



# Ghost Adventures begin 17th season of show with visit to haunted Alton

by Leanne Guthrie, Reporter  
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ALTON - January 5th marks the mid-season return of Travel Channel's most watched show Ghost Adventures. To kick off the New Year they are debuting a two-part special filmed in Alton, Illinois, titled "Curse of the Riverbend".

Ghost Adventures are currently in their 17th season of the show, where Zak Bagans, Aaron Goodwin, Jay Wasley, Billy Tolley, and their crew visit haunted locations. In each episode, they explore the history and interact with locals about their own paranormal experiences. Then upon nightfall, the crew conduct an investigation and communicate with the restless spirits with the help of high-tech equipment.

Everyone who has visited Alton, Illinois, has their own opinion on what makes the town unique. Rather it be its stunning placement along the Mississippi River, the limestone bluffs, its charming downtown, or its distinctive music and art scene, there truly is something in Alton for everyone to enjoy. For many, it may be its deep-rooted American history, from Native American land to a fast-growing river town that first began development in 1818. But often with history comes hauntings.

Alton is widely considered one of the most haunted small towns in America. It was only a matter of time before the Ghost Adventures gang finally stopped by to investigate the

town for themselves. During their time filming in Alton, they conducted investigations in two of Alton's most well-known haunted locations the McPike Mansion, and Mineral Springs Hotel.

“Alton Illinois was the perfect location for our upcoming two-part special “Curse of the Riverbend”. It’s rich history and hauntings are kept alive and embraced by an amazing community there. We could have filmed a whole season in Alton, but we definitely got to investigate two of the most haunted locations. The McPike Mansion was absolutely incredible, the perfect classic haunted mansion, and the Mineral Springs Hotel delivered some terrifying experiences for me that I’ll never forget,” said Jay Wasley.

Construction of McPike Mansion started in 1869. The mansion was one of the most extravagant homes in Alton at the time standing three stories high with 16 rooms and a vaulted wine cellar. Henry McPike and his family moved in upon its completion in 1871 and resided there for many years after. Henry McPike served as Alton Mayor for a few years and was a well-known businessman in real estate, insurance, and box-making. Paul A. Laichinger purchased the home in 1925 and lived in the home until his death in 1945. Today, the McPike Mansion is slowly being renovated and brought back to its former glory. It is said many of its past residents still reside inside the mansion. Those who have visited the house claim to have seen Paul Lainchinger, a maid that worked for the McPikes and other figures of those who most likely lived in the house years ago. Also often reported are sounds of children playing and laughing, footsteps, and strange figures in photographs, along with many other unexplained occurrences.

The Mineral Springs Hotel is the location of Ghost Adventures second episode filmed in Alton. The Mineral Springs Hotel first opened in 1914. Upon opening the hotel heavily advertised their large swimming pool and the healing properties of the mineral waters within it.

The hotel flourished with success for many years until its downfall began in the 50’s. The idea of healing mineral waters began to die down and the hotel closed its doors officially in 1971. Today, the hotel hosts events in their banquet center overlooking for Mississippi River, an antique mall, the popular new age store It’s Raining Zen as well as other businesses.

The owners at the Mineral Springs Hotel welcome the idea of spirits and often host ghost tour events of the building. There are said to be dozens of ghosts still roaming the hotel halls and a countless amount stories of the many encounters people have had at the hotel have been shared and experienced over the years. There are piles of paranormal evidence collected at the hotel, some now displayed in the Mineral Springs lobby.



Some spirits died in tragic accidents at the hotel, while many of their stories are unknown, their presence shows they are still around. One of the more known ghosts is the “Jasmine Lady”. It is said she fell down the stairs and tragically died after a fight with her husband. People often report smelling her jasmine perfume near the staircase. There are also reports of a not-so-nice spirit who hangs around the pool. Loud bangs, moving doors, and uneasy feelings of an unseen presence are just some of the things described by many who visit the pool.

Ghost Adventures are sure to have collected a ton of hard-hitting evidence believed to shock and spook you in their upcoming two-part special. “Curse of the Riverbend” premieres on Travel Channel January 5th at 8 p.m. Central time with the McPike Mansion. The Mineral Springs Hotel episode airs January 12th at 8 p.m. CT.

