



Hatton Court Hotel

In May 2003 Para.Science conducted a week long investigation into a haunted hotel in Buckinghamshire, courtesy of Media Nations, a Japanese television production company.

The Hatton Court Hotel in Milton Keynes, is a Country House Hotel set in its own private parkland. It also has its own complement of ghosts. Despite the difficulties of coping with a film crew and guests who didn't go to bed until dawn, the hotel staff were friendly and helpful, and Para.Science will be continuing their investigations into this attractive building.

May 12th - May 18th 2003

Initial Notes and Witness Testimony

The team arrived and was given a walk-around introduction to the areas of paranormal activity in the building and the grounds. The Housekeeper 'Ellen' conducted this tour and introduction. The following account is based entirely on her comments, unless specified no date or period for the reported events was known.

Bar and Lounge



In the Bar (pictured left), one of the staff was hit on the head by a half pint glass that 'flew' off a low shelf upwards to hit him on the side of the head. This was said to have taken place during a period of 'stress' within the hotel.

In the Lounge (first picture to the right), about 6 weeks prior to the investigation one of the female staff was sitting in the window alcove (second picture to the right) looking out at around 10pm at night. As it was dark outside it was possible to view the room behind her as a reflection.

For some 1 or 2 minutes she observed a female in a pale 'Victorian' style dress standing to the left of the fireplace. When she turned around, the figure was not present and had also disappeared when she looked back at the reflection in the window.



Also in the lounge, about 3 or 4 months prior to the investigation, the former Manager - Jenny, conducted a séance attended by several members of the staff. A number of names and details were given of spirits that inhabit the hotel, but these could not be recalled. The impression was that she was accurate and had said things that people could not have known.

Restaurant



In this long room (pictured above left) is a painting of a large Victorian or Edwardian family (above right) with seven children pictured. The staff have heard the sounds of children's footsteps running about in this room.

Kitchen

A large pan of hot soup was seen by the Chef to lift off the cooker several inches and then return to the cooker top. Several plates have been thrown off the stainless steel work top and across the kitchen. At night the sounds of cutlery and crockery rattling have also been heard coming from the kitchen.

Bedroom 8



In the bathroom of Bedroom 8 a male guest brushing his teeth saw the reflection of a man standing behind him, in the over sink mirror. Turning around there was nobody there. Terrified, he elected to spend the rest of the night sleeping in his car rather than return to the room.

A female guest sleeping in the bed was awoken by someone touching her arm - alarmed and disturbed she called the Police thinking that someone had got into her room and was molesting her. In the corridor outside the room hangs a painting that is continually tilting .

Corridor from Room 7 to Room 12



Along this corridor footsteps are frequently heard that appear to be upon a hard wooden surface, they approach Room 12 and then stop. Two maintenance workers in room 12 heard the footsteps and prepared to 'jump out' to frighten the person approaching. They were the ones to get the shock when nobody entered and when they looked into the corridor nobody was there.

Maids cleaning the rooms on this corridor have frequently reported the sounds of keys being jingled in the door locks whilst they are alone on the top floor.

Main Lawn

Reputed to be the site of an ornamental lake, guests have reported the sounds of children running about and playing in this area of the garden.

Side garden small pond

The sister of the current maintenance man - Sam, as a 15 year old was sitting near this pond when she witnessed the apparition of a large 'Black Man' standing some 20 yards away close to the gateway.

As recreated in the photograph to the right, he remained motionless for about a minute, standing with outstretched arms like a scarecrow and brandishing a shotgun.



Tattershall Suite



On the fire exit steps (pictured left) at the 1st floor level the same Black man apparition as above was seen several days later by the previous witness and about 10 or 11 school friends as they approached the hotel across adjacent fields. He was seen by all to stand motionless for about a minute with a shotgun held 'broken' in his arms.

It is said that in the past a Black Man lived in the Tattershall Suite when it was a stable and kept a Lion and a Gorilla in cages inside the building. After the death of the Gorilla the man died of a broken heart.

