

**MONSTER FILES**  
*Official reports revealed*

**FAMILY FEAR**  
*Ghost haunts baby*

**DEATH WORM**  
*Demon of the desert?*

Paranormal

# Paranormal

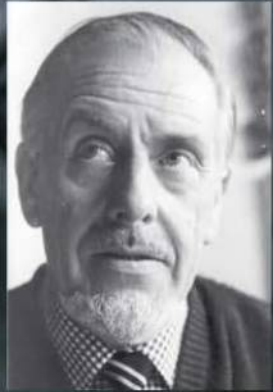
EXPLORING THE WORLD OF THE UNEXPLAINED MARCH 2010 • ISSUE 45

## Victorian Spaceman?



**THE MYSTERY OF  
SPRING-HEELED JACK**

**ALSO**  
**GHOST  
HUNTER**  
*The legendary  
Peter Underwood*



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*Timothy Good,  
Nick Pope &  
Nick Redfern on  
UFOs in the UK*



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**PARANORMAL NEWS**  
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'NON-HUMAN PERSONS'

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and so many more names that bring images to the mind of a large ape like creature that lives in the dense forest land of mountain ranges around the world. Many believe they are mythical beings left over from earlier times, or perhaps stranded Aliens who are still waiting for rescue, or the Missing Link perhaps Neanderthal or Homo Erectus who in very small numbers still strive to exist on a planet where their kind is thought to be extinct, or a being so different we have yet to classify, but he has existed in the stories and sightings of men & women for hundreds of years.

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# Paranormal

Exploring the world of the unexplained

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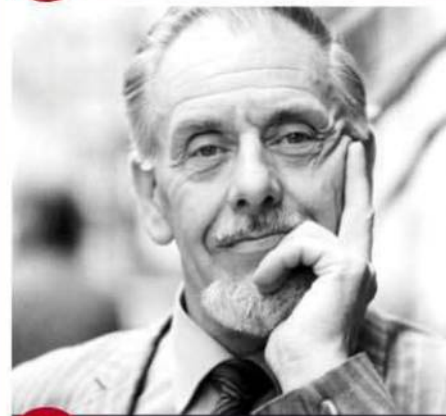
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# Paranormal

Exploring the world of the unexplained

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It's typical, isn't it? You wait ages for a horrible worm-monster and then two come along at once.

Picture the scene: a charming English village in the early 1960s. A respected member of the community is taking an evening stroll when she suddenly spots a

UFO. Moments later she finds herself menaced by a huge, hideous creature like a gigantic earthworm. She shrieks... scurries away... calls the police.

Not very likely, is it? Well, of course not, but then the paranormal does not obey rules of logic or commonsense, so what's really remarkable is that this lady's astonishing story was taken seriously enough by the authorities for them to mount an official investigation. More surprising still, according to reports filed away in the National Archives, investigators found puzzling evidence which supported her story.

Nick Redfern has uncovered many official Government reports into weird creatures like this one and presents us with a striking selection in this issue of *Paranormal Magazine*. Aside from the story itself, I was taken aback by the fact that well in advance of receiving Nick's yarn about this vermiform monstrosity, I had already commissioned an article about another wriggling horror.

This is the far more famous but no less mysterious Mongolian Death Worm. So named because it looks like a (giant) worm and can kill people in not one but two unpleasant ways, the Death Worm is arguably the weirdest of the world's classic cryptids.

Recently another expedition went in search of it but had no more luck than their predecessors in finding one. Indeed, it seems increasingly unlikely that the Death Worm is a flesh and blood animal and in this issue Dr Karl Shuker

pays particular attention to the deadly critter's paranormal characteristics. Is it, like the Shamen of the Gobi believe, not a living creature at all but 'the demon of the desert'?

A far more humble and rather more familiar animal, the hare, has also inspired many superstitions and, as we head into 'mad March', these are explored by Mark Greener. The borderline where folklore and contemporary experience meets is dramatically illustrated by The Kidsgrove Boggart - a rare example of a legendary, centuries-old, spook still manifesting in some form today. The phenomenon is examined by local man Matt Hicks.

Contemporary hauntings also manifest in another, particularly unnerving, case investigated by Steve Mera in 'The Harris Haunting', and Janet Bord, of the Fortean Picture Library, treats us to a selection of photographic evidence from some of the most important poltergeist cases on record.

A particular delight this month is an exclusive interview with one of the great names in paranormal research, Peter Underwood, carried out by John Stoker. After 60 years of ghost hunting, Underwood's recollections and insights are invaluable.

Three other big names are interviewed by young ufologist Richard Thomas, who is keen to get a handle on the state of British ufology following the closure of the MoD's UFO desk - Timothy Good, Nick Pope and our good friend Nick Redfern all share their opinions in Richard's 'UK UFO debate'.

Finally, I must mention our fascinating cover story. Spring-Heeled Jack is one of the great enigmas of the past but details of his alarming career are muddled by misinformation and spurious speculation. Dr David Clarke puts 'Jack' under the microscope in a bid to answer some of the questions that surround him. Was he, for example, a stranded alien in Victorian London, as some believe?

I hope you'll find this issue more than just 'double the fun' - it's a bumper edition of extraordinary stories and astonishing events that can't fail to intrigue the open-minded and boggle the imagination of us all.

Richard Holland, Editor



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# Paranormal News

The latest from the world of weird

## 'Cursed' outpost spooks soldiers

'The Rock' is an ancient fortress used as an observation point in Afghanistan. Human remains, mysterious whispers and strange lights have given it a sinister reputation. [Times Online, Dec 28]

**T**he ghostly reputation of a remote and exposed outpost perched 65ft (20 metres) up a mountain in Afghanistan is causing almost as much alarm for the soldiers posted there as the Taliban forces attempting to dislodge them.

Observation Point Rock was captured from the Taliban in 2008. Known simply as 'the Rock' by the small groups of US Marines stationed there for months at a time, it has also become widely referred to as 'the haunted Observation Point' by American troops.

'The local people say this is a cursed place,' Sergeant Josh Brown told his opposite number in the company which had come to relieve them. He continued: 'It is weird what you hear and don't hear around here. You will definitely see weird-ass lights up here at night.'

His comments were overheard by a reporter from *The Times* newspaper serving as an Afghan correspondent over Christmas 2009. The correspondent learnt of a growing legend surrounding OP Rock, which is a few hundred metres south-east of Patrol Base Hassan Abad.

'The Rock' is actually an ancient fortress, partly collapsed. This strong defensive site has been used for centuries. Some say the fort dates back to the time of Alexander the Great. What is certain is that human bones

have been dug up here by unnerved soldiers, although their age is unknown. Some have heard members of the Taliban became entombed below the fort when it was bombed by the US Air Force. Others believe they are the remains of Russian soldiers dating from the time of the repulsed Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

'This place really sucks,' said Lance Corporal Austin Hoyt. 'The Afghans say it's haunted. Stick a shovel in anywhere and you'll find bones and bits of pottery. They say the Russians up here were executed by the Mujahidin.'

**"It is weird what you hear and don't hear around here. You will definitely see weird-ass lights up here at night."**

Corporal Jacob Lima spoke of the night he was woken by a colleague screaming in terror.

'He was yelling and begging me to go up to the firing point he was guarding,' Cpl Lima recalled. 'When I got there he said that he was sitting there when he heard a voice whisper something in his ear. He said it sounded like Russian. He begged me to stay in there with him till he was relieved from guard duty. After that he really didn't like standing post up there.'

Welsh Guards were stationed on OP Rock before the Marines and they, too, have added to the stories.

'The Brits claimed to see weird things, hear noises,' Cpl Lima said. 'Lots of them said it's creepy at night, especially from midnight till 4am. You see a lot of unexplained lights through night-vision goggles.'

When the article was posted on *Times Online*, some confirmation of the stories came from an anonymous reader, presumably a soldier who had also been stationed on 'The Rock'. He wrote (correcting spelling): 'This site gave me the willies. We would see and hear things in English and other languages at night and sometimes in the day. The

light would just appear where there could be no possible light source and sometimes a couple of guys fired flares and they would just disappear. It was just creepy.'

Another reader, a Mr James Fowler, added a pertinent comment, however: 'I can relate to the experience. I was a miner and when you were alone and down old workings, after a while you started to hear and see things. Add to that what these young lads are having to deal with being on edge, in a very dangerous situation, you pick up on any knock or glimmer. That's how you stay alive.'

### Paranormal Shorts



#### CHINA SAUCER

A UFO exhibition at Kunming, China, has been the catalyst for the uncovering of research into the phenomenon by the Chinese government. The most recent sighting to come to light took place on December 12, 2004.

A group of students noticed a flying saucer hovering over the northern city of Jiayuguan and one of them managed to film it for about six seconds before it shot upwards into space. They estimated it was the size of a jet liner. It emitted a bright light. The young witnesses reported feeling unwell after the sighting. It is only now that these official UFO reports are becoming available for study. [AllNewsWeb.com, Dec 21]

#### BIG BALLS

Huge ice balls have been found on an island off the south-eastern coast of Sweden. The globes – some larger than a football – were found strewn along a beach on Öland during the week before Christmas. There were at least 200 of them and found to consist of a ball of snow surrounded by a crust of ice 2 to 5cms (ie an inch or two) thick. Witnesses were mystified by the fact that they were found resting on the west side of a bank of seaweed, even though the prevailing winds were from the east – almost as if they had travelled under their own power. [TheLocal.se, Jan 5]

#### LOST CITY

Legends of lost cities in the Amazon jungle have been the stuff of explorer's dreams for centuries. Many lost their lives searching for El Dorado, among other myths, but 20th century scientists maintained that the jungle is simply too inhospitable to allow for large settlements to be founded within it. Satellite imagery and fly-overs have now proved the dreamers right, after all. More than 200 huge earthworks carved in the upper Amazon basin near Brazil's border with Bolivia have been found, spanning 155 miles. Initial digs suggest this unknown city by an unknown people lasted for a thousand years between about 200AD to the 13th century. [Guardian, Jan 5]

## Bigfoot does the braiding

Last month we reported on mysterious braiding appearing overnight in horses' manes throughout southern England. Mark Fraser, who compiles the Sightings section, has pointed out that in some wilder parts of the USA similar braiding has been found by horse-owners – but they are blaming it on Bigfoot! A photo in a book called *Backyard Bigfoot* by Lisa Shiel professes to show braids made by an artistic Sasquatch. It can be seen, along with lots more on the subject, at [www.cryptomundo.com/cryptozoo-news/bigfoot-braids/](http://www.cryptomundo.com/cryptozoo-news/bigfoot-braids/)



**PEOPLE TOO:** New research has shown that dolphins are second in intelligence only to humans and should be treated as 'non-human persons'.

# Non-human people are living on Earth

For a while there has been speculation of intelligent life-forms other than human beings sharing our planet with us. It's now a fact. *[Jonathan Leake in the Sunday Times, Jan 3]*

**W**e're not the only people living on Earth, scientists have declared. It's time we recognised another species are people, too – dolphins. From now on, declare zoologists and neuroscientists at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, dolphins should be treated as 'non-human persons'. Their studies have shown strong similarities in their communications to those of humans and have shown them to be more intelligent than chimpanzees. Magnetic resonance imaging scans have also shown that dolphin brains have many key features associated with high intelligence, just like *Homo sapiens*.

'Many dolphin brains are larger than our own and second in mass only to the human brain when corrected for body size,' said zoologist Lori Marino. The research has shown that dolphins have distinct personalities, a strong sense of self and can think about the future – their intelligence has been

compared to that of three-year-old human children.

The Emory Uni team is not alone in its conclusions. Diana Reiss, professor of psychology at Hunter College, City University of New York, found that bottlenose dolphins could learn a simple symbol-based language, for example.

Behavioural studies are backed up by neuroscience. Marino and her colleagues found, for example, that dolphin brains have the same convoluted folds linked with human intelligence.

Marino and Reiss are to present their findings at a conference in San Diego, California, in February, along with Thomas White, professor of ethics at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles. White has observed: 'The scientific research... suggests that dolphins are "non-human persons" who qualify for moral standing as individuals.'

The researchers feel their findings show that it is morally wrong to keep dolphins in amusement parks or to kill them for food or by accident when fishing.

## GHOST ALLEY

A bowling alley in Wadsworth, Ohio, has been renamed Ghost Alley after its new owner discovered it had a resident spook. Gary Williams has named the ghost 'Charles' because it may be the spirit of a man of that name who was once 'crushed by one of the big, huge machines behind the lanes' in 1948. It has been seen by his wife Sue among others. Sue said she was downstairs when "all the lights went out. He was standing by the light switch. He was tall, slender, with dark hair, green eyes – very green eyes – and a very pleasant smile." *[ohio.com, Dec 21]*

## BUT IS IT ART?

A New Hampshire artist and videographer is complaining that his rights were violated when a ranger halted his performance art project and ordered him to leave a state park because he didn't have a permit. He was dressed as Bigfoot at the time. Jonathan Doyle's complaint has been passed to the state attorney's office. Doyle said that he and others with him, some also in costume, were on a lesser-used trail and weren't bothering other park visitors. Quite why Doyle was dressed as Bigfoot hasn't come out. Is it possible yet another hoax video was unwittingly repressed by the officious ranger? *[Huffington Post, Jan 5]*

## FATTIES FIRST

An advert using a UFO theme to encourage people to join a health club backfired on the advertisers. The ad for a health club and spa in Bristol, featured a green alien and the legend: 'Advance health warning! When the aliens come, they will eat the fatties first.' The ad attracted numerous complaints. Vicky Palmer, for example, who had an eating disorder as a teen, said: 'I am not overweight yet I still find this extremely offensive and patronising.' Health club manager Jason Eaton stressed that they did not intend to cause offence to anyone. *[Telegraph, Jan 5]*

## COUNT DRUNKULA

A young Russian bit off more than he could chew when he and his friend got drunk during the New Year holidays and decided to play at being vampires. The two men, aged 27 and 23, from the Moscow area, got so carried away that one accidentally bit the end off his friend's nose. Rushed to hospital, the victim underwent an operation to have it sewn back on again. A surgeon said: 'There was a lot of blood. The patient was saying he was Count Dracula. When he came to his senses, he could not understand what had happened to him. Now he will have a defected nose for the rest of his life.' *[Pravda, Jan 11]*

More Paranormal News →

# Strange tale of a crafty spirit

A columnist in northern Idaho has revealed the odd experiences of his neighbours and their apparently haunted television.

**L**awrence Fury, who writes for the *River Journal*, has recounted the strange adventures of the people who moved in next door after his neighbour, an elderly lady, died in her sleep in January, 2009.

There were a few odd happenings within the first week of the new tenant and her teenage son moving in but the most persistent mystery involved their television. The woman set her VCR to tape soap operas while she was at work, but when she later watched the tape she found it had recorded the satellite program guide. Then there was a sudden switch to a crafts channel, more than an hour of which had been recorded.

'Thinking her son had skipped school, she questioned him and he promptly denied it,' writes Mr Fury. 'He pointed out that he had a TV in his room and, in any event, wouldn't watch the craft channel to save his life. A call to the school confirmed her son had been at school all day.'

Things got stranger. On a Sunday his new neighbour left the TV tuned to a station showing a motor race while she

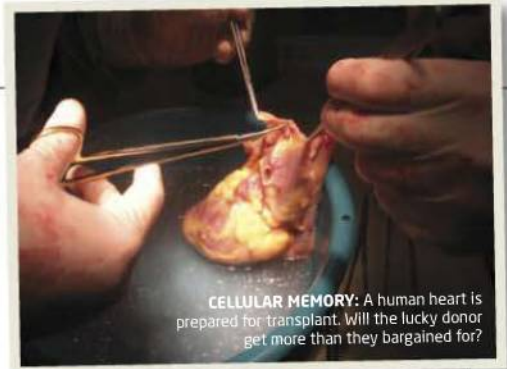
and her son nipped out to the shops. When she returned, she found that the telly had switched channels in her absence. The racing had been replaced by the crafts channel.

You will not be surprised to learn that the previous tenant was a keen crafts maker. While she lived there the apartment had been filled with stuff she had made.

There were a few other odd events, the most eerie being the several occasions on which the closed and locked front door would begin opening by itself while the woman was watching TV. Heart in her mouth, she'd look round, expecting to see an intruder – and the door would quietly close again.

All this happened earlier last year. In the late summer the teenage boy moved to live with his father in Oregon and the mysterious occurrences began to fade away. Was he behind them? It's hard to see how he could have been.

Lawrence Fury theorises: 'Could it be that the previous occupant did not care to have a male living in her home, but is now content that there is once again a single lady living where she had for more than four years?' [Lawrence Fury, *River Journal*, Jan 5]



**CELLULAR MEMORY:** A human heart is prepared for transplant. Will the lucky donor get more than they bargained for?

## Heart-felt cravings

Another rare example of what researchers call 'cellular memory' has emerged from Australia. The phenomenon occurs when people who have undergone organ transplants find themselves taking on the characteristics of their donors.

Teenager Kaden Delaney, of New South Wales, was killed in a car crash and his heart was donated to Adelaide man David Waters, then only 22 but who had only months to live due to a condition that was stiffening his ventricles. Kaden's parents Greg and Shelley spent two years looking for David and then exchanged emails with him.

In one of these emails an odd fact came to light. Mr Waters happened to mention that since the operation he had developed an odd craving for Burger Rings, a salty snack sold in Australia (note to English readers: they're a bit like hamburger-flavoured Hula Hoops).

Mr Waters asked: 'Did Kaden like Burger Rings? That's all I seemed to want to eat after my surgery. I never used to eat them before.'

Talby, Kaden's brother, confirmed that indeed he had 'loved Burger Rings'.

The best-known case of so-called 'cellular memory' was heart-lung transplant recipient Claire Sylvia, who said she found she had a sudden craving for beer, chicken nuggets and green peppers. She later found her donor was an 18-year-old male who had died in a motorcycle accident.

It has been suggested that perhaps the brain is not the only organ to store memories or personality traits and that they can be stored in the cells elsewhere in the body. Cellular memory is not accepted by scientists, however. [News.com.au, Dec 23]

## Boy blamed for Czech polt

In the January edition we reported the dramatic events taking place at a house in Strašice near Prague. Popping light-bulbs, burnt light sockets and an exploding fish tank were among the phenomena recorded. [Radio.cz, Dec 30]

Numerous experts had been called in, including power company employees and a geophysicist, and various tests made but they all drew a blank. The mayor offered to rehouse the family if the apparent poltergeist activity did not come to an end. He even suggested tearing down the house for everyone's sake.

The latest news, however, is that the authorities have come to the conclusion that the problems were deliberately engineered – by the family's 12-year-old son. When he was sent to live with his grandparents for his own safety, the incidents stopped, we are informed. He has now admitted his involvement but he told police that he only performed some of the 'stunts', and even then only to make people take seriously what was happening to his family.

This is a remarkably common pattern in poltergeist cases: inexplicable events followed by the apparent exposure of a

young member of the household helping it along, but this exposure not sufficiently explaining all the incidents.

Certainly the electricity company which investigated is not satisfied with the explanation. A representative of the CEZ power utility told a Czech news agency that 'no evidence of any kind of self-combustible material had been found on any of the sockets'. They say they will continue to look into the case.

Of course, young adolescents are often a common factor in poltergeist reports and it has to be considered whether the boy was the focus in this case. Another interesting sidelight, one which we didn't pick up on when the story broke, is that the name of the village, Strašice, would be translated into something like 'Spooksville' in English. One has to wonder why.



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# 'I killed my own son to satisfy spirits'

The desire for a higher standard of living in Uganda has led to a greater demand for witch doctors - and a horrifying increase in child sacrifices.

**B** BC special correspondent Tim Whewell has heard chilling first-hand accounts of child sacrifices in Uganda.

Preparing for a *Newsnight* special, he spoke not only to parents of victims and to youngsters who narrowly escaped death but also to witch doctors who had themselves carried out the murders.

The Ugandan government have confirmed that human sacrifice is on the increase in their country. According to the head of Uganda's Anti-Human Sacrifice Taskforce the crime is directly linked to rising levels of prosperity: people want more and they believe witchcraft can help them get rich quick.

One practitioner Whewell spoke to admitted that clients had come to him in search of wealth.

'They capture other people's children,' he said. 'They bring the heart and the blood directly here to take to the spirits... They bring them in small tins and they place these objects under the tree from which the voices of the spirits are coming.'

This is not a rare occurrence. According to the witch doctor clients brought blood and body parts 'on average three times a week'. The demand is seen not to come from the clients initially, but from 'the spirits' upon whom they are calling for favours.

Whewell's guide into this underworld was Polino Angela, a former witch-doctor who now campaigns to end child sacrifice. He admitted that before his conversion to Christianity he had murdered about 70 people in human sacrifice rituals. One of them was his own 10-year-old son. The spirits told

him to sacrifice the child and he was too terrified of them to refuse.

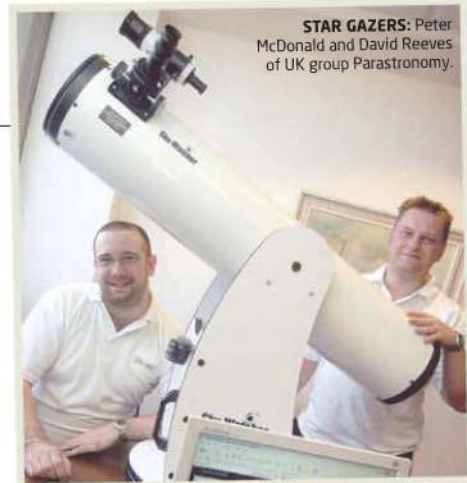
Angela was initiated into the trade in neighbouring Kenya. A 13-year-old boy was killed in the ceremony, his neck sliced open. Angela was encouraged to allow the blood to splash over him. Angela says that since he repented in 1990 he has managed to persuade 2,400 other witch-doctors to give up the trade.

Angela is unlikely to face prosecution for his murders. Uganda's Minister of Ethics and Integrity James Nsaba Buturo believes that 'to punish retrospectively would cause a problem... if we can persuade Ugandans to change, that is much better than going back into the past.'

[Tim Whewell, BBC News Uganda, Jan 7]



**MAGICAL TRADITION:** Belief in the power of witchcraft is widespread in Africa. These sangomas, or traditional healers, are pictured at a get-together or 'greeting' in South Africa. It should be stressed that these men would have nothing to do with human sacrifice; on the contrary, they see a major part of their role as the defeat of the kinds of evil spirits the Ugandan witch doctors claim demand it. © Wizzy



**STAR GAZERS:** Peter McDonald and David Reeves of UK group Parastronomy.

## Keep watching the skies

A scheme has been launched that will give astronomers, including amateurs, a formal mechanism for reporting any unexplained phenomena they observe when studying the night sky. [UAPreporting.org, December 2009]

The Unidentified Aerospace Phenomena (UAP) Observations Reporting Scheme aims to provide a global focus for sightings by astronomers and 'contribute towards a better understanding of transient phenomena occurring in the atmosphere'. Of course, UAP is just another term for UFOs (until they become IFOs, that is).

The reporting scheme has been set up by amateur astronomer, Philippe Ailleris, who hopes to collect more rigorous information on UAPs/UFOs. He has developed a questionnaire that requests precise details of the sightings, including the location, time, elevation, velocity, apparent size and distance of the UAPs, as well as a description of the terrain and weather conditions at the observation point. Finished questionnaires will be downloadable from the dedicated website [www.uapreporting.org](http://www.uapreporting.org).

A British organisation intended to bring together astronomers and UFO buffs, Parastronomy was launched last year and featured in Paranormal News. Find them at [www.parastronomy.co.uk](http://www.parastronomy.co.uk).

## Grim artifact found in ghost house

[Camden Advertiser, Jan 6]

A grisly discovery has been made during renovations to a well-known haunted house in Australia.

Studley Park House is a 120-year-old mansion at Camden in New South Wales. It has long had a reputation for ghosts and was used for a reality TV programme called *Scream Test* back in 2001. Four contestants were locked into the mansion overnight as cameras filmed their feelings, thoughts and hoped-for paranormal occurrences. One contestant said he heard a baby crying in the corner of a room and another was so distressed after hearing voices that she had to be let out.

The house is the now undergoing a refurbishment. When workers set about making sure the house was watertight, they were shocked to find a hangman's noose dangling from the attic ceiling. No one knows why it's there.

Expert on Studley Park Ray Herbert knows of nothing in its history to account for the gruesome find. However, Ray - who says he has never experienced anything spooky in the house despite visiting it at 'all hours of the day and night' - was able to reveal more about its haunted reputation.

'Kids have said they've walked past the house and seen a lady looking out the window,' he said. 'When the fire brigade was called to investigate a report of lights being on, they checked the mains and found they were switched off.'

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## GHOSTS



**PHOTO PHANTOM:** While at a friend's birthday party David Finch took a photograph at the Red Lion pub which is situated along Blackburn Road in Wheelton, Lancashire.

He said: "I don't believe in the afterlife and all that but I can't explain the picture. It's done the rounds in the village, and everyone has come out with a story." A local senior psychology lecturer believes it may be due to double exposure or a smudged finger print, although the *Paranormal* team (who are usually fairly cautious about ghost photos) feel this one looks too 'good' for that explanation. But judge for yourself: the photograph can be viewed at [www.paranormalmagazine.co.uk/news](http://www.paranormalmagazine.co.uk/news) (Source: *Lancashire Evening Post* 3rd December 2009).

**ANGELS AND THE DEAD:** Kylie Homes from Cambridgeshire believes that her three children, Jade 11, Amber 9, and Leo 5, talk to angels and dead people. They claim to remember past lives, and even draw sketches of the beings that they converse with. While on holiday in Ireland a picture taken of them on the Giants Causeway shows them, according to Kylie, "surrounded by a radiant white light". Kylie says: "It's just a manifestation of the energy of the three children themselves, combined with that of the place itself." Kylie's husband is sceptical, and Chris French, head of the Anomalistic Psychology Research Unit of Goldsmiths College at the University of London says: "Most children have vivid imaginations and enjoy fantasy play and that's a perfectly healthy part of growing up." (Source: *KRGV News* 4th December 2009).

**THE SITWELLS:** Situated in the East Yorkshire town of Scarborough and now known as the Woodend Creative Workspace, Sitwell House is said to be haunted by members of the famous literary Sitwell family who once owned it. A recent "live ghost hunt" was said to have provided proof that the establishment is haunted. Andrew Clay, centre director of Woodend, said: "They are all friendly ghosts. We have seen very strange things in the past and someone once took a picture of a face in the window. We were told some are visiting ghosts while the others are permanent." (Source: *Scarborough Evening News* 18th December 2009).

**HAUNTED HOTEL:** First built in 1640, destroyed by the Jacobites, once owned by the man who ordered the slaying of the McDonalds in Glencoe, and set in the majestic surroundings of Loch Linnie and Loch Leven, this building has a long and troubled history. Guests and staff alike are reporting paranormal goings-on from the hotel today. Incidents include ghostly foot falls from empty corridors, the ghost of a little boy who has been photographed, an old lady in grey, piano music and even sleep paralysis. Now staff members Jim Morrison and his fiancé Heather MacLeod have started their own paranormal research group in the hope of getting to the bottom of the strange occurrences. (Source: *Lochaber News* 30th December 2009).

**JAILHOUSE SHOCKS:** Built in the 1750s on a "busy" execution site and now owned by historian and ghost hunter Richard Felix, the jail is reported as being a "hotbed of paranormal activity." Mr Felix says he was once "confronted by a grey haze in the shape of man, who glided straight past him before disappearing at the end of a corridor." Doors open and close of their own accord, and many people report feelings of nausea, so much so that they have to leave the premises. People have also felt themselves being strangled and the apparitions of two men hanging from beams have been noted on several occasions. The most frightening apparition of all is a bald man who wears a leather apron. (Source: *Sunday Mercury* 3rd January 2009).

**FARM IN FEAR:** Donna Santos, of Connecticut, called in the Northwest Connecticut Paranormal Society to help make sense of incidents on her farm. Frightened horses were often moved from one locked barn to another, the cat's bowl of milk was often moved, dogs barked at invisible beings. The whole family became very uncomfortable living there. Mrs Santos said: "I did not move the horses. My husband did not move the horses our children did not move the horses. The horses could not unlock themselves and move on their own, something had to move them." State Troopers spent the night on the farm on one occasion, they saw nothing, yet still the horses had been moved right under their noses. (Source: *The Register* 6th December 2009).

**COP 'FREAKED OUT':** San Francisco Police officer Eric Borghesani initially set out to debunk the alleged haunting at the Hayward Mansion, but now he is a believer. He saw something out of the corner of his eye, took a photograph and caught on camera what he believes is a ghost, of what he says was a "disembodied dress-shape hovering in the right side of the photo". EVP experiments in the building have resulted in many 'spirit' recordings with phrases such as "Step ... back!" "Get ... out!" "Just let them know ... dad!" Borghesani said: "It totally freaked me out." (Source: <http://www.insidebayarea.com> 13th December 2009).

**ATTENTION SEEKERS:** Desk clerk Kirsten Kuykendall at the Hotel Monte Vista in Flagstaff, Arizona, believes the majority of ghosts seen in the premises are just after attention. "Whatever is here is trapped and bored," Kuykendall said. "They just want to be acknowledged." Many of the occurrences take place in a room in which two prostitutes were murdered in back in the days when the area was the red light district. (Source: <http://www.jackcentral.com> News 16th December 2009).

**TEXAS DEMONS:** A woman in Texas fled her home in terror, claiming demons forced her out. She reports seeing shadows and ghostly voices and that her daughter talked to the spirit of a girl who called herself Beth who said she was demonic. The unidentified woman brought in a ghost hunter and the Channel 5 news team to try and help with the situation. The family of four ended up sleeping in the same room, being too scared

to stay alone. The owners of the leased property explained that they had never experienced anything bad in the house, suspecting that the story is made up to get out of the lease. Property manager Kay Kerr said, "a lease is a lease". (Source: *KRGV News* 17th December 2009).

## UFOS



**WINGED THINGS:** Winkleigh, Devon; the witness reports: "I went inside and told my wife that there was a strange light in the sky. We both went outside and there were now three lights lying about 300-yards astern of each other all on exactly the same course. I watched them fly in silence towards the east. Then there was a fourth. It took exactly the same course and flew over the farm in silence and was gone. If I was to describe them they were like brilliantly lit up stars with wings, almost like hang gliders. But they were not; they didn't circle or soar, they kept to a rigid course and in my humble opinion these were UFOs." (Source: *The North Devon Gazette* 10th December 2009).

**ORANGE LIGHTS:** About 20 orange lights were seen by witnesses over Cardiff on 31st December, 2009. One witness said: "There was a procession of them one after the other about 20 travelling about 300 mph 1000 feet from east to west approx: following the M4 corridor along the South Wales coast. No sounds or flashing lights so most definitely not aircraft and impossible to be Chinese lanterns! Many other people I spoke to today said they saw them and we got it on video and photos. I think I saw the underside of one which flew close by and it appeared flat and circular but I'm not sure." (Source: [worldufos.blogspot.com](http://worldufos.blogspot.com) 1st January 2009).

**DELTA FLIGHT 106:** On the 27th December three bright red lights in a triangular formation were spotted by a passenger over the North Atlantic Ocean 800km West of Glasgow, at approx 02.00hrs at a height of approx 60,000 - 80,000ft. The witness continues: "I was awake on the transatlantic flight; I looked out the window at the stars, and noticed three bright red lights overhead in the one- to two-o'clock position in the sky. Thinking this was a reflection of cabin lights, I cupped my hands over my eyes to block out any reflecting light. The lights were bright and clear overhead, so I then immediately thought these were outside lights. It was like seeing bright blinking lights on the ground - but in reverse. The blinking lights were above and we were flying below, moving more and more out of view." (Source: *MUFON Early January 2009*).

