

ISSUE 138
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seriously
strange
magazine

**Ghost Story:
The Many Haunts
Of Mary Blandy**

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Diary of an ASSAP Trainee

Ghost Photos

An Adventure in Time

How to Hunt Monsters Part 4

EMFs and Spirit Mediumship

EMFs and Paranormal Phenomena

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Brian Laythe Ph.D

The Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena was formed in 1981 to research and education about a wide range of anomalous phenomena.

These fall into the broad categories of psychic phenomena, earth mysteries, Ufology and Fortean phenomena. ASSAP holds no corporate views and the views expressed by individual authors are their own.

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New Website Members Password:

Username 'assapmember' password 'xenonormal'

Are you on Email?

We like to keep in touch with members from time to time by email. If you haven't received an email from us please email your name and email address to chairman@assap.ac.uk so you can keep up to date!

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Groups provide incidental support for ASSAP's charitable objects by acting as forums for research. Should you wish to affiliate or start a group please contact assap@assap.ac.uk

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GHANON is a group covering Wirral, Cheshire and North Wales. Membership by invitation. Contactingq@ghanon.org.uk or visit www.ghanon.org.uk

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PARANORMAL SITE INVESTIGATORS (PSI) Operates in Wiltshire and surrounding area and produces e-newsletters and research journals. Contact Dave or Nicky through www.p-s-i.org.uk HauntedSwindon.com TheOrbZone.com or 0845 6521529.

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PLYMOUTH ASSAP Operates in Plymouth, South Devon and South East Cornwall. Contact Lee at eustacetuttle@yahoo.co.uk

SPIRIT TEAM UK Operates in the Midlands, with meetings at Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Coventry. Contact Alan at enquiries@spiritteamuk.com or visit www.spiritteamuk.com

STAFFORDSHIRE PARANORMAL STUDY GROUP (SPSG)

Monthly meetings in Stoke on Trent. Contact Terri at thespsg@yahoo.co.uk or visit www.spsg.org.uk

SUPERNATURAL INVESTIGATIONS UK (SI) are based in Devon and Somerset and Cornwall but also operate further afield, mainly focusing on hauntings. Contact Stuart at stuart@supernaturalinvestigations.org.uk

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Two extra training weekends



By popular demand!

Overwhelming demand for ASSAP investigator training has meant that our usual one or two weekends per year are not keeping up with the number of people who want to train.

Please find a form enclosed to book onto one of our courses right away, as they keep selling out.

Introduction to Scientific Investigation

The basic training weekend if you're new to ASSAP. 26-27 May at Oxenwood nr Marlborough, Wiltshire. Basic accommodation and non-evening meals provided. This course covers the basic skills and knowledge needed to start investigating.

The Advanced Training Weekend

16-17 June at Legge House in Wroughton. This is for people who have attended the basic weekend or those who want a refresher. It covers advanced knowledge, practical aspects and advanced interviewing. Contact Claire on events@assap.ac.uk for information.

About ASSAP Training

ASSAP Training is fun and inclusive. Many people come by themselves and immediately feel welcome and supported. Because it's residential people have a great time, get to network with like-minded people and learn a few new things. Book quickly before it sells out!



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I arrived at Legge House Conference Centre in Wroughton on a crisp cold morning, in a slightly apprehensive but excited frame of mind, ready for my first training weekend.



The Centre was established in 1865 and received charitable status in 1967 and offered a relaxing rural setting for nearly 30 would-be ASSAP Accredited Investigators (AAs) on the Saturday 21 January. I was joined by trainers Dave Wood, Nicky Sewell and Trystan Swale and Wendy Milner David Ian Ball, Simone Taylor and Steve Wills who were acting as team leaders for the weekend.

We started off, after registration and introduction, with an icebreaker to get to know one another better. When we had established who had a tattoo or piercing, those who used to watch Most Haunted and who could roll their tongue, complete with demonstration, it was time to start.

Trystan kicked off with an interesting and far ranging talk on the variety of anomalous phenomena we investigate which included everything from cryptozoology to crop circles. Lunch gave everyone the opportunity to network and eat copious amounts of sandwiches, crisps and cakes and in the

early afternoon we tackled how to find and handle private paranormal cases. After a well deserved break we talked about good practice in interviewing clients and took part in a practical exercise to test our skills. Wendy, David, Simone and Nicky acted as interviewees for the fictional case which was to provide the basis for the rest of the weekend. After Oscar-worthy performances, including gender changes for Wendy and

Nicky, we discussed the value of a good preliminary investigation, client feedback and reporting writing.

After a long and tiring day everyone retired to a nearby pub for an evening meal and a chance to socialise before returning to Legge House to continue the party. I left after the meal but I understand the pool table bought out the competitive element in some.

On Sunday everyone was refreshed and ready to go. After the Annual Meeting of the Association in the morning, and the obligatory group photograph, we had a lot of fun with the 'How

not to run a paranormal investigation' module. There were some lively exchanges regarding the use of mediums, the place of historical research and the validity of certain equipment during investigations. As a team leader I was obliged to help with the cleaning before lunch but, after battling with Henry the Hoover, I returned to my team for 'How to conduct a scientific investigation'. After lunch it was the last leg of the weekend covering analysing evidence and looking at the ASSAP report form before final conclusions, close and journey home.

It was a long but rewarding weekend and hopefully the attendees felt the same. Many of those present expressed the desire to attend an advanced training weekend so the experience must have been a positive one. There is a great demand for these courses and there is a possibility that another introductory training session could be held in the spring with an advanced session in the summer. Watch this space!

By Alison Wills



Wanted: Social Media Officer

ASSAP is seeking a Social Media Officer to drive ASSAP's e-communications portfolio.

