

UFO FILES

Brazil's Roswell

The History Channel, Sunday 12th
March, 2006



The History Channel's *UFO Files* continues to prove itself to be one of the best UFO-based documentary series produced for many years. This week's episode explores the events in 1977 on an Amazonian island that the producers have dubbed *Brazil's Roswell*.

Over a period of months in that year, a sequence of events occurred that some have said led, twenty years later, to the apparent suicide (some call it murder) of Brazilian army captain, Uyrangê Hollanda. He was found hanging from his bed, asphyxiated by a tie wrapped around his neck by his daughter in 1997 just two months after giving an interview with Brazilian ufologists about what he experienced on the island of Colares in the Pará region of the country.

The superstitious people of Colares are simple fishermen and their families for the most part, not primitive by any means, but somewhat isolated from the bustling

cities only a few hours drive away. Beginning in September of 1977, a technology beyond the ken of even the most sophisticated city-dweller visited this tranquil location.

Emidio Campos Oliveira was settling down to sleep on a warm night in October. Suddenly, a bright light penetrated the roof of his house and burned his thigh before vanishing as quickly as it had appeared.

Several days later, Orivaldo Malaquias Pinheiro was net fishing on the beach with a friend. A bright light began approaching them from the sea and, afraid, they ran. On telling others about their experience, it became clear that dozens of people had witnessed something similar, with some saying that they had been chased and attacked by the lights.

Lucia Helena Marques was a twenty-five year old dentist at the time and she recounted how she and others at the market she was visiting saw strange lights moving erratically out to sea. The lights were mostly red, but green and yellow ones were also visible. Then they simply vanished.



A journalist in the nearby city of Belém, Carlos Mendes, began receiving phone calls from the witnesses in Colares suggesting that his newspaper should visit the island and see the lights that were making the population so afraid. Mendes and his photographer set out to the island and heard the stories of the locals. The photographer took images of marks on the skin that witnesses said were caused by the lights. One woman had been paralysed by the lights and the next day found a group of puncture marks that looked like they had been made with a pin on her chest. Some even said that they thought the lights were sucking their blood!



Mendes never saw the lights for himself, but he appreciated how scared the local people were. Over the next few months, over eighty people would report being attacked by the paralysing beams of light from space. Things got so bad that many of the women and children left the town, while some of the men stood guard around bonfires. Others locked themselves in their homes, fearful of the mysterious invaders from above.

Doctor Wellaide Carvalho was the young local physician and had only been on the island for six months. During the time of the attacks, she saw a sharp increase of patients complaining of injuries caused by the lights. Initially sceptical and at first believing that the town was gripped with mass hysteria, Dr Carvalho found that each patient suffered from the same symptoms – signs of radiation burns and odd puncture marks, usually in the chest and thigh areas.



One night, a woman was brought in and her family explained that she had been attacked by the lights. She was suffering from spasms, her mouth was clenched shut and Dr Carvalho could not get her to respond to stimuli. Unable to stabilise her patient, the doctor could do nothing but have the patient bundled into a car and driven to the regional hospital in Belém.

Five days later, as she waited for a report on the progress of the woman, another patient was brought in, another victim of the lights. She had been attacked whilst standing in her garden. She was so completely rigid that the police officers that had

brought her in their car had been forced to drive her there with her legs sticking out of the door. This patient was also sent to the city hospital.

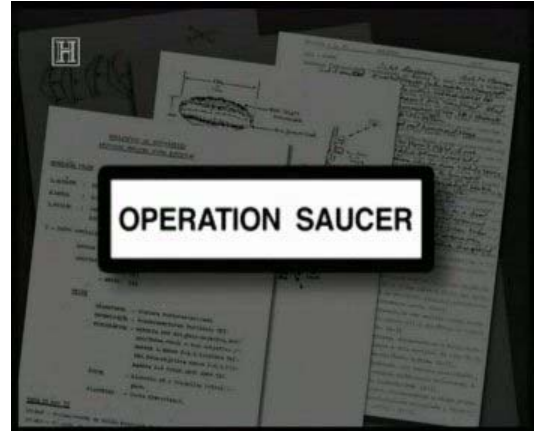
Shortly afterwards, Dr Carvalho received word from Belém that both patients had died. She requested that a cause of death be ascertained, but the report came back, giving no explanation for how the women had died. The young doctor still did not believe that the women had died because of an attack by these supernatural lights, but that the panic that had gripped the town had brought on a heart attack or stroke in both patients.

Hoping to put an end to the hysteria, Carvalho and other town officials pleaded with the mayor for help. A request went out for the Regional Air Command (COMAR) to look into what was happening on Colares. Heading up the investigation was Captain Uyrangê Hollanda.



Carlos Mendes suspected that the government assigned COMAR to investigate the island was because it believed that communist guerrillas were behind the attacks. The rebels

had been active in the state for some time. Despite this mundane reason behind Captain Hollanda's investigation, it was assigned a curious name – Operation Saucer.



