

Medium provides enlightening evening

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"This gentleman doesn't let me go; he's showing me a flag. He's asking me about his ring and his watch." Disjointed sentences? Guessing? Or does Linnea, a medium, really have what some would call, "the gift?"

Two weeks ago, about 25 folks, including one gentleman, attended a special program in the Gordon Room of the Peabody Institute Library to listen to what message Linnea — she chooses to use only her first name — might have for them from the beyond. To help facilitate making the connection, registrants were asked to bring with them a piece of jewelry or a picture of someone who has passed.

It's the beginning of the program. Linnea heads over to someone on the other side of the room, but she keeps pausing and returning to the woman in the front row, the target of an invisible gentleman's persistence.

"Was he in the Navy?" Linnea asks the older lady, who smiling at the actions of what she perceives to belong to her husband, nods that he had indeed been in that branch of the service. "He's waving the flag and singing, 'In the Navy, in the Navy,'" Linnea adds.

These are many positive connections and much recognition of people, places and events that Linnea manages to hit on in the two hours during which she tries to touch the lives of the participants. Many of the revelations are startling; others, perhaps a little less so, or, for the skeptic, questionable. But how do you argue with statements such as: "Who put the letter in your mother's casket? She took it with her."

The two sisters to whom the question is addressed are already on the verge of tears. Linnea,

who has two rings the women brought in, jewelry that was their mom's, suddenly blurts out, "Surprise! Surprise! I thought I had more time."

The women do sit up in surprise. Their mother truly had not expected to pass as quickly as she did. Linnea also asks the women who has the chest. "I do," says one. "It's a family joke. For years I kid-

dingly told my mother that I wanted the chest when she died."

Another woman, who had taken over the raising of children after their mother had passed on, is in tears when she hears that the deceased woman is grateful to her and wants to send her thanks. Through the medium, the word cheerleader keeps

coming up and the fact that this anxiously awaiting audience member is surrounded by cheerleaders, something popular with this family.

Most of these revelations come through jewelry, or as in one case, a favorite hat, all belonging to the deceased. Others come through photographs — called photo recognition — and at the end, Tarot cards.

Getting the energy of the one who passed via such things as jewelry or clothing is called psychometry. According to Merriam-Webster's "Collegiate Dictionary," psychometry is "divination of facts concerning an object or its owner through contact with or proximity to the object."

While trying to make connections for people, Linnea often uses names. Some skeptics would say that everybody knows someone in their lives named Thomas, Christopher, James, Anne or Mary. But how about Jane and Jean? These turn out to be the names of one woman's granddaughters.

When Linnea comes to a relatively young woman, it's obvious this lady is desperately trying to connect with a man who had played a very important role in her life.

"This person says he didn't expect what happened to happen," Linnea tells her. "He had experienced the same thing before. He says he's sorry, sorry. He thought he had many more years."

The recipient of the message wants to talk to the deceased but the messages still seem to come through Linnea. The medium asks who drove a truck and who works in a restaurant only to find out the deceased had driven a truck and the petitioner works in a restaurant. Linnea also comments that the gentleman had collected American Indian artifacts, another true fact.

"Always remember," Linnea keeps saying during

the evening. "(Life) has a beginning, a middle and no end. There is no death."

During the course of the two hours, which no one seems to want to end, there are many more revelations. Linnea tells one woman, who had brought her late husband's hat, that her husband is mentioning keys, a reference to the fact that the family home has been sold and there is a new set of keys.

"Selling a house is a hard thing to do," says Linnea, also conveying the feeling she's getting is that the couple had met and fallen instantly in love. "He does hear you," Linnea continues. "He's saying, 'I'm quite proud of you.'"

When Linnea tells someone that the gentleman she is hearing from (her husband), is walking with not only a dog, but a Boxer, there is an audible gasp from many in the audience. The medium also brings a chuckle from a participant when she's told the lady who is present in spirit is scolding her for not learning to cook.

There's also laughter when another lady is told the spirit gentleman she's getting energy from is referring to that "damn cat." Linnea tells another attendee she has been successful in love since she has had two husbands. And she tells a widow that she sees a gentleman walking with her, which could mean a new love in her life.

"I try to inject a little bit of humor," says Linnea in a follow-up interview during which she explains how pleased she was with the evening. She also notes that people don't always connect right away. "The energy was there. It was wonderful. Sometimes people get caught up in the moment. They get nervous and can't

link on their feet. On the way home, they get the message."

Linnea, who grew up in Lexington, has a bachelor's degree in speech communication from Emerson College and graduate credits from Northeastern University.

She reveals that her grandmother had the gift and that she, herself, showed the signs at the age of 5 or 6.

"It's a blessing or a curse," Linnea says. "Some people are fascinated with it and others ridicule it."

Some people also react with fear to what she has to offer, so, for many years, Linnea sublimated her talent and did other things. One of her successful ventures was travel sales.

"I was very good at it," Linnea says. "My intuition has helped me in business."

With the public more exposed to mediums through such programs as "Crossing Over" with John Edwards,

two years ago, Linnea decided it was time for her to put her own gift to good use. She's been sharing it with others through several different councils on aging, the Marblehead YMCA and other locations. She also teaches several courses at Salem State College and does private and group sessions.

"I believe in my gift," she says. "I never hurt anybody. I never say anything bad. I'm totally sincere

at. If one person in the room gets it, then that's what I'm supposed to do."

Library Director Doug Rendell has been bombarded with so many requests for a repeat performance, he is scheduling another session with Linnea on Aug. 13. Size will be limited to the first 20 who register. Registrations are not being taken as yet.

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A personal experience

People have asked me about my experience as one of the audience members at the program presided over by the psychic medium Linnea.

Although I was covering the session, I also took advantage of the occasion by wearing several pieces of jewelry belonging to my mother, including a bracelet, and an old-fashioned watch chain with a watch fob worn by my grandmother. At the last minute, I decided to also wear my mother's high school graduation ring.

When Linnea asked me what I had brought with me, however, I switched to the high school graduation picture of my late son, Brian, that I carry in my wallet.

Several of the things Linnea said to me were, perhaps, generic, or could have been figured out by a smart medium. But, many of the things were unique to me, alone. She asked me if someone was a tailor. My sister-

in-law's late father was. She asked me who the baker was. My late husband's oldest brother, now deceased, was a baker.

There were several other things that were also particular only to me. Linnea asked who Matthew was. It's the name of my other son. She asked if the name Sandra meant anything. It's my sister-in-law's name and my middle name. She also mentioned my mother, Rose, and startled me by saying "She says you are wearing her ring." Coincidence? Possibly. A connection? Perhaps.

Linnea also said many other things that I could relate to and a few that meant nothing to me, but as she told me in a follow-up conversation, "I don't get everything right. I'm not perfect."

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LINNEA, PSYCHIC
MEDIUM

She also noted, both the night of the session and in the later conversation, that sometimes people go home and think about what was revealed, and then it means something to them.

When I called Linnea several

days later to check on some of her background and experience, she again startled me by asking me who Max was and did January mean something. Max is the name of my late father and my birthday is in January.

Admittedly, despite some of the connections that seem questionable, most of us tend to focus on what is meaningful to us. Perhaps it's because we want so desperately to believe that there is life after death, that our loved ones live on, know what we are doing and somehow, become our guardian angels.

On Thursday evening, April 24, most of those people who came to see Linnea, were hoping to do just that — somehow connect with a loved one no longer here. For the most part, judging by the tears of sorrow, and of joy, they left with a sense of comfort and even a glow of happiness.

As Linnea says, "If one person in the room gets it, then that's what I'm supposed to do."