

FILM REVIEW: "TOWER"

A mass shooting before anyone knew what that was

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Associated Press

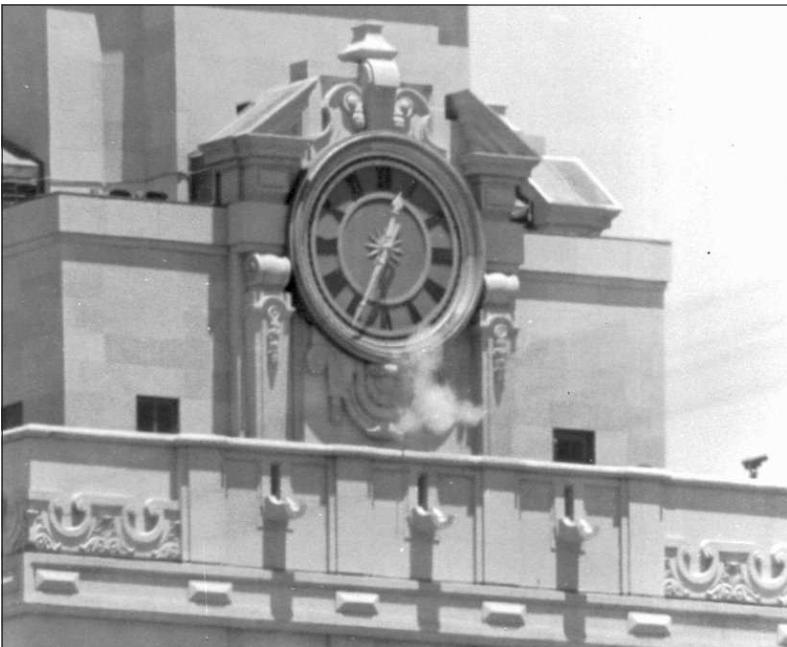
AUSTIN, Texas — Neal Spelce was scrounging for news to fill his Austin station’s noon radio broadcast when he heard this announcement on the police scanner: “We have a report of a shot being fired at the University of Texas.”

That message, on Aug. 1, 1966, didn’t even begin to capture the magnitude of the tragedy about to rock the sleepy college town.

Charles Whitman, an architectural engineering major and U.S. Marine sniper, had climbed the campus clock tower and launched a killing rampage considered one of the first “mass shootings” in modern American history.

A new documentary film, “Tower,” captures the sense of confusion and carnage that permeates many major acts of violence. But it also illustrates how extremely rare such events were back then — a stark contrast to more recent massacres that have become almost chillingly common.

Director Keith Maitland tells the story using animation spliced with news photographs and footage, radio clips and testimonials provided chiefly by eight survivors. Among them is Spelce, then news director for KTBC-TV, who soon after that initial report was in a station vehicle, broadcasting on radio as he drove toward the sniper.



AP file photo

In this Aug. 1, 1966, file photo, smoke rises from the sniper’s gun as he fired from the tower of the University of Texas administration building in Austin, Texas, on crowds below.

“It was really an unbelievable scene, unlike anything anyone had ever seen before and you didn’t have any frame of reference,” Spelce, then 30, said in a phone interview. “It wasn’t like today. There was no police tape marking anything off. No authority saying ‘Stand back.’ We were able to go straight onto the campus.”

The documentary has begun opening in theaters nationally, five decades after an attack in which Whitman, then 25, killed 13 people and wounded nearly three

dozen others. He had killed his wife and mother prior to heading to the tower, one victim died a week later and medical examiners eventually attributed a 17th death to Whitman in 2001.

Rather than focusing on the sniper, though, the documentary explores what it was like on the ground during the mayhem. Men, women and a newspaper delivery boy were shot without warning, before they even knew to be afraid — and some survived. Some scrambled for any cover they

could find in the nearly 100-degree heat. Police and ordinary Texans would eventually rush to get their own guns and fire back, in vain, at Whitman from the ground.

The sniper’s face doesn’t appear in animation; only his legs are shown after he’s killed by police and a store manager who made their way to the top of the clock tower. Whitman’s name isn’t mentioned until more than hour into the film.

“I felt like really every other newspaper article, magazine article, the one bad TV movie and other kinds of basic-cable, true-crime investigations were always about the sniper and trying to unravel his motivations,” Maitland said, panning a 1975 Kurt Russell made-for-TV offering called “The Deadly Tower.”

“We would never know the answers to those questions,” he added. “But what was answerable was what it was like to survive.”

When the shooting started, a TV station near to the clock tower rolled a camera close — some say it was onto a balcony, others remember it as by an open window. The footage, which Maitland said hadn’t been previously accessed since the 1970s, appears in the documentary and provides the much of the visceral, seemingly endless sounds of booming gunfire throughout it. Authorities would later say Whitman had 700 rounds of ammunition, though how many times he fired between

around 11:48 a.m., as the attack began, and when he was killed about 90 minutes later is unknown.

Claire Wilson James had just finished an anthropology test when she and her boyfriend, Tom Eckman, began walking through campus to put a nickel in the meter where their Volkswagen was parked. The 18-year-old was eight months pregnant and describes in the film being shot and feeling her baby stop moving — then lying on the blistering pavement beside Eckman’s body.

Bystanders carried James to safety eventually, knowing they too could be shot at any instant. Another of the documentary’s stars, John “Artly” Fox, said at Austin’s South by Southwest Film Festival in March that the rescuers figured they had a 75 percent chance of survival since the tower’s observation deck was four-sided. While Whitman was firing from all four, he couldn’t be more than one place at once.

James spent seven weeks in intensive care. She resumed classes the following January and said she never felt “horror or trauma” returning to campus — but eventually left school anyway.

“It seems like you’re with the love of your life and I’m going to have a baby in another month or so, and then, all of a sudden, everything’s gone,” James, who now lives in Texarkana, Texas, said in a phone interview. “I just felt a lot of loneliness.”

BRIEFLY

PHS orchestra to present ‘Nosferatu’

PENDLETON — A live film score performance to the classic silent film “Nosferatu” will be presented by the Pendleton High School orchestra.

The score, composed by Oregon East Symphony conductor Beau Benson, has been performed locally for the past two years to rave reviews. This Dracula story is always especially popular this time of year, said Emily Muller Callender, PHS orchestra director.

The performance is Saturday, Oct. 29 at 7 p.m. in the school’s auditorium, 1800 N.W. Carden Ave. Pendleton. A reception will follow the show. The performance is not recommended for children under 5.

The cost is \$10. Money raised from the event will help send the orchestra to the Newport Symphony Orchestra Festival.

For more information, contact Callender at emily.callender@pendleton.k12.or.us.

Inland chorale sets two concerts

Under the direction of R. Lee Friese, the Inland Northwest Chorale will perform a pair of free upcoming concerts.

The programs will include “Ain’a That Good News!” by William L. Dawson, “A Gaelic Blessing” by John Rutter, “All My Trials” by Norman Luboff and “Worthy to be Praised” by Byron J. Smith.

The performances are Saturday, Oct. 29 at 4 p.m. at the First Church of God, 712 S.W. 27th St., Pendleton; and Sunday, Oct. 30 at 4 p.m. at the Seventh-day Adventist Church, 1244 N. Elizabeth St., Milton-Freewater. Donations are gladly accepted. Receptions will follow each show.

Formed in 1999, ensembles of the Inland Northwest Musicians provide free live performances throughout rural Eastern Oregon and southeast Washington. The organization’s mission is to provide an atmosphere to support musicians in developing their talent — auditions aren’t required.

For more information, contact 541-289-4696, inwm@machmedia.net or visit www.inlandnorthwestmusicians.com.

Kindle corrects date of solo show

ECHO — A calendar mix-up resulted in the wrong date for the upcoming performance by J.D. Kindle.

To catch the intimate solo show featuring the frontman of James Dean Kindle & the Eastern Oregon Playboys, be sure to head to Echo Ridge Cellars Saturday, Oct. 29 from 6-9 p.m., 551 N. Thielsen St. The venue is located on the left at the bottom of the hill coming into Echo.

For more information, call 541-376-8100.

WHAT TO DO

Festivals

Umatilla County Potato Show

•Saturday, Oct. 22; 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
•Memorial Hall, 210 E. Main St., Weston

Free admission. Features the Friends of Weston Library annual book sale and showcases the talents of area residents. A potato dish lunch is available for purchase.

Echo Oktoberfest

•Saturday, Oct. 22; 2-10 p.m.
•Echo Ridge Cellars, 551 N. Thielsen St., and other Echo venues

Free/many children’s activities, \$15/3 coupons for activities (4, if purchased in advance). Coupons can be used for food, brew, haunted house, corn maze and other activities. \$5/ additional coupons. Live entertainment featuring Rowdy Fix Band at 6:45 p.m.

Fall Release Weekend

•Nov. 4-6
•Various wineries in Milton-Freewater, Walla Walla region
Some events free. Cellar doors are open and new releases are available for tasting. Celebrate the end of harvest season with special pours, winemaker dinners, live music and more.

