



# The ghosts of Ohio® Newsletter

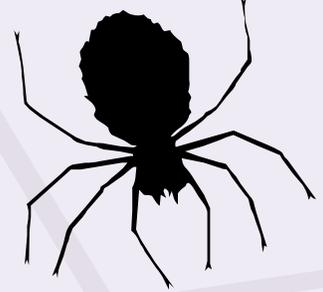
www.ghostsofohio.org

Volume 14 Issue 1

FROM THE SPOOKY DESK OF JAMES WILLIS:

THIS TIME,

## IT'S PERSONAL



James

### HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

And welcome to the first issue from our 14th year! That's right, The Ghosts Of Ohio Newsletter officially turns 14 with this issue.

Crazy, right? And it kind of got me thinking: Who are all these people who read this newsletter? More importantly, what are their thoughts and beliefs when it comes to ghosts? With that in mind, we here at The Ghosts Of Ohio decided to spend a little more time on the Personal Experiences section of this newsletter. Traditionally, we'd include a single reader-submitted story in each newsletter. Not this time! Read on and you'll find three Personal Experiences, which were submitted by readers just like you! Which reminds me—if you'd like to share your story with us and have it featured in a future edition of this newsletter, email it over to us and we'll be honored to include it in the months to come.

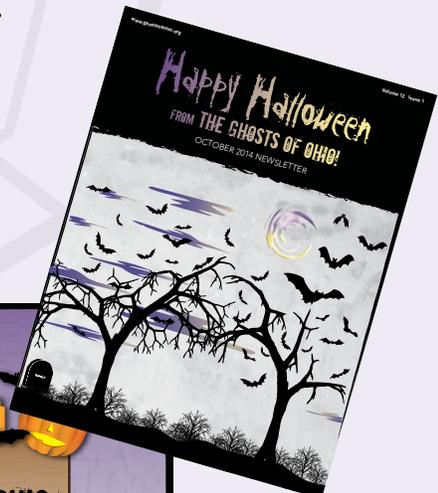
But we're not done there. Since turnabout is fair play, we thought it was time to give you all a peek behind the ghostly curtain and get to know a little more about us—The Ghosts Of Ohio. So starting with this very issue, we will be featuring a different member of The Ghosts Of Ohio, giving you the opportunity to find out who we are, how we got started, and what continues to drive us.

So I guess you could say that for our 14th year, we're getting personal! So if you have a burning question for any of us here at The Ghosts Of Ohio, let us know. And if it's a really good one, we'll feature it in an upcoming newsletter, giving you full credit of course!

OK, from the sounds of what I'm hearing upstairs, I think my wife and daughter just found my hidden stash of Halloween candy! Gotta dash lest they completely wipe me out of Sour Patch Kids.

Cheers,

James A. Willis  
Founder/Director



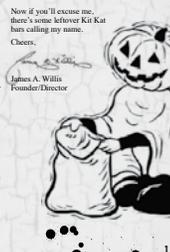
FROM THE SPOOKY DESK OF JAMES WILLIS:

### Gimme That Candy!



A few weeks ago I never once thought "you know what would make this Halloween complete? A satanic ritual." I never felt an overwhelming need to worship the devil. No, Halloween was always about the candy.

And you know, that got me thinking. As I was traveling across Ohio this October, for presentations and book signings, I would inevitably get questions about "demons," spirits and even if I'd ever had "demons" attack me. Short answer, no. Believe it or not, in all my 28+ years of actively chasing after ghosts, I've yet to encounter anything I would consider "demons." Of course, that seems to be all there are on these ghost reality shows. But maybe that's because for those shows, their aim is to frighten their audience. With me, my research is and has always been about one thing and one thing alone: ghosts. Sure, they're not as exciting as confronting a demon in a real-world version of *Mental Combat*, but I'll take it just the same.



Happy Halloween



# Personal Experiences

## Queenie

—Mary J., Newark, OH

This is kind of a weird story because I am convinced that I heard and felt the ghost of my dog, Queenie.

