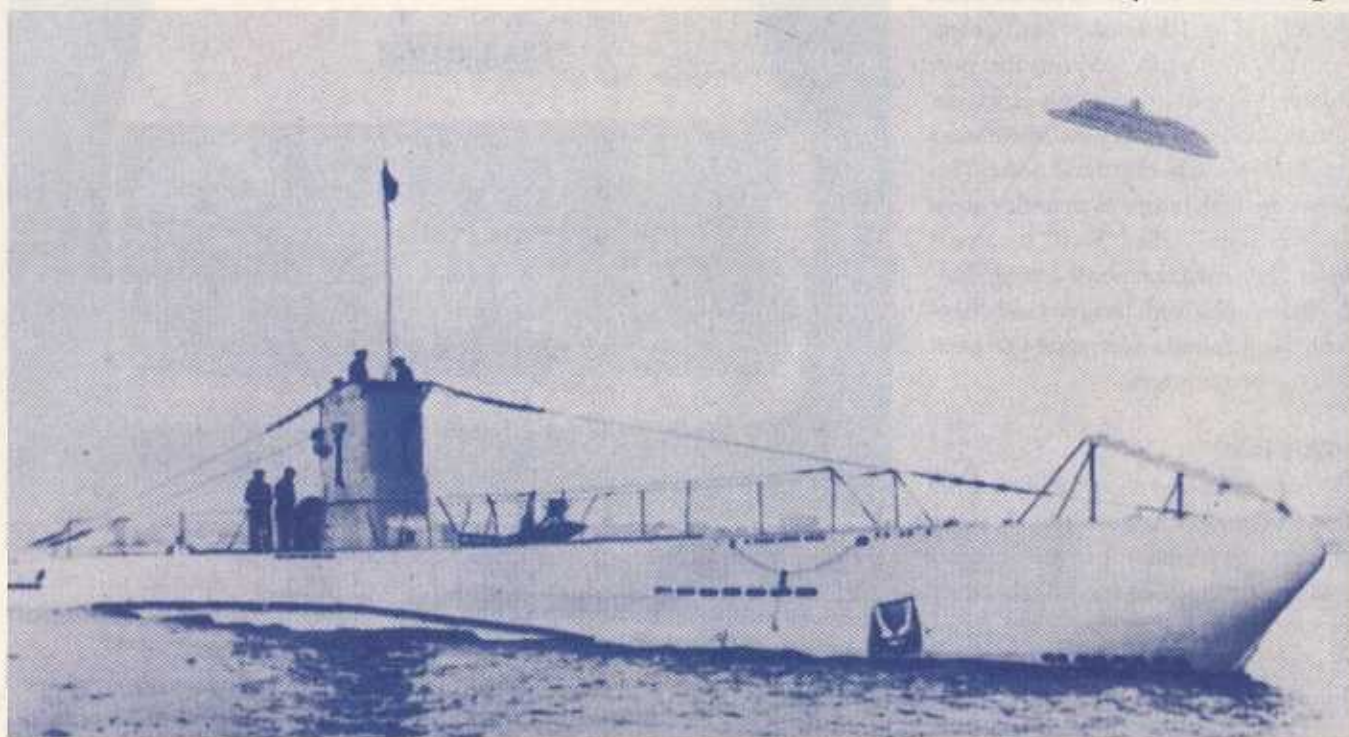


1.943 The U-Boat and the UFO

By Frank Joseph



Researchers of the phenomenon know that UFOs were sighted by pilots on both sides in the Second World War. The Americans referred to them as "Foo Fighters," and presumed they were some kind of enemy secret weapon. The same craft were observed by German flyers, who came to similar erroneous conclusions.

Fewer investigators are aware of a World War II "close encounter" that took place on the high seas. No less remarkable, its documentation, while unique, is among the best of its kind, found as it is in the official operations log of the Oberkommando der Kriegsmarine, the German Navy's U-boat arm, and cited in a Time-Life series, *The Seafarers (The U-Boats)* by Douglas Botting).

The incident occurred on June 28, 1943, in the mid-North Atlantic, about 300 miles west of the Irish coast. The previous March, British cryptographers had cracked enemy naval codes with the so-called "Ultra Secret," which pinpointed the locations of all U-boats while operating in the open

ocean. After that, they were easy targets for destroyers and bombers. It was during this reversal of fortunes that the German U-629 was patrolling the sea lanes in search of Allied convoys freighting war materiel to England.

She was gently riding a calm swell on the surface at dusk, her radar scanning the skies for ships and aircraft. A pair of lookouts in their positions atop the conning tower peered intently through powerful binoculars. Just below them, their commander, Lieutenant Hans-Helmuth Bugs (pronounced "Boocks"), enjoyed the warm, summer breeze and a post-twilight glimmer on the velvety ocean. Stars were beginning to sparkle in the cloudless evening sky. The U-boat rocked rhythmically beneath his feet, combining with the constant murmur of its diesel engines below in a sensation as comforting as it was misleading; a British bomber or American sub-chaser might appear suddenly at any moment.

