

1

00:00:00,709 --> 00:00:07,708

Hidden away in an underground archive are row upon row of files few have seen.

2

00:00:07,708 --> 00:00:12,707

The lights work of history's greatest UFO hunter.

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00:00:12,707 --> 00:00:18,706

And they may contain proof that we are not alone.

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00:00:18,706 --> 00:00:29,705

In 1957, America's most advanced aircraft is followed by something that had the power to disappear.

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00:00:29,705 --> 00:00:37,703

In 1957, you don't have an aircraft that can jump from 11 o'clock to 2 o'clock instantaneously.

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00:00:37,703 --> 00:00:44,702

A landing in the desert turns sand to glass and leaves behind other physical traces.

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00:00:44,702 --> 00:00:48,702

These weren't just random holes in the ground, this was an engineered craft.

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00:00:48,702 --> 00:00:50,701

Who came out to investigate this?

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00:00:50,701 --> 00:00:51,701

FBI.

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00:00:51,701 --> 00:01:02,700

And the most sought after photographs in UFO history.

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00:01:02,700 --> 00:01:08,699

These photos have become the holy grail of the ufology.

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00:01:08,699 --> 00:01:17,697

Corroborating reports, strange marks in the desert, and a picture too perfect to be a hoax.

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00:01:18,697 --> 00:01:21,697

It's a perfect match.

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00:01:21,697 --> 00:01:28,696

This is case number 54103, the Lost UFO Files.

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00:01:28,696 --> 00:01:42,693

The Lost UFO Files

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00:01:42,693 --> 00:01:47,693

1954, the Arizona desert outside of Tucson.

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00:01:47,693 --> 00:01:58,691

Under sunset, James E. McDonald, a senior physicist at the University of Arizona, is driving through the expansive desert with four meteorologists.

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00:01:58,691 --> 00:02:05,690

Off in the distance, McDonald notices a strange point of light hovering above the mountains.

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00:02:05,690 --> 00:02:09,689

A bright anomalous object appears to be made of aluminum.

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00:02:09,689 --> 00:02:15,688

He points it out to his colleagues, but none of the men are able to identify it.

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00:02:15,688 --> 00:02:20,688

It appears without much of a reaction.

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00:02:20,688 --> 00:02:28,686

Little do these men know, but this mysterious sighting has just changed the course of UFO history.

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00:02:28,686 --> 00:02:34,685

James McDonald became fascinated with the controversy over UFO studies.

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00:02:34,685 --> 00:02:43,684

And the more his fascination grew, the more he realized that these cases had to be investigated.

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00:02:46,684 --> 00:02:59,682

Over the next 16 years, McDonald interviews over 500 witnesses, uncovers important government documents, and gives presentations of UFO evidence to huge crowds across the country.

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00:02:59,682 --> 00:03:07,680

He was the first man to take hard science into the UFO phenomenon and bring it into the scientific community.

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00:03:07,680 --> 00:03:18,679

Today, McDonald's legacy lives on in the archives of the University of Arizona, an untapped resource of UFO investigation and evidence.

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00:03:18,679 --> 00:03:25,678

There's a massive amount of material here. The collection is extensive, very meticulously detailed handwritten notes.

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00:03:25,678 --> 00:03:31,677

We've got film, video, physical artifacts. There could be some pretty interesting information here.

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00:03:31,677 --> 00:03:46,674

With special access to his archived files, UFO hunters aims to piece together the investigations of James McDonald by bringing classic case files into the 21st century.

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00:03:46,674 --> 00:03:52,674

UFO hunters meet with archivist Scott Cossel, who escorts them into the vault.

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00:03:52,674 --> 00:03:55,673

Here we are now, this is the archive of the University of Arizona special collections.

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00:03:55,673 --> 00:04:02,672

The James McDonald papers run from here all the way down that way. This is a restricted area.

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00:04:04,672 --> 00:04:05,672

Happy hunting.

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00:04:08,671 --> 00:04:09,671

Wow.

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00:04:10,671 --> 00:04:26,668

Bill Burns will reopen one of the most controversial cases in UFO history, the 1965 Eflin photographs, and put them through vigorous tests and visual analysis.

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00:04:27,668 --> 00:04:42,666

These four images have become the holy grail of ufology. If they're real, they're the best pictures of UFO we have anywhere.

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00:04:43,666 --> 00:05:00,663

Dr. Ted Acworth will dig into the RB-47 UFO sightings of 1957, when a UFO reportedly pursues an Air

Force crew for over 90 minutes and 700 miles.

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00:05:01,663 --> 00:05:13,661

One of McDonald's most compelling cases, the incident includes three verifiable sources, the pilot, a ground radar station, and the plane's state-of-the-art electronic countermeasure technology.

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00:05:13,661 --> 00:05:18,660

Did all three see a UFO with staggering capabilities?

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00:05:18,660 --> 00:05:25,659

This one looks pretty good because it's not just witness testimony, but if we can uncover more technical data about the radar.

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00:05:25,659 --> 00:05:32,658

It wasn't just the radar systems on board the aircraft, but also the radar on the ground. There were active radar installations that actually picked up the UFO at the same time.

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00:05:32,658 --> 00:05:35,658

So maybe through this research here, maybe we can end up with something new.

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00:05:35,658 --> 00:05:44,656

Pat Uskert is looking closer at the 1964 sightings of a strange craft by Lonnie Zamora, a police officer in Socorro, New Mexico.

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00:05:44,656 --> 00:05:51,655

The case involves a shiny capsule-like craft that blasts off, leaving hard evidence behind.

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00:05:51,655 --> 00:05:55,655

In the Zamora file, there were sketches, there were photographs, and his testimony.

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00:05:55,655 --> 00:06:04,653

What I'd like to do is, using our more modern techniques and tools that we have today, is pick up where McDonald left off and see what actually happened that day to Lonnie Zamora.

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00:06:04,653 --> 00:06:08,653

After all these years, this has never really been resolved.

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00:06:10,652 --> 00:06:15,652

The files are the culmination of 17 years of work by McDonald.

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00:06:16,652 --> 00:06:22,651

He began assembling them in 1953 while a professor at the University of Arizona.

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00:06:22,651 --> 00:06:29,650

Within McDonald's files, cases originally conducted by Project Blue Book are reopened.

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00:06:29,650 --> 00:06:36,649

His research uncovered some of the first proof that the CIA was investigating UFOs.

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00:06:36,649 --> 00:06:47,647

His documents revealed the possibility that the Air Defense Command, Air Force Intelligence, and even the Strategic Air Command were involved in UFO incidents.

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00:06:47,647 --> 00:06:51,646

His conclusion? The public is being deceived.

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00:06:55,646 --> 00:07:01,645

You can't do any research into the work of James McDonald without examining the Heflin case.

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00:07:01,645 --> 00:07:05,644

McDonald was fascinated by the Heflin case. In fact, he couldn't let it go.

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00:07:05,644 --> 00:07:13,643

August 3, 1965, Santa Ana, California, approximately 12.30 p.m.

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00:07:13,643 --> 00:07:19,642

Traffic investigator Rex Heflin is about to take a picture of a tree branch that is obscuring a road sign.

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00:07:19,642 --> 00:07:24,641

But out of the corner of his eye, he witnesses something fascinating.

