



"THERE'S A GHOST IN MY ROOM"

The ghost of a young boy visits guests of the Hotel Monteleone

Phyllis Paulsen, a successful financial planner from California, has always had an extra sense about ghosts.

"I've had this eerie ability to see ghosts since I was a young child," she explains.

So it wasn't a surprise that when Mrs. Paulsen checked into her suite on the 14th floor of Hotel Monteleone that she had a visitor. The historic hotel, founded in 1886 and owned by the fourth generation of the Monteleone family, has often heard ghost stories from guests, especially on the 14th floor (actually the 13th floor).

"I was just relaxing in bed one morning when I looked up to see a young boy about three years old walk by the foot of my bed," she vividly recalls. "Since he had come from the sitting room, I immediately got up to see if the door was open and to check if a parent may have followed him into the room. My husband had just left for a meeting and I thought he may not have closed the door all the way."

The door was securely closed. "It didn't take me long to realize that I had seen a ghost," she continues. "He was a friendly little fellow wearing a striped shirt. One moment he was there and the next he was gone."

The experience was so real that Mrs. Paulsen always requests the same room when she visits the Monteleone. "I've been back twice since I first saw the child and he hasn't reappeared, but I am always thinking that maybe he will next time."

The story of the young boy has been repeated many times by other guests and legend has it that he was the son of Josephine and Jacques Begere who stayed at the Monteleone when they came to New Orleans to attend an opera in the famous French Opera House on Bourbon Street in the late 19th century.

Maurice, their young son, was left with his nanny while the couple went off to the opera. Unfortunately, an accident occurred as they were returning to the hotel. The horses bolted when they heard a loud noise and Jacques was thrown from the buggy, killing him instantly. They say that Josephine died within a year of a broken heart.

The speculation is that the ghost of young Maurice sometimes roams the halls searching for his parents. His presence is especially felt on the fourteenth floor near the room where his parents were staying.

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