

WELCOME TO THE STRANGEST
PLACE ON EARTH...

SEEKING
OUT THE
SKINWALKER

[By April Slaughter]



Extraordinary things often happen in the most ordinary places. In a remote area of Northeastern Utah, one such place has reportedly been host to paranormal phenomenon in nearly every form. To look at it, nothing extravagant or unique would likely catch your attention and you'd probably drive by it none the wiser to what has occurred within its perimeter. This is the Skinwalker Ranch, and visitors are not welcome.

I was born and raised in Utah, spending a majority of my adolescent life roaming around the desert, mountains, lakes and rivers abundant all throughout the state. Duchesne County and I were no strangers either, as members of my extended family called it home. I spent many a summer among the sagebrush-ridden hills and copper colored sand imagining it to be another world entirely. Little did I know at the time that in many ways it was. It wasn't until I attended a local MUFON meeting in Salt Lake City late in 2006 that I was introduced to the Skinwalker Ranch, and since that day my intrigue with it has grown significantly. I purchased a book called *Hunt for the Skinwalker* by Colm A. Kelleher, Ph.D. & George Knapp that had been showcased at the meeting, and off I went to learn more about the ranch for myself. All of my life it had been there, and yet I had never heard of it. The spark of intrigue now urged me to learn more about the ranch and the alleged events occurring within its perimeter.

According to a three part series of articles authored by George Knapp (and predating the book), local area residents have been reporting interesting, even frightening experiences in the Uintah Basin for decades. Everything from cattle mutilations, to UFO sightings, ghostly activity, and encounters with Sasquatch have all been reported and documented. It is suspected that nearly half, if not more of the area's population has at one time or another seen unexplained objects flying in the sky. Finding individuals willing to talk about it, however, may be quite a feat. The Ute Indians native to the area consider the 480-acre property to be 'the path of the skinwalker' – creatures thought to be powerful

brought his family to the ranch in 1994 when he purchased the property to raise cattle. Prior to their arrival, the ranch had been vacant for nearly eight years. Upon moving into the house, the Gormans took note of the many bolts found on all of the windows and doors, as well as the peculiar arrangement of iron stakes with heavy duty chains hooked to them just outside. What had made these bizarre security measures necessary?

Day one on the ranch provided the Gormans the very first of many strange experiences they would encounter over their time there. What can only be described as a larger than normal wolf had reportedly been spotted out in the pasture, and the family watched intently as it cautiously approached them. Ed Gorman, Tom's Father, stood over six feet tall and this animal's back came up to his chest. As it had been raining earlier in the day, the family noted the unique scent of a wet dog emanating from the animal. While the wolf had initially seemed harmless, it quickly turned its attention to a calf in the adjacent corral which it violently tried to extract by latching onto its snout and pulling it through the corral bars. The family stood horrified, until Ed and Tom attempted to halt the situation by repeatedly hitting the animal with sticks. When this failed to stop it, Tom fetched a .357 Magnum from his truck and shot the wolf at point-blank range. Amazingly, the animal did not even seem fazed by this attempt at his life. After a couple more shots with the gun, the calf was released but no apparent injury to the wolf had been sustained. The blood expected to follow several gun-shot wounds was nowhere to be found. Gorman fired two more rounds, one of which tore a small piece of flesh from the ani-

"...creatures thought to be powerful shape-shifting spirits brought to the land by the Navajos as a curse on the Utes."



shape-shifting spirits brought to the land by the Navajos as a curse on the Utes. This land is strictly forbidden to them and tribe members never set foot on it. Tom Gorman (not his real name)

mal and the other apparently persuaded it to casually retreat into a nearby thicket. The wolf was followed but disappeared and was never found. In the two years that followed, the Gormans saw a wide range of unidentifiable animals on the property. Other experiences would suggest that the family repeatedly witnessed the appearance of a Sasquatch-like animal, otherwise known as Bigfoot during their time living on the ranch.

One particular visitor to the ranch was meditating when a large blurry object moved from within the trees across the pasture in mere seconds to where he was, letting out an extremely loud and terrifying roar. Tom and his son had witnessed the event and described the object as almost transparent and akin to the being seen in the movie *Predator*. The man was so frightened by this experience that he quickly left the property and has not returned.

Strange animals were not the only source of fright or frustration. Pastures would be entirely lit up at night without explanation and shafts of light were reported coming up from the ground. Sounds of what they

described as heavy machinery being used came from beneath the earth and inexplicable voices held conversations in an unknown language twenty or so feet in the air above their heads. Tom Gorman would often find large amounts of soil missing in areas throughout the property, as if someone or something were cutting perfect concentric circles into the ground.

