



The ghosts of Ohio[®] Newsletter

www.ghostsofohio.org

Volume 14 Issue 5

FROM THE SPOOKY DESK OF JAMES WILLIS:

YEARS LATER, I STILL DO NOT ROCK



James

A few years ago, I wrote an article for my blog about an episode of *Ghost Adventures*. Specifically, it was the one where they visited Bachelors Grove Cemetery in Illinois. The article wasn't

written to bash *Ghost Adventures*, but it did raise many questions, which I thought were valid. Mainly, I questioned why a cemetery that has suffered horribly for decades at the hands of vandals (to the point where the cemetery has to be patrolled at night) and whose owners have never allowed ghost hunters to officially investigate there at night, would choose such an over-the-top show as *Ghost Adventures* to be the first.

Overall, the article was well received, save for a small constituent of the diehard *Ghost Adventures* fans. Truth be told, I got more than my fair share of hate mail, some of which was downright nasty. But my favorite was one that simply read: "Zak Bagans Rocks! You do not rock." That email quickly became one of my all-time favorites and I have been known to tell people "I do not rock" whenever I feel I am discussing something that might be construed as "angry" and/or behavior that might be deemed as "lashing out."

The reason I bring all this up is because in this issue, I have written a piece about the TV show, *Mountain Monsters*. And I want to make it perfectly clear that I have

no "beef" with anyone associated with the show. Nor am I, as I have been accused of being in the past, jealous of the show's popularity. Simply put, I wrote the article out of love.

Put another way, I love this field. Not just ghosts, either. The entire paranormal field. I tell people that I have been trying to explain the unexplained since I was 18, but that's only because I was 18 when I joined my first official ghost group. But in reality, I have been obsessed with all things strange and spooky for over 40 years. I've come across ghost stories I wrote when I was 8 and some of the first books in what would become my Strange & Spooky Library were first given to me (by my mom) when I was only 6. There's even some 1st Grade homework of mine that says "when I grow up, I want to be a scientist so I can find the Loch Ness Monster."

This field has also allowed me to meet some of the most fascinating and amazing people. And I've been truly blessed that I can call some of those very people my friends. Heck, the first unofficial date my wife and I ever went on was to a haunted cemetery and my daughter ad-libs the lyrics to *Ghostbusters* by screaming out the response to "Who ya gonna call?" with "James Willis!"

Yes, the field of paranormal research is very near and dear to my heart. And when I come to believe, as in the case of *Mountain Monsters*, that something is being done that harms this field, I feel the need to speak up.



So I would ask that as you read my *Mountain Monsters* article, you approach it with an open mind and consider the points it is making. Over the years, I have had the privilege of meeting and chatting with many subscribers to this newsletter. And while we all come from different backgrounds and have been known to entertain a multitude of beliefs and theories about the paranormal, there's one thing we all have in common: The desire to be taken seriously in this field. And that is where I feel that *Mountain Monsters* is doing an incredible disservice to us all.

In the end, my article is just my opinion and nothing more. So if it offends you, please know that wasn't my intent. I am not intending to alienate any of you, as it is my sincere hope to still find you standing alongside me as we all continue to grow in this field as we search for answers.

Even if I do not rock.

Cheers,

James A. Willis
Founder/Director

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE #1

You Saw Him, Too

—Mary C., Columbus, OH

I have been wanting to share this story with you for a while. I love all the other stories the other people write in to you. It was just that when I would read those stories, mine didn't feel like anything special. But it is a true story and I want to share it, so here go.

I am an only child and my dad died when I was 8. My mother raised me alone in the house my dad died in. I don't remember the first time I saw it, but I started seeing my dad's ghost in the house. He didn't look like a ghost from tv. He wasn't all white and floating in the air or anything like that. It just looked like my dad. He would be dressed in clothes like he wore when he was alive. It was almost always a flannel shirt and jeans. But I would see him all over the house. Sometimes he would even be outside in the yard. I was never scared when I saw him. A couple of times I would see him and then have to remind myself that my dad was dead. Then he would just disappear. But when he was there, he was always smiling and looking at me.

I also don't remember the first time I told my mom I was seeing my dad's ghost. My mom is very religious and I was afraid of what she would tell me. I was right because when I finally told her, she got really mad and said there were no such things as ghosts and that dad was in heaven. I continued to see my dad's ghost in the house and yard, but I never told my mom about it again. When I turned 19, I moved out and a couple of years later, my mom moved to a small apartment. I never saw my dad's ghost again.

