



The ghosts of Ohio® Newsletter

www.ghostsofohio.org

June 2009—Volume 6 Issue 5

From the Spooky Desk of James Willis: Thank You from GOO!

My, a lot has happened since The Ghosts last graced your inbox: we celebrated our 10th anniversary, cleaned up a cemetery, finished up a couple of investigations, and even attended two conventions. You'll be hearing more about a lot of these great events later in the newsletter.

To be honest, I'm still recovering from the SOAR Paranormal Meetup that took place on Saturday, June 27th, so we'll give you a full review of that in our next newsletter. Suffice to say, a great time was had by all and it really helped me put things in perspective. By that, I mean that The Ghosts of Ohio has spent the past few months out and about meeting people at presentations and conventions. At SOAR, there was truly

an outpouring of warmth and friendship for us that just seemed to be a great way to end the month. I want to let everyone who stopped by our booth to say "hi" to just know how wonderful it was to meet all of you.

Oftentimes, especially in the past few years, it appears to me that a lot of people in the paranormal community have lost sight of why we do what we do. For me, it was (and continues to be) the impact I can have on others. So to hear how you enjoyed my presentation or are intrigued by the type of equipment The Ghosts of Ohio is using on investigations means a lot.

So to all of you, I say "thank you." And I'd also like to remind all our friends and fans of one thing: you are

what helped make The Ghosts of Ohio what it is today. You are the ones who support our efforts. You are the ones who give us leads for investigations or reach out to us for help with your own property.

For future reference, I personally don't care if you want to come up to me just to say "hi," share a spooky personal experience with me, or discuss the latest trend in paranormal gadgetry. Whatever it is, please don't stop! Because despite what some may have you believe, this field would be lost without you.

Cheers,

James A. Willis
Founder/Director

Peace, Love, and Spirits: A Haunting Review of Ghostock 7



Wendy

Massachusetts.

Like most conventions, Ghostock has a wide selection of speakers from the paranormal world. This year's speakers included Father Andrew Calder, John Zaffis, Shannon Sylvia, UK psychic Gavin Cromwell, writers Fiona Broome and Marley Gibson, Patrick Burns (of course), Darkness Radio's Dave Schrader, Georgia Ghost Society's Bob Hunnicutt, and the "rock and roll ghost hunter" Keith Age. The convention was opened with a talk by Christian Day, a modern day Salem witch, who gave us the scoop on the past and present of witchcraft in Salem.

The talks this year were on a wide variety of current issues. Dave Schrader's talk was on how to properly

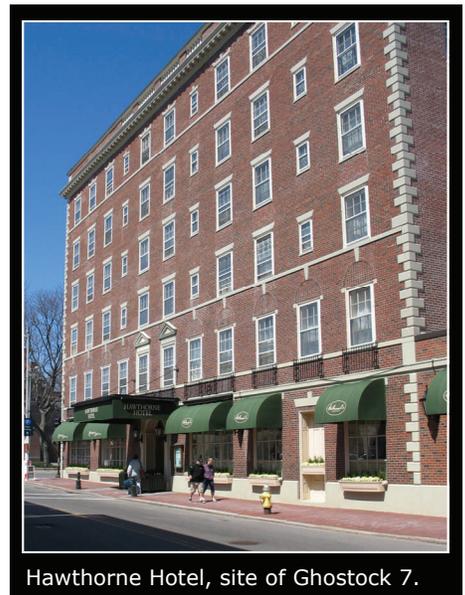
run an investigation. Shannon Sylvia spoke about "drama," and the backstabbing and name calling currently going on in Internet chat rooms and blogs. (People, just don't do it. Rise above it and focus on what you *are* supposed to be doing, i.e., helping your clients.)

Father Andy and John Zaffis spoke on their work within the demonic field and the personal problems they have had because of it, and Fiona Broome gave a very thought provoking talk on laylines and the paranormal activity that can be found along them. She is investigating two lines in Salem. One she has found has the most houses with judges and lawyers on it...from the witch trials of 1692 to today. Another line has something like twenty haunted places running along it in less than a mile, and that line ends where one of the victims of the Boston Strangler was killed. Her book *Paranormal Patterns* should be out in the fall, via Amazon.

