

Paranormal Underground™

Volume 3, Issue 8

August 2010

THE OUIJA BOARD: SPIRIT COMMUNICATOR?



THE BELL WITCH STILL A MYSTERY

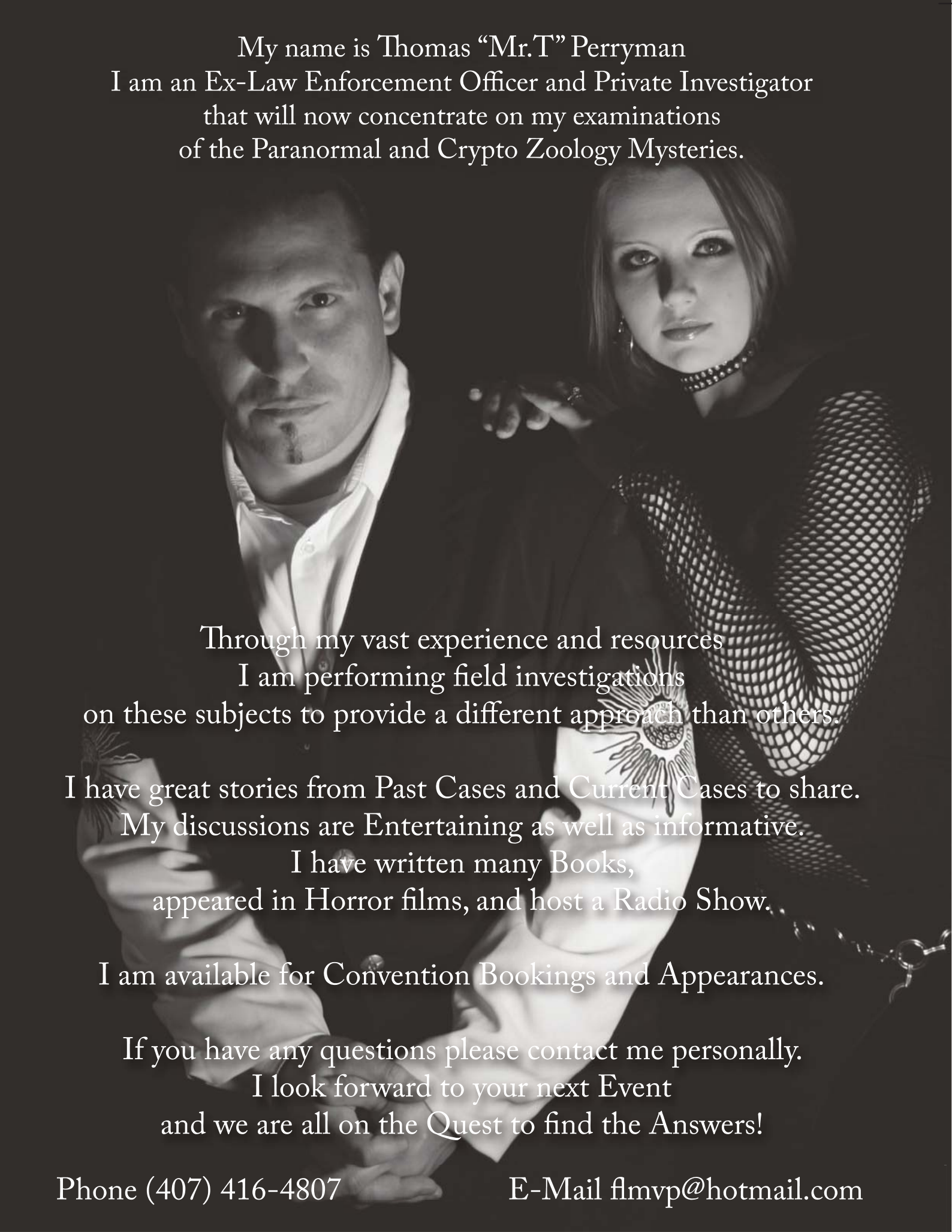
The Curious Case of Stan Romanek

Is The Mothman Homeless?

FIVE AMERICAN HAUNTS

ALSO INSIDE:

- INVESTIGATOR SPOTLIGHT: PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS OF CENTRAL TEXAS
- CASE FILES: A FIRST-TIMER'S PARANORMAL INVESTIGATION AT COWTOWN
- EQUIPMENT UPDATE: THE OUIJA BOARD AS A PARANORMAL TOOL?
- TV WATCH: *HAVEN*
- DIARY FROM A HAUNTED HOTEL



My name is Thomas “Mr.T” Perryman
I am an Ex-Law Enforcement Officer and Private Investigator
that will now concentrate on my examinations
of the Paranormal and Crypto Zoology Mysteries.

Through my vast experience and resources
I am performing field investigations
on these subjects to provide a different approach than others.

I have great stories from Past Cases and Current Cases to share.
My discussions are Entertaining as well as informative.

I have written many Books,
appeared in Horror films, and host a Radio Show.

I am available for Convention Bookings and Appearances.

If you have any questions please contact me personally.

I look forward to your next Event
and we are all on the Quest to find the Answers!

Phone (407) 416-4807

E-Mail flmvp@hotmail.com

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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.

Shaun Belekurov

Shaun has spent 18 years in the field investigating paranormal phenomena. This has taken him everywhere from investigating Chupacabra sightings outside Tijuana, Mexico; Bigfoot Hunting in Washington State; and most recently trailing the “Hellhound of the Ozarks” in his own backyard.



His lifelong pursuit of all things strange has led him to recently publish *2012: The Paranormal Cookbook (Convergence of Reality and the Supernatural)*. Shaun founded S.P.O.O.K.S. (a paranormal field investigative unit based out of Springfield, Mo.). He enjoys riding his Harley and doing field work. His Website is www.spooksfeld.com.

Paul Bottini

Paul has written several eBooks about haunted sites, UFO sightings, and cryptid lore. When not writing, Paul travels the countryside in search of UFOs, hotspots of high strangeness, ethereal beasts, and anything remotely paranormal.



Paul also designs Web graphics and animations. You can visit his MySpace page at www.myspace.com/zzyzyparanormal.

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 investigates with the McHenry County Paranormal Research Group. He writes a biweekly blog for www.paranormalunderground.net about his frequent investigations.



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.

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.”

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 business publications. Cheryl is a partner for Ghost Knight Media.



Michelle M. Pillow

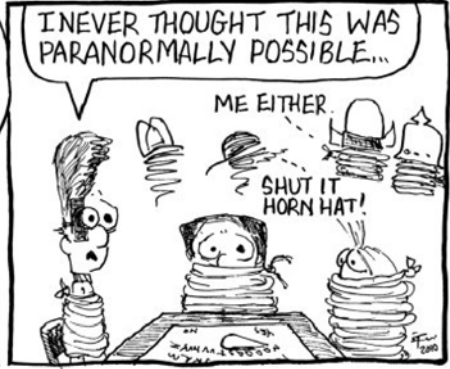
Michelle is an award-winning author writing in many romance fiction genres, including futuristic and paranormal. A skeptical believer, she has a fascination with anything paranormal. She’s also a photographer and cohost of Raven Radio.



Readers and listeners can contact Michelle at www.michellepillow.com. You can catch her latest three book series, *Realm Immortal (King of the Unblessed; Faery Queen; and Stone Queen)* in bookstores now.

Entities-R-Us

by Terri J. Garofalo — www.entities-r-us.com



Entities-R-Us

by Terri J. Garofalo — www.entities-r-us.com



Andrew Selfridge

Andrew is an investigator with the Oklahoma City Ghost Club. A police officer by trade, Andy brings seven years of law enforcement experience and critical thinking to his investigative approach, with a strong emphasis on the purity of data collection and preservation of evidence.



Andrew says that a critical approach to paranormal phenomena is essential, but also believes that a human, compassionate mentality is required when dealing with clients living with anomalous activity.

Jill Stefko, Ph.D.

Jill has studied the paranormal since 1957. Her expertise in the paranormal includes parapsychol-



ogy, cryptozoology, Fortean phenomena, anomalies, UFOs, aliens, demonic possession, and exorcism. She gives workshops and lectures and has been a guest on radio call-in talk shows and local TV as an expert in the paranormal. She investigates alleged cases of the paranormal and counsels experiencers.

Jill is the Feature Writer in the paranormal topic for www.suite101.com, an international ezine. Jill is the director and founder of FIRE-Psi, which was established in 1996.

Linda Williams

Linda is the founder/lead investigator for Martinsville Volunteer Paranormal Society in Indiana. She spent six years working in a public library where she perfected her researching skills.

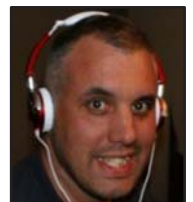


She is currently a receptionist in

a local eye doctor's office. Williams had her first paranormal experience at a young age, prompting her life-long interest in the paranormal.

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 Anne Hotel, the Queen Mary, and private residences among his investigations.

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www.ParanormalUnderground.net

EDITORIAL

PUBLISHER

CHAD WILSON
PUBLISHER@PARANORMALUNDERGROUND.NET

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

CHERYL KNIGHT
EDITOR@PARANORMALUNDERGROUND.NET

MANAGING EDITOR

KAREN FRAZIER
KARENFAZIER@PARANORMALUNDERGROUND.NET

SCIENCE EDITOR

J.D. HARRISON
SCIENCEEDITOR@PARANORMALUNDERGROUND.NET

CONTRIBUTORS

HEIDI ANN
SHAUN BELEKUROV
PAUL BOTTINI
TERRI J. GAROFALO
CAROLYN M. HUGHES
CHERYL KNIGHT
KAREN FRAZIER
RICK E. HALE
MICHELLE M. PILLOW
ANDREW SELFRIDGE
JILL STEFKO, PH.D.
LINDA WILLIAMS
CHAD WILSON

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Where We're Supposed to Be

When I began seriously studying the paranormal in the summer of 2006, I had no idea where it would lead me. I was simply looking to step up my study of subjects that had fascinated me since my youth. I had read books on all things paranormal since childhood and had always been in awe of the world's mysteries.

A few years ago, it seemed to be the right time for me to try and uncover even more. I had no "solid plan." I was just going with the flow. Today, I find myself a paranormal investigator, the publisher of a magazine, and a budding documentarian. Areas I never thought I would delve into have become, in essence, what I do.

How did I get here? The process began with Cheryl Knight, our editor-in-chief, as she is the one who has always encouraged me to achieve my goals and dreams and to give things "a shot" when I might not have otherwise done so. Cheryl is 100 percent receptive to the "maybes" of this world and beyond.

Karen Frazier, our managing editor, has also been a source of inspiration. Karen is someone who never lets fear get in the way of her investigations and experiences. She is always asking questions and searching for answers.

We have become a good team, and through that teamwork we are moving ever forward to fulfilling our mission – toward delving into all things paranormal. We have been able to accomplish things I never thought would be fully realized.

Personally, I've always wanted

Paranormal Underground to contribute something worthwhile to the paranormal field, whether it be information gathering, shining the spotlight on those investigators and researchers trying to uncover "more," presenting and exchanging new ideas within our magazine and on our Website and forum, or even providing thoughtful entertainment for our readers and Website visitors. Doing these things

and receiving feedback that what we do has made a difference makes all the hard work worthwhile.

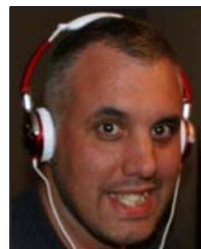
Up to this point, the magazine has involved a lot of donated time and effort by a lot of people, not only by Cheryl, Karen, and me, but by all of our volunteer writers, editors, designers,

and forum moderators.

And as hokey as it sounds, we've received help from the universe along the way. A lot of what many people would consider "coincidental incidents" have helped spur the entire process of what is Paranormal Underground, from our magazine to our radio show to our Website.

Some were little things, while others were much bigger events. From interviews falling into place right when we needed them, to opportunities knocking just when we were about to look into a particular area, such as our new radio show, things continue to fall into place.

To me, it is all an indicator that we are in exactly the place we are supposed to be. So, I'll continue to go with the flow and ask more questions. Maybe together, we can all help further the paranormal field. ■

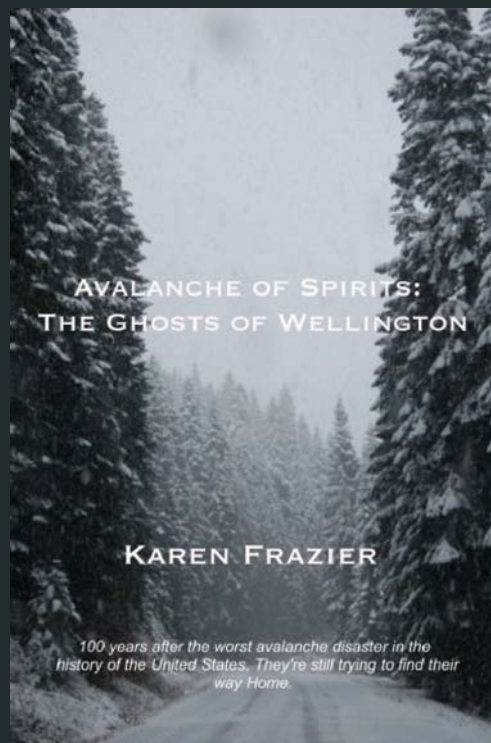


Chad Wilson,
Publisher



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Underground



With Hosts Rick Hale & Karen Frazier

Shining the Spotlight on the Paranormal Investigators of Central Texas

In this issue of *Paranormal Underground* magazine, we get to know Ryan Tackitt from the Paranormal Investigators of Central Texas. The team investigates locations around Central Texas looking for evidence of ghosts and spirits.

While Ryan believes that most paranormal encounters can be explained using common sense, logic, and science, he has found through his research that some encounters can't be explained this way and leaves him and his team curious to learn more. Ryan's Q&A can be found on page 14.

Also featured in this issue is author and *Paranormal Underground* editor Karen Frazier. Michelle Pillow talks with Karen about her new book, *Avalanche of Spirits: The Ghosts of Wellington*. In Karen's book, she shares how investigating the site of the worst avalanche disaster in U.S. history (Wellington, Washington) led her to transform from a skeptic to a believer. Turn to page 20 to learn more.

And in this month's Special Report and Equipment Update, we profile Ouija boards and their supposed link to the spirit world. Is the Ouija board just a game? Or is it more? And should it be used during paranormal investigations? (Turn to pages page 24 and 56 to read more about these infamous boards.)

In our Case Files of the Unknown (beginning on page 32), we

feature five intriguing, haunted U.S. sites; the Bell Witch case; new Mothman news; and the unusual case of UFO abductee Stan Romanek.

And in our Personal Experiences section, we've got our ongoing series from Carolyn M. Hughes, called "Diary From a Haunted Hotel" (page 46); a "first-timer's" paranormal investigation at the Old Cowtown Museum (page 48); and a personal experience at one paranormal investigator's job site (page 54).

On page 59, Karen Frazier reviews the Loyd Auerbach book, *A Paranormal Casebook*, and on page 12, Heidi Ann summarizes the new Syfy Channel TV show *Haven*.

Also, thanks to everyone who entered our 3rd Annual Paranormal Short Story Contest. Winners will be notified of the results prior to publication of our October issue, in which the first place winner be published!

In next month's issue we'll shine the spotlight on long-time paranormal investigator, documentarian, and *Fact or Fake: Paranormal Files* investigator Bill Murphy. We'll also talk with Marie D. Jones and Larry Flaxman, authors of the book *11:11 The Time Prompt Phenomenon: The Meaning Behind Mysterious Signs, Sequences and Synchronicities*.

Happy reading! ■

~ Cheryl Knight
Editor-in-Chief



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ART

ART DIRECTOR

CHAD WILSON

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

CHERYL KNIGHT

COVER DESIGN

CHAD WILSON

PROMOTIONS

PROMOTIONS/MARKETING

KAREN FRAZIER

KARENFRAZIER@PARANORMALUNDERGROUND.NET

MYSPACE

www.myspace.com/paranormalunderground

TWITTER

<http://twitter.com/ParanormalUG>

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ADVERTISING

Interested in Advertising in Paranormal Underground Magazine, on our Website, or in our Podcasts?

