

# Flying Saucers Still Skimming After 21 Years

By William E. Burrows

WASHINGTON.

**T**HE flying saucer game has gone into its 21st year. Any number of people can play — regardless of whether they know what they are talking about—and about 5 million have.

The game was started on June 24, 1947, by an Idaho businessman named Kenneth Arnold who, while flying past Mount Rainier in Washington, claimed to have seen nine objects that “flew like a saucer would if you skipped it across water.” A reporter described them as “flying saucers,” and the name stuck.

The object of the game is to state publicly whether unidentified flying objects (UFOs) exist, and if so, whether they are manned or controlled by intelligent beings from space.

UFOs are defined as flying objects that cannot be rationally accounted for as man-made or natural.

Then “evidence” in the form of UFO sightings is given to support the assertion, and the other sides rebut it. Evidence is the most important word in the game.

Participants may join any of the following sides:

—The undecided, many of whom are scientists, who call for more and better ways of investigating the evidence.



*Photograph, which Ralph Ditter, a Zanesville, Ohio, barber, says he took on Nov. 13, 1966, at his home, shows a typical configuration of an unidentified flying object.*

One of the most controversial photos ever taken, originally published by a Cologne, Germany newspaper. Story alleges that two FBI agents are leading a silver-clad occupant of a flying saucer down an American street. No additional information has ever been published.



Thursday, February 8, 1968

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# *Seen Saucer? Scientists Here Ask Phone Call*

A group of Pittsburgh scientists, organized to investigate "flying saucers" (UFOs), said yesterday they are geared up and ready to go into action.

They've taken the name "UFO Research Institute," have established a 24-hour answering service, and equipped themselves with geiger counters, tape recorders and cameras.

"Anyone who sees a UFO within 200 miles of Pittsburgh should call us at 391-2766," said Stanton Friedman, a Pittsburgh nuclear physicist and one of several scientists on the Institute's board of directors.

A call to that number, Friedman said, will provide instant contact with a trained scientist who, if the occasion warrants, will head for the location of the UFO sighting immediately — any time of the day or night.

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The small moon "spirit" observed in the Astral travels of Immanuel Swedenborg of the 1780's perfectly describes the crown of a flying saucer or UFO which crash-landed near Mexico City in January, 1952 and is shown above as a corpus on display between two German biochemists. It shows also his approximate size. This is stamped "secret" in the U.S. but the picture was obtained from West Germany. Is this the type of being which might be living in the Moon? Certainly there is a great deal of activity in certain craters of the Moon which shows up to close Lunar observers.

YET these sightings are in no way different than what has been seen on the moon for a long, long time - in fact, for.....

For the last hundred years and more responsible observers from various national observatories over the world as well as competent amateurs have made one number of indications that the greatest activity in the universe is the moon, the moon, the moon of activity.

This activity varies from bright lights, from various colored lights, to white and jet black spots. Peculiar

reflections are seen not only by amateurs but also they are shown with clarity by the Lick back telescope of Mt. Teide. These moon pictures that take the observer to within 31 miles of the moon clearly show that according to modern deep study in the moon they outside of the surface, light is not seen to be coming across the moon and some 1100 or more instances of light from the surface of the moon have been recorded. Many of the objects creating the moon are seen to cast shadows. Lights from the dark portion of the moon have also been seen.

The very strong indications are that all of the Lunar traffic have reached moon's surface less than the crossing possibility that other entities might have been using Luna as an over-the-moon space station long before man straggled into his own atmosphere via the airplane. Careless reference to Hyper space, UFO's or spaceport appear all over written history from the time of March 11 in 1836 A.C. These might well have been, and could be now, based in the moon. They might well be from Mars or Venus. Most are two small satellites of its own 3 and 11 miles in diameter. Many appear to have "captured" the moon lights with light signals of its own.

#### SOBIES CROSSING THE MOON

SCIENCE July 31, 1954. Mr. W. S. Bards, director of the South Observatory, saw a dark round object pass slowly across the moon in a horizontal direction apparent diameter 1/10th that of the crater, crossed the disc in three or four seconds.

Dr. F. E. Smith (POPULAR ASTRONOMY 10-191) Jan. 27, 1912. Saw open a moon an extremely bright object estimated to be 100 miles long and 30 miles wide.

U.S. Navy Scientific 1944-51. Four numbers of bodies were seen by Lt. Ismay to cross the moon. Lines 1174-421 Messier reports an immense number of black spherical bodies.

POPULAR SCIENCE 70-116. Devine tells of a shadow that Schwabach saw in 1828 on the Lunar Alps. First he saw a light, but then when this light was extinguished he saw a round shadow where the light had been and "that he saw a business object over his nose; that that part of the moon became illuminated and the object was that to view; but then its shadow underneath was seen."

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY 12-121. "Remarkable appearances during the total eclipse of the moon on 19 March, 1843. At the time of the predicted total eclipse the moon shown with about three times the usual intensity of the well-known lunar disc. . . rather dimmed with red and being in perfect with light as if there were not an eclipse at all."

