

# NESS INFORMATION SERVICE

## NESSLETTER 157

### FEBRUARY 2011

ULRICH MAGIN

Ulrich continues to do sterling work producing his very good newsletter, 'BILK'. Issue 157 has word that the account of the sighting by Ian Milne, just dated as 1930, was reported in at least two American newspapers at the time. Ulrich, says that the articles can be accessed Pay to View only, so he pieced a report together as best he could. "People in the vicinity of Loch Ness, Scotland, are much mystified over reports of a monster having taken up its abode in the lake. Three young bankers from Inverness were angling (?) from a boat on a calm night (?). There was a churning and splashing of the water as if a fight between two large fish was in progress. Then it suddenly came towards the boat at high speed and then when 300yards away, turned to the right and disappeared with a wriggling motion into a deep bay. It raised a wave about two and a half feet high, sufficient to rock the boat. A keeper on the shores of the lake, says that sometime ago he saw a monster swimming down the lake and that it looked like a boat upside down." (Scotch Lake becomes a Place of mystery, *Hartford Courant* 12<sup>th</sup> October 1930; Weird Lake Monster Reported in Scotland. Fishermen At Loch Ness Report Being Startled By It. *The Sun* 19<sup>th</sup> October 1930). Ulrich says he is fascinated by this, as he had always assumed the first reports made their way 'over the pond' in December 1933. We can now see, the Loch Ness Monster made headlines in the USA in 1930.

In Tim Dinsdale's 'Loch Ness Monster', there is a report by Mr Ian Milne, an Inverness Gunsmith, which seems to be the same account as above. The bay, which the disturbance went into, is named as Holly Bush Bay. There is no better date given than 1930, there is a time of day, 8.30pm, a perfectly calm fine evening. Mr Milne says that in his opinion it was an enormous eel, about twenty feet long. This report is headed as being in the Northern Chronicle on 14.6.1933, does this indicate the story made the American papers, before the Scottish!

STEVE FELTHAM

Steve, on the phone a little while back, is fit and well, his old ex-library van still holding together; although it is a very long time since it last moved under it's own power. He told me the 'monster' scene continues to be quiet, as it has been for some time now. I have expressed my concern about this before. He did have one, or is it two, accounts that have been reported to him. Easter weekend two, mature, American ladies were staying at a B&B guesthouse in Dores, just along the front from the Dores Inn. From their upstairs window they watched a dark hump move across the bay. Not much by way of detail, estimated size two feet long, dark colour, moving steadily, in sight for a few minutes before being obscured from view, passing behind a house further along the shore. At around the same time a Spanish lad, from Barcelona I think, was camping on the shore in the other direction, by Tor Point. He took video of something crossing the bay. When he visited Steve to tell of his sighting, Steve was unable to see what he had on video, even on the small camera screen, as the batteries were flat. He promised to get back to Steve, or send a copy. He did return, and Steve managed to get the images on to computer. At first it was a large dark object, seemingly as big as a horse. After adjusting the scale and other things, what emerged was a Black Throated Diver. These Divers are quite large birds, with a longish neck and sit low in the water. I have watched them, from the old Abriachan pier, crossing the loch out of Dores Bay past Tor Point, an impressive bird. Steve wondered if the American ladies had seen the same, or another, Black Throated Diver? He also told me he had written an interesting paragraph, about the American ladies' account, submitting it to the Inverness Courier. Being a bit disappointed when it did not appear in the paper. I wonder if this could be one possible reason of the apparent scarcity of reported sightings? When accounts are passed on to the papers, they are not, now, deemed of enough interest to publish!

## GERIANT GIBSON

Phone call from Geriant, early October, he has featured in earlier Nessletters. He is a dedicated researcher and had just returned from his third trip to the loch this year. He had some good news for us, as well as being frustrating for him. He had been staying at the chalet-park between Fort Augustus and Inchnacardoch. I think this has been developed since my last visit to the loch in '06, and is wonderfully situated giving views out over the loch. Over the years Geriant has built a friendship with Ricky MacDonald, who operates the 'Royal Scot', doing tourist runs out of Fort Augustus. Around mid-day on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> September Geriant received a phone call from Ricky, telling him to look out of the door as there were three humps proceeding along the loch in the vicinity of Cherry Island. Can you imagine how frustrating it must have been for Geriant to have to say, thank you for letting me know but I am in the middle of Inverness shopping!! I believe this was Ricky's first sighting for five or six years. Although he does, from time to time, obtain sonar contacts with the good equipment he has aboard. In fact he told Geriant, later, that he had contacts the next day. Also that there had been a similar report earlier in the year. Geriant is of the opinion that there are a number of sightings that are just not being reported. Another indication, as in Steve Feltham's case, that some reports are made, then just not being published in the papers.