**BACK ROADS:** On the 5th of January a witness reports strange aerial activity on the Dalry to Ardrossan road in Ayrshire, Scotland. The witness said: "I noticed a bright pulsating light in the distance. At the left of my vehicle at what appeared to be about approx 100 feet in the air was a very bright stationary light. I stopped the car and the light moved towards me, it was triangular shaped, and completely solid. It had a large red pulsating red light

on the top, and was about half the size of a football pitch." After coming even closer and blocking the witnesses mobile phone signal the object flew off. Incidentally Big Cats in Britain have received several reports of livestock mutilations from this very same stretch of road. (Source: [www.uk-ufo.co.uk](http://www.uk-ufo.co.uk) 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009).

**BRIGHT OVAL LIGHT:** A witness in Oldham reports: "A mate frantically knocked on my door, when I answered he told me to come outside as he had just seen a strange light moving swiftly across the sky. By the time I put my footwear on and joined him outside I could see nothing. We stood around for a few minutes, joking, then to my amazement, an intense bright orange oval light appeared overhead and travelled in a smooth, but quick direction from west to south, where it eventually disappeared from sight. I had time to get a good look at the object, and it was eerie to say the least. (Source: [www.uk-ufo.co.uk](http://www.uk-ufo.co.uk) 6<sup>th</sup> January 2009).

**SKY SPIRAL:** A spectacular light show over Norway led some experts to believe that "an entirely new astral phenomenon" had been discovered. The lights could be seen from hundreds of miles away. Theories ranged from a misfired Russian missile, meteor, new strain of the Northern Lights, black holes to alien activity. Totto Eriksen, from Tromso, is one of the thousands of witnesses, he reports: "I was driving my daughter to school when this light spun and exploded in the sky. It looked like a rocket that spun around and around - and then went diagonally across the heavens. It looked like the moon was coming over the mountain but then turned into something totally different. People just stopped and stared on the pier - it was like something from a Hollywood movie." (Source: *The Sun* 9<sup>th</sup> December 2009).

**UFO LANDING:** A UFO landing was reported to have taken place on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December in the Barstow area of California. It apparently had "landed on one of the major highways and was surrounded by a team of black cars". A witness said: "The police and black cars arranged themselves so that their headlights were facing outward, making it difficult for people to see what was happening. One witness took photographs but they came out blurred with no details. Locals say that a large military plane arrived to take the UFO to a nearby military base. It is not stated where the large military plane landed. (Source: *Phantoms & Monsters* 15<sup>th</sup> December 2009).

**SKINNY INVADERS:** During December witnesses at a garden party in Monahans, Texas, believed that a plane crashed after seeing lights go down. Then all the dogs in the area "went bonkers," shortly after they saw "two strange men" which they describe as 4ft in height, skinny, with large heads and long skinny arms that reached down to their knees. They were picking objects up from the ground when they suddenly noticed the witnesses watching. "Their eyes were large, almost like the eyes of a praying mantis, except they were jet back and wrapped around its head." The entities then turned and left the area. (Source: *MUFON* 12<sup>th</sup> December 2009).

**CAUGHT ON CAMERA:** OVNIs were caught on camera over Santiago in Chile during late December. In the early days of January an

unidentified object was filmed over California which seemed to be emitting flares and having a tail like a comet. Two videos of unidentified objects were taken over Peru in December, the first showing a security guard and a police officer observing a bright light in the sky. The second was taken over a beach which triggered security lights. A triangle UFO was photographed over fire trucks attending the scene of an accident in Portsmouth New Jersey, USA. A vehicle had crashed into a pole, the reason why is not clear. (Source: *Phantoms & Monsters* and *MUFON* Early January 2009).



## CREATURES

**ALBINOS:** Harmonising with the whiteout weather, several albino animal specimens have turned up in the UK over the last few of months. A rare albino magpie was spotted flying around the grounds of Dover Castle in Kent. Even though a lone magpie is supposed to bring bad luck, it has not deterred the twitches flocking to the area to catch a glimpse of the animal. Brian Hopper waited two weeks before he finally got a clear picture of the bird. An albino hedgehog was photographed in Caia Park, Wrexham, by Karla Dawson. She said: "We saw him crawling across the car park and someone said, 'It's a rat!' But when we had a closer look we realised it was a hedgehog." A white blackbird was snapped in Tiverton, Devon, in early December, by Victor Garland, who said: "I've never seen one like it before but I think it must be living in the church garden - it's part of its territory." (Source: *Daily Telegraph* October, *The leader Live* December, *Mid Devon Gazette*, December 2009).

**BIG CAT UK:** A witness announced: "I saw a large very black 'cat' in broad daylight, (6/1/10) on the outskirts of Tur Langton in Leicestershire. It moved stealthily like a cat into a ditch and disappeared into a hedge. The one thing I really noticed was its long cat-like (cheetah-like-shaped) tail. It was not a dog, and no native British wild animal could be anything like what I saw. I didn't even see the head and it was gone in a flash. (Source: *Nigel Spencer* <http://www.bigcats.org.uk> 6<sup>th</sup> January 2010).

**BIGFOOT TRAIL-CAM:** Tim Kedrowski was taken aback when he saw an image he had caught on a trail camera in an undisclosed location in Minnesota. Tim said: "To us, it's very hard because we lean toward the sceptical type. It could be a bear to a hunter in a fuzzy suit." Don Sherman of the Minnesota Bigfoot Research Team believes it may be a genuine Bigfoot, others say it is a man in a suit. Meanwhile a Greek man hunting wild boar while dressed in goat skins was shot dead outside of the Greek town of Nemea, Chalkidiki. He had been mistaken for a wild animal. Bigfoot hoaxers beware! (Source: [www.bemidjipioneer.com](http://www.bemidjipioneer.com) *The Telegraph* 9<sup>th</sup> December 2009).

**TERROR IN NAMIBIA:** Terrified villagers from Okaku in the Oshana region of Namibia are on the hunt for a creature(s) they believe is linked to witchcraft that is slaughtering their livestock. None of the villagers have seen the beasts but they believe they know who is responsible for its existence. Massive prints have been found and followed to a

nearby property but a police search found nothing. The prints were unidentifiable by the Nature Conservation in Ondangwa. "The giant dog-like creatures" have attacked a 16-year-old boy, and one woman suffered a breakdown after all her livestock had been eaten. (Source: [www.informante.web.na](http://www.informante.web.na) 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009).

**MARYLAND CRITTER:** An unusual cryptid was spotted by a male witness on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December near Grantsville, Maryland USA. He reports: "I slowed down when I saw an animal digging in trash. I'd say about 4 ft tall and about 80 lbs. It was dark gray in color with long straight, coarse hair. Then it turned and stared at me with its large eyes set forward on its face that appeared bright red in the headlight. The paws were very unusual, almost like human hands with long fingers. It acted surprised that I was there but remained motionless staring back at me. The face was shaped a lot like a large rat but had a flat face. I didn't notice a tail." (Source: *Phantoms & Monsters* 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009).

**TEXAN TIGER:** Police and wildlife officials in Brazoria County, Texas, are searching for a Bengal Tiger seen along the Buc-ee's at FM 523 and Highway 332, near the town of Oyster Creek. The animal has been "spotted by scores of local residents," although there are no official records of anyone in the area owning a tiger. Police officer Byron Rexes said: "I was sitting in my patrol car on the side of the road and a guy drove up beside me and told me he saw him. The man told Rexses he was fishing with his buddies on the north end of Oyster Creek, about a mile from the first sighting when they spotted a large animal on the banks. They thought it was a cougar, they shined the spotlight on it and it ran away." (Source: [www.khou.com](http://www.khou.com) 20<sup>th</sup> December 2009).

**DEMON CAT OR CHUPACABRA:** The carcass of a cat has been found by hunters in San Carlos, Arizona. It looks like a domestic cat "but with several noticeable differences." According to local news it has "elongated fangs and possible wings," causing some to say it is the fabled Chupacabra. It is further described as "saber-toothed" because its incisor teeth are elongated into fangs, the front limbs of the creature are also longer than an ordinary cat's legs and appear to have an extra joint giving the appearance of large feet. View the pictures at [paranormalmagazine.co.uk/news](http://paranormalmagazine.co.uk/news). (Source: *The Morning Star* 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009).

**NEW ZEALAND PANTHER:** David Wightman has set traps in the Mid-Canterbury area of New Zealand because he is determined to prove that panthers exist there. Recent reports of a jet-black animal bigger than a domestic cat and usually spotted slinking along on its belly, have spurred him into action. He plans to use a live goat, presented in such a way that the panther will not be able to harm it. (Source: *The Sunday Star Times* December 13<sup>th</sup> 2009).

Sightings  
is compiled  
by MARK FRASER  
of the research  
organization  
Big Cats in Britain  
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**EYE OPENER SPECIAL**

# Poltergeists



**JANET BORD, author and co-director of the Fortean Picture Library, selects images from some of the world's most intriguing poltergeist cases.**

Poltergeists have always been with us. There are recorded cases as far back as AD 530, and from all parts of the world. The sheer quantity of cases on record, and the time-span, indicate that this is a genuinely mysterious phenomenon – one that remains inexplicable despite much investigation.

The German word *Poltergeist* means literally 'noisy spirit', and that describes its behaviour very well. Among its manifestations are banging noises, things being thrown around, furniture being piled up, and also more destructive behaviour such as attacking people and lighting fires. It can express itself in other quieter ways, such as hiding things or writing messages. ●

# Poltergeists

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© Guy Lyon Playfair/Fortean Picture Library

The poltergeist is seen as a mischievous spirit because that is what the behaviour suggests: a disembodied spirit that enjoys upsetting people. Just as there is no real evidence that ghosts are the spirits of the dead, so too it cannot be proved that poltergeists are discarnate entities. However, it is clear that many poltergeist activities do not follow the rules laid down by science.

Objects move without being touched, sometimes slowly through the air. Solid objects have apparently passed through other solid objects. Spontaneous fires occur, water appears from nowhere, and so on.

It is possible that these paranormal events are triggered

by powers and energies we have not yet recognised, but which everyone has the potential to use.

### The Rosenheim case

For a few months beginning in November 1967, inexplicable events took place in a solicitor's office in Rosenheim in Bavaria, Germany. Light bulbs exploded, neon lights would go out and were found to have been unscrewed, fuses blew, bangs were heard, and the telephones went haywire with large bills being received.

Technical investigations of the power supply and telephone failed to solve the mystery. Professor of Parapsychology Dr Hans Bender was called in, and he noted that the phenomena happened when a new



Lyon Playfair/Fortean Picture Library

girl, Anne-Marie Schneider, was present. (The photograph shows her in 1982, 15 years afterwards.)

As the girl walked down the corridor, electric lights hanging from the ceiling would begin to swing, an event which was captured on video (see photograph), and glass from exploding bulbs flew towards her. In her presence paintings on the walls would swing, filing cabinets would move and their drawers would shoot out – but all activity ceased when she was away from the office.

**'It is clear many poltergeist activities do not follow the rules laid down by science. It is possible [they] are triggered by powers and energies we have not yet recognized.'**





© Guy Lyon Playfair/Fortean Picture Library



© Dr Elmar R. Gruber/Fortean Picture Library



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### Poltergeists in Brazil

During the early 1970s, paranormal investigator Guy Lyon Playfair was living in Brazil, where he investigated numerous poltergeist outbreaks around the city of São Paulo. At Suzano in 1970, spontaneous fires were breaking out, and one witness told Guy she saw a calendar on the wall go up in flames. She even burned herself when she checked if the fire was real! The photograph shows a blanket that was burned.

Furniture was damaged by an invisible slasher at Guarulhos in 1973 (see photograph); and also in 1973, when he was sleeping in a house haunted by a poltergeist at Ipiranga, Guy photographed a stool which fell downstairs into his room. It had been stored on top of a wardrobe in the room above, and had apparently come through a closed door. There was no one in the room but less than a minute later, a drawer of clothes was thrown from the window.

**‘There was no one in the room but less than a minute later, a drawer of clothes was thrown from the window.’**

In 1974, Guy investigated the Carapicuíba poltergeist event, in which stones were thrown, breaking a tile on the roof only minutes before the photograph of Guy was taken.

### The Mulhouse events

During 1977-81, a house in Mulhouse, France, was the focus of unexpected events: a young couple and their four-year-old son were experiencing poltergeist phenomena that included knockings at the windows, the sounds of crying babies and animals, a table ‘dancing’, bedclothes pulled off the bed, and abrupt temperature changes.

A physicist who was intrigued by the events installed a chart-recorder to continuously monitor

the temperature, but the resulting lines on the print-out (see photograph) were not continuous, as they should have been, but broken and horizontal.

Parapsychologist Dr Hans Bender was called in and he discovered that the phenomena often centred on young mother Carla. She was physically attacked – pinched, scratched, and cut – and ‘cold hands’ tried to strangle her. The investigators felt that the phenomena were due to some powerful force which focused on Carla.

The photograph shows her holding an automatic drawing of her son which was one of many she produced, her style changing with time as if the act of drawing had become an outlet

# Poltergeists



© Adam Hart-Davis/Fortean Picture Library



© Paul Cropper/Fortean Picture Library



© Paul Cropper/Fortean Picture Library



© Guy Lyon Playfair/Fortean Picture Library

**‘She was physically attacked – pinched, scratched, and cut – and ‘cold hands’ tried to strangle her.’**



© Tony Healy/Fortean Picture Library

for her psychic energies. Dr Bender organised glass-tilting sessions to try and contact Carla’s subconscious; he is shown recording the results.

Eventually the couple decided to leave the house and escape from all the unwelcome attention, and as they packed, a neighbour informed them that the previous owner had experienced ‘unexplained knockings and the mysterious opening and closing of doors’, and that she had recently died.

### Stone-throwing polts

Showers of stones are often thrown in poltergeist cases and, despite strenuous efforts, their source can never be found. A particularly interesting occurrence began around 1979 and continued for several years in the Ward End area of Birmingham. Five houses in Thornton Road were the focus of the attacks, being regularly bombarded with large stones. The residents had to board up their windows and erect mesh screens.

The stones were similar to ones found in the gardens, but they had no soil or fingerprints on them, as if they had been washed.

The police spent months investigating the case, with constables spending cold nights huddled in sleeping-bags in the gardens, but no perpetrator was ever caught, even though the police could hear the stones arriving. The photograph shows several stones placed on a police map of the area.

The famous Enfield poltergeist outbreak of 1977 also involved pieces of stone being thrown into the house, in the presence of investigator Maurice Grosse who found that three pieces fitted together exactly, as shown in the photograph. The smallest piece arrived in the house several hours after the others.

### Outbreak in Humpty Doo

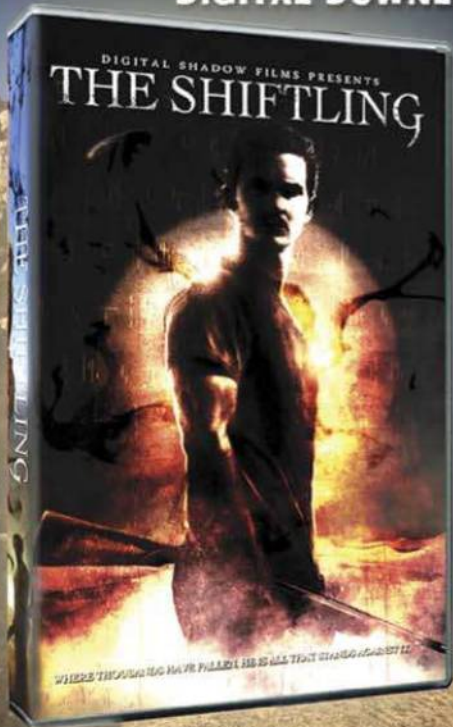
A house in the settlement of Humpty Doo in Australia’s Northern Territory was the focus

of inexplicable events in 1998. Showers of pebbles were seen to fall inside and outside, sometimes appearing to materialise in a room. Other objects also materialised: one of the photographs shows investigator Paul Cropper holding a cartridge which fell on his leg. Objects which fell were placed in a drawer: they would disappear and later fall again.

Messages said to be from a friend who had been killed in an accident were scrawled on the walls and floors – the photograph shows a resident cleaning the word ‘Die’ off the wall. The other photograph shows Jill Summerville in her bedroom, just after the poltergeist has trashed it.

Psychic researchers Paul Cropper and Tony Healy who stayed at the house witnessed numerous strange events and were convinced the phenomena were genuine, but a television film crew that filmed on site for 24 days were only able to capture three events actually happening. ●

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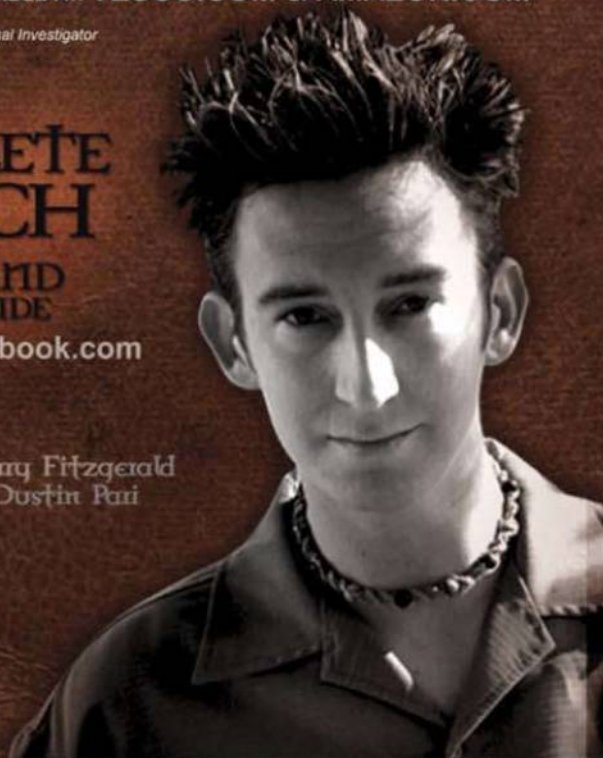
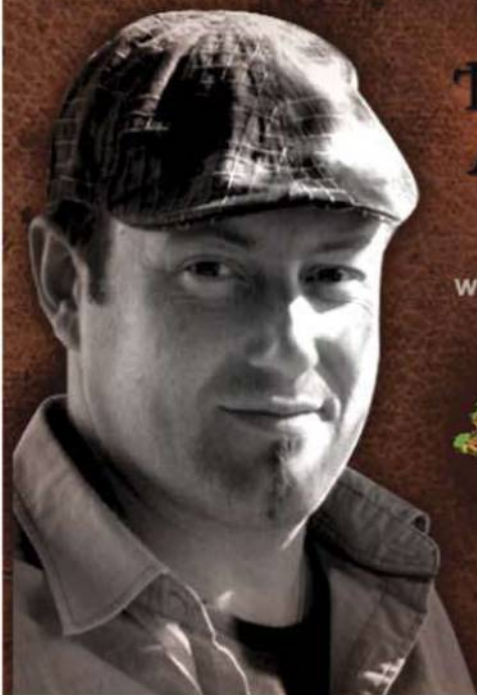
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# BOGEYMAN OR SPACEMAN?

## The legend of Spring-heeled Jack

This year sees the publication of the first detailed, fully-referenced study of perhaps the most enduring of all Victorian legends. Folklorist **DAVID CLARKE**, who has contributed to *Spring-heeled Jack: Sources and Interpretation* (edited by Mike Dash), examines the origins of the mystery and recent claims that Jack was really a UFO-naut.

**THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY** SAYS Spring-heeled Jack is a name 'given to a person who from his great activity in running or jumping, especially in order to rob or frighten people, was supposed to have springs in the heels of his boots'. The term originated in the winter of 1837-38 when 'Spring-heeled Jack' was identified by *The Times* as the mysterious bugbear responsible for a series of vicious nocturnal assaults upon individuals, mainly women, in parts of northwest London.

Descriptions of Jack's appearance varied (see separate panel on page 23): sometimes he appeared in animal form as a bull or bear, on other occasions he wore a suit of armour. He employed metal claws or talons to rip at the clothes of his victims but his most obvious characteristic was his ability to make good his escape through tremendous leaps and bounds, popularly attributed to springs concealed in his boots.

Later in Victorian England Spring-heeled Jack became a generic street name for a host of robbers and footpads who leapt on their victims and made good their escape by speed and agility. A number of 19th century newspaper accounts of court proceedings include examples of named individuals, 'known as a Spring-heeled Jack' in their

localities, who were prosecuted for a variety of assaults, burglaries and anti-social behaviour.<sup>1</sup>

By the end of that century, 'Spring-heeled Jack' was firmly established in the nomenclature of frightening figures in English

**'THE MELTING POT OF POPULAR LITERATURE, LEGEND AND FOLK BELIEF PRODUCED AN ARCHETYPAL FIGURE: PART BOGEYMAN, PART GHOST, PART MYSTERY ASSAILANT.'**

folklore. The urban terror generated by his activities predated the murders of Jack the Ripper by half a century. In folklore the two shared a number of characteristics and the fear of one appears to have been absorbed into the legend of the other. Indeed, one of the letters sent to the Metropolitan Police during the original Ripper investigation of 1888-89 was signed 'Spring Heel

Jack: The Whitechapel Murderer'.

For the lower classes of Victorian England, Spring-heeled Jack was perceived not as a human being but as a ghost or devil figure whose modus operandi echoed the existing supernatural folklore familiar to most of his victims. By the early 20th century his name was frequently invoked as a frightening figure used to pacify unruly children. Indeed, my own grandparents recalled being warned in their childhood in Sheffield to behave 'or Spring-heeled Jack would fetch them'.

An alternative tradition, popular among the educated, literate upper classes, attributed the London terror of 1837-38 to the rakish activities of a notorious nobleman, Lord Henry de la Poer Beresford, the 3rd Marquis of Waterford. Waterford and a small group of aristocratic friends were notorious for a series of unpleasant and vicious pranks that were widely chronicled in the newspapers of the day. These included practical joking that occasionally resulted in savage beatings of random pedestrians.

Waterford was killed in a riding accident in 1859 and within a decade of his death he was named by several sources, including the author of the influential *Brewer's Handbook*, as the original perpetrator of the Spring-heeled Jack scare in London. From that point onwards, this ●



theory has been published as fact in a number of popular 20th century accounts of the legend, including the single full-length book on the topic, published in 1977 by Peter Haining (*The Legend and Bizarre Crimes of Spring-heeled Jack*). Nevertheless, although there are some circumstantial facts that place Waterford in London during

precursor, perhaps, of comic-book superheroes such as Batman.

The melting pot of popular literature, legend and folk belief produced, by the late 19th and early 20th century, an archetypal figure: part bogeyman, part ghost, part mystery assailant. By the time of the First World War those with a direct memory of Jack's exploits during the

Victorian period were few and he was largely forgotten about until 1948 when ghost-hunter Elliot O'Donnell devoted a chapter to the bogeyman in his book *Haunted Britain*.<sup>2</sup>

Haining's account triggered off what would become the most radical metamorphosis of the Spring-heeled Jack legend. From the 1950s a new generation of authors, sometimes sincere but occasionally dishonest, helped to transform Jack from a nebulous Victorian ghost into a visitor from outer space. From 1950 reports of, and belief in, flying saucers, or UFOs as they became known, spread to Europe and attracted an enthusiastic following.<sup>3</sup> In Britain, writers such as Harold T. Wilkins and Desmond Leslie, co-author with George Adamski of the best-selling *Flying Saucers Have Landed*<sup>4</sup> began searching archives for evidence of visits to the Earth in prehistoric and ancient times, not only by alien craft but also by their occupants.

influential example of the latter was the character portrayed in the Penny Dreadfuls, whose popularity reached its height in the mid-19th century. As their name suggests, these publications were cheap illustrated serials containing lurid and sensational crime fiction. They were widely read by a newly literate working class, particularly young men, from the 1830s until the first decade of the 20th century.

Characters named Spring-heeled Jack appear in several Penny Dreadful serials between 1860 and 1904. Here he was portrayed not as a ghost or demon but as a vengeful anti-hero, often a wronged aristocrat, whose demonic appearance was complemented by a costume that included spring-heeled boots, horns and bat-like wings – a direct

**'HE EMPLOYED METAL CLAWS OR TALONS TO RIP AT THE CLOTHES OF HIS VICTIMS [AND] MADE GOOD HIS ESCAPE THROUGH TREMENDOUS LEAPS AND BOUNDS.'**

the winter of 1837-38, there is no convincing evidence to support the allegation that he was responsible for the assaults attributed to Spring-heeled Jack.

Yet another incarnation of Spring-heeled Jack was portrayed both in dramatic theatrical productions and popular 'pulp' literature. The most prominent and

The first person to link Spring-heeled Jack and the modern UFO mystery was the British character actor Valentine Dyall who presented the BBC Radio horror series *Appointment with Fear* between 1941 and 1953.

In 1954 Dyall wrote an article for *Everybody's* magazine that was instrumental in transforming Spring-heeled Jack into a supernatural creature more suited to 20th century science fiction.<sup>5</sup>

He asked readers: "Today we are still without a likely answer to the question: who – or what – was the fabulous,

ubiquitous creature that terrorised a huge section of the British public for nearly sixty years? One thing is certain – he was no ordinary mortal. It is significant that

“A BEING,  
REARED ON A  
PLANET WHERE  
GRAVITY WAS  
FAR GREATER  
THAN ON EARTH  
WOULD BE  
ABLE TO LEAP  
COLOSSAL  
DISTANCES ON  
THIS PLANET.”

A “SPRING-HEELED JACK.”—For the last fortnight some excitement has been caused at Clewer, near Windsor, by the rumoured appearance of a “Spring-heeled Jack.” Timid women and children living in the district have been afraid to venture from their homes after dark in consequence of the pranks accredited to this mysterious individual. About two o'clock on Saturday morning a Windsor police-constable, while walking down Thames-street, was startled by some one springing on his back. He fell and rolled in the mud, and on rising attempted to secure his assailant, who proved to be a tall, athletic young man, about six feet high, residing in a village near the Royal Borough. The man escaped for the moment, but after being chased up and down the streets of the town, was eventually captured by the police and carried to Mr. Superintendent Hayes. The delinquent remained in custody at the police-station till about eleven o'clock the same morning, when he was released after a caution by the Magistrate before whom he was taken.

# Spring-heeled Jack: The Reign of Terror

**DECEMBER 1837: LONDON:** "...some scoundrel, disguised in a bear-skin, and wearing spring shoes, has been seen jumping to and fro before foot passengers in the neighbourhood of Lewisham, and has in one or two instances greatly alarmed females. This feat, it is said, is to decide a wager; he having undertaken to play off these freaks for a number of nights in nine different parishes without being apprehended...he has been named 'Steel Jack' by the inhabitants...many of whom are afraid to heave their houses after dark" (*Morning Chronicle*, 28 December 1837).

**WINTER 1837-38: OUTSKIRTS OF LONDON:** Various descriptions: "in the shape of a white bull" (Barnes Common), "in the form of a white bear" (East Sheen), "dressed in polished steel armour" (Isleworth), "clad in a bear's skin, which upon being drawn aside, exhibited a human body in a suit of mail, and with a long horn, the emblem of the king of hell himself" (Peckham), "in the form of an immense baboon six feet high with enormous eyes" (Hammersmith), "in the shape of a lamplighter walking on his hands, and carrying his ladder between his feet, on which was suspended a lantern" (Hackney).

**JANUARY 1838:** Contents of an anonymous letter addressed to the Lord Mayor of London, Sir John Cowan, read at The Mansion House: "It appears that some individuals (of, as the writer believes, the higher ranks of life) have laid a wager that a mischievous and foolhardy companion (name as yet unknown), that he durst not take upon the task of visiting many of the villages near London in three disguises – a ghost, a bear and a devil; and moreover, that he will not dare to enter gentlemen's gardens for the purpose of alarming the inmates of the house. The wager has, however, been accepted, and the unmanly villain has succeeded in depriving seven ladies of their senses." (*The Times*, 9 January 1838).

**FEBRUARY 1838: BOW, LONDON:** newspaper account of the attack upon Jane Alsop, 18, in Bearbinder Lane: "...at about a quarter to 9 o'clock...she heard a violent ringing at the gate in front of the house, and on going to the door to see what was the matter she saw a man standing outside...the person [said] that he was a policeman, and said: 'For God's sake, bring me a light, for we have caught Spring-heeled Jack here in the lane.' She returned into the house and brought a candle, and handed it to the person, who appeared enveloped in a large cloak, and who she at first really believed to be a policeman. The instant she had done so, however, he threw off his outer garment, and applying the lighted candle to his breast, presented a most hideous and frightful appearance, and vomited forth a quantity of blue and white flames from his mouth, and his eyes resembled red balls of fire. From the hasty glance which her fright enabled her to get of his person, she observed that he wore a large helmet, and his dress, which appeared to fit him very tight, seemed to her to resemble white oil skin. Without uttering a sentence, he darted at her, and catching her partly by her dress and the back part of her neck, placed her head under one of his arms, and commenced tearing her gown with his claws, which she was certain were of some metallic substance." (*The Times*, 22 February 1838).

**JANUARY 1838: LONDON:** "In consequence of the above ridiculous stories, a reporter...adopted every means for obtaining information on the subject, and personally visited many of the places above-mentioned, where he found that, although the stories were in everybody's mouth, no person who had actually seen the ghost could be found. He was directed to many persons who were named as having been injured by this alleged ghost, but, on his speaking to them, they immediately denied all knowledge of it, but directed him to other persons whom they had heard, had been ill-treated, but with them he met with no better success; and the police of the T division, who extend as far as Brentford End, declare that, although they have made every enquiry into the matter, they cannot find one individual hardy enough to assert a personal knowledge of the subject." (*Morning Herald*, 10 January 1838).

