



Spirit Society of PA.

A P P A R I T I O N S

A Review and Preview of SSP Activities and Items of Interest • Vol 9, Issue 12 - Dec 2005

"ROO's" BOOS - NOTES FROM KELLY

Happy Holidays to one and all. It feels good to be back among the living once again. (I spent the last 5 weeks in bed). Although my progress is steady and slow, I know that the major back pain is behind me. I have another 6-8 months of walking and physical therapy and I am getting better each and every day. I wanted to thank all of you for your kind thoughts, gifts, cards and prayers. I really appreciated all of them. Prayer certainly does work!

On behalf of John and myself, here's wishes for a safe and happy Holiday season and New Year beyond to everyone in our extended SSP family!

Snow in the Forecast? Tune into ABC - 27 and check the cancellations when in doubt of a meeting being canceled. You may also call our home number (717) 737-7623 and a message will be on our answering machine. Let's keep our fingers crossed that we don't have any missed meetings! (If time permits, John will also post any cancellations at www.spiritsocietyofpa.com)

SSP Dues Due to increasing costs of copying the newsletter along with our rent and hosting the SSP web site each month, we will be raising the per-meeting donation by \$1.00 per month. The cost per person will be \$4.00 beginning in January. (\$3 for "Seniors" over 65) Hopefully our fundraising efforts in the next few months will also help to build up our bank account. Thanks for your support and understanding.

NC Senior Center Remains our "Home" Fortunately, we have been able to secure the Senior Citizen's center as our meeting place for another year. I think everyone, especially those who were with us at some of our previous venues, will agree that paying a small fee to help provide for a decent facility is worth it.

YULE LOG A substantial log, ideally of Beech wood, that was formerly burned in the hearth in our homes as part of the Christmas festivities, traditionally on Christmas eve. The arrival of the yule log was an occasion of great excitement, and only those with carefully washed hands were allowed to light it. Once burning, it was generally held to be unlucky to stir it at all while supper was being eaten that night or worse still if it burned in the presence of anyone who was cross-eyed or any barefooted or flat-footed woman.

Superstition dictated that keeping a piece of the burned Yule log safely under one of the beds would preserve the luck of the household over the following twelve months and would also prevent the house catching fire or being struck by lightning. It was further believed that mixing some water constituted an excellent cure for consumption, and that the ashes mixed with corn seed would improve the harvest.

Now you know... Kelly

(Excerpted from the Dictionary of Superstitions by David Pickering)

POSITIVE LIGHT

"That which propels us to say yes to our callings can save the world: The green shooting force of soul, a love of life and the good fight, an almost unreasonable sort of faith, a crying need." — Gregg Levoy

"What do you want more or less of in your life, so that you can love the life you're living?" — Sarah Ban Breathnach

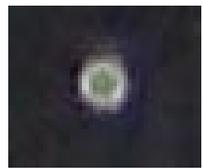
"A man's a success if he gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do." — Bob Dylan



PARA-TECH
.....
Opinions & Observations by JDW

NEW CUMBERLAND HOUSE INVESTIGATION Kelly and I were recently contacted by a person in New Cumberland regarding possible activity in their home. Since Kelly was obviously in no shape to investigate due to her surgery and I had to be around to assist her, I asked Melissa and Gail to assemble a team to check it out. Craig, Gail and Laura participated (Melissa was on "sick call" and I'm very pleased with the thorough and objective information they gathered thru instruments and interviews. Remember, our mission is to first determine if it really is haunted before we proclaim anything. They will be presenting evidence for the group to review this evening, including some video and audio. I've already had some discussions with Craig regarding what they learned and as to if paranormal activity is actually taking place here, but I don't want my or his opinion to influence anyone else until they share the information obtained.

While none of the photos they've shared suggest anything from the paranormal realm, I did notice a peculiar "anomaly" on a couple of the pics, taken by Gail's and Laura's cameras. When magnified, what first seems a likely dust "orb" is seen to be a green circle surrounded by white. The object is not stationary - that is evident by the background in the photos. *(Gail's photo is shown at right; the object in Laura's is identical)*



Although Gail and Laura have different models, I suspect the fact that they are from the same mfg. (Kodak) has something to do with this. Again, I do not think it is anything paranormal, just strange. Remember, although they have the same "Front end" (a lens) once the light enters the camera what happens inside a digital is much different than with a film camera.

