

The Millsite Inn

Conducted on Wednesday November 10th-11th 2010, and Friday 3/4-Saturday 3/5 2011

Background

On October 31st, 2010, we received the following email:

Hello Richard

I am Carol Byers. My husband, brother in law and myself own the Millsite Inn up on the Peak to Peak. Most of us have seen or heard the ghost who lives in the restaurant. Despite the sage burnings and suggestions that he 'go to the light', he continues to stay and is just a harmless, seemingly curious presence.

If you'll go to www.millsiteinn.com you can read the ghost story there. It explains why we think we know his identity. If we are right and it is Carl Walter, he passed away on the 10th of November 1973. I'd like to stay the night there on the 10th.

Would that interest you and your crew?

Thank you for your time.

Carol

The Millsite Inn website posts the following background information:

Over the years there have been many reports of encounters with a male presence at the Millsite. Maybe a glimpse from the corner of your eye...even a tap on the shoulder or a knocking sound.

One Sunday night Scott found himself, as he had hundreds of nights before, alone in the dark with the doors locked, counting the money. Carol was elsewhere in the building. All at once, the unmistakable feeling that someone was watching him came over him. He spun around and found himself face to face with an old man looking at him with an astonished expression through a hole cut into a door to the kitchen. He pushed the door open, calling for Carol, thinking he was about to be robbed! There was nobody there.

Scott's education is in the field of engineering, his imagination runs toward numbers, not ghosts. He refused to believe the man was not there. He and Carol searched the entire building from the upstairs to the dirt floor basement. They found nobody but themselves and all the doors remained locked. He finally gave up, telling Carol that he 'had goosebumps the size of Long's Peak and he was going home!'

On a quiet evening not long after Scott's encounter with the mysterious old man, the subject of ghosts came up and Scott told his friends what he had seen. One of the listeners was Mr. Bill Weaver. Mr. Weaver, or Billy, as he preferred to be called, had a story of his own to add.

He believed he knew the identity of the ghost in the doorway.

Born locally, Billy grew up in the mountain town of Gold Hill. What follows is the story he told us that evening.

When Billy was a young boy, in 19** the Millsite, known at the time as The Aspen Grove Inn, was built by two brothers, Joe and Carl Walter. There was a terrible falling out between the two brothers. Joe even had a headstone made with his brother's name engraved on it. He left blank the date of his passing, however. Carl was still living at the time.

Billy told us that Joe was a big, husky man while Carl was shorter with a slighter build. His description of the Carl he knew and Scott's description of the man he saw were ironically similar, down to the tan dungarees, suspenders and plaid shirt. His sunken cheeks and scruffy iron grey hair were also a match.

To date it is unknown what became of the brothers, but the author continues to research the subject. It is the contention of the author's mother that the Millsite discover Carl's birthday and celebrate it with him.

Following several email exchanges, it was agreed that BCPRS would send an team to conduct a preliminary investigation of the property on Wednesday, November 10th.

The Millsite Inn is located at an elevation of 9,317 feet, situated on highway 72 (known as the Peak-to-Peak highway), north of Nederland and in the vicinity of Ward. Best access to the Inn can be made by taking Boulder Canyon (highway 119) to Nederland, then taking highway 72 north, or alternatively taking Overland Road west through Jamestown, then taking highway 72 south. The latter road is somewhat treacherous in snow and icy conditions.

Our initial visit, on Wednesday November 10th, ran from 22:00 to 03:00. Weather conditions were cold, with a light dusting of snow. The BCPRS team was joined by our colleagues from the American Association of Paranormal Investigators (henceforth known as AAPI), and The Other Side Investigations, henceforth known as TOSI. The breakdown of personnel is as follows:

Miranda Armstrong-Metzger (BCP)
Brad Carstens (TOSI)
Richard Estep (BCP)*
Laura Estep (BCP)
Jeff Metzger (BCP)

Joey Stanford (BCP)
Stephen Weidner (AAPI)*
Kira Woodmansee (BCP)
Seth Woodmansee(BCP)

*coordinating, not observing, due to prescription medication constraints

It should be noted that Richard and Stephen were taking prescription pain medications. In the interests of objectivity, their use as observers was discounted, and both occupied coordination roles instead.

21:00 – 22:00 The team assembled at the Millsite Inn and tried some of the excellent house specialty pizza. All beverages consumed were non-alcoholic, in order to preserve validity of observational data.

22:00 Interviews with proprietor (Carol-Anne) and barman (David) were conducted. Both related experiences of an unusual nature that had occurred during their tenancy at the Millsite Inn. Carol-Anne observed the apparition of a man she believes to be Carl Walter, stepping through (literally through, without opening) the front door, before turning immediately to his right and disappearing down the stairs towards the pool table, subsequently vanishing from sight. David noted feeling an unseen presence in the bar on several occasions, and hearing the tread of heavy footsteps upstairs when nobody else was in the building. At one point, when talking with a couple who were vocally skeptical of the Millsite ghost's existence, distinct knocking was heard coming from upstairs in answer to knocking conducted by those people on the ground floor. As noted in the earlier section of this document, proprietor Scott observed the surprised face of an old man, looking at him through a hole in the kitchen door. Another witness claims to have seen a female figure, in period dress, standing in the upstairs attic window on the alpha side of the structure.

