



Most Haunted Cammell Lairds 27th February 2007

We present here two reviews of the above show, the first one a serious review of the issues brought up in a show that “investigated” a location that Para.Science have been investigating for over 3 years now. The second one is a more light-hearted review, but hopefully will still make people think.

Part One - Commentary and Comparisons

Introduction

Filmed during December, 2006 this episode allows us an opportunity to compare the results of the show's investigation conducted over a 24 hour period with that of the Para.Science investigation which has taken more than 900 hours to date.

Our own investigation was perhaps one of the most comprehensive ever conducted in recent years and included in-depth measurements of a wide range of environmental factors including Temperature, Humidity, Electromagnetic Fields (EMF's), Electrostatic fields and Infrasound. Psychological factors were also extensively studied both within the staff members and the investigation team. Both the environment and the psychology of the witnesses are known from pre-existing research to be key factors in understanding and determining why people may report having anomalous experiences. The investigation also made use of a Psychic Medium in order to consider objectively all possible options.

Although we had been granted exclusive access to this location over the 3 years of the investigation we were permitted by the management company to cooperate with others interested in portraying either our own investigation or the experiences of the staff and former shipyard workers. This included a BBC crew and in 2006 the Discovery Channel used the location to film our infrasound experiments - this was broadcast on February 11th 2007 entitled “Tigers Attack”. At our suggestion the location was used by Yvette Fielding and Dr. Ciaran O’Keeffe as an investigation location for their joint book ‘Ghosthunters’ which entailed them spending several hours at the site accompanied by members of the Para.Science team. Ciaran had also visited the location as part of the Discovery Channel programme as well on a number of other occasions prior to the Most Haunted visit. During the research for the show Para.Science had assisted with the location research and had supplied information to the Most Haunted researchers. This had included providing a tour of the location and information from our own investigation and research notes.

Clearly, no direct comparisons can be drawn between our own extensive investigation and that of the Most Haunted team who spent considerably less time carrying out their own investigation but from our point of view it did represent the chance to compare the two investigations and of course we were very interested to learn what respected Medium David Wells might uncover.

Let The Show Begin

After the usual opening sequence where we are introduced to the various ghostly phenomena that have been reported we arrived at Ciaran and Yvette’s interview. Ciaran is surprised, given the history of the land on which the buildings now stand that some of the reported apparitions are not Monks as the site formed part of monastic land in the past. This is maybe a good time to point out the lack of a

dedicated historian on the show these days as in actual fact the land upon which the two buildings are located was reclaimed from the sea in the 19th Century as the shipyard expanded. The Monastic land and Birkenhead Priory are located almost half a mile north of the offices and shipbuilding hall although part of the monastic lands do underlie the earliest parts of the shipyard where in fact a ghostly Monk is still regularly reported by workers. But this is well away from the part the team are in, so it would have been a surprise if ghostly Monks had been encountered here.

Onto David's walk around and in the ground floor boardroom he tells us he is aware of two figures - the first is a female who is outside and walks up and down the corridor but no further information is offered before he describes the second character. David describes him as being Portly, well dressed and quite dominant and maybe dating from the early 19th Century although he is not certain on this date. He suggests that this is from something that pre-dates the modern building. Although our own research has not definitively been able to determine the sequence of land usage we are confident that in the early 19th century this land as mentioned previously was part a tidal mudflat prior to its reclamation to permit the shipyard to expand. The female sensed by David may correspond to the apparition reported by staff members. Described as wearing green clothes or overalls 'she' was seen by at least one staff member in the corridor outside the boardroom. To date we have never been able to ascertain the possible identity of this figure and sadly David offered no additional information.

Moving up onto the first floor in the empty and deserted drawing offices David senses someone who moves very quickly around. The figure is definitely male. The name is 'Graham' and he was apparently killed in a hit & run accident in the 1970's when he was only 35 or 36 years old. He is in the building because he is trying to tell someone what happened or who the driver was as they may not have been caught at the time but the impression is that it was someone whom Graham knew. Calling out to Graham brings a small flurry of raps in response seeming to confirm David's impressions. This information is new to our investigation and we are unable to confirm its validity at this stage but given the recent date and nature of the incident i.e. a hit & run we are sure that this information will be available in local archives and can be easily checked. This we plan to do at the earliest opportunity.

The fleeting shadows seen in this room have been a feature of many investigations by us and have been reported by staff members too. Many of these reported sightings were plausibly explained at the time due to large amounts of external glazing and glass panels inside this room and the fact that it lined up directly with the Mersey Tunnel access road causing car headlights to frequently shine through creating rapidly moving shadows of both people and furniture. There was a much smaller number of reports where we felt unable to offer this explanation and currently these remain classified as unexplained.

Moving to the 2nd building - the massive former shipbuilding hall. David senses an older man - a worker in dirty blue overalls and boots. He apparently died on the site in the 1980's perhaps following a fall which left one side of his head shattered. The name George is provided and also the additional information that he started as an apprentice at the yard in the 1950's or 1960's. He is of medium height and losing a bit of his hair. The description provided is a good match, except for descriptions of his attire, for a figure that has been reported several times over the years by staff who had long ago christened him 'George'. This choice of name has been commonly encountered at a number of cases over the years when people almost affectionately give a name to their ghost. The name George is very common in the records of the shipyard but we have no knowledge of an incident matching the described fall and severe head injuries. Admittedly the records for the shipyard are incomplete but the period of the 1980's toward the end of shipbuilding is well covered and there is nothing we are aware of that substantiates this claimed account. Most accounts of the figure in blue overalls also differ on the suggested date too. Workers frequently describe a figure wearing 1930's style trousers and jacket and a big cloth cap.

