

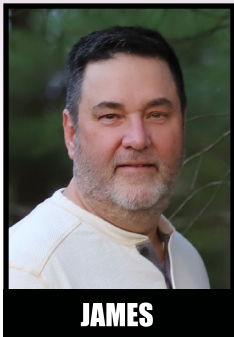


The ghosts of Ohio[®] Newsletter

www.ghostsofohio.org

Volume 23 Issue 4

TIME FOR ANOTHER TWO-BOTTLE CONVERSATION



JAMES

What I'm about to get into ties directly into *Ohio's Historic Haunts II*, which is still in production, so I've got to keep some details close to the vest for now. But something has come up that I genuinely can't shake—and I'd love to hear what others think.

It comes down to one simple question:
where does ghostly music come from?

We've now had three separate instances involving the same traditional song showing up out of nowhere. In one case, investigators heard it live, right there in the room. In another, no one heard anything at the time—it only showed up later during audio review. And then there's the third instance, which might be the strangest of the bunch.

We were playing trigger music through a speaker—period-appropriate stuff, like we usually do. When this particular song came on, everything seemed normal in the moment. But when we reviewed the audio later, it sounded like someone—or something—was humming along to the melody. No lyrics, just the tune. And it matched.

That's the part that stops you in your tracks.

Now, I still can't get too specific (you'll have to read the book for that, LOL), but I can say this: the song itself is well-known and over 150 years old. We often use music tied to a location's time period or to individuals connected to it, so that part isn't unusual. What is unusual is that there's no known connection between this song and any of the locations where it showed up. One of those

locations isn't even in Ohio—and isn't part of the book at all.

So, what are we dealing with here?

By definition, music doesn't really fall under EVP—Electronic Voice Phenomena. You could maybe argue that the humming qualifies, but what about the other two instances? In both of those, the music just appeared—once heard in real time, once only captured on recording.

If it wasn't heard live, is that some kind of residual playback? A time slip? And if so, how does that even work?

But then you've got the humming. That doesn't feel residual. That feels responsive. If something is reacting to music we're actively playing, that suggests intelligence. Awareness. Interaction. And if that's the case, what does that say about the other side? Are we talking about something that can hear us? Interpret sound? Recreate it? That's where things start to slip out of the realm of tidy explanations. At a certain point, you run out of clean answers and end up right where we are now; standing around, tossing theories back and forth, and admitting, "Okay, this is weird."

And honestly? That's the kind of weird that keeps me going.

Cheers,

James A. Willis
Founder/Director



PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

MY HUSBAND'S RECLINER

Angela L., Akron, Ohio

I'll tell you this the same way I tell my sister. Just straight through, no dressing it up too much, because even now, I'm not entirely sure what to make of it. This happened about eight years ago, not long after my husband passed. I'd stayed in the house since we'd been there nearly thirty years, and I just couldn't bring myself to leave it yet. The house itself wasn't anything special. A plain two-story in a quiet neighborhood. No history of ghosts or anything weird that I knew of.

The first thing I noticed was the chair. It was my husband's recliner in the living room. It was the one chair no one else ever sat in. Not because we weren't allowed, but because it just felt wrong to. Even after he passed, I left it exactly where it was. Sometimes I'd catch myself glancing at it like he might still be there, watching television with the volume a little too loud.

About a month after the funeral, I came downstairs one morning, and the chair was tilted back. Not all the way. Just enough that someone had clearly been sitting in it.

I've always been a practical person. My first thought was that maybe I'd bumped it the night before and didn't realize. Or maybe the mechanism slipped. It was an old chair, after all. So, I pushed it back upright and went about my day. But the next morning, it was the same thing. It was tilted again and in the same position as before. That's when I started paying attention.

I made a point that night of setting it perfectly upright. I even gave it a little extra push forward, so it leaned just slightly the other way. I remember thinking, Well, if it moves now,



I'll know. I came down the next morning, and there it was—tilted back again. Not just upright. Tilted, like someone had eased themselves into it and settled in.

