

The Denver County Jail:



History:

The Denver County Jail facility was built in 1956. The Jail was designed to hold 1,500 inmates waiting for trial or transport to the Colorado Department of Corrections. The daily average was 1,986 when the facility was closed and moved to a new location.



Ariel view of Jail

The layout of the campus consists of 18 buildings attached together for the main structure and 5 separate buildings (Staff, Production Kitchen, Buildings 19, 20, Palmer Building & Mechanical building 21).

Heating and utilities are provided through a service tunnel that is located under all of the facilities. Building 21 is the location of the boilers and other utilities.



View of cells on first night

The buildings that were marked for demolition during our investigation were 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13.



The cell the suicide happened in

The Jail not only houses prisoners but also offers different types of life and rehabilitation programs. These programs are continuing education to obtain a G.E.D., Domestic violence counseling, Drug and Alcohol counseling, Aptitude and vocational testing, Career counseling, Project Bed-Time Story, Turnabout program, Life Skills program and the Community Reentry program.



Suicide cell interior

The prisoners have full time medical access from staff provided by the Denver Health Medical Center.



Sheriff station

The facility offers visitation via telephone/video conference stations.

Notable Incidents in the Jail:

XXX was the person who brought down United Air Flight 629 on November 1 1955 killing thirty-nine passengers.



The Pipe chase area between the cell blocks

February 10, 1956 about 5:30 p.m. a Deputy Sherriff was attracted to XXXXX cell by the sound of heavy breathing. The prisoner was slumped on the floor. His socks were twisted tightly around his neck, with a piece of rolled cardboard used to get added leverage. Quickly the Sheriff loosened the garrote; a doctor was summoned immediately, and sedatives were administered. XXXX was placed in a strait jacket to subdue him through the night. The following day he was returned to the psychiatric ward. Colorado General Hospital, where he was strapped to a bed with four guards posted nearby.



The base location on the second night

Tear gas used by Police to halt Denver jail inmates:

Police used tear gas to smother a two-hour riot by 70 inmates. Four jail guards were beaten by the rioters, but were not seriously injured. The prisoners took no hostages, and they never had a chance to escape. At the climax of the disturbance shortly after 8:00 p.m., 36 of the available 44 patrol cars had surrounded the maximum security building in which the riot occurred. By 9:10 p.m., the Sheriffs reported they had shaken the last of the rioters and returned them to their cells. Authorities said they had not established the reason for the riot. Showers were turned on to the floor and water was mixed with the scattered remnants for the evening meal. Hamburger, potatoes, gravy, and custard were squashed underfoot. Windows were smashed, tables and benches were upended, and brooms and brushes were scattered. A quote from the staff was "if they think things have been tough, they haven't seen anything yet, I'm taking away their mattresses and radios. There's going to be no more picture shows and they can eat in their cells."



Controls for the Cell doors

August 6 or 7, 1974

Deputy XXXXXX was just beginning his, nightly duties when two inmates, Ronald VXXXX and Charles XXXX, attacked another Sheriff who managed to get to safety in the "cage"; however, the other Sheriff was not able to get away and had his throat cut with a four-inch blade. XXXX was taken to Denver General Hospital where he died of his injuries.



View of the third tier on first night

April 20, 1980

Miguel XXX was being held on two charges of murder of a security guard in Texas. He attacked the Jail Shift Commander while he was being held for extradition to Texas. He became violent and agitated in the shift Commanders office after being informed that he would be placed in isolation, he attempted to strike the Officer with a fire extinguisher. On June 20, 1980 he had been taken to Denver General Hospital, when his handcuffs were removed, he used a homemade "shank" that had been concealed to stab Deputy XXXX in the neck. The knife penetrated the right side of the neck to his spine. He was eventually extradited to Texas and was the 38th murderer to be executed in 2001 (June 26, 2001)



Graffiti on the cell wall

December 22, 1989

Denver County Jail inmate XXXX thought Christmas would be “a bummer time” singing and wearing jailhouse blues, but XXX will be home for Christmas. He and 15 other inmates got an early Christmas gift yesterday-their freedom-from Mayor Federico Pena. The holiday “Amnesty” is a Denver tradition for those serving sentences for violations of municipal ordinances and nearing the end of their terms.



Soap that was hidden in cell

June 14, 1990

With less than 60 beds remaining at the jail for the new inmates they were forced to release 23 inmates early to avert a prisoner overflow at the jammed facility.



The suicide cell

June 1, 1999

An accused armed robber escaped from the Jail by “walking out with a group of visitors”



Art done by inmate

December 24, 2000

During a showing of "The Cell" the VCR broke down causing a "rampage"



Art done by Inmate

March 22, 2002

A man suspected of serial rap was stabbed by a fellow inmate. XXXXX was treated at Denver Health Medical Center for stab wounds to the left arm, leg and ankle and returned to jail. Inmate XXXX faces an aggravated assault charge in the attack. XXXX who was supposed to be in 23-hour lockdown in the violent-offender section of the jail, he was hiding in the shower when XXX and the Deputies walked by.



Art by inmate

October 24, 2004

XXXX collapsed, suffered a seizure and died. She had hidden a package of cocaine in a body cavity and it had ruptured. She was being held on charges of Distribution, manufacture, sale and possession of a controlled substance and carrying a concealed weapon.



Art by inmate

October 26, 2004

A maximum-security inmate the Jail was stabbed repeatedly in the upper torso in the afternoon by another inmate who used a homemade "shank". The injured inmate, jailed on burglary charges was taken to Denver Health Medical Center and was listed in stable condition.



Sheriffs watch area

February 17, 2007

XXXXX was jailed because of a traffic accident where she turned in front of an oncoming car. When the Officer conducted a breathalyzer test, she tested at .121. She was released from the hospital and sent to jail. The day following the accident when called her mother and complained she was freezing and couldn't feel her feet. The claims were that she had told an on-staff nurse but the nurse had suspected that she was drunk and needed to "sleep it off". Later that night she was in severe pain and other inmates got the attention. She was found dead the following morning. It was discovered that she had sustained a seven-inch gash to her liver, a lacerated spleen and three broken ribs during the accident and the condition was not diagnosed. Her family later filed charges against the City and County of Denver, Denver Health

Medical Center, nearly 50 Deputies, Jail personnel, Doctors and Nurses. The City eventually settled with the family for three million dollars.



View of second and third tiers

Unknown Dates:

April, 21

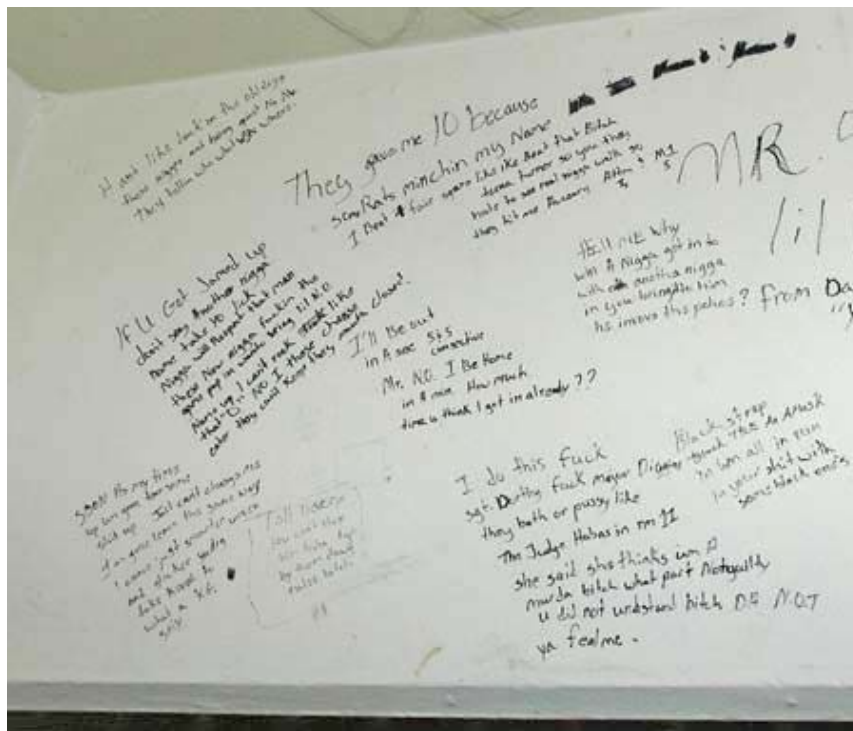
While being moved to his cell, he ran up the stairs to the rear of the third floor tier and jumped to his death. He was being held on charges of destruction of private property and threats. It was later discovered that his lover was being housed at the facility, and he had committed suicide as an act to show his affection. Five months later his lover attempted to do the same thing, but was stopped by another inmate.



Sheriffs area and tier cells with protected walkway

October, 1

While facing charges of sexual assault and kidnapping, he hanged himself with a bed sheet. The staff did not notice the suicide for about 5 hours, because he had hanged himself from the top bunk of the bed and appeared to be sitting on the lower bunk.



Notes from inmates

October, 27

Frank was stabbed and beaten by his cellmate, he died on the way to the Hospital. He was being held on charges of Menacing with a deadly weapon.



Cells with protected walkway

Reported Activity:

Throughout the facility the inmates have reported the sounds of keys jingling in the night. This is the sound that the Sherriff makes with their keys to alert the inmates that they are doing their rounds. The inmates claim that they hear these sounds but when they look there is nobody there.



Interior of cell door mechanism

On inmate asked a supervisor why someone had been placed in his cell with him during the previous night, when he was supposed to be housed by himself. The staff asked him what he had seen. He replied that during the night he had awakened to use the toilet and he saw the other inmate in the top bunk sleeping. He figured that he would talk to the staff in the morning, but there was nobody in the cell with him when he woke up. The staff told him that he was alone the entire time.



View of protected walkway from cells

Multiple staff members have reported “shadows” wandering around various parts of the facility.

Both staff and inmates have reported hearing what they describe as “Cell doors being tugged on”. This is a common sound, as it is what the Sheriffs do to check that none of the doors and been opened by one of the inmates. This is done on their hourly rounds. The reports are that when nobody is at the door, they will hear the same sound coming from the door.



Sheriffs station

In the “pipe chase” utility access tunnel that is located between units 6 & 8, the staff has reported seeing a person/shadow at the end of the tunnel that either vanishes or appears to walk directly through a wall.



Cell door controls

Inmates have refused to use the community shower on the first level of unit 6, because they reported that they “felt something in there with them”.



Inside protected walkway

At the back of unit 2 various staff members report seeing a woman who did not belong in the infirmary, who would “just vanish” in front of people.

A Deputy Sherriff who was killed by inmates has been reported by both staff and inmates. They have reported that they see him in the location that he was killed. They say that they know it is him because he has an older uniform and when they are asked to identify him using a photo, they recognize him.

A Sherriff that was onsite while we were there, reported that while he was in the back hall area that connects areas 6 and 8, he had the sensation of his shoulder being pushed. When it

happened he thought that it was one of the people with him, but when he turned around they were too far away to have done it.



View from protected walkway

Several different Sheriffs that we interviewed claimed that they had heard voices from the back of building 6 when it was empty.



Hall Sheriff was killed in and view of cells from second night

Several staff members have reported activity in the Law Library. This is an isolated room located next to the area we were monitoring. The reports are of books and papers moving with nobody in the room. They have also reported that they have seen a person in the room at night when it was locked and closed. Because of the nature of the building the Sheriffs had to investigate, but never found anyone.



View from third tier on second night

Investigation:

The areas that we monitored were recently evacuated for demolition and were without any staff or inmates. The rest of the facility was still and active Jail, so we had to account for the outside interference from these possible sources of data contamination.



Sheriffs station

05/21/2010

We arrived at 7:00 p.m. and started setting up equipment in unit 8
The base location for monitoring was located in the “cage” just behind the “birds nest” where the staff monitored the inmates.



Third tier on second night

Equipment:

- Video camera in the pipe chase
- Microphone in the pipe chase
- Video camera on the entrance side to the unit monitoring the length of the main room

- Video camera on the third tier monitoring the length of the main room
- Video camera in cell 6 on the first tier (location of hanging/suicide)
- Video camera located outside cell 6 on the first tier looking into the cell
- Video camera located opposite the cells on the first tier looking at the wall of the cells near the front entrance
- Video camera located opposite the cells on the first tier looking at the wall of the cells near the back of the building
- Thermometer located at the main entrance to building 8
- Microphone (stand mounted) on the second tier near the main entrance monitoring the bed and entrance to the cell
- Natural EMF meter in cell 6 on the first tier (suicide location)
- Microphone located outside of cell 6 on the first tier
- Thermometer located in cell 6 on the first tier
- Seismometer at the entrance to cell 6 on the first tier
- Microphone located on the second tier near the main entrance
- Natural EMF meter used to sweep the locations and for baselines
- Standard Tri-Field meter used to sweep the locations and for baselines
- Two digital still cameras used to document entire location
- Video camera used for walkthroughs
- Four MacBook's used to capture Video and Audio recordings

We completed setting up and started monitoring around 10:30 p.m.



Area Sheriff was killed in being monitored

During the night, we started with baselines and then followed with up hourly sweeps of EMF. It was noted that the cells had high amounts of manmade EMFs located near the back wall (3-4 milligauss)

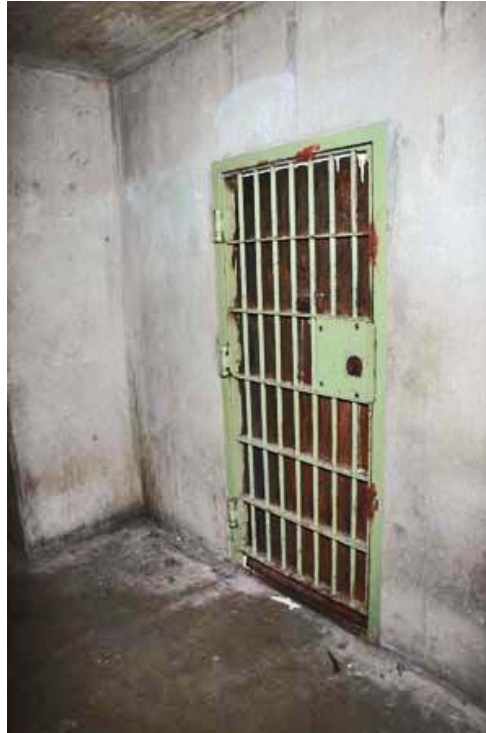
This was due to the main wiring and utility tunnel that is located behind the walls. The natural EMF readings were below measurable readings and did not vary throughout the investigation.



View of cells on first night

Temperature readings were consistent throughout the three locations being monitored. The base location was 77 degrees and the two remote were both 74 degrees. There were slight variations due to temperature changes of the outside air temperature.

Throughout the investigation we heard what sounded like cell doors being pulled on (loud thump), just like we had heard in the previous reports. We could not identify which doors it was coming from. Bryan reported after one of the thumps, there was the sound of footsteps.



Door at back of cells on first night

We noted that on the far end of the main room on the first tier there was a very low hum. This hum was more noticeable in cell 12 on the first tier.

We interviewed four of the staff members on duty, and they confirmed that they had witnessed several of the claimed events at the facility.



Lamp assembly in cell (from back of cell)

Second night:

We moved the camera that was on the far end of the first tier closer to cell 12.



Artwork by inmate

We decided to monitor the sound levels of the low hum that we discovered. We used a seismometer and a sound level meter to determine that the sound was coming from a combination off the main airs system fans for the facility and the fans located behind the community showers in units 6 and 8. We monitored the sound with the shower fans on and off and determined that with them on the ambient sound was around 62db and with them it was above 100db. There was a noticeable difference in the vibration being monitored in the area. The hum was determined to be from 10-19hz when the shower fans were on and not able to be monitored when they were off.



