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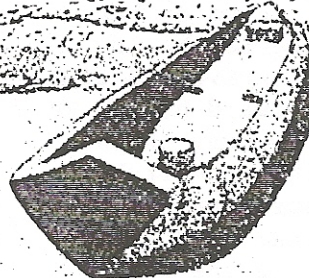
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'EXPLORING OUR HISTORY'

1997

JANUARY

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1997

TSURAI-TRINIDAD TRAILS

By: Axel R. Lindgren

After a long day, and the sun nearing the horizon, some members of the family decided to take a refreshing stroll along the beach, over to the whaling station, up to the Trinidad store, then back home via the old County Road.

The evening trek started down the cow trail, crossed Hiwy 101, continued on the cow trail to the beach a short distance south of Charlie Lindgren's Rock. After touching the beach, one of the group noticed a person sitting among the driftwood which was deposited near the vegetation line by the rough ocean waters during previous winter storms. Immediately, everyone's eyes focused on a nude woman in a sitting position with head bent, as if she was staring into the sand, and her long black hair covering her face.

Her coloring led the group to believe she was one of the local residents out for a swim. "Let's go talk with her," and they moved toward the unclothed woman. After a number of steps, they could see that their eyes had betrayed them; it wasn't a local person. In fear, the group stopped ... with fixed eyes and too afraid to turn their backs, a hasty back-pedaled retreat began until each felt it safe to turn and walk briskly away while glancing over their shoulders to make certain there was no action taken on the part of the naked woman.

After reaching Charlie Lindgren's Rock, which was about 115-yds away, the evening strollers slowed-down and reassessed this unusual experience. During this pause the naked long black-haired woman (who seemed to be of Indian descent) stood up and moved slowly toward the ocean and disappeared from sight

without ever exposing her face.

About a week later, our Aunt Alice Spott, along with her brother Robert Spott and Florence Shaughnessy (who were Dr. Kroeber's informants in the study of Yurok Indians of Northwestern California) visited her relatives in Trinidad ... and when she came to our house, this odd experience was related to her in detail. In Alice Spott's stoic style, she said "I saw a woman who answers that description walk from the breakers," (which wash the beach where the Klamath River meets the Pacific Ocean) "cross the beach and disappear into the willows." This was our introduction to the "ocean woman."

Speaking of the Klamath River, which is one of the largest, oldest, treacherous at times, and a source of the Chinook Salmon, I will attempt to describe an interesting 'visitor' to the River--whether it be annual or no, I cannot say. A large sea-serpent swims into the mouth of the Klamath and on up-stream where it becomes visible, on occasion, to some of the local natives. While interviewing one of the eyewitnesses (who lived in the Greater Trinidad Area), I determined the creature with a snake-like head was approximately 2-1/2-ft in diameter; there was no way to determine the length, as the serpent swims silently up-stream, his head 6 to 8-ft above the River's surface, turning his head from one bank to the other as if his visit had a purpose. On one of its visits, bruises were visible, indicating it gave battle to some other sea-creature.

Cont'd



In November 1960, my Dad and I decided to go buck hunting on Chaparral Mountain (which stands in the path of the airliners as they prepare their approach to the McKinleyville airport). The terrain was rough and steep, which was more time-consuming than we had anticipated. At the bottom of the ravine was a creek-bed with very little water but good-sized boulders which added to the loss of time. Needless to say, we arrived in time to start the long climb back toward home! We were in the creek-bed making our way through the boulders when I heard this high-pitch cry which I recognized, having heard many times my grandmother mimic this sound. She also had said ... "When you're out in the woods and hear this sound, you don't come back."

I looked in every direction, trying to determine from where will this monster attack! Raising my line of vision, I could see the trees bent out of proportion and, by all rights, should be breaking and falling. A sudden wind storm, moving with hurricane force, was coming at us. Before either of us could take another step, we were standing, unprotected, with tree limbs and debris falling everywhere but on us. After the initial thrust of the windstorm had passed, we weren't out-of-the-woods yet. With all the 'savvy' that two people gained in a lifetime, we managed to climb our way to safety.

Each of the preceding events seem 'mythical' in nature ... "Ocean Woman" taking 'five' on Lindgren Beach; "Sea Serpents" swimming in the Klamath River; and a sudden gust-of-wind capable of blowing down forest trees ... but, they can't be myths. Each was witnessed by people.

Axel R. Lindgren, lineal descendent, Tsurai Fifth generation by documentation.

Tsurai Village was found to be here, by early travelers, in 1620.

MEMBERS . . . Please LOOK at the date on your mailing label. Are you due for renewal in January? An addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

If you are past-due (July or October '96), we hope you will renew your membership at this time.

"Thank you" for your continued support of T-M-S ... it is much appreciated.

From: Fort Bragg Advocate-News  
March 28, 1934

## WHALING PLANT AT TRINIDAD TO BE TORN DOWN

Humboldt's one-time, far-reaching odorous plant -- the Whaling Station at Trinidad -- will soon be no more.

The station is being torn down. Two crews of men have been working on the job the past ten days and at the end of five or six days more, will have the job completed. The whaling station is estimated to have cost between \$250,000 and \$300,000 to build.

After opening and operating the plant for about six years, the California Sea Products Company finally realized that a whaling station could be operated much cheaper at sea: 1st, because a specially-built ship to follow the whaling schooner around would be less expensive; 2nd, no deodorizer would be necessary at sea; and 3rd, the refuse could be easily disposed of overboard.

In 1926 the plant was closed down but was reopened for a short period only to close again, permanently. From 1921 to 1925, about 290-cars of fertilizer (a by-product from whales) were shipped out by train. The whale caught during that period totaled 8,995-tons.

### TRINIDAD TREASURES

*I see a flash of genius  
in the sparkle of an eye  
That peeks above a small mud nest  
to scan a slice of sky.  
I glimpse a bit of heaven  
in a caterpillar's crawl  
Whose measured steps sense nothing  
of tomorrow's urgent call,  
And in symmetric gossamer  
that bridges dusty weeds  
I think I recognize the hand  
that guides these earthly needs.*

Dee Smith