

UFO INVESTIGATOR

NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE ON
NICAP AERIAL PHENOMENA

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Subject Still Interests Editors

Newspapers Take New Look At UFOs

Are UFOs coming back? No, they never left!

What did disappear for awhile but is now returning is newspaper coverage of the phenomenon.

Newspapers around the country are taking a new look at the UFO question and noting the public's continuing curiosity, in dozens of feature stories and news articles on "flying saucers" — a rarity only a few months ago.

One article receiving national press coverage was "Saucer Sightings Soar," by Tom Tiede, staff reporter for the Newspaper Enterprise Association (NEA), a news service in Washington, D.C.

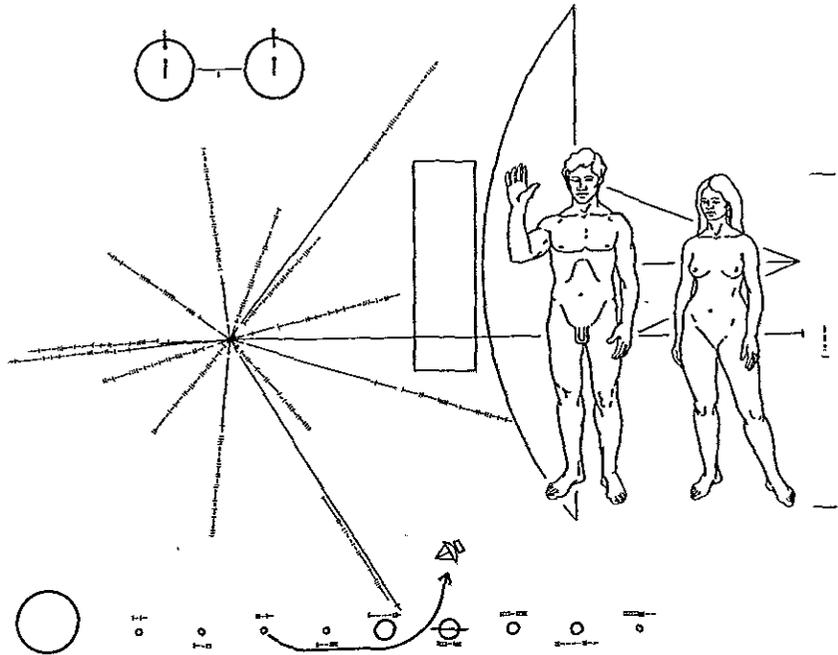
"It may be too early or too presumptuous to tell, but the accumulating evidence seems to indicate that Unidentified Flying Objects are on their way back into the news. After some years of aerial phenomena drought, interested observers say sightings are on the increase in many areas of the world," notes the NEA story.

The article quotes NICAP at length regarding its analysis of current UFO trends and sightings. "I'm 29 years old. I've never seen a saucer. But I sincerely believe we can't just turn our backs on the people who say they have . . . I just don't think it's very scientific to simply ignore the unexplainable," notes Stuart Nixon, NICAP Executive Director, in the story.

"NICAP has gathered well over 10,000 UFO sightings in the last 15 years. We've pretty well disproved about 80-90 percent of them. But there are hundreds that we can't explain," Nixon continued.

Newspapers carrying the NEA feature included the *Philadelphia Daily News*, the *Beloit Daily News* (Beloit, Wisc.), *The Daily Eagle* (Claremont, N. H.), *The Toronto Sun*, *The South Dade News Leader* (Dade County, Fla.), the *Kalamazoo Gazette* (Kalamazoo, Mich.), *The Key West Citizen* (Key West, Fla.), the *San Jose News* (San Jose, Calif.), *The Register* (Santa Ana, Calif.), the *Rome News-Tribune* (Rome, Ga.) and the *Times-News* (Hendersonville, N.C.).

One of the largest newspaper stories (See Newspapers, page 3)



The aluminum plaque depicts man in scale with a drawing of the Pioneer spacecraft, the path of the spacecraft, Earth's solar system, the alignment of the nine planets, schematic of two states of atomic hydrogen and a pulsar map depicting the 14 pulsars in the Milky Way galaxy. These symbols, according to astronomer Carl Sagan, are the ideal way to specify where the spacecraft is from and when it was launched.

