

UFO

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REGISTER, Sandusky, OH — Oct. 20, 1990 CR: V. Perry



United Press International

James Lawson of rural Milan, Illinois, stands on the ladder of his combine in front of the mysterious circle of flattened corn he found in his field while harvesting Tuesday. The

circle is a perfect 46 1/2-foot in diameter and had no sign or evidence of cutting or humans in the circle area.

Farmer may have had close encounter

MILAN, Ill. (UPI) — Farmer James Lawson doesn't know what made the perfect 50-foot circle in his cornfield, but he's not ruling out the possibility that it was an alien being.

The corn stalks are flattened in neat rows in clockwise swirl, hidden from the nearest intersection but visible from inside the field.

The phenomenon is common in Britain, with hundreds of such incidents reported in recent years.

Crop circle reports have also come in from the Soviet Union, Japan and New England.

"I was just making my first trip (on a combine) through the field," Lawson said. "The first thing I thought of was a UFO."

"I thought 'holy smokes, what is this?'"

"It feels weird. There's no road coming in," said Lawson, 70. "It could have been here quite a while, but the ears are still on the

stalks. Maybe it's been a month or so."

"When I went in to tell my wife, she didn't believe me," Lawson said. "She said, 'You're goofy.'"

Lawson has farmed for 42 years and although he did not think the crop circle is a hoax, he wasn't quite ready to accept the UFO theory.

"It couldn't have been the wind because the dike would have stopped it. And it's a perfect

circle. The stalks are mashed in perfect rows," he said. "Maybe it was a UFO that made the circle when it landed and then took off."

Other explanations from around the world range from the landing pods to crazed hedgehogs to a freak natural event.

Lawson said he would leave the circle alone and harvest around it.

"I think people would be interested," he said. "Who knows who might want to come and see this?"

Government Has Agreement With Outer Space Creatures, Mutual UFO Network Says

CHARLOTTE — More than 150 people attended the annual meeting Sunday of the Mutual UFO Network where they heard a hypothesis that the government has agreements with creatures from outer space.

Ufologist Ginger Richardson said according to the hypothesis, the government gets advanced technological knowledge in exchange for harmless medical experiments on humans. But according to the hypothesis, the aliens have violated the pact by implanting trackers in human brains, murdering humans for food and impregnating women to create hybrid offspring, she said.

Steven Greer of Asheville says all aliens aren't evil. A real chance exists for bilateral communication.

"The extraterrestrial civilizations are out there and are indeed wanting us to get to the place where they feel more comfortable having an exchange," said Greer, director of the Center for the Study of Extraterrestrial Intelligence in Asheville.

MUFON was founded in 1960 to investigate the UFO phenomenon. Topics at the meeting ranged from evil aliens abducting humans to creating an atmosphere for bilateral exchange.

SENTINEL, Gulf Breeze, FL — Sept. 27, 1990 CR: R. Reid

Dear Sentinel:

I know that UFOs exist. I lived in Chumulka Lake, Florida, that's out from Pace, Florida. One summer at the age of 10 I was living with my grandfather, Rev. James Harris. We were sitting on the porch and all of a sudden one just came down and stopped. Very large; very large. In about two to three minutes it started to spin and as it did some small ones came out. My grandparent was scared to death at that sight over our house. One small one came and stopped. When I knew anything again it was day but my right arm had swollen bad. My grandmother put some salve on it and in a few days it came down but I felt something in it, but marks about the size of a ballpoint pen. It doesn't bother me so it's still in my arm ever since that night. Every so often I have flashback dreams, even now at 43 I saw on T.V. something your paper covered - I would like to have a copy and maybe a photo of the craft. I feel that one day when they feel that it's safe, we will have more contact than just the crafts. I also have this gut feeling that we are kept in the dark about what the people know about other planets.

Thank you for your paper. Did you have a copy of one of the men or people from the craft? If so, please share it with me, there are some things that I know but I need to see what you have. All kinds have seen them, some up close.

Thanks for the information you are sharing.

Sincerely yours,
Royal Harris

Westmoreland County pair end silence on UFO sighting 25 years ago

By Mark Belko
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

For almost 25 years, William Bulebush and James R. Romansky Sr. have kept silent about their Steven Spielberg-like close encounter near Kecksburg in Westmoreland County.

Not any longer. Activated by the renewed interest in the sighting of a mysterious object in the skies over Westmoreland County in 1965, both men have come forward with tales of their discovery of the UFO.

