

THE MOST BELOVED TOWN; BY THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

The nation's oldest seashore resort, where Spirits linger because of the intense energy created at where the Delaware River and Atlantic Ocean meet, ranked among one of the most haunted towns in America the most Southern Tip of New Jersey, Cape May.

Some of the most haunted buildings on Cape May Island consists of, The Physick Estate, Hotel Macomber, The Southern Mansion, The Cherry house, Congress Hall, The Ugly Mug, and The Fishmarket. Business owners, locals, tourists, weekenders, each will have their own experience and individual story. Both negative and positive souls roam this town, people that stay because they were tragically killed, you have others that stayed because they lived here and died here, and they don't want to let go. They have a material or emotional connection to the house they lived in. As a local resident of Cape May, who works in one of these historic buildings, I have yet to experience my own encounter with these spirits but am lucky enough to know an abundance of people who have stories that they love to share.

Casey Smith, a local resident who spends most of her time working at the Ugly Mug, a building built in 1924, started its "The Ugly Mug Club" in the 1940s when Fishermen who visited Cape May Harbor each had their own Mugs they drink from. When the members of "The Ugly Mug Club" were on their boat for weeks or sometimes months, their personal mugs would hang from the ceiling facing the ocean to tell their drinking buddies that they were back on the boat and not around to have a drink. Casey explains her firsthand experiences with the ghosts of the Mug, she says, "We had the typical stuff happen at the mug. Hearing your name, mugs coming unhooked from the ceiling (when we tried to make it happen by jumping on the ceiling above and could no recreate it), bottle caps caught on camera flying across the bar and barstools falling off the bar at night with no one around."

She continues, "But the creepiest story was this one night. My coworker was really freaked out and told us he couldn't believe what he saw. He was the kind of guy who laughed at us all the time when we would be scared to go up to the stockroom or down in the basement at night. Well one night he oversaw bringing the money bags up to the second-floor office. The office was down a hallway and across from the office door were the stairs that lead to the third floor (creepy third floor). Minutes later after he went upstairs at the end of the shift, where we heard him come through the kitchen door into the bar and was white as... a ghost. He was really freaked out and told us he couldn't believe what he saw. When he walked out of the office, he happened to look over at the stairs leading up to the third floor and saw a little girl in a white nightgown sitting with her elbows on her knees and hands covering her face like she was crying. He said she was almost see-through. He immediately just ran and didn't look back. After that night he never made fun of us for the ghost stories or wanting someone to walk upstairs with them to put the money away at the end of the night." In an article entitled, "Ghosts of Cape may" by Craig Mcmanus he also states, "I had heard "the Mug" as it is affectionately called by the locals, was active again. Lights were flickering, and an employee, closing alone one night, encountered the ghost of a young girl sitting on the steps. She vanished as quickly as she appeared."



Another personal interview I had the honor of conducting was with my best friend Julia Cook, she shares her mom and aunt's stories, where they grew up at 839 Kearney Avenue, right in the heart of Cape May. The house was built in 1865 and is now available for weekly rentals, after the loss of her grandmother who accompanied the house for over 50 years. Julia says, "at my mommom's house, there was a couple of stories, first my aunt Hope would sleep up in her room with her door open one night she heard footsteps coming up the steps that started off soft and gradually got really loud and fast, she tried sitting up to see who was coming, but there was a cinder block on her chest, at least that's what it felt like, she was stuck and couldn't move and finally when she was able to sit up her door slam shut. Another story is my Aunt Hope went down to the house when she was in college, and it was just her and the dog and she fell asleep one night and woke up and couldn't find her shoes. It took her until the next time she came back down to find those shoes they were hidden, hanging up inside of a kitchen cabinet and she was the last person to be there when she showed up the next time." Julia explains how her family believed it was a harmless ghost who was a part of the family before they moved in. They never did any further research in the hope of not disrupting or angering any of the entities.

There are spooky spots all over the Garden State, but if we're talking towns, one stands out. You may not think of Cape May as creepy, probably because it's overflowing with charm, but there's a dark side to the seashore standout. Craig McManus a Cape May local, wrote 5 books about the hauntings in this little town, along with plenty of others. Along with multiple lengthy house and trolley tours focused on its otherworldly residents. People never seem to want to leave, dozens of spirits, both human and animal, are proved to roam the streets, shops, beaches and bed & breakfasts of Cape May.