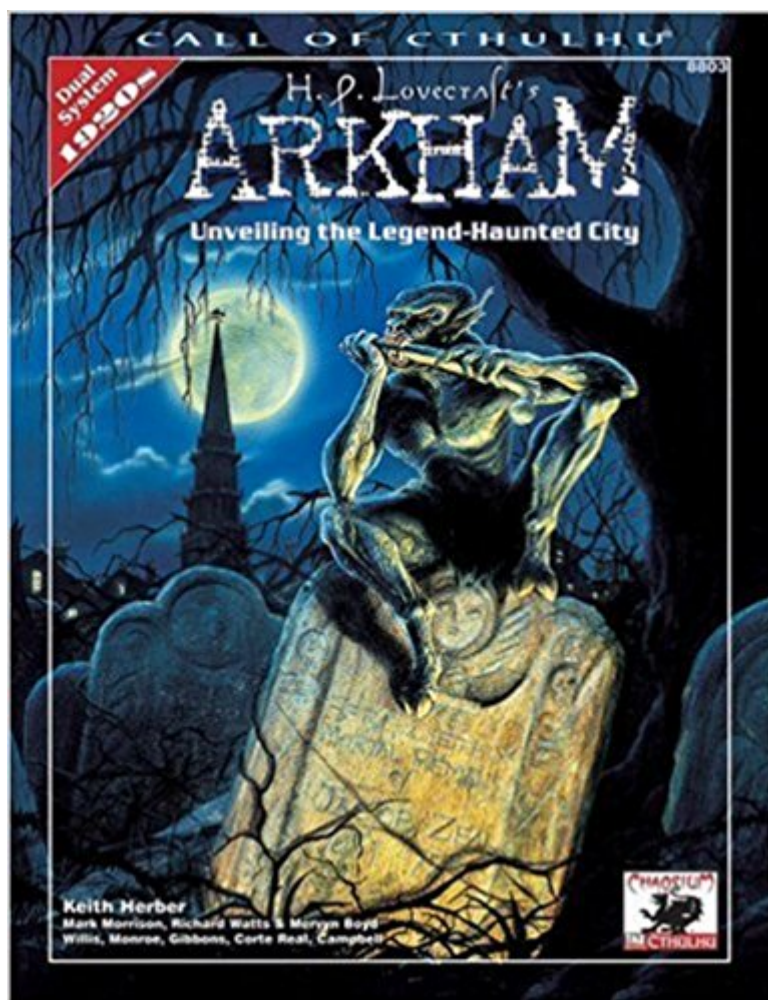


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H.P. Lovecraft's Arkham: Unveiling The Legend-Haunted City (Call Of Cthulhu Horror Roleplaying, Chaosium # 8803)



Synopsis

"Behind everything crouched the brooding, festering horror of the ancient town . . . the changeless, legend-haunted city of Arkham, with its clustering gambrel roofs that sway and sag over attics where witches hid from the King's men in the dark, olden days of the Province. "It was always a very bad time in Arkham" -H. P. Lovecraft

ARKHAM is a small town along the Massachusetts coast-the setting favored by author Howard Phillips Lovecraft in his tales of monstrous horror. All in all a quiet place, Arkham is best-known as the home of Miskatonic University, an excellent school becoming known for its esoteric and disturbing volumes residing in its library's Restricted Collection. These tomes form the foundation of all current efforts to thwart the dire desires of the Mythos legion. H.P. Lovecraft's ARKHAM contains extensive background information about this haunted New England town-written to be used by serious investigators as a base from which to further explore the mysteries of the Cthulhu Mythos. Pertinent buildings, useful people, and important locations are described in depth. A 17x22" players' map of Arkham is bound into the back, and four thrilling adventures complete the package.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A+ Seller

The wonderful thing about roleplaying games are their endless possibilities for action- one can literally do anything within the framework of the rules; the only limit is the glass ceiling of your imagination. Though there IS the limitation put forth by the necessities of playing a particular module or campaign- if the game takes place in Canada, it is probably a good idea to go there and not to

