



# The Paranormal Press

The Official Newsletter of the Northwest Indiana Ghost Trackers

Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2006

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

### Inside This Issue

News/Updates	1
Deadlines (Headlines)	1
Letter from the IGT Office	2
Creature Feature (Entertainment)	3
Local Haunts (Places of Interest)	3
Gravesites (Websites)	3
What's on Slab (Upcoming Events)	4
Topics for Dissection (Discussion)	4
The Library (Articles & Stories)	5
Eulogy (Final Thoughts)	6



Newsletter Creator  
and Creatrix

Chris & Jennifer  
Mojica

### IGT NEWS

“Elections” were held at December’s meeting. Congratulations to Denise Williams for becoming our Director for 2006 and to...Secretary: Jen Jacob; Treasurer: Michelle Walavich; Public Relations: Wendy Deiotte; & Trainer: Mary Shea. Let’s provide our support to all of our new officers throughout the coming year! (See “Eulogy” for the rest of the 2006 Lineup.)

Hunt possibilities: January—lighthouse in Michigan City; February—Kaske House in Munster. Come to the meetings to find out!!!!

Hannah House, Indy—Twice a month for overnites hosted by IGT. See website for details.

Members need to sign up for one (or more) of the following committees: Planning/Activities, Hunt, Webpage & Cemetery

Restoration. All for one and one for all, Trackers!!!

Upcoming Research days at Valpo Library—watch *Forum* for dates.

Suggestions for content on our Chapter’s webpage needed (like a list of the books in our “library”)

The arrival of spring will bring new Cemetery Restoration classes by Mike Esposito.

### DEADLINES

#### *Ghost Show Accused of Spoofing Spooks*

Viewers of the paranormal television show *Most Haunted* complained that the show’s producers were deceiving the audience by depicting unsubstantiated paranormal activity within the program’s content.

UK Communications watchdog Ofcom (Office Of Communications) cleared the reality ghost show of breaching program guidelines and any wrong doing.

Ofcom declared *Most Haunted*, and spin-off *Most Haunted Live*, as “program produced for entertainment purposes only.” Ofcom’s

report also states, “The program is not a legitimate investigation and should not be taken seriously.”

Now in its seventh season, *Most Haunted* is based in the United Kingdom, produced and presented by ANTIX Productions and is carried by Living TV in the UK and shown on the Travel Channel in the US.

In the Ofcom report, Living TV confirmed that parts of these programs are “faked” but was quick to point out, although the program features “...many entertainment production conventions...it does indisputably retain an investigative element.”

For fans of the paranormal, it’s exciting to have television programming devoted to ghost hunting, but the surge in this genre seems to

come with a price. As the show’s producers are more interested in the ratings than the reality aspect of the show, they are willing to create false content or contrived content for the sake of viewers.

The negative press that the *Most Haunted* program has created is actually just another blow to the credibility of all paranormal research. Those who legitimately investigate paranormal activity using scientific methods for the sake of knowledge and science are being compromised by such scandals.

Producing a show for the purpose of entertainment is great, but to produce a show under the pretense that the content is “authentic” or “real” in order to deceive its audience is another.

## A Letter From the IGT Office

Happy New Year everyone! With this new year comes a lot of ideas and plans for our chapter. My name is Wendy Deiotte and I am the PR director for the Northwest chapter. Bryan Creely is assistant PR director.

Before I get into what's coming up in 2006, I would like to take a moment and explain just what PR is. Public Relations is helping the public understand the organization and its services; basically who we are, what we do and how we do it. External PR is dealing with the public. Keeping our members informed of chapter activities and promoting individual growth and support within the group is internal PR. Including our monthly meetings, these are events scheduled thus far:

- 1/14 New Member's night at Gelsosomo's in Valparaiso
- 1/20 NWI chapter featured on Graveyard Theatre's live show
- 4/4 Presentation at Valpo Lion's Club
- 4/17 Presentation for the American University of Women in Dyer

Plans are in the process for speaking at an area school. Keep in mind that libraries and historical societies are other great places for us to focus on giving public talks.

