



# ORBITER

*The New England Aerial Phenomena Report*

Editor: Jim Melesciuc  
Address: 43 Harrison Street  
Reading, MA 01867 USA  
Hotline: (617) 944-0686

Issue #12

OCT. 1988

## COMMENTARY

Dr. Hynek often remarked that we should be embarrassed by our riches when referring to all of the accumulated data on UFO reports. Since the modern era of ufology, thousands of reports have been collected by organizations worldwide. However, experience has shown that about 85 percent of these reports can be explained. When an investigator takes on a case his priority is to rigorously weed out the IFO's if he is able. Some events that are unidentified to one person can be quite identifiable to the technically qualified. But what about events that are truly puzzling even to the experts? Do we really know what is available to be seen in the sky, in water, or over land?

In this issue I've reprinted a few reports of strange oddities - transient phenomena. Reports of this type are of rare and unusual events made by human observers which often triggered an emotional response. Transient phenomena occurs infrequently and is short-lived which make their study difficult.

Hundreds of these unusual events can be located in meteorological, astronomical and nature journals. An indepth study of these observations should be practiced by ufologists to develop better quality in investigations. It is essential to keep our minds open as to what causes UFO reports. There are some arguments that can be made for extraterrestrial visitors, but there are powerful arguments against this theory, too. So, when concluding an investigation the ufologists should ask themselves, Have all the avenues on finding an alternate explanation been exhausted?

## SEPT/OCT RADIO-TV LOG

Sept. 7, Whitley Streiber was a guest on Good Morning America, Channel 5.

Sept. 9, Whitley Streiber was a guest on People Are Talking.

Sept. 12, Whitley Streiber was a guest on the Larry King programm, CNN.

Sept. 16, Whitley Streiber was a guest on the Late Show, Channel 25.

Sept. 18, Whitley Streiber was a guest on WBCN-Radio.

Oct. 5, "Unsolved Mysteries" Channel 4, carried the Gulf Breeze, Florida events.

Oct. 14, "UFO-Coverup" was aired on WPIX, New York, at 8:00 p.m. and on Channel 56, Boston at 10:00 p.m.

Oct. 15, "UFO-Coverup" was again aired on Channel 56, Boston, at 8:00 p.m.

## POSSIBLE MOVIE IN THE MAKING

There has been some serious interest from Hollywood producers in regards to making a movie based on the books, "Clear Intent", and "Night Siege". Right now, ideas are being sought from Hollywood producers. Mike Farrell (moderated "UFO-Cover-up") has shown great interest in this project.

Mars is the first planet beyond Earth, away from the sun. Its diameter is approximately 4,200 miles.

The sun has a diameter of 864,000 miles and is approximately 92,900,000 miles from Earth.

## CASE REPORTS .

The following reports have been brought to our attention by Mass. MUFON:

Type of Report: General

Date of Report: July 12, 1988

Date of Sighting: June 19, 1983

Time of Sighting: 11:30 p.m. EDT.

Place of Sighting: Cumberland, Rhode Island

Evaluation: Unknown

Summary of account: Two witnesses noticed a dark object about 100 feet over their backyard. The object had a brilliant white light shining from the underside beaming downward toward their backyard. There was no noise or odor. After observing the object for about 25 seconds the object made a "whoosh" sound, went upward and out of sight.

Type of Report: Preliminary special

Date of Report: August 29, 1988

Date of Sighting: May 9, 1988

Time of Sighting: 3:00 a.m. EDT

Evaluation: Unknown

Summary of account: The witness was driving home on Interstate 95 north, when she noticed a red light about the size of a full moon. The light accelerated towards her vehicle. The vehicle stopped and the witness became sleepy. When she came to, she realized she was only a few feet from her driveway and about 14.5 miles from where the encounter took place. What actually was a 20 minute drive took more than 2 hours.

## ARTICLE LOG

Congressional record - House: Oct. 16, 1967 and January 9, 1969.

Cross Currents - Fall, 1977

Cycles - April, 1968

Government publications - May, 1985

Harper's Magazine - January 5, 1950 (two articles)

Life Magazine - October 28, 1957 (the Baldwin lights)

Life Magazine - December 3, 1951 (Fatima photo)

Mother Jones - December, 1978

New Statesman - July 7, 1967

Popular Photography - March, 1968

On-Line Magazine - October, 1988

We also located numerous articles of strange aerial phenomena, Fortean phenomena, oddities of nature in numerous nature magazines, Scientific American, weather and science journals dating back to the 1800's and early 1900's. (Barry Greenwood has to be credited for a lot of leg work).

## \*\* UFO TRIVIA \*\*

Q: What was the most interesting aspect of the Levelland, Texas sightings?

Answer: All eight witnesses experienced vehicle EM effects.

Q: In what year was the word "saucer" first used to describe Unidentified Aerial Objects?

Answer: 1878

Q: In what year did the War of the Worlds appear in published form?

Answer: 1897

Remarkable Lunar Halo.

I send an account of an interesting lunar halo which I saw from the Uniou-Castle Line R.M.S. Balmoral Castle on January 21, 1913. I first noticed it about 6.15 p.m., ship's time; which would be about 6.30 local time, as the ship's time changes 12 to 15 minutes at midnight.

The halo was square with quite straight sides and the angles quite sharp, and I estimated the length of each side of the square at 3 diameters of the moon. The halo did not seem to vary in size as the moon rose higher, though I think at times it became less distinct, or possibly became rather less bright as the moon got higher, but that was hard to judge.

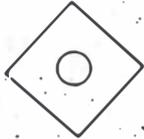
I pointed out the halo to some of the ship's officers, none of whom seems to have seen one like it before, so it may be very uncommon.

The following is an extract from the ship's log:—

"Lat. 4° S. Long. 8° W. January 21, 1913.

8 p.m. The moon (aged 14 days) is framed in a dull, yellowish halo of square shape, which is about 3 lunar diameters in extent and is placed with a corner towards the horizon after this manner.

"January 22. 5 a.m. The halo is still visible."



LEWIS EVANS.

Corona around Venus.

On Easter Monday, March 24, between 7 and 7.30 p.m. the planet Venus in the western sky was surrounded by a faint ring of light similar to a corona, but no variation of colour could be distinguished. The apparent radius of the brightest part of the ring, estimated by comparison with a mental image of the moon, was between 30' and 1". There was no sharply defined boundary to the illumination, but the brightness diminished towards and away from the planet. The phenomenon was visible for at least ten minutes, but it was only possible to observe it for about a minute at a time as the eye gradually lost its power of distinguishing between the ring and the general illumination, probably owing to the brightness of the planet itself. The phenomenon was seen here both by Mr. R. G. K. Lempfert and myself.

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB, N.W.

E. GOLD.

REMARKABLE OCCURRENCE.

