

Strange Sightings Stir Sasquatch Stories

by Sandy Rangila

Skepticism and nervous chuckles greet most Big Foot or Sasquatch stories. But it was no laughing matter Saturday, March 17, when Russell Charley and his wife rushed to Kah-Nee-Ta Village to report that some kind of monster had thrown a 30-pound rock at their car.

"They were both very shaken up and scared," agreed

Jim McDonald and Ted Nisley who were on duty that night. The Charleys arrived at the village at about 8:30 p.m. and reported their frightening encounter to Kah-Nee-Ta security guard Ed Fortson who, in turn, notified the Warm Springs police.

Referring to the thing as "a monster," Charley said that it had thrown a 30-pound rock, about one foot in diameter, at his

car as he was driving through Russell Charley Canyon to his home. The rock reportedly passed across the windshield and landed on the ground on the other side of his car.

Charley explained that he has seen and heard the monster before. He described it as being very big and tall, and said when it got close enough he could detect a very bad odor. Although he doesn't like to talk about it, Charley says the eyes are very distinctive.

He describes the monster's sound as "a scream or yell." He told Nisley and Fortson that it sounds almost like a cow, but higher pitched and of a longer duration than a cow can produce.

"He seemed to be telling the truth," said Nisley. "He and wife were both very shaken up and they had stern looks on their faces the whole time. They were antsy and looking around here at the office, and they were the same way when we all went over to their place to have a look around."

Although police and Spilyay Tymoo reporters later looked the area over for footprints, none could be found. It is still not known what it was that Russell Charley saw that night, or whether or not it was a Sasquatch.

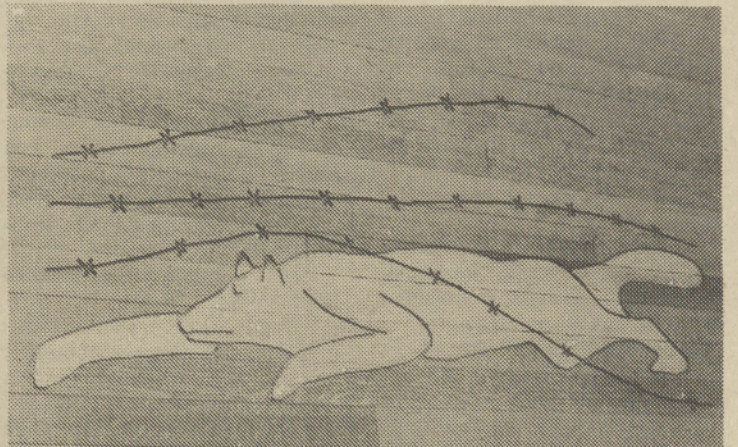
Bob Griffin, interim pastor of the Presbyterian church, had a strange experience that same Saturday night. He had been driving back from Portland and was too sleepy to continue, so he pulled off the road near Simnasho Butte.

About 3 a.m., as he awoke, he saw something that looked to him like a shadow or a man. He said later that he was feeling uneasy about sleeping that soundly along the side of the road anyway. So when he saw the "shadow," he reached for and cocked the gun he had at his side.

He was alarmed because he didn't know what it was or even if it was just part of a dream. "I was just waking up, and I was in a mild state of paranoia anyway," said Griffin. He described the thing as a six-foot shadow that crossed the road just in front of his car and disappeared. When he looked again, it was gone.

Guessing that he in no way attributes what he saw to a Big Foot, Griffin said that he thinks a Stick Indian or forest character would be a better explanation. "I think Sasquatch is a rational creature," said Griffin. "He doesn't want to be around humans, and furthermore, I don't believe he would be down at this low of an elevation."

The "shadow" frightened him, but Griffin said he thinks it's purely coincidence that his experience is being connected to the other monster sighting.



SNEAKING AROUND — One theory of the Big Foot phenomenon is that it is really just Spilyay changing himself into Big Foot and then back into a coyote again. The above is a Kah-Nee-Ta carving done by Seattle artist Richard Beyer.

Spilyay Photo by Rangila

Editor Sid Miller also pooh-poohs the theory of a Big Foot on the reservation. He jokingly suggests that perhaps it is Spilyay changing himself into Big Foot, then back into a coyote again just to trick people.

OTHER STRANGE STORIES

Three days later — on Tuesday March 20, Gordon Scott and Roscoe Smith of Natural Resources, and Claude Smith and Milan Smith of the BIA Roads department all saw something they've never seen before.

