

Bits & Pieces – Issue No. 16

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This is the insignia of the Nisga'a Native people in British Columbia. They have traditions that relate to sasquatch. In the preparations for my exhibit at the Museum of Vancouver, three Nisga'a Council elders were asked to provide information on sasquatch. They shared their individual stories in a letter to the Museum. The full contents of the letter are published in my book *Sasquatch in British Columbia*.

We learn of the firm Nisga'a belief in sasquatch and that they are natural beings with paranormal abilities. The elders reported finding footprints, and sighting they and their people have had. They accept the fact that sasquatch are able to disappear.

Sasquatch are held in great reverence. They often refer to it as the "hairy man." Only those who had cleansed themselves were allowed to see it. One elder mentioned that no one has captured a sasquatch.

What can we make of this? Generally speaking, all Native information on sasquatch is essentially the same, despite their different cultures. Although we don't like to acknowledge anything associated with the paranormal, such is apparent to Native people.

John Green had to come to grips with

this. He was provided with a sighting report that stated the sasquatch virtually disappeared. He did include it in his main book and said in effect, "I wish it were not so."

When I decided on the title *Know the Sasquatch* for my book, I reason that I must provide both sides of the story. I equated exclusion of the paranormal to writing the history of the world and excluding religion. Although I just scratch the surface on paranormal belief, I definitely sensed a "cold shoulder" with professionals; only one scientist provided a report on the work. I now appreciate the depth of the politics in the scientific establishment. Scientists with a job must be very careful. If they are seen to condone a book, then it is taken that they agree with everything in the book.

I am certainly not a paranormalist, but no matter how much scientists wish the paranormal as it relates to sasquatch "were not so," it's not going to go away. Ron Morehead recently wrote to me and expressed the same thoughts I provide in B&P#14 (the Rainbow entry). In short, just because we presently don't understand something does not mean we never will. Also, yes I did write the Foreword to Kewaunee Lapsereitis', book, *The Psychic Sasquatch*. I said it is important to LISTEN to what he and others say. You don't have to believe, just listen. In the history of the world, those who did not listen have gotten us into a lot of trouble; and their successors are still doing so.

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The photo seen here of William F. Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, was taken in about 1875. It was at about that time he was brought strange relics that may have been sasquatch related. Here is what he reported:

While we were in the sand hills, scouting the Niobrara country [Wyoming] the Pawnee Indians brought into camp some very large bones, one of which the surgeon of the expedition pronounced to be the thigh bone of a human being. The



Indians said the bones were those of a race of people who long ago had lived in the country. They said these people were three times the size of a man of the present day; that they were so swift and strong; that they could run by the side of a buffalo, and taking the animal in one arm, could tear off a leg and eat it as they ran. These giants, said the Indians, denied the existence of a Great Spirit. When they heard the thunder or saw the lightning they laughed and declared that they were greater than either. This so displeased the Great Spirit that he caused a deluge. The water rose higher and higher till it drove these proud giants from the low grounds to the hills and thence to the mountains. At last ever the mountain tops were submerged and the mammoth men were drowned. After the flood subsided the Great spirit came to the conclusion that He had made men too large and powerful. He therefore corrected His mistake by creating a race of the size and strength of the men of the present day. This is the reason, the Indians told us, that the man of modern times is small and not like the giants of old. The story has been handed down among the Pawnees for generations, but what is its origin no man can say.

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In England, there is a story about “The Cats on Leigh Street.” Apparently people who lived on this street had a lot of cats. When automobiles rather quickly replaced horses, many cats were killed. Nevertheless, as time went on the number of kills decreased. People still had many cats; they were just not killed as often as previously. Eventually, the kill-rate dropped to zero. What happened here is that the cats learned, and taught their offsprings, as to the danger in crossing the street. When it is seen in certain situations that people (usually young people) have to learn something for themselves, one might say, “Well, cats on Leigh Street.”

This analogy is likely applicable to sasquatch. There are only rare instances when one is hit by a vehicle, and even then, no confirmed reports of a kill. Nevertheless, it was probably not always this way. The following is a report of a train hitting and killing a sasquatch in the 1880s. The ending is very interesting.

