

# IUR

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*James McDonald in his office at the Institute of Atmospheric Physics, University of Arizona, sometime in the mid-1960s.  
Photo courtesy of Betsy McDonald.*

## REMEMBERING JAMES McDONALD

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# **INTERNATIONAL**

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## **UFO**

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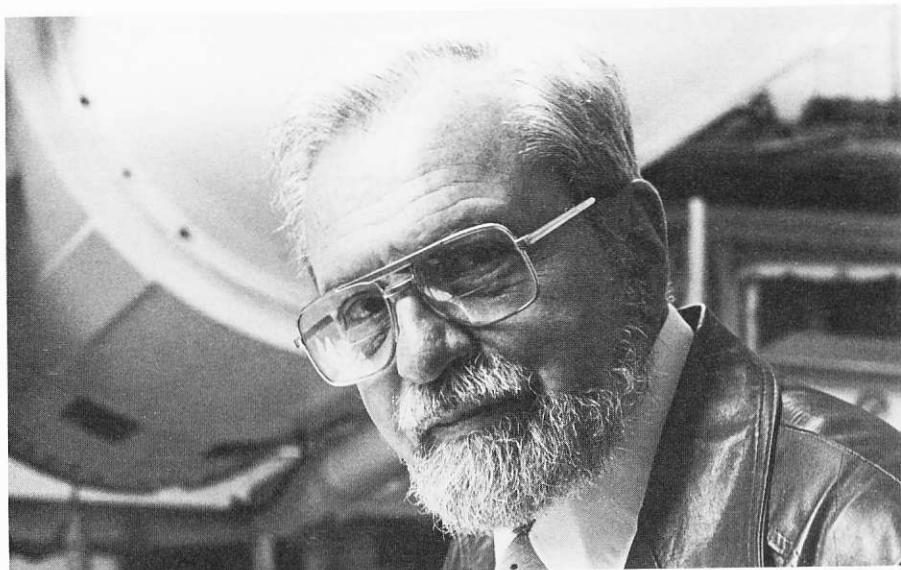
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*J. Allen Hynek*  
1910 - 1986

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## EDITORIAL

# INTO THE MYSTIC

In February 1945 San Diego occultist N. Meade Layne founded an organization which he called Borderland Sciences Research Associates. Only ufologists with long historical memories remember him. Layne died long ago, and even in his time conservative UFO proponents had little use for his eccentric theories about the nature of UFOs and their occupants. He had no shortage of followers, however, among the contactee faithful, who regarded him as a brilliant intellectual.

Layne took the hoary occult idea of an etheric realm and applied it, in a 1950 monograph published by BSRA, to flying saucers, which he renamed "ether ships." The "ethereans," their pilots, live in another dimension of atomic vibration which coexists with ours but of which we become aware only when its inhabitants lower their vibratory rates and thus turn visible. Layne took much of his inspiration from medium Mark Probert, who communicated with discarnate authorities on ethereal science and philosophy.

The problem with such concepts was clear enough to sensible ufologists, including NICAP's Richard Hall, who remarked (in the June/July 1958 issue of *Saucer News*) that it would be perfectly acceptable to call UFOs ether ships "if it were not soon apparent that 'etheric' is supposed to actually refer to a real place from which the UFOs come. A name, however, does not endow a concept with physical reality by virtue of being spoken or written."

No rational ufologist of the 1950s would have dreamed that ethereanism, albeit by other names (ultraterrestrialism and Magonianism, for example), would soon become a respectable branch of UFO theory, lauded by those who saw, and see, themselves as adventurous, forward-looking thinkers. How all this happened—and how a goodly number of ufologists, including many who ought to have known better, cast ufology adrift from any scientific bearings it may have claimed and set it on the bumpy waters of mysticism—is a dreary tale to which I plan to devote a large part of a book I am now writing.

The question of how ufology got linked with occultism and the paranormal is certainly an interesting one, and it is remarkable that many persons in the field implicitly accept, or even actively embrace, such an association. In doing so, they have made the UFO question immeasurably more difficult than it need be. The flight from the extraterrestrial

hypothesis was never justified by the evidence, unless one believes—as some apparently do—that men-in-black yarns are more worthy of our attention than RB-47 cases. Nor does it make any sense to discard, at least without much better reason than we have been given so far, a hypothesis that is eminently defensible from a scientific point of view.

One of the problems, of course, is that the "scientific point of view" means little to the mystery-monger, and from the beginning UFOs have attracted mystery-mongers: those who uncritically embrace all manner of extraordinary and even preposterous notions. To many, UFOs had the same sort of appeal as ESP, ghosts, poltergeists, the Bermuda Triangle, reincarnation, monsters, and other wonders, and it was inevitable that eventually all these things would become one. It would become an article of faith, never empirically demonstrated, that UFOs are just one aspect of a "single phenomenon, together with . . . other weird apparitions," in the words of one book proposing such a view.

Debunkers have had every reason to encourage such thinking. The more UFOs are lumped with mystical manifestations, the less reason sober people have to take them seriously. If UFOs are indeed beyond science, as the mystery-mongers assert, why *shouldn't* science ignore them? If ufologists focus their attentions on the wildest claims, for which the evidence is always soft, their critics will not feel themselves obliged to deal with the hard evidence—the radar/visual cases, the CE2s, and others—which exists in abundance, and even potentially sympathetic scientists will be none the wiser.

The best evidence lends firm support to the hypothesis that UFOs are the product of an extraordinary technology, and it also tells us that the scientific method remains our best hope for dealing with the UFO phenomenon in rational fashion. To the extent that UFO proponents have abandoned the extraterrestrial hypothesis, which—right or wrong—is a scientifically meaningful hypothesis, in favor of mysticism and obscurantism, they have made themselves part of the problem.

Ufology ought never to be confused with or, worse, think of itself as a branch of paranormal study. Ufology's concern is not some immaterial apparition but an interesting anomaly which, unlike ghosts, leaves machine-derived traces on the ground and solid echoes on radar screens.

—Jerome Clark



Jerome Clark

# REMEMBERING JAMES McDONALD

BY ANN DRUFFEL

A recent article of tribute by Walter Webb to Dr. J. Allen Hynek (*IUR*, January/February 1993), prompts me to write a companion tribute to the late Dr. James E. McDonald. Most persons in the UFO research field know McDonald's name, but there are relatively few persons still left in the field who knew and worked with him personally. Due to his untimely death in June 1971, at the age of 51, the field was deprived prematurely of a fearless and gifted fighter.

For an unforgettable five years, between 1966 and 1971, McDonald sought the truth about UFOs with a boldness and perseverance which the field had never before—nor since—experienced. With his rare mastery of interdisciplinary scientific knowledge, his countless contributions to the field of atmospheric physics, his numerous high-placed contacts in government, the military, and academia, McDonald was able to sound a clarion call to those who might be able to make a difference. He investigated the best UFO reports on-site, was friend and colleague to many investigators, and spoke innumerable times before prestigious scientific and governmental groups. He was listened to with respect everywhere he went. His main purpose was to convince the scientific establishment that UFOs should be studied seriously.

If Jim McDonald had lived out a normal life span, ufology today would be very different from the chaos into which it has descended. At the very least, we would likely be much closer to understanding these enigmatic objects.

The recent publication of Jacques Vallee's *Forbidden Science: Journals 1957-1969* (Berkeley, Calif.: North Atlantic Books, 1992) has reintroduced McDonald to the field; however, it presents him in rather negative terms. I wish merely to present the other side of the controversy, so that those readers who did not know McDonald personally but yet are curious about him and his many accomplishments in the field may have a chance to see him as he was, and as his numerous friends, associates, and colleagues knew him.

Vallee's unflattering portrayal of McDonald may have to do with Vallee's association with Hynek, his mentor and friend. Perhaps Vallee, whose work I otherwise admire, did not fully understand McDonald's intense nature—or his modus operandi, which even for a scientist was incredibly thorough. McDonald had, indeed, repeatedly challenged

Hynek on various issues, usually not in public, but mainly in conversation and correspondence. Hynek, from 1948 to 1969, had been the official astronomical consultant to Project Blue Book, and in this capacity had been instrumental in supporting government efforts to bury the UFO subject. McDonald visited the Blue Book offices for the first time in June 1966 and became aware of the stunning observations—hundreds of good UFO reports—which were being passed off as stars, meteors, and balloons.

McDonald saw how Hynek let absurd explanations of intriguing cases pass by without challenge or personal investigation. He therefore charged Hynek with contributing to what he himself called "the government foul-up" on the UFO problem and concealing the true extent of this serious scientific problem from the scientific community. The decades-long governmental neglect of UFOs and Hynek's role in this (through 1968 at least) thoroughly irritated him and offended his sense of honesty and fair play. The dispute between the two men lasted for the rest of McDonald's life, although in public the two men managed to act cordially toward each other from about 1969 on.

James E. McDonald was senior physicist at the Institute of Atmospheric Physics (IAP) at the University of Arizona in Tucson and a professor of meteorology at that university. He was noted for his brilliance as a teacher, for his pioneering contributions to cloud physics and weather modification, and for his deep knowledge of related fields of science. Endlessly inquisitive, he made adventurous forays into any subject that happened to capture his interest, such as the physics of baseball and tennis and the shape of raindrops. He also spoke out vigorously on more serious subjects, such as the insanity of ringing American cities with antiballistic missiles. His all-out attack on this problem in the early 1960s finally convinced the government that placing defensive missile silos *downwind* would at least prevent mass civilian deaths from radioactive fallout in the event of a nuclear war. He also spoke out boldly against the war in Vietnam and especially against the use of napalm and other chemical weapons.

McDonald's last contribution to the field of atmospheric physics, in March 1971, was his logical but impassioned argument at a public Congressional hearing against government funding for fleets of supersonic transports (SSTs), which at the time were being proposed to phase out conventional jet airliners. From his study of the problem he had concluded that fleets of SSTs flying over the American continent would damage the fragile ozone layer and cause

*Ann Druffel, a veteran UFO investigator who lives in the Los Angeles area, is coauthor of The Tujunga Canyon Contacts (1980).*

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thousands of additional cases of skin cancer each year. He was one of the very few scientists to speak out in the early 1970s about problems in the ozone layer, and his concern about the ecology of the atmosphere has proven prophetic.

McDonald, in Vallee's opinion, had seemed "to burst upon the UFO scene" in June 1966. Actually, his entrance into the field was far from sudden. Between 1958 and 1965, he had quietly made an eight-year private study of Arizona UFO reports, and had served as a scientific consultant to NICAP before he ever spoke out publicly on the subject. He was the first eminent scientist to work closely with civilian research organizations to persuade government and science of the urgent necessity to take the problem of UFOs seriously. He was a family man, with three children in universities and college and three more in high school. In spite of his personal responsibilities, however, after becoming convinced that UFOs did, indeed, present a serious scientific issue, he became a vigorous public advocate, disregarding the professional and financial risks involved.

McDonald was intense by nature. He spoke out bluntly whenever he felt the situation called for it, and he believed Hynek merited blunt criticism. But with his friends and family, McDonald was a charming and congenial man with a unique, sometimes impish sense of humor. During his eight years of studying Arizona reports he became known to the public as an eminently approachable, courteous professional who did not laugh at their UFO reports, but doggedly studied each report that came to his attention. This was done in his own spare time, and he found conventional answers to most reports, as all good researchers do. Those he could not explain puzzled him deeply.

McDonald was, above all, that type of rare scientist who was acutely sensitive to the public's right to know. He felt that a scientist's goal was to serve the public, not to live in an ivory tower. This philosophy prompted him to write prolifically on numerous scientific questions, not only in highly technical, refereed journals, but also in semitechnical articles that any educated person could read and understand. He also contributed clearly written articles—often tinged with humor—on scientific subjects in the popular press. No matter what medium he chose, his writing style was clear and fluid. His command of English language and grammar rivalled any writer's. His vocabulary was limited only by what was between the covers of the dictionary. He was truly a layman's scientist.

