

U.F.O.I.C. NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL

Perhaps the most perplexing term used by ufologists throughout the world is "U.F.O. research." Often as not, this "research" only involves the classification and filing of numerous reports, interviewing of eye-witnesses and sometimes the occasional skywatch; rarely is any real scientific research carried out.

Let us then examine the meaning of the term research and more importantly, what scientific research involves. Research, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is "careful searching or inquiry; endeavour to find new facts; course of critical investigation." Scientific research usually makes use of inductive reasoning to probe the unknown - this has three stages - observation, hypothesis and verification.

Immediate problems arise when this type of reasoning is applied to U.F.O.'s - the very nature of the objects makes it difficult to carry out consistent and accurate observations, let alone develop a lasting hypothesis. Moreover, the details provided by untrained eye-witnesses are often unintentionally misleading and hence the consequent collation of reports is of little value. Thus the ufologist must be prepared to carry out some research if any facts about U.F.O.'s are to be obtained.

Such research would require the cooperation of groups of dedicated researchers throughout the world, each armed with scientific apparatus to make detailed studies of U.F.O.'s. Beside the existing U.F.O. detectors, equipment such as geiger counters and magnetometers in association with chart recorders, spectroscopes, theodolites, meteorological instruments and sky cameras would have to be set up.

To the individual this would be a mammoth task, but to enthusiastic groups it could be a quite feasible project. Unless some real research into U.F.O.'s is undertaken, the future will reveal little about these mystifying objects and the piles of reports will undoubtedly continue to grow.

David A. Scott, Editor.

WORLD SCENE

RUSSIA

Little is known of the sighting of U.F.O.'s in Russia. However, it does appear that U.F.O.'s have been sighted behind the Iron Curtain and by quite reputable witnesses. The following details recently appeared in *Soviet Russia Today* under an article written by Felix Zigel, Doctor of Science, Assistant Professor at the Moscow Aviation Institute.

A strange luminous body was observed by members of a geophysical expedition, camped 11 miles from Koktal, on August 16, 1960, at 11 p.m., local time. According to Master of Geology and Mineralogy, Nikolai Sochevanov, the object moved from north to south and its visible diameter was one and a half times longer than the Moon's. It disappeared behind mountain tops, reappeared and headed south-east, maintaining constant speed and height above the Earth. The object was lens-shaped and bright, the edges being somewhat less luminous than the centre. Eight scientific workers, all members of the expedition, observed the object.

In another case, three Latvian astronomers, Robert Vitolniek, Yan Melderis and Esmerelda Vitolniek, observed an U.F.O. from an observation station at Ogra on July 26, 1965. An unusually bright "star" was observed at 9.35 p.m., moving slowly in a westerly direction. The "star" was observed through binoculars and then through a telescope. In the heart of the lens-shaped disc, which was estimated to be 325 feet across, was clearly evident a thickened part, a small sphere. Around the disc at a distance of three diameters were three spheres resembling the one in the centre. The spheres slowly rotated about the centre, and later moved away, as if receding in different directions. The astronomers estimated that the objects were at a height of about 60 miles and were observed in the north-western part of the sky, at an elevation of 60 degrees above the horizon.

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BRAZIL

Three people, Mr. Aristeo Machado, 45, his wife and Federal Agent Aguiar watched an object about the size of a car land on the ocean about one kilometre from the shore at 11 a.m. on June 21, 1970.

When the U.F.O. settled onto the surface of the sea, spray was thrown up on all sides. The object floated another 100 metres closer to the shore and a transparent cupola became discernible. Inside were clearly visible two beings in dark grey overalls and helmets. Both were small and thick-set.

The object was reported to have a bright rotating light which changed from red to green to yellow. After remaining on the surface for 30 or 40 minutes, it took off quickly in a low, long flight out to sea. Before taking off, a small yellow ball was ejected from the U.F.O.

A.P.R.O. BULLETIN, August 1970

FINLAND

While driving on the 8th August 1969, in the region of Pudasjarvi parish in the direction of Sarkivaara, Mr. Atte Sarkela, a taxi driver with six passengers, observed a ball of light moving sideways in front of them. It was 1.25 p.m. Another smaller ball was then seen moving over the mountains. Meanwhile, the first ball, which had earlier disappeared, again became visible.

In size and appearance the ball resembled the moon. A smaller ball was seen at its left side. A number of small balls were then observed criss-crossing in a deep gully and even appearing to touch the ground. Mr. T. Laine, a teacher, and his wife, were also witnesses to the strange phenomenon and observed the objects through binoculars.

Radiation measurements were later taken by investigators and these appeared to be normal (0.09 milliroentgens). It is interesting to note that the area in the vicinity of the sightings has had minor magnetic disturbances in the past and compasses are known to behave oddly in this region.

VIMANA, No. 4

RHODESIA

Mrs. S. Pink and Mr. R. Armstrong of Salisbury, on the 19th March, 1970, sighted "three silver objects circling at a height about a black object, before the 'black object' made off at a great speed towards the sun, followed by the silver objects." Other people also saw the objects from different locations.

SKYWATCH, August 1970

AUSTRALIAN REPORTS

The following report was received from Mr. Keith Basterfield of Adelaide. On 1st October 1970 at 8.18 a.m. local time, Mr. Basterfield, his father and sister were driving along Anzac Highway when his sister sighted the object.

