormal research.

Submitted by: David L. Goodwin, Missouri State Coordinator for the GRS, 3260 Brookshire, Florrisant, MO. 63033.



Abby's Room

By

Ellen Robson

The Hotel Vendome, located in the quaint little town of Prescott, Arizona, welcomes the longest unpaying guest and her cat, Noble. Room 16, which is referred as "Abby's Room" by the hotel owner Rama Patel, is often requested by repeat visitors.

Abby, like so many ghosts, had a tragic life. Built in 1917, Abby owned the logging house which became the Hotel Vendome, but lost it when she was unable to pay the taxes on it. The new owner, however, allowed her to live there. In 1921 she became very ill and her husband went to get her some medicine but never returned. One newspaper clipping reported that Abby never left her room again and starved to death.

Bill, the night clerk, told me that a group of women held a seance in room 16 and were able to locate the grave or Abby's cat after learning of its whereabouts.

"At times you can make out the image of Abby in her favorite chair. And if you're lucky, you might see her roam down the corridor," he chuckled.

I didn't book my reservation far enough ahead to reserved Abby's Room but I spoke with a married couple that did. Ann, who has some psychic abilities herself, claims they encountered not only Abby but her cat as well.

"My husband had just taken his shower and was barefoot when he opened the closet door. It was then that he felt something brush across his ankle, making the hairs on his neck stand up. We found our later from Bill that Noble had died in that closet. Skeptical as John is, he finally had to admit that it felt just like a cat's tail that rubbed up against him," Ann said.

"I didn't have any experiences like that", she continued, "but there were several cold spots in the room. And towards morning, I heard a faint meow of a cat. Before I could crawl out of bed to check on it, I fell back to sleep."

If you're ever in Arizona, visit the town of Prescott and stay in room 16, especially if you're a cat lover!

Submitted by: Ellen Robson, 1648 E. Campus, Tempe, AZ. 85282.

Play Ball!

By

Shelley Sykes

Is it is spooklight? Is it a ghost?

The "Ball Thing" of Old White Church Cemetery is not fully one or the other. It is, so far, unclassified. On two occasions, less than a year apart, we were there when it decided to come out and play.

A few nights before Halloween, 1993, there were about ten of us at "Collins Graveyard"* to do some taping. We were fairly scattered about the small area and I sat on the stone of John Bracken while Marcia stood 20-25 yards away from me. She was watching me. At one point I felt as if someone were playing with my hair, and knowing there was no one behind me I called Marcia to come over and see if there was a change in temperature or anything like that directly behind me. * (Old White Church Cemetery is also known as Collins Graveyard because of the number of Collins graves).

She felt the area and said there was no change she could detect, but that she had seen something behind me and had decided to watch it without telling me. There are trees within the cemetery, and some were behind me, as well as an old stump which had suckers growing from around it making it look like a bush. She reported a "sphere-like" object which was low to the ground and which flitted between two trees. The next she saw it, it "popped up" behind the bushy stump, as if peeking over. Just after that, I called her.

While I was asking about it, others were milling around, some with flashlights. She described it as orangish-brownish-white, not self-lit, and "gnome-ish or impish." It was ball-shaped, but in a fluid-like manner. It was very low to the ground when she first saw it.

We were still discussing it when I saw my sister Steffi's flashlight beam in a spot on the back tree line. The ground dips down back there and I would say the light was at a height or at least ten feet from the ground. Dead center in the circle of light was a white round ball. In the split second I saw it, I thought her light was unusually bright. Then, the ball ducked (I use the word for lack of a better one) out of the circle of light. Steffi's arm jerked and both of us said, "Did you see that?"

I made my way up to her and started telling her what Marcia had just seen while she played her light along the trees. She said, "There it is!" I couldn't see her beam of light because of the trees and tried to get to where I could, but it was gone. She had been looking down into the far left corner. This time, she

said, it seemed to melt away.

It was in late May, early June of 1994 when Marcia, Beth, Angie and I went to the cemetery. Angie had only been there once before and that was a visit of less than ten minutes. We walked around and taped, telling Angie a little about the place. No one mentioned the Ball Thing.

