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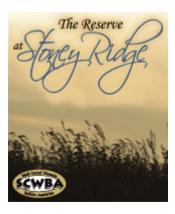
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Flying saucer redux: Futuro owner tells the story

By <u>CATHERINE IDZERDA</u> (<u>Contact</u>) Monday, Nov. 2, 2009 <u>EMAIL SHARE PRINT</u>



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To learn more

For more Futuro information:

- -- Read Larry Tracy's book "A Letter Annabelle." It is available on Amazon.com, www.peppertreepublishing.com and a variety of other booksellers for \$9.95.
- -- Go online to <u>www.futuro-house.net</u> or <u>www.futurohouse.com</u>. Wikipedia also has an entry about Futuro homes.
- -- Take a look at the file about Futuro in the Janesville Room at the Hedberg Public Library.
- -- Vacation in a Futuro home near Arbor Vitae, about 2 miles from Minocqua in Vilas County. The pod is on Sumach Lake, a private-access, 60-acre lake filled with a variety of fish. More information is at the Web site www.podupnorth.com.

Photo



Photo by Submitted photo

Janesville resident Sue Campbell models outside of the Futuro home after it was moved to a spot near Janesville in the early 1970s. The structure was designed by Finnish architect Matti Suuronen for use as a holiday home or ski lodge.

Photo



Photo by Submitted photo

Larry Tracy and Sue Campbell pose in the Futuro Home. The home was a fixture around Janesville in the 1970s. Campbell and her husband owned a tavern on Milton Avenue during that time.

JANESVILLE — Larry J. Tracy left a curious mark on Janesville history.

The businessman was one of two men who brought the Futuro to Janesville.

Most folks remember the Futuro as the flying saucer-shaped home that floated around Janesville in the early 1970s.

Now, decades after both Futuro and Tracy left Janesville, Tracy has self-published a book with Peppertree Publishing, "A Letter to Annabelle."

The book, which is in the form of a letter to his grandchild, tells the story of Tracy's life and offers grandfatherly advice on everything from lawyers to education.

It's the brief chapter on Futuro that will capture Janesville's attention.

In 1970, Tracy and friend, Norm Sauey, went to Philadelphia to buy a Futuro house.

The homes were designed by Finnish architect Matti Suuronen. The circular homes were 11 feet high without their supporting legs and 26 feet in diameter. Oval windows ringed the outside, and a hatch door—straight out of a science fiction movie—provided the home's only entrance.

"Photographs from the time make the house look like a place where the Teletubbies might live with Barbarella as a frequent houseguest," the New York Times wrote in 2005.

Tracy was enchanted by its possibilities.

"We kind of got wrapped up in it," Tracy said in an interview from his home in Sarasota, Fla.

Tracy instantly began to market the homes, and one his first stops was at Playboy headquarters in Chicago.

Playboy had recently opened a resort near Lake Geneva, and Tracy thought a UFO-shaped home would be just the thing for the place.

"We went down to see this guy, Morton, he was like the president of the Playboy Clubs," Tracy said. "And he was going on and on about how they put \$17 million into the club and why would they want to put in a UFO."

Tracy convinced Morton the UFO would draw visitors and sell Playboy Club "Keys."

Keys allowed people into the clubs and were status symbols in their own right.

"I remember being down there once, and there were two little old ladies in the parking lot, and one of them thought it was Hugh Hefner's plane," Tracy said, starting to laugh.

Tracy told them it was, in fact, Hefner's plane and offered to fly them around the grounds.

"They thought it was so neat that his plane had a fireplace," Tracy said.

They caught on pretty quickly, once they were inside—and Tracy used the shower nozzle as a microphone and began to announce flight plans.

Tracy eventually moved the Futuro to a piece of land he owned south of Janesville. Later, a Ford Dealership used it for a promotion, and it eventually was moved north of Interstate 90/39 near what is now the Best Western.

"I don't know what happened to it," Tracy said. "I think a farmer bought it."

