

In Search of the Talking Moose?

Who is the Talking Moose? Where did he come from? How did he get here? What does he want from us? Is Steve Halls the only person to see a Talking Moose in the flesh? Why did Steve write the Talking Moose program? Why is Baseline publishing it? What is the Talking Moose philosophy? Why does the Talking Moose like Macintoshes? What does a Talking Moose eat? Is the Talking Moose connected to UFOs? Why are there so many questions in this introduction?

These questions and more we will try to answer tonight on... In Search of the Talking Moose.

Where did the Talking Moose come from?

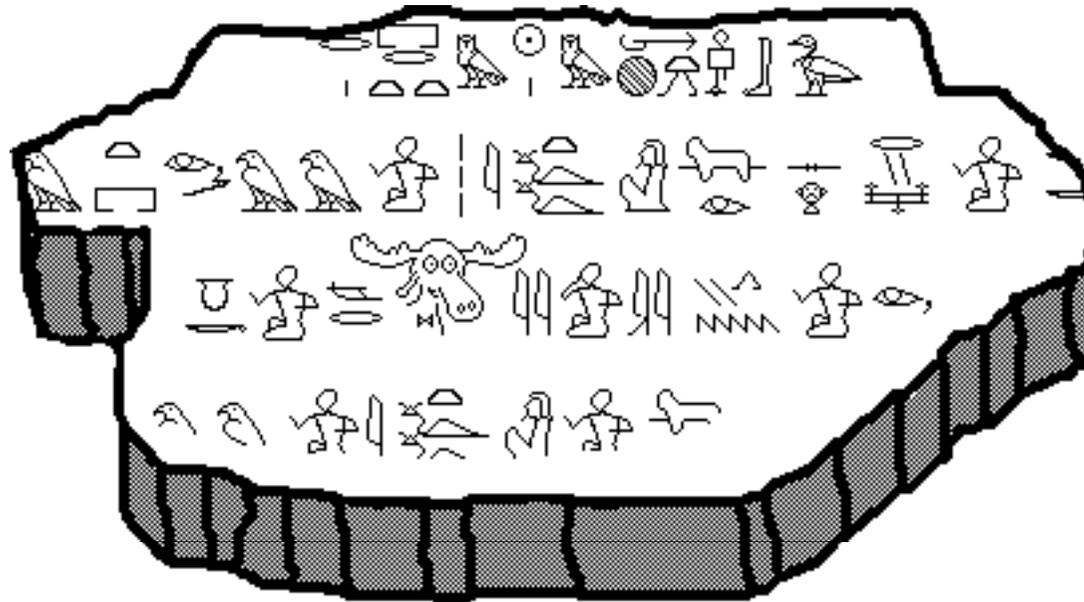
Scientists are at a loss to explain the exact origins of the Talking Moose. In fact, only in the past few years have some members of the scientific community come to accept the Talking Moose as a reality. The meager data collected so far seems to indicate that there were once huge herds of carnivorous moose shaped dinosaurs that roamed the earth. Named TyrannaMoosus Rex (“Thunder Moose King”) by an obscure Canadian paleontologist these dinosaurs were responsible for many of the practical jokes that were played on unsuspecting herbivores in the Jurrasic era.



The links between the ancient Moose-lizard and the modern day Talking Moose are tentative at best. Some archaeologists suggest that the thunder mooses foresaw the coming of the ice ages, disappeared into a large cave in New Jersey, and left a wake up call for the morning. If they did, then they have overslept.

The next suggestion of the Talking Moose comes from the burial chamber of an ancient Egyptian king, Ra-Moos-ese. Ra-Moos-ese's tomb was discovered by a curious Egyptian shepherd in 1920 when he noticed that a herd of elk would gather every June 23 at an old watering hole. When the boy told the local authorities they didn't believe him because elk are not native to Egypt. Finally, the young lad contacted the Canadian consulate of Egypt and they agreed to examine his claim.

The old watering hole turned out to be the partially destroyed burial crypt of the aforementioned Ra-Moos-ese. Over the door appeared the inscription, “Enter not here or thou whilst be followed be that which walks



...and the moose did grin and the carp and the antelope and the fruit bats and the anchovies did feast upon (untranslatable) by the great river...

...and the moose said, "One. Thou shalt say hello in the morning. Two. Thou shalt say goodbye in the evening. Three. Thou shalt crack jokes in the between." And the animals did look upon him and they saw his bow tie was red and the great king gurgled for a while and was glad.

