

Paranormal Underground™

Volume 3, Issue 2

February 2010

**A REVIEW OF
EVP BASICS**

**THE CROSS
ON THE CAR:
A PERSONAL
EXPERIENCE**

**BY THE LIGHT
OF THE
FULL MOON**

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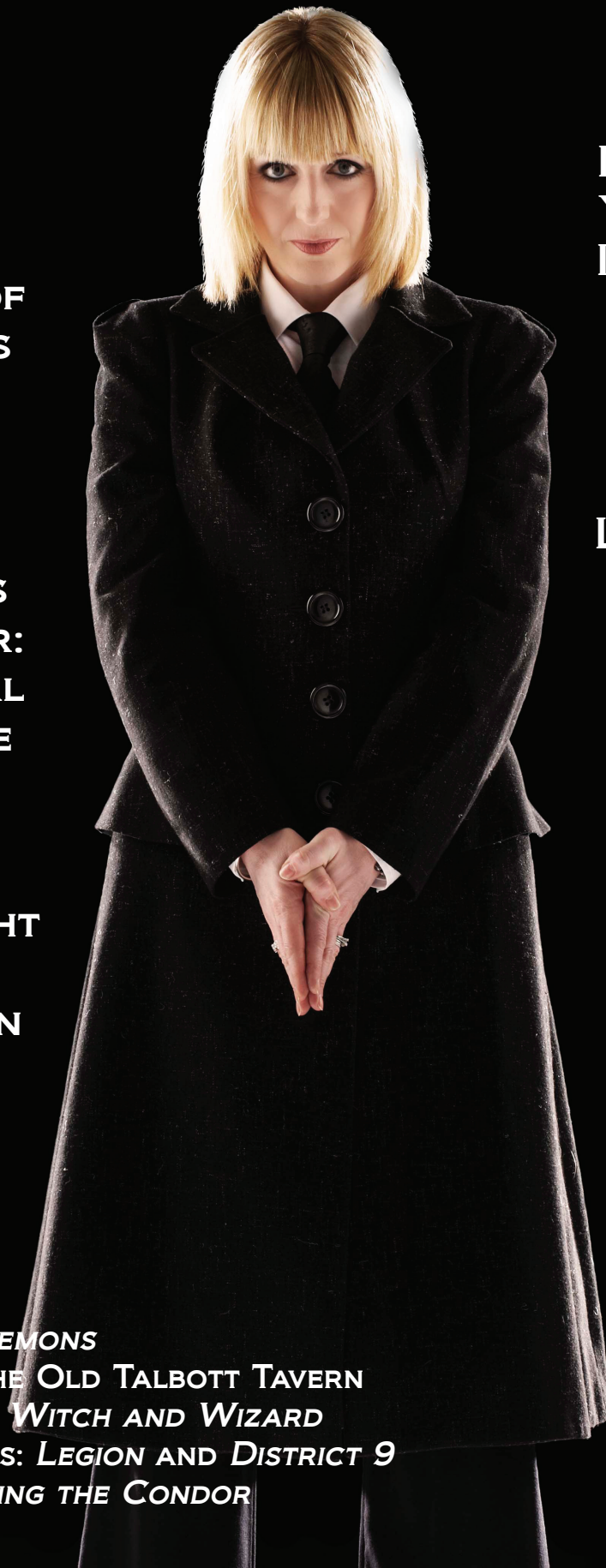
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- **CASE FILES: THE OLD TALBOTT TAVERN**
- **BOOK REVIEW: *WITCH AND WIZARD***
- **MOVIE REVIEWS: *LEGION* AND *DISTRICT 9***
- **FICTION: *DANCING THE CONDOR***

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YVETTE FIELDING:
IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

**THE STORY OF
LURANCY VENNUM**

**OTHERWORLDLY
ENCOUNTERS AT
NDSU**

**INSIGHTS FROM A
NEW PARANORMAL
INVESTIGATOR**



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Seeing the Light in Every Person
... Every Day



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Heidi Ann

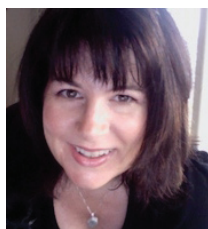
Heidi Ann has been a paranormal enthusiast since childhood when she had her own encounter. Her personal experience led her to question the world around her.



Heidi is a mother of three sons, works as a special education paraprofessional in a middle school, and loves watching television shows and reading books on the paranormal.

Karen Frazier

Karen is the managing editor of *Paranormal Underground* magazine. After living in a WWII-era apartment 20 years ago where unexplainable things happened, Karen began to search for answers about the paranormal.



Now she combines that interest with her professional experience as a copy writer and technical writer to help bring *Paranormal Underground* to the public. Karen is a partner with Ghost Knight Media.

Terri J. Garofalo

Terri is a paranormal investigator, as well as the author and illustrator of *Entities-R-Us*, a Ghost Hunter Comic. For more information, visit www.entities-r-us.com.



Rick E. Hale

A native of Chicago, Rick is the cofounder of the Greater Illinois Ghost Society. A paranormal

researcher since the age of eight, Rick is happily married and digs Jazz.

He believes in the use of the scientific method in gathering evidence of paranormal claims. Rick can be contacted at t_seeker@hotmail.com.



Katie Hamness

Katie of Strathcona, Minnesota, is a 22-year-old senior at Minnesota State University Moorhead. She is working toward a double major in journalism and graphic design with a minor/emphasis in photography. Her career ambition is to someday write and design for a well-known magazine company or newspaper.



In her spare time, Katie enjoys spending time with family and friends, writing, singing, and reading. And, just like most women in today's society, her guilty pleasures are shoes, handbags, and ice cream!

Joy Healey

Joy is the online publisher of health information at www.nutrition-4all.co.uk. With a background in computing, she changed careers and qualified as a nutritionist in 2000 at the Institute for Optimum Nutrition in London.



According to Joy, one of her interests outside of her business is UFOs, because "when you dismiss the quackery, there are some very credible reports out there." For more information, visit www.project-blue-book.com.

Carolyn M. Hughes

As a night manager in a haunted hotel on the Gettysburg battlefield, Carolyn has had ghostly experiences both at work and while on the battlefield. She considers the ghosts of the soldiers that haunt Gettysburg as 'her boys.'



Carolyn shares her experiences with *Paranormal Underground* in her column, *Diary of a Haunted Hotel*.

Caitlin King

After Caitlin's first paranormal experience at the early age of nine, she began researching the field of the unknown. She's particularly fascinated with astrology, demonology, ESP, OBE, and psychokinesis.



Caitlin is a paranormal investigator and photographer with Haunted South Paranormal Research, a not-for-profit team based in Tampa, Florida. As an investigator, her goal is to gain a better understanding of the paranormal, while helping others to understand as well.

Cheryl Knight

Cheryl is editor-in-chief of *Paranormal Underground* magazine. She has been a professional writer and editor for more than 20 years. Cheryl is combining her writing, editing, and design talents — along with a fascination of the paranormal — to bring you *Paranormal Underground*



each month.

Her previous magazine experience includes roles as Senior and Managing Editor for several niche-market publications. Cheryl is a partner for Ghost Knight Media (www.ghostknightmedia.com).

Kim Kowalczyk

Kim is the founder of Ghost Breakers Paranormal Research Organization and has more than 30 years of experience



investigating the paranormal in the U.S. and abroad. He is a retired criminal investigator, and has also been an investigator for the U.S. Army, worked for the Juvenile Justice Commission, and was an undercover detective with the Pinkerton's Detective Agency.

Kim has formal education and training in crime scene processing and evidence collecting, disciplines he uses in paranormal investigation.

Richard Lombardi

Richard is 39 years old and lives in Sarasota, Florida. He has worked in the movie theater industry for 15 years.



Richard has always been interested in the paranormal, movies, and TV shows since childhood. "I am also lucky enough to have had an extra bit as a zombie in a movie, called *After Sundown*, which was a lot of fun."

New England Society of Paranormal Investigators

The New England Society of Paranormal Investigators is a non-profit corporation with a mission "to

scientifically investigate, capture, and document the existence of true paranormal activity."

Always with an eye toward the skeptical, the group's experience shows that about 80 percent of reported activity can be explained away and/or shown to be caused by very normal conditions or occurrences. Visit <http://nespi.net/> for more information.



Rich Newman

Rich lives in Memphis, Tennessee, and is the author of two books. He recently released his first feature film, *Ghosts of War*, a documentary about haunted Civil War sites.



In his spare time, he researches and investigates the paranormal with his group Paranormal Inc. You can contact Rich at info@paranormalincorporated.com.

Michelle M. Pillow

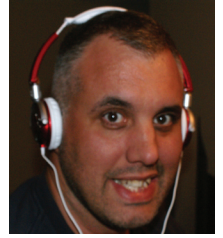
Michelle is an award-winning author writing in many romance fiction genre, including futuristic and paranormal. A skeptical believer, she has a fascination with anything paranormal.



She's also a photographer and cohost of Raven Radio. Readers and listeners can contact Michelle through her Website, www.michellepillow.com. You can catch her latest three book series, *Realm Immortal* (*King of the Unblessed*; *Faery Queen*; and *Stone Queen*) in bookstores in January 2010.

Chad Wilson

A writer of articles and fiction, Chad is the publisher of *Paranormal Underground* and a partner for Ghost Knight Media (www.ghostknightmedia.com). He has parlayed his avid interest in the paranormal into a top-notch publication and Website – *Paranormal Underground*.



Chad has investigated with East Tennessee Paranormal Research Society and counts Waverly Hills, the Villisca Axe Murder House, the Queen Mary, the Queen Anne Hotel, and private residences among his investigations. ■

**THE TEAM AT
PARANORMAL
UNDERGROUND
WOULD LIKE TO
GIVE A BIG
THANK YOU
TO OUR
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**THANK
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Space Age Prejudice

With the recent discovery of a plethora of Earth-like exoplanets, that is planets in other solar systems, I don't think it's a matter of if there is other life in the Universe, but more a matter of when we will we discover these other life forms.

With the storied history of racism and prejudice on our planet, I am led to wonder how will we, as a species, react when we eventually meet face to face with life on other planets and more specifically, how we will react to other forms of life that are different than our own?

Knowing the human species and its propensity to segregate and ostracize that which it doesn't understand, will we be able to fit into Galactic society with our common hang-ups over race, beliefs, gender, and the like?

Imagine if you will a life form based not on water, but say methane. Will we even consider the members of that species as being on the same level as us humans? Even more extreme, say we come across a life form that is like a bacteria. They might seem small and insignificant to us due to their

size, but what do we know?

We define life according to our limited, Earth-bound view. We have only stepped out into our own solar system in the past 50 or so years, let alone a Galaxy that could very well be infinite in its scope.



**Chad Wilson,
Publisher**

Maybe this is why we are approached with apprehension by supposed alien visitors. Any extraterrestrial species who has observed our history will see us for what we are, a self-destructive species full of bigotry and hate.

Yes, we can also be compassionate, kind, and caring, but the former makes us less attractive as a species, even with the latter taken into account.

So, what are we to do as a species? Hopefully, in time we will grow and leave behind our tendency to try to control, conquer, and even destroy that which is different. Only then do I think we will be accepted by whatever other life are out there. ■

Want to give your views on paranormal topics? We welcome your comments on our forum at www.paranormalunderground.net/site/forum/. Please join in on the discussions!

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PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS

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TRANS-ALLEGHENY LINATIC ASYLUM

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THE DEADLY CURSE OF DODLEYTOWN

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HAUNTED HISTORY
HAUNTINGS AT THE BAKER HOTEL

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GHI's Robb DEMAREST
INTERNATIONAL GHOST HUNTER

AVALANCHE OF SPIRITS
THE GHOSTS OF WELLINGTON

DEMON DOGS ON DOOM
TALES OF HORROR FROM HELL

NWPIA
EXPLORING THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

THE QUEEN MARY
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**SO YOU WANT TO BE A
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ALIEN ABDUCTION ISSUE

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UFO RESEARCHER

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- GHOST HUNTER CASE FILE #1:
WAVERLY HILLS SANATORIUM

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Yvette Fielding Is in the Spotlight

In this issue of *Paranormal Underground* magazine, we profile *Most Haunted*'s iconic host and paranormal investigator Yvette Fielding, who has led the British TV "paranormal revolution" since her show hit the airwaves in 2002.

It didn't take long for the show's unusual formula to hit home with TV audiences, and *Most Haunted* quickly became one of the Living channel's highest-rated original shows of all time. In our Investigator Spotlight on page 16, Fielding provides insights on why the program was created and how she feels about speculation that the show is faked.

In this month's Special Reports, we hear from Caitlin King, a new investigator with Haunted South Paranormal Research. Caitlin advocates a more cohesive effort in research to move us closer to unlocking the answers the paranormal field continues to search for.

And in "A Review of EVP Basics," contributed by the New England Society of Paranormal Investigators/Cape Cod Ghost Hunter, we detail EVP history, EVP recording basics, how to ask questions during an EVP session, and warnings and considerations.

Our Case Files of the Unknown section features the otherworldly encounters at the NDSU campus, the amazing story of 12-year-old Lurancy Vennum, a look at werewolf legends and lore, and early attitudes toward UFO reports.

This issue's TV Watch reviews the BBC America show *Demons*, which features a group of teens



who team up to battle half-lives: vampires, demons, werewolves, etc. Their single goal is to rid the world of these terrible demons.

And, of course, our personal experiences section wouldn't be complete without *Diary of a Haunted Hotel*, *Ghost Hunter Case Files: The Old Talbott Tavern*, and *The Cross on the Car* (one investigator's personal brush with the paranormal during his youth.)

Check out our book and movie reviews on page 58 for assessments on the book *Witch and Wizard*, and the movies *Legion* and *District 9*. And turn to page 46 to read Chad Wilson's paranormal fiction story, *Dancing the Condor*.

Thanks to all of our writers, editors, and designers this issue!

I'd also like to announce the new Paranormal Underground Gear Store, which features PUG-logo T-shirts, mugs, bumper stickers, calendars and a whole lot more! Visit www.cafepress.com/paranormalUG to view our products!

I hope you enjoy this issue.
Happy reading! ■

~ Cheryl Knight
Editor-in-Chief

Paranormal Underground™

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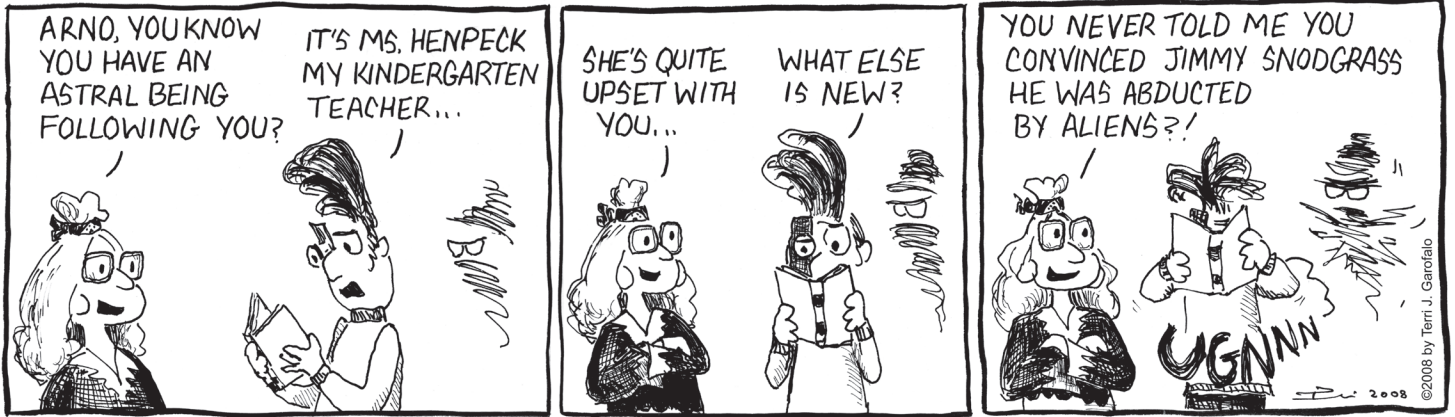
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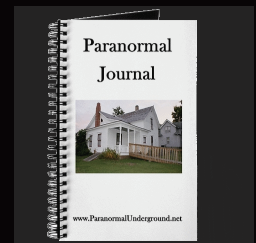
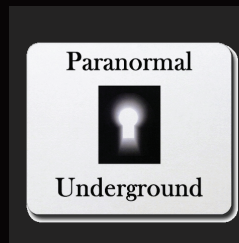
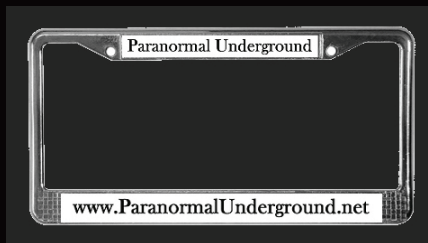
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February 21-27



International UFO Conference
Aquarius Casino Resort
Laughlin, Nevada
<http://ufocongress.com/>

February 26-28

Gulf Coast ParaCon
Nix Center
Fairhope, Alabama
www.gulfcoastparacon.com

March 12-13

Southeast Texas Paranormal
Convention
Beaumont Civic Center, Texas
www.texasghostshow.com

March 12-14

Eastern Paranormal Investigators
Co-Op Conference
The Cavalier Hotel
Virginia Beach, Virginia
<http://epiccon.com>

March 25-28



Phenomenology 102
Eisenhower Hotel
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
www.phenomenology102.northeasternparanormal.org

April 9

Queen City Paranormal
Convention
Cincinnati, Ohio
Historic Music Hall
www.queencityparacon.com

May 7-8



Indiana Paranormal Convention
Danville, Indiana
www.indyparacon.com

May 8

Mission Paranormal Convention
1 p.m.-9 p.m. CDT
San Marcos, Texas
For more information, e-mail
alcaladora45@yahoo.com

May 15-16

Shadowz Paranormal and
Wellness Expo
Jackson County Fairgrounds
Pascagoula, Mississippi
<http://shadowzparanormal.com>

May 21-23

California Ghost Hunters Conference
Hampton Inn
Hayward, California
www.ghost-trackers.org/2010_conference.htm

June 25-26

Haunted America Midwest
Conference
Decatur, Illinois
www.americanspookshows.com

August 6-8



Canadian - American Paranormal
Convention
Quality Inn
Sarnia, Ontario, Canada
www.canamparacon.com

August 21-22

Second Annual Ohio Paranormal
Convention
Dayton, Ohio
www.ohioparacon.com/

August 27-28



Haunted America East Coast
Conference
Cape Cod Community College
West Barnstable, MA
www.americanspookshows.com

October 9-16

First Annual Paranormal Cruise
Norwegian Cruise Line's Epic
Miami, Florida
<http://wisdominlight.com/paranormalcruise2010.html>

October 29-29

Haunted Horrors Paranormal and
Film Convention
The Marriott MeadowView Confer-
ence Resort and Convention Center
Kingsport, Tennessee
www.thehauntedhorrors.com

November 5-7



ScareFest Horror & Paranormal
Convention
Lexington Center
Lexington, Kentucky
www.thescarefest.com

*Do you have an event that you'd
like us to announce? E-mail editor@
paranormalunderground.net with
your information.*

New Project Invites You to Try 100 Days of Namasté

The Namasté Project नमस्ते

The company that publishes *Paranormal Underground*TM magazine has a new project on tap that invites participants to spend 100 days trying to recognize the Light that shines in other people.

