

**Ghost Hunter's Guide
to
California's
Wine Country**

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Wine Country**

Jeff Dwyer



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*To my son,
Samuel Dwyer,
an adventurous spirit who is fascinated with ghosts*

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I ride over my beautiful ranch. Between my legs is a beautiful horse. The air is wine. The grapes on a score of rolling hills are red with autumn flame. Across Sonoma Mountain, wisps of sea fog are stealing. The afternoon sun smolders in the drowsy sky. I have everything to make me glad I am alive.

—Jack London
on the Valley of the Moon wine country
circa 1916

Introduction

Who believes in ghosts? People from every religion, culture, and generation believe that ghosts exist. The popularity of ghosts and haunted places in books, television programs, and movies reflects a belief held by many that other dimensions and spiritual entities exist.

In 2000, a Gallup poll discovered a significant increase in the number of Americans who believe in ghosts since the question was first asked in 1978. Thirty-one percent of respondents said they believe ghosts exist. In 1978, only 11 percent admitted to believing in ghosts. Less than a year later, Gallup found that 42 percent of the public believed a house could be haunted, but only 28 percent believed that we can hear from or mentally communicate with someone who has died. A 2003 Harris poll found that an astounding 51 percent of Americans believe in ghosts. As with preceding polls, belief in ghosts was greatest among females. More young people accepted the idea of ghosts than older people. Forty-four percent of people aged 18 to 29 years admitted a belief in ghosts compared with 13 percent of those over 65. In 2005, a CBS News poll reported similar findings. Twenty-two percent of the respondents admitted they had personally seen or felt the presence of a ghost. Seventy-eight percent said they believe in an afterlife.

Judging by the incredible popularity of ghost tours and history tours in cities such as New Orleans, San Francisco, and Seattle, a lot of visitors believe in the possibility that ghostly phenomena can be experienced.

In October 2001, Home and Garden TV conducted a survey at its Web site. When asked, "Do you believe in ghosts?" 87 percent of respondents said, "Yes!" Fifty-one percent indicated they had seen a ghost but only 38 percent would enter a haunted house alone at night.

Other cable channels recognized the phenomenal interest in paranormal phenomena. In the summer of 2004, Sci Fi channel launched a weekly one-hour primetime program on ghost hunting. Sci Fi also airs programs that investigate psychic abilities, reincarnation, telekinesis, and many other fascinating topics. Programs such as *Supernatural* on the CW television network, *Most Haunted* on the Travel Channel, and *Haunting Evidence* on TrueTV have attracted millions of viewers.

NBC broadcasts a weekly primetime drama that follows the true-life experiences of a medium who communicates with ghosts in order to solve crimes. CBS joined the trend by offering another fact-based drama called *Ghost Whisperer*.

Annual meetings and conventions for people interested in ghost hunting and other paranormal investigations are staged in most major cities. Many of these attract thousands of participants and feature well-known authors, ghost hunters, psychics, mediums, and TV show stars. In addition, more than 2.5 million references to ghosts, ghost hunting, haunted places, or related paranormal phenomena can be found on the Internet. Clearly, interest in these areas is widespread.

There is no way of knowing how many people have seen or heard a ghost only to feel too embarrassed, foolish, or frightened to admit it. Many ghost hunters and spiritual investigators believe a vast majority of people have seen or heard something from the other world but failed to recognize it.

The recent worldwide interest in ghosts is not a spin-off of the New Age movement or the current popularity of angels or the manifestation of some new religious process. The suspicion or recognition that ghosts exist is simply the reemergence of one of mankind's oldest and most basic beliefs. There is a life after death.