NASA Craft Bears Message For Aliens

Pioneer F, the first spacecraft programmed to leave the solar system, will carry a special symbolic message for any extraterrestrial civilization that may chance to encounter it years or eons in the future.

The mission of the spacecraft is to fly past Jupiter and the outer planets, into the vast expanse of our galaxy — a journey expected to take 100 million years and cover a distance of 18,000 trillion miles.

Attached to antenna support struts of the spacecraft is a gold-anodized aluminum plaque, measuring six by nine inches, on which the greeting is graphically displayed.

The plaque depicts a naked man and woman, a path of the spacecraft, the number and alignment of planets in our solar system, and other technical information of possible interest to a race advanced enough to interpret it.

Dr. Carl Sagan, professor of astronomy at Cornell University, is one of the three individuals who conceived the design of the plaque. Sagan said the idea for the plaque came from Eric Burgess, of the *Christian Science Monitor*, who reproached Sagan three months ago for not developing such a concept on his own.

Sagan said he agreed with Burgess but thought little of the chances for acceptance of the idea by NASA. Nonetheless, John Naugle, associate administrator for Space Science at NASA, was contacted, and gave the idea a tentative go-ahead.

On receiving approval, Sagan worked with Dr. Frank Drake of Cornell to develop the plaque's design. Sagan's wife, an artist, was also called in to assist with the project.

Pioneer F is scheduled to lift off from Cape Kennedy early next month. It will be the first time a man-made spacecraft has attempted to carry a message from Earth to intelligent life on another world.



FAA Controller Recounts '69 Sighting

Witnesses Spot Four UFOs From United Cockpit

Six months after the release of the Condon Report many individuals considered the UFO question "closed."

At least five highly qualified observers appear willing to refute that conclusion following their sighting of four UFOs during the afternoon of June 5, 1969.

James V. Beardsley of Sterling Park, Va., is one of these individuals.

Beardsley, an FAA controller assigned to the Leesburg Control Center, was on an authorized "familiarization flight" on American Airlines (flight 112) from Phoenix to Washington, D.C. He was observing flight procedure from a "jump seat" located directly behind the pilot's seat. Across the small aisle from Beardsley was the flight engineer.

Beardsley's 707 was heading east at 39,000 feet. Eight miles behind him and travelling in the same direction at 37,000 feet was a United Airlines plane. Four miles behind the second craft and also flying in the same direction at 41,000 feet was a National Guard aircraft.

Everything was routine up to this point, according to Beardsley, and the pilot had temporarily left the flight deck around 4 p.m. to use the washroom. The co-pilot had taken over the control as the plane crossed the Missouri River and entered the St. Louis air traffic control area.

Flying conditions that day were ideal, clear with no clouds or turbulence, according to the witness.

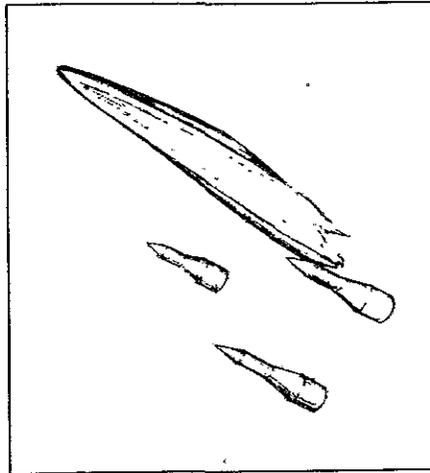
"I was leaning over talking to the flight engineer when the co-pilot suddenly hollered out, 'Damn, look at this.' I swung around and there it was — a flight of four — whatever they were — flying in a square formation," recalls Beardsley.

Beardsley, with the pilot temporarily out of his seat, had an unobstructed view of what the co-pilot was seeing — four UFOs approaching their plane from almost directly ahead.

Within three to five seconds, the formation of UFOs, approaching from an "11 o'clock position," passed within 300 feet of the craft on "the left side at no more than a thousand feet above us," according to Beardsley.

Leaning forward, Beardsley followed the UFOs as they swept by.

"There were four of them, one large and three small ones. They were in a square formation [arranged in a vertical plane] — with one in each corner . . . the



Beardsley's description of four UFOs as seen from the cockpit of his American Airlines 707, eastbound from Phoenix to Washington, D.C.

larger one was in the upper left-hand corner. The one in the lower right-hand corner was on a collision course with us . . . all of a sudden they looked like they went up to [the large] one . . . as they went by they were still separated . . . about 20 feet apart," Beardsley recalls.

The larger of the four objects was described by the witness as "hydroplane-shaped," about 18 to 20 feet in length, 7 to 8 feet thick, and about 12 to 14 feet across at its aft portion.

The three remaining objects were described as smaller and shaped like the front portion of a dart. All of the objects, according to Beardsley, were the color of "burnished aluminum." Had there been any clouds, they would have blended right in, he said.

Although no sound was detected or contrail observed, Beardsley noted what appeared to be a power source on the back surface, similar to an "old-fashioned" gas stove burner. It was "bluish-green" in color.

Meanwhile, the co-pilot, checking with ground radar at the St. Louis FAA Center, asked controllers if they had anything in the vicinity. In a matter of seconds, the controllers came back and confirmed two "paints" of unknown objects in the vicinity of the airliner.

Within a second or two after the formation had passed, a pilot in the United plane eight miles behind them exclaimed excitedly, "We see it too!" recalls Beardsley.

A few seconds later came another comment, "Damn, they almost got me!" — this time from the pilot of the National Guard plane.

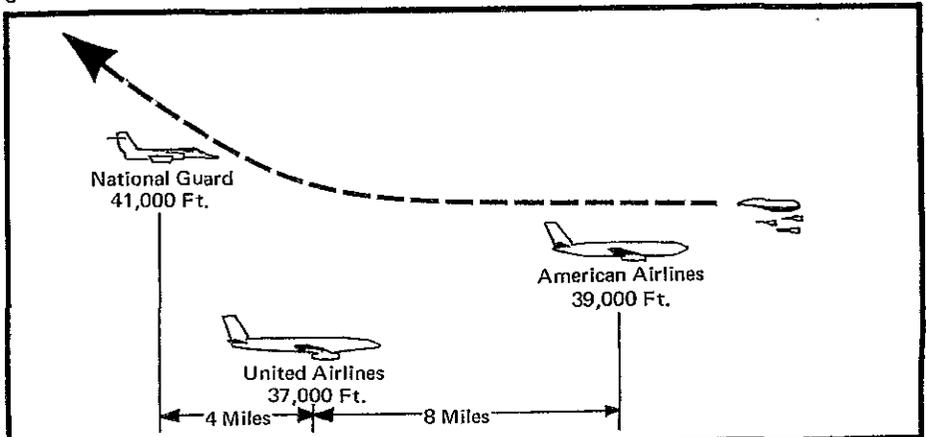
The pilot of the National Guard plane later claimed the UFO formation had approached his craft from almost "directly ahead" before altering its course abruptly and ascending quickly at the last moment.

Following the sighting there was a lot of conversation on the radio and among the crew of flight 112 as to what the objects had been. All participants agreed they had seen a flight of UFOs but none seemed willing to pursue the matter further, at least officially, remembers Beardsley.

The only official mention of the sighting, according to Beardsley, was a brief mention of it in his own flight report, filed later with the FAA. No investigation of the incident, either by the FAA, the airlines, or other government agencies ever took place.

The lack of interest or follow-up in the sighting was not surprising, according to Beardsley, considering the skepticism and caution expressed by most aviation people following release of the Condon Report.

NICAP intends to investigate this case further. Interviews with other crew members, the names of which Beardsley could not recall when he was interviewed recently, will be conducted as part of the investigation.



Artist's drawing depicts approximate position of planes and flight path of UFOs as observed by Beardsley, June 5, 1969.

