

NEWS from the Paranormal Investigators of Milwaukee

March 2015

Issue 31

Conover Square Mall

Special points of interest:

PIM offers scientific investigations of suspected paranormal activity in homes, businesses, and historic sites. We pride ourselves on providing confidential, professional services free of charge.

To have PIM conduct an investigation for you, contact Noah Leigh (Lead Investigator) through our website or by the phone number listed above.

We look forward to meeting you at a public event, investigating with you, or just hearing from you on Facebook or Twitter!

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With Spring less than a month away, it's time for PIM to hit the road and explore the claimed haunted world around us. First stop, Conover Square Mall in Oregon, Illinois.

Conover Square Mall was originally home to the Schiller Piano Company and was built back in 1890. The company built thousands of pianos over the years but in 1975 was converted into a shopping mall. The mall boasts old-world style storefronts to reflect the beauty and architecture of the period in which the building was built.

There is claimed paranormal activity that happens here such as the sound of a girl giggling in the hallways and museum, loud crashes coming from an unoccupied third floor and some have even said they have seen and felt the presence of a man in the south hallway.

PIM is very excited to investigate the mall for themselves. It is always an honor to investigate a building that's over 100 years old but the hard work, pride and craftsmanship that went into the pianos that were crafted in this building is something to be honored. This will be a very interesting investigation indeed.

PIM Welcomes New Investigator Andy

This month we would like to introduce a new member to PIM. His name is Andy and he is a Neurologic Music Therapist. He works with people who are non-verbal on a daily basis and therefore is very specialized in the use of alternative communication. During his research in these types of communication he ran into articles about EVP and other paranormal investigation tools. This prompted an old interest he had in the paranormal, thus leading him to PIM. After looking into a few other groups he felt PIM seemed like the right collection of people and ideas. PIM looks forward to working with him and would like to welcome him to the group!

**Paranormal Investigators
of Milwaukee**

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Website:

www.paranormalmilwaukee.com

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Cudahy Family Library Event

On February 10th PIM gave a presentation at the Cudahy Family Library. PIM would like to thank everyone who came out, we had a huge turnout! Everyone was very interactive and asked lots of questions. We love hearing your stories and inquiries of what we do as paranormal investigators. We would also like to thank the Cudahy Family Library for inviting us. We look forward to doing more presentations in the future.

Milwaukee Paranormal Conference Lineup

2015 Keynote Speakers

Donald R. Schmitt, expert on UFOs and the Roswell Crash, author of UFO Crash at Roswell, Witness to Roswell, and Inside the Real Area 51: the Secret History of Wright Patterson. Linda S. Godfrey, author of The Beast of Bray Road: Tailing America's Werewolf, Weird Wisconsin, and American Monsters: A History of Monster Lore, Legends, and Sightings in America. Noah Leigh, founder and lead investigator, Paranormal Investigators of Milwaukee.

Paranormal Investigation/ Ghosts

Melissa Tanner, founder and lead investigator, TnT Paranormal Investigations.

Allison Jorlin, ghost historian and proprietor of Milwaukee Ghosts Tours & Investigations. Panel: "Communicating With Clients: Dos and Don'ts," Noah Leigh, Melissa Tanner, Valerie Kedrowski (Stevens Point Paranormal).

Sociology

Tea Krulos, author, Monster Hunters: On the Trail With Ghost Hunters, Bigfooters, Ufologists, and Other Paranormal Investigators.

Marc Eaton, professor of sociology, Ripon College.

Cryptozoology & Folklore

J. Nathan Couch, author, Goatman: Flesh or Folklore? Jim Sherman, Michigan field representative, Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization (as seen on Finding Bigfoot).

Irish Folklore speaker TBA

Ufology

Nick Roesler, author, In Focus: Photographic Evidence of Unconventional Flying Objects.

Mark O'Connell, biographer of Dr. J. Allen Hynek and Mutual UFO Network Chief Investigator for Wisconsin.

Documentary Screening Session

Echoes of the Past (2015), documentary featurette, director David Gloyd.

