

# Ghosts haunt teenage twins in McClure's mystery

**A REVIEW** By **KEN BELL**

Item City Editor

**Secrets & Ghost Horses** by Holly McClure. Bella Rosa Books, Trade paperback. 162 pages. \$9.95

Holly McClure's new novel, "Secrets & Ghost Horses," is one of those books that leaves the reader thinking about the plot long after he's finished reading.

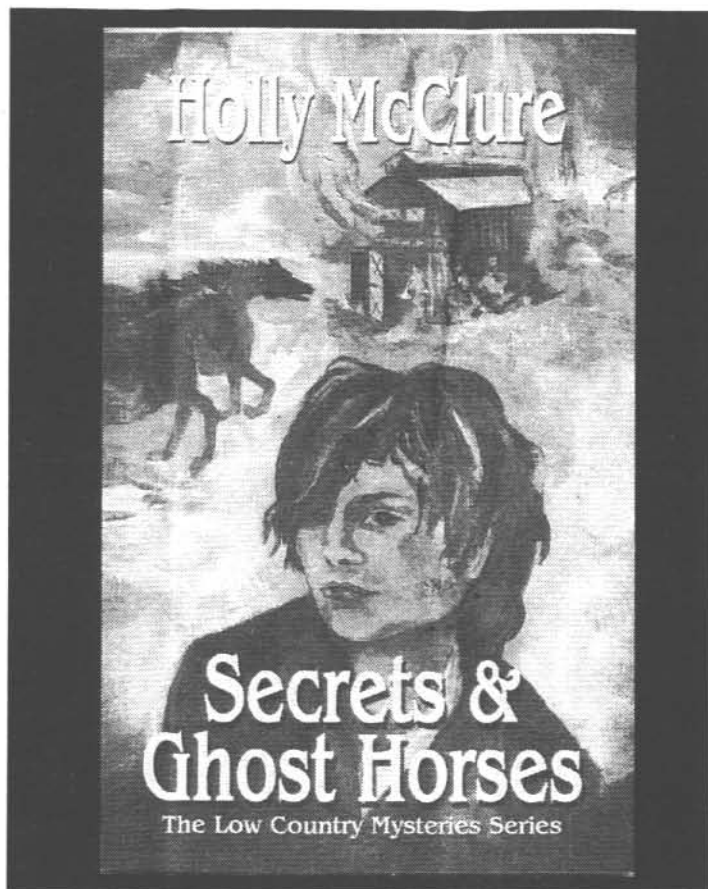
Thirteen-year-old twin sisters Hannah and Aislinn Hanover are not happy when their parents decide to take them on a summer vacation to the former family home place in the South Carolina Low-country.

Hanover Hall, once a proud mansion, is now in disrepair, but not so much that it can't be lived in. While their parents, Bob and Paige Hanover, inspect the place to be sure it's safe to stay there, the girls go exploring.

They discover a freshly painted barn, two horses and a caretaker named Donovan, who is about their age and the most gorgeous boy they've ever met.

Thrilled to have horses at their disposal, plus the fact they've met a good-looking boy, the girls' displeasure turns to eagerness to stay there.

The twins' parents are surprised by the sudden change in their demeanor, but accept it as their just being kids.



But the mystery begins when the girls get up the next morning to find the barn, horses and Dono-

van all gone. There's no trace of any of them.

Then, just as suddenly, Dono-

van reappears. He explains that he's a ghost, along with the barn and horses. He tells the girls he died along with the horses in a fire. His parents were blamed for the fire but they had nothing to do with it. And until his killer is brought to justice, he won't leave. He identifies the killer and solicits the girls' help in bringing him to justice.

The plot thickens when the girls learn that their mother and grandmother also have the ability to see the ghosts.

McClure, who now lives on an island off of the Georgia coast, weaves a tale of intrigue and suspense as the family secrets are slowly revealed.

Bob Hanover, who had previously denied that his wife or her mother had special powers, comes to the realization that he must support the women in order to find the bodies of his mother and brother who were swept away while driving across a bridge during a hurricane many years earlier. It's not until he learns that his daughters also have the special power that he becomes an ally.

The story builds to an exciting

climax that will have the reader almost ready to cheer. Just when readers think they've figured out the plot, McClure tosses in another twist that sends readers in a completely different direction.

The plot is as thick as the Low-country haze on a summer afternoon.

In one scene involving a mosquito, I found myself rubbing my arms to make sure there wasn't one on me.

"Secrets & Ghost Horses" is a book that readers both young and old can enjoy. It's a story so good you'll swear it's true. And who knows? Maybe it is.