



Local Authors: Explore myths of area haunts

By **JESS KROUT**
Evening Sun Features Editor

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As children board school buses and mums make their debut at local market stands, I'm reminded fall is near.

In a few weeks, leaves will turn colors and I'll be bundling up in a sweatshirt, guzzling apple cider.

And soon, so soon that greeting cards are already haunting store aisles, little ghosts and witches will be knocking on my door.

Oh, Halloween, you don't scare me, but the creepy ghost stories and haunted houses - well, maybe, just a little.

The book, "Spooky York, Pennsylvania," explores the truths and myths of some ghost stories and haunted houses in the area.

Written by York County lifelong resident Scott Butcher and former York resident Dinah Roseberry, the non-fiction book includes a walking ghost tour of York City and more than 50 haunted locations throughout the county.

Butcher and Roseberry seem like the perfect team for "Spooky York," because they are honest opposites.

Butcher has written previous books on York County history, while Roseberry has a sincere passion for the horror/science fiction/fantasy world.

So from the very beginning, the reader knows their

writing styles are completely different. Butcher writes using facts and historical information. He also includes many of his own photographs of the sites in the book. Roseberry, on the other hand, writes with emotion, talking about how she feels when spirits are present and how she uses a pendulum to communicate with the dead.

The first chapter is Butcher's "Haunted History Ghost Tour," which explores paranormal activity in the city of York. From Golden Plough Tavern to The Yorktowne Hotel to The Lafayette Club, they're all on the tour, explaining how each are rumored to contain ghosts.

Chapter Two explores city haunts, while Chapter Three explores county haunts - some widely known like the murder of a powwow doctor in Rehmeier's Hollow, some lesser known like a ghost in a Hanover High Street house.

The exact address is not given, but Butcher describes the house as a Victorian with a mansard roof, built by a postal worker. When the worker, engaged to be married, received a letter from his bride-to-be, calling off the marriage, he hung a noose and took his own life at the top of a staircase.

A former resident of the home, kept anonymous, said the ghost had a sense of humor, occasionally locking the family cat in a third floor room and closing a door on her father.

Chapter Four, "Historic Haunts," mentions additional Hanover ghosts in a house on the 200 block of York Street. The owners of the house said there is blood on the walls, ringing doorbells, shattering candle holders, music and burned matches - all supernatural activity.

After some research, it was found that Robert Graves and his friend Jonathan were both soldiers

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fighting for the Confederacy in the Battle of Hanover.

Graves was killed in the battle; Jonathan was injured and brought to the home on York Street for surgery and later died. Because Graves never knew of Jonathan's death, psychics believe he is the one who rings the doorbell, hoping to see Jonathan again.

The homeowners also discovered a room in their attic, once hidden by a fake wall. In the room, the couple found 22 medical and school books, believed to be owned by Civil War Hanover physician, Dr. John Culbertson, who treated wounded soldiers in makeshift medical sites.

Reading the book is not as creepy as visiting the sites themselves. And even then, places like York Little Theatre and the Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center do not appear threatening - in the daytime.

Even Hanover's share of ghosts in "Spooky York, Pennsylvania," seems more like Caspers and Jacob Marleys than the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man.

But the stories are nonetheless interesting, and encourage readers to start hunting for ghosts themselves - in some cases, in their own homes and backyards.

After all, it's Gettysburg that coined the phrase, "Got ghosts? Gettysburg does." And apparently, so does York.

"Spooky York, Pennsylvania," by Scott Butcher and Dinah Roseberry, is available online at <http://www.schifferbooks.com>.

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