



Former School in Birkenhead

Former Council School in Birkenhead, Wirral

Brief History

A temporary Council School in Birkenhead was opened by the Birkenhead Education Committee in April 1908. Additional buildings were constructed on the site and in April 1911 separate Infants and Senior Boys and Senior Girls departments were established.

This was one of six Central Schools established between the wars to take all pupils from local elementary schools at the age of 11.

During the post-war reorganisation the Central School became a Secondary Modern School for Girls. However, the Infants School shared the site until its closure in July 1956, when the building was taken over for an extension of the girls secondary school.

Witness Interviews

During August 1999, a series of interviews took place. The witnesses reported that most of the activity has taken place on the first floor corridor which includes the sound of children running through the corridor, footsteps, doors opening and closing, various bangs/thuds, chairs/furniture moving, scraping upon the office walls, music playing then suddenly stopping plus knocks upon the office doors which has also been witnessed on the ground floor.

One witness claims to have seen the figure of a man with a beard wearing a chequered shirt standing behind the doors near the Conference Room on the first floor; the figure has reportedly been seen on 3 separate occasions.

Objects have been mysteriously moved within one of the offices, unexplained smells on the first floor corridor (near gents), feelings of a presence in the ladies toilets again on the first floor corridor plus uneasy feelings near the toilets on the ground floor.

There are also a number of second-hand stories that were reported by the interviewees such as a former member of staff was once leaving the ladies toilets and felt the presence of children surrounding her, the sound of children giggling has also been heard in the ladies toilets, a cleaner has apparently seen the figure of a young girl on the first floor corridor and the sound of a piano has been heard coming from one of the rooms.

A commonly-known story was also mentioned during the interviews. Apparently years ago there was a fire at the school and one of the schoolteachers either committed suicide or was burned to death.

3 further events have been witnessed since the investigation began. One member of staff saw a figure standing in the left-cubicle of the ladies toilets on the first floor, another witnessed hearing someone in the left cubicle of the gents toilets on the first floor whilst he was in the right cubicle only to find no-one there when he came out, and a painter who was on-site also witnessed a male in the gents on the first

floor who followed him up the stairs leading to the corridor and disappeared.

Vigils

So far, the group have held over 25 vigils between August 1999 and March 2003, the majority being shorter vigils of 3-5 hours in length.

The equipment used during the vigils includes sound recording both analogue and digital, video recording including standard, digital and infra-red, still photography both digital and conventional, electronic temperature monitoring, magnetometer/electro-static monitoring and personal observation.

Saturday 21 August 1999

The first vigil consisted of 4 members of the group. No sooner had the group arrived, than the faint sound of a piano/chime was heard in the first floor corridor whilst setting up equipment.

The sessions started around 9:15pm and during the night there were many incidents which were witnessed and recorded; a groan, a doorslam, cold draughts, various thuds/bangs and unspecified sounds. There were 2 major events which occurred during the vigil, the first occurring at 11:53pm during Session 3. There was a temperature drop of 4.9°C within 3.5 minutes, as the temperature started to rise again the sound of footsteps was witnessed by 2 members of the group, these were just about picked up by Digital MiniDisc. Based upon computer enhancement and interpretation, the footsteps sound like female shoes on a tile or stone surface and can be heard to scrape the floor as if they are rotating or swivel turning before continuing down the stairwell.

The second incident occurred at 2:18am just after Session 4. One of the group members was entering the gents toilets on the first floor, when he reached to turn on the light, he saw the solid figure of a male wearing dark/black trousers and a light/white shirt, the figure was right side towards him and rotated clockwise before disappearing when the light came on; the event lasted no more than 2 seconds. There was also a possible sighting of a black figure on the stairwell during the first session.

Footsteps/temp drop details:-

23:53 FF corridor temp drops from 20.6c to 20.0c

+30secs - ff corridor temp 19.2c

+60secs 18.7c

+90secs 18.1c Click heard from FF corridor

+120secs 17.6c

+150secs 17.0c

+180secs 15.9c

+210secs 15.7c

+240secs 15.9c

+270secs 16.2c

+300secs 16.4c Footsteps heard - see later....

