

THE GHOST STORIES OF TERRELL, TEXAS

True and Amazing Paranormal Encounters:

**A Collection Compiled, Experienced, and Told by the Terrell Ghost
Walk Paranormal Investigators**

Second Edition (eBook)

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Brenda Newby and Mary Jo Woodruff.

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These stories are written from memory, recalling events, locations, and conversations as accurately as possible. To protect privacy and anonymity, certain information, including names of specific locations and personal details, may be altered. Every effort has been made to accurately convey the experiences described to us.

While the authors used Gemini AI as a tool to fix grammatical errors and smooth out sentence structure, the heart of this book is human. The AI served only to refine the readability of the text, leaving the authors' original words and ideas intact

Cover designed by Brenda Newby and Mary Jo Woodruff

All photographs were taken by Mary Jo Woodruff

For information contact: Brenda Newby at TerrellGhosts.Com
or learn more about the Terrell Ghost Walk at TerrellGhostWalk.Com

DEDICATION

Mom

It's been an incredible journey, and I cherish every moment. I'm thankful for our bond, seeing you as not only a mother but also a true friend and the remarkable woman I aspire to be.

Dayton, My Son

My profound love for you, far exceeding my expectations, has always been immense, despite my shortcomings as a mother. I only hope that I was a good enough parent that you'll consider placing me in a quality nursing home when the time comes.

Jason, My Husband & Best Friend

We've overcome unimaginable hardships together, as one. I truly lucked out with you, and it's undeniable—you're still an absolute smoke show.

Through all the highs and lows, I couldn't have asked for better company than the three of you.

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1

WHY IS THE CITY OF TERRELL, TEXAS SO DAMN HAUNTED?

"The city is a palimpsest, a parchment that has been written upon again and again, with the old texts still shimmering through."

– Unknown

TERRELL, LIKE MANY TOWNS WITH A RICH HISTORY, possesses a network of prohibition-era tunnels. These

subterranean routes facilitated the illegal distribution of moonshine and supported the operations of organized crime. Similar tunnel systems are rumored to span thousands of miles across the United States, particularly in towns like Terrell, which benefited from railroads and a high volume of transient visitors. I've stood at the barricaded entrances, lending credence to the whispers of up to three miles of winding underpasses. It's believed these tunnels once connected key locations such as the town's bank, the infirmary, and the state-run psychiatric hospital, a subject we'll delve into later.

Intriguingly, these very buildings are often associated with reports of paranormal activity. Unbeknownst to many Terrell inhabitants, underground passageways were indeed built in older, developed areas, and they often facilitated illicit activities. The concealed nature of these routes was key, as organized crime thrived on the clandestine sale of bootleg liquor, a highly lucrative enterprise. Years later, these hidden passageways became secret playgrounds for local children. Many of our tour guests have fondly

recalled their youthful adventures exploring this underground city.

During the early 19th century, Terrell was a vibrant and prosperous city. Older residents still have vivid memories of Moore Avenue as a bustling hub of culture and activity. Over the decades, the street has been home to opera houses, billiard halls, general stores, candy shops, and even wagon shops. We've also discussed the numerous soda shops where younger generations socialized, and the many movie theaters that drew crowds. During Prohibition, a few discreet "underground" establishments offered a place to grab a drink at a local speakeasy. And as the stories go, if a gentleman desired companionship for the evening, it could easily be arranged on the east side of Highway 34.

The upper floors of the Anderson building have their own intriguing tales. Rumor has it that high-stakes card games were held there, with one particularly audacious story claiming the city's newspaper was once wagered on a single hand of five-card stud. Whether it was won or lost depended

entirely on the cards dealt. These are the stories that echo the Old West days. In fact, if you were determined enough, you might still unearth some old bones, perhaps a little closer to the surface now due to soil erosion. Terrell is certainly not lacking in colorful legends and grand stories. While I can't always discern fact from fiction, ultimately, does it truly matter? These tales contribute to a small town's unique charm. One of the remarkable things about cities as captivating as Terrell is that a rich past only deepens its intrigue for future generations. However, our primary focus here lies in a different kind of story – the kind that can't be found on microfiche or through a quick internet search. We're interested in the things that go bump in the night, the stories that send a shiver down your spine. As naturally curious individuals, we want to explore the experiences that make us question our perceptions and the reality of what we've just witnessed.

UNVEILING A CITY AND ITS SPECTERS: MY INITIAL ENCOUNTER

OUR PURPOSE HERE IS TO DELVE into the realm of ghosts and the unexplained. In a city with as many paranormal stories as Terrell, one is naturally drawn to the historic buildings, hoping to encounter something that might offer a glimpse into life after death. It wasn't until recent years that I became a believer in such things, sparked by my own first paranormal experience. It was an inexplicable photograph captured by my mother, with me present, around my 36th birthday. The picture was taken in another small city not far from Terrell. Initially, my discovery of Terrell wasn't tied to its ghost stories at all. In fact, I found Terrell in a decidedly non-paranormal way.

Like many brides-to-be, I became intensely focused on every detail of my upcoming wedding. My preoccupation reached a point where even my closest friend, my maid of honor, jokingly considered drastic measures to silence my incessant complaining. Despite my earlier vows to remain a calm bride, I

must now confess that I did, indeed, become quite frantic in the lead-up to the big day, expressing my displeasure rather loudly and colorfully whenever something wasn't exactly as I envisioned. My obsession had spiraled out of control. My mother, ever the pragmatist, seized this moment to gently point out the noticeable mustache that had been subtly developing above my upper lip for the past few years. I may have been a new bride, but I was an aging woman as well and “riper” than most. This was just another unwelcome sign of that, whether I chose to acknowledge it or not. It was clear something had to be done. The thought of walking down the aisle sporting a Fu Manchu was, understandably, deemed unacceptable. Discreetly, my mother made an appointment for me with a highly recommended electrolysis technician in Terrell.

The clinic is still on the main street downtown. Driving down Farm to Market Road 148, I turned onto State Highway 80, which then transitioned into a more intimate road, marked by intersections and stop lights. It was no longer a highway but a comfortable stretch of street – Moore Avenue. This area is

lined with buildings dating back to the 1800s, and they retain a significant historic charm despite some attempts at modernization. This is the heart of the Small Business District. Today, the street offers a diverse array of unique shopping experiences to cater to almost any taste. It's an area that commands attention, even from the most inattentive traveler. Despite my overwhelming anxiety about the upcoming procedure, I distinctly remember a sudden and palpable heaviness in the air after crossing the intersection at Rockwall Avenue.

I had never considered myself to be particularly "sensitive" or "psychic," but I quickly recognized this sensation. I would later come to understand that this feeling is often associated with the presence of spirit energy. At that moment, the heaviness was so pronounced that my anxiety dissipated, replaced by an unexpected sense of calm. Years after that experience, I learned that many people are quite capable of sensing these echoes of the past. Mediums, who are more prevalent than one might think, can sometimes hear, see, feel, and even smell the energetic signatures left behind by ghosts. While I've

never been able to consciously access these abilities, I can easily detect shifts in the atmosphere. If that shift is particularly strong, my old and worn-out joints might protest loudly, much like my Aunt Edna's famously unreliable knee. We all knew Aunt Edna's knee was more predictable than even David Finrock, our most trusted Dallas meteorologist. Subsequent trips to the area yielded the same results. It seemed that at the intersection of Rockwall Avenue and Moore Avenue, this tangible sensation would immediately envelop me. It never occurred to me at the time that this might have paranormal or ghostly origins. Ghosts were, to me, a vague possibility, with most stories seeming to stem from overactive imaginations. There was never a sense of negativity in the area. Instead, it felt like stepping back into a simpler time. I often thought, "If these buildings could only talk, the stories they could tell." Something was undeniably different about this part of the city, and the increasing number of unexplainable experiences shared by those who frequented it began to feel less like mere coincidence. Eventually, a paranormal experience far from Moore Avenue would serve as the catalyst for my deeper investigation into

the area. As my curiosity grew, fueled by my own encounter, I became something of a paranormal enthusiast. With the development of my skills as an investigator alongside a professionally assembled team, our focus naturally turned to Terrell. We all began to formulate various theories to explain the substantial number of reported accounts of perceived paranormal events in that unique area. Mostly, we just asked ourselves, “Why is Terrell so damn haunted?” Here are our theories.

MAGNETIC ENERGY FROM THE RAILROAD

MANY PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS BELIEVE that our departed loved ones can draw upon various energy sources, such as magnetic, static, atmospheric, and electromagnetic energy, to help them manifest in different ways. If they can effectively channel this energy, it increases the likelihood of them being seen, heard, and sometimes even moving objects, often to the complete shock of unsuspecting witnesses.

Interestingly, a railroad track runs parallel to the Small Business District on Moore Avenue, less than a city block away from the busiest street in town. At one point, our investigation team was subletting space a block behind the track. One evening, feeling significantly behind on my work, I spent a restless night at the office, intending to start working again in the very early morning hours. Additionally, staying overnight in the building provided an ideal opportunity to observe any ghostly activity during its quietest period.

Lying on my air mattress that night, I was awakened by the train passing through almost twenty times. That's a significant

amount of magnetic energy being released into the air, making it perhaps unsurprising that the office experienced particularly heightened ghostly activity that night. The train generated so much energy that at times, our equipment, even when simply sitting out, would have its proximity meters light up and beep shortly after a train passed. Sometimes, the intensity of the train's energy was so strong that the entire building would shake and vibrate. You could physically feel the tremor in your core as the train horn blared, warning of its steady approach to the intersection.

Each time that train came through, it was one of the most amazing and fulfilling sensations I've ever experienced. It served as a powerful reminder of the historical commerce that the railroad brought to Terrell in the early 20th century, allowing the city to thrive and grow. It was a sensation that evoked feelings of achievement, innovation, and hard work. It also represented an unending supply of magnetic energy for our ghostly predecessors to potentially harness and make their presence known.

Tak, a psychic medium we collaborated with, once asked me if the railroad crossing gates would ever close when there was no train approaching. I had never witnessed that before. He laughed, seeming almost uncertain himself, and said, "I feel as if there's a ghost train zooming through the city sometimes." The very next morning, on my way into the office, I gasped as I saw the crossing gates close on their own and remain down for a full five minutes with no train in sight. Since then, I have heard several other reports of this phenomenon occurring in Terrell. It makes you wonder: what is the freight of this spectral train – cargo or passengers?



**DOES THE RAILROAD FUEL THE
PARANORMAL ACTIVITY?**

Some people believe that magnetic energy from sources like the railroad may give spirits a “lift” when it comes to manifesting. Terrell’s railroad brought commerce and economic growth to the city. Does it also bring its ghosts?

LEY LINE PROXIMITY

MOORE AVENUE IS RUMORED TO RUN DIRECTLY through the center of two intersecting lines, specifically at Moore Avenue and Virginia Street. This is an area we call, “The Paranormal Triangle” because the apparitions seen there are often so clear they are mistaken for actual living people. Many people may have heard of ley lines but are still unsure of what they are. These migratory paths are shrouded in mystery and intrigue. While I find the concept of these energy pathways somewhat difficult to fully grasp, I will do my best to describe them as I understand them.

The concept is quite complex, and the scientific theory remains debatable. Ley lines are alleged invisible lines that connect places of spiritual or religious significance, such as Stonehenge or Easter Island. While still a controversial theory, some believe that ley lines possess electromagnetic energy that can be measured by specialized equipment. Certain

animals, including humans but primarily birds, are thought to be sensitive to these energies. One current theory suggests a connection to a specific tissue found in the ethmoid sinuses of many animals, which is believed to help them align with migratory routes. While the scientific basis for this idea and its specific impact on Terrell is still unclear to me, many paranormal investigators are convinced that these areas experience increased paranormal activity, both along the lines themselves and at their intersections.

Although I have never personally attempted to locate a ley line intersection within the city, documented research suggests that Moore Avenue runs parallel to these lines. For those who believe in such things, it's easy to see how the increased reports of ghostly events might be attributed to Moore Avenue's unique geographical location. While this theory may seem far-fetched to some, I believe it's worth considering, especially given the widely acknowledged level of paranormal activity, ghost sightings, and other unusual experiences in Terrell. I often told our previous tour guests, "It would be easier for me to list the places in Terrell that

aren't haunted, as opposed to the places that are. Listing all the haunted locations would simply take all day."

POSITIVE MEMORIES FROM THE DEPARTED

I also believe that many spirits simply don't want to leave Terrell. Considering the stories and letters written by the young men from the No. 1 British Flying Training School (BFTS), which we will discuss in more detail later in this book, it's easy to understand why Terrell residents might believe their spirits are still present today. Perhaps they inhabit one of the many former soda shops or movie theaters that were operating during that time. These establishments were vital social hubs for the airmen, and their letters often recount the teenage antics they shared with the local girls. A recurring theme in these letters is the strong desire of these young men to return to Terrell after the war.

Even today, the small business owners and the city's residents are constantly working to improve their town. There's a palpable positive energy in the air, which I believe comes from both the current inhabitants and those who have called Terrell home in the past. The deeper we delve into the city's history, the more we uncover stories of kindness, community

spirit, and the strong sense of honor among Terrell's people. It becomes clear why this would be a difficult place to leave, even in death. This strong sense of place is precisely why we chose Terrell to develop and run our local ghost tours. It's an undervalued and often overlooked city brimming with history and, many believe, the lingering spirits of its past residents. We are honored to share the stories of the spirits we believe are still here. I sincerely hope that my great-grandchildren will be recounting the tales of our paranormal team decades from now, while we, as spirits ourselves, thump and knock on the walls with delight and slam doors to the bewilderment of future ghost tour guests. We're certainly going to have some fun with them.

