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INVESTIGATORS' BULLETIN

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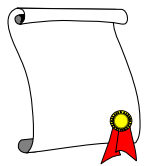
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CONGRATULATIONS!

The following people have all gained their A.I. status since Bulletin issue number 5:-

Michaela Symonds

Peter Symonds

Jean Porter

Lee Norton

Julian Perkins

David Tee

Philip Royce-Dexter

Simon Royce-Dexter

Stefan Lobuczek

Joanna Smith

Well done to all!

ASK AN AI

I would like to ask all you AIs what type of articles you would like to see in future Investigators' Bulletins?

Is there any aspect of investigating that you would like us to try and answer for you?

Could there be something you would like us to find out for you that could be printed as an article for everyone to benefit from?

Providing you do not ask me to carry out your research for you, I would be happy to try and help.

Would you like to submit an article for publishing?

Please remember that this is YOUR Bulletin. Your contributions will be most welcome.

Please contact me at:

deputy.nic@assap.org

Here is the latest in the series of articles written by our new Chair, Dave Wood.

Paranormal in the Media: Tell Them Everything, Then Tell Them Again!

By Dave Wood, ASSAP Chairman

Since the last Investigators' Bulletin the Western Daily Press regional newspaper has printed another excellent ASSAP-related 'issues' article.

<http://www.p-s-i.org.uk/WestPressParapsychology.JPG> (would recommend downloading and reading in a viewer)

However during the course of the article's publication I have been taught the lesson of not taking knowledge for granted, even in an ongoing relationship.

Building relationships with journalists is recognised as an integral part of media liaison, regardless of what field you operate in. To the paranormal researcher who elects to work with the media having a regular journalist contact is useful. He or she will know about your group and will know your boundaries, ending the need for the endless rounds of explanations and laying down the law needed in dealing with the mass media - or so you might think.

I have had an ongoing journalistic relationship with the same reporter from the Western Daily Press for some months. This relationship is a distinct advantage as the journalist is knowledgeable, sound and is daring in what he will print. Most journalists would flinch at the prospect of running an article that was not a slap-heap of cliché, appealing to the lowest common denominator. However the WDP have run leading articles on the 'orbs-as-dust' theory and now on the subject of 'false' parapsychologists - neither of these could be described as exciting or chilling. I'm just grateful for a newspaper that will report on real issues rather than 'chilling' events.

However just when you begin to relax in the level of knowledge a journalist has in you and your group, you make a fatal mistake. In the case of the article on 'false' parapsychologists I, myself, was quoted as a "qualified psychologist". Whilst the irony of this turn of events wasn't lost on me, I was nevertheless not overly happy about being displayed as something I'm not. After conferring with the journalist it emerged that, in briefing him about our background, I had mentioned that my co-founder and myself had studied Psychology at University. So my attributed status was an innocent and easy mistake to make.

The lesson I learnt from that experience is to 'tell them, and then tell them again!' Never rely on any media representative having prior knowledge of yourself or your group. Journalists are only human and can only hold so much information in their brain, and like the rest of us they have a tendency to fill in the blanks.

Thanks Dave for yet another information packed and interesting article!

Following on from the 2006 training day in Oxford, I thought it might be useful to highlight some of the reasoning and practices concerning vigils. Here is the first instalment:-

WHY DO WE VIGIL ?

We usually undertake a vigil when all other explanations are exhausted or when we want to confirm what we have already found.

At this point we feel that the way forward is to arrange an investigation to try and find the cause, or the source of, the reported phenomenon.



HOW DO WE START?

All the necessary background work has been completed. We have been and interviewed the witness/witnesses and have hopefully managed to take a set of base readings at the initial interview. This is so that we have at least one set of readings to compare future readings with.