Increasing our membership is important. I would like to plan a membership drive where IGT hosts a campfire. We will invite the public to gather around the fire for stories of true haunts and legends. Of course, this will be done when the weather is warmer. Let's aim for late spring. In the past, membership has increased with our booths at the fairs & Popcorn Fest, as well as the ghost tours in October. Watch for dates on these events for this year.

Another very important aspect of PR is fundraising. As a non-profit organization, we must continue to raise revenue so we may serve the public. How could we perform professional investigations using essential equipment or restore cemeteries without the funds to do it? Fundraising is vital to our organization. Some ways to accomplish this would be to have a yard sale or sponsor a car wash. I plan on increasing our cemetery restoration funds through donations by group members. There will be more on this at our January meeting. Our fundraising "biggie" is the ghost tours in October.

Many fun group activities will be planned throughout the year. Members can look forward to movie nights, parties and road trips. Be sure to read *The Paranormal Press*, attend meetings and check the forum boards, so you don't miss out!

Public Relations is a group effort. All members need to work together to make it a success. Please take an active role in planning and running events. Bryan and I invite all members to share their ideas and suggestions. We are so fortunate to have a group comprised of such knowledgeable and talented people. Let's get the word out that we have wonderful professionals ready to serve the public!



### *Off the Shelf*

For those of you who have yet to see, and are looking for, a creepy film to watch, **The Grudge** is this month's Off the Shelf pick.

Japanese director Takashi Shimizu collaborates with (*Army of Darkness*, *Evil Dead* and *Spiderman*, just to name a few) director Sam Raimi to bring this dark and eerie film to the big screen.

I have to admit, I was not expecting too much from this film even with the veteran horror film masterminds as the driving forces behind this movie. That this film stars Sarah Michelle Gellar left me thinking that the movie would be just another bad teen-slasher film, falling

## CREATURE FEATURE

in rank with other such cinematic gems as *Scream*, *FearDotCom*, *Final Destination*, *I Know What You Did Last Summer*, *28 Days Later*... blah, blah blah!

**The Grudge** is far from being masterpiece status; however, it does have a decent premise and good timing, combined with some great ghostly images and special effects that will make the hair on the back of your neck stand tall.

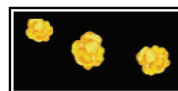
The film is about an American student attending college in Japan who finds work as an assisted living aid. Unknown to her, the home she is sent to has a dark history. An evil curse dwells within the home and all who are exposed to the infectious terror are doomed to face the same hideous fate.

Of course, no film is without its faults.

The flashback sequences seem to appear without any indication making the story a little hard to follow at times. And the cliché ending to the film has been done so many times in other films that it seems like a bad case of *deja vu*.

To really appreciate **The Grudge**, it may take more than one viewing. There seems to be a lot of detail the audience misses the first time.

I give **The Grudge** 3 stars... err, popcorn kernels.



(Editor's note: The views and opinions expressed here are strictly of this film school graduate and should in no way be taken to heart. Don't take my word for it, see it)

## LOCAL HAUNTS

### Kaske House, Munster

Munster's first structure was a tavern built by David Gibson about 1837. In 1845, Allen & Julia Watkins Brass took over the property and erected a new, large, 2-story inn, the *Brass Tavern*, on the south side of this "ridge road." The *Brass Tavern* served both as a way station for travelers and a gathering spot for neighbors. Eventually the inn came into the hands of Johann & Wilhelmina Stallbohm and was called the *Stallbohm Inn*. It was from the only area telegraph at the Stallbohm farm that the news of President Lincoln's death was learned on April 14, 1865. Declining business in the 1890's forced the Stallbohms to close the *Inn*, but the family continued to reside at the corner loca-

tion for almost 100 years more. After the deaths of both Stallbohms, their daughter and her husband, Wilhelmina & Hugo Kaske, moved back from Minneapolis and remodeled the old building. In November of 1909, after a Kaske family Halloween party, a small fire spread while the family slept. The family was able to escape, along with a few possessions; however, the 60-year old landmark building was totally destroyed. The following year a new home was built, set further back from Ridge Road. By 1934, the Kaskes still owned 90 of the original 202 acres. The Kaske's daughter, Helen Bieker, and her husband eventually inherited the property. By the 1960's, the Bieker's home and barn sat on 44 acres of land. In 1968 the Munster Board of Parks & Recreation and the Munster School Board jointly purchased 32 acres from Mrs. Bieker. In the early 1980's,

Mrs. Bieker sold 2 acres to the St. Paul Episcopal Church and in 1986 the remaining 11 acres of the old homestead were sold to the Munster Park Board with the condition that Helen Bieker could live out her remaining days in the house. She died a mere 2 years later at which time the care of the property reverted to the citizens of Munster.

