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## Things That Go Bump In A Canadian Night - A History Of Ghost Hunting

Publish Date: Wednesday, 10th of November 2010  
by Ronald Wolf

Ghost Hunting has been around for much longer than most people are aware of.

Thanks to the human condition that we thrill to be challenged of being terrified beyond words; and our undying need to know that spirits can communicate with the living the number of people believing in ghosts is reaching ever growing numbers.



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The oldest recorded case of [ghost](#) hunting is reported by Pliny the Younger in 100 A.D. When he told the story, it was already a century old tale. The tale tells of a man who bought a house in Athens. The price of the house was far below what it was worth but the sellers wanted to be rid of it and quickly.

One night while the new owner was resting comfortably by the fire, a [spirit](#) came to him wrapped in chains. The spirit beckoned him to follow and so he did. He was led to a spot in the garden behind the house where the spirit vanished. The next morning, with the permission of the city magistrates, he dug the spot and found a skeleton wrapped in chains. Once the body was given a proper burial the [haunting](#) ceased.

Ghost hunting followed a renewed interest in spiritualism caused by two young girls that claimed to speak with a dead peddler. Forty years later one revealed that the noises heard during his presence were fake, but by that time, such a resurgence of interest occurred that no one cared. The first group that devoted it's time to the search for disembodied souls was a society devoted to ghosts at Cambridge University in 1851. London's Ghost Club started 11 years later. These pioneers provided the beginnings for today's avid ghost hunters. □ Enter the mid-1880's. William James, a philosopher, suggested applying scientific methods in the search for spirits and [ghosts](#). He found allies in London with Alfred Wallace, Harry Sidgwick, Harry's wife Elanor and Edmund Gurney. Together they founded the Society for Psychical Research to collect evidence proving, or disproving, the existence of ghosts, [haunted houses](#) and other [paranormal](#) phenomenon. □ [Ghost](#) hunting would not become a mainstream hobby until the 1970's with the founding of the Chicago area [Ghost](#) Trackers Club (which became the Ghost Research Society in 1981). Today there are over 300 separate [ghost](#) hunting organizations throughout American and England and the list is growing. □ The three forms of ghost hunting include: the first uses psychic methods to make contacts. Sensitive's walk through a home and make communication with the ghost or go into a trance. Others may use Ouija boards or other channelling tools to make contact. □ The second type of ghost hunter uses something known as "ghost buster" tools. These can consist of Infrared cameras, tape recorders and energy measurement tools like the electromagnetic field meter. Pictures of orbs, ectoplasm and spirits represent their proof. □ The third type of ghost hunting uses the scientific method. They gather all data and evidence of a haunting and search for normal, natural scientific explanations. If they can find none, then these investigators look to the paranormal for answers. □ In my years of ghost hunting, I have photographed orbs but not much else. Some spirits appear to others that have no interest in ghosts while others, like me, have a strong desire to meet and great ghost have a hard time seeing them. One theory on seeing ghosts is that you can see them every day and not even know it. For instance, if you walk downtown Toronto, you see thousands of people daily. Are all those thousands of people really from this realm or are some spirits trapped in this world who can't continue to the next?