

FREAKY LINKS



FREAK-O-PEDIA

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NECROPOLIS NOW

Brushstrokes from Beyond

Henderson Kentucky - Patrick Beck loved to paint. The 74 year old retiree had worked for over 40 years at the post office but when he retired in 1992 he found a new passion. On a whim he bought a canvas and paint from the art store and started at it. With no formal training he discovered that he had a knack for it. Landscapes were his favorites but he'd also paint horses, still life and the occasional abstract. He refused to do portraits because as he once told his grandson, "I can't paint faces worth crap."



"This picture taken by Ted in 1996 shows the painting as it was originally"

Yes a whole new life was opening up for Patrick. The only problem is that Patrick suddenly went and died in his sleep one night in July of 1996.

"We all thought that if Granddad had kept it up he might have been another Grandma Moses" says Ted Bowers, his grandson. "He had talent."

In remembrance of his grandfather, Ted decided to hang one of his art pieces in his own home. He choose the last finished painting that his grandfather did which was a landscape that showed the family cabin

on the lake.

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IN THE FREAK-O-PEDIA:

"Grandfather Beck loved it up there." Sarina, Ted's wife told me, "He'd go up there with the rest of the family and spend all week fishing and painting. That was where he passed away in fact. I remember he finished that painting just as the sun was going down and we all thought it was a good one. Then we ate supper and he went to bed early. The next morning when we got up, Bob (Ted's father) went in to see why Grandfather Beck hadn't got up yet. He found him in bed, looking just like he was sleeping."

The painting hung in the family's living room for over 2 years before Ted noticed something unusual.

"I was up late one night watching TV and all of a sudden the TV started turning off. I'd turn it on and then it would

immediately turn off. It happened like

10 times. I finally tried turning it to a different channel and it was fine but if I turned it back to Leno it would almost immediately click off. I didn't think of it that night but later after I started hearing the noises I remembered that Granddad hated the tonight show after Carson left. He refused to watch it."

The noises that Ted refers to seemed to come from the painting. "I'd hear this high pitched whistle in my ear," Ted told me. "It starts out a low hum and then gets louder until it goes out of my hearing range. The whole thing lasts about 10 seconds and I only hear it when I'm in the living room. It's especially bad if I'm sitting on the couch underneath the painting. Sometimes I'll hear it 10 times a night, some nights not at all. Sarina doesn't hear it at all."

Sarina agrees that she hasn't heard the noise but she was the one to discover that the painting had changed.

"I was cleaning one day and something made me look at the painting. Nothing seemed weird about it but then I noticed that there was a light painted coming out of one of the windows of the cabin. That was strange because I swear Grandfather Beck didn't paint it that way. He painted that painting by looking at the cabin during the daytime. There weren't any lights on in the cabin while he was doing it.. I thought maybe Ted had done it scare me but when I asked



"Close up of the painting as it was originally"

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him he
swore
up and
down
that he
hadn't
done a
thing.

Ted
agrees
and
adds

"Notice the lighted window that has appeared"

another scary note to the discussion. "The window that is lit up is granddad's room. It's the one he died in."

So what do the Becks plan to do about the painting?

"Nothing," Ted tells me. "If it is haunted by granddad I don't believe he would hurt us. I think he just left a little bit of his soul in the painting since it was his last one. It's adds a little something special to the home. And besides, I don't like Leno that much either."



"Close up of the changed painting"

editors note - While I was at the Beck's home I kept noticing that their small child kept staring at the painting. The Beck's have noticed it too and says that Granddad painting is a great way to keep the kid quiet. If their grandfather haunting the painting then it's the first baby-sitting ghost that I have ever heard of.

sources

interview with Ted and Sarina Beck, December 17th, 1999

photo set #1 (Xmas) courtesy of Ted and Sarina Beck

photo set #2 by Derek Barnes

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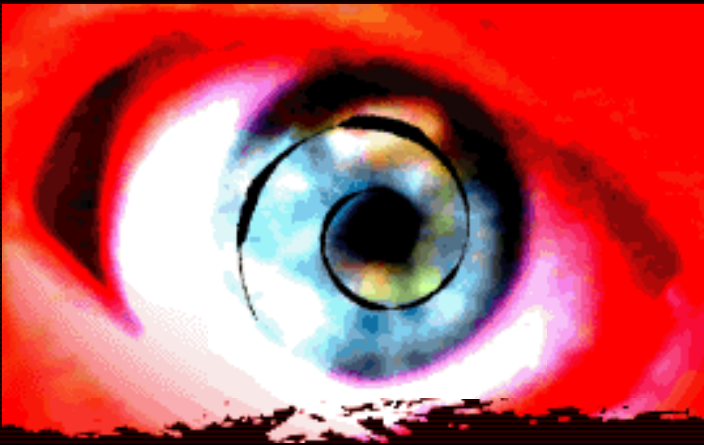
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Corpus Delicti

They say that old houses hold secrets. Past memories of

events can linger on at a location long after the living have passed away. This belief is the basis for many a ghost story and it's a subject that has enthralled generation after generation. Countless scores of humanity have passed through this earthly plain before us, is it not normal to wonder if they left something of themselves behind?

That's a question that I started asking myself not long after I went with my friend Jason to the law offices of his father.



