

Tryad Paranormal seeks answers

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When it comes to the paranormal, experts say thanks to modern technology, it's easier than ever to capture evidence of the unexplained.

However, it's also easier than ever to fake that evidence, making it difficult to convert the skeptical unless they've seen it themselves.

For Greg Honeycutt, a behavioral therapist in Crescent City and founder of Tryad Paranormal Investigations, he became a believer early in life.

"I had my first experience at the age of 4 at a house I lived at — it wasn't a reflection, it was a full-on apparition in the mirror that looked back me. It was frightening, I was only 4 years old. Terrifying," Honeycutt said. "I was haunted for a while when I was living there. It was a demonic haunting. The church

had owned the house at one time. It was the church rectory. I don't know what led it to be haunted by something evil, but... sure enough. So, my first experience was pretty scary."

Since then, he explored and developed his fascination with the paranormal.

"When I was old enough to get a driver's license, I'd drive around looking for abandoned places to explore. Sometimes, these places were haunted. The doors would slam. I'd hear a noise. Something odd would happen. Catch something on the camera," Honeycutt recalled.

Not every occurrence was part of an investigation.

"After the 2011 tsunami, I was a guard out at the harbor during the cleanup of the boats that had sank," Honeycutt recalled. "We were out there late at night and could hear voices, people talking. It was really strange. My friend heard a little girl laugh at him."

He eventually founded Tryad Paranormal Investigations and brought his search for the unknown to Crescent City about six years ago. He and his group of five fellow believers have investigated locations throughout Del Norte, Humboldt and Curry counties.

"We did a lot of urban exploration, that developed into a lot of ghost hunting because we have experiences out in old houses," Honeycutt said he's seen a lot of things while living here but doesn't like to disclose the locations to preserve them and protect them from vandals.

Ghost hunting shows have popularized the profession, including "Ghost Hunters" and "Ghost Adventures." While they each purport to capture evidence, Honeycutt said they each have their degree of credibility.

"We're associated with the priest who was on 'Paranormal State.' He has a network of paranormal groups. He sends up different training materials and prayers and some ways to cleanse houses. If he hears of anything in our area, he'll let us know," Honeycutt said.

Honeycutt said Tryad Paranormal Investigations' five members include Ayla Richards (a historian, especially knowledgeable on Smith River), Melinda Riley (a tough girl, strong woman), Mitchell Lassle (Honeycutt met him on an investigation for his parents, and he later decided to join the group) and Kit Creed.

"We are a nonprofit, Christian-based paranormal investigation team. We use prayer and religious items in our investigations. We never charge for our services. We don't guarantee we can get rid of the ghost. Do it out of our own interest. It's fun, it's adventurous. If we can help the people, too, that's what we're out to do," Honeycutt said.

He added he often gets calls from locals who have experienced something in their home and have nowhere else to turn.

"We get calls from people who don't know what to do. This is their first time experiencing anything. They call me up kinda scared," Honeycutt said.

“I just did one a couple of nights ago, down at Shangri La (Trailer Court. We didn’t really pick up anything solid. A really, really nice lady said her dog didn’t like to go into the bedroom. It would growl outside the door. She was a friend of a friend of that’s in our group so we decided to check it out for her. It was fun, even though we didn’t catch anything,” he said.

Other times, they’ve been successful capturing evidence, such as from an active house on 7th Street and another on Oregon Street.

“It’s really interesting doing residential investigations because you’re trying to help that spirit move on. A lot of times it won’t, it’s pretty much cemented to that place. There’s not much we can do, we can tell you it’s there but can’t guarantee to get rid of it,” Honeycutt said. “Usually we are able to help them. Just affirming to them that we found evidence of something unusual eases their mind, they’re not going crazy.”

Honeycutt said they helped a couple living on Oregon Street. The husband had Lou Gehrig’s Disease and the wife was the one upset about her house being haunted.

“The alarm clock radio would turn on and play music even though it wasn’t plugged in. It was cool to investigate because I got the husband to help us in the investigation. We let him use the instruments, let us know if anything was happening,” he said.

The instruments he uses on investigations from his ghost hunting kit include a spirit box, which quickly sweeps radio signals that ghosts can use to communicate through, a K2 meter that measures the level of electromagnetic energy in an area (the closer to red, the higher the likelihood of paranormal activity), a mel meter which gives an exact level of the electromagnetic reading, a laser pen that sets up a light grid to detect movement and hand radios.

“Our camera is our most important piece of equipment,” Honeycutt said. “If there’s something there and we get it on camera, that’s good proof, good evidence.”

One such investigation in an undisclosed location near Dead Lake, Honeycutt said his group captured evidence on three devices, including photos and digital recordings of an EVP, or electronic voice phenomenon.

A spirit says its name, “Marshal,” three times. When asked how many other spirits were there it responded “There’s many” then gave a warning to the crew, “Leave now.”

“We were pretty jazzed to get that. My buddy wanted to go. I said no, this is the time we might get something exciting. I’d ask a question, record it, play it back, and hear the answer right away. Ask another question. Hear it back,” Honeycutt said.

He finds that the time of year for investigations doesn’t seem to matter, although the full moon sometimes helps bring out the spirits. He’s also been out on Halloween but doesn’t attribute that day to any increased activity.

While Tryad has investigated many places around the region, Honeycutt said there are some places they'd like to explore where they're not welcome, like The McNulty House in Crescent City which is on a list of most haunted sites in Northern California but is currently occupied by four professional lawyers who don't want to be a part of a tourist attraction. He'd also like to investigate the lighthouse at Battery Point.

"We were told they don't want us to upset the spirits that are there. No ghost hunting there at all," Honeycutt said.

After an investigation, they burn sage, sprinkle some holy water, say a prayer, and tell the spirit it's time to move on, it's no longer wanted there.

Although they are not always successful, they do make a friend. Honeycutt said he may write a book someday.

"I just like collecting experiences and stories," Honeycutt said. "We're just here to help people using our personal experiences. Get answers for them. At the same time, it's fun to put together the puzzle pieces through the clues. People who invite us out find out things they didn't know."