

Allen H. Greenfield's

FLYING SAUCER OBSERVATIONS

**AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
ALBERT S. GREENFIELD MEMORIAL PRESS**

VOLUME TWO

NUMBER ONE

THE TURN OF THE WHEEL IN UFOLOGY

When I actively entered the UFO field over a decade ago, it was dominated to a considerable extent by such personalities as George Adamski, Gray Barker, and James W. Moseley.

It is quite true that some of the personalities of that era are still active, but I think that the emphasis in the field personality-wise and publication-wise has shifted considerably.

The recent announcement by editor Gene Duplantier of the discontinuation of his long-running *Saucers, Space and Science* can be sited as an example of this shift. *SS and S* follows the demise of *Saucer News* and *The Saucerian*. By the same token, in recent years *Skylook* and *UFO Commentary* have appeared on the scene. The staffs of these publications may reflect the coming leadership of the UFO field for the 1970's.

Not all of these individuals are new to the field; witness Hayden Hewes of Oklahoma City. But we assert that the wheel of time and circumstance has thrust upon these individuals a considerable share of the mantle of leadership of the Ufology of the '70's.

Who Are They?

UFO Commentary has already weathered an initial crisis and continued in print. Its first editor, Patrick Huyghe, a personable young man from Newport News and now an undergraduate student at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, turned the reigns of editorship over to Allen Benz. Mr. Benz holds a B.A. degree from the University of San Diego and a Master of Library Science degree from the University of Missouri.

I have corresponded with Patrick Huyghe and met him in person at the Congress of Scientific Ufologists; Mr. Benz attended the 1971 Midwest UFO Conference, as did I. It is to be hoped that both gentlemen will continue to play an active role in the UFO field and will continue the publication of *UFO Commentary*. Stanton Friedman and John Schuessler are both academically and personally impressive. Friedman may be currently the most avidly requested UFO lecturer in the United States. I am also favorably impressed with Mrs. Norma Short, editor of *Skylook*.

As mentioned above, Hayden Hewes is a man to be reckoned with in the ufology of the coming era. Lucius Farish and Ted Phillips also figure into the picture.

Whither Ufology?

I venture to offer the guess that, even with the efforts of John Keel, Jacques Vallee and others, the coming cycle in Ufology will be marked by the relative conservatism that has characterized the "Ufological middle" of the past. The extra-terrestrial hypothesis continues to be king, and ultraterrestrialism has yet to receive the serious attention it deserves. It is to be hoped that those who advocate these concepts will not be discouraged by this emphasis.

Conventions and conclaves may become an increasingly important institution in the UFO field. It is ironic that, at the very moment when this mode of Ufological expression is coming into its own, the long-running Congress of Scientific Ufologists may be floundering. The Congress is a product of "the old wing" of Ufology, and that wing of the field is, I fear, in trouble. However,

there is no mechanical reason why this group cannot rally and continue to play a major role. It is up to each single individual to continue to play an active part. Collective activities, such as the Congress, follow naturally from individual enthusiasm and initiative. This wing should not isolate itself from the newer wing, but should join it; the new may benefit from the experiences of the old, the old from the energy - the enthusiasm - of the new. Charges by the old wing that the new are unsophisticated and by the new that the old have been irresponsible are both counterproductive.

BAROMETERS OF THE FUTURE

Is UFOlogy as a whole in trouble? Is it true that interest in UFO's as such is in decline?

It would seem that, in general, the amount of publicity given the subject of late has been considerably less than during the "great days" of 1966-67. But from both my own personal experience and that of others a good case could be developed for the assertion that public grassroots interest remains strong, even with the decline in public exposure of the subject. It may be somewhat latent, it may be somewhat less than what it once was, but it is still present. A wave of domestic saucer cases at the right moment reaching the right ears in the news media could bring about another major surge similar to that of the late '60's.

On April 18, 1972, nuclear physicist Stanton Friedman gave a lecture at the Georgia Institute of Technology which I attended. Approximately 150-175 persons were present. This apparently was the largest audience thus far this year that the sponsoring body has had.

I spoke with Friedman about attendance at his lectures recently, and his response is most encouraging. One recent lecture by Mr. Friedman at the University of California, Berkeley, drew approximately 1250 persons.

Friedman's lecture, incidently, was an excellent one. His subject matter included Project Blue Book Special Report #14, NICAP's *The UFO Evidence* and the Condon Report. He also dealt with the feasibility of interstellar travel, presenting a persuasive case for its credibility.

Not all of the news given me by Friedman, though, was good.

The turn-out for a recent UFO event in Oklahoma City was fairly low, and one would hope that ufologists would not become discouraged by this, but would rather redouble their efforts in the future.

In addition to conventions and lectures, a person might wish to keep an eye on the publications put out by the newer wing in order to better understand how this group is faring. News from Friedman in this respect is also encouraging.

While Friedman was here I informed him of the demise of *Saucers, Space & Science*. In a "farewell letter" published by editor Duplantier we gain some insight into the attitude that may be at the root of the "old wing's" decline.

Duplantier states:

"... We never thought we would solve the UFO mystery . . . as others thought they would . . . and we haven't. It's been like a long-walk down an endless tube True, there

are those who say they know, but they haven't been able to prove it 100% to me. . . . Many of the big happenings have proven to be hoaxes and misinterpretations

"In 1968 a reverse trend reared its head. Persons began to lose interest in UFO news and its accompanying publications. Along with the top name outfits, we too began to lose more readers than we gained"*

As a veteran of many years in the UFO arena I can feel a goodly amount of sympathy with Duplantier's views. Perhaps ufology is a "long walk down an endless tube" with the goal always beyond our grasp. Then, too, the search for positive indications of continued widespread interest does not hide the obvious: "saucers" - - the saucer subject does not now enjoy the fame it did a few years ago.

But even if Duplantier's evaluation has a great deal to be said for it, does this form of defeatism serve a productive purpose? It is highly questionable. If the UFOs are a chronically enigmatic problem, does this mean that an answer of a clear-cut nature will never be forthcoming? For how many centuries did men gaze at the sky with varying degrees of wonder and interest before our modern concepts of astronomy were developed?

As to the degree of interest in the problem on the part of the public - - well - - there are signs and there are signs. Some good, some bad. Why not accent the positive and work towards developing interest, rather than just throwing in the towel?

Many of the journals of the old wing have already ceased publication, and their convention's future is in doubt. Their course in the field as a group depends largely on attitude. Look to a revitalization of their convention and renewal of their publications under somewhat different formats.

There are some positive signs in this direction which may be pointed to.

Eugene R. Steinberg and Timothy Green Beckley have both released new publications. James W. Moseley has assumed a role of importance within the structure of the Congress of Scientific UFOlogists.

Regardless of the future of the old wing as a unit, the ufology of the future can benefit from the counsel of individuals long associated with the field. It is much to be hoped that such persons as Al Manak, Gene Duplantier, Rick Hilberg and Edward Biebel will continue their active participation in the field. At the same time, we applaud and encourage the ufologists of the newer wing.

MEANWHILE.

Don't, in all this intrapolitical discussion forget about them.

The saucers, I mean.

* Quotations taken from a circular headed "Important Notice" from editor and publisher of *Saucers, Space & Science*, Gene Duplantier, 17 Shetland Street, Willowdale, Ontario, Canada.