

# Visit ghosts of Oklahoma's past

Paranormal group leads visitors on ghostly tour through historic Ft. Reno

By Traci Chapman  
Contributing Writer

Halloween comes early to Fort Reno some summer Saturdays nights, as visitors look to catch a glimpse of some of the fort's ghostly inhabitants.

It's called Ghost Tours and it's one of Historic Fort Reno's most popular events. Members of area paranormal groups lead visitors around the western Canadian County fort's historic buildings, on the lookout for some of the phenomena seen by those researchers in their studies, volunteers said.

Ghost tours have helped spread the word about Fort Reno, bringing in visitors for other events held there, such as the annual Tombstone Tales, which take place every September, and the Candlelight Tours, held in May.

Most of the buildings are not open to the public, because of lead paint, asbestos and other safety issues. Small groups walk around the fort, hearing about the ghostly Paranormal groups have long been drawn to Fort Reno, not just because of its well-known cemetery located on a wind-swept hill, but also because of stories of past inhabitants. Researchers' work at the site has encompassed many of the site's building's built at varying times during the 1800s and into the 1900s, including the fort's chapel, constructed by German and Italian prisoners held at Historic Fort Reno when it was a Prisoner of War camp during World War II.

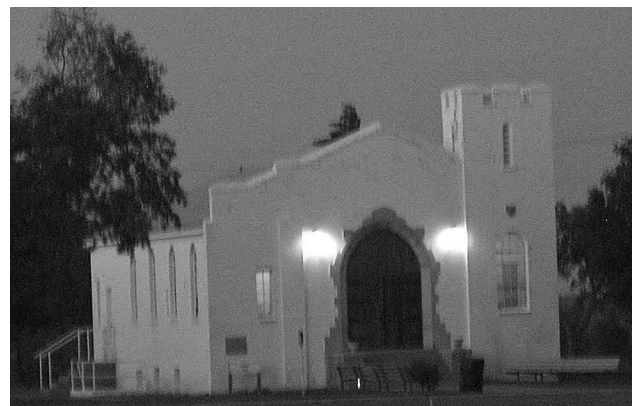


Reported paranormal activity on the fort ranges from "very little" to "serious," among the fort's buildings. Researchers said they have had few ghostly encounters in the chapel, built by German prisoners of war during World War II, but the "old Victorian" is another story.

The Victorian is a large home, built "in the middle of nowhere," which volunteers believe came about when a well-to-do father learned his daughter was living in a tent with her husband, a cavalry officer stationed at the fort.

Of all of the buildings at Fort Reno, the Victorian was where researchers said they felt an ominous presence – like a weight pressed against their chests or that they were being watched.

Another structure that has seen a lot of activity is Fort Reno's visitor's center, which is open to the public. Built in 1936 as officers' quarters,



a Maj. Konat was said to have committed suicide in the building, "and we don't think he's ever left," volunteers said.

Researchers contend two people have seen the major in the years since the 1998 restoration of the building, and there are frequent occurrences of lights going on and off, knocking and footsteps.

Ghost Tours are held the third Saturday of the month, through the

**The Ghost Tour at Ft. Reno take guests on an after dark tour through the historic property. Small groups walk around the fort, hearing about the ghostly Paranormal groups have long been drawn to Fort Reno, not just because of its well-known cemetery located on a wind-swept hill, but also because of stories of past inhabitants.**

*-Photos by Traci Chapman*

Spring and into October – sometimes, depending on visitor response, tours can be extended into November. Extra tours are held in October to celebrate Halloween.

Reservations are required and can be made by calling Historic Fort Reno at 405-262-3987. Tours cost \$10 for adults, \$9 for seniors 55 and over and \$5 for children ages 5 to 12 years of age.