After walking around a bit we stopped near the Collins section to talk. Angie suddenly turned her light on and swept it along the fence. Then she pulled me aside. She reported seeing something which was so "...dumb it couldn't have really been anything." It was a short, round, orange-brown thing that put her in mind of a "cartoon character." She'd seen it in the dark, and when she shined the light it was gone.

I was interested in her saying it was cartoonish and asked her to expand on that. She said that if she had to put a character on it, it would be a spy-like trench-coated guy. That's why, she said, she thought it couldn't have actually been anything.

Needless to say, she wasn't happy to hear Marcia tell her what she'd seen the night in October. The color, size, and the feeling that the thing was impish, cartoonish, were just too close to discount.

ANGIE: Short.

MARCIA: Low to the ground.

A: Round.

M: Spherical, ball-like.

A: Orange, brown. (No light on it.)

M: Orange, brown, white. (No light on it.)

A: Cartoonish.

M: Impish, gnome-ish (behavior-wise).

Now, as far as this thing imparting intangible information such as gnome-ish, and impish: Was Angie receiving the same information, but in a different manner? "Spy-like" could be a way to describe its actions the previous October when it flitted between trees, popped up behind the bushy stump and ducked out of the light. Spies, especially cartoon spies, do all of that. Perhaps Angie received the information in a visual manner whereas Marcia may be more psychically attuned to that area and felt it rather than saw it.

Even though it showed up as white in a flashlight beam, we are positive this is the same thing Steffi and I saw, not only because of the brief interval between Marcia's sighting and ours, but also because of the way it moved.

Two points immediately come to mind that need further thought. The orange-brown color while not lit by an outside source: Take an orange shirt, or even a ball, outside on a dark night when there is no artificial light. Does the orange really look orange? Could someone at 20 yards, who didn't know what color it was, really tell if it was orange?

Marcia and Angie saw orange and brown; they actually saw the colors. There must be light to see color.

The second point is its interaction. Any apparition that

seems to interact should be looked at all the more closely. The mere mention of interaction suggests an intelligence. Shine a light on a ghost (the term "ghost" being used for simplicity's sake) and it may fade, but it certainly won't duck out of the light! A ghost is not usually seen flitting between trees and peeking over bushes as if playing.

Research shows ghosts to be rather calm most of the time, either oblivious to us, or fading at our intrusions. Classic ghosts, anyway, in classic apparitional hauntings. Poltergeists on the other hand, with their pranks and energetic free-for-alls, are more like our cemetery's Ball in character, though poltergeists don't make a habit of showing themselves and are often linked to telekinesis. There are fine lines crossed all of the time however, and some apparitional hauntings do cross the poltergeistic line of prank-playing. If the Ball Thing is a ghost, it is a rare one.

Spooklights come to mind. Spooklights are playful and impish. They have been know to whiz around people, hover, follow and wink on or off. But, spooklights are called that for a reason. They are balls of lights.

People have also described what are termed UFO probes, but these, too, are usually self-lit. (Here I add the fact that I've recently read an account of a "dull" UFO probe, though it didn't mention color.)

What is the Ball Thing in Old White Church Cemetery? I don't know. The phenomena surrounding it is classic and new all in one. It needs extra study. In the meanwhile, we go out occasionally on a dark night to the graveyard hoping to get another chance to play ball.

Submitted by: Shelley Sykes, PO Box 70, Arendtsville, PA. 17303.

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The Astral Shell Game

By

Maurice Schwalm

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The Kansas City Star carried an intriguing item regarding a haunting on February 29, 1996. Their editorial policy permits few such items except at Halloween. It was in Hearne Christopher's metro gossip column. He was reporting on the marriage of Kansas City, Kansas's mayor, Carol Marinovich at the chapel of The Strawberry Hill Chapel and Museum. He mentions that it was a good thing that the happy couple did not plan on spending a night in one of the bedrooms on the premises as the building is known to be haunted. A volunteer worker there told him of *The Lady in Red* who frequently appears out of nowhere and asks, "Where is the priest?" This happens at the front desk. She has also been seen processing down the aisle of the chapel wearing 1940s style red clothing, possessed of red hair and trailing red blood. This alone would seem to be enough to justify her appellation as The Lady in Red or just TLIR.

