

South Eastern Idaho Paranormal Society seeks to scientifically debunk local haunts

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In Kara Hill's childhood home there was an empty bedroom because no one would sleep in the "haunted" room.

There were weird lights on the window, noises under the bed and the distant sound of cupboard doors slamming when no one was in the kitchen.

"I dove in, trying to figure it out. I would watch what was happening," she said. "I would try to find out an explanation."

Her family pushed items under the bed so nothing could get under it, but the noises continued.

"For 14 years that bedroom sat empty. It's kind of silly," Hill said.

To this day she would love to discover the explanation behind the anomalies. And she firmly believes there is one — unrelated to any ghosts. That's why she has joined the South Eastern Idaho Paranormal Society, a group determined to find the cause behind those bumps in the night and set local home and business owners' minds at ease.

Since its inception in February, the group has helped to discover the cause of several strange incidences in local homes.

One of the homeowners was having unusual experiences in her office and felt like someone was watching her. Her "ghost" was created by too many electrical devices running at the same time. People sensitive to high electromagnetic fields can experience tingling sensations on their skin, dizziness and feelings of being watched, Hill said. By unplugging unused devices, those symptoms disappeared.



Hill said other local “ghosts” have been caused by forgotten light timers — that strange clicking noise by the stairs — and birds nesting in air vents — weird fluttering noises under the bed.

“If you fix the problem, you fix the ghost,” Hill said.

The group does not use séances, Ouija boards or any occult objects in the process of their investigations, believing that those things can actually invite bad presences. SEIPS instead takes the scientific approach, relying on cameras, recorders, thermometers, weather stations and electromagnetic field detectors to do its work.

Because members have other duties during the day, the society begins its investigations at about 8 p.m. and stays for several hours. The members make video and audio recordings and take thermal and electromagnetic measurements. When they pickup something unusual, they investigate, even if it means climbing into attics or exploring crawl spaces.

Part of the reason the group is able to locate the problem is that the members have not experienced what the residents have and aren’t afraid to investigate, Hill said. And although they respect the homeowner’s feelings, they come in armed with a healthy dose of skepticism and belief that at least 95 percent of hauntings can be scientifically explained.



“You have to step back and think outside the box,” Hill said. “There is almost always an explanation.”

And that’s part of the fun. Members of the group enjoy solving the puzzle, and there’s always the hope that one day they may meet a real ghost, although they would have to have numerous, unexplainable incidences to actually believe it.

“The main thing is curiosity,” said Emily Murphy, who helped found the society.

Although she has never had supernatural experiences and is very skeptical of them she is interested in finding out for herself if there really are any ghosts out there. And she enjoys helping people while she’s at it.

Hill agrees. While she helps to solve local hauntings, she is also searching for the answers to the strange experiences she had in her childhood home — the odd noises, lights and whispers that continue to this day.

“I want to understand,” she said. “I would still like to have an explanation.”

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