"We have been favoured with the perusal of a letter from on board the Warren Hastings, recently launched at Portsmouth, and now moored at the Mother Bank, which states a singular occurrence that took place on board of that ship on the 14th instant, for the truth of which we can vouch:—

"The morning being fine, it was deemed necessary to get up the top-gallant masts, which occupied some hours. About three o'clock in the afternoon the atmosphere was overcast to the westward, and every appearance indicated the approach of a violent storm. Several alert sailors were sent aloft to strike the top-gallant masts as speedily as possible, but while lowering them the wind blew tremendously, and the rain fell in torrents, accompanied by heavy claps of thunder. In the midst of the confusion occasioned by the storm, three distinct balls of fire were emitted from the heavens; one of them fell into the main-topmast cross-trees, killed a man on the spot, and set the main-mast on fire, which continued in a blaze for about five minutes, and then went out. The seamen both aloft and below were almost petrified with fear. At the first moment of returning recollection, a few of the hands ran up the shrouds to bring down their dead companion, when the second ball struck one of them, and he fell, as if shot by a cannon, upon the guard iron in the top, from which he bounced off into the cross jack braces. Finding that he still survived, he was relieved from his perilous situation, and brought upon deck with his arms much shattered and burnt. This poor fellow was expected to undergo immediate amputation, as the only means of saving his life. The third ball came in contact with a Chinese, killed him, and wounded the main-mast in several places; the force of the air, from the velocity of the ball, knocked down Mr. Lucas, the chief mate, who fell below, but was not much hurt. For some time after the storm subsided, a nauseous, sulphureous smell continued on board the ship.

"A report prevailed at Portsmouth on Tuesday, that eight of the crew had been killed; but the above account may be depended on as the most accurate."

Luke Howard in his *Climats of London*, 2nd edition, vol. 2, p. 69, gives the following notes for February 14, 1809:—

"During a heavy storm of wind, accompanied by thunder, rain, and hail, the house of a baker in New Navy Row, Plymouth Dock, was struck by lightning, and together with the two adjoining houses materially damaged. On the same day at Paris, the barometer being just past the minimum for the month, the wind very strong at West with much rain, there was thunder at 6 p.m., and a house near the city was struck by lightning. A portion of the bell-wire in this house was dispersed and fixed as a very extensive stain in the wall of the apartment: one portion of the iron being thrown off each way, at right angles from the course of the wire, in mossy ramifications; and another above it, more perfectly dissipated, in a figure resembling an electrified lock of hair in the midst of a cloud of smoke. The stain measured six feet by four."

Parhelic Circle

On 16 February 1951 at 7.30 p.m. at Southampton, I noticed the unusual sight of a circular halo, centre the zenith, passing through the moon. The moon was then almost due south, altitude approximately 67°, so that the circle was nearly the same size as the common 22° halo, though in a different position. It was presumably a 'Parhelic Circle' caused by reflection from vertical faces of ice crystals. It appeared white and about half a degree in width.

Bassett Row, Southampton

F. G. MAUNSELL

A 'Moon-Pillar' ?

At moonrise on 23 February 1951, the moon being then two days past the full, a curious sky phenomenon was seen by several persons at Abinger, near Dorking, Surrey. As described to me, it had the appearance of a reddish band extending vertically upwards from the moon's disc for a few degrees 'like hair standing on end'.

I have wondered whether it could have been the counterpart, in moonlight, of a 'sun-pillar'. In the course of meteorological experience covering half a century in the London area I have only twice seen a good example of a sun-pillar occurring naturally, though during the recent war complex trails from high-flying aircraft occasionally combined to produce the necessary conditions.

I should be interested to know if any readers of *Weather* have witnessed a like appearance due to moonlight.

New Cross, London

W. M. WITCHELL

Cobwebs or Flying Saucers?

By a curious coincidence, I had just finished reading the letter to the Editors in the September issue of *Weather*, entitled "Cobwebs in the Rigging", when a colleague of mine started to describe a phenomenon he had observed the day before and which he had taken to be an actual manifestation of the illusive "Flying Saucers" which raised so much excitement some time ago. After talking the matter over we were both satisfied that what he had seen was a particularly fine example of a large mass of "cobwebs" described in the very interesting letter from Messrs Ovey and Browning.

As his description may be of interest to your readers, coming so shortly after the above letter, I pass it on to you for publication.

Sunday, September 26, 1948. Port Hope, Ontario. This day was warm and the sky cloudless. We had had dinner in the garden and I was lying on my back on the lawn, my head just in the shade of the house, when I was startled to see an object resembling a star moving rapidly across the sky. The time was 2 o'clock, Eastern Standard Time.

At first it was easy to imagine that recent reports of 'Flying Saucers' had not been exaggerated.

More of these objects came sailing into view over the ridge of house, only to disappear when nearly overhead. With field glasses I was able to see that each was approximately spherical, the centre being rather brighter than the edges. The glasses also showed quite a number at such heights that they were invisible to the naked eye.

With only a gull flying in the sky for comparison, I should estimate the elevation of the lower objects to be about 300 ft. and the higher ones 2,000 ft.; the size was about one foot in diameter and the speed about 50 m.p.h., in a direction SW. to NE.

Also visible every now and then were long threads, apparently from spiders. Some of these were seen to reflect the light over a length of three or four yards, but any piece may of course have been longer. Each was more or less horizontal, moving at right angles to its length. In one case an elongated tangled mass of these gave the appearance of a frayed silken cord. These threads appeared only in the lower levels.

It is reasonably certain that these objects were balls of spiders' threads, possibly with thistledown entangled in them, but the way in which they caught the rays of the sun as shone so brightly was very striking.—P. L. LEWIS.

This may really be the cause of the "Flying Saucer" scare. Port Hope is some 60 miles east of Toronto and a SW. wind would waft these webs from the Middle West, where saucers were so often reported. The play of light would also explain why aeroplanes set up to investigate could never find them. No one else seems to have seen them on the occasion, but perhaps Mr. Lewis was the only one to be taking horizontal, post-prandial repose at that time.

Trinity College School, Port Hope, Ontario

P. R. BISHOP

[We have been asked to correct a printers' error in the original letter by C. D. Ovey and E. Browning, referred to above. The name of the family of spiders there mentioned should have been *Linyphiidae*.—EDITORS.]

18. *Supposed Meteorite*.—We have received from Mr. Thomas Bassnett of Ottawa, Illinois, specimens of scoria, with a description of their supposed fall on the 17th of June last, about ten miles south-southwest from that place. The account of the fall, as written out by L. H. Bradley on whose farm the scoria was found, states, that the time it occurred was fifteen or twenty minutes before 2 p.m.; the wind blew west by south. He says, "The cinders fell in a northerly direction in the shape of the letter V. The weather had been showery, but I heard no thunder and saw no lightning. There appeared to be a small, dense black cloud hanging over the garden in a westerly direction, or a little to the south of west. The cinders fell upon a slight angle within about three rods of where I was at work; there was no wind at the moment, or none perceptible. My attention was called first to the freak the wind had in the grass, and the next moment to a hissing noise caused by the cinders passing through the air. The larger ones were considerably imbedded in the earth, so much so only to show a small part of it, while the smaller ones were about one-half buried. I noticed at the time that the ground where I afterwards picked up the cinders showed signs of warmth, as there was quite a steam or fog at that particular point. I thought it singular, as the ground had been very cold previously."

The scoria is in rounded inflated pieces, like what have been called volcanic bombs, the exterior being glassy, and the interior very cellular. They are little over an inch in the longest diameter. Color black.

The paper, called the "Sunny South," of Aberdeen, Miss., of Sept. 17, 1857, describes a mass of lava as large as a barrel, "which fell near the farm of Mr. John Fortson, ten miles west of Aberdeen, on the 8th of July, 1850, and which excited a good deal of wonder and speculation at the time for hundreds of miles around."

The Illinois scoria is unlike any meteorite, and suggests the idea of a terrestrial origin. We know nothing about the Mississippi "lava."

