

If you can answer yes to that question, then this might not be the blog to read. In honor of Halloween next week, I decided to tackle some of the haunted places, according to legend & folklore, here in North Carolina. These range from the Biltmore in Asheville to Wilmington's bobbing lights.

Let's go from west to east. Asheville's Biltmore Estate has been empty for quite some time and several witnesses have seen or heard some uncommon occurrences. When George Vanderbilt passed away from complications of an appendectomy, his wife would sit in the library and talk to him as if he were still there and some say those conversations can be heard today. There are also reports of sounds of laughing and screaming throughout the house. Some have also seen a headless orange cat roaming the gardens and bass pond.

While travelling through the Blue Ridge Parkway, you may witness the Brown Mountain Lights which were first reported by Native Americans. These lights appear after sunset and rise up off the mountain. One legend has it the lights come from the maidens looking for their lost warriors after a battle between the Cherokee & Catawba had taken place here.

Jamestown brings us a story of a vanishing hitchhiker. Allegedly on a dark rainy night in 1923, a young woman by the name of Lydia was killed while coming home from a dance. Many years later the story happens that a young man driving down US70A is flagged down by a young lady in a white dress who asks for a ride. Once he delivers her home, he opens the door only to find she is not in the back. He approaches the home and is told by an elderly lady that "Lydia" was her daughter and she was killed on that bridge. Evidently Lydia is still trying to get home.

On the South side of Siler City in Southern Chatham County lies what many consider one of North Carolina's most haunted places. What do you call a perfectly round and absolutely barren circle about 40 feet in diameter? The locals call it the Devil's Tramping Ground. Absolutely nothing will grow within the limits of the circle. As the story was told by generation to generation, this area was where the Devil himself spends night after night pacing in a circle coming up with nefarious ways to torment human souls.

On the North Carolina coast, in Wilmington there is a story about a ghost that has become one of the state's greatest stories. It is about the Maco light, a mysterious light that has been seen and photographed bobbing up and down along railroad tracks near Maco station. The Legend of

Maco light goes back to a sad night in 1867 when a signalman named Joe Baldwin was asleep in a caboose. Joe was awoken by a violent jerk that was the caboose becoming detached from his train. While standing on a platform, swinging his light to and fro to warn an oncoming passenger train, young Joe was decapitated. His head fell in the swamp never to be found while his headless body was later buried. The legend of the light says that it is young Joe himself walking along trying to locate his missing head.

There are many more fascinating tales of ghosts and odd occurrences to be found in North Carolina and I hope you have enjoyed the few here.

Happy Halloween.