“Many of us encounter hundreds of people in any given week,” says Karen Frazier, director of production and public relations for Ghost Knight Media, LLC. “Most of them we barely notice. The Namasté Project invites you to not only take notice, but to try for just a moment to really see in them that which makes them Divine.”

According to Frazier, The Namasté Project is all about making the world a better place by making an internal shift in how you view others who inhabit the planet with you. The word Namasté is a commonly used greeting in South-east Asia that literally means, “The Light in me acknowledges the Light in you.”

Frazier, her husband Jim, and another couple – Chad Wilson and Cheryl Knight – are all attempting what the project coins “100 Days of Namasté.” They are chronicling their experiences on their Website, www.namasteproject.org, through video diaries, blogs, and personal diaries.

Others are invited to join in by pledging to try 100 Days of Namasté on the Website. Those who do participate can then choose to share their experiences in the site’s forums or by submitting personal experiences and video diaries that will be shared on the site.

New Zealand UFO Papers to Be Made Public

Hundreds of pages of secret files on New Zealand UFO sightings will be released by the New Zealand military this year, according to www.stuff.co.nz.

The files, which include reports of sightings from 1979 to 1984 and references to the Kaikoura sighting of December 1978, are held by Archives New Zealand. The Defense Force is removing personal information from the files to comply with the Privacy Act before making them public.

“At the moment we are working on making copies of these files, minus the personal information,” a Defense Force spokeswoman said, according to www.stuff.co.nz. “Once this work is completed, we are hoping to be able to release a copy of all the UFO files, including some ahead of their release time, within the year.”

The press had requested Defense Force files on UFO sightings under the Official Information Act in August of 2009. Suzanne Hansen, the director of research group UFOCUS NZ, said she was frustrated by the delayed release but understood the privacy reasons, the report said.



Ghostly Children Photographed at Cemetery?

A family recently said they took a ghostly photo while on a ghost tour in Picton, NSW, Australia, according to www.news.com.au. The family said the photo on the right shows the figures of two children, born nearly a century apart, walking in the cemetery. The family claimed there were no children inside the St. Mark’s Cemetery.



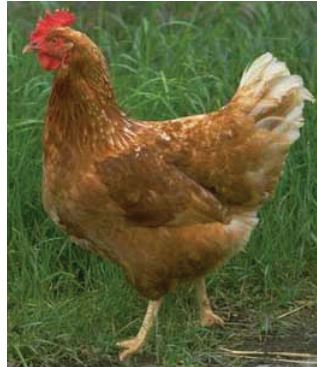
According to local legend, the ghostly figures are that of two children, David Shaw and Blanche Moon, who died 60 years apart. Blanche was crushed to death in 1886, and David died in 1946 from polio.

The woman who took the controversial photo, Renee English, said she was a skeptic before taking the ghost tour January 9.

“I know that when I took that photo there was no-one else in the cemetery. The only people we saw were a family of four about 10 minutes later, but those kids were clinging to their parents the whole time,” English said, according to www.news.com.au.

“El Chupacabra” Blamed for Chicken Deaths

After moving to the El Paso, Texas, area three years ago, Cesar Garcia and brother-in-law Juan Miranda were reportedly beset by strange and unexplained occurrences. Their rabbits went into hiding, their cat spent the weekend on the roof of their house, their roosters didn't crow, and their dogs didn't bark, according to www.elpasotimes.com. And at least 30 of their chickens have been killed.



The brothers now say that El Chupacabras are to blame for the bizarre activity.

“I saw the chickens were dead, but there was no blood around the sheet metal,” Garcia said, according to www.elpasotimes.com. “All of them were just dead in one big pile. But, really, I don't know what it was because there was no blood.”

Garcia also said he didn't recognize the wounds on some of the chickens, which he said were “two pokes.”

Why Hasn't ET Made Contact Yet?

After looking to the skies for the past 50 years in search of extraterrestrial intelligence, Frank Drake has come up empty. However, he is still convinced “they are” out there, according to www.bbc.co.uk.



While recently attending the Royal Society's discussion meeting – The Detection of Extraterrestrial Life and the Consequences for Science and Society – Drake said that searches for ET are difficult because of the size of the Milky Way.

Drake also said, “In searching for extraterrestrial life, we are both guided and hindered by our own experience. We have to use ourselves as a model for what a technological civilization must be, and this gives us guidance for what technologies might be present in the Universe. At the same time, this limits us because we are well aware that all the technologies that might be invented have not been invented; and in using ourselves as a model, we may not be paying attention to alternatives, as yet undiscovered and as yet unappreciated by us.”

What Drake is saying . . . while researchers usually listen for signs of intelligent life from space via radio signals, ET might be using a different technology altogether to communicate, including optical flashes.

The bottom line: Communication with ET will take awhile.

Researchers Claim Apalachicola B&B “Officially Haunted”



According to Big Bend Ghost Trackers of Tallahassee, Florida, the Coombs House Inn in Apalachicola, Florida, is “officially haunted,” reported to www.tallahassee.com.

After leading a recent seminar at the historic bed and breakfast, Ghost Trackers Lisa Guancial and Michael Williams presented Lynn and Bill Spohrer, the Coombs House owners, with a plaque declaring the inn officially haunted.

The Spohrers invited the Ghost Trackers to investigate on December 12 after multiple paranormal sightings over the years. And after only one night in Mr. Coombs' bed chamber, Room 8, the Ghost Trackers were ready to declare the property haunted.

“Someone came into the room twice during the night. The first time the door opened by itself and then closed. The second time the door opened again and something came in and stood at the foot of the bed,” said Guancial, according to www.tallahassee.com. “You know that feeling, when you are sure something's there, but you are afraid to look? That's what it was like.”

According to locals, the friendly spirits of Mr. Coombs and former innkeeper Anna Wilson reside in the Coombs House Inn.

"DEMONS" COMES TO U.S. VIA BBCAMERICA

BY HEIDI ANN

From the writers of British TV shows *Hex* and *Merlin*, comes a relatively new show called *Demons*. The show debuted in England in January 2009 and began its airing on BBCAmerica in January 2010.

A Young Van Helsing

Luke Rutherford (Christian Cooke) was like any teenage boy growing up in London. Hanging out with friends, going to school, worrying about tests, and hoping to get his driver's license were the biggest things going on in his life. However, after a break-in at his school, and the appearance of the American godfather he never knew, everything changes.

Luke's godfather, Rupert Galvin (Phillip Glenister), returns to let Luke know that he is really the great great-grandson of Abraham Van Helsing, the legendary hunter of half-lives: vampires, demons, werewolves, etc. His father, also a hunter, was killed in the line of duty when Luke was just a baby.

Luke's identity as the last heir in the line of Van Helsing's has been a closely guarded secret from the half-lives. The break-in at his school, orchestrated by Gladiolus Thirp (Mackenzie Crook), a type 12 entity, signals that Luke's identity is no longer a secret and his life is now in danger.

Galvin begins Luke's training so



The stars of the British TV show *Demon* team up to battle half-lives: vampires, demons, werewolves, etc. Their single goal is to rid the world of these terrible demons.

Pictured (left to right) are Ruby (Holliday Grainger), Luke (Christian Cooke), Rupert (Phillip Glenister), and Mina (Zoe Tapper).
Photo by: Sony

he can fulfill his family's destiny of destroying the array of demons that roam the Earth. He is shown "The Stacks" — his great great-grandfather's library, filled with books that contain all the information on half-lives that Luke will need to destroy them. It also contains the array of weapons used in "smiting" half-lives. He learns about the different types of entities, which are categorized by number. The higher the number, the smarter and more dangerous the entity is.

Never Hunt Demons Alone

Luke and Galvin are not alone in their quest to destroy the demons. Galvin introduces Luke to a beautiful, blind concert pianist, named

Mina Harker (Zoe Tapper). Mina turns out to be far more than she appears though. She has a sixth sense that allows her to read the history of items she touches. She also has a vast knowledge of all the entities Luke must hunt. But, Mina is hiding a secret of her own, as well as a shocking connection to the vampire Quincey (Ciaran McMenamin).

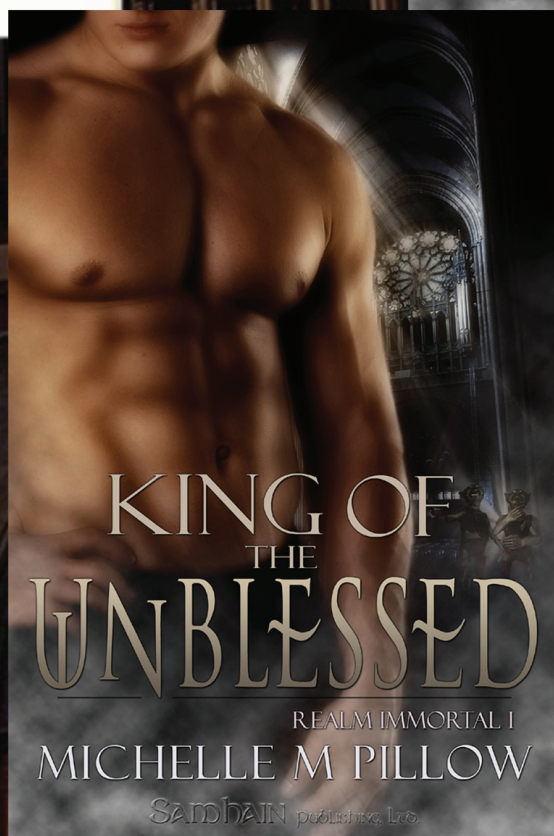
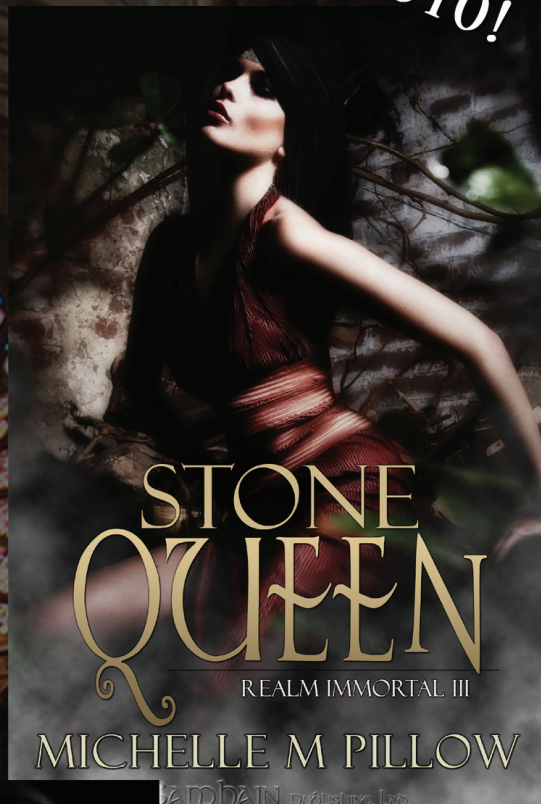
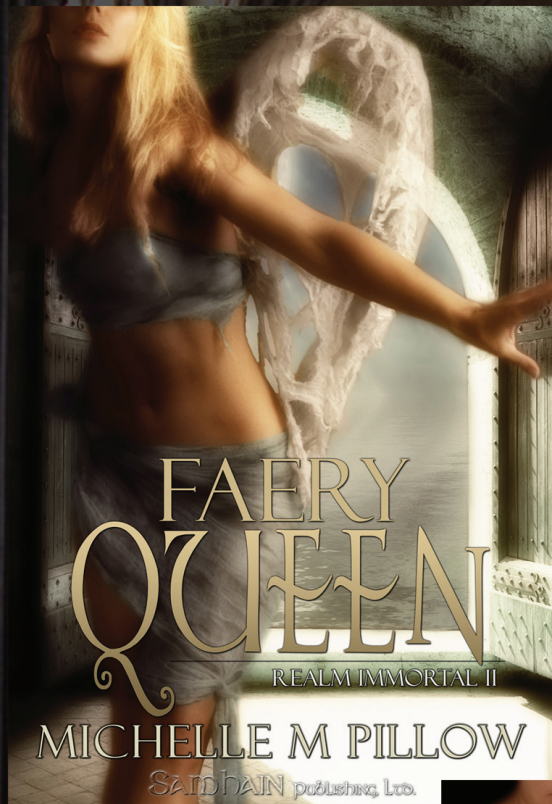
Luke's best friend Ruby (Holliday Grainger) is kidnapped by one of Thirp's underlings and unwittingly finds herself thrust into Luke's dangerous new life. Ruby, who is secretly in love with Luke, decides to join the others in their efforts to rid the world of half-lives.

As of now, there are no plans to do a second season of *Demons*. ■

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Yvette Fielding Brings the Paranormal to the Forefront

By Cheryl Knight

Yvette Fielding wasn't always known as the energetic and enthusiastic host of the hit British TV show *Most Haunted*. In fact, Fielding was first seen on British television screens at the young age of 13, in 1983, on the BBC children's sit-com *Seaview*.

She then joined another flagship BBC show in 1987, called *Blue Peter*, becoming the program's youngest-ever presenter at age 18.

Fielding left *Blue Peter* in 1992 and went on to present or appear in a range of shows, including *What's Up Doc?*, *Practical Parenting*, *Girl's Talk*, *Karaoke Challenge*, and *Well Being*. She also appeared on *Stars in Their Eyes*, *Never Mind the Buzzcocks*, *Richard and Judy*, and *The Paul O'Grady Show*.

In 2002, the iconic and controversial paranormal show *Most Haunted* was born after Fielding and her husband, Karl Beattie, established their own television production company, Antix Productions, and pitched the show to several networks. British TV channel Living picked up the show, which was an instant hit with audiences and remains one of Living's highest-rated original shows.

The show also airs in the United States on the Travel Channel, as well as in Australia, Canada, Sweden, Norway, New Zealand, Finland,



TV personality and paranormal investigator Yvette Fielding led the British TV "paranormal revolution" with her hit TV show *Most Haunted*, which began airing in 2002.

Iceland, and Asia.

The show's premise features paranormal investigators, parapsychologists, historians, and psychics who explore reportedly haunted sites throughout the UK, as well as an occasional investigation in the U.S., Ireland, the Netherlands, and Romania. The team uses a wide variety of equipment during their

investigations, including video cameras, EMF meters, Ouija boards, and thermal imaging cameras.

Most Haunted's success spiralled off into several other TV programs and specials, including *Most Haunted: Midsummer Murders*, *Most Haunted: Recurring Nightmares*, *Most Haunted USA*, *Most Haunted: The Live Series*, and



Pictured above is the current *Most Haunted* team, which includes Catherine Howe, Chris Conway, Dr. Ciarán O’Keeffe, Yvette Fielding, Karl Beattie, and Stuart Torevell.

Ghosthunting with . . .

And in 2008, Fielding and Beattie formed a new company, Monster Pictures, to operate a 24/7 paranormal channel.

Originally launched as The Paranormal Channel on June 9, 2008, it was re-branded as The Unexplained Channel in August 2009. The channel, anchored by Fielding, claims to be the first TV channel in the world dedicated to the paranormal. The station presents documentaries, dramas, and films on the paranormal. Current programming includes *Arthur C. Clarke’s Mysterious World* and *Strange But True*, as well as original programming such as *Ghosts of the Asylum*, *Whines and Spirits*, *Yvette’s Screaming Ban-*

shees, and *Phantom Photos*.

Yvette recently sat down and answered several of Paranormal Underground’s questions. Read on to find out more!

* * * * *

Q: Talk about your life before *Most Haunted*.

Yvette: My life before *Most Haunted* was quite busy. I had just given birth to our daughter, Mary, and my son, William, was five years old. So really I was a full-time mum and doing some presenting work on the side. I was very, very happy, and still am.

Q: How would you describe yourself?

Yvette: Quite outgoing, but quite shy in front of celebrities. I hate going to those celebrity parties. I prefer being at home with my husband, my kids, and my animals.

Q: What would our listeners and readers be surprised to find out about you?

Yvette: I’ve never seen a horror movie at all. I don’t watch horror movies because they absolutely terrify me, which is quite ironic.

Q: Did you have an interest in the paranormal before you created *Most Haunted*, and had you experienced anything paranormal prior to creating the show?



Prior to filming *Most Haunted*, TV personality Yvette Fielding had several paranormal experiences, including witnessing a full-bodied apparition.

Yvette: Yes, I had an interest in the paranormal before *Most Haunted*. We had a house that we lived in prior to making the show that was haunted, and we had to get it exorcised. That was quite a horrible occurrence.

And, I remember sleeping at my mum's house, waking up to find a WWII soldier standing at the bottom of my bed, which made me scream a lot.

Q: Are you at all psychic? If so, how?

Yvette: No, I'm not psychic. I don't believe many people are. I think that they think they are, but I don't think they truly are.

Q: Do you believe in an afterlife?

Yvette: Yes, I do believe in an afterlife. I know there is an afterlife. And I have proof there is an afterlife.

Q: What inspired *Most Haunted*?

Yvette: Karl Beattie, my husband, is an amazing man, and he's a very creative person. We both came up with the idea together. We sat up to 5 o'clock in the morning coming up with the idea.

We tried to sell it to various TV shows for six months, and they all slammed the doors in our faces, saying no one's interested in the paranormal. How wrong they all were.

Q: Since *Most Haunted* was first aired in 2002, it has proven to be immensely popular in the UK, and more recently in the U.S. on the Travel Channel, and the show is one of LivingTV's highest-rated original shows. In your opinion, what makes the show so popular?

Yvette: The show is so popular because it touches on something that everyone has been intrigued with for hundreds and hundreds of years.

And, also, it is a show that involves normal people. There are no stars. The makeup lady is involved, the soundman is involved, the cameramen are involved. It's in

"I REMEMBER SLEEPING AT MY MUM'S HOUSE, WAKING UP TO FIND A WWII SOLDIER STANDING AT THE BOTTOM OF MY BED."

the dark. It's original. And it's new, even though it's been going on for nine years.

Q: *Most Haunted* features a histo-

rian, a psychic medium, a parapsychologist, and paranormal investigators. Why did you decide on this formula for the show?

Yvette: We decided on this formula for the show because we felt we had to cover every single base.

So we had to have a believer, a nonbeliever, somebody that sat on the fence, we had to have our investigators, and we had to cover the historical side of the show. And I think it's worked.

Q: When trying to communicate with spirits, what do you think is the best approach?

Yvette: I think the best way to communicate with spirits is to work with a group of people, and work with them for a long time. So, do séances, and when you're doing séances, use the same group of people.

Keep your energy up. There's no point in doing it when you're tired. And, most of all, try and be patient.

Q: In your opinion, what has been the "most haunted" site *Most Haunted* has investigated so far?

Yvette: There isn't a most haunted site. In nine years, there have been so many different places that we've been to. There have been lots and

lots of different haunted sites that I can say have scared me to death, but there isn't one particular one.

Q: Will the show investigate in

other countries in the future?

Yvette: If other countries invite us to go and investigate locations there, we'll be there quick as a flash.

Q: How do you respond to the critics of *Most Haunted*, and specifically those who claim evidence is faked?

Yvette: Those who claim that *Most Haunted* is faked, I feel sorry for because it isn't. It's not faked. The show is true.

I always invite journalists and people who don't believe to come and witness what we do, but funnily enough, not that many journalists take me up on the offer because I think they're terrified.

Q: Why do you delve into spiritual investigation on the show, such as using Ouija boards, for example, and do you believe them to attract evil?

Yvette: I think it's important to use things such as Ouija boards. And when they work, they really, really work well, and you can get some incredibly accurate information, which can then be cross-checked by historians.

I really do believe that there is evil. I think it can come through on the Ouija board. I think it can come through in a séance. I think it can come through whenever you're in a place that has a history such as murder and where terrible things have happened. But I definitely do believe in Ouija boards. I was terrified about using them when we first started *Most Haunted*. But now I think they're a fascinating tool. ■

* * * * *

For more information about Yvette Fielding and *Most Haunted*, visit www.livingtv.co.uk/shows/most-haunted-the-live-series/ and www.antixproductions.com/index.htm.

The Most Haunted Team



Yvette Fielding
Producer/
Presenter



Karl Beattie
Director/
Producer



Ciarán O'Keeffe
Parapsychologist



Miriam Cooke
Historian



Chris Conway
Medium



Stuart Torevell
Cameraman,
Investigator



Cath Howe
Makeup Artist,
Investigator



Lesley Smith
Historian



Phil Whyman
Investigator



INSIGHTS FROM PARANORMAL

BY CAITLIN KING, HAUNTED SOUTH PARANORMAL RESEARCH

Do you remember your expectations prior to becoming involved in the paranormal? Your intentions? For those who have been paranormal researchers for some time, I'm sure it may be difficult to recall those previous feelings. As a new paranormal investigator, I'd like to share my point of view with you.

I don't really know what I expected when I became an investigator; I just knew it was something I have wanted to do since childhood. Now I'm here, and I'll tell you something: I have yet to see an object fly across the room; I have yet to see a demon; and I have yet to be attacked by anything. There hasn't even been a time when I have felt threatened enough to run out of a room screaming. It sounds boring, right? Wrong.

Investigating claims of the paranormal is not now, or has it ever been, about an adrenaline rush. It's not about searching for spooky ghosts in abandoned buildings, armed with nothing but flashlights; however, it IS about hard work and dedication.

True researchers put a great deal of their time and energy into acquiring cases, investigating for hours, and then sifting through mountains of video and audio evidence. They



As a whole, the paranormal field is capable of obtaining the answers that we are so desperately searching for. Dividing ourselves has already proven to be counterproductive.

consider it a passion, not just a hobby. So, I'll ask you this: Are you looking to satisfy those thrills, or are you dedicated to seeking answers regarding the unknown?

Hold the Drama Please!

One thing I never expected to come with the title Paranormal Investigator is drama. I don't mean the

everything-is-so-exciting-and-intense kind of drama, either. I mean the most-of-the-people-here-are-acting-like-they're-in-high-school kind of drama.

Fortunately, I have yet to be involved in any of this nonsense, but I have had the opportunity to observe it from the outside. There has been name-calling, backstabbing, and at-

FROM A NEW INVESTIGATOR



tacking. More often than not, these confrontations can be easily avoided.

- When working with other teams, be sure to act in a professional manner. Represent your team well.
- If you disagree with another team's techniques or views, and you feel it is best to not work with them, simply decline any further involvement with their future projects or investigations . . . politely and professionally, of course.
- If the name of your team has been slandered, or if there have been attacks against you, defend yourself, and then move on. Take solace in the fact that you are in this field for the right reasons and have no interest in becoming involved in unnecessary confrontations or long-standing feuds.

Continue on in the Face of Resistance

There are numerous factors working against us as members of the paranormal community. We must deal with skeptics, who claim we are wasting our time. I've found that only a small number of the population take our work seriously. Paranormal research is most times dismissed as a pseudo-science.

As it is, those who confess to ex-

periencing anything otherworldly are usually considered unstable, perhaps even crazy. Can you imagine what word is used to describe those who study and research the phenomena?

Common occurrences such as these should call attention to the fact that we must stick together. Like it or not, we are a type of family, a community focused on the same objective and working toward the same goal.

You may agree, you may not, but please remember: As a whole, we are capable of obtaining the answers that we are so desperately searching for. Dividing ourselves has

moment to appreciate it. In those few seconds, think about how extraordinary it truly is. If you are looking to be productive in your studies, you must possess an immense passion and love for this field.

For those simply in this field to land a television show: I wish you the best of luck, sincerely, as you are going to need it. If you are here to gain attention, start trouble, or anything of the sort, perhaps you should rethink further involvement.

As I stated before, there are enough factors working against us as it is, we do not need any others.

REMAIN CONSCIOUS OF WHY YOU CONTINUE YOUR RESEARCH.

already proven to be counterproductive. As long as the bickering and fighting continues, we are only robbing ourselves and cancelling out the work of researchers before us.

Unlocking the Answers in a Field of Limitless Possibilities

The next time you are analyzing evidence and hear an EVP, take a

To all of my fellow researchers and investigators, to anyone who is a part of this field in any way: Remain conscious of why you continue your research. Assist others, enjoy yourself, and above all, love and be proud of your work.

In doing so, we move closer to unlocking the answers in this field of limitless possibilities. ■

A Review of Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP) Basics

Contributed By New England Society of Paranormal Investigators/Cape Cod Ghost Hunter

One of the world's most respected scientists, Thomas Alva Edison, believed that it would one day be possible to build a machine that would help humans communicate with the dead. He once said:

"If our personality survives, then it is strictly logical or scientific to assume that it retains memory, intellect, other faculties, and knowledge that we acquire on this Earth. Therefore . . . if we can evolve an instrument so delicate as to be affected by our personality as it survives in the next life, such an instrument, when made available, ought to record something."

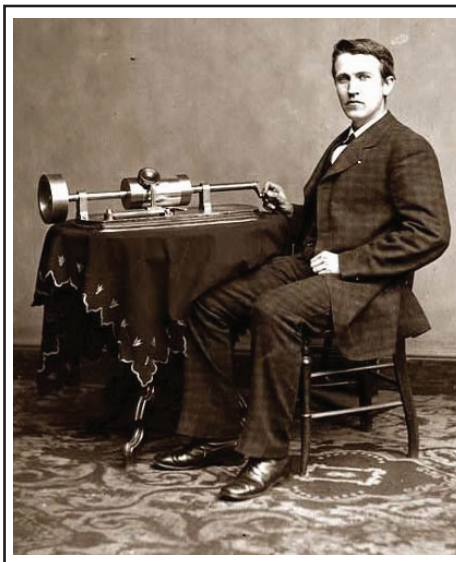
Unfortunately, Edison did not live to see his invention take shape.

EVP History

In 1949, Marcello Bacci of Italy began recording voices with an old tube radio. People would come to Bacci's home to talk with their departed relatives.

A few years later, two Italian priests named Father Ernetti and Father Gemelli were trying to record a Gregorian chant on their magnetophone, but the machine kept breaking. Exasperated, Father Gemelli looked up and asked his father for help.

To his surprise, his dead father's voice answered from the magnetophone, "Of course I shall help you.



Pictured at left: Thomas Edison believed it would one day be possible to build a machine that would help humans communicate with the dead.

Pictured above: Italian Marcello Bacci began recording voices with an old tube radio.

I'm always with you."

One of the most well-known Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP) researchers of the 20th Century was a Swedish opera singer, painter, and film producer named Friedrich Jurgenson. His interest in EVP was sparked one day in 1959 when he recorded the sounds of birds singing in a forest.

When he played the tape back, he heard a female voice say, "Friedrich, you are being watched. Friedel, my little Friedel, can you hear me?" It was the voice of his dead mother.

Jurgenson went on to record many other voices over the next four years, and he published two books: *Voices From the Universe* and *Ra-*

dio Contact with the Dead.

Dr. Konstantin Raudive, a Latvian psychologist, heard of Jurgenson's experiments several years later. At first he was skeptical, but then he tried the technique himself and wound up recording many voices, including that of his deceased mother.

In the 1960s and 1970s, EVP became a legitimate, if controversial, arm of paranormal research. American researchers George and Jeanette Meek and psychic William O'Neil recorded hundreds of hours of EVP with radio oscillators. They claim to have worked closely with another scientist, Dr. George Jeffries Mueller. The only catch was that Mueller was deceased.

What Is EVP/ITC?

EVP is the term traditionally used to describe unexpected sounds or voices found on recording media that aren't picked up by the human ear at the time of recording. EVP initially involved audio tape recorders, but in later years, virtually any recording medium became a vehicle for the phenomena.

The term Instrumental TransCommunication (ITC) came into being to describe these expanded modes of audio- and video-format communication. Other acronyms used in the literature include Electronic Disturbance Phenomena (EDP) and Trans-Dimensional Communication (TDC).

EVP Recording Basics

Recorders

Digital recorders, or IC recorders as they are known, are fast becoming the first choice of professional and amateur paranormal investigators. The problems associated with these digital recorders usually arise in that some of these recorders have "noisy circuitry," resulting in digital static. This digital static can be mistaken as an actual EVP to the untrained ear, and sometimes can fool even the most experienced.

Analog recorders, which utilize magnetic tape as the recording medium, must be used with an external microphone so as to reduce the cap-

experimented with numerous makes and types of microphones and found the less expensive ones to be the most effective in actually picking up EVPs.

Computer

You really need a computer or access to one and a specialty software program to analyze and edit the recording. The upside is the ability you gain to clean up the background noise while preserving the integrity and enhancing the characteristics of the voice.

While computers are certainly not cheap, much of the sound editing software available is. At NESPI, we use Cool Edit, which is a very sophisticated program but fairly simple to learn. Cool Edit is currently sold by Adobe as Audition for around \$349.

Soundbooth is another Adobe product that we have been experimenting with; we believe this program to be much easier to use than Audition, but it gives almost equally good results in the sound editing department. Soundbooth is retails for \$199.

Both programs allow for easy noise reduction and amplification. Be sure to record using the line-in jack on the computer and that the computer has a good quality sound card.

Headphones

You'll want a quality headphone set. Choose one that completely covers the ears. The vast majority of EVPs are soft, quiet, "whisperish"



New England Society of Paranormal Investigators/Cape Cod Ghost Hunter has experimented with numerous makes and types of microphones and found the less expensive models to be the most effective in actually picking up EVPs.

There are no rules as to when, where, or even if an entity will speak.

turing of "gear noise" or the actual sound of the internal mechanics of the tape spool's movement.

At New England Society of Paranormal Investigators/Cape Cod Ghost Hunter (NESPI/CCGH), we have

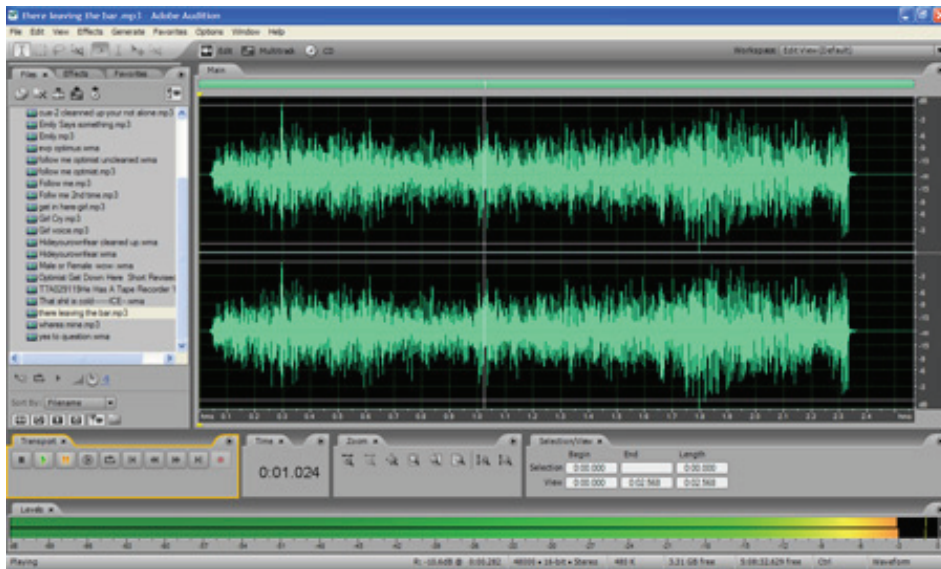
voices and can be missed very easily.

The ear is like any other muscle, the more you use it the stronger it becomes. The more time you spend listening for EVPs, the stronger your perception of them will become.

Time & Place

There are no rules as to when, where, or even if an entity will speak. When first starting out trying to capture EVPs, it is best to record at the same time and at the same location each time. It doesn't matter whether or not it's the middle of the afternoon or the middle of the night, but repetition does seem to make a difference.

NESPI's lead EVP specialist has captured some of the highest quality EVPs in the afternoon. Why? The answer to that question is unknown.



NESPI uses Cool Edit, which is a very sophisticated program but fairly simple to learn. Cool Edit is currently sold by Adobe as Audition (pictured above) for around \$349.

Background Noise

There are several schools of thought here. The most commonly held to is that the entities actually manipulate the ambient sound in the area to speak through. This makes sense as they have no vocal chords; they would need some mechanism in which to manifest their voice. I have personally found running, gurgling water to be the best background noise to utilize. This can be easily accomplished by recording over the sink while a light stream of water runs down the drain creating that gurgling sound.

The second most common method for background noise is to tune a

Asking Questions During an EVP Session

When you begin your recording session, allow the recorder to run at least 10 seconds before you ask your first question. These 10 seconds can be used later in the editing process. You should be relaxed and in a generally good state of mind.

It does seem like the feelings and moods of the EVP experimenter do in fact play a role in not only "who" but possibly "what" answers.

Take your time. Ask your question, and wait at least a minimum of 20 to 30 seconds before asking another. Don't be disappointed if you don't immediately make contact.

Be careful and use common sense.

radio to a setting between stations so as to create just "white noise." However, I must say that during an actual investigation we usually have at least five recorders going all the time, and some of our clearest and best EVPs are right out of thin air.

It comes easier to some people than others. Be persistent.

If you are attempting to communicate with a particular spirit, give it time. It seems they need time to learn how to make their voices heard. If you have asked for

a specific spirit to respond and have received an answer from a spirit representing itself to be that specific spirit, don't be surprised or disappointed to find out that it wasn't.

Ask a question that only the spirit you wish to speak to could know the answer to. In the beginning, it's a good idea to say a prayer for protection. Even if you don't believe, it can't hurt.

Another fun test is to ask something like, "What am I holding in my hand?" The responses can be quite interesting. One time I held up a six-inch figure of Buddha. The answer came back as "Small white porcelain statue." Interesting.