POPULAR ASTRONOMY—Ed. Smith of Weston, Mass., during an eclipse of the sun on August 7, 1858; objects moving in two directions across the moon and each moving in parallel lines.

ASTRONOMICAL JOURNAL—44-301. Prof. Schaefer of Prague writes that on April 24, 1874, he saw an object of such peculiar size that "I do not know what to make of it" . . . slowly traversing the disc of the



**HOT-AIR BALLOONS, KITES HAVE TRIGGERED UFO REPORTS**  
 Virginia Phelps and S/Sgt. Harold Jones of Blue Book Office

# *Student Balloons Keep Cities Nervous*

By JACK JONES  
 Daily News Staff Writer

Building flying saucers may never replace a trip to Fort Lauderdale as the favorite spring past time of college students—but there's some evidence students are turning to UFOs as the weather becomes warmer and there's an urge to get out and do something different.

They're not really UFOs. They're really homemade hot-air balloons, made of plastic and powered by candles.

**BUT THEY** give rise to plenty of UFO reports—take it from the Air Force investigators of Project Blue Book at Wright-Patterson Air Force base.

Last month at least 15 unidentified flying object reports were traced to the hot-air balloons. Since last December the total is 24.

And there's no telling how many of them have gone unidentified or reported to local authorities but not to the Air Force.

**THE REPORTS** have come in from California to New Jersey and many places in between. By some coincidence, many seem to come

from college towns, such as Claremont, Calif., Winston-Salem, N.C., Urbana, Ill., Galesburg and Monmouth, Ill., Portland and Corvallis, Ore., Tucson and Tempe, Ariz., and Morgantown, W.Va.

The hot-air balloons generally are similar to one described recently in a published "expose" of flying saucer hoaxes.

They're made from the plastic bags used by dry cleaners. A framework, usually made from plastic drinking straws, holds the bottom open and supports a small, birthday cake candle.

**THE RESULT** is a hot-air balloon that not only flies a considerable distance but gives off a ghostly, flickering light on a dark night.

Once in a while, like out in Portland, Ore., they set somebody's house on fire.

The Blue Book office recently acquired several examples of the plastic balloons as well as another kind of UFO. This was a red plastic kite, equipped with a battery-powered light bulb. Police found it near Galesburg, Ill., after a rash of flying saucer reports in the Quad Cities area.

## THE SEPTEMBER IIR CARRIED THE FOLLOWING STORY

Early in the Spring of 1949.

Almost 16 years ago an unidentified flying object landed on a ranch near Aztec Mexico. The thirty-six foot saucer one member of the two man crew was found lying dead across the sill of the door which he had apparently opened on landing. Death seemed to have been caused by the "Bends" that affliction which has agonized deep-sea divers and upper stratosphere flyers in the past when they moved suddenly from one air pressure area to a greatly different one. The other spaceman was dead by the ships' instrument panel.

Within three hours scientists from Denver were on the scene and shorrrly transported, marked as "amunition" on army trucks to Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

What did the scientists find out? The saucer was propelled by electromagnetic power and traveled at the speed of light, 186,000 miles per second.

The photo below is one of the "little men."



27 inch man purportedly captured, early 1930, after flying saucer landed near Mexico City.

—The believers, who think UFOs are from out of this world, but admit a lack of concrete proof.

## Friend or Foe?

—The cultists, who call themselves “scientific UFOlogists,” and not only insist that UFOs are intelligently controlled by beings from space, but in many instances they have communicated with the spacemen and have gone for rides in their vehicles (which come in a variety of shapes, including saucers, cylinders, balls and cones). This group subdivides into those who think the spacemen are friendly to earth. And those who think they mean us harm and constitute a menace.

—The doubters, who think UFOs are really either man-made (balloons, satellites, planes, rockets), natural (comets, planets, clouds, birds, ball lightning, meteors), or products of pure imagination or illusion.

The cultists are the most vociferous players and the most publicity seeking. They play with religious fanaticism, and even trace visits by space creatures to the Bible. Lot, for example, could not have eaten with angels because angels are spiritual. Lot, the cultists insist, broke bread with members of an intergalactic expedition.

This infuriates the calmer believers who retort, somewhat self-righteously, that cultists

are “book,” “fast-buck artists,” and “hoaxers.”

The believers have formed into two main groups: the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization in Tucson, which publishes a journal of sightings called the APRO Bulletin, and the National Investigation Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP) in Washington, which puts out a similar bi-monthly publication called the UFO Investigator. There are hundreds of smaller groups around the world, most putting out their own less ambitious, but often more spectacular journals.

NICAP, which claims a world-wide membership of 13,000 people, is headquartered in a third-floor suite in northwest Washington.

There, a staff of 10 persons updates files bulging with thousands of sighting reports, answers queries, stores hundreds of books, periodicals and assorted works by the cultists, and plots recent sightings by sticking red thumb tacks in a large map of the United States.

NICAP says many of the reports in its files have been checked out by about 30 subcommittees around the country staffed by scientists, engineers, technicians and other “reliable” people working on a voluntary basis.

In 1964, NICAP published hundreds of its best sightings in a 184-page book called “The UFO Evidence,” which concluded that UFOs are “vehicles of extraterrestrial origin,

from one or more planets in or beyond our solar system.”