As they enter the elevated Portakabin offices George is more strongly sensed by David. George is a heavy smoker. After some discussion about an apparent figure seen next to David on the Thermal Imager and a claim by Stuart of having seen a shadow move past a window in an adjacent office, the team head back to the main offices to hold a séance in the 1st floor drawing office.

As the séance commences, Jon Gilbert claims to have seen something moving across the office which is confirmed by Karl. The table apparently begins to shake slightly and Karl experiences the sensation of being touched on the shoulder by something icy cold. David is then able to provide further information about the alleged hit & run. The car we are told was a brown Cortina and as the table continues to move (unseen by the camera) David says the driver was someone senior in the offices who returned to work knowing that they had hit and killed someone. David is drawn by the spirit to a nearby office in which the driver worked. As the team head toward the office a filing cabinet is heard to fall amongst much exclaiming - we know of many episodes during our time in this location where individuals have collided and fallen over and into items of furniture. In fact, in the same sequence Karl apologises for having fallen over another desk! Furniture spontaneously falling has never been encountered during any previous investigation or reported by any staff member so this represents a first time event for this location. Karl offers the idea that the cabinet had been pushed over to prevent the team entering the office by the spirit of the deceased car driver. Asked by David, Graham confirms with a rap that it was not him who toppled the cabinet. This seemingly confirms Karl's idea that there was now a second spirit that up till this point had gone unnoticed by David. Two taps from this new spirit further confirms Karl's spirit conspiracy hypothesis. This may be strong evidence that Karl is also a budding psychic able to fill in those gaps left by David.....or maybe someone just bumped the cabinet causing it to fall - we certainly banged into them in the dark on more than one occasion!

Disgusted by the actions of the hit & run driver and feeling deeply for his victim Yvette notes that Graham "So needs our help". Anxious to make further contact the team split into smaller groups and begins a series of vigils around the location.

Down on the 1st floor Yvette and Ciaran are having a quiet time of things which was very typically for Cammell Lairds. Yvette asks for the spirit to do something - with camera pointing at the staff tea trolley she asks for a cup to be rattled or thrown. Upstairs after goading 'Cortina Man' Jon Gilbert and Wigan are shocked as a mug is seemingly thrown towards them. As the vigil session draws to an end the two teams meet up and to their amazement discover that this was precisely the event that Yvette had called for and although the mug took flight on the 1st floor much was made of this event being more than a simple coincidence. The time of the calling out and the mug being thrown could have been quickly determined however by simple reference to either the time codes of the video cameras or on Jon's sound recorder. It is normal practise for any TV production to synchronise the cameras and sound recording equipment prior to a recording session being made and we are surprised that this simple check was not apparently made. If it had been then it could have been quickly shown if the mug being thrown occurred before or after Yvette asked for such an event. This is a serious omission. Such information could have helped immensely with trying to understand what really transpired during this vigil session.

Meanwhile during all this excitement Karl and Stuart had returned to the shipbuilding hall and were now underneath the launch ramp in the stores and workshop area.

They too were having an interesting time of things, after hearing footsteps they then had an object thrown near to them in the rear access walkway. Exiting the stores Karl believed that he had just seen David walking past the large side entrance to the hall but upon hurrying back to the main offices they found David seated in a chair where he claimed to have been for at least 10 minutes. The stores and workshops under the launch ramps are perhaps some of the darkest parts of the entire site - when the lights are off! There are no windows and the walls and roof are massively reinforced concrete as they had to support the enormous weight of ships being built directly overhead. Many hours have been spent in this part of the building and it's probably true that most of the investigation team were never exactly happy being allocated this position but not for any paranormal reasons. It is a dark, cold and cheerless place and one that has never produced anything scarier than the odd sighting of one of the buildings resident feral cat population. There is however a large quantity of loose metal objects and industrial detritus lying about in this area and it would have been no surprise if any of was accidentally kicked across the floor or knocked off its resting place as Stuart or Karl wandered about in the dark.

The figure of David being seen near to the entrance door is in an area where figures have been seen moving in the past, although never as clearly as this during any of our investigations. A figure was seen entering the hall by this doorway during the night several years ago and was subsequently followed into the hall by security staff who failed to locate anyone at the time. The description of this figure closely matched the 1930's attired figure previously reported by workers. Anecdotally, this 1930's figure has sometimes been associated by the staff with a known murder that took place outside the shipbuilding hall in the past. The murder was a real incident, the link to the figure is a lot less certain but we were hoping that perhaps David might have picked up on this more lurid event from the shipyard's past or indeed one of the several other murders we know have taken place on the site.

In the hope of getting further information and offering help to Graham the team return to the shipbuilding hall and the under ramp area for a mass vigil. This is a bit surprising as Graham was said to be active in the drawing offices and it was George who inhabited the shipbuilding hall.

