

NEPA Paranormal Investigates an Unusual Haunting

By Katie Christopher, North East Pennsylvania Paranormal

As a paranormal investigator, I often find myself questioning the reason behind some of our cases. Usually, we get a case and it doesn't take long to piece everything together. The spirit in question is usually attached to the home, the client, or even an object. Whatever the case may be, the explanation behind it is normal fairly easy to find after we do a little digging.

But once in a great while, you get one of those cases that you just don't quite know how to explain. Something is there haunting a person, and you just sit back and wonder: Why this person? What is the connection? And no matter how hard you try, you can't figure it out, but regardless, it is happening.

After investigating, you have your evidence. The proof that it's happening is right in front of you, and suddenly nothing makes sense anymore. This goes against all the theories we as paranormal investigators subscribe to. In a normal situation, we take the evidence for what it is, present it to the clients, and move forward in our normal process, but what do you do if you realize you've stumbled into something much bigger?

A recent case put me in this exact situation, and now my team, North East Pennsylvania Paranormal (NEPA Paranormal), has, in my opinion, made contact with a



Pictured at left are the North East Pennsylvania Paranormal team members. Bottom row (left to right): Chris Smith, Natalie Belleman, Alissa Timko, Lauren Pollman, Katie Christopher, Kathy Christopher, Bob Christopher. Top row (left to right): Bill Ulichney, Kim Shiner, Kelly Hughes, Mark Hromisin.

ghost from one of the country's most notorious murders.

The Amityville Horror

Amityville. Population: 9,441; area code: 631; average income: \$68,000 per year. Up front it seems like your average town, but if you ask just about anyone about this town, it becomes clear it has much more significance. Almost everyone has heard of the Amityville haunting.

On December 18, 1975, George and Kathleen Lutz, along with their three children, moved into their new home at 112 Ocean Ave., Amityville New York. On the same day, the family had a priest come into the home to bless it. It is claimed that the priest heard a voice say, "Get out!"

And according to the Lutzes,

this was only the beginning. In the following days, the family became increasingly angry and began to lash out at one another. At the peak of the activity, the house seemed to be disassembling itself. Windows were smashing, the door was ripped off its hinges, and there appeared to be weather damage even though there was no bad weather to speak of.

One of the Lutz children claimed to have befriended a red-eyed pig. After only 28 days in the home, the Lutzes claimed they could take no more and fled the home. All of these claims are very controversial, and some involved in the publication of the story have even come out and said it was all a hoax, but this is the story everyone remembers and associates with Amityville.

What most people don't know is that the original story of the Amityville house is much more terrifying, and 100% true.

The Amityville Slayings

On November 13, 1974, Ronald "Butch" DeFeo, Jr. burst into a local bar frantic for help. He told patrons he thought someone shot and killed his parents. Ronald Jr., along with five other men, quickly left the bar and drove to the DeFeo home.

They quickly went into the home to see what had happened, and what they discovered shocked them all. They went up to Ronald Sr. and his wife Louise's bedroom and found them lying in bed with bullet holes in their backs. Both were dead.

They went to check on the two younger boys, Mark, age 12, and John, age 9. Both were also shot in the back and dead. At this point, they gathered on the main floor and made the call to 911 to report four murders. After police arrived, they would find that two more family members were dead: Allison, age 13, and Dawn, age 18. At this point, Ronald Jr. begins to sob uncontrollably as police question him. They wonder who would be capable of such a crime and begin to consider who might hold a grudge against the family.

After thinking for a moment, Ronald gave them the name of a local mobster who had a disagreement with the family a few years earlier. The police took down the information and suggested he come down to the station with them for further questioning, as he might be a target too and the station would be a safer place for him.

Ronald Jr. did not have a good relationship with his parents. He grew up under a constant stream of abuse. It was nothing unusual for Ronald and his father to get into screaming matches, and even use physical force against one another.



NEPA Paranormal Investigator/Reiki Practitioner, Chantel Mangat, conducts an EVP session during a recent investigation.

Ronald Sr. owned a local Buick dealership and was very well off. Ronald Jr. took advantage of the money and was very deep into trouble and drugs. In the days prior to the murders, when his father would not give him the money he wanted, Ronald Jr. even staged a robbery of some of the dealership's funds so he could keep it for himself.