The elder Tatum holds court (no pun intended) in a historic building in Baltimore Maryland. This city on the upper east coast has a presence that you don't find in the typical Florida urban sprawl I come from. In Orlando the buildings all look like they were pressed out of a machine the day before yesterday and downtown seems to be the facade of a leftover tourist attraction. In Baltimore you get the feeling that the buildings have been here long enough to grow roots, that the city is a permanent structure in the midst of the changing human tide. The law offices of Tatum, Torrance and Levine amplified this feeling. This nest of lawyers (apologies to Shakespeare) has its residence in the bowels of an ancient building that was built in the early 1800's. Behind the usual trappings of watercolor prints and flowery wallpaper there's a real feeling of the past in the building. As if the history inside of it wasn't a dead thing at all but something that knows you're here and is letting you know that you're not the first to walk these halls.

- [Welcome to Baltimore](#)
- [Ghost Hunters of Baltimore](#)
- [Ghostly Lawsuit](#)

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But feelings and raw emotion isn't something you can build a Freakopedia story around. For this website you need some truths. You need hard, cold facts.



And when I learned that strange events had been transpiring in the building I knew I was staring at the tip of a bigger paranormal iceberg. I just need to dig a little deeper and find out what the history really was.

What was going on in the building, you ask? Lots of strangeness, boys and girls:

1. One of the head lawyers had recently quit and checked himself into a mental health facility. When I went to visit him, it became apparent that he was on a permanent vacation. Something had turned a highly respected lawyer into a virtual vegetable.
2. Jason's dad had landed in the hospital after he suffered an "attack" during a meeting. He said it was a minor health issue but from the descriptions of his actions it looked like he had been scared out of his wits.
3. Many of the employees at the firm have been noticing strange noises in one particular conference room. (The same one Mr. Tatum suffered his attack in.) They reported chairs seeming to move on their own, ghostly voices, and things going bump when they shouldn't go bump.
4. Recently renovation work had started in the building. It's been shown in other hauntings that repairs in haunted houses have a tendency to bring out the worst in any spirits that may be living in the building. Were there spirits in the law office that objected to the work being done there? If so maybe the above mentioned poltergeist phenomenon might be a manifestation of their anger.

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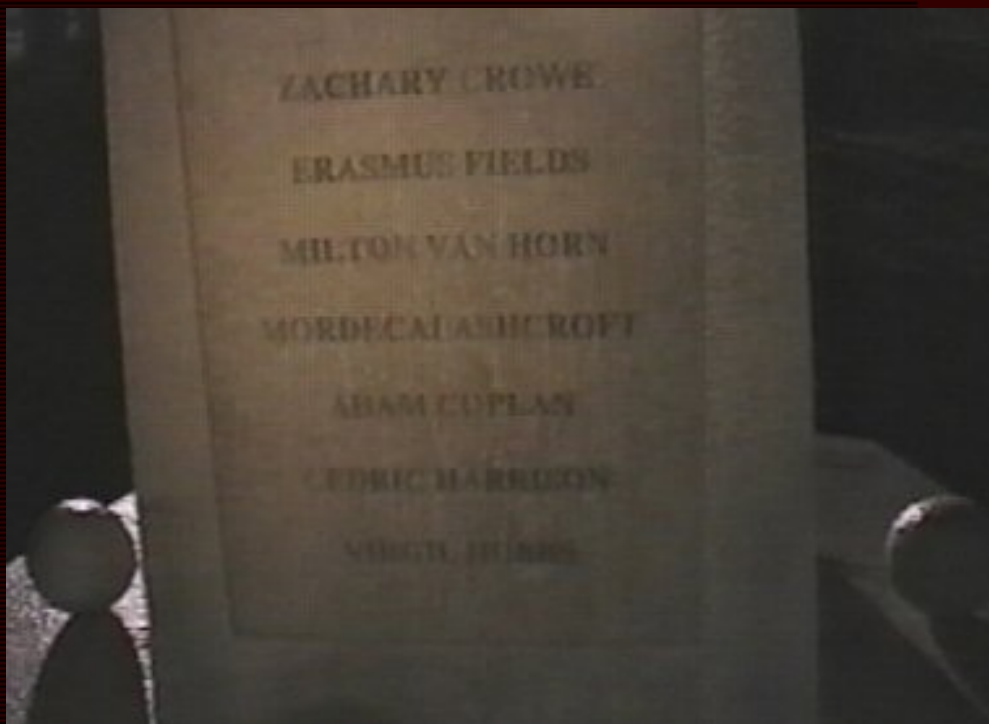
Jason's dad isn't one to listen when you start speaking on ghosts and he dismissed my claims when I brought them forward. Even Jason wasn't too keen on hearing my theories and I didn't blame him that much since he was rightly concerned with his Dad's health. Still, I was determined to find out what was going on and to do that I needed to find out the facts on the building's history. With a little help from Lan I began to dig at the back-story of the building. I started uncovering the true history on what exactly went on in the stone edifice. And what I found seemed to prove the theory of a haunting.

The first thing I was surprised to learn was that the building hadn't always been a business office. A wealthy man named Wallace Seaton erected the building in the early 1800's as his home. In the early days of Baltimore's history, Wallace was one of the most prominent leaders. On the surface he seemed to be an uptight, upright citizen. He loaned money to local businesses, was an active member of his church, and led the city council. All in all, Wallace helped put Baltimore on the map back when it was just a sleepy little town on the edge of nowhere.