Ancient writings from many cultures describe apparitions and a variety of spirit manifestations that include tolling bells, chimes, disembodied crying or moaning, and whispered messages. Legends and ancient books include descriptions of ghosts, dwelling places of spirits, and periods of intense spiritual activity related to seasons or community events such as festivals and crop harvests. Vital interactions between the living and deceased have been described. Many ancient

cultures included dead people or their spirits in community life. Spirits of the dead were sought as a source of guidance, wisdom, and protection for the living. Many followers of the world's oldest religions agree that nonliving entities may be contacted for guidance or may be seen on the earthly plane. Among these are visions of saints, the Virgin Mary, and angels.

Ancient sites of intense spiritual activity in Arizona, New Mexico, and Central and South America are popular destinations for travelers seeking psychic or spiritual experiences. More modern, local sites, where a variety of paranormal events have occurred, are also popular destinations for adventurous living souls. Amateur and professional ghost hunters seek the spirits of the dearly departed in the Wine Country's historic sites, Victorian mansions, old restaurants, and countless other places in Napa, Sonoma, and Mendocino counties, including graveyards and homes. Modern buildings, parks, theatres, and wineries also serve as targets for ghost hunters.

Throughout the past two millennia, the popularity of belief in ghosts has waxed and waned, similar to religious activity. When a rediscovery of ghosts and their role in our lives occurs, skeptics label the notion a fad or an aberration of modern lifestyles. Perhaps people are uncomfortable with the idea that ghosts exist because it involves an examination of our nature and our concepts of life, death, and afterlife. These concepts are most often considered in the context of religion, yet ghost hunters recognize that acceptance of the reality of ghosts, and a life after death, is a personal decision, having nothing to do with religious beliefs or church doctrine. An intellectual approach enables the ghost hunter to explore haunted places without religious bias or fears.

The high frequency of ghost manifestations in California's premier Wine Country, as evidenced by documentary reports on TV and other news media, reflects some people's open-mindedness and widespread interest in ghostly experiences. Ghost hunting is becoming a weekend pastime for many adventurous souls. Advertisement of haunted inns, restaurants, and historical sites is commonplace. It is always fun, often very exciting, and may take ghost hunters places they never dreamed of going.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Chapter 1 of this book will help you, the ghost hunter, to research and organize your own ghost hunt. Chapters 2 through 6 describe several locations at which ghostly activity has been reported. Unlike other collections of ghost stories and descriptions of haunted places, this book emphasizes access. Addresses of each haunted site are included along with other information to assist you in locating and entering the location. Several appendices offer organizational material for your ghost hunts, including a Sighting Report Form to document your adventures, lists of suggested reading and videos, Internet resources, and organizations you may contact about your experiences with ghosts.

GHOST HUNTING IN CALIFORNIA'S WINE COUNTRY

The word ghost immediately brings to mind visions of ancient European castles, foggy moors, and dark, wind-swept ramparts where brave knights battled enemies of the crown or heroines threw themselves to their death. The fact is that ghosts are everywhere. A history based in antiquity that includes dark dungeons, hidden catacombs, or ancient ruins covered with a veil of sorrow and pain is not essential, but contemporary versions of these elements are quite common in many American cities.

Indeed, the Wine Country, with its quaint towns and villages and old wineries, has all the ingredients necessary for successful ghost hunting. For nearly two hundred years, the region has been a magnet to the world, attracting people from a variety of cultures who experienced tremendous changes in their lives. Important periods include the establishment of a Russian colony, early Spanish exploration and colonization, transition from a Spanish colony to a Mexican province in 1820, a brief period in 1846 as the California Republic before annexation by the U.S. as an American territory, and then statehood in 1850.

Starting in 1812, Russian settlers and military personnel occupying Fort Ross destroyed many Pomo Indian villages throughout lands that now comprise Mendocino and Sonoma counties. Those who were not killed in these attacks were taken prisoner and set to work in vast fields used to produce food for Russian outposts in Alaska. Subsequent military campaigns in the region were limited to

skirmishes with local Indians at the Sonoma Mission, in Yountville, and near Petaluma. There are two notable exceptions. The infamous Death March of 1857, in Round Valley, Mendocino County, killed hundreds of Native Americans. Five years later, in Sonoma's Lovall Valley, hundreds of Wappo and Pomo Indians were massacred in one day by U.S. Army troops as part of an eradication policy dictated by politicians in Washington. People who live in this area have reported apparitions of wounded Indians while sensitives detect emotional remnants of the tragedy.

