

# GHOST STORIES

Who knows if these spooky tales are true — it's fun to imagine these historical hauntings whether you believe in them or not.

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## ST. LOUIS LIGHT

Towns all over Canada have stories about eerie lights that appear out of nowhere with no explanation. One of the most famous is Saskatchewan's St. Louis ghost light, which is also known as the St. Louis ghost train. The light is said to be red but may change colours and vary in brightness as it appears and disappears along an abandoned rail line. It's supposedly the light from a lantern being held by a ghostly conductor who was killed on the tracks.



## PLAINS OF ABRAHAM

In 1759, British and French forces faced each other in a battle that would turn New France over to the English. The field where the fight took place is now surrounded by Quebec City. Many visitors say they have seen ghostly soldiers and smelled sulfur, as if guns and cannons were being fired.

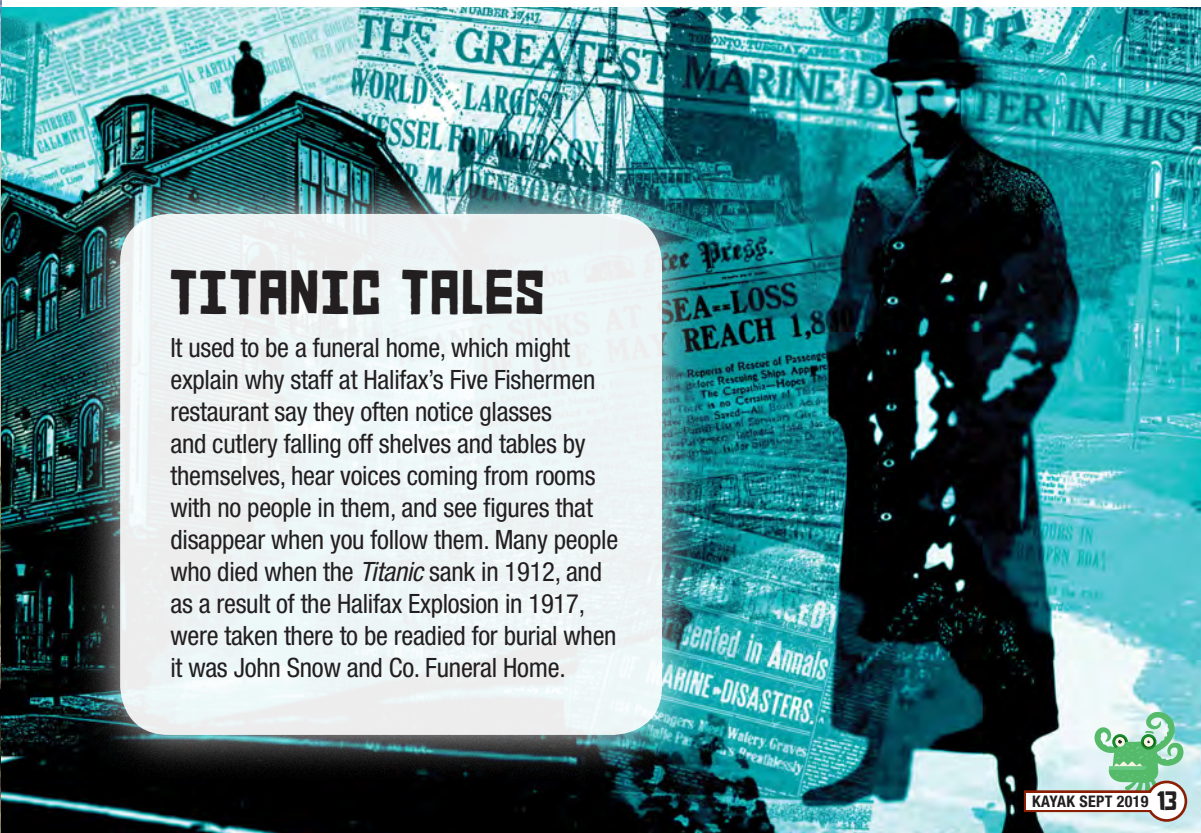






## THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SPIRITS

He's still Canada's longest-serving prime minister, but when the diaries of William Lyon Mackenzie King became public after his death, Canadians were astonished to learn of his firm belief in ghosts and spirits. He often met with mediums — people who claimed to be in touch with the dead, such as his beloved mother Isabel — and held gatherings aimed at bringing spirits to talk to him, known as séances. He talked to his dead dogs, Pat (all of his dogs were named Pat), and asked famous dead people for advice. In public, King always seemed stuffy and dull, but he let his imagination run wild when he created Kingsmere, his country home which is now part of Gatineau Park in Quebec, just across the river from Ottawa. He had huge stones, columns, arches and more moved from old banks and churches that were being demolished, creating his own fake ruins. Visitors say you can feel odd shafts of cold air, or, if you're lucky, have a chat with the ghost of King himself as you wander the grounds.



## TITANIC TALES

It used to be a funeral home, which might explain why staff at Halifax's Five Fishermen restaurant say they often notice glasses and cutlery falling off shelves and tables by themselves, hear voices coming from rooms with no people in them, and see figures that disappear when you follow them. Many people who died when the *Titanic* sank in 1912, and as a result of the Halifax Explosion in 1917, were taken there to be readied for burial when it was John Snow and Co. Funeral Home.







