



The ghosts of Ohio® Newsletter

www.ghostsofohio.org

Volume 11 Issue 5

FROM THE SPOOKY DESK OF JAMES WILLIS:

The World Through My Daughter's Eyes



James

If you've been reading this newsletter for any length of time, no doubt you're familiar with my theory that in order for one to see ghosts, they might just need to look at things from a different

perspective. Oh yeah, and you've probably heard me rambling on and on about getting used to living out in the country. Well, recently, I had the opportunity for both of those worlds to collide.

Since my wife and I are both nature freaks (and now live with Hoover Reservoir practically in our back yard), we made the decision to try something new: kayaking. With neither of us having any sort of experience with using a kayak, we opted to purchase an inflatable one, albeit a heavy duty one that holds 450 pounds, before taking the plunge and purchasing a "real" kayak. You know, in case the whole thing went south and we never wanted to try it again.

So for the kayak's maiden voyage, Steph and I loaded the car up with every conceivable form of safety device, as well as an assortment of tools, towels, and sunscreen. All this despite the fact that the car ride down to the boat launch would take a grand total of four minutes. As for my four-year-old daughter, all she wanted to bring was a "picnic."

Once at the launch, while Steph and I struggled to get into the kayak without falling out, Courtney stood quietly, gazing out at the tiny clump of trees sticking out of the water, an area she dubbed Pirate Island.

Amazingly, we got the kayak launched and all three of us were off. Of course, the first destination, per Courtney's request,

was to take a trip around Pirate Island. As Steph and I struggled to keep the kayak moving in something resembling a straight line, Courtney just sat between us, taking it all in. Eventually, Courtney declared there were no pirates on Pirate Island and she wanted to go see another part of the reservoir; the part that was over on the other side of the bridge.

Before long, our kayak is propelling through the water, heading right for the bridge. As we got closer, I noticed a group of men under the bridge, fishing. So now, Steph and I were trying to not only avoid the slew of bobbers in the water, but also attempting to hug the other embankment without crashing into the rocks...or the bridge itself.

As we struggled and strained to make our way under the bridge, Courtney remarked about all the cliff swallows that had made their nests under the bridge. She talked about seeing the babies poking their heads out of the nests and of the "mommy and daddy" bringing food for said babies. She even said she saw a couple of "bird butts." As for me, I saw nothing save for the back of Steph's head, made just a wee bit blurry by the drops of sweat falling into my eyes.

Once on the other side of the bridge, Courtney declared it was time for the picnic. After managing to get Courtney her sandwich without falling out of the back of the kayak, I returned to struggling to keep us on course. Courtney just sat there, munching her sandwich, calling out all sorts of birds, bugs, and fish that I never saw.

Several hours later, when we were all safety back on shore and heading home, my thoughts turned to our successful kayak excursion and all the things Courtney had been excited to see. And then, like everything else, my thoughts turned to ghosts. That's when it really hit me: I really think there is something to being able to see things you never had

before when you simply sit back and take it all in. Courtney saw all sorts of things while we were on the kayak—stuff I didn't see because I was too busy focusing on other things. Rather than just enjoying the new experience, including the sights and sounds, I decided to focus elsewhere and, in doing so, missed so much (although, to be honest, "drowning" is something I think needs to be focused on, especially when you're talking about me embarking on a maiden kayaking adventure).



You see where I'm going with this. I think far too often, we get so caught up in the small details that we fail to see the big picture.

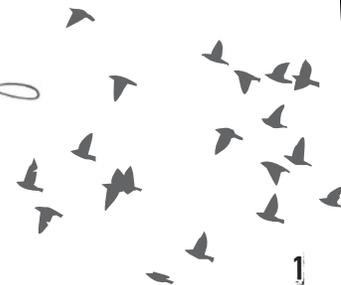
When it

comes to ghosts, I can't help but wonder how many of them are standing behind us, waving their arms and mouthing "Hey! Over here!", while we continue on, oblivious to their presence. Thankfully, we have children who can help guide us and teach us to relax...at least until the weight of the world crushes them and teaches them things like ghosts don't exist.

Until next time, my friends: keep looking up. You'll never know what you might see!

Cheers,

James A. Willis
Founder/Director



THE LIFE AFTER DEATH PROJECT: A REVIEW



Samantha

When Jim purchased this DVD and wanted someone in the group to review it for the newsletter, I got really excited to get it home and press play. Supposedly, someone had been

experiencing paranormal phenomena caused by a deceased friend and decided to make a documentary about it. I mean, who *wouldn't* want to check that out?

