



MOSTLY GHOSTLY INVESTIGATIONS

STAGE FRIGHT



Derek McCall, John Hill,
Kathleen Cronie and Mary
Wood. Below: Kathleen
and John dowsing



Mostly Ghostly's first Haunted Theatre Tour at the Theatre Royal in Dumfries – Scotland's oldest working theatre with a reputedly haunted basement and more than its fair share of ghostly

goings-on – proved an eventful night for the team and their guests.

Kathleen Cronie reports

I think we all felt a degree of trepidation (and a little stage fright!) as the hour approached for our Haunted Theatre Tour to begin. John launched the evening in suitably dramatic style; emerging ominously from the wings, tapping a stick on the wooden floor in time with his own footsteps. He greeted guests in his inimitable manner, setting the scene for what would turn out to be a fantastic and eventful night. There followed a brief history of the theatre and a selection of stories relating to the stage area.

We then split into two groups, with Group A being led towards the upstairs dressing rooms. While sharing the stories of a dark figure which has been seen in this vicinity, one of the group said he'd seen something similar through a glass panel on the door. A young woman then jumped in fear when she felt

something touch her back. She spun round and asked if anyone had touched her accidentally, but no-one had...

Down in the haunted basement, we took part in a short dowsing session. Most people were able to illicit a response with some showing a natural affinity with the rods and crystals. One woman said she was picking up on a young lady who she described as a "very happy soul" – could this be our famous Lady in Green?

Meanwhile, Group B visited the disorientating staircase which links the foyer and balcony. Two people reported tingling sensations in their right hands and arms and an oppressive sensation was felt at the foot of the stairs, which links with many of our own experiences. On a more unusual note, one person described the feeling of standing on a heated plate, with their feet becoming very hot!

Last but by no means least, was a visit to the balcony. On previous Mostly Ghostly investigations this has proved to be an extremely active, and at times, disturbing location. Reports in this area included: the air feeling thick and heavy; sickly sensations, and interestingly, a "dark, hunched shape" which was seen to move from left to right; something one of our team witnessed in the control room during our first investigation.

The final vigil on the stage was lively and somewhat unsettling, particularly when one of the group broke down into tears. The girl explained that her emotions had changed



suddenly and it took her several more minutes to regain composure. Despite our high hopes for mysterious happenings, I don't think any of us expected this.

To end the evening, everyone congregated in the Hopkin Room for refreshments and a de-brief. Feedback was really positive and we listened with interest as people shared their stories and experiences. All in all it was an unforgettable night for Mostly Ghostly Investigations.

We're looking forward to more tours in future and have no doubt that this beautiful and historic theatre will continue to intrigue performers, guests and ghost tour participants for many years to come...

■ For more information about Mostly Ghostly, its Dumfries Ghost Walks and Haunted Theatre Tours at the Theatre Royal (there are tours planned for Saturday, January 21 and Saturday, February 11, 2012) see www.mostlyghostly.org or call 07755 722008 or 07791 047835.