

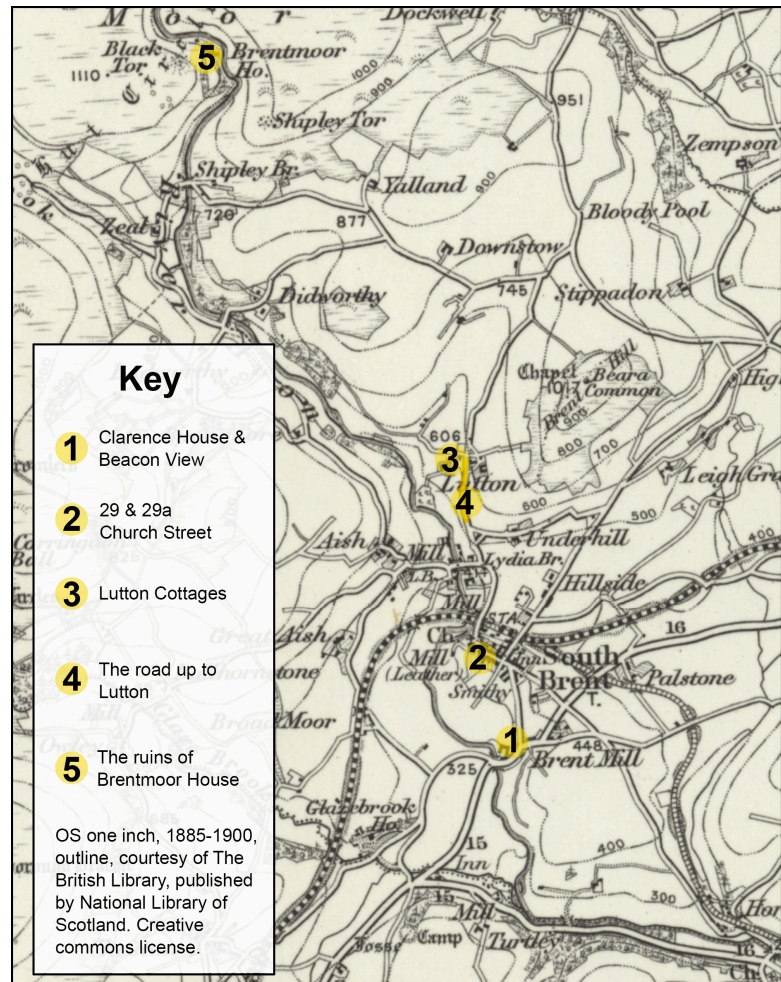
More South Brent Ghost Stories

Following my March 2023 blog post, [South Dartmoor's Haunted Bridge](#), this post charts more first-hand accounts of hauntings shared by members of South Brent Storytellers and Archive's Facebook group: Clarence House & its adjoining buildings (Beacon View); Church Street; Lutton and Shipley Bridge, including the ruins of Brentmoor House.

Clarence House and Beacon View

Clarence House is remembered as having been the London Inn until a Victorian Temperance society bought it and closed it down. Rosalyn C's account (below) tells of hearing inn-yard noises in the courtyard:

Rosalyn C: *My mother lived at Avondale House before moving to the cottage out the back of Clarence House – the old London Inn – which had an outdoor toilet in the cobbled yard. This was back in the 70s. My two sisters and I had gone up to Wrangaton to the disco held at the Kingsbridge Road Hotel that was run by Mrs B. I*



Above: map showing the locations of the hauntings.
Below: Clarence House and the entrance to the internal courtyard (author's photo, June 2023)



must have been fourteen years old at the time, so it had to be 1974.

It was late when we got home. There were two rooms downstairs and I decided to sleep on the sofa in the main room where the fire was. My sister slept in the other downstairs room which had a single bed in it. That room was rather small and led to the stairs. It must have been about two, maybe three in the morning when my sister and I, who were both still awake, heard a horse and carriage coming into the back yard. I was scared and spoke to my sister in the other room. She told me to go in with her, but when I tried to reach her, I couldn't find the handle to the door. It took a while but I got in with my sister in the end. We both sat up listening to what was going on outside in the cobbled yard. All we heard was beer barrels being lifted off the cart and put in place in the yard.

