



# Aliens On Earth.com

Resources for those who are stranded here



## Our Bookstore is **OPEN**

*Over 5000 new & used titles, competitively priced!*

Topics: [UFOs](#) - [Paranormal](#) - [Area 51](#) - [Ghosts](#) - [Fortean](#) - [Conspiracy](#) - [History](#) - [Biography](#) - [Psychology](#) - [Religion](#) - [Crime](#) - [Health](#) - [Geography](#) - [Maps](#) - [Science](#) - [Money](#) - [Language](#) - [Recreation](#) - [Technology](#) - [Fiction](#) - [Other](#) - [New](#)

Search... for keyword(s)

in Page Titles

Location: [Mothership](#) -> [Area 51](#) -> [List](#) -> [1997](#) -> [Jul](#) -> [Roswell 50th Trip Report](#)

**NOTICE:** The page below has been permanently FROZEN as of January 2000. Due to resource limitations, this section of our website is no longer maintained, so some links may not work and some information may be out of date. We have retained this page for archive reference only, and we cannot vouch for its accuracy. Broken links will not be repaired, and minor errors will not be corrected. You are responsible for independently verifying any information you may find here. [More Info](#)

For more recent information about Area 51, see the new [Area 51 Research Center](#) maintained by Don Emory.

## Roswell 50th Trip Report

From: Rich Thomson <[rthomson@ptc.com](mailto:rthomson@ptc.com)>

Date: Fri, 11 Jul 1997 13:47:35 -0800

Subject: Roswell 50th Trip Report

Thursday July 3rd:

A friend of mine and I pile into my Explorer to head out on the highway to Roswell. It takes us 10 hours to drive to Albuquerque, where we stay with a friend of mine after having a wonderful meal at Los Cuates just off Lomas Blvd. The margheritas are tasty, the beer is cold and the food is excellent.

Friday, July 4th:

The Crowds?

After resting up wonderfully, we begin the trek from Albuquerque to Roswell. We take the I-25 down to San Antonio and head east over US 70, the two-lane highway through Lincoln National Forest. On the way into Roswell we pass a white van with NV plates. Did the government disinformation agent give up his quest to seed fear, uncertainty and doubt early? We press on.

We arrive in Roswell around 3:30 pm. We are surprised by the distinct lack of crowds. Estimates reported in the press said "50,000 to 100,000 people" would be attending. We were skeptical of those estimates considering we could drive around and find parking places close to major attractions without difficulty. A survey of license plates consisted of (most common first): New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, Nevada\*, Utah\*, California\*, Maryland\* (\* - only one sighted). I was getting the distinct impression that the attendance numbers were a little bloated.

About 4pm we wander over into the Starchild shop to do some mandatory souvenir buying. I get a couple T-shirts (Kokopelli the Native American flute player as an alien motif, and a 50th anniversary Roswell shirt) while my friend loads up on his bundle of goodies.

Camping in a Lake

Around 5pm we wander over to the Museum to find out they closed EXACTLY at 5pm -- this turned out to be the only thing in Roswell

that operated on-time. So, having been foiled in our attempts to check out the UFO museum we proceeded to cruise around town to see what sort of accommodations we could find for the night. Although a number of hotels on the way into town didn't have their "no vacancy" signs lit as we entered, they were all illuminated as we drove back out attempting to secure a cheap hotel room. Foiled in our plans for a hotel room, we headed out to the fairgrounds and secured a tent-site.

Our choice of a tent-site proved to be a little disasterous. Campers adjacent to ours told us how it had rained the night before, but we didn't think there was much chance of it raining again in Roswell that evening. Luck wasn't on our side, however! Storm clouds began brewing and the rain started to drizzle down; the winds were picking up too. It was already dark and hard to tell the severity of the storm until it hit us full swing. The rain pelted down so hard that it seemed to punch through the rain fly of our tent and began getting inside. The winds and lightning were pretty fierce, making me think of the lightning storm that sent rancher Mac Brazel out the following day to check the windmills for damage that led him to the "debris field".

After about half an hour of pouring rain, we found our tent no longer resting on a campsite, but instead resting in the middle of a temporary lake, about 1-2" in depth. Unfortunately the nearby areas were draining into the road, which in turn drained to where our tent was located! We relocated our slightly soggy sleeping bags and soaked tent to underneath the covered livestock area in the fairgrounds. This allowed us to dry off our gear and get some shuteye.

