The Ghost Club

Founded 1862



Newsletter – Spring 2007

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"Nasci, Laborare, Mori, Nasci"

The Ghost Club

Cover: Face in the sky.
(Photo by Heather Golding).

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

It is wonderful that five thousand years have now elapsed since the creation of the world and still it is undecided whether or not there has ever been an instance of the spirit of any person appearing after death. All argument is against it; but all belief is for it.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

Isn't it incredible that with huge advances made in practically every other area, that this quote remains over two centuries later, such an accurate statement on the subject of ghosts/ spirit?

While I found Alan Murdie's suggestion that ghosts cannot be photographed in his article "Photographing Ghosts" very interesting (Newsletter Summer 2006), I think the question of how a genuine photograph would be received is equally important. As I am fond of saying: if a large group of Ghost Club members were to see, photograph and video a procession of ghostly monks for instance, how many people presented with the evidence would believe the images to be authentic? I would even go one step further and suggest that a proportion of the original witnesses would have convinced themselves over the few days after the event, that their experience was after all, "a trick of the light", shadows or have some other natural cause. Very often, the "rational" explanation is even more outlandish than the idea of somebody actually witnessing a ghostly apparition but perhaps this type of reasoning, sometimes has safer psychological implications?

Most "anomalous" photographs submitted to the club and on various websites are reasonably easy to explain; reflections, camera straps, smoke, effects of lighting, dust orbs, misjudgement and sadly more and more commonly, hoaxes. There are still however, a small minority that seem to defy explanation. However compelling the image might first appear, there is always room for doubt and uncertainty under scrutiny. Take for instance, the well known World War I photograph showing the image of a mechanic who was killed by an aircraft propeller a couple of days before the photograph was taken. Some might suggest that this is a case of mistaken identity and in fact the face bore little resemblance to the dead mechanic. Unfortunately of course, this is not something that can be easily verified so many years on. Some might suggest a double exposure although now there is no way of knowing whether the photographer had previously photographed the mechanic.



Image of mechanic killed 2 days before photograph was taken.

The face definitely appears to be behind his colleague and is in perfect scale to the rest of the picture. Could this old photograph have been tampered with, or could perhaps those concerned, have been mistaken regarding the dates?

The photograph on the front cover demonstrates very clearly the need to trust information given by the photographer. It was taken at Bellapais Abbey on the Kyrenia Hills in Crete and sent to me by Ghost Club member Fred Thomas. The photographer, his friend Heather Golding, (who has no interest in the paranormal) thought it was odd and passed it on to her friend knowing he would be interested. The photograph was taken well away from the road at the far side of the abbey whilst on foot, following a guide. At the time of taking this particular image, most of the party were exploring the partly ruined abbey behind and listening to the guide but the photographer saw an unusual spiral of smoke rising from the ground, which is why she took the photo. The day was good at that point with bright sunshine; ending in rain and a storm by the time they left the area.

My first reaction on seeing this photograph was that it was taken from behind glass, and that the face was a reflection. (An opinion shared by Philip Carr, our Webmaster and photographic expert). I have spoken first-hand with Heather and she is adamant that she was not standing behind glass and that in fact she was positioned in front of a low wall over a steep drop to the house below. She seemed sensi-



Face in the sky, taken in Crete by Heather Golding.

ble, level-headed and genuinely surprised by the photograph, admitting that when she first saw it, she was a little frightened.

In truth, there is absolutely no way of proving the authenticity of a photograph for a multitude of reasons. Often witness's testimony is flawed, even after a day or two our memory forgets what it thinks we don't need to remember and subconsciously we "fill in the blanks". We often are unaware of environmental conditions and don't always account for other natural phenomena that may later be considered. With so many photographs that eventually prove to be genuine misconceptions or purposeful hoaxes, we are inundated with a perplexing amount of images, none of which can be proven beyond doubt. I believe that there will never be a photograph or any other type of image that will ultimately offer proof of the existence of ghosts. The better the image, the more the temptation is to think it "too good to be true" and to suspect purposeful tampering. Sadly, I think the best that we can ever say about a photograph is that it is "very interesting".

Ultimately, the only "undeniable" proof of the existence of ghosts that will be accepted by most of us is a first-hand experience. Sadly, unless scientifically we can discover other measurable elements present during a manifestation, I think this will remain the case for some years to come.

Finally, despite my complete acceptance that photographic evidence is no evidence at all; I still carry three cameras and a video recorder on every investigation!

Many thanks to Fred Thomas and Heather Golding for sending me this "very interesting" photograph.



Living Ghosts

By Philip Carr

When the pressure is on we might say, 'Look, I can't be in two places at once'. Well for some people, they can. Stories abound of people who have encountered their own apparitions or been seen in two different locations at once. The Germans have loaned us a special word for this: Doppelgänger. The word derives from Doppel ("double") and Gänger ("goer") and is defined as 'the ghostly double of a living person that haunts its fleshly counterpart'. But how can this phenomenon occur? Putting aside instances where siblings or look-alikes are mistaken for other people, if one accepts that dead people can manifest psychic memories and imprints of their existence at a location, why not living people?

Emilie Sagée.

Perhaps the most impressive report of a doppelganger came from American writer Robert Dale Owen in 1853. He was told the story by Julie, the second daughter of the Baron von Güldenstubbe. In 1845, when Julie was 13, she was a pupil at an exclusive girl's school 6 miles from the port of Riga in present-day Latvia. One of her teachers was Mademoiselle Emilie Sagée, a vivacious 32-year-old French brunette. Although the school was quite satisfied with Sagée's ability as a teacher and impressed by her good nature, intelligence and education, strange stories about her fuelled gossip and speculation. There was much confusion as Mlle Sagée would be continually reported as being in different parts of the school at once. Then it was said, she had a double, or a 'fetch' as the



Guy de Maupassant: Doppelganger dictated one of his books.

Victorians called them, that would materialise and vanish in the classroom.

The first time it occurred, Sagée was writing on the blackboard with her back to the class, when her doppelganger materialised beside her. It followed Sagée's every move as she wrote, except that it did not hold any chalk in its hand. This was seen by Julie and 12 other girls in the classroom. The extraordinary event naturally caused a sensation in the school and all thirteen girls agreed exactly in the stories as to what had occurred. One night the fetch was seen again by both servants and pupils at dinner standing behind Sagée and followed the movements of her eating, although it held no cutlery. But Sagée's double did not always follow her actions. Once, for example, Julie reported that Madamoiselle got up from her chair but the double remained where she had been. One of Julie's school friends, Antonie von Wrangel was getting ready to go out one night, aided by Sagée.

In the looking glass behind her, Antonie suddenly caught sight of two Madamoiselles buttoning up her dress and the shock made her collapse in a faint. On another occasion Antonie and some of her



John Donne: Doppelganger presaged death of his child.

friends were caring for Mlle Sagée who was bedridden with a fever. Antonie was alone reading to her when she noticed all the colour go out of Sagée's face. Concerned, Antonie asked if Madamoiselle was feeling a lot worse. She weakly replied not but then, Antonie saw Sagée's fetch walking up and down the room behind her, seemingly the picture of health. On this occasion there was only one witness but the next time, the double was seen it was in front of the whole school.

On a summer's day in 1846, Mlle Sagée was in the school's garden gathering flowers. All 42 girls were assembled in the school hall sitting at long tables at their sewing and embroidery lessons supervised by another teacher. Sagée could be seen though the French windows in the hall. The teacher supervising the girls got up to talk to the headmistress and her chair was immediately taken by Sagée's double. Mlle Sagée could still be seen clearly in the garden but, the girls noted later, she suddenly appeared overcome with fatigue and tiredness. Her double meanwhile, sat motionless. Two of the girls approached the fetch, tried to touch it and felt a slight resistance in the air surrounding it like a film of muslin. One brave girl tried to pass between the teacher's chair and the table and passed right through the apparition, which remained without movement and slowly vanished. Mlle Sagée had never seen her own double, and on this occasion, she had only seen the empty chair in the hall, was concerned the girls were unattended and might get up to mischief. An interesting aspect of this case is that every time the fetch appeared it would drain the energy from the living woman, overcoming her with fatigue which would be restored when it faded away.

News of the events eventually got back home to the girls' parents who no doubt began fearing black magic or witchcraft was afoot in the school. Much to the consternation of the headmistress, the pupil numbers started to fall and 18 months after Mlle Sagée had joined the school, the roll numbers had fallen from 42 to 12.

Famous doppelgangers.

• In 1905, Sir Frederick Carne Rasch MP was reported by Sir Gilbert Parker to be sitting in his usual spot in the House of Commons, listening to a debate. How was this so, since Sir Frederick was very ill with influenza and members of his household were sure he had not moved from his bed all day?

• In a case That suggests doppelgangers might have something to do with time shifts, German poet, novelist and playwright Johann Wolfgang von Goethe encountered his double while riding to Drusenheim. Coming toward him was his doppelganger, wearing a grey suit trimmed in gold. Eight years later, von Goethe was again on the same road but going the other way. He then realized he was wearing the

same grey suit trimmed in gold that he had seen on his doppelganger eight years previously!

• Guy de Maupassant, generally considered to be the greatest French writer of short stories, wrote how he was haunted by his doppelganger towards the end of his life. Once, he said, this shade entered his room, sat down opposite him and began to dictate what de Maupassant was to write. This experience is recounted in his short story "Lui."

• The English occultist Aleister Crowley was reported by acquaintances to appear as a doppelganger but he himself was not conscious of it happening at the time.



Percy Shelley: his Doppelganger showed him how he would die.

It is said that everyone has a doppelganger. If the person is good, the doppelganger will exhibit the dark side of the person and the other way round and if the two should meet, then they will both die. Folklore says that when a person's doppelganger is seen, it is often a harbinger of death and it is considered unlucky to try to communicate with one.

The following are examples of this.

• John Donne, was a 17th Century English poet and metaphysic. Obsessed with the idea of death, Donne even posed in a shroud for a painting completed just a few weeks before his death. While in Paris he was visited by the doppelganger of his wife holding a newborn child. Donne's wife was indeed pregnant at the time but the apparition was a warning of tragedy. When the doppelganger appeared, his wife had just given birth to a stillborn baby.

• Percy Shelley, one of the great poets of the English language, encountered his doppelganger in a dream whilst in Italy. The apparition wordlessly pointed toward the Mediterranean Sea. Shortly after, just before he was to become 30 in 1822, Shelley drowned in a sailing accident – in the Mediterranean.

• Queen Elizabeth I of England was stunned to see an apparition of herself lying on her bed and died shortly afterwards.

• Soon after he was elected president Abraham Lincoln told his wife he had seen two faces of himself in a mirror, one deathly pale. His wife believed this to mean that he would be elected to a second term but would not survive it.

Scientific investigators into doppelgangers Shahar Arzy and colleagues of the University Hospital, Geneva, Switzerland, unexpectedly reproduced an effect strongly reminiscent of the doppelganger phenomena. They applied electrical stimulation to a patient's brain in the left temporoparietal junction while she lay flat on a bed. The patient immediately felt the presence of another person in her "extra-personal space". Other than epilepsy, for which the patient was being treated, she was psychologically fit. The other person was described as young, of indeterminate sex, who did not speak nor move and whose body posture was identical to her own. The other person was located exactly behind her, almost touching and therefore within the bed that the patient was lying on. A second electrical stimulation was applied with slightly more intensity, while the patient was sitting up with her arms folded. This

time the patient felt the presence of a "man" who had his arms wrapped around her. She described the sensation as highly unpleasant and electrical stimulation was stopped. Finally, when the patient was seated, electrical stimulation was applied while the patient was asked to perform a language test with a set of flash cards. On this occasion the patient reported the presence of a sitting person, displaced behind her and to the right. She said that the presence was attempting to interfere with the test, "He wants to take the card; He doesn't want me to read". Again, the effect was disturbing and electrical stimulation was ceased.