PROCEEDINGS BOSTON Soc. NAT. HIST.—Vol. VI. p. 145. List and descriptions of eggs obtained in California; E. Sumner.—p. 145. On erosions of shells; J. Lewis.—p. 152. On a supposed new Sirex; S. Kneeland.—p. 155. On a new Succinea and Helix; W. G. Binney.—p. 157. On a new Gynno; A. A. Hayes.—p. 158. Note on the wild turkey breeding with the tame; Bryant.—p. 160. A psychological view of the motions of Animals; D. Weirland.—p. 167. Cementation of Conglomerates; A. A. Hayes.—p. 173, 179, 194. Notice of J. W. Bailey; A. A. Gould.—p. 175. SECOND SERIES, VOL. XXIV, NO. 12.—NOV., 1857.

Quick note: While contemplating on the "Remarkable Occurrence" article I really wondered what outlandish UFO tales this type of atmospheric oddity could create especially if it occurred during a UFO media event. Upper right article; something to keep in mind on "Angel Hair" phenomena. Interesting event on the Supposed Meteorite article. V type object falling from the sky and partially embedding itself into the ground.

In 1963, Valentina Tereshkova of the Soviet Union became the first female astronaut.

### Remarkable Display of Phosphorescence.

Mr. Douglas Carnegie, of 44 Shooter's Hill Road, Blackheath, has forwarded the following extract from a letter from his brother, Mr. A. A. Carnegie, an officer on board the ss. *Patrick Stewart*, giving an account of a remarkable display of phosphorescence which he observed in the Gulf of Oman:—

"This last voyage we witnessed a weird and most extraordinary electric phenomenon—I say 'electric,' for I cannot think of it being anything else. We were steaming along at eight knots in the Gulf of Oman. At 10.30 p.m. I was on watch, and noticed ahead of the ship a bank of apparently quiescent phosphorescence; it might have been a tide up or the sea lapping the beach, but I knew it could not with any degree of probability be the latter. Yet I kept a careful watch on it, as uncharted shoals and islands are ever out-cropping in these parts.

"When we got to within twenty yards of the whitish water I saw it break into life and light—shafts of brilliant light came sweeping across the ship's bow at a prodigious speed, which might be put down as anything between sixty and two hundred miles an hour. Then we steamed into the light, and the effect was weird to a degree. It was just as if a large gun with a rectangular muzzle were shooting bars of light at us from infinity. These light bars were about twenty feet apart and most regular; their brilliancy was dazzling. They first struck us on our broadside, and I noticed on our lee side that an intervening ship had no effect on the light beams; they started away from the lee side of the ship just as if they had travelled right through it.

"The direction from which the light bars came gradually veered round the whole compass. After a quarter of an hour of this harmless bombardment we ran into the night's ordinary darkness. But in another five minutes we were again attacked by the light bars, now travelling in a direction the exact opposite of the ship's course. This second attack lasted for about five minutes, and then the entertainment was over for the night. It was impossible to say whether the light bars travelled through the water or on its surface. I collected a bucketful of the water and examined it under the microscope, but could not detect anything abnormal. Altogether it was the most wonderful sight I have seen, and its inexplicability added to its weirdness and grandeur."

The phenomenon witnessed by Mr. A. A. Carnegie bears a close resemblance to the phosphorescent display observed by Mr. W. S. Hesse, of the ss *Kilwa* (see *Quarterly Journal*, vol. xxviii. p. 29).

### Display of Phosphorescence.

The Director of the Meteorological Office has forwarded the following extract from a letter from Mr. S. C. Patterson, second officer, P. & O. ss. *Della*, respecting a remarkable display of phosphorescence in the Malacca Strait:—

On March 14, 1907, at 2 a.m., the ship being in lat 5° 43' N., long. 97° 55' E., an unusual phenomenon occurred. I noticed shafts of pale yellow light moving rapidly over the surface of the water. During the major part of the time the shafts seemed to move round a centre—like the spokes of a wheel—and appeared to be about 300 yards long; the appearance being very similar to that of the reflection of a powerful electric quick-flashing light (of the type of Ushant), thrown on the clouds on a dark clear night, but the motion of the shafts was faster, and the interval between them much less. At other times the flashes appeared to come in waves one behind the other.

The sea at the time was smooth, and the sky cloudy; and the temperature of the air 83°. The water was slightly phosphorescent in a dull monotonous way, but no signs of brilliant patches. The phenomenon lasted about half an hour—during which the ship travelled 6 to 7 miles—and then suddenly stopped.

The weather did not appear electrical, and there was no lightning throughout the watch, nor were the compasses affected in any way.

### (3.) REMARKABLE OPTICAL PHENOMENON. By S. ALEXANDER.

"The following account of a remarkable optical phenomenon was recently related to me by a lady living in this vicinity. She is intelligent and entirely trustworthy. Her statement has been corroborated by others. The occurrence herein related took place from twenty to thirty minutes before sunset in the latter part of June 1885.

"The weather was more than usually fine. The sky was clear, with the exception of a few clouds of the cumulo-nimbus order a few degrees above and to the northward of the sun. Suddenly there appeared a peculiarly weird and hazy condition of the atmosphere. There was an indescribable commingling and general diffusion of all the hues of the rainbow. During this state of things there appeared in the sky, on the earth, and on the trees, innumerable balls of decomposed light, presenting all imaginable colours, and apparently of about the size of a bushel basket. They were uniform in size and appearance.

"This phenomenon was confined to that region of the sky about the sun, extending but a few degrees each side of it. It lasted about twenty minutes, when it disappeared as suddenly as it came." (*American Meteorological Journal*, Vol. III. p. 486.)

Note: We see here in the top left articles strange observations made by ship officers describing luminous bars and spokes of a wheel occurring over water. It seems that most of this type of phenomena exists in the Near or Middle East. Right hand article mentions a globular light seen in daylight. Also in the same article there is mention of electrical experiments in which discharges took the form of discs.

Mr. SYMONS, after reading an extract giving an account of a comparatively recent occurrence of ball lightning, said he had worked at the subject of thunderstorms very thoroughly in the years 1857 to 1859, and had collected a number of reports of lightning phenomena which certainly disagreed with all electrical theories as to the extreme rapidity with which lightning travels. He had no doubt that lightning did frequently travel so slowly that its movements could be easily followed by the eye. He remembered seeing Mr. Varley, at one of the Meetings of the Society of Telegraph Engineers, produce globular lightning, of course, on a small scale, but he caused balls of fire to travel along his machine almost as he liked.

Mr. WHIRPLE said he believed that the rate at which electricity travelled depended entirely upon the conductivity of the medium through which it was conveyed. Along telegraph wires the rate of motion was very rapid, the cables less so, whilst in rarefied air the movement was slow. He had seen experiments made in Dr. de la Rue's laboratory in which electrical discharges in rarefied air took the form of discs whose motion was comparatively slow. In 1872 he saw a bright globe appear in broad daylight, which might possibly have been a manifestation of globular electricity, but at the time he thought it was a meteor, and sent an account of what he saw to *Nature*, describing it as "the appearance of a meteor in broad daylight." He had not seen Mr. Varley's experiments, but he had seen descriptions of something similar to ball lightning

<sup>1</sup> *Jour. Soc. Tel. Eng.* Vol. I. p. 336. et seq.  
<sup>2</sup> *Phil. Trans.* Vol. 169, Part I.

artificially produced by M. Gaston Planté<sup>1</sup>. The photographs of lightning exhibited, especially those taken at Brighton, seemed to show that the lightning was really a ball of fire.