Social media is a great way to reach out to new researchers and new members and involve people in our education and research outreach.

If you have the time and the skills to join our team email the chairman, Dave Wood, on chairman@assap.ac.uk

Join our Investigations or Research Team

The new National Investigations Committee and National Research Committee have been formed and are busy rising to the challenges of an increased interest in ASSAP. There are still places available on these committees. If you have experience of investigation or strong administrative skills (and have been trained as an investigator) please do get in touch. If you have a specialist area of research or would like to be involved in engaging members and the research community in ASSAP we'd like to hear from you. Email chairman@assap.ac.uk for an application form.

New Directors: Enter the Professionals

The ASSAP Board of Directors has appointed three new members.

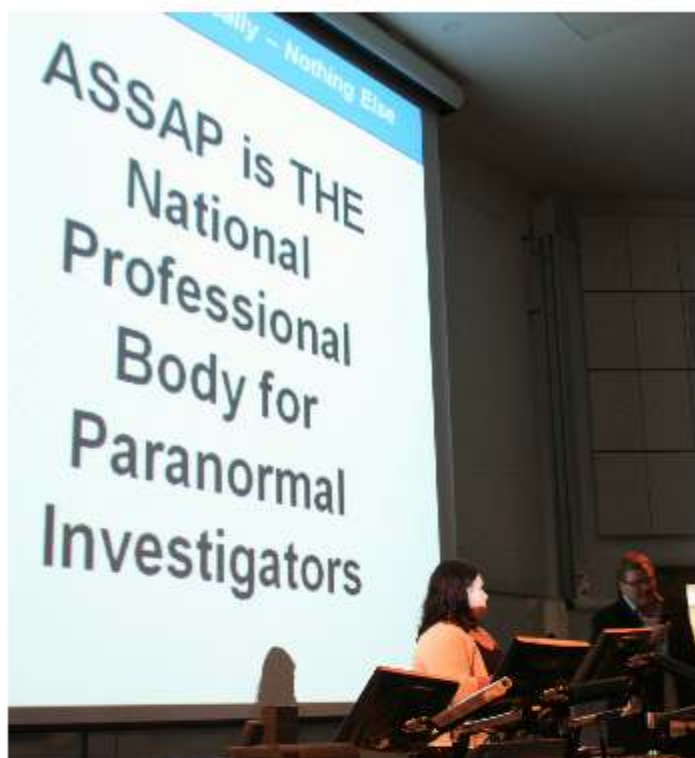
Alison Wills takes the helm as Publications Managing Editor and David Ball and Simone Taylor fill the new post of Education Officer. Alison works for one of the UK research councils with experience of co-ordinating peer-review, a valuable skill to bring to ASSAP's peer-reviewed journal *Anomaly*. David and Simone are both education professionals and will be working on E-Learning and ASSAP's continuous improvement.

AN ASSAP WEDDING!



ASSAP's Chairman and Training Officer, Dave Wood and Nicky Sewell, got married on 4th February 2012. Their wedding blessing was performed by ASSAP President Reverend Lionel Fanthorpe at Lydiard House - where guests were trapped in a snowstorm! - and is the site of much ASSAP research. Numerous ASSAP members were in attendance.

Professional Body Update



Following ASSAP's recognition as a professional body a consultation and review has been taking place and the majority of members contributed to this. The new National Investigations Committee are working on a Code of Ethics which will form the basis of the ASSAP National Register of Professional Investigators. The Education Officers are also working on an E-Learning package on ethics to support this. If you would like to be consulted on the Code of Ethics before the draft is published email chairman@assap.ac.uk

In the coming months ASSAP will launch the National Register of Professional Investigators and will be inviting investigators who are members of ASSAP to get involved.

A Preview of What's Next:

Free professional indemnity and public liability insurance

A professional code of ethics

National Professional Register for groups and individuals

Our National Investigations Committee are working hard, ready for the launch. If you would like to be part of the first tranche of people to become professional members of ASSAP contact Dave on chairman@assap.ac.uk

TELEPHONE CALLS
FROM THE
DEAD



CALLUM E. COOPER

New Book by ASSAP Member

ASSAP members publish books all the time but Cal Cooper's new book - Telephone Calls From the Dead - has a long association with ASSAP.

In the last two editions of *Anomaly: Journal Research into the Paranormal*, Cal has published his findings to general interest. Cal also presented his research to the Seriously Strange ASSAP 30th anniversary conference.

For details of how to buy the book visit Cal's website:
www.calcooper.com



GHOST PHOTOS

By Maurice Townsend

This is a series of articles examining the basic questions of paranormal research. Though primarily aimed at those new to the subject, some old hands may also find something of interest.

Q: *What does a photo of a ghost look like?*

A: When people report seeing ghosts they usually say they look just like normal people. The only reason they know it's a ghost is because the figure may vanish, walk through a wall, be present in an unoccupied locked room or do something else that's impossible. But photos reported as showing ghosts are generally quite different. Many show a transparent figure or even no figure at all, just a mist or shadow. In some cases, people report seeing a face, and nothing else. There are a few ghost photos showing a normal, solid figure but that is usually where there was supposedly no such person present at the time.

Q: *Why do ghost photos differ so much from reports of ghost sightings?*

A: In virtually every ghost photo case, the figure, face, mist or whatever was not seen by the photographer at the time of the exposure. In other words, it is assumed that there was an invisible ghost present. In very few cases did the photographer think there was a ghost present, invisible or otherwise, at the time they took the photo.

Q: *So do different 'rules' apparently apply to seeing ghosts and photographing them?*

A: In reality many, if not all, apparent ghost photos have natural explanations. Transparent figures, for instance, are typically caused by someone moving in or out of shot during a long exposure. In many cases the long exposure was accidental and the photographer was unaware

of it. Mists are often the result of the photographer's own breath becoming visible on a dark, cold night. The intense light of a flash can pick it up even when it is invisible to those present at the time.

