

THINGS TO DO

Tour 17 Kentucky locations that inspired filmmaker John Carpenter as he wrote 'Halloween'

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It's been more than 40 years since one of the most iconic horror movies ever made hit movie theaters.

"Halloween" scared the bejeebers out of teenage babysitters and went on to launch a pretty cool driving tour in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

You can add an element of realism to your Halloween season with a day trip to Bowling Green to see the place that inspired famed filmmaker John Carpenter as he wrote his scary movie franchise.

Carpenter was 5-years-old when his family moved from New York to Kentucky. His father, Dr. Howard Carpenter taught music at Western Kentucky University and became the head of the school's music department. John Carpenter attended WKU before transferring to the USC School of Cinema in Los Angeles. In 2007, the moviemaker was awarded an honorary doctorate and he was inducted into WKU's Hall of Distinguished Alumni.

While no movie scenes were filmed in Bowling Green, Carpenter did make numerous area references in some of his flicks, using local street and community names like the fictitious Warren County-Smiths Grove Sanitarium from where Michael Myers escaped in "Halloween."

Louisville haunted houses: Boo! Here are 10+ spooky Louisville haunted houses you can visit this Halloween season

The Bowling Green Area Convention and Visitors Bureau has created a tour of nearly 20 locations that inspired the "Master of Horror." The self-guided "John Carpenter's Reel Sites, Real Scary" driving tour leads fans to 17 different locations around town including the log cabin where Carpenter lived as a boy on WKU's campus.

“This is the perfect year for a driving tour, and ‘Reel Sites, Real Scary’ is a great fall, fun, socially-distanced activity,” Nora Bryant, communications director for the Bowling Green Area CVB told the Courier Journal. “Horror movie fans will love exploring Bowling Green with a little guidance from Carpenter’s films.”

Other sites on the tour include Russellville Road, Chestnut Street and the Capitol Arts Center, where Carpenter watched movies as a child.

The tour includes information for film buffs about when a location is referenced and in which film. There is also brief Carpenter biography and filmography.

Capture photos of all 17 locations for Instagram or Facebook with #reelsitebg and message the visitors' bureau @VisitBGKy for a free t-shirt.

Jack O' Lantern Spectacular: The walking path is back for 2021. Everything you need to know

Brochures are available at the Bowling Green Visitors Center, 352 Three Springs Road, Bowling Green, and at the kiosk in the National Corvette Museum lobby.

Visitors can also access the tour through the Visit Bowling Green app, which is available for free download from the App Store or Google Play. The map is also available on our John Carpenter site at visitbgky.com/johncarpenter.

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