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dpoggemann

Nov 6, 2009 at 10:35 p.m.

Suggest removal

Nice article! Ours was mentioned that you can vacation there... It is in northern Wisconsin (Minocqua area) if anyone wants to take a 3 day or week long vacation and stay in an authentic Futuro! :) Thanks, Drew

www.podupnorth.com

FALCON51

Nov 6, 2009 at 2:56 p.m.

Suggest removal

www.worldufophotos.org

FALCON51

Nov 6, 2009 at 2:53 p.m.

Suggest removal

twerp13

Nov 3, 2009 at 3:36 p.m.

Suggest removal

Yeah I remember the Zanadu home too, but I also think this UFO home went up north as well. I remember my dad talking about it how it had to be hauled it up there, I think they used one of the big flat bed trailers that Ryan's road construction company had. He worked for them back then.And I recall him talking about working on getting the trailer to move it. I think it had to go in two pieces as well.

*

Dad once looked at buying it himself. As I said I thought it was cool back then,and wanted it for a playhouse. I was about 5 or 6 at the time. But of course the price was too high at the time \$500.00 and just where in the world would we have put the darn thing LOL.

. ж

I should try to look through some old pics and see if I can find the ones of the UFO. I know we had some (me out in front of it when it sat off of hwy 26, and of it on the trailer)but not sure if they are still around or not.

insightfullone

Nov 3, 2009 at 12:43 p.m.

Suggest removal

twerp13, I think what you're referring to is the Zanadoo home. That was made of foam or something. It was circular in shape and futuristic.

BikerJoe

Nov 3, 2009 at 12:41 p.m.

Suggest removal

For me it would have been early 70's Probibly 71 or 72.. I do remember the Gas wars when It used to dip to 26.9 a gallon..Like I said I was a pump Jocky at the Deep Rock on the corner of Mt Zion and Milton Ave, Back when stations were still full service.. Phil Grover owned Toyota Classics across the street.. He had a Red one sitting there a couple of Months..

justaguy

Nov 3, 2009 at 11:10 a.m.

Suggest removal

would have been late 70s - early 80s, I didn't get out that way much but do remember seeing it once or twice there, mainly remember it near pizzavilla while cruzin the circuit in my 69 Mustang :-) couldn't tell you the color tho.

BikerJoe

Nov 3, 2009 at 8:32 a.m.

Suggest removal

It was Red.. It sat in the Parking lot at Toyota Classics on Milton ave for awhile as well.. I was a pump jocky across the street at the Deep Rock Station

localboysince1968

Nov 3, 2009 at 8:23 a.m.

Suggest removal

I thought this thing was red. I remember it being red when it was out on Hwy 26.

justaguy

Nov 3, 2009 at 12:03 a.m.

Suggest removal

bobb1951: was it out by afton road and rockport? I know i've seen it a few places but down town rings the biggest bell.

justaguy

Nov 2, 2009 at 8:39 p.m.

Suggest removal

ranjan: Yes I remember it being there, I use to ride the circuit around 1979 - 80 and it was there for awhile, I was wondering if this is the same one.

sannio

Nov 2, 2009 at 5:54 p.m.

Suggest removal

Dugg for the go-go boots, and that idiotic fireplace sitting on a fuzzy table. It was very cool when I was a kid, too.

twerp13

Nov 2, 2009 at 5:21 p.m.

Suggest removal

I could be wrong, but if I remember correctly I thought it went to the Wisconsin Dells as part of a attraction up there.

*

I always wanted it for my back yard as a playhouse. I thought it was so cool looking.

pastamom

Nov 2, 2009 at 4:50 p.m.

Suggest removal

How cool is that? I want one! Of course, how "futuristic" is it when the woman is still serving the man in the photo?

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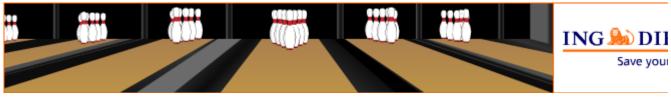
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