Heady stuff indeed!

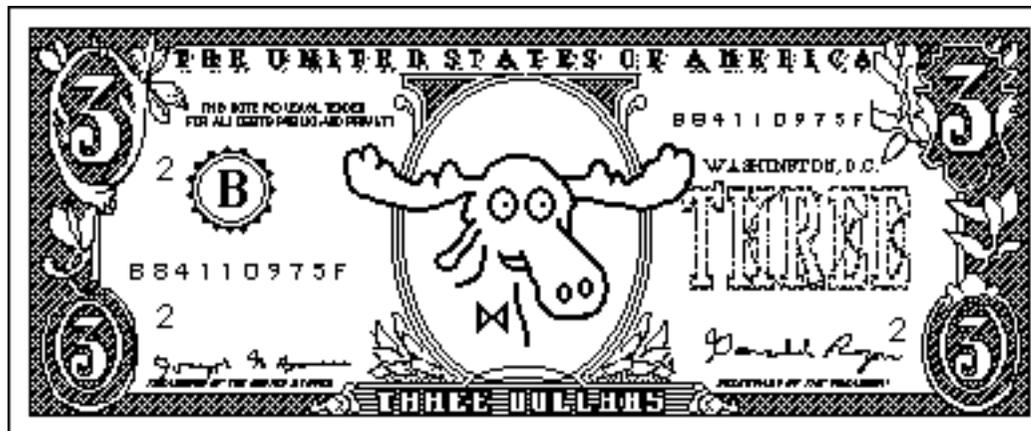
In a tragic side note, every member of the expedition died within a few years of each other under mysterious circumstances. The only clue to the unexplained deaths was a note one of the members of the expedition had scribbled shortly before his death. "Beware the Moose," was all it said.

The next hint of the secret moose subculture comes from pre revolutionary France. Apparently an minor nobleman by the name of Jean Louis Moosé took it upon himself to design monuments to his king. Sadly, Jean Louise was neither an enlightened nobleman nor a good designer. His one work, "L'Moosé," was destroyed during the French revolution. Jean Louis was found guilty of crimes against the state and was deported to the new French colony in Canada.