I'll be honest with you, that's when I felt that first little chill. Not fear exactly. Just like an awareness,

like realizing you're not as alone as you thought you were.

I didn't say anything to anyone at first. Didn't want to sound foolish. But things kept happening. Small things that were easy to explain if you wanted to. The TV would be on in the mornings, tuned to the sports channel he used to watch. I was never one for watching sports on TV. Too much noise. But there it would be, low volume, like someone had been sitting there listening.

(continued on page 3.)

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

MY HUSBAND'S RECLINER *continued*

And then there was the smell. My husband used the same aftershave for years. Nothing fancy, but you'd recognize it instantly if you smelled it. One evening I was in the kitchen, just standing at the sink, and it drifted past me. Clear as anything. Not faint at all, more like someone had just walked by. I actually turned around and said, out loud, "Alright, that's enough now." I laughed when I said it, but my hands were shaking a little. I won't lie about that.

Now here's the part that changed everything for me. It was late, maybe around 10:30, and I was sitting in the living room reading. The chair was across from me, empty. I remember glancing at it, like I always did. And then I heard that soft, familiar creak. The sound that chair always made when someone leaned back in it. I looked up and saw that the footrest was slowly and smoothly coming up, exactly the way it did when he used it.

I didn't scream. I didn't move. I just sat there and watched, like my brain couldn't quite decide what it was seeing. The chair settled back into that same position I'd seen every morning and then it stopped.

I must have sat there for five minutes without blinking. I kept waiting for something else to happen. For a voice, or a shadow, or something to step out of that chair. But nothing did. Finally, I said, very quietly, because it felt like the right thing to do, "If that's you, you don't have to stay."

I don't know why I said that. It just came out. And I swear to you, that chair eased forward. Not fast or dramatically. It just returned to its upright position, as if someone was standing up. After that, everything stopped. No more tilted chair. No TV turning on. No aftershave drifting through the kitchen. The house went back to being quiet.

Now, I've gone over this a hundred times in my head. I can explain parts of it away if I try hard enough. But not the moment when I watched that chair move on its own. And not what happened after I spoke. So, here's what I've settled on: I don't think it was something trying to scare me. I think my husband just hadn't quite left yet. And once I told him he could, he did.

WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR GHOSTLY EXPERIENCES!

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 e-mail 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!



PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

IT KNEW OUR NAMES

Angela L., Akron, Ohio



I'm just gonna type this out exactly how it happened, because every time I try to explain it out loud people either laugh or say I was half asleep. So, this was like Tuesday night. Nothing special. I had school the next day, so I was actually trying (for once) to go to bed at a normal time. It was around midnight, maybe a little after. I'm in my room, lights off, just scrolling on my phone. House is completely quiet. Parents are asleep, dog's downstairs. And then I hear my name. Like clear as day. Not loud. Not yelling. Just someone saying my name right outside my door.

I froze. At first, I thought it was my mom. But it didn't sound like her. It was hard to explain. It sounded normal, but also kind of flat. Like no emotion behind it. So, I'm just laying there, staring at my door, waiting for it to open. It doesn't.

So, I call out, "Yeah?" Nothing. No answer. Now I'm annoyed more than anything, because I'm thinking someone's messing with me. So, I get up, open the door. Hallway's empty. Lights are off. Everyone's doors are closed. I even checked my parents' room. Both asleep. Like asleep asleep.

So, I'm like, okay...cool...that's weird, but whatever. Maybe I imagined it. I go back to my room, shut the door, get back in bed. Not even two minutes later—

I hear it again. My name. Same voice. Same tone. Right outside my door.

At this point I'm not annoyed anymore. Now I'm just sitting there like...nope. I don't answer this time. I just listen. And then I hear something else. A knock.

Three taps. Soft. Right on my door.

I swear my whole body just locked up. Like I couldn't even move for a second.

Finally, I get up again—because I'm stupid, apparently—and I open the door fast this time. Nothing. Again. But this time I noticed something. The bathroom light at the end of the hallway was on. And I know it wasn't on before.