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THE SELLS BROTHER'S PARADE AND THE AWNING DISASTER

*"Tragedy is a tool for the living to gain wisdom, not a
guide by which to live."*

- Robert Kennedy

IT WAS NOVEMBER IN THE YEAR 1884, and the day began beautifully, filled with a festive atmosphere. Families gathered picnic lunches and blankets to sit on. The ladies wore wide-brimmed hats to shield their skin from the sun, as was the fashion of the time. Today was the day the Sells Brothers' Circus came to town. The festivities commenced with a parade of the circus performers down Moore Avenue. It was a grand occasion, a sentiment echoed by a recent mural painted on the side of the former Brin Opera House.

Over 10,000 spectators congregated along Moore Avenue, and the sun beat down on the crowd. The men decided it would be best for the women and children to stand beneath the veranda-like awnings that adorned the stores, providing shade. To make room, the men themselves gathered atop these sturdy coverings, allowing for a great view while keeping their families out of the direct sun and heat.

Just after 10:00 A.M., with at least 100 men on top of the canopies, the unthinkable occurred (The Dallas Times Herald). One of the wooden awnings completely collapsed, trapping an

unknown number of women and children underneath. The iron rods supporting the building in front of the Mississippi Dry Goods store, owned by Morris Brin, crashed into the windows, and the roof partially caved in. People were caught beneath the rubble. The fall from above also resulted in further casualties. At least four individuals were killed at the scene, and 75 were severely injured, some fatally, during the accident (McCarty). Those who needed assistance were taken into the nearest businesses for treatment. Demonstrating remarkable heroism, even the parading circus participants, led by the circus owner Allen Sells, immediately sprang into action to help. Spectators across the street also rushed to offer aid (Indiana). Local newspapers provided a partial list of those affected. Some were noted to have fatal injuries, but a definitive list of those who perished or survived does not exist. The children involved were not listed by name, only adults with a notation indicating a child were with the victim (Indiana). At the time, Terrell had no hospital, and many of those attending the parade were from neighboring towns, making complete record-keeping difficult, if not impossible.

Witness reports of child apparitions are abundant in the Small Business District. We believe that this tragic day may be one of the primary reasons for the numerous stories we encounter. Child spirits are so frequently reported in the locations discussed throughout this book that it's impossible to keep track of every account. Most buildings have at least one report of a child spirit. While it is speculation, the awning collapse remains a strong possibility as the origin of these reports.

The apparition, Lizzie, whom we discuss extensively in the remainder of this book, may or may not have been involved in this unfortunate incident.



THE CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN

The day the circus came to town it is said that over 10,000 people packed the streets of Moore Avenue to get a view. I watched the artist, Sunny Delipsi, paint some of this mural. She painted the entire length and detail of the mural by hand and by sight.

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THE IRIS THEATRE

"I have often thought that the best way to define a man's character would be to seek out the particular place where he felt most comfortable and inspired."

-Unknown

TWO OF THE LOVELIEST PEOPLE YOU WILL EVER MEET own what is often considered the heart of the Small Business District. Within this central location there are three interconnected businesses: The Silhouette Resale Shop, Books and Crannies, and The Iris Theater. Without a doubt, this is one of the most active places I have encountered in terms of paranormal occurrences. Thankfully, the spirits that reside here seem to be as pleasant and benevolent as the people who own the establishments.

The Iris Theater is a black box theater, which is a performance space with black walls, black ceilings, dark floors, and stadium seating, creating an intimate setting for a small audience. This theater seats 34 people and is home to productions by the Terrell-based group, Vagabond Players, who present community theater productions several times a year. The small, dark theater truly allows you to feel transported to wherever the actors take you, a quality I've found quite effective as someone who has attended many plays there. As a paranormal investigator, I can also attest that theaters tend to

be hotspots for ghosts and hauntings, and the Iris is no exception.

The building originally opened as a movie theater in the 1920s and continued to operate as such until around 2001. The current owners remodeled the building to include three distinct spaces. The traditional bookstore and clothing consignment areas occupy approximately three-quarters of the space, with the black box theater built across the width of the remaining area at the back. The theater entrance is hidden by a black velvet drape. Upon stepping inside, your eyes need a moment to adjust to the darkness. Witnesses entering this dimly lit space report seeing a white, smoky apparition, believed to be a former owner and caretaker of the movie theater. They say he sits atop the soaring theater seats on the far stage on the right side. People report that it appears as if this specter is looking down upon the patrons and actors, as if overseeing the theater. Witnesses describe him as wearing a plaid shirt and sitting silently, seemingly unaware or uninterested in anyone who enters and moves around the theater. He simply remains there for his own

reasons, which will likely forever remain unknown to us. Others have claimed to capture photographs of this smoky apparition as he quietly sits in his preferred spot.

All three businesses create a welcoming, home-like atmosphere. There has been more than one occasion where I've nodded off, completely relaxed, in that theater during an event because the ambiance is so calming. Despite this welcoming feeling, I always need to minimize my time spent there because I am overly sensitive to barometric pressure changes. It's impossible for me to ignore the significant drop in barometric pressure as soon as I cross the black-curtained threshold into the theater. If spirits utilize available resources for manifestation, barometric pressure must be one of them. Never has such a clear drop in pressure been more evident to me than in this theater. Although I haven't personally measured it, there is a discernible change in the air pressure. The longer I remain in the theater, the heavier the air feels, and others have reported the same sensation.

We often host events in the theater, including group readings conducted by our talented mediums. Its intimate size and dark surroundings make it an intense and incredible venue for such experiences. I recall one instance when Medium Amy Scott was conducting a group reading. She was speaking to a woman who had been troubled by a mysterious presence since moving into her home. Amy explained that the male spirit was attached to an object that belonged to the woman's brother and that he was upset about the move, harboring feelings of anger towards her brother even in death. She advised the woman that he shouldn't be trusted and that the best course of action would be to identify the object he was attached to and remove it from her property. After that, the resident should speak to him clearly, stating that his presence was no longer welcome and that he needed to find another place to haunt. It was at this exact moment that Maddie, the cat who resides in the store, abruptly jumped from her usual spot and darted out of the room. Additionally, our two Boxers, who were with us that evening, were sitting quietly in the top row. These dogs are very well trained and typically ignore most things unless we give them permission to investigate.

Suddenly, they both began to whimper, and the female Boxer started to hide under the seat next to her, crying softly. At that precise moment, the woman who was discussing the angry presence with Amy felt an unseen hand forcefully tilt the glass of wine she was holding, spilling it down the entire front of her blouse.

Another unique occurrence at the Iris Theater involves foreign interference with our electronic investigative equipment. One such incident happened during a routine investigation.

Our standard protocol before an investigation includes ensuring fresh batteries in all equipment and fully recharging any items with rechargeable batteries. We also carry backup equipment, including still and video cameras, and audio recorders. On this occasion, the photographer entered the theater and began taking photos, working counterclockwise around the space. The standard procedure is to take three to five still shots of each view, methodically covering the entire area. Just a few frames into the shoot, the digital camera's

battery died. She then brought in the backup camera, which had a smaller megapixel count but had captured many anomalies over the years. After a short time, that battery also died. Not wanting to be without a camera, the photographer went to her car and retrieved a fully charged camera she kept there for impromptu photographs. Unfortunately, few photographs were taken of the Iris that day, as the third camera's battery was also quickly depleted. It appears the very air in the theater was absorbing the stored energy. There were numerous photos taken in the bookstore and consignment shop that day, including some anomalies, but the spirits in the Iris seemed to have other plans.

On another day, the photographer was monitoring both an audio recorder and a video recorder during a medium group reading in the theater. Both devices appeared to be recording, with all the indicator lights showing full operation. However, later, back at the office, we realized the video recorder had only captured approximately the first minute of the session, while the audio recorder captured a bit more, about two minutes. While it's often easy to find explanations for isolated

Brenda Newby & Mary Jo Woodruff

events, there has never been a solid, natural explanation for all these equipment failures happening alone.

If you are curious about the spirits of the Iris Theater, you are welcome to visit and experience the venue for yourself. The Vagabond Players perform several times a year, and the Iris presents classic movies for free on a couple of Friday nights each month. You can visit bookscrannies.com and click on the Iris Theater tab to see a current schedule and sign up for the email list of upcoming movies and plays. The spirits and owners would surely enjoy a visit from you. The price of admission is quite reasonable for the tremendous fun you will have.



THE IRIS THEATRE

The black box theatre where it is reported a man watches over the audience and productions onstage. The Iris Theatre is home to productions given by the Vagabond Players.

4

BOOKS AND CRANNIES

*That's why I call this place the Haunted Bookshop."
Haunted by the ghosts of the books I haven't read. Poor
uneasy spirits, they walk and walk around me. There's
only one way to lay the ghost of a book, and that is to
".read it*

- Christopher Morley, The Haunted Bookshop

ONE WOULD BE AS LIKELY TO CAPTURE A PHOTOGRAPH of a Chupacabra and Big Foot having high noon tea as finding a real bookstore these days. One of the few left lies in the heart of downtown Terrell: Books and Crannies. It is the cornerstone of the small business community there and is almost a hub for information about the rest of the town. I've seen many travelers come by to find out where they could find a specific place in the city. I attribute that to the inviting energy that rolls out the door and the grand Iris marquee that draws you to the entrance of the store.

The books are not organized in the usual horizontal fashion but are instead stacked vertically in an almost whimsical style. There is also a 'method to the madness' sorting system that any of the staff will gladly guide you through. Books and Crannies have been designed for faithful readers who consume books left and right, making it unique compared to any traditional big-box store found elsewhere. The store throws caution to the wind with unique shelf displays where books fit into bright white shelves adorned with arches above the aisles. Other aisles have the added allure of beautiful black

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velvet curtains dividing sections. As any delightful bookstore should, it has chairs and comfortable seating strategically placed to make it easy for a reading aficionado to sort through their finds.

You suddenly feel at home. There is always a quiet, private spot to duck into if you need to get lost in a few pages. The current owners won't mind a bit if you sit a spell, drink some coffee, and thumb through a novel. All who work there are as quiet as librarians, but if you just ask a question, they jump to their feet to help you find what you want.

The owner, Gayle, has spoken to me about the times she senses an invisible hand gently and endearingly stroking her arm or hair, or when she hears her name softly called from the back of the store. She perceives the contact as kind and protective. She has absolutely no fear of the resident spirits and is quite protective of them.

I recall a story she shared with me about a paranormal investigation team who expressed irritation with the lack of

ghostly interaction during an investigation. One investigator displayed a bit of arrogance and, to no surprise, the study was yielding no results. To elicit some response from the other side, the investigator spoke out loudly to the room, "If you give us some indication that you are here, we will pack up our stuff and leave." Seconds later, a book flew off the shelf and launched toward the investigator. Excited, the team continued with a barrage of questions. The owner looked up and said, "You told them you would leave if they responded. They did as you asked. You need to be true to your word and leave." The team was dismissed. Like many of Moore Avenue's small business owners, Gayle is a living spokesperson for those who may not be heard as clearly. As paranormal investigators, we do our best to make sure they are treated with the same dignity they were offered while in physical form. These are people we are dealing with and should be treated with courtesy.

The bookstore is extraordinarily busy with spirit activity. It is not unusual for a book to suddenly launch itself off the shelf. In some instances, it might appear to fly at a sudden

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90-degree angle down the aisle. I recount a personal episode during the intermission of the Vagabond Players' "Steel Magnolias," which was being performed in the Iris Theater housed within Books and Crannies. I had walked to the ladies' room, and my husband had stopped to pick up a large and heavy book on firearms. He replaced the book and met me at the front of the store. We stopped for a bag of popcorn, freshly popped in an old-fashioned machine. Refreshments are provided with no expected charge, but donations are appreciated as they are used to raise money for the local animal shelter—yet another example of how the business community gives back to others.

Upon approaching the threshold of the theater again, we stopped to investigate a loud sound behind us. As we turned, we witnessed the firearms book my husband had held in his hands only a few minutes earlier being launched, by some unseen force, across the aisle where it hit the opposing bookshelf. The book had flown at least five feet, and it was done with intention and purpose. There was so much strength behind this movement that it caused several books

on the opposite shelf to fall to the ground. Immediately, I knew someone was trying to get my attention. Days earlier, our team's medium and I had visited the store. This could have easily been a random event, or maybe the spirit recognized me? Even though we were initially startled, I chuckled and said out loud, "Thank you for remembering me. It is great to see you again so soon." I understand that this is common in Books and Crannies and is just one example of many paranormal experiences that take place.

Books and Crannies often rescues a cat to live out its life among the stacks at the store. I can imagine that this would be one cushy job for any cat. The customers often bring the store's cat toys, treats, and luxury items. I've been guilty of indulging the bookstore cat myself from time to time. What's a little catnip among friends, right?

Years ago, a black tortoiseshell named Satchamo was the mascot of Books and Crannies. Sadly, Satchamo advanced to the Rainbow Bridge, and a new feline, a Hurricane Katrina rescue named Maddie, took over the role. One day, the owner

approached me at the front door, practically dancing like a small child needing a bathroom trip. I knew that she was excited and must have a juicy new ghost story for me. She did! At this point, I joined her in her dance. She told me of a little girl who had been in earlier that week with her mother. The little girl had played with Maddie, the resident cat at the time, and she told Gayle she tried to catch the black cat, but he ran through the curtains of the theater threshold before she could catch him. The black cat had become shrouded in the darkness of the theater and couldn't be found. When the owner said she didn't have a black cat, the little girl was adamant that there were two cats: Maddie, and a cat fitting the description of Satchamo!

I am deeply saddened to say we recently lost Maddie. Personally, while I might not have always been a great fan of cats, Maddie was different. I can tell you there was something special about this feline. She was a cat for all the people, and she always played like a kitten, to our amusement. Her eyes followed objects we could not see. Being startled and running out of an area extraordinarily quickly, as if something unseen

had grabbed her tail, was common for Maddie and always gave us a giggle. What could she see that we did not? When we often rented the Iris Theater for our mediums' group sessions, Maddie would always come and sit up front as if in honor of the spirits. Often, she would sit on the stage, back turned to the audience, and watch the dark wall towards the front of the room. Maddie will be deeply missed.