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00:07:25,641 --> 00:07:32,640

A saucer-shaped craft moving across the horizon just 150 feet above the ground.

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00:07:32,640 --> 00:07:39,639

According to Heflin, he snaps these three pictures with his Polaroid 101 Instant Camera.

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00:07:39,639 --> 00:07:45,638

As the object travels left to right across the road, the first, taken through the front windshield,

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00:07:45,638 --> 00:07:52,637

clearly shows a saucer-shaped object that appears to be off in the distance flying above the ground.

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00:07:52,637 --> 00:07:59,636

The second seems to show the same disk as taken through the side window of Heflin's truck.

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00:07:59,636 --> 00:08:05,635

In the third picture, the object seems to be smaller, as if traveling away from the camera.

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00:08:05,635 --> 00:08:13,634

Within two minutes, the alleged saucer disappears, but leaves behind a peculiar smoke ring in the sky.

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00:08:14,634 --> 00:08:18,633

James McDonald wasn't the only person fascinated by the Rex Heflin case.

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00:08:18,633 --> 00:08:23,632

The Air Force investigated it, Project Blue Book investigated it,

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00:08:23,632 --> 00:08:27,632

and also the Condon Committee investigated this case.

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00:08:27,632 --> 00:08:31,631

All of those groups dismissed the case as a hoax.

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00:08:31,631 --> 00:08:39,630

Project Blue Book was the Air Force's official program studying UFO phenomenon until 1968,

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00:08:39,630 --> 00:08:42,629

when the Condon Committee, headed by physicist Edward Condon,

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00:08:42,629 --> 00:08:47,629

determined that UFO research was unlikely to yield any serious results.

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00:08:47,629 --> 00:08:51,628

Blue Book was abandoned two years later, in 1970,

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00:08:51,628 --> 00:08:55,627

but James McDonald believed Condon's conclusions were highly flawed

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00:08:55,627 --> 00:09:00,627

and showed a blatant disregard for the high number of unexplained incidents.

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00:09:01,626 --> 00:09:07,625

Bill's investigation begins with Ann Druffel, who not only maintains copies of the Heflin photographs,

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00:09:07,625 --> 00:09:10,625

but is also James McDonald's biographer.

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00:09:10,625 --> 00:09:15,624

These photos have become almost like the Holy Grail of ufology.

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00:09:15,624 --> 00:09:19,624

It did, but you see, Rex Heflin didn't think anything of it.

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00:09:19,624 --> 00:09:25,623

He had lent them first to two military sources that wanted to analyze them,

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00:09:25,623 --> 00:09:27,622

and both of these sources returned them.

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00:09:28,622 --> 00:09:34,621

But then, according to McDonald's files, Heflin states that two men claiming to be from NORAND,

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00:09:34,621 --> 00:09:39,621

the North American Air Defense Command, asked to borrow the photos.

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00:09:39,621 --> 00:09:45,620

Now, Rex Heflin was used to working with official sources because of his job,

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00:09:45,620 --> 00:09:50,619

so he gave them the photos expecting that they would be returned within a few days,

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00:09:50,619 --> 00:09:56,618

but they never were, and all we had left were second-generation copies.

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00:09:56,618 --> 00:10:00,617

After Heflin claims his originals are not returned,

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00:10:00,617 --> 00:10:04,617

the U.S. Air Force officially labels them a photographic hoax.

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00:10:04,617 --> 00:10:10,616

With only copies to analyze, some debunkers claim to see a line just above the UFO,

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00:10:10,616 --> 00:10:14,615

indicating some type of wire or connection to the object.

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00:10:15,615 --> 00:10:21,614

Others disagree, saying these are defects or alterations seen only in the copies.

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00:10:21,614 --> 00:10:25,614

Without the original photos, there is no way to be sure.

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00:10:27,613 --> 00:10:32,612

So suddenly other copies of the photos began to spread through parts of the community?

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00:10:32,612 --> 00:10:34,612

Yes, of course they had been altered.

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00:10:34,612 --> 00:10:39,611

So if one were paranoid, one would say there was some kind of a disinformation thing going on

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00:10:39,611 --> 00:10:43,611

with various copies of the photos that kept turning up.

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00:10:46,610 --> 00:10:51,610

Some believe that the originals were taken for precisely this reason.

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00:10:51,610 --> 00:10:57,609

And then, almost 20 years later, something miraculous happens.

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00:10:57,609 --> 00:11:01,608

One day his phone rang, and a woman's voice said,

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00:11:01,608 --> 00:11:04,608

have you checked your mailbox lately?

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00:11:04,608 --> 00:11:06,607

And Rex was puzzled.

103

00:11:06,607 --> 00:11:10,607

But he went out and he saw an envelope there.

104

00:11:10,607 --> 00:11:14,606

He opened it, and there were the three original photos

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00:11:14,606 --> 00:11:20,605

that the so-called NORAD men had borrowed 20 years before or so.

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00:11:20,605 --> 00:11:27,604

Today, Anne Druffel is the closest source for getting to the original photographs taken by Heflin.

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00:11:27,604 --> 00:11:31,603

And she gives Bill copies of the photos for further analysis.

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00:11:31,603 --> 00:11:38,602

Heflin died in 2005 and never wavered from his story that he photographed an actual object,

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00:11:38,602 --> 00:11:40,602

albeit an unusual object.

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00:11:40,602 --> 00:11:43,602

The question remains today.

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00:11:43,602 --> 00:11:47,601

Is he hoaxed the photo, or is it a real object?

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00:11:47,601 --> 00:11:51,600

Will the wire or line appear in the original copies?

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00:11:51,600 --> 00:11:56,600

Closer analysis and crucial data from McDonald's files may reveal

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00:11:56,600 --> 00:12:00,599

if these are really photos of a flying saucer.

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00:12:00,599 --> 00:12:03,599

It's a perfect match!

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00:12:07,598 --> 00:12:09,598

After his death in 1999,

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00:12:10,598 --> 00:12:14,597

physicist James McDonald left behind an amazing array of files,

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00:12:14,597 --> 00:12:17,596

precise notes, photos, audio files,

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00:12:17,596 --> 00:12:23,596

and other evidence meticulously collected over years of research into UFO phenomenon.

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00:12:23,596 --> 00:12:31,594

UFO hunters have selected three of the most intriguing cases to follow up with new investigations.

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00:12:31,594 --> 00:12:34,594

April 24, 1964

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00:12:35,594 --> 00:12:37,593

5.45 p.m.

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00:12:37,593 --> 00:12:41,593

Officer Lonnie Zamora of the Socorro New Mexico Police Department

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00:12:41,593 --> 00:12:46,592

is pursuing a black Chevrolet speeding down Old Rodeo Street

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00:12:46,592 --> 00:12:51,591

when he hears a loud roar and sees a bluish flame to the southwest.

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00:12:51,591 --> 00:12:54,591

Zamora abandons pursuit of the vehicle

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00:12:54,591 --> 00:12:59,590

and radios that he is investigating a possible explosion.

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00:12:59,590 --> 00:13:01,590

As he nears the scene,

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00:13:02,590 --> 00:13:05,589

he expects to see an accident.