Rev. W. CLEMENT LEY said that although he had been a keen observer of lightning and thunderstorms, he had never in the whole of his experience witnessed an occurrence of globular lightning. In 1873, he saw a heavy thunderstorm come on, and the lightning struck an elm tree about 60 yards from his house. Some persons who lived in a cottage rather nearer the spot where the lightning struck than he was, said they saw a ball of fire descend with the flash, that this ball came in at the front door, and after perambulating round the room retired by way of the back door. He, however, saw no signs of this ball accompanying the flash. On another occasion the lightning struck a cow in a shed about 30 yards from his house, and some persons stated that they observed a ball of fire, but although intently watching the flashes of lightning he saw no signs of a ball of fire. He was rather sceptical respecting these appearances of ball or globular lightning, as in spite of close and careful observation he had not seen these appearances which others stated they had seen, and concerning the certainty of similar occurrences of which Mr. Symons was so firmly convinced.

Mr. MUNRO said he remembered taking shelter in a butcher's shop in Regent Street, Lambeth Walk, twenty-seven years ago, during a very heavy thunderstorm, the rainfall being one of the heaviest downpours he ever experienced. While looking out from his position of shelter, he saw a ball of fire, about 2 inches in diameter, thrown into the air from some invisible source, with streamers of fire or light diverging from it, the ball eventually bursting with a loud report. The occurrence made such an impression on his mind that he had never forgotten it.

Mr. WARING said an occurrence of globular lightning came under his notice in Ceylon two years ago. Two coolies, sheltering in a hut during a thunderstorm, said they saw a large ball of fire fall to the ground about 40 or 50 yards from where they were stationed. On hearing the account of this phenomenal occurrence from a planter very soon after it took place, he (Mr. Waring) at first believed it must have been an aerolite which had been observed, and accordingly visited the spot where the ball had been seen to fall, and found a large hole in the ground, the earth all around it being scattered in every direction. He set some coolies to work to dig in order to discover the supposed aerolite, but although they went to a considerable depth they found nothing. The vegetation in the vicinity of the hole had a scorched appearance.

Mr. H. SOVERBY WALLIS said he did not remember any descriptions of globular lightning in which more than one ball was said to have been seen, and he could not conceive of the manifestation of so many isolated particles of electricity—if he might so describe them—as were seen in the phenomenon at Ringstead Bay. The balls seen at Remenham he thought were not electrical, but bubbles caused by the escape of air or marsh-gas from under the snow, Remenham being on the Thames and he believed low ground.

Capt. THOMSON said that St. Elmo's fire, which has been very frequently observed at sea, is a form of globular or ball lightning; and described how, on board the ss. *Buccaneer* during an exceptionally severe tornado off Sierra Leone in April of this year, balls of fire were observed at the mastheads, where they remained for two hours.

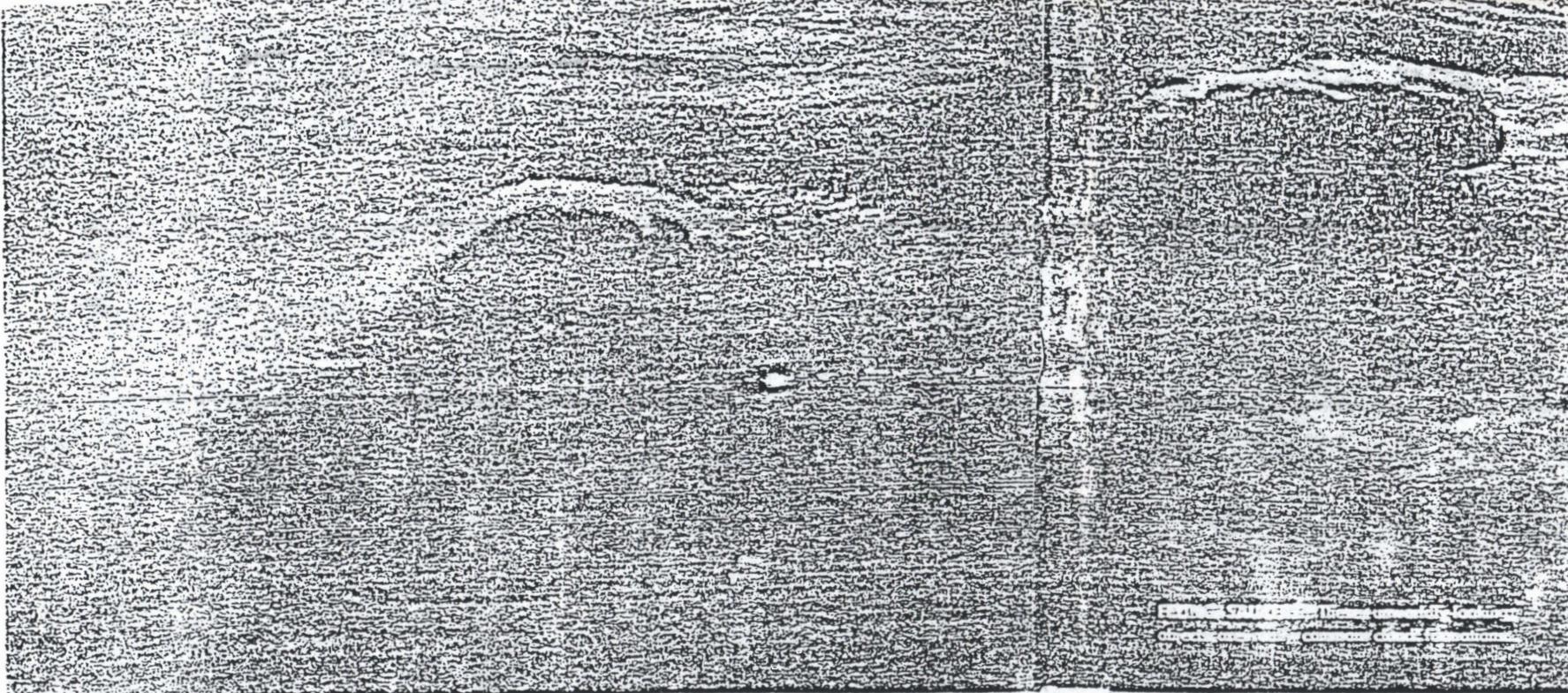
Mr. EATON said, five weeks before the phenomenon occurred, he had walked along the coast-guard path, and could testify to the accuracy of the description of the locality. He first heard of this extraordinary appearance about three years ago, but as Mr. Warry had forgotten the date, he had taken no steps to bring it under the notice of the Society. However, Mr. Warry, who enjoyed excellent health, sustained a strong nervous shock from a flash of lightning in the thunderstorm on the evening of the day in question, and was confined to his bed for a fortnight; and the entry by Mr. T. B. Groves, chemist, of Weymouth, of the medical prescription, gave a clue to the precise date, which had been otherwise confirmed, and he had, therefore, communicated the Paper to the Society. Miss Warry, now Mr. Eaton's sister-in-law, was then a girl in her teens, which might perhaps account for her courage in the neces-

<sup>1</sup> *La Nature*, 1884, Vol. II. p. 196.

sarily futile attempt to grasp the fire balls. The Paper had been drawn up by his brother the Rev. A. E. Eaton, Vicar of Shepton Montague, Somerset.

