

PEGASUS



Monthly Journal
of the Surrey Investigation Group on
Aerial Phenomena

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+ Surrey Investigation Group On Aerial Phenomena +

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+ EDITOR: Ron Toft, 14 Buckhurst Rd., Frimley Green, Camberley, +
+ Surrey. +

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+ Articles for publication in "Pegasus", be they long or short, +
+ are extremely welcome. They should be sent to the Editor. +
+ Views expressed in "Pegasus" are not necessarily those of the +
+ S.I.G.A.P. Executive Committee. Extracts may be taken from the +
+ magazine, provided they are in context and full credits given. +
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+ S.I.G.A.P. CHAIRMAN: Omar Fowler, 149 Mytchett Road, Mytchett, +
+ Camberley, Surrey. Tel. Farnborough 41012. +
+ " " SECRETARY: Dick Beet, 23 Coatham Place, Cranleigh, +
+ Surrey. Tel. Cranleigh 4420. +
+ " " TREASURER: Mrs. Jean Fowler, 149 Mytchett Road, +
+ Mytchett, Camberley, Surrey. +

+
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+ E D I T O R I A L +
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"Pegasus", S.I.G.A.P.'s very own magazine, leaves the launching pad at long last. It will appear, barring any production holdups, during the first week of each month. Pegasus replaces the "S.I.G.A.P. Bulletin", of which there has been 25 issues. Bulletin No. 1 came out in June, 1967, shortly after the group had been formed by Omar Fowler and Dick Beet. It consisted of just one duplicated foolscap sheet! Over the months the Bulletin, originally edited by Omar, was knocked into shape and the number of pages per issue increased. In February last year I took over the editorship of the Bulletin from Omar. He wanted to spend more time on practical U.F.O. research. Being a newspaper reporter and an amateur astronomer and ufologist in my spare time, I was only too pleased to take over responsibility of the Bulletin. In a way it did, and still does, present a challenge. My ambition from the start was that one day, S.I.G.A.P.'s financial circumstances permitting, to turn the Bulletin into a magazine. This aim is gradually materialising. The ultimate objective is a fully printed magazine - but this is still a long way off. Nevertheless, I and other S.I.G.A.P. officials hope you agree when we say that Pegasus is at least a step in the right direction. Pegasus is to remain in a duplicated quarto format for the foreseeable future at least. However, we may be experimenting with the make-up of the cover. We hope you like the present cover design. It was drawn up for us by Dan Butcher, S.I.G.A.P.'s talented artist member. Pegasus, named after the star constellation and the winged flying horse of Greek mythology, will be issued free to members. To non-members it will cost 1s 6d. As I mentioned at the beginning, Pegasus is S.I.G.A.P.'s official journal. But the editorial content will be such that it will appeal, we hope, to ufologists in general. By selling copies to "outsiders" we can boost our depleted funds. Features and news items are not only welcome, but urgently needed. This is vital to the success of the magazine. Stories can, but need not be, pages long. In fact, even a short snappy sentence or two on some aspect of ufology or related subjects, will be extremely welcome. It doesn't matter if your spelling isn't 100 per cent perfect or you are not very good at putting things on paper. Just make a note of the relevant facts and send them to me. As well as articles and news snippets of a general nature, perhaps members and even non-members might consider writing a piece on what they think the genuine U.F.O.s really are. Are they extra-terrestrial spacecraft? If so, where might they come from? I sincerely hope that this appeal will not fall on stony ground, as my previous ones have largely done.

Pegasus is available on an exchange basis for other U.F.O. publications. Bulletins and magazines should be sent to me. It is hoped shortly to introduce advertisements into Pegasus. Inquiries regarding this should also be made to the Editor. We are delighted to announce that we shall be able to reproduce photographs in the magazine, and next month hope to feature some of those taken on National Skywatch Day. Pegasus, like the S.I.G.A.P. Bulletin, will contain full details of all local U.F.O. sightings. Space will also be given to the more interesting reports from other parts of the country, and from abroad. There will be information too on the latest developments in astronomy and space research. Starting in Pegasus this month is the first in a series of articles I have written on the history of U.F.O.s. This should interest new members. Letters, critical and otherwise, will also be published in the magazine. So we hope you will like Pegasus and support and promote it whenever and wherever you can.

- Ron Toft.

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+ THE SEARCH FOR ALIEN LIFE +

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A major international research programme is about to be launched to find, and communicate with, intelligent beings on other worlds in our galaxy. It will be code-named PROJECT CETI, which stands for Communications with Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence. Ceti is also short for Tau Ceti, a star some ten light years distant, which is thought might have life-bearing planets orbiting it.

