

Eye of God / Crystal Mountain

From Wikipedia

The Eye of God (Serrano: **Hatauva**)^[1] is a quartz dome which is a landmark in the Baldwin Lake area near Big Bear City, California. It is a megalith which is a sacred tribal landmark for the native Yuhaaviatam "People of the Pines," a clan of Serrano people who have lived in the region for at least 2,000 years.

The Serranos worshipped the dome, which they referred to as the eye of their creator Kruktat (Kokitach).^{[2][3]} It is where the Serrano's creation narrative takes place.^[4] The Serrano Indians still hold the place sacred and believe God's spirit remains here.^[5] Legend says God was watching to make sure the Indians treated one another well. Originally a full dome, it was dynamited during 1940's.^[6]

Their creation stories involve a God, Kruktat, who created the People. After falling ill, Kruktat journeyed to the mountains where he lay dying in a bear cave. Tended by the First People, he was taken to Maktsuk, today called Pan Hot Springs, where he was bathed by human caretakers. Knowing he was dying, Kruktat instructed the People to cremate him and protect his body from Coyote, who eats dead things. Kruktat died near present-day Baldwin Lake. During the cremation the eye of Kruktat flew out and became a giant snow quartz megalith known as Aapahunane't, or God's Eye. Coyote snuck through the bowed legs of bear and snatched Kruktat's heart in his mouth. The people hit Coyote, and as he ran into the mountains above Baldwin Lake, the dripping blood turned the rocky soil red. When the creator died the people mourned and their tears turned into pine trees, the area called Yuhaaviat. The nuts from the trees became food for the Yuhaaviatam, or People of the Pines.^[7]

From Big Bear News

When the Serrano Indians used local mountains as a summer residence between 2,000 and 2,500 years ago, they were known as The People of the Pines. They were skilled basket weavers and pottery makers, and they worshipped a huge dome of brilliant white quartz as the eye of their creator, "Kruktat", calling it "God's Eye". It was perched above present day Baldwin Lake, and it's said that "They took comfort in knowing His watchful gaze looked out at them as they went about their daily lives in the valley." Legend also has it that Kruktat's blood created the red hillsides on the northern border of the lake, in the vicinity of the two other sacred Serrano landmarks in our area: Pan Hot Springs at Paradise Way and the Cold Springs in Shay Meadows.

In the middle of the 19th century, valley ranchers chased the Serranos out of the area, leaving God's Eye exposed on its perch. When the California gold rush brought miners to Big Bear, they dynamited the sacred site in a fruitless search for gold. No gold was found, and irreversible damage had been done.

Its remnants are still a sacred tribal landmark, though, and what's left of the dome still gleams in the sun at the east end of the valley. From far away, the quartz outcropping looks mostly white, but on closer inspection, it contains multicolored patterns.

Part-time local resident Ian James Murphy produced a half-hour documentary called "God's Golden Eye", that goes into the site's history and its significance today. It includes interviews with Native Americans, and representatives of the mining industry, the Big Bear Discovery Center and the Big Bear Valley Historical Museum, which helps keep legends like God's Eye alive by preserving local history.