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New features: A writer's name **underlined** means you can email that writer and we've also added printer friendly to print the stories and read them later.

Investigators report finding spirits living at Lockwood Mathews Mansion

By **PATRICK R. LINSEY**

Hour Staff Writer

NORWALK — LeGrand Lockwood lived in the Norwalk mansion now bearing his name for only four years before his death in 1872. But according to Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum executive director Marjorie St. Aubyn and a team of paranormal investigators, the railroad tycoon and his wife, Ann, stuck around a lot longer than that.

Four researchers from Connecticut Paranormal Research and Investigations combed the museum from top to bottom Monday, and said the 62-room 138-year-old structure abounds with spiritual energy. Two of the presences felt most strongly, said lead investigator Christine Kaczynski, are those of LeGrand and Ann Lockwood.


Kaczynski discussed her findings with her ragtag team standing in the imposing mansion's shadow in Mathews park, as they puffed on cigarettes and punched keys on a laptop.



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"There! That's an orb!" she chirped, pointing to what looked like a small, transparent ball of light in the corner of a photograph taken in the mansion that morning. To Kaczynski and her team, an orb is evidence of a spirit taking energy from the earthly world. To skeptics, an orb is a reflection of light in the camera's lens.

"It's going through levels of manifestation," she said of the glowing ball. "Sometimes, you'll actually get the outline of an individual. Energy never dies. It never ceases to exist. It just changes form."

If one were looking for spiritual energy, the Lockwood Mathews Mansion would seem a good place to start. The stunning "country manor" positively drips with history. Commissioned by Lockwood in 1864 as a triumph of the fortunes made with the rise of heavy industry in America, it was sold less than a decade later, after its patriarch saw financial ruin and an untimely death.

Members of the affluent Mathews family occupied the mansion for the next six decades, until it was sold to the city and fell into disrepair. Nearly razed, the structure was eventually sold to a non-profit foundation and restoration efforts have been ongoing in recent years.

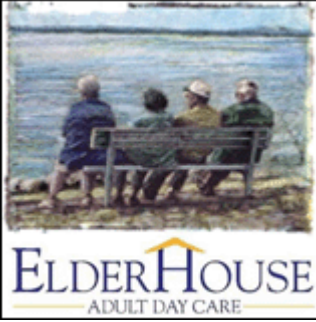
St. Aubyn said that for as long as she has worked at the mansion, volunteers and staff have sensed an otherworldly presence: "People that work in the museum, I'd say, 'How come you left a mop in the middle of the rotunda?' and they'd say, 'Well the house told us to leave.'"

Witnessed have been a little girl in a white dress and a little boy, she said. Strange sounds are heard — doors slamming, children playing. The mansion has been a popular set for the entertainment industry, and a "man in a long frock coat" once spooked a burly production assistant on a film shoot.

Kaczynski said walking through the large door into the entrance room and rotunda, she and her team sensed a paranormal presence almost immediately.



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"There's some very old places you can go in and every night of the year and not get anything," she said. Not at Lockwood Mathews.

She also provided assurances that none of the energy present at the mansion poses any danger to visitors or staff.

"These by no means are negative spirits," she said, "but they're still living their after lives here in the mansion. These spirits are living alongside the living."

It is when the edifice is dark and quiet that the spirits are most easily sensed, said Kaczynski, though she is quite sure they are active in the day, as dozens of volunteers, staff and visitors are traipsing through the museum.

The mansion has seen a resurgence in recent years, being used for fashion shows, financial seminars and holiday parties.

Laughed St. Aubyn: "And the Lockwoods party on."

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