Mary of Agreda with the Jumano Indians.

(Picture thanks to Janet Bord at the Fortean Picture Library).

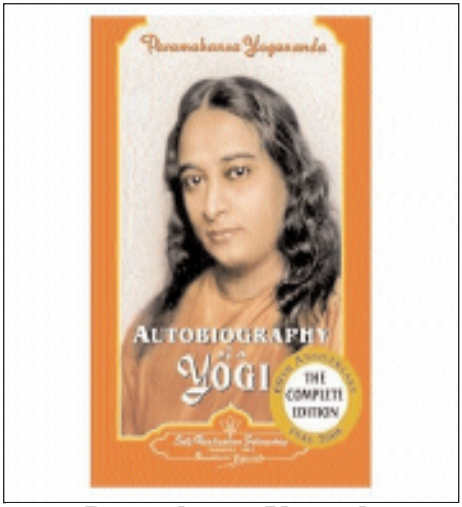
Accordingly, some reports of the doppelganger phenomenon may well be due to failure of this region of the brain but obviously not in cases such as when doubles are seen by multiple witnesses. There is a subtle distinction between someone who has a doppelganger and someone who bi-locates, the latter usually has the ability to come and go at will whereas the former is not in control of their double's appearances and often is unaware of them even occurring.

It is notable how many holy people in most religious traditions have achieved the ability to manifest their double in other locations, a common factor often being the self-inflicted extreme physical and mental hardships necessary in the path towards spiritual enlightenment.

In the internationally famous 'Autobiography of a Yogi' by Paramhansa Yogananda, there are numerous anecdotal accounts of 'miraculous powers' exhibited by yogis, including bi-location, levitation and the materialisation of physical objects. The explanation given for these powers is that the yogis in question gain immense control of the 'Pranic force' (the vital energy which permeates the universe) during their intense yogic practices. The complete text of this extraordinary book can be found available free online at http://www.crystalclarity.com/yogananda/

Icelandic sagas also speak of warriors who were able to fall into a trance and appear thousands of miles away in battle.

In Islam too we find much evidence of bi-location. Famous Sheikhs, Imams, and prominent figures such as Abusaeid



Paramhansa Yoganda

Abolkheir , Rumi or Al-Khidr for example, were believed to possess keramat (miracles) and writings from medieval Islam are full of stories and reports of certain individuals possessing such a trait. For example, Idries Shah and Robert Graves mention the case where senior members of the Azimia order were "reputed to appear, like many of the ancient Sheikhs at different places at one and the same time". Many other examples can be found in Attar's Tadhkirat al-Awliya (Biographies of the Saints), or the works of Ibn Arabi, as well as other similar chronicles.

The Blue Nun.

In the Christian tradition, many religious figures have also been attributed the powers of bi-location, the most famous of whom was St Mary of Agreda, the 'Blue Nun' (whose picture adorns the label of the wine of the same name).

Mary Coronel was born in 1602 in Castile, Spain. It was evident from an early age that she was no ordinary child. Mary experienced intense visions and heard voices speaking to her. It was reported that Mary would frequently levitate and go into ecstasies. These strange events led, in 1620, to Mary joining the Franciscan Convent of the Immaculate Conception at Agreda. She later became abbess, till her death in 1665.

She imposed a harshly austere life on herself, undergoing long periods of fasting, going without sleep and undertaking self-flagellation, a whipping to fortify oneself spiritually.

It was soon after the 18 year-old Mary joined the convent that she had a vision, in which she saw all the peoples of the world and noted sadly how many were without the benefits of Christianity. Particular concern went to the Jumano Indians of Mexico, newly colonised at the time and she began to pray earnestly for their conversion.

Missionary work.

Mary began to find herself, during prayers and deep meditation, in a strange land. The landscape and climate were different. It was very hot and exotic. Mary also found herself, to her amazement and astonishment, amongst the Jumano Indians. Not only was she in the New World, two thousand miles away but Mary could understand their language; and they hers. Yet neither the Jumano nor Mary spoke the language of the other. Mary then later found herself back at the convent. This was not an isolated event. The Church, despite being wary of the celebrity of this miracle, estimated that between 1620 and 1631, Mary was transported to the New World over five hundred times. However, as attested to by fellow nuns and

her superiors, Mary Coronel never left the convent.

Father Benavides

However, the story has a twist. In 1622, two years after Mary began her teleports, a letter arrived for Pope Urban VIII and Philip IV of Spain. It was from Father Alonso de Benavides, Abbot of the Isolita Mission in New Mexico. Fr. Benavides was rather aggrieved that someone had converted the Jumano Indians before he had. Benavides reported that a group of Jumano had travelled one hundred miles to his Franciscan mission. The Jumano asked that Benavides and other monks return to their camp. The Indians wanted to be baptised. Benavides asked how the Jumano knew, not only of Christianity but also of its ceremonies. They said that for some years they had been visited by a 'lady in blue'. This lady had taught them Christianity and converted them. She had even left them with a chalice and crosses and rosaries. They described a Franciscan nun in her habit. Benavides searched New Mexico in vain for a nun answering this description.

In 1630 Benavides was sent back to Spain. There he met with the head of the Franciscan Order in Madrid. Benavides recounted to him the story of the Jumano conversion and was asked to question a nun named Mary of Agreda. This nun, Benavides was told, had reported something similar. He then went to question Mary but in secret, as not to start rumours of miracles. Mary gave 'a perfect account' of New Mexico, of its flora and fauna. She also accurately described individual Jumano and their customs. This was only known to a handful of travellers, none of whom Mary could have come into contact with. The exploration of the New World had only just begun and information was not widely available. She said that, on her travels, she had seen that the world was a sphere, rotating on its poles. This was a heresy at the time, as it was believed that the world was flat and that everything rotated around it. Benavides was convinced of Mary's sincerity and published his findings, causing a sensation. Unfortunately, Mary had taken a vow of humility and unhappy with all the attention, began to pray for the transports to end. They did in 1631 and Mary never again experienced teleportation.

Bi-location?

As Mary's teleportations, or bi-locations, happened in the privacy of her own cell, we can never know if she actually physically transported. Mary herself favoured the view that she was astrally projecting: sending her non-physical spirit body to do the conversion that she herself could physically not do. However, this fails to explain the presence of the many Christian artefacts found with the Jumano.

Other Christian bi-location accounts.

• St. Anthony of Padua, a Franciscan friar, in 1227 was in Limoges, France giving a sermon. During this, he suddenly recalled that he should be at prayers with fellow friars in a chapel at the other side of town. So he halted his sermon, knelt down and pulled his hood over his head and became motionless. At that exact moment, St Anthony appeared in the chapel and chanted the prayers with his fellow friars. When they finished, he instantly withdrew from the chapel and raised his head again at the church - and resumed the sermon.

• In 1774 St. Alphonsus Liguori, bishop of St. Agata dei Goti, was in his palace near Naples when he fell into a trance and

simultaneously appeared at the Vatican in Rome, at the bedside of the dying Pope Clement XIV. The bishop helped those attending the Pope and prayed with them. He remained until the Pontiff passed away, then awoke from his trance back in his palace in Naples, describing what had just occurred in Rome.

• The stigmatic and healer Padre Pio, was reported to have appeared to Italian soldiers in North Africa, whilst simultaneously being beside the bed of a sick woman. Padre Pio was famed for psychical skills, from healing to prophecy and was also noted for rigorous praying and fasting.

Remote viewing.

So does it take a lifetime of self-mortification and physical punishment to achieve such abilities? Perhaps not. Let us consider the curious phenomenon of remote viewing – projecting the mind across time and distance. Whereas this is not true bi-location in that the person in question is not detected at the second location, obviously something is present there if valid observations are made.

In 1972 the CIA and US Department of Defence initiated research into remote viewing, first developed by Russell Targ and Harold Puthoff at the Stanford Research Institute and some $20 million was spent over the course of 20 years on 'Stargate' and related projects. Concerns about the program's effectiveness led the CIA to contract the American Institutes for Research to provide an evaluation. This showed no evidence supporting claims of paranormal ability. However as testing for the paranormal in laboratory conditions so often produces negative results, this is hardly surprising. Since the end of the US government's involvement with the Stargate Project, remote viewing has entered the private sector. Companies such as PSI TECH claim to teach remote viewing procedures and numerous books on remote viewing history and methods exist. Anybody wishing to try remote viewing for themselves can read the Controlled Remote Viewing Manual developed by SRI-International and Ingo Swann, a New York artist with a special talent for remote viewing and one of the original subjects of the US Government study, at http://www.fire-docs.com/remoteviewing/answers/crvmanual/

Out of the body experiences.

People who have survived near-death experiences have regularly reported leaving their bodies as invisible, ghost-like forms, sometimes watching themselves in an operating theatre or at the scene of an accident, later describing the events as an observer in astonishing detail. Again this sustains the premise that something can separate itself from the human body, appearing to have an independent existence but undoubtedly tied in some way to its living owner, however far away he or she might be.

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This section of the newsletter is dedicated to recent news stories found in the media, connected to ghosts and the paranormal. Many thanks to Keith Morbey, Philip Hutchinson and Monica Tandy for their contributions in this issue.

Ghostly door slams at council HQ.

Mystery door slams and doorbell chimes have led a Kent town council to allow a Ghostwatch team into its offices. The alleged ghostly activity at Maison Dieu House is thought to be down to a servant called Mary who lived there and died in the 1688 revolution.

Dover town clerk Mike Webb said he had never encountered a ghost before he met Mary in his first week at work, whilst working late in the building. "The door closed and I realised it couldn't have been any member of staff because I was locked in on my own. If you feel the weight of the door, it cannot close on its own."

The house, built in 1665 is thought to be the oldest domestic property in the town. Town mayor Jan Tranter said that Mary ringing the doorbell when nobody else was around was quite a common way for her to make her presence felt to staff in the building. She continued, "Sometimes pictures come off the walls. The storeroom on the top floor was very cold and creepy." she added. This was thought to be Mary's living quarters and many members of staff had complained of the strange atmosphere, refusing to stay there for too long.

Local paranormal investigators, Thanet Ghostwatch, are set to spend a night in the building next month. They plan to have two teams which will observe activity and compare notes afterwards, to work out whether they have the same or different findings. They will be equipped with cameras, thermometers, voice recorders and meters to measure electromagnetic flux. A spokesman for the group said the aim was to have real physical evidence - that "ever elusive full-bodied apparition" captured on film.

The full story can be found at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/kent/6357605.stm

MoD defends psychic powers study.

The Ministry of Defence has defended a decision to carry out tests to find out whether psychic powers could be used to detect hidden objects.

The tests conducted in 2002, involved blindfolding volunteers and asking them about the contents of sealed, brown envelopes. Most subjects consistently failed to establish what was inside them. Revelations about the secret research is contained in a previously classified report released under the Freedom of Information Act.

During the tests, defence experts attempted to recruit 12 "known" psychics who had advertised their abilities on the internet, however, when they all refused to take part

in the research, "novice" volunteers were asked.

For the study, commercial researchers were contracted at a cost of £18,000 to carry out the tests with a view to discovering if psychic ability existed and could be used for defence purposes. 28% of those tested managed a close guess at the contents of the envelopes, which included pictures of a knife, Mother Teresa and an "Asian individual". However, the majority of subjects produced guesses that were not even close to the correct answer and one subject even fell asleep while he tried to focus on the envelope's content.

