

# Sleepless Souls

<http://www.sleeplesssouls.com/2004/riser.htm1>

## THE RISING CRYPT

This year we wanted to expand our cemetery by adding our first animated prop. Now I know in the past few years there have been a great deal of inexpensive, mass produced, talking, dancing, and moving props to hit the market.

But what's the fun of having something just like Joe Shmoe has down the street? We make it a general rule; if you buy it, change it. We want our stuff to be different. So we decided to build our rising crypt ourselves.

First things first, we looked online at the enormous quantities of Halloween related websites out there. Just as my site offers ideas on how to build props, there are hundreds of other sites out there that do the same. Haunters are some of the most generous people on the web. They offer their ideas and suggestions in hopes that someone will like what they do enough to duplicate it.

I found a wonderful site called Spookdawg's Haunted Halloween that had a rising tombstone that we thought we could modify for our purposes.

Here's how it came together:

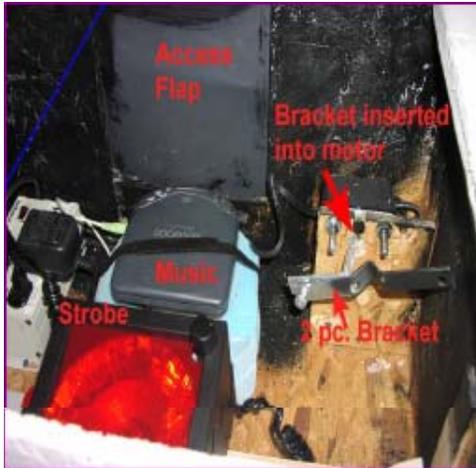


The basic construction for the box. It is sitting on a stool for photo purposes only.

The box is made from OSB. It is sitting on a base cut from 2" thick roofing insulation styrofoam.

The columns ( only 1 is showing in the photo ) is PVC and the outer rim of the box is scrap lumber.

Obtained from  
Omarshauntedtrail.com



Here are some of the elements of the lift mechanism.

We purchased a rotisserie motor from EBAY. The motor is mounted vertically along the bottom, back wall of the crypt box.

Use a scrap piece of wood to mount the motor. You will need to drill out a hole to allow a bracket to fit inside the motor shaft.

On the backside of the crypt box we cut an access panel and covered it with a vinyl flap painted the same color as the box. This allowed access to power the music, strobe and motor.



We had to make the bracket for the motor ourselves. It is simply (1) L-shaped bracket, filed down on one end to fit inside the shaft of the rotisserie motor, and (1) flat metal mounting plate, cut to the appropriate length and bent in the middle. (See photo).

The bend is needed to act as a "stop" as the bracket moves up and down through the conduit shaft mounted on the crypt top.

Use a bolt and (2) nuts to attach the brackets together. Double nut the bolt so you can leave it loose on the brackets, this will hold it together without binding the brackets as they rotate.

Once assembled, this bracket will slip up and down inside of a metal conduit shaft hanging from the crypt lid above.



This shows the attached piece of metal conduit on the top of the crypt.

We painted it black, as most of the interior of the box, so it wouldn't be seen at night, It simply dangles down from the top of the lid and the bracket is

slipped in to. The size of the conduit depends on the size of the bracket you use. The conduit should be wide enough for the bracket to move freely without binding as the arm rotates.

In addition, since we were using a pretty heavy tombstone on top of the crypt, we needed to add a lift-assist. The lift-assist consists of 2 spring loaded hinges with extension plates and rollers on the end of the plates opposite the hinges. The hinges are screwed to the edge of the main box. The rollers slide along the underside of the top as the top rises. We were able to lift a much heavier lid once we assembled the lift-assists. (See Photo).

The skeleton arm was hung from the lid off of a cup hook and a tie wrap. The fingers were position so that they were hanging out of the crypt even when the lid was down.



Another view of the inside of the crypt.



A view of the completed crypt. The top is 2" styrofoam. We did cheat a little and purchased the RIP stone on top.

It looked too good to pass up.

This was the only tombstone we purchased instead of actually making.



The arm lifted the top about 5". It cycled about every 30 secs. We added a red strobe light to the inside of the crypt and put our sound system for the cemetery inside it as well.

With speakers and a walkman playing on a loop inside the crypt, this is all the music we needed for the entire

The epitaph reads: ALEXANDER GOOD....YOU CAN'T KEEP A GOOD MAN DOWN