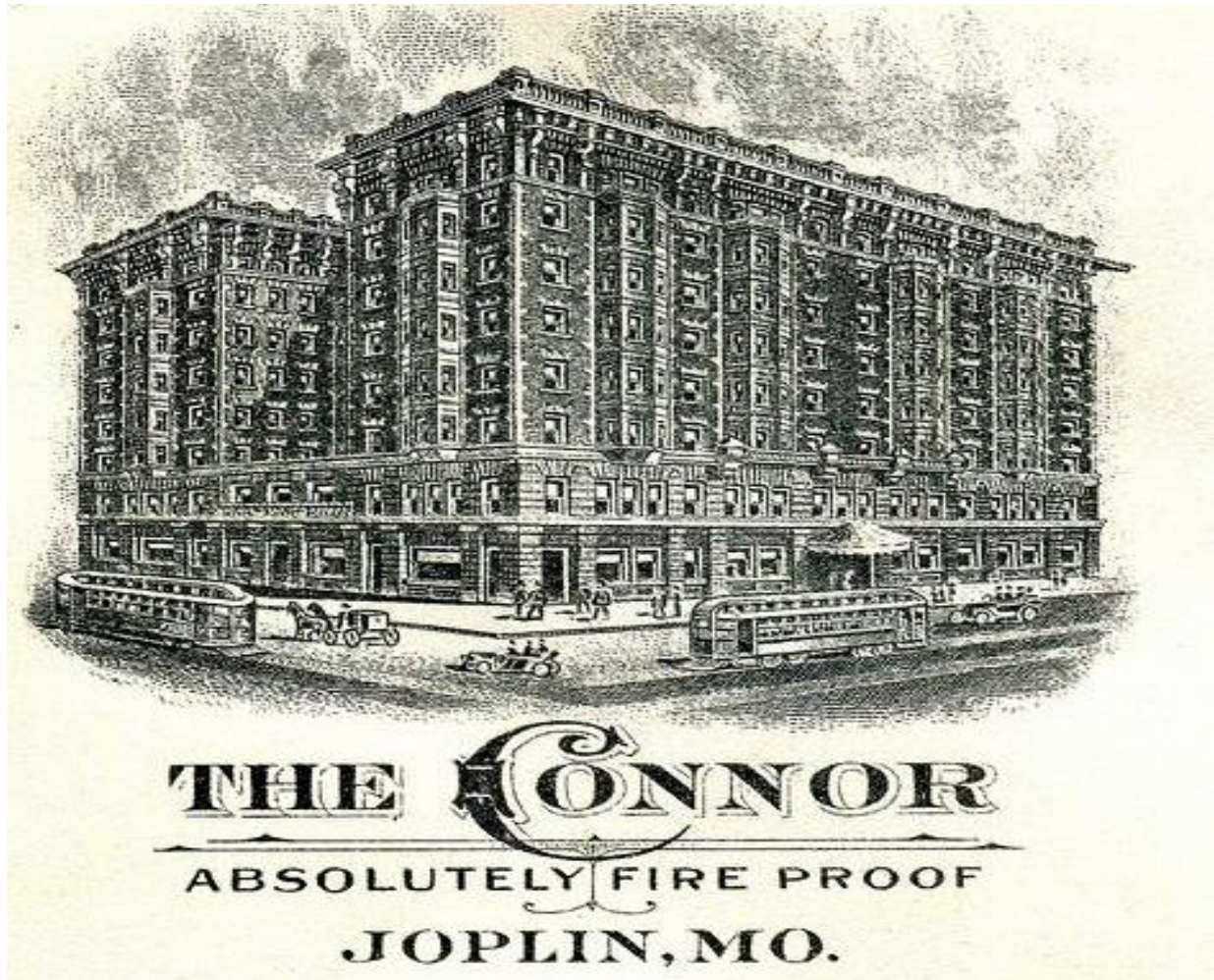


The Haunted Toad

Ghosts in the Library

Haunted History of the Connor Hotel



Have you ever been alone somewhere when you felt that tingling sensation on the back of your neck? Or ever seen a shadow in the corner of your eye but when you looked nothing was there?

Do you get a creepy feeling when you hear the wind howling through the window or a door creaking open? Most of us have probably experienced something that has given us an uneasy feeling and even if it could be explained away rationally, there is a little part of us that still wonders, *“What if..?”*

This is especially true for some employees of the old Joplin Library. Books falling off shelves, the sound of footsteps pacing but no one around to make the sound, breathing on the neck of the lone librarian

restocking the shelves at night, shadow figures ducking behind shelves and walking the halls when the doors were locked for the weekend. Could it be overactive imaginations? Or was the building truly haunted?

Haunted Librarians

As librarian Danya Walker described,

"I worked at the Joplin Public Library on Main Street for over 10 years. Over the years, it was accepted by many staff that the building was haunted or at least had unexplained activity. I, myself, did experience some odd things at the library. Many times, when out in the stacks, shelving books, I would feel someone standing behind me or walking up towards me, but there would never be anyone there. That was a very common experience shared by other people/staff as well. I have also heard books fall off the shelf but then there aren't any books knocked off."