Numerous colleagues in physics and related branches of science, as well as nonacademic UFO researchers, appreciated McDonald's untiring efforts to break down military and governmental resistance to studying the UFO question seriously. It was during the McDonald years (1966-1971) that many scientists for the first time joined in the effort to make the subject of UFOs an "acceptable" field of study. But few could keep up with him. McDonald lived fast. His speech and movements were often hurried, as if his body was laboring to keep up with his remarkable, racing mind. He

had an encyclopedic memory and could recall the details of any one of the hundreds of cases he had worked on at a moment's notice.

I knew Jim McDonald personally because of my association with the Los Angeles NICAP Subcommittee (LANS), headed by Idabel Epperson. The Committee's lively meetings at the Epperson home included virtually every scientist in the Los Angeles area who dared show interest in the subject. McDonald visited Los Angeles now and then, stopping over whenever he could in his incessant travels, and a meeting was always planned at those times to allow ufologists and scientists in the area to exchange information and ideas with him.

He was a friend to many UFO investigators and scientists in the Los Angeles area. He showed a deep interest in many Southern California sightings, such as the 1965 Rex Heflin photo case (on which LANS conducted a six-year study) and in the 1968 Redlands case which was investigated by a team from the University of Redlands. He was interested in the 1967 Yorba Linda photograph and the 1966 China Lake sightings. He was also intrigued by the element of "missing time" experienced by a civilian who lived on the perimeter of the China Lake Naval Weapons Center, where the sightings repeatedly occurred. His interest in good cases from all over the United States and other countries was unlimited; his personal investigations were limited only by his time, energy, and funding.

During his brief five public years in the field, he seemed on the verge of convincing the scientific community that UFOs must be studied worldwide. Although from the beginning of the modern UFO era there were always a few scientists who spoke out publicly, none were as prominent or as accomplished as McDonald. Hundreds of colleagues flocked to his frequent talks in every section of the country. He presented numerous papers at prestigious scientific conferences where the subject of UFOs had formerly been a laughable or forbidden subject. He was quoted often in the media, TV, radio, and press. He traveled to various countries where he met the same intense interest from scientists and nonacademic researchers alike.

He was welcomed everywhere he went, ignoring admiration and awe, for these were not what he was seeking. What he sought was the truth, and he listened carefully to

#### McDonald bibliography

A 100-page bibliography of all known writings by James McDonald has been compiled and published by Valerie Vaughan, a librarian at the University of Massachusetts. The volume describes 231 articles, papers, and other materials, approximately 60 of which are UFO-related.

Copies may be ordered for \$17.00 postpaid from Valerie Vaughan, 51 Longmeadow Drive, Amherst, MA 01002-3225.

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anyone with competence in any professional field who had the proper objectivity and the ability to research UFO reports competently. Many UFO investigators were among his friends. His regard for Major Donald E. Keyhoe (the real "dean of UFO research"), for Dick Hall, Idabel Epperson, Isabel Davis, Walter Webb, Gordon Lore, Ted Bloecher, and numerous others researchers was deep and sincere. He received from them much of the information he researched—good cases which had been competently investigated and which he reinvestigated so diligently—and he shared what he found with anyone who asked, whether layman or scientist, military or governmental.

Some of the scientists who worked with him did so surreptitiously, fearing loss of governmental grants, or loss of their jobs in government-funded aerospace corporations should their interest become known. Others simply were fearful of peer ridicule or diminished credibility. There were exceptions, of course, like Dave Saunders and Norm Levine.

In contrast to experts like Donald E. Keyhoe, Richard Hall, and others in NICAP who, even in the early days of ufology, subscribed to the theory that the government was covering up data, McDonald preferred to explain the government's incredible neglect of the UFO question as a "grand foul-up" or bureaucratic bungling, even when he was officially denied access to dozens of classified radar-visual UFO cases in Blue Book files. He combed through Air Force files four times between 1966 and 1969. After Dr. Edward Condon finished his hatchet job and the Air Force disbanded Project Blue Book, the files were finally declassified and McDonald promptly copied them.

These radar-visual cases occupied a considerable amount of his time toward the end of his life. He was of the opinion that, if properly analyzed by competent experts, radar-visual cases could provide physical evidence—documented proof—that unidentified, metallic aeroforms of unknown origin were invading earth's atmosphere.

McDonald's death seemed a mystery to many ufologists. This intrepid and apparently tireless man died by his own hand on June 12, 1971, at the height of his career. Suspicions of governmental conspiracy abounded in the field; many were convinced, at first, that he had been silenced deliberately. Slowly reason prevailed, however, as the true causes—problems in his personal life—became known. His loss took a terrible toll. Besides the loss to his family and to science in general, ufology lost its most effective leader and champion. Gone were his numerous contacts in science, government, and the military. Gone was his persuasive voice and his unyielding search for empirical evidence and proof.

Although more scientists began to show an open interest in the UFO field after McDonald's death, it was never the same. We struggled on without him, never having a chance to properly mourn him, for none of us understood the reasons why he died.

Not many years afterward, missing-time and abduction reports were on the rise, overwhelming UFO investigators still shocked by his death. By 1973 the tenor of the field had

changed subtly. No longer were unexplained *physical* objects the main focus; now abduction cases became dominant, presenting themselves to a still-stunned field. We do not know why these events—eventually termed close encounters of the fourth kind—took over the field at that particular time; most researchers accepted them merely as "a new phase." It is impossible not to wonder what McDonald would have done about the plethora of such cases, which gradually increased until by the 1980s they were a virtual flood that could no longer be investigated adequately.

As a consequence, a situation similar to the 1950s—the age of the contactees that McDonald effectively confronted—faces us today. McDonald had succeeded in wresting media attention away from the contactees and focusing it on objective UFO research. Contactee stories, it is true, differed in content from present-day wild stories, but in the 1950s and 1960s they were a serious problem for the small number of objective, scientific researchers who were active at that time.

Fifties-style contactee stories are now nearly extinct, but claims of alien implants, hybridization and genetic experimentation, missing fetuses, underground alien bases, and secret cooperation of the U.S. military with aliens run rampant. No solid evidence has been found to substantiate any of these reports, just as no proof was ever found for the oldtime contactee ravings. But there is a terrible difference. Today, wild claims are accepted uncritically by many prominent UFO researchers. To my mind, the situation is even more serious than the contactee problem faced by McDonald and his colleagues.

The field has never been the same since McDonald left us. It lacks the piercing objectivity he brought to it, his demands for adequate investigation and *proof*. The search for proof drove McDonald. It constituted the main force behind his appeals for adequate governmental funding and proper attention to the subject by the scientific community. His hope was that someday science, government, and the public would participate together in a nationwide—or even international—tracking network similar to the National Weather Service. His hope was that, with science aroused and government convinced, such a project could be set up.

By such means, McDonald reasoned, the existence of UFOs as physical craft of unknown origin could be demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt. After their existence was established the theoretical problems of their nature and purpose could be explored by the full force of scientific deduction.

What might have happened if McDonald had lived out a normal lifespan? Would he have succeeded in breaking through the secrecy? Would the scientific community have continued the steps they were taking, calling for open discussion on UFOs at scientific conferences and symposia? Would the scientific community—hand-in-hand with objective UFO investigators—have been able to generate a public demand that *all* classified UFO information in gov-

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# THE FUTURE OF UFOLOGY

BY RICHARD HALL

**F**rom time to time someone gives us a gloomy assessment of the state of ufology, implying (like certain 19th-century physicists) that we have learned about all we can or that no progress is being made and perhaps we ought to just give up. Fortunately these gloom-and-doomers, who include some leading figures in ufology, continue to plug away and—lo and behold—progress is made.

Heaven knows there is much wrong with ufology, beginning with its name, and I have been outspoken about the bizarre and clownish activities in the field that bear no resemblance to science. Ufology is about as much of a science as scatology. Scientific method is rarely practiced and apparently not even understood by many self-styled ufologists. The standards of evidence, dialogue, and evaluation are *terra incognita*.

Still, many of us *try* to be scientific in our endeavors. The biggest problem in ufology is the unscientific, mystical, muddleheaded, New Age element that tends to make a shambles of the enterprise with completely uncritical and illogical outpourings. As long as we passively embrace them rather than openly disown them, we deserve as a field not to be taken seriously.

Having said that, I still am more optimistic now about the prospects for the near future than I was a few years ago. I am not nominating Rosie Scenario for President, but she is beginning to capture my attention. The prospects for definite, clear-cut accomplishments and important developments in the near future look very strong to me.

## ABDUCTION RESEARCH

As this is being written, the 1,000-page proceedings of the June 1992 abduction research conference held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) are nearing completion and will probably be published by the end of 1993. Perhaps that little publicized event has already been forgotten by most people, but its full impact is yet to be felt. The full significance of what transpired there will become known shortly.

The sessions involved an unprecedented number of behavioral scientists and psychotherapists, including directors of clinics and heads of institutes. A wide range of

*Richard Hall, an IUR contributing editor, worked for NICAP in the late 1950s and 1960s. He is now chairman of the Fund for UFO Research.*

alternatives to the alien hypothesis for abductions were carefully reviewed by experts in the relevant fields. The sessions held over five days were completely fascinating in intellectual terms; just as importantly they marked a coming together of serious scholars to attack the abduction problem systematically. Representatives were present from Australia, Canada, England, Scandinavia, and South America.

John Mack, the Harvard psychiatrist who organized the conference together with David Pritchard of the MIT Physics Department, has become a leading voice in calling serious attention to the abduction phenomenon. He has been working on an important article for a prominent psychological journal and more recently contracted with a major publisher for a book on the subject. His influence on the field already has been great, but there is more to come.

An indirect outgrowth of the MIT conference is the abduction database project, the concept of which was first described by Dan Wright at the conference. Dan built on the consensus of colleague support obtained there, and the project is now a reality. The audiotaped interviews of abductees by major researchers are being transcribed and entered into a computer database and will eventually be analyzed at a level of detail not previously possible. This data has never been accessible to the field at large before. The result may well be a quantum leap forward in our knowledge about the abduction phenomenon.

An important sidelight to this, which also bodes well for the near future, is that acquisition of the necessary computer hardware and software for the database project was jointly financed by the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) and the Fund for UFO Research (FUFOR). Since resources are scarce for serious UFO research, it is important for the major organizations to join forces and work together to accomplish mutual goals. MUFON and FUFOR will be considering other cooperative projects.

## CRASH/RETRIEVALS

Similarly, CUFOS and FUFOR have been cooperating on various initiatives related to the Roswell-Corona, New Mexico, crash of 1947. Although it is a well-known fact that relations between some of the investigators have been strained on occasion, there is still a solid relationship between the leaders of the two organizations.

A new joint project is in the talking and planning stages to examine critically any evidence that the MJ-12 docu-  
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# UFOs COMPETE WITH SANTA FOR CHRISTMAS EVE LIMELIGHT

BY W. L. GARNER, JR.

**M**ake sure it doesn't have eight tiny reindeer out front!" That humorous admonition was among several bits of advice received over their radio from fellow sheriff's deputies as Robert Johnson and Curtis George drove out to western Ouachita Parish (county) in northeast Louisiana on Christmas Eve, 1992. Johnson and George were responding to a rural complainant's 6:09 p.m. request for deputies to help identify a bright light over the pasture south of his house.

Although this first sighting by a civilian might well have been of Venus or Saturn, during the next three hours more than a half dozen deputies, one shift at a fire station, and maybe 50 curious civilians would watch or chase one or more large, bright objects, some with multicolored lights, across 120 square miles of west-central Ouachita Parish. These witnesses reported large UFOs that glided silently at treetop level, bounced up and down like a yo-yo, made sudden jumps in position, zipped out of sight or suddenly just disappeared.