Smallpox epidemics of the 1830s and other illnesses carried by European, American, and Mexican immigrants decimated the local Indians, who had no immunity. During dry years, grass fires swept through small settlements and, in the 1880s, nearly destroyed docks on the Napa River. Other disasters, such as cave-ins of wine cellars cut into mountainsides by Chinese laborers, and floods also took their toll, creating thousands of lost souls who died before their time.

Countless numbers of spirits whose bodies died in these events have not moved on. Many old hotels and restaurants, wineries, vineyard mansions, pioneer cabins and cottages, neighborhoods, barrooms, churches, and Spanish Missions are inhabited by ghosts who are often seen or sensed. Many of these lost souls are the result of violent or unexpected death at an early age. These unfortunate people passed with great emotional anguish, leaving their spirits with a desire to achieve their life's objectives, or with a sense of obligation to offer protection to a particular place or person. Some ghosts remain on the earthly plane to provide guidance for someone still alive, or for revenge.

The Wine Country has had its share of criminal activities and social injustice. This has produced many disadvantaged, used, abused, and forlorn people who remain with us after their death. Their souls seek lost dreams while they remain attached to what little they gained during their difficult lives. Many ghosts, harboring resentment, pain, a sense of loss, or a desire to complete their unfinished business, still roam the darkened halls of aging mansions, hotels, theatres, cemeteries, modern buildings, and many other places throughout the region that are accessible to the public.

On April 1, 1912, Alfred Hatt, Jr. committed suicide in his Napa warehouse. His ghost has been spotted in Sweetie Pies Bakery and the

Napa River Inn, which now occupy the site. The last public hanging in California took place on January 15, 1897, on the steps of the Napa County Courthouse. Some sensitives believe they can detect environmental remnants of this event. At the entrance to Napa County Airport, the Greenwood mansion was the scene of the gruesome murder of Lucinda Greenwood on February 9, 1891. Her husband, John Quentin Greenwood, also died in the house after four years of suffering physical and emotional wounds.

Sensitives and psychics who visit the site at which the body of kidnap victim Polly Klaas was discovered report environmental remnants that are sad and depressing. Her body was recovered on December 4, 1994, from a thicket of woods south of Cloverdale on the west side of Highway 101. The spot has become a shrine and stands as a memorial to all missing children. On March 28, 1995, a gunfight filled Sonoma's Plaza with bullets and left an armored car guard and would-be robber dead on the sidewalk. On November 1, 2004, the townspeople of Napa were shocked to learn that a double murder had occurred in a quiet neighborhood at 2631 Dorset Street. The tragedy cast a veil of sadness and fear over the entire town.

WHAT IS A GHOST?

A ghost is some aspect of the personality, spirit, consciousness, energy, mind, or soul that remains after the body dies. When any of these are detected by the living—through sight, sound, odor, or movement—the manifestation is called an apparition by parapsychologists. The rest of us call it a ghost. How the ghost manifests itself is unknown. There seems to be a close association, however, between aspects of the entity's life and its manifestation as a ghost. These include a sudden, traumatic death, strong ties either to loved ones who survived the entity or to a particular place, unfinished business, strong emotions such as hatred and anger, or a desire for revenge.

Ghosts differ from other paranormal phenomena by their display of intelligent action. This includes interaction with the living, performance of a purposeful activity, or a response to ongoing changes in the environment. Ghosts may speak to the living, warning of a foreseen accident or disaster, giving advice, or expressing their love,

anger, remorse, or disappointment. They may try to complete some project or duty they failed to finish before death. Some ghosts try to move furniture, room decorations, and the like to suit their preferences.

Some ghosts appear solid and function as living beings because they are unaware they are dead. Others appear as partial apparitions because they are confused about the transition from life to death. Occasionally, paranormal activity is bizarre, frightening, or dangerous to witnesses. Objects may fly about, strange sounds may be heard, or accidents may happen. This kind of activity is attributed to a poltergeist or noisy ghost. Most authorities believe that a living person, not the dead, causes these manifestations. Generally, someone under great emotional stress releases psychic energy that creates subtle or spectacular changes in the environment.

Noises commonly associated with a poltergeist include tapping on walls or ceilings, heavy footsteps, shattered glass, the ringing of telephones, and running water. Objects may move about on tables or floors or fly across a room. Furniture may spin or tip over. Dangerous objects such as knives, hammers, or pens may hit people. These poltergeist events can last from a few days to a year or more. Discovery and removal of the emotionally unstable, living agent often terminates them.

HAUNTINGS

Hauntings and apparitions may not be the same thing. In fact, some professional ghost hunters and parapsychologists make a clear distinction between these two kinds of paranormal phenomena. They share many of the same features in terms of what witnesses see, feel, or smell, but a haunting may occur without the presence of a spiritual entity or consciousness of a dead person. People have reported seeing the pale, transparent images of the deceased walking in hallways, climbing stairs, or sitting in rocking chairs or seats in airplanes, trains, buses, and restaurants. Some have been seen sleeping in beds, hanging by a rope from a tree, or walking through walls. Most commonly, a partial apparition is seen, but witnesses have reported seeing entire armies engaged in battle. Unlike ghosts, hauntings do not display intelligent action with respect to the location. They do not manipulate your new computer and they do not interact with the living.

Hauntings may be environmental imprints or recordings of something that happened at a location as a result of the repetition of intense emotion. As such, they tend to be associated with a specific place or object, not a particular person. The ghostly figures tend to perform some kind of task or activity that is repetitive. Sometimes the haunting is so repetitive that witnesses feel as though they are watching a video loop that plays the same brief scene over and over. A good example is the image of a deceased grandmother who makes appearances seated in her favorite rocking chair. Another example is the Wagoner's Lad, who is often seen on First Street West in Sonoma. The apparition, riding an empty wagon pulled by a weary horse, repeats his return from San Francisco after selling his goods at market.

There is much evidence that people can trigger and experience these environmental recordings by visiting the particular site, touching an object that was a key element of the event, and psychically connecting with the event. Images of hauntings have been picked up on still and video film and digital recordings. The location of strong environmental imprints can also be discovered through devices such as electromagnetic field detectors. Higher magnetic readings have been found at locations where psychics frequently experience hauntings.

HOW DOES A GHOST MANIFEST ITSELF?

Ghosts interact with our environment in a variety of ways that may have something to do with the strength of their personality, level of confusion concerning their transformation by death, talents or skills they possessed in life, personal objectives, or level of frustration in getting our attention. Some ghosts create odors or sounds, particularly those associated with their habits, such as cigar smoke or whistling. The odors of tobacco, oranges, and hemp are most commonly reported. Sounds, including voice messages, may be detected with an audio recorder (see Electronic Voice Phenomenon). Ghost hunters have recorded greetings, warnings, screams, sobs, and expressions of love.

One of the most common ghostly activities is moving objects. Ghosts like to knock over stacks of cards or coins, turn doorknobs, scatter matchsticks, and move your keys. For many, it appears easy to manipulate light switches and TV remotes, move windows or doors,

or push chairs around. Some ghosts have the power to throw objects, pull pictures from a wall, or move heavy items. As a rule, ghosts cannot tolerate disturbances within the place they haunt. If you tilt a wall-mounted picture, the ghost will set it straight. Obstacles placed in the ghost's path may be pushed aside.