+330secs 17.1c

+360secs 18.0c

+390secs 18.6c

+420secs 19.2c

+450secs 20.1c

+480secs 20.6c

+510secs 20.9c

+540secs 20.9c

Sound analysis from MD recording of footsteps recorded in FF corridor gents end at @23:58.

Sound duration - 11.5 secs : Peak frequency - 11,000Khz

Interpretation and analysis:

Based upon computer enhancement and interpretation these are female footsteps that appear to descend the stairwell pause at the mezzanine level, they are then clearly heard to scrape to floor as if they are rotating or swivel turning before continuing down the stairs.

The recording is a mono track, 44,100 kHz sample frequency, 16 bit resolution. The microphone was a Sony parabolic reflector mic. aimed 180 degrees away from the source, thus the results are very quiet although quite clear and just on the verge of allowing the computer analysis to be performed. Thus it must be concluded that the sounds whilst being clear and audible cannot be conclusively assigned a definite cause. This should however be balanced with the witness report at the time when the footsteps were so clearly and definitely heard and subsequently reported that the balance of probabilities does support that fact that the sound of footsteps did indeed manifest themselves in a locked and secure environment with no persons other than Para.Science members present and all those persons being known to be seated and not moving about.

Saturday 4 September 1999

The second vigil consisted of 6 members of the group. 3 hours prior to the arrival of the group, one member had set-up a video camera in one of rooms, minutes before the rest of the party arrived, the member who was alone in the building had just turned the camera off and moved the equipment into the corridor, on re-entering the room at 7:16pm he witnessed the sound of a low-key piano melody which lasted approximately 8 seconds, unfortunately there were no other witnesses to the event and no equipment was recording.

During the sessions there were various thuds/bangs heard, movement sounds, male/female voices, door opening/closing, various unidentified sounds, feelings of a presence, problems with one of the temperature monitors and the light was switching off on various occasions in the gents toilets on the first floor.

Saturday 25 September 1999

For the third vigil, the group decided to invite some of the interviewees, this was to show them how Para.Science was carrying out the investigation and to answer any questions that they may have. The group consisted of 4 members plus a few interviewees.

During the vigil, once again there were various thuds/bangs heard, movement sounds (mostly near reception end of building), voices, musky perfume smell, door opening/closing and knocking sounds. There was a major event witnessed by at least 5 members of the group at 12:06am (approx). The sound of children could be heard as if in the playground area, the event lasted approximately 9 minutes and was recorded by the majority of equipment that was set-up within the building, 2 MiniDiscs have been archived for evidence.

Please visit our Media Page of the website to listen to an excerpt of the audio recorded.

October 1999

There were 6 shorter vigils during October covering the period 10pm-12:30am. The number of attendees ranged between 3 and 5. During these visits there were approximately 2 sessions on each including recorded sessions whilst the building is empty (group members being located in the car park).

On Friday 22 October 1999, whilst setting up the equipment, one member had just started recording

when he heard the sound of footsteps on the ground floor corridor. The footsteps were heavy and very clear. They appeared to travel towards and past the member of the group and faded away near reception. This was by far the best recorded evidence at the former school and the MiniDisc has been archived for evidence.

Continuing the sessions on Sunday 24 October 1999, there was a doorslam heard by all 5 members at 9:51pm, minutes after the event one member of the group took a photograph of the ground floor corridor, on viewing the image it captured what appears to be a white vortex of energy.

We also set up a voice-activated cassette recorder in the Conference Room during October to monitor sound 24 hours a day, obtain number of activations within each hour, analyse most productive activity time (excluding working hours) and hopefully record unexplained sounds between during non-working hours (although this would not have been sufficient evidence due to no witnesses) - unfortunately there was no specific pattern or active time period.



