

# HAUNTED UK PODCAST

## (Season 4) Episode 37 - From Sceptic to Believer

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This is Episode 37 of the Haunted UK Podcast, and in this episode, we're going to hear about the experiences that turned a listener of the show from a sceptic to a true believer.

Throughout all our lives there's a good chance that we've encountered something that's made us think *'I just don't believe that at all'*, or *'I'll believe it when I see it.'* Scepticism is something that we should all exercise. Always asking questions and always trying to seek the truth is a path that we should all try to follow. But at the same time, what happens when that moment arrives when you *DO* see it ... *and then see it again ... and again ... and again?*

When our scepticism is tested, we can react in many different ways: going from completely rejecting the incident that has just happened right before us to instantly clicking into an all-new mindset of belief. This is the same for people when they have a paranormal experience. Some will welcome the experience, letting it alter their perspective of their life and reality, whilst others may go on a quest to debunk not only their own experience but also those of others.

We can never predict just how we would react to any situation, let alone a paranormal encounter, but the following stories give an insight into the life of one listener, and how he coped with a series of paranormal experiences that have stretched throughout his life so far. But the following incidents didn't just happen to him ... they were witnessed by multiple people ... in different locations.

As with all listeners of the show who kindly take the time to send in their stories, Neil Rowson got in touch in October 2022 with, literally, an essay of experiences. There was also a collection of fantastic photographs which I will post onto the show's Instagram account when this episode releases. To say

that Neil did an amazing job of describing the encounters that he's had is an understatement ... and that's why I just couldn't leave this document alone.

Like a few episodes before it, this person's stories needed their own episode to truly do them justice, and Neil has been incredibly kind enough to let me do this. He has also let me use his real name, and that of all the locations and other details mentioned. It initially took me a few days to get back in touch with Neil when he first sent his stories through ... I was just completely in awe of the sheer amount of content that was included – but there was one incident which happens early on in Neil's life, which I feel could have been the catalyst for the paranormal events that seem to sharply punctuate the rest of his life.

So, without any further delay ... here are Neil Rowson's stories...

I've listened to all of the Haunted UK Podcast, and I have loved it so far. It is great to listen to the different episodes and although I only came across your podcast recently, I have literally binged every episode to catch up. So far, my favourite has been the Big Foot special and the listener stories.

I live in Lancashire – and I think you should really look into some more of the hauntings in and around Lancashire – there is a wealth of stories and legends, including the stories of Meg Shelton or the Fylde Hag as she was known. She is still rumoured to be buried headfirst under a huge rock in Woodplumpton just outside of Preston. The White Lady of Samlesbury Hall (which my grandmother saw crossing the road in the 1980s) and there are also stories of ghostly hangings being seen in and around Goosnargh near the canals.

I have *ummed* and *ahhed* in my head on whether I should write into the show, mainly because I am super busy with family life, multiple jobs and knowing that it would take a huge amount of time to tell you all about my experiences and what changed me from being a sceptic to a believer in the supernatural. However, after finding some time over a couple of evenings, I decided it was worth writing them all out and sending them in to see what you and your listeners thought. I'll start at the beginning with my first experience, but if you do decide to read these out (which I do hope you do) feel free to pick one or two – or even read them all if you want.

I was born in Ormskirk in the early 80s. My father was a police officer and when I was 3 years old we moved to a village called New Longton as it was closer to the main headquarters of Lancashire Constabulary where he worked. I grew up in New Longton and started attending the local nursery school where I met my best friend Arran. Arran and I were inseparable as kids; I was an only child and we saw each other more as brothers – and still do to this day; over 35 years on, we are still best friends.

Arran and I had a large group of friends, and we spent many happy years hanging out and doing typical 'Jack the lad' stuff like building dens in the local woods, making campfires and so on. As we got older, I would say around 14, our friendship group had expanded, and we regularly would be found in a group of 10 or so kids in the local park.

My dad was always very busy with work due to his shifts, so I was predominantly brought up by my mum. She was amazing and all my friends loved her as she would let us hang out at our house with very little pestering. I am guessing it was because she could keep a closer eye on us, but in general she was not what you would call a 'worried' parent. We were good kids and didn't really get in trouble, so she was very relaxed with me being out and about with my friends.