Nevertheless, the team assemble in the darkness. Cath is touched on the shoulder as David and Karl ask for one of the filing cabinets to be moved. To be a bit picky here, they are not actually filing cabinets but metal clothes lockers as the room they are standing in was a staff changing room - but maybe I am just being too picky!

As the show reaches its climax and the crew begin to leave the area they first of all experience a small metal cylinder being thrown toward them out of darkness. Jon reacts by saying "That was a door" although this suggestion is quickly shown not to be the case. The team return to examine the missile and are further disturbed by Yvette hearing a low moan which was sadly not captured by the sound equipment. As they hurry to leave for a second time there is a loud crash from inside the room. The camera turns to capture Jon saying that it came right from between him and Wigan and Karl quickly determines it came from a loose door on a 'filing cabinet' (clothes locker!) being slammed into the locker. As they review the events a series of footsteps are heard by members of the crew coming toward, past and finally heading away from them. The audio again lets this sequence down as the supporting sound does not seem to have picked up this event that was apparently heard by most of the crew.

Returning to this area did not seem to make much sense in terms of an investigation from our point of view as we have never experienced anything untoward in this part of the shipbuilding hall. The noise that Yvette heard is not really a surprise as this part of the site is close to a very busy oil dock with tankers unloading their cargoes of oil products. The oil dock and its associated large pumps and heavy equipment is responsible to a lot of noise in this part of the site and for the unsuspecting the deep low frequency sounds sometimes produced can often catch them unawares. The building hall is constructed of large sheets of metal. Close to where the team were positioned during this sequence are the enormous launch doors. Almost 40 metres high and over 100 metres wide these massive and heavy doors readily move slightly in even a light breeze causing noises that often sound like low moans and rumbles. As the wind picks up the sounds change into a series of creaks and hammer blows that make a really good impression of someone walking on the overhead walkways. This was noted by Wigan and Ciaran during their night together ahead of the main investigation and was most likely the cause of the sounds Yvette heard although with such a poor recording being made of the event we can only speculate. Karl makes the point several times in the MH Extra that the wind is very strong during the team's investigation and from our experience of such conditions it must have been quite a noisy time for the MH crew.

As the show ends Ciaran offers an explanation of some of the events that the crew has experienced - he makes one mistake that we have to correct when he notes that the location has been investigated for more than 300 hours by a local group. As that group was Para.Science we feel compelled (!) to correct this error and point out that our investigation has in fact totalled more than 900 hours. This accounting error he makes more than once in the show too.....

It's a shame that in his summing up he did not mention the possibility of using the camera tapes or the sound recording to try and time-sequence the call for a cup to be thrown and the mug apparently being

thrown. This would have offered useful additional information that could possibly help understand the context of this event much better.

However, he saves us some typing of this review in his final summing up when he notes that the experiences of the crew during their visit to Cammell Lairds did not tie-up with the previous eye-witness testimony and for that reason he treats the evidence with a great amount of scepticism.

Almost from the start of the show it was clear that much of the information the crew were using as the basis of their investigation came from the Para.Science investigation. The fact that a previous extensive investigation had taken place was mentioned a number of times in the show and in the Extra that followed it several direct references were made to events that took place only during the Para.Science investigations. From our point of view it would have been nice to have been acknowledged by name as we not only actively assisted the location research for this show but were directly responsible for introducing Yvette and Ciaran to the location, originally for their book investigation and also later for show itself. Sadly, that's not unusual for some TV and media production companies. Whilst their own works are normally heavily protected by worldwide copyrights many make free un-acknowledged use of the effort and assistance of others. Also, what a shame that in using our investigation as the basis for their own they did not choose to acknowledge that we had been able to explain the causes and mechanisms of many of the anomalies we were originally called upon to investigate. In our opinion this additional resource would have allowed them to have shown a very different type of investigation episode. One in which, like many investigators know only too well from their own experiences, the majority of the incidents can be explained and events that cannot be explained become the exception rather than the norm.

And So We Move Onto Most Haunted Extra.....

This opened with footage from an earlier investigation which took place during January of 2006, when together with a couple of investigators from Para.Science Yvette and Ciaran spend several hours at the shipyard for their book. The video shows Yvette and Ciaran in the shipbuilding hall listening to some pretty loud bangs and deciding that as it was not a windy night then it could not have been the giant doors banging in the breeze. They do - even on almost calm nights, they may be heavy but the scale of these doors mean they have an enormous surface area to catch the lightest of winds and they need only move a couple of centimetres to create some spectacular acoustic effects!

As the programme continues we are shown part of the walk around omitted from the main show. This takes place in another large 1st floor room which we have always referred to as Room A during our investigation. In fact it was the electrical drawing office and lies directly above the main reception for the office building. After David describes getting the impression of playful spirit or perhaps even a gang of them! Ciaran recounts almost word perfectly our experiences in this location when accompanied by a BBC film crew who had joined us for night of investigation. It remains one of the most unusual and difficult to explain sequences of events we have ever experienced during our time at this or any location. It is fully detailed in our investigation report elsewhere on this site. This same room has also been the site of several documented sounds of footsteps being heard by people situated on the ground floor at times we can be certain the room was empty.

But perhaps the award for the biggest blunder of the night must go to the guest medium Paul Hunt who was not shown in the main episode??