At about 9:30 a.m., the four men observed strange puffs of dust shooting up about 50 feet in the air between Eagle Butte Grade (near Indian Head) and the Dry Creek dump. It was close to Bill Sam's place, said Scott.

"At first we thought it must be wild horses," said Roscoe, "but we looked and there weren't any horses around." The puffs of dust shot up like geysers and they stayed within a 100-yard-wide strip for about four or five miles, said the men. "It was like something traveling about 20 miles per hour," said Roscoe. Some of the puffs came up together and others were spread out, he noted.

"I couldn't figure out what it was," said Roscoe. "I've lived here all my life and I never saw nothing like that before." Gordon Scott said that when they were thinking about reporting it that Roscoe had cautioned them, "Don't call, they'll think we're batty."

"All four of us saw it, though — whatever it was," said the men. When they returned to the office, they were all in a state of curiosity, said range rider Oliver Kirk. "They didn't know what they'd witnessed."

Wednesday, when Delson Suppah heard about Russell Charley's experience, he told Spilyay Tymoo about something that happened to him, Paul Estep and Darryl Miller up by Whisky Dick's during the Mutton Mountain fire about five or six

years ago.

They had hauled some horses in and set up a camp from which to patrol the fire aftermath. But when it was time to break up the camp, Delson and Paul saw some eyes glowing about six feet off the ground. "The eyes glowed for about a half-hour, but when we shined a flashlight on them they moved," recalled Delson.

Delson described it as being kind of creepy and said that the six horses were spooked and hard to handle. He said that the horses had to be led two at a time from the corral to the truck, and that after the last two were loaded Darryl wired the gate shut.

But by the time he walked the 50 yards back to the truck and pulled it around "the gate was busted open, and that scared him," said Delson. By the time he drove to McKinley corral, he said the horses were still excited and acting up. And when he unloaded them, the racks fell off the truck, said Delson.

After that, Delson said that Darryl told his dad, Avex Miller, what had happened. According to Delson, Darryl said that Avex related a scary story about an incident that occurred when Avex was a boy. His father told him that when he was a small boy, they used to cattle ride and sleep on the ground out there at Whisky Dick's along the Deschutes.

As the story goes, a big, hairy thing that walked upright (not a bear) came into the camp and carried off one of the men. The man was later found dead and dismembered, according to the story.

When questioned about such an incident, Olney Patt, Sr. said, "I've been all around the Mutton Mountain area since 1938 — up and down the slopes, and I never did see anything like that. 'I saw some bear, but never anything like a Sasquatch.'"

Patt says he'd have to see one to believe it, or at least a photograph of one.



SEARCHING FOR SASQUATCH — Following reports of a "monster" out at Russell Charley Canyon, tribal police and Spilyay Tymoo staff combed the area for footprints. Editor Sid Miller scaled the rocks on the west side of the canyon and used his telephoto lens in the search, while tribal policeman Tony Suppah checked the other side.

Spilyay Photo by Rangila

Recruitment Opens For YCC

Applications are being accepted by Marlin Reimer at the Education Office now through May 11 for jobs with the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC).

Designed to provide summer employment for persons 15 through 20 years old, there is no restriction in the YCC in regard to race or economic background. But applicants must have an interest in the natural environment. Former employees are not eligible but can apply for a youth leader position. Former YCC participants interested in a youth leader position should apply at the camp they attended previously.

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Participants of the work-learn conservation program are introduced to environmental problems, contribute solutions and work with the management and development of public lands.

YCC staff will begin work June 11 and students will begin June 18. The 40 hours-per-week job pays \$17.40 per day, and 20 hours per week will be devoted to environmental education.

Persons interested in the non-resident program can obtain information and applications from Marlin Reimer, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 553-1121, extension 403.

Outdoor Camp Experience Offered Through Summer Audubon Scholarships

The Central Oregon Audubon Society is currently accepting applications for its annual summer scholarship program.

Following the April 30 deadline for receiving applications, the society will select recipients of funds for fees at Oregon outdoor camps and workshops in environmental, natural science and conservation studies. Central Oregon residents of junior

high school age and older are eligible.

Winners last year included students from Madras, Bend, and Prineville and adults from Redmond and Bend.

Each applicant is asked to submit a letter briefly describing the program in which the individual is interested and how the experience will relate to his or her long term goals. The appli-

cant should indicate how much financial aid is requested.

Recipients of scholarship funds are expected to report on their experiences at the September general meeting of the sponsoring organization.

Application letters should be mailed to Evelyn Slawson, 526 N.E. Burnside, Bend, 97701, by April 30.

**Pick up your 1979 fishing regulations
at the Natural Resources office in
the old Administration Building.**