These seemingly minor indications of ghostly activity should be recorded for future reference on the Sighting Report Form in Appendix A.

Ghosts can also create changes in the physical qualities of an environment. Ice-cold breezes and unexplained gusts of wind are often the first signs that a ghost is present. Moving or stationary cold spots, with temperatures several degrees below surrounding areas, have been detected with reliable instruments. Temperature changes sometimes occur along with a feeling sensed by witnesses that the atmosphere has thickened as if the room were suddenly filled with unseen people.

Devices that detect changes in magnetic, electrical, or radio fields have been used in the search for ghosts. However, detected changes may be subject to error, interference by other electrical devices, or misinterpretation. Measurements indicating the presence of a ghost may be difficult to capture on a permanent record.

Ghosts may create images on still cameras (film or digital) and video recorders, such as luminous fogs, balls of light called orbs, streaks of light, or the partial outline of body parts. In the 1860s, this was called "spirit photography." Modern digital photographs are easily edited and make it difficult to produce convincing proof of ghostly activity.

Humanoid images are the prized objective of most ghost hunters but they are the least experienced. When such images occur, they are often partial, revealing only a head and torso with an arm or two. The feet are seldom seen and full-body apparitions are extremely rare. The solidity of these images is highly variable. Some ghost hunters have seen ethereal, fully transparent forms that are barely discernible while others report ghosts who appear as solid as a living being.

WHY DO GHOSTS REMAIN IN A PARTICULAR PLACE?

Ghosts remain in a particular place because they are emotionally attached to a room, a building, activities, events, or special surroundings

that profoundly affected them during their lives or played a role in their death. A prime example is the haunted house inhabited by the ghost of a man who hung himself in the master bedroom because his wife left him. It is widely believed that death and sudden transition from the physical world confuse a ghost. He or she remains in familiar or emotionally stabilizing surroundings to ease the strain. A place-bound ghost is most likely to exist when a violent death occurred with great emotional anguish. Ghosts may linger in a house, barn, cemetery, factory, or store waiting for a loved one or anyone familiar that might help them deal with their new level of existence. Some ghosts wander through buildings or forests, on bridges, or alongside particular sections of roads. Some await enemies seeking revenge. Others await a friend and a chance for resolution of their guilt.

UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS IS A SIGHTING MOST LIKELY?

Although ghosts may appear at any time, a sighting may occur on holidays (July 4), anniversaries, birthdays, or during historic periods (December 7, September 11) or calendar periods pertaining to the personal history of the ghost. Halloween is reputed to be a favorite night for many apparitions, while others seem to prefer their own special day, or night, on a weekly or monthly cycle.

Night is a traditional time for ghost activity, yet experienced ghost hunters know that sightings may occur at any time. There seems to be no consistent affinity of ghosts for darkness, but they seldom appear when artificial light is bright. Perhaps this is why ghosts shy away from camera crews and their array of lights. Ghosts seem to prefer peace and quiet, although some of them have been reported to make incessant, loud sounds. Even a small group of ghost hunters may make too much noise to facilitate a sighting. For this reason, it is recommended that you limit your group to four persons and oral communication be kept to a minimum.

IS GHOST HUNTING DANGEROUS?

Ghost hunting is not dangerous if reasonable precautions are taken

to ensure safety. Motion pictures and children's ghost stories have created a widespread notion that ghosts may inflict harm or even cause the death of persons they dislike. There are a few reports of ghosts attacking people, but these are highly suspect. Persons who claim to have been injured by a ghost have, in most cases, precipitated the injury themselves through their own ignorance or fear. The ghost of the Abbot of Trondheim was reputed to have attacked some people decades ago, but circumstances and precipitating events are unclear. Authorities believe that rare attacks by ghosts are a matter of mistaken identity, i.e., the ghost misidentified a living person as a figure known to the ghost during his life.

