

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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Local fear factors

Students share experiences with Bryan-College Station's supernatural occurrences and legends

By Lyndsey Sage
THE BATTALION

A lone soul wanders the dark hallways of the Animal Industries Building. The desolate building is silent except for one pair of footsteps and, on occasion, the slow creak of a door opening and closing. It is a picturesque scene for any ghost story, except this is no scene; it is based on reports that visitors to the Animal Industries Building, on the Texas A&M campus, have made.

Ghosts are not just reserved for the pages of horror novels or movies, but, as some believe, reside in residences and buildings in Bryan-College Station. Most of the rumors built around these "haunted" buildings stem from stories which occurred at that location.

Roy Simms, a meat laboratory manager in the Animal Industries Building, was in the building butchering meat on an afternoon in 1965. On his third cut, Simms sliced through the meat he was working on and through the femoral artery in his leg. Roy Simms bled to death.

According to legend, Simms' ghost continues to haunt the building.

Cushing Library archives have records of unexplained noises, sightings and moving objects in the building when it is vacant.

The Animal Industries Building is not the only place on campus to report tales of ghost sightings. According to Pam Zablocki, a junior animal science major, there have been sightings of a figure and unusual occurrences at the A&M Dairy.

"When you are out there, all sorts of weird stuff happens," Zablocki said. "Like the lights will turn off and on and the radio will switch stations."

She describes the happenings as something out of "your typical nerdy ghost story." Zablocki said she has been present when the lights have turned off on their own. She attributes part of this to the building being old; however, she said, there is still something odd

about the situation.

"The lights don't flicker before they go off," she said. "And the light switch would be down."

Another strange encounter Zablocki had at the dairy occurred on July 4 when she went out with friends and fellow co-workers to watch fireworks on the land.

"We were listening to the radio and the radio completely turned," Zablocki said. "It wasn't like it was just picking up another signal. No one changed the dial but yet the dial on the car changed to a new station."

Although Zablocki said she has never seen the ghostly figure, which many report witnessing, she said she is frightened enough by co-workers' tales that she will not venture onto the dairy's property alone. She said the figure, which is supposedly a man, appears in the early morning hours near the grain silo.

"I know grown men that won't go out there by themselves," Zablocki said. "They really think that the figure is a ghost."

Zablocki said she doesn't think her co-workers' tales are fabrications. Zablocki said she has heard different rumors, such as someone was killed on the land or someone died of tuberculosis there, but she has not been able to pinpoint the real story.

Everyone who has worked at the dairy has some strange experience to share, Zablocki said. She recalls one story of a worker coming in late one night, walking from one room into another, then, only a minute later, walking back into the first room only to find all of the cabinets open.

"It was like he turned his back for only a moment," Zablocki said. "It was like the scene in the movie *The Sixth Sense*."

Reports have also been made that the Schulman 6 Movie Theater complex in Bryan, although no longer in business, is haunted by a man in the upstairs projection room.

According to theshadowlands.net, a man was closing the theater alone one night when he heard a knock on the door. When he opened the

door, his lover was there and the two began to fight. His lover fled, only to return and kill the man. The man's body was discovered the next day by the opening crew.

The murdered theater employee supposedly now haunts the upstairs portion of the theater, including the projection rooms and office. He has been reported to stand near the projection machine and whisper into the ears of workers.

Fiction or fact, the element of fear in ghost stories make them part of Halloween tradition.

Lisa Bell, a senior agricultural development major, said she doesn't believe in ghosts but admits some stories do give her the creeps. Bell said stories with a psychological factor are more likely to trigger fear.

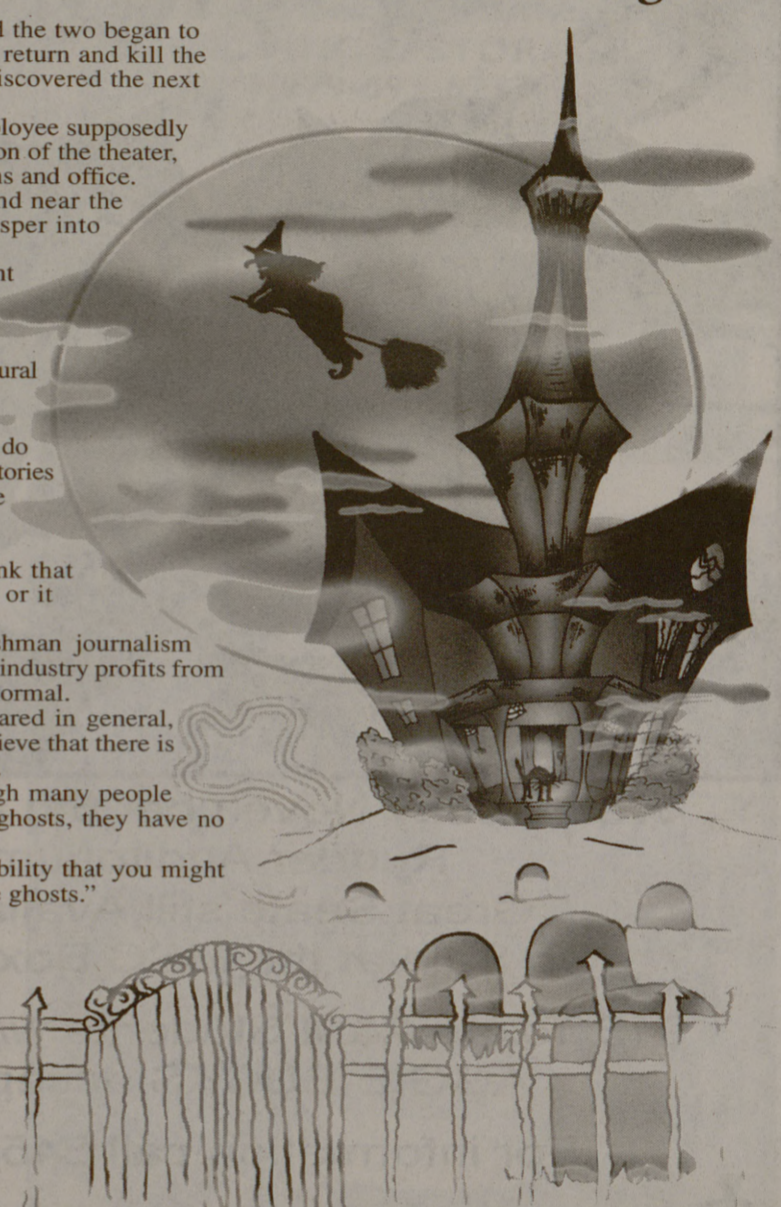
"Even though you don't believe in that stuff, you think that somehow they could be real or it could happen," she said.