Romansky is turning his encounter into an

appearance on the NBC television show, "Unsolved Mysteries," which will air a segment based on the incident this fall.

And while Bulebush is not reaching for that kind of stardom, he is talking publicly for the first time about what he saw.

Romansky concedes that the television spotlight brought his story out in the open, but not because of dreams of stardom. "I figured that if I went public, more people would come forward and start telling what they saw."

And when Bulebush heard that Romansky was about to break his silence on national television, he figured that there was no need

to keep his secret buried any longer.

"I just didn't want to say anything to anybody. Nobody else said anything. Why should I be the first to say anything? When I heard about the interview, I figured I would come in and say my part," he said.

Had they gone public immediately after the Dec. 9, 1965, encounter, both men feared, they would have been branded crazy by a skeptical public.

"At that time, if I said I saw this or that, they were ready to call the funny farm."

Romansky said. "Now people are inquisitive. They're not naive enough to believe that we're all alone."

Before going public, the only person outside their families who had heard their story was Stan Gordon, director of the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained, a Greensburg-based organization that investigates UFO sightings.

Different paths led the two men to the discovery of an acorn-shaped object they said was eight feet in diameter and 12 feet long with markings "like ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics."

While working on his car in his driveway that evening, Bulebush caught a glimpse of "a fireball going across the sky. It made a turn and came back a little bit. I crawled into the Corvair and took off [after it]."

His journey led him to a hillside outside Kecksburg where he spotted the object in the woods as it emitted a bluish glow, "like a welding arc," and went after it. Bulebush, then 40 years of age, found it nestled in a ravine.

In the aftermath of the incident, the official explanation was that the object was a meteorite. But Bulebush said the object he saw was no meteorite.

"When a meteor comes down, it makes a big hole. This didn't. It was like a smooth landing. I mean, I've seen too many pictures on television of meteorites falling. No way could this have been. It would have torn everything up. The only thing this tore up was the treetops. They weren't burnt or anything," he said.

The object "had no seams. It was a solid piece. It was crackling, like something cooling off," he said. It also "had funny writing on the back. It was none of our kind of writing."

Before falling into the woods, the object "made an S in the air ... just like it knew where it wanted to go."

So what was it?

"I thought it was something from outer space. I never saw anything like that around here or on television or anything," said Bulebush, who left the area before search crews arrived.

Romansky, then an 18-year-old volunteer firefighter called to duty because of fears that an airplane had crashed, was a member of one of the search crews.

What he and others found "was a big surprise. It was no airplane. There were no wings, no motors, no propellers, no fuselage."

"There were no windows, no doors, no cracks, no seams. It was just one giant piece of metal. It was a gold and bronze color. It was weird."

Like Bulebush, Romansky has no doubts about what he saw.

"My personal feeling is that it was an alien spacecraft trying to make a friendly approach, and something just went haywire," he said.

Shortly after finding the object, search crews were ordered out of the area by two men in trench coats, and the Kecksburg Fire Hall was converted into a military command post, complete with armed guards, Romansky said.

Later in the evening, a flatbed truck left the area with a covered cargo, he said. Romansky, 44, believes it was the UFO.

By coming forward with his own tale, the Derry man hopes to entice others into telling what they saw that night.

"There's a lot more [witnesses] than me. You're talking 20 to 30 people — witnesses who saw it hit, who saw the military going in, who saw the military taking it out. Everyone had a piece of it."

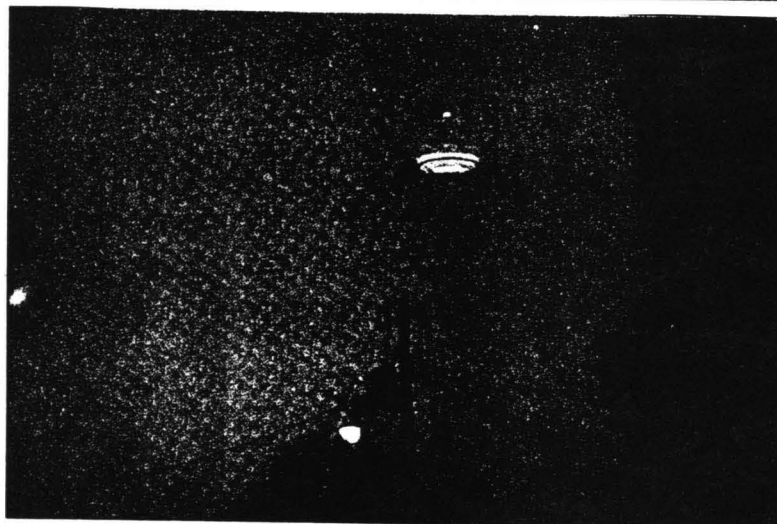
Gordon said the object, first sighted over Ontario, Canada, was traveling too slowly to be a meteorite, appeared to make controlled turns and did not fit the pattern of a rocket or missile.

