



ADRIAN McCANDLESS | THE WICHITAN

A temporary entrance was made for the campus bookstore due to new renovations.

Bookstore

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when the university's contract was going to expire.

"(Contract) conditions were made with Barnes and Noble, and they never hesitated to agree with our conditions. Had they not, we would have gone out to bid," Lamb said.

The contract was renewed for seven years.

"We extended our contract, and Barnes and Noble agreed to

the renovation at no cost to the university with the exception of the asbestos abatement," he said.

But with Java City relocating, what happens with the area it currently occupies?

"We have had many ideas," Lamb said, "but we're unsure about what to do with the space."

According to Lamb, a convenience store, national brand, or a Rock Creamery are but a few

ideas being tossed around.

Although the bookstore is open during remodeling, plans for a grand re-opening are in the works.

"We are hoping for the re-opening to be sometime after Thanksgiving break," Tina English, a management trainee for the bookstore said.

Hunter

ghost hunting.

"I'm not saying I see dead people," she said, "but I have had, by far, more luck capturing any type of paranormal evidence than most 'professionals.' It's like I get a feeling for these types of things."

She spent a lot of time at the 14-story Baker Hotel in her hometown of Mineral Wells. Tales ran rampant of its many ghostly occupants. Cunningham, however, was more interested in facts than legend.

"I took it upon myself to single handedly find every ghost in that building," she said.

At night, she'd squirrel away a tape recorder inside the abandoned building to try and pick up audio evidence. On one occasion, she said she recorded a man talking to a screaming woman.

The first time Cunningham became aware she was "sensitive" to the paranormal world was in church. She was about 5 years old, she recalled. She remembers seeing a bright, transparent light floating from the back of the church through the doors and up to the altar.

Her mom, noticing her daughter was preoccupied, asked what she was looking at. She remembers telling her mother in a matter-of-fact fashion that she saw an angel.

"Kids are more in tune to spirituality through innocence," she said, "so I just knew that's what it was."

For two and a half years, Cunningham's family lived in a house in Mineral Wells that she considered haunted. During her sophomore through senior years of high school,

she experienced some paranormal activity in their home, which was built in 1923.

"A lot of little things would happen every now and then, but only to me," she said. "Everyone else in my house thought I was crazy."

She remembers instances of hearing things, seeing movement out of the corner of her eye, having tricks pulled on her all the time and once, having a lemon thrown at her. Eventually, unexplained events started happening to the rest of her family, but not with the same frequency as they did with her.

Sometimes the whole family would hear deep, raspy breathing throughout the house. The backdoor would always be open when the family returned home, even when they all knew they had shut and locked it before leaving.

"There were times when I would be in the room, and you would hear the doorknob turn or the lock click and it would open," she said. "I even got that on film once."

She said she saw something in the house on several occasions, sometimes in a light charcoal color or sometimes in gray.

"I thought I saw my little brother run in my closet out of the corner of my eye," she said, "but then I saw my 'real' brother in his room, far away from my closet."

She said she turned quickly back to look into her closet and saw the hangers moving as if someone had brushed past them.

Some people may not know the difference between experiencing

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real paranormal activity and just paranoia, but Cunningham said if something happens more than once, you might be experiencing some type of phenomena.

"If physical things happen, and happen more than once," she said, "I would have to say that you should look into possibly having a ghost friend."

If this indeed is the case, she said the person should start doing a little digging to see if there is any evidence to back up his or her belief.

First, find out if anyone has died on the property and, if so, take a tape recorder and disposable camera and record various places on the property.

"Hold the tape recorder and say, 'Is there anyone else in the room besides me,' and wait for a response," she said.

What you may find is an Electronic Voice Phenomenon, EVPs, recorded on the tape. This term is used to describe the sounds recorded on a tape that are not human.

The human voice range is recorded between 300 hertz to 3000 hertz, both being the extremes. The EVPs are recorded between 0 hertz to 300 hertz, proving they are not from a human. These ranges can be found through any audio editing software, Cunningham said.

Having ventured into many abandoned buildings to get such evidence, some may wonder how Cunningham stays so calm. She gives only one explanation.

"I guess some people are born brave."

Hotel

to its past splendor. Just what is the future for this architectural remnant of the past, and do observers really understand its history?

In order to value the true importance of the Baker Hotel, the history of the town must be understood as well. In 1877 James A. Lynch settled in a valley 45 miles west of Fort Worth, that was soon to become Mineral Wells, known until 1954 as "Ednaville."

Upon digging water wells in his establishment, James Lynch soon discovered the water, despite its odd taste, cured his wife's rheumatism. This well and its water was famed for its mineral healing powers and was named the "crazy woman well," eventually shortened to "crazy water."

Soon people came from miles around to experience this magical healing water. Many hotels and drinking pavilions were built for guests to enjoy, including the Hexagon, the Oxford, the Period, and the Piedmont Hotel. The Crazy Water Hotel was the Baker's predecessor, built in 1927 by Carr Collins. The hotel featured the city's famous crazy water, 200 guest rooms, a spacious lobby and the Crazy Water Pavilion. Shortly thereafter, the Crazy Water—labeled "fireproof"—will burn to the ground, and the Baker Hotel will be built. The luxury of pavilions and boarding would be taken to a new level, 14 stories to be exact.

Mike Fiedler is the designer of the official Baker Hotel Web site, www.bakerhotel.tk. He and his wife, Karen are responsible for documenting the history of the hotel and keeping the site up to date. "When the Collins Brothers bought rights to the Crazy Water, they didn't want 'foreigners' or 'out-of-towners' to drink the water," Says Mrs. Fiedler "so, they got T.B. to build the Baker."