My initial reaction to any multiple hump sighting is to think; 'boat-wake'. That was the case as Geriant was telling me the above account. However, over the years he has built up a very good rapport with Ricky, who is very experienced, spending many hours on, and by, the water. Geriant regards Ricky as a source of reliable information. Regardless of my outlook towards 'multiple humps' this could be classed as a good sighting.

## JOHN COOPER

Having just returned from their latest, all to brief, visit to Skye, John let me have an account of the trip. He and Davina did manage to drop by 'The Loch'. First arriving from the south at Dores, they rolled onto the shore, at about 11.00 hrs, and parked nose towards the water just by the stream, under the tree which is still standing after so many years. John says that he is sure I have parked in the same spot, and have the view in my mind's eye. Indeed I have, as will so many of you, although I usually parked a little further back. Steve's van was still there, although John's impression was that it did not seem to be the centre of activity it used to be, perhaps he was there on a quiet day. He had hoped to espy Steve and have a chat, although Steve does not 'know' him, they have exchanged letters on a number of occasions, although the last was some time ago. They stayed at the shore car park for about an hour, walking to the point at the far end of the shingle beach. There were white capped breakers crashing on to the shore with some noise, visible some 300 yards out was what they took to be a round floating dive platform, with people active on it.

They then, once again, remade John's old pilgrimage to Lower Foyers, but did nothing more than a 180 degree turn on the very degraded, pothole ridden, gravel patch near the pier. Making their way to the small, fishing boat car park, where they stayed for about an hour. After parking, they walked past the fish-farm to the, now very rickety, wooden bridge and onwards to the end of the spit, with John seeing the place both as it is now, and in his mind's eye, as it was some thirty years ago. It is very noticeable that the Inverness facing side of the Foyers Spit has suffered about 3 metres of wave erosion during those intervening years. There used to be two or three quite wide and clear grassy spaces, near where the old WW2 observation posts once were, wide enough to set up a tent and view the loch from the comfort of a camping chair. Nowadays these spots are quietly lapping below the water's edge. The wider camping spots are gone, some totally, some have about a metre left.

They then quickly made their way to Skye for their short break, taking the road to the Kyle. After bumbling around Skye for about a week, they once again crossed that very high bridge, to make their way south. They break the journey with an overnight stay at a B&B in Kingussie, which they have used before. Arden House was warm and cosy, as always, with the excellent hospitality of Norrie and Jenny. To reach Kingussie, on the A9, they passed along some of the north shore of Loch Ness. John had decided that after many years, they should visit the Loch Ness display in the converted hotel. The road along the north

growing trend to tailgate, it is quite unnerving. John says, he may be completely wrong, but thought they may have actually missed part of whatever was offer at the exhibition site, as he believed there was both an exhibition and a presentation. They did indeed see the sound and light presentation, the one where the audience passes through about five themed chambers, but saw no exhibition, in the sense of items for examination and posters or similar. As this was their first visit they went in completely void of expectations as to what was to be discovered. What was presented in the five, or so, chambers was a short and rather minimalist initial handing over of an amount of folklore and geological background information. This was followed by a short sequence of Loch Ness and sonar science facts and rounded up by allowing the 'viewer' to determine their own conclusion, which is probably sensible. John felt that all in all it was not in any significant way lacking in tourist entertainment quality, although to his ageing ears it was indeed far to LOUD! For his personal learning he would have liked to have more hard core science presented, but then he would have to say 'just how'. As he appreciates it is difficult to offer hard core data to a mix of wandering random visitors such as themselves, and the very many coach parties. He did see, with some quiet personal amusement, the "Monster" picture which when inspected, even quite fleetingly and casually, does appear to be nothing more than perhaps a 'double exposure' of a Labrador (type) dog with a salmon or other large fish in it's mouth.

John went on to say. On a general and wider point, perhaps more of the multi-expeditions accumulated data could be made available for researchers and other interested persons. Although there have been quite a few sonar scans and University based explorations over the decades, since the initial LNIB investigations, there is as far as I am aware very little data available for 'research' use. The audio-visual presentation did show short clips of the experiment using a multi-vessel sonar curtain sweep. He has made the usual WWW searches but nothing with significant data content pops up. Surely after some 50 years, or so, there must be a substantial pile of data stashed away? He then refers to NIS 156, saying he found it most interesting and enjoyed the piece about Mr Dinsdale. John, like many others, has only seen the repeatedly copied, low resolution, versions of the short film sections. There is always at least one version viewable via YouTube, WWW; this is of very low resolution. He would very much like to have the original made available for modern copying and dissemination for research purposes. Viewing the occasionally available poor copies does not settle the case one way or the other, he says. Always convincing himself that there is a vee-wake plus the outboard motor wake in the film. However without good clear images, that is not proven either way. If the clip at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVOyo-OwDYM> is viewed there are some characteristics that have not been subject to debate, John says.

