

**UNDERUTILIZED**  
Living Dead Museum,  
Evans City, PA



**Evans City, Pennsylvania**, a small town about 30 minutes north of Pittsburgh, has the dubious honor of being the birthplace of the modern horror movie genre. George Romero filmed his famous zombie flick, *The Night of the Living Dead*, here in 1968, and the Living Dead Museum is dedicated to his legacy.

The owner, Kevin Kriss, had assembled a large collection of Living Dead memorabilia over the years, and in 2013, he opened the museum to much fanfare, including visits from Romero and the original cast. The Museum is featured on *Roadside America* and has garnered enthusiastic reviews from visitors and tourists who love the movie.

### WHY IS IT UNDERUTILIZED?

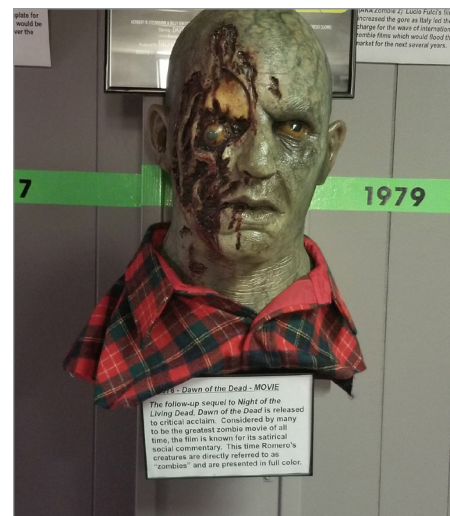
The museum doesn't get much business. Part of this is from its non-descript location, local attitudes, and its very cult-like following.

The museum sits in a non-descript building on a busy street in Evans City's historic downtown dominated by a variety of locally-owned shops. Other than the sign, you would never know it was there.

In addition, while the museum has garnered public attention in the past, it is not well-known amongst its followers due to its lack of a modern digital presence. The website revolves around memorabilia, and Facebook focuses more on area events than the museum itself.

### MAIN UNDERUTILIZERS

**Local townspeople:** Evans City is a very family-friendly town, centered around its school and marching band, as well as various community events. While they appreciate their town's histo-



ry, the local townspeople view the museum--and the idea of zombies--as an oddity. While the town participated in the opening and subsequent events, such as the Living Dead weekend where the original cast signed autographs, the locals have since soured on the experience. When I moved here, they described it as "creepy" and "I avoid downtown like the plague when those people in town."

**Young people:** Younger audiences are typically unfamiliar with the original movie and in comparison to modern horror movies and even the typical haunted house, they are turned off by its cheesiness and lack of effect. They want a more of an experience, not a museum. This will become more of a problem as cast members and movie followers get older.

**Tourists:** While people here in Pittsburgh, "the zombie capital of the world," are generally familiar with the movie, outsiders are not. The few people who happen upon this small town were most likely sent here by TripAdvisor. But with a small website geared toward memorabilia and poor social media, would-be visitors most likely rely on word-of-mouth.

### INTENDED USERS

Similar to the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, a movie like *The Night of the Living Dead* garners a cult-like following. Having just turned 50 last year, its followers are a bit of an oddity themselves. Generally older, white and working class, singles and couples drive to this little, out-of-the-way town because they love the movie and appreciate its role in the horror genre. During the Living Dead Weekend in October, fans turn out by the dozens, dressed in zombie/horror attire. It sort of reminds me of the people who attend a renaissance festival or comic con, which looks humorous in that setting but perhaps less so in an ordinary town.



