



North face of Mt. St. Helens as an eruption begins on the afternoon of April 2, 1980.

USDA Forest Service Photo

Mt. St. Helens: Beauty or the Beast?

The eruption of Mount St. Helens affects each person differently. To some it is an event of a lifetime, to others it has little bearing because it does not present a personal change, and to others it is part of a continuing study of life on this ever-changing earth.

The youngest mountain in the Cascade range, St. Helens is considered, or was considered, the most beautiful of mountains because of its symmetry. But its appearance has been altered since volcanic activity commenced on March 27. The mountain now sports a crater of over 1700 feet in diameter on its northern flank.

Mt. St. Helens hasn't been one to remain silent for too many years. Its last eruption took place in April of 1857. Evidence indicates that it is only 37,500 years old, so it is a relatively youthful mountain, still growing and changing.

The reason for St. Helens activity is little understood by

scientists. The most popular theory, put concisely, is that the oceanic crust is being pushed into and under the continent producing hot spots. Pressure eventually forces the produced molten rock out an opening, thereby creating mountains.

Perhaps as Indian legends suggest, St. Helens is actually a beautiful young woman named Loo-wit who was changed into a mountain. Unexplained natural events are sometimes given a story to explain their existence.

One Indian legend tells the story of when the mountains were people. Long ago when the world was young, all the people were happy. The Great Spirit, whose home is in the sun, gave them all they needed. No one was hungry, no one was cold.

Two brothers began quarreling over land. While they were sleeping the Great Spirit transported them to a new land. One became chief of

the Multnomah people, the other chief of the Klickitat people. He built what later became known as the Bridge of the Gods across the Columbia River to encourage peace and friendship.

The tribes did not remain peaceful for long. The Great Spirit punished them by keeping the sun from shining. The people had no fire, they were cold.

The heart of the Great Spirit was softened by their prayer. He went to an old woman who had kept herself from the wrong-doing of her people and so still had some fire in her lodge.

The Great Spirit said to the woman, "If you will share your fire, I will grant you anything you wish." The old woman replied, "I wish to be young again, and to be beautiful." The Great Spirit promised.

Loo-wit, the old woman, took her fire to the bridge and kept it burning. The people saw

the fire the next morning, and soon their lodges were warm again.

A quarrel developed between Wyeast, chief from the south of the river and the Klickitat chief because both wished the affections of Loo-wit.

This time the Great Spirit was made angry by the wickedness of the people. He broke down the bridge across the river. He changed the two chiefs into mountains. Some say they continued to quarrel over Loo-wit, even after they were mountain peaks. In a volcanic struggle they caused sheets of flame to burst forth and they hurled hot rocks at each other.

Loo-wit was changed into a snow-capped peak which still has the youth and beauty promised by the Great Spirit. She is now called Mt. St. Helens. Wyeast is known as Mt. Hood and Klickitat as Mt. Adams.

What do people today think about a volcano in a nearby vicinity. Here are some

comments from those who work and live in Warm Springs.

Versa Smith: "It's exciting. It's kind of scary too, especially when you think about it. It may be a sign of the times and many of us aren't ready for it."

Arlene Berry: "It's something I get to see. It arouses my curiosity. It's a good experience. Mt. Hood could be next."

Theron Sam: "I don't worry about it; it probably won't bother us here. It might bother those working in fish and wildlife."

Dennis Shewczyk: "If I wasn't busy at Kah-Nee-Ia I'd be on my way to see it. I'd like to be camped out there to see what's happening."

Small Fire Hawk: "I'm very impressed that something so dramatic is happening in the lifetime of our children and so close. It's made for good lessons for our students. This is a tremendous, humbling type of thing."



Senior citizen representatives, Mary Ann Meanus and Wimpy Winishut, prepare an Indian meal once a month to take to the Senior citizens at Mt. View Nursing Home.

We're trying our best to please our elders

Dear Editor,

It is very difficult to acknowledge and welcome any non-member determining negligence and taking advantage of our elders through the budgets. I feel we are being judged, especially with so many living standards and ways of life imposed upon us in the past. Yet, we are still trying to catch up. I will say that in the catch-up era, it is a blessing that advertising for caretakers for the elders has not caught on and sorry if we

caused you to be embarrassed and ashamed of Warm Springs.

As for the purchasing of the merchandise, we attempt to extend our services to satisfy. However, we do have limits set by our governing body... (the people). Last but not least, we try our best but there will be some "TRIBAL MEMBERS" we cannot satisfy. For others, at least attempt to secure accurate information before a verdict is reached.

Orthella Miller