Now, I would be remiss not to tell a story of a friend who had his own experience in the Silhouette Resale Shop, which quickly made him a believer in the spirit world. Richard is a kind man, nearly seven feet tall, and not the kind of stranger you'd want to meet in a back alley alone. He always had a Glock 45 strapped to his hip, and he knew how to use it. He was a frequent attendee of our ghost tours and always welcome to join us, as he enjoyed the tours and was a good friend. Richard was in the restroom that evening, and he was quickly converted from non-believer to believer. As he stood there, pants dropped to his ankles, he felt a sudden pressure as if someone was gently pushing the inside of his calves, and then the sensation started to run right up his thighs! Well, everyone got the laugh of a lifetime as our tall, brave friend

Brenda Newby & Mary Jo Woodruff

quickly appeared, almost sans pants, running out of the restroom door yelling and screaming like a teenage girl. To the Spirits of the Resale Shop: Well played!



Books and Crannies

A long legacy of felines has shared their bookstore home with us. Even today, their presence is still heard, seen, and felt. Hang around here long enough, and you might catch a book fly clear across the room, usually scattering the books on the opposing shelf.

5

THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY

"Perhaps the most valuable heritage we can provide for future generations is a sense of the past, and perhaps the most effective way of presenting this is through the surviving buildings of period and place."

-Alan Hodges

THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY WAS BUILT IN TERRELL IN 1904, thanks to a generous donation from steel magnate Andrew Carnegie. This businessman and philanthropist, who believed strongly in the power of education as the key to success, funded the construction of over 2,500 libraries worldwide. While many of these libraries no longer exist, those that still stand have often been repurposed as museums or other displays of historical significance (Wikipedia). The Carnegie grant came with the stipulation that the city would assume responsibility for the library's maintenance, operations, and collection. In the 1980s, Terrell built a new city library, and the original Carnegie building transitioned into the Terrell Heritage Museum. Today, the Terrell Heritage Society (THS) supports and operates it.

The building boasts a beautiful design, typical of Carnegie libraries, featuring a two-story structure with an entrance that opens into a foyer, showcasing two elegant staircases. The top floor houses two offices at the front, a large open auditorium with a slightly elevated stage, a closet stage right, and another closet stage left with stairs leading to the bottom

floor. The museum's bottom floor consists of one large room with two smaller rooms on each side at the rear, each side also having a separate small bathroom tucked under the staircases. Hardwood floors grace the entire building, a testament to the grandeur of architecture from that era.

On one occasion, two volunteers were working at a table in the front room. One of the volunteers suddenly flinched, having seen something unusual that appeared to originate from the direction of the foyer. She asked her companion, "Did you just see that?" Her colleague simply replied, "No." The first volunteer then described what she had just witnessed: a seemingly average-sized, dark, three-dimensional human shadow walking across the interior threshold and into the foyer. The spirit moved quickly and with no discernible purpose or intention. We have been told several similar stories about this shadowed figure by other witnesses.

One of our own investigators recounts her personal experience with this phenomenon, describing the man manifesting as a shadow silhouette cast upon the foyer wall

one day while she was volunteering. Occasionally, when the figure appeared as a shadow, the door chimes would ring as if someone had entered the foyer. The volunteer acting as greeter that day would then walk to the entrance to welcome the guest, only to find that no one had come in. On some days, the chimes would ring mysteriously and so frequently that the museum attendants would eventually unplug them.

This type of door chime actually makes a fantastic and inexpensive investigation tool. These devices are called passive infrared chimes or IR sensors. Easily purchased at any hardware store, they are economical tools that should be in every paranormal investigator's kit. The term infrared describes the spectrum of light that exists just beyond the range of human vision. This infrared layer of light also emits a temperature signature. Once the sensor is in place, it records the ambient temperature of the surface it is pointed at. If anything with a different temperature crosses the infrared beam, it triggers the chime. Shadows will not falsely set off the chime because they lack a temperature signature. Perhaps the shadow man reported in Carnegie's foyer caused a

temperature change? We may never know the definitive answer, but if the chimes are activated during his movement, we can hypothesize that this is indeed the case.

The sounds within the Carnegie building are also quite significant and unnerving. One wouldn't typically expect to hear such loud noises when alone in a quiet building. Footsteps can sometimes be heard moving across the original hardwood floors that still exist on the second floor. At times, it sounds as if the footsteps are descending the staircase on either side. The door to the men's restroom also sounds as if it is opening and closing on its own. One volunteer shared a story with us about a morning when she was at the museum with her husband. She was busy sweeping the floor near the double doors at the front of the building, while her husband sat quietly reading the newspaper at the downstairs table, only a few feet away. Suddenly, she heard the unmistakable sound of someone entering and shutting the door to the men's room. She automatically assumed her husband had gotten up to use the restroom. At least, that's what she thought until she looked behind her to see him still sitting

exactly as he was before, quietly reading. He hadn't moved an inch. She asked him if he had gotten up to go to the bathroom, and he simply said that he hadn't moved at all. Do apparitions also need to occasionally relieve themselves? It seems some burdens never cease, even after we leave the physical world.

Two other volunteers recounted an experience where they were arranging displays in the museum. They lifted a small, but quite heavy, cast iron ice cream parlor table with two attached stools to move it just a few inches. This table was a permanent fixture at the Bass Rutledge Drug Store soda shop during the 1940s, a popular spot frequented by the cadets of the British Flying Training School. It took both ladies all their strength to move the table about ten inches. Suddenly, a loud scraping sound, coming from the second floor directly above them, echoed through the building. They described it as the sound of a large, heavy table being dragged across the entire length of the auditorium upstairs. It was deafening, and they were disturbed because they were certain they were alone in the building. Startled by what they had just heard, one of the

ladies wondered if the curator was in his office upstairs and they had simply been unaware of his presence. However, both knew this wasn't the case. Nevertheless, one of the ladies reluctantly climbed the staircase to his office. Just as they had suspected, there was no one upstairs, and the furniture was exactly where it always was. She could find no explanation for the strange noise.

On another occasion, during a business meeting of the local art association with five people in attendance, an unbelievable and unexplained noise event occurred. The downtown area was quiet; it was about 7:00 p.m. on a weeknight. While the members sat around a table in the middle of the first floor, a loud, vibrating, crashing noise seemed to emanate from the front, south side of the display area. The members jumped to their feet, startled, and ran to the exhibit space to see what had happened. They were worried that some of the precious artifacts had surely been destroyed and that one of the large, top-heavy display shelves might have fallen over. To the amazement of everyone present, nothing was out of place. The displays were perfectly arranged. A few members

commented that they had heard breaking glass, although some only heard the crash. Looking outside, there was absolutely nothing and no one around. Although somewhat shaken, they attributed it to the Carnegie spirits and continued their meeting, comforted by the fact that others had shared similar experiences. This was just one of the many reported phantom noises that are commonplace in this beautiful building.

One of our investigators spent several years volunteering at the museum, helping with display installations, opening the doors for Saturday visitors, cleaning, and hosting events. She spent a significant amount of time there and even began to greet the Spirits when she entered the building. Sometimes, this would cause the lights to flicker, almost in acknowledgment of her interaction – at least, that's what we like to believe. The building is old, as is the wiring. Regardless, we all feel a connection to the spirits we believe are there. If you are in town, please be sure to say "Hello" from us. They just might flicker the lights for you.

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We sincerely hope that some of the city's founders, such as "Captain" Robert Terrell and Governor Colquitt, enjoy visiting the museum occasionally in the afterlife. The Terrell Heritage Society has done a great job representing the history of Terrell and its founders. If you happen to be in town, we highly recommend a visit to this museum. Please be sure to sign the guest book when you arrive and let the staff know how you heard about the museum.

Learn more about the Terrell Heritage Museum by visiting their website www.terrellheritage.org. Their hours are limited, so be sure to check the site before planning a trip. Admission to the museum is free, but donations are always appreciated and are used to help with the upkeep and restoration of this magnificent building.

6

THE BRITISH FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

"The air is full of ghosts... They are all whispering."

- An old Native American proverb.

THE NO. 1 BRITISH FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL (BFTS) IN TERRELL holds the distinction of being the first training school of its kind. During World War II, Royal Air Force (RAF)

flight schools in Europe were under constant threat of bombing by Nazi forces. By 1941, the situation had become so dire that the United States Army Air Corps opened seven training facilities across the United States to provide a safe haven for young fighter pilots to train without fear of attack.

Young men arrived in the United States through Canada, often under the cover of darkness and dressed in civilian clothing. Most were as young as 18, many were only children, and all were understandably frightened. They were entering a completely foreign country where everyone was a stranger, and the familiar cultures of their homeland were absent. They could never be entirely sure of their own families' safety back home, where food rationing was severe, and some arrived malnourished and thin. However, upon their arrival and as they lined up for breakfast the next morning, a man behind the chow line who offered them bacon with their eggs greeted them. Coming from the harsh realities of war, these young men quickly formed strong bonds, becoming like brothers, and many would later recall the next six months as the best time of their lives.

During the week, the cadets underwent rigorous training, mastering incredible aerial maneuvers and feats of skill in small airplanes. When they weren't in the air, they spent long hours in the classroom, learning the intricate skills required to operate aircraft and engage their adversaries. These lessons would be put to the ultimate test when they returned home to fight a brutal war with an uncertain outcome. They began their training in Stearman PT-17 biplanes with open cockpits and then advanced to the more sophisticated Harvard AT-6 aircraft. The training was demanding, and lives, including their own, depended on their success. Their country's freedom depended on it. These young men were destined to become heroes.

Out of the 2,200 trainees, both instructors and cadets of the School tragically lost a total of 24 lives. Twenty of these young men now rest in a memorial plot dedicated to them at Oakwood Cemetery on Moore Avenue. This small section of land holding their graves is affectionately known as "a little bit of England." Today, people from all over the world make a yearly pilgrimage to Terrell to honor these young men.

On the weekends, the cadets ventured into town and enjoyed dances, parties, Sunday family dinners, and other events generously hosted by Terrell residents. The Bass-Rutledge Drug Store's Soda Shop was a particularly popular hangout. Many cadets were even given rooms in the homes of Terrell residents, spaces dedicated solely to them. Members of the community would "adopt" a soldier every six months, simply to provide a weekend's respite from life in the barracks. The cadets met young ladies, forged new friendships, and genuinely had a wonderful time. It was a brief but cherished escape for those who might soon face death fighting for their country's freedom. Some of the men who survived the war eventually returned to Terrell, married local women, and embraced the community as their own family. Others who did not survive had written letters home, often expressing their longing to return to Terrell when the war was over. I sincerely believe that many of them did return, in spirit. It's impossible not to be moved by the stories of the No. 1 British Flying Training School.

Every year, remembrance ceremonies are held at the

cemetery, and many attendees attest to feeling the presence of these young men standing beside them. Some say they sense eyes upon them during the ceremonies, as though the cadets are watching as they are honored for their bravery.

At the site of the former school, two original hangars still stand and are currently leased by private businesses. Fragments of the original runway are also identifiable. Recently, the Terrell Heritage Museum acquired both a Boeing AT-6 and a Stearman PT-17 aircraft that were used at the school. The Museum also holds many artifacts and photographs from the school, including pictures of all the graduating classes. One of the largest displays is a map of Texas with Great Britain superimposed over it, with London and Terrell sharing the same point.

I have been told that when the atmospheric conditions are just right, you can hear the faint sounds of young men's voices and laughter carried on the wind as you stand outside the museum. Directly in front of the museum lies the airfield, which was once home to the barracks and the school. If you are fortunate enough to experience this phenomenon, there

is no need to be afraid. It is merely the lingering echoes of the young cadets who left their imprints of joy and camaraderie on the soil, rock, and stone of this place. It's like our own record player of the past, playing on a continuous loop for us to appreciate today. It is the enduring legacy of these young, brave soldiers, a reminder of the time they spent here and their ultimate sacrifice. These boys loved this place, and they loved each other as brothers in arms.

Remembrance ceremonies are held at the cemetery each Memorial Day and Veterans Day. You can learn more about these events, the museum, and the cadets of the No. 1 British Flying Training School by visiting their website at www.bftsmuseum.org. Visitors are welcome and donations are welcome. Admission to the museum is free.



**THE CEMETERY PLOT
DEDICATED TO THE BFTS CADETS**

Every year the cadets and instructors of the No 1 British Flying Training School who lost their lives in training or at the school are honored. The intensity of the ceremony is such that some claim that they can feel the spirits of the cadets standing by.

7

THE WARREN BUILDING

“There is no conclusive evidence of any sort of life after death, but there is no evidence against it. Soon enough, you will know, so why fret about it.”

—Robert A Heinlein
(Heinlein)

SENATOR ROBERT WARREN GAVE RISE to this building in or about 1897. Warren practiced law in offices on the second floor while the first floor was home to the Famous Hat Company. Later the ground floor would be occupied by many businesses, including drug stores, furniture stores, and even a gun store. In more recent years, it was given a facelift from a local architectural design expert, Davis Griffith-Cox. Professor Griffith-Cox is a bit of a local celebrity, as he is an eccentric character born and raised in Terrell, along with generations of his family. In future books, we will be sure to talk about Griffith Homeplace Museum and paranormal events we experienced there during our investigations. Those stories would fill an entire book on their own

To make this section of the book easier to categorize, when referring to the Warren Building, we will discuss the original Warren building and the adjacent building. In other words, considering spirits don't see walls then, for the purpose of ease, we don't either.

The Warren Building's façade is as beautiful and intriguing as

many of the other storefronts lining Moore Avenue. It has its own character and boasts its own unique set of paranormal phenomena. Currently, the two buildings are home to a coffee shop, barber shop, appliance store, boutiques, and residential lofts. It is also zoned for residential, or bed and breakfast status.

