



frightening experience, and they wanted to sell it. In addition I was wanting to drive the car to Melbourne, where the Ford Motor Company was interested in conducting other tests on it.

#### Misinformed

However, about one hour before I was due to leave Adelaide, on February 4, 1988, a man knocked on the door of my hotel room to tell me *that the owner of the car had given him authority to keep the vehicle in Adelaide for an exhibition. After I had arrived back in Melbourne I learned that the whole family had been told that I "did not want to drive the car to Melbourne". During my August visit to Perth (Western Australia) I learned additional details about the transaction: an authority had not been signed until February 10th, six days after my return to Melbourne from Adelaide.*

#### Further Mistreatment

The Knowles family mentioned to me several other examples, illustrating how they had been *mistreated*. Their hopes had been encouraged initially by promises by people who said that they would look for possibilities of television commercials in Australia or in other overseas markets, and by talk of making a documentary film dealing with the UFO encounter. Another idea was that the vehicle would be placed on

exhibition, and all expertise would be used to promote and market the car to its fullest advantage. The agent said that all this would be costing him a considerable amount of time and money, with outlay like phone calls, faxing, staff, telegrams, and travelling to make the necessary arrangements for the transport of the vehicle. The Knowles family was to receive 65% of the profits, *nett*.

The promises were altogether different from the reality experienced by the Knowles family. Their total losses amounted to nearly A\$20,000. Most of their money had been tied up in the car. Then there was the cost of six weeks away from their home in Perth — which was four weeks longer than they had planned to be away. Finally, on top of all that, there was the cost of the airline tickets to fly back to Perth.

They had been relying on the money promised by the agent.

They had all these troubles, in addition to all the ridicule dished out by the de-bunkers and reinforced by comments from individuals of the Australian scientific community who don't know enough about documented UFO cases to even ask sensible questions, let alone deal with the problem of how to account for what happened to the Knowles family. All this made their position even more uncomfortable.

Meanwhile, the research on this important case continues.

## OBITUARIES

### *Major Donald Edward Keyhoe, U.S. Marine Corps, Ret'd.*

By Gordon Creighton

**D**ONALD Keyhoe, the undisputed doyen of UFO research, departed from this world on November 29, 1988, in Virginia, at the age of 91.

As Director of NICAP (The National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena\*), which he established, he was active from 1956 to 1969, during which time most of his energies went into attempting to persuade the U.S. Air Force to "investigate UFO sightings". (As we all know, such investigation was already in progress on an intensive scale throughout the United States and in other countries too, but of course the U.S. Air Force was not the body involved in it. Their job was simply to serve as a "front" and to "take

the garbage." After a while they — quite understandably — got tired of playing the "Aunt Sally" role. Hence the *Condon Report* — irreverently known nowadays as the "*Condom Report*" because it was so full of holes.)

In an article published in the *Washington Post* in 1966, Major Keyhoe said: "We want the Air Force merely to end its secrecy on sightings and stop ridiculing competent witnesses". He went on to say that his goal was to get the U.S. Air Force simply to support his Committee's contention that UFOs exist. NICAP eventually went bankrupt in 1969 (the same year in which the *Condon Report* appeared).

In its latter years, NICAP was being rapidly and forcibly eclipsed, in the opinion of many, by the rise of Coral Lorenzen's older APRO (also now unfortunately defunct). One of the reasons may have been Keyhoe's rigidity, and his refusal (at first) to countenance any of the reports about *occupants of UFOs*. (FSR and LDLN in France were among the very first to accept the fact that the encounter stories were probably true, however bizarre. APRO also was very quick in climbing on this particular bandwagon, and indeed one of Mrs Coral Lorenzen's first paperbacks contained a good deal of material which was a straight "lift" from FSR, without, of course, any acknowledgement to FSR or as to who had translated the various reports from foreign languages.)

Major Keyhoe, a native of Ottumwa, Ohio, graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1919. He served in the Marine Corps for five years before retiring in 1923 owing to injuries received in a plane crash. During the 1920s he was an editor with the Coast & Geodetic Survey and an Information Officer with the Civil Aeronautics Branch of the Commerce Department. In 1927 he was an aide to Charles A. Lindbergh when the latter made the first famous solo non-stop flight from New York to Paris.

During the 1930s and the 1940s, Keyhoe was a free-lance writer, and his work appeared in *The Nation*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, and *Reader's Digest*.

Major Keyhoe wrote five books about the UFOs. These were

1. *The Flying Saucers Are Real* (1950). Reprinted a good many times.
2. *Flying Saucers From Outer Space* (1954). Also reprinted many times.
3. *The Flying Saucer Conspiracy* (1957).
4. *Flying Saucers: Top Secret* (1960)
5. *Aliens From Space... The Real Story of Unidentified Flying Objects* (1973)

All of these books contained a mine of information, about real cases, received at first-hand by Keyhoe, often from experienced pilots. It was therefore found necessary to pillory and slander and ridicule Keyhoe mercilessly, and the U.S. authorities set about the task with gusto, but he stood his ground well and firmly.

Of the five books, No. 4, *FLYING SAUCERS: TOP SECRET*, may have been the one that gave the authorities the biggest headaches. Very, very few copies of it were ever seen in Britain. (Original edition in U.S.A. was by Putman. There was no British edition so far as we know). There were British editions of No. 1 and No. 2 (both by Hutchinson) and No. 5 (Panther books paperback, 1975).

So far, in the press-clippings that we have received from the U.S.A., we have seen only one obituary report on this dogged pioneer of our subject, and we may surmise that there won't be many obituary mentions, just as there weren't many for Dr. J. Allen Hynek who, so far as I know, got precisely *one* in England. (To earn a fine obituary notice you need to be a marxist politician, a crook, a drug-pusher, a murderer, a rapist, a transvestite, a crooner, a pop hero, a clown, a showbiz tartlet, or a pimp).

As is usual among the "UFO research fraternity", Keyhoe received far more than his fair share of bitchy abuse and jealousy and backbiting from them. No matter. As the Arab proverb says: "*Les chiens aboient. Et la caravane passe*" — "The dogs bark. And the caravan goes through..."

Donald Keyhoe has his important and dignified place in the history of our subject. (Even though he will probably turn out to have been totally wrong in his stubborn belief that our UFO pals are "from Outer Space".) Anyway, we salute him, as we salute Hynek, Coral Lorenzen, and so many others. They have all earned our respect and our thanks.

\*I was a NICAP member. G.C.

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## Peter F. Johnson

PETER Johnson, a well-known pioneer of UFO research in Britain, passed away on August 7, 1988, at the age of 73.

His name will have been very well known to many of the older readers of FSR.

He was BUFORA's Regional Co-ordinator in Norfolk for many years, and at one time he sent quite a number of interesting reports to FSR, and also supplied FSR with a considerable number of excellent tape-recordings of UFO witnesses — an activity in which he was very much of an expert.

He had worked as an engineer for the Anglian Water Company, in Norwich, for more than 40 years. During World War II he had served with the Royal Air Force. Some of his service was on Radar, and this led on to his later interest in making metal-detectors and also UFO detectors, which were highly successful.

All who knew him remember Peter Johnson for his unfailing helpfulness and affable nature, and we wish to express our sincerest condolences to his wife and his family.

By Colin Andrews and Pat Delgado

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