A few years ago, my mom was in hospice. One night, I was just sitting there and she said, "You know, I saw your dad's ghost back when we lived in the old house." I couldn't believe she was telling me that. At first I was mad that she had basically called me a liar when I told her about seeing my dad's ghost. But then I was just interested and had to know more. My mom said she would see him all the time and not just in the

house. Sometimes he would be in the yard. But he almost always had a flannel shirt and jeans on. When I asked her why she lied to me, she said that her parents had always told her that ghosts didn't exist, so she never believed in them. But when she started seeing my dad's ghost, she got scared because she didn't know if it was real or not. She also said she felt bad because she secretly liked that my dad's ghost was still hanging around, watching over his family.

My mom died a few days later. I was half expecting her ghost to show up at my new house one night, but she never did. Every once in a while, though, I get the urge to drive by the old house to see if maybe my mom's ghost and my dad's ghost are hanging out in the yard together. That would make me happy.



**GOT A
SCARY STORY
TO TELL?**



Have you had a ghostly encounter in Ohio? Want to see it featured in a future issue of The Ghosts of Ohio Newsletter? Then here's all you have to do:

Just write down your story and send it to info@ghostsofohio.org with the subject line "Newsletter Ghost Story." Be sure to also include your name as you'd like it to appear with the story. We'll take it from there and send you out an email letting you know which issue it is going to appear in. That way, you can get all your friends to sign up for the newsletter so they can see how famous you are!

MISSING 411



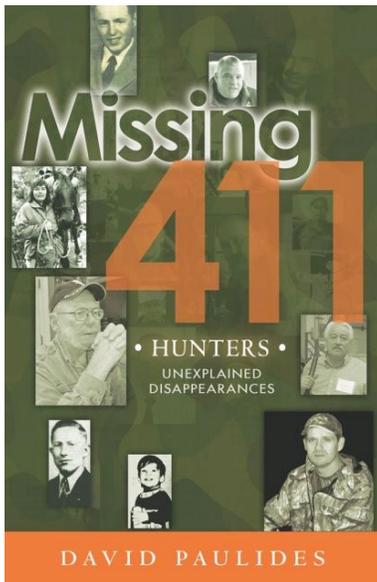
DAVID PAULIDES' RESEARCH CONTINUES



Samantha

Regular readers of this newsletter may recall reading my article from the April 2016 issue titled "Missing 411: David Paulides' Research into Unexplained Disappearances." If you haven't read it, I highly suggest that you look into our archives and check it out before reading this article. You can find it here: https://www.ghostsofOhio.org/services/newsletter_apr16.pdf

It outlines everything you need to know so that you can fully appreciate the strange cases outlined here.



I also suggest that, if you haven't read any of the *Missing 411* books yet, don't start with *Missing 411: Hunters*. It's the sixth (and latest) book in the series, and it's the subject of this current article.

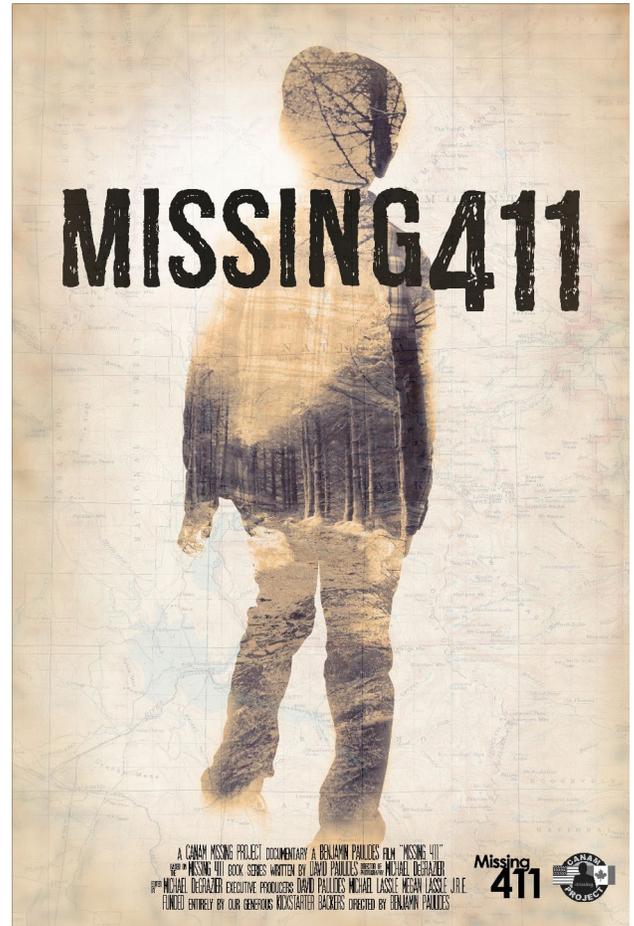
I guess what I'm trying to say is, if you're new to this topic, you're probably going to be confused if you read this, and you'll miss the significance of what's happening in our wilderness areas. Please go back and read my

previous article, then come back to this one.