So now I'm thinking, okay, maybe my dad got up and didn't answer me or something. I walk down the hallway, kinda slow, and I'm like, "Hello?" No response. The bathroom door is cracked open just a little. Light's on inside.

I push it open. No one's there. Sink's dry. No noise. Nothing. Just the light on.

And right as I'm standing there, trying to figure out what's going on, I hear my name again. Behind me. Not from down the hall this time. Right behind me.

Like someone standing just over my shoulder.

I turned around so fast I actually smacked into the door. And there's nobody there. But I felt it. Like that feeling when someone's standing too close to you? Like you can just tell? That. I didn't even bother turning the bathroom light off. I just went straight back to my room and shut the door. Locked it this time.

I stayed awake for a while after that, just listening. Didn't hear anything else.

Eventually I must've fallen asleep. Next morning, everything seemed normal.

But here's the part that messed me up the most. I asked my mom at breakfast if she came to my room at all during the night. She said no. Then she goes, "Why?"

And I was like, "I thought I heard you call me." And she just kinda paused and goes, "That's weird."

I asked why. And she said around the same time, like right around midnight, she thought she heard me call her from the hallway. Said she even got up and checked, and I was in my room with the door closed.

So yeah. I don't know what that was. But if something calls your name in the middle of the night, I'm just saying, don't answer it.

MY SATANIC PANIC EXPERIENCE



WENDY

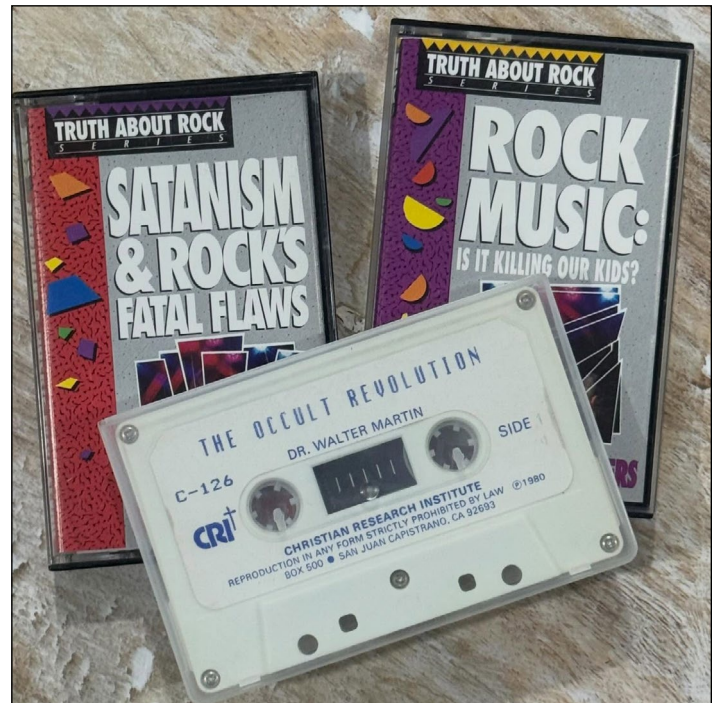
Lately, Jim has been obsessing over the 'satanic panic' of the 1980s, so I figured I had to tell my own story.

In the late 1980s, a friend and I wrote a local music magazine. At the time, I was still living at home, and at dinner one night, my Dad asked me, 'So what do you have going this weekend?' I told him we were interviewing a band out in Newbury. He promptly said, 'Be careful. There is satanic cult activity out there.' I figured he was just spinning a yarn, but no, he was telling the truth.

Back at the time (May 1989), my Dad – who was a union pipefitter – was doing HVAC work out in Geauga County. And from talking to the people out there, he said that farmers and people who had land were finding dead dogs hanging on fence posts along the road. The dogs were gutted and their eyes were missing.

