



📷 The Old Parramatta Gaol is a creepy place. Picture: Bob Barker.

NSW

# Ghost tours through the creepy corridors and cells of Old Parramatta Gaol sends shivers down Tele man's spine

Matt Bamford, The Daily Telegraph

November 21, 2014 10:00pm

A WOMAN cries out. The sound echoes through the empty prison cell. "Who's there? Hello!" Her voice startles a clutch of concerned intruders holding their torches high in the eerie darkness, hands shaking as they inch past a row of cells once home to murderers, rapists and hardened criminals.

The cry didn't concern me. That's to be expected on a ghost hunt. It was the

peculiar sound before it, almost like a rustling, that had caught our attention.



📷 Razor wire fencing around the Old Parramatta Gaol. Photo: Bob Barker.

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📷 Hayley Flinn outside old Parramatta Gaol. Picture: Craig Greenhill


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We were creeping along the corridor of Old Parramatta Gaol's I Wing, where once a month guides from the Australian Paranormal Phenomenon Investigators are allowed behind the sandstone walls to conduct a ghost hunt.

Notorious armed robber and escapist Darcy Dugan, murderer Kevin John Gallagher and Sydney's first gangster John "Chow" Hayes all did time here.

Nearing the end of the corridor the group met veteran ghost chasers Belle Hadden and Rebecca Coyle from Penrith, who were paused in front of a particularly dark cell.



 Razor wire is silhouetted in front of a full moon during at the abandoned Parramatta Gaol. Picture: Chris McKeen

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Everyone who heard the noise had come to investigate, milling a safe distance from the bars.

A sudden shifting to the right made a few cry out and the group held their breath.

“Hello?” someone called again.

No response.

Student Hayley Flinn held up a camera ready to capture some paranormal activity but it was only her friend Sophia O’Rourke who stepped sheepishly out from the pitch-black cell.



 Hayley Flinn and Sophia O'Rourke outside a cell. Picture: Chris McKeen

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📷 People use an ouija board during the ghost hunt. Picture: Chris McKeen

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“Sorry, I got lost and tripped,” she said, as the others groaned in disappointment.

Opened in 1798, Parramatta Gaol was one of Australia’s longest-running prisons until it closed three years ago.

Since then reports of unexplained activity have turned the abandoned facility into a popular spot for those seeking a paranormal experience.

Tour operator Peta Banks led us through a series of razor-wire gates to the old exercise yard.



📷 Ghost hunts are organised by the Australian Paranormal Phenomenon Investigators at the Old Parramatta Gaol. Picture: Chris McKeen

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📷 Sophia O'Rourke behind bars. Picture: Chris McKeen

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Standing in a circle, the prison's three main wings loomed over us, their hulking faded sandstone bodies now little more than architectural remnants of colonial Australia.

Ms Banks related some history about our first stop on the tour, 4 Wing, where mentally unstable prisoners were held before being transferred to Cumberland Asylum.

"Guests have reported feeling a heavy hand on their shoulder and men find their wallets sometimes go missing in this wing," she said.





📷 Torches illuminate the prison chapel. Picture: Chris McKeen

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📷 Torches illuminate a cell block during the ghost hunt. Picture: Chris McKeen

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Ms Hadden and Ms Coyle said they were receiving plenty of spiritual feedback.

“We’ve seen quite a few shadows and I heard someone sense a girl was speaking to them. She said her name was Caitlin and she was eight years old,” Ms Hadden said.

Ms Flinn was having less luck as she locked herself in one cell and attempted to call on the dead.

“Other people seem to be seeing a lot more than me, maybe I scare them off,” she said.

“The spirits don’t always perform on cue but even those who don’t have a big encounter usually find the tour engaging,” said Ms Banks.



📷 Hayley Flinn and Sophia O'Rourke stand outside cell blocks. Picture: Chris McKeen

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Walking out through the giant gates and looking forward to bed, a sudden cold change sent shivers running over my body.

And, wait, was that a whisper?

Spooky.