All this philanthropy and good work was made possible by the wealth Seaton had accumulated in his land holdings. By the time Wallace was in his 70's he owned most of the inner harbor of Baltimore. The rents and levies he collected as landlord let him lead a very comfortable life. So comfortable in fact that he built the huge estate called Seaton house. Seaton's house was the pride of the city (and to Seaton himself) His death in the house at age 74 was a normal one

and that confused me. Normally ghosts are formed by a violent death. Seaton passed away in his sleep of natural causes. If it was his spirit haunting the building then there had to be more to the story. I decided to look at it from another angle.

The other angle was the question of timing. If Seaton was the angry ghost that was haunting the law offices why had he just recently started making his presence known? To find out the answer to that I had to dig a little deeper. It seems that back when Seaton was helping to make Baltimore a major city, there were a series of strange occurrences involving several local landowners who went missing. One minute they were walking out the door to their home and the next second they had vanished. Over a period of ten years a total of seven of the most prominent landowners went missing.. Their bodies were never recovered and no one ever found out what happened to them. In every case the land they owned was taken by the city from their relatives after they could no longer afford to pay the prohibitively high property taxes that Wallace Seaton had helped impose. Furthermore, whenever the city sold the land, Wallace was right there in the front of the line. Over the time span of those 10 years, Wallace became the biggest private owner of land in Baltimore.



The gravestone of the seven missing men.

But no one ever spoke up against Wallace simply because he was too highly respected to suspect. Wallace was trying to make Baltimore a major city, he couldn't have anything to do with these disappearances, could he? With the city fathers turning a blind eye, Wallace became a wealthy man, Baltimore grew, and everyone was happy. Upon Seaton's death his land became to be known as Northgate Holdings and exists right on up to this day as one of the major real estate companies of Maryland.

And this is where all the lines of thought begin to converge because the lawyers of Tatum, Torrance and Levine had recently been hired by the last surviving relative of one of the missing men to protect her house from being bought out by Northgate. Some how over the years, the giant real estate firm had overlooked this little woman's home. But now Northgate was hungry for more property and they were ready to assert their rights to the land in the form of the deed Wallace Seaton had bought from the city after the original owner had gone missing. Jason's dad seemed to have a one-track mind on the case and was determined to win against Northgate even if it meant doing so at the expense of his business. This determination against Northgate's empire may have proved to be the catalyst that made the spirit of Wallace Seaton rise up against the firm.

These speculations lead me to do a little amateur archeology and I found hard proof of Seaton's misdoings. Buried under the floor of the law firm, in the former basement of Wallace Seaton's home I found the remains of the seven missing men. To me this proves that Seaton's spirit was haunting the law offices in an attempt to keep Mr. Tatum from uncovering the truth. Of course such paranormal talk isn't going to fly in a courtroom but the evidence can be used to prove that Seaton was a murderer and that Northgate is founded upon his ill gotten gains. The whole matter is still pending in a Baltimore court and I promised the senior Mr. Tatum I wouldn't speculate on the outcome but I think it's safe to say that Seaton's murderous past has come to haunt Northgate Holdings in much the same way as Wallace himself was haunting the law firm.

sources

Original Baltimore land deeds and records, Baltimore Historical society

"The History of Baltimore" Harold Cinsome. Geriday Publishing 1998

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Croatoan

I saw my dead brother yesterday.

Someone sent me a quicktime and there on the screen, large as life, was Adam. Is it just a cruel prank? The date on the video is only 3 days old and I want to believe it's real and that it's him. My heart wants to even though my mind screams at me to accept the fact that he died almost 3 years ago.



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IN THE FREAK-O-PEDIA:

When we were kids I always took Adam for granted. We saw each other every day. We even dressed alike until we got older and convinced Mom that wearing the same clothes made us look like dorks. Looking at Adam was like looking at a mirror

image of myself.

Then after high school we kinda went separate ways. I embraced the hedonistic surfer / skateboarder lifestyle. Adam embraced higher learning, cold logic, and a search for a deeper meaning of what life is all about. For a while that made me the black sheep, the slacker who didn't have a care in the world. Adam was the good son, the one earning the long string of educational letters behind his name. But I always tried never to resent it. I looked up to him and at a certain point even came to respect him. Hell, since he was my twin it was kinda like having a clone of myself that was willing to do the dirty work of becoming an adult. I could stay young and dumb while my alter ego got the awards, paid the bills, and made the name Barnes mean something. I refused to enter the real world while Adam choose to embrace it and make it work for him.



An old picture of Adam and his fiancé Chloe

But the urge to go a different route must have been just as deeply imbedded in Adam as it was for me. Instead of stopping at the edge of acceptability, Adam started plunging deeper. His interest in humanities and history took him deeper out into the fringe. He became interested in things that most academics turn away from. Unexplained phenomenon, occult studies, and magic, started to consume more and more of his time. Looking back, I can't tell you the exact day that his behavior and methods went over that invisible line of respectability. I just know that at some point in his quest he crossed over into a scientific darkness. He tried using his desire for knowledge as a torch against this enveloping blackness of ignorance but even I could see that he was beginning to lose his way.

