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

Los Angeles is a city with an extremely high number of UFO sightings.

2

00:00:08,000 --> 00:00:11,000

We're looking at the video right now.

3

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

Wow!

4

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

Dude!

5

00:00:13,000 --> 00:00:19,000

Some believe that the largest mass UFO sighting in history took place here during the Second World War.

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00:00:19,000 --> 00:00:21,000

Fire! Fire!

7

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

When hundreds of US soldiers fired on the scariest moving targets during what was called the Battle of Los Angeles.

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

This was well before anyone was talking about flying saucers,

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

yet we have thousands of witnesses describing very strange occurrences that night.

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00:00:37,000 --> 00:00:39,000

Can eyewitness reports?

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

Something caught my eye. It was large. I mean, pretty much almost dead on.

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00:00:43,000 --> 00:00:46,000

Declassified documents and new evidence.

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00:00:46,000 --> 00:00:49,000

There is in fact one thing that I hadn't noticed before.

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00:00:49,000 --> 00:00:54,000

Shed new light on an incident that terrified the city of Angeles.

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00:00:58,000 --> 00:01:02,000

Unidentified flying objects have been seen in our skies for decades.

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00:01:02,000 --> 00:01:07,000

Thousands of UFO sightings have been documented in official government files.

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00:01:07,000 --> 00:01:10,000

Most have logical, scientific explanations.

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00:01:10,000 --> 00:01:15,000

Yet some cases remain unexplained, classified, unidentified.

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00:01:15,000 --> 00:01:21,000

Can newly released files reveal the truth behind these UFO encounters?

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00:01:21,000 --> 00:01:26,000

The World of the Airways

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00:01:26,000 --> 00:01:30,000

February 25, 1942.

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00:01:30,000 --> 00:01:33,000

Something appears in the skies over Los Angeles.

23

00:01:33,000 --> 00:01:40,000

Only three months after Pearl Harbor, anti-aircraft batteries are scanning the skies for Japanese planes.

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00:01:40,000 --> 00:01:44,000

The World of the Airways

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00:01:44,000 --> 00:01:47,000

Four-year-old Ray Bingham hears the air raid sirens.

26

00:01:47,000 --> 00:01:52,000

I remember I was picked up by my father and we went outside.

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00:01:56,000 --> 00:01:59,000

I remember the searchlights, definitely.

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00:01:59,000 --> 00:02:02,000

And they were kind of not just random.

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00:02:02,000 --> 00:02:05,000

They were searching a specific point in the sky.

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00:02:10,000 --> 00:02:14,000

Then the anti-aircraft guns started firing.

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00:02:15,000 --> 00:02:18,000

Very, very disturbing.

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00:02:18,000 --> 00:02:23,000

And there were people lined up from both sides of the street.

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00:02:26,000 --> 00:02:27,000

All looking up.

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00:02:27,000 --> 00:02:33,000

17-year-old Bill Tompkins claims he saw something over the city that he cannot explain.

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00:02:33,000 --> 00:02:39,000

And there was a very large, round vehicle at about 7,000-8,000 feet.

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

It just moved in and just stopped right above us.

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00:02:44,000 --> 00:02:50,000

There were other vehicles, smaller, that were coming and moving around and moving above them.

38

00:02:52,000 --> 00:02:58,000

Ray Bingham has no memory of seeing actual objects in the sky, only a sound and light show.

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00:02:58,000 --> 00:03:01,000

It was kind of an awesome sight.

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00:03:01,000 --> 00:03:05,000

A little bit frightening actually, because everyone was tense.

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00:03:05,000 --> 00:03:09,000

Tompkins witnessed something far more specific.

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00:03:09,000 --> 00:03:15,000

We could see clearly the shells blowing up on the bottom of this big vehicle,

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00:03:15,000 --> 00:03:19,000

making no indication that there was any damage to it.

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00:03:21,000 --> 00:03:27,000

Tompkins was one of a few eyewitnesses who reported seeing this strange craft.

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00:03:27,000 --> 00:03:32,000

If this sighting is accurate, it's America's first report of a flying saucer.

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00:03:33,000 --> 00:03:36,000

But is there any truth to the account?

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00:03:37,000 --> 00:03:47,000

What is known is that for about an hour, thousands of civilians watch as American soldiers fire anti-aircraft guns at unidentified targets in the sky.

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00:03:50,000 --> 00:03:54,000

The night has become known as the Battle of Los Angeles.

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00:03:55,000 --> 00:04:03,000

And the aircraft guns run into action against unidentified aircraft in the Los Angeles area shortly after 3 a.m. Pacific War Time.

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00:04:03,000 --> 00:04:08,000

This actual report from CBS Radio, broadcast a few hours after the event,

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00:04:08,000 --> 00:04:13,000

clearly shows that the people of Los Angeles believed something was over the city.

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00:04:13,000 --> 00:04:17,000

What it actually was is still being disputed.

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00:04:17,000 --> 00:04:20,000

It never was clear what actually happened.

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00:04:20,000 --> 00:04:24,000

The unidentified object, which some sources thought might be a glimpse,

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00:04:24,000 --> 00:04:30,000

moved slowly down the Pacific coast from Santa Monica and disappeared south of Long Beach.

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00:04:31,000 --> 00:04:40,000

Former FBI agent and UFO investigator Ben Hansen believes it may be the first and best documented sighting of a Los Angeles UFO.

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00:04:41,000 --> 00:04:49,000

The night of February 24, 1942, leading into the early morning hours of the 25th, something incredible happened right here.

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00:04:52,000 --> 00:04:57,000

We have thousands of witnesses describing very strange occurrences that night.

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

This was well before anyone was talking about the terms UFOs, flying saucers, flying discs.

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00:05:04,000 --> 00:05:06,000

This predates Roswell.

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00:05:07,000 --> 00:05:10,000

Others believe there was a much simpler explanation.

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00:05:10,000 --> 00:05:15,000

In my opinion, I really think it was mass hysteria that set off all that anti-aircraft fire.

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00:05:15,000 --> 00:05:21,000

I think they were shooting at Jupiter that night, just a target in the sky, and all hell broke loose.

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00:05:21,000 --> 00:05:27,000

Was it a false alarm? Or, as Bill Tompkins says, a flying saucer over L.A.

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00:05:28,000 --> 00:05:38,000

Seven decades later, declassified U.S. government and military documents shed new light on what really happened on the morning of February 25, 1942.

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00:05:40,000 --> 00:05:50,000

Based on a series of reports written at the time, the history of the 4th Anti-Aircraft Command is the only declassified account of the Battle of Los Angeles.