## THE MACKENZIE RIVER GHOST

Augustus Richard Peers was just 33 years old in 1853, when he died unexpectedly. He had always insisted that he did not want his final resting place to be Fort McPherson in the Northwest Territories where he had worked for the Hudson's Bay Company. A man named Roderick Macfarlane volunteered to transport the coffin and its contents hundreds of kilometres by dogsled. Macfarlane noted in his journal that more than once, when there was danger to the remains from wild animals, the dogs surrounded the sleds and barked wildly. A voice could be heard commanding the sled dogs to start running, but there was no one there. After the trip was over and Macfarlane and his companion were trying to sleep, they both felt a ghostly presence that came on them "so very suddenly and scaringly that I instantly covered my face with the blanket and remained speechless."

## HOTEL HAUNTINGS

It seems almost every hotel in Canada has at least one ghost living in it, if you believe all the stories. A man in a grey hat is said to roam Saskatoon's Delta Bessborough hotel looking for his friends. There's the former worker at the Algonquin Resort in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, who messes up place settings and sometimes sits at the bar and cries. Staff at the Royal York in Toronto get complaints about children running and yelling in the halls when there are no kids around. The ghost of famous artist Emily Carr is said to haunt the James Bay Inn in Victoria, B.C. — the story is that she's annoyed the room where she died is now the men's washroom. The Banff Springs Hotel has more than one ghost hanging around. The favourite is a man named Sam McAuley who loved his job at the hotel so much that he supposedly continues to help guests even though he died in 1976. The Caribou Hotel in Carcross, Yukon, probably has the only claim to a parrot haunting in Canada. Former hotel owner Bessie Gideon is said to still hang out there with her squawky pet, Polly. The real bird lived at the Caribou from 1918 to 1972.





## LA CORRIVEAU

Marie-Josephte Corriveau was convicted of murder in April 1763 in Quebec City even though the case against her was mostly rumours. She was hanged and her body was put in a sort of iron cage. The folk tales grew from there. Different versions of the story are told around Quebec, but it always has the skeleton of La Corriveau jumping onto the back of a man walking by, reaching its arms through the cage to grab him, and insisting he take her to a gathering of witches.



## SIGNAL HILL

People say there are lots of ghosts wandering around this beautiful, rocky spot looking down on St. John's, NL. That's not surprising, since it's where criminals were once hanged. A woman is said to wander the hill and wait for her baby who supposedly suffocated when the mother fell asleep by a fire that filled the room with smoke.