Saturday, July 5th:

#### The Parade

After a breakfast at the Fairgrounds' "chuck wagon", we head into town to check out the loonies. We arrive in town just in time for the "parade". Well, at least they told us it would be a parade. In fact, it turns out to be a lame assemblage of various "alien" floats, one of which is nothing more than a man pushing his child in a baby stroller while he wears a Blue Oyster Cult concert T-shirt. This "parade" was a disappointment, especially considering that we waited an hour and a half for it to start and crowd control was so poor that the audience for all intents and purposes WAS the parade.

While waiting for the parade to begin, we talked with a camera crew at the event for ABC network news. From their observations, the majority of the visitors to Roswell were locals from Albuquerque and only a few had travelled any significant distance from out of state to attend the convention.

#### The Vendors

Oh well, on to the civic center to check out the various wares being hawked by the vendors. Now here is where I made an interesting observation about the "UFO believers" -- they aren't interested in the memorabilia and trinkets that go along with genuine space travel of the human variety. They aren't even that interested in Star Trek memorabilia and trinkets. They have more interest in "psychic readings" and other quasi-mystical New Age things than anything bearing a resemblance to genuine science or technology. Although Phil Corso's book seem to occupy a niche on every table at the center, Kevin Randle's book about the events in Roswell was conspicuously absent from every vendor's table. Having read Randle's book, which I found to be a fairly skeptical assemblage of the various eyewitness testimonies and related government documents, and having read reviews of Corso's book (pretty much describing it as a sham), this was a little disconcerting. The attendees seem more intent on focusing on the wilder versions of UFO lore rather than the careful, meticulous examination of fact and documented evidence. I made a feeble attempt to find the recent fictional Area 51 book mentioned on this list, but noone had it in stock for me to thumb through.

There were no autographed photographs of astronauts, no models of the space shuttle (or even the starship Enterprise), no pictures of galaxies, or other astronomical phenomena. Instead there was an endless array of "grey" merchandise -- jewelry, posters, dolls, and so on -- as well as psychic readings by a woman who claims that her unborn twin sister was abducted from the

womb and that anodized aluminum plates somehow turn a martini into water in about 3 minutes.

#### The UFO Museum

From the exhibit hall we moved onto the main UFO museum in Roswell. This is the museum located near the center of town on Main St. with free admission. We toured through the museum and I found it interesting that this portrayal of events laid out all the eyewitness testimony as well as the government's version of the story side-by-side. This is a fairer portrayal of events and allows the audience to draw their own conclusions. Naturally the recent report of the test dummies and so on from the "Case Closed" report was also represented. The museum's commentary didn't go so far as to state that the Air Force was lying, but it did cast doubt on the most recent explanation. The underlying tone was essentially still of the "you decide" variety, however. In contrast to the vendors and attendees who were willing to believe anything they were told, this was refreshing.

As I neared the end of the exhibit, they had a section on crop circles and the ancient stone carvings of the Incas that could be interpreted to be a diagram of an astronaut inside a control capsule (i.e. "Chariots of the Gods"). I found this a bit of a stretch (many crop circles have been admitted to have been created by humans and the prehistory of central and south america is so murky that no conclusive findings can be made on the origins of the stone carving), but after that there was a refreshing few stalls that focused on hard science -- results of tests that showed the purported "crash fragments" were more likely examples of a little known ancient Japanese jewelry making process as well as several posters of the Milky Way and so on.

On my way out (we were forced to exit via the gift shop; now I know why the museum itself was free :), I noticed that this museum was the only place so far I'd seen selling Randle's updated book. They also had a variety of genuine space merchandise for sale (I bought a nice poster of the Solar System), although most of the merchandise naturally focused on UFOs.

#### Budd Hopkins

After our little tour through the museum, we waited to hear Budd Hopkins talk at 3pm. (My friend had an interest in alien abductions and came to Roswell with the intent of getting an abductee interviewed on tape.) We didn't pay to hear Budd; apparently several speakers from the UFO convention were also speaking in the museum for free, so we sat in on one of these free talks.

Budd Hopkins is an alien abduction researcher (see the UFOmind web site for details). First he talked about the UFO phenomenon in general. He said he had been asked many times about why the government doesn't reveal what it knows about UFOs if it is keeping a secret? He said he believes that the government simply can't admit to knowing anything because they are impotent to do anything about the knowledge they would be admitting. In other words, the President isn't going to say "Yes, we know all about these aliens that have been landing since at least 1947, but we're powerless to do anything about it, or keep them from abducting our citizens."