Books

Investigating UFOs

by Larry Kettelkamp

William Morrow, New York, 1971
Reviewed by Isabel S. Davis

Mr. Kettelkamp has been remarkably successful in simplifying a complicated subject. His little book is well organized, clearly written, and admirably free from bias either of skepticism or gullibility.

By and large, he has made good use of his space; most of his material is well chosen, although one could quarrel with his selection of occupant cases, particularly the old Scully story, when the occupant literature is so extensive.

The photographs are uneven in quality, but this is inevitable in any book presenting UFO photos, since the number of incontestably genuine pictures is vanishingly small. (The Trindade Isle photos are incorrectly dated as February 21, 1958; the correct date, January 16, 1958, is given in the text.)

The informed student of UFOs will note several inexact statements, but these are minor and will not seriously mislead the beginning reader for whom the book is designed. All in all, a worthwhile primer in a field that has more than its share of unreliable literature.

Miss Davis's association with the UFO field dates back to the early 1950s when she helped guide the small but conscientious Civilian Saucer Intelligence (CSI) of New York, a now defunct UFO group whose files NICAP inherited. Joining NICAP as a full-time staffer in 1966, Miss Davis has assisted in all phases of the Committee's work, and is presently serving as a parttime volunteer on special projects.

The Age Of Flying Saucers: Notes On A Projected History of Unidentified Flying Objects

by Paris Flammonde

Hawthorne Books, New York, 1971
Reviewed by Ted Bloecher

Can a comprehensive survey of 25 years of UFO history be covered adequately in a book of less than 300 pages? Mr. Flammonde himself is aware that it cannot, and tell his readers this in his foreword.

The book is organized in a generally chronological scheme, beginning its case material with a detailed review of the Kenneth Arnold sighting and an account of Arnold's investigation of the Maury Island "mystery."

The "classic" cases of 1948 — the Mantell case, the Eastern Air Lines sightings by Chiles and Whitted, and the (See BOOKS, page 4)

SIGHTING ADVISORY

Preliminary information on new reports. Details and evaluations will be published when available.

January 26, 1972 — Chatworth, Calif. "A slowly rotating disc with several bright lights around the rim" was observed over Chatsworth around 7:30 p.m. by a 25-year-old postman. The witness claimed he observed the object for approximately one minute before it disappeared.

January 19, 1972 — Phoenixville, Pa. At least seven individuals, including three police officers, reported observing a strange object in the shape of a "boomerang" hovering over Phoenixville High School around 9:30 p.m. Following release of a report on the sighting by local police, at least 12 other witnesses reported seeing UFOs over the town. One officer described the object as similar in size to a DC-3, with three red lights and numerous white lights around its perimeter.

January 17, 1972 — Fausse Point, La. A UFO described as an "umbrella-shaped silver thing" about 25 feet in diameter was observed by at least five witnesses around 10:30 a.m. near the Charenton Levee. One witness stated that the object moved up and down, from side to side and could stop "dead still." The UFO, observed for approximately 30 minutes, appeared to be traveling at approximately 50 feet above the ground, according to most witnesses.

January 13, 1972 — San Angelo, Tex. At least 3 Angelo State University coeds claimed they observed an "arrow-shaped" UFO Thursday evening around 10:30 p.m., near Mathis airfield. The UFO was "packed with lights" and traveled parallel to the road on which the girls were driving. The object finally disappeared towards the east — a path later confirmed as a direct approach to the northeast-southwest runway at Mathis Field. Airport officials noted that a DC-9 had been practicing a series of touch-and-go landings about 9:30 p.m., but they could not confirm a plane in the vicinity at the time of the sighting.

January 6, 1972 — Quebec City, Canada. A series of sighting reports that puzzled this community have now been solved. The UFOs, frequently described as "luminous objects hovering over the city," have turned out to be polyethylene bags inflated by local college students as a prank. Students admitted launching at least eight balloons on the date in question.

