

# **Today is National Paranormal Day, which should be a big deal for a town like Alton**

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
May 3 2018 2:34 PM



ALTON – Today (May 3) is National Paranormal Day, which should be a big deal to a town such as Alton.

Dave Nunnally, who is co-owner of It's Raining Zen, has built part of his livelihood on Alton's paranormal reputation – a reputation driving the local economy a lot as summer

dwindles into fall with countless ghost tours. He also operates his shops, It's Raining Zen, Indigo Moon and the soon-to-open Mississippi Hippie, with his wife, Donna, inside what is claimed to be one of the most haunted buildings in town, the historic Mineral Springs Hotel.

Being in one of the most notable haunted buildings in a town thought by some to be the most haunted town in the nation is nearly a full-time job in itself.

“There's always activity at Mineral Springs,” Nunnally said. “Things not being left where you put them to laughter, giggling and footsteps and even more personal things like touching go on around the clock here. There are at least a dozen spirits known by name here, like Pearl and the Jasmine Lady, but there are many dozens more not known by name roaming the halls.”

When asked why Alton is such a hub for this activity, Nunnally said the river town has the “perfect trifecta” for a good haunting: it's got a tragic history, lots of limestone and a large source of flowing water.

“The city has seen its fair share of tragedy over the years; tragedy from natural things like flooding to the martyrdom of Lovejoy,” he said. “There's also limestone quarries and the big river. Limestone and water both act as vectors for spiritual energy.

“People here are also comfortable with their history, and because we're comfortable with our history, the spirits are comfortable with us.”

Outside of Mineral Springs, Nunnally said he and Donna have visited the historic and notoriously-haunted McPike Mansion as well as the Unitarian Church downtown and the remains of the former Confederate Prison. He said they have had some experiences there as well as within people's homes.

“We have had a number of folks coming in to do investigations in their homes,” he said. “There are some very haunted residences in this town. Over time, people have come into the Zen shop and asked if we could help them out. A lot of those hauntings have to do with who owns the building. Most of those spirits are either the spirit of the builder or a former resident. They either have attachments to the place they loved or an attachment to people.”

Those hauntings are much different than that experienced within the halls of Mineral Springs. The ghosts haunting those walls most often met their end under that roof.

“At its height as a hotel, this place had over 100 rooms, and thousands of people came through and stay here,” Nunnally said. “Some were on vacation, and some may have

wanted some privacy with someone who wasn't their spouse. This place has been the scene of a lot of questionable energy over the years.”

Adding to the spirits of the deceased, Nunnally said many of the dozens of phantoms reported at Mineral Springs have come from people inviting them with seances and other supernatural rituals and not sending them back from whence they came.

Overall, however, Nunnally believes Alton to be a hub of the supernatural simply because that is the way it is supposed to be and has always been.

“I don't really know how to explain it to people besides inviting them out to spend some time in our town, then they experience it and get it,” he said. “There is an interesting vibration running through this town, and we're glad it's here and are very proud of it.”