

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:08,000

MUSIC

2

00:00:19,000 --> 00:00:24,000

Did this plane's pilot escape unknown forces in the Devil's Triangle?

3

00:00:25,000 --> 00:00:32,000

Can these submarine scientists explain the fate of sailors and their ships that disappear there?

4

00:00:35,000 --> 00:00:42,000

Five US Navy planes like these never came home. Were they victims of some unearthly power?

5

00:00:43,000 --> 00:00:49,000

Mysteries from the fires of Arthur C. Clarke, author of 2001 and inventor of the communication satellite.

6

00:00:50,000 --> 00:00:55,000

Now in retreat in Sri Lanka, he ponders the riddles of this and other worlds.

7

00:00:56,000 --> 00:01:18,000

MUSIC

8

00:01:19,000 --> 00:01:25,000

MUSIC

9

00:01:26,000 --> 00:01:32,000

These fishermen land their catch at dawn every morning near my beach villa in Sri Lanka.

10

00:01:33,000 --> 00:01:39,000

They know that the Indian Ocean holds countless dangers for even the most experienced seafarers.

11

00:01:40,000 --> 00:01:45,000

A chance wave or storm could wreck their flimsy boats and claim them at any moment.

12

00:01:45,000 --> 00:01:54,000

According to some writers, these treacherous seas hold few dangers compared to the area of the Atlantic between Bermuda and Florida.

13

00:01:55,000 --> 00:02:03,000

This is the notorious Bermuda Triangle. Since 1945, over a hundred ships and planes are said to have vanished there.

14

00:02:04,000 --> 00:02:08,000

Not only without trace, but often in mysterious circumstances.

15

00:02:08,000 --> 00:02:15,000

Businessman Bruce Gernon commutes all over Florida in his private plane.

16

00:02:16,000 --> 00:02:20,000

There's one flight he'll never forget.

17

00:02:21,000 --> 00:02:29,000

I encountered this cloud out over the Bahama bank and I saw this tremendous buildup of electricity inside it.

18

00:02:30,000 --> 00:02:35,000

The deeper I got, the more electricity I could see and they weren't lightning bolts.

19

00:02:35,000 --> 00:02:38,000

They were just bright pure white flashes.

20

00:02:39,000 --> 00:02:44,000

MUSIC

21

00:02:45,000 --> 00:02:51,000

Gernon found himself flying along a tunnel in the strange cloud. It was just wide enough for his little plane.

22

00:02:52,000 --> 00:03:00,000

It sort of had like a silver lining that you often see on clouds and the other end was clear blue sky with the sun shining through.

23

00:03:01,000 --> 00:03:09,000

I had to concentrate very hard on the other end which appeared to be like 12 miles away and narrowing rapidly.

24

00:03:10,000 --> 00:03:20,000

Well, when I came out, I couldn't see any horizon or the ocean or the sky. It was pure gray and I'd call it an electronic fog.

25

00:03:21,000 --> 00:03:30,000

I tried to get a position fix. I asked my co-pilot and he was unable to do it and then discovered

that all the electronic instruments were malfunctioning.

26

00:03:31,000 --> 00:03:38,000

Then these huge slits opened up parallel to the direction of the flight showing the clear skies.

27

00:03:40,000 --> 00:03:48,000

At last, air traffic control made radio contact. They told Gernon he was much closer to Miami than he believed possible.

28

00:03:49,000 --> 00:03:56,000

I looked at my watch and airplane clock and I had only been flying for 30 minutes.

29

00:03:57,000 --> 00:04:05,000

So according to my calculations, I was probably 90 miles away from Miami, I told him he had the wrong airplane.

30

00:04:06,000 --> 00:04:11,000

Then after my eyes start to focus, I could see directly below me was the island of Miami Beach.

31

00:04:12,000 --> 00:04:27,000

I think that when I entered that tunnel, Vortex, the aircraft was moved forward through time and

space about 100 miles or 30 minutes or both.

32

00:04:28,000 --> 00:04:32,000

At the time, I thought I wouldn't have made it because it appeared to be a powerful electronic force.

33

00:04:33,000 --> 00:04:39,000

I could have damaged the aircraft beyond repair and probably crashed and the Bermuda Triangle may have claimed another victim.