A five-day conference will probably be held in Prague in September between astronomers, exobiologists and other scientific specialists. They will air their views on the controversial and speculative subject of extra-terrestria life - and get the programme under way.

The wheels were first set in motion in September 1967 at a 26-nation meeting of the International Academy of Astronautics, in Belgrade. A 12-man study group was set up under the chairmanship of Professor Rudolf Pesek, Head of the Astronautics Commission at the Czech Academy of Sciences. Professor Pesek said at the time: "We shall begin with Mars. Because if we find life there - even in a primitive plant-like form - then scientists will be sure for the first time that the earth is no exception in the universe. If intelligent beings are

discovered elsewhere, then I think it will revolutionise our thinking, because their civilisation could well be on a higher plane than our's". More than 30 leading scientists consulted by the Academy of Astronautics expressed the need for a serious investigation. They felt that the possibility of life existing somewhere else in the universe could no longer be relegated to the pages of science-fiction novels.

Professor Pesek said that among the problems which had to be solved were:

(A) Where should scientists start looking for alien life? Mars is now considered to be probably the only planet in the solar system where life is likely to have evolved and gained a reasonable foothold. Venus has been virtually ruled out as an abode of life; earth-like anyhow. Unmanned reconnaissance probes to the planet have shown it to be tremendously hot and possessing an extremely dense atmosphere. The Russian craft Venus 5 and Venus 6 which descended through the Venusian atmosphere in May, showed that the air was composed almost entirely of poisonous carbon-dioxide. The actual concentration was found to be a staggering 93.97 per cent. Nitrogen and the inert gases make up 2 to 2½ per cent and only 0.4 per cent was attributable to oxygen. The atmospheric pressure ranged from half that on earth to 27 times as much. The temperature fell between 25° C. and 320° C. Russian scientists estimate that the ground temperature may be as high as 530° C. and the atmospheric pressure between 60 and 140 times that at sea-level on earth. All these figures go to show what an inhospitable world Venus must be. Scientists now believe that the giant planets of the solar system - Jupiter, Saturn and possibly Uranus and Neptune may harbour some very primitive forms of life. The possibility of intelligent life existing elsewhere in the solar system has been ruled out though. From a scientific point of view, the only contact Man is likely to make with aliens in the near future, is by radio. The majority of scientists still refuse to accept the overwhelming evidence put forward by U.F.O. researchers that extra-terrestrials could be on our doorsteps.

(B) How to decipher any intelligent radio messages picked up from deep space.

(C) Where should we direct our radio-telescopes to listen for such signals? And on what frequencies?

(D) What would alien life-forms look like? Can bug-eyed monsters really exist?

(E) What would the psychological and religious consequences be of learning that Man is not alone in the universe after all?

Professor Carl Sagan, of the Radiophysics and Space Research Centre at America's Cornell University, is expected to play an active role in Project Ceti. He is one of the world's foremost

exobiologist-astronomers. He has written countless papers on the subject of extra-terrestrial life and co-authored a book entitled: "Intelligent Life in the Universe".

Topics likely to be discussed at the forthcoming meeting will almost certainly include: a review of the existing knowledge of planetary environments, radio-astronomy, anthropology and communications physics.

Britain and the giant space-powers Russia and America are expected to play an important role in Project Ceti. It is possible that Britain's job will be to use its giant radio-telescopes at Jodrell Bank and Cambridge to listen in on the universe and see if any intelligent signals are heading our way. America and Russia will probably concentrate on the practical side and send further probes to the planets. Two American Mariner spacecraft are at this very moment streaking towards Mars. Mariner 6 is due to reach the vicinity of the planet at the end of July, and Mariner 7 at the beginning of August. Both will take pictures of the Martian surface and carry out temperature and atmospheric density measurements. In 1971-the next opportunity for launching probes to Mars-two Mariner-type vehicles will orbit the planet for three months. In 1973 two spacecraft will orbit Mars and detach soft-landers to descend to the surface. The Mars '69 mission objectives are to study the surface and atmosphere of the planet to establish the basis for future experiments in the search for extra-terrestrial life and to develop technology for future Mars missions. The '69 flights will NOT determine if life exists on Mars but help establish whether or not the Martian environment is suitable for life. Actual detection, or otherwise of Martian life, is unlikely to be made before 1973 therefore. The Russians, of course, never announce what they are going to do next. They may well continue their probes of Venus. But as even they are now probably convinced there is little chance of finding life there, they may turn their sights on Mars too.