Our beloved Lizzie is believed to have been photographed there by occupants of the buildings. Several tour guests have claimed to have captured her apparition in photographs, and others have claimed to have seen her staring out while she stood in an upper floor window of the Warren Building just briefly before disappearing. Although her manifestation is common in the Warren Building, the Anderson Building, found directly across the street, has generated enough reports of the young lady it will make your head spin. Her presence is quite common here, and her apparition is often so vivid, onlookers first mistake her for a lost little girl instead of the spirit she is. People often speak of other specters they have seen here, and they are just as opaque.

There was once a bakery in the building that had several ghostly encounters of a single spirit that visited the first two weeks the business was open. The employee reporting the story would be in the kitchen. She would hear the door chime and look up to see a woman dressed in Victorian-era clothing, complete with hat and gloves, enter the building. The lady would walk to the couch, sit down, and remove her gloves. Hurriedly, the employee would approach the woman to see if she could help the first customer of the day with a cup of coffee. Yet, as she approached, the woman just suddenly disappeared, leaving no trace of her existence other than this story.

There appears to be a small area between the Anderson building, Old City Hall, and the Warren building where ghosts garner enough energy that they manifest themselves as apparent as you or I. It is highly unusual to have so many similar reports of such solid apparitions in one area. Is there a ley line or an elevation of electromagnetic energy in this spot, possibly?

Perhaps the complex theories of quantum mechanics, wormholes, and interdimensional portals hold a deeper truth. Could there be an unseen window into the galaxy, imperceptible to our standard senses? Do our senses instead only register the anomalies that emerge from and recede back into these invisible doorways? Those scientists are far more brilliant than I. I'll leave them to contemplate the region I've playfully named "The Paranormal Triangle." While it's more accurately a trapezoid, "The Paranormal Trapezoid" isn't sexy to say. Regardless, it remains a distinct zone of profound high strangeness. Nonetheless, we are happy these ghosts have decided to use it to their own benefit. It certainly makes for a great, if almost unbelievable, story.

There is another apparition who tends to appear in this building, and he is affectionately referred to as the cowboy. He had been seen so clearly and so often that one witness was able to identify him in a photograph taken circa 1930 when the building was the Famous Hat Company. We stumbled upon several pictures shared via social media during the restoration of the Warren building. As so often occurs in

these old buildings, there are usually several changes that need to happen before a place can be opened to the public. This was the case on the second floor of the building. I mention this because we can assure you there was no contamination by anyone but those working in that space. However, the sawdust left to settle on the floor the night before had been strangely imprinted by cowboy boots.

As is often the case, renovations in old buildings appear to generate higher reports of potential paranormal activity. Our research uncovered a recent story about the strange misplacement of blue painters' tape that was being used to mark the walls for remodeling. Mysteriously, sometime during the night, the tape had been removed from the carefully measured areas and replaced randomly in obscure places. Workers would arrive to find blue tape placed on the staircase, windows, floors, and other bizarre areas where it was not needed. This resulted in the requirement of exact replacement of the tape in preparation for painting.

The Warren building is adjacent to residential lofts, and some

renters have recounted their own stories to us. It is common for disembodied voices to be heard, whistling, and other mysterious sounds made by someone unseen. One resident couple reported a large painting hanging above their bed was removed from its place on the wall and found, the next morning, on the floor leaning against the opposite wall. Another resident expressed concern because she often finds her two-year-old sitting in front of the bedroom closet while babbling “toddler-speak” for great lengths of time as if someone invisible was entertaining him. To make matters stranger, the resident states that the child’s eyes follow some unseen object around the room. Either one of these behaviors would be considered eerie by themselves, but to make things more bizarre are the sudden, intense cold spots that suddenly appear in the same area by the child’s mother.



ORIGINAL WARREN BUILDING

(Addition Not Shown in Photo)

The Warren building and its addition are rumored to be one of the places Lizzie has been seen and photographed. It is also said that a cowboy hangs out there.

8

THE TRAIN DEPOT

*“Railroad Iron is a magician’s rod, in its power to evoke
the sleeping energies of land and water.”*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson
(Emerson)

ONE DAY A CALL CAME INTO THE OFFICE asking if we could
come down to the old Texas & Pacific Railroad freight depot

to set up a time to speak to a local community group. Walking in the door, a group of friendly, excited staff, who could not wait to share their own personal stories about the place, instantly swarmed us. For a haunted tour guide operator, this place was an absolute dream! The old freight depot was built in 1911 and operated as a depot until 1977. It has been converted into a beautiful set of office spaces, but most of the original structure remained to keep the unique context of the building. This is undoubtedly the most beautifully restored historical building in Terrell, Texas. It is a real mixture of contemporary meet the historical past in one building. That historical past not only included the property but, according to the employees offices in this building, also continued to be the home of a ghostly figure they affectionately called, “The Conductor.”

Paranormal investigators discuss two primary kinds of hauntings: Intelligent hauntings and residual hauntings. Residual hauntings are those that seem to play along on a loop as if a recording were repeatedly playing. When periods of high emotional energy are present, that energy is believed to

imprint itself into the organic structures of the area, including the soil, trees, stone, and more. These areas are most notorious for the negative or darker incidents such as accidents, violent crimes, or horrific scenes of war. However, the same theory holds true for positive experiences such as where the boys of the British Flying Training School stayed during their time here in the U.S. This is reported as the sounds of the boy's laughter and voices carrying across the fields and into the wind. This is to be heard by those who happen to be in the right place, at the right time, and during the right conditions. Those that experience residual hauntings should consider themselves fortunate as a living person rarely observes them. Based on the information we have received from the witnesses at the old Freight Depot; I am confident that this is a residual haunting. It is a perfect example of an energetic tape loop reminding us all about the professionals who proudly spent their lives working for the railroad.

Two ladies shared the office in front of the depot. They spoke to us one evening when they were both working late due to a

project deadline. Out of nowhere, they heard footsteps, walking at first and then moving into a fast run or jog. Both ladies were startled but made their way to the long wooden hallway that divided the building into offices on the right and on the left. They saw absolutely nothing but what they heard sent shivers up their spines. As they both stood and looked down the hallway, there was the clear sound of footsteps starting at the most distal part of the building, followed (in sound only) by a quick increase in speed as the noise ran towards them.

I understand this train depot once received and shipped freight. Expensive parcels needed to be held in a secured area. As a result, the building had a small space, secured with grated bars, preventing access to anyone without a key. Parcels would be placed here, processed, then shipped when the time was right, all the while, protected under the watchful eye of the station master. These parcel cages are still intact in the building.

This was never illustrated better than the story shared with

me by one employee. She stated she casually walked towards the front portion of the depot only to be surprised by a man, dressed in overalls and a typical conductor's hat. He appeared to be making motions as if stamping then writing on something. We speculate it was an unseen logbook. Standing in the secured, grated area, the Conductor's apparition paid absolutely no attention to the employee that stepped in on him. This behavior is one clue that leads paranormal investigators to classify this as a residual haunting. The specter seemed to be performing a task that he may have conducted during his job, and his lack of interaction with the employee tells us that she had seen an energetic imprint.

One gentleman claimed he watched the "Conductor" walk directly through a wall into the gentlemen's restroom. Of course, there is no longer any type of door there, so the apparition simply made the same type of movements he would have made when he was living. This is another hallmark of a residual haunting. Spirits just go through the motions they made earlier with disregard to any structural changes to the building or space.

More stories on the old Freight Depot are out there, but there wasn't enough time that day to hear about them all. We hope to go back soon and take more time to visit with the tenants there. This fantastic, little building must hold a million secrets in its walls.



THE TRAIN DEPOT

The employees at the renovated Train Depot speak fondly of the ghostly “Conductor” who continues his duties. He has been spotted inside one of the secured, grated areas performing tasks he once did when he worked there. His footsteps can sometimes be heard walking down the long corridor that lies in between the new offices.

9

THE BRIN BUILDING

“There are an infinite number of universes existing side by side and through which our consciousnesses constantly pass. In these universes, all possibilities exist. You are alive in some, long dead in others, and never existed in still others. Many of our ‘ghosts’ could indeed be visions of people going about their business in a parallel universe or another time – or both.”

—Paul F. Eno *Faces at the Window*

FOR THE SIMPLE EASE OF CATEGORIZING OUR BUILDINGS we have included the real estate located on Moore Avenue between Catherine and Adelaide Street “The Brin Building.” The entire block was not owned by Terrell’s prominent Brin family, but they did own the most famous section of the building. This section would be most known as the Brin Opera House. Although it spent most of its life as the Brin Store, we understand it to be an upscale Montgomery Wards or Sears & Roebuck, for those of you who remember those stores. The entire building had been home to the dry goods store, office spaces, and the opera house, of course.

During the initial writing of this book, we had no first-hand experience with the Brin Opera House. However, we did occupy a portion of its immediate adjacent. In fact, we were right next door divided by a simple cinderblock wall. the building next door to the former Brin Opera House for several years, and it was never a dull moment.

Our location held a piece of the Brin’s operations in the form of a gigantic safe. The ancient object safely secured the personal goods and money used for business affairs. As

temporary caretakers of the Brin safe, we had many opportunities for a variety of mediums to "read" the safe and its alleged secrets. The enormous multi-door metal box dated back to 1855 and weighed in at a whopping 2-3 tons. The safe was so large, the concrete slab underneath it was breaking down into the earth from years of its weight bearing down upon it. One could assume the sheer size and the materials of its construction contributed to an enormous amount of energy that was palpable by even the least sensitive people. No doubt, it was an ideal trigger object, and we would gather our guests around it for short examples of investigation techniques. They would 'ooh,' and 'ahh' as the lights and noises from the proximity meters would flash in response to their questions. Every paranormal investigator will tell you having an object of this magnitude, you should expect a spirit or two to come with it. Those working in the office would agree that perhaps, Mr. and Mrs. Brin weren't so ready to let go of that safe.

Our mediums and investigations taught us that Mr. Brin was not fond of women touching the safe. It was a common belief

at the time that the patriarch in the household was to manage the money, and the women took care of the “softer” family needs. This attitude may have been in the atmosphere, but Mrs. Brin's spirit was not quiet. Evidence, in many forms, seemed to indicate she was an integral part of whatever business that safe was associated with.

The Brin safe dates to 1855 and weighs at least 2 tons. It has survived at least one fire and has secrets that we will never know about. Before our offices moved into the building, there was a businessman in the location. This man was an integral part in helping us get started in Terrell, and we wanted to return the kindness by providing exposure for him. The issue was that there weren't any real ghost stories that we could tell about his building. However, there was a minor incident. It wasn't a great ghost story and could likely be explained, but we used it to our advantage and told it anyhow so we could promote his business space.

WASH YOUR HANDS

On a couple occasions, the agent entered his building in the mornings to find that both bathroom sink faucets, even the non-working hot water faucet, were standing wide open and water was running full blast. Of course, the plumbing in these buildings was ancient, so we assumed it was the probable cause of the issue. Our tour guide would take the group by the business and mention the faucet incidents, leaving them to make up their own minds. It was a brief way to get his business noticed without taking time from our other, more-enticing stories. About two years later, we moved directly behind his business, with only a conference room serving as a buffer between his agency and our headquarters. It was at that time that we inadvertently stirred up more spirit activity than we could have ever hoped for.

CAUTION: AREA MAY HAVE MOVING OBJECTS

Objects simply started moving on their own and in the most unusual ways. More than once, I would be sitting at my computer, engaged in a project, when half the contents of my desk would simply fall off onto the floor. It was as if someone took their forearm and swept everything off in one quick motion. Paperwork, stapler, computer mouse, cell phone, and any other item occupying my workspace just slipped off onto the floor in one swift action. This elicited a joyful laugh every time because it was as though someone I could not see was trying to garner my attention. On other occasions, the first person to arrive in the morning would find my stack of reference books, carefully housed with bookends on the windowsill the night before, scattered all over the office floor, far away from where they sat the night before. Initially, we scratched our heads, but it soon became apparent, as ghostly activity became more evident, we were dealing with a joking spirit.

The movement of objects started to become routine, but I can

recall one strange day being floored by the sheer force the spirits could use to throw an object. Earlier that day, a fellow investigator was standing by the sink, and he noticed a tube of lip balm. He alerted me to its presence since I was always searching for my lip balm and could never find it. He placed the container by the sink, which was about 12 feet from my workspace. The moment was quickly forgotten until later that afternoon when I turned away from my desk and turned back in time to see the last foot in the flying trajectory of that tube of lip balm. When it hit the cabinet behind me, it created a loud bang, and the sheer force of the power behind it caused the magnetic-clasped cabinet door to open about an inch. The other investigator jumped at the noise. After a short episode of laughter, I apologized to the spirit who threw it. He or she was feeling a bit ignored. This was an effective tactic to get our attention as we spent the rest of the day, knowing we were not alone in our day-to-day bustle. Did I mention this was an incredible place to work? Surely most business offices didn't include invisible co-workers in their decision making.

Our favorite spirits in the building were never shy around an audience. Others were often around to report what were inexplicable events which always helped our claims. One late afternoon, the team was working on one of Terrell's small business events. The day had been a busy one with large numbers of shoppers in the area and team members scattered around the two offices helping guests and answering questions. The doors had been propped open all day long, enjoying the beautiful weather. Sitting in the center of the office with a guest and her granddaughter when we started to notice something bizarre. Three of us sat watching this door slowly moving on its own. It shifted slowly enough that the guest and I had at least three opportunities to turn our attention to each other then back to the door. The door slowly closed to about one foot from its threshold, and then it slammed shut with such alarming force it rattled the photos on the wall. The doors had been open all day and had not moved an inch. It was clear there was another force at work. The atmosphere during the incident seemed different. It is difficult to put into words, but I would equate the feeling to what you would sense in the moments before a Texas

tornado, something most of us Southerners know entirely too well. There was an unnerving stillness to the air that was nothing short of eerie.

THE APPARITIONS: NOW YOU SEE ME, NOW YOU DON'T

Several days later, another investigator at the event told us about his encounter that happened minutes before we saw the door slam. He had an actual spirit encounter. It happened in the room next to us. He had propped a swinging door open with a small, empty trashcan. The door, that was too heavy to be secured by this flimsy object, repeatedly swung closed. As he was looking for something to secure the door properly, the door swung closed again. During one of these moments, the door swung outward. The investigator noticed a woman who had wandered into the small break area next to the room. This space was simply a small break area and he at once became perplexed by her movements toward an interior wall. Thinking she must be lost or getting a cup of coffee from the small coffeemaker in the area, he went to welcome

her. For just a second he got a quick, unobstructed view of the form. He described her clothing as being solid black, “gauze-like,” and flowing but unable to say if it was a blouse or a dress. He was observant enough to see she was dressed professionally. At that moment, he assumed she was a guest, and she just stepped in quietly. Politely he said, “Hello ma’am. I’ll be right with you.” and as he stepped forward into the small area, the well-dressed woman had vanished into thin air, as if she walked through the interior wall. The only other witness did not see the apparition but did hear the investigator speak to the woman as though she was a customer.

Before moving our headquarters into this space, it had been used as a storage area. The Brin safe had not been touched in years and was used as a space for mounds of paperwork. It was a mess. The busy office up front took precedence over cleaning in this back room. We set about the task of cleaning this fantastic treasure trove of items that had not been touched in years. Not surprisingly, our busy cleaning stirred up the spiritual energy that had been quietly settled for a long

time.

Our intuition was right. As we were leaving through the front door, I turned in time to see a white orb, greater than the size of the door threshold itself move from right to left in the room we had just worked in. The ball was misty and fog-like in nature. The excitement was overwhelming because there were almost no reported experiences of anything paranormal in the building before. Suddenly, here was this enormous paranormal slap in the face as I watched the ghostly orb moving in the room. Calling out to my teammate, I wanted to confirm he had laid his own eyes on the orb. Unfortunately, I was the only witness.

The last apparition I witnessed there was completely startled. Never fearful of the energies present in the building, it was completely unexpected. Left with excitement and exhilaration that was challenging to define, I was utterly shaken. Nursing a bad back and needing to be in the office so early the next day I decided to get some shut eye on the air mattress for the night. The goal was to be fresh for the next

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day instead of making the pilgrimage home. Sitting on the air mattress low off the floor there was enough ambient light from the conference room and the television, I clearly saw the tall figure of a man's shadowy silhouette. The shadow ghost stepped about six feet to my right, and I laid my central vision directly on the specter. Where I was sitting, he was slightly taller than the average man. It was difficult to tell since I was practically sitting on the floor myself. There were no features on his face or body nor clothes to identify. It was merely a shadow. It was not like stories I have heard by others, where they experience a sense of doom and evil with the appearance of a "shadow person." In fact, I felt protected, looked over. Other women working in the building have expressed the same sense. It was as if our specter was protecting us and wanted to ensure we never felt alone.

The shadow figure's head seemed elongated and only partially manifested and was still trying to appear. His arms seemed to be long and thin. His head aside, he was just the shape of an average person. I sent a text to our Office Manager, so I had an immediate record of what I experienced. Typing in the

text message, I was shaking so badly I could not manage my fingers on the small, electronic keyboard. Switching to the voice to text feature on my cell phone, I realized that my voice was equally shaky and came out like a small child's voice. Now, I laugh at how shaken I had allowed myself to get. It was from pure excitement as I had never had such a close encounter.

THE DEPARTED HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR TOO

One sunny day, my husband, my son, and I went to clean the office. I had just purchased a new sundress and was feeling particularly pretty in it. At the sink washing my hands, one of the boys grabbed the back of my dress and started to pull on it with enough force. I took a step to balance myself from falling. Turning to tell them to leave it alone, I realized that no one was behind me. Maybe, Mrs. Brin or another female occupant was telling me that she approved of my new ensemble? Mrs. Brin was considered one of the elites in Terrell and a nod to my dress would be regarded as a compliment.

By this point, the phenomenon about bathroom taps was forgotten. Going on with our business, satisfied with the encounters everyone had experienced was enough for us to believe the place was haunted. It was two years in the building before the ghosts began to play tricks with the faucets again. Once it started, it became a regular thing. The bathroom faucets started turning on when no one was near the sink. An agent, new to the office, was alone working at her desk when she suddenly heard water running. She was embarrassed to say anything initially, but several days later, she had worked up the courage to mention it to me. The experience seemed to be of ghostly origin to her, but she didn't want to jump to any conclusions and initially felt a little silly about the whole thing. She had never heard the story before and was glad to know that she had some validation, and that she was not alone in her experience. It was just several days before her account the regular agent had come into our office to ask if one of us had left the sink running as it came on while he was working up front. Of course, no one had. This phenomenon soon became regarded as a typical event for us.

The spirits enjoyed playing pranks on all of us during the time we were most vulnerable. That is, the bathroom became a source of nervousness for us all. The bathroom door would shake and rattle as if someone were at the door. Other times, the simple hook lock would just pop off the eye hook that it was seated in as you were taking a tinkle.

One evening, the agent told me he had locked everything up for the night. About two hours after he left, and the sun had gone down for the day, I excused myself to go to the bathroom. Alone in the building, I did not bother to lock the bathroom door. The distinct sound of someone entering the building through the front door was heard. An old-fashioned bell was hanging over the door so that we could hear someone coming in if we were in the back. Reaching up as quietly as possible, I locked the bathroom door. Being unarmed and in a vulnerable position, I sat quietly looking for something to fight with if necessary. Armed with nothing but a sad and shameful bottle of mouthwash, I listened for footsteps or shuffling from an intruder. Hearing nothing moving about the building, I finally stepped out of the

bathroom and using my biggest “bad dog” voice I called out to the room, demanding someone answer me and announcing I was armed. I had this lethal bottle of mouthwash to protect myself, but they didn’t need to know that, right. Feeling comfortable that I was alone, I walked to the front door, finding it locked and secure. After that, we heard the door open and often close with the distinct sound of the tinkling bell. Eventually, we listened to the mystery bell so often we simply began to ignore it as it was becoming a repeated distraction.

THE HAUNTING OF THE OPERA HOUSE

I don't claim to be an expert in architecture, particularly from the late 1800s or any other century for that matter. My fascination with historic buildings stems from a simple desire to stand within their old bones, to see their enduring structure, and to imagine the vibrant activity they once housed. One building I have always admired is the historic Brin Opera House.

Today, the building is home to a variety of professionals,

including therapists, lawyers, architects, and CPAs. In fact, the owners are a local county judge and a certified public accountant. These professionals, and others like them, have known this city for decades and witnessed its many transformations, all from within the walls of this historic theater.

I always dreamed of having a small space in this building, if only to simply exist within it. I yearned to spend significant time there, doing whatever my day required. While I could have worked from home, my four walls had become rather monotonous, especially after the COVID pandemic.

When a small room became available for an incredibly reasonable price, my urge to escape my house and work in a real office became irresistible. I would often go there in the afternoons, finding quiet solitude for my work. A year later, the office suite across from us went up for sale. It boasted two rooms and incredible hardwood floors, not to mention large windows that let in abundant light—a feature I always seek in a good workspace. It was the perfect opportunity to expand as I had envisioned.

We are often in the building after other tenants have left. The nature of entertaining in the paranormal and supernatural field requires availability beyond typical "bankers' hours." It's generally quite pleasant because the building becomes quiet, unlike our team!

We understand there was a 2-story building constructed in the 1880s, and in the 1890s, another 3-story building was erected in its place that became the Opera House. The opera house was only active for about seven years. Fires were common back then, and many buildings, including the local Synagogue and an entire block of buildings behind it, were destroyed due to the prevalent use of candles and other light sources before electricity. Despite its short run as an opera house, its seven years left a significant mark on this incredible building. There are truly no words to explain its magnificence, and I commend the two families who made it their mission to ensure its integrity, beauty, and overall feeling of stepping back in time.

With a building this old, this large, and with this much activity, you're bound to encounter a ghost story or two, wouldn't you

agree? It's even hard to know exactly where to begin.

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

One afternoon, our mail carrier came in and shared a story about an experience one of the owners had. The owner's office is on the third floor and, being quite large, has both a front door that opens into a small gathering area and a side door that leads into the hallway. The side door connects to a short hallway that leads into a good-sized rotunda. It's easy to miss the stunning artistry on the dome ceiling, which is adorned with painted cherubs.

I still chuckle about the time a guest looked up and asked, "Why are there babies painted on the walls or on the ceiling?". The tour guide and I were amused, as this kind of artistry isn't something many people are exposed to in historic buildings. Without prior knowledge, "babies in diapers" would probably be my first guess too. I only know about this from local building historians who shared the information with me, so I try not to be too hard on guests—I would have been in the same position fifteen years ago.

The owners have set up a beautiful meeting space in the rotunda for small conferences, complete with a huge, gorgeous wooden conference table and comfortable office chairs. While I would never use it for my personal work, it's the perfect spot to bring my guests. It's a quiet space on the third floor where a ghost story took place, and it's a great area to use some of our paranormal tools to get them excited about their surroundings. We've even had reports of whispers, a "yes" heard in someone's ear, and a feeling of someone playing with a guest's hair. And, of course, many visitors—ghostly or not—claim to see fleeting shadows on this floor. These are all perceived paranormal experiences that occur before I even begin to tell them the story of the Opera Goer.

I digress! After the mail carrier shared the owner's story, I had to get the story from the owner and ask if they would allow me to share it. I was delighted to get both This is how I understand it.

Mr. Miracle had spotted a woman walking down the hallway right past his open side door. He caught her out of the corner of his eye and went to investigate, as he was the only one left in the building, or at least on that floor. He was also annoyed because he had just installed a new system that would alert him with a small noise when someone got off the elevator, but it hadn't gone off. As he stepped into the hallway, he saw a woman in a long dress, with her hair pulled back, walking toward the rotunda. His initial frustration stemmed from the fact that the alert system never indicated anyone was on the floor, yet he saw her with his own eyes. As he stood there, trying to figure out who she was and what she needed, she simply disappeared.

It's no secret that theaters, opera houses, and places of music and high-energy arts tend to hold onto that energy. It spills into the building's surfaces, into every nook and cranny. Those vibrational energies are imprinted into solid, organic surfaces. When conditions are right, they will spontaneously and suddenly escape a little at a time retelling bits of a story only the fortunate will be able to witness again.

Of course, that's just one of many stories from this three-story, century-and-a-half-old structure. This building has been home to many offices and businesses, and has witnessed singing, entertaining, mourning, sadness, joy, and incredible energy vibrations that someone with a magnificent voice could project, leaving their emotion hanging in the air and settling on the stone for us to experience centuries later.

A SYMPHONY OF SOUNDS IN THE BRIN OPERA HOUSE

As someone whose work schedule often means I'm in the Brin Opera House when it's otherwise empty, I've become intimately familiar with its unique acoustic personality. In such quiet surroundings, every little noise stands out. And this building makes a lot of noise.

The most common sounds are heavy footsteps, but I've also heard loud banging on walls and the distinct jiggle of doorknobs, as if someone is checking the security of the building. One Saturday, several of us clearly heard hammering

coming from the floor directly below us, like someone was hanging a picture. What made this particularly odd was that our car was the only one in the parking lot, suggesting the building should have been deserted. The following Monday, I made a point of asking the attorney whose firm occupied that space what they had been hanging. She looked at me with confusion, stating no one had been in the office on Saturday.

After one tenant passed away, we began to hear the distinct sound of his office door slamming shut down the hall, followed by footsteps and other disturbances both above and below us.

Many of the tenants here have been in this building for 20 or even 30 years, often working well past retirement age because they genuinely love what they do. When you run your own business, it can become an integral part of your identity, making it difficult to step away. I can only imagine that some of us might return after death to the places where we poured so much time and effort into cultivating our projects,

nurturing them with the same devotion a mother shows her child.

WARNING: FLYING WALNUTS

One evening, during a tour, we were sitting at the top of the stairwell in the Opera House. This was a spot where I had frequently heard the heavy-footed sound of someone moving between the first and second floors. We often used this location to try and make contact and communicate with whomever might be ascending those stairs. I had set up several methods for any present entity to contact us on these stairs. The stairwell has a landing in the middle, and we strategically placed various objects there, intending to capture the movement of "spirit energy." This technique also serves to elicit "oohs" and "aahs" from guests when it appears to work. My small group spent a considerable amount of time attempting to establish a connection with the other side, but much to our disappointment, we were met with radio silence.

Disappointed, we turned off the video camera and began to descend the staircase, moving towards the small waiting area in front of the elevator by the hallway. It was at that precise moment that we heard a noise, almost as if someone had thrown something down the stairs. I quickly turned to see what I was hearing, just in time to witness a piece of potpourri, shaped like a plastic walnut, bouncing as if thrown with considerable force down the lower half of the staircase. This flying home decor must have been thrown with deliberate and focused force as we watched in awe as it bounced several times off each descending step.

I can only assume some energetic force are not happy with the current decorum of the building. Come to think of it, I've never been a fan of Potpourri either.

MY NEW HOME AWAY FROM HOME

I feel incredibly fortunate to share this magnificent building with its diverse occupants, both spectral and living. This building, with its blend of historic charm, majestic historical appeal, and modern additions, truly embodies the old, new,

Brenda Newby & Mary Jo Woodruff

and beautiful essence of the city. It's truly amazing to be a small part of it.

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TERRELL STATE HOSPITAL

“Perfer et obdura, dolor hic tibi proderit olim.”

*(Translated: Be patient and tough; someday this pain
will be useful to you.)*

—Ovid

ONE WOULD BE REMISS IF THERE were not a section dedicated to the most controversial and spoken about alleged haunted spot in the city: The Terrell State Hospital. The

hospital is a state-owned and managed facility used for the acute treatment of those struggling with varying degrees of psychiatric illness. Most Terrell residents (and those in local towns) have heard at least one story about an unusual happening. There is no shortage of people eager to share a story, including the local police officers who stopped us during the tour regularly just to tell us about a recent call, usually a probable trespasser. Verbal accounts and occasional email reach us regularly. Large numbers of stories are handed down by former employees and, at times, a rare temporary resident. The talk of ghostly apparitions and unexplained phenomenon have been occurring since it began operation in the late 1800s when it was still referred to as the North Texas Lunatic Asylum.

