

MPI

METRO PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

Howell Opera House Investigation
Final Report
Submitted by: Chris Forsythe

Location:

Howell, MI

Date:

March 22nd 2008

Source:

Livingston Arts Council

Investigation Duration:

6 Hours (20:00-02:00)

Investigators Present:

Chris F. (*Lead investigator*)
Wayne M. (*Lead investigator*)
Wendy F.
Deana M.
Chris C. (*Technician*)
Erin C.
Jo G.
Russ G.
Kevin J.
Kristie J.

Guests:

Shane (*Pwnd Radio*)
Bryan (*Pwnd Radio*)
Missy (*Pwnd Radio*)
Chris (*Pwnd Radio*)

Location Condition:

Historic landmark, 1000 Seat Theater / civic auditorium, built in 1880 and was operational until 1924 when fire code called for its closure. The 1st floor was used as a storefront during the dormant years, and the theater and balcony portion were used for storage. Many of the artifacts in this location are almost in original condition such as gas lighting fixtures, old single pull wiring, and woodwork. The first floor and staircases have been brought to code with new electrical and fire deterrent systems while the basement, 2nd and 3rd floor balconies remain almost intact. New HVAC was also noted in the basement area as well as a closure of a tunnel system that is rumored to connect all of the storefronts in downtown Howell. The site is currently under continuing heavy renovation under the supervision of the Livingston Arts Council. (See historical documentation for photographs as of current investigation date).

Notes: Noted at the start of the investigation were several leaks that developed from the roof and will affect audio on the second and third floors. Due to colder conditions the furnace in the basement was active (audio / video contamination) and breath could also be seen on the 2nd and 3rd floors. The old wiring was not checked to see if any active spots could be found to note any erratic EMF activity, in several spots the original wiring and ceramic bumpers were exposed and showed signs of advanced aging and wear. Also noted was the travel of sound between floors, special measures were taken to keep all team activity to a minimum, heavy dust concentrations and activity were also noted in the basement, 2nd, and 3rd floor areas.

Location Weather:

Upon our arrival the mid evening was clear and cool, after dusk a slight breeze with falling temperatures was noted by the staff.

Moon Phase: Waning Gibbous

Solar X-Rays: Normal

Geomagnetic Field: Quiet

Temperature: 36 F

Feels Like: 30 F

Visibility: 10.00 Miles

Pressure: 30.17 Steady

Dew Point: 12 F

Humidity: 38 F

UV Index: 2 Low

Wind: N 7 Mph.

Equipment on Hand:

Digital Cameras
Digital Voice Recorders
Micro Cassette Recorders
External Microphones
Laptops (2)
Desktop PC (DVR monitoring station)
IR Headlamps
Flashlights
2 Way Radios
Laser Thermal Contact Gauge (LTCCG)
Ambient Temperature Gauge (ATG)
DVR IR Camera System (6)
Wireless Audio Transmitter / Receiver (w/ext. Microphone)

Note:

All recording equipment was loaded with both fresh batteries and recording media as is MPI investigation protocol, and voice checks were performed for recognition and recording quality. All media was transferred to digital file for review upon completion of the investigation.

Team Rally Point & Monitoring Station

2nd Floor Landing, South Stairwell

Team Assignments:

Alpha

Wayne M.
Chris F.
Shane (guest)
Bryan (guest)
Missy (guest)
Chris (guest)

Bravo

Wendy F.
Jo G.

Charlie

Deana M.
Erin C.
Kevin J.

Delta

Kristie J.
Russ G.

Team Rotation:

20:00 – 21:00 – Setup / Briefing

21:00 – 22:00 – Rotation #1

Basement – Charlie
CC Station – Alpha
1st Floor – Bravo
2nd and 3rd Floor – Delta

22:15 – 23:15 – Rotation #2

Basement - Alpha
CC Station - Delta
1st Floor - Charlie
2nd and 3rd Floor – Bravo

23:30 – 00:30 – Rotation #3

Basement – Delta
CC Station – Bravo
1st Floor – Alpha
2nd and 3rd Floor – Charlie

00:45 – 01:45 – Rotation #4

Basement - Bravo
CC Station - Charlie
1st Floor - Delta
2nd and 3rd Floor – Alpha

02:00 – 03:00 - Breakdown

CC & Monitoring Staff:

Chris C. (*Note: all teams had at least one session in the monitoring station during posted rotation.*)

Equipment Placement - Video:

DVR Camera #1 – Stage 2nd floor, left side facing towards audience arena

DVR Camera #2 – Upper balcony 3rd floor, facing stage

DVR Camera #3 – Audience arena 2nd floor, facing stage

DVR Camera #4 – Stairwell 2nd floor, facing up to third floor landing

DVR Camera #5 – Basement facing main room (long shot), right side

DVR Camera #6 – Basement left room

Equipment Placement - Audio:

Digital #1 – (Stationary) CC monitoring station (See above for camera location information)

Digital #2– Main stage area, 2nd floor center

Wireless Audio – Main stage area, 2nd floor rear

Mobile Units – Each investigative team had at least one mobile recording unit on hand during each investigation rotation and area.

Note: All mobile units were outfitted with external microphones to limit possible contamination of audio evidence.

Case History – Consultation Notes

Consultation Date: November 30th 2007

MPI Representative: Wayne Miracle

Note: All permission and investigation request documentation reviewed and signed by client at the date of consultation.

