

Loch Ness in the News.

There was a report in the Yorkshire Post during February about the exorcism performed by Dr. J. Omand, accompanied by Ted Holiday, last year. This also brought U.F.O.s into the mystery; and Swedish researcher Jan Oue-Sundberg, who reported seeing a grey cigar shaped object land near the loch, a crew of three get out, and then board the craft again and fly off.

Also, after the exorcism Mr. Holiday and another witness experienced Paraphysical phenomena at Strone, by Urquhart Bay. A loud crash was heard, and a whirling black cloud like manifestation was seen through a window, apparently.

Another local Scottish paper reported that the B.B.C. was filming an episode for the childrens programme "Bonny" at Luss, near Helensburgh, using a mock Loch Ness Monster. While this is still typical one notices Nessie cropping up more often, and being accepted as normal, especially by young people.

Peter Costello, Irishman, author of "In Search of Lake Monsters", has had a good review in the Guardian. His book contains some background to Loch Ness and Loch Morar, mentioning the L.N.I., but mixes up the Loch Morar Survey with it; not apparently realizing they are different organisations. This and other mistakes are irritating, but as a whole the book is a useful addition to the literature.

Tony Blackburn on Radio 2 has been doing a Nessie spot on his morning pop music show recently. He asked for anyone having a sighting, (past, present or future) to write in, he is broadcasting some of the reports, which usually come over about 9-15 - 9-30 a.m. Some of these are both new and interesting.

A cousin for Nessie,

B.B.C. radio news on March 22nd had a short report about a Monster lurking a in a lake high in the Peruvian Andes. Local people say it is serpentine in shape, and comes out at night to eat sheep and other animals. (Sounds like my local Monster, 'The Lambton Worm.')

Angling

An improvement in sport was had during the latter days of April. Several good fish being landed at the Fort Augustus end of the Loch, a 25 pounder was the best but 16, 10, 13, and 12 pounders were among the others. Trout also showed an improvement, a nice two and a half pound fish being caught by Mr. Joe Murray. A bad feature about the salmon is that a fish taken from the loch near Foyers had the U.D.N. disease despite the fact it had sea lice which indicate a fresh run fish. In the River Ness some 13,000 sea trout fry were introduced during the first week of April, and a week later some 45,000 young salmon. This is the second year that restocking has been carried out.

Loch Ness swim.

April 26th saw the Findus Loch Ness challenge swim take place, there were teams from Queen Margaret's College, Edinburgh, Dunfermlin College of Physical Education, Cramond, Edinburgh, both female, and Dundee University, all male team. Teams consisted of six members, each spending about half an hour in the water at a time, they were sponsored in aid of Cancer Research, and trying to break the 13-hour record set up last year. I do not yet have news of the outcome.

Inverness County Council Development Study Group, (chairman Lord Lovat,) meeting on April 9th, supported a proposal by the Foyers' residents for the siting of a marina near the Hydro-Electric Boards' new pumping scheme. Mr. Laurence Hasson, local councillor, said the village angling club had prepared plans for the marina and it was now a matter of getting support. The property company which had bought most of the property for a "holiday village" project had now abandoned the idea and had sold the houses, and far from supporting the local fishing development had in fact increased dues to local people by 50%. Lord Lovat agreed that the committee should back any moves in development, as he considered Foyers had had more than one raw deal in the past.

Further on this subject Mr Brian Davenport, British Waterways Board Engineer (Scotland), said later in the month that pleasure cruising on the Caledonian Canal would reach saturation point in about three years, and he hoped that in any planning for marinas on Loch Ness the Board would be consulted. He also gave news of Scott II, the Boards own pleasure steamer. Last year it had carried 15,000 passengers, which amounts to 80% capacity over the entire season, and attempts to get tenders to lengthen the vessel by putting a new section in amidships had so far failed, it is possible therefore the Board may have to consider a larger vessel.

Monster Hunter News

Bob Rines, and Academy Team hope to resume underwater work mid- June onwards, using modified and improved equipment, in and out of Urquhart Bay.

Ivor Newby hopes to lend support with his new boat 'Kelpie II'. Also Tim Dinsdale will be assisting the Academy team in Urquhart Bay after drifting and watching out of Fort Augustus in his boat 'Water Horse', from late May until the Academy team arrives.