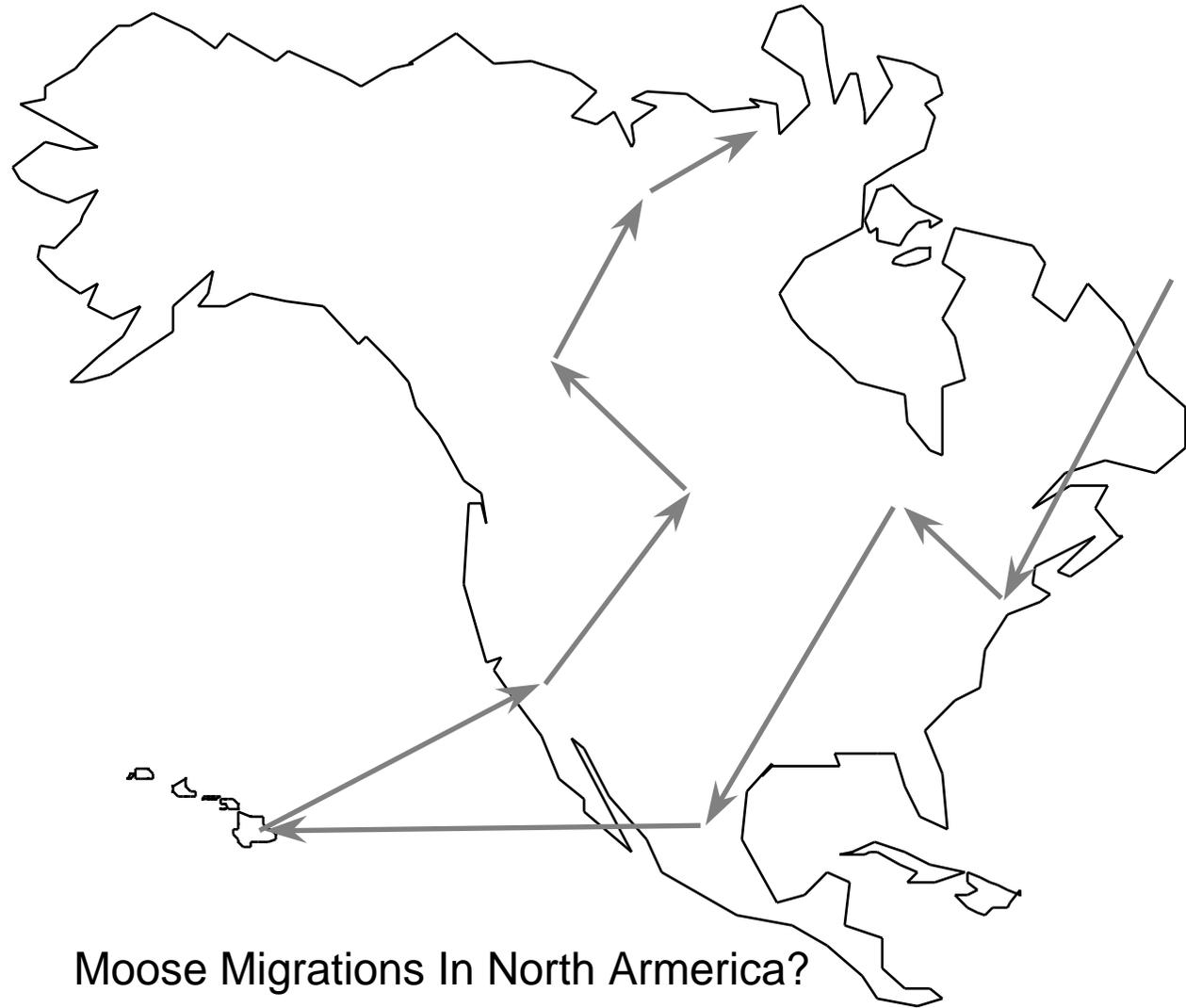


Jean Louis, a broken man, spent his last days wandering the cold Canadian countryside repenting his ways by protesting against the booming fur trade. His last words were, “L’œuvre c’est rien - l’Moosé c’est tout!” (The work is nothing - the Moose is everything!)

Only until the late 1920's did the elements of the moose culture penetrate the United States of America. At that time the US. was in the grip of the great depression. Times were very tough on humans, let alone mooses.