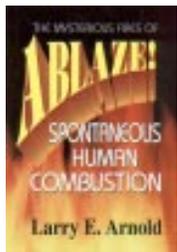
Perhaps this is how Kodak's system interprets small particles present close to the lens in certain lighting conditions (both were taken in the basement with obvious maximum flash used) I've noticed in other photos taken by Gail's camera, that small particles *(Cont. on Pg 2)*

(New Cumberland House, Cont. from page 1) often appear as a "soft" triangular shape, similar to how certain brands of cameras process them as more of a diamond. The "triangle orb" seen here was captured by Gail's camera upstairs in the house. Could the lighting be a factor? (I've seen a couple photos on the web with identical objects claiming to show the oft-reported Triangular UFOs!) Of course, with the majority of digital cameras, a small particle (or dust orb) remains just that - a circular orb! (Better quality, more convex shaped lenses will actually distort them, such as the older Sony Mavica does)



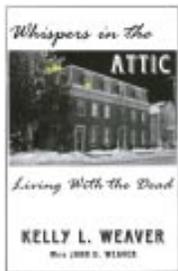
Is this strange green and white relic the simple product of lighting conditions and how a particular brand of camera's processor "sees" them, or is there something else to this? (Anyone with Kodak digitals may wish to experiment and see if similar conditions yield the same result)

BOOKS AUTHORED BY S.S.P. MEMBERS



Ablaze by Larry Arnold Perhaps the world's leading authority on SHC - Spontaneous Human Combustion - and a dedicated paranormal researcher, Larry is a long-time supporter of local groups such as ours, S.E.A.R.C.H. and the former Harrisburg SKYWATCH. Larry's site is www.parascience.com

Whispers in the Attic - Living With The Dead by Kelly Weaver Upcoming book signings with Kelly include Sept. 3 at Mark Nesbitt's Ghosts of Gettysburg store on Baltimore St. 7-10pm each night. (Mark Nesbitt will also be signing on those dates)



Ghosts, Legends, Mysteries and Rogues of Mechanicsburg by Melissa Griffith Melissa is planning our June "Haunted Tent Event" at Sickmans Mill in Lancaster Co. and the delightful "GORE TOUR" in spring 2006 to the Lizzy Borden House and Salem, both in MA. Her book can be purchased locally at Civil War and More in Mechanicsburg



Ghosts at Carlisle Barracks by Allen Campbell is also available locally at Civil War and More. (Had no image of Allen's book, thus I chose the famed MP LeTort photo rather than a really scary one - Allen himself! - JDW)



Spirit Society of PA.

APPARITIONS

Story & Photo Contributions are Solicited - send to:

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E-mail: weaviate@aol.com

S.S.P. Website: www.spiritsocietyofpa.com

2006 CONFERENCE NEWS - It's not too early to make plans for the spring & summer with all these great events coming up locally and in nearby states!



PA PARANORMAL CONFERENCE - MAY 6, MARIETTA, PA
Lloyd Auerbach, Stanton Friedman, Rosemary Ellen Guiley Frank Feschino & Ed Okonowicz will be speaking along with PSP Founder Rick Fisher at his 2006 event at the haunted, historic Railroad House!

Details at <http://home.supernet.com/~rfisher/paconf.html>



NEW JERSEY GHOST CONFERENCE

APRIL 22, HACKETTSTOWN, NJ Speakers include Kelly Weaver, Rosemary Ellen-Guiley, John Zaffis, Vince Wilson, Jeff Belanger, Charles Adams and more! Lots of "extra" events at haunted venues, too and close to the PA border, too!

Details at <http://www.njghs.net/pages/9/index.htm>



AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD GHOSTHUNTERS SOCIETY "BOOT CAMP" EVENT & EXPO - APRIL 21-23, FREDERICKSBURG, VA Speakers include SSP NE Founder Ed Dubil, Mark Nesbitt, ABGHS Founder Patrick Burke, Dale Kaczmarek & more. Ghost Tours (in the town) & Battlefield Investigations.