130

00:13:05,589 --> 00:13:10,588

Instead, he sees something entirely different,

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00:13:10,588 --> 00:13:15,588

a shiny metallic object that has landed to the side of the road in the desert.

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00:13:15,588 --> 00:13:19,587

He estimates it is approximately 30 feet wide,

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00:13:19,587 --> 00:13:22,587

the size of a small RV today.

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00:13:22,587 --> 00:13:27,586

He also claims the egg-shaped craft has four landing supports at its base.

135

00:13:27,586 --> 00:13:33,585

Suddenly, the object lifts off with the same bluish flame traveling to the southeast.

136

00:13:33,585 --> 00:13:36,584

It disappears within minutes.

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00:13:36,584 --> 00:13:39,584

Pat is in Socorro, New Mexico,

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00:13:39,584 --> 00:13:43,583

hoping to find new leads based on James McDonald's file.

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00:13:43,583 --> 00:13:47,583

It's really hard to emphasize how significant the Lonnie Zamora case is.

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00:13:47,583 --> 00:13:52,582

It's been a part of every major UFO report since Project Blue Book.

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00:13:52,582 --> 00:13:55,581

So this case has never been so clear.

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00:13:55,581 --> 00:13:58,581

And that's why we have to look at it.

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00:13:58,581 --> 00:14:01,581

Local historian and reporter Paul Hardin

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00:14:01,581 --> 00:14:06,580

recently covered Zamora's sighting in the L. Defensor Chieftain newspaper.

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00:14:06,580 --> 00:14:08,580

And after more than 40 years,

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00:14:08,580 --> 00:14:12,579

he found that Zamora's story still has legs.

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00:14:12,579 --> 00:14:16,578

Can you tell me why people are still talking about this incident 40 years after it happened?

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00:14:16,578 --> 00:14:19,578

That's a good question. I was kind of surprised myself.

149

00:14:19,578 --> 00:14:22,577

I do a lot of history articles,

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00:14:22,577 --> 00:14:24,577

never UFO articles before.

151

00:14:24,577 --> 00:14:26,577

You don't consider yourself a ufologist?

152

00:14:26,577 --> 00:14:28,576

No, not really.

153

00:14:28,576 --> 00:14:32,576

I was really surprised at how many people in town actually remembered it,

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00:14:32,576 --> 00:14:35,575

more were involved in it, and so it got kind of interesting.

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00:14:35,575 --> 00:14:39,575

So from a historical point of view, this is real history. This really happened.

156

00:14:39,575 --> 00:14:42,574

No doubt in my mind that the incident happened.

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00:14:42,574 --> 00:14:47,574

The only thing that history can't tell you is, you know, what did Mr. Zamora see?

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00:14:47,574 --> 00:14:49,573

I can't answer that.

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00:14:49,573 --> 00:14:54,572

Zamora's account is one of the most specific UFO sightings ever recorded.

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00:14:54,572 --> 00:14:57,572

According to McDonald's Zamora file,

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00:14:57,572 --> 00:15:03,571

not only did he provide descriptions of the object's size, appearance, speed and behavior,

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00:15:03,571 --> 00:15:07,570

but reports described marks left in the sand by the object,

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00:15:07,570 --> 00:15:11,570

as well as fused sand and scorched brush.

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00:15:11,570 --> 00:15:14,569

Numerous witnesses to these strange physical traces

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00:15:14,569 --> 00:15:18,569

are unseen within minutes after the sighting.

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00:15:18,569 --> 00:15:22,568

So immediately you have a fair number of law enforcement agents

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00:15:22,568 --> 00:15:27,567

that were at the scene ten minutes or so after Lonnie sought.

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00:15:27,567 --> 00:15:30,567

When you say at the scene, you mean they went to the landing site?

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00:15:30,567 --> 00:15:32,567

They went to the actual landing site.

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00:15:32,567 --> 00:15:37,566

Okay, and so these were law officers that could confirm that there were landing impressions in the dirt

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00:15:37,566 --> 00:15:40,565

and that there were burned bushes.

172

00:15:41,565 --> 00:15:46,565

Well, as a matter of fact, in the original Defense Chiefs and Story,

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00:15:46,565 --> 00:15:51,564

they cite how when they arrived at the scene, the plants were still smoldering.

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00:15:51,564 --> 00:15:53,563

Wow.

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00:15:53,563 --> 00:15:56,563

So, you know, it tells you something happened.

176

00:15:57,563 --> 00:16:00,562

Many people have looked into the Zamora sighting,

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00:16:00,562 --> 00:16:03,562

but few have come up with any solid conclusions.

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00:16:03,562 --> 00:16:08,561

Some believe this is because Zamora has remained silent for over a decade,

179

00:16:08,561 --> 00:16:12,561

but Pat is on his way to hear the story first-hand.

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00:16:12,561 --> 00:16:16,560

Lonnie Zamora has agreed to break his silence.

181

00:16:20,559 --> 00:16:23,559

As Pat heads out into the desert,

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00:16:23,559 --> 00:16:27,558

Ted travels to Castle Air Museum in Atwater, California

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00:16:27,558 --> 00:16:30,558

to meet with aviation expert Bill Scott.

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00:16:30,558 --> 00:16:33,557

The two are looking into James McDonald's file

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00:16:33,557 --> 00:16:39,556

on the sighting of a UFO trailing a state-of-the-art RB-47 in 1957.

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00:16:39,556 --> 00:16:43,556

Now, Professor McDonald was really interested in this case

187

00:16:43,556 --> 00:16:46,555

because he's felt there was an awful lot of technology involved,

188

00:16:46,555 --> 00:16:49,555

which was giving up serious hard evidence.

189

00:16:49,555 --> 00:16:53,554

It was our most sophisticated listening technology on the planet, really.

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00:16:53,554 --> 00:16:59,553

The RB-47E was the reconnaissance backbone of the U.S. Air Force during the 1950s.

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00:16:59,553 --> 00:17:02,553

It was specifically outfitted not to carry weaponry,

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00:17:02,553 --> 00:17:06,552

but highly sensitive elant or electronic intelligence technology

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00:17:06,552 --> 00:17:09,552

used to intercept radar signals.

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00:17:09,552 --> 00:17:12,551

Its job, with all its electronic gear on board,

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00:17:12,551 --> 00:17:16,551

would be to fly along the border of the Soviet Union, for instance,

196

00:17:16,551 --> 00:17:19,550

and listen for the Russian radars that were transmitting.

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00:17:19,550 --> 00:17:22,550

In the 1950s, when this aircraft was launched,

198

00:17:22,550 --> 00:17:26,549

it was our most sophisticated radar listening equipment in the world, right?

199

00:17:26,549 --> 00:17:27,549

That's exactly right.

200

00:17:27,549 --> 00:17:31,549

1950s technology, of course, but that was a state-of-the-art.

201

00:17:31,549 --> 00:17:33,548

It was critical to our national security,

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00:17:33,548 --> 00:17:36,548

so of course we had the best electronic gear that was available.

203

00:17:36,548 --> 00:17:39,547

But the U.S. Air Force's best available technology

204

00:17:39,547 --> 00:17:43,547

would soon encounter something beyond its own capabilities.

