

Jan. 7, 1987 CR: S. Gordon

UFOs perplexed local experts all through past year

By The Standard Observer

Numerous travelers on Route 119 near New Stanton saw it. So did people in Connellsville and Uniontown.

On the night of August 31, 1986 a large elongated object with a metallic surface, a distinct dome-shaped structure at the top and numerous bright lights was observed in a 10-mile area.

The object was first thought to be an aircraft in trouble, about to crash, as it came closer to the ground in New Stanton. Motorists approaching the area noticed a hillside on fire and several stopped, climbed a steep bank to assist at the crash site but found only two small circular areas of fire.

The incident is only one of hundreds of cases reported by residents of Westmoreland County and Pennsylvania during 1986 to the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained (PASU) based in Greensburg.

The association is an all volunteer, non-profit scientific research group which conducts first-hand studies of alleged UFO sightings and other strange occurrences throughout the state.

PASU received over 300 reports on various sightings from 28 counties in the state during 1986. The majority concerned sightings of UFOs but other strange encounters were also reported.

Those sightings include sightings of a cougar (mountain lion), an

animal declared extinct in the East since the late 1800s. There have also been reported sightings of Bigfoot, the tall, hairy apelike creature that has not been scientifically verified but which is seen regularly.

Strange glowing ground sites, unusual photographs and animal mutilations all come to the attention of the PASU but after the group investigates most are found to have a logical explanation.

PASU exchanges information on a worldwide basis with reputable researchers and organizations and works closely with the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) in Texas, the largest international organization conducting UFO research. The group also passes data on to the

CUFON, the Computer UFO Network, near Seattle, Wash.

In 1986 many strange cases were reported in Pennsylvania which have not been identified or scientifically explained, according to PASU director Stan Gordon.

Gordon says, "It is PASU's purpose to try to find explanations for the cases reported, and most of the time this has been found to be the case. There are, however, reports of strange phenomena, being reported by credible people that remain indeed baffling." Gordon says it is the group's policy not to release names of the observers to protect them from ridicule.

Some of the other cases reported to PASU in 1986 include:

p.m. a metallic appearing disc shaped object is seen hovering over the Birmingham Bridge in downtown Pittsburgh.

Jan. 23--Slickville. Several cases in early 1986 indicated a military interest in some UFO cases. Residents of the community saw a large, triangular object with numerous lights maneuvering over the area. A short time later, the silence was broken by three military jets that chased the object toward Pittsburgh.

June 21--Forbes Road. Two witnesses observe a metallic, cigar-shaped object moving at tree-top level a short distance away. The object has two, large, brilliant lights on at each end. One witness described it as looking like a

metallic hot dog.

Aug. 12--Two daylight UFO sightings of similar objects are reported. The first at 8:30 a.m. near Monroeville and the second in the afternoon in Mt. Pleasant.

Oct. 30--Latrobe residents report something has been breaking down their new electric fence. Three large footprints were found and a PASU investigator made a cast of the best track. It was 13 inches long and 8 inches wide, the general configuration of a Bigfoot track made in Greensburg in 1973.

The research group can be contacted 24 hours a day at the Pennsylvania Hot Line, 412-838-7768, or by writing to Gordon at 6 Oakhill Ave., Greensburg.