SACAMENTO'S
HAUNTED
HOT SPOTS

A Survey of Sacramento Area Haunted Locations
by Haunted Places author Dennis William Hauck
INTRODUCTION

by Dennis William Hauck

Most Sacramento residents have no idea how many ghosts are hiding in the closets of our staid capitol city. But I am not talking about some politician’s dirty linen here – I mean the real thing: spooks, spirits, and visitors from the Other Side. Sacramento is one of the most haunted cities in the country. There are nearly a hundred cases of paranormal activity currently under investigation, and some of the older cases have become textbook examples among researchers.

Current hotspots include the Citrus Heights' neighborhood near Antelope and Roseville Roads, site of a temporary Japanese internment camp. Forlorn Asian ghosts have appeared in the bedrooms, living rooms, garages, and front yards of homes in the area. Several households along La Riviera Drive are trying to cope with a ghost that splits its time among them, and the owners of nine downtown buildings between 8th and Front Streets got so tired of dealing with one sinister presence that they hired a local ghost-buster to get rid of it. Another haunted hotspot is the area south of Pocket Road and Greenhaven Drive. Some homes there were constructed on top of an old Portuguese cemetery, while others border an earthen levy that was built over Indian burial grounds. Other tribal grounds located in the Woodlake area near Royal Oaks Drive are the alleged source of more hauntings.

Sacramento also has its share of famous ghosts. The image of Governor Leland Stanford's dead son appeared to him in the mansion on the corner of 8th and M Streets. The old Perrault house on 14th Avenue became notorious in the late 1950s for its widely-witnessed instances of light bulbs bursting in their socket, objects hanging in midair, and fires starting in the furniture. In 1973, the Martinez home in East Sacramento gained national attention for its whole family of apparitions. Other legendary spooks from River City include the phantom of a man in his twenties sighted on the beach at the American River Sailor's Bar (beneath the Sunrise Boulevard bridge) and the ghost of an old gold miner, who emerges from the weeds along Prospector Road in the foothills.

Another well-documented location for ghost sightings is the Sacramento Theatre Company at 1419 H Street. One ghost appears so often there, that theater employees have nicknamed him "Pinky," but this 50-year-old former vaudeville stage is full of other ghosts too. In 1991, three clairvoyants uncovered at least five more spirits. Two phantasms hang around the upstairs, stage-left dressing room. One was a tall, thin man with a mustache, who has been identified as a former volunteer. The other is a very sad Polish actress by the name of Madame Helena Modjeska, who image is often seen in one of the large mirrors in the room. In 1994, investigators recorded unexplainable footsteps crossing the McClatchy Mainstage and photographed numerous infrared anomalies during a séance in the Stage Two area.

Probably the area’s spookiest ghost is Robert Chalmers, who haunts Vineyard House in Coloma. In 1879, he went mad, and for his own protection his wife chained him in the cellar where he eventually starved to death. Later residents were so spooked by shimmering apparitions and the sounds of rattling chains, that no one would live there. Now remodeled into a hotel, Vineyard House has been the scene of dozens of eerie poltergeist events witnessed by employees and guests.

So take a look at the following Sacramento area cases and see if they don’t change your mind about the spectral climate in Sacramento. We may be famous for our hot summer weather, but we are just as well known for our haunted hot spots!

(Many of these reports are from Haunted Places: The National Directory by Dennis William Hauck. For information on ordering this and his other books, see the list at the end of this book.)


**Auburn**

**Latitudes Restaurant** This pleasant eatery is haunted by two ghosts. One is a shadowy form that appears to be seated at one of tables in the **Dining Room**, while the other is the ghost of a woman who materializes in the lower level **Bar**. The lower level was once a blacksmith shop, and the ghosts seem to date from that time period. *(Auburn is northwest of Sacramento on I-80. The restaurant is across from the courthouse in downtown Auburn. Latitudes Restaurant, 130 Maple Street, Auburn, CA 95603. Phone: 530-885-9535.)*

**Coloma**

**Bell's General Store** Built in 1849, this brick building was the center of activity for a large community of gold miners that settled around Sutter's Mill. Modern visitors have reported hearing the ringing of a nonexistent bell, as the ghosts of former customers walk through the doorway. *(Coloma is 8 miles north of Placerville on Hwy 49 in Placer County. The remains of the store are in the Gold Discovery State Park, just north of town.)*

![Pioneer Cemetery](image)

**Pioneer Cemetery** (Shown above.) The phantom of a Lady in Burgundy keeps watch over the Schieffer family plot in this old settler's graveyard. According to the markers, William Schieffer died in 1861 at the age of 2 years, Charles Schieffer died in 1864 at the age of 42, and May Schieffer died in 1890 at the age of 27. The ghost is an elderly woman with her hair parted in the middle and pulled tightly back into a bun. She wears a long, flowing, burgundy dress and can be seen from the roadside, beckoning passersby to come up to the gravesite and visit with her. What she wants has never been determined. *(Follow Hwy 49 north out of Placerville and turn left where Hwy 49 meets Coldstream Road. The cemetery is up the hill on the left, across the street from Vineyard House.)*
Marshall Monument  On June 24, 1848, James Marshall found two small gold nuggets. They were caught in the tailrace of the waterwheel at the logging mill operated by him and his partner, John Sutter. It was the beginning of the California Gold Rush. Between 1847 and 1860, the population of California went from 15,000 to 380,000, largely because of that single event. But fanatical gold seekers followed Marshall wherever he went, thinking he had a magical gift for finding gold. He died, broken and destitute, on August 10, 1885, and was buried here. His restless ghost has been seen as an indistinct shadow following visitors to his monument. *(The Marshall Monument is in Gold Discovery State Park in Coloma.)*

