

Haunted Hawai'i

all year long...



JO2 Jim Williams
Staff Writer

Halloween may be over, but that doesn't mean all the ghosts, ghouls and goblins have necessarily left the island. In fact, you can catch them anytime of year if you know just where to look... Glen Grant does.

Grant, a professor at Hawai'i Tokai International College in Honolulu and author of several books like "Obake (ghost) Files: Ghostly Encounters in Supernatural Hawai'i" and the Chicken Skin series, has gained the reputation as being one of the top experts in Hawai'i's supernatural side.

Now after spending the last 30 years collecting and telling ghost stories, he offers a few suggestions on how to keep the spirit of Halloween alive year round. "There's a little history, a little mystery and a little folklore," describes Grant about Hawai'i's "Chicken Skin Tours", his first suggestion for discovering the darker side of the island. And for those who don't know - "chicken skin" is just another name for goose bumps, a regular occurrence during these sometimes frightening trips into the supernatural side of Oahu.

But besides being sometimes scary, the tours are full of interesting historical information.

"Ghosts and ghost stories touch Hawaii in many ways," said Grant. "They're stories of history and of our community. You don't have to believe in ghosts to find them intriguing."

The first tour is the "Ghost Walk through Old Honolulu" every Wednesday night from 7-9 p.m. It offers a chilling introduction to the supernatural spirits and stories of Hawaii by taking you into several haunted sites in Honolulu's capitol district. Your host guides you through haunted buildings, lonely graveyards and the occasional eerie supernatural occurrence. Learn all about footless spirits and faceless

women, fireballs and translucent apparitions, in the fascinating blend of stories from several cultures.

"One interesting thing about Hawai'i is we have so many different cultures mixed together here," explained Grant. "So you end up having Hawaiian spirits mixed with Asian, European and American ghosts."

There's also the "Mysteries of Moiliili" tour from 7-9:30 p.m. Fridays. Discover firsthand the supernatural lore of the historical neighborhood of Moiliili as Glen personally guides you through ancient legends, faceless obake, fireballs, choking ghosts and graveyard hauntings in this fascinating neighborhood where lore and history meet.

"Sometimes to explain the supernatural, you also have to explain the history," Grant said. "What we do with the tour is try to connect the person and the tour with the different places they visit."

But, if you feel extremely brave and fear nothing, the "Ghosthunters Bus Tour" may be just for you. Based on Glen's stories in his Obake Files, this tour has become a popular excursion on Friday and Saturday evenings for only the bravest of heart.

Investigate several haunted sites around O'ahu while listening to tales of the supernatural shared by your fearless host. Join in as a small group of daring souls journey into the night, seeking those who have returned from the other side. The Ghosthunter's Bus Tour occurs every Friday and Saturday evening from 7:15 p.m. to the witching hour of midnight. Again, remember this tour can be very intense and is not for the easily scared or faint-hearted.

All of the Chicken Skin Tours are sponsored by Honolulu TimeWalks, the cultural tourism program that



JO2 Jim Williams Photo

The Haunt is a a supernatural and mystery emporium located at 2634 S. King Street in downtown Mo'ili'i. They offer a variety of rare classic horror film posters, hard-boiled mystery, Hawaiian history and supernatural books as well as regular activities and special events.



Photo courtesy of Glen Grant

Glen Grant is a professor at Hawai'i Tokai International College in Honolulu and the author of several books on the supernatural in Hawai'i. He has been collecting and telling ghost stories here since 1971.

launched thematic tours of our town in 1992. For those who would like to learn more about historic Hawaii without the ghost and spirits, TimeWalks has teamed with the Sheraton Waikiki to provide visitors "A Journey to Old Waikiki." Also designed by TimeWalks, this tour offers a historical introduction of the area beginning at 9 a.m. every Wednesday, starting at the lobby of the hotel.