Once, I was trying find out if the entity I was speaking with was in the room with me or somewhere else, and I asked the question, "Where are you?" On playback a very soft, female whisper replied, "Closer, than you think."

Warnings & Considerations

If you are offended easily by the use of bad language, EVP work might not be for you. There are many "prankster" entities that seem to enjoy the shock value of foul language and will say anything.

There is no way to be totally prepared for when you get your first response. I promise you it will get your blood pressure going. You should be physically fit and healthy or else EVP work might not be for you.

There are no experts in this field. No one really knows who or what we are truly dealing with. Personally, I have recorded thousands of hours and had numerous conversations right in my home and never had a bad thing happen. But that's my experience, and yours could be quite different.

Be careful and use common sense. If you have any questions, NESPI would be happy to help. Visit <http://nespi.net/> for more information. ■

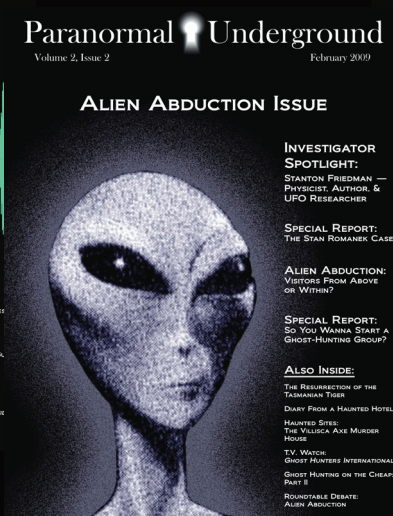
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The Paranormal Campus: Otherworldly Encounters at NDSU

By Katie Hamness

One night at the North Dakota State University (NDSU) library, Sara Adams swept up the floor and began to lock up. She put away the many books that were used during the day by students and staff. She put away the books in Section A and in Section B, and then she went down to Section J to replace a few books on her cart.

Right around the corner stood an older gentleman wearing a jacket with patches and a 1900s style collar, reading a book. But in the blink of an eye, he vanished. "He just disappeared," Adams said.

Later, while walking back to her desk, she noticed some books lying on a table, which was odd, because she knew she had put all the books away. She picked them up and noticed that they were North Dakota Law and North Dakota Century Code books from the early 1900s.

Ghost Stories From NDSU

Ghost stories surround college campuses. The tour guides and resident advisors share these tales with the new freshmen who remember them, and, just like the grade school game of telephone, they pass them on down the line year after year. Many campuses have old buildings, stories, and legends to go with them.

NDSU's campus also contains ghost stories. Many students who attend this university hear the leg-



North Dakota State University's Ceres Hall is said to be home to unusual paranormal activity. Ghost hunters recently investigated the campus and discovered some interesting findings.

ends of folklore, and some people, including ghost hunters, have experienced otherworldly encounters of their own.

Some believe in the stories right away, others need to actually see the ghosts to believe them, and some experience the paranormal for themselves. Many stories abound. Some say NDSU faculty and staff heard strange noises or saw odd, out-of-place lights throughout the classrooms. But, do ghosts and college students from the past truly haunt NDSU?

Sarah Adams, a true believer and night librarian at NDSU, says she has had first-hand encounters with the paranormal. She claims she sees an older gentleman every few months and says she feels a calming energy whenever the man is present.

"He wants nothing from anyone and only wishes to be left alone to read his books," she said.

Adams believes being half deaf has helped her encounter this older gentleman. She says this may be why she can see and hear the ghost

over others. Adams calls this man a 'jokester,' since every so often when she's alone at night in the library, a hard tap hits her shoulder and almost knocks her off balance. When she turns around, nobody is there.

Even though Adams may be a strong believer in ghosts and spirits, others are more skeptical and base their opinions on facts.

Michael Robinson, an NDSU archivist, may be considered a non-believer, but he has his own opinions of the ghost stories on campus, which he says are based upon facts, experience, and research. Robinson's personal experiences in the buildings of NDSU have produced no phenomenal results.

When asked if he's ever felt a presence while researching the stories and walking the halls of NDSU, he said, "No. When I was up [researching] in Minard [Hall] I was with some management, and when I was down [researching] in Ceres [Hall] I wasn't with someone all the time. But no, I was not down there in the dead of night. That was not the case."

Robinson's explanation for the strange noises and weird happenings has to do with the age of the buildings and how they were built.

"With Minard, there are four floors. The fourth floor is the attic and has always been an attic," Robinson said. "But they have done a lot of renovations, and it's uneven because Minard was built in three phases by two different architects."

Do Ghost Actually Roam the Halls at NDSU?

Once stories began to circulate throughout the campus, people, including ghost hunters around the area, became intrigued. So, a couple of years ago, with a little push from the student body, ghost hunters were brought to campus to figure out whether the campus was really haunted.

Another believer, Shawn O'Donnell, has also encountered an older gentleman in Ceres at NDSU. O'Donnell — an information management officer for NDSU, avid ghost hunter, and cofounder of Fargo-Moorhead Paranormal, which is a group dedicated to debunking the paranormal happenings in this area — describes the Ceres ghost as

"A BLACK, SILHOUETTED FIGURE SHUFFLED
TO ONE SIDE . . . EVERYTHING WENT
PITCH BLACK."

an older gentleman wearing old-fashioned clothing.

"This ghost does not have a friendly presence," O'Donnell said.

O'Donnell and his group investigated Ceres on October 31, 2007, to determine whether or not ghosts and spirits were present. They say they captured five EVPs of the ghost speaking and repeating certain phrases along with numerous screams. O'Donnell felt a cold draft and presence while in the basement of Ceres, and he says he captured camera images of flashing lights and streaking colors.

Special equipment and ghost hunters perhaps can capture evidence that there are ghosts and spirits within NDSU's walls, but there's a lot of discrepancy, episodes, and accounts that show disparity between the so-called facts and stories. So, do ghosts actually exist, or do these stories just create a typical tradition throughout the college and serve to scare the incoming freshmen?

In late 2008, Fargo-Moorhead Paranormal investigated Ceres for the second time. The team provoked the paranormal, according to O'Donnell, and a different scene played out. O'Donnell says he experienced the supernatural in a very scary light.

The boilers were billowing hot sticky steam when O'Donnell and his

team walked down into the basement of Ceres. He immediately began to sweat while he made his way through the basement to set up equipment. When his team had everything ready, they asked the ghost to show himself. Nothing happened. They asked again, and still nothing occurred.

So, O'Donnell's friend began to provoke the ghost. His friend called

the ghost names like "wimp" and told the ghost he wasn't man enough to show himself. All of a sudden the entire room became ice cold and freezing. O'Donnell could literally see his own breath floating in the air just like a cool, foggy fall morning.

"It was like I was freezing to death," said O'Donnell. Then, O'Donnell's freshly charged batteries began to die and the battery light for his camera started to blink.

"The ghost was sucking the power from our equipment to gain energy to show himself to us," O'Donnell said. The "fight or flight" feeling inside of O'Donnell began to consume his every thought, but his friend continued on. His friend asked the ghost to block the one and only light source in the room. Then the unexplained happened. A black, silhouetted figure shuffled to one side, O'Donnell says, and instantly everything went pitch black."

Do ghosts surround our everyday lives? Do we walk through them and not even notice? Do we believe the facts or believe the first-hand stories of people like Adams and O'Donnell?

No matter what the case, ghosts stories and folklore will continue to surround college campuses. However, we may never know if these stories are meant to scare freshmen or if they are true paranormal encounters. ■

Wonder in Watseka: The Story of Lurancy Vennum

By Rick E. Hale, Greater Illinois Ghost Society

The ancient belief in reincarnation has been steadily gaining ground over the last 100 years in the Western part of the world as an alternative to explain what happens to the human soul after death. An increasing number of people in the United States have left the traditional Christian idea of death, judgment, and punishment or reward behind to embrace the ancient doctrine that is a tenant of faith for millions of Hindus and Buddhists the world over.

I suppose it is a more pleasant idea to come back as an elephant than running the risk of burning in a sea of fire for eternity and a day. It is a nice idea, but as with anything pertaining to matters of the paranormal or supernatural, is there any proof to back up such a belief?

I believe there just may be, and that proof came in the form of a young girl living right here in my home state of Illinois.

Watsseka, a small town in southwest Illinois, was pretty much like any other small town in 19th Century Illinois . . . boring as hell. I can tell you from experience as a native-born son of the Prairie state, not much has changed. It would seem that the only thing to do on a Saturday night was get drunk, tip cows, and . . . sorry I digress.

In 1876, that boredom would



In 1876, a Southern Illinois town, called Watseka, was changed forever after paranormal events transpired involving 12-year-old Lurancy Vennum.

change for the Southern Illinois town after something odd occurred to the Vennum family that would forever change the way many viewed life after death.

The Story of Lurancy Vennum

Little 12-year-old Lurancy Vennum, by all appearances, seemed to be like any other girl her age. She played with friends, pulled pranks on her older siblings, and undoubtedly dreamed of the day when she would walk down the aisle and

marry the man that she loved.

Unfortunately all that would change shortly after her thirteenth birthday when Lurancy began to complain to her mother of excruciating stomach pains that would oftentimes cause her to black out.

When she awoke from one of her pain-induced blackouts, she told all who were seeing to her safety that she experienced strange visions of angels who came to her and spoke of incredible things that she found difficult to articulate to anyone. Terrified

by what her daughter was telling her, the Vennums called for the local doctor to examine their young daughter.

The first time the doctor was sent for, Lurancy was coming out of one of her mystifying blackouts. As she awoke, she found the doctor sitting over her. After a complete examination, the doctor took the Vennums aside and reported that he could find nothing physically wrong with their daughter. She showed no signs of epilepsy or any other fainting disease for that matter.

The doctor further explained that whatever was effecting the 13-year-old may have been something purely in the mind, or perhaps she was just succumbing to a swoon, something young girls were prone to do. The Vennum's were pleased with the doctor's diagnosis, and the doctor headed out the door not knowing that the worst was yet to come.

The Worst Was Yet to Come

As the days came and went, the strange condition of Lurancy Vennum appeared to be getting much worse. The quiet of the Vennum household would oftentimes be disturbed in the middle of the night by the screams and cries of Lurancy as she fought with some invisible assailant in her bed.

When Lurancy's family burst through the door, they found their little girl sitting on her bed covered in sweat, with her bedclothes flung across the room. Lurancy, who was truly terrified, would tell them bizarre tales of evil spirits that flew into her open window, screamed at her, and showed her terrifying images of souls writhing in eternal torment in a sea of fire.

By now the Vennums were at a loss about how to help their little girl, and they began to fear the worst. They feared their sweet child was in the process of losing her mind.



Did Lurancy Vennum (pictured at left) really channel the deceased spirit of Mary Roth (pictured at right)? Many people say that's exactly what happened back in Watseka, Illinois, in 1876.

Once again the local doctor was sent for to examine the young girl. After inspecting her, the doctor told her parents that, according to his professional opinion, Lurancy was going mad and should be admitted to an insane asylum.

Let the reader understand insane asylums of the 19th Century are nothing like the psychiatric hospitals of today. Folks who were sent to an asylum were either forgotten about and died in their own filth or were subjected to barbarous experiments that really did nothing but make the patient worse. The Vennum's were well aware of this fact and would do no such thing; they would care for the daughter and endure anything that should come their way.

Did Lurancy Vennum Channel the Spirit of Mary Roff?

For a few weeks, the madness of Lurancy Vennum subsided. She went about acting as she normally did, until one day when she was

helping her mother hang the laundry on the line in the backyard. Lurancy, began to slip into a strange trance and babble incoherently until a gruff masculine voice escaped from her mouth.

Mrs. Vennum rushed to her daughter's side and called for her husband's help. Mr. Vennum burst through the back door and ran up to his wife, who had her arms around the young girl to keep her from falling down.

"Get the hell away from me you hypocrites," the gruff male voice yelled when Mr. Vennum reached his wife and little girl. "I don't need your help," the voice said. "You are nothing but pigs to me."

Upon hearing the voice, the Vennums began to suspect their daughter was not going mad but that some spirit was using their daughter to speak.

During this time, the new faith of Spiritualism was gaining ground in that part of the United States, and those who had heard of Lurancy

Vennum, and the strange voices that came through her, thought the young girl might be, in fact, a powerful medium. Hundreds of people from all over the countryside flocked to the Vennum house in the hope that they could receive messages from dearly departed friends or family members.

One day, as Lurancy was channeling a spirit for a family friend, a new voice that had never been heard before began to emerge, and Lurancy took on the personality of

hold, Lurancy ran through the door to find numerous Roff family members present. As she burst through the door, Lurancy greeted Mary's siblings and Mary's grandmother with the special pet names that only Mary Roff would know.

After a brief chat with the astounded family members, Lurancy ran straight to Mary's room and flung herself on the bed in a special way the Roffs said their daughter used to do.

Was Lurancy Vennum a powerful medium who was able to hold the spirit of a dead girl inside of her?

this new spirit. Lurancy, or the spirit, began to sob, saying that she was Mary Roff, was afraid, and wanted her mom and dad immediately.

Across town, Mr. and Mrs. Asa Roff, got word of the strange events transpiring at the Vennum household, which involved the spirit of their young daughter, who had committed suicide 15 years earlier. When the Roffs arrived at the Vennum household, Lurancy jumped up and threw her arms around Mr. Roff and said, "Oh Daddy, I missed you so."

Mr. Roff pushed the strange girl away from him, and after a long look into her eyes he began to cry and shouted, "Thanks be to God, this young girl is my daughter, Mary."

Although the Roffs were firm believers that the dead could contact the living, they still needed proof that this was their daughter inhabiting the body of Lurancy Vennum. After a long talk with Lurancy's parents, the Vennums agreed to allow Lurancy to go and temporarily live with the Roffs to see if there was any truth to the strange goings on.

Upon arrival at the Roff house-

Lurancy jumped up from the bed and tried on Mary's favorite hat and scarf. Lurancy turned to the Roffs and said with tears in her eyes, "Mommy, Daddy, I'm so sorry for what I did. Will you please forgive me?"

The Roffs hugged the young girl and were delighted to see that their young girl was returned to them, even if she did not look like their Mary. The Roffs were convinced this was their daughter, Mary Roff.

After a few months of living with the Roffs and becoming a true member of the family, Lurancy/Mary woke up and began to cry uncontrollably. Mr. Roff raced to his daughter's side and asked, "Mary, whatever is the problem?"

Lurancy/Mary looked up at the old man and stammered out, "I'm not Mary, my name is Lurancy Vennum." Mr. Roff could feel his heart breaking inside of him, and after a long moment of looking at the young girl who once claimed to be his daughter, he did the only thing that he could, he returned Lurancy Vennum to her family. Mary Roff left the young girl, never to return again.

Does This Case Further the Argument for Reincarnation?

When we look back at this strange case, many questions come to mind. Was Lurancy a powerful medium who was able to hold the spirit of a dead girl and become her completely? Or was Lurancy merely faking and taking vengeance on her parents for something they had done?

Or was this a true case of a reincarnated soul who was able to come forth and take over a new body? It is entirely possible that Lurancy was a medium, and the spirit of Mary was strong enough to take possession of her body for a time. And as for faking, what would Lurancy have to gain? By all accounts, Lurancy was a happy, well-adjusted girl, and the Vennum Household was a happy and loving one.

So that would leave the reincarnation possibility.

I am reminded of a case that came out of India a few years ago, where a young boy claimed to be a criminal who was murdered. The boy claimed to have terrible nightmares of a bunch of men ganging up on him and shooting him in the head.

The boy complained of horrible headaches and was born with a strange birthmark that resembled a bullet wound on his forehead. When the young boy was taken to the village of the man he claimed to be, he greeted all the dead man's relatives and friends as if he had known them his whole life.

This very true story is much like the Lurancy Vennum case that came out of Southern Illinois. Perhaps when we die, some great judge in the sky does not pass down a guilty or innocent verdict. Perhaps the strange case of Lurancy Vennum is proof that we come back time and time again to get things right.

Perhaps. ■

In Loving Memory Of Steven Michael Mackin

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By the Light of the Full Moon



By Rick E. Hale, Greater Illinois Ghost Society

“Even a man who is pure in heart and says his prayers by night may become a wolf when the wolf-bane blooms and the moon is full and bright.”

—Movie: *The Wolf Man*, 1941

When it comes to horror movies, I’m not the kind of guy who likes slasher flicks. You know, the kind where the sexually repressed maniac grabs the nearest butcher knife and starts carving up coeds like a Thanksgiving turkey. Nope, for me I’ll take my horror film with a supernatural edge . . . Ghosts, demons, vampires, and werewolves.

However, when it comes down to my favorite monster of the genre, my money is on the werewolf . . . the damned soul, forced to change into a ravenous beast by the light of the full moon, and although he hates what he becomes and the horrible crimes he commits, he is completely powerless to do anything about it.

Hollywood and The Werewolf

Over the past 60-plus years, Hollywood has offered up a plethora of werewolf movies. Some are good, and others, well, they’re not so good.



Over the past 60-plus years, Hollywood has offered up a plethora of werewolf movies, from *Silver Bullet* to *An American Werewolf in London* to the classic *The Wolfman*. But how do these Hollywood movies match up to the legends and lore surrounding the werewolf?

Silver Bullet, an 80s horror flick starring Corey Haim, is one of the best in the genre. The story details the struggle of a wheelchair-bound boy against a seemingly unstoppable foe, a priest who becomes a wolf.

Gary Busey is great as the alcoholic uncle who eventually forgets about his own demons to save his nephew from becoming a midnight snack.

And who could forget the truly awesome *An American Werewolf in*



Can the tales of blood-thirsty werewolves throughout history be simply attributed to “sympathetic magic,” or is there any truth to the stories some tell of people actually transforming into wolves?