Go ahead. I'll wait.

Okay, are we all caught up? Good! Well done!

As I stated earlier, the subject of this article is hunters who have gone missing under unusual, even bizarre, circumstances. Paulides' latest book begins by quickly rehashing his criteria for determining which cases are ordinary disappearances and which cases fit commonalities associated with the *Missing 411* cases. Then, he dives into the cases themselves. The following are just a few highlights that definitely left me scratching my head.



Lawrence Prange - 20 years old - Missing 8/14/1958

Lawrence, along with his German Shepard named Queen, made a trip to the Seeley Lake region of Montana to hunt mountain goats. He took with him a backpack and two rifles, and Queen also wore a pack full of supplies. When Lawrence failed to contact his family on the date he was set to return, an official search began. Six days later, there was still no sign of Lawrence, but Search And Rescue (SAR) found his dog Queen, packless, running wild. Once they caught and fed her, they took her to areas that Lawrence would have been hunting with the hope that she could locate him. Queen, terrified, wanted absolutely nothing to do with those areas. Lawrence has never been found.

(continued on page 4.)

MISSING 411:

DAVID PAULIDES' RESEARCH CONTINUES CONT.

Robert Springfield - 49 years old - Missing 9/19/2004

Robert and his two sons, bow hunters, were members of the Crow Nation Indian Reservation and were hunting elk in the Bighorn Mountains of Montana. When Robert didn't meet up with the boys at their arranged time, an official search began. There was no sign of him until 2005, when a hunter heard a crow screeching incessantly from a tree. When the hunter approached, he found human remains beneath the tree, including a partial skull and femur. Here comes the strangest part. There was also "a neatly rolled-up men's belt next to the skull," along with "two boots [that] neatly sat next to the skull and femur." A men's coat was also found, along with a wallet with money inside. Sadly, Robert was found only just outside the search zone.

Aaron Hedges - 38 years old - Missing 9/7/2014

Aaron was a bow hunter who went with two rifle-toting friends to the Crazy Mountains in Montana to hunt elk. When Aaron failed to return to camp, an official search began. However, it was delayed two days by a snowstorm that dumped two feet of snow on the area. Once the search was fully underway, it took two days for a team to find some of Aaron's belongings, including his boots. In the fall of 2015, a man found Aaron's bow, backpack, orange hunting vest, shirt and socks piled up against a tree. These items were 15 miles away from where he disappeared. His body has still not been found.

Robert Winters - 78 years old - Missing 10/8/1969

Robert and his three sons were deer hunting in their usual area—Sparks Lake, Oregon. When he didn't arrive back at camp, the sons grew worried, and then a snowstorm moved in that dumped 18 inches of snow in 24 hours. Once the men notified authorities about their dad, an official search began. However, it was terminated 5 days later due to the difficult conditions. Nine months later, a man visiting the area found Robert's rifle, glasses, a boot, a glove, and a his dentures at the base of a tree. There was no sign of his body.

I can't think of another topic within The Ghosts of Ohio that has spurred more discussion than the cases presented in the *Missing 411* series. Just take a look at those cases outlined above! A dog too terrified to find her owner.

Personal effects and clothing (including *necessary* clothing like boots and coats) found "neatly" arranged beneath trees, usually with no body to go with them. Dentures found among personal effects! I mean, who removes their dentures in the woods?

These examples are just the tip of the iceberg. There are so many cases and so many questions to be asked; and while theories abound, no one has any answers. That's what makes this series so compelling. These are cases of real missing people who vanished or perished under very real circumstances. And they continue to do so to this day!

This latest book doesn't really blaze any new trails in comparison to the rest of the series, but it does highlight a couple of interesting ideas regarding missing hunters. First, Paulides has found that "...hunters disappear in disproportionately greater numbers compared to fishermen." Does this have something to do with their location, clothing, mindset, etc? Who knows? Second, Paulides has found that "Bow hunters have a high mortality rate comparatively in this book and have the highest rate of not being found." Why is this?

