



Watch the Skies, New Mexico

New Mexico's internationally famous **Roswell UFO Festival** came back this year with even more people attending than before the pandemic. Maybe this was because it was the first big event since the state reopened. But interest was added by the fact that flying saucers, er UFOs, that is, UAPs, the currently fashionable term for those weird things in the sky, are very much back in the news once again.

The preliminary **Pentagon report** on UAPs, a scant 9 pages, was a big **disappointment** to many, but it marked an historic first – the US government finally admitted that *something* real is out there and interested in our military. But this interest is not new.

The aliens (or whatever) did not come here for our chile. In 1947, New Mexico was host to the most secret and advanced military technologies around. The atom bomb had been built in **Los Alamos** and exploded at **White Sands**, where **captured Nazi V-2** rockets were then being tested. The *only* operational air unit with nuclear weapons on the entire planet was the **509th Bomb Wing** stationed at Roswell. All were constantly watched over by some of the world's most powerful **radars**, which must have lit up the radio sky like searchlights from a car dealership.

Whatever fell near Roswell was quickly explained away as a misidentified **weather balloon**, though the idea that the chief intelligence officer of the most highly-advanced air force on Earth did not recognize it was absurd. Yet it remained unquestioned until the early 1980s when that officer, **Maj. Jesse Marcel**, finally told what he really found and made history.

Everybody agrees that *something* came down that July 4th weekend, the question is *what*. The Air Force, after **losing communications** records with the base from that time, **changed their story** from a weather balloon to a top-secret balloon and added **crash-test dummies** dropped from planes. Other explanations were even more **outlandish**.

After Roswell

Once the Roswell story resurfaced, it quickly grew. Over the decades, more and more witnesses, many on their **deathbeds**, came forward to confirm aspects of the event. From just one field of debris, it eventually encompassed 5 or so claimed sites, with alien bodies and even entire vehicles supposedly

recovered. One may have come down on White Sands and another out on the **Plains of San Augustin**, near where the **VLA radio telescope** observatory would later be built, curiously enough.

And weird things kept happening. The **Roswell Incident** took place barely a week after the first **nationally-known sighting** from which the term "flying saucer" came. Less than a year later, another crash, this one **near Aztec**, supposedly occurred. It was first reported in 1950, in a book called ***Behind the Flying Saucers***, which has been debunked **countless times**, yet the story still **won't go away**.

Amazingly, there are lists of at least seven alleged **UFO crashes** up to 1948. While some of this may well be attributed to the game of "whispers" of which much historical UFO research consists, it's enough to make one wonder if New Mexico's tragic drunk-driving problem extends vertically as well.

Perhaps as a result of the crashes, **green fireballs** swooped over Los Alamos and Albuquerque in the late 1940s. Seen by scientists and pilots, they did not behave like typical falling meteors and vanished in a flash – no remains were ever found. UNM's meteorite expert, **Dr. Lincoln LaPaz**, led the search team.

LaPaz had several UFO sightings of his own and might also have worked with New Mexico's own **Clyde Tombaugh**, the astronomer who discovered Pluto and also observed UFOs, looking for near-Earth satellites in 1954, three years before Sputnik.

Quite spectacular yet as forgotten today as was Roswell, was the **aerial "armada"** that appeared above Farmington over 3 days in March 1950. Shortly before noon each day, hundreds of people witnessed a cloud of roughly 10-100 saucer-shaped objects performing playful maneuvers, darting through the skies above town led by a single red-colored craft.

New Mexico remains a UFO hotspot to this day. Despite our relatively low population and our wide-open spaces, the state **boasts** the fifth-most per capita sightings in the US while the **National UFO Reporting Center** lists 1,511 New Mexican reports.

The most recent sighting to make news occurred on February 21 of this year. An American Airlines pilot **reported** that a "long, cylindrical object" like a cruise missile passed quickly overhead as they flew near Clayton. The FAA **said** there was no radar track; Kirtland and White Sands both denied it was theirs.

Down the rabbit hole

In 1953, Paul Villa, an Albuquerque mechanic who claimed telepathic contacts and meetings with aliens, snapped a series of remarkably **clear pictures** of silvery UFOs above the Bernalillo bosque. Though the Air Force claimed they were models, they are said to be some of the best UFO photos ever taken.

Claiming photos and documents are hoaxes is a convenient way to dismiss them, but frauds do occur. There have been **likely-hoaxed alien autopsy** films, lots of **false witnesses**, and the Roswell crash site is now a **tourist attraction**. It's **more impossible** than ever to determine what the truth behind it all is.

In 1984, a TV producer received an **anonymous package** bearing an Albuquerque postmark that contained a roll of film on which were 8 photos of typed pages, now called the **Eisenhower Briefing Document**. This was a report **supposedly written** as background for the new president by the ultra-top-secret group studying the Roswell remains.

Called "**Operation Majestic Twelve**" or **MJ-12** for short, the allegedly highly-classified project was named after the dozen eminent scientists in charge, led by none other than **Dr. Vannevar Bush**, head of US military scientific research during WWII, who had predicted the personal computer and the internet.

After the document was finally publicly released, respected researcher on cattle mutilations and UFOs, **Linda Moulton Howe**, said she'd also been shown similar papers by **Richard Doty**, a **controversial** Air Force counterintelligence officer at Kirtland who allegedly tried to sabotage a documentary of hers.

This made the briefing document seem all the more **dubious** but it was just the beginning of a **small flood** of leaked papers, covering everything from **instructions** on retrieving debris to reports on what was found inside. **Debate** still rages on which, if any, were real, and what their purpose really was.

Some hoaxes are committed by officials trying to cover up other things. Doty also had a hand in the notorious **Bennewitz Affair**. In the early 1980s, **Paul Bennewitz** made scientific instruments for nearby Kirtland Air Force Base. He alerted them to strange radio signals from the base he had picked up. They decided to feed him discrediting disinformation to conceal the secret project he had stumbled upon.

Doty later **admitted** that under orders he fed Bennewitz and other researchers false information, convincing him that there was an alien underground base near the town of Dulce. Bennewitz became paranoid and eventually was institutionalized. The tragic story came out when **Bill Moore**, a ufologist deeply involved in Roswell and the MJ-12 papers, publicly confessed his role at a UFO convention.

"**Dulce Base**" quickly took on a life of its own. Wild tales were spun about human dissections there

and underground **firefights** with US special forces. Hopefully, all of the other known or suspected **underground bases** here belong to our military.

Ominously, however, Dulce and the northwest corner of the state have long been hotspots for **cattle mutilations**. Cattle (and sometimes other animals) are found dead; tongues, eyes, genital and other organs surgically removed; with no blood on the body or ground, untouched by scavengers, without tracks of any kind leading up to the body.

The **first known** case was of a pet horse named "Lady" or "Snippy" near Alamosa in 1967. Linda Moulton Howe brought this troubling phenomenon to public attention in award-winning **videos** and books. In 1975, the FBI held a public symposium here at the request of New Mexico's Sen. Harrison Schmitt, the last human being to walk on the Moon so far.

The Bureau completely dismissed the mystery, yet mutilations **still continue**. Cults or UFOs seem to be the main suspects, largely because the killings are so utterly disturbing and inexplicably strange.

Fortunately, not all such associations with flying saucers are so grim. There is even a possibility that many of our modern technologies (including the device you may be reading this upon), were developed from wreckage retrieved at Roswell.

In 1997, *The Day After Roswell*, by **Lt. Col. Philip J. Corso** was published, just a year before his death. The author said that **transistors** and **silicon chips**, along with **Kevlar**, **fiber optics**, **heads-up displays**, **lasers** and **particle beams**, **night vision**, and **stealth technology**, **all derived** from Roswell. He also claimed that he'd seen the bodies from the crash and later communicated telepathically with an alien while commanding a missile battery in New Mexico.

These claims caused an immediate sensation, not least because of the **highly credible source** – Corso had been chief of the **Foreign Technology Division** at the Pentagon in 1961, and before that a staff member of the **National Security Council**.

Other UFO stories from the Land of Enchantment are equally fantastic. They range from rumors about President **Eisenhower** meeting aliens at Holloman Air Force base, to the **Socorro Incident**, where a **city cop** chased off a landed saucer. So keep looking up, people – and keep your cameras handy, too!



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