

**Around Cheyenne Magazine article
TELLTALE SIGNS OF A GHOST**

By Jill Pope
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Do you have a ghost? Are strange things happening in your home or work space? I have compiled a listing of the most common occurrences reported with spirits.

The term **unexplained noise** can cover a very wide range of sounds as related to paranormal activity.

FOOTSTEPS- many people tell of hearing footsteps when no one else was around. Usually coming from the floor above them, but sometimes the sounds come from the same room or are heard going up or down stairs. A local man tells of repeatedly hearing footsteps on his roof, only to learn later that a previous resident died of a heartache while repairing the roof.

THINGS THAT GO BANG IN THE NIGHT – Most ghost tales involve thumps, knocking, creaking, or slamming type noises. Keep in mind the Wyoming wind factor. If windows or doors are not tightly sealed it could produce some strange sounds.

VOICES IN THIN AIR– It would be particularly disconcerting for a disembodied voice to whisper into your ear. This happened to a Cheyenne paranormal investigator during an investigation held in a dirt crawlspace that happened to be the scene of a murder. Sometimes these audible sounds are muffled voices where the words cannot quite be understood, while other times the words are distinct. It's not uncommon for people to report moaning, crying or even laughter. Be aware of vents and piping where voices may be carried from other areas of the building, neighboring buildings, or outside. There was a story online about a woman who had some construction work done at her home. For the next few days she kept hearing voices in the basement, then the voices abruptly stopped. She thought whatever was in her basement must have moved on. Eventually she learned that a workman had dropped his portable radio into the cement floor he was pouring. Rather than try to dig it out, he smoothed it over and left it there. The battery operated radio had been tuned into a talk radio station!

Besides these **unexplained noises** the following happenings can indicate paranormal activity:

MISPLACED - There are many different stories of belongings being moved or rearranged. Reports of items that are routinely placed in the same spot, such as keys then being found in some other unexplained place are common. One such Cheyenne resident would find her hairbrush and TV remote moved under the kitchen table. The first time or two she thought it odd, but when it began happening every week she looked for some sort of explanation. Once other paranormal activity began she believed it to be her resident ghost. These are small items, I've also been told of furniture being rearranged, and



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even piled ceiling high. Sometimes possessions disappear for some time, and then reappear just as mysteriously. Either someone close by has a strange sense of humor or maybe the ghost itself is a prankster. I believe ghosts have a variety of personality traits, just as they did when in human form.

LEVITATE- When household items are seen physically moving “on their own” you could have a ghost! A few local reports include a TV remote that would frequently fly off of the entertainment center and slam to the floor or onto the couch where tenants were sitting, as though the ghost disapproved of their show selection. There’s an account of a vase shooting straight through the air and hitting the visitor square between the eyes. A Cheyenne merchant tells of a sculpted Indian Brave that was hanging on a wall, it defied gravity when it soared straight out from the wall, lingered momentarily before dropping to the floor in the center of the room. In a different downtown location, with no customers in the store, two saleswomen were startled as they watched a glass shelf shoot straight forward before crashing to the floor. People relay stories of glasses or plates sliding across the table as they watch. In looking for logical explanations think of things that could cause a vibration and possibly move things. Train tracks nearby could be one answer.

SLAM- what about those doors and cupboards that seemingly open or close on their own, Sometimes quietly, sometimes not. One ghost was apparently unhappy that the residents were moving away. They had emptied out their kitchen cupboards, leaving all the cabinet doors open so they could clean inside them. Suddenly all of the cupboard doors slammed shut at once! Another couple says that when they would wake up in the mornings they’d find all of the kitchen cabinets wide open, everything on the floor, and often broken. They went through three sets of dishes in six months.

ELECTRIC PERSONALITY – Some believe that ghosts draw energy from electrical sources and even batteries. Paranormal investigators often document brand new batteries being immediately drained from their cameras and equipment. Lights flicker or turn on/off on their own, just as TV’s, radios, toys and electrical tools have been reported to do. This is particularly unnerving when these items are unplugged. Always have electrical wiring & sources checked out, safety first. Look for logical answers and don’t jump to the conclusion that it must be paranormal activity.

DID YOU SEE THAT? Ever catch a glimpse of something or someone from the corner of your eye only to realize there’s no one there? Are there shadowy figures, misty forms, transparent bodies, full body apparitions or body portions such as a floating head in your house? One local home has a resident hand that floats over the dinner table. Other apparitions include white spots or balls of light called orbs, non distinguishable fleeting shapes. Be sure to check if headlights from nearby traffic could somehow be responsible. Consider reflections from mirrors or TV’s, or any light source. One explanation for the phenomenon is the how the "rods and cones" are set up in our eyes. It makes us particularly sensitive to movement in our peripheral vision. This goes back to our tribal hunter days, so we could see if an animal was suddenly attacking us from the side.

BRRRRRR- A drastic temperature change is one of the most common signs associated with a ghost. Most generally cold spots, sometimes reported to move right through a person.

THE AROMA – Sometimes distinguishable scents such as flowers, cigar and pipe smoke, or cologne are reported to hang in the air when ghosts are present. Reports of a deceased former Cheyenne judge lingering at his office always include the aroma of pipe smoke.

GOOSEBUMPS- A term often included in ghostly tales include “the hair on the back of my neck stood up”, or “I got the chills”, “I had goosebumps”. Many report overwhelming feelings of being watched, and some people get an intense headache or upset stomach. Occasionally people even feel as though they have been touched or poked by an invisible hand. One lady reported feeling a spirit kiss her cheek. Sometimes imprints of an entity can be seen in a chair cushion or a mattress.

ANIMAL MAGNETISM – Many say that animals have keen senses that allow them to be more in tune with the paranormal. It’s thought that when animals intensely stare at “nothing” that are seeing a spirit. Do your dogs bark at nothing? Is this because they are crazy little critters, or is there something there that we cannot see? There are chilling tales of dogs attacking an invisible adversary. I’ve received three separate stories of dogs reacting this way at the perimeter of Lakeview Cemetery. I’ve also received many reports of dogs that refuse to go into the basement or a particular room, including trained security dogs at the base.

Be rational and look for natural or man-made causes for each event. Consider wind, drafts, traffic, rodents or other animals, the house settling, furnace noises and of course an over active imagination. In a room where you’ve experienced unusual things place a piece of paper on a flat solid surface. Lay a coin in the center of the page. Trace the coin so you know the exact position of it. Leave the room unoccupied for 24 hours. If the coin has been moved upon your return this could indicate paranormal activity. Another test that can be done in a room that does not have any natural drafts is to take a long candle placed securely in a candle holder, set the lit candle in the center of a stable flat surface (on tin foil or some fire resistant surface for safety sake). Leave the room for awhile. If the flame has gone out when you return it could warrant further investigation.

“There is nothing so powerful as the truth, and often nothing so strange.”
Daniel Webster

If you have experienced any of the above phenomena I’d love to hear your story. Please email me at jill@cheyenne.org.

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