

MINNESOTA MUFON

Newsletter

From the State Director

This year was MUFON's 25th anniversary. Accordingly, the theme of the 1994 symposium was **UFOLOGY: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**.

As it turned out, there were only three presentations that took us back to those formative years. I'll use these next issues of our Newsletter to summarize the contributions made by APRO, NICAP, and MUFON, along with some of the problems each experienced. I know that we have members who are familiar with several of the older civilian groups, so this may prove to be more valuable to newcomers.

James Harder delivered his presentation "THE AERIAL PHENOMENA RESEARCH ORG. AND THE FUTURE OF UFOLOGY." Having been closely associated with APRO, Harder gave an interesting account of the work of Coral and Jim Lorenzen, and added his own thoughts on some of the enigmas we face.

He began by reminding us that the UFO phenomenon is beyond anything we have ever faced on earth. To enter into this situation is to confront implications more serious for the earth than at anytime in the past. Here we are, at this important junc-

ture in history, engaged in discourse on the subject.

Coral Lorenzen organized APRO in 1952, making it the earliest civilian UFO research group in the United States. Coral was APRO's chief architect, but her husband, Jim, was named "director" because Coral felt that a man would be better accepted in international affairs.

The Lorenzens investigated all aspects of UFOs from the beginning. While others were mainly concentrating on just the physical evidence, they considered biological, psychological, social, spiritual, political, military, and historical implications of UFO activity. While lost time experiences are now familiar to many, they were looking into the hypnosis technique for investigating these experiences from the beginning.

APRO began recruiting representatives from foreign nations. One of these, Dr. Olavo Fontes of Brazil, acquired magnesium fragments from a vehicle that had crashed into the surf zone off the coast of Ubatuba. At the request of the Condon Committee, a portion of the aluminum was analyzed by the Alcohol Tax Beverage Bureau in Washington, who had the equipment needed to make precise chemical analyses. Their report showed tiny amounts of

mercury and manganese. James Harder, a Ph.D. engineer, concluded that no commercially available ultra-pure magnesium could be combined in any proportions to produce the Brazilian sample.

Coral's first book was *The Great Flying Saucer Hoax* in 1962. It reversed the notion that the saucers were a hoax to the idea that *the way it was being treated was a hoax perpetrated on the American public*. Other books such as *Flying Saucer Occupants and Encounters with UFO Occupants* followed. (If you haven't read these books, visit your library! You'll find that the nature of the occupants and their contact techniques were very different from reports during recent years.)

Coral became acquainted with Betty Hill through a series of phone calls and gave unswerving support to the importance of the Hill case. Her reactions to Betty sensitized APRO to be open minded about close encounter reports.

It was hard for many to confront cases of close encounters in the early days. It was felt that the strangeness of such bizarre phenomena would detract from their main goal of objectively proving that these flying objects were real. Would it be wise to

inquire into the significance of UFO contact in the wider context of earth history? APRO came down on the side of science. It was assumed that credible witness testimony, however unusual, was more important than adhering to any preconceived theory.

On one occasion, APRO headquarters in Tucson had apparently become a target of suspicion by unnamed persons. A group of men in very clean painter's clothing offered to paint the inside of the Lorenzen home for a very low price. Coral took one look at their spotlessly clean truck and clothing and declined!

In another incident, a man offered assistance in helping with some office work. Since APRO needed this kind of assistance, they accepted. A bit later, Coral was digging around in the waste basket and came across a blank piece of paper which had been used as a cushion sheet in the typewriter. She dusted it with some graphite and discovered that it was a report to the man's superior officer detailing recent observations. The volunteer's work was terminated.

The APRO Bulletin ceased publication in 1988 due to Coral's failing health. Jim had died in 1986. There was no one who could adequately finish the work.

The APRO files did eventually end up with some other organization. I have been told by Bob Dean that he and others are trying to legally obtain these files because the organization holding them has done nothing with them.

At this point Harder digressed into his own thoughts about the UFO phenomenon. His mild-mannered style and knowledge of the subject made him one of my favorite speakers at the symposium.

He took a shot at the questions of government secrecy. The public, news personnel, and astronomers agree that the discovery of an alien civilization would be the most important find in all of history. Harder proposes the interesting point that their reflections on this *act only in the superficial regions of the mind*. The average person doesn't *really* believe that there is anything to get excited about. Researchers might get excited, but they often underestimate the importance of the problem they are working on. Maybe they don't really want to know the contents of the Pandora's box they hold!