The MoD refused to discuss the possible applications of psychic techniques in the defence of the nation but a spokeswoman stated: "The study concluded that remote viewing theories had little value to the MoD and was taken no further."

The full story can be found at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6388575.stm

Exorcist Clears Spa.

There might be something in the air at Broxbourne spa – but it's now more likely to be something fragrant than something nasty… because owner Sarah Jones has had the premises exorcised by a renowned psychic.

Sarah opened the Phoenix Spa at The Hertfordshire Golf and Country Club in December 2005 but almost a year later, she felt she had to call in psychic, Jules Williams, to exorcise "a strange atmosphere" from the building. "I couldn't put my finger on it but from day one, something didn't feel quite right," said Sarah. "Staff talked about negative feelings, clients never hung around after their treatments and the business was basically not performing as it should have done."

After Jules had done his stuff at the spa, he told us: "I sensed negative and destructive energy in the entrance corridor but it was rising up from the basement where there was a negative vortex of energy and underground water. I felt it was old stuff that had hung around and that mental patients were somehow involved – we found out later it used to be a mental asylum. I went down and right underneath the spa I could feel a negative vortex and underground water. There was a small grille and I could sense dead animals and maybe even dead bodies which had been thrown down there many years ago." Mr Williams said he had channelled the energy away and cleared the space where it had been.

Business is now booming, clients are now happy and relaxed and Sarah puts this change down to the exorcism. "Some people might well be sceptical but I'd like to thank Jules because what ever he's done seems to have worked wonders."

This story was printed in the MERCURY 16/2/07

Degree Course

Students are to investigate the existence of ghosts as part of a degree course looking at people's experience of the paranormal.

Coventry University is offering the chance to look into haunted houses, extrasensory perception and "the survival of bodily death".

Tony Lawrence, director of the two-year parapsychology course, said it would be "controversial yet thought-provoking". The focus will be the middle ground between religion and science, he added.

The 15 post-graduate students starting the first course this autumn will look at the paranormal using several scientific methods. Some will investigate haunted houses, looking at statistics on which parts of buildings provide the most sightings.

Extra-sensory perception - where two people seem to communicate without using sound, vision, touch or smell - will also be covered.

'Ghost' captured on US security camera.

Could this grainy blur be a ghost caught on film? The image of a woman writing on a pad, was taken by a security camera in a locked office in a US courtroom. Court official Barbara Jones identified it as a ghost and alerted security guards but on entering the room, they walked right through the image. The building, the Lincoln County Court in North Carolina, has a haunted history. Some workers think the image is a reflection.

This story was printed in London Lite, 20/12/06



"Ghost" caught on security camera at Lincoln County Court.

Ghost team stakes out spooky pub

Original story by Emily Walker

Ghost hunters are trying to unravel the secrets of haunted Swindon. Dave Wood and his team of paranormal investigators visited the Jolly Tar pub in Hannington in January to try and find an explanation behind some mysterious sightings.



"Stake out" at the Jolly Tar Pub.

Dave said: "Two unusual figures have been reported in the public bar. One, a man, was seen walking out of the fireplace in the main bar. Secondly, a lady was seen but she had vanished a split second later." There have also been reports of flying beer mats and coins. Dave said the poltergeist-type reports could be down to lorries driving past on the main road or even seismic activity.

The Paranormal Site Investigators (or P.S.I. for short) have conducted experiments to try and establish scientific causes behind mysteries in the Swindon area for the past two years. They were previously based in Devon. Ninety nine per cent of the apparent hauntings investigated turn out to be easily explained but there were some that PSI's 800 members, some leading scientists at universities across the country, could not understand. "One time we had rocks and stones thrown at us at a location in Devon," he said. "The investigation into what happened there is still on going, but so far it is a mystery," said Dave.

Dave, who is also a Liberal Democrat councillor in Eastcott ward on Swindon Council, described himself as an open-minded sceptic. "I don't go into a situation trying to disprove it but I do try to apply rational science, based on objective evidence."

He and his team will spend several weeks analysing the results of their findings at the Hannington pub before they can work out exactly what is causing the mystery.

Sarah Darnell.

Ghost Calendar



Keep a lookout for these spectral regulars.

APRIL

24th. Bolton, Lancashire. Smithills Hall. The Protestant Martyr George Marsh left a lasting footprint when he stamped the floor, angry at his interrogation by Bloody Mary's men. He was condemned to burn at the stake for heresy. On this day, the anniversary of his terrible death, the footprint turns a bloody red.

26th. Poundstock, Cornwall. Three ghosts are set to re-enact the awful events of this night in the 17th century. Kate Penfound and her lover John Trebarfoot were discovered trying to elope by her father. The ensuing sword fight (Bit of an over-reaction I'd have thought) ended with all three dying.

30th. Burrough Green, Cambs. Two statues above the school door come alive and dance on the village green, sometimes leaving telltale footprints in the grass!

MAY

4th. Prestbury, Glos. On this day in 1471 a Lancastrian messenger killed by an arrow to the chest, is said to re-enact his last journey riding his white horse furiously about Shaw Green Lane.

21st. Tower of London. Henry VI makes an appearance just before midnight on the anniversary of his murder in the Wakefield Tower.

29th. Dundee, Scotland. An unknown white lady waves a handkerchief from a high window at Claypotts Castle.

JUNE

2nd. Soham, Cambs. A phantom ammunition train runs along the tracks to the station where it caught fire in 1944 killing two people.

10th. Haworth, Yorks. Courageous local celebrity, 21 year old Lily Cone who died attempting to parachute from a balloon in 1906 has been seen visiting the local pub, The Old White Lion on this day.

20th West Kennet, Wilts. On the eve of the longest day, a pale hound (sometimes accompanied by a ghostly druid) can be sighted in the long barrow at sunrise.

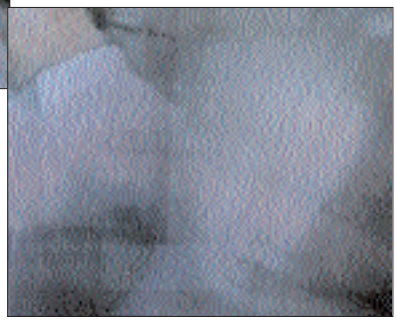
PERSONAL ACCOUNTS BY GHOST CLUB MEMBERS

THE APPARITION ON THE COUCH..

by Luke Shepherd.
Forward by Derek Green.

Recently, I had these photographs sent to me by a gentleman called Mr Luke Shepherd. He was very interested to hear my feelings regarding the strange anomalies caught on film. I studied them and then contacted Philip Carr to ask for an expert opinion. Philip e-mailed me back with his thoughts. With both of us finding the photographs very interesting, I asked Luke if he would send me a detailed account as to the circumstances surrounding the taking of these strange pictures. With Luke's kind permission, we have published Luke's own account in his own words:





It was Christmas day and I had just received the digital camera as a present. This was the first shot I had taken with it. I took a picture of my dad sleeping and there was nothing strange noticed at the time.

Our house was about one hundred years old. Other family members had seen things and not just in the room where this picture was taken. On the landing outside of the door, people had seen a dark figure like a solid shadow at times, mostly during the early hours of the morning. I saw the dark figure myself on numerous occasions at around 3am and this seemed to be the time when most people saw it. I previously lived in England and I had seen something similar a few times in my bedroom when I was 8 or 9 years old. Usually when I saw it, other strange things would happen. For example, on two occasions when I saw this solid shadow, my mother had a nightmare and actually screamed, causing the solid dark shadow to move. On the other occasions it had just stood still, looking like it was staring at me. This is the only time I have ever felt fear because of what I've seen. When my brother saw the same thing in a different location, this time at the bottom of the stairs it seemed to move, leaving a blur. He put this down to fear and his eyesight. My mother, brother and I seem to be quite sensitive to these things compared with other family members.

Strange noises also occurred in the house and sometimes it sounded as though a man with a really deep voice was speaking in another room. On trying to find the voice it would stop.

My family have since moved out of this house. The only other experience I have had since then was while camping in the village of Ballater, where I saw a white figure dancing. He looked almost like a Morris dancer. As I have said, I have seen these things most of my life during certain times.

The photograph was taken on Christmas

Day, 2003 with only two people present in the room; myself and my father. There has been no manipulation or any other tampering of this photograph, other than cropping of one image to show the main face(?). Also, there seems to be streams of yellow light and other strange whisps on the picture. On closer inspection there also appears to be other faces within the strange cloud of mist near the main face(?). To me the face appears to be of a woman/girl with the upper breast area visible. The room had no lights on at the time and the flash was not used. There was no movement to the camera during picture taking or afterwards as it was on a tripod. I used to have many photographs of orbs, vortex's but an unfortunate problem with my old computer caused me to lose these pictures. Have just recently purchased an 8mega pixel Kodak p880 camera so hope to get out and take more photographs as I feel I have been lucky in capturing images in the past. Please let me know what you think.

Mr Shepherd can be contacted through Derek Green at ghost.green1@btinternet.com where Derek will pass any e mails onto him.

TALKING WALLS

By

Philip Carr

My wife decided our guest bedroom needed decorating and set about the job. The room, cavernous and gloomy with exposed beams, definitely needed cheering up. An hour later she reappeared and said that she could not do any more as the walls were talking to her. Oh yes, she just wants me to do the job, I thought. But I was wrong.

First some back story:

In Victorian times the life of the farm labourer was pretty dreadful. Physically punishing and scraping by on subsistence wages, for these workers penury and starvation loomed if illness struck or they were maimed in an accident. To make matters worse the Government withdrew subsidies from farming families, prompting an uprising of agricultural workers in 1838, whipped up by the self-styled, and colourful eccentric, Sir William Courteney. The riot was quashed by the militia in what became known as 'the last battle on British soil', the ringleaders being either killed or jailed. This happened about a mile from our home in rural Kent, a farmhouse with Tudor origins, which was leased to the parish in 1823 as a home for destitute agricultural workers.

Back to the guest bedroom. My wife was hearing different messages from different parts of the walls, she sensed some were from young men. They went thus:

"There's no water here".

"No one will marry me".

"They locked me up".

Caroline then told them she didn't want to hear all this. The voices continued;

"I thought you were a nice person and would want to talk to us."

Caroline left the room at this point, as she told me, not too keen to carry on. However after a cup of tea she went back to continue decorating. The voices started again:

"There was a magic lantern show here given by a lady called Catherine Hartswood, she was more of a woman than you."

Thanks a lot, thought Caroline.

"There were lions and tigers here."

She thought this was all getting ridiculous until she remembered her mother telling her about the wild animals in a travelling circus which had come years ago to nearby Whitstable.

Behind the door the words "bairns" and

"weans" were picked up, perhaps a reference to the children of the family originating from Scotland who had previously owned the house for several generations.

Caroline, though a little psychic, has never had such an experience in our home before, even though we have been here for thirteen years but if it is a valid experience, it raises some interesting points.

Unusually for her, she said she was feeling pretty fed-up that day and she wondered perhaps whether in that state of mind she had unknowingly tuned into the wavelength of the past occupants of the room.

Since the 1970s the Stone Tape Theory has been one of the main theories behind ghost phenomena. Essentially the theory is based on the premise that buildings and materials are able to absorb a form of energy from living beings. Researchers theorise that a recording is laid down during times of high emotional stress such as murder, grief or an important scene in someone's life and replayed when certain conditions are met. This was obviously more than this. As a conversation of a sort took place, an intelligence was involved. One of the voices was judgemental and had presumably been observing Caroline for some time to think she might be sympathetic to their troubles.

