

Shirreff Hall ghost not a trek fan

by Garth Sweet

Dalhousie University isn't a place that comes to mind when you think of ghouls and ghosts, but maybe it should be. Our own Shirreff Hall is apparently haunted by the long-dead ghost of a chambermaid from the roaring twenties.

For years, students living at Shirreff Hall have been reporting strange incidents — lights turning on or off, strange sounds and other ghostly things.

The ghost, affectionately called Penelope, is apparently centered in the East Eddy wing of the building, particularly the fourth floor, closest to the attic where she supposedly committed suicide back in the late 1920s.

The story of her death varies with the person telling it, but a common thread runs through. Penelope was apparently a chambermaid working at Shirreff Hall back in the 1920s.

She had a torrid love affair with a married faculty member (who may speculate was the dean) and became pregnant. Out-of-wedlock pregnancies, especially those that came from a married man, were very unacceptable in those days, so down in the basement of Shirreff Hall, the man broke off the affair late one night. So distraught and upset was Penelope that she ran upstairs to the attic and hung herself from one of the ceiling beams.

Today her restless ghost haunts the residents of Shirreff Hall. Talking with residents and workers in the building brought out some interesting stories. They reported first-hand instances of unexplained happenings — lights blinking, stereos starting or stopping, or TV's shutting off while people watched.

One Resident Assistant (RA) reported that while she was alone in her room, in her bed with the door locked, her light switch suddenly

clicked and her lights turned on. She checked the switch and her room and could find no reason for the light to have come on.

Another RA reported being in bed with her stereo on and playing, then waking to find the stereo and CD player both shut off.

Others have actually reported seeing the ghost of Penelope. She appeared one night at the end of a girl's bed and floated there ethereally before disappearing seconds later.

Many a resident can also relate stories of hearing people running down the halls when no one is there, or having their locked doors mysteriously unlock and swing open while in their rooms.

Bruce Murray, the night security guard for the building, said he's heard many stories from residents and even had some interesting experiences himself. Once he saw some unexplained lights at the end of a hallway floating up and down. He has heard

footsteps and running when the building is empty.

Most residents try to take the ghost in stride. They generally agree that Penelope is friendly and has never hurt anyone with her haunting. Nevertheless, around Hallowe'en each year, mass sleepovers are pretty common, just to be safe.

Penelope apparently also has a bit of a personality. Several residents report that she doesn't like Star Trek. In the second floor lounge, it's been a common sight for the TV to switch off mysteriously when the theme music to Star Trek starts up. Perhaps

Jean Luc reminds her of her former lover.

The only problem with the story is the hangman's noose that supposedly still hangs in the attic of the building where Penelope took her life. According to Gail Power of Housing and Conference Services, the attic is little more than a crawl space without enough height to stand, let alone hang oneself.

Regardless, the ghost of Shirreff Hall will remain a popular topic of stories with residents for many more years.

Big biz — science needs it

The business of science versus the art of science. Oh I know it doesn't have the centuries-old tradition of church versus state or the media circus that surrounds Bobbitt versus Bobbitt, but I believe it is a critical issue.

How much influence, if any, should big business have on scientific research and advancements? Where would the world be today if science wasn't in some way driven by money? Should knowledge and scientific perspectives be free to the masses or should the scientific community charge a fee for what it knows and thinks, in the same way an investment broker charges for their advice?

With the upcoming visit of Dr. David Suzuki to our campus, these issues hit close to home. Apparently, Dr. Suzuki is paid an amount in the area of \$10,000 to fly here, talk on the crisis in the Atlantic Fisheries, answer a few questions and sign some books. Some have expressed anger that the Dalhousie Science Society would spend that kind of money for one man. To these people I say, why shouldn't he get paid this money? I have never heard him talk specifically on the fisheries, but from what I know and have heard about him, Dr. Suzuki will certainly be well informed and an extremely entertaining speaker, not to mention his work concerning the environment and his own personal thoughts on the subject. Shouldn't a scientist or researcher be compensated for their years of schooling and training as well as their own work in a particular field of study? Doesn't his status as arguably Canada's premier scientific thinker demand that his fee be in the range of \$10,000?

