

# Ancient Astronauts

## Modern Mysteries

John A. Keel

### **MYSTERY SUBS RETURN**

Norway and Sweden have been plagued by phantom submarines for many years (see SAGA, Nov. 1973). Apparently these mysterious intruders don't belong to the Soviet Union, the U.S., or any other nation. They often appear in deep fjords many miles inland, and elaborate searches by ships and planes have repeatedly failed to bring them to bay. The most recent incident took place on Sept. 17, 1973, in the Sognefjord in Norway, site of a previous massive submarine search in November 1972.

Researcher Finn Kalvik of Bergen, Norway, has compiled a list of recent submarine sightings from the 1968-70 period:

- Apr. 27, 1968: Norwegian warships and planes were rushed to Grottsundet, near Tromso, after reliable witnesses reported seeing a large submarine;

- June 10, 1968: An unidentified submarine collided with the fishing vessel *Haveygen* 60 miles outside of Torsvag, Norway;

- Nov. 12, 1968: Another mystery sub was sighted at Tosnes, not far from Tromso. Again, a massive military search was conducted without results;

- Nov. 26, 1968: A submarine popped up in Hardangerfjorden, near the Sognefjorden. Planes and ships thoroughly searched the fjord without results;

- June 16, 1969: A sub was seen again in the Hardangerfjorden;

- Nov. 20, 1969: Mr. and Mrs. Ole Sagen reportedly saw a submarine conning tower, antenna, and periscope rising from the waters of the Sognefjorden over 100 miles inland. The Norwegian Defense Command rejected the report, saying it was impossible for a submarine to travel so far inland;

- Nov. 23, 1970: The crew of the ferry *Tysnes* saw a submarine on the surface of the Hardangerfjorden near Kinsarvik. They watched it through field glasses for several minutes. Other reports poured in and the Norwegian navy launched the usual futile search.

These isolated fjords jut inland between barren, mountainous, thinly-populated areas of no apparent strategic importance. Although they are as deep as 600 feet in some places, it would be dangerous and foolhardy for a submarine to try to navigate their treacherous ice-bound waters. Nevertheless, someone has been doing just that for years. They have even been following a discernible time schedule, usually turning up around the 12th of the month in the September to November period. Numerous other sub sightings have taken place on

the same schedule in neighboring Sweden in the Gulf of Bothnia.

### **THINGS FROM THE SKY**

Since the 1930s the skies over Scandinavia have been filled with inexplicable objects and machines, and local researchers have cataloged 27 cases in which airborne objects have plunged into local lakes. The latest incident took place in July 1973 when something crashed into a swamp at Ovre Soppero in Lapland, leaving 3 big holes. The Kiruna Geophysical Observatory is currently investigating that incident.

In December 1959, a man named Lorentz Johnson made a remarkable sighting at Skomsvoll, Norway, near the Namsenfjorden. He was walking from his garage to his house at 10 p.m. when he saw a peculiar cigar-shaped object gliding silently through the sky. At first he thought it was an airliner because he could see what looked like windows along the body of the object. But it was glowing with an eerie reddish color and was only about 150 feet in the air. Suddenly, Mr. Johnson reported, there was a rattling sound and 2 long objects dropped from the UFO into the water of the fjord. A woman living on a farm on the other side of the fjord later said she had heard a strange noise about the same time, followed by a splashing sound, but saw nothing.

Five years later Reidar Hartvigsens was fishing in the area when he caught "something" on the smooth bottom and had to release it. Another fisherman, Schonning Bugge, was in a boat equipped with sonar and detected a large object which hadn't been there previously.

These reports inspired the members of the Norwegian UFO-Center to launch a special investigation in 1968. They rented a boat with sonar equipment and systematically searched the area. At a depth of 90 meters they discovered a mysterious object 6 or 7 feet high and about 20 feet long. Scuba divers tried to descend into the icy waters for a closer look but couldn't reach the thing. However, they did see, strange wheel-like tracks on the bottom of the fjord which disappeared into deeper water.

We still don't know what the 1959 "cigar" dumped into the fjord is, or if it is still there.

### **LAKE MYSTERIES**

Northern Scandinavia is dotted with lakes, large and small, and there are endless stories about lake monsters like Scotland's Loch Ness Monster. But many of these monster reports sound more like submarine sightings. How would submarines manage to reach these remote, often shallow, inland lakes? One witness at

Bullaren Lake in the Province of Bohuslan said, "It looked more like a boat I would say, yet a boat or a sub can't go in this lake . . . It had a hump that looked like a glass tower."

