

Joe McMoneagle

Joseph McMoneagle is a former US Army soldier who played a leading role as a remote viewer in the Star Gate psychic spying program run by American military and intelligence organizations until the 1990s. Since retiring from the military, he has continued his activities in the private sector. He gives talks and public demonstrations, and has published several books.

Background

Joseph McMoneagle was born in 1946 in Miami, Florida, one of four siblings. His father had no formal education and was an alcoholic; the family lived in a slum, often going hungry. He was frequently beaten by his mother, who also became alcoholic, and attributes his first psychic inklings to the need to anticipate her rages.¹

After graduating from high school, McMoneagle was admitted to Miami University with a partial scholarship, but quit on the first day. He joined the US Army and was assigned to signals intelligence. During the Viet Nam War in 1968, he was deployed to Southeast Asia and took part in the Tet Offensive and other engagements. He says this combat experience sharpened his psychic 'inner voice', which urged him to move out of harm's way on several occasions, saving his life.

McMoneagle was then stationed in Europe. During a deployment in Germany he became ill while eating a meal and had a near-death experience. First he viewed from outside his body the journey to the hospital and efforts being made to resuscitate him; then he passed through a tunnel to a white light that emanated joy, comfort and love. An inner voice told him it was not time for him to die, and he awoke in a hospital bed.² During his recovery, he writes, he found he was aware of the thoughts of the people around him. He began to read books on philosophy and reflect about the metaphysical world.³

Star Gate

McMoneagle was promoted to warrant officer in 1977. The following year he was invited to take part in a trial of psychic ability carried out on behalf of the Army by physicists [Russell Targ](#) and [Harold Puthoff](#) at the Stanford Research Institute (SRI). Thus began his career as a [remote viewer](#) in a US Army project, initially called Grill Flame and later Star Gate, exploring the use of psychic abilities for intelligence purposes.

McMoneagle defines remote viewing as 'a human ability to produce information about a targeted object, person, place, or event, while being completely isolated from the target by space, time, and other forms of shielding'.⁴ In six initial tests he scored five 'first-place matches' – enabling an independent judge on the basis of his comments to correctly identify the target from a pool of five photographs – and one 'second-place'.

As a result of this success he was one of six people selected for a remote viewing group located in Fort Meade, Maryland.

The first phase involved testing on known targets. After eight months, the viewers' accuracy with American secret installations began to draw notice. At the end of 1978, they began working on operational requests. Their superiors were impressed by the results and decided to upgrade the program, to ensure the US did not fall behind hostile nations in the use of remote viewing. McMoneagle ended his regular military career after thirteen years to become a full-time remote viewer.

By 1981 the remote viewing service was being requested by many American military and intelligence agencies. According to McMoneagle, these included:

- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
- Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)
- Secret Service (SS)
- Air Force Intelligence Agency (AFIA)
- Naval Intelligence Command (NIC)
- Naval Investigative Service Command (NISC)
- National Security Agency (NSA)
- Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM)
- National Security Council (NSC)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF)

The service was also used by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) in some districts and by some internal elements of the State Department.

With the increase in demand, the unit members struggled with overwork. By 1982, only McMoneagle and one other remained, tackling increasing incidents of terrorism. By the time McMoneagle retired from the military in 1984, he had addressed more than 1,500 intelligence queries. He received the Legion of Merit Award for distinguished military service.

Method

In a typical assignment, the unit might be given a photo of a building together with a written instruction such as 'Describe the interior' or 'Say what is being constructed within'. These were placed between two black pieces of cardboard in an envelope and laid in front of a remote viewer, who would immediately report what he sensed about the target. If the viewer was generally correct, mentioning a building and that something was being built inside it, more detail in a second session would be requested. These details would be returned to the agency that had requested a viewing, and used along with information it had acquired through more conventional means.

Achievements

McMoneagle has published some details of accurate viewings in an operational context. Examples are given here.

Typhoon Submarine

In September 1981, McMoneagle carried out sessions on the request of the National Security Council to try to identify the activity within a large, industrial-type building somewhere in Russia. On his first attempt, he imagined himself 'drifting down into the building, passing downward through its roof'.

What I found was mind-blowing. The building was easily the size of two or three huge shopping centers, all under a single roof. In fact it was so huge I was only able to see one or two walls that ran lengthwise down the center as support walls. Even these were open in segments along their length. I felt as though I were standing inside the building and able to actually see vividly what was going on. This rarely occurs in remote viewing, but for some reason it was happening on this target.