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00:05:51,000 --> 00:05:59,000

On February 23rd, at about 7.30 p.m., Franklin Roosevelt was giving a pep talk to the citizens of the United States.

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

We must be set to face a long war against crafty and powerful bandits.

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

The attack of oil...

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00:06:07,000 --> 00:06:14,000

Simultaneously, one of the Japanese submarines surfaced off the coast of Elwood, which is near Santa Barbara, California,

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00:06:14,000 --> 00:06:17,000

and began lobbing shells at the oil fields there.

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00:06:17,000 --> 00:06:22,000

California oil wells near Santa Barbara are hit by shells from a Japanese submarine.

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00:06:22,000 --> 00:06:25,000

It's the first Japanese attack on mainland USA.

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00:06:25,000 --> 00:06:30,000

Eyewitnesses report the submarine is headed south towards Los Angeles.

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00:06:30,000 --> 00:06:34,000

Pearl Harbor happened on December 7, 1941.

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00:06:34,000 --> 00:06:38,000

Ten weeks later on the west coast, people were panicked.

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00:06:38,000 --> 00:06:42,000

This attack cemented the fear of a possible Japanese invasion.

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00:06:43,000 --> 00:06:47,000

Tensions mount during the evening of February 24th.

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00:06:47,000 --> 00:06:54,000

The 4th Anti-Aircraft Command puts the entire Pacific Coast, from Monterey to the Mexican border, on yellow alert.

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00:06:54,000 --> 00:06:57,000

A full-scale attack could be imminent.

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00:06:57,000 --> 00:07:12,000

Over 250 anti-aircraft guns point to the skies.

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00:07:12,000 --> 00:07:17,000

Inexperienced gunners nervously await a possible invasion.

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00:07:17,000 --> 00:07:26,000

The declassified government document reports a sudden change, just before 2 a.m. on the morning of February 25th.

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00:07:27,000 --> 00:07:34,000

The reports indicate that radar picked up a target 120 miles off the coast of Los Angeles.

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00:07:34,000 --> 00:07:40,000

Right out here, the object comes due west, comes in east towards Malibu,

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00:07:40,000 --> 00:07:47,000

and then starts to turn southward, right over here, Santa Monica, towards Los Angeles.

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00:07:48,000 --> 00:07:56,000

At 2.21 a.m., as the object appears to approach the city, a blackout is ordered.

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00:07:56,000 --> 00:08:03,000

By 2.30, the gunners were told that they were on green alert status one, which is fire at will.

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00:08:03,000 --> 00:08:10,000

At 2.43 a.m., an officer reports something in the sky south of downtown Los Angeles.

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00:08:10,000 --> 00:08:16,000

Faced with the prospect of another Pearl Harbor, they take no chances.

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00:08:16,000 --> 00:08:21,000

One set of gunners thought they saw targets at about 18,000 feet.

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00:08:21,000 --> 00:08:25,000

What is that? Got them? Got them? Got them? Target acquired!

93

00:08:25,000 --> 00:08:28,000

And they fire at will. Fire! Fire!

94

00:08:28,000 --> 00:08:33,000

Firing 76 millimeter shells into the air like crazy.

95

00:08:35,000 --> 00:08:40,000

The sky was described in the LA Valley as erupting like a volcano.

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00:08:41,000 --> 00:08:47,000

It was total chaos. The anti-aircraft gunners were firing at perceived targets.

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00:08:47,000 --> 00:08:49,000

They weren't verified targets.

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00:08:49,000 --> 00:08:53,000

We have three intertillery shells, 50 calibers, mortars.

99

00:08:53,000 --> 00:08:58,000

Shells were coming down into neighborhoods. A number of people were killed.

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00:08:58,000 --> 00:09:05,000

Six people are confirmed to have died, making the Battle of Los Angeles the deadliest U of O sighting on record.

101

00:09:05,000 --> 00:09:10,000

The whole sky lit up, waking people out of bad thinking what is going on.

102

00:09:10,000 --> 00:09:14,000

The eyewitness reports are wildly inconsistent.

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00:09:14,000 --> 00:09:18,000

Some claim they see entire squadrons of heavy bombers in formation.

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00:09:18,000 --> 00:09:26,000

Some see bright lights. Others describe seeing a strange, whitish sphere, like a large balloon.

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00:09:26,000 --> 00:09:31,000

If you look west, as far as you can see, is where Santa Monica is.

106

00:09:31,000 --> 00:09:34,000

From those hills is where the object first appeared.

107

00:09:34,000 --> 00:09:40,000

Slowly meandering, as far inland is Baldwin Hills, Culver City, where we're standing.

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00:09:40,000 --> 00:09:47,000

At this point, the object turns and goes back towards the coastline over Long Beach and out towards the ocean.

109

00:09:49,000 --> 00:09:54,000

At 4.13 a.m., the last sighting is reported.

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00:09:54,000 --> 00:09:58,000

Soon after, the targets disappear without a trace.

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00:09:58,000 --> 00:10:02,000

No bombs were dropped. No casualties sustained.

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

The civilian deaths are not the result of bursting shells, but car crashes and heart attacks attributed to the dramatic events of the night.

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00:10:13,000 --> 00:10:21,000

And after firing 1,400 high explosive shells into the sky, the U.S. military doesn't bring down a single enemy target,

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00:10:22,000 --> 00:10:27,000

leaving civilians and soldiers unsure of what they had just seen.

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00:10:27,000 --> 00:10:38,000

Was it a false alarm? A failed Japanese air raid? Or, as some claim, a mass eyewitness sighting of something that we now call a UFO?

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00:10:39,000 --> 00:10:47,000

No, I don't believe it was a UFO, but I did meet people that did believe that. Yes.

117

00:10:48,000 --> 00:10:51,000

Bill Tompkins is one of these people.

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00:10:51,000 --> 00:11:01,000

I never stopped thinking about that night. I knew that it was something extremely important, that something had definitely taken place.

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00:11:01,000 --> 00:11:10,000

I felt that some enormous extraterrestrial vehicle had made it pass over Southern California.

120

00:11:10,000 --> 00:11:25,000

February 25, 1942. Anti-aircraft gunners have just fired over 1,400 shells at a mysterious object

floating over the city.

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00:11:25,000 --> 00:11:29,000

The object may have been L.A.'s first UFO.

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00:11:30,000 --> 00:11:38,000

Over the last 70 years, the city of Angels has been a hotbed of UFO sightings.

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00:11:38,000 --> 00:11:47,000

Some of these sightings are from highly experienced military sources, including this one from 1954.

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00:11:47,000 --> 00:11:53,000

Over the city of Los Angeles, two test pilots report seeing an object in the sky.

