

Things That Go Bump In A Canadian Night

Mather-Walls House, Keewatin, Ont.



By: Ronald Wolf

John Mather (1828-1907), a businessman, is known to history as the one who brought industry to the township of Kenora, Ont. in 1889.

A native of Scotland, Mather travelled to Canada in 1857. Mather became an important person when he acquired the lumber rights to the area around Kenora.

It was then that Mather built The Keewatin Lumbering and Manufacturing Company (KLMC). In its first few years of production the mill almost exclusively produced lumber for the railroad.

Mather hired many skilled and unskilled workers as far away as Scotland. The KLMC was destroyed by fire in 1905.

Three identical houses were built by Mather to house his employees. The second house, built for his son David, is known as the Mather-Walls House (MWH) in Keewatin, Ont.

In 1893 David moved to Kenora and rented the house to various families including John Walls (1857-1934) and his family. Walls, a native of New Brunswick, was experienced in the lumber trade and in 1883 became a foreman in the Keewatin Lumber Company.

In 1975 the Ontario Heritage Foundation acquired the house. The purpose of the house is to recognize the importance of the Mather family's contribution for the development of Canada.

Jim Doulis is a member of KPS (Kenora Paranormal Society) along with two other members who investigate the paranormal in the Kenora area. Recently, they investigated the MWH.

Variable temperatures are just part of paranormal activity. It was about 15 degrees in the area of the house where they investigated. The temperature jumped to 24 degrees when they investigated the master bedroom.

Three spirits are suspected to haunt the homestead. John

Mather, an unknown little girl, and a woman in Victoria dress.

People had seen the woman in the window or have felt her presence. She's unusually the one who gives the feeling that she doesn't want people there, explained Doulis.

"It's almost like it's my house, what are you doing type of feeling. When people use the Ouija board they also experience that type of feeling. Lots of thumping, unexplainable thumping," said Doulis.

"As soon as asked a question we would hear the sounds. It was just weird that we would hear the sounds."

"The big one (experience) was the feeling of being touched," reported Doulis.

One of the investigators felt a brush against her arm in the little girl's room.

Liz asked "if there's someone in this room, could you please let us know by either touching Jim or making a sound. That's where she felt movement across her neck."

The room warmed up to 19 degrees from about 11 degrees in the girl's room after what they experienced.

"The little girl wanted us to be there," he remarked.

They also experienced what felt a little like fingers grabbing their wrists.

The KPS say they will investigate more hauntings in and around the Kenora area and plan to have a tour for the public this summer about the haunted places they have encountered.

Things that go bump in the night are right down the laneway leading to the unknown.

Mather-Walls House http://www.heritagefdn.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_8818_1.html

John Mather http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/people/mather_1.shtml

Kenora Paranormal Society <http://kps.reidsplace.ca/> contact: 466-7925