23:00 We were taken on a tour of the property. All three floors – basement, ground floor, and attic – were inspected.

23:40 EMF meters began to detect regular, grouped pulses of 10 spikes and then 12 spikes (ranging from 3 milligauss to 22 milligauss), alternating in a 10-12-10-12 recurring pattern. An explanation was soon found -: Richard's cell phone was searching for a signal. Once it was shut down, no further EMF irregularities were recorded. This served as an excellent reminder to shut down all of our cell phones.

23:50 Initial division of personnel into groups:

- Command/coordination (Richard, Stephen)
- EMF baseline group (Joey, Kira)
- Temperature baseline group (Brad, Seth)
- Architecture group – identify EMF hotspot areas such as utilities, wireless router, etc (Miranda, Jeff)

00:00 Floor plans drawn up. Baseline readings were taken on all three floors. A floor plan was drawn

up and baseline readings were charted on it.

- Alpha side of building is entrance door where cars are parked. Delta side faces the road.
- Delta side basement window broken out during recent burglary. Significant draught.
- Compressor in basement generates significant A/C EMF field for 2.5' radius.
- 60-64 degrees Fahrenheit in main room, 67 degrees in kitchen. 61-62 degrees upstairs. 42-50 degrees in basement.

●

00:50 Knocking/rapping/tapping experiments were conducted – Carol attempts to repeat the knocking “dialog” wherein her knocking on the main floor would be seemingly answered by knocks from the roof. Digital voice and tape recorders were left running. Experiment concludes at 01:05 with no knocking returned, however Laura, Seth, Brad, and Kira report extremely faint “music-like” noise, seemingly from C wall at the rear of the structure. We verified that the one neighbor (whose lights are on) does not have a radio or TV on, and was not home at the time. We verified that the radio inside the Millsite Inn is turned off. No explanation was found for this noise, which was not detected on digital voice recording equipment.

01:17 Silent observation and listening experiment (EVP running)

Laura and Brad – C side of main floor

Seth and Kira – Upstairs in attic

Miranda and Jeff - Basement

01:21 Unidentified sounds heard on the main floor, near the bar. 01:25 repeat – sounds were traced to the ice machine. We subsequently emptied and unplugged the ice machine at 01:40. No noises were heard that could not be accounted for logically.

02:05 EVP session – recorders scattered upstairs, against far C wall of ground floor, by fireplace, in main room with investigators. EMF meters were distributed alongside voice recorders.

02:20 Jeff, Miranda, Brad, Joey left for the night.

03:00 The investigation was terminated, as no unusual activity was deemed to have occurred.

Post-investigation analysis

From: Brad Carstens (TOPI)

To: Richard Estep, Director BCPRS

I reviewed both the video and voice recorder evidence and did not find anything. There were a couple of items that while on one recorder seemed to be a possible EVP but when further reviewed on the other device cleared up the sounds.

From: Stephen Weidner (AAPI)

To: Richard Estep, Director BCPRS

Here is the second audio session I recorded. There seemed to be one very very very faint EVP. Did I mention it was very faint?

<note: in answer to the question, "Is there a woman present, who might have something to say to us?" Stephen believed he might have gotten an extremely faint EVP stating "Who's that?" or "What's that?" Having listened to this audio clip several times, and submitted it to other investigators for a second opinion, I believe that this EVP does not constitute evidence, as it is extremely difficult to make out and subjective in nature.)

BCPRS members did not record any audio anomalies which could not be explained scientifically. In hindsight, the only unexplained event arising from the initial investigation was the extremely faint "music-like" noise, seemingly from the C wall at the rear of the structure, reported by Laura, Seth, Brad, and Kira. Theories floated for this include an open window in a house somewhere in the vicinity of the Millsite, allowing radio or TV noise to carry across the still, calm night air (taking into account the snowy conditions, I consider this to be unlikely) or the stereo system of a passing vehicle (again unlikely, because no "Doppler effect" was reported, which is inconsistent with a moving vehicle). The question surrounding the source of the music-like noise remains unresolved at the time of writing (03/15/2011).

A second investigation was planned for a Friday night approximately three months later. Snow was predicted (but did not appear), and the evening weather was cold, still, and clear. A new moon made for extremely clear, starry skies, and the rise of Venus in the pre-dawn hours was sufficiently bright as to cause surprised exclamations from several investigators. The surrounding roads were somewhat busier than at the time of our previous investigation, probably due to the fact that Nederland's "Frozen Dead Guy Days" festival took place the following morning.

