

Things that go Bump in the night

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PEA RIDGE — Do you believe in ghosts ?

The Arkansas Paranormal and Anomalous Studies Team investigate paranormal events or unexplained phenomena. Team members conducted an investigation Saturday night at Pea Ridge Military Park.

Larry Flaxman, president of ARPAST, told members that battlegrounds are always a good site for investigation.

Flaxman recounted an investigation he was part of at a battleground in Helena, Ark. The group had spent hours at the location without any strange occurrences, but they saw an orange glowing light flash at least three times from the bluffs, where the cannons were located during a battle.

Flaxman said there was no way a person could have walked up the bluff, and after doing research, he discovered the orange glow was similar to the burst from cannon fire.

Team members set up headquarters at the park's visitor center, which included setting up video recording equipment. For more information on ARPAST, you may visit the group's Web site at www.arpast.org.

Group members were then going to investigate any paranormal activities on four locations — the hospital site at Lee Town, the battlefield, Ford Cemetery and Elkhorn Tavern.

Park Ranger Troy Banzhof said a maintenance woman tells a story about candles on the fireplace mantle in the tavern. Each morning she would find the candles on the floor or on the other end of the mantle, Banzhof said.

Pressler, along with team members Suzanne Weaver, Mindy Harrison and Daniel Harrison went to the hospital site. Daniel Harrison recorded the three as they used a Geiger counter and hygrometer to do preliminary measurements of the site. Team members planned to monitor the four sites for several hours.

ARPAST have been involved in the investigation of more than 100 reportedly haunted locations throughout the southwest region of the United States.

Pressler said the group members are not ghost busters and their goal is not to prove or disapprove the existence of spirits or ghosts.

The group's mission is to document, collect and analyze environmental and corroborated data surrounding paranormal events, while ruling out or uncovering any possible explanatory causes for such phenomena, Pressler said.

Pressler said she been interested in paranormal phenomena since she was a teenager and has experienced her own brushes with the unexplainable. She has seen glasses slide across a counter and a rocking chair that rocks on its own.

Pressler said her husband is a mortician and she's seen a phantom coffin in the foyer of the funeral home. The body of an old woman was in the coffin, which wasn't supposed to be in the foyer. The next morning when her husband attempted to find out how the coffin got there, he discovered the funeral home did not have any bodies of females.

Daniel Harrison described himself as a non-believer in ghosts or spirits before he became involved with ARPAST. His wife, Mindy Harrison, was already a member of the organization.

Daniel Harrison said he hadn't seen anything, but there have been events that now lead him to believe.

During one investigation, recording equipment was left in an old nursery. When team members played the tape a voice of a little boy was on the tape.

"There was no child in that room that could have caused the noise," Daniel Harrison said.

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