We first got Queenie as a puppy and we had her for 13 years. She was a big German Shepherd but she always pranced around like she was a queen or something—that's why my daughter named her Queenie. The only time she didn't act very ladylike was whenever she heard a door in our house open. When that happened she would stop at nothing to get outside. She really loved being outside.

The second you opened the door, you would hear Queenie running through the house towards the door. You had to hurry up and close it as quickly as possible or else she would try to fit through whatever part of the door that wasn't closed all the way. On the few times Queenie did get out, she just ran and ran forever. You couldn't catch her you just sort of had to keep an eye on her and wait for her to tire herself out. She really loved it outside.

Queenie died a couple of years ago. It was really hard but she was sick and we had to take her to the vet and have her put down. When we came home, I just sort of sat in the living room crying by myself. I decided to go sit outside in the sunshine to try and cheer myself up. As soon as I opened up the back door, I heard a familiar noise coming from upstairs. I heard what sounded like Queenie running towards the stairs and then running down them towards me. I never saw anything but I felt a slight breeze go past me and through the open door. I just stood there looking around. I never saw anything or heard that noise ever again. But I know that was the ghost of my Queenie running outside one last time.

I know she's never coming back and I am ok with that.



## Are You Asking Me To Help You?

—Linda S., Kent, OH

One short story I can tell you is the following. It happened in Colorado at the Cave of the Winds, and George Washington Snyder, a stonecutter from Ohio, excavated much of the cave.

While on vacation in Colorado, we made a trip to the Cave of the Winds. My buddies and I hung back from the group to catch more of the amazing sites. While walking into the Bridal Cave (I think that was the name), I noticed a woman walking away from the group heading down one of the adjacent corridors. I thought it was odd that she didn't have a lantern with her. Worried, I caught up to our group and walked over to the corridor where I had seen the woman walk. It was a dead end...and empty. She was wearing a white shirt and had very long black hair and seemed to be in her late 20s. I asked the guide at the end of the tour if she knew who I may have seen. Long story short, she was the wife of one of the men who owned and worked in the caves back in the late 1800s.

But the story I really wanted to tell you was the only time I ever had a ghost talk to me. I know crazy right? Not sure where to start so how about the beginning.



I moved into a home in Norton in 1998 with my husband. One day while dusting off some track lighting in the kitchen, I heard footsteps come down the stairs. From where I was I could not see who but of course assumed it was my husband. I was having a hard time reaching the lights and yelled out, "Hey can you help me with this real quick?" A male voice answered, "Are you asking me to help you?" I answered, "Yes, I can't reach this light." The male voice repeated, "Are you asking me to help you?" At this point I was a little mad and was about to climb down off the ladder and ask my husband what the heck?!? Before I could climb down, I heard footsteps walk down the second flight of stairs. An hour later, I found my husband in the garage. I asked him why he didn't help me. He looked at me with very wide eyes and said "I don't know what you are talking about. I haven't been in the house all morning." Wow!!

One weekend morning I lay in bed thinking about the chores I had to do that day. I heard footsteps and the bedroom door open. I wondered why my husband would come wake me up. Lying on my side facing away from the door, I decided to play possum. I felt a hand run up my side starting at my feet all the way to my shoulder. I opened my eyes, rolled over and no one was there. I got a little bit mad. I yelled at the ghost, "You can live here. You can talk to me. But don't you ever touch me like that again!" He didn't! We did hear him from time to time wandering through the house, but he never touched or talked to me again.

# Personal Experiences Cont.

## Give It Back

—Name and location withheld by request

Do you believe that things can have curses put on them? I never did but I'm pretty sure I had a necklace that had some sort of curse on it. Whatever it was it wasn't nice.

My sister and I always like going antiquing or checking out local swap shops and flea markets. About six years ago, we decided to stop into this cute little store outside Waynesville, Ohio. I was walking around in the store and didn't really see anything I liked when my sister came running up to me and grabbed my arm. She starts dragging me over to this one display case in the back of the store and she keeps saying, "Oh my god, wait till you see this; it's so creepy."

Well we get to this display case and there are all sorts of jewelry in it. My sister starts tapping on the top of the case and saying, "Look at it! How scary is that?"

