



# HAUNTED HAMILTON GHOST WALKS & EVENTS

Feature Article - [www.hauntedhamilton.com/70\\_article\\_blueghosttunnel.html](http://www.hauntedhamilton.com/70_article_blueghosttunnel.html)

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## **The Blue Ghost Tunnel**

*Thorold, Ontario, Canada*

By [Daniel Cumerlato](#)

Lock 18 passes above a tunnel which has become one of the most popular ghostly hotspots in the Niagara region.

The “Blue Ghost Tunnel”, or historically “The Merritton Tunnel”, was only used for 39 years, 11 of which were full-time. Completed in 1876, the tunnel was converted to occasional use in 1887, and closed completely in 1915.

How can any location so lightly used, gain such a reputation over 100 years later? The Blue Ghost Tunnel did just that... but for all the wrong reasons.

The [Screaming Tunnel](#) was the historic springboard for the Niagara region - a region known for its tunnels because of the trains and the [Welland Canal](#). There’s nothing scarier than peering into a dark, stone tunnel at night, the smallest amount of light reflecting off of a vast portal as an invitation to any paranormal enthusiast. Combine this with the dark history of the Welland Canal and you have a place that would be very hard to ignore.

The Welland Canal is a river highway for boats travelling between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. The canal was championed around 1824 by William Hamilton Merritt - former lord of the haunted [Merritt House](#).

Historic accidents, suicide, sabotage, and much foul play have given the Canal a tragic and dark energy. Add in how the Canal cuts through the city of St. Catharines, turning streets into confusing turns and difficult dead ends.

The tunnels began one method of cutting confusion. All forms of traffic would be give passage at different and strategic points. The Merritton Tunnel (Blue Ghost Tunnel) was not a smart point, only a temporary fix. And in this tiny history, tragedy would strike in 1903...

### **Article from**

The St. Catharines Daily Standard newspaper on Saturday January 3rd, 1903  
(slightly edited for understanding and space)

### **BAD TRAIN WRECK**

*No.4 Express Collides with a light Mogul Near Merritton Tunnel (Blue Ghost Tunnel)*

*On the Grand Trunk rail line near Merritton a serious and fatal accident occurred near the Merritton Tunnel today. The accident occurred around 7:03am. Engine Number 975 to leave from Niagara falls at 6:00am and run through to [the city of] Hamilton. The Engine Number 4 express train was scheduled to arrive in Merritton at 6:28am.*

*As nearly as can be learned it was 7:03 am when the ill-fated express train passed a small telegraph station near the tunnel, a few moments later Engine 4 and Engine 975 met with a terrible crash.*

*Both engines were in full steam when they met head on. The estimated speed of both trains was about 22 MPH (miles per hour) at the time of the collision.*

*Both engineers escaped with only broken limbs and minor cuts to face and arms while Mr. Charles Horning (firemen) for Engine 4 was killed instantly.*

*The reporter described the condition of the body as being jammed in the boiler, his body horribly mangled. When rescuers went to pull on the limbs of the man to try to free him, they broke off. When some of the remains were taken away, his mid-section was so tightly wedged that his remaining body could not be pulled free. It was noted that his wrist watch was still working.*

*The other firemen, Abraham Desult, from Engine 975 was smashed into the boiler of the train, and received burns to 90% of his body. He was rushed to the St. Catharines General Hospital where he died 5 hours after the accident.*

## *Dark and Spooky Tunnel*

The dark history of the Canal and the accident combined to make this place hauntingly intriguing.

Haunted Hamilton was just a baby when a paranormal explorer named Russ made his way to the Merritton Tunnel (Blue Ghost Tunnel).

According to the TGHRS (paranormal group out of Toronto), Russ was given directions to the [Screaming Tunnel](#), but got lost and somehow stumbled his way to Merritton. He would return many times to investigate and take pictures of this historic find. During one of these investigations he captured a blue ghostly mist which would give Russ the inspiration for the now famous name, "The Blue Ghost Tunnel".

The reputation started to grow and Haunted Hamilton wasn't going to sit back and not be a part of it. Investigation nights were setup with our resident psychics and friends from two other paranormal groups.

We knew of the train crash, blue mist, and reports of a ghost dog that had been seen around the entrance of the tunnel. This was intriguing, but it was the tunnel's reputation that brought us there for two night-time investigations.

The investigations were quiet and uneventful; with only one experience I personally took part in - the sighting of the ghost dog.

We were halfway in when a member of our team noticed something walking back and forth at the entrance. A few of us (including me) ran as fast as we could to get closer, prove the ghost dog was real and maybe get a picture. And as we got to close enough to confirm, we saw nothing. Whatever it was had vanished.

## *Dear paranormal enthusiast... Ignore The Blue Ghost Tunnel!*

So why do we shun the tunnel today at a time when so many people are talking about it?

First off, we are unable to guarantee the safety of those going. The tunnel is falling apart. The space has always been flooded because of the supporting stones violently leaking from above. The overall tunnel may be sinking into the ground and it's possible the structure could collapse. The previous statement is a personal viewpoint; something we would never expect the landowners to admit due to liability concerns. However before and after pictures would prove something's not right.

Along with the unsafe tunnel, there's the dark, steep and rocky descent and the abandoned Canal Lock located along side of the main path. The Lock is an over 50 foot drop and has little to no safety fences.

Not to mention the reports of a nasty element hanging around the area at night. People have been threatened and many cars vandalized while sitting in the make-shift parking lot.

And if that wasn't enough... we find it hard to believe this place is truly haunted.

After the many years of random investigations, this location lacks results. As with many spots, there are orbs, strange sounds (and ghost dogs), but overall the results are insubstantial.

If we believe energy, experience and tragedy is what creates ghostly activity, then the Blue Ghost Tunnel would rank a mere 2 out of 10. One train accident causing the on-site death of one man, and the eventual death of another many kilometres away... a few other tragedies which didn't actually happen in a tunnel with only 39 years of actual use, would not put this high up on the paranormal scale.

There is a submerged cemetery on the flooded end of the Tunnel. We at Haunted Hamilton feel this is a terrible disrespect, and is a huge reason for building up this historic landmark, but is no reason for ghosts.

The image of the Blue Ghost Tunnel made it perfect for legends and fictitious stories which have gotten out of hand. This has caused the legitimate and respected history / ghost hunters to run for the hills.

The Tunnel has become a location for drinking, partying and scaring girls, but not investigation.

Every history lover should see The Merritton Tunnel (Blue Ghost Tunnel) because this is a space frozen in history which may not be around forever. But if you go at night you're missing the best parts.

Go during the day instead and see the Tunnel in all its glory. Take in the abandoned Canal Lock with the rusted out Ford at the bottom (How the hell did that get there!) and the calming hike down the rocky hill, ending at an amazing monument to Canadian engineering.

You will not miss anything ghostly, because if it hasn't happened in over a decade, chances are it's not starting with you.

Save yourself the hassle, the danger, the damaged car and possibly damaged friends, and go when the sun shines. After all, if there are ghosts at The Blue Ghost Tunnel... they'll find you..

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