

Tuesday, October 15, 2013

Last night we watched "Fire in the Sky" while camping our first night at the location of the Walton abduction. It was pretty surreal doing that, and I'm glad that we didn't tempt any bad karma, ha ha. Daniel went to bed after that, but Mike and I stayed up getting pretty drunk watching "Waterworld" while perfecting our Wizard Sticks. Earlier in the night, we saw a crazy thing that seemed like a star except that it was rapidly changing colors in a sequential pattern. Daniel got the telescope focused on it and it was just insane looking. It was black in the center, with lights going around it like those things that they give you at chain restaurants to let you know when your table is ready. It was flashing blue, green, red and yellow. We really got a kick out of freaking out on that thing for an hour. Daniel looked up some information about that type of phenomenon in one of his books, and we think that what we witnessed was a binary star situation. Meaning, the stars are either so close together or are in a type of line with one another so that you see them simultaneously as one single entity. So, they create a brilliant vibrating effect that appears to be shifting in color. So weird.

Today we drove into Heber, the nearest town to where our base camp is located. We traveled a different route than the way that we drove into camp on Sunday night. There is a dirt road system that we utilized and if I'm remembering correctly, it was about 13 miles from our camp to the town. Heber is the town from which Walton called his sister from a payphone after having disappeared for five days.

Once in town we tried to do a little research, but we didn't find very much in Heber. They have a public library, one that's run by volunteers, and we visited it to inquire about a newspaper archive or microfilm library that we hoped might contain copies of the papers from early November in 1975 when Walton was abducted. Unfortunately, they didn't have an archive. We also tried to see if we could locate the building that originally housed the Red Robin Inn (where Walton's crew went after his disappearance) but didn't have any luck. It likely closed decades ago. From Heber, we decided to visit Snowflake, where Walton was living at the time of the event, and where he still lives today.

We hit up a coffee shop and did some emails and other basic web updates. Just prior to that, we visited the police station in Snowflake to try to see if we could access the police reports from that time period. They told us that we weren't permitted to look at any of their records unless they were about us specifically. Next we visited the library hoping to find a newspaper archive. They also did not possess one. I called the local paper and asked them if they had an archive that we could look at in their local office, and they said that none of their offices (they have one in Show Low and some other small cities) kept these types of records. The woman on the phone gave me the number of the Arizona Archive in Phoenix, and I'm going to follow up with them to see if maybe I can at least get digital copies of those papers.

We exited the library to the car, and a man named Stradler who was also exiting the library approached us. He'd seen the car magnets with our logo on it and asked us what we were investigating. We explained the project and he seemed genuinely intrigued. It turns out that his brother worked for several years at the Snowflake paper mill where Walton was a foreman. He actually knew Walton's brothers as well, and told us that Walton's oldest brother was essentially a kook. He pointed out the irony that Walton himself seemed so level-headed but a lot of people think that he's a wackjob because of his experience, while his brother was the real weirdo. We couldn't get a sense of his own opinion on the abduction, but he was super nice and asked us a lot of questions about what the final outcome of the project would be. We gave him a business card, and he pointed down the road and said that Walton's home was just a couple of blocks away. He also told us that Walton regularly walks the track at the local high school in the mornings and that we could find him there. After we left, we all kind of agreed that approaching him on his morning walk was a bit rude and that we wouldn't pursue that avenue. Nonetheless, we definitely drove up and down the street where he lives shooting video, hoping to maybe catch a glimpse of him outside of his home.

We decided that we needed to try to talk to some more of the locals, but it was the middle of a day on a Tuesday and it seemed like it'd be hard to locate anybody. Still, we decided to stop by a bar called the Ranch House Saloon that we'd passed when entering town. It seemed like the type of person who would be in there drinking in the middle of a Tuesday afternoon would probably be the type of person who would want to talk to us about paranormal experiences.

The bartender was very friendly, and there were only a couple of other patrons inside. She was likely in her sixties, and we could sense a good energy coming from her. We chatted a bit about arbitrary things and then she just out of nowhere told us that she's an amateur ghost hunter. We all totally flipped out. We told her all about what we were doing, and she told us that she was a visual arts major in college as well. She jokingly asked us if we were her three long lost sons. I gave her a business card and as she was walking away reading it, she turned and said, "My last name is also Carney." I told her I didn't believe her and she gave me her driver's license. Sure enough, her name was Diana Carney. It was nuts.

We had a couple of beers and chatted with her for a while before leaving to get ice and water to bring back to camp. As we were leaving, she gave us her phone number and offered to take us out to a Native American ruin east of town where people from one of the universities had dug up a three year old (presumably Navajo) girl who'd been buried there. I didn't get a sense of how old it was. Diana said that she and her friends had gone there before, and that one of them had a daughter (or granddaughter, I can't remember) who was three years old herself. Diana asked her if there was anybody else standing in the ruin with them, and she replied that there was a girl her age in there with them. Trippy.

So, we're shooting to meet up with her on Friday on our way out of town to Albuquerque. We're going to give her a call tomorrow.

Thursday, October 17th, 2013

We're currently at the public library in Heber where we're scheduled to do an interview with Corinna Kirsch from Art Fag City in a few. I woke up extremely late today, probably around 11:00am. Last night we watched "Signs" at the campsite and got twisted up. Actually, I think that I've gotten twisted up pretty consistently since we went into the field. Maybe that's a key element of my art practice: being constantly inebriated or totally hungover. I do feel more sensitive/perceptive right now as a result of my hangover. Whatever.

Yesterday, Daniel shot some clips for my music video tribute to Miley Cyrus' "Wrecking Ball." Since coming on this trip, we've listened to her new album BANGERZ probably a dozen times straight through and I have become completely convinced that I am in love with her. I'm making this video in the hopes that she sees it and then falls in love with me. She's quite a bit younger than me, but she seems like an old soul.

We've gotten emails from several individuals who claim that they're coming out to camp with us tonight. After the library, we're going to go back and finish up some of our site-specific sculptures at camp. Daniel is burying something at the dead center point of camp. Mike has made a bunch of safety blanket installations and put up some of his flags. He's also applied punk studs/spikes to multiple trees in the area. I need to stud out my headlamp tonight.

The plan is to individually interview everybody who comes out tonight. Mike put together a great list of questions to interview people about paranormal experiences and we all took the interview last night. Mike said mine was too long, but that's because he's a fucking idiot. I'm just kidding. He's looking over my shoulder while I'm typing this and I'm hoping that he'll read it and yell at me in the library.

Mike says, "Fuck you."

Oh yeah, yesterday we also walked the road trying to determine the path that Walton's logging crew would have driven when they had their experience. There are a lot of weird logging roads in the area that are no longer useable. We think that we were able to determine where they stopped and where Walton walked into the clearing where we're camped.

We also took a bunch of rubbings of different flora. Yesterday was a good art day.