

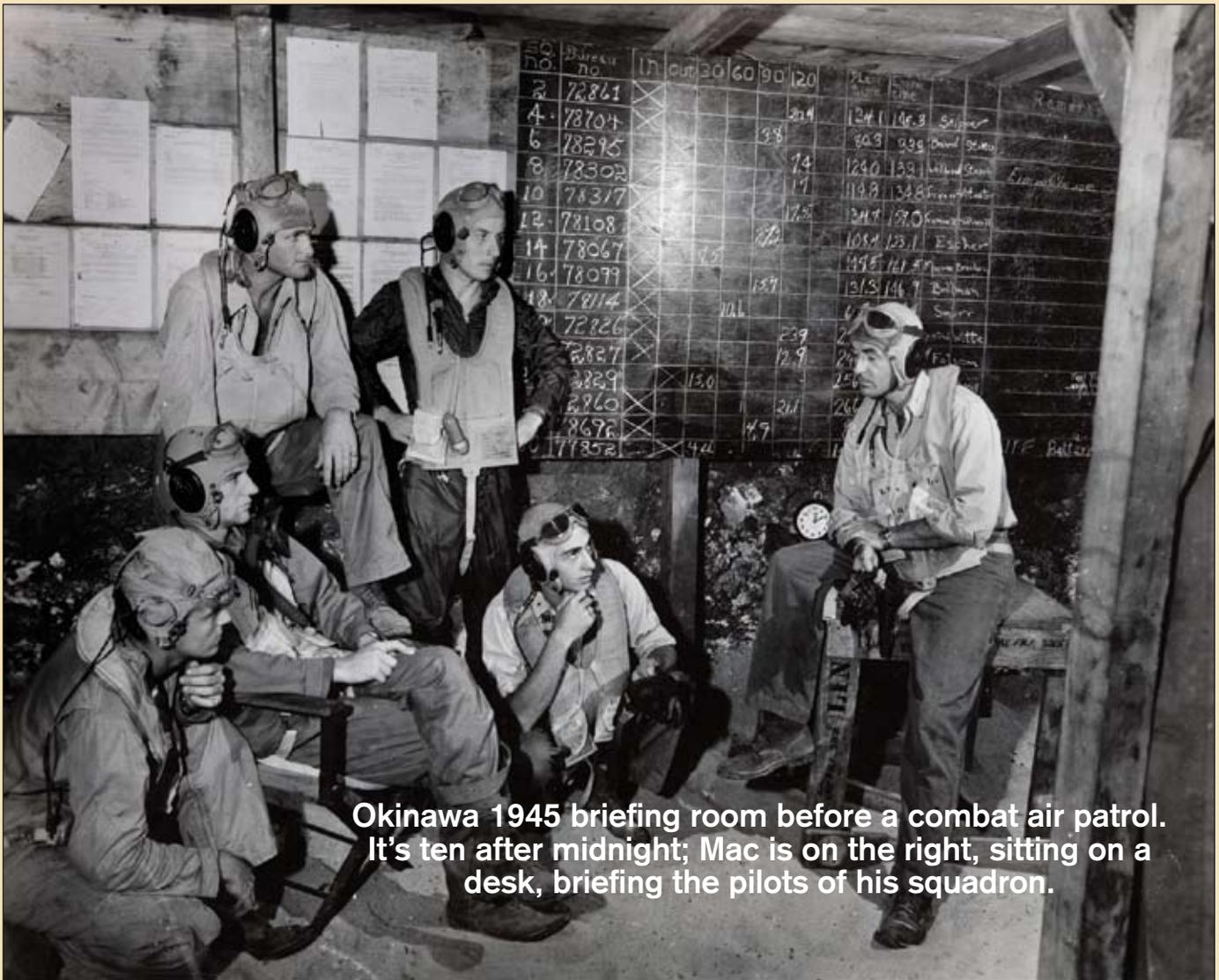


# Squiggly.

That's the word Marine Lieutenant Colonel Marion M. "Black Mac" Magruder used to describe the alien that he saw at Wright Field in Ohio in 1947. "Squiggly," he told his son Mike as he lay near death in 1997, responding to questions his granddaughter Natalie had asked her father to ask him.