Russia recently started a ten-year search for intelligent signals from space. A special section of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in Moscow has been set aside to direct the hunt. Highly sensitive equipment has been developed specially for the task. Said Dr. Nikolai Kardashev, deputy director of the Soviet project: "Scientists are at present exploiting only about ten per cent of the possibilities for picking up signals from extra-terrestrial civilisations, if they exist. Almost nothing is known about the infra-red and sub-millimetre frequency ranges". The Russians now have aerials which can operate at all frequencies.

DEATH FROM SPACE: Several people a year may be killed by forces from outer space, a world-renowned physicist claims. Swiss-born Professor Fritz Zwicky, of the California Institute of Technology, believes that apparently inexplicable deaths could be due to people being hit by microscopic meteors or heavy particles in cosmic rays. He said that faint traces had been found, indicating that the victims were struck by such forces.

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+ L E T T E R S +
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The following is a letter from S.I.G.A.P. Area Investigator Peter Hill:

"One of the principal conclusions of the Condon Committee is that inter-stellar and inter-galactic travel are virtually impossible (Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects. Bantam Books 1968). However, Professor K. P. Stanyukovitch, eminent Soviet physicist, seems to think otherwise (Vassiliev, M. & Goushev, S., Editors. "Life in the 21st Century". Penguin Special 1961. pp. 209-213). His work involves the application of nuclear science to space travel, which would seem to make him well qualified to speak on the question.

"What does he say? He says that scientists of the next century will calculate the inter-stellar trajectory for photon spaceships travelling up to the speed of light. Einstein's Theory of Relativity would enable inter-stellar and perhaps even inter-galactic flights to take place. This appears to be a flat contradiction of the Condon Committee's basic assumptions and so calls into question the validity of the whole report.

Yours, Peter Hill, The Flat, 19 Bridge St., Godalming.

SATELLITE NEWS By Tim Childerhouse: Now the decay rate of artificial earth satellites has reached one per day, and the fact that natural fireballs can occur at any time, the Satellite Section and the Meteor Section of the British Astronomical Association (B.A.A.) have agreed to work in close co-operation by collecting information on such observed events. This is in line with the decision reached by the Optical Tracking Sub-Committee of the British National Committee on Space Research. It was decided to use Coventry as the initial collecting centre (H.Q. B.A.A. Satellite Section) for such reports. By doing this, it will be possible to give the press full details of the event and, if necessary, appeal for further observation reports. Phenomena associated with the re-entry of artificial earth satellites and natural fireballs, are very similar. In the past much confusion has resulted after events like the decay of the Russian Cosmos 253 rocket and the meteor which landed in Northern Ireland at the end of May. Such co-ordination might bring a speedier and positive announcement. Fireballs brighter than magnitude minus five, and any spectacular decay, are requested to be reported.

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+ THE HISTORY OF FLYING SAUCERS +
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+ By Ron Toft +
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+ Part 1. In the Beginning... +
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The sparkling snow-capped peaks of the Rockies were a really awe-inspiring sight from the cockpit of Kenneth Arnold's private plane. Mount Rainier, soaring majestically to over 14,000 feet, was particularly dazzling.

Arnold, the owner of a fire-fighting equipment supply company, was flying from Chehalis in the State of Washington back to his home town of Boise in Idaho, visiting clients on the way.

Little did he know that when he set out on that memorable day - Tuesday, June 24, 1947 - he would see something which would spark off the greatest scientific controversy of all times. Arnold, then 32 years old, was devoting most of his time to scouring the picturesque crags and gullies far below him for the wreckage of a troop-carrying plane. Pilots had been asked to keep a special lookout for the aircraft, believed to have crashed in the area.

Suddenly a flash caught his eye. Turning his head he saw nine silvery objects darting nimbly between the menacing peaks. Arnold watched them flying in geese-formation for two minutes, estimating their distance from him as between 20 and 25 miles. An experienced pilot and navigator, he could see that they were moving fast; very fast. Noting how long the objects took to pass in front of the mountains he knew so well, Arnold came to the conclusion that they were travelling at not less than 1,200 m.p.h. This was a speed unheard of in 1947. But it wasn't so much the speed which astounded Arnold. It was the shape of the objects. They were like nothing he had ever seen before - they were circular.

Aviation experts later told Arnold that he must have seen planes or a secret weapon. The objects couldn't have been anything else they said authoritatively.

The story soon broke and Arnold was besieged by journalists. When relating his experience to them he used the term "saucer" to describe the objects and their flight. This is how the popular phrase "flying-saucer" first originated.

