

UFOs INVADE THE BAVARIAN ALPS - PART II

Adolf Schneider, Ernst Berger, et al

This report of events which followed the remarkable Hochries landing, described in Part I, is the result of collaboration by investigators of MUFON's newly formed Central European Section

ONE day in late February, 1974, Friedrich Lennartz went outdoors with a couple of skiers at about 9.00 p.m. to take a look at the nighttime panorama. When they had stopped 20 metres from Hochries hut near a steep slope, somebody spotted a group of lights in the air. Lennartz, who carried his 12 x 50 binoculars discerned it was a formation of yellowish objects approaching Oberwiesen Valley (between Hochries and Klausenalm) from the dark Mt. Heuraffelkopf - Mt. Predigtstuhl area, and in front of the mountains.

Three fly past

The manoeuvre proceeded rapidly. First three balls, one above another, came in exactly from the east. At approximately 110° azimuth the trajectory was changed into one parallel to the south-eastern Hochries slope and, due to perspective, the echelon formation spread in the air. Ball 1 seemed to accelerate for a few moments, but the other two soon caught up with it and all three kept an equi-distant echelon for the rest of their low flight path, "apparently under remote control," according to Lennartz. He told Adolf Schneider that the lights had looked like aeroplanes ducking low into the alpine valley to escape radar detection. No change of brightness or shape was seen during the 30 seconds of observation and they were lost from sight over Austrian territory towards the Spitzstein slope. The minimum distance from the group of observers was one kilometre; thus the globes of slightly less than 1° diameter had a true size of about 15 metres. Lennartz's description of the globes' light as "yellowish, warm, but not dazzling" reminds us of the three Traunstein globes in formation.

Friday evening, March 29, 1974, Mt. Geigelstein, which looks like a "hawk's beak" from Hochries, was the focus of strange light phenomena again. Frau Anna Kellerer from Munich discovered two bright spots in front of the Loferer Steinberge range (2,500 m. high and 30 km. distant), to the right of Geigelstein, at 7.40 p.m. She was unable to make out definite shapes at the supposed distance of between 10 and 30 km., and neither could Herr Niedermaier, Peter and Wilhelm Melitat, Herr Wagner and his wife and two other Hochries guests who gathered around Fray Kellerer. Lennartz and his wife arrived too. Object 2 was somewhat higher in the air than number 1. It was five to ten times larger and comparable to a dazzling white spotlight. Its companion had an orange-red colour and both pulsated at irregular intervals until 10.00 p.m. Object 1 went out completely now and then and number 2 took on an orange tint at times. Meteorological conditions were not excellent, but normal (warm, cloudy).

"Mushroom" and satellites

The next Hochries sighting happened three days after our summer field investigation, on August 17, 1974. Adolf Schneider obtained important data on it during his interviews of November 2.

Storm clouds were dissolving in the calm air with temperatures above 20°C and good visibility. Friedrich Lennartz was in the company of Franz Huber, owner of a sports shop at Rosenheim, and Konrad Lorenz of Zandorf/Rosenheim (not the famous ethologist). The clock stood at 8.30 pm when these three, and others, spotted a source of bright light which travelled very slowly southwards from the Ashau region. Thirty minutes later it had reached an elevation of 19° (value obtained with quadrant), and was to the left of Geigelstein and high up in the direction of the Watzmann massif - azimuth about 110° from Hochries. Again, Lennartz had his 12 x 50 Zeiss Ikon ready. He later described the object to Adolf Schneider precisely as a "mushroom upside down," radiating an extremely brilliant orange light, much brighter than the full moon. The circumference consisted of a zig-zag shaped border of pale velvet-greenish colour, perhaps a radiation effect. Moreover, the dazzling thing seemed to be equipped with secondary objects which were released periodically. Quite often one or two oval "satellites" dashed out of the object's left side like sparks or meteors, and at meteor speed. They never came back. After some hundred odd metres of luminous trajectory, being a darker yellow than the main body, they disappeared as fast as leaving a spotlight cone. At one time, as many as three bolides crossed the field of view of the binoculars. The last peculiar details inevitably remind us of the Traunstein pulsations. The mushroom seemed to shrink periodically. After about five minutes of maximum brilliance it shrank "like a sponge or jelly-fish" and reduced its light to a barely visible, reddish glow. The "air out process" did not disturb the flying sparks; with the main object doused they were even better visible. A few minutes later, the "sponge" expanded, brightened, and a peak was reached again.

Herr Huber tried to film the strange show, but unfortunately his film cassette had only centimetres left. He had the impression of two overlapping parts or circles at the object's dark phase. Herr Lorenz added that the "jellyfish" was flying slowly in loops. If we suppose the "sponge" manoeuvred directly over the Mt. Meigelstein area, Lennartz's elevation gives us a height of 2,500 metres above the Geigelstein peak level and the standard size test an average size of 40 metres at 8 km away. At 11.00 p.m. the pulsating "jellyfish" was lost in the clouds.

They draw nearer . . .