The "Casper" photo

Analysis of "Casper" photograph

Shortly after the event @ 21:51, a team member photographed an anomaly on the ground floor corridor, reception end (see MCV-004X.JPG). Since the photograph was taken, we have investigated how the photograph could possibly be faked. This was done by taking a 3.5" floppy disc containing 411 data files (when a photograph is taken using the Mavica, it saves 2 files - the picture and a data file). The date on the PC was then set back to a previous date and time, the data was then pasted from the original 411 file to a new 411 file and saved over existing 411 file on the floppy disk. Although this was possible, it was noted that all original 411 files have exactly the same created/modified dates & times, when examining the new "faked" 411 file the modified time was 1 second different to its created time. This was repeated 2 more times just in case this was just a coincidence, the PC was unable to replicate the original file. It is worth pointing out that there is apparently a utility available to "crack" these dates/times, but without the software we can see no possibility of replicating an original 411 file.

Footsteps details:

23:23 Loud footsteps heard in GF corridor, commencing corridor centre doors and moving toward reception end doorway. My position about 2ft in from recep. end doorway adjacent to MD recorder. Recording commenced 23:23, after 7secs footsteps or a series of loud bangs are heard getting louder. My

perception was of footsteps moving toward my position, they then passed down my right side through an 18" gap between me and the door to the Living Options unit. They then continued into the reception area and sounded like they brushed against some plastic plants in a floor level planter opposite the reception office. This was recorded by the MD rec.

Please visit our Media Page of the website to listen to an excerpt of the audio recorded.

December 1999 - April 2000

Five more visits took place in December covering various times, number of attendees ranging from 2-5. Most of these visits were either reasonably quiet, the usual "normal" thuds/creaks or had some explanation to some of the events that occurred during sessions.

Although a black figure was witnessed by 3 separate group members on 3 different occasions; the first time 2 members saw the motionless figure at the top of the stairs by the ladies toilets from separate ends of the first floor corridor, the event lasting minutes!

The only other event of interest was on Sunday 5 December 1999 when two members witnessed the sound of distant female humming in the ground floor corridor at 3:39am, the event lasted 4 seconds approx.

The first vigil of the millennium took place on Sunday 2 January 2000 and 2 members witnessed the sound of footsteps in the first floor corridor; the following visit later that month produced no results.

2 further visits were made in April 2000 with a guest investigator and using our new magnetometer/electro-static meter.

A pair of short vigils were arranged for the evenings of 17th April and 25th April 2000 as part of the regular ongoing investigation into this location. Since the group last visited there were a number of witness sightings of unusual phenomena including apparitions mainly focussed on the area of the first floor gents toilet. The group also wanted to conduct further work in the ground floor corridor which produced the footsteps and voice events at an earlier vigil. All these incidents are related elsewhere within the main body of the report.

17th April 2000

Investigators established themselves inside the entrance doorways to both the ladies and gents toilets on the first floor, the first floor corridor and in the ground floor corridor - all areas of interest and activity on previous vigils.

MiniDisc audio recorders were set up in the ground floor [GF] corridor and both ends of the first floor [FF] corridor. Video [non Infra-red] was in use on the FF corridor and each investigator was equipped with a digital still camera for personal use. The Magnetometer / Electro-static meter ['Gizmo'] was placed in the GF corridor at the midpoint.

Due to the short duration of the vigil no other equipment was in use.

It should be noted that the group investigators were joined by a guest investigator 'Joe' who was making his first ever vigil and so was initially attached to the investigations co-ordinator after being briefed about techniques and protocols in use.

Session One 20:45 - 21:00

This was a short session of 15 minutes as we have noticed that events can happen within a few min-

utes of our entry into the building - accordingly equipment was deployed and the investigators in position within 5 minutes of our arrival.

Nothing of note took place during this session, the only sounds being heard were the usual sounds both from inside and outside the building that the group are by now well used to, these included the trains, cars and dogs from the outside and the heating pipes and building 'settling' noises inside.