Q: *What about photos featuring normal-looking people not present at the time of the exposure?*

A: When people take photos they do not typically remember

everything that was going on at the time. It is like expecting someone to remember precisely what they could see when they got off a bus last Tuesday. Although photographers might be expected to notice a person who was in their shot when they did not want them there, this does not always happen. Whenever we look at photos we've taken there are nearly always things present that we did not notice at the time. When someone is taking a photo they will be concentrating on framing the subject and



Photo: W Milner

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may not notice someone else who has strayed into the picture, usually in the background.

Q: *What if the photographer is absolutely certain there were no figures in their shot when they took it?*

A: You can get a particularly spooky kind of apparent ghost with a long exposure. You take the shot you want but don't realise the camera shutter is still open. This can happen with some night modes on cameras that combine a flash with a long exposure. You get a nice, crisp shot of your intended subject, when the flash goes off, but then point the camera away, thinking the shutter is closed. If there is a person, or object, which is well illuminated and happens to be picked up by the long exposure, they can appear to be in the original frame of the final photo. Often such 'extra' figures are transparent because they are not well exposed. They may also be blurred and 'out of scale' with the rest of the photo (maybe appearing unusually large or small compared to similar objects in the shot).

Q: *What about pictures of shadow ghosts?*

A: Some pictures of apparent shadow ghosts are clearly just normal shadows that happen to resemble a human figure. It is unlikely that a photographer would notice such a shadow at the time. They only see it when they can examine the photo at leisure later. Cameras can also change the extent of shadows, compared to what can be seen with the naked eye. That's because cameras do not react to light in exactly the same way as people's eyes. In particular, digital camera sensors have less latitude than either photographic film or eyes. Latitude is, in essence, the number of shades of grey between black and white. Digital camera sensors have fewer of these than human eyes, so a shadow may appear darker to a camera than a person on the spot. This can change a shadow's apparent extent, shape and darkness. It may make a shadow look more like a human figure than would be apparent to a witness present at the time.

Q: *So what would a photo of a real ghost look like?*

A: If someone saw a ghost and took a photo of it at the time, and it looked like what they were seeing, then we'd know for certain. Of course, in such a case, you'd have to completely rule out the possibility that it was a real human being! This comes down to doing a full investigation of the incident.

Judging from reports of those who have seen ghosts, I guess it would look like a normal human being. It's possible there are many photos of ghosts around already and no one knows because they just assume they show real people.

Q: *How should you photograph a ghost if you see one?*

A: Take as many shots as possible, not just one. And after the ghost has gone, take more shots of the surrounding area. You should also, obviously, conduct an on-site investigation of the incident, at the time, to eliminate the possibility of things like misperception, or even seeing a real person! If you happen to see someone in period costume walking down the street, for instance, you cannot automatically assume it is a ghost. It could be someone going to a fancy dress party or a historical re-enactment!

Q: *What should you do if you think you have a photo of a ghost?*

A: You can send it to ASSAP (photoquery@assap.ac.uk) for comment if you don't have the relevant expertise to analyse it yourself.

**Send your ghost photos to
photoquery@assap.ac.uk
for expert analysis**

Sir Robert Victor Goddard (1897-1987), formerly Wing Commander Goddard of the R.A.F. as he was in 1935, became involved in what seems to have been a curious adventure in time - or some unknown dimension. Goddard is an ideal - and very prestigious - witness. He joined the Royal Navy in 1910 and served with distinction in the R.N. Air Services, before transferring to the R.A.F. He was Deputy Director of Intelligence at the Air Ministry in 1938 and 1939, and served with the British Expeditionary Force in France in 1939. He was also in charge of the highly effective New Zealand Air Force in the South Pacific in 1941. From 1946-1948, he served as the R.A.F. Representative in Washington, before he retired in 1951.

Goddard's 1935 adventure involving what seems to have been some sort of time slip - or possibly an encounter with a parallel universe, or probability track - occurred when he had gone to inspect a disused WWI airfield at Drem, near Edinburgh. Drem provided a depressing landscape of dereliction and dilapidation: hangars were in need of repair and tarmac was badly cracked. It clearly looked as if the airfield had not been used for years. Cattle were grazing there. It was a familiar, peaceful and long-used pasture as far as they were concerned. Goddard resumed his flight.

The weather deteriorated dramatically. Skilful and experienced pilot though he was, the weather forced his Hawker Hart down sharply. Goddard only just managed to control her a few feet above the ground - but the plane recovered. Flying back towards Drem to make sure that he was where he thought he was, Goddard saw that the airfield had undergone an incredible change since he had

inspected it earlier in the day. The grazing cattle had gone. The grass was neatly trimmed. The place was in excellent repair. Brightly coloured *yellow* planes were on the ground. Mechanics in *blue* uniforms were busily attending to them.

The torrential rain and storm-force winds had gone. Drem airfield was now in bright sunlight - although something about the sunlight seemed unreal, more like stage lighting on a vast scale. Although Wing Commander Goddard was flying low over the airfield *none of the ground-crew seemed to be aware that his Hawker Hart was just above them.*

He was greatly surprised by the episode - not least because in 1935 R.A.F. planes were normally *silver* or *aluminium* coloured, and engineers wore *khaki* clothing.

Four years later WW2 broke out and Goddard had to make another visit to Drem: the restored and refurbished airfield was now identical to the one that he had seen in his 'time-slip' vision in 1935. The planes were painted yellow, and the engineers wore blue overalls.