He said he believed the military had been hiding the truth about the incident and about other UFO sightings elsewhere.

REGISTER, New Haven, CT
Oct. 12, 1990 CR: J. White

FAR OUT

UFO
abductees
and
researchers
converge in
North Haven
this weekend
seeking
the truth
about
visitors
from
outer space



A UFO hovered over Gulf Breeze, Fla., in November 1987, one of many well-publicized sightings photographed by Ed Walters, who will attend this weekend's UFO conference in North Haven.

By Jim Shelton
Register Staff

NORTH HAVEN — The pickup lines will be flying here at the Holiday Inn this weekend. Extraterrestrial pickups, that is. You know, spaceships, unidentified flying objects, strange visitors from another planet, that sort of thing. More than a dozen UFO researchers and people who claim to have been abducted by UFOs will meet at the fourth annual international conference on "The UFO Experience" Saturday and Sunday.

Ed Walters of Gulf Breeze, Fla., for example, will tell the conference, which is open to the public, about his experiences with UFOs since Nov. 11, 1987. That was the day he came home from his construction job and saw a round, glowing object with what appeared to be black windows hovering near his driveway.

"I went in the house and grabbed an old Polaroid camera," Walters says. "I saw that the object was going across the neighborhood." He took five pictures (including the above photo).

Walters says that several months later, while at a local park, he experienced 75 minutes of "missing time."

"I was struck with a white light," he says. "What seemed like a split second later, I was standing 20 feet away from where I was standing before, and I looked at my watch and discovered an hour and 15 minutes had gone by. It was bizarre."

Walters' series of sightings, which he says have been shared by hundreds of other people in Gulf Breeze, have been featured in two episodes of NBC's "Unsolved Mysteries." His

the process with "abductee" Betty Andreasson Luca of Connecticut, whose experiences are the subject of the recent book, "The Watchers."

■ James Harder, a bioengineer who will talk about his research into hundreds of alleged UFO abduction cases. Harder says dozens of alien races are observing the Earth, not all of them benevolent.

■ California researcher Ann Druffel, who will report on her research into cases where people have allegedly successfully resisted abduction attempts by UFOs.

Registration for the conference is \$75 per day, or \$15 per event.

On Saturday, registration will begin at 8:30 a.m., with the conference running from 9:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

On Sunday, registration is at 9 a.m., with events from 9:15 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Besides Walters and his wife, Frances, other scheduled conference speakers include:

■ Former Apollo astronaut Brian O'Leary, who says a Martian geological formation called "the Face of Mars" may be evidence of extraterrestrial life.

■ Travis Walton, of Arizona, who will tell of his 1975 "abduction" by alien beings. Walton says the aliens were about 4 feet tall with high-domed, hairless heads.

■ Canadian Stanton Friedman, who will share his findings regarding a 1947 incident in which he says a UFO crashed in New Mexico and was recovered by the military.

■ Hypnotist Fred Max, of Cheshire, who will explain how, he says, he has hypnotically regressed UFO abductees to remember their experiences. Max will demonstrate

THE INFO

Event: "The UFO Experience" conference

Time: 9:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Saturday and 9:15 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday

Place: Holiday Inn, North Haven, planet Earth

Cost: \$75 a day or \$15 per event

book, "The Gulf Breeze Sightings," is to be made into a television miniseries next year.

"I am an average person, or at least I used to be," he adds. "Once you've taken photographs of a UFO, you then have to decide whether to keep your mouth shut or not. When you do step forward, you put your reputation on the line."

Conference organizer John White, of Cheshire, says a big part of the event will focus on government suppression of UFO information. One of the conference's main speakers will be journalist Howard Blum, author of "Out There: The Government's Secret Quest for Extraterrestrials."