Patrick is still very much attached to the idea of using psychics for cold cases, even with Haunting Evidence being

cancelled. So he is currently working on a website called psipi.net, where he wants to gather thousands of people with psychic ability, and harness that to help any police department that contacts him for help in solving cold cases.

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Hawthorne Hotel, site of Ghostock 7.

Peace, Love, and Spirits: A Haunting Review of Ghostock 7

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Fortunately we had a 40-years-on-the-force detective in attendance, who was able to give Patrick some ideas of what would be acceptable to law enforcement and what would not. So with some tweaking and adjusting, hopefully we will see this in the near future.

The thing that sets Ghostock apart is that it always streams the entire event live at Patrick's website www.ghosthounds.com, and it has full scale paranormal investigations. Locations are handed out on a first-registered, first-choice basis. Then on Friday night, teams assemble and head out to their location. This year most locations were expecting teams at 10 p.m. and the investigations ran anywhere between two and four hours, depending on the size of the property and what was going on. Saturday morning is reserved for review of evidence, followed by more talks, and ending the evening with a reveal for each location.

My investigation location was in the Hawthorne Hotel library and was lead by Keith Age and Shannon Sylvia. We assembled at 10, and once we got the computer up and running with the



Lollipops placed at the Lindell children's grave.

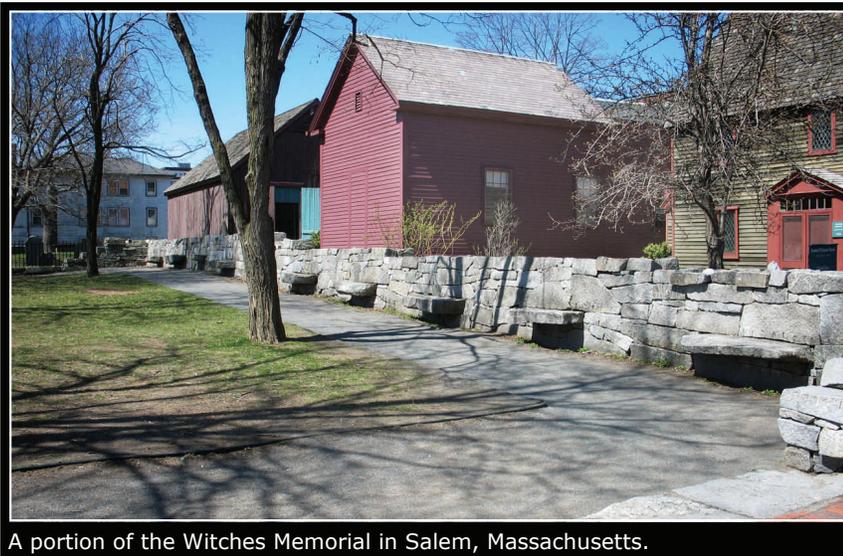
the electronics engineer who created the Ovilus as a "ha ha" to us ghost hunters, is completely freaked out by how accurate it is, and how it is doing things he never programmed it to do.

He programmed only certain words into it, and specifically opted to exclude swear words so that the instrument was "kid friendly." We have found that the

the unexpected accuracy and success of the Ovilus, Bill has been spurred on to create more instruments for the paranormal investigator, so keep an eye out!

Pretty much every location we investigated had some sort of activity. Patrick used his shack-hack over at the Witches memorial, and got several statements, including, "Are you a witch?" At the Salem Inn, Fiona and Gavin had the Ovilus calling their names out and giving the names of people who had built and owned the Inn in the past, including the names of Captains and Admirals. At my location, I saw a shadow man standing back behind Keith that appeared for just a couple seconds, and several of our investigators carried on a conversation with it via the Ovilus. Several teams got a handful of EVPs, and some locations even had strange photographic evidence.

