

two weird encounters in my life. In 1972, my brother and I just got back from the local mall. I was 17 at the time. It was August. I parked the car, we were going in the house. I looked up in the sky and saw a strange lighted object. It did not move and all of a sudden it was gone.

The next day in the local paper, two police officers changing shifts reported a strange lighted object in the sky the night before. Coincidence?

Flash forward to August 29, 2001. My boyfriend and I went to a seminar at the World Trade Center, then had lunch in the shops below. Thirteen days later, we all know what happened. You never know what can happen in life. Like the saying, maybe it was fate.

Your magazine is exciting and mysterious! Keep up the good work!—*Linda Hoski, Easton, Pa.*

### **Airship Mystery**

I am writing this in response to the article about the 1897 airship mystery (July 2007). As both a member of the Lighter Than Air Society and one involved in UFO research for over 40 years, I've had an interest in this series of incidents for most of my life. I've done my own research, but to me the true story of the airships was solved to my satisfaction with the publication of Solving the 1897 Airship Mystery by Michael Busby in 2004. It is one of the most remarkable pieces of pure research I have ever read and I can only imagine the amount of digging, time, and leg-

work it took to write this informative book.

Although he mentions several of the sightings around the country, Busby concentrates on the dozens of Texas sightings. He names names of the builder and crew members, reveals their backgrounds, Civil War units, and even census records that confirm their residences. He encloses copies of the patent applications for their designs. In fact, using the design of Dr. Charles A. Smith, I am now attempting to design and build a working (flying, radio-controlled) model of his airship.

Anyone who has an interest in this subject owes it to themselves to read this book.—*Richard A. Banks, Crystal, Minn.*

### **Who Discovered America?**

Kudos to you for reprinting a fascinating article, W. L. Vallette's "Who Discovered America?" (July 2007).

Anyone who'd like additional information on the author's long list of pre-Columbian visitors to our shores should consult Gunnar Thompson's *American Discovery* (1994). From what Dr. Thompson says, the Japanese, Egyptians, Chinese, Minoans, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Hebrews, Welsh, Hindus, Pacific Islanders, Norsemen, Arabs, and Scotsmen arrived prior to 1492. What's more, there's evidence that medieval Basques and Prince Henry the Navigator's Portuguese explorers beat Columbus to the New World.

Again, many thanks for making W. L. Vallette's great article available!—*Mary Virginia Devine, Racine, Wisc.* ❏

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