"The major UFO research organizations, plus the major individual researchers, want to make a collective call for President Bush to take the wraps off the governmental coverup of the UFO situation and share the truth of it with the world," White says.



Peter R. Hvizdak/Register

John H. Bielinski of Wallingford with one of two alien mannequins he plans to take to this weekend's UFO conference in North Haven. The model is based on descriptions by witnesses.

Dear Editor:

Mr. Mayor, Ed Gray, I am going to vote for you even though I probably shouldn't. You made a very serious mistake when you called a number of good Gulf Breeze people "liars" regarding the sighting of UFOs in our area. Most of these good people will probably vote for you anyway.

Over 40 years ago my brother and I saw a strange object that was not man made. It was very early morning, in the summer, when we saw this object flash down and then back straight up. When we finally decided to make this news known we were accused of drinking white whiskey before breakfast.

I am no liar, as I know what I saw or then again, I don't know what I saw.

Regards,
Bob Glasscock

SENTINEL, Gulf Breeze,
FL - Oct. 25, 1990
CR: R. Reid

CR: S. Gordon

Amorous PUFOG member in love or spaced out?

By Jack D. Welch

I got lost driving to Mt. Hood Community College for the monthly meeting of PUFOG (538-0836). I can't find Gresham, yet I'm supposed to believe that



AT LARGE

aliens travel billions of light years across outer space and land in Clackamas county. On purpose.

PUFOG (pronounced "poo-fog") is the Portland Unidentified Flying Object Group. And this was not my first visit. Last year I listened to Ron Hoag of Molalla, a normal-enough looking guy, talk about the time he saw a pulsating, 50-foot red ball hovering over his car as he drove down Highway 213.

In the next few days, beautiful, wrinkleless humanoids visited him in his living room. In 1982, the aliens said the United States was headed toward a nuclear war ... within three years. That's when Hoag first went public with his experiences. His phone was tapped, he said, and his mail, intercepted. Visitors — government types — stopped by his place of business.

The aliens told Hoag that they want humans to continue on Earth (how generous!), but if we destroy ourselves, then the planet will be repopulated by you-know-who. They are not gods, more like science officers working on a specific project. Out of town.

Ms. Layne DeWitz, a hypnotherapist, has never herself experienced a UFO contact. But a number of her patients have. Like the woman who was visited by a little man. After some testing, she gave him "one

of her eggs." Another patient, it seems, was not a normal female, but the offspring of her mother and an alien entity. Probably answered the wrong Personals ad.

By now, you're doubtlessly wondering, DO SPACE FOLKS FOOL AROUND? (Does a bear wee-wee in the woods?)

This October, PUFOG's program was entitled "Alien Abduction for Crossbreeding Purposes." It really was. A total of 428 *homo sapiens* showed up. Snicker if you must. Given the sheer number of planets OUT THERE, anybody who plays Lotto America should believe in UFOs.

Initially, Bruce Smith thought his experiences were nothing more than very unusual dreams. Then, just a year ago, sleeping in a mobile home in Matena, Wash., the bearded, burly Smith awoke, glanced out the window, and saw a UFO. His first.

He tried to move, but couldn't. When he finally forced his right hand to lift off the bed, the spaceship disappeared. Blinked off. The next three days, he'd wake in the middle of the night, fully aroused. He just knew there was an alien woman out in the woods behind the house. He knew she'd come in if he asked. "I felt debauched ... so I went out to the kitchen and made some tea."

Smith told his therapist about his sexual longings for a space female. The counselor pointed out that his personal life — he was going through a divorce — was not fulfilling his needs, so his subconscious was creating an imaginary love interest. Smith wanted to believe this.

Then one night — accompanied by "two little guys" — an alien woman showed up in Smith's bedroom. She — he calls her his honeybun — was about 5 feet 6 inches, naked except for a black wig, "not bad looking" with very

weird eyes. (Sounds just like a lady I used to date in Salem.)

She comes into his bedroom in the middle of the night ... music up, fade to black.

Soon thereafter, Smith heard the story of another man who'd had experiences

me," boasts Smith. "I've got kids in space." But no earth children. According to a mental voyage he took to a galactic nursery, Smith has 30-40 alien offspring. How many in the crossbreeding program? Either 340,000 or 34 million. The message was un-

ground bases in Los Alamos that are operated jointly by aliens and U.S. authorities.

