



Haunted Rockland County

A Special Issue of the Ramapo Room News



The Halloween season is almost upon us here in Rockland County! To celebrate this year's spooky season, I thought it best to cover all of our county's local haunts and mysterious maladies. The Northeast, and especially Rockland County, has a rich history to draw from. Stories range from the truly terrifying: a young child being sacrificed on Spook Rock, to the somewhat mundane "bump in the night" hauntings. Either way, this season's special issue will be sure to remind you to sleep with one eye open. Sleep tight!

🎃 Audrey (Local History Librarian)

Danton Walker's Haunted House

Not far from the town of Mt. Ivy off of Route 202, a man by the name of Danton Walker bought a house on Camp Hill in 1942. He dedicated many years to restoring the old house, and would often take naps on a cot during the renovation. It was during his naps that he would often observe the presence of a Revolutionary War soldier.

As he finished the renovation, many other things began happening. The front door knocker would bang on its own, footsteps could be heard on the stairs, and all the lights in the house would go out at once.

Eventually, Walker had the home exorcised, and the ghost was found to be that of a legitimate Polish soldier who had gone to the house seeking the aid of American forces. Instead, he was tortured by the British and, sadly, left to die. It was only when the ghost learned that his death hadn't been "in vain", that the Americans won the war, that he was finally able to rest in peace.

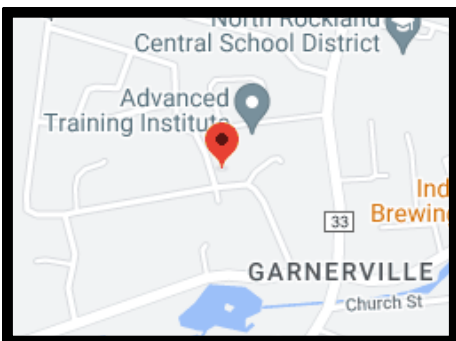
Spook Rock

There are many variations or reasons as to why Spook Rock is allegedly haunted. The basic premise is that back several hundred years ago, a Dutch settler committed a crime against a local Native American tribe (the exact crime is unknown). As an act of revenge, the daughter of the criminal was kidnapped and murdered on the rock. Afterwards, the ghost of the child killed could be seen hovering on or near the area where the sacrifice occurred.

Other variations of the story swap out the girl for a young, amorous couple as the victims of the sacrifice and where a bonfire and chanting were witnessed before the act was committed.

You can still visit Spook Rock on the corner of Spook Rock Rd and North Airmont Road.

*VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO AND RESOURCES
ON LOCAL HISTORY*



Above is a snapshot of the location of The Suffern House.



A Google Maps image of the Suffern House. It was featured as a stop on the 2016 house tour for the Historical Society of Rockland County.

****Please note that this is a privately owned home and property. Going on the property without express permission of the owner is considered trespassing. Please respect the owner's privacy.**

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The Suffern House

Located in Garnerville, New York is The Suffern House, so named because it originally belonged to the John Suffern Family. John Suffern (our town's founder) owned the land the house now sits on, but sold it to his son Andrew in 1797. It is believed that the house was built sometime in the 1790's.

While it stayed in the Suffern family for many years, it has since changed hands. It was one of the owners in the 1990s that reported some of the most eerie and unsettling hauntings. The owner was interviewed for a television program called *The Holzer Files* and it is within the episode that he relays his horrifying encounters.

One evening he watched as the figure of a woman walked across his room and slammed the door behind her. Other times toys and objects would move. Or objects would go missing entirely. A tenant that lived in an upstairs apartment witnessed the linen closet fly open as sheets threw themselves out. They moved out the following week.

The ghost of the unknown woman took it to a new level one

evening while the homeowner was sleeping. Allegedly, the woman reached up through the sheets of the bed, put her hands around the owner's neck, and began choking him. He was so traumatized by this event, that he could barely speak about it when *The Holzer Files* interviewed him.

The psychic medium from the show reported sensing a dark presence and that while the ghost appeared to be a woman, it could easily be a spirit posing as a woman. She sensed that the woman was manipulative, and was influencing members of the family living there.

The medium also speculated about the house being used as a makeshift hospital during the Revolutionary War, though there doesn't appear to be any records to confirm or deny that. During a session of automatic writing by the medium, she kept hearing something about a boy, whom another crew member spotted while in the basement.

The house is featured in S2 Ep. 2 of *The Holzer Files* on Travel Channel.

- Lafayette Theatre- This historical piece of Suffern allegedly has two separate ghosts. One ghost came with the organ and the other is an old, angry spirit.
- Indian Rock-The large rock located near the CVS in Airmont has seen some strange activity. It used to be part of a highway used by the local indigenous population.
- Tappan Zee Bridge-The waters surrounding the bridge were said to be haunted by the famous explorer Henry Hudson and some of his crew on a ghost ship.