Theodore Brasher Baker was a well-known hotel operator from the Midwest. He had designed many top-of-the-line hotels around the state, including The Menger, a Sterling Hotel in San Antonio and the Hotel Galvez in Galveston.

The Baker Hotel in Mineral Wells is fourteen stories high and has 450 rooms. It was also the first skyscraper ever built in Texas that was not in a metropolitan area.

"There is 12 miles of carpet in the building," Jayne Catrett the building manager said, "complete with second level baths, spas and it was the first hotel in Texas to have a swimming pool."

The grand opening for the Baker was an extravagant party complete with an elaborate banquet and music provided by Hal Pratt and his Orchestra. Six hundred guests from New Mexico to Louisiana and Amarillo to Houston attended.

The Baker was centered on the famous mineral "crazy" water and featured a drinking pavilion and

many water treatments. Therapy applied through trained hydrotherapists and water treatments was supposed to cure every known ailment.

The entire second story was dedicated to the "baths." Along with trained attendants, the Baker featured tubs, Vita-A-Bath Steam Cabinets, steam rooms, hot rooms, hot packs, salt glow, soap rubs, needle showers, infra ray and ultra violet light, Jacuzzi whirlpool baths, facials, body massages and the ever-popular colonic treatments.

The Baker hosted many stars of the silver screen including the infamous Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, Judy Garland, Clark Gable, Curly and Moe Howard, Ronald Reagan, Lucille Ball and Jack Dempsey.

Due to slim profits Earl Baker, the beneficiary of the Baker, swore that on his 70th birthday he would close the Baker for good. Sure enough, the Baker closed on April 30, 1963, putting 250 people out of jobs.

"Is the Baker haunted? I believe there is some entity in here that does little things, protects people," Catrett said. "There were many deaths here. There was one murder here."

The one known murder is that of a man by the last name of Mitchell. He was shot and killed in the lobby area of the Baker by a man named M.R. Williams.

The dispute was over a private parking spot.

"Williams was tried in 1932, and

his sentence was suspended due to good behavior. The guards said he acted like a perfect gentleman." Catrett said.

There were numerous deaths sickly and quarantined guests at the hotel. Those who sometimes traveled long distances to find cures their ailments would check in, but never check out. There were also many rumors of suicide and murder that, although were very popular, are not accounted for in documentation. Whether these rumors are true is a mystery; however the stories of ghosts and conspiracy have entertained Mineral Wells citizens for generations.

One story of the ghosts of the hotel is that of a young bell hop, Douglas Moore, who died in an accident in 1948.

Mrs. Fiedler said, "According to his friend, they were just running like kids do, running to the elevator to see who could get there first, when one boy tripped the other and Douglas went to jump into the elevator and was crushed."

Douglas, who was just a 15-year-old at the time, lived for about 15 minutes after the incident. Rumor has it that his ghost haunts the basement, due to the conspiracy behind his death that is speculated to not just be an accident.

There is rumor that Moore was involved in an illegal prostitution ring at the hotel. The activity was discovered by the sheriff and soon

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Moore was laid off at the hotel. Upon returning to gather his things, Moore was mysteriously killed. This is not documented.

Perhaps the most famous story of the ghosts of the hotel is that of Virginia Brown, Baker's mistress.

As the stories go, Brown was feeling guilty about her affair with Baker and decided, after a great amount of drinking, she would go up to the ball room on the 12th floor to think. Legend has it she thought it would be a good idea to jump from the 14th floor balcony into the pool. Her fate was well assumed. Stories say Brown can be felt on the seventh floor, perfume can be smelled, and sometimes a woman can be seen in a white dress. However, there is no record of any event similar to this occurring on the premises. Brown died from old age in San Antonio.

Workers and visitors of the Baker have had many encounters of their own.

Ms. Catrett said, "I was cleaning in the second level, and I said out loud that I was about to stop cleaning the floor because it was too hot," Ms. Catrett said. "All of the sudden, the air conditioner started blowing, and there is no electricity up there."

"I don't say anything unless I have proof, so I very carefully put my hand up to make sure that it was blowing, and I sure enough found it was. I don't believe in ghosts but I don't know what that was. It wasn't my imagination."

Hacker from page 1

so damaging and time-consuming. Most of the attempts are so minor, in fact that the public would never even guess that an attack was occurring. MSU students and faculty don't see the effects of a hacking attempt unless the school network or server slows down as a result, or if the hacker changes or replaces a page on the university's Web site. It would be highly inconvenient if users did notice anything wrong, as hackers make frequent attacks on Midwestern.

"Hackers attack every major network on a daily basis," Griffin said.

The impressive and intimidating quantity of attacks does not mean that there are people out there who do nothing but sit at their desks and try furiously to get into MSU's system. Instead, hackers use automated programs to carry out their attacks.

The most obvious sign of a hacker attack is when an MSU web page is replaced with something else; such as the hacker's own homepage. Other signs that are easily spotted are drastically increased activity on the network, lab or server computer slowdown, and strange login files. Wynn also utilizes a program that adds the binary numbers contained within the network and comes up with one large sum. The number is compared to the previous day's number. Any difference between the two indicates that intruders have modified something. A computer that attempts a hack leaves behind proof of its own actions.

"Any time you use a computer to attack another computer, the network traffic leaving the compromised machine makes it stand out," Griffin said. "Obviously, a machine with a bunch of new files like porn, music and movies is easy to spot."

The big remaining question, then, is what level of risk all this puts MSU students and faculty at on a daily basis.

Griffin insisted that the risk to users is "very, very low."

"We have one of the most secure networks, compared to other state institutions."

Happy
Home-
coming
Week!