He now believes that he lost his virginity to an alien at age 14. He believes his tentmate at Boy Scout camp was an alien.

Do I believe him? I was never a Boy Scout. The idea of spending a week in the woods with a bunch of adolescent males in uniform always seemed, well, alien to me.

You can judge for yourself on Sunday, Nov. 18, at 2 p.m., when PUFOG sponsors a panel of five abductees from the Pacific Northwest. They'll discuss their kidnappings by intergalactic adventurers, "using slides and other visual aids."

It's at Mt. Hood Community College, if you can find it.

Given the sheer number planets OUT THERE, anybody who plays Lotto America should believe in UFOs.

just like his own. Smith burst into tears. Emotion, relief, flowed out. "Those tears are my proof," he says. "I knew then that my alien sex life was real."

Whew! I suddenly had an incredible urge for a cigarette. I was willing to take the man at face value, but then...

"I'm proud they picked

clear. According to Smith, the offspring will be the "second generation" which will colonize Earth in 2020-2030. Around about then.

He also believes he has been abducted by "the government" — I assume ours — because the feds want to know what the aliens are up to. He believes there are under-

TIMES, New York, NY — Oct. 19, 1990

Books of The Times

America's Top-Secret Sky Watch

By RICHARD SEVERO

Nobody should rush out to buy Howard Blum's "Out There" in the belief that it will resolve the question of the existence of extraterrestrial beings or whether the people who claim to see flying saucers are really hallucinating or lying. That is not this book's mission.

For in trying to unmask the mystery that the Government has created around its research into U.F.O.'s, Mr. Blum, a former reporter for The New York Times, tells much more about humans than he does extraterrestrials.

The Government has kept the work of scientists secret because, according to Mr. Blum, "keeping secrets is a habit."

"It is the way officials ... are taught to behave."

But why should the efforts of visionaries be locked up in the nation's attic like a crazed relative in a Gothic novel? "Because now we are the end of history," the author says, and "at the end of a politics of global conflict ... all that is left for a great nation to protect and believe in is its tattered secrets."

The story he tells in reaching this conclusion hardly constitutes a "startling exposé," although the jacket of "Out There" so touts it. The contents are illuminating, not startling; the book's real value is not the light it shines on the needlessly murky workings of government. It is rather the rich reporting on the human drama that has unfolded in and out of government over the years, some of it unknown, much of it quite public, all of it fascinating.

It is not startling to learn that since the end of World War II, scientists pursued extraterrestrial research long after the Government seemed to lose interest and the public became bored with all those television programs about unidentified flying objects. Such research was to be expected. For a nation with America's pretensions, to do otherwise would have been assiduously backward; there is too much unknown about the blackness beyond the stars.

Nor is it startling to learn that believers in possible extraterrestrial

Out There

The Government's Secret Quest for Extraterrestrials

By Howard Blum
300 pages. Simon & Schuster. \$19.95.



Sigrid Estrada/Simon & Schuster

beings have their debunkers. "The whole idea is nonsense," William Proxmire, the former Democratic Senator from Wisconsin, is quoted as saying. "If there are other creatures out there, where are they? Why haven't they landed on the White House lawn?" Mr. Blum's reporting may not surprise anyone but it will document the level of the national dialogue.

"Out There" contains excellent science reporting and lucid explanations of the nature of the research. But the book is not without a few bumps.

For example, Mr. Blum reports that Jesse Jackson was once investigated by an Air Force Intelligence officer who tried unsuccessfully to find "some long-hidden scrap of information about Presidential candidate Jackson's ministerial past, a secret tucked away in a dusty corner of his congregation in Chicago that Air Force Intelligence could discover — and use." Why? To use how? And by whom? Has this ever happened before? Is it legal? The author uncharacteristically skips away from his own lead.

The book's most distressing demerit is its use of a technique known as reconstruction, an approach that has become popular among journalists, alas. The author pushes fiction hard against the novel; his book frequently reads like make-believe, even though Mr. Blum reminds his readers it is all true. To accomplish a more seamless narrative, he routinely uses third-party accounts of situations where he was not present, then reports many of them without attribution. As a result, they read as though Mr. Blum had witnessed them personally. Not until after his final chapter does the author own up to this and explain why he did it. He says he wanted to show how people think and so, "the book's style and structure

were influenced by the narrative pace of popular science fiction. ..."