If we look at the economics of science from a research point of view, ask yourself this: Where would we be if large companies did not sponsor certain areas of research and development? Certainly we would not be living as comfortably as most of us are today. Yes, it can be argued that most of the initial breakthroughs in science would have been, and will be made, without corporate sponsorship.

information and develops it into something that the general public can use. Since society is always clamouring for something bigger and faster, it is these same companies that encourage research labs and universities to further explore and create new theories based on the original idea.

The major drawback of business and science working together is that areas of research that need money may not get it. Companies are not going to be interested in the mating habits of 3-toed sloth or if a star is about to go supernova or not. They I never read about Kite Makers Inc. donating money to Ben Franklin or Columns 'R' Us sliding a few dollars Archimedes' way. The fact is, though, that beyond the discovery of how electricity works or a mathematical principle, it is business that uses this

want to know what kind of rubber lasts the longest or what percentage of people feel better after taking their cold pill. Also, something tells me that there is a greater feeling of accomplishment for a scientist when they have discovered something on their own or with other scientists than if all their time and work goes into the development of Pepsi Max.

It is unfortunate that big business is sometimes necessary to provide money for scientific endeavours. It would be better if science could work unhindered in any way but it's also virtually impossible. Scientists need the money from companies to continue their research, and companies and society need scientists to continue to produce ideas or formulas that can be developed into useful and marketable products.

Colin Mac Donald

POINTLESS PONDERABLES

Answer:

This puzzle may have seemed simple at first — 10 volumes of 1,000 pages each means our bookworm ate through 10,000 pages, right? Wrong. When you stack books on a shelf, page 1 is not on the 'outside' of the set, but on the 'inside'. The remaining pages of volume one are to the left of page 1. Similarly, in volume 10, the last page is also on the 'inside'; its first 999 pages are to its right. With this in mind then, our worm ate through eight full volumes plus one page in each of two other books — 8002 pages, right? Wrong again. The first and last pages of volumes 1 and 10, respectively, were eaten completely through, and each had two complete pages of text printed on them — pages 1 and 2 in the first volume and pages 999 and 1,000 in the last volume. Thus the correct answer is 8,000 pages plus 4 more pages for the end volumes, or 8004 pages.

We received several email answers this week (much to our glee), but it seems that nobody got the right answer. Congratulations, however, to Greg McKenna, who sent his almost-right answer (8002) only hours before James Hubley.

Question:

Here's a short (and simple?) one for you this week. You are at a local supermarket, and you see some fellow students fighting over the last box of on-sale Kraft dinner. Being of a helpful nature, you suggest a competition to determine who gets the box. Your competition is to race two cars to Dartmouth, but since you don't want either to break any speed laws you add the twist that the person whose car arrives last is the winner. The two students head off in their cars, but drive around aimlessly since neither wants to be the first to reach Dartmouth. In desperation they stop into a local Tim Hortons and ask a wise truck driver for advice. Minutes later they jump in the cars and race to Dartmouth as fast as they can. What could the wise trucker have told them?

Please send answers c/o the Gazette, Room 312, SUB or by email to Gazette@ac.dal.ca. Entries must be received by Monday at 4 pm.

The Dalhousie Science Society presents

ECONOMICS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Dr. David Suzuki

Dr. Bob Fournier, Mr. John Risley, and Mr. Gary Dedrick

Saturday, February 12, 1994 at 7:00 pm

AT THE REBECCA COHN AUDITORIUM DALHOUSIE ARTS CENTRE

ADMISSION: STUDENTS WITH I.D.'S: \$5 NON STUDENTS: \$10



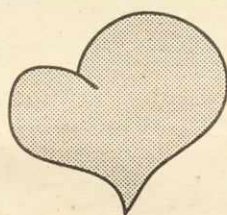
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RUMOURS

Valentine's Weekend

The DANCE

Saturday, Feb. 12
Dancing til 3 am
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The DINNER

Sunday, Feb. 13
Seating 6:30pm.
\$16.50 + taxes

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Sunday, Feb. 13

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