\*A guest on one of the October 2005 IGT Ghost Tours informed us that she had been a home health nurse for Mrs. Bieker and this was her first time returning to the home since her passing. She described an experience she had with what she believed to be the spirit of a little girl who was trying to wake her.\*

Artifacts and personal affects are on display at the Kaske House Museum

Call 836-6932 for hours

## GRAVESITES

[www.frightbytes.com](http://www.frightbytes.com)

Virtual haunted houses, quotes & stories

[www.hauntedmedia.com](http://www.hauntedmedia.com)

Haunted attraction industry site

[www.spottinghauntedhouses.com](http://www.spottinghauntedhouses.com)

E-zine, jokes & stories

[www.moonlit-path.com](http://www.moonlit-path.com)

Dark poetry, articles & stories



# WHAT'S ON SLAB

## JANUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	2	3	4	5	6	7 IGT Meeting
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 New Member Nite
15	16	17	18	19	20 Graveyard Theatre	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**Notes:**

- \*This month's meeting will be from 2-4:30 at the Valpo Elks.
- \*New Member Nite @ Gelsosomo's Pizza, Valpo, 7PM—just a meet & greet w/out the business of regular meetings
- \*Catch IGT on *Graveyard Theatre* live show (Hammond Comcast viewing area only)

### COFFEE & TALK



### TOPICS FOR DISSECTION

- ☞ Was there a specific event/incident that got you involved in the paranormal???
- ☞ The Chapter will be purchasing new equipment with Ghost Tour profits. Suggestions include: DVD recorder, digital video camera, flat screen monitor, wireless headset. Others???
- ☞ How can the Chapter, as a whole, help welcome/initiate new members to our group?

## The Restoration Process – One Step at a Time



### Historical investigation & Discovery of ownership

Every effort must be made to determine the ownership of every cemetery. Resources such as the local library, the county recorder and newspaper advertising can be used. Very often neglected cemeteries will be township property—unless they are on private property on which taxes are assessed and paid. The Township Trustees may not know of every cemetery that exists, or, if they do know, have little to no funds available for upkeep. Approach the Trustee and other local officials in the spirit of volunteerism. Ask if you can help, don't demand action.

### Securing permission and/or permits

Once ownership has been determined, make sure that you have written permission to conduct the restoration. This permission should be posted at the cemetery anytime work is underway.

### Preliminary survey & photos

Initially, only enough brush and debris should be removed to allow access to the cemetery. This will permit volunteers to begin the work of photographing and surveying the cemetery. Every grave will not be found in the beginning and each new grave should be added to the map and survey as it is discovered. Photograph the site from several different angles. These photos may need to be used as a reference later on.

### Clearing of brush, weeds & limbs

After the preliminary survey is complete, tree limbs, undesirable vegetation, trash and small sapling trees can be removed. Work carefully, making sure you don't disturb any grave markers. Work safely and wear proper safety equipment.

### Creating plat map, survey & second photo series

At this point, all graves should be visible, either by grave markers or depressions. Finalize the plat map and surveys. Where no grave marker is visible, you may have to probe the soil to locate sunken markers. Always photograph the uncovered stone before attempting to move it. Some stones will crumble in your hands when you try to extract them. Record all required information from the marker on a survey form. Now is a good time for a second set of photos showing the work in progress.

### Cleaning markers

Do not attempt to clean a stone that is cracking, flaking or scaling. Sandstone markers, in particular, are susceptible to irreversible damage if improperly cleaned. Aggressive cleaning methods are never encouraged by preservationists. Washing with clean water or Orvus by Proctor & Gamble are generally recommended as a first step. Thorough rinsing is essential and may necessitate hauling large quantities of clean water to the work site. It is strongly recommended not to use household cleaners, hydrochloric acid, muriatic acid, phosphoric acid, oxalic acid, trisodium phosphate, sodium chloride, sodium sulfate, sodium carbonate, sodium bicarbonate, ammonium carbonate, etc. for gravestones and markers. Do not use metal brushes or scrapers or abrasive pads. The use of improper cleaning materials and practices can cause serious irreparable damage to gravestones.