The team arrived on Colares and set up camp. They placed cameras on the beaches and ensured that the locals saw everything that they were doing, in the hope that seeing this would calm their fears. Their efforts were in vain, however. Hollanda met with Dr Carvalho and instructed her that she should tell everybody that all that was at work on Colares was mass hysteria and nothing more. From that point, the doctor knew that the investigation was not to find the truth, but to hide it. She refused to cooperate, saying that she would not lie to her patients.

Carvalho's scepticism about the cause of the injuries changed when she had an encounter for herself. She was walking home one evening when she saw a woman faint. As she tended to her, her attention was drawn to a bright light in the sky. She saw a cylindrical object of a colour that she could not describe.

Transfixed, she watched it move in an elliptical manner. Unknown to her,

at the same time, a radar station set up on the beach by the COMAR team picked up the object. As they rushed to focus their cameras and telescopes on the object, it headed out to sea and vanished.

Over a four month period, Hollanda's team took over five hundred photographs and fifteen hours of film footage, depicting strange lights in the sky. They drew diagrams of what they had seen and made out reports, which were sent back to COMAR headquarters in Brasilia.

At the end of December 1977, the order came to wrap up Operation Saucer. Hollanda's team packed up and left Colares and their reports have never been made public.

Over the following months, the sightings and attacks diminished and eventually became nothing more than a local legend. Operation Saucer was forgotten about until 1997.



That year, Hollanda contacted Brazilian ufologists, AJ Gevaerd and Marco Petit. They travelled to Rio de Janeiro, where they filmed an interview with the former air force

officer. Over two days, he gave an astonishing account of what his team saw during their time on Colares.



He described brightly-lit craft in the sky, some of which were over a hundred metres across and making sounds like the thrum of an air-conditioning unit and also clicking noises. He described three encounters and produced drawings of what he had seen, depicting cylindrical, saucer-shaped and triangular craft.

His final encounter included a visit from one of the occupants of the craft while he was in bed. He said there was a bright flash and suddenly, he felt the creature hugging him from behind. It was a metre and a half tall, wearing some sort of mask that hid its features and a suit that reminded him of something an astronaut or diver might wear. Then it spoke to him in Portuguese, but in a metallic, computer-like voice:

“Take it easy. We are not going to do you any harm.”

Then it vanished.

Hollanda then claimed that he had an object implanted under the skin of his left arm. As he demonstrated, something solid, yet flexible could be clearly seen beneath the surface. He claimed the alien had placed it there and an x-ray had shown nothing.

Two months later, Hollanda was dead. Despite having a history of mental illness and previous suicide attempts, some who knew him said that he could not have killed himself. His co-pilot during Operation Saucer, Pinon Friás, said that Hollanda would never have tied a rope around his neck and hanged himself. Gevaerd disagreed, saying that the captain had been depressed, but that his story proved that something went on at Corales and the Brazilian government knew all about it.



In 2004, Gevaerd and Petit fought and won a case to be allowed access to the Operation Saucer files. They found the sketches, reports and photographs taken by Hollanda's team, however, they claimed that not all the documents were made available to them. Of the hundreds of photographs and reports that were filed, they were shown only a hundred and ten photos and two

hundred documents, nor were they allowed to view the film footage shot by the team. The reports they saw, though, were astonishingly detailed and comprehensive, yet they made no attempt to explain the sightings nor did they debunk them. The photos they saw were also puzzling, showing odd lights in the sky.

Officially, Operation Saucer found nothing that can be explained scientifically and that was as far as the Brazilian government would go with regard to the events of 1977. It would be up to independent researchers to try and find their own answers.

Doctor Daniel Rebisso is a ufologist intrigued by the reports of burns and puncture marks inflicting the victims of the Colares lights. He dismissed the theory that the marks were the result of vampire bats, explaining that bats leave completely different wounds when they feed. He also found the theory that what happened was down to mass hysteria and self-mutilation to be wanting. Rebisso also looked into claims that the lights were some form of psychological warfare by the communist guerrillas, in an attempt to frighten away the locals so that weapons could be brought in for their cause. This could neither be confirmed nor denied.

He came to the conclusion that some form of radiation paralysed the victims' nervous systems and the lights extracted something from their bodies. Marco Petit seemed to agree, suggesting that material was taken so that the aliens could produce vaccines that would protect

them against earthly viruses once open contact is finally made.



Whatever happened on Colares, and the files opened by the Brazilian Air Force seem to confirm that *something* happened and was not only reported, but also captured on film, it is another little-known case brought to mainstream, public light by the increasingly excellent *UFO Files*. Whether it should be called 'Brazil's Roswell' is another matter. The case bears little resemblance to those events of 1947 and the incident in Varginha in 1996 would likely fit the 'Roswell' label better. Perhaps *UFO Files* will cover this important case at some point?

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