

An Establishment Full of Spirits

Ethyl's Party

by Joey Tito



Over the years, there have been reports of paranormal activity that took place on numerous occasions at Ethyl's Party. Some of those reports were of a phantom patron sitting at one end of the bar who is seen one minute, then gone the next. There's also the sighting of a man wearing a long black trench coat and hat who has been seen walking through the bar and disappearing near the stage. There were also reports of a phantom band member who has joined some of the bands while playing on the stage of the bar in the past. I have been told first hand accounts regarding some of this activity. I credit that to being related to the owners. The establishment is owned and operated by the Tito family!

My father's cousins own the bar and his oldest brother was a bartender there. One of the craziest stories I heard involved my uncle, who goes by "Ace". He was tending bar during an afternoon on a weekday and talking to one of the local patrons. Suddenly, a wine glass came flying off the wall and crashed onto the bar right in front of him. Another story that I have heard on occasion is that of the story of the vanishing man in the long coat. An experience similar to the stories that I've heard in the past actually happened to another family member. One of the owners, Russell, was in the bar alone after hours one night cleaning up. While in the front foyer of the bar, he recalled seeing an older man walking near the stage area. He described this man as being more than a shadow, but not completely solid. Russell described feeling peaceful and not being scared at all. According to Russell, the man disappeared into the doorway behind the stage. That would be enough for most to open up a bottle and have a drink right there on the spot. Another thing that he mentioned was that he feels the presence of someone near him when he is alone in the bar. With all of the stories that I have heard while growing up, I believe it's safe to say that nobody is ever alone

at Ethyl's. About ten years ago I actually worked at the bar as a bouncer during the summer. There were plenty of good nights during those times I must add! There is one constant that I'd like to mention, I felt a little off when I was in certain areas of the bar, most notably in the back rooms. One of the rooms was an office and the other was a storage room. That storage room was in fact the former embalming room when this establishment was once a funeral parlor. I'm not for certain if these feelings were coming from my subconscious, knowing what took place in these rooms during years past, or if I was sensing something that was not of this physical world. Whatever it was, it creeped me out regularly and this is no easy task! Like I said, this building wasn't always home to a bar, it was once a funeral home. Some believe that this could be the cause of the supposed paranormal phenomena that had taken place over the years. I know some people link ghostly phenomena to funeral homes and cemeteries, but I think we can all thank Hollywood for that. Before it took the name of Ethyl's Party, the bar was called Tito's On the Edge. The name took a geographical approach, since it literally stands on the edge of Chinatown. Prior to its Tito's On the Edge days, the bar was known as The All Pro Drinking Establishment. It was owned by Rich Milanowski, who happens to be a friend of mine. I have talked to Rich many times about the bar. One day I asked him whether or not he had encountered anything that could be considered paranormal while he owned the bar. He replied to me and I quote "Many unusual things happened in the bar, but those spirits came out of a bottle." After a good laugh, he told me that while he owned the bar he had never come across anything out of the ordinary. In fact, he never heard of anything dealing with ghostly activity from any of the bar's former patrons. The only spirits in the bar at that time were those of the top shelf variety! He did say that he heard the building was also a rooming house and coffee shop a long time ago. Since this was one of Capone's neighborhoods, plenty of things could have taken place in this building...