On August 23, 1974, there were thunderstorms and showers in the Northern Alps, except at Hochries and its surroundings. At 8.30 p.m., Lennartz left Riesen hut (1444 m.). He said good-bye to Frau Ramsauer, the landlady, and steered his jeep into the woods along the first few metres of the two-to-three-kilometre-long rough track up to Hochries hut. He had only just disappeared behind the trees when Frau Ramsauer noticed something odd going on in the starry sky. A strange, lengthy "balloony object" stood upright left of the hut at the peak and gave off a yellow-orange colour of spotlight intensity. It illuminated the eastern front of Hochries hut brightly, so Frau Ramsauer called her husband and a relative. The three persons watched the eerie sight through Leitz Trinovid 10 x 40 binoculars. It was definitely near or on the ground to the south or south-east of Hochries hut, bigger than a house, i.e. about 12 metres high. Unfortunately no telephone line runs from Riesen hut to Hochries hut, and the Ramsauer family has no wireless set either. Within 30 minutes of continuous watching, about the time Lennartz was on his way up the mountain, the "luminous banana" appeared at different positions around the hut and at last vanished suddenly. The following day Frau Ramsauer went to see Lennartz and told him of the sighting, but he found no traces on the ground near the house on close examination.

Whatever had been there produced no E.M. effect or residue whatsoever. Frau Lennartz, who had watched TV in Hochries hut (in a room at the western side), remembered nothing unusual about the set — a significant difference compared to December 10, 1973.

. . . in the falling rain

Frau Ramsauer went home a little confused. Her interest aroused by the phenomenon, she again looked out of a window after dusk. The weather was bad on Saturday, August 24, there being rainfall in the Hochries region with scattered thunderstorms and the sky almost overcast; winds were below 10 km./hour. Certainly no "sighting weather," experienced investigators will say. But by the time 8.30 had arrived, so had the phenomenon.

The landlady was amazed to spot a luminous, motionless object, and quickly alerted her husband, sister, niece and five members of the Gabriel family of Frasdorf-Ried, and also an acquaintance of the same family, who were guests at the Riesen hut. The Leitz Trinovid 10 x 40 was passed on from observer to observer. Herr Ramsauer said later that the object resembled an ellipsoid in horizontal position with solid shape and clear outline despite the falling rain. The ellipse hovered low in the valley between Hochries peak and Mt. Klausenberg (the area of the February low-flying echelon). Franz Gabriel, a farm-worker from Frasdorf-Ried, saw it only with the naked eye and compared it to a plate seen from the rim, with a diameter half the apparent size of the moon. The ten witnesses lost it from view, in a flicker of an eye, five to ten minutes after Frau Ramsauer's call.

The interview at Riesen hut also revealed a sighting by the mother of Frau Ramsauer, aged 56, who on Saturday October 27, 1973 (one day before the Traunstein manoeuvres in Austria) had remained alone in the hut while her daughter had been to a wedding in the neighbourhood. Suddenly a yellow-red, orange-shaped object seemed to glide down from Spielberg (1 km. distant) towards Riesen hut and threw a "ghostly light" on to the dark trees of the landscape. After a turn to the right, it blinked out instantly.

The "jellyfish" is back

Stage: Hochries hut, Germany, and Klausen hut, Austria. Date: November 9, 1974. A few clouds had gathered in the calm night air (about 1°C outdoors), when Friedrich Lennartz took his routine "sky-look" at 8.30 p.m. CET. Not only clouds! Lennartz rushed inside the hut to alarm the two servant girls, Erna Bonvecchio (20) and Sybille Hell, as well as two guests: a pilot and a man from Rosenheim (names withheld). The usual sighting preparations were made. The five witnesses gathered at the open panorama window of the dining room, Lennartz got his 12 x 50 binoculars and a second pair of 7 x 50, which were passed around. In the starry sky above Mt. Weitlahnerkopf (the scene of the December, 1973 landing), a round orange-red object shone much brighter than the waning moon. Lennartz switched on his Sommerkamp TS 600 only minutes after and broadcast his observations. He reached the Czechoslovakian border easily and also the station at Wendelstein, as well as German colleagues. They could not all see what he did — apart from Austrian landlord, Walter Foidl, and his wife of Klausenalm hut, 1.6 km. away. They went outdoors together with Karl and Marianne Bechhold, a Munich couple. Unfortunately the Klausen hut observers paid only a mild interest to the "unusual star" over Geigelstein and after a look with a telescope and 7 x 42 binoculars they found "nothing unusual about it" — or were reticent to talk about it later.

According to Lennartz, the object's inner core had an orange luminosity, whereas the outer margin looked greenish yellow. Miss Bonvecchio observed green and red border colours (Herr Foidl: "blue and red"), which seemed to rotate around the object in a "runway light" pattern, rather like a wavy colour blend, there being no clear-cut sectors. Compared to a rock structure at Geigelstein, Lennartz estimated the object's diameter to be 40 metres (supposing it hovered there).

Startling manoeuvres occurred at regular intervals. The round mass of light shrank to a quarter or a fifth of its size within 10–20 seconds and expanded within the same general time. During the "shrinking process" the lower half of the "jellyfish" narrowed. Twenty minutes after first sighting it, the "sponge of light" had travelled from a position over Weitlahnerkopf to a point near Mt. Geigelstein (near the first position of the January 3 object), where it hovered low. At 10.30 p.m. low-hanging clouds drew the curtain for "Jellyfish Two".