Capt. WILSON-BARKER, in a note to the Secretary, said:—"Dr. Tripe's account of the storm is very interesting; but I am afraid I belong to the ranks of those who doubt that there is really such a thing as ball lightning. Zigzag lightning has frequently been pointed out to me as ball lightning. I regard this as an optical delusion either on my part or on the part of those who pointed it out. Such a thing is so totally opposed to all one knows of electrical action. It may be interesting to note what does take place between highly electrified clouds. As the clouds approach one another sparks pass between them in single zigzag lines, which are never bifurcated, as is so frequently illustrated, the electric spark taking any direction which offers the least resistance to its passage; as the clouds get closer, the number of sparks increase, so that we have continual flashes of lightning until the clouds coalesce or disperse. If it were possible to see the clouds quite close to one another and yet not touching, we should find a glow between them, though electric sparks would continue to pass, but would be invisible; and I feel almost certain that the sparks pass from the positive cloud to the negative cloud. I am somewhat doubtful as to whether photographs will give us any correct idea of lightning flashes, as they cannot at present be taken quick enough. Is it possible that the balls of light seen could be masses of incandescent gas produced by the sudden passage of the electricity along certain paths?"

Mr. W. CHURCHILL, in a communication to the Secretary, said:—"I was walking one evening about 8 or 9 o'clock on the slope of a hill in Dorsetshire. I think it was about October or November 1860. I saw a globe of light, white or pale yellow, not dazzlingly bright, pass slowly between me and the higher part of the hill and fall to the ground, but not making any noise. The whole thing suggested a football of fire. Its apparent diameter was nearly that of the moon. I thought I saw part of the rise of the curve as well as the fall. It was probably not more than a quarter of a mile off. Though I lived near, I heard of no damage done. It was not stormy, or I should not have been out for a stroll. It was on a chalk hill which was ploughed in the part where the ball seemed to fall, but down turf where I was."



Desmond Leslie wrote book on alien UFOs that landed on earth.



Kenneth Arnold 'saw' the first flying saucers on June 26, 1947.



Donald Keyhoe, ex-Marine Col., says UFOs come from space.



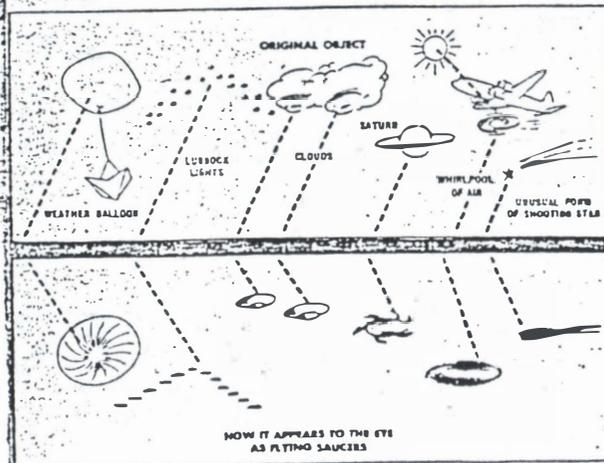
Buck Nelson, 'visited' Venus and Mars aboard flying saucer.

# 'FLYING SAUCER'

# PHENOMENA

The editor brings you a report on UFOs that separates sense from nonsense

by OTTO O. BINDER



**“WORLD SOCIETY OF FLYING SAUCERS!**  
 I propose a Society devoted to nothing more than the search for an answer to the greatest aeronautical mystery of all time . . .”

This advertisement appears in a bi-monthly magazine devoted solely to flying saucer phenomena. The ad was inserted by Kenneth Arnold, who inadvertently started the entire flying saucer mystery that has reverberated across America for almost 14 years.

It was in June, 1947, that Arnold, employed by a business firm in Idaho, was flying his private plane near Mount Rainier in Washington. Suddenly, he saw nine flying objects. “I watched for about three minutes a chain of saucer-like things . . . swerving in and out of the high mountain peaks,” he reported later. “They were flat like a pie pan and so shiny they reflected the sun like a mirror. I never saw anything so fast . . .”

It was the newspapers, not Arnold, that invented the term “flying saucers”. Only a few days later, reports began coming in of more flying saucers sighted by impressionable people everywhere. The sky, once so serene, was suddenly full of flying disks, whirling dinner plates, domed pancakes and a wide variety of such queer craft.

The U.S. Air Force was ordered to investigate the possibility that some new form of foreign aircraft was surreptitiously crossing American airspace. It quickly became apparent from the reported speeds of over 1,000

mph (this was before the supersonic barrier had been broken) and the sharp-corner turnings, that no earthly technology could have created these vehicles.

The official term then became UFO, Unidentified Flying Objects. All reports were processed through the ATIC (Aerospace Technical Intelligence Center) of the Air Force. From 1947 to date, there have been over 6,000 sightings of the mysterious “craft” in America. UFO fans claim a total of at least 15,000, plus many more thousands from other countries.

### Is Seeing Believing?

The official story is told in a new book, “Flying Saucers and the U. S. Air Force”. According to the author, Colonel Lawrence J. Tacker, the vast majority of sightings proved to be illusions involving peculiar weather conditions or familiar objects seen in distorted form. Typical

examples:

In 1958, a woman in Ohio reported a bright flat circular object moving about eight feet off the ground during a misty night. Investigation by the ATIC proved she had seen a train's oscillating headlight that had been weirdly magnified by the smog that night.

That same year in Pennsylvania, a number of witnesses saw something generally described as being round and orange, larger than the moon, shooting out sparks and making a rushing noise like wind. This proved to be a fireball, a large meteor falling slantwise toward earth, technically known as a bolide, by astronomers.

In 1959, a UFO was reported by pilots that turned out to be the planet Venus, which at times hangs low in the sky like a brilliant lantern rather than a star. And because of its remote distance it seems to "follow" you, just as the moon does. Anyone can see this remarkably realistic illusion by waiting until Venus is in the western evening sky, then getting in his car and driving north or south. Even though you are fully aware it is Venus, you will get the uncanny illusion of a UFO following and "observing" you, especially if there are trees, hills or buildings to the west behind which it dips as if "hiding" at times.

A good proportion of UFO reports are explained by the ATIC as caused by Venus, Mars, Jupiter or the star Sirius, since all of them can be bright enough to trick human eyes. But there are many other kinds of visual illusions that account for UFO "sightings."

A young couple driving at night in unfamiliar territory reported a huge silvery dome-shaped UFO near the road which later proved to be a radio tower whose floodlight created the illusion from the angle at which they saw it.

In 1949, a high-flying silvery disk turned out to be a huge weather balloon, some of which expand to 100 feet in diameter up in the stratosphere and

reflect moonlight or starlight.

A series of lighted disks, similar to those Kenneth Arnold saw, were reported in 1953 and came under a classification of illusion that accounts for a large proportion of UFO sightings. It is called temperature inversion.

Generally, warm air settles near the ground and the higher you go the colder the air gets. But atmospheric movements can often raise a large layer of warm air, causing cool or cold air to settle close to the earth below the warm air. Light-rays are refracted at different angles in warm and cold air. And where two such layers meet, light-rays from below can be bent and distorted amazingly. Because of this, common objects over the next hill—a row of streetlamps, car headlights in traffic, neon signs—become eerie objects to the viewer and seem to hang in the sky.

This is akin to mirages and can at times rival their magnitude. The famous "Washington Attack," which occurred in 1952, is an example:

Seven to ten UFO were suddenly seen by a large number of personnel at defense facilities near the city. Jets were sent to chase them and give battle if need be. Using their usual fantastic speeds and maneuvering ability, the UFO eluded pursuit and vanished. They returned later to cause the same furor before disappearing for good. To allay jittery nerves over the seeming threat to our capital city, the ATIC swiftly consulted with weather experts and other authorities. The consensus was that a temperature inversion (warm air mass over cold) of unusual proportions had been the cause.