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00:17:43,547 --> 00:17:49,546

July 17, 1957, just after 4 a.m.,

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00:17:49,546 --> 00:17:52,545

an RB-47 with a six-man crew

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00:17:52,545 --> 00:17:55,545

is on a routine training mission over the Gulf of Mexico

208

00:17:55,545 --> 00:17:58,544

near the town of Gulfport, Mississippi.

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00:17:58,544 --> 00:18:03,544

On the No. 2 monitor, one of the officers detects a signal moving rapidly.

210

00:18:03,544 --> 00:18:07,543

For the next 90 minutes and 700 miles,

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00:18:07,543 --> 00:18:11,542

the aircraft's elant, ground radar installations,

212

00:18:11,542 --> 00:18:14,542

and even the Air Force pilots themselves,

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00:18:14,542 --> 00:18:19,541

will observe a strange object tracking one of the Air Force's most important aircraft.

214

00:18:20,541 --> 00:18:23,541

This crew was on their way back from our training mission,

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00:18:23,541 --> 00:18:26,540

all six of them aboard, three of whom were the elant operators.

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00:18:26,540 --> 00:18:28,540

This is the end of their training. They were about to ship out,

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00:18:28,540 --> 00:18:31,539

so they're probably at the height of their expertise,

218

00:18:31,539 --> 00:18:34,539

just finishing up an extensive training program in the states before deployment.

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00:18:34,539 --> 00:18:39,538

At the time, this was our front-line fighting force, a strategic air command,

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00:18:39,538 --> 00:18:43,538

so these elant operators would have been very well trained,

221

00:18:43,538 --> 00:18:47,537

because literally the fate of the country were in their hands

222

00:18:47,537 --> 00:18:50,536

and the pilots that flew these airplanes.

223

00:18:50,536 --> 00:18:53,536

How about the elant equipment? How long had that been out?

224

00:18:53,536 --> 00:18:56,536

Is there any chance that this equipment was malfunctioning

225

00:18:56,536 --> 00:18:59,535

or it's such a brand new technology that there's some question there?

226

00:18:59,535 --> 00:19:01,535

Or was this tried and true hardware?

227

00:19:01,535 --> 00:19:04,534

I would say it was probably tried and true hardware at the time.

228

00:19:04,534 --> 00:19:07,534

So it was cutting edge, very well maintained.

229

00:19:11,533 --> 00:19:14,533

According to James McDonald's report,

230

00:19:14,533 --> 00:19:18,532

despite this being the most advanced equipment in service,

231

00:19:18,532 --> 00:19:21,532

the officer who first spots the object on the elant

232

00:19:21,532 --> 00:19:24,531

thinks the equipment is malfunctioning.

233

00:19:24,531 --> 00:19:27,531

They had one of the other operators that double-checked it,

234

00:19:27,531 --> 00:19:29,530

tried it on another monitor,

235

00:19:29,530 --> 00:19:33,530

which would use a different set of antennas on the RB-47.

236

00:19:33,530 --> 00:19:36,529

They established very early on that the equipment was working fine,

237

00:19:36,529 --> 00:19:38,529

everything was perfect.

238

00:19:38,529 --> 00:19:43,528

But the rest of the crew is about to get an up-close and personal view

239

00:19:43,528 --> 00:19:46,528

of whatever is appearing on their scope.

240

00:19:46,528 --> 00:19:52,527

As the RB-47 approaches Jackson, Mississippi for the second part of its exercise,

241

00:19:52,527 --> 00:19:56,526

one of the pilots spots what he first thinks are landing lights

242

00:19:56,526 --> 00:19:58,526

of another jet coming in fast.

243

00:19:58,526 --> 00:20:01,526

As the single bluish-white light closes rapidly,

244

00:20:01,526 --> 00:20:06,525

he alerts the rest of the crew to be ready for sudden evasive maneuvers.

245

00:20:06,525 --> 00:20:08,525

But before he can attempt anything,

246

00:20:08,525 --> 00:20:13,524

both he and his co-pilot see the light instantaneously change directions

247

00:20:13,524 --> 00:20:16,523

and flash across their flight path.

248

00:20:16,523 --> 00:20:18,523

Then it blinks out.

249

00:20:21,523 --> 00:20:24,522

In these rare recordings from the files,

250

00:20:24,522 --> 00:20:29,521

James McDonald is heard conducting an interview with a pilot who encountered the object,

251

00:20:29,521 --> 00:20:31,521

Colonel Lewis D. Chase.

252

00:20:31,521 --> 00:20:34,521

I'm looking at it as a pilot at night now, being a light source,

253

00:20:34,521 --> 00:20:36,520

that I interpreted as an airplane.

254

00:20:36,520 --> 00:20:40,520

But then suddenly the pilot's going to be so fast that I put my loose on.

255

00:20:40,520 --> 00:20:44,519

Did it simply blink out or did it take off at the appreciate-wanker Boston?

256

00:20:44,519 --> 00:20:46,519

No, it just went off.

257

00:20:46,519 --> 00:20:47,519

Just disappeared?

258

00:20:47,519 --> 00:20:48,518

That's what you think?

259

00:20:48,518 --> 00:20:49,518

Yeah.

260

00:20:49,518 --> 00:20:53,518

That's quite an intercept which you're starting back on.

261

00:20:53,518 --> 00:20:55,517

That is really, really strange.

262

00:20:55,517 --> 00:20:58,517

Now these were trained aircraft pilots.

263

00:20:58,517 --> 00:21:00,517

These are United States Air Force officers.

264

00:21:00,517 --> 00:21:02,516

These guys know what aircraft look like.

265

00:21:04,516 --> 00:21:09,515

Nothing in the U.S. military arsenal has the ability to simply blink out.

266

00:21:13,515 --> 00:21:19,514

In the report, the pilot, a 20-year veteran, claims the object moved at a velocity,

267

00:21:19,514 --> 00:21:23,513

quote, he'd never seen matched in his flight experience.

268

00:21:23,513 --> 00:21:28,512

And for them to be really shocked about something they saw visibly says a lot.

269

00:21:28,512 --> 00:21:32,512

So now you add to that that in addition to the visible sighting,

270

00:21:32,512 --> 00:21:36,511

we had, you know, this aircraft, the technology back here in the bay,

271

00:21:36,511 --> 00:21:41,510

was our most sophisticated listening system for listening to radar.

272

00:21:44,510 --> 00:21:47,509

With no surviving images from the flight's elant,

273

00:21:47,509 --> 00:21:54,508

Ted turns to the testimony in McDonald's files to verify the object's incredible maneuvers.

274

00:21:54,508 --> 00:22:01,507

And Bill zeroes in on Rex Heflin's photographs with a field test putting the hoax theory on the line.

275

00:22:03,507 --> 00:22:10,506

James McDonald's files are offering up intriguing leads on some of the top UFO cases ever recorded.

276

00:22:10,506 --> 00:22:15,505

From Lonnie Zamora's strange encounter in the desert,

277

00:22:15,505 --> 00:22:22,504

to highly trained RB-47 pilots being buzzed by objects they cannot describe.

278

00:22:22,504 --> 00:22:24,504

But perhaps they are not.

279

00:22:24,504 --> 00:22:29,503

But perhaps the most well-known case involves these photos.