The deceased in question was/is a man named Forrest J (“Forry”) Ackerman. Born in 1916, he spent his life as an *extremely* passionate fan and proponent of all things science fiction. It’s thanks to him that we have the term “scifi,” we have scifi and horror conventions with cosplay and fan groups like Trekkies, and we have countless books, TV shows and movies



The late, great Forrest Ackerman

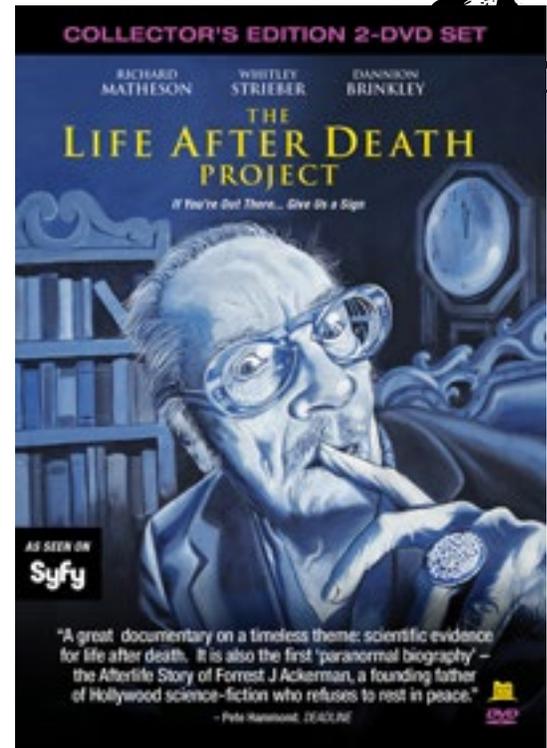
created by people who were inspired by him, like Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, John Landis, Peter Jackson, Tim Burton, Stephen King, Ray Bradbury, and more.

Forry used his expertise every day of his life. He was a scifi writer, a literary agent for over 200 writers, an actor, and the editor and head writer for an industry magazine called “Famous Monsters of Filmland.” The magazine not only introduced newbies to the scifi/horror/

fantasy genres, but it also celebrated the talents of artists both behind the camera as well as in front of it. Forry was also the world’s most avid collector of scifi memorabilia, and for 50 years shared his collection with fans for free at his museum-like “Ackermansion,” which had 18 rooms filled with over 400,000 objects. He was so important to the industry and so beloved by, well, everyone that he even received a World Science Fiction Society’s Hugo Award in 1953 for “#1 Fan Personality,” which is an award that’s never been given to anyone else. He absolutely loved what he did, generously shared his expertise and passion, and became one of the most important icons in Hollywood.

Sadly, Forry died at the age of 92 on December 4, 2008. However, his extraordinary story is far from over. It seems that people who were close to him started experiencing paranormal phenomena after his passing that they could only attribute to him. Is it genuine, or is it just wishful thinking? Paul Davids, a close friend of Forry’s and the creator of the documentary, believes whole-heartedly that Forry is still around.

Paul’s inspiration for the documentary began with his own strange experience involving blotted out words on a document. He had printed a list of contacts and left the document on his bed while he took a shower. When he came out of the shower, a specific line on the document was blotted out, seemingly by a heavy marker. It created a play on words, just like something Forry would do. Since Paul had been alone and could find no explanation for the marking, he decided to investigate it further by taking the document to a couple of different labs that specialize in forensics. They found the chemical composition of the blotting to be puzzling, partly because it contained silver, and partly because they could find no solution that could dissolve it. It was



clearly different ink than what was present on the rest of the document. So what was it, and where did it come from?

Paul soon found that other people were experiencing strange things, too. A couple of Forry’s friends were talking about him being dead when a spam-like advertisement popped up on the computer screen. It was an animated character laughing and saying, “No way!” Since Forry was someone who loved to joke around and have fun, they attributed the incident to him. Another friend wanted Forry to prove his presence by giving him a spider bite, which he hadn’t had in years. The next day, the man had a bite as well as a spider in his sink. The list of alleged Forry encounters goes on, including falling objects, a clock running and striking when it hadn’t run for years (and hasn’t run again since the filming of the documentary), clocks going off at three minutes to 12 (the time Forry died), etc. There have also been weird things going on at the former Ackermansion, which has been turned into an apartment building. Residents have had their papers placed on the floor and have seen a shadow walking

(continued on page 3.)