As he wandered around the shipbuilding hall he described getting impressions of a ritual taking place - performed by a group of men. As he was standing on the end of one of the launch ramps at the time we thought initially he was referring to the numerous launches that had taken place on this spot over the years. We were stunned when he then said he felt it was a Monk or Monks! If this was the case then they would have been performing their little ritual all at sea as in the time of the monastery this area was in the middle of a bay and in deep water to the south of the Birch covered headland that gave both

the Priory and the Town the name of Birkenhead. But when were facts ever allowed to spoil a good psychic impression!

There were plenty of events experienced by the Most Haunted crew during their 24 hours spent at Cammell Lairds, the majority we could easily have offered them an explanation for based upon our own extensive investigation and personal experiences.

We were interested in this episode because we hoped that it may have offered some additional information about this location. Sadly, we were only left bemused and bewildered and none the wiser by the MH crews visit.

One final point to end this commentary - several members of the crew suggested in their summing up speeches that this would be a good location for others to perhaps try and gain access for their own investigations. Save yourselves the effort. In January, 2007 the entire site was sold to new developers and they have decided that all future access to the site for the purposes of continuing or extending any paranormal investigations is permanently banned. After 3 years and 900 hours we have had to draw to a close the active part of our investigation and are now left only to document this location and its ghostly residents but that does still mean we have a bit more work to do yet before we sign off on this investigation.

Footnote

Since the programme was first shown we have been able to access local archives and local newspaper records in some depth. We were looking for any hit & run type accidents that corresponded to the information David provided i.e. the name Graham, a victim aged around 35 or 36 years of age, a brown Cortina, the 1970's. In fact, records dated between 1965 and 1985 were checked. There were 7 reported hit & run incidents in that 20 year period but none matched the details provided in the show. The closest we could find was a 1986 report of a hit & run involving a male aged 37 that took place 3 miles from the shipyard. The driver responsible was caught and prosecuted after turning himself in 2 weeks after the incident. He had been driving a white and blue Ford Transit at the time.

A week after the programme was broadcast we were able with the generous assistance of former shipyard workers to locate the worker whose office was identified in the show as belonging to the hit & run driver referred to a number of times as "Cortina Man". Carefully checking the office indicated on the show and comparing it to plans and photographs of the building as it is now and also as it was in the 1977 means that there could be no doubts. The man whose office this was from 1968 to 1986 is still very much alive and we have been able to speak with him and also show him the segment from the show. He was able to confirm that the office indicated in the show was his office during the 1970's. He was understandably upset and annoyed by the implications made that he could have been a hit & run driver. Mr. S. (at his request he currently requests anonymity) is considering a number of possible responses.

Pursuant to the spirit named as 'George' who was said to have suffered from a fall and massive head injuries in the 1980's. A search of the existing accident records for the 1980's did not reveal any accident or incident of this nature. The shipyard did have an excellent safety record during the period although in earlier decades falls and head injuries were commonplace.

Part Two - The View From The Outside

by Ann Winsper

Okay, I'll admit at the start - I'm no Most Haunted fan. Not from any deep sense of righteousness and indignation, but more from an uninterested, lethargic sense of boredom. Apart from the gloriously spectacular excesses of Derek Acorah, which could rouse even me to exert the supreme effort required to press the remote and change channel to Living TV (surely that's an example of bizarre nominative determinism) there really is nothing about the show that excites me.

However, I allowed myself to be persuaded to watch the recent show set in Cammell Lairds shipyard on the Wirral. Being familiar with the shipyard myself, I thought it may be interesting to see the hordes of spirits who would no doubt start climbing out of the woodwork in response to the "calling out" of the team. Even if the spirits had not graced me with their presence during my time at the shipyard, I'm sure it was purely due to my obvious lack of talent in the spirit-baiting direction.

The first surprise was before the programme even started - according to the fresh-sounding young lady announcer, we were paying a visit to "Cammell Layered". Who would have known? "Untimely death, fear, and vast emptiness await us". Prudence forbids me from speculating on which cast member might be being referred to.

A first, moody shot of the shipbuilding hall, replete with the biennial Question Mark, which reflects my state of mind - why, oh why it seems to say.

Scene One

Ciaran and Ian Cash have obviously upset someone, and are sent to spend the night together in the building hall. Ciaran launches into calling out, surprisingly with no sense of embarrassment. Methinks he has been hanging around psychics and mediums for too long. Having informed us that he is desperate for something to happen, he then fulfils his own prophecy by seemingly hallucinating something approaching the four phantom horsemen, even Ian (presumably fearful of the thought of spending a night with a hysterical parapsychologist) urges him to "calm down, mate". Ciaran insists he has also heard talking and voices, and it is left to the confused cameraman to assume the role of the level-headed skeptic. Ciaran realises he has learnt the wrong script, and decides the best way out is to end the sequence as quickly as possible.

Scene 2

The witness interview (yes there was only one) consisted of a report of someone seeing an old lady when they were by the kitchen, and when they walked the 30 feet or so to the reception, she had gone. I might have been impressed, but my mother is in her 80's and I'm sure she could manage to walk 10 feet out of the door in the time it took me to walk down the corridor. Maybe it was my mother, she isn't dead but then most of the apparent ghosts on Most Haunted aren't either.

And so we move onto the history of the site. Now it may just be me, but isn't the historian missing? This may explain why Ciaran explains to us about the priory that "was here very early on in history". I think you'll find it still is here, down the road and called Birkenhead Priory. Worth a visit if you're ever in the area (god forbid).

