

"I Lived In A Haunted House"

By Anna Abner

I'm not the kind of person who looks for evidence of the supernatural. I love to read and write about it. My favorite TV shows all have paranormal and supernatural themes (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Vampire Diaries*, *Teen Wolf*), but I never had a concrete stance on whether ghosts are real until I moved into a haunted house.

In 2008, my husband, our daughter, and I moved to Ogden, Utah into a sixty-plus-year-old home. We were native southern Californians and this was our first experience living in the Beehive State. My husband's job transferred him to nearby Roy and we were excited to find a cheap house within fifteen minutes of his office.



Exterior of the Ogden House in winter.

The house has a main floor plus a full basement that can be used as a "grandma apartment" with its own kitchenette and bathroom, and an attic with two bedrooms and a bathroom. Though there were only three of us, it was

perfect. We could have a playroom for our daughter, a rumpus room downstairs, and both my husband and I could have our own home offices. I loved it.

The first unusual experience happened almost immediately. At the rear of the property was an older garage with a much newer garage addition built onto the side. I adopted the older garage, but when we moved in it looked like it hadn't been used in decades. It was coated with dust and cobwebs. Someone had dug their own mechanic's pit into the ground and miscellaneous car parts and shop tools were rusting in drawers and cabinets. The first thing I did was cover the mechanic's pit and clear out the space from top to bottom so I could park my car inside without being afraid of breathing in the Hanta virus.



[My daughter celebrating Easter in front of the garage door where I spotted a ghost.](#)

After a rough day of cleaning, I was standing in the doorway of the old garage and I saw a man behind me, to my right, on the edge of my peripheral vision. Scared that a nosy neighbor had snuck up on me, I spun around. No one was there.

The kitchen on the main floor didn't usually have any supernatural or scary

vibes. But one day my three-year-old daughter and I returned to an empty house. With her in the lead, we rounded a corner into the kitchen. Something by the windows caught her eye and she called out, “Hi, ghost.”

There was no one in the house but us and I didn't see anything. When I asked her what she'd seen to make her say that, she didn't want to talk about it.



The kitchen curtains near where my daughter saw a ghost.

The worst area of the house, though, was the attic. When we bought the property the previous owners, who'd only lived there two years, had been using the adorable attic bedrooms – with their hand built shelves, wood paneling, and sloping ceilings – as storage space. I couldn't understand why!

As soon as we moved in I swept the two rooms and spread out my daughter's impressive toy collection, made curtains for the windows, and lay down colorful play rugs. I couldn't wait to spend hours of fun, imaginative play in there.

Except no one ever wanted to go up there.



My daughter and a friend playing in the attic. Notice the lens spot?

One reason, which has nothing to do with the paranormal is, heat rises. During the summer, the attic was the hottest level of the house. Beyond that, though, I always got a bad feeling up there. The stairs leading into the attic were narrow, steep, and covered in thick green carpet. I slipped on them at least a dozen times in the three years we lived there. My daughter fell so badly once, while carrying a play set down, that she still remembers it six years later. When I used those stairs I purposefully gripped the banister tight and planted my feet solidly on each step because it became an almost certainty that if I wasn't paying attention I'd slip. Especially on the way down.

And the attic stairs were always cold. Winter or summer, it didn't matter; they were colder than the rest of the house.

All those toys in the attic used to power on constantly and randomly. My daughter still has a lot of battery powered toys and I can honestly say, except for

Zhu-Zhu pets that come on if something touches them, none of them power on by themselves. *None*. But in the attic, toys would sing and light up and talk without human interference all the time. We just got used to hearing the little piano start playing music, or the animatronic bear say, "I love you," or the electronic book sing the *Alphabet Song*. At any time of the day or night.

When we had overnight guests, I set them up in the attic. They would have privacy and their own bathroom. So, when my brother came to stay for Thanksgiving I made a place for him in the attic. I didn't say anything to him about the strange feelings I got up there because I didn't think he'd believe me and I also didn't want to influence him. Maybe it was just me.



My brother going into the front door. (right) The attic window.

The next morning he described his night spent in my attic. First, the plastic vanity against the wall turned on, flashed its lights, and played a bright, tinny melody. He hadn't touched it, even by accident. Once he'd actually fallen asleep, he said he woke up to a man bending over him, his twisted and angry face inches from my brother's.

My brother wouldn't sleep in the attic again after that. When he visited next time, he slept on the pullout couch in the basement and was much happier.

The final incident I can share happened over the summer when my mother-in-law, sister-in-law, and nephew were visiting. Because it was hot, we were all chatting in the rumpus room in the basement, directly under the main floor living room.

Keep in mind our house was older and had wood floors. It made noise — pops and creaks — all the time as it settled, expanded, and constricted in different temperatures. But that day I heard the front door open and close. My husband always came home through that door, never the basement door, so I knew who it had to be. I remember leaning back my head onto the couch and following the sound of his footsteps as they crossed from the door to our bedroom on the other side of the house.

Excited, I announced, “Sounds like he’s home.” I rushed upstairs to greet him, but the house was empty. The front door was still locked. There was no car in the driveway except mine. There was no one there.

I still haven’t researched the property or its previous owners. Half of me is scared I’ll find nothing. The other half is afraid I’ll discover I was living in some hellish murder house. But I have never had any other supernatural experiences in any other home I've ever lived in, and because of my husband’s job I've lived in nine different homes since we got engaged.

By the time we moved away that adorable playroom in the attic I’d spent so much time decorating was being used for storage and no one ever went up there unless they had to.