



SPRI Files:

Investigation Policy Series:

A Few words about cemeteries and other “seemingly” public areas.

Often I am asked questions about cemeteries and other creepy or reportedly haunted buildings or places. The questions are usually followed by the suggestion, “You should go there.”

Well, just because there may be paranormal activity there, does not necessarily mean that SPRI will show up, cameras at the ready.

That’s not to say that we are not passionate about what we do, we very much are! But, there are other things to consider; local laws, safety and liabilities chief among them.

SPRI is a community organization whose mission is to help educate our community, and thus ease their fears, as we strive to capture proof of the paranormal. We must keep that in mind when we ask ourselves, “Should we go there?”

Below is our policy on investigations of cemeteries and other seemingly public places presented in a Frequently Asked Question format.

Q: I have heard of some very weird things happening in cemeteries. Do you investigate cemeteries and, if so, which ones?

A: SPRI does not generally investigate cemeteries or other “seemingly” public areas or structures. One of the main reasons behind this is that cemeteries are not public, but private land. The care of the grounds usually rests in the hands of a church or civic organization, but the plots themselves are real estate (usually) owned by the inhabitant, future inhabitant or their family. SPRI requires written permission from the owner or its agent before it will begin an onsite investigation. The number of owners in a cemetery makes obtaining that permission daunting.

Q: You said other “seemingly” public areas, what do you mean?

A: Other places that come to mind in this area include; the West Mountain Sanitarium, the old Rocky Glen Park, empty or condemned buildings and the many mines that dot our part of Pennsylvania. These places are not open to the public, even though there may not be any physical barriers or signs to keep the public out of them.

The long and short of it is that SPRI does not investigate areas where they have not been invited. Written permission is that invitation.

Remember that being in one of the places mentioned above (after hours, if it has them) is trespassing and is punishable by law. **SPRI does not condone the breaking of any laws in its quest to prove the paranormal.**

In addition, with out permission the owners/caretakers would not know that SPRI was on the premises. This creates a severe safety issue. If some or all of our investigators were to be injured or incapacitated while in such a place, more serious injury or even death could occur while awaiting discovery.

In the case of a mine, the entire team could be overcome with gas and may not be found for some time.

Q: What if you were invited to investigate?

A: SPRI would consider investigating these types of places, if invited and with proper safety measures in place.

Q: OK, what about visiting these places if they have posted hours of operation?

A: Well, that's a different question. Of course we encourage our members to seek out areas where they have heard of paranormal activity and many of these places have open hours and/or tours (the tours may even include ghost stories).

I (myself, not SPRI) also encourage people to visit our local cemeteries, if they have hours where they are open to the public. Above and beyond the chance meeting with a daytime spirit, cemeteries offer a very interesting look into our area's history. You can learn a lot about a people by the way they treat their dead.

To sum this all up...

SPRI is truly dedicated to recording proof of paranormal activity, but we are also committed to being a organization where the people in our community can come for help, education and understanding in the paranormal field. We feel that we cannot accomplish both goals by breaking laws or putting our investigator's safety at undo risk. Responsibility and credibility go hand in hand.

Respectfully Submitted,



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