**1845 BRENTFORD:** butcher Richard Adams charged with 'having frightened a number of women... personating Spring-heeled Jack dressed in a 'gown, shawl and other disguises' (*Manchester Guardian* 12 February 1845)

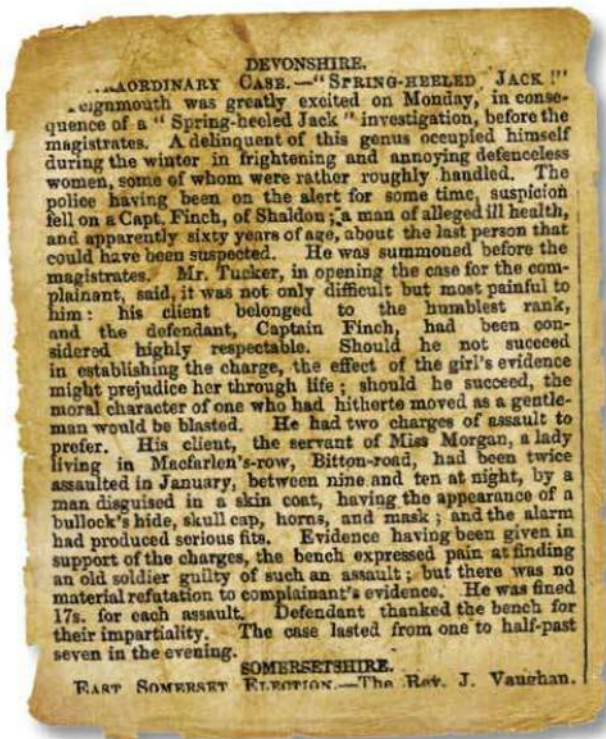
**1847 DEVONSHIRE:** Captain Finch convicted of sexual attacks on servant girls disguised as Spring-heeled Jack in 'a skin coat, having the appearance of a bullock's hide, skull cap, horns and mask' (*London Daily News*, 29 March 1847)

**1853 LEWISHAM:** William Turner – well known by the name of Spring-heeled Jack' – charged with highway robbery (*Reynolds News*, 16 January 1853)

**1869 SUNDERLAND:** George Gorman convicted of burglary: 'entering houses in so mysterious a manner and making his exist so rapidly as to earn himself the sobriquet of 'Spring-heeled Jack.' (*Newcastle Courant*, 5 November 1869)

**1872 (NOVEMBER 17). *The News of the World:*** "The exploits of Spring Heeled Jack are still remembered as having frightened London half out of its wits. The miscreant made night hideous by his tricks – leaping over hedges to the terror of lonely pedestrians, waylaying females, scaring children, and even rendering the drivers in charge of the mails helpless with terror. The suburbs of London were in a far different state forty years ago, when all this happened, to what they are now, and it can easily be imagined how great was the consternation thus occasioned among those residing in them. People were afraid to venture out after nightfall. Stories of the wildest and most extravagant nature got into the newspapers and formed the staple of conversation. By many Spring Heeled Jack was believed to be a veritable demon; others declared him to be a nobleman in disguise who took delight in his cruel sport; while the majority were in favour of his being a vulgar footpad, who first terrified those whom he subsequently plundered. Thus, while some credited him with horns and eyes of flame, an opposite set of eye-witnesses were in favour of a mask and whitened face; and society was divided between believers in hoofs, and those who asserted, with hardly less folly, that the extraordinary leaps in which he indulged were effected by means of springs in his boots, powerful enough, some said, to carry him over houses!"

**EXTRACTED FROM *Spring-heeled Jack:*** Sources & Interpretation, edited by Mike Dash, published in 2010. For more information see [www.mikedash.com](http://www.mikedash.com) and [www.dr-david-clarke.co.uk](http://www.dr-david-clarke.co.uk)



**NOTORIETY:** 'Springheeled Jack' became a nickname for any person performing outrages, especially against women. This 19th century news report from Devon presents the name being attached to a Captain Finch who attempted to molest women while disguised in a mask and 'skin coat' complete with horns. From the author's collection.

a high proportion of those who saw him were convinced that he was not of this world, but either a spirit or a visitor from some distant planet... it is pointless to scoff at this theory unless we can produce a sound, natural one to take its place.<sup>6</sup>

In response, *Everybody's* published a letter from Inman Race from Sheffield, who had an ingenious answer to Dyall's question. Evidently, Spring-heeled Jack was a spaceman marooned on Earth. This solution struck a chord with a generation mesmerised by

The ideas of Dyall and Race were developed to their logical conclusion seven years later by the London-based magazine *Flying Saucer Review*, at that time the world's leading UFO journal. In their spring 1961 issue FSR published an article credited to one 'J. Vyner' with the title 'The Mystery of Springheeled Jack'. Vyner presented an eccentric and muddled summary of the legend that lacked a single primary reference to his source material. His theory, clearly borrowed from Inman Race, portrayed Jack as an alien marooned on Earth. The various assaults that occurred during the winter of 1837-38 and their eventual focus on one small area of northwest London, according to Vyner, suggested that Jack was desperately trying to locate a 'safe house' or a friendly 'agent' who could help him locate his misplaced flying saucer.

In his article Vyner introduced a number of new details about Jack's costume and appearance that cannot be identified in the original 19th century newspaper accounts (see panel). Some of these were sourced from Dyall's account, while others



magnetic effects, he reminded readers, are commonly reported 'by those who have ventured too near grounded saucers.'<sup>9</sup> The editor of the new study, *Spring-heeled Jack: Sources and Interpretation*, Mike Dash, has described Vyner's article as 'possibly the most influential contributions ever made to the legend'. He notes how 'the author's inaccurate summary of Jack's appearance and abilities has influenced almost every subsequent writer on the subject, either directly or as a result of the incorporation of the description into later books'.<sup>10</sup>

It was significant that Vyner's article was published at a time when the idea of alien – or extra-dimensional – visitors was about to become an established part of the burgeoning occult counter culture. To proponents of this new branch of UFOlogy, Spring-heeled Jack and UFO occupants were regarded not as extra-terrestrials but as 'ultra-terrestrials', creatures

**ROMANTIC FIGURE:** Springheeled Jack, or versions of him, turned up in several 'Penny Dreadfuls' of the period in which he was portrayed not as a villain but rather as a precursor to today's superheroes. Illustration from the author's collection.



## 'SPRING-HEELLED JACK THE SPACEMAN WAS A POWERFUL IDEA THAT COULD NOT, IN THE LIGHT OF THE INCREASINGLY BIZARRE NATURE OF THE UNFOLDING UFO PHENOMENON, BE EASILY DISMISSED.'

the developing space race, the flying saucer mystery and the possibility of return visits from other worlds.

Race wrote: 'The downward thrust need to allow any spring to hurl a grown man many feet could never be obtained. But a Being, reared on a planet where gravity was far greater than on earth would be able to leap colossal distances on THIS planet.'

He added: 'I suggest that the alleged monster was a visitant from Space who had been marooned. His birth on a greater gravity planet would enable him to live longer on Earth, and perform all the feats attributed to the oddity.'<sup>7</sup>

appear to have been a product of Vyner's own imagination. According to Vyner Spring-heeled Jack wore 'a tall, metallic-seeming helmet' and 'close-fitting garments of some glittering material' (one original account refers to this as 'white oilskin'). He also had 'a lamp strapped to his chest', a 'prominent nose' and 'ears...cropped or pointed like those of an animal'.<sup>8</sup>

In his article Vyner claimed Jack's victims being stunned by 'Jack's weird blue flame' that he equates with a type of 'stupefying gas' linked with 'a magnetic effect transmitted along a beam of polarised light from Jack's mysterious lantern'. Weird





Illustration © Jonathan Edwards / www.jonathan-e.com

during 1966-67. The cover illustration of John Keel's book on the West Virginia events, *The Mothman Prophecies*, featured a winged, demonic figure with glowing red eyes.<sup>12</sup>

Roger Sandell, in an article published by *Flying Saucer Review* in 1971 made further links between Jack's appearance and accounts of close encounters with UFO occupants. Sandell commented that: 'Had these reports appeared in the press today it is possible that the creature would have been described as a "man from outer space". The helmet and oilskin garment may well have been described as a "spacesuit". Even the luminescence and the incredible jumping ability can be paralleled in many modern reports.'<sup>13</sup>

Spring-heeled Jack the spaceman was a powerful idea that could not, in the light of the increasingly bizarre nature of the

unfolding UFO phenomenon, be easily dismissed. Even Peter Haining, author of *The Legend and Bizarre Crimes of Spring-heeled Jack*, a book which sought to identify the original bogeyman who terrorised London in 1837-38 as the Marquis of Waterford, was unable to ignore

visiting our world from other dimensions.

One influential contribution to literature of this 'new UFOlogy' arrived with the publication in 1969 of Jacques Vallee's *Passport to Magonia*, a book whose subtitle linked 'folklore to flying saucers'.<sup>11</sup> Vallee repeated Vyner's reference to Jack's lantern and ray gun. For good measure, Jack's Batman-like behaviour encouraged Vallee to make further links with other stories of winged creatures and 'flying men' recorded in the UFO literature including the Mothman reported by numerous eye-witnesses in West Virginia

the spaceman hypothesis. Haining opined that 'at first sight [this] might seem a totally absurd suggestion', but went on to devote a whole chapter of his book to rehashing Vyner's ideas.<sup>14</sup>

Vyner and Haining's largely unreferenced distortions of primary, secondary and imaginary source material have been copied and re-copied largely uncritically by writers

**'VYNER CLAIMED JACK'S VICTIMS [WERE] STUNNED BY A TYPE OF "STUPEFYING GAS" LINKED WITH "A MAGNETIC EFFECT TRANSMITTED ALONG A BEAM OF POLARISED LIGHT".'**

in the field of Fortean, UFOlogy and even crypto-zoology who have re-fashioned the image of Spring-heeled Jack for a new audience in a new century. The exotic, space age re-invention of his appearance and modus operandi would not have been recognised by many of his 19th century victims.

It is evident that some imaginative authors, following in the footsteps of the 19th century penny-a-liners who preceded them, are reviving old legends for new purposes and in the process creating news ones for an entirely different audience. Spring-heeled Jack is simply too good a story for them to let go. ❁



**Dr David Clarke** is best known for his work as a ufologist, including his success in convincing the British MoD to declassify its UFO files, but he has written or co-written many books on various aspects of supernatural belief and tradition. A former journalist and public relations professional, he has a PhD in Folklore and teaches journalism at Sheffield Hallam University. He writes for a variety of magazines and is a regular contributor to radio and TV documentaries.

<sup>1</sup> For examples see my paper 'The Folklore of Spring-heeled Jack' in Mike Dash (editor), *Spring-heeled Jack: sources and interpretation*, forthcoming 2010.

<sup>2</sup> O'Donnell, Elliot (1948). *Haunted Britain*. London.

<sup>3</sup> Clarke, David and Roberts, Andy (2007). *Flying Saucers: A Social History of UFOlogy*. Loughborough.

<sup>4</sup> Leslie, Desmond and Adamski, George (1953). *Flying Saucers Have Landed*. London: Werner Laurie.

<sup>5</sup> Dyall, Valentine. Spring-heeled Jack - the leaping terror. *Everybody's*, 20 February 1954.

<sup>6</sup> Dyall, op. cit.

<sup>7</sup> *Everybody's*, 6 March 1954.

<sup>8</sup> Vyner, J. The Mystery of Springheel Jack (1961). *FSR* 7/3, 3.

<sup>9</sup> Vyner, op. cit. 5

<sup>10</sup> Dash, M (1996). Spring-Heeled Jack: To Victorian bugaboo from Suburban Ghost. *Fortean Studies* 3, 29.

<sup>11</sup> Vallee, Jacques (1970). *Passport to Magonia: from folklore to flying saucers*. Neville Spearman.

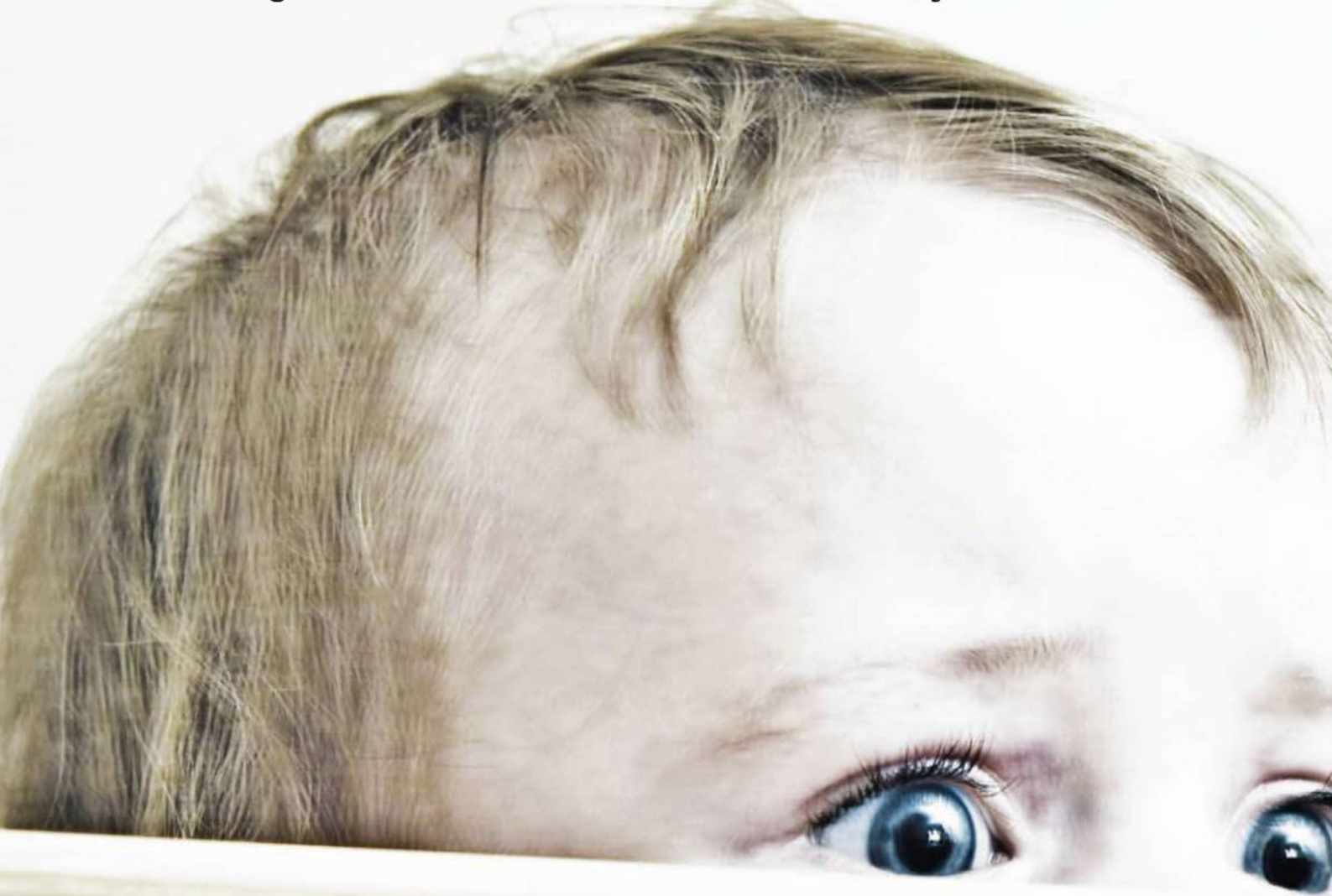
<sup>12</sup> Keel, John (1975). *The Mothman Prophecies*. New York - a similar illustration appeared on later paperback editions published in the UK.

<sup>13</sup> Sandell, Roger (1971). 'Spring heel Jack: Victorian humanoid?' *FSR* 17/1, 22-24.

<sup>14</sup> Haining, 140-153.

# THE HARRIS HAUNTING

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**STEVE MERA** reveals another previously unpublished report carried out by Manchester's Association of Paranormal Investigation & Training. This frightening haunting not only manifested as apparitions and poltergeist activity but also had a malign influence on the health of a vulnerable baby and his father.





**ORDINARY HOME:** The lounge in the Harris's family home. Their modern house might not seem the typical scene for a haunting but the investigators experienced several strange things in this room alone, including the sighting of an apparition. © Steve Mera

IN NOVEMBER 1996 Chris and Lisa Harris were filled with excitement at the prospect of moving into their newly built house in the north of England. They settled in quickly with their two children, Gemma, 5, and baby Adam and started to prepare for Christmas. The only thorn was that they seemed to be losing personal items constantly.

Lisa agreed with Chris when he said that losing things was not unusual after a move, but it was infuriating. Christmas was almost upon them and they had wrapped the children's presents, except for one which appeared to be missing. They searched the house for the large musical mirror they had bought for Gemma. It was nowhere to be found and it was too late to buy another. They presumed it must have been left behind in the shop, even though Lisa distinctly remembered putting it with the other presents in their wardrobe.

At around this time 10-month-old Adam started to suffer from what appeared to be severe nocturnal asthma attacks. He would be found gasping for breath, almost turning blue. He appeared to be terrified. The local hospital carried out some tests and they ruled out asthma as the cause. Further examinations were scheduled.

Shortly after Christmas, Chris went to take a towel from the airing cupboard and

found to his surprise the missing musical mirror lying on top of the towels. This posed a real mystery, as both he and Lisa had visited the airing cupboard countless times before. They told a friend what had happened and he suggested they might have a ghost. The couple laughed but privately Lisa thought it could be the answer after all, as objects were still going missing.

One morning Lisa came back from the shops to find a potted plant

had been 'thrown' across the room. Framed family photographs were face down and there was a very strange smell in the air. At first she thought she may have disturbed a burglar but nothing seemed to be missing and the doors and windows were secure. They lost no time in fitting an alarm, however.

Adam still continued with his night terrors, and by January 1997 his parents received an appointment for some time in May to see a heart specialist. The only medical possibility left to explore was a hole in the heart.

Adam wasn't the only member of the family suffering poor health. Chris had become so depressed that he didn't want to get out of bed or even speak to anyone.

He couldn't explain why he felt this way and it began to cause friction between the couple.

One night after work, Lisa went for a well-deserved soak in the bath. As usual she left the door slightly ajar and settled into the warm water. She began to read a novel, as she often did when she had time to herself. Then she noticed Chris's hand on the door, so she told him to come in, thinking he had brought her a cup of tea.

When he didn't do so, she craned her neck and was horrified to see a strange man standing just outside the door. Lisa let out a terrified scream and the stranger simply vanished before her eyes. On a future occasion, the apparition was seen again, this time by a friend of Lisa's. She was so upset she had to be taken home, and vowed never to enter their house again.

The activity in the house became more intense. Objects moved of their own volition, the television set would switch on by itself and jewellery went missing. An inexplicable chill began to manifest

## 'LISA WAS HORRIFIED TO SEE A STRANGE MAN STANDING JUST OUTSIDE THE DOOR. SHE LET OUT A SCREAM AND THE STRANGER SIMPLY VANISHED BEFORE HER EYES.'



**NASTY SURPRISE:** Lisa Harris returned home one day to find the house in disarray and this pot plant thrown onto the floor. The house was locked and there was no sign of a burglar. © Steve Mera

**TARGETED:** A frightened baby became the focus of 'the Harris haunting'. (Picture posed by a model).



**NOW YOU SEE THEM:** While the three investigators were sitting just yards away from them these three coasters were found to have vanished virtually under their noses. They were found to have moved into the kitchen.  
© Steve Mera

in the downstairs toilet and in Adam's bedroom, even with the central heating on. Lisa saw the 'Man' several more times.

One afternoon the family arrived home from a trip out, when Gemma called out: 'Daddy, there's a Master in your bedroom.' Chris ran up to investigate, but there was nobody there. The couple were puzzled by their daughter's use of the word 'Master': it was not a word she would normally use to describe someone.

Chris and Lisa decided they needed help and got in touch with MAPIT on April 13, 1997. We conducted an interview with the Harrises two days later. The couple recalled all the events and then showed us around the house. The thermostat which controlled the central heating was set at 22°C and the house was rather warm, with the exception of Adam's room and the downstairs toilet. In these

readings yet the two rooms that had previously registered temperatures of 11-12°C now showed a normal 19°C despite the thermostat being now set lower.

The Harrises had sent their children to stay with a relative, so the investigators wouldn't be disturbed and could thoroughly investigate any of the rooms if necessary. Photographs of all rooms were taken at random and video cameras were set up in Adam's bedroom and another in the lounge. A number of trigger objects were also set, including a number of fridge magnets placed in a certain order on the fridge door. This procedure is sometimes undertaken in hope of coaxing some type of phenomenon to rearrange them.

The first occurrence took place when Lisa made coffee. She placed three coasters on a small table in the lounge. The remaining three coasters were put back on the side of the television unit. Lisa then went back to the kitchen and brought in her own coffee. She walked over to the television unit and reached for a coaster herself, then paused, confused. The remaining three coasters had gone.

Investigators had been sitting in the lounge at the time but no one had seen anything unusual. They remembered the remaining coasters being put back on the side of the television unit, but did not see them disappear. It was at this time investigators realised that the video camera was pointing down the lounge to the kitchen doorway and not at the opposite side of the room where this incident had happened.

## **'SHE DESCRIBED A MAN DRESSED IN WHAT LOOKED LIKE 1940S CLOTHING. HE WAS GREY IN COLOUR ... AND HIS BODY WAS 2-DIMENSIONAL, FLAT AGAINST THE WALL.'**

rooms the temperature registered as 11-12°C, despite the fact that the radiators were very hot.

MAPIT decided to carry out an overnight investigation at the property on April 27 in the hope of recording some of the anomalies the couple described. After setting up the equipment conducting baseline tests, investigators were unable to locate any unusual electromagnetic fluctuations, negative ions nor unusual microwave energy. The magnetometer obtained no unusual

In frustration, they set it up in a different location, this time near the kitchen doorway pointing to the television unit and the investigators themselves. About 20 minutes later Lisa took the empty coffee mugs back into the kitchen. No sooner had she taken a few steps into the kitchen, when she shouted out, 'Here they are!' The three remaining coasters were now sitting on the worktop next to the cooker.

At 2.21am, the investigators were all chatting quietly in the lounge

when one of them, Clair, said she could hear something in the kitchen. Everyone looked towards the kitchen door and heard an odd scraping sound that lasted only a few seconds. On investigation, nothing unusual was found.

At 2.24am Alicia (another investigator) looked over at Chris and froze. She seemed transfixed and looked rather pale. Clair shook Alicia's arm. Alicia took a deep breath and said: 'Didn't you see that? There was a man stood by the side of Chris's chair.'

No one had seen the man except Alicia. She could not understand why she was the only one to see the apparition. She asked several times: 'Are you joking? You must have seen it.'

She seemed a little upset as she described a man dressed in what looked like 1940s clothing. He was grey in colour, with a grey suit on and stood around six feet tall. His face was in profile and seemed to have no chin, which gave him the appearance of an imbecile. He also appeared to be without hands or legs and his body was 2-dimensional, ie flat against the wall.

Alicia went on to say: 'I noticed changes in myself as I was perceiving this event, such as an absence of sound. As I viewed the scene it occurred to me that the background seemed to rush away as the focus became clearer. The apparition remained there for around 30 seconds and appeared to move further into the wall and faded away. At that point I felt Clair tug on my arm.'

Clair explained she had tugged on Alicia's arm because she could hear a man's voice coming from the kitchen. Clair had looked around the lounge and noted that no one was reacting to this voice except perhaps Alicia, who was staring at the wall. Clair got a bit scared and had grabbed Alicia's arm. Clair said it was definitely the voice of a man who seemed to be in conversation but she could not remember what was being said.

It suddenly dawned on Alicia that the video camera was pointing the right way for the mike to have picked up any noises coming from the kitchen as well as capturing the investigators on camera as they sat on the settee. After a rather long debate over what had happened, the Harrises retired to bed around

## 'THE TAPE RECORDER RECORDED THE INVESTIGATORS DISCUSSING WHERE THE MUSIC WAS COMING FROM, BUT NO SOUND OF MUSIC COULD BE HEARD. VERY ODD.'

4am and the investigators sat in silence for about an hour.

At 5am another baseline test was carried out with no unusual findings. However, just as the investigators had finished and sat back down, they suddenly heard music that seemed to be coming from upstairs, although they had just been upstairs and knew no television or radio was on. The investigators stood at the bottom of the stairs listening to music emanating from one of the bedrooms. As they were just about to head up the staircase, the music abruptly stopped. They checked all three bedrooms but could find nothing to account for the music. No lights were seen at either of the neighbouring houses: the investigators were sure the music had been coming from one of the bedrooms. They left the Harrises at 8.30am.

The following day, MAPIT went through the audio and video tapes. The audio tape recorder on the upstairs landing recorded the investigators discussing where the music was coming from, but no sound of music could be heard. Very odd. The video tape had captured Alicia staring at the lounge wall and Clair looking over at the kitchen in shock. This must have been the time when Alicia claimed to see the apparition and Clair heard the voice coming from the kitchen. No sound was heard coming from the kitchen on the video tape and the angle did not take in

where the apparition was seen, only Alicia's reaction.

When MAPIT next contacted Lisa she asked us if any of the team had moved the bedding in Adam's bedroom; she'd found it removed from the cot bed and piled up on the floor. The investigators hadn't touched it, of course. Lisa also said that she had noticed that four of her own fridge magnets were missing but Clair was sure she had only packed our own into a bag. The bag was checked and this was confirmed: none of Lisa's magnets had been packed accidentally. Another mystery.

The photographs taken during the investigation were developed but only 31 exposures came out all right. The rest were completely black. Frustrating! So many reported incidents yet no evidence whatsoever...

The odd temperatures in the back bedroom and downstairs toilet remain a mystery. As for

Alicia and Clair's experience, they both are amazed that no one else either heard the voice in the kitchen or saw the tall man in the lounge. They both seemed a little shaken up by this.


Investigation of continued phenomena carried on until 1998 when incidents suddenly ceased. The family last reported everything as normal: no unusual sounds, or missing items and no more sightings of the 'man'. Not only that but Adam's undiagnosed illness cleared up and so did Chris's depression. Like in so many other cases, the disturbances simply stopped.

However, some years later, in 2001, MAPIT came across some interesting information. Census, death register and police incident reports revealed the death of a Mr Liams, through suicide, in April 1949 at a house where, according to the land registry office, was where the Harrises' home now stood. Police reports showed that Mr Liams was handicapped and was often seen talking to himself. These details seemed to tally with Alicia's impressions of the apparition she had seen. ☹



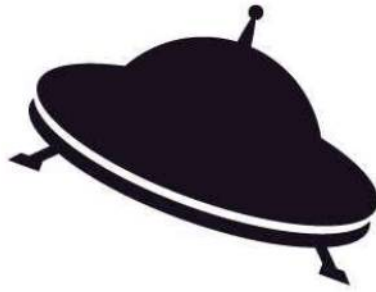
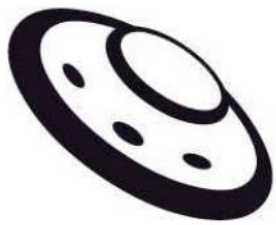
**Steve Mera** is the chairman of MAPIT, Manchester's Association of Paranormal Investigation & Training ([www.MAPIT.kk5.org](http://www.MAPIT.kk5.org)), which was established in 1974. He is also the founder of SEP, the Scientific Establishment of Parapsychology, and has been involved in the scientific study and investigation of anomalous phenomena for around 24 years. He currently lectures and tutors on the British Investigators Training Course.

Thanks to **Alicia Leigh, Dave Tierney and Clair Aitken** for their contributions to this article.



**RECORDING:** Video cameras were the important bits of kit the MAPIT team brought with them to the Harris's house. By luck one camera was pointing in the direction where one of the team believes she saw an apparition.

**FRUSTRATION:** As is so often the case with paranormal investigations the technology lets down the researchers, possibly because of some unknown force associated with the haunting itself. In the Harris case very few of the exposures taken on the stills cameras came out - the team were disappointed to find strip after strip of blank film.



# The UK UFO debate

Last month we highlighted in Paranormal News the Ministry of Defence's decision to close its UFO reports desk after nearly 60 years of service. Coming so soon after one of its busiest years, young ufologist **RICHARD THOMAS** found this puzzling, so he got in touch with three of the biggest guns in British ufology - **NICK POPE**, **TIMOTHY GOOD** and **NICK REDFERN** - to find out their views on the British Government's current attitude to the UFO enigma.

I LIVE IN SOUTH WALES so I was particularly excited by the incident which kicked off an enormous increase in interest in UFOs in Britain, and many more sightings subsequently being reported to the now defunct UFO desk at the MoD.

On June 8, 2008, a police helicopter was apparently forced to swerve sharply to avoid being hit by what the experienced crew termed an 'unusual aircraft' near RAF St Athan, a military base near Cardiff. A few weeks later, another dramatic sighting was reported, this time by a member of the military. A soldier, along with three other witnesses, saw several 'craft' spinning in the skies above his barracks near

Market Drayton, Shropshire, just two hours before the South Wales UFO-helicopter incident - begging the question, could the sightings have been related?

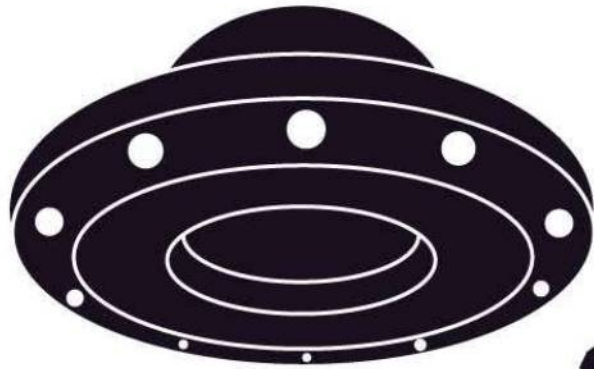
It would be hard to overstate the excitement generated, not just in UFO circles, but in the general public and press, by these incidents. The UFO phenomenon was the hot topic of the day and even the official statements regarding Chinese lanterns failed to stem a tide of new sightings reported by the British public to the press and the MoD. This wave lasted throughout 2008, with *The Sun* newspaper creating its own online UFO page to cope with the correspondence, and it only began to wane during the latter half of 2009.

Despite this renewed interest and calls for official inquiries from the likes of Nick Pope, who ran its UFO desk for three years (1991-1994), the MoD has decided to take no more calls from the public

- which might confirm in some people's mind that there really is a cover-up going on.

So, in order to get a handle of what's going on here, I tracked down the 'three lions' of British ufology: the aforementioned former MoD UFO investigator Nick Pope; prolific author and contributor to *Paranormal Magazine* Nick Redfern; and the master of UFO cover-up research and author of the 'UFO Bible' *Above Top Secret*, Timothy Good.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Nick Pope was the most outspoken of the three. But he dismissed the idea of



Timothy Good

a possible conspiracy. He feels sure nothing more sinister than economic factors and the perceived proper use of resources are to blame.

He said: 'Two factors led to the termination of the MoD's UFO project. The first is cost. The defence budget is under huge pressure and savings targets have been imposed across the department. Cutting posts is one way to meet these targets and the UFO project was an easy target for MoD finance staff. The second factor is the MoD's corporate irritation with the subject.

'Sighting reports are at a ten-year high and the vast majority are clearly misidentifications of

ordinary objects and phenomena. Additionally, the MoD receives more Freedom Of Information requests on UFOs than almost any other subject. Terminating the project, when seen in conjunction with the ongoing process of releasing the UFO files to the National Archives, enables the MoD to disengage from a subject that it has struggled with for many years.'

Nick Redfern added: 'The MoD's statement that it intends to cease its study of UFO reports is not quite so clear-cut as it seems. By the MoD's own admission it will continue to investigate - via radar and the scrambling of aircraft - any penetrations of British airspace by unidentified sources. And, who knows if some of those potential threats might remain unresolved and unidentified? If they do indeed remain unresolved and unidentified, then by definition the MoD is still investigating UFOs. ●

**Timothy Good** first became interested in the UFO subject back in 1955, when his passion for aviation and space led him to read a book by Major Donald Keyhoe describing UFO sightings by qualified observers such as military and civilian pilots. In 1961, after reading a book by Captain Edward Ruppelt, a US Air Force intelligence officer, he began to conduct his own research. Since then, he has amassed a wealth of evidence, including several thousand declassified intelligence documents. Good has written numerous best-selling books on the subject, most notably *Above Top*

**'Closing the MoD's UFO project won't make the slightest difference. Most witnesses don't bother contacting the MoD anyway, and classified investigations by the military will continue as before.'**

*Secret* which many consider the definitive book on UFOs. His most recent book *Need to Know: UFOs, the Military and Intelligence* was published in paperback in 2007.



'I suspect, however, the MoD clearly realizes this, and its statement actually means that officialdom doesn't want to be bothered by members of the public sending in letters or phoning the MoD switchboard to report sightings of flying saucers, little grey (or green) men, etc etc anymore, and this is their way of getting out of handling a subject that they really don't understand - or have any interest in understanding or appreciating.'