We will also, hopefully, have managed to draw up a set of floor plans of the location, even if not to scale or accurate! These will help us to plan our vigil and on large scale investigations may well prevent people from getting lost! Some locations will have floor plans already drawn for health and safety reasons. Why not ask if we can obtain a copy of those? We can use these plans to mark the areas of the reported phenomenon and utilise our team of investigators in the most beneficial way.



POINTS TO REMEMBER

Please ensure that the client fully understands what a vigil will entail and that they agree to everything you are planning.

Tell them what you intend to do and how many people you will be bringing with you on the investigation.

Most importantly, make sure you assure your client of **complete confidentiality!**

Here is the final instalment of the series by Terri Settingington about drugs.

COLD AND FLU TREATMENTS

The cold season is upon us once again and is commonly the time that we reach for the nearest medication to ease our symptoms, rarely giving unwanted side effects a second thought.

As paranormal investigators we are very aware that substances we put into our own body such as alcohol and medication can affect mental reasoning and therefore hamper objective thought and action. Therefore we refrain from alcohol and medication prior to investigations. However, do our clients realise that their mental reasoning can be affected by simple cold cures? Because of this it is an investigators' responsibility to have a basic understanding of the everyday substances that could affect an individual's ability to perceive phenomena in a clear and sensible way. By allowing for this during the initial interview stage an investigator can ensure the correct questions are asked..." have you recently been taking any over the counter medication for minor illness such as a cold?"

What is a cold?

A mild viral infection, involving the nose and respiratory passages (But not the lungs). The symptoms include sneezing, sniffing, running and/or a blocked nose, scratchy, sore or phlegmy throat, coughing, headache and an overall general malaise. The symptoms last between 3-10 days but residual coughing can last for up to 3 weeks.

What is flu?

An acute viral infection of the respiratory tract caused by one of three strains of the influenza virus (A, B, or C). Flu is highly contagious.

Commonly used treatments.

Antibiotics - Powerless in the treatment of a virus unless nasal mucous becomes discoloured or blood stained which usually shows that the infection has now become bacterial. Antibiotics have few side effects that directly affect mental reasoning but they can cause symptoms that weaken the human body, leaving an individual tired/drowsy.

Decongestants - (Pseudoephedrine / phenylephrine)

Side effects include; Tachycardia (fast heart rate), anxiety, restlessness, insomnia, hallucinations, body rash, blurred vision and photophobia.

Scenario - a client reports a strange feeling at the top of the stairs in their home. They report... "When I get to the top of the stairs my heart is beating fast and I feel anxious". As the investigator you need to consider your options... Could this be because;

- a) they have exerted themselves whilst climbing the stairs*
- b) they are experiencing something paranormal*
- c) they are taking a well known decongestant*

Answer - there is no clear-cut answer, but if an investigator is able to review all possibilities they can make an informed decision about whether the case is worthy of investigation.

Analgesia/Antipyretics (medication used to control aches and pains or high temperatures) - **Ibuprofen**. Side effects include; dizziness, nausea, blurred vision, nervousness, depression, drowsiness, hearing disturbances, and photosensitivity.

Naproxen. Side effects include; Drowsiness, confusion, psychiatric disturbances, depression and blurred vision.

Codeine. Side effects include; nausea, drowsiness, dizziness, muscle rigidity, dry mouth, sweating, headache, facial flushing, bradycardia (slow heart beat), tachycardia (fast heart rate), palpitations, hallucinations, dysphoria (mania in an agitated way), and mood changes.

Cough suppressants - (codeine linctus / pholcodine)

Side effects include; nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dizziness, drowsiness and dependence.

Antihistamines - (piriton / hydroxyzine / phenergan)

Antihistamines block the action of a substance that causes sneezing and a runny nose but they can make you sleepy and affect your normal perception.

Alternative remedies (which will not alter perception)

- Garlic - good for symptom control and its added bonus is it keeps vampires away!
- Echinacea, golden seal, liquorice, astragalus - herbal remedies
- Bioflavonoids 500mg/day.
- Vitamin C 500mg - 1000mg every 1-2 hours helps with reducing symptoms but can cause excessive flatulence and diarrhoea.
- Zinc gluconate lozenges every 2 hours will help to rev up the immune system and ease your sore throat.

