

Author finds hunting the haunted is good in N.C.

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In Kala Ambrose's world, Halloween is like Christmas - a high holiday.

A specialist in paranormal matters, Ambrose has been studying, seeking and writing about ghostly matters for most of her life. Her latest book is "Ghosthunting North Carolina" (Clerisy Press), a guide to finding spirits throughout the state. Ambrose spoke in advance of a series of readings across the Triangle next week.

Q: Where does North Carolina rank among states in terms of haunting?

Probably in the top 10. First of all, you have Blackbeard, who is just legendary - everybody wants to know about him. North Carolina is also the haunted graveyard of the Atlantic. There have been more shipwrecks off the coast here than any other state, just hundreds. So there are a lot of ghosts and hauntings along the coast. On the other side of the state, you have the mountains. There's also the Trail of Tears, Brown Mountain Lights, Devil's Tramping Ground. Couple that with the Civil War and plantations, and North Carolina's a very haunted state.

Q: What are some haunted areas around the Triangle?

Well, there's the state Capitol. Many people say it's the most haunted in the country, and some legislators have stories about that. Also the Horace Williams House in Chapel Hill; Mordecai Plantation with Mary Turk; the Carolina Inn in Chapel Hill; and Bentonville Battlefield - a lot went on there. But the scariest of all is Stagville

Triangle readings

Kala Ambrose will read from "Ghosthunting North Carolina" at 7 p.m. Thursday at the Regulator Bookshop in Durham; at 7 p.m. Friday at Flyleaf Books in Chapel Hill; and at 4 p.m. Oct. 30 at the Triangle Town Center Barnes & Noble in Raleigh. The readings are all free.

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Plantation in Durham. Over the years, there have been so many reports where people called to say there was a fire there, but the fire department shows up and there's nothing.

Ambrose

Q: How did you get started looking for ghosts?

I've lived in North Carolina for 15 years, but I'm from Louisiana and I took after my great-grandma and my grandfather. They both had intuitive abilities, and my great-grandmother made a living reading tea leaves. So I had a supportive family and I was raised Catholic, with the idea of guardian angels. I would see spirits as a kid; it became very common to me.

Q: How did you come to write this book?

This book is like a trifecta of my three favorite things: history and traveling and the supernatural. ... I see ghosts everywhere - homes I live in, places I go. Most of my work is writing other books, but I feel there is duality between the everyday and paranormal worlds. Spirit is spirit, and the destination is the ability to know yourself and understand the divine.

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