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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### More Roswell Hi-Jinks - SUN #45

From: [legion@werple.net.au](mailto:legion@werple.net.au)  
Date: Thu, 12 Jun 1997 08:38:55 +1000 (EST)  
Fwd Date: Thu, 12 Jun 1997 01:02:55 -0400  
Subject: More Roswell Hi-Jinks - SUN #45

>From Skeptics' UFO Newsletter by Philip J. Klass. #45, May, 1997  
404 "N" Street, SW, Washington DC 20024 (C) 1997

[SIX ISSUES \$15 for US/CANADA, OVERSEAS AIR MAIL IS \$20/YEAR]

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New Witness Debunks Randle/Schmitt/Kaufmann "UFO Impact Site"

The "crashed-saucer impact site" 35 miles north of Roswell, first revealed by Kevin Randle and Don Schmitt in early 1994 in their second book, "The Truth About The UFO Crash At Roswell," based primarily on claims made by their star witness -- Frank J. Kaufmann -- has been disavowed by Jim McKnight, whose family owned the land and lived nearby in mid-1947. The recent disclosure, in a sworn statement by McKnight, further erodes the credibility of Kaufmann's wild claims (SUN #27/May 1994). In the second R/S book (R/S#2), Kaufmann's wilder claims were attributed to Steve MacKenzie, pseudonym. (MacKenzie's true identity was revealed in SUN #27.)

In a sworn statement made on Feb. 3, 1997, McKnight notes that the "alleged impact site is located on a part of the ranch that belonged to my aunt and is a little over a mile west of my grandfather's original ranch house....I do not believe that a UFO or anything else crashed at the alleged crash site in 1947 for several reasons. No one in my family had any knowledge of such crash or military retrieval. If a coyote crossed that ranch, my dad or uncle would likely see his tracks...I cannot believe that a convoy of Army trucks and cars could have come and gone without them noticing. If they had seen it, they would have told us about it." (Emphasis added) McKnight was four years old at the time.

If an Army convoy had been dispatched from Roswell, it would have headed north on highway #285, turned left (west) on what is now Bitterroot Road, and would have passed to within about 200 yards of the McKnight ranch house. This was the route taken by news media (and SUN's editor) on March 25, 1994, when Randle/Schmitt "unveiled" the then-new impact site following a press conference for their new book. At that point, the media transferred to four-wheel-drive vehicles for a very rough, rocky drive to the impact site.

NO ROAD TO (ALLEGED) IMPACT SITE IN 1947

McKnight's affidavit states that "during the 1950s I rode horseback all over both pastures around the alleged crash site on a number of

different occasions." McKnight said he emphasized that he rode horseback "because there were not any roads west from the ranch house [to the alleged impact site]. It was not until the early 1960s that my aunt hired a bulldozer to build a crossing on the Macho\_ [a dry creek that becomes flooded after heavy rains]. (Emphasis added.) In a telephone interview with McKnight, he told \_SUN\_ that "to get to the alleged impact site a convoy would have to get across the Macho which was all but impossible in 1947."

In McKnight's affidavit he said: "In addition to our own ranch, it was customary to exchange labor with our neighbors. We had many discussions and some included the military, their practice bombing ranges and crashed airplanes. We had a practice bombing range on the ranch about 10 miles west of the alleged crash site and one airplane crashed on the ranch. Never, never did the subject of such an event as the Roswell [crashed-saucer] incident come up for discussion. I know the people who settled in that harsh environment...No amount of military threats would have silenced them, especially when they talked among themselves. McKnight's affidavit concluded that while "the entire Roswell Incident has been of great interest to me and I hope to find the truth some day, I do not have an axe to grind nor a profit to be made from this incident.

#### \_TIT FOR TAT\_

McKnight's affidavit, which was obtained by the Roswell International UFO Museum, might be viewed as the museum's response to Randle's charge that it used "financial inducements" to get \_Jim Ragsdale\_ to change his location of the (alleged) impact site from the Randle/Schmitt/Kaufmann location 35 miles north of Roswell to another location roughly 55 miles west of Roswell, as first reported in \_SUN\_ #31 (Jan 1995). Randle/Schmitt had expressed great confidence in the location of the Randle/Schmitt/Kaufmann (R/S/K) impact site because it seemingly was corroborated by Ragsdale.

