

By ERIN McCracken
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Unexplained visions
... bumps in the
night ... footsteps
of the unseen ...
objects that move
on their own ...

These experiences
produce goosebumps and
make the hair on the back
of the neck stand on end —
and they all happened in
York County.

"Spooky York,
Pennsylvania" co-author
Scott D. Butcher, Fran
Keller of Martin Memorial
Library in York and
members from other area
organizations have
collected evidence of local
"X-Files." Read if you
dare.

• **The Penn Park case:**

Legend goes that
Revolutionary War Gen. "Mad
Anthony" Wayne took six
prisoners from the old jail at
George and King streets in
York, marched them over to
Penn Park and executed
them one at a time by firing
squad. People have
reported seeing headless
men wandering around the
park, Keller said.

• **The Camp Security case:**

In 1782, a fever broke out at
the Revolutionary War prison
in Windsor Township, killing
many prisoners. "Hessian
Thal," a poem by Henry L.
Fisher tells how soldiers'
ghosts awaken every
Christmas Eve, to jeer at
their commanding officer.
Learn more at
www.campsecurity.com.

• **The Accomac Inn case:**

John Coyle purchased the
Accomac Inn in Hellam
Township in 1864. On May
30, 1882, Coyle asked
servant Emily Myers for her
hand in marriage. When
Myers rejected the offer,
Coyle shot her dead. He was
later found guilty of murder
and hanged in Gettysburg. He
is buried about 50 feet from
the Inn. Butcher has heard
accounts of screams from the
fireplace, arguments between
invisible people in the middle
of the night and latch doors
opening on their own. Learn
more at
www.accomacinn.com.

• **The UFO case:** Butcher
said that York had its own
reports of extraterrestrial
encounters during the UFO
hysteria of the 1950s. In July
1952, residents reported
seeing a flying saucer moving
from North York toward
Emigsville and Mount Wolf.
Then, a Shiloh resident came
forward saying that he and
some friends were playing
with spotlights pointed toward
the clouds.

• **The cannibal case:**

In 1872, P.T. Barnum's
traveling museum, menagerie
and hippodrome came to
York. A canvas tent was set
up near Penn Park and
featured cannibals from Fiji.
One of the cannibals — a
dwarf — died at the
Pennsylvania House Hotel.
A local newspaper reported
that two male cannibals ate
the body, but the story was
disputed, Butcher said. The
cannibal was buried in an
unmarked grave at Potter's
Field. When the cemetery
was excavated in the 1980s,
the cannibal's body was
missing, Butcher said.

"A local physician
reportedly obtained the
body to dissect it for
research," he said.

• **The Hex murder case:**

In 1928, Nelson Rehmeyer
was murdered in his
farmhouse on Rehmeyer's
Hollow Road in North
Hopewell Township by three
young men who believed
he cast evil spells on them.

"It was the most
notorious witchcraft trial of
the 20th century," Butcher
said. He added that most
people don't make the
connection that the trial
took place in the old
courthouse in downtown
York. Learn more at
www.hexmurder.com.

• **The Goodridge house
case:**

The William C. Goodridge
House, 123 E. Philadelphia
St. in York, was a stop on
the Underground Railroad.
Over the years, there have
been stories about people
hearing children laughing
or crying, the sounds of
footsteps and windows
opening by themselves.

Butcher said that
groups involved with
renovations "heard chains
rattling and moaning" and
refused to return to work.

• **The Capitol Theatre
case:**

Strand-Capitol
Marketing Director Gary
Taylor said that there have
been reports of cigar odor
coming from the Capitol
Theatre's projection area.
"The story goes that there
used to be a projectionist
who smoked cigars year
ago," Taylor said.

**Other supernatural events
have been reported at:**

- First Presbyterian Church, 225 E. Market St. in York
- Elmwood Mansion in Spring Garden Township
- York Little Theatre, 27 S. Belmont St. in Spring Garden Township
- The Smyser-Bair House, 30 S. Beaver St. in York
- Ghost hill on Pleasant View Road in Lewisberry