TO ENTER CONTEST:

Identify the ghosts and give us your interpretation of what really happened to each of the individuals haunting Heathmoor Manor.

Mail your answers by April 1, 1997 to:

Bits & Pieces
575 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116
Attention: Contest Puzzle

THE GHOSTS OF HEATHMOOR MANOR

Read the story, put the puzzle together and discover the truth behind the hauntings.

produced by:

BITS & PIECES
The Great International Puzzle Collection
575 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116
You are about to read a reproduction of sections from the diary of Amanda Heath, matriarch of Heathmoor Manor in England in the late 1800s. A stern, strict woman, Amanda tried to do what was best for Gwendolyn, her niece and sole heir to the Heath estates. But her efforts all went tragically wrong.

Gwendolyn Heath had just reached the ripe old age of 21. Since childhood, she had been in love with Conan Bell, the orphaned son of a local doctor. Since Conan was a commoner and had only a small inheritance, Amanda naturally disapproved. She would prefer a marriage to Lord Bruce Lowell, a young, miltarily aristocrat from London who had only recently taken up residency in the country. Despite the fact that he did not have a fortune like the Heaths, he was considered a much better match.

Lord Bruce was instantly enchanted with both Gwendolyn and Heathmoor Manor. He bade Gwendolyn’s younger brother Harry to show him around the estate. An impetuous eighteen year old, Harry enjoyed showing off his knowledge of the manor and all its secret rooms to his sister’s persistent suitor.

Gwendolyn held out, refusing to marry anyone if she couldn’t have Conan, her childhood soul mate. And then Conan suddenly left. Lord Bruce reported seeing the young suitor taking the early morning train north to Scotland and produced a note he was to give to Gwendolyn.

Here is where we enter into the diary of Amanda Heath and learn the tragic history behind the ghosts of Heathmoor Manor told in her own words.

Dear Diary,

A day of pure hysteria for my luckless niece. And yet perhaps it bodes well.

For several weeks, Lord Bruce has honored Gwendolyn with his attentions. He visits Heathmoor often, nearly to the point of living here, as young Harry jokes. The marquis son is most shy and proper, and has succeeded in winning my heart, if not Gwendolyn’s. Her response has been deplorable. She remains attached to her childhood sweetheart, to the point of flaunting it in the face of her noble suitor. To Lord Bruce’s credit, he has remained steadfast in his pursuit.

This morning, as usual, he was already on the premises when the family came down to breakfast. His coat was torn and his cheek bruised. With much agitation, Lord Bruce revealed his distressing news.

“As you know, my daily route to Heathmoor passes the railway station. This morning, on my way here, I glanced up at the platform and was surprised to see Mr. Conan Bell standing there, speaking to a porter. A moment later our eyes met and he hailed me. ‘The very man!’ he shouted. ‘Much better than sending a porter.’

“As I mounted the platform, Conan handed me this
note." Lord Bruce produced a sealed letter and hesitantly handed it to my niece. "For you, Lady Gwendolyn." Even from my distance, I could see the paper was from our own supply of stationery. I had always suspected Mr. Bell of pilfering and this seemed ample proof.

"I asked him if he were about to take a journey," Lord Bruce continued. "I am leaving forever," he replied. "I can wait no longer to make my fortune. If the Heaths will not have me, then I must cut my losses and try to forget. Gwendolyn will understand."

"I was aghast at the fellow's callousness. Knowing of Lady Gwendolyn's attachment, I begged him to reconsider, to at least come here personally, like a man, and explain. He refused. As the train to Scotland approached, I grabbed at his lapel. 'You must speak to her,' I implored." Lord Bruce touched the bruise on his cheek, chagrined. "Mr. Bell is a larger, more active man and I fear I failed in my duty to make him stay."

Gwendolyn turned deathly pale and grabbed for the note. 'This is not his. It's not his writing,' she stammered as she read the cold words of Conan Bell. But in her heart, she knew. Without excusing herself, my niece ran back to her bedroom and collapsed.

She has been in there the entire day. Her hysterical sobs torment all of Heathmoor and I fear for the poor dear's sanity. And yet... And yet, perhaps it is all for the best.

This behavior shows Conan Bell as the fortune hunter I always supposed him to be. And Lord Bruce... If his affection remains constant throughout Gwendolyn's recovery, she may grow to love him in return.

August 18, 1894

Dear Diary,

I have been remiss in my journal keeping and there is so much to tell. On the 28th of last month, Heathmoor witnessed a wedding. After many weeks of depression, after countless hours of attentive care from her new suitor, after ceaseless persuasion from all sides, Gwendolyn finally accepted Lord Bruce's proposal of marriage.

The first days following Conan Bell's departure were most difficult. This event naturally the talk of the county. Without word, he had abandoned everything, including a handsome packet of debts. The local merchants were up in arms and threatened to issue warrants until his Lordship graciously agreed to pay them off. I think this kindness was what finally turned Gwendolyn's eye in his direction.

The wedding day found me contented. But much has happened since to make me uneasy. Gwendolyn, I fear, will not give the union a proper chance. She keeps a portrait of Conan Bell on the hall table and spends much of her time staring at it soulfully.
Her unkind behavior has affected Lord Bruce who is not as patient or forgiving as he once was, a distemper which is reflected in his management of Heathmoor. As the new master, he has seen fit to ignore many of its oldest traditions. The gypsies, for example, have enjoyed a rent-free existence on the fringes of the estate, dating back to the days when their ancestors came to the aid of the first Earl of Heath. But Lord Bruce has taken exception to their presence and made several attempts to evict them. Their response has been just as unfortunate. Nightly, they move their wagons to new locations and have taken to poaching the occasional pig or sheep from under our noses.