In giant bays between the walls were what looked like cigars of different sizes, sitting in gigantic racks. One seemed older and I felt as though it were under repair, but the other was absolutely huge, beyond anything I could ever have imagined. Thick mazes of scaffolding and interlocking steel pipes were everywhere. Within these were what appeared to be two huge cylinders being welded side to side, and I had an overwhelming sense that this was a submarine, a really big one, with twin hulls.[5](#)

In later sessions he created a detailed drawing of the submarine and guessed it would be ready for launch some four months later.

This material was received with scepticism by some within the NSC, who believed the construction was actually of a new type of assault ship and doubted that a vessel could be launched in January in a frozen sea. In fact, the vessel proved to be the first of the new class of twin-hulled submarine named Typhoon, the largest ever built; it moved out through a newly-dug canal for sea trials in early 1980.[6](#)

General Dozier

McMoneagle was involved in efforts to trace the location of Brigadier General James Dozier, deputy chief of staff at NATO headquarters in Verona, Italy, who was abducted in December 1981 by members of the Italian Red Brigades. McMoneagle was given a picture of Dozier and asked to identify where he was being held. The material produced in initial sessions was somewhat vague, but in a later session, in which he felt strongly motivated to succeed, he started with an impression of Italy's north-eastern coastline, an area that looked familiar to him as he had previously visited Venice.

I followed my instinct and began moving away from the coastal city due west along the main road, toward what I sensed was the town from which he had been taken. I felt like I was actually following the track his kidnapers had originally taken; I was coming in on his location by following in their footsteps.

I suddenly found myself hovering directly over a fairly large town not far from the coast just south and south-east of a very large mountain range. I moved closer to the ground and began to pick out roadways and buildings. I followed the roads and eventually found myself near a small central plaza, across from some kind of a fountain, and picked up the smells of a butcher shop, and the faint hint of a place where they did some kind of tanning, or worked with hides. I got an image of a very large apartment building and settled in on the second floor. I came out of the session knowing that I could pretty much replicate the images and streets that I had seen.[7](#)

McMoneagle produced a regional map that was specific enough to identify the city as Padua. He then then sketched a rough street map, pointing out the location of the apartment house where Dozier was being held on the second floor.

Information provided by other psychics (not connected with Star Gate) had proved abortive, and the lead provided by McMoneagle was not followed up. After 42 days, Dozier was freed unharmed by a SWAT team from an apartment in Padua. McMoneagle writes that all of his drawings proved accurate, and 'would have contributed significantly to finding the building and floor within which he was being held', as was attested by Dozier himself when he viewed them.[8](#)

Skylab

In late 1978, as a personal project, McMoneagle attempted to predict where and when the space station Skylab would fall to earth. Eventually he produced a map and showed it to colleagues.

I had selected a spot in Australia about two thirds of the way west, across from the easternmost coast and about a third of the way up from the southern coast, and drew in a pear-shaped area running from the narrow end westward to a much larger end. I darkened in the narrow end and said that was where the primary craft pieces would impact, with the larger end area being the debris field that would be spread over about 1500 miles of area some sixty miles wide. It was the latter part of 1978. I predicted that re-entry would occur around the 5th of July, 1979.

Skylab re-entered from orbit on the 11th of July 1979. I missed the primary impact area by approximately sixty kilometers, as the area I selected was a bit farther to the north. I also missed the re-entry date by six days and a few hours and minutes.[9](#)

Post-Retirement

Following his retirement in 1984, McMoneagle continued to offer remote viewing services as a private contractor, often for the same military and security agencies. One assignment was to trace a lieutenant-colonel kidnapped in February 1988: McMoneagle supplied the correct location but the man was murdered before he could be rescued. Between 1988 and 1994 he worked on several major terrorist incidents, of which the results remain classified.

McMoneagle also found employment participating in experiments at the SRI, a continuation of the research project that had started with Targ and Puthoff, and two years after his arrival in 1984 was headed by Edwin May. In 1990 the lab moved to Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC).

For private sector clients, McMoneagle has carried out remote viewing related to stock interests, investments in world currencies and real estate. He has also helped discover new water sources in the USA, Europe and Africa. However, he says most of his work involves missing persons.

McMoneagle published his first book, *Mind Trek: Exploring Consciousness, Time, and Space Through Remote Viewing*, in 1993. In July of 1995 he was challenged by the American television network ABC to do a televised remote viewing demonstration, using a target in a city he had never visited: Houston, Texas. According to McMoneagle, he identified the target the night before it was chosen.