The year 1947 marked the beginning of world-wide interest in flying-saucers or unidentified-flying-objects (U.F.O.s). But they had been seen long before this - centuries in fact. This

aspect of the problem will be dealt with more fully in later articles. The Arnold "sighting" made headlines round the world and as a result other people came forward saying that they too had seen strange craft in the skies. Police stations and newspaper offices were inundated with calls.

Since 1947 thousands of sightings have been reported, investigated and filed. What are these mysterious aerial objects which have attracted so much publicity, usually of the wrong kind, and brought ridicule to bear on those who have seen them? Many are nothing more than meteorological and other natural phenomena. Some are aeroplanes and weather balloons seen at unusual angles. Others are satellites. But an increasing number of reports tell of exotic craft which hover one moment and shoot off the next at fantastic speeds. Reports which tell of landings and even contact with extra-terrestrial beings. Reports which cannot be explained away.....We have a choice. Either we believe the witnesses or we write them off as cranks or compulsive liars. Honestly, which is it more logical to do?

For a couple of weeks after the Arnold sighting, great prominence was given in the American press to U.F.O. reports. Then there seemed to be a sudden clamp-down. The larger papers refused to carry stories on the subject and the official explanation for all sightings was - "hallucinations".

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+ U. F. O. s. - T H E L O C A L S C E N E +
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BLACKWATER TYPIST SEES U.F.O. - A U.F.O. was seen over Blackwater, Hampshire one day last month, and is thought to have actually landed! This follows a spate of reports concerning a mysterious brilliant mass of light which performed various manoeuvres in the sky over Yateley, Hampshire on the night of May 12. Miss Susan Dorman, a 17-year old typist at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, said she saw the U.F.O. at 10.30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 3. She was walking along a road called Kingsway, off Rosemary Lane, Blackwater. Said Susan: "I was just looking at the sky when I saw two whitish lights, with a red one in the middle, going across - fairly high up at first. Then it got lower and lower and went down behind some trees near the Blackwater Factory Estate". Susan added that the object had been travelling from Camberley to Blackwater. She could not hear any noise and was convinced that the U.F.O., whatever it was, was definitely coming in to land. The trees, which the object disappeared behind, were some 400 yards away from where Susan was standing.

Susan, who lives in Chesnut Close, Blackwater, went on: "I've never seen anything like it before". She admitted: "It gave me the creeps". A spokesman for Air Traffic Control at nearby Blackbushe Airport, now used only for private flying, said none of their aircraft were operating at that time of the night. And Air Traffic Control at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, commented: "We didn't have anything up".

MOON-LIKE U.F.O. SEEN AT FETCHAM: A mysterious object described as like a "big steely moon" was seen by a 55-year old Fetcham, Surrey housewife at 9 p.m. on April 25. Mrs. C. E. Attwell, of Revell Close, Fetcham told S.I.G.A.P.: "It was brilliant, radiating a glow.....so that the street lamp just in front of it seemed quite dim. My first thought was 'What a moon!!', but then, as I walked into Revell Drive, was the real moon to my right, high in the sky and quite pale to the light which still hung quiet and stationary. When I returned some half-an-hour to three quarters of an hour later, it was gone, leaving the space where it had been - the usual dark blue of the sky".

SCHOOLBOY SEES TWO STRANGE OBJECTS: A 12-year Redhill, Surrey schoolboy reported seeing two globe-like U.F.O.s, while walking to school at about 8.20 a.m. one morning back in November, 1967. Anthony Bramley, of Clarence Walk, Meadvale, Redhill, said: "I noticed two strange objects over some houses. I stopped and looked. I saw a shiny ball moving towards a similar ball. At first I thought they were football lights, but they were too high. Then one of the objects made a spurt of speed towards the other. I think one sphere might have gone behind the other, or they had merged together. Then I looked at my watch and saw it was time to get to school. During break I tried to observe the objects, but some trees obstructed my view. Then, on the way home from school at four o'clock, I noticed the same objects in the same place. Once more they merged together, and this time a slight haze of heat seemed to come off. I stood there for about 15 minutes then walked off home, keeping the objects in view for as long as possible".

GLOBULAR OBJECT SEEN OVER SUTTON: Richard Harrison (14), of Ridge Road, Sutton, Surrey saw a strange circular object in the sky at about 6.45 p.m. on May 28. Said Richard: "It was roughly the size of Venus. Its colour was silvery-white, bearing 150° and elevation 50°. Length of observation was nearly five minutes. The object was almost stationary, but seen through binoculars appeared to float like a balloon. Although the sky was cloudless, it suddenly disappeared from view. The object was seen from my back garden, travelling in an easterly direction. It may have been a weather balloon". Richard Harrison is a S.I.G.A.P. member.

