



# Spirit Society of PA.

## A P P A R I T I O N S

www.spiritsocietyofpa.com

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS · Vol 19, Issue 1 · JAN 2014

### *'Slightly haunted' Pennsylvania home on sale for an unfrightening \$140,000 Steve James NBC News contributor*



The house for sale in Dunmore, Pa., that owner Greg Leeson says is “slightly haunted.” A staircase with spooks, a bathroom that goes Boo!, and sparkling finished hardwood floors – this Pennsylvania house has it all, almost. In the listing for his 1901 Victorian house at 1217 Marion St., Dunmore, Pa., Greg Leeson is asking for \$144,000, but he adds that the house is “slightly haunted, nothing serious, though.”

Here is what the prospective buyer will get for his money besides the four walls and roof: The sounds of phantom footsteps, a strange knocking, a “hardly noticeable” scream at 3:13 a.m. (once a week), and “the occasional ghastly visage lurking behind you in the bathroom mirror.” That little extra occurs rarely and only in an upstairs bathroom, according to the listing.

If that’s “slightly haunted,” it’s hard to figure out what “very haunted” might be. For sale: split-level ranch packed with poltergeists? Leeson’s for-sale-by-owner listing on real estate website Zillow has prompted offers and interest from buyers and would-be ghost hunters. “When I was writing it, I had been thinking about it, and I went back and forth,” Leeson told Zillow. “The way I worded it — I was trying to keep it light. I have been reading online, and people saying you are supposed to disclose it. I don’t know the laws here, but thought better safe than sorry.”

Leeson was not immediately available to comment to NBCNews.com. But he clearly believes the haunting might be a selling point — and he might be right. A recent survey by realtor.com found that more than half of home buyers are open to buying a haunted house and 35 percent of the nearly 1,400 people who took the survey say they have lived in a haunted home.

“When purchasing a home, buyers want to know what they are getting into and that includes anything potentially spooky,” said Alison Schwartz, vice president of corporate communications for Move Inc., which operates realtor.com. “Our data reveals that while the majority of consumers are open to purchasing a haunted home, many buyers conduct research on a home’s history to be aware of any weird incidences.”

But while some respondents “are willing to purchase a haunted home at a discounted price, many say levitating objects, ghost sightings and objects moving from one place to another would deter them from purchasing a home,” she said.

According to Frank L. DeFazio, a real estate agent and former lawyer with the Center City Team in Philadelphia, state law only requires sellers to disclose material defects, such as dry rot or ant infestations. “There is a distinction between physical defects and psychological flaws, or stigma like murder. Haunting is difficult to prove,” he told NBCNews.com. DeFazio recommends full disclosure to avoid potential lawsuits. And sometimes, if the person who died in a home was famous, such disclosure can even help.

“Especially in a historic district like Philadelphia, where President James Madison died, that can increase the value,” DeFazio said. Some disagree. Randall Bell, a specialist in so-called stigmatized real estate, says the recent involuntary manslaughter conviction against Michael Jackson’s doctor, Conrad Murray, could make it difficult to sell the mansion where the King of Pop died. The house was designated a crime scene. “That is usually not a good thing in terms of home values,” Bell said in a recent interview with a real estate industry web site [www.appraisalbuzz.com](http://www.appraisalbuzz.com). Roy Condrey, who runs [diedinhouse.com](http://diedinhouse.com), a service that researches whether there has been a violent death in a home, noted that singer Amy Winehouse’s home in London did not sell for its list price after the British singer died. The house in a fashionable part of the city sold last year for 1.98 million pounds (\$3.2 million) at auction, after it failed to attract serious buyers on the real estate market. The house had been put up for sale in May 2012 for 2.7 million pounds.

Condrey said his service culls information about previous tenants of homes from public records. “I can basically break down my

customers into five groups — people interested in the paranormal, people who want to know their home’s genealogy, people who fear ghosts, people who don’t care, but don’t want the stigma (of a death in the home) and people who want to use a death for leverage to get a better price.” He said only three states — California, Alaska and South Dakota — require an owner to reveal if there has been a death, especially a violent death, in a house.

“But if I invested in a house and moved in and later discovered that a mother had drowned her five kids in the bath, I’d be upset,” he said.

### ***Penn Researchers Examine History, Beliefs and Rituals Tied to Ghosts***

November 22, 2013

A group of scholars at the University of Pennsylvania is actively engaged in the scholarly examination of the history of beliefs in ghosts and the phenomenon of ghost hunting.

Justin McDaniel, professor and chair of the religious studies department at Penn, is director of the Penn Ghost Project, a Faculty Working Group of the School of Arts and Sciences.

Formed last spring, the group is comprised of faculty from literature, art history, nursing, archaeology, religious studies, the history and sociology of science and medicine.

“Either we’re all crazy,” McDaniel says, “or ghosts are a part of human phenomena and have been a mass phenomenon for a long, long time.”

This fall the Penn Ghost Project presented its first public event, a symposium on interdisciplinary approaches to studying the other-worldly. In the year ahead, the faculty research team will focus on the intersection of ghosts, healing and health care.

