

CHEHALIS - Land of Intrigue

Back in June 2005 I participated in a CTV production entitled *Sasquatch & Bloodlines*. It is a 20 minute film about the Chehalis First Nations people and their connection with the sasquatch. Kelsey Charlie, a Chehalis Native, spoke on behalf of his people.

I have been to the Chehalis band reserve many time and provided some information on the area in my book *Meet the Sasquatch*. The entrance to the reserve is hardly an hour's drive from where I live—but that's far enough in this part of the world to be, as it were, "out there."

Chehalis never fails to intrigue me. Its history is well-steeped in sasquatch lore; even the band's insignia shows the entity (which is after frame 352 of the Patterson/Gimlin film). It was designed by Ron Austin and adopted by the band in 1980).



The road into the reserve headquarters skirts a wasteland as seen below. I have never seen anything or anyone wandering around out there, and would expect it is pretty wet and boggy. I expect (but don't know) that the ground is too wet to support large trees. It does not appear that the land was actually cleared for any purpose.



One is greeted with a couple of signs at and beyond the turnoff that takes you into the headquarters area. That imposing sasquatch logo sort of permeates the whole area giving one a feeling of being watched, especially if alone. It is a fair distance down a lonely road to the actual reservation with basically nothing but bush one each side of the road.



The band headquarters building is situated sort of in the center of the community. One can follow a road that goes in a large circle with a fair number of houses each side—all on very large lots. I once saw a tepee on one lot which was very picturesque.



UPDATE: The building seen here has now been demolished and replaced with a new, modern building at a different location.

On one trip, I inquired about wood carvings, and was told to see Rocky, a Native artist who lived just down the road. Rocky was not at home, but one of his relatives

showed me around. I inquired about a sasquatch carving and was directed to the strange carving seen under the tarp in the first photograph below (detailed or right). The explanation given me was that the sasquatch is a “shape shifter,” and in this work has been associated with a salamander. Some (probably most) Chehalis people hold the creature in reverence, giving it supernatural qualities, and therein lies the reason in their belief that the creature will never be captured. While we continue to question this aspect, all I can say is, “right so far” as we don’t have firm proof in this regard.



Just beyond the band settlement is the crystal clear Chehalis River. There are a few picnic tables in the area where I took this photo, and on a hot day it is a very refreshing spot. The clearing kind of meanders off into the forest and as you gaze into its depth, you get an apprehensive urge to wander in there.



Another carving, one in process of a tradition totem pole, intrigued me. Creating a work of that nature would be very rewarding, but you certainly have to know what you are doing.



The following photograph was given to me by John Green. It show John’s wife, June, with what appear to be large footprints. They were taken on the reservation some time ago—probably the last 1960s or early 70s. One cannot help but note the prints are in a reasonably straight line, which is characteristic of sasquatch prints. Nevertheless, small animals that hop have been known to make impressions like that—what can happen here is that the impressions melt out becoming somewhat larger. Hoaxing prints of that nature would be a tough call unless one were very tall. As you can see, the snow around the prints has not been disturbed.

When René Dahinden, my son Dan, and I went up to investigate a sasquatch sighting in 1995, I took this photograph. The canoe was very nicely crafted, and blended in with the forest as though it was simply meant to be there.



If you have the Google Earth program, search “Chehalis British Columbia” and a marker will come up showing you the location of the band headquarters. You will see that beyond the reservation there are thousands of square miles of mountains and forests into which few people have ventured. I have said before, and will say again, that intensive research into this area might be the key to fully resolving the sasquatch issue.