Timothy Good shares this view. He told me: 'Closing the MoD's UFO project won't make the slightest difference. Most witnesses don't bother contacting the MoD anyway, and classified investigations by the military will continue as before.'

Nick Pope agreed that the closure of the project doesn't signal the end of UFO investigations but he feels that it's an ill considered decision nonetheless.

'Clearly, if a pilot reports a sighting or if something unusual is detected on radar, this will be looked at,' he said. 'But this will be

done on an ad hoc basis, outside of any formally-constituted project. Arguably, therefore, all that's really happened is that the public has been cut out.

'I think this is a mistake, because it's based on the erroneous assumption that a sighting from a member of the public could never involve anything of defence interest.'

Perhaps Chinese lanterns are to blame - they seem to account for most of the recent sightings. But was I wrong to feel that the incident with the helicopter was of defence interest? What do the Three Lions think of the rash of sightings over the last two years?

'The Welsh case is interesting,' confirmed Nick Redfern, 'but I think on examination many of the others were simply lanterns. That's not me being a sceptic. Rather, while I believe there is indeed a genuine unsolved UFO presence among us, the fact is that most cases can be explained. And I put much of the recent UK wave in the second category.'

Nick Pope, who you'll remember called for a public inquiry into UFOs in 2008, feels more strongly.

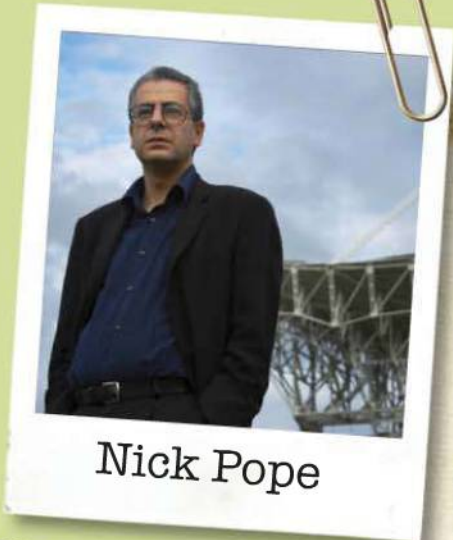
'My call for a public inquiry was not the result of a single sighting, but a response to the

wave of sightings over the UK that summer, coupled with unprecedented media and public interest,' he said. 'Some sightings have clearly been caused by Chinese lanterns, but the MoD appear to be using this as an excuse not to investigate. It would be simple to ensure that witnesses are interviewed, photos and videos analysed and radar tapes checked, yet these basic things are not happening. This is why we still need an inquiry. Whatever one believes about UFOs, cases such as the incident involving the police helicopter show that there are air safety issues involved.'

One might be tempted to think that the former MoD investigator, who has always steadfastly maintained in interviews that he doesn't believe his former employers are involved in any sort of UFO cover-up, is now hinting that the government's real Men in Black might be using lantern sightings as an excuse not to investigate potentially much more serious sightings, such as the Cardiff UFO-helicopter incident. Conspiracy theorists might conclude that the Shropshire sightings - which were reported by military witnesses - could have even been an attempt to distract the public from, and ultimately discredit, the Cardiff event.

Nick Pope immediately poured cold water on that suggestion. He said: 'I never got any indication that there was any clandestine UFO group operating in the UK, having access to material that was somehow being withheld from me and my colleagues in the Defence Intelligence Staff.'

Nick Redfern, on the other hand, discussed the possibility of an ultra-covert British UFO group - which he named MJ-UK - in his 1997 book

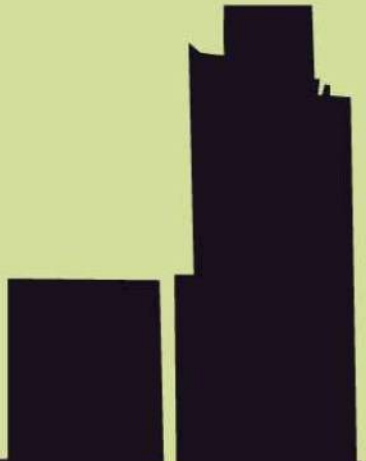


Nick Pope

**Nick Pope** used to run the British Government's UFO project at the Ministry of Defence. Initially sceptical, his research and investigation into the UFO phenomenon and access to classified Government files on the subject soon convinced

**'Some sightings have clearly been caused by Chinese lanterns, but the MoD appears to be using this as an excuse not to investigate.'**

him that the phenomenon raised important defence and national security issues, especially when the witnesses were military pilots or where UFOs were tracked on radar.







*Cosmic Crashes.* In his book Redfern devoted a chapter to the strange rumours of alien technology being stored and studied at RAF Rudloe Manor, a Royal Air Force station located south-east of Bath and which closed in 2000.

'The whole Rudloe-UFO saga has been a puzzle,' he told me. 'There's no doubt that the RAF's Provost & Security Services (who were based at Rudloe for two decades) have played a role in official UFO investigations. There are even a few declassified files available at the National Archive, Kew. But the big question is the extent, or otherwise, of those investigations.'

'Some researchers have suggested – particularly Matthew Williams in the mid-to-late 90s – that Rudloe's role went far beyond that officially admitted by the MoD. Others merely see it as a minor aspect of official UFO investigations that got blown up out of proportion by the UFO research community. I still get accounts now and again from people talking about how, at one point at least, Rudloe was involved at a far deeper level. But I will concede that actually proving this has not happened yet.'

In relation to the possibility of an 'MJ-UK' organisation, Timothy Good told me he believes that: 'Probably an equivalent team was set up, but I have no specifics. The top-secret Flying Saucer Working Party (1950-51) would qualify in many respects.'

Then he added an intriguing implication:

'Whatever the case,' he said, 'the UK is subservient to the US regarding these matters.'

If a UFO crash has taken place in the UK, providing RAF Rusloe with its alleged alien technology, it didn't happen on Nick Pope's watch.

He told me: 'I believe that as the Subject Matter Expert, I would have been told [about a crash]. I would

Originally from England, **Nick Redfern** now lives in Texas. He is a full-time author and journalist specialising in a wide range of unsolved mysteries, including UFOs, alien contact, Bigfoot, the Loch Ness Monster, government conspiracies and paranormal phenomena. Redfern's interest in UFOs was prompted by his father, who worked on radar with the RAF, and who was personally aware of several UFO encounters



Nick Redfern

**'There are stories of elements of the British Government and military supposedly examining [a UFO] - and crew - at some point prior to 1955.'**

investigated by the British Government in the 1950s. His latest book *Science Fiction Secrets: From Government Files and the Paranormal*, was published in 2009.

then have briefed up the chain of command to Service Chiefs and Defence Ministers. A key priority would have been to bring in MoD scientists to ensure there was no biological or chemical hazard.'

Redfern is intrigued by stories of UFO crashes taking place in Britain during World War 2.

'There have been rumours for many years of an alleged UFO crash – or Foo Fighter crash – in Britain at some point during the Second World War,' he said. 'Unfortunately, the details are very brief and no-one has really been able to pinpoint with any real accuracy what exactly happened, where and when. However, there are stories of elements of the British Government and military supposedly examining such a device – and crew – at some point prior to 1955.'

Timothy Good believes official UFO cover-ups began even earlier than World War 2, however, and not in Britain but elsewhere in Europe. 'The UFO cover-up seems to have begun in 1933 with the top-secret RS/33 group in Mussolini's fascist Italy,' he said. 'Other

governments – that of Sweden in particular – also became concerned about intrusions of strange flying machines that year.

'Unfortunately we don't have an actual description of the type of unknown aircraft which came down in Italy. I think it possible that a UFO did crash, but I have no definitive information on that particular case. However, the RS/33 documents – which include descriptions of unexplained craft seen by pilots in 1936 – are evidently genuine.'

Whether or not a policy of UFO cover-ups exists, the conclusion regarding the closure of the British Ministry of Defence's UFO desk is that it really won't make that much difference. Investigations will continue as before but only those that are more clandestine. The tragedy is that the British public will be left without any official channels to investigate their sightings.

Without the UFO desk the British people won't even enjoy the dubious courtesy of being told that all they've seen are Chinese lanterns. ☹



**Richard Thomas** lives in Swansea, South Wales. Richard grew up watching science fiction shows, including his all-time favourite Doctor Who. As a child this enthusiasm for sci-fi evolved into an interest in space, UFOs and other esoteric subjects. In 2008 Richard began to write a fortnightly column (Richard's Room 101) for Binnall of America (<http://binnallofamerica.com/rr2.6.9.html>). Soon after that, he started writing a Sci-Fi/TV related column for Stuart Miller's Alien Worlds magazine. In 2009, he began to write a spin-off column to Room 101 for BoA, titled 'Sci-Fi Worlds' (<http://binnallofamerica.com/sfw5.15.9.html>) where you can read an interview with the editor of Paranormal Magazine.



# FRIGHT CRAWLER

**KARL SHUKER** explores the supernatural aspects of one of the most notorious and (if real) most dangerous of mystery beasts, the so-called Mongolian Death Worm.

**THE MONGOLIAN DEATH WORM** was first brought to the attention of cryptozoologists as recently as the 1990s, after Czech mysteries investigator Ivan Mackerle, undertook the first of several expeditions to the southern Gobi Desert in search of it. Since then, thanks to claims that it can shoot forth lethal venom and/or electrocute anything that touches it, the death worm swiftly became a crypto-celebrity.

Less well known, however, is that a paranormal nature has also been attributed to this bizarre entity. So, what might the truth be behind the rumours and the very real fear surrounding this monstrous denizen of the dunes?

## **AN UNNATURAL HISTORY OF THE DEATH WORM**

Based upon detailed testimony collected over the years from the nomadic tribespeople who claim to share their desert domain with this much-dreaded creature, the following account provides a succinct overview of the Mongolian death worm, or, as it is known locally, the allghoi khorkhoi - 'intestine worm':

As thick as a man's arm and usually said to measure 1.0-1.6 m long. Bright red in colour, with darker blotches along its length but otherwise smooth, scaleless or fine-scaled, and generally featureless (lacking any discernible eyes or other external sensory organs), often likened to an animate intestine, hence its native name. Some eyewitnesses have stated, however,

**DESERT MYSTERY:** According to locals, a hideous and deadly creature lurks beneath the sand dunes of the Gobi desert. Artist's illustration of the Death Worm was provided by Ivan Mackerle and is from the author's collection.

**SEEKERS:** Dr Jarda Prokopek and Ivan Mackerle photographed during an expedition to the Gobi in search of the Death Worm. © Ivan Mackerle



that it sports long, pointed projections at one or both ends. When approached too closely it is believed that it will rear one end of its body upwards through the sand, inflate itself, then shoot forth a spurt of fluid, which will immediately turn yellow and burn through any flesh it touches. This will often bring about rapid death.

Even worse, however, are widespread claims that merely to touch one of the creatures causes instant death. Indeed, a person need not even touch a death worm directly to die.

During his first expedition, in the summer of 1990, Mackerle was informed by one of his local guides that during his childhood a team of geologists had visited the Gobi, and while there one of them had reputedly died in what remains a mysterious manner. According to Mackerle's guide, one of the team members had been poking the sand by the team's campfire with an iron rod, only to drop abruptly to the ground, dead. When the others ran up to him, the sand where he had been prodding the rod began to heave, and out from beneath it emerged a very large wriggling worm.

As the man had only touched it indirectly, via the metal rod, the conclusion drawn was that the worm must somehow have electrocuted him. This extraordinary claim is backed by

local testimony that entire camel herds have collapsed onto the sands after trampling over a patch of sand concealing a death worm.

Although the death worm spends much of its time hidden beneath the Gobi's desert sands, sometimes during the two hottest months there, June and July, it can supposedly be encountered lying on the surface, especially after a bout of rain. Moreover, it is often said to be found in close association with a yellow-flowered desert shrub known as the saxaul, whose roots are parasitized by a strange cigar-shaped plant called the goyo. Both have been claimed to be poisonous, and some investigators have speculated that these plants may be the source of the death worm's venom (analogous to the South American arrow-poison frogs which derive their skin toxins from small arthropods they consume).

Conversely, my own researches have revealed that the goyo is definitely *not* poisonous, and I have yet to uncover any confirmation that the saxaul's roots are either, so this remains a moot issue.

#### **THE UNUSUAL SUSPECTS**

Assuming that the Mongolian death worm is a genuine cryptid – as opposed, for instance, to a wholly mythical creature of traditional folklore – what could it be? My book *The Beasts That Hide From Man* (2003), featuring an

artist's reconstruction of the death worm on its cover, contains the most extensive documentation of this mystery beast yet documented in book form, and includes a comprehensive analysis of the various likely – and unlikely – zoological identities on offer, which can be summarised as follows.

Could the death worm, as its name suggests, be a bona fide worm? If so, it would presumably be allied to the annelids or segmented worms, which include the earthworms. There is no doubt that it does superficially resemble a large fat earthworm, some known species of which grow to lengths far in excess of the death worm's reported size.

Also, there are certain species of earthworm that are referred to fittingly as squirts because, when threatened, they squirt forth

**“I STRUGGLED TO ESCAPE BUT MY LEGS WERE HEAVY AND MY BODY WAS WEAK. A HORRIBLE, WORMLIKE BEAST EMERGED FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE DUNE.”**

jets of fluid from various body orifices. However, the earthworm identity is fatally flawed by the water-permeable nature of their outer cuticle, because this would singularly fail to prevent the death worm from drying out in the arid conditions of the Gobi Desert. Also, there are no known venomous or electricity-generating earthworms, which would require major



**PIONEER:** Czech investigator Ivan Mackerle is credited to bringing the Mongolian Death Worm to the attention of cryptozoologists in the West. © Ivan Mackerle



**IN MONGOLIA:** The people of the Gobi desert live in yurt-like homes called gers. Various investigators have found the locals full of information about the mysterious Death Worm but most of the stories seem to date back generations.

**'IT IS BELIEVED THAT IT WILL SHOOT FORTH A SPURT OF FLUID, WHICH WILL IMMEDIATELY TURN YELLOW AND BURN THROUGH ANY FLESH IT TOUCHES.'**

physiological modifications in order to perform such activities.

There is a little-known group of limbless amphibians known as caecilians that are very worm-like outwardly, but as with earthworms they require damp conditions as their skin is not impermeable. Consequently, a giant caecilian is not a practical identity either.

Much more plausible is a giant species of worm-lizard or amphisbaenian – a group of lizard-related but remarkably worm-like reptiles of subterranean nature, rarely spied above the surface except during rainy periods (as with the death worm). Being reptiles, they have an impermeable external

surface, so the hot desert conditions would not be a problem for them.

However, unlike the death worm they are very conspicuously scaly, with a small yet recognisable mouth, and are wholly harmless (but perhaps the worm's death-dealing abilities are themselves wholly fictitious, a product of folklore rather than physiology?). All of the above considerations also apply to suggestions that it may constitute a species of limbless true lizard, allied to the slow worm, glass snake, etc.

More dramatic is the prospect of the death worm being a species of venomous snake, some of which, such as spitting cobras, spray forth their venom in a manner reminiscent of descriptions for the death worm. Alternatively, it might simply be a harmless species like the sand boa, and whose supposed venomous nature is mere superstition.

While crawling through sand its scaly body might even be able to generate a weak electrical current via friction (triboelectricity), which, if true, may in turn have been

exaggerated during generations of retelling in native tradition to yield ultimately the deadly death worm – whose shocking talent would thereby owe far more to fable than to biophysics. Certainly, all of the known species of electricity-generating animal are fishes (most famously the South American electric eel) living in water, which conducts electricity in a far more effective manner than sand would be able to achieve, even if the worm had evolved specialised electric organs analogous to those of these fishes.

In short, if the death worm is real, then a limbless reptile, whether it be an amphisbaenian, legless lizard, or snake, would appear to be the most reasonable explanation, with at least its powers of electrocution mere legend.

But what if the death worm is real, but not in a zoological, corporeal sense? Could it be that this most feared of desert denizens is some form of paranormal entity whose behaviour is not bounded by the basic laws of biology?



**ARTIST'S IMPRESSION:** A representation of the appearance of the Death Worm, based on folklore and alleged witness testimony. © Ivan Mackerle

**'MORE PLAUSIBLE IS A GIANT SPECIES OF AMPHISBAENIAN - A GROUP OF REMARKABLY WORM-LIKE REPTILES OF SUBTERRANEAN NATURE.'**

**THE OCCULT CONNECTION**

Although Ivan Mackerle and others have pursued the death worm on the assumption that it is an unknown species of flesh-and-blood animal, Mackerle in particular readily acknowledges – due to frighteningly personal experience – that this entity has supernatural characteristics. Yet these have attracted far less attention than zoological considerations.

During his first expedition, Mackerle spoke not only to nomadic tribesmen but also to educated monastery-inhabiting lamas and to respected shamans, and all affirmed that the worm was decidedly supernatural, and that those who intruded upon it risked devastation and death. Perhaps the starkest, most dramatic description of its allegedly occult nature was given to him one day by an esteemed shaman who fearfully termed it 'the demon of the desert', comprising a living intestine filled with blood. Not a pleasant image – but one that was to recur in a singularly terrifying manner the very next evening, while Mackerle lay sleeping:

'I dreamt of a large purple sand dune in which a horrible creature stirred,' he wrote. 'I wanted to run away, but I could not. I struggled to turn around and escape but my legs were heavy and my body was weak. A horrible, wormlike beast emerged from the depths of the dune. It suctioned itself to my back like a disgusting leech to a wound. A burst of pain pulled me out of the nightmare and away from

the creature, but the acute pain remained: It was real.'

And that, dream or no dream, was not the only thing that was real. When one of Mackerle's team members, physician Dr Jaroslav Prokopec, examined him to discover the source of the pain, he was horrified to discover that not only was Mackerle's body covered in mysterious swollen bruises, but also, raised upon his back, was a large

**WE'RE OFF TO SEE THE DEATH WORM...**

Back in 1922, a major American Museum of Natural History expedition seeking vertebrate fossils in the Gobi was soberly requested by no less a figure than the Mongolian Premier to do whatever they could to capture a death worm while they were there. As they clearly failed to do so, however, this cryptid swiftly sank back into Western obscurity, until the modern-day expeditions of Mackerle brought it back to attention beyond its Gobi homeland.

Since then, it has been sought by a number of other investigators too. These include an expedition led by English cryptozoological field researcher Adam Davies in 2003, a team sent out by the Centre for Fortean Zoology in 2005, and most recently a two-man expedition led by New Zealand journalist David Farrier in August 2009. Unfortunately, none succeeded even in seeing, let alone capturing, a death worm (a local man informed the CFZ team that on one occasion a killed specimen had been taken away by Russian zoologists, but he did not provide any names or details that could be pursued).

However, a great deal of informative anecdotal evidence has been gathered, and both the Adam Davies-led team and the CFZ team observed and photographed a carving of a supposed death worm (although it sported eyes) on exhibition at the remote Gobi Museum.

Most telling of all, however, is the local testimony gathered by the Farrier expedition, which is currently being incorporated into what promises to be a very revealing and significant documentary. As Farrier mentioned to me during a series of communications following his return to New Zealand, many of the alleged local eyewitnesses interviewed by him are elderly, whose accounts would otherwise have been lost in the not-too-distant future if they had not been recorded.

Moreover, and of especial note, the interviewees claimed that the death worm, although still feared, is now rarely if ever encountered. Some believe that this is due to modern-day nomads travelling more by motorbike than by camel or on foot, whereas others suggest that the worm itself is now a rarity. The latter school of thought thus indicates that if the death worm is truly a real creature, it may now be threatened with extinction... always assuming that it still survives at all.

**SUSPECT:** A creature similar to the rarely seen but humble slow worm has been suggested as an identity for the Death Worm. But such a creature would obviously be scaly with an identifiable head and therefore quite unlike the intestine-like creature of the Gobi.



intestine-shaped sac full of blood!

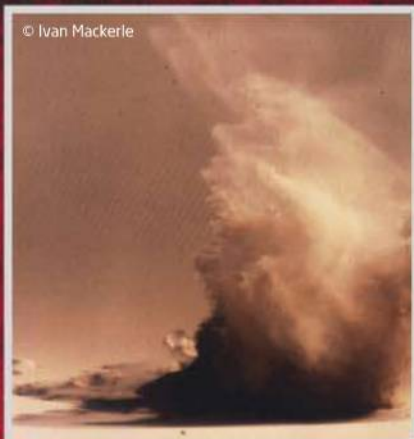
Injections to quell the pain and haematomas had little effect, with more haematomas appearing the next day, followed by the first signs of an impending heart attack. Not surprisingly, Mackerle had no option but to abandon his search for the death worm and return home to recover. Had he succumbed to the curse of the death worm?

Of course, all of this may have been purely coincidental. However, the intestine-shaped haematoma's development upon Mackerle's back within just a day of his being told by a shaman that the death worm was a supernatural entity comprising a blood-filled intestine is startling enough to suggest either a psychosomatic occurrence or a particularly grisly manifestation of sympathetic magic. There may even be a third, still more ingenious – and sinister – explanation, for as Mackerle himself conceded:

'[Perhaps] the Allghoi khorkhoi is a real living animal, but one so



**POISON:** The saxaul is one of the few plants to grow in the most inhospitable areas of the Gobi desert. Some believe the Death Worm collects its venom from eating the roots of this plant – but the author has his doubts on the subject.



© Ivan Mackerle

## OF DUNE AND SAND DUNES

Science-fiction devotees reading about the Mongolian death worm will undoubtedly recall Frank Herbert's celebrated series of *Dune* novels. These were set on a desert planet called Arrakis – home to an enormous species of vibration-sensitive sand worm, which could be 'called' to the surface when the planet's human inhabitants used a vibration-engendering device known as a thumper.

In a classic scenario of transforming science-fiction into science fact, and directly inspired by the *Dune* stories, during his first Gobi expedition Mackerle and his team tested out their very own specially-constructed thumper, but to no effect. During their second Gobi expedition, clearly favouring a more emphatic approach this time, they set off a number of controlled explosions in areas said by the locals to harbour subterranean death worms, in the hope that the massive vibrations elicited by these explosions would stimulate the worms to surface. Sadly, however, their summoning again went unheeded, as no worms appeared.

## 'THE PHYSICIAN WAS HORRIFIED TO DISCOVER THAT RAISED UPON HIS BACK WAS A LARGE INTESTINE-SHAPED SAC FULL OF BLOOD.'

rare that shamans have for ages worshipped it as a deity. These priests might still be bent on magical ritual, sending out negative forces telepathically to anyone who attempts to disrupt the Allghoi khorkhoi's peace by trespassing onto the sacred dunes. Why could there not exist a shaman with the power to make a trespasser like me ill with life-threatening and horrifying symptoms?

There are times when cryptozoology reveals a disturbingly darker side to its nature, as exemplified by the saga of the Mongolian death worm. Certainly, it might well be said – and not for the first time either – that the trail of unknown animals sometimes leads to Hell. ☉



**Karl P N Shuker PhD** is a zoologist and expert in cryptozoology, animal mythology and wildlife anomalies. A scientific fellow of the Zoological Society of London, a fellow of the Royal Entomological Society and a member of the International Society of Cryptozoology, he is the author of more than a dozen books on mysterious phenomena, including *In Search of Prehistoric Survivors*, *The Beasts That Hide From Man* and, most recently, *Dr Shuker's Casebook*. His new website is [www.karlshuker.com](http://www.karlshuker.com)

Another paranormal worm-like creature is presented in Nick Redfern's 'Official Monsters' on page 60.

# TREWARMETT INN

nr Tintagel, North Cornwall

THE  
GOOD FEAR  
GUIDE

Photo © Steven Feather

Along the wild north Cornish coast, just a few miles from magical Tintagel Castle with its connections to the legends of King Arthur, can be found the charming village of Trewarmett. And in the heart of Trewarmett is the 18th century Trewarmett Inn, the perfect base to explore this romantic stretch of country (which also includes the Museum of Witchcraft at nearby Boscastle).

There is much to enjoy at the Trewarmett Inn. There are the sea views; the comfortable rooms and reasonably priced B&B accommodation; the beer garden; children's play area; an excellent restaurant; a warm welcome from the owners Ade and Keri Osbourne and the unbeatable sense of being in a pub that is central to the community, with a lively atmosphere highlighted by regular quiz nights and 'jam' nights where you are welcome to grab an instrument and get up and play.

And then, of course, there are the ghosts. The Trewarmett Inn has recently become something of a hive of spooky activity. This is not one of your pubs with a vague legend about smugglers and the occasional eerie moan coming down the chimney: the

Trewarmett Inn's ghosts are active ghosts.

A phantom black cat has been seen slinking through the bar and a woman with a tragic countenance staring out of a window. A recent investigation carried out by Cornwall Paranormal Organisation (CPO) resulted in a time-slip type vision of 'old farmers sitting at the bar in old-fashioned attire'.

If that were not enough, later on in the night members also claimed to see the ghost of a woman sitting in a rocking chair and a pair of men descending the stairs carrying a coffin! It doesn't get much creepier than that.

Staff have reported finding food and utensils moved around in the kitchen and a medium taking part in the investigation believes these might be down to 'a pair of young children playing hide and seek'.

Ade Osbourne admits to being a sceptic by nature and was at first openly doubtful of the CPO's report. However, on the morning after making a dismissive comment about the ghosts, he found a glass smashed in the bar area, the fragments radiating out from the middle of the floor, well away from where the glasses are kept.

Now he has second thoughts and he and Keri are considering hosting paranormal

research evenings and stop-over weekends for interested parties in the coming months.


If you're really keen to experience something spooky, the Trewarmett Inn may therefore be just the place. If you're 'unlucky' and not frightened out of your wits, you will at least be able to look back on a thoroughly enjoyable stay in a pleasant inn in one of Britain's most magical landscapes.

*The Editor*

## FACTFILE

The Trewarmett Inn, Trewarmett, Tintagel, Cornwall, PL34 0ET.  
Tel: (01840) 770460 / email: mailto:trewarmettinn@btconnect.com / www.trewarmettin.co.uk

- 18th century inn in pretty village
- Well priced B&B accommodation
- Restaurant serving home-cooked meals using local produce
- Beer garden
- Children's play area
- Views of the wild Cornish coast
- Lively bar with regular quiz and jam nights
- Growing roster of ghosts



**OLD HAUNT:** The Harecastle Tunnel in days of yore. Scene of a cruel murder and home of the Kildsgrove Boggart.



# BEWARE OF THE BOGGART

Is it a goblin or is it a ghost? Whatever it is, it's still terrifying the residents of an English town. **MATT HICKS** goes in search of the Kidsgrove Boggart.

IT MAY SOUND LIKE something from a *Harry Potter* spin-off but if reports from a Staffordshire town are to be believed, a boggart is still being encountered to this day.

Kidsgrove is a small town nestled close to the Staffordshire Moorlands. It expanded from a rustic village due to mining and iron smelting industries, creating a landscape which combines rural beauty with the visible dereliction of an industrial past. Said by some to be a folkloric entity akin to a pixie or a fairy and by others to be the echo of a terrible murder committed in the foreboding atmosphere of the canal tunnels, the various manifestations of the Kidsgrove Boggart reflect this landscape.

The Kidsgrove Boggart is one of the most enduring legends in the county, with recorded encounters dating back hundreds of years. They still occur to this day.

## THE LEGEND

The Boggart offers a number of attractions to investigators of the paranormal: shared ground with major folklore topics, links with other strange local reports and, perhaps most fascinating of all, well recorded first-hand reports.

The popular version of the legend repeated today is something of a mishmash involving folk tradition, local hearsay and crime. By his own admission, the version recounted by historian Phillip Leese in his book *The Kidsgrove Boggart and the Black Dog* is a modern interpretation of an oft-told tale. A young woman has arrived in Kidsgrove seeking passage to London, where her husband has gone on ahead to seek work. She eventually finds room

on a barge which sets off along the Trent and Mersey canal and into the darkness of the Harecastle tunnel. The next we hear of the young woman a search party is dragging her headless body from the water.

Since that time, rumours spread that if you walked at night along the lonely lane past the tunnel's entrance you ran the risk of encountering the 'Kitcrew Buggat', as it was then known.

Significantly, both legendary and eyewitness sightings of the boggart vary in their descriptions. It has been described as, among others, a black dog, a headless woman, a woman in white, or simply as a strong sense of being followed or watched. This shape-shifting characteristic matches wider reports of boggarts.

Related to terms such as bogey, bogeyman and the like, the boggart is found in folklore the length and breadth of the British Isles. Trying to pin down any characteristics typical of the boggart is difficult, as its cultural role seems to have changed over time. In some stories, the boggart is a hobgoblin-like mischievous fellow capable of acts we would now attribute to poltergeists, while in others – such as our tale from Kidsgrove – it is altogether more spectral, appearing with either a strong link to a certain area of land or as the result of a terrible deed, or sometimes because of both.

For example, it is said that a stream in Thirsk, Yorkshire, is named 'White-lass-beck' after a girl who was murdered nearby. The entity left behind by the death is a shape-shifter with a number of traits similar to those of the Kidsgrove Boggart, showing that people across



STILL IN RESIDENCE?: The Old Harecastle Tunnel as it is today. Is it still the haunt of the Boggart? © Nathan Fox

**'THE KIDSGROVE BOGGART IS ONE OF THE MOST ENDURING LEGENDS IN THE COUNTY, WITH RECORDED ENCOUNTERS DATING BACK HUNDREDS OF YEARS. THEY STILL OCCUR TO THIS DAY.'**

the country held similar beliefs in the supernatural results of an unnatural death. Furthermore, boggarts such as the one at Kidsgrove are linked to spectral black dogs – a spook often known by the associated word 'barguest'.

## ENCOUNTERS

Crucially, the story of the boggart is not just a great piece of folklore – down the years many witnesses have testified to having strange experiences and encounters in the area long before the murder in the Harecastle tunnel is said to have taken place.

For example, Phillip Leese cites a journal entry from 1816 by preacher Hugh Bourne. Bourne makes a clear reference to the 'Kidcrew Buggat' ☉



**CLOUGH HALL:** The apparition of a headless woman was reported in the grounds of Clough Hall, which has long since been demolished. The same ghost sometimes rode on the boats passing through the Harecastle Tunnel.

**'SHE DESCRIBES "THE SOUND OF SOMETHING HEAVY, CERTAINLY NOT A HUMAN, MOVING VERY DELIBERATELY IN THE UNDERGROWTH TO MY RIGHT".'**

as a creature that makes fearsome noises at the houses of those soon to suffer an accident. Confusingly, he describes the 'buggat' as being both invisible yet also like a half-dressed man running after what appears to be a white dog.

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, local folk have come forward with their own first-hand reports of encounters. In many of these it seems the creature has changed from Bourne's monstrous description into the more familiar ghostly black dog. In the 1920s a Mr James Smith was walking home from working at a colliery when he noticed a large black dog walking by his side. Years later, during World War 2, a councillor heard the sound of a large animal 'panting and running hard', which rushed past him and faded into the distance. Notably, the man in question was not a Kidsgrove native and claimed not to have heard about the stories of the boggart until after his experience.

In the 1980s a local couple were returning home one evening when they heard the sound of a 'heavy animal rushing through the wood'. They were certain it was too large to be a fox or badger, and were so frightened that they headed straight for the police station.

Coming right up to date, a contact of mine had a strikingly similar experience just a few years ago. Walking along Boathorse Road, which follows the route of the Harecastle tunnels beneath it,

she heard what she describes as 'the sound of something heavy, certainly not a human, moving very deliberately in the undergrowth to my right'. This was at dusk, and there was enough light for her to see into the trees, but she could see nothing that would have accounted for the noise.