Details at <http://www.americanbattlefield.com/webPage54.html>

EASTERN REGIONAL PARANORMAL CONFERENCE - JULY 21 - 23 GETTYSBURG



Vince Wilson hosts the 3rd Eastern Regional Paranormal Conference at Gettysburg Holiday Inn Battlefield July 21-23rd. Troy Taylor, Mark Nesbitt, John Zaffis, Rosemary Ellen Guiley, George Hansen, Katherine Ramsland & more, plus: A bus tour hosted by Mark Nesbitt, a Spirit Circle hosted by Kelly Weaver, a Haunted Pub Crawl hosted by Vince Wilson, an investigation of the G.O.G. HQ and a Haunted Train Ride!

Details at <http://conference.marylandparanormal.com/>

NOTE: If you don't have internet access & need phone #s for events, contact John Weaver @ SSP Meetings or call me @ 932-9900 (9-5)

Musings of a Ghost Adventurer

By Melissa Griffith

Haunted New Hope

The quaint town of New Hope has often been touted as “The Most Haunted Town in America.” Although I’m willing to bet Gettysburg is head & shoulders above this claim; if even half the ghost stories of New Hope are true, it comes in a good second.

This hamlet along the Delaware River is worth the trip from Central Pennsylvania. It’s steeped in history and has more than enough restaurants and riverfront shops to charm your wallet empty.



The Logan Inn (left), built in 1722 and originally named Ferry Tavern, changed its name to honor a Lenni-Lenape Indian chief and is clearly the most haunted building in town.

A sometimes headless soldier is still on patrol in the kitchen and the second floor. Most believe he may be there from when the kitchen basement was used as a temporary morgue for Hessian soldiers during the Revolutionary War.

The most haunted room at the Logan Inn is reputed to be Room Six. Many guests have reported bizarre happenings in this room that is inexplicably the coldest room in the building. The aroma of lavender is often smelled and one time guests complained of the crying of baby in the bathroom. Some believe the spirit in Room Six is that of Emily Lutz who died at the inn and was the mother of former owners.

Built in 1784, the Parry Mansion is home to the ghost a dapper gentleman and a little girl.

The apparition of famed artist Joseph Pickett is said to often be spotted strolling through the evening streets of New Hope. The Pickett house on Mechanics Street is currently home to a couple of shops and has had many residents over the years—all of whom complained of hearing footsteps in the night, cold blasts of air enveloping them and strange chalk writings appearing on the walls. One former resident would frequently find herself unable to enter her bathroom as the door would be mysterious locked—from the inside. Unbeknownst to most pedestrians who pass by the front brick wall of Pickett’s house, underneath 30-plus layers of paint, is a drawing by Pickett of one of his paintings. Pickett’s talents were never recognized when he was alive; however, his painting “Manchester Valley” now hangs in the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

The ghost of Aaron Burr, who killed Alexander Hamilton in a famous duel, is said to still skulk the streets of New Hope—where he sequestered himself after the deadly deed.

Odette’s Restaurant, named after a French woman who once owned it (and who, surprising, currently does **not** haunt it) is famous not only for its paranormal activity, but for also being the establishment where celebrated t.v. anchorwoman Jessica Savitch ate her last meal. She died when her vehicle accidentally flipped into the waters of the nearby canal in 1983.

A negative spirit seems to haunt the third floor; while a spirit named “Mimi” haunts a particular booth in the dining room. According to a

customer who claimed to be psychic, Mimi once worked at the restaurant and was murdered. A male presence is also said to be felt and, on occasion, heard.

Cry Baby Bridge (Near the Washington Crossing State Park)

There are plenty of “Cry Baby Bridges” throughout the New England and Mid-Atlantic states. No one seems quite sure where the urban legend originated, but Van Sant Bridge, situated over Pidcock Creek, is one of the most haunted.

The “cry baby” legend goes something like this. Back in the 1800s (or late 1700s or early 1900s, depending on who’s telling the story) a young woman became pregnant to a married man who refused to help her, acknowledge the unborn child or support her in any way. Back in those days being pregnant and unwed was a stigma worthy of shunning.