Call 1-714-646-4197

or e-mail:

editor@paranormalunderground.net

Send comments and letters to:
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Calendar of Events

August 12-15

PhantomCon
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Hickory, North Carolina
<http://phantomcon.com>

August 13-14

2nd Annual Psychic & Paranormal
Gathering
Holiday Inn, Southwest
Louisville, Kentucky
E-mail: spiritseekers@att.net

August 21-22

Second Annual Ohio Paranormal
Convention
Dayton's Hara Arena
Dayton, Ohio
www.ohioparacon.com/

August 27-28

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

August 27-29

Paranormal Information Association
Conference
Clewiston Inn
Clewiston, Florida
<http://paranormalinformationassociation.com>

September 10-11

Paranormacon
Masonic Temple Fundraiser
Historic Fort Wayne, Indiana
<http://innomineparanormalresearch.com/>

September 18

The Learning Light Foundation
w/the Close Encounters Resource
Organization Presents . . .
"Stan Romanek: World's Most
Documented UFO Contact Story"
Anaheim, California, 1:00 p.m.
www.learninglight.org



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September 18-19

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Little Theater
Pensacola, Florida
www.pensacolaparacon.com

October 16

Parafest 2010
The Ambassador Rooms
Workshop Masonic Hall
Workshop, Nottinghamshire, UK
www.parafest.info

October 29-30

Port Gamble Ghost Conference
The Pavilion, Port Gamble, Wash.
www.portgamble.com/default.asp?ID=126

October 29-31

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

October 30

Southern Oklahoma PARACON
Medicine Park, Oklahoma
<http://nats.truthok.com>

November 5-7

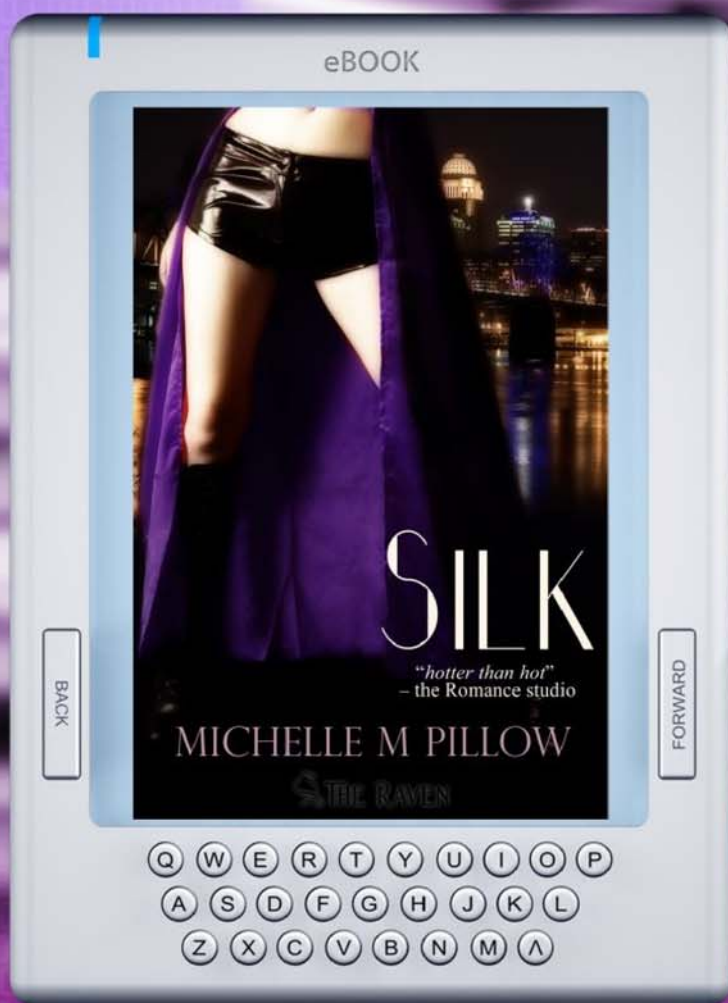
ScareFest Horror & Paranormal
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"HAVEN" OFFERS INTRIGUE & SUSPENSE FOR SYFY VIEWERS

BY HEIDI ANN

From Twin Peaks, Washington, to Cicely, Alaska . . . Rome, Wisconsin, to Eureka, Oregon . . . quirky, small towns with plenty of secrets have always been a television staple. The latest town to join this list is Haven, Maine. Based loosely on the Stephen King novel *The Colorado Kid*, *Haven* debuted on the Syfy Channel on July 9, 2010.

In the pilot episode, FBI agent Audrey Parker (Emily Rose) is sent to Haven, Maine, in search of Jonas Lester, who escaped federal lockup and killed a guard. Lester grew up in Haven, so Parker sets off in the hopes of tracking him down.

A freak accident just outside of town leaves Parker literally hanging on the edge, where she is saved by Haven police detective Nathan Wournos (Lucas Bryant). After explaining who she is to Nathan, he offers her a ride into town. On the way there, she discovers that Lester has been murdered. Parker's assignment then changes to finding his killer, which is easier said than done in this town full of eccentric characters.

As Parker investigates Lester's unusual murder, she discovers that Nathan, who is the son of the police chief, can't feel pain, which is not as much of a blessing as it may sound. She meets other Haven locals, including Dave and Vince Teagues,



Emily Rose and Lucas Bryant (pictured at left) star in the new Syfy drama *Haven*. The one-hour show is loosely based on a 2005 Stephen King novella, called *The Colorado Kid*.

who run the local paper the *Haven Herald*. The brothers are convinced they've seen Parker before.

Conrad Brower, a local handyman with an aversion to people getting in his personal space, becomes an early suspect in Lester's death when his hat is found at the scene of the crime. Conrad had been in the service with Lester, and when they got out, Lester used his computer skills to steal VA benefits from other servicemen, including Conrad.

When shop owner Marian gives Conrad an alibi, Nathan begins to suspect another Haven resident, Duke Crocker (Eric Balfour). Crocker, who lives on a boat in the harbor, has an, as of yet, unknown past with Nathan that causes them to

hate each other.

As the suspect list grows in the murder of Jonas Lester, so does the bizarreness of the town.

Parker soon learns that Haven is just that, a haven for people with supernatural powers. During her investigation, she also discovers an old picture from the *Haven Herald* reporting on the death of "The Colorado Kid." The report includes a pictures of a young woman who is the spitting image of her. Having grown up in an orphanage, Parker becomes convinced this woman is her mother, and she decides to stay in Haven and figure out the mystery of not only the town, but of her own past.

Haven airs on the Syfy Channel Fridays at 10 p.m. EDT. ■

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Ryan Tackitt Leads the "Paranormal Investigators of Central Texas"

By Cheryl Knight

Ryan Tackitt first became enchanted with the paranormal as a young boy after he encountered a ghostly apparition.

"When I was about 6 or 7, I remember walking down a hallway in my house and seeing a white form move across the hall from one bedroom to another," Ryan said. "Since then, I have had a fascination with the paranormal."

Ryan had his most recent unexplainable encounter while investigating for his group Paranormal Investigators of Central Texas (PICT).

"A couple of years ago, I was on duty and was walking outside a cemetery where my group had caught some great EVPs, when I saw a brown, fog-like form move across the ground about 50 feet in front of me," he said. "After it disappeared, I heard a female voice behind me say, 'Excuse me.' When I turned around, no one was there."

After forming PICT in 2008 with like-minded friends and coworkers, the team set out to research ghost stories and sightings, find supposedly haunted locations, conduct investigations into paranormal activity, and authenticate evidence of ghosts. The team investigates buildings and residences around Central Texas looking for evidence of ghosts and spirits.

"I believe a lot of encounters can be explained using common sense, logic, and science," Ryan



The Paranormal Investigators of Central Texas (PICT) include (pictured at left in the back row) founder and team leader Ryan Tackitt, junior investigator Trevor Nunn, head of research Tonya Nunn, case manager and part-time investigator Shannon Tackitt, and (front row) investigator Anna Wilhelm. PICT investigates buildings and places around Central Texas looking for evidence of ghosts and spirits.

said. "Some of our encounters can't be explained this way and leaves us curious for more."

A key principle of PICT's operating philosophy includes attempting to debunk suspected paranormal activity first before deeming it "paranormal."

"We do not claim to be experts in the paranormal, as no experts exist when it comes to the supernatural, no matter what anyone may claim or who may claim to be one," Ryan added. "And we do not

remove paranormal entities, only try to prove or disprove their existence."

The Waco, Texas, native works as a paramedic, a part-time EMS instructor at his local community college, and as a tactical medic on a SWAT team. Along with investigating the paranormal, Ryan enjoys rock climbing, hiking, paintball, and golfing.

Ryan recently talked with *Paranormal Underground* about his experiences in the paranormal, as well as his team's multiple investigations.

* * * * *



In the picture at left, taken at The Myrtles Plantation in St. Francisville, Louisiana, you can see the lower body of someone on the island (circled in yellow on the left side of the picture). PICT states they did not see the figure in the photo while the picture was being taken.

Q: Tell us about yourself.

Ryan: I'm both a believer and a skeptic in the paranormal. I've had numerous personal experiences but still believe that something other than paranormal is the explanation.

I'm a paramedic and am looking forward to going to the police academy next year. My wife is a vet tech, and I have two sons, ages seven and four. I enjoy outdoor stuff like rock climbing, camping, hiking, paintball, and golf. I enjoy watching *Ghost Hunters*, *NCIS*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Doctor Who*, and *Torchwood*. And

“I strongly believe in reincarnation. I have memories of earlier lives . . .”

I can't forget *Monty Python*! Oh, and I'm a Sagittarius.

Q: When did your interest in the paranormal begin?

Ryan: As a little kid. Aside from the experience I had when I was about six, I used to listen to my family tell ghost stories. Some of them were made up and some of them were personal experiences. This caused me to read a lot of books growing up about ghosts and the like.

It wasn't until last year that I found out that one of my sisters had the same experience I had as a young boy.

Q: Did you have any other paranormal experiences prior to becoming an investigator?

Ryan: I've had a few, but not as many as I would like. I guess I'm not a ghost magnet.

Q: Whose work in the paranormal

field do you respect the most and why?

Ryan: That's a hard question to answer. I really have to say the only person in the field who I look up to is Harry Houdini. The way he set out to debunk the many mediums that were around at the time really inspired me to do the same.

Q: What interests you most about the paranormal?

Ryan: The main thing about the paranormal is the mystery. People have had experiences for centuries, and we still have only theories to go on. I also love evidence collection and listening to EVPs.

Q: What do you think happens to us when we die?

Ryan: I strongly believe in reincarnation. I have memories of earlier lives that I can't have gotten from anything in this lifetime.

Ryan: A real investigation is like watching paint dry — it is hours of boredom with maybe a few minutes of excitement. Most of the excitement comes during evidence review when something is found. It's nothing like what is seen on television.

Q: Tell us about a time when your team helped someone struggling with paranormal activity at their home or business.

Ryan: One good example is actually when we investigated one of our member's houses. She happens to be one of my sisters and has been having activity going on in her home.

Just being able to record some of the stuff that she experienced helped her feel like she wasn't imagining the activity that was going on. We did three investigations at her house and now use it as a training ground for new and junior investigators.

Q: What has been your most memorable investigation to date and why?

Ryan: Last year, part of our group went to the Myrtles Plantation in Saint Francisville, Louisiana. It has long been considered one of the most haunted locations in the United States. We spent three days and two nights there and had a blast.

We didn't have any personal experiences but we came away with some interesting evidence and stories to tell. I would love to go back again soon.

Q: What have been some of the scarier moments you've had while investigating, and how did you handle those instances?

Ryan: Probably the experience I had in the cemetery listed earlier. It didn't scare me exactly, but I decided that I should get back to the ambulance after it happened. It basically caught

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Pictured above, members of PICT investigate at the Saint Francisville Cemetery in Louisiana. The team hopes to one day investigate sites in Gettysburg, the Alamo, and Eastern State Penitentiary.

are looking for evidence. I hold with the philosophy that we have no facts in this field, but most everyone in it is looking for them.

Q: Talk about common misconceptions about the paranormal field that you've encountered.

Ryan: The main one we encounter is that it's just like people see it on television. Some people will not admit that the television has lied to them.

Q: What words of wisdom would you offer amateur ghost hunters investigating for the first time or individuals looking to start their own group?

Ryan: I would mainly tell them to be true to why they want to do it. Do they want to help clients or satisfy their own curiosity? Also, they should read the Paranormal Underground magazine every month; there is some very good information there.

Q: Please tell us about any future investigations you have planned.

Ryan: We are in the process of talking to a local school and a local doctor's office about investigating those two locations. Plus, there is an old college dorm house about an hour away that I would love to investigate.

Q: What sites do you have on your wish list to investigate?

Ryan: Mainly some locations in Texas, like the Alamo (that won't happen), or a return trip to The Myrtles Plantation. I would love to investigate places like Gettysburg and Eastern State Penitentiary. I would also love to go overseas and investigate locations like the Hellfire Caves. ■

* * * * *

For more information on Ryan and PICT, visit www.wix.com/Ryan-NREMTP/PICT.

me off guard. (And I have to tell my friend Heidi, no, I didn't run or sprint back to the ambulance!)

Q: What have been the most significant EVPs you've captured during investigations?

Ryan: We caught a Class A EVP during the second investigation at my sister's house. It's listed in the Evidence Found section on the PICT Website at www.wix.com/Ryan-NREMTP/PICT.

Q: What has been your best video and photographic evidence caught to date?

Ryan: We haven't caught any video yet. We are still working on that. But we did get a picture while at the

Myrtles that we believe might be a ghost standing on the island. It's also listed in our Evidence section.

Q: How did you go about becoming trained in paranormal investigation?

Ryan: I hate to say that I learned a lot of it from TV, but that's the truth. From there, I tailored it to what I believe works for me. And what works for me might not work for someone else.

Q: What philosophies do you adhere to while investigating? Do you approach the work as a skeptic or a believer?

Ryan: I approach it as a skeptic. I already believe that the paranormal exists, but if a client is calling us, they

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Karen Frazier Experiences an Avalanche of Spirits

By Michelle M. Pillow, www.michellepillow.com

Those of you who've read more than one issue of *Paranormal Underground* magazine or have hung around the Paranormal Underground forums will undoubtedly recognize the name of Managing Editor Karen Frazier. Her paranormal journey began 20 years ago when unexplainable things happened to her while living in a WWII-era apartment. Since then, she has searched for answers.

Now working as a journalist and author (among other things) in the paranormal field, Karen recently released her newest book, *Avalanche of Spirits: The Ghosts of Wellington*. Part historical account, part ghost story, and part personal memoir, the book explores the March 1, 1910, disaster when an avalanche fell onto two trains in Wellington, Washington. At least 96 people died that day, and some believe that they've been living there ever since.

In addition to *Avalanche of Spirits: The Ghosts of Wellington*, Karen has written the book *Supernatural! Exploring the Mysteries of Our Universe*, due out later this year, as well as co-written *Lessons of Many Lives* with fellow author Melissa Watts.

Karen recently talked with me about her journey at Wellington.

* * * * *



In her new book, *Avalanche of Spirits: The Ghosts of Wellington*, Karen Frazier shares how investigating the site of the worst avalanche disaster in U.S. history led her to transform from a skeptic to a believer.

Q: Your book, *Avalanche of Spirits: The Ghosts of Wellington*, seems to be a project close to your heart. Tell us a little about the book.

Karen: In the book I tell the story of the 1910 avalanche disaster in the former tiny town of Wellington, which sat in the Cascade Mountains of Washington State. It was the worst avalanche disaster in terms of human life lost in the history of the United States.

I spent a great deal of time during the summer of 2009 at Wellington and really got to know and understand what is going on there. I have come to believe that Wellington is haunted — not just by victims of the avalanche, but also by people who watched their town die in the wake of the avalanche. It's an amazing place and an amazing story.

Q: What is it about Wellington that first piqued your interest and inspired you to write this book?

Karen: It all started with a picture and an EVP. I was interviewing a local paranormal team — A.P.A.R.T. of WA — for *Paranormal Underground* magazine. When I asked for their best evidence, they shared the picture and EVP with me.

From the first I heard of it, I was drawn to Wellington. Unfortunately, I had to wait several months for the snow and avalanche danger to clear, but as soon as I had the opportunity, I visited Wellington. It changed my belief in ghosts, and it changed my life.

Q: How many spirits do you think reside in Wellington? Why do you think so many remained?

Karen: I would say more than 10 and less than 100. There certainly

seems to be a rather large cast of characters up there, including at least one or two children. I also think that there is probably a combination of residual and active haunting. Some of the spirits there are extremely interactive, which makes for a pretty cool experience. If I decided to become a ghost when I died, I might choose to haunt Wellington. It is a beautiful and peaceful place.

Wellington was this hearty little town carved out around the turn of the century in some of the harshest conditions imaginable. In the winter, they were effectively cut off from the rest of the world, except by railroad. I get the feeling that the people there were proud of the town they built, and when it so unceremoniously disappeared off of the face of the Earth in the name of railroad progress, that had to be difficult for them.

Then there's the issue of how much death took place at Wellington — most associated with the railroad. The old Cascade Tunnel, which has its Western terminus at Wellington, saw a large number of asphyxiation deaths when the trains ran through there. Working on the railroad was difficult and dangerous work. A number of employees died building the railroad, building tunnels, working on trains, and more.

And then there were the deaths in avalanches. Not just in 1910, but throughout the years that there was a town there — there were slides that came down the hill and killed people. It was a fact of life.

Q: What types of hauntings do people experience while they're there?

Karen: On the residual end, there is a party that starts up. You'll hear lots of voices and music — banjos, accordions, and pianos. On occasion, the smell of malt liquor accompanies the sounds of the party.



Karen became interested in investigating the Wellington avalanche site after seeing the picture at left. The picture was taken by Shane Bodiford (when he was an investigator with A.P.A.R.T. of WA) at the site of the Wellington train disaster in Washington State. Shane caught a strange anomaly as he snapped a picture of his fellow investigators, Steve Rainero (at left) and Joe Heithe (at right) while they sat on Wellington's observation deck, recording an EVP.