Inside this building is a large hole (pictured right) believed to be the site of a well into which a young boy known as 'Johnny', son of the gamekeeper, fell and drowned.



Subsequent Notes and Witness Testimony

During the course of our week long stay and investigation it was possible to talk more openly to members of staff and to other staff members who had been off duty earlier in the week. The following is a review of the accounts of the alleged paranormal activity in the areas previously noted plus additional areas not mentioned during the initial walk round.

Bar and Lounge

The staff member who was hit by the flying glass was identified as Brian the Night Porter. It was also mentioned that the glass which had been just washed was dry, when others washed at the same time were still wet. The glass was on a shelf at a little more than waist height when it flew off, hitting him on the back and side of the head, whilst he was bending slightly but still substantially higher than the shelf. Brian was approached but declined to discuss the incident.

It was also said that Jane the previous Manager had seen the apparition of a little boy in the area of the Bar and he had also been seen and 'felt' by other [unidentified] staff members seemingly playing around the Bar.

Reception Corridor area

The same apparition of a little boy was seen by Jenny [Manager] in this area.

Bedroom 8

According to Libby [Housekeeper] a female guest who walked into the room witnessed the solid apparition of a woman sitting in the chair in this room. As she looked on the figure faded from sight and vanished.

After beds have been made and the rooms locked, upon re-entering the room the bed appears to have been slept-in and disturbed - this is mainly room 8 although other top floor rooms have been affected.

The incident involving the male guest and the mirror did not take place in this room, but in:

Bedroom 11

The previously reported incident involving the male guest and the bathroom mirror actually took place in this room, according to Libby who was employed at the Hotel at the time of the incident.

Clare, one of the maids, volunteered that she and other staff members did not like Room 11 as they got unnerving feelings when they were in the room.

Corridor from Room 7 to room 12

Clare and the other maids said that they had frequently heard the footsteps walking along the corridor leading to room 12. Described as those of a man, the corridor end door was heard to open and the footsteps ascend the steps to the corridor level then along before stopping outside room 12.

The footsteps are heard frequently and sound as if they are on a bare wooden floor.

Keys are frequently heard to rattle and jingle in the door locks along this corridor.

Stable block



Various members of the staff said that they felt we should be looking in the converted stable block as in their opinion it was the location of unusual events. In particular Room 17 was mentioned by more than one staff member as being an area of particular interest.

Baseline Observations:

Each day during the week a series of baseline observations (below) were undertaken in several locations around the building to try and establish a 'norm' as a control to compare other readings taken at other times against. Readings were taken at each of the sites where alleged paranormal activity had been reported along with the conference room in which nothing had been reported as taking place.

	12th	13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th
Dining Room EMF	<1mG	<1	<2	<1	<2	<1	<2
Dining Room Temp	18.2C	17.6C	18.7C	15.7C	16.3C	18.7C	16.7C
Dining Room Radiation	Background every day						
Bedroom 8 EMF	<1	<2	<1	<1	<2	<2	<1
Bedroom 8 Temp	16.5C	16.9C	18.0C	16.1C	16.6C	17.3C	17.1C
Bedroom 8 Radiation	Background every day						
Bedroom 11 EMF	<1	<2	<1	<1	<1	<2	<2
Bedroom 11 Temp	21.3C	20.9C	22.1C	19.6C	18.9C	19.4C	21.0C
Bedroom 11 Radiation	Background every day						
Lounge EMF	<1	<1	<1	<2	<2	<1	<2
Lounge Temp	18.7C	17.8C	19.4C	16.7C	17.6C	19.4C	17.8C
Lounge Radiation	Background every day						
Conference Room EMF	<2	<2	<1	<2	<1	<1	<2
Conference Room Temp	17.9C	17.3C	16.9C	18.1C	17.6C	17.1C	16.8C
Conference Room Radiation	Background every day						

The base line observations showed no radiation or EMF abnormalities in any area or the house.

