

# Ghosts

"Guess Who's Sleeping in Your Attic?", *Acorn* article, September 30, 1983, by Lisa Spitz.

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"It's just a feeling you get; there are certain buildings you won't walk in to by yourself - you couldn't pay me to go in by myself," said a graduate from the class of '83. No, he wasn't referring to the castles of creature feature and Dracula films, but to several of the buildings on Drew's campus.

The original estate (which is now Drew's campus) was built by the Savannah based plantation owner, William Gibbons, in 1833 as a Northern home for his family and growing stable of race horses. The original estate included the mansion; a large stable; a granary and storehouse; a greenhouse; and over a 1,000 acres of wood and pasture land. These buildings, with the exception of the greenhouse, continue to stand; They are known as Mead Hall, [Asbury Hall](#), and [Embury Hall](#), respectively. Buildings such as S.W. Bowne, [Seminary Hall](#), [Hoyt-Bowne](#), the [Rose Memorial Library](#) and Bowne Theatre (formerly the Gymnasium) were added to accommodate the rapid growth of the student body.

Most of us have seen the formidable [Roxanna Mead Drew](#) in her post beside the Main doors to the Founders' Room and many a gullible freshman has been told by an upperclassman that she haunts the cavernous alcoves of her namesake, Mead Hall. This may not be so far from the truth. One female senior noted that she heard footsteps in the hall one Saturday, when she was in the building alone, "I locked the door behind me; I knew there was no one else in the building on a Saturday, but I heard footsteps on the main staircase, and downstairs in the hall below." The woman also noted that she often got an eerie feeling while she was in the building, and often found she couldn't look at the picture of Roxanna. This student is not the only one who has reported hearing footsteps in the building. The same claim has come from other people who work in the building, maintenance, and security people, all of whom are usually in the building late at night, by themselves, or when the building is relatively empty.

Two security officers stated that when they were in the building one night, one of the inner office doors slammed behind them, although there were no windows open, and no apparent air currents in the building that could have shut the door with such force. The attic door often is found open at very odd times. On several of the hottest days this past summer, the broken window beside the attic door was emitting gushes of very cold air, although there was no wind and the attic is very warm, as hot air rises.

According to one night maintenance person, approximately four years ago, he and a security officer saw a dense haze, not a consistent shape of a person, but a mass which stood four feet from the floor, and moved around the corner wall of Mead's basement, which was brightly lit. "The mass moved around the corner of the wall, and then lurched back as if it was surprised that we were standing there. It moved out, and then back again, but made no noise." The two men split up, and each went up a stair case, which are at opposite ends of the hall. The two met in the main foyer. "There were no sounds - no noise, footsteps, doors slamming - we searched the whole building. There was nothing there."

Approximately two years earlier the same maintenance person had been working in Seminary Hall, during the winter (all the windows were closed), and while mopping the floor in Craig Chapel saw the shadows of the pews move, as if the chandelier was swinging. He looked up, but it was still. This happened a second time. When he moved to the other side of the Chapel the same thing occurred. He finished mopping the Chapel, turned off the lights, and began mopping the outer hall. The lights in the Chapel went on. He went back inside and turned the lights off, and then continued mopping. The lights went on three more times, after he continued to turn them off. He also noted that there were sudden temperature changes, to extreme heat or cold, in many parts of the building as well.

Several security officers and maintenance people have stated that they have heard the organ playing in the Chapel when they know no one is in the building. One security officer explained that sometimes the organ was left 'on' (the wind pipes are left open), and if a window were open, wind entering the pipes could explain for the sound. When this explanation was offered to one of the other security officers who had heard the organ he replied, "no, I didn't hear sounds, like wind running through the pipes. I heard church music - a tune - being played."

Hoyt also has a reputation for keeping the proverbial skeletons in the closet, although in this case it's a ghost in the attic - otherwise known as the fifth floor. At the beginning of this past July, at approximately two a.m., five students were standing in front of Hoyt and all five thought they saw the figure of a woman with dark hair in the fifth floor window. Lights behind the figure appeared to be very bright. The group went around to the back of the dorm (the side facing the library), to look at windows on the fifth floor. When they reached the front of the building again, it appeared as if a shade had been pulled down in the window. They went inside the building to see if they could get into the attic. When they eventually got into the attic, it was dimly lit, despite the fact that from outside they could see bright lights in the window. When the security officer (who was one of the five students) tried to contact the dispatch officer to report what the group had seen he found his radio transmissions could not be received until he was several feet away from the outside of the building; Although less than half an hour earlier his transmissions could be received from the basement of Tolley, which is approximately four times further from the Pepin building than Hoyt.

Several students have noted that things disappear from their rooms in Hoyt. One male alumni, '83, made note of an account one Jan Term; while he was living in Hoyt. He had been folding his laundry, and had four pairs of socks sitting on the bed and when he sat down, the socks rolled off the bed. He found three pairs, but could not find the other pair, even when he rolled up his carpet and moved out of the room at the end of January.

The account of items disappearing is the most consistent one heard. Strange items - socks, a bag of cotton balls, one earring, furniture, paintings - the list goes on; most eventually appear later, sometimes in the place it was originally set down, sometimes not. This account of disappearing items was heard from students, staff, even one administrator, who called it "the Drew phenomena." One male senior who had spoken to the parapsychologists, who hold their conference at Drew every summer, was told had found "voids of space on campus," a space where things could not be accounted for; a space between two worlds.

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