Despite these many witnesses, and a short story on the front page of the Monroe *News-Star* on Christmas morning, the whole episode was lost in the shuffle of holiday events and didn't come to my attention until February. I began an investigation on February 8 but didn't travel the 200 miles from my home in Baton Rouge until late February. Understandably, then, important details may have become scrambled and/or confused in the witnesses' minds before I conducted any interviews, but I believe the basic story as outlined here is correct. The sequence of events is based on a correlation of details from the various witness statements. Actual times are not always known precisely.

Many of the report forms I handed out or mailed have not been returned as of this writing, but enough onsite and long-distance investigation has been accomplished to publish this written account with confidence. The close encounter reports described below are quite unlikely to have any natural or manmade explanations, and the simultaneous viewing of an object by independent groups of witnesses makes this case important.

All of the sightings took place in a six-by-twenty-mile

area south and west of Monroe/West Monroe, Louisiana (see map). About one-third of the area is wetlands, with rolling timber and farmlands to the west and south. Interstate 20 runs east and west through the southern portion of the metropolitan area while Highway 34 runs south out of West Monroe through the Bawcomville area.

Christmas Eve in Ouachita Parish was cold (39°), still, and mostly clear as the sun set at 5:08 p.m. The new moon was already below the horizon and the two brightest objects in the sky, Venus and Saturn, were only about three degrees apart and about fifteen degrees above the horizon in the west-southwest when the sightings began.

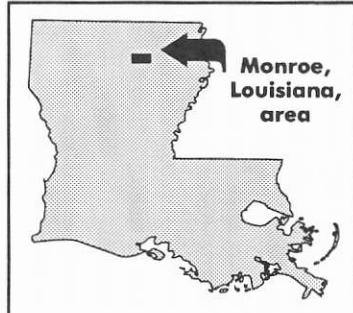
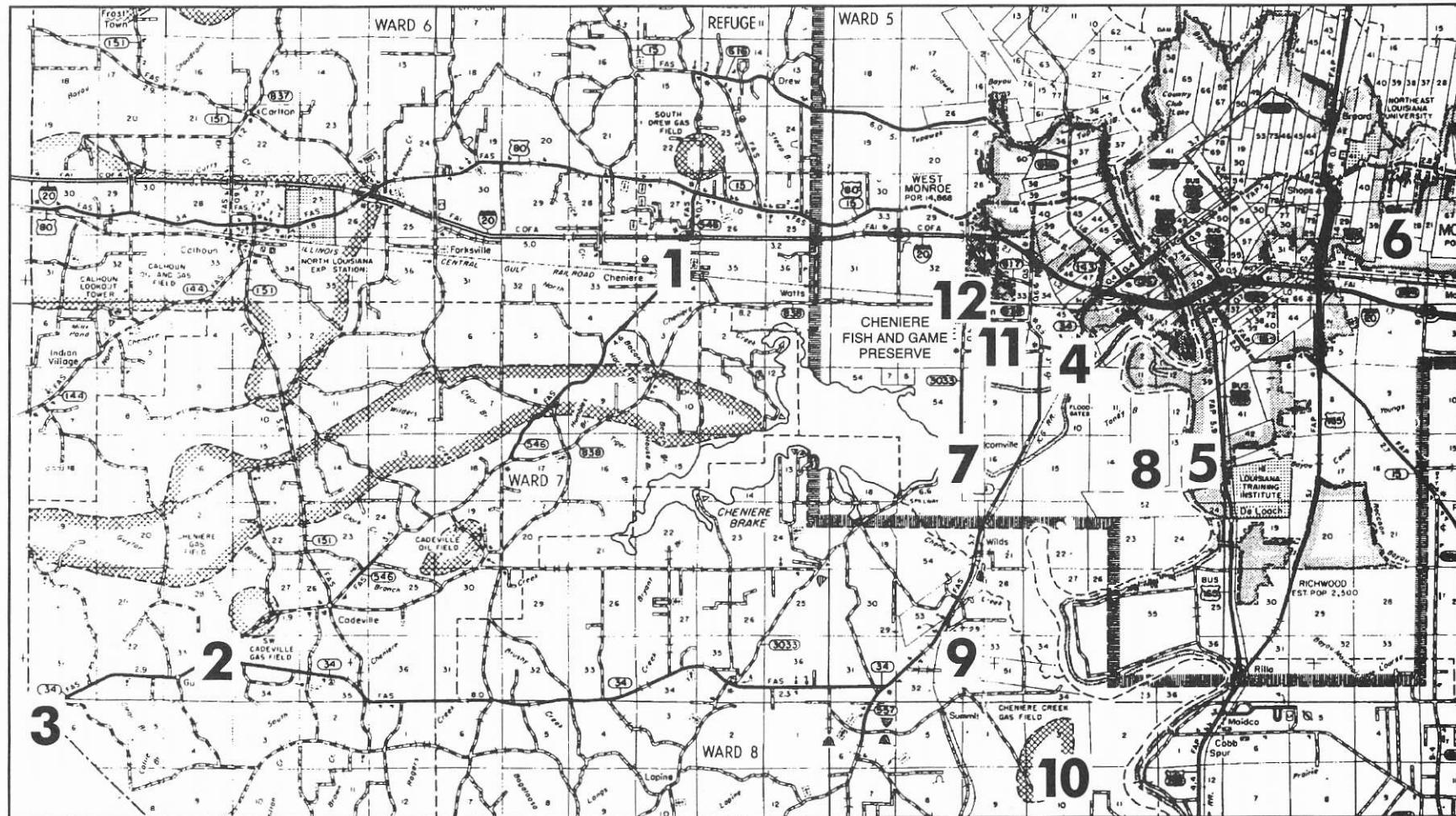
The evening's first report occurred at 6:09 p.m. when retired army sergeant Albert Lowery, who lived in a rural area just off Highway 546 about eight miles west of Monroe/West Monroe, called the sheriff's office requesting deputies to help him identify a bright object south of his home. As deputies Johnson and George approached the area, they spotted a bright light in the sky to the west at a distance they estimated to be one mile. Deputy Johnson told his partner, "I bet that's what they are talking about right there," and George replied, "I bet that's an airplane, ain't nothing to that."

As the deputies drove to Lowery's home, the curving road and broken forests caused them occasionally to lose sight of the light, but it never appeared to move. While both of them were convinced they were watching some type of aircraft, it should be noted that Venus and Saturn were located in approximately the same direction they were looking. However, what they were to observe in a few moments cannot be ascribed to misidentification of a planet.

At this same time, Deputy Gene Caviness was on Highway 34, about nine miles southwest of Johnson and George, traveling west to meet a Jackson Parish deputy at the parish line. He had been listening to Johnson and George talk about the light they were watching when he spotted a bright object to the north. He radioed that he also saw the object and the other two deputies replied, "Yeah, we're looking at it too." Caviness pulled off the road to get a better look, and as he was watching it out the passenger window it suddenly just disappeared. "It's like you turned the light off in a room; I stopped seeing it right there," he said. Johnson and George reported that the light they were watching had also disappeared from view.

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*W. L. Garner, Jr., is Louisiana state director for the Mutual UFO Network and editor of its newsletter, LA MUFON.*



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1. Lowery's home.
2. Caviness at first sighting.
3. Caviness and Faulk at parish line.
4. Paper mill.
5. Wilson on Ouachita levee.
6. Monroe Regional Airport.

## Area Southwest of Monroe, Louisiana

7. Bawcomville Fire Station.
8. Estimated location of UFO viewed by firemen and Wilson.
9. Sandalwood/Philpot Road community.
10. Knight at first sightings.
11. Knight's close encounter.
12. Cullipher's location.

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A minute or so later they arrived at Lowery's house. Almost immediately they saw a UFO as Johnson yelled "Look!" The object was "just over treetop high; I mean it was so enormous." Searching for a way to describe it, Johnson explained, "You really couldn't make out what we were looking at, other than it had two great big blinding lights in the front, had one blinking light in the back, and had two big, big ones in the front." He continued, "And it, more or less, just stood over the vehicle for a moment, just a few seconds. I was trying to drive, Curtis was looking at it and he said he really couldn't see . . . because it had come up on top of him."

Johnson said he waited for the thing to come across as it hovered over the car. There was no sound as it moved overhead (the windows were rolled down). After a few moments more, "the craft speeded up a little bit, and then it accelerated and, zip, it's gone. It was gone within just—maybe one second." As if it were necessary to justify the accuracy of his observations, Johnson explained, "I've been in the military for four years and did a lot of time on helicopters—and different things—they make noise. And I know the stars and trees, and everything, and there was no wind blowing. There was no noise, there was nothing."

A few minutes later at Lowery's house, Lowery pointed out the bright light he wanted identified. The deputies correctly identified it as Venus (when I interviewed the Lowerys on April 5, Mr. Lowery pointed to almost the exact position where Venus and Saturn were at 7:00 p.m. on December 24). The deputies left the Lowerys about 7:00 p.m.

Meanwhile, Deputy Caviness had proceeded several miles further west on Highway 34 to the Ouachita-Jackson Parish line and was talking to Jackson Parish deputy Dean Faulk. Alerted by a radio call from Deputy Johnson, they spotted a UFO approaching at treetop level from the southwest (possibly not the same object as seen by Johnson and George since they were eleven miles northeast of Caviness and Faulk). Caviness told me that "it was there again coming straight towards us. It was kinda low this time, it was coming towards the Jackson Parish deputy and me, making no sound whatsoever. It came right over us; I say right over us—kind of north of us a little bit, but . . . we heard no sounds, no air sounds or anything whatsoever indicating any type of mechanical device."

The UFO moved silently at an altitude of only two or three times the height of nearby trees. In his written report, Faulk checked items indicating the object was oblong, very bright, appeared red, yellow and blue, had three lights and was 30 times as big as a star. In his report, Caviness also noted three red, blue and green lights. He noted that object's size as that of a "larger jet." However, he stated and drew sketches that showed that from a distance the object appeared as a sphere with a band of colored lights around its middle and a short string of lights hanging from the bottom, but overhead it appeared as a triangle with a band of colored

lights around its perimeter. He told me that "when the two of us were sitting there looking up at it, it looked kinda like a triangle shape . . . but from a distance it looked like a ball—a bright ball."

Statements from both deputies agree that the object approached and passed by them rather slowly, but its departure was very abrupt. The object was still moving toward the northeast when it disappeared and within seconds the police radio was reporting a bright light going down behind the paper mill, about seventeen miles to the northeast.

The paper mill is a little more than a mile south of Interstate 20, at the intersection of Highways 34 and 838, on the southwestern edge of the Monroe/West Monroe metropolitan area. The mill is about two miles west of the meandering Ouachita River, which runs from north to south between Monroe and West Monroe. The community of Bawcomville is squeezed between the wetlands of the Cheniere Brake, the river, and the paper mill.

At about this time, Deputy Artis Wilson was at his home on the east side of the river in south Monroe, getting ready to go on duty and listening to the UFO talk on his police radio. As he left his house, Wilson spotted a bright object to the west, but assumed it was an aircraft going up the river on final approach to the Monroe Regional Airport. Then it made an erratic move which Wilson, a retired army sergeant with experience as a flight line chief, knew could not be accomplished by an aircraft or helicopter. He drove to an abandoned school on the river levee where he watched the object, at treetop level and only an estimated five or six hundred yards distant, for more than 15 minutes. This places the object over the wetlands just west of the river, east of Bawcomville and south of the paper mill. Wilson told me that "it was across the river from where I was. The lights would go up, and then they'd drop, and they'd just sit there for a minute and all of a sudden they'd make a fine right or left turn, either one." Describing the lights he said, "They were changing [colors] . . . sometimes it would look like a white and green, sometimes a red and green—and a white, sometimes you see all three." He heard no sound from the object.

