

of 76, when "a bloody cart ran right over my bloody back", leaving his five children orphaned.

I asked Thomas about his connection to the Ship Inn – a question that didn't go down too well!

"I already told you," Donna/Thomas snapped, "don't you listen? My shop is three doors down the street."

After a couple more minutes' questioning, Donna slumped forward and opened her eyes as if she'd just woken from a nap. We had to fill her in on the details as she told us that while she was in the trance she wasn't fully aware of what was happening.

At 6.30am we called it a day. Donna thanked us all for coming; Stuart apologised for the lack of activity. He felt embarrassed as none of his 'regular' ghosts showed up. He needn't have felt bad though – I know I went home with plenty to think about, even more so when I downloaded my photos the following day. I was amazed to find what appeared to be an orb in one of the pictures I took in the front bar – in the exact area where high EMF readings had been recorded.

I had taken a series of pictures in the space of one minute, and there was nothing untoward on any of the other pictures.

### Gobsmacked

When I looked at my exterior photos of The Ship I was absolutely gobsmacked. Just one of the several pictures appeared to show several orbs, and when I lightened it on my computer I couldn't believe my eyes: there were more light anomalies than I could count.

Before cynics among you ask, no, it wasn't raining, or even drizzly – take a look at the dry pavement.

So, do these strange orbs prove the existence of ghosts? Of course no one can confirm this definitely, but I for one am baffled as to what these strange circles of light are.

A week after the investigation, Donna phoned to tell me that Stuart had been speaking about the investigation to the owner of Casa De Tapas, which is three doors along from The Ship.

When he mentioned Thomas the cobbler, his eyes nearly popped out of his head. Apparently his family have owned the building for some time and the ghost of a white-haired man has been seen many times in the building. He also told Stuart that the building was indeed once a cobbler's.

I was unable to confirm this name, nor that of the fisherman Joseph Brannigan, despite the kind help of family historian Paulene Green who looked on census records from the years we were given as their death dates.

But even without any concrete evidence, my Ghost Search UK investigation was great fun and left me with more questions than answers. In fact I enjoyed it so much I've since joined the team as part of the camera crew!

■ For details on forthcoming investigations, or if you know of a venue which may be suitable for an investigation, visit [www.ghostsearchuk.co.uk](http://www.ghostsearchuk.co.uk) call Donna on 01797 367172, or email [info@ghostsearchuk.co.uk](mailto:info@ghostsearchuk.co.uk)

## Into the darkness

**Name and occupation:** Donna Gearing, paranormal investigator

**Describe your job:**

My researcher and I are constantly searching for locations that are reputed to be haunted or at least have 'that strange feeling'. I go to every location to ascertain if active spirits are present there, and should a site be active enough to warrant us going in, I open up our doors to a limited number of paying guests. This is for two reasons: firstly it's our only way of financing the work we do, and the other reason is to allow the general public to see what takes place behind closed doors when an investigation is under way. Each guest becomes a team member for the night, allowing them the chance to experience paranormal activity for themselves.

**What made you start up Ghost Search UK?**

I originally set up Ghost Search UK as a means of securing some form of evidence that what I, as a spiritualist medium, have always been able to see, hear and sense. I wanted to show people who think clairvoyants are nothing more than fanciful dreamers that there is an afterlife. I accept that most people need hard evidence before they can believe in something they cannot see, hear or touch, and this is what I set out to achieve.

I continue with this work because I just love it. It's exciting and unpredictable. Since investigations started, the team have come across many earth-bound spirits that are lost, confused or in denial that they have left their physical bodies. We are able to help them on their last journey home where they can find peace, contentment and family who have already passed over. To witness loved ones come and collect the lost souls has to be the most rewarding of all. Many rescue circles leave tears of joy in our eyes and a warm feeling in the heart – how many occupations can boast that?

**What's the best bit of your job?**

Apart from helping the earthbound, for me it has to be dealing with the lower entities. This is my speciality, I just love it.

Lower entities are those that refuse to go to the world of spirit, normally for fear of retribution for their earthly misdemeanours. They love to cause upset and mayhem, they love to fight and to challenge anyone that dares stand in their way.

Ghost Search UK has secured both on still camera and video evidence of just what a low entity can do. The lady on the receiving end of this attack received two raised welts across her back. The skin was not broken and within a number of hours all physical signs had disappeared, but she had to have physiotherapy the next day to release her back muscles as they had gone into a spasm and she was unable to stand or walk.



■ The scratches which mysteriously appeared on a guest's back during an investigation



If I detect low entities I always, with the aid of team mediums and our spirit guides, move them on to where they rightfully belong, the world of spirit. We do this totally free of charge.

**And the hardest part?**

Easy... the paperwork!

**Where would you really like to hold an investigation?**

One of two places. Either a disused hospital, as I was formerly a nurse, or a prison. Both of these would be full of energies, a mixture of good and bad.

**What is the most exciting thing that has happened on an investigation?**

The Metaphysical Research Society is currently analysing a photograph that I took when we had been invited to investigate a building not open to the public. I felt a male energy step into a doorway, took a photo and it appears that I have captured a full ghost manifestation in colour. Until I get written confirmation from the Metaphysical Research Society I'm not releasing the photograph, however the reports so far are thumbs up!

**Do you ever get scared?**

If I said no I would be lying, but it's the darkness that worries me more, especially in a building that I don't know.

**Your house in on fire: apart from your family what two things would you rescue?**

My pets (one dog, three cats, one rabbit and four ducks)... can I count them as one? And photographs of past family and friends, such treasured memories.

**What is your greatest ambition?**

To be doing the work I do in ten years from now and still be happy doing it.

**What makes you most proud?**

My children, my husband and my team.

**What gets your heart racing?**

Apart from chocolates and ghosts? (sorry... and my husband!) It would have to be watching our guests' reactions to things they cannot explain or have never experienced.

**What was your last extravagance?**

Buying the business a new laser printer – sounds sad, but it's brilliant!

**What sums up your attitude to life?**

To love and be loved. As simple as that really.