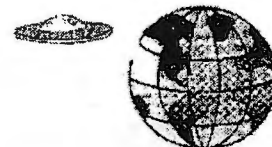


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Richard Hall and new bride, Marty, flanked on the couch by Idabel Epperson and Dr. Leslie Kaeburn. Marilyn Epperson and Ann Druffel are in foreground. May 1967 photo during visit with Los Angeles NICAP Subcommittee members. (Story page 2.)

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DIALOGUE WITH ➤

LOREN GROSS

"Apocalyptic" Research: Raw Data

Loren Gross is retired from the General Motors Corporation and lives in Fremont, California. He was one of the founding members of the Sign Historical Group, which focuses on the history of UFOs. Within the UFO community he is known for his series of publications on UFO history, year by year, titled *The Fifth Horseman of the Apocalypse, UFOs: A History*.

Hall: You were an Air Force radar operator during the Korean War period, is that correct?

Gross: Yes, that's correct. I was a radar operator for the Air Defense Command (ADC) from 1956 to 1960. I was stationed at radar sites in Michigan, Korea, and Arizona

Hall: And I recall that you were a member of NICAP and in touch with us in the 1950s.

Gross: I didn't have very much contact with NICAP during my service years or right after when I attended college. By the way, after examining thousands of UFO reports I don't feel radar cases are the best kind. There is too much anomalous propagation, small aircraft entering and leaving the radar beam, and

electronic malfunctions. Some good witnesses seeing a UFO close up in daylight beats any radar return.

Hall: Well, some of the radar-visual cases are pretty strong. Did you personally track UFOs on the radar screen?

Gross: No. I did have two UFO-related incidents though. My first assignment when I got out of radar school was at the ADC site at Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan, near Detroit. I was a very green 18-year-old A/3C [Airman Third Class]. When I mentioned the subject of UFOs my crew chief related an incident that occurred sometime before I arrived.

I think it is the one Major Keyhoe used in one of his books. It involved a jet chase of a pair of UFOs by a two-plane flight of interceptors, apparently scrambled out of Selfridge. The radar showed the UFOs disappearing and then reappearing behind the interceptors. This seemed impossible unless there were four UFOs, or there was some scope malfunction. A third possibility was

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Loren Gross interview, continued

that the UFOs "jumped" over the jets between radar sweeps.

Hall: Was there any visual sighting?

Gross I'm not sure how much visual contact there was – an important point. The RO [radar officer] usually has his head under the hood. Most pilots seem to have problems locating lights in the sky at night. They are pretty busy; that's why they have ROs. Even though I could not get much information because I was a lowly airman, I did think the data might be useful to compare with other reports of a similar nature.

Hall: What was the second incident?

Gross: Once when I was in Korea (1957) I was walking to radar ops and passed by two civilian Bendix radar technicians talking to a sergeant. The Bendix people were checking out the site's HRI (height radar). They had a portable scope hooked up so they could monitor the returns [radar target displays] as they adjusted various controls. The three men were expressing puzzlement over a number of targets at 100,000 feet. The range put the mystery targets over the DMZ (demilitarized zone) at about the middle of the Korean Peninsula. I stopped and looked briefly at the scope.

Hall: By this time you had a year or so of experience.

Gross: At that point I had about a year and a half of experience.

Hall: About how many targets were there? Two or three? Several?



Loren Gross with Sgt. Choi, Korean AF 1957 photo.

Were they "solid" appearing?

Gross:. There were at least three radar targets on the screen and they looked to be good solid returns. They were either moving slowly or were motionless. Balloons? I sent NICAP a note about the incident and enclosed the day's winds aloft figures displayed in radar ops. If I had been an officer, I could have phoned adjacent sites and requested a radar check on the mystery targets, but I wasn't so it was never done.

Hall: What career did you pursue when you got out of the Air Force?

Gross: I studied to be a teacher, went through the whole six years and got my B.A. degree. But I didn't like the profession, so I took a
(Continued on next page)

Loren Gross interview, continued

temporary job with General Motors and ended up staying with the company.

Hall: We met in Chicago during the founding meeting of the Sign Historical Group. Are you still active in SHG?

Gross: I helped SHG reach some of the goals set at the first Chicago meeting. I obtained UFO files from Dr Willy Smith, Robert Gribble, and Murray Bott of New Zealand. However, I failed to get any of Frank Edwards' files. I check the SHG web site often, but I spend most of my time writing my histories.

Hall: These days you are noted among serious UFO researchers for those histories. Your excellent "Fifth Horseman of the Apocalypse" series.

Gross: What makes the history series something of value is its raw data. The series is for the use of serious researchers. I have to say that most of the credit goes to the many people who gathered the data, like Jan Aldrich and Barry Greenwood. They are the real heroes. I just passed it along.

Hall: You have been very generous in providing them to people like me. Why don't you publish them on a broader scale? I think they would be ideal for library collections where they would be accessible to a far larger number of users.

Gross: There are copyright problems if one wanted to go commercial. Besides, I don't need the money or

the ego trip. I am comfortably retired. Also, complete sets of them are available for public use at the Roswell UFO Museum, the Mutual UFO Network, and the Center for UFO Studies.

Hall: And at the Donald E. Keyhoe Archives.

Gross: Yes.

Hall: Now, the inevitable question for someone who has pursued the subject for nearly half a century: What is your opinion about the nature of the hardcore UFO reports?

Gross: My history series is biased toward the existence of very high tech machines of unknown origin. It's true that some reports seem like magic and their purpose puzzling, but to a great extent one should expect that if we are dealing with an advanced civilization. On the other hand, I'm well aware of the ideas of men like Vallee and Keel. I can't say that I'm ready to endorse any extreme UFO origin theory at this point.

Hall: What do you think needs to be done in order to attract serious, scientific attention to the subject?

Gross: Well, UFOlogists have tried hard for half a century. Personally, I believe it will be something the UFOs do that will finally alert the world.

Hall: I think so too. All we can do in the meantime is study the reports carefully and try to figure out what is going on. □