Wing Commander Goddard's Hawker Hart biplane

Robert Goddard's

By President and First Lady,
Lionel and Patricia Fanthorpe

ADVENTURE IN TIME

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THE MANY

Mary Blandy

By Ian Topham, Heritage Officer

Amongst the many suitors no doubt attracted by Mr Blandy's reputed wealth was Captain William Henry Cranstoun, fifth son of Lord William Canstoun and Jean Kerr. His commission had been purchased for him by his uncle Lord Mark Kerr. Cranstoun was received well by the Blandy Family and Mary fell in love with him.

Unfortunately, Cranstoun had already married a lady named Anne Murray in Leith on 22 May 1744 and they had a child together. According to the Newgate Calendar 'Cranstoun, apprehending that Miss Blandy might discover that he had a wife in Scotland, informed her that he was involved in a disagreeable lawsuit in that country with a young lady, who claimed him as a husband; and so sure was he of the interest he had obtained in Miss Blandy's affections, that he had the confidence to ask her if she loved him well enough to wait the issue of the affair. She told him that, if her father and mother approved of her staying for him, she had no objection.'

It is thought that Mary and Cranstoun would take walks together through the grounds of Park Place, which is the first of our potential hauntings. At this time Park Place was the property of Frederick, Prince of Wales and Mary is said to haunt the estate. It is interesting to note that Park Place was sold in 2011 for £ 140 million, making it the most expensive home sale in Britain.

Cranstoun's affair with Mary came to the attention of Lord Mark Kerr who wrote to Francis Blandy informing him of the Captain's wife and child. Alarmed Mr Blandy informed Mary who of course been prepared for this following Cranstoun's lie. When questioned by Mr Blandy, Captain Cranstoun insisted that his

It was over a decade ago that my brother, then living in Oxfordshire, made me aware of Mary Blandy the most famous ghost of Henley on Thames. It was not until fairly recently though that I really took an interest, after realising that there are locations not only in Oxfordshire, but Buckinghamshire and Berkshire with claims to her ghost. Trying to identify the exact locations she haunts is not easy, especially as a local term for seeing a ghost is to say "I have seen Mary Blandy" and I'm sure some of the stories of her ghost are possibly folklore or myth. However, let us take a look at some of her many haunts.

Mary Blandy was the only daughter of Francis Blandy, a wealthy and eminent attorney and town-clerk in Henley on Thames. Mary was described in the Newgate Calendar as being 'educated with the utmost tenderness; and every possible care was taken to impress her mind with sentiments of virtue and religion.....She had read the best authors in the English language, and had a memory remarkably retentive of the knowledge she had acquired. In a word, she excelled most of her sex in those accomplishments which are calculated to grace and dignify the female mind.'

marriage was 'only an affair of gallantry, of which he should have no difficulty to free himself.'

Mr Blandy was not convinced of Cranstoun's motives though his wife seemed to have been quite taken by him. In fact on one visit to Turville Court in Buckinghamshire with Mary, she fell ill and cried out "Let Cranstoun be sent for." When he arrived after leaving his regiment in Southampton she exclaimed "My dear Cranstoun, I am glad you are come; I shall now grow well soon!"



Blandy House

The current Turville Court, on Dolesden Lane was built in 1847 to replace the early building built by Robert Doyley in 1635, which is likely to have been the one visited the Blandy family. (Please note that Turville Court is private property). The apparition of a young woman is thought to haunt Dolesden Lane in Turville. According to the Luton Paranormal website 'One witness was pushing his bicycle along the road when he saw someone approaching. It was a bright, moonlit night and he could clearly see that she was wearing old-fashioned clothes. As she approached he could hear the rustle of her skirt. Not wanting to frighten her, as it was late at night, he walked past her without acknowledging that she was there. As they passed he thought that it might have been reassuring for her if he had raised his cap and wished her goodnight. He turned round but there was no one there, yet he could still hear the rustling of her skirt. She was also seen by two other residents of Turville on a dark night. A man and his wife were walking down the lane when they saw 'something' pass them by and they could hear the rustling of a silk dress. They turned to see what it was but there was nothing there.' It has been suggested that this apparition is Mary Blandy.

Following the eventual death of Mrs Blandy, Mary's father began to exhibit his evident dislike of Cranstoun, who suggested to his lover that some powders he could send down from

Scotland would change Mr Blandy's feelings toward him. To avoid suspicion of what the powders may be the note that he sent accompanying them read, "Powders to clean the Scotch pebbles."

The powders were actually poisonous and Mary applied them to her father's gruel.

Her actions did

not go unnoticed by the household staff. It was realised that Francis Blandy was poisoned before he died as he first became ill and was attended by a physician. It was also known that Mary had administered the poison. The Newgate Calendar describes the scene in which she confessed to Mr Blandy on his death bed, "Banish me where you please; do with me what you please, so you do but forgive me; and, as for Cranstoun, I will never see him, speak to him, or write to him, as long as I live, if you will forgive me."

In reply to this the father said, "I forgive thee, my dear, and I hope God will forgive thee, but thou shouldst have considered before thou attemptedst any thing against thy father; thou shouldst have considered I was thy own father."

Miss Blandy now acknowledged that she had put powder in his gruel, but that it was for an innocent purpose; on which the father, turning in his bed, said, "O such a villain! to come to my house, eat of the best and drink of the best my house could afford; and, in return, take away my life, and ruin my daughter. O my dear, thou must hate that man."