Mr. Jan-Ove Sundberg, a Swedish journalist, has supplied us with several detailed accounts of these alleged lake "monsters." The following item appeared in the newspaper *Motala Tidning* on July 26, 1950:

"The monster in Lake Rasvalen has appeared again, this time 3 times within 3 hours. A man who was skeptical of the monster reports saw it in Kallernas Bay but when he tried to get closer to it, it disappeared.

"One has got to believe one's own eyes," said Sigvard Barnstrom from Vedevags Bruk today. "The monster was about 5 meters long and looked almost like a black whale or an upside-down boat. I was on the lake together with a friend to look in our nets when we suddenly spotted this strange creature about 300 meters from our boat. When it showed up we tried to get closer to it, but it submerged in a funny way and disappeared."

"After a few minutes the monster appeared again, and this time both men saw that it was longer than 5 meters, black in color, and somewhat round in front and back. The time was 5 a.m. Again they tried to get closer, and again it disappeared.

"Around 8 a.m. it turned up again about 200 meters from the boat and was in view for about 15 minutes.

"This time it circled the lake at terrific speed," Mr. Barnstrom said, "unlike any animal I have ever seen. Then it submerged like a sub."

Something like "an upside-down boat" has been seen scooting over the surface of Storsjon Lake in Jamtland, also. At Stensjon Lake in Ostergotland a witness saw what looked like the conning tower of a submarine jutting above the water. Vasterbotten's Tavelsson Lake has also produced reports of an elongated "something" that behaved like a submarine. And at Vattern Great Lake in Ostergotland witnesses once watched 2 "torpedoes" about 40 feet long which submerged abruptly when an airplane flew over.

### **PHANTOM BOATMEN**

Legends dating back to the year 1456 describe an underwater connection between Lake Mossarpegolen and Lake Yxningen in Ostergotland, according to researcher Lennart Karlsson. Lake Mossarpegolen is surrounded by a dense forest and is only about 300 feet wide and 600 feet long. People vacationing at the

(Continued on page 54)

# Ancient Astronauts

(Continued from page 14)

lake side have claimed that it sometimes lights up, as if the waters were illuminated from *below*, with a strong reddish color. This phenomenon was last observed in July 1972.

Karlsson and journalist Sundberg report: "The people in the lake area claim they have seen a 'mystery boat' on Lake Mossarpegolen. In the boat were 2 figures resembling human beings. Sometimes on dark nights the boat and figures disappeared with a sharp, blinding light. The 'mystery boat' seems to be an old legend come true, as local inhabitants claimed to have observed it many years ago. There are fish in the lake, but nobody in the area knows who the figures in the mystery boat are, where they keep their boat, or where they are from. They just seem to disappear into thin air."

Disappearing boats and phantom boatmen are no strangers to collectors of Fortean. There is also a growing body of

lore about mysterious frogmen who climb from small lakes and inlets in full diving gear, waddle ashore, and get into waiting black limousines to drive off into limbo. The late Ivan T. Sanderson was particularly intrigued with stories like those recounted here, and he collected many others . . . such as the mysterious voices and *music* heard by divers off the shores of Great Britain. He speculated that strange things may be happening at the bottom of our oceans, lakes, rivers, and fjords while all the UFO enthusiasts are looking eagerly in the wrong direction—to space—when the real secret of these phenomena may be as earthbound (or waterbound) as we are.

## SINGING RIVERS

When the great flying saucer wave of October 1973 occurred, the case that received the most publicity was the story of the 2 fishermen in Pascagoula, Miss., who were allegedly taken aboard a UFO while fishing in the Mississippi, which is famous as a "singing river" because it has produced a mysterious humming sound like the buzzing of bees for years. Similar

sounds have long been associated with UFOs.

Flying saucers have long demonstrated a penchant for bodies of water, diving into rivers and reservoirs around the world. The majority of the most famous UFO contacts has taken place on beaches and river banks. Myths dating back thousands of years describe how strange alien beings, such as Oannes, the Babylonian half-man, half-fish, emerged from the water to teach man the rudiments of science and agriculture.

Several Scandinavian researchers are now carefully investigating the many strange events taking place in the fjords and lakes of Norway and Sweden. Meanwhile, John Magor and other Canadian ufologists are exploring the many peculiar events that have been happening around the thinly-populated lakes and bays of Canada. A very busy UFO belt extends across the top of the world from Scandinavia to Greenland, Labrador and British Columbia. There may be more phantom submarines in our waters than there are UFOs in our skies. ★ THE END