Sierra Nevada House  A mischievous spirit inhabits this hotel, which was established in 1850. Co-owner Gail Masi says her employees named the ghost "Christopher" and blame him for move pot and pans, hiding knives and forks, turning off teapots, and other harmless pranks. The only negative presence was a spirit named "Mark" who haunted Room 4. According to psychic Jeanne Smith, he shot and killed his girlfriend in that room. Fortunately, she was able to release his troubled spirit from the scene of the crime. *(Sierra Nevada House, Coloma, CA 95613. Phone: 916-621-1208.)*

Vineyard House  In 1879, less than a year after construction was completed on his mansion, Robert Chalmers went mad. For his own protection his wife, Louise, chained him in the cellar, but the insane man refused to eat and starved himself to death. After he died, the family's grapevines mysteriously withered away, and Louise was forced to close their winery and take on boarders to make a living. She even rented out the cellar as a jail and allowed hangings in her front yard. She died in 1913 and was buried next to her husband in the Cemetery facing their home. Subsequent residents of their house were so spooked by shimmering apparitions and the sounds of rattling chains, that no one would live there. Remodeled into a hotel in 1956, Vineyard House has been the scene of dozens of poltergeist events witnessed by employees and guests alike. Glasses move by themselves in the Basement Bar, and few years ago, a Sacramento couple ran from the hotel in the middle of the night. They insisted they heard someone being murdered in the next room, although Sheriffs Deputies could find nothing wrong. Recently, a guest reported seeing the phantom of a small boy being beaten in Room 5, the same room from which the Sacramento couple had heard screaming. In 1998, three psychics visiting a haunted area of the old stone winery detected the spirit of an unidentified woman, who was struck on the head from behind and murdered just to the left of the crumbling entrance. It is known that this was another area where Robert had been chained, when his screaming in the basement became too much for Louise to bear. *(Vineyard House is across the street from the Pioneer Cemetery in Coloma. The mailing address is P.O. Box 176, Coloma, CA 95613. Phone: 916-622-2217.)*
Wah Lee Store (Shown above) Eerie waves of murmured voices have been reported inside this old general store. The ghostly sounds of years gone by seem to rise and fall, like ocean waves. Invisible customers chat idly punctuated by the sound of a meat cleaver hitting a butcher's block. (The store is now a museum in the Gold Discovery State Park in Coloma.)

Georgetown

American River Inn (Shown at top of next page.) Behind a basement wall in this elegant hotel lie the bodies of an undetermined number of miners buried in the collapse of the old Woodside Mine. However, the miner that haunts the place today survived that disaster. His name is Oscar, and he was shot dead on the steps of the hotel after an argument over a prostitute. A few days later, the prostitute leapt to her death from the hotel's balcony. A romantic fellow, Oscar still haunts lovers and honeymooners who check into Room 5, his former room. He likes to turn on lights in the middle of passionate scenes. Then his nebulous figure enters from the balcony door, walks across the room, and leaves through the door at the top of the stairs. In 1986 alone, more than a dozen guests crossed paths with Oscar. (Georgetown is on Hwy 193, 15 miles north of Placerville in El Dorado County. The Inn is on Orleans Street and their mailing address is P.O. Box 43, Georgetown, CA 95634. Phone: 916-333-4499 or 800-245-6566.)
Georgetown Hotel (Shown below.) The ghost of the former owner of this frontier-style hotel harasses employees in the Kitchen and wakes up guests in Room 13. He has appeared so many times that he is like part of the staff. He is a tall man, around fifty years old, with gray streaks running through his black hair. He usually materializes with a pipe in his mouth and his hands resting on his hips. (The hotel is at 6260 Main Street, Georgetown, CA 95634. Phone: 916-333-2848.)
Prospectors Road (Shown above.) This treacherous mountain road has claimed many lives in the last 150 years, but today the ghost of a gruff, old prospector makes the trip even more harrowing. The parting of weeds along the side of the road is the first sign of his approach. Then he materializes and floats up the embankment, confronting the fearful traveler with a pointing finger. "Get off my claim," he mouths in silence. (The 7-mile stretch of road runs between Georgetown and Lotus. It parallels the more modern Marshall Road, which connects Hwys 49 and 193.)

Grass Valley

Holbrooke Hotel The ghost of a blond woman, dressed in 19th-century clothing, has been seen by employees and guests in the upstairs hallway of this 143-year-old hotel. Another ghost, a cowboy in a striped shirt with boots and spurs, was spotted leaning against a post in the Iron Door, a basement dining room. None of the colorful ghosts have ever been identified. (Holbrooke Hotel, 212 West Main Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945. Phone: 916-273-1353.)

