# Couple discovers human bones and traces of witchcraft while renovating historic Lancashire home



A young couple from Barrowford, Lancashire, experienced a startling discovery after purchasing and renovating a historic home, revealing human bones concealed within the walls alongside signs of past supernatural beliefs. Emmie Brookman, 28, co-owner of a homeware business, and her fiancé Norton Johnston, 34, a science teacher, bought the three-bedroom property, originally built in the 1580s, in February 2023 for £311,000. The pair were drawn to the house’s character and charm but quickly learned that it required extensive repairs beyond their initial expectation of just new carpets and paint.

Following the purchase, the couple began renovation work in August 2024 after noticing a pink mould spread on the exterior walls and a pervasive musty smell that caused their paperwork to become soggy. They discovered that the previous render applied to the house trapped moisture, damaging the building’s fabric. Opting to save money, Brookman and Johnston undertook the labour-intensive job of hand chiselling off the render themselves, spending only £300, in contrast to the £17,000 quote they had received from professionals.

During the process, the couple was confronted with an unsettling find. “We were taking the render off and when I was by the front something popped out of the wall. It was very obviously a bone. I was really creeped out. What do you do when you find a bone in the wall?” Ms Brookman told the Daily Mail. They unearthed a total of four bones on the exterior and an additional two inside the house. Among the bones, one appeared to be a human finger bone, while the others were believed to be animal remains.

Further adding to the home’s secret history, the couple discovered a green bottle containing ashes and herbs, which led them to research local beliefs and customs. Ms Brookman explained, “We found an article on magic in Kendal and read that they really believed in witches. They used to put bones in the walls and herbs to ward off the evil. It’s what they believed was protecting them.” The bones were found near every room in the house, with one even ‘flying out’ towards her during renovation work. While some have been placed back into the walls, Ms Brookman plans to put a few of them on display, describing them as integral “part of the house.”

The project has involved substantial ongoing costs beyond the original budget, with the couple estimating an overall spend of between £10,000 and £15,000 so far. Despite this, Brookman is committed to renovating “sympathetically” to preserve the home’s period style, sourcing original features such as reclaimed radiators from an old fire station found on Facebook Marketplace.

Adding a further layer of intrigue to the property’s story, the couple uncovered that a convicted murderer, James Hargreaves, once lived next door. Hargreaves was found guilty of assaulting his housekeeper and subsequently shooting a young solicitor’s clerk in the back, who had served him with a writ.

Currently, structural work on the property has been completed, and the couple are in the final stages of decorating two bedrooms and two bathrooms. Ms Brookman notes that if professionals had undertaken the renovations, costs would have soared to between £50,000 and £60,000.

The Daily Mail is reporting that the couple has been documenting their renovation journey on social media platforms TikTok and Instagram under the handle @emmiesfarm, sharing their experiences and the fascinating history uncovered within the walls of their unique home.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)