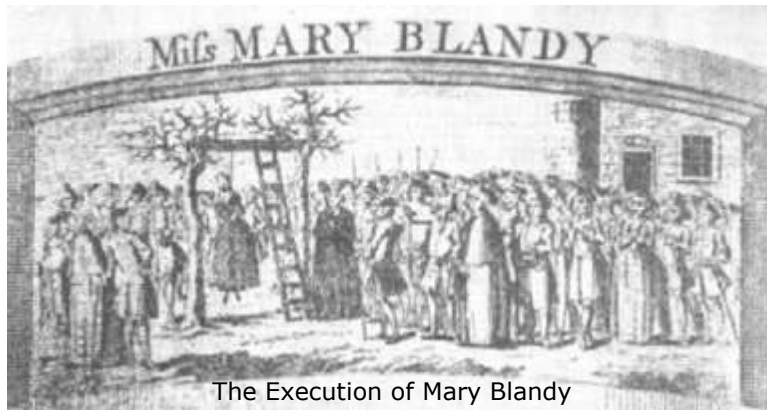
The young lady replied, "Sir, every word you say is like a sword piercing to my heart; more severe than if you were angry: I must kneel,

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and beg you will not curse me." The father said, "I curse thee my dear! how couldst thou think I would curse thee? No, I bless thee, and hope God will bless thee, and amend thy life. Do, my dear, go out of the room; say no more, lest thou shouldst say any thing to thy own prejudice. Go to thy Uncle Stephen's; and take him for thy friend: poor man! I am sorry for him."

Prior to being imprisoned in Oxford Gaol, Mary was detained in the family home in Henley on Thames, Blandy House, which, of course she apparently haunts. Now a dental practice, the Grade II listed Blandy House can be found on Hart Street. In his book 'The Ghosts' Who's Who' (1977), Jack Hallam states that Mary Blandy's ghost has been seen "standing under an old mulberry tree in the garden of the house where she lived". Another account of this apparition mentions it has been seen several times standing under the mulberry tree at the bottom of the garden and apparently on two occasions a second shadowy male figure has been seen beside her.

One day, whilst under house arrest, she discovered that the door to her room had been left open and she decided to go outside into the streets of Henley on Thames, where she was accosted by members of the public seeing she was free. Mary Blandy fled the growing crowd, she went over the bridge and was given refuge in the Little Angel which was at that time said to have been run by a friend of hers called Mrs Davis and again there is a suspected haunting. During mid 20th century the Little Angel Inn was reputedly the scene of haunting like phenomena which was experienced by the Bucknalls who were the licensees. The disturbances were said to take place over a 30 month period starting in 1952. Tramping footfalls and the slamming of doors could be heard from upstairs, the apparition of a hysterical woman was seen reported sitting on a couch and unexplainable rappings were heard on the front door.



The Execution of Mary Blandy

This case is very briefly mentioned in Guy Lyon Playfair's 'The Haunted Pub Guide' (1985), in which he refers to Joan Forman's attempted investigation of the building and what would appear to be the landlord's disinterest or refusal to speak about such things. The piece does infer that the ghost is that of Mary Blandy and says that she poisoned her father at the Little Angel. Though the ghost may have been Miss Blandy, the facts of the murder are not accurate. I am unaware of any recent reports of experiences.

She was tried on the 3rd of March, 1752 at the Oxford Assizes held in the hall of the Divinity School. The court was presided over by The Honourable Heneage Legge and Sir Sidney Stafford Smythe. Blandy was found to be guilty and the Scottish Captain Cranstoun got away scot free. You may think that she haunts the court room to this day....well, I cannot comment on that, but apparently her apparition did appear at a re-enactment of her trial at Henley on Thames Town Hall in 1969.

Mary Blandy was executed on 6 April 1752 for the murder of her father Francis Blandy in Henley on Thames. The location of Mary

Blandy's execution was either the Westgate prison mound or in the Castle Yard in Oxford, both of which are very close to each other. According to folklore a blackbird was perched on the gallows during her execution and from that date no

blackbird has been heard to sing in that vicinity. It is also suggested, yes, you've guessed it, the ghost of Mary Blandy has been seen behind the Westgate shopping centre, where the prison mound is thought to have been.

In his book 'The Ghosts' Who's Who' (1977), Jack Hallam also says she haunts the graveyard where she is buried. Mary was buried in the early hours of the day following her execution at the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Henley on Thames, between the



seen rising from a table before dropping and smashing whilst cast members were discussing Miss Blandy.

On the Henley Operatic website Bill Port recounts Mary's next visit to the theatre. *'Mary Blandy appeared at the Kenton on the night of Saturday 10th April 2004. A party from the Ghost Club Society accompanied by Bryan Villars and myself spent the night in the complete dark of the auditorium. At around 2.45 am we all saw a mysterious light about four feet in height moving up and down the aisle. A photograph was taken by the GCS secretary. Later a questioning session was held and the 'ghost' claimed to be Mary Blandy. Asked why she had come to the theatre the reply was that she had come to see a play about herself which she did not like.'* Later checking revealed that a play called *"The Hanging Wood"* by Joan Morgan about Mary Blandy had been performed in the theatre in 1969.

graves of her parents. The burial service was conducted by Rev William Stockwood and the graves of the Blandy's can no longer be traced after restoration work on the church. I do not know of any witness accounts to support this haunting other than Hallam's reference.

So, could she possibly haunt anywhere else? Well, there is the Kenton Theatre in Henley on Thames which dates from 7 November 1805 and is thought to be the fourth oldest working theatre in Great Britain. The building itself has not always been used as a theatre. After eight years the theatre closed and in 1813 became a chapel. It did not re-open as a theatre until 1935 and had by that time also been utilised as a church hall, school and storeroom.

Jack Hallam also says that the ghost of Mary Blandy, was *'once seen at Henley's Kenton Theatre, standing at the back of the stalls as if watching a performance of The Hanging Tree, a play based on her crime.'*

With the start of rehearsals, strange things reputedly started to occur, including doors opening and closing, lights switching on and off, a large mirror jumping off a wall and items being smashed by what has been described as poltergeist activity.

