

The Spirits of Lehmann House

By

Marie Davies

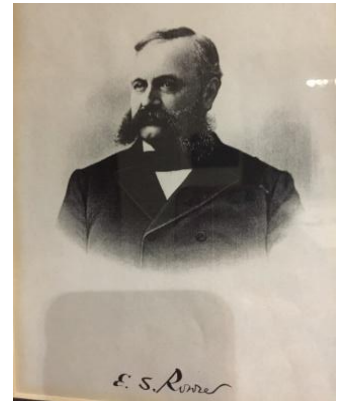


The Spirits of Lehmann House

Hello! I'm Marie Davies and I'm your bed and breakfast specialist at Lehmann House Bed & Breakfast. Together, with my husband, I have owned #10 Benton Place since February 1992.

Over the years there has been much documented (and undocumented) paranormal activity at Lehmann House Bed & Breakfast. *Who is this ghost?* We believe it to be Edward S. Rowse, the original owner of the home.

Edward and his wife Ann Eliza commissioned the 10,000 sq ft mansion to be built by the famous architectural firm of Peabody & Stearns in 1892 for an astonishing sum, then, of \$25,000 equivalent to about \$1,000,000 in today's dollars. But as projects of this nature often do, it went over budget by nearly 100%, costing then, about \$49,000, or about \$2,000,000, by the time the last bit of wallpaper was hung on the walls.



It was to be their dream home, where they lived out their retirement years . . . was. But then Edward died, in the house, in the master bedroom—currently one of the guest rooms, about a year after they moved in. In fact within one year of the house being built, Edward, the head builder and the architect all died. We believe, based on sightings and sounds, that Edward is our ghost. That after waiting 18 months and spending almost "\$2,000,000" building his dream home, we surmise that he's not willing to leave it.

"Aren't you scared to live in a haunted house?" I'm often asked. NO! I really believe that if I continue to faithfully restore this glorious mansion back to what it was when Edward had it built, and with the same integrity with which it was built, he will be satisfied, and we can continue to peacefully co-exist.

And Now for a Little Back Story . . .

I've owned the house twice, buying it for the first time with a college friend who had already been renovating rental property in the city. That experience, plus I couldn't afford to buy the house on my own, lead us to partnering on the purchase of the house. During the two plus years of my first ownership, I experienced many things I could not explain.

Let me give you some examples of the paranormal at Lehmann House . . .



One evening, after the floor refinishers had gone, my friend and neighbor from across the street, Cindy North, wanted to come over and visit. Alone, and with only

network TV to entertain me (think Dynasty, Dukes of Hazzard, CHIPS, Mork & Mindy), I accepted Cindy's impromptu self-invitation. We decided to sit in the dining room and I served us each a glass of my dad's homemade red wine. Just as we began chatting, we both heard the same noise above us, both looking up as we did.

Then Cindy asked, *"What was that?"*

After a moment's thought, I said, *"It sounded like a wagon being rolled across the floor."*

Cindy: *"I thought we were alone, I thought all of the workers went home."*

Me: *"We are. They did. And by the way, the floor above us is carpeted."*

Cindy jumps up, announcing, *"I have to go home!"*

"No you don't! Here grab a poker and let's go investigate."



Reluctantly, she accompanied me up to the room that's now named Nora's Room. We slowly opened the door, flipping on the lights and saw nothing. The three windows were still closed. Nothing in the room was disturbed. No one was there. I reluctantly let her leave and slept with the lights on that night!

Here's another unexplained experience . . .

On another evening, in the house alone, while on the second floor, I heard what I thought was someone in the house. I ran into the turret bedroom, the only room I could lock from the inside. I went to the windows hoping to get someone's attention from the outside. After awhile, a police car came onto the street, but no amount of effort on my part got their attention. After maybe an hour, I was more bored than scared and went to investigate, poker in hand. Again—nothing! All of the exterior doors were locked from the inside, windows all tightly closed, no one there.

This happened with regularity. No sightings yet but a lot of "soundings!"

After about two and a half years, my friend and I decided to sell the house, split our money (which we tripled!) and part ways. But something about this house tugged at me for the next eight years.

By then, I bought a different house in Lafayette Square, had married, had two kids, had opened my first bed and breakfast and by then, with space restrictions from our growing family, and we reached a point of either I close the bed and breakfast or we buy a bigger house. I knew the house was currently being rented, and it worked out that the owner/landlord was very willing to sell.

On Feb. 14, 1992 the house was mine again.

And the fun began again, but in different ways . . .

We owned the house for 14 months before moving into it. Often in the evening, for a few hours, I would come over to work on it. For company and security, I would walk over with my two dogs, Cooper and Sebastian. Cooper, a German Shepherd, was so excited to be in the house, she bopped around exploring here and there. Sebastian, a Chow, was more circumspect. He would nose around, but carefully. I soon noticed there were rooms he would not go into.

In that early time, I was busy refinishing the library cabinets and fireplace. Cooper would come in and sit at my feet. Sebastian would sit at the door but would not come in. After several weeks of this I took him by the lead and brought him onto the room. He dug his heels in, resisting me as best he could, but I managed to drag him into the room. As soon as I let him go, he bolted for the door. I tried this off and on, a few more times, over the next few weeks, with him reacting in the same way each time.



And then a neighbor told me that the 11th owner had died in the library in 1980

.

Though it was daylight when I would come over, I always turned on all of the lights in the front first floor rooms while I was there, as it would be dark by the time I left. It also was less freakish being there alone, after all that I had experienced during my first tenancy.



The only light in the parlor at that time was a wall sconce, all the way in the back, on the left, inside the turret. Straight away I noticed when going into that room a presence in the middle of the room, as if there were people sitting on either side of a coffee table. Only the room was completely empty—we hadn't moved in yet. The presence was so strong, I couldn't bring myself to walk through the room to get to the light switch, but rather walked cat-like around the edges of the room, quickly, batting at the light switch and bolting from the room.

Then one Saturday, I was over at the house to meet the plumber, Bud. He had to make a phone call so I took the moment to pop in the restroom. As I was washing up, I heard the very distinct sound of a man wearing hard soled shoes walking down the 2nd floor hallway. I ran out to alert Bud there was someone in the house but he had heard it too. We raced upstairs to check it out, but there was nothing, no one, no where.

That's when I conceded that we indeed had a ghost and began referring to our ghost as Edward.

These are just some of the many stories we have of unexplainable paranormal activity at Lehmann House. If you love ghosts and ghost stories, I'd be happy to share more of them with you when you visit.

I hope that you've enjoyed reading this, and that I've inspired you to come to St. Louis, to our lovely Lafayette Square, to Lehmann House. So, if you'd like to hear more of our experiences living with Edward—and have some experiences of your own—be sure to [CLICK HERE](#) to choose your room. And in case you're wondering . . . Nora's Room, the Presidents' Room and the Judge Sears Room have had the most activity.

Marie Davies



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