Supposed Activity:

Apparitions, being touched, electrical disturbances, phantom smells, recorded EVPs, voices, cold spots, objects moving.

During the consultation of the Opera House the MPI representatives present were able to tour the facility and gather notes for team size, equipment setup and rotation. Upon talking to the LAC representative the staff believes that there is legitimate paranormal activity in this location. Several members of the staff have witnessed these phenomena firsthand as well as several investigative teams have recorded EVPs in this location.

There have been 2 deaths associated with this facility and it has been active in one form or another for over 126 years with seven different families having obtained ownership at various periods.

No other details available for report.

Evidence Review & Findings

Photographs:

As is MPI protocol several hundred photographs were taken during the duration of the investigation period. Upon review of all submitted photographic material, no anomalous activity was captured on film at this location for report.

Audio:

Digital #1 – (stationary) – No physical evidence captured on this device at the time of the investigation.

Digital #2 – (stationary) – No physical evidence captured on this device at the time of the investigation.

Wireless – (stationary) – No physical evidence captured on this device at the time of the investigation.

Mobile Units (All) - After a thorough review of all of the analog and digital data submitted, several segments were saved for further analysis.

Segments #1 - #1A – During a EVP session on the first floor several members of alpha team had heard a distinct male cough. The “cough” can be heard and shortly thereafter you can hear the team in the area reacting to the sound (refer to personal experience section, later in this report, for further information). After the time was noted on the recorder the team made a check to see if any male present had coughed at that time, no one in the area reported making that noise.

Segments #2, #3, and #4 – All throughout the investigation distinct but inaudible whispers can be heard behind normal EVP questioning and conversation.

Segments #5 - #5A – During routine EVP questioning in the basement area two members of bravo team are conversing; an audible whisper can be heard in the recording.

Note: Please refer to client copy (disc) for actual labeled audio segments, and recording descriptions.

Video:

DVR Camera #1 – No physical evidence captured on this device at the time of the investigation.

DVR Camera #2 – No physical evidence captured on this device at the time of the investigation.

DVR Camera #3 – No physical evidence captured on this device at the time of the investigation.

DVR Camera #4 – No physical evidence captured on this device at the time of the investigation.

DVR Camera #5 – No physical evidence captured on this device at the time of the investigation.

DVR Camera #6– No physical evidence captured on this device at the time of the investigation.

Thermal:

Both Laser Contact Gauges (LCTG) and Ambient Gauges (ATG) were used for both baseline and notation throughout the investigation. Falling temperatures after dusk made it hard to maintain baseline in the basement, 2nd, and 3rd floors. Drafty conditions were noted in these areas.

EMF:

Several readings were taken around the location on each floor, due to erratic readings from the locations wiring as well as proximity to outside high voltage lines no definite “baseline” could be acquired. (Jumps of .08+MG to 7.00+MG were noted in several areas of the location, to surges of over 50+MG near active heating and cooling equipment in the basement area.)

Investigator Feeling / Experiences:

(Note: Personal experiences cannot in itself determine paranormal activity in a location, unless documented by video or audio equipment)

Chris F. – Heard what sounded like a mans cough on the 1st floor. After checking with all teams, it was determined that no one had coughed at that time. No other experiences to report.

Wendy F. – (1st floor) Felt something touch my hair. (Basement) Saw anomalous lights that couldn’t be explained in the left side tunnel entrance.

Chris C. – No personal experiences to report.

Erin C. – No personal experiences to report.

Wayne M. – No personal experiences to report.

Deana M. – No personal experiences to report.

Jo G. – (Basement) On left side of the tunnel entrance, saw a white circle of light twice in separate areas of the room.

Russ G. – No personal experiences to report.

Kevin J. – No personal experiences to report.

Kristie J. – No personal experiences to report.

Shane (Guest) – (Basement) While in the left tunnel area I felt something touch my stomach. While in the main room of the basement I was kneeling down and someone hit my right knee/leg. I said sorry to Wayne M. but he was not near me when I checked. Also Chris F. and I went into the basement alone and both of our camera batteries drained at the same time; prior to starting both cameras were fully charged. (1st floor) Around 11:32 PM we were talking and both Chris and I heard a male cough to our left. We checked with the other teams and no one had coughed at that time.

Bryan (Guest) – (Basement) In the left room I felt like the IR camera moved several times; I also experienced chills and felt extremely cold at certain times. (1st floor) Heard a male clearing throat / cough.

Missy (Guest) – (Basement) In the left tunnel room, I was extremely cold at times and thought something had touched my left knee / thigh area. (1st floor) I heard a male cough in an area where no one was there.

Chris (Guest) – (Basement) My video camera went from full charge to dead battery. (1st floor) I heard an unexplainable male cough.

Final:

The Howell Opera House proved not only to be an interesting investigation due to its long and cherished history, but also allowed the team to put in place new tactics and equipment configurations to be able to cover such a large and open area. After a thorough analysis of all of the submitted data we can say at this time that there were several personal experiences as well as anomalous audio and video that could in fact be paranormal in nature, however further study of this location must be performed before we are able to make the judgment of an actual haunting. We will be returning to meet with the representatives of the Livingston Arts Council to set up a supplemental investigation so we can further our research and hopefully gather more data to help prove and substantiate claims of a haunting at this location.

The entire MPI team would like to thank The Livingston Arts Council and its membership for allowing us the opportunity to investigate the historic theater and also for taking the time and effort to preserve a piece of history for future generations to enjoy.