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, head of Northwestern University's Astronomy Department and an Air Force UFO consultant for 18 years, says he has never seen a UFO, but “too many reliable people have seen them to dismiss the phenomenon.” Reliable witnesses are everything, the astronomer says.

While no well-known astronomer claims to have seen a UFO, Prof. James McDonald, of the University of Arizona's Department of Meteorology, says there now are so many “credible” reports that they “must be given extremely serious scientific attention.” Hynek agrees wholeheartedly.

So does NICAP, which is why, they say, much of their time is spent checking out witnesses and debunking reports and photographs made by hoaxers and the mentally unbalanced. And that is why NICAP makes a fetish out of mentioning the scientists, engineers, technicians and other “reliable” persons on its subcommittees who make and examine reports.

## Pilots Favorites

Everyone's favorite witness, however, is the professional pilot, who is trained for and works in the sky. He has built-in credibility. Pilot reports of near misses with UFOs, or of violent, buffeting attacks on

their planes, are taken as gospel.

But seldom, if ever, do the reports mention the kind of aerial optical illusions that cause startled pilots to maneuver violently to avoid hitting other planes that seem just beyond the cockpit, when actually, they may be more than a mile away.

And rarely do pilots' reports of buffeting attacks take account of CAT (Clear Air Turbulence), which does not appear on radar, but which is strong enough to tear the four-story-high tail off a B-52 jet bomber as if it were tinfoil, as happened a few years ago. Flaps also have been reported in South America, Australia, Central Europe, and the Northeastern and Central United States.

And sightings, by the way, have been recorded on and off since the 18th century, but not as saucers.

Through last year, the Air Force investigated 11,108 sighting reports and determined that 676 of them could not be traced to rational causes. Believers suspect that the number of UFOs is actually far greater, because the project has been manned only by a major, a sergeant and a secretary not up to the enormous task of a thorough investigation.

Believers and cultists also charge the Air Force with fabricating “preposterous” explanations for some sightings. A typical example, NICAP

says, was telling a witness that he had seen four stars from the constellation Orion, rather than a UFO, when checking a stellar chart would have shown that Orion was on the other side of the earth when the sighting was made.

The cultists accuse the Air Force, and every other governmental agency in the world, which they collectively call “officialdom,” of plotting to keep the “facts” from the public to avoid panic.

So the Air Force, out of apparent exasperation, last year awarded a \$300,000 contract to the University of Colorado to conduct its own investigation under the direction of Dr. Edward U. Condon, former director of the National Bureau of Standards. The Colorado report is due early next year.

## Ruled No Threat

Meanwhile, the Air Force insists that “there appears to be no verified and fully satisfactory evidence of any case that is clearly outside the framework of presently known science and technology.” In other words, there is no threat to national security, the Air Force says.

UFOs, says a psychiatrist, are really people who need to feel important or who must compensate for their weaknesses by belief in beings superior to themselves. Being “experts” or something with scientific connotations makes them more potent, he adds.

# Flaming Objects Seen by Many Traced to a Soviet Space Shot

By WALTER SULLIVAN

At about 9:45 P.M. Eastern Standard Time on March 3 a woman in Indiana looked out a window and saw a procession of fiery objects fly past in the sky.

"Two or three minutes later," she reported to the United States Air Force the next day, "my cousin, my aunt and my uncle came running into the house and yelling and trying to tell me about the U.F.O. [unidentified flying object] they saw.

"It was at about treetop level and was seen very very clearly and was just a few yards away," she continued. "All of the observers saw a long jet airplane looking vehicle without any wings. It was on fire both in front and behind. All observers also saw many windows in the U.F.O."

A woman in Ohio told how her dog, when the U.F.O. passed over, had lain between trash cans in her driveway and whimpered, "like she was frightened to death."

The woman, although she had slept 10 hours the night before, said she had had "an overpowering drive to sleep." She had the same experience after seeing a U.F.O. in 1966.

In Tennessee, a woman re-

ported seeing a craft with rather square windows and what seemed to be a riveted metal fuselage. The absence of sound terrified her, since she believed the vehicle to be only 1,000 feet overhead.

What she and the other witnesses saw, the Air Force believes, was the re-entry into the atmosphere of the booster rocket, or other launching components, of Zond 4, a space vehicle launched from the Soviet Union the day before. A study of Air Force files in Ohio has shown it to be one of the most thoroughly documented — and revealing — U.F.O. episodes to date.

Moscow announced on March 3 that Zond 4 had been placed in a parking orbit until it would be in the proper position for launching into "outlying regions of near-earth space."

Some thought its task was to photograph the moon and return to earth, but apparently the mission was unsuccessful.

Yesterday the North American Air Defense Command confirmed its assessment that the fiery objects seen over the Eastern United States were debris from the Zond 4 launching. Meanwhile, the Aerial Phen-

Continued on Page 10, Column 1



# 12 Cops, 40 Others Sight

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (UPI)—At least 12 policemen and 40 other persons said Monday they watched a weird flying object, guarded by four sister ships, land in a swamp near here Sunday night.