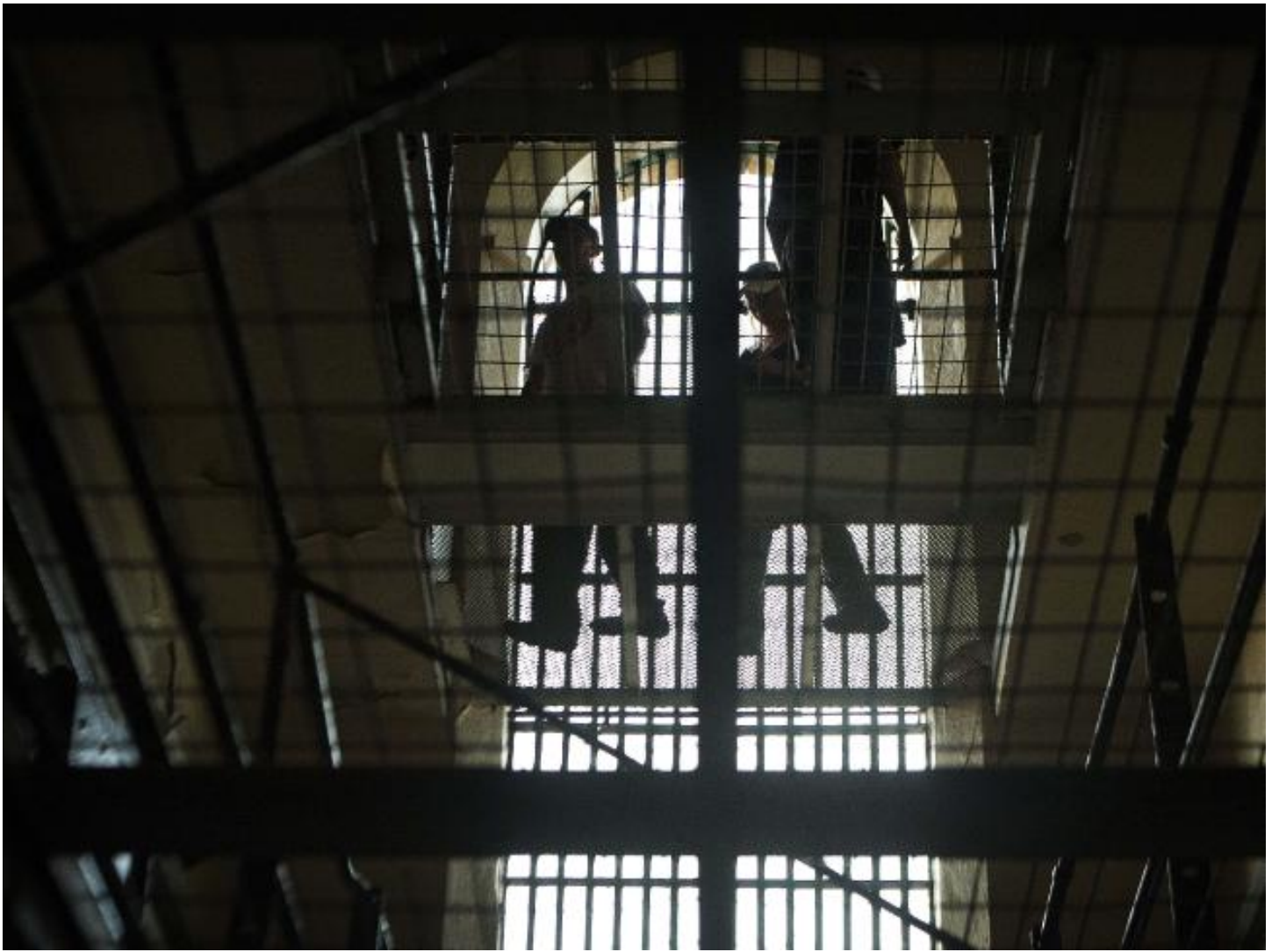
📷 Torches illuminate a cell block during the ghost hunt. Picture: Chris McKeen


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 The Australian Paranormal Phenomena Investigators give a guided tour of Old Parramatta Gaol.  
Picture: Elenor Tedenborg

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 People walk through a cell block during the ghost hunt. Picture: Chris McKeen

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