



REPORT

CALICO GHOST TOWN

INVESTIGATION



*Calico
California*

CA001

SOUTHWEST GHOST HUNTERS ASSOCIATION



UNSOLVED
CLOSED

2001

COMPLAINTS
STANDARD

WWW.SGHA.NET



Forward

The word “investigation” is defined as
“a searching inquiry for ascertaining facts; detailed or careful examination.”

The key word here is “facts”. Do ghosts exist? No, it has not been proven.
Therefore are no facts to investigate.

What we do have is the testimony of the witnesses and this is where an investigational process will work. Investigations are often viewed as a skeptical activity because the main goal is trying to determine what the witness actually saw. Is it explainable or not? This is done through critical thinking and an event replication process developed by SGHA. This is an important concept because what defines a haunting or ghost sighting is “Multiple witnesses reporting unusual phenomena over a period of time”. If these phenomena can be explained, the witness reports are no longer validating paranormal activity as a cause and thus there is no ghost or haunting. Additionally historical research may be done in an attempt to validate facts.

It is important to understand that the goal of an investigation is not to find evidence of the paranormal but to attempt to identify any natural or manmade causes of the reported phenomena

Definition of Terms

Investigation Status: Unsolved investigations will have either an open or closed status. An investigation is given an “Open” status if:

The investigators were unable to replicate all of the witness events. Something significant remains that is still unsolved.

It is important to understand that an “open” investigation does not mean that the unsolved facts are paranormal in nature. It simply means that we have exhausted our resources and cannot solve the “open” items/events.

A “Closed” status indicates that there is insufficient data or confounding variables that prevents replication or identifying possible explanations. This often occurs when investigators do not have direct access to witnesses or some other environmental change have occurred that creates confounding variables.

Confidentiality Notice

Many of the witnesses interviewed have wished to remain anonymous in exchange for presenting their accounts of paranormal experiences. We honor that request and thus witnesses will often be identified by aliases. Any coincidence between aliases and actual persons is unintentional.

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Part 1: Location Information

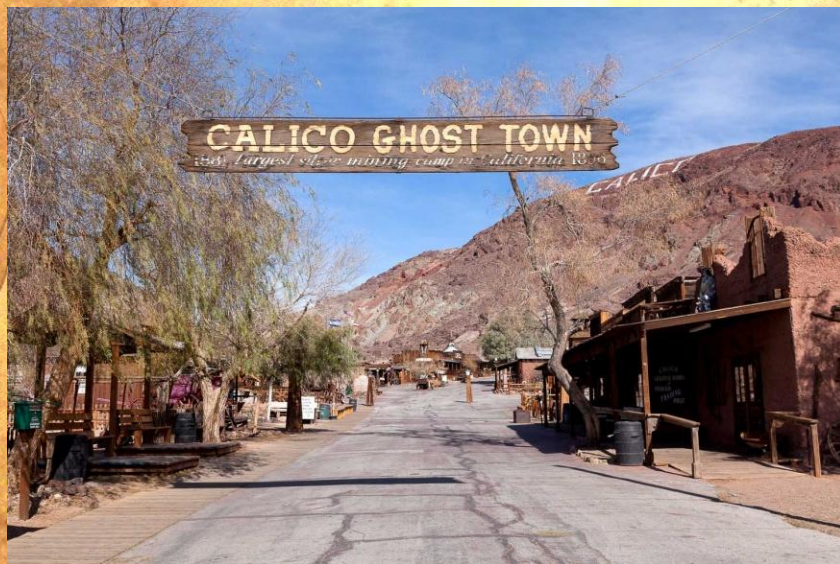
Calico Ghost Town

36600 Ghost Town Road

Yermo, CA 92398

Part 2: Location History:

In 1881 four prospectors were leaving Grapevine Station (present day Barstow, California) for a mountain peak to the northeast. Describing the peak as "calico-colored", the peak, the mountain range to which it belonged, and the town that followed were all called Calico. The four prospectors discovered silver in the mountain, and opened the Silver King Mine, which was California's largest silver producer in the mid-1880s. A post office was established in early 1882, and the



Calico Print, a weekly newspaper, started publishing. The town soon supported three hotels, five general stores, a meat market, bars, brothels, and three restaurants and boarding houses. The county established a school district and a voting precinct. The town also had a deputy

sheriff and two constables, two lawyers and a justice of the peace, five commissioners, and two doctors. There was also a Wells Fargo office and a telephone and telegraph service. At its height of silver production during 1883 and 1885, Calico had over 500 mines and a population of 1,200 people. Local badmen were buried in the Boot Hill cemetery.

The discovery of the borate mineral colemanite in the Calico Mountains a few years after the settlement of the town also helped Calico's fortunes, and in 1890 the estimated population of the town was 3,500, with nationals of China, England, Ireland, Greece, France, and the Netherlands, as well as Americans living there. In the same year, the Silver Purchase Act was enacted, and it drove

down the price of silver. By 1896, its value had decreased to \$0.57 per troy ounce, and Calico's silver mines were no longer economically viable. The post office was discontinued in 1898, and the school closed not long after. By the turn of the century, Calico was all but a ghost town, and with the end of borax mining in the region in 1907 the town was completely abandoned. Many of the original buildings were moved to Barstow, Daggett and Yermo.

