



The jail is currently a museum and covers a huge area including a naval prison and civil prison on five levels. Witnesses have reported much phenomena including auditory, visual and a generally oppressive atmosphere. The jail was first built in 1779 and later almost completely rebuilt; the new jail was finished around 1860 and built using stone from the Gaol quarry, also known as Cuckoo Quarry. As a cost saving exercise it was intended for the new jail to be built using stone from the old; however the quality of stone prevented this. The new jail was built on the same site, and there is evidence that parts have overlapped, the old gaol mostly covers parts of the courtyards within the current site.

Conditions and life within the prisons were hard but for many preferable to conditions outside. The jail was often overpopulated with as many as 182 inmates in 1831 which meant that prisoners would have shared cells. Prisoners were convicted of a variety of crimes from petty theft to murder. They were expected to work; tasks included cleaning, whitewashing, and oakum picking. Men on long sentences would have been given hard labour including quarrying and working on the treadmill an example of which can be seen on level 1. If you refused to work the treadmill you could expect to be flogged with a cat-o-nine tails. Women were employed amongst other things washing, spinning and weaving. Juveniles received limited education. From 1860 a penal reform led to separation of prisoners and silence at all times. Tuberculosis was common and sufferers would have been placed together. Diet was simple and depended upon how long one was staying in the jail. Heating and lighting were available in the winter months only.

Hangings were first conducted publically and then in private in several locations around the jail. Public hangings attracted large crowds. The guidebook lists seventeen public hangings held outside the old jail from 1820-1856, one at the new jail in 1862 and two private executions in 1878 and 1882. There were two further executions in the execution shed to the front of the building in 1901 and 1909.

The naval prison was the last naval prison in the country and contained 105 cells on 4 levels, it closed in 1922.

The SI team eagerly arrived at the location, keen to get started. After the initial tour and set up they split in to two teams and the investigation began. Each team had a mix of sceptics and believers, with a 'sensitive' member in each. Some very interesting information was picked up psychically. It is worth bearing in mind that the Supernatural Investigations 'sensitive's' know very little about the locations they visit to avoid contamination. Whilst it was amazing that the main ghost characters of the Prison were named and their crimes revealed, what became more interesting was the variation in the stories revealed in comparison to the published, known history associated with these crimes.

Some of the unexplained activity experienced ranged from a stone being thrown in one area, a wealth of psychic information and personal experiences.

Overall the investigation at Bodmin Jail for the Supernatural Investigations team was amazing. Just like other teams before they had collected some excellent scientific, personal and psychic information to take away and digest. A must for any paranormal enthusiast!