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00:11:53,000 --> 00:12:01,000

They describe it as pencil thin, stationary, floating horizontally, and appearing to be solid and metallic.

126

00:12:01,000 --> 00:12:15,000

This sighting is filed in Project Blue Book, an American Air Force UFO initiative that investigates over 12,000 UFO sightings between 1952 and 1969, when the project is terminated.

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00:12:16,000 --> 00:12:29,000

It was an effort by the Air Force to find out what these phenomena may have been and to capture these reports and analyze them and try to figure out if they were a threat to national security.

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00:12:29,000 --> 00:12:35,000

They looked at 12,000 and changed separate sighting incidents that they had reports on.

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00:12:35,000 --> 00:12:44,000

They developed a way to capture this data and ultimately came to the conclusion that most of these had explainable origins.

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00:12:44,000 --> 00:12:52,000

Project Blue Book classifies the great majority of the sightings as simply birds, clouds, airplanes, or stars.

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00:12:52,000 --> 00:12:56,000

Some of them still were listed as unexplained.

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00:12:56,000 --> 00:13:04,000

Out of the 12,000 cases, 701 remain unidentified. There is no known explanation.

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00:13:04,000 --> 00:13:12,000

The Los Angeles 1954 sighting remains on the Air Force's records as unsolved and unidentified.

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00:13:14,000 --> 00:13:25,000

12 years earlier, well before Project Blue Book or even the invention of the concept of UFOs, something unidentified appears in the sky over Los Angeles.

135

00:13:25,000 --> 00:13:31,000

It receives a massive military reaction from the jittery, post Pearl Harbor shore patrols.

136

00:13:31,000 --> 00:13:46,000

The intensive barrage from over 250 anti-aircraft guns leads to no confirmed hits or down targets.

137

00:13:46,000 --> 00:13:51,000

The most logical explanation is a Japanese airstrike.

138

00:13:51,000 --> 00:14:00,000

This declassified secret memo is key evidence to understanding what happened over Los Angeles that night.

139

00:14:01,000 --> 00:14:11,000

Dated February 26, 1942, the day after the event, it is sent to President Roosevelt from Army Chief of Staff George Marshall.

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00:14:11,000 --> 00:14:17,000

Marshall believes unidentified planes, other than American, were fired upon.

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00:14:17,000 --> 00:14:28,000

15 airplanes may have been involved, but he's puzzled that no bombs were dropped, no casualties among our troops, and no planes shot down.

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00:14:28,000 --> 00:14:36,000

It doesn't fit the profile of a Japanese attack and shows the confusion all the way up to the President's office.

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00:14:36,000 --> 00:14:40,000

Army officials declined to comment that the object might have been a blimp.

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00:14:40,000 --> 00:14:46,000

However, to this day, there is a dispute over what could have been over Los Angeles that morning.

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00:14:46,000 --> 00:14:55,000

Japanese airplanes, nothing at all? Or what some say was an extraterrestrial craft.

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00:14:55,000 --> 00:15:04,000

News of the Battle of Los Angeles makes headlines across America, and the hunt for an explanation begins.

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00:15:04,000 --> 00:15:15,000

People were wondering what had happened, because no one knew. No one seemed to have any definitive information.

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00:15:15,000 --> 00:15:19,000

Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox believes nothing was over Los Angeles.

149

00:15:19,000 --> 00:15:28,000

He calls it a false alarm due to war nerves and overreaction by inexperienced American soldiers. But the Army disagrees.

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00:15:28,000 --> 00:15:34,000

The next morning, the Navy said there were no airplanes in the sky, but the Army said the alert was real.

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00:15:34,000 --> 00:15:37,000

So there was a lot of finger pointing going on.

152

00:15:37,000 --> 00:15:43,000

The Army did exactly what they were told to do. They were ordered to shoot a target during a green status.

153

00:15:43,000 --> 00:15:47,000

The alert was real. The green status was real. The firing was real.

154

00:15:47,000 --> 00:15:51,000

How that gets interpreted, you know, oh, there were planes flying over or there were balloons.

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00:15:51,000 --> 00:15:54,000

That's where things get a little cloudy.

156

00:15:54,000 --> 00:16:02,000

The after-action reports from the history of the 4th Anti-Aircraft Command give a clear indication that something was over LA.

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00:16:02,000 --> 00:16:09,000

At 2.43 a.m., a gun officer reports unidentified planes between Seal Beach and Long Beach.

158

00:16:09,000 --> 00:16:18,000

At 3.28 a.m., Battery G of the 78th Coastal Artillery reports 25 to 30 heavy bombers over the Douglas plant.

159

00:16:18,000 --> 00:16:25,000

At 3.33 a.m., 15 planes are seen flying over Artesia.

160

00:16:25,000 --> 00:16:33,000

There are 37 reports from soldiers to an officer as high-ranking as a colonel, all claiming they saw targets in the sky.

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00:16:33,000 --> 00:16:41,000

Various witnesses are reporting not just one, but up to 20, maybe 200 different types of aircraft.

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00:16:41,000 --> 00:16:49,000

Yet there is no evidence that the Japanese had any ability to launch a full-scale air attack near the California coast.

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00:16:49,000 --> 00:16:55,000

Within the history of the 4th Anti-Aircraft Command, Wing Commander Milton Durham states,

164

00:16:55,000 --> 00:17:01,000

the tactical defense was turned over to the anti-aircraft as no fighters were sent up.

165

00:17:01,000 --> 00:17:07,000

The Army Air Forces held their defense fighters on the ground until they had verifiable targets to attack.

166

00:17:07,000 --> 00:17:10,000

There are no reports they ever took off.

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00:17:10,000 --> 00:17:16,000

If the planes that were spotted were not American, one would expect them to be Japanese.

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00:17:16,000 --> 00:17:24,000

But the Japanese submarine which attacked the oil fields the night before is reported to have withdrawn from the area with no further incident.

169

00:17:24,000 --> 00:17:30,000

Months later, the Japanese deny any involvement in the Battle of Los Angeles.

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00:17:30,000 --> 00:17:35,000

It might seem to be simply a case of war jitters, except the radar picked up something.

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00:17:35,000 --> 00:17:42,000

It's key evidence as to why the military ordered green alert status 1.

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00:17:42,000 --> 00:17:51,000

The official record confirms without a doubt there were three different radar sets that tracked this object off the coast as it came in and down the coastline.

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00:17:51,000 --> 00:17:59,000

Official reports show a target first spotted at 144 a.m., 120 miles off the coast.