34

00:04:42,000 --> 00:04:57,000

Miami is perched on the tip of the USA, literally on the edge of the Bermuda Triangle.

35

00:04:58,000 --> 00:05:05,000

Newspaper reporters of the Miami Herald know that they must look to the sea for some of their best copy.

36

00:05:06,000 --> 00:05:11,000

This is Vicki Silderberg at the Miami Herald. I'm just checking to see if everything's running smoothly today.

37

00:05:12,000 --> 00:05:18,000

I need distress calls or emergencies. No, nothing in the Bermuda Triangle, right? Okay, thank you very much. Goodbye.

38

00:05:19,000 --> 00:05:25,000

The executive editor of the Miami Herald holds a watching brief. Doug Clifton is a veteran of Triangle Tales.

39

00:05:26,000 --> 00:05:33,000

The Bermuda Triangle has got to be one of the longest running stories in Herald history, I guess.

40

00:05:34,000 --> 00:05:45,000

It started way back when a reporter was doing kind of an update and he for the first time noted that there was a confluence of these kinds of disappearances.

41

00:05:46,000 --> 00:05:58,000

The reporter, E.V.W. Jones, said he found the losses occurred within a triangle. Miami, Bermuda and Puerto Rico were at its three points. The legend of the Bermuda Triangle was born.

42

00:05:59,000 --> 00:06:17,000

Since Mr. Jones' first piece, the stories about the Bermuda Triangle seem never to stop when events occurred. A boat missing, a boat late to report, a plane veering off course. It was always in the Bermuda Triangle.

43

00:06:18,000 --> 00:06:37,000

The strangest and most tragic case of all dates back to December 1945. Five Avenger planes belonging to the United States and Navy took off from Fort Lauderdale, Florida on a training flight.

44

00:06:37,000 --> 00:06:52,000

Neither the fourteen men who flew off that day nor their aircraft were ever seen again. And even now, the mystery they left behind them lives on in the hearts and minds of their loved ones and their comrades in arms.

45

00:06:53,000 --> 00:07:07,000

Every year since 1945, a commemoration service has paid tribute to Flight 19.

46

00:07:08,000 --> 00:07:25,000

The flight should have been uneventful. Avenger planes like these were tried and tested. The weather on takeoff was good, the forecast was clear, the crews were experienced and the planes well maintained.

47

00:07:25,000 --> 00:07:42,000

The five planes were on a routine combat practice over the ocean. No one expected any problems. The commander of Flight 19 was Captain Taylor. The first sign of trouble came when he radioed in to say he was lost. Don Poole had trained Flight 19.

48

00:07:55,000 --> 00:08:21,000

Captain Taylor seemed to have no idea where he was.

49

00:08:22,000 --> 00:08:26,000

But it appeared that Captain Taylor wasn't listening.

50

00:08:41,000 --> 00:08:46,000

Jim Ward was waiting in his rescue boat for orders. He heard all the radio transmissions.

51

00:08:52,000 --> 00:09:00,000

If you're over the Gulf of Mexico, you're going to hit the coast of Texas. If you're over the Atlantic Ocean, you're going to hit the coast of Florida.

52

00:09:00,000 --> 00:09:10,000

He acknowledged the direction by radio and then they asked him how much gasoline do you think you had left. He said I think I have about twenty minutes.

53

00:09:10,000 --> 00:09:16,000

We watched the clock tick down and twenty minutes went by. We knew they must be down someplace but we didn't know where.

54

00:09:17,000 --> 00:09:29,000

Those left behind still wonder what went wrong. The bereaved families and comrades have only the Bermuda Triangle to blame.

55

00:09:39,000 --> 00:09:43,000

One member of the search and rescue team was Dave White.

56

00:09:43,000 --> 00:09:50,000

We couldn't believe it. One plane going down, engine failure is nothing, but five of our planes missing, impossible.

57

00:09:50,000 --> 00:10:02,000

At six o'clock we took off. They had drawn up a grid for us and each one of us instructors took five or six people with us and we flew out about 150 or 200 miles from here.

