



# REPORT

## GEORGETOWN CEMETARY

INVESTIGATION



*Georgetown  
New Mexico*

NM097

### SOUTHWEST GHOST HUNTERS ASSOCIATION



SOLVED

2003

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

Georgetown Cemetery

Georgetown, NM

## Part 2: Location History:



Georgetown was a "silver city" during the 1880s and boasted a population of twelve hundred residents. The city was well planned with the business district in the middle of town, the better residential area to the north with schools and churches and to the south was the jail, miner's quarters, saloons and other questionable establishments. The silver mines, and there was many of them, was located across the

gulch from the town and nestled in the hills beyond. When the price of silver slumped in 1893, the town began to decline and by 1897 only two hundred remained. The turn of the century saw only about a hundred or so.

(Source: <http://www.ghosttowns.com/states/nm/georgetown.html>)

## Part 3: Witnesses

This section identifies the witnesses to the reported activity.

Witness	Sex	Association with incident	Interviewed
Randall	Male	Witness	11/8/2003
Richard	Male	Witness	11/8/2003
Jeanette	Female	Witness	11/8/2003

*Witnesses given aliases are noted by a \**

Randall and Richard are partners in a business that takes visitors on tours of ghost towns in southern New Mexico. During their last tour they parked across



the road from the cemetery in Georgetown. They lit a bonfire for their guests who roasted marshmallows while the hosts told various ghost stories.

As the evening was winding down and the guests were leaving, Jeanette noticed two white figures moving rapidly among the tombstones in the graveyard. The people remaining in the tour watched for several minutes as the figures moved about. Finally Richard became curious enough to cross the road to investigate what the group was seeing. Right after he entered the cemetery there were several “shrieks and screams” followed by a “swooping white blur” that seemed to be warning the group to stay out of the graveyard. The screams repeated and the group jumped into their vehicles and fled.

The first visit to this location was in 2003. The actual investigation was performed in 2004.

#### **Part 4: Reported Phenomena (General)**

The reported phenomena consisted of the sightings of two apparitions moving about in the cemetery. The apparitions were making noises that the witnesses described as “shrieking or screaming”.

#### **Part 5: Investigation Summary**

We arrived around 4:30 in the afternoon and began setting up a surveillance system to watch the area around the cemetery. We also lit a bonfire across the road to replicate the same lighting conditions the group had during the tour. We limited the observation area for the investigators to this area.



After three hours of seeing nothing of interest, two investigators moved into the cemetery to explore several hypotheses that the group had discussed during the observation period. The two remaining investigators stayed at the observation area. About 5 minutes after entering the graveyard we heard a



high pitched shriek coming from the southwest end of the cemetery. When investigators moved to locate the source of this noise they were “dive bombed” by a rather large owl. The creature did not seem to be pleased with our presence and flew by closely several more times while shrieking. The observation team radioed the investigators in the cemetery that they were vaguely seeing a white shape moving around them and that with a little imagination, it could look like an apparition.



The noise did not sound like the “hoot” you think that an owl would sound like. It was actually quite bizarre. The team inside the cemetery was able to record the noises the owl was making and took a photo of it when it landed on a nearby tombstone. Since the owl’s behavior suggested that the animal was protecting a nest or food source the

cemetery team decided to withdrawal.

## Part 6: Hypotheses

Our main hypothesis is that the tour group was seeing a pair of barn owls in the cemetery. This matches the description of white shapes that the witnesses reported. Being nocturnal, we believe that the disturbance of several cars turning on their lights and leaving the area disturbed the owls causing them to move about and shriek. The perspective from the road, combined with the low lighting conditions, made the owls look larger against the background. (In other words the owls were actually closer to the group but the group perceived them as human sized figures moving further back in the cemetery)

Several weeks later we were able to discuss this hypothesis with Randall and Richard who agreed that this was the most likely cause of what they had see.

## Part 7: Conclusion



The apparitions were identified as being common barn owls.

**SOLVED**

## Part 8: Photographs