Samantha

SPOOKY (BUT NOT TOO SPOOKY!) READS FOR KIDS

Let's face it: if you're into the paranormal, it's probably nothing new. You've probably been hooked for a long time. Which means, if you're like me, you spent many a childhood day combing the local libraries in search of strange and spooky books to read. As a child, the perfect paranormal book for me was one that had that perfect mix of entertainment and spookiness. Do those books still exist today? That's exactly the question our very own Samantha Nicholson decided to tackle. Read on to see what she uncovered! – James A. Willis

Ghost Detectors #1: Let the Specter-Detecting Begin

by Dotti Enderle



10-year-old Malcolm is a wannabe scientist with a penchant for ordering quack scientific devices through the mail. Since they usually don't work, he is flabbergasted to discover that his new Ecto-Handheld-Automatic-Heat-Sensitive-Laser-Enhanced Specter Detector actually detects ghosts! It's really awesome! That is, until he gets a major wedgie from a prankster ghost at the creepy McBleaky house. It's one thing to detect spirits, but what do you do when you've found one? Of course, Malcolm's solution is to place an order for the Ecto-Handheld-Automatic-Heat-Sensitive-Laser-Enhanced *Ghost Zapper*. This device

works, and together with his best friend Dandy, the duo sets out to do some neighborhood investigating and ghost busting.

This is a fun read for ages 8 to 12. It's not too scary and has plenty of corny humor that young boys will love. It even includes Malcolm's "Top 15 Ways to Detect a Ghost" for those kids who want to be future paranormal investigators.

The Cryptid Files #1: Loch Ness The Cryptid Files #2: Mexican Devil

by Jean Flitcroft



A girl named Vanessa is the star of this series. In the first book Vanessa discovers her deceased mother's files on cryptids and soon becomes obsessed with finding them herself. As luck would have it, a family vacation takes her to Scotland, right near the shores of Loch Ness. Finding Nessie was her mother's lifelong dream, so Vanessa makes it her mission to fulfill that dream. In the second book Vanessa's best friend invites her to Mexico to stay with her extended family on their ranch during summer vacation. However, not everyone is happy to have the girls there, especially with the strange occurrences that have been happening. Townsfolk believe that the ranch is cursed. However, Vanessa wonders if a Chupacabra is to blame.

Appropriate for ages 9 to 14, this series features a smart, insightful girl whose encounters with cryptids are based on facts mixed with a lot of imagination. Kids who are new to the world of cryptozoology will be entertained by these books, and perhaps be inspired to do some research of their own!

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THE LIFE AFTER DEATH PROJECT: A REVIEW

through at least one of the rooms.

In an effort to prove that Forry is still around, Paul consulted with three different mediums to see if they could pick up on his presence. None of them were told with whom they were supposed to connect, but all three were able to give specific information that described Forry. One of them even asked about the blotted ink and supposedly got the answer that, "It was me." Dr. Gary Schwartz, the Director of the Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health at the University of Arizona, was also included in the documentary because of his research with communicating with spirits using technology. Supposedly, he has been able to communicate with Forry with yes and no questions.

So does *The Life after Death Project* prove that there is life after death and that Forrest Ackerman is still having fun at the expense of those closest to him? My opinion is a simple "maybe." It was an interesting, although somewhat disjointed, documentary; and a few of the experiences were certainly compelling. Honestly, though, I was more fascinated with the biographical information about Forry than with the details of a falling iPhone or a chiming clock. He was one heck of a fascinating character, and he lived an incredibly rich and fun-filled life. Whether he's still around in spirit or not, there's no doubt that his legacy will live on for generations to come.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES:

THE RUNNER

Adrienne W., Cambridge, OH

James's stories about living out in the country in your newsletter made me think of a really creepy story that happened to me when my family first moved out to the country near Salt Fork.

Maybe 15 years ago, my husband and I bought about 10 acres and built our dream home on it. We loved it even though I ended up having a 45 minute drive to work every day. I didn't mind it because it was a nice quiet drive on two-lane back roads.

From time to time, I would pass a jogger on my way to work in the morning, usually around 6:15 in the morning. The first time I saw him I thought he was a little odd. It wasn't because someone was out jogging as much as it was what he looked like. If I had to guess, I would say that the guy looked like he was in his 60s. He had really long curly hair that was completely grey. He was also wearing a black jogging suit with white stripes down the sides. I ended up nicknaming the guy Ozzy because his sweatpants reminded me of the ones Ozzy Osbourne used to always wear on the Osbournes reality show.

I wouldn't see him all the time; maybe like once or twice a year. But when I would see him I would be driving south and he would be running north, but in the other lane, so I would get a pretty good view of his face. Sometimes, I would wave, but he never waved back. He just kept on jogging.