When Ronald Sr. discovered what had happened and confronted his son about it, Ronald Jr. threatened to kill him. All of this was unknown to the police at the time, but soon it would all come out.

Ronald Jr. went along with police to the station where he played the part of the model witness. He detailed everything he had done that day, right up until he found the bodies of his parents. He also detailed his father's dealing with the mafia, right up until the alleged disagreement. Police still had no reason to suspect he was lying, so they finished their questioning and gave Ronald a cot to sleep on for the night.

In the meantime, detectives scoured the DeFeo home for evidence of the crime. When they entered Ronald Jr.'s room, they noticed some boxes. They were labeled .22- and .35-caliber Marlins. Though they still did not know what the murder

weapon was, they took them anyway.

These boxes would later become a key piece of evidence. When the murder weapon was discovered, they knew all six people were killed with a .35-caliber Marlin.

The police now began to wonder if Ronald may be their suspect after all. They woke him up and began to question him again. Little by little, Ronald's story started to fall apart. Facts were disproved, and Ronald was backed into a corner. He became visibly shaken and started to add lies to his story, even going as far as to say the mobster woke him up in the middle of the night and pointed a gun to his head.

Police now knew they had cracked Ronald Jr., and after pushing him a little more, he caved and confessed to the murders of all six members of his family.

Ronald Jr. was brought to trial, and on November 21, 1975, more than a year after the murders, he was found guilty of all six murders and sentenced to 25 years to life in prison. He is still in prison today.

In 1992, Ronald requested to change his testimony, and stated that he did not kill his two younger brothers and youngest sister. He said he only killed his parents, and that his sister, Dawn, killed the younger

NEPA Paranormal investigator, Mike, shoots video during a recent paranormal investigation.



children. When he saw what she had done, he killed her.

There is much controversy around this theory. Gun powder residue was found on Dawn's nightgown, which suggests that she could have fired a gun, but since she was shot at such a close range, the powder could have easily gotten on her nightgown because of the proximity of the gun. Psychologists who spoke with Ronald have concluded that they think he is blaming Dawn for the murders of the children because he can't accept that he killed such innocent people, and convincing himself that Dawn did it makes it easier for him to live with himself.

NEPA Paranormal Takes on a Controversial Case

So how does all of this relate to a case NEPA Paranormal conducted in Reading, Pennsylvania? We received a call in December 2009 from a client with an interesting request. Upon our initial conversation, the client said to me that he was being haunted by the spirit of a murdered girl.

Most of what he was experiencing was subconscious. He would see her in his dreams. He did hear her speak on occasion. He was touched a

few times. But it was the vivid dreams that were most disturbing. In these dreams, she would come to him in desperation, pleading with him to help her. When he asked what she needed, she would repeat over and over again, "Tell them I didn't do it."

He was to the point where he was even beginning to question his sanity. Figuring he had to do something, he contacted our organization for help. After getting the basic information from him, since this case had to do with a specific occurrence, I figured we should do some research on the murder beforehand.

When I asked him if he knew the name of the girl who was coming to him, he replied "Dawn DeFeo." It was at that point I realized this case was very different from anything we've ever done.

I wanted to figure out the connection between this man in Reading, Pennsylvania, and a girl from Amityville, New York, so I asked the client how he knew Dawn. He told me he grew up in New York, but never personally knew Dawn. He did meet her once when they were children. She was a few years older than him, and he visited her father's Buick dealership with his parents.

He said this particular memory

is one of his earliest and most vivid childhood memories. Dawn came out from a back room and saw him. She smiled at him, and then went back in the room. She came back out a moment later and gave him a lollipop. This was the only contact they ever had.

He told me even he knew it sounded impossible, but nevertheless, he was having these experiences and didn't know what to do. As an investigator, I feel part of my job is to be skeptical, but at the same time, groups such as mine are supposed to be the people others can turn to when they don't know what else to do. We're supposed to be the ones to give them the benefit of the doubt when no one else will.

The more I thought about it, the more I realized that no matter how unlikely it seemed, I had to find out for myself, so we booked the case. If indeed she was there, it was my early suspicion that there is only one thing she could possibly want. If she was telling him she didn't do it, she wanted to clear her name.