Local folk have also testified to sightings of the boggart in the form of a woman. A headless apparition was said to appear sitting on the helm of boats travelling through the Harecastle tunnels, and a similar entity has also been sighted on the nearby Clough Hall estate and in Kidsgrove itself, where in the 1930s a young woman saw 'the figure of a lady all in white [with] no discernable features; just clothed

as in a shroud...'. All of these encounters have been blamed on the persistent and nebulous boggart.

Clearly there seems to be something in this area which results in people consistently having boggart-like experiences (although this might just be overwrought imaginations inspired by generations of story-telling). It is notable that similar reports also abound from the wider local area. Just a short journey up the road at Mow Cop, for example, a policeman had a chilling experience.

He said: 'I became aware of the loud sounds of an animal panting and running hard towards me. I saw a huge dog jump from the hillside with a coal black skin and red eyes.'

**WHAT IS THE BOGGART?**

With accounts stretching across the years and over an area of several miles, it seems we need to

**TERRIFIED:** Carriage Drive skirts the former Clough Hall estate. The author was told by local residents of certain points along this lane where inexplicable feelings of dread are experienced. © Nathan Fox



look beyond the story centred on the Harecastle tunnels to find an answer to this mystery.

As Phillip Leese points out, in an industrial area such as north Staffordshire life expectancy was short and death, especially for those men working the mines and iron foundries, would often have been abrupt and brutal. It is understandable that folk may dream up cautionary superstitious tales to try and explain the causes of such upsetting events, and the boggart often served the purpose of being a ghostly warning of an impending accident or disaster.

Historically, local people have suggested several explanations for their encounters. From Hugh Bourne's harbinger-of-doom theory and the murder in the tunnel, through to a drowned maid working at nearby Clough Hall or a trapped local dog who died a painful death, the fact that there are various colourful stories suggests that we are dealing with genuine experiences, rather than something that has grown from one particularly seductive fictional story. Of course, it may be that unrelated local experiences are interpreted as being linked to the boggart simply because it is the best known story.

The evidence points to a case of a strong folkloric motif finding an ideal real-life occurrence, one that has strong links to the creation of boggarts in other parts of the country, and the two being strongly connected by word of mouth. It might well be that the

### **'HE TELLS ME HE AND HIS SON HAVE EXPERIENCED PRONOUNCED FEELINGS OF TERROR AT CERTAIN SPOTS.'**

sort of experiences being reported today started the legend in the first place, and that the subsequent stories grew up around them.

We could choose to complicate matters further by taking into account the other strange reports that come from the old Clough Hall estate, situated very close to the Harecastle tunnels. A friend of mine living in the area often walks his dog along what is known as Carriage Drive, once part of the estate. He tells me he and his son have experienced pronounced feelings of terror at certain spots, and that a number of other local people have felt the same.

**UNNERVING:** The old industrial landscape is much in evidence around Kidsgrove. This scene is taken near Boathorse Road where a witness told the author she was once followed by some noisy but invisible thing. © Nathan Fox



What could be the cause of this? Is it the boggart in modern form?

If we were looking for a latter-day foul deed to tie all this into, in the same way that the alleged murder in the tunnel was linked to it in the past, then we have the perfect candidate in poor Lesley Whittle. The heir to a small fortune made in the transport business, Lesley was kidnapped in 1975 by Dennis Neilsen, the self-styled 'Black Panther'. He kept her in a drainage shaft in Bath Pool park, through which Carriage Drive

passes, where she eventually died.

We might tentatively suggest that the folk mechanism linked to the tales of the Kidsgrove Boggart may also be at play here, subconsciously at work on those who know of the murder and spend time in the area.

Taking a more scientific viewpoint, it might be suggested that the shape and size of the Harecastle tunnels are capable of creating the sort of infrasonic (low frequency) phenomena said by some to cause experiences akin to some of our witness reports [see 'The Lowdown on Infrasound' by Steve Parson in issue 36]. This might explain why

the tunnels themselves are said to be haunted, as well as nearby Clough Hall, but of course cannot account for stories such as the black dog encounter at Mow Cop.

Quite simply, it may be that Kidsgrove is an area that seems to attract paranormal activity. As I mentioned earlier, the town lies very close to the Staffordshire Moorlands, which has been identified by researchers such as Jenny Randles as a 'window area'. That is to say, it produces a much higher ratio of paranormal reports than would be expected from its geographic size. Explanations for such activity are varied, including geomagnetic fields causing hallucinations, and the presence of ley lines and ancient places of power or ritual.

Certainly, what is indisputable is that people regularly have what appear to be paranormal experiences in the area; I have on record many more ghostly experiences from Kidsgrove which could easily fill another article. It seems that the town has an unexplained talent for attracting the paranormal. The story of the boggart is perhaps the most involving of these, and goes to show how in the right location folklore and genuine paranormal experiences can intertwine to create something stranger than fiction and all the more fascinating for it. ☼



**Matt Hicks** has an avid interest in all things strange and supernatural, and has just released a book, published by the History Press, on Paranormal Stoke-on-Trent. He is a member of the executive of the Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena and can usually be found sitting in dusty corners of libraries pondering over 'many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore'.



**ELUSIVE:** The European brown hare is rarely seen, except in early spring, when its 'mad' mating behaviour can make it highly visible.

# MAGIC, MADNESS AND MYSTERY

## THE LEGENDARY LIFE OF THE COMMON BROWN HARE

In an apt article for our March issue, **MARK GREENER** considers a humble little animal that has attracted to itself more superstitions than almost any other.

**SPRING IS NIGH.** Blackthorn bushes are snowy with white blossom. Green stems of crocuses and daffodils tentatively emerge from the soil. And hyperactive hares chase and box, flaying their forelimbs in their annual mating rituals.

Rabbits seem to be everywhere the year round. You can't miss them if you drive along the lanes around my village. But spring is one of the few times you have a reasonable chance of seeing the enigmatic, graceful hare. The rest of the year, they're rarely visible, even from a few feet away, squatting down to ground level in forms ('nests') that they scrape out of the earth.

Their elusive behaviour helps explain why hares maintain a slightly sinister mystique that the more familiar rabbit lacks. Many folklore traditions regard hares as unlucky, especially when seen in the morning, as tricksters, witch's familiars, even personifications of the devil.

### HARES: A BIOLOGICAL AND MYTHOLOGICAL SUCCESS

Hares are among the most successful mammals (see separate panel). One or more of the 23 species of hare naturally inhabit every part of the world, except the Antarctic, Australia and the area biologists call the southern neotropical zone (essentially South America).

Hares hopped around prehistoric England with hippopotami, mammoths and woolly rhinoceros. But they're now under threat. In the 1860s, hunters killed more than 1,000 hares in a single season on one estate. Sadly, numbers of brown hares declined across Europe since the 1960s, probably following habitat changes in the wake of increasingly intensive farming (hares prefer

habitats that offer cover and forage throughout the year).

Nevertheless, the hare is part of our culture. We 'hare' around, reflecting the animal's rapid, weaving, unpredictable escape from predators. We plan hare-brained schemes – somewhat eccentric, flighty endeavours. And some of us are as mad as March Hares. Even the most hardened city-dwellers know that male (buck or Jack) hares go raving mad in March. They stand upright on their hind legs, swiping and poking their rivals with their long, sharp claws. They may run round-and-round a field, seemingly oblivious to predators. Occasionally, several hares may even sit in a circle while only one or two frolic inside.

Although mares have long mating seasons, the 'madness' is short-lived. As Alice commented

**'THE HARE IS PART OF OUR CULTURE. WE HARE AROUND, WE PLAN HARE-BRAINED SCHEMES AND SOME OF US ARE AS MAD AS MARCH HARES.'**

when she decided to visit the March Hare in Wonderland, 'perhaps, as this is May, it won't be raving mad – at least not so mad as it was in March'. Biologist G A Lincoln found that the March Madness probably stimulates females into breeding activity at the start of each season.

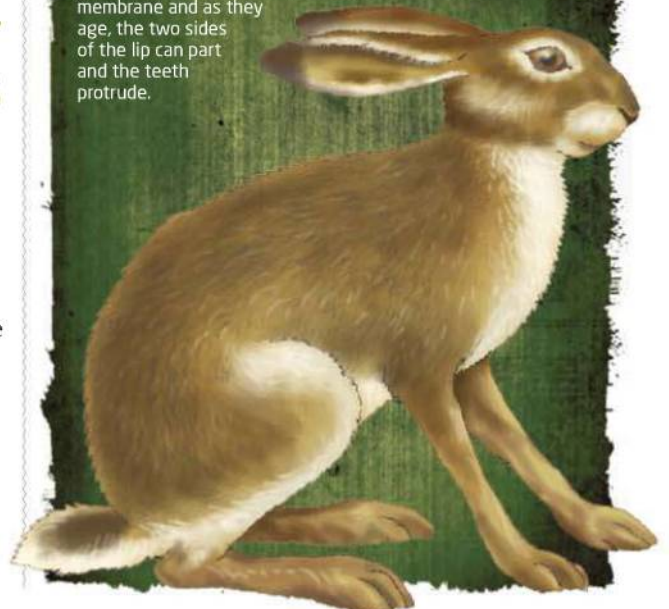
The contrast between the hare's solitary behaviour during most of the year and the spring madness

struck our ancestors, helping create a rich seam of folk stories and myths worldwide. In their classic book, *The Leaping Hare*, George Ewart Evans and David Thomson suggest that hares were sacred animals to the White Goddess, the Earth Mother. A Saxon moon-goddess – celebrated on moon days (*monandæg* – or Monday) – wore a short coat with a hood representing the hare's head and ears. Evans and Thomson suggest she may be an avatar of the Saxon fertility goddess Nerthus, a possible manifestation of the White Goddess.

The association between the hare and the White Goddess may help

### INTRODUCING THE HARE

Hares and rabbits belong to the family of mammals called *Leporidae*. There are 23 species of hares (*Lepus*) worldwide and 14 rabbit species. Two main species of hare inhabit northern Europe *Lepus timidus* (the mountain hare) and *Lepus europaeus* (the brown hare), which you'll see in farmland across the UK. The two species occasionally interbreed. A membrane towards the nostril at the top of the split in a rabbit's lip joins the two sides and covers the gums. Hares lack this membrane and as they age, the two sides of the lip can part and the teeth protrude.





**READY TO LEAP:** A brown hare glimpsed in open country. Its lean body and curious arched stance readily distinguish it from the more familiar rabbit.

## 'THE RELUCTANCE TO EAT OR EVEN KILL HARES STRIKES ME AS A SIGN OF A DEEPER DISQUIET, PERHAPS REFLECTING A LINK WITH THE OLD GODS.'

explain why many country people rarely ate hare. In some parts of the country, people were reluctant to kill hares, even rescuing the animal from the hunt or the packs of dogs. Indeed, the strength of the feeling was similar to the disquiet felt by many English people about eating another sacred animal, horses. Hare's turned up on fashionable tables in towns and cities. However, many country people – even those who caught the animal – never ate hare. They preferred rabbit.

The old country folk the authors spoke to in *The Leaping Hare* described the meat as unpleasant: dark, strong and bloody. The hare's heart is larger than the rabbit's and the hare has a greater volume of blood, providing the hare's remarkable speed and stamina – which once seen you'll never forget. However, the reluctance to eat or even kill hares strikes me as a sign of a deeper disquiet, perhaps reflecting a link with the old gods.

### WITCHES AND HARES

Some anthropologists of magic believe that as Christianity

spread from the Middle East and replaced the older pagan beliefs, the worship of the White Goddess evolved into witchcraft. And the hare remained closely associated with witches – as familiars, for divination and as charms.

Traditionally, some witches distinguished two types of familiar. Certain familiars – such as cats, weasels and toads – belong to the witch. Others, including hares, remained in the wild and impersonated, or acted as an interpreter for, the Devil – in effect the old gods. Of course, hares, like hedge witches, tend to be solitary for most of the year, forging another link between the two. And, hares can make human-like sounds that I believe possibly contributed to the myth of the banshee (see separate panel).

According to *The Leaping Hare*, witches evoked a spell that includes the lines, 'I shall go into a hare / With sorrow, and such, and *meikle caire*' to transform into a hare. The meaning of '*meikle caire*' isn't clear. According to some translations, *meikle caire* means mental suffering. Certainly, a long tradition links hares and psychiatric torment. The 17<sup>th</sup> century writer and depressive Robert Burton commented in the classic *The Anatomy of Melancholy* that eating hares could cause 'fearful dreams' and, if eaten often, 'breed incubus' (an incubus is a male demon that has sex with a female sleeper).

According to an alternative translation, *meikle caire* means returning to a place where one has been before – which may refer

to the witches' personal magical space in his or her consciousness.

The stories of witches turning into animals may arise, at least in part, from shamanistic rituals using hallucinogenic drugs (as I discussed in my feature on the witches' flying ointment in *Paranormal* issue 33). Shamanism practices require considerable self-discipline, abstinence and self-control. So, I wonder if *meikle caire* could be a pun, playing on the mental suffering needed to get the personal mental place of magical power.

### BOUDICA AND THE HARE

There's also millennia-old tradition worldwide of watching animal behaviour to predict the future, such as arachnomancy (spiders), augury (bird formations) and ophidiomancy (snakes). British Celts used the hare's movements as divination. The tradition probably persisted beyond the decline of Celtic culture, eventually recalled only in superstitions. For example, according to *The Leaping Hare*, many people regard seeing a hare when you set on a journey or a hunting trip as a bad omen.

Around AD60, the East Anglian Iceni tribe, led by the charismatic Boudica, rose in rebellion against their Roman overlords. According to the Roman writer Cassius Dio, Boudica was 'very tall' with a terrifying appearance, a fierce glance in her eye and a harsh voice. A great mass of tawny hair fell to her hips. She wore a large golden necklace – probably a torc, a symbol of nobility.

After a speech inciting the Iceni and their allies to rebel, she let a hare escape from the fold of her dress. The hare ran on 'the auspicious side'. The multitude of warriors shouted with pleasure. Boudica raised her hand toward

## HARES AND BANSHEES

Could hares help account for the wail of the banshee? Banshees can appear as various animals associated with witchcraft, including hares but what of that terrible wail? In Ireland, poachers and hunters laid pit traps in bogs. The sides of the yard-square, 2.5 to 3.0 foot deep pit sloped outwards to prevent the hare's escape. The pit would slowly fill with water – and trapped hares sometimes shrieked in distress.

As Evans and Thomson note in *The Leaping Hare*: 'Everyone who has heard a hare screaming agrees that it sounds like a woman or a child; it is sometimes indistinguishable from the screams of a baby'. One Irish country man told Evans and Thomson that, 'The mournful cry of [hares] is frightening. She cries like a child. You'd never set a hare-hole again.'

## 'TRADITIONS PERSISTED IN SUPERSTITIONS ... THE MARCH HARE BECAME THE CUDDLY EASTER BUNNY.'

heaven and thanked Andraste, the Icenic war goddess.

The hare seemed to be right – at least at first. Boudica led the Britons to a series of spectacular victories. The Britons sacked Colchester – aided by supporters inside the city – Verulamium (St Albans) and London, and inflicted a humiliating defeat on the 9<sup>th</sup> Legion led by Petillius Cerialis. Eventually, Boudica met her match in the Governor of Britain Suetonius Paulinus, who also invaded Anglesey and in so doing possibly destroyed one of the last enclaves of Druidism. Paulinus defeated the rebels somewhere in Midlands, probably near Mancetter or Towcester on the Roman road of Watling Street.

Eventually, traditional pagan knowledge succumbed to Christianity's 'cultural imperialism'. Magical traditions passed knowledge of the old religions from generation to generation of initiates. However,

for most people traditions persisted in superstitions. The March Hare became the cuddly Easter bunny, for example. In his *Magic in the Middle Ages* Richard Kieckhefer notes that a hare's foot bound to the left arm allows the wearer to go anywhere without danger. The right foot of a hare keeps dogs from barking.

As mentioned above, many people once believed that seeing a hare at the start of a journey or a hunting trip was a bad omen. Evans and Thomson refer to a deer stalker who was guiding a hunter on a Scottish hill, Beinn A'Bhric, locally linked to a witch. A mountain hare approached the two men to within a few feet, hopped around them and then moved away.

'That's the old witch of Beinn A'Bhric,' the stalker told his companion. 'We shall do no good today.' And, sure enough, it proved a 'disastrous' day's hunting.

Country folk respect the environment and its denizens

## MONACELLA'S LAMBS

A good example of folklore presenting hares as sacred animals is localised at the remote parish church of Pennant Melangell in Mid Wales (pictured). The legend, which was first written down in the 16th century (in Latin), explains the founding of the church dedicated to a Dark Age saint known as Melangell, Latinised to Monacella in the manuscript. The Victorian folklorist Elias Owen summarised the story in this manner:

'One day the Prince of Powis chased a hare, which took refuge under the robe of the virgin Melangell, who was engaged in deep devotion. The hare boldly faced the hounds, and the dogs retired to a distance, howling, and they could not be induced to seize their prey. The Prince gave to God and Melangell a piece of land to be henceforth a sanctuary. The legend of the saint is represented in carved wood on the gallery in the church of Pennant.

'Hares were once called in the parish of Pennant Melangell "Wyn Mellangell", or St Monacella's Lambs. Until the [18th] century no one in the parish would kill a hare, and it was believed that if anyone cried when a hare was being pursued, "God and St Monacella be with thee," it would escape.'

It is tempting to wonder whether Melangell/Monacella is a Christianised version of the pre-Christian spring goddess whose totemic animal was a hare. Perhaps her tradition lingered longer in this lonely valley.

The Editor



in a way anyone from a town cannot. There's no sweet, sickly anthropomorphic sentimentality. Instead, they have a deep, profound respect and knowledge that rarely receives the recognition it deserves from biologists in their laboratories.

As Evans and Thomson write, a deer stalker 'is a practical man with a superb knowledge of nature. If he were not he could never keep his job'. The deer stalker knew the hare, knew its behaviour and believed it was an embodiment of the old witch of Beinn A'Bhric. His certainty that they'd have a poor day was probably either a self-fulfilling prophecy or the subconscious recognition that the hare's behaviour arose from an environmental factor that made for poor hunting.

Nevertheless, I still hope the deer stalker really did see the old witch of Beinn A'Bhric that day. It would be a fitting testament to this most enigmatic, fascinating and enchanting of all our native mammals. ☺

### Further reading

George Ewart Evans and David Thomson *The Leaping Hare* Faber & Faber 1972; Richard Kieckhefer *Magic in the Middle Ages* Cambridge University Press 1989; GA Lincoln *Reproduction and "March madness" in the brown hare, Lepus europaeus* *Journal of Zoology* 1974;174:1-14; Peter Salway *A History of Roman Britain* Oxford University Press 1997; Nancy Vaughan, Elizabeth-Ann Lucas, Stephen Harris and Piran CL, 'White Habitat associations of European Hares *Lepus europaeus* in England and Wales: implications for farmyard management', *Journal of Applied Ecology* 2003;40:163-175

**MAKING TRACKS:** A hare's paw prints in the snow. There are many old tales of witches who, having transformed into hares, are caught after their tracks lead their pursuers back to their hovels.

Read more of Mark Greener's thoughts in 'Bookend', page 82.





# 'How I began the Alien Autopsy scam'

**The Alien Autopsy film is perhaps the most famous (or infamous) 'evidence' ever offered for the existence of extraterrestrial life. It is now widely believed to be a fake. PHILIP MANTLE is sure of it and tracked down a film-maker who claims he inadvertently started the bandwagon rolling with his own short piece of film. Contacted again recently, film-maker Keith Bateman adds fresh information to this long-running saga.**

Just when you thought it was safe to go back into ufology, the old subject of the Alien Autopsy Film comes up again. There are those who still hold out some hope that this film is authentic and it really is proof that aliens were recovered at a crash site in New Mexico in 1947. But I am now firmly convinced this is not the case: the Alien Autopsy Film is a scam.

I have already covered this in my book *Alien Autopsy Inquest* but to expose a hoax it is useful for someone else to check some of your work and discover for themselves exactly where it all began. For this reason I invited Sean Jones, a UFO researcher in the UK, to get in touch with Keith Bateman. Bateman made what is known as the 'tent footage' section of the alien autopsy film. Not widely seen on TV this is a largely unknown part of the alien autopsy saga.

The 'tent footage' is a black and white film about six minutes long. It shows a 'creature' on a table covered by a sheet with its head, arms and feet showing. To the far side of it are two men in white coats (doctors) and a man in a dark coat walks in front of the camera every now and then. The two doctors appear to be handling some kind of flesh-like material. There is no sound.

Ray Santilli, the front man for the alien autopsy film, originally said that this tent footage film was a sequence

filmed at the crash site in a field tent. It was the first section of film shown to anyone, myself included. Several months later Santilli withdrew this statement, saying that his mysterious former military cameraman did not recognise the film and could not be sure about it.

In 1998, my colleague Tim Matthews and I were contacted by a man by the name of Keith Goodyer, who told us he knew who had made this 'tent footage'. He led us to Keith Bateman. Bateman was at first reluctant to speak to us but in time revealed how he faked this sequence and acknowledged that the whole alien autopsy film was a scam.

I asked Sean if he would independently check this part of the story with Bateman to verify my research. He did so in the summer of 2009. His (partly edited) report follows.

I rang Keith Bateman (KB) on his home number supplied to me by Philip Mantle (PM). This conversation lasted slightly over an hour. It was free-flowing and several things were discussed and revisited during the conversation. It was a conversation, not an interview as we also discussed numerous items non-Alien Autopsy related. I took notes and I am using these to refresh my memory.

'KB volunteered very early on in the conversation that he was the cameraman for the fake "Tent Footage" (within the first five minutes, in fact). I spoke about Spyros Melaris [The man who led the team that faked the actual autopsy footage. See my web site: [www.philipmantle.com](http://www.philipmantle.com) for full details] coming clean and wanting to publish a book about the making

**'Ray Santilli originally said this footage was a sequence filmed at the crash site in a field tent. It was the first section of film shown to anyone, myself included.'**

**HOME MOVIE:** A still taken from the 'tent footage' film Keith Bateman claims to have made on his own initiative as a tongue-in-cheek exercise. It was later incorporated into the Alien Autopsy film presented by Ray Santilli. The footage was distressed in the post-processing to make it look more authentic.





**above BIG BUSINESS:**

An Alien Autopsy display at the UFO Museum in Roswell, New Mexico. The film presented to the world by Ray Santilli as genuine footage of a dead alien recovered by the military in 1947 greatly increased worldwide interest in the alleged flying saucer crash.

**right FILM MAKER:**

Keith Bateman with the head of the 'alien' used in the tent footage. The prop was a polystyrene head used for holding wigs with orange peel used to make the eyes.



of the Alien Autopsy etc. KB said he had never met the man and had only heard him mentioned in relation to the Alien Autopsy three times, this conversation being the third time.

'KB felt that his tent footage was more realistic as he had given a lot of thought in to the cameraman's motives etc, i.e. being got up late at night to come and film this thing. However Ray Santilli (RS) said it was "a load of rubbish" and refused to pay for it. KB informed me he still has the original footage

on film (although this is likely to have degraded by now) and he also has the original BETA footage ("in colour").

'KB went on to explain that working with RS was "interesting" at times. He was there (back in the days of AK Music) with RS and Andy Price-Watts (AP-W) when RS came up with the original idea for the Alien Autopsy. It was being done for one reason, and one reason only, to make money. KB said they had tried a number of different things to make money; it was like that in the eighties and nineties. KB said that whilst RS never paid him for the tent footage he often gave him work to "shut him up", basically paying him to keep quiet about his involvement.

'KB said that the Ant & Dec film (*Alien Autopsy* movie) was total lies from beginning to end. Full of fabrications and that Gary Shoeifield (Santilli's business partner) was never involved the

way he was portrayed in the film.

'KB said that he edited the tent footage whilst AP-W did the "selling" of the film. Little did they know how RS was "screwing them over". KB said he had talked to RS about making the AA film himself. Andy Bennett (one of Bateman's colleagues) was going to be one of the actors in it, the alien, only being disabled he couldn't lie flat on the table for a mould to be made, so in the end, it was Bateman's son that was used.

'When I asked how much KB had quoted RS to make the film he told me £25K. I asked him to confirm this as I had been told by Philip Mantle and Spyros Melaris (via email) that KB wanted £45K and that SM wanted just £35K which is why he "got the gig". When I pressed about this figure KB said he was certain about it as he was quoted £25K to make the body for the autopsy. KB believed that the other company (SM) got the job for £15K. He did say he felt that SM had done a better job than he thinks he could have done, because of certain effects.

'KB mentioned that when PM published his name and address on the internet in relation to the AA he had *The Sun* newspaper and another daily contact him for his

**'He was there when [Santilli] came up with the original idea for the Alien Autopsy. It was being done for one reason, and one reason only, to make money.'**

story, and in the end he did a deal with the *Mail on Sunday*. He regrets this now as he feels a deal with *The Sun* would have got him better exposure and perhaps forced RS into coming clean long before now.

'KB said that it would be nice to have the recognition for his film, and his input into the whole idea.

'A number of other things were discussed and several items revisited a number of times. Any errors or omissions are entirely mine. Any comments in speech marks are quotations from Keith Bateman: these might not be verbatim, but are close enough.'

Keith Bateman sent an email to Sean Jones just a few days later to clarify a few points. He explained that his company at the time, AK Music, worked 'quite closely' with DVD companies, which included one of Ray Santilli's. He described AK Music as an 'idea company' involved in, among others, early commercial animations for PC, music videos and low budget programmes on special interest subjects.



to what he was filming and the bad lighting with little time to set up. It was shot on umatic and I still have the Sony M3 camera stored somewhere. It was then put to VHS pushed through the computers with a true vision board and animated lines were super imposed.

'I was quite happy with the finished result and sent it to Santilli for his reaction. "Load of rubbish" was the gist of his opinion ... although he asked us to superimpose a restricted sign at the bottom of the video.



Dec to Hollywood (don't know if that is a good thing or not!).

'As for Santilli, if he has a piece of real footage who knows! But he definitely did not show me it. As I am writing this the alien head is still in my office sat behind me.'

I think it is fair to say that Keith Bateman has more than adequately described how the whole Alien Autopsy film hoax started. No original 1947 film, no mysterious cameraman. It was all a money-making scam from the beginning.

Sean has done an excellent job in checking this aspect of the story, which is one of the most important of all as to how the whole scam began. If it were not for Keith Bateman there would probably never have been an Alien Autopsy film in the first place. So, if the topic of this film ever arises again, and there are those still holding out hope that it is genuine, please just point them in the direction of this article as it should provide them with all they require. ●

above  
**ELLIOT WILLS:** An employee with Keith Bateman at AK Music, Bateman says he played one of the doctors in the tent footage.

above left  
**BATEMAN TODAY:** Keith Bateman at the time he was interviewed by Philip Mantle.

## **“I believe that if I had not produced the tent footage none of this would have come about. Even though it was supposed to be tongue-in-cheek, it gave Santilli a base to build his story.”**

He told Sean: 'We would produce DVD ideas and try to sell them to the general market for distribution [so were] always pestering companies like Santilli's with our ideas.'

He then went on to outline how germ of the Alien Autopsy film idea came about.

'When [Santilli] came back from America and sat in our office with a contract with Elvis's name on it for some back catalogue products he was chasing, the subject of Roswell was brought up. I found this quite interesting and whilst talking to one of our animators he told me he had a book about it. I read this book and this is what gave me the idea to create the tent footage. The idea of aliens being brought into a tent - a cameraman being nervous as

'The points I would like to make are that the Tent Footage was produced from reading a book [and] I did not realize how big this was until I gave this to Bruce Barlow [a figure prominent in the early days of the Alien Autopsy footage] to input into his video and it was going on a breakfast show the following Thursday. Santilli flew back from his holiday in Orlando just to stop us showing it and paid us to withdraw from the show.

'I believe that if I had not produced the tent footage none of this would have come about. Even though people saw through it and it was supposed to be tongue-in-cheek, it gave Santilli a base to build his story. I produced a piece of footage (good or bad) that started all of this, plus programs all over the world and got Ant and



Philip Mantle is a former Director of Investigations for BUFORA and is an international UFO researcher, author, lecturer & broadcaster. *Alien Autopsy Inquest* is available on Amazon, priced £18.50. His other books include: *Beyond Roswell*, *Without Consent* and *Mysterious Sky: Soviet UFO Phenomenon*. He can be contacted via his web site at: [www.philipmantle.com](http://www.philipmantle.com) or directly via [philip@mantle8353.fsworld.co.uk](mailto:philip@mantle8353.fsworld.co.uk)

# Memoirs of a ghost-hunting man

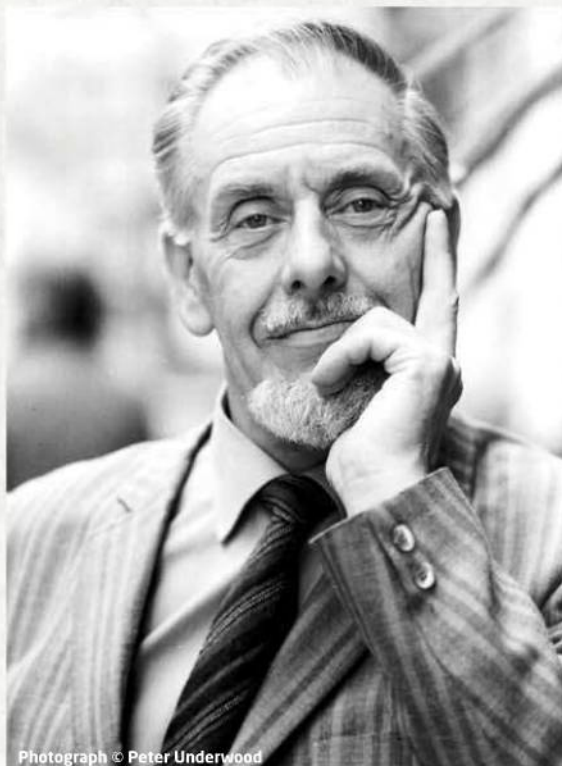
DESCRIBED BY THE OBSERVER NEWSPAPER AS 'THE WORLD'S LEADING GHOST HUNTER', PETER UNDERWOOD HAS DEVOTED A LIFETIME TO THE PURSUIT OF THE PARANORMAL. NOW IN HIS 86TH YEAR, UNDERWOOD'S FASCINATION WITH THE SUPERNATURAL IS UNDIMMED. JOHN STOKER MET WITH THE GREAT MAN TO DISCUSS SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF HIS CAREER AND TO DISCOVER WHAT CONCLUSIONS HE HAS COME TO AFTER SO MANY YEARS OF RESEARCH.

The sounds of ghostly music in a large house in Sussex having proved a mystery to previous investigators, the owner of the property decided to call in one of the country's most experienced ghost-hunters.

When the investigator arrived he was told by the owner that the music had been heard by many people and that everyone had been completely baffled. As they sat down and talked, the muffled sounds of an orchestra could be heard coming from another room and the investigator immediately made a closer inspection. But when he was joined by the owner the music mysteriously stopped.

The two men discussed the matter over coffee and when the owner left the room to clear the cups the investigator looked at the chair in which the man had been sitting. He touched one of the armrests and felt some buttons under the fabric – when he pressed one the music was heard again. Later the owner of the house confessed that there were speakers hidden under the floorboards and that he enjoyed fooling 'experts'.

