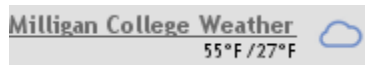


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Ghosts from Milligan's past

Madison Mathews

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Halloween for me has always included telling ghost stories. So, I decided to hold my own investigation and see if I could track down any ghost stories from Milligan's lengthy history. Whether or not you believe in this sort of thing, it's still a part of our past.

I contacted several East Tennessee paranormal societies, but Justin Guess, co-founder of the Haunt Masters Club, had the only Milligan College ghost story- one following a true tragedy.

Here's the background according to documents in the Milligan Archives.

In 1953, the fall semester at Milligan College began much like others that came before. Part of the new semester began with a week the students dubbed "Rat Week," during which freshmen were hazed. Hazing was a long-standing tradition among colleges and universities, including Milligan.

One night during "Rat Week," some upperclassmen woke a group of freshmen, had them meet outside the dorm, where they instructed them to run to the dining hall, located in Hardin Hall.

Calvin Dougherty, a freshman from Greenwood, Ind., decided to take a shortcut across the tennis courts to beat the other freshmen to Hardin. In the dark night, Dougherty failed to see the cable stretched waist-high across the middle of the court, which held up the nets.

Dougherty hit the cable at full speed and was instantly thrown to the ground. He was rushed to the hospital where doctors discovered severe internal damage, including a ruptured spleen and damaged pancreas.

Doctors continued treating Dougherty, but almost a month to the day after the accident, Dougherty died from hemorrhaging. The tragic death sent shock waves throughout the campus.

According to Guess, not long after Dougherty's death, a former student was walking around campus when she noticed a familiar face. The student was shocked as she stepped closer and recognized Dougherty attempting to introduce himself to other students.

As soon as she got close, Dougherty was gone. The student couldn't believe her eyes, but she was sure she had seen the ghost of Calvin Dougherty.

While there is no way to determine whether there is any merit to the woman's story, the death of Dougherty was a truly dark time for the campus. However, this is the thing that ghost stories are made of. Places with years of history are filled with legends that live on through generations.

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