The Investigation Begins

We arrived at the home a few weeks later, in mid-January 2010. We spent the early part of the evening just talking and going over some of the details of the murders. How and why Dawn was linked to them, and what our opinions were on the case. Once we began, I knew that evidence for this case would be very difficult to come by.

This wasn't just a matter of proving or disproving a ghost. If, in fact, something was there, if anyone was going to believe it was Dawn, we would need her to give us some very specific information. We went through the usual investigative techniques we always use, but also spent the better part of the night asking very specific questions.

We asked her an excessive amount of times to tell us her name. We asked questions about Ronald Jr. We asked questions about her parents, as well as her brothers and sister who were killed. As far as the actual investigation went, we didn't really pick up much while we were there. We did have a temperature drop of more than 20 degrees, and felt some cold spots, but that was it for personal experiences. We began to wonder if we were going to find anything at all. Little did we know, we had found some amazing evidence, we just hadn't heard it yet.

I live in a home that is greatly centered around the paranormal. My mother, Kathy, is a member of our team, and my father, Bob, co-founded NEPA Paranormal along with myself. We use words like apparition, EVP, and EMF like normal families use the word "the."

There have been so many times when I will hear my father calling for me sometime around 2 a.m. to play me an EVP or show me a picture that he found. It's something that I'm more than used to at this point, and it is somewhat of a regular occurrence.

The night we found one of our most unbelievable EVPs to date, I made my way down the steps from my room in a semi-comatose state. My dad handed me the headphones and said, "You're not gonna believe this."

As I listened to the EVP, I was suddenly wide awake. I had to have him play it again to make sure I heard it right, but after listening to it a second time, there was no mistaking what the voice was saying.

I looked at my father and said, "She just said, 'Dawn is here.'"

I played it over and over again for the next few minutes, and couldn't believe our luck. I put so much energy into trying to get her to say her name during our investigation, and she actually did it! What

was even more interesting was that the EVP had an accent to it. It sounded like a Long Island accent. I looked at my dad again and said, "You're right, this is unbelievable."

More Evidence of a Haunting

In the following days, we came across a few more EVPs. We have one of a female voice saying, "Oh no," a few times in a row. We also have another one where the client is talking about Dawn and said, "I hope she's not hiding tonight," and a female voice replies, "Ollie Ollie Oxen Free."

I myself have heard the expression before but was a little unsure of what exactly it meant. My father explained to me that it was a term used in hide and seek that one would say when they wanted everyone to come out of hiding. At that, I was amused at the ghost's sense of humor. With some pretty exciting evidence in our

We captured several astonishing EVPs during the investigation.

possession, we were ready to take it back to the client and see what they thought of it.

When we got back to the client's house, we first asked him how things had been going. He said "she" seemed pretty quiet lately, but she was still around. So we prepared to show him what we found. One of my personal favorite parts of the paranormal investigative process is the reveal. I take pleasure in watching the clients' faces and reactions when we show them the evidence we capture.

As we played the first few EVPs, I watched the client's face become very relieved. You could see that he was starting to realize he was right all along. We saved for last the EVP where the spirit said her name, and when we

finally played it for him, he just looked up and simply said "Wow."

After letting us know that he was glad he really wasn't crazy, he just seemed relieved. We sat and talked for quite a while after playing him the EVPs. We talked some more about Dawn, and how we thought she might now realize she could talk to us and that we would hear her. We also began to wonder what else she might say now that she knew she had the opportunity to do so. It was then that we came to a mutual agreement that we would perform another investigation.

For NEPA Paranormal, this is still an open case. We have our next investigation scheduled for a date in the near future, and are very eager to get back to work on it. After intense study on the history of this case, I don't believe that Dawn had anything to do with the murders, and I want to give her the opportunity to let people

know of her innocence. It is my hope that she will use our next investigation as a chance to do just that.

I personally think about this case a lot. Sometimes I think about it so much that I swear I hear the "Dawn is here" EVP in my sleep. And as I think about it, it takes me back to those same questions I mentioned earlier. What could the connection between Dawn and our client be? Why him? I don't have all the answers to that, but yet we still have this evidence in front of us, and the evidence speaks for itself.

So while uncommon, unlikely, or whatever word you want to use to describe it, is it still a possibility? I know what I and the rest of NEPA Paranormal believe. ■