



Delphos, Kansas Ring Mystery - More Analyses

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September 5, 1999 Reeds Spring, Missouri - Today I talked with UFO physical landing trace investigator, Ted Phillips, about a 35-page analytical chemistry report he received this week. It's the 24th lab report for Ted over the past three decades in a strange case known as the Delphos, Kansas ring mystery.

Twenty-eight years ago on the night of November 2, 1971, teenager Ronald Johnson went outdoors to check his sheep penned up about 250 feet northeast of his family's farmhouse. He heard a rumbling noise and watched a very peculiar, round aerial craft descend toward the ground. Later, astronomer J. Allen Hynek who consulted with the U. S. Air Force on Project Blue Book and created the Center for UFO Studies, investigated a ring that remained in soil on the farm. Hynek asked Ted Phillips to gather soil samples and Ted traveled to the Delphos farm in 1975, three and a half years after Ron Johnson's encounter. Ron is now in his mid-40's, does not want any publicity, but has described in great detail for Ted Phillips the round craft that hovered only 40 feet from where he was standing.

Earthfiles, news category.

Interview:

Ted Phillips, Physical Trace Investigator, Center for UFO Studies, Reeds Spring, Missouri: "The thing was about 5 feet thick, the body of the object. It was about 8 to 10 feet in diameter. The surface was brilliantly glowing with multi-colored light. Not individual lights. Not changing colors, but just a mixture of all colors of lights. It was very bright. It hurt his eyes. His dog, Snowball, was with him and he stood there very quietly which is very unlike a dog. No barking, no reaction, other than he was standing very quiet. The sheep were not moving around. Ron could not move. He wanted to run, but couldn't move. Beneath the object was what he called a "stem." He described it as like a mushroom - the body of the mushroom being the object, the stem being a different textured display which looked like a fluid or shimmering material dropping to the ground from the base of the object about 6 feet wide and it ended about a foot above the ground. On the ground he could see what looked like steam or a haze rising in a circular pattern.

He had a very clear view of the object from 40 feet and he stood there for what he thought was about five or six minutes. And suddenly, the bright stem of this thing brightened, expanded somewhat, the object tilted slightly to the west and moved away silently through the trees, made a turn to the right, gained in altitude and passed over a 5-foot high hog shed. As it did so, the sound changed from a rumbling like an old washing machine out of balance to a high-pitched whistling sound. At that point he lost his vision. And I asked him if it was total black or if he could see spots like from a photo flash. And he said, 'Totally black. No spots. No light of any kind.' He could hear the sound of the object receding slowly to the south. After an undetermined period of time, he began to regain his vision. Saw the object still in the southern sky beyond the house.

So, he hurriedly told his parents what had happened. They ran around behind the hog shed and there in the total darkness where the object had been

stationary was an 8 foot ring of glowing dirt. And this material was not glowing at the center. It was sort of a big doughnut and lower portions of the trees within two or three feet above the ring were also glowing. And the area was lit up. His mother told me it was bright enough that you could have read a newspaper.

Ron asked his mother, 'Do you have any film in the camera?' So she goes to the closet and gets out an old Polaroid 104 and there was one image left. The flash unit was separately contained in the box. She didn't take the flash unit. It has to be attached to the camera which is kind of a chore and they went out and she photographed the ring. So, we have there an image which clearly shows the glowing ring taken within minutes of the ascent of the object. This is the only case like this that I'm aware of.



Photograph © 1971 by Ron Johnson, Delphos, Kansas; provided with permission by Ted Phillips, Former Investigator, Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS). Photograph taken immediately after Johnson's encounter with an unidentified aerial craft that emitted a liquid-looking substance onto the ground.

After she had taken the picture, Mr. And Mrs. Johnson leaned down and Mrs. Johnson laid her hand flat on the ring surface and rubbed it. There was no warmth. It actually felt cool and glassy. Mr. Johnson later confirmed this. The soil surface felt as though it was a slick crust pitted with tiny craters. And instantly, they both noticed their hands going numb. And Mrs. Johnson rubbed her hand on her slacks on her upper right leg to try to get the soil off. That portion of her leg became numb. The numbing effect in her hands lasted about three weeks. She was a nurse. She couldn't take pulses. Mr. Johnson being a rough-handed old farmer - the effect lasted 2 or 3 days with him. The boy suffered severe headaches. His eyes watered. He had nightmares.

The sheriff photographed the ring the next day. Beautiful photos showing that the surface of this ring was very highly reflective white material. And the soil in the center and around it muddy and dark as you would expect.



Photograph © 1971 by Sheriff Harlan Enlow, Ottawa County, Kansas Sheriff's Office. Harlan photographed the mysterious ring on November 3, 1971, sixteen hours after Ron Johnson encountered the unidentified aerial

craft.

I have a photo of the ring taken 3 years, 6 months after the event and it's absolutely startling. Because there it is, there is a nice growth of weeds in this unaffected central area and all around the ring and in the ring looks like desert soil. There isn't a grain of anything growing in there.



Photograph © 1975 by Ted Phillips taken of Delphos, Kansas ring three and a half years after
Ron Johnson's encounter with an unidentified aerial object on November 2, 1971.