Ione

Hotel lone Guests have reported encountering a floating dark shadow passing through the rooms of the second floor of this modest hotel. Clouds of etheric vapor have appeared in the dining room, where candles have a way of re-lighting themselves. The ghost of a woman named Mary Phelps, who lost her baby son in a room fire in 1884, has appeared to many witnesses, and another ghost, named George, keeps returning to his old room at the hotel. Owners Millie and William Jones have also experienced the entities. (The town is southwest of Sacramento, near Jackson in Amador County, at
**Jamestown**

**Willow Steak House** (Shown above.) It may not look like it, but this small woodframe building is all that is left of a once majestic hotel. The original Willow Hotel was built in 1862 on the site of a collapsed mineshaft that killed 23 men. When a devastating fire struck the town in 1896, residents used dynamite to blow up other buildings to save the hotel. Unfortunately there were people still in those buildings, and their ghosts seek revenge to this day. Witnesses reported nine apparitions hovering around the source of a 1975 fire in the hotel, and in 1985, a mysterious blaze burned down the hotel and several nearby stores. The bar and restaurant were rebuilt, but the hotel never reopened. Both customers and employees have reported seeing the ghost of a short man roaming through the halls, and a gambler dressed in a black suit has been glimpsed at the bar. Others have seen the redheaded figure of Elualah Sims, murdered in the bar by her husband in the 1890s. *(Jamestown is located in Tuolomne County off Hwy 49 in the Sierra Foothills. The restaurant and saloon is on the corner of Main and Willow Streets, Jamestown, CA 95327. Phone: 209-984-3998.)*

**Lake Tahoe**

**Cave Rock** is haunted by the spirits of Washoe Indians. They used to throw their deceased off the cliff into the water. Large numbers of spirits can be made to appear if the proper ceremony is performed on the summit. The site is still sacred and Washoe tribe members have been arrested for trying to climb to the top. *(Lake Tahoe is located in northern California along the California-Nevada border in the Sierra*
Mountains. Cave Rock is on Hwy 50 between Carson City, Nevada, and South Lake Tahoe, California.

Emerald Bay The ghost of Dick Barter is said to haunt Fannette Island (Shown above) in the middle of Emerald Bay. Barter came to the lake in 1863 as caretaker for Ben Holladay, a stagecoach magnate who had bought up most of the land surrounding Emerald Bay. Though a seafaring man, Barter soon took up the life of a hermit and only left Emerald Bay to pick up whiskey and provisions over at Rowland's Station on the south shore. One January night he got caught in a squall on the lake and lashed himself to the side of his boat. It was not until the next morning that he made it home, and by then two of his toes were frozen. When they turned gangrenous, he amputated them himself and kept them pickled in a jar to show off to people. But the experience changed Barter, and he dug a tomb with a crude chapel over it on Fannette Island. He let it be known that if anyone ever found him lashed to his boat, he wanted to be buried there. In 1873, three years after digging his own tomb, Dick Barter's boat smashed into the rocks at Rubicon Point. His body sunk in 1,400 feet of water and was never recovered, but somehow his ghost found its way back to Fannette Island. (To reach Emerald Bay, follow Hwy 89 north out of the town of South Lake Tahoe.)

Tahoe Tessie A 60-foot-long serpentine creature has been sighted swimming in this deep body of water. Tourism officials downplay the sightings and even admit to suppressing film footage of the creature shot in 1985. The first reports were by the Washoe Indians in the 1800s, but a rash of sightings in the 1930s brought the legend back to life. Since then, dozens of tourists, fishermen, and even a few scientists have reported seeing the giant, dark-skinned, snakelike creature in the pristine lake. According to some reports, after his underwater expedition to find Tessie, Jacques Cousteau took footage that "the world wasn't ready for." (Most of the sightings have been along the south and east shores of the 1500-foot-deep lake.)
Marysville

Laney House  Anita and Francis Laney believe their old Victorian house is haunted by the original owners, the Norman Abbott Rideout family. The Laneyes have seen a little boy and girl playing in the upstairs halls, while the children's fashionably dressed parents stood by the front window. Visitors to the house have reported that dinnerware and vases have a way of falling to the floor for no apparent reason. *(Marysville is in Yuba County, 50 miles north of Sacramento, off Hwy 99. The house is a private residence at 710 D Street, Marysville, CA 95901.)*

Mokelumne Hill

Hotel Leger  Before you take a room at Hotel Leger, be sure to take a good look at the portrait on the north wall of the dining room. It is an old photograph of the founder of the century-old hotel, George Leger. He was an aristocratic French immigrant who lived, and died, in Room 7 of the hotel. George was known for his amorous adventures with the wives of the gold miners who lived in the town. He was also known for the meticulous way he ran his hotel. Many witnesses can attest to the fact that George never really left his beloved hotel. Startled guests have confronted his well-attired specter gliding silently through the halls. Some people have complained of rowdy laughter and ladies' giggling behind the door of an otherwise empty Room 7. The hotel's personnel accept George's presence as a normal part of their jobs, and even manager Ronald Miller remembers to pay his respects. Not long ago, while patrolling the halls, he noticed the shadow of a man following him. Miller turned around but could see nobody there, yet the shadow remained on the wall. "Goodnight, George," he said. The shadow disappeared. *(The Leger Hotel is just off Hwy 49 in Calaveras County. Leger Hotel, 8304 Main Street, Mokelumne Hill, CA 95245. Phone: 209-286-1401.)*