All of this does not sit well with young Harry who had always been quite friendly with the gypsies. It gives him one more reason to dislike his new brother-in-law. Constantly I must endure my nephew's complaints. "Bruce has reduced my allowance," "Bruce won't let me buy a new horse."

Heaven only knows what will become of us.

Dear Diary,

How much the situation is improved between my two nephews. Almost overnight, it seems, Lord Bruce became quite conciliatory toward young Harry, even to the extravagance of purchasing for him the stallion Harry had been cov-
eting for so long. He has christened the animal Secret Sin and is forever riding and grooming and pampering the beast.

Alas, the situation with Gwendolyn is not improved. She still pines for her lost love. Her devoted brother is the only one of us able to bring even a smile to her lips.

August 28, 1894

Dear Diary,

Today was Harry's funeral. I am so filled with despair I can barely put pen to paper. And yet I feel I must record my scattered thoughts, if only to preserve my sanity.

Two nights ago, after supper, Harry was taking his usual doze in the summer hammock among the stand of willows. Gwendolyn was not far off, doing crewel work on the swing, when a noise caught their ears. A horse was whinnying, stomping fretfully in the nearby stables. "It's Secret Sin," Harry said, suddenly up and alert. "Gypsies," he added with a growl, for there had been several thefts lately, all fairly close to the manor.

In a flash, Harry was off to the stables. Gwendolyn watched nervously. She called out for Lord Bruce, hoping he could accompany her headstrong brother and keep him safe. It was no more than half a minute after Harry disappeared through the stable doors that Gwendolyn saw the smoke. Mere seconds later and the entire structure was ablaze.
By the time Lord Bruce arrived and organized the servants, it was too late. The stable and the barn attached to the rear of it were irrevocably afire.

The dead horses were discovered first. Secret Sin, a young mare, and a gelding. The stablemaster deduced that one of them must have kicked a lantern into the straw.

For an hour, we held out hope that Harry might have escaped. And then the body was found. It was in the far reaches of the barn, crumpled in a corner, mere feet from the door we kept padlocked against the threat of gypsies. My dear nephew, our golden boy, was an unrecognizable heap of charred skin. “He made a brave run for it,” the doctor said with sad respect in his voice. “Only he ran in the wrong direction. The smoke must have confused him. By the time he reached the barn door, it was too late.”

The service was held by the stable ruins and his body laid to rest under a simple headstone.

Gwendolyn suffers so. In a matter of months, she has lost the two men she loved most. Her depression worsens and she divides her days between staring at Conan Bell’s portrait and the one of Harry hanging above the stairs. “If only I could stay and care for her. But obligations call. Tomorrow I must travel to York to deal with family business.”

Before I depart, I will speak with Bruce. For the past day or so, a servant tells me a gypsy has been seen sneaking around the grounds. Other servants have dubbed the figure an escaped convict. I must remind Bruce to take especial care of Gwendolyn. Don’t let her wander out by herself and don’t allow her to become too depressed.

Dear Diary,

This is the end of Heathmoor for me. I can no longer live in a place so filled with tragic memories. And the ghosts. I am certain I have seen poor Gwendolyn’s soul wandering the shadowy halls. Was it all less than a month ago? Seems like ages.

I had spent those two days in York, returning to find Hogan the Butler waiting for me in the drive. It was he who told me the news. “Last night was the Grange social.” His voice was choked with tears. “Rainy and blustery it was, but like every year, all the house servants make a point of going and enjoying themselves. The carriages returned us around midnight. I saw a lamp lit in the main hall and decided to investigate. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have found them until morning.”

Hogan and a maid found their bodies on the marble floor, Gwendolyn with a rope around her neck. Lord Bruce holding a knife, its blade stuck deep in his abdomen. On a sideboard not far away was the beginning of a note. The writing was shaky. To this day I don’t know if it was Gwendolyn’s hand or her husband’s. “Dear Auntie,” it said. “Please forgive me. I can’t go on liv...” And that was all.

The local authorities considered Gwendolyn’s depression, the note and her manner of death. They concluded suicide.
In her blackest hours she had talked of hanging herself, how easy it would be to perch up on the balcony railing, one end of a rope around her neck, the other end tied to the chandelier.

Lord Bruce must have discovered her body. He cut her down with his own knife, placed her gently on the marble, then with the same knife ended his own life. There are other possibilities, of course. But this is the truth, I choose to believe, their version of the truth that the police have recorded in their official records.

The hauntings began soon thereafter. The servants say there are four spirits in all, Gwendolyn, Lord Bruce, and two others. Gwendolyn’s ghost I have seen myself and it is enough to break my heart. Has she returned to accuse me? Was I so wrong in wanting a good marriage for my only niece?

Whatever her purpose in remaining on this earth, I cannot endure it. Heathmoor must be closed up. Perhaps one day the spirits will be put to rest and the manner house will be opened once more. I know I will not live to see that day.

Amanda Heath

It’s now one hundred years later. The manor house has been left untouched since the second tragedy, although now there seem to be a total of five ghosts wandering the estate, spirits that haunt either their final resting places or the sites of their most traumatic moments in life.

You are an investigator in psychic disturbances and have been brought in by distant relatives and heirs to the Heathmoor family fortune. It is your job to piece together the puzzle of this tragic story. Once you have completed the puzzle, turn out the lights and view the glowing ghosts that haunt the manor. By viewing and identifying the ghosts, and finding clues that remain in the manor and within the story contained in this booklet, you must discover what really happened during those months in 1894. Only by finding the truth will the tormented souls be able to rest in peace. With your help, Heathmoor Manor will be restored to it’s former grandeur and once again be a home for the living.