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A haunting experience

IT WAS a ghostly assignment for Warren Frehse . . . bizarre tales of strange occurrences had given the historic mansion built last century by Eureka Stockade hero Peter Lalor the reputation of being haunted.

Children would cross the road instead of walking in front of the imposing home.

The tales captured the imagination of Warren, an

18-year-old university student, of Balwyn, who took it upon himself to investigate the scene for a national magazine.

"There was certainly something very strange about it," Warren recalls.

His investigations unearthed a number of mysterious tales.

The present owners of the home in Church St., Richmond, Mr and Mrs Morton, told Warren they have learned to live with weird events, like the sound of

bells and unexplained noises upstairs.

The Mortons have been living in the house since 1962. A relative who came to stay with the Mortons found herself the victim of a series of incidents which has her firmly convinced that the ghost of Peter Lalor haunts the home.

She recalled to Warren that she was sitting at the foot of the stairs when she felt a hand grab her ankle. She screamed and the hand let go. She still can find no earthly explanation for the bizarre incident.

On another occasion, she was walking to the bathroom late one night and walked past a shelf with three old lamps sitting on it. Suddenly the delicate glass casing from one of the lamps came crashing down at her feet . . . and did not break.

Warren said that most people who think the house is haunted believe that the ghost of Peter Lalor is responsible.

Lalor built the house in 1882 and it became the scene of many tragedies for the Lalor family.

Lalor's daughter committed suicide by jumping off the balcony. His son hanged himself, and Lalor and his wife both died of illness in the old grey mansion.

Warren's investigations did not find an answer to the mystery. But his involvement with the strange house on the hill hasn't ended.

During his research a spiritualist suggested to Warren that a proven way to get rid of a spirit from a haunted house was to hold a seance.

At this suggestion, the

People and Events



● The "haunted" old grey mansion. Classified by the National Trust, it was built by Eureka Stockade hero Peter Lalor in 1882.



● Warren Frehse at work

Mortons are currently arranging a seance which Warren will participate in and which may unravel the mystery of the "haunted" house.

The house is classified by the National Trust and must be preserved. So unless the seance clears up the mystery, it will remain with the house, throughout time.