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The Moving Lockers

Mira Davis

mjendavis@gmail.com

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Heather Santi
Logan, Utah
November 26, 2018

“The Moving Lockers” **Occupational Folklore/Memorate/Legend**

Informant:

Heather Santi is the owner of Herm’s Inn, a local breakfast hub in Logan, Utah, and is consequently my boss. Heather has worked in the food industry for decades and has been with Herm’s since its grand reopening in 2012. She also owns a sister restaurant named Eggs in the City in Salt Lake City, Utah, from which she commutes every week.

Context:

“Herman’s Inn,” as it was initially called, made its debut in the early 20th century, with the exact year and date unknown. Built and founded by Herman (“Herm”) and Elizabeth (“Lizzy”) Johnson along Canyon Road, Herm’s Inn was, at one point in time, quite literally one’s last chance to “gas up” before entering the mouth of Logan Canyon. Decades later, after over half a century of neglect, Herm’s was bought and restored by local businessman Jim Laub to revive the building and its glorious history. Reestablished in 2012, Herm’s Inn is now a popular breakfast and lunch destination for those who know how to find it. Despite its unassuming appearance and quiet location within a residential area, Herm’s holds a colorful history, including an underground whiskey operation during prohibition and age-old notions of the building being haunted.

Herm’s Inn is now home to a collection of old stories and legends that still circulate around Cache Valley today, not to mention a series of newly developed jokes, traditions, and numinous experiences among current employees.



*Herm’s Inn in its original state. Exact date unknown.
(Source: www.hermsinn.com/history)*



*Herm’s Inn today.
(Source: www.hermsinn.com/history)*

I interviewed Heather in her office in the basement of Herm’s a little after 1pm. Herm’s opens at 7am and closes for the day at 2pm, so she was just wrapping up her full day at work. As the owner of Herm’s for about six years now, Heather knows more about its history and legends, both past and current, than just about anyone else in the valley. It is also a well-known

understanding among the employees at Herm's that Heather is superstitious; hence, when anything odd or numinous happens, she is one of the first to learn of it, as she makes for the best audience you could ask for. This piece is Heather telling of her own supernatural experience at Herm's. She told me this shortly after giving me a rundown of Herm's history and of other people's supposed experiences with ghosts in the building.

The other item from this interview can be found under the following name: "The Ghosts of Herm's Inn." I also interviewed the manager of Herm's, Andrea Steffes, as well as other Herm's employees, which can be found under the following titles: "The White Figure," "The Children See Ghosts," "Tired of Talking to Ghosts," "The Pantry Door," "Haunted Coffee Spoons," "The Heroin Spoon," "The Black Figure," and "Something Down the Stairs."

Text:

So my experience was in this office [circulating hands to show the space]. Ken [friend and work associate] and I- you can see how small this office is [pressing hands down on arm rests of her chair to emphasize this] Ken was in a chair right here [motioning at filing cabinet next to the desk] where this filing cabinet was and I was like this [turning to show that she was sitting in her desk chair facing her computer, back to the door]. And we were [pause] kind of just talking and working on something, and those lockers [pointing out the door] that are by the employee bathroom used to be right here [pointing to the wall to the left of the door, indicating they were on the other side of that wall] by our office, and um, I don't know if you've ever tried to move those lockers. It's not like you [emphasized "you" motioning toward me] could just pick 'em up and move them or slide them [indicates motion of moving lockers with both of her hands] without them making, like a lot of noise. So Ken and I were in here talking, and all of a sudden we look over and the lockers were right here [waving one hand, motioning that the lockers were halfway in the doorway of the office] inside the office, and he and I looked at each other [pause] and he looked at me and he's like, "Did you hear those move?" and I said, "no." And he said, 'do you think somebody's playing a trick on us?' and I said, [pausing, then laughing] "How would they have done that?" 'cause the door was open, ya know the door's open like this [indicating that the door was open all the way], the door wasn't closed, we were talking, how would