I tried to help. I started working for him, telling him I was just paying back a loan. But what I was really doing was trying to keep an eye on him. I thought that if I was around then nothing could go wrong. When you're young you know bad things happen but you never think they are going to happen to you. It's always the other person that has a disease or the other family that loses someone they love. Well that's crap. If

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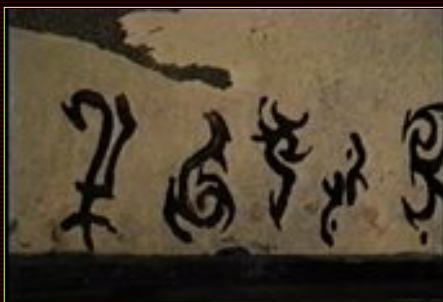
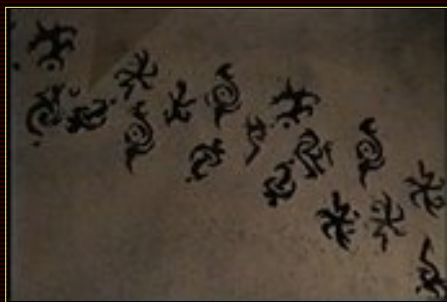
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nothing else, Adam taught me that grief and suffering doesn't play favorites. I thought Adam and I would have plenty of time together. That this overpowering urge for a deeper truth would leave him some day. But I was wrong. I couldn't or wouldn't realize where this obsession was taking him. That he take his own life. Up till this week I still didn't understand the real reason why he did it. I always thought it was because he couldn't accept that life has finite limits. That when he ran up against that final wall and found out he couldn't go over it, he just gave up.

But now I know that he did it for a different reason.

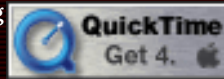
After getting the quicktime I decided to do what I should have done back in 1997. Adam's ex-fiancé Chloe and I went to Adam's house and we found something amazing. Hidden underneath the wallpaper and beneath the carpets were a multitude of strange symbols.



Adam (I assume it was Adam) had painted these glyphs everywhere in his house. Were they there to protect him from something? Were they there to protect the outside world from whatever forces he was attempting to conjure up? I don't know.



(movie not working for you? you probably need to [download the QuickTime software](#))



[Click here to see the movie](#) (3MB).

Under the floorboards of his bedroom we found an amulet with these same symbols. The jewelry looks ancient and I have no idea where it came from. Adam never spoke of it to me. I know he was talking to some strange people on his website, [Occultresearch.com](#) and was searching for artifacts to help him in his theories. Maybe someone he chatted with on the site sent it to him.



Another puzzling clue is that somehow this all relates to the lost colony of [Roanoke](#). That was one of the last legends that Adam was researching before he died and these glyphs match ones I found in his old notebook. We found "Croatoan" painted on one of the walls and it was also on the website that sent me that quicktime.

The legend goes that in 1587 English explorer John White brought over a group of settlers to America. He then left them there (Including his young granddaughter, Virginia Dare) and went back to England for more supplies. When he returned to the settlement four years later everyone was missing. There were no signs of a struggle, no graves, no nothing. One hundred and fifteen men, woman, and children had just disappeared without a trace. The only clue was the word Croatoan carved into a tree. John White thought it referred to an island just west of the settlement but for some reason he never went there to check.



Chloe told me that Adam believed the story was incomplete and that John White didn't tell everything he knew. Adam thought

White had discovered something so horrible that he left the colony and never tried to find out what happened and believed it had something to do with John White's granddaughter, Virginia Dare. It kinda makes sense because in the years following the disappearance, Virginia became a prominent figure in many different stories and legends. Local Indian tribes said she was an evil spirit, a shape shifter and refused to go near the old colony. Adam believed these fears had a basis in fact. He partially based this theory on a fragment of a diary entry by John White in which Virginia is described as "...something fearsome."

How does this all fit in with my brother's death? I don't know. I feel like John White must have when he walked into that deserted settlement and wondering what happened to all those people. Did the word Croatoan really mean what John White thought it did? Do I understand what that quicktime really means? Sure I've uncovered something but finding out the facts is just the start of the problem. The truth is all tangled up with myth and guesswork and separating the two is a bigger burden than I can handle by myself.

That's why I'm posting all of this here. Take a look at the symbols I found in Adam's house. Read [his website](#). Try to help me make some sense out of all of this. I've asked for your help before and you guys have always come through for me. This time I need it more than ever.

sources

The notes of Adam Barnes

Personal Investigation by Derek Barnes

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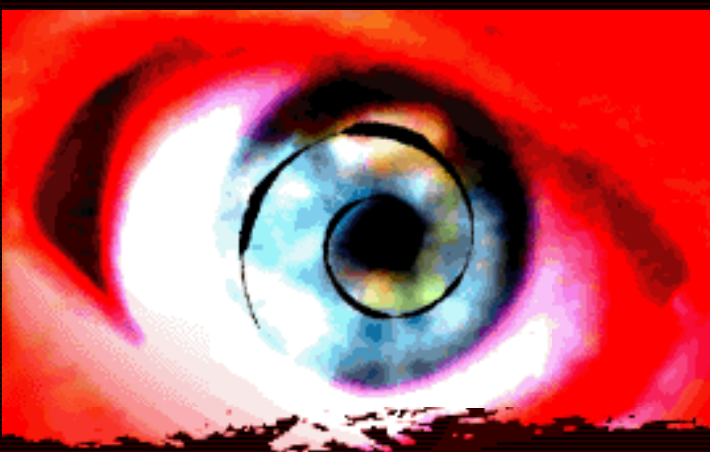
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Damn Telemarketers!

