

1. Monster Hunters in Profile -

First of an occasional series by Tim Dinsdale:

Bob Rines.

Perhaps one of the most welcome and encouraging aspects of the search, and research activity at Loch Ness and Loch Morar in recent years has been the true internationalism achieved. People from different countries, and walks of life, and scientific disciplines have lent a hand, and put their minds towards solving the problems we face. Which are very real, and very difficult, as time has demonstrated.

One of the most active of the Monster hunters, Bob Rines, comes from Boston, Massachusetts. In the recently founded Franklen Pierce College Law Centre 'Bulletin of Information 1974-75', a fitting 'Thumbnail Portrait' of him is to be found.....

"Robert H. Rines. Dean and Professor of Law / B.S. Physics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology / J.D. The Georgetown University / Ph.D. The National Chiao Tung University / Examiner U.S. Patent Office 1946-47 / Registered Professional Engineer, (Mass) / Gordon MacKay lecturer on patent law, Harvard University 1956-58 / Lecturer on Invention, Patents and Innovation MIT 1962-73 / Member US Dept. of Commerce Tech. Advisory Board 1963-67 / National Inventors Council 1963-67 / National Academy of Engineering Patent Committee / Sigma Xi / Scientific Research Society of America / Institute of Electronic and Electrical Engineers / American Association for the Advancement of Science / Anti-Trust and Patent Sections of American Bar Association / Author / Member and President of Academy of Applied Science "-----etc.

It is in this last capacity we know Bob at Loch Ness, and Morar too, and it is due to his generous and unbounded enthusiasm for the chase, and his ingenious technical approach towards the underwater aspects of it, that the recent strobe-flash sonar linked pictures were obtained. Thus he deserves three more well earned letters! M.M.H. 'Master Monster Hunter'; and our congratulations go with them.

## 2. Nessie at Large

Two reports of strange happenings, first in early August shipping off Dover was alerted after a giant 'swirl' was reported in the area. A coastguard helicopter searched within a five mile radius but nothing further was found. The obvious comment was made, 'Nessie on holiday!!' About a month earlier two teams of divers, independent of one another, told of finding sets of 'footprints' on the floor of Lake Ullswater, in the English Lake District. This caused some excitement in the district at the time, but has been explained away as being natural fault marks in the sandstone lake bottom.

## 3. Loch Ness in the News

There has been extensive coverage following the publication of Nick Witchell's book, and the recent Tony Blackburn Radio 1 programme. Most of the articles seized on the row between Nick and Frank Searle; but one which did not was in 'The Rhodesia Herald'. It concentrated on the foreword by Gerald Durrell, who, as a naturalist with an international reputation calls for more effort to solve the Loch Ness mystery. This was a very well balanced article, the opposite of one in the 'Aberdeen Evening Express' which was written by a non-believer, who does not appear to have studied the evidence.

Other Scottish newspapers gave space to the programme by Tony Blackburn and also the model "Monster", at the Clansman Hotel, which has been the cause of much good-humour.

The Evening Telegraph reported early in August a "new" theory put forward by Mr J Wilson, who is a warden on a nature reserve at Leighton Moss Lancashire, to explain what Nessie is. Mr Wilson who has studied otters for nine years says that a group of them at play could give rise to Monster sightings. He too has evidently not studied the evidence, or the history for that matter.

## 4. Water Sports and Loch Ness

On Saturday August 17th six swimmers set out to swim the length of Loch Ness to mark the 90th anniversary of Ye Amphibious Ancients Bathing Association, Broughty Ferry. A former long distance Olympic swimmer Mike Read (33) of Norwich was the only one to finish, his time of 14 hours 24 minutes 46 seconds was just over five minutes better than the existing record. Mr Read who was accompanied over the last 400 yards by a frogman from R.A.F. Lossiemouth, was taken to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, to be treated for exposure and exhaustion, On his release a few hours later he said he could not remember finishing the swim. and while conditions were good the water at 42°F

was much colder than he and the others had expected.

Saturday 31st August saw Mr David Munro of the Caberfeidh Water Ski Club complete a 48 miles Lochend to Fort Augustus and back sponsored ski, raising £650; more than half of which would go to the Handicapped Childrens Home at Maryburgh. Provost W.A.Smith of Inverness travelled in the towing boat as official observer during the run, which was completed in 77 minutes giving an average speed of 37 m.p.h. Lord Burton kindly allowed the club to use the beach at Lochend to start and finish.

