

The Mystique of AREA 51

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Area 51—it is simultaneously the most secret and the most famous military base in history. Indeed, despite the fact that it has been the focus of countless books, movies and speculation for decades, it did not “officially” exist until the summer of 2013, when the CIA finally admitted to it.

There is a real mystique to Area 51. But what is it? And what really happened there—and continues to happen there? And what does it have to do with the Roswell Incident that involved a US government official admitting to having recovered a flying saucer? Explore with us the fascinating history and mystery of Area 51.

Roswell, New Mexico. July 1947.

W. W. "Mack" Brazel is at home on his ranch looking at a powerful thunderstorm. Seemingly out of nowhere, there is a brilliant flash of light, which is immediately followed by dust being thrown into the air and the sound of an earsplitting crash. He rushes outside, and what he sees shakes him to the core. A peculiar object with a roundish shape has crash landed virtually in his backyard! Even more so, lying next to the craft are the strangest-looking creatures he has ever seen.

He loads everything into his pickup and heads for the local sheriff's office....

Later, Frank Joyce, a young radio announcer at KGFL in Roswell, New Mexico, receives a telephone call from Roswell Army Air Field press officer Walter Haut. He says that he is delivering an urgent press release to go on air:

The many rumors regarding the flying disk became a reality yesterday when the intelligence office of the 509th Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force, Roswell Army Air Field, was fortunate enough to gain possession of a (flying) disk through the cooperation of one of the local ranchers....

However, several hours after Haut releases the statement, the commander of Roswell Army Air Field sends Walter Haut back to KGFL with a second press release saying



The newspaper report that started a legend.



Picture showing intelligence officer Major Jesse Marcel posing with the remnants of the weather balloon that the military said was mistaken for a flying saucer.

that the first statement was incorrect. What crashed outside Roswell was nothing more than a weather balloon. Pictures showing intelligence officer Major Jesse Marcel posing with remnants of the balloon are offered as proof.

Thus began one of the strangest sagas in modern cultural history. Did the New Mexico rancher really find remnants of a spacecraft from another world, and was this the biggest cover-up in US history? Or is the Roswell "flying saucer" an urban legend that grew to mythical proportion, and something only the most naïve and delusional believe?

Today, more than 60 years later, there are people who passionately take one side or the other.



Newspaper retracting the "flying disk" claim.

Next Stop... Area 51

If you stop the average person on the street and ask him what he knows about Area 51, he says "aliens" or "Roswell." But the place they call Area 51 encompasses much more than that.

Situated about 118 miles northwest of Las Vegas, Nevada, in a forbidding stretch of desert, it is known by many names: Dreamland, Paradise Ranch, Groom Lake and most notably, Area 51. This is where a lot of the United States' most secret and important work has been done. Although the US government denied its very existence for decades, Area 51 has long been a part of the American and international lexicon.

Locating the top secret facility is fairly simple. But getting inside is an altogether different matter. It is ringed by mountains. A person walking there in the summer would be dead in two or three days without a couple of gallons of water to drink each day. And if that was not enough to deter the would-be trespasser, then the ever-present and far-reaching security system would be.

In reality, there is no fence around the area and its border is poorly marked, conspicuous only by orange posts. However, unbeknown to unauthorized passersby, sequestered security guards using high powered binoculars and remote TV cameras are tracking their every move. Furthermore, the entire area abounds with magnetic and electro-optical sensors, as well as highly sensitive listening devices. Some claim that the security technology is so advanced that the sensors can even *smell* an intruder coming. It is rumored that the perimeter is laced with devices capable of distinguishing between odors emitted by humans and those of desert animals roaming the area!

In case there was any doubt that an intruder was entering forbidden territory, there are signs that read: "Stop here!" "Unexploded Ordnance!" "Contaminated Area!" "Radiation" and "Use of Deadly Force Authorized." People persistent or foolish enough



Federal lands in Nevada, including Area 51.



Signs trespassers encounter upon entering Area 51.



One of the many surveillance cameras in Area 51. The entire area abounds with advanced sensors, capable of picking up movement, sound and even human smell.