He says that wherever possible, he corroborated the stories he heard. There is no reason to doubt him. Still, his book is journalism, not science fiction. Journalism's power and its charm is that it can't always cut like butter; and in reading about the chaos of the real world, these are healthy things. Mr. Blum's skill as a storyteller is such that little, if any, of the book's fluidity would have been lost if he had more frequently attributed his facts to his sources. In any event, his disclosure ought to come before his narrative, not after it.

One of the most engaging parts of "Out There" deals not with secrets but with the public antics of the people of Elmwood (pop. 991), in northwestern Wisconsin. In most ways, Elmwoodites are like other Americans (Mr. Blum says they are mad about bowling and microwaved hot dogs). But many of them have parted company with the rest of Middle America and become convinced that unidentified flying objects have been whooshing over their town, following cars, disturbing electrical systems and generally scaring the pants off people.

It may be that greed has now replaced awe in Elmwood. Vexed because their village never attracted the tourism of nearby places that offered festivals honoring the mosquito and the cucumber, Elmwood's leaders decided to try to attract extraterrestrials, who, in turn, would attract tourists. Among the proposals was a huge landing field for U.F.O.'s, a musical extravaganza, and even a huge, illuminated depiction of a man and a woman having sex (in an alfalfa field), large enough to be seen from aloft. The sex display was soon abandoned; there was, after all, no guarantee the aliens would have cared a jot.

SENTINEL, Gulf Breeze, FL
Oct. 4, 1990 CR: R. Reid

UFO seen in Gulf Breeze area

By Joe Barron
MUFON Field Representative

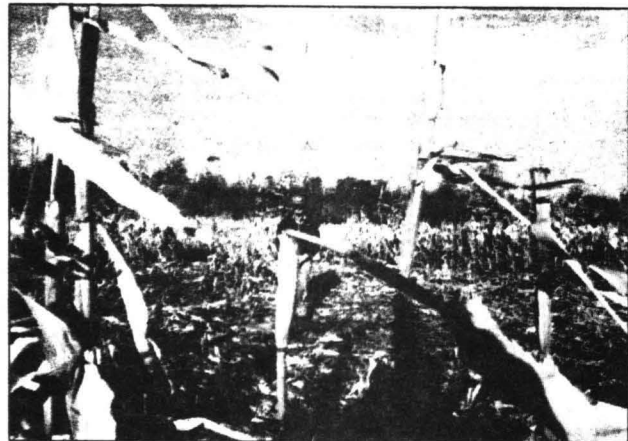
A very large blue-white ball of light appeared in the western sky going east in the vicinity of the Midway area at 5:30 a.m. on Friday, 28 July 1990. Mr. George Conover of Conover Lane was sitting on his front porch overlooking the Santa Rosa Sound when he spotted the very brilliant light which covered approximately 25 to 30 degrees of the horizon in one second. It left no wake, trail or residue of any kind as it traveled that space in such a short time.

Mr. Conover stated that no aircraft or vehicle, to his knowledge,

could have covered that distance in that space of time. Mr. Conover is a retired educator, has several degrees and served as a Liberator pilot for the Navy during WWII. He shares his lovely and spacious

home with his wife, Margaret, who among her many avocations, is an artist. She thinks that she had a sighting a couple of years ago, but isn't really sure. The details of the craft's size, speed and altitude haven't been worked out at press time; however, from the preliminary data, it appears that it was a very large craft traveling at a tremendous speed.

Unidentified Farm Object shakes state



Here's Ed Lawson on the spot where they, or it, or nothing, landed.

By Wes Smith

MILAN, Ill. — The otherworldly nightmare began here along Turkey Hollow Creek, on the farm of Ed and Faye Lawson.

Twelve days ago, Ed was harvesting corn when he found a perfect circle of knocked-down cornstalks in his field.

He mentioned it to a local radio station reporter. And faster than Cher in pursuit of a new romance, word got out that a spaceship may have landed in Rock Island County.

Ever since, strange beings and assorted experts have been crawling all over the Lawson place.

It is the Invasion of the Corn Stompers, and its net result is

conflicting theories, startling revelations, suspicions of a hoax—and a media circus that has totally disrupted orderly farm operations.

"Last night, the sheriff had to get a bunch of them out of the field. And they were from Peoria," says Ed, 70.

People call. They call and come. They come without calling. At all hours. In chartered buses, even.

The invaders have turned nearby Illinois Highway 92 into a parking lot. Cars wait there for a space to open on the roadside.

