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Every Location Has History
by TIPTOETHRUDA2LIPS

Spirits At The Bend

Thistle Millworks at Ilchester, Md., *by Michael*

Dancing Lights & Thistle Mill Findings

Thistle Millworks at Ilchester, Md., *by Sulky*

Forlorn Hope

by Jeff Tsuruoka

How Paranormal Investigators Can Save Our Green Planet

by Marcellina Rodriguez

Ghost Worlds

by Melba Goodwyn, reviewed by Sharon Ramirez

Edited by Jeff Tsuruoka,

East Ghost Quarterly

is the spooky journal of
eastghost.com, a vibrant society
for the advancement of humanity,
knowledge, freedom, understanding
independence and other goodness,
available online at
<http://eastghost.com>



THE SPOOKY JOURNAL OF EAST GHOST DOT COM

From the Editor's Keyboard...

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome you to EastGhost Quarterly – the online magazine presented by EastGhost.com. I've been honored with the responsibility of editing our publication and, accordingly, would like to tell you a little bit about who we are.

EastGhost.com is an active community made up of paranormal investigative groups based in the Mid-Atlantic region as well as many individuals with an interest in the things that go bump in the night.

Discussions, debates, photographs, investigation reports, historical essays, and even book reviews are to be found on our website – and of course, in our magazine as well.

What you will be experiencing here in these pages is a snapshot of the kind of content found on EastGhost.com. The contributors to this publication are all members of our community. The words you read are their words, the photographs are their images – with very little editing by me. They have chosen to share their experience, expertise, and creativity with us and I heartily thank them for it.

This is what EastGhost is about. It doesn't matter if you're an Orb-Hugger or a true skeptic. All are welcome here.

It is my hope that you enjoy what we've put together. We have certainly enjoyed putting it together and are already hard at work on the next issue.

I am always open to suggestions about things we can include in future issues – don't hesitate to send me a wave via EastGhost.com if you have an idea for something you'd like us to cover (my screen name is smokejmt).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Jeff Tsuruoka

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Every Location Has History by Tiptoethruda2lips

Every old location has a history waiting to be revealed. Unraveling the past can be time consuming and intimidating unless you have the proper tools to help. Fortunately, there are many available resources to get you on your way to unlocking the mystery of a location.

Did you know walls could actually talk? In fact, just a simple walk through of the house or location itself can collect data. Discovering materials used such as what type of piping, woodworking, and flooring can reveal the location's age. Architecture style can also show the date of the location and sometimes even the builder. Even old appliances may have dates of manufacturing printed on them. Looking for evidence of renovations and additions to homes can reveal how many owners occupied the home. Investigating attics and basements can uncover treasures left behind by others. These can offer information about its past occupants and may actually help with telling the story.



U.S.S. Constellation - This 18th century warship, which is now docked in Baltimore's Inner Harbor and serves as a museum, is haunted by the ghosts of many sailors who had served on the ship over the span of many years.

If you are unable to physically investigate the location, there are many online resources that can be of aid. The Library of the University of Maryland can guide you on how to obtain information such as tax assessments, property records, census data, obituaries, newspaper archives and even some personal interviews. It is a great source for beginners.

The Baltimore County Legacy Website is also a great resource filled with images of the past as well as some information on locations that may not be listed as historical. Furthermore, it contains a full research database on genealogy, reference books, newspaper articles as well as downloadable audio books. The Maryland Historical Society as well as the National Registry of Historical Places are also great resources. Both are filled with special photography collections as well as maps and oral histories. These are just a few quality sites available that are easily manageable.

The Google Book Search is a resource that can help you down the road in your research. Once you have obtained information such as past homeowner or year of establishment, this information can be inputted into Google's database. Downloadable books on your subject can be gathered and can assist in adding insight to your search. Some downloadable books of great resource are:

MARYLAND: A HISTORY OF ITS PEOPLE by Suzanne Elley, Greene Chapelle

BALTIMORE: IT'S HISTORY AND ITS PEOPLE by Clayton Coloman Hall

INDEX OF SOURCE RE-

Hampton Mansion was the home of the Ridgley family, one of the leading families of colonial-era Maryland. At least three ghosts are said to haunt the place.

CORDS OF MARYLAND: A GENEALOGICAL BIOGRAPHY by Eleanor Phillip Passano

Once determining the physical and personal history of location, you can acquire insight in defining whom, if anyone is still residing there. Once piecing together their past story, you may understand the significance of why they have not moved on. In knowing their story, respect of its past owners as well as the property itself will be gained.

Links:

--National Trust For Historical Preservation UMD:
www.lib.umd.edu/NTL

--Baltimore County Library:
www.bcpl.info/info/history/local.html

--Baltimore County Legacy:
http://external.bcpl.lib.md.us/hcdo/lw_home.html

--National Registry of Historical Places:
<http://www.nps.gov/nr>

--Maryland Historical Society:
<http://www.mdhs.org/explore/library/collections.html>



Spirits At The Bend

Thistle Millworks at Ilchester, Md.

In the missing shadow of old Hell House
Pictures and experience by Michael

“Three deaths here? Yeah, easy. Probably. Definitely. This place is over one-hundred years old. There’s a lot of heavy machinery and many places to get hurt. Three deaths in one-hundred years is probably an understatement.” That’s one thing our helpful guide had to say about the deaths, injuries and reported hauntings at Simkins Industries Paper Mill <http://eastghost.com/haunt/775/> near old “Hell House” at the sharp bend of the Patapsco River, on River Road in Ilchester, Maryland. The older parts of the plant --the mill onto which the plant was later grafted-- date back to the 1700’s and are over 200 years old.

While our guide had not directly had any “substantially haunted” experiences to speak of, at least one other visitor had, in summertime 2006, suddenly become so “scared and totally creeped out” that he left in quite a rush, abandoning his work and belongings. This has happened several times. Sulky has reported ongoing

paranormal experiences, research and subsequent validation of certain facts that would corroborate ghostly experiences.

For my part, while I was down below, between the buildings at the Patapsco River, over the swooshing sound of water endlessly smoothing rocks and the nearby control dam, and the audibly electrifying hum of high voltage transformers, coming from deep within the old plant (and seemingly underground) I heard about one dozen earth-shaking booms, ominous thuds



of heavy machinery solidly hitting Earth-coupled surfaces, as well as metal clanking and moving about --it sounded maybe two hammer blows short of the plant being in full operation. Only...no one was working inside. The thuds were powerful and dreadful, and they unmistakably resembled the thuds that Sulky had re-





ported hearing and feeling months earlier.

Kimness, up above on the roadway and hillside, heard

none of this. Her main concern was taking pictures while avoiding daring cars whizzing by on the quite narrow and twisty River Road.

Knowing what was happening to me within the high-energy electromagnetic field of the humming transformers, I felt mighty uncomfortable and wanted right



Opposite, top: Southern end of the plant, at the sharp bend in the Patapsco River behind camera. The burned out and dysfunctional Simkins Plant, latest working occupant of the Thistle Mill complex, is being slowly dismantled, discarded and removed.

Opposite, left: the “bugs bunny” fire hydrant. Opposite, right: Southern entrance and drive way along the Patapsco River, to frame left.

Top: Thistle Mill, in better days, circa 1890, Baltimore Historical Society.