As with all kids, we had gone through the stages of growing more mature and starting to discuss more scary things as you learn about the world – and one summer, around July 1998 I think, we were all hanging about in the local park one Saturday afternoon. We had got onto the subject of ghosts and Ouija Boards and one of the girls we hung around with suggested that we do one. Both Arran and I were complete sceptics and thought it was an absolute joke. However, we decided that we would have a go and we all trekked back to my house to find some items to make a board. If memory serves me correctly, there were six of us in total, three girls and three lads.

My parents were out that day and we had been left to our own devices. We all piled into my parents' garage and rummaged around to find something to make a board. I found an old piece of wood and we set about scrawling the letters out onto the board all directed by one of the girls as she knew how the board should look. Once we were finished, we grabbed a small glass from the kitchen, and we set about trying the board out. Now it's pertinent to the story to mention that we had a dog kennel attached to our garage with two spaniels. Our dogs had been trained by my dad and he used them as gun dogs as he used to enjoy shooting on his days off. They were pets, but they were also proper working dogs, and they were the most obedient canines you could imagine; they would do anything required on command – and they were not skittish in the slightest.

We placed the glass onto the board, and all reached out to touch it together, it was like a scene from a horror movie. All slightly apprehensive, we looked around at each other and started to ask questions like, '*is anybody there?*' and '*will someone talk to us?.*' A few minutes passed ... and disappointingly nothing happened. Then ... suddenly ... completely unexpectedly ... the glass started to move; we all stared at each other in complete disbelief, the room going eerily cold with both dogs letting out spine-tingling howls. The dogs then proceeded to bark and howl uncontrollably, running and jumping, bouncing off the walls of their kennel and snarling like rabid animals. Nothing I said or did would calm them down ... and, in all truth, it absolutely scared the hell out of me.

We asked the spirit, who we seemed to be communicating with, if it could provide a sign for verification that it was there (not that we actually needed it), but the glass moved to '*no*' and then spelt out the word '*energy*'. In desperation, we then asked if it could calm the dogs and stop them from howling. The glass slowly moved over to '*yes*' and the instant it got there the dogs immediately fell silent. This was a real '*goosebumps*' moment for us all; it totally stunned us. One of the girls, a little shaken, whispered about how animals, especially dogs, could sense a presence – and we all quickly agreed that we were not messing about with the board anymore.

We said our goodbyes and then carried the board to the local wood and burnt it in a firepit we had built. To this day, I still get goosebumps when I talk about the experience, even writing this out to you now is causing it because I can still vividly remember every detail. My friends and I never spoke of that day again – and to this day *I have not and will not mess with another Ouija Board.*

So, to me ... *THIS* is the incident which I mentioned earlier that I feel could be the main factor and catalyst for all of Neil's experiences. Whether you believe in what Ouija Boards are allegedly able to do or not, they have a very dark and ominous reputation throughout the world. Many people have dabbled with Ouija Boards to contact the dead – and absolutely nothing has happened...but that's not always the case for everyone ...

The Ouija Board has a very interesting history which goes all the way back to 1890. Now many believe (and I've heard this a number of times first-hand) that the name Ouija is a combination of the French and German words for yes ... oui and ja, but this isn't true. The truth is a whole lot

stranger. From the early to mid-1800s, belief in spiritualism began to really take a hold in America. The idea that sensitive people could somehow contact the dead and relay messages to the living was huge business, but many processes of doing this were lengthy to say the least.

In many cases, when a séance was in full flow, the medium would go through the alphabet multiple times until the spirits would stop at the letters needed to spell out the answers to any questions the sitters would ask. Over the years, this practice was streamlined when items known as *'talking boards'* started to become popular, but it was Charles Kennard of Baltimore who took this idea and went to the next level.

Kennard, along with Elijah Bond and Col. Washington Bowie were responsible for the investment which was needed to develop this new device for spiritual communication. The board which we know today was finally born in 1890, but it still didn't have a name. Helen Peters was an experienced and, reputedly, very powerful and successful medium...she was also the sister-in-law to investor Elijah Bond. During a séance, which Helen and all the investors were taking part in, Helen apparently asked the talking board what name it should be officially given. The answer came from a spirit who communicated through the board and through Helen.