Session Two 21:30 - 22:15

Again this appeared to be a quiet session with nothing untoward being observed by any of the investigators.

At 22:08 the investigator on the GF thought he noticed some slight movement toward the central area of the GF corridor and was about to take a picture ['just in case'] when 'Gizmo' located in the same area as the perceived movement sounded an audible alert. This being a short duration low level response of 300V/m. Two pictures were then taken.

The guest investigator positioned at the opposite end of the GF corridor also took a number of pictures in response to the alert of 'Gizmo' and the flash of the other camera.

The guest investigator also noted a muted sound from within the GF corridor at 22:10, described as being a "muted rattle". Later he also reported seeing a slight movement within the corridor at 22:14. Investigators located on the FF reported nothing untoward during this session.

Session Three 22:45 - 23:10

Another quiet session was reported by all investigators on the FF and on the GF only the guest investigator reported a glimpse of perceived movement in the GF corridor at 22:53 again at 22:53 and also at 22:57.

At 23:07, he recorded a "slight shadow move across reflection on the floor" A dim light was illuminating the corridor from emergency exit signs at the corridor ends and from outside via windows high in the wall.

These sightings were not observed by the investigator at the opposite end of the corridor.

Examination of Evidence Gathered

Following the vigil the guest investigator submitted 5 digital stills for examination as he thought that they may contain unusual items. In each picture was contained a very faint circular image/s which were too faint to be fully analysed by the software image analysis package.

However, from the limited analysis that could be done it was thought most likely that these faint circles of light were the result of light from the camera flash being reflected back into the camera optics. In one picture the circle was exactly on the projected lightpath from a bright surface in the corridor and the optical centreline of the lens. The colour temperature also closely equated to other flash reflections within the picture such a shiny wall and floor paintwork and surfaces.

One other picture, taken during session three by the investigator at the other end of the GF corridor initially looked to usual with a large proportion of the lower left corner of the image being obscured by a translucent white object. Subsequent examination and analysis revealed that this was in fact the investigator's finger illuminated brightly by the flash that had strayed into the picture area of the lens, which being a wider angle than portrayed through the viewfinder was not observed at the time of taking the picture. No other investigator reported anything unusual on any of the pictures taken or audio discs

recorded.

25th April 2000

The start of this vigil was delayed by over an hour by our finding a member of the staff still on site when we arrived.

Again the same positions were to be monitored as on April 17th. The equipment was set up as before with the addition of an Infra-red [IR] ‘Nightvision’ camcorder set up outside the FF gents toilets and ‘Gizmo’ being moved from the GF corridor to a position inside the FF gents toilets.

Much of the equipment had been in position for almost an hour and the investigators were congregated outside the FF gents talking amongst themselves whilst we waited for the staff member to leave.

At 21:53 ‘Gizmo’ started to produce a series of audible alerts which at first were thought to be the result of the investigators outside the toilet moving about. Gizmo had been switched on for almost an hour without activation and with the investigators in the same place.

The investigators moved further away from the toilet but ‘Gizmo’ continued to sound audible alerts. As the staff member left at this time, quickly the video camera was switched on and a number of still pictures were taken as the investigation team quickly moved to their positions and commenced a vigil session.

Session One 22:00 - 22:30

Throughout the session ‘Gizmo’ continued to sound audible alerts at frequent random intervals and with varying levels of signal strength.

At 22:07, the guest investigator reported a “flicker on the top left corner of [FF] gents door frame, simultaneously with an alert from Gizmo” At 22:31, he reported a sound of movement from either the FF corridor or possibly the gents.

The Para.Science investigator sitting next to him saw and recorded nothing of note and the investigators in other locations likewise reported nothing out of the ordinary.

Session Two 22:45 - 23:15

The only item reported by any investigator was a strong “fart like” smell noted by our guest investigator.

Examination of Evidence Gathered

Following this vigil a further four photographs were submitted for examination by our guest, this time however they were more obviously unusual and bore a close resemblance to the light ball images captured at the Ellesmere Port Boat museum vigil [again supported by ‘Gizmo’ alerts].