Finally, probably one of the most important observations that I think needs to be expressed is that, unlike in some of the other books in the series, I did not read any case in the "Hunters" book where a hunter was found alive. If you're a hunter, I think you'd agree that this is chilling.

If you'd like to know more about the *Missing 411* phenomenon, be sure to read David Paulides' books, listen to podcasts like Coast to Coast, attend conferences (like the MUFON Conference in Pittsburg this year—Paulides will be there!), and check out the newly released-to-DVD *Missing 411* documentary.



TOWPATH HAUNTINGS:

NATURE AND GHOSTS AT THEIR BEST!



Wendy

As the weather in Ohio transitions to summer, it is a great time to get out and explore our highways and byways. A fantastic area that is full of

haunted places and runs approximately 101 miles from Cleveland's Lake Erie shores to New Philadelphia is the Ohio-Erie Canal Towpath. Around 86 of these miles are paved or compact dirt, with the start and finishing portions of the Towpath still in the planning stages. The towpath takes you along the Canal and portions of the Cuyahoga River, and has many great stops along the way. I bike and hike this path throughout the summer from Valley View to Boston Township, so I thought I would give you ghost hunters a heads up on what the towpath has to offer your spooky sensibilities. Keep in mind, the towpath is open 24 hours, and in the nighttime you will encounter groups of night bikers with running lights on their bikes. But other areas, like the cemeteries and active buildings, are not. Do not trespass and give ghost hunters a bad name!

I usually start my biking at the Canal Visitor Center. This is just north of our first reputed haunting at the Tinker's Creek Cemetery. This cemetery is a little hard to get to... you need to park at a little pull off on Tinker's Creek Road, and then walk all the way up to the top of the hill. Established in 1810, filled with early Whittlesey settlers and possibly Native Americans, this is now a

forlorn spot surrounded by trees. Here you can hope to see lights in and around the cemetery, and even a headstone that glows. But longtime resident of Sagamore Hills, Roger Ganley, warns about getting too excited if you do see lights. "There are still roads that go up through there that cars travel on, which could account for some of the sightings."

Continue on the path toward the south, and you will pass Station Road in Brecksville, where you can pick up the train. This was also the location of an old powderworks. According to various stories, a guard stayed there over winter and went mad, or after the building shut down a worker stayed on in the building, becoming a hermit and dying there. Interesting story, but there are no known sightings of ghostly apparitions here.

A couple of miles along the towpath you come to a bonanza of hot *Remains of Fourdrinier* spots. Red Lock, Jaite Paper Mill and Lonesome Lock all fall within about a mile of each other. Lock 34, known as Red Lock, is supposedly haunted by the prankster spirit of a former tavern owner from that area who was known as Red. There is a reported shadow figure here, but hey, this is

also "grassman" territory! The Jaite Paper Mill is on the opposite side of Vaughn/Highland Road. It was torn down about two decades after arson fires gutted it in the 1980s. But before that it was reputedly haunted by a man who was killed while operating part of the fourdrinier machine there. As you can see from the picture this is a huge structure, and it has been left where it stood, too heavy and cumbersome to move. It is found on west side of the path about 250 feet in—you can't miss it. Locals claim to hear the factory whistle, which used to be blown four times a day during the factory's heyday in the 1940s. People say that they feel "watched" in this area.



Note: the yellow buildings there on Vaughn/Highland Road were used by former papermill workers, but are now property of the National Park Service, and are occupied. No trespassing here!

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TOWPATH HAUNTINGS: NATURE AND GHOSTS AT THEIR BEST! Cont.

Continue south on the towpath and you will get to Lock 31, also known as Lonesome Lock. This Lock was pretty isolated, standing between Jaite and Peninsula, which made it a great place for the lawless of the area to hang out. The reputed haunting is of a woman in white, who was murdered here back around 1850. Probably nearer the truth is the fact that over 10 murders of canal boat workers occurred in this area, due to its isolated location.

Our next stop is the town of Peninsula, which was built up around the towpath and canal. The Winking Lizard Tavern building was originally an inn in the 1850s, before it became a nightclub in the 1920s, and then the Peninsula Inn.

