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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

## New Automatic Indexing Feature on Web Archive

From: **campbell@ufomind.com (Glenn Campbell, Las Vegas)**
Date: Mon, 21 Jul 1997 20:48:31 -0800
Fwd Date: Mon, 04 Aug 1997 23:37:18 -0400
Subject: New Automatic Indexing Feature on Web Archive

The UFO UpDates mailing list has been archived on the Ufomind server
since mid-December.  (See www.ufomind.com/ufo/updates/) The archive
lets users browse through messages by date, and it also provides a
stable, linkable address for each message.

One problem, however, is that past messages are difficult to locate,
since there has been no reliable way to index messages by topic.

Now an automatic system has been provided to add new messages to the
Ufomind index pages.  All a message author needs to do is include a
Ufomind URL at the end of his message, and the link will be
automatically added to that page.  This feature is optional, and not
all messages need to be indexed, but it makes future access much
easier.

The added line, appearing at the bottom of your message, must be in
the following form.

Index: wxw.ufomind.com/ufo/place/us/nm/roswell/testimony/

(In these samples, I have deliberately replaced "www" with "wxw" to
prevent these sample lines from being processed in the web version.
You should use "www" instead.)

This line should normally be the last line of your message, but it can
be a few lines up from the bottom if your signature forces it there.
The system only works for the Ufomind server: www.ufomind.com, so
don't try to put any other server name after "Index: ".  You can also
insert "http://" before it, but this is superfluous.

(BTW: "http://" is no longer required to make a URL "hot" in the
body of a message, so long as the URL begins with "www.".)

When the message is stored on the web server, the URL above is
replaced by the name of the Ufomind page and a hot-link to it....

Index: _Roswell Testimony_

An entry is then added to the index page referring back to the
message.  The link is now "reciprocal": The message refers to the
index page, and the index page refers to the message.

More than one "Index:" line is allowed, but usually one or two lines
are sufficient -- three at most.  For example, a certain message
regarding, say, Kevin Randle's evaluation of Philip Corso might
have the following at the bottom....

Index: wxw.ufomind.com/ufo/people/c/corso/
Index: wxw.ufomind.com/ufo/people/r/randle/

You don't want to "over-index" your message by including too many
index lines, because this dilutes the value of the the index pages.

For example, there is no need to reference the Roswell Incident page
(www.ufomind.com/ufo/place/us/nm/roswell/), since both Corso & Randle
are already linked there.  In general, you should add an entry for
only the single "best" index page -- i.e. the most specific one.

For an example of an active index link, see the bottom of this
message. Also see the recently posted message: "BLM Directions for
Roswell Crash Sites." The indexing system has been operational for
several weeks on the Area 51 mailing list
(www.ufomind.com/area51/list/) and the Ufomind mailing list
(www.ufomind.com/misc/), so you can see those for further examples.

WHAT SHOULD BE INDEXED?

To be indexed, a message must contain SIGNIFICANT DATA, not just
opinions, queries or minor responses to previous messages.  The key
question is, "Will this message still be useful a year from now?" If
the message does not seem to hold any lasting data that we will want
to refer to again in isolation, then it should not be indexed.  I
guess that less than 1/4 of UFO UpDates messages are appropriate for
indexing.  (We'll see.)

I am very cautious about indexing copyrighted articles (from AP,
Reuters, etc.).  To avoid eventual legal problems, I don't want
too many of them to end up on my server, and I don't want to depend
on those that do.  If you post such an article to the list, try to
include a URL for its original location (at a newspaper's website
usually) at the top of the document.  This gives me the option of
indexing that URL instead of the posted message.

All messages, even if not indexed, will still be accessible by date.
Responses to messages (i.e. "Re:" messages) are usually available by
using the search-by-email and "This Day's Messages" options at the
bottom of the main message, and in the future I may provide more
advanced tools for finding threads.  Thus, you do not need to index
most "Re:" responses, only the most significant of them.

The definition of "significant data" is subject to debate and is
ultimately determined by Errol and myself.  The Ufomind server is
concerned with data about UFO cases but it is also interested in
personalities (i.e. Who can you trust?).  In general, expressions of
opinion are not worth indexing (because there are so many of them),
but if a researcher really gets upset about something, the message
might be worth saving on his "unofficial" index page just to show
his style and what is important to him.


HOW IT WORKS

-- Message authors may "nominate" their messages for indexing by
adding their own index line to the bottom of their message.
(Nomination is an important step, because finding the appropriate URL
on the Ufomind site requires some effort, and if the author doesn't
choose to look it up, then he is saying that he does not care about it
being indexed.)

-- The mailing list moderator (Errol) has the right to overrule the
indexing choice, by adding an index line, removing the author's line
or changing the URL to one he believes is more appropriate. Errol
continues to have full control over the content of the mailing list.

-- Once a message has been approved and has been added to the website,
an entry is automatically added in the target index page. An approval
request is then queued to the Ufomind webmaster (me) for approval.  I
have full discretion to remove, modify or move the index entry in
whatever manner I feel is most useful. The idea is to preserve
references to the most useful documents without watering down the list
with superfluous links. (The webmaster, like the moderator, will no
doubt piss some people off with his choices, but that is his job.)

-- If an entry is removed from an index page by the webmaster, the
message itself will remain unchanged and will continue to refer to the
original index page. In other words, the presence of an "Index:" line
does not guarantee a reciprocal link; it is only a request.

-- Past messages in the archive may only be indexed by hand, using the
Add-a-Link feature at the bottom of index pages.  New messages that do
not get indexed on the first pass may also be indexed by hand, but
there will not be any reciprocal link at the bottom of the message.
We encourage any users who have idle time to go through past

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messages and index the most interesting ones.  Otherwise, these
messages may be forgotten.


INDEXING ASSURES PRESERVATION

There are currently no plans to delete older postings, and I hope to
retain the full UFO UpDates archive indefinitely. However, as messages
accumulate over the years, I may be forced to delete some messages,
and those will be the ones that are not indexed. If a message is
successfull indexed, then I guarantee that it will be preserved
forever (as much as I can guarantee anything forever in this crazy
mixed-up world of ours).


OTHER INFORMATION

Future system features may give the author and moderator more control
over where on the index page a link is inserted, instead of always at
the end.

Please contact me if you would like me to create a new index page --
either for a topic or a person.  Such requests may take me up to
several days to process (depending on my workload).  In the meantime,
use the index page that seems closest.  When the new page has been
created, you can request that the link be moved (via the "Report Bad
Link/Special" option at the bottom of index pages).

FINANCIAL SUPPORT: The Ufomind website is supported by advertizing for
the books we sell. (The Research Center needs to feed itself somehow,
but users can rest assured that we ain't getting rich.) Advertizing is
inserted in the headers and footers of index pages, but not in the UFO
UpDates section (apart from a simple link to our catalog).  If you
find our free web services useful, please check out our catalog.

Glenn

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Index: UFO UpDates Rules & Policies

Search for other documents to/from: campbell

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**To find this message again in the future...**
Link it to the appropriate Ufologist or UFO Topic page.