This seems plausible to me (if you accept the preconditions that the government knows something and is attempting to conceal it), if only for the reasons that politicians think it is within their power to do something about anything, regardless how ridiculous (the legislature in Utah passed a law forbidding the Great Salt Lake to rise above a certain level, for instance).

He then went on to talk some about the abduction phenomenon and the psychology of it. He introduced his webmaster, John Velez, who told us they had a web site. I thought it rather silly to mention that you have a web site, but not mention the URL. It is linked on the UFOmind web page for Hopkins, so you can find it there. Sadly, there was no information there about abductions at all, just a bunch of dancing baloney (animated graphics and various bits of flashey hoo-haa that deliver no content). Hopkins claims to have a large photographic library of the physical scars left behind from abductions. Having this photographic library on-line would be more important to boosting his credibility than all the dancing baloney he has on his web site.

John Velez is apparently an abductee himself and contacted Hopkins to find out what Hopkins could tell him about his experiences and possibly find some answers to his questions. At this point, I remember the floor being opened up for questions from the audience.

Someone from the audience asked how widespread Hopkins believed the abduction experience to be. Hopkins said that he delivered a survey to about 500 people, which was seeded with 5 questions about common abduction experiences amongst a number of other questions about occult matters (have you ever seen a ghost, etc.). There was also one "loony filter" question in which Hopkins made up a word and asked people if that word meant anything to them. (If they answered "yes", they were removed from the survey sample.) The results from this survey indicated that about 2% of the sample base reported experiences consistent with the prototypical abduction experience. That is not to say that those 2% were abductees, merely that they reported phenomenon consistent with the abductee experiences Hopkins has studied.

Next came a question about the Nova episode on alien abductions. Hopkins and Velez (both were in the episode) made it clear that they believed Nova to be on a "debunking mission" rather than an objective assessment of the phenomena. I saw the episode in question and came to that conclusion myself. Nova seemed desperate to reach any conclusion other than allowing for even the possibility of an unknown phenomenon (UFOs or not). Velez even stated that he offered to have them conduct psychological profiles and examinations of him to rule out psychosis as a possible explanation (they didn't do this). So, it seems that the Nova program made up their minds what the phenomena was before they "investigated".

Back to Albuquerque

We left Roswell that afternoon around 5:30pm to head back to Albuquerque to stay the night once more with my friend before heading back to Salt Lake. Things were getting pretty dull at that point since we weren't considering paying any money to hear the speakers.

Summary

UFO Encounter '97 was indeed a loon fest. The highlights of the convention for me were seeing the other UFO museum and just checking out the general crowd. After having seen the crowds of "believers" I can now understand why so few people are willing to go on record as saying they believe in UFOs, extraterrestrials, alien abduction, or anything else remotely resembling the belief systems of the attendees I saw. However, it was mildly entertaining; the parade was a disappointment and I was a little bummed I didn't get to see our Fearless Leader once again (i.e. GC :). Similar to what Glenn has said, for me it was mostly a "checklist" item. Now that I've been to a UFO convention I know that I don't ever need to attend another one in my life. :)

--  
``Between stimulus and response is the will to choose.'' -- Steven Covey  
=====

3D Paint: The Power to Create in 3D; email me for more info	Rich Thomson rthomson@ptc.com
--	----------------------------------

Index: [Roswell Crash 50th Anniversary Celebration - July 1997](#)

[Mothership](#) -> [Area 51](#) -> [List](#) -> [1997](#) -> [Jul](#) -> [Here](#)

[Our Design and Original Text Copyrighted](#) © 1994-99 [Area 51 Research Center](#)  
PO Box 30303, Las Vegas, NV 89173 Glenn Campbell, Webmaster & Moderator

This site is supported by the [Ufomind Bookstore](#)  
*Please visit our business if you appreciate our free web services.* [New Items](#)

Send corrections to [webmaster@ufomind.com](mailto:webmaster@ufomind.com)

This page: <http://www.aliensonearth.com/area51/list/1997/jul/a11-003.shtml> (12/16/00 21:26)

We encourage you to link to this page from your own. No permission required.

Created: