

A Conversation With Daniel W. Fry, Scientist Living in Merlin

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Few people who have met Daniel W. Fry in his new home town — the community of Merlin, seven miles northwest of Grants Pass — realize who he is.

Fry's husky, easygoing appearance tends to label him as a typical outdoorsman. And friends who have known him for years say he is so modest that it is often difficult to get him to speak of his accomplishments.

People who have met him casually would probably be surprised to learn that Fry possesses a brain that has produced a number of scientific feats, including the designing of several parts of the guidance system of the Atlas missile.

Undergoes Fantastic Experience

And many would probably be shocked to learn that the same Daniel W. Fry who lives in Merlin today underwent 12 years ago what must be (providing, of course, that it did happen — and no one has ever proven that it didn't) one of the most fantastic experiences ever undergone by a resident of planet earth.

For Fry states quite seriously — and rather convincingly when one can coax him into talking about it — that in 1950 he took a ride in a so-called "flying saucer" and conversed with a man who was not born on earth.

And he states in an equally convincing manner that during the first part of 1961 the man and his ship landed in a forest clearing several miles northwest of Merlin.

Fry is in southern Oregon today in an effort to fulfill a dream that began 15 years ago — a dream that was interrupted by his extra-terrestrial encounter in 1950.

To Develop Merlin Area

He is attempting to develop the Merlin area, in which he has owned property since 1946. Fry made up his mind to buy in southern Oregon the day the first A-bomb fell on Hiroshima. He considered this area one of the safest in the United States in the event of nuclear attack. He bought 80 acres and spent the winter of 1947 in a cabin on it. Then a job with Aerojet General corporation drew him to southern California.

His post with Aerojet subsequently involved occasional trips to White Sands Proving Grounds in New Mexico, and it happened that on July 4, 1950, a date Fry will always remember, he was at White Sands.

It was a hot night, Fry recalls, and the air conditioning system broke down, so he went out for a walk on the desert.

He had gone about half a mile beyond a rifle range on the outskirts of the base when he first noticed something in the sky. He saw a star seem to go out, then a second, a third and a fourth. Soon he realized that what was making the stars seem to go out was an object gradually increasing in size as it came toward him.

An Ovale Spheroid Object

As the object came closer, Fry said, "I could see that it was an ovale spheroid about 30 feet in diameter at the equator, or largest part. It was now traveling at not more than 15 or 20 miles per hour and seemed to be decelerating at a rate that would bring it to zero velocity by the time it reached the ground."

As he watched, Fry said, the object glided in lightly and settled to the ground about 70 feet away from him without the slightest bump or jar. Except for the crackling of the brush beneath it when it landed, the object made no sound.

Fry had been working in the rocket field for several years and thought he was fairly well acquainted with developments in the aircraft field, but this object's performance was far advanced over anything he'd ever heard of.

Fry admits that at first he felt "a strong desire to be somewhere else!" He said he considered going back to the base to get more witnesses, but then he envisioned the possibility of returning with other men only to find that the object had taken off. And so he decided to approach the object.

Touches Smooth Surface

He approached cautiously and finally got up enough nerve to place a finger tip on the hull of the ship. It felt incredibly smooth, Fry said. He stroked the metal with the palm of his hand and felt a tingling sensation.

Just then a crisp voice "came out of the air" saying, "Better not touch the hull, pal, it's still hot!"

Fry leapt backwards several feet, catching his heel in a low bush, causing him to sprawl at full length in the sand. He said he heard what sounded like a low chuckle. Then the voice came again in a friendlier tone, "Take it easy, pal, you're among friends."

The voice apologized for making Fry jump, saying, "Sorry, buddy, but you were about to kill yourself and there wasn't time to diddle with controls." The voice went on to explain that Fry had touched a force field around the craft rather than the actual surface and that exposure for more than a few seconds could cause congestion of the liver and eventual death.

Puzzled By Voice's Use

Fry was puzzled by the voice's use of not only the English language but also the American idiom. In reply, the voice explained that he had been studying the use of the American language and idiom for the past two years.

"I have never yet set foot upon your planet," said the voice. "It will require at least four more of your years for me to become adapted to your atmosphere and gravity and to become immunized to your biotics."

