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Castle teems with ghost stories

Continued from page A1

Once he's noticed he'll disappear, but leave his chair askew, Haymes said.

During renovations, shortly after purchasing the building in 1980, Haymes was removing lath and plaster from a wall. She was nine-months pregnant and feeling the financial pressures of starting up a business, she recalled.

"I used to talk to the ghosts and that day I said 'OK guys show me this is all worth it,'" she said.

Then on a piece of carpet she had just vacuumed appeared a shiny 1867 American nickel. "That five-cent piece was my validation," Haymes said.

While many people consider ghost stories to be nonsense, Royal Roads University claims to have proof of its supernatural occurrences.

After decades of ghost stories and unexplained occurrences at the Hatley Castle, the B.C. Society of Paranormal Investigation and Research into the Supernatural (B.C. Spirits) conducted a one-night investigation in September 2006.

"Every castle is supposed to have a ghost and we have at least one."

–Stephanie Slater
Royal Roads University

In their finding the group of psychics and occult experts left the castle with an image of a disembodied head in the foyer in the castle and an audio recording of a spirit voice saying, "there's a psychic in here."

"It seems some of the original residents have not departed," said Stephanie Slater, RRU community relations director.

The castle is more than 100 years old and was built by James Dunsmuir.

A tale that's been circulating for years is that the Dunsmuir's maid supposedly committed suicide by throwing herself out of a third-floor bedroom window, Slater said.

During the B.C. Spirits investigation, a psychic heard the voice of man in the maid's former room saying "It's an accident, it's an accident," Slater said adding the psychic said the man was lying.

During the early 1940s when the castle was used for military purposes, ghosts often disturbed the cadets when they were sleeping.

"One night a cadet awoke to the woman trying to pull him out of bed," Slater said. "It is believed (Laura Dunsmuir) was looking for her son."

"I think there are a lot of things we don't understand yet, and paranormal activity is one of them. Every castle is supposed to have a ghost and we have at least one."

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PUBLIC NOTICE
WEST SHORE FIREWORKS BYLAW

The Town of View Royal, the District of Highlands and the Cities of Colwood and Langford have Fireworks Bylaws to regulate the sale, possession, and discharge of fireworks in the community. The Bylaws are in effect 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all year. Residents and visitors to these communities should note the following important restrictions:

- Everyone must have a permit to possess or discharge any fireworks;
- Permits are issued only to persons 18 years of age and older;
- Consumer fireworks events may only take place on October 31 between 5 pm and 10 pm; and
- No fireworks may be sold or traded in these municipalities.

Persons wishing to have a fireworks event may obtain the permit for their municipality at the following locations:

City of Langford	City of Colwood	View Royal Fire Hall	District of Highlands
877 Goldstream Ave., 2nd fl.	3300 Wishart Rd.	280 Island Highway	1980 Millstream Rd
Tel. 250-478-7882	Tel. 250-478-5541	Tel. 250-479-7322	PH: 250-474-1773

Completion of the Fireworks Safety Course is required for those wishing to obtain a consumer (family) fireworks permit. While the Course offerings are now completed for 2009, you may still be eligible to obtain a permit as the certificate of completion for the Fireworks Safety Course is valid for three years.

Consult your municipality and its complete Bylaw for full information – including permit costs and other requirements – before planning your event.