What aroused the most excitement was the fact that even radarscopes had shown UFO. Radar, it would seem, could not be fooled. Yet it can. The USAF had a previous record of radar false alarms over non-existent objects. This can be caused by several special factors. For example, during electric or magnetic storms when the air is full of ions. These charged atoms have

the power to reflect radar-waves which otherwise go straight without bending. Thus, as the radar beams searching the sky are temporarily deflected downward, they bounce back from distant cars or other moving ground vehicles to give "blips" on the radarscope. False "planes" then mystify the radar crew watching their screens.

In the case of the "Washington Attack", extraordinary electrical/magnetic conditions worked on the radarscopes, while the temperature inversion worked on human eyes, resulting in the combined UFO sightings of craft that were harmless phantoms.

There is a long list of other known phenomena, which, combined with unusual seeing conditions at night, create vivid flying saucer illusions. Among these phenomena: high-flying jets refueling in midair, close-packed flocks of migratory birds, moon halos, meteors seen during an auroral display, the "hump-backed" radar surveillance coastguard planes, and many more.

After investigating hundreds of such cases during the years after 1947, the ATIC became skilled in classifying most illusory sightings. However, a small percentage of "hard core" reports, made by reputable witnesses, could not be easily disposed of. As an example:

In 1948, two Eastern Airline pilots and several ground observers, sighted what seemed to be a wingless cigar-shaped craft about 100 feet long which zoomed down toward the airliner, then swerved up into the clouds at incredible speed, ejecting bursts of flame from its rear. It was nothing like a rocket, they said, nor any vehicle or device known to earthly science. Because of the reliability of the pilots and

The Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center is located in Houston.

witnesses on the ground, and their unshakable repetition of precise details, this object could not be dismissed as the usual optical illusion.

According to the USAF, about 2 percent of UFO sightings like these are in the "unexplained" files of the ATIC. Yet this does not by any means constitute proof that UFO are real. The USAF has enlisted the aid of many scientists to try to track down these unsolved cases too and feels confident some rational explanation will eventually come forth.

Scientific opinion is almost solidly arrayed on the side of the USAF and against the UFOlogists (as flying saucer believers prefer to call themselves). Several points are advanced to challenge the UFO theory:

1. If other-world civilizations have sent their spacecraft to visit earth, why have they not landed and contacted our authorities long ago? Their strange game of playing hide-and-seek in our clouds for 14 years hardly seems an "intelligent" thing to do.

2. More concretely, why is it that no astronomer has announced seeing even one UFO in his telescope? Out of the thousands of photographs taken by observatories all around the world, some photographic plate by the sheer law of averages should have caught such craft approaching or leaving earth, if the UFO traffic is as heavy as UFOlogists would have us believe.

3. Even more remarkable is the fact that no ordinary camera has obtained a genuine photograph for the UFOlogists. Those presented to authorities have either proved to be shameless hoaxes or were distortions of ordinary objects such as weather balloons.

For six years "Long John" Nebel, on his radio and TV shows, has interviewed UFOlogists such as Kenneth Arnold, George Adamski and Major Keyhoe, as well as many other famous champions of flying saucers. He has been shown hundreds of alleged UFO photographs. Nebel, an acknowledged photographic expert, flatly declares that every photo he has seen was questionable. To date, no documented UFO photo or movie film has proved to be authentic when examined by experts.

4. Also damaging to the flying saucer theory is the fact that through a 14-year period of research, the thousands of UFOlogists have not yet pinned down one single fact on which they all agree. Shape of craft? Size? Specific speed range? Probable propulsion? Engine sound? The data presented by each UFOlogy study group differs from the data of other groups.

This is not to deny the possibility that interplanetary ships could exist. Most astronomers consider it not only possible but quite likely that many other intelligent beings inhabit the universe. Our galaxy alone, it is estimated, contains a minimum of one million earth-like planets. Many of their civilizations would be more advanced than ours and could conceivably have interstellar ships.

No less an authority than Dr. Otto Struve is conducting Project Ozma in which a radio-telescope is seeking to pick up coded signals from other worlds. But Dr. Struve plainly states that the reported UFO phenomena do not "inspire confidence in a hypothesis of an extra-terrestrial origin of the so-called flying saucers".

UFOlogists accuse scientists of having "closed minds" about manned craft from far-away worlds. But the exact reverse is true. "I don't think there is an astronomer alive," says Dr. J. Allen Hynek of Smithsonian, "who would not stand up and cheer at some real evidence for space visitors. How our knowledge of astronomy would grow if we could communicate directly with denizens of outer space..."

One thing that has furnished fodder for the UFOlogists is the fact that the USAF is under orders to keep checking all UFO reports. As the USAF has stated many times, it has the plainest of motives—national defense. They have to make sure no odd earthly craft are flying secret missions in America's airspace.

But the hundreds of detailed, scientific explanations by the USAF of so-called saucer phenomena fail to satisfy the UFOlogists, who claim the U.S. government is withholding secret proof of the existence of flying saucers for fear of creating public panic.

Uranium, a metallic, radioactive element, is used as fuel in nuclear reactors

#### Myth Makers

Behind this 14-year controversy there lies a unique phenomenon of modern times. The phenomenon is not the UFO, but the UFOlogists.

Since 1947 we have seen a myth in the making. Just as earlier eras believed in Olympian gods, ghosts, witchcraft, leprechauns and what-have-you, thousands today believe in flying saucers.

Dr. Carl G. Jung, noted psychiatrist, has studied this mass mental aberration and sees it as a reaction to the uncertainty of our cold war times. Scientifically superior saucerians who might right all earthly wrongs would be such a wonderful answer to our problems. The subconscious wish for a "father-image" in our present civilization is demonstrated by UFO books, which rarely predict the aliens as potential conquerors of earth. Invariably, the visitors are volunteer space samaritans awaiting the right moment to lift our poor, misguided society into the light.

The psychological factor in UFO sightings also appears in the yearly totals. In 1952, after the notorious "Washington Attack," sightings rose sharply to a peak. Fearful people "saw" many more UFO's for 6 months. Also, quite significantly, out of a total of 1,178 sightings in 1957, 701 of them took place in the 3 months after Sputnik I went into orbit. Obviously, the fact that earth could now launch space vehicles instantly stimulated the public imagination and led to more sightings of vehicles from outer space.

Incidentally, a considerable proportion of UFO sightings since 1957 has been traced directly to our orbiting satellites. On March 7, 1960, for example, people near Miami, Florida reported a bright UFO flashing across the heavens in fiery style. The NASA verified that the satellite carrier of Discoverer VIII had fallen from orbit

QUARTERLY COMMENTS

"I'm not too comfortable with the Gulf Breeze photographs. I feel that many of these images are double exposure photographs. The craft in many of these images seems to be in a different focus, that they're either more sharply focused or fuzzier than the surrounding background objects. The spacecraft appears to be rather bright as if there's some kind of external light shining on it. The situation that would arise if the craft were in a room at an earlier time with room light shining from all directions. It seems that in quite a few of these pictures the very top and bottom of the spacecraft are very sharply cut off whereas the rest of the image is rather fuzzy, giving me the feeling that there was some kind of cut and paste on to some surface. It appears that with every photograph where this object appears that its against a relatively uniformly dark background; the kind that you need for double exposure. When you add two images together you get the intensities added and even though the portholes, if that's what they are, appear rather dark, they're never darker than the background sky. I've been chasing UFO sightings for over 30 years. I would have liked to have said differently but I'm afraid the Gulf Breeze photographs just don't check out."\* - Dr. Robert Nathan, "UFO Cover-Up, Live" broadcast internationally on Friday, October 14, 1988.