Jersey Devil

While not directly in Rockland County, the Jersey Devil, a mythical creature birthed in 1753, has supposedly been haunting the woods near the Jersey/New York border for well over 200 years. The creature is said to have a snake-like body, bat wings, the head of a horse, pig feet, and a forked tail. It can fly and sightings are rare but not unheard of.

In 2015, a man by the name of David Black from New Jersey allegedly caught the creature on camera. It didn't look much like the illustration provided below... it mostly looked like a large, furry goat with wings that really wasn't experienced in flying.

Is this creature real or is this one hoax that just won't die?



The Girl in the Lavender Dress

Sometime during the 1940s there originated the story of the girl in the lavender dress. The tale sets the scene anywhere between Sloatsburg and Hillburn, where two young men were driving down the road on their way to a dance. It was nighttime, and at some point during their commute they spotted a young woman in lavender dress walking alone. They stopped and asked her if she would like to go with them.

The young woman agreed and it is assumed that she spent the evening at the dance until the two men drove her home. On the way, she claimed that she was very cold and didn't have a jacket. One of the men offered her their coat. They dropped her off at her house safely, and then drove away.

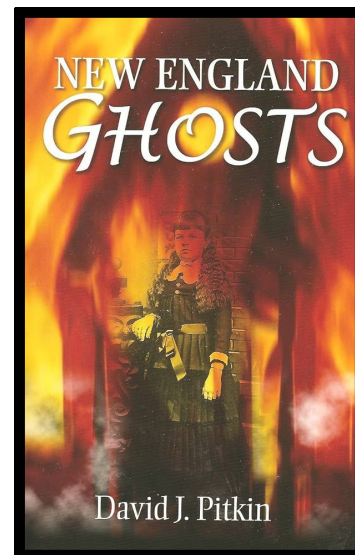
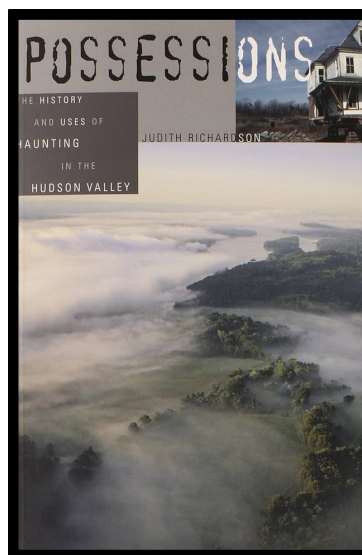
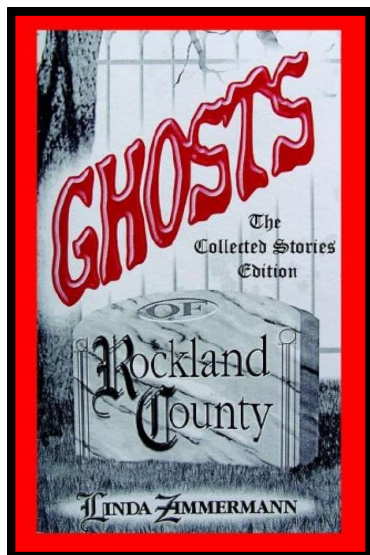
The next day the young man who had lent the girl his coat realized he hadn't gotten it back at the end of the evening. So, logically, he drove to her house to get it back.

Upon arrival, the man knocked on the door of the house where an elderly woman answered. The man inquired about the woman and asked if he could have his coat back. The old woman then told the young man that the girl he was referring to had died many years ago after freezing to death while returning home from a trip. The only thing she had worn was a lavender dress.

She told him the girl was buried not far from the house, and pointed in the direction of her grave. The young man decided to go visit the grave to see if the old woman was telling the truth.

Sure enough, her grave was there. And lying on her grave was the young man's jacket.





Paranormal Local History Books

Listed below are the books we have available in our collection about hauntings/paranormal in Rockland County. Asterisks indicate they are local history books and a research appointment is required to view the materials.

1. ***Ghost Investigator**** (volumes 1-6) by Linda Zimmermann
2. ***Ghosts of Rockland County*** by Linda Zimmermann
3. ***Haunted Hudson Valley*** by Linda Zimmerman
4. ***Hudson Valley Haunts: Historic Driving Tours*** by Linda Zimmerman
5. ***Mysterious Stone Sites in the Hudson Valley of New York and Northern New Jersey*** by Linda Zimmerman
6. ***Possessions: The History & Uses of Haunting in the Hudson Valley*** by Judith Richardson
7. ***New York Ghost Towns: Uncovering the Hidden Past*** by Susan Hutchinson Tassin
8. ***New England Ghosts*** by David J. Pitkin

More Ghostly Reads

1. ***Magic, Mystery, and Science: The Occult in Western Civilization*** by Dan Burton
2. ***The Little Book of True Ghost Stories*** by Echo Bodine
3. ***Real Ghosts, Restless Spirits, and Haunted Places*** by Brad Stieger
4. ***Ghosts: A Natural History: 500 Years of Searching for Truth*** by Roger Clarke
5. ***Ghostland: An American History in Haunted Places*** by Colin Dickey