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Ghost Stories

By LeAnn R. Ralph

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by: **LeAnn R. Ralph**

When I started teaching English at Northwestern Military and Naval Academy near Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, nobody warned me about the ghosts.

Northwestern — a beautiful, old granite building — was a boarding school. A hundred boys lived there, ranging in age from seventh grade through twelfth, although the building could have accommodated maybe twice as many. The school had been in existence for about a century. The hallway leading to the gymnasium was lined with photographs of all the graduating classes

The entrance to the school featured two wrought iron gates and a long driveway that wound through the extensive grounds. Trees, flowers and shrubs added to the park-like atmosphere.

Northwestern was both a military and a naval academy, and some of its graduates had served in World War I and World War II. A couple of those who had been killed in action were buried on the grounds. Considering the age of the building and its history, I suppose I should have expected ghosts — or rather, I should have expected ghost stories.

But I didn't.

Not until one fall morning when my students came to class so upset that they couldn't concentrate on their school work.

"Do you believe in ghosts?" one of them asked finally.

"Yeah, Ms. Ralph. Do you believe in ghosts?" several others chimed in.

While I was attending the university to earn my teacher certification, none of the professors had mentioned how you were supposed to handle a question like this.

Ghost Stories

"Well," I said, "I think there are probably many things in this world that we don't understand."

By now, all of my students were giving me their utmost attention. If only they were this interested in English.

"Have you ever seen a ghost?" one of them asked.

I shook my head. "No. I've never seen a ghost."

"We have," said one young man.

"Really?" I said. "And when was this?"

"Last night."

"In our room."

"We did, too," said a couple of others.

"What happened?" I asked.

"It was just after lights out. Our curtain started moving."

Instead of doors, each of the dorm rooms had curtains covering the doorway.

"At first I thought it was the sergeant coming to check on us," my student said.

Military personnel were on duty around the clock to supervise the boys.

"Then what happened?" I asked.

"S-sss-some," he stammered.

"Something pulled the blanket off his bed," his roommate finished.

By now, all of the boys looked frightened.

"I don't want to stay here anymore," said one young man.

"Me, either."

"I'm calling my mom to tell her to come and get me."

"Me, too."

Ghost Stories

"All right everybody," I said. "Take a deep breath."

I waited for them to take a deep breath.

"Now let it out slowly."

They all did.

"What else happened?"

Other boys described pranks of a similar nature — waking up in the middle of the night freezing cold, only to discover that their window was wide open when it had been shut and locked hours earlier; math books that had been sitting on their desks when they went to sleep were in the bottom of the garbage can when they woke up; uniforms were switched so that when they started to get dressed in the morning, they discovered they didn't have their own clothes.

"Hmmm," I said. "Who do you think would play tricks like that?"

My students considered the question for a few moments.

"Well, it kind of sounds like something we would do," said one young man.

"Hey...it DOES sound like something we would do!"

"You mean you think it's a real person...?"

"Or is it a ghost, one of those guys that's buried here...?"

"I think it's one of us."

"But even if it's a ghost, it's still one of us — a cadet."

"Yeah, it WOULD be a cadet, wouldn't it..."

I smiled to myself as they continued their discussion. At least they didn't seem so frightened anymore.

For the rest of the fall the incidents continued. Then they stopped as abruptly as they had started. Either the culprit was afraid he was going to get caught, or else. . .

Wait a minute. You don't suppose there really WAS a ghost?

Naaa. . .couldn't be.

LeAnn R. Ralph is the editor of the Wisconsin Regional Writer (the quarterly publication of the Wisconsin Regional Writers' Assoc.) and is the author of the book: Christmas In Dairyland (True Stories From a Wisconsin Farm) (trade paperback; August 2003). Share the view from Rural Route 2 and celebrate Christmas during a simpler time. Click here to read sample chapters and other Rural Route 2 stories ---

ghost worlds

By mark rabusseau

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Hello, My name is Mark Rabusseau. I am also known as "Mark the Printer." My wife, Mary Lou and I have been hunting ghost for about 2 years now. It all started when we took a tour of haunted houses of the north side of Pittsburgh. It was not the kind of houses where someone jumped out to scare you. It was a narrated tour, where you stood in front of the house, a brief history of the house was given, along with what super natural occurrences have been experienced. We never entered the premises. That is until we came to the last house. The house was owned by Mr. DeSantis which he beautifully restored to its original Victorian Splendor. While everyone was dispersed on the first floor, I was drawn to the stair case. While I was looking up the steps, I saw a grayish mist travel across the top of the steps and through a closed door. I didn't tell my wife because she didn't believe in ghosts and would probably rib me for what I saw. After 2 hours I could not contain myself, and I had to tell her. She said that's funny, because she saw the same thing but from a different angle. She said she did not want to tell me because of all the years of saying ghost don't exists, she finally saw one. The next day we went back to Mr. DeSantis' house. Without embellishing he ask us exactly what did we see. After telling him, he said that he never told anyone on the tour about the ghost at the top of the steps. He said he had never seen it but guest in his home have reported to him that the ghost has been seen leaving the closed door and going up the stairs.

Since then Mary Lou and I have been ghost hunting with our digital camera and EMF detector. Our best luck has been on the battlefields of Gettysburg. Most of the pictures we have are of orbs which seem to be semi-translucent balls of energy.

When we ghost hunt we follow a list of guidelines such as no smoking, no rain or adverse weather conditions, it must be a clear day with no dust floating around. We don't see the ghost with our eyes, but the digital camera picks up the energy they seem to produce. please view my home page at: <http://hometown.aol.com/mrrab/index.html>

printer, amateur ghost hunter

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