Yvie mentions that the weather is atrocious, it's very windy and the doors in the shipbuilding hall are all rattling. Confident Ciaran stresses that he GUARANTEES that they will get door slamming tonight. Oops, perhaps Ciaran shouldn't be given any more scripts, if he's not reading the wrong one he's reading the one marked "door slamming rota" and blabbing the contents.

We Meet the Spirits

David has a go at connecting with the astral plane. He seems to have put the frighteners on Yvies' "slow moving shadows" (sorry, she mentioned them earlier but I was too catatonic to make a note), and they have speeded up considerably and are now zipping about like a workman with a gay sailor behind him. Apparently there are two characters that David is aware of, a female moving up and down the corridor, and a dominant, portly man from the early 19th century.

Moving upstairs to the first floor, and the resident spook isn't quite quick enough to escape and is spotted running by David. "I'm not sure what he's running for or running away from" opines David. Want a hint, I'm sure I could make a stab in the dark? The figure is apparently male, and has a really modern name - Graham. Bet the anglo-saxons would be surprised to learn how fashionable and modern their names are. But maybe David is comparing it with mystical names from before the dawn of time, who knows? Graham apparently hails from the 70's (presumably the 1970's as opposed to the 570's?). He's 35 or 36 years old and died in a car crash, David describes how he can feel the impact of a car hitting him. We can all dream I suppose.

Looks like David might have the wrong script now, as the realisation simultaneously hits David, Yvie and Ciaran that it would be fairly difficult to run someone over on the first floor of an office block. But David worms his way out of it, by describing how the impact catapulted the astral body from the scene of the crash into the first floor office, then via a convoluted description of how the driver hadn't been caught, so the spirit was wandering the (deserted) office trying to tell someone of the injustice (presumably his brain had been catapulted in the opposite direction during the impact, or he wouldn't be wandering an empty building for all eternity waiting for someone to turn up and listen to his story). In a masterstroke, David informs us that the reason the spirit is wandering the building is because he **KNEW HIS KILLER!!!!**

A Seance

The team attempt to contact the dead. I'm always confused by this bit. David has just gleaned that a man called Graham is wandering the building, looking to finger his killer, and now he is calling out to him to make a sound if he is there. Either David has just made the whole thing up, or he knows damn well that Graham is there, as he's just told us he is. But I guess the public needs proof, and let's face it, if you've been killed by someone who has got away with your murder scott free, there's no better way to correct the injustice than by tapping twice on the table. The spirit makes another desperate bid for freedom, but not quick enough, he is spotted by Yvie. "Did I just see you?" asks Yvie. Maybe he was running off says David sarcastically (I actually have a soft spot for David, hard as that may be to believe, I find his little comments quite endearing).

David then describes how Graham, being a younger ghost, will understand such things as cameras. Presumably when you die you lose the ability to observe anything that is happening on earth, including any advance in technology, which would explain why spirits wander deserted buildings forlornly tapping bits of furniture (which must be quite a parlour trick on the other side if you can't see the furniture you're tapping). Ciaran asks if the spirit is rushing around because that's what he did when he was living, or because he's moving in and out of this plane and that plane. With the look of an adult explaining something very obvious to a small, slightly special child, David explains that Graham is rushing around because he was trying to tell people what had happened, trying to grab people and tell them, but his hands are going right through them (presumably because he can't see them, as people on the other side can't see anything on this side, or they would know what cameras were). In a telling sentence, David says "imagine the frustration if nobody can see you". Ah, the old falling ratings fear.

Then suddenly, a sensible question from Yvie! Why is Graham rushing around when there's no-one here? Get out of that, Wells! "I think he's just got caught, and that's how he moves about". Well that clears that one up then, wish I had that level of depth and insight. It's now Ciaran's turn to act superi-

or, as he explains to Yvie “People have seen dark figures here, and that’s him rushing around cos he knows there are still people walking around, whether it’s security, or other investigators, or us, so the rushing around is him trying to grab our attention”. Someone really needs to explain this script thing to Ciaran - the bits marked psychic bollocks are Davids, the bits marked sceptical cop-out are his - how hard can it be?

It Goes All Dark

The crew now decide to switch to night vision. As if the poor spirit is not having enough of a hard time trying to get around in the light. Although how they are supposed to see moving shadows in pitch black isn’t explained, but presumably they will hear the spirits tripping over the various bits of furniture strewn around the floor. The crew leave the spirits to trip and curse, and head over to the shipbuilding hall. The first “astral” David senses is an “older guy” in overalls, who died in the 1980’s.

Now I’d like to take a short break here, as I’m getting increasingly concerned that these alleged deaths are getting more and more recent. I hope the team have done their research, living relatives can cause terrible publicity. Unless this is all leading up to an actual live on air death while we watch the “astral” leave the body, and presumably rush round for all eternity banging into furniture while futilely shouting “it was them what did it”

Anyway, back to the plot. Mr Died In The 80’s apparently had an accident which removed part of his head. He is apparently wandering about (don’t these “astrals” have homes to go to?). On being asked for a description, David describes someone with average height, average weight, average hair, average..... zzzzzzzzzz. Sorry, dozed off with the excitement for a moment. On to the portakabin to search for a likely site off which our half-headless friend may have flung himself in desperation. Ooh, we have a name to go with our Mr Average. Must be good, even David is embarrassed - and it’s George. Name of (anecdotally) at least 70% of the ghosts I’ve ever been told about. Although David does acknowledge this, and says that there is no reason why the spirit couldn’t be called George, to the emphatic agreement of Ciaran (oh I give up, he’ll be reading Yvie’s script next and shouting four letter words and screaming).