somebody physically move that without us hearing them? Yeah. So we left. [I ask about the time of day] Oh it was probably after five. We were here later. [I ask if they were alone] Yeah, we were here by ourselves, yeah [eyes widen and look at me] so we left. [laughs] He and I—it took two of us to pick it up and move it back, it was very loud when we picked it up and moved it, and he and I just looked at each other, and I said what do you think? And he goes, I [pause] I don't know it's very strange. So we were sort of freaked out, I would say that most people that work here don't like to be here alone after dark. I would say that's the majority. Like if I'm working a party I'll turn on all the lights to come down here, I don't like to be in that room especially for some reason [pointing directly to her left, where on the other side of the wall is the larger basement room we use during events to seat customers] out in the, ya know where D1 through 6 is. [reference to the table numbers]



*The basement room, Herm's Inn
Source: www.hermsinn.com/catering
Note: Heather's office is on the right,
through the windowed door.*

I don't go out there without every light on. Like I'm scared. [laughs] And Andrea [manager], after Andrea saw that one, um, over kind of by the boardroom area [room directly adjacent to the larger basement room and on the other side of another wall in the office] I really, every time I focus down that long- and I just pray that I don't see anything. 'Cause I don't want to see it.



The boardroom, Herm's Inn.

Source: www.hermsinn.com/catering

Note: this room is directly to the right of the larger basement room, shown in the previous photo.

We've had mediums come in and eat here and say, do you know you have somebody in your basement? I go to a woman in Salt Lake for [pause] to read, like cards, and stuff and she says, "Ya know you have three entities in your basement up at your business." And I was like, "three?" That's why, when Andrea saw the second one, I'd only heard people talk about the old man that they see. He's wearing, like older clothes, he's old, and that's the one Sarah [employee] saw I think is the old man.

Mira: Do you believe in ghosts?

H: [pausing, looking up at the ceiling, then confidently at me] I do, um, I think that's because I've been around a lot of people who have passed away and it's definitely [pause] this [motioning toward her own body with both hands] is just like a shell, and I feel like the energy has to go somewhere [pause] and I feel like a lot of people do get trapped, like if they have a weird death, or if they have an experience that draws them to a certain location. I'm more into, like, I don't know what it is but I do think people get trapped places, or they choose to be there, I don't know! Maybe [laughing] that guy likes the basement 'cause the whiskey was here, I don't know. But I never feel like they're hurting us. I feel like there possibly could be something in the

basement. I do think it's weird here sometimes [pause] not all the time, like it's weird sometimes I feel totally fine being down here, but [pause] I would say [pause] I've heard voices I can't explain. I know Robyn [head chef] has heard whispering that she can't explain. A lot of us have things that we try to explain away to explain what we're hearing. [I ask about the feeling Heather gets when she thinks the ghosts are around] I just more or less feel like somebody's there, like that they can see me. I don't know how to explain it I just feel like there's something there [pause] I don't necessarily get chills, I just feel like I'm not by myself, and I don't know how to explain it I don't feel alone [eyes widening, looking directly at me again] which is a weird feeling if you're in the building by yourself [long pause] I don't know. I have only had one other thing happen to me in Logan that I think was associated with a ghost but I found out also that that person had a very strange death, he was killed up Logan canyon sort of intentionally, and I left that building at four in the morning [laughs] to come here 'cause I was so scared. So I never went back to that house again. So I do think, I don't know I do think that it's like around death and how they died or what they're attached to, energy-wise, and really it has such a deep history.

Texture:

Heather is an active bearer, and this interview portrayed that, as she had so much to say on the topic. She was very expressive, using her hands often, laughing frequently, and widening her eyes after telling each story. Based on my interactions with Heather on a normal day-to-day basis, it felt as though she had forgotten I was recording her; she seemed completely unphased by it and acted very casually as she normally would.

Mira Davis
Utah State University
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Dr. Lynne S. McNeill
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