On the active end, there are a lot of really interesting things that happen, including disembodied voices, touches, apparitions, shadows, and whispers in your ear. It runs the gamut from very intangible — like maybe just having a feeling of apprehension, itchiness, or the hair rising on the back of your arms, all the way up to seeing full-bodied apparitions and hearing voices of people that just aren't there.

Q: What do you hope readers will take away with them after reading *Avalanche of Spirits: The Ghosts of Wellington*?

Karen: I hope that they will get a sense of what a wonderful place it is and how much those of us who return time and time again love the ghosts there. I also hope that if they choose to visit, they will understand that these spirits, and the location, are deserving of respect and care instead of rudeness and provocation.

Everyone should also remember that there are wild animals at Wellington, including bears and cougars.

I hope beyond all hope that people who visit Wellington will be aware that they are in the wilds of nature and elect to move forward as safely as possible.

Q: You're soon-to-be-released book, *Supernatural! Exploring the Mysteries of Our Universe*, covers a broad range of supernatural topics. Can you tell us a little about the project?

Karen: Actually, *Supernatural! Exploring the Mysteries of Our Universe* was written long before I wrote *Avalanche of Spirits*. It was really written from a different viewpoint than I have now. I was more of an agnostic about the existence of ghosts when I wrote the book. Wellington, obviously, changed all of that.

Recently, I sat back down with *Supernatural!* thinking that I was going to have to do a total rewrite based on my new point of view. Wellington changed me so fundamentally that I was certain I'd have to scrap what I'd written and start anew. I was surprised at how much I didn't change.

The primary difference between when I originally wrote it and now is that I now believe in ghosts, where before I wasn't sure what I believed about them. But the information in the book has a lot of journalistic content to it, and that research remains the same. In spite of my belief about how much I feel I've changed in the past year, I find that many of the conclusions I reached a year ago when I wrote the book remain the same.

In *Supernatural!*, I look at all types of unexplained phenomena. I did a lot of research about a large number of topics that fall into the realm of the supernatural — from ghosts, cryptids, and crop circles to the mysteries of death, like near-death experiences and reincarnation, to the mysteries of God and religion.

While I do draw a few conclusions in the book, mostly it is up to readers to arrive at their own conclusions. I'm not about telling others what they should think. Instead, the book takes an in-depth look at unexplained phenomena so that people can arrive at their own opinions — or in my case, arrive back where I usually seem to wind up — saying, "I don't know."

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

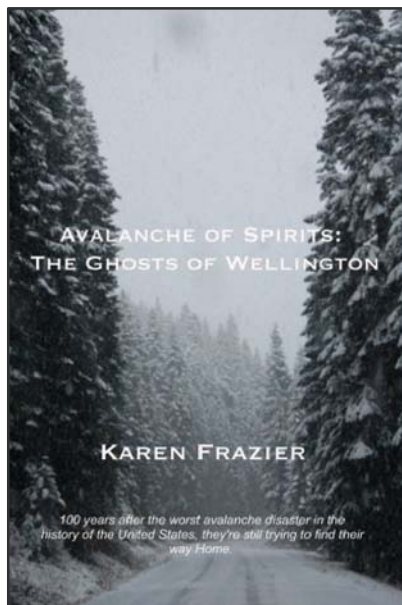
Karen: The unexplained is always fascinating, isn't it? Looking into the paranormal seems like exploring some undiscovered territory. In this day and age, it feels like there is very little unexplored territory left — so the element of discovery is cool for a lot of people.

From a more philosophical perspective, I truly think that we seek out the paranormal because we're searching for information about what happens after we die. Death is scary. Looking for the paranormal may just give us an indication that we go

on after we die and there isn't just nothingness.

Q: Have you ever had a personal paranormal experience?

Karen: I've had a lot of paranormal experiences. Before going to Wellington, I had a few. The most significant — and the thing that got me started on my interest in the paranormal — was living in a really spooky WWII-era apartment when I was in my early 20s. It was my first apartment, and all sorts of



The book *Avalanche of Spirits: The Ghosts of Wellington* is part historical account, part ghost story, and part personal memoir.

odd things happened — odd noises, latched cupboards that would unlatch and re-latch, faucets that would turn on and off, and some kind of invisible something that would sit down on the bed next to me and whisper "I love you" in my ear.

Since then I've had paranormal experiences because I've sought them out. I plan to continue to seek them out. I've become a ghost junkie.

Q: What kind of paranormal crea-

tures do you wish you could meet?

Karen: This may raise a few eyebrows, but I'd like to meet a demon. I have a lot of questions about that aspect of the paranormal. It would have to be in a controlled situation just in case I'm wrong and demons don't come from the heart of man but actually are truly evil entities. What I'd truly like to know is if evil has some kind of divine (universal) origins, or if it is a manmade construct.

I'd also love to run across all of the little magical creatures — elves, faeries, leprechauns, etc. I think it would be really amazing to discover that there actually are such magical little critters out there. How cool would it be to discover that magic was real and not just a part of overactive imaginations? I'd love knowing beyond a shadow of a doubt that I lived in a universe where magic was possible.

In both cases, I'd want to interview them and then write an article about it. It would make a great story to tell, and I'm all about sharing a great story.

Q: What kinds of popular paranormal phenomena do you think is real and what do you think is discreditable?

Karen: I do believe in ghosts — although I don't think that they are as common and prevalent as many believe. I believe they exist, but I don't necessarily think that every anomalous experience is evidence of a haunting.

I believe in life on other planets because it would be arrogant to believe that we are all alone given the vastness of our universe. I also believe in reincarnation.

As far as discreditable — that's a tough one. It is pretty difficult to prove a negative, so to say that something absolutely doesn't exist,

I can't do it. What I can say is that I do have doubts about some of the cryptids and the little elementals like faeries. I haven't seen evidence that I found convincing so far. But then, I used to say that about ghosts as well, and look what happened!

Q: What projects are you currently working on?

Karen: I'm currently writing a book about my experience with The Namasté Project, called *My 100 Days of Namasté: A Soccer Mom Takes on The Namasté Project*. We're also going to have another go at the Wellington documentary this summer so that people who can't experience it firsthand can see why I love it so much through film.

I also have another documentary in the pipeline that came as a huge surprise to me. At its heart it is about faith and religion — and my faith has been lapsed for years. But the subject fascinated me, so I'm excited to tell the story. I also have ongoing projects with Ghost Knight Media and Paranormal Underground, including The Namaste Project, my blog on both www.namasteproject.org and www.paranormalunderground.net, Paranormal Underground Radio on www.ztalkradio.com, and *Paranormal Underground Magazine*.

Keep your eyes on Paranormal Underground and Ghost Knight Media — I truly believe we're going places, and we plan to have more terrific content and projects in the near future to keep our readers, listeners, and viewers informed and entertained. ■

* * * * *

Thank you for joining me, Karen! For more information about Karen and her books, visit www.karenfrazier.com. Or you can find out more about her books at www.ghostknightmedia.com, www.avalancheofspirits.com, and www.supernaturalbook.com.

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Paranormal Humor for the Ghost Hunter's Soul

by Terri J. Garofalo

Foreword by Barry FitzGerald

THE OUIJA BOARD: A PORTAL TO THE SPIRIT WORLD?

BY KAREN FRAZIER

I have a confession to make. I had never played with a Ouija board until very recently – just a few weeks ago as a matter of fact. Ouija boards have never held a lot of curiosity for me. In my mind, they were merely a child’s game.

Sure, I’d heard all of the usual urban legends about Ouija boards. As a matter of fact, I can still clearly recall the first Ouija board urban legend I heard when I was about seven.

The Stuff of Urban Legend

It seems that three teens were playing with a Ouija board one night in the basement of a church. All night long, the Ouija board responded to their questions one after the other. And then came the fateful question.

“Is one of us going to die soon?” the three teens asked the Ouija board.

Slowly, the pointer (also known as the *planchette*) drifted to YES.

The teens felt a chill. “Which one?” they asked.

And then they waited. And waited. But the Ouija board, it appears, was done for the night.

Finally, the teens gave up and put the Ouija board away. Then, one of the teens went to the bathroom, and there on the bathroom door – in what appeared to be blood – was his name. Freaked out, he returned to his friends. They tried to scrub his name from the door, but it wouldn’t go away.

Later, the church even attempted to paint over it, but the red name



Talking boards, such as the Ouija board, have been around since the mid-1800s. They arose from the spiritualist practice of table tipping.

remained on the door. It remained on the door until a month later, when the teen whose name on the door died in an automobile accident. Then, his name disappeared from the door, never to return.

The next Ouija board story I remember hearing came when I was in college. A girl claimed that her cousin had been playing with a Ouija board when the door to her closet flew open and all of her hangers flew out of the closet and pelted her in the head.

Since then, I’ve heard all kinds of stories about the Ouija board. People trying to discard Ouija boards, but the

boards keep turning back up. Ouija boards leading to demonic infestations. Ouija boards accurately predicting death and mayhem.

Ouija Goes Hollywood

Ouija boards aren’t just the stuff of urban legend, however. Hollywood has used the Ouija board as a critical plot point in several horror movies over the years – usually the board makes its appearance just before demonic possession takes place.

Consider the recent movie release *Paranormal Activity*, in which the world’s coolest-looking Ouija

board has a small but pivotal scene where its planchette moves around and the board all by itself and then the Ouija board bursts into flames.

Or consider this scene from the most profitable horror film of all time, *The Exorcist*:

Chris: “Do you know how to use this (indicating Ouija board)?”

Regan: “Sure Mom, I do it all the time with Captain Howdy.”

Chris: “Who is Captain Howdy?”

Regan: “You know. Captain Howdy. I ask the questions and he gives the answers.”

Cue spooky music, and before we know it young Regan is possessed and projectile vomiting pea soup. Turns out the Ouija board was a portal. Go figure.

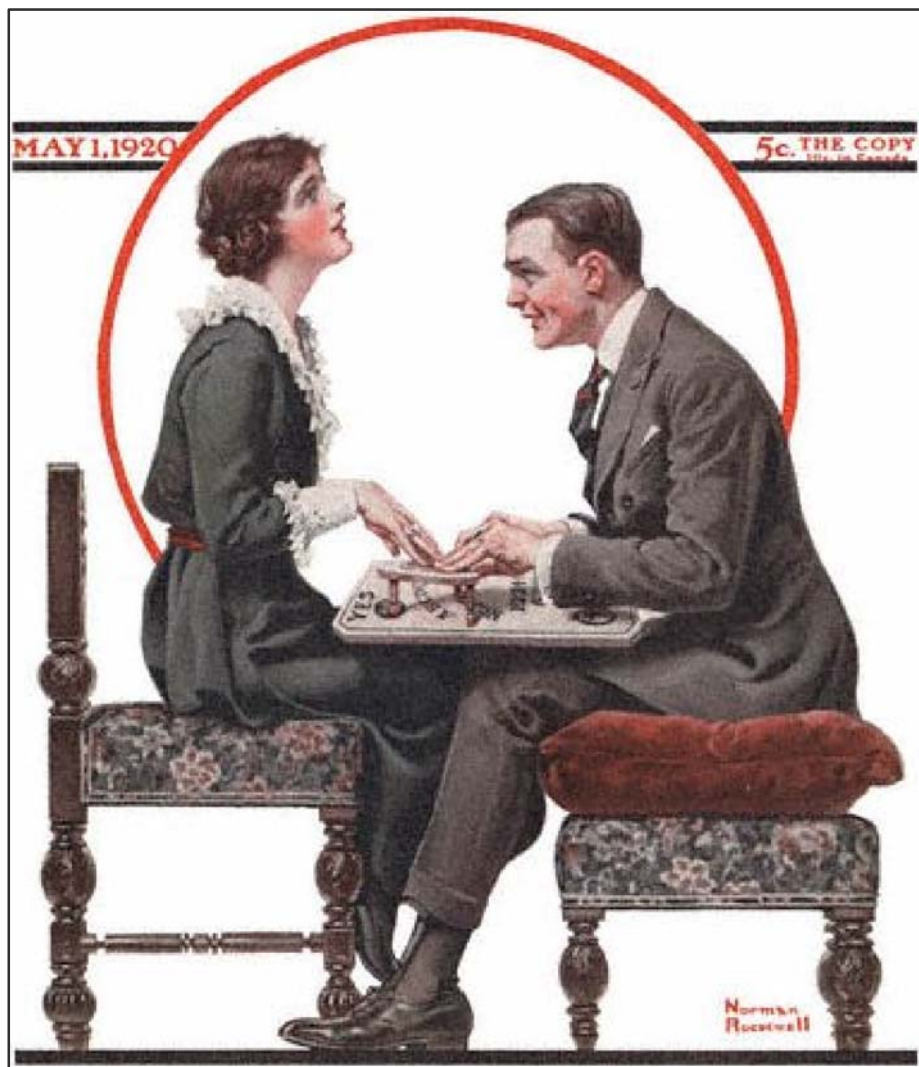
These aren't the only two horror movies in which the Ouija board — or some other type of talking board — has made a dark appearance over the years. It's been featured in cartoons, television shows, and movies since the 1920s, including:

- The 1920 cartoon “The Ouija Board,” *Koko the Clown*.
- The 1944 horror film *The Uninvited*.
- The 1983 horror film *Amityville 3-D*.
- The 1985 horror film *Witchboard*.
- The 2000 horror film *What Lies Beneath*.

These are just a few of the many star turns talking boards have made in popular culture. But it begs the question: Are such terrifying media portrayals of talking boards a result of truly terrifying real-life experiences with Ouija boards, or do we believe that Ouija boards are terrifying because the media portrays them as such?

History of the Talking Board

What is this mysterious board that is not only the subject of urban legends but also the star of Holly-



Pictured above: The Norman Rockwell painting called “The Ouija Board,” which appeared on the cover of *The Saturday Evening Post* on May 1, 1920. (Copyright © 1920 *Saturday Evening Post* & Curtis Publishing Company)

wood films? Why can it strike terror into the hearts of so many? Is it all hype, or is there something mystical or paranormal to the Ouija board?

Talking boards have been around since the mid-1800s. They arose from the spiritualist practice of table tipping, in which a medium would establish contact with a spirit, and then when contact was made, the table would tilt and tip as the medium called out letters from the alphabet in order to communicate.

Table tipping was time consuming, and it was often difficult

to decipher the messages from the spirits. Spiritualist mediums who didn't like table tipping devised their own method of communication in which they used a small basket with a pencil attached. Once the medium touched the basket, the “other side” took control and used the pencil to write their messages.

Soon, the basket was replaced by a heart shaped planchette on rollers with a pencil attached. The spirits liked this just as well, and automatic writing was often accomplished by spiritualists using this device.



The Ouija board has experienced its own marketing buzz over the years to include necklaces, lunch boxes, and key chains, among other novelty items.

In December 1876, *American Spiritualist Magazine* recommended that its readers try painting letters of the alphabet on a table and using a polished rod to point to letters. Thus, the first talking board was born.

In 1886, the spiritualism world was abuzz with a new “talking board and table” that was being used in Ohio. The board was a rectangular board that had all of the letters of the alphabet, YES, NO, GOOD-EVE, and GOOD-BYE painted on it. The board was placed on the knees of two participants sitting knee to knee. As an indicator, a small table was fashioned with four, three-inch legs placed on top of that.

As questions were asked, the table would move along the top of the letter board, with one of the legs landing on a letter or response. Users reported that the indicator table moved on its own accord without human intervention.

The next iteration of the talking board was the combination of the heart-shaped planchette (minus the pencil) and the board with letters. Patents followed shortly, and the device was named Ouija. The patent holder claimed that Ouija was Egyptian for good luck (it wasn't) because the board had told him so during a session.

Later claims included that the name was a combination of the French and German words for yes (*Oui* and *Ja*), and that Ouija was taken from the name of a Moroccan city Oujda. With all of this obfuscation, chances are that the true origins of the name will never be known.

Whatever the source of the name, the Ouija board was an instant success. Now, ordinary people with no medium training could communicate with the other side all by themselves. Parker Brothers bought the rights to the Ouija board in 1966. The rest, as they say, is history.

My Ouija Board Experience

I've never put much stock in using a Ouija board as a paranormal communication device. I'd never really had the desire to use one — not out of fear, but rather out of an absolute belief that if that planchette were to move during a Ouija board session, it would be because someone was moving it either consciously or subconsciously.

Fast forward to this year, when a few of my friends, including Bert and Jayme Coates of the Washington-based paranormal investigation group NWPIA, started researching the Ouija board and decided to do some controlled experiments with it.

They were rather impressed with the results, which they shared with me.

What the heck, I thought. It's only a game. I'll give it a try.

Cue spooky music. Hold the pea soup.

So there I was, at Wellington, Washington, with my friends from NWPIA and a Ouija board.

All of us present at the Ouija board session were extremely familiar with Wellington. I visit the location as often as I can, and earlier this year I published a book about the history and haunting of Wellington. NWPIA investigates at the site a few times a week. We have all uncovered recurring phenomena at the site, including a woman with a lovely voice who sings in the parking lot where the town once stood. I've heard her on the recorder more than once.

So enraptured was I with this singing woman that, during a recent reading with psychic medium Jennifer Hicks for an article in *Paranormal Underground* magazine, I asked who the woman was that sang in the parking lot.

My recollection of the conversation was that it was a woman named Sarah Covington. More about this in a few minutes . . .