The temperature fluctuated around an average range, the variability being explained by changes in the ambient daily o/s temperature and the variations due to central heating, doors being opened and closed and other normal factors.

Noted Unusual Events

During the weeklong investigation various members of the investigation team and hotel staff noted a number of unusual events. Each event was investigated and is recorded here:

12/5/03 Bedroom 7

In the evening D, S and A were in room 7. D dropped his keys to the floor from the bedside table, but did not bother to pick them up from the floor. Later he returned to the room to collect the keys and could not find them on the floor. After some time and a search he located the keys on the bedroom window sill, close to where S and A were standing earlier. D did not recall picking up the keys from the floor and neither S nor A picked them up and moved them.

It is clear that the most likely cause of this event is simple forgetfulness on the part of the people involved. An action so nearly 'automatic' as picking up dropped keys is sometimes not registered by the memory. In a strange twist to this event, the spirits themselves may have offered a clue to what actually happened - see later account seance session 1.

12/5/03 Restaurant - c. 21.35



During a meal a low frequency rumble was heard and felt from the floor beneath the table (pictured left) the group were sitting at. This was observed by at least 4 of the group including S and M the Japanese sound recordist. It sounded like thunder or the passage of an underground train.

The sound was also heard [and felt] in the same area at 01.13 13/5/03.

Over the following days extensive tests and a detailed examination of the area of the 'rumble' were carried out. In the basement below were a number of appliances that were variously switched on and off with no apparent repeat of the sound. An external air conditioner was looked at too, again not found to be the culprit. Heating pipes were followed and traced around the under floor areas with little success. The rumble was finally traced during Thursday 16/5/03 to the main hot water boiler and it was found that if the boiler had been turned off for some hours and allowed to cool, trapped air in the pipes caused the distinctive rumble when the boiler was started up again.

This area also demonstrated a thermal anomaly during the first night and second day. A small area of carpet (pictured right) close to the site of the rumble was more than 7C warmer than the surrounding floor area. The hot spot was a about 6" diameter and centred close to the table the group used for it's meals.

The thermal anomaly was quickly traced following some careful detective work to an un-lagged junction in the hot water pipe feeding the radiators. It was this discovery that later gave a clue to the nature of the rumble too.



13/5/03 Bedroom 9

During a break S returned to his room to have a bath. Whilst in the bath he heard a series of footsteps in the corridor outside his room. Described as like a man's upon a bare wooden floor, they seemed to pass from the corridor door end toward room 12.

It was not possible to use the radio to check the location of other team members, film crew or staff as he was in the bath. Once out of the bath S did enquire via the radio if anyone had been in the area of the top corridor at the time of the event but it was not possible to ascertain if anyone had been there and there were many people who could have been without the main group being aware.

Despite this, the footsteps sounded sufficiently different to those heard in the corridor during the rest of the week with known causes to warrant a mention herein.

It is also worth noting that a fire escape ran outside room 9 with open and easy access from any part of the building exterior or interior and beneath the bathroom of room 9 lay an access tunnel that provided services and storage. The tunnel was easily accessed from the corridor via an unlocked door and provided an 'acoustic tube' to distort and alter sounds that were heard in that part of the building.

13/5/03 Bedroom 2 c.03.00 onwards -

H after not being required for filming retired to bed. Preferring to sleep with some lights on, turned on the bathroom light via the pull cord and closed the bathroom door, allowing a small amount of light to seep under the door. After getting into bed she heard the click of the pull cord switch and noticed the bathroom light was off. She went into the bathroom and tried the switch a few times, finally putting it on and returning to bed. After a few minutes the same click was heard and the light was observed to be off. This continued a total of five times - when H awoke in the morning the light in the bathroom was on.

14/5/03 Bedroom 11 20.50



An alarm clock was heard to fall to the floor from a TV table whilst A[3], the only occupant of the room was in the bathroom. Within a few seconds of it falling S knocked and entered the room seeing the clock on the floor (pictured left) and A[3] in the bathroom door.