280

00:22:29,503 --> 00:22:37,502

Four images of a saucer-shaped object taken in 1965 by Rex Heflin in Santa Ana, California.

281

00:22:37,502 --> 00:22:41,501

Many have claimed that the photos are a hoax.

282

00:22:41,501 --> 00:22:48,500

One reason they cite is that Heflin could not have possibly shot three polar bears in the desert.

283

00:22:48,500 --> 00:22:50,500

But could he?

284

00:22:50,500 --> 00:22:56,499

Bill has brought in a senior scientist from Polaroid, Ted McClelland, to put this theory to the test.

285

00:22:56,499 --> 00:23:04,498

Was it possible for Rex Heflin to snap off three photos in 20 seconds using a Polaroid 101?

286

00:23:04,498 --> 00:23:06,497

It was a very long time ago.

287

00:23:06,497 --> 00:23:08,497

But it's not a long time ago.

288

00:23:08,497 --> 00:23:11,497

It's been a long time since he was shot.

289

00:23:11,497 --> 00:23:19,495

Heflin has been able to snap off three photos in 20 seconds using a Polaroid 101.

290

00:23:23,495 --> 00:23:27,494

Ted has brought an authentic Polaroid 101 camera.

291

00:23:27,494 --> 00:23:34,493

It is the exact same model Rex Heflin used in his everyday work and to take the infamous photos.

292

00:23:34,493 --> 00:23:38,492

The filter very simply goes in to the back of the camera,

293

00:23:38,492 --> 00:23:40,492

throws it up and everything is light tight,

294

00:23:40,492 --> 00:23:46,491

raises the viewfinder and hits the shutter button and pulls the frames out and I'll demonstrate that.

295

00:23:46,491 --> 00:23:51,490

So you're not waiting for the film to actually process inside the back of the camera.

296

00:23:51,490 --> 00:23:54,490

You just take the whole pack right out as soon as you're done with the photo?

297

00:23:54,490 --> 00:23:57,490

You take the frame out as soon as you snap the shutter?

298

00:23:57,490 --> 00:23:59,489

Okay. Well, acid test.

299

00:23:59,489 --> 00:24:00,489

Ready?

300

00:24:00,489 --> 00:24:01,489

Ready.

301

00:24:01,489 --> 00:24:02,489

Go!

302

00:24:09,488 --> 00:24:12,487

Two, you're doing good.

303

00:24:16,487 --> 00:24:18,486

Seventeen seconds.

304

00:24:18,486 --> 00:24:20,486

Very good.

305

00:24:20,486 --> 00:24:27,485

But with one debunking point crossed off the list, there are still others that plague the Heflin evidence.

306

00:24:27,485 --> 00:24:33,484

Several claims have been made that the shots are too focused, suggesting a double exposure.

307

00:24:34,484 --> 00:24:40,483

A double exposure happens when two photos are taken on the same frame of film.

308

00:24:40,483 --> 00:24:46,482

If this was a hoax, Heflin could have taken one photo out of his window of the sky

309

00:24:46,482 --> 00:24:51,481

and then taken a second photo of a hubcap or similar object on the same film,

310

00:24:51,481 --> 00:24:55,481

making it appear as if the two images are one.

311

00:24:58,480 --> 00:24:59,480

So Ted,

312

00:24:59,480 --> 00:25:03,479

another really big issue in this whole Heflin controversy is this.

313

00:25:03,479 --> 00:25:05,479

Look at this shot.

314

00:25:05,479 --> 00:25:10,478

This looks like it's in focus, that looks like it's in focus, that looks like it's in focus.

315

00:25:10,478 --> 00:25:15,478

And these vagus look like they're in focus, and this is in focus.

316

00:25:15,478 --> 00:25:16,477

The rear view mirror.

317

00:25:16,477 --> 00:25:21,477

So one of the issues is that these are somehow double exposures or hoax shots.

318

00:25:21,477 --> 00:25:24,476

Depending on the camera settings and the film stock,

319

00:25:24,476 --> 00:25:27,476

objects can be seen as well as the camera.

320

00:25:27,476 --> 00:25:30,475

The focus is on the focus and the film stock.

321

00:25:30,475 --> 00:25:35,475

Objects close to the lens or far in the distance can appear out of focus.

322

00:25:35,475 --> 00:25:39,474

Heflin's ability to capture a crisp foreground and background

323

00:25:39,474 --> 00:25:42,474

led many to question the validity of the photos.

324

00:25:42,474 --> 00:25:48,473

Using this camera, having it set on infinity with 3000 ASA speed film,

325

00:25:48,473 --> 00:25:52,472

you would be in focus from three feet to infinity.

326

00:25:52,472 --> 00:25:57,471

That camera can keep all of these disparate objects, this, this, this,

327

00:25:57,471 --> 00:26:02,470

and the line of the road going off into infinity here, in focus at the same time.

328

00:26:02,470 --> 00:26:03,470

Correct.

329

00:26:06,470 --> 00:26:12,469

Another point that plagued James MacDonald was seen in Heflin's fourth and final photo.

330

00:26:12,469 --> 00:26:18,468

Heflin's last image appears to show a smoke ring that lingers after the craft flies away.

331

00:26:19,468 --> 00:26:23,467

The first three photos show what seems to be clear skies,

332

00:26:23,467 --> 00:26:28,467

but the fourth, supposedly taken only two minutes after the first three,

333

00:26:28,467 --> 00:26:30,466

shows clouds in the sky.

334

00:26:30,466 --> 00:26:33,466

So looking at these three photos taken from inside the car,

335

00:26:33,466 --> 00:26:37,465

in fact, you can't see any clouds in these photos, whether they're not.

336

00:26:37,465 --> 00:26:41,465

Gets out of the car, takes this, now suddenly clouds appear in the photo.

337

00:26:41,465 --> 00:26:44,464

So the question is, where are the clouds?

338

00:26:44,464 --> 00:26:50,463

This camera, the automatic exposure, is probably tricked by the darkness within the van

339

00:26:50,463 --> 00:26:52,463

and setting the exposure closer to that.

340

00:26:52,463 --> 00:26:57,462

The outside photo, the last one, is nothing to interfere the auto-exposure

341

00:26:57,462 --> 00:27:00,462

and it's picking up exactly what it sees.

342

00:27:00,462 --> 00:27:04,461

So let me get this straight. Here, it's getting darkness from inside the truck.

343

00:27:04,461 --> 00:27:05,461

Correct.

344

00:27:05,461 --> 00:27:06,461

Over-exposes this.

345

00:27:06,461 --> 00:27:07,461

Correct.

346

00:27:07,461 --> 00:27:11,460

Therefore, totally white sky against the totally black background.

347

00:27:11,460 --> 00:27:17,459

But here, he's outside, so the automatic exposure only takes what it sees

348

00:27:17,459 --> 00:27:20,459

from the light that's coming in the lens, nothing interferes with it.

349

00:27:20,459 --> 00:27:23,458

It takes exactly what it sees, i.e. the clouds.

350

00:27:23,458 --> 00:27:24,458

Correct.

351

00:27:24,458 --> 00:27:26,458

That mystery solved.

352

00:27:34,456 --> 00:27:38,456

While some of the major debunking points have been dismissed,

353

00:27:38,456 --> 00:27:43,455

the harshest one of all is that the object itself is a fake.