As mentioned by Hallam, the apparition of a young woman was seen at the back of the theatre watching the rehearsals and vanished when approached. A cup was also reputedly

The haunting experiences associated with the Kenton Theatre are amongst the most interesting I have read, but I do have some questions. Were there any experiences reported between 1969 and the Ghost Club investigation of 2004. If not why the investigation? If it was being done to be close to the anniversary of her death (only 4 days out) and to follow up on the experiences of 1969, why would later checking only reveal the ill fated production behind the experiences and as they were well known (as shown, Hallam wrote about it 30 years earlier) any psychic or calling out experiments to contact Blandy should surely be discredited.

If Mary Blandy haunted *The Hanging Wood* production at the Kenton, it would mean she made a conscious decision to attend a play written 200 years following her execution in a theatre that opened 50 years after her death and then offered her critique of it 35 years later when supposedly contacted in 2004. There are also stories of Mary haunting the street of Hambleden and Churchfield Wood near Turville in Buckinghamshire and Kingston House in Kingston Bagpuize. No doubt there will be more, somewhere as she does seem to get about.

If you want more details please visit www.Mysteriousbritain.co.uk and if you know of any of Mary's other haunts please let me know.

How to Hunt Monsters

Part 4, by Richard Freeman

HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF YOUR TIME

If you are taking a big group then split up to cover more ground. Smaller groups also make less noise. Record all interviews with witnesses and film as much of the expedition as you can. This will come in useful not only as a record in itself but also as a tool to improve future trips.

You will be very lucky to get a glimpse of your target creature so gleaning information from locals and witnesses is the next best thing. It is a good idea to prepare a list of questions when interviewing a witness. Be patient as English will probably not be their first language. You will have to work through an interpreter. In Sumatra, when speaking to the Kubu tribesmen of their encounters with orang-pendek and giant snakes we needed two interpreters. Our guide Sahar translated our questions into Indonesian and then these were translated by a second man, who spoke no English, into the language of the Kubu and vice versa.

Generally I have found native peoples to be very hospitable and honest. They are usually surprised at scientists from 'the outside world' being interested in their sightings. They ask for no payment and often do not consider what they have seen to be anything special but just 'another kind of animal'. One Russian almsy witness was amazed that we were interested in such a 'crazy topic' as she put it. The only real exception to this was in

The Gambia where all kind of tall tales were told.

Always keep a journal of your trip with entries every day. Such notes are invaluable when it comes to writing an account of your expedition. In the modern day you may even be able to do a daily computer blog with a laptop if you can get a signal.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU GET HOME

If you have got lucky and managed to film a cryptid do not hoard the film and exchange it only for money. As noted before this is a scientific endeavour not a way of making cash. Share the film with fellow cryptozoologists and the scientific community.

This is all about exchanging knowledge and advancing knowledge. If you hold out for cash people will be suspicious. If you have indeed filmed an unknown animal than your reward will be scientific fame. If you have bone, skin, dung, scales or other organic matter that may come from a cryptid you will need to get it scientifically analysed. Approach reputable museums, universities or zoological organizations. If these cannot do the analysis themselves they may be able to furnish you with contacts who can. Most of the organic matter from CFZ expeditions are analysed by Copenhagen University were our friend Dr Lars Thomas works.

Whatever the outcome publish the findings. There is no shame in mistaking something mundane for something strange. Supposed orang-pendek hair the CFZ brought back from Sumatra

on our first expedition turned out to be from a golden cat. Possible almsy hair was in fact human. Such negatives do not mean your monster does not exist, just that you don't have a part of it. It's better to have made a genuine error whilst looking for a cryptid than to never have looked for it at all. One day someone will get lucky and come up with the goods. That someone might just be you!

On our latest trip to Sumatra we brought back possible orang-pendek hair. The DNA has been analysed by Lars and his team and he discovered it was similar to but not the same as orangutan DNA. At the time of writing a further set of tests are being carried out. It looks as if the hair may belong to a new species of ape.

Always record your findings and your trip in a write up. This can be as a book, a magazine article or an on line account or as we at the CFZ do, all three. Recording your work for posterity is vital. You would not want the things your expedition discovered to be lost and forgotten would you? By recording them they will be here forever and be a useful resource to other cryptozoologists.

THE BEST WAY TO HUNT MONSTERS

Finally, the best way to have a chance to hunt real life monsters in the 21st century is to join the only full time, professional cryptozoological organisation in the world, The Centre for Fortean Zoology. The CFZ organizes monster

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hunts all over the world. Any CFZ member can come along if they can pay their own way. The great thing is that you will not have to organise a thing! The CFZ do the entire organisation. Check out our website at www.cfz.org.uk

Even now monsters still stalk the world and great discoveries are waiting to be made. Adventure is just around the corner if you're brave enough. Now it's all up to you.

Focus On... is a series of educational articles covering the wide range of anomalous phenomena ASSAP has researched, mainly written by experts in their field.

If you would like to contribute a piece please contact us first - news@assap.ac.uk

Richard Freeman is Zoological Director of the Centre for Fortean Cryptozoology and is a prolific writer on the subject.



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CLAS SVAHN, PAUL DEVEREAUX.

SUNDAY

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EMFs and Spirit Mediumship:

A Research Proposal

Since the nineteenth century spirit mediumship has been associated with concepts of electricity and magnetism, and psychical research has a long tradition of trying to document and record electromagnetic radiations in the proximity of entranced mediums (Alvarado 2006: 149-152).