She dismisses the conversations as perhaps her imagination but nevertheless is giving the room a wide berth these days and has got a decorator in.

We are always eager to publish accounts of your personal ghostly experiences. Send them with a picture of yourself to either Monica or Sarah.



The Ghosts of RAF Montrose
by Derek Green

Ghostly apparitions have been recorded on land sea and air. On this occasion I would like to look at ghosts of the air and the very interesting case of RAF Montrose.

Montrose Air Station Museum was opened in 1983 and the current museum is housed in what was the main HQ Building of the former Royal Air Force Montrose base. Today much of the base can still be seen but over the years, various companies have bought hangars and sadly leave the museum with limited space. By day the former HQ Building consisting of the original wooden hut, attracts many interested people but by night, the building is known to receive nocturnal visitors from the wartime era.

For many years now RAF Montrose, the first of 12 Government planned Air Stations from 1912, was operated by the Royal Flying Corps. From 1916 the Montrose base at Broomfield had the repu-

tation of being haunted. The base which closed in 1957 had such a catalogue of hauntings that a separate file classed *Top Secret* was held by the Ministry Of Defence. Because of the existence of this file, it was agreed that every new staff arrival at the station would be officially told in writing, that the place was haunted.

The first documented sighting was from 1916 when an officer saw the figure of a man in full flying gear move towards the Officers Mess. The officer, who witnessed the same apparition twice, documented that as he watched the gentleman walk towards the mess, he noticed that the figure simply faded away as he reached the door. Another reported sighting from that year came from a flying instructor who awoke one night to find an airman in full flying gear sitting in a chair by the fire in his bedroom. When the instructor challenged the man he then observed that he was addressing an empty chair. Other strange accounts began to be documented and these included airmen feeling that an extra unseen person had joined them and was present in their rooms.

Rumours started to spread around the base that the spectral figure was that of Flight Lt Desmond Arthur from No2. Squadron who had died in a crash over the Broomfield base in 1913. Flt. Lt. Arthur was preparing his BE-2 Biplane for landing when it folded in mid air and plunged 2500 feet to the ground. An investigation into the crash recorded that Desmond Arthur had been the victim of a "criminally negligent repair" to a wing of his tiny aircraft.

From 1916 onwards many strange occurrences were documented around the areas of the hangars and the Waldron Bridge. In 1936 an RAF Policeman had a frightening experience in the vicinity of the old hangars. As he was walking, he suddenly heard another set of footsteps ahead of him. It was night time and it was dark but the Policeman, with the aid of a torch decided to give chase and follow the footsteps which made their way round the side of the nearest hangar to the bridge. Once he rounded the building he realised the footsteps had stopped and no one was in front of him or even behind. He then decided to give up chase and made his way back



HQ Building, the site of many nocturnal visitors of the paranormal kind.

round, passing the HQ Building and headed onto the Waldron Bridge. It was a fairly clear night and with no more thought of the footsteps he started to cross the bridge making for his next location. As he was halfway across the bridge, again he heard the footsteps but on this occasion they were rapidly *approaching* him. He quickly switched his torch on and shone the single beam of light in front of him. Nobody was there but the sounds of footsteps were drawing closer and closer until he observed the steps stopping only a few feet from where he was standing. The air was still, not a sound and on shining in his torchlight forwards there no sign of anyone. The Policeman was rather scared by this occurrence and reported it to the HQ Building where no explanation could be found for the sound of the footsteps.



Waldron Road, the haunt of a ghostly airman.

Another two manifestations were reported in 1942. One involved the NAAFI which was situated on the western side of the base. In here, the airmen regularly met for chats over a cup of tea or coffee and shared stories from the day's actions. One day in particular Airman Alex K_____ and a few fellow colleagues heard a loud scream coming from the direction of the NAAFI. As they rushed into the building, they found the duty NAAFI girl unconscious on the floor. Alex and his colleagues brought the girl back to a state of consciousness. She then explained what had happened. She told them that as she was preparing the tea and coffee, she heard a plane engine very close to the building and decided to serve up a few early teas in readiness for some of the aircrew who were about to enter the building. As she opened up the shutter, the girl explained that the bottom doors into the NAFFI burst open and a pilot in full WWII flying gear strode towards her. As she handed out the cup of hot strong tea to the pilot he simply faded away completely in front of her. Understandably the poor girl fainted!

Another manifestation was witnessed on the Waldron Bridge, six years after the Policeman's encounter. An RAF mechanic while walking across the bridge saw a figure in full WWII flying gear walk towards him. As the mechanic passed the figure he made light conversation about the weather but received no reply. Thinking this was very strange he immediately looked round over his shoulder to find the figure had completely vanished.

Over the period of World War II, various reports from different areas of the base were coming through about a spectral figure of an airman being seen. One report



Hangar: Where an "extra" figure appeared in photograph.

came in from the area of the Mortuary. A night guard was on duty outside the mortuary, when he became aware of a sound coming from behind the doors. As he turned round to investigate the mortuary doors opened with full blast and out walked an airman in WWII flying gear. Not understanding fully what he was seeing, the night guard took chase only to see the airman fade away completely in front of him.

Since the closure of the base in 1957 and the opening of the museum in 1983, very little activity was reported, mainly due to the fact that many of the buildings were unused. However in 1983, staff of the current museum started to catalogue a chain of mysterious events which were clearly leaving staff very intrigued as to what was happening.

There have been numerous accounts of the phantom airman in full flying gear and two incidents in particular stand out above the rest. The first one being the apparition in a commercial photograph. A catalogue firm decided to hire one of the old WWI hangars to take a photo shoot with their models wearing new designer outfits. The afternoon went very well and a number of photographs were taken in different areas of the hangar. When the photographs were developed, one stood out from all the rest. In the photo, the models were clearly visible but it was noticed, that an extra person was in the picture. On closer inspection, it clearly revealed the figure of an airman in full flying gear standing towards the back of the hangar. The photograph was examined and no logical explanation could be given. The company insisted that nobody had been booked to appear in a flying kit to create authenticity. The appearance of the figure remains a mystery to this day.

The second incident involved a Grampian TV film crew who were making a programme on the ghosts of RAF Montrose in the late 1980's. The crew decided to film behind the HQ Building and record views of the Waldron Bridge from ground level. This area of filming was to cover the stories of recorded sightings of the apparition on the bridge. Ironically when Grampian TV started to edit the footage back at their studios, there,



Airfield. RAF Montrose

appearing on film and slightly under the bridge, was the eerie figure of an airman in full flying gear. Grampian TV stated that they had not employed an extra to stand in the area to help create authenticity. The piece of film has been viewed by many people and a number of experts and it remains a mystery to this day.

Numerous reports of ghostly activity have been documented from inside the former HQ Building The activity, which includes doors opening themselves, footsteps, door handles being rattled and a figure passing interior panels of glass have all been witnessed by staff and visitors to the museum. In fact at one stage, the activity was so strong that the staff placed Desmond Arthur's name on the staff in/out board as being permanently IN the building! In 2004 The Ghost Club investigated the former HQ building and during the evening reported footsteps, and a door at the end of the corridor opening on two occasions by itself. The latter puzzled the investigators even more as the door in question had a Yale lock. The lock was examined and it was not in the snib position where the door could have been opened easily. The only way to open the door was to physically turn the Yale lock. The investigators also reported a shadow passing an exterior window while the group were inside the CO's room. It was also noted that the main gates were locked and a police patrol had been organised by the Museum Staff to keep a close guard on the GC Investigation Team during their investigation. Other reported activity that night included loud bangs, the scraping of what sounded like nails across the floor of the main museum room and the possible sighting by three members of a vigil team of a figure of a man in the doorway.



Main Museum where GC members saw a figure in the doorway.

As for the staff of the museum, their first reported account involved a committee meeting which was held in the building after closing time. The committee had gathered in the former Adjutant's office which was now the main museum office and a while into the meeting the members of the committee became aware of footsteps walking in the corridor outside the office. The group decided to halt the meeting and investigate the sounds thinking that

they had an intruder. After a thorough investigation of the building, no intruder was found and what added to the mystery, was the fact that the main museum door was locked from the inside and the main perimeter gate was locked. No one could have gained entry to the building.

Another manifestation was reported during a period of re-decoration when two brothers who were committee members of the museum trust, were busy painting. One was doing the interior of the main museum room and the other was busy creosoting the exterior roof of the HQ Building. The brother, (who we shall call Neil) was working inside the room atop the ladder when he heard someone entering the south door of the building. He could clearly hear the footsteps coming down the corridor and entering the meeting room. At this point Neil decided to come down from the ladder and find out what his brother wanted. Neil then checked the meeting room to discover nobody there and then on making his way outside, noted that his brother (who we shall call Graham) was still on the roof. Graham said he'd not heard anything while being up on the roof and was not aware of anyone approaching the building from the outside. The brothers could not understand who their visitor had been. Another experience witnessed by Neil, happened a few weeks later when again he was working in the main museum room and again, became aware of footsteps in the corridor. At this point Neil reckoned it was another committee member popping to see how he was getting on. He listened as the footsteps came up the main corridor and entered the area of the museum shop. Shortly after this the door handle started rattling and Neil shouted for the person to come into the room. Nobody entered, then the door handled started to rattle again and this carried on for a prolonged period. Neil thinking that one of the committee members was playing a prank on him, came down from his ladder and slowly crept to the door while the rattling continued. He then grabbed the handle and wrenched the door open to find no one in front of him and no one in the corridor! Neil then very quickly packed his tool bag and left the building at great speed!

Two other members of staff had a chilling experience on another occasion when they witnessed a gentleman stride down the corridor and proceed into the office. This area was out of bounds to the public. The two members walked down to the office and on entering the room saw nobody.

Another recorded sighting from wartime happened during the early-morning duty hours. A Scottish clerk was scared out his wits when he awoke to find himself staring at a figure in a white flying suit and officer's hat. The young clerk watched the figure standing at the desk and appearing to rifle through some papers. What was frightening about the apparition was that it had no feet and was literally floating in the air.

The hauntings of Montrose are not just attached to the buildings, regular sightings have been recorded out in the airfield during and after the wars and up to the present day. In the last ten years, members of the general public have been out walking their dogs on the airfield and have witnessed an airman walking in front of them. There is also the case of the airman who was smoking a cigarette beside the crumbled remains of the control tower. He watched a woman walk past with her dog and as she glanced back, thinking that the figure in flying gear did not look normal, there was no sign of anyone. Another lady had an unnerving experience while walking her dog when she heard a disembodied voice repeat four times "I'm here." On two occasions an

unidentified figure has been seen around the area of the old WWI hangars. One of these sightings was witnessed by three girls who ran from the area terrified and never returned.

There are various theories as to the identity of the men seen wearing flying gear. One, being Desmond Arthur who was killed in 1913 whilst flying over the Montrose base, although many people believe that Arthur did not actually frequent Montrose Air Field as he was based in Upper Dysart. The airbase then moved to Broomfeld in Montrose six months after Arthur's death and many of the staff from Upper Dysart moved as well.



Museum. Sounds of running and scratching have been heard here.

