

Ghostly Mississauga

“His presence haunts this room tonight.
A form of mingled mist and light from that far coast.
Welcome beneath this roof of mine!
Welcome! This vacant chair is thine,
Dear guest and ghost!”
-Robert Burns



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Do you believe in Ghosts?

The term “Ghost” gets everyone talking. Many people believe in ghosts and spirits, and many do not, but undoubtedly the discussion of ghosts is highly debated. People have spent, and continue to spend, a great deal of time researching and documenting the existence of ghosts. Television shows, radio broadcasts, movies and more books than can be counted have chronicled “ghost stories”. Countless individuals have attempted, and perhaps succeeded, in photographing, recording and communicating with ghosts. Whether or not you believe in the phenomena of ghosts, it is undeniably a fascinating topic that has engendered countless debates over time.

What are spirits or Ghosts?

The word “ghost” derives from Old English *gāst*, which means “breath” or “spirit”.

Stories of spirits come from all cultures, from oral folklore to works of literature to modern movies. Belief in, and experiences with, ghosts and spirits cross all cultural boundaries, and have been recounted for thousands of years. A spirit or ghost is defined as the apparition of a deceased person, and usually encountered in places she or he frequented in life, or in association with the person’s former belongings. Ghosts are often seen as the physical manifestation of the person or likeness of a person, but some are also without form, invisible, or are seen as orbs or balls of light. Ghosts are often connected with “the more or less regular occurrence of paranormal phenomena associated with a particular location, such as a building, and usually the phenomena may include apparitions, disturbances, cold drafts, sounds of footsteps and voices, and various odours.”

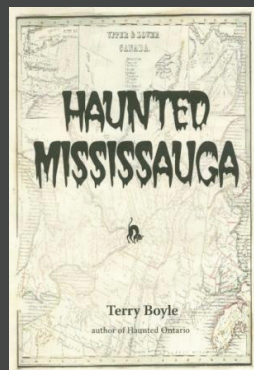


Haunted Mississauga

The City of Mississauga is home to many, many “ghost stories”, haunted happenings, legends and myths that connect with spirits or ghosts. Only a few are recounted here, focusing on some of the places that welcome visitors. There are many other stories associated with private homes across our city.

There are several historic houses in our city that have become restaurants and public houses over time. They include the Franklin House and Cuchulainn’s Irish Pub in Streetsville, the Old Barber House, and Cherry Hill House, amongst others. Prominent “ghost stories” are also attached to several grand edifices and historic former estates in our city, such as the Adamson Estate, the Cawthra Estate, the Glen Erin Inn, and the Harding Waterfront Estate.

For more stories, please see the book “Haunted Mississauga” by Terry Boyle.





Franklin House (built 1855)

The Franklin House (263 Queen Street South, Streetsville) was built as a private home in 1855, and its second owner was Bennet Franklin (c1809-1876), a local businessman. After Franklin's death, the house was converted to a hotel, and it remains a public house today – Mississauga's longest serving public house. The building is believed to be haunted by a ghost named "Jessie" (other names are also given). She is believed to have been a servant living in the house, or an employee of the hotel that operated here after Franklin's death. Her apparition is seen looking out of a window on the second floor.

Cherry Hill House (built c1807-1822)

Possibly Mississauga's most haunted house, and one of Canada's most documented haunted places, Cherry Hill House is said to be home to as many as six different spirits. Among them are a Native man, a young girl on a white horse, a young girl named Miranda, footsteps on the stairs, and a mysterious attic light. Truly an interesting place!





“Gairloch”, the Harding Waterfront Estate (built 1938)

In its majestic and secluded setting, this building has become a prominent event venue for the City of Mississauga. Built in 1938 by Charles Bell, the property is well-known for its spirits. On the grounds several spirits have been reported, including that of a man and a woman who appear in formal wedding attire. Several independent sightings place the mysterious couple at various places around the property.

The Old Barber House (built c1852)

This house was built by William Barber, proprietor of the Toronto Woollen Mills, in 1852. It is believed to be haunted by three different ghosts, the most prominent being William’s three-year old daughter Louisa (some call her Martha) who died in 1860. Her apparition is said to be seen on the staircase leading up to the second floor.



Gairloch, 2010

William Barber House, 2010



“Lotten”, the Cawthra Estate (built 1926)

Many people report that something still resides in the Cawthra-Elliot House besides memories. Some report “seeing something” move in the dark hallways and basement, while others have “heard something”. Grace Cawthra was known to have had a fondness for séances. Perhaps the spirits of Grace, or her husband Colonel Harry McIntyre Elliot, never left their beloved home.

“Grove Farm”, the Adamson Estate (built c1920)

The Adamson Estate is located on land that was originally granted to Joseph Cawthra on November 8th, 1809. In 1900 the property was given to Mabel Cawthra and Agar Adamson as a wedding present. The Adamsons constructed the present baronial mansion after the First World War in 1919-1920, replacing an earlier home on the property. Both Mabel Adamson (as a nurse in Belgium) and Agar (as a military Colonel) had served overseas in the First World War, and grew to love Flemish architecture. The family raised Chows, and the spirit of one dog, “Zeph”, is said to run through the house. Also on the property is an outbuilding known as “The Folly”, built in 1904. The spirit of a young man named “Bernard”, who died here while his father was employed on the property, has been seen near “The Folly”.





“The Grange”, the Robinson-Adamson House (built c1828)

The Grange, also known as the Robinson-Adamson House, is amongst our city’s oldest surviving structures. Originally built as a cottage for the Chief Justice of Upper Canada, Sir John Beverley Robinson and today serving as the offices of Heritage Mississauga, this building is also home to a few spirits, notably a mysterious one known only as “Sam”, who is reportedly trying to hide something in the building.

Explore the “Other Side” of our History

This is only a brief glimpse at some of the “haunted places” in our community – there are reportedly many, many more. Stories about spirits and ghosts have long fascinated people, and many of the places that connect with these stories and “happenings” are historic in nature. Please visit with care and enjoy the “other side” of our City’s remarkable history!



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