According to some witnesses, a woman in 1920s-style clothing can be seen here. I don't know about that, but I do know that the lower level of the building is pretty darn creepy. I stopped here for a drink while biking one afternoon and found that I was constantly looking over my shoulder. If you walk out of



Valley View Cemetery

the Lizard toward the street and turn left and head down to the park parking lot, there is an area where an old school bus was abandoned. Lots of stories circled around this, including children kidnapped on the bus and murdered—their little ghosts leaving handprints on your car if you park there at night. Of course, a certain Jim Willis knows the truth about that story!

Heading south on our journey we come to Boston, and infamous Indigo Lake. This really isn't a lake, it's a quarry that had its walls shortened and then was filled with water to provide a lake for visitors. Park at this lot, cross to the train station and walk the road behind it that goes around the lake. There are claims that Indian mounds are in the trees, but the only official mounds in the area I know of are another four or so miles down Riverview Road, in Botzum. Still, this entire valley was very heavily inhabited by the local tribes, so there could be little mounds in the trees. Shadows walking across the road are the main paranormal events associated with this area.



Red Lock

Now, we're going to take a large hop, skip and jump down to the Canal Fulton area of the towpath. Canal Fulton itself is rife with hauntings, but the two buildings along the towpath most interesting are the Warehouse on the Canal and Sisters Century House Restaurant. The Warehouse started out as exactly that, a warehouse for things being boated up and down the canal. It was also at times a mortuary, and a furniture store. In the last 10 years it was renovated and is currently a little set of shops. Reports of heavy EMF fluctuations are here, along with the feeling of being watched. Down the street south of it is Sisters Century House. Reportedly home to a female ghost in a big hat, this is a great place to stop for lunch and observe the canal. There is an old story that here, near lock 4, one of the Irish immigrants who was building the canal went berserk and attacked his fellow workers with acid. There has never been any confirmation of that, but when you have a bunch of workers using their weekly pay on whisky, and suffering from malaria, influenza and a bad diet (whisky), you are going to

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TOWPATH HAUNTINGS: NATURE AND GHOSTS AT THEIR BEST! Cont.

have a lot of death. With no stopping time for proper funerals, most of these unfortunates were buried in shallow graves along the canal. Stories in the area between Sisters and Lock 4 revolve around the sound of men screaming in agony.

Our final stop is Zoar Village, just north of New Philadelphia, where the towpath ends. If you speak some German, you may have some luck here. Zoar was created by German separatists looking for religious freedom in 1815. They lived in a very communal society—all goods kept at the magazine building and doled out according to what your family needed. Alongside it was the community garden, where everyone was expected to work and contribute. Here you can again find myriad hauntings—the Firehouse Pub and Grille, Number One House and Magazine (where the town supplies were) are great places to try your German skills and see if you get a responding EVP. The garden is apparently still being tended by a ghostly former gardener, and the smell of pipe smoke is often experienced outside the Number One House. I smelled it on a tour years ago, and it was accompanied by a static cold spot, right there on the sidewalk. It was really odd. Step out of the spot and you were no longer cold and no longer smelled the pipe smoke. Step back in, and there it was. Across from the Firehouse Grille is a building that used to be a hotel in its heyday.

The obligatory woman in white is seen here in the upstairs windows. While we were investigating this building that night, I caught the sound of high heeled boots walking around.

One of the more famous haunts here is the Canal Tavern of Zoar. Created in 1829, it is reputedly haunted by a ghost named George. There are varying stories of where he came from...from a spurned lover of a tavern waitress to a canal worker who caught malaria, and was nursed



Canal Tavern of Zoar—from <http://www.canaltavernofzoar.com/>

here until he died. He is often seen peeking around the corner of a post, checking out the diners...especially if they are female!

So there you have it, plenty of places to hike to, bike to, or just explore as you wind your way through the summer months in Northeast Ohio!

www.canalfultoncenturyhouse.com

www.canaltavernofzoar.com

MEET THE GHOSTS OF OHIO: Stephanie

Length of time in The Ghosts of Ohio?

I've been a member for 12 years.

What got you interested in ghosts? I

was very curious about ghosts as a child, but didn't pursue my interests until 12 years ago when I stumbled upon this guy, James Willis, and his group The Ghosts of Ohio. I remember reading a book called "The Haunted House" as a child and the author, Peggy Parish, came to visit our small town library and talked to us about it and read some parts to us. I was completely stoked. I still have that book (somewhere) that she signed so many years ago and I believe that is when I really started thinking spooky things were pretty cool.

Favorite piece of ghost-hunting equipment?