It is possible that attacks may be nothing more than clumsy efforts by a ghost to achieve recognition. Witnesses of ghost appearances have found themselves in the middle of gunfights, major military battles, and other violent events yet sustained not the slightest injury. If the ghost hunter keeps a wary eye and a calm attitude and sets aside tendencies to fear the ghost or the circumstances of its appearance, he will be safe.

Most authorities agree that ghosts do not travel. Ghosts will not follow you home, take up residence in your car, or attempt to occupy your body. They are held in a time and space by deep emotional ties to an event or place. Ghosts have been observed on airplanes, trains, buses, and ships; however, it is unlikely that the destination interests them. Something about the journey, some event such as a plane crash or train wreck, accounts for their appearance as travelers.

HOT SPOTS FOR GHOSTLY ACTIVITY

Numerous sites of disasters, criminal activity, suicides, huge fires, and other tragic events abound in California's Wine Country, providing hundreds of opportunities for ghost hunting. You may visit the locations described in Chapters 2 through 6 to experience ghostly activity discovered by others or discover a hot spot to research and initiate your own ghost hunt.

Astute ghost hunters often search historical maps, drawings, and other documents to find the sites of military conflicts, buildings that no longer exist, or locations of tragic events now occupied by modern structures. For example, maps and drawings on display in museums,

old restaurants and bars, and historic locations may point to the former location of houses, churches, schools, or graves that may lie under parking lots, streets, or other structures. At places such as Railroad Square in Santa Rosa, old wineries in the Napa Valley and the Sonoma's Valley of the Moon, and the Petaluma Adobe near the historic town of Petaluma, old photographs can help you locate former sites of canals, wells, pioneer cabins, mills, barns, bunkhouses, and barracks for soldiers, and other places to stage a ghost hunt.

Fires and floods have resulted in a large number of sudden and tragic deaths in the Wine Country. Since the days of the region's first settlers, both the Napa and Russian Rivers flooded with heavy rains, destroying roads, bridges, and crops, and taking lives. Even with modern flood-control measures, these rivers cause extensive damage to property and threaten the lives of those who live at the water's edge. In 1987, the Napa River overflowed its banks, killed three people, and caused \$100 million damage. Another disastrous flood occurred in 1997. On New Year's Eve 2005, the river flooded lands from Calistoga to the city of Napa. Roads were blocked, neighborhoods evacuated, and thousands of lives disrupted.

The Russian River has had twenty major floods in the past 140 years. From the late 1940s to mid-1960s, even minor flooding was disastrous as people built residences, businesses, and vacation cabins close to the river's edge. Even with the construction of flood devices and installation of warning systems, flooding is an annual concern along the Russian River. The flood of February 18, 1986, was one of the worst on record, resulting in loss of property and lives.

Many churches exist throughout the Wine Country and nearby coast with structures dating from the mid-1800s. Most of them, such as the Mendocino Presbyterian Church, built in 1867; the Kenwood Community Church, established in the Valley of the Moon in 1887; and St. Paul's Church in Healdsburg, are beautifully restored and open to the public when services are not scheduled. The grounds of many of these old places of worship include the graveyards of well-known explorers and pioneers. Mass graves of those Native Americans who died in the epidemics of the 19th century surround Mission Solano in Sonoma.

In the Napa Valley, ghost hunters may be interested in the First

Presbyterian Church (1333 Third Street, Napa), established in 1857 and rebuilt in 1874. Its stained-glass windows and other architectural features seem to retain a 19th-century atmosphere. In Sonoma, the First Baptist Church (5423 First Street East) may have had a graveyard that is now covered by adjacent buildings.

The homes of many well-known residents, such as General Vallejo's house in Sonoma, Jack London's cottage and famous Wolf House in Glen Ellen, the Cavanagh House in Petaluma, and George Yount's house in Yountville, are reputed to harbor ghosts. At the northern reaches of the Wine Country, the MacCallum House and Kelley House in Mendocino, the Madrona Manor in Healdsburg, and the Vintage Towers in Cloverdale have fascinating histories and ghostly atmospheres. Some of these charming old homes have become bed-and-breakfast inns, museums, or restaurants, making them exciting weekend destinations for ghost hunters.

