

Fun Fables & Mythical Creatures

By Marilyn Reeves

According to History.com, the legend of the Loch Ness Monster began on May 2, 1933 when a sighting was reported in the *Inverness Courier*. A local couple claimed to have seen “an enormous animal rolling and plunging on the surface.” Another couple claimed to have seen the animal on land. The story soon became a media phenomenon, with reporters from the London newspapers rushing to Scotland, and a reward of 20,000 pounds sterling was offered to anyone who could capture the beast.

Since then, amateur investigators have continued to swarm the area of Loch Ness, and in the 1960s sonar expeditions were sent by British universities to the lake. While nothing conclusive was ever found, some type of large, moving, underwater objects were detected. In 1975, a photo was taken of something that vaguely resembled a giant flipper. But in 1994 it was revealed that the famous 1934 photo was a complete hoax. Nevertheless, tourists and investigators alike continue to search for the legendary Loch Ness Monster.

I find myself torn between being a functioning skeptic and the little girl inside me who wants to believe in the magical, the impossible – or at least the highly improbable. When reading a story or watching a movie about a haunting, or a sighting of Big Foot, or even one of those close encounters of the third kind, I suspend my disbelief and root for the poor protagonist who so desperately wants to be believed by the naysayers like myself. “What’s wrong with all those silly people, anyway? Why don’t they believe him? There really *is* a monster in the closet!” I think at the time.

Perhaps at the heart of some of these myths and legends lies a grain of truth. After all, the general public used to nay-say the existence of gorillas, until one was finally captured. So, while I am among the worst of the doubters, I continue to hold out just the tiniest bit of hope that perhaps one day someone will capture the real Nessie, or a real Sasquatch. Or perhaps the public will be allowed to view the incontrovertible evidence of the body of an alien being that’s supposedly cloistered in Area 51 outside Roswell, New Mexico.

Wouldn’t it be nice if someone would finally unlock some of these mysteries that keep the world so intrigued? Then we could all celebrate with the rest of the true believers and say, without reservation, “Yes, Virginia, there really *is* a Santa Claus!”