After giving birth to the illegitimate baby (or twins, depending on who’s telling the story) the young woman was so distraught over the loss of her lover, his indifference toward his offspring and the intolerance of the community that she drown the baby (or babies) in the creek and then hanged herself from the rafters in the middle of the bridge (or from support beams under the bridge, depending on who’s telling the story).

For years after this tragedy, horses would refuse to enter the bridge and late at night the crying of an infant could be heard wailing from the waters beneath it. Some folks would claim to see the specter of a young woman in a long white gown standing in the bridge, sad and lonely—tormented by her selfish, gruesome act.

But others, depending on who’s telling the story, will say the young woman did not commit murder or suicide; but instead was murdered by the married man who set up a clandestine meeting with the young mother under the guise of a lover’s rendezvous at the bridge. Instead of a night of passion, the man turned on the pregnant woman and drowned her in the creek in order to keep his indiscretions a secret.

In the 21st century, the stories persist and many claim that if you go to Van Sant Bridge on a dark, moonless night, you will hear the incessant crying of a child and perhaps see the glowing white form of the pathetic, murderous (or murdered, depending on who’s telling the story) young woman. Others claim that if you drive to the middle of the bridge and turn off your vehicle, it will refuse to start again.

Are any of the tales of the multitude of “cry baby bridges” true? Probably somewhere in history, such an event occurred. The story becoming embellished at each re-telling, until the ‘cry baby bridge’ wasn’t *the* “cry baby bridge,” but a covered bridge closer to the story teller’s community.

Could Van Sant Bridge be the original “Cry Baby Bridge” where a young mother performed such an act of desperation? Absolutely, depending on who’s telling the story.

More to the legend: It’s also been reported that horse thieves were hanged from the bridge (as, apparently, was a common practice back in ‘the day’) and that at certain times, the apparitions of limp bodies can be seen inside the bridge as if hanging in mid-air.

Comments: The last part of the legend is almost identical to what is claimed happen at Sach’s Bridge (Although no ANV records correlate the supposed hanging of deserters from Lee’s army there) - New Hope (& its ghost tour) is highly recommended by “Roo” & me - JDW



BIOGRAPHIES of the STRANGE and PARANORMAL by Gail Dull **SPECIAL EDITION**

This month, I digress from my normal column to tell you of the miraculous and beautiful story of my dear mother-in-law's passing.

THE STORY OF RUTH

My mother-in-law, Ruth, was always one of the kindest and giving people I have ever met. From the day I met her until the day she left us, these traits were preeminent.

Approximately five years ago she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Hardly noticeable at first, by the end of those five years, it took her memories, her abilities and finally her life.

The last six months have been exceptionally hard. Slowly she slipped away from us. First she lost her ability to walk, then her ability to talk, then her ability to recognize us. The last time my husband visited her; she wouldn't even open her eyes.

The Friday before Thanksgiving, the hospice nurse called to tell us that she had had her eyes open and had nodded yes and no to answer her questions. She was hopeful that Ruth had begun to rebound a bit. Then the call we feared came.

On Thanksgiving, we returned from dinner to a message from the hospice nurse; Ruth had taken a turn for the worse and that they didn't feel that it was necessary for us to come immediately, but we should be prepared for the "emergency" call that they would tell us when they thought the end was near.

Friday passed. Sat. afternoon I turned on HBO and they were playing *Titanic* for the first time in years. I watched it and remembered that it was the last movie that Ruth had seen with us in the theater. She had loved it. Just as it got to the scene when the ship hits the iceberg, the phone rang. It was time to go; they felt that it was time for Ruth to pass.

We drove to her nursing home in Dallastown (the Manor Care Facility), 45 minutes away. We prayed that we could make it in time. When we got there, she was obviously in distress, her breathing was labored and with each breath, her whole upper body was forced to contract. Soon afterwards, the nurses came to give her some morphine to help ease her heart rate and keep her comfortable. They also told us that she had not been awake in days and that they had not been able to get her to eat since Tuesday.

Steve's brother was not home so we called his cell phone and left a message for them to call us as soon as possible.

We sat with her, telling her how much we loved her and how much we would miss her. Steve was in doubt as to whether she could hear us. About five in the afternoon, as we were talking to her, she opened her eyes! We told her how much we loved her, repeating "We love you" over and over.

