ROCKS THAT LOOK LIKE ...
PEOPLE . . or . . ANIMALS . . or . . OTHER THINGS

Since the beginning of time, human beings have been interested in the supernatural, and have frequently associated it with the natural environment. This is particularly noticeable in the many instances where humans have identified likenesses of people or animals in the rocks and trees around where they lived. The likenesses vary from obvious to extremely fanciful, but many have achieved recognition far beyond their local area.

In many instances such figures have become associated with mythical or historical persons, and stories have accumulated around them. Many of them look very convincing, almost as if they are statues carved by sculptors and a bit worn by the weather. A good example is the pillar of rock on Mount Sodom, Israel. You may recall the incident in the Bible where Lot is warned by two angels from God to leave the evil cities of Sodom and Gomorrah which are soon to be destroyed because of their wickedness. "Escape for thy life, neither look behind thee," said the angels in Genesis 19, v 17. Lot obeyed and set off with his family, but his wife turned round and looked back, disobeying the order, and for her trouble was turned into "a pillar of salt". The picture is not of a pillar of salt, but it is in the right place, and the pinnacle of rock certainly looks like someone who has been "petrified"!

But there’s no need to travel to foreign lands to see rocks which, with a little touch of imagination, might resemble human figures. We have some of these quite close to home, at Island Cove, near Bottle Cove.

In this picture of the entrance to Island Cove, there are two relatively small rock pinnacles marked by black asterisks. It is not difficult to imagine that these two might appear like human or almost-human figures standing guard as sentinels over the entrance to the Cove. Having arrived at such a thought, it is only a short step further to attributing them with some kind of supernatural powers protecting the Cove. And having assimilated this idea, it would be equally easy to develop around them a mythology which could become more and more complex with the passage of time, especially if the Cove was the home of a superstitious or fearful people who might feel threatened by the sea, or by enemy invasion.

The two smaller pictures at left clearly illustrate how the grotesque appearance of these rocks could quite easily render them figures of fear for a community with no knowledge of the geological forces which had made them as they are. Local legends may well have grown around these if the area had been inhabited since the distant past as was the case in other parts of Canada.

1. For more pictures of “Lot’s Wife” visit: http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=lot%27s+wife&qpvt=lot%27s+wife&FORM=IGRE
But of course not all weirdly-shaped rocks look like people. Some may remind us of animals, and some even of monsters. We have one of those at Bottle Cove, too. Here he is, waiting on his rock, guarding his cave at the entrance to Bottle Cove.

He may have been there for years . . . centuries . . . millennia . . . perhaps since the dawn of time itself. But why?

*Can you invent a story to explain his patience, and why he does it?*

*To see more of Bottle Cove and Island Cove, come and visit.*