While still at home he had first wondered whether the object was Venus, but his college-age son, who is an amateur astronomer, pointed out Venus to the right of the object they were viewing. And several times during his sighting, Wilson asked the department's dispatcher to check with the Monroe Airport tower concerning traffic in the area. Each time he received a negative report.

At the Bawcomville Fire Station, firefighters Greg Cates, Curt Meachum, Dinnon Butler, and others were alerted by another station to turn on their police scanner. Hearing police reports of a UFO sighting over Philpot Road (to their south), the men went out into the parking lot behind the station where, through a break in the trees, they could see a bright, multicolored object an estimated two to four miles to the east, roughly the same position as estimated by

Wilson. They watched the object through binoculars and listened to the deputies' descriptions of it on their scanner. Cates said, "You could see green, red, blue, and white and it just seemed to stay there. It would get lower and get higher." Meachum wrote in his report: "Multiple lights [white, red, blue, green], at different times you could see different lights. The object would move up, down, left, and right at different speeds."

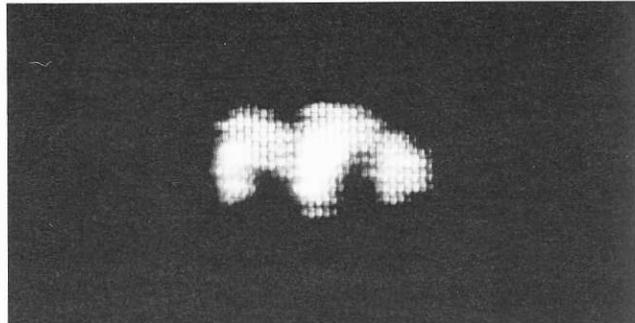
Since it was cold and the object didn't do anything spectacular, boredom gradually set in and the men went back inside the station. Their estimates of how long they watched it ranged from 30 minutes to over an hour. Although they were sure they were watching the same UFO being talked about on the police radio (over Philpot Road), they were looking just south of east (100–110° azimuth), not directly south toward Philpot Road.

Around the time Deputy Wilson and the Bawcomville firefighters were having their sightings, dozens of people who live in a small community of homes and trailers near Philpot and Sandelberry Roads, due south of the fire station and paper mill, began gathering outside to watch for UFOs (they had heard the police reports). According to several witnesses who prefer anonymity, "a turtle-shaped object, bigger than a house, with two big headlights in front and colored lights all over it," traveled slowly in a southeasterly direction above Philpot Road at treetop level. An estimated half-mile to a mile away it turned bright red and settled behind some trees.

Word spread quickly and soon there were a dozen or more people standing along the road. About five minutes later the UFO came back up Philpot Road, moving to the northwest, again at treetop level. One young woman ran along the road under it taking flash pictures with a 35mm camera (none showed anything). Near the intersection of Philpot and Sandelberry, witnesses reported "sparkler-like sparks being emitted." Then the UFO began to ascend slowly and then suddenly it disappeared. Strangely, the witnesses said the big lights in front were very bright but did not light up the ground or trees in front of the object.

After listening to reports of the UFO activity over his police radio for about thirty minutes, Deputy Kevin Knight, off-duty at the time, decided to see for himself. He went to a cut-over area off Philpot Road a couple of miles beyond the Sandelberry community and just west of the river. He told me: "[The object was in the] north-northwest at first, and it was just a big large light. And then it just kept going further and further away and it would just completely disappear. And the next thing you know, it would be orange and greenish looking. It would be real small and it would just start going down behind some trees. It was quite a distance away, but it would go up and come right back down. And then it would just disappear completely. It was just like a, like a yo-yo."

Another deputy joined Knight, and when the UFO disappeared for about fifteen minutes they decided to leave.



*Videotaped image of the UFO, taken from a photo of the TV screen during a showing of Cecil Cullipher's tape.*

"I was just fixing to leave out there, packing all the flashlights and things back in the car," said Knight, "and I could see something coming across the trees. It was several bright lights. It was just about treetop high but it wasn't making any sound. And it came and it just [inaudible] speed and it turned and when it turned it was shaped like a triangle. It had lights all the way around it. Then all of a sudden it just zoomed away." Asked if the triangle shape was from the side or bottom, Knight replied "It looked like it was coming right at me like an airplane. It had bright lights on it, it had several of them. Then it looked like it just turned and went right toward the paper mill, and when it did it looked like a triangle." He added "Then it just disappeared as quick as it got there. Just like someone snapped their fingers and it went away."

At about 8:15 p.m. Cecil Cullipher, an electronics technician who lives in West Monroe just northwest of the paper mill, turned off his TV and turned on his police scanner. When he heard the deputies talking about a UFO bigger than a football field and at treetop level, he grabbed his camcorder and telephoto lens and went outside. To the southeast he could see a bright object with two or more randomly blinking lights hanging stationary in the sky. (Cullipher estimates the object was about ten miles away, but his direction of view suggests he was videotaping the same object being seen by the firefighters, which would put the object about five miles from him.) Cullipher taped one minute and 41 seconds of the object before turning off the camcorder and going into the house to get a telephoto lens with higher magnification. When he returned his wife told him that the object had moved north and disappeared behind a house and some trees.

The tape shows a fixed light with two slowly pulsing portions (see photo). MUFON photoanalyst Jeff Sainio has analyzed the tape and found it to be of better than average quality and strangeness. He concluded that the behavior and characteristics of the lights are inconsistent with aircraft lighting, and their on/off timing is incompatible with either incandescent lighting or pyrotechnics.

The night's excitement wasn't quite over. Deputy *continued on page 23*

# UFOs AND THE AMISH

BY MICHAEL D. SWORDS

**M**any people interested in UFOs have probably never heard of George Hunt Williamson, but in the 1950s he was almost as big as George Adamski, and in most ways more interesting. In fact, Williamson was the most prominently quoted witness to the Desert Spaceman event that propelled Adamski into fame: the November 20, 1952, desert contact with Orthon the Venusian.

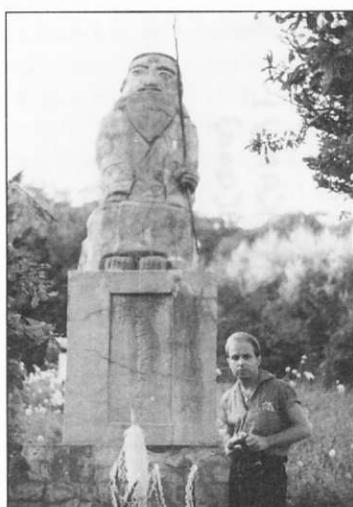
Williamson almost invented the ancient-astronaut hypothesis, was a very early UFO channeller, and believed in spiritual "walk-ins," a Lemurian superrace, and the imminent Second Coming of Christ and the Space Brothers. He was immersed in archaeological exploration, secret temples and lost wisdom, and direct radio and light contact with ufonauts. He was incomparably rich in creative ideas, yet poverty-stricken in his analysis of his amazing constructs. He knew Adamski, George Van Tassel, Truman Bethurum, Morris Jessup, J. Manson Valentine, Charles Laughead, and many other figures on the fringes of saucerdom.

Even so, he is an *extremely* difficult individual to figure out. I have read some characterizations that are absurdly wrong-headed, so I will be circumspect in claiming to know what made him tick. But I would like to give you a taste of the Williamson files.

So what does all of this have to do with Amish UFOs? In 1954 Williamson was riding Adamski's coattails and giving lectures all over the country (usually in the Midwest and sometimes teamed up with good ol' boy contactee Truman Bethurum). Williamson was an effective storyteller and slide-projecting lecturer who put on a good show. He had a knack for making audiences think they were part of something very special.

While on a tour that took him to Detroit, Cleveland, and Cincinnati, he decided to give a lecture in an Amish county in eastern Ohio. Combining UFOs with his version of Second Coming Christianity, he apparently impressed a group of impressionable people who began watching the

*With this short research note, the Center for UFO Studies is pleased to announce the acquisition, preservation, and availability of the George Hunt Williamson files. The Center will be happy to respond to reasonable research requests in writing, and should a responsible researcher wish to visit the files, this can be arranged through the Center and/or Dr. Michael Swords, who is cataloging and temporarily storing them in Kalamazoo, Michigan.*



*George Hunt Williamson, standing in front of the statue of a Japanese god, near Piratori village.*

skies and searching their memories. Williamson, who seems to have genuinely believed most if not all of the things he said (at least at the time he said them), reasoned that the enlightened Space Brothers might well seek out spiritually advanced peoples such as the Amish and the Hopi for contacts. His special contact among the Amish became Yost Miller, who collected cases and passed them on to Williamson "in the Name of the Coming King . . . our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ."

Miller collected ten sighting reports for Williamson, all but one from the 1953-1955 period; the odd case was intriguingly dated "the summer of 1947." These reports reflected good old-fashioned 1950s ufology and are worth reexamining. For instance, for our odd-technology

theorists, take these two cases: one reported by a lumbermill worker and a roofer in early October 1953, and another by a minister and his wife in August 1954.

The cases are as identical as any that I have read from two groups of apparently independent witnesses. Both cases involve a noiseless, disc-shaped object that fluttered slowly along, offering alternate views of its edge and its circular form. The flutter was accompanied by short bursts of speed, which one pair of witnesses noticed were accompanied by a dark-colored exhaust. When the circular face was visible, all the observers reported that it was composed of dark-colored areas interspersed with lighter ones. In both cases the craft took about fifteen minutes to cross the sky. The sightings took place in the early afternoon. Were our fly-boys at Wright-Patterson up to something weird?

There were three other disc sightings. The two from 1955 were particularly interesting: one object hovered overhead for several minutes moving in little circles, a polished

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Williamson, who also went by the name of Michel d'Obrenovic, at a Civil Air Patrol reunion at Perrin AFB, Texas, in 1967.

watched the minidisc dart in rectangular patterns, outlining the fences in their yard and making precise 90-degree turns. Twenty minutes of this geometry lesson were enough, so the couple went to bed and let the "whatsit" do whatever it was about.

There were three nocturnal lights. One was a likely candidate for ball lightning, according to Williamson. Another was an especially bright starlike object that moved up and down and back and forth, apparently describing a small cross in the sky for fifteen minutes until it raced away at terrific speed. The third sighting was a low-level silent light, oscillating white to red, not quite as large as the full moon at 800 feet away, and moving up and down over a neighbor's house situated beneath a hill (which allowed a precise distance estimate). Intriguingly enough, a baby boy was born to the witness' family (in the hospital, not at home) late that morning. Williamson and the Amish were puzzled about how to interpret this.

There were two high-strangeness cases in the file, plus a note about a third odd case outside the Amish community. One was a close encounter (CE1) involving a large object shaped like several discs on an axle, and moving flexibly through the air like a caterpillar. The second was a flying



fuselage (no wings or tail) with "blisters" on the front, rear, and bottom (see drawing). This thing was silent, hovering, and perhaps even responsive (the primary witness waved and it came nearer). It dashed away at great speed and a steep

angle when conventional aircraft arrived, and it returned and repeated this act four times in all. It was bright aluminum in appearance, had no windows, and was about half the size of a Piper Cub. The odd note was about an unattributed landing report, where an Orthon-like spaceman emerged, fetched water from a stream, and took off.

There are many fascinating aspects to all this. First, the witnesses were Amish. As Yost Miller said, "the individuals that had the sightings are all reliable and would not spin a yarn for anything, with one exception. Just between us, the one by Mrs. Aling and her husband [the UFO that "signalled a birth"]: a pinch of salt might be in order—nevertheless there is no doubt that something was seen since they both concur on this." The letters and reports have a clean, refreshing element about them. Take these remarks by Mrs. Kandel, observer of the approach-and-run fuselage:

Why won't they become friendly with me? The way the books say, they want people to know about them and we want to know of them and they won't even play?

