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### Fort Ticonderoga Paranormal Investigation on TV

Speculation has been running high about the results of the week-long investigation at Fort Ticonderoga by T.A.P.S, The Atlantic Paranormal Society. The results of the teams' findings will be the subject of an entire *Ghost Hunters* episode that will air the night of March 10th. Given the site's eventful history there is no lack of 'ghost stories'. Will this investigation finally substantiate the tales of apparitions, objects moving inside cases, and the sounds of horses' hooves, whispering voices and ancient music? The most popular series on the recently renamed Syfy Channel, *Ghost Hunters* has a huge fan base that follows their investigations. Each episode generally features half-hour investigations from a variety of sites that have included private homes, hospitals, prisons and other historic sites. However, the March 10th episode will focus the whole hour on the paranormal activity at Fort Ticonderoga. It will include testimony from several employees; 'eyewitnesses' to all types of sights and sounds that cannot be explained in any logical way.



*The TAPS team joined by Fort staff. From left to right: Steve Gonzales, Dave Tango, Mark Turdo (Fort), Amy Bruni, Kris Williams, Babette Props-Treadway (Fort), Jason Hawes, Chris Fox (Fort), and Britt Griffith*

Well known Ghost Hunters investigators Jason Hawes, Dave Tango, Kris Williams and Amy Bruni, along with Tech Manager, Steve Gonzales, spent nearly a week in November '09 on the Fort grounds. They started late in the afternoons and worked through three nights on the case. Accompanied by Curator of Collections, Christopher Fox, the investigators went to all the places where odd occurrences have been reported over the years. Many of these are in regularly visited parts of the Fort and the surrounding grounds but some of the investigations were in areas that have never been open to the public. Fox described the various reported incidents for each area and the team used a number of highly sensitive instruments designed to record sounds, movements and possible apparitions. Fort staff Babette Props-Treadway and Mark Turdo helped the team during their nighttime work. Featured in the TV show, Ms. Props-Treadway, the Private Functions Director at the Fort says "Fort Ticonderoga is known for its paranormal activity, the history is so rich and ancient. It was such an honor to have TAPS Ghost Hunters come here. They are respectful, discerning and very professional. This is one show that no one wants to miss!"

Occasionally, visitors to the Fort will report encountering an odd site or feeling. People have seen faces in windows, felt an icy breeze on a hot day, heard bag pipes and more. The French Lines, the American Cemetery, and other places out on the grounds have also had their share of encounters. Reenactors at the big encampments have reported ethereal figures late at night in the campsites. Three students from a group of 100 re-enacting the American Revolution reported that a soldier in a white uniform had watched them marching in the evening. When they asked their teacher who it had been it was determined that no one in white had been on the grounds at all. A Ticonderoga police dog being trained quailed and refused to go into the French ovens. More than once a voice has been heard there lamenting over his 'burned bread' – in French.

Fort staff will be featured on the show recounting some of their experiences. Museum docents Eileen Greely and Beverly O'Neil spend their time in the exhibit rooms and have a trove of paranormal stories to report including orbs of light, objects moving in the cases and the sound of footfalls. Mrs. Greely recalls a late afternoon when "an orb came out of the fireplace in the Pell Room, shot right between me and Norma (Dreimiller) and whooshed up the stairs!" Orbs have also been seen near the ceiling in the Black Watch exhibit and often shown up in photos taken at any number of spots on the site. In another instance, while she was cleaning a glass case, a canteen came off the shelf toward her and fell straight down without hitting the glass or any other objects. "Just like someone pushed it from behind" she says. Both women say that nearly all the docents have had at least one or two encounters with what can only be described as ghosts.

Lyle St. Jean, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds and his staff have any number of stories that have happened in areas closed to the public or after the visitors have left for the day. Heavy footfalls have been heard a number of times and he and Steve Teer, Fort Carpenter, experienced an orb. Are the spirits bashful or can we not sense them with lots of people around?

Fort Ticonderoga is a commanding site at any time of the day but when seen in the dark it takes on an 'other-worldly' feeling. Exclusive nighttime tours are being scheduled around the T.A.P.S. findings and the paranormal stories already on the Fort's books. An in-depth 90 minute tour will include the American Cemetery and take the guests to areas never before open to the public. Many of these are small and hard to access and for that reason the tours are limited to 25 guests at a time. The tour is not handicap accessible. Offered only Friday and Saturday nights during the July and August, tours will require reservations and are \$35 per person. Reservations can be made by phone at 518.585.2821. A daily 25 minute tour, accessible to all, will occur daily and is included with regular admission for the entire season. Full information on the tours and other Fort events can be found at [www.FortTiconderoga.org](http://www.FortTiconderoga.org) .

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### **TAPS Investigates Fort Ticonderoga**

Historic Fort Ticonderoga was recently visited by The Atlantic Paranormal Society (TAPS) who investigated the museum's long history of ghost stories for the Syfy channel's top rated series *Ghost Hunters*. In the series the paranormal investigators from TAPS visit sites with stories of paranormal phenomenon to learn about the site's history and investigate the alleged unexplained activity. Their approach is to experience the activity first-hand and whenever possible collect hard evidence related to the claims. After an investigation, personal experiences and data are reviewed with the aim of first seeking natural or logical explanations for alleged phenomena. Only when such an explanation can not be determined are alternate explanations in the paranormal realm suggested. However, according to TAPS founder Jason Hawes, paranormal simply means *above* normal and that it does not necessarily mean that a place is "haunted" if a rational explanation for an unusual occurrence can not be determined.

Fort Ticonderoga's stories of unusual phenomena and unexplained occurrences have been reported for decades, but only in recent years has staff systematically collected and documented these stories.

After more than a week of work the TAPS and production crews finished the investigation and filming of the Fort and grounds on November 17. The TAPS and production crew alike were a great group of people to work with. "We were very pleased to welcome them to Fort Ticonderoga and I was extremely impressed by the professional approach to their work and sensitivity to the site's history, museum and grounds" said Fort Ticonderoga's Curator of Collections Christopher D. Fox. "The work was exhausting for everyone and we can not comment on the results of the investigation prior to the program airing in 2010." According to Jim Dugan, Supervising Producer for *Ghost Hunters*, "Fort Ticonderoga is a stunning location and it is going to be a great show."

The Fort Ticonderoga episode of *Ghost Hunters* will air early in the show's sixth season scheduled to begin next February. The Fort opens for its 2010 season on May 20<sup>th</sup> and the King's Garden will begin its season June 1<sup>st</sup>. For additional information on upcoming programs and events see the website [www.FortTiconderoga.org](http://www.FortTiconderoga.org).