

## COMMENT

# I ain't afraid of no ghost... much

By Ted Brown  
tedbit@hotmail.com



### A Ted Bit

I'll be the first to admit—it was freaky.

We walked a bit, and our guide told how certain events occurred at that spot. Over the years, the paranormal activity observed by both visitors and staffers at the fort has been documented. Many staffers have experienced 'dark feelings' when securing the fort at night, particularly in one area close to the river. Our guide was no exception.

"I've never enjoyed going over to that part of the fort alone, after dark," he said. "I just get uncomfortable feelings over there."

One personal sighting he experienced was a little girl at the other end of the tunnel running through the walls.

"It was dark and raining, with thunder and lightning. I had a small group inside the tunnel, out of the rain," he said. "From inside the tunnel, I kept seeing a little girl's silhouette in the doorway at the far end of the tunnel, thinking one of the parents must have left their kid outside. But when the lightening flashed, lighting up the grounds, there was no one there."

Another staffer had a fear of one building. In an effort to overcome his phobia, one night he decided to face it directly and secure the Officers' Mess alone. The routine included taking down a light fixture from a ceiling hook, and put it in the cupboard. He brought along a huge flashlight for the task, but had to set it down while he used both hands to disconnect the fixture. The moment he pulled the plug on the electric fixture, his flashlight went out, plunging him into darkness. It was only off a few seconds—but it seemed like eternity. The flashlight came back on and he never returned to that building.

At the end of the tour of one of our National Historic Sites, I can honestly say I did NOT see a ghost.

But hearing the stories, documented by people completely unknown to each other—well, ya gotta wonder.

'I ain't 'fraid of no ghosts.' But I truly believe something's happening out there, in the darkness around old Fort George.

For a very long time, man has discussed the existence of spiritual beings we call ghosts.

I've always maintained an open mind regarding their existence, usually maintaining ghosts do not exist—but at the same time, can't help but wonder if maybe, just maybe, they might.

Last weekend, The Sidekick and I spent the weekend at Niagara-on-the-Lake with another couple. While there, we decided to take in the two-hour Fort George Halloween Ghost Tour. We were the last tour of the evening—10:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

I expected a guide would take us through the Fort, and staff would jump out to 'scare' us with ghostly sounds. Wrong.

Our guide, a veteran of the tour for more than 20 years, was a historian. He said Niagara-on-the-Lake was THE most haunted town in Canada.

"Ghosts are often associated with feelings of hate, grieving, suffering and death—all the 'dark' emotions," he said. "How could quaint little Niagara-on-the-Lake be associated with those types of feelings?"

"Dating back to the War of 1812, the Americans occupied Fort George for some time. With winter approaching in December 1813, they returned to their side of the border. As they left, they burned down the town—only two buildings survived the fire. As those residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake looked at the ruins of their former town, their houses, supplies of food and clothing, everything, burned to the ground—and the cold of winter blowing across the Niagara River—believe me, there was lots of hate, grieving, suffering and death, as they struggled to survive that winter.

"Many didn't survive. The British army returned to Fort George, but couldn't provide much help for the residents, due to their own shortage of supplies."

After our guide's preamble, we entered the huge gates of the fort. With only a few tiny lights in some of the buildings housing historic displays, there was no light, beyond the candle in a hurricane lamp that our guide carried.

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