Summer 1995: Jenny Carrazco (20 at the time) was having a difficult enough time at Seminole Community College in Longwood, Florida with failing grades and the possibility of losing her financial aid moved into a more reasonable priced apartment only to find herself in the grip of an "angry ghost." This photograph, taken in the summer of 1995, was snapped during one of the many attacks by Jenny's boyfriend, Mike Yakov (35).



Phone Home: Pesky Poltergeist Plays Phone Pass

morning, and everything would be fine. We'd get back, and things would sometimes be messed up, sometimes rearranged, and sometimes stacked one on top of the other," says Yakov. "Once Jenny was doing her homework at the kitchen table, and she turned to answer the phone. When she turned back, her pencil was gone and her homework was wadded up. She didn't move a foot!" The



"We would leave the house in the

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pesky poltergeist would sometimes wake the couple up in the night, ripping the bedcovers off of their sleeping bodies.

"It really was a pain. and we moved out after a month. We lost our deposit and everything." Said Carrazco.

That apparently didn't stop the force, which followed them to their next house. "This time it would keep us up all night sometimes. This was unbearable." Said Yakov. "After a year of it, we couldn't stand to be around each other. I had to leave." After two years, the couple broke up. Carrazco says that as soon as Yakov left, the attacks abruptly ended.

"If I didn't know Mike as well as I do, I'd think he had caused it all along." Says Carrazco, who remains uneasy friends with Yakov. "I'm afraid to take any dates back here, for fear that it will return."

Carol Louden (34), who moved into the house after Carrazco fled claims that she has never experienced any disturbances. "I love the view. It's a really great house," says Louden.

sources

Interview with Jenny Carrazco September 22, 1998, Mike Yakov September 23, 1998, and Carol Louden September 23, 1998

Photo Credit: Mike Yakov

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Do the Ghosts of the Alamo Pay Taxes?

If you ask around the town of San Antonio about ghosts in the Alamo you'll get lots of different answers.

"Oh, sure there's ghosts, everybody knows that."

"Ghosts? That's just something people say to get tourists here."

"The only ghosts are the spirits of our heroes who died defending Texas."

"Maybe.... I mean I heard people talk about them."



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Do the spirits of the dead haunt the Alamo?

But beyond the rumor and innuendo there's a deeper truth. Hidden behind years of bureaucratic red tape there may be documents that prove the city government has acknowledged there are ghosts in the Alamo. These documents may also prove that in the 1930's the city tried to rid the number one tourist attraction of Texas of it's ghosts by holding a government approved séance!



Davy Crockett was just one of the men who met a violent death at the Alamo.

Rumors of ghosts and spirits haunting the Alamo begin almost as soon as the Mexican army overcame the defenders. A Mexican General named Andrade was the first person to say he had seen something. A few years after Santa Ana overcame the defenders of the outpost he ordered Andrade to destroy the chapel. Andrade later reported to his leader that he had tried but had been met at the Alamo's walls by "fiery demons" who brandished swords and told him to depart. Some have speculated that these apparitions were the spirits of dead monks while others insist that it was the ghosts of Jim Bowie, Davy Crockett and others who died in the Alamo's defense. Either way, Andrade refused the order and left the Alamo standing.

In later years other people have seen ghostly figures walking upon the ramparts of the stone wall or even spirit lights that play upon the outside of the chapel. In 1932 San Antonio Mayor Dermont Callohan was walking past the Alamo on a summer night when he reported seeing something. He talked about what he saw to his friend Judge Raymond Simkins who described the meeting in his autobiography "San Antonio Sunset"

"Mayor Callohan came to my chambers one morning in June with a most peculiar look upon his face. When I asked about his condition he said that while on his nightly constitutional he had found himself walking around the Alamo and had noticed a strange series of light and shadows that played off the rocky walls. Drawing closer to inspect the source of this display he said he found himself surrounded on all sides by the noise of a loathsome battle. Having served with



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Callohan in the Great War I knew that he was not one to mistake the sounds of such an event and I asked him to clarify. Were the sounds such as the ones we heard while in France?

Callohan nodded but then said that the guns sounded louder and less frequently and while he wasn't sure he suspected that several great booms he had heard was of a cannon. The sounds, Callohan stated, continued for several seconds before ceasing altogether and leaving no clue as to their source. I

gathered the distinct impression that he believed these noises to be after-images of the great and historic battle, which took place at our beloved Alamo and not a fantasy in his head. The matter troubled him dearly."



San Antonio Mayor Dermont Callohan may have seen spirits.

But did the Mayor and Judge Simkins take it upon themselves to investigate the noises further? Evidence suggests they did. An article in the June 19th 1932 edition of the San Antonio Star newspaper has this peculiar report hidden on page 2 of it's local section.

CITY OFFICIALS MEET IN ALAMO

"Mayor Callohan met with governmental officials from Houston last night on the grounds of the Alamo. Callohan stated that the meeting was an informal one and no notes were kept although the subject was one of creating tighter bonds with our sister city. 'I meet with a group from Houston in the hopes of strengthening our ties with our neighboring metropolis. San Antonio is becoming one of the top destinations in travel to our fine state and it is my desire that this idea be fostered and allowed to grow with the correct application of funds and services. I suggested the meeting with some top officials in Houston's tourism trade in hopes of getting ideas and direction from them.' When asked why the meeting took place at night and inside the Alamo instead of in a city building the Mayor replied, 'The Alamo is our single biggest boon to our fledgling tourism trade and I thought that meeting in it was a direct way to show off our product.' Also present at the meeting was

Judge Ray Simkins. Refreshments were served my Judge Simkin's wife, Eva Lyn."