The investigator was Peter Underwood and this was one of many disappointments that he was to experience as a psychic



Photograph © Peter Underwood

researcher. But he knew that such disappointments were to be expected and that investigating the field of the paranormal was a hit and miss affair with more misses than hits. So what is it that holds Underwood's fascination with the subject?

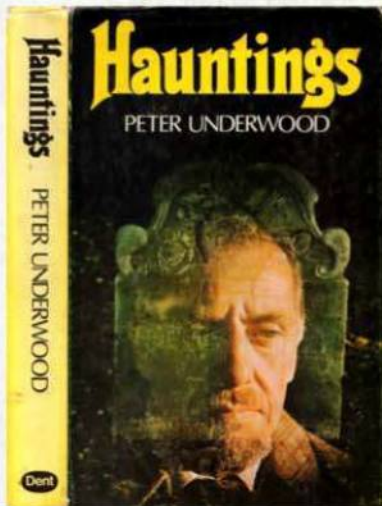
He said: 'As far as I know I have seen three "ghosts". The first was my father on the night he died. My mother saw the same figure at the same time. Secondly, a face, also seen by another sitter, I saw at a séance in a haunted house. Thirdly, a railway worker whose name I didn't even know and who I had only chatted with to pass the time of day and exchange pleasantries. I saw him one evening and learned the next day that he had died the previous morning.'

'There have been other "glimpses" of something I have never been able to explain, but nothing definite. Little to show for a lifetime of paranormal investigation perhaps but I would not have missed the many, many

times I feel sure I have walked along the edge of the unknown.'

As a boy Peter Underwood showed many people the haunted room at the home of his grandparents in Hertfordshire and the visitors would often tell of their own supernatural experiences. He collected these stories and

'Underwood is still a tireless investigator of the paranormal, and has arguably visited more alleged haunted sites than anyone in Britain.'



left **AUTHORITY:** A publicity shot taken of Peter Underwood in 1972 as his reputation grew through his ever expanding roster of books. © Peter Underwood  
far left **BOOK MAN:** The cover of just one of Peter Underwood's many books, showing the author in striking form superimposed on a headstone. © Peter Underwood

“What are ghosts? The honest answer is we don't know but the evidence for appearances of dead and living persons in circumstances that cannot be explained is quite overwhelming.”



**VIGIL:** The staircase at Newark Park where ghostly footsteps were heard while under observation by Peter Underwood and other investigators. Underwood considered the evidence 'overwhelming' in this case. © Peter Underwood

but little else') and Colin Wilson ('whose clear thinking and fairness is always impressive'). Michael Bentine, comedian, author and psychic investigator also impressed him ('a quite remarkable man whose conviction that the paranormal was just part of the normal is something I agree with').

Other influences were Professor Henry Habberley Price, Wykeham Professor of Logic at Oxford ('a delightful character who believed that hauntings had been proved to exist'), Sir Julian Huxley ('who wore his fame, reputation and eminence lightly'), Lord Dowding ('a majestic and humble figure') and Kathleen Goldney ('a staunch SPR official, sometimes charming, sometimes unhelpful and irrational, always sincere but never infallible').

Underwood is still a tireless investigator of the paranormal, and has arguably visited more alleged haunted sites than anyone in Britain. To this end he has spent many a cold and uncomfortable night in the hopes of witnessing a paranormal event. Many vigils have proved to be fruitless but others left profound impressions on him.

'I recall the tremendous bangs and thumps that caused the Priest's Room at Chingle Hall to vibrate and yet they were not heard outside the room,' he told me. 'At Newark Park in the Cotswolds the impressive evidence was overwhelming and some completely unexplained footsteps were heard and recorded from two different directions while the deserted corridor and stairway were under observation. ◉

added them to a vast collection of press cuttings which sparked a lifetime's curiosity in the unexplained. Soon he was joining various societies connected with the subject and beginning a career which would involve him in literally hundreds of investigations. He combined this with his work for the publishing house of Dent but eventually he became a full-time author with more than 40 books to his credit.

Underwood was also in correspondence with some of

the leading figures in psychic research, including Harry Price. Indeed one of Price's last letters was to Peter Underwood asking him if he was interested in The Ghost Club, an organisation in which Underwood would eventually become President and continue in that role until 1993 when he left to form The Ghost Club Society.

He also met authors Algernon Blackwood ('a wonderful raconteur'), Dennis Wheatley ('who believed in reincarnation

## A GHOSTLY CRICKETER?

A council house in Nottingham provided Peter Underwood with an interesting and satisfying investigation; the ghost of a young man dressed in white trousers, white shirt and with a handkerchief round his neck had been seen by the occupants. Underwood and members of The Ghost Club spent the night in the house and the sounds of footsteps, dragging noises and unexplained knocking were heard.

On further investigation Underwood discovered a lady with the same surname as the one given by the medium at the séance held on the night of the visit. She had lived in the house with her son who loved playing cricket. But his career on the field had been cut short when he was paralysed in an accident, and eighteen months later he had shot himself. The young man had always worn a handkerchief to protect his neck from the sun.

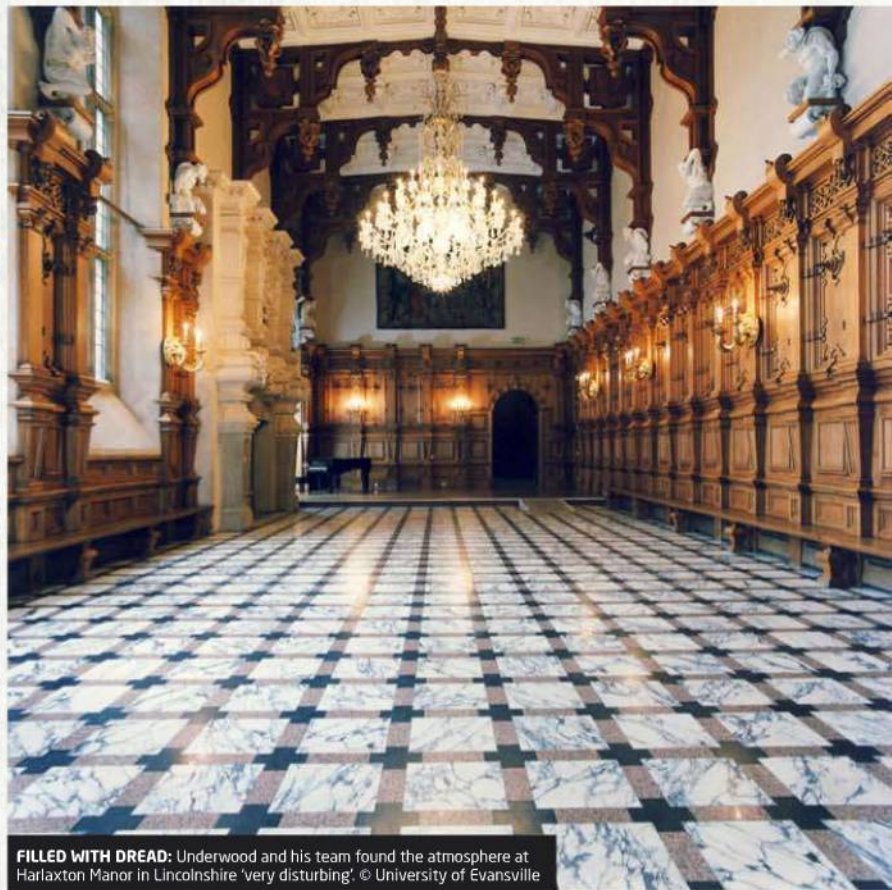


**SEEKING CONTACT:** Peter Underwood looks on at left as a séance takes place in the Nottingham house haunted by a young man dressed in white. © Peter Underwood

‘At the Bull Inn at Long Melford, a case that interested Harry Price, we heard mysterious sounds and a door opened as we watched, seemingly without human agency. At Harlaxton the atmosphere was heavy and very disturbing and the haunted Clock Room where we spent the night was alive with the spirits of the past.

‘Inside the haunted Lincoln bomber at Cosford Aerospace Museum a figure wearing flying gear was seen and photographed in the deserted aircraft. And at Rushbrooke Hall, perhaps I heard a ghost. So many memories, so many possibilities, so many ponderables.’

However, there are two investigations which stand out in Peter Underwood’s memory. The first concerned the church of St Mary the Virgin at Langenhoe, a remote village in the Essex marshlands. When the Rev Ernest Merryweather took over the parish in 1937 he became aware that strange things



**FILLED WITH DREAD:** Underwood and his team found the atmosphere at Harlaxton Manor in Lincolnshire ‘very disturbing’. © University of Evansville

were happening in and around the church. Poltergeist activity included the slamming and locking of doors as well as the moving of objects and the ringing of the credence bell. Added to this were auditory phenomena such as voices and the sound of singing from the deserted church.

The ghost of a young woman was seen to vanish through one of the walls and other spectres were also sighted. Many members of the congregation also felt that they were being watched and that the atmosphere inside the church was more than a little strange.

Underwood was fascinated by the case and began an investigation which lasted for twelve years in which he interviewed most of the people who had experienced the various phenomena, including Rev Merryweather. The Rector informed him that the haunting was certainly not confined to the church and told of an experience

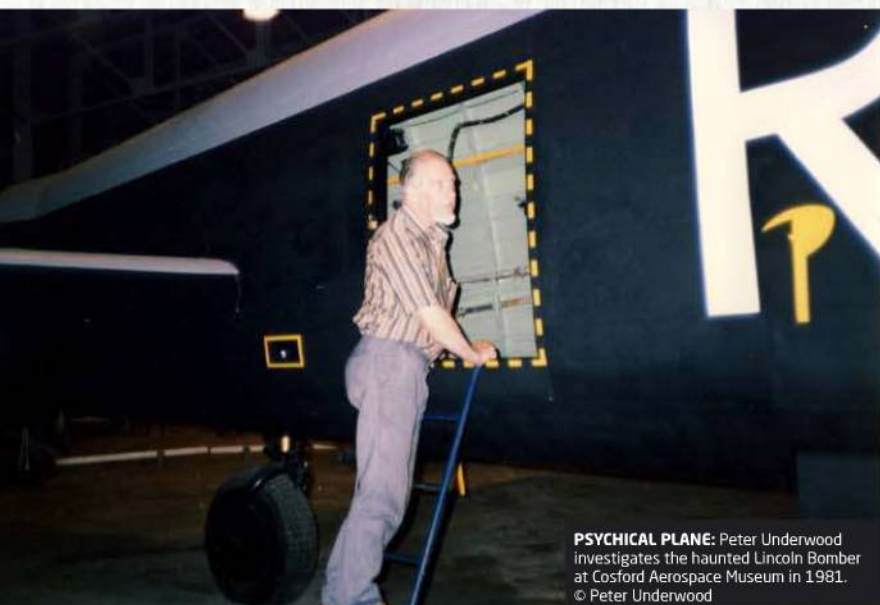
he had had at the nearby Hall. He was being taken around the building by the owner, Mrs Cutting, who took him into one room to show him the view over the marshes. She felt there was something odd about the room and said she would never sleep there.

Mrs Cutting left Merryweather admiring the view, but when he turned to follow her he found himself faced by the form of a naked young woman, who promptly vanished.

In September 1949 Peter Underwood, together with the Rev John Dening, began an all-night vigil in the church. They carefully laid out control objects and powdered the floor as well as leaving writing materials in the hope of some psychic activity. Unfortunately a violent thunderstorm broke out and lasted for some hours. As dawn broke over the marshes they could find no proof of any paranormal event having taken place. Another vigil was held the following year but achieved nothing.

On his retirement Rev Merryweather presented Underwood with the credence bell together with his diaries containing his records of the haunting. The church itself became structurally unsafe

“The influence of television in psychical matters has been disastrous; it has practically ruined the chance of a quiet, uninhibited and fair investigation.”



**PSYCHICAL PLANE:** Peter Underwood investigates the haunted Lincoln Bomber at Cosford Aerospace Museum in 1981. © Peter Underwood

**CLASSIC CASE:** Underwood in 1949 with the Rev E A Merryweather, his housekeeper and her daughter at Langenhoe, Essex. Merryweather got in touch with Underwood after his church became dramatically haunted. © Peter Underwood



and was closed, being finally demolished in 1962.

Twenty-five miles from Langenhoe lies a small hamlet which was to provide Underwood with his longest and most complex investigation. Harry Price had already put Borley Rectory on the map with his two best-selling books on the controversial haunting and its many alleged phenomena. A third volume was in preparation when Price died. Underwood continued to chronicle the further investigations into the haunting of the gloomy old house that had met a fiery end in 1939 and also of various psychic events in and around the church across the road.

By the time he first visited Borley in 1947, the ruins of the Rectory, reputed to be the most haunted house in England, had been demolished. With permission from the owners of the land he and a colleague spent a night on the site and in the Rectory cottage; both men heard strange footsteps which they could not account for. It was to be the first of many visits which he would make over the next 60 years.

Underwood set about interviewing nearly every person connected with the much publicised haunting and was convinced that strange things had happened in Borley. He can now boast the largest collection of material on a case which has probably divided more opinions than any other. The great bell that hung in the Rectory courtyard, which one rector claimed to have heard ringing by itself many times, was a gift to Underwood from the widow of Harry Price

‘Having worked with some of the world’s leading mediums for over 60 years, Underwood has also come to some definite conclusions about what must be the greatest mystery of all: is there life after death?’



**MOST HAUNTED:** Underwood has spent 60 years studying the famous case of Borley Rectory, originally investigated by Harry Price in the 1930s. The Rectory had already burnt down when Underwood first came to Borley in the 1940s but he continues to find plenty to interest him. This is the cottage in the village in which he stayed when he first visited Borley. © John Stoker

and now graces his garden.

Underwood says: ‘I do think Borley Rectory justified the term “the most haunted house in England” in view of the length of time over which paranormal activity has been reported; the number of varied witnesses; the variety of phenomena reported; and the wealth of first-hand evidence that I personally have collected. I have studied the case and everyone concerned with it for

over 60 years and I don’t regret a moment I have spent on the case.’

Now in his eighth decade and after a lifetime of investigating the paranormal has Peter Underwood come to any conclusions? Does he subscribe to the Stone Tape Theory and believe that ghosts are the result of a natural recording mechanism?

He told me: ‘The Stone Tape Theory makes a lot of sense and in some cases it seems extremely likely, but in some instances



**PRICE POSSESSION:** Peter Underwood in 1967 with Constance Price, widow of Borley Rectory investigator Harry Price. The bell behind them originally hung in the Rectory courtyard, where it allegedly rang by itself on occasions. Mrs Price made a gift of the bell to Underwood. © Peter Underwood

**STILL ACTIVE:** Peter Underwood gives a lecture at Bydgoszcz University, in Poland, in 2008. © Peter Underwood



and not in others remains a puzzle. It could be that only in certain environmental and climatic conditions and in the presence of certain individuals some portions of a strong personality remain for a time after death, but again only when the conditions are just right.

‘What are ghosts? The honest answer is we don’t know but the evidence for appearances of dead and living persons in circumstances that cannot be explained within our known laws is quite overwhelming.’

Peter Underwood is not optimistic about the current state of psychic research in Britain.

Following a career which has found him in front of the camera and the microphone many times, he believes that the media has much to answer for.

He says: ‘I feel that the influence of television in psychical matters has been disastrous; it has practically ruined the chance of a quiet, uninhibited and fair investigation and made the owners of alleged haunted houses over-aware financially.’

‘The state of psychical research today is poor. Statistical experimentation is leading nowhere while practical investigation into both spontaneous and induced

“So many memories, so many possibilities, so many ponderables.”

phenomena has been rendered very difficult and it seems to me we are going around in circles and establishing nothing. I truly hope I am wrong.’

Having worked with some of the world’s leading mediums for over 60 years, Underwood has also come to some definite conclusions about what must be the greatest mystery of all: is there life after death? Eileen Garrett, one of the most tested mediums of all time, who convinced so many people of the existence of an after-life, told Underwood that she sometimes wondered if her spirit guides were secondary personalities drawn from her subconscious. She told him that she herself did not believe in survival after death. Underwood is forced to agree:

‘I can honestly say that in all my extensive investigations into the psychic world, in the séance room and in alleged haunted houses, I have never experienced anything that has convinced me of life after death,’ he said.

‘As I approach the latter, I am increasingly convinced that when you are dead, you are dead, and there is nothing to follow – but that makes me all the more persuaded that life is for living and we should seek to enjoy every moment, make the most of every day and do a little good where we can for I am convinced we shall not pass this way again.’ ●

Watch out for a  
**Ghost Gallery**  
 of classic spook  
 photographs in next  
 month’s **Paranormal**.



## THE GREENWICH PHOTOGRAPH



**main THE STAIRCASE MYSTERY:** The famous photograph of the Tulip Staircase in Queen's House, Greenwich, apparently showing an ascending ghostly figure. Its hands on the banisters. © Mary Evans Picture Library / Peter Underwood. **left ON THE SPOT:** Forty years later, in 2007, Peter Underwood has a go at reproducing the position of the Tulip Staircase ghost. © Peter Underwood. **below IS THERE ANYBODY THERE?:** Members of the Ghost Club take part in an impromptu séance at the Queen's House, Greenwich, in 1967, soon after Underwood received the Tulip Staircase photo. © Brian Tremain



Peter Underwood still receives many photographs which claim to have captured ghostly images. Most can be written off as light anomalies or frauds. But one taken by a Canadian clergyman on the Tulip Staircase of the Queen's House in Greenwich stands out from the rest for it shows a shadowy figure that cannot be explained away.

The photograph has been examined many times and led to a Ghost Club investigation of the building resulting in the discovery of an entirely different spectre. The museum's official photographer made several attempts to reproduce the photograph but failed. It remains an intriguing mystery.



## Popular Haunts

Each month we will be asking writers and investigators to choose their favourite haunted location in their own neck of the woods. And 'woods' it is this month, as NIGEL WOOLLSEY chooses an atmospheric area of woodland with a creepy old legend attached to it.



**WAYLAND WOOD:** Locally known as Wailing Wood after the forlorn cries of the children who are supposed to haunt it. It may not look old but those coppices show evidence of human management dating back hundreds of years. © Nigel Woollsey

# Wayland Wood

WATTON, NORFOLK

**BABES IN THE WOOD** HAS long been one of Britain's most popular pantomimes, guaranteed to have been playing in theatres and village halls up and down the country over the Christmas period.

However, few of those enjoying the traditional slapstick comedy, songs and cries of 'He's behind you!' are aware of the grim reality of this story's origins near the rural town of Watton, in Norfolk. Here the small, sad spectres of the two innocent children abandoned

to their deaths in Wayland Wood (or to use its older name, Wailing Wood) in the 16<sup>th</sup> century are still said to be seen wandering forlornly between the trees.

The story was first published in 1595 by Thomas Millington and will be familiar to most people: two young children, a boy and his younger sister, are orphaned upon the untimely deaths of their parents and passed into the care of a wicked uncle. This evil character, who lived at the hall in the village of Griston, just a

**'The children were so young they were unable to find their way out or fend for themselves and so suffered a protracted death by exposure.'**



**SIGN OF OLD TIMES:** Two villages in the neighbourhood of Wayland Wood, Watton and Griston, prominently display the Babes in the Wood on their village signs, helping to keep their legend alive in local memory. © Nigel Wooltsey

**‘To this day it is said these woods are haunted by the wraiths of those poor children, wailing and forever lost.’**

mile or so from Watton, stood to inherit his late brother’s estate should the children in his care perish before coming of age.

The black-hearted uncle decides to murder his young charges and hires two cut-throats to carry out the killing. The children are taken into the nearby wood to be disposed of but the villains cannot bring themselves to kill the innocent babes and instead abandon them in the forest. At this point pantomime history diverges from the real story, with the romantic English folk-hero, Robin Hood, finding and rescuing the children (no doubt with much thigh-slapping and cries of ‘Hurrah!’).

The original tale ends much more tragically, as the children were so young they were unable to find their way out or fend for themselves and so suffered a protracted death by exposure, huddled together beneath the dark, forbidding trees. In a later version of the story the two little bodies are then covered in a shroud of leaves by robins.

Deep within Wayland Wood there stood a great oak under which the bodies of the unfortunate children were eventually discovered. Unfortunately, this oak tree no longer stands, as it was destroyed by lightning in 1879.

It is said that the uncle was

eventually brought to book for his crime – although the nature of his punishment and whether this is by mortal or divine justice was never firmly established. Locally, though, the crime is still much remembered and the two children are prominently displayed on both the village signs of Griston and Watton.

To this day it is said that these woods are haunted by the wraiths of those poor children moving silently between the trees and through the undergrowth, wailing and forever lost. Cries have been heard echoing eerily from the woods at night: the calls of foxes or the pitiful weeping of those two young children so callously abandoned to their fate long ago..? ●



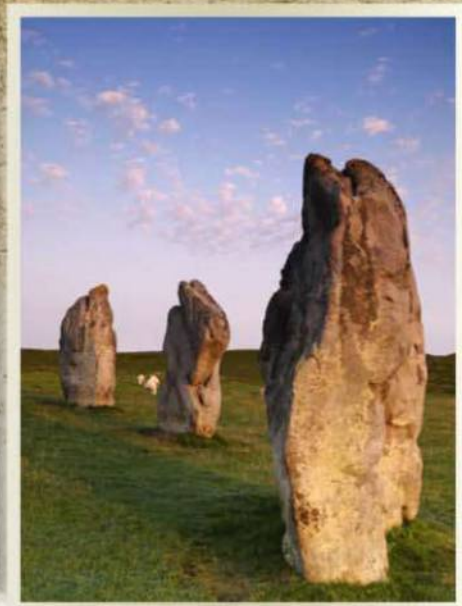


# Official Monsters

Government Files on  
unknown animals

By Nick Redfern

While tales of strange creatures and monstrous beasts feature heavily in books, magazines, films and on television, it is a little-known fact that British Government agencies have taken far more than a passing interest in those mysterious animals from the outer-edge, including lake-monsters, sea-serpents, big-cats, and much more. Take, for example:



**MOST MYSTERIOUS:** Various paranormal tales regarding the world-famous prehistoric stone circles at Avebury have seen them make several previous appearances in Paranormal Magazine. But the official report on a monstrous worm manifesting among the stones must be the weirdest of them all.

*below* **SEA BEAST:** The Admiralty took seriously the report from James Stockdale, captain of the Royal Navy ship the *Rob Roy*, in which he described an encounter with a sea serpent on May 9, 1830.

**The Avebury Monster**  
 In 1962 Malcolm Lees, formerly with the Royal Air Force's Provost and Security Services, received a posting to an RAF station in Wiltshire and worked in the prestigious and secretive world of intelligence gathering. Most of the work, Lees says, was routine but one aspect of his career proved stranger than fiction.

Early one September morning in 1962, a call came into the base from someone who had seen a UFO hovering in the vicinity of the ancient standing stones at Avebury.

UFO reports would reach the base from time to time, says Lees, and were always handled by the RAF's Provost and Security Services, and were for the most part mind-numbingly mundane and related to little more than sightings of unidentified lights in the sky that could in reality have been anything or nothing.

Invariably, he adds, the reports were a week old by the time they were received and so were simply filed and passed up the chain of command – that was then at Government Buildings, Acton, and relocated to RAF

Rudloe Manor in 1977. But this one case was a little different.

The witness was a middle-aged lady who had lived in Avebury all of her adult life and who was fascinated by its archaeology. A spinster, she would often stroll among the stones at night, marvelling at their creation and musing upon their history. On the night in question she had been out walking at around 10.30 pm when she was amazed to see a small ball of light – perhaps two feet in diameter – gliding slowly through the stones.

Transfixed, she watched as it closed in on her at a height of about 12 feet. The ball then stopped approximately 15 feet from her and small amounts of what looked like liquid metal slowly and silently dripped

**'She was faced with a horrific sight. The ball of light had gone, but on the ground in front of her was a monstrous, writhing worm.'**



from it to the ground. Then, in an instant, the ball exploded in a bright, white flash.

For a moment she was blinded by its intensity and instinctively fell to her knees. When her eyes cleared, however, she was faced with a horrific sight. The ball of light had gone, but on the ground in front of her was a monstrous, writhing worm. The creature, she said, was about five feet long, perhaps eight or nine inches thick, and its skin was milk-white. As she slowly rose to her feet, the creature's head turned in her direction and two bulging eyes opened. When it began to move unsteadily towards her in a caterpillar-like fashion, she emitted a hysterical scream and fled the scene.

Rushing back home, she slammed the door shut and frantically called the airbase, after having been directed t

The woman, he said, had practically barricaded herself in her home, was almost incoherent with fear and agreed to return to the scene only after lengthy coaxing. Lees' colleague said that he found no evidence of the UFO, and the worm, or whatever it was, had gone. On the ground near the standing stones, however, was a three-foot long trail of a slime-like substance, not unlike that left by a snail. Lees' colleague quickly improvised and, after racing back to the woman's house, scooped some of the material onto a spoon and into a drinking glass.

After assuring the woman that her case would be taken seriously and requesting that she discuss the events with no one, he headed back to the base, the slimy substance in hand. An extensive report was duly prepared and dispatched up the chain of command – along with the unidentified slime. For more than a week, said Lees, plainclothes military personnel wandered casually among the stones seeking out evidence of anything unusual. Nothing else was found, however, and the file was closed.



## ‘On the ground near the standing stones was a three-foot long trail of a slime-like substance, not unlike that left by a snail.’

### The Serpent Files

Contained in the official records of the old Admiralty that are held at the National Archive, London, are a number of illuminating reports relating to sightings of gigantic sea-serpents seen by British naval crews sailing the Atlantic Ocean. One such report, prepared by James Stockdale, captain of the Royal Navy ship, the *Rob Roy*, describes the details of a startling incident that occurred on May 9, 1830.

The captain wrote: ‘About five pm all at once while I was walking on the poop my attention was drawn to the water on the part bow by a scuffling noise. Likewise all the watch on deck were drawn to it.

‘Judge my amazement when what should stare us all in the face as if not knowing whether to come over the deck or to go around the stern – but the great big sea snake! Now I have heard of the fellow before – and I have killed snakes twenty-four feet long in the straits of Malaca, but they would go in his mouth.

‘I think he must have been asleep for we were going along very softly two knots an hour, and he seemed as much alarmed as we were – and all

taken aback for about fifteen seconds. But he soon was underway, and, when fairly off, his head was square with our topsail and his tail was square with the foremast.

‘My ship is 171 feet long overall – and the foremast is 42 feet from the stern which would make the monster about 129 feet long. If I had not seen it I could not have believed it but there was no mistake or doubt of its length – for the brute was so close I could even smell his nasty fishy smell.

‘When underway he carried his head about six feet out of water – with a fin between the shoulders about two feet long. I think he was swimming about five miles an hour – for I watched him from the topsail yard till I lost sight of him in about fifty minutes. I hope never to see him more. It is enough to frighten the strong at heart.’

### Big Cats on the loose

For years, reports of so-called ‘big cats’ seen roaming the British Isles have proliferated. And while the general public and the media are refreshingly open-minded on the subject, and even seem to accept that such creatures are a reality, in 1998 – official British

**SOURCE MATERIAL:**  
The National Archives building in Kew where the author uncovered the official documents relating to the strange stories retold here. Photo by Nick Cooper / Wikimedia Commons.



**CAT FLAPS:** The author uncovered numerous reports of big cat sightings in Britain. One of the oddest involved a lynx found in a freezer.

Government files reflect – our elected leaders were far less inclined to attach too much credence to such reports.

In a statement delivered to the House of Commons in 1998, the then-Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Elliot Morley, informed the House of the following: ‘Until we obtain stronger evidence, the reports of big cats are still in the category of mythical creatures.’

Fortunately, such evidence does exist: in the files of the British Police Force.

Replying in 2006 to a Freedom of Information Act request from a member of the public that had a particular fascination with big cat incidents in the county of Hampshire, the county’s Police Force issued an intriguing statement in document format:

‘Hampshire’s Constabulary’s Air Support Unit has been deployed to assist with the following reports: January 1995 – Black Panther like animal seen in Eastleigh. Two likely heat sources found by the aircraft, but nothing found by ground troops. March 1995 – Black Puma like animal seen in Winchester. One heat source found that could not be classified by the aircraft crew, kept running off from

searching officers, search eventually abandoned.’

Similarly, when a FOIA request was filed with the Sussex Police during the latter part of 2005, the following summary-report was issued; being based upon a study of then-available police files: ‘Firearms officers have been deployed in response to such a report on one occasion, on 22 July 2004 – sighting by a member of the public in Seaford. The area was searched, but no trace was found of such an animal.’

And the story doesn’t end there.

In 1991, official police records reveal, a lynx – that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs concluded may have been an exotic-zoo escapee – was shot and killed near Great Witchingham, Norfolk. The man who killed the creature then duly placed the body in his freezer before selling it to a local collector who had the creature stuffed. It turns out that a detailed file on the matter was opened by local police that – just as is the case with the other ‘cat-files’ cited above – would have remained firmly behind closed doors, were it not for the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

The now-open files show that matters began when the police began investigating a local game-keeper who, it was believed, was responsible for the deaths of a variety of birds of prey in the locale. The officer who interviewed the game-keeper at issue noted in his memorable and slightly-surreal report, the following:

‘At the start of the search in an outhouse, which contained a large chest freezer, I asked him what he had in the freezer, and he replied: “Oh, only some pigeons and a lynx.” On opening the freezer there was a large lynx lying stretched out in the freezer on top of a load of pigeons! He had shot this when he saw it chasing his gun dog.’

#### **The Nessie Dossier**

During the latter part of the 1970s, British Government files released into the public domain in 2005 reveal, the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had given detailed consideration to a request to use trained dolphins as part of a project to locate, and identify once and for all, that most famous of all unknown animals: the Loch Ness Monster.

If the reality of Nessie could be ascertained, mused the Government, it could – in theory, at least – have a very welcome

**“One heat source that could not be classified by the aircraft crew kept running off from searching officers.”**





## 'Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had given detailed consideration to a request to use trained dolphins as part of a project to locate the Loch Ness Monster.'

effect on local tourism; which is surely putting things mildly! The Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was far from happy with the idea, however, and the matter was quietly shelved. But the file on the beast of the loch was not destined to remain closed.

During the mid-1980s, Thatcher's minions attempted to ascertain if Nessie was at serious risk from poachers. Indeed, for a brief period at least, civil servants even thought about creating new laws that would provide protection for Nessie, and

issuing hefty fines – and perhaps even serious prison time – for anyone foolish and irresponsible enough to kill the creature. Ultimately, however, the Government decided that: 'The legislative framework to protect the monster is available; provided she (or he) is identified by scientists whose reputation will carry weight with the British Museum.'

Unfortunately, the idea was not taken any further, and identification still eludes us. Or does it? In 1965, the Royal Air Force's Joint Air Reconnaissance Intelligence Centre at RAF Brampton

carefully studied film taken in 1960 that allegedly showed the Loch Ness Monster moving on the dark waters of the loch, and reported: 'One can presumably rule out the idea that it is any sort of submarine vessel for various reasons which leaves the conclusion that it is probably an animate object.'

So, keeping all the above in mind, if you should one day be strolling through the wilder – and occasionally not so wild – parts of the British Isles and run headlong into a giant worm, a big-cat, or something even worse, your name may eventually end up in a secret government *X-File*. You have been warned! ●

Nick Redfern is the author of many books on UFOs, cryptozoology and the paranormal. His most recent books are *Science Fiction Secrets* (Anomalist Books, 2009) and *Contactees* (New Page Books, December 2009). Nick can be contacted at his website: [nickredfern.com](http://nickredfern.com)

**NESS FILES:** Loch Ness came under Government scrutiny in the 1980s when plans were proposed to seek out its famous monster while other proposals were discussed in order to protect the legendary beasts from poachers.