Yvie asks the spirit to communicate by tapping. Tap. “I heard a faint tap” she says, unconvincingly. “It was two” states Ciaran in a voice that brooks no disagreement. “Did you fall from a great height” asks Yvie. Thump. Why should anyone be surprised by the thump, presumably replicating the fall in all its glory (although I must state that I couldn’t hear anything, but that may be due to a fit of giggles that was consuming me). “I thought I heard 2” states Ciaran the arch skeptic again. Pointless discussion about meaningless sounds follows (sorry, I really am starting to lose the will now). David then enters George (not something I’d expected to see on MH, but then nothing surprises me any more). The shock of being entered by David has apparently pushed George out of his astral body, and he appears on the thermal camera, cleverly doing an impression of a crew member. David tells us that George was a heavy smoker, as he can feel his chest heaving. Not the pressure of having David on top of you then, George? “George, do you need our help?” asks Yvie.

God yes get this bloody medium off me you can almost hear George scream. Yvie then throws a coin, and asks George to throw something back. If I was George, I’d be heaving at least a desk at them by now. Yvie starts to get cross, and tells George if he wants their help, they need his, so if you want to have eternal light and salvation, damn well perform for the cameras or we’ll leave you here to rot. Doncha just love TV? Obviously realising the faux-pas, Yvie promises they won’t leave without helping George, who must by now be totally confused and willing to put up with eternal damnation just to get rid of the three ring circus.

Part 3 (or 4, does it really matter any more?)

David, Kath, Karl and Yvie gather for a séance to try and glean more information from our frustrated hit

and run victim. The desperate spirit makes another brave bid for freedom, only to be spotted. Again, the spirit is asked to perform for its supper by providing a physical sign for the team. Excitement - the table shakes!! Unfortunately completely unseen by the camera. After all, who would think of training a camera on a table when you've just asked a spirit to move it, doesn't make sense to do that does it. Exhausted by the effort, the poor spirit falls back, relieved in the knowledge that he has provided a sign and will now get the help he apparently so desires. "Can you do something else for us?" asks Karl. Karl suddenly appears overcome - "Cor! Cor!" he shouts like an overexcited 1950's schoolboy. "I'm listening Graham, tell me something. Tell David so he can tell us if you can't speak out loud". Something icy cold has just touched Karl on the shoulder!! Presumably the exhausted spirit dropping in a faint at the thought of having to perform again.

Luckily for us David is channelling information from the other side, although he states the info is disjointed. Bit like Graham I suppose. "It was a Cortina that hit him" states David. "Aaaahhhh" sighs Yvie, as if Karl has just produced a fluffy bunny from under his coat. "A brown one" says David. "Aaahhh, bless his heart" sobs Yvie. I'm suddenly overwhelmed by a strange feeling, but it's alright it's just nausea. The table starts moving again, presumably the fluffy bunny is making its own dash for freedom before the crew get peckish. "I think it might have been someone senior in the office" states David. "Was it covered up?" squeals Yvie with mounting excitement. "Well it's someone who's known they've done it and just come back to work." "That's awful" screeches Yvie. Luckily for us, Karl the psychic is ready to enlighten us poor mortals about the gossip from the other side. Apparently when Graham is grabbing people he's trying to tell the people around not to trust the boss as the boss has just killed him. As he is telling us this, Karl is apparently "freezing cold". Mendacity does that to you apparently. David appears less convinced, presumably thoughts of law suits from former Cammell Lairds bosses are flashing through his mind, but he does admit that it could be a possibility, and it appears that it was someone senior who hit him and drove off.

Yvie asks Graham if he worked at Lairds, and to tap once for no (presumably the concept of leading questions does not apply to the astral plane, so we don't have to give them the option of tapping twice for yes). Yvie tries to push the spirit by insisting "you didn't work here, did you? Tap once for no". Presumably she would have shined a light in the spirits eyes to make him talk, but he might have gone to towards it and been lost for ever. David feels he is being pulled towards one of the offices, apparently the one the perpetrator worked in. Hope he's not watching, this could all be rather embarrassing if incorrect, or alternatively solve the mystery of who ran Graham over, and just why did that boss arrive for work that day with a shoe sticking out of his front grille.

Excitement!!! (Not really)

Suddenly all hell breaks loose! Holy **** shouts Karl! Crash! Bang! At the same time as dragging David to the office, Graham has managed to push over a filing cabinet 15 feet away! Take that, MH!! Now will you let me escape my eternal pacing of this empty building? Panic, pandemonium, cameramen tripping over discarded bits of furniture. That's why we leave the lights on, guys. But Health and Safety has no meaning to our intrepid group of ghost botherers.

