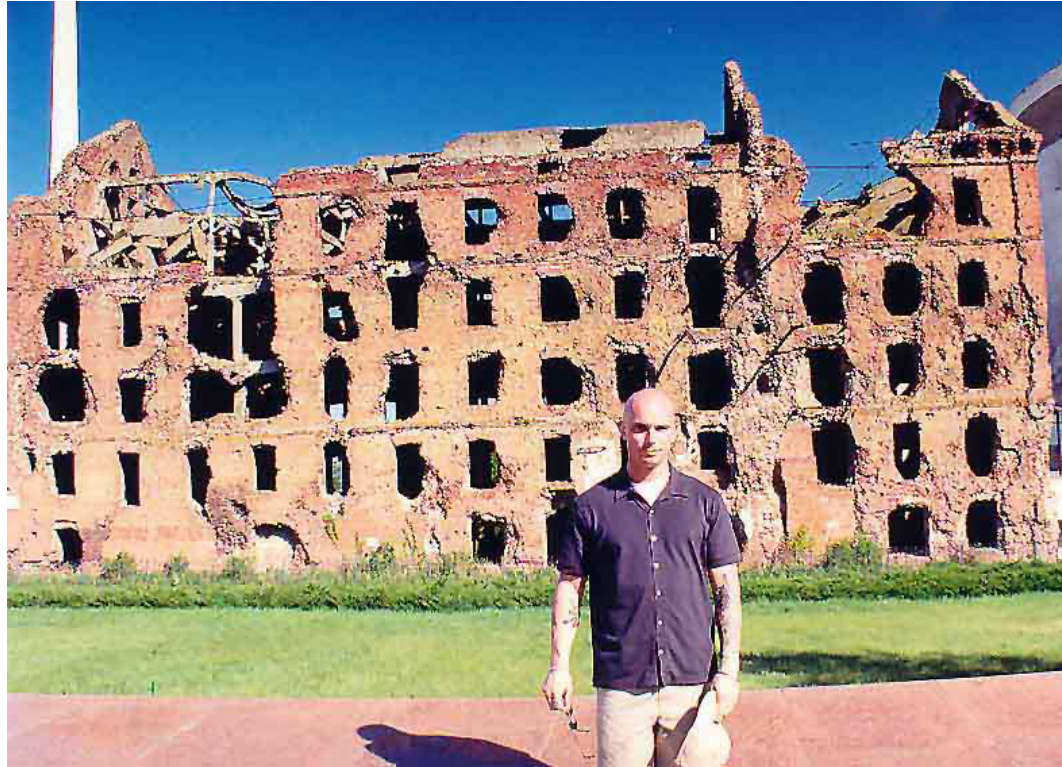


MoleTown



Great, just great, thought Mel as he read the *Tallahassee Tattler's* property listing for the umpteenth time. “Large apartment complex close to downtown. Nice lawn. A little TLC turns this fixer-upper into a great income-generator for life!” A *little* TLC? Mel unhappily eyed the building. How about *a whole lot!* It looked like his old fraternity house after a weekend-long toga party. Check that. It looked even *worse!* Well, he sure was in for it now. He’d bought the property sight-unseen from a friend of a friend of a friend (and, apparently, at least one of them wasn’t much of a friend) as a way to prove to his mum that his decision to quit brain surgery school and pursue a career in real estate was a good idea. Worse, he’d used her life savings as the down payment! A sudden loud crash shook the ground. Mel looked up in time to see part of the roof collapse, taking a section of the fifth floor with it. Well, so much for – he glanced at the blurb again – the “potential for a nice roof garden.” Abruptly, his attention was drawn to the front lawn where a mole had just surfaced. A second mole followed a moment later. And then a third, a fourth, and a fifth! Soon, the whole lawn was alive with scores of small, burrowing animals. But rather than lament this additional setback, this elimination of “nice” from the description of the lawn, Mel had an idea. He quickly wrote an ad for the *Tattler*, printed five hundred admission tickets, slipped into his game warden’s costume and, within days, was guiding inquisitive tourists on half-hour-long tours of MoleTown, USA, recently voted one of the Seven Wonders of the Pest Sightseeing World!