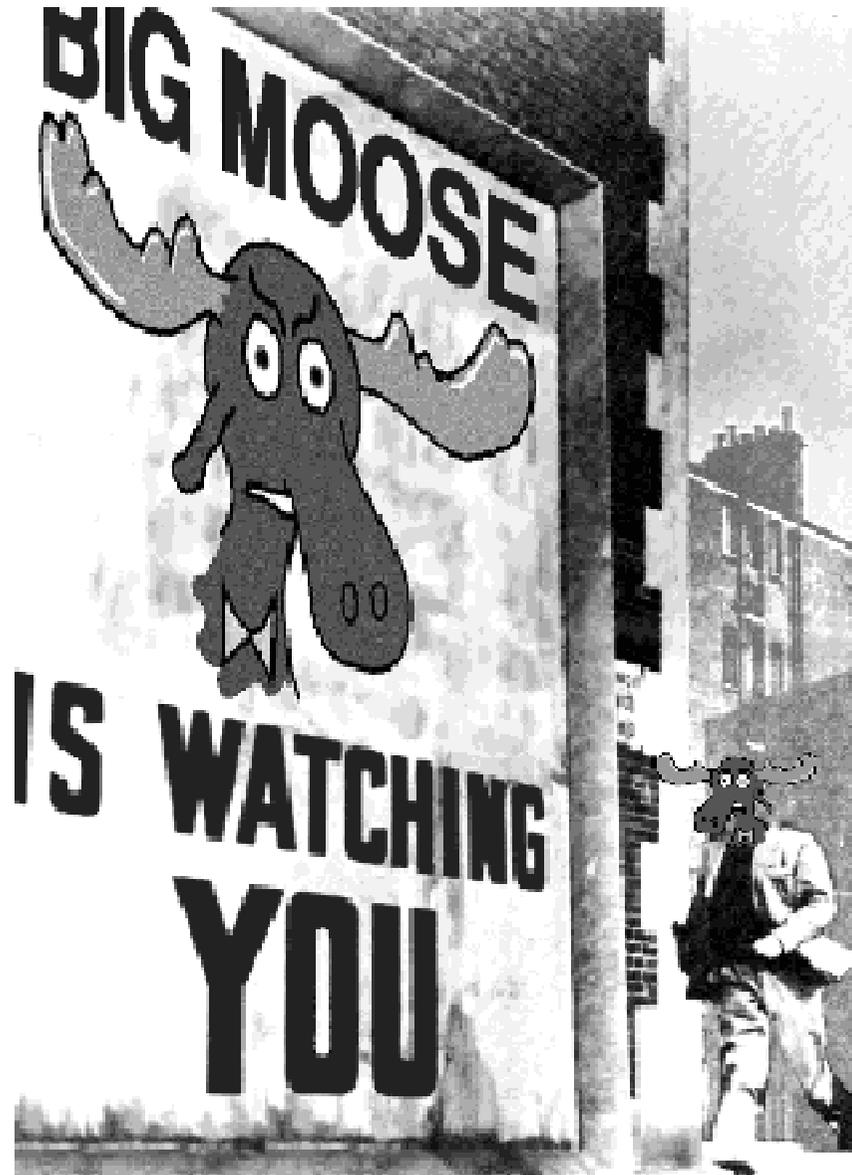


In an attempt to revitalize the economy, the treasury department came up with a plan to adjust the monetary balance in a novel manner. They believed that the issue of a new \$3 bill sporting the profile of a moose would allow the government to issue as much money as it needed to pay debts while never having to worry that anyone would ever actually spend the money! The bills were almost ready to go into production when,



Moose Migrations In North Armerica?

The journey was long and difficult and they did not arrive in Hollywood until the early 1960's. Luckily the mooses came at an auspicious time; talking animal shows were the rage. The Talking Mooses were immediately scooped up by the William Moosis Talent Agency and started acting in bit parts in such great films as *Treasure of the Sierra Moose*, *Mr. Moose Goes to Washington*, *Mars Needs Mooses*, and *Dial 'M' for Moose*. But the Mooses had their eyes set on greater things. Rumors had been circulating that a major TV series was being planned featuring a talking hoofed animal. The best and the most humorous mooses, with highly polished antlers, attended the tryouts. After a day filled will hoof-biting agony the results of the auditions were posted; the top contenders were the mooses and the horses.



The horses immediately recognized the threat posed by the fun loving, gregarious mooses and hired the Wilbur and Ed Detective Agency to dig up some dirt on the mooses. The detectives were brutally thorough in their investigation. They revealed to the Screen Animals Guild (SAG) that the mooses could not prove they were native US. citizens. The SAG had no choice but to bar the mooses from acting. Once again the mooses had to seek new tundra to roam.

Shortly after the Moose herd left Hollywood a mysterious fire broke out at MGM (Moose Golden Manor) Studios which destroyed the complete archives of Moose films. Only a few publicity stills remained to

Often as a child he had read the dime store comics about programmers, *C-Man*, *Blaze Pascal - Programmer Extrordinaire*, and the famous coding team *Object X*. Steve studied the craft well, and in '84 he began practicing in his spare time.

Steve also was courting the woman of his dreams, Jenny. She was an attractive, mysterious beauty that was the most precious jewel of her family. For Steve to win her hand in marriage he had to perform a great feat. Therefore Steve packed up his Macintosh and camping equipment and headed for the forbidding northern waste. He didn't have a clear idea of what he would do, but he felt that somewhere out in the snow his destiny or a good case of frostbite was waiting.

Steve traveled over glaciers. Steve forded freezing rivers. Steve climbed a mountain once and his Mac experienced dangerous power fluctuations from the Aurora Borealis!

One day he came upon a large ice cave in a glacier. The cave looked like a typical home that a solitary moose would live in, if you ignored the TV, stereo, VCR, and refrigerator stocked with beer. In the center of a cave was a moose looking very mournful. Steve was impressed and a bit curious. He began examining the moose with his medically trained eyes.

Once the Moose understood what Steve was doing he cooperated. The moose used his hoof to point to his mouth and wade a hideous sound similar to Ethel Merman underwater. "Aha," Steve exclaimed, "you have a frog in your throat!" The moose nodded enthusiastically.

With the skill that would make strong surgeons cry and weak orthodontists faint, Steve removed the offending frog from the moose's throat. The moose pranced for joy and opened his mouth, said "Good day, eh?" and told a joke! Steve was stunned! Then the moose told another joke. Steve began to giggle. The moose told another and another. Steve was rolling on the floor. The frog put on a fur coat and left for Florida in a huff.

