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➔ **Columnist: Nancy Bradley**



Some seriously haunted cemeteries
 Posted on Saturday, 18 July, 2009 | 4 comments
 Columnist: Nancy Bradley

As I have said many times before, rarely to never will you find a spirit in a cemetery among the rotting remains of what and who. You are much more likely to find spirits in the places they loved in life, their homes, fishing on a river, and it is not even uncommon to find a person who was a workaholic in life still hanging around their office. But sometimes, just sometimes, you will find a wayward spirit in a cemetery.

One such case was a man named Malcolm that we encountered in a New York Cemetery. He had been a groundskeeper there in life, for many years, and he held that job as very important. He was convinced that even in death his services were still needed. The final resting place of those that he cared for over the years had gone to ruin, it is now in what is considered and obviously apparent in the worse part of town. The cemetery is overrun with weeds, tombstones barely visible any longer for debris. It is full of trash, people throwing the nearby fast-food bags over the fence and beer and soda cans strewn on the ground. We saw used plastic wrapped diapers tossed aside and boxes of trash having been opened by critters all over the place. There seems to be little respect for the old cemetery as people party at all hours at the site, leaving refuse behind, needles and much ugliness. Sadly, in his death, there is nothing much that Malcolm can do to fix this any longer. We tried to reason with him, but to him it is a matter of principal and pride. It means something to him as he took this job seriously. Even if his presence could be seen and he could frighten just one person away from his beloved cemetery he would feel happy. I had to understand what he meant about these people and the place he respects and honors. The people he now deals with do not respect the living, and therefore unable to respect the resting places of the dead.

But more likely than spirits in cemeteries, you will find ghostly imprints. The spirit of the person of course no longer remains (ah another pun – sorry!), but we are dealing with the image or imprint of when they were there. And this is more prevalent in places where there was charged energy around at the time of a death, perhaps a war situation, murder, or other disruptive activity. Imprints abound mostly where there is unexpected, unanticipated, fearful, strife ridden, and otherwise avoidable death. Some such places in the United States would be the Civil War battle fields, in New England all through the areas of witch hunts. In Europe, war areas.

There are also the stories of gasses that escape from the bodies of deceased in electrical storms making their way to the top dirt floor in cemeteries, leaving the appearance above their headstones of being haunted. Even when embalming a body for viewing purposes with today's technology it is believed by most that it is impossible to remove all the gasses and bodily fluids from a decedent. After burial it is anyone's guess how much this would impact a cemetery if those gasses were to come to the top of a plot in an electrical storm. Encased in cement? Would it be more likely with older graves not so well protected? Stories abound and we have been called out on many of them...

Still, these are stories for another time. Right now it seems fitting to talk to you about some other aspects of ghosts that make some resting places seriously haunted cemeteries.

The McDowell Cemetery in Fairfield, Virginia is likely the most haunted cemetery that we have explored. The story of a headless soldier in the cemetery wearing a long overcoat and appearing cold and ragged has been reported endlessly here. The cemetery is the site that on a cold day in December of 1742 Captain John McDowell and seven of his men killed and mutilated a band of Oneida Indians, some reports say they carelessly left the bodies for animals to feed on or their loved ones to find. So gruesome was the attack that is retold for all time.

On our visit, we did not see the headless soldier, but we did see phantom soldiers marching, and much evidence of the attack. This is one that should be explored.

The St. Louis Cemetery in New Orleans, Louisiana is a very interesting place too. Now over populated daily with visitors as the rumors of ghosts increase, it is hard to get away by yourself for a good and clean investigation. Still, time allowing, this is a treasure trove for ghost enthusiasts.

There are two unmarked tombs of most interest here, both covered with graffiti and gifts that are left daily. They are the tombs believed to contain the remains of not one, but two Marie Laveaus. The original Marie Laveau was a Voodoo Queen in New Orleans in the 1700, early 1800s. By all accounts she had strange powers and was feared and/or loved and honored by those of her time. Sneaking in and out of places, appearing to be able to hide when encountered did not help her to appear in any way to be normal by any standards of the time. It is said that she saved several men from hangings with her magical powers and potions. Even in old age people would remark that she always appearing youthful, giving credence to the story that, as many speculated there was actually TWO Marie Laveaus, one the mother, the other her daughter.