A visit to the premises suggested that TLIR is a frequent guest and the subject of a neighborhood tradition. An officer of the association showed Schwalm around the premises. Predictably, a knocking sound was heard in one of the upstairs hallways and not at a point mentioned as the site of other phenomena. The officer cheerfully responded when the knocking sound was mentioned to him, "Oh, I hear a voice saying, 'Hello there', every now and then, but I have never actually seen her." Schwalm asked her name and date of death. The officer said those details had never been mentioned to him by anyone in the neighborhood. All that was really known was that she was a woman of the streets who was under the protection of the Franciscan sisters that formerly operated an orphanage on the premises. Schwalm then asked how she got to be known as TLIR. Was she murdered or what. The officer looked uncomfortable and said, "Well, the story is she died in a botched abortion and the sisters could not save her." Schwalm began to understand why no names or dates are mentioned even though the haunting is known all through the Croatian community that is still centered on Strawberry Hill. It appears that ghosts are quite openly discussed and even seances would be tolerated, but abortion remains a tabued subject.

There were other phenomena as well. A caterer there on business reported seeing a haloed form sort of hanging in a closet. It reminded her of a picture she had seen somewhere. Mr. Cruse, the first owner of the vast if simple stone structure, had some

connection with the image -- as if she had gone back in time. Another business visitor, who has vowed not to return, heard nuns saying their office of prayers upstairs where they formerly lived. Again, a time warp form of experience. Locking up the building at night is a formidable task as the lights are promptly on again before the officer can drive away. These would be the lights visible from the street. He frequently hears from a neighbor adjacent to the rear of the building as the rear lights come on after the building is closed for the night and darkness has set in. The neighbor apparently makes a point of keeping suspicious light bulbs under surveillance.

That night, Schwalm had, what might be termed, a lucid dream. At least he was able to ask questions of TLIR. He asked, "Why are you there at the chapel? You were not a nun by any means."

"It was the only home I knew. They took care of me when I was down."

"Did you abort?"

"She haunts me. I need a priest."

Perhaps she needs an exorcist to sever the "umbilical cord."

Submitted by: Maurice Schwalm, PO Box 3522, Kansas City, KS. 66103-0522.



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Alphonse Capone

(1899-1947)

By

Linda Haluska

Al Capone is world famous as the notorious Chicagoland gangster during the Prohibition Era in the 1920s. His name is known throughout the land and most visitors to Chicago associate Al with this city.

He died in 1947 and is laid to rest at Mount Carmel Cemetery in Hillside, Illinois. Al Capone is buried with his father, Gabriel and mother, Theresa, as well as several siblings.

I have visited his grave several times during different seasons. In the Spring, I have seen roses or some cans of beer placed on his burial marker. In the Summer, the grass is a flat yellow due to the many visitors that stop by. Sometimes pennies or other coins are left behind. In the Fall, more flowers or beer cans and in the cold Winter, the grave is usually bare. At Christmas, no one places any holiday decorations for either Al or the rest of his family.

This summer, I stopped by on my usual Al Capone visit. To my surprise, four of Al's siblings' monuments were not there! Their grave markers were located directly in front of Al and his parents. Since I had not heard of anything on the news about the markers being stolen, I didn't know what to think. Were they stolen? Did someone want a souvenir to show their friends? Would they also return to take Al's marker? Will Al's ghost haunt the person or persons who did this?

I will stop by again in a few weeks to see what has occurred. In the meantime, Al Capone's ghost could be on the prowl searching for his family's missing grave stones. All I know is that I would not want to be one of his victims because Al's ghost might come to haunt me on a spooky night. Who knows?

Submitted by: Linda Haluska, GRS member, Willow Springs, Illinois.



Report on the Bell Case

By

William Hauck

Date: 1817 to the present.

Location: Adams, Tennessee. The town is 36 miles north of Nashville on U.S. Hwy 41.

Type of Case: Unique Spirit Manifestation with Poltergeist Effects.

Summary:

Problems at the 1,000-acre Bell farm started in 1817, when John Bell sighted a strange, dog-like animal in his cornfield. When he aimed his rifle at it, the creature dissolved into thin air. That same week, a huge, grotesque turkey-like bird was sighted. Another time, the strange presence took the form of a giant rabbit. Then, the family began hearing scratching on the doors and windows as if something were trying to get in. Finally, gnawing and thumping sounds started coming from inside the house. Within a year, the mysterious presence had grown so strong that the whole farmhouse shook with clashing and clanging sounds, loud garbled utterances, and tortured gasps.

