

# HAUNTED CANADA

TRUE GHOST STORIES

PAT HANCOCK

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# THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

## *Kenosee Lake, Saskatchewan*

Nestled on the southeastern edge of Moose Mountain Provincial Park, Kenosee Lake is a popular summer resort with impressive scenery, good fishing and great campsites. And for those who are looking for some other-worldly entertainment, it's also said to have a haunted nightclub.

For more than ten years now, folks have been talking about the spooky things that happened at the Moosehead Inn, a former dance hall that was once a favourite hang-out for teenagers.

In 1990, Estevan resident Dale Orsted bought the inn and decided to fix it up a little. But he'd only had the place

a few months when he started noticing that things like ashtrays, cutlery, glasses and figurines were disappearing at an unusual rate.

At first Orsted thought a few customers or staff members might be suffering from a bad case of sticky fingers. But the missing items started showing up again, often in the weirdest places. Then the loud noises started. Banging on the locked front door, thumping on the floors overhead — the racket could last for hours. Frustrated and frightened, Orsted called the police, but they couldn't figure out who or what was causing it.

In 1992, things went from bad to worse. One night, after the last customers had left, Orsted and a friend began ripping up some smelly old carpeting. Almost immediately the noises started up again, this time louder than ever. Sounds of large metal objects crashing into each other were so loud they nearly shattered the windowpanes.

The ear-splitting, nerve-jarring clanging and banging went on all week, night after night, until all the new carpeting was installed. Until then, Orsted had laughed whenever anyone suggested his place might be haunted. After that harrowing week, he found himself — against his better judgment — agreeing with them.

The presence of a ghost could also explain other things that started happening at the Moosehead. The lights flickered several times a night, the dishwasher turned itself on and off, a pail flew across the dance floor, and locked security doors suddenly crashed open and slammed shut. Patrons were excited to be around when some of these things happened, but they were a little nervous too. So was Orsted. He'd been living at the inn since he bought it, but for two years in the mid-1990s he moved back to Estevan, commuting to work each day just so he could get

a break from all the stress he felt at Kenosee Lake.

As word about the Moosehead's troubles spread, Canadian and American TV crews showed up to film the story of the haunted inn, and investigative reporters wrote about the creepy incidents experienced by Orsted, his girlfriend, his buddies and the servers working there. A psychic who read about the haunting phoned Orsted and told him his renovations to the place had probably upset the original owner, Archibald Grandison. She said that the old gentleman's spirit was most likely the source of the mournful moaning sound Orsted had started hearing outside his bedroom door.

Finally Orsted decided to take an "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" approach to his weird predicament. He came up with the idea of hosting a psychic fair at the inn. Several people interested in ghosts and the paranormal showed up for the fair, which turned out to be quite an entertaining event for the whole town.

During the fair, Orsted took part in a special gathering, or seance, organized by a psychic who said she detected three separate ghosts at the inn. She claimed she was able to convince two of them — a cleaning woman and a teenaged boy who had drowned — to leave. But a third — an older man who may have been Archibald Grandison — seemed determined to stay around until he was certain his widow was being well cared for.

Mrs. Grandison was Orsted's next-door neighbour. He liked the elderly lady, and was already keeping a friendly eye her, so he didn't mind at all making more of an effort to look after her. As soon as he started doing that, the number of spooky incidents decreased dramatically. In 1999, when Mrs. Grandison died, the ghost — and Orsted — finally found peace.