So there we were at Wellington. It was a chilly evening in mid-June.

There were nine of us present, and we broke up into two groups. For the first part of the evening, I wandered around the site with my group and held a ghost box session, while the other group used the Ouija board. We met on the path to trade places, and they said that they'd had zero results with the board. Needless to say, I wasn't expecting much.

The Ouija board was set up on a folding table in the parking lot.

Two tea candles were on the table to provide some light. I sat down on one side of the table and another investigator, named Lynn, sat down on the other side. Neither of us had used a Ouija board before, and we were both huge skeptics.

Our skepticism worked in our favor. Neither one of us was willing to touch that planchette with any more force than the lightest of feather touches. We each placed

This classic Parker Brothers ad for the infamous Ouija board plays up the mystical element of their board, even though the company says the Ouija is just a board game. Others, however, are positive the Ouija opens up a portal to the spirit world.

two fingertips from each hand on the planchette. You could have slid a piece of paper between our fingers and the planchette.

My husband, Jim, was handed a piece of paper and a pen. He was going to be our scribe once those letters started whipping out at top speed. We didn't want to miss anything.

"Is there anyone here?" we asked.

At first, the response was underwhelming. And then, much to my surprise, the planchette started to slide out from under my fingers very, very slowly.

Lynn gave a startled exclamation and looked at me.

"Are you moving that?" she asked.

"No. Are you?"

"No."

As the planchette continued to inch its way along, the above conversation was repeated over and over. Finally, after about five minutes, the planchette settled on YES.

"Are you from the town of Wellington?"

Again, the planchette started to inch away from under my fingers, and again the above conversation was repeated more than once, along with statements such as, "This is so weird!" and "How is this thing moving?"

It took a few more minutes — the progress of the planchette was so agonizingly slow that Lynn and I didn't even bother to watch it as it moved. Instead, we looked around and had a conversation with everyone else who was with us. Finally, the planchette settled on YES again.



Like other forms of divination, such as scrying and dowsing, many believe the results from Ouija board sessions are the result of the ideomotor effect.

Next question: Are you the one who sings in the parking lot?

Next answer: YES

Next question: What is your name. (Yeah, I know, original).

Instead of moving back to YES, the Ouija board started to spell. Agonizingly slowly. My fingertips were numb and my arms were sore from being held in place for so long.

It spelled out G - E - R - T.

It took about five minutes to spell it. Finally, I said, "Is it Gertrude?"

YES.

I could no longer feel my fingers or arms. So we stopped. Then we grabbed my aforementioned book, which has a listing of census data of people from the town of Wellington. There was no Gertrude, but that isn't surprising. Census data is collected every 10 years, so there were probably a lot of people from Wellington who were never listed in a census.

Flash forward.

I'm home from Wellington. I decided to go back through my notes from my reading with psychic medium Jennifer Hicks to confirm that the woman who sang in the parking lot was named Sarah Covington. It turns out I was wrong. This was the dialog from my conversation with Jennifer:

Karen: "Who is the woman who sings in the parking lot?"

Jennifer: "I'm getting a very religious vibe. She calls out 'Gertrude.'" Whoa!

Talking Boards: Portals to Evil?

Rumor has it that Ouija boards are evil; however, accounts of evil associated with Ouija boards are mostly apocryphal. Like other forms of divination, such as scrying and dowsing, the results achieved are oftentimes believed to be more likely the result of something called the ideomotor effect than communica-

tion with the other side.

According to Wikipedia, *The ideomotor effect is a psychological phenomenon wherein a subject makes motions unconsciously. As in reflexive responses to pain, the body sometimes reacts reflexively to ideas alone without the person consciously deciding to take action. Automatic writing, dowsing, facilitated communication, and Ouija boards have also been attributed to the effect of this phenomenon.*

Most parapsychologists believe that the preponderance of the evidence points to the ideomotor effect as being the prevalent force at play during Ouija sessions.

Still, stories abound that make you wonder. Could the other side be communicating through the Ouija board? Could it be a portal to evil?

It's a tough question to answer. No clear scientific studies have shown that Ouija boards are anything more than a toy that is subconsciously controlled by our own motions. In repeated experiments with blindfolded participants, Ouija boards consistently produce nonsensical messages and gibberish. Many feel that this is a strong argument for subconscious, and conscious, control of the planchette.

And yet, things happen. Many people have experiences with Ouija boards that they feel are completely valid and real. I, for one, am more on the fence about Ouija boards than I once was. Could I have subconsciously remembered the name Gertrude from my reading and then subconsciously moved the planchette to the letters G-E-R-T, even though I was looking away and having another conversation as the planchette moved? Absolutely.

In the end, like so many things in the paranormal, the conclusions you reach about the Ouija board will be up to you. ■

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DOM & TOM CREATE NEW “GHOSTLY” IPAD APPLICATION

BY CHERYL KNIGHT

To the delight of Ouija board lovers across the world, developers Dom and Tom Tancredi recently released their new iPad application, called “Ghost in the Machine.”

Dom and Tom created the Ouija board-inspired application along with a collaborative team made up of friends, colleagues, and even strangers. While “Ghost in the Machine” is based on the Parker Brothers’ classic Ouija board game, Dom and Tom’s computerized version presents slick graphics, creepy sound effects, and custom animations.

Play the game alone or with more than one person. Either way, iPad users are sure to enjoy an immersive digital experience with an entertaining application.

Tom Tancredi, of Dom & Tom Inc., recently spoke to *Paranormal Underground* about the new “Ghost in the Machine” iPad app.

* * * * *

Q: Describe your business.

Tom: Dom and I are twin brothers who run a development studio that services mobile application development for the iPad, iPhone, Android, and Blackberry platforms.

We also do Web development, but we’re slowly morphing more and more into a game development studio.



The “Ghost in the Machine” iPad application was the brainchild of developers who were thrown together at this year’s iPad Hackathon in April.

Q: Who created the “Ghost in the Machine” app and why?

Tom: It’s the brainchild of a team of developers, designers, sound engineers, and complete strangers. We participated in an iPad Hackathon back in April. People met and formed “Development Teams” on the spot, and you had 48 hours to make a game.

The “Ghost in the Machine” team included Catriona Lohan-

Conway; Carolyn Sheehan-Gargano; Chuck Edwards; Danny Saad; Dom Tancredi; Tom Tancredi; Lawrence Koret; Peter Levine; John Fitzpatrick; Scott Benaglio; and Yanwing Wong.

Q: Do you have any personal interest in the paranormal field?

Tom: We’re huge fans of the show *Supernatural*, zombie movies, and love reading old comic books about



The “Ghost in the Machine” iPad app interacts with the touching functionality when users place their fingertips on the planchette. If users ask too many questions, the ghost will get angry and explode the board, or get bored and leave without answering questions. The ghosts in the machine tend to be moody.

ghosts. Also, and especially, all things *HP Lovecraft*.

Q: What other apps have you created?

Tom: We have a quite a few. The recent ones are “Nymphamous” for Android – it’s a sex trivia application. We just made a baseball encyclopedia iPhone application for Triumph Books, called “Underground Baseball Encyclopedia.”

Q: Tell me about “Ghost in the Machine.”

Tom: It’s a haunted application. We trap ghosts into code and make them spill the beans.

“WE GUARANTEE FRESH SOULFULNESS IN EVERY APP.”

Q: What is the app’s purpose?

Tom: Correspondence with the paranormal. And fun for those who like to taunt the hallows.

Q: How does it work?

Tom: Well, there’s the code. When people look at the application, it LOOKS like there’s a game AI in there with random “moods” that

swing from “scared” to “angry” to “mournful.”

Really, it’s a trapped ghost. The ghost’s “moods” interact with the touching functionality when users place their fingertips on the planchette. If you ask too many questions, the ghost will get angry and explode the board, or get bored and leave without answering your questions. They tend to be moody.

Q: Has the app won any awards?

Tom: We won “Best Use of the iPad Functionality” for iPadDevCamp 2010 East Coast. The event was sponsored by Barnes & Noble and AOL – coincidentally, major com-

petitors of Apple.

Q: One of your descriptions of the app is “A fresh ghost packed into each and every app!” What do you mean by that?

Tom: We guarantee fresh soulfulness in every app.

Q: Is this app for “entertainment”

purposes only, or do you believe it can be used as a paranormal tool to communicate with departed spirits?

Tom: In all honesty, using technology to unlock paranormal powers is probably going to have a Lovecraftian ending, where we accidentally unleash powerful elder spirits into the human world and all souls are forfeit.

It kind of goes against the D&T company motto of “Do Good, Be Good.” That said, who says tools can’t be entertaining?! That’s the iPad for you.

Q: Where can readers go to get the app?

Tom: Check out iTunes and search for “Ghost in the Machine” on the apps store. Or check out the Dom and Tom Website, www.domandtom.com, or Facebook at www.facebook.com/domandtom.

Q: What is the cost?

Tom: \$1.99 and your soul. Just kidding. Souls are donation-only.

Q: What else should our readers know about the “Ghost in the Machine” iPad app?

Tom: We’re constantly tinkering with it to make updates and are very responsive to questions! ■

Five American Haunts That Will Have You Going Back for More

By Rick E. Hale, McHenry County Paranormal Research Group

Ofentimes, when people find out that I'm a paranormal investigator, I usually get the same question, "What are some of the most haunted locations in the good, old US of A?" To be honest, this is a very difficult question to answer.

How does one even begin to answer such a question when you consider all the great places within the U.S. that have a reputation for being home to entities that are living impaired? Is it the tragedy that causes a location to be considered the most haunted? Or is it the activity that is known to scare the living bejeezus out of those few intrepid souls who have dared to visit and walked away with a few extra gray hairs and a neat-o story to tell their friends and family?

In the following "countdown" list, are the five locations that I personally consider to be the most haunted locations in America. You, as the reader, must be the ultimate judge.

Number 5: Zombie Road

Fifty miles west of St. Louis, Missouri, sits a lonely, old, tree-lined road that rarely sees any vehicular traffic — mostly due to the fact that it is so isolated, hardly anyone knows it's there. However, the road once known as Lawler-Ford Road has gained a reputation for being an area that plays host to a plethora of strange events. The road attracts only the bravest who dare to

traverse its ancient path. Some call it an urban legend, some call it haunted, and most just call it Zombie Road.

Shortly after the Civil War, Zombie road was built by the Glencoe Marble Company for the transportation of marble that was quarried from their property to the train tracks sitting nearby. However, it was not until the 1950s that Lawler-Ford Road would gain its unsavory reputation for being a place of extreme dread and evil, earning it the nickname Zombie Road.

In the 1950s, couples seeking

a place to get away from it all drove out to the isolated road for the hopes of a little privacy. It was at this time that the isolated road began to gain its dark rep. Not a week would go by when the local police would discover a car sitting somewhere among the trees without its occupants.

When those occupants never returned, police and family became suspicious and soon discovered that a killer was in their midst. A man was eventually convicted of abducting and murdering numerous teenagers over a five-year period. The killer was dubbed "The Zombie." Many believe that the souls of the killer's victims still haunt the area.

One of those spirits is said to be a hideous, old woman who appears out of nowhere and shrieks at travelers. Other entities reported are shadow people hiding among the trees and the souls of those who were struck and killed by a local train. Others report feelings of extreme dread and the sensation of being watched.

Zombie Road definitely fits nicely on this list, even if folks from the area consider it to be nothing more than one of those pesky urban legends.



This infamous 1991 photo, taken by a Ghost Research Society member during an investigation of Bachelor's Grove cemetery near Chicago, seems to show a ghost apparition of a young woman dressed in white.

Number 4: Bachelor's Grove Cemetery

Most paranormal researchers agree that ghosts prefer to hang around the places that they consid-



Over the years, employees and patrons of Stone's Public House have reported water taps turning on and off by themselves, sensations of dread and being watched by some imperceptible presence, and being tapped on the shoulder by an unseen force.

ered their home turf rather than hang out in some moldy, old bone yard. However, there appears to be a cemetery in my vast back yard of Illinois that has gained quite a reputation over the years as being one of the most haunted cemeteries in the world. And with more ghosts than you can shake an EMF detector at, Chicago's very own Bachelor's Grove Cemetery comes in at number four.

Located in the Southside suburb of Midlothian and part of the Rubio Woods Forest Preserve, Bachelor's Grove has become a favorite of many corn-fed ghost hunters in the land of Lincoln. In 1844, as the railroad was being built by German immigrants, the citizens of Midlothian felt that a graveyard was needed to bury their dead, and Bachelor's Grove was consecrated.

As the years went by and the area grew, Bachelor's Grove was soon forgotten, and the bone yard became overgrown with weeds and trees. It ultimately fell into a state

of disrepair. Legends concerning this graveyard state that sometime in the 1960s, the isolated cemetery became a favorite meeting place for servants of Satan and practitioners of the black arts. It is possible that these acts of desecration, and the fact that the graveyard was used as a body dumping ground for Chicago's criminal elite, led to Bachelor's Grove gaining its dark reputation.

Numerous visitors, me included, have reported a plethora of paranormal deliciousness over the years, and the Grove has reached legendary status. Those brave of heart have reported seeing ghostly lights bobbing around the tombstones at all hours of the day. Others have reported seeing the apparitions of a farmer and his mule near the stagnant pond. Some have witnessed an apparition, dubbed The White Lady, wandering the area searching desperately for her lost child. And others have reported witnessing a large white farmhouse that appears and disappears in various locations in and

around the cemetery.

Legend states that if you approach the house and enter the door, the house will vanish, taking you with it.

Number 3: Stone's Public House

I'm usually pretty skeptical when it comes to restaurants or businesses that claim to host the breathing impaired, because after all, ghosts are damned good for business. However, despite my skepticism, Stone's Public House in Ashland, Massachusetts, appears to be the real deal, serving up more than food and spirits of the liquid kind.

In 1834, Captain John Stone of the local militia felt that the citizens of the small town of Ashland, Mass., needed a place to hang their hat and sit a spell while they drank till their hearts' content. His dream business, originally called The Railroad House, was opened to the delight of the then 300 souls living in town. However, Stone would only own his public house for a mere 10 years; he died sometime around 1844.

Sadly, the former crown jewel of Ashland fell into disrepair and sat empty for decades. In 1976, a local businessman, named Leonard "Cappy" Fournier, saw the potential of the dilapidated old building and restored it to its former glory. He reopened the doors to the restaurant, calling it Stone's Public House after the gentleman who built it many years before. However, there was one thing that Cappy had not anticipated: His restaurant was the home to a number of discarnate entities.

Over the years, employees and patrons alike have reported having brushes with beings that are said not to exist. Employees reported to their skeptical boss that water taps would turn on and off by themselves, they would have a sensation of dread and

An entire family was brutally murdered in the quiet town of Villisca, Iowa, in 1912. Ever since, visitors to the Villisca Axe Murder House have reported seeing ghostly apparitions and hearing the phantom screams of young children. (Photo by Chad Wilson.)



being watched by some imperceptible presence, and many times staff would be tapped on the shoulder by an unseen force.

In 1984, Cappy decided to open the doors of the public house to psychics and mediums in an attempt to find out who was haunting his establishment. He soon discovered an ugly secret heard only in rumor well over a century before.

Shortly before John Stone's death, it was rumored that the former militia captain shot and killed a traveling gambler for the serious crime of cheating at cards. It is believed that Stone and numerous cohorts buried the man's lifeless body in the basement. The gambler's spirit is said to haunt the building looking for vengeance.

One of the sadder entities said to haunt the building is that of a small girl who was struck by a train on the nearby tracks. Some say after the tragic event took place, her lifeless body was brought into the bar. Many have witnessed the wispy figure of the little girl and have even reported hearing the giggling of a small child.

The third prominent entity said to haunt Stone's Public House is that of Burt Philips, a local drunk who died in the building in 1890. Philips is said to be the ghost behind

the numerous mischievous pranks pulled on employees, including tapping them on their shoulders and scaring the bejeezus out of them on the third floor.

If you're looking for good food, good fun, and ghosts, Stone's Public House is where it's at.

Number 2: Villisca Axe Murder House

Pretty much all paranormal researchers agree that a haunting can be caused by various tragic circumstances. Often suicide is a precipitating factor, as well as moments of great distress that result in a person dying or murder.

Prior to the morning of June 10, 1912, the small, sleepy village of Villisca, Iowa was like any other Midwestern town of the time. Neighbors knew each other well and watched their children play together. Folks led a quiet carefree existence greeting each other in the streets and kept their doors unlocked and wide open as they peacefully slept the night away . . . that is, until a murder occurred that not only shocked the town but scandalized some of its prominent citizens.

On the morning of June 10, a neighbor of the Josiah Moore family was awakened from a deep slumber by the wild behavior of the large

family's horses. Thinking it strange that not a single family member came out to quiet their horses, the neighbor decided to go next door and demand that they take care of their animals. What the neighbor received was the shock of her life.

Lying in their beds was the bloody, broken bodies of Josiah Moore, his wife, Sarah, their four children, and two friends who had spent the night with the family. The neighbor ran from the house screaming and alerted the surrounding neighbors to the brutal murders. The neighbor's screams for help touched off the greatest unsolved murder in American history, and the town of Villisca would never be the same.