Ooh, ooh Karl has a conspiracy theory! Let me guess, it was Elvis in a UFO and all the numbers add up to 23!! Oh, sorry, had a flash back then. So what's the great conspiracy Karl? Apparently the boss who killed Graham is also dead, and is trying to cover it up! And it was him who pushed the filing cabinet over, to stop the crew from going into the office!!! Where presumably there is a note pinned to the desk with a dagger saying "it was me, I did it, signed The Boss". David asks Graham if it was him who pushed the cabinet over. Well if it was he's going to be mightily cross that apparently nothing short of a murder will convince them he's there. Would you like to borrow a sharp implement Graham? I'll hold them down if you like. The intrepid team now decide that there must be another spirit present. They haven't even asked each other who pushed the cabinet over, which would have been most normal people's first reaction. Oh. I see.

Yvie accidentally strays into David's script and not only asks the spirit a question, but is psychically given the answer as well. She fixes us with a stare. "This poor man! Some ***** had smashed into him and never came forward, and drove off. That's disgusting!". "This poor man so needs our help". At last!! The poor murdered Graham has been jumping through hoops for hours trying to get you to help him!!

The Team Split Up!!!! (but only for a vigil)

The team split up, with Yvie and Ciaran moving to the ground floor corridor, where Ciaran informs us they are going to break the cynicism of the rest of the team by turning the lights off. Within a matter of seconds, Yvette has spotted a torch beam at the end of the corridor. More impressive are the spooky musical sound effects that accompany it, presumably Graham has now got his synthesiser out in a desperate last bid to attract the team's attention.

Meanwhile, Ian and John attempt to provoke Cortina man.

Back downstairs, Yvette asks the spirits to rattle the cups on a bizarrely placed tea trolley as a sign. Which apparently prompts the throwing of a mug in the offices upstairs.

"Oh, it's a mug" exclaim the upstairs team in somewhat unconvincing surprise. "Is that the friendly Graham?" Well if it is, you've obviously annoyed him beyond the limits of his patience.

Yvie and Ciaran can hear faint tapping on the floor. Presumably the spirits attempting to make their way around in the dark without tripping over any more lockers or dropping any more mugs. Ciaran is now seeing lights on the floor, in the dark. Hopefully the spirits will throw something large and heavy at Ciaran and knock the sense back into him.

Ian and John carry on trying to provoke Cortina man into doing something. Something that would prove the existence of the paranormal forever, like banging a door, yes that would do it. Except he doesn't oblige, prompting the comment "you're not so brave when there's two of us". As opposed to earlier, during the locker toppling incident when there were at least 6 of them. AND HE'S DEAD - what are you going to do to him John?

Great excitement when the two teams meet up - "the killer" threw a cup at Ian and John! In response to Yvie asking it to throw a cup! Yvette squeals "you're joking!!!!" and a nearby colony of bats is startled into flight. Of course they will now prove to us by means of the time stamps on the videos that the two events occurred sequentially. Or maybe they'll just play some spooky music and move to the construction hall.

Back To The Construction Hall

Where Karl and Stuart frighten themselves silly imagining that David has wandered in, a fact that David denies with an air of resigned boredom and a tinge of annoyance. You can't blame him though, after all, everyone appears to have turned psychic tonight, even the parapsychologist! "I've been here ages" huffs David. Presumably for the whole time the rest of the team have been investigating - no wonder he's miffed.

The team head back to the construction hall to help Graham. Who is probably wishing he could die again, seeing as he's stuck in the office building opposite. An object is thrown!! Which is somewhat of a surprise as to the best of my knowledge this has never been reported from this location before. But I believe it has been reported from a startling number of MH shoots. The action becomes a little difficult to follow at this point, as Yvie has shared her 4 letter word script with most of the crew, and the dialogue consists of lots of beeps. Makes about as much sense as the bits without the beeps I suppose. Apparently there was a groan, but presumably not a paranormal one, as David is the only person who didn't hear it. Someone eaten some dodgy rabbit maybe. We are then treated to one of the most sorry

displays of hysteria I've seen in a long time. Apparently there are groans, locker doors being banged, footsteps, spirits passing through the team. And it ends. As abruptly as it began. But with less evidence.

Ciaran Sums Up

So onto Ciaran's summing up. Apparently a local group have spent 300 hours here. That's over 900 Ciaran, at least try and get the black and white facts right.

One of the key moments is described as a filing cabinet toppling over during a vigil. Although this was a vigil where people were wandering around the room like a pensioners coach trip - coincidence? Ciaran makes the point that someone could have bumped into the cabinet, and I listen with a feeling of relief that daylight has apparently restored Ciaran's objectivity. He also mentions the apparent cup throwing incident, and stresses how interesting it is that the event appears to occur in direct response to Yvette's calling out. Again, we are unfortunately shown no evidence to back this up which must render the whole incident as anecdotal. Ciaran asks if the event is paranormal or coincidental, presumably he cannot mention the third option, that the event is fraudulent - we know Yvette called out, and we know a mug was thrown. We have no evidence however about the timing of the two events or the initiator of the cup throwing.

Ciaran redeems his earlier performances by recounting the object throwing and door banging incidents from earlier, and stating that objective evidence is required, evidence that in Ciaran's view has not been obtained. He also makes the point that a large group conducted this vigil, whether he intended this to mean that it is impossible to watch everyone and therefore leaves the situation open to the possibility of fraudulent activity would only be speculation on my part. Ciaran also gets huge brownie points for pointing out that the events that the team were most excited about were completely different to any event ever previously reported at the location.