Objects in the sky began appearing to the family in the Spring of 1995. One evening, Tom and his nephew went out to check on the cattle when they spotted what they initially thought was a recreational vehicle parked on the property. The closer they moved to the vehicle, the further it began to move away from them. Tom described this object as being refrigerator-shaped and witnessed it fly over the trees making absolutely no sound at all as it departed. By 1996, several inexplicable spheres had been seen, most commonly blue in color though orange spheres had been seen as well. The blue spheres seemed to affect the family's emotional responses and instantly caused a great deal of fear in them when spotted.

It wasn't until May of 1996 that one particular encounter convinced the family it was finally time to sell the ranch. One evening, another of the blue spheres appeared and Tom encouraged the three family dogs to pursue it. They were led into the trees bordering the pasture and were no longer within Tom's site when he heard three yelps followed by an immediate silence. The dogs did not return. Tom went looking for the animals the very next morning, only to find three round spots with a black greasy lump sitting in the middle of each one. He had assumed the dogs had been incinerated.

These events understandably caused a great deal of distress for the Gorman family, as it upset their lives almost daily. Nothing seemed to be consistent or on any discernable schedule. The family's livelihood hinged on the successful raising of quality high-end cattle. This ambition became difficult as the Gorman's began to find several of the animals dead and mutilated. Cuts made with apparent surgical precision and the lack of blood at each would suggest these particular mutilations tie in with others reported throughout North America for decades.

One afternoon in April, Tom and his wife were leaving the ranch to run some errands. Upon passing the corral where their four 2,000 lb prize bulls were held, Mrs. Gorman made mention of the devastation they would experience should anything happen to them. When they returned to the property, the bulls were not where they had left them. In a frantic search for the animals, Tom decided to take a look inside a large metal trailer housed in the corral. With only one available door that was clearly still secured with thick metal wire, there was no logical explanation for what he would find. Inside were all four of the bulls, packed in as tightly as you could imagine. When Tom yelled to his wife that the animals had been located, the bulls began to kick violently inside as if they had been startled from a deep trance-like state. How had the bulls been placed in the trailer without disturbing the wire closure or the cobwebs still intact on the inside of the door? Had something or someone overheard Mrs. Gorman's comment and set out to deliberately play with them?

Strange occurrences were not only common in the pastures of the ranch, but also within the walls of the Gorman family home. Family members reportedly witnessed doors and windows that would open and slam shut all on their own. On one occasion, Mrs. Gorman had returned home from a shopping trip with a large amount of groceries to sort and put away. Once this task was completed, she stepped into the other room for a couple of minutes only to return to see that all of the items were placed back onto the kitchen table. Oftentimes, items would inexplicably go missing from within the locked bathroom as Mrs. Gorman showered.

Tom Gorman's son was instructed to move a one-tone pile of cord wood on the south side of the tree line. This was not an easy feat and took a considerable amount of time to complete. In a thirty minute window he had taken to rehydrate, the entire pile had somehow been moved and restacked 100 yards away on the south side.

Like many people experiencing paranormal phenomena, the Gorman family grew hesitant to talk about the high strangeness that had become part of their daily lives on the ranch. The sorts of things they had endured surely had some logical explanation, but what was it?

"Oftentimes, items would inexplicably go missing from within the locked bathroom as Mrs. Gorman showered."

They were a family working hard to make a living and were respected members of the community, not prone to making up wild stories to garner attention. In fact, they didn't want attention at all.

In the summer of 1996, successful Las Vegas businessman Robert Bigelow heard about the events occurring in this remote area of Northeastern Utah. Mr. Bigelow is the founder of The National Institute of Discovery Sciences (NIDS); a research organization employing highly educated professionals to study paranormal phenomena. What would become of his visit to the Gormans and their property? Would evidence that a strange force existed or cohabitated on the ranch be discovered? The story continues in Part II of Seeking Out the Skinwalker.

NOTE: The ranch is PRIVATE PROPERTY. Any attempt at gaining access is strongly discouraged, as trespassers will be prosecuted.

Resources:

Hunt for the Skinwalker by Colm A. Kelleher, Ph.D. & George Knapp

Path of the Skinwalker by George Knapp (3 part series of articles published in the Las Vegas Mercury)

<http://www.aliendave.com/>

An Irish Book of Shadows
by Katharine Clark
"A highly practical 175-page and Don Campbell's edition of Clavic, Grimoire and Spells."

Graven Images Oracle
by Natalie Zeman and Katharine Clark
"Stand above the rest." - Raymond Buckland, author of Witchcraft from the Inside

available now from
galdepress.com
and
amazon.com

Graven Images Oracle kit contains 71 cards, 139 page book and velvet pouch, \$26.95
An Irish Book of Shadows, \$18.95

for FREE online readings visit
gravenimagesoracle.com

PARANORMAL
Source
EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES

