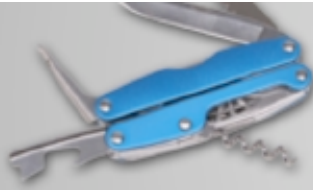


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Portland Haunted Tour

On this tour, history can be a little scary

The Portland Tribune, Oct 27, 2006

When asked if anyone resides in many of the homes on the Portland Haunted Tour, Eric Holmes likes to say, "No one with a heartbeat or a pulse."

Portland Haunted Tour, operated by husband-and-wife team Eric and Haley Holmes, started in August. Eric claims that every other major city has a haunted tour and, since Portland didn't have one like it, he and Haley felt it was their civic duty to start one.

Depending on the size of the night's crowd, the year-round, two-and-a-half-hour tour takes visitors in a black air-conditioned bus or a comfortable five-passenger van from the South Park Blocks to (or past) more than a dozen houses, hotels, parks and restaurants around town.

Stops include Pittock Mansion, Wilcox Mansion



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION ©2006 HALEY HOLMES
Pittock Mansion's a highlight on many sightseeing tours, and now it's a stop for those interested in learning about Portland's haunted spots.

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and Cathedral Park, all of which are alleged to be haunted.

The Holmeses are talented storytellers and share a staggering amount of Portland history, in addition to harrowing tales of the paranormal.

The tour takes visitors to the spooky sites and allows them to peer into the shadowy buildings or walk the grounds where apparitions are said to have appeared.

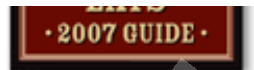
Music streaming from the shuttle's speakers (familiar tunes from "The Exorcist," "Friday the 13th," "The Twilight Zone" and "The X-Files") provides a creepy ambience for the stories.

When asked about his knowledge, Holmes says that months ago, he began to dive into all of the references he could get his hands on about hauntings in the Portland metro area from newspapers and books: "There are a ton of books out there, like 'The Encyclopedia of Haunted Places,' and they all tend to be by state, by city. From there, I began to acquire all the information.

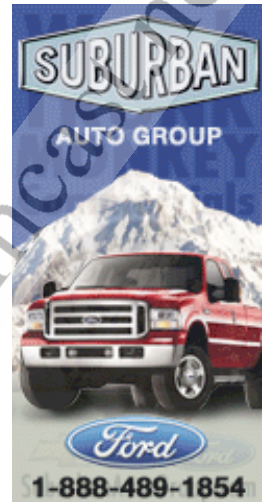
"Ghost stories are not fact; they're lore, they're myth, they're the figments of our collective imaginations or based upon people's interpretations of things they've experienced," Holmes says. "I make no claims that the things that we talk about have actually happened. They are alleged to have happened. There is no way to disprove them. And the people that go on a ghost tour want to believe, and so we try to accommodate them."

- Suzie Ridgway

7:30 p.m. check-in, 8 p.m. departure FRIDAY and SATURDAY, year-round, tour begins and ends at the South Park Blocks, between Southwest Salmon and Main streets, 503-545-6090, www.portlandhauntedtour.com, \$30, recommended for ages 13 years and older, advance tickets required (starting Nov. 1, tours have a 7 p.m. check-in and 7:30 p.m. departure)



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