Is there any way of contacting them? So far they just sort of tease us. We know there is such things and aren't afraid when we see something unusual. Yet, why don't we ever see any little people or any saucers close? Could it be something we have done or something? I would very much like to know why we get just so far and no farther. Are we going nuts? Or are these other people [Adamski, et al.] liars [sic] when they say they see them? Or what is it? I have even prayed about it but so far have no answer!"

Mrs. Kandel, you are a wise and perceptive woman, indeed.

I believe that Williamson was just as charmed by and assured of these people and their observations as I am reading their letters. He included these cases in his book, *Road in the Sky* (1959), with no embellishment whatever.

This is the last point that I wish to make relating to this material from the files. It indicates to me (as does much else in the files) that Williamson was basically an honest man, regardless of whatever failings he may have had (honest about what he felt was true about the phenomena he wrote about, but a big yarn-spinner and self-inflator when he described himself and his accomplishments). I am led to conclude that he actually believed all the stuff—the wild, amazing, impossible-to-believe stuff—that he wrote about. This is why I say that Williamson is not easy to explain and cannot be deposited into some conveniently labeled box.

In future issues I may occasionally dip into this fantasyland, as respite from our more serious UFO business, and try to make a little headway in unraveling the mysteries of this complex man. I welcome your assistance if you have any insights to offer, and CUFOS would welcome the addition of photocopies of any Williamson-related materials you have to enhance the completeness of the research collection. ♦

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# THE FORTUNE PHOTO REVISITED

BY WALTER N. WEBB

**O**n October 16, 1957, nurse Ella Louise Fortune was driving north of Tularosa, New Mexico, when she spotted a brilliant-white, elliptical object hovering against a deep-blue sky. The object had what looked like a faint exhaust trail at one edge. The nurse stopped her car and snapped a 35mm Kodachrome of the scene. She did not stay to see what happened to the UFO. Later Fortune testified that she thought the bright phenomenon was not a lenticular cloud because it appeared solid and self-luminous.<sup>1</sup>

The photograph is reproduced in color in Ronald Story's *The Encyclopedia of UFOs* (Doubleday, 1980) and three times (although backwards) in *Look*'s special 1967 issue, *Flying Saucers*.

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The evaluation of APRO's photo consultant, John T. Hopf, indicated that the object was "more cloud-like than solid." He went on to state: "Although I feel that the 'object' is not a solid one, it certainly is an unusual phenomena [sic] and should receive the attention of a qualified aerologist."<sup>2</sup>

Listed as photographic case #35 in *The UFO Evidence* (NICAP, 1964), NICAP concluded that the Fortune object was "probably a cloud."<sup>3</sup>

Although I too believed early on that the manifestation might indeed be a lenticular cloud, I had never witnessed one possessing the "exhaust trail" feature—that is, until September 1, 1967. While traveling through Yellowstone National Park, I happened to see *precisely* the same type of cloud, complete with a trailing wisp. Unfortunately my 35mm camera wasn't loaded at that moment, and I was unable to locate my black-and-white camera in time to get a picture before the cloud broke up. But it was convincing evidence to me that the Fortune object was a lenticular cloud.



*Ella Louise Fortune, a nurse with the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the Mescalero Reservation, took this photograph near Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, on October 16, 1957. (NICAP files)*

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In a letter to APRO on October 23, 1967, I passed along details of my personal observation and offered the opinion that the 1957 photo actually showed the same cloud type. I received no reaction from APRO, and as far as I am aware, nothing was published in *The APRO Bulletin* concerning my eyewitness confirmation/explanation.

Recently I did a little more digging into orographic or wave-cloud phenomena. These clouds, which can be extremely bright and reflective, form when high-velocity winds containing moist air flow over mountain obstacles, generating downstream standing waves. At the wave crest the air cools, condenses, and forms a nearly stationary lens-shaped cloud. The top of the cloud bears the curved shape of the wave crest; the bottom usually appears horizontal. This happens to be the appearance of the Fortune phenomenon. The cloud may either stand above a summit, or it may form at some distance downwind from the mountain range, as apparently is the case in the 1957 photo. As long as the winds continue, the wave cloud will sustain itself in a more or less motionless position. Although Fortune said there was little

or no surface wind at her own location, winds aloft at cloud height undoubtedly were of higher velocity.

As for the "exhaust trail," R. S. Scorer described this feature in *Scientific American*, March 1961:

... ice clouds . . . may stream from the downwind edge of a wave cloud. . . . Since ice crystals evaporate less readily than water droplets, they may form long ice trails when they are swept out of the clouds.<sup>4</sup>

#### NOTES

1. "UAO Photographed over Holloman Test Range," *The APRO Bulletin*, May 1958, p.1; Ronald D. Story, ed., *The Encyclopedia of UFOs* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1980), 140.
2. John T. Hopf, "Photographic Analysis of the Fortune Photo," *The APRO Bulletin*, September 1958, p.3.
3. Richard H. Hall, ed., *The UFO Evidence* (Washington, D.C.: NICAP, 1964), 87, 90.
4. R.S. Scorer, "Lee Waves in the Atmosphere," *Scientific American* 204, no.3 (March 1961): 132. ♦

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## UKRAINE RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON ANOMALOUS PHENOMENA

BY VLADIMIR V. RUBTSOV

The Research Institute on Anomalous Phenomena (RIAP) was established at Kharkov in the Ukraine in 1992 by the VERTICAL Aerospace Company. It is an independent research body, aimed at scientific studies in the fields of the UFO problem and nonclassical SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence). The Institute makes its investigations in strict conformity to requirements of the scientific method and in close collaboration with the CIS Academy of Cosmonautics and the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Specific features of the UFO problem are well known. UFO sightings are unpredictable and therefore difficult to investigate with conventional scientific methods and equipment. Although progress has been made in the last few decades in collecting and analyzing raw data on UFO observations, the nature of genuine UFOs still remains an open question. The ufological community has acquired a huge number of UFO reports (mostly of low quality), together with poorly developed methods of data treatment and hypothesis testing. As a result, mainstream science shies away from this field of research.

To open the way to a solution of the UFO problem, it should be posed as a normal scientific problem, in complete conformity to the cognitive standards of science. Being multidisciplinary, it is best divided into narrow mono-

disciplinary subproblems that can be developed with methodological rigor while providing efficient interdisciplinary coordination. It is essential to organize a systematic gathering and processing of instrumental information on UFO sightings so as to obtain really hard data on the phenomenon. This information will provide a basis for a complete picture and well-founded theoretical models.

The principal research activities of the Institute in the UFO field are: development of methods and strategies for active monitoring of UFOs by means of radar, optical, infrared, and other detection systems; instrumented studies of supposed landing sites, effects on biological systems, and UFO samples; creation of an efficient system for reconstructing a real anomalous event on the basis of witnesses' testimonies; creation of a unified UFO database and a computer expert system to identify UFOs; development of physical models of UFOs; psychophysiological investigations of contactees and abductees; and studies in the history of Soviet ufology.

In the SETI field, we are engaged in the program, "Search for Alien Artifacts on the Moon" (SAAM). This program includes: a search for sunlight reflections from flat, mirrorlike surfaces of hypothetical extraterrestrial objects (for example, reconnaissance devices monitoring the earth); a search for other probable artificial extraterrestrial phenomena on the lunar surface; examination of the possibility of interaction between the terrestrial and extraterrestrial

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civilizations on the Moon; and simulation of probable extraterrestrial strategies for the Moon.

These investigations employ both existing catalogs of lunar transient phenomena (LTP) and the data obtained by a network of LTP observers that has recently been created especially for this purpose and involves at present a group of competent observers in the Ukraine, Russia, and Byelorussia.

The Institute staff consists of RIAP Fellows—the scientists and scholars, permanently employed by the Institute—and RIAP Contributing Fellows, who are engaged under contract. They are distinguished specialists in physics, astronomy, history, psychology, and other disciplines.

Formally, RIAP is divided into four departments: 1) Ufological Department; 2) SETI Department; 3) Historical Department; 4) Information Department. But the main research unit is a problem-oriented team that is specially created to work on a mono- or multidisciplinary problem. Such a team is headed by a chief researcher, who is totally responsible for the quality of the work and reports to the Scientific Council and Director of the Institute.

The Scientific Council and Advisory Board of the Institute include such Russian and Ukrainian specialists in the UFO problem and SETI field as A. V. Arkhipov (radio astronomer who discovered supposed ETI radio sources near some distant stars), A. V. Beletsky (historian studying pre-1917 UFO waves in Russia), Dr. E. A. Ermilov (specialist in radio detection of aerial anomalous phenomena), Dr. V. N. Fomenko (investigator of the famous Vashka find, as well as other supposed extraterrestrial artifacts), Yu. A. Fomin (doyen of UFO studies in Russia), Dr. L. M. Gindilis (astronomer and SETI expert), Dr. Yu. V. Platov (vice-chairman of the Academic UFO Study Group), Dr. A. V. Zolotov (investigator of the Tunguska explosion), and oth-

ers. The Advisory Board comprises a group of well-known Western scientists, scholars and engineers: V.-J. Ballester Olmos (Spain), Dr. Thomas E. Bullard (USA), Dr. Richard F. Haines (USA), Dr. A. Meessen (Belgium), and others. Dr. V. V. Rubtsov has been appointed the director of the Institute.

RIAP is starting two special periodicals: the journal *Anomalistics and Astronomy* (in Russian) and the newsletter *RIAP Bulletin* (in English), as well as irregular *RIAP Proceedings*.

The budget of the Institute is formed from subsidies of VERTICAL, contracts for research performed by RIAP for other organizations, grants, and donations. Thanks to the VERTICAL Aerospace Company, the Institute has sufficient funding in the Ukrainian currency to enable the beginning of its research activities. However, some (limited in number, but important) equipment, materials, and services may be obtained here mainly or even exclusively in dollars or other hard currency. The lack of these means (however small) considerably impedes the work of RIAP.

In this connection, the Scientific Council of the Institute appeals to the international anomalistic community for any possible donations in a freely convertible currency. Any financial help on your part will be most highly appreciated and will benefit of our common field of study, promoting its further development.

The Scientific Council is also very much interested in establishing contacts and collaboration between RIAP and serious anomalistic bodies, journals, and researchers from other parts of the world. For further details please write to: RIAP, P.O. Box 4684, 310022 Kharkov-22, Ukraine; fax (057-2) 79-11-11, RIAP; e-mail: riap%office.kharkov.ua@relay.ussr.eu.net ♦

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## BOOK REVIEW

Timothy Good, *Alien Contact: Top-Secret UFO Files Revealed* (New York: William Morrow). 1993. 256p. \$22.00. ISBN 0-688-12223-X.

*Above Top Secret* (William Morrow, 1988) established Timothy Good's reputation as a serious and thorough researcher of government interest in the UFO phenomenon, and it remains an important contribution. With his most recent publication, *Alien Contact: Top-Secret UFO Files Revealed*, Good takes on the difficult task of exposing the facts relating to some of the most controversial claims in ufology: that a restricted number of government officials know some UFOs are extraterrestrial in origin; that alien bodies and crashed UFOs have been recovered; that the U.S. military has test flown alien craft; and that some governments have established contact with alien races at official, but restricted levels.

Good faces the thankless task of separating the UFO wheat from the ufological chaff. Rumors, secret informants,

and second-hand stories abound in the UFO field, leaving him (and us) wondering what the truth really is about government involvement with UFOs. Good also confronts the formidable obstacles that other UFO investigators have attempted to overcome: the fact that few officials in government, the military, and the intelligence communities have knowledge, or even any awareness, of the complete UFO situation; the refusal by the few individuals knowledgeable about the subject to make public statements (Good often refers to secret sources or second-hand accounts: "a colleague of mine learned from a scientist friend"); and information that is diluted and distorted by disinformation intended to confuse and deceive the public.

One particular quote neatly represents the kind of information Good and other researchers must contend with as they struggle to untangle the knots of UFO testimony. Air Force Lt. Col. Robert Bowker is quoted as saying:

*continued on page 20*

# CARL HART AND THE LUBBOCK LIGHTS

BY KEVIN D. RANDLE

The Lubbock Lights case started with a small group of college professors in the summer of 1951. At about 9:10 p.m. on August 25, W. L. Ducker, A. G. Oberg, and W. I. Robinson spotted what they later called a "string of beads" flying overhead. During the course of the evening they saw more flights and called the local newspaper, hoping that a story would encourage other witnesses to come forth.

The professors discussed the lights and determined what they would do if they reappeared. They wanted to gather solid data that might help identify these peculiar objects. When a second flight passed by, they put their plan into action but learned nothing useful.

Ducker called the Lubbock newspaper, *The Avalanche* (later *The Avalanche-Journal*), but the editor on duty, Jay Harris, was reluctant to run the story. When Ducker insisted, Harris reluctantly went along on the condition that Ducker allow his name to be used. He agreed, and the story appeared.

The story did not attract national attention, however, until Carl Hart, Jr., an incoming college freshman, took a series of photographs of the lights. Hart, who had read the stories in the newspaper about the professors' sightings, was lying in bed on the night of August 31 with an eye on the sky.

According to Hart, whom I interviewed recently, "We didn't have central air conditioning. I slept with the windows open, and I liked to sleep with my head stuck out the window—and there they were."

Hart said the lights had been in the news for a week or so, "and they usually showed up in several flights when they would, so . . . I went outside with my camera. . . . I didn't go anywhere without a camera."

Hart took two photographs of the second flight, and when the lights came back a third time, he took three more. The next day he took the film to a friend's photo lab so that he could develop it.

Harris at the *Avalanche* learned of the pictures when a

photographer who did some work for the newspaper called to say that Hart had just been there developing some film. He thought Harris might be interested, and Harris suggested that Hart bring the negatives to the office.

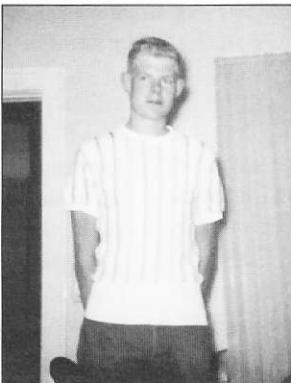
Harris, along with head photographer William Hams, examined the photos, but he feared a hoax. Harris called Hart a couple of times and bluntly asked him more than once

whether he had faked the photos. When Hart denied it, Harris told him that if he ever learned the pictures were bogus, he would "raise hell" and see that Hart was run out of town.

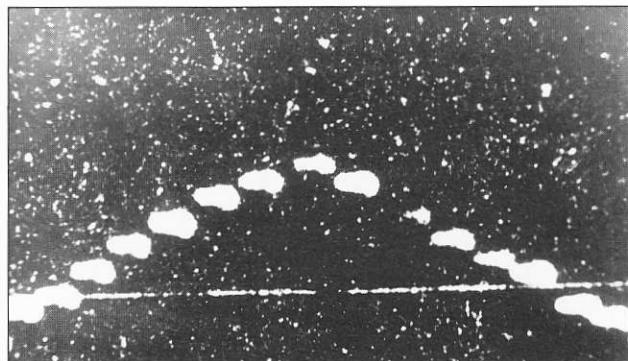
Hart replied that he had photographed something flying over Lubbock and if Harris didn't want to use the pictures, Hart didn't care. He didn't care about the payment for them either. Whatever they paid would be fine. He eventually received about \$10.

"My advice from a friend and professional journalist at the time was that if [I] copyright them, somebody's going to think [I] faked them and [was] trying to make money out of them," Hart recalled. "I was interested in that part of it [proving the pictures weren't fakes] and didn't do it [copyright them]."

Harris later decided to put the pictures on the wire services, but before he did, he contacted Hart once again. This time he warned him even more fiercely about the consequences of fraud. Once the photos went out on the wire nationwide, Hart's problems would be far worse if he was



*Photo of Carl Hart, Jr., taken by Special Agents Bossert and Farley in his home on September 20, 1951.*



*The Lubbock Lights.*

*Kevin D. Randle, an IUR contributing editor, is co-author of *UFO Crash at Roswell* (1991).*

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lying about them. Hart stood by his story and his pictures.

Later Hart said, "I never did hear an official version. I heard some unofficial things that came out later . . . about [how] they thought I had faked them somehow."

*Avalanche* photographer Hams tried to duplicate the photos. He took a camera to the roof of the newspaper building and watched for the lights. He saw nothing but a flight of birds. They were barely visible in the glow of the sodium vapor lights on the street below. Though he took two pictures of them and the birds flew in a ragged V-formation, they did nothing to explain the Hart pictures.

Hams developed the film, but the image was too weak to be printed. He tried one other time and failed again. The experience convinced him that Hart had not photographed birds.

## THE SEARCH FOR AN EXPLANATION

Once it learned about the pictures, the military spent a great deal of time trying to come up with an explanation for them. Officers came from Reese Air Force Base just outside Lubbock and from Wright-Patterson in Dayton, Ohio. Lt. (later Capt.) Edward J. Ruppelt even made the trip to Lubbock to investigate the lights and to interview Hart.

In the official report he would write about his trip, Ruppelt mentioned Joe Bryant of Brownfield, Texas. Bryant said he had seen the lights on August 25, the night the professors made the first of their reports. He was in his backyard when he saw the lights pass overhead, flying from north to south. He described them as "kind of a glow, little bigger than a star." A short time later, a second group appeared. Neither group had been in any sort of formation. Bryant characterized them as just a group of lights.

A few minutes later a third flight appeared, but instead of flying over the house, it dropped down and circled. Because the group was lower, Bryant could see the objects quite clearly. They were birds. One of them chirruped, and Bryant recognized it as a plover. When he read the account in the newspaper the next day, he told Ruppelt, he realized he would have been as baffled as the professors if he hadn't identified the lights as a group of plovers.

Ruppelt and the investigators from Reese AFB, including Lt. John Farley and Special Agent Howard N. Bossert, interviewed Hart half a dozen times. Armed with the insights from Bryant, they thought they had the answer. They wanted to see if they could match the bird identification to Hart's sighting.

On September 20, 1951, Bossert and Farley interviewed Hart at his home and asked for the negatives. Hart could find only four of the five. He turned these over to the



*From Carl Hart, Jr.'s back yard, looking north towards where the lights first appeared. The house is now gone, replaced by a Pizza Hut.*  
Photo by Kevin Randle.

military for analysis.

Bossert's initial report, dated October 8, went to Headquarters, OSI, in Washington, D.C. Copies were also sent to the commanding general of the Air Materiel Command, and to the commanding officer at Reese AFB.

Between November 6 and 9 another investigation of the Lubbock Lights was conducted. Ruppelt and Bossert interviewed Hart at his home and were told exactly the same story as before. "Hart's story could not be 'picked apart' because it was entirely logical," the official report states. "He was questioned on why he did certain things and his answers were all logical, concise, and without hesitation."

A technical report, dated November 29, 1951, and based on an analysis conducted by the physics laboratory at the Air Technical Intelligence Center (ATIC) at Wright-Patterson, revealed nothing about the sightings other than that the lights photographed by Hart were individual lights and not part of a larger, dark object. The lights moved in relation to one another in the formation. The Air Force physicists did estimate that if the lights had been attached to an object one mile from the camera, it would have a diameter of 310 feet. If closer, it would be smaller, and if farther away, it would be larger. The negatives were returned to Hart once the Air Force investigation was completed.

Ruppelt's was not the last interview by the military. On December 2 he was questioned again. According to the OSI report, Hart was interviewed in private and asked for a written statement. Evidently the military hoped to break his story, which was a continuing obstacle to the bird explanation. If a professional photographer could not get a picture of birds at night, how had an amateur done it? The obvious answer was that Hart had not photographed birds. If so, that meant the objects he had photographed were unidentified flying objects.

Hart rather enjoyed the attention he was receiving. The professors, he would remark, "felt like I had stolen their glory."

After December 2 the military investigation began to wind down. The officers involved had spoken with all the witnesses more than once, concentrating on Hart (they returned his negatives in March 1952). After speaking with Bryant, the man who had seen the plovers, and another West Texan, T. E. Snider, who reported that he had seen the lights and identified them as ducks, the officers decided that the Lubbock Lights could safely be explained as birds.

Their report concluded that:

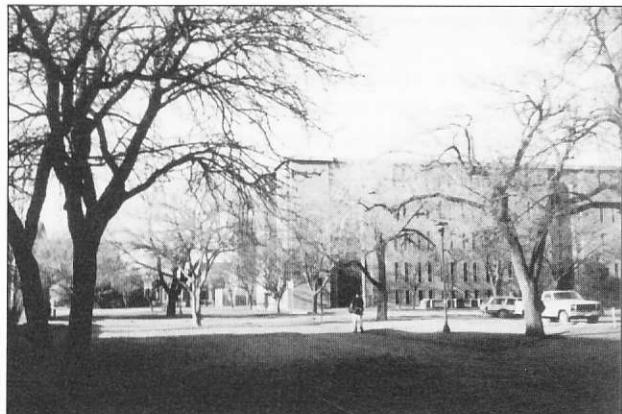
...birds, with street lights reflecting from them, were the probable cause of these sightings. The angular velocity of 30 degrees per second seems rather high for birds during migratory flights. It is probable that the angular velocity was less. In all instances the witnesses were located in an area where their eyes were dark-adapted, thus making the objects appear brighter.

The kind of birds responsible for this sighting is not known, but it is highly probable that they were ducks or plover. Since plovers do not usually fly in formations of more than six or seven, ducks seem more probable.

There are, however, no migratory birds in the Lubbock area at that time of year. According to Loren Smith of Texas Tech, ducks fly in V-formations in the area in late August. The glossy ibis, for example, visits the area, but it has no white with which to reflect the streetlights. Therefore the bird explanation does not work.

In fact, the photographs taken by Hart refute this theory, but that made no difference. And it made no difference that a professional photographer, when he attempted to photograph a flight of ducks at night, could not do so. Project Blue Book lists the case as solved by the birds.

That was not the last of it. In June 1952, in a *Look* article, Harvard University astronomer and UFO debunker Donald H. Menzel claimed that the Lubbock Lights were not birds but reflections of the city's lights—"mirages caused by an atmospheric condition known as temperature inversion."



*The campus of Texas Tech, where the professors who first reported the lights taught.*

Menzel was able to reproduce chemically, to his own satisfaction in his laboratory, what he insisted were the Lubbock Lights. But the photo he produced did not look like those taken by Hart. The latter were more diffuse, and Menzel compared his to one of Hart's with streaks on it. He did not use the classic photo of the round lights.

Apparently Menzel did not like that explanation either. In his 1977 book *The UFO Enigma* (written with Ernest H. Taves) he devotes less than a paragraph to the Lubbock Lights. "We believe that some of the Lubbock photographs may have been hoaxes," he and Taves wrote. Left with no convincing alternative explanation, Menzel, who emotionally could not accept the idea that anyone could photograph a genuine UFO, simply called Hart a liar.

Hart continues to deny that the pictures were faked. No one has ever presented any evidence to support the accusation, nor has anyone explained how they *could* have been faked.

Hart himself has no explanation. Asked if he believes in flying saucers, he said, "I don't particularly disbelieve. I think I'm kind of open-minded on that. If one would show up some place else here, I think I'd accept it." When asked if he knew what the lights were, he told me, "I really don't." ♦

## SECRET CRAFT OR DUCKS -- THEY KEEP OBSERVERS GUESSING

### 'Flying Whatsits' Stir Dispute In Area

Article from  
the Lubbock  
Morning  
Avalanche,  
September  
6, 1951.