Murphys

Murphys Hotel  (Shown at top of next page.) Murphy's is the second oldest continuously operated hotel in America. First opened in 1856, the hotel's register includes such names as Daniel Webster, Mark Twain, Horatio Alger, Ulysses S. Grant, J.P. Morgan, and Charles Bolton (also known as Black Bart, the Gentleman Bandit). Bullet holes in the thick iron shutters on the hotel's windows bring back memories of lawless times and the famous ghosts that roam its corridors. During a 1995 investigation of the premises, a ghostbuster was injured by a showerhead that mysteriously flew off and hit him. *(Take Hwy 26 east from Stockton to Hwy 49. Go 11 miles southeast to Altaville and turn northeast. Follow the Hwy 4 for 7 miles to the town of Murphys. Murphys Hotel, 459 Main Street, P.O. Box 329, Murphys, CA 95247. Phone: 209-728-3444. For reservations, call 800-532-7684.)*
**Nevada City**

**Nevada County Historical Museum** (Shown at top left on next page.) Built in 1861, this ornate Victorian structure served as a fire station for 77 years. It was not until old relics were brought into the building and it was turned into a museum in 1948, that bizarre events start to occur. Many trace the recurring reports of ghosts and poltergeists to a 1,000-year-old Taoist shrine taken from a Chinese church in Grass Valley. An old piano from a frontier whorehouse could also be the source of paranormal energy. A priest and two graduate students once witnessed a redheaded female phantom playing a song on the antique upright. *(Nevada City is in the Sierra Foothills northeast of Sacramento, at the junction of Hwys 49 and 20. The museum is at 214 Main Street, Nevada City, CA 95959. Phone: 916-265-5468.)*

**Red Castle Inn** (Shown at top right on next page.) Built in 1860, this picturesque Gothic mansion is home to the apparition of a Lady in Gray. Owners Conley and Mary Louise Weaver say the ghost is so real that guests believe her to be a living person until she passes through a door without opening it. Such a ghost that appears like a real person is known as a "lepke." The Red Castle Inn's lepke is thought to be Laura Jean, the governess for the John Williams family, the original owners. Most encounters have taken place in the **Gold Room**, in the halls, and in the fourth-floor bedrooms. *(Red Castle Inn, 109 Prospect Street, Nevada City, CA 95959. Phone: 916-265-5135.)*
Placerville

Chamber of Commerce Building The ghost of a bearded man wearing a black top-hat has been spotted on the mezzanine of this old landmark. Employees summoned police many times over the last fifteen years in attempts to rid the building of his presence. They say he resembles descriptions of the town's funeral director and official hangman, seen in old pictures taken when the town was known as "Hangtown." Nearly 150 years ago, most of the hangings took place on the property where the Chamber of Commerce is now located. (Placerville is east of Sacramento, on U. S. Hwy 50 in El Dorado County. The Chamber of Commerce Building is at 542 Main Street, Placerville, CA 95667. Phone: 916-621-5885)

Hanging Tree Cafe The ghosts of claim-jumpers and outlaws, many sentenced to hang from an old oak tree here, are said to harass patrons and employees of this small restaurant. Several drivers have reported seeing the apparitions while passing the location in their automobiles. (Hanging Tree Cafe, 305 Main Street, Placerville, CA 95667. Phone: 916-622-3878.)
American River One of Sacramento's most famous ghosts is the phantom of a young man sighted on a public beach (Shown above) along this river. The ghost's age is estimated at about twenty years, and his apparition has been reported numerous times over the last fifty years. His identity has never been established, but he is thought to be the spirit of a man who drowned in the swift currents here. (Sacramento is in the San Joaquin Valley in central California, at the junction of I-5 and I-80. The sandy area is called the American River Sailor's Bar and is located in Fair Oaks, where Sunrise Boulevard crosses the American River.)

Belleview Cemetery Most of the headstones in this cemetery date back to the 1960s, but something or someone is restless here. Many visitors have complained of sensing a menacing presence and have cold chills run down their spine for no apparent reason. In 1994, a series of unexplainable holes above the graves showed up overnight and several local residents told reporters of a bluish light floating about the flat cemetery ground. (Belleview Cemetery is in South Sacramento on Elder Creek Road along Hwy 99.)

Biba Restaurant This restaurant is on the second floor of a 150-year-old structure known as the Old tavern Building. But in the 1800s, it was more than a tavern, and a popular bordello occupied the space where the restaurant now sits. Employees have heard the sounds of a late night party on that floor when no one is around, as well as unexplainable problems with phones and appliances, and some customers reported seeing the ghost of a woman in old fashioned clothing in a large mirror that used to hang behind the bar. The ghost is thought to be the spirit of a prostitute named "Mary," who was murdered by a client in the 1890s. (Biba Restaurant is on the second floor of the Old Tavern Building at 2801 Capital Avenue in Sacramento. Phone: 916-455-2422.)