In an R/S article in the Jan./Feb. 1994 issue \_International UFO Reporter\_ published by the Hynek Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS), they wrote "Skeptics of UFO crash stories have clamored for one, firsthand witness to the crash of a nonterrestrial object, with bodies, who would sign an affidavit and whose story checks out. There is now such a witness in the person of Jim Ragsdale, who has lived in Roswell for many years and has been telling his crash story, completely at odds with the [original] press release and Brazel story, since soon after the event. Ragsdale has, indeed, signed an affidavit, and with his public accounting of what he witnessed, the case for Roswell becomes that much stronger." This affidavit, dated Jan. 27, 1993, had been prepared by Schmitt, based on a tape-recorded interview with Ragsdale. It had been executed by Max Littell, a notary public and Secretary Treasurer of the Roswell International UFO Museum who had accompanied Schmitt on the Ragsdale interview.

R/S could never have imagined that little more than two years later -- on April 15, 1995 -- Ragsdale would sign another affidavit in which he made significant changes from his first affidavit, beyond changing the location of the impact site. For example, in the 1993 affidavit Ragsdale claimed that he and his girl-friend, who were camping out for the night, did not investigate the (alleged) crash of the bright object until the following morning. In the 1995 affidavit, Ragsdale claimed they had gone to investigate the crash in darkness and also returned the next morning. In the 1993 affidavit, Ragsdale said they saw "a number of smaller bodied beings \_outside\_ the craft." But in the 1995 affidavit, Ragsdale reported: "When we looked into the craft, we saw four bodies of a type we had never seen before." In the 1993 affidavit, Ragsdale said: "While observing the scene, I and my companion watched as a military convoy arrived and secured the scene. As a result of the convoy's appearance, we quickly fled the area." But in the 1995 affidavit, Ragsdale said: "...we heard what we believed was trucks and heavy equipment coming our way, so we left and were not there when whatever it was arrived."

Highlights of Ragsdale's financial deal with the Roswell International UFO Museum were revealed in the July 1995 issue of \_SUN\_ (#34). Under the terms of the memorandum of agreement, written by Littell and dated Sept. 10, 1994, the Roswell museum gained exclusive rights to produce and sell a booklet and video on Ragsdale's tale as well as souvenirs such as T-shirts with 25% of the gross income going to Ragsdale and 75% to the museum. Under the agreement, "any designation of the impact site, and all material relating thereto will be designated as 'The Jim Ragsdale incident and site.'"

\_FRIEDMAN ENDORSES NEW RAGSDALE SITE WITHOUT ANY INVESTIGATION\_

Stanton T. Friedman, who boasts of his scientific approach to investigating UFO claims, interviewed Ragsdale once on Sept. 3, 1994, and in July of 1995 watched a recent brief video-taped interview made shortly before Ragsdale's death. Based on this, Friedman offered the following assessment when interviewed for "The Jim Ragsdale Story" videotape sold by the museum: "Over the years I have developed a kind of approach to things. I learned the hard way that you need to verify. I was impressed with his story...I have no reason to doubt it and certainly there wasn't a profit motive here." Friedman's views may stem from his animosity toward Randle who has characterized the Friedman-endorsed MJ-12 papers as counterfeit.

\_BUT JOURNALIST BILL BARRETT INVESTIGATES AND FINDS SERIOUS FLAWS\_

Albuquerque journalist William P. Barrett spent some time researching the Roswell Incident for an article for the July 15, 1996, issue of Forbes magazine (which was headlined: Unidentified Flying Dollars") and an article for the Albuquerque newspaper Crosswinds. Barrett decided to interview persons who had lived near the Ragsdale impact site. Following are representative comments as reported by Barrett in his August 1996 article in Crosswinds:

\* Dorothy Epps, whose family owned land only one-half mile from the Ragsdale site: "I'm quite sure we would have heard about it if it were true. It's all a hoax."

\* Bill Edgar, who worked as a farm hand near the Ragsdale site in 1947: "It never happened. I never heard about saucers or soldiers moving around."

\* Kenny Schear, manager of the nearby Armstrong ranch who arrived in 1955: "I've talked to all the oldtimers over the years. I think it's the biggest damned joke I've ever heard."

Barrett learned that none of the above have been interviewed by museum officials. Barrett also interviewed Ragsdale's former wife, Vennie Scott, who divorced him after 40 years of marriage. Although they were married in 1953 -- only six years after the alleged incident -- she said that he had never told her about a crashed saucer, but she said she once heard her husband, while drunk, tell the tale to a friend. Ragsdale's daughter Judy Lott, who is featured in the video and booklet sold by the Roswell museum and whose children will benefit from the royalties, endorses her father's tale.

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