Above: North end of old southern mill building. Notice juxtaposition of original masonry and later additions including gate, fire hydrant, cement blocks.

Above, right: Pipe support catwalk carried energy.

Right: Oil-fired power plant, directly across Patapsco River and pipe support catwalk.



away to get further away, out of the magnetic field, to basal safety. Instead, I set to it and simply walked by the facility, taking pictures all the way. Happily abiding my one stern warning against entering the buildings, I did however get some shots through numerous





cracks and open doors.

There were quite clearly within many places to get mangled, deformed, maimed and otherwise seriously harmed. There is nothing nice or forgiving about this place. It made me think of a sleeping but malevolent mechanical giant, still somehow strangely noisy even in awkward, abandoned rest, like an old missile silo, seemingly ready to wake up and swing into action at a moment's notice, or at least exuding that precipitous aura.

The air carries that same Patapsco smell, not necessarily stale but definitely old and heavy (Day and Night at the Good Church and the Bad Church <http://eastghost.com/post/35075>). All along the length of the plant, the Earth itself reeks of heavy industrial oil and solvents.

A slip in the mud here would probably leave a remarkably persistent rash and stain and maybe even a chemical burn. There is a large cauldron of badness --tens of thousands of gallons of liquid capacity-- slowly rusting away, no doubt once housing the high-molar solution that unpleasantly decomposed stuff or acted as a reagent in some desired but unnatural process. A thin but apparently deep waterway or canal, impossibly crammed between the older part of the mill and the too-nearby River Road, is criss-crossed by a grated steel catwalk that was too shaky to dare. Who knows if it's even water in the canal.

I heard several dozen dull screams



Top: A glimpse inside the machine shop. Notice the unprotected nature of the chains, pulleys and heavy machinery. Not a safe looking place to work. This area felt the most repulsive to me.

Above: A peek inside the machine room. An oppressive feeling came from the machine shop, to the left out of frame.

Left: Loading dock at machine shop building.





I also thought I'd glimpsed a few "flashes," unexpected because everywhere nearby, given a long enough glance, was clearly deserted, except for the few cars flying by on the road above, out of earshot and almost out of sight. It's the frequent but fleeting "what-was-that?!" glimpses that getcha.

coming from just beyond, or possibly inside, a small wooden shanty-looking thing barely standing several dozen yards further north than I was willing to tread. It was definitely some mammal; I'm not ruling out human, though possibly a prank. Several times in the Patapsco River valley I've had the very uncanny feeling of not being alone, of just barely hearing and/or seeing things not quite possible to clearly make out or identify one way or the other --was that a person screaming for help or calling out to a friend, or was it a fox or bird or cat or something, or was it just nothing, or really something worse?

At the furthest-north end of the "mill complex" is a rotting wooden shack that exudes red light. Maybe it's a cue to stay away; maybe it's for the fire department should the hulk spontaneously reignite itself. I did not approach its slightly-ajar door. In any



Top: Closer look into machine room.

Above: Peculiar, hallmark rooftop, from River Road.

Right: Looking north along the entrance driveway.





case, fire clearly can not kill or reclaim this place; there is too much stone and metal here, too many chemicals, too much history, maybe too many spirits.

The tall, original mill structure has various windows, mostly with broken-out panes. Several sets of stairs and ladders climb at weird angles and unlikely bends. The whole thing is hodge-podge, you can tell, built and twisted as needed over too many years.

There are apparently one and one-half “floors” in the long, triangularly-tipped “sawtooth” buildings to the south (what purpose does that roof serve, anyway?); three floors in most of the mid-section; and probably at least five floors in the tallest portions furthest north. It’s unclear what’s rotted away, but I’d bet, given all the broken windows, that it’s treacherous inside.

There is something under the loading dock at the machine room. It hisses just above the whisper of the river.

There were no cats or birds or wildlife of any kind that I could hear, see or otherwise sense. Except for the tired settling sounds of the buildings, the spooky electromechanical hum, and the burbling of the river water, it was spooky-quiet.

Water still runs in a steady, silent trickle from a firehose connector, the one of three without long-ago crinkled hoses that run off to nowhere.

It’s strange to see the obviously very old stonework of the original mill buildings patched with modern brickwork and cinder-block build-ins covering over old openings. It’s sad, in a way, how the still-beautiful build quality of the historical mill was architecturally defaced decades ago. They definitely do not build them like that anymore. To the real craftsmanship, the unwelcome additions look as cheap as grey bondo on a jet-black Mercedes.

A bright-red fire hydrant is here, tucked half-underneath the mill and built-around in a way somewhat reminiscent of that Bugs Bunny episode in which the



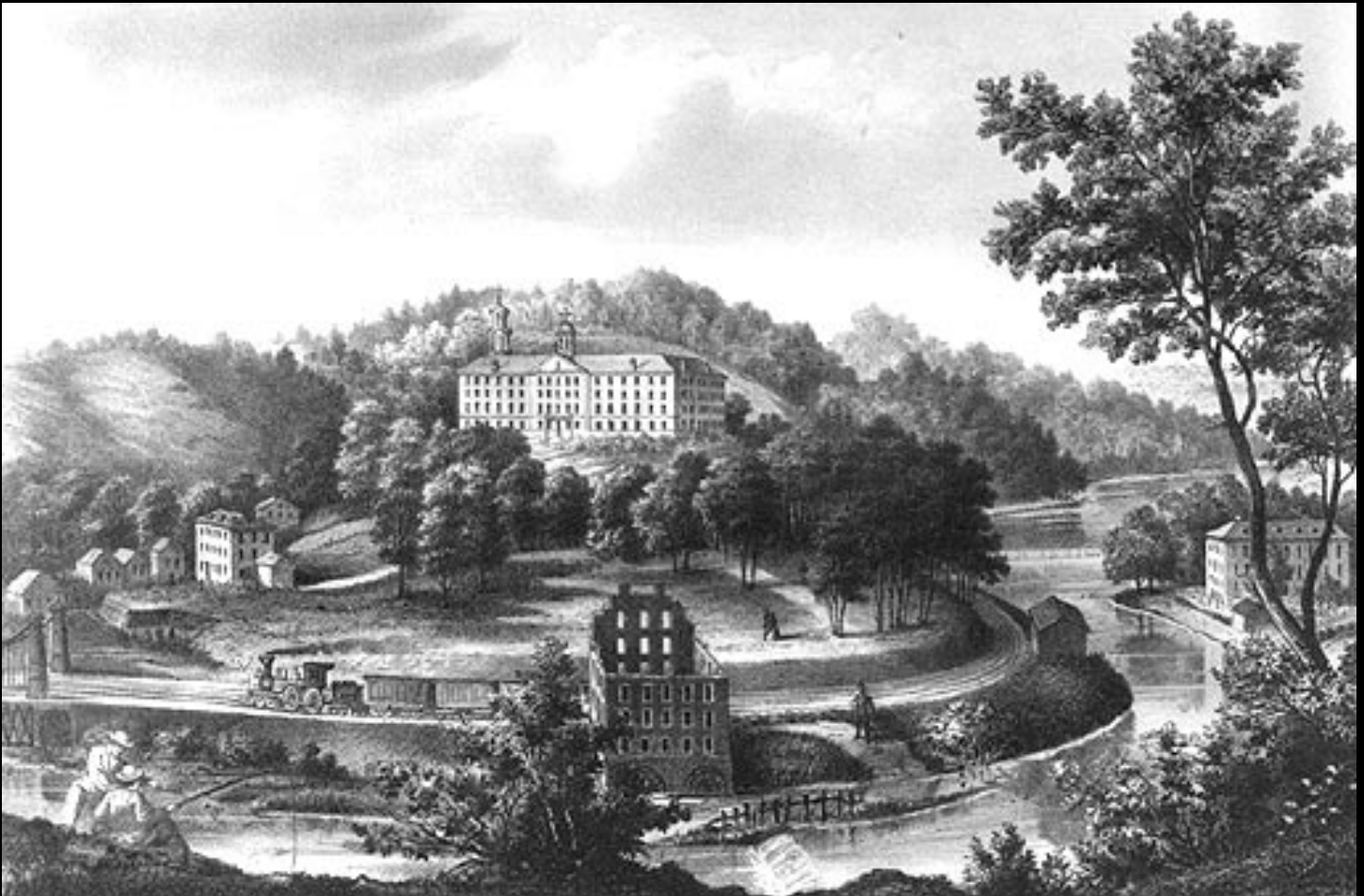
Left: Simkins Paper Mill, at the site of the old Thistle Mill, sometime in early Spring, 2006, as seen from several locations along River Rd. Pictures courtesy of SolarAngel.