California State University The CSUS Theater on this 288-acre campus is haunted by the ghost of a young man who died in an accident during construction of the building. He fell from the second floor and was impaled on the steel girders of the unfinished site. His presence has been felt near the
elevator that runs between the **Scene Shop** and the **Costume Shop**, on the **Catwalks**, and in the **Lightbooth**. *(The elevator is behind the main stage in the Scene Shop and runs up to the Costume Shop on the second floor. California State University, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95819. Phone: 916-454-6011.)*

**Citrus Heights** Houses built on the site of a holding facility for the Tulelake Japanese Internment Camp have been plagued by the ghosts of people who were held there during World War II. The forlorn ghosts of Japanese couples have appeared in the bedrooms, living rooms, garages, and even in the front yards of homes in the area. Parapsychologist Robyn Street has helped many residents rid their houses of the unwanted guests. *(The area is near Antelope and Roseville Roads in Citrus Heights, which is a suburb northeast of Sacramento. Robyn Street can be reached at 3550 Watt Avenue, Suite 140, Sacramento, CA 95821. Phone: 916-973-9500.)*

**Franklin Boulevard Victorian** There is a large house on this busy boulevard that keeps the owners from moving away. Every time the family attempts to sell or rent the house, pipes start bursting, the furnace bellows black smoke through all the heating vents, red liquid oozes from the woodwork, brown blotches appear on the walls, pipes spray water, huge cracks would open around door jams or some sort of other calamity befalls the prospective buyers while they are touring the property. Then, after they leave, things are back to normal. In 1991, a realtor and two clients fled the house after hearing screams coming from the basement and then being overcome by foul odors and an ice cold wind. Photos taken to sell the house showed a non-existent candelabra and mantel clock in the living room. The apparition of an elderly lady has been seen, and once an elderly man was seen sitting quietly on the daughter's bed. The house was built in 1924 by a couple unable to have children, though the husband fathered one out of wedlock and brought it home. His wife treated it badly and it is her presence that still haunts the home. Local television reporter Betty Vasquez set up a seance at the house to try to help the owners, but it did not work out. *(The house is a private residence on north Franklin Boulevard in Sacramento. The owners do not want publicity because they are still trying to sell the house.)*

**Frio House** The former home of KXTV news anchor Alan Frio was haunted by a ghost that appeared like clockwork every Saturday night at 2:00 AM. The transparent image of a blue man would appear in the bedroom and knock things off the nightstand or turn on the radio. The apparition once appeared in the middle of the afternoon and awoke Frio from a nap. The former owner experienced the same kind of paranormal activity, as did two more families after the Frios moved out in 1984. *(The house is in Carmichael. The house was listed as one of California's most haunted houses in a 1981 issue of Sunset magazine.)*

**J Street** A family's terrifying encounter with a ghost took place in the basement of a Victorian apartment building here. Roland Johnston and his wife were led to the basement by their 4-yearold daughter, who told them a man named Sam had asked her to dig up something there. When Roland picked up a shovel laying on the dirt floor, the giant specter of a white-haired man appeared before them. The ghost, dressed in black with a long white beard, pointed to a spot on the ground. When Roland refused to dig there, the ghoul's eyes turned fiery red, and the family fled from the cellar. They boarded up the basement and moved to Tehachapi, where Roland later became Chief of Police. *(The house was torn down in 1954. Workers installing a new foundation found a small cache of gold coins buried in the cellar.)*

**Maydestone Apartment Building** Stories of hauntings of this old building on the corner of 15th and J streets have been circulating for many years. Tenants have reported cold spots and odd electrical
problems, as well as feeling an unseen presence wandering through the apartments. No investigation has ever been made and the spirit remains unidentified. *(The Maydestone Apartment Building is at 1001 15th Street in Sacramento. Phone: 916-442-4257.)*

**Martinez House** A 100-year-old Victorian on H Street has been considered haunted for some time. The trouble seems to have started three weeks after Mrs. Lillian Martinez and her family moved into the remodeled house in 1973. Sounds of crashing glassware and noises of a struggle in the kitchen started late at night, but nothing was there. Then 15-year-old Angie began seeing a gray and white cat fade in and out of reality. Upstairs, a "panting presence" started following people around and later materialized as the ghost of an Oriental man wearing a white coat. The ghost of a woman wearing a yellow flower-print dress was also seen by Lilly Monica, Tyrone, and Diana Martinez. Husband Julio reported the ghosts of two children hiding in doorways. Rumors of a family murder in the house have never been confirmed, but other tenants down through the years reported similar activity. *(The house is now a private residence near 22nd and H Street in Midtown Sacramento.)*

**Newcastle Restaurant** The ghost of a young man in his twenties haunts this old saloon and restaurant. Employees have nicknamed him "Gary," and he is blamed for wine bottles and glasses that fly off the shelves behind the bar. But the glasses never break when they fall to the floor. Gary also likes to roam the basement and switch lights on and off. The establishment was formerly known as Soracco's Restaurant and Saloon and is currently closed for renovation. *(Newcastle is 20 miles northeast of Sacramento on I-80. Newcastle Restaurant, 525 Main Street, Newcastle, CA 95658. Phone: 916-663-4954.)*