"Incoming aerial radar contact bearing north-northwest approaching at high

speed!" a metallic voice abruptly shouted from the voice-tube at Bugs' elbow. He tripped a red switch. It brought to life a deafening claxon. And almost at once, seas began washing over U-629's decks, as the two lookouts, who had seen nothing, rapidly slid down from their positions like firefighters sliding down poles on their way to an emergency. The lieutenant made sure they were safely below before joining them and bolting the hatch.

But before he could do so, he was distracted by the sudden appearance of "some sort of strange new aircraft" hovering just off his starboard beam, only 30 or 50 feet above the surface of the ocean. It hung absolutely silent and motionless, as though nailed in the sky. No less remarkably, neither he nor his watchful lookouts had seen the object coming; it seemed to have materialized in the thirty seconds that elapsed from its first and only radar contact. Bugs reported that the craft was "a flying disk" larger than even the big British four-engined Sunderland flying boats, but approximately 15 feet shorter than the

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length of his own vessel (151 feet). He described its smooth exterior as a kind of dull silver, with no indications of cockpit, wings, or motors.

However, instead of attacking his U-boat, as he fully expected, the craft suddenly "winked white, yellow, and red" lights in succession, as though sending him some kind of inexplicable recognition signal. At the last moment, with seas literally bubbling up around the conning tower, Bugs jumped through the hatch, securing it as water began rushing inside. Once there, he yelled, "Crash dive!" U-629 plummeted to nearly a thousand feet beneath the surface of the Atlantic Ocean, away from its strange pursuer. Officers and men braced for the concussion of exploding depth charges that had inevitably followed all earlier interceptions from the air. But none occurred.

They waited in the lightless depths for more than three hours before cautiously rising to the surface. As they made their slow ascent, hydrophones were tuned for

the sound of nearby vessels.

Lieutenant Bugs was first in the tower, which was still streaming with cascading water. At his heels were the two lookouts, who jumped to their positions. The three sailors wordlessly scanned the skies through their binoculars again, while the radar mast above them, revolving rapidly, whistled in the salty air. Neither men nor instrument detected any sign of ships or planes.

Returning to Kriegsmarine command headquarters in France, Bugs made his unusual report. He and his fellow commanders concluded that the craft he saw must have been the first in an anticipated line of new Allied antisubmarine weapons. But throughout the remainder of the World War II, such aircraft were never reported again at sea, at least by German U-boat commanders.

Years after the close of hostilities, Hans-Helmuth Bugs was still intrigued by his unique wartime incident. Following a prolonged period of official inquiry, he was fi-

nally granted permission to consult the Royal Navy's operational records for June 10, 1943. They indicated that no British or American forces were on duty in the area of the North Atlantic when and where his vessel had been approached from the sky. These records, combined with Bugs' physical description of the craft and its non-belligerent behavior, define his visual contact as an otherwise classic "Encounter of the First Kind" with an unidentified flying object. Indeed, its resemblance to thousands of UFOs witnessed during the post-war era lends at least some circumstantial credence to his sighting.

Perhaps, in the midst of one of our planet's interminable wars, the U-629—a submarine designed to operate through inner space—briefly met another vessel from the far greater ocean of outer space.

Frank Joseph is a frequent FATE contributor, editor of Ancient American magazine, and the author of Synchronicity & You.

"Screaming Like a Fishwife" and Other Superstitions of the Sea

by Sharon Carter

Most of us have heard the term, "screaming like a fishwife," but do you know how it began? It's a guess, but it probably started from the odd superstition that if a fisherman had a quarrel with his wife, and if the couple in the ensuing brawl drew blood, the portents were strong for a good catch.

Under those conditions, what woman *wouldn't* scream?

Most of us have seen pictures of old sailors wearing a golden earring. Know why?

It was a widespread superstition that piercing the earlobes would improve the eyesight. Also, it was felt that wearing golden earrings would protect a person from death by drowning.

Sailors were ready to throw overboard anyone who brought the flower foxglove on board. Understandable—since it is a deadly poison.

Sailors also believed that carrying a piece of coal around in the pocket long enough while on shore would keep them from drowning.

Seafarers around the world objected to the use of the words "pig," "priest," or "dog" while a vessel was at sea, and in many ports fishermen were reluctant to set sail if they met a nun or clergyman on the way to the harbor.

In some communities it was considered very unlucky to have eggs aboard ship, and on some even the mention of the word "egg"

was barred.

In most of the Western world it was considered lucky to have children aboard a ship.

In the Hebrides, if a drowned person is buried a few hundred yards beyond the waterline, it is believed that the sea will rise up in anger and claim another victim.

It was considered unwise to trim the nails or cut the hair while at sea, for fear of raising a storm.

The wives of fishermen in former times wore their blouses inside-out to be sure their men came home safely from the sea. As the men disembarked, the women hastily switched their clothes right side about. ❧

