

Children's Department (Basement)

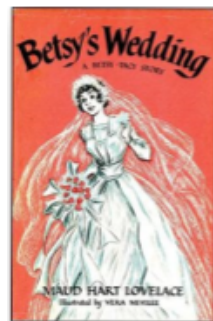
The tale of the Grey Lady began one icy morning in 1937. The custodian, alone in the dimly lit library basement, ventured towards the furnace room with his flashlight. There, in the murky shadows near the hallway junction, he nearly collided with a spectral figure—a woman in a flowing dress and a haunting grey veil. As he gazed at her in disbelief, she dissolved into darkness before his eyes.

Ms. Margaret Maier, the Children's Librarian, had several encounters with the Grey Lady. During the library's renovations in the 1980s, the phantom followed her home, a presence she found mysteriously linked to her.

The library staff whispered about inexplicable occurrences—books tumbling from shelves without cause. A former Director's attempt to suppress talk of the Grey Lady backfired dramatically: a patron's innocent query caused a book named "Betsy's Wedding" to crash to the floor.

Renowned psychic Lorraine Warren, drawn to the library in the 1970s, fell into a trance in the Story Pit. She spoke of a vision—a sorrowful woman connected not to the building, but to the very land beneath it.

Even the mundane corners of the library held spectral secrets. A Special Collections Librarian, alone in the basement restroom, heard faucets running despite being locked in the room. The inexplicable incidents continued, each adding to the library's chilling legend of the Grey Lady.



Margaret Maier



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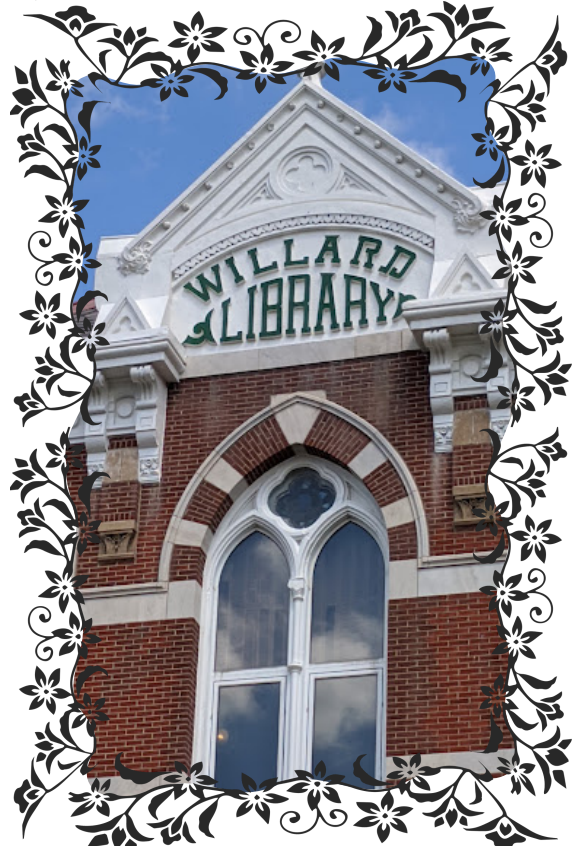
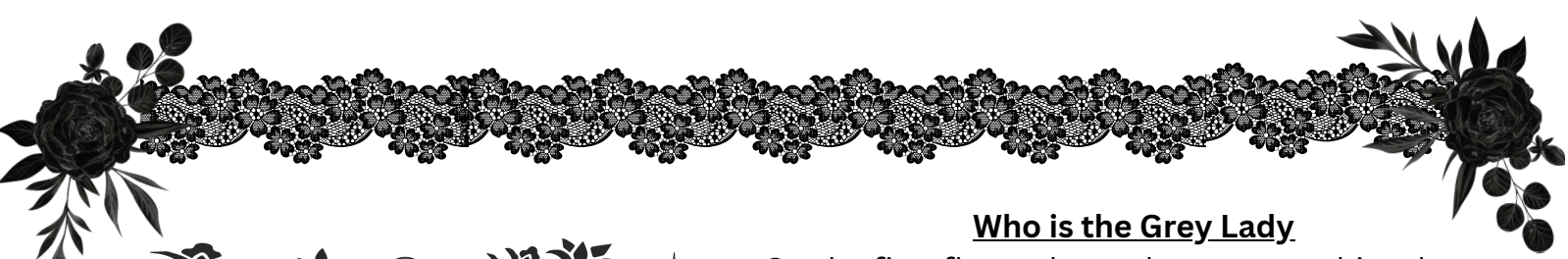
The Grey Lady

of

 Willard Public Library

Feel free to capture photos and explore!