A[3]'s account written a few minutes later is attached here:

"I left my keys on the bed and headed to the bathroom. I heard a clatter from the bedroom and went through, expecting S to be at the door, to find my alarm clock on the floor, appearing to have been knocked off the TV table where it had been placed. There was no sound of the clock sliding from the table."

S also made an account of the incident:

"Walked into room 11 after knocking on the door, A, who was standing in the bathroom doorway, informed me that seconds before her clock had fallen to the floor. The blue alarm clock was on the floor about 2ft from the small TV table with a battery lying next to it."

I took a couple of pictures and recorded the EMF which was normal, the temp was 22.8C.

The table was close to an open window but the curtains were secured behind the TV and could not have touched the clock and the wind was calm.

It was noticed that the table did rock slightly when the floor close to it was stood on, this effect had also been earlier seen on a bedside table in the same room [nearest corridor wall] when someone walked up and down the corridor close to the table - both causes were traced to wobbly and ill fitting floor boards. The movement of the TV table was slight and subsequent tests failed to make the clock fall off the table or even move more than slightly when the floor close by was stood or bounced upon.

However, it remains a likely explanation for the falling clock - perhaps the effect being cumulative, successive passes by the table causing the clock to move ever nearer the edge until finally it falls."

14/5/03 Bedroom 11 21.30



A coin trigger had been placed at the site of the earlier clock fall incident, A[3] was just about to leave the room after setting it when she noticed that the coin appeared to have moved - the TV table wobble was again the most likely causative but the incident is noted here for reference (pictured left).

Footnote to clock falling incident:

During the following mid morning, D noticed that the clock which had previously fallen in room 11 and had its battery knocked out was approximately 40 minutes slow. Following the fall the total time that the battery was out and the clock not powered was less than 5 minutes. After the clock was re-set to the correct time it ran without any subsequent loss or gain for the remaining 4 days of the visit.

15/5/03 Bedroom 8 02.40

During the night several people spent time sitting quietly in room 8. The observer noted that the stool creaked and described the noise as though someone was sitting down on the stool.

15/5/03 Bedroom 1 c.03.00

S had just returned to room 1, the monitoring base room, to check the time remaining on the DVD recorder. He sat for a couple of minutes in a chair close to the table with the recorders on it. A slight rustling sound caught his attention on a table near the window. As he turned to look he saw a paper doily move and two cat toys fall off the table, one landing on the floor the other landing on the seat of a chair beneath the table. Two plastic bags on an adjacent chair simultaneously slid to the floor. On examination it was found that the edge of the doily was curled up and should have prevented the cat toys rolling off the table. Although the window close by was open it was not possible to replicate the incident by blowing however hard onto the paper doily. The wind outside was calm and still.

16/5/03 Bedroom 2 00.33

A[3] was spending some time sitting quietly observing in room 2, she quickly became 'depressed' and was greatly disturbed by the feelings.

Her account of the events is attached:

In room 2. Sat on the bed, curled up on the bed, felt really depressed. Felt like I really wanted to cry [howl]. Depression got worse and was ready to pack up and drive home. Thought I heard A[2] [control] say to come upstairs, just wishful thinking, went back in and felt the same way again. Didn't want to do anything like read. At last A[2] said session was over. After 10 minutes still felt crap.

16/5/03 Kitchen rear door c.22.00

Ann the waitress was in the kitchen at the rear door talking with Alice another member of the waiting on staff. She felt a 'tap' on the top of her left shoulder. Louise who was directly facing Ann did not notice anything unusual. Ann screamed when she realised that nobody was actually behind her and in answer to the scream, the Chef came to see what had happened.

Both girls were aware of the hotel's reputation, and both have had several unusual experiences in various parts of the building over the time they have been employed and had also heard from other members of staff about other unusual events that had been experienced.