Now this could be anything from gang initiation to teenagers trying to freak people out, especially the Amish who live out there. But according to the lore at the time, a dead dog with no eyes, particularly a German Shepherd, were used as 'guardians of the dead' or 'Satan's watchdogs'. So that really got that area panicked. Even a band I knew in Chardon referred to the Convenient Mart as the 'Covenant Mart' and wouldn't go into it after dark.

Anyway, my friend and I headed out to Newbury to do our interview at one of the band member's home. His mother greeted us when we came in and said, 'you'll want to be out of here before midnight because things get really



hairy around here'. Seriously, it was like everyone was totally freaked out.

Needless to say, the interview and the jam session ran long. As we were getting ready to leave... well after dark and closing in on midnight, the mother looked at the clock and said it wasn't midnight yet, so we should be good. But she followed that up by telling us not to stop at red lights. If we did, she said to watch the corners carefully and, if people started appearing on them, to go through the light and get out of there.

Hmmm. I had NEVER had an adult tell me to just go through a red light. I was 25 at the time, so that literally put a chill down my spine. I was driving, and as my friend and I got in the car, I was talking about how, if even the mother was giving that kind of advice, we should definitely heed it. We pulled out and at the end of the street hung a right and then traveled down the

(continued on page 6.)

MY SATANIC PANIC EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

road until...we hit a red light at the crossroad. As we sat there somewhat nervously waiting for the light to change, we noticed people coming out of literally nowhere, on both sides of the car, coming to the street. Well, I was a good law-abiding Libra, and I was not going to go straight through a red light, so I turned right.

I wasn't in full panic mode, but as we were now driving down a 2-lane road to who knows where, lights came on up ahead, headed toward us. Spooked, I saw a road sign and quickly hung a right, yelling to my friend, 'Are they following?' To which she replied, 'I don't know... Yes, yes, they are turning!' Completely wiggled out at this point, I sped up, barely noticing that the 'road' I had turned on had become dirt...running through a corn field that still had last year's stalks up. (*Children of the Corn*, anyone?)

As the corn stalks beat against the side of the car, the stalks being higher THAN the car, my friend kept screaming, 'Where are we, where are we?' I just continued driving, watching my rearview mirror to see if we had lost the truck, and watching for any road lights that could

help. I came to a non-dirt road, hooked another right, and kept going. At least we were no longer in a corn field. I kept going until the road kind of dead-ended on I-90, so we were well out past Chardon. I followed along the highway until I found a ramp to get on, and we were on our way home. Whew!! And to this day I wonder why we were driving through full-on corn in May?!?

So...was it all 'suggested' to us by everyone else's fear? Were the people who suddenly just came up on the corners of that intersection coming for us, or were they just out for a little midnight walk on a Saturday night? What was really going on in Geauga County at the time...were people just worked up over things that had nothing to do with satanism? I guess I will never know.... I just remember how amped up we were after all this stuff started happening. And yes, the original *Children of the Corn* is still one of my favorite movies.

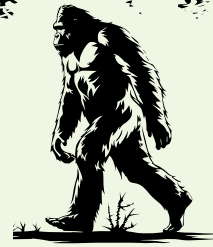
'We've come to give you peace'.



EQUIPMENT REVIEWS

Got a piece of paranormal equipment you've always wondered how it works? Does it really do what it's supposed to be doing? Or maybe you've created some paranormal equipment you'd like field tested? Either way, let us know because The Ghosts Of Ohio would love to help! Drop us a line at info@ghostsofohio.org with the subject line "Equipment" and we'll take it from there!

"HEY, DID YOU HEAR ABOUT BIGFOOT?"



There are basically three things that northeast Ohioans hold true when it comes to the month of March. First, we expect the weather to be erratic. One day it's sunny and 65; the next day it's 20 and snowing. That's just how it is. Second, March is the heart of our maple sugaring season. There is seriously no shortage of pancake breakfasts

to enjoy all month long, the best ones offering real, locally-made maple syrup! And third, March is when we begin to see signs that winter is loosening its grip. The grass begins turning greener, small buds appear on trees, and flowers like daffodils begin to pop with some much-needed color.