By the time the police arrived at the house, the crime scene had already been contaminated and may have ultimately led to the perpetrator, or perpetrators, getting away with murder. However, the police did discover the murder weapon — a blood-encrusted axe that sat in the corner of the room. Police officials were stumped by who could have possibly committed such a heinous act, but they did have their suspects.

Their first suspect was Frank Jones, a former business partner of Moore. Jones claimed that he would someday have his revenge against Moore after a deal went sour between the two. Jones was eventually cleared of all charges.

The second suspect was Reverend Lyn George Jacklin Kelly, a traveling minister, who some said had a liking for young girls. In the early morning hours after the murders took place, Kelly boarded a train and told an elderly couple about the murders before the bodies were discovered. Again, this suspect was cleared.

William Mansfield, the third suspect, was an ex-convict from

Blue Island, Illinois. Only a few years after the Villisca Axe murders took place, Mansfield brutally murdered his own family in a like manner. Mansfield was later cleared of the murder when it was determined that while he was in Iowa at the time of the murders, he was not near the house.

With this list of suspects, it is strange that no one was ever apprehended for the crime. The case still remains open. However, this has not stopped the rumors that the former Josiah Moore home is haunted by the large Moore family.

Although the home sits empty, it is open to tours and any brave ghost hunter who dare unlock its secrets. Over the years, people have reported seeing bright lights bobbing up and down through the house's windows. Others report hearing the screaming of young children begging for mercy. And still others have report seeing the bloody and battered apparitions of Josiah Moore or another unfortunate victim of that crime almost a century ago.

Perhaps if the murders are ever solved, the victims' souls can finally rest.

Number 1: The White House

When President Barack Obama took possession of the white house as the 44th president of the United States, there was cabinet position he should have filled immediately — Secretary of Paranormal Research. If the stories that have been told through the years even have a grain of truth to them, then the Executive Mansion is quite possibly the most haunted location in America.

Over its long and tumultuous history, the White House has seen its fair share of tragedy and distress. From 1861-1865, the United States was embroiled in a bitter struggle, state against state, American against



The White House is said to house the spirits of former President Abraham Lincoln and Dolly Madison, as well as the ghost of a British soldier who is believed to have been killed during the War of 1812.

American, and all too often brother against brother. The president who presided over the tragic war was none other than the great emancipator Abraham Lincoln — so is it any wonder that his ghost is said to walk the halls of the mansion?

Since Lincoln's death at the hands of an assassin, many residents, employees, and visitors have reported seeing the specter of the fallen president. Grace Coolidge, the wife of former president Calvin Coolidge, reported seeing Lincoln's ghost staring out of a window in the Oval Office as he wringed his hands behind his back.

Employees have oftentimes reported seeing Lincoln sitting on his bed, pulling on his boots, in the president's former bedroom. However, the most dramatic sighting was reported by Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. While visiting the White House and then-President FDR, the queen was found on the floor outside her bedroom late one night by a cleaning person. When she was revived, she told the most amazing story.

She awakened in the middle of the night by a loud rapping on her door. Annoyed by the rude intrusion, she threw open the door to scold whoever dare interrupt her slumber; what she saw was the wispy phantom

of the 16th president standing before her. She then fainted.

Of course, Lincoln is not the only spirit believed to haunt the executive mansion. Over the years, many who have come and gone reported seeing the spirit of a British soldier walking around the grounds in full red coat uniform. It is believed that he was killed when the White House was burned to the ground during the War of 1812. John Adams' wife has been seen in the East room scrubbing laundry. And the spirit of Dolly Madison has been seen walking through her beloved rose garden.

During the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, Wilson's wife, Edith, planned on tearing out the roses because she was allergic to them. When she and a contractor were about to begin, Dolly's ghost appeared and roundly scolded the former first lady. The rose garden still stands as a testament to this story.

In conclusion, I hope you understand that this list is by no means exhaustive. There are so many haunted locations in our great land that the stories alone could fill volumes . . . and they have. I hope you enjoyed reading this article.

And uh, oh yeah, President Obama, if you're looking to fill that cabinet space, I am your man. ■

The Bell Witch Case Remains a Mystery

By Jill Stefko, Ph.D., www.suite101.com/profile.cfm/stevko1901

The Bell Witch Haunting remains one of the most enthralling poltergeist stories to come out of the United States. The story itself begins in the early 1800s, when a “haunting” began, in earnest, with poltergeist activity. Voice came next and, ultimately, death.

The events of this terrifying ordeal involve the Bell family of Adams, Tennessee. John Bell was a married, well-to-do farmer with eight children. The family members were staunch Baptists who led peaceful, contented lives. That is, until 1817 when Bell saw a large, canine-like creature and a bird resembling a turkey. He shot at them, but they both vanished. These creatures foretold of inexplicable phenomena.

What happened next would shock the family and community around them.

The Bell Family Deals With Poltergeist Activity

The Bells, and even some of their friends, reportedly began suffering from extensive poltergeist activity, including:

- Rappings and scrapings on windows and doors.
- Sounds of rats gnawing at the bedposts.
- Noises of dogs clawing on



According to www.bellwitch.org, this cabin, built in 1810 by John Bell's family, is believed to be the only surviving structure from the original Bell plantation.

the floor.

- Covers pulled off beds.
- Unseen hands slapping faces and pulling hair.

The primary victim of the violent attacks was 12-year-old Betsy, who was also pinched and stuck with sharp objects. These types of reported phenomena remain extremely rare.

Initially, Bell kept the family's awful secret, but he eventually confided in family friend James Johnson, who discovered there was an intelligence behind the bizarre events. Word about the eerie happenings spread quickly throughout the small community.

The Bell Witch entity soon began to verbalize, claiming to be different spirits, reminiscent of Gef, the Talking Mongoose. The entity claimed to be a million-year-old spirit from Heaven, Hell, and Earth; the spirit of a person whose nearby grave was disturbed; the ghost of a dead immigrant; and “Kate Batts’ witch,” who would torment Bell as long as he lived. Batts was alive and angry with Bell over business dealings.

The General Visits the Bell Witch

Kate visited the Bells daily, making predictions about a Civil War and two 20th Century world wars, but her primary purpose was to torment Bell.



Pictured above, the Bell Witch Cave, located in Adams, Tennessee, was said to be the temporary home of The Bell Witch after she sought sanctuary in the 490-foot-long cave during the infamous Bell haunting.

Pictured at left, *McClure's Magazine* depicted the Bell Witch tormenting John Bell as he lay dying in a 1922 issue.

General Andrew Jackson (who later became president) heard about the witch and decided to visit the property accompanied by Sam Houston and a professional exorcist (also known as a “witch layer”).

When the General’s party of ghost hunters was close to the Bell farm, their carriage wheels became stuck and would not roll on. The men on hand claimed to have heard Kate say she would appear to them that night. Then, at the end of the audio phenomenon, the carriage wheels began to move again.

That evening, all present heard ghostly footsteps and a voice. Those in attendance said it was at this time that the witch layer shot at Kate only to be slapped across the face. He then fled the house in fear.

Bell Witch (AKA Kate) Wreaks Havoc

It was said that Kate had cursed John Bell. And when he finally began to have convulsions and became deathly sick, the Bell family believed the curse was coming to fruition.

On December 19, 1820, Bell went into a stupor from which he couldn’t be roused. The family

found a strange vial with dark liquid in the medicine chest. They tested the liquid by giving some to a cat. The animal died. The next morning, Bell was dead.

To this day, no one knows what or who the Bell Witch was. At the onset of this haunting was poltergeist activity. Extensive research hasn’t revealed any other poltergeist cases resulting in death. And most experts say that poltergeists rarely, if ever, communicate verbally.

Dr. Fodor Presents an Interesting Theory

Dr. Nandor Fodor, a distinguished psychoanalyst and parapsychologist, questioned as to whether Kate was a spirit or a “split-off” of Betsy Bell’s personality. Although Kate had clairvoyant, psychokinetic, and telepathic abilities, Fodor came to the conclusion that it was the latter. He further postulated that, if correct, theories about the dissociated personality had to be revised. Kate could act outside Betsy’s physiological body, had superior intelligence, and performed paranormal acts.

If Fodor’s theory is correct, could it be that the one with the dis-

sociated personality was Kate Batts, not Betsy?

Some of Bell’s contemporaries suspected Betsy was behind the “haunting” all along because she hated her father. Was there a unique entity producing the paranormal phenomena all along, and Betsy, who hated her father, took advantage of the situation and killed Bell using poison?

The answers to these questions continue to be asked to this day. And the case remains popular in poltergeist lore. The Bell Witch legend is the basis of the films *An American Haunting* (2006) and *The Bell Witch Haunting* (2004).

For more information about the Bell family and the Bell Witch haunting, visit:

- www.bellwitch.org
- www.prairieghosts.com/b-cave.html
- www.underworldtales.com/bell.htm
- www.studiesoftheparanormal.com/bellwitch.html
- www.bellwitchstory.com/encounters.htm ■

Source: www.suite101.com

Is the Mothman Homeless?

A New Model of Paranormal Studies

By Shaun Belekurov, Spooksfield Investigative Unit

The Mothman may be homeless. This celebrity monster was not a victim of the sub-prime housing market, but possibly of a much older concern: The Curse of Chief Cornstalk. On May 17, 2010, around 1:13 a.m., an explosion rocked the “TNT area” once thought to be the home of the creature.

Witness Adam Frazier described the event: “It was so bright it turned night to day.” He added that he didn’t hear an explosion but “saw the light.” The official story is that some of the munitions stored in the grass-covered igloos ignited and caused the explosion. A cause has yet to be determined.

Gary Sharp, the Point Pleasant-based district biologist for West Virginia’s Division of Natural Resources, highlighted the damage: “The steel doors were thrown off, and the ceiling that is made of six-inch concrete lifted up and then caved in; the blast was pretty extensive.”

So is this just another dark coincidence? A foreseeable consequence after 40 years of storing explosives? Or something more? Before deciding, we must get into the strange history of the Mothman’s stomping grounds.

Exploring the Mothman’s Stomping Grounds

In the late 1700s, Chief Cornstalk was a leader of the region’s Shawnee people. He had his share of scrapes with the early Colonial settlers

but had made a tentative peace in his later years. His unjust death occurred in November 1777 when the Chief learned a rogue band of Shawnee were planning an attack on some near-by colonists. So, the Chief and his son, Elinipsico, rode to warn the settlers of Point Pleasant.

Unfortunately, after the pair arrived, news came of the attack that had resulted in the death of a prominent American soldier. The settlers



Does the Mothman foretell future disasters?

exacted revenge by killing the Shawnee Chief and his son. With his dying breath, the Chief uttered this curse:

“I came to your fort as your friend, and you murdered me. You have murdered by my side, my young son . . . For this, may the Curse of the Great Spirit rest upon this land. May it be blighted by nature. May it even be blighted in its hopes. May the strength of its people be paralyzed by the stain of our blood.”

The executed Chief was buried near the bend of the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers. This region has sustained many “accidents” that do have the feel of a curse. Here is a short list of the most significant.

- December 6, 1907: Worst coal mine disaster in American history — 310 killed in neighboring Monongah, West Virginia.
 - June 1944: Tornado kills 150 people in the tri-state region.
 - December 5, 1967: Collapse of the Silver Bridge into the Ohio river — 46 casualties (Point Pleasant).
 - August 1968: 35 people died when a plane crashed near Kanawha airport.
 - November 4, 1970: Plane crashes into mountains of nearby Huntington, West Virginia.
 - March 2, 1976: Mason County jail exploded as a man with a suitcase full of explosives visited his wife who had killed his infant daughter. Both Mr. and Mrs. Sisk and three agents of law enforcement lost their lives.
 - January 1978: A freight train carrying chemical toxins derailed and contaminated the water supply of Point Pleasant, ruining the local wells.
 - April 1978: 51 laborers were killed in the neighboring town of St. Mary’s when a scaffold collapsed at the Willow Island Power Plant.
- That is 672 deaths in tragic accidents during a span of 75 years. And then things get really weird . . .

A Significant Case of "High Strangeness"

The 1966-67 13-month flap in West Virginia was and still is one of the most prominent cases of high strangeness in our field. More than 100 witnesses encountered the winged creature, now known as Mothman, in the 13 months preceding the Silver Bridge tragedy. At least seven of these encounters involved the "TNT area," more than any other single locale.

Originally designated as the "McClintic Wildlife Refuge" (fittingly enough as a bird sanctuary), the area was converted into a WWII munitions dump. Its subterranean tunnels, earth-covered igloos, and seclusion made it an excellent dump site. It also doubled as a popular spot for intrepid teens to do what it is teens do. And this was where the Mothman flap began in earnest.

Across the world, winged creatures of enormous size have been reported for centuries. There seem to be three primary creatures sighted in this category: 1) A huge bird (sometimes considered to be a Pterodactyl or Thunderbird); 2) A humanoid creature with wings (the classic Mothman); and 3) A man with wings and often a mechanical apparatus on his chest (à la *Future-Man*).

In one of the more dramatic and well-known encounters, four teenagers were pursued by the Mothman from the TNT area as they sped down the road at speeds topping 100 mph. The group reported their sighting to the Mason County Sheriff, and a Deputy Millard Halstead followed the teens, who he knew "all of their lives" and "took seriously." Arriving at the TNT area, the police radio in his car "emitted a strange sound, like a speeded-up phonographic record," according to *The Complete Guide of Mysterious Beings*.

The creature was not seen, but the next day a press conference was

IN MEMORIAM: JOHN A. KEEL

MARCH 25, 1930-JULY 3, 2009

John A. Keel passed away on July 3, 2009, at the age of 79.

Since Keel was madly influential in my investigative research and writing style, I wanted to drop a few lines of dedication.

He possessed a uniquely singular mind, which is a true rarity these days. He did the research of an unpaid intern, had the personal insight of a professor, and used the observational skills of an anthropologist. His insatiable curiosity reflects



John A. Keel

the human experience, searching for answers to the mysteries of existence, reality, and the bottomless well of the mind.

Keel always left you with the impression that he knew much more than he would say, and his insight was so subtle that you could almost believe that you drew the inference on your own.

We would do well to follow Keel's example, shining the torch of knowledge into the dark corners of our minds and beyond.

held in the county courthouse and local reporter and beloved spitfire Mary Hyre entered the fray. She was the local authority collecting reports on not only the Mothman but also the near nightly UFO sighting.

And also following the UFOs was the ultra enigmatic, JELL-O-drinking Men-In-Black whom Hyre said she personally encountered on several occasions. In response to the barrage of UFOs appearing, homes throughout the area that had never been "paranormally active" had sudden outbreaks of poltergeist-like activity. In several of the cases, the almost-always-present teenage catalyst was suspiciously absent. This paranormal activity may have been the result of a "psychological spillover" effect.

Other Cases That Defy Contemporary Theories

Since this classic case, we have seen other regions come under investigation that also defy contemporary theories: multiple creatures or phenomena manifesting within a "window" area. Such cases include the Skinwalker Ranch with its invisible cryptids, death squad of orbs, and in-

terdimensional rips in the skies above the ranch; Contact Ranch with its controlled Bigfoots, disappearing trees, and the mechanical voice from an unknown source; and Mystery Farm X with its poltergeist activity, firework-watching Bigfoot, and camel-headed entity. Not to mention the mysteries of the San Luis Valley, the disturbing allegations surrounding Dulce, New Mexico, and the persistent strangeness of the Yakima Reservation.

All these cases seem to follow a new model where an underlying intelligence evolves with our perceptions. Each supernatural event/entity reinforces the belief (Moth-Mania in this case) in the persisting strangeness that, in turn, aids in the manifestation process — an interactive intelligence with its own agenda.

In the Mothman case, was the chief's curse an element in the high strangeness that has plagued this desolate corner of West Virginia? We don't know. But we would do well to observe the wise words of the late Fortean author, journalist, and Mothman researcher John Keel: "When it comes to the paranormal world, nothing is what it seems to be." ■

The Curious Case of Stan Romanek

By Paul Bottini, <http://zzyzyparanormal.com>

The extraterrestrial peered through the window, purposefully directing its gaze toward the camcorder lens. Stan trembled as he watched the videotape replay.

Could this really be happening? the Denver native's mind raced. An alien peeking into his house wasn't typical evening entertainment.

As Stan viewed the playback from his camcorder, the pitch black eyes bulging from the diminutive face glanced from right to left.

How was any of this possible? the Colorado homeowner wondered. The window through which the creature had been leering was on the second floor; seven feet off the ground! Stan knew damned well there wasn't anything between the lawn outside and the sill. No scaffolding. No trellis. Nothing. No place for a being of this size, let alone an average human, from which to hoist itself up to the window.

Stan Romanek Captures Aliens on Film

This wasn't the first time Stan had captured the image of an extraterrestrial on camera, either. In fact, since 2000, he had been playing a game of cat and mouse with not only



Pictured at left: alien abductee Stan Romanek. Some say that Stan's case is the most documented case of alien abduction to date. He has had more than 100 alien/human encounters. (Photo by www.ufonut.com)

anthropomorphic entities, but also *Men In Black*; mysterious balls of light; nefarious, unmarked helicopters; ominous phone voices; and UFOs. This latest incident, although earth-shattering, was but a single event in a slew of inexplicable occurrences.