Halloween Parties

Comic Book Halloween Party

•Saturday, Oct. 29; 8 p.m.
•Wildhorse Sports Bar, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

No cover. A wildly ghoulish night, including killer drink specials and prize giveaways. Show up in a comic book character costume to be eligible for cash prizes. No masks. And, live music from Rock Bot will shake things up.

Monster’s Ball

•Saturday, Oct. 29; 9 p.m.

No cover.
•Mac’s Bar & Grill, 1400 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton
No cover. 21 and older. Prizes for costumes, including a luxury cruise for two. Live DJ mixing party songs, drink specials and dancing. No masks.

Halloween Party

•Saturday, Oct. 29; 9 p.m.
•Midway Tavern, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston

No cover. 21 and older. A ghoulish good time, including costume contest

Halloween Party/ Coyote Ugly dancing

•Saturday, Oct. 29; 8 p.m.
•Sub Zero Restaurant & Lounge, 100 W. Highway 730, Irigon

Free if arrive by 8 p.m.; otherwise \$4 cover. Costume contest, dancing, raffles, including a flat screen TV.



Contributed photo

Evening Bell will perform an all-ages show Oct. 29 at Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., Pendleton.

Psychedelic roots band to color GP

PENDLETON — Described as a psychedelic roots and rock ‘n’ roll band, Evening Bell will perform an all-ages show in Pendleton.

The Seattle-based group features vocals that soar on that high lonesome road between city lights and prairie skies. In addition, they have a rhythm section reminiscent of The Wrecking Crew in their more psychedelic moments. And the lilting cry of pedal steel guitar completes the sound.

You can hear the sounds for yourself Saturday, Oct. 29 from 7:30-10 p.m. at Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton. There is no admission charge.

For more information, call 541-276-1350. For more about the band, visit www.eveningbellmusic.com.

Art & Museums

“Asunder: a reconstruction of space and place”

•Monday-Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
•Betty Feves Memorial Gallery, BMCC, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton.

Free. Features Portland artist Katie Steinberg, who creates small architectural structures that reference familiar environments while creating entirely new and fictional worlds. Gallery also open by appointment by calling 541-278-5952. Runs through Oct. 27.

Jean Ann Mitchell

•Monday-Saturdays; 9 a.m.-6 p.m.
•Wenhaha Gallery, 219 E. Main St., Dayton, Wash.

Free. Features the work of wildflower artist Jean Ann Mitchell of Milton-Freewater. Runs through Oct. 22.

“New Paintings and Small Works”

•Tuesday-Fridays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

•Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St.

Free. Exhibit features artwork of Hermiston painter Arlen Clark. Runs through Oct. 29.

Jackson Sundown and Happy Canyon: A Century Later

•Monday-Saturdays; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
•Tamastslit Cultural Institute, near Wildhorse Resort & Casino.

Regular admission, \$10/ adults, \$9/senior citizens, \$6/ youths, free/5 and under or \$25/family of four. The exhibit highlights Jackson Sundown’s championship run in saddle bronc and the history of Happy Canyon Indian Pageant and Wild West Show. Runs through Oct. 29.

Sandra Spencer

•Monday-Thursdays; 11 a.m.-7 p.m.,
•Friday-Saturdays; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

•Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave.
Free. Artwork of Sandra Spencer, who won the grand prize at the 2016 Eastern Oregon Arts Festival, is on display in October.

Arts Portal Exhibit

•Saturday & Sundays; noon-5 p.m.
•Arts Portal Gallery, 508 N. Main St., Milton-Freewater

Free. Exhibit features the works of David Partridge (oil paintings) and Nancy Kessler

(fabric art). Runs through Oct. 30.

“Circuit Chautauquas: Educating Dayton and America”

•Wednesday-Saturdays; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
•Dayton Historic Depot, 222 E. Commercial St., Dayton, WA

Admission by donation. Exhibit explores the history of traveling shows and assemblies popular in the late 19th and early 20th century. Runs through early November.

Music

Cowboy Poetry Dinner & Dance

•Saturday, Oct. 22, 3 p.m.
•Elgin Opera House, 104 N. Eighth St.

•Saturday, Oct. 22; 5 p.m.
•Stampede Hall, Elgin
\$22/show, \$15/dinner, \$7/ dance, \$40/ combo ticket. The afternoon event features cowboy poetry. Evening event features a social hour, dinner and dancing.

