



Flagstaff's Haunted Places

Self-Guided Historic Walking Tour

Compiled and Written by James Hardy



1 1926 Railroad Station 1 E Route 66

The Brakeman

Visitor Center workers have reported feeling as if they were being watched as they climbed the stairs to the upper floor of the station.

Others have described the stairs as having an eerie or cold feeling to them. Strange things often happen here but are normally glossed over by the staff, such as locked doors that have often been found unlocked when the janitorial staff comes in the night. A member of the staff here after hours reported seeing and hearing people in the locked and secure building, only to find no one was around when he went to check.

Prior to 1926, when the station was built, the railroad tracks would have run right through the middle of the building. On these original tracks, in an unfortunate but very common accident, a brakeman was killed—crushed between the couplings of two boxcars. Is it possible that this brakeman is still here at the spot where his life was cut short?



2 Flagstaff Public Library 300 W Aspen Avenue

Emerson the Ghost

Built in 1982, the Flagstaff Public Library is a new building in the downtown area.

The library, however, is built on the site of the old Emerson School, a formidably built 2-story building with a deep cellar beneath. The school stood in Flagstaff from 1896 until it was condemned in 1980, and was torn down to make way for the library building.

The story goes that a custodian at the school killed his family, then went to the school and committed suicide there. Many have claimed to see his shadowy figure climbing a long-lost stairway to the upper floor of a building that is no longer there, only to disappear when he reaches the top. Doors open and close on their own, and strange noises are often reported throughout the building. Librarians have often accused night janitors of moving books, papers, and other supplies during the night—charges the janitors vehemently deny.



3 Milligan House—Flagstaff CVB 323 W Aspen Avenue

Noises and Feelings

This building was the home of JC Milligan, former Flagstaff Justice of the Peace and owner

of a local brickyard. Later the house served as apartments, and now serves as the office of the Flagstaff Convention and Visitors Bureau. Past employees and tenants of the house report they often felt an “presence” late at night. The presence seemed to originate in an upstairs office. One former CVB employee speculates that this was the bedroom of Mabel Milligan, who died unexpectedly in 1923 and may continue to habituate her home. Footsteps are heard at night on the stairs and across the wooden floors, although the doors are locked and no one could be in the building. The spirit does not seem to be hostile or angry, but is just there. A ghostly mural of Mabel ascending the staircase was added to the house in 2016, later joined by a Victorian-themed mural at the top of the stairs. The murals and display of period clothing are a must-see for visitors to the Milligan House.

Coffee Maker Pranks

The spirit apparently is particular about the kitchen. One previous employee reports that no fewer than three separate coffee makers in the kitchen area refused to work properly, boiling over and spilling coffee grounds all over. Thinking that maybe the cause was faulty equipment, staff replaced the coffee makers with more expensive brands, only to have the same problems. Finally the coffee maker was placed in a different spot and the problem stopped.

A Helpful Spirit

Not only is the ghost of Milligan House benign, she can often be helpful. An employee tells of a time that she was to be at the Visitor Center for an evening event. She was in the back office doing some last minute work on the computer, and lost track of the time. She began to feel the cold feeling, and to hear movement in the hallway. She went to investigate, and found no one there. Upon returning to her office, found a picture of the Visitor Center on her keyboard—a reminder that she had an appointment, and needed to get moving.



4 Doris Harper-White Playhouse 11 W Cherry Avenue

Three Old Ghosts

This site, once a private home, a boarding house, then the site of the Flagstaff Public Library, became the home of the Flagstaff

Theatrikos Theatre Company in the early 1990s. Reports of strange happenings began shortly after the public library moved into the building. Librarians refused to go into certain areas of the basement after dark, reporting that there was a very malevolent feeling there. The library would often have cold areas, and many times odd things would happen with the lights and with the thermostat.

Theatrikos staff and performers have reported seeing three separate entities in the building. Two have come to be not only accepted, but revered by the staff, but the third they would just as soon be rid of.

The Kindly Looking Old Lady

This apparition has often been seen in the auditorium during rehearsals, only to vanish upon second glance. She never says or does anything; she just sits and enjoys the show.



The Old Man in the Basement

The second reported apparition is an older man who simply stays in the basement area, minding his own business. He wanders about, oblivious to all around him, until he disappears as quietly as he appeared.

