



Investigation Summary Report

LeBourgeois Building New Iberia, LA



HISTORY

(Courtesy of "Ghosts Along the Bayou" by Christine Word)

Walking along Main Street in New Iberia, the old LeBourgeois building, a turn-of-the-century, two-story structure with a few modern trappings. The ground floor, currently occupied by the Lagniappe Café, is covered with glossy black ceramic tiles. Above are a series of tall, vertical-opening windows. From outward appearances the LeBourgeois building could be just another building on any Main Street anywhere in America.

But there is a difference. Perhaps it began on the day many years ago when someone buried a body in the ground beneath the floor. Who or why, no one knows; neither does anyone know the identity of the deceased. But workman came across the skeleton in the early part of the century when the building was being converted from a salon into an automobile showroom.

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Predictably, the discovery set off a blizzard of speculation. Some said it was the body of an unruly slave; others thought it might be a damnyankee; or maybe even an unfaithful husband (or wife).

Whatever the circumstances, the excitement soon settled down, and, except for occasional whispers about noisy ghosts, nothing out of the ordinary was known to have happened there. At least not when it was used by Isaac Martin—father of contemporary photographer Carrol Martin—for his photography studio. Nor when it progressed through a succession of tenants—from a doctors’ offices to a baby’s clothing shop and on to Stag Records.

But when Kent Hutslar opened his studio in the upstairs portion of the building, things began to happen. Most of the activity occurs in the dark room, which is located in a back corner office that had been closed off and neglected for many years.

Previous owners point out that most of the activities seem to occur in the month of August. People wonder if this date might coincide with the death of some previous occupant. Or perhaps it dates back to New Iberia’s outlaw days and the poor fellow unearthed beneath the showroom floor.

ACTIVITY

Friends and family of the current owners have reported seeing shadows moving through the upstairs portion of the building. Feelings of being watched have commonly been reported. Several woman have also reported being shoved or tapped from behind.

INVESTIGATION

We arrived at the LeBourgeois building Saturday afternoon at about 5:30 that evening, with eight investigators and our usual equipment. We set up 8 IR cameras with 2 DVR systems, planning on covering as many rooms of the upstairs area that we could. We focused three of our IR cameras on the area that was most known for the “shadow” that lurked upstairs.

During the initial walk through, it seemed nothing felt strange or unusual. A little later, while standing at the back door on the 2nd floor, Bobbie felt a push from behind. Upon turning to see who was near her, there was nothing there and no one around her. This startled her quite a bit and she wasn’t the same the rest of the night.

After setting up, we left the upstairs area to enjoy a good dinner, courtesy of the Lagniappe Café, before starting the initial investigation. We then headed back upstairs, spreading out to different rooms, hoping to be able to get a glimpse of this famous “shadow”. Yet the night ended up being long, with very little activity. When you think you get a strange sound or a door that may have made a creaking noise, you seem to find what causes it and consider it debunked. During a lighter moment in the night, we shared a laugh due to an investigator’s clumsiness. However, during the playback of the audio, a slight whistling can be heard. No one inside the building caused this whistle.

After a short break, we headed back to finish attempting to catch the known shadow visitor. Again, we tried to get what was said to be there, to show or give us some kind of sign of it being

present. With all the equipment that was used, we came up empty handed with no hard proof evidence. We started breaking down the equipment close to 2:30 in the morning. As I entered one of the rooms to retrieve one of the IR cameras, I seem to have caught a glimpse of what looked like a large shadow. It ducked behind a corner of the wall, which was enough to give me a very strange chill. You seem to get used to the feelings you get after doing this for so long, but it was still a strange feeling, which was the strongest I had all night. This was seen in the room where the shadow has most often been seen walking the floors.

We packed up and headed out, wanting to return again for another shot at what is said to walk the hallways of the LeBourgeois Building.