George Kuhn, an engineer with the Colorado & Wyoming Railway, reported that his train hit and killed a large ape-like creature along the US and Canadian border. The collision occurred at night, and at first it was thought that a moose had been hit. The impact bent the train’s cowcatcher, causing it to drag on the tracks. As a result, it was necessary to stop the train and inspect the damage. Kuhn and several workers with lanterns observed the creature entangled in the catcher, emitting a terrible stench. The workers removed the lifeless body, taking on the stench themselves, and placed it in an open flat car. Kuhn stated that while the creature was ape-like, it was structurally different from a regular gorilla or ape. It was about 8 feet tall,

covered in thick dark brown hair with light tips, and its genitalia showed that it was a male. Its teeth were human-like, but extremely wide and large, and its eyes were large and dark. It weighed at least 500 pounds. Six men were needed to lift it and put it on a flat car.

While they proceeded to repair the cowcatcher, the brakeman noticed movement in the dark forest, indicating that Natives were in the area. When ready to leave, the workers were surprised to find the body had disappeared. Footprints found around the flat car led them to believe that Natives had taken the creature (dragged it away). Hair was seen on the ground, which Kuhn recovered and since gave to a doctor friend in Michigan. Kuhn and the other workers have decided that the creature had probably escaped from a circus or sideshow. However, if this is so, just why natives took the body is a further mystery. (End)

This same sort of thing is said to have happened in British Columbia in the 1880s. A sasquatch was killed after it was lassoed and an old Native man traveled a great distance to claim the body and bury it. Moreover, in recent years, First Nations people in Canada have insisted that ancient bones of their people be returned for burial. Museums have been stripped of such bones. I recall a significant display at the Museum of Vancouver, which has long disappeared. Dr. Krantz had great problems with Natives as to an ancient skeleton found in Washington State.

All of this indicates the concern of Native people over the remains of their people, and the sasquatch is considered by them to be in that category. Make no mistake; if a Native finds a deceased sasquatch he will likely simply bury it. Turning it over to “science” would be considered a desecration. For sure, the likelihood of a Native finding a sasquatch corpse is thousands of times greater than a non-Native. The reason here is that Natives are essentially the only people in highly remote regions.

This absolutely is not going to change. Our relationship with Native people is extremely tenuous. In my opinion, their spirituality is far greater than our scientific ambitions.



Dr. Marjorie Halpin (1937–2000), University of British Columbia, provided her analysis of the Tsimshian mask seen here.



The mask was found in 1914 and is believed to have been made around 1850. The person who found the mask (Lieutenant G. T. Evans) said that it represented, “a mythical being found in the woods and called today a monkey.” The actual mask is in the Peabody Museum, Ontario. I was unable to obtain it for my Museum of Vancouver exhibit because the Niska (or Nishga) Native people (Tsimshian group) who own the mask “hold a strong belief in mountain monkeys.” The inference being that they did not want it sort of desecrated through use in a sasquatch exhibit. Here is what Dr. Halpin said:

A good way to begin is by attempting a zoological classification of the creature represented in the Peabody mask [reference here is to the museum that has the artifact]. According to physical anthropologist R.D.E. MacPhee, it does not resemble any known species of primate closely enough to be identified as a zoologically verifiable animal. It does have primate attributes, four of which are especially noteworthy: the brow ridges, the shape of the nose, the distance between the base of the

nose and the upper lip, and the prognathic, chinless lower face. The brow ridges appear from the photographs to be bow-shaped and sharply delineated from the forehead, a form replicated in many monkey species and quite unlike those of man, fossil or recent. The dished-out nose with its rounded, somewhat laterally directed nares is striking and is perhaps the best single monkey-like feature of the mask. While the large mobile upper lip is prominent in apes, it is also characteristic of numerous monkeys. The prognathism of the lower face and its lack of a chin also strongly evoke the non-human primates. Such identification is, however, counteracted by the lack of large canines, which are characteristic of every other primate except man. Comparing these and other attributes with those of both old and New World primates, McPhee concludes that, except for the absence of prominent canines, "if the mask represents a monkey, the most likely model would be found among the short-faced monkeys of the Old World."

From this information, it appears we have to conclude that a Native person in the mid 1800s happened to see a "short-faced monkey of the Old World" and made (or had made) a carving (mask) of the animal's face. He then proceeded to tell his people that a creature of this nature existed in the woods of British Columbia, and that it is sacred; resulting in a strong belief in "mountain monkeys."

