

Shirley Bay "flying saucer" Monitoring Station

Written by John C. Ross

Friday, 30 October 2009 21:18 -



**Canada Hunts for Saucers:
Dozens of flying saucer reports have
resulted in the creation of a
Canadian flying saucer observatory.**

Fate Magazine, John C. Ross, 1954

In a tiny building only 12 feet square at Shirley's Bay, 10 miles north of Ottawa, is house one of the most unusual collection of instruments ever crammed into so small a space. It is the world's first flying saucer observatory.

The sighting station went into operation with little fanfare. At first Canadian Government officials were inclined to dismiss the very existence of the station as a figment of the imagination. On the day before it opened, Dr. O.M Solandt, chairman of the Defense research Board, professed complete ignorance of the project. "Nothing to do with the defense research Board," he said.

"True enough," it turned out. The station was constructed by the National Research Council and officially announced by the Hon. Lionel Chevrier, Minister of Transport. Mr. Chevrier did not explain the denial of the project by Dr. Omond Solandt, who was quick to modify his statement, explaining only that his board was not involved in the project.

"However we are continuing to study new reports (of flying saucers)," he admitted. " And are

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alert to the possibilities of discoveries of that nature."

Meanwhile, reports of new saucer sightings have been coming in from all over Canada.

In North Bay Ontario, The Daily Nugget has a file of 16 persons who have reported sightings of orange-colored discs. The newspaper says that all the accounts check closely in size, color, speed, and flying behaviour.

One North Bay citizen late in October told of a dozen night sightings of a "funny orange globe" which came out of the north-eastern skies, wandered back and forth across the sky, then vanished.

In the fall of 1951, three persons reported a daytime sighting over Lake Nipissing. Each saw it from a different shore and did not know of the others report. Each reported a silver, round-shaped star going through strange manoeuvres.

Orange-red discs have appeared over the Royal Canadians Air Force base at North Bay several times. Once such an object circled, dived and zigzagged over the field for eight minutes. Another time a disc approached from the southwest, stopped, hovered over the field, reversed direction, and disappeared in a climbing turn.

It is dozens of such reports that have resulted in the creation of Canada's flying saucers observatory? some call it a "disc watching" station. Management of the station is under the Canadian saucer project called "Project Magnet." Project Magnet was given formal recognition three years ago by the Department of Transport on an understanding that it was to be confined to the broadcast and measurement section of the telecommunications division of the department and that no appropriation of public funds be required for its support.

Actually Project Magnet was created to investigate the possibility of discs powered by magnetic propulsion.

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Tremendously complex and expensive equipment has gone into the tiny building at Shirley's Bay. The equipment is designed to detect gamma rays, magnetic fluctuations, radio noises and gravity or mass changes in the atmosphere.

Installed in the tiny little structure is an ionospheric reactor to determine the height, pattern, and conduct of the ionized layers of gases several hundred miles in the atmosphere.

There is a new-type instrument called a gravimeter, imported from Sweden, to measure the earth's gravity, a magnetometer, to record the variations in the earth's magnetic field; a radio set running full volume at 530 kilocycles to pick up any radio noises, and a counter to detect atomic rays from the outer atmosphere.

Peter Dempson of the Telegram staff reports that all the instruments are connected with a control panel filled with lights, dials and other instruments, which record the individual findings on paper.

The station is not manned, but is connected directly by an alarm bell system with the nearby ionospheric station at Shirley's Bay, where a staff of telecommunication experts are on 24-hour duty.

Eventually, relays will carry the information recorded by the instruments in the sighting station to the main building. Any unusual variations in the information they provide will trigger the ionosphere recorder? an instrument that transmits a radio signal 250 miles into the sky. The signal bounces off the heavy layers in the ionosphere, and is reflected back to be picked up by a radar-like instrument. Officials believe that it would record any flying saucer in the area.

"If anything should happen, the findings of this recorder would prove very valuable," one official said.

The effective range of the other instruments is limited to about 50 miles.

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Wilbert B. Smith, engineer-in-charge of the project, believes that on the basis of past reports there is a 90 to 95 per cent probability that the sighted phenomena that the station was set up to observe actually do exist. Mr. Smith's official position is engineer in charge of the telecommunications division of the Department of Transport. He and members on his staff have conducted saucer investigations for five years as a hobby and Project Magnet now represents the official Canadian Government's official seal of approval on their efforts. Smith, himself believes that there is a 60 per cent probability that flying saucers are "alien vehicles."

Top Canadian scientists, including Dr. C.J. MacKenzie, former head of the National Research Council and the Canadian Atomic Energy Project, have consistently refused to ridicule any saucer reports.

"My own opinion is that the reports are valid," Smith told Gerald Waring, Canadian news writer. "The optical illusion explanation is lovely, but in every sighting there is always some factor which rules it out. So we've decided to learn just what flying saucers are."

Because of the comparatively large number of sightings in Canada, and despite the fact that most of his instruments have only 50-mile range, Smith predicts that his instruments will report at least one saucer within a year. He points to a fact which may or may not be significant? that saucer sightings increase when the planet Mars is nearest to Earth. These close ranges occur every 26 months. Next summer the Earth will come within 40 million miles of earth, and in 1956 it will come within 35 million miles.

Others aiding engineer Smith include Dr. James watt, theoretical physicist with the Research Board; John H. Thompson, technical information expert on telecommunications; Professor J.T. Wilson of the University of Toronto, and Dr. G.D. Garland, gravity specialist with Dominion Observatory.

The Shirley's Bay observatory had its first major test in January, just two months after it was established. A ball of fire flashed across Ontario, Quebec, and New York State in the early dawn and may have fallen into Georgian Bay. Startled residents of Ontario and Quebec started calling police and radio stations for an explanation. From Parry Sound, Ontario came reports of an explosion "like a bomb."

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The observatory was able to report that it was a meteor. Director Smith stated that the object was noted at the flying saucer station but failed to register on the delicate instruments, indicating that it definitely was not a saucer.

"Not a squiggle on our electronic devices," Smith said. If it had been a saucer, our recorder would have shown it." Smith pointed out that his station's electronic devices would not detect meteors unless they were of "great mass" and passed very close.

This leaves no doubt whatever that the little building at Shirley's Bay is a flying saucer station only.