These accounts are reported to have occurred over the entire area of the hospital's grounds, which cover over 600 acres of land. Initially, the hospital was self-sustaining, with dairy and farming. Terrell State Hospital includes a newer, contemporary, and functioning facility. There is a significant number of grounds where there are dilapidated buildings that

were formally part of the functioning hospital. It also is home to its own, "Wildwood Cemetery," at the very back of the property, and homes that were once occupied by the Superintendent and other administrative staff. Today, the hospital grounds are accessible from one gate at the East end of Brin Street. A security guard is aware of cars entering and leaving, and a security guard or two drive the grounds. Although this is a state-owned, publicly funded facility, health-care privacy laws restrict some general activity, including photography. Paranormal investigative groups will not be welcomed, so don't even think about that.

Fascination, and unnecessary taboo, with mental illness, automatically conjure up images of people who have problems that seem, to the uneducated, as frightening, and scary. Buying into media and movie propaganda, the oblivious automatically conjure up images of people performing unnatural acts of screaming in straitjackets or speaking in tongues. These false stories are further fed by barbaric and equally terrifying inhumane treatments. Mental illness rarely manifests with such intensity. Fortunately, with a far better

understanding of the human brain, the treatments used today are in the form of much more successful medications and therapy. Even though medicine has made tremendous advances in the treatment and management of such diseases, it never fails, when we take these long-held, erroneous misconceptions and combine it with a ghost story, two subjects most people do not understand, it creates the perfect storm for enigmatic misunderstanding and intense curiosity.

There are thousands of stories held in the walls of the hospital formerly known as the “North Texas Lunatic Asylum.” No one can say there are not cases of extreme suffering in dire need of help that is not helped with a pill or injection, but these are the rarity. However, they are not locked away to be forgotten.

There are rumors many moons ago a handful of perfectly sane wives were admitted by hateful husbands claiming stories of hysteria. The actual truth is the men simply grew tired of their spouses and either decided to live out their days as bachelors or with their younger mistresses. Personally, I shudder to think that if I had been born in a different era, I

might have been committed to the hospital, myself, about fifty pounds and many gray hairs ago.

Once every couple of months the tour would be stopped by a Terrell police officer hoping to share a recent call about someone reported on the unused grounds. Terrell's PD is the epitome of a fantastic police force. They are in great physical shape, well-trained, and armed. In spite, most are not embarrassed to admit these reports make them nervous. According to the officers that have reported the stories to us, they say they will not exit their vehicles when called to the unused part of the grounds at night unless necessary. They offer no shame or embarrassment about this. Mostly, the calls are about a woman who is repeatedly seen in one dilapidated building centered in the middle of the grounds. The rumor is that this structure was once used to hold the patients that no one could control. We do know that this practice did exist in other similar institutions across the United States. If this did occur at Terrell State Hospital, we land on the side of oblivion. Even still, the report of the woman is still consistent from multiple, reliable sources with close ties to the hospital, the

police officers included.

Emails come to us often from a variety of people reporting they have seen shadows roaming the halls of the treatment wards. The departed here do not seem to mind the new roomies endlessly rotating in and out of the buildings for treatment. They continue to live in the afterlife doing their afterlife things, so-to-speak. These were residual hauntings of patients or staff merely going about things in their earlier lives like an endless loop of recorded energy. Some emails did not even describe specific events. They simply wanted to drive home the point that the hospital was very, very haunted with no desire to leave any further details.

At one time, firefighters and EMT's used the abandoned buildings to conduct regular training. One fireman described a mannequin they used for practice so heavy it took two physically fit firemen to lift it. To carry it up and down the stairs was a huge and painstaking undertaking. The weight of the mannequin offered an opportunity for the men and women to practice the realistic evacuation of a victim. During several days of training, they arrived one morning to find the

mannequin missing from its original place on the first floor. The firefighter relaying the story to us remembered how odd it was because the day prior, they all had a detailed discussion about how they were leaving it there. No one wanted to move it merely due to the manpower needed to move it upstairs.

The only reason they pondered moving it was the highly unlikely event that someone would want to steal it. After they considered there was a secured gate, a locked door, it was of no monetary value, and it would take an act of God to move, they decided to leave it. They had joked about it so much that it was cemented in everyone's mind exactly where they left it. Imagine the surprise when they found the missing mannequin on the second floor. At least two strong men were needed to move the body but not a man fessed up to the event, and only one person held the key to the building. If it had been a joke, it would have been hard to keep secret. If it were paranormal, it would have had to have been one strong spirit to move that object to the second floor. How do you explain it? If you can figure it out, then I know a group of young, strong, perplexed firemen who want to know.

One of the stories that we occasionally come across is that of a woman in white. She is reported to be visible in one of the dilapidated buildings in the center of the abandoned property through a window. We took two mediums by that building on separate occasions. Neither medium knew each other nor had ever met. Both reported, not knowing our stories, that there is a woman there. Why this spirit would be there is something we do not know nor can we speculate on. Curiously, the trees that are growing on all sides of this building are growing outward and away from the building. I've sent this to several gardeners, and they mention that the trees may be reaching towards the sun or that years of the wind blowing through those areas may have caused the trees to change growth trajectory. This is reasonable, of course, except we find it strange that it happens around the entire building. Simply something to ponder about.

We honor the privacy of the staff and patients at Terrell State Hospital. We tell ghost stories associated with the facility but in no manner do we intend to imply disrespect.



**ABANDONED BUILDING AT TERRELL
STATE HOSPITAL**

This is the location where a mysterious woman in white has been reported. We are repeatedly stopped twice a year by one of Terrell PD's finest to share the latest account of her.

It should be noted that the hospital has its own security,

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THE ANDERSON BUILDING

“Death is not the end, it is simply walking out of the physical form and into the spirit realm, which is our true home. It’s going back home... We unzip the body, so-to-speak let it fall to the ground and walk through the next door clothed in our spiritual form, which was always there inside the physical body.”

---Lianne Willowmoon
Soul Antiquary

THE ANDERSON BUILDING IS A MAMMOTH of a structure. It is on the Northeast corner of East Moore Avenue and Adelaide Street. The residents in Terrell refer to it as the “White’s Building” because it previously held the White’s dry goods store. Others commonly call it the “Hardbodies” building because it was home to the training gym for decades. Our team calls it the Anderson Building because that is clearly engraved on the top of the building, alluding to the fact that someone with the surname “Anderson” was the original builder of the structure itself. The five-floor construction has a full underground basement (which we count as a floor), and when compared to the other businesses on Moore Avenue, it stands alone in size. The basement is unique, holding only two small rooms with only a narrow, wooden staircase to enter and exit. It has a rear metal exterior door that slides up and down with a descending concrete slide that allows the accessible entrance of materials into the basement. This floor also allows access to the prohibition tunnels of the city. The entire structure makes it an ideal space for storing dry goods. Ironically, it is rumored to have been a morgue in later years when the second and third floors became home to a small

privately-owned hospital. Considering the design of the basement, it would have made for an equally efficient morgue. Residents who lived in Terrell their entire lives swear it was never used for such purposes; however, we have heard a substantial number of stories to the contrary. So many stories, that we simply cannot dismiss the fact that this could be a genuine possibility. Having been in the basement, personally, on more than one occasion, I believe that it would have served that purpose at one time. No matter how morbid this may be, every city must have such a service. Considering this was a hospital for decades, it seems very reasonable these could be more than rumors.

When writing the first edition of this book, the Anderson building was in shambles. It had punching bags hanging the entire length of the ample space. Like most basements, the area is as you expect: dark, damp, musty, and cold. It was obvious the room was a cast-off space with minimal users. The first floor, level with East Moore Avenue, is a fitness gym equipped with workout equipment, including free weights and machines. The second floor is an extension of the fitness gym

reserved to classes including boxing, martial arts, among others. It also houses tanning beds and shower rooms. Numerous guests on the ghost tour attested to uncomfortable experiences while they were members of the gym. They shared stories of being pinched or touched, having their hair pulled or stroked while using the gym equipment by some unseen frisky hand. Overall, they all agreed it was just plain creepy there.

The third and fourth floors have incredible views of East Moore Avenue. For decades and when we had access to it, there were no utilities on these floors, so building code does not allow their use. The spaces were in disarray with broken windows, construction material, and dead birds strewn about. Apparent medical books still lined shelves, and there are tiny rooms with glass windows looking into them, reminiscent of infant nurseries. It was shameful, the state of such a historic jewel.

Today, a developer has taken over and started reconstruction of the building. It is said to house boutique-style apartments with space for a small cafe and other various businesses fit for

today's millennial generation. As I've seen this building over the years, I am overwhelmed with the possibilities it holds. The progress is slow but consistent. It gives me hope this structure will have another chapter to fill.

SPIRITUAL YIN AND YANG...

Our team spent four short days there renovating a space on the second floor of the Anderson building before a rental agreement snafu was discovered. Although we hated to leave, the best thing for all parties was to move on. We were grateful for getting to spend time working side-by-side with its ghosts, even if we were not aware of their immediate presence. It is impossible to explain the intensity of the atmosphere there. Being on any one of its five floors brings on feelings that are powerful and exciting. The air is palpable. It possesses a different mix of staleness and electrical charge. One area may bring on a less than pleasant sensation, and others are overwhelmingly positive. It is almost as if there is a battle of each power, keeping both in a constant balance. The positive cancels out the negative and vice versa.

THE PARANORMAL TRIANGLE

The building just next to the Anderson boasts accounts of apparitions so solidly manifested they look as real as you or I. Spirit reports are described with such clarity they are mistaken for being customers and approached by helpful staff. The employee would inquire to the customer as to how they may help them only to suddenly become stunned as the apparition would vaporize right before their eyes. This triangle between the Anderson and Warren buildings and Old City Hall, immediately behind the Warren building on Adelaide Street, are unusually active areas for reasons we cannot explain. Realistically, the triangle is more of a quadrangle but “Paranormal Quadrangle” is not sexy enough to sell to the public.

Witnesses tell stories of many specters in these buildings. One is a young girl we have named “Lizzie.”

SHE NEEDED A NAME

The young girl mentioned above is reported to be seen in businesses up and down Moore Avenue, even being seen walking the sidewalks. Most accounts seem to occur at the Anderson building. Described to be around eight or nine years old with long hair and a white dress donning a black sash around her waist, she manifests with exceptional clarity.

The little girl was mentioned on our tour so often that we needed something to call her. Being of such a young age, it only seemed appropriate to provide her with an identity. “The team eventually landed on the name “Lizzie” based on multiple impressions shared with us by numerous mediums. Psychic Medium Steph, a well-respected medium who is also talented in remote viewing, identifies her birth name as “Elizabeth” and even believes she is buried in a cemetery southeast of Terrell. Although we conducted research to identify this child, we were unable to do so. There was a theory that she is the daughter of Senator Robert Warren. However, that was dispelled. The sheer abundance of her reported sightings provided us with an obligation to give her a

name.

One of our tour guests captured a photograph of what appeared to be a young girl peering from a window of the Warren building. Another guest had a similar photo of what might have been an apparition of Lizzie, too. The guests allowed me to share the pictures with the lady who owned the Anderson at that time. She was someone who believed she had seen Lizzie on multiple occasions. Immediately she pointed at the first photo and said, "This is her. I would recognize her anywhere." The photograph showed what appeared to be a short form, with a white dress and a black sash around the waist. What convinced me was the absolute confidence in the owner's voice when she saw it. At least in her mind, there was no doubt.

A gym employee brought her little girl to work one day. Her daughter was around 11-years old and had been at the building very often without incident. During that visit, however, the daughter claimed to witness Lizzie coming into a room and trying to physically turn the doorknob into another room. The little girl did not mention the incident to

her mother. Instead, she started to refuse to return to the gym and became insistent, if not downright fitful, that she stay home by herself. She absolutely refused to go to the gym without having a crying episode, which was unlike the child. The concerned mother pried harder, wanting to know why this strange behavior began so suddenly. Previously, the little girl loved to go to work with her as she enjoyed playing on the many floors offering unique opportunities for a child's active imagination. Incessant amounts of prodding resulted in her daughter detailing an account with Lizzie's apparition. Most adults would be frightened by seeing a ghost, so understandably her daughter was scared and never wanted to step foot in the building again.

DANCING ORBS

On occasion, while standing across the street from the Anderson, myself, and others have awed at dancing light orbs in the building. During one ghost tour, the tour guide and guests sat down on the tall, stepped curb and watched for all of ten minutes while the lights blinked and danced.

Sometimes the illumination would appear in the window of a room which we knew to be locked and closed off from the remainder of the floor. The repeating rows of windows give excellent visual access to each floor. These orbs are always seen on the third floor, where there is no electricity. These strange small circular balls are illuminated red, and they almost appear to be enjoying themselves darting around in unusual patterns. It was easy to rule out organic reasons for such brilliance, such as the reflection of cars, traffic lights, or someone in the building with a flashlight.

One employee shared her experience in the gym at the Anderson. Just after cleaning off one of the weight machines, she walked back to her desk to sit down at her chair. Suddenly, a small, green-colored orb elevated from the machine and flew across the room, back again, returning to the same machine she had just cleaned. It proceeded to hover in a manner that the witness felt as though the orb wanted to be acknowledged in some way. She watched the spherical object for what seemed like an eternity. As an attempt to stop the frightening experience, she spoke up and said shakily, "I

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know that you're here, but you are frightening me." The green orb disappeared. She told us she was confident the ball of light was a manifestation of her husband trying to reconnect. He had passed a year earlier, and he was a frequent, almost daily attendee at the gym.



THE ANDERSON (HARDBODIES) BUILDING

We witnessed strange orbs of light navigating between the top two floors, at a time when there was no electricity on those levels.