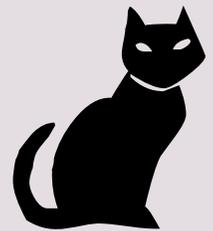
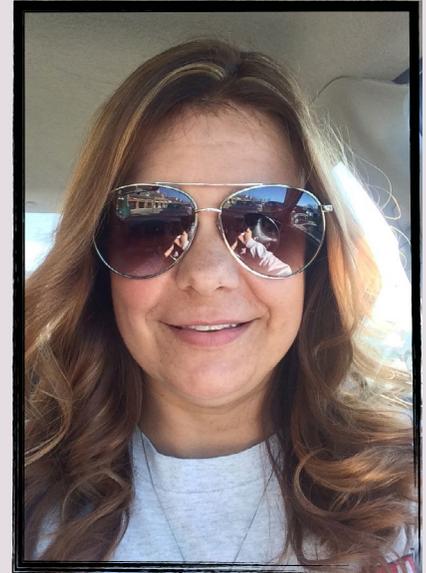
I would say the digital recorder. Odd noises that are heard when replaying the recordings that I know weren't there in real time tend to fascinate me.

Favorite place you've investigated?

As much running around that I have done to all places strange and spooky (since I happened to be married to the Founder/Director of the group), I would have to say my favorite place has been Waverly Hills Sanatorium. If you haven't been, it's a must!

Three places you'd love to investigate?

One place I haven't been to in Ohio is the Moonville Tunnel. Perhaps I can coerce my husband into taking me this summer. And of course the Franklin Castle if we could ever get in there. Finally, if not for it being across the country, I'd love to check out the Stanley Hotel.



SEND THE GHOSTS BACK IN TIME!

Two issues ago, we announced our new "Back In Time" feature where we asked you to share your spooky stories from childhood and we would do some research to find out where those stories stand today. Sort of like a supernatural scavenger hunt where we try to unearth all those tales from your youth. I guess we struck a nerve with you guys because the response has been overwhelming! We've gotten over 95 requests so far, which include everything from ghosts and haunted houses to mysterious monsters and even a few UFO sightings! Amazing!

For those of you unfamiliar with what we're doing, it all goes back to the idea that everyone, even though who might not believe in the supernatural, has one thing in common when it comes to ghosts: a scary story of a haunted place from your childhood. You know, the old house you weren't

supposed to go near or the creepy old grave sitting all by itself on top of a hill. Maybe the monster that lived in the woods behind your house. Well, whatever it was, we're sure that you've often thought to yourself "I wonder whatever happened to that place?" Well, now's your chance to find out!

The Ghosts of Ohio wants you to send us your childhood ghost stories. We'll take it from there and dig into the history to find out if there really was any truth to the tales that chilled your bones as a youth. Just send an email to info@ghostsofohio.org with as much information as you can remember and we will jump right on it. We'll even supply you with a free report with everything we were able to uncover. So what are you waiting for? Send The Ghosts back in time!



Dear Mountain Monsters, Will You Please Just Stop?



James

So Season 5 of Destination America's reality series *Mountain Monsters* is officially in the books. And while the season ended with a bit of a cliffhanger, my first (and still only) thought is this: Please don't let there be a Season 6. You've done enough damage.

For those not familiar with the show, *Mountain Monsters*, at least initially, was like a bizarre mash up of *Ghost Adventures*, *Finding Bigfoot*, and *Moonshiners*. Basically, the show follows around members of the AIMS team (Appalachian Investigators of Mysterious Sightings)—a merry band of men who sport names like Huckleberry, Wild Bill, and Trapper—and some of whom look like they stepped right out of an old Snuffy Smith comic.

Mildly offensive hillbilly stereotypes aside, *Mountain Monsters* portrayed itself as a show about real, down-to-earth men, who roamed the Appalachians investigating reports of sightings of Bigfoot-like creatures, at least initially. As the series wore on, they began to expand their reach and would often go out looking for various non-Bigfoot-like cryptids, including Mothman.

As with all paranormal reality television shows, people immediately started questioning just how much of *Mountain Monsters* was indeed real and how much was staged. From the very beginning, the cast of *Mountain Monsters* proclaimed that the show was "100% real" and that "absolutely nothing was staged for TV." Based on online comments and the show's initial success, many members of the viewing audience believed it to be real, too. But then the show began to change.



