**History**Sources:  
<http://www.history.com/topics/halloween/historical-ghost-stories>  
 Since before recorded times, ghost stories and tales of spirits who come back from the dead to haunt places where they have unfinished business have become popular in the folklore of many cultures everywhere. There are many stories involving historical figures from queens and politicians to writers and gangsters, many who died very early in their lives, and/or mysterious or violent deaths.  
 The concept of a ghost, aka a specter, is based off of the ancient idea that a person’s spirit is a separate part of the human entity, and may continue to exist after a person’s body has died. Due to this idea, many societies began to use rituals and “spells” as a way of ensuring that the dead person’s spirit would not return to the land of what we know as, “The Land of the Living.”  
 Places believed to be haunted are often associated with some negative occurrence or emotion from the ghost’s past; these places are often a former home or the place where their body had died. Beside the actual ghostly apparitions, traditional signs of haunting range from out of place, or mysterious noises, lights flickering or being turned on and off, odors that are unusual or come out of nowhere or breezes when there are no windows open to the movement of objects, bells that ring with no one touching them or musical instruments that seem to play with no one else around.  
 During the first century A.D., the great Roman author and statesman “Pliny the Younger” recorded one of the first notable ghost stories in letters, which became very famous for the vivid way they account of life during the heyday of the Roman Empire. “Pliny” wrote that the ghost of an old man with a long, white beard and was wearing rattling chains, was haunting his home. The Greek writer “Lucian” and “Pliny’s” fellow Roman Plautus also wrote memorable ghost stories.  
 In the year 856 A.D., the first poltergeist was reported to be at a farmhouse in Germany. The poltergeist apparently tormented the family that was living there by throwing stones around and lighting fires, among many other frightening things.

**The Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel — Banff, Alberta**Sources:  
<http://roamnewroads.ca/6-terrifying-haunted-places-canada/>  
http://immrfabulous.com/2012/03/27/you-didnt-know/  
<http://hammersonpeters.com/?p=964>  
The Fairmont Hotel in Banff was opened in 1888 during the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway and is rumored to be home to not just one, but several ghosts.  
 Many decades ago a family was killed in room 873. A father killed his wife and young daughter in this room before committing suicide. The exact date of this incident is uncertain. After a lengthy investigation the room was refurbished and booked out to travelers. Soon after, reports of disturbances flooded the front desk. The stories say that guests would fall asleep in the room only to be woken up by hollow screams and when they turned the lights on they would be startled to find bloody handprints on the mirrors inside the room. By the time staff could rush to the room to investigate, the prints would have disappeared. The room has since been covered and closed. Every floor ends with a 73 except the eighth floor. When you head down the eighth floor hallway, there are lights only above each doorway, including where the missing room is located. The baseboards are also cut in a way that looks like a door should be there. If you knock along the walls, you will notice a hollow sound coming from on the spot where the door is hiding.  
 “The Doomed Bride,” is a spirit who is said to have fallen down the stairs to her death on the day after her wedding in the early 1930’s, and has yet to accept the fact she is dead. The legend states that before her celebratory banquet was supposed to have been held at this fine establishment, she was going up the marble staircase to the Ballroom to meet with her husband. Along the way, her wedding gown was said to have brushed a candle and caught fire. Of course, with fire comes panic which led to the bride tripping over her own wedding dress, falling down the marble steps, breaking her neck causing an almost instant death. The stairs had to be closed off to the honeymoon suite after this. Employees stated that the stairs were creepy, especially at night because they ended at a ceiling. Many guests have mentioned that they have heard laughing, crying, and even screaming from this specific area of the hotel. The Employees were sworn to secrecy about the “ghost” situation, no one was permitted to talk or even mention it, especially around guests.

* Another ghost is Sam (McAuley) the bellman, a bellhop who died in 1975—and yet has reportedly been helping people with their bags and opening elevator doors for years since. After many years of working there, the man died of old age but the story goes that he is so used to working that he is not used to being dead or has yet to accept the fact that his living body is long gone.

A few other legends tell of a ghostly bartender who encourages drunken guests to retire for the evening, and a headless man who somehow manages to play the bagpipes, even without a mouth.

**HI-Ottawa Jail Hostel – Ottawa, Ontario**Sources:  
<http://roamnewroads.ca/6-terrifying-haunted-places-canada/>

<http://hicanada.netedit.info/Ontario/1474/Ontario/HI-Ottawa-Jail/History-of-the-Jail/index.hostel>

**HI-Ottawa Jail Hostel — Ottawa, Ontario**This building in the 1860s to 1972, and was a *maximum-security prison*. According to gathered information, it was quite a brutal place. The jail had appalling and inhumane conditions for the prisoners that persisted throughout the usage of it. Executions by hanging happened until the 1940s, and prisoners were kept in overcrowded cells. There was almost nothing to do but wait out the long days of their sentence. If they were unlucky, they were put in solitary confinement, where they were chained face-down, on the cold, hard, ground for over 23 hours per of the day

 When it was finally closed in 1972, and the occupants transferred to the new Ottawa-Carleton Regional Detention Centre in Blackburn Hamlet, it was considered to be a suitable, potential site for a new year-round hostel in Ottawa, and topped the list of many other potential sites.  With some imagination and renovations, it could be transformed into a friendly and welcoming hostel which is what it has become today!

Before the opening, **i**t was excavated and many unmarked graves were found. During renovations they turned cells into hostel rooms and made very few changes. They invited, and still invite people to spend a night “in jail.” But the dark history and events has led many to believe it is haunted. Some report seeing a man appearing at the foot of the bed. Supposedly he is Patrick James Whelan, who was hanged for the murder of journalist Thomas D’Arcy McGee in the year 1869.