I believe the houses along Clarence House on both sides were used also as servants quarters. I've been told that the end house on the right-hand side as you walk out the door is also haunted. It's the one going down the road with the steps leading up to the door.

Rosalyn's account sparked enthusiastic discussion in South Brent Storytellers and Archive's Facebook group. One member, Emma, said:

"I also know someone who lived in the little flat by the courtyard and said she heard horses and things."

Emma went on to recount a bad experience in the house Rosalyn described as "the end house on the right-hand side" (at the far end of Beacon View terrace from Clarence House):

"the first house with the steps going up is definitely haunted by a bad spirit! I stayed there when my friends lived there I have never been so scared by a entirety in my life!"



The house with the steps at the end of Beacon View (author's photo, June 2023)

However, the end house's current occupier wished to make it clear that she'd experienced nothing sinister:

Adel G: *I've lived in this house for the last 14yrs and never had any bad vibes at all.*

Emma: *Adel, my friend who lived there didn't have any bad vibes either, but I was never able to go back into the house after my experience.*

... I've had several [experiences of hauntings] from around the village... But this one has been hard to shake! I had stayed in the house several times before but never in the room this happened in! Up to this point nothing bad happened to me but I never felt relaxed in the house. The night in question I was alone house sitting. I had gotten ready for bed and

switched off the light. I remember seeing some eyes in the reflection of the mirror, bearing in mind the room was pitch black. I told myself not to be so stupid and got into bed. A few moments later, I heard the noise of deep heavy breathing. And a massive weight on my chest I couldn't move and the feeling of a short man standing over me! But not a very nice man at all I have never been so scared!! I never slept over again or stepped into the room! I was later told by someone who I was telling the story to that her friend's mum who lived there before used to do ouija boards a tarot cards!

... Honestly they all thought I was nuts because they had lived there a few years and never had anything strange happen. Maybe whoever it was just didn't want me there.

When sleep paralysis was suggested as an explanation, Emma responded:

"I have read up on this but, as it wasn't the first time I have had experience of the paranormal, I cast it aside. Also the things leading up to the experience. But hey who really knows..."

Rosalyn, the person who heard inn sounds in the courtyard of Clarence House in 1974, said:

"I got a feeling that someone hung themselves in one of the bedrooms in that house. I am sure I was told that many years ago...I think the person that lived in the house was Anne Williams. I know she also lived in the flat at Clarence House on the 2nd floor flat with her husband and children."



Above: Beacon View buildings with Clarence House on the right.
Below: Nos. 29 and 29a Church Street (author's photos, June 2023)

Nos. 29 and 29a

Church Street

Group discussion expanded to other areas of South Brent parish, the first being two small houses in Church Street; one of the village's central thoroughfares. The strange happenings took place in Nos. 29 and 29A Church Street which are a twinned pair of two-storey terraced houses on the left of Church Street as you look down from the Co-op.



Ruth P: *My family live, and have lived, in 29 and 29a Church Street. There have been reports of the males in the houses seeing a lady dressed in white. My dad saw her sort of floating in his bedroom. For my son, she was stood at the end of his bed. A friend saw her looking at him through a window. My partner heard noise in a spare room but no one was there and I have seen what was like shadows.*

I always wondered if maybe she lost husband/son or another male person, as it seems to be males that she is showing herself to.

Emma – the person who felt a malevolent presence in the end house of Beacon View – recalls her three-and-half year old nephew seeing a female ghost in 29a Church Street:

“...he looked out towards the back door and asked us what the lady was doing there, we looked and didn't see anything so we asked him to tell us what he had seen he replied, ‘a lady wearing a long white dress!’”

Lorraine P said her grandmother repeatedly saw a man wearing a Trilby hat coming out of her wardrobe. Emma added:

“she also claimed to have seen orbs around Grandad... And after Grandad passed, Nan’s doorbell would go off randomly. She said it was Grandad messing with her. I know the morning he passed I went into their bathroom, sat down for a wee, and stood up to find the medicine cabinet behind the door had opened! There was definitely a lot of goings on at 29. Not sure Ruth’s house is as active?”

Ruth P said she also remembered the doorbell going off.