**New Governor's Mansion** (Shown above.) Maybe the reason no California governor has ever taken up residence in this 25,000-square-foot, ranch-style mansion is because it was built on top of an Indian burial ground. Buried around 1000 BC, 117 Indians were unearthed here in 1937 and stacked haphazardly in a Quonset hut. When the hut was destroyed by a mysterious fire, the bodies were lost forever. It was not until 1972 that the state sponsored an archeological dig and uncovered eleven more bodies, which this time they left buried. Workers estimated that several hundred more bodies could be
lying beneath the building. Governor Jerry Brown refused to live there, and Governor George Deukmejian never had a chance. The California legislature voted to sell the property rather than deal with all the problems. *(The modern mansion is a private residence in Sacramento County at 2300 California Avenue, Carmichael, CA 95609.)*

**Old Governor's Mansion** This is a house that does not want its story told. Maybe something in the stately Victorian home's "personality" just makes it more reserved than other buildings, but whatever is causing it, investigators run into all kinds of odd complications and weird setbacks when trying to report on the goings-on here. Television and radio reporters, psychics, authors, and paranormal investigators all tell stories of odd equipment failures, confused schedules, purloined notes, garbled or erased tapes, and other obstacles to telling the story of this house. Nonetheless, the ghosts here still walk about and icy cold spots remain at places in the house where people died. *(Governor's Mansion, 1526 H Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone: 916-323-3047.)*

**Old City Cemetery** Of the 36,000 people buried in this historic graveyard, several are thought to walk the earth again. One alleged ghost is railroad engineer William Brown, who died on September 26, 1880 after saving hundreds of lives. Because someone had thrown the wrong switch, his train headed onto a ferry wharf that led directly into the San Francisco Bay. He was able to unhitch the passenger cars from his locomotive just before it plunged into the water. When they dredged the engine out of the Bay, they found Brown still grasping the controls in a last-minute bid to brake the machine. The ghost of May Woolsey contacted her parents and told them she was not yet dead but waiting for them on the Other Side. The 12-year-old girl died in 1879 from encephalitis. In 1979, a trunk of her toys and other "secret things" was found behind a wall in her home. Old City Cemetery officials are still marveling at the bodies of John Wesley Reeves and his daughter Ella. When they were exhumed from their 90-year-old iron coffins, caretakers were amazed to find them in perfect condition. Their smooth skin had its natural color and their clothing was like new. The unmarked grave (shown above) of a Sacramento prostitute named Maria, knifed to death by one of her clients in the 1920s, is graced by the statue of a
handless angel donated by one of her admirers, a San Franciscan physician. One Old City grave contains the remains of over 800 victims of a cholera epidemic in 1850; three other graves contain 452 "misplaced pioneers." But the record for mass burials in Sacramento has to be at East Lawn Cemetery (43rd and Folsom), where one 60-by-70-foot plot contains 4,685 bodies removed from the old New Helvetia Cemetery, which is now the site of the Sutter Middle School at Alhambra and J Street. (The cemetery is at 10th and Broadway, Sacramento, CA 95810. Pick up a map to the gravesites at the front gate or call 916-449-5621 for tour information. The ghost of May Woolsey is said to haunt her former home on E Street. The contents of May’s trunk are on display at the Sacramento History Museum, 101 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone: 916-264-7057.)

**Old Sacramento** Frightening phantoms have been reported in the maze of tunnels that run underneath this section of Sacramento. The tunnels date from the period of 1864-1877, when buildings and streets were raised an entire story to protect them from flooding. Between the retaining walls, an underground maze of tunnels resulted, enclosed from above by wooden sidewalks. Before long, the tunnels were being used as opium dens and hideouts for criminals. The owners of nine of the restored buildings got together and hired a professional parapsychologist to free them of one troublesome demon. See The Record. *(The underground area is bounded by H and L Streets, and Front and 12th Streets near the Sacramento River. The most haunted section is between Front Street and 8th Street. The former level of the city is discernible at several "sunken" restaurants and plazas in Old Town.)*

**Perrault House** America’s hotspot for poltergeist activity in 1964 was the small woodframe home of Dorothy Lunsford and her 17-year-old son, Jerry Loftin. Owner Hector Perrault had to keep a round-the-clock vigil on the house to keep it from being destroyed by the unseen presence. Fires started on the furniture for no reason, light bulbs burst in their sockets, 60 fuses were blown for no apparent reason, and bottles exploded. Objects, including a heavy purse and telephone, floated in mid-air. One sure sign it was haunted: cats were terrified of the place. *(The old Perrault House is now a private residence at 5848 14th Avenue, Sacramento, CA.)*

**Pocket Area** Some homes in this section of Sacramento are built on top of an old Portuguese cemetery, while others border an earthen levy that was built over Indian burial grounds. Many of expensive new homes are haunted by strange phenomena, but houses located on the north edge of the area are haunted by the ghost of an old Indian chief. Tara Pierce reports that family members and guests at her home have encountered the apparition ascending a staircase. Sometimes the plodding sounds of his footsteps can be heard late at night. *(The Pocket Area is in southwest Sacramento along the Sacramento River. Take Pocket Road west from I-5.)*