tall office building was built with a small semi-circle all up its length, above the rabbit hole. I wonder why they didn't just move the dang waterpipe and not cut away the mill's massive foundation!?

A fire extinguisher sits out in the middle of the muddy dirt passage that's barely wide enough for two eighteen-wheelers inched side-by-side. Old wood. Old

though it sure felt unwholesome there. I'm glad that feeling stayed in the garage.

The river banks have been fortified by cement-lattice work on both sides. The river is probably about 50 feet wide here and only a few feet deep at most. However, the banks are maybe ten feet down to the waterline. There is a depth stick for measuring floodwaters, and



nails. Old pipes. Pulleys and girders and chains and everywhere jagged steely things. An angry, old blue industrial water pump sits with its chrome-shiny but malicious looking screw-blade propeller still attached to strong but stained stainless-steel pipe. I wonder if mashed paper pulp sludge once flowed inside; the mill was apparently, in its final life, used for paper recycling. Yuck.

I had a strange feeling (both times that I passed it) of uneasiness, like I was being watched, from within the garage. Maybe it was just heebies from the way that, despite its totally open doors, the blackness abruptly filled the cavernous interior like tar. Photonegative shots of the interior didn't reveal anything strange,

"15 feet" was marked slightly below my eye level. The stick was gunky-dirty-wet, like it was not so long ago wholly submerged. Just across the river and up are the train tracks, and above them is the former site of "Hell House," old St. Mary's College at Ilchester.

I got a very unusual picture of the building across the river. It was getting dark, I was shooting handheld, and somehow I managed a shot in which the foreground is in focus but the motionless background is motion blurred. Weird, but there it is.

Above: Saint Mary's College at Ilchester, popularly "Hell House," now demolished, Gray's Mill at bottom right, and Thistle Mill at bottom center.

The plant is possibly being disassembled, piece by piece. There are half-a-dozen large dumpsters, half-full with all sorts of pipes and gizmos and chunks of machinery. Hopefully the mill will be saved as an historically significant site.

About half-way down the length of the buildings, a rickety-looking steel tram- or walkway crosses from the mill rooftop over the river and to another building on the far side that looks like an enlarged machine gun bunker. The bridge formed a sort of invisible boundary; I didn't like crossing under it, so many dozens of feet

overhead --it made me feel like a black cat slyly crossing under a ladder, half-expecting for the inevitable worst. Maybe this "bunker" was to keep the workers in line, inhaling fumes and toiling away! Probably it's just an extension of the processing plant. Numerous large signs warn of possible hearing damage; blindness from regarding ultraviolet arc welders, and the ever-present dangers of forgetfulness. A misstep could literally be deadly.

It's an effective choice of words: I kept thinking about the "life changing accidents" that Sulky mentioned in his research. This isn't some collection of workshop bandsaws; machinery herein is as heavy-duty as heavy-duty comes. Even keeping myself safely several feet outside the buildings and the realm of the dormant but still fearful machines, I was very aware of my every footstep and even of the dangling pullcords on my jacket. Silly, I know. But, if you've been around heavy equipment, you understand what I mean; there is no such thing as a second chance, and even while standing

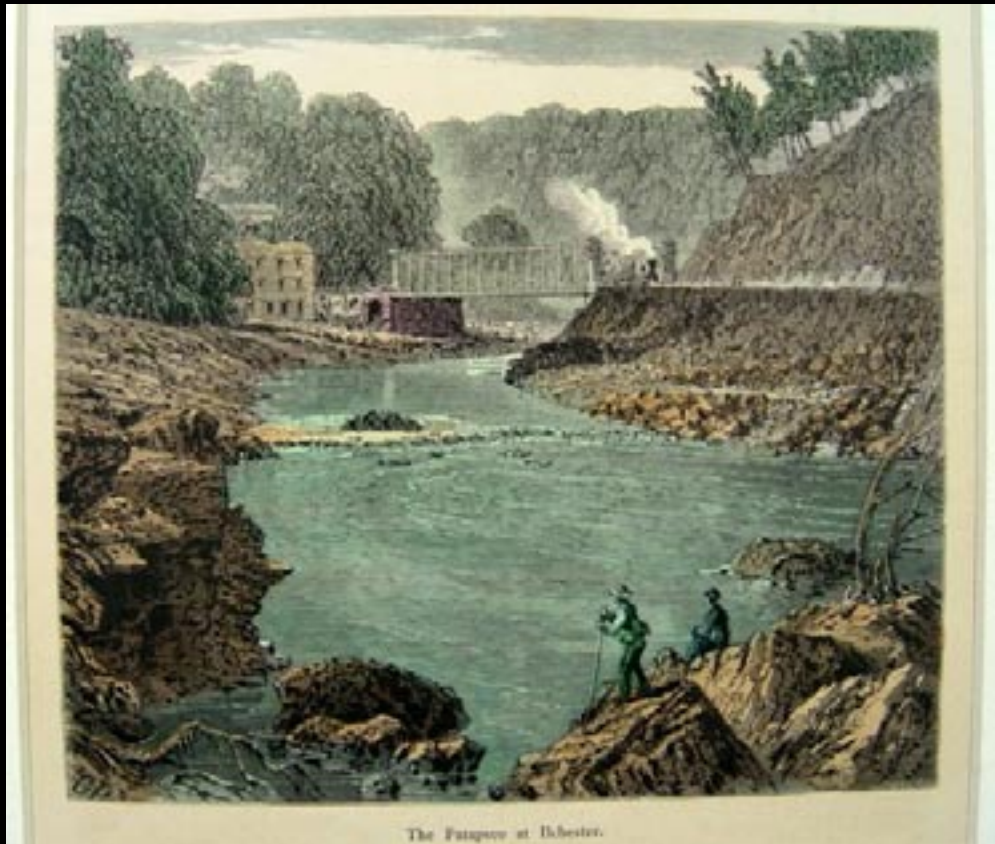
absolutely motionless you still think twice before making the slightest move. That oppressive fear of what-if literally impedes motion on a moment-by-moment basis, and it would have taken very much "getting used to," I imagine, to have been an effective employee

here, instead of a molasses-mannequin.