58

00:10:02,000 --> 00:10:11,000

My first run was up near Palm Beach and we went up there and then went out over the ocean for about 200 miles. Turn around and came back, nothing.

59

00:10:11,000 --> 00:10:24,000

We searched on the boat end of it for at least two weeks. We had patterns that we followed trying to cover the whole ocean while there were many, many planes out searching all over the place.

60

00:10:24,000 --> 00:10:36,000

B-19s and all the planes that could get into the air but never found a bit of wreckage, no gasoline

slip, no fellows floating or anything. Nothing found.

61

00:10:37,000 --> 00:10:43,000

An exhaustive official investigation was conducted by Captain Richard Roberts.

62

00:10:43,000 --> 00:10:58,000

Well, it's still a mystery because we have not found an airplane. Digging into all the facts we could get at the time, we could only go so far and our conclusion was we didn't know where they went but they just vanished.

63

00:10:58,000 --> 00:11:02,000

So you might as well just say they flew off into the wild blue yonder.

64

00:11:06,000 --> 00:11:11,000

B-19s and all the other planes that were found were found in the ocean.

65

00:11:11,000 --> 00:11:16,000

B-19s and all the other planes that were found in the ocean.

66

00:11:19,000 --> 00:11:31,000

Believers in the Bermuda Triangle have inflated their case by departing lists of ships and planes

that have come to grief in the area and anywhere near it.

67

00:11:32,000 --> 00:11:40,000

This commercial passenger plane was en route from Puerto Rico to Miami. It disappeared and no wreckage was ever found.

68

00:11:40,000 --> 00:11:49,000

A millionaire's sailing yacht, the Revenok, set off on a short pleasure trip to Miami from Key West. She never returned.

69

00:11:50,000 --> 00:12:01,000

This naval submarine was equipped with radar and sonar but while patrolling the Bermuda Triangle, the USS Tigrone went mysteriously off course and collided with a reef.

70

00:12:01,000 --> 00:12:09,000

Joshua Slocum owned the Spray, one of the world's most experienced sailors. Why did he vanish off the Miami coast?

71

00:12:10,000 --> 00:12:19,000

But the facts tell a different story. Experts claim the airliner ran out of fuel over the Gulf of Mexico.

72

00:12:19,000 --> 00:12:31,000

The Revenok sailed into a hurricane according to coast guards. The Tigrone's accident was not unheard of in the Navy. Sailors didn't think it at all mysterious.

73

00:12:31,000 --> 00:12:37,000

And even Slocum's own son believed his father simply failed to weather his last storm.

74

00:12:38,000 --> 00:12:50,000

Lloyds of London are the world's foremost insurers of ships and planes. If there's something out of the ordinary about the Bermuda Triangle, the experts there are certain to know.

75

00:12:52,000 --> 00:13:02,000

At Lloyds of London, records of the shipping lot is are kept for decades. At Lloyds maritime, Norman Hawks sifts fact from fiction.

76

00:13:02,000 --> 00:13:09,000

Quite a number of the inquiries we receive relate to vessels which are reportedly lost in the so-called Bermuda Triangle.

77

00:13:10,000 --> 00:13:14,000

The Marine South Aquine is a classic case for Bermuda Triangle supporters.

78

00:13:15,000 --> 00:13:26,000

The Marine South Aquine was on voyage from Texas through the Gulf of Mexico, through the Florida Straits and then out into the Atlantic. She was last reported off Key West.

79

00:13:27,000 --> 00:13:37,000

Search and rescue teams found no wreckage and declared the loss of the Marine South Aquine a mystery. But later some flotsam did surface, carried north on the Gulf Stream.

80

00:13:38,000 --> 00:13:52,000

The Marine South Aquine is regarded as a marine casualty. There's nothing mysterious about her loss really, because wreckage has been found and obviously the wreck does lie at the bottom of the seabed, probably southeast of Key West.

81

00:13:57,000 --> 00:14:11,000

The Anita was last reported, I believe, about 150 miles southeast of Cape May. Nothing ever was found of that vessel, nor were any survivors ever found, nor anybody's ever located.