**Puente Boarding House** This Sacramento landmark is where Dorothea Puente murdered seven of her elderly guests to collect their social security checks in the 1980s. She buried most of the men in the backyard, and pathology evidence suggests they were not all dead when she did it. In her testimony, Puente commented several times that she kept seeing one of the men long after he was dead, and later residents reported an abundance of paranormal manifestations. Tenant Maria Orozco and her family reported ghostly presences shaking their beds at night, a bothersome presence in the kitchen, doors opening by themselves even when locked, and the sounds of slow
footsteps. An old haunted house at 917 H Street was recently moved on the vacant lot across from Puente's. The former Mory's Victorian, which housed California's oldest operating funeral parlor, is now the Sacramento Youth Hostel. *(The house is at 1426 F Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Puente is now serving a life sentence in Chowchilla Prison, although she has a cookbook coming out soon.)*

**Records** This used record store is haunted by the ghost of a very old woman dressed in a black Victorian dress with a white ruffled collar. In 1993, according to owner Ed Hartman, she appeared to a customer who was rifling through posters and told him to get out of the store because he was making too much noise. When he said he was leaving and said "Have a nice day," she replied with a strange "Uhh Ahh" – like it was her last breath. The owners have named the ghost Gertrude. Strange noises and doors slamming on windless days startle customers, but Gertie the Ghost only materializes in the basement sales area, which was once at street level. In the 1860s, the entire downtown section of Sacramento was raised a floor to protect from flooding (see Old Sacramento). The building was originally a saloon, and singer Al Jolson once dined there. Later it became a woman's store. In 1998, another presence starting showing up in the basement. According to manager Mark Cary, the apparition of a young man in his 20s is now appearing. *(The store is on the K-Street Mall at 710 K Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone: 916-446-3973.)*

**Sacramento Theatre Company** (Shown above.) This 50-year-old building is full of ghosts. A male ghost is encountered here so frequently that employees nicknamed him "Pinky." In 1991, three clairvoyants uncovered five more spirits. Two phantasms appeared in the upstairs, stage-left dressing room. One was a very sad Hungarian woman who wanted to be a famous actress but never succeeded. The other was a tall, thin man with a mustache, who wears a beret and an ascot. He has been identified as a man named Joe, who used to help around the building and was always impeccably dressed. In 1994, investigators recorded unexplainable footsteps crossing the McClatchy Mainstage and photographed numerous infrared anomalies in the Stage Two area. *(The theater is at 1419 H Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone: 916-443-6722.)*
Snowball Mansion (Shown above.) This two-story, brick mansion was built by Englishman John Wells Snowball in 1877 and remained in his family until 1944. It is the ghost of his wife, Lucy Knight Snowball, who walks the halls after dark. She is blamed for footsteps heard late at night and doorbells that ring at odd hours. Once, her mournful specter walked through a bedroom door and sat on the bed of a flabbergasted boarder. *(The mansion is at Knights Landing, which is 30 miles northwest of Sacramento on the Sacramento River. The small community is in Yolo County, at the junction of Highways 45, 113, and E10.)*
Stanford Mansion (Shown at bottom of previous page.) Another haunted Sacramento governor's mansion (see New Governor's Mansion) is this 19,000 square-foot, 13-fireplace, Italianate mansion, which served as home to three governors but is named for Leland Stanford, inaugurated governor of California in 1862. The governor's son, Leland Jr., died of typhoid fever when he was only fifteen years old. His father was devastated and overcome with grief. Then one night, his son appeared to him and asked him to rededicate his life to founding a university to educate young men. After visiting and evaluating several famous colleges, Leland Stanford completed his task in 1891 with the opening of the university that bears his name today. A multimillion dollar restoration scheduled for completion by the year 2000 is bound to stir up some ghostly activity in this ornate edifice. (Stanford Mansion is on the corner of 8th and N Street, Sacramento, CA 95810. For tour information, call 916-449-2057.)

Woodlake Park This area is one of Sacramento's most haunted neighborhoods. The homes are mostly middle-class and range from 50 to 60 years old. All look quite harmless from the outside, but more residents report paranormal phenomena here than any other area of the city. Psychics investigating the hauntings believe most stem from an old tribal burial ground that lies underneath the development. (The area is off Arden Way along Royal Oaks Drive in Sacramento. The center of the activity is the 2000 block of Royal Oaks Drive in Sacramento.)

Woodland Opera House The ghost of fireman W.W. Porter haunts this building. He was killed when a wall collapsed on him during a fire that nearly destroyed the theater on July 1, 1892. Since then there have been several unexplained fires. The theater was rebuilt by 1896, but a lawsuit by a woman who fell a few feet off a stairway and the advent of movies closed the majestic theater from 1917 to 1971. In 1937, another large fire nearly destroyed the place, then in 1950, a fire started in the balcony but was quickly put out. The ghost's presence is presaged by the odor of smoke, and he is most often detected in the Upper Balcony and in the Basement Costume Shop near the stairway. Poltergeist activity such as thread unwinding and being pulled from needles and objects falling from nowhere have been reported. Recently another strong presence has showed up in one of the Dressing Rooms. The graffiti on the walls in the dressing rooms and on the bricks by the side stage door dates back to the 1890s, and the great Polish actress Madame Helen Modjeska (thought responsible for several other hauntings across the United States) performed there. The opera house was reopened in 1989, after a seven-year restoration project. A 1998 investigation documented ghostly activity in the basement and upper balcony using infrared and electromagnetic detection devices. (Woodland is 23 miles northwest of Sacramento on I-5. Woodland Opera House, 340 Second Street, Woodland, CA 95695. Phone: 530-666-9617. The current director is Jeff Keane.)

