

**LOCK HAVEN HAUNTED TOUR**  
**By Lou Bernard**  
**Sponsored by Downtown Lock Haven**

Lock Haven, Pennsylvania was founded on November 4, 1833 by Jeremiah Church. It grew up around the canals and the lumber industry, and has become a community that is rich in legends and haunted places. The county seat of Clinton County, Lock Haven is noted for its local legends throughout central Pennsylvania.

It is recommended that you exercise caution in all hazardous areas, such as streets or railroad tracks. Please respect the people who live and work in these buildings, and do not trespass on any private property.

Begin your tour at the offices of Downtown Lock Haven, 205 East Main Street.

Walk west along Main Street until you reach the post office, at 19 West Main Street. This will be the first stop on your tour.

**#1: Lock Haven Post Office**  
**19 West Main Street**

The Lock Haven Post Office was built in 1919 by an architect from Washington, DC. Several homes stood on this property before the post office was built here. One of these homes belonged to the Satterlee family.

William Satterlee and his wife Mary lived and died on this property. In the early 1900s, both of them passed away from Bright's Disease, a common kidney problem in those days. William allowed local undertaker John Brunner to perform the first autopsy in Lock Haven on him. Local people working in the neighborhood have claimed to see ghosts in old-style clothing walking in and out of the building. If you're lucky, you might see them, too.

Continue walking west on Main Street. Across the street in just over two blocks, you will see the local public library, which is the next stop on the tour.

**#2: Annie Halenbake Ross Library**  
**232 West Main Street**

A part of this building, now Lock Haven's public library, was built by Mayor Robert Bridgens in 1887. It was later owned by Annie Halenbake Ross, a local widow and a very popular member of the community. In September of 1907, Annie died of a misdiagnosed appendicitis while on vacation, and left her home to the city of Lock Haven on the condition it be made into a library. It opened for business on Thanksgiving Day on 1910.

One of the best-known head librarians was Mary Elizabeth Crocker, who lived in the building from 1924 to 1942. During the 1936 flood, she rescued thousands of books, carrying armloads of them to the attic.

It is believed that both Annie and Mary are still haunting the building. Staff and patrons have reported hearing unexplained footsteps. An elevator has been known to move by itself, and mysterious sounds have been heard by staff working alone in the building at night.

Historian and paranormal investigator Lou Bernard works in the library. Feel free to stop in during open hours for some historic or ghostly information.

Pass the Ross Library, and turn left, going south on Third Street. Make the first left onto Church Street, heading east. In one block, turn right onto Second Street going south. This will put you in the parking lot of Walker's Hardware, facing the local railroad tracks.

### **#3: The Headless Trackwalker**

#### **Railroad Tracks Crossing Bellefonte Avenue**

This story is taken from the works of Henry Wharton Shoemaker, local writer and folklorist, and has been repeated in local legend since the 1800s. The story begins with a young man on his way home at night. While taking a shortcut along the railroad tracks, the young man saw a headless figure walking along the tracks, carrying a lantern. The headless man beckoned him to follow.

The headless trackwalker led him to a large pile of metal railroad spikes that had been dumped on the track. It was enough to derail a train---And the train was coming, and could be heard in the distance, less than a mile away.

The young man grabbed the lantern from the dead man's hand and ran up the track, signaling the train to stop. The conductor saw the boy as he leaped from the track, and applied the brakes, coming to a stop just in time to avoid derailing.

The boy was called a hero. Later, as they pulled the spikes off the track, some older railroad employees told him about the first trackwalker to stroll along these tracks---A man who had been struck by the train and beheaded.

Legend has it that he still walks these tracks at night, attempting to prevent another death---A headless guardian angel.

Cross the parking lot and reach Bellefonte Avenue.

### **#4: Great Island Cemetery**

#### **Upper portion of Bellefonte Avenue**

If you look to the southwest up Bellefonte Avenue, you will get a view of Lock Haven's Haunted Hill Section. In the 1700s, Great Island Cemetery was placed on the uphill area of this street. Owned by the city, the cemetery was the resting place of many local citizens. One of the bodies buried there was John Michael Conley, partner to the infamous outlaw David "The Robber" Lewis. The two of them spent years shooting and stealing until the law finally gunned them down in 1820.

Conley was buried in Great Island Cemetery. Some time later, his body was dug up, and his skull was used as an example in a classroom. The rest of him was reburied.

In 1918, the decision was made to close the cemetery and move the bodies to other locations. The bodies were dug up and moved to other local cemeteries, but some weren't dug up at all, and listed as "unfound." Homes were built on the land, and the people who live there have reported experiences with the paranormal in those homes.

Some of these experiences may be caused by John Michael Conley, whose body was one of the unfound ones. Many of the people who have lived in the neighborhood over the years probably don't know that they are being haunted by the ghost of a headless outlaw.