Descriptions of the unidentified flying objects tallied closely. Patrolman Robert Hunawill said he and other residents of the area saw similar craft before dawn last Monday and Wednesday.

In Washington, the Air Force said it knew nothing of the reports. The Air Force's Michigan headquarters in Battle Creek, central point for radar systems throughout the state, would not talk to newsmen.

A United Press International reporter and Donald Merkel, 18, son-in-law of a man who claimed he saw the object and drew a picture of it, donned hip boots and slogged through the 300-acre swamp Monday looking for traces of the craft.

They found nothing but marsh grass, quicksand and muck. However, the two persons who reportedly were closest to the object, Frank Mannor, 47, and his son, Ronald, 19, said it did not appear to touch the ground but sat on a base of fog.

Frederick E. Davids, State Police commissioner and head of Civil Defense for Michigan, launched an investigation.

"I used to discount these reports too but now I'm not so sure," Davids said.

Mannor and son said they ran to within 500 yards of the object as it sat on the fog-shrouded

base in a big swamp about 12 miles northwest of here.

Mannor said the craft was shaped like a football and was about the length of a car with a "grayish yellow" hue and a pitted surface "like coral rock." It had a blue light on one end and a white light on the other, he said.

"They were pulsating and each of them looked like they had a little halo around it," Mannor said.

Other witnesses saw only the lights but their descriptions, including those of policemen, tallied closely with that of the Mannors. Robert Taylor, police chief of Dexter, a small village near here, said he watched the object on the ground from the Mannor home.

"I saw a red glow down in the swamp," Taylor said. "It was a pulsating bright red and then it grew dimmer. I put the binoculars on it and saw that there was a light on each end of the thing."

Mannor said the object took off with a sound like the echo of a ricocheting bullet when his son broke the silence by saying, "Look at that horrible thing!"

Stanley McFadden, Washtenaw County sheriff's deputy, said he and Deputy David Fitzpatrick watched the object zip over their car about the same time the Mannors reported its takeoff.

Other witnesses said the object flew over the Mannor house after taking off.

Hunawill said four other unidentified flying objects hovered in a quarter-circle over the object in the swamp. When it took off, they vanished with it, he said.

LIGHT



MICHIGAN S

Six police cars  
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# Flying Saucer Is Traced to Space Shot by Soviet

Continued From Page 1, Col. 3

nomenon Office of the Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio had assembled some 70 eyewitness accounts of the episode.

A study of this file illustrates the excitement that grips some observers when confronted with a U.F.O. However, it also shows that others, such as airline pilots, can help reconstruct what actually happened, particularly when their reports are sufficiently numerous to weed out these that are misleading.

Included in the file are reports from an Eastern Airline pilot over Connecticut, a United Air Lines flight over Indiana, an American Airlines plane over Pennsylvania, a Piedmont Airlines pilot over Virginia and an Air Canada pilot north of Toronto.

Their in-flight reports led the air traffic control centers of the Federal Aviation Agency in Indianapolis and New York to search their radar scopes, but no unidentified objects below 60,000 feet could be detected.

At least two of those reporting to the Air Force guessed that they had witnessed the re-entry of a spacecraft. Most pilots, however, were perplexed by what seemed a formation flight of several vehicles. Most also thought the strange craft were only a few thousand feet above them, instead of near the fringes of space.

## A 98-Cent Bargain

Such a "formation flying" seems typical of unplanned re-entries. Yesterday, satellite trackers at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory in Cambridge, Mass., recalled what they refer to as the "Milwaukee Miracle." Early on Sept. 5, 1962, one of its Moonwatch



The New York Times July 2, 1968

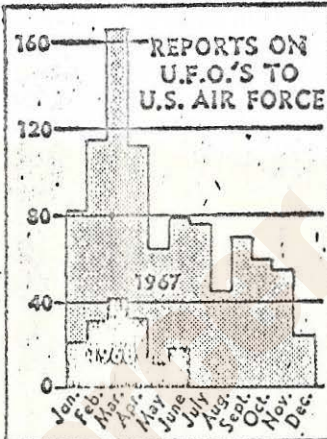
U.F.O. later identified as Soviet space debris is said to have followed trajectory of arrow-tipped line, landing in area shown by cross.

(Satellite-tracking) teams had been alerted to watch for the fall of Sputnik 4, due to pass overhead at 4:58 A.M. The chances that anyone would see the plunge were considered slight.

Eight minutes before the predicted pass a team member, with a 98-cent telescope mounted on a hoe handle, saw a brilliant object approaching. It broke into six pieces that flew across the sky in procession, then snuffed out.

Shortly thereafter a police patrol car saw a dark object embedded in the white centerline of a street in Manitowoc, Wis. It was almost too hot to handle and was soon identified as a chunk of Sputnik 4. Other pieces were found nearby.

In the incident on March 3, the Air Force believes, such a procession of fiery objects looked like lighted windows to some observers. Lieut. Col. Hector Quintanilla, head of the Aerial Phenomenon Office in



Sightings for 1968 are down

Ohio, believes from the reports on file that the debris passed over Lexington, Ky., and Pittsburgh, Pa. Any surviving fragments, according to his estimate, fell near the Pennsylvania-New York line.