It was the final description Magruder would give about the almost human-like creature he had seen only once, but whose story would haunt him for the rest of his life. As he had told his sons and his granddaughter on more than one occasion: "It was alive. But we killed it."

Black Mac Magruder was an ace fighter pilot in World War II who



**Okinawa 1945 briefing room before a combat air patrol. It's ten after midnight; Mac is on the right, sitting on a desk, briefing the pilots of his squadron.**

developed the night-fighting techniques that he had learned from the RAF in England into what became known as the Naval Night-Fighting Doctrine for single pilots in single-engine fighters operating from aircraft carriers. Back in October 1943 as U.S. naval forces were battling their way back across the Pacific, the Navy and Marines were in desperate need of night-fighting techniques to enable them to own the skies, which up until then had been dominated by the Japanese.

By 1945 Magruder and his squadron, VMF(N) 533, which was known as “Black Mac’s Killers,” had become legendary as night combatants. The squadron’s exploits at Okinawa, by far some of the bloodiest battles of the entire Pacific war, were crucial in ensuring Allied domination of the skies at night.

Okinawa was the end-game pivot, the must-win battle to cut off Japanese access to its sea lanes and prepare the Allies for the final assault on the home islands. Yet the American losses at Okinawa were so great, both in the number of ships, planes, and ground-combat personnel, that it was an ominous portent of things to come should General Douglas MacArthur attempt to invade Japan. This fact was undoubtedly one of the factors that led to the use of nuclear weapons against Japan.

Okinawa was also the site of the last Japanese naval action of the war, a battle in which the Imperial Navy’s *Yamato*, the largest battleship ever built, was blown out of the water while her carrier and destroyer escorts were either sunk or left dead in the water. Central to the victory over the Japanese navy was the Naval and Marine domination of the airspace.

Even as *kamikaze* pilots and the piloted Japanese suicide rocket bombs devastated Admiral Spruance’s 5th Fleet, Marine fighter pilots fought Japanese fighters and bombers out of the sky. They took control of the air war over the island, providing cover for a battle that would take months, defeat the last stand of the Imperial Navy, and convince the U.S. war planners that an invasion of Japan’s home islands would be the costliest campaign in American history.

The losses at Okinawa, civilian as well as military, presaged the coming of the nuclear age. At the core of the joint military strategy at Okinawa was the domination of the air, and one of the leaders in that campaign was Black Mac Magruder and his squadron of night fighters, whose training in the use of radar made them one of the most formidable air units from the Battle of Okinawa.

Mac Magruder's prowess as a fighter pilot and squadron leader carried him to a long career in the Marines after the war and brought him, *albeit* unrequested, into contact—on two different occasions—with one of our country's most closely held secrets. In July 1947 Lieutenant Colonel Magruder began his year's posting to the National Air War College at Maxwell Field in Alabama. He would remain there until June 1948. July was a fateful month in his life, according to his sons Mark and Merritt, because it was in that month that his class took a special trip to Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio.

As Mark Magruder recounts, his father told him that he and the rest of his class were told that "the military wanted his feedback—his thinking on a decision they had to make. It was a strategic decision in the area of military and political planning. Basically, the higher-ups in the military were looking for guidance on a critical decision they had to make."

The issue confronting the military was whether to disclose to the public that they had not only retrieved a UFO from the New Mexico desert, but that they had also brought debris back to Wright Field and had recovered a living extraterrestrial. With a cloud of uncertainty hanging over the military, they were about to make a momentous decision to expose a group of officers to a glimpse of another world.

