



REPORT

MY HOUSE OF OLD THINGS

INVESTIGATION



*Ancho
New Mexico*

NM102

SOUTHWEST GHOST HUNTERS ASSOCIATION



SOLVED

2001

COMPLAINTS
STANDARD

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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 has 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

My House of Old Things

Ancho, NM

Part 2: Location History

Because of one woman's dream that future generations might understand and study the frugal and pioneer beginnings of the West, the Museum known as "My House of Old Things" still brings tourists to Ancho from May until October. Jackie Straley Silvers was a descendent of the Straley family who homesteaded there the early part of the century. She was an avid collector and could not throw anything away nor refuse anything that was given to her. People even willed things to her: a collection of rocks, dolls, bottles, dishes, cigar bands. Friends, instead of taking things to the dump, gave her old washing machines, rusty stoves and farm implements.



Her collection became immense.

To house her growing collection she bought the old abandoned railroad station and moved it next to her home.

The grand opening of her "House of Old Things" was held in June of 1963. People came from all over New Mexico. Newspapers reported the event, and the Secretary of State came. For the nine years until her death in 1972, Jackie thoroughly enjoyed giving tours. Now her daughter Sara and her husband, L. Y. Jackson, continue the legacy. Even though antique lovers would be ecstatic to be able to purchase some of the items in this Museum, none of it is for sale.

There are rugged hand wrought iron nails, early kitchen utensils and appliances, delicate silver, china and glassware. Furniture styles of the past are displayed in many of the eight rooms. Part of the old post office wall is appropriately there, as Jackie was postmaster of the Ancho post office, a position that someone in her family held for fifty-six years.

For railroad buffs there is a complete station with its relics from Ancho's past. An operating telegraph key, switch controls and hundreds of mementos attest to its authenticity. For those of us who are older, there are many things to remind us of items our grandparents owned. For the younger generation it gives them a glimpse into pioneer life. Perhaps it will make everyone appreciate the inventions and ways in which our lives are soft compared to the hardships of our ancestors.

Part 3: Witnesses

This section identifies the witnesses to the reported activity.

Name	Sex	Connection with reported incident	Interviewed
Jackie	F	Witness	07 Aug 2001

*Witnesses given aliases are noted by a **

Part 4: Reported Phenomenon

Jackie told us that certain objects move and occasionally the movement is to another room. She believes that the visitors were responsible for some of the movement but there were some objects that were either not possible

to move (being in a display case). She had also noticed the there were unusual noises that came from the deserted buildings around the town and was curious if "ghosts" were the culprit.

Part 5: Investigation

We went through the museum with Jackie as she showed us the objects that appeared to move on their own accord. We then proceeded to make observations and conduct a more detailed interview with Jackie. The objects that appeared to move where in locked display cases on wooden shelves. The display cases that contained "moving objects" were all in one room on the south side of the building.

Part 6: Conclusion

The only reported phenomenon is the movement of objects. Based on our observations we think this phenomena is explainable.

There are many things that cause vibrations in the building (a furnace, a fan, an air conditioner, a computer, a well pump, a toilet flushing, anything with a motor, a stereo to name a few). We also noticed that Trucks passing by on the road made the windows buzz. Strong wind on the window panes may also transfer pressure from their elasticity even if they are closed. We think that a large number of small, successive perturbations (disturbances) would eventually move the objects very close to an unstable position causing them to move or fall over.

With the addition of the other noises heard around the town (which we also provided a rational explanation for) Jackie started considering a "paranormal" cause for the movement. With alternative explanations identified and a lack of any other type of phenomenon that could be considered to be paranormal missing, this location does not have any paranormal phenomenon occurring.

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Part 7: Photographs