Most of the activity seemed to center around 13-year-old Elizabeth "Betsy" Bell. While her brothers Richard, Joel, Williams and Drewry were harassed by the poltergeist, Betsy suffered brutal yanking on her long hair and invisible blows to her face that left ugly bruises. Then, she started having seizures and lost consciousness for hours. Another brother, John Jr., and the mother, Lucy Bell, were never bothered by the spirit.

Amazingly, the spirit began to speak. At first, it spoke only in a whisper, then its voice grew so loud that witnesses had to cover their ears. When asked who it was, the spirit played jokes on the Bells, telling them it was the ghost of an Indian maiden, an immigrant who buried treasure on the Bell's land, and a murdered peddler. Finally, it said, "I am a spirit from everywhere. I am in the air, in houses, any place at any time. I've been created millions of years ago. I was once very happy, but I have been disturbed and made unhappy." Oddly, the spirit never again spoke of itself in terms of gender and preferred people to use the androgynous pronoun "it".

One witness described the voice of the spirit in these words: "It commenced whistling when spoken to, in a low, broken sound, as if trying to speak in a whistling voice, and in this way progressed. The voice gradually gained strength in articulating

and soon utterances became distinct in a low whisper so as to be understood in the absence of any other sound."

As Kate grew in strength, John Bell appealed for help to the family minister, James Johnson, who performed an exorcism. When that did not work, the minister organized a committee of parishioners, who kept watch over the Bells and documented the supernatural assaults. They dubbed the presence the "Bell Witch," and before long the whole countryside descended on the farm, hoping to witness the inexplicable phenomenon.

Even future-president Andrew Johnson came to the Bell farm to confront the spirit. As his carriage neared the house, all four wheels suddenly froze up. Each one was removed and inspected, but no problem could be found. Then, the spirit's voice came from a ditch on the side of the road and allowed them to continue. Jackson finally left in defeat after dishes and furniture were hurled at him. "I wish no more dealings with that torment," he said.

The added attention caused the Bell Witch to grow even stronger. The voice would quote from Scripture and attack local residents for their immoral behavior. It even attended church services, as scores of witnesses heard it argue with the minister's sermon.

But the voice directed the brunt of its attack on John Bell and declared that he must die. Some say the Bell Witch was the spirit of Kate Batts, a cantankerous woman to whom John Bell had proposed marriage, when he lived in Halifax, North Carolina. The woman's body was found near a well on her property in the late 1770s, and soon afterwards, John married Lucy Williams and moved to Tennessee.

Whatever the true identity of the Bell Witch, John Bell was mercilessly beaten by the unseen foe and his tongue became so swollen that he could barely eat. Before long, he was bedridden and sinking fast. The doctor prescribed a tonic, but the spirit bragged that it switched the tonic with a dark-colored poison. "I've got him this time," it bellowed, "He will never get up from the bed again." John Bell went into a coma and died on December 21, 1820. Afterwards, the murderous spirit left the house, promising to return in seven years.

Historical:

The Bell Witch kept its promise and returned in 1827 for two weeks. Then it promised to return to wreck havoc on the country and John Bell's descendants in 107 years, at the height of the Great Depression. In the meantime, Joel Bell encountered further manifestations in 1852, and his son felt he was visited by the Bell Witch in 1861, at the beginning of the Civil War.

In 1934, the year the witch promised to return, nothing manifested in the homes of Bell's descendants, although many of them alive in that year seem to have met violent deaths. John Elijah Bell I, a Memphis lawyer, was struck and killed by an ambulance rushing someone to the hospital. Another relative, Robert Adam Sr. burnt to death in a suspicious fire in his Gulfport

home in 1968. His wife committed suicide four months later. In 1969, the widow of John Elijah Bell II was killed by a mysterious nerve disease which left her with a stiff throat and unable to talk. Descendant Carney Bell believes the witch led him to the grave of a lost relative in 1975.