A rubber dingy marathon sponsored by British Petroleum and the Highlands and Islands Development Board was organised by the London Motor Boat Racing Club, to cover the 63 miles of the Caledonian Canal manhandling craft and motors round the canal locks. Run on 14/15th September, it attracted 41 entries of which 31 finished, the winners being Lt. Tom Dickson, and Marine John Alsford of the Royal Marine City of London B team. They incurred only 70 penalty points and were awarded the British Petroleum Cup, the Services Cup, and a cheque for £100.

#### 5. Caledonian Canal

The canal was closed for a few days in the second week of August, due to a split in a lock-gate at Laggan Locks. Mr Brian Davenport, Scottish engineer for the British Waterways Board, said "the situation with the Caledonian Canal is potentially very serious because it can only get worse". He went on to point out that the oil boom and resulting wage rises had brought about the loss of skilled employees, and all diving work was being done by one young carpenter. He stated that so far they were able to cope because of the loyal work done by lock-keepers, but it only took one mechanical failure in one unit to bring the whole canal to a standstill.

Scott 11 had some Royal passengers in the last week of July. While visiting the Inverness area the Shah of Iran's three children took a trip on Scott 11 out into Loch Ness. The children Crown Prince Reza 13, Prince Ali Reza 8, and four year-old sister Liela, were reported to enjoy the trip very much and to share the Shah's fondness for the highlands.

#### 6. Sightings

I have some details of a sighting by Sergeant Key of Inverness who reports that while driving alongside the Loch he saw a 'black dome' 20 feet from the shore about one foot high and four feet long. I have also heard that another local has had a recent sighting, but I have no details as yet. I hope to report this in NIS 6.

I have a fascinating new report of a sighting by a N.I.S. member back in 1959. Mr George Andrews of Newcastle, wrote the following account... "At the end of June 1959 my wife, daughter, two friends and myself were taking a yacht to the West Coast of Scotland, and spent the night moored to Temple Pier in Urquart Bay. Late at night (probably about midnight) it was pretty dark, seemingly more so in the bay than the main Ness which appeared to be getting some light from the midsummer northern sky. I was in the cockpit with a friend when Nessie passed us, travelling into the head of the bay. He (or she) was abreast of us when we saw him. Moving quite slowly, I estimate  $4\frac{1}{2}$  ft per sec = 3 mph. What impressed me was that it was apparently paddle driven. I had expected it to go in waves like an eel, or perhaps to be tail driven like a porpoise. Two humps, the longer one aft, and I assumed the smaller (front) hump was the neck with the head under water. It was about 15/20 feet from us and was lost to sight in the darkness in 5 or 6 seconds. Going too slowly to leave a wake; but was surrounded by a displacement wave, like that made by the nuclear submarines travelling in the Clyde with only their conning towers above water; length 15-20 ft, no colour, everything was black brown". A very interesting report. When I first read it what came to mind was talking to Tim Dinsdale, who spent a great many nights anchored in the bay, and while he never saw anything he had this wave effect disturb him on occasion.

#### 7. Geology and Weather

In early August there were earth tremors in Ross-shire which affected the Wester Ross areas of Glenshiel, Dornie, Inverinate and Achmore. A spokesman for the Institute of Geological Sciences, Edinburgh, said that it was unlikely there would be more disturbances, as there were one or two such cases every year. A few days later there were more tremors, Inverness, Fort Augustus, and the South Laggan area being among places affected.

In August the weather records for Fort Augustus were published, showing on the whole a dry year; January being the wettest month. March was a good month with higher than usual temperatures. On the last days of the month honey bees, butterflies, wasps etc. were seen, as well as a large lizard basking in the sunshine at Loch Ness-side. This tempts one to ask whether it was grey coloured, and about 40 feet long?

#### 8. Wanted

N.I.S. member Dave Whittaker is looking for the following books; 'More Than a Legend' by Constance Whyte, 'The Leviathans' by Tim Dinsdale, 'In the Wake of the Sea Serpent' by B.Heuvelmans. Anyone with any of these books spare

and for sale, or any information as to where they may be obtained is requested to contact Dave at 57, Marchmont Road, Edinburgh, c/o Dr.T.Rose.

That is all for NIS 5. Please remember I need news and comments from members, and NIS welcomes new members.

NIS address; R.R.Hepple. Huntshieldsford Cottage. St. Johns Chapel.  
Bishop Auckland. Co. Durham DL13 1RQ. Membership is £1 per year,

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