

Aol Travel.

Raleigh Mythbusters

by Kala Ambrose, an AOL Travel Contributor
Posted Sep 23rd 2010 04:08 PM



Aol. | MAIL | You might also like Gadling, Mapquest and More

Aol Travel.

What can we help you find?

SEARCH >

Main Book Travel Deals Ideas & Interests Travel Guides

Send us feedback

You are here: Main » Travel Ideas and Interests » Raleigh Mythbusters - AOL Travel News

Raleigh Mythbusters

by Kala Ambrose, an AOL Travel Contributor
Posted Sep 23rd 2010 04:08 PM

0 Comments

Email Facebook Twitter Print More



Raleigh, the capital city of North Carolina, once held a reputation as a sleepy southern town, but what's the city really like? Test your knowledge on how well you know Raleigh urban myths, ghost stories and haunted history. Here is a list of the top Raleigh mythbusters – you'll be surprised at the truth!

1. Raleigh has the most haunted state capitol in the U.S.

Getty Images
The legend: Paranormal activity in the capitol has been reported since the late 1800s and the city boasts that it has the most haunted capitol in the country. There are numerous reports by security officers investigating strange sounds of glass breaking and people walking and talking in the building after hours, only to find the rooms empty. The experiences don't stop with security – several former governors and their staff members have reported encounters with spirits while working late nights in the building.

This story is true.

The facts: In 2003, I spent the night in the capitol with a few other paranormal researchers and ghost hunters. Is the capitol haunted? I can answer with a resounding "yes!" After receiving special permission for this one evening, all the alarms in the building were disconnected due to the large number of people involved in the hunt. As we entered the library, I noticed the ghostly form of a man in the corner. As he moved closer, the security alarms went off, although this was deemed impossible since they were disconnected. During the debriefing afterwards with security and other investigative team members, it was determined that we had seen the ghost of Zebulon Vance, a former Governor of North Carolina who is reputed to still haunt the building. Employees and visitors to the capitol continue to report new and recurring incidences with ghosts to this day, adding to this Raleigh mythbuster's validity.

2. Does an acorn dropping in the woods signify a new year?

The legend: Raleigh has so many oak trees that its nickname is the "City of Oaks." Residents love the name so much that they celebrate New Year's Eve every year by standing in the park and watching a giant acorn lowered at midnight.

It's true!

The facts: Since 1991, city residents celebrate New Year's Eve by using a giant crane to lower an enormous 1,250-pound steel and copper acorn at midnight to ring in the New Year. Enjoy watching Dick Clark from home on New Year's Eve? It's not an urban myth that Raleigh residents can view a split screen option on their television, which simultaneously shows the crystal ball dropping in Times Square in New York, in tandem with the giant acorn dropping in the City Plaza.

3. Alcohol and legislation made the city what it is today.

The legend: In the late 1700s, legislators from North Carolina traveled between several cities to conduct state business and look for a place to designate as the capital city. Legend has it that one of their favorite stops along the way was Isaac Hunter's tavern in Wake County, and rumor has it that one of the main considerations in choosing a site for the capital was to have it located no more than ten miles from Isaac's tavern so they would have a local spot in which to drink. Upon hearing this news, competing local tavern owner, Joel Lane, set out to convince the legislators to buy property near his inn instead. He accomplished this by using a special alcoholic

ADVERTISEMENT

Follow Us

Newsletter Facebook Twitter RSS

Categories

Air Travel	News
Beach	Outdoor
Best Of	Real Life Stories
Budget	Romantic
Cruise	Tips & Tricks
Family	Video
Hotel	Weird

Most Recent Most Popular Most Commented

[Southwest Boots Thin Flier for Overweight Teen](#)
Fran Golden

[10 Destinations NOT to Visit](#)
Terry Ward

[Flight Attendant Blows His Top, Yells at Passengers and Bolts Down Emergency Slide](#)
Fran Golden

drink he created to sway them in his favor.

The lore and legends all point to this being true.

The scoop: According to local lore, Lane created a potent libation that he named [Cherry Bounce](#), made from mashed cherries, sugar, whiskey and brandy, which he aged for several weeks. Cherry Bounce became such a popular drink with the visiting legislators that they decided to purchase one thousand acres from Lane in order to create the capital city. Those forefathers must have loved nature as much as they loved their drink, as they hired designers to plan the city out in advance, making sure to preserve as many parks and trees as possible throughout the city. The rest, as they say, is history.

4. Are you part of the "in crowd"?

The legend: In Raleigh, you're either in or you're out and therefore classified as ITB or OTB. Preservationists are in, McMansions are out and the boundaries between old money and new money are best reflected in the area zip codes.

It's partially true.

The history: ITB translates to "inside the Beltline" and OTB to "outside the Beltline." I-440 circles the city and connects back to I-40 as travelers move outside the city. Almost every resident has a story of being lost on the beltline and circling around the city more times than they had planned. Inside the Beltline lie the historic neighborhoods and homes of Raleigh, including Hayes-Barton, Five Points and Oakwood.

Outside the Beltline, especially in what is now described as "North Raleigh," are the expensive new construction homes.

ITB residents prefer their stately historic and more size-appropriate and proportional craftsman-style homes, designed to fit into the neighborhoods and communities with trees and within walking distance of shops and restaurants.

OTB/North Raleigh residents live in upscale suburban style communities with larger homes placed on smaller lots featuring less architectural character and diversity. Recently, though, new money is moving into the ITB, attempting to tear down old houses and replacing them with modern homes, which may change the historic look and feel of the old neighborhoods over time.