John Bell's farmhouse was demolished by fear-filled local residents, but the Bell property still exists. It is located in Robertson County along the Red River, near the Kentucky state line. In the 1980s, the apparition of a dark-haired woman was seen floating across part of the former Bell property, and Carney Bell has recently reported further strange events at his home in Springfield, Tennessee. A cave on the former Bell land, dubbed the Bell Witch Cave, is still haunted by the sounds of chains rattling and inhuman screams. The apparition of a girl, floating across U.S. Highway 41, has been struck by several bewildered motorists, and eerie balls of lights have been reported hovering over the old Bell farm.

A Tennessee Historical Commission road marker on U.S. Highway 41 commemorates the site of the Bell farm, and a stone monument has been erected in memory of the Bell family. A smooth gravel driveway leads up to where the house once stood. Tours of the cave on the old Bell property have been conducted by the present owner, W.M. Eden of Adams, Tennessee. John Bell is buried in the cemetery at Adams. Betsy Bell died in 1890 in Panola County, Mississippi, at the age of 86.

Remarks:

This unique, puzzling, and very well documented case is widely regarded as America's greatest ghost story. Without any doubt, a malicious and powerful force plagued the Bell family for four horrible years and ended in the only murder by a poltergeist ever reported in North America. Descendants of John Bell are still bothered by their "family problem."

But what is even more amazing is that this spirit is very likable. It exhibited both good and bad aspects. Despite its hatred of John Bell, it had great respect for the "powerful souls" of Mrs. Bell and John Jr. The spirit could be very loving and tender with some people and even sang hymns during community sewing circles. At other times, it attacked human pettiness and greed, exposing hypocrisy and lies in nearly every household in Robertson County. Even the darkest family secrets, including incest and adultery, were exposed.

The spirit also had definite opinions on the proper interpretation of Biblical verses and even prophesied the future. It predicted the Civil War, the Great Depression, World Wars I and II, and the end of the world in a holocaust of fire. Many of the prophesies have been kept from the public by family and church members. Never in the history of paranormal phenomena has such a powerful and sympathetic spirit appeared.

It is as if the Bell Witch was really America's own spirit guide, our own national angel, come to expose good and evil in our society, reveal our deepest soul, and even predict the country's

future. The mercurial Bell Witch was more powerful, more articulate, and exhibited more "personality" than any of the oracles of ancient Greece, of for that matter, than any other alleged presence channeled by mediums through all of recorded history.

Submitted by: Dennis William Hauck, California State Coordinator for the GRS, PO Box 22201, Sacramento, CA. 95822. Mr. Hauck is also the author of the newly revised and released book, *The National Directory of Haunted Places*, recently published by Penguin Books. He will be in Chicago during the weekend of October 25-27th on a book signing campaign and is tentatively scheduled as a guest on one of *Excursions Into The Unknown* bus tours for that weekend.

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Press Releases

Author Reveals Newport's Ghostly Presence

NEWPORT - Don't let the pretty scenery fool you. Beyond the beaches, mansions and colonial homes, there is a mysterious, more spook-tacular side to Newport, Rhode Island, one that is often seen but rarely documented in tourist guides.

"Newport is a paranormal playground," according to Eleyne Austen Sharp, author of the newly released *Haunted Newport: Spectral Sightings of the Nearly Departed*. Ms. Sharp interviewed at least one hundred residents during her research. "Everyone I spoke to was excited about the book. They wanted to talk about their ghosts and other people's ghosts and they wanted me to believe they saw them. It was as if I had released a huge burden by giving them an opportunity to share their supernatural experiences no matter how incredible their stories may seem."

In a fascinating account of local legends and testimonials, Ms. Sharp has unearthed the ghoulish secrets of Admiral Farragut Inn, Belcourt Castle, Cliffside Inn, Glen Farm, Hydrangea House, The Inn at Shadow Lawn, La Petite Auberge, Prescott Farm, Purgatory Chasm, Salve Regina University, Vernon House, White Horse Tavern and many others. The book includes interviews with local psychics and Ed Warren, an internationally-known ghostbuster whose work has taken him from North America to Australia.