Based on that clip John offers the following for general discussion, if included in a Nessletter, right.

1/ A boat or other object travelling through a body of water with part of its' mass above water level will leave a visible surface disturbance, i.e. a wake. An object without, what I shall loosely call, 'engine power' or similar, will generally leave a clean two sided 'V' wake. Whereas an engine powered object usually leaves a central plume, positioned as expected in the angular middle of the 'V' wake, which then has two equal side divisions at any instant of time. Under normal conditions the direction of travel, the angle of the 'V' wake and the centre plume are all symmetrical about an imaginary line constructed along the direction of immediate travel. Also the outer 'V' tracks will normally be quite similar, whilst the central plume will have a rather more agitated, broken-up appearance.

2/ Focussing on the wake seen in the clip, as the velocity of the object in the film is relatively slow, compared to the speed of wake-wave propagation. The wake should be symmetrically arranged behind the object, with visually equal angles of dispersion to each side of the imaginary projected centre line of the travelling object.

3/ To my view, upon seeing the clip as above, the angle of the significantly visible 'V' wake is not arranged as one may expect it to be from item '2' above.

4/ The largely visible and substantial wake is in fact, to my view, very significantly biased to the right hand side of the image, from where it may otherwise be expected to be seen, when compared to the direction of travel of the object.

5/ Whilst viewing the clip, it is easy to see that in a good proportion of the frames the apparently 'missing' left hand wake is indeed visible as a wave line. But often obscured by strong sun-glint, or other image white-out and positioned in very close agreement to where it would appear, as per item '2' above, if the wake was where it 'should be' for an object travelling through, and breaking the water surface.

His personal conclusion is that the object in the clip has a symmetrical 'V' wake with a centre plume. John says he will leave the final conclusion to your selves to ponder. He also wonders, 'given the date and approximate time of filming, is the 'sun glint, if indeed it is and not film fogging, at the expected angle on the loch surface'?

#### ULRICH MAGIN

I started this Nessletter with information from an issue of Ulrich's 'BILK' newsletter. It has taken me so long to finish it I now have an account from his latest. Ulrich reports, the Inverness Courier, 26<sup>th</sup> November '10, carried a sighting report and photograph of something strange being seen in the loch. Richard Preston, a landscape architect working at Aldourie Castle, situated on the south shore at the northern end of Loch Ness, reported the unusual event. He is a 27year old Yorkshire-man based near Skipton, who has redesigned the castle grounds over the last three years. No exact date given, but one day in November '10, at about 3pm, something close to the opposite shore caught his attention. He said, "It was a glimmer, it was like a reflection, the rest of the water was still and dark, it was quite odd." He snapped a series of images on his mobile camera (presume that is mobile phone), but when he turned round the mystery, three-humped, object had disappeared. Saying, he was 'gobsmacked' and having worked there for the last two or three years had never seen anything like it before. "I am not saying it is the monster," Mr Preston said, "but do not see any reason why it cannot be some sea-going beast." The photographs were of interest to Steve Feltham, who said he was quite excited about them. Taken from the castle grounds, looking over the loch, about three-quarters the way across there appears to be three humps. At first Steve thought boat-wake, but in the several shots the image does not move, if it was a boat-wake it would move along in relation to the far shore. Steve said he was unsure what it was, but that Richard was a reliable character. Adrian Shine, described as 'Loch Ness Monster Expert', described the pictures as interesting but suggested they could be of sunlight reflecting from a house or leaves.

I only have the small picture that is in Ulrich's 'BILK' to examine, but it does have much to go on. The near shore, in foreground of the picture, is in shadow almost to the water's edge. The far shore is clearly bathed in bright sunshine, with trees and buildings throwing strong dark shadows. These shadows show the sun to be behind and to the left of camera, about 11 o'clock. One of the buildings looks to be the traditional style croft, with dormer windows. I wonder if it is the one we used to refer to as 'the old manse'? The other, in centre frame, single story, bungalow/chalet type. It's front is bright in the picture, indicating something like patio doors, or picture windows, reflecting the sun. Taking the height of the sun in the sky, and thus the angle of the tree shadows, this reflection corresponds with the 'object' on the surface. Which incidentally looks to be some sixty feet long. I think Adrian is correct to suggest reflection, also Richard says, "it was a glimmer, it was like a reflection"!! Many years ago I came across similar incidents in Urquhart Bay.

I have asked from time to time, in the Nessletters, 'where are sighting reports', just as Steve was, even the misinterpretations. There are three to report in this one, although it does span a number of months, which is heartening. Thank you for being members. If you have a change of address please let me know. Please remember your news and views are always welcome, and needed, possibly more now than ever, visitors would also be made welcome, subscriptions, if you are good enough to continue to subscribe, are UK£3.00, the USA remains \$10.00. address is still:- R.R.Heppele, 7 Huntshieldford, St John's Chapel,