Just then Steve's cell phone rang it was his brother. We told him her eyes were open and to talk to her. We held the phone to her ear and he talked. After a few seconds, she closed her eyes and his brother hung up, promising to hurry back from Delaware where he had been visiting his daughter.

We sat with her for hours. Dan, Steve's brother and his wife, Donna, arrived later and the four of us stayed by her side until late in the night. The nurses came in and examined her and informed us that she had seemed to plateau and that they felt that it was safe for us to go home and they promised to call us if there was any change.

At 5:45 the next morning, they called and stated we needed to get there as soon as possible, that they were not sure how much longer she would hold on. When we got there, Dan and Donna were already

by her side and five minutes later, the hospice minister had arrived. We prayed for her and the minister sang "Amazing Grace".

At eight, we called Ruth's sister-in-law and her nephew to whom she was especially close arrived. We spent several hours reminiscing and celebrating Ruth's life. At noon, she again was struggling to breathe. By evening, her condition had seemed to stabilize. At ten, Dan and Donna who only live five miles from the nursing home decided to go home to sleep and would come back if Ruth's condition changed.

About an hour later, Steve glanced down at his watch and said, "It's 11:11." I replied, "11:11 is when all prayers are heard, it's a special time." To which Steve said, "Yeah, but my watch's two minutes fast." We discussed this for a minute or so and then the unimaginable happened...the power to the nursing home went out!

We began to panic as Ruth needed oxygen to help her breathe and without power, the oxygen machine whirred to a stop! After a few seconds, the power came back. We breathed a sigh of relief...but it was short lived.

The power went out again! This time we sat in the dark for more than a minute before the emergency power kicked on, but it only relit the lights in the hall. Ruth's oxygen machine did not have a battery back-up system and she began to struggle to breathe.

As soon as we could see, I ran into the hall, looking for the nurses. I ran to the nurses' station to tell them of Ruth's condition. The auxiliary power was limited to lights in the hall and a series of special outlets also in the hall. The nurses were scrambling to find extension cords to connect people to their oxygen machines. Steve and I were afraid that Ruth would die, not on her terms but due to a power failure.

As soon as they had the cords, I stayed with Ruth and Steve went out into the hall and helped Ruth's nurse drag the cord into the room and reconnected the oxygen machine. Within a few moments, Ruth was breathing easier. Then the worst-case scenario happened.

I needed to just walk into the hall to try to calm my nerves and as I walked into the hall I looked and saw another nurse plugging in another oxygen machine into another one of the extension cords and as she did...it overloaded the backup generator and for the third time that night, the nursing home plunged into darkness.

The lights in the hall came back and when they did the first thing I saw were firemen running down the hall to where the power room was. I found Ruth's nurse and told her that again, without the supplemental oxygen, Ruth was having greater difficulty breathing. The nurse soon came with a canister of oxygen and soon Ruth was fine. We sat with her with a battery-operated lantern in the near darkness for almost another hour before the power was restored.

Ruth again defied expectations and was still alive. An hour later, she was returned to her regular oxygen machine and the nurses turned her. They told us that the firemen had said that there had been a car accident on Main Street that had taken out three transformers and that was the cause of the power failure.

Steve and I began to reassure Ruth that everything was ok and that there was nothing to worry about. It was then that her right eye opened! We told her over and over that we loved her, expecting her to close it, but she didn't. For nearly two hours she watched us. We could see her pupil move as she followed our movements. We prayed with her and said the Lord's Prayer. We told her it was ok to let go and that we would all take care of each other. We also told her that Dan and Donna were only napping and would return soon. I sang "Amazing Grace" to her. Then without warning, one single tear trickled out of her closed eye. It was an incredibly emotional, special and miraculous moment. (Cont. Pg 5)

At four that morning, the nurses came in the room to change her position and she closed her eye to us forever.

At five thirty, Dan and Donna returned with breakfast and after conferring with everyone we decided to go home, try to get a little sleep and would come back in a few hours, as we had been there for over twenty-four hours straight.

It's a forty-five minute drive to get home and we had hardly even walked in the door when the phone rang, it was Donna, Ruth had taken a turn for the worst.