London? This is by far my favorite werewolf movie, probably due to the fact that I have a streak of evil a mile long that absolutely loves dark comedy. And, of course, what about the classic *The Wolfman*, starring the immortal Lon Chaney, Jr. Chaney portrays an American visiting his cousin in Europe when he comes across a gypsy werewolf that sinks his teeth into the American, turning him into one of the children of the night.

Although I love these movies, and they are great entertainment when you have nothing else better to do, like anything else that Hollywood sinks its teeth into (pun intended) concerning the paranormal, they only get it half right.

The Legend of the Werewolf

The legend of the werewolf does not just go back to the misty slopes of the Carpathian Mountains, nor is it reserved for the wind-swept moors of the British countryside. The legend of the cursed soul forced to

become a ravenous beast by the light of the full moon has its shadowy beginnings much further back in the cold mists of prehistoric man, and believe me when I say this, truth is much more terrifying than fiction.

Anthropologists tell us that the legend of the werewolf may have gotten its start with the magical and religious beliefs of prehistoric man. According to these researchers, ancient man believed that by dressing themselves up in the skins of the animals they hunted for food they would gain that animal’s cunning and physical prowess, and make it easier for the hunter to track his prey and make a kill so that his family unit would have a something to eat and wear in the frigid European winters.

This “sympathetic magic,” as it was called, was a great technique used by practically every ancient society known to man. Since the bear and the ravenous wolf were the most readily available animals in many parts of prehistoric Europe, and the

most feared, they were the animals most used. The wolf was a cunning hunter who almost rivaled the prehistoric human for supremacy in the hunt.

These tales of ancient hunters, researchers say, is the primary source behind the werewolf legend; however, many ancient sources from classical Greece have something much different to say concerning the idea of a seemingly normal human being transforming into a blood-thirsty creature of the night.

The Story of King Lycaon

The modern Lycanthropy used to describe the transformation was first coined by the Roman poet Ovid, who tells a tale of an Athenian King named Lycaon, who was said to have the ability to turn into a wolf at night. Ovid describes the condition, “In Vain he (Lycaon) attempted to speak . . . he thirsted for blood . . . he raged among the flocks and panted for slaughter . . . his vesture

turned to hair . . . his countenance turned rabid . . . his eyes glittered savagely.”

The transformation of King Lycaon sounds pretty much like any werewolf movie we have ever seen. Of course, upon reading this, some feel that Ovid is not describing the transformation of King Lycaon into a ravenous beast; rather, they say that Ovid is describing a man in the throes of rabies.

To me, this explanation really is very absurd. My cousin got bit by a squirrel when we were kids and contracted rabies, and I can tell you this, my cousins vesture (flesh) did not grow hair.

More Stories of Werewolves

If the first-hand account from Ovid did not make you think twice about the possibility of humans being able to make the transforma-

tion from man to wolf, consider the words of Gaius Petronius, who in 60 CE gave us the *Satyricon*.

Gaius speaks of an acquaintance he met at a wedding who showed him something the historian would not soon forget. As Gaius and his friend left the wedding, the moon came up, and the friend began to remove his clothes, piling them into a bundle in the middle of the woods. The friend urinated in a circle around his clothes and, Presto Changeo, turned into a wolf before Gaius' eyes. The friend let out a haunting howl and trotted off into the woods.

One other story from the classical world tells us that during one of the first Olympics, a race of werewolves called the Neuri participated and walked away with all the rewards and accolades. Michael Phelps ain't got nothing on these hairy dudes.

Although the modern legend of the werewolf got its start with the ancient Greeks, our final image of the werewolf comes to us from Medieval Europe. The term werewolf was first coined in 1212 by the historian Gervase of Tilbury. In his work, *Otia Imperialia*, Gervase gives many descriptions of men and women who had the ability to turn from human to wolf. The term “werwulf” was not just reserved for this horrific man-beast, but was also ascribed to outlaws.

During the period of what many historians called the “Burning Times,” alleged werewolves were caught in the middle of the frenzied belief that Satan and his evil minions were lurking behind every corner, seeking a good Christian soul that they could corrupt. A person who could transform from man to wolf did not do it by the classic method of being bitten by a werewolf; instead, much darker methods were used.

In 1573, a tale of greed, evil, and cannibalism came out of France that shocked the entire nation and cemented the belief that werewolves were a product of collusion between mortal man and the Prince of Darkness. Gilles Garnier was, by all appearances, a seemingly normal peasant farmer, that is until he was arrested and put on trial for heresy and cannibalism.

At his trial, Garnier told the judges that one day, as he was hunting in the forest, he was met by a black-clad stranger who told Garnier that if he fell down and worshipped him, the stranger would give him a magical salve and a wolfskinned belt that would turn him into a wolf. Of course, Gilles could not turn the stranger down, and ultimately paid the price for being in league with this obviously satanic spirit.

Gilles admitted he was guilty of killing numerous children and eating



The legend of the werewolf does not just go back to the misty slopes of the Carpathian Mountains (pictured above) nor is it reserved for the wind-swept moors of the British countryside. The legend goes much further back in the cold mists of prehistoric man.

their flesh while in his preternatural wolf state. He was found guilty of these hideous crimes and burned at the stake.

Beliefs Surrounding the Werewolf

In Europe, being a werewolf was considered to be a curse handed down by God to a family or a single person. Many believed that a potential werewolf could be identified early in life and certain precautions could be taken to save that person from a life lived in Hell.

A unbrow was considered to be a dead giveaway that a person was a werewolf or a child born with a caul, a thin membrane that some children were born with. In the event of this occurring, the child was pierced through the hands with silver nails or the caul was immediately removed from the child's face and burned in a fire made of Mountain Ash.

It was also said that if a person was suspected of werewolfery, they could be identified by cutting a strip of flesh from the suspect; then, if hair was discovered growing under the person's skin, they were immediately arrested and burned at the stake.

The legend of the werewolf or shapeshifter was not just believed in by nervous Europeans looking for a sinister flesh-eating boogeyman, it would appear that certain Native

walker. The skinwalker is said to be an evil sorcerer who gains the ability to change into a beast by giving his soul to wicked primordial forces of the Earth.

One tale says that the Dineh or Navajo once wiped out an entire village of suspected skinwalkers when they believed that the wicked sorcerers were stealing their children and making meals of them. The legend of the skinwalker is so feared by the Navajo that they refuse to speak of the beings. It is believed that to speak of the skinwalker is to invite its wrath.

A Tale of Lycanthropy

Today, modern science accepts the possibility that a human can turn into a ravenous beast, although the transformation is far from physical but rather wholly psychological. Lycanthropy is a condition of the mind, where a human being believes that they actually make a physical transformation from man to beast.

One famous case of actual Lycanthropy comes to us from France. A young man was arrested by the cops for having blood on his shirt



Lycanthropy is a condition of the mind, where a human being believes that they actually make a physical transformation from man to beast.

discovered that the night the strange man was arrested, he murdered his friend in his apartment and ripped out his buddy's throat. The man was sent to a psychiatric hospital for the criminally insane for his crime.

While in the hospital, the man was witnessed by many employees to run around on all fours and howl at the moon. One male nurse said that as he looked in on the mentally ill man, he had to take a double take because at first glance he thought he saw a giant wolf in the patient's room.

The legend of the werewolf is perhaps the greatest tale of a monster known to mankind in our short but illustrious history. Like the vampire, the werewolf is the subject of many myths going back not just centuries but millennia, and there is no sign of these legends going away anytime soon.

Is it possible that a seemingly normal human being has the ability to transform from a man to a blood-thirsty creature of the night? That's for you to decide. ■

The man had murdered his friend by ripping his throat out.

American tribes here in the United States believed in some form of a shapeshifter as well.

The tribes of the American Southwest believe in and greatly feared an evil being called a skin-

and around his mouth. The police also reported that the insane man attacked them and tried to bite their faces as he growled like a wolf.

When the man returned to normal, he was visited by a doctor who

What Are Flying Saucers and UFOs?

By Joy Healey, www.project-blue-book.com

When the first widely reported UFO story hit the headlines shortly after June 24, 1947, newspapers all over the United States were reporting the sighting. The story told how nine very bright, disk-shaped objects were seen by Kenneth Arnold, a Boise, Idaho, businessman, while he was flying his private plane near Mount Rainier in the state of Washington.

With journalistic license, reporters converted Arnold's description of the individual motions of each of the objects, "like a saucer skipping across water," into "flying saucer," a name for the objects themselves.

In the years that passed since Arnold's memorable sighting, the term has become so common that it found a place in Webster's Dictionary and is known today in most languages in the world.

What Does the Term "Flying Saucer" Mean?

For a while after the Arnold sighting, the term "flying saucer" was used to describe all disk-shaped objects that were seen flashing through the sky at fantastic speeds. Before long, reports were made of objects other than disks, and these were also called flying saucers.

Today, the words are popularly applied to anything seen in the



As a result of the continuing accumulation of more impressive UFO reports, early in 1951, the U.S. Air Force created *Project Blue Book*, a study intended to review "the UFO situation."

sky that cannot be identified as a common, everyday object. Thus, a flying saucer can be a formation of lights, a single light, a sphere, or any other shape; and it can be any color. Performance wise, flying saucers can hover, go fast or slow, go high or low, turn 90-degree corners, or disappear almost instantaneously.

Clearly the term "flying saucer" is open to interpretation when objects of every imaginable shape and performance are labeled as such. For this reason, the military prefers the more general, if less colorful, name: unidentified flying objects (UFO, for short).

Attitudes Toward Early UFO Reports

Some weeks after the first UFO was seen on June 24, 1947, the Air Force established a project, called Project Sign, to investigate and analyze all UFO reports. This was in turn followed by another project that looked into the UFO phenomenon, called Project Grudge, which was initiated by the government in February 1949, after Project Sign was dissolved in late 1948.

The attitude toward this task varied from a state of near panic, early in the life of the project, to that of complete contempt for anyone who even mentioned the words "flying saucer."

This contemptuous attitude toward “flying saucer nuts” prevailed from mid-1949 to mid-1950. During that interval, many of the people who were, or had been, associated with the project believed that the public was suffering from “war nerves.”

Early in 1950, the project, now under the name of Project Grudge, for all practical purposes, was closed out; at least it rated only minimum effort. Though, it carried on in a very minimal capacity until late 1951. Those in power now reasoned that if you didn't mention the words “flying saucers,” the people would forget them and the saucers would go away. But this reasoning was false, for instead of vanishing, the quality of the UFO reports improved.

Airline pilots, military pilots, generals, scientists, and dozens of other people were reporting UFOs, and in greater detail than in the reports of the past. Radars, which were being built for air defense, began to pick up some very unusual targets, thus lending technical corroboration to the unsubstantiated claims of human observers.

A Look at Project Blue Book

As a result of the continuing accumulation of more impressive UFO reports, official interest stirred. Early in 1952, verbal orders came down from Major General Charles P. Cabell, then director of intelligence for Headquarters, U.S. Air Force, to make a study reviewing the UFO situation for Air Force Headquarters.

The study was given the code name *Project Blue Book*. It was under the supervision of Captain Edward J. Ruppelt (EJR), who had impeccable credentials until late in 1953. During the Second World War, EJR was a B-29 bombardier and radar operator. He restarted college after the war and before long, gained his aeronautical engineering degree. To keep his reserve status while in school, he flew as a navigator in an Air Force Reserve



Kenneth A. Arnold, a Boise, Idaho, businessman, shows a drawing of the crescent-shaped object he said he saw during his June 24, 1947, UFO sighting.

Arnold said he saw nine very bright, disk-shaped objects while he was flying his private plane near Mount Rainier in the state of Washington.

Troop Carrier Wing.

While compiling *Project Blue Book*, EJR and members of his staff traveled close to half a million miles. They investigated dozens of UFO reports and read and analyzed several thousand more. These included every report ever received by the Air Force.

There were 10 regular staff on *Project Blue Book*, plus many paid consultants, representing every field of science. Everyone involved had Top Secret security clearances, so security was not an issue in the investigations. Behind this organization was a reporting network made up of every Air Force base intelligence officer and every Air Force radar station in the world, as well as the Air Defense Command's Ground Observer Corps.

This reporting net sent *Project Blue Book* reports on every conceivable type of UFO, by every conceivable type of person. What did these people actually see when they reported a UFO? Putting aside truly unidentifiable flying objects, this question has several answers.

Did Project Blue Book Present Proof of UFOs?

It has been positively proved that people have reported balloons, airplanes, stars, and many other common objects as UFOs. The people who make such reports don't recognize

these common objects because something in their surroundings temporarily assumes an unfamiliar appearance.

Unusual lighting conditions are a common cause of such illusions. A balloon will glow like a “ball of fire” just at sunset. Or an airplane that is not visible to the naked eye suddenly starts to reflect the sun's rays and appears to be a “silver ball.” Pilots in F-94 jet interceptors chase Venus in the daytime and fight with balloons at night, and people in Los Angeles see weird lights.

In reality, did *Project Blue Book* ever prove the existence of UFOs? The hassle over the word “proof” boils down to one question: What constitutes proof? Is a UFO required to land at the River Entrance to the Pentagon, in front of the offices of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

Or is it proof when a ground radar station detects a UFO, sends a jet to intercept it, the jet pilot sees it, and locks on with his radar, only to have the UFO streak away at a phenomenal speed? Is it proof when a jet pilot fires at a UFO and sticks to his story even under the threat of court-martial? Does this constitute proof?

Project Blue Book recorded the facts, but you must decide for yourself. ■

Article source: www.articlesbase.com/education-articles/what-are-flying-saucers-and-ufos-615630.html.

Diary From a Haunted Hotel

By Carolyn M. Hughes

When I began working as a night auditor almost three years ago at Quality Inn at General Lee's Headquarters, located on the Gettysburg battlefield, I anticipated experiencing nothing more interesting than having some bizarre request from a guest.

I never expected my spirit friends to visit so often or to hear so many accounts of activity from unsuspecting guests. I never thought they would alert us to their presence in so many creative ways, or for there to be so much activity involved.

I am of the personal belief that spirits only want us to know they are still here and not to forget what happened here, for it is on this ground that they truly gave their "last full measure of devotion."

Here is my ongoing diary of my experiences within the hotel . . .

Sun., Nov. 22

1 a.m.-4:30 a.m.: My friends, Mr. and Mrs. S, e-mailed me to report that on the last night of their stay with us in the Fireside Suite, they were awakened many times during the early morning hours to the sound of repeated gunshots in their room.

Mrs. S related that the sounds were very loud and was adamant about the fact that the gunshots were inside the room where they were sleeping. The Fireside Suite sits only a few feet away from the railroad cut where on July 1, the 2nd and 42nd Mississippi and the 55th North Carolina



During the months of November and December, the hotel's dryer mysteriously turned on by itself, and one of the breakfast room doors repeatedly closed of its own accord.

infantry regiments were engaged in a deadly struggle with the 95th New York and 6th Wisconsin infantry regiments. As the fighting progressed, it spilled over onto the land where the suite is currently located.

Sun., Nov. 22

6:30 p.m.: Chris and D were both in the lobby working on their respective computers. Everything was quiet in the lobby when they heard a noise coming from the laundry room. Chris went into the laundry room to investigate the sound. He found that one of the dryers, completely empty, once again had been turned on and was running.

The housekeepers had left at approximately 3:00 p.m. earlier that day, and no dryers had been left on. Two days in a row, at exactly the same time, the empty dryers had been turned on.

Mon., Nov. 23

6:30 p.m.: Monday night is normally my night to work one of my all night shifts. Since I was still on vacation, our new employee, D, was working his first all night shift. D and another employee were both working in the lobby on their respective computers. Once again, everything was quiet in the lobby when they heard a noise coming from the laundry room.

Once again, D went into the laundry room to investigate the sound. Once again, D found that one of the dryers, completely empty, had been turned on and was running.

The housekeepers had left at approximately 2:00 p.m. earlier that day, and no dryers had been left on. Three days in a row, at exactly the same time, the empty dryers had been turned on.

Mon., Nov. 30

6:10 p.m.: As usual, at dusk, I turned all the outside lights on. The panel where the light switches are located is on the wall just inside the office. I am always careful and make a visual check to be certain that all the security and safety lights outside are on.

I was working at the front desk and heard that very distinctive “click” the light switches always make when being turned on and off. I immediately looked up and noticed that the portico lights, which illuminate outside the lobby front door, were turned off. And, good evening to you boys!

Tues., Dec. 1

6:30 a.m.: With the new breakfast buffet room that was recently built, a new access door was constructed in the laundry room. In order to transfer the food from the preparation area into the new breakfast buffet room, two doors must be left open — the one that leads from the breakfast preparation room into the laundry room and the door from the laundry room into the breakfast buffet room.

Because I am constantly being distracted by dark shadows either darting or moving around in the well-lit laundry room, I keep the access door going into the laundry



Guests of the hotel who were staying in the Fireside Suite (pictured at left) recounted hearing gunshots from within their room. Could the “shots” be residual activity from Civil War battles that occurred on the ground where the suite sits?

room closed until I am ready to move everything. Then, I keep both doors open.

I was coming back from the breakfast buffet for another load of food and saw that the previously opened door from the breakfast prep room was closed. No more than 30 seconds had elapsed. There are no windows open and no breezes. The door does not sit on a slant, but on level ground. There is no spring on the door to shut it. Okay, knock it off. I need that door open for a few more minutes guys!

6:40 a.m.: I had just finished transferring all the prepared food into the breakfast buffet and had closed both doors. I took two steps when I heard a very loud bang on the door directly behind me. Needless to say, I jumped! When I turned around, I could still see the wood on the door vibrating. Okay, I guess they want that door open now.

Mon., Dec. 14

9:30 p.m.: I was standing in the office in front of a table that is situated to the left of the recliner. Under the table is a file cabinet. We usually put our personal belongings on top of the table

when we arrive for easy access.