They climb over Ed's fences and stroll past his "Keep Out! Private Property! No Trespassing!" signs. They spook his

sheep with their NewsCopters.

They ignore, or fail to respect, his four large bulls.

"I can't believe they go in there with the bulls," says Faye.

According to one ardent UFO believer, the Lawsons and everybody else should steer clear of the mysterious circle altogether. Bulls or no bulls.

"This woman called and said, 'Don't get in the circle!'" Ed says.

"She kept me on the phone for 45 minutes. She said the aliens spray stuff on the ground, and if you touch it, you'll be marked for life and they'll find you no matter where you are."

"It's been a real hassle," he adds.

"I'm trying to get the crops in, and the telephone calls start at 4 in the morning. By 7 a.m., I've been on three radio shows," he says.

"I'll tell you one thing to come out of this, I'm getting to know how many radio stations there are in the country."

And how many "kooks, goofs and squirrels" too, he says.

The 'government man'

One earnest fellow from Chicago telephoned at 4 a.m. one morning to get the Lawsons' permission to view the flattened circle of crops.

"He said he was with the federal government," said Ed, his eyes scanning the heavens.

When the "government man" arrived, he was cagey about his affiliations. TV reporters on the scene tried to get a fix on him.

"He told the cameraman to stay away," Ed says.

The supposed G-man brought his own camera. Inside the circle, he dropped to the ground, held the lens just inches from the ears of corn compacted into the hard soil, and began snapping pictures.

"Then he stood up and said, 'Well, they were here,'" Ed recalls.

Who was here? Ed asked. "The spacemen," replied the G-man.

He found footprints, he told Ed. And he knew them for spaceman footprints because "their feet aren't like ours. They are on backwards."

"Spacemen walk backwards," the man told the farmer.

"He said this fit a pattern of landings around the country," Ed says. "He told me to call Washington and ask for the 'grid' they'd drawn up."

A local TV reporter took all that in and came up with this keen assessment, which she whispered to Ed: "I think he's squirrely, don't you?"

Ed, who is not a trained broadcast journalist but knows his woodland creatures, replied, "I know he's a squirrel!"

Though skeptical of any extraterrestrial-in-the-corn-patch theories, the Lawsons really don't know what to make of the circle.

"Like one reporter said, we can't prove they are not out there, so until somebody does prove it, we have to assume they might be out there," Ed offers.

The stubbled hub of this controversy lies near the northwest corner of a 100-acre field that is bordered on the north by the four-lane Illinois 92, on the east by the Turkey Hollow Road blacktop and on the west by Turkey Hollow Creek.

Ed discovered it Oct. 16, from the cab of his combine. He got out and inspected the circle, suspecting at first that a local hot-air balloonist may have put down in the field.

"But it was down like a mat, and in a perfect circle like someone had taken a cookie cutter to the field," Ed says.

"I went and told my wife, and she said, 'You're going goofy.'"

'It's a perfect circle'

Ed defended his mental state by reminding his wife that similar circles had been found in fields in Europe (as well as Kansas, Missouri, Florida and Canada).

He decided to call a local radio station and talk to its farm reporter, who quickly put him on tape and on the public airwaves of a UFO-infatuated world.

And so, as Ed Lawson has since told countless radio, TV, newspaper, magazine and even "Un-



Whatever made the circle in Ed Lawson's cornfield, it leveled all the stalks in a clockwise pattern.



Chicago Tribune Map

solved Mysteries" TV series reporters, as well as college professors, amateur UFO experts and assorted bold trespassers:

"It's a perfect circle with a diameter of 46½ feet no matter how you measure it. Some stalks are broken lower than others, but all are bent in a clockwise direction. Some ears are embedded deep in the ground, so whatever was here was heavy, because the ground is hard."

What about those fresh holes just outside the circle, Ed? "Oh those. I guess the moles are coming to look at it, too."

The chain theory

In the center of the circle is a smaller, bare circle about 1 foot in diameter. Some suspect that a pole was stuck in the ground there and a long chain, or something, was stretched from it and pulled around to flatten the crops in a neat circle.

But assorted experts have dug around without finding any evidence to support that theory, Ed says.

"I examined it, and since there are no human footprints, and neither the wind nor a helicopter could have done it, the only thing you can't rule out is a UFO," says Grant Callison of Galesburg.