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00:17:59,000 --> 00:18:09,000

For almost 45 minutes, three separate radar operators followed it until, at three miles off the coast, it disappears.

175

00:18:09,000 --> 00:18:14,000

That means there was something in the sky. We followed it all the way into the coastline.

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00:18:14,000 --> 00:18:19,000

This is key evidence that has fueled the UFO believers for decades.

177

00:18:19,000 --> 00:18:28,000

If the radar did pick up some object, and it's proven without a doubt that no American or enemy planes were in the sky that night, then could the believers be right?

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00:18:28,000 --> 00:18:34,000

Could the target that floated over Los Angeles have come from another world?

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00:18:34,000 --> 00:18:44,000

What makes this story so extraordinary is that even here, confronted with what looks like solid evidence from radar, there is solid reason for doubt.

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00:18:44,000 --> 00:18:51,000

The official record records that radio bee officer says target doubtful. It wasn't a true reading.

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00:18:51,000 --> 00:18:58,000

Radar was in its infancy in 1942, easily thrown off by flocks of birds or storm clouds.

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00:18:58,000 --> 00:19:08,000

The primitive SCR 268 radar units used in Los Angeles were nowhere near as sophisticated or as accurate as we have come to expect.

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00:19:08,000 --> 00:19:13,000

I really think the targets they saw that night were phantoms. They just weren't there.

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00:19:13,000 --> 00:19:24,000

At the time, the radar was hard to interpret, and according to the history of the 4th anti-aircraft command, the target mysteriously vanished about 3 miles off the coast.

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00:19:24,000 --> 00:19:29,000

So I think it was most likely atmospheric interference.

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00:19:29,000 --> 00:19:37,000

Is it possible that the fears of a Japanese attack, combined with a suspicious radar report, were enough to spark panic?

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00:19:38,000 --> 00:19:44,000

Besides the eyewitness accounts, there is photographic evidence taken during the battle.

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00:19:47,000 --> 00:19:53,000

Printed in the LA Times, this is the most famous and widely recognized photo of the event.

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00:19:56,000 --> 00:20:05,000

The first time I saw the photo, I thought, OK, this might be actual proof of a UFO caught in the beams of these searchlights.

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00:20:07,000 --> 00:20:12,000

The ban is about to uncover a mystery that until now has never been made public.

191

00:20:15,000 --> 00:20:28,000

February 25, 1942, as the panicked city watches anti-aircraft light up the sky, army radar tracks something strange overhead, seemingly unharmed by the gunfire.

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00:20:28,000 --> 00:20:33,000

It might be the first UFO caught on radar, but it's not the last.

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00:20:34,000 --> 00:20:40,000

Los Angeles is a city that continues to get a large number of strange UFO sightings.

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00:20:40,000 --> 00:20:48,000

The U.S. Air Force's Project Blue Book investigated a 1956 sighting just south of the city in El Toro, California.

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00:20:50,000 --> 00:20:55,000

Over an 8-hour period, the UFO is sighted by local residents and tracked by radar.

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00:20:56,000 --> 00:21:02,000

70 pages of Blue Book files exist, including over 30 photos of the anomaly caught on radar.

197

00:21:03,000 --> 00:21:09,000

Helicopters and jets are sent to intercept, but they can't find the unidentified object.

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00:21:10,000 --> 00:21:15,000

The investigators conclude the radar blips are caused by some local phenomenon.

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00:21:16,000 --> 00:21:20,000

The visual sightings are attributed to overactive imaginations.

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

Did the same phenomenon happen in 1942?

201

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

The Los Angeles event has one key piece of evidence that the El Toro sighting doesn't have.

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00:21:32,000 --> 00:21:40,000

A photograph published in the LA Times, capturing the dramatic moment when the lights appear to converge on something in the sky.

203

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

UFO investigator Ben Hansen is near the spot he thinks this photo was taken.

204

00:21:49,000 --> 00:21:52,000

We really don't know much about where this photo was taken.

205

00:21:52,000 --> 00:21:59,000

It's the only photographic evidence of that night, but most people believe that it happened somewhere near the Baldwin Hills, which are behind me.

206

00:22:01,000 --> 00:22:12,000

We can see that it matches up pretty well. The profile of the hills, the outline, and it matches

what witnesses said about the object coming this far inland before it turned back towards the coast.

207

00:22:13,000 --> 00:22:15,000

But is there something under the spotlights?

208

00:22:16,000 --> 00:22:22,000

The only way for us to know if there really is an object in this picture is for me to get a hold of the actual negative.

209

00:22:23,000 --> 00:22:29,000

The only person who can help is the archivist of the LA Times collection at UCLA, Simon Elliott.

210

00:22:30,000 --> 00:22:38,000

So here's box 3178 from the Los Angeles Times collection, and this should have the negatives in it that you're looking for.

211

00:22:38,000 --> 00:22:43,000

More than four million historic photos from the LA Times are under Elliott's care.

212

00:22:43,000 --> 00:22:47,000

And then here is the original negative.

213

00:22:48,000 --> 00:22:56,000

This is completely underexposed. Look at this. I had no idea it was going to look so faint.

214

00:22:56,000 --> 00:23:00,000

The searchlight beams are there, but the ridgeline's completely gone.

215

00:23:00,000 --> 00:23:07,000

There's very little else to see, and then this is the photograph as it appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

216

00:23:07,000 --> 00:23:10,000

The original image has been heavily retouched.

217

00:23:11,000 --> 00:23:21,000

In an era before Photoshop, retouching required copying negatives, enlarging details, and even painting directly on the celluloid.

218

00:23:22,000 --> 00:23:25,000

Is this simply to make the photo look better in print?

219

00:23:26,000 --> 00:23:35,000

Was the retouching meant to insert an image of something that really wasn't there, and does the original negative contain details that are hidden in the published version?

220

00:23:35,000 --> 00:23:42,000

Then, before the analysis even begins, archivist Simon Elliott spots something he's never seen before.

221

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

There is in fact one thing that I hadn't noticed before, is that you have these notch codes in the edge of the negative.

222

00:23:49,000 --> 00:23:56,000

This one has a completely different notch code in it, so this was clearly taken with a different stock of film.

223

00:23:56,000 --> 00:24:04,000

Out of four million photographs in the LA Times collection, this is the first negative the archivist has seen that's been shot on a different film stock.

224

00:24:05,000 --> 00:24:10,000

It is rather a curiosity, it's not something I've seen in any other negatives in the collection.

225

00:24:10,000 --> 00:24:15,000

The Times photographers all use the same film from the same manufacturer.

226

00:24:16,000 --> 00:24:22,000

This one is so completely different, suggests that maybe the negative was not taken by a Times photographer.