All in all, it was informative and fun, and being held in a historic location gave attendees ample time to wallow in paranormal history. Ghostock used to be held only in Savannah, Georgia, but Patrick now wants to hold it in different haunted locations each time. So keep your eye on www.ghosthounds.com for upcoming event information if you are interested in an event like this.



A portion of the Witches Memorial in Salem, Massachusetts.

paranormal Puck, we began an EVP session. After about 40 minutes, we ended that and focused on using the Ovilus, which is definitely the instrument to own in the investigative world at this moment. Bill Chappelle,

Ovilus habitually uses words not on Bill's programmed list, cusses, calls out first and last names of investigators and possible entities, and repeats words. (Bill has a chip in there that is supposed to make sure that doesn't happen.) With

Scary Sleepover: Spend the Night with The Ghosts of Ohio!

Last year, The Ghosts of Ohio kicked off their Spend the Night program, which created the unique opportunity for some of our lucky fans to take part in an overnight investigation with us. As part of the Spend the Night with The Ghosts of Ohio program, we are renting out some of the most haunted buildings in Ohio for an entire night.

Unlike traditional "ghost hunts," where you are often forced to share the location with total strangers, every building we rented out was totally ours.

Based on how successful the program was last year, we have begun finalizing locations for our 2009 Spend the Night program. And just like last year, we want you to come along with

us! We'll bring all the equipment, so all you need to bring is your courage.

How do you get in on all this spooky fun? It's simple, really. All you need to do is sign up for The Ghosts of Ohio newsletter—which is free...and which most of you have already done!!

For each investigation, we'll be picking several names from our list of newsletter subscribers and giving them the first shot at spending the night with us. All they need to do is pay the same registration fee that the members of The Ghosts of Ohio have to pay in order to rent out the building (dollar amount subject to change based on individual venue).

In addition, we'll be drawing at least one lucky Grand Prize winner who will get to come along for FREE!

That's all there is to it! Of course, we might want to take a few pictures of you on the investigation and post them on our site so you'll be the envy of all your friends. But hey, that's a small price to pay for the chance to spend the night with The Ghosts!

If for some reason you don't have your own subscription, what are you waiting for? <http://ghostsofohio.org/services/newsletter.html>.



The Ghosts of Ohio at Prospect Place in Fall 2008.

Confirmed Locations for the Spend the Night Program

So where are some of the places you could spend the night with The Ghosts of Ohio? Well, while there are several locations we're still working on, we can at least get you excited about the two that we have already confirmed:

Friday, July 10th
Loveland Castle (Loveland, Ohio)

Sunday, September 13th
Bobby Mackey's (Wilder, Kentucky)

Winners for the Bobby Mackey's overnight will be announced in our August newsletter. Keep reading to see who the Loveland Castle winners are!

Who's Spending the Night at Loveland Castle with The Ghosts?

Stacy Richards, Brittany Hermiller, and Richard Tollman, that's who! They are the lucky people we pulled from our newsletter subscriber list. As such, they will have the chance to spend the night with The Ghosts of Ohio locked inside the Loveland Castle on an overnight investigation...provided, of course, they pay the entrance fee like the rest of us have to. You should be receiving all the pertinent information via email shortly. But for now, congratulations!

Also, congratulations go out to Jimmy Chung, who is our grand prize winner and will be spending the night with us for FREE!

See you all on July 10th. As with our past Spend the Night excursions, we'll be sure to post pictures of the investigation on our website so you can be the envy of all your friends!



The Ghosts storm Loveland Castle on July 10th!

Dinner and Spirits With The Ghosts of Ohio

The Ghosts of Ohio is proud to announce another program that we are getting ready to roll out in 2009—our Dinner & Spirits Tour. We don't have any dates and venues confirmed yet, but we thought you would all like a sneak peek.

For our Dinner & Spirits Tour, The Ghosts of Ohio will be working with some of Ohio's reportedly haunted eateries to create a truly unique evening. The evening will begin with a specially created (and possibly themed) menu. Guests will enjoy their meal while hearing The Ghosts of Ohio members recount some of the ghost stories and legends associated with the building and, in some instances, showing "evidence" we acquired during our overnight investigations at the location. Some of the locations will even allow a few lucky guests to join The Ghosts of Ohio on an

investigation after the meal has concluded.