Lutton

The hamlet of Lutton perches on Brent Hill overlooking the course of the River Avon as it flows from Didworthy to Lydia Bridge. Lutton comprises a few cottages, two farms (Higher and Lower Lutton) and a largish residential property called Lutton House, which my mum used to stay in for her school holidays.

Emma, who we’ve already met, used to live in Lutton Cottages and told South Brent Storytellers & Archive:

“I remember being woken one night and seeing a fire at the top of the stairs: ghost fire!”



Lutton Cottages (author's photo, June 2023)

Ted W's uncle told him of a ghostly monk he encountered on the road up to Lutton:

"My uncle, William Hannaford, as a lad of 16 or so, was courting a girl at Lutton Cottages. He would visit her evenings and walk back to Wellington Square. He always told me that one evening just as dusk was falling he looked back along the lane and saw a monk. He said he never ran so fast in his life down Lutton hill."

However, my mum's spooky experience on the same hill in the 1950s turned out to have a rational cause. She was traversing the steep path in the pitch dark when an eerie light appeared that bobbed up and down. Before long she realised it was a bicycle's headlamp.



The road up to Lutton (author's photo, June 2023)

Shipley Bridge, including the ruins of Brentmoor House

Shipley Bridge is a popular walking destination in the remote, northern part of South Brent parish that's mostly comprised of open moorland. [Treks and Tors' website](#) aptly describes it as:

"a well hidden bridge at the end of a long road that leads out of South Brent and ends up at Avon Dam (although you can't drive past the Shipley Bridge car park). The River Avon crashes beneath the bridge on its way to the English Channel at Bigbury Bay."



The River Avon near Shipley Bridge (author's photo, August 2022)

Two accounts of hauntings in the vicinity of Shipley Bridge have been provided by members of South Brent Storytellers & Archive's Facebook group.

The first contributor asked to remain anonymous:

"I don't know the full story, but it's something to research. I'd love to find out more about it. There's a story of a guy on a horse at Shipley. I've heard the same story from two different people who didn't know each other, years apart. From what I was told he's very friendly

and chats to people who are on the moors late at night, a sort of traveling companion, after a while, they look up and he's gone.

Also there a lot of spooky things at Lower Downstow [adjoining] Shipley.

The second contributor is Emma, again:

"Another ghost story was from the ruins at Avon Dam: I saw a man stood on the wall looking down at the footings wearing a cap and black suit.

One evening at dusk, me and my husband where returning from a late dip at Jack in the Box when we approached the narrow just after the ruins. We where instantly stopped in our tracks my a loud, low "woof woof woof"! We didn't know what to do. I picked up a stick in fear and, when nothing came towards us, we proceeded down. Didn't see any foot prints or saw or heard anything more!"



The ruins of Brentmoor House (author's photo, August 2022)

Haunted Devon's website holds a report of a visit to Brentmoor House in 2012 with a Brent local called Byron Hosking:

It was a cold crisp moonless night in November 2012... There was an eerie silence as we drew closer to the house... As I walked amongst the remnants of the old walls I developed a feeling that we were not alone. I decided to turn to the trusty dowsing rods to see if I could gain any further information...[I] picked up upon two prominent spots [...] in the past have been points of interest. I [...] picked up on a male and female spirit, the male came across as a menacing character [who] had a strong dislike [for] women; the female spirit was located [in] one of the entrance doors and swiftly moved towards the bank leading to the river Avon. I had the impression in my mind's eye that the female had some connection [to] the river. Byron [explained] that Brentmoor was known to be the haunt of a mournful spirit, who was a nanny at the house. It is said that she smothered an infant child many years ago and through guilt she walked down to the river and drowned herself in its icy cold depths. Since this day it has been known that the mournful spirit re-enacts her sinister crime prior to walking down to the river Avon..."

Conclusion

There've been multiple witnesses to the various hauntings described in this blog article, namely: Clarence House & Beacon View, 29 & 29a Church Street, Lutton, and the ruins of Brentmoor House.

Whether you're sceptical or not, there's no denying that South Brent village and its surrounds are packed with history.

If you've experienced anything supernatural in this area yourself, South Brent Archive would welcome your story.