## Further Clues Sought

His office has been phoning police barracks throughout the suspected impact area in a search of further clues. However, specialists at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory doubt that scraps like those that fell on Wisconsin will be found in that area, much of which is forested.

A number of the reports on this episode came from motorists, including business executives and other well-educated observers. Several ruled out a meteorite plunge on the ground that the object changed course in mid-flight. This may have been an illusion caused by motion of the observer.

Almost all were impressed by the silence of the flight, but one man reported a sound like that of a tin sheet being thrown

in the air. Another said that 72 grass fires occurred in his neighborhood the next day and suggested a possible association with the U.F.O. visit. A science teacher, who said he held a doctor's degree, reported trying to signal to the U.F.O. with a flashlight.

Many of the pilots' reports were collected by H. E. Roth of the United Air Lines office in Denver. He is project director of the Volunteer Flight Officer Network, which collects pilot sightings of U.F.O.'s.

## U.F.O. Reports Decline

Despite the March flurry, a puzzling aspect of the U.F.O. situation, according to Colonel Quintanilla, is the sharp decline in reports of sightings this year. They are reaching the Air Force at roughly one-quarter the monthly rate of a year earlier. In Washington yesterday, the headquarters of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena said that it, too, had seen a sharp decline from a year ago. There was also a slight drop from 1966 to 1967.

In 1966, several much-publicized U.F.O. episodes in Michigan and elsewhere apparently stimulated further reports. As of last weekend the Air Force had received 156 reports since Jan. 1. Of these 21 were attributed to planets or other astronomical objects, 19 to aircraft, 10 to balloons, 8 to earth satellites and 22 to other known causes. There are 35 cases pending and 1 that have not yet been identified.

A University of Colorado study of the U.F.O. phenomenon, directed by Dr. Edward U. Condon, is being drafted and should be released by the end of this year. It is an attempt to assess the phenomenon from a scientific point of view.

## SPRING AND UFO COME TO MICHIGAN

# ps, 40 Others Sight Weird 'Saucers'

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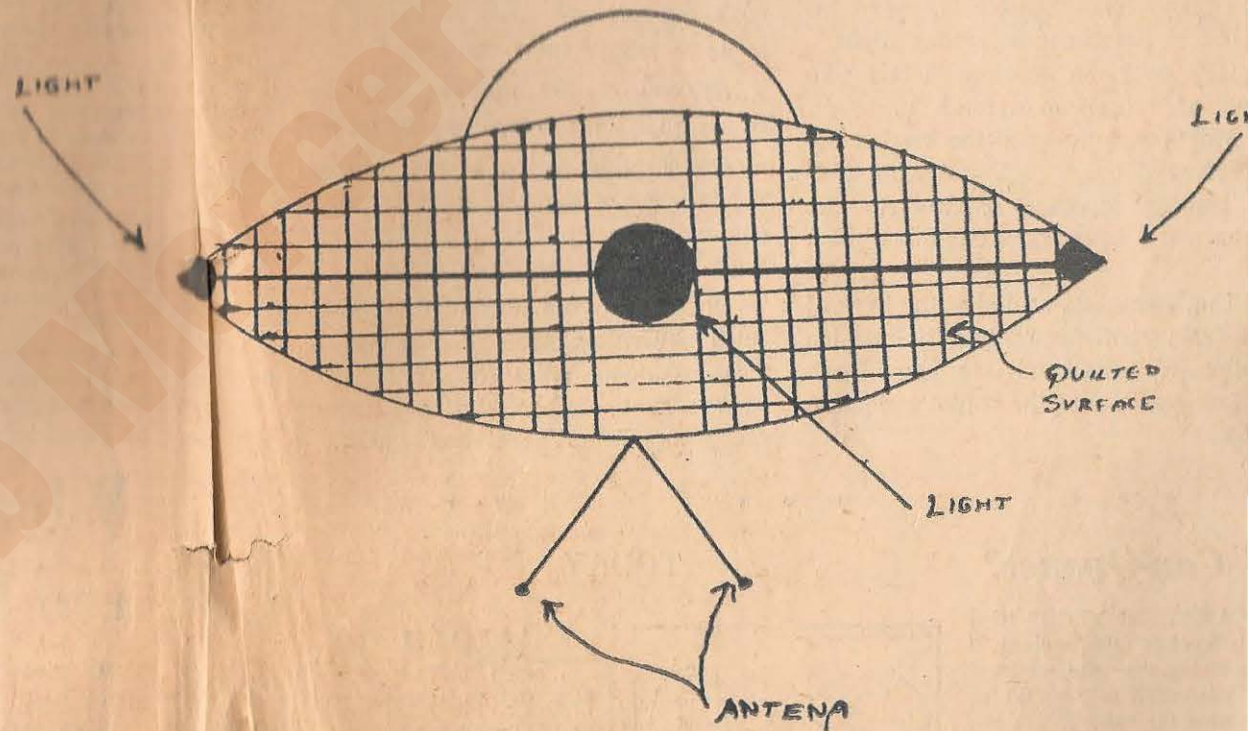
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MICHIGAN SHERIFF'S DRAWING OF MYSTERIOUS UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT

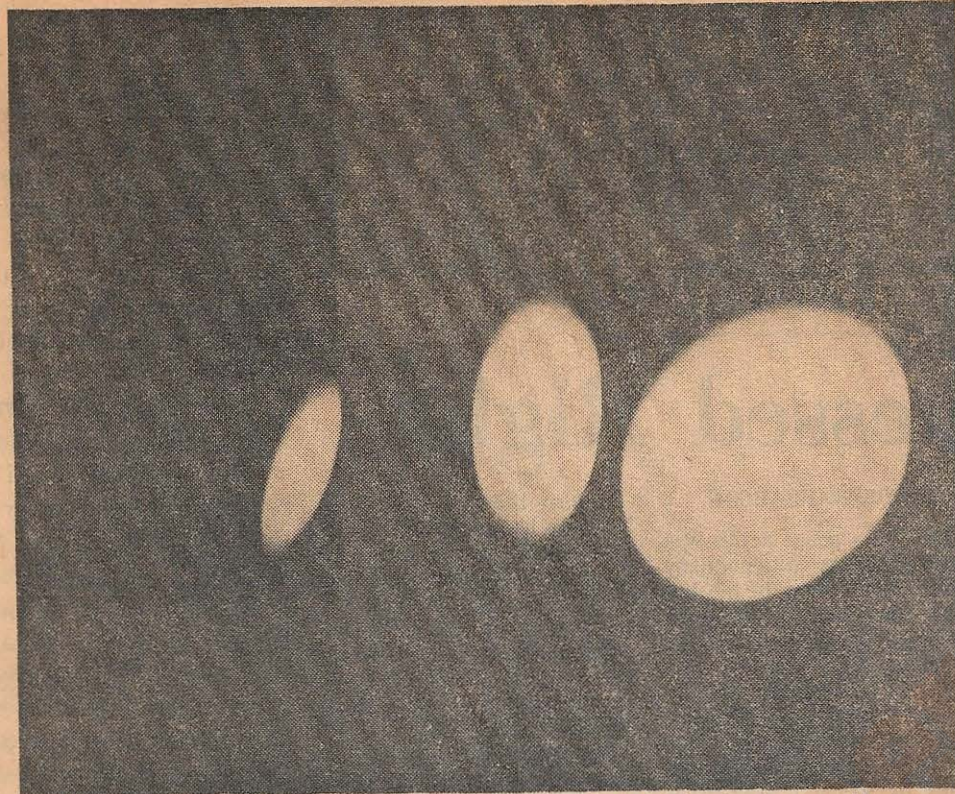
... Sketch depicts football shape, placement of lights and an antenna-like obje

Six police cars chased the formation but the  
objects vanished.

McFadden, Fitzpatrick and Mrs. Mannor said  
they saw the object rise from the swamp to tree-  
top level, than sink again, apparently to land.

McFadden said at least 60 persons saw one or  
more of the objects in the air or on the ground.

December 23, 1965  
San Jose, Mercury



**FLYING OBJECTS** — These three blobs are flying saucers, according to Francis Geary, a high school photography student, who said he took this

photo at Big Sur last year. He turned the photos over to Louis Peresenyi, Monterey High School football coach, who also thinks these are saucers.

**SAUCER?** — Francis Geary of Seaside, a high school photography student, reportedly took this picture of what he feels is a flying saucer at Big Sur a year ago. Young Geary said he thought the diameter of the object may have been more than 200 feet.



# The Lights In The Sky—

by John Jakes

## *A Report on the Investigation of the UFO Phenomenon by the U. S. Air Force In Dayton.*

It began on June 24, 1947.

A civilian pilot, Kenneth Arnold, took off in his own plane from a field at Chehalis, Washington, bound for Yakima. The time was about two in the afternoon.

Arnold's flight plan took him in the direction of Mount Rainier. In the bright afternoon sky, he suddenly spotted nine strange objects flying in a diagonal chain-like formation.

Geese?

Jet aircraft?

He watched them, calculated their speed, concluded it must be at least 1600 m.p.h.—

That night, on the ground, Arnold talked to authorities. He was certain he'd seen something besides a mirage. What, exactly, he didn't know (nor does he today, according to published reports; nor does the Air Force, for certain — the Arnold sighting remains a part of the small percent of Unidentifieds).

In describing the objects, Arnold likened their appearance and mode of travel to saucers skipped across smooth water.

Saucers?

*Flying saucers.*

The identity of the newsman who made up the term is lost, but the term has been around ever since.

And so have the saucers, if you want to call them that; or the UFO's or aerial

phenomena if you want to be more exact.

Commercial pilots have seen them. Barbers have seen them. Co-eds, social workers and nuts have seen them. Some members of the nut fringe have even "gone aboard" and tooted off to this or that planet. One such "contactee" made quite a few dollars from books which contained fakey smudged photos of something that looked like a 1920 dining room ceiling light fixture. The contactee asserted that he rode aboard this "craft" and even ate lunch in a New York City short-order joint with two of the splendid, intelligent, benevolent interstellar pilots, each of whom ate a peanut butter sandwich and drank a Coke.