"Extreme" might describe the pain of being crushed to death between a 3,000-pound roll of paper and 'a machine known as a rewinder,' especially if it was operating. Mill accidents must be truly ter-

rrible events, life changing even to those who survive in witness. I wondered what would actually happen if someone's loose scarf got wound up in the belt of a car engine's alternator; clearly it would violently jerk the entire torso down, but would the result be immediate decapitation, or would the scarf somehow rip first? You know the engine would not stop. It's thoughts and echoes of that same kind that I sensed most here.

Despite the lingering smell of chemicals and fear, there is a peculiar draw to this area. The sharp 90-degree bend of the Patapsco River here in Ilchester, once literally under the shadow of Hell House, down-river and down-hill from nearly everything, seems to be some sort of "spirit trap" that snags and holds history in a way that is unlike anywhere else.



The Patapsco at Ilchester.

Above: Idyllic view of railroad bridge and Patapsco River, just after the bend and downriver from Thistle Mill. Notice exaggerated features and perspective. Picture courtesy of Sulky.

The Dancing Lights

Thistle Millworks at Ilchester, Md.

Investigation and Experience by Sulky

I investigated an inquiry several years ago at the Simkins Industries, Inc. plant in Ilchester, MD. Some employees had noticed an orb of “dancing” light about 10 inches in diameter occasionally move slowly right to left along a wall in the beater room section of the plant. The sightings were usually in the early evening hours but always in the same area.

An employee and I entered the complex while the plant was down for weekend servicing. I must say that I noticed several spirits within this plant. There had been some deaths (natural and accidental) in the plant and some were evident, in particular an older man who insisted on following us around. His presence was very strong and somewhat disturbing since my feeling was that his death came at his own hand. The name I sensed was “Buzzard” are something similar. I don’t know if it was a nickname or his actual surname in life.

We reached the area of the orb sighting and I noticed immediately that the temperature had dropped quickly and remained colder than the surrounding area the entire time I was there.

My perception was that of a man who has died in a piece of machinery (bottomliner pulper) many years before. The name that I sensed was “James” and that he seemed to be in his 30’s. I never witnessed the orb, but I am sure that this was his spirit energy. I attempted to contact “James” through my spiritual guide and seemed to have made some impact. My subsequent inquiry a year or so later with those employees who made the original inquiry concluded that the orb had not been seen and/or reported since.

Below: Thistle Mill, main building, in the 1940s when it was used primarily to produce “cotton duck” a heavy, plain woven cotton fabric, commonly called canvas. This was well after the mill’s heyday and in the wake of major cotton duck mill closures in Hartford, Connecticut and other areas in the north. Picture courtesy of Baltimore Historical Society.



Thistle Mill Findings

Thistle Millworks at Ilchester, Md.

Investigation and Experience by Sulky

On Thursday, April 6th, 2006, I assembled a small team to investigate the recent paranormal activity at the Simkins Industries plant located in Ilchester, MD. The plant is located on the Baltimore County side of the Patapsco River at River Rd. near Hilltop Rd. There are remnants of the Ilchester mid-1800's village still standing, but all the houses are now boarded up. The plant is also deserted due to a major fire on the top level in 2003.

I had received several inquiries from people who had recently been on the property as well as a few queries from former employees. There have been various incidents and reports of phenomena mainly strange lights and sounds. To our knowledge, no other investigations had been made in the plant since it was closed. For the record, we had investigated some paranormal activity in the plant in the early 1990's and I have reported this previously.

The team consisted of my assistant Cory and two former employees of the plant, Keith and Jerry. I brought along 2 digital cameras, 2 EMF meters, a pair of 2-way radios and a laser thermometer. We were able to work our way into the plant through a dock entrance and descended 2 stories into the main beater room area. Because Keith and Jerry knew their way around, I had Cory and Jerry start the investigation to get some baseline EMF readings at various locations throughout the plant and to record any activity. All the power was off in the plant, so I was hoping for solid electro-magnetic readings. I decided to stay in the main beater room area with Keith mainly because I had recent physical limitations that made standing and walking for a sustained period of time impossible. I figured if Cory found anything, she'd give me a call and Keith could direct me to the area. Before we began, I asked Keith and Jerry not to mention any specific deaths or injuries that had occurred in the plant. This plant has a long history and reputation for many horrific work related casualties.

Not too long after we started to look around, I noticed that the images on the digital cameras were not developing though the register on the card indicated that images were there. There was full power in the cameras and the cards were fine, but no images were coming on

the screen. That was truly strange because I had never experienced that before and for this to occur with both cameras was very unusual.

Everything was fairly quiet for about 2 hours. I called Cory and she said that nothing remarkable had happened other than she received 1 major EM spike in the machine room dry end and that they were going to walk back to our location. A few minutes later Cory and Jerry returned. Jerry commented that it was very strange that he had not seen or heard any cats in any part of the plant. He stated that the plant was always inundated with cats for the many years he had worked there. Keith stated that he had also noticed it and thought it was very strange. Frankly, up to that time it was eerily quiet. We sat together for about an hour going over her notes and planning out our next moves.

By this time, it was 11:15 pm and we decided to start walking to a few areas that Cory had suggested. We went through an area that I was familiar with from my initial investigation but, strangely, I felt nothing. We continued to walk until we reached the former maintenance department. I started to get a feeling of dread and nausea as well as tightness on my chest. Cory also stated she felt a bit weird. After a few minutes, I asked Cory where she had recorded the EM spike. She said on the floor below by a machine called a rewinder in the machine room dry end.

We walked down the stairs and entered into the main part of the plant. As soon as I walked through the wide doorway, I felt like something pushed me in the chest... I literally backed up and tried to regain my breath. A few seconds later, we heard a loud thud sound. Each of us looked around not knowing where the sound came from. It seemed to me that something large had hit the floor but the sound was tempered as if it was in a tunnel. My feeling was that something catastrophic had happened here...the residual energies were coming at me from all directions. Cory was getting erratic EM readings stronger than those she had recorded earlier. I tried to endure the bombardment of energies I was experiencing, but it was getting very hard to deal with. I needed to get out of that area as soon as possible so I could gather my thoughts. I turned around and walked towards the warehouse area so I could sit down and rest. The others soon followed and we took a break.

I asked Jerry to confirm if someone had died in that area, but I didn't want a name or know how it happened. He stated that at least 2 employees had lost



their lives in that specific area but he was unaware of their names since the deaths occurred before he started employment. Keith confirmed the deaths but he also had no idea of the circumstances or names...only third party information he had heard. I was determined to go back into the machine room and see if I could sense anything from the spirits residing there.

After a bit of a rest, Cory and I walked back into the machine room. As before, I felt pressure on my chest but not to the degree I experience previously. Cory and I held hands and I attempted to contact at least one of these spirits. I immediately felt pain and sorrow...like my life force was draining out of me and I couldn't stop the inevitable. Then I heard the name "Russell". It was obvious that this was the person who had been haunting here. I tried to communicate but the sorrow and grieve this spirit was projecting was as intense as I have ever felt. I fear he will remain on this plane and refuse to ever move on.