The spirit said the name should be Ouija, and when asked what the name meant, the board replied, *'Good luck.'* It should also be noted that at around this time in history, there was a famous author and animal rights campaigner named Maria Louise Ramé, who also went by the pseudonym Ouida. At the time of the séance, Helen Peters was apparently wearing a locket with the picture of a woman on it with the name 'Ouija' above her head. *Was the woman on the locket in fact Ouida? ... and was it her name that was simply slightly doctored by Helen and then given to the board?*

It was common knowledge amongst the group that Helen was a huge admirer of Ouida, so it's highly plausible that this is where the name for the board came from ... and not from the spirit world ... but it does make for good story telling. So now this new device had a name, it needed a patent, but to get a patent it was required that the board's ability to contact the other side had to be seen to be working and real. In simple terms ... no patent ... no Ouija Board.

The pressure was on, but this didn't deter Helen Peters at all. On the day of the appointment at the patent office, Elijah Bond filed the application and was then asked by the chief patent officer for a demonstration. He challenged Helen to get the board to spell out his name which was allegedly unknown to both her and Elijah. They all sat down around the board and Helen began to communicate with the spirits. With their fingers on the planchette, the patent officer was astonished to feel it not only move, but to begin to spell out his name. Amazed, but at the same time disturbed, the patent officer issued the patent and the rest, as they say, is history. But it also must be noted that Elijah Bond was a patent attorney at the time ... *so could he have already known the chief patent officers name??* It's a strong possibility, but it can't be proved.

So now we have a brief history of where and how the Ouija Board came about – *is it possible for these items to bring the spirits of the dead, or even more worryingly, demonic entities, into our world?* Communication with the dead through the use of a Ouija Board is one thing, *but what if these boards can be used as interdimensional doorways, allowing movement of beings which we know little or nothing about, to freely roam around in our environment? Did Neil and his friends unknowingly open a doorway that enabled something to attach itself to Neil...to make him, and those around him, more sensitive to the paranormal?*

Well, let's find out, as the stories continue...

A few months later, I had my next experience, again with my best mate Arran. We were walking from Hutton back to New Longton; it's only a mile or so and just follows a country road. We were walking down Saunders Lane which is where the police headquarters is based and, on that road, there are a few of the old police houses. One of these was an old derelict building and it was rumoured to have been the place of a suicide where someone had hanged themselves. I have no idea whether this is true or not, but it was talked about amongst the kids where I grew up.

It was around 10 p.m. in the evening and was quite dark. Arran and I were walking together and came to the corner where the entrance to the house grounds was (pic included of the area – it's now been knocked down and is all overgrown). Arran and I were chatting away, when we both saw a flash of white, and then light glowing from the grounds of the house. It was dark and there was no streetlighting and no cars in the area. Without saying a word to each other, we crossed the road and entered the grounds of the house.

It was like we were being drawn to something, but we had no clue what. A few minutes passed and finally I looked over at Arran and said something like, '*what on earth are we doing here mate?*' and he agreed that he had no idea – it was like we had lost time or something because neither of us knew why we had just walked into that place without even discussing it. We didn't feel scared, but there was an odd feeling in the air, and we knew that something weird had just happened to us. We left the grounds, and we walked home, not really talking, just walking on autopilot until we got back.

As I grew older, I became more fascinated with the supernatural and over the years I have had more and more experiences. I think because I have been open to the idea of ghosts, I have been lucky enough to have other encounters – and although I believe in science, and I am not religious – I do believe that there is something unexplained there.

When I was 19, I got a job in a bar/restaurant in Preston. The building was called 'Fives' because it had five separate areas. There was a basement bar called '49's', two restaurants on the ground floor, a music bar on the first floor and then a cocktail bar on the top floor. I believe that the building itself was the original Guild Hall in Preston and it is situated on the aptly named '*Guild Hall Street.*' There is a long history with this building, and I think it was also once a gentleman's club in the Victorian era. It was a grand old building with many of the original features such as fireplaces, and it had a huge central staircase running up the middle of the building.

I started working there with a few friends and it was a great place to work. We had an absolute blast working behind the bars and I loved every minute of it. As the months passed, I was given more responsibility and I became a bar supervisor, and this meant closing the bars at the end of the night and cashing up.

One evening, I was working in 49's down in the basement. It was an older style bar with large wooden features and large leather winged backed chairs. I loved that bar; it had a really good vibe at night when it was filled with people. The bar was a horseshoe shape, but at one end there was a doorway into the kitchen at the rear and this was where the access hatch to enter the bar was. The stairs to leave the basement were at the other end of the room through an access door and there was a sort of tiered section with more seating to the side of the bar.