The Angry Young Man

While the other spirits are quiet and benign, the last of the apparitions most definitely is not. The ghost of a very angry young man stays near the north stairway to the basement. He has a history of violent behavior, and has scared the wits out of many of the staff. It is very possible this is the spirit of a man who, in the late 1970s, hung himself from the loading dock at the top of the stairway—this apparition was never reported until after this event took place.



Weatherford Hotel, circa 1890 *Courtesy NAU Cline Library Archives*



5 Orpheum Theater 15 W Aspen Avenue

The Balcony Specter

The Balcony Specter is a shadowy figure that stays on the old balcony. A janitor who was cleaning late at night when the theater was closed reported that he watched as a dark figure moved back and forth through

the aisles of the balcony. Knowing that no one else should be in the building he went to investigate, only to find that he truly was alone in the building—there was no one there that he could find.

Downstairs Phenomena

Employees tell of a time at the concession stand, while the last show was playing for the evening, they watched in amazement as a roll of paper towels hanging on the wall started to unravel onto the floor. One of them stopped it, but when he let go it began to unroll of its own volition. The men's room has had phenomena reported as well. Employees and patrons alike have said that as they would walk into the room they could sense that something was there. Others would report feeling strange, electric vibrations in the room. One evening after closing, several employees reported that suddenly the toilets began flushing and the sinks started running full blast.

While nobody is sure who or what might be causing the disturbances here, there are rumors. Near the projection room at the very top of the balcony, there is a crawlspace with a ladder that leads to the roof near the marquee. The story is that a man committed suicide there, but there is absolutely no evidence to support this.



6 Weatherford Hotel 23 N Leroux Street

The Zane Grey Ballroom

Complete with its stained glass windows and antique Brunswick bar from Tombstone, The Zane Grey Ballroom is said to be the site where at least one of the Weatherford's ghosts appears most often. In this beautiful

ballroom, the ghostly woman has often been spied floating across the room. On other occasions, she is said to dart from one side of the room to the other.



The Newlyweds

A bride and groom reportedly haunt Room 54. According to the legend, the honeymooning couple was murdered in this room in the 1930s. Most people report eerie feelings or glances of figures. On one occasion an employee staying in the hotel awoke in the middle of the night to find the bride and

groom sitting on the foot of the bed. Today the room has been turned into a storage closet, but that hasn't stopped the ghostly pair, as guests have often reported seeing the couple entering and leaving the room.

From Top to Bottom

Staff often report hearing their names being called out by an unseen spirit while on the fourth floor as well as feeling a presence standing behind them. On the ground floor, the light over the pool table seemingly sways of its own accord, and the sounds of whispers and voices come from the empty bar. Employees also have been reported to refuse to step on a spot of bare earth in the basement, and say that they get cold eerie feelings from that spot.



7 Monte Vista Hotel
100 N San Francisco Street

Strange Happenings

To this day any spirits you may encounter here seem to be more playful than otherwise, causing all sorts of strange happenings. Spirits will make noises, move furniture around, make sudden appearances, ring the

lobby telephone, and knock things over. An entire hallway has its lights unscrewed and/or completely removed on a regular basis. In the cocktail lounge a phantom couple in formal dress is often witnessed dancing and laughing. There is often the very disturbing sound of a baby crying in the basement—this occurrence has spooked many of the staff to the point that they refuse to go there. Often visitors and staff have seen the ghost of a small boy wandering the halls, looking as if he is speaking to his mother—some people say they have actually had physical contact with this apparition!



The Phantom Bellboy

In Room 210 guests will report hearing a knock on their door and a voice calling that room service has arrived. When the guests open the door, they find nobody is there, and nobody is in sight. This ghost was first reported by John Wayne. Others have reported seeing the wispy apparition

of a young woman wandering through the halls near this room. The hotel avoids putting guests with pets in this room because dogs tend to go crazy and tear up the room.

The Ladies of the Night

Reportedly there were two prostitutes from Flagstaff's old red light district who were murdered in room 306 in the 1940s. For some reason the men who had hired the ladies grew angry with the women, and threw them out of the window to their abrupt and violent deaths. Now many guests report a disturbing feeling that they are being watched while in that room. They will wake up in the night, and that feeling will be so strong that they cannot get back to sleep. Male guests have reported feeling like they are being smothered—as if someone has put a hand over their mouth and throat. These two ladies have also been seen in the pool hall and in the lounge.



