

TRIPPIN'

Who, says haunted houses have to offer the usual ghosts, witches and black cats? The Winchester Mystery House in San Jose, Calif., spooks

Although some say Mrs. Winchester—who designed the house herself—was a poor architect, most believe a medium advised her that building on to her home 24 hours a day was the only way to ward off vengeful spirits.

When Mrs. Winchester purchased and began construction on the farmhouse, it had eight rooms. When she died nearly 40

years later, she had installed 13 coat hooks in one closet, built 13 bathrooms and constructed a 13-window room.

"Was she crazy?" is the question visitors most frequently ask, Rodriguez says. Mrs. Winchester became severely depressed and increasingly eccentric after her infant daughter and husband died.

Mrs. Winchester inherited more than

2,000 shares of stock, several million dollars in cash and \$1,000 a day in royalties from Winchester firearms. UCSC senior Ian McFadden suggests Mrs. Winchester's money caused her decline. "It supports my theory that too much wealth makes people insane," he says.

Rodriguez, who became a tour guide after visiting the house, says the tour provides a lesson on Victorian homes, as well as the thrill of a bizarre building. "Some people come here expecting an elaborate mansion," she says, "but it's really just a regular house with unusual things."

■ Jennifer Webster-Burnham, *City on a Hill Press*, U. of California, Santa Cruz

Magical Mystery House

visitors with staircases that go nowhere, seance rooms with trick closets and doors that open to 8-foot drops.

Students from the U. of California Santa Cruz, San Jose State U. and Santa Clara U. venture to the late Mrs. Sarah Winchester's Victorian mansion for a look at its frightening architectural faux pas. "I liked the staircase that leads to nowhere," says San Francisco State U. student David Jenkins.

Mrs. Winchester, who died more than 70 years ago, constructed the bizarre building in a desperate attempt to confuse the spirits of those killed by the famous Winchester rifle.

Developed by her husband, Oliver, in 1866, the superior repeating rifle gained notoriety as a fatal weapon. The rifle's effectiveness brought Winchester financial success, and when he died, he left his wife a fortune — and endless nightmares.

years later in 1922, she left a 160-room Victorian mansion that boasts more than 10,000 windows, 47 fireplaces and 40 staircases.

Mystery House tour guide Veronica Rodriguez says college students pack the guided tours during spring break, summer vacation and, of course, Halloween. On Oct. 28, 29 and 31, the Winchester Mystery House staff leads Halloween trick-or-treat tours by flashlight until midnight.

Friday the 13th is another occasion for flashlight tours. The number 13 fascinated Mrs. Winchester, who worked the motif into her home: She designed a stained glass window with a 13-point spider-



Can you find 10,000 windows and 47 chimneys?

IN PLAY

Revealing their names would be like telling a 5-year-old who's really inside a Santa costume. Their names don't matter anyway, because they're mascots — campus heroes. They get tackled, torn and tortured and have to endure athletic mosh pits. And they don't even get paid. Why do they do it? We polled some of our favorite mascots to see what life as a synthetic feathered — or furry — friend is really like.

U.: Temperature inside the costume? Pounds sweated out per game?

Spider: 100° to 110°, 5 to 10 pounds.

Fighting Camel: 90° to 100°. It's a personal sauna, 3 to 5 pounds.

Rowdy the Roadrunner: 110°. Remember, I'm in San Antonio, 5 to 6 pounds.

Louie the Lobo: 110° to 120°, 5 to 7 pounds.

Who Was that Mascot Man?

U.: Your weirdest experience?

Spider: A couple years ago, I was attacked by Virginia Military Institute cadets — their whole freshman class tried to steal my head. The coach was yelling at me to get into the stands, and I looked up and saw about 200 people running at me. This man in the stands said, "Here, hide here." I thought he was protecting me, so I hid. Then he stands up and yells to the crowd, "Here he is!" The massacre ensued. That class is graduating now, and they all have spiders on their class rings.

Fighting Camel: After a game, the opposing team's starting player came up behind me and drilled a forearm into the back of my helmet.

Rowdy the Roadrunner: This little girl

fell in love with me — she was the cutest thing in the world — but she fell in love with a 6-foot-tall orange and blue bird.

Louie the Lobo: At a grade school's fitness day, I was dogpiled by hundreds of kids. I felt violated, for sure.

U.: Your arch enemy?

Spider: The James Madison U. Duke.

Fighting Camel: The North Carolina State U. Wolf. He has an intimidating outfit, but he's not intimidating at all.

Rowdy the Roadrunner: Currently we have a peace treaty with the San Antonio Spurs' Coyote.

Louie the Lobo: New Mexico State U.'s Pistol Pete.

U.: It's midnight. You're alone on the 50-yard line with the arch enemy. What do you do?

Spider: I'd have a wrestling match — then we'd get up and shake hands and walk back to our respective sides.

Fighting Camel: I'd stomp on the wolf — I guess that's what a camel does. Either that or spit.

Rowdy the Roadrunner:

I'd put him upside-down in the basketball net with his feet sticking up on the backboard.

Louie the Lobo: I'd dogpile him. I'd hogtie him. No, I'd kick his ass.

U.: Your favorite part of the job?

Spider: Doing the most random things you could ever think of. During a timeout in a basketball game, the band played "Unchained Melody." I started dancing with some girl from the audience. In costume, it felt natural — I'd never do it in real life.

Fighting Camel: Making people laugh.

Rowdy the Roadrunner: Scaring people. Coming up behind them when they don't know I'm there and putting my beak over their shoulder.

Louie the Lobo: The attention of thousands of people.

U.: Do you shed? Molt?

Spider: No.

Fighting Camel: I was shedding a little bit — then my hump fell off. It was Velcro.

Rowdy the Roadrunner: My costume doesn't, but I think I do after being in there a few hours.

Louie the Lobo: A little. I stink.

■ Ed Poe, *The Oklahoma Daily*, U. of Oklahoma, contributed to this article



U. of Richmond Spider



Campbell U. Fighting Camel (yes, Camel)



U. of Texas, San Antonio: Rowdy the Roadrunner



U. of New Mexico: Louie the Lobo