

Medium has taxing times . . .

THE EDITOR'S E-MAIL INTERVIEW

This month, Tony Ortzen interviews Bournemouth, Dorset, medium Geoff Hayward, a frequent visitor to the Spiritualist Association of Great Britain's Belgravia premises, where he gives private sittings, public demonstrations and workshops. A former tax inspector, Geoff describes the spirit return of a female relative when he was a child and answers an array of questions about his life and psychic gifts. Points put to him appear in italics. The first question was, "How long have you been a medium?"

I STARTED working as a medium in 1972, so that's 37 years.

Has the Spiritualist movement improved or deteriorated during that time?

Spiritualism is generally a pale reflection of what it was when I first entered the movement in 1968.

Arising from that, do you think Spiritualism has failed to become a respectable religion?

In some ways we have made progress. Due to the fact that we are living in more enlightened times, we have become more respectable, but, alas, that is different from being respected.

Please describe your first psychic experience.

My first psychic experience happened when I was about three. At that time, due to my delicate constitution, I spent many hours in bed with coughs and colds.

I frequently became aware of an elderly lady by my bed. I felt her presence, which was warm and comforting. Many years

later, I discovered this was my father's grandmother. Apparently, she was well respected and had a great love of children.

My dear parents realised that their delicate son had this psychic sensitivity and were sympathetic to this part of me. Once I developed mediumship, my father, who was initially very sceptical, sent sitters to me, then obtained reports of my work. Both my parents supported my work.

What do your family think about your mediumship?

None of my family is Spiritualists, but my sister shows an increased interest. My wife doesn't have any interest in the subject.

What psychic gifts do you have?

I am clairvoyant, clairaudient and clairsentient. As the years have gone by, I have found that the clairaudience in particular has got stronger and stronger.

What's the reaction if you tell people that your previous job was for the Inland Revenue?

Yes, I have fun when I tell people I am a medium, but spent thirty years at the Inland Revenue! They often wonder if I used my gifts to find out if people were evading their tax.

I am by nature a very down-to-earth guy, so like to get across that mediums are not airy-fairy as may be the common perception.

Where do you live?

In Bourne-mouth, Dorset. That is my home town.

What's your age?

I am 60. Where have the years gone?

What was the best day in your life. . . and the worst!

I find life such an adventure, so the best day of my life was when I was born. I was a miracle baby and survived against all the odds.

My worst days were when both my parents passed away. Although I know they are fine in the spiritual world, I miss their physical presence so much, particularly my dad's guidance and support. My father was a huge influence. He taught me to respect myself and others.

If because of some disaster you had to leave your home in ten minutes, which items would you save?

There are so many things of sentimental value to me that the list is endless. One item would be a copy of my autobiography "Soul Search."

Who is your favourite singer and why?

My favourite singer is Kirsty MacColl. She was so original. An English singer and songwriter, very sadly, Kirsty was killed by a powerboat at the age of 41 whilst scuba diving with her sons in a restricted diving

area off Cozumel, Mexico, on December 18, 2000.

What kind of programmes do you like watching on TV or listening to on the radio?

I like all TV, but particularly history programmes and documentaries.

If you could invite six people for dinner, "dead" or alive, who would they be and why?

I would invite my mum and dad for all they did and because I love them very much. Next comes Lloyd George to discuss history and politics, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to discuss Spiritualism and Sherlock Holmes.

I would also like Patrick Moore to talk about astronomy. I'd have to invite Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy - I know that makes seven, so I'm cheating - because I love their comedy.

Lastly, I am going to add Australian cricket legend Sir Donald Bradman, so the table would be very full with eight guests altogether.

What really irritates you in life and other people?

I think inconsiderate and criminal actions most disturb me.

Do you think that Spiritualist churches should update their services in any way?

The churches generally do a splendid job. I admire many of the dedicated souls who run them, so don't wish to criticise. I think a friendly welcome and a lively atmosphere are far more important than a "with it" image.

How many churches do you serve a month?

I serve about fifteen churches a year. Nowadays, a lot of my work is abroad, although I value the churches I serve very much.

What makes a good medium?

Dedication and honesty are essential as well - of course - an ability to communicate with Spirit.

Why do mediums so rarely supply surnames as evidence?

I rarely see other mediums work, but as I am clairaudient, I frequently give surnames as the many people who have witnessed my work will testify.

Where have you worked abroad?

So far, I've demonstrated in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and Portugal, and have several new venues in the pipeline.

I am happy to say that wherever I have been invited, I've always been asked to go back. I have always shunned publicity, preferring to work quietly in the background.

Do you ever get tired of travelling and living out of a suitcase?

Yes, living out of a suitcase is hard. Frankly, I have had to battle against a number of health difficulties, but I feel there is much work to be done.

How do you relax?

Luckily, I manage to switch off and relax easily. I love holidays, listening to music and reading. In fact, I have so many interests, hobbies and pastimes.

What would be your perfect day?

Each day as long as I feel healthy is a perfect day.

If you could choose to live in a different century, which one would it be and why?

I have a special fascination with Victorian times, but if I had lived then, I would like to be comfortable financially.

How do you think your friends would describe you?

My friends would describe me as friendly, outgoing and fun-loving, with warmth and depth. However, I don't think my enemies would see me this way!

Is there anything you would like to change about yourself?

I would like to have better vision, as my eyesight is poor. In character, sometimes I wish I were more tolerant.

Are there any habits you would like to give up?

Luckily, I have no bad habits. I don't smoke, although I enjoy social drinking. Maybe I need to lose a little weight, but I adore chocolate.

What's the secret of a happy life?

To keep healthy and give to others.