The Air War College students were led into a room where they were told about the crash outside of Roswell, New Mexico earlier that same month, and then they were shown debris from the crash. They were also brought into first-hand contact with one of the craft's inhabitants, the only one alive after the crash. Magruder described the being in specific detail to his sons, but kept repeating that the being seemed "squiggly" to him, a remark that he repeated as he lay dying 40 years later.

"He said the creature was not like the aliens you see depicted on television," Mike Magruder remembered. "Except for the large head. Actually, instead of a gray color, the being had a flesh tone. And it resembled a human being more than anything else. It had a large head, it had large eyes—larger than usual—and it had only a slit for a mouth and hardly any nose.

In fact my father said that it didn't really have a nose the way human beings have noses. The creature was human-like. Yet, despite its humanoid appearance, it was clearly, my father said, not from this planet. It was not like any human being he had ever seen."

Mac Magruder seemed also impressed with the way the alien moved and the disproportionate length of its limbs. It was small, he said, like a child, but not like a child because of its large head and long arms.

It was five feet tall or smaller, a little creature, but it did not look like a small adult. It was clearly something different. He also remembered that it was wearing a coverall that reminded him of a flight jumpsuit. He could not tell what the material was composed of.

Magruder never claimed that the creature communicated with him. Nor did he ever talk about whether the entity communicated with any other member of his Air War College class. However, as he told his children years later, he seemed to empathize with the creature.

He made this statement on more than one occasion: "It was alive. And we killed it." He also said repeatedly over the years: "It was a shameful thing that the military destroyed this creature by conducting tests on it."

Magruder saw other items from the crash as well. He said that his group was shown photographs of the craft, and that it was more like a disk than a crescent or a triangle. He said he also saw some of the crash debris and remembered that certain beams had something inscribed on them, but he was never told what the writing meant or whether it was ever translated into English.

The material he saw and the entity he encountered at Wright Field prompted Magruder over the years to repeat to his sons that "Roswell did happen." It was no myth or fairy tale. It was no weather balloon either.

The debris that his father handled, Mark and Merritt Magruder said, convinced him that whatever the material was and whatever function the parts served, this stuff was otherworldly. It was like nothing he had ever seen before.



His sons described Mac Magruder as having a strict military bearing. His years in the Marines and his different assignments to sensitive positions had hardened him.

At Okinawa, he said that he had strafed columns of retreating Japanese troops that had used civilians as human shields. His orders at that time were strict: Attack the retreating troops. And he remembered that as rounds from his cannon tore up the columns, he was also hitting women and children as he completed each strafing run.

Magruder had been posted to NATO headquarters in Europe as well, on Eisenhower's staff, and had helped draw up plans for using nuclear weapons should Soviet troops invade Western Europe. Yet, despite his battle-hardened demeanor, until the month he died, Mac Magruder's eyes would tear up when he thought of the small extraterrestrial he had seen at Wright Field and remembered that the medical tests conducted by the military had destroyed it.

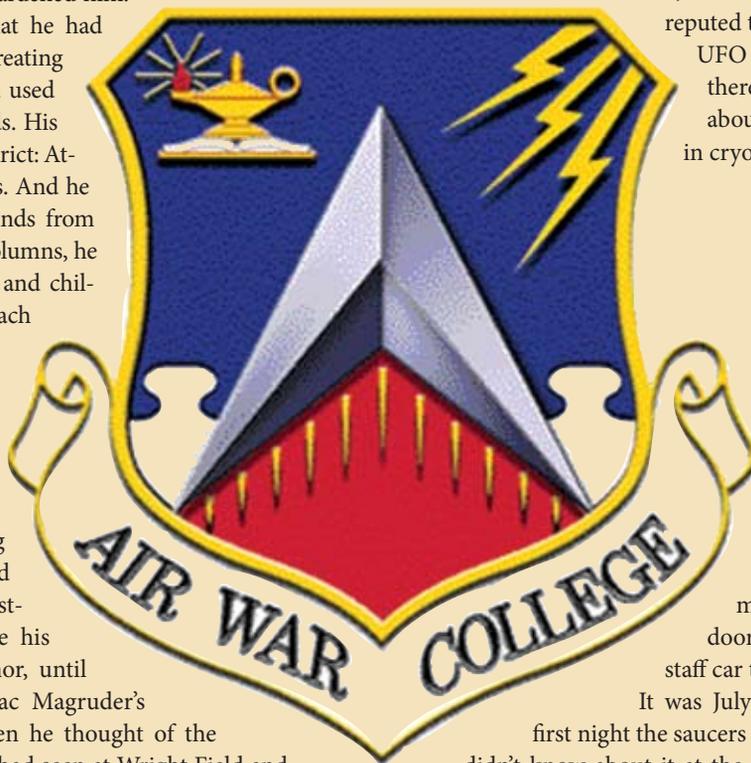
Magruder's sons recalled that their father had been very reluctant to discuss what he had learned about Roswell. Although he had dropped hints over the years that he had been inside the disclosure loop, he would always stop short of telling them what he really saw.