Subsequent analysis was performed and they proved to be anomalous. The video footage was also examined and this too showed some interesting phenomenon that corroborated the still pictures.

A total of four pictures were forwarded for examination



771 [Taken 21:51] orb1



772 [Taken 21:51] orb2



774 [Taken 22:16] orb3



775 [Taken 22:19] orb4

We were fortunate that each image was paired with another image taken from almost exactly the same viewpoint [771 and 772], [774 and 775] as this allowed much better examination of the light being reflected from bright surfaces within the respective picture pairs.

The first pair of pictures 771 and 772 were taken before the vigil proper began and while members of the investigation team were still in area of the toilets.

The main building fluorescent lighting was on when this picture pair was taken within a few seconds of each other.

Flash was used in both pictures. 771 shows three bright circular objects within the frame, 772 shows four such objects.

The second pair of pictures 774 and 775 were taken during the first vigil session some 3 minutes apart but from the same camera position and with essentially the same camera angle.

The building main lighting was off with only dim emergency illumination being available. Flash was used in both pictures.

774 shows a single bright circular object within the frame, 775 shows three such objects.

Each 'light ball' is single circular or spherical entity with a colour temperature some 400 Kelvin lower than that produced by the on camera flash and on no picture did any light ball correspond with the path of light reflected back into the camera optical axis from a bright reflective surface within the frame.

In each of the two pairs of pictures no light ball appears in the or even quite near a lightball in the corresponding paired picture. This substantially rules out any possibility of reflections or refraction's of light within the camera optics as it would not be unreasonable to expect such reflections to appear in the same places in two pictures if the camera angle is substantially the same in both.

Further examination of the images also rules out known camera faults and optical aberrations as being likely sources. Digital cameras do not suffer from any of the film and development problems as conventional cameras, apart from the optical system there is little to malfunction in such a manner as to affect the final image in such a manner.

The video footage was then copied to the computer for examination. The camcorder was a Sony Digital model fitted with a modified 'Nightvision' imaging device. The camera may be used to record in available light, non IR assisted light amplification and IR assisted light amplification modes. The digital format allows each frame [representing 1/25th of a second per frame] to be looked at individually.

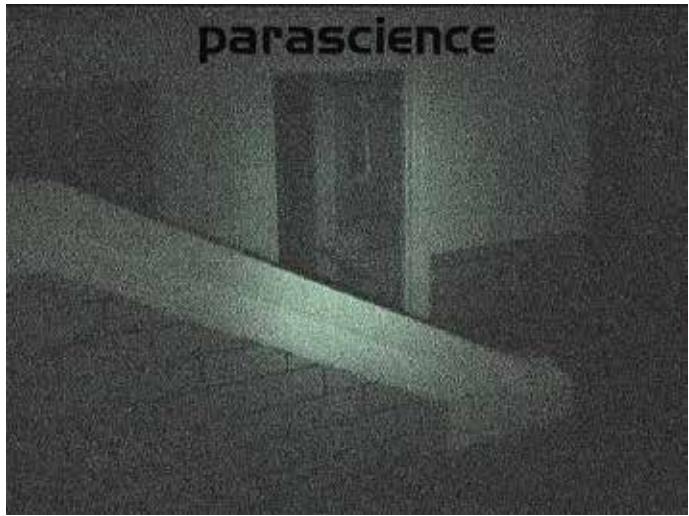
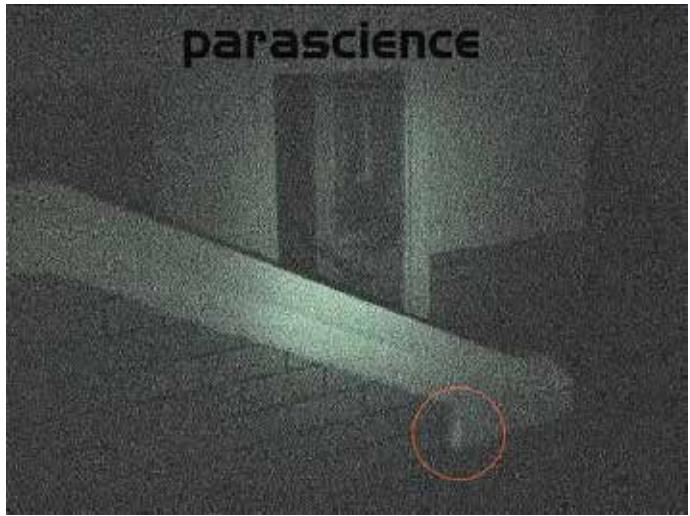
In available light mode before the vigil started nothing was observed but once the camera was switched into light amplification [IR assist on and off] mode small bright light balls were seen in many frames moving rapidly around and into the gents toilet.

