

Bumps in the Night!!!!

January 2014 Issue

Tools of the Trade

Photography Dos and Don'ts

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Photography is a very important tool in the field of paranormal investigation. The investigator can capture images that may show evidence that is, or is not, visible to the naked eye. Most of the techniques that apply to still photography, single image at a time, also apply, at least to some degree to videography.

To increase the chances that an investigator can capture clear and concise images, he/she should have an understanding of the camera that is being used. Below are definitions of common terms used in photography.

| | | |
|-----------------|---|--|
| DSLR | Digital Single-Lens Reflex Camera | Uses a single lens, therefore, what is seen in the viewfinder is what is captured |
| CCD | Charged Couple Device | Used for light capture in digital cameras, video recorders <u>that require high quality resolution.</u> |
| CMOS | Complementary Metal Oxide Silicone | Usually used on low end cameras due to inability to use in low-light areas and low image resolution. |
| Focal Length | The distance in air from the lens, or mirrors principal plane to the focus ₁ | The distance from the camera lens that the image will be in focus. The distance changes according to the lens type (SLR, cinematic, macro) |
| Auto Focus | Most SLR cameras use through the lens autofocus. The sensors meter the light coming in and adjust the camera optics to the best possible settings for the image | Auto focus can be difficult in low light, sports or objects close to the lens unless proper lenses are used. |
| Manual Focus | All settings are controlled by the camera user | Must have knowledge of camera settings such as aperture, f-stop, shutter speed |
| Shutter Speed | The length of time the camera shutter is open | One of the means to control the amount of light entering the lens |
| Aperture | Controls the depth of field (distance where objects are sharp) | Works in conjunction with Shutter Speed |
| Infrared camera | Increases visibility in the dark without using a visible light source | Most infrared cameras use near zero lux light and amplify it to allow <u>to be visible.</u> Other cameras employ an infrared light source. These cameras can operate in zero lux environments. |

To acquire useful images using a still camera, or video camera the following suggestions will help:

- Use a tripod or body stabilizer to reduce camera shake

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- Clean camera lens as often as needed. Especially in dusty areas, or areas with high humidity.
- Verify that there are enough fully charged batteries for the time planned and increase by half.
- Document all environmental data – temperature, humidity, dew point, etc.
- Do not change settings unless you are sure that it will enhance image.
- Do not take flash pictures unless absolutely necessary and never when another investigator is handholding an infrared camera, as the flash can affect their eyes.
- If flash is used, do not take pictures towards a mirror, picture frame with glass, or other shiny surface.



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Paranormal or Not?



The picture to the left was taken by Producer Jeff Leeper while at a bonfire for a paranormal conference. Thoughts?

Answer will be provided in next month's issue.

Answer from the previous issue:



The picture to the above was taken by a close friend of the team. It appears to be a reflection from the trees.