As one point of the "Paranormal Triangle," this building stands out as one of the most paranormally active locations in town.

While the apparition Lizzie is sometimes seen here, her presence, from personal experience, is almost always intensely felt.

ONE FATEFUL FALL BRINGS A DIFFICULT DECISION

So, I was having one of those days. You know the kind I'm talking about. The type of days where you think the world is punishing you for some sort of karmic displeasure you put into the universe when you were a teenager. Leaving a doctor's visit, I had an issue with a prognosis that would affect my ability to focus on my business. I wasn't sure if I was going to manage. I loved what I did. The paranormal was more than just entertainment to me. I saw how it impacted people's lives, and I was glad to be part of a team that provided a service to help when people didn't have anywhere else to go. We never charged for investigations, and we did a lot of free work, but we managed to find legitimate, honest ways to make a profit with our work. That allowed us to do the things we loved to do and help people feel accepted and safe.

Well, I stepped into the elevator to have an encounter with a beautiful, middle-aged black woman. Pleasantries were exchanged, and it was not anything that seemed out of the ordinary in any way, but it felt different in a way. "How are you

today?" I asked. Her response, "I am blessed," indicating to me that she was a God-fearing woman. She asked about me, and I responded that despite it all I honestly couldn't complain about a thing. I was blessed too.

At that time, I had been struggling with health, additional weight from medications, and extreme pain in my foot. My doctor sent me to have an MRI across the street, and I got lost. Finding my compass, I rushed into the crosswalk, but my movements were like a drunk giraffe in stilettos. I fell in the crosswalk and couldn't get to my feet. Cars lined up, passengers staring at their phones, and no one made any motion to help me get to my feet. I was humiliated and disgusted. I decided at that very moment that I would close my office doors forever. After all, who would miss us? Ego bruised but uninjured, I managed to get to my feet. Cane in hand, I turned to the line of cars and gave my best curtsy to the offending traffic. Admittedly, I don't have to explain the dirty words I was calling those people in my mind.

Arriving at the imaging center, I stood at the front door and broke down in tears. My mind was made up; I was closing the

business.

ENTER THE ANGEL

Taking a seat in the lobby this sweet, almost angelic voice speaks up from behind me. The voice said, “Had I known that you were coming here, then we could have walked together.” Turning to see the source of the voice it was the lady from the elevator. This chance meeting turned into an hour-long conversation that would change everything.

She asked me what I did, and I told her about the ghost tours and our investigation team located in Terrell. She says to me that she grew up there. I love Terrell. However, she had a very different view of the city.

During the height of segregation, she had grown up “on the wrong side of the tracks.” It was a dark time in history, and few discuss it today. We had uncovered historical information about extreme racism in Kaufman County while researching investigations in the area. On one investigation, our medium had impressions of white men lined up, walking across fields,

looking for freed black men, women and children who would be sold back into slavery. This was a program instituted by the state government in 1846, dubbed “Slave Patrols.” This was not isolated from Terrell or Kaufman County but occurred all over the South. Even though Mary, my new friend, was not old enough to experience that fear she had experienced the racism that continued long after. She had no fear of speaking about things that are kept hidden today. She spoke of the hurt, the isolation, and how the color of her skin caused tension and turmoil. Her story required me to stifle back tears. I received an education, first-hand, that day, and I will always be grateful for her honesty.

Still processing the information I had just heard, I almost didn’t realize when she started to speak of Dr. Fridel, the physician, who operated his hospital on the first and second floors of the Anderson building. Dr. Fridel only treated white patients, as was the standard then, but he was well loved by everyone. Dr. Fridel had a nurse who was a black woman, and it is reported she had been with him for 20 years. My new friend told me the following story: Dr. Fridel’s nurse found it

challenging to have a child. Eventually, she managed to give birth to two beautiful children. Both babies were delivered by Dr. Fridel. Sadly, a few days after the birth of her second child, she developed complications. Dr. Fridel took every possible measure to save her life. After she crossed over, the kind doctor held her hand for an hour and a half, before the staff convinced him to call time of death. Dr. Fridel had deeply loved his professional partner and friend. I can only imagine the immense pain he suffered at this loss.

DOES THE NURSE STILL RESIDE IN ANDERSON?

Several weeks after this intense encounter with the stranger on the elevator, my breath was taken away when a woman posted on Facebook that while waiting at the traffic light intersecting East Moore Avenue and Adelaide Street, she happened to glance up at the side of the Anderson building. In the window, she witnessed a black woman, dressed in an old-fashioned nurses' uniform, complete with the starched white hat sitting atop her head, crossing behind the windows

on the second floor. She reported that she couldn't believe her eyes and instantly knew she saw an apparition. She called her sister to tell her what she had witnessed and inquired what the building had been in the past. Before her posting on Facebook, she had no knowledge the structure had been home to Dr. Fridel's hospital several decades earlier. She certainly had no experience of Dr. Fridel and his beloved nurse. I was exhilarated there was finally confirmation of this beautiful, albeit tragic story.

As for the angel I met that day, I had asked her to call me, and we would have lunch together. I told her we would walk up and down the shops of Moore Avenue and shop together as friends. Two years later, I'm still waiting for her phone call. I wonder if she will ever know the impact she had on my life and if I will ever have a chance to share the amazing story of the nurse's apparition in the window of the Anderson building, as she seemingly continued her work.

Another intriguing story this woman shared with me was about her own personal struggles, living with the burden of being a clairvoyant. She would often have dreams of tragedies

that would come to fruition days later. One of these misfortunes involved the drowning of a child which deeply disturbed her because she was unable to change the circumstances of the event. She had no idea how to deal with this burden (or gift, depending upon how you view it). Since our business works to help people just like her, I had confirmation I was exactly where I needed to be. I was tremendously grateful God saw to place this Angel in front of me.

A VISIT FROM LIZZIE?

This chapter would not be complete without me sharing my own personal story of the Anderson. The short time we spent in the building, we had started a full renovation project. The project began with restoring the original floors that lay beneath the worn linoleum flooring in a large, windowed room on the Northwest corner of the building. One day, my team and I were sweeping and running the shop vacuum to pick up all the dust. Out of nowhere, I felt a powerful and fantastic presence with me. Earlier in the day, we had conducted an electronic voice session using our investigative

equipment to let the spirits know we were there for them. We went on to let them know it was okay to make themselves known and we wouldn't be frightened by any activity they might elect to show us. We had hoped this would increase paranormal activity, but when this sudden presence stumbled upon me, I was taken entirely by surprise. The hair stood up on my arms and the back of my neck. My fellow Investigator and I looked at each other with wide eyes. Both of us had felt the same thing. Was it the young lady Lizzie, we had so often told stories about? Perhaps, it was Dr. Fridel's nurse that we would learn about a couple of years later? Maybe it was an appearance by Dr. Fridel himself? We may never have the answers to such questions. Whomever it was, I am glad they stopped by to say, "Hello."

YOU'RE NOT ALONE IN THE MORGUE

For one season, I was able to take my tour guests into the Anderson Building's basement. This space had always been rumored to house the county morgue during the building's days as a small hospital. It seemed to be the most active and

least populated area. Everything about that place was creepy, but it wasn't long before I began to feel at home there.

This was the year I started to introduce some of the “ghost hunting” gadgets you see used on the television shows. Although the scientific use of these devices is highly debatable, it's easy for anyone to get swept up when the beeping and lighting start.

It was a beautiful mid-spring evening, and only three people showed up for the tour that night. This was a welcome relief from my usual crowds of thirty to fifty people. Finally, I didn't feel like I was putting on a dog and pony show. Instead, I could sit and relate to the young birthday girl, who had just turned twenty, and her two grandmothers. They were my captive audience that night.

As I walked into the basement, I could feel a static charge in the air, like the feeling you get when lightning strikes too close during a Texas thunderstorm. The static caused the hair on my arms to stand up, and the three women looked absolutely frightened.

Since there were only four of us, we were able to commandeer the only four folding chairs. The three of them faced me, and I sat opposite them. There wasn't much light in the basement; actually, it's quite dark. The space has two separate rooms, and we were sitting in the interior one. A large cement wall with two arched doorways at either end divided the area.

Aside from the static, there was something else peculiar about that night, something I hadn't experienced before. I turned on my gadgets, and they immediately went with little bonkers. I had three devices with me, and they were all behaving as you might expect in the presence of a high level of electromagnetic energy, or something else quite out of place. I'm not saying it was indicative of spirits, but it was different from any other night I'd spent there, and I'd spent plenty.

Before I could even get my bearings, trying to make sense of what I was hearing and formulate a plan to make the tour enjoyable for these three wonderful ladies, I saw him.

There stood a man, so black and shadowy it was as if he were a void, sucking the very light out of the room. The entire upper half of his torso was exposed, and I could even see his hands wrapped around the door frame. It was clear that he was watching me, and I got the intense sense that this being, whoever or whatever it was, was just as curious about me as I was about it. To this day, I can see him clearly.

I didn't think. I jumped to my feet, dropped all my equipment, and ran toward him. The second I moved; he retreated beyond the frame of the arched door. It was a futile attempt to hide. He was so clear and so detailed that as he jumped back, I could see his hands wrapped around the door frame. By the time I made it to the threshold, he was long gone. No trace of him.

I searched for a rational explanation, but I knew exactly what I had seen. There was no way to explain the encounter as anything other than coming face-to-face with an interdimensional soul.

After a sighting like that, you want to identify anyone else who might have witnessed the same thing. The more eyes on an entity, the more credible your account becomes. I quickly turned to my guests to see who else had caught a glimpse of the curious shadow figure.

My guests were nowhere to be found. They had fled up an extraordinarily narrow wooden staircase, out a heavy door, through the gym, and I found them waiting for me on the sidewalk. They had left me alone in there. Of course, I didn't mind. I knew I was safe.

I made absolutely no mention of what I saw to the three lovely women. All they knew was that if the investigator was running toward something, they had best run away from it.

Once in my car, I called my mother excitedly. It was 11:00 at night, and Mom was already asleep, so I got an earful first. But it would have been worth it, had she not said, "Brenda, I saw the same shadow figure two weeks ago and tried to tell you about it. It just happened there were so many people on the tour that evening that you didn't hear me."

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While her story was validating, I'd be lying if I said it didn't take the wind out of my sails a bit. The adventures she and I have shared.

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THE MEDIUMS

“I suspect everybody has a degree of psychic ability, just as everybody has a degree of athletic or artistic ability.

Some people have special gifts; other people have a particular interest that leads them to develop their

*abilities. But the phenomenon itself is ordinary and
widespread.”*

— Michael Crichton, *Travels*

THIS BOOK WOULD NOT BE COMPLETE without a section devoted to our experiences with mediums and sensitives attending our tour. The stories included throughout this book have been shared by individuals who were completely unaware of ghostly activity until they had an experience. There were so many reports by sensitives we felt obligated to dedicate a section to those who shared their impressions with us.

THEY WALK AMONG US

There are believers, skeptics, and those who will always be nonbelievers when it comes to mediums. Suffice to say, experiences with trustworthy mediums through attendance of many private, group, and personal readings our team are now supporters of the psychic community. Through personal experience it would not surprise me if 25% of the population are sensitive to the paranormal. We all possess a sixth sense,

intuition, or gut feeling about circumstances, but others have extremely heightened skills. I am not one of these individuals. I have a great amount of experience regarding parapsychology, or the study of psychic phenomenon. Those with these talents see them as a harsh burden that interferes with their daily life.

There are many mediums and psychics walking around living seemly normal lives when inside there is little resemblance to what most of us consider normal. Our team has worked with this group for so long we easily distinguish the rock stars from the groupies. We give a certain level of trust to someone's reported impressions. Bearing in mind unless it is specific or repeatedly reported by various individuals, then we don't take most reports at face value.

No one stands to gain anything by being 'outed' as having psychic abilities. If their secret ever gets out, they are criticized or laughed at. Here in the south, there is a large community of Baptist followers who harbor a harsh stigma about those who claim to be mediums. Those earning a living do so knowing they can never 'clock out' because once the

doors are opened you will be constantly bombarded with spirit energy. Usually encounters occur at the most inappropriate of times, when the mind is relaxing, and the skilled doesn't have his or her guard up. Often, spirit comes to them when they are falling asleep at night or washing their hair in the shower. It is not an easy life. I've been told countless times that when spirit wants to be heard, it will be heard. The only way to satisfy energies from persistent nagging is to deliver the message that needs to be delivered and it must be delivered to the right person.

USING MEDIUMS AS AN INVESTIGATIVE TOOL: OUR INTRODUCTION

A few months into investigating and the thought of using a medium to help gather evidence never crossed our minds. A highly unlikely meeting with someone I had gone to school with, from kindergarten to graduation, came into our lives. She had, as had many like her, kept her abilities close being cautioned by good old Southern doctrine that you "just don't talk about those things." Her entire maternal family had

abilities, but they did not speak of them. The family were all devout Baptists, and it was against the doctrine of the Bible, so she had kept quiet about her skills. Curious about her abilities, she joined us on investigations, and using research, electronic surveillance, and witnesses' testimony we were able to compare her impressions. Every time her abilities were consistently validated. We made a point not to share any details, no matter how slight, prior to introducing her to our favorite haunted location.

Since then, we have developed personal and professional relationships with numerous gifted mediums. Mediums we work with are peer-reviewed, background checked and approved by providing readings by every team member and trusted friends of the team. Our team must feel confident in their honesty and integrity. Impressions they receive are used against measurements taken by our tools and the detailed stories of our witnesses. This group has proven to be a reliable tool just like any others we may use on investigations.

People know that paranormal investigators are open to

hearing their stories. These are the stories and secrets they cannot share with the rest of the world. Most are comfortable, we grant them automatic acceptance and confidentiality. It is our job to hear about the bizarre, unusual, and unexplained. We take that responsibility very seriously and we take an objective, non-biased approach to everything they share. Not surprisingly, every tour we offered, at least one person told us about having skills. Some were able to feel, see, hear, taste, and smell other worldly things. In every instance, these individuals received some sort of impressions others simply could not. At times, individuals would talk to us about having clairvoyance, such as dreaming of events so vividly they were almost real, only to have the experience in the following days. Most were truthful about their abilities. Others were truthful but may have exaggerated the skill a bit.

