

Paranormal Activity OR Paranoia *at the pub?*

Discover Bedfordshire reveals the results of Luton Paranormal Society's recent investigation at a pub that stands on one of the town's most historic sites.

Ghosts... Are they a replay of past events? Conscious entities of the deceased from another plane of existence? Or are they simply a figment of our imaginations? These are the questions that the Luton Paranormal Society seeks to find the answers to.

Luton Paranormal Society (LPS) was formed in 2003 for like-minded people with an interest in all things paranormal. In the last four years the group have investigated all manner of locations from haunted pubs and private residences, to ghostly roads, woods and battlefields.

In July 2007 LPS was given the opportunity to investigate one of Luton's most historic sites. The Biscot Mill public house, at the peak of Montrose Avenue in Luton, lies on the site of three previous windmills. If you ever visit the pub you will notice the millstones which are set into the concrete outside. There are also reports that a Neolithic long barrow once occupied the site, but evidence of this was unfortunately destroyed by extensive building and rebuilding works on the site over the centuries. >





The bar area inside the Biscot Mill, and inset, four members of LPS using an Ouija board in the pub

> Prior to the investigation a small team of LPS members visited The Biscot Mill to conduct baseline tests. These tests enable the group to get an understanding of the usual non-paranormal noises and readings at the site, including such things as temperature, EMF (electromagnetic field) and any other natural noises such as squeaky doors, floorboards, machinery etc. This will make sure that during the investigation they don't inadvertently record a squeaky door as a paranormal phenomenon, when it squeaks all day long anyway. The most scientific of these tests is the EMF readings, which are taken using special meters which gauge EMF in milligauss. If there is paranormal activity in an area of a building, the EMF reading should theoretically be higher there than in other places.

Vigils provided similar experiences within the teams. A figure was seen walking past the kitchen door.

The main investigation began with a series of experiments at The Biscot Mill. The first of which was the use of a Ouija board by some group members, while others recorded the event or observed. Now, before you clap your hand over your mouth in horror, remember not to believe everything you see in films or on television. Of the many times that LPS have used a Ouija board they stress that they have rarely experienced anything significant – let alone evil! Some small occurrences in the form of dark shadows were seen behind one of the bars during the sitting, as well as the impression of names and images. The séance that followed, in the pool room, again produced impressions. An impression of a man sitting in a chair looking at something in his lap was reported and another instance was of a wagging finger.

Smaller experiments using pendulums produced names, ages, years of birth and other family details, while dowsing rods that were used in the restaurant pin-pointed an area roughly 60cm across that caused the rods to react. The spot was challenged from different directions but the rods still reacted in the same place, even when the experimenter had their eyes closed.

One method that LPS nearly always practise on investigations is 'vigils'. These are synchronised periods where small teams occupy different areas of the building in the dark, taking recordings and observing their surroundings for any phenomena. The most reported experiences during vigils are from senses – seeing, hearing, feeling and smell. The vigil teams are required to record all their experiences, however insignificant they may seem, as it is important to have all the information so that it can be collated to highlight the areas or phenomena of interest. There were three areas the vigils concentrated on and these were rotated between the teams. At no time between vigils do the teams converse on their experiences so as to eliminate suggestion and (hopefully) provide independent witnessing of the same phenomena.

Noting the last few sentences, vigils conducted in the cellar at the Biscot Mill produced an auditory experience for two of the LPS teams. This was the sound of something heavy and wooden being dragged along the floor. There is a wooden door in the cellar but this was observed as not moving during the time the noise was heard. Small red, yellow and blue light anomalies were also seen in the cellar, as well as a larger flash of light on the ceiling beam.

Experiences noted during vigils in the main bar were of lights, shuffling/talking behind the bar and shadows. Two members in separate teams saw shadows in the same area. One member also had the impression of a small boy with curly auburn hair, wearing blue, kneeling next to what may have been a bed.

Vigils in the restaurant area of the pub also provided similar experiences within the teams. A figure was seen walking past the kitchen

door (inside the closed door which has a round window in it), and there were repeated reports of the sound of whistling by one team and the sound of whispering and talking.

One team decided to try Catoptromancy, which is a method of divination using a mirror, also known as scrying. One member concentrated on their reflection as the other observed their reflection. Faces were seen by both members, one of which was scowling and frowning. Nothing apart from faces were seen. During this time a camcorder nearby stopped recording. The battery and tape were checked, but the battery was not low and the tape was not at its end. A temperature drop of 2°C was also recorded at this time, falling from 27°C to 25°C.

This is just one of the many investigations that Luton Paranormal Society has conducted over the years. Every investigation is different and the reality of paranormal investigation is that sometimes it can be very quiet and very cold!

However, it just takes those one or two experiences where the logical explanations have been explored and failed to provide a conclusion that makes it all worthwhile for members of the group. Most people would agree that there is some other level to explore, whether

they perceive it as a spiritual world or purely psychological phenomena that have explanations that we have yet to discover. Whatever it is, there are investigators all over the world, and of course in Luton, who will continue to search for the truth.

We'll let you know when they find it...

For full details of Luton Paranormal Society and their investigations visit their website at www.lutonparanormal.com

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