An attempt to revive the town was made in about 1915, when a cyanide plant was built to recover silver from the unprocessed Silver King Mine's deposits. Walter Knott and his wife Cordelia, founders of Knott's Berry Farm, were homesteaded at Newberry Springs around this time, and Knott helped build the redwood cyanide tanks for the plant. In 1951, Knott purchased the town and began restoring it to its original condition referencing old photographs. He installed a longtime employee named "Calico Fred" Noller as resident caretaker and official greeter. In 1966, Knott donated the town to San Bernardino County, and Calico became a County Regional Park.

In 2012 Calico became the first ghost town in America to be re-opened for residential purposes. 100m from the ghost town site, six luxury villas were built with a trading value of \$4.5 million.



Calico has been restored to the silver rush era it once flourished, although many original buildings were removed and replaced instead with gingerbread architecture and false facades that tourists would expect to see in a Western-themed town; Most of the restored and newly built buildings are made of wood with a simple, rustic architecture and a severely weathered appearance. Some structures still stand dating back to the town's operational years: Lil's Saloon; the town office; the former home of Lucy Lane, which is now the main museum but was originally the town's post office and courthouse; Smitty's Gallery; the general store; and Joe's Saloon.

There is also a replica of the schoolhouse on the site of the original building. The one-time homes of the town's Chinese citizens exist as ruins only; nothing remains of the former "family" residential area on a nearby bluff.

In November 1962, Calico Ghost Town was registered as a California Historical Landmark (Landmark #782), In 2002, Calico vied with Bodie in Mono County to be recognized as the Official State Ghost Town. In 2005, a compromise was finally reached when the State Senate and State Assembly agreed to list Bodie as the Official State Gold Rush Ghost Town and Calico the Official State Silver Rush Ghost Town.

Today, the park operates mine tours, gunfight stunt shows, gold panning, several restaurants, the historic narrow-gauge Calico and Odessa Railroad, and a number of trinket stores. It is open every day except Christmas, and requires an entrance fee. Additional fees are required for some attractions. Overnight camping is also available. Special events are held throughout the year including a Spring Festival in May, Calico Days in early October, and a Ghost Town haunt in late October.

(Source: wikipedia.org and investigation report filed by Frank Manis)

Part3: Witnesses

This section identifies the witnesses to the reported activity.

Name	Sex	Connection with reported incident	Interviewed
Andy Ewing	Male	Employee	02 Dec 2001
Joe*	Male	Employee	02 Dec 2001
Emma*	Female	Employee	02 Dec 2001

*Witnesses given aliases are noted by a **

Part 4: Reported Phenomena (General)

Visitors and investigators to Maggie Mine, the one on-site mine which is open to the public, have reported cold spots in the vicinity of the tunnel Y. Also reported have been feelings of "one's hair standing up" near the home of the Mulcahey Brothers within the mine. Only about 1000 feet of the mine are open to the public; metal grates or wooden walls seal off the rest.

A hillside adjacent to the upper parking area is commonly mentioned as having orb activity.

According to the town staff, this is the location where Chinese (possibly Japanese) mine workers would cremate their dead before having them sent home. The building currently used as the R&D Fossil and Mineral shop was formerly a theater. Actors reported items would be moved from the spots at which they were left, and blamed it on a ghost they called Esmerelda. There is no known historical basis for this name.

The Calico schoolhouse is one of the (many) reconstructed buildings in the town. A British couple visiting the site had a long conversation with a staff member in period costume. They took pictures with her, but when they returned home, the staff member did not appear in any of the photos. They called Calico, requesting pictures of this individual, only to find out that there had been no staff member to work at the school house in the past 6 months. While this sounds like an urban legend, one of the employee historians is

emphatic that this happened. He began working at the site shortly before the British couple requested replacement photographs.

Part 5: Phenomena reported during Ghost Hunts

No unusual phenomena were observed during the investigation at this location.

Part6: Hypotheses

All of the reports of paranormal activity are second or third hand accounts. Calico does warrant a full investigation, as this was done under less than ideal conditions. Night time access is prohibited as there are several open mine shafts, especially around the area of the cemetery. This prevents a controlled environment for attempting recreations of the described events. As such the reported phenomena at this location appear to be nothing more than assorted ghost stories told to visitors.

Part 7: Conclusion/ Confounding variables

Myth building is a serious problem here that obscures the vital facts that need to be investigated.

- We had no access to any eye witnesses. The identities of the witnesses of the reported phenomena have been lost over time, preventing recreations that could identify any explainable phenomena.
- Witnesses Joe and Emma both complained about the findings of other ghost hunting groups that have visited the town. Specifically about findings in rebuilt buildings (not original) and the historical inaccuracy in their reports.

The reported phenomenon at this location is not solvable. Recreations of witness events cannot be performed due to the lack of data.