

Ness Information Service
Nessletter No.7.
February 1975

Editor's Note: It has occurred to me that new members may like to know how the N.I.S. came into being - the story, quite simply, is as follows:-

As a private individual I first went to Loch Ness in 1965, after reading many of the books then available. I was a firm believer in the existence of something large and unknown in the Loch but I did not see anything then, or for that matter at anytime since. I did find the 'Loch Ness Phenomena Investigation Bureau' (L.N.I.) however which I joined. During the years that followed I spent my annual holiday with the L.N.I. at the Lochside, becoming more experienced in observing water and weather conditions and in running the operations as a Group Commander. I found this a tiring but satisfactory position; training newcomers in the workings of L.N.I. cameras, temperamental vehicles, and so on. In 1969 I closed my business and the following season in 1970, I was able to go to Loch Ness for the full expedition to assist Tim Dinsdale who had become 'Surface Photography Director' for the season. It was about then that the Inverness County Council started to make things difficult for L.N.I. whose Directors asked Tim to look for a new site. The I.C.C. gave L.N.I. an extension of one year at Achnahannet, the basecamp and headquarters for expeditions, providing it was brought up to certain standards.

I was called in to tackle the job and in January 1971 started moving caravans, altering fences, putting in drains and a septic tank, a new P.R. building, and washing facilities with flush toilets and running hot water - along with many other jobs. The start of the '71 season saw a much improved H.Q. site from the point of view of both visitors and L.N.I. expedition members. During the season Tim made progress towards a superb new site at Fasagh, but there were many problems, and the I.C.C. was once more approached for a further extension of one year for Achnahannet, which they reluctantly granted.

The end of the 1971 season, saw another big change in my life; I acquired a wife and ready made family, so in 1972 I was unable to return to L.N.I. Plans for the Fasagh site fell through, and the I.C.C. insisted the Achnahannet site had to be vacated by the end of 1972, and thus after 10 years of fieldwork the L.N.I. was forced to cease active "Monster Hunting".

During my work with L.N.I. one thing stood out, the heart and strength of the organisation was in the membership, the ordinary people from all walks of life who paid for their own keep and who did all sorts of chores and tasks, while trying to put someone with "the right equipment in the right place at the right time" Due to the L.N.I.'folding it's tents'. These and many other interested people were now without a supply of news from Loch Ness.

At this time I had many friends at Loch Ness who wrote to me with news; So the idea of N.I.S. was born. My 1973 plans were laid, and, January 1974 saw N.I.S. off to a shaky start. I was having problems with typing, and duplicating, as the early Nessletters indicate, but as the year progressed I sorted matters out and the membership grew. At the year's end N.I.S. had more or less broken even, which was heartening, for while I was not out to make money I did hope it would not cost too much! Now with an expanding membership, and your encouraging support the time has come to ask for the 1975 subscriptions which will remain at the same rate as in 1974. I do hope you have found N.I.S. to be worth while, and look forward to your continuing support, which is needed, and appreciated.

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LOCH NESS NEWS

Weather

1974 was the wettest for 25 years at Fort Augustus with 1407.3mm of rain recorded by the Forestry Commission, between July 1st and 31st December there were only 17 days without rain. This was followed by some severe weather over the whole Highland area in the middle of January, snow, drifted by very strong winds, blocking the A9 the main road south for some time and when cleared it drifted in again overnight. Once more Fort Augustus featured, on Wednesday night the 22nd January minus one degree fahrenheit, 33 degrees of frost were recorded. Then as the snow started to thaw there was a fear of flooding in the Spey valley and farmers were advised to move stock to higher ground. Then by contrast the first week in February turned sunny and pleasantly warm, one unusual thing being wasps seen feeding on Snowdrops in Fort Augustus.

Angling

Another season started on January 15th on the River Ness and many others, there have been signs of spawning fish since November which is a good pointer to improved future stocks. With the snow melting, there have been big spates in the rivers feeding Loch Ness, which is a help to the fish coming in. The river Moriston yielded some very good fish at the seasons start. Superintendent A. Mackay, Inverness Constabulary, taking one of 11 lbs, and another, the biggest from the water for many years, of 32 lbs; other anglers getting fish of 18½lb and at least two of 29lb.

'Bigfoot'

Tim Dinsdale passed on to me issue number three, December 74, of the "Bigfoot News", this is a new publication about a bi-pedal 'Monster' phenomena in the Pacific North West of America I found it very interesting reading and possibly some N.I.S. members may like to subscribe. The address is Bigfoot Information Centre, P.O. Box Box 632., The Dalles, Oregon 97058, U.K. membership is \$7.50 for a monthly newsletter by air mail,

Sightings

I have some more news from the two boys who had a head and neck sighting near Fort Augustus, first mentioned in N.I.S.6. I contacted both boys, Kevin Buggy 12, and Hugh Kennedy 11, who attend The Abbey School at Fort Augustus, sending them sighting report forms to fill in. After a long period they returned them, they had been home over the Christmas holidays, but neither had put a date or time of the day on their reports.

The boys were on the canal (Caledonian) bank close to where it joins Loch Ness. The Loch was calm, no wind, slight mist. There had just been a shower of rain. Hugh saw the object first and drew Kevins attention to it; a neck with a small head about 5 feet in height. They give no thickness, but both did a sketch and it seemed about 9 inches. It was directly opposite/slightly to the right (depending which report you read) of the pier separating the canal from the River Oich, at a distance of 100 yds/150yds. A greenish brownish colour it moved away from them in a North Westerly direction. They watched it for about

3 minutes before it disappeared.

News & Views

Paul Covell is working at the Pitlochry Festival Theatre as chief electrician, and he says he would be delighted to meet fellow N.I.S. members if anyone is passing through just go to the box office and ask for Paul. While working at the Theatre last year he managed to visit the Loch ten times, just a day or two at a time, but evidence of how keen he is.

While on this subject would members who plan to visit Loch Ness in 1975 care to send me dates? I can include them in future Ness letters and thus enable some of you to get in touch directly with each other at the Loch-side.

I do not need to remind you that, articles, news, for inclusion, in fact anythings of interest to Nessie hunters is always welcome.

Rip.

Ness Information Service puts out six Nessletters a year for those interested in Loch Ness, its surroundings, and its creatures.

Annual subscription: £1 British Isles: 5 Dollars, U.S.A. Canada.

We welcome any news, views, articles, anything of interest to Nessie -
Hunters.

(PLEASE TEAR-OFF AND PASS ON TO YOUR FRIENDS).