Does the ET presence offer us a threat or a promise?...Military intelligence would view the UFO as the worst of science fiction come to life.

But what if the lid opened? What is inside? We would be confronted with superior brainpower and technology. We would see ourselves as sitting ducks for a takeover if the aliens wished to do so. Many cherished beliefs would be questioned. What would the Pope have to say? What would Phil Klass and Carl Sagan say?!

How would the TV evangelists react? Would cultural values come crashing down? Are we pawns of some kind? Would we be found wanting, like those not taken aboard Noah's ark? Perhaps we should fasten the lock on the box more securely!

Harder argues that the way to understand government reactions is to understand the overwhelming significance of the UFO. Harder said that he knows government agents know more about human-alien interaction than private researchers do. They have looked into Pandora's box and don't like what they see. They are simply hoping they have an adequate response to a very frightening situation.

We must also recognize that the military has a single-minded approach to strangers. They must assess the capability of a potential adversary and make policy without regard to their understated intentions. They are always preparing for the worst. Considering the aliens, the worst can be frightening. Military intelligence would view the UFO as the worst of science fiction come to life. Their fears would be amplified with each unfolding aspect of ET-human interactions.

Harder then offered the central point to be examined. *Does the ET presence offer us a threat or promise?* From the intelligence agency's standpoint, they might fear recruitment of humans for a future invasion. A suitable response—certainly being carried out right now—would be to compile lists of people who have had contact, and watch them.

Dr. Harder ended his talk by stating that 300 witnesses to the Roswell event have not received much public attention. He suggested that the Showtime movie of the Roswell crash might have the impact needed to create a demand for the release of government secrets.

(Oh well, I guess the Project Mogul balloon cluster is all we've got!)

This has been a very brief account of James Harder's program at the 1994 MUFON Symposium. Anyone wishing to know the entire contest should obtain either the symposium video or a copy of the MUFON 1994 INTERNATIONAL UFO SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS available from MUFON in Sequin, TX.

Dick Moss



Roswell crash just a Cold War project?

The following article written by New York Times reporter William J. Broad appeared recently in the Atlanta Journal/Constitution. It raised the hackles of Assistant State Director Bill McNeff, who dashed off a response to the New York Times! Following is Broad's article in part, and McNeff's response in total.

A mysterious 1947 crash in the New Mexico desert that became legendary among flying saucer

fans and cover-up theorists turns out to have involved something nearly as strange as an alien spaceship.

...Debris found near Roswell was a smashed part of [Project Mogul] the program's balloons, sensors — of most consequence to the growth of spaceship theories — radar reflectors made of thin foil.

At the time, the Air Force said the wreckage was that of a weather balloon — a misleading explanation.

Since the Roswell debris no longer exists, the Air Force cannot prove that it was from Project Mogul. But photographs of it, taken in 1947 and published in newspapers, show bits and pieces of what are obviously collapsed balloons and radar reflectors.

On September 8, after an eight-month investigation, the Air Force issued a thick report that to all appearances deflates the conspiracy theory once and for all. But ardent flying-saucer fans, of course, contend that the cover-up continues.

Walter Haut, president of the International U.F.O. Museum and Research Center in Roswell, said in an interview that the Air Force is up to its old tricks.

"It's a bunch of pap," he said of the report. "All they've done is given us a different kind of balloon. Then it was weather, and now it's Mogul. Basically I don't think anything has changed. Excuse my cynicism, but let's quit playing games."

To The Editor, New York Times:

While I would not call myself a "flying-saucer fan," I am a student of the UFO phenomena. I feel compelled to answer the short article by William J. Broad printed in the Atlanta Journal/Constitution on Sept. 18

regarding the 1947 Roswell crash.

Curiously, nothing could be found about Project Mogul in the military section of the Hennepin County Library in Minneapolis. But assuming that the project did indeed exist, the material recovered on the Brazel ranch in New Mexico was extremely strange. The Intelligence officer at the Roswell Air Base, Maj. Jesse Marcel, is on record on video tape as saying that the balsa-like material could not be burned or cut with a pocket knife. And he said that when they laid a piece of the foil-like material on the ground and hit it with a sledge hammer, the hammer bounced off it and left no visible dent. If such exotic material was ever fabricated under the auspices of the US government, let them bring it forth and demonstrate that it has the reported properties. Otherwise we may be forced to conclude that the only fabrications are the stories put forth by the Air Force.

In addition, witnesses reported that among the wreckage were pieces of I-beams with strange characters on them. One witness is a physician, the son of Maj. Jesse Marcel, who sketched the characters under hypnosis. They do not appear to be from any earthly alphabet or numeric system.