Occasionally when the family would watch a show about UFOs, Mark remembered, his father would hear a commentator talk about little green men and Mac would say, "They weren't green." If he saw an image of the typical gray alien on television, he would remark that that's not how they looked. Over the years, as more UFO stories came to the fore, Mac Magruder opened up to his sons about his being flown to Wright Field with the rest of his class at the Air War College.

As he revealed more information about the alien and the debris, he made the stunning comment that he was told there were actually *two* different species of aliens that our government had come into contact with. Nicknamed the *greens* and the *grays*, the different species also had different intentions toward Earth. One species was relatively benign, Mac said. It was considered friendly. However the other, and the sons are not sure which group was which, was unfriendly and was regarded by the military as hostile.

Magruder also said that the Roswell debris and the dead aliens were never destroyed. Nor were they kept at Wright Field, later to become Wright Patterson Air Force Base. The material, Magruder explained, was moved from Wright Field to Eglin

Air Force Base in Florida where the alien bodies were stored in a cryogenic storage buried beneath the base. Eglin Air Force Base, near Gulf Breeze, Florida has been reputed to have been the site of much UFO activity over the years, and there has been much speculation about the kinds of materials kept in cryogenic storage at Eglin.



## July, 1952 UFOs over Washington D.C. Incident

Mark Magruder remembers one night in July 1952 when a police motorcycle squad arrived at their house. Mac Magruder was summoned to greet the military and police unit at the door and was whisked away in a staff car to the Pentagon.

It was July 26, 1952, a week after the first night the saucers came. Although the brothers didn't know about it at the time, their father was taken to a situation room in the Pentagon where, through most of the night and into the morning of July 27, he and a group of military officers watched radar screens as blips wove their way across some of the most critical airspace of the United States with complete impunity.

It was the height of the Cold War. The Soviet Union had already exploded its own atomic nuclear weapons. We were still in a bloody war with Chinese- and Soviet-backed North Koreans, but the real fear the first night the flying disks appeared, as Captain Edward Ruppelt reported, was that UFOs that had been sighted over the east coast of the United States would make their way to Washington. Ruppelt's source for this information came from, in his own words, "a scientist, from an agency that I can't name." This scientist told Ruppelt that he was afraid that, "we were sitting right on top of a big keg full of loaded saucers."

It was against this backdrop of fear that officers in the Pentagon on duty the night of July 19 first heard reports of strange objects heading towards Washington. Shortly before midnight on July 20, in what was supposed to be our nation's most secure airspace, seven blips appeared on the radar scope at D.C. National Airport.

The control tower not only confirmed the radar targets but also caught a visual sighting of at least one of the objects. It wasn't a plane. As the objects headed towards the Capitol and the White House, USAF jets were scrambled from Delaware to intercept the objects. Meanwhile, while the jets were en route, at least one of the objects tracked a commercial airliner and then

disappeared off the radar. It had to have traveled extremely fast and maneuvered in a way that no existing American aircraft could have. What were these objects?