The last time I saw him was maybe three or four years ago. It was right around that time that there was an article in our local newspaper saying that an arrest had been made in a jogger hit-and-run accident. I couldn't believe it as I read the article! It turns out that a 62-year-old man had been hit and killed by a car while jogging one morning—on the same exact road where I had been seeing my jogger! The article even had a picture of the jogger and I only

needed to see his long curly grey hair to know in an instant it was the same man!

The article explained that the man had been jogging one morning and appeared to be doing it on the wrong side of the road. A car came up behind him, hit him, and knocked him into the ditch. The car kept going. Had it stopped, they think the man could have been saved. But the car didn't stop and the poor man died on the side of the road because his body wasn't found for hours.

The article said that the police didn't have any leads at first, but a few years later, someone came forward and said that his neighbor had been the one driving the car that hit the jogger. He was quickly arrested and charged with vehicular homicide.

The man was eventually found guilty and sent to jail. Every morning, even this morning, I still look for that jogger when I'm on my way to work. But I never see him. I can't help but think that maybe his ghost was out there jogging because his murderer was still out there. Once they caught the guy and sent him to jail, the jogger's spirit was able to rest in peace. At least that's what I like to think.



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!





MEET OUR FOUNDER IN THE ALLEY!

Got an old, weathered copy of Weird Ohio you need autographed? Maybe grab a new copy of The Big Book Of Ohio Ghost Stories? Or just want an excuse to get outside, enjoy the sun, and browse some really cool arts, crafts, and antiques? Then come see The Ghosts of Ohio's founder and director, James A. Willis, on July 5th as he takes part in the annual Larchmere Festival in Shaker Heights, Ohio. It's free!

He'll be hiding down in the Author Alley, which is located right next to Loganberry Books (13015 Larchmere Boulevard, Shaker Heights)...in the alley. Willis will be joined by close to 50 other Ohio authors. And if that's not enough to draw you in, the Larchmere Festival has everything from antique and craft vendors to fun activities and an armada of food trucks.

For more information on the Larchmere Festival, [click here](#). And if you need more specific information on Author Alley, [go here](#).



Author Alley
July 5, 2014

THIS SEPTEMBER, THE GHOSTS ARE GOING TO JAIL

The Licking County Jail, to be precise. And just to clarify, we didn't break the law or anything, we're visiting the abandoned/haunted jail, not the active one!

In our never-ending effort to find and explore new haunted locations in Ohio, The Ghosts of Ohio will be conducting a private hunt at the Licking County Jail this coming September.

A fairly new addition to the list of Ohio locations offering public and private ghost hunts, the Licking County Jail will be featured on a July episode of Ghost Adventures.

So will we find any ghosts at the Jail? More importantly, will some of you get to join us? For those answers, stay tuned!



The old Licking County Jail, taken from www.parajail.com

EVER BEEN TO A CRYBABY BRIDGE IN OHIO?

If you have, The Ghosts of Ohio's founder and director, James A. Willis, wants to talk to you!

Willis is currently in the process of compiling what he hopes will be the most comprehensive database of all known Crybaby Bridges in the state of Ohio. And he wants you to help! So if you've ever been to a Crybaby Bridge/Tunnel/Lane/Hollow in the state of Ohio, drop Willis a line and let him know about it. What happened there? Anything? Did you hear the baby cry? Even if you think the whole story surrounding the area is bogus, he still wants to hear about it. He'll even include your story on the website, along with your story, when the site launches.

For more information about the project, visit his [author site](#). To submit your story, send it to jim@strangeandspooky.com



GOT GHOSTS?

REQUEST FOR MORE INFORMATION

From time to time, The Ghosts of Ohio learns about a haunted location that, try as we might, we just can't seem to dig up any additional information on. That's when we turn to one of the largest group of Ohio ghost experts out there; our newsletter readers! That's right, we're asking you to let us know if you have any information (or better yet, have had a personal experience) at any of the following locations. If you have, shoot us an email at info@ghostsofohio.org. And who knows? You just might get the chance to investigate the location along with The Ghosts of Ohio!

Black Rabbit Road (Samantha / Highland county)

Haunted Train Trestle (Abbeyville / Medina county)

Hell House (Lockbourne / Franklin county)

Witch's Pyramid (Ridgeway / Hardin county)

COMING IN THE AUGUST NEWSLETTER

- A Ghostly Farewell To Summer
- The Ghosts of Ohio's Jamboree
- Wanna See Something Really Scary? The Latest Round of Hollywood Horror Movies



Investigations & Consultations

The Ghosts of Ohio is still scheduling investigations for 2014. 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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<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Columbus-OH/The-Ghosts-of-Ohio/60704381381?ref=mf>



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Administration

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