



ADELAIDE GAOL – SOUTH AUSTRALIA

History:

The Adelaide Gaol was built in 1841 and housed approximately 300,000 prisoners during its 147 years of operation. The Gaol was closed in 1988 and is known as the longest continuously operating prison in Australia. After opening, the Adelaide Gaol continued to be built in stages, with additions being built over the years. At that time, questions were raised to why in a State that was a free colony and not a penal one, should such an expensive Gaol be needed.

William Baker Ashton became the first Governor of Adelaide Gaol, a position he held until his death 1854 whilst still in office at the Gaol. Ashton died on site and the next morning when he was found, rigor mortis had already set in making it impossible to bring his body down the narrow staircase from his apartment. William Ashtons body had to be lowered from an outside window and it is said that his ghost continues to haunt the Gaol.

Until an Act of Parliament in 1858 mandated private executions, seven hangings were held in public outside the goal walls with the first occurring in November 1840 while the site was still under construction. From 1861 to 1883, 13 prisoners were executed on portable gallows erected between the Gaol's inner and outer walls. Executions were moved to the "New Building" in 1894 where a further 21 prisoners were executed. The "Hanging Tower" was converted to that use in 1950 and used for the last four executions before Capital Punishment was abolished in 1976.

From 1840 to 1964, 45 of the 66 people executed in South Australia were executed by hanging at the Gaol. William Ridgway was the youngest at 19 in 1874, Elizabeth Woolcock the only woman in 1873 and the last was Glen Sabre Valance in 1964.

Adelaide Gaol was decommissioned in 1988 and the site taken over by the South Australian Department for Environment and Heritage.





API Log:

On a cold damp night in May 2010, API had the opportunity to investigate the Adelaide Gaol.

Over the years there have been many recorded and documented incidents of paranormal activity at the Gaol. These paranormal activities are continuing to this day with a number of reports from staff and visitors on tour.

We were really interested in the 'new' building. This is the area where they executed most of the inmates in the later years and is the most reported area of activity.

Over its 147 years of service, an estimated 300,000 men and women have passed through its doors and 45 prisoners were executed on the premises, where they remain to this day.



Graves of the executed prisoner, they were buried between the prison and out prison wall, only marked by an ID, initials and date.



'New Building' has many reports of a guard being seen and seems to have the most activity reported.

Findings:

A couple of EMF fluctuations but nothing substantial.

No clear EVP recordings.

API is still trialling the viability of our franks box. Whilst it is still under scrutiny, we are intrigued by a recording captured in one of the condemned cells in the new block.

Conclusion:

It was a very interesting evening. There wasn't the expected activity, as it happens and unfortunately any possible EVP's could not be determined due to the background noise beings mostly outside or echoes in the building.

The Franks box recording was rather interesting.

API would like to give a special thanks to Alison and the rest of the team of Paranormal Field Investigators, SA. Very envious that you have such a great historical place that you can investigate in depth.