Sara Williams, a freshman journalism major, said the entertainment industry profits from society's interest in the paranormal.

"People just like to be scared in general, and a lot of people like to believe that there is something else after they die."

Williams said that although many people may claim not to believe in ghosts, they have no basis for their disbelief.

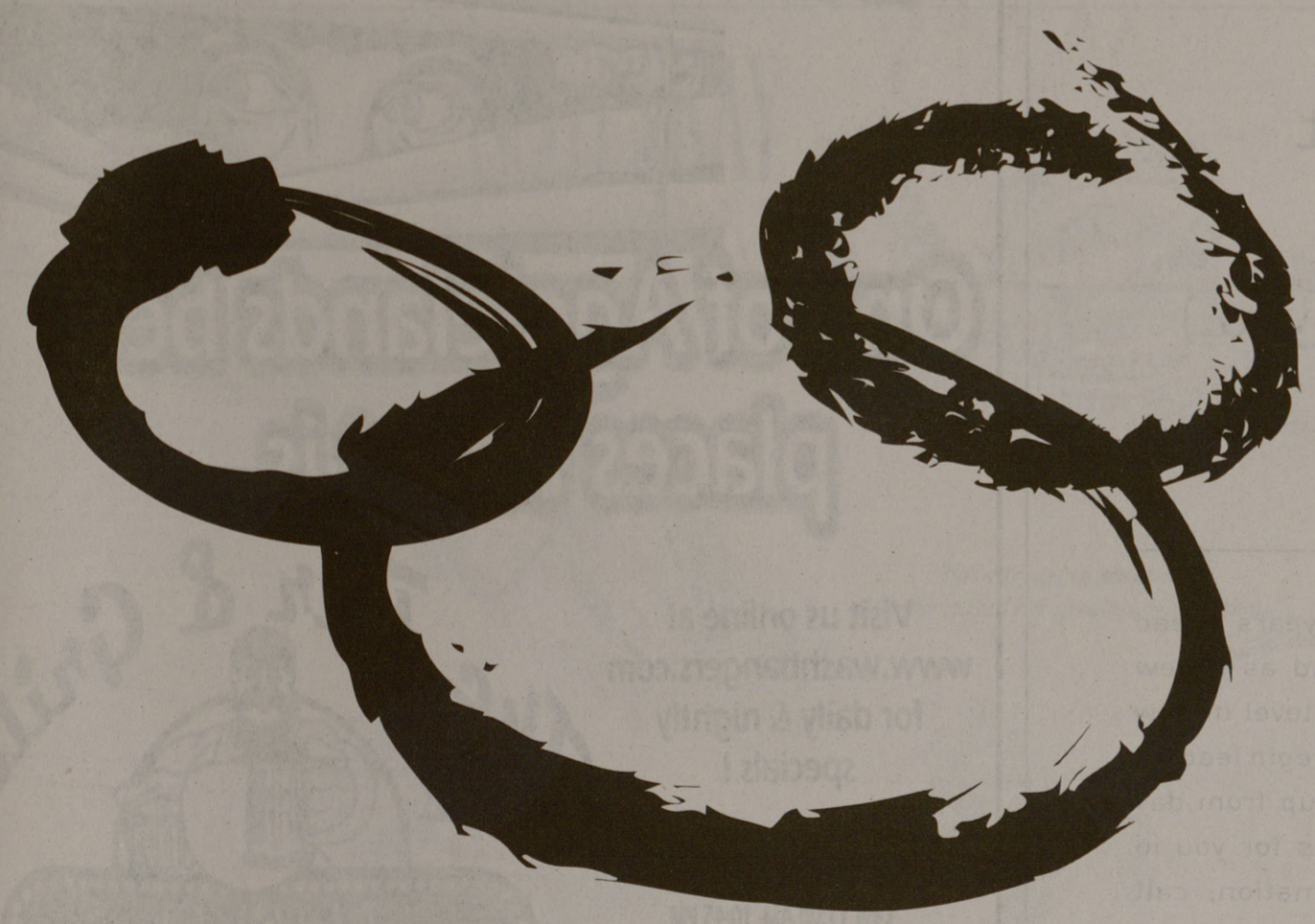
"There's always the possibility that you might be wrong and there really are ghosts."



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"I know grown men that won't go out there by themselves. They really think that the figure is a ghost."

— Pam Zablocki
junior animal science major



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