As the seasons rolled on, the AIMS Team started chasing after monsters with bizarre names like the Snallygaster and the Stonish Giant. And in one episode, they were stalking a group of creatures known as Lightning Man and the Thunder Brothers. And no, I'm not making that up. What's more, an online search for information on some of the creatures they were looking for revealed nothing more than links to either the AIMS website or the show's landing page on Destination America's site (or, in the case of the Snallygaster, some Harry Potter pages). Still, the show said it was real and they weren't making anything up. Some of the diehard fans were starting to question things, though. Still, had *Mountain Monsters* stopped here, the ambiguous nature of the show would have remained, for the most part, intact. But they didn't stop there. In fact, they went way beyond. And that is what I take issue with.

For whatever reason, the show decided to push the boundaries so far as to leave no doubt that what was being portrayed was pure fiction. The monsters they were hunting began to come fully equipped with eerie powers, including the ability to read the minds of the AIMS team and even hypnotize them. Team members began to experience episodes of lost time and would often vanish during the course of a night hunt, only to appear later on, often minus articles of clothing and covered in mud.

The AIMS team also found that they themselves were being hunted by a rogue team of monster hunters (who, hilariously, are known as the Rogue Team) who not only

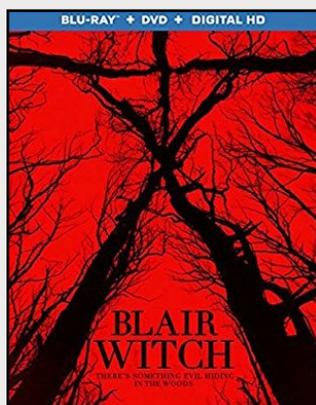
Dear Mountain Monsters, Will You Please Just Stop? Cont.



Members of the AIMS Team, after having been kidnapped by the mysterious Rogue Team

kidnap members of the AIMS team and the film crew (at gunpoint, no less), but who also shoot at them on a fairly regular basis. That is, when they're not out shooting and killing monsters like the Stonish Giant and absconding with the body. And not once does the AIMS team think that, I dunno, maybe since we're being stalked and terrorized by an armed group of thugs and have them on camera doing such things, maybe we should go to the authorities.

And now we come to Season 5 of *Mountain Monsters*. Or, as I like to call it, *Mountain Monsters Vs. The Blair Witch*. That's because the team has ventured into the Dark Forest



in search of something known as the Black Wolf. Apparently, this Black Wolf likes to run with a ghost known as the Woman Of The Woods. Yup, a ghost. And she also likes to hang stick figures in the woods that not only bear an uncanny resemblance to the iconic figures from *The Blair Witch Project* movies, some of them are nearly identical, to the point where you have to wonder if there's some sort of

copyright infringement taking place. But she also makes giant rings that look similar to those used in the promotional materials for the US remake of *The Ring*, so I guess when it comes to ghostly women in the woods, no horror movie is safe.

When not engaging in supernatural arts and crafts in the woods, the ghostly woman also enjoys randomly showing up on camera, and (spoiler alert) possibly somehow being involved with a tiny skull being jammed up one of the AIMS member's nose, causing an entire episode of nose

bleeds before the light bulbs go off and another team member thinks, "Hey, you've been getting a lot of nose bleeds. Maybe there's something stuck in your nose."

There's also the ghost of a young girl who likes to pop up on video from time to time and randomly point at things. She may or may not be connected to the Black Wolf and/or the Woman Of The Woods. My guess is that the show felt they needed yet another horror movie cliché and went with "random foreboding ghost girl in the woods." But it's all up for debate since Season 5 ends without explaining who this girl is or how she fit in.

Season 5 of *Mountain Monsters* also ends without explaining why they felt the need to throw such an array of BS out to its audience of dedicated followers and if they truly expected said audience to swallow it all as truth. And that, gentle readers, is what has me all bent out of shape.



One of the many stick figures the AIMS Team encountered in the woods

Now, don't get me wrong. I fully understand the need for paranormal reality shows to bend the truth a bit, shall we say, in order to sustain interest with their viewers. But *Mountain Monsters* has chosen, for whatever reason, to step so far outside the boundaries that there now appear to be more things that are fake than real on the show.

Of course, there will be those who will say this is all harmless, fun entertainment. And I would agree with that assessment, to a point. I have to admit that I find their unique approach to being stealth-like when hunting/tracking—namely, yelling, screaming, walking around with

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Dear Mountain Monsters, Will You Please Just Stop? Cont.

flashlights and headlamps on, and even running their various ATVs wide open with headlights on—hysterical. But I find it funny because it is so ridiculous and over the top. Where it ceases to be funny to me is when I realize that *Mountain Monsters* has, from the very first episode, made the decision to portray the show as “real.”

