The Silver Bridge collapse was one of the worst in history.

- Allison Rollins

By Laura Flood

The Mothman Chronicles

It is an eerie quiet that fills Main Street. Walking “down town” Point Pleasant W.Va, it feels as if one has just entered into a David Lynch film. Signs for the local antique and coffee shops say that “we’re open,” fill the empty side walk.

Jerry Kolsterman of Beaver Creeks, Ohio has come to Point Pleasant to find just one thing. It something that he can’t find in any of the antique shops, no, what he is looking for is answers; answers about the mothman.

“I am here looking for the mothman. I mean you have to believe that something is out there, why would there be so many stories if it wasn’t real,” said Kolsterman. Point Pleasant is home to the mothman folk legend. According to local lore the mothman acts as an omen. The creature made its first appearance in 1966 when a local couple went to the old abandoned World War II TNT bunkers hidden in the woods. The couple reported seeing a creature with red eyes and large wings. News of the mothman was short-lived, but in 1967 the mothman would become infamous.

In 1967, Point Pleasant had one of the nation’s biggest tragedies of the time. The Silver Bridge, that connected West Virginia to Ohio collapsed, killing over 40 people. It was said that the mothman was spotted before the fall. The creature sparked a national fascination. Newspapers from all over flocked towards the small West Virginia town. In the early 2000s, the mothman would make news again, this time as a feature film starring Richard Gere. Once again the town was swarmed with questions about the existence of the mothman. Instead of pushing their bizarre history to the side, many locals embraced the legend. The main advocates of the “I believe club” are the storeowners that occupy Main Street. “Yeah something is there,” said Bob Landrum, a local shop owner. “But 1966 is incorrect for the first sighting. I did research on the topic, and you can do it, too, it was actually in the early 1700s before Ohio was settled.”

For anyone like Kolsterman who is looking for answers about the mysterious creature Landrum is the person to talk to. With his shop in the heart of town, Landrum has become one of the main stops for mothman hunters. Landrum’s passion for the legend is made obvious by the paintings on his walls.

He can tell you all the history on the topic as well as accounts of the mothman.

“Yeah I have seen that, it’s how I know something is up there. You see seven different Indian tribes used roam that land, and the bunkers were placed on top of an Indian burial ground, said Landrum. Point Pleasant has a deep history in Indian culture. The Shawnee tribe used the land to harvest corn.

With the old World War II TNT bunkers being part of the military some believe that the military is behind the mothman, and that the government is well aware of what is happening in the bunkers.

“You see the bunkers were closed to the public, now why would the government do that? They recently opened three, but you better believe they are still up there,” said Landrum. “I cont. on pg. 2