THE ACCIDENTAL OUIJA BOARD TEST

It was pure accident we stumbled on a test to many of their claims. A close friend gave me a Ouija board she found. In a

tongue and cheek manner, we created a display on the wall framed by a shadow box. A few “sensitive” guests would talk about its history as soon as they saw it. Some claimed it had been a catalyst for malevolent energies and would provide a brief, vague history of the display. The tales they spoke of were always much more fascinating than the actual truth. The board was a gag that was given to a strict Southern Baptist couple who wanted nothing to do with it. Never opened it was tossed into the attic destined to rot away with other storage items. After the couple passed and the old home was being cleaned out the board was pulled out and thrown behind their bedroom door. Hearing horror stories about Ouija boards, the adult children opened it but soon threw it behind the bedroom door not knowing what to do with it. The strict religious upbringing had absolutely forbidden such “tools of evil.” The board, being exposed to wet, damp, dark conditions gave it a fantastic look of antiquity. This Ouija board was one of the commonly purchased Parker Brother’s games sold in the 1980's.

UNSEEN EYES WATCHING OUR TOUR

Our tour guides were sometimes overwhelmed with stories from sensitives on the tour that aligned with stories from others. These stories came from people who often had nothing to gain from sharing. We gathered impressions from children as young as 14, stories from fire fighters and other civil servants, men and women, and some of the most unlikely people you could imagine. The stories were always whispering in the ears of the tour guides and were never speaking aloud in public.

Alley Street in Terrell runs parallel and adjacent to the railroad. When the city began its relationship with the railroad, businesses sprang up on both sides of the railroad track. There were saloons, print shops, newspaper and hardware stores on both sides. One such block, referred to as the "Star Block", began at S. Virginia Street and ran West on the South side of the railroad track, Grove Avenue. A fire began in one of the businesses, with a variety of stories as to its' origin, and the businesses on the South side of the railroad burned. There were no fatalities, but as a result, the

businesses on the North side of the tracks turned their attentions to Moore Avenue. Over the years, entrances facing South to the track were bricked up and the North Moore Avenue entrances became the front of the stores. There are still many of these bricked up entries and windows apparent as you drive Alley Street from S. Virginia to Rockwall Ave. There is even a chained supported awning hanging from one of the stores. Some of these buildings are circa 1880's. Mediums have told us that as we walked that route on the ghost walk West to Books and Crannies, spirits watched from the doorways and windows, waving, excited to be talked about and acknowledged! Upon crossing S. Frances Avenue, the Bass-Rutledge Drug Store's rear wall is exposed, made of old brick. Apparently, there is a "cowboy," decked out in jeans, plaid shirt, and big hat, who leans against that wall, smoking, as he observes the curiosity seekers heading for the back door of Books and Crannies. We don't know if he belongs to one of the existing buildings, or perhaps to the saddle shop that occupied that corner in the 1880's.

Another instance of being watched by Spirits happened at the

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Old City Hall on N. Adelaide Street. Multiple mediums shared their visions of Spirits standing on the roof, lined up along the two storied front visage, watching the ghost walk guests. I wonder if they were shaking their heads at the tour guide's stories, maybe even calling out from above, wanting to correct our version of events!

MEDIUM IMPRESSIONS IN TERRELL'S HAUNTED BUILDINGS

Over a period, we hosted events in the Iris Theatre in the back of Books and Crannies. The heaviness felt by some upon entering the black box theatre was multiplied by some of the mediums who spent time in the building. One such medium complained at her first visit to the bookstore that there was an angry male spirit in the store, prone to yelling into her ear. After a few such visits, she revealed the reason for his anger. He felt trapped there in the bookstore, and he didn't know how to read!

The Carnegie Library is at the top of the mediums'

revelations. We know the building is very active with spirits without confirmation from these gifted folks. However, they have a variety of other impressions. I asked one frequent visitor to the museum why she always moved her chair to the rear of the room during meetings, away from the foyer entrance. She admitted to being sensitive and explained she was not comfortable in the middle of the room, exposed to the foyer's open double doors. Apparently, there was activity there that distracted her. Other mediums shared being overcome with nausea upon entering the foyer, either from the front doors or having entered through the rear library door. They did not describe a dark or evil presence, just immense, sweeping energy. Indeed, many of the paranormal experiences in this building revolve around that foyer with its two sweeping staircases to the common landing, and the open auditorium on the second floor. Another medium described the presence of a matronly woman in a rocking chair just outside the ladies' room, at the front South side of the first floor. Another medium feels the presence of the head librarian, shushing and straightening books. The building was a library from its' construction in 1904 until the mid-1980s, so

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it only stands to reason there's at least one such devoted spirit, happily lingering among the stacks. In fact, all the spirits were described as being content, even happy, and always glad for company from the "other side."

MEDIUMS ABOUND AT THE HEADQUARTERS

While our headquarters were in a portion of the adjacent building East of the Brin Opera House, we had numerous guests and colleagues sharing their psychic impressions of the building, constructed in the early to mid-1880s. The original enormous Brin Store safe had been moved to that building and held court over our office space. You've already read about some of the mediums' stories related to this safe. Mr. Brin's presence was all over and all around the safe. Mediums told us there was a stream of people (Spirits!) coming into the front and back doors, walking back and forth. It was a busy spot, apparently. One such person said the Spirits knew she was there and had lined up outside the back door, waiting their turn to be recognized by her so they might send a loved one a message. The place was almost

overwhelming for some. One evening after a private ghost walk for a group of Boy Scouts, I was giving a presentation to the group while standing in front of the safe. I noticed a parent with the group looking as if she wanted to break out laughing. Now, we enjoyed ourselves there, but this was a serious talk to a group of young boys about the pros and cons of owning your own business. Later as the group left, the lady pulled me aside and said she could see a woman standing behind me, waving her arms, having a good old time at my expense as I tried to deliver my message. That was a relief, and I have no doubt the spirits there made fun of us on more than one occasion.

One day while attending the office, a lady with her young daughter came through the front office, seeking us out. Her daughter appeared to be about 14 years old, soft-spoken but serious. She had heard some of the ghost stories being shared on the Terrell Ghost Walk and wanted to share her personal experiences with the young girl spirit we referred to as "Lizzie." She explained that she was sensitive, and that this young spirit had been coming to her in her dreams since she

was about five years old. She shared that the child's name was actually "Lissie," and that she died by drowning. Each time the spirit child came to her, her long dark hair was always wet. This family lived in a community near Terrell and did not have long family ties with the town. Perhaps she was seeking this child medium out to share her story with, just as children are drawn to each other in life. Another medium who was a colleague sensed that the young spirit had been the illegitimate daughter of one of the many prostitutes working in the "billiard halls" lining Moore Avenue in the 1800's, and had been left to her own resources most of the time. Whatever the truth, engaged mediums agreed that "Lizzie" or "Lissie" still plays on the sidewalks and in the businesses along Moore Ave.

A PICTURE FINDS ITS HOME

On another occasion a medium visited us at the office and explained she had encountered a framed portrait, a graphite painting, at a resale shop in a nearby town. This portrait drew her to it, and she believed that its' purpose in attracting her

was to help find its' way back to Terrell. She explained that we'd just know it when we saw it. She was reluctant to purchase the portrait and take it home, afraid the spirit would become a permanent resident at her home. Well, that was an easy find, as I flipped through framed paintings of all sorts a few days later at the resale shop. The attractive regal figure was there, high necked blouse, hair swept up and secure with a fancy comb. There was no artist's signature, but simply "J. Newman" written across the back. We settled the portrait into our office space, and with the magical tools of the internet believe we have identified this woman from Terrell as Josephine (Mollie) Newman. She and her husband are buried in the Oakland Cemetery in Terrell. Although our office is no longer in Terrell, we still have the portrait, and some day perhaps we will return it to her extended family.

Working with these individuals has given us a profound respect for their gifts. Their gifts are not easily carried, nor lightly shared. However, I recommend looking around at the audience in the theatre, the other diners in the restaurant, the person in the car beside you at the red light. These gifted

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folks are all around us, yet only a few share their secrets. We believe.

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CONCLUSION

"There are places I'll remember all my life, though some have changed. Some forever, not for better, some have gone and some remain."

-The Beatles, In My Life

TERRELL'S DOWNTOWN SMALL BUSINESS DISTRICT isn't so much glitter and lights as it once was. However, after the shop owners have closed for the day, this section of Moore Avenue is quiet. The city streets lack pedestrians, except for the occasional person taking the dog for an evening walk. The marquee of the Iris Theatre is lit. This grand monument never sleeps. It is a nightly reminder, full of grandeur, of the blood, sweat, and tears given to small businesses every day. Moore Avenue is a place where the American dream still happens. Every morning when the marquee is dark, owners get out of bed and turn the open signs on to invite you in.

Today, you can buy anything online without even putting on your shoes. However, you miss the experience of being there. You can't thumb through a book and feel its pages between your fingers. You miss the slightly musty smell of the resale shop where you may discover a wonder that was somehow put there just for you. You miss out on the small things such as Kit and Kat, the two ceramic cats, gifted to the bookstore owned by her and her husband and sit atop the Iris marquee. If those kittens could talk, they would have stories about that

little stretch of avenue no one else knows.

The predecessors of these buildings may have had different items for sale or offered various services, but they are still present in the stone walls of these gloriously beautiful buildings. I tell their stories, so they are not forgotten. They have a legacy there, and I believe they try to share their presence through these ghostly experiences.

When I began my adventure of “Ghost Hunting,” I did it because I had questions about the afterlife. There was a thrill in trying to have an experience. That is how most of the paranormal investigators get started. Anyone can go on a search to have a brush with a spirit. There is no shame in wanting to get confirmation with the other side. Just keep in mind, ghosts are people too. Their lack of a physical body doesn’t mean that you have permission to be invasive or rude. Treat the departed with respect and dignity. You are now in their territory, and you are the guest. Tread with courtesy and always ask permission. You may never get that confirmation and give up quickly. You may have experiences and decide that was all you needed to prove to yourself the

supernatural exists. There are very few that truly dedicate themselves to hard work, commitment, and patience to become a paranormal researcher. Those that decide to continue the quest to reach the dead do so with respect of science and to help others understand what may be happening in their homes by providing education to eliminate fear.

Whether the spirits you seek out haunt Terrell or any other town in the world, remember that you are a visitor and you should act accordingly. Take off your hat, be sure to introduce yourself, and be a good steward. Get permission to enter the premises. Remember, when you speak in a haunted location, the deceased CAN hear you. For God's sake, act like your mama taught you. Come and go with love. If they choose to make themselves known, be grateful for that. You are one of the fortunate.

If you have an opportunity to visit Terrell, tell them we sent you and say, "Hello" for us.

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The small business owners, those with legacy and those who are new,
thank you for your continued trust.

If I still live rent free in your head... seriously? I sleep just fine with no
thoughts of you.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Brenda's interest in paranormal investigation was sparked by a personal encounter with her son and mother in 2012. Since then, she has been striving to advance the field through rigorous education, team collaboration, and practical experimentation. She evaluates evidence with an objective and critical eye.

Brenda is currently taking certificate programs at Rhine Research Center's online, 4-year parapsychology program that has been in existence since 1926 when it was founded at Duke University.

Brenda also holds a field investigator certificate from the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON), the world's largest and most respected organization dedicated to UFO studies since 1969.

As a host of the podcast Terrell Paranormal Talk, Brenda shares her insights and experiences with a wide audience of

listeners who are curious about the paranormal.

Brenda frequently participates as a speaker at various paranormal conferences, where she specializes in the theoretical understanding of electronic voice phenomena.

Brenda believes that paranormal phenomena are evidence of the continued presence of our loved ones and that by increasing our understanding of these phenomena, we can overcome our fear of the unknown.

Brenda is not afraid to take risks and challenges in her investigations. She performs her own stunts and experiments with innovative techniques and equipment.

ABOUT THE CO-AUTHOR

After a 30-year career of government service, Mary Jo developed diligence in paying attention to detail and provided the grooming for a no-nonsense approach to investigating the paranormal. A life-long artist and hobby photographer, she sees details in objects with a precision provided from years of practical experience.

Mary Jo relies on a Samsung NX2000 for investigative photography. Mary Jo has invested countless hours of personal research into the multi-faceted approaches of photographic documentation of haunted locations. She possesses an uncanny ability to analyze photographs, identifying issues resulting in misidentified anomalies. Mary Jo has been successful in capturing the likeness of many



ghostly figures.

She has always had an interest in the paranormal, having her first personal experience at the age of 12. After capturing a ghostly apparition on film in 2012 she and her family established S.P.I.R.I.T., a paranormal team in Dallas, TX. Hundreds of hours have gone into the experimentation, research, and documentation of profoundly haunted locations by her and her team. She has participated in all aspects of the paranormal process, including conducting control studies, planning and executing investigations, working with medium evidence, EVP analysis, video analysis, and historical data research.

Although she spends most time working with spirits and ghosts, she has a diverse background in all aspects of the paranormal. Her other research includes parapsychology, cryptozoology, and ufology. She is a blogger and often a podcast host for Terrell Paranormal Talk.

Mary Jo is also currently taking certificate programs through Rhine Research Center's online, 4-year parapsychology

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program.

Mary Jo has also developed training programs in photography for paranormal investigations, and the introduction to paranormal investigations.

She and her team have been featured on radio show, Texas Road Trippin' with J.D. Ryan, Ride Texas Magazine (a publication of Texas Monthly), and spent a season on the cover of Kaufman Life Magazine.

Mary Jo lives in North Central Texas with her husband and dog, Buddy. She enjoys gardening and painting, but most of all, investigating and educating others in all aspects of the paranormal.

She is currently studying the art of reading tarot cards.

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