And so ends Most Haunted, Cammell Lairds.

Most Haunted - not even one of the best entertainment shows around.

And just when you thought it couldn't get any worse - MH extra!

Yet more - why didn't anyone warn me there was more?????

Yvie introduces the program by telling us that she and Ciaran have been to Cammell Laird before whilst investigating for their book (NB: with Para.Science). The programme then manages to show the only bit of film without Para.Science. Which is presumably why during every bang from the building, the pair get overexcited and ascribe some paranormal significance to something that is, I can assure you, simply what it sounds like - the banging of the doors. Ciaran also displays again his tendency to misinterpret light phenomena in the dark, something he really should know about, being a psychologist.

Stuart and Iain describe how they think the scary areas will be the offices in the shipbuilding hall, presumably having a psychic flash to the hysteria they will be part of the following night.

I'll skip the interviews, as they add nothing to the story except a growing sense of weary boredom. Back to the upstairs drawing office, and David has trouble adjusting his sea-legs to the solid floor. He describes a playful character who's a bit bouncy. Presumably Graham bouncing down the road after being run over. Oh no, maybe not, he's apparently the office idiot, who switches the lights on and off and bangs doors. He also says the spirit may pop in with the "ghost groups" and "take the mick". Something the MH team should know all about. He died of a heart attack, but not in the building. Yvette describes two knocks or raps, presumably completely forgetting that the wind outside is "strong enough to blow you over" according to Karl, and the building is full of loose panels and open windows. David describes how the spirit swings from light switch to light switch. Ciaran then tells us how himself and

Karl were trying to work out the light phenomenon, as the lights go on and off but there is no master switch, and each one would have to be switched on individually. He then mentions how it happened once to a group with a crew.

Now call me a cynic, but I cannot be in the slightest bit impressed by this astounding feat of psychic ability by David, and master deduction by Ciaran and Karl - the light phenomenon happened to Para. Science whilst filming with a BBC film crew, an event that was shown on BBC1. This is also documented in some detail on the Para.Science website, also Ciaran has himself been on many investigations at this location with Para.Science, so the history of light switching and door slamming is a very well known phenomenon. Null points for psychic/investigative ability, chaps.

Cue Stuart telling us that "if there's a prankster here tonight, me and Beattie will find it". Wonder how you're so confident about that then? (As if we didn't know!).

As If By Magic.....

Another medium appears! Where did he pop out from, then? Bet his family were pissed off, sitting through an hour of the main programme - "I'll be on in a minute, honest mum". Relegated to the Extra show, Paul Hunt appears, hopeful to amaze and astound us with his psychic utterances. Okay, what have we got? A feeling of being trapped, his legs not operating in the way he wants them to, having no control over his legs - he's channelling the pub over the road. Somebody who was so involved in their work they committed suicide because things didn't go their own way (mental note, check on Paul after show). There was apparently no need for the person to have killed themselves though, as everything worked out for the best. Well not really Paul, he'd killed himself, remember?

OK, now at the entrance to the shipbuilding hall, the one looking out over the slipway where the ships were launched. "I feel there was some kind of ritual here, taking place by men". Give that man a gold star, he's guessed that ships were launched from the launch ramp. Oops, no, he didn't mean that, he was picking up on a monk. Presumably a very wet and drowned one, as the Priory land is half a mile away, and the area Paul is standing on was a bay.

Part 2 of the Extra starts with a tedious insight into Karl and Yvie's relationship as Karl drags her into the building while Yvie stamps her foot and screams in a very Violet Elizabeth kind of way whilst pouting "I don't want to go there". Once upstairs, and the rest of the crew have appeared, Yvie hears banging from all around the room. But remember (as Yvie apparently hasn't), it is a very windy night. In fact, we normally wear hard hats when in the drawing office when it's windy, as tiles frequently drop from the ceiling in a very frightening but totally non-spooky manner.

Yvie asks David if "the guy who killed Graham" is definitely dead. David says he thinks he is, but does not sound very confident. He does however state that he "passed a very comfortable passing in a comfortable bed". Karl attempts to backtrack from earlier, and says the "killer" may not be the nasty bastard that they are making him out to be, it could just have been a mistake that he made.

Cath and David carry out a vigil, the boredom only punctuated by Cath's imagination conjuring up sounds within the windblown building.

The Summing Up

Ciaran again tells us the site has been investigated for over 300 hours. THAT'S 900, CIARAN!!!! And the team has just added 24 hours to it. I would dispute that fact, but maybe it's being pedantic.

David says come and visit.

Karl says he knows that people investigate, and he hopes they do it properly and do the place justice.

I'm speechless by this point. But luckily the Para.Science reputation precedes us, and we have nothing to fear from an entertainment show.

Cath says come and visit

So I probably should point out that the site is privately owned and has been recently sold for development, so you will not be able to visit, sorry.

“Cortina Man” is Found!

We can only assume that the MH research team may have been slightly lacking in their research for this programme, as a great deal was made during the show of the fact that one of the bosses was a hit and run driver. In fact, they specifically pointed out his office and the dates he was there. Fortunately for us, we all have numerous family members who worked at the ship yard and within a week of the show we had tracked down “Cortina Man” - who is not a very happy man at being branded a hit and run driver. We currently await his response to the allegations made during the programme.