And finally.....

"The old German cure"

Get into a four poster bed, hang a hat on one of the posts. Drink schnapps until you can see two hats!!! It may not cure your cold but it sure takes care of your symptoms.



Terri Settingington 2006

This series of articles has been extremely useful and it is well worth everyone keeping a list of widely used drugs and their side effects. Thank you Terri for all your hard work. Well done!

Hints and Tips

It may be extremely useful for you to consider using an MP3 player/recording device during your interviews, and on your actual investigation vigils. These lightweight devices, which are usually hung around your neck and are therefore no carriage, serve three main functions:

The first is to record your interviews (as long as you have the witnesses' permission to record them) so that you get your facts straight.

The second is to act as a log of incidents during the vigil. This comes in extremely handy when writing up those reports! Turn them off during break times to act as time markers for you as well.

Finally, the third use for these handy gadgets is to record and later analyse any unaccountable voices or noises that may occur during the vigil.

Please remember though that although these devices are extremely useful, the earphones may act as an arial and should therefore be disconnected during recording. Also be aware of your own sounds. Sighing, puffing and yawning can easily be mistaken as EVP!

Be sure not to hang anything else around your neck either, as the clashing noises can drive you mad when trying to listen to your recordings.

Current Cases

- Caroline Pick's investigation into the haunting of an office block in Nottinghamshire has been continuing, with a further vigil being held, involving members of ASSAP and LPA. Incidents occurring during the vigil included one investigator's neck going inexplicably red and an unexplained light suddenly appearing in a corridor.
- Both Caroline Pick and Terry Hewitt have been looking into reports of phenomena at the site of the Battle of Bosworth.
- Cherill, assisted by members of Paranormal Awakenings, has held a further vigil at a hotel in Shropshire.
- In Staffordshire, Cherill's investigations into haunting phenomena at a nightclub and at a shop have been continuing, with a further vigil being held at each location.
- Still in Staffordshire, Cherill has been investigating a poltergeist case at a former vicarage, has an investigation in progress at a priory and is looking into reported apparitions at a further site in the county.
- Cherill is looking into a paranormal disturbance on the stairs of a house in the West Midlands.
- Annette Lenton has been looking into the case of a lady in Surrey who claims to spontaneously experience telepathy and precognition and who has an anomalous video.
- Kevin Griffiths-Boden has been carrying out an investigation at a farmhouse in North Wales, where the owners claim that images spontaneously appear on the walls (usually in Welsh), that apparitions have been seen, that a heavy object has been moved around the house and that miraculous healings occur in one of the farm's fields. Sounds too good to be true? Well, it might be, as Kevin is struggling to be given details of any independent witnesses from whom he can obtain corroborative statements or for him or his investigative colleagues from Ghanon to actually witness anything themselves, despite having spent time at the location.
- A ghost hunting team from Derbyshire, with a (suspiciously) close relationship to a film company has obtained what they claim to be an anomalous voice recorded on a camcorder at Pembroke Castle (public domain case). They were making a TV program called 'Restless Spirits'. The crew present actually heard the voice, as well as having recorded it. The case is being coordinated by Jean Porter, who has interviewed the lady running the group concerned and passed the recording to Dr Simon Sherwood, Dr David Stevenson and Alan Tigwell for their opinions as to whether there is really anything anomalous about it. Whilst the consensus seems to be that it is a human voice, it is difficult to tell whether this is a hoax, a paranormal occurrence or an incident with some other

explanation. The feeling is that it will be difficult to throw more light on the matter without some ASSAP investigators actually visiting the castle. Terry and Jean are intending to visit the castle, to examine the layout of the area concerned and to carry out tests to simulate a hoax, etc. If any AIs are interested in joining them for this visit, please make contact either with Bill or with Terry Porter (TerryP@fsmail.net). In both this and the previous case (of Kevin's), there is the possibility, of course, of clients producing a hoax and then looking for a respected organisation such as ASSAP to give scientific credence to their experiences; however the AIs involved won't commit to a paranormal explanation without good objective evidence, of course.