In 1990 an Australian medium was invited to the base to help the staff of the museum find an answer to the curious goings on. His conclusion seemed very bizarre. The ghost he claimed, was the restless spirit of a prankster who liked dressing up in flying uniform and who suffered from insanity. There is a connection between the Royal Flying Corps and the old Montrose Lunatic Asylum. A member of the Montrose museum staff did claim that the old asylum had stood on the same site as the barracks which were home to No 2 Squadron before the outbreak of WWI. It is fact that Desmond Arthur never flew from Montrose, but another theory was put forward that the ghostly figure could be that of Major F.F Waldron who was killed in France in 1916. One final theory that must be considered is the possibility that the apparition of the WWII airman could be a flight officer who was killed in 1942 when his aircraft crashed on take off. His identity has not been found from records as yet.

There have been a number of alleged sightings over the years, all too many to mention. The last famous sighting involved one of the best known figures in aviation; his name was Sir Peter Masefield. On the

27th of May 1963, Masefield was flying his chipmunk over the North East of Scotland, his route taking him over the then disused airfield of Montrose. As he approached the old airfield he became quite excited knowing that some years before, it had been a very active RAF base. As he made his approach he could see the old runways coming into view and was looking forward to getting an aerial view as he flew over. Ahead of Masefield was another plane, he thought it was a Biplane and on drawing closer, he realised it was a seventy horsepower BE-2 trainer that the Royal Flying Corps had used before WWI. Very intrigued by this, Sir Peter managed to draw close enough to the aircraft to describe the pilot as wearing a leather helmet, goggles and a flying scarf. At this point Masefield wondered if the plane had been rebuilt by a group of enthusiasts but then noticed that the plane moved oddly, in a strange manner, as if in slow motion. Then Sir Peter watched as the upper part of a wing on the Biplane broke, and then another section of the other wing came loose and broke off. Finally Sir Peter Masefield was to witness the BE-2 rear out of control, fall and start twisting and spinning while heading in a nose dive straight for the disused airfield. Sir Peter, shaken by this, made a frantic short landing on the long golf course beside the airfield. As he dashed from his chipmunk, he asked some golfers on the course to help him. Bemused by this spectacle, the golfers joined Sir Peter and hurried across the field to the crash site. On arrival and to Sir Peter's amazement, there was no sign of wreckage, no sign of the BE-2 nor was there remains of any wreckage of any kind at all to be found.

Sir Peter Masefield decided to embark on some research on his sighting. Surprisingly he discovered that the day he had been flying, the 27th of May 1963, was almost 50 years to the very day Flt. Lt. Desmond Arthur had crashed his BE-2 Biplane. The Accident report into the inci-



Corridor with the original door that opened itself.

dent and death of Desmond Arthur was dated as happening on the 27th May 1913. Had Sir Peter Masefield witnessed the 50th anniversary of the death of Desmond Arthur?

Now in 2007, there is still the odd report of activity in the old former HQ Building of RAF Montrose but the activity, does seem to have diminished. One possible theory for this is that a lot of the old crash site exhibits have been removed for safe keeping. Is it just possible that the crash site exhibits had caused a lot of the manifestations to take place, the pieces of wreckage being from different crash sites in Scotland? I tend now to disagree with this theory as I have discovered through research that many of these sightings and occurrences were happening before any crash site exhibits were placed in the building. However it could be possible that the crash site exhibits fed the activity like a battery charger and now they have been removed, the activity is diminishing through lack of being "charged". We can only hope that the exhibits are put back into the museum and consequently hope that the activity may heighten again for the future. However I do feel that ghosts/sprits of RAF Montrose come into the same heading as John G Fullers book entitled "The Airmen who would not die".

As a result of more research for this article one curious item of interest has come to my notice. It would appear that from 1942 onwards a high percentage of the sightings have been witnessed by females and on one of The Ghost Club's investigations a lady member was inadvertently locked in the building. Could this be an airman who likes the company of women? I will leave you to decide!

GHOSTS.

Proof of Life after Death?

The fact that ghosts have been seen by people of sound mind, sober, awake and often by several people at once since the beginning of civilization is, I believe, beyond question. It seems they have been photographed and disembodied voices (EVPs), have been recorded. They have affected sophisticated monitoring equipment, gauss meters and the like and set off movement detectors as they've crossed the beams. Ghosts have appeared at times of death or crisis, to warn, say goodbye or reassure. They have been seen to re-enact battles, search for things apparently lost, trace old habits, hitch-hike and sometimes just go BOO in the night. If we accept, as many of us cautiously do, that ghosts exist, should this convince us of the survival of the human soul or mind?

Repeated or Historical Haunting

If we take for instance, the "Historical" type haunting, perhaps there is another explanation other than accepting that these are the souls of people having survived death. There is the well documented case in 1953 of Harry Martindale, an 18 year old apprentice plumber installing central heating in the cellars of the Treasurer's House at York Minster. He was surprised first to hear a trumpet call and on turning around, saw a Roman Centurion emerge through the wall playing a trumpet, march across the room and disappear through the opposite wall. Not surprisingly he fell off his ladder and retreated to a corner of the room, from where he watched in amazement as a carthorse emerged, followed by about 20 soldiers processing in double file.

Oddly, he noted that they marched at a lower level, seeming to be submerged in the solid floor up to their knees. They carried lances, round shields and short swords. This procession had been witnessed before several times by different people. A documented case happened in 1930 and again in 1946.

One theory to explain this sort of historical apparition could be the Stone Tape Theory. It was hypothesised during the 1970's, that somehow memory is impregnated into the surrounding walls, rock earth etc., particularly during times of stress, grief, high emotion and like magnetic tape, records and then, with a suitable trigger, replays the events. The triggers suggested are people with psychic abilities, stress, or even brainwaves "in tune". Some speculate these memories are stored within the tectonic plate or lying somehow in the deep strata. These "vibrations" must obviously be able to withstand the demolishing of buildings, movement of land for roads and buildings etc. and vast expanses of time!

Another explanation was proposed after experiments in a completely unrelated area proved that water molecules retain a "memory". Jacques Benveniste, the French allergy specialist was using a blue dye to help isolate which blood cells became active when in contact with allergens and which did not. Quite by accident, after the substance had been diluted to the point that no allergen was present, the water still reacted as it had done in the presence of the allergen. After hundreds of repeated experiments, the result was the same. It seems water molecules can retain a memory. Given that so much of our world contains water, perhaps even these aforementioned elaborate memories may be stored there. It's often reported that excavation, demolition etc., seems to stir up paranormal happenings, perhaps this is also releasing hitherto trapped water molecules into the atmosphere and thus setting free trapped memories. This may explain away one type of apparition but as we know it's not that easy. Surely through time and movement, the molecules containing the memory would become confused and jumbled and make less sense. It is also baffling if you look at another earlier reported sighting at the same location.

A young woman at a fancy dress party in the 1920s had wandered downstairs to the same Treasury House cellars, when her way was physically barred by a Centurion. Accounts are quite clear that no-one at the party was dressed in this way. If these apparitions are actually interacting with living people, how can they still be just replayed memories? If there are two types of ghost haunting the Treasury, then what is it about the place that makes it so active?

Crisis Apparitions.

Crisis apparitions involving living people may perhaps be explained away by telepathy; somebody sees their friend's phantom standing before them at 3am, only to hear the next day that this person had perhaps been in great danger at that time. One could argue that at times of stress, it is possible to transfer those feelings and one's ethereal body telepathically to someone else, especially a close friend. Even in a case where one person dies, at the point of death, the same could apply. Often however, post mortem ghosts have appeared to their families and friends at times after their minds could not be functioning, even telepathically, if one accepts that the mind dies with the body. There have been many cases where the "dead" person even interacts with the living. Surely these must be cases where we have to look for explanations

other than telepathy or some sort of replayed memory.

Living Ghosts.

Early in the last century, experiments were conducted into consciously produced apparitions. The percipient would put himself into a relaxed state, and concentrate very hard on a particular location to project to that place where they knew someone, (the recipient) to be, without this person's prior knowledge. On many occasions they were actually seen by the unsuspecting recipient. On some occasions the spectre was also seen by a person who happened to be there without the percipients prior knowledge. This is interesting, as if it was just seen by the recipient, that could I suppose, be put down to telepathy (supposing it is possible to project oneself telepathically) but a second person, whose presence was unexpected must, I think, rule this out again. So a living person is able to project their spectral body through space by the power of the mind.

Ghosts with a Mission.

Hauntings involving ghosts who seem to be hell bent on righting wrongs, seeking revenge, searching for proof of this or that, watching over someone, even bearing a grudge are demonstrating some sort of continued consciousness; something moving on from when they were alive. They are not always habitual actions left over from life but seem to have an awareness of a new state of things, as if mind conscious.

Ghosts, the Old Routine.

Perhaps some people like to come back to this place just to do things they once did, like walk down the old lane again, sit in the pub on their favourite chair, for no other reason than they like the feeling. Not necessarily replayed taped memories. They may have made a conscious choice to do this.

Time Slips.

Amongst others, there is a well known case in 1902 of a visit to the Palace of Versailles by two English women. They subsequently wrote a book of their experiences on that day, 10th August, which coincided with the anniversary of the arrest of Marie Antoinette. They intended to walk to Petit Trianon and became lost. In the course of the day they saw people and places that existed only at the time of the French Revolution. They were both also affected by a deep feeling of depression. A year later they went back to look for the place to which they had been but were unable to find anything familiar. The two women were convinced that somehow time had slipped for them. During this experience, they had spoken and interacted with people. These kinds of apparitions appear to be a completely different kind of phenomena. Time being such a slippery thing, it being difficult to determine the difference between past and future, I find it more interesting that these time slips don't happen more often. Perhaps our brains are preventing us from perceiving these events, in an attempt to make more sense of our existence.

Consciousness.

If we are able to leave our bodies through powerful thought, relaxation, projection etc, then our minds must be able to function without our bodies. If this is so, perhaps our brains are not needed for our minds to function. Philosopher, Henri Bergson wrote that consciousness was not a function of the brain but more of a tool of perception, focusing the mind's attention to

what is needed for life. In death of course this is no longer needed. The mind is not dependent on matter to function.

Conclusion.

There are many different types of ghosts and apparitions, whether consciously produced or not. Sometimes we go looking for them; sometimes we see them when we least expect it. Perhaps our brains are so programmed to keep us focussed on what we need for life, i.e. survival, that we are pre-disposed to think anything we cannot see directly, or grasp logically can't be registered. Maybe this is why research into the paranormal moves along so slowly and why not everyone sees ghosts. Whilst it may be true that it can be argued, not all ghosts are proof of life after death, I believe there is ample scope to say the existence of, at least some ghostly phenomena, must point to the survival after death of the conscious human mind. Or then again...

Monica Tandy.

COUNTY GHOSTS



by

Keith Morbey

CORNWALL

This month I would like to share with you the remarkable events of April 1821 which occurred in the county town of Truro. The happenings were reported in the 'West Briton' and gained wider notice when reprinted in The Times.

A recently built house in Cardew Street was used as an arms depository by the militia regiment of Royal Miners. Around the 20th April the armourer who resided in part of the house was alarmed by the breaking of his windows. He ran to the door but could not discover the spot from whence the stones proceeded. The stones continued to fly at intervals and several panes of glass were demolished in the house and also the adjoining one occupied by the regimental sergeant major.

The armourer and sergeant major alerted officers residing in the town but although they saw the stones strike the houses and break the windows and were occasionally struck themselves, every attempt to discover the person who threw them or the precise spot from whence they came was fruit-

less. At length the mayor was sent for and he came, together with the parish constables and several other persons to view the proceedings.

The scene of the attack was now changed from the front to the rear of the houses. Although the stones continued to fly, the civil power was on the alert and scouts were sent out in all directions but no discovery was made. The mayor and his assistants were struck by stones whilst endeavouring to unravel the mystery. Sentinels were placed at various points, some of the cavalry in the adjacent barracks were called in to assist and the magistrate and constables withdrew. Still no detection took place although the stones continued to be thrown occasionally.