227

00:24:22,000 --> 00:24:24,000

So, where did it come from?

228

00:24:25,000 --> 00:24:28,000

Well, that's a mystery you're going to have to try and work out.

229

00:24:29,000 --> 00:24:36,000

The famous photograph was possibly not taken by an LA Times photographer, and the source of the original negative is in doubt.

230

00:24:36,000 --> 00:24:40,000

If it didn't come from the LA Times, where did it come from?

231

00:24:43,000 --> 00:24:44,000

The first thing I want to do is...

232

00:24:44,000 --> 00:24:51,000

Ben sends high-res scans of the negatives to forensic photo analyst and former LA Times photographer George Reis.

233

00:24:52,000 --> 00:24:59,000

The first thing I think to do is determine whether or not the two images are actually of one exposure or if it's two separate exposures.

234

00:24:59,000 --> 00:25:04,000

George takes the two negatives and overlays them to make sure they are the same image.

235

00:25:04,000 --> 00:25:06,000

It's good to see that they match up.

236

00:25:06,000 --> 00:25:08,000

Yes, they do match up.

237

00:25:08,000 --> 00:25:16,000

The forensic comparison suggests that the doctored photo is enhanced, but not faked. Yet, there are bigger issues.

238

00:25:17,000 --> 00:25:22,000

Most people who study this photo, the biggest question they have is,

239

00:25:22,000 --> 00:25:26,000

is there an object in the center of the convergence of the spotlights?

240

00:25:26,000 --> 00:25:27,000

What do you say?

241

00:25:27,000 --> 00:25:34,000

Well, if we zoom in on the image, and if we adjust the brightness and contrast of it,

242

00:25:34,000 --> 00:25:40,000

we definitely can see that there's more density in this one area of the image,

243

00:25:40,000 --> 00:25:42,000

which indicates that there may be something there,

244

00:25:42,000 --> 00:25:45,000

but we can't determine the size or the shape of it.

245

00:25:45,000 --> 00:25:49,000

It might be something in motion. It might be something translucent.

246

00:25:49,000 --> 00:25:56,000

Rather than solving the issue, the forensics seem to have created more questions and more mysteries.

247

00:25:56,000 --> 00:26:03,000

Another anomaly that a lot of people focus on is the fact that some of these beams seem to kind of go through,

248

00:26:03,000 --> 00:26:09,000

you know, like this one, but the other ones pretty much are stopped right at the convergence point.

249

00:26:09,000 --> 00:26:14,000

This is the key part of the negative that experts have analyzed for years.

250

00:26:14,000 --> 00:26:17,000

Could there be something within the beams reflecting the lights?

251

00:26:17,000 --> 00:26:21,000

We have the lines here that could be reflections.

252

00:26:21,000 --> 00:26:25,000

So it could be that they're hitting an object, some of these lights coming from the side,

253

00:26:25,000 --> 00:26:30,000

and then hitting an object and reflecting outward, and they are brighter towards the center.

254

00:26:30,000 --> 00:26:33,000

And you can notice that they're brighter towards the center and fade out.

255

00:26:33,000 --> 00:26:38,000

And that could be indicative of them hitting an object as well. Yeah, it could be something there.

256

00:26:38,000 --> 00:26:42,000

The beams do appear to be reflecting off something at the convergence point.

257

00:26:42,000 --> 00:26:47,000

Is it an illusion of the negative? Are the reflections from smoke in the air?

258

00:26:47,000 --> 00:26:51,000

Or are we seeing an actual object caught in the lights?

259

00:26:51,000 --> 00:26:55,000

There is still one more remaining mystery to solve.

260

00:26:55,000 --> 00:27:02,000

At the archives when I was looking at the negative, I noticed that every collection they had of these negatives

261

00:27:02,000 --> 00:27:06,000

had the same notch codes except for this one.

262

00:27:06,000 --> 00:27:11,000

Can you tell us anything about the notch code that is in this photo and why it's different?

263

00:27:11,000 --> 00:27:18,000

Yes, this image has a single notch. It's kind of a U-shaped notch up in the top right-hand corner.

264

00:27:18,000 --> 00:27:21,000

So this is the notch right here.

265

00:27:21,000 --> 00:27:25,000

So I have a sheet that shows the notch codes.

266

00:27:25,000 --> 00:27:28,000

So we have several different notch patterns.

267

00:27:28,000 --> 00:27:35,000

But the one that looks most significantly like this is the narrow notch of the Kodak Fine Grain Positive Film.

268

00:27:35,000 --> 00:27:39,000

And this would be very indicative of this being a copy negative.

269

00:27:39,000 --> 00:27:46,000

So what you're telling me is this negative is not even the original, but this is a copy?

270

00:27:46,000 --> 00:27:47,000

That's correct.

271

00:27:47,000 --> 00:27:53,000

That is incredible because everyone's research has been based on this being the original negative.

272

00:27:53,000 --> 00:27:54,000

So where is it?

273

00:27:54,000 --> 00:27:57,000

I don't know. It's a mystery to me.

274

00:27:57,000 --> 00:28:01,000

The digital analysis leaves us with as many questions as answers.

275

00:28:01,000 --> 00:28:06,000

Are these light beams reflecting off something solid that's hidden behind the glare?

276

00:28:06,000 --> 00:28:11,000

It's impossible to say for sure because the original negative is missing.

277

00:28:11,000 --> 00:28:13,000

Was it simply lost or misplaced?

278

00:28:13,000 --> 00:28:17,000

Or was it intentionally removed from the archive?

279

00:28:17,000 --> 00:28:19,000

And if so, who took it?

280

00:28:19,000 --> 00:28:26,000

Would the original negative supply any more information or prove conclusively that the object existed?

281

00:28:26,000 --> 00:28:33,000

And finally, if there is indeed an object behind the glare of light, how is it that it wasn't shot down?

282

00:28:33,000 --> 00:28:40,000

Some believe that an object was actually shot down and they say they have proof.

283

00:28:40,000 --> 00:28:44,000

But if something was, what was it?

284

00:28:44,000 --> 00:28:51,000

The day after the Battle of LA, the Secretary of the Navy reported to the press that it was a false alarm.

285

00:28:51,000 --> 00:28:54,000

Simply a case of war jitters.

286

00:28:55,000 --> 00:29:00,000

Military historian Stephen Nelson believes that many of the reports were right.

287

00:29:00,000 --> 00:29:07,000

That guns were firing at an actual object and he thinks he's finally determined exactly what the target was.

288

00:29:07,000 --> 00:29:13,000

This is the type of search light that would have been used around the time of the air raid.

