

UFO MAGAZINE · NEWS BULLETIN

Issue 16

April, 1978



Denise LeCouteur

"PROJECT U.F.O."

by Robert S. Easley

The Jack Webb production of the new NBC series "Project U.F.O." is, in my estimation, a serious attempt to pose the question of unidentified flying objects to the general public. There are, however, some major flaws that should be corrected.

The attempt at humor was just that - an attempt, and a very feeble one at that. The acting by alleged stars William Jordan and Caskey Swaim was definitely bad, but that too can be overlooked.

The special effects were good, and I found the use of flashbacks when discussing the sightings to be very good. The photography, also, was extremely well done for a network television offering.

The ending segment with the Air Force trying to explain the sightings as a temperature inversion and ball lighting probably made Phill Klass very happy. The main thing, though, is that the question of whether the object seen was identified or not was definitely left unanswered.

All in all, I found the program to be a very entertaining one. If the acting and humor improves, it will be a very good series. I do recommend it to all interested people. The show airs on Sunday nights from 8 to 9 P.M. on the NBC Network.

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BOOK REVIEW:

"BIG FOOT - TALES OF UNEXPLAINED CREATURES"

The Page Research Library with Dennis Pilichis as Editor, has come up with another gem in the Fortean field. Their most recent endeavor, BIG FOOT - TALES OF UNEXPLAINED CREATURES, is a must for all Big Foot and Fortean enthusiasts. This 60 page booklet should definitely be on everyone's bookshelf!

The series of articles are all very interesting and informative, and the illustrations are very well done. I found Ron Schaffer's article on Ohio sightings of Big Foot and Don Boyd's article on Australia's "Yowies" to be very well done.

This outstanding publication is in a limited edition only, so I suggest that you order it now. It sells for \$3.25 from the Page Research Library, 30525 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, Ohio 44145. Highly recommended!

- reviewed by Robert S. Easley

UFO MAGAZINE NEWS BULLETIN is published at 3403 West 119th Street Cleveland, Ohio 44111 on a quarterly basis. Subscription is \$2.00 for four issues. Robert S. Easley and Rick R. Hilberg, editors; Carol J. Hilberg, managing editor.

Cover art by Denise Le Comte

The Question of Proof in Ufology

by Robert S. Easley

"All proofs inevitably lead to propositions which have no proof! All things are known because we want to believe in them."

from the Bene Gesserit manual,
as written in Frank G. Herbert's
CHILDREN OF DUNE

The field of Ufology can definitely apply to the above quotation. The proof that something is being seen by the masses leads to the proposition of what are they, where do they come from, why are they here?, etc., etc. We, as yet, have no proof to answer these propositions.

In the early years of the UFO phenomena there were only two distinct possibilities as to the nature of UFOs. They were either spacecrafts from another planet or some sort of natural phenomena. It was the battle of the century, with NICAP and APRO against the U.S. Air Force and Dr. Donald Menzel.

The late Sixties, however, saw many new propositions enter the field of battle. They included everything from Canadian secret weapons to an alternate reality, even to a mythical planet known as Lanulos. All these propositions have no definitive proof to support a final solution to the mystery.

These new propositions also enlarged the arena of battle to include MUFON, Philip Klass, the CIA, NASA, The University of Colorado, among others. This battle is still being fought today, as hot and as heavy as it was years ago. And there appears to be no let-up.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has politely declined to investigate UFOs, while the Fish-Hill Zeta Reticuli map is causing a minor controversy among Ufologists and Astronomers. President Carter's campaign promise to release all UFO information was a sham, while lawsuits against the government for withholding facts about UFOs are getting nowhere. Attempts to solve the UFO phenomena have become a never-ending fight.

Today the subject of UFOs has become "respectable" again. Thanks to such movies as "Star Wars" and "Close Encounters of the Third Kind", there has been a re-birth of interest in outer space and the unknown. The general public is being flooded with new magazines and books on UFOs and related topics. The subject of "little green men" is surfacing more and more at "chic" cocktail parties and "hippie" pot parties.