Colleen Heusser

•Saturday, Oct. 22; 8 p.m. No cover
•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

Basile & Wambeke

•Friday, Oct. 28; 6-9 p.m. No cover.
•Nookies/Hermiston Brewing Co., 125 N. First St., Hermiston

J.D. Kindle

•Saturday, Oct. 29; 6-9 p.m. No cover
•Echo Ridge Cellars, 551 N. Thielsen St., Echo

Evening Bell

•Saturday, Oct. 29; 7:30-10 p.m.
•Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton

No cover. All ages.

Rock Bot

•Friday, Oct. 28; Saturday, Oct. 29; 8 p.m.
•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

No cover. Live Karaoke-Jamaroke

Inland Northwest Chorale

•Saturday, Oct. 29; 4 p.m.
•First Church of God, 712 S.W. 27th St., Pendleton

•Sunday, Oct. 30; 4 p.m.
•Seventh-day Adventist Church, 1244 N. Elizabeth St., Milton-Freewater

Free, donations accepted. Features “Ain’a That Good News!” “A Gaelic Blessing” and more.

“Worth the Wait”

•Sunday, Nov. 6; 7:30 p.m.
•Vert Auditorium, 480 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton

\$20/adults, \$15/students, seniors, \$45/family. Oregon East Symphony concert. The program includes Rebekah Schaub as featured soloist on Richard Strauss’ “Horn Concerto No. 1.”

Night life

DJ music

•Saturdays, 8 p.m.
•The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

Whiskey Wednesday Game Night

•Wednesdays; 3-7 p.m.
•The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

No cover. Xbox 360, Nintendo Wii, PlayStation 3 and Nintendo 64.

Digital Karaoke

•Thursdays and Fridays, 8 p.m.
•The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

Mac’s Trivia Night

•Thursdays, 8 p.m. No cover

•Mac’s Bar & Grill, 1400 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton
21 and older. East. Drink. Think. Teams of 2-8 compete in trivia contest with other teams. Live host and prizes.

Wine tasting

•Fridays, 4-8 p.m.
•Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo.

Open Mic

•First/third Friday each month, 8 p.m.-midnight
•The Packard Tavern, 118 S.E. Court Ave., Pendleton

Karaoke

•Fridays 8 p.m. (9 p.m. if game on)
•Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla

Theater & film

“Hammerstein!”

•Saturday, 7:15 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m.
•Bob Clapp Theatre, BMCC, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton.

\$10. Musical revue featuring the life and work of Oscar Hammerstein II, which was created by BMCC music instructor Margaret Mayer. Benefits the BMCC Foundation for student scholarships.

“America’s Greatest Game Shows Live on Stage”

•Saturday, Oct. 29; 3 p.m. & 6 p.m.
•Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

www.wildhorseresort.com
Must play to win tickets at Wildhorse. Audience members have a chance to go on-stage for a chance to win cash and free play. CHIPs star Erik Estrada is the live host.

Murder on Sno Mountain

•Saturday, Nov. 5; 7 p.m.
•Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo

\$35/couple. A murder mystery party. For tickets, contact info@snoroadwinery.com or 541-376-0421.

Maryhill offers plenty to ‘check’ out at season’s end

East Oregonian

The public still has a chance to view some special exhibits during the final month of the season at Maryhill Museum of Art.

•The George E. Muehleck Jr. Gallery of International Chess Sets includes a new installation featuring 90 of the museum’s unique chess sets from around the world. In addition, there are special chess-related works of art.

•A Kaleidoscope of Color: American Indian Trade Blankets. The display features pre-1925 blankets from the Pendleton Woolen Mills and other historic manufacturers, including Buell Manufacturing Company, J. Capps & Sons, Racine Woolen Mills and the Oregon City Woolen Mills.



A new installation featuring 90 unique chess sets and chess-related works of art is on exhibit though Nov. 15 at Maryhill Museum of Art, located near Goldendale, Washington.

Staff photo by Tammy Malgesini

•Animal Kingdom. The exhibit includes animal-centric works, such as pastoral paintings and equestrian scenes, along with exotic birds, sheep and man’s best friend, the domesticated canine.

•American Art Pottery from

the Fred L. Mitchell Collection. It highlights ceramics from a variety of makers, including Roseville, Rookwood and Weller companies established in the American Midwest during the height of the American Art

Pottery movement.

•Sam Hill and the Columbia River Highway. The exhibit features black and white prints showing construction and early scenic views of the Columbia River Gorge.

Maryhill Museum of Art is located off Highway 97 near Goldendale, Washington. To get there, take Exit 104 off Interstate 84. It’s open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Nov. 15.

Regular admission is \$9 for adults, \$8 for seniors, \$3 for youth age 7-18 and free for children 6 and under. Free family passes can be checked out at many area libraries.

For more information, call 509-773-3733 or visit www.maryhillmuseum.org.