Somalia. With this book, all limitations are gone. The homebase of H.P. Lovecraft's Call of Cthulhu investigators is in all probability Arkham, perhaps being their place of employment or residence. With this new Sourcebook, H.P. Lovecraft's Arkham, we now have a literal blueprint of the town. Who lives where, what is the criminal underground like, what are the industries and businesses, public transportation, what do the government and police consist of, etc. It literally creates an entire world for the player to exist in. We have not even bothered to play any of the game scenarios at the back because just existing in the town and creating our own situations have been fascinating enough. For example, we had the investigators encounter and befriend an underground movement of Anarchist whom attempted to unionize the immigrant factory workers, wipe out the Arkham government, simultaneously blew up the three power stations in the town and the water tower, did battle with the national guard and took over! There is literally endless possibilities for play. Think Grand Theft Auto times a thousand. The book is brilliant and besides having the original Call of Cthulhu sourcebook, I see this book as being absolutely essential. There are gangs and cults and underground movements and plenty of beasts and forbidden tomes and strange people and places to go and situations to become involved in, besides ones that the Storyteller creates herself. Included is also information on the Miskatonic University and its professors, campus, and library. Also included is information pertaining to the surrounding area around Arkham for those Investigators brave enough to leave town, for, indeed, there is much that is truly monstrous writhing about the periphery. Although I see this book as essential, if you dig it, there are other similar and exciting books for those wishing to expand your play world- there is H.P. Lovecraft's Kingsport, H.P. Lovecraft's Dunwich, and Escape From Innsmouth. Thus opening up the possibility to wander throughout four complete, though completely unique and hideously decadent, towns all within reach of each other. I can't wait for the release of the hardcover Miskatonic University sourcebook.

First, let me say that this is a huge book. At 250 pages, you are really getting your money's worth. The town info is great, lots of useful characters, and the scenarios are excellent. I do have some complaints - the layout is more primitive than the other books, especially the neighborhood maps. On the other end of the scale, all the portraits are computer generated. First, it looks pretty hokey (maybe CGI was not as good back then?); second, the facial proportions are wrong for many of the people. This isn't a big deal for, say, Dunwich, but Arkham is somewhat respectable and misproportioned faces just clashes with the attempted realism of CGI. The standard layout of these books is to have a story by HPL featuring the town, to discuss town history, to break down the town

into neighborhoods and show each one in detail, and then to have scenarios. The opening story is "Dreams in the Witch House", which is probably the best available. I really like opening these books with a story by HPL - it is a reminder of how the whole thing got started. The neighborhoods take up a lot of space and describe a great many people, places, and things to meet in Arkham. I wish they would have spent some time talking about architecture in the town history section - I still don't know the difference between "gable" and "gambrel". Some real problems: street names are not clearly marked on the neighborhood maps, even when they are referred to. The combined map is not reprinted in the neighborhood section, nor is each neighborhood map shown as one piece; we only see fragments at a time. I think the Kingsport sourcebook does this best, so I assume that the layout people were still perfecting their craft at this early stage. As always, the town directory is helpful considering especially that there are so many entries that an index is needed to quickly find anything. All of the scenarios are great, although one ("the Hills Rise Wild") really would have been better in the Dunwich book, which was short on good scenarios. Also included is a tear-out map of Arkham on very nice paper, and an issue of THE ARKHAM ADVERTISER, which also becomes a handout. In all, this is a very informative sourcebook, with plenty of people, places, and things for investigators to explore. The only drawback, besides the poor maps, is that the spooky atmosphere was not conveyed very well. Reading the other sourcebooks, I definitely felt the atmosphere; Arkham didn't do that for me. It could have been better, but was still great.

Great book with a map inside that you can tear out. I used this book exclusively for a CoC group I ran for a whole year long. I really appreciated the block to block set up with the various places of import and the mythos related possibilities. This is a great place to have players start from and explore.

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