Despite the "respectability", however, we are no closer to the final answer now than we were in the Fifties. For that matter, I doubt very much if we'll be any closer to the final answer by the 1990's!

The many possible "answers" to the UFO phenomena has caused the Ufology scene to become a disorganized mess of mass confusion. UFO groups are fighting each other to force their opinions on the public

while numerous publications have become nothing more than outright scandal sheets.

Although the "respectability" factor is gaining prominence, the general public is casting a skeptical eye at organized UFO research. They see the sometimes vicious in-fighting, the lack of journalistic decency in some publications, and the total lack of any common attempt to solve the mystery. This shuns the public away from the UFO organizations.

In closing, I can only suggest that maybe we should start all over again, from the very beginning, and see what happens. Maybe we'll find the answer to the UFO mystery. Perhaps the quote from "Little Gidding" will show us the way:

"We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time."

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MOVIE REVIEW:

"Close Encounters of the Third Kind"

The main premise behind the movie "Close Encounters" is that the UFOs, after years of being pursued and investigated, are finally communicating with Earthlings by way of "thought suggestion" (the main character's obsession with Wyoming's Devil's Tower, the site of the eventual meeting between the Earthlings and the Ufonauts) and through a five note musical sequence.

Steven Spielberg's movie was a disappointment to me because of the special effects in the final forty minutes and the use of humor to offset tension that was not there. The aliens were obviously benign, and as such appeared to be no real threat.

The best effect in the movie is when Richard Dreyfuss, playing a power company employee, has an E-M encounter with a UFO. This UFO affects his pickup's electrical system, magnetizes the vehicle, causes nearby railroad crossing lights to oscillate and vibrates a line of rural mailboxes. As soon as the UFO leaves the area, everything returns to normal, except for Dreyfuss, who pursues the UFOs to the movie's climax.

The great French Director, Francois Truffaut plays the Ufologist who, with U.S. governmental cooperation, tracks the UFOs from Sonora, Mexico to Bombay, India to Wyoming. He is a cross between Jacques Vallee and Dr. J. Allen Hynek (the movie's Technical Consultant). In a sense, Truffaut is the official inquiry and Dreyfuss is the Middle Ufologist. It's very fitting at the end of the movie that it's Dreyfuss who goes with the aliens and not Truffaut. Truffaut keeps saying that the "ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances" have been invited to the meeting between Earthlings and aliens. Have we Middle Ufologists also been "invited" to investigate UFOs?

The finale of the movie is also a letdown. The UFO "mothership" doesn't appear to be on the same plane of reality as the Earthlings, a great plug for the Alternate Reality theory, but the whole movie stresses the extraterrestrialism of the aliens. Although the aliens are backlit from the spaceship and thus have a great deal of mystery about their appearance, one is frontlit and appears rather fakey in appearance.

The movie "CE3K", as it's now known in the movie trade, appears to cry out for a sequel with the motives of the Ufonauts defined. Spielberg has said that he has a sequel in mind, so perhaps we Ufologists will be happy with "CE3K Part II."

- reviewed by Edward M. Biebel

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Notes From The Saucer's Cup

by Robert S. Easley

Recent books received by this writer include PHENOMENA: A BOOK OF WONDERS (Pantheon Books, 201 East 50th, New York, 10022; \$10.95) by John Mitchell and Robert J. M. Rickard. This book covers just about every enigma imaginable with 119 illustrations and 128 pages of small print in an 8½ by 11 inch format. Must reading for any Fortean enthusiast!

WONDERS FROM THE HEAVENS by Ruth Starr and EUREKA by Eddie Glenn (both from Exposition Press, 900 South Oyster Bay Road, Hicksville, New York, 11801; \$7.00 each) make for interesting reading only if you have nothing left in the house to read.