The moose told jokes for three straight days. Then he introduced himself. Steve had met a Talking Moose!

The moose was eternally grateful for Steve's assistance. Apparently the moose had been banished from his herd because he couldn't tell any jokes. Now that he was freed of his affliction he could return to the herd and claim his rightful hereditary title as JokeMaster! But before he would return, he said, he would perform a favor for Steve.

Steve was at a loss for what kind of favor a talking moose could perform for him. He explained to the moose about Jenny, his heroic quest, and his love of Macintosh programming. The moose was very interested in the Macintosh. "I sure hope it isn't like an IBM. My father tried telling some jokes to an IBM executive in Scranton, PA. That was a real mistake."

Steve carefully removed the Macintosh from the special cold weather case and plugged it into the cave socket next to the lava lamp. Steve attempted to show the moose how user-friendly Macintoshes were. The moose was not moved. "If it was real friendly it would tell jokes like me," he said. "Well, it hasn't been around long enough to get that sophisticated," Steve explained. "Too bad, a computer that could tell a good joke would make the world a nicer place," the moose mused.

That night while Steve was warmly wrapped in his sleeping bag he had a dream. In the dream Jenny was at his side while they watched a parade in front of their log cabin. The parade was composed of humans and Talking Mooses walking hand in hoof, the line stretching into infinity. Dramatically, like in some Cecil B. DeMille film, the visage of the great Woz appeared over the parade. He fixed his eyes upon Steve and said, "Write a program - Change the world!" Steve felt himself filled with the power of creativity. "Yes, I can do it," he cried, "I can change the world!"

In the morning he told the moose how he wanted to give the gift of humor to the Macintosh. He said he

Steve began to get more and more desperate. His time was running out. He began to try more and more risky programming techniques. "Power. I need more power," he would mutter to himself. He installed a lighting rod on the roof of his home and connected them to huge capacitors. He wired a colander to the head of the moose, ran the wires through a fax machine, and terminated the phone line to the SCSI port of his Mac. That night there was terrific lightning storm.

The air crackled with unseen energies. There was a smell of ozone. "Now I must reverse the polarity," Steve chortled. He closed a massive switch. Then...

...a giant bolt of lightning struck the rod...

...there was a blinding flash...

...there was a deafening crash...

...there was a numbing jolt...

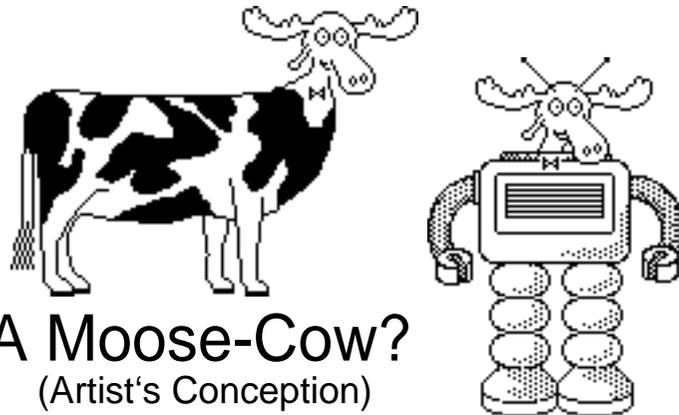
...and there was blackness.

Steve regained consciousness. His laboratory was a shambles. There was no sign of the moose. He hung his head in defeat. A small voice came from his Mac, "Hey, get back to work!" And there on his Mac was a funny Talking Moose! "He lives, yes, yes, he lives," he cried.

Like any good programmer, the first thing Steve did was back up his drives.

This moved pretty quickly after this point. Jenny and her family saw the great work he had done and they were finally married. The moose wasn't dead or zapped into the Mac. He had decided to go home because Steve was taking things a bit too seriously with that last experiment. Steve got a postcard from his moose friend explaining the disappearance. The moose was happily back with his herd and waiting for royalty checks. Steve's life has pretty much settled down since then.

Steve tells me that the Talking Mooses are still out there, waiting for the time that humankind is ready to accept them. So take your Talking Moose a cherish him, he is their ambassador to our world. And on cold winter nights, if you believe strongly enough and listen carefully, you will hear the sound of laughing mooses far off in the distance. And if you have a good sense of humor, you will laugh too.



A Moose-Cow?
(Artist's Conception)