

Mary Elizabeth Munce

Character:

Mary Elizabeth Munce (dressed in 1920-30's styled attire)

Location: Funeral home

Tour Guide: (Before walking up) Looks like there is a funeral tonight. Let's go and visit the deceased. Pay our respects.

Mary Elizabeth: Why, good evening. Are you here for my funeral?

Tour Guide: Well....we thought we would stop by.

Mary Elizabeth: Such a thing to do on an evening like this. Did you know me? Oh, you probably don't remember me. I haven't back to Zionsville for a while, not since my Mother died. (sighing) Until today.

I did so love my time in Zionsville. I graduated from Zionsville High School in 1921 ...such a joyful time. Although my parents were quite protective on the account of my only sibling in the world, James, dying when he was four years old. He is buried over at Little Eagle Cemetery. (pointing towards the East)

Oh, to be young and in Zionsville with all the parties and dances. (twirling around) My dance cards were filled! And I had many suitors. Unfortunately having overly protective parents, they wouldn't even let me drive the car!

After high school, I went to Indiana University for one year, but was dreadfully homesick. So I transferred to Butler University and just had a swell time there! I met so many wonderful, talented, funny, friends. I participated in numerous theater productions and of course, played my beloved piano.

Can you believe, I even was a charter member of Psi Iota Xi sorority in 1924 and became president in 1926. What a thrill it was. Are you familiar with my sorority?

Then I met Dr. Thomas Munce and married soon after. We lived in Zionsville for a bit, just down Hawthorne street in the 500 block. I think it is close...Have you seen it?

Dr. Munce's career was picking up and he was transferred to the Pittman-Moore facility in Sioux City Iowa. Iowa is so very far away. I was only 28 years old when I moved away. We became recluses after moving there. Or so they say. No one is sure why.

My life was filled with excitement and thrills here, but there is a mystery to my silence after moving to Iowa. Mystery can be a bit exciting, don't you think?

Tour Guide: It is my understanding you donated money to start the Munce Art Center here in Zionsville upon your death.

Mary Elizabeth: Yes, yes. I never forgot my time here. Upon my death, I felt an old, tender calling to further the ideals of my youth, it felt important for me to continue to bring diverse cultural experiences to my own home community through the arts. And that is what I did.

Tour Guide: We are so very glad you did.

Mary Elizabeth: Well, I believe in furthering charitable enterprises, in studying the best art, literature and music and in developing myself socially, morally and intellectually. And I will continue to do so for myself, and others, in death.

Now...you don't want to sit around here and listen to my funeral. Go on and enjoy this theatric and haunted evening! Oh how I wish I could be in it today.

Tour Guide: Will we hear from you again?

Mary Elizabeth: I'll be around the art center again. Playing my piano. They always said I was an excellent pianist.

Maybe you will hear me play one day at the Munce Art Center. Stop by won't you?

Tour Guide:

Mary Elizabeth Hopkins Munce died in 1974 and left money to start the Munce Art Center. After Mary died, she gave money to various art centers, Humane societies, she even left her house in Iowa to her beloved cats!

There have been a number of children who felt like the Art Center was haunted. We like to think of Mary Elizabeth Munce as our resident ghost, embraced in the arts and enriching the lives of her hometown.