But after doing a little research I've uncovered some interesting facts concerning this meeting. The tourism board of Houston operated under the city parks and recreation division in 1932. The board at that time consisted of only 2 people; Mrs. Tara Apenton, a local socialite, and Mr. Jim Keller. No records exist of any such meeting between the two groups. In fact, Keller was suffering from an advanced cancer and his title of senior board member was an honorary one, given to him by a Houston city councilman in order for his wife to collect benefits after his death. Mrs. Apenton was known in Houston for her love of roses and for holding large socialite parties for the upper crust. The only record I could find of her using her title on the tourism board was in 1931 when she applied for a grant from Washington DC to plant the city roadsides with flowers in an "effort to relieve the city of it's ugly style toward concrete, brick, and metal." By any accounts she was not a driving force for tourism.

So who then did the Mayor meet with on that night in June? Judge Simkins autobiography doesn't give a clue but after looking through old records in San Antonio I may have found a hint. At the time there was a fledging Spanish language newspaper in the city known as "El Diario." The paper folded in 1943 because of a paper shortage caused by World War II but archives of it exist at the downtown San Antonio library. Searching through it I came across an advertisement placed there on June 23rd, 1932, only 4 days after the Mayor held his semi-secret "meeting."

"Notice of Wonderment!

Notice is hereby given that Mexican medium and spiritualist extraordinaire Rosalie Vasquez is holding sessions at the Diaz hotel for one week only. The public and those with burning questions involving bygone spirits of the deceased are invited to make reservations for ceremonies on the nights of the 25th thru 28th. Sister Vasquez is highly trained in the arts of the spiritual world and can give you answers to questions that have plagued you about the great beyond. Call the Hotel Diaz or come by to make an appointment."

Rosalie Vasquez was indeed one of the top stars of the Mexican spiritualist movement and her appearance in town would surely have caused quite a stir among those that took stock in her trade. But what was she doing in San Antonio? Her normal residence was in Monterrey Mexico and by any accounts she did enough business there to afford to live as one of the upper class. There was no need for her to



Spiritualist Rosalie Vasquez shortly before her death in 1951.

come to the states at all unless someone had called her and made an "offer she couldn't refuse." But would Mayor Simkins or the Judge feel the need to call a spiritualist to San Antonio to deal with the spirits of the departed heroes of the Alamo?

A final clue may lie with Judge Simkin's wife Eva Lyn who was at the meeting inside the Alamo according to the newspaper report. Eva Lyn had in her employ a servant girl named Maria Lopez. By local accounts in social columns of the

times, Maria was a valuable employee and even accompanied the Simkin's on their travels across the state. An interesting fact is that Maria was originally from Monterrey. Since Rosalie Vasquez came into prominence as a spiritualist during the 1920's when Maria was still living in Monterrey it's quite possible that she was the one that informed the Judge about her. Certainly it's not implausible.

So is Maria the smoking gun that connects all the pieces and proves the claim that the Judge and Mayor of San Antonio performed a séance inside the Alamo? I can't say for sure but something went on inside that old chapel on that night in June of 1932. Something other than what the Mayor told the public. Any further evidence may be locked up inside the San Antonio city courthouse and until the city government agrees to open the old files that's where it's going to stay.

sources

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Judge Simpkins and his wife Eva Lyn. Did they sponsor a séance on the Alamo grounds?

Houston Texas City Governmental Appointee records of 1932

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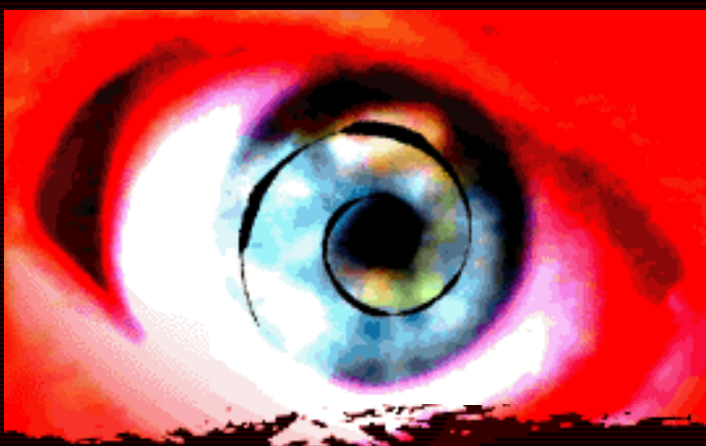
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NECROPOLIS NOW

Ghost Dog Attacks Skater, Film at Eleven

Southern sidewalk surfers have different obstacles to contend with than their northern cousins. While skate rats in New York try to avoid potholes, angry security guards and the occasional loony bum, us boys in the south are more likely to find ourselves skating around kudzu, cows, and the occasional loony in a 4 wheel drive pick up truck. But even regular doses of this southern madness failed to prepare one Alabama skater when he encountered a paranormal pooch waiting for him on the concrete of his favorite ramp.

Will Showden, or "Show and Tell" as he likes to be called, loves to skate the streets of his hometown Selma Alabama late at night. With little traffic after 10 pm, the downtown area that borders the Alabama River is a perfect place for a skater to try out new tricks and test the limits of his board and himself.