Bill Wisner's VANISHED - WITHOUT A TRACE (Berkley Publishing, 200 Madison Avenue, New York City, 10016; \$1.95) is an interesting collection of sea tales concerning the Bermuda Triangle. Although mostly rehash, it would be a good book to curl up with on a cold and stormy night.

Robert Charroux's THE MYSTERIES OF THE ANDES (Avon Books, 959 Eighth Avenue, New York City, 10019; \$2.25) is the fourth, and by far the most interesting, of Avon Book's Mysteries series (others are on Easter Island, Stonehenge and Chartres Cathedral). Charroux presents an intriguing thesis for the origin of civilization and uses 75 photographs to support his theories. Recommended!

Dell Books has shelled out \$200,000 to publish the book CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND now that the movie has been released. The book is written by Steven Spielberg, who wrote the screenplay and directed the movie.

On November 1, 1977 Rick Hilberg and I lectured on UFOs to the students at Kent State University. Fortunately, there were no demonstrations or riots while we were on campus.

UNUSUAL NEWS is a monthly 8 page publication put out by Editor L. S. Kaplan. I found the first few issues to be highly informative, interesting and very well done. Subscriptions are three dollars for twelve issues; UNUSUAL NEWS, P.O. Box 12181, Cincinnati, Ohio 45212.

Recently reported in the newspapers, again, is that Leonard Nimoy has signed to portray "Mr. Spock" in the upcoming new "Star Trek" movie. The remaining stars of the original TV series have agreed also to re-play their characters for the movie. Gene Roddenberry will produce this new "Star Trek" adventure for Paramount (maybe).

Veteran Caltech astronomer Charles Kowall has discovered what might be the tenth planet of our solar system. Somewhere between 100 and 400 miles in diameter, the object is in the vicinity of Uranus, the seventh planet from the sun. Kowal himself states that "I haven't the slightest idea what it is...you might say it is a mini-planet. It will take a long time to establish what it is exactly." It has been named "Chiron" by Kowal.

Indians living in Little Eagle, South Dakota, a part of the Standing Rock Reservation, have been terrorized since last September by at least three "Bigfoot" creatures. Called "Taku He" by the Souix Indians, the creatures seem to be very similar to the "Sasquatch" creature of the Pacific Northwest. Over twenty-eight sightings have been reported, including one by the wife of Rev. Angus Long Elk. Many of the Indians have either moved away or have taken to carrying rifles or tranquilizer guns. The creatures have been said to be six to nine feet tall and weighing between 600-900 pounds.

Noted saucer historian Lou Farish has taken over the bulk of the operations from Rod Dyke of the "UFO Newsclipping Service." Perhaps now it will be on time and worth five dollars a month. Good luck to Lou in his new endeavor; I'm sure he will do a much better job. Lou Farish, Route One - Box 220, Plummerville, Arkansas 72127.

The United Nations "Special Political Committee", which recently spent a week discussing UFOs, began by viewing the highly-touted movie, "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." The debate on UFOs was opened by Prime Minister Eric Gairey of the Caribbean island-nation of Grenada. Sir Gairey, who had been actively seeking a UN probe for some time, stated that "This is the fulfillment of my very high expectation. The world is looking on."

Unfortunately, however, the UN decided not to spend \$16,000 studying flying saucers. They did urge all member nations to think about UFOs, and thus ended - for some time at least - any UN investigation into UFOs.

With deep regret, we mention the recent death of Leigh Brackett, who had just finished the first draft of the screenplay for "Star Wars Two". Among the many other films she wrote were "Rio Bravo", "Rio Lobo" and the remake of "The Long Goodby." Her television scripts included "Terror at Northfield" for Alfred Hitchcock. Her many science fiction novels included THE GINGER STAR and THE HOUNDS OF SKAITH.

"Starship Invasions", a Hal Roach Production starring Robert Vaughn and Christopher Lee, has got to be one of the worst movies I've ever seen! I thought "Invasion of the Saucer Men" was bad, but this movie really takes the cake.

