

HAUNTED HISTORY TRAIL *of* New York State

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Wartime Haunts: Spirits Straight from the Battlefield on the Haunted History Trail of New York State

Batavia, N.Y.— Visitors to [Fort Ontario State Historic Site](#) in Oswego, NY, often comment on the people dressed in military uniform wandering about the fortress. Imagine their surprise when they are told by staff that there are “no people dressed up as soldiers” and they are instead seeing the ghostly apparitions of spirits who never made it home from the battlefield. Known as the “Guardian of the Northern Frontier” when it was built in 1755, hundreds of soldiers perished while defending Fort Ontario from attack. Many have since remained at the fort, appearing to guests day and night.

On the [Haunted History Trail of New York State](#), military and wartime history play a large role in the sites we now consider “haunted”. From Niagara Falls to the Hudson Valley, there are attractions that bring you spirits straight from the battlefield – allowing visitors to get a taste of history, with a touch of the strange and unexplained.

In the City of Buffalo, the spirit of soldier Edgar Zernicki haunts the [Iron Island Museum](#) – a former church turned funeral home that was built in 1883. Zernicki was a marine and navy soldier who served between the two world wars, and whose remains were buried – unclaimed and forgotten – in the basement of Iron Island. That is, until a psychic visited the haunted museum and discovered Edgar was the name of the ghost that was stirring up trouble. Funeral records connected the ghost to the military veteran, Edgar Zernicki, and the rest is history.

The [Herkimer Home State Historic Site](#) tells a rather different story, though its connection to the military is no less apparent. The Georgian-style mansion was the home to

Revolutionary War hero, General Nicholas Herkimer, who was on his way to defend Fort Stanwix (located in Rome, NY) when he and his men were ambushed by opposing forces. Herkimer was injured, and later died of infection after having his leg amputated. While his home became a symbol of his heroism, it also became a hotbed of paranormal activity – leaving many to believe that the war hero never left his beautiful mansion home.

[Bannerman Island Castle](#) on the Hudson river tells a less gruesome tale. Frank Bannerman, after whom the island gets its name, built the castle in the early 1900s to house his collection of military artifacts. Bannerman's father was in the business of selling goods at Navy auction, and Frank became such a skilled collector that he soon needed the island to act as a storage site for his collection. A fire brought the property to ruins in 1969, but even before the devastating fire, strange and spooky occurrences were happening across the island. What we now call ghosts were known as the "goblins of the island" by Bannerman and his family.

There is no sugar-coating the stories that invade [Fort William Henry Museum](#) in Lake George. It was once the scene where countless battles took place, and harsh weather and disease swept the land. Now, the fort stands as the scene where spirits roam free – after many failed to make it home.

Visitors can experience these sites in a variety of ways – from candlelight tours at [Fort William Henry Museum](#) to guided daytime tours at the [Fort Ontario State Historic Site](#), [Herkimer Home State Historic Site](#) and [Bannerman Island](#). For the more serious investigators, nocturnal tours are available year-round at [Iron Island Museum](#).

The [Haunted History Trail of New York State](#) celebrates the strange and spooky year-round. The trail welcomes solo travelers, families, couples, or large groups to experience the spookier side of travel. More information about haunted attractions, events, and year-round activities can be found online at www.hauntedhistorytrail.com.

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About the Haunted History Trail of New York State

From the great spirits invoked by early Native American tribes, to the first Dutch settlers who carefully avoided haunted places, New York has harbored centuries of spooky events that simply can't be explained. Interest in the eerie has steadily increased with television and movies exploring the ghosts, UFOs, and things beyond the realm of human understanding. All of this awaits you on the Haunted History Trail of New York State as it takes you to the places where human forms come out of the mist and strange lights wink from the dark.

The Haunted History Trail of New York State features attractions from almost every region of New York State. Haunted dining, tours, and overnights are available on the trail, with many of

the attractions tying back to New York's local history. For more information, visit:
www.hauntedhistorytrail.com