The Old Woman

In room 305 is the ghost of an old woman who used to sit in a rocking chair by the window for hours, just watching the town below. This is reportedly the most active room in the hotel. People have reported seeing the old woman sitting in the chair, but many also have reported seeing the chair rock by

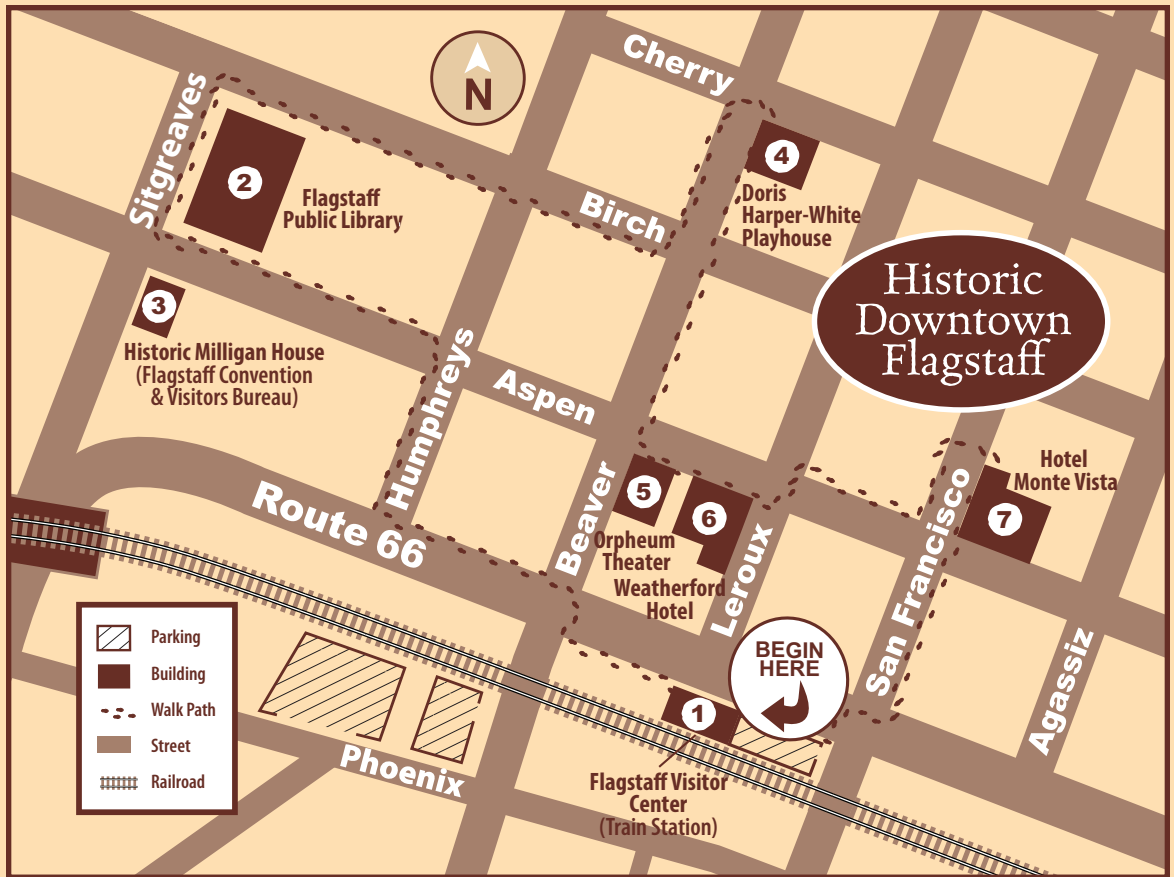
itself. Cleaning staff report that if they move the chair to another spot, it always manages to move itself back to the window.

The Bank Robbers

The cocktail lounge is also the site of eerie phenomena. Members of the staff report that they are often greeted by a voice that says "hello" or "good morning" when they open the bar each day. Bar stools and drinks will sometimes move by themselves, and some guests have said they feel an unsettling presence while having a drink in the lounge. Many staff members think they know who is responsible. In the 1970s three men robbed a bank near the hotel. The men laid low in the Monte Vista Lounge, casually drinking and hoping to be left unnoticed. One of the robbers was shot during their getaway, and his injury was apparently more serious than they thought. The man died in the lounge before he could finish his first drink. Today, many staff and guests feel his spirit still haunting this historic old building.



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