Now, if you still want to dive into the supernatural side of Hawaii, but don't feel a guided tour is what you're looking for, you might want to make your way to 2634 S. King St. Suite 3, downtown Moiliili, near Honolulu. Here lies the Haunt. The Haunt is a bookshop/coffee bar showcasing one of Hawai'i's largest collection of books on the supernatural. You can also find a number of books on Hawaiian history, detective novels and many other unusual subjects.

"There are so many mysteries in life," said Jill Staas, the Haunt's manager. "So we have hardly any boundaries." They even have educational books and activities for children. "The store is not some gothic dungeon. We have a more positive attitude about everything here. Plus a lot of us work in education or with education programs so we offer a lot of educational type programs," said Staas.

But they do offer more than their share of ghost and ghost stories - all of which you can enjoy over a cup of their special Chicken Skin coffee in a friendly and fun-filled atmosphere. "We like to build bridges between people," described Grant about the Haunt. Our stories are universal. They come from all different cultures and that's where people here find their connection with each other. We just like to help people make those connections."

Don't feel like reading? You can also browse through their wide collection of mystery games, voodoo dolls, unique stationary, offbeat gift items, customized mystery boxes, vintage tin robots including Robby the Robot and toys for kids who yearn to be spies and mad scientists.

"We're a bit eclectic," Staas said. "But we have a positive attitude about everything whether it's ghosts, mysteries or just fun activities."

The Haunt also offers one of these activities as something different to do on a Saturday night. Join them for "dinner and a movie" from 6-9 p.m. when they cook up an old-fashioned homestyle dinner and watch a free classic horror or science fiction film from their extensive collection of "chicken skin" cinema b-movies.

They also offer several activities for those not feeling quite so ghoulish like

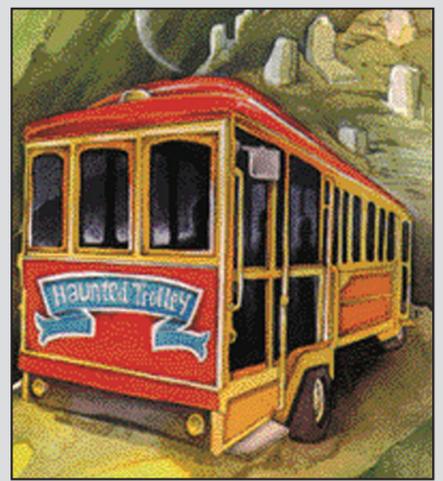
regular poetry readings, cultural events and lots and lots of live music.

So you don't feel like going on a tour? And maybe hanging out at the Haunt doesn't seem inviting to you. Well, there's one last thing that you can do without even leaving your house.

Sunday night, instead of automatically turning on the television, try turning on your radio and tuning into KCCN 1420 AM from 8-10 p.m. for Glen's live broadcast of "Chicken Skin: The Radio Show." It regularly features special guests like storyteller James McCarthy, journalist Burl Burlingame or writer Lee Tonouchi - all talking about Hawaii's supernatural side. If you enjoy it, or if you've ever wanted to be a radio star yourself, drop by the Haunt on the last Sunday of the month for a live remote from the store of the radio show. It involves an evening of live music, audience participation and lots of fun.

So whether you are fascinated by the supernatural, or if you are just looking for something different to do some weekend, the Chicken Skin Tours and the Haunt both offer a chance to learn a little about the supernatural while having fun, not to mention the opportunity to learn a little more about this place where you live. "I think some of the most enthusiastic people we've had on our tours, visit our store, or become part of our ghost-loving family are people who have been connected with the military here," concluded Grant.

"I find that they usually are the ones who are really looking for ways to get involved in the community. And I think this is a perfect way to learn a little more about the place you live, because the local stories are windows to the people here," he said.



For more information on the Chicken Skin Tours, the Haunt or anything else supernatural, visit their website www.chicken-skin.com or call the Haunt at (808) 943-0371.