January 3, 1972 — Brunswick, Md. A mother and her two sons reported sighting two stationary white lights in the sky near Lovettsville, Va. around 7:30 p.m. The lights were observed for approximately five minutes before disappearing, according to the witnesses. This area has been the source of numerous UFO reports during the past two months (See *UFO Investigator*, January issue).

Newspapers Take New Look At UFOs

(Continued from page 1)

on UFOs to appear in recent months ran in the Feb. 6 edition of the *Detroit Sunday News*. Occupying page three of the Sunday edition was a three-quarter-page article headlined, "Flying saucers: new respect — less publicity."

Written by staff writer Chester Bulgier, the article deals at length with the UFO question.

"After more than two decades of ridicule and patronizing put-downs from many scientists and government agencies, flying saucers are gradually becoming scientifically respectable," notes the article's first paragraph.

Bulgier discusses current scientific opinions regarding UFO phenomena and quotes a number of scientists, including Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Stanton Friedman and Dr. Richard C. Henry.

Another article attesting to the renewed interest in UFOs appeared Jan. 31 in the Baltimore *Evening Sun*. Titled "UFO Chasers Will Go Anywhere to Investigate Report of Sighting," the article discusses the efforts of NICAP investigators to check out UFO reports. The article also notes the efforts of other groups such as APRO, the Odyssey Club of Baltimore, and the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained.

A similar article dealing specifically with the recent Maryland sightings (see last month's newsletter) appeared in the Hagerstown, Md., *Daily Mail* earlier this month.

"Whatever the truth is," the story noted, "it appears that the UFOs or at least the reports of them — are coming back. But it will probably be a long time before the truth is determined, if it ever is."

"As (one man) who believes that the UFOs are 'extraterrestrial vehicles that have this planet under surveillance,' says: 'They are always one step ahead of us.'"

Q/A

Q. What is NICAP's opinion of the UFO movie taken in Alberton, Australia, several years ago and written up lately in various popular magazines?

J.W./Anchorage, Alaska

A. An opportunity to analyze the Alberton film sequence was afforded NICAP in October 1969 by the Intercontinental UFO Research and Analytic Network (ICUFON), a New York group that obtained part of the film from a UFO investigator in New Zealand. ICUFON wanted NICAP's help in comparing the object in the film with still photographs alleged to show UFOs. NICAP was unable to act on the matter because of pressure from other business. When subsequent events brought out conflicting statements about some of the details of the case, NICAP decided to leave the film for others to evaluate and focus on more promising cases.

One deterrent to analyzing the film was the discovery that it was taken "accidentally" by a man running his camera to unwind the motor. Arbitrarily aiming the camera at a star in the night sky, he said he exposed 52 frames (less than three seconds of viewing time), then went back into the house. No sighting of a UFO occurred.

Having never examined the original film, NICAP can neither confirm or deny that the image in question is consistent with a nighttime exposure of a star. Normally, stars register on film as pinpoints of light, or as streaks of light if the photograph is a time exposure. In published accounts, the Alberton image is described as "a tiny speck, a fraction of a millimeter across." However, published pictures — supposedly enlargements of the image—show

a structured object, not a light source (see below). In addition, a picture that appeared in *Saga* magazine last November purporting to show an actual section of the film, reveals an image much larger and more detailed than the reported "speck" of light. A star could not photograph as this latter object did.



There is also some confusion as to when the movie sequence was taken—a critical point in any careful photographic analysis. In its original report to NICAP, ICUFON stated the film had been taken in "April or May 1967." Later, an article in the *National Enquirer* said the date fell in the "spring of 1968" when the witness was 37 years old. A third source, *Saga*, gave the date as 1969, noting the photographer was 35 years old at the time. The discrepancy between these latter two reports is particularly curious because both articles were written by the same man.

Other unresolved questions concern the time the film was developed and the location of the UFO sequence on the movie roll. The *Enquirer* article said the film was processed in January 1969, at least seven months after the alleged shooting of the UFO (taking the exposure date in the article). *Saga* gave the date of processing as January 8, 1970, a time lapse of some 19 months if the *Enquirer* exposure date is accepted, and 31 months if the date reported by ICUFON is correct.