As we mentioned, we are still in the process of confirming dates and locations for 2009. So keep an eye on The Ghosts of Ohio newsletter and website for more information. And if you happen to be the owner of a haunted eatery and would like to be included on our Dinner & Spirits Tour, please send an email to info@ghostsofohio.org and we'll be happy to discuss the details with you.



Spooky Social Networking

Need a spooky friend? If you have a MySpace account, swing by and add The Ghosts of Ohio to your friends list: www.myspace.com/ghostsofohio.

And for those of you who use Facebook and/or Twitter, you can now find The Ghosts of Ohio on those sites, too:

Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Columbus-OH/The-Ghosts-of-Ohio/60704381381?ref=mf>

Twitter

<http://twitter.com/ghostsofohio>

Whichever online community you prefer to use, you can always find us!



Greenlawn Cemetery Clean-Up: The 'Spirit' of Community Service

On Saturday, May 2nd, the Ghosts of Ohio members, along with a team of friends and family came together to help clean up our adopted Section 50 of Greenlawn Cemetery. Due to recent spring storms, there were plenty of tree branches to be cleaned up. With the help of about 15 volunteers, GOO got the cemetery cleaned up in about an hour. All together we gathered eight bags of yard waste and a large pile of sticks and branches. GOO was also honored to have a regular newsletter reader stop by to say "hello."

The volunteers had a great time donating their time to an important community service project. We encourage you to grab some yard gloves and join us for one of our upcoming cemetery clean-ups. We would love to see you there! For more information, please contact info@ghostsofohio.org.



The Ghosts of Ohio cemetery clean-up crew at Greenlawn on May 2nd.

Investigations and Consultations: Now Scheduling for 2009

The Ghosts of Ohio is continuing to schedule investigations for 2009. If you or someone you know is experiencing something unexplained in a home or place of business, contact us at info@ghostsofohio.org or visit our website to fill out an investigation

request. All investigations are offered free of charge, and confidentiality and discretion are assured.

Not sure if you want or need an Investigation? The Ghosts of Ohio now offers consultations. Let us sit down

with you to discuss your current situation and what help we may be able to offer.

For more information, please visit <http://ghostsofohio.org/services/investigations.html>.

P-CON 2009: A Confirmed 'Ghosts' Sighting in Dayton, Ohio



Sheri

Saturday, May 30th was not a "normal" day for the local FOP Hall in Dayton, Ohio. In fact, it was rather "paranormal." Spirit seekers, ghost hunters, UFO watchers, Bigfoot believers, Mothman followers, and all folks "weird" invaded the FOP Hall to learn more about the paranormal field and share their experiences with others at the first annual "P-CON Conference."

This event was hosted by The Prodigy Paranormal Group, a paranormal investigation group based out of Dayton, Ohio. The Ghosts of Ohio's very own James A. Willis was honored to be asked to present "The Spooky Side of Abraham Lincoln" to kick off the day of speakers and to close the day with his "The Strange and Spooky World of James A. Willis" presentation. His presentations awed,

and his ride on the homemade rollercoaster the "Blue Flash" (with hilarious video accompaniment).

Throughout the day, guest speakers and Prodigy Group members shared their knowledge with attendees and colleagues alike. The presentation topics included: the Mothman history, understanding "orbs" in photography, the psychology of ghost hunting and the "mind's eye," Bigfoot investigations and evidence, the Ghostly Talk Radio show, UFO sightings, and Abraham Lincoln.

Also available for attendees were several booths that offered a variety of services, including: psychic readings, ghost tour information, dowsing rods and pendulums for sale, hand massages,



The EVP Bar was a popular attraction at this year's event and put the listener's interpretation skills to the test.

recorded directly to a computer hard drive. Also on hand was the first ever "EVP Bar" sponsored by the event hosts. At the bar, attendees were able to put on headphones and try their skill at deciphering the often vulgar and risqué EVPs.