Whether there was one or two Marie Laveaus, (from my psychic perspective there were two) they disappeared in life by 1895. Still, the ghostly legend of Marie Laveau remains to this day and rituals and ceremonies continue on in their honor.

There are two tombstones belonging to the Laveaus in the old cemetery in the French Quarter. People leave voodoo offerings. They ask them to help with problems and worries. Often at the sites you can see a big X that is left there for good luck. Superstitiously people knock three times on the sites to awaken the spirits so that they can help.

Over the tombs people remark of constantly seeing a black crow, hovering. Some believe this is a sign that she is listening. Many folks living in the French Quarter talk of seeing the original Marie Laveau all the time. Some say she takes on the appearance of a large black dog when she walks through the cemetery.

On our visit, yes, there was a black crow. Are there crows in the area, sure, we saw many of them. We did record ectoplasmic activity at both sites, but more at site 1. Orb activity was high in infra-red and also on elaborate camera equipment. There was a dog that accompanied us that night, but he was large, brown, and had his updated tags on. His name was Buster.

Still, I felt the presence of someone pushing me at the first site, there were rattlings going on inside the area where the first Laveau grave is. We are scheduled to go back again in the near future. In the last month Bob King and Judy Cooper of GRG/ITU did a preliminary investigation making it official to us that there is reason to re-explore.

I would leave this one to you, but certainly if nothing else, if you live in the area or go to vacation there, do not leave this one behind. The first Marie Laveau's grave is about 30 feet from the entrance to the St. Louis Cemetery (1) on the left. The second Marie Laveau (thought to be the daughter, and we felt less presence there) is at St. Louis Cemetery No. 2, 400 Basin Street, New Orleans.

We introduced you to the Coloma, California cemetery earlier, but here is another California cemetery worthy of note. The Old City Cemetery located at 10th and Broadway in Sacramento, houses (if you like that word) the remains of over thirty-six thousand people. From this number, it would be insanity to not believe that the ghostly appearance of any number of them in imprint would not be able to be seen by those able to do so. And just one such imprint in this historic graveyard is railroad engineer William Brown, who died September 26, 1880 after having saved the lives of hundreds of people from a watery grave in the San Francisco Bay. It is told that someone threw a wrong switch on his train and it headed head onto a ferry wharf leading into the direct path of the water. He unhitched the passenger cars from the locomotive just moment before the rest of the train plunged into the bay. Unfortunately, he was not so lucky to survive. When they found what was left of the train and the engine in the bay, they found a brave Brown still holding the controls as if still trying to break the machine. It is said his ghostly image, perhaps even his spirit, likely because of his charged and unexpected death, followed the funeral procession to the cemetery. For whatever reason, he is still seen here, only not in his working clothes, in the afterlife in a black suit. How do we know it is him? Because he stands at his burial site.

Of course of all the ghostly stories at the Old City Cemetery it would be completely unfair to not remind you of the story of John Wesley Reaves and his daughter Ella. After being interred ninety years in old iron coffins, when exhumed, people were amazed that there bodies were still in perfect condition, even down to Ella's pink lips. Their fingernails had not grown, and their hair was in perfect order as if just combed. The skin on their bodies was perfect appearing as if they were just sleeping, there was no deteriorated at all, still smooth and in perfect color, their clothes appeared brand new.

One such a story I was a part of in another cemetery years ago. It was a woman that lost a child 50 years prior to her death, and because of this incident she went insane. For years she sat and rocked on her rocking chair, not speaking to anyone, simply looking forward. She had to be force fed and cared for. The moment she died, the interred body of her child shot from the ground in the cemetery where it had been buried fifty years before. When the wooden coffin was opened, the toddler was in perfect shape. Within 20 seconds of the lid being taken off the little coffin, the body crumbled to ash. Interesting, there is so much we can learn from cemeteries.

So I say never omit cemeteries on your quest for TRUTH in paranormal work. And NEVER omit the cemeteries of the stars, Forest Lawn, Hollywood Memorial Park, etc. How wonderful would it be if it were you who secured a photograph of a known deceased celebrity?