Although additional investigation might clear up some of these uncertainties, there would appear to be room for doubt as to the accuracy of the photographer's report and the

exact cause of the image on the film. Until these doubts can be resolved, NICAP feels the film is best regarded with caution.

Q. What does NICAP know about the Brown Mountain lights of North Carolina? Two years ago I came through there on Route 181 and spent the night at an overlook about three or four miles from the mountain. I saw nothing. Are they some unexplained natural phenomenon?

H. P./Coatesville, Ind.

A. NICAP has made no investigation of the Brown Mountain lights since they are not, strictly speaking, UFOs. From what has been published, many of the reported observations would appear to stem from ordinary causes, as do a large number of UFO reports. In a press release issued last October, the U.S. Geological Survey noted the lights are commonly seen from points along the Blue Ridge Mountains, west of Brown Mountain. Since most of these points are higher than Brown Mountain, said the Survey, "an observer . . . is actually looking over the top of Brown Mountain into the Morganton basin to the east." For this reason, the Survey concluded it is difficult to tell at night (when the lights are seen) whether the lights are actually on the mountain or in the valley beyond. Under certain conditions, conventional light sources in the valley can appear to originate on the mountain or even maneuver over it. This, however, accounts for only some of the reports, leaving many others still to be explained.

FEEDBACK / Readers write

Dear Editor:

Your Newsnote of last July titled "UFO Forecast Proves False" brings to mind my own experience concerning psychics. It involves the highly rated Jean Dixon whose claim to fame has for the most part been attributed to her prognostication concerning the first of the Kennedy assassinations.

As it turns out my family and I were living in the Washington, D. C. area in 1966 when Mrs. Dixon was scheduled to appear as a guest on a local radio talk program set for a Saturday morning. Due to my interest in the UFO problem, I thought a call to her might prove worthwhile. I had intended on asking her about UFOs but tragedy struck on Friday of that week — the death of three astronauts. This event provided me with a good lead to my UFO question and went as follows: "Did you (Mrs. Dixon) receive prior to the tragedy any vibration, premonition, etc. of the catastrophe?" The answer was a positive "no." (My wife was also present when I made the call.)

The point I wish to make is that some months ago in the *National Enquirer* under the astrologers, psychics, etc. predict section, a list of firsts were listed for Mrs. Dixon. Low and behold the death of the three astronauts were among those in the set.

Sincerely,
Paul Smith
Los Angeles, Calif.

BOOKS

(Continued from page 3)

Gorman "dogfight" at Fargo, N.D. — are once again discussed, but no new information is brought forth. Scant attention is given to the series of reports made during the dramatic wave of sightings in 1950, including a number of striking airline encounters which occurred that year.

In contrast to such omissions, nearly one-quarter of the book is squandered on detailed reviews of almost all of the contactee cases. As a skeptical guest on Long John Nebel's nightly radio program during the late 1950s and early 1960s, Mr. Flammonde had many opportunities to observe these characters at close quarters. Apparently, such first-hand familiarity with this curious crew did not dissuade him from giving them a generous amount of space in his book.

There are a few errors of fact — for example, the sighting in New Mexico which the author attributes to Dr. Clyde Tombaugh on July 16, 1947, was actually

made by Dr. Lincoln La Paz on July 10, 1947. There are also several serious omissions in the bibliography; for example, neither the well-known 1966 compilation of UFO cases by Thomas M. Olsen nor the excellent annotated bibliography compiled by Lynn Catoe at the Library of Congress in 1969 is listed.

The book does, however, have several features that make it useful as a reference work. It is well annotated for sources, and includes an appendix listing UFO organizations and publications available both here and abroad. It also includes a useful and interesting chart on personnel involved in the official Air Force investigation, plus photographs of many of the personalities that have figured so prominently in the UFO field.

Mr. Bloecher is a writer, actor, and former staff member of NICAP. His knowledge of UFOs derives from extensive personal research plus two years of participation in NICAP's investigative program. Formerly connected with CSI of New York, he has been involved in the UFO field for over 20 years; and is author of the NICAP publication *The UFO Wave of 1947*.