

Assistant Maintenance Manager Gary Schachel keeps a watchful eye during nightly rounds at Division 2.



By ADRIENNE FIGUEROA

(Oct. 24, 2003) Each night, as dusk falls and the moon casts its light over downtown Los Angeles, restless spirits roam the deserted maintenance building at Crossroads Depot Division 2.

The wind whistles through the old glass skylight windows above the shop floor, rattling chains that hang ominously from the ceiling. The flutter of bird wings echoes throughout the cool night air in the desolate century-old structure.

Occasionally, the gas detection alarm will sound abruptly, but the source remains a mystery. It's spooky enough to raise the hairs on the back of your neck.

Before the MTA mechanic strike, an average of 28 people – service attendants, supervisors and mechanics – worked overnight at the division. Now, Division 2 Assistant Maintenance Manager Gary Schachel works the graveyard shift.

"It gets haunted here at night," says Schachel. "I go searching for noises."

Is Division 2 haunted? That's been the talk around the building for some time.

"The goblins'll get you if you don't watch out!"
-- Children's poem



Gary Schachel checks the rattling doors, above, but the street outside, below, is empty.



"It's a little spooky," says Division 2 Maintenance Manager Donel Harris. "I've had mechanics tell me they've heard some strange noises in the yard, but things like that don't scare me. It doesn't give me the heebiejeebies."

Constructed in 1903 as a Los Angeles Railway division, the structure was closed down in 1985. Then, in 1992, Division 2 reopened, resurrecting the spirits that had been locked up for eleven years.

As a child, Crossroads Division 2 Transportation Manager Thom Pelk was always on the quest for a good scare. Now, he has fulfilled his thirst for thrills by working at the division.

"I look for that kind of stuff," he says. "There's something very eerie about the maintenance building."

But, tonight, by the dim light of a crescent moon, it's Gary Schachel who will hold vigil in the cavernous structure, watching...listening ...for things that go bump in the night.

[Back to MTA Report](#)



When he's not raising the rafters, above, Crossroads ghost retires to his office in the basement, below, where workers often find his chair pulled back from his desk, as if to rest his ghostly feet.



PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON