



A crow illustration accompanying Sydney Stevens' new book.

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Stevens' collection also includes the tale of Mrs. Crouch, a preacher's wife who died under mysterious circumstances. Her body

was found in a river and some locals suspect that her husband may have been the killer. These are old stories familiar to long-time peninsula residents. "It's all of those old familiar people and ghosts, but this time

talking to a younger audience," she said.

Geared toward readers roughly middle school aged, Stevens' new book is set to be published as part of Arcadia Publishing's "Spooky America" series. With input from both editors and younger relatives, Stevens reformatted the collection. She emphasized some of the more spooky elements to engage younger readers and tightened up the stories by cutting out much of the background historical information.

The new book also includes 50 images. "Most of these are black and white drawings to pair with the stories," Stevens said. They also include a collection of photographs that help to bring the tales to life. "The Ghostly Tales of the Long Beach Peninsula" gives young readers a vehicle to dive into the peninsula's history by way of ghost stories. "I don't feel the traditional way of teaching history is necessarily the most effective way," she said, "if a (histori-

cal story) involved a ghost story, you have a chance of really planting some seeds."

Stevens hopes the book will pique young readers' interest and lead them to exploring more about local history. "That's worth all of the effort of writing a ghost story," she said. "Stories are a great way to open their eyes," she added. Stevens worked as an educator for nearly 40 years, an experience that has helped her along in understanding young readers' comprehension ability.

Stevens' family connections to the peninsula spurred much of her curiosity. Her great-grandfather, Robert Hamilton Espy, co-founded the Oysterville village in the mid 19th century. When she moved to the Long Beach area full-time in the 1970s, Stevens took the opportunity to dive into writing about the region's history.

"The Ghostly Tales of the Long Beach Peninsula," will be available starting on Monday.

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