There was a small silver necklace hanging on a piece of plastic at the back of the case. Hanging from the necklace was this tiny dragon that had a small black stone in its mouth. It looked old but other than that I didn't think much of it. Looked kind of cheesy to me if you want to know the truth.

But my sister keeps going on and on about how scary the necklace is and that she can feel the negative energy around it. She's been saying things like that for years and sometimes she's right. Most of the time though I think she just does it for attention. So when I saw that the necklace wasn't that expensive, I decided to buy it just to prove a point. Boy, was that a mistake!

The morning after I bought the necklace, I woke up with the worst headache I have ever had. On top of that, both of my hands were swollen to the point where I thought I was going to have to go to the hospital to get my wedding band cut off. I did end up going to the doctor but he couldn't find any explanation for what was wrong with me. He said he just thought it was an allergic reaction.

Starting that night, I began having really bad and vivid nightmares. They were always the same. I would be sitting in my house and then a dark figure would come into the room and point at me and

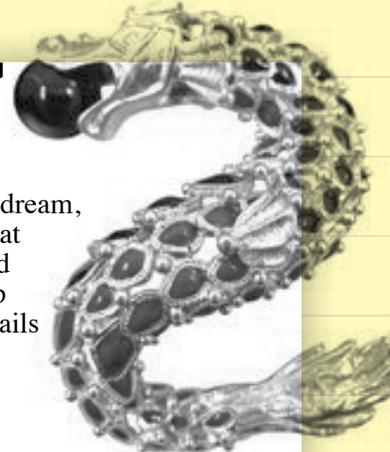
then say, "Give it back." In the dream, I would just sit there. I guess that would make the dark shape mad because it would lift its arms up and reveal long, bloody fingernails or claws. Then it would scream and jump at me. That's when I would wake up.

I had that dream every night for the next week. During that time, on top of me getting sick, my husband lost his job, the family car's engine died with only 30,000 miles on it, our cat died, and my 8-year-old son almost caught the house on fire trying to make breakfast.

When my sister came over to visit one weekend and I told her about all the bad things that were happening, she immediately said it was because of that necklace. I got mad at that and went into the bedroom to show her that there was nothing wrong with the necklace. I hadn't even worn the damn thing once! But here's the weird part. The necklace was still in the bag I brought it home from the store in and when I dug it out and looked at it, the black stone that was in the dragon's mouth when I bought it was RED now! Even scarier, there were two little red stones in the dragon's eyes that weren't there when I bought it!

I tried to convince myself that maybe the cashier had given me the wrong necklace, but my sister and I agreed that there was only one necklace like it in the case. It was then and there that I realized my sister was right and that there was something wrong with the necklace.

We tried to think of what to do and that's when I remembered my nightmares and the dark shape telling me to give it back. I didn't want to look stupid or foolish going back to the store and asking for a refund because the necklace was cursed, so we decided to just put it back in the original bag and leave it on the doorstep of the store with an unsigned note that just said, "I'm giving this back." And that's exactly what we did. I haven't had anything bad happen to me like what happened when I had that necklace. I never had that nightmare again, either.



# SPOOK LIGHTS

## AND ONE AUTHOR'S SEARCH FOR ANSWERS



Samantha

Years ago, before joining The Ghosts of Ohio, I participated in an investigation with another group at an old, dilapidated hotel that was undergoing massive renovations. I remember that

there was no heat, no power (except for a work light on the main level), and holes in the rotted floors that allowed us to see through to the floors below. I honestly don't know why we were allowed inside given the state of the place, but my memory of that night sticks with me because it was the first time I saw phantom lights that I couldn't explain.

Several of us were in an upstairs room, sitting around the perimeter of the dusty hardwood floor. Since the windows were boarded, the room was like a cave—utterly, completely dark. After about 10-15 minutes of idle chit-chat, I suddenly noticed a bright blue, quarter-sized point of light appear on the wall above a participant's head, then swoosh away almost as quickly as it appeared. Since our eyes tend to play tricks on us in complete darkness, and since no one else reacted to it, I blew it off. But it happened again! And the second time it happened, someone else saw it, too. The next thing we knew, everyone in the room was watching for the lights, which appeared three or four more times. We had no explanation for them. They obviously weren't reflections from anything outside the hotel, and no one had a flashlight or laser pointer that gave off that kind of light.