"It's dead around here," Will told me. "The police all know me and they don't care if I'm out cruising the streets cause they know I'm not up to anything. The front of the Goodwill store has got a perfect lip to it and its angle is the best thing to do ollies and heel kicks on anywhere in town."



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Will Showden claims he was chased by the ghost of a police dog and has the broken arm to prove it.

Another favorite spot for Will is the infamous Edmund G. Pettus bridge where Selma civil right marchers clashed with police over 35 years ago.

"After midnight you can skate down that sucker without even thinking about cars," says Will. "There's nothing to stop you from boosting yourself all the way down to the highway from there. Late at night I love to coast down the streets from the bridge. Feels like I'm the King of the world."

But last week something a little out of the ordinary occurred while Will was skating over the bridge. Something so strange that he still seems a little spooked about it when he tells me what he saw.

"I was walking up to the middle of the bridge and I know it was just after midnight cause I heard the bank clock ring out," Will tells me. "It was a bright night cause the moon was out and I could see the water coming under the bridge. So I was watching the water, not thinking really about anything when I heard something that sounded like a low growl. Well I looked up at the top of the bridge and right under the steel girder there was what looked like a dog. But it wasn't just a regular dog cause it seemed like it was glowing. It's fur was all shiny and it kinda morphed in and out like that evil Terminator's skin did in T2. It was way strange and when it saw me looking at it; it started moving toward me and began to growl. I just turned



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around, got on my board and started skating off the bridge at that point. I could hear it growling at me and coming closer and I started smelling this weird smell. The smell made my eyes water and when I got to the bottom of the bridge I couldn't see real good and I got the angle wrong and fell. That's when I broke my arm. I heard my arm snap like a chicken bone. I thought I was dead meat but when I looked behind me the dog was gone. It had just disappeared."



Is the Edmund Pettis bridge haunted?

Will didn't stay to find out where the dog had gone but made it to the nearest public phone and called his mother. She drove downtown and carried Will to the hospital where doctors tended to his broken arm. Will didn't tell anyone about his strange run in with the glowing canine.

"I didn't think anyone would believe me," Will continues. "Mom was already pissed that I had broken my arm. I wasn't gonna make things worse by telling her I was being chased by some weird ghost dog or something. She'd just think I was on drugs or something."

But Will is convinced that what he saw wasn't a delusion. He thinks that the apparition is related to the violence that has been committed on the bridge. And some interesting facts help booster that claim.

On March 7, 1965, over 600 civil rights protesters, led by Doctor Martin Luther King Jr, attempted to cross the bridge on their way to Montgomery Alabama in protest of racist voting laws. They were met on the bridge by a group of Alabama state troopers and city police officers who ordered the crowd to disperse and then began to beat members of the protest. During the violent attack, numerous people were injured as the police assaulted the marchers with batons and tear gas. Police dogs were also unleashed on the crowd in an effort to

stop the marchers from completing their peaceful demonstration. The day became known as "Bloody Sunday" and lead President Johnson to urge the passage of the voting rights act that same year.

After the nighttime event on the bridge, Will looked up the facts on the violence in 1965 and says that what he witnessed was a manifestation of that event.

"I think what I saw was one of those police dogs," says Will. "It must have been killed during the attack and its spirit stills haunts the bridge. That smell that made me break my arm had to have been the tear gas they used on the protesters. The dog's spirit still carried the stink of it with him and when it chased me I got a whiff of it. That has to be what happened."

City records and documents are vague on the action taken on the bridge. Although the police logs do state that both tear gas and dogs were used, it does not tell if any of the animals were killed in the attack. Long time Selma Mayor Joe Smitherman, who was Mayor at the time of the event, was recently defeated in his bid for reelection and refused to answer any questions concerning the incident.

But Will is adamant that the ghost dog did appear on the bridge. As proof he took me out to the center of the span and pointed to a mark on the concrete. Looking close I did see a blackened foot print of what looks like a dog's paw. Will swears that the print wasn't there before the attack.



Will claims this is a print made by the ghost dog.

"The ghost dog was here, dude," says Will. "I'm not making this up."

sources

"Interview with Will Showden, December 6th, 2000

March to Selma

All photos by Derek Barnes

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FREAK-O-PEDIA NECROPOLIS NOW

Ghosts in the Machine

Since 1986 Brad Masert, an audio engineer, has been going to 'haunted' places and trying to record the sounds the ethereal inhabitants make. He has hours of sound recorded in such places as haunted houses, abandoned mines and even a haunted bar.

I spoke with Brad about his audio quest over beers at a local bar.

Derek: So what got you into recording ghosts?

Brad: In 86 the theme park I work in . . . I don't want to name them since they might not like this kind of publicity.

D: Understandable.



Brad Masert next to his ghost recording audio equipment

the right kind of sound from the natural world. If you want the sound of a car I'll go out and put microphones all over a car and run it through it's paces. Sometimes I have to make up sounds for more futuristic things but I still try and base them in the real world. Like for a spaceship I had to do I found the sound for it's engines in a industrial laundry press.

B: Anyway, this park was interested in redoing the soundtracks of their haunted house ride. The ride had the same audio in it since they opened in the 70's so it was showing a little wear here and there.

D: So that got you on the hunt for ghost sounds-

B: Well kinda, I mean for other jobs I do I always try to get



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D: Laundry press?

