

Local Folklore of Kempsville and Places Nearby

Because this is the time of year for ghost and witches, for some, it may be fun to share stories of local legendary tales with your family, and take them on some field trips in the process. What could be better than the legends of the neighborhoods you live in, and the surrounding areas? Read on:



"TALLWOOD"

Tallwood Elementary, Tallwood Highschool, and the surrounding area neighborhoods (Alexandria, Charlestown, Brigadoon, Brandon, Plantation Lakes) are on land that used to be part of the **Tallwood Plantation**. One person reports encountering a slave girl ghost; when they lived in a house on the former plantation grounds (source: http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/624477/hauntings_in_the_virginia_beachnorfolk.html?cat=16).

If you are into this type of fun, keep imaginations active, and make things fun and not too scary: Go on a stroll in your neighborhood when the moon is full and the air is crisp. Tell the story about the plantation ghost, with your own twists. As you walk by a neighborhood park or a grassy lot say, "Did I just see something standing underneath a tree???"



Elbow Road is also said to be haunted by a woman, Mrs. Woble (sometimes spelled Wobble) and a small child. There are stories of lights turning on and off in houses, no longer there, and small footprints (source: <http://theshadowlands.net/places/virginia.htm>).

If you are ever in the area, it may be interesting to share a variation of these stories with your imaginative travelers, telling them to be on the look out for flicking lights!

Note: Woble is elbow spelled backwards. Sounds like a great imagination came up with this one, but it still makes for a spooky story, particularly this time of the year.

Witch Duck Bay is where the accused, Grace **Sherwood, the Witch of Pungo**, is said to have been ducked on July 10, 1706. She did not drown, but was imprisoned afterwards. The short of the story is Grace was an unusual woman for her time. She was tall, very attractive, smart, outspoken, and wore pants! She was blamed for crop failure, a rash of adulteries, and therefore, and accused of being a witch. One variation



of the story is that just before she was ducked, she warned that all of the spectators, who came from miles around, that they'd be the ones to get the ducking of their lives! When the event was over and the spectators headed back, in their horse drawn wagons, torrential rains came and washed many of them from the dirt roads they traveled. On **July 10, 2006**, 300 years to the anniversary of her conviction, Virginia **Governor Timothy Kaine** **officially pardoned her.**

Here is the scenic route to the Witch Duck Bay:

1. Head north on Kempsville Road, until it turns into Witch Duck Road. Cross Virginia Beach Blvd.
2. At the light, where Witch Duck Road meets Independence, continue straight on Independence, passing Sentara Bayside Hospital on your left.
3. Continue straight, through a neighborhood with very large, mansion-like homes. When the street forks, veer to the left. You should be able to see the water from the street.



To find out more about Grace Sherwood. Click here: <http://www.carolshouse.com/witch/> .

According to an account from the **book “The Ghosts of Tidewater...and nearby environs (L.B. Taylor Jr.)**...there is a house in **Bellamy Manor** that is said to be haunted. As the story goes, there was a couple and the husband killed his wife's lover. Soon after, the couple's young child died. Soon after, the distraught wife died. It was rumored that the faint cries of a baby could be heard in the house. In the 1970's, Tom Gulbranson, an office supply sales person, who also researched extrasensory phenomena, and his friends, decided to record any activity in the now empty house. They recorded nothing. However, the following morning, his mother woke up screaming. Tom told her about the previous night's events. When Tom's mom played the tape recorder, there were the distinct sounds of a baby crying!

Note: The Bellamy Manor stated above may actually have been in Gloucester County instead of Virginia Beach.



The Chesapeake Beach Fire and Rescue Station, located on 2444 Pleasure House Road, Virginia Beach is said to be haunted by the ghost of Ben Bishop. Ben was a dedicated firefighter who died at the age of 24 from a car accident while visiting Pennsylvania. Right after his tragic death, other firefighters witness sirens going off by themselves...with the switches in the off position, and fire truck doors opening and shutting, also by themselves. While firefighters are known for their pranks, these incidences occurred when proof of trickery could not be found.

Source: "The Ghosts of Tidewater...and nearby environs (L.B. Taylor Jr.)

Note: Check out the **Local Events Calendar**, October 25th and 26th, the **Chesapeake Beach Fire and Rescue Station** is having a **haunted house** to raise money. The event is free and open to the public, and donations are welcome.

The Great Dismal Swamp, located at **1200 Dismal Swamp Canal Trail, Chesapeake** has always been shrouded in mystery. Many tales of the unexplainable have emerged throughout history, dating back to the American Indians and run away slaves, who inhabited the land, to other travelers and explorers. Purportedly everything from large fire birds, to ghosts, goblins, spirits, witches, mystery lights, dragons, and even Sasquatch are said to inhabit the swamp, particularly many years ago, and during the dark of night.



Source: "The Ghosts of Tidewater...and nearby environs (L.B. Taylor Jr.)