We rushed back as fast as we could, knowing that this would likely be the last time. Steve drove as fast as he could safely and as we got out on the highway we were passed by a white car that was going a little faster than we were. Steve fell in behind this white car and used it as an escort to get to Dallastown quicker.

When we got there, Donna told us that she had passed a few minutes earlier. About ten minutes after we left she opened that right eye for about ten minutes while Dan and Donna had a chance to say goodbye. She again shed a tear out of her closed left eye. Then she closed her eyes forever. Three breaths later, she was gone.

She had waited for Dan and Donna to return and for us to go home to rest before she decided to leave us. She had survived more than thirty-six hours longer than expected, lived for a while even without oxygen during a power failure and again opened her eye twice to say goodbye to the people who loved her most.

Babbling With Brutus

By Brutus Dubil (w/help from JDW)



I just wanted to wish all the SSP members down in the Harrisburg Area a Happy Holiday season on behalf of the SSP Northeast Chapter! Also, I gotta tell you my Dad Ed Jr. is the best -- every dog deserves the care, dignity, companionship and love that he has shown me since the first day we met! (Hey, its Christmas time - gotta suck up!)

My Dad and I have a special bond that extends beyond the typical canine-master relationship: The experiences we've had exploring haunted places are something I wouldn't trade for a huge T-bone!

I don't know if other dogs can sense what I can, but I'm proud to be so well received at Gettysburg and other battlefields, not just by the fellow ghosthunters and history buffs we meet, but by the spirits we encounter as well! But I'm even more proud of my Dad, for his unwavering respect for what these spirits represent, and insisting that such respect should be observed by anyone who visits these places.

This April, we'll be at the American Battlefield Ghosthunters Society "Boot Camp" in Fredericksburg, VA, where my Dad Ed will be speaking on what its like to ghosthunt with a dog. I'm thrilled he was asked to share this knowledge at this event -- even if the boys in Blue he is descended from didn't fare too well here in 1862! (Since we'll be kinda close to Redskins territory, I wonder if he'll let me wear my Steelers hat?)

Most of you know that I'm a quiet sort of dog, but I can tell you I'll be tail-wagging excited to meet new people who share my Dad's interest in history and ghosts, and I'll be as proud to represent SSP as he will!

Whispers & Sneezes, Brutus.

PS: Hey Ed - Betcha' didn't know I can translate for Brutus - JDW

SHADOW PEOPLE, BIGFOOT, ALIENS & SHC - IS THERE A CONNECTION? In the midst of helping Kelly recover from her surgery, we received a call from someone in the Toronto area who wanted to discuss the phenomenon of "Shadow People". I spoke with the gentleman who shall for the time being, remain unidentified.

He mentioned finding us through Stan Gordon (I assume he linked Stan's site to Rick's PSP site and then from there found us). The initial dialog was limited to Shadow People, and if we had encountered them in our investigations or research. My response was we had heard of these in many cases and have noticed some possible fleeting evidence of them taped in IR, with perhaps the clearest example being of one ascending the stairs at the US Hotel. He went on to say that he has had personal experiences with them himself, beginning as a teenager. While my opinion is that their darkness is not necessarily suggestive of them being demonic, his is that they are pure evil. (I have heard this debate before)

The experiences he described with SP parallel typical abduction scenarios (or their oft-claimed explanation, sleep paralysis). This is when the conversation got really weird, but frankly, stimulating as well. He reported experiences of others who had shared "SP" contacts that correlated with known, documented accounts of paranormal activity, ranging from the wave of Bigfoot/UFO sightings in Western PA in 1973-74 to Canadian SHC events to various recent cases of animal mutilations in the US & Canada.

He shared a number of documents and site links that I am just starting to wade through, but I've seen enough so far to conclude that no matter how bizarre his theory is, I think there could be something to it! Stay tuned! - JDW

SSP 2006 Meeting Dates

JAN. 9
FEB. 13
MAR. 13
APRIL 10
MAY 8
JUNE 12
JULY 10
AUG. 14
SEPT. 11
OCT. 9
NOV. 13
DEC. 11

*(2nd Mon. of each month, 7:00pm
At New Cumberland Sr. Center)*