Artwork by inmate

We also decided to place three people in the main room on the first tier to watch the cell doors and see if we could determine the location of what appeared to be the sound of the doors moving (see previous night) After about 45 minutes, one of the people reported seeing door 2 on the third tier moving slightly when one of the sounds was heard. We placed another person directly in front of the door and 15 minutes later they reported the same thing. We placed a seismometer at the door to see if we could record any movement when the sounds were heard. A sample of the sound and the door moving was taken for a baseline. We also setup a video camera at the door. We noted that the sound was happening every 15-20 minutes. Initially we thought that the sound was coming from the doors caused by a timed mechanical issue such as an automated system check, but after four time coming from this door the sound started moving to random doors. We were never able to record the sound or movement.



Gang markings in cell

The Second investigation:

We arrived at 7:00p.m. and started setting up equipment in building 6



Artwork by inmate and area where sheriff was killed

The base for the location was located on the first floor “cage’ where the staff monitored the inmates.



Back side of cellblocks

Equipment:

- Video camera on the of cell1 on the first tier aimed at the outside of the door
- Video camera on the door of cell1 on the second tier aimed at the outside of the door
- Video camera on the door of cell 1 on the third tier aimed at the outside of the door
- All of these cameras were positioned to look at locked cell doors

(all three of these cameras were re-positioned at 12:00 to look into the main room of building 6)

- Video camera mounted on the “cage” looking down the length of the building
- Video camera mounted on the railing of the second tier near the first cell look down the length of the building
- Video camera added when a staff member reported that a two-way radio was turning off and on by itself
- Video camera in the pipe chase on the first tier
- Video camera in the pipe chase on the second tier
- Video camera in the pipe chase on the third tier
- Microphone in the pipe chase on the first tier
- Microphone on the second tier near the location of the murder
- Video camera in the “cage” on the second tier facing the location of the murder
- Video camera in the “cage” on the second tier facing go the location of the murder and up the staircase
- Video camera looking down the second tier hallway towards the location of the murder
- Thermometer in the location of the murder
- Seismometer located on the desk in the caged area of the second tier

- Thermometer at the base location



Area where Sheriff was killed

We started out by placing people to watch locations:

- Just outside the “cage” on the first tier
- At the top of the stairs on the third tier
- At the end of the main room sitting at the table
- At the location of the murder on the second tier

At 2:00 one of the people monitoring noticed what appeared to be a “shadow” around cell 5 on the first tier. At the same time this was noted the tx/rx light on the two-way radio started to flash.

We moved a camera to monitor the radio and the cell that the movement had been reported at.



Base location night two

The seismometer readings were unremarkable during the investigation



Man-made EMF was unusually high in the areas that the staff would monitor the inmates from. This was on all three levels and was most noticeable on the first floor near the main entrance. The readings average of .25-.40 milligauss to .50 in the hottest spots.



Sheriffs watch area

The person located at the top of the stairs on the third tier reported seeing movement similar to what had been reported earlier, but there was nothing on the video recording.



Sheriffs area

Conclusion:

The Jail has a lot of Ghost stories; however, this is a place with the perfect conditions for stories like this to perpetuate. The staff and inmates are at the location 24 hours a day and have the opportunity to continue telling the stories over long periods of time. This allows for the “Telephone” effect, which not only keeps the stories in an oral tradition, but allows them to evolve over time to become more complex.

Some of what appeared to be mechanical issues with the doors would add to the ghost lore of the Jail. The automated system that controlled the cell doors, was in question with the claims of the sounds of doors making sounds with nobody near them. This in combination with the spreading of the Ghost stories could be the deciding factor in concluding that it was a “ghost” that made the noises.

The low frequency hum that was focused on the one cell, could account for all of the incidents in the location (suicides, sensed presences, audio hallucinations). The frequency of the hum was identified years later as something that can cause perceived paranormal experiences.