By measuring the distance the object moved in a single frame approximate speeds for the objects were obtained - some appeared stationary for up to 1/4 of a second before accelerating to speeds close to 20 kph. Others were seen to move at constant speeds of 10-15 kph but change direction rapidly.

Moving objects followed flat non ballistic trajectories and in some cases described shallow curves or demonstrated rapid angular direction changes and rapid velocity changes that it would be unlikely insects could achieve. The computer software is programmed to recognise insects and their generally erratic flight which it did not do. Although more than 35 light balls were observed over three minutes of video footage it is impossible to say that more than 2 were present at any one time as on one frame two such light balls are seen following the same trajectory almost as if flying in formation!

Throughout the video tape the audible alarm on 'Gizmo' was heard to be sounding at levels of up to 100 milligauss. Many of these alarms corresponded to the observed appearance of a light ball on the video recording.

As all the images are 2D estimating size is difficult - they may be large and further away from the camera or smaller and nearer. However, by using the computer to simulate 3D and by referencing nearby objects such as bricks which are a known size it is estimated that the light balls are around 1/2 - 1cm in overall diameter, they also are more likely to be spherical in nature as they appear as near perfect circles in every image irrespective of the location within the frame. Moreover, they also appear to be brighter at the periphery than at the centre of the ball and thus may be hollow spheres.



A small movieclip of lightball activity (1.18Mb) is available to view on the Para.Science website, under the Media section.

It is worth making a few notes about 'Gizmo' at this point although it has been described in earlier reports from other vigils [notably that of the boat museum]. Essentially, 'Gizmo' is a highly modified Tri-field meter as favoured by many 'ghosthunters'.

The modifications basically consist of improved sensitivity and response and were done 'in-house' by Para.Science. The audible tone generator was also replaced with a multi-tone speaker that is calibrated to the meter scale reading. These tone and their corresponding meter readings are recorded to the group analysis PC so that the tones recorded by a nearby MiniDisc may then be played back and related directly to the actual meter reading.

After remaining resolutely silent for the first 50 minutes inside the gents and with all group members outside the gents 'Gizmo' started to sound audible alerts at around 21:53.

The vigil was commenced and 'Gizmo' continued to sound in combined Magnetometer / Electro-static mode with registered levels of up to 500V/m.

Later Gizmo's threshold sensitivity was reduced by 20dB - this was done to reduce to the possibility of some external source being a possible cause [a slight possibility of thunderstorms had been forecast and we know that 'Gizmo' can be triggered by nearby lightning, although none was observed at any time that night].

Even after being 'turned down' the alerts continued without noticeable change in frequency.

During the final session 'Gizmo' was operated in exclusively ES and exclusively magnetic modes. It is noteworthy that when placed into ES mode no further alerts occurred and from this it may be presumed that the cause of the alerts was some disruption to the geo-magnetic background [Gizmo is filtered to block out all but the very strongest Electro-magnetic fields].

The calibration of 'Gizmo' was checked both before and after the vigil in accordance with group operating protocols and at all times remained fully functioning.

