

Are UFOs surveying the Elk County area?

By W.R. Peterson
Ridgeway Record
Editor

Another sighting of mysterious lights in the sky over Alaska, the second in the short space of two months, has resurrected interest in UFO's (Unidentified Flying Objects) which may or may not be carrying little green men from Mars.

Both sightings, one which showed on radar and one which did not, were reported by Captain Kenji Terauchi, veteran JAL Boeing 747 cargo pilot, who said he believed there may be a natural explanation for the latest phenomenon.

Despite Terauchi's acceptance that the lights might be a trick of nature, the FAA is broadening its investigation into the strange lights over Alaska's vast northeastern arctic expanses while maintaining that it is not a UFO hunt but a safety probe of the region's airspace.

UFO's sightings are not uncommon and the majority of those reporting these heretofore unexplained phenomena, firmly believe that visitors from outer space are making regular visits to our planet. While we have yet to uncover any firm evidence of such visits, neither have we completely explained away the possibility that they may have actually taken place.

The Pennsylvania Association for the study of the Unexplained, a statewide clearinghouse for reports of UFO sightings and other phenomena, have compiled an interesting account of sightings in Pennsylvania in past

years.

The Record contacted Sam Gordon, director of the Greensburg, Pennsylvania based Association to inquire if any UFO sightings had ever been reported in *The Record's* circulation area.

According to Mr. Gordon two sightings were reported in Ridgeway in 1984. On March 19 of that year, a bright orange globe was seen moving from N.W. to N.E. The lights were visible for four minutes before disappearing over the horizon.

On April 8, a bright object with two yellow lights was reported in the Bear Creek area.

In 1985 Mr. Gordon noted that on January 8th, two multi-colored lights came from two directions and joined together over Punxsutawney before moving out of sight.

On June 21 that same year at a few minutes after midnight, two witnesses reported seeing a very large elongated white glowing object with six blue non-blinking lights. The object was about 100 feet off the ground, and only about 150 feet from the observers. Oddly enough, similar objects were reported that same night from Fayette, Somerset and Allegheny Counties in Pennsylvania and from various sections of West Virginia.

On October 18th of last year, several DaBois residents reported objects in the sky that were flashing bright colors of red, blue and green. This case was attributed to what is known as refraction and dispersion while watching bright stars on a clear night. This effect can cause a star or planet to

twinkle, change colors, and appear to move up and down, change in density and temperature of the atmosphere can add to this effect.

One of the most interesting sightings was reported in the Smethport (McKean County) area October 14, 1984.

At 9:55 p.m. on that date, Gordon revealed, the witness, a female, was walking her dog when she noticed flashes of light on the ground and looked up thinking the light on the upper corner of her house was going bad. To her surprise, she saw an unusual illuminated object floating at a slant with her house roof and as close to the roof as possible without touching it. The object dropped down towards the ground and remained about 25 feet above the terrain as it moved over trees and other obstacles before ascending and moving out of sight over a group of trees. The object made no sound.

Gordon said the next day the woman woke up with a severe headache and sore throat and observed an unusual black soot on the floor of her house which when she touched it, stung her hand. The substance was tested in a laboratory and found to be biological in nature but not a pollen, seed or the product of fungi or bacteria. It was speculated that the "unknown object" passing overhead could have been responsible for sufficient disturbance to the trees to stimulate a "soot shower". The residue was proven to be natural but the quantity and circumstances of the case are at best, unusual, Gordon said.

Hundreds of sightings are reported each year, Gordon said and offered the following documented incidents as proof.

On the night of August 31, 1986, numerous travelers on Route 119 near New Staughton, Westmoreland County, observed a large object in the sky

with multiple yellow-green lights. The object was first thought to be an aircraft in trouble and about to crash as it came closer to the ground. Several persons climbed the steep embankment to assist at the crash site but there was no wreckage, only two small circular areas of fire which were quickly extinguished.

It was later learned that the strange object had been seen by many persons in the area, first near Connellsville moving in the direction of Uniontown. It was described as elongated and about 50 feet in length with a distinct domed structure at the top. Numerous bright lights covered the object which made no sound while moving through the area.

January 7—Small metallic disc shaped object was seen hovering over the Birmingham Bridge in downtown Pittsburgh about 11:20 p.m.

January 23—In Slickville (Westmoreland County). There were several cases early in 1986 indicating a military interest in some UFO cases in western Pennsylvania. On this night, residents saw a large triangular object with numerous lights maneuvering in the area. A short time later, three military jets proceeded to chase the object in the direction of Pittsburgh.

February 28—At New Castle in Lawrence County, a solid appearing elliptical object, with four long proboscis, and described as being the size of a house, was seen hovering low in the sky.

March 25—Dowington in eastern Pennsylvania. A large triangular object approached head on with a car

in the early morning hours, hovered over and around the vehicle and followed in down the road for a short distance before moving off.

In late May, numerous observers in the Harrisburg area, reported a huge triangular shaped object with many lights that was said to be larger than a C-5A transport aircraft. It made no sound as it passed low over the area.

August 12—Two daylight sightings of a similar object are reported. The firsts about 8:30 a.m. near Morenoville and the second later that afternoon near Mt. Pleasant. Both were the same bright silver elongated object which was viewed at close range for several minutes.

UFO's are not the only strange phenomena reported by Pennsylvania residents. On October 30 at Latrobe, residents reported "something" had been breaking down their new electric fence built to hold their horses. On October 30, three large footprints were found nearby. A PASU investigator made a cast of the best track. It was 13 inches long and 8 inches wide which compared favorably with a cast made of a Bigfoot track in 1973 near Greensburg. Residents also reported hearing strange noises and finding rabbits and cats with their necks broken.

And finally, Gordon said several cougar have been sighted throughout the state. Some witnesses have even reported cubs. This despite the fact that the animal has been declared extinct in the Eastern portions of the United States.

