Haunted Media

Home of Ghost Watch, Phantom Radio & Said The Cat

Briefing Notes

Location

Antwerp Mansion
Kent Road West,
Manchester,
M14 5RF

Antwerp Mansion has a long and fascinating history stretching back to the early years of Queen Victoria's reign when it was first built as two adjoining mansions in 1840 in the cutting edge modern style of Gothic decades before it become synonymous with the Victorian period. Situated in the extremely exclusive gated and walled estate of Victoria Park for 3 decades it was the family homes of many different wealthy and influential individuals before finally being turned into a single Mansion and renamed Antwerp by the Pinto - Leites, a branch of the Portuguese and Belgian royal families who also made it the Portuguese consulate for Manchester For over

50 years this was the families Manchester home until in the early 1920s it became a private members club and was massively extended to nearly double its original size. Many famous and powerful individuals visited over the following years including amongst them Prime Minister Winston Churchill

Nearly 20 years ago it became the legendary nightclub Antwerp Mansion and for a decade it provided some of the best and most popular music nights in Manchester Now Antwerp Mansion has a multitude of uses from video and film shoots to ghost hunts, photography, theatre and of course art events.

** Found a room which was boxed up – they think it was for holding people in. But they do not know who the owners would have kept down there.

A Boy fell through the ceiling and did not survive

Torture Boards, people would just disappear – people with money would rule Women were raped, murdered and buried here.

It started off as a Mansion build for the wealthy and the elite, it has also been used for a nightclub, and today it is used for arts,

entertainment and logically ghosts hunts.

A Ghost of a woman is seen walking up and down the stairs.

Millionaires Row! Houses would have been built for the rich and wealthy of the Industrial Revolution!

Antwerp Hall was the first house to be built, and is the only house in Victoria Park to have a breach in the wall!

One of the first areas in the world to have electricity and gas brought to the area.

1920: Turned into a private members club

Cousins of the Portuguese Royal Family

English Law: That Every Mansion Must Have a Dungeon.

A house that kept reinventing itself
Victoria Park was created as a private, gated enclave for Manchester's wealthiest industrialists.
Antwerp Mansion rose here around 1840 in a forward-looking Gothic style. By the late 19th century, it was home to the Belgian consul (the name stuck). In the 1920s, it became a social club with billiards and ballroom nights.
Fast-forward to the 2000s: new owners transformed the fading property into a cult venue, beloved for sweat-drenched gigs, art happenings and its defiant, peeling grandeur.
The nightclub has since closed its doors, but the legend of the house—and the reports of paranormal activity—persist.

Most people of a certain age experienced the sheer oddity that was Antwerp Mansion at some point in their clubbing lives – and no matter how drunk you were or how many pills you pinged, you'll always remember something about this most unique of venues.
These enduring memories usually revolve around either the horrible toilets, or just the fact that this place was proper manky; a dangerously dishevelled Victorian town house situated in an already rather rough end of Rusholme. It instantly appealed to the students of Manchester, many of whom were likely drawn to the grotty city experience that they'd never get in their upper-middle class village back home.
But how did Antwerp Mansion become one of the world's most talked about, and you could say coolest, clubs? Well, it all started with politics. In particular – the Conservatives.

** The building itself started life as a private home, built in 1842 inside the world's first ever gated community for super-rich industrialists. It was home to the Belgian Consulate until it became a Conservative Club in 1924.