Indeed, anomalous effects have occasionally been recorded during attempts to document mediumship demonstrations with certain types of measuring equipment. Alvarado (2006: 149), for instance, describes the experiments of the French physician Hyppolyte Baraduc who, in 1893, used a delicately suspended needle to record movements effected when people put their hands near the instrument. These movements, so Baraduc thought, were "tangible and recordable expressions of a superior Force" (Baraduc 1893: 12-13 as cited by Alvarado 2006). Hereward Carrington (1919: 319) describes experiments in which the physical medium Eusapia Palladino was able to discharge electroscopes at a distance, an observation that led Dr. Imoda to conclude that Palladino emitted "mediumistic rays" that could

"become a conductor of electricity" (Imoda 1908 as cited by Carrington 1919). Albert von Schrenck-Notzing (1920), in his investigations with the medium Eva. C., noted "sensations of cold, heat, and other radiations" and labelled them "thermoradiant" phenomena. He further suggested that such phenomena should be regarded "merely as preparatory and concomitant phenomena of one of the real manifestations." In a similar vein Batchelor (1984) noted that electrical and magnetic effects often accompanied the production of psychokinetic phenomena in sitter-groups, but also suggested that these "may not necessarily be essential features of the PK process...but may themselves be created by PK" as epiphenomena. More recently, Wilson *et al.* (2010) used an 8-channel MESA measuring system in a seance-like situation to document fluctuations in environmental variables (infrared light, ultraviolet light, visible light, seismic vibration, AC magnetic fields and DC magnetic fields). The MESA system registered "notable changes in visible and infrared light, as well as changes in DC magnetic field strength," which coincided with observable PK phenomena during the session in which it was used (Wilson *et al.* 2010: 630). In conclusion to their paper Wilson *et al.* suggest that the "specific

interactions within the surrounding environment that may have led to the observed changes currently remain unclear, and any possible insight can only be guided by further research" (2010: 630). More recently, Wilson *et al.* (2010) used an 8-channel MESA measuring system in a seance-like situation to document fluctuations in environmental variables (infrared light, ultraviolet light, visible light, seismic vibration, AC magnetic fields and DC magnetic fields). The MESA system registered "notable changes in visible and infrared light, as well as changes in DC magnetic field strength," which coincided with observable PK phenomena during the session in which it was used (Wilson *et al.* 2010: 630). In conclusion to their paper Wilson *et al.* suggest that the "specific interactions within the surrounding environment that may have led to the observed changes currently remain unclear, and any possible insight can only be guided by further research" (2010: 630). Bran (2011), using the PIP photography system, which creates images in the electromagnetic spectrum, observed a distinct anomaly associated with her shamanic trance initiation procedure. During the initiation of her trance state, in which she called on her Upper World teacher, an unusual electromagnetic signature was seen to approach and merge with her own in the resulting PIP photographs. Could this be seen as evidence to suggest that unusual electromagnetic phenomena are associated with the induction of shamanic trance states?

With the assistance of ASSAP, who have kindly provided us with two EMF meters, we intend to carry out some exploratory research into these possibilities with a Bristol based Spiritualist home-circle. Although the use of EMF measuring devices has been criticised on methodological and ethical grounds (Swale & Wood 2009; Wood 2009), it nevertheless remains true that such methods continue to be employed in both amateur paranormal and professional parapsychological investigations (see for example Wilson *et al.* 2010; Bran 2011), and that the results of these preliminary studies demand further investigation.

The experimental method will employ a "psi in process" approach and will be non-intrusive so as to maintain the ethnographic context, as though it were just a normal seance (cf. Giesler 1984). This research would, therefore, be aimed at determining whether or not such effects can be independently documented with mediums in controlled, but normal, conditions, and at exploring whether there are correlations between apparently subjective trance experiences and physical/environmental fluctuations. The research will be written up and published in the ASSAP journal □



By Jack Hunter.
Jack is a PhD student at Bristol University.

He also edits the Journal of Paranthropology

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18 EMFs and Paranormal Phenomena

For many years now, ghost-hunting organisations and some parapsychologists have been examining the role that electromagnetic fields (EMF) play in relation to anomalous phenomena.

Over several decades, as with any controversial issue, two camps of belief have arisen on the matter. On the one hand, some ghost hunters have been using EMF claiming that changes in EMF are predictive of supernatural events. However, research has never been conducted to validate or disprove this theory. What is important is the understanding that if EMF is predictive of anomalous phenomena, then the phenomena observed is in some sense “real” that in turn produces EMF.

On the other hand, researchers and scientists have been examining experience inducing fields (EIF's; Braithwaite), under the well-demonstrated hypothesis that certain frequencies of EMF can induce hallucinations in participants. Key to this theory is that certain “haunted sites” have abnormal levels of

magnetic fields that can produce this hallucination effect in those exposed to the fields for a duration of time. As tradition is justification for the former theory, and replicated science provides the justification for the latter, the general conclusion by investigators of a scientific mindset is that EMF is only useful as a predictive sign of potential hallucination. This conclusion is not unreasonable, as EIF fields have been examined in haunted locations and EIF hallucinations have been demonstrated for many years in laboratory settings.

