

Things That Go Bump In A Canadian Night

by Ronald Wolf

The Irving House



There are many homes which are haunted. When they are being first built, they are called buildings, then they can turn into a house and when a family moves into them they become homes.

If a famous person resides in these homes they can become museums only if the right people look after them. If these museums stand the passing of time and enough strong events take place there, they can in fact become haunted. The Irving House in Victoria, BC, is a haunted building where peaceful spirits still occupy the home.

William Irving was born in 1816 in Annan, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. In 1859, William Irving and his family moved to Victoria where he became a partner in the Victoria Steam Navigation Company and built two stern-wheelers, the Governor Douglas and the Colonel Moody, to serve between New Westminster and Victoria.

However, Irving did not have a monopoly on the route and rate wars soon erupted between him and his main rival, Captain William Moore who was running his Henrietta on the same route. By that September, freight rates, which had begun at \$12 a ton, dropped to 50 cents a ton and fares, which had been \$10 a passenger also dropped to 50 cents.

According to the Irving House website the house was built in 1865 for Captain William Irving who was an important figure in the river trading industry of the Lower Fraser River in the late 1800's. The house was built in the Carpenter Gothic Revival style of architecture and has some features reminiscent of architecture from Irving's homeland, Scotland.

Archie Miller, owner, A Sense of History Research Services Inc. in British Columbia was the curator and lived in the basement suite for 26 years. In his residency there he came across

some paranormal activity.

A dog he had responded to noises in the middle of the night with a low growl. He could sense that Miller was scared. Since the home is a public place he thought people were walking by looking into the house. It was in the main hallway where sounds of people pacing came from.

"I thought I got people on the property," noted Miller.

"I could definitely hear people above my head. I know sounds of the house and the sounds the house makes, he stated.

"I can hear this pacing. I started to go up and confront them (people) and the sounds stopped. That was one (incident) that was quite profound. The captain himself died in the house. We think a couple other people died in the house if you're looking for a candidate (spirit) probably the best one is captain William Irving."

Irving's son John was close to the house but didn't die in the house. That still could make John a candidate for a spirit that haunts the home.

The sounds of rustling skirts were heard over the years. One incident over the many years includes the following:

* A visitor came into the house when she was greeted by a tour guide. The visitor noticed another woman behind the guide dressed in costume of the Victorian time. The person in costume turned and vanished into the wall.

* A woman who was sensitive to spirits said that the house was so full of spirits that she had to step outside to catch her breath and never came back, noted Miller.

* Another incident of yesteryear included when a child, who was sickly, visited the caretakers long ago. When the child went to John's room she saw a man lying in the bed and reported it. There was a major indentation on the bed when the others came to see the mysterious man.

The Irving House definitely has some pretty weird events going on there and the spirits bump in a Canadian night.

For more information on the house please visit:

<http://www.infovancouver.com/things-to-see-and-do/greater-vancouver/irving-house-new-westminster-museum>.