However, Ann was quite adamant that she did not imagine the incident and had felt quite a strong tap on her shoulder whilst she was talking to Louise.

Unusual Events Observed on Camera

Bedroom 8

The Japanese film crew set up several IR CCTV cameras in this room, feeding the o/p back to recorders in room 1. One of these cameras was placed into a corner opposite the door in room 8 and looking toward the bed and bathroom. Immediately the camera was turned on and the lights in the room turned off a large number of 'orbs' were seen moving quickly across the image from top right toward bottom left. This continued for some time - eventually a team was sent to investigate.

They noticed that the windows were closed but a strong draught could be felt from the open chimney - this was measured at 0.5 metres/sec. The orbs were also seen in lesser numbers using a hand held camcorder shooting in nightvision mode. It was soon discovered that the orbs could be made to move in any direction required by wafting the air with a towel and also that using an air puffer camera duster, additional orbs could be created by blowing the dust off the tops of picture rails and pelmets around the room. Over the days and nights that followed, the orbs continued to appear on the IR CCTV cameras in room 8, the well room and the bar. It was clear that these were not a manifestation of the paranormal but simply the effect of direct reflection of the IR illumination lights around the camera lens on the minute dust particles suspended in the air.

An interesting observation was made regarding this effect during a series of experiments early in room 8. It was at first difficult to see the orbs using the nightvision camcorder, despite dozens a minute being seen on the IR CCTV in the same room and radio directions from the control room on where to look. It was realised that the camcorder was fitted with an additional IR floodlight mounted on the hot shoe. This had the effect of increasing the separation between the IR lighting and the lens central axis - when this light was turned off and the camcorder used only with it's inbuilt IR lighting which is very close to the lens the orbs were easily seen in large numbers.

During this same experiment it was at first difficult to influence the movement of the orbs by blowing or wafting towels around in the room. This led to some initial surprise. However, it was again soon apparent by experimentation that the orbs were very much closer to the IR CCTV than was being perceived by looking at the TV images - the orbs were in fact being illuminated only up to about 8 inches from the front of the lens. By blowing in this area we were able to easily make the orbs change direction at will. It is clear from this interesting series of tests and observations that the orbs so often encountered on IR TV and camcorders are in fact the direct reflected light emissions from microscopic house dust par-

ticles very close to the camera lens. The particles have to pass within a foot [conservatively] of the lens and IR illumination has to be very close to the lens axis as in many IR CCTV cams and Sony nightvision camcorders. Turn off or move the lights - no orbs!

Placing the air motion detector in this room and watching the orbs in real time also show a direct link between the movement of the draughts within the room and the direction the orbs are seen to move.

More than 100 hours of IR CCTV footage from this camera was taken in room 8, the same in room 8's bathroom and in several other rooms around the hotel and outbuildings - all showed a steady and consistent 'snowstorm' of orbs - in all more than 250 hours of recordings!

Other Events That Were Noted

12/5/03 Restaurant 23.13

Sounds of footsteps moving around above the restaurant for several minutes - appeared to be moving quickly from one end of the floor above to the other then returning - this happened several times. A was sent to see what the cause was of this event and discovered the Manager and another member of staff moving furniture around in the rooms above.

12/5/03 Corridor outside room 7 23.48

Strong sweet smell in corridor o/s room 7 described in the notes as 'being similar to Refreshers sweets' no cause was found for this event.

13/5/03 Top floor corridor 00.23

Sound heard that was described as being 'similar to a dog scratching itself' again no cause for this event was found.

The Seance Session

Statement regarding the use of a seance during an investigation:

Parascience have not used a seance during any investigation prior to the Hatton Court Hotel and it was only after a direct request to undertake such an experiment was made by the film crew and much thought was it tried. Several members of the Parascience team have spent a number of years privately undertaking research and experimentation into the use of such methods and felt entirely safe and comfortable doing this experiment. The permission of the Hotel management was sought and readily given and the whole event was recorded carefully by non-participant members of the team.