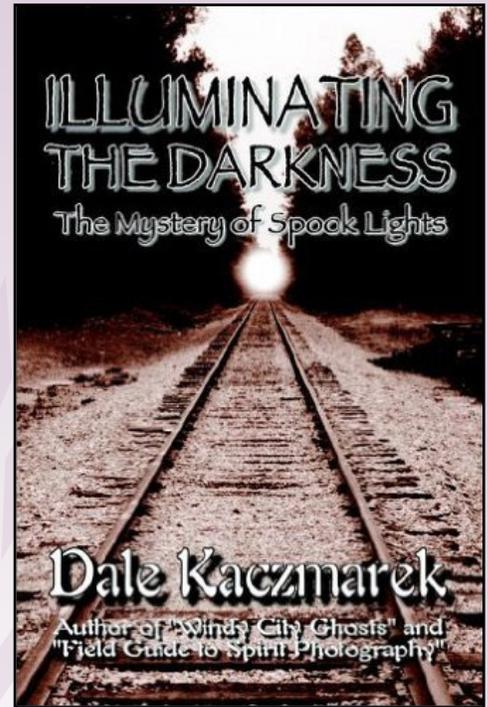
Remembering that night years ago made me very curious about reading author Dale Kaczmarek's book, *Illuminating the Darkness: The Mystery of Spook Lights*. Kaczmarek is the president of the Ghost Research Society, and he's been investigating the paranormal for over 30 years. His work has been cited in various publications, and he has appeared on documentaries about ghosts and hauntings. Maybe this book would shed some light (pun intended!) on what I saw.

Or maybe not.

As it turns out, this 2003 publication didn't even touch on the kind of lights I saw, which were indoors and away from the ground floor. Instead, Kaczmarek's book is all about the mysterious lights people have seen on hillsides, railroad tracks, roads, and anywhere else in the great outdoors. These kinds of lights have been seen for centuries, going by a plethora of names, like spook lights, ghost lights, mystery lights, ghost beacons, will-of-the-wisps, night suns, fox fire, elf lights, corpse lights, fairy lights, and many more. What are these mysterious lights?

First, Kaczmarek outlines biological, geological and meteorological explanations for the phenomena. For example, swamp gas can glow or even ignite as a result of decomposition. And then there's lightning, which can take on many forms—volcanic lightning happens around erupting volcanoes, ball lightning is shaped like a ball and happens during storms, and sprites are electrical discharges above storm clouds. Friction can also be a cause of luminescence. As sand particles strike each other in dry areas, the static electricity built up can give off light; and earthquakes can create lights as rock strikes rock along fault lines. There are a lot of scientific explanations for some "spook lights." But what about the lights that *don't* have these factors involved?

Kaczmarek's research has identified some commonalities among them, but nothing concrete when it comes to causes. The vast majority of unexplained ghost lights are seen near bodies of water, along railroad tracks, and on long rural roads, "the lonelier the better." They can be any color or size, and most are silent. As for their behavior, that's where things get very interesting for a paranormal investigator. Some lights behave like residual hauntings—their appearance and movement is somewhat predictable, and they don't interact with anyone. Other lights behave like intelligent hauntings by disappearing when people approach or by actively giving chase, even seeming to attack people! Interestingly, some of those who have gotten close to these lights have experienced hearing voices from the lights, dizziness, and even what seemed like radiation sickness.



Kaczmarek has investigated these lights for years, as have a plethora of other researchers and organizations, including the Smithsonian and the United States Geological Survey. After eliminating known scientific and human causes, they're left with a mystery that still hasn't been solved. Are we dealing with a haunting situation? Based on all of the state-by-state urban legends outlined in Kaczmarek's book, the consensus among storytellers seems to be that spirits of the dead are appearing as lights and seeking either their loved ones, or their own severed heads. However, others have proposed that we may be dealing with extraterrestrials, or even inter-dimensional phenomena. On one investigation Kaczmarek himself witnessed a glowing "diamond-shaped object with a hollow center" in Missouri that someone warned him was a "doorway to another dimension." Whatever's happening, it's obvious that this mystery will persist for a long time to come.