After I reached the place after we heard about the case, there had been a light snow. I went to the ring. The snow had melted all over the farm lot and there was standing water and a mud bog everywhere except the ring which was still outlined by snow. I took my hand and removed the snow from the ring and the soil was light brown and as dry as a freshly waxed automobile surface. You could pour water onto the ring surface, even months later, and it would simply bead up in tiny spheres rather than be absorbed. The soil is totally hydrophobic. The samples I had up until the last lab test was still hydrophobic. It would not absorb water. It was totally sapped of all moisture.

WELL, IT'S 28 YEARS LATER, TED, AND YOU'VE HAD A LOT OF TESTING DONE. WHAT IS THE SUMMARY OF THIS MOST RECENT SERIES OF TESTS?

There is no composition whereby any of the laboratories could say this is extraterrestrial. But Erol Faruk who was at Nottingham University in England - now working for another lab - in a 2-page summary of all his work - and he worked on this stuff for a very long time. For brevity, I'll just quote a part of this. 'With regard to a summary on what I believe the Delphos analysis tells us. Everything points in my mind to a genuine case and a model, in fact, can be proposed based on the analysis data that fit surprisingly well with Ronald's sighting.'

That goes on and down here he says, 'My strong belief is that the soil compound was responsible for the surface light emission of the object and was deposited into the ground as an aqueous solution for an unknown reason.' And then he says (it might be) 'a reduction in weight on the part of the object.'

And then the latest analysis which began in a major laboratory in the United States in Dec. of 1998 with the last of the samples and was completed in April of this year. And very briefly, the conclusion - and this report was drawn up by an analytical chemist who has 35 years of experience with one of the major labs in the country and is ranked as one of the top ten analytical chemists in the U. S. - and she says, quote: 'There has been a definite release of material. This analyst concurs with Erol Faruk in that it was most probably deposited as an aqueous solution. The material coats the soil's surface still imparting the hydrophobic effect noted 27 years ago.'

MEANING THAT SOME KIND OF LIQUID CAME DOWN OUT OF THIS OBJECT?

That's what Ron Johnson was seeing and describing as the 'stem.'

IT SOAKED INTO THE GROUND AND IT IS STILL MEASURABLE TODAY AND WATER CANNOT PENETRATE THE SOIL?

The last time I saw it that was absolutely true. I would point out that this effect in only the ring soil went 14 inches below the surface.

14 INCHES!

14 inches. This was not found - if you would go - what I did was run core samples down taking half of the core on the one edge of the ring - the other half in the central unaffected portion. The central unaffected portion was simply normal black soil all the way down to that depth and it ended abruptly at the edge of the ring where you then had the hydrophobic material.

At any rate, this analytical chemist goes on, 'Based on the presence of the high concentration of oxycylic acid (oxycylic acid is a natural product in the soil). However, such a high concentration would not be expected from the usual plant source. One of my colleagues suggested an exhaust from a low-temperature oxidization or combustion engine whose fuel source was elemental carbon could leave a high concentration of the acid along with the other lower molecular weight acids.'

BUT NONE OF THESE LABS TO DATE - 24 DIFFERENT ANALYSES OVER 28 YEARS - NO ONE HAS BEEN ABLE TO ISOLATE, ANALYZE AND SAY WHAT THIS AQUEOUS COMPOUND IS?

Well, the problem is it's - as I understand it from Faruk - it is highly unstable and he just reached the point where he did not have the equipment to continue analysis of this compound. Oak Ridge had started that because they were sending us high quality electron microscope images showing some of the structures in this coating material. And they were sending us images of very small particles of soil on which you can actually see the compound. (Until Hynek and Phillips were notified that due to 'changes in management,' no more materials analyses could be done at Oak Ridge.)

So, Hynek followed up Faruk's plea to try to get NASA - having the availability of any lab in the country - to pursue getting the composition of this coating material. But it was a brick wall. As it always was. Maybe they already know what it is. I don't know."

More Information:

Ted is very frustrated that after all these years and tests, he still doesn't have a precise answer about exactly what the white glowing compound is. But he will be sending the latest analyses to the Center for UFO Studies for distribution to the public in the near future. This is the only case on record that Ted Phillips and I know about where a soil ring glowed brightly over *four days* before fading. It's also important to point out that the Johnson family never did want any publicity. In fact, the extraordinary story might never have surfaced if Ron hadn't tried to find someone else to photograph the glowing ring after his mother's camera ran out of film. Ron went to the small, local newspaper office to find a photographer. The editor said it wasn't important enough to send a reporter out until the next day. The girl who was assigned, Thaddea Smith, interviewed all the Johnsons and then contacted a Salina, Kansas radio station and the sheriff. , Ron Johnson and his parents began to be ridiculed unfairly and without any reason except human denial and fear of the unknown. Eventually, the Delphos, Kansas ring made national news and was promptly attacked by professional debunkers such as Philip Klass.

Two years ago in 1997, the strange ring was still there on the farm and still would not absorb water. Ron Johnson - now in his mid-forties and tired of being defensive about what he had watched with his own eyes as a teenager - decided he didn't want to see the ring anymore and covered it up with a ton of soil. So, these analyses briefly summarized by Ted Phillips might be the last ones on the mysterious ring that never went away.

Credits

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