I retrieved a little box of Tic Tacs out of my purse, flipped the lid, and slipped a few into my hand. One of the Tic Tacs bounced off my hand and went underneath the table behind the filing cabinet. I could see it in the back on the floor, but wouldn't be able to retrieve it unless I got down on my hands and knees and got under the table.

I decided to wait until later just in case a guest came into the lobby and caught me under there. What a sight that would have been!

No sooner had I made that decision when a guest did come into the lobby. After dealing with the guest and their request, I walked back into the office. For some reason, I walked over to the table and saw, to my surprise, that the errant Tic Tac, which had only moments before been laying way in the back under the table on the floor, was now sitting on the top of the table.

When I looked under the table, the Tic Tac wasn't there. Thank you boys! You saved my back and my dignity from being caught with my butt in the air underneath a table!

Stay Tuned . . .

The Cross on the Car

By Kim Kowalczyk, GhostBreakers Paranormal Research Organization

During my younger days in New York during the 1960s, my friends and I used to take turns borrowing our fathers' cars on a rotating basis (without their knowledge). We would all get together, and one guy would sneak his dad's keys. Then the guys would push it out of the driveway, very quietly, and then down the street.

As long as the car was home before dad woke up, all would be fine. After a night of driving around the island, we would go home and coast the car into the driveway, and no one was the wiser. We always had a good time, until one night we decided to visit a cemetery at the end of a dead-end road.

There were four of us that night. Nothing out of the ordinary. It was my turn to take my dad's station wagon. It was a fairly new Oldsmobile Vista Cruiser. It had no roof rack. (This is relevant to the story.)

We pushed the car out of the driveway and down the street. We all jumped in, and I started driving around. Little did we know that this night wasn't going to be just another ordinary joy-riding experience.

It began just like any other night. Nothing special, and it was even getting boring just driving around. One



"We set off in my dad's Oldsmobile Vista Cruiser for who knows where. But as we would soon find out, we'd be driving straight into a paranormal encounter."

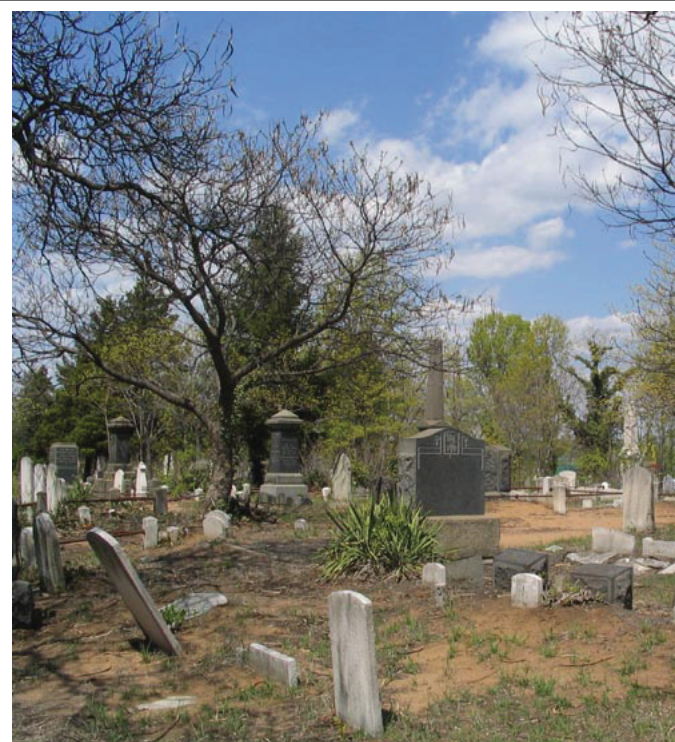
of my friends suggested that we go to a graveyard. He just said a lot of cool things could happen in a cemetery. We figured it had to be better than what was going on, so we headed toward the river.

On the way, one of the guys said he knew of this cemetery at the end of this old road. He gave the directions as we went. Sure enough, all by itself at the end of this lonely old road was a very old cemetery.

Night of the Living Dead

I remember there was one street light at the entrance, but the cemetery was dark. I drove up into the cemetery until the road ended. Thinking back, I'm not sure why, but everyone got out of the car except me. Maybe I was nervous or maybe concerned for my dad's car.

They were all acting goofy. You know how young guys act. A couple of the guys started acting like the



“Our trip to the cemetery involved an old, wooden cross that just wouldn’t go away. Was someone or something trying to tell us something? By the end of the night, most of us in my dad’s car would say . . . Yes.”

Night of the Living Dead. Climbing on my car, etc., until one of them broke my dad’s rear view mirror off the car. That took the fun out of it for me, so I yelled for everyone to come back so we could leave and go to Wetson’s for a burger at the other end of the island. Staten Islanders, remember Wetson’s? Is it still there?

The guys came back to the car, and one was carrying a wooden cross. It was one of those temporary markers used for graves before the headstone is put on the grave. It was faded, dirty, and some of the paint was missing. The guy wanted to bring it with us, but everyone objected saying it was bad luck.

He held it by the end of the longest part below the cross and tossed it with a full swing into the darkness. Then he jumped in, and I backed the car out of the cemetery onto the road.

Burn Rubber!

As we sat in the car under the lone street light, the guys told me to burn rubber (something we said in

the ’60s, meaning to spin the tires). I tried and tried but could not break the tires loose from the pavement.

So everyone but me got out to lighten the load. I tried and tried but still couldn’t. (It was a family station wagon!) I then drove up the street and backed up as fast as I could, and then threw it into drive, but the car would just stall.

Now here is a very significant part of my story. One of the guys saw an old tire and tried to put it on the roof to see if the car even had enough power to knock it off. I told him no, it would scratch the paint and he dropped it. Well, the guys all got a big laugh about that.

They all got back into the car, and we drove down by the river road. It was a winding road that went up sort of the west side of the Island. As we drove along, one of the guys suggested we stop by this closed bar he knew of. He said they threw away their empty kegs behind the bar, and we could get a few.

So we went to the bar, I backed

in, and two of the guys got out and started loading the kegs. I would quickly find out that they were lying, and the bar was actually open and a few of the kegs they took were full.

Well, the bartender had seen or heard us, so we took off as the bartender chased after us in his van. We raced down that winding road. Me screaming at them for lying to me and taking the kegs. Them rolling the kegs out of the back of the station wagon in front of the guy’s van until the guy broke off the chase.

“Take a Right!”

The guys were all excited, and I was extremely nervous and agitated. Just then someone yelled, “Take a right!”

So I slammed on the brakes and made a right up a road with no houses. My friend said that he had been down the road a few days earlier, and they had put down fresh tar to make repairs. (They did that back then.)

He suggested that I make one



“Our bizarre night included everything from racing down the street with beer kegs to witnessing a refinery explosion. Was the cross on the car an omen?”



last try to spin the tires in the new tar. I drove for a little bit, and he yelled, “There is the tar. STOP!”

I did. Being in the excited state that I was, I slammed on the brakes, and the car came to a full stop. Then, after the car came to a full stop, we all heard a scraping noise on the roof of the car and a bang on the hood.

There on the hood of my father’s car was the wooden cross that everyone has seen my friend throw away more than an hour before. We had driven miles, made sharp turns and sudden stops, and drove quite erratically to evade the angry bartender. Yet the cross held on? Or did it? I don’t see how it could. The car had a smooth roof and no roof rack.

yelling at us to get rid of it. The friend who originally found it swore he threw it away. (We did all see him do it.) He said it was an omen, and we should keep it.

An Omen or Something Else?

I got out of the car, took it off my hood and gave it to him. We took it and talked about it the rest of the night. My one friend never was comfortable with keeping it.

We finally drove to the other side of the Island that night to Wetson’s. On our way back home, we got stuck driving behind another car. All of a sudden, in what seemed like slow motion, the entire area lit up as bright as day but with a strange orange glow. Then there was an explosion louder than anything I have

my one friend was even more upset, saying that we should have never taken the cross.

Well, it wasn’t the cross’ fault. I don’t think. It was a huge oil tank from a refinery in New Jersey that exploded. Talk about scary. Well, we all went and watched the fire from across the river before going home. That ended our night of adventure. Our parents never knew.

The Cross on the Car Remains Unexplained to This Day

Just before I wrote this, I got a hold of and talked to the friend who took the cross. I asked him one last time if he had put the cross on the car somehow? Nearly 40 years later he swears he did not, even explaining that if he did, how would it have stayed on the car so long, as well as no one seeing it when they were out of the car a couple of times.

I had to agree that I had no explanation either.

Oh, and one last thing. Remember my friend that was so upset about the cross? It turned out that when the cross was cleaned and examined, the name on the cross was his grandmother’s name.

We talked about this for many years afterward . . . ■

My friend said the cross was an omen and that we should keep it.

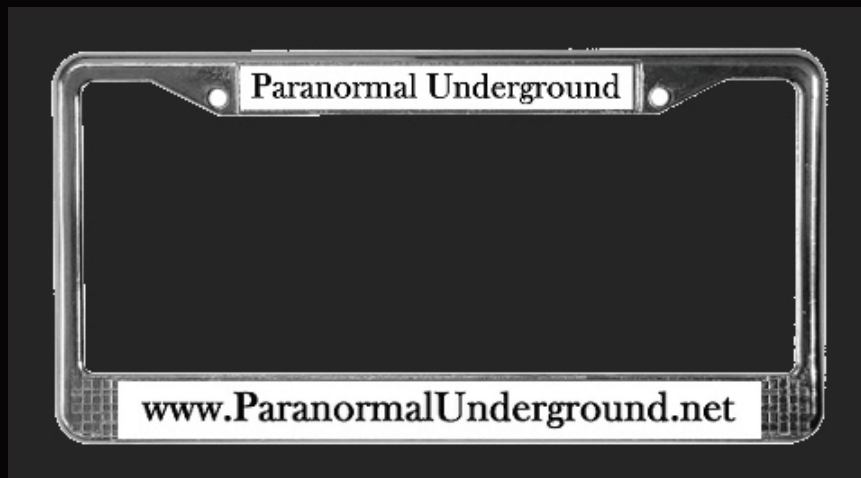
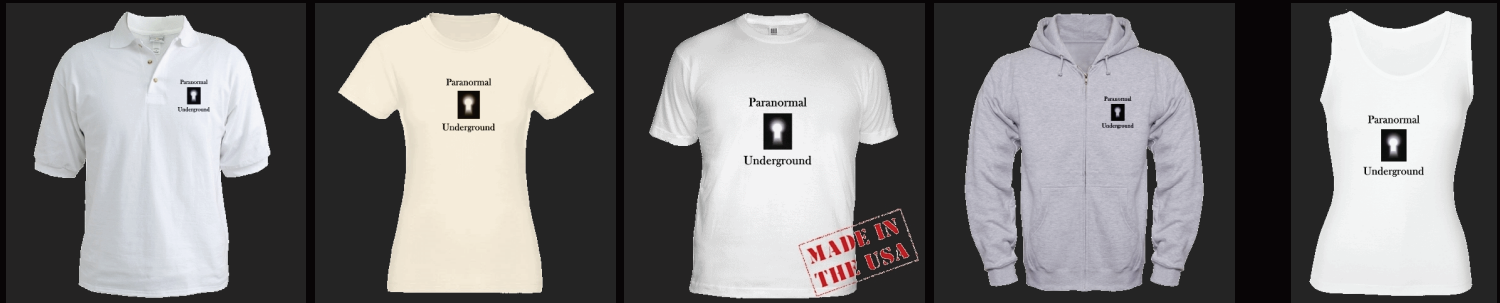
Also, my one friend had tried to put the tire on the roof and no one saw the cross then. Did it just get there somehow? One of my friends was beside himself, very upset, and

heard to this day.

The car in front of us and mine were pushed into the oncoming lane by the shock, and we both screeched to a halt. At this point,

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The Old Talbott Tavern

By Rich Newman, Paranormal Inc.

The legends surrounding the infamous Old Talbott Tavern in Bardstown, Kentucky, are actually less interesting than the reality there. With a past filled with visitors like Jesse James, Daniel Boone, and Abraham Lincoln, it's no surprise that the place has seen its fair share of years, both good and bad, and that paranormal activity is associated with the location. In fact, the earliest sign of the place being haunted occurred with Jesse James himself.

While staying at The Old Talbott Tavern, James thought he saw something or someone entering his room. Without hesitation, he drew his gun and fired at the intruder — he then leapt from his bed and inspected the area only to find there was nobody there!

It's a story that James imparted to the tavern's innkeeper at the time, and that story has stayed with the bar, now turned bed-and-breakfast, all these years. The bullet holes from James' gun are still present in the room (now called the Jesse James Room).

During our visit to The Old Talbott Tavern, my co-investigator Mike and I stayed in the General's Quarters — a room that is reputedly a "hot spot" (according to local Bardstown investigators).

Over the course of the evening, we had many strange things happen during our investigation — not the least of which was a great EMF session we had in the Concord Room (a sort of common area used for conferences, etc.) that involved an entity coming forward on de-



Our night at The Old Talbott Tavern included an entity coming forward on demand, setting off our EMF alarm, and touching us. The spirit actually touched me three times — twice on the hand and once pressing up against the back of me in a way that felt like I had leaned against a wall.

mand, setting off our EMF alarm, and touching us. The spirit actually touched me three times — twice on the hand and once pressing up against the back of me in a way that felt like I had leaned against a wall.

The audio clip we captured took place in the General's Quarters after we had settled in for the night. We asked the spirit in the Concord room to come back to the room with us to "hang out," and this was one of the occurrences that happened in our room.

Mike and I were joking about our EMF alarm going off while we were sleeping, when Mike felt a cold blast of air hit his face and neck. After we listened to the audio, we were surprised (or maybe not so surprised) to hear that the spirit thought our conversation was funny and laughed at Mike's comment via EVP.

Here is the script of the clip we caught that night:

Rich: "If that thing (EMF alarm)

starts beeping in the night, is it going to wake you up?"

Mike: "Oh, Hell yeah. You'll probably have to take a double take to find me, dude, 'cuz I'll probably be hanging from the canopy [of his bed]. I'll be all tangled up in that damn netting."

* Entity laughs *

Mike: "What the f*@\$! was that?"

Rich: "Huh?"

Mike: "I just had a cool breeze that went across my face . . ."

During the rest of the evening, I was touched again on the foot, and we captured audio of drawers in the room opening and closing by themselves. Our investigation also yielded numerous EVPs, including voices, groans, and whispers.

Take a trip to The Old Talbott Tavern — you won't be disappointed! ■


For more information about The Old Talbott Tavern, visit www.talbotts.com/.

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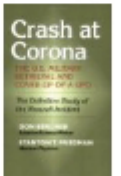

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Dancing the Condor

By Chad Wilson

Diego sat in the shadows of the hillside, trying to avoid the morning sun. He had to conserve his strength as tonight he would begin his vision quest.

Rubbing his shaven head, the 16-year-old's mind was drawn back to the years leading up to this test. He had contemplated long and hard which path he wished to follow. The High Shaman had told him to choose carefully. If he chose the wrong "figure" to dance, he could end up like some of the other dancers, who had gone insane from their visions — the strain of what they had seen too much for their minds.

His own brother had become one of the "lost ones." He remembered as a child, before being chosen, his brother had returned from his vision quest, mumbling to himself. That was the last time he had seen his older brother. Diego still wasn't sure what happened to those who lost their mind to the vision as they were never seen or heard from again.

He tried not to think of what would happen if he failed, but rather tried to focus on success. He knew that was the first step toward achieving his goal.

Diego had thought about it for some time before finally deciding. He had chosen to run the Thunderbird, or the Condor as some referred to it.



At first, The High Shaman had tried to dissuade him, saying no one had ever successfully danced the bird. But Diego had been adamant. He told The High Shaman he had been instructed to run that particular course by a figure in a dream. When The High Shaman asked who the figure was, Diego had replied cryptically, "The eyes."

Living in Cahuachi, far from the capitol of Cuzco, Diego's desire, some would say destiny, was to become a shaman. Physically, Diego did not stand out from the rest of his tribe. A little on the lean and short side, he never would have made a good warrior. His skin had been

browned by exposure to the sun. His eyes a deep black, he had what his mentor called "seeing" eyes. The elders had seen within him that which most of his ancestors carried — the ability to expand their minds, their souls, beyond the physical plane that limited most Nazcans.

He had been chosen by the shamanistic order at an early age, as all of the potentials were. He barely remembered his mother and father, the order to which he belonged taking the place of any real family. But, that was many ages ago; soon he would take his rite of passage, and hopefully take his place among the great ones — those who had

received in their visions the next figure to be immortalized upon the desert floor.

If he successfully ran the Thunderbird, he would take his place among the elders.

* * * * *

The greatest of the runners had been Arcani. She had been the first, and though her pattern had been small, it was still considered the single most important pattern that had to be studied in a young shaman to-be's early years — the years when they first learned about the patterns and their purpose.

Diego remembered when he had been chosen for “the test.” The Old Shaman had taken Diego to the plains above the village where the rest of the potentials lived. Diego came from a long line of shamans, even being able to trace his lineage back to Arcani the First. It would have been a disgrace if he had failed the first, crucial test on his way to becoming a shaman.

He had gasped in relief when The Old Shaman had nodded at his answer, the question of which had been, why do we receive the dances in dreams? That answer of course had been . . . to show the way. The answer was easy, as the young shaman candidates had been taught that simple principal from inception, mainly through songs and tales by the fire side at night.

To Diego, those who paid attention were able to first hear the people, then the earth, and finally the spirits who gave the visions and ultimate guidance.

Diego had watched and listened to The Old Shaman while he was taught the ways of the people and how to be a true shaman. Even though he would like to have admitted it was easy, in truth, it was the hardest thing he had ever done.