As for Kaczmarek's book, I'm actually surprised that I gleaned as much information from it as I did here. Books of urban legends aren't usually of much interest to me. However, I appreciated his efforts to investigate the spook light phenomenon and his ability to systematically eliminate possible causes. I wish that he had included more photos and diagrams; and I would have liked to have seen a much higher quality in the few photos he did include. But the book serves as a decent introduction to spook lights. Now if I could just figure out what those lights in the hotel were.

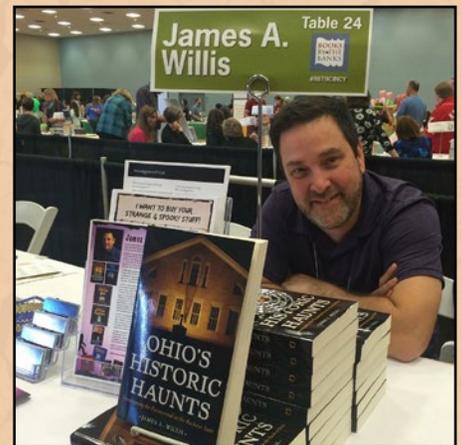
# Thanks for coming out and meeting **THE GHOSTS!**



The Halloween edition of this newsletter is always a bit sad for us because it means another of our Fall Tours has come and gone. But boy, was it a load of fun!

This past month, The Ghosts Of Ohio took part in several ghost walks and even a lantern tour. Plus, there were presentations and appearances at various Ohio libraries, schools, conventions, and even several retirement homes.

As always, it is an extremely humbling experience to get to meet all of our fans and, more importantly, swap ghost stories with you. Your smiles and words of encouragement is what keeps us going!





# MEET THE GHOSTS OF OHIO: SEAN



**Length of time in The Ghosts Of Ohio?** 8 years

**What got you interested in ghosts?** My parents, shows about haunted places, and some of my own experiences with the unexplained.

**Favorite piece of ghost-hunting equipment?** Myself. No other piece of equipment can tell me when something is happening better than my own personal feelings. There is nothing better than the moment when you feel the weight of something happening around you that you can't explain. I also like the security camera setup we have. It's fun to watch.

**Favorite place you've investigated?** To date I would have to say Mansfield Reformatory—one of the coolest buildings I've seen.

**Three places you'd love to investigate?**

- Waverly Hills Sanatorium
- Myrtle Inn Plantation in New Orleans
- Wilson Children's Home in West Union, OH



## SEND THE GHOSTS BACK IN TIME!

We've all got them: Those scary stories of haunted places from our 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](mailto: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!



## 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!

Since the last quarter of each year is usually when we're out giving presentations and making appearances at various locations, there are no more Spend The Night events planned for 2016. But we're already well on our way to planning at least four events for 2017, so keep your eye on this newsletter for us to announce where you'll have the chance to spend the night with us!



# 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](mailto: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!

## Investigations & Consultations

The Ghosts of Ohio are continuing to schedule investigations for 2016 and have also begun setting dates 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](mailto: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:

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

 TWITTER  
<http://twitter.com/ghostsofohio>

## Administration

The Ghosts of Ohio Newsletter is a free, bimonthly email newsletter. To subscribe, unsubscribe, or change your email address, please visit <http://mailman.ghostsofohio.org/mailman/listinfo/ghostsofohio>.

Please do not send vacation notices or other auto-responses to us, as we may unsubscribe you.

The Ghosts of Ohio collects your name and email address for the purpose of sending this mailing. We will never share your name or email address with advertisers, vendors, or any third party, unless required by law. The Ghosts of Ohio will never sell, trade, or rent your personal information.

For more information, please visit us online at [www.ghostsofohio.org](http://www.ghostsofohio.org).

**NEWSLETTER STAFF:** Editor-In-Chief: James Willis   Copy Chief: Kathy Boiarski   Designer: Stephanie Willis  
Contributing Authors: Samantha Nicholson, Sean Seckman, James Willis