PIM: A Paranormal Documentary (2015), documentary feature, producer Bradley James Kroll

Milwaukee Paranormal Conference Line Up

On Saturday, June 6th, at the Irish Cultural & Heritage Center, Milwaukee will play host to a FREE paranormal conference! In the February newsletter we told the story behind the inspiration for the conference itself but this month we will focus on the fantastic line up (which you can find in the list to the right) that will be at this exciting event!!

Of course we are very excited to have PIM's own Noah Leigh as a keynote speaker but we also have many close friends and fellow paranormal colleagues joining in as well.

Some of the topics you will have the opportunity to hear discussed are, of course, Paranormal Investigation but also Sociology, Cryptozoology and Folklore, Ufology, and more to be announced!

After the conference, PIM will be holding a public investigation at the Chudnow Museum of Yesteryear! For more information visit our website or Facebook page.

This is one conference you won't want to miss!!

Upcoming Events

- On Friday, May 8th, at the Best Place in the old Pabst Brewery, please join us for Horror-O-Rama. This will be your chance to come speak with PIM members face to face plus movie screenings, live music, food, costume contests, vendors, and so much more. After the festival is done you will have the opportunity to stay and participate in a real investigation with PIM for an additional charge. Tickets for the investigation are sold ONLY during the festival but to purchase tickets or get more information for the festival please visit PIM's fb page and follow the link for Horror-o-Rama. Act now and get the tickets to this event while you can!!



The John Krahnicles

Written: by John Krahn

In the next few issues of our monthly newsletter, I will be discussing several of the most infamous demonic/haunted cases out there. So onto the first case, The Amityville Horror. I will outline the details of the case, give my personal opinion on the case and then explain why I came to the conclusion that I did.

The year was 1974. Twenty-three year old Ronald DeFeo shot and killed both parents and four siblings with a rifle in his house in the Town of Amityville on New York's Long Island. Afterwards, DeFeo entered a nearby bar and stated that his family had been killed. Soon thereafter, he was arrested for the murders of his family members. DeFeo and his attorney went with "The devil made me do it" insanity defense and stated voices in his head told him to kill his family. It should be noted that there was a \$200,000 life insurance policy on the family. With the other family members deceased, DeFeo would be the beneficiary as a result. He was subsequently convicted and sent to prison, where he remains to this day.

Fast forward several years to 1977. I was approximately 10 years old. I remember reading in the green sheet section of the Milwaukee Journal about a family who was terrorized by demons and spirits for 28 days before fleeing their house, leaving all their property behind. The book, "The Amityville Horror: A True Story" was written by author, Jan Anson and was soon released. I immediately picked up a copy. I remember reading it late at night when I was alone. The book scared the bejesus out of me. It had to be a true story. After all, it said right on the cover, "a true story" so it had to be true, right? In my eyes, this was absolute proof that ghosts were real.

In December 1975, George, Kathy, Danny, Chris, and Missy Lutz moved in to their house. After moving in, they made numerous claims of paranormal and demonic activity. After moving in, they alleged that they called a priest named Reverend Ralph J. Pecoraro to the house to bless it, due to the dark history of the house. While there, the book states that the Reverend heard a disembodied voice bellow, "Get out!" The book further indicates that he was plagued by flu symptoms, blisters on his hands and other afflictions. Other claims were: repeated appearance of swarms of flies on a window in the sewing room, a ceramic lion coming to life, biting George and then teleporting, the daughter reporting she had a friend, named Jodi, who was a pig with red eyes who left cloven hoof prints in the snow, George waking up at the same time every night, the supposed time of the murders, the heavy front door being blown off hinges, a crucifix turning upside down, Kathy levitating two feet above their bed, a red room that emanated the odor of blood, and the claim that the property was on land that was once used by local Indians as a place to take the insane, sick and dying. Many, many more claims were alleged in the book. After 28 days, the book indicates that the Lutz's fled the house in terror never to return, leaving their property behind.

On February 16, 1976, George contacted parapsychologist and paranormal investigator, Stephen Kaplan, Ph.D. and requested that he conduct an investigation of their home. Kaplan indicated he was willing to investigate the house and does not charge for his services. Kaplan did advise, however, that if he found that the case was a hoax, he would be exposing it as such. Three days later, George contacted Kaplan and told him to disregard conducting an investigation as Lutz and his family did not want any publicity. Kaplan indicated that on February 24, 1976, he was watching channel 5 news and they were showing a filming of a séance at the Lutz home conducted by five people, including Ed and Lorraine Warren and two psychics. Clearly, they were trying to avoid publicity, not! According to Warren's own website, self-proclaimed clairvoyant, Lorraine Warren, claimed to be overwhelmed by a demonic presence and that the presence followed her to her home after leaving the Lutz residence. She further stated in an interview by Yahoo Movies at "The Conjuring" press release, that the Amityville House was the one place she would never return to due to her experiences there.



The John Krahnicles Continued.....

There you have the story in a nutshell. Now, my opinion on the veracity of the story. I think it is a well-conceived hoax and here is why. It has been suggested that George was in over his head when it came to being able to afford the huge house. George and Kathy met up with DeFeo's attorney, William Weber. Weber has stated that he and the Lutz's concocted the story over many bottles of wine to mutually benefit both parties. Weber was hoping to use the story to get his client a new trial and the Lutz's were hoping for a good book deal to make some coin and dig themselves out of their money pit. It should be noted that the movie, "The Exorcist" came out in December 1973 and turned a pretty good profit.

Kaplan decided to do an in-depth investigation as to the alleged "facts" of the case, which he discusses in his book, "The Amityville Horror Conspiracy." He interviewed many people involved and documented his sources. In the book, he lists over one hundred inconsistencies. Due to limited space in this article I will only address a few of them. The Reverend has denied ever stepping foot onto the Lutz residence and only spoke to them via telephone after George expressed concern of the history and occurrences in the house and counseled them. The Lutz's claim to have repeatedly contacted the local police department, however, there is no record of that occurring. The red room was found to actually be a tiny area behind the shelving under the basement stairs. The claim that Shinnecock Indians used the land the house was on for the insane and dying is impossible since the Shinnecocks always lived far east of Amityville. George claimed that an entity caused a window to slam on his son's hand, smashing it flat, requiring that George take him to the Brunswick Hospital. The hospital has no record of George's son, Daniel ever being admitted. Another dubious claim is that of the pig with red eyes leaving hoof prints in the snow. Weather records show there was no snowfall on that date as indicated in the book, therefore, hoof prints could not have been left. The neighbors had a Siamese cat, which when light reflects off the eyes, glow red and it was observed climbing up to the Lutz's windows, looking in. The photograph that Missy drew, portrayed in the book, looks very much like a cat. No indication of a door blown off its hinges as the Lutz's fled the house was ever found. I believe there were video cameras and audio recording devices back then. Why are there no recordings if the activity was constant? None of the subsequent owners of the house after the Lutz's have reported any activity.

What about the two boys all grown up. Well, you can watch an interview of Daniel Lutz on Netflix, entitled, "My Amityville Horror". I think if you watch it, you will come to the same conclusion I did, which is Daniel has more than a few bats in the belfry. Don't take my word for it, watch it yourself and come to your own conclusion. What is Chris Lutz up to these days? He apparently changed his name and stated he wants to stay out of the limelight. In an interview with Spooky Southcoast in 2011, Chris basically said all the claims by George and Kathy that were disproven, never actually happened. He also confirmed that George had run into substantial financial issues after buying the house. Chris did state that some paranormal things did and still do happen to him and you can find out all about the details when he comes out with his book about it. He also gets paid to speak at various paranormal conventions, including one at the Chicago Ghost Conference in 2013, listed as an "Amityville survivor." I apparently have a different definition of keeping out of the limelight. Missy Lutz has wisely remained off the grid. Worst case scenario, it was all a complete hoax. Best case scenario, some low level paranormal activity happened, making it just another run of the mill haunted house story that is a dime a dozen.

Bottom line, if you want to know all the intimate details about the Amityville Horror from the murder, to the trial, to the claims, to the hoax exposed, I recommend The Amityville Horror Conspiracy by Stephen Kaplan. If you want to read one of the scariest ghost story books out there, you can't do better than the Amityville Horror by Jan Anson. It just should be located in the fiction section.