

Some news to the neighbors of Stoneybrooke from the caretaker of Stone Mansion



Dear neighbors,

Just wanted to pass on the news that after living nine years in Stone Mansion and being the caretaker of Stoneybrooke Park, I will be moving away into a new home.

When I first moved in after Bill and Sue Resler retired and moved to Tennessee, I knew it was going to be a special place to live in. While I was only a temporary tenant, I considered it my home for the time I was here, and enjoyed living in such a nice area with a wonderful park, great neighborhood, and among nice people. For those that I have met and gotten to know over the years, I wish you well.

For those curious, I thought I'd share a few memories, both natural...and maybe even a little *supernatural*.

While it's not uncommon to witness the fox, deer, rabbits, bats, and even the periodic large owl that call Stoneybrooke home, it has its share of spirits too that have been both seen and heard during my time.

For those that like specifics, I can tell you the following stories that you can choose to believe or not:



- Periodically at night over the years, when my head was down on a pillow in bed, I would hear indiscernible music and voices as if they were either downstairs, in the floors and walls, or in another room. Lifting my head the sounds would cease. Searching the mansion and even the grounds outside would not turn up anything like a TV or radio left on, or people in the park. During the whole time I had a roommate, I had initially thought it was her watching TV late at night. Only after her moving out did we talk and realize she heard the same things and thought the same of me...when it was neither her or I doing any such thing.
- This story was told to me by a former Historic Property Rental employee that worked the special events at the mansion. She said that before I had moved in, she had this frightful experience after closing up after a rental. After turning out the lights and heading for the door to leave, she saw on the floor a single freshly muddied old-fashioned style boot sitting there where nothing had been before. The fact that it was a dry night, the mud was particularly eerie. Spooked, she immediately left leaving the boot there. When she asked the next days clean up crew if they had found it, they replied that they hadn't. This story by itself, and from someone I didn't really know and half thought was just trying to scare me, I put to the back of my mind and forgot about for several years...until I heard the following:

- Years later, I was leaving town for a vacation. I asked one of my co-workers to stay at the mansion and watch over it while I was gone. While I was out of the state, she called me to say that she wasn't going to stay any longer and that on the previous night she had pulled up in the gravel driveway to park and was scared by a ghost. Apparently from behind a tree a shadowy shape protruded and the voice of a man said "Can you help me? I've hurt myself again...I knew the original owner, and he helped me when my foot was caught". Him not showing himself, and her being creeped out, she ran for the door saying "Sorry!". She called the police to come and check the grounds, but there wasn't any sign of anyone. When she told me this story, the part about the foot being caught, and the muddy boot from the earlier story, really made me wonder...especially since she had never heard any stories before. Where some people hear things and don't see anything, and others see things without hearing them, this was the only story that I've heard where someone both heard and saw something.
- Yet another roommate during my years here said she saw a moving shadow of someone outside along the gravel driveway late at night. She had called out one time, and with no response she quickly came inside to tell me. I went outside with my dog and asked him to search (for those that don't know, I volunteer my time with my dog searching for lost or missing people and drowning victims. Being a search dog trained to find people, he should have easily been able to find someone in the vicinity of where my roommate had seen someone), however my dog would show no indications that anyone had even been there.
- Speaking of dogs, and having heard how some are sensitive to the supernatural, mine would sometimes leave rooms suddenly afraid to come back into them. He would at times be totally carefree, and then suddenly get worried and withdrawn with a fearful posture. While normally not afraid of anything, this was something I wondered about.
- The last story worth mentioning that offers tangible evidence is that in the upper-most floor, in the room closest to the tennis courts, on the wall are the images of two little footprints coming out from beneath the paint. It appears that the walls have been painted over several times, however these two feet seem to break through the paint. The paint does not seem to take where the footprints are for some reason. Why these images are tiny feet (as if a babies) and on the wall, I don't know. They have been there all my years there, and after I leave the Park Authority will paint again...and I'll bet the next caretaker will start to observe tiny feet emerging from beneath again.



From watching the 4th of July fireworks from the front of the mansion, to listening to the cicadas in the park, seeing the various meteor showers in the evening skies, seeing all the couples getting married or other celebrations at Stonybrooke Park, and of course meeting and getting to know some of you, I can easily say that it was a wonderful stay these last nine years.

Some interesting facts & trivia about Stone Mansion and Stoneybrooke Park:

- The original owner, Commodore Walter Brooke is still buried on the property somewhere in an unmarked grave.
- The original size of the property back in 1780 was 400 acres.
- On the flag pole are the inscriptions:
 - “Art Grindler Nov 5, 1957”
 - “Saten loves MC, 1974”
 - “Norman Baker”
 - “Tony Lombardy, 1979”
 - “John Chrobak”
- One owner, a Senator from Wisconsin working here in Washington D.C., bought the place with his wife, but died by a self inflicted gunshot wound in 1953 in D.C. before either of them ever moved into the property.
- It reported that there used to be a civil war fort in the woods of Stoneybrooke Park.
- Stone mansion caught fire back in 1938 and would have burned to the ground if not for the good work by the Franconia Fire Station crew and volunteers.
- There is a time capsule inside the mansion that was placed on the 4th of July, 1976 by the SCA and states that it is not to be opened until July 4th, 2076 (so if any of you are around in seventy years, be sure to find out what was in it!).
- There used to be a Coke machine on the side of the mansion.
- The stones used to make the ADA accessible lift/patio in the back came from the same quarry that supplied the stones that encases the mansion (the mansion used to be wooden and had no wings).

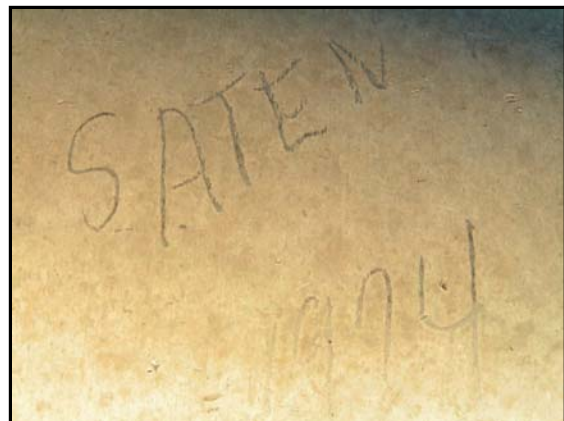
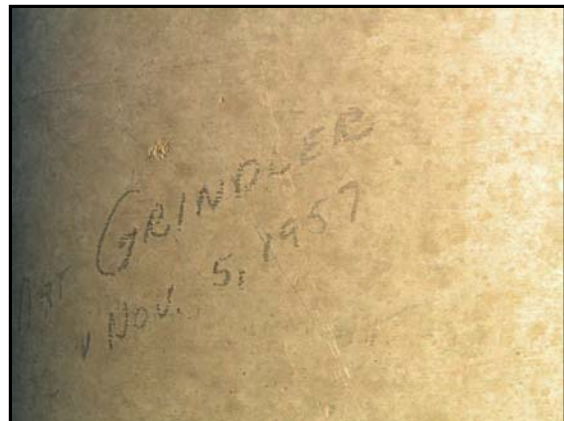
For more interesting facts and history, be sure to read “The History Behind Stoneybrooke” by Barbara Preston written in 1972 and found on the *Stoneybrooke Sentinel* website.

Best wishes everyone,

David Wyttenbach



My dog Hero watching the arrival of Santa from the second floor window



Graffiti on the flagpole in front of the mansion