Further sightings in the early hours of the morning on July 20 seemed to confirm that these objects could maneuver vertically and could, based on a report from Andrews Air Force Base, travel at almost ten times the speed of sound. By dawn on July 20, observers on the ground said they actually saw flying disks in the air over the Capitol. And even after the craft seemed to fly away, other reports of sightings came flooding into the Air Force from states across the Midwest.

It is easy to imagine, therefore, that the Air Force, even as they tried to cover up the obvious, was mobilized not only to figure out what had happened but to prepare should these objects appear again. And appear they did, this time a week later on July 26 over Washington and again at night.

It was a night Mark Magruder remembers. He and his family were living outside of Washington. At first there was a phone call. Then his father hurriedly got dressed. Then there was a knock on the door and Mark saw a small contingent of police—he did not know what kind of police—on motorcycles. There was a black car waiting outside their house.

Mac Magruder, without saying anything, left the house, disappeared inside the car, and the small motorcade took off. It would be many years later before Mac told his sons what really happened that night. He said that he went to the Pentagon. A situation room. He didn't say which one or where actually in the Pentagon it was, although Mark believes that it was the "war room."

Inside this room, under the cloak of the highest level of secrecy, a group of military officers watched as Air Force jets entered Washington airspace to intercept the unidentified radar



Washington National's  
Control Tower radar room

blips. The Air Force pilots, flying jets equipped with rockets, had been ordered to defend the airspace, engage the unidentified object, and shoot them down if possible.

What happened next according to Magruder and other witnesses including Albert M. Chop, whom we talked about in last month's issue, was nothing less than horrifying. As the U.S. jets chased the UFOs, a number of blips reformed around at least two of the jets.

Al Chop said that over the control-tower speakers he heard that the flight leader, Red Dog One, reported in an urgent transmission that he was surrounded by UFOs. Reporters, military officers, radar operators, and civilian flight controllers all hear the emergency transmission as the pilot described the UFOs forming up around him.

Other pilots reported much the same thing and, according to researcher Stanton Friedman, one and maybe more U.S. fighter jets disappeared in the predawn darkness that morning. Mac Magruder would tell his sons years later that at least one jet simply vanished from the radar screen. He told his sons that the Air Force lost pilots that night, pilots who'd been scrambled to intercept the UFOs. This was the second encounter that Magruder had had with UFOs.

After he left the Marine Corps, Magruder went into business, first banking, and then ultimately buying a franchise from McDonalds. Over the ensuing years Magruder bought more franchises and became one of the first multi-independent fast-food-chain franchisers in the country.

But his past never left him. Even as Magruder softened up towards his Roswell story, explaining to his sons that some of the stories that were released were close to the truth while many were not, security people from an unidentified federal agency, military or civilian, continued to visit him. Mark explains that they would





ask his father whether he had disclosed any of the secrets he carried. They would remind him that his top-security clearance was still in force. They also asked him about those to whom he might have mentioned his secrets. Who did he talk to?

Finally, in 1974 Mark remembered that his father had had enough. When the same group came to his office to interview him in private and ask him the names of people he might have spoken to about UFOs, Mac Magruder blew up. He told them that he had been a Marine, had fought in World War II, had upheld his national security oath, and had no intention of being interrogated any further about the issue. He threw them out of his office and he was never visited again.

In the 1980s after the story of Roswell became widely circulated with the publication of a number of books about the incident, Magruder became less reticent about discussing his own encounter with the Roswell debris. He revealed to his sons that he had actually been face to face with the debris and had handled some of the material. He revealed that he had seen a living extraterrestrial, commenting that people who said these were tiny creatures were all wrong. He commented that the standard

depiction of the gray that appeared in the alien-autopsy film wasn't accurate at all because the alien he had seen look much more human than that. In fact, he said, what was most compelling about it wasn't the difference between the alien and the human, it was the similarity.