I decided that I was done here and that we should check out a few other locations within the mill. We

spent another 2 hours in the plant taking EM readings and recording some history of the mill from Keith and Jerry. I asked Jerry if he could put me in contact with a former employee who could tell me about any of the people who had died in the plant.

That Sunday, I interviewed a gentleman who wanted to remain anonymous. He had retired from the Simkins plant in the mid-1980's and had started there when Bartgis Brothers had owned the mill. He confirmed that an employee by the name of Russell Calimer was killed in the machine room in 1977 after a 1 ½ ton roll of paperboard had slipped off a forklift and crushed him to death against the rewinder. But, I was stunned by the information that was to follow. The employee who attempted to load the paperboard roll and allowed

Above: Gray's Mill, a contemporary of Thistle Mill, a few thousand feet upriver, has an intertwined and equally interesting history, complete with hauntings and recent investigation, to be covered in a later edition of EGQ.

it to slip off was a man by the name of Robert Buzzard. If you read my initial investigation at the Simkins plant, you would recognize that name. I had felt a presence of a spirit who called himself “buzzard”. I had no idea at that time that this was an actual name. As well, I had this feeling that “buzzard” had died by his own hand. It was confirmed that Mr. Buzzard had become so distressed after the accident he decided to retire. Less than a year later, “buzzard” had indeed committed suicide.

I think the plant is worthy of further investigation, but I have a bad feeling about some of the spirits that are there. There are, of course, many residual hauntings (ghosts)...but there may be at least one vortex there and I didn't like what I was feeling especially in the machine room. For the record, there have been 4 deaths in the plant since 1971....3 in the machine room. As well, there have been several major life altering injuries.

I have a suspicion that someone tried to perform a half-hearted seance or used a Ouiji board in the plant since it closed. There have been all kinds of people hanging around there and the sense I get is that a spirit with some relatively heavy duty malevolence and lingering hatred is moving in and out of a vortex (I was unable to locate a vortex....possible that it was closed when we were there).

The “Russell” spirit we did encounter is a strong one but with a lot of sadness and acts like it is looking for something. We tried to “move it along” but I don't think we were very successful.

AVON KIM .COM

Military Strength Bug Spray

In each issue of EastGhost Quarterly we feature a piece of fiction. As often as possible it will be a piece of original work by an East-Ghost member. Other times it will be a classic ghost story from the past. I've fallen in love with 19th century ghost stories and have encountered many a good tale. This issue features the story “Forlorn Hope”, by Jeff Tsuruoka.

Forlorn Hope

by Jeff Tsuruoka

Morris sat hunched over in his chair, paying no mind to the cramped posture that would likely disfigure him in later life. He had been sitting in that way for years enough that it actually required a considerable portion of his powers of concentration to sit up straight.

The small notebook in which he was writing took up nearly the entire surface of the scarred table just outside of the café. There was only enough space left over for his elbow and his drink.

He continued to write in his tight, semi-legible scrawl even as he flattened his free hand down on the opposite page as a warm, gritty breeze passed through.

He paused in his writing as he read back the last few lines. He made a small change to the last sentence and then stuck the pen between his teeth as he would a cigarette. It was an odd habit. He had never smoked a cigarette in his life.

He leaned back in the stiff-backed chair, wary as the much-abused wooden joints groaned in protest over the shifting of his relatively slight weight, and placed the pen down on the notebook.

He swirled the brackish liquid at the bottom of his glass, looking around for the waiter.

“Uno mas, señor,” he said, holding the glass aloft.

The waiter nodded slowly and turned toward the kitchen.

Before returning to his notebook Morris dabbed at his brow with a napkin. The late afternoon sun had shifted out from behind the roofs across the street, concentrating its full force directly on his head. He cast a look over at the table closest to the wall, silently willing the young couple ensconced there to pay their check and leave so he could take their place in the shade of the battered awning.

“Your tea, sir,” said the waiter as he expertly found a space on the table for the glass of hot liquid.

He looked up at the waiter, a wiry mustachioed man with an able look about him.

“Gracias.”

“You're welcome, sir.”

“Porque no le habla español conmigo?”

The answer was the same he'd received the last time he'd asked the question.

“That language is dead to me.”

He accepted the answer without comment.

The waiter turned his attention to another table and Morris picked up his pen.

He regretted not having an opportunity to converse in Spanish. In his travels he had achieved a passable fluency in the language and had furthered his grasp of it by, whenever possible, talking with the locals he met while on assignment in their communities.

Morris sipped at his tea as he read over the last sentence he had written, making two more changes before scratching it out entirely. He wanted his first impressions of the town – a town he was revisiting after many years away – to be recorded precisely, a feat that was beyond him at that moment. He turned some pages back and re-read his afternoons' work, sighing with dissatisfaction. He took a final drink of tea and closed the notebook, securing his pen in his jacket pocket.

Both of his feet had fallen asleep - God's little way of telling him that he'd been sitting on his ass for too long - and he stamped them before standing up out of the chair. He shuffled painfully over toward the waiter and counted out some bills.

“Adios, amigo,” he said.

The waiter accepted the money and Morris turned to leave the café.

“Senor,” called the waiter.

He stopped and turned back.

“Tenga cuidado esta noche. El Diablo anda aquí.”

He regarded the waiter, playing back the words in his head.

“Comprende, senor?”

“Yes... yes I do. Gracias, amigo.”

The waiter nodded and resumed cleaning tables. Morris lingered for another second or two before making his way out to the street.

It took him only a few blocks at a reasonable gait to realize that the passing of the afternoon hours had

done little to cut the heat. He looked up and cursed the weather, most especially the storm clouds which had blackened the skies and then just blown away without spilling so much as a single drop of rain or contributing some wind. The air still hung stubbornly stagnant over the street.

He stopped, taking advantage of the shade of a boarded up storefront and considered his options. He had taken a cab from the hotel to the café earlier, approaching the town from the new highway. It was well after six o'clock and the hotel was more than three or four miles from the café by way of the old main road. He was still close enough to the café to go back there and have some more tea in relative comfort while waiting for another cab to come pick him up. But he had so looked forward to walking down this particular road, a road he remembered fondly. The sun would begin its descent within ninety minutes and there were plenty of places to stop and rest if he tired along the way. He slipped out of his jacket and rolled up his shirtsleeves as he pushed away from the wall and turned away from the café. A slight but refreshing breeze rippled through as if to affirm his decision and he followed it down the street and away from the café.

He was reminded of other walks through town as he strolled. He had grown to love this neighborhood and its people and it pained him to see the place in the condition it had fallen into.

When Morris had inquired back at the hotel the man behind the desk had told him that the town was all but ruined. A massive government construction project to improve the old road had been abruptly abandoned in favor of building an entirely new highway circling around the town. Land seizures were rampant. The few families who could not or would not leave eked out an existence in crude shelters, mere lean-tos set up against gutted structures, leaving them even more vulnerable to the horrors of the civil war which had swept through the town later that same year.

He saw evidence of the daily lives of those who stayed in the meager belongings strewn along the side of the road, the little piles of refuse, and the remnants of cooking fires.