5. The city's namesake is Sir Walter Raleigh, a gallant and chivalrous explorer who introduced potatoes and tobacco to England.

The Legend: Sir Walter Raleigh was a handsome ladies man, who was so gallant and charming that he laid his cloak across a mud puddle so that Queen Elizabeth would not get her feet wet. After spending time in the colonies of the New World, he returned to England to introduce the country to potatoes and tobacco, to the delight of the Queen.

This story is false.

The facts: There is no confirmed complete biography of Raleigh that experts can agree upon. Many reports state that he was considered to be homely looking at best. As a ladies man, he charmed Queen Elizabeth when he fought for England against Ireland. She knighted him for his efforts, only to have him imprisoned later after he was caught having a relationship with one of her maids of honor. The reports of him introducing potatoes and tobacco to England are also disputed. Raleigh never laid his cloak on a mud puddle for the Queen either. This was a romanticized myth popularized in 1821 when it was mentioned in the novel Kenilworth, and today is one of the top Raleigh urban legends.

If you are interested in contributing to AOL Travel, join our network of writers and check out travel assignments on [Seed.com](#).



ADD YOUR COMMENTS

First time? A confirmation email will be sent to you after submitting. Name:

E-mail:

Comments:

Five Things Airlines Don't Want You to Know

Tery Ward

Cruise Passenger Dies in Gangway Collapse

Fran Golden

Link Love



Crazy Footage of Cruise Ship Hitting Rough Seas (Video)
Real video shows passengers, tables getting thrown about.
[Watch: Cruise Ship Footage](#)

Editorial Team



Fran Golden
News Editor



Liz Behler
Editor



Beth Caulfield
Editorial Director

[Meet the full team](#)

Editor Picks



It's not Times Square or the Sunset Strip, but Disney World that has a surprising number of thrills after the park goes dark.
[Walt Disney After Dark](#)



Discover terrific new spots and explore popular trips. Make vacation planning easy with these great family getaways.
[Family Travel Trip Planner](#)



AOL Travel's editors have picked the hottest travel deals. Don't miss out on the latest savings!
[Today's Top 5 Travel Deals](#)



Remember me

E-Mail me when someone replies to this comment

[Add Comment](#)

Please keep your comments relevant to this blog entry. **Email addresses are never displayed, but they are required to confirm your comments.**

When you enter your name and email address, you'll be sent a link to confirm your comment, and a password. To leave another comment, just use that password.

To create a live link, simply type the URL (including http://) or email address and we will make it a live link for you. You can put up to 3 URLs in your comments. Line breaks and paragraphs are automatically converted — no need to use <p> or
 tags.

Sponsored Links

Travel Expense Management

Save time with our travel expense management software. No setup fees.
www.Certify.com

American Express Business

Learn how to get your staff to help reduce business travel expenses.
corp.americanexpress.com/midsized

Raleigh Nc Builders

Building New Homes in Cary Interactive Floorplans & more!
www.khov.com

Around the web



Budget Tips

[Air Travel with Kids](#)
[Traveling with Pets](#)
[Travel & the Economic Crisis](#)
More Travel from [Walletpop](#)

HOTSEARCHES

Top Searched Cruises

1. [Celebrity Cruises](#)
 2. [Disney Cruises](#)
 3. [Carnival Cruises](#)
 4. [Royal Caribbean Cruises](#)
 5. [Cheap Cruises](#)
- More from [Hot Searches](#)

mapquest m²



Get **Free Voice Navigation** on your **iPhone!**

GADLING

"Extreme Exposure" photographic exhibit to open in Los Angeles
Photo of the Day (9.25.2010)
Fall escapes to the North Carolina Mountains

ShermansTravel

\$220+: Maldives Resort w/Villa & Breakfast; Save up to 50%
Save 30% on Last-Minute Antarctica Cruise

See more [Travel Deals](#)



Airplane Food So Good it Belongs in a Cookbook



What can we help you find?

[SEARCH >](#)

[Send us feedback](#)

Quick Links

- [Travel](#)
- [Airline Tickets](#)
- [Hotels](#)
- [Car Rentals](#)

US Destinations

- [Las Vegas](#)
- [New York](#)
- [Chicago](#)
- [San Francisco](#)

World Destinations

- [London](#)
- [Nassau](#)
- [Punta Cana](#)
- [Niagara Falls](#)

Hotels

- [Las Vegas Hotels](#)
- [Virginia Beach Hotels](#)
- [New York Hotels](#)
- [Chicago Hotels](#)

More on Travel

- [Discount Travel](#)
- [Travel Deals](#)
- [Cruise Deals](#)
- [Disney Travel](#)

More on AOL

- [Personal Finance](#)
- [Shopping](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [Rentals](#)

Cruises	Boston	Sydney	San Francisco Hotels	Honeymoon Travel	Fit Travel
Vacation Packages	Orlando	San Jose	Los Angeles Hotels	International Travel	Black Travel
Travel Guides	Hilton Head SC	Dubai	Boston Hotels	Long Weekend Getaways	Yellow Pages
Travel News	Nags Head	Hong Kong	Orlando Hotels	Advertising Opportunity	Autos
Vacation Rentals		Cabo San Lucas	London Hotels		
Site Map		Paris	Paris Hotels		
		Cancun			

[AOL Downloads](#) | [Download AOL Toolbar](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Trademarks](#) | [Help](#) | [AOL A-Z](#) |
[+ Taxes & Fees Additional](#) | [* Taxes & Fees Additional](#) |

© 2010 AOL Inc. All Rights Reserved.