

Calling all ghost hunters

Seaside's Ghost Conference doubles number of events

By Eve Marx
For Seaside Signal

Calling all ghost hunters, busters and those fascinated in all things paranormal to the sixth-annual Oregon Ghost Conference, the largest paranormal convention held in the Pacific Northwest.

Psychic readings, magic and ghost stories, along with Seaside's haunted history is on display Friday through Sunday at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

Conference Director Rocky Smith is a historian and paranormal investigator who has been featured on local radio and television. In 2006, Smith founded Northwest Ghost Tours offering paranormal tours in Portland and Oregon City.

Smith said what makes this year's event special is "double the amount" of classes and events.

New speaker topics and entertainment includes Mystiques Roadshow, psychometry readings by Ankhasha Amenti, and the Historical Conjuror Magic Show. Seth Michael and Sharon Lewis will debut at the gallery reading, "one of our most popular events," he said.

Last year the Oregon Ghost Conference offered a haunted Seaside tour. Will that be repeated?

"I asked around and nobody had any specific paranormal experiences on the tour last year," Smith said. "But people did have paranormal experiences inside the Seaside Civic and Convention Center itself, and in specific locations like the Bridge Tender and the shop right next door." Smith said that during a psychic readings by Tiffany event last year, most of the people in the group had a paranormal experience.

"One of the investigations was led by Aaron Collins from Paranormal Crossings," Smith said. "He has some stories to tell,"



Conference participants on the Seaside ghost walk at the 2016 event.



Vendors at the ghost conference.



Inner Voice jewelry was among booths at last year's conference.



Panelists at the 2016 Oregon Ghost Conference.

The Bridge Tender has special T-shirts for sale this year heralding their connection to the Ghost Conference. As legend goes, the Bridge Tender has a few resident spirits, including the "Madame" and a little boy and girl. The T-shirts, which feature the Madame, glow in the dark, Smith said. And on the bottom of the shirt it says "Watch who you pick up."

Smith said ghost tours of Seaside will be offered this year on both Friday and Saturday nights. "We've added tours and will be offering two tours each night, one of downtown and Broadway and the other the Promenade and oceanfront." The conference, which has its roots in Oregon City, attracts visitors from all over the Pacific Northwest and beyond. The Oregon Ghost Confer-

ence connects its attendees with some of the top paranormal experts in the area. \$5 general admission gets you in the door for the entire weekend.

Kathleen Dudley, a Seaside resident and presenter at the conference, has been a practicing numerologist for 20 years.

"Numerology is a metaphysical divination, a branch of philosophy that deals with abstract concepts, such as being, knowing, substance, cause, identity and time and space," Dudley said. "It's a systematic method to organize random facets of existence and provide insight into a problem at hand."

Sacred numbers, she said, provide a measure of our talents and our potential.

"It is believed that by understanding why and how our

lives and those around us, our earth, and all involved, evolved to become today who and what they are, we can be more fulfilled, happier, content," she added.

For more information about the conference and to book your reservation for tours and classes, log on to visit www.oregonghostconference.com

"We're anticipating 800 visitors and attendees to the conference this year," Smith said. "We had 600 last year." This is a show that just keeps getting bigger and better."

How many unseen visitors will be in attendance is anybody's guess.

Couple brings Victorians to life

Pittock from Page 1A

When Mary's contract ended with the Rose Festival after four years, she became independent and, together with her husband, they have continued to share the Pittock story to schoolchildren, residents at assisted living facilities, libraries, civic centers and philanthropic organizations — always in full period costume.

The Pittocks played a major role in the history of Portland and to the growth of Oregon's largest city.

The Pittock Mansion was built on Portland's original "lover's lane" above Burnside. Built in the style of a French Renaissance chateau in 1914, it was a progressive masterpiece for its time.

Amassed on 16 acres with 44 rooms, it included all the latest technology. A central vacuum system, a telephone and intercom system with intercoms in every room, refrigeration, indoor plumbing and electricity. There was a dumbwaiter and a passenger elevator was installed for Georgiana after her stroke. (The elevator is still operable today.) Henry Pittock used Oregon artisans and craftsmen and insisted that all materials used including marble, tenino stone and wood came from the Northwest.

The Pittocks were deeply connected in their community and spent much of their time improving the lives of local residents. Family and community were central to them and they shared their home with some of their children and grandchildren. Generations of Pittocks lived in the mansion up to 1958 when it became too much to endure.

Now a museum, the mansion has become a popular destination for visitors, bird watchers, event planners and gardeners. Though it seems lavish, it is a testament of who the Pittocks were as



Georgiana Pittock (Mary Hutchens) and her chauffeur Herman Hawkanson (Mike Hutchens) visited the Seaside Library.

pillars of the community in both business development and philanthropy.

Pittock suffered a stroke in 1913, just before the mansion was completed. Sometime afterwards, she started to read The Oregonian for the first time. She never cared for it before, but started to feel her world getting smaller. Because of the Spanish-American War, there were stories about German atrocities, propaganda, spies and submarines.

"I liked that stuff," she said. "I know I shouldn't have, but they opened my mind."

Seaside connection

The Hutchens divided their program into two parts. The first story covers the years 1845 to 1907 and includes the wagon trains that brought the Burton family to Oregon; Georgiana's marriage to Henry Pittock, the formation of the Portland Rose Society; the Lewis and Clark Exposition and the Rose Festival.

The Hutchens' portrayals covered part two of the program: the last years of Georgiana's life, the building of the Pittock Mansion, the evolution of women's voting rights in Oregon, World War I and her final years suffering from the debilitating effects of a stroke.

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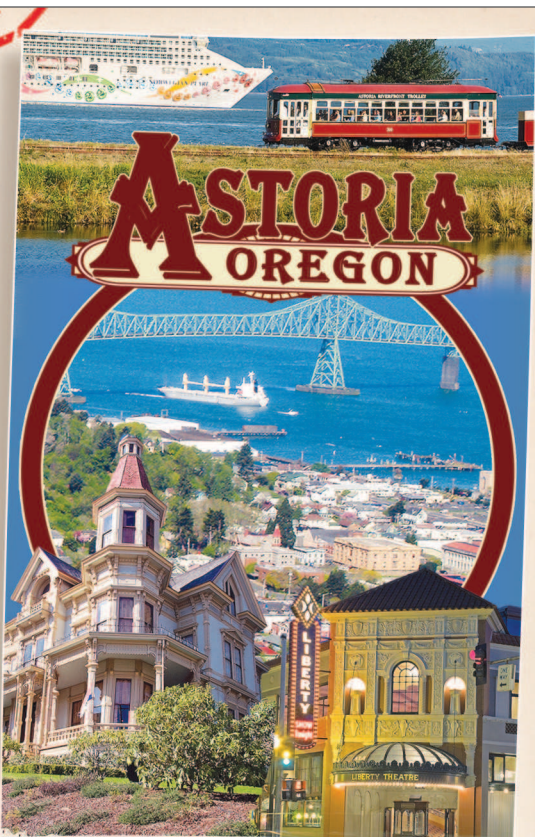
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