From that first test of confirmation, Diego had gone on to dance many of the basic patterns, learning the intricacies of each as he progressed. What some would consider just “lines in the sand” were to Diego's people, the Nazca, visions of

forehead as he squinted at the wind that blew stinging dust into his eyes. He hoped tonight the wind would be calm. Dancing the patterns were complicated enough without the further distraction of wind and dust. His mind needed to be sharp.

Diego had studied the Thunderbird the better part of a year.

other places, as well as a roadmap to the future.

The most peculiar pattern had been the large fish. Diego had not been required to run that particular pattern in his journey toward being a shaman, but had chosen to because he had been drawn to it. And as he ran it, he had found himself being drawn into a world of oceans and ice. For a moment, he had become one of them, one of the whales. He had swam, full of life and energy, free in the blueness of the great world-ocean, while beside him, his mate and their children shared in that freedom. The freedom to go where their hearts took them, the freedom to “live.”

Their song reverberated through the deep blue, filling his soul with joy. It was wonderful, and as Diego had emerged from the dream dance, the vision, one word had come to his lips. Orca. He knew not what it meant, only that it fit the race of giant killers within the land of the deep sea, their song still echoing in his ears. He had always kept that memory with him, if only to remind himself that the Nazca way was just one of many.

* * * * *

Diego's reverence of the past began to fade away. The hot sun was now overhead. Sweat beaded on his

Slight of build, Diego was suited to the spiritual path of the shamans, as opposed to the warriors. And even though both shaman and warrior partook of the sacred drink, they were for different reasons. The warriors to fuel their battle rage, the shamans to help them along on their vision quests. In essence though, the two groups were not that far apart. Surely the warriors were unmatched in their physical prowess, but in the same way, the shamans were warriors in their own right. They were warriors of the mind, a place where few dare tread, for one misstep could lead to madness, from which there was no return.

He thought of the pattern he faced tonight. Diego had studied the Thunderbird for the better part of a year. He had walked its lines, though not all at one time, lest they take him before he was ready. Earlier in the year, he had spoken to The Old Shaman, who soon thereafter passed away to be with the ancestors. Once again, Diego's mind raced back to the night of The Old Shaman's death.

* * * * *

As he had sat beside the kindly old man, the only father Diego had ever truly known, they had talked of what the great bird represented. And in talking with his mentor that

→



one final time, as he made his final preparations for his greatest of journeys, Diego learned something.

The revelation hit him so hard that it physically took his breath away. Diego realized that The Condor, as the Thunderbird was more commonly called, was a pattern to teach his people to fly, to be free, just like the Orca flew within their watery world. And if he was able to complete his vision quest, then his people, like the Orca, would be free . . . free to begin their preparations for the “Final Journey.” A journey that would send them off throughout the stars to live with the Creator.

Diego had sat there holding The Old Shaman’s liver-spotted hand as it trembled with age — the frail body attached to it hid his true warrior

spirit, a kindred soul that Diego felt a deep connection to, as if their souls were the same, yet split in two. He only wished The Old Shaman could see him succeed — see him run the bird and free their people to go home.

And as his old friend drew in his last breath and peered deep into Diego’s eyes, no words were necessary. He didn’t want The Old Shaman to go, but it was his time. He was needed elsewhere.

Tears trickling down his cheeks, Diego said the prayer of remembrance. Soon, The Old Shaman’s name would be added to the Chant of Years, which detailed the long line of greats among his people. From the mightiest warriors to the greatest of shamans, the Chant was a

reminder to the Nazca of where they had gone before.

And as he sat there beside the lifeless husk of his friend, Diego wept heartily. Not out of sadness, but in joy — joy that The Old Shaman had moved on to something greater still.

* * * * *

Shaking free of his memories yet again, Diego set his mind to preparing for the night’s monumental task. Remembrance of the past came easily and often lately. It was almost as if his mind was taking a mental inventory of all that had come to pass, just in case.

Well, the time for days gone by was over, he had to focus on “the now” like he never had before. With that, he stood. Looking up at the blazing sun overhead, he set his teeth in determination and headed into the village.

He would start his “focusing” by preparing his body. He walked toward his small adobe hut in the village. Entering, he sat down beside the fire that had been made in preparation of his journey. He gathered what he needed later for the medicine hut, which would be where he focused his mind and spirit.

Diego set about making his midday meal. Even though he had no hunger, he knew from past dances that he would need the energy the food would provide his body. He gathered the nuts, berries, and dried fish he had around his hearth in various clay pots.

As he ate, he noticed his fingers were sun-browned and aged, much more so than the rest of his body. And for one last time before his night’s journey, he thought back to when he had been sitting in this very same hut with The Old Shaman. They had been talking about the meaning of the desert drawings.

* * * * *

“Why were the patterns first created?” Diego had asked.

The Old Shaman had looked at Diego long and hard. Finally he spoke. “So that we would have to dance them.” He stopped and waited for Diego to reply. When he did not, The Old Shaman continued, “So that we would have to dance them and set ourselves free.”

“What does that mean?” Diego’s asked.

“You must wait and see; someday soon you will understand,” was The Old Shaman’s only response.

* * * * *

The last vestiges of that long-ago conversation echoing in his mind, Diego fully focused on the here and now. As he finished eating, he cleaned up his hut and then began to dress in the ceremonial robes he had laid out that morning. The robes were only to be worn for the medicine hut ceremony.

Tonight, he would face the dance alone, wearing only what he had come into the world with to help him in his quest. Dressed, he stepped out into the hot sun. The bright fabric of his ceremonial robes, in an array of browns, reds, and oranges, lay rough against his skin. The medicine hut was on the far side of the village, and as he walked, tiny puffs of dirt arose upon each determined step. He walked toward where the elders and shamans awaited him, his future uncertain.

Diego entered the hut, its interior dark and hot; as the hide flap fell into place behind him, the muggy air inside the medicine hut made him sweat even more. Darkness. Soon his eyes began to adjust, and he could make out the looming figures of the elders and shamans as they sat against the far side of the dark interior.

Before him crouched the lean form of The High Shaman. Diego could see the shaman looking at him from out of the shadowy pits of his eyes. The embers in the fire pit sprang into life as he stoked them. They grew brighter and brighter as the shaman fueled the pit with dry tinder and pieces of wood.

Waving to Diego, The High Shaman gave a command: “Sit.”

Taking his seat, Diego looked over at the other occupants of the medicine hut. He could smell the bodies — their closeness — as he counted a full half dozen or so of the elders and shamans sitting across from him against the far wall. Diego was not yet considered a full shaman, even though he had devoted almost his entire life to being one. After tonight though, if all went well, he would be considered one of them, and not an outsider.

Looking deep into Diego’s eyes, the shaman issued another command: “Drink.”

Taking the clay bowl beside the fire into his hands, Diego brought it to his lips and took a gulp of the sacred drink. It was said to help aid the visions. Diego had never partaken of it before, but he must drink it now.

Bitter upon his tongue, he bit back the initial reaction to spit it out.

“Ananaki, Ananaki, Ananaki.”

Trying not to spill any, Diego could still feel it running from the corners of his mouth as he gulped it down. He wiped his mouth as he finished off the bowl’s contents.

He instantly began to relax and meditate upon the Condor and its majesty in flight. His mind swam from the intoxicating effects of the sacred drink. He sat back as the others around him remained silent.

His senses took in the crackling of the fire and the smoke that filled his nostrils with its heady fragrance.

Diego was startled from his trance-like state as The High Shaman took up a chant, “Ananaki, Ananaki, Ananaki!”

Soon, this chant was taken up by the others. Amidst the sights, sounds, and headiness, Diego’s head began to buzz, his body to vibrate, and colors exploded behind his closing eyes. All seemed to blur into sound, an eternal staircase to the stars, infinite chorus of the ancestors, on and on, taking on a form and life of its own. Diego could feel his body moving of its own accord as he swayed to the beat.

“Ananaki, Ananaki, Ananaki!” the sacred words rang out.

A crescendo of sound, rising up and up, until finally it reverberated and fell silent.

* * * * *

Diego opened his eyes and realized he was alone. The fire had burned low and no one else was present, not even The High Shaman. He had not even noticed they had all departed the medicine hut.

Alone in the hut, he could still hear the echoes of their chant, “Ananaki, Ananaki, Ananaki!” in his mind.

With a loud knock on the side of the hut, Diego was startled as he watched a familiar person enter its confines. Behind the figure, beyond the entrance flap, Diego could see that it was near night fall already. Looking back at the individual, a smile emerged from Diego’s lips. Rising, he welcomed the spirit of The Old Shaman.

“Welcome father, I await your

guidance,” Diego said, his speech still slightly slurred from the effects of the drug he had ingested earlier.

“Come young one; the Gods await,” The Old Shaman said, leading Diego from the medicine hut toward the plateau where the others awaited. Obediently, Diego followed.

Making their way through the waning light of the setting sun, they carefully climbed up the long, winding path until they stood upon the plain, the sunset red upon the mountains in the distance. As Diego and The Old Shaman approached the others, the sun extinguished itself beyond the peaks. They stood within the dark, moments before the moon would rise to shine her light upon the sacred lines of Cahuachi and the Nazca people.

Diego looked to his side, but The Old Shaman was gone. Before him was The High Shaman, and beyond him, Diego could see the others.

Kneeling on both knees, Diego presented himself to his people. “I come seeking knowledge . . . show me the path.” Diego repeated the words of the ritual.

The High Shaman called out to him: “Rise.”

As Diego rose to his feet, he could see a small smile playing across The High Shaman’s face. It

with the playing of reed flutes upon the breeze and the drumbeat, which seemed timed with the beating of Diego’s own heart.

Chant upon chant, a crescendo was reached as the moon took her place in the sky. Soon it would be time, the midpoint of the night, when the connection with the spirit plain was strongest.

* * * * *

It was time. Diego was led to the lines of the Condor by the shamans. As he approached, he remembered the teachings of The Old Shaman as he heard his voice in his mind. *Always keep your eyes on your ultimate goal, each step bringing you closer to enlightenment.* Diego could feel The Old Shaman’s presence with him still, even though he could no longer see him.

As his ceremonial clothing was stripped away, Diego strangely remembered back to when he was young, before he set off on the Path of The Shamans. He was with his mother. She was bathing him, and he somehow knew she was making him presentable to the world.

Here now, he was being made presentable to the lines.

Naked, he stood before the

Bringing his fingers to his mouth, he tasted the Earth. A strange energy shot through his body as he envisioned the task before him. None had succeeded at dancing the Condor he reminded himself, but now it was his time to run. He would succeed.

As his feet began to move under him, he jogged, slowly at first, but steadily faster as he seemingly became driven by unknown forces.

The whiteness of his path blurred in his vision as sweat ran into his eyes. But he could feel the path. He did not need his sight. Soon he concentrated on nothing but the path, as he felt himself being drawn out of his body. Each moment seemed to fold in upon the next, an eternity before him, Diego ran determinedly into the darkness, on and on upon a path of light. The end was somewhere before him, out of sight, and so far, out of mind.

Seconds turned into minutes, and minutes into hours. Exhausted, he continued, his destiny a blur before him.

The darkness became jagged, and Diego suddenly lost control of the pattern. He stumbled, landing on his hands and knees, the cold stones beneath him carving into his skin. He held himself in place, not wanting to fall all the way to the ground.

He could faintly hear the chant of his people as their tune played out softly in the night. He began to weep in despair, fearing that he had failed.

As he tasted his tears, he heard it, a soft song from the ocean. The Orca. And with it came a message from the past. *Rise up, do not despair, for the path is before you, and all it requires is for you to take it. Rise up young one and seize your destiny!*

Slowly, Diego did rise up; he began to see the path before him — partly with his sight, but mostly with his senses. He took a step, then another. Soon he was moving at a

“The High Shaman signaled for the Ceremony to continue.”

was almost a look of expectancy, as if The High Shaman knew what was to come that very night. Waving his arms in the air, The High Shaman signaled for the ceremony to continue. Giving Diego one last look of subdued excitement, The High Shaman rejoined the others and led them in a low chant, intermixed

world. He looked down and wriggled his toes, for beneath them, he could feel the plain’s stony terrain. Looking around his feet, the moonlight illuminated the stark white of the ground in contrast to the purple stones that normally covered the surface.

Kneeling down, he placed his hands upon the powdery surface.

steady pace once again, the song of the whales playing in his ear, their song of freedom playing in his head.

In the back of his mind, he could make out another voice, that of The Old Shaman.

“That’s it Diego! Lead the people to their freedom! Lead the Nazca to the Stars!” The voice of his beloved mentor faded out as the pattern once again came into focus.

Concentrating upon each step, Diego willed himself on. One step, two steps, in time with the beating of the drum, in time with the beating of his heart, in time with the heart of the world. Relentless, along the path to fuller understanding, he ran toward his goal.

* * * * *

And then it happened. Diego could see the end of the line in front of him. He would succeed! But he did not have time to relish his victory, as he instantly felt himself rising up, shooting into the air above. He felt weightless, his energy zooming out of control. He almost lost himself, but regained his mental foothold once more as he looked back toward the Earth below.

Upon the plain, he could see the Condor in its entirety. He could make out the group of shamans to the South, but could not see his own figure as it toiled upon the path to enlightenment. The moon hung fat and close before him.

Diego could now feel himself being pulled upward, and he turned to see where he was going. Up, up his spirit soared, the Earth a blue gem far below.

And then he stopped, hanging motionless in the soundless, yet star-filled, darkness for what seemed like an eternity. But then, a light.

Diego watched in silent amazement as a silver disc appeared in the distance. It approached his position



in the void faster than an arrow’s shot. He was all alone, except for the disc, which now hovered before him, first on end, then slowly turning until it lay flat. Spinning, it hung there, watching, waiting.

Then he heard it, softly at first, but gradually growing stronger, a wind howling in his ears. Eventually, the sound seemed to transfer into a hum from the disc itself. He could still feel the heartbeat from the world below, and the hum seemed to ebb and flow with that beat, almost as if it was in tune with the stars and everything as a whole. It was at that moment that Diego knew that it was all somehow connected, everything working together toward a common goal.

Realization then struck Diego, and he was surprised he hadn’t recognized it before. This was no being, but a vessel that carried his brothers from the stars. And as these thoughts flowed through Diego’s mind, he watched spellbound as a door opened in the craft’s side. An energy reached out and drew him to the craft’s doorway.

And just as fear once again entered Diego’s mind, he heard the voice of The Old Shaman in his head. *There is no such thing as coincidence . . . there is a purpose for all things in this life.*

Diego remembered back to that particular lesson, almost as if it were yesterday. Yes, we are all connected, he thought, releasing the fear from his soul.

Diego turned to enter the open door. He could make out no features beyond its bright, defining edges. And just before entering its threshold, he reached out and touched the edge of the silvery vessel. Sleek and cool to the touch, he thought as he passed through the door.

As he entered the vessel, darkness befell him, and he lost consciousness.

* * * * *

Diego awoke startled and confused, wondering where he was and why was it so dark. But he quickly remembered . . . the vision quest, the Condor, the craft in the void.



He lay there and felt the craft's cold floor against his naked form. A hum vibrated up through the surface beneath him. He also knew he was not alone, as he felt a presence within the darkness surrounding him.

"Who's there?" Diego whispered into the dark.

A beam of light shot down from above, illuminating a circular patch of the floor before him. As his eyes adjusted, he could see that the floor was similar in color to the exterior walls of the ship, though of a darker hue. He called it a ship for surely that is what it was, a ship that traveled the oceans between the stars.

His people had dealt with the Star Brothers in the past, but that had been long ago. It was the Star Brothers who had guided the shamans in the intricacies of the dance

beginning with Arcani the First, mainly through dreams. They were the ones who had showed her that even though we lived a physical existence, complete with all its pitfalls and dangers, that we also live a spiritual existence. It was through this spiritual existence that we grew as a people, for in the end, we returned to our spiritual state. In the end, the body died, but the spirit was eternal.

Looking up, Diego searched the darkness. He finally saw the figure as it stepped into the beam of light before him. It was the figure from his dreams! It had large eyes that were almost too large for its head, a small mouth, and not much of a nose. The being's neck was slender, along with the rest of its body. It was a God in Diego's eyes, and he prostrated himself before it, its image burned into

his mind. He knew with a certainty that before him stood one of the ancient Star Brothers.

He felt a hand upon his neck and he knew . . . he knew.

A voice spoke mentally to him out of the darkness. *Ananaki, Ananaki, Ananaki.* Quiet, yet resolute in its message.

Burning white light shot through Diego's being as he could feel himself falling back to Earth, back to the plains below.

* * * * *

Falling into his body, Diego stumbled halfway to the ground. He could once again see his surroundings. Before him were the other shamans, as his journey around the Condor had just been completed.

Falling the rest of the way onto the ground, Diego felt himself being dragged toward unconsciousness yet again. This time though, he welcomed it. He had seen his vision, his quest was complete. And as the darkness took him, he flashed back to what his Star Brother had said.

Ananaki. It was the name of the Star People.

He could also hear their song, It was akin to the song of the Orca. It spoke of the sounds of the stars, and the oceans in between. Within the song, there was also a message for his people. It spoke of the return of the Star Brothers, the Ananaki, and of their plans to gather up the Nazca, much like the distant Olmecs, and others who had come before. But first they had to prepare the way. Diego was sent back to help prepare the way.

And as he lay there listening to the song of the stars, he could also hear the other shamans chanting, "Ananaki, Ananaki, Ananaki!"

And, in the distance above, he could hear The Old Shaman, his father, singing, "Freedom, freedom, freedom!" ■

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Cynthia Eden

By Michelle M. Pillow, www.michellepillow.com

Cynthia Eden is an award-winning author of paranormal romance and romantic suspense. She writes everything from vampire heroines to dragon shifter heroes to demons and succubae.

She lives in the South, and loves long, hot summers and supernatural stories. Her latest paranormal romance releases, *Eternal Hunter* and *Hotter After Midnight*, are available in all major bookstores.

* * * * *

Q: In your book, *Hotter After Midnight*, your heroine is a psychologist who primarily treats supernatural patients. What inspired you to create such a character?

Cynthia: I was inspired to create Dr. Emily Drake (my monster doctor) because a friend of mine is a

a paranormal crosses the line in my story and begins to kill humans, she's the only one who can profile him.

Q: Why do you think readers, and society in general, are fascinated by the paranormal?

Cynthia: I think people like to believe there is more to this world than meets the eye. For centuries, people have been fascinated by the paranormal – the idea that something “more” may wait in the darkness intrigues us . . . even if it also makes us afraid sometimes!

Q: What are your favorite paranormal shows, movies, and books?

Cynthia: I am a huge fan of *Supernatural* – I love seeing all the new paranormal characters that are introduced each week.

“The idea that something more may wait in the darkness intrigues us.”

psychologist and I've always been fascinated by her job.

However, I wanted a paranormal slant on this story, so I decided that Dr. Drake would be psychic – and she'd mainly treat paranormals. When

And, of course, I'm also a diehard *Buffy* fan. Spike is one of my all-time favorite vampire anti-heroes. He blurred the line very nicely for the good guy/bad boy, and like so many other folks out



Paranormal romance and romantic suspense writer Cynthia Eden writes everything from vampire heroines to dragon shifter heroes to demons and succubae.

there, I found myself tuning in to see how he would develop – and to see if he'd get the girl.

Q: Do you believe in the supernatural? Or are you a skeptic?

Cynthia: I definitely believe in the supernatural. I think there is much more to this world than what we see every day.



Psychic phenomenon, past-life experiences, ghostly encounters — I think all of that (and more!) is certainly possible in our world.

Q: If given the chance, would you become a vampire?

Cynthia: No. While I do enjoy writing about vampires, the blood drinking would be a turn-off for me.

"There is much more to this world than what we see every day."

Q: How would you react if you came face to face with a ghost?

Cynthia: I'd try to communicate with the ghost. Yes, maybe I've watched too many *Ghost Hunters* episodes, but I'd want to try talking.

The ghost would be there for a reason, right? What does he/she have to say?

Q: What does the future hold for your writing?

Cynthia: I've recently launched a new paranormal bounty hunter series for Kensington Brava. The first book in the series, *Eternal Hunter*, released in January, and the second book, *I'll Be Slaying You*, will release in July 2010.

I'll Be Slaying You is a vamp story. It answers the question, "What happens when you become the thing you hate/fear the most?" ■

* * * * *

Thanks for joining us Cynthia!

*You can learn more about Cynthia Eden and her books at her Website, www.cynthiaeden.com. You can catch *Eternal Hunter* and the mass market re-release of *Hotter After Midnight* in bookstores now.*

Sampling of Cynthia's Paranormal Titles

- Immortal Danger
- Midnight's Master
- Midnight Sins
- Eternal Hunter
- I'll Be Slaying You
- Hotter After Midnight
- The Vampire's Kiss
- The Wizard's Spell

Awards for *Hotter After Midnight*

- Gayle Wilson Award of Excellence (2009)
- CAPA for Paranormal Romance (2008 Winner)
- Sensual Reviewers' Choice Award (2008 Winner)
- PEARL & PRISM finalist

Annie Aurand-Mayes (MissingK8)

About Annie

Age: Physically one age, emotionally much older.

Born/Currently resides: Lyons, New York/Seneca Falls, New York (the home of Women's Rights and the town that Bedford Falls from the movie *It's a Wonderful Life* was based on).

Status (married/single/etc.): Married for 26 years.

Education: 2 3/4 associates degrees.

Zodiac Sign: Aries.

Occupation: Wife, mother, grandma, and artist.

* * * * *

Q&A

What brought you to Paranormal Underground?

Annie: I can't remember how I found it; it may have been from a link on the *Ghost Hunter's* board on SyFy!

What does your member name mean?

Annie: I miss my daughter Caitlin, who passed at age 19 after battling Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia for 5 years.

How would you describe yourself?

Annie: This one is difficult as I am not the person I was before Cait's illness and death. (I still have a hard time using that word in a sentence

with my child's name). During her battle, I felt I could take on the world and win because there was just no considering any other outcome. I now know that sometimes there just is nothing that is 'enough' in certain situations, no matter how hard we try or how much we are desperate for something.

Cait's death pretty much destroyed me, which I am only now acknowledging. After watching your child suffer so much for almost five years, and then to not have her



Annie is a paranormal believer who is most interested in ghosts and spirits.

leaves you physically, emotionally, and financially bereft.

I am loyal to friends. I try to see all sides to a situation. I am harder on myself than even an arch enemy would be. My sense of humor is oftentimes dry to the point of kindling. I have tried to go through life leaving as little pain and harm in my path as possible. I haven't always succeeded, but I try.

Tell us about your family and what you like to do.

Annie: Currently, our family is my husband Bill, who is 80, but has been dragged into this century kicking and screaming; our son Mick who is 25; and his son Danny, who is four. We enjoy watching DVDs of favorite movies, reading, watching Danny grow, and long walks when the Central New York weather permits.

Who are your heroes?

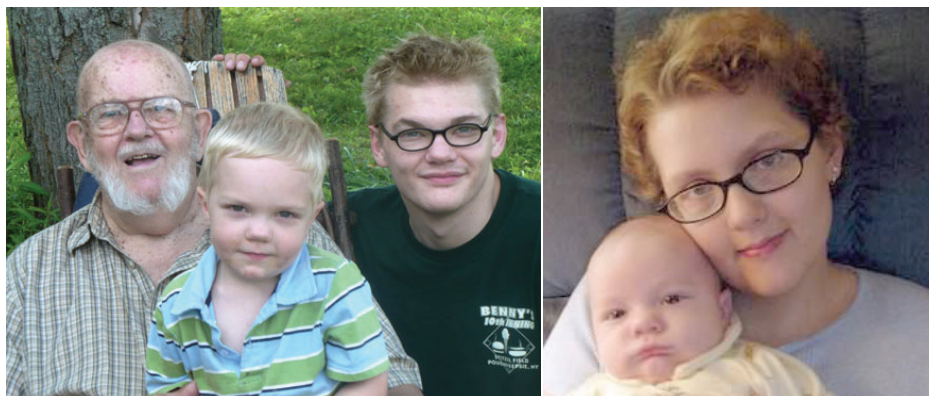
Annie: This is probably getting tiring, but my two kids. Cait for the amazing fight she put up with grace, humor, and a strength that was way beyond what a teen should possess.

Mick for the things he has overcome: the guilt siblings have when there is terminal illness in the family, survivor's guilt, the 10 minutes he had alone with her before he could get to me that last night, and so much more, i.e., the neglect that was unintentional, but necessary at times, in his teen years. He is a wonderful father to his son, and I am so proud of him for surviving intact.

What are your favorite TV shows, paranormal shows, books, movies?

Annie: I watch a lot of the History Channel, Science Channel, Discovery, etc. I love britcoms. *Inspector Morse*, *Inspector Lewis Mysteries*, and *Prime Suspect*.

A guilty pleasure is *Kitchen Nightmares*. My favorite book is *The Bedside Book of British Short Stories* edited by Bennett Cerf and published in 1939; it goes from



Pictured above (at left) are Annie's husband, Bill; grandson, Danny; son, Mick; and (at right holding Danny) daughter, Caitlin.

Chaucer to late 30s. It's my second copy; the first was my dad's, and I lugged it around for 30 years before it gave out. I love Dennis Lehane mysteries. We still watch *Ghost Hunters* every week.

Some of my favorite movies include *Dogma*, *Cube*, *Sweeney Todd*, any of Kenneth Branagh's Shakespearean stuff (especially *Henry V*), all of Hitchcock, *How Green Was My Valley*, *Grosse Pointe Blank*, *Judgement at Nuremberg*, and *Inherit the Wind*.

Favorite music?

Annie: The Beatles, Green Day, and Flogging Molly.

Any other favorites?

Annie: I really love all sorts of music. PM and Wings . . . some Nine Inch Nails, some Dire En Grey, classical, and traditional Irish/Celtic.

What would our readers be surprised to find out about you?

Annie: I have a pierced nose and eyebrow and two tattoos, one of which is a large dove with the word "Saoirse," which is the Irish for "freedom." I was once with a group who confronted Orangemen wanting to march through a republican town in the six-counties.

What are your pet peeves?

Annie: I've lost a lot of my pet peeves as they just don't seem important any more. The biggest is being called ma'am in stores by snotty salespeople who emphasize the word when they are arguing with me. My kids used to just look at each other and take a step backward when it happened.

Are you a skeptic or believer?

Annie: I am a believer due to what I've experienced. If I don't experience it, then I remain cautiously skeptical, but open.

What areas of the paranormal interest you the most?

Annie: Ghosts and spirits, which I think bleeds over into a lot of areas.

Talk about any paranormal experiences you have had and how they affected you.

Annie: Without going into a lot of detail here, I have seen Cait two times, and Bill has seen her more. I have experienced manipulation of physical things. One morning I woke up and was having my first coffee and ciggie, when I suddenly noticed that my left hand felt heavier than usual.

I looked and Cait's school ring that I wore on my right hand was now on my left, above my wedding band. I did not dream of jewelry nor had I dreamt of Caitie. It just was there and has remained there since. There are more things that I may share at another time.

What do you think happens to us when we die?

Annie: I believe we move to another plane of existence. Cait and I would discuss this a lot the last few months of her life, and we decided it was sort of the Roman view, Elysian Fields.

I think there is more coming/going than we suspect. I don't think most spirits are trapped here, but choose to be here. I have come to believe those on the other side have a learning process for communicating with us.

Do you have any words of wisdom that you live by?

Annie: It's something I told Caitie when she'd been inundated with her oncologist telling her over and over again that if she didn't go into remission, there would be no bone-marrow transplant and no more chemo, except experimental, and that she'd probably die in the end.

I asked if she was seeing death. She said yes. So, I told her to look him in the eye and tell him, "Okay, I see you. You're lurking there. Now piss off. I'm busy with living and getting well, so I don't have any more time to waste worrying about you."

She slept that night for the first time in a week. I think we all need to acknowledge that death is at the end, but to piss off until that time comes.

Any exciting plans for the future?

Annie: I hope to start doing my art and jewelry design work again. ■

WITCH AND WIZARD

BOOK WRITTEN BY JAMES PATTERSON AND GABRIELLE CHARBONNET

REVIEW BY KAREN FRAZIER

“I see my mother crying quietly. Not for herself, of course, but for Whit and me. I see my father, his tall frame stooped with resignation smiling at me and my brother — trying to keep our spirits up, reminding us that there’s no point in being miserable in our last moments on this planet.”

So begins the latest book, *Witch and Wizard*, written by the extremely prolific James Patterson. Better known for his hugely popular *Alex Cross* and *Women’s Murder Club* series of books, Patterson casts his lot with the teen set, probably hoping to cash in on the gap left by the completion of two wildly popular youth/teen series, *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* (both to which he pays tribute in *Witch and Wizard*.)

In the book, Patterson and Charbonnet tell the story of Whit and Wisty Allgood, a teen-aged brother and sister who lead normal, unremarkable lives when they are ripped out of bed in the middle of the night and imprisoned by the newly elected totalitarian government called the New Order — a government characterized by its slavish devotion to all that is logical, scientific, and proper.

Much to their surprise, Whit and Wisty are charged with being a witch and a wizard — crimes punishable by death in the New Order. Lest you think this is a modern commentary on the Salem Witch trials, however, the story has a twist. Although they didn’t know it, the teens are actually in possession of magical powers that have remained latent throughout their childhood. Once the pair is impris-



oned, however, Whit and Wisty discover that they are, indeed, magical. Not just magical, but powerfully so.

In *Witch and Wizard*, Patterson and Charbonnet attempt to follow the winning formula of previous books in the genre. They create their own world where magic coexists with the real world. They create their own vocabulary surrounding their magical world. They create their own history and future. Unfortunately, the formula falls flat. Instead of being an engaging story, *Witch and Wizard* seems more like nothing more than an attempt to become the next *Harry Potter*.

The authors have some success in creating the New Order, but it is never fully fleshed out in a way that allows the reader to understand what is really going on. That could be by device, however. It’s difficult to tell whether the reader is supposed to feel the same confusion that the story’s protagonists do, or whether the confusion arises from sub-par plot development.

Speaking of the protagonists, the characters are really rough sketches more than fully developed characters. One of the things that made *Harry Potter* so endearing to so many was J.K. Rowling’s full development of her characters. Raise your hand if you think you know Harry,

Ron, and Hermione pretty well. Or, if you feel you know what drove Lord Voldemort to do what he did.

The same can’t be said of either the heroes or villains in *Witch and Wizard*. There’s nothing there to make you like them, hate them, or even relate to them. Of course, Rowling had a whole series to develop her characters, while Patterson and Charbonnet are still on their first book.

Instead of any kind of a satisfying ending, Patterson and Charbonnet pretty much wrap the book up with “to be continued.” While creating a story arc is obviously important in a book that is intended to be part of a series, I still am one who believes that each book in the series needs a beginning, middle, and end instead of a beginning, middle, and to be continued. *Witch and Wizard* fails to provide any kind of a miniature wrap up.

Another distraction is the new vocabulary, which is sprinkled throughout the book, but never explained until a glossary at the end of the book. This once again seems to draw on the Rowling formula, by creating words specific to the fictional world in the book. Unfortunately, the device falls flat here and ultimately winds up being pretty jarring and confusing.

In the end, *Witch and Wizard* seems to fall well short of its apparent goal of filling the abyss left in the hearts of young readers (and sometimes their moms) of *Harry Potter* and *Twilight*. Instead, it winds up feeling like a quick attempt to cash in. I think teens (and their moms) just might be slightly more discerning that *Witch and Wizard* gives them credit for being. ■

LEGION

MOVIE DIRECTED BY SCOTT STEWART

REVIEW BY CHAD WILSON

When I saw the previews for the movie *Legion* earlier in the year, I really did not want to see it. At the urging of my significant other, arm twisting is more like it, I decided to give it a chance. Three words come to mind when I think of the opening sequence: Angels With Guns. It is a motif that sticks with the movie throughout its entire 1 hour and 40 minute run time.

Warning: SPOILERS AHEAD!

It seems God is mad at humanity, just as he was during the time of Noah's flood, and wishes to do away with all of us once again. It makes me question what kind of God is so wishy-washy that he wants to destroy humanity every 10,000 years or so. Michael, played by Paul Bettany, was originally slated to kill the chosen child but decides to go against his maker and try to save the child, and thus humanity.

From the cross-shaped hole blown in a wall at the beginning of the movie to campy one-liners (such as Dennis Quaid's character, Bob Hanson, declaring, "We're closed for business," as he blows himself up along with his dive diner) at the end of the movie, *Legion* has very corny effects, as well as very bad acting . . . for the most part.

It started with the wooden acting of Adrienne Palicki, who played Charlie, the pregnant, cigarette smoking (yes, she did), jaded woman

who was the soon-to-be mother of the chosen one. However, I found myself liking her less and less as the film went on. I disliked her character so much that I was hoping that humanity would be wiped out by the end of the movie.

Legion is a bad showing in the acting category. While Charles S. Dutton (Percy Walker),



Tyrese Gibson (Kyle Williams), and Paul Bettany (archangel Michael) played convincing characters, most of the rest of the cast left a bad taste in my mouth. Dennis Quaid, with his over-the-top acting, was the worst offender in this movie. Even the above-average acting of Bettany could not save this film. This movie's extremely superficial feel can be lumped onto the Director, Scott Stewart, who also co-wrote the movie.

I do think *Legion* could have been a good movie if done right, but I think it suffered from bad writing from the start. Co-written by Peter Schink (writer of such classics as *Barb Wire* . . . cough), and Scott Stewart (who also directed this bomb), *Legion* is one of the worst movies that I've ever seen. I really wanted to walk out of the theater during the movie, and if I had been at the theater alone, I would have done so.

I give this movie a rating of 1 out of 10 archangels. Wait, let's bump that up to a 2 for gun action alone.

I have one word for those going to see this movie . . . "DON'T!" ■

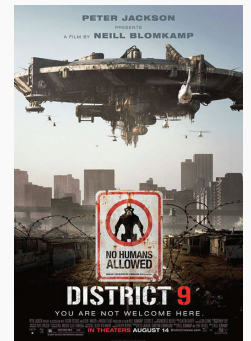
DISTRICT 9

MOVIE DIRECTED BY
NIELL BLOMKAMP

REVIEW BY RICHARD LOMBARDI

District 9 is produced by Peter Jackson of Lord of the Rings fame and directed by Niell Blomkamp, who also directed *Crossing the Line*, *Tempbot*, *Adicolor Yellow*, and *Alive in Joburg*.

Released August 14, 2009, the movie is Rated R for bloody violence and pervasive language. District 9 is a documentary-style drama, starring Sharlto Copley as Wikus



Van De Merwe, head of the "MNU" — a Multinational corporation in charge of containing a race of aliens whose space ship has come to a halt above Johannesburg, South Africa.

The movie flips back and forth between the storyline of Wikus' daily duties, struggles, and interviews with journalist Grey Bradnam — UKNR Chief Correspondent — played by Jason Cope, and sociologist Sarah Livingstone, played by Nathalie Boltz.

Usually I do not like CG movies, but this movie had about the best I have seen to date. The film work was spectacular, and the acting was as great as the story. It is a complex story, but is ultimately a hero story sprinkled with comedy, drama, action, and a bit of social commentary.

The movie is 112 minutes overall. I would recommend that you buy this one if you love alien movies, as it is well worth the \$20 to buy the DVD. ■