It took Fry what seemed to him like a long time to digest the full meaning and implication of what the voice had just said. But as he looks back on the experience, he says he realized that if whoever was in the ship had meant to do him harm, he would have done so by that point, so he decided to go along with the "voice" and learn whatever he could.

Man In Second Craft

One of the first things he learned was that the voice was that of a man situated in a second craft some 800 miles above the surface of the earth, and that the object before him was actually a remote-controlled device used for gathering samples of earth atmosphere. The being identified himself with the name A-Lan (pronounced "Ah-Lan").

Fry learned the following concerning A-Lan's purpose in visiting earth: "One of the principal purposes of this expedition is to determine the basic adaptability of the earth race, particularly the degree of their ability to adapt their minds quickly and calmly to conceptions that are completely foreign to their customary modes of thought. Previous expeditions by our ancestors met with



This artist's drawing on the cover of Fry's book "White Sands Incident" depicts the shape of the spacecraft which Fry says landed near White Sands Proving Grounds in New Mexico in 1950 and took him for a ride. The craft was an ovate (egg-shaped) spheroid. The marks around it were made by the artist to denote motion.



Daniel W. Fry says an extra-terrestrial craft landed in this clearing near his cabin in the hills northwest of Merlin in 1961. He went up to the cabin "on an impulse" and found the craft already on the ground with his friend A-Lan standing nearby. After a conversation of some 20 minutes, the man got back in the ship and took off, Fry said.



Daniel W. Fry of Merlin says he took a 30-minute ride in a space vehicle from another planet in 1950.

almost total failure in this respect. This time there is hope that we may be able to find minds sufficiently receptive so that we may be of some assistance in the progress of your race."

Descended From Earth People

Fry learned that A-Lan was descended from men and women who once lived on earth — on the continent of Lemuria during an era when its inhabitants engaged in war with a civilization on the continent of Atlantis. A-Lan said his ancestors were among a handful who escaped in spacecraft to the planet Mars. Subsequently, they began a new civilization, which eventually evolved, the visitor explained, to the point where its people began to dwell in spacecraft constantly moving about rather than on an single planet.

During the half hour that followed, Fry said he kept up a constant line of questioning, almost all of it on scientific and technical matters. The conversation led to an invitation for Fry to take a short ride aboard the craft, which he did.

The "short ride" consisted of a hop across the United States to a point 20 miles over the city of New York and back again. Judging that the trip took about 30 minutes, he figures that the craft maintained an average speed of 8,000 miles per hour — not so fast in 1963 when satellites travel 18,000 miles per hour, but in 1950 it was unheard of, Fry points out.

Feels No Acceleration

The most amazing part of the ride was that Fry felt no acceleration. "Instinctively I braced myself in the seat," he said, "but the ground just fell away from the ship with incredible rapidity. I did not feel the slightest sense of motion."

The visitor's explanation of this phenomenon was that the ship maintained its own force field, like a tiny planet. Therefore it could fall away from the earth as if two magnets were repelling each other and no one on the craft would feel the motion in the same way that no one on earth can feel its motion as it rotates and revolves around the sun.

After Fry was returned to approximately the same location where he had first seen the visiting craft, A-Lan excused himself, saying he would contact Fry again, and took off.

Feels Sense of Depression

"For a long time I stood in the sand looking from the crumpled brush (crushed beneath the landing craft) up to the stars," Fry recalls. He said he felt a strong sense of depression, because only a few hours earlier he had been a "self-satisfied technician" working on setting up tests for one of the largest rocket motors ever assembled on earth. He now realized that this big motor was hopelessly obsolete before it had even been tested.

Daniel W. Fry's life since the night of July 4, 1950, has not been easy. He said very little about the experience of that night for almost four years until he finally wrote a book called "The White Sands Incident."

He was talked into taking that step when he exper-

enced a second meeting with his extra-terrestrial friend. The contact took place at his cabin located northwest of Merlin, Fry says. A-Lan asked him to make his story known to the public in an effort to open people's minds, if nothing else — to suggest that there are other inhabitants of the universe besides those of earth.