Yolo County History Museum This building used to be the headquarters of the William Gibson Ranch that was active from 1850 to 1940. Built in 1852, the large brick house with four Ionic columns in front was abandoned for many years until Yolo county renovated it in 1975 and turned it into a museum. By the 1980s, everyone knew it was haunted. Curator Monika Stengert thinks the hauntings stem from the large collection of old clothes displayed there. Somehow the old dresses, hats, corsets, and bustles are attracting an unseen presence. (The 2 1/2 acre Yolo History Museum site is north of Sacramento in Yolo county. Phone: 530-666-1045.)
Sonoma

Valley of the Moon Saloon An invisible patron shows up in this colorful bar that features 13 types of draft beer. The ghost moves objects, reorganizes the money in the cash register, and pops records out of their slots in the jukebox. (Valley of the Moon Saloon, 17154 Sonoma Hwy, Sonoma, CA 95476. Phone: 707-996-4003.)

Sutter Creek

Sutter Creek Inn Although this house was already over a century old when Jane Way bought it in 1966, she had no idea it came with its own ghost. Two weeks after moving in, an apparition appeared in her doorway. She later identified the spirit as State Senator Edward Voorhies, who lived there with his wife and family in the 1880s. But there were other ghosts in the old house. The Senator's daughter once materialized in front of several guests, who were sitting in the lounge. She curtsied politely and disappeared. Less polite was the spectral flasher, who appeared in broad daylight in the lobby and promptly dropped his pants in front of a group of elderly ladies. (Sutter Creek is in Amador County, 32 miles south of Placerville on Hwy 49. Sutter Creek Inn, 75 Main St., Sutter Creek, CA 95685. Phone: 209-267-5606.)
Books by Dennis William Hauck

SORCERER’S STONE (A Beginner’s Guide to Alchemy) is the first basic primer on the fascinating subject of alchemy. By providing clear explanations, moving meditations, and hands-on experiments making tinctures and elixirs, this beautifully illustrated guide passes on the knowledge and creative energy of alchemy’s magnificent discipline to the modern seeker. Hauck presents a fascinating history of alchemy – from the ancient Emerald Tablet to modern quantum chemistry – and elaborates on its arcane principles in an intimate, conversational way that anyone can understand. This book makes alchemy’s secrets and powers accessible to anyone. Citadel Press, 2004. ISBN 0-8065-2545. Illustrated with 25 engravings and diagrams. 276 pages. Index, Resource List, and extensive Glossary. $12.95

THE EMERALD TABLET (Alchemy for Personal Transformation) is an ancient Egyptian text that became the basis of alchemy and contains a secret formula that shows us how to perfect anything – even ourselves. Stanley Krippner Ph.D. (Director of Consciousness Studies, the Saybrook Institute): “This book combines esoteric wisdom with practical advice. Hauck offers his readers a remarkable path for spiritual change in the tradition of Carl Jung's depth psychology.” Jeffrey Mishlove Ph.D. (Director of Intuition Network; host of "Thinking Allowed" PBS series): “Every reader who gives this book the thoughtfulness it requires will discover a treasure of inner riches.” Penguin 1999. ISBN 0-14-019571-8. Illustrated with 44 alchemical engravings. 464 pages. Index, bibliography. $16.95.

HAUNTED PLACES: THE NATIONAL DIRECTORY (Ghostly Abodes, Sacred Sites, and Other Supernatural Locations) is an illustrated guide to over 2,000 real locations in all fifty states where paranormal activity is taking place or has been reported in recent years. As a highly respected explorer of consciousness, the author believes paranormal experiences are part of the inauguration of human beings into a more encompassing reality. “Hauck’s book, while piquing my curiosity enough to make me think about buying an RV, also reassures me, because I already know what I might see. For the first time in my life, I can open myself safely to the Other Side.” - Lily Warner in “Fate Magazine.” Penguin 2002. ISBN 0-14-200234-8. 100 photos; 486 pages. Index and bibliography. $18.00.

THE INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY OF HAUNTED PLACES (Ghostly Abodes, Sacred Sites, and Other Supernatural Locations) is the second volume in the Haunted Places series. From the overgrown temple site at Angkor Wat in Cambodia to the pyramids on the Giza plateau in Egypt, from the haunted castles of England to empty shower stalls at Dachau in Germany, this book tells you where to go to find places with memories, places that contain sacred energy, and places that will transform you. Penguin 2000. ISBN 0-14-029635-2. 100 photos; 418 pages. Index and bibliography. $16.00.