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[intro music]

Maggie Johnson:

Welcome to a very special episode of “As Spiders Do,” from the University of Richmond Office of Alumni Relations. I’m the show’s usual host, Maggie Johnson, from the class of 2018. Today, I’m joined by my friend and colleague, Charlotte Pfamatter, to bring you a special Halloween episode of the podcast.

Charlotte Pfamatter:

Hey there! I’m Charlotte, the Assistant Director of Student and Young Graduate Programming in the Alumni Relations Office. You’re probably used to hearing from our amazing alumni. But, that won’t be the case here. Today’s subjects are of the, let’s say, legendary sort.

Maggie Johnson:

The University of Richmond has a long and unique history. And as with anything with a history such as ours, it’s the stories that have been passed from one generation of students to another that shape our experiences as students and alumni. But the stories of the unseen can affect us just as much as those living memories and experiences.

Charlotte Pfamatter:

On this All Hallows Eve, we’re here to share some of our favorite campus legends of the unseen. You may have heard some of these stories. Some may be new to you. Either way, we invite you to join us as we venture through time and space to explore the spectral and mythological side of campus. Let’s start by unwrapping our first story. One of the most ancient residents at the University of Richmond is Ti-Ameny-Net – a 2,700-year-old mummy from Thebes in ancient Egypt. She is the guest of honor in the Ancient World Gallery in North Court where she currently resides. But that hasn’t always been her home. Ti-Ameny-Net’s post-humous travels are not well documented. But we do know that after lying undisturbed for more than 2,500 years, she was unceremoniously dug up in 1869, reportedly as a gift for the Prince of Wales. She then changed hands many times in the years following and at some point, was even subjected to a Victorian-era unwrapping party to rob her of her amulets. Ti-Ameny-Net had been dispatched all over Europe and America, as a gift, an exhibit, an item to be sold.

Maggie Johnson:

Ti-Ameny-Net came into the University of Richmond’s purview when a Richmond College professor, Dr. J. L. M. Curry, purchased her from an unknown man in 1876. While just a blip in hers, our histories are inextricably linked as she finally landed in Richmond less than 40 years after the founding of Richmond College. And this is where she has remained ever since. But still she didn’t have a permanent home on our campus. Before coming to rest in her current spot at the center of the Ancient World Gallery, she lived in a professor’s living room, the Biology museum in Maryland Hall and even the basement of North Court.

Charlotte Pfamatter:

And as we all know; college campuses aren’t necessarily peaceful resting places. In the early 20th century, Ti-Ameny-Net was sometimes the center of student pranks, used to spook the freshmen on their first Halloween on campus with flashing lights that made her seem alive. One has to wonder with all the moving and the pranks, is Ti-Ameny-Net truly at peace? Or does she see all that goes on around her, watching and waiting for the next turn of events?

Maggie Johnson:

Now, it wouldn’t be Halloween without a ghost story. And lucky for us, University of Richmond has many spirits supposedly still lingering on campus. Perhaps the most famous is the ghost of May Keller, the first dean of Westhampton College. Dean Keller was a pioneer. Born in 1877, she was a scholar and professor in a time when few women had the opportunity to pursue higher education. In 1914, she became the first female dean in Virginia and establishing the newly founded Westhampton College as a strong institute of higher learning became her life’s work and her legacy.

Charlotte Pfamatter:

Dean Keller led the University for 32 years and was known as the “iron dean” for her steadfast commitment to her beliefs. She rarely took no for an answer and was a force to be reckoned with. Even after her retirement, Dean Keller was an integral part of the campus community, often popping into events to share tidbits of hers and the college’s intertwined history. She lived in the Westhampton Deanery until her death in June 1964. But not even death could keep her apart from the college that she built from the ground up. It’s said she still wanders the halls of the deanery, and perhaps all of campus, checking up on her beloved college and maintaining a watchful eye on what goes on today.

Maggie Johnson:

While May Keller might be the most famous spirit, we can't overlook the others. One of the most often encountered is the ghost of Booker Hall. Footsteps have been heard on many occasions, pacing the theatre's catwalks, high in the air. They've been heard in the wee hours of the morning, by students and staff alike. Nobody has ever seen the spirit who paces to and fro – whenever someone attempts to catch a peek, the sounds abruptly stop, only resuming when the searcher returns to their work or leaves the building altogether. Who is this restless soul? We may never know...

Charlotte Pfamatter:

Another of our unidentified ghosts came to us in an unconventional way. Though not originally part of the campus, the Bottomley House was built on River Road in 1915, just one year after the founding of Westhampton College. The house was donated to the University in 1995 and moved to its current spot on campus a year later, making the slow trek across the road. But in addition to rooms for rent for living guests, the Bottomley House came with a permanent guest of sorts. Members of the University catering team have reported seeing a young child wandering the halls of the old house as they've set up for events. No one knows who the child is or how they became attached to the house. But they have been a part of our campus for the past 27 years. So, the next time you come home to campus, take a walk through our alumni office halls – you may just meet a new friend.

[outro music]

Maggie Johnson:

Thank you for tuning in to this special Halloween episode of “As Spiders Do,” from the University of Richmond Office of Alumni Relations. Please note, this episode is a work of fiction, based loosely on facts and resources from the University archives. This episode was narrated, edited and produced by me, Maggie Johnson...

Charlotte Pfamatter:

And me, Charlotte Pfamatter. This episode's music is by [Dmitry Taras](#) and [Oleg Fedak](#) from [Pixabay](#). Sound effects are from Solar Music, [Mikhail](#) and [Pixabay](#). Leave us a review and subscribe to get the next episode of “As Spiders Do.” Who knows, there may be more legends to explore.