"Dr. Nathan has studied only a few of the photographs. I, on the other hand have analyzed all the photographic evidence which includes stereo photos that allowed me to calculate the distance and size of the UFO. I've also analyzed the video tape. I've asked myself if the photographic evidence were a hoax, how was it done? I've considered many methods for creating trick photos; each method can leave a characteristic flaw within a photo. And I have searched for such flaws, for example, I have looked above each UFO to see if there is a fine line indicating it was suspended by a string. I've looked below each image to see if there is any indication if it was resting on a table or a post. I looked for reflections in glass, double exposures and photographic montages. I've found that none of these methods had been used. Therefore, after many, many hours of analysis, I have found nothing in the photos which could refute the sighting reports. My opinion is that the photos are genuine and these crafts are not from here, unless there is some race other than the human race operating them."\* - Dr. Bruce Maccabee, "UFO Cover-up, Live" broadcast internationally on Friday, October 14, 1988.

"In science replication of findings is a necessary part of the process of inquiry. It is now time for another scientist as skilled and conscientious as Dr. Maccabee to examine the photographs and to report his conclusions." - From "The CUFOS Position on the Gulf Breeze case", August, 1988.

"We support a recent statement by CUFOS, the CUFOS Position on the Gulf Breeze Case, and look for a quick resolution to this very serious problem." - JUST CAUSE (Citizens Against UFO Secrecy), September, 1988.

"...as in all other serious scientific endeavors where truth is sought, the data must be openly available for the scrutiny and re-analysis by others who are also trained in photo analysis. I am not referring to myself. But I do refer to Dr. Willy Smith and perhaps colleagues of JPL. They should be given the opportunity to freely examine all of the photos and then prepare their own report(s). If Mr. Ed has nothing to hide then he will agree to this, as the owner of this evidence." ... "No response received as of 9/30/88!" - Copy of letter to Dr. Maccabee from Dr. Richard F. Haines, dated August 18, 1988.

\* Bold underlined emphasis my own - editor.

"Can you inform me as to how the computerized photograph analysis is coming along in regard to GB? Is there a projected date for its conclusion? Will an independent analysis be allowed for possible replication? Since Mr. Whitley Strieber financed the one currently under way there should not be any objection to Dr. Smith financing a second one, should there?" - Letter to Dr. Maccabee from Robert D. Boyd, dated August 31, 1988. No reply as of October 15, 1988.

"Robert Boyd has done a nice detailed dissection of Dr. Maccabee(s) work in a report titled 'Failure At Science', which those interested in pursuing the matter further can obtain directly from him." - Dr. Willy Smith, "The Gulf Breeze Saga", dated September 17, 1988.

"This is a well-detailed piece of work complete with illustrations and pertinent data, anomalies of photographs which have been kept out of the MUFON journal, negative evidence which was systematically suppressed, the development of the senseless attack on Bob Boyd, lengthy critique on Bruce Maccabee's 1988 Symposium paper, and more." - Mr. Jim Melesciuc, ORBITER, The New England Aerial Phenomena Report, September, 1988.

"I found 'Failure At Science' to be a devastating critique of (Dr.) Maccabee's work on the case. I will be surprised if he responds to it, particularly since he has not responded to your critique of the details of Ed's first sighting and his report of it to the investigators." - Mr. Mark Rodegnier, Scientific Director, J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, October 2, 1983.

"At our Sunday luncheon, Ed stated to me that he realized the publication of a book would be viewed by some as capitalizing on the incidents and lead to further skepticism. I suggested in turn that, if all profits were turned over to a charity or to FUFOR, for example, this would blunt any criticism that a hoax was perpetrated for financial gain. And if they remained anonymous in such a book, there would be no reasonable criticism that they were seeking fame." - Copy of letter to Robert D. Boyd from Mr. Dan Wright, MUFON Deputy Director, June 28, 1988.

The last quote above brings questions to my mind: If Ed does write his book where will the money derived from its sales go? Will he keep it all for himself? Will FUFOR and MUFON associates receive percentages of those sales? If so, how much and in what manner? Now that Dr. Nathan, a qualified scientist with a decade of experience beyond Dr. Maccabee's 19 years in the UFO phenomenon study field, has refuted Ed's claims and replicated Dr. Smith's findings, which of the GB proponents will continue to collaborate with the perpetrator?

The above comments are reprinted from the Oct. Center Investigators Quarterly (Robert Boyd P.O. Box #66404, Mobile, Alabama 36606 USA). I find it a bit unfortunate that with all the media hype and so-called UFO experts who found the Gulf Breeze F1 events to be the most "significant case ever" had to be exposed on national television. (see above statement from Dr. Nathan) The UFO Cover-Up, Live broadcast has to be one of the most informative programs aired in recent years. Strong credibility was applied in the first half of the program with Mike Farrel interviewing Dr. Haines on pilot sightings and pilot Cpt. Daniels relating his experience. Colonel Friend and Colonel Coleman were interviewed and gave the viewers some insight on the Blue Book era. It was also refreshing to see a flow of information from within the Soviet Union with the appearance of Sergi Bulanoff (spelled phonetically) who is a Tass journalist and UFO investigator. The second part of the program in my opinion was somewhat disappointing. The MJ-12 proponents produced nothing new to support their claims except the EBes enjoy strawberry ice-cream.

Results from UFO Cover-up Telephone Poll:	
No Experience	20%
CE-1	66%
CE-2	5%
CE-3	3%
CE-4	6%
Q: Do You Feel a Congressional investigation is warranted?	
YES	87%
NO	13%

# N.Y.'s Hudson Valley Attracts People Seeking Close Encounters With UFOs

**PINE BUSH, N.Y. (AP)** — Clouds quickly fill the night sky, obscuring a nearly full moon. It's not a good night to find whatever's Out There.

Still, a half-dozen people who've parked their cars in the shoulder of a country road in New York's Hudson Valley crane their necks at the sky. This is supposedly one of the nation's best areas for spotting UFO activity, but the only things visible on a cool autumn evening are identified flying objects — airplanes banking into nearby airports.

Peter Gersten waits suspiciously. The silver-bearded lawyer believes 99 percent of supposed UFO sightings are easily explainable, despite the vanity license plates on his Porsche that read UFOBREAL. He's devoted hundreds of hours to wrangling UFO documents from the government in court.

Victoria Lacas waits expectantly. She's mad because most people abducted by aliens are unwilling victims, and she'd be more than happy to submit herself to experiments.

Linda Doern waits calmly. Linda and her husband, Peter, both real estate appraisers, admit to being fascinated by psychic and other unexplained phenomena. An evening in Pine Bush, she jokes, "boats watching television."

Ellen Crystall waits excitedly. The self-described UFO photographer is the guardian of the field, where she's claimed to have seen aliens and dozens of unexplained lights. She's driven to this field from her New Jersey home hundreds of times since 1981 in the hope of making contact again.

"You missed it, Ellen," Gersten tells Crystall when her car pulled up a half hour later than expected. "The mother ship was here! There used to be several more of us waiting."

Crystall dismisses the joke and checks the sky. It doesn't bode well. The aliens, who she suspects are building an underground base in the Hudson Valley, don't seem to like clouds or rain, she said.

Whatever the reason, strange sightings seem commonplace in the Hudson Valley. Hundreds of people — not just those who go out looking for them — have seen things in the sky that can't be explained, said Phillip Imbrogno, author of "Night Siege: The Hudson Valley UFO Sightings."