Parascience are aware of the hype surrounding seances and their use and continue to have a policy of not using them in support of any investigation. However, on this occasion it was felt to be an appropriate experiment to carry out.

At the request of the TV crew a séance was undertaken in the lounge, this being the same area as the original séance held by the staff some months earlier.

S, D, A[2] and H conducted the séance - the séance was also filmed by S[2] and recorded on MD. Rough notes were taken by H as they happened and written up immediately after the session.

In order to save space within this report it is proposed that only the relevant points will be noted although a full transcript is retained by Para.Science along with videotape and audio recordings.

A number of names and dates were received via the board which are listed below;

Bob - a Cobbler who died in 1839. He operated a business from the house [hotel]. His employer was 'CN' who owned the property.

Bob, our contact, identified 6 additional spirits who 'lived' in the hotel.

John Deakin - age 5 years, died by drowning in a well in 1866. He is buried in Castlethorpe Church. John is depicted in the family painting in the restaurant as the little boy drinking from the glass.

'**A Man**' - No name given or year of death and Bob and the other spirits don't associate with him.

'**AK**' - An apple picker who died in an accident in 1836

Blanch BM - Identified by Bob as the white lady seen in the lounge near the fireplace. She died in 1875.

Anne - Died in 1930

Alan - A soldier who died in 1945 in an accident with a bomb - Alan didn't live here - just came here.

Questions were asked about the spirits and the areas they inhabit around the hotel - the response was they move in all areas of the hotel but special mention was given to room 7 and the bar. Bob said the spirits were aware of the cameras and wished to help the Japanese TV crew with their search for something to be recorded on film.

When asked about the incident with the keys in room 7, Bob responded that human hands not the spirits moved them!

Bob also said that he was able to flicker the lights although not to request - the lights throughout the entire hotel regularly flickered - many such events were timed to the switching on of appliances around the hotel. The dimmer switch that controls the lounge lighting too was not in good working order and regularly could be made to work in such a manner as to cause the lounge lights to flicker.

However, it is strange to note that the lights in the lounge did at times appear to flicker more strongly and in a manner that could be suggestive of being in response to our requests for them to be flickered.

Following the session it was felt to be important to try and verify the information we had been 'given'. A series of trips were made to Milton Keynes record office, Local history library and Family history library. Additionally, a number of enquiries were made with the Hanslope local history Soc. And the team attended their meeting in the school hall.

One problem we had to overcome was that apparently some of the dates we had been 'given' did not appear to relate to the hotel, which was not built until the 1850's.

As the records were searched - it was with a great deal of surprise that Robert Buckmaster a shoemaker / Cobbler was identified as living in Hanslope Lodge and trading from there in the mid 1830's. His son, also Robert, was Butler at Hanslope Park House and the extended family lived in the lodge on the estate . *[Hanslope Memorials, written by the Churchwarden c.1850]*

It was also found that the lodge was in fact the same building as the hotel. The original lodge being built in the 17th century when the house was built. It was sold privately and extended to its present size in the 1850's. So the discrepancy over the dates in the 1830's was apparently solved.

At the time of writing this report [mid May 03] it was believed that the identity of the boy John Deakin had

been traced and proved from burial records along with the woman Anne from 1930. Work to check the archives continue and a full account of results obtained will be appended to this report in due course.

A second seance session was carried out on 18/5/03 at 01.30 - 04.00

This was held at the request of the hotel staff and with them being present as observers and participants. Although an interesting session, no additional information was received that can be verified or checked and the event is noted here for completeness of the records only.

At this session four members of the hotel were guided through a table lifting experiment and all four swore that they were able to 'feel' the table lifting beneath their hands, which were resting upon it.

In fact the table was being closely observed and no movement however slight was observed. The experience being entirely within the perceptions of the participating staff members, although each was convinced at the time that the table was rising up off the floor.

