

# body there?

the stairs which stopped half-way ... there was absolutely no one there.

"Then from a room off the gallery was a loud crack like a rifle going off. A colleague joined me and we settle down in the room on mattresses, presuming nothing more would happen. We tried to sleep but soon heard little taps coming from the floor. We elicited specific patterned replies from the taps and they travelled and got louder."

There followed a sequence of strange events — a chair stacked on a packing case fell to the floor with no one near it; the taps moved around the room and answered their attempts at communication; no one was in the room below while the taps were going on and nothing was found between the floorboards; as they re-entered the room having fetched a third colleague, the door slammed shut and behind the metal plate on the door was lodged an old brass toasting fork which had gone through the door staple, bolting them into the room.

Investigation techniques were basic in the 1950s, but despite careful measuring of the building to rule out any hidden rooms and acoustic experiments to see if the sounds could have been projected from elsewhere, no rational explanation was to be found.

Dr Gauld said he has investigated many many cases since and has even captured poltergeist activity on video, but the Wisbech case of 40 years ago still tantalises.

Other areas of more repeatable phenomena, such as extra sensory perception (ESP) are also an area of interest for Dr Gauld, who has conducted lab-based experiments which he says are intriguing. This area of science is gaining increasing credibility, in fact, professor of parapsychology at the University of Edinburgh Robert Morris has this week gone on record in a national newspaper and will next week state at a public lecture that he is between 90 to 95 per cent sure that humans possess a "hitherto undocumented ability to communicate with

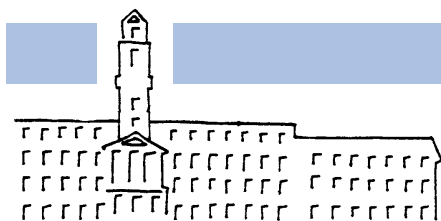
the world around them."

Using data on fluctuations in the Earth's magnetic field, it has been shown that ESP experiments are considerably more successful at times when global geomagnetic activity is low. Now, the work begins to find out why.

So tonight when the lights are dim and you hear a heavy knocking sound, don't have nightmares — it's only the kids playing trick or treat!! Or is it ....?



*Poltergeists* by Alan Gauld and Tony Cornell is available at the University Library.



## Across the Quadrangle

It is not always true that people make the most poignant pictures. A 1940s vintage double decker bus turning off University Boulevard, past Highfields Lido, with only open space in the distance, is one of the most telling images of a cine film unearthed in the project to produce an historical Golden Jubilee video.

Living on the University Park campus today, with more than five times as many students and members of staff as in the early post-war years, is still hardly a shoulder-to-shoulder affair. Imagine the feeling of spaciousness in the days when science city and even Portland Building were nothing more than projects in Bertrand Hallward's visionary mind. In fact you do not have to imagine it, as the cine archives capture the atmosphere so beautifully.

As a result of appeals in *NewsLetter* and *The University of Nottingham Magazine* two major sources of film have come forward. The Department of Manuscripts and Special Collections has a small but valuable archive, the highlight of which is a 12-minute, 16mm black and white film, made in 1946, entitled *Saturday* at UCN. This features a male and a female student and follows their progress throughout the day. The boy, Peter R. Smith, is seen getting up and shaving in his lodgings, and the couple's progress is monitored from catching a bus in the Old Market Square to saying goodnight after the *Saturday* night 'hop'.

The original film was discovered in the Chemistry Department in 1992, transferred to Manuscripts earlier this year and copied on to video. The film was made by an outfit called Photo Tech Film Unit and has full credits. It features both students of UCN and those of Goldsmiths College, still at Nottingham in 1946 as part of their wartime evacuation.

A current task is to try and trace the two stars' of the film. Peter R. Smith was a UCN student but neither the Nottingham alumni relations office or its counterpart at Goldsmiths can trace the girl in the production, Cynthia Bardwell. There is no such problem in the case of the other major item of film offered for the Golden Jubilee tape. Former chemistry reader Dr Stephen Wallwork has supplied cine films of various events on campus in the early fifties, including that of the graduation of his wife-to-be.

Distinguished graduates in the world of television, including Bob Phillis of the BBC and Edward Childs, responsible for much of the best drama seen on ITV in recent years, have offered advice and assistance in helping to realise what is proving to be a fascinating product. One major question remains. Cynthia Bardwell, where are you today?

**Philip Dalling**