289

00:29:13,000 --> 00:29:19,000

And in the famous photograph with all of the search lights, you could see that search lights did converge.

290

00:29:19,000 --> 00:29:23,000

In some cases, it's been argued that they have over illuminated the target.

291

00:29:23,000 --> 00:29:31,000

Documents from the 4th Anti-Aircraft Command reveal what the search lights might have been following buried deep inside the report.

292

00:29:31,000 --> 00:29:35,000

We believe that meteorological balloons were launched according to schedule.

293

00:29:35,000 --> 00:29:39,000

The report reveals the launch of large weather balloons at 3 a.m.

294

00:29:39,000 --> 00:29:43,000

These balloons were sent up to determine weather and wind conditions.

295

00:29:43,000 --> 00:29:50,000

According to the reports, some balloons may have been released over Los Angeles during Green Status 1.

296

00:29:51,000 --> 00:29:56,000

When the balloon goes aloft on Green Status, people take notice of it.

297

00:29:56,000 --> 00:30:00,000

The search light crews took notice of it, the gun crews took notice of it.

298

00:30:00,000 --> 00:30:05,000

The controller learned that there was a balloon aloft in Green Status 1.

299

00:30:05,000 --> 00:30:08,000

He orders it destroyed.

300

00:30:08,000 --> 00:30:15,000

In this theory, when the commanding officer realizes the sighting of the weather balloons is causing panic, he orders them destroyed.

301

00:30:15,000 --> 00:30:19,000

Only to cause more panic as gunfire increases.

302

00:30:21,000 --> 00:30:26,000

So the gun crews didn't simply just start firing, you know, pell-mell.

303

00:30:29,000 --> 00:30:38,000

This was a direct order from the area controller to destroy the target, which was known and identified as a balloon at that time.

304

00:30:38,000 --> 00:30:43,000

But there are other interpretations, though, but that is my interpretation.

305

00:30:43,000 --> 00:30:51,000

But this balloon theory, although plausible, does not account for the reported sightings of various aircraft by military personnel.

306

00:30:51,000 --> 00:30:59,000

And the theory doesn't account for the most startling phenomenon of the night, a report of an actual crashed aircraft.

307

00:30:59,000 --> 00:31:08,000

The Navy stated they were receiving reports that they had downed aircraft at about 180th Street in Vermont.

308

00:31:08,000 --> 00:31:12,000

This was confirmed by the 77th precinct of the LAPD.

309

00:31:12,000 --> 00:31:21,000

There are numerous reports at night, both from men with a great deal of experience to people with almost no experience.

310

00:31:21,000 --> 00:31:25,000

And they claim to have seen aircraft being shot down.

311

00:31:25,000 --> 00:31:27,000

It's a startling claim.

312

00:31:27,000 --> 00:31:34,000

The Los Angeles Police Department, the U.S. Navy, and the Daily Paper all report a crash in the middle of the city.

313

00:31:34,000 --> 00:31:37,000

But no evidence of a crash ever surfaces.

314

00:31:38,000 --> 00:31:42,000

Stephen Nelson believes there's a simple explanation.

315

00:31:42,000 --> 00:31:49,000

When you have bursting shells in the sky, there are often embers and burning things that come down.

316

00:31:49,000 --> 00:31:56,000

Perhaps, you know, they may have seen that sort of sputtering down from the sky.

317

00:31:56,000 --> 00:32:02,000

As a professional UFO investigator, Ben Hansen suspects there's more to the story.

318

00:32:02,000 --> 00:32:08,000

He believes the reports from the police and Navy can't be so simply dismissed.

319

00:32:08,000 --> 00:32:13,000

Now, it's one thing to say, yeah, we may have hit something, it may have come down.

320

00:32:13,000 --> 00:32:17,000

It's another thing to say, we have it on the ground.

321

00:32:17,000 --> 00:32:26,000

I think that we have enough witnesses and enough people definitively saying we downed some type of craft that maybe somebody came in and scooped it up.

322

00:32:26,000 --> 00:32:30,000

The Japanese claim they had no aircraft over Los Angeles.

323

00:32:30,000 --> 00:32:36,000

The Army Air Force didn't order any fighters to intercept the unidentified target.

324

00:32:36,000 --> 00:32:41,000

If these official reports are true, what could have been shot down?

325

00:32:41,000 --> 00:32:46,000

If it wasn't an alien spacecraft, there's another intriguing possibility.

326

00:32:46,000 --> 00:32:54,000

What if it was an experimental American aircraft so classified that its crash could not be acknowledged by the military?

327

00:32:54,000 --> 00:32:59,000

Aviation historian Peter Merlin is an aircraft accident expert.

328

00:32:59,000 --> 00:33:03,000

He's investigated more than 600 crash sites.

329

00:33:03,000 --> 00:33:10,000

Merlin and Ben Hansen explore a crash site from a top secret aircraft that went down in 1953.

330

00:33:10,000 --> 00:33:13,000

Some of the remains are still visible.

331

00:33:13,000 --> 00:33:16,000

They're coming from the south to the north from over here.

332

00:33:16,000 --> 00:33:20,000

The plane exploded and spread debris for a quarter mile.

333

00:33:20,000 --> 00:33:22,000

You're seeing this much debris and wreckage.

334

00:33:22,000 --> 00:33:24,000

I mean, this is just strewn all over the place.

335

00:33:24,000 --> 00:33:27,000

Is there anything to identify the actual craft with?

336

00:33:27,000 --> 00:33:32,000

Well, some pieces you'll find, part numbers or inspection stamps.

337

00:33:32,000 --> 00:33:44,000

The crash site from 1953 is near one of the most highly secured and top secret facilities in the world, Edwards Air Force Base.

338

00:33:44,000 --> 00:33:48,000

Edwards sits just on the other side of the mountains from Los Angeles.

339

00:33:48,000 --> 00:33:52,000

In 1942, it was called Muroc.

340

00:33:52,000 --> 00:34:00,000

Edwards has been at the forefront of testing virtually every aircraft that was developed for the Air Force Inventory.

341

00:34:00,000 --> 00:34:04,000

From California, the first pictures of the new flying wing.

342

00:34:04,000 --> 00:34:19,000

From early innovations to supersonic and hypersonic to more modern-day stealth projects, many revolutionary top secret technologies have been developed at Edwards.

343

00:34:19,000 --> 00:34:26,000

There are a lot of projects which have taken place in the past that are still not declassified and remain a mystery to this day.

344

00:34:26,000 --> 00:34:33,000

But what top secret projects are being developed in 1942 at the time of the Battle of Los Angeles?