82

00:14:12,000 --> 00:14:28,000

By coincidence, another Norwegian bulk carrier, the Norse variant, was in a very, very similar location when she was overwhelmed by such severe weather conditions that she sank with the loss of all her crew except for one seaman, Stein Gabrielsen.

83

00:14:29,000 --> 00:14:44,000

Gabrielsen was lucky to survive. He spent three days on a life raft before being picked up. His testimony shed light on the fate of the Norse variant's sister ship. No supernatural forces had

been at work on the Anita.

84

00:14:45,000 --> 00:14:58,000

His story was that the vessel he was on was overwhelmed by such severe weather conditions the vessel sank very, very quickly. So it was presumed that the Anita suffered the same fate.

85

00:14:58,000 --> 00:15:10,000

Some people may have thought that the Bermuda Triangle as such may have claimed these vessels, but for us, looking through the records, it was obviously weather conditions which determined the fate of these two vessels.

86

00:15:11,000 --> 00:15:16,000

There are no more losses in that particular area, the Bermuda Triangle area of Atlantic and anywhere else in the world.

87

00:15:25,000 --> 00:15:32,000

Even the most famous Bermuda Triangle case of all, Flight 19, yields to meticulous investigation.

88

00:15:33,000 --> 00:15:37,000

John Meyer believes he knows how Flight 19 came to grief.

89

00:15:41,000 --> 00:15:45,000

In 1992, searchers thought they might have found the answer.

90

00:15:50,000 --> 00:15:53,000

But these five Avengers were not Flight 19.

91

00:15:56,000 --> 00:16:02,000

Another ditched plane was raised from elsewhere on the seabed. Again, hopes were dashed.

92

00:16:03,000 --> 00:16:12,000

The planes are still missing, but Meyer believes his diligent research could update the official report drawn up by Captain Roberts.

93

00:16:18,000 --> 00:16:28,000

Meyer has spent 13 years plotting every aspect of Flight 19's fateful trip. The wind speed, ocean currents and weather conditions all played their part.

94

00:16:29,000 --> 00:16:34,000

He can now say with confidence exactly where the planes went and when.

95

00:16:36,000 --> 00:16:41,000

There were several things. The wind was coming from a different direction and a different speed

than they had flight planned.

96

00:16:41,000 --> 00:16:45,000

They had a leader that was confused for whatever reason.

97

00:16:45,000 --> 00:16:51,000

Then we had the kids flying into a bad storm system and then we had nighttime on top of that.

98

00:16:52,000 --> 00:16:59,000

In spite of that, the flight would have come back and hit the mainland based on this track here.

99

00:16:59,000 --> 00:17:03,000

Had not, the first airplane run out of gas at 6.04.

100

00:17:09,000 --> 00:17:12,000

Meyer thinks he knows the point where the first plane ditched.

101

00:17:12,000 --> 00:17:18,000

He believes the other planes flew off in different directions in the desperate hope that one might make it home.

102

00:17:19,000 --> 00:17:22,000

Each now lies alone on the Atlantic seabed.

103

00:17:23,000 --> 00:17:30,000

The mystery is being able to prove, which I think I can on paper, what happened to Flight 19.

104

00:17:30,000 --> 00:17:41,000

Where they went, why they went where they went, why the pilots thought what they did and where the aircraft finally came to rest on the ocean floor.

105

00:17:42,000 --> 00:17:48,000

The US Coast Guard cutters ply the seas off the Florida coast day and night.

106

00:17:48,000 --> 00:17:52,000

Their crews know every stretch of sea and the oceans every mood.

107

00:17:52,000 --> 00:17:56,000

Coast Guard Jim Howe is skeptical of the Bermuda Triangle.

108

00:17:56,000 --> 00:18:00,000

Well, we don't know if there is a Bermuda Triangle or not.

109

00:18:00,000 --> 00:18:07,000

What we know is that a lot of folks that we go out to rescue get in trouble either because of bad weather or because of bad judgment on their part.

110

00:18:07,000 --> 00:18:15,000

We've never really seen anything paranormal in these waters, but we do see a lot of people who get in trouble because of natural phenomenon such as high winds, heavy seas,

111

00:18:15,000 --> 00:18:22,000

or because of the current such as the Gulf Stream which can whisk someone in trouble pretty far away from where they initially start out.