# LIVING DEAD

## e x p e r i e n c e

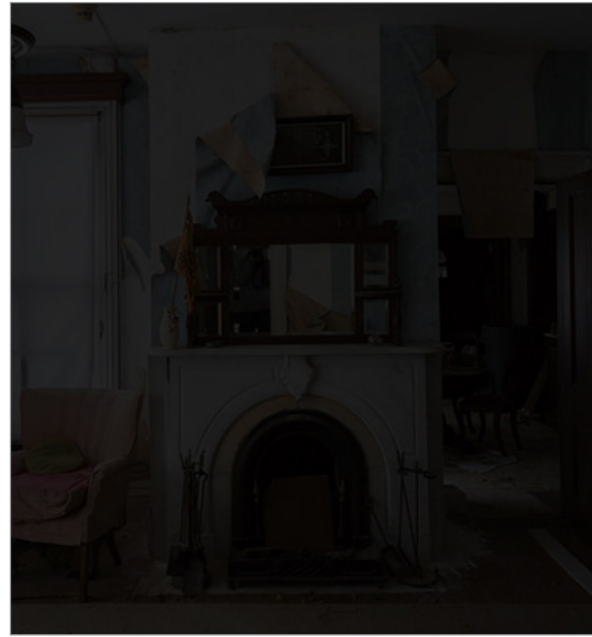
In the age of virtual reality and life-like haunted houses, the Living Dead Museum needs to reorient itself to the changing landscape. Showing props of a 50-year old movie and having its cast members sign autographs simply aren't enough for today's generation. The goal is to turn the museum in more of an experience through the use of zombie-themed escape rooms. Each escape room will highlight different scenes from the Night of the Living Dead movie and engage participants on a multi-sensory level that will frighten them time and time again.



# Escape Room Experience



The experience begins with participants being chased by zombies.



Participants are chased into a dark room.



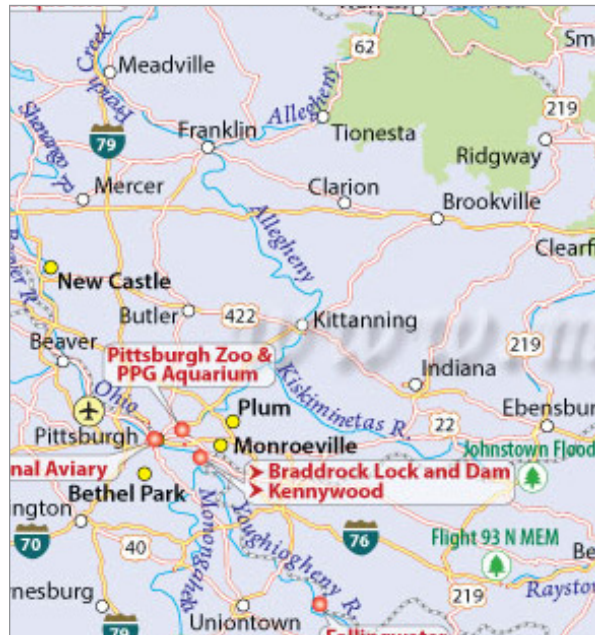
The light reveals a delapidated room that mimics the key room from The Night of the Living Dead.



In the corner lies a partially devoured, mangled corpse.



The radio starts to play the broadcast from the movie, with additions in Morse Code. Participants have to translate the beeps in order to find the next clue.



The code tells participants they need to get to the nearest National Guard post. Participants will need to locate longitude and latitude coordinates.



All the while, participants will smell smoke and hear things getting worse outside: glass breaking, grunts, groans, screams, and large bangs.



Once they find the post on the map, they are directed to other clues--a music box, fruit jars, a table post--all to locate a key which opens a hidden compartment.