At the end of one Saturday night, I was cashing up at the end of the bar (the end nearest the kitchen and furthest away from the stairs). The bar was empty, and I was the only one there, all the main lights had been turned off and I was working with only the lights from the bottle fridges behind the bar. With the room so dimly lit, quiet – I began counting the takings – and this is when I heard a small childish giggle from the corner. I looked up and I saw a shadowy child-sized figure run around

the bar and then giggle again when she reached the other corner. I completely froze, then I heard the giggle once more.

I grabbed the till box and literally sprinted around the bar; I burst through the door and bounded up the stairs taking three or four steps at a time. At the top of the stairs was an old heavy oak door, I smashed through it and fell out into the hallway just as the building manager Marie was walking out of the office. Marie took one look at me and said, *'you've seen her, haven't you?.'*

She helped me get up and we carried the till box into the office and finished the cash count. Marie went on to tell me that there were several ghosts in the building – many people had seen them, including one of a small girl in the basement that runs around giggling. She went on to explain that there was a poltergeist that would move things on the top two bars and there had also been a Victorian gentleman seen with a large top hat, and he had been given the nickname 'Fred.'

Over the coming weeks, I started to keep a close eye out for anything peculiar, but unfortunately everything went quiet. After the summer, the owner had decided to repaint some of the walls as it was starting to look a little tired and he brought in some of the lads that worked for him (he also owned a building company as well as the bars and restaurants). A couple of the lads commented on how they had done work there before and that the paranormal activity always increased when they made any changes to the building.

Over the course of a few weeks, they set about replastering different areas, installing some new lights, and redecorating. I usually worked on the second level bar called Tic-tac's. One morning a few days into the decorating, I went up to the bar to set up for the day and restock etc. As I walked into the bar, I noticed that the ladders that had been left out overnight were laying on their side on the floor and there was a small amount of paint spilled on the dance floor.

I spoke with Marie about this, and we checked the CCTV; to our astonishment, at about 4am, we watched the ladders topple over on their own and the paint tray that had been left balanced on the frame fell off. These ladders were large A-frame style and not something that just fell over on their own. I couldn't believe what I had seen, and she just laughed and said, *'I told you there was a poltergeist'* or something along those lines. From that point on, I witnessed more and more things happening, usually at the end of the night when we were cleaning up. I have seen chairs move on their own, only a few inches, but still – I have seen a chair physically move on its own and slide out from a table.

Another chilling experience was in the top bar which was called Masquerade. Masquerade was a cocktail bar and had a long bar at the back of the room. It had lots of masquerade masks hanging on the walls (hence the name). It was the grandest looking room in the whole building – and my favourite to work in of an evening. It had a large ornate fireplace and a huge mirror behind the bar. There was a raised snug area to one side of the bar and then the dancefloor was on the opposite side with a huge chandelier hanging in the middle of the room.

One evening, I was finishing up and I was the only one on the bar. The lights had been dimmed and I was drying the last few glasses out of the washer. The sink and glass wash were based at the end of the bar on the side with the fireplace. I was taking the glasses out of the washer, drying them, and then placing them on the bar.

Out of the corner of my eye, I watched a pint glass start to move. As I looked up, the glass slid about a foot across the top of the bar – right in front of me. I felt cold...it was an odd feeling as I knew I was not on my own; I remember it like it was yesterday. As I watched in amazement ... the glass stopped

– and so just to make sure I wasn't seeing things, I picked the glass up, checking the bar with my hand to make sure it wasn't wet – which, obviously, could have made it slide ...

The bar and glass were both bone dry.

What followed was even more intense. The taps on the sink started to turn on their own; water streamed out at full blast. I was completely dumbfounded, it was unreal seeing it happen first hand, but I didn't feel afraid; I guess because I had now had a few experiences, I was starting to settle and not get freaked out by these things. From that point, I always talked to the ghosts when I was alone in the bars. I felt it helped not only me – but them too and I didn't really experience much more after that event.

The only other thing that was quite common, was for the lights to get switched off during the evening, especially when it was very busy. That used to happen so much that we had to post a member of the door staff near the switch box to turn the lights back on when they went out. For clarification, this wasn't the lights tripping the fuses; the actual switches would be flicked from on to off inside the switch box.