The use of the seance and the subsequent table lifting experiment were interesting experiences and it is certainly unusual that subsequent searches in the archive seemed to conform some of the details that were 'given' during the session. It is certain that no member of the team had any prior knowledge of the people and only the briefest of information about the site history prior to undertaking the experiment.

Many of the details were vague apart from the names and dates as recorded above no substantial information was provided. Perhaps in the future further similar experiments may be justified for the purpose of gaining a further insight and perhaps understanding of the mechanisms involved in such things. However, the use of such experimentation remains highly controversial.

Unexplained Event in Room 11

One event that does remain unexplained took place in room 11 during the afternoon / evening of 17th May.

During the early afternoon it was decided on the basis of information received from Libby [housekeeper] to relocate the CCTV camera from the bedroom of room 11 to the bathroom - this was apparently where the male guest saw the man in the mirror [detailed earlier].

After setting up the camera it was decided to re-set the coin trigger experiment that had been tried earlier in the week.

The TV table was again chosen and extensive studies of the loose floorboards and the resulting table wobble were made. Only if one stood in one particular spot close to the table could the table be induced to wobble and then insufficiently to move a coin or indeed cause a clock to fall.

A 20p coin was drawn around and the circle signed by S, S[3] and A[3] witnessed the setting up of the experiment. The windows were also closed and locked, to prevent draughts moving the paper and thus the coin placed on it.

The room was locked and the keys retained by S - a CCTV cable was located behind the door due to the re-positioning of the camera - this meant that great care had to be taken closing and opening the door. As the door was finally closed, the coin was observed to be unmoved.

The door was locked at 15.52.

At 22.31, the Japanese requested access to the room to place one of their CCTV cameras into the

room. S and O the cameraman went together to the room. S unlocked the door and took care to clear the CCTV cable away from behind it. Immediately the door was opened the lights in the room were put on and the TV table observed before entering the room.



The coin was seen to have moved. The paper, positioned in line with the table edges was in exactly the same position as it had been left when the room was closed and locked.

The coin had moved around 50% of its diameter - 8mm. A number of photographs were taken, together with the temp [23.2C] and the EMF levels [$<1\text{mG}$].

Unfortunately the CCTV had been re-positioned to the bathroom and so did not record the event.

Once again, the team members spent several minutes trying extensively to replicate the coin movement but could not induce the coin to move except by jumping with some considerable force onto the loose floorboard adjacent to the table.

There was a master key to room 11 which the team did not have in their care [it was in the key cupboard at main reception] but it is considered highly unlikely that it would have been used to gain access to the room - in addition, the CCTV cable stretched behind the door would have presented a further obstacle to the unwary entering the room and if not carefully moved when opening the door would have pulled on the CCTV camera causing it to move and that movement to be seen on the monitor.

No explanation can be found that provides an answer as to why the coin moved - re-setting the experiment again later, along with several others in other places within room 11 failed to repeat the coin moving.

The team members are satisfied that nobody entered the room during the 6 hours that the door was locked and further more they are also satisfied that the table was not moved by somebody walking or stepping on the loose floorboards either close to the table or anywhere within the room or the corridor outside. The following day the rooms adjacent to room 11 were also examined to see if loose floorboards in those rooms could perhaps have caused the TV table to move - again without any success.

This remains the one event that cannot be satisfactorily explained and so far defies all attempts to find the cause of the coin moving.

In an interesting footnote to this event, during the final Ouija session that took place some hours later, a question was asked of 'Bob':

"Have the spirits done anything today in the hotel to show they are here?"

The answer was given as the word COIN.

Unusual Photographic Anomalies

Orbs photographed

During the course of the week long investigation more than 150 digital images were taken by S's Konica Revio KD-400, others also took a large number of photographs both digital and film.

Of the many pictures taken three of them had what appeared to an orb or orbs on them.

Interestingly the three images were taken in parts of the hotel and the gardens that were alleged to have been the location of ghostly activity.