Who is the Grey Lady

On the first floor, above the copy machine, hangs a picture of Louise Carpenter, daughter of Willard Carpenter. Some think the ghost could be her, but there are various theories.

Once, two young ghost hunters came looking for the Grey Lady but paused at Louise's picture. One remarked she wasn't attractive, and later felt uneasy for the rest of their library visit—perhaps because of the comment! Many patrons and staff have their own ideas, but we may never know unless she tells us herself!



Unexplained Encounters

- In the library, patrons occasionally sense a ghostly touch on their hair or jewelry.
- The Grey Lady has a peculiar fondness for chairs. She delights in pulling them out from under tables, and a few have felt her icy presence while seated.
- Her presence carries a potent fragrance, often described as a blend of lilac, lavender, and an old-fashioned perfume.
- Many have heard phantom footsteps echoing through deserted aisles and witnessed books tumbling from shelves.
- Night shift workers at Berry Global have frequently spotted the elevator mysteriously moving up and down throughout the night.

Brief History of Willard Library

Founded in 1885 by local philanthropist Willard Carpenter, Willard Library is the oldest continuously running public library in the state. Carpenter aimed to leave a lasting mark on Evansville, a town he helped develop through his political and business ventures. Originally planning to establish Willard College for women, financial setbacks led him to create this remarkable library instead.

Designed by James and Merritt Reid in Victorian Gothic style, the library was to be a place "for the use of the people of all classes, races, and genders, free of charge forever." For over 135 years, it has faithfully served this mission and will continue to do so for years to come.

Special Collections

(Second Floor)

One morning, Jeff Lyons, Chief Meteorologist at WFIE, ventured into Willard Library with his cameraman and a pair of librarians. They ascended to the top floor, where Lyons casually requested to prepare for a shot. Before the librarians could respond, several books inexplicably slid off the shelf, shattering the silence.



Jeff Lyons

Archives Reading Room/ Browning Gallery

(Lower Level)

In the year of 2015, as the new addition took shape, so too did the newly minted bathrooms. A haunting phenomenon began: the toilets began to flush of their own accord, incessantly. Plumbers were called into to investigate, yet they couldn't find a cause.

Another incident involved the new projector that was installed after the completion of the Browning Gallery. The projector would move on its own accord, up and down. Technicians were called in to investigate, but they had no solution for the odd occurrences.

Bayard Room (Second Floor)

One night, our security alarm summoned police and the library's former Director to Willard. One officer was stationed outside while the others investigated inside. As the lone officer watched from the parking lot, he spotted a figure in the Bayard Room window—an apparition of a woman, with a shadowy figure beside her. When his colleagues emerged, he asked if they had seen them, but they found no trace of anyone inside. The Director calmly suggested it might have been the ghost. Bewildered, the officer denied it, admitting he'd never heard of the Grey Lady before that night.

Elevator

One early morning, a custodian found himself stuck on the first floor elevator. He voiced his frustration aloud, demanding to descend. Miraculously, the elevator obeyed his command.

Shortly after being hired, a library assistant bravely addressed the Grey Lady while alone on the Adult Services Floor. She politely asked not to be frightened and suggested the ghost communicate in gentler ways. Moments later, the elevator doors opened unexpectedly, the call light illuminated despite no one being inside. The assistant approached cautiously, finding the elevator empty. She believed this encounter was the Grey Lady's response, welcoming her to the staff.

Adult Services Department

(First Floor)

There haven't been any Grey Lady sightings reported on the first floor, but there have been several unexplained experiences over the years.

Multiple staff members have noticed the smell of perfume, heard the sound of someone walking on the wooden floor boards, and witnessed books falling from the shelves,