B: Yea, I was at my dry cleaners and they were running this large press. I heard it and thought 'there's my spaceship.' I used the sound of it's steam valve as the main engine in the spaceship. But for the sounds of ghosts I was kinda stumped. I mean ethereal voices don't really jump out at you when you're running around doing the household tasks. I finally used actors but thinking about the idea got me on the road to spectral recording.

D: So what was your first experience.

B: Well there's a home out in Casadega-

D: Oh yea, a whole town devoted to spiritualism, more mediums per square foot than any other place in America.

B: Right, right, there's a hotel there that is built on the spot where the original founders of Casadega spent their first night back in 1875. Anyway it was on that night that a woman died giving birth. The owners and visitors to the hotel had reported hearing footsteps on the stairs, seeing ghostlights and stuff like that. I contacted them and they agreed I could come out and set up some equipment.

D: Tell me about your equipment.

B: Back then I was just using a standard recorder. I also did some research and found that sometimes when radios are turned to dead channels, you can get ghost recordings. I set up one radio connected to a 8 hour tape in the lobby and another in the dining hall. I also had a open mic set up in my room. I didn't hear anything but at about 3 am I woke up with a weird feeling so I said 'here' out loud to mark the time on the open mic.

D: So did you capture anything?

B: Well the next day when I was going over the stuff in my lab I came upon a drag in the open mic tape. A place where the recording had slowed, like the electrical flow had gotten spotty. Just after this point I heard my own voice saying 'here.' That got me a little suspicious so I speeded up the tape and sure enough I heard the faint sound of footsteps.

D: In your room?

B: Yea, a room that I had locked from the inside. So that was my first experience with the supernatural.

D: Have you gone back to the hotel?

B: A couple of times. But I just set up my stuff in unoccupied rooms. I don't spent the night there anymore.

D: What else have you captured?

B: My best recording was at a deserted house in New Orleans. I had heard about it in an e-mail from a friend. There had been a murder suicide in the place in the 30's and ever since people had been seeing weird stuff. The current owner of the house actually saw a ghost coming at him with a gun while he was in the upstairs bedroom where the murder had taken place.

D: That's when you know it's time to leave.



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B: Yea, that's what this guy thought. He was selling the property to a developer who was going to tear it down for a strip mall. I convinced the guy that before he did that he should let me set my equipment up for a night or two. He agreed and so in September of 94 I went to New Orleans.

D: What happened?

B: Well it was a cool looking house. Built in the late 1800's and just this huge rambling plantation. This guy had already cleared all his crap out of it so it was real spooky being in there even in the daytime cause there was no electricity and all these huge rooms with nothing in them. An architectural company had been in there and taken down all the interesting molding and detail work in the house so there was broken plaster and wood laying around. I set up open mic recorders in the upstairs bedroom where the guy had seen the ghost and 3 more in different spots.



A picture of the haunted New Orleans house.

D: You stay the night in there?

B: You kidding? I stayed in my car parked on across the street. I got a bad feeling being in there during the day. At night? No way.

D: So what happened?

B: The next morning I went back into the house and started taking the reels off the recorders to change them over. I was going to do a quick check of my stuff at my friend's studio and then come back in the afternoon to put fresh reels in. Well in the upstairs bedroom I got spooked because my recording equipment had been messed with.

D: No way.

B: Yea, I had put it in the center of the room and placed the mic up to capture the entire area. When I went into the room I saw that the equipment had been thrown against the far wall. The mic was bent like a pretzel. The reel was broken off the recorder and the tape stock was strewn around the room like it was party streamers. Even the car battery I had been using for power was bent out of shape.

D: Freaky

B: Yeah, I was awake right across from the house all night and I didn't see anybody going in. There's a side door but it was locked tight. I went and looked at all the windows but they were unbroken and all the hinge locks were still closed from the inside. Finally I just gathered up all my stuff and went over to my friends. That recorder and microphone cost me a grand so I was a little upset. I decided not to record in there for a second night.

D: But it was worth it?

B: Well I spent a day splicing the tape back together when I got back home. Parts of it looked like it had been set on fire so I had to cut them out, they were totally useless. Finally I got a workable tape together and ran it. The first couple of hours had nothing on them but sometime around 1 am things got interesting. You can hear the sound of the door in the bedroom opening. Then I swear you hear the sound of a gun being cocked. Then there's a huge blast of white noise. After that the recorder was broken.

D: Not a whole lot of sound for your thousand bucks.

B: Well I was still a little disappointed but then I transferred the white noise to another tape and played around with some noise reduction I got a voice. A man's voice saying what sounds like "Missy."

D: Missy?

B: Yea I looked up the murder/suicide thing from the 30's I found out that it was a husband who killed his wife and then himself. He shot her in their bed, that same room. His name was Walter Scott and her name was Melissa. The short form of Melissa is Missy.

Listen to the original non-noise reduced recording:

[WAV Format](#) (1.3MB) | [AIFF Format](#) (1.3MB)

Listen to the same recording after Brad applied noise reduction (listen carefully to the end for "Missy"):

[WAV Format](#) (1.3MB) | [AIFF Format](#) (1.3MB)

Brad Masert still is on the hunt for ghost sounds. He's currently planning to travel to Europe and spend some time in some famous haunted spots of London and Paris.

sources

-interview with Brad Masert May 5th, 1999

photo by Derek Barnes

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