

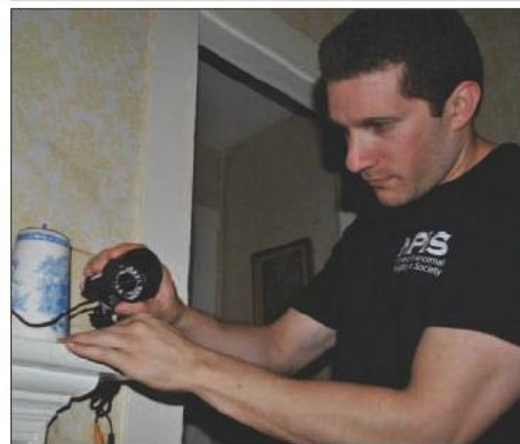
# Record-Journal

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## A haunting in Cheshire?

► Paranormal investigators come to the Cheshire Historical Society to look for things that go bump in the night. **Page C1.**

# A haunting in Cheshire? Paranormal team investigates

By Eve Britton  
Record-Journal Staff

CHESHIRE — The creaky floorboards, the slight list of the darkened hallways, the musty smell of the old house and the bells pealing in the otherwise silent night from the First Congregational Church next door, all combined to make a recent paranormal excursion at the Cheshire Historical Society more, well, paranormal.

"I've gotta say I'm a little nervous; there are mannequins all over the place," said Patrick Mediate, of Greenwich, who was beginning his first ghost hunt. "I'm excited about it, though. In the dark, it's an indescribable feeling. It's wild."

The Northeast Paranormal Investigations Society, based in New Haven, was doing a late-night search of the historical society's building Saturday. The house was built in 1785, and has served as a private residence for most of the time, though for a time it was a boy's dormitory for Cheshire Academy. It now houses a lot of Cheshire's his-

tory, from social registers of the 1800s, to furniture, to table settings and even vintage wedding dresses.

"There is a lot of history associated with this house: lots of births, deaths, marriages," said Adam Shefts, of Wallingford, director of the group. "Who's to say some of the energy of the previous occupants isn't still around? We don't want to provoke something and leave it for the historical society to deal with, though."

It took the crew of four about two hours to set up all the equipment: 11 infrared cameras spread throughout the maze-like house, linked by long cables to a DVR, audio recorders, still cameras, electro-magnetic field detectors (EMFs), a "Ghost Box" (radio receiver), and two balls, which were placed on the floors for any "energy" that might be in the house to play with.

"It's exciting for us; there's lots of adrenaline," said Mark Firulli, of North Haven, the society's co-director. "We've captured shadow figures, voices, temperatures in rooms suddenly drop. It's pretty interesting."



Investigator Patrick Mediate surveys the bedroom at the Cheshire Historical Society before the all-night investigation Saturday evening. | (Tyler Salomon / For the Record-Journal)

The NPIS, founded in 2009, has searched sites all over Connecticut, New York state, Maine, Gettysburg, Penn., and Massachusetts. Shefts

has self-published a book about some of the group's findings: "When Ghosts Appear, History Speaks."

"This has been our busiest year

yet. Since winter, it's been non-stop," Shefts said. "We're reaching out to more properties and people are becoming more interested in the paranormal. There's not such a negative conception about it now."

Stuart Vyse, professor of psychology at Connecticut College in New London, said he admits that right now there may not be as much skepticism, but he himself is a skeptic. He teaches a course called "Irrational Behavior," which among other topics deals with the subject of believing in ghosts.

"There is nothing in the understanding of the natural world that would support a belief in ghosts," Vyse said. "Having a belief or faith in, is unsupported evidence. They're beliefs that are contrary to scientific evidence. Until ghosts show themselves in the light of day and consent to be interviewed, it's irrational."

For the NPIS crew, though, their belief is that the paranormal, or ghosts, do show them-

See Paranormal / Page **C5**

# Paranormal

From Page C1

selves in the form of energy and changes in atmosphere.

About 9:30 p.m., when the lights in the house were turned off and everything was set up, the crew started straight for the toy room, where most of the energy was located.

"Is there anybody in this room?" Shefts asked loudly but gently in the quiet room. "You don't have to be afraid of us. Whoever is in here, it's probably been a while since someone tried to contact you."

Silence.

"Is there anyone here?" Shefts said, as Mediate used the EMF to check for signs of electro-magnetic energy.

"I'm getting readings here by the doll," Mediate said excitedly.

The two went with equipment to the doll sitting in a rocking chair and tried contacting whatever might be in the room with them, reassuring whoever was there that they weren't going to do any harm.

"Hey, you guys, you've got to come in the bedroom. I feel something here," Firulli called out.

The trio repeated the same call that they had in the toy room, equipment in hand and digital pictures snapping, while the infrared cameras continued to record.

Back in the toy room, they invited whatever entity was there to play by rolling a ball back and forth on the floor between them. Then they left the ball in the middle of the room, in sight of the camera, which would continue recording.

"If you're here, please show



Investigator Mediate surveys the bedroom at the Cheshire Historical Society prior to the all-night investigation Saturday evening. | (Tyler Salomon / For the Record-Journal)

us by moving this ball," Shefts said. "It's here for you to play with."

In the Victorian room, Shefts played Victorian music he had recorded on his Smartphone to try and coax the spirits out.

The trio, and a few followers allowed in for the occasion, checked out all the rooms of the house they had deemed high-energy in an earlier walk-through.

In each room, they called out to any presence, stating once again that they were not there to harm and what their equipment was. They stayed, patrolling the house and calling out to spirits, until about 3:30 a.m.

"We did get a shadow on the digital camera in the toy room and in the (dining room)," Shefts said Sunday. "There is definitely some-

thing there. It's definitely not dust. It just patterns that way."

In one room, Shefts said, they were clearly asked to leave by a past resident, Lydia Cushing, who blinked lights on the readers when asked if she wanted to be left alone.

In the toy room, Mediate got the most response from whatever energy was there, he said. Every time he asked a question, his meter went up, but not when anyone else asked a question.

"It only responded to him

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asking the questions," Shefts said. "It really couldn't be a coincidence."

The full NPIS report on the Cheshire Historical Society house will be available online at [www.NortheastParanormal.org](http://www.NortheastParanormal.org).

Also, the group will be back Oct. 28 to make a presentation, which will be open to the public, about their findings.

[ebritton@record-journal.com](mailto:ebritton@record-journal.com)  
(203) 317-2208  
Twitter: EveBritton

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