

# Searchers sought the unseen in Town Hall

Written By **BRIAN LOCKHART**

Do former employees, officials, or lost visitors still roam the passages and chamber of the Orangeville Town Hall – even after they have passed from this life?

A paranormal research and investigations group – The Searcher Group – spent eight hours in the Town Hall last Saturday, September 5, looking for evidence of paranormal activity.

Built in 1875, most of the current the building has 140 years of history that has passed through its hallways and the Opera House, located on the second floor. The Searcher Group arrived with team members including lead investigator Peter Roe and psychic medium Joanna Buonopane. They were accompanied by members of the Wellington County Paranormal Investigators Group.

The team members conduct their investigation in two phases. First, they do an initial walk-through, which in this case lasted for over an hour. They get a general impression of the building and speak openly to any unseen presence in the room.

Psychic Joanna focuses in on any area she feels has some kind of activity. Joanna is never told the location of the investigation before arriving to avoid any perceived prior information that might contaminate the group's findings.

"I can't research, I don't know what to expect. It's an authentic investigation not only for myself but for others as well," Joanna explained of the cold start to every experience. "I'm empathic so I go by feel. It's a very distinct feel for me. It's either there or it's not. I've been on some investigations where there's nothing here. But when it's there, it's



PHOTO: BRIAN LOCKHART

**GHOSTLY ENDEAVOUR:** Members of The Searcher Group, a paranormal and investigations group, start their investigation of Orangeville Town Hall. The group spent several hours in the Town Hall looking for evidence of paranormal activity.

there. It's very black and white for me. Sometimes it's just a trail that leads me to an area where the activity is hot. When I get there then I can start connecting."

The group doesn't enter an investigation expecting to find something paranormal. "We debunk and enter into each situation and environment with an open-minded skepticism more than we conclude something is paranormal in origin," explained lead investigator Peter Roe.

"They (the investigations) are not as glamorous as seen on reality TV. We keep the lights on and don't have a spooky soundtrack following us around. We saturate the location with audio / video surveillance and tour it

repeatedly, asking questions aloud and conducting communications experiments. We often leave and secure the location to let the equipment do their thing without any of the living present. This is typically when we get the most promising results."

During the initial walk-through, psychic Joanna focused on two areas.

The first was the council chamber itself, where she sensed the presence of a man with whom she asked several questions and actually determined a name before she felt he had moved on to somewhere else.

The group continued upstairs to the Opera House, but in an area that was ripe for the television version complete with blackened stage and catwalk, she sensed nothing at all.

It was the basement where some very interesting interaction took place.

There, Joanna immediately sensed the presence of a man – an older man – standing inside the janitorial room. A fellow empath from the Wellington group also felt the presence and both agreed he was a rather nervous man who was not too thrilled about

having visitors.

It was in this room the K2 meter flashed red. A K2 meter is a unit designed to detect electro-magnetic energy and is often used by ghost hunting groups to detect a presence in the room. You have to be careful with a K2 meter as it will also flash when near electrical outlets, wires or anything that contains a current so you have to rule out nearby interference.

It became apparent to Joanna that this older gentlemen was not willing to talk and she sensed he was standing quietly and nervously in the corner of the room waiting for us to leave. We stepped back into the well-lit hallway with the K2 meter glowing only a normal week green signal.

Investigator Peter asked in a loud voice, "Do you want us to leave? If yes, can you make the meter flash?"

Immediately the K2 meter flashed red, as if this unseen gentlemen was answering and telling us we weren't wanted there. It was the hair-raising moment of the tour.

The group then began the task of setting up their equipment. Cameras, microphones and sensors were deployed at various locations around the building to record for the next six or seven hours.

The final results won't be known for several weeks, as there will be hours and hours of video and audio surveillance to be examined in detail.

However, I had my own result later that evening when reviewing a digital audio recording made in the council chambers. The digital recorder was on and I was standing alone at the opposite end of the room from where the investigators were speaking to an unseen person. A whispering voice, feminine in sound, suddenly appears on the track although no one else was anywhere near where I was standing.

Whether it is a ghostly voice or overactive imagination is up for debate, but the recording was forwarded to Peter who heard the same voice.

The Searcher Group will provide the results of their investigation at a later date.



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For more info: Email [membership@orangevillechorus.com](mailto:membership@orangevillechorus.com) or call 519-943-0343.

**BINGO-** Fri. Sept. 11 @ 7pm. Hockley Seniors & Community Hall (904174 Main/Adelaide Townline, Hockley Village) \$2/card or \$5 for 2. Everyone welcome!