112

00:18:22,000 --> 00:18:27,000

One of the things that happens in the southeast U.S. off of Miami off of Florida is the weather is usually pretty pleasant and you get a lot of boaters down here.

113

00:18:27,000 --> 00:18:29,000

It's basically the boating capital of America.

114

00:18:29,000 --> 00:18:31,000

You can boat year round.

115

00:18:31,000 --> 00:18:38,000

The problem is that in the summer, for example, you can get a lot of thunderstorms that come through and they can often crop up on short notice.

116

00:18:38,000 --> 00:18:45,000

Hundreds of shipwrecked mariners are rescued every year, but the Coast Guard videos show only natural forces at work.

117

00:18:45,000 --> 00:18:50,000

We can go from a perfectly calm day like we have today to a very, very rough weather just in a matter of minutes.

118

00:18:50,000 --> 00:18:53,000

8, 10 foot seas, 40, 50 mile an hour winds.

119

00:18:53,000 --> 00:18:56,000

And those winds can capture a lot of the sea and the sea.

120

00:18:56,000 --> 00:19:03,000

We also have hurricanes that roll through here once or twice a year and people can get caught in the real bad weather there.

121

00:19:03,000 --> 00:19:08,000

And that, of course, is much more traumatic and often leads to ships going down.

122

00:19:08,000 --> 00:19:12,000

Good Fix, minute 07 holds you 400 yards to the right of track.

123

00:19:12,000 --> 00:19:16,000

Recommend course 358 to regain.

124

00:19:16,000 --> 00:19:20,000

5 minute 10 at speed 13 knots.

125

00:19:20,000 --> 00:19:22,000

One desk per hour.

126

00:19:22,000 --> 00:19:25,000

5 minute 10 at speed 13 knots.

127

00:19:25,000 --> 00:19:27,000

1.98.

128

00:19:27,000 --> 00:19:28,000

1.989.

129

00:19:28,000 --> 00:19:29,000

North Jenny.

130

00:19:29,000 --> 00:19:30,000

Miami Beach.

131

00:19:30,000 --> 00:19:32,000

5.66.

132

00:19:32,000 --> 00:19:36,000

We don't really know where the myth of the Bermuda Triangle came from.

133

00:19:36,000 --> 00:19:39,000

What we see are natural phenomenon like the weather.

134

00:19:39,000 --> 00:19:42,000

And also we see people who just don't take proper safety precautions.

135

00:19:42,000 --> 00:19:46,000

We actually came across a boat once that was lost at sea and they called up in a panic.

136

00:19:46,000 --> 00:19:51,000

They were trying to navigate from Miami to the Bahamas using a placemat from a dinner restaurant.

137

00:19:51,000 --> 00:19:54,000

And they just thought that they could just drive it like they drive a car.

138

00:19:54,000 --> 00:19:57,000

It just doesn't work that way. It's very dangerous out here.

139

00:19:57,000 --> 00:19:59,000

The elements can surprise you.

140

00:19:59,000 --> 00:20:01,000

It's not like driving a car down a road.

141

00:20:01,000 --> 00:20:10,000

5 minute 10 at speed 13 knots.

142

00:20:10,000 --> 00:20:18,000

Amidst all the hype and flim flam, a few scientists claim to have found some real phenomena to investigate.

143

00:20:19,000 --> 00:20:27,000

In America's largest wave tank at Texas A&M University, a unique experiment is about to begin.

144

00:20:27,000 --> 00:20:33,000

Eruptions of gas on the seabed may explain disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle.

145

00:20:33,000 --> 00:20:37,000

The man behind the idea is Dr. Richard McIver.

146

00:20:37,000 --> 00:20:42,000

I was a scientist with one of the major oil companies and I had been reading in one of the offshore journals

147

00:20:43,000 --> 00:20:49,000

about the large number of floating drilling rigs and drilling ships that had been sunk when they drilled into shallow gas.

148

00:20:49,000 --> 00:20:53,000

And gas came rushing up and either sank them or caught them on fire.

149

00:20:53,000 --> 00:21:03,000

And about the same time I read the account of the Marine Sulphur Queen, that 429 foot tanker that disappeared without a trace in good weather out of the Florida Straits.

