

# The Old Hospital on College Hill

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## **History**

Settled at the highest point and overlooking the town of Williamson, West Virginia sits the very haunted Old Hospital on College Hill – formally known as Williamson Memorial Hospital. The Old Hospital on College Hill was built by Dr. Conley and Dr. Salton, opening its doors on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1928 after a fire engulfed the original hospital, destroying it in 1926. The two doctors met in 1914 and had already built a practice together when they decided the town needed a fully functional hospital that could treat not only the town's residents, but the coal miners and railroad workers that passed through as well. The hospital had about 76 beds and treated all ages for everything from death to birth, as well as trauma. After its 60 years in operation, a new and improved hospital was built down the street, shutting down Williamson Memorial hospital for good in 1988. The building was then used for doctor's offices until 2014 where it now sits vacant as a storage facility.

Being the largest hospital in the area during a railroad and coal mining boom, Old Hospital on College Hill became a major hub for treating injured workers from Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia. Tragedy struck in 1956 when a train derailed right outside of town, leaving the conductor dead at the scene and 29 injured passengers being taken to Williamson Memorial for emergency treatment.

With all the injuries, illnesses, and routine medical treatment the facility saw in its short 60-year life, The Old Hospital on College Hill is a playground for paranormal activity.

## **Hauntings**

Over the years, past employees, patients, and even the present owners have shared their eye-witness accounts of paranormal experiences in the building. Believed by many, it's thought that the spirits are still working their shifts as if the hospital is still up and running and their lives never stopped. Reports of voices, shadow figures, and strange noises are common throughout the hospital and the residents of the town hear noises coming from the property, see lights turning on and off, and catch shadow figures in the windows. Police are often called to the hospital to investigate reports of trespassers, but when they arrive there is never any sign of entry.

A former ambulance worker claimed to constantly hear noises on the nights he was working, but never knew what it was. One night, the noises were so active that he finally asked his coworkers if they ever heard any strange noises coming from the hospital. They all responded "yes" with a sign of relief that they weren't the only ones. The group of men described the noises as sounding like a nurse pushing a cart on the floor above them.

In 2018, a guest on one of the tours captured a photo of what looks like a nurse on the overlook between the hospital and the nurses building – people claim this nurse to be "the nurse that never clocked out."

## **The Basement**

The basement is said to have the darkest feeling in the building, holding a heaviness and sadness that you don't feel anywhere else. It saw the most action over the years - trauma,

surgeries, amputation rooms, x-ray rooms, it housed the hospital's morgue and incinerator for unclaimed bodies, and finally was turned into the pediatrics department in 1988 when the hospital closed.

An unfriendly male entity is commonly seen and heard in the x-ray rooms, with reports of him showing his face on the wall. One October, the two owners, Tonya and Charlie, were setting up a fake corpse on a gurney in the x-ray room for a Halloween event when they heard a noise. They both turned around at the same time to see the door slowly closing. Stunned, Charlie walked over to shine his flashlight behind it to see if he could find anything that could've moved it, but he saw nothing. He re-opened the door to only have it slowly close again right before their eyes. Tonya thinks this was the spirits of the staff telling them to get out while they were trying to perform x-rays on the "patient" that was on the gurney. They left the door closed and came back the next day to see the door had been opened again.

Other paranormal experiences in the basement are a "floating nurse" that is seen going between the two x-ray rooms, a voice caught on audio saying "help me," and many disembodied voices of men and women.

## **The Second Floor**

One morning, Tonya was walking one of the long halls of the second floor after a paranormal group had just left for the night- as she walked past one of the doors, a male's voice yelled out a loud "HEY!" Tonya froze, quickly texting the group asking if they were still in the building. They responded no, but that they had to tell her something: they'd been

hearing a man's voice the entire time they were packing up their gear to leave on the second floor. Tonya said the voice didn't sound mean or evil, but rather like it was trying to get her attention. In her mind, this was possibly a former doctor or nurse calling out to her thinking she was a patient or another staff member.

A former patient claims she interacted with a nurse's spirit during her pregnancy when a nurse came in the room and told her she was going to be discharged because she wasn't ready to give birth yet. The woman packed her things and started to leave when another nurse stopped her and asked where she was going. She simply responded that the other nurse told her to go and that she'd come back later when the nurse at the nurse's station looked at her and said, "There's nobody else here, I'm the only nurse working tonight." The woman said that same spirit nurse continued to appear several more times while she was there after she gave birth.

### **The Third Floor**

Mose Blackburn, a man who murdered a police officer in cold blood, is said to haunt this floor. In 1962, Mose shot Lt. Garnet Richmond right below the left eye during a gun battle after they responded to a fight between Mose and his wife, Ora. Mose was shot in the arm, and both were taken to Williamson Memorial where Lt. Richmond was pronounced dead. Mose would spend months in the hospital while waiting for his trial that he ultimately would never attend. That July, Mose leaped from a 3<sup>rd</sup> story window in a possible suicide attempt. There is speculation that Mose might not have jumped on his own accord. Rather, one of the police officers tossed him out of the window in retaliation for killing one of their officers.

Although Mose didn't die from the initial fall, he would die just 2 weeks later from his injuries.

Reports on this floor are a shadow figure of a man standing in a third story window, cold breezes that pass by in the route from Mose's room to the window, and intelligent responses.

### **The Fourth Floor**

The ghost that haunts this floor is thought to be a nurse that worked at the hospital while it was open. It's believed that one day while she was on her way to work, she was involved in a terrible car accident. She was rushed to the ER of the hospital she worked at and sadly passed away from her injuries. A construction worker claimed to see her on the job and refused to return to that floor during his remaining time at the hospital. She is seen going about her day, as if she is doing her rounds like she did every day before she suddenly lost her life.

The history of The Old Hospital on College Hill is not only said to be haunted after it shut down but was also haunted during the years it was open. Though there isn't an exact number of how many deaths happened here, it's safe to say that number is in the thousands with the many types of people it treated, and it's also safe to say The Old Hospital on College Hills continues to be one of the most active locations in West Virginia.