The intimate all-day conference was an excellent chance to meet fans and friends of The Ghosts of Ohio in person and to share experiences and advice with up-and-coming paranormal investigators and fellow colleagues. The Ghosts of Ohio would like to thank the Prodigy Paranormal Group for making us a part of the first annual P-CON.



Mark at The Ghosts of Ohio table provided demonstrations of the Vernier LabPro system.

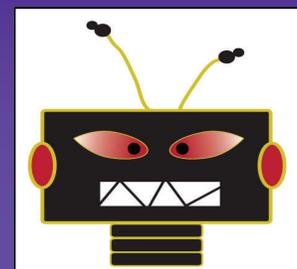
inspired, and entertained. Among some of his memorable "weird" stories were: the mysterious message in the snow near Gretchen's Lock, his trip to the naked leg sundial at an Indiana nudist camp, a sample EVP from a recent Ghosts of Ohio investigation where a possible spirit taunts, "You don't deserve it..."

and a chance to see a gigantic Bigfoot decoy head. The Ghosts of Ohio also proudly displayed their technological gizmos and gadgets that create the Vernier LabPro system, which is used on most investigations to detect changes in temperature, motion, ions, and electromagnetic fields, which are then

The Newsletter is a Robot!

We'll stop reminding you when you stop sending e-mails to the newsletter address!

Until then, consider this yet another annoying reminder that the newsletter is STILL a robot. So if you send anything at all to the newsletter address, our surly robot will eat it...and that will make us all sad. So please don't do it, OK? Promise?



Darrin's Tools of the Trade: Take a Picture—It'll Last Longer



Darrin

In this article we are going to get back to the more traditional tools used in paranormal research—cameras. All kinds have been used throughout the history of this field and wide varieties are still available today.

This article will be about more traditional film cameras and newer digital cameras. Both have their pros and cons and I'm sure that proponents for each can give strong arguments as to why one type is better than the other. I am only going to list some of those pros and cons and you can decide which is better for yourself.

There are some advantages to using a film camera: accuracy and the images are harder to manipulate or alter. If you want to know how to manipulate the image, you have to know what you are doing. Yes, you can set a long exposure time and get some interesting images, move the camera when you are taking the picture or throw in some props, but in order to really change things, you have to be able to develop the film yourself. This, and the fact that a bit of science goes into getting a picture from film, helps lend some weight to a photo being used as evidence.

Experts know how the chemicals affect both the film and the paper during the developing and processing times. They also know how manipulating light during the processing time can affect the image that comes out on the paper. The photo and the negative it came from can pretty much give photographic experts all the information they need to determine if an image is genuine or fake.

As I said earlier, not everyone that has a camera has the ability to do most of these things; therefore, I think it is easier to accept a picture, along with its original negative, as stronger proof of something paranormal happening. At the very least, you can get a skeptic to agree that they have no idea how the image on the photo got there.

Unlike not too long ago, getting a 35mm camera today is inexpensive and it is easy to use. Almost all cameras can be set to automatically focus and set off a flash when needed, and they will even advance the film and rewind it for you. The film is easy to load and handle, you just have to point, hold still, and push the button. When you are done, you can drop off the film at all kinds of stores to have it developed and processed. Recently, this last part has also become a drawback to using film cameras. The only exception to this is if you use a Polaroid camera so you can get pictures right away, but this is very expensive since you can easily take a few hundred pictures during an investigation.

As more and more people start using digital cameras, it is less profitable for companies to develop film so it may start to become harder to find places to do it. Along those same lines, it is costly to develop a whole roll of film only to find out that there is nothing of any use there. You also have to store the physical photos somewhere. Over time this can add up both financially and in amount of space needed for storage.

The use of digital cameras is even easier than a film camera because there is no film to load. Like the other, you just point, hold still, and push a button and you get instant results because you can see the image right away on the back of the camera. With a relatively inexpensive memory card, you can store hundreds of images on the camera and only need to have the ones printed that you want. You can then store all the photos on a CD ROM or DVD and what used to fill boxes is now on one disc. To get printed photos, you don't even have to leave your house, you can print them out yourself or upload them to various places online and have them printed and sent to you.