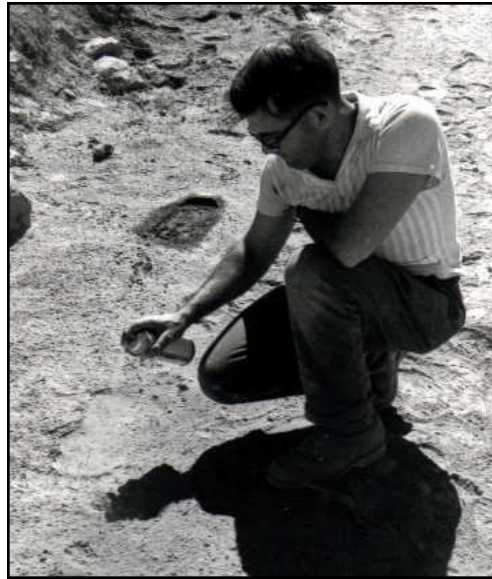
You might say, "That's ridiculous," but what other "professional" explanation can be offered? The only logical explanation is that the mask represents a sasquatch, probably the result of a sighting. The reason the Niska people call it a "monkey" is likely because that was the closest name they had for the oddity acceptable to non-Natives. They do have their own name, "Ba'oos" which literally means "ape or monkey." They also have another name, "Gyaedem gilhaoli", which means "men of the woods."

Wikipedia shows the following for Marjorie Halpin:

Marjorie Halpin (February 11, 1937 – August 30, 2000) was a U.S.–Canadian anthropologist best known for her work on Northwest Coast art and culture, especially the Tsimshian and Gitksan peoples.

It is odd (to me at least) that Marjorie with her credentials did not sort out all of this. Nevertheless, it might be reasoned that had she given sasquatch any scientific consideration she would have joined the ranks of Dr. Krantz and Dr. Meldrum.

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Royal Museum anthropologist Don Abbott is seen here glue-spraying a track to hopefully remove it intact. I discussed this in BP#6, and also discussed Abbott himself in BP#13.

Upon hearing of the death of Abbott in 2005 I wrote the following for a *Chronicle* book entry. Things changed and that book did not get published. Nevertheless, I provided the information in *Sasquatch in British Columbia* (page 393).

Victoria, British Columbia, July 28, 2005. Royal Museum anthropologist Don Abbott passed away today. Abbott played a major role in the early "bigfoot days." It was Abbott who responded to John Green's request that the museum send a professional to Blue Creek Mountain, California, in August 1967 to look at the many unusual footprints found there. When asked about his experience upon his return to Victoria, Abbott said: "I was laughing at the whole idea on the way down; now I don't think it's a subject for mirth anymore. You realize that a scientist could ruin his reputation by going out on a limb and saying the creatures exist. So I won't

say I believe in them, but I am genuinely puzzled."

As has been explained previously, Abbott was among those scientists who later saw the Patterson/Gimlin film at the University of British Columbia on October 26, 1967. Although he seemed to be receptive to the existence of sasquatch, he refrained from becoming highly involved in the issue beyond what he had done. In my opinion, he "toed the line" to avoid criticism from his peers and superiors.

I am providing this entry to impress upon you just how deep-set main stream scientific aversion to sasquatch was even in 1967. What about now, 50 years later? I think it's 50 times as severe. The main reason is, of course, that the subject has been hijacked by the Internet misfits and the media. Even US presidential candidate Mitt Romney said that a specific political issue was "a bigger hoax than Bigfoot."

It's a little hard to rationalize that what I say is the only reason for scientific concern. For every ridiculous or hoax claim there are likely 10 legitimate claims.

At one time there may have been religious objection (sasquatch may cast a shadow on creationism), but now that the theory of evolution is considered a fact (even the Roman Catholic Church does not dispute it) I don't see this as a concern any longer.

Some researchers believe there may be a "cover-up" of some sort so sasquatch research is suppressed. All I can say here is that John Green (now deceased), Thomas Steinburg, and I have never been bothered by the "men in black."

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After publication of my book *Meet the Sasquatch* (2004) Vance Orchard contacted me. Vance was a reporter (retired in 1983) for the *Walla Walla Union Bulletin* newspaper (owned by the *Seattle Times*). He had written many articles about bigfoot and was highly involved in research in the Walla Walla, Washington, region; which continued until he died in 2006.

His reason for contacting me was to express his dissatisfaction with my failure to provide a tribute to Paul Freeman in

my book. Of course, I explained things (opinions of Green, Dahinden, and Steenburg) and he told me that their concerns were totally wrong. He justified his position and then told me about the books he had written and later sent me copies.

Loren Coleman has provide a detailed website article on Orchard, which is now presented.



Vance Orchard with Bigfoot casts found in the Walla Walla, Washington State area.

Vance Orchard died March 7, 2006, in Walla Walla, Washington, after a cancer discovered just a week ago ended his Bigfoot hunting and reporting at the age of 88. Before Orchard died, he talked to me from October through December of last year, about how he wanted his "Bigfoot history," as he called it, remembered. The following is Vance's own view of his "Bigfoot" life, as he wished for it to be shared with the Bigfoot community after he died. — Loren

Vance Orchard (1917–2006) In His Own Words

As told to Loren Coleman

I was born in a small town near Colville, Washington State on December 26, 1917. I was a graduate in 1936 of Highline High School, Burien, Washington.

I started writing about the

Northwest (but not Bigfoot) beginning in my high school newspaper. I followed the craft through weekly newspapers around Seattle-Tacoma until 1951 when I moved to Walla Walla to work for the Union-Bulletin as its Roving Reporter, covering 12 counties of SE Washington and NE Oregon. I retired in 1983 and continued to write for them until 1990, when I began writing a column with the *Times of Waitsburg*, Washington.

I really don't know how many articles about Bigfoot that I have written for these two papers but I have been about the only one here writing about Bigfoot for decades.

It all started with a story in 1966 about big tracks seen near here. The 1966 Bigfoot tracks were reported by a motorcyclist riding the Tiger Canyon road which comes off the Blue Mountain peaks and joins the Mill Creek Road; [there is] a stream which runs through Walla Walla, en route to the Walla Walla River and thence to the Columbia River. Tracks were found on the Tiger Canyon Road about 15 air miles east of Walla Walla on the eastern boundary of the Mill Creek Watershed, which straddles the Oregon–Washington boundary.

The story went to the *Associated Press*, and Roger Patterson saw the story and came over to Walla Walla to check it out. I spent most of two days with Roger, in the field and at my home, and found him far from being some devious, perpetrator of nonsense that I have read in recent years. This was a year before the Bluff Creek film he shot, of course.

I wrote two books about Bigfoot, compilations largely of reports of sightings of Bigfoot in this area (*Bigfoot of the Blues*, 1993, and *The Walla Walla Bigfoot*, 2001).

My work in the Bigfoot field commenced with that time spent with Roger Patterson, and continued through the years, working in the field with Dr. Grover Krantz, Wes Sumerlin, Paul Freeman, Bill Laughery, Dr. Jeffrey Meldrum, Dr. Ron Brown, and others; often following several miles of Bigfoot tracks and other significant signs of their presence.

In the event you print something of my Bigfoot "history," please add the name of René Dahinden to those

with whom I have shared some field experiences. René came here following the first reports from Paul Freeman, and was here during some filming by TV crews. I believe from ABC's "Good Morning America."

René and I shared good rapport and exchanged several items of communication over the years. I split with him on some of his very strong views of U.S. scientists in general and one or two in particular, but I liked the way he went at things in general. This view was especially true when he took the Patterson 1967 film to Russia for scientists there to examine. This, as you know, was done and an affirmative assessment of the film and what it portrayed was given. This is somewhat forgotten, it seems in light of what we read of so much; the recent bogus claims by people who say they performed in monkey suits.

Vance Orchard chronicled Paul Freeman's quest as compelling, and discussed what Freeman found in the way of Bigfoot tracks and other evidence often. He is shown above holding Freeman's casts.

Vance's longtime friend Joe Beelart has observed: "Vance always had great faith in the early work of Paul Freeman and was a dedicated friend of Paul."

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Paul Freeman died in 2003 at the age of 60. He is shown in this photo taken in the 1990s.



I still did not provide a tribute to him in my book *Know the Sasquatch* (2010) be-

cause of continuing controversy, as explained on page 125 of this book.

Three scientists (Grover Krantz, Henner Fahrenbach, and Jeff Meldrum) have attested to the authenticity of all/some of Freeman's casts. They were all obtained in the Blue Mountains (near Walla Walla, Washington State. As far as I know, after Freeman's death, no in-depth research was done in this area. As a result, nothing more has emerged.

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