These sightings caused a sensation in 1983 and 1984 in this area of New York City suburbs and farmland, stretching in to western Connecticut. Reports have been less frequent since then; but still steady, Imbrogno said.

Most, if not all, can be easily explained, said Jeff Lehman, spokesman for the nearby Stewart International Airport. He said a group of pilots, whose identities are not known, enjoy fooling UFO fanatics by flying in close formation many evenings. It's not illegal, but it's annoying, he said.

"I don't see scaring people with aircraft as a game," he said, saying many of the people who've described UFOs have seen things that conform closely to what airport officials know what the planes look like.

"As for UFOs, I myself would have to see it to believe it," Lehman said.

Crystall believes. She said she saw something unusual at the cornfield off Searsville Road, 20 miles from Middletown, soon

after she was first taken there by a magazine writer.

Gazing over a distant treeline while alone at the field one night, she spotted what appeared to be a craft drifting slowly to the ground. After seeing something flutter, almost like a moth, she shined a spotlight into a wooded area. She said she saw a 3½-foot creature with a beige body and huge yellow eyes staring back at her.

"This thing had a worried look on its face and it bled through its hands," Crystall said. "I was panic-stricken. I could not utter a sound."

The blonde-haired music student with the infectious enthusiasm claims to have taken 800 photographs of UFOs. She said she holds no grudges against people who don't share her beliefs but confided, "I try and avoid them."

At a restaurant 20 minutes from Searsville Road, Crystall's friends passed the time waiting for dusk to turn to darkness. Ignoring critical looks from by-standers, they discussed landmarks in UFO history with the sort of insider's lingo that renders the conversation meaningless to anyone else.

Gersten, who's set up a hotline telephone number for UFO fanatics to keep up on the gossip, said he enjoys the mystery and glamour of UFOs.

"It seems like we're prisoners on this planet and we've lost the ability to explore," said Gersten, who fixes companions with a penetrating stare. Most people accept that UFOs exist, he said, "because we simply can't be the only people in the universe."

But he dismisses most reports of unexplained lights in the Hudson Valley. Most sightings are probably conventional airplanes, he said, adding he'd offered a reward so the mysterious group of pilots come forward to identify themselves.

Gersten belongs in the "government conspiracy" camp of UFO followers, believing that secret military technology is being tested in the skies.

"Imagine a civilization 10,000 years more advanced than us," said the New York City lawyer. "Do you think they'd come here in spaceships?"

Yes, opined Lacas, because they want to investigate the inhabitants of Earth. The local assistant and flower-child hold-over is fascinated by the current UFO furor over abductions,

during which people are supposedly "beamed up" by aliens for a quick examination.

Lacas calls herself an "abduction volunteer."

"I want to bring trinkets to trade," she said, fingering some jewelry, "because I want to make friends when I go on board."

"For the Doerns, all aspects of the paranormal are fascinating. There's a lot more going on in the world than meets the naked eye," Linda said, but she under-stands why most people look at UFOs and psychic phenomena with abundant skepticism.

"There are a lot of strange people involved in it," she said. "I think it discredits it for a lot of people. It turns a lot of people off. I think you have to look beyond them and not let it deter you."

After the drive to Searsville Road, some participants note the "eeriness" they feel while gazing at the sky. But friends passed the time waiting when it's apparent most of the lights in the sky are either stars or airplanes; conversations drift to baseball and photography.

A car roars by the packed vehicles about safety. A woman, partially hidden by curtains, peers out at the visitors to her neighborhood.

Crystall and her followers are well-known to Chief Daniel McCann and the rest of the Town of Crawford police department, which has jurisdiction over Pine Bush. He said he occasionally hears trespassing complaints, and Crystall has been chased off people's property once or twice, but she's usually good about telling authorities where she's going to be.

With the airport and a unit of the Air National Guard nearby, Crawford police are used to getting calls about strange things in the sky. Police have never seen any hard evidence of UFOs, but they don't always have an easy explanation for what people claim they see.

The area's becoming some-

what of a tourist spot among the supernatural fans, McCann explained, saying he's gotten calls from UFO enthusiasts for directions to Searsville Road.

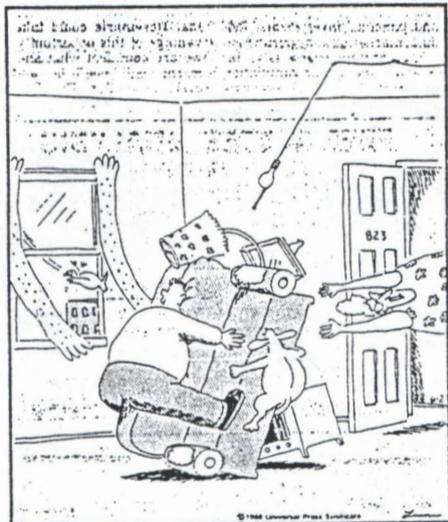
"Ellen does say that she sees these things," he said. "I'm not going to dispute her. She probably has seen something. Who knows what they are?"

One of Crystall's companions points the flash of her camera at some shrubbery, hoping others notice the particles in the air she sees during the brief burst of light. What she claims is "angel dust" looks suspiciously like pollen.

It's the only unusual sighting of the night. As the night progressed, the search for warmth became paramount and the evening ended in disappointment.

Neptune is the most distant planet from the sun until 1999, reports the World Almanac. It orbits at an average of 2.8 billion miles.

THE FAR SIDE © by Gary Larson



Suddenly, through forces not yet fully understood, Darren Belsky's apartment became the center of a new black hole.

The "hunters moon" follows the "harvest moon."

## Cont'

and burned up like a meteor on that date.

In the newspapers, only the number of satellites in orbit are reported — around a dozen. But scientific reports list a total of 38 objects up there — including empty rocket shells, burned-out third stages, jettisoned retro-rockets, and other debris left over from satellite launchings. Many of those pieces of space "junk" are in a low enough orbit to become visible briefly, flashing across the sky like meteors.

Thus, an increasing percentage of UFO sightings today are not objects from outer space but objects from earth. However, this explanation is also rejected by the UFOlogists.

## Contactees

Perhaps Willy Ley, top-notch authority on rockets and space travel, has

best summed up the flying saucer furor by calling it an epidemic which "seems to have run its course in the same manner as an epidemic caused by bacteria. At the first onslaught a large portion of the population succumbs, getting more or less severe cases of the disease. A few are immune. After a while, most of the patients recover, but there are a number of hopeless cases."

The hopeless cases may be those classified by UFOlogists as "contactees." These are people who claim to have met flying saucerians in person. Some have written books on their experiences with such typical titles as, "My Contact With Flying Saucers," "Aboard A Flying Saucer," "Inside The Saucer Ship," etc.

In their books and during radio or television interviews, the contactees claim they have not only met people from other worlds but have taken rides

back home with them. A sort of running theme in most of these books is that the saucerians wish to help backward earth and its warlike civilization into a golden age. So far none of this help, which would be welcome, has materialized. The authors never explain why.

An advertisement in one of the flying saucer magazines points to a possible mercenary motive: GENUINE substance from Outer Space. You can wear it on your finger. Send \$5.00 for complete set, with affidavit and guarantee of genuineness.

Perhaps the final answer to the UFOlogists will come only when earthly spacecraft begin traveling to the moon and planets. Then, if no flying saucers are found in our space attic, the last UFOlogist will doubtless surrender his belief in these extra-terrestrial visitors in their fantastic flying machines.