In the upper Napa Valley, popular destinations for ghost hunters include Victorian mansions, such as the Elms in Calistoga, which was once the home of Judge A. C. Palmer, and the Beringer Brothers' famous Rhine House in St. Helena on the valley's main corridor, Highway 29.

Ghost hunters frequent historic Napa wineries, such as Charles Krug (1861), Beringer (1876), Beaulieu Vineyards (1900), Buena Vista (1857), and Sebastiani (1904) in Sonoma, and picturesque Hop Kiln Winery (1905) and Dry Creek Vineyard, both located in Healdsburg.

Historic military sites in the region are believed to harbor ghosts. These include the Presidio on Sonoma's Plaza and Fort Ross on the coast north of Jenner.

Cemeteries dating from the mid-19th century are scattered about the Wine Country, many of them with fascinating lists of occupants, epitaphs, and architecture. These villages of the dead are composed mostly of small tombs, in-ground crypts, and low monuments, some with elaborate cast-iron fences.

Established in 1885 on a steep hillside, the Old Pioneer Cemetery in Calistoga is the final resting spot for many upper Napa Valley pioneers. Dense shade trees and other foliage give the place a creepy atmosphere even in midday. The Yountville Cemetery covers flat

ground with less foliage, but it also has an atmosphere that triggers the imagination of ghost hunters. A huge monument that marks the grave of George C. Yount is a central feature, but there are unmarked graves of thousands of Indians, too.

In the city of Napa, Tulocay Cemetery has received the remains of the dearly departed since 1859. This cemetery was named for Don Cayetano Juarez's sprawling Rancho Tulocay after he deeded 50 acres for use as a community cemetery. When Juarez died in 1883, he was buried in the Catholic portion of the cemetery. Grass fires in the 1890s and early 20th century destroyed many wooden markers, leaving many graves unmarked.

In Santa Rosa, the Rural Cemetery stands out as one of the spookiest places in the Wine Country. Nearby, the recently rediscovered Chanate Cemetery has become a hot spot for local ghost hunters.

Hillcrest Cemetery, in picturesque Mendocino, occupies land that rises above the quaint Victorian village. Surrounded by trees and shrubs, it can be found at the intersection of Lansing Street and Little Lake Road. This is a spooky place at any time. It is best to visit this place in daylight to get oriented to the grounds and locate one or two graves of special interest.

In Sonoma, the St. Francis Solano Cemetery of East Spain Street and Sonoma Mountain Cemetery on First Street West are hot spots for local ghost hunters. The Mountain Cemetery contains the remains of General Vallejo and other notables in California history. With hundreds of above-ground crypts, some with glass doors or windows, this cemetery resembles the famous cities of the dead found in New Orleans. Other Wine Country cemeteries worth visiting include the Calvary Catholic Cemeteries in Santa Rosa and in Petaluma, and Olive Hill Cemetery in Geyserville. In Santa Rosa, ghost hunters should visit the Rural Cemetery. One Web writer said, "I have never been in a creepier graveyard than this one."

The best way to see the historic cemeteries of the Wine Country and learn fascinating histories of those entombed is to tour them with a knowledgeable guide. (See Appendix D: Tours and Events.) Some of these places are too spooky and unsafe after dark unless you are with people who can ensure a pleasant visit.

TWO SIMPLE RULES

Two simple rules apply for successful ghost hunting. The first is to be patient. Ghosts are everywhere, but contact may require a considerable investment of time. The second rule is to have fun.

You may report your ghost hunting experiences or suggest hot spots for ghost hunting to the author via e-mail at Ghosthunter@Jeffdwyer.com. Also, visit the author's Web site at www.jeffdwyer.com.

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