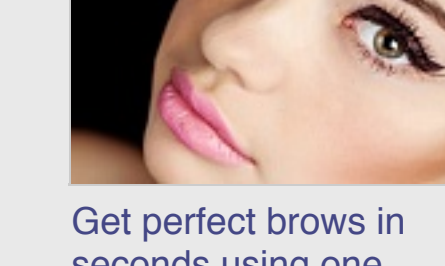
It is my belief that NO cemetery and NO ghost town should ever be overlooked by serious investigators. Even if such places only represent the ghostly imprints of the inhabitants and interred, it is an amazing study into still unknown realms.

Happy hunting!
 Nancy Bradley


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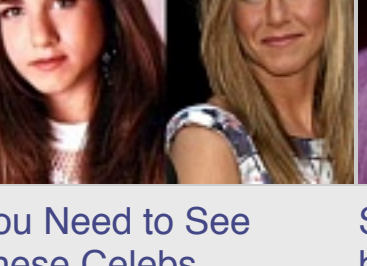
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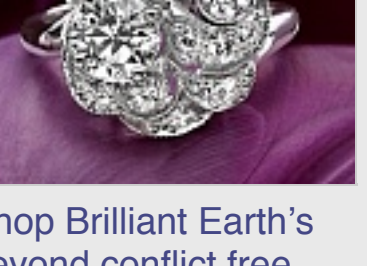
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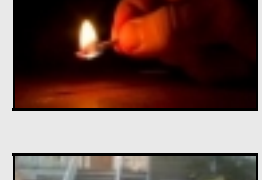


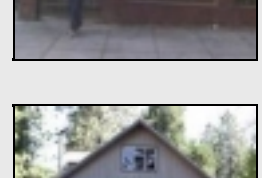
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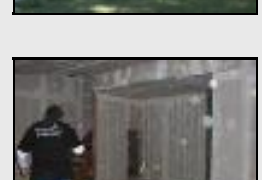



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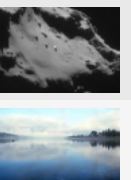
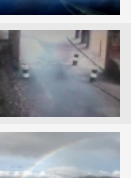
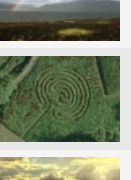
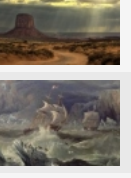
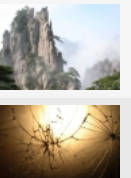
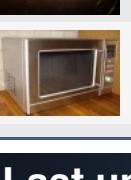
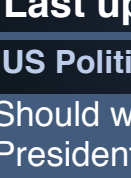
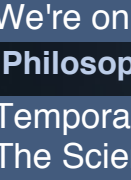
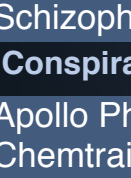
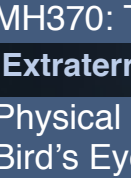
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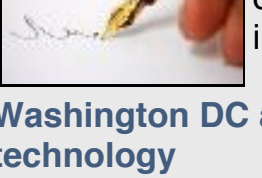
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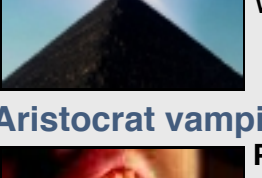
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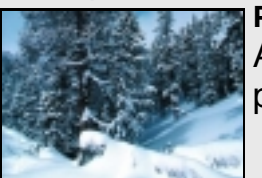
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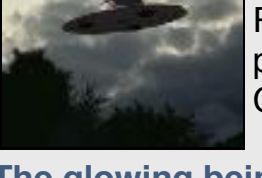
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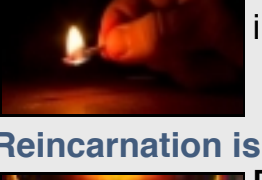
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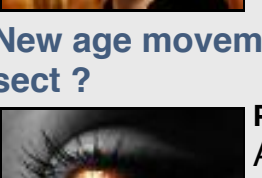
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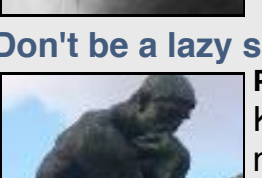
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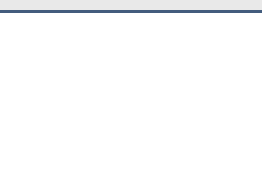
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