354

00:27:43,455 --> 00:27:48,454

Project Blue Book labeled the photos as a hoax,

355

00:27:48,454 --> 00:27:54,453

calculating that the object was only 9 inches in diameter, 12 feet off the ground,

356

00:27:54,453 --> 00:27:58,453

and about 15 to 20 feet in the distance.

357

00:27:58,453 --> 00:28:05,452

There is no hoax that I saw pulling up negatives of this, magnifying this as best I could.

358

00:28:05,452 --> 00:28:07,451

I saw no signs of a hoax.

359

00:28:07,451 --> 00:28:09,451

No strings, no piano wire.

360

00:28:09,451 --> 00:28:10,451

Nothing like that.

361

00:28:15,450 --> 00:28:23,449

Yet the strongest proof that this is a true UFO may lie in calculations by James McDonald himself.

362

00:28:23,449 --> 00:28:29,448

But Pat is still in search of something solid on the Lonnie Zamora file.

363

00:28:29,448 --> 00:28:33,447

I'm here at the police station here in Socorro, New Mexico,

364

00:28:33,447 --> 00:28:36,447

where I'm going to meet the chief of police, Lawrence Romero.

365

00:28:36,447 --> 00:28:41,446

Lawrence has agreed to take Pat to meet Lonnie Zamora at the landing site.

366

00:28:41,446 --> 00:28:45,446

Pat is hoping to get a clearer picture of Zamora's sighting

367

00:28:45,446 --> 00:28:49,445

and revisit some of James McDonald's lingering questions.

368

00:28:51,445 --> 00:28:53,444

So what is your opinion of Lonnie?

369

00:28:53,444 --> 00:28:58,444

Lonnie is a very upfront type guy, excellent police officer.

370

00:28:58,444 --> 00:29:01,443

He's a pillar of his church also.

371

00:29:01,443 --> 00:29:03,443

So you don't doubt his story at all?

372

00:29:03,443 --> 00:29:04,443

No.

373

00:29:04,443 --> 00:29:06,442

So are we close to this site now?

374

00:29:06,442 --> 00:29:07,442

Yes, we are.

375

00:29:07,442 --> 00:29:11,442

We're about 400 feet, 500 feet.

376

00:29:14,441 --> 00:29:18,441

By finally meeting Lonnie Zamora, the key witness in the case,

377

00:29:18,441 --> 00:29:23,440

Pat aims to dig deeper into one of McDonald's strangest cases.

378

00:29:23,440 --> 00:29:28,439

What touched down in the desert outside of Socorro, New Mexico on that cold spring day?

379

00:29:28,439 --> 00:29:31,439

This is one of the original indentations?

380

00:29:35,438 --> 00:29:39,437

Pat is in Socorro, New Mexico and has come to meet with Lonnie Zamora,

381

00:29:39,437 --> 00:29:43,437

the subject of one of James McDonald's top UFO cases.

382

00:29:43,437 --> 00:29:49,436

Zamora hasn't talked about his 1964 encounter in the desert in over a decade,

383

00:29:49,436 --> 00:29:55,435

but after years of scrutiny, Lonnie hopes that he can help prove what he saw was not a hoax.

384

00:29:56,435 --> 00:29:58,434

So what did you see from this vantage point?

385

00:29:58,434 --> 00:30:03,434

From here I can see down on top of it sort of an ancient object.

386

00:30:03,434 --> 00:30:07,433

I'll say about 30 to 40 feet wide.

387

00:30:07,433 --> 00:30:11,432

I didn't know what it was until I started moving towards it.

388

00:30:11,432 --> 00:30:15,432

I realized it was something that I had never seen before.

389

00:30:15,432 --> 00:30:21,431

I thought maybe it would be some kind of air force experiment at the first.

390

00:30:21,431 --> 00:30:26,430

So at first you thought maybe this was a military aircraft of some sort.

391

00:30:26,430 --> 00:30:27,430

Yeah, something like that.

392

00:30:27,430 --> 00:30:31,429

Well it was investigated and they found out that there was no such aircraft.

393

00:30:31,429 --> 00:30:33,429

Yeah, I wasn't here at all.

394

00:30:36,429 --> 00:30:42,428

The odd shape and structure of the object Lonnie describes is similar to the lunar module.

395

00:30:42,428 --> 00:30:49,427

In fact, air force investigators initially theorize that this might be a test of this top secret vehicle.

396

00:30:50,426 --> 00:30:53,426

But further analysis quickly proved this theory wrong.

397

00:30:53,426 --> 00:31:03,425

A flyable working model of the lunar module was not ready until 1965, a full year after Zamora sighted.

398

00:31:03,425 --> 00:31:08,424

But whatever landed here left evidence behind.

399

00:31:11,423 --> 00:31:15,423

Now you're saying there were actual indentations from the craft down here.

400

00:31:15,423 --> 00:31:17,422

Yes, the craft's a rod.

401

00:31:17,422 --> 00:31:20,422

And there's one indentation right there.

402

00:31:21,422 --> 00:31:23,421

This is one of the original indentations?

403

00:31:23,421 --> 00:31:24,421

Yeah, right there.

404

00:31:25,421 --> 00:31:26,421

Okay, one of them's there.

405

00:31:26,421 --> 00:31:27,421

There's another one over there.

406

00:31:27,421 --> 00:31:28,421

Okay.

407

00:31:28,421 --> 00:31:30,420

Where the rock is.

408

00:31:30,420 --> 00:31:32,420

And one over there.

409

00:31:32,420 --> 00:31:33,420

And one over here.

410

00:31:33,420 --> 00:31:35,420

So it was four.

411

00:31:35,420 --> 00:31:40,419

So right after the craft lifted off, these indentations were fresh?

412

00:31:40,419 --> 00:31:41,419

Right, right.

413

00:31:41,419 --> 00:31:43,418

Real fresh.

414

00:31:44,418 --> 00:31:51,417

The indentations are not the only physical traces the craft leaves.

415

00:31:51,417 --> 00:31:57,416

According to Lonnie, bushes burn and rocks smolder at the landing site.

416

00:31:57,416 --> 00:32:00,416

So Lonnie, where were these bushes exactly?

417

00:32:00,416 --> 00:32:04,415

Well, that was a big one right there, one right there, where I up here.

418

00:32:04,415 --> 00:32:05,415

And then we'll all burn it.

419

00:32:05,415 --> 00:32:08,415

This was the one that was burning more, you know.

420

00:32:08,415 --> 00:32:12,414

You couldn't get near it, it was just burning.

421

00:32:12,414 --> 00:32:15,414

Do you think this fire here was directly related to the object you saw?

422

00:32:15,414 --> 00:32:17,413

Yeah, what it took off, yeah.

423

00:32:17,413 --> 00:32:21,413

But this evidence is quickly confiscated by Air Force investigators,

424

00:32:21,413 --> 00:32:24,412

who arrive soon after Lonnie does.

425

00:32:26,412 --> 00:32:32,411

And McDonnell reveals it wasn't the Air Force that asked for this debris to be collected and taken away.

426

00:32:32,411 --> 00:32:34,411

It was the FBI.