Mr. Basterfield writes:- "My sister first drew our attention to an object which she saw through the front windscreen. I was able to see an elongated strip in the sky; my father verified that this was what he saw, later. However, as he was driving, this was all that he saw. However, my sister and myself were able to see what happened next. One object was seen which changed shape. The sequence was:-

- a) Initially elongated.
- b) Circular, with definite size.
- c) Pinpoint of light until disappearing.

As the shape changed, so did the luminosity." While the object had the circular shape, it appeared to be half the size of the moon and gave off an intense light, "... as reflection from a metallic surface such as an aircraft."

From the observer, the object had a bearing of about 100 degrees and an angle of elevation of about 25 degrees above the horizon. After 45 seconds the object had diminished to a pinpoint and eventually disappeared from view. At the time of the sighting weather conditions were good - wind direction was 20 deg. with a ground speed of 6 knots; there was no cloud cover.

Subsequent investigation by Mr. Basterfield revealed that a weather balloon had been launched from West Beach airport that morning at 8 a.m. From figures quoted from the Bureau of Meteorology, Mr. Basterfield was able to make the following comparison between the balloon and the object. At 8.20 a.m. (time of sighting) the balloon had a bearing of 180 degrees whilst the object's bearing was 100 deg. The balloon had an angular diameter of less than 1 minute whereas the object at its widest had an angular diameter of 15 minutes. Hence it seems that the object seen could not have been the balloon. Furthermore, the balloon would not appear to change shape as the object appeared to. Mr. Basterfield came to the conclusion that the object was unidentified.

(Editorial Note: I wish to thank Mr. Basterfield for an excellent piece of investigation and the detailed 3 page typewritten report from which I have quoted. — Ed.)

PULSARS

The following is a summary of a lecture given by Prof. Mills, designer of the Mills Cross radio telescope, at a U.F.O.I.C. meeting.

As the name implies, the Mills Cross consists of two parabolic reflectors set at right angles to each other, each arm being one mile long. Although the Mills Cross depends on the earth's rotation to steer it to the required celestial longitude, the north-south arm may be tilted electrically.

Operating on a frequency of 408 megahertz, the Mills Cross has been used to study the Milky Way, the Maganelllic Clouds and more recently, pulsars. Pulsars were discovered three years ago, their main characteristic being the emission of radio pulses at a regular interval. Because of the interstellar matter (dust, gas, etc.) existing between stars, a given radio pulse will be received firstly on a high frequency (the higher frequencies pass more easily through the interstellar matter than the lower ones) and later on a lower frequency. From this time interval, the distance of the pulsar may be approximated - the nearest pulsar being some 100 light years away and the most distant at 15,000 light years.

Pulsars are believed to be the remnants of an exploded star which have condensed into a small massive core (neutron star) which rotates and emits radio waves. The pulsing effect of the signal is thought to be due to the pulsar's magnetic field lining up particles at the poles of the field. These gyrating particles in turn emit radio signals in a beam, which rotates with the core of the pulsar. Thus the pulsar is like a "radio lighthouse" sending out a beam of radio waves as it rotates.

In order to test this theory, the radio telescope was directed to the Crab Nebula (the remains of an exploded star) in search of a pulsar. A pulsar was found, emitting radio pulses 30 times a second, along with corresponding pulses of light and possibly gamma radiation. The pulsar in the Crab Nebula has been, as have the other known pulsars, gradually slowing down. As the Crab Nebula first appeared 1000 years ago, the age of the pulsar can be calculated by its rate of slowing down.

At first it was thought that the regular pulses may have been signs of extra-terrestrial life (this view was advocated by many U.F.O. magazines at the time) or part of an ancient navigational system. These ideas have been proven wrong and the idea now discarded as obsolete.

U.F.O.I.C. NEWS and EVENTS

COMMITTEE

At the annual meeting in December, all committee members were re-elected with the exception of Mr. E. Sayers who resigned. New committee members are Mr. M. Drawbridge and Mr. B. French, sight investigations officers, Messrs. J. Blattman, N. Szechwenko and Mrs. Exley, assistant secretaries and Mr. F. Wilks, research.

SIGHTINGS

Please report any U.F.O. sightings to our investigation officers, Mr. Barry French and Mr. Martin Drawbridge, so that investigations can begin as quickly as possible. TELEPHONE 6076608 or 6070615 day or night.

FEES

Members are reminded that membership fees for 1971 are now due. Forward fees to our secretary, Mr. Moser, BOX E170, ST. JAMES, SYDNEY 2000.

SOCIAL

The next U.F.O.I.C. social will be held at Mr. and Mrs. J. Blattman's residence at ¹⁵ ~~14~~ Constitution Rd., Wentworthville, on Saturday, March 6 at 3 p.m. Ladies a plate, gentlemen liquid refreshments. All welcome.

LIBRARY

Please note new postal rates for library postal service:

Within 30 miles of Sydney 30c.

Elsewhere in N.S.W. 40c.

Adjoining States 60c.

These rates apply for parcels of one or two books. Please remit stamps to the Librarian, Mr. M. Duggan, 22 Ferguson Avenue, Springwood, N.S.W., 2777.

U.F.O.I.C. takes this opportunity to wish members and readers all the best for 1971.

Other activities for members besides socials are planned for this year, including several skywatches.