RETURN VISIT Friday 3/4-Saturday 3/5 2011 21:00-06:00

Richard Estep (BCPRS)

Jeff Metzger (BCPRS)

Kathleen Paulsen (BCPRS)

Jenna Robbert (guest observer)

Joey Stanford (BCPRS)

21:00-22:30 Team assembles, dinner (no alcohol)

22:30 Briefing. Kathleen and Jenna were informed of the Inn's backstory, and the circumstances surrounding the reported haunting. Bar patrons go home and leave the building in the care of proprietor Carol-Anne and BCPRS personnel. Since our last visit, Carol-Ann had conducted some detective work of her own. She had obtained the death record for Carl Walter, stating the time and date of his death (in a Boulder nursing home), and the manner of his death (an acute myocardial

infarction, i.e. a heart attack).

22:35 Joey reports seeing a reflection, well-illuminated, of a Caucasian face in the south side (alpha side) door windows (middle window and lowest, leftmost, window). Attempts to replicate this with various lighting and positioning changes unsuccessful. However, due to the fact that only one investigator made this observation, and no recording instruments could verify it, it must be discounted as evidence. Photographs taken of the alpha side door and windows throughout the investigation revealed no anomaly.

23:00 Baseline (EMF, temp) measurements taken throughout structure. It was decided by mutual assent to ignore the basement this time, due to the small number of personnel and the fact that no paranormal activity has been reported in the basement. Although a control object would be placed in the attic, our attention was focused almost exclusively on the ground floor, where multiple sightings of the male apparition have been reported. EMF spikes were noted around the pizza oven (80mgauss), outlet above prep fridge (70mgauss), spikes around kitchen appliances (30-60mgauss). Kitchen outlets at 3mgauss along west wall (bravo side).

00:30 Placed control objects throughout downstairs and one upstairs, on sheets of white A4 paper, outlined in ink. Objects placed on the bar, in the kitchen/bar doorway where the male apparition was seen by Scott, on the pool table, and at the top of the stairs.

00:35 At the top of the stairs, Richard's camera turned itself off with a dead battery warning. Fresh batteries had been placed in the camera at the beginning of this investigation, only five photographs had been taken prior to this attempt. The camera then refused to power back on. On returning downstairs, the camera powered on again. The batteries tested as being at 50% capacity, according to Joey's battery tester.

00:42 Joey and Carol were upstairs in the attic and recorded an EMF spike from 0.0 to 1.5 (statistically insignificant) but accompanied by a temperature raise from 57.7 F to 62.1 F. They took an EVP immediately, which yielded no anomalous result.

01:00 EVP experimentation conducted at the bar. No anomalous results.

01:30 Joey reported a dark shadow moving on the curtains above the couch. Everyone at the time was sitting in the bar. The light source was the pool table light and nobody was there. No others saw it. Dismissed as evidence due to lack of secondary verification.

02:00 Joey reported movement at the bar next to the flowers. States that he saw a faint shadow, in motion. It was seen through the mirror by the bathrooms and then from the couch seat next to front door (delta side). A minor EMF spike of 1.0 on the Mel meter was noted upon investigation (statistically insignificant). No others saw it. Dismissed as evidence due to lack of secondary verification.

02:30 EVP experimentation conducted at the couch against the delta wall. Curtains moving slightly, explained by draft coming through insulation and underneath front door. No anomalous results reported.

03:00 The “music-like noise” (reported during the earlier investigation) was reported again, this time heard by Jeff and Joey. Once again, attempts to track this down to a source in the kitchen and/or outside the property were unsuccessful. The next door neighbor was not home, as he returned an hour after this incident. We have been unable to identify the source of this noise. It was not recorded on the digital voice recording equipment.

Observation continued for the next three hours. The atmosphere was relaxed and quite informal, due to a lack of activity to investigate. Joey slept for approximately two hours. Carol-Ann had reported that any of her friends or Inn patrons who had slept at the Millsite experienced terrible and disturbing dreams – this was not to be the case for Joey, who reported a dreamless sleep, in a sleeping bag against the delta wall.

06:00 BCPRS researchers pack up equipment, secure the building, and leave.

Post-Investigation Analysis

Digital voice recording equipment and photographic equipment yielded no anomalous findings. The one thing for which we remain unable to account is the “music-like noise” reported by multiple investigators on both occasions. On our first visit, the sound was reported slightly after 01:00 a.m. On the second visit, it was reported at 03:00a.m. We are unable to explain this noise, and regret the fact that it did not appear on any of our audio recordings.

We were unfortunately unable to capture evidence of the resident Millsite Inn apparition(s) during our two nights there. Based on the fact that they are reported at very rare intervals throughout the year, our chances of achieving this goal were not high.

On behalf of AAPI, TOSI, and BCPRS, I would like to thank Carol-Ann and Scott for making us welcome and entrusting us with their property for two nights. I strongly recommend visiting the Millsite Inn if you are able, enjoying some of their delicious food and hearing the story of Carl Walter for yourself. Who knows, the next person to see the apparition or hear the unexplained music might just be you! Should you experience anything out of the ordinary at the Millsite, please contact the Boulder County Paranormal Research Society and let us know of it.

Richard Estep Director BCPRS 03/15/2011