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More Spooky Tales & Ghost Hunting In Cape May

By Kelley Anne Mc Gee

If you're ever visiting Historic Cape May, touted the shore's oldest seaside resort, you might want to double check yourself. For instance, the cold spot swimmers sometimes come upon in the ocean. Is it another sea creature like the shark featured in "Jaws" giving bathers chills up and down their spines as some over active imaginations might think? Or could it be the ghost of a dead child searching for seashells swimmers are bumping into. Both seem scary. And the lone surfer who suddenly disappears into the surf without a trace, is he real? Or maybe it's the ghost of an unfortunate soul lost at sea some years ago, while trying to catch the big wave. And what about cats in a bed and breakfast inn who seem to be chasing an invisible mouse. Or perhaps it's the dead spirit of an older woman they're being drawn too.

Ghost hunter, psychic medium and writer Craig McManus is on the prowl again for more ghosts in Cape May, and luckily for us, he finds them. In his latest book, *The Ghosts of Cape May Book 2*, the author introduces us to a whole new

group of ghosts and spirits such as those mentioned above, among others who haunt Cape May's sandy beaches and surf, historic places like a lighthouse, streets, homes, shops and businesses, while sharing his findings and opinions on them.

The writer also explains why the seaside resort may very well be the most haunted. For starters, Cape May's very old and rich in history dating back to the 1600s, when first used by the Indians for fishing and hunting followed by whalers and farmers. Secondly, quartz crystals or stones referred to as Cape May Diamonds frequently wash ashore at Cape May Point, which the Indians believed possessed mystical and supernatural powers. Thirdly, the town's surrounded by water, and these contributing factors among possible others, may help make Cape May a hotbed for paranormal activity and hauntings.

So, perhaps the strange feeling of another presence being around in Cape May in general, is not your imagination, but really the dearly departed such as sea captains and pirates killed at sea, victims of shipwrecks, tragically drowned swimmers, fishermen, boaters and surfers from over the years along Cape May's shores, as the author

seems to suggest. It's certainly an interesting, if not downright scary theory to consider.

But for those who prefer their ghostly encounters up close and personal, you may like to try any of the several ghost tours or programs available in Cape May that the author helped to create, along with the local arts and entertainment center the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts, better known as MAC, a non-profit group dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Cape May's heritage.

For instance, choose from ghost tours and trolley rides that pass many of the author's favorite haunts he writes about in his books, to luncheons and dinners with ghost theme lectures such as exploring Victorians fascination with spiritualism and strong desire to communicate with the dead through séances, or you can learn about ghosts in general, like if your own home is haunted.

The ghost tours and programs, which schedule and admission fees vary and seating is limited, have become very popular and fill up quickly, especially during the fall. Anyone interested should make reservations early. While Cape May does offer ghost tours and programs year-round, Mr. McManus personally attends and hosts some of them, especially those during the month of October. So those looking to be guided by a real ghost expert, might like to consider taking the tours or lectures at this time of year.

The humble writer has rubbed elbows with the likes of Shirley MacLaine, when he's been a frequent guest on her past radio show, and Martha Stewart, who will feature a glimpse of his wonderful collection of rare Christmas ornaments in her December issue of *Martha Stewart Living*. Mr. McManus, who also loves the Christmas holiday, will often decorate his home with as many as 11 Christmas trees. Now that's someone I call with spirit.

The author's newest book *The Ghosts of Cape May Book II* is available at Barnes & Nobles Bookstores, Atlantic Books and gift-shops in Cape May, and amazon.com.

For reservations or additional information on Cape May's ghost tours and programs, please contact MAC at www.capemaymac.org or call (609) 884-5404 or (800) 275-4278.



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