Callison, 77, a retired newspaper composing room staffer, is state director of Mutual UFO Network Inc., an international UFO-sighting reporting group.

The man from MUFON said he had never seen such a circle in his 15 years of investigating UFO reports, although he has handled dozens of sightings in central Illinois, as well as having made one personally.

Callison turned in the Milan circle as his fourth possible UFO incident of 1990. "Everybody has a right to their own opinion," he says, "and I think this could have been a UFO."

In the opinion of meteorologists, who investigated crop circles found in Kansas in September, they are usually caused by either wind or pranksters.

Ouija boards and crosses

Reports of crop circles were first recorded in England in 1678. More than 300 circles were reported in Europe last year, the largest number ever recorded, according to news reports.

A brouhaha over crop circles found in a wheatfield in Wiltshire, England, last summer ended with the discovery of Ouija boards and wooden crosses in their center. An international team of investigators declared it a hoax.

The circles have been found elsewhere in the world in sand, snow and rice paddies, and variously attributed to whirlwinds, witches, magnetic forces, animals, spaceships—and tricksters, experts say.

After examining the Milan circle, Robert Frank, head of the physics department at Augustana College in Rock Island, holds to the latter theory.

At the Lawsons' request, Frank took Geiger counter readings in the circle just one day after Ed discovered it. Frank says he found no abnormal radiation readings and no evidence of intense heat.

Evidence of a prank

Footprints and other evidence of human activity might have been wiped away by wind and rain, because it is possible, from the condition of the downed crops, that the circle was formed a month before it was discovered, Frank explains.

So, after careful thought and discussion with his fellow professors, Frank offers this scientific conclusion: "My view is that if this was caused by some kind of space vehicle, then there are lots of questions about how it was done."

"But, if it were a prank, then there are only a few questions about how it was done."

Rock Island County Sheriff Mike Grchan, whose detectives checked out the circle, says he believes some pranksters heard reports of the crop circles elsewhere in the world and decided to have a little pre-Halloween fun in his jurisdiction.

Still, Grchan concedes, "It is difficult to compress corn that hard when it is 8 or 9 feet tall, and if it was kids, they usually have to tell someone who tells someone else, and we haven't gotten any feedback like that at all. . . ."

Still on the fence

To Ed Lawson, who is still on the fence concerning this mystery, it seems that, for every non-believer, there is a believer, even when you talk to sheriffs.

A former sheriff of a nearby

county visited Ed's field and told him "not to sell this stuff short," the farmer relates. "He said that he and a friend once followed a UFO for one whole night."

"He said it had halo lights and was spinning like a top. He said he never reported it, because he was still the sheriff then, and he didn't want people to think he was goofy."

The Lawsons are also unwilling to discredit the UFO-believers, because they have been contacted by two sources who believe they might have encountered the UFO that might have done a doughnut in the farmer's cornfield.

The first was an unidentified caller, an older man, who told Ed he was driving with his wife near Ed's field in late August in his brand new car when suddenly the car's engine started cutting out and the car began shuddering.

"He said it seemed as if a helicopter was trying to land on his car," Ed recounts. The man had the car checked by the dealer, who could find nothing wrong with it.

After the movie, a scare

The most intriguing report the Lawsons have received came from Lucinda Puckett of New Boston, about 35 miles to the southwest.

Puckett recounted an incident that happened in late August to her daughter, Tonia, 17, and three teenage friends—all of them honor students, the mother notes.

The double-daters had been to a Milan movie theater to see "Arachnophobia."

"The movie didn't scare me," Tonia says today. "But this thing did."

She spotted a strange light in the sky as they left the parking lot, but didn't mention it "because I didn't want the others to think I was stupid."

But then her date, Dave Zimmerman, 18, ("class valedictorian," her mother noted), spied it too. Dave, an Augustana freshman, drove toward it.

"We thought it looked like a street light or a star, then a tower light, then a helicopter hovering. We kept getting close to it, and it didn't move," Tonia says.

The teens rolled down the car windows and shut off the radio, but the object made no sound.

"It was about treetop height and a big geometrical shape, with

lights around it in all colors," Tonia says.

When they drove to a spot directly beneath it, the object took off. They then "blew all stop signs" trying to keep up, Tonia adds.

When they speeded up, the object did. When they slowed, it slowed, she says.

At one point, the object disappeared below the horizon and, just when they thought they'd lost it, popped back up.