As the owner of one of several inns featured in the book, Randy Fabricant says his ghosts are welcome to stay at The Inn at Shadow Lawn as long as they wish and doubts their presence will scare away guests. "However," he admits, "since Ms. Sharp's investigation, there has been a big flurry of ghostly activity here."

A longtime journalist, editor and copywriter, Ms. Sharp is the founder and executive director of the nonprofit Community Writers Association which sponsors the annual Newport Writers Conference. Recently, she formed Austin Sharp, a book publishing and film company, with plans to produce nonfiction and children's books, feature length films and consumer videos.

Haunted Newport: Spectral Sightings of the Nearly Departed is sold for \$9.95 at bookstores throughout New England. To order, contact: Carl Battey at 401-847-7030.

Author Request

Debra Munn, contributing member living in Brighton, England is looking for stories of famous writers who have experienced psychic phenomena of all kinds. She is also interested in true stories involving the ghosts of writers. Send your accounts and stories to: Debra Munn, 46 Windsor Court, Windsor Street, Brighton BN1 1RS, England or call: 01273 747 200.

Book & Video Reviews

Seeing Ghosts with Richard Senate (Peter Kuehn Productions, Inc., PO Box 5269, Ventura, CA. 93005, 805-647-4905, video, \$29.95 plus \$4.00 shipping/handling, 60 minutes, 1996)

Longtime contributor to Ghost Trackers newsletter, Richard Senate, the first ghosthunter to appear in People Magazine, has put together a very interesting how-to video about the investigative techniques of ghostbusting. Not only does he tell you how to properly interview people, collect data and conduct the actual investigation, he gives you insight into some of his past investigations and shows you inexpensive equipment that you can make and use yourself for investigating the fascinating world of ghosts.

Professionally shot and reproduced, this video is one not to be missed especially if you are a novice in the field and wish to devote your lifetime to hunting these elusive creatures we call ghosts. Mr. Senate has a no nonsense approach to the field and follows along with the mainstream theories that all parapsychologists and other ghost hunters agree with. Follow Mr. Senate on actual investigations into haunted houses and places. This is definitely one video that should be added to your collection of paranormal videos. I've never come across a similar video of a similar nature yet! Rated a 7 in a 1-10 scale.

Reviewed by: Dale Kaczmarek

The Amityville Horror Conspiracy by Stephen Kaplan

I wish to bring to the attention of our readers a new book which debunks the story of the infamous Amityville Horror. As a matter of fact, the exact title of the book is The Amityville Horror Conspiracy. It is written by Stephen Kaplan and published by Belfrey Books. Belfrey Books is the imprint of my own editor, Sharon Jarvis. So I suppose I have a remote financial interest in the whole thing. Sharon edited the True Tales of the Unknown series to which I contributed so brilliantly. That series will soon be reprinted as a one-volume trade paperback with illustrations under the Belfrey imprint.

To refresh everyone's memories, Amityville was a "big deal" murder case in 1974 which led into an even bigger horror story which became a best-selling book and then a movie which grossed 35 million. "There's gold in them thar hills." Ronald DeFeo killed six members of his family with a rifle. He confessed and was found guilty and sent to prison. He talked about mental influences that caused him to do it. Then the Lutz family bought the house and soon began telling the press about how they had unsuspectingly bought a mass murder house that was haunted by a "pig from hell" and floors that dripped with green ooze. There was even a priest in the plot. He was supposedly run off the road for his trouble in

attempting an exorcism. A 250 pound door was supposedly shattered by mental forces. After a month-long "Hell Week", they abandoned the house and have been making a living out of talking about it ever since. This includes a pre-history of an Indian burial ground conveniently located under the premises.

Enter author Stephen Kaplan. His investigation indicates that DeFeo never claimed that his obsession was of a psychic nature. The "pig from hell" seems to be the oversized pussy cat next door who was in the habit of invading the house. No one besides the Lutz family ever saw the green ooze or any residue thereof. There was no smashed door on the house nor any local record of repair of same. No priest of the diocese ever performed such an exorcism let alone suffered a mysterious car wreck in which the hood of the car blocked his vision. Yes, a priest did talk to the family, but it was only about an annulment of Mrs. Lutz previous marriage and the conference did not take place on the premises. There was no known Indian graveyard within 70 miles.