There was another incident I can recall from my time at Fives, but it wasn't relating to me. There was another bar manager called Louisa. She was on some form of foreign exchange with university or something. Louisa was from the Gold Coast in Australia; a proper Aussie lass and was an absolute hoot to work with. At the start of one shift, I was down on the ground floor sorting out the stock in the restaurant fridges. We heard a scream from upstairs and Louisa came bolting down the stairs soaking wet through. She said that she was stocking the bar in Tic-tac's and that someone or *something* just threw a load of water over her. We never knew if anyone was to blame, but as far as I recall, Louisa was the only person on that floor level at the time – so it could have been the poltergeist.

From the ages of 20 to 30, I didn't really experience anything further, until I moved into my last house in Chorley. We lived on Heather Close off Eaves Lane.

So, before we continue with Neil's experiences, it's now becoming abundantly clear that he's somehow able to tune into paranormal environments in many different places. *Is this a case of haunted places and spirits actively picking up on Neil's gift? Are they then presenting to him whatever they feel may grab his attention?* As we've seen on many occasions, poltergeist cases revolve around one person who can either manifest these phenomena, or can channel a resident entity, enabling it to unleash whatever it has in store. Can this be the same for other areas of the paranormal such as ghost sightings, orbs, strange lights? *Was the flash of light and the subsequent ominous glowing coming from the derelict police house a sign of things to come? Was this initial display a ruse to attract both Neil and Arran to the house, where even more spirits would have the chance to attach themselves to Neil?* As already stated, they both felt as if they'd lost time and had no idea why they were attracted to the lights ... but felt compelled to enter the house ... whatever the circumstance.

It's amazing to go through these experiences; to see how they have built up from one event which could be responsible for everything after. The feeling of lost time is fascinating, and I'd be so interested to see if hypnotic regression could shed any light (no pun intended) upon what went on inside that building.

We then move on to all the events that took place in 'Fives' restaurant and bar. Now although we've learned from Neil's accounts that the building already had a history of strange activity; it's still

amazing that he was able to experience all the events that took place while he was there. The little girl giggling, the poltergeist moving the glass along the bar as well as pushing the ladders over, switching lights on and off, turning taps on right in front of him.

Even with all this activity going on around Neil, he never felt truly terrified ... he began to get used to the strange goings on. *Again, was this a case of the attached spirits opening his mind up and preparing him, showing him that there was no need to be afraid? ... or are we reading too much into this?* ... Well, the stories don't end here.

Let's get back to where Neil moved into a house in Chorley, in Heather Close, off Eaves Lane...

The estate had been built for many years and I moved into the house with my wife and our kids. I have a son and daughter from a previous marriage – and my wife Toni has three kids of her own. The eldest of Toni's children did not live with us at the time as they were into their late teens. Layla, my youngest daughter, was about three when we moved in and Issy, Toni's youngest at the time, was around 18 months. It was a three-bedroom house: Luke being the eldest needed his own room, Toni and I occupied the master bedroom ... but Issy and Layla shared a room. This is when the trouble began ...

We had lived there for around 18 months when Issy started to experience night terrors. She would be awake screaming in the bedroom she shared with Layla ... pointing to the corner of the room. Something was in that corner – and it was scaring her. It even got to the point where she would be talking in her sleep, uttering '*no, let me sleep*' and '*I'm tired now*' etc. One morning we were getting the older kids ready for school, and I asked Issy why she couldn't sleep at night. She looked straight at me, very seriously and whispered, '*because of the little girl in our room.*'

Both Toni and I were a little shocked by this – and we asked Layla if she knew what Issy was talking about. Layla was quite open about the fact that they had a friend; a little girl in a dress who played in their room with them – and this girl had no legs. When we asked Layla she replied in a sing-song voice, '*the little girl is dead. She is dead. She told us that she is dead*'... Well as you can imagine, this led onto a plethora of experiences for not only the kids, but for myself and Toni too. For example, one night, I woke up with a start to find a bright white figure of a woman standing next to our bed staring at me ... the lights in the house would always flicker on and off – and things got even stranger – one evening we even found, what we thought to be, ectoplasm.