427

00:32:36,410 --> 00:32:41,410

Adding to the mystery, the files reveal that the FBI didn't want anyone

428

00:32:41,410 --> 00:32:44,409

to know they were working on the case.

429

00:32:44,409 --> 00:32:47,409

The reason is never fully revealed.

430

00:32:48,408 --> 00:32:53,408

They were excited about it, you know, trying to ask questions.

431

00:32:53,408 --> 00:32:57,407

But they wouldn't let me answer any questions.

432

00:32:57,407 --> 00:32:59,407

Just keep it quiet for a while.

433

00:32:59,407 --> 00:33:01,406

Air Force told you to keep this quiet for a while.

434

00:33:05,406 --> 00:33:09,405

James McDonnell was interested in breaking that silence

435

00:33:09,405 --> 00:33:15,404

and doggedly tracked down specialists who had been brought in by the government to investigate Lonnie's sighting.

436

00:33:15,404 --> 00:33:21,403

His files indicate one expert, Amari Maze from the University of New Mexico,

437

00:33:21,403 --> 00:33:24,403

was enlisted to analyze plant material.

438

00:33:24,403 --> 00:33:28,402

In an interview with McDonnell, Maze described the location

439

00:33:28,402 --> 00:33:34,401

and reported seeing a 25-30-inch patch of fused sand at the landing site.

440

00:33:34,401 --> 00:33:39,401

According to her, a small area of desert had turned to glass.

441

00:33:42,400 --> 00:33:46,400

One test may shed additional light on Lonnie's story.

442

00:33:57,398 --> 00:34:00,397

In hopes of adding to McDonnell's investigation,

443

00:34:00,397 --> 00:34:07,396

Pat aims to find out just how much energy it would take to melt the sand from the site of Zamora's encounter.

444

00:34:07,396 --> 00:34:11,396

I'm meeting Patrick Morrissey, a glassblower with 30 years of experience,

445

00:34:11,396 --> 00:34:15,395

who's going to tell me exactly how sand fuses in the glass.

446

00:34:15,395 --> 00:34:20,394

And I've specifically brought sand from the Sikoro landing site,

447

00:34:20,394 --> 00:34:23,394

where Lonnie's Zamora saw the craft land.

448

00:34:26,394 --> 00:34:29,393

Now, you know that there are various theories about what happened.

449

00:34:29,393 --> 00:34:34,392

One of them is that something landed and fused the sand from incredibly high temperatures.

450

00:34:34,392 --> 00:34:38,392

Another theory is that there may be hoaxers somehow fused the sand.

451

00:34:38,392 --> 00:34:43,391

So what I'd like to know from you is, what does it take to fuse sand into glass?

452

00:34:43,391 --> 00:34:47,390

First, what we have to do is we're going to take it off of here, we're going to use this plate right here.

453

00:34:47,390 --> 00:34:52,390

And then we'll put it into our glass glory hole over here and see if we can melt it.

454

00:34:52,390 --> 00:34:55,389

So Patrick, while this is heating up, I'd like to ask you a few questions.

455

00:34:55,389 --> 00:34:58,389

Let's say these hoaxers came out with some equipment, let's say a blowtorch.

456

00:34:58,389 --> 00:35:02,388

Could that work? If a hoaxer brought out a blowtorch and tried to fuse sand?

457

00:35:02,388 --> 00:35:06,387

It's a pretty good plane, but that would not really melt any glass at all.

458

00:35:06,387 --> 00:35:07,387

It's just not hot enough.

459

00:35:07,387 --> 00:35:11,387

So basically you're saying you need an oven to melt glass.

460

00:35:11,387 --> 00:35:12,386

That's right.

461

00:35:14,386 --> 00:35:17,386

I think I see the sand changing color.

462

00:35:17,386 --> 00:35:19,385

It's starting to bond a little bit.

463

00:35:19,385 --> 00:35:24,385

Now don't let that bond fool you, it's not glass. Not yet anyway.

464

00:35:25,384 --> 00:35:31,384

After nearly 25 minutes, the sand sample from the Zamora site is ready to be examined.

465

00:35:31,384 --> 00:35:33,383

It's kind of hot.

466

00:35:35,383 --> 00:35:36,383

About how hot?

467

00:35:36,383 --> 00:35:39,382

Right now it's definitely at least 2100 degrees.

468

00:35:39,382 --> 00:35:42,382

So 2100 degrees Fahrenheit is sufficient to melt sand.

469

00:35:42,382 --> 00:35:46,381

2100 degrees is hot enough to melt the sand that you bought.

470

00:35:46,381 --> 00:35:51,381

So now according to our reports, there was a huge patch of fused glass at the landing site.

471

00:35:51,381 --> 00:35:55,380

So you're saying it takes 2100 degrees to create this.

472

00:35:55,380 --> 00:35:58,379

25 minutes to melt that little piece.

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00:35:58,379 --> 00:35:59,379

Right.

474

00:35:59,379 --> 00:36:02,379

So the hoaxer scenario is kind of hard to believe.

475

00:36:05,378 --> 00:36:09,378

It takes over 2100 degrees and some duration of time to melt sand.

476

00:36:09,378 --> 00:36:11,377

Maybe over 20 to 25 minutes to melt the sand.

477

00:36:11,377 --> 00:36:16,377

So in Patrick's professional opinion, the hoaxer scenario is unlikely.

478

00:36:16,377 --> 00:36:24,375

Pat's finding adds great validity to Lonnie Zamora's story.

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00:36:24,375 --> 00:36:30,375

Meanwhile, Ted continues his investigation into James McDonald's RB-47 case.

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00:36:30,375 --> 00:36:38,373

What happens when the most sophisticated aircraft in the U.S. arsenal is upstaged by something far more advanced?

481

00:36:38,373 --> 00:36:45,372

1957, you don't have an aircraft that can jump from 11 o'clock to 2 o'clock instantaneously and then just blink out.

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00:36:46,372 --> 00:36:59,370

James McDonald's files have provided new grounds for investigation for both Rex Heflin's photos and Lonnie Zamora's sightings in the desert.

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00:36:59,370 --> 00:37:14,368

But with no radar records or eyewitnesses from 1957, little is known about the RB-47 encounter where an object pursued a state-of-the-art Air Force jet for over 90 minutes and 700 miles.

484

00:37:14,368 --> 00:37:23,366

With this in mind, Ted and Bill Scott have plotted the course of the aircraft in hopes of understanding the strange events on that summer morning.

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00:37:26,366 --> 00:37:33,365

So the aircraft turns west and that's when the pilot has a visual sighting right out of the cockpit.

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00:37:33,365 --> 00:37:36,364

And then what do they do over this course here before Dallas?

487

00:37:36,364 --> 00:37:39,364

That's when they're actually trying to evade the object.

488

00:37:39,364 --> 00:37:47,363

They started accelerating and decelerating to see if they could lose the object and it always stayed right with them all the time.

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00:37:48,363 --> 00:37:53,362

Now at this point, the pilot contacts Duncanville with their ground-based radar.

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00:37:53,362 --> 00:37:57,361

Not only does Duncanville confirm they can see the UFO, but they can also see the aircraft.