What the Lutz family seems to have done, is to take the hot ingredients from every ghost story from the beginning of time and baked them into a one-month scenario. Takes a good cook!

The book details media discussions of this burning question from day one on. It is out of the oven and cold by the time he gets done with it. But along the way, many nationally known personalities just could not resist taking a piece of the pie. It proved too hot for anybody but the Lutz family. But it tastes pretty good cold.

Reviewed by: Maurice Schwalm

More Civil War Ghosts by Susan Crites (Butternut Publications, PO Box 1851, Martinsburg, WV. 25401, 1994, \$5.00, 34 pages, softbound, ISBN: 1-881562-11-5)

Any book that combines ghosts and the Civil War immediately attracts my attention as I am an avid Civil War enthusiast and with the possibility of paranormal activity surrounding these battlefields, I become even more excited and interested. This book, while not mentioning any exact Civil War battlefield sites, does go into ghost encounters and paranormal events that have happened in close proximity to smaller skirmishes and lesser known sites. Many of these stories happened on private property and were told to the author right at the location where it occurred.

A rather short but nevertheless interesting book especially if you are into the Civil War as I am. I did find one major flaw in the book under an "Author's Note" on page 4 following the retelling of the story *The Shed*, and I quote: "...In the corner, a bloody rag had been discarded. I walked over to it and saw writing just above it. The words read, 'Private Hanson died here. February 11, 1863.' As I looked at the words, I realized that the night before had been February 11. Union troops from Maine and Pennsylvania were in Washington County following the Battle on that date in 1863. Active skirmishing took place between the armies as Lee and

his troops escaped across the Potomac into the safety of (West) Virginia."

The battle of Gettysburg didn't take place until July 1, 2 and 3 of 1863 and not around the middle of February. I have reread that passage many times and, in my opinion, that's what it appears to indicate. Perhaps though, I'm missing something or some hidden meaning to the passage.

Rated a 4 in a 1-10 scale.

Reviewed by: Dale Kaczmarek

/// **Kentucky Ghosts by William Lynwood Montell** (The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, KY. 40508-4008, 1994, 58 pages, softbound, ISBN: 0-8131-0909-4)

I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Montell while visiting Mammoth Cave, Kentucky many years ago and not long after he wrote the book, *Ghosts Along The Cumberland*. I visited with him at Western Kentucky University at Bowling Green. He was very congenial and friendly and we talked for a spell about hauntings and folklore in the area.

The eight stories presented in the book do not indicate where they came from and pseudonyms were used instead of real names. The stories were short but interesting and a few were taken from his first book *Ghosts Along The Cumberland*. Some tend to be more closely associated with folklore and legends than actual paranormal encounters, especially the story, "Popular Foot, the Dancing Road Haint."

A small and curious collection of stories which might keep you occupied for a couple of hours. That's the amount of time I finished the entire book in. Rated a 4 in a 1-10 scale.

Reviewed by: Dale Kaczmarek

Haunted Tennessee by Charles Edwin Price (The Overmountain Press, Johnson City, Tennessee, 1995, \$9.95, softcover, 129 pages, ISBN: 1-57072-037-1)

This is only the second book that I have come across in my searches that covers the state of Tennessee. Apparently either there isn't a large population of ghosts in Tennessee or nobody wishes to discuss or write about them. Even in my visits to the state, I found it quite difficult to retrieve information about haunted locations from locals. Much of the state is a Bible belt and heavily Southern Baptist which don't talk much about ghosts and spirits.

I found this to be an extremely easy book to read and of course no book on Tennessee ghosts would be complete without a mention of the infamous or famous, take your pick, Bell Witch haunting. It's the longest story in the book. I had a chance to visit the area near Adams while visiting the state.

I especially enjoyed the stories "Ghost Lights of the

Cumberlands", "The Ghosts of Tennessee High" and "The Library Ghost". Many others were equally interesting and new as I've not come across these in other books on Tennessee spirits. Rated a 7 in a 1-10 scale.

