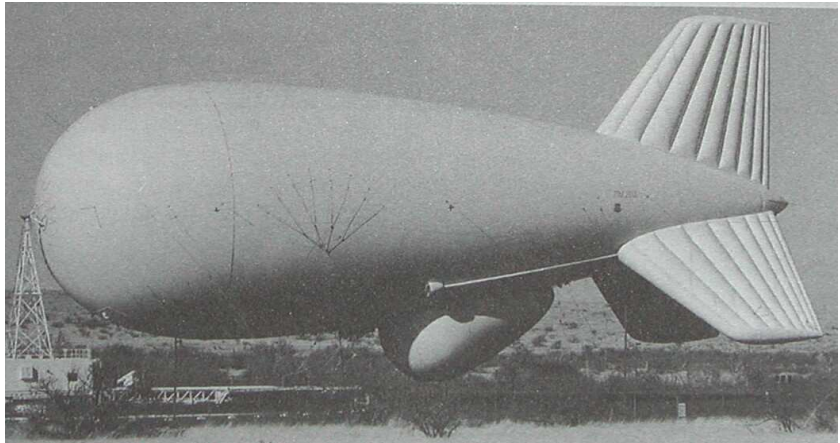


THE DARNDES'T THINGS

July 11, 2005

We were blithely cruising thru Arizona, when suddenly we saw a UFO! At least that was our first impression. The next thought, was that it was one of those parachutes with a man suspended below it. We finally settled on an advertising balloon.

Lo and Behold, we found that it is an Air Force operated balloon, called an aerostat, that is suspended 2 miles high and tethered to the ground, visible for 50 miles! It is 230 ft. long and weighs 6 tons and is bulletproof. It has a down-looking radar that detects low flying aircraft trying to enter the US from Mexico, with drugs or whatever. A series of these balloons line the border with Mexico. Now we know.



The Arizona countryside is steeped in history, some of which has to be dug out tenaciously. We had heard about, and subsequently searched and found the Triangle T Guest Ranch near Wilcox, AZ.

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, the US detained 3 Japanese diplomats who had prior knowledge of, and provided information to facilitate the raid. They were sent to this ranch and detained for months, guarded by troops, before being sent to New York, and then subsequently traded for the release of some of our captured diplomats.

Even though this has been written about in publications, not too many people know about this, even around here! We visited the Ranch and drove around the old buildings that are still used as cabins today. The place is off the traveled way and hard to find as the historical site of this event.

Dave & Bonnie