Her coworker explained that she and someone else heard whistling one night while they were alone in the building and on another occasion they heard music, and even after searching the library they were unable to locate the source.

It was obvious to those working there that there was quite a bit of activity in the Library and they were anxious to find out more.

The Investigation Begins



Lisa Livingston-Martin is a Missouri native and Attorney working in the Joplin area for many years. She is also the [published author](#) of several books about Missouri's Haunted History and the lead investigator for the [The Paranormal Science Lab](#). Knowing all about its history, Lisa took special interest in the case of the haunted library and set up some instruments around the building to record what happened one night.



But First... a Little Bit of History for Context

At the time, the Joplin Public Library stood on the corner of 4th and Main street and had taken the place of the once glorious Connor Hotel.

Named after one of Joplin's first millionaires, philanthropists and prankers, Thomas Connor, who unfortunately passed away one year before the completion of his hotel, hence the name dedicated by his partners in his beloved memory.



Look down Main Street today, can you imagine a building of 9 stories, almost as many fireproof rooms as there are days in a year. With luxurious parlors, restaurants, cafes, it's own barbershop, a stunning rooftop garden on one half of the building and the other a formal ballroom hosting who knows how many weddings and events over the years!



Not to mention the two extravagant "Empire Room" keeping Joplin residents and really was an impressive



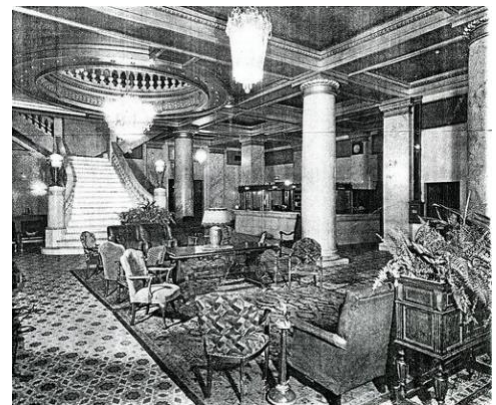
There Are Many Added Pleasures in Dining at the CONNOR



Select Foods Only. Dine With Us Today.
 Sunday, June 10, 1923.
 \$1.25 Per Cover. Served from 11:30 a. m. to 9 p. m.

Cream a la Francis	Green Sea Turtle Clear
	Colocial Green Olives
Celery	Salted Almonds
Fresh Lobster a la Newberg en Patties	
Roast Spring Chicken, Stuffed, Strawberry Preserves	
Grilled Calf Sweetbreads, with Bacon	
New Potatoes in Cream	French Garden Peas
Head Lettuce, Thousand Island Dressing	
Apple Pie, Fresh Cherry Pie, Lemon Merangue Pie	
Strawberry Sundae, Spice Cake	
Coffee	Tea Milk

nightclubs, the and the "Joplin Club" guests entertained. It building.



As beautiful and grand this hotel was, it was also surrounded by tragedy. There were 4 fatal accidents associated with the construction (and later deconstruction) of the Connor Hotel.



Ward Provance started his employment at Joplin's grand hotel as an elevator operator, so he had the opportunity to see many faces come and go... dead or alive.

There were at least 10 suicides that he was aware of in his 52 years of working there.

One of note was the beautiful woman who checked into a room on the 8th floor.

She ordered a chocolate malt, and after finishing it she opened the window to the outside and jumped out, landing in the street below.

Some have described hearing a wailing moan, that sounded as if it could be the voice of this unhappy woman as she plunged to her death.



Many well known celebrities passed in and out of the hotel doors, much to the excitement of staff and city locals. To their dismay, gang leaders and criminals also darkened their hallways and found refuge there while they plotted their next job.



Famous gangsters like Al Capone, Bonnie & Clyde, Wilbur Underhill and the Dillinger gang were rumored to have passed through. Bank Robberies and Prohibition sales of illegal alcohol was the business for these guys and the misfortune of booming towns like Joplin, MO.

It has even been said that the Kansas City Massacre of 1933 was actually planned in the Connor Hotel by Vernon Miller and his gang to free their friend Frank “Jelly” Nash from police custody while being transported at the Union Station.

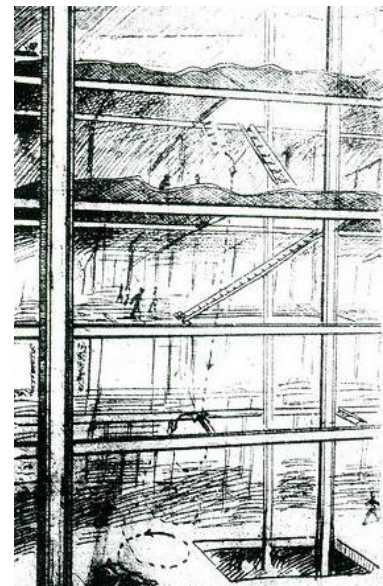


Construction of the Connor Hotel



John Hively sat on a beam as it was crane lifted around 30 feet into the air when the cable holding it up snapped and crashed into the trolley cables below causing an electrical spark show, and dropping the beam John sat on. He fell in a seated position and hit his head on the the corner of the metal beam, killing him instantly.