Marion M. Magruder's story is more important than simply the story of another witness. We can glean a number of things from the fragmentary information he left us. First, we learn that in July 1947, even after General Ramey had ordered the official story of a UFO retrieval outside of Roswell suppressed and replaced with the story of a weather balloon, the military apparently had not decided whether to keep the story a secret from its own officer corps.

The revelation that at least one class from the Air War College was flown to Wright Field to encounter the alien and handle the alien debris is stunning because it shows that the military was actively trying to figure out how people would react to impact of this story.

Magruder himself said that he was told that the military was looking for the Air War College students' opinions on what to do. Strategically, what did they think? Was this a story of such great weight that not even the military could handle the truth?

Apparently this was what the military ultimately decided because shortly after Magruder's class returned to Maxwell Field, the military made up its mind.

There would be no disclosure. This would appear to be an important element in the history of our military's involvement with the UFO secret.

Magruder's appearance at the Pentagon on the night of July 26, 1952 also casts additional light on the story of UFOs over Washington, D.C. If there ever was an example of hiding something in plain sight, denying the obvious, and convincing the media to walk away from what surely must have been an incredible set of occurrences, the July 1952 UFO encounters are it.

Not only were the UFOs visible in the night sky, they were on radar; members of the press were allowed into the radar tower at D.C. National Airport to see the radar contacts and listen to the pilot reports over the radio. In addition, the Air Force tracked UFO reports across the Midwest during the week after the D.C. flyovers.

We lost aircraft that night of July 26. And yet the story has nearly been lost to history. Amazingly, Mac Magruder reports that even while standing inside a Pentagon situation room in the presence of other military personnel looking at the blips on radar, he was unable to offer his opinion on what was happening because he

wasn't sure who had the clearance to hear what he had to say.

It was ironic, to be sure, that in the presence of a near military catastrophe when the skies over the White House were penetrated by craft that could out-fly, outrun, out-maneuver, and out-fight our own top-of-the-line interceptors, Magruder could not tell anyone what he knew or even why he had been picked up and brought to the Pentagon.

He never reported to his sons that he had been debriefed after that night. What was he doing there? Who knew, in the tightly closed world of military personnel to whom the evidence of the Roswell crash had been disclosed, what Magruder knew? Who was tracking him and what had been expected of him that night? Was Magruder's presence there a test to see if he would reveal what he knew to other personnel? If so, Mac Magruder passed that test.

And the final element of Magruder's story is the yearly visits he was paid by the investigators who kept asking him who else he had told about Roswell. Was the story turning into an information epidemic that had to be contained at all costs? What leverage could the security detail have used to frighten Magruder, an officer who had seen some of the bloodiest combat of World War II? And yet they kept up their pressure on him for almost

**The revelation that at least one class from the Air War College was flown to Wright Field to encounter the alien and handle the alien debris is stunning.**

40 years until he told them to beat it. Why was it so important to track this man for all those years?

In 1997, almost to the fiftieth anniversary of the crash at Roswell, Mac Magruder died. In the final weeks of his life, his granddaughter, whom he had told about some of the Roswell secrets, began to press her father to ask his father about more of the secret.

What did the aliens really look like, she had asked him? What could he say about them? His son said that Mac kept on repeating that they were squiggly. But he also said, even as he lay dying, that it was a shameful thing that the military had done to the alien.

"They killed it," he kept on saying, as if in facing the entity, Magruder had empathized with it. Mac had been a fighter ace in World War II, shooting Japanese pilots out of the sky and strafing long columns of retreating soldiers on Okinawa. Yet, in the final weeks of his life as he contemplated the alien he had seen at Wright Field, he told his sons, "All life is important, no matter what it is." **UFO**

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**This article was written by William J. Birnes, in collaboration with Mark, Merritt, and Natalie Macgruder. A special thank you to Stanton Friedman, whose earlier research is, as usual, invaluable.**



**Magruder sitting on the wing of his Hellcat fighter F6F-3N, nicknamed "Little Mac." Mac was the CO of his squadron.**