Breakdown and parallels

The "pulsations", "satellites" and the typical "orange glow" of the Hochries flap reports remind us of the Traunstein, Austria manoeuvres on October 28/29 and November 17, 1973. Supersonic speed, hours of hovering and right angle turns are also patterns characteristic of 1973/1974 activity in Central Europe — and not only Central Europe of course. To publish data on the Hochries flap first, the translator has postponed compilation of an article on his own investigations at Traunstein in September and November, 1974. Activity there has developed at the same rate as in Bavaria and the thirteen new reports from Walviertel Highland show a highly similar spectrum of patterns.

The investigators are sorry that bad weather conditions and excessive snowfalls prevent a close examination of the possible landing spot at Weitlahnerkopf in 1973 and early 1974. As we have seen, nothing was found near Hochries hut, the second touch-down area.

Searching for additional cases with "egg-shaped objects in vertical position" we found a remarkable sighting on New Year's Day, 1970 at Mill Bay on Vancouver Island, Canada.* Three witnesses noticed

* For further details, see *Canadian UFO Report*, Summer, 1970.

a yellow-orange glow in the sky which turned out to be an egg-shaped object. It seemed to have a transparent part on the top, and one witness thought he saw a set of lights inside.

Up to December 1, 1974, nine different sightings with ten definite objects, two lights and numerous "satellites" have been reported by at least 37 persons in the Hochries area (sketchy 1973 reports have been excluded from this breakdown), and 18 have been interviewed at length by seven field investigation teams during six field trips organised by MUFON C.E.S.

Geological maps do not indicate major tectonic faults running through the flap area, but a remarkable Karst morphology (dolinas, polges and disappearing wells) is present north-east of Hochries hut, especially around Riesen hut and stretching 2 km. further to the Laubenstein Basin at Mt. Zellerhorn, where the famous Laubenstein caverns are located.

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Correspondence may be addressed to Dipl. Ing. Adolf Schneider, Konrad-Celtis-Strasse 38, D-8 MUNICH 70, W. Germany, and Ernst Berger, postlagernd Postamt Nussdorferstrasse 7, A-1094, VIENNA, Austria.

World round-up

*of news and comment
about recent sightings*

United States of America

Police report UFOs

The *News and Observer* of Raleigh, North Carolina, carried a report in its issue of April 6, 1975, under the signature of staff writer Larry Bliss,— "The mystery returned Saturday to Eastern North Carolina's outbreak of UFO reports.

"Law enforcement officers said they saw unidentified flying objects for the third night in a row and rejected suggestions that what they were really sighting was a jet plane on a training flight.

"White Lake police chief Garry Moore even reported that an object hovered over his car about 8.45 p.m. Friday, shining a light 'so bright I could hardly look at it.'

"None of the lawmen interviewed Saturday agreed with the suggestion of Federal Aviation Administration officials that the Wednesday and Thursday night sightings involved a jet plane.

"A *News and Observer* photographer got pictures of what he said was apparently a jet aircraft with its vertical stabilizer brightly illuminated. Staffer Steven Murray took two photos at state road 1726 and

U.S. 301 two miles south of Parkton at 10.25 p.m. Friday.

"But that was more than an hour before a Piedmont Airlines pilot said he made test flights over the area.

"Moore said that the object hovered 200 feet over his car Friday and shined a light on his patrol car on N.C. 53 near White Lake.

"He described the UFO as V-shaped with 'several colours of light.' Moore and the other sighters said the object or objects made no noise.

"A White Lake police officer, Sgt. J. C. Baxley, also reported seeing the object, this time at a distance. His description was similar to Moore's — a V-shaped thing with lights around it.

"He observed the UFO between 8.45 and 10.40 p.m., saying that it hovered in the area of Moore's car for 45 minutes. Baxley said it moved off slowly west after standing still.

"Bladen County Deputy Sheriff Phillip Little said he saw a 'big glow four or five times brighter than a star' through binoculars from a location near Elizabethtown.

"Little, looking northwest from the city, said that from 9 to 10 p.m. he saw a light that varied in brightness slowly moving to the northwest. He

guessed that it might have been a balloon.

"Another sighting occurred on a rural paved road off N. C. 130, five miles northwest of Rowland about 9.15 p.m. Friday. Police dispatcher Ron Thompson said he signaled with his headlights an object that had two searchlights and was hovering 100 yards away or less over an open field."

Credit: Raymond Urban of Carrboro, N. C.

North Carolina sightings continue

Again from the *Raleigh News and Observer* (of April 8, 1975) we learn that,— "Five members of a Robeson County family reported they saw five pink-and-red objects flying in a circular formation land in a field in a rural area near here Sunday night.

"Ron Thompson, a dispatcher for the Robeson County Sheriff's Office, said Monday he collected charred soil samples from five spots in the field where he believes the objects landed.

"Dozens of sightings of unidentified flying objects have been reported in a multi-county area of Eastern North Carolina for the past week. Most of the sightings have been