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00:37:57,361 --> 00:38:05,360

One of the things that fascinates me in this particular incident is that when the pilots reported that the bright light disappeared,

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00:38:05,360 --> 00:38:12,359

the ground-based radar at Duncanville said they lost the object and the E-Land operator said he lost the object as well.

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00:38:12,359 --> 00:38:18,358

So they all three disappeared at the same time and when it reappears, all three of them see it again.

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00:38:18,358 --> 00:38:26,357

All three are agreeing on the progression of the case, the visual of the pilots, the RB-47's E-Land technology,

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00:38:26,357 --> 00:38:33,356

and most amazingly, the radar on the ground as well. Everything is transpiring at the same time.

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00:38:33,356 --> 00:38:40,355

Now at this point, our pilot has received permission to deviate from his course back to base and now he's basically going after the object, right?

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00:38:40,355 --> 00:38:50,353

That's right. The object is at a lower altitude, so the pilot of the RB-47 dies towards the object and all of a sudden the object stops and they overshoot it.

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00:38:50,353 --> 00:38:56,352

So at that time, the crew starts a left-hand turn to get back to where it can see the object.

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00:38:56,352 --> 00:38:58,352

Unfortunately at this point, they're running low in fuel, right?

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00:38:58,352 --> 00:38:59,352

That's right.

501

00:38:59,352 --> 00:39:02,351

And that's when they decide to break off and head back for home.

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00:39:02,351 --> 00:39:09,350

That's right. So then they took off to the north, headed back towards Ford's Air Force Base, Kansas, and the object tends to stay with them.

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00:39:09,350 --> 00:39:12,350

Right, stayed back, stayed with them almost halfway home.

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00:39:12,350 --> 00:39:16,349

All the way back to Oklahoma City, again Oklahoma City, it disappears.

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00:39:16,349 --> 00:39:23,348

After 90 minutes, the intense chase leaves the pilots and the ground-based radar operators dumbfounded.

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00:39:23,348 --> 00:39:27,348

None of them have an explanation for what has just occurred.

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00:39:27,348 --> 00:39:35,346

When you string together the various descriptions of the flight maneuvers of this object, would you say that these are explainable through conventional aircraft?

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00:39:35,346 --> 00:39:43,345

Well, in 1957, you don't have an aircraft that can just blink out both in the electromagnetic spectrum as well as the visual spectrum.

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00:39:43,345 --> 00:39:45,345

And I would say we don't have anything like that now.

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00:39:46,345 --> 00:40:00,343

Despite the overwhelming evidence and testimony, Project Blue Book dismissed the sighting quickly, as the near collision of two DC-6 American airliners near Salt Flat, Texas.

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00:40:00,343 --> 00:40:06,342

They give no details or rationale for this explanation, except for the following statement.

512

00:40:07,341 --> 00:40:17,340

Quote, it was definitely established by the CAA that object observed in the vicinity of Dallas and Fort Worth was an airliner.

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00:40:18,340 --> 00:40:27,338

Blue Book's conclusion is highly unlikely. The RB-47's flight path didn't come within 400 miles of Salt Flat, Texas.

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00:40:28,338 --> 00:40:34,337

McDonald used this quote in his report to demonstrate Blue Book's poor methods of investigation.

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00:40:34,337 --> 00:40:39,337

Yet the case is now carried in the official Blue Book files as identified.

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00:40:40,336 --> 00:40:43,336

I feel like there must have been something out there, something going on.

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00:40:43,336 --> 00:40:51,335

It sure looks like something was there. What it is, I don't think we know, and here it is, 50 years later, we still don't know.

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00:40:52,335 --> 00:41:00,333

The answers to the RB-47 case will never be fully known, but the investigation can be sure of one thing.

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00:41:00,333 --> 00:41:08,332

James McDonald never agreed with Blue Book's findings, and for him, the case remained unidentified.

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00:41:10,332 --> 00:41:13,331

But there's one last hoax claim left to be tested.

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00:41:15,331 --> 00:41:17,331

Rex Heflin's photographs.

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00:41:17,331 --> 00:41:24,330

Heflin claimed the object he photographed was roughly 20 feet in diameter and about an eighth of a mile from his truck.

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00:41:24,330 --> 00:41:30,329

Project Blue Book said the object was small, like a hubcap, and close to the camera.

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00:41:30,329 --> 00:41:37,328

Bill has brought in Ted, an image analyst expert Terrence Masson, to give the photos a closer look.

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00:41:37,328 --> 00:41:47,326

Blue Book said it was a total hoax that the object was no more than 9 inches in diameter, that it was maybe 12 feet off the ground, maybe 15 to 20 feet in the distance.

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00:41:47,326 --> 00:41:55,325

But Heflin's account varies greatly. He describes a specific object 20 feet in diameter and 700 feet away.

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00:41:55,325 --> 00:42:02,324

Using these specific numbers, Terrence has constructed a 3D landscape to test Heflin's claims.

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00:42:02,324 --> 00:42:10,323

He places a 20-foot diameter saucer 700 feet in the distance, matching the description given by Heflin after the incident.

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00:42:10,323 --> 00:42:21,321

If Heflin had hoaxed the photos and simply made up numbers regarding the size and distance of the object, there will be almost no chance of the 3D model matching the photos.

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00:42:21,321 --> 00:42:28,320

If he was telling the truth, if he made an accurate estimation to his eyeball, that object in our simulation has to line up.

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00:42:28,320 --> 00:42:40,318

Here's our 20-foot diameter object, 150 feet off the ground, let's slide it along, fade up our image, and put our object at about 700 feet.

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00:42:40,318 --> 00:42:41,318

Amazing!

533

00:42:41,318 --> 00:42:42,318

So that's better than close.

534

00:42:42,318 --> 00:42:45,317

Better than close? It's a perfect match!

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00:42:47,317 --> 00:42:52,316

This is just very simple trigonometry. You just put it in the space, that's very accurate.

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00:42:52,316 --> 00:42:58,315

At the size of the object and the height of the object that Heflin said it was, they match very, very precisely.

537

00:42:58,315 --> 00:43:05,314

So you've eliminated somebody throwing some stupid thing in the air like a hubcap, you've knocked that out because that couldn't come up this way.

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00:43:05,314 --> 00:43:16,313

The investigation's theory is now that Heflin must have been observing something not under his control, and that he himself was not hoaxing it.

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00:43:16,313 --> 00:43:22,312

In my estimation, James McDonnell did a really good job collecting relevant evidence for this case.

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00:43:22,312 --> 00:43:27,311

They didn't have a lot of computational power back then, digital image processing was a brand new technology.

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00:43:27,311 --> 00:43:41,309

We've enhanced what McDonnell said because we had these tools at our disposal and therefore could definitively show by the mathematics of that computer simulation that Heflin was right.

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00:43:42,309 --> 00:43:55,307

Given today's extraordinary leaps forward in technology and scientific analysis, James McDonnell's investigation into UFO phenomena would only have gotten stronger.

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00:43:55,307 --> 00:44:06,305

But tragically, he committed suicide in 1971, his personal life unraveling as he pushed forward with his scientific studies of UFOs.

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00:44:07,305 --> 00:44:11,304

Now, his legacy and his tireless work live on.

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00:44:11,304 --> 00:44:19,303

With other cases awaiting new investigations, and more answers, still waiting to be discovered.