The attacks continued for several days and in the presence of hundreds of persons of all descriptions, who went in crowds to view the annoyance. Many were fully persuaded that it was a supernatural visitation by some troubled spirit and numberless tales of a most extravagant nature were circulated. Some asserted that the stones smelt of brimstone; others that they were quite warm.

The last report stated that the activities continued at intervals with the people in the neighbourhood being perfectly convinced that the stones were directed by a supernatural agency, as it was impossible for any human being to have eluded the vigilance which been exerted to unravel the mystery.

I remember some years ago the late Graham Wylie spoke to the Ghost Club and related a story of similar stone throwing which had occurred quite recently in a garage in South Wales.

O tempora, o mores!

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to these members who have recently joined us:

Shaun Feeley,
Amy Rowe,
Amrit Bamrah,
Carolanne Douglas,
Janice Scott,
Nicky Butler,
David Taylor,
Michael Murphy,
Mark Davies
Deborah Hagarth-Dodd,

The Spirit Voice

By Philip Paul.

"You're not yourself" were his blunt words.
"Who am I then?" I said.
He didn't answer for a while
Then said "You look like Fred."

"But Fred's long dead, "I pointed out.
"Yes, that's quite true," he cried;
"The way you're looking here and now,
One might well think you'd died."

"That isn't nice," I told him then.
"I know it's not," he said.
"But facts are facts, like it or not,
And when you're dead, you're dead."

"But I'm not dead," I ventured then.
"Of course you're not," he said.
"That's beyond all doubt because
You can't talk with the dead."

And then from a dark corner came
A message plain and pure.
Addressing my old friend, it said
"Don't you be so **sure**!"

We thought it was a spirit voice,
Which, in a way, was true.
Because the words turned out to come
From a chap who'd had a few!

Ghost Walks
Guildford

Pitch up at the steps of Trinity Church Guildford on a Friday night with a fiver in your pocket and you're in for a treat. I joined around twenty, slightly apprehensive looking people for a tour presented by **Philip Hutchinson** around this historic town's most haunted places.



The Ghost Tour of Guildford however, is so much more than just a guided stroll through a spooky past. There are plenty of stories from antiquity such as the Duke of Monmouth's last night spent at Abbot's Hospital before his return to London and botched execution at the block (quite a bit of detail there) but many of the tales you'll hear are bang up to date, such as the relatively recent haunting at Waterstones Bookshop (where the GC held an investigation in 2004) and this, our guide probably knows more about than anyone!

Philip Hutchinson, many of us know as The Ghost Club's Events Officer and active member of the GC Council but he has many other strings to his bow. He is of course, the author of Haunted Guildford (Tempus 2006), which explains why he knows his subject so well. Incidentally the book was the number 1 best seller at Waterstones in Guildford for 3 months! This is not just a load of old recycled rumour but well researched and very well told, hilarious and this is the best bit; as Philip is also a professional actor this Ghost Walk is a true performance from beginning to end.

At Holy Trinity Church you are not met by your guide; he appears before you as if from nowhere. Once his audience is wrong footed in this way, he then goes about sneering, insult-



Philip Hutchinson with his Casio keyboard- music to calm our nerves.

ing and sometimes shouting and scaring - and the audience love it. Nobody knows what to expect from him from then on. He sets the atmosphere so expertly and has our full attention as we all head off into the "unknown".

Outside the Edinburgh Woollen Mill he somehow persuades a volunteer to play on a toy trumpet produced from a large bag (we'd all been wondering what the bag contained). He tells us of the" poltergeist that haunts The Three Pigeons public house and the case of the "exploding cheese"! At Tunsgate Arch we hear stories about the public executions that took place at The Mount (and at this point he attempts to "hang" a member of his audience). As we progress up Tunsgate we look for Lorna, the lady in grey who was seen walking through a demolition site and watch out for fist fighting nuns at Sydenham Road car park.

A little bizarrely, our guide (or tormentor), then took us to Guildford Castle accompanied by a Glenn Miller number played on a small Casio keyboard, which he had acquired, once again from his bag of tricks. There he told us a spine chilling story of recent events involving prisoners chained to walls, which had been witnessed by small children. Then it was off to the museum, this time to Mozart (Philip thought it would help us on the walk through the darker areas of the Castle grounds). From the museum, where we were told of a piano playing ghost and dancing umbrellas, some of which had actually been sighted on



Our "tormentor" at the cemetary gates.

this walk a few years ago, we went on down to St Mary's church. Here on a previous tour whilst trying to scare people, Philip admitted to having accidentally knocked over and broken a 200 year old tombstone! Back to the high Street for tales of what Petula Clark saw in the Angel Hotel and the odd building at No 122 where 8 mummified cats were found. The tour lasts for an hour and three quarters; fantastic value for money. At the conclusion you are given the opportunity to purchase Philip's book for less than the cover price.
If you're up for something a little different, I dare you to go along on a Friday night at 8pm.

Monica Tandy.
(Photographs, Sarah Darnell).

Runs March to November. 8PM Trinity Church Guildford.
For more info call: 01483506232
or 079052888333
www.ghosttourofguildford.co.uk

INVESTIGATION
Battle Abbey

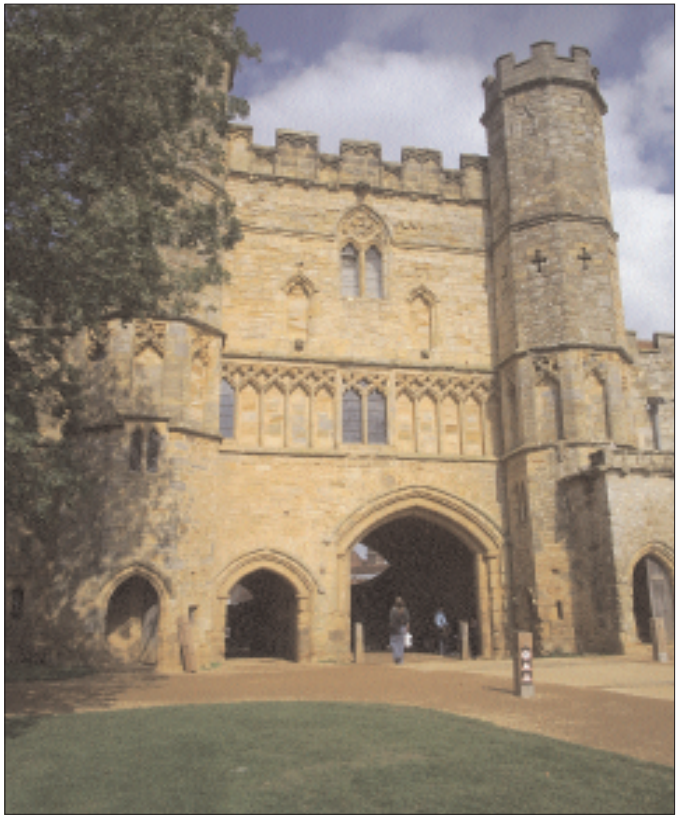
Saturday 30th September 2006

On the invitation of English Heritage, an overnight investigation was arranged at Battle Abbey, Battle, East Sussex on Saturday 30th September. Although this investigation was arranged at very short notice, the prospect of investigating this amazing historic site elicited an overwhelming response from our members. This was particularly impressive as we would be outside throughout most of the night and torrential rain was forecast!

It would be hard to find anybody who did not at least know one date in English history; the year of the Battle Of Hastings. On the 14th October of 1066, William of Normandy asserted his claim to the English crown and with his Norman Army invaded and defeated the Anglo-Saxons. The actual conflict took place not in Hastings but in nearby Battle. King William subsequently built Battle Abbey to commemorate the event and give thanks for his victory.

The investigation was attended by Bibi from the Guardian Newspaper, Richard from 'Mission 21', Dawn an employee of the Abbey and their guest Amanda, who was their official Medium for the night. All four participated in the investigation and joined with Ghost Club members to form six teams:

TEAM ONE:
Sarah Darnell. Philip Hutchinson. Bibi and



The Gatehouse, Battle Abbey.

Richard.

TEAM TWO:
Milton Edwards, Dave Stephens.

TEAM THREE:
Steve Rose, Kellie Kirkman, Nick Seear.

TEAM FOUR:
Monica Tandy, Paul Brown, Amanda, Dawn.

TEAM FIVE:
Dane Nye, George Nye, Jo Edwards, Paula Eason.

TEAM SIX:
Nobby Clarke, Carol Tolhurst-Clarke, Shirley Mason.

I would not be joining a specific team but spent time where needed, although most of my time was spent in the vicinity of our 'Monitoring Station' which was to be my van.

My evening started with a brief meeting in the Museum area with Bibi, Richard, Dawn and Amanda. Daryl Burchmore, a long-term employee of the Abbey, joined us. The purpose of the meeting was so that Daryl could relate details to us of activity reported by the public over the years, as well as his own experiences. To discount autosuggestion, Ghost Club members were not present and had met at the nearby 1066 pub.

At 8.45pm, Ghost Club members entered the Abbey. Our Base/Meeting Point was to be the Function Room situated over the Souvenir Shop where the Abbey kindly provided refreshments throughout the night. After a quick pit stop, I took members on a whirlwind tour of the areas we were to explore with the kind help of Daryl, who was able to give us additional help with the lesser-known history. As our remit for the night was to concentrate on the scientific side of investigation, we then spent quite some time setting up various experiments throughout the site. All teams were provided with two-way radios. The following is our account of the night by location, which was put together from the written accounts of all teams.



Undercroft, Battle Abbey

LOCATION ONE:
PRELUDE:

The "Prelude to Battle Exhibition" is housed in a wooden building in a small wooded area. It is the recommended starting point for the Battlefield Walk, where tourists can learn more of the events leading up to the Battle of Hastings. Although easy enough to find in daylight, the building is completely obscured at night by the trees and the narrow pathway between the trees leading to the front entrance, could be quite eerie and disorientating. Although the building itself is very recent, its interest lay in the fact that it was located on the Battlefield and was the only point of electricity accessible in that area. A monitor was set up in the building displaying (and recording onto LP VHS), via Mircowave link, the footage of a 0 Lux Camcorder focused into the wooded area. A second Night Vision Camcorder was also used. A planchette was positioned as a trigger object in the room at the front of Prelude, in the front corner furthest from the door. Regular EMF and temperature readings were also taken throughout the night by the team assigned that area.

This location proved very quiet (apart from a lot of insect activity after a heavy shower of rain!). The temperature was a steady 18 - 19 degrees throughout the night with no fluctuations. EMF readings remained within the expected parameters with no disturbances.

All investigators to Prelude reported a quiet, relaxed and peaceful vigil, with nothing out of the ordinary to note.