It remained a Conservative Club right up until the turn of the millennium,

hosting what I can only presume were a bunch of stuffy blokes in ill-fitting suits who would clink their glasses to Maggie Thatcher and applaud the ideals of free market capitalism.
The Club also happened to host Winston Churchill a few times over the years, a man who, you may forget from time-to-time, was a staunch Tory through and through.
By the noughties the club was owned by a fella named Andrew Barnfield, a man who you could certainly call eccentric – as the person responsible for the rather odd futuristic car parked up on Mauldeth Road in Withington, which he bought from the set of Sylvester Stallone's 1995 movie Judge Dredd.
Andrew became the sole owner of the mansion and thus decided to do something with it, and so back in 2011 he decided to turn the venue into an "artistic and creative hub" with film showings, folk music nights, art exhibitions and gigs.
Half of the building became caked in graffiti and murals, while the other half was planned to be returned to "how it looked in Victorian times" – which is actually pretty accurate with how it ended up – except it was more the slums of Angel Meadows than the boulevards of Didsbury.
With such innocent intentions, Antwerp was officially open to anyone who wanted to put on an event, and rather quickly this turned into club nights – and things started to get a bit rowdy.
There was a seemingly endless array of different nights and events on almost throughout the whole week, and it would get very, very busy indeed. Standing around in here, sweating your box off and realising that all of the radiators were on – it was just the most surreal of venues – but people LOVED it.
There was a sense of freedom that you didn't get with other venues. It was like you were at a house party, one where the police could come in and shut it down at any minute or worse – the floor could collapse and you'll end up in a rubble heap with two broken legs.
There were countless great gigs and club nights here over the years, and it became probably the world's best clubbing experience for a spell. Even the odd celebrity, probably looking to slum it with the commoners made an appearance – and they'd quickly go up in most people's estimation as a result.
When it was open there was seemingly a never ending series of spats and issues with the wider community, many of which resulted in nights being shut down early by the police, or new rules being enforced on an almost daily basis.
Noise complaints were a big one, as was the tendency for the venue to over subscribe their nights – going well over capacity at times and causing some serious health and safety issues.
Eventually the paperwork and bureaucracy caught up with the venue when the council realised that they never even actually ever held a licence to be a nightclub! It seems that Andrew simply changed the venue from a 'Conservative Club' to a night club without permission from the council, and so were closed down within weeks – much to the uproar of Manchester's clubbing scene.
So the vile toilets and sweaty walls were shut up as a club for good, and since then Antwerp Mansion has re-invented itself as an arts studio and exhibition space, as well as somewhere you can host an event. Perhaps even a wedding?

They’re also concentrating on the fact that the building is, in fact, haunted AF – and so they run regular Ghost Tours through the corridors and rooms – telling creepy stories about when a little boy fell to his death from the skylight above the main staircase.
As a club though, Antwerp was only ever really going to be a temporary thing. Luckily it was paperwork that closed it down and not some horrific accident as the result of the ageing, dilapidated state of the building. It’ll live on forever in our memories though, rather infamously, and Antwerp will always be a place that connects a whole generation of Manchester clubbers who’d find themselves in here on a Tuesday night at 4am **

Paranormal Activity
Disembodied Voices in the Ballroom
Male Voice said: Get Out
Dragging Sounds
Dungeon – cold and uncomfortable
The main staircase: Many report a heavy, oppressive feeling on the sweeping stair. Some attribute this to past accidents; others blame the dark figures seen there. Either way, the landing is a favourite location for sensing that you’re being watched or followed.
The former ballroom/nightclub floor: Deep bangs echo along the corridor and into the large upstairs room. Disembodied voices have been reported when no one else is around. Lights are said to flicker in otherwise unlit spaces, and small objects appear to move on their own.
The cellars: In the graffiti-tagged basements, investigators describe guttural growls, sudden temperature drops and sightings of a tall, dark figure lurking in corners. Poltergeist-style activity—taps, knocks and objects shifting—features most often here.

1892: Death of Leo Pinto, an infant aged 6 months, in the area now referred to as the "Forgotten Bedroom".
1910: Death of Sophie Jeanne Pinto, aged 57, in the "Red Bedroom".
1922: Death of Joaquim Pinto Leite, aged 72, who died near the ballroom.
1940s: Several club members reportedly died during service in World War II.
1960s: A child, aged between 7 and 10, is believed to have fallen through a skylight on the main staircase and died at the bottom of the stairs. This incident is a focal point for many paranormal stories.
2016 stabbing (outside): A man was stabbed in the neck outside the mansion during an altercation in 2015, almost dying from blood loss. While he survived the initial attack due to public first aid, the incident highlights a more recent violent event associated with the venue when it operated as a nightclub.

Paranormal Activity
Due to its history, the mansion, which previously operated as a nightclub and is now an arts studio and event space, is a popular location for paranormal investigations and ghost hunts. Visitors and ghost hunters have reported numerous spooky phenomena, including:
Shadow figures: Dark shadow figures seen lurking throughout the mansion.
Disembodied voices: Whispering, childish voices, growling, and a male voice telling people to "get out" have been heard.

Unexplained movements: Reports of a rocking chair moving on its own, objects moving around, and people being pushed by unseen hands

Winston Churchill is said to have visited on occasion, and the building was well used by the local community.