"Uh . . . Interested In A  
Pretty Good Yarn, Misler? . . ."

THE "flying whatsits" continue merrily on their way—but the argument goes on. And if a duck wearing a lighted miner's cap ever meets up with a man in a flying saucer, there's going to be quite a battle over who caused the most commotion over Lubbock and other South Plains towns.

Again last night, as has been the case almost every night recently residents called in to report the mysterious objects.

Lubbock doesn't have a monopoly on the illuminated "things" which jumped into prominence when three Tech faculty members sighted a string of lights travelling from northeast to southwest over the horizon at an "incredible speed" twelve days ago. A lot of people, in Amarillo, Big Spring, Lamesa, Brownfield and other

Panhandle-South Plains points<sup>♦</sup> have sighted the objects since. The only thing is that those who "see" birds stick to that theory while many others—including the Tech instructors and others highly reliable—admit they too have sighted birds but say other objects definitely are not birds.

Last night, one of a group of scientific observers from the Texas Tech faculty announced that group had further substantiated its belief that the objects are not birds.

"There have been three flights tonight, and at last we observed one group passing above a cloud which gave us a more concrete idea of the altitude. Assuming that such a cloud crossed Lubbock at 2,000 feet, the objects would have

See MYSTERY, Page 10



(Staff Drawings By Dalton Wood.  
"Say, Bub . . . About Those  
Flying Saucer Stories . . .")

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## BOOK REVIEW—continued from page 16

Over the years, I have heard rumors galore, fully substantiating my belief in the reality of UFOs and the sometimes pitiful efforts of the Establishment to cover them up, and I have seen two myself. Recently, I sent a copy of the MJ-12 document to a friend in Arizona, who showed it to another gent there [whose] uncle worked at Wright-Patterson AFB as a welder at the time that artifacts from the 1947 NM crash were being analyzed, and was given a piece of it to melt with his equipment. He was unable to produce a flame hot enough for the task.

Here we are presented with everything that must turn ufologists's hair gray, or make a professional violinist break his strings: rumors of cover-ups, possible sightings, a hoax document, a friend-of-a-friend (twice removed) story about Wright-Patterson and Roswell—providing information already on public record and with nothing new or substantial added. What are we to make of this? If this kind of testimony gives experienced researchers pause (as it should), how can the average citizen, who simply wants a straight accounting of what his government knows about UFOs, be expected to make sense of such statements?

*Alien Contact* begins with a summary of some sensational recent reports, including two 1988 incidents in which jet fighters disappeared while pursuing UFOs over Puerto Rico, an aerial confrontation between a UFO and a Soviet Air Force pilot, and the unexplained aerial objects that intruded into Belgian air space during 1989–1990. Although these particular reports are fascinating, quotes by government officials acknowledging the significance of the UFO phenomenon are also quite intriguing. Commenting on his country's UFO sightings, the Belgian Air Force's chief of operations, Colonel Wilfried De Brouwer, is quoted as saying: "There was a logic in the movements of the UFO." Good even provides a quote attributed to Mikhail Gorbachev in which the former Russian leader stated that "the phenomenon of UFOs does exist, and it must be treated seriously." Finally, an unnamed source claimed that the British government probably had an established operational procedure for investigating UFO sightings and the Ministry of Defense appropriated millions for UFO research.

*Alien Contact* next explores the controversial link between UFOs and animal mutilations. We hear reports from individuals who have investigated such cases in New Mexico, including a state law enforcement official and a retired Sandia scientist, who describe precise and bloodless surgical procedures performed on cattle, irradiated carcasses, the discovery of fluorescent markings on specific cattle types, and reports of strange lights, unusual craft, helicopters, and ground markings near mutilation sites. Although some researchers consider cattle mutilations a result of normal predator and scavenger activity combined with unsubstantiated rumor, the evidence presented in this book leads us to consider the possibility that someone—whether extraterres-

trial or human—is experimenting on cattle. Clearly, for many, the reports of cattle mutilations remain an enigma calling for a more systematic study.

Throughout *Alien Contact*, Good refers to many famous stories found elsewhere in the UFO literature: President Eisenhower's alleged visit to Edwards AFB to see UFOs and to talk with aliens; President Nixon taking entertainer Jackie Gleason to see alien bodies at Homestead AFB; Senator Goldwater's attempt to find out what UFO material might be at Wright-Patterson AFB; and film producer Robert Emenegger's belief that he saw actual footage of a UFO landing at Holloman AFB. Other intriguing tidbits include President Carter's campaign promise to release government UFO documents, President Reagan's repeated statements about an alien threat uniting the world, quotes by Wernher von Braun and Hermann Oberth suggesting that some human technology and scientific advancements have been influenced by outside and presumably otherworldly forces, and the suggestion by Colonel William Coleman and Brigadier General Bolender that significant UFO reports were investigated and cataloged outside the Blue Book system.

Unfortunately, Good adds nothing new. A more detailed investigation of any one of these stories would have been helpful. One can only imagine what kind of revelations might come forth from a thorough investigation into the Eisenhower visit or the Holloman landing.

The most extensive portion of *Alien Contact* presents the highly controversial claims of some of the more famous (or infamous) figures in recent ufology, such as "Falcon" and "Condor," Robert Lazar, and Bob Oeschler. This material includes stories about a captured alien, who while incarcerated wrote a book about his home planet, his people's social structure, and his fellow aliens' life on Earth; an American scientist who claims to have worked on the propulsion system of alien craft; and a UFO investigator who describes his ride in a black helicopter, his visit to a secret NORAD installation that monitors UFO activity, and his plans for the inclusion of an alien body in an exhibition to educate the general public about the alien presence.

While Good wisely withholds endorsing such claims outright, he does express his belief that there might be method to the madness. He is essentially asking that if there is no truth in these stories, why are so many people wasting their time and energy—let alone risking their credibility, reputations, and careers—to make these outlandish public statements? Unfortunately, while separating truth from fiction in ufology is sometimes a task that would frustrate Solomon, determining the motives and reliability of individuals who report startling revelations is an even more difficult, if not impossible, one. Whether the evidence presented in *Alien Contact* convinces you that extraterrestrial contact has been established, this intriguing book will make many of us wonder why, if UFOs and aliens are not real, so many people are trying to convince us otherwise.

—David Boras, *Blue Island (Ill.) Public Library*

## LETTERS

### CRASH CLAIMS

*To the editor:*

In regard to the two Ohio stories mentioned in your article, "A Catalog of Early Crash Claims" (*IUR*, July/August 1993, p. 18), both incidents are under active investigation by MidOhio Research Associates, Inc. (MORA). We have recently published additional information about both events.

We obtained the following information (mentioned in *Ohio UFO Notebook*, July 1993) about the Columbus (Ohio) Army Supply Depot (now the Defense Construction and Supply Center (DCSC)) incident of 1952. The person we interviewed was very credible. He had retired as a DCSC supervisor and was a long-time acquaintance of Pete Hartinger. His sighting took place in the daytime. He was standing on the dock of one of the warehouses with two other men when he saw an object swoop down over the warehouses. It came in so low that he thought it had come out of a hangar at the nearby Curtis Wright aircraft manufacturing plant (now McDonnell Douglas). It flew slowly down the main street of DCSC and then turned east and flew away. There was a vapor trail behind it. He does not recall a noise. The object was circular and had two fins on the rear. It was gray in color and as large in apparent diameter as airplanes coming in for a landing at nearby Port Columbus. He believed it was 500–700 feet in altitude during various parts of his observation, which lasted around three minutes. He could not estimate its actual size. He viewed only the underneath part of it and he has never seen an aircraft that resembled it.

Several other people saw it at the same time, but he doesn't remember their names. He remembers telling the others that this object must be ours because it was flying so close to the ground. He told his wife about the sighting later that day, and she remembers this. Until a few years ago, he still thought that this object was a U.S. device. However, after studying different sighting reports, he now has doubts about this origin.

Soon after this, perhaps the next day, one of the buildings that had been unsecured suddenly became highly secured. The windows were blocked and no one was allowed in. Part of the outside was roped off. He thinks his sighting must have happened around the time that the alleged UFO events reported by James Moseley occurred. He recalls a rumor that the object buzzed DCSC because of certain UFO artifacts in storage there.

We also have reported (*Ohio UFO Notebook*, July 1993) on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and information given to us by several informants, who among other things have talked about alien bodies at the base. One informant showed us computer drawings of gray alien bodies. These drawings were reportedly used on the TV show, "UFO

Cover-Up Live." The copies that he showed us had numbers and letters in the upper corners that he said did not show up on the program. One picture had what looked like "FTD-SYD, Veh Type WHDD4" at the top left. FTD stands for Wright-Patterson's Foreign Technology Division, while "Veh Type" probably means vehicle type. The photos also had numbers at the top right. Another drawing, as I recall, had "FTD YP 28 8100" at the top left.

The government had reportedly provided these drawings for use on the program in place of actual photographs of the bodies. These aliens were described as 3'4" to 3'8". There was a small amount of webbing between their fingers—toward the proximal end of the fingers and not extending very far out. The alien's eyes had several inner eyelids. Their lungs and heart were one organ. Their kidneys and bladder were also one organ. The visual area of the brain was in the front, rather than in the back as with humans. Also, the brain was more convoluted than the human brain. They had four fingers and toes, but no thumb.

This informant also described a vault system under Wright-Patterson where at one time aliens from crashes were cryogenically preserved. Another of our informants showed us the hangar where the Roswell debris was first unloaded. If any confirming information is uncovered we will keep you advised.

*I. Scott, Ph.D.  
William E. Jones, J.D.  
MidOhio Research Associates  
Dublin, Ohio*

### FLYING WINGS

*To the editor:*

As a fellow Roswell-Corona investigator, I found Kevin Randle and Don Schmitt's "Roswell and the Flying Wing" (*IUR*, July/August 1993) most interesting. This is especially true because in May, while I was on a research visit to New Mexico, a credible source suggested to me that a crash of one of the famous Northrop flying wings might be behind the mystery.

A flying-wing buff since childhood, I was highly skeptical. However, my source was someone whose suggestions one takes seriously, and an alleged Roswell witness had recently told me that the crashed craft was winglike. So I did some checking, about 90 minutes worth of research that included very interesting conversations with Max Stanley, chief test pilot for the Northrop flying wing bomber program, and the National Air and Space Museum's Tim Wooldridge, author of *Winged Wonders: The Story of the Flying Wings*, cited by Kevin and Don in their article.

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In all relevant Roswell aspects, I agree with Kevin and Don's findings. However, I do have one nit to pick and a couple of interesting bits of detail to offer.

First the nit, which concerns the nonfatal YB-49 accident. The aircraft involved was the first YB-49 (tail number 42-102367), and it was destroyed (not merely damaged) on March 15, 1950, when its nose landing gear failed during simulated takeoff runs (not in a forced landing).

Next the bits. In 1945 the N-1M, the first Northrop wing, now beautifully restored and on exhibit in the National Air and Space Museum, was given to the Army Air Force for eventual display. It was preserved and put into storage at Freeman Field, Indiana, on June 6, 1946. On July 12, 1946, it was delivered to the Museum Storage Depot, Park Ridge, Illinois, where it remained until the early 1950s, when it was shipped to the Smithsonian's restoration facility in Silver Hill, Maryland. There it remained boxed and stored until May 1979, when the restoration project began.

As for the other bit, Max Stanley told me that the Planes of Fame Museum in Chino, California, is restoring and *plans to fly* one of the N-9Ms. Stand by for a rash of reports of small, wing-shaped UFOs over southern California!