A computer assisted analysis is currently underway on these three images and a full report will be appended to this report in due course.

However, it is worth noting a few things apparent at the time of writing this report.

Each of the 'orbs' are almost perfectly symmetrical and circular, they all have a uniform transparency that allows the image background to be seen through them. They each have a bright halo around the periphery of the orb and they each appear where paranormal activity has been reported.

Upon initial examination they do appear to be very similar to the 'lightballs' captured digitally on Sony Mavica some years ago in the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum. Those pictures were taken in direct response to an EMF event being detected.

One final observation regarding these 'orbs' in picture 58, which was taken in room 8 while the dog was present, the orb appears to be blurred or maybe exhibits camera shake. The picture was taken trying to photograph the dog as it moved quickly about the room. The camera was panned rapidly from right to left as the picture was taken and this appears to have resulted in the 'orb' being blurred.

If this is the case then the orb is clearly something that is external to the camera - if it were an internally generated aberration of the lens then it would not have showed this effect.

It does not eliminate blurring caused by the software in the camera.

Orbs appearing on video

As discussed earlier in the report, each of the CCTV cameras positioned around the building and out-buildings showed a large number of orbs moving past the lens usually in the same direction.

Room 8 had the highest number - several hundred each hour being seen and recorded. The experiments to prove that there were simply dust being moved around on currents of air within the respective rooms under observation and being the result of the infra red light being reflected from the IR LED's surrounding and close to the lens.

Animal Experiments



At the request of the Japanese TV crew a cat (pictured left) was found and placed into room 8 overnight.

The cat showed no distress and no unusual behaviour during its time in the room.

Some months prior to the investigation a member of staff's dog had refused to enter room 8 on one occasion although subsequently on another occasion it did enter the room happily.

As part of the investigation, the dog was taken to room 8 and placed outside, and called into the room by its owner. It entered the room readily and showed no unusual behaviour and seemed quite content during the 20 minutes it was in the room. The dog was also released in the top floor corridor and again showed no distress or unusual behaviour.



It is worth noting that on the night of 16th and 17th May the dog above and another belonging to the Manager were reported to have behaved strangely, the Manager's dog barking uncontrollably for several minutes and the housekeeper's dog growling and becoming aggressive for no apparent reason.

Both Dogs were in adjacent buildings to the main hotel - the stable and the Tattershall Suite.

The stable and in particular room 17 therein were mentioned by some members of staff as being areas that made them feel uncomfortable and that we should have investigated - this suggestion was made late in the week and with a wedding party staying in the stable block rooms that made even a short investigation impossible.

Conclusions

During the course of the weeklong investigation no obvious paranormal activity was observed by any of the team members or the equipment deployed.

However, a number of events that may ultimately remain unexplained were noted. The movement of the coin in the trigger object experiment, the clock seen to fall to the floor, the tap on Ann's shoulder and the orbs being photographed being a few of the more unusual.

Perhaps the results of the seance experiment also require further examination and investigation.

The Hatton Court Hotel is in many ways typical of other haunted locations - a number of events taking place that people believe are either normal but unusual or paranormal depending on an individual's point of view and beliefs. One possible explanation might be that there are some genuinely ghostly activities present, perhaps one or two events each month, these being added to and masked by a larger number of events with a normal explanation that are the result of altered perception and awareness by the witnesses, all of whom are fully aware of the haunted reputation of the hotel. The staff are known to play tricks on each other too and also freely discuss amongst themselves events that take place therein.

A longer period of investigation is required and this has been arranged with the hotel, future visits are planned and the hotel staff are keeping a diary of events. It is an intriguing location and one that certainly warrants and merits further investigation.

The hotel staff must also rate a mention for their hospitality and friendliness without which the investigation could not have taken place and without which any future investigations also would be doomed to failure.

In addition to the areas already identified, as being subject to paranormal activity future investigations will take a look at areas that were identified too late in the week to be investigated this time around - such as the former stable block including room 17.