

The Ghost Barracks

Location: Kay Moor Mine, West Virginia

Description: three-level underground fallout shelter, with residential and office space. No garage as such, but there are kitchens, storage areas, and a small machine shop. The power and water still work, but the ventilation system always seems to be in need of a serious overhaul. The site can be accessed both from the main mine, and a disguised passageway that originates in a culvert on the New River Gorge.

Purpose: “Long-term stable storage space for various personalized paraphernalia used to facilitate standard individualized post-mortem communication protocols.” In English: it’s where they keep stuff that can be used to summon specific ghosts.

Capacity: designed for fifty people, for six months. It can host a considerably larger number of ghosts, of course. Currently, the Ghost Barracks is set up to accommodate about six to ten living people indefinitely; the mortal staff is rotated in and out regularly, and often uses the site as a staging area for local supernatural operations (which,

incidentally, occur in the Appalachians with no little frequency).

The Ghost Barracks is located deep in the bowels of the abandoned Kay Moor Mine (located close to the equally abandoned town of Nuttallburg, West Virginia), and was probably constructed some time in the 1950s as a Civil Defense continuity of government shelter. The site is technically part of the New River Gorge National River, but very few people in the National Parks Service actually know of the Ghost Barracks' existence.

Not that the Ghost Barracks is exactly *classified*. It doesn't really have to be: people don't officially believe in ghosts anymore; there certainly are no sanctioned government policies in place for organized necromancy; and anybody who comes across the existence of this facility will simply assume that it's disinformation of some sort, because the US government will do that from time to time in order to filter out the dumber spies. That takes care of most inquisitive government officials. The ones who keep digging will soon find that their career path will abruptly and permanently take a shift into more *interesting* waters.

This kind of self-selecting involuntary recruitment is par for the course for many occult bureaucracies, but it must be admitted that the government agency that administers the Ghost Barracks takes a somewhat attractively **hands-on** approach to overseeing arcane complications. It's no patch on the shenanigans that went on during the World and Cold Wars, of course; but one can still have a fairly engrossing career, even today. The burnout rate is actually remarkably low, although the line-of-duty death rate isn't as low as it could be, or at least as people might wish it would be.

And, of course, once your career is over, and your retirement is done, and they lay you to your rest -- why, a piece of your gear is sent to the Ghost Barracks, to make it easier for your shade to be summoned at need. It's apparently a pleasant enough duty, with long periods of rest punctuated by intense briefing sessions where the institutional knowledge of the dead is tapped one more time to aid the living. Or multiple more times. Or maybe everybody just gets summoned for a movie night. Cinema is one of those things that the dead can enjoy as much as the living.

And the best part? No matter how serious the situation that the shade might be called forth to consult on,

somebody **else** has to actually go out and resolve it, while the shade gets to be the one who sits back at the Barracks and enjoys the cigarettes, candy, and rum traditionally given to the restless dead in order to get them to talk. Watching somebody **else** have to go do all the hard work for a change is one of death's simpler pleasures, but still worth it just the same.

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