345

00:34:33,000 --> 00:34:41,000

The XP-59 was tested at Muroc beginning in 1942 and was followed immediately by the XP-80.

346

00:34:41,000 --> 00:34:48,000

These aircraft were revolutionary and they were highly secret at the time.

347

00:34:48,000 --> 00:34:56,000

Even at Edwards, the line between top secret experimental aircraft and UFOs gets blurred.

348

00:34:56,000 --> 00:35:02,000

Some of the things flying at Edwards are so strange looking that they would easily generate UFO reports.

349

00:35:02,000 --> 00:35:08,000

Does this explain the strange object fired on by anti-aircraft gunners in 1942?

350

00:35:08,000 --> 00:35:14,000

A top secret, experimental craft scrambled during the first reports of an attack.

351

00:35:14,000 --> 00:35:21,000

A craft that crashed and had to be covered up to protect its vital secret for the Japanese and the Nazis?

352

00:35:21,000 --> 00:35:26,000

It's an intriguing theory, but Merlin finds it unlikely.

353

00:35:26,000 --> 00:35:31,000

I don't think there's any chance they would have flown the early jets over the Los Angeles area.

354

00:35:31,000 --> 00:35:37,000

It was such a secret project they could find their activities to the desert ranges where the population was sparse.

355

00:35:37,000 --> 00:35:44,000

Even today, Edwards Air Force Base remains a hotbed of UFO reports, even from seasoned combat veterans.

356

00:35:44,000 --> 00:35:50,000

I called the office and I said, Edwards, you're not going to believe what I'm about to say.

357

00:35:52,000 --> 00:35:56,000

DOB, February 26, 1942

358

00:35:56,000 --> 00:36:03,000

After a night of anti-aircraft fire, citizens of Los Angeles wonder what kind of craft flew over their city.

359

00:36:03,000 --> 00:36:10,000

Could there be any connection to the nearby top secret testing grounds called Murak or Edwards Air Force Base?

360

00:36:10,000 --> 00:36:15,000

Since 1942, Edwards remains a UFO hotspot.

361

00:36:15,000 --> 00:36:23,000

There are a lot of UFO stories surrounding Edwards. Some of them are elaborate to the point of being unbelievable, like UFO landings with visitors.

362

00:36:23,000 --> 00:36:28,000

Others are vague lights in the sky and objects being tracked on radar.

363

00:36:28,000 --> 00:36:34,000

The US Air Force's Project Blue Book began documenting UFO sightings connected to the airbase.

364

00:36:36,000 --> 00:36:44,000

1947, according to Project Blue Book, an Edwards test pilot sees an oscillating sphere at 12,000 feet.

365

00:36:44,000 --> 00:36:48,000

Over the next three days, other people at the base also see it.

366

00:36:48,000 --> 00:36:56,000

1951, two F-86 pilots attempt to intercept an unidentified flying object at 55,000 feet.

367

00:36:56,000 --> 00:37:04,000

The sighting is at first attributed to a weather balloon, but the pilot state the craft had wings

and could move at incredible speed.

368

00:37:06,000 --> 00:37:13,000

After an investigation, Project Blue Book concluded, contrary to all eyewitness reports, it was a weather balloon.

369

00:37:15,000 --> 00:37:20,000

Bizarre sightings at Edwards Air Force Base continued up to the present day.

370

00:37:21,000 --> 00:37:27,000

In 1996, another eyewitness report enters into the realm of the unexplained.

371

00:37:27,000 --> 00:37:28,000

I was solo that night.

372

00:37:28,000 --> 00:37:32,000

Mike Larson is an Air Force Security Officer at Edwards.

373

00:37:32,000 --> 00:37:36,000

And I just pulled over somebody on Mercury Boulevard for speeding.

374

00:37:37,000 --> 00:37:40,000

All right, sir, have a good night. Slow it down, all right?

375

00:37:40,000 --> 00:37:48,000

I gave him a warning and I was just walking back to my vehicle. They were leaving and that's when something caught my eye.

376

00:37:48,000 --> 00:37:50,000

It was a light off in the distance.

377

00:37:51,000 --> 00:38:00,000

What I saw coming pretty much almost dead on was a triangular shaped, was large, had a center light, just steady, not too bright.

378

00:38:00,000 --> 00:38:04,000

And then on each corner, it had greenish lights on each side.

379

00:38:04,000 --> 00:38:13,000

No blinking, no aviation lights, all the lights were steady on and it moved very slow and it was quiet.

380

00:38:13,000 --> 00:38:17,000

There was no engine noise, nothing to identify it as a standard aircraft.

381

00:38:17,000 --> 00:38:19,000

Edwards Police Force?

382

00:38:19,000 --> 00:38:22,000

And so then I called the office and I said, Edwards,

383

00:38:22,000 --> 00:38:28,000

I'm not going to believe what I'm about to say. I'm seeing an unidentified flying object.

384

00:38:28,000 --> 00:38:32,000

I asked them to confirm to the tower if we had anything flying tonight.

385

00:38:33,000 --> 00:38:37,000

The tower said that there's no flying and they don't see anything.

386

00:38:37,000 --> 00:38:41,000

And at that point, that's when I said, well, tell them to look to the southeast.

387

00:38:41,000 --> 00:38:48,000

And a few seconds later, then other posts around the bay started calling in saying that they saw something as well.

388

00:38:48,000 --> 00:38:59,000

It came in this direction and slowly moved almost to the south base side and then over towards Boron.

389

00:38:59,000 --> 00:39:04,000

I had 10,000 flight hours. I've been around aircraft, you know, for 20 years.

390

00:39:04,000 --> 00:39:07,000

And to this day, I can't tell you what it is.

391

00:39:08,000 --> 00:39:15,000

Did Officer Mike Larson see an experimental craft so secret even base personnel were unaware of?

392

00:39:15,000 --> 00:39:19,000

Or was it something even stranger?

393

00:39:19,000 --> 00:39:23,000

I know what I saw. I just can't tell you what it is.

394

00:39:25,000 --> 00:39:30,000

What Larson saw remains a mystery and adds to the Edwards UFO lore.

395

00:39:30,000 --> 00:39:35,000

The mystery remains as to what, if anything, was over LA in 1942.

396

00:39:36,000 --> 00:39:42,000

The official army file states something crashed near downtown Los Angeles. What could it have been?

397

00:39:44,000 --> 00:39:48,000

Dr. Robert Wood believes he has definitive evidence.

398

00:39:48,000 --> 00:39:53,000

As an aeronautical engineer, he spent 40 years at Douglas Aircraft Company.

399

00:39:54,000 --> 00:40:01,000

He believes he has documents to prove that something extraordinary crashed in February 1942.

400

00:40:01,000 --> 00:40:07,000

And his mysterious evidence has fanned the flames of conspiracy theories ever since.

401

00:40:07,000 --> 00:40:15,000

I first became interested in the Battle of LA when I got some documents that appeared to be classified.

402

00:40:15,000 --> 00:40:24,000

Five photocopied documents marked Top Secret were delivered to Dr. Wood by what he claims was an anonymous military source.

403

00:40:24,000 --> 00:40:31,000

These mysterious documents appear to be from the 1940s, memos and letters to the President's office.

404

00:40:31,000 --> 00:40:40,000

They excited me a great deal because it seemed as if the documents suggested strongly that we were being attacked by UFOs.

405

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

And that we were shooting at the UFOs and that we might have shot a couple of them down.

406

00:40:45,000 --> 00:40:50,000

Every way I looked at them, it seemed to me that they had all the airmarks of authenticity.

407

00:40:51,000 --> 00:40:57,000

One of the four documents is already confirmed and well known among historians.

408

00:40:57,000 --> 00:41:03,000

The memo from George Marshall to President Roosevelt, written the day after the Battle of Los Angeles.

409

00:41:03,000 --> 00:41:07,000

But it's the other four documents that are in question.

410

00:41:07,000 --> 00:41:13,000

When I found out that it looked as if we really had recovered craft, I got very excited.

411

00:41:13,000 --> 00:41:23,000

This is a memo one week later from FDR to George Marshall saying that we have actually recovered two craft.

412

00:41:23,000 --> 00:41:28,000

One was recovered in the San Bernardino Mountains and the other was salvaged by the Navy at sea.

413

00:41:28,000 --> 00:41:33,000

This headquarters has come to a determination that the mystery airplanes are in fact not earthly

414

00:41:33,000 --> 00:41:39,000

and according to secret intelligence sources they are an all probability of interplanetary origin.

415

00:41:40,000 --> 00:41:47,000

So those are the words right in this document in March, one week later, 1942.

416

00:41:47,000 --> 00:41:53,000

Dr. Wood's documents seem incredible, yet there is no other verification or support for these claims

417

00:41:53,000 --> 00:41:59,000

and no other copies besides the mysterious documents that Wood claims he received anonymously.

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00:42:01,000 --> 00:42:07,000

Even UFO investigator Ben Hansen questions the authenticity of Dr. Wood's documents.

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00:42:08,000 --> 00:42:14,000

One of the most crucial things in doing forensics on documents is having the original document.

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00:42:14,000 --> 00:42:18,000

That's my biggest problem with the ones that Dr. Wood presented.

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00:42:18,000 --> 00:42:26,000

We can't test the paper, we can't test the ink, we can't look for the special qualities that would have been present in that time period.

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00:42:26,000 --> 00:42:35,000

The mysterious documents are the only official connection of the Battle of Los Angeles with the idea of alien or extraterrestrial spacecraft.

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00:42:35,000 --> 00:42:40,000

Without any reliable source, these documents remain shaky evidence at best.

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00:42:40,000 --> 00:42:46,000

All that remains are the official files reporting mysterious craft over Los Angeles,

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00:42:46,000 --> 00:42:50,000

soldiers firing upon unknown targets and eyewitness accounts.

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00:42:51,000 --> 00:42:59,000

Bill Tompkins was one of a few who reported bizarre, disc-like craft, unlike anything they'd seen on Earth.

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00:42:59,000 --> 00:43:09,000

It's a situation where a massive extraterrestrial military organization came in over our planet

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00:43:09,000 --> 00:43:12,000

at two months after we went to war with Japan.

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00:43:13,000 --> 00:43:15,000

Others remain skeptical.

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00:43:15,000 --> 00:43:19,000

I believe there are other advanced civilizations out there, but based on the reports,

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00:43:19,000 --> 00:43:24,000

there's no documentary evidence that they came and visited on February 25, 1942.

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00:43:24,000 --> 00:43:28,000

I've always found material at every crash site I've been to.

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00:43:28,000 --> 00:43:31,000

But it's certainly nothing extraterrestrial.

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00:43:31,000 --> 00:43:41,000

I've certainly never seen any evidence myself of extraterrestrial hesitation, and I'd love to, but it just doesn't seem to be there.

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00:43:49,000 --> 00:43:53,000

Stephen Nelson prefers a different approach to commemorate the event.

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00:43:53,000 --> 00:43:59,000

Every February, the actual site of the air-raid guns hosts a celebration of the Battle of Los Angeles

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00:43:59,000 --> 00:44:04,000

with re-enactors, 1940s music, and World War II veterans.

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00:44:05,000 --> 00:44:09,000

I don't want to destroy people's theories and their ideas.

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00:44:09,000 --> 00:44:17,000

I just think that there has been precious little focus on the men that served that night and the circumstances behind it.

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00:44:17,000 --> 00:44:22,000

Rather than look at it as an embarrassment, we should look at it as a lesson.

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00:44:22,000 --> 00:44:27,000

And the men that served that night actually went on to do great things in World War II.

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00:44:27,000 --> 00:44:35,000

And that is the story of the air-raid, I think, much more important than speculation on a UFO or something of that nature.

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00:44:37,000 --> 00:44:42,000

Ben Hansen believes that despite decades of investigation, the event remains a mystery.

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00:44:44,000 --> 00:44:51,000

We have hundreds, if not thousands, of witnesses who saw some type of strange object over Los Angeles.

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00:44:51,000 --> 00:44:54,000

As to what it was, we may never know.

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00:44:54,000 --> 00:45:00,000

On the one hand, we want to determine with a final exact what happened that evening.

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00:45:00,000 --> 00:45:09,000

But I think with the passage of time and the loss of the eyewitnesses, I think it's forever going to be open for speculation.

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00:45:12,000 --> 00:45:15,000

The official files clearly show the confusion of the night.

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00:45:16,000 --> 00:45:23,000

Government reports mention both planes and balloons in the skies, yet there is no conclusive evidence of either.

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00:45:24,000 --> 00:45:28,000

Eyewitnesses claim bizarre sightings with no evidence to back them up.

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00:45:30,000 --> 00:45:36,000

Even the famous photograph turns out to be inconclusive, since the original has disappeared.

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00:45:37,000 --> 00:45:45,000

And the alleged leaked documents of Dr. Wood refer directly to interplanetary aircraft, but their authenticity is seriously questioned.

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00:45:46,000 --> 00:45:55,000

The events of February 25, 1942 remain a mystery, leaving the case study of the Battle of Los Angeles unidentified.