And not just what we see on the show, either. The members of the AIMS group themselves are supposed to be real and AIMS itself is alleged to be a real group that had been in operation before Destination America came calling. On the show, AIMS members will often go out of their way to talk about their personal lives and how they got into the field. And perhaps most telling, there are multiple examples of interviews of the team members where they talk about how everything about the show is 100% real. I say this is most telling because if their defense is that the whole show is some sort of tongue-in-cheek mockumentary, there is absolutely no reason for the actors to stay in character outside of the show. Case in point, look at any classic mockumentary out there (*This is Spinal Tap* or any Christopher Guest movie will do, but the original *Blair Witch Project* works if you need to keep things in the horror/supernatural genre) and you will see that after the initial buzz dies down, the actors and everyone involved with the production come out from behind the camera and say, “It’s not real.”

Above all, my biggest issue with the path that *Mountain Monsters* has headed down is that the show has, I fear, caused irreparable damage to the field of cryptozoology. A field that, let’s be honest, was already standing on shaky ground before *Mountain Monsters* ever aired.

I say this because even before *Mountain Monsters* chose to venture down the road to Blair Witch or even the hypnotizing Cherokee Devil, battle lines were drawn between the skeptics and those who truly believed the show was real. Now that the show has become so asinine and obviously fake, the skeptics are now fully armed with a basket full of “I told you so”s, leaving those who believed in the show to suffer while pondering a hard decision: Admit they were duped by the alleged authenticity of the show or else continue to claim it is indeed real. If you ask me, neither one of those options are very appealing.

But the group most impacted by this show is the general public—the ones who really didn’t know much about



Image said to represent the Cherokee Devil, whose red eyes allegedly hypnotized a member of the AIMS Team

Bigfoot and/or monsters and just tuned in to see what all the fuss was about. I defy anyone to tell me anyone from the general public who tunes into a single episode will walk away thinking that the show is either complete BS or, if they think it’s real, that everyone in this field is a complete idiot.

And that is the real reason for my extreme displeasure over this show. Had they simply presented the show as a mockumentary of sorts, it would most certainly not have gathered the following it did. Simply put, as a work of fiction, it’s not that entertaining. It was the idea that this show was real that drew people in. And now, the show has gone so far off the tracks that to turn back is impossible.

If one takes a look at message boards and blog posts, there does appear to be a growing constituent of viewers who are as angry as I am about the show. Those viewers are almost certainly reflected in viewership as Season 5 of *Mountain Monsters* is the first season to show a serious dip in the numbers. Still, it is one of the top-rated shows on Destination America, so a Season 6 is probably all but confirmed. But I, for one, hope the series is over. As far as I’m concerned, the cryptozoology field needs *Mountain Monsters* like a Snallygaster needs a hole in the head.



SPEND THE NIGHT WITH THE GHOSTS OF OHIO: THE BELL NURSING HOME

This August, The Ghosts Of Ohio will be spending the night locked inside another haunted location as part of our Spend The Night program: The Bell Nursing Home in Kimbolton, Ohio.

The building first began as a private residence before being turned into a funeral home and then, finally, a nursing home. When the nursing home closed down in 2006, the remaining residents were relocated to other facilities. Or were they?

As we've mentioned before, all of us at The Ghosts Of Ohio are really excited for this overnight as this will be our first visit to The Bell Nursing Home. The facility is actually smaller than our usual Spend The Night locations, which makes for a more intimate investigation. We can't wait to (hopefully) hear and see what secrets The Bell might hold!

Stay tuned! We'll have a full write-up in the August edition of this very newsletter!



WANT TO SPEND THE NIGHT WITH THE GHOSTS OF OHIO IN 2017?

For those of you not familiar with our Spend The Night program, simply put, it's an opportunity for some of our fans to get locked inside of a haunted location with us on a private, overnight ghost hunt.

All you need to be is an active subscriber to this very newsletter. As long as you are, there's a chance your email address will be randomly pulled from the list. When that happens, you and a guest are headed to a haunted location with us for the night!



Investigations & Consultations

The Ghosts of Ohio are continuing to schedule investigations for 2017. 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 also 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>

Interact with The Ghosts of Ohio

In addition to our website, here are a couple of places where you can find The Ghosts of Ohio lurking online:

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