### Repairing markers

The condition of the stone, the type of break involved, the nature of the stone, etc. are all essential factors in determining how best to proceed to repair a broken marker.

### Resetting of markers, as required

When possible, it is desirable that grave markers be restored to a vertical position. Righting large monuments will, of course, have to be left to the experts; however, smaller broken markers can often be fairly easily repaired and/or restored to an upright position. Some of the broken markers may need special epoxies to hold the parts in place. Consult with your local stone repair or cemetery monument dealer for their recommendations on an appropriate epoxy. When reinstalling markers, first make sure the stones face the proper directions – most will face east, but this is not a hard and fast rule. Unmarked graves should be denoted with some sort of homemade marker to indicate a burial place.

### Final cleanup of brush and weeds & Mowing

When all of the markers are in their proper place, the remaining small brush and weeds can be removed and the cemetery mowed.

### Depressions filled and/or seeded

If needed, grave depressions can be filled and the grounds leveled off. If you do add fill to the depressions, throw some grass seed down to help hold the soil.

### Final photo series

Take some photos to show off your proud achievement. Forward these photos and the survey forms to the Township Trustee.

### Ongoing maintenance

The cemetery should occasionally be revisited to clean up any fallen limbs. Also, watch for signs of deterioration and vandalism.

*Summarized and reprinted from: Indiana Pioneer Cemeteries Restoration Project ([www.rootsweb.com/~inpcrpl/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~inpcrpl/))*

*Related site: Association for Gravestone Studies ([www.gravestonestudies.org](http://www.gravestonestudies.org))*

*Related books: "A Graveyard Preservation Primer" by Lynette Strangstad*

*"Preservation of Historic Burying Grounds" National Trust for Historic Preservation Information Series #76*

Quote of the Month

"Death will slay with his wings whoever disturbs the peace of the Pharaoh."

Legendary mummy's curse found at Tutankhamen's tomb

Eerie facts

13th Century philosopher, Thomas Aquinas, believed that an incubus (male demon that has sexual intercourse with sleeping women) could in fact impregnate his victims. The child would look normal, but inherit dark and evil tendencies. Incubus is Latin for nightmare.

OFFICERS

Northwest

Director Denise Williams

Secretary Jen Jacob

Treasurer Michelle Walavich

Public Relations Wendy Deiotte

Trainer Mary Shea

YOUR 2006 NON-VOTING OFFICERS

Asst. Secretary: Jaye Douglass

Asst. Public Relations: Bryan Creely

Investigations Coordinators: Cindy Butrym & Sheila Reed

Research Coordinator: Ginger Shimmer

Webmaster: Len Walavich

Librarian: Ed Henning

Cemetery Restoration: Michael Esposito

Newsletter: Chris & Jennifer Mojica

TEAM LEADERS:

New

Len Walavich, Ginger Shimmer, Bill Robinson, Wendy Deiotte & Barb Spittler

Existing

Jaye Douglass, Mary Shea, Eric Bevel & Mike McDowell

EULOGY

OVERNITES?

- Barbee Hotel, Warsaw
Radisson, Muncie
Story Inn, Story



Ghost Wear

T-Shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts, sweat-shirts and lanyards are still available to purchase. Quantities are limited!

Loose Ends

Please be sure that your membership forms are complete and up to date. Check with Michelle Walavich.

Ghosthunting 101

Basic Ghosthunting classes are held every couple of months. If you are a new member, please contact the Trainer for the next class. You MUST complete this course to be eligible for investigations!!!

WANTED

DEAD OR ALIVE\*

Individual(s) to fill the Hunt Coordinator position

\*Preferred

Annual Dues

Dues can be paid in three different ways: mail, in person or online with PayPal. Our website will provide all the necessary information to help you through the process.

Simply select "Membership" from the homepage to begin.

E-mail submissions for The Paranormal Press to: paranormalpress@hotmail.com