

10-25-1984

They believe ... was Mary dorm's late night visitor?

Decatur Herald & Review

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Recommended Citation

Decatur Herald & Review, "They believe ... was Mary dorm's late night visitor?" (1984). *The Pemberton Hall Ghost*. 15.
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/pemberton_hall_ghost/15

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They believe

Does a ghost — or ghosts — roam Pemberton Hall?

Yes, say many of the 225 students who live in the old castle-like building on the Eastern Illinois University campus.

The hall supposedly is haunted by the spirit of a young woman named Mary — described variously as a counselor, student or maid — who, legend says, was attacked by an ax-wielding janitor in the fourth floor music room during spring break in the early 1920s. She died scratching at the locked door of her third floor room. Her terrified roommate, not knowing it was Mary, refused to open the door.

The ghost often is called Mary Hawkins, who was an early Pem Hall residence counselor. However, Mary Hawkins died a natural death in a Charleston hospital, said Doris Enochs, a former Pem Hall residence counselor who has researched the tales of ghostly happenings. Mrs. Enochs now is a guidance counselor at Hillsboro High School.

THREE OTHER GHOSTS are said to haunt Pem Hall. One walks down corridors late at night tapping on doors and asking for pins. The other checks doors to see that they are locked. If not, she locks them. And finally there is the infrequently active Lounge Ghost, who turns lounge furniture upside down in the middle of the night every few years. All "live" on the fourth floor.

Most of the floor is unfinished. "It never was intended for student living quarters," said Lou Hencken, director of housing at EIU.

Mrs. Enochs said she could find no records of any murder in Pem Hall, where she was counselor from 1970 to 1980. Her husband, Richard, died of a heart attack in the building in 1978. He was director of married student housing at EIU.

Mrs. Enochs said she does not believe in the ghosts. "But some weird things happen there."

STUDENTS LIVING there now have experienced some of those hap-

penings:

- Michelle Schwab, 21, of Godfrey emptied a closet looking for a particular blouse, only to find it later in the closet she had thoroughly searched. Nobody had entered the room.

- Kathy Reilly, 21, of Kankakee was standing in the corridor when a shadow moved across her room. The room was empty.

- Lucy O'Brien, 21, of Danville and several other students went to the bathroom and noticed that all the shower stall curtains a few feet away were closed. When they came out, the curtains were open and a heavy chair had been moved. Nobody had heard a sound.

- Becky Johnson, 20, of Glendale knows she left her door unlocked one day. When she returned, it was locked. She had the key. Lisa Blackburn, 20, of Decatur experienced a similar lock-out.

- Pattie Hockspiel, 18, of Crystal Lake and roommate Deanne Radermacher, 18, Bloomington or were awakened by a voice between their beds whispering either "Hi" or "Die."

- Sheila Cowell, 20, of Chester and Julia Cambria, 21, of Peoria were studying when the stereo suddenly came on.

MRS. ENOCHS SAID similar events occurred when she was Pem Hall's counselor. "I always tried to find a logical explanation." She wasn't always successful.

She recalled when five persons followed a mysterious figure to the fourth floor where it vanished without trace. "The door (to the fourth floor area) was padlocked from the outside and there was no other way out," she said.

Despite the tales and happenings, none of young women who described their close encounters of a chilling kind wants to move out.

"It's kind of fun having your own ghost or ghosts," Lucy O'Brien said. "It makes life here more interesting."



Michelle Schwab



Kathy Reilly



Lucy O'Brien



Becky Johnson

Was Mary dorm's late-night visitor?

By **PATTY O'NEILL**
Herald & Review Staff Writer

CHARLESTON — I lived in Pemberton Hall at Eastern Illinois University for three years before I had my first and only encounter with "Mary" — the guardian ghost of Pem.

It was the spring semester of 1981, close to mid-term, when I saw what appeared to be Mary standing by my bed.

My roommate and I lived on the first floor of the 60-year-old "new" section of the dorm, which is the oldest in Illinois.

Pem has a personality that jumps out at you. There are cubbyholes where stairways have been bricked off and tunnels — now closed off — that lead to other buildings on campus.

The night Mary "visited" me, my roommate went to bed early while I stayed up to study to about 1:30 a.m.

Before turning off the lights, I went to the door and turned the lock, but because of damp weather the door would have had to be slammed for the lock to catch.

I THOUGHT ABOUT whether I should try to shut it harder or leave it. Pem is a small all-female dorm where everyone looks out for one another. We rarely locked our door, so I left it the way it was.

I went to sleep facing the wall with my back toward the door. I was in a very light sleep when I got an awful feeling that someone was watching me. As I turned over to look, I glanced at the glow-in-the-dark digital numbers on the clock. It was 2:15 a.m.

When I turned I saw a figure standing by the side of my bed dressed in something like a long nightgown or robe. The figure stood there for several seconds, then turned away and walked toward the door.

She opened the door and started to leave when she turned around with her hand on

the door and looked back at me for several more seconds. She left, closing the door behind her. I went back to sleep.

MY FIRST THOUGHT was that it was my roommate, possibly feeling ill. I remember saying something at that point, but I can't recall what. As the figure left, I recall telling her not to shut the door because she would be locked out.

The following morning I asked my roommate if she had gotten up during the night. She said she hadn't.

I asked other Pem residents if they had seen anyone enter our room to borrow something, but the answer was no.

After I relayed the story, girls in two other rooms both said they experienced something strange the same night.

The girls in the room directly across the hall from mine said they had gotten up three separate times during the night to shut their door,

although it was supposedly locked.

The heavy wooden doors in Pem do not blow open, they blow shut.

Other happenings were reported a few doors down. Another girl said there were a lot of noises out of the ordinary. She didn't think too much of the noises until we started comparing notes and times.

Most girls on the floor didn't believe me. The most common and frustrating response was, "We believe that you believe you saw her." They left the impression that I was under considerable pressure and imagined the entire thing or was just dreaming.

I don't believe it was a dream. In my dreams, although I know where I'm at, everything is different. When I woke up, everything was in its exact place in the room.



Patty O'Neill