At no time during any of the alerts was any persons within 12ft of the device location and all investigators were in clear sight of all the others and thus absolutely ruling out any human mischief or inadvertent triggering off 'Gizmo' - when members did enter the toilet area 'Gizmo' sounded a strong audible alert at their proximity.

Conclusions

Given that we have three entirely separate and independent items of equipment registering some form of anomaly at the same time and that both a still camera and a video camera each appear to show the same or similar objects in the same area, at the same time but from opposite sides, then it is not improper to assume that something unusual was recorded.

The light balls do not show in visible light which may be because they are extremely faint in their nature and require either the intense burst of flash light or some form of light amplification to be made visible. In the first case, they appear to reflect the light from the flash burst and it may be assumed that they therefore contain some physical matter or component for the light to be reflected from. They are also capable of generating some illumination of their own which is why they are observed on the light amplifying video, this may be in the form of IR light rather than in the visible light spectrum. They also appear to glow brightly, when close to the optical centre of the video when using IR assistance this too would indicate that they are some degree reflective also to IR light - in fact maybe more so than to visible light.

From the attached images it may be seen that the light balls appear 'frozen' on the still images whilst they appear blurred and indistinct on the video grabs. This is due to the mechanisms by which the im-

ages were recorded. On the stills, the image is recorded primarily by the light from the flash which has a duration typically of 1/10,000th of a second or less, which clearly is fast enough to 'freeze' or arrest the motion of the objects. The camera further uses an imaging CCD with over 1,000,000 pixels giving a high image resolution.

The video on the other hand is operating in near darkness and electronically amplifying the available light, this results in the grainy image from a CCD with only 500,000 effective pixels thus any image captured will by definition be of a much lower quality.

It is known that the CCD [Charge Couple Devices] fitted to both modern video cameras and their digital still counterparts are very sensitive to light at the IR end of the spectrum and this sensitivity is now exploited by manufacturers of such cameras to produce 'Nightvision' systems.

This may go some way toward providing an explanation as to why such light balls are being reported in increasing numbers from haunted and other sites as more and more people move into digital photography. They have been reported on conventional film also but not in the same quantity as those taken with CCD imaging devices.

Finally, it may be noted from the report that our guest investigator 'Joe' seemed to report occurrences that were apparently not observed by the Para.Science investigators.

This may be interpreted in several ways; our investigators had visited the site on more than 30 occasions over almost 12 months and were thus very familiar with the 'normal' noises and events associated with this site and therefore did not note them as unusual. Alternatively, it may be conjectured that our team were perhaps over familiar with the site and perhaps were actively choosing not to report instances that were below their 'threshold of interest'.

Para.Science has always encouraged 'third party' investigators to join us from time to time and we welcome their fresh input into investigations that may be either going stale or perhaps we are overlooking things simply through over exposure to a particular location.

We must also consider the possibility that 'Joe' - who was on his first vigil may have been a little 'hyped up' and was expecting something to take place and when confronted by unusual or unexpected bangs and assorted noises that are the norm for this location, made more of them than perhaps a more experienced investigator would have done.

We must also bear in mind that perhaps 'Joe' has psychic abilities or in some way is more able to 'detect' such events in a way that non of us can yet understand.

We cannot begin to suggest what these light balls are - the group has observed and recorded them before on both video and digital still images at a number of different locations and with a range of different camera makes and models.

In all cases, the light balls bear a close similarity to others we have recorded and indeed to light balls produced by other paranormal investigators [The US based Ghost Research Soc. operating along similar guidelines to Para.Science has also produced very similar results - with the interpretation that they are likely to be related to other paranormal phenomena such as hauntings].

What exactly they are and by what mechanism that occur remains unknown and more experimentation is being planned using additional equipment including a second even more sensitive 'Gizmo'. We are also making our results available to The Ghost Research Society and co-operating with ASSAP toward hopefully developing further studies to examine this unusual and possibly paranormal phenomenon.