Layla and Issy continued to play games with the little girl until Issy got to around seven years old and then she stopped mentioning her. Other strange happenings we experienced came in the daytime too. Both Toni and I have done stints of working from home and both of us have heard someone walking around upstairs – and a child's voice; all of which had happened when we were the only ones in the house.

It also became a regular occurrence that we would leave the property in darkness and return with all the lights turned on in the house. It was very bizarre but again, we never felt threatened, it was all more a sense of mischief than any form of malevolence. It got to the point where we had to investigate it, and we actually reached out to the owner of the house as we were renting through an agency. We asked if there was any previous discussion about the place being haunted or if they had experienced anything in the house. We were told by the agency that the landlord wouldn't comment when he was asked; so, we can only presume that we were not the only ones who had some form of an experience there.



We decided to investigate the property more and we discovered that it was built on the grounds of the old Chorley Hospital. The exact location of our house was where the mental health unit was – where young women would attend with their children. Prior to the building being a hospital, it was a workhouse built in the 1800s and I can only presume that the hauntings were related to the grounds' previous buildings.

Our house would have been built over the left-hand side of the building in the picture I have sent, so it would have been erected directly over the foundations of the original building. To this day, the old ground railings still stand off the main road, which you can also see from another photo provided.

We have since moved from this house and we have now bought a house in Whittle-Le-Woods. This house was built around 1854 and the previous owners have some of the original pictures of the building, including a fantastic photo taken on the front step. This is also supplied. The house was originally a pub up until 1925 and most of the original features remain, including the cellar access and steps from the main road where they would have delivered the ale.

The house is steeped in history, with it being a greengrocer at one point with the adjacent building (now a Chinese takeaway) being the stable for the horse and cart. We spoke with the previous owners and asked if the building was haunted, and they said that they had often joked that it was as they had heard the odd noise and the TV turning off with no reason. We have only just moved in, and I have already heard things being knocked over when I have been decorating the empty house. I am kind of hoping that we do have some proper experiences here as although it may shake some people, I have become quite comfortable with the paranormal now, but I suppose that's mainly because I have never felt threatened.

I can only reiterate my thanks and appreciation to Neil for these amazing stories. I truly mean it when I say that this show wouldn't be anything without the support, interaction and kindness from its listeners, and this episode has proved that yet again. In emails we have exchanged since our first contact, Neil has made me aware of two other incidents which he felt that he needed to add to his collection of amazing experiences.

The first one was regarding his son who one Christmas received a wind-up music box, and you only have to guess what happens to this item on a very regular basis ... it begins to play on its own ... at completely random times ... without even being wound up.

And the second experience reinforces the idea that the Ouija Board *could have been* the flash point for all these encounters and experiences. Neil said that a few years back himself and his wife Toni went to a party where they met a paranormal investigator. As they were talking, Neil began to elaborate on some of the events that had happened to him, his friends, his wife and children. The paranormal investigator almost immediately zeroed in on the Ouija Board session and suggested it was very possible that a spirit could have attached itself to him and have been with him ever since. He also pointed out the Ouija Board could also be why Neil has had so many experiences.

*So, what do you think about all of these events? Are you in agreement that the Ouija Board could have been the sole catalyst for everything that has gone on so far...or do you think that Neil could have been sensitive all his life?* It's often suggested that as children we are much more open, consciously, sub-consciously and intellectually to possibilities which are way outside of our adult comfort zones.

In our childhood we are fearless, and don't yet fully understand the limitations which bind us with our environment ... but some people, it seems, can carry this way of experiencing our universe all the way through their lives. To all of you listening out there ... *are you one of these people?* ... if you are, then I'd love to hear your stories too. *Have you ever had an experience with a Ouija Board? What is your opinion on them?* Let us know on Twitter @hauntedukpod – include the hashtag #hauntedukpodcast and we could start a conversation going. Alternatively let us know on Instagram @hauntedukpodcast, drop us a message or even a voice note. We love hearing your stories and opinions!

Finally, as with all of these episodes, it all comes down to what you personally believe ... but if at some point you're alone at home for instance, maybe putting something away upstairs in a bedroom, and then you feel the room go icy cold ... with the hairs on your neck and arms suddenly standing on end, coupled with the disturbing and unrelenting feeling ... that there's something in the room watching you ... something that wasn't there before ... then be prepared ... because the next person who could have an encounter with the paranormal ... could be *you*.