Diagnoses Problems of Earth

In this conversation, Fry said A-Lan diagnosed the problems of earth's peoples as basically arising from an overdevelopment of the material sciences and underdevelopment of the social and spiritual sciences. He urged Fry to try to lay some groundwork toward correcting this imbalance.

In the months that followed, Fry founded an organization and a magazine, both titled "Understanding," for the purpose of "bringing about a greater degree of understanding among the peoples of earth and making available to them more of the higher understanding of those who are not of earth." Both are now in their seventh year.

He also made himself available for lectures, often as many as 250 a year. He spent his "vacations" from engineering work going on lecture tours, actually at a punishing pace with an average of two hours of sleep per night. His performances prompted one observer to remark that Fry was the only person he knew who would willingly drive all night to lecture for 16 people and then go home without requesting a fee for the talk.

Lectures Were Well Received

Many of Fry's lectures were well received. At one time he was the most popular speaker on the service club circuit in southern California and was in demand virtually every week day noon hour.

But when on the lecture platform he was also a frequent target of insult and ridicule, particularly when he first embarked on public speaking and had not yet gained the polish his more recent talks exhibit. No one who knows Fry, however, can recall an instance when he has lost his temper. He answers all questions calmly and methodically and more often than not gets in the final word in an exchange with a heckler.

Fry received one of his greatest compliments — and most concrete proof of the authenticity of his 1950 White Sands experience — when an attempt at making fun of him went awry.

In July, 1958, Dr. Parry Moon, scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, along with a co-author published a paper in the Journal of the Franklin Institute setting forth a new finding with respect to gravity.

Shortly after the paper was published, Dr. Moon was sent — as a joke — a copy of one of Fry's books, "Steps to the Stars." The book, published four years previously, contained the same finding, and some of the wording Fry had used was almost identical to the sentences Dr. Moon had used — four years later. So identical were several of the sentences that Fry now possesses a letter from Dr. Moon assuring him that he had not seen "Steps to the Stars" before publishing his 1958 paper and that no plagiarism was involved.



Daniel W. Fry now operates the Merlin Trading post, where he may frequently be seen behind the grocery counter or out pumping gas.

Involves Theory of Gravity

The finding that Fry had published four years before Dr. Moon involved the theory that gravity actually reaches a zero point, beyond which it becomes negative. In other words, the earth's gravitational field does not act as an attracting force on into infinity. It reaches a definite zero point, beyond which it becomes a repelling force, Fry and Dr. Moon agreed. They use this conclusion to explain why the universe is constantly "exploding" outward.

Fry said he arrived at this conclusion as a result of his conversation with A-Lan during the White Sands incident.

From 1954 to 1961 Fry was vice president in charge of research at Crescent Engineering and Research company in southern California. It was during this time that he designed a number of scientifically advanced items, including several parts of the guidance system in the Atlas missile. He attributes many of these accomplishments to his White Sands experience also.

Meets A-Lan Face-to-Face

In the first part of 1961, Fry said he went up to his cabin in the Merlin area "on an impulse" and met A-Lan face-to-face. The spaceman's craft was on the ground in a clearing next to the cabin. A-Lan was an ordinary looking person wearing casual clothes, Fry reported. After a conversation of about 20 minutes the visitor got back in his craft and took off.

Fry hasn't said a great deal about the contents of that 20-minute conversation with A-Lan, but from that point on he began making frequent trips to Merlin. He acquired more property and went about making it known that he hoped to establish a planned community at Merlin, one where "the niche a person will occupy is engineered for him even before he arrives."

Merlin could be used as a survival area in event of a nuclear disaster, Fry said, but he was principally interested in developing a largely self-sufficient, well planned community of people with widely diversified talents and backgrounds but with a common interest in developing a deeper understanding of the universe about them.

Perhaps Would Develop Advice

Or perhaps what Fry is really after is a community that will follow some of A-Lan's advice and give its attention to developing the social and spiritual sciences as well as the material science.

About 10 families who might otherwise never have heard of Merlin, Oregon are living there today. More are planning to move in.

Fry's plans also include the erection of a radio station dedicated to broadcasting information along the lines of what he has gained from his experiences.

Several new businesses have opened in the town, and Fry himself has taken over the Merlin Trading post, where — in testimony to the sort of man he is — he may frequently be seen behind the counter or out front pumping gas.