McDaniel became familiar with rituals to “call and petition” ghosts as healers when he spent time as a Buddhist monk in Southeast Asia. There, he learned about the practice of harvesting body parts and fluids from the deceased to create amulets to protect wearers from harm. His experiences led to his award winning book on ghost protection and healing called *The Lovelorn Ghost and the Magical Monk: Practicing Buddhism in Modern Thailand*.

Other faculty affiliated with the Penn Ghost Project include David Barnes, Marjorie Muecke, Projit Mukharji, Ilya Vinitzky and Joyce White.

McDaniel believes it’s no coincidence that they all ended up teaching at Penn, a first-rank research institution. The convergence of so many scholars with research strands that involve ghosts, is, however, uncanny.

“It was kind of odd that we all came here,” he says. “We might have already been a center for scholarly ghost research in America and didn’t even know it.”

Penn Ghost Project scholars’ areas of research are wide ranging.

McDaniel has taught graduate courses on death and the afterlife in Buddhist cultures and currently teaches a religious studies course called *Gods, Ghosts and Monsters*.

David Barnes, associate professor of the history and sociology of science, has conducted in-depth interviews of paranormal investigators who’ve been active in preservation efforts at the Lazaretto, a quarantine station that operated outside Philadelphia on the Delaware River in 1801-1895. He has informally observed many paranormal enthusiasts at the site and is writing a history of the Lazaretto.

Marjorie Muecke, assistant dean for global health affairs in the School of Nursing, is a specialist in traditional healing and nursing practices, infant death and midwifery in Thailand. For more than 30 years she has studied ghost belief in Laos and the ways ghosts are invoked and used in healing ceremonies.

Projit Mukharji, assistant professor of the history and sociology of science, is a historian of modern South Asia, working particularly on eastern India and Bangladesh and specializing on the history of medicine, healing and technology. His latest research project is a history of ghosts and healing practices in India.

Ilya Vinitzky, professor and chair of Slavic languages and literature, researches the history of Russian mystical awakenings and interactions between Russian literature and various spiritualist and occult trends originating in the West.

Penn Museum archaeologist Joyce White is a specialist in the pre-literate cultures of Laos and has done extensive excavations on burial sites in the region. Her findings have uncovered early practices in preparing for the afterlife.

The Penn Ghost Project faculty team is organizing a major lecture for the spring semester and is planning a series of small group tours of Philadelphia area sites where people have claimed to have seen ghosts, such as the Lazaretto quarantine station and Eastern State Penitentiary, which operated from 1829 to 1971. <http://sites.sas.upenn.edu/ghosts-healing/>



# 2014 MUFON NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Coming to the Phila. Area -

**JULY 18-20 2014 CHERRY HILL NJ REGISTER AT WWW.MUFON.COM**

**Speakers/Topics Include:**

- George Knapp - "Area 51- 25 years after Bob Lazar"
- Ben Hansen - "Media, Technology and Belief"
- Bill Birnes - "UFO Hunters: Season One"
- Lee Spiegel - "UFOs: From Cave Walls to Modern Reports to the United Nations and the Internet"
- John Ventre - "Anderson Cooper and The Case for UFOs"
- Dr Lynne Kitei - "After the Phoenix Lights"
- James Fox - "UFO Film making"
- Linda Moulton Howe - "Gobekli Tepe's 12,000-Year-Old Stone Circles Enigma"
- Stanton Friedman - "Press Coverage of Flying Saucers a Study in Laziness and Misrepresentation"
- Roger Marsh - "Covering UFO's"
- Stephen Bassett - "Congressional UFO Disclosure"



Enlargement of possible male apparition at Bubes Brewery in Mt Joy, PA. Taken with 'Officer Deb' Snyder's friends cell-phone and noticed later. Of course, could just be 'matrixing' (image is in the mirror behind downstairs bar) but Deb assures no one with this appearance - which matches the late 19th early 20th century 'glory days' of the facility - was present that night.

## SSP 2014 EVENT CALENDAR

*Confirmed Dates listed are monthly meetings. All meetings are at Mechanicsburg Mystery bookshop on the SECOND Monday of each month.*

*In case of inclement weather, please check the SSP site at [www.spiritsocietyofpa.com](http://www.spiritsocietyofpa.com) - if meeting is cancelled it will be noted on the site by noon the day of the meeting.*

*Additional events may be added during the year.*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>
Jan 13	Meeting	7:00pm
Feb 10	Meeting	7:00pm
Mar 10	Meeting	7:00pm
April 14	Meeting	7:00pm
May 12	Meeting	7:00pm
June 9	Meeting	7:00pm
July 14	Meeting	7:00pm
Aug 11	Meeting	7:00pm
Sept 8	Meeting	7:00pm
Oct 13	Meeting	7:00pm
Nov 10	Meeting	7:00pm
Dec 8	Meeting	7:00pm



**Spirit Society of PA.**

**A P P A R I T I O N S**

*Story & Photo Contributions are Solicited - send to: [weaviate@aol.com](mailto:weaviate@aol.com)*

**S.S.P. Website: [www.spiritsocietyofpa.com](http://www.spiritsocietyofpa.com)**