Another construction worker, Irvin Neyhard, plummeted to his death after attempting to cross a wooden ladder that laid across an elevator shaft. He had done it many times before as did his coworkers, but this time it gave out under his weight, sending him grasping and lurching for anything he could find to save himself on the way down three stories to the concreted floor below.



Despite the tragedies, The Connor Hotel remained on schedule and opened on April 12, 1908 with a live orchestra to accompany the fine dinner and was attended by the highest members of Joplin society. It was quite an exciting event.

“It is with great pleasure that we announce to the citizens of Joplin and to the public generally, that, on Sunday, April 12th, we will open the beautiful, fire-proof hotel, “The Connor,” which bears the name of the man who, out of his great generosity, made it possible for this city to be graced by the most magnificent hotel that has ever been erected, in the history of the world, in a city of this size. We respectfully solicit your hearty co-operation.



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The Connor Hotel Company.

The Connor Company”

Rumbling like thunder shook downtown Joplin. A dark cloud of debris covered the streets for blocks surrounding the hotel and blacked out the windows of the neighboring buildings. A nearby employee of the Joplin Globe, afraid it was an earthquake at first and now not so sure, tries to see out of her window, only knowing for certain that it isn't safe to go outside. She picks up her phone to call the editor, *"I think the Connor's just fallen... it's hard to tell... it's as dark as midnight outside..."*



The Connor Hotel closed after 70 years standing tall over the city blocks of 4th and Main, housing guests, residents, conventions, parties, entertainment and business deals (shady or not). Eventually the automobile ownership and lack of parking began to hurt the hotel's popularity, and cheaper motels with larger rooms began to pull guests away. Leading to the Connor Hotels unfortunate decline and inevitable retirement. The Library Land Holders purchased the property in 1978 and scheduled an implosion of the outdated building on Sunday, November 12.

The wind howled around the building, rocking it slightly while workers were still inside removing salvageable fixtures. Heavy winds weren't uncommon because of the shape of the hotel it had the "Flatiron Building Effect" causing people to lose their hats as they walked by, or even a whole truckload of sand being transported down Main Street to go flying all over the streets, into the open windows of passing cars... everywhere.

One man, as he was walking by the Connor Hotel on his way to work, said that he actually got blown into the side of the the building and it was so intense that he had a very difficult time pulling himself away!



On November 11th, 1978 the Connor collapsed unexpectedly, without charges ever being set, trapping 3 men inside.



Al laid beside another construction worker under the rubble in the northeast section of the basement of the hotel for three days. Staring into the absent eyes of his coworker he cried and cried for someone to rescue him, in and out of consciousness as the days crawled by.

The sounds of machines and people removing the rubble as quickly as they could echoed around him, but they unable to hear his cries.

Hope of finding anyone alive under there was all but dead... Volunteers and rescue workers searched relentlessly understanding at this point that they might just be recovering instead of rescuing anyone at this point. Finally something caught the attention of a rescue dog. He started digging in one spot, and all the effort of the relief workers focused on that area until they could hear something faint coming from below the layers of building wreckage. Everyone stopped, the machines went quiet and they listened... until a weak voice shouted out, "Hey! Boys, I'm ready to get out of here."

Al miraculously survived with a few fractured bones but his construction buddies weren't so lucky.

The Investigation Continues...

Ever since the library was built, people there could sense they weren't the only ones in the building. There was so much history under their feet.

Lisa Martin and her team were excited to get started with their investigation of the haunting claims. In their many years of exploring and learning about the Paranormal they have only had a handful of truly supernatural experiences, and tonight, they experienced a few things with multiple witnesses that could not be explained.

The PSL team sat quietly with a few librarians who wanted to know more about what they had experienced on their own.

One librarian distinctly heard footsteps moving toward them and shuffled back in her seat, afraid to say anything about it until she noticed the reaction of the team members who looked around. They heard it too.

“*Is Mr. Connor here with us?*” Lisa asked, not expecting to hear a response, maybe they would see a flashlight flicker or feel it, but certainly not expecting what happened...

“*Oh yeah, he and I were known for...*” [a disembodied male voice responds](#), and then mutters unintelligibly. Everyone was shocked. They asked a few more questions but couldn’t make anything out as clearly as that first part.

Who was that? What happened?

Was it Thomas Connor playing another prank from *beyond the grave*? We may never know!

Maybe the Old Joplin Library was haunted... It still stands there, ready to host the next occupant, and perhaps we will get to hear some new stories when they have had the chance to settle in. Whatever (*or whoever*) is there doesn’t seem to have an issue sharing, and they have never bothered anyone, but it is certain for some that there truly is an unexplained presence lurking in the building where Mr. Connor’s Hotel once stood...

Read some more really interesting spooky stories about Joplin in Lisa’s books that can be found on [Google Play](#) and [Kindle](#), or get a hard copy from your local [bookstore](#)! Learn more about Joplin History by visiting the new [Joplin Library](#) on 20th and Connecticut Street, ask the employees about their experiences in the old library, you might be surprised to hear more!