



Lowell tourism expert describes best local haunts

Brendan A. Sanders • Dec 17, 2020



Tours Around Michigan is a tour guide company based right here in Lowell. Run by Candice Smith-Fleszar, the company provides tours for many individuals, showing off this state to anyone who is interested.

Smith-Fleszar is a tourism and communications professional with more than 30 years of experience in media, public relations and branding. Smith-Fleszar began sharing stories as a television news producer in Grand Rapids and Indianapolis, IN, and a reporter for WGTV Public Radio. She has worked in international communications for Amway, and she also consulted in branding and public and media relations for small businesses and organizations.

Tourism is a passion that married her love of storytelling with her high level of customer experience. This work quickly resulted in her receiving Certified Tourism Ambassador of the Year for Kent County and a WAVE [Way Beyond Visitor Expectations] award for best attraction.

Smith-Fleszar began her own tourism business, Tours Around Michigan in early 2018. Through the company, she has given tours across the lower peninsula, with many trips to Traverse City, Muskegon and her specialty, Grand Rapids. She prides herself as a tour guide on her research and extensive knowledge of local history.

Smith-Fleszar has focused much of her energy compiling stories about Lowell's history. She has knowledge of many of Lowell's greatest historical figures such as Madeline La Framboise, a famous fur-trader, Ann Rule, a true crime author who was a coworker with Ted Bundy at a suicide hotline center in 1971, and Glendon Swarthout, an author who lived in town.

Some of the most interesting stories are not about the fascinating people this town has produced, but stories of the unknown: Lowell's ghost stories. With a town that has over 200 years of history to its name, many ghost stories have come up through the years at many places you know and love. There are quite a large number of ghost stories around town, especially on Main Street, where some of the oldest buildings are located, a few in some of Lowell's best stores.

According to Smith-Fleszar, one ghost story resides in the "Fans in the Stands" building on Main Street, where a ghost has been long-sighted in the building. The ghost is described as an eight to ten year old Native American girl who is playful.

The LowellArts building that was formerly the Hallmark store is also rumored to be haunted, by a supposed former owner of the store, who has been heard walking around the building on floors where no one was residing.

216 W. Main St. is where the Flat River Antique Emporium is currently located. In the past, it has been reported that a man with a blue baseball cap was spotted in the basement, with multiple people seeing the man.

204 W. Main St., home of Lavender and Lace Boutique, was said to be a funeral home at one point in Lowell's history before becoming a hair salon. Reports from the time it was a hair salon say that there are stories of the owner seeing someone leaving out of the corner of her eye when no one else was in the building, along with moments where hanging mirrors would inexplicably start swinging as if someone lightly pushed it.

The ghost stories don't just stick around Lowell's historical main street though. Many stories have persisted across the town. There's a fairly recent story coming from Tractor Supply, talking about how a ghost has taken up residence in the store, knocking things off shelves, even throwing a tire at an individual.

A historical townhome south of Main Street had an occurrence where a previous owner of the home has been heard coming in at 3 am, stomping his boots and hitting the wall. Then, at 6 am, he can be heard leaving.

The Oakwood Cemetery and Civil War memorial have had many ghost stories, with people seeing shadowy figures and homeowners in the past saying that their children couldn't sleep because they felt like someone was watching them through the windows.

These are just a snippet of the stories that Smith-Fleszar is able to tell, with many other stories coming to her as time goes on. While there aren't any planned ghost tours in Lowell for Tours Around Michigan, if the interest is there, she would be happy to customize an experience.

For more information on Smith-Fleszar and Tours Around Michigan, you can visit her on toursaroundmichigan.com or various social media platforms, including Facebook at Tours Around Michigan, Twitter at [ToursAroundMI](https://twitter.com/ToursAroundMI), Instagram at [toursaroundmichigan](https://www.instagram.com/toursaroundmichigan), and on Youtube at Tours Around Michigan.