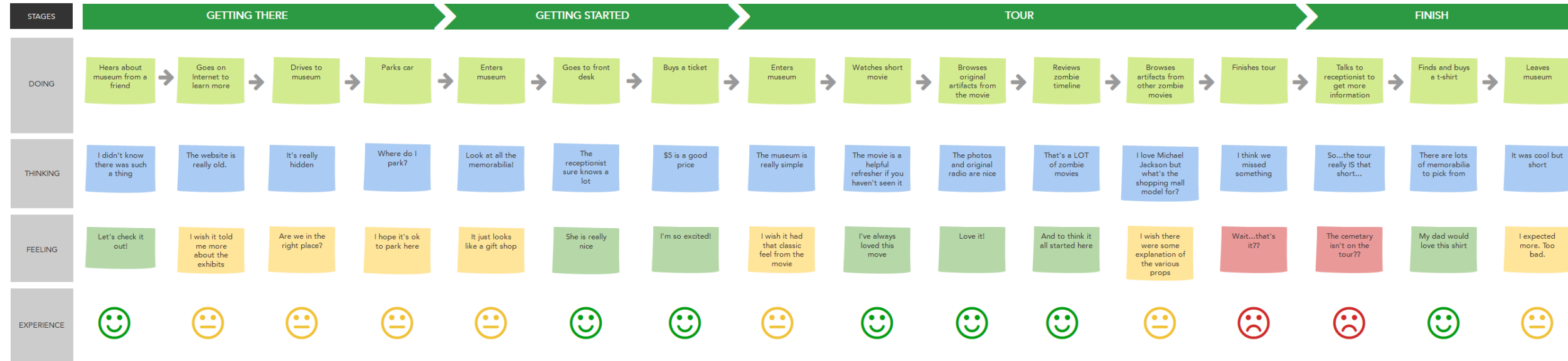
At the 45-minute mark, the lights flicker and go out. Participants will have to navigate the room by flashlight at this point.



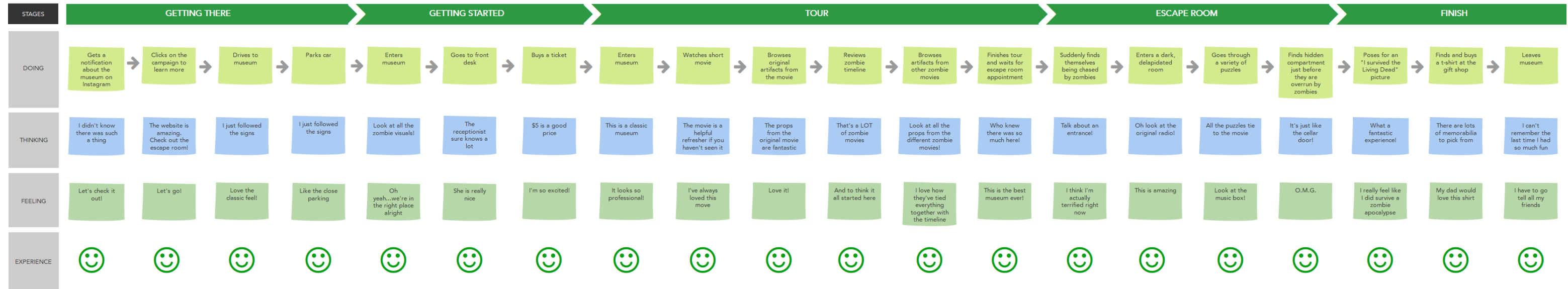
At 55 minutes zombies start banging on their door. If participants do not locate the hidden compartment, zombies will knock down the door and overrun the room.



# Experience Diagram



## Current Experience



## Proposed Experience

# Mood Board

**NAME/TAGLINE:** LIVING DEAD Experience

**CONCEPT DESCRIPTION/PURPOSE:** The Living Dead Experience is an interactive escape room and experience dedicated to George Romero's original The Night of the Living Dead. The goal is to not just provide a museum with props but an interactive experience that brings visitors face-to-face with their greatest fears. Escape rooms will be designed to mimic various rooms portrayed in the original movie, and participants will have one hour to escape before the room is overrun by a group of zombies.

## PHOTOGRAPHY



## COLOR



## TYPOGRAPHY

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
1234567890

## SPOT ILLUSTRATIONS, DIAGRAMS, RULES



## TEXTURES



## Branding

The goal is to update the branding, signage, website and other materials with an updated look-and-feel.



New Logo



Escape Room "I Survived" Button



# Instagram

The goal is to use Instagram and social media to get the word out to anyone within an hour's radius of Pittsburgh.