Reviewed by: Dale Kaczmarek

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Pulling Back the Curtain by Ed Okonowicz (Myst and Lace Publishers, 1386 Fair Hill Lane, Elkton, MD. 21921, 1994, \$8.95 plus \$1.50 postage/handling, 57 pages, softbound, ISBN: 0-9643244-0-7)

The first in a series of regional books subtitled, *Spirits Between the Bays* by author and Delaware State Coordinator, Ed Okonowicz. This book, as the others that follow it, have true stories and a section on legends and lore which is always entertaining. This book has stories about phantom cats, ghostly odors and of course apparitions!

I found the stories to be highly interesting and related in an, easy-to-read format that makes you feel that the author is talking directly to you while relating the various stories. Of course, no book would be complete without a headless horseman story or, for that matter, a tale of buried treasure. *Pulling Back the Curtain* has both and they are great! Rated a 6 in a 1-10 scale.

Reviewed by: Dale Kaczmarek

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World of Strange Phenomena by Charles Berlitz (Fawcett Crest Book, Published by Ballantine Books, 1988, 331 pages, paperback, \$4.95, ISBN: 0-449-21825-2)

From the author who gave you *The Philadelphia Experiment*, *The Mystery of Atlantis* and *The Bermuda Triangle* comes another book devoted to all sorts of weird and strange phenomena from all the corners of the earth. The table of contents goes on for almost eleven pages telling you, right off the bat, that the stories enclosed are rather short but well told. Some are less than a page long while others are several.

Some of the topics covered include: vengeful ghosts, strange moons of Mars, human lightning rods, bleeding walls, spontaneous human combustion, firestarters, UFOs, poltergeists, falling frogs, vampires, ESP, phone calls from the dead, witches, near-death experiences, spirit possession, angels, psychic mind control, sasquatch, psychic detective, kirlian photography, Nostradamus, crystal skull, phantom hitchhikers, folklore, out-of-body experiences, men in black and other topics just too numerous to mention.

Many of the stories included in the book are well-known to the paranormalist and Fortean alike. Others aren't so well known and need to be told. A truly marvelous collection of extraordinary phenomena all wrapped together in one book. Rated a 6 in a 1-10 scale.

From Beyond: The World of Spirits Video (Simitar Entertainment Inc., Plymouth, MN. 55447, 1995, approximately 90 minutes)

A very poor attempt at the making of a video tape! The only images were artwork and the nagging narration of the host only succeeded in putting my asleep! While there was talk about spirits a lot of the other dialogue concerned, in my opinion, totally unrelated subjects including: angels, reincarnation, out-of-body experiences and telepathy.

From Beyond: The World of Spirits should have presented exactly that; SPIRITS and nothing else. The title is misleading and the video slopedly put together. Besides that they used copyrighted material and pictures, including one that I gave Rosemary Ellen Guiley for a recent book in the video without getting permission from the copyright holder, me!

I would pass on this sleeper and spend your money somewhere else like on a good book. You won't learn much from this video! Rated a 1 in a 1-10 scale! Forget it!!

Reviewed by: Dale Kaczmarek

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A COLLECTION OF GRS APPEARANCES VIDEO and Mr. Dale Kaczmarek can now be obtained directly from the GRS. This video tape in VHS format only, shows the various segments and specials Dale Kaczmarek has been a guest on from 1984 to the present. Segments included come from *AM Chicago*, *Chicago Ghost Stories*, *Sightings*, *Encounters: The Hidden Truth*, *The Other Side*, *Mysteries*, *Magic & Miracles*, *Rolanda* and various local television specials and news programs. This video is **FREE** for a suggested donation of \$30.00 to the GRS. Make check payable to: **Dale Kaczmarek** and mail it to: Ghost Research Society, PO Box 205, Oak Lawn, IL. 60454-0205. Please allow 2-4 weeks for delivery.

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Opportunity to
Explore the Unknown!**



An expert in his field RICHARD SENATE has been researching ghosts and hauntings since 1978 after an encounter of his own.

He's conducted hundreds of investigations at such places as *Alcatraz Island* and the *Queen Mary*. He was the very first Ghost Hunter to appear in *People* magazine. TV appearances have included such shows as *Merv Griffin*, *Paranormal Borderline*, *Mid Morning LA*, *AM San Francisco* and numerous times on *Sightings*.

In this nearly one-hour-long HOW-TO video, Senate demonstrates how you too can conduct your own Ghost Hunt using simple inexpensive tools and instruments.

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