



ST HELENA ISLAND – QLD, AUSTRALIA

History

For more than 60 years from 1867, St Helena was home to many hundreds of society's outcasts, because located here, was colonial Queensland's foremost prison for men.

In the early 1860s, as Brisbane's gaol at Petrie Terrace became more and more crowded, about 30 prisoners were transferred to an old hulk, called the Proserpine, anchored near the mouth of the Brisbane River. In 1866, as part of their labours, the prisoners were taken each morning across the waters of Moreton Bay by whaleboat to St Helena Island. Here they were put to work sinking wells, clearing scrub, quarrying stone and building accommodation for a new quarantine station. They were brought back to the hulk each night.

Government plans for the quarantine station were scrapped later that year — because the conditions at Petrie Terrace gaol had become so unbearable, the prisoners from the Proserpine were set to work building a gaol instead. On 14 May 1867, the Governor of Queensland signed a proclamation declaring the island 'a place whereat offenders under order or sentence of hard labour or penal servitude may be detained'. In the years that followed, St Helena was to become Queensland's showpiece prison.

The toughest years on St Helena were undoubtedly the early ones, and the ruins on the island testify to the hard work that the prisoners had to do. These, too, were the years of severe punishment — the lash, the dreaded dark underground cells, the gag, and energy-sapping shot drill. These were the years that gained St Helena its fearful reputation as 'the hell hole of the Pacific' and 'Queensland's Inferno'. But in these days tough measures were called for, because St Helena housed some of the country's worst criminals. In 1891, for example, there were 17 murderers, 27 men convicted of manslaughter, 26 men convicted of stabbings and shootings, and countless individuals responsible for assaults, rapes and similar violent crimes.

API Log

API participated in an investigation at St Helena Island organised and run by the Australian Paranormal Research Centre in August 2009. Couldn't have had more of a surreal setting! You're on a deserted Island, you have a only one Island guide with you, stepping off the charter boat and walking across the pier, we noted the abandoned dinghy's floating in the shallow water, to our right was a rectangle shaped enclosure in the water (the wood was rotting and the feeling was that it was a water prison of some sort). Of course this is where the jokes started about being led 'unsuspectingly to our dooms'. All in all, it was a creepy start to a good night. Seriously, it was almost straight out of a horror movie (except without the horror bits, just the atmosphere and setting).



We passed the abandoned lime mill on the way to the main prison area



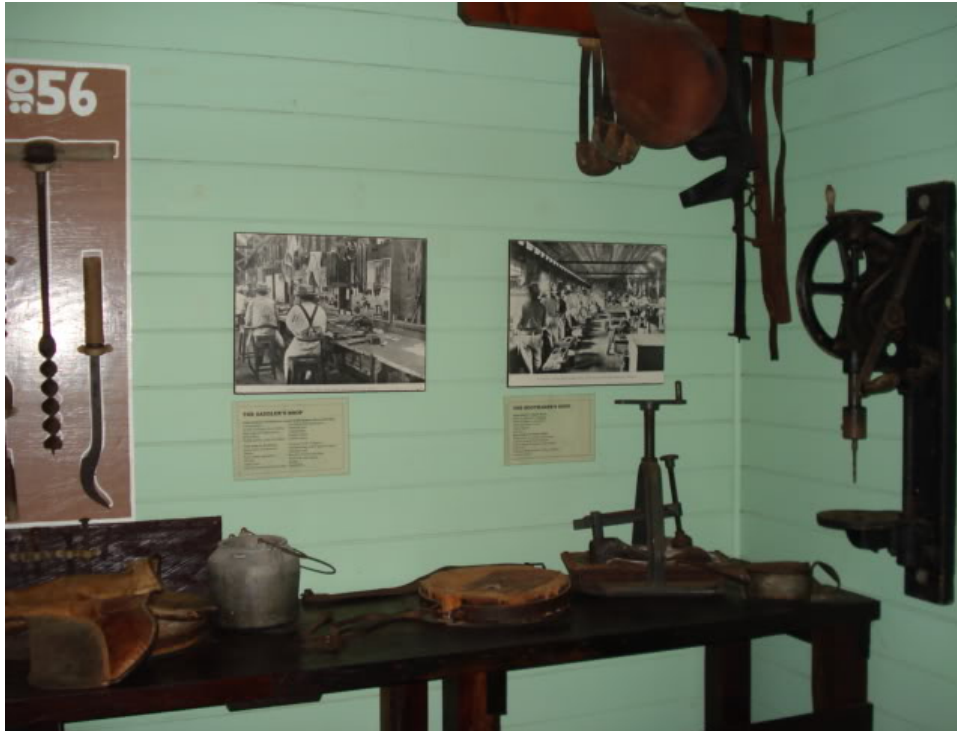
Getting to the good parts now! The Main prison area and surrounding buildings, including the Warden's quarters.





This was part of the museum they have built on the Island. (I half expected the dummy to move that's how eerie this setting was!)





Findings

There is no doubt whatsoever that there is history with this place. No one on the investigation team had any experiences or caught anything that could be considered 'proof' of paranormal activity in the area.

The EVP's conducted during the investigation were reviewed but we agreed that we could not determine the viability of the recordings due to the enormous amount of background noise of crows, planes, crickets, bats and just about everything else that wanted to be heard that night.

Camera footage was reviewed but we were unsuccessful in capturing paranormal activity on video.

The EMF did spike on only a couple of occasions but we were soon able to debunk the thought of paranormal activity after a bit more investigating was done to determine the cause of the spike.

Chris was the photographer and she did an amazing job snapping a lot of photos. You will see the photos taken by the digital camera posted in this report and also in the gallery. You be the judge!

Conclusion

API will not rule out going back to St Helena Island to conduct further investigations. Given the history and the reports surrounding the Island, we were perhaps just 'unlucky' on this occasion.

A Special Thanks:

API would like to offer their thanks to Pete and Fran of Australian Paranormal Research Centre for organising this investigation. It was a fantastic night and we enjoyed ourselves immensely. API hopes we will have the opportunity to work with you again in the future.