From Arnold to the Lubbock Lights —from the things that appeared visually and on radar over Washington, D. C. in 1952 and threw the public, with some help from the enthusiastic press, into a panic, to the bloody light falling whatever — it — was at Exeter, New Hampshire in '65—from the Michigan swamp-gas business in 1966 to a picture that was probably in the paper yesterday or will be next week . . . the UFO phenomenon has proved irresistibly intriguing to Americans.

Some interpret the lights, silver cigars, jet-propelled gravy boats and other aerial doodads, as evidence of visitation of the Earth by survey teams or scouts

from some far-advanced, faraway star civilization.

Some, as noted, claim to have met the saucer crews. Psychologists point out that perhaps the star-creatures who step from these ships and speak to the "contactees" in the Mojave Desert or some other godforsaken place are God substitutes, pseudo-religious creations rising from the smoke of the subconscious of whoever sees them. The cause of such visions may be the cosmological confusion that has arisen as science relentlessly strikes down old belief after old belief.

Sort of a sub-group, a few degrees to one side of the "contactees" but with some overlapping too, is made up of the civilian "investigators" and other UFO cultists who are not only convinced that we are being watched, but that the U. S. Government, from the Pentagon on down, is lying to us, muzzling the authorities, keeping the "news" or the "truth" under wraps for heaven knows what reason—the view, in other words, being that we have already been contacted. An alternate theory of theirs: we are building super-secret saucercraft but for one reason and another the public is too dumb to be let in on it.

This popular Conspiracy-of-Silence idea rises vigorously every time there's a rise in the incidence of sightings, and is just as vigorously denied in high places every time.

*continued*

## The Lights In The Sky—Are What? *continued*

Some other people, somewhat more reasonably, acknowledge the existence of the lights, cigars, flying plates, *et al.*, don't know what they are and would like to find out.

A still smaller group holds much the same idea as above, modified as follows: most, if not all of the sightings can be logically explained, and should be, first in the interest of national security, second in the interest of satisfying scientific curiosity.

Place in this last group Project Blue Book at Wright Field, Dayton.

It operates from a small but comfortable office in Building 275. Star-charts brighten the walls. A small green ceramic elf sits on the edge of a large ashtray on a desk beside a neat white sign reading, *Hector Quintanilla, Jr., major, USAF.*

The man behind the desk is the man who runs Blue Book these days. With his gray-framed glasses and direct brown eyes and a quiet voice, you imagine comes in part from his Spanish heritage, he looks a bit more the scientist than the career officer.

In fact he is both, being a physicist trained at St. Mary's University in San Antonio.\* Major Quintanilla has been a member of the Air Force for 18 years. He has headed up Blue Book for the past 43 months.

On his staff are a metallurgist (Lt. William Marley), a non-commissioned officer who handles administrative duties (S/Sgt. Harold Jones), and two women who type and do the things that need to be done in an office.

Just five against a whole host of alien invaders? Alarming!

Isn't it?

No, because, as the major explains it, the lights in the sky usually have a comprehensible cause. The cause can be determined by detective work. It is the job of Blue Book to do just that, as scientifically and objectively as possible.

The major likes to define his terms, too.

The Air Force puts no faith in *flying saucers*. This is a press term, remember, and should be equated only with stories of discs that land someplace carrying purple humanoids who speak exclusively to lonely souls in some desert, but never to the President or Congress or any group, and then fly off again, the pilots presumably munching peanut butter sandwiches. *Saucers* are fiction; there is simply no proof.

But the Air Force does recognize and believe in the existence of the UFO's. That is, *unidentified* flying objects. The things seen, heard and reported, whether they be lights, silver cigars, su-

*“Commercial pilots have seen them. Barbers have seen them. Co-eds, social workers and nuts have seen them. Some members of the nut fringe have even ‘gone aboard’ and tooted off to this or that planet.”*

personic bullets or sky-diving meat platters.

It is the job of Major Quintanilla and his group to find out, if possible, what the sky-diving meat platter that someone probably saw really was. Blue Book strives to transform the U in UFO to I, for *identified*.

The Air Force got interested in the matter in the first place back in '47 after the Arnold sightings. The Air Corps, as it was known then, felt there was enough substance in sightings to warrant the study, particularly from the angle of a potential threat to national security.

A policy letter issued in December, 1947 by General Nathan Twining asked the old Air Materiel Command at WPAFB to make a detailed study under a classification of Restricted and the code name *Sign*.

The study concluded that the phenomenon did not present a threat to security, but was worth further study. The project was continued under the code name *Grudge*. Its classification remained Restricted. Finally, in 1952, the project's classification was removed and a nickname (as opposed to a code name for classified work) chosen. Blue Book has operated under that nickname ever since.

Over the years, techniques for gathering and evaluating information have been refined, and the range of scientific disciplines involved in investigation broadened.

Today, a UFO investigating officer is stationed at every Air Force base in the U.S. It is his duty to look into sightings in his area and relay information to Major Quintanilla's section. The major often does additional field investigation himself if the case warrants.