## Unearthed

This month we complete Arthur (later Sir Arthur) Grimble's recollections of paranormal happenings personally witnessed by him on the Gilbert Islands, a remote chain in the South Seas now forming part of the Kiribati nation. Grimble became Resident Commissioner of the islands and it is clear from his narrative that not only did he have a great affection and respect for the Kiribati people he was also sufficiently (and unusually) fair-minded enough to admit that the experiences he repeats here were to some extent beyond his understanding. In this instalment we learn of the horrible demise of a young girl of 17, apparently cursed to death, and the apparition of a spirit which was seen by 30 men. Grimble himself did not see the spirit, but he *smelt* its passing. These unnerving tales are given more impact told as they are by an educated European whose logic cannot deny the inexplicable nature of the events. Reprinted from the April 1926 edition of the Wide World Magazine.

# Witchcraft in the South Seas

## Part II

My third story has to do with "wishing to death", a form of revenge much practised by the Pacific peoples, and, indeed, by most of the world's primitive folk. Nearly all [primitive peoples] believe that evil influences may be brought to bear on a man through the medium of his food, hair-clippings, or nail-parings. Everyone has heard, in this connection, highly-coloured tales of how Indian fakirs have tried to hypnotize and kidnap white women by concentrating upon stolen strands of their hair.

In 1917 I was stationed on the Central Gilbert island of Abermama. As I sat in my office one blazing afternoon there came a wavering through the palms from the lagoon-side a thin, high-pitched cry. It was a cry that held neither rage nor pain, a changeless reedy note of insufferable dreariness.

My ears led me to the leaf and coconut-rib dwelling of a native constable. Sitting there, devoid of all clothes, was a native girl of about 17, bolt upright. Her eyes, with irises enormously distended, stared straight ahead into nothingness, and from her rigidly-open jaws came the interminable moan that I have described. But the most noticeable thing about her was a terrible distention of her body. From the arch of the ribs downward she was so swollen that the skin shone like taut silk.

Her family told me that the swelling had begun just before dawn. And why, in the name of this and that, had they not called for help hours since? I demanded. Because they knew it was useless. Useless, why? Because no help might avail

**'Why had they not called for help hours since? I demanded. Because they knew it was useless. Because no help might avail against the work of Raku-nene.'**



The "spirit house" of a Gilbertese sorcerer.

against the work of Raku-nene.

And who or what might Raku-nene be? There was much hesitation; then someone blurted: "An evil spirit!" Finally I elicited the story.

It appeared that Raku-nene had once been a man who, after death, became the collaborating spirit of all men engaged in the conquest of female hearts. From the beginning of his ghostly



**A Gilbertese youth in gala attire. He wears an amulet of porpoise teeth to ward off enemy magic and a belt of white shells to give him courage.**

career he had concerned himself especially with the revenges of rejected suitors.

To enlist the aid of this sinister male Ashtaroth, the flouted lover acquires a single strand of the unresponsive lady's hair. This he binds about his thigh for three days; on the fourth morning he burns it in a fire of leaves, with suitable invocations to Raku-nene.

That same night the spirit visits the scornful girl in a dream – and that is the end of her sanity. In the morning she wakes up strange in manner. Her body quickly becomes swollen. She mumbles continuously about an evil dream; then she falls into a sulky silence and refuses to wear clothes.

Later, she starts moaning, quietly at first, but with gradually

**'The terrible odour of death that came with him had awakened them all at about the same moment; every one of them had seen him in the darkness.'**

mounting strength and increasing violence of gesture, until by the next morning she is raving, clawing at her own flesh, and biting at all who approach her. This continues until the evening of the second day, when she suddenly shrieks "Raku-nene! Raku-nene!" half a dozen times, is seized in a rigor, and dies.

The relatives of the poor creature whose condition had elicited this extraordinary tale watched me with incredulous eyes while I administered a sedative.

"You cannot fight a spirit with your white powders," they said.

Spirit or no spirit, their doubts as to my healing powers were justified in the event. Nothing I could do had the least effect; the girl passed through every phase predicted, and died the next night. Within ten minutes of death her body had resumed its normal shape, but an expression of dreadful horror remained frozen on her face.

Since that time I have seen several cases of the so-called "Raku-nene madness" up and down the Gilberts. Observed fact, therefore, establishes this much: There is among the island women a sudden form of madness, accompanied by physical disfigurement, which in the mind of the victim, is invariably associated with the name of Raku-nene. Can we possibly believe that it is induced by some malicious exterior agency, working from a distance, with the sole aid of a strand of hair and an incantation to a spirit?

I have only one fact of any evidential value bearing on the question. In 1919 I saw the death of a Monouti woman afflicted with the madness. At the end of the same year a man of her island confessed that he had worked the spell which killed her. He described how, having fallen in love with her, he had made advances which she has repeatedly rejected. In his anger he returned to Raku-nene. On the fifth day after he had begun



The District Officer's house on Tabiteuea, where the "ghost" incident occurred.

the magical rites prescribed, the woman was dead.

This man was emphatic in his assertion that *the woman knew nothing whatever in advance of his resort to sorcery.*

Now he may possibly have been lying, though it is worth recording that he died professing Christianity, with every appearance of having made confession for the peace of his mind. For the sake of argument, let us suppose that his tale was true. Can we then swallow the idea of an evil spirit which conspires with men to torment unwilling women?

Personally, I cannot, so we will reject the supernatural element. In that case, if the man was not lying, the only hypothesis left is that malignity is in some way transferable; that madness, distortion, and death can be willed through the air by one human being upon another. It is not a comfortable thought.

But perhaps, after all, the dying man merely muddled his statement. Possibly his victim had some inkling that he was focusing his sorcery upon her. That offers us a very ready explanation of the whole process – auto-suggestion.

The women had been brought up in dread of Raku-nene, was overcome by fear at her lover's threat, brooded upon it, induced in herself every symptom that

tradition prepared her to expect, and so died. That she did die, and that many of her island sisters perish every year of the same malady, is an indubitable fact, of which the local administration is so well aware that it forbids the practice of "Raku-nene magic"

#### THE DEATH MESSENGER

One of the first characteristics of the Pacific Islander to impress the white man is his horror of darkness. Born fighter and navigator though he is, he will shrink at night from venturing 20 paces into the bush that grows up to his doorstep. For him, the shadows teem with ghosts. He hears their whispering in the interminable mutter of surf that haunts his narrow islands, and feels their clutching fingers in every touch of leaf or twig upon his shoulder.

The ghosts so dreadfully feared are supposed to be the earthbound spirits of dead men – earthbound because careless kinsfolk have neglected to perform the magic funeral rites which alone can speed the departing soul safely to the Land of Shades. The most dreaded of these ghosts is said to haunt the island of Tabiteuea, the Southern Gilberts. His name is Takaro; his appearance is believed to herald death; and when he walks abroad a dreadful odour of putrefaction poisons the air about him.

I was quite unaware of these local beliefs until after the events

about to be described.

One night in 1922, about 10 o'clock, I was reading in the District Officer's quarters on Tabiteuea when I gradually became aware of a nauseating stench that pervaded the air of the room. Such a smell could belong only to decaying flesh, and I deduced that it must come from something dead brought in by my dog.

As I sat up to investigate, I saw the dog in question, standing with drooped tail and quivering body in the middle of the room, staring out of the front door. I called him sharply. He took no notice, but turned with a low whimper and scuttled through the opposite doorway towards the lagoonside, where I heard him howling dismally.

I myself was more interested in the frightful smell than in the dog's behaviour. I followed it down the front steps; and it grew more sickening as I approached the public path that runs past the house. I was just about to call for my house-boy when a yell from the jail-yard not 50 yards to the northward riveted my attention. There followed the patter of bare feet hurrying out of the darkness towards me, and a native sentry, oozing panic, literally hurled himself into my arms.

"Sir-Sir!" he gasped; "the ghost-Takaro-I saw him-there-by the jail! He passed me as I stood!"

He was in such an abject state of fear that I could get nothing else out of him. Just then a fresh clamour broke upon my ears-the muffled shouting and screaming of men from inside the prison, and the thud of bodies flung against locked doors.

I raced for the guardhouse, snatched keys from the jailer (who had slept through all this din), and precipitated myself through the darkness to unlock the prison doors. When they swung back, I was almost knocked over – fighting, gibbering maniacs bursting from within.

"Takaro! Takaro!" they yelled, and pelted in one mad tangle of arms and legs across the yard to the lamplit guardhouse.

While they lay there panting and sweating, I had more lamps brought, and in that cheerful light they gradually regained sanity. Their tale was quickly told: the

**'You cannot reason a crowd of men out of such fear as those prisoners had felt. Had I guessed what was still to come I should not even have made the attempt.'**



Gilbertese women in dancing costume.

ghost Takaro had visited the prison!

The terrible odour of death that came with him had awakened them all at about the same moment, it seemed; everyone of them had seen him in the darkness.

He looked neither to right nor left, but walked down the whole length of the building with eyes fixed on the floor; then turned back and passed quietly out through the locked door. That was all. There was none of the gesturing or mouthing common to nearly all ghosts of island story; but he left behind him the madness of utter terror.

You cannot reason a crowd of men out of such fear as those prisoners had felt. Had I guessed what was still to come I should not even have made the attempt. For the climax was not yet. It arrived only when, fearing that some of them might have escaped into the bush during the stampede, I had the roll called before leaving for the night.

One man did not answer his name. It was called again, but there was no response. A single thought, obscurely shared, impelled every man of us to stare through the night in the direction of the prison. Without a word spoken half-a-dozen of our number picked up lamps crossed the yard, and trooped (very close

together) into the building.

The frightful taint of corruption still loaded the air of the place.

With heaving stomach I walked to the far end of the room, and threw the feeble light of my hurricane lamp on a still form against the wall. It was the missing man. Face up, mouth open, he lay on the mat in the careless attitude of sleep. But his eyes were staring; he was dead.

There was no distortion of features, no smallest sign of violence on his body. An autopsy revealed that he had died of natural organic disease, peacefully if suddenly, and probably in his sleep. Such a diagnosis was entirely keeping with the native theory that Takaro had visited the prison, not to kill the man, but to herald his death.

"We know it!" the others insisted. "We smelt the ghost, we saw him; and behold, our friend is dead. All these things happened exactly as our fathers and grand-fathers have related to us."

I must confess to feeling that the facts equip one very poorly for refuting the native belief. The chain of independent witnesses is indeed impressive – the dog, bolting in mortal dread from something that passed my door; myself, absorbed in a novel,

becoming aware of that deathly odour; the sentry, who saw what he saw, and fled; the 30-odd prisoners, whose very restraint in describing the apparition adds significance to their testimony; and last, the missing man, most eloquent of all in death.

Foul play is, I think, out of the question. Suppose some native to have acquired the power of

**'I must confess to feeling that the facts equip one very poorly for refuting the native belief.'**

making his body luminous, and of producing that awful odour – how did he enter the jail? Assume that he was in collusion with the jailer, and, in short, to overcome all physical difficulties in his way, assume the most complete and perfect co-operation with every inmate of the prison: even then a question remains to be answered. Why was the dog afraid?

Tricks of smell and vision may deceive human beings, but fox-terriers are not so gullible. If animals could speak, we might sometimes be a great deal wiser than we are. ●



# SPOOKY SURREY

Anciently inhabited and largely unchanged until the years following the First World War, Surrey still retains its mysteries. **MARQ ENGLISH** takes us on a tour away from the suburbs and into the county's less well known creepy corners, ending our journey at one of England's most famous haunted houses.





**LANDSCAPE:** Surrey is a county of patchwork fields intersected by patches of woodland, with high heaths and the North Downs presenting surprisingly wild aspects of country. Surrey's most well-known mystery is the Surrey Puma, which may still pad about in the less well-trodden parts, but it also boasts its fair share of ghosts.

**MENTION THE NAME OF SURREY** to most people and images are conjured up of quaint villages, the rolling hills of the North Downs and commuter towns such as Guildford and Woking ferrying City workers back and forth from the capital.

But Surrey is a very ancient place with its name derived from the Old English 'Suther-ge' (meaning southern district) and is mentioned as 'Suthrige' as far back as 722 AD. In the 1400's, Surrey was divided

## **'ACCOUNTS OF THE HISTORY, GHOSTS AND FOLKLORE ARE HIDDEN AMONG THE MODERN TRAPPINGS OF SUBURBIA.'**

into multiple hamlets which remained constant until rapid suburban expansion occurred between the two World Wars.

In 1965 the London Boroughs of Croydon, Kingston, Merton, Richmond and Sutton were created to form part of Greater London.

Some may argue that Surrey lost a little of its identity when this merging occurred but the county retains many of its mysteries hidden among the numerous hamlets, lanes and buildings both old and new. And on this tour of paranormal Surrey, I will take you to the places that may not be as well known as some of the more prominent locations, with accounts of the history, ghosts and folklore that are hidden among the modern trappings of suburbia.

Standing in the vast grounds of Beddington Park, Carew Manor's original structure was built around the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century. Related to the Carews of Pembrokeshire, the Manor was once the country seat of this prominent family in Tudor times and a dynasty which would dominate the area for centuries. Indeed, in its heyday the Manor was graced by a number of royal visitors, including Henry VIII, James I and most prominently Queen Elizabeth I.

In later years, two deep wings

were added but soon after the building work was complete, the north wing was gutted by fire and the whole interior destroyed. This part of the house remained in disrepair for many years and was still largely empty in 1859 when Carew Manor converted into an orphanage; operating from 1866 until 1939. Underground tunnels exist around the area and these could be extensive although most of them were filled in during the later 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although there have been many alterations over the years, the roof of the late-medieval hammer-beamed Great Hall dates from around 1500 and is the only Grade One-listed building in the London Borough of Sutton.

With such a vast history, there are, of course, reports of paranormal activity at the Manor. The ghosts of Sir Walter Raleigh and Queen Elizabeth I are said to haunt the grounds and at nearby Bunkers Lane but, like many famous historical ghosts, this is more likely to be folklore than



actual witness accounts. Poltergeist activity was reported in the north wing following the fire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

A young girl has been heard laughing along the corridors and been seen walking across a small bridge linking the former infirmary. As well as dark shadows, a face has been seen staring out of an upper classroom window.

The adjoining churchyard holds a mass grave of young girls dating from an epidemic back when the Manor was an orphanage. The spirit of a nun was seen here as recently as 1972.

There are many accounts of spectral sightings on England's roads and Surrey is no exception. In recent years, one intriguing report that continues to have eye-witnesses concerns the A22 approach to Caterham. Usually occurring in the early hours of the



## 'THE GHOSTS OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH AND QUEEN ELIZABETH I ARE SAID TO HAUNT THE GROUNDS AND POLTERGEIST ACTIVITY WAS REPORTED IN THE NORTH WING.'

morning, drivers have reported seeing a young girl stumble across the road and vanish into woods opposite. Some people have been so startled by what they've seen, police have been called out to investigate but no one is ever found.

A designated area of outstanding natural beauty and one of the most popular regions of the North Downs, Box Hill rises proudly over the nearby towns of Tadworth and

Dorking. Since the 19th century, Box Hill has been a popular tourist destination with walkers and cyclists thanks to its breathtaking views. Archaeologists speculate that Box Hill may have been a sacred site in ancient times and one does feel a strange atmosphere when strolling through the woodland and heath. As expected, various ghost stories and paranormal occurrences have been associated with Box Hill for

many years.

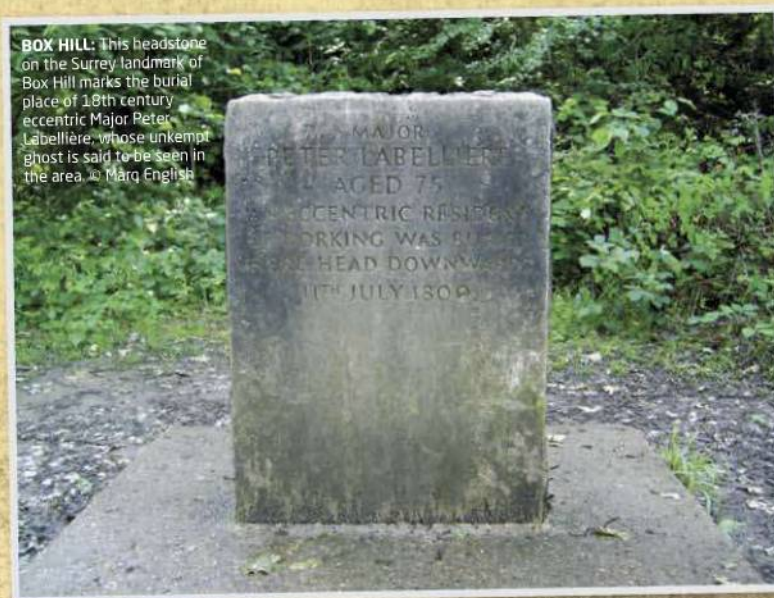
The prominent spirit reported here is that of Major Peter Labellière. He moved to Dorking sometime after 1763 and was a deeply religious man. Generous to a fault, Labellière would frequently give away his clothes to the poor of the area. In later years, Labellière's appearance became unkempt and his behaviour even more erratic. One day, he was out walking but tripped and fell onto a spike, gouging out an eye.

When he died from this injury in 1800, he was buried upside-down on the Hill. Why he requested this novel form of interment is still debated; one suggestion is that Labellière thought the world was topsy-turvy, so when it fixed itself he would be the right way up. Even to this day, there are reports of people seeing a strangely dressed one-eyed man wandering around the heath of Box Hill. A gravestone now marks the spot of his burial.

The old Pilgrim's Way stretches from Winchester to Canterbury. Assorted apparitions have been seen along this ancient route, including weary pilgrims stumbling over the stepping-stones that cross the River Mole and a phantom rider galloping across the landscape at night.

Situated in the ancient village of Cheam (mentioned in Domesday as 'Cheyham'), Lumley Chapel is the oldest building in the London Borough of Sutton and has been standing for over 900 years. In ☉

**CAREW MANOR:** This medieval mansion has undergone many ups and downs during its existence and its rich history has left behind a legacy of ghostly activity. © Marq English



**BOX HILL:** This headstone on the Surrey landmark of Box Hill marks the burial place of 18th century eccentric Major Peter Labellière, whose unkempt ghost is said to be seen in the area. © Marq English



**LUMLEY CHAPEL:** Bloodcurdling screams have been heard emanating from this quaint little building, all that remains of a medieval church in Cheam. © Marq English

times gone by this small and beautiful structure was the nucleus of this parish and although not used for regular worship anymore, it still lies on consecrated ground and is under the protection of The Churches Conservation Trust.

Now overshadowed by a 19<sup>th</sup> century church dedicated to St Dunstan's (itself a replacement for an earlier Georgian structure), Lumley Chapel is all that remains of the original medieval structure. Following Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536 which changed the face of religious order across the country, Cheam was bought by Henry Fitzalan, 12th Earl of Arundel, who

**'PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SO STARTLED, THE POLICE HAVE BEEN CALLED OUT TO INVESTIGATE. BUT NO ONE IS EVER FOUND.'**

passed the estate onto his son John, Lord Lumley. He is buried in the chapel with his two wives, Jane and Elizabeth, along with their children, who unfortunately died in infancy (commemorated on their mother Elizabeth's tomb chest).

There have been at least two murders in or near the chapel. On occasions, screams have been heard coming from within the building. The police have been called but were unable to find anyone there. Many people have sensed a presence in the chapel as well as the surrounding graveyard, which is an ominous place at the best of times. According to old folklore, the

first person buried in a churchyard would be the Spirit Guardian of the plot. It is believed that the early inhabitants of Cheam butchered the village simpleton by cutting his throat and allowing the blood to spill into the graveyard so his spirit would be its first Guardian.

Underneath a concrete slab behind the chapel lie the bodies of 14 children, apparent victims of the Great Plague. There was once a well behind the old caretaker's shed (once a stable) and years ago an unfortunate victim called Lucinda Jarrett fell to her death (or according to many reports – was pushed!). Her spirit has apparently been seen many times walking through the old building.

Also in Cheam is the Grade Two-listed Old Rectory which dates from the early 1500's and stands

near Lumley Chapel and Whitehall along Malden Road.

This beautiful building is in the vast area that was the estate of Nonsuch Manor; one of King Henry VIII's homes but sadly long since demolished.

For many years The Rectors of Cheam were Bishops of Chichester and this post is still an important Church position. It is tempting to imagine the Rectory as being a kind of B&B for prominent visitors to the Court of Nonsuch, humming with the gossip of the day.

As you would expect from a property with such a rich and fascinating history, there are many reports of paranormal activity. These include apparitions of a child who has been seen several times (most notably by the present Rectory owners), a White Nurse, a young maid, a malevolent male entity in the cellar and even a Roman Legionnaire who marches through the living room wall towards the old village of Cuddington (the site of Nonsuch Palace).

Heading south and overlooking the nearby River Mole, Betchworth Castle was originally an 11<sup>th</sup> century structure but the present ruin is of a medieval house built in the 14<sup>th</sup> century by Sir John Fitzalan. A large portion of the building was demolished in 1791 to make way for a country residence and again in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which leaves little but a folly visible today.

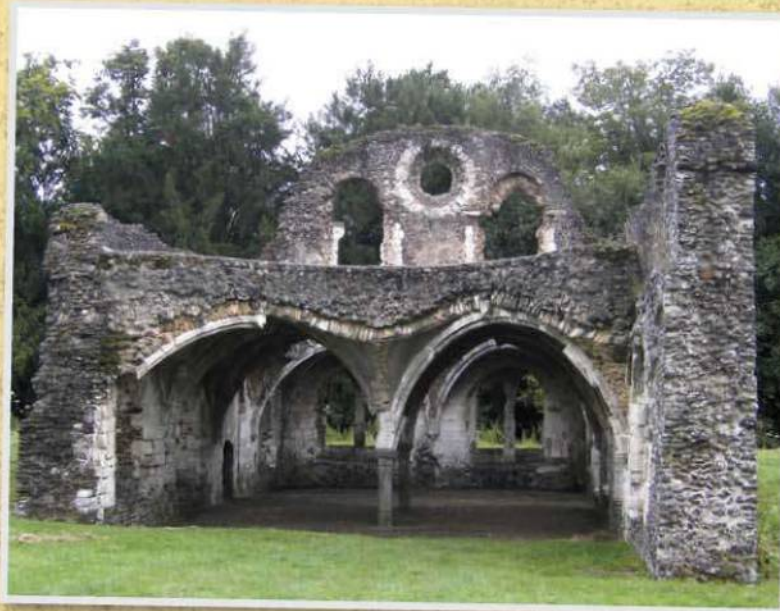
Betchworth Castle is rumoured to be patrolled by a fierce black dog, a creature that makes regular appearances in the folklore of hauntings. Another ghostly figure seen (although in human form) is that of a nobleman called Lord



**OLD RECTORY:** Dating back to the early 1500s, this is another of Cheam's beautiful and historic buildings, and also one of the most haunted in the county. © Marq English

Hope. The tale goes that while he was chasing an escaping prisoner, Lord Hope killed the man, whom he subsequently discovered was his own son. The bereaved father now he walks the area in deep regret and shame.

Situated three miles south of Farnham and set in a picturesque meadow next to the River Wey is Waverley Abbey. Founded in 1128, this was the first Cistercian Monastery in England. Providing shelter for weary pilgrims and an infirmary for the sick, the Abbey grew steadily until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536. After this time, the Abbey became a source of building materials, so the ruins seen today are just a remnant of its magnificent heyday. The Cistercian Monks also built Wanborough Barn



**WAVERLEY ABBEY:** A fabulous treasure is said to be buried among the ruins, and here monks are still glimpsed or heard chanting. © Marq English

## 'HAMPTON COURT IS WORLD FAMOUS FOR ITS GHOSTS, WITH MANY TALES CENTRED AROUND HENRY AND HIS WIVES.'

in Guildford in 1388, one of the finest medieval barns in the country.

Not surprisingly with a location like Waverley Abbey (and the nearby Newark Priory for that matter), apparitions of monks have been seen many times as well as the sound of chanting coming from the Abbey ruins. There are also rumours of hidden treasure somewhere within the grounds but again this is probably folklore.

No tour of haunted Surrey would be complete without visiting the magnificent palace of Hampton Court, built in 1514 by Thomas Wolsey, Archbishop of York. This fine building was later acquired by Henry VIII in the 1520s and his association with the building is the most widely known. With Henry's occupancy, alterations and extensions were added with much of what we see today built and planned by him including the general lay-out of the gardens.

Of course, Henry's infamous marriages are prominent in the history of this grand building. Jane Seymour gave birth to the future King Edward VI here but sadly died shortly afterwards and it was here that Kathryn Howard was accused of infidelity, which led to her execution. A well-known account is of Kathryn escaping from her guards to desperately plead for her life whilst Henry prayed quietly in the Royal Pew, ignoring her cries.

Henry also married Katherine Parr in the Royal Chapel.

Hampton Court is world famous for its ghosts, with many tales centred around Henry and his wives. For example, the ghost of Kathryn Howard is alleged to roam the Haunted Gallery (which naturally gives this area its name) and Jane Seymour is said to have been seen walking the corridors and cloisters but like other famous historical figures, it's more likely a romanticized view of what people would like to see!

A recent occurrence happened in October 2003. Following unexplained openings of a fire exit, CCTV footage revealed what looked like a long-coated figure opening the doors (even staff do not use this exit!). This footage circulated around the world and has been analyzed many times with people still open-minded about what or who it could be.

I have only scratched the surface of Surrey's haunted locations. In common with many other counties in the UK, there is much more to discover if you explore the fascinating layers lying underneath. ☉



With a life-long passion for all things paranormal, Marq has a particular interest in ghosts, hauntings and earth mysteries. He is also a filmmaker and actor and has directed an assortment of films, including *Shelf Life* (2003), the comedy feature film *Return to Ravenswood* (2007) and *FANZ* (2009). He was the founder of The Sutton Film Festival. Working with both his team at Spiral Paranormal and with Out There Media, Marq produces an ongoing series of Paranormal Episodes and Video Diaries which are downloadable free from his website: [www.spiralparanormal.co.uk](http://www.spiralparanormal.co.uk).

**HAMPTON COURT:** Most of the many ghosts reported from this vast former palace date from the period of Henry VIII's occupancy. Two of his unlucky queens are said to haunt the oldest parts of the building. © Marq English



# experiences

**Do you have a story to share?** Here at Paranormal, we are always interested to hear of our readers' true life experiences of the supernatural. Email your story to: [editor@paranormalmagazine.co.uk](mailto:editor@paranormalmagazine.co.uk) or write to The Editor, Paranormal Magazine, Jazz Publishing, The Old School, Higher Kinnerton, Chester CH4 9AJ.



## What is this tiny figure?

I am part of Thames Valley Paranormal Group and we were investigating the Highwayman Pub in Kidlington, Oxfordshire, when this intriguing photo was taken.

The picture was taken on a Fujifilm Finepix s1000fd camera in night mode and no flash was used, which accounts for the colours, which are created by light coming through a window to the right and shining onto a wall. The dark shadow that can be seen is a jacket hanging up, so that can be discounted.

The figure that is seen is the interesting part, as it should have been a blank wall. It appears to be a man in uniform with one hand raised and in the other hand something is being carried but it is too faint to conclude what it is

(some speculate it could be a rifle). The figure is only 12 to 14 inches in height and appears in mid air. This is what we find so odd as there is nothing in the room that could have caused it.

Some other investigators were present in the room but they were all to the left of the room and not in the picture. When we zoomed in on the figure we could see it quite clearly, with distinct colour differences of the hands and head to the other colour of it. We do not actually say this is paranormal but it has so far defied any reasonable explanation.

If any of your readers can possibly come up with a reason why this image is there I would appreciate it as we have tried to debunk it and had some people who are from outside our group try but no-one has yet been able to offer any explanation.

**Simon Buckle, via email**

**'She was gazing round the room like me. She looked away and shook her head and she slowly faded away.'**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** We have lightened the photo to make it clearer but otherwise haven't tampered with it. The figure referred to can be seen in the centre of the photo with its 'arm' raised.

## I saw the White Lady -and she saw me

I'm 12 years old. I've had many experiences of the paranormal but this story is one of my scariest.

It was May 2007 (I was 10 years old), I can't quite remember the exact date, but I went with the school on a residential trip to How Hill, near Ludham, in Norfolk and we stayed in a 103-year-old house. I thought it was an amazing house (with a big history).

We stayed in a room marked 1 (dormitory No.1). The people in my dormitory were my brother Zack, and friends Anton, Thomas and Sebastian.

I was sitting in bed in the middle of the night (not knowing what time, possibly 1 or 2am) when I was gazing around and I

saw a white figure. I think was the White Lady of How Hill. She had long hair hanging half way down her back; she was young, beautiful and wore a night gown which looked at least 80 years old.

When I first saw her, she was gazing round the room like me. When she saw me with shock, I was very shocked too! She looked away and shook her head and she slowly faded away.

I wasn't the only person who experienced the paranormal in that house that night. Jack, one of my other friends, experienced a figure getting closer and closer to him when he blinked. And a girl who's one of my friends, Elise, experienced a figure out of the corner of her eye. Another one of my friends, Luke, looked out of his window and saw a medieval woman walking in the gardens speaking Old English and her dog was yapping beside her carrying a dead rabbit.

I'm telling you, someone or something's in that house and hardly anyone has spoken of it!

**Noah, via email**

## Bedroom visitors

With reference to your article concerning 'Shadow People', I remembered an incident that happened to me about 30 years ago.

I awoke in the early hours to see a shadow crouched next to my bed. It then stood up, revealing itself to be humanoid, but just a shadow with no detail at all. As I watched, it walked along the length of my bed before disappearing into the shadow of the wardrobe next to my wall.

At no time did I feel frightened or threatened in any way, and I never saw it again.

In the same room, I woke to see a dog (a spaniel, I think) sat in the corner watching me. On a more surreal note, I once watched as the large sheet on the room's spare bed rose up and took on the shape of what appeared to be an Afghan hound!

The visions of a sleepy child or genuine occurrences? They seemed real, but who can say?

**Simon, via email**

## The Laptop Codes

I received a telephone call from my friend, Maureen. She opened up her company laptop to do some work on it. To do this she has to go through a series of security protocols before she is allowed access. She works for a UK utility company. She telephoned me around 9.30-ish to say her laptop was typing up stuff onscreen by itself.

Both she and I are psychic but very down to earth people. I told her to either

# 'As I watched, it walked along the length of my bed before disappearing into the shadow of the wardrobe next to my wall.'

write down what the laptop was typing or try to print it off. I then went on the net to search for related articles and found that some people had either viruses or spyware which does similar things, but NOT in the way this was operating!

Most viruses (according to what I can find so far) type up certain letters, vowels or characters but do not form paragraphs of sentences. Anyway, although the sentences do not always form perfect syntax or make grammatical sense, there are quite a few linking paras or sentences containing what I believe to be certain 'key' words... the type that makes MI5/6 etc sit up and listen.

These words are for instance: ISRAELIS, 9 AND 11, (written like that... not 9-11) PLANE, ANAHEIM. There are other weird sentences like, 'I still have not been paid for a side job'.

I know my email must seem either bizzare or a tad dramatic but who is to say that this may not be some kind of 'coded' message from an unknown sender to his contact?

**James Conn, via email**

## RESPONSES

### Dreaming of the future

Rebecca Lane's experience ('Paws for thought', Issue 42, December 2009) seems to be a classic example of a precognitive dream. The two key elements in her dream are the unusual smallness of the dog and her sense of loss and it is these two points which the museum attendant emphasises when she tells Rebecca about the stuffed dog the following day. The dream therefore appears to be connected with Rebecca's future conversation with the museum attendant.

It was John Dunne's book, 'An Experiment with Time', which showed the reality of future dreams and in which he proposed his radical and complex theory of Serial Time. Dunne's most dramatic future dream concerned the volcanic eruption on Martinique in 1902 which killed about 30,000 people, but what he realised was that he had not dreamt of the event itself, but his reading of a newspaper account of it.

Many of his future dreams were

relatively trivial and it was not until years later that he discovered that other people also sometimes dreamt of the future. By encouraging others to carefully record their dreams at the moment of waking (most dreams are quickly forgotten), Dunne's 'experiment' showed that some elements in the dream might refer to the past or future, with often a mixture of the two.

According to Dunne, when we dream, a different observer from our waking self takes over and has access to a wider perspective of time, which includes the future as well as the past of our present life. Dunne's theory can explain that strange feeling, which most of us have experienced, of déjà vu (a previous dream about the future). It has profound implications for physics as well as our understanding of time, yet the future may not be entirely written in stone for we live in a dynamic universe.

It would be interesting to know whether the 'Sooty' element in Rebecca's dream has any associations with anything in her past; the dream would then be a blend of the past and future.

**David Leadbetter, via email**

### Vampires are people, too

Pretty disappointed in Brad [Steiger]'s vampire article ['Are Vampires Real?' issue 42].

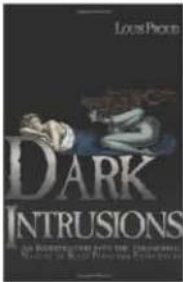
There are a great number of people identifying and struggling with a vampiric condition. The cause of this can be varied, from an energetic form of diabetes, so to speak, to these being visiting souls which find it difficult to remain in the human body.

Regardless, these are normal people: doctors, engineers, musicians and poets. For many, they need to energetically connect with other humans, opens a world of doors, which can be used for healing, growth, etc.

But your researcher chose to go with the shock value, and perhaps that's what your readers want: to be afraid. But to be honest, preying on people's fears is much closer to the vile behavior that your researcher was trying to pin on the vampire community.

**Dark Avatar, via email**

## Books



**Dark Intrusions: An Investigation into the Paranormal Nature of Sleep Paralysis Experiences**

By **Louis Proud**  
Published by **Anomalist Books**  
RRP: **£12 pb**  
Reviewed by **Nick Redfern**

In the References section of my book, *There's Something in the Woods*, I briefly noted that: 'In the early hours one morning in late 2002, I had a nightmarish encounter with a wolf-like, cloaked figure that manifested in our apartment while I was in the depths of a sleep-paralysis-style slumber. It took all my strength to wake up, at which point the foul beast vanished into the darkness.'

I have had maybe two other experiences of this nature: one involving a cloudy, shadowy figure leaning over me and preventing me from rising from the bed, and the other of a presence slowly climbing the staircase at one of my old abodes in England. I struggled to wake up, knowing full well that its destination was my bedroom.

A lot of words have been written about the strange and unnerving phenomenon (or, perhaps, phenomena would be a better and more accurate word to use). But, what has been lacking until now is a truly in-depth, book-length and definitive study of the mystery written by someone who has actually experienced repeated episodes of sleep-paralysis, first-hand - and in all their terrifying glory, no less.

That situation has now changed thanks to Australian author Louis Proud, whose title makes for both remarkable and essential reading.

As a result of not just wanting to get an answer to what lies at the heart of SP, but also to understand, appreciate and reconcile how the mystery impacts upon his own life, Proud brings to the table a vast array of data that is thought-provoking and unsettling. He provides the reader with a variety of theories to explain what may well be afoot with respect to SP, and what its relationship to us may be.

*Dark Intrusions* is a truly excellent and wide study of a phenomenon undertaken by a man who has not only been touched and changed by SP himself, but who has had the courage to seek out the answers to this mystery, and who ultimately triumphs, rather than merely playing the role of victim to the menacing entities that invade our slumber.

As Proud states: '...the SP state puts you in direct contact with your soul.'



**Magic 1400s - 1950s**  
By **Mike Caveney, Jim Steinmeyer, Ricky Jay and Noel Daniel (editor)**  
Published by **Taschen GmbH**  
RRP **£135 HB**  
Reviewed by **Gordon Rutter**

Magic has transformed over the years from the ability to control natural events by invoking the supernatural through to the conjuring and prestidigitation that we know today.

This latest work from Taschen covers magic from the start of the art of printing to the middle of the 20th century. As its over riding theme it uses the many posters and playbills that have been produced and recreates each beautifully in colour (where appropriate) on high quality paper with massive pages 20 by 13 inches. And there are 640 pages and over 1,000 illustrations.

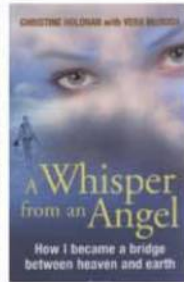
It's a giant book and visually simply stunning. The quality of reproduction is outstanding and the choice of illustrations is breathtaking. As well as posters and handbills, there are also reproductions of magic lantern slides and also early photographs.

Oh and there are some words as well. In common with many Taschen books the text is in English, German and French. Each chapter is repeated with the appropriate language text but of course the illustrations are different.

The introduction is written by Ricky Jay, from whose personal collection a number of the illustrations come. As well as a magician, Jay is a collector of anomalies. The body of the text is by Mike Caveney and Jim Steinmeyer. Caveney is a practising magician and historian and Steinmeyer is a magic designer and historian (most recently writing a biography of Charles Fort).

It's difficult to focus on just one chapter as a highlight but in view of the interests of *Paranormal Magazine* it has to be Steinmeyer's chapter on 'The Supernatural and the Spirit Worlds'. In this single chapter we have a history of Magic Lantern shows - the Phantasmagoria, Pepper's ghost, Davenport spirit cabinets and the appearance of the dead on photographs and on stage as entertainment. It, like the rest of the book, simply leaves you wanting more.

This is quite simply the most beautiful book I have ever had the privilege to review and I can't recommend it highly enough.



**A Whisper from an Angel**  
By **Christine Holohan with Vera McHugh**  
Published by **Maverick House**  
RRP **£7.99 pb**  
Reviewed by **John Stoker**

Christine Holohan is a much respected medium who has brought comfort and guidance to the many of the people who consult her. In this book she relates the story of her life and how she came to terms with her ability to connect the living with the dead. But the major section concerns how in 1983 she was contacted by the spirit of Jacqui Poole shortly after the young woman was savagely murdered.

Holohan tells how she was begged by the entity to give the police all the details of the crime, including the name of the killer, and how she managed to convince two of the police officers of her paranormal abilities.

The suspect had already come to the attention of the police but there was not enough evidence to convict him and testimony from ghosts is not admissible in law. However, in 2001, thanks to advances in DNA testing, the case was reopened and the killer was successfully convicted.

The book is an updated version of *A Voice from the Grave* published in 2006 and also contains testimonials to Holohan's abilities from a number of sources. What it doesn't mention is the opinion of Detective Superintendent Tony Lundy, the man in charge of the case in 1983, who stated that Holohan 'did not supply anything significant which advanced or assisted the investigation'.

It's still a fascinating story but needs to be told from a more dispassionate view.



## Films



**Something, Something, Dark Side**  
Creator: **Seth MacFarlane**  
Price: **£24.99**  
Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

The *Family Guy* 'cast' and crew return to the world of *Star Wars* in a parody of *Empire Strikes Back* and a sequel to their comically acclaimed first adventure in space with *Blue Harvest*.

Spoofing the classic sci-fi franchise of all time is never going to be an easy task for a cartoon to achieve successfully. Many have tried to do this before, either by briefly playing-off *Star Wars* or like *Robot Chicken* (the main *Family Guy* rival) in a similar feature comedy mirror of *Star Wars*. However, most have entered into this without the care, consideration and craft that is on display here.

What the *Family Guy* creators have produced in these two straight-to-DVD films is nothing short of astounding. Funny and painstakingly drawn, a clear love of the trilogy shines through each digitized frame. Great efforts have been made to pay homage to the source material in what at times is almost a shot-for-shot remake, but with a very obvious *Family Guy* twist layered on top.

The real coup for *Dark Side* is that the hour-long special is fully endorsed by Lucasfilm. This allows the filmmakers the chance to retell the story exactly, and also gives them full license to the use of original sound effects and score, etc - all in all helping to create a cartoon that at times feels like you are watching the original but in a parallel cartoon universe.

This is undoubtedly the best *Star Wars* parody to date. A cartoon that conscientiously retells a classic sci-fi tale with a great adult sense of humour... Roll on the finale!





### The Men Who Stare at Goats

Directed by: **Grant Heslov**  
 Price: **£17.99**  
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

As the title suggests, this satirical, pseudo-paranormal comedy is about men who stare at goats.

Now that may sound a little too high-concept for many to pick off the shelves, but this transcendental take on military misdirection is funny, witty and absurd. Everything an army satire should be.

After his marriage falls apart, Ewan McGregor's lost reporter stumbles upon the world of secret psychic military operations who are trying to change the shape of war as we know it. *The Men who Stare at Goats* is a thoughtful and competent adaptation of the Jon Ronson 'non-fiction' book of the same title.

It doesn't really matter how much of the film is actually true or not in the end (as mentioned in the opening), either way what we see on screen is at times hilarious if at times stumbling. A mixture of eccentric comedy and actual military thinking of a period past, we go on a spirited journey into one of the oddest military units imaginable.

While the plot is interesting, it crawls along at quite a slow pace, never seeming to reach a climax. But really what makes the film is the plethora of great acting talent on display, with George Clooney and Jeff Bridges standing out from the rest, but Kevin Spacey, McGregor et al acquiring honourable mentions.

Sitting somewhere between the absurd and the serious, *The Men who Stare at Goats* may not fully reach its potential, but the journey is enjoyable enough to be captivated and taken in by.



### Gamer

Directed by: **Mark Neveldine & Brian Taylor**  
 Price: **£19.99**  
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

Set in the near future, *Gamer* is a high-concept, lowbrow action thriller where online gaming and real-life have become so embroiled in each other, the main form of entertainment is a death

match shoot-out involving real people. While it may seem unbelievable (and believe me it is), *Gamer* does actually manage to touch a nerve in today's games market. We have seen online phenomena like *Second Life* take off, which seem to impact on people's lives a little too much for comfort, while games like *Modern Warfare 2* which give people the awkward moral choice of shooting innocents.

Then we have *Gamer*, a heightened and ridiculous mixture of both these games tacked together, along with added violence and sex.

Visually, *Gamer* is impressive. For a relatively low-budget film, the same guerrilla tactics and innovations were used by the filmmaker duo to produce a stylish, action-packed, if invasive movie that punches well above its weight at times. However, overall the film lacks the appeal that the pair's earlier film *Crank* held. With a plot that when broken down is nothing short of madness, and enough gratuitous nudity to make a porn star blush, *Gamer* gets lost in the world it creates.

If you are on the lookout for a leave-your-brain-at-the-door no-holds-barred action flick, then this could be for you, but if you want a film with a little more quality and subtlety then look the way of *G.I. Joe: The Rise of the Cobra*... Something I never thought I would say.



## Games



### Left 4 Dead 2

Format: **360, PC**  
 Developer: **In-House**  
 Publisher: **Valve**  
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

Two years ago, *Left 4 Dead* arrived on the gaming scene with a smattering of blood and a horde of mobile corpses, leading to what became Xbox 360's most anticipated game since the console was first launched. Namely, *Left 4 Dead 2*.

The critically acclaimed co-operative multiplayer immerses you into a world full of 'infected' where you play one of four unique survivors trying to survive through five massive maps with the help of weapons new and old. There is a new melee weapons system in *L4D 2* that forces you to get up close and personal to the onrushing zombies, giving the game a much more dynamic feel and ruthless enjoyment now you are able to wield a katana sword in self-defence.

But the new campaign maps are where this game comes in to a world of its own. The design and layout of these massive areas are more diverse, dynamic, atmospheric and ultimately much more enjoyable than those seen in the first instalment.

And the game modes this time round offer a much greater variation to players, from the regular campaign mode, to the Realism and Survival are modes that will have you coming back again and again for more zombie punishment.

It may not be long since the release of the first *Left 4 Dead*, but with already great gameplay, the little tweaks on display, (computer AI, weapons selection, melee function, larger more diverse levels) have seen a rebirth in *Left 4 Dead 2*. This is not to be missed, but a word of advice - get online, stick together and stay safe.



### Darksiders

Format: **PS3, 360**  
 Developer: **Vigil Games**  
 Publisher: **THQ**  
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

Going one step further than being set in a post-apocalyptic wasteland, *Darksiders* actually begins during the apocalypse.

Deceived by the forces of evil into prematurely bringing about the end of the world, War, the first Horseman of the Apocalypse stands accused of breaking the sacred law by inciting a war between Heaven and Hell. Dishonoured and stripped of his powers, War must return to Earth to search for the truth and punish those responsible.

Paying homage to similar titles (sometimes a little too closely) such as *God of War* and *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*, *Darksiders* is an expansive and action-packed world for you to battle and puzzle-solve your way through. And with visual art by former Marvel comic book artist turned game developer Joe Madueira, there is plenty on display to please the eye in this visually stunning game.

The combat throughout the game is both brutal and extreme. War hacks and slashes his way through countless enemies and bosses with his gigantic sword, as well as a few side arms you will have to strategically collect and use along the way.

It must be said that much of the gameplay found in *Darksiders* has been seen elsewhere, which results in a lack of freshness in the overall feel of the game. But fortunately for *Darksiders*, it has gotten the balance between combat and puzzles just right, delivering enough in to the mix to keep you entertained in this energetic thriller.



Book, DVD & Game reviews from back issues can be found online at:  
[www.paranormalmagazine.co.uk](http://www.paranormalmagazine.co.uk)



### Bayonetta

Developer: **Platinum Games**  
 Publisher: **Sega**  
 Format: **360/PS3**  
 Reviewed by: **David Valjalo**

After the indulgent sadism and infuriating shallowness of *MadWorld*, director/designer Hideki Kamiya rightly reverts back to the hardcore hack-and-slashery that he carved a reputation with in *Devil May Cry*.

His new heroine is gifted the occupation of a netherworld bounty hunter, armed to the heavenly teeth and dressed devilishly down (in a suit of her own hair). Bayonetta is a pop-star masochist whose arsenal is matched only in eccentricity by her creator's penchant for boss battles.

Kamiya's trademark meta-game humour (nods to *Sonic*, *Okami*, *MadWorld*, *Godhand*...) is the rouge to Bayonetta's stern cheeks and helps to keep the rip-roaring flow of events a light flutter rather than a pulse-pounding cardiac arrest. The leisurely score (welcome back elevator music and crooner classics) aids and abets Bayonetta's stealthy charm - a character arc with no transformative journey is spun through a colourful world of angels and demons so zany it can only be a (Kamiya) game.

So is it thumbstick heaven or controller damning hell? It's both. Initially, *Bayonetta* is a tutorial of turmoil and experimentation that feels familiar but fresh. The regularly overcrowded encounters with multiple enemies becomes tiresome, however, and a bland arcade vehicle interlude does little to ease the crushing sense of repetition. The limited weapon and attack upgrades is also a disappointment, rendering the experience more theme park ride than graphic action theatre.

*Bayonetta* may not redefine a genre on the verge of sterility but it sets in stone the strengths and weaknesses of both third-person action and over-indulged imagination.



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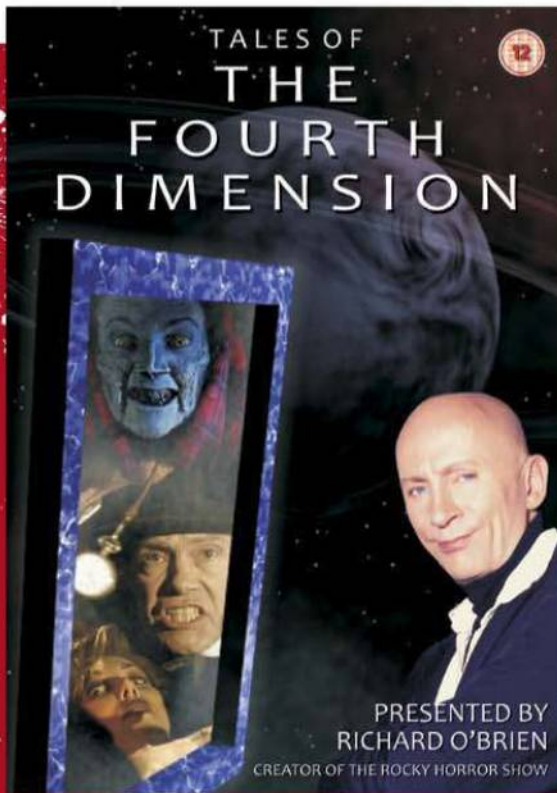
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*Tales of the Fourth Dimension* from Blue Dolphin is a series of five short 'what if?' films. The Time Master (Richard O'Brien), introduces the series of tales about the weird and wonderful things time can do.

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O'Brien's dry and witty comments weave together these five entertaining and intriguing short sci-fi films.

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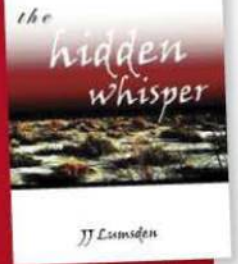
For your chance to win a copy log on to [paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions](http://paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions) and be prepared to answer this question:

**Richard O'Brien is best known as the writer and star of The Rocky Horror Picture Show. What is the title of the hit song featuring 'time' which he sang in the film?**

You may also enter by post. Please write your answer, with your full name and contact details, onto a postcard or sealed-down envelope and send it to:

Competitions, Paranormal Magazine, Jazz Publishing, The Old School, Higher Kinnerton, Chester CH4 9AJ.

## Signed copies of 'The Hidden Whisper' book by JJ Lumsden



The Hidden Whisper is a mystery story centring around alleged poltergeist activity that breaks out in a couple's home in Arizona. But it's more than just any spooky story - it's been written by a man with a PhD in parapsychology!

As well as weaving an intriguing and well-written novel around paranormal events, Dr Lumsden also provides about 20,000 words of non-fiction endnotes which go into the subject of the poltergeist phenomenon in more depth.

The Hidden Whisper is a unique concept which 'fills a new literary space' and has attracted wide praise, including in the pages of this magazine.

Dr Lumsden has kindly donated three signed copies of his book. For your chance to win a copy, log on to [paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions](http://paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions) and be prepared to answer this question:

**In which London suburb did a famous poltergeist case first grab the attention of investigators in 1977?**



## Three supernatural romances: Through Violet Eyes, Speak of the Devil and Hidden Currents

Publishers Piatkus have kindly supplied us with a set of three recent novels on supernatural themes to give away.

*Through Violet Eyes* by Stephen Woodworth is a novel of suspense set in the near future in which psychics, born with violet eyes, find themselves the target of an apparently unstoppable serial killer. It is the first in a series and has been described as 'Part *The Silence of the Lambs*, part *The Lovely Bones*,' by one critic.

*Speak of the Devil* by Jenna Black is part of the critically acclaimed Morgan Kingsley Exorcist series. Described as a 'dark and sexy thriller', *Speak of the Devil* sees female exorcist Kingsley tangling with a mysterious enemy with a deadly grudge while fending off a journalist seeking to pry into her unorthodox life.

*Hidden Currents* by Christine Feehan is one of a series of novels about the seven magically gifted Drake Sisters. *Hidden Currents* is part mystery story, part romance as the youngest sister, the telepathic Elle, becomes abducted by a dangerous stranger and the local sheriff - who just happens to love her - frantically tries to find her.

For your chance to win this set of three critically-acclaimed novels from Piatkus, log on to [paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions](http://paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions) and be prepared to answer this question:

**What famous horror film of the 1930s bore the tag-line: 'The Strangest Love Story Ever Told'?**



# BOOKEND

## WHY DISMISSING INTUITION IS COUNTERINTUITIVE

By Mark Greener



**I was delighted to read Jim Duthoit's article 'Intuition and Manipulation' in last month's *Paranormal* (issue 44), because I found that author's views so closely mirrored my own on this too-readily dismissed human experience.**

I believe intuition is important. Indeed, it can save lives. As George Orwell noted in *The Road To Wigan Pier*: 'An experienced miner claims to know by a sort of instinct when the roof is unsafe ... he "can feel the weight on him".' Our supposedly 'rational', science-dominated, technology-obsessed society often devalues intuition and instinct. Yet we dismiss this survival skill at our peril.

Intuition and instinct aren't irrational. Intuition could use information and experiences we collect subconsciously. Even if we avoid superficial celebrity 'culture' (an oxymoron if ever I heard one), facile reality TV and biased, self-serving political spin, we're bombarded with too much stimuli to pay equal attention to everything. So, our brains filter the information we need.

Much of this processing, which psychologists call 'selective perception', is subconscious. From time-to-time, information excluded by selective perception from consciousness but stored subconsciously may resurface as 'intuition' or 'instinct'. Orwell's miners probably picked up subliminal warnings that told them the roof was unsafe.

*Paranormal's* readers probably value their intuition more than most subscribers to scientific journals. A few years ago, the *European Journal of Personality* (2006; 20:585-602) looked at the personality traits typical of people who hold paranormal beliefs. The paper contrasted analytical and intuitive thinking. Analytical thinking, the authors suggest, refers to explicit, conscious reasoning that the person can verbalise. Analytical thinking uses logic and 'hard' evidence. In contrast, intuitive thinking is implicit, associative and automatic. (In other words, intuitive thinking rapidly links objects and ideas without direct proof they're associated.) Often the intuitive person can't easily verbalise their thinking and tends to use personal experience to assess information.

The differences between analytical and intuitive thinking contribute to

the tension between science and the paranormal. Scientists often dismiss the 'intuitive' evidence of people poorly versed in analytical thinking about 'hard' data. As our editor noted in issue 43, when he discussed Tokoloshe and poltergeists, 'in any arena other than the "paranormal" such a wealth of testimony would be considered proof enough of truth'. Testimony may condemn in a court of law, but isn't enough to support the paranormal.

Yet scientific experiments test 'hypotheses' - often 'educated guesses' based on previous experience. Some insights are even more intuitive. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, chemists knew they could make a molecule called benzene that contained six carbon atoms and six hydrogen atoms. But they couldn't work out the atoms' arrangement. A German chemist, August Kekulé, tried numerous structures - none worked.

One evening Kekulé dreamed that black balls representing carbon turned into six black imps with forked tails racing around the room. With one hand, each imp grabbed the tail of the one ahead, forming a circle. In the other hand, the imp held a white handkerchief - representing hydrogen. Kekulé realised that in benzene carbon formed a ring, with each attached to one hydrogen atom. (How many modern scientists would admit they dreamt the answer to a chemical conundrum?) Years later, the 16-year-old Albert Einstein imagined chasing after a light beam. This famous 'thought experiment' helped Einstein develop his theory of special relativity.

As these examples show, neither analytical nor intuitive thinking is superior: they offer complementary insights. We may intuitively know the answer to a problem, but experience or experimentation needs to show we're right.

The paper in the *European Journal of Personality* suggested that people with 'magico-religious beliefs' showed 'high intuitive thinking, a humanistic world view and low analytical thinking'. I, in common, I suspect, with most *Paranormal* readers, regard 'high intuitive thinking' (and, for that matter 'a humanistic world view') as a complement in an age in danger of becoming counterintuitively over-analytical.

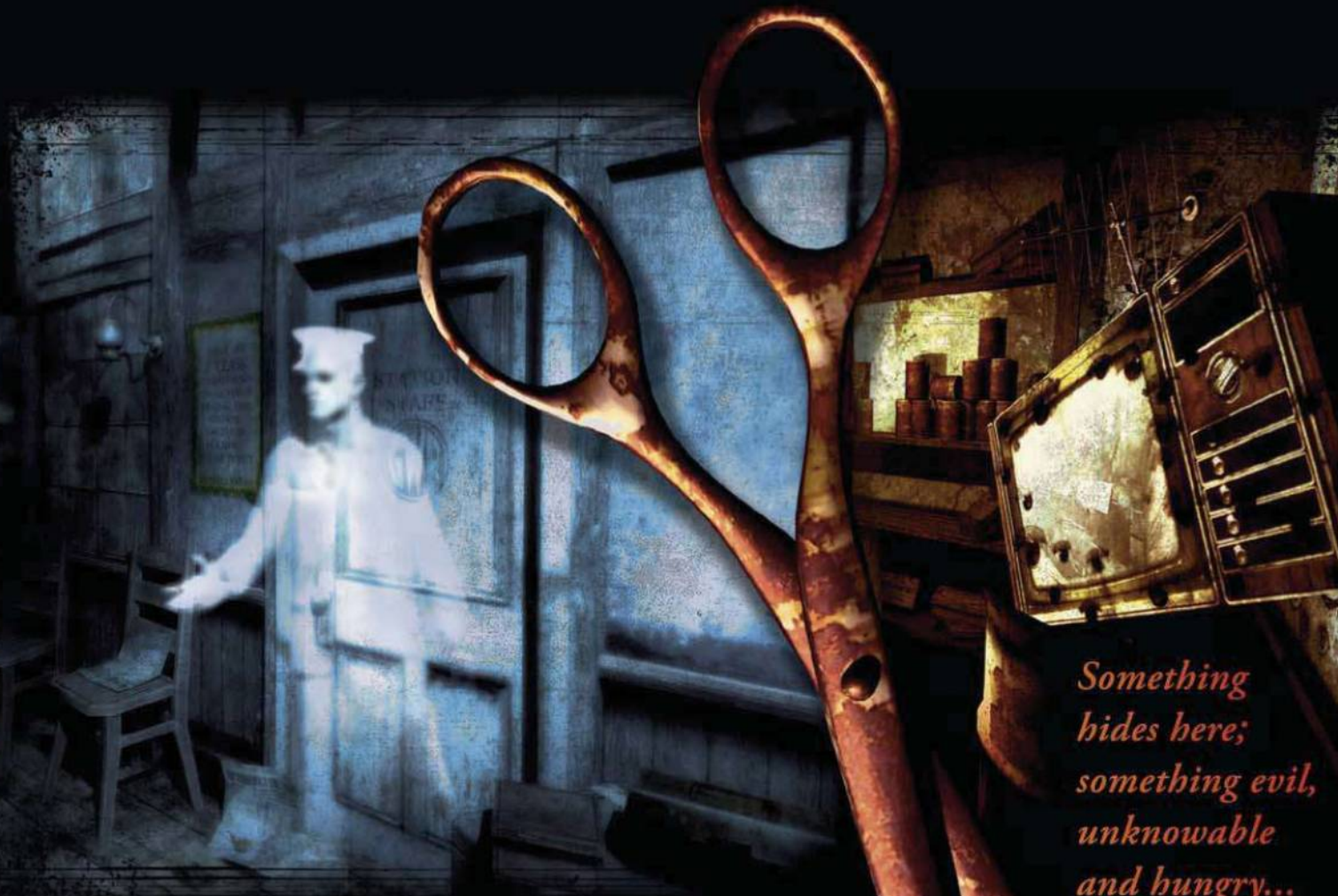
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Mark Greener is an award-winning freelance journalist specialising in health and bioscience. Mark is a former research scientist who has written widely on his life-long passion: cryptobiology. He's the author of nine books and his features have appeared in magazines worldwide. He lives between Cambridge and Ely and keeps a sharp look-out for the Fen Tiger but has sadly never even seen a footprint.

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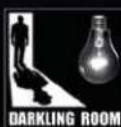
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Starter Kit 1	Starter Kit 5	Intermediate Kit 7	Intermediate-Pro KIT 9	Professional KIT 12
CODE: KIT001	CODE: KIT005	CODE: KIT007	CODE: KIT009	CODE: KIT012
<p><b>KIT Contains:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 x GM2 Gauss Master with backlight</li> <li>1 x MOT2 Beam Barrier Alarm</li> <li>1 x IRTN1 IR Thermometer</li> <li>1 x RT9 In/Out Dual Display Thermometer</li> <li>1 x TRCH1 Standard Torch</li> <li>Batteries for the above</li> <li>Plastic case with cut foam</li> <li>Introduction to ghost hunting sheet</li> </ul> <p>Presented in a sturdy plastic carry case with foam, two-part hinged and catches designed for frequent use.</p>	<p><b>KIT Contains:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 x GM2 Gauss Master with backlight</li> <li>1 x MOT7 Mini PIR Motion Detector with Remote</li> <li>1 x IRTN1 TN1 IR Thermometer</li> <li>1 x RT6 Hygro-Thermometer</li> <li>1 x RT9 In/Out Dual Display Thermometer</li> <li>1 x TRCH1 Standard Torch</li> <li>Batteries for the above</li> <li>Plastic case with cut foam</li> <li>Introduction to ghost hunting sheet</li> </ul> <p>Presented in a sturdy plastic carry case with foam, two-part hinged and catches designed for frequent use.</p>	<p><b>KIT Contains:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 x CELL1 CellSensor EMF Meter</li> <li>1 x IRT3 RayTemp 3 IR Thermometer</li> <li>1 x MOT2 Beam Barrier Alarm</li> <li>1 x RT6 Hygro-Thermometer</li> <li>1 x RT9 In/Out Dual Display Thermometer</li> <li>1 x TRCH1 Standard Torch</li> <li>Batteries for the above</li> <li>Aluminium flight case with cut foam</li> <li>Introduction to ghost hunting sheet</li> </ul> <p>With a high quality Aluminium flight case with foam, metal hinges, catches with locks and a shoulder strap.</p>	<p><b>KIT Contains:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 x GM2 Gauss Master with backlight</li> <li>1 x CELL1 CellSensor EMF Meter</li> <li>1 x MOT2 Beam Barrier Alarm</li> <li>1 x RT12 In/Out Dual Display Thermometer</li> <li>1 x IRTN2 TN2 IR Thermometer</li> <li>1 x MOT7 Mini PIR Motion Detector with Remote</li> <li>1 x TRCH1 Standard Torch</li> <li>Batteries for the above</li> <li>Aluminium flight case with cut foam</li> <li>Introduction to ghost hunting sheet</li> </ul> <p>With a high quality Aluminium flight case with foam, metal hinges, catches with locks and a shoulder strap.</p>	<p><b>KIT Contains:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 x GM2 Gauss Master with backlight</li> <li>1 x CELL1 CellSensor EMF Meter</li> <li>1 x MOT2 Beam Barrier Alarm</li> <li>1 x MOT7 Mini PIR Motion Detector with Remote</li> <li>1 x TLKR5 Motorola TLKR T5 2-Way Radio (Pair) Rechargeable</li> <li>1 x RT12 In/Out Dual Display Thermometer</li> <li>1 x RT6 Hygro-Thermometer</li> <li>1 x IRTN2 TN2 IR Thermometer</li> <li>1 x MIC1 Boundary Microphone</li> <li>1 x REC4 Cassette Recorder</li> <li>2 x TRCH1 Standard Torches</li> <li>1 x TDK90 90 Min Cassette tape</li> <li>Batteries for the above</li> <li>Aluminium flight case with cut foam</li> <li>Introduction to ghost hunting sheet</li> </ul>
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