

Local group mining for spirits

Paranormal investigators find link between museum, Ludlow

By Jon Pompia
The Pueblo Chieftain

Coal mining is an indelible part of the fabric of Southern Colorado.

In more ways than one can imagine.

For the past several months, Light in the Dark Paranormal — a local group that specializes in ghost towns and mining sites — has focused its investigative efforts on the Cokedale Mining Museum, a onetime company store located in the heart of the former coal mining camp west of Trinidad.

These investigations, Paul Hill said, were prompted by reports of unusual activity from museum staff and even Cokedale's town clerk.

"We conducted an initial investigation back in February," said Hill, joined by his wife Adrian and Louise Bosche in Light in the Dark Paranormal. "And we discovered, quite readily and easily in a short time, quite a bit of evidence."

Evidence, Hill said, that included an antique wooden wire cutter mysteriously spinning around and Maglights turning on in response to questions.

"Items like the wire cutter are, probably trigger objects, which



A woman places flowers at the Ludlow Massacre memorial. Dark Paranormal investigators say a recent Cokedale Mining Museum investigation shows activity related to that found in 2012 at the Ludlow Massacre. [CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE]

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Paul Hill, paranormal investigator

likely contain the energies of the miners who used to buy things there," Hill said. "We captured the wire cutter on video. And I made a freeze frame photo out of it and it's self-illuminated. No one took a picture with a flash, but the wire cutter is lit up in a soft blue hue."

In the spirit of the season, Hill

and his colleagues in the curious opened up the investigations to both believers and skeptics. Every Saturday in September and October, the investigators hosted two-hour "paranormal encounters" at the museum.

Although the sessions started slowly from an otherworldly standpoint, manifestations

eventually appeared, including anomalies Hill had never before encountered.

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It's the group's contention that the main spirit permeating the building is Leo Gottlieb, who owned and operated the company store during mining's heyday.

"We're very intuitive and sensitive," Hill said, "and there's no question it's him. Historically, he used to run the show, the dominant figure on the scene. Initially, he was very cautious and kept his distance, running away and hiding. But flashing forward to last Saturday, he was more curious about us than ever and was making the flashlights go off ridiculously."

"Leo was Jewish and my wife is half-Jewish. And he really seemed to warm up once she mentioned that to him. And I think he's fond of her. If I could be jealous of a ghost, I would be."

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Another spirit, believed to be that of a little girl who was fatally injured in a wagon accident outside the store, also made her presence known.

"We caught her giggling on audio and playing and

stirring with the recorder," Hill said.

In 2012, a similar investigation at the Ludlow Massacre site north of Trinidad produced several still photographs of what appear to be eerie mist-like forms.

"Ludlow and the Cokedale Museum are closely related," Hill said. "In a lot of cases, these are the same miners who worked at the mine and

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patronized the store. What we did at Ludlow is read off the names enscribed on the monument. We literally called them out and they came, they answered our call.

"We got photographs

of a man and a woman crossing the street, with the shadows of two little children, and miners walking toward us with their headlamps lit. We stayed out all night to get those photographs.

"So I think there's

a relationship between Cokedale and Ludlow."

Hill said the group may return to the Ludlow site in the near future. Those interested in learning more about the group and upcoming investigations may contact Hill at at 303-927-9134 or by writing youracceptedoffer@msn.com.

jpompia@chieftain.com