Obviously, a crashed flying wing of earthly origin had nothing to do with the Roswell-Corona incident. So what gave my source the idea that such a craft may have been involved? Perhaps it was a case of blended memories of the 1947 incident and a later Northrop wing stopover at Roswell. However, Max Stanley told me he is all but absolutely certain that *none* of the Northrop wings *ever* paid a visit to Walker Field in Roswell. For the sake of completeness, I will run this detail down some day, but there can be no reasonable doubt that, as an explanation for the Roswell-Corona case, the flying wing does not fly.

Karl T. Pflock  
Annandale, Virginia

## CAPTIVE ALIENS

To the editor:

Jerome Clark's "A Catalog of Early Crash Claims" (*IUR*, July/August 1993) asserts that Joseph Rohrer's 1952 claim that an occupant had survived in captivity for several years "may be the first published account of such an allegation."

Here is an earlier one from *Time* magazine, January 9, 1950. It follows a sloppy version of the crash/retrieval stories that Frank Scully had already been publishing in his *Variety* column.

**Pressurized Prisoners.** This fanciful tale was hardly in circulation when a bigger & better version caught up with it. The space ship's space men were not dead at all. Fifteen of them had been captured alive. They would not, or could not talk (as earthbound creatures know talking), but one of them obligingly drew a map of the solar

system and pointed to the second planet from the sun. Thereupon, at the suggestion of a smart Earthling, all the prisoners were hastily placed in a pressurized chamber filled with carbon dioxide to simulate the atmosphere of Venus.

The Air Force did not bother to deny this fantastic story. It repeated vehemently that no reported flying saucer had ever proved genuine. . . .

Scully later claimed, quite believably, that he'd had rather hostile interchanges with a *Time* representative. At this point it is difficult to tell whether the rumor was actually out in the field or an exaggerated inference from Scully's tale.

Frank John Reid  
Chicago, Illinois

## JESSE MARCEL CLARIFICATION

To the editor:

Recently I reviewed my notes on Bob Pratt's interview with Jesse Marcel in the light of Christopher Allan's comments in "Jesse Marcel and the Roswell Incident: An Exchange" (*IUR*, May/June 1993). In the interest of accuracy, I wish to clarify some details.

I received an undated copy of the article Bob Pratt wrote for the *National Enquirer* from a friend. Attached to it were notes from an interview with Marcel dated May 1979. My friend told me that the article had appeared in the May 1979 issue of the tabloid and that the interview had been conducted in December 1978.

This didn't seem to track. I decided to review the situation with Bob Pratt. From Pratt I learned that he interviewed Marcel, not in December 1978 as we had been told, but in December 1979. He was gracious enough to review his notes and his expense records for accurate information. He wrote his story about Marcel on December 17, 1979. He wasn't sure when the story appeared, but clearly it could not have been May 1979, since he hadn't yet conducted the interview or written the story.

What this means is that Christopher Allan is right about one aspect of the case. Marcel could have been contaminated by other interviewers before Pratt spoke with him. It doesn't mean that he was, only that others had spoken to him. Marcel's testimony, as provided to Len Stringfield in March 1978, is still solid and consistent with what he said later.

Since we are all searching for the truth, I believe that I should provide this information for the sake of accuracy.

Kevin D. Randle  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

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## LOUISIANA—*continued from page 11*

Caviness had traveled back to the area south of the paper mill where he met with Deputy Buddy Aulds. He reported, "Buddy and I sat over there and looked at this object—it was a long ways from us. Now and then it was round-shaped, kind of like the glow of a planet from Earth, like you see on a globe, but it had—appeared to be like it had lights going round it, some coming down."

Sometime later Caviness, Johnson, George, and Knight were parked north of the Cheniere Brake talking about the events of the night when suddenly the whole sky lit up. The south sky, across the brake, remained lit up like some ball field lights were on. The deputies departed, taking different routes, but couldn't find any cause for the mysterious sky brightening.

Still later, after the deputies had given up chasing UFOs, Knight, Johnson, and George were parked a half mile or so north of the paper mill when they had another sighting. Knight was the first to see the UFO. He reported that "it was real bright, hard to look at. It was coming out of due west right toward the paper mill." They got into their cars and drove to the paper mill, then west on Smith Street. At Evergreen Street Knight turned south while the others continued straight. Johnson told me, "I looked back towards Kevin turning off there and there it was again, back behind the Tango Lounge, back in there. I told [him] 'Kevin, look up, it's on top of you!' I said, 'Don't worry, we're coming, we'll be right there.'"

Continuing the story, Knight said: "So I stopped the unit, got out of the car, looked up, and I mean not fifty feet above my head, and it was just humongous. It was the shape of a boomerang, not a triangle, but rounded at the front end. It just had bright lights all over the bottom of it. It was setting right above me and it never made a sound. There was no wind, no sign of lights that would light up the ground like I thought it should do. But it never made a sound, and it just started moving real slow going toward the paper mill, and then, just like you gave it gas, it just—sheew!—and it was gone. And that's the last time I ever seen it."

Knight added, "The car in front of me, coming towards me, they got out and stood there and looked at it—kept asking me what it was. If I had a fifty-foot stick I could have reached up and poked it." Asked how big it was, he replied, "I'd say over a hundred yards long. It was definitely over a football field long, and it [had] several lights . . . kind of chasing each other." Asked if they were rotating, he said, "Like they were chasing each other. There was three or four large [ones] right in the center of it, shining straight down, but they didn't illuminate the ground. [They] looked like they weren't that far from the top of the trees—and the trees weren't moving and there was absolutely no sound coming from whatever it was. I don't believe in them—I really don't—but I don't know what I saw."

With this final sighting, the UFO (or UFOs) apparently

left the area, leaving more questions than answers. Checks with the Monroe Regional Airport manager and the FAA controller on duty that night confirmed that no known aircraft were involved. Some elements of the case that are still unclear or deserving of additional study include:

- 1) In several instances the witnesses are positive they were observing a fairly close object at treetop level, but the testimony indicates other observers five, ten, or even twenty miles away also watched it move, disappear, or reappear at the same instant. The observers were looking in different directions, so their sightings can't be attributed to misidentified stars or planets, but were they both watching the same object or two different ones?
- 2) Witnesses sometimes gave different descriptions to the same object, and sometimes a single witness gave disparate descriptions of the same object that seem to depend on distance or viewing angle. Can the darkness, light configurations, and perspective account for the same object (or objects) being described as spherical, turtle-shaped, triangular and boomerang?

As a final note, I would like to thank the Ouachita Parish sheriff's department, the other local law enforcement agencies involved, the media and the many civilians who cooperated with and supported this investigation. The reward is implied by one deputy's statement to me: "I'm glad somebody is looking into this. I felt like an idiot after this thing went through, you know. It got blown out of proportion and I got a lot of flack at the office." I hope my investigation and article will help eliminate some of the stigma associated with making a UFO report and give other witnesses the courage to report their own experiences. ♦

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## MCDONALD—*continued from page 6*

ernment possession be made freely available?

Is there another James McDonald somewhere out there, ready to take up the cudgel? Is it too much to hope that another, with the unique combination of knowledge, energy, enthusiasm, and the personal talents of mind and heart which Jim McDonald possessed, lives among us?

McDonald's curiosity extended beyond the physical puzzle that UFOs represented. He maintained an interest in early abduction and time-loss cases such as Betty and Barney Hill. He preferred, however, to leave public comment on abductions to psychologists, for he felt unqualified to assess them properly. Since they apparently occur during altered states of consciousness, it is possible that these incidents are beyond the monitoring capabilities of physical science. James McDonald would have pointed this out and focused on proving the physical reality of the craft-like objects.

It seems as if the UFO research field today no longer demands competent investigation or empirical evidence. UFO investigation today, in large part, consists of anecdotal

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data obtained through the questionable means of hypnotic regression. The attempts of a few researchers to prove claims of missing fetuses have met with no success. The few alien implants that have been recovered turned out to have conventional explanations. Claims of underground bases staffed by alien/military compatriots exist in a shadow world. We struggle through a morass of ever-increasing complexity.

McDonald has never been replaced, and perhaps never will be. The least we can do, however, is this: *It is time to return to the scientific approach McDonald took, to seek incontrovertible proof that unidentified, metallic aeroforms are invading earth's atmosphere.* This will be accomplished if enough data can be extracted from radar-visual cases, from satellite monitoring systems, and the like. It was information like this that McDonald sought and at least partially succeeded in finding.

McDonald's voluminous files remained virtually intact, carefully guarded by his family; only a very few researchers have been permitted access to them since 1971. I have been given access to these files and to private journals he kept between 1966 and 1971, and for the past nine months have been researching them. Detailed information about McDonald's contributions to the UFO field, new facts about the last months of his life, and the circumstances of his death will be the subject of a book with the working title, *Government Conspiracy and the Demise of a Maverick Science*, scheduled for completion in 1994. ♦

## THE FUTURE—*continued from page 7*

ments are a hoax. What is the strongest evidence? How conclusive is it? What remains to be determined? Attention to the MJ-12 question has been very time-consuming and costly, and we hope to clear the air one way or another.

The prospects for a major breakthrough with the Roswell case itself have never been better. The number of witnesses who have been interviewed has steadily increased, new leads have been found, and important new players are in the field. Interest has been displayed by certain Congressional representatives, and Executive Branch agencies are beginning to pay attention.

Some new, highly influential people are now behind the movement to open up the files on Roswell. Much of what is going on is being treated as highly sensitive by the principals so the new initiatives will not be derailed by premature publicity, but it will all be out in the open before too long. The sooner the better. My own feeling is that not all of the secrecy about these matters is justified, although some of it has been for tactical reasons.

Abductions and crash/retrievals continue to dominate UFO research for better or for worse, but at least we seem to be getting somewhere in both cases. (I was amused to learn that there is now a woman on the UFO lecture circuit who claims that she was abducted onto a UFO that crashed while

she was on board!) A breakthrough in either area could be a pivotal event.

Still, other research should not be ignored. The agenda should include continued investigation of medical injury cases, electromagnetic effects, and other CE2 data. Another issue is: Have old-fashioned daylight-disc and physical-effect cases disappeared or become exceedingly rare, as it appears? Research should be done to determine whether this is true or whether (as has happened in the past) such sightings are still being made but not reported widely.

Also, whatever has happened to CE3 (humanoid occupant) sightings? When was the most recent case? If we take a look back at humanoid sightings with 20-20 hindsight, do we see any common elements with CE4 (abduction) reports? Are the latter simply a continuation of the former but with more direct and forcible interaction replacing the often observed standoffish behavior of the entities? As a matter of fact, some humanoid reports did involve aggressive confrontation and capture or attempted capture. Two such cases are the humanoid encounters by the bow-and-arrow hunter in Cisco Grove, California, September 4–5, 1964, and the November 2, 1967, case in Ririe, Idaho, in which the beings took over the car of two Indian youths.

If daylight disc, CE2, and CE3 sightings really have all but ceased, this could be highly significant in itself, perhaps signalling a new stage in the unfolding UFODrama. Has an observational or surveillance phase of operations been completed? Do abductions represent the beginning of more direct contact and interaction? Since abductions have now been going on for at least 30 years, is some dramatic new phase about to unfold (as has been unreliable predicted a few times by some abductees and New Age seers)? Or is something else at work? The ebb and flow of significant UFO sighting events clearly is an important area for study.

The possible but unproven connection between UFOs and cattle mutilations and UFOs and crop circles also should be monitored. And the opportunists and con-men, weirdos and muddleheads who make such a shambles of the field should be emphatically exposed, refuted, disowned, and (when appropriate) ejected from the field and ostracized.

The outlook for the near future is for possible breakthroughs of unprecedented significance in our efforts to understand the nature and meaning of the UFO phenomenon. We can help these trends along by practicing scientific methods and vigorously policing our ranks, or we can continue to practice muddleology and contribute to further confusion and obfuscation. ♦

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