Follow Bellefonte Avenue northeast, until you reach the Civil War Monument. The next stop on your tour is in this neighborhood somewhere, though the exact location is unsure.

#### **#5: The Bones of Little John Bricker**

##### **Corner of Bellefonte Avenue and Church Street**

This area is thought to be haunted by the ghost of ten-year-old John Bricker.

In 1898 in this neighborhood, a man was digging a basement on this property. While working, he found a skeleton that the county coroner identified as a small child. This began a mystery that wouldn't be solved for over a century.

Property records show that a home in this neighborhood was the house of Jerome Bricker, local undertaker. Bricker lost his young son, John, at age ten to disease in 1889.

John has a gravestone at a local cemetery, but it is believed that his grave is empty. Some people believe that Jerome Bricker, acting in grief, chose to keep his son close to home instead of the cold, lonely ground of a cemetery. It is thought that Bricker buried his young son underneath the house, unwilling to let go.

Jerome Bricker himself died five years later, taking his secret with him.

Continue northeast one block until you reach Main Street again. Stop in Triangle Park and look south, away from the post office.

#### **#6: Eric Carlson and the Titanic**

##### **Corner of Bellefonte Avenue and Main Street**

Eric Carlson owned the building across from Triangle Park on Bellefonte Avenue---These days, a loan office. People who work there claim they hear unexplained noises, and drawers are found hanging open when they were left closed. Perhaps this is the restless ghost of Carlson, a florist who came from Sweden as a child. And perhaps they're caused by his regret over the Titanic sinking with someone he knew on it.

You see, Carlson knew Captain E.J. Smith. In 1912, when the Titanic went down, Carlson walked across the street to the newspapers, and explained to them that Smith had been the captain of the ship that had brought him from Sweden. They'd known one another, and Smith had been very capable and reliable. There had been some storms on that voyage, but Smith had handled it well, keeping everyone calm.

Cross the street to Mill Street, heading one block north. This will bring you to Water Street, the next stop on the tour.

#### **#7: Mad Anthony Wayne**

##### **Water Street**

Chances are, you've heard the name of Mad Anthony Wayne. Most of the time when a county, a town, a school, or a street has the name "Wayne," it's from Mad Anthony. The character of Batman, Bruce Wayne, was named after him in the early comic books. Mad Anthony Wayne was born on January 1, 1745 in Chester County. He served in the Revolutionary War under George Washington, and had a reputation for being both brave and insane. He once told Washington that he'd storm Hell if given the order. Another time, he got drunk and rode his horse through the lobby of a luxury hotel.

In spite of all these antics, Anthony Wayne is known for being in two graves.

Wayne died on Presque Isle, on the opposite end of the state from his family. It had always been his wish, however, to be buried with them. So thirteen years after his death, his son Isaac was sent north to bring his father's body back home.

Isaac found that his father's body had not decomposed at all. Having only small saddlebags to bring bones back, he was in a bind. Isaac bribed a local doctor to boil the body of his father, and put the flesh back into the first grave.

Then Isaac rode home to Radnor, Chester County, with his father's bones in the saddlebags, which spilled several times on the way. Though the large bones were gathered up, some of the smaller ones were not found.

The route Isaac took home has never been proven. Some say it was along Route 322 through Centre County, but looking at it on the old maps, that would have taken him far out of his way. Another theory makes more sense: Isaac used the trails that followed the Susquehanna River, which would have taken him along this very street.

It's said that on his birthday every year, Mad Anthony Wayne walks the route between the two graves. So you may be standing where a ghost walks, bits of his bones right beneath your feet.

Turn right, and walk one block east to Vesper Street. Then turn left and walk to the end of the sidewalk. Feel free to walk up the stairs to the top of the levee, where there stands a pavilion. It's here that you will look for the Susquehanna Monster.

## **#8: The Susquehanna Seal**

### **Overlooking the Susquehanna River**

The story broke in the Daily Democrat on February 27, 1897: They announced that an unknown creature had been seen in the Susquehanna River. Like Loch Ness or Lake Champlain, Clinton County had become home to some sort of water creature.

The articles ran for several days. A creature in the river was tipping over lumber rafts, splashing in the river, and making loud noises, especially at night. These were described as "Strange sounds that emanate from the deep, dark water like the groaning of some expiring giant."

Nobody had any idea what this monster could have been. People speculated that it was some ocean creature that swam upstream during a heavy flood, and then was trapped when the water went back down. The creature became known as the "Susquehanna Seal."

The Susquehanna Seal was never captured, and no photographs of it were ever publicized.

Does it still roam the river? Nobody knows for sure. So take a moment and look for it....Because you never know.

Walk back down to Water Street and go east. Turn right onto Grove Street, and go one block south. That will put you back on Main Street, where you began your tour.

We hope you've enjoyed your haunted walking tour through Lock Haven. You are in a magical place, full of history and adventure. Thank you for joining us on this walk through the past.