- Simon Royce-Dexter has interviewed a young lady in Derbyshire who claims to have had minor psychokinetic effects take place at her house.
- Rhiannon Ashmore has been to interview the landlady of an allegedly haunted pub in North Yorkshire.
- Susan Vousden is making enquiries as to whether ASSAP will be permitted to look into a domestic poltergeist case in Essex.
- Damien O'Dell is looking into what the cause might be of a strange light entering the bedroom of a gentleman in Suffolk.
- Some anomalous photos (no - not simply orbs) have been submitted by a lady in the West Midlands and Dave Taylor is looking into the possible explanations.
- As a result of an article having been printed about a haunting at a school in Hereford & Worcester, Barry Fitzpatrick approached the school for permission to investigate but, alas, was informed that there was no paranormal activity and that the newspaper article must have been a hoax. Of course, in a situation like this, there may be a kernel of truth in such articles, but one can understand it if a school wishes to play the matter down, in order not to put off prospective pupils.
- Michael Lewis has been examining an anomalous video recording obtained by a ghost-hunting group in the grounds of a chapel in Hertfordshire.
- Tamsin Ashmore and Bill have been to interview a couple in South Yorkshire where certain psychokinetic and apparitional effects had taken place, centered mainly around their children. Down to Earth explanations are, in true ASSAP fashion, being looked for but on a psychical level Tamsin sensed an involvement by the children's (deceased) great-grandfather. The mother had been quite frightened by the incidents but Tamsin did a good job of putting the lady's mind at rest.
- An article in a local paper about apparitions being sighted by a barman and barmaid at a pub in South Yorkshire prompted Bill to write to the barman, seeking permission for an investigation. The witness phoned back to say that he and the landlord were amenable to the idea of an investigation being carried out and so Bill is about to interview the witness. All AIs are asked to keep a lookout in local papers for anything strange going on in their respective areas.

Sending a letter on ASSAP headed notepaper explaining what ASSAP can do and seeking permission for an investigation sometimes leads to a 'foot in the door', as in this case - and sometimes not, but it's always worth a try! Any AI requiring a blank letter heading (which can then be photocopied) is asked to send an SAE to Bill.

It is in everyone's interest to keep Bill informed of your latest cases and to keep him up to date with the progress of your investigations. We are always on hand to help with your report writing as well.

And to follow with instalment number two:-

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

Decide how many people you need to complete the investigation in a professional manner, without going overboard! Think about the size of the location, the phenomenon reported and what equipment you intend to use. Only have the amount of people you really need. Also take into consideration the kind of people you are involving. This may seem obvious but it is so easily overlooked when taking names, particularly from a paranormal group! Plan the areas you are going to cover and decide where you want to place your people. You don't need three people in a small box-room of a three-bed semi, just as two people in a



Great Hall of a manor house, would also be of little benefit! Let common sense rule! Decide what equipment you are going to need and where you plan to put it. Work your investigators around the equipment. Make sure your client knows all about the equipment. It would be awful to simply turn up carting loads of bags and boxes into a person's home without prior warning. Talk to your client beforehand and tell them exactly what you are going to bring along, what it roughly looks like and what it actually does. If your client doesn't want such equipment in their homes, you have to honour their decision. Your client may want to pull out altogether! If they do, let them! Do not ask questions why. Then, if they have a change of heart, you may be invited to carry on with your investigation.

Remember - your clients' interest is your main priority!

And on that note.....

**WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR AND
EVENTFUL INVESTIGATIONS TO EVERYONE!**