What we didn't expect this year was Bigfoot.

I first noticed the posts on social media. People in my area were spreading news that Bigfoot had been spotted in Mantua. That's only 15 minutes from my house, so I was definitely intrigued! Within the next several days, he had been spotted in Garrettsville, Streetsboro, Windham, and Newton Township. It became such a hot topic that the news spread to a national level, even getting a mention on *Late Night with Stephen Colbert!*

Here are the facts in case you somehow missed all of this:

- Sightings took place in Mantua on March 6th & 7th, Garrettsville, Streetsboro & Windham on March 9th, and finally in Newton Township on March 10th. Indications are that the creature (or creatures) was/were migrating in a southeasterly direction through Portage & Trumbull counties.
- Witnesses described the creature as anywhere between 6-10 feet tall, with brown or black hair, a strong musky odor, and a stilt-like gait.
- At the time of the sightings, witnesses had been driving, hiking, or walking their dogs. The encounters only lasted a few seconds, and no confirmed photos were taken.



Headwaters Trail, Garrettsville

This event holds significance because, according to Jeremiah Byron of the Bigfoot Society Podcast, "It's normal for there to be Bigfoot sightings all over the United States, but it's not normal to have multiple sightings in a small area within a short number of days." In cryptozoological terms, this is called a "flap" of sightings, which he says hasn't happened since the late 1970s.

Regardless, the Bigfoot phenomenon brought some humor to local communities, inspiring restaurants to create themed menu items, businesses to include Bigfoot in their advertising, and even locals to don Bigfoot costumes, popping up unexpectedly around town. Everywhere I went, people were talking about it, and I was lucky enough to spot one of the "creatures" while volunteering at a pancake breakfast in Burton! He entered the hall, made a pass through the packed room, and then quietly made his exit. I'm not sure how many people looked up from their pancakes (with real maple syrup) to notice, but I saw him. Unfortunately, I missed the chance to get a photo, though, to be fair, the costume was clearly too small for the guy wearing it, since the back was open! I couldn't help but laugh.

And if you're curious, yes, I did hike the Headwaters Trail in Garrettsville with a friend to see if we could find Bigfoot. We found no trace of him, but we had a great time joining in the quest, even for a couple of hours.

PRESENTATION AND APPEARANCE CALENDAR

The following are the only confirmed dates...or just the ones we're allowed to talk about now! Lots more are in works, including an Adult Education class and a super-fun event for October where I will be speaking about a certain werewolf said to be lurking around Defiance, Ohio. Stay tuned!



Saturday-Sunday, July 11-12 Columbus Book Festival

Columbus Metropolitan Library:
Main Branch
96 S. Grant Avenue
Columbus, OH 43215

James A. Willis will be participating
in the following Panel:

Midwest Murders: True Crime
Sunday, July 12th @ 12:00 pm
in Room 3B

For more information, visit
columbusbookfestival.org

Tuesday, July 28th The Spooky Side of Abraham Lincoln

Pickerington Main Library
201 Opportunity Way
Pickerington, OH 43147

Monday, August 31st @5:30 pm My Strangest & Spookiest Investigations presentation

Hillsboro Public Library
10 Willettsville Pike
Hillsboro, OH 45133

Wednesday, October 14th Meet The Ghosts of Ohio presentation

Beavercreek Community Library
3618 Dayton-Xenia Road
Beavercreek, OH 45432

Saturday, October 17th @ 4:00 pm Weird Events in Ohio History presentation

Dayton Metro Library:
New Lebanon Branch
715 West Main Street
New Lebanon, OH 45345

Investigations & Consultations

The Ghosts Of Ohio continue to schedule investigations and consultations for 2026. So, 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.

Are you unsure if you want or need an investigation? The Ghosts of Ohio also offers consultations. Let us discuss your current situation and what help we can offer. For more information, please visit

<http://ghostsofohio.org/services/investigations.html>

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