At the end of the movie the credits listed the Mattel Toy Company for thanks and appreciation. Apparently that's were Dennis Pike and his seven assistants got their special effects. If the special effects budget ran over ten dollars I would be totally surprised.

The movie - at least - did have some UFO lore in it. The scientist who helped save the world from the invaders was Dr. Allen Duncan (Robert Vaughn) - an obvious parody of Dr. J. Allen Hynek.

Also used were electromagnetic effects, radar cases, burned rings in the ground, amnesia, using the ocean floor as a base, Zeta Reticuli, and portions of the following cases: AVB, Herb Schirmer, Travis Walton, and the Hickson and Parker Pascazoula contact.

The movie was so bad that it even showed Vaughn sitting at his desk leafing through the April '76 issue of OFFICIAL UFO. Also shown was Chris Lee (the head invader) in a "galactic whore house" in an attempt to fondle his dead female victim.

Definitely not recommended!

And on a sad note, we close with mentioning the death of Richard Carlson on 27 November 1977. A very good character actor, Carlson appeared in such movies as "It Came from Outer Space", "The Magnetic Monster", "The Ghost Breakers", and probably his most famous role, "The Creature from The Black Lagoon."

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Around And About The Saucer World
by Rick R. Hilberg

It is always with a great amount of sadness that we must report on the death of a personality in the saucer field. On February 9, 1978 George Van Tassel died suddenly of a heart attack at his home in California.

Van Tassel was one of the early saucer contactees, and the first person to sponsor a large-scale UFO convention. His famous Giant Rock

gatherings on the California desert drew literally tens of thousands of persons from the years 1953 to 1970. While the Giant Rock cons were oriented toward the contactee theme, I believe that many of the more recent "scientific" cons such as the NUFOC and the MUFON symposia owe their inspiration from the early Giant Rock events.

Ed Biebel and I had the chance to hear Mr. Van Tassel lecture before a rather large crowd here in Cleveland in 1965. Afterwards, we had the opportunity to speak with him for some time regarding his experiences and theories regarding the UFOs. While we were both skeptical regarding contact claims, we did find him to be a very friendly and sincere person.

We recently read a news story that reported that the Ground Saucer Watch has filed suit in the U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, New York against the CIA and its director, Stansfield Turner. GSW is charging that the CIA is withholding proof of the existence of UFOs. They are seeking under the Freedom of Information Act to enjoin the CIA from withholding certain photographs and reports which they feel constitutes proof of the reality of the enigmatic UFOs.

Judge Jacob Miller set March 17 for a hearing on the government's request that the case be dismissed on the ground that the court lacks jurisdiction. As of press time we have not yet received word as to what happened at the hearing on the 17th, but if the case is not dismissed it will be transferred to the U.S. District Court in Washington.

Ed Dula, a hotel maintenance man from Las Vegas, Nevada, had a strange experience with UFOs while he and his family were en route from Zion National Park to Las Vegas on November 13, 1977. They were traveling on Interstate 15 just out of St. George, Utah at about 6 P.M. when the family first became aware of the strange objects which they described as being "saucer-shaped."

"We saw them when we first left St. George and headed back toward Las Vegas about 6 P.M. They were on the horizon above the mountains. I knew they couldn't be airplanes because they were hovering," said Dula. "Sometimes they dropped so low you could see the mountains behind them. We could see red and white lights. We could make out the image. It was round and saucer-shaped.

"It seemed like they were over the highway, sometimes to the right or left and they would move higher in the sky. They moved too fast for helicopters. We watched them for about 15 minutes and then I had a flat tire and couldn't keep up... They moved with quick motions and moved around too quickly for a plane or helicopter."

Dale Rettig wrote us recently to say that he is recovering nicely from a recent illness that has kept him away from investigating UFOs and other strange phenomena. We're glad to hear that he's feeling much better, and hope that we see him back in there plugging away soon.

In our next issue we will be giving full details on the 1978 National UFO Conference. We hope to see many of our readers in person at the con this year here in Cleveland. Stay tuned folks.....