Yet the general conclusion that haunting phenomena are the result of subjective hallucination may be premature based on several intuitive leaps in the scientific process. Under a pure scientific perspective, when a debate exists positing two potential explanations, and only one explanation has been scientifically studied (e.g., EIF's), it is incorrect to claim that the issue has been resolved. Researchers up to this point have never designed a critical test of EMF predicting real

phenomena versus EMF as a function of “haunting hallucination.” As such, only half of the data is available. Although in some sciences, such as physics, a single principal cause can be determined for a particular effect, it is often a mistake in other sciences to assume an “either/or” stance on relatively new and complex phenomena. Whether we like it or not, the investigation of paranormal phenomena is an interaction of the person with the environment. People make science a much more difficult process. As a social scientist for more than a decade, there is rarely, if ever, a case I have seen where one factor or variable can completely explain specific phenomena. More often than not, several variables contribute to a particular process, each providing a different degree of influence. If we are to be genuinely scientific, the most accurate stance on EMF should simply state that EIF's represent one verified process in which a person can experience what some would term paranormal phenomena. To address if EMF variation predicts phenomena that is not hallucination-based, we

Electro-magnetic Fields and Paranormal Phenomena:

Prediction Beyond EIF Hallucination

By Brian R Laythe Ph.D

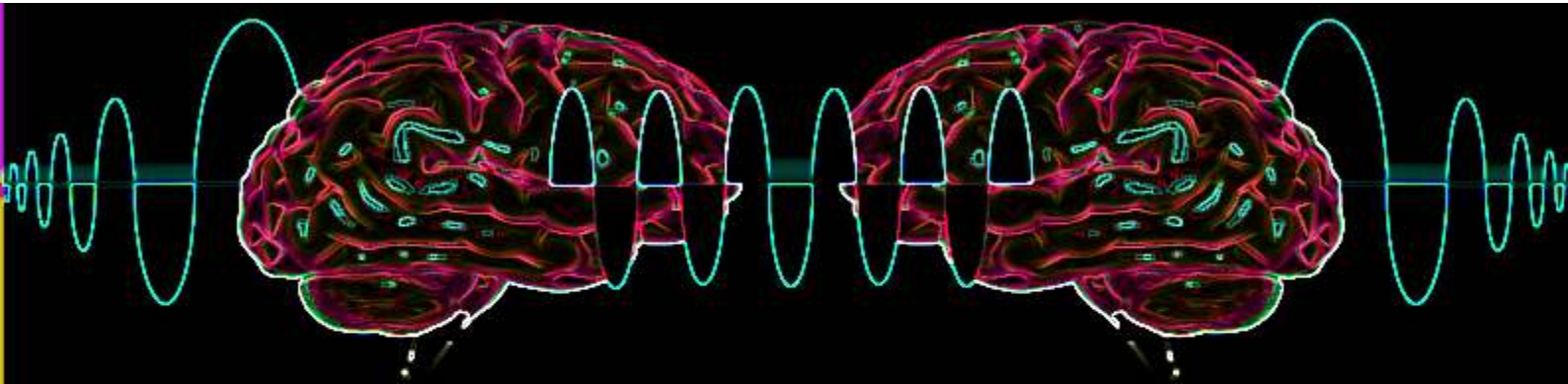
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must first conduct sufficient studies to determine if the relationship exists.

I am happy to report that this research has been conducted, is in process of numerous replications, and the findings support the claim that paranormal phenomena represent more than just hallucination. Our organisation has submitted a paper to the *Journal of Parapsychology* that demonstrates a distinct relationship between serial EMF spikes and the occurrence closely examined phenomena. When events that are recorded on video and audio were examined in contrast to EMF and GMF data sampled at 24 readings per second, our findings show that a large and statistically significant percentage of these events were associated with EMF spikes. Key to our process was an

mindful paranormal community at large to get back out in the field and further explore an EMF-Phenomena relationship. We want to emphasise that these are initial findings and many research studies have not been replicated either by the original researchers themselves or independent researchers. We will need other researchers' help in determining if EMF relate to carefully examined phenomena in multiple environments. However, as we move forward with our research, we struggle with an issue that has confounded many investigators of the paranormal who wish to approach the phenomena from a scientific perspective: belief and interpretation. As a psychologist, I am acutely aware that I and others are always influenced by our belief systems. Our beliefs determine what we

for decades in the lab, researchers have not yet actually studied humans in "haunted" environments and demonstrated that these specific fields are either present at the right magnitude or at the right frequency to induce participant hallucination phenomena. Even if the fields are present, as previous work suggests, the case is not truly closed until human subjects are tested for hallucinatory experiences on location. With EMF and its relation to non-hallucinatory phenomena, we have two existing data-sets we are reviewing with varying conditions, and an upcoming four-day continuous run of data collection that will take many months to appropriately sort out. Personally, we expect that both scenarios are valid, and it would not be the first time that a single



evaluation system for phenomena that excluded internal or subjective phenomena, as well as a standardised point system to appropriately rate phenomena as easy to explain environmentally (Class 0) to very difficult to explain environmentally (Class 3). Essentially, as events became more difficult to explain (e.g., clear child voices on audio; human shadows present in an empty house), the ratio of EMF spikes occurring during these events increased. Most importantly, conservative statistical tests of these findings demonstrate odds of this association occurring randomly at less than a hundred thousand to one; an extremely significant finding. As we publish these findings, we want to encourage the scientifically

study and, to the chagrin of reliable science, how we (and others) attempt to interpret our data and the implications that it has. A simple scan of a social psychology text-book will demonstrate the massive and pervasive amount of cognitive errors and judgment bias that humans engage in to protect their self-esteem and worldviews. Unfortunately, humans become very attached to those views, and we quickly become resistant to information contrary to our existing beliefs. I bring this up because if we look at the role of EMF/GMF in paranormal phenomena, the issue was never close to being settled. Even with our recent work, there is simply not enough data (yet) to make a solid conclusion for either or both cases. Although EIF's have been studied

variable (i.e., EMF) relates to outcomes that are perceptually similar, but technically different. However, regardless of investigators' worldviews of skepticism or belief in the paranormal, reasonable scientific conclusions are based in a body of data and evidence. We suggest that it's time to conduct enough research to create a solid base of evidence for or against both of these scenarios. It is only through a thorough study of both of these potential relationships of EMF to paranormal phenomena (hallucinatory or otherwise) that further understanding, and hopefully, additional scientific understanding can occur. □

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