

Ghosts? Strange occurrences witnessed downtown

JOHN LOWE/The Daily Jeffersonian
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Late at night and, even during the day, a subterranean presence lingers in a Wheeling Avenue business, causing minor mischief and creating unexplained phenomena.

At least that is the thought of some who venture into Penny Court.

Owner Anna Pavlov cannot quite embrace a belief in ghosts. But even she admits to seeing unexplained things caught by the camera, if not the naked eye.

For many years, the Penny Court building -- which once housed the JC Penney store and, in the 19th century, [a hotel](#) -- has created, among some of the customers, a sense of an unseen presence in the building, Pavlov said.

Then, two years ago when a room in the front part of the basement was opened as a consignment space, one of the vendors noticed some movement without seeing anything distinctly recognizable.

However, a [security camera](#) upstairs subsequently captured an image that Pavlov and her family saw.

"By golly, there was something down there," she said. "It was kind of cloudy, a globe-like object."

Her mother, Fran decided to spook whatever it was. So, she crossed the threshold of a doorway on the east side of the basement room and began

to shout, "Get out of here!"

Upstairs, the other Pavlovs observed the globe.

"It ran and hid behind a post in the room," Anna said. "When she left [through the north doorway], it ran up behind her. But it never left the room. It never crossed the threshold."

Other strange happenings also seem to have occurred.

Once the Pavlovs pinched out a candle before leaving the store for the night. When they returned the next morning, the candle had been lighted again, Anna said.

On another occasion, a show window mannequin was displayed holding a glass goblet. The next morning, the goblet was out-of-hand, shattered in countless pieces beyond the span that a simple fall from the mannequin hand could explain.

What's more, the shards were deeply embedded into the floor, Anna said.

"It looked as if they had been scrunched in by someone using his foot to put out a cigarette," she said.

"When you hear people say they have ghosts in their house, it's like, 'Yeah, right.' But ..."

Her father, Dick Pavlov, doesn't believe in ghosts per se, but he wonders whether some unknown process may be at work, particularly since the human body does have electrical currents flowing through it.

"Maybe, in certain conditions," he speculated, "something can be imprinted on a place. Look at a CD. You wouldn't think that anything is on it. But music is imprinted on it.

"It's a theory. I guess it's as good as any other."

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