There is news too of another underwater attempt; Dick Raynor of L.N.I. is putting, or has put together an underwater camera using the hard helmet of a divers suit. I do not know what light source he is hoping to use, but we wish him luck with it.

Nick Witchell, who has spent a great many hours over the last few years watching from Strone will be back this season, although his time may be curtailed as he has taken the job of editing the Leeds city's student newspaper for a year.

Paul Covell, N.I.S. member who is working at the Pitlochry Festival Theatre, hopes to spend any spare weekends up at L.Ness during the season.

I am also hoping to be able to take my holidays at the Loch, as usual, first two weeks in August family matters permitting.

Sightings

I can now include the very good sighting had by Mr. Richard Jenkyns from the shoreline of his property at 'Point Clair'.

The date was Saturday November 10th. and the time 11-45. approx. The weather was stormy with a strong wind blowing from the N.W. but in spite of this quite large rollers were coming in to the shore, say 18 inches to 2ft in height but they were not in the form of white horses or breakers. My site was a small clearing in the woodland about 20 yards from the shore and about 20 ft above the level of the loch, I was starting a reluctant tractor and in

order to do this, it had been found necessary to remove the silencer, the tractor started with a roar, much black smoke etc. and almost immediately afterwards I heard a very large splash as if someone had gone in from the high board very flat and all this over the noise of the gale rushing through the bushes and the tractor. I got off the tractor and went to look at the loch but could see nothing so after a few moments returned to the tractor, I then took a further glance and saw a ring of concentric expanding ripples in the waves just out from the end of the new jetty which we are constructing, nothing further so back to the tractor. A few moments later I glanced again towards the loch and there nicely framed by a curved overhanging bough, a fish like object (at first) started to appear quite slowly and steadily until it was about 18 inches above the water surface, it then seemed to pause but on reflection I think that this may have been a wave rising up the neck, and then came up about another two feet or so. It then seemed to stay quite motionless for a short time, very hard to say how long as I was flabbergasted, it was leaning slightly forward and my view was that of a profile. It then moved slowly forward towards the easterly end of the loch and parallel to the shore and slowly sinking from the base upwards but not splashing forward or porpoising etc. It moved about forty yards or so out of the frame work of the bough and I walked forward to see it finally sink out of sight. Now for the first time I realised that I had probably seen the beastie and I became rather bewildered and it has taken me some time to rationalise my sighting.

Now for a description and I am sorry that I cannot draw, colour black or a brownish grey, texture neither rough nor smooth or slimy, matt is the best word I can think of at the moment, diameter say 9", no fins or gills, there appeared to be scales very large on the head only but this was only an impression, a great gash of a mouth at least 9" long and tight shut and above the centre of the mouth what may have been an eye, but possibly a blow hole, very small it appeared to me to be about the size of a pea and pitch black. I was under the impression that the animal was well aware of my presence. When it first appeared it was about 15' out of the vertical leaning forward but when it sank, it increased this angle to about 30'. There was no further indication of how much remained under water but about a week later I found a 10lb salmon still just alive with a large wound in its side against the jetty. I wonder if it had attacked this fish.

The general appearance of the animal was that of a tube, slightly rounded at the top with the head profile rather like that of a lizard, snake or frog. I saw no sign of the often mentioned horses head.

Sightings '74 Stop Press

Tim Dinsdale tells me that about a month ago a big 3 humper was seen from the shore near Johnnies Point. Dick Jenkyns talked to the local postman who spoke to the actual witnesses. A man and wife, and a girl of eleven. They had stopped their car, and had climbed down to the shore. The Beast broke surface close to and made off at great speed, creating a wave which broke over their feet. All three witnesses were so shaken they retreated to their car. The girl was in such a frightened state she accidentally damaged her head when entering the car - receiving a nasty scalp wound. The postman said their state of shock was both obvious, and real.

Another 'telegraph pole' neck sighting was had by young Ian McKenzie in much the same area recently. Son of a local forester at Point Clair, he saw two humps in May of '73, and is now a confirmed Monster hunter - like all the rest of us!

Thats all for Newsletter No 3. remember any news or ideas for inclusion are greatly received.

Rip.