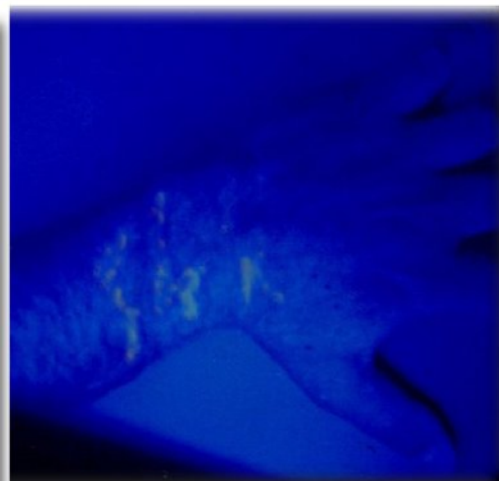
Still, the regularity of these phenomena didn't make the four-foot-tall alien staring back at him from the blackness outside any less disconcerting. After catching glimpses of the creature running off into the night, Stan wondered how much more he could endure. It hadn't just been eyewitness experiences, after

all. How could he forget the abductions? They were surreal episodes from which he awoke to find himself locked outside his own home, sporting fresh wounds and unexplainable bloody noses.

Stan recalled he didn't even believe in this stuff. After all, wasn't it only four years ago he was poking fun at those who expressed an interest in anything remotely paranormal?

UFOs, especially those of otherworldly origin, were the brainchildren of delusional minds, weren't they? Through his video camera's viewfinder, Stan watched the recorded

After a September 2001 alien abduction, Stan Romanek awoke to find these, and other, wounds on his body. The wounds fluoresced under black light. Stan later recalled his abduction experience, including several medical procedures performed on him by the extraterrestrial beings.



version of the creature duck below the window one last time. *Am I goin' nuts?* the frazzled man wondered. Whatever had been outside obviously hadn't come from Earth. If not from this planet, though, it must have traveled from a location an almost incomprehensible distance away.

Why would something so highly advanced traverse vast expanses to look in my window? Stan pondered.

Little did Stan realize, but the footage he shot that evening would be a source of great ridicule from not only the UFO community, but skeptics alike. In 2008, Stan would finally release his videographic evidence during a Denver media convention and immediately face disparaging treatment from those

group went so far as to reproduce the scenario Stan encountered that fateful night, using a mock-up alien and over-the-counter editing software.

Stan conceded it was possible some esoteric faction may have been playing tricks on him, but then the question became, "Who was this arcane force?" And moreover, "Why would anybody go to such great lengths to alter one ordinary man's life?"

Again, none of it made sense.

How It All Began for Stan Romanek: Early Encounters

Stan was born in Denver, Colorado, during December of 1962. Being the son of an Air Force officer, Stan and his family moved through-

When Stan was only four years old and living in Northwood, Colorado, he recalled his older brother Jimmy witnessing an enigmatic craft hovering over the town's water tower. Jimmy related his experience to his mother, who responded with disbelief. It wasn't until Stan's father returned from work that night, asserting that he, too, had observed an aerial anomaly that day that Stan's mother listened more intently.

Still, the incident hadn't involved Stan, and, as a result, he'd forgotten it for some time. Oddly enough, Stan even failed to recall several childhood episodes in which he was visited by a woman with uncommonly large eyes and who spoke to him without opening her mouth. What's more, this bizarre, fleeting acquaintance claimed Stan was somehow "special," intimating he was part of something more than merely human.

It wasn't until 2000 that Stan began experiencing the paranormal once more. Shortly after the dawn of the new millennium, Stan found himself attempting to videotape the majestic scenery of Colorado's Red Rocks Park, only to discover he was being watched by the most peculiar, airborne object he had witnessed to date. An alloy craft, comprised of numerous spheres rotating in

Electronic devices would inexplicably fail when in Stan's presence.

who viewed it. What he believed was confirmation of exoplanetary life was reduced, in the minds of many, to nothing more than a hoax.

Although Stan's raw video had been verified by expert analysts, from a post-production standpoint, as untampered with, there were those who failed to accept his assertions. One

out the Midwest on a constant basis, relocating to strategically advantageous locales, such as Minuteman missile installations.

To this day, Stan remains unaware of the capacity to which his father was employed by the government. From early on, his Dad's secrets remained obscure.

a counterclockwise motion, was keeping pace with his van. As he attempted to photograph the conundrum, the vessel suddenly vanished into the heavens, resulting in a small sonic boom.

As with numerous encounters Stan has allegedly been privy to over the years, he wasn't the sole witness to this event. In fact, other observers in the park that day attested to having seen the same craft. Even more bizarre were the twin F-16s that appeared out of nowhere, racing after the enigmatic vessel.

Who Tapped Stan Romanek's Phone Lines?

It was about this time that Stan professed to hearing strange, audible clicks when speaking on his home phone. Perturbed, he called his telecommunications company, who subsequently discovered a bugging device on the line in question.

Shortly thereafter, while waiting in line at a restaurant, Stan found himself approached by a gaunt individual in business attire, who whis-

pered in passing, "It's not over yet."

As if these events weren't disturbing enough, electronic devices would inexplicably fail when in Stan's presence. Within a year, he went through nearly 10 home computers, as the machines would short out not long after he'd unpack them. Street lights quit whenever Stan was near, and touch lamps would continually turn off and on in response to his close proximity.

Most troubling, though, was the way birds were suddenly attracted to Stan. The effect escalated to detrimental proportions, when literally dozens of fowl flew into the windshield of Stan's van one day in an apparent mass suicide.

UFOs began targeting Stan in the most innocuous of places. The enigmatic craft would often engage in a sort of hide-and-seek with Stan. Such was the case on a return road trip from Pennsylvania that found Stan, his then-girlfriend Lisa, and their friend Mark traveling back to Colorado. The entourage was followed by an inexplicable, airborne

craft that hid itself strategically behind clouds whenever the group attempted to photograph it. Only after repeated efforts were Stan and his companions able to capture this massive, metallic disc on camera.

As if multiple sightings weren't enough, on the evening of September 20, 2001, Stan was allegedly the target of an extraterrestrial abduction. After he and others witnessed a 30-foot, crimson globule above his place of work, Stan headed for the shelter of his home. Little did he know, he'd soon encounter three diminutive, anthropomorphic creatures on his apartment's front stoop. Although the physical attributes of these beings were almost human, enormous eyes and nearly non-existent mouths forewarned Stan he was face-to-face with a species not of this Earth.

What's more, he was unable to overpower the creatures, who clearly had intentions of seizing him. From that point on, Stan recalls awakening in bed, lamenting over the most bizarre, yet vague, dream he'd ever had. Distinct divots in his back and torn

On Sept. 20, 2001, Stan Romanek and other bystanders saw a UFO with large, blinking lights. After falling to sleep that night, he was awakened at 2 a.m. by a knock at the door. Stan remembers three "people" waiting for him by the front door. As he approached them, he realized that they were not fully human. The illustration at right shows the alien beings Stan saw that night.





The controversy surrounding Stan Romanek's video of what he believes could be an extraterrestrial peering through his living room window led to his appearance on *Larry King Live*. Stan's case has also been discussed on *20/20* and *Fox News*. You can view his "alien in my window" video on www.youtube.com.

skin on his wrists seemed to support Stan's belief that something nefarious occurred the previous evening. Even so, details of what transpired during the night, eluded him.

Enigmatic Equations & Complex Physics

Intrigued by Stan's assertions, *Fox News* interviewed the Denver resident. For some unbeknownst reason, the segment didn't air until eight months later. At the moment the program was scheduled to broadcast, a monumental blackout occurred, affecting 20,000 local residences. Even more suspicious was the fact that electricity was restored exactly one hour later, precisely when Stan's interview ended. It was as though some inconspicuous human element was involved with the anomalies Stan was encountering.

And then came the shocking revelation. A hypnotic regression revealed the details of Stan's abduction. Stan remembered a luminescent room in which he found himself adhered to a wall by some

invisible force. To Stan, the room seemed as if it had been constructed for creatures smaller than humans. Even more curious was that he couldn't recall seeing a single sharp edge anywhere around him.

The same anthropomorphic creatures that had initially approached Stan on his balcony, now came into view. As if telepathically, a tranquil voice within his head informed the terrified man he needed to collect his wits. Subsequently, an ordeal ensued in which Stan felt his captives remove several hunks of flesh from his lower back. And after being rendered unconscious, he recalled awakening in the center of the room while the apparent female of the group cleansed his wounds with some form of liquid.

Stan began a telepathic discourse with his apparently sympathetic captor, inquiring as to where the creatures originated from and what their intentions were. The being answered his queries with cryptic symbols.

Eventually, she commandeered the conversation, revealing to the

frightened man that "Something significant is about to happen." With that, the creature stared intently into Stan's eyes, and his thoughts were inundated by visions of great catastrophes to humanity. The images were so intense, they caused Stan's knees to buckle, as he collapsed to the floor.

The frazzled man's obvious response was, "Is this what's going to happen? Is this what you're showing me?"

Initially, the creature failed to answer, but Stan was later informed by those temporarily incarcerating him that the cataclysmic events were possible outcomes for humankind, should the current situation on Earth continue.

It was during Stan's initial regression that he began drawing what later became an extensive series of mathematical equations, the likes of which could only be understood by highly educated astronomers, cosmologists, mathematicians, and physicists. These formulas were always conceived while Stan was either

hypnotized, with his eyes closed, or asleep in complete darkness.

Stan's enigmatic representations were determined to be complicated physics regarding planetary alignments, space travel, and wormholes. His nocturnal scribbling also yielded reproductions of the Drake Equation (used to ascertain the number of species within our galaxy that could possibly possess advanced intellects), and a mysterious, theoretical substance known as Element 115. The fact that Stan possessed a fifth-grade proficiency in mathematics made his cryptic formulas that much more astounding.

Stan's inexplicable experiences didn't end there, though. Spook lights, in the form of red orbs, followed Stan and his family wherever they went. These crimson balls of luminescence apparently possessed advanced intelligence, as well as the ability to traverse solid walls. While usually benign, these conundrums were also known to destroy electronics, searing through both plastic and metal.

And through it all, that inauspicious, human element continued, as if someone possessed a keen knowledge of what was going on.

Mysterious Warnings

In June 2002, Stan's wife, Lisa, was the recipient of a disturbing, anonymous e-mail signed by a "Concerned Informer." The electronic correspondence read, verbatim:

"This is regarding Stan Romanek. I understand this might be

but I have managed to keep your location out of the picture . . . I have contacted others in MUFON who have been working closely with Stan. I hope you don't take this lightly; there is a lot at stake here!"

Periods of intense activity were often followed by lulls in the anoma-

"Stan is in danger! Unfortunately, time is running out."

a little hard for you to accept but it's all real. As you know by now this UFO case is very important, but what you don't know is how important! It seems that the people upstairs are making a statement and Mr. Romanek is the conduit. I, for one, would like to see this happen. But there are those in the organization I work for who do not. In fact, the reason for this contact is so that you know that Stan is in danger! I have tried to contact Mr. Romanek, but Stan is stubborn, and I am sure he believes these warnings to be a hoax. Unfortunately, time is running out. It has taken a lot of work,

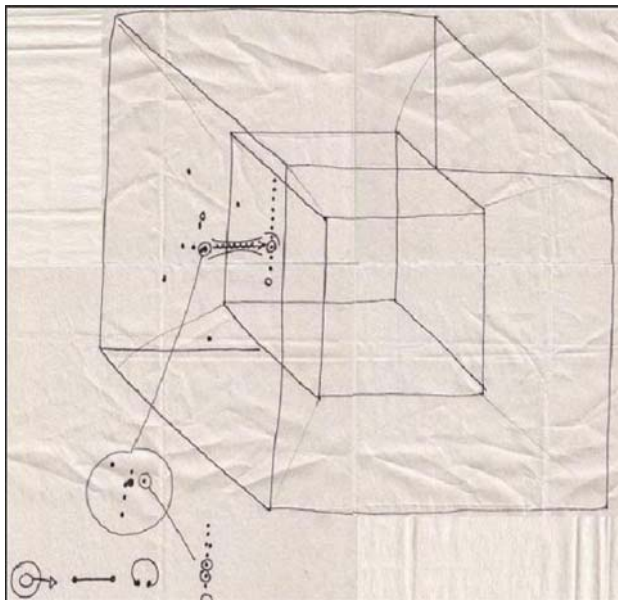
lous action, leading Stan to believe things might return to normal. Unfortunately, such was not the case. A rudimentary crop circle, perhaps the residual of an enigmatic craft, was found on the Stan's lawn following another of Stan's alleged abductions.

On more than one occasion, when some of the family's digital, point-and-shoot cameras went missing, they reappeared with mysterious photographs on them of classic gray aliens. The pictures seemed to suggest the extraterrestrials photographed had been fumbling with the devices, inadvertently opening the lenses, and accidentally taking pictures of themselves.

After hearing unexplained sounds on their outdoor deck, Stan and his wife ventured into the backyard, only to discover their lawn furniture scattered about the property.

Such was the case for two consecutive evenings, until the chairs in question inexplicably ended up in a concise configuration on the roof. Resultant of these incidents, Stan took a number of random photos into the blackness engulfing his yard. His efforts were rewarded when he examined the pictures and discovered the face of a typical gray alien peering back at him from between the deck's railing slats. Although Stan hadn't recognized the enigmatic presence as

Stan Romanek drew the illustration to the right after having a vivid dream on Oct. 10, 2003. He drew it freehand in under a minute and has no idea how he drew it "so straight and so quickly." He later tried to duplicate this illustration and was unable to.





These UFO photos/video captures are just a few of the many Stan Romanek has taken since Dec. 27, 2000. If you'd like to see more of Stan's photos and videos, visit his Website, www.stanromanek.com.

he was taking the photographs; the creature appeared to have been mere feet away from him in the darkness.

Any recapitulation of Stan's ongoing occurrences would be remiss without mention of Audrey — a foreboding, electronic voice who made her presence known via telephone. On July 25, 2004, Clay Roberts, one of Romanek's friends, found the following message on his voice mail, spoken in the computerized tone of a British female:

"Hello, Clay. I apologize for being so forward. It did not take us long to get your phone number. Our surveillance is mostly for passive monitoring, but it does come in handy. I cannot tell you who I am for safety reasons, but I can tell you that your perceptions of Stan Romanek and his experiences are real. And yes, there is a connection with Stan's family and the military, but it is anyone's guess what the visitors do with Stan. What is important is why they chose him. As you have probably noticed, Stan is slightly different. The way he thinks . . . the way he perceives the world seems to be a little more advanced than usual. His nonverbal communication and abstract thinking skills are off the map. So yes, he is slightly different. The interesting thing is that Stan has no idea who he really is. We

believe the visitors are going to make a statement and it will be interesting to see what part Stan will have as this unfolds. There are a few of us in high positions that are tired of the lies. We look to the day when everything will be revealed, knowing it will be enlightening for all, but there are those in specific agencies that would disagree, and for many reasons, most of which has to do with ego and power, and they are getting aggressive because they are scared of the inevitable . . . If anything 'funny' were to happen, it would look suspicious . . . and they do not want to draw attention to themselves . . . Stan is doing all the right things, but he needs support. Stay focused on your goal, but keep an eye out without overly exciting Stan and Lisa. They have a lot to deal with as it is. This has taken a great deal of effort, contacting you, so please watch what you say and who you say it to. The immediate people involved in this case are okay. But some of Stan and Lisa's friends are not who they seem."

To this day, Stan, Lisa, and Clay purport to being baffled by the origin of the correspondence, although they have determined the voice, itself, was produced via a retail computer program, known as Audrey. Hence, the endearing moniker.

Stan's Case Continues to This Day

To properly encompass the ongoing, anomalous activity Stan professes to encounter (yes, Romanek's experiences continue to this very day) would require an entire book. Fortunately, such a publication exists. Should the sampling of what we've presented here be of interest to you, get your hands on a copy of *Mes-sages: The World's Most Documented Extraterrestrial Story*, by Stan, himself. Said book does far more justice to the material than we ever could. After all, Stan has purportedly lived through the preceding, whereas we've simply done our best to relate relevant aspects of it.

You can also view some of the alleged extraterrestrial and UFO footage Stan has shot via www.youtube.com. Also, watch Stan's 20/20 interviews or analyze his appearance on *Larry King Live* and draw your own conclusions.

The above book is a fascinating read. Its closing message seems quite pertinent. In the words of Bill Maher, via his documentary *Religulous*, "It's simple. Grow up or die."

It's obviously time humanity developed cohesion within itself. To continue otherwise, would court assured disaster. ■

Diary From a HAUNTED HOTEL

By Carolyn M. Hughes

When I began working as a night auditor more than 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 . . .

Sat., Apr. 24

11-11:10 p.m.: I was on my way to my car on Sunday morning, my usual exhausted self after working my 16-hour, all night shift, when I heard my name being called across the parking lot. I recognized one of our regulars at the hotel, and immediately stopped to chat with her. She is a lovely lady, and we are always



Pictured above is the Quality Inn's breakfast room. Recently, a hotel regular saw a shadow man sitting at the middle table in the picture. Carolyn took this picture at the exact same time during the day in an effort to duplicate the conditions. General Lee's Headquarters can be seen in the background outside the window.

happy to have her and her family visit us.