Unfortunately, the ease doesn't just stop with use and storage. With virtually no experience, anyone can take a picture and, after putting it on their computer, can do all kinds of enhancements and alterations. Skilled individuals can take out elements or put multiple images

together to make something completely new. There is virtually nothing that can't be done to a digital image and it's sometimes very hard to determine if anything was done. You can review the meta data, which is information about the camera and its settings during the time the picture was taken, which is imbedded in the image file. However, as the image is moved from camera to machine to machine, it can become lost, fragmented or it can even be altered. You can also have someone who is skilled at programs like Photoshop review the files to see if they can recognize anything that may have been done to the image. What it all comes down to is that because of how easy it is to manipulate photos from digital cameras it can be less impressive as evidence than if it were from a film camera.

The Ghosts of Ohio uses mostly digital cameras but some people bring their own 35mm cameras to use. As I mentioned earlier, there is no right or wrong camera to use. If you use digital cameras, make sure to do as little to the image file as possible. This way you can say it hasn't been altered in any way. I feel safe in saying that any little thing you do would be enough for someone to say it's a fake. Be familiar with what can cause certain effects on digital images. The orb you think might be a ghost could really be your two megapixel camera getting confused and marking the spot where it got confused. You may have moved the camera after you took the picture and not realized that while it is processing the image it is still taking the picture. The same thing goes for cameras that use film. Always keep your negatives with your pictures so you have both available for examination.

For both cameras, always keep your hair pulled back, straps and fingers out of the way and if possible the time and date stamp on. And most of all—have fun and use common sense.

Have Spirits, Will Travel: Come Out and See The Ghosts!

It's already June, and The Ghosts of Ohio's calendar is already filling up with public appearances throughout the state of Ohio. So if you're interested in finding out more about our organization, what sort of evidence we've uncovered over the years, or just want to swing by

and say "hi," have a look to the right and see when we're coming to your town!

NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, all appearances are open to the public. Those listings with a "\$" denote venues with admission fees. All others are free.

Saturday, August 1st @ 6:00 pm
Just How Weird Is Ohio Presentation (\$)
Columbus Area MENSA—Regional Gathering
Comfort Inn—North
1213 Dublin-Granville Road — Columbus, OH
<http://www.columbus.us.mensa.org/>

Sunday, August 2nd @ 8:00 pm
Ohio Library Support Staff Institute
Meet The Ghosts of Ohio Presentation
Denison University
<http://olssi.org/>

Friday, August 14th – Sunday, August 16th
The Ohio Paranormal Convention (\$)
Hara Arena — Dayton, Ohio
<http://www.ohioparacon.com/>

Saturday, September 19th – Sunday, September 20th
8th Annual Mothman Festival
Pt. Pleasant, West Virginia
<http://www.mothmanfestival.com/>

Thursday, October 8th @ 6:00 pm
Meet The Ghosts of Ohio presentation
Wellsville Carnegie Public Library
115 9th Street — Wellsville, OH
<http://www.wellsville.lib.oh.us/>

Friday, October 16th – Saturday, October 17th
Delaware Ghost Walk (\$)
Delaware, OH

Thursday, October 22nd @ 6:30 pm
Meet The Ghosts of Ohio Presentation
New Lebanon Public Library
715 W. Main Street — New Lebanon, OH
<http://www.daytonmetrolibrary.org/branch.cfm?ID=30>

Saturday, October 24th (time TBD)
Meet The Ghosts of Ohio presentation
Litzenberg Memorial Woods
6100 US 224 — Findlay, OH

Wednesday, October 28th @ 7:00 pm
Meet The Ghosts of Ohio Presentation
Upper Arlington Public Library
2800 Tremont Road — Upper Arlington, OH 43221
<http://www.ualibrary.org/>



Check out The Ghosts of Ohio at an upcoming presentation near you!

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