It is problematic whether photographs of the real Roswell wreckage were ever published. Air Force personnel have testified that the photographs published in the papers were of a weather balloon that a serviceman was ordered to tear up and

scorch with fire, as part of a cover-up.

Furthermore, there are a good number of witnesses, first, second and third hand, to the existence of alien bodies at a second and third crash site in the Roswell area. The bodies, while humanoid, were plainly not human. Even if it should be shown that some of the wreckage was from the Mogul project, that cannot explain these reports. There are over 250 known witnesses to the Roswell events. Witnesses said that they or their relatives were threatened with death if they revealed anything about the bodies or the wreckage. This would indicate a government concern going far beyond an atomic weapons spying program.

Walter Haut, president of the International UFO Museum in Roswell, was the information officer who, in 1947, was ordered to issue a press release saying that the Air Force had recovered a flying saucer. He was and is one of the people in the best position to be able to say that the Air Force stories are "a bunch of pap."

The question of the truth about Roswell deserves a very careful study rather than an uncritical acceptance of the government statements about this event. The same goes for government statements on UFOs in general or any other subject.

William F. McNeff

And more Roswell...

And you thought the O.J. Simpson case was getting a lot of play! Wells Horvereid sent us an article from the October issue of *Popular Science* which also addresses the Roswell case.

The article included the fact that during a 1947 press conference in Fort Worth, TX, Commanding General Roger M. Ramey of the Eight Air Force told reporters the debris had been misidentified and was actually was a weather balloon. Many "students" of the Roswell incident believe this was when the "spin doctors" arrived on the scene. Authors Kevin D. Randle and Donald R. Schmitt (*The Truth About the UFO Crash at Roswell*) videotaped an interview with retired Air Force Brigadier General Thomas J. DuBose, who said the weather balloon was a cover story "we could tell the press with a straight face." DuBose was Ramey's chief of staff in 1947.

The point is well made that the GAO investigation is directed at the Defense Department's top-level refusal to deal with requests for information that should be available to the public. The agency is empowered to examine all records of the federal government, and has access to classified documents up to "sensitive, compartmentalized information," one of the highest security levels.

GAO assistant director Gary K. Weeter says "This is a search for records, and not a search for UFOs. If we pull the lid off something that's more than just a radar tracking balloon — and let's not say it's aliens — I'm sure that the Na-

tional Security Council would try to help the GAO decide what to do. I think then we'll have all the help in town we need."

Crop Circles appear in Minnesota

Early this month, State Director Dick Moss received a call regarding a farm couple who reported the discovery of crop circles in their cornfield. The farm is located in Milaca, some 60 miles north of Minneapolis. Dick and crop circle buff, John Sawicke drove to Milaca to investigate and were met by news reporters and cameras — a situation not appreciated by either!

Recent rains in the area, coupled with the number of people tramping around the circles, made investigation somewhat difficult. Moss and Sawicke made initial observations, but when interviewed, Moss refused to either accept or refute the circles as being "genuine."

A few days later, Dick and Bob Schultz investigated again, and Schultz concluded that the circles were formed by laying down the outer edges of the corn first. Hoaxers would more likely have formed the circles starting from the center, working outward. That, and the way the corn was *bent* (not crimped) gave more credence to the possibility that the circles *might* have been formed by a method other than human intervention. Dick, however, is leaning toward the idea that the circles were man-made. You can see the videos at the next meeting. ☺☺☺

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MINNESOTA MUFON meets the second
Saturday of each month, 1:30 p.m. at
The Irish Well, unless notified of change

Your news or editorial contributions to
this Newsletter are welcomed and ap-
preciated.

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MEETINGS! MEETINGS! MEETINGS!

Paranormal Study Group

Saturday, November 26, 1994 1:30 P.M., The Irish Well
Discussion: New Directions • Milaca Crop Circles • TV Coverage

Welcome to new Director, Wells Horvereid
Thanks & appreciation to Wally Moe, founder of the Study Group.

Beginning January 1995, Meetings will be held monthly.

Theosophical Society

Public lectures are scheduled on 1st & 3rd Mondays
7:30 – 9:30 pm

900 Mount Curve • Minneapolis, MN
(Kenwood, above the Guthrie)

For more info contact:
Rolf Canton, 822-3155 or Peter Morris, 926-1393

International Tesla Society

3rd Saturday of each month, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The Pavlek Wireless Museum
3515 Raleigh Avenue
St. Louis Park, MN

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