AIR Report

In 1995, a report was published by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) at the request of the CIA, which had been considering assuming responsibility for the Star Gate project but now decided to terminate it. The report concluded that while statistically-significant results had been attained in research, there was no good evidence that a paranormal process was responsible and that no actionable intelligence had been gained through the million project.[10](#)

McMoneagle notes that the AIR investigators only had access to a fraction of relevant material and declined to interview anyone who had claimed to benefit from RV material, as they deemed such people to be biased.[11](#)

McMoneagle suggests that the negative findings are contradicted by repeated decisions by Congressional committees (whose members have security clearances) to approve funding for Star Gate as a result of the enthusiastic endorsements given by end-users. He also questions the AIR report's objection that remote viewing material 'required substantial subjective interpretation' and that it had never been used to guide intelligence operations, pointing out that the former is generally true of intelligence derived from normal sources as well, and no one source of information guides intelligence operations.[12](#)

The report created a surge of public interest in remote viewing, but also a media backlash. Spokespersons for government agencies, including some who had used remote viewing, claimed it had been experimental only and had not succeeded. The project had been shrinking for some time from staff attrition and lack of new recruitment already, and now was apparently doomed. McMoneagle's private business declined, as clients became concerned about the effect of public exposure.

Media Appearances

McMoneagle has appeared many times on television. Videos of demonstrations, lectures and workshops by him can be found on YouTube, for instance [here](#) and [here](#). On a [show for a national TV network in Japan](#), two missing persons were

found using information McMoneagle provided by remote viewing. By 2002, McMoneagle had performed a total of 22 television demonstrations, of which seventeen were successful. Two of the failures he attributes to poor protocols.

Remote viewing does work, he emphasizes, although not as well as most want to believe. He considers that remote viewing of world-class quality is rare, and that the vast majority of claims of remote viewing ability are probably specious.

Annie Jacobsen

The book *Phenomena: The Secret History of the U.S. Government's Investigations into Extrasensory Perception* by Annie Jacobsen was published in 2017 and attracted considerable media notice. However, it was severely criticized by McMoneagle and others as a misleading account based on rushed research. Jacobsen appears to believe Star Gate was a CIA project, when in fact the bulk of the funding was provided by the US Army. She also attributes a central role to individuals such as Uri Geller, Andrija Puharich and others whose participation was peripheral or non-existent, while remaining unaware of key players such as Edwin May, who ran its research laboratory for many years. McMoneagle wrote a detailed critique.[13](#)

UFO Experience

McMoneagle claims to have experienced a UFO sighting in 1966 while stationed on an island in the Bahamas.

I was working on an island called Eleuthera, a downrange missile tracking site from Canaveral, and my partner and I were heading back toward quarters, taking a shortcut across the sand dunes. It was about 12:30 in the morning and the whole place lit up like high noon, as if the sun had come up. We looked up to see where the source of the light was and it was a very large disc, an oblique disc, probably fourteen hundred feet above us, going in a sort of start-stop fashion. It was intriguing, because it was very much there – you could see panel lines in it and dimples and opaque sections – it was very bright, you had to squint – and all sound went away, it was like being in a bell jar. After about fifteen seconds, our perception was that it shot over the horizon very quickly, almost instantaneously, but in retrospect it could have just folded out of time-space too.[14](#)

He experienced what appeared to be bad sunburn, which he assumed was an effect of exposure to radiation, while his companion required hospitalization.

KM Wehrstein

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Endnotes

Footnotes

- [1](#). McMoneagle (2002).
- [2](#). McMoneagle (2002), 48-50. See also McMoneagle (1993).
- [3](#). McMoneagle (2002), 50.
- [4](#). McMoneagle (2002), xi.
- [5](#). McMoneagle (2002), 121.
- [6](#). McMoneagle, 2002, 120-24. See also [here](#).
- [7](#). McMoneagle (2002), 118.
- [8](#). McMoneagle (2002), 120.
- [9](#). McMoneagle (2002), 97.
- [10](#). Mumford, Rose and Goslin (1995).
- [11](#). McMoneagle (2002), 240; see also May (1996).
- [12](#). McMoneagle (2002), 240-41.
- [13](#). McMoneagle (2017).
- [14](#). <http://www.thiemeworks.com/interview-with-joe-mcmoneagle-remote-viewer/>