U.F.O. MAY HAVE BEEN A METEOR: S.I.G.A.P. has just received a report of a meteor-like object seen by Mr. M. G. Wood (19), a telephone engineer, at 9 p.m. on June 7. Mr. Wood, who lives in New Road, Chilworth, Guildford, Surrey, gave us the following account of what he saw: "I was standing in the back garden talking to my next door neighbour when he pointed out a light in the sky. The object was at a great height and travelling very fast, although no sound came from it. In appearance it closely resembled a shooting star, except that it was too slow and appeared to be in level flight. The direction it took was from due south to N.N.E. When it had passed over....the tail which the object had disappeared - leaving a red glowing object that continued on the same course and disappeared at an elevation of about 20°. There were several very loud bangs from the east before the object appeared". (Despite Mr. Wood's view, the object seems very likely to have been a meteor. It is possible that the bangs heard just prior to the sighting were sonic ones, due to the passage of the object through the earth's atmosphere - Editor).

Mr. George Spickett (18), also a telephone engineer, of High Street, Ripley, may have also seen the object. He said: "At 9.40 p.m. on June 7 myself and two friends were walking from Guildford Station car park, when we sighted a very bright white light, travelling approximately from Compton towards Farnham. It appeared to be travelling at a similar height to that of an aircraft, but at a far greater speed, perhaps three times as fast. It was visible for approximately five seconds. There was no noise. I lost sight of the object behind Bridge House. It was an incandescent white ball. I noticed there were a few stars visible. My father informed me that at about 9.40 p.m. he and my mother had heard some large explosions. He described them as like something continually passing through the sound barrier".

BARNEY HILL DIES: American postman Barney Hill, who claimed under hypnosis that he and his wife Betty were taken aboard an alien spaceship, has died. The story, which was not revealed until Barney and Betty were put into deep medical hypnotic trances, has become a U.F.O. classic and the subject of a book - "The Interrupted Journey" by John G. Fuller. It is believed that on September 19, 1961, Barney and Betty were captured by aliens while on a night drive from the Canadian border through the White Mountains, on their way home to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, after a holiday. While driving along they both saw a large star-like object in the sky, which seemed to be following them. Barney subsequently stopped the car and both he and his wife were overcome by a daze. When they came to they found they had "lost" two hours and travelled a further 35 miles, without either of them knowing it. The story of the temporary capture by aliens was not revealed until both Barney and Betty were "forced" to re-live the events under hypnosis. A fascinating case which has the scientists baffled. Barney died of a cerebral haemorrhage in Portsmouth Hospital, New Hampshire.

U.F.O. REPORTS DWINDLE: The number of U.F.O. sightings reported to the U.S.A.F. decreased substantially during 1968, says an announcement by the Pentagon. The total for the year was 375, compared with 937 in 1967 and 1,112 in 1966. It was the smallest number of sightings for any year since 1951, when 169 were reported. Of the 1968 sightings, the Air Force attributed 37 to astronomical phenomena, 41 to aircraft, 38 to balloons and 84 to other explainable causes. Three were listed "unidentified", 34 were under "investigation still pending" and 117 cases provided "insufficient data to reach a conclusion".

(Credit: "Saucer Scoop", St. Petersburg, Florida.)

ECHO II DOWN: The Echo II passive communications satellite, launched by the American space agency on January 25, 1964, re-entered the earth's atmosphere on June 7. It was a very bright satellite and seen by millions of people round the world. According to the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD), the 135 foot diameter inflatable balloon satellite re-entered the atmosphere between 6.09 p.m. and 6.31 p.m. GMT just north of the Sea of Okhotsk in Siberia.

MEETINGS: The next S.I.G.A.P. meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 22 in the canteen of the Plastic Coatings Factory, Guildford, starting at 8 p.m. This meeting will take the form of an "investigators training evening". Although aimed primarily for S.I.G.A.P. Area Investigators, ordinary members will be welcome. Two other meetings have also been arranged. On September 9 "Pegasus" Editor Ron Toft will give a talk on the mysterious lights and flashes seen on the Moon's surface through earth-bound telescopes. And on October 7 there will be a Film Evening.

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S.I.G.A.P. BULLETIN: Back copies available at 1/- each. Three different for 2/6 including postage. From: Dick Beet, S.I.G.A.P. Secretary, 164 Park Mead, Cranleigh, Surrey.

UFOLOG: Published by the Isle of Wight U.F.O. Investigation Society. Duplicated information sheets containing news of recent sightings at home and abroad. Monthly. 10/6 for 12 issues. From: Mrs. K. Smith, "Ringlemere", Colwell Road, Colwell Bay, Isle of Wight.

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