All project records are here. Major Quintanilla presses a button beside a rectangular opening in one wall. There's a motor sound and tiers of vertical files on a kind of dumb-waiter rise past the opening. The index tabs read

all the way back to June, 1947.

The major tells you that this is the only place within the governmental structure where this information is kept. Further, the files are permanent. They are not destroyed after three years, as is the case with many official records. Rising up past the opening on those shelves are 20 years of things in the sky, each incident neatly foldered and labeled.

In all, the shelves contain records of more than 11,000 sightings which have been reported and investigated since the day Arnold took off for Yakima.

Often the detectives can find explanation of a sighting in some of the official data which flows regularly into the major's office.

Among other things, Blue Book keeps track of all the satellites orbited by the U.S. and other countries. It monitors dates and times of all missile launchings from the East coast, the West coast, from Polaris subs undersea, etc. It receives top-level meteorological data on conditions all over the country.

From such material, a UFO can be revealed as, let's say, a weather condition (temperature inversions can bollix radar, as in Washington, D. C. in '52); or a satellite breaking up and burning up part by part in the atmosphere.

Here, by way of example, is Blue Book's tabulation of causes for 1966 (a busy year; only 1952 had more sightings) —

Causes	No. of Sightings
Astronomical	255
Aircraft	270
Balloon	32
Insufficient Data	242
Other	94
Satellite	109
Unidentified	30
Pending	28
TOTAL	1060

In the "Other" category are lumped such diverse causes of optical misinterpretation as *Missiles/Rockets; Flares/Fireworks; Clouds/Contrails* and a *Miscellaneous* that includes such tan-



Michigan brothers claim they took a picture of a UFO behind their home on Lake St. Clair. This drawing is based on their widely published photograph.

talizing footnotes as *lighthouse* and *blimp*. There's a *Hoaxes* entry too; people have tried to trick up photos to deliberately fool the experts in the past.

Blue Book prepares an annual summary of its findings. This is customarily done in February.

And over the years, roughly 5 percent of all sightings have remained classed as *Unidentified*. The Air Force does not go further. That is, the Air Force does not publicly speculate on what these sightings might have been, certain only that the total range of sightings represents no security threat.

That is the primary job anyway, seeing to security, and Blue Book gets it done.

Still, the 5 percent is tantalizing.

To shed more light, Blue Book utilizes not only all of the Air Force resources at WPAFB, of which Major Quintanilla is justifiably proud, but also the services of outside consultants.

The principal one is astrophysicist J. Allen Hynek of Northwestern. Dr. Hynek, he of the highly photographable beard, leaped to national prominence last year when the TV cameras ground away at the Detroit Press Club and reporters rushed into print with Dr. Hynek's explanation of the Michigan sightings—swamp gas.

Quite soon after, it might be noted parenthetically, another rash of sightings popped out. The major says that the sighting reports always increase sharply the moment the press gets hold of one good story and gives it national play. These sightings are relayed to UFO officers at various bases; to the Dayton base; even to Major Quintanilla himself, unfortunately on his home phone at wild hours of the night.

It happened that way again after Michigan, though the major seems philosophic about it, smiling as if to say people are people and it's his job to listen to everyone. He emphasizes that. The Air Force listens to everyone.

In pursuit of further knowledge—and probably to help bury the ghost of the Conspiracy-of-Silence theory as deeply as possible—the office of the Secretary of the Air Force last year granted slightly more than \$300,000 to the University of Colorado.

The money is to be used for an independent study of UFO's. Underway since November, the study is headed by noted physicist Dr. Edward Condon. At the end of about 15 months, Colorado will write a report for the USAF.

Major Quintanilla stresses that Dr. Condon and his researchers will get any information and records for which they ask and are free to call upon academicians of any discipline they feel is relevant.

It's an odd way to go about a study, to say the least, if, as some do maintain,

the Air Force is murkily at work trying to hide something from us.

Asked to define the purpose of the study, Major Quintanilla replies, "Simply to answer this question a little more clearly—what *are* we experiencing? Most stimuli can be explained. Not all. We hope the Colorado conclusions will offer some suggestions, and will be accepted by the scientific community and the American people."

So the UFO watch goes on from Dayton—

"It's a fine place for this operation," says the major. "Within the Wright-Patterson complex are the best facilities you could want . . ." He ticks them off. "Photo interpretation, One of the best

radar analysis complexes in the world. The Air Force Materiel lab right over there to run spectros, chemical analyses. All of the scientific disciplines are available here, every one. You name it, we've got it." He adds, "Maybe this was one of the big reasons the project was placed in Dayton in the first place, and has stayed here."

What *are* we experiencing?

Using this area's formidable concentration of skills and brainpower, Project Blue Book asks the question, and will continue to ask it, presumably until the time when even the 5 per cent Unidentified disappears, and we *know*. «

*\*Local note: Like U.D. St. Mary's is operated by the brothers of the Society of Mary.*



Hector Quintanilla, Jr., major, USAF is the man behind Blue Book. His office is the only place within the governmental structure where information on unidentified flying objects is kept.