He saw few people as he walked and those few paid him no mind.

The air had cooled only slightly as evening approached and Morris noted, with resignation, that the sun was

making painfully slow progress on its way down. Darkness and the promise of relief was still a long way off.

After a mile and a half, by his optimistic calculation, he stopped to lean against a battered stone well. His shirt was soaked through so he stripped out of it, leaving on his inexplicably dry undershirt. He mopped his face, uselessly, with the sodden garment and continued on.

Destruction was in evidence at nearly every step. Partially razed homes and burnt-out businesses lined many stretches of the old road. The scars of artillery and small arms fire on what remained of the buildings were plain to see – they would have been obvious even to an untrained eye.

He tried to make out how the structures might have ap-

peared years ago and wondered if he were gazing at the ruins of homes that once belonged to people he knew.

He covered another half of a mile in this way, comparing each pile of debris he passed with an increasingly imprecise picture of the road as he remembered it, eventually coming to a shell of a building that might have been a bodega he used to frequent. He stared dumbly at the battered earthen walls, walls which appeared to have been repaired only recently, and blinked sweat out of his eyes.

He did not notice the sound right away – static-filled music was being strangled out of a radio somewhere inside the building.

The place had no sign identifying it in any way – it did not even have a door – but he could see cheap wooden tables arranged in its single room. Small groups of



Lilburn - This grand old mansion near downtown Ellicott City is haunted by a ghost who loves to cook. The smell of cooking food has been reported here.

men, no more than two or three to a group, occupied some of those tables.

He entered the little building and encountering no immediate or overt hostility to his presence settled himself down at an empty table close by the open doorway.

As his eyes adjusted to the dimness he could see that the tables were constructed of pieces of whatever cast-off wood could be found and nailed together.

He leaned back in his chair, resting his head against the crumbling, sun-hardened wall, allowing the fatigue he had been trying his best to ignore to wash over him.

His eyes opened after a few moments, moments in which he could not be certain that he hadn't nodded off, to see a shirtless, barrel-chested man standing before him. Shrapnel scars stood out prominently in angry, puckered patches in the man's rather prodigious body hair.

He looked up from his seat and asked for some tea.

"No tengo te aqui, abuelo," answered the burly man, not unkindly.

Morris nodded his understanding and ordered one of whatever it was that the others were drinking, not bothering to correct his hirsute server's error - from his earliest childhood he had been mistaken for being older than he was.

"Me llamo Arnufu," said the shirtless man as he placed a dark brown bottle on the table.

The beer was warm and flat. Arnufu remained standing before him, evidently waiting for him to deliver his opinion on the quality of the brew. At least one of every pair of hands in the place was clutching a dark brown bottle and every eye was trained on him.

He raised his bottle in toast to Arnufu and took a second sip, nodding his approval as he swallowed the bitter liquid.

"Better than tea, eh?" asked his host.

"And nearly as hot." Morris tossed the rest of it back in a single gulp.

The big man reared back and laughed. The rest of the room resumed drinking. Arnufu loped over to a broken crate which served as a bar, retrieved a second bottle and opened it before placing it down on the table.

"Que es el nombre de esta café?"

For the briefest of moments something very much like simple joy flashed in Arnufu's eyes, as if he had never before thought of his hovel as an actual café, let alone honored it with a name.

"Lo llamo... Arnufu's, que mas?"

The big man laughed, manhandling Morris' shoulder in a comradely way before seating himself at a table across the room.

Morris straightened in his chair and managed to hold the position for a minute before his body slumped into its more familiar posture. He sighed, reaching into his jacket pocket to retrieve his notebook and pen.

Outside, the street was quiet, so quiet that the rumble of a far-off motor vehicle reverberated down the old road and right into the café. The room had grown even more silent than the street had been and when he turned to look around at his fellow drinkers the unease on their faces was unmistakable.

He listened with them, trying to pinpoint the vehicle's location based on the rattle of its engine and noted with interest how the men looked surreptitiously at one another, each gauging his fellow's anxiety against his own before recasting his gaze at the small section of stained wooden table immediately before him.

He craned his neck to get a look outside, idly wondering if the driver would be willing to take him back to his hotel.

Arnufu stood silently next to Morris, his eyes firmly fixed on the road beyond the doorway.

Morris did not bother to ask the question. He knew he would receive no answer.

He looked down at his hand and was surprised to find that he was clutching his bottle so tightly that his arm shook with the effort.

Annoyed, he released the bottle and opened the notebook.

The vehicle's motor growled once more, growing steadily quieter until it could not be heard at all.

The drinking resumed. Arnufu helped himself to a bottle of beer and eased himself into a chair at a table across the room, engaging the two men already seated there in animated conversation. Morris tried to pick up the gist of their discussion but was unable to understand any but the most rudimentary of words.

He drank half of the second beer and then turned his attention to the notebook, writing steadily for some time. All that he had seen and heard during the day found its way onto the page. He recorded each pile of rubble, each pathetic shelter and ruined structure, each broken patch of asphalt. In a few simple sentences he sketched the mustachioed waiter who refused to speak Spanish until issuing that cryptic warning to him before Morris had left the café. He eyed the decrepit room he was then in, securing each detail – each sun-browned face, each furtive eye and gnarled hand, the makeshift tables and the bad beer, and of course, Arnufu himself. The details were his life. The essence of a thing was always to be found in the details.

The sound of his pen striking the notebook jarred him back into a reasonably wakeful condition. The odor of onions mixed with stale beer assailed his nostrils as he slowly opened his eyes to Arnufu's face.

Despite his embarrassment at having fallen asleep in public Morris sleepily met the big man's stare and nodded as if providing evidence that he had not died right there in one of Arnufu's rickety chairs.

Arnufu straightened up. "Where are you staying, abuelo? Which hotel?"

Morris named the place and, rather spasmodically, began to gather his things. He reached for his money clip.

"Quanto vale, señor?"

Arnufu waved derisively. "Nada, señor. No aceptare su dinero."

He opened his mouth to object but his host spoke first.

"You have given us something to talk about other than the war and our dead children. Payment enough for



Maryland State House -The Maryland State House dates back to the 18th century and is supposedly haunted by the ghost of a workman who fell to his death while working on the interior of the building's dome.

two bottles of my cerveza.”

Morris sighed and thanked Arnufu politely. He peered out of the doorway and was surprised at how dark it had gotten - surely he could not have slept for so long?

“But now you must go,” continued Arnufu. “We will be leaving this place before long and you cannot stay here alone.”

He nodded in reply and stood up, stretching the tightness out of his lower back. Every man in the room turned to watch him depart and he waved a farewell in their general directions.

“Perhaps we will see one another again,” he said.

There was no reply from anyone so he turned and began to walk toward the doorway, still unsettled by how deeply the darkness had set in, and even more unsettled that he had sat unaware for as long as he had.

“Uno momento, abuelo,” called out Arnufu. “Diego will take you to your hotel.”

A small, wiry man in a rough canvas shirt and tragically tattered trousers slipped into a pair of sandals and stood. He bowed his head in greeting.

“That won’t be necessary,” said Morris, knowing full well that this was an argument he could not possibly win. “I know the town and the road quite well. I know the way.”

Arnufu laughed – just one sharp bray. “You may have at one time, but not now.” He gestured to the smaller man. “Diego will take you to your hotel.” There was an insistence in his voice, a note of deep concern.

Morris began to feel a little churlish for attempting to refuse something which they so clearly believed was important, if not essential. He went over and offered his hand to Diego to atone for his error. The smaller man had a strong grip and shook hands vigorously.

“All right,” said Morris. “Despues de usted.”

Diego led the way out of the building and into the night.

It was not as dark out as it had appeared from inside the building. The stars, without the ubiquitous artificial light he was accustomed to, blanketed the town in a blue haze which the eyes did not have to work particularly hard to adjust to.

Morris realized that Arnufu had been absolutely cor-

rect after only a few yards of walking. He did not know the town or the road. Not anymore. To the best of his knowledge the old road ran in more or less a straight line through the town to the city but it seemed to be anything but straight as he followed after Diego.

He was about to ask his guide about the apparent misconception when Diego spun around and grabbed him by the shirt-front, his eyes feral and his jaw firmly set.

Morris instinctively raised his arms to defend himself but Diego had an incredibly strong grip and easily dragged him to the ground, forcing him down hard. He bit back a cry as a jagged piece of debris tore into his shoulder blade.

He reared up, trying to dislodge the smaller man but Diego held him pinned to the ground, clamping a sweaty, gritty hand over his mouth.

“Silencio, señor,” he hissed. “Silencio.”

Something in the man’s tone was enough to make Morris stop struggling and start listening.

The sounds were far off but were unmistakable – an engine revved and was moving in their direction.

He quickly nodded his understanding to his guide.

“Silencio,” commanded Diego once again. He hesitantly removed his hand from Morris’ face.

Morris shifted his position, working a hand around to free the debris out from under him. It came away wet with blood and was much smaller than it had felt when it had dug into his back.

The vehicle was close by them now and Morris did not need to see it to know with certainty that it was the same one that had caused the strange anxiety in the men in the bar.

He turned his head to get a look at the vehicle but Diego covered his eyes with his hand.

“No mira, señor,” he whispered. “No mira.”

The warning came too late.

Morris had seen.

Worse. He had been seen.

The being who rode in the back of the jeep wore a general’s uniform, resplendent in taupe with epaulets and piping. Morris could make out knee-high black leather boots and the ensemble was completed with a general’s

cap perched almost comically atop a large, misshapen head. Its face remained hidden in shadow. Only one eye could be clearly seen and Morris was filled with an icy nausea the instant its gaze met his own. The visual contact lasted but a fraction of a second.

Diego gently took his hand away from Morris' eyes and stood up, staring at the thing in the jeep. After a few seconds the thing nodded its gigantic head. Diego looked down at the ground, his face unreadable in the darkness.

The jeep idled for another interminable moment before the driver gunned the engine and drove off. Diego stared after it until it was out of sight. He turned to face Morris.

"Miro?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Morris, lifting himself from the ground.

"Y el le vio?"

"I'm afraid he did."

Diego exhaled violently, worrying his temples with his fingertips.

Morris stooped to retrieve his notebook which had fallen out of his pocket when Diego had yanked him down.

"Senor," said Diego.

He looked back over his shoulder at his guide.

The man was pointing at Morris' back.

"Sangre."

Morris shrugged and moved to put a reassuring hand on Diego's shoulder.

"No es nada, Diego."

He slapped Morris' hand away. "No, senor. It is NOT nothing."

The guide paced nervously. He fished around in his pants pocket and came up with half of a badly crumpled cigarette which he managed to light with a shaky hand.

"Who is he, Diego?"

Diego merely shook his head, smoking and studying the ground at his feet. The scent of the tobacco was surprisingly pleasant. He finished his smoke and looked up at Morris with determination set into the

lines of his face.

"We must move quickly. This way, senor."

Morris quieted the voices in his head, voices which were screaming for him to demand an explanation, to refuse to take another step until he was briefed – in full – about just what the hell was happening. He badly wanted to give in to them but instead forced himself to quietly follow Diego down the road, feeling very much like the one thing he did not expect he would be in this town – a stranger.

They walked without speaking for what felt like many miles before the lights of the city became visible before them.

As the two men prepared to part company Morris offered his hand to Diego.

"What happened back there, Diego? What are you trying to protect me from?"

Diego accepted the proffered hand but again just shook his head, averting his eyes as Morris explored the man's features, trying to glean whatever he could from his expression. There was little expression there for him to read. The smaller man's eyes sought his own but looked through him rather than at him. The life had bled out of the man's face. All that remained was an appearance of stony resolve.

"No es tu averia, Senor. You can do nothing."

He released Morris' hand.

"What the hell do you mean by that?"

Diego was already turning back toward the town.

"Adios, Senor."

The day was already too hot by the time Morris woke. The miserably worn slatted blinds were not quite up to the task of keeping the sunlight out of the room.

His mouth was impossibly dry and he cursed out loud as he knocked his water carafe over while disentangling himself from the bedclothes. He kicked free of the mosquito netting, launching himself at the floor to snatch up the carafe before the entirety of its contents spilled out of it. He gulped down what remained of the tepid water and marched into the washroom to get some more.

He drained the carafe as he dressed, going over what he could remember of the previous night's events.

His powers of recollection were not as dulled as he feared they would be given the disorienting malaise with which he had at first awakened. He remembered nearly everything and tried desperately to draw something out of it other than a sickening dread. What he remembered the clearest of all was the look on Diego's face before they had parted ways. It was a look he had seen in other places in times of war – the look worn by men who have just been told that they will be the first to attack a well-defended position.

Morris staggered out of the hotel, feeling his way forward as his eyes adjusted to the unrestrained late-morning sunlight. He was bathed in perspiration before he had covered three blocks toward the old road out of the city and stopped to purchase a straw hat from a vendor on the street.

In a matter of minutes he was on the old road. In the daylight it appeared straight and long. It was familiar again.

He had gone a little more than three quarters of a mile when he saw them – a small group of people mournfully pulling a wobbly cart. An oblong wooden crate rested in the cart's bed.

The crate was empty.

He deliberately looked past the box, scanning the faces of those assembled. He recognized Arnufu along with most of the men he had seen the night before.

He did not see Diego walking amongst them.

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How Paranormal Investigators Can Save Our Green Planet

By Marcellina Rodriguez

Lately it seems “going green” is all the rage. Although paranormal investigators often find themselves in remote places in the middle of the night, there are many changes all of us can make to help preserve the planet and save some green. Here are six reasons to show some love for the environment without sacrificing your ghostly fun.

1. Carpool/Public Transportation

With an increased number of paranormal enthusiasts hitting the road for investigations, a large portion of expenses goes to fuel. By carpooling and using public transportation you can save money on gas, reduce traffic congestion and emissions, save time by using HOV and express lanes, save money on parking costs, have less wear and tear on your car, experience less stress, and you'll help protect the environment and preserve natural resources. My favorite perk from carpooling and using public transportation is the fun that can be had when sharing the commute with your friends – imagine the excitement when heading to your destination and the stories told on the way back home.

2. Batteries

Any seasoned investigator will tell you batteries are one of the most important items for our craft due to the portable nature of the electronic equipment we rely on while in the field. Unfortunately the standard one-time use battery is not very eco-friendly because it often contains hazardous chemicals that can leak into our environment. Thankfully there are many options the environmentally conscience paranormal investigator can use immediately.

Rechargeable: rechargeable batteries are an environmentally friendlier option than one-time use disposable batteries. Although they cost more initially, according to Energizer.com (Energizer Holdings Inc. is one of the world's largest manufacturers of consumer batteries), the rechargeable battery can be recharged hundreds of times, therefore extending its lifespan several times over that of the standard battery.

Human powered: I've been on many paranormal investigations where batteries seem to be sucked of their life. This drain of battery power usually puts a tem-

porary halt on investigations until the backup batteries can be found. In the occasion of drained batteries or when additional batteries are scarce, electronics that recharge with a hand crank may be the perfect replacement. The most common human powered products currently on the market are radios and flashlights. Some manufacturers are expanding beyond the hand-crank method for human generated power to squeezing or shaking products to recharge their life.

Solar power: there's also an array of products designed to charge batteries of common handheld electronics using solar energy. In addition to the virtue of being green, the portability and back-up power provided by a solar charger makes it even more attractive. Not only are many solar chargers very small, they can charge a multitude of items such as your music player, phone, GPS device, flashlight, digital recorder, camera, you name it!

*Don't forget to dispose of your old batteries at a local collection facility. Check out www.earth911.org and www.epa.gov for locations near you.

3. Bug Repellant

The hours from dusk to dawn are not only your average paranormal investigator's preferred time to work, but according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) it is also the peak time when most mosquitoes dine on our flesh. As much as I want to do my part to help take care of Earth and live as eco-friendly as possible, I don't want to get bit by these pesky buggers, especially considering the diseases they carry. I've been on many outdoor investigations where mosquitoes have feasted on my flesh to a point where I've felt my contribution to the environment was a cruel twist of fate. So, aside from staying inside, what's the best environmentally friendly way to keep those pesky mosquitoes at bay?

Avoid using perfumes, colognes, or scented personal care products.

Cover your skin as completely as possible when outdoors. Although mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing consider wearing long-sleeves, long pants, and socks to make it extra difficult for them.

Studies have shown mosquitoes are attracted to dark colors. Try wearing light colors.

Don't hang out near standing water, a breeding ground where mosquitoes lay their eggs. Your presence means

it is dinner time for the mosquito family.

All natural bug sprays are usually infused with various oils from plants and flowers known to naturally repel insects. These sprays are often as effective as those sprays containing DEET and are much safer for you and the environment.

4. Stay Hydrated

The best way to go “green” while staying hydrated on an investigation is choosing your water bottle wisely. From the single-use-only plastic water bottle you can buy at gas station to the stainless steel and aluminum options, making the right choice is important in maintaining both your health and the health of the environment.

According to a recent Center for the Evaluation of Risks to Human Reproduction study of chemicals found in plastic bottles, bisphenol A (BPA), a compound in hard, clear plastics, creates physiological changes in people when they ingest BPA that has leached from plastic drinking bottles into water. The National Toxicology Program suggests switching to BPA-free bottles and avoiding hot liquids in containers that contain the compound. So, for now, it seems the best way to take your water on the go is to not allow the water to reach high temperatures and store it in containers with stainless steel or ceramic interior, as they seem to exhibit the least amount of health concerns, are difficult to break or crack, and are reusable without any degradation as seen in plastic counterparts.

5. Manage Your Personal Impact

Remember the three R strategies to reduce the amount of waste that goes into landfills and to line your pockets with green – reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Reduce. Ask yourself if you really need the newest and coolest gadget or is it possible to borrow the item or to go without it? Do you really need to replace your equipment now or can you extend its life? The idea is to reduce dependency on frequently upgraded equipment and items not easily recycled.

Reuse. When you have upgraded or finished using electronic equipment it doesn't have to go in the trash and eventually to a landfill. Consider whether someone would find your used equipment useful, if you could use parts of the item to enhance other pieces of equipment, or if you could update the product on your own so it can be reused. Also decide if it's possible to

rent or buy second-hand rather than buy new hi-tech equipment.

Recycle. If the previous options are not good for you, determine whether your equipment can be recycled. Cell phones, print cartridges, batteries, PDAs, computers, etc are all recyclable. Check out www.epa.gov/e-cycling/donate.htm for donation locations.

6. Reduce Pollution

As paranormal investigators, we're often in remote locations in the dead of night. We often go into places most people would never consider. As a result, human presence creates quite a bit of pollution.

Noise. A common problem that impacts the quality of life is noise pollution. Paranormal investigations are often conducted at night, which can result in the slightest whisper being construed as unwanted noise. If heading into a natural area, try to park in designated spaces and walk to the location of the investigation to prevent the amount of nuisance noise. Remember to keep low noise levels to prevent disruption of those around you, human or animal.

Light. Although most investigators do not use more than a strong flashlight to guide their way, the light emitted is not typically considered light pollution, but to animals in remote locations, the beam from a flashlight can be very intrusive. Flashlights can also destroy your own night vision. So what is an investigator to do? A great option is to use a red lens flashlight which, according to NASA, the human eye is less sensitive to. The red glare will help the human eye adapt better to tasks, will have minimal impact on your night vision and those around you, will draw less unwanted attention while in discreet locations, and can eliminate the chances of flashlight related anomalies in photos. Can't find a red flashlight in the store? Make your own by converting your average flashlight using red cellophane over or under the lens.

Litter. To never litter should go without saying. Be sure to remove all traces of your presence once your investigation is done.

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Elegance by Arrangement

Ghost Worlds

written by Melba Goodwyn

reviewed by Sharon Ramirez (Astralspirit)

“As the mist became focused and more defined, it was obvious to me as well as everyone who was present that it was taking on the shape of a huge circular portal. Then it happened! Orbs began flying out of the center at rapid speeds. Before long the area was flooded with orbs of every conceivable color.” --Ghost Worlds, by Melba Goodwyn

Experienced parapsychologist, and member of the Texarkana Paranormal Investigators, Melba Goodwyn, has blended clairvoyant wisdom with traditional psychology in providing spiritual counseling for over twenty-five years. Goodwyn theorizes that ghosts are energy beings who vibrate at different frequencies. This results in ghosts appearing not only in different forms, but also in different colors with tendencies toward darker shades, hence the shadow people.

In this fascinating examination of paranormal phenomena, she gives insight on the behaviors & types of ghosts, children & imaginary playmates, practical ghost hunting & communicating tips, energy anomalies, and vortexes. She states that she believes that a vortex represents a conduit that supplies

the energy necessary for ghosts to retain their spherical shape until they choose to manifest in a more distinct form. Vortexes that appear to spin clockwise will appear vertical as if rising, while those appearing to spin counterclockwise is often photographed as descending from the upper part of a photo. These descending vortexes are usually photographed as long swaying horizontal shapes, bending and curving with odd contrails behind them.

Discover more and discover this guide to poltergeists, portals, ecto-mist, and spirit behavior. Discover how to create an environment conducive for attracting spirits, recording their presence, and conducting a ghost interview. Recommended, a must read!

Savage Mill Tower - The tower is only one of several spots in this 19th century site reputed to be haunted. Among other sightings, the ghost of a woman who fell down the stairs to her death has been seen here for decades.

