

A throughway for UFOs

By ELIZABETH HORNE

Is the Mon Valley a throughway for Unidentified Flying Objects?

According to Stan Gordon, director of the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained, "There is always a lot of activity in the Belle Vernon, Monongahela, Harlerol and Washington areas."

Most UFO sightings seem to be what is termed nocturnal light. An example of just such a sighting was reported by two different witnesses last year on Jan. 11, at 5 a.m.

At the intersection of Route 51 and Interstate 70 a brilliant bright white light, triangular in shape, hovered in the early morning sky. As the people watched, the object shot off towards Uniontown leaving a tail of light.

In Washington County on June 25, 1987, a father and his son had an experience in broad daylight as they worked on their truck.

They had spent the morning underneath the truck, occasionally looking up to name the planes as they flew overhead. They heard a small engine plane and identified it as a biplane. After identifying it they noticed an object off of the left aircraft wing and then began noticing more and more of the strange objects around the plane.

They described them as starlight objects in the sky. The man held his thumb in the air to gauge the speed of the objects. It took three seconds or thereabouts to pass.

Adding to this mystery, on the same day an airline reported a UFO encounter that one of its airplanes



had.

Paul G. Johnson, a chemistry professor at Duquesne University and head of the Pennsylvania Center for UFO Research has also had many sightings reported.

One of his most puzzling UFO sighting was that of a man with a heart condition. Johnson received the report 20 years after the incident occurred.

The man reported that entities entered his room during the night while he was experiencing chest pain. The creatures put a metallic object, shaped like a cigarette pack,

into his hand. His hands got warm and turned red. The entities then took the object from his hands and left. Since that time he has never experienced any heart problems.

What would you do if you saw a bigfoot or a UFO?

According to both Johnson and Gordon, the first thing that you should do is to take a picture and note the exact time and location of the sighting. Sit down, as soon as possible, and write down everything that you can remember including a description of the object, any sounds, or lights.

"The longer you wait the more difficult it is to remember," Johnson said. The information you gather could provide possible clues to the investigators.

After recording the information call your local or state police. They will pass the information on to an agency that investigates sightings. If you would rather deal directly with a research agency then dial Gordon's hotline number, 833-7768 or Johnson's hotline number, 823-1834.

"People should call since this information is important to researchers," according to Johnson.

"All information is kept strictly confidential," commented Gordon, "Anyone who doesn't want to call should send a brief narrative of the experience including the date, time and location."

Gordon's group was founded in 1981 from a group that had previously been called Westmoreland County UFO Study Group. The volunteer

group is now made up of such professionals as doctors, engineers, scientists, and astronomers.

The group is not funded but does have an elaborate communications system.

The information gathered from sightings is used to collate statistical data, which is then used to locate patterns. These patterns will eventually allow researchers to be present at a sighting. With special equipment, researchers can take measures, such as radiation level, that can further their studies.

"Sightings occur in flap periods," according to Johnson. This means that sightings seem to occur in large numbers during certain times and years. For example, sightings for 1988 are about double the number for 1987. So, 1988 can be considered a flap year.

"Sightings are more likely to occur during mid-week, mostly on Wednesday evenings," Johnson said. According to statistical data, more sightings occur during the months of March and October.

About 90 percent of the reports can be traced to bright planets, stars or other natural phenomena the other 10 percent are attributed to close encounters.

How do researchers decide whether an object was a natural phenomena or a UFO?

The first step is to check for any special atmospheric conditions and bright planets.

Johnson's group of investigators follows-up on each report they receive with a personal visit, if the area is within driving distance. Once there they ask the witness to fill out a questionnaire and then proceed to the area of the sighting. At the site they perform an in-depth investigation.

Many people do not believe in this phenomena but as Gordon points out, most of the witnesses are people who were complete skeptics.

A police officer in Harrisburg was quickly turned into a believer on

Dec. 4, 1988 at 5:25 a.m. As he was driving he noticed an object over the powerlines, it was about 75 feet long, and bright silver in color. After he pulled over to the side of the road he got out of his car.

He said that he felt like he was in a mist. He heard a low humming sound and his car was glowing blue. He felt a burning sensation on his face. Then the object left.

The man had indeed sustained first degree burns on his face and ears, his eyes were also injured almost as if he had been exposed to ultraviolet light.

His car was covered with a dust. Upon testing it was found that the dust was composed of potassium chloride.

"There has been a definite increase in cases in recent years," Gordon said.

No one has yet explained UFO's, but with your cooperation perhaps one day researchers can be present during a sighting and identify the phenomena.

Anyone interested in receiving information on UFOs should send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to PASU, 6 Oakhill Ave., Greensburg, Pa, 15601.

STAN GORDON via COUD—I
PASU