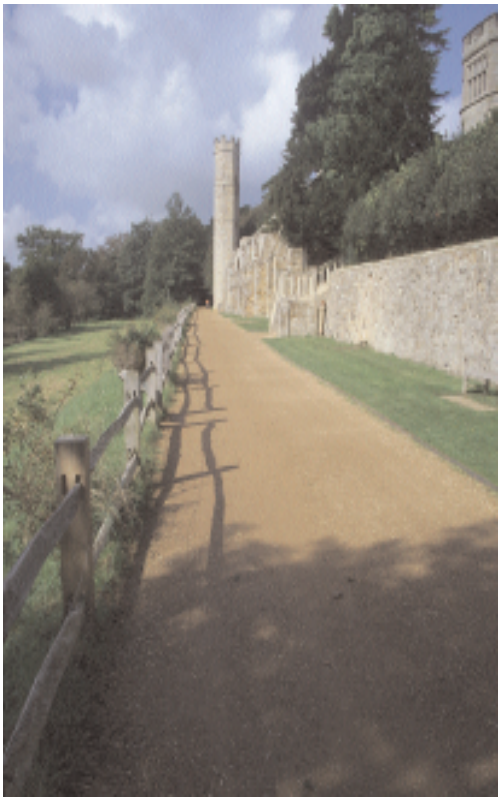
LOCATION TWO:
UNDERCROFTS AND TERRACE

Follow the pathway downhill from Prelude and the path veers left. In daylight you are confronted with amazing views across the battlefield, with the impressive walls of the thirteenth century undercrofts to your left. These vaulted chambers were used for storage by the abbey and were built below its guesthouse block.

I took an initial walk around Battle Abbey on the Tuesday before the investigation and even in bright sunlight, the

rooms were very dark and gloomy. I was aware from the outset, that anyone entering these buildings and making their way through the string of chambers might feel uncomfortable, as subconsciously they would be aware that if something happened, there is only one way out!

The furthest chamber was "locked off" with motion detectors but this took considerable patience as the torchlight disturbed some very large bats, which initially seemed intent on flying through the beams. Once the bats had settled in another chamber, the teams were asked to keep their torches low to the ground in order not to disturb the bats again and risk them setting off the alarms! A small hand-held bell was positioned in the locked-off area as a trigger object. Covered Dictaphones were also placed in two of the other chambers.



The Terrace

Outside, further along the terrace/pathway I parked up my van, housing two monitors which recorded one 0 lux CCTV camera focused along the terrace and one 0 Lux Audio CCTV focused on the stone steps at the end of the undercroft walls. A 0 Lux camcorder was also used to film across the field. EMF and temperature readings were taken regularly throughout the area.

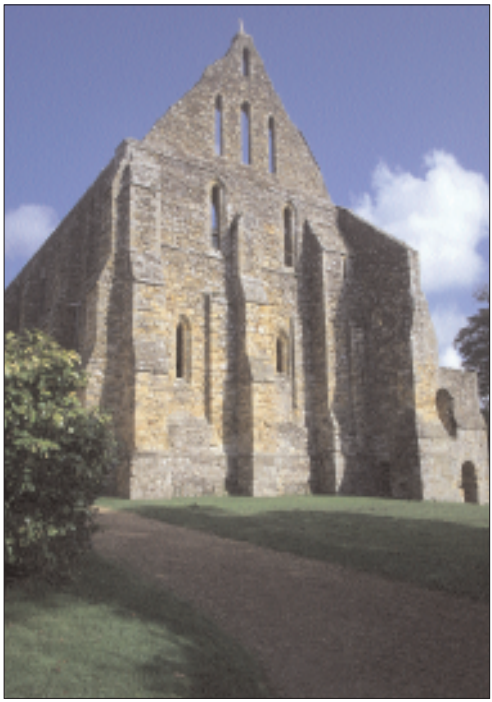
Throughout the evening the temperature in the undercrofts remained constant and unremarkable. There were no unusual EMF readings. Several people remarked that the atmosphere felt "heavy" which could easily be attributed to the darkness being almost total, adding to the already claustrophobic location.

At around 1.30am, Sarah accidentally triggered the motion detector - still, nice to know they were still working in the rather damp conditions! Naturally, this alarm was picked up on Dictaphone, as was the occasional sound of bats flying around. When Sarah, Richard and Philip were in the middle rooms, they heard a "clonk" which they described as sounding like stone falling. They were unsure of the direction, which is not surprising as the acoustics can be deceiving. At this time Bibi accompanied me at the Monitoring Van as she felt uncomfortable and claustrophobic at the prospect of entering the chambers.

At about 2.30pm, Dane and George both said they felt the ground tremble underfoot when they were in room five. They described it as similar to being in a large room where lots of people were moving about. At this time, I was outside further along the undercrofts walls and noticed no anomalies that might have caused the "trembling" sensation. The site is nowhere near a road, at this point the weather was

quite clement and although the engine was running in my van, it was constant throughout the night and too far away to cause this "tremor". At the end of their vigil at 3am, both Dane and George heard a "clink" which sounded like to glasses or empty bottles tapping together.

Of most note throughout the night, was the sudden and widespread drainage of batteries in this location which extended from within the chambers as far as the area



Dormitory

where the van was parked. At 2.20am, whilst the teams were all at base, my radio died, followed by a second one. Within the space of five minutes, my camcorder, digital camera and thermometer batteries had also inexplicably discharged. A few minutes later, approaching footsteps were heard and recorded, albeit faintly. Fully expecting an investigator to appear at any moment, I was surprised to find that there was nobody else around. There was a fair amount of "wild life" around during the night but the steps were solid, purposeful and too heavy to be attributed to any inquisitive animal and no possible cause was filmed on any of the cameras. Six minutes later, the next team to explore the Abbey and undercrofts arrived so I was able to confirm that when the footsteps were recorded, all members were accounted for, as they were leaving base at this time.

It is a shame that there was not time for another vigil as I felt that the terrace overlooking the fields had a lot of potential. After the investigation, I discovered from her notes that Monica felt much the same and had perceived a man on horseback along the pathway on the initial tour.

LOCATION THREE: BATTLEFIELDS BEYOND TERRACE, LAKE AND WALLED GARDEN.

This area covered the battlefield from Senlac Ridge below the Abbey across the fields and the Walled Garden. This was a huge area, which unfortunately could not be adequately covered due to its sheer size and hazardous, boggy condition on the night but we did our best!

Dictaphones / Voice Recorders were placed on the Battlefield but unfortunately did not pick up much with the exception of the wind. EMF readings were within expected range, and there were no sudden drops or rises in temperature. Camcorder footage does not show anything unusual.
Perhaps the most unexpected and surprising thing throughout the evening was that virtually everybody thought the Battlefields felt calm, peaceful and tran-



The Dairy

quil. Given that we all knew that this was the site of a bloodbath involving thousands of men, I found the contrast between well-known historical events and the perception of the place very odd. As much as we try to discount autosuggestion, you would expect a certain amount of preconception when walking the Battlefield in the dark, to seep through, albeit subconsciously!

At 2.25am, Philip reported a feeling of exhilaration on the Battlefield which only turned to a feeling of threat as the sky darkened. Sarah agrees with this, saying the mood had changed to feeling quite oppressive, which was possibly due to dark clouds covering the moon. At 2.50am he recorded seeing a "ball of light on the field, near the lake, whiz across the top of the grass.

The Walled Garden was not originally part of our remit, but Dawn and Amanda felt it worthy of further investigation. We therefore briefly explored the area on our initial tour and agreed that it could be incorporated when groups were investigating the Battlefield. Although the wind was not particularly strong, it is quite noticeable in the large open areas throughout the grounds, so the sudden still and quietness as you enter the sheltered area within the high walls, can be quite disconcerting and give the area an eerie aspect. There were no temperature anomalies and EMF readings were all normal, although Paul, Monica and Amanda all entered the walled garden just after midnight and all felt nauseous. A covered Dictaphone recorded nothing out of the ordinary.

LOCATION FOUR:
THE ABBEY RUINS AND DORMITORY RANGE

The beautiful Abbey remains incorporating the Dormitory on the upper floor and Common room and Novices Room on the lower, were a definite favourite with members. The area is still awe-inspiring with its high vaulted ceilings and stone columns. At the furthest-most point of the building, there are the remains of the monks Latrines.

A "locked-off" camcorder was left in the Common Room, protected by Motion Beam Detectors at each door. A Dictaphone was left running and a Multi-Meter was available to record: lux, (light), decibels, humidity and temperature.

At about 11.15pm, Dane reported his cameras seemingly turning itself on and off near the Dormitory, and then taking photos on its own! It subsequently worked perfectly again when he left this area. Several groups recorded very fleeting chills, with Paul, Monica and Amanda noting a significant and very sudden drop in temperature of 3 degrees at 12.50. Several people also

recorded shadowy movements throughout the building but the general consensus seems to be that this was most probably due to the eyes trying to focus in very low-light conditions. None of these movements were captured on video footage.

At 3.10, Philip heard several distinct tolls of a bell, which he estimated sounding as though it was coming from a couple of miles away. The group also all saw a small pin of green light on the ceiling, with seemingly nothing to cause it. The light seemed almost stationary, perhaps moving only a couple of inches. My first thought was that I noticed a fair amount of very bright moss and lichen on my preliminary visit and wondered if, although quite rare, there might be some phosphorescent moss on the ceiling. I have since spoken to Sarah on the phone who described it as a green/blue light and suggested it may well have been feint moonlight seen through a chink in the stonework.



The Monument.

EMF readings remained within normal parameters and the trigger object was undisturbed.

LOCATION FIVE:
DAIRY, ICEHOUSE, CHAPEL, CRYPT, MONUMENT AND HAROLD STONE.

The Dairy and Icehouse stand behind the Abbey Ruins and date from the 19th century when Battle Abbey was in use as a country house. Although the Dairy was opened, unfortunately we could not gain access into the Icehouse.

There is very little left of the abbey's church, except for a neatly marked out area in the well-manicured lawns indicating where it once stood. It was built on the site where King Harold fell. The high alter is said to mark the exact spot and is identified by the "Harold Stone" with the inscription:

The Traditional site of the High Altar of Battle Abbey Founded To Commemorate The Victory of Duke William on 14 October 1066. The High Altar was placed To Mark The Spot Where King Harold Died".

The excavated crypt area is very hazardous, particularly in the dark! The ground suddenly disappears into a large deep stone-walled pit which was once the Abbey Crypt. The floor above this would have been the infirmary. There are steep steps allowing access to this area which can be very slippery when wet. The Monument is the furthest part of this vigil location.

Several members used camcorders throughout this very large location, although as the ground was perilous in

places, and the grass very wet, we were limited as to which equipment we could utilise in this area. A trigger object, (a very large Quartz Crystal), was positioned on the monument and a covered Dictaphone was also placed there. Obviously the Harold Stone would have been preferable but could easily have been accidentally kicked or disturbed in the dark.

EMF readings proved very high in areas of this location but on further examination by Nobby, it seemed highly likely that this was due to underground cables feeding electricity to the School in the centre of the grounds.

The most impressive occurrence of the night occurred near the Icehouse and Dairy. Several groups reported seeing a shadowy silhouette lurking around this area, only to seemingly disappear when approached. Meanwhile, both Nick and Steve reported hearing footsteps as though on gravel, emanating from this area while they were in the Abbey. At first it was assumed that it was another member/group but on investigation, there was nobody there; no torches, no voices and the footsteps had stopped. Ten seconds after resuming the vigil in the Abbey, the footsteps were briefly heard again. Everybody was accounted for at this time and this is a good example of several groups unwittingly corroborating each other's findings. Monica also independently commented that she had the impression of a man wearing high boots in the Dairy. I was surprised when reading members reports about this area as actually, the Dairy is probably the most modern and cheeriest looking location in the grounds and the least likely candidate for activity!

At 11.30pm, in the Crypt, Carol, Nobby and Shirley recorded a sudden, dramatic and inexplicable drop in temperature. In the space of nine minutes, the temperature



The ruins of the Crypt.

dropped 5.2 degrees! (From 21.5 to 16.3). With this exception, there was nothing else of note in or around the Crypt.
The Chapel, Harold Stone and Monument area were all very quiet throughout the night with nothing remarkable to record. Dictaphones drew a blank and the Trigger Object was untouched.