150

00:21:03,000 --> 00:21:08,000

And at that point I asked the question, why couldn't naturally occurring gas blow out sink ships?

151

00:21:09,000 --> 00:21:15,000

The scientists are using a scaled down tanker carefully calibrated to match the real thing.

152

00:21:15,000 --> 00:21:22,000

Gas pipes have been installed on the wave tank floor to simulate spontaneous gas explosions from the seabed.

153

00:21:22,000 --> 00:21:26,000

Dr. Wayne Dunlap is in charge of events.

154

00:21:26,000 --> 00:21:31,000

Well we have a vessel, it's a scale model of tanker.

155

00:21:31,000 --> 00:21:38,000

It's a perfect scale model and it's ballasted just like a tanker would be, so it's floating the distance in the water that a tanker would.

156

00:21:38,000 --> 00:21:43,000

What we're going to do is turn on the gas at a low pressure.

157

00:21:43,000 --> 00:21:48,000

That means that we'll get probably smaller bubbles and not as many of them and we'll see what's

happening.

158

00:21:48,000 --> 00:21:55,000

Then we're going to increase the pressure, we'll get larger bubbles, more bubbles and continue to increase the pressure and see what effect we get out of it.

159

00:21:55,000 --> 00:21:59,000

If the hypothesis is correct, the ship will sink.

160

00:22:01,000 --> 00:22:13,000

Dr. McKiver believes escaping gas can bring down aeroplanes as well as ships.

161

00:22:13,000 --> 00:22:20,000

Well my feeling is that the airplane could experience tremendous turbulence which could cause the airplane to go down.

162

00:22:20,000 --> 00:22:28,000

But more important perhaps is that when the gas is diluted five to ten times with air, then it becomes a combustible mixture

163

00:22:28,000 --> 00:22:32,000

and could ignite on the exhaust of the airplane.

164

00:22:32,000 --> 00:22:37,000

Mike go ahead and check out the camera.

165

00:22:37,000 --> 00:22:49,000

Okay I'm going to turn it on now.

166

00:22:49,000 --> 00:22:53,000

That's about 20 psi.

167

00:23:19,000 --> 00:23:38,000

That's it, we did it, we did it.

168

00:23:38,000 --> 00:23:42,000

Well it seems evident from what I've seen so far that we can sink a ship.

169

00:23:42,000 --> 00:23:49,000

Now as you saw this ship did rotate to the side and it took on some water and sank.

170

00:23:49,000 --> 00:23:57,000

We will try the same experiment now but with solid tops on it so that it can't rotate and take up any water.

171

00:23:57,000 --> 00:23:59,000

We'll see what happens to it.

172

00:24:13,000 --> 00:24:21,000

This is the first really scientific experiment we've done where we've had scale models and wonderful equipment.

173

00:24:21,000 --> 00:24:28,000

But to see a tanker model that was completely sealed off with air inside that was swamped by the gas bubble

174

00:24:28,000 --> 00:24:34,000

shows that the buoyancy is dramatically reduced in water when it's charged with bubbles.

175

00:24:34,000 --> 00:24:38,000

So does Dr. McKiver now believe in the Bermuda Triangle?

176

00:24:38,000 --> 00:24:43,000

Well I don't think the Bermuda Triangle is so unique as far as gases are concerned.

177

00:24:43,000 --> 00:24:50,000

I think the reason that so many ships and planes disappear there is that the ship density and their aircraft density is so high.

178

00:24:50,000 --> 00:24:53,000

We know that ships and planes disappear around the world.

179

00:24:53,000 --> 00:25:02,000

It just so happens that this is a place where we get a lot of publicity.

180

00:25:02,000 --> 00:25:11,000

I believe the Bermuda Triangle is a literary hoax invented by writers and embroidered by interested parties.

181

00:25:11,000 --> 00:25:14,000

It's also a self-fulfilling prophecy.

182

00:25:14,000 --> 00:25:19,000

Amateur sailors can't resist the challenge of dangerous waters.

183

00:25:19,000 --> 00:25:27,000

So they set sail defiantly and inexperently and learn that the sea is unforgiving.