27 January 2001

Nothing much was reported since the last couple of vigils in April last year. So after an 8 month break from the school, it was decided to hold another vigil. This time there were a team of 8 Para.Science members, 4 of whom were trainee investigators who had recently joined the group.

The only incident to report is at the end of the final session, multiple sounds were reported by members on both floors on the staircase near the ladies/gents toilets (ground floor) although it is not certain whether these sounds were from the back of the houses outside the building.

16 March 2001

This vigil consisted of 5 members.

During a break between session 2 & 3, all members were located in reception area when female footsteps followed by a door closing was heard coming from the stairwell area, the footsteps were heard on 3 more occasions plus door knockings, all 5 members witnessed these events. At the end of session 3, the sound of a door slam was heard and during the next break the footsteps were heard again except this time they were coming from the ground floor corridor, these were heard on 3 occasions between 22:40 & 23:01.

January - November 2002

After a nearly a year out from the former school, we decided to take another look at this case and held a number of vigils during 2002 but unfortunately came away with no results although proved useful for training and experiment purposes.

25 January 2003

The vigil consisted of 6 members and was the first vigil with results for nearly 2 years!

At 22:30, sounds of movement and undefined noise from the stairwell to the ground floor (reception end) duration about 10 seconds. All members witnessed the event and were also recorded by minidisc that was located 20 feet into the first floor corridor; no detail revealed by recording.

The second event at 22:55, sounds of minor movement from same stairwell but additionally with numerous voices at the same time. Again, recorded by the same minidisc as previously, upon examination there appears to be some slight movement noises but additionally with something that one could describe as baritone male singing, perhaps like a chant or sea shanty or monks singing. The event lasts a little under 10 seconds.

1 March 2003

The vigil consisted of 8 members.

A large bang was heard at 23:35 in the ground corridor and a couple of members reported that it felt colder, both times tally. We also had a new younger member (8 years old) with us who had also attended the previous vigil on a trial basis. She reported nothing from the previous vigil but during session 1 (in her own words). "I heard a noise coming from the cellar and I think I saw somebody on the stairs, they were a boy and a girl, the boy had on grey trousers and the girl wore a dress. Some paint fell off the bricks." During the second session, she reported "Somebody pulled something through my hair like a comb, it hurt a bit. Then I heard a bang and I felt cold".

14 June 2003

The most recent vigil consisted of 12 members and 3 from UPIA. Before most of the group had arrived, 6 members were stood outside the main entrance of the building and all heard a large bang from inside the building, no members were inside. Luckily some equipment had been setup but on review of the minidisc, the sound is very much like that of the pipes within the corridor.

The other incident was towards the end of the night, most were leaving when it was noticed that a light within one of the units had been turned on. On investigation, the light switch to the unit was found on the wall in the corridor so was most likely that one of our group had switched the light on.

Explained Evidence

On the first vigil there were various knocks/bangs witnessed just after 2am, the source of these sounds was the generator which is located in the cellar of the building.

An unspecified sound which was heard repeatedly in the Conference Room during the second vigil is possibly caused by the air conditioning within the room.

The problem with the temperature monitor was due to an electrical services distribution board in the Conference Room which was interfering with the signal from the sender.

The majority of thuds witnessed on all vigils so far may be explained by the pipes within the building.

A typewriter sound which was witnessed during one of the sessions in October has been explained by the sound of the fax machine located in reception.

During an “out-of-building” session, a video camera moved several times from side to side. The cassette was thoroughly analysed for any possible fault or break in recording in which there seemed to be no faults. We then contacted Sony who confirmed that there was a “normal” explanation for this. The image stabiliser having been left switched on whilst the camera was on a tripod, causing the system to ‘hunt’ thus causing the image movement.

Continuous knocks and bangs were heard during one night at the building, it was discovered later on that the sounds were being created by a crane working on a nearby railway.

Voice-type sounds heard in first floor corridor were explained by the sounds of running water in a nearby room which was normally locked on previous vigils.

Old-fashioned bell heard during a session (not the one in reception), it was later discovered that there was another bell located on the ground floor.