

STRANGE HAPPENINGS AT EDGEFIELD MANOR

BY KAREN FRAZIER

Fifteen minutes east of Portland, Oregon, in the town of Troutdale, sits a destination resort that is one of Citysearch's top 10 haunted hotels in the United States.

Reports of strange happenings pour in from guests and employees, including reports of a woman who wakes people by shaking their feet, a ghostly black dog that sticks its nose in the faces of sleeping guests, an invisible cat meowing to be let out of a bathroom, spirits peeking into or out of windows and wandering the parking lot, and the sound of children crying and playing when no children are present.

But the most reports come in about Althea's Room, a third floor attic room in the main manor.

In this room, guests are awakened by a ghostly young girl who serenades them with nursery rhymes and then asks them to play with her.

Edgefield Began as a Poor Farm

Edgefield Manor's history certainly could be consistent with multiple hauntings. Built in 1911,

Edgefield Manor was originally Multnomah County's poor farm. Occupied by the disabled, mentally challenged, elderly, poor, and infirm, poor farms (or poor houses) were established by Federal mandate and set up by local governments in the days before social assistance.

The Multnomah Poor Farm was self-sustaining, with a farm and orchards on the land. Residents

In 1947, the property was converted to a nursing home, and in the 1960s, part of the site housed troubled children. The nursing home closed in 1982, and the farm was vacant until 1990, when it was purchased by Mike and Brian McMenamins and subsequently converted to a destination resort.

The McMenamins converted the 38-acre property with its multiple outbuildings in phases over the next four years.

McMenamins Transformed Into Resort

Now McMenamins Edgefield is a thriving complex and destination resort that is a wine and diner's adult Disneyland.

The Georgian Revival building that housed poor farm residents is now a National historic landmark and has been dubbed Edgefield Manor.

The main manor has been converted to European-style lodging and a hostel, complete with old-style ambience and funky art on all of the walls and guest doors. It is here that

harvested the produce, farmed hogs, and operated a dairy and cannery.

The poor farm also housed a sanatorium. Residents were often frail and sick, and there was minimal medical care. As a result, deaths at the Poor Farm were common. Those who died were often buried in unmarked plots.



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the ghost of a young girl reportedly serenades guests with nursery rhymes in the third floor Althea's Room.

Across from the manor is Ad House. Formerly the home of the poor farm administrator and his family, the Ad House is now a bed and breakfast with a ghost of its own.

Also on the property is the Power Station, a charming movie theater and pub where moviegoers can sit back in comfy chairs, have a drink and something to eat, and watch a recent-release movie. Formerly the laundry and power facilities for the poor farm, the Power Station may also house a ghost. Employees here feel as if they are watched by an unseen presence.

The wine tasting room is reportedly haunted by the specter of a mysterious black cat, and there are some rumors that seasoned employees stay out of the cellar and send the new employees down in their stead because of spooky occurrences there.

Atmosphere Abounds at the Edgefield Manor

The entire 38 acres of McMenamins Edgefield is filled with atmo-

sphere — from the gently undulating hills that hold vineyards to the gorgeous orchards and gardens. All together, the Edgefield has eight different restaurants/pubs that feature wines, beers, and spirits from the onsite winery, brewery, and distillery.

Vegetables and fruits abound on the restaurant menus, picked fresh from the gardens and orchards on the property.

Just wandering the complex reveals

many surprises — like the old style pool hall in the basement of the manor; the cozy 12 table Little Red Shed bar that features fine scotch and spirits; Jerry's Ice House, which could best be described as a tribute bar to the Grateful Dead; an onsite potter and glass blower; and a funky statue of Jerry Garcia that is on hole 10 of the 18-hole par 3 pitch-and-put golf course.

Guests can also go soak in the

soaking pool, relax with a number of spa services at Ruby's Spa, or enjoy one of the summer concerts on the lawn that feature performers like Sheryl Crowe, Death Cab for Cutie, Lyle Lovett, and Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Edgefield Pricing and Location

Pricing at Edgefield Manor is eminently reasonable. Hostel guests can stay for \$20 a night, and European-style lodging (bathroom down the hall) ranges from \$50 a night to around \$110 a night. Suites with bathrooms are also available for around \$150 a night.

McMenamins Edgefield is sure to offer travelers a unique experience, steeped in history. And while you're exploring all of its fascinating nooks and crannies, who knows — you just might come across a ghost. No extra charge.

Edgefield McMenamins is located at 2126 SW Halsey Street, Troutdale, Oregon 97060, 800-669-8610. You can learn more about Edgefield and McMenamins' other Pacific Northwest destination resorts on their Web site at www.mcmenamins.com. ♦



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