She appeared to be very excited as she ran over to me. I knew which wing she and her daughter were staying in, so I was not surprised when she related the following to me:

"It was between 11:00 p.m. and

11:10 p.m. when I heard four loud blasts of cannon fire. Carolyn, the bed even shook!"

I told her that on that particular night, I didn't hear anything, but that is not unusual. I often hear the phantom cannon fire when the guests do not and vice versa. She was excited

and not frightened at all, as she is a regular and often has experiences at the hotel. I can't wait until she visits with us again to see what the boys will do next.

Mon., May 10

6:30 p.m.: I was standing in the lobby behind the counter at my usual spot. My coworker was also in the lobby standing behind the counter at the second computer terminal. I saw a guest open the front door, look to her right into the breakfast room, and then approach my coworker at the lobby desk.

Just after she approached my coworker, the guest looked back into the breakfast room, and I noted the shocked look on her face. I immediately asked her what she had seen in the breakfast room. The woman excitedly told us the following:

"I saw a dark form in the outline of a man sitting at one of the tables reading."

I asked her why she thought he was reading, and she said that was the very first impression she got, but that she definitely saw a shadow of a man sitting at the table. The guest was so convinced she saw someone sitting at the table, she left the lobby and went into the breakfast room to investigate. There was no one there.

My coworker and I knew that no one had come into the lobby and no one had gone into the breakfast room. The chair in which the shadow man had apparently been sitting was pulled out from the table.

I cannot verify that it had not been pulled out by another guest or moved during the morning cleaning. However, the woman was very adamant about what she saw. That led to a discussion about what we all experience at the hotel, and she left happy knowing that there are, indeed, strange things happening at

the hotel.

Also attached is a picture of the breakfast room. I am standing exactly where the lady was standing when she saw the shadow man sitting at the middle table in the picture. I took the photograph at the exact time she saw the figure sitting at the table to duplicate the conditions. General Lee's Headquarters is in the background outside the window.

I recently learned that trestle tables were situated in the exact location of our breakfast room next to

who she was speaking to.

The little girl pointed and replied, "The man in the corner."

There were only three occupants in this room at the time: the father, mother, and child.

Tues., Jul. 6

Sometime After Midnight: A gentleman approached the front desk at 9:15 a.m. on Tuesday, July 6, to check out of Room 135. He proceeded to explain to my co-

SHE NEVER TOOK HER EYES OFF THE SHADOW MAN . . .

General Lee's Headquarters where his officers sat, ate their meals, and also died.

Sat., Jul. 3

9:10 p.m.: A man, his wife, and two children were resting in Room 135 after spending the day on the battlefield when all four heard what appeared to be gunshots. The gentleman reported that there were two consecutive gunshots that appeared to be coming from inside the room.

Note: July 3 was the 147th anniversary of Pickett's Charge, which was the last major action in the three-day battle that became known as The Battle of Gettysburg.

Sun., Jul. 4

5:55 p.m.: A man, his wife, and their six-year-old daughter had just checked into the hotel and were putting their belongings away in Room 135. Apparently, the little girl began having a conversation with an unseen person located in the room.

The father asked his daughter

worker, Carrie, about an incident that his wife said had occurred during the night.

The gentleman said that he and his wife were sleeping. His wife woke up and saw a large, dark shadow in the shape of a man standing at the end of her bed. She frantically tried to wake him up but he, apparently, is a heavy sleeper. The whole time his wife was trying to wake him up, she never took her eyes off the shadow man standing at the end of the bed.

Finally, she slapped her husband across the face, and he awoke with a start. When his wife pointed to the end of the bed saying there was a man standing there, he said he saw no one standing there. The apparition had vanished.

The gentleman was laughing about the incident, not believing his wife. Carrie told the gentleman that not two days before, in that very room, a little girl saw that man. The gentleman was not laughing when he left.

Stay Tuned . . .

Old Cowtown Museum: A First-Timer's Paranormal Investigation

By Michelle M. Pillow, www.michellepillow.com

I'm a list person. I make them for everything, even adventures I want to someday have. One thing that's been on that list for a very long time has been to be involved with a professional paranormal investigation.

On May 29, 2010, I finally got my wish when I was invited to join Wichita Paranormal Research Society (WPRS) on their third overnight investigation of Wichita, Kansas' Old Cowtown Museum. With more than 40 possible investigation sites on the museum property, it has been no small task for the group to thoroughly investigate the entire area.

Cowtown is unique in that it's a collection of relocated buildings built on a once-empty sand bed. Though some buildings have been built on the site within recent years, they do contain historical artifacts from the 1800s. Several of the buildings are original homes and stores that have been relocated to the museum property.

Set up with sidewalks crafted of wooden planks, and dirt roads, this is about as authentic an 1800s Old West town as you can find in modern day America. During the day, reenactors run the shops and wander the town, but at night there is said to be another force stirring. This is when the ghosts come out to play, reclaiming their new-



Pictured above is Main Street at the Old Cowtown Museum. With more than 40 possible investigation sites on the museum property, it has been no small task for the Wichita Paranormal Research Society to thoroughly investigate the entire area. (All photos copyright © Michelle M. Pillow — 2010)

ly configured town. There have been numerous reports of shadow figures seen near Munger House — it's really more of a log cabin — and roaming the residential streets.

Our investigation focused on one of the most active homes on the site, the Murdock House, so the equipment headquarters was set up in the Story-and-a-Half House located next door. The official headquarters was located a block away at the Fritz Snitzler's Saloon, because it was the only area big enough to

accommodate seating for the entire group. This is where we met to receive our investigative assignments.

Present at the investigation were WPRS founder Shane Elliot and his wife, Karrie; case manager, investigator, and PR manager Sherrie Curry; photographer and investigator Derek Pinkston; historical researcher and investigator Lori DeWinkler; investigators Donna Chaffin, Charles Harding, Ted Thomason, and Lu Ann Julian; and investigator Bob Gilmer — who was kind enough to



Pictured above (at left) is the Murdock House, one of the most active homes on the site. Extensive EVPs have been recorded here, and investigators have also gotten some hits on the ghost box. Pictured above (at center and right) are views of Cowtown's Main Street. Several of the buildings are original homes and stores that have been relocated to the museum property.

satisfy my curiosity about that childhood snack, Bugles. For the record, I think they shrunk. They no longer fit on my fingers like claws . . . anyway . . . Also present were guest investigators visiting from a Topeka, Kansas, group called Paranormal Research Investigators (PRI) — founder Nick Spantgos and investigator Tim.

I felt that this was a great investigation for my first, since I could witness how the many other investigators acted throughout the night. The impulse to jump right into the action was great, but I went into this wanting to learn all I could, not just to experience the fun part of a haunting.

During the day, reenactors run the shops and wander the town, but at night there is said to be another force stirring.

WPRS' Investigative Style

Founded in 2007, WPRS has been investigating the Central Kansas area quite extensively, and they are members of the TAPS family of investigators. I first met several of the

members when they attended one of my book signings with Bob's wife, author Candice Gilmer, in Wichita.

Many of their investigative techniques are comparative to those of the Syfy Channel's *Ghost Hunters*, though not completely, as the group does have their own way of doing things and works with their own unique rhythm. For this reason, I think it was worth the drive to Wichita instead of looking for something closer.

I had a moment before the investigation started to talk to the two guest investigators from PRI about their investigative approach. Though I did not get the opportunity to investigate

with them directly, they said they focused their investigations on logic and the collecting of data, just like WPRS. They had brought a camera and set it up to take pictures every 30 seconds in the Murdock House.

Nick demonstrated a new device they had modified — a voice recorder holder that allows the investigator to walk around with their free hands, while stabilizing the recorder. The purpose was to avoid the friction noises sometimes picked up when investigators hold the devices in their hands. The device hangs around the neck and sets against the stomach, and can be taken off to be set down. According to their reports, they've had great luck with it.

My First Investigation Begins

The night was broken up into four investigative blocks. My first official investigation took place at the Drug Store in the druggist's shop, where there are reports of footsteps on the second floor. This would be the only newer building we investigated in that night; the rest were originals. With me were WPRS veteran Laurie, and fellow newbie Karrie, who was on her third investigation. Both ladies were wonderful, answering all my curiosities (incessant as they might be at times) with

Personal Experiences: Ghost Hunter Case Files

good-natured humor.

Lights automatically turn on in this building, and there is no way of turning them off. I know different investigators have different opinions as to whether or not the lights should be on or off during an investigation. The best argument I've heard for the dark is the function of the IR cameras. But, to me, I think the dark adds a certain peaceful ambiance to the event.

The Drug Store is a newer building on the museum's main street. On the first floor is the druggist shop, including many original artifacts, such as chemist bottles, pumice stones, scales, and herb jars. I'm pretty sure the rum locked away in the cabinet is just for show, but I did invite anyone listening to a party should they like to get one out. Nothing supernatural took me up on my offer.

However, I will say this about EVPs. The first time you do them, you feel a bit silly asking questions to an empty room. But, I did it, silly or not, and tried my best to think of the right things to say. No one gave me

an odd look, so hopefully I didn't mess up the recordings too badly.

Upstairs are the three offices for doctors and dentists, also filled with historical artifacts. To preserve their integrity, the rooms are blocked off with only visible access through the door windows. Unfortunately, the excess amount of plexi-glass separat-

The first group of the night to investigate the house reported hearing voices that sounded like a conversation between a male and a child.

ing the rooms from each other and from the public does tend to give off strange reflections, and whenever my camera flashed, I noticed an image of the investigator looking in at the door next to me for a split second within the frame.

These images did not show up on the film, but I can see how such a reflective effect could confuse someone not expecting to see it. While upstairs, we did experience some EMF fluctuations.

Encountering Paranormal Phenomena at Cowtown

Meeting back at the saloon to receive my next team assignment, I was then paired up with computer specialist Charles and my friend, investigator Bob Gilmer, to investigate the hotel. In the ballroom, there are reports of a ball being bounced

against the floor and walls, which is often caught as EVPs on audio recorders but not heard with the naked ear. There is also a door that is slammed shut and opened right off the main dining room.

We did extensive EVP sessions downstairs in the dining room and ballroom and upstairs in the two hotel rooms. In the ballroom, when we laid the flashlight on the floor, we seemed to get some movement when we invited a child to play with us, but nothing conclusive.

In the dining room, we did have one incident where we asked whoever was listening to turn off the flashlight for "No" and turn it off and back on for "Yes." When we asked if they understood and were willing to talk to us, the flashlight turned off. This was not an event we could repeat. Was the spirit saying "No" to talking to us? Or was it a jiggle of the plank floorboards against the table leg? It's hard to say.

In one of the hotel rooms decorated specifically for a woman, there was a significant pressure, not unlike when sitting in a plane during takeoff. This room is blocked off by a gate across the bottom half of the doorway to keep the public out, while still allowing them to look in.

Leaning across the threshold of the gate, our ears popped and our



Pictured above is the Munger House, which is really more like a log cabin. There have been many reports of shadow figures roaming near the Munger House, as well as the surrounding streets. The house is named after the town's founder, Darius Munger.



Pictured above (at left): The Saloon at Cowtown was WPRS' headquarters for our night's investigation. Pictured above (at center): According to one of the old caretakers, he could tell whether or not Cowtown was going to have any paranormal activity by the presence of the town's many cats. Pictured above (at right): At the Druggist office, rum was locked away in the cabinet, but I was pretty sure it was just for show; however, I did invite anyone listening to a party should they like to get one out.

heads felt heavy. But, when we pulled out of the room, the sensation instantly stopped. This area is open to the outside air, which was cool with a nice breeze, separated from the main door by only a few feet of open hallway. However, inside the room, the air felt dead and still, like a mausoleum that had been locked up for a decade.

The other hotel room did not have these sensations and was even further from the opened main door. Conclusive? No. But in my opinion worthy of further study.

While in this area, we did try EVPs with rudimentary Spanish and German – German because many of the people who settled in the area were from Germany, and the language is still spoken in the somewhat nearby Amish community of Yoder, as well as by the older Mennonite generations. Spanish because Kansas is close enough to the south to have hosted Spanish-speaking people.

Beyond the usual greetings, the

best German I could come up with would be to recite Rammstein lyrics. I refrained from treating the unearthly residents to this musical rendition. I am sure they are eternally grateful. Though, if you happen to catch a future EVP with a request that I come back and give a concert, be sure to let me know.

Spirit Activity Within the Murdock House

My third assignment, at perhaps the most exciting house on the grounds, was the Murdock House, which showcases beautifully preserved Victorian Gothic architecture. I was with Bob and Shane. The first group of the night to investigate the house reported hearing voices that sounded like a conversation between a male and a child.

Having heard the stories of EVPs, EMFs, K-II readings, and personal accounts, I have to admit I felt a little nervous going into the home.

This, of course, didn't stop me, though it did take several minutes for the nervous flutters of my stomach to subside. However, the confident attitudes of my chaperones soon put me at ease – even if Bob did joke about leaving me for ghost bait.

This original structure belonged to pioneer journalist Marshall Murdock, who founded *The Wichita Eagle* in 1872. He lived there with his family. It has been moved to its current location and contains some of the family's belongings – including a beautiful settee and blackmail letters written to Mr. Murdock from his wife's lover demanding money. The rest of the furnishings, though not original to the home, are all period pieces.

On the first floor is a particularly interesting candelabra. Due to an agreement with the museum, no pictures from within the Murdock house can be published, so I can't show it to you. It has been reported

Personal Experiences: Ghost Hunter Case Files

that the candles are taken out of the candelabra and laid down next to it by unseen hands. It's also been reported that the piece itself is moved.

Extensive EVPs have been recorded here, as well as some hits on the ghost box. The ghost box is a radio wave scanner, modified to constantly scan all frequencies. Though an interesting piece of equipment, I found the noise to be a bit distracting. However, there did seem to be a couple of instances where we heard the words *Bob* and *Marshall*.

Due to the scanning nature of the box itself, it is hard to say whether we heard what we were looking for because we wanted to within the radio chatter or if we experienced a real communication. In my opinion, which I believe was shared by the two investigators with me, the ghost box needs more study. However, I applaud this group for their many methods of investigative techniques and for experimenting and testing equipment — of which they had a lot of. Not a single person I was with seemed to force evidence where there was none.

On the stairway of the Murdock house, investigators have reported being touched in succession. Personal experiences are hard to prove, but I

feel they are important as they add to the story and help with future investigations. Besides, not everyone is out to prove what they believe to the world, but to further their own understanding.

The hardest part of the entire investigation was waiting for the audio and video evidence to be analyzed!

I, personally, am a need-proof person, but I do not discount what others claim to have had happen.

The top level of the house consists of three rooms, one of which reportedly is the daughter's bedroom. I've heard a recording of a girl's voice saying, "Daddy, you promised," caught on the ghost box. It is believed this might have been the voice of Love'n Tangle Murdock (1875-1883), who died from spinal meningitis in the home.

Having mentioned I'm not 100% convinced of the ghost box, I do admit this particular recording did sound clear and different than the normal radio scanning. For this reason, the clarity and difference of voice quality, I think the ghost box should continue to be explored.

Also on this level of the home,

I had a chance to use my debunking skills when we heard a noise downstairs that sounded like someone moving around. I made Bob step around the floor until I found the

plank that did it. Though a small thing, I'm proud I figured it out.

An Unusual Experiment & An Interesting Theory

The last location that I investigated, The DeVore Farm, was with newer WPRS investigators, Karrie and Lu Ann. It was about 2:30 a.m. by this point, and I was starting to feel the effects of a late night.

At The DeVore Farm I saw a device at work that I had never heard of. The WPRS group learned about it from a TAPS affiliate out of Ireland. Standard wind chimes are hung inside a jar and sealed. Supposedly, since spirits can move through solid objects like walls, it's possible for them to pass through the jar and stir the wind chimes. Though I've never seen this in action, they were



Cowtown is a living history museum where visitors can experience what life was like in an 1870s Midwestern cattle town. Above (at left) is the DeVore Farm's kitchen, where we conducted the wind chime spirit jar experiment. Above (at right) is the Hotel, where we felt strange shifts in pressure.



Pictured at left are two photos from within Cowtown's Druggist shop, where there are reports of footsteps on the second floor. This is the only newer building we investigated during my first-ever investigation; the rest were originals.

set up in this area while we were there with a camera on them. I've heard reports of the wind chimes clanking against the side of the jar without anyone else around. Since it's sealed, there is no airflow within the container itself.

There was a theory I found interesting. Cowtown is home to many cats. They roam the town freely, sleep in some of the houses and barns, and hang out by the saloon. One of the old caretakers who lived on the property said that he could tell whether or not the place was going to have any activity by watching the cats. If the cats were roaming around at night, there would be little to none. If they weren't to be seen, he knew he was in for a busy night. WPRS, knowing this theory, paid attention.

The night I was there, the cats roamed freely and there wasn't a lot of personal experiences recorded. However, the month before when WPRS investigated, there were no

cats and a lot of personal experiences. Some say animals are sensitive to ghosts. Who knows, there may be something to that theory if Cowtown is to be used as an example.

Though I did not help with the initial equipment set-up because I did not want to be in the way, I did help with the tear down. By the time we rolled out of Cowtown, it was after 3:30 a.m.

I have to say, the hardest part of the entire investigation was waiting for the audio and video evidence to be analyzed. It was very hard not to call everyone and demand to hear if anyone from beyond had responded to me, especially since patience has never been one of my virtues. However, if I someday hope to get another awesome invitation, I knew I had better be good and wait.

Though I have no indisputable paranormal personal experiences to report beyond extreme pressure and creepy feelings, I am very pleased

with my first ghost hunt. I proved to myself that I was brave enough to participate, I learned some valuable hands-on experience, and I made some great friends. Thank you to WPRS and PRI, as well as the Old Cowtown Museum for a wonderful night, and for finally letting me check another item off my life's list.

Pssst . . . WPRS, where to next? Call me. ■

* * * * *

For those of you wanting to check out Wichita's Old Cowtown Museum to see if you can have your own paranormal experience, or just join in the historical fun, you can find out more on the Web at www.OldCowtown.org. For more information about WPRS, and to see/listen to some of their Cowtown evidence, visit www.WichitaParanormal.com. For PRI, visit www.ParanormalResearchInvestigators.com. To read more of my personal adventures, visit me at www.MichellePillow.com.

Unseen Coworkers

By Linda Williams

I've been working for a local eye doctor for about two years now, and I really enjoy the job and the people I work with. About a year and a half ago, I began to realize that the girls in the office are not my only coworkers.

I began to notice on days I worked alone that there were noises happening that weren't audible over our usual atmosphere. I began hearing the sounds of things falling in the far room of the office, but when I would go to check out the noises, there was no sign of anything out of place. My coworkers don't believe in the paranormal, so they usually brushed it off as an overactive imagination.

Soon enough, though, my coworker, Debbie, began to have weekends where she was the only one in the building. She eventually came to me and admitted she was hearing things that didn't belong. She also went on to tell me that a psychic had visited the building before and told our boss, Carrie, there was a presence trying to make contact with her.

I began to notice that the activity picked up when Mary, my boss' niece, found out she was pregnant and decided to put the baby up for adoption. Suddenly, the noises were louder and no longer all the way in the back room; they were there with us. There were lights that would go out at various times, and it seemed that whatever was there was really upset and trying to gain the attention



"A small, metal, plane-shaped clock came off of the counter and landed on the floor in front of me."

of our boss, who was still ignoring the paranormal activity.

I questioned Debbie about why she thought the unexplainable activity had been picking up just because Mary was pregnant. Debbie told me that Mary's dad, who had passed away, previously ran the lab in our building. She expressed to me that she really believed it could be Mary's dad, Jason, who was there. At this point, the investigator in me wanted to do a full-scale investigation, but my boss was not into "that kind of thing," so I respected her wishes.

Two weeks ago, Mary went into labor. I had known that she

was struggling with whether she still wanted to give up her baby or if she was indeed ready to be a mom. The day that we were told Mary was in labor, I was over in the far room in our office moving a box. When I went around the counter, a small, metal, plane-shaped clock came off of the counter and landed on the floor in front of me.

I was the only one in the area, and I had not yet made it to that part of the counter, so I knew I hadn't knocked it off. I bent down to pick it up, and immediately my hand began to burn. When I looked at the back of my left hand, I noticed it was very red, like it had been scratched. This made me nervous, so for the rest of the day I stayed clear of that side of the office.

That night my boss called and told me that Mary had decided to keep the baby and everyone was thrilled. She also told me they needed me to work solo the next day.

While I was still a bit nervous to head into the office the next day, I did so. I again found myself in the far room. I sat down in a chair that we keep in the room and I told whoever was over there that Mary had given birth to a beautiful baby girl, and she was going to keep and raise her baby.

The room was really quiet, and I immediately felt a feeling of calm wash over me.

Deb and I still hear occasional sounds of our unseen guest, but he or she definitely seems to be more at peace with the way things are going now. ■

The Other Side

By Chad Wilson

Red and black. Those are the colors before him — the darkness with streaks of blood. He sees a white light in the distance and hears wails of despair from afar. Sadness floods through his whole being. Coldness consumes him.

What to do . . . he can't think. Where is his family, and why is everything gray all of a sudden? A somber mood descends upon him.

Looking back, he sees his mom and dad, all tears and sobs. His brother is in the distance beckoning for him, but how can that be? His brother has been dead for three years. Fear overtakes him, and he runs back to his house, to the safety of his room.

* * * * *

Huddling in the corner of his room, his confusion grows as a stranger enters — a young boy in an empty room. Where are his things? He screams, but no one hears. His anger red, he tears through the house, at first with no effect.

Soon though, small things fall in his wake. He feels himself growing stronger on their fear, a house full of strangers. Now he will be heard. A glass shatters as it hits the floor, falling from the table he had knocked it from. And the strangers cry and huddle in fear as he makes his presence known.

Why must he be here, all alone; no one to understand, so afraid. He would rather be dead, but then he would never see his mom again. She was the one who had taken care of him while sick when he was young.

It was she who had come to comfort him when his sister had died, a victim of cancer. And if he left this house, she might never find him.

And these strangers — why were they here? They were intruders in his home. He will make them go away. He will drive them from his domain.

Their cries of fear and terror only fuel his anger as he rips and roars through the house.

As they send in the priest, he quickly goes into hiding, not wishing to offend the man out of respect. And when he is sure the priest is good and gone, he commences his rage. He will never leave, not until his dying day . . .

* * * * *

Rage fills his soul, the color of blood. He rampages to and fro, knocking all asunder. The house shakes to its foundations as he moves from room to room, their fear driving him to new heights.

Soon he is alone, the strangers having fled in his path. Content and strangely drained, he drifts to his room so he can rest.

A knock at the front door . . . he goes to investigate and finds a little, old woman there. She sees him and asks him his name.

"James," he says.

She smiles a sad smile and tells him it is okay.

He cries, his sobs wracking his body. All he wants is his mother.

"Where is my mother?" he pleads.

"She has passed," the kind woman says. "She is beyond the white light."

He remembers the wails from

before, and he flees to his safe spot, his room; but it's not really his room anymore.

* * * * *

Eventually the old woman finds him. Looking at him she says she understands and that she misses her mother too. And then she takes him in her eyes, so soft, so kind, so knowing, and she tells him the way.

"Go to the light," she says, but he refuses.

"Go to the light," she says, and she tells him he is dead.

I'm dead? No, not dead, his mind races with this pronouncement.

But he quickly realizes the old woman is telling him the truth. He does not remember how he died, but he now realizes he is dead. He sighs and hangs his head low for a moment. He then looks up toward the light — a light he can now see no matter where he is.

In surprise he gasps! Is that his brother within the light? And his mom and sister are there as well. With the first joy he's felt in a long time, he runs toward them, every ounce of fear vanishing as he realizes that this is the way home . . . to his real home.

* * * * *

As he draws closer to his loved ones, he thinks ahead in anticipation.

What happens after? What will be my next great adventure?

All he knows is that his life will begin anew once he reaches the other side. Once he steps through that white light, it will be a whole new adventure. Once he is there . . . ■

The Ouija Board as a Paranormal Communication Device: A Viable Option?

By Andrew Selfridge, Oklahoma City Ghost Club

In the modern paranormal investigative community, it is common place to see the “scientific-based methods” disclaimer posted conspicuously on the front page of paranormal group Websites. This is probably a good thing, as it likely puts clients at ease knowing that when employing the team’s skills in an attempt to confirm or deny the existence of anomalous activity in their home, the team will be using what is deemed state-of-the-art methodology and not some arcane, esoteric method to contact the spirits dwelling there.

A lot of groups profess to shy away from “spiritual contact methods” that do not offer a tangible data stream or value to be collected, recorded, and compiled later for use in an investigation report. It is a common thought that spirit contact by esoteric means (divining rods, Ouija boards, crystals, etc.), instrumental transcommunication (ITC), or by use of a sensitive or psychic doesn’t provide standalone evidence and, at the very least, should be only used in conjunction with other more technical methods of contact and data collection.

If you capture an EVP, have an EMF meter activate anomalously, or get an ITC fragment or image that is directly in context with the information that is being gathered by experimenters using the Ouija

board, for instance, it tends to add some validity to the session.

Should Ouija Boards Be Used in Paranormal Investigation?

Methods such as the Ouija board do provide another channel of validation, especially when used in conjunction with more technical means. If it can be used as a validation tool



Much like ITC, the main principal of Ouija board operation relies on a wildcard: the operator.

in addition to equipment, then why is there not a Ouija board in every seasoned investigator’s tool bag?

I have a few thoughts on this. First, just the very sight of a Ouija board conjures up mental images of demonic infestation and projectile-vomiting of green pea soup. Hollywood has done its best to ensure the image of the Ouija board as a readily available, easily attainable doorway

to the seventh level of Hell.

Usually portrayed as not being too bright, but clearly having nothing better to do, a group of unwitting teenagers will accidentally rip open a portal to Hell, allowing for two-way traffic of Lovecraftian-like horrors to freely come and ravage our Earth. Garden-variety possession is also portrayed as an almost guaranteed byproduct of using a board. These are the Hollywood visions of Ouija use, and they are ingrained in all of us from a very early age.

With Hollywood imagery and third-party stories of how your brother’s buddy’s uncle was possessed by using one, it is no wonder why even experienced investigators can shy away from its use.

Why Ouija Boards Aren’t in Most Paranormal Tool Kits

Another less exciting reason why you are not likely to find a Ouija board in many paranormal tool kits is the nature of the information received. Much like ITC, the principal of board operation relies on a wildcard: the operator.

The use of operator(s) hands on the planchette creates an environment where a person or persons can easily manipulate the sessions. Even operators with the most honest of intention can fall susceptible to

a phenomenon known as ideomotor response, a condition in which subtle muscle movements on the planchette move it in accordance with subconscious impulses.

As with ghost boxes, dowsing rods, or Schreiber video loops, we are looking for intelligence in the very factors that we try to filter out in a normal investigative session. Personally, I have no problem with the use of Ouija on private, non-client-based investigations because I want to have all of the contact options available at my disposal.

But, for the reasons mentioned above, I do not believe that Ouija communication data is valid in a standalone fashion, and that only through correlation through two or three other data points would its use be termed as "interesting."

I should add that it has been my experience that whenever attempting to use Ouija, my results have been random and unsuccessful.

To Ouija or Not to Ouija: It's a Personal Choice

So should you utilize Ouija on your next investigation? I would say that it would not be a good idea to break out your Ouija board on a client-based investigation due to the stigma associated with it. This would possibly be damaging to professionalism and credibility.

Should you experiment in a private venue to test correlation with other, more rigid data points? That is up to you. I firmly believe experimentation is the key to noticing data trends, and that applies to technology-based monitoring as well as esoteric or ITC-based contact methods.

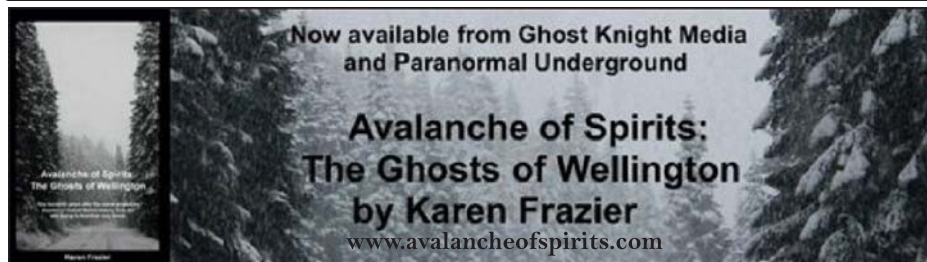
In summary, I do not recommend using a Ouija in a professional investigative setting, but since I try to keep an open mind about the spiritual world, I leave it to the discretion of the operator if they wish to experiment privately. ■



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Amy

(Forum Name: BornAware)

About Amy

Age: 28.

Born/Currently Resides: Willingboro, New Jersey/Philadelphia, Pa.

Status: In a serious long-term relationship.

Zodiac Sign: Libra.

Occupation: Data geek for a non-profit mental health agency.

Q&A

Q: What brought you to Paranormal Underground?

Amy: A comment from Chad on another forum.

What does your forum name mean?

Amy: I think that we are all born with a clean slate, aware, if you will, of the greater truth of life. It's not until we are indoctrinated with beliefs that we learn certain behaviors.

Q: How would you describe yourself?

Amy: Logical, skeptical, stubborn. Sometimes I can be too stubborn, but I try not to let that stop me from admitting when I'm wrong.

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

Amy: I grew up the youngest of three sisters, so I had plenty of examples of what not to do in life. I think I learned a great deal from my older siblings. My parents always did the very best that they could, even when it wasn't easy.

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



Amy has always been interested in what she can't explain. She is interested in ghosts, UFOs, and Bigfoot and loves learning new things and expanding her mind.

Amy: I was married for five years. I got married at 19 to a Muslim man. It didn't work out, but I got so many life lessons from the experience. I apply those life lessons every day and try not to make the same mistakes.

Q: Who are your heroes?

Amy: I don't think people should have heroes because that puts ex-

pectations on people that they don't deserve.

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

Amy: I watch paranormal shows for the laugh factor. I was a long-time *Ghost Hunters* watcher until I became disillusioned by it. I am also an avid reality TV watcher, usually the trashier, the better. I'll read almost any book I can get my hands on. Reading is my go-to choice in terms of things to do.

Q: Favorite music?

Amy: Right now, I listen to rock and classic rock.

Q: Other favorites?

Amy: I used to be a real country music fan, but have since come to my senses!

Q: What are your pet peeves?

Amy: Intellectual dishonesty, close-mindedness, and unwillingness to learn. As long as you are willing to learn something new, you'll never be bored.

Q: Are you a skeptic or believer?

Amy: I'm a skeptic through and through. It would take a huge personal event to convince me otherwise.

Q: *What areas of the paranormal interest you the most?*

Amy: I have always been interested in UFOs and abduction theories.

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

Amy: When I was about seven, I woke up in the middle of the night because I heard footsteps in the hallway leading to my room. When I called out, no one was there. The footsteps kept starting and stopping. I distinctly remember thinking that it sounded like the person was wearing flip-flops. It terrified me.

Since then, I've always been curious. As I became an adult, I searched for answers and got explanations that satisfied me. Looking back, I in no way believe that I had a paranormal experience, but it's a cool memory.

Q: *What do you think happens to us when we die?*

Amy: As for when we die, I believe that we are done. Kaput. There is nothing. Just as we are nothing before we are conceived, we are nothing once the electrons stop firing in our brains. For me, this is a huge comfort.

Q: *Do you have any words of wisdom that you live by?*

Amy: It is what it is. Don't waste time worrying about the things you can't change, because it'll just drive you crazy. You get one life, live it as hard as you can.

Q: *Any exciting plans for the future?*

Amy: I'm actually getting ready to relocate to Illinois at the end of August. I'm also going to be having my second child in November. There are a lot of big changes coming up and I'm looking forward to them. ■

A PARANORMAL CASEBOOK: GHOST HUNTING IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

BOOK WRITTEN BY LOYD AUERBACH

GENRE: PARANORMAL NONFICTION

REVIEWER RATING: FIVE OUT OF FIVE STARS

REVIEW BY KAREN FRAZIER

Words cannot describe how much I respect Loyd Auerbach. His studied take on paranormal phenomena is equal parts refreshing, entertaining, and informative.

While *A Paranormal Casebook: Ghost Hunting in the New Millennium* has been out for a while now, if you haven't read it, I'd highly recommend it. In the book, Professor Paranormal himself takes a look at some of his most interesting cases.

For those who aren't familiar with Auerbach, he's a parapsychologist with an impressive resume. He bases his theories of the paranormal on the past 100 years of research into paranormal and psychic phenomena, as well as his own experiences in the field.

Like the author, the book is equal parts enlightening, enjoyable, and informative. In it, Auerbach talks about some of his most interesting cases — like his ongoing

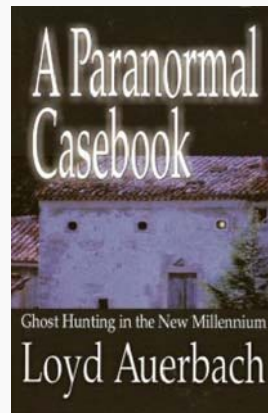
experiences with Cady, the Blue Lady of the Moss Beach Distillery; a private residence poltergeist haunt involving strange globs of water; and his experiences on the USS Hornet, among others.

Auerbach also shares helpful tips about ghost hunting, as well as knowledge he's gained through research.

If you haven't read *A Paranormal Casebook*, I'd highly recommend scaring up a copy. You can learn more about Auerbach on his Website, www.mindreader.com.

About the Author:

Loyd Auerbach is director of the Office of Paranormal Investigations and author of *ESP*; *Ghost Hunting: How to Investigate the Paranormal*; *Hauntings and Poltergeists*; *A Ghost Hunter's Guide*; *Mind Over Matter*; *Psychic Dreaming*; and *Reincarnation, Channelling, and Possession*. He lives in Pleasant Hill, California. ■



Studies in this volume range from encounters with intelligent entities and imprints of past events to peculiar moving objects to those events that may seem paranormal but actually have common explanations.