LOCATION SIX:
THE GATEHOUSE, OFFICE AND MUSEUM.

The original "location six" was to be outside the Gatehouse and an office within it, which has experienced activity. However, on the night the Office was locked and we were unable to gain access, so we opted to investigate the Museum area and adjoining rooms. I was quite optimistic. The 1338 Gatehouse was built to help defend the abbey from the French. It is arguably the most imposing Gatehouse I have seen and is said to be one of the best examples of English monastic Gatehouses in existence today. Access to the museum is via steep, stone, winding steps and by contrast to all the other locations was cosy and dry. I was quite optimistic about including this area as part of our investigation, as early in the evening whilst we were having our meeting before the Ghost Club members arrived, the lights in an adjoining room went out. Obviously we were unable to check the electrics, or whether the bulbs had simply gone but the area was felt to be particularly atmospheric at that time. In general, investigators remarked that this was a lovely location but was very quiet with no EMF readings and nothing apparent on camcorder or audio. Members noted that there were a lot of dust particles in the air, which would very probably show up as orbs when taking photographs. This observation proved correct.

Several teams reported hearing various noises throughout the night but it was noted that most of the times coincided with Dawn manning the door at the souvenir shop. Most of the doors are of heavy wood and it is quite amazing how sounds like this travel through a building in the still of the night. I am sure this would be less apparent during the day when the building is bustling with activity. There were several other "clicking" noises that could very well just be the building settling as the temperature dropped through the night. However, there were a couple of "knocks" reported which seemed to come from the vicinity of the Tower Room corner. Perhaps the Abbey staff could discount plumbing or some other electrical cause for this? There was nothing of note outside the Gatehouse.

Thank you very much to English Heritage for allowing us to investigate such a beautiful site. It was particularly nice to have Richard along from Mission 21 and Bibi from the Guardian. Both joined in enthusiastically and with open-minds, which are probably the two main requirements when participating on an investigation!

Given the fact that we all could not help be aware of the history of the site, I found the overall feeling of calm and peacefulness quite astonishing. I certainly believe that the site deserves further investigation and would be very keen to include the School in the remit if the opportunity ever arises.

We soon discovered that Battle Abbey had something for everyone! The history of the place is quite overwhelming, the architecture particularly of the Gatehouse and Abbey is certainly worth viewing, the walks are beautiful and anyone with an interest in the paranormal I am sure, would be very keen to visit the site. I certainly plan to go back in daylight with my family

to further explore all the areas Battle Abbey has to offer.

Kathy Gearing.

Book Review



WALKING HAUNTED GREENWICH PART 2 - DEPTFORD TO THE DOME

(Malcolm C Godfrey) (Time For Greenwich, 2005) 88pp, ISBN 0-9548752-1-4

This is Malcolm's second exhaustive offering on the ghosts around his own environ in South East London. Some Ghost Club members will recall the excellent afternoon spent in his company in the summer of 2006 when he took us around some awe-inspiring sites. Seeing the Tulip Staircase in The Queen's House was quite an experience for all, not least because of Malcolm's successful attempts to belittle the jumped-up bureaucrats who were trying to interrupt him.

The book is similar in style and presentation to the first volume and consequently one should consider acquiring both books together - they're certainly reasonably priced at only £5 each.

As a nice opening touch, Malcolm has started the book with a map of the haunted sites not on a current street map but on an old 18th century plan of the wider area.

A small criticism of the book remains from the first volume; there are several different sets of introductions to it and it really only needs one. That is not to say the contents of those introductions are superfluous - an introduction to the book, the author and the history of the area are all relevant.

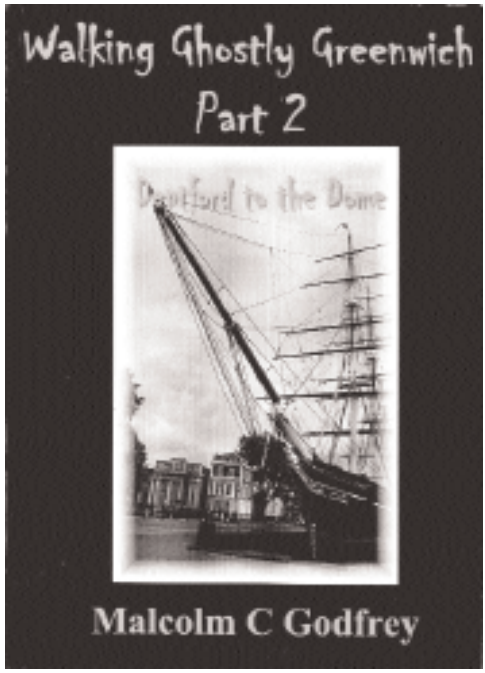
The images in the book are again very attractive; nicely composed and sharp. They appear to have been generated on a high quality desktop printer and not by the usual mass printing method. This is a plus, as though it has the tell-tale columns you get with such printing, they are much clearer than you would expect if the book were printed by other means.

The first story has a great deal of impact as it deals with a fairly recent haunting in a modern building involving strong poltergeist phenomena and a man seen staring back from a mirror - more akin to a Hammer Horror anthology than an historic piece of localised folklore. I'm not so convinced by the findings of the medium who visited but Malcolm never tries to persuade the reader one way or the other; he simply gives a personal opinion. One thing I am glad to see in this second volume is that the author far less frequently finishes most of the tales with an anecdotal question. Personally, I much prefer those stories without them. Presenting possibilities rather than posing questions gives the teller a greater air of authority and Malcolm is certainly a man who knows what he's talk-

ing about.

The Greenwich Theatre has an interesting inversion of the classic short 'ghosts walking on a lower floor level' tale, such as the notorious Martindale sighting at The Treasurer's House in York in 1953. Here, the legs of the apparition are seen walking below the ceiling!

There are one or two short pieces in the book dealing with sites that aren't actually haunted but have a dark history. I do not think this is a major issue so long as their inclusion is limited. They still make interesting reading in their own right.



Certainly, one of the more attractive aspects of the book is that all the stories are different. How many times have we read tale after tale of a dead grandmother appearing at the foot of the bed, or nothing more than a feeling of not being alone? Here we are assailed by accounts most of us will not have heard before and they pretty much cover the whole spectrum.

Malcolm has still not finished his third volume and I hope he has dispensed with one promised chapter on orbs. When he wrote this book we didn't quite possess the knowledge on this anomaly of digital photography and these days only a few people believe them to be anything other than dust, water droplets or insects. Likewise, at the time of writing the straightforward explanation of the spectre snapped by the Rev Hardy was not widely known but accounts of other hauntings in The Queen's House compensate for this.

However, it is with the last part of the book, dealing with new occurrences at Greenwich Naval College - Malcolm's main passion - that the book really comes into its own. There is another sighting of the altruistic Admiral Byng in yet another part of the grounds, assisting yet another member of staff.

Perhaps the most surprising story is the anachronism of Sir George Livesey, Chairman of the Victorian gas works, appearing to workmen constructing The Dome on the site where he once ran his utility business.

What appeals to me about Malcolm's writing is that I largely like his style. His words read well and comfortably and all the stories are brief whilst still retaining their essence. It makes for an enjoyable read.

Philip Hutchinson

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

All meetings are held at the Victory Services Club, 63 Seymour Street, London, W2, commencing at 2pm (nearest tube, Marble Arch)

April 21st : Margaret Green

May 19th: Ross Allison from AGHOST

June 23rd: TBA

July 21st: TBA

July 28th: Summer Barbeque at Belmont House. (See page 47)

WEIRD EVENTS AND UNCANNY HAPPENINGS IN TUSCANY

by

The Late Lionel S Gibson.

Lionel sent this article to us along with one published last newsletter, shortly before his sudden death. Once again we felt he would have been happy for us to publish his extraordinary tale in his absence.

At the time I was living in Paris and working for UNESCO, I thought of taking a quiet holiday in Tuscany, an area of Italy which I knew only from a brief visit to Florence and the surrounding area. As I looked up the relevant travel information, a rather unusual advertisement caught my eye. It was about some old manor house that had been recently reconverted into a hotel at the summit of a hill in the Chianti region, near a village named precisely Gaiole-in-Chiante. The odd way in which the add was phrased somehow tickled my fancy and I made a reservation.

After flying to Pisa there was a long and bumpy ride by taxi across the gently undulating Tuscan hills, some of which resemble parts of the English countryside. The twilight was pierced by the last flickering reflections of the setting sun and the ascent of the unbelievably steep hill on which the hotel was located was quite breathtaking. After that I only remember meeting my host, a somewhat eccentric, middle aged German, who offered me a glass of the local 'vin santo'. It turned out that the place had been less of a manor house than a fortress throughout most of its very long history. The foundations were supposed to be Etruscan and the solid Roman wall, which still made a substantial part of the whole structure, were clearly visible. But alas, it seemed that I had arrived at the wrong time of the season and most of the guests had already left, so my host had told me apologetically… The truth was that I didn't mind that at all, since in any case I was supposed to be seeking peace and quiet from the hectic Parisian scene in which I lived and worked at that time.

Lazy golden mornings by a deserted swimming pool and great views over the hills were all very enjoyable, if it hadn't been for the furious swarms of a variety of flying bugs which could have held their own against their kin in the Congo or the Amazon!

One early afternoon, when the whole sky had turned into a misty evanescent blue almost devoid of clouds, I decided to explore the further limits of my host's domain and try to reach a road bordered by olive groves, which I had glimpsed in the distance. As I followed a narrow path down the hill on the opposite side from which I had arrived, I entered a wood which gradually became thicker, to a point at which I could only see glimpses of the sky while random shafts of light pierced through the overhanging branches. I walked steadily towards the unseen end of the winding forest tunnel, which judging by the overgrown grass wasn't used very often. Then I noticed something on my left hand side which made me stop. It was a huge chunk of rock, roughly rectangular in shape. As I looked at it, I realised it was indeed a great flattened rectangle, even and smooth on its upper surface like a table. The material did not seem to be marble or granite and my limited knowledge of minerals did not allow me to identify it. The subtle lighting at that moment seemed perfect for a picture and my instincts as a photographer made me set up my camera. Just a fraction of a second before I pressed the trigger I stopped. I heard the sudden cry of a bird, sharp and eerie where there had been absolute silence. A silence I hadn't been conscious of until that moment, as I had not noticed the darkening of the hidden sky. At that point I experienced some mixed feelings. I felt somewhat foolish and at the same time, there was something like reverence and awe – of what, I asked myself? Then the sun came out again, outlining in gold the contours of the huge stone which I now realised must at some time have served as an altar. So I got ready again to take a picture of the thing, beautifully framed by branches in every shade of green and brown. But I never did. Out of the unnatural silence there came a rustling sound, like that of a large animal flexing its muscles and getting ready to spring through the undergrowth. It is rather difficult for somebody who has seen as much as I have to admit to absolute, irrational terror without any visible cause - but that's what I experienced on a bright Tuscan afternoon. I knew that the sounds I had heard could not have been made my any kind of dog. I simply bowed my head deeply towards the altar, put away my camera and walked out of that accursed place up the hill, feeling like I had been warned twice. That night I had a nightmarish dream somehow related to the ancient Etruscans, in which I was running away and hiding and then in the nick of time, reaching safety.

The next day I informed my German host that I would be leaving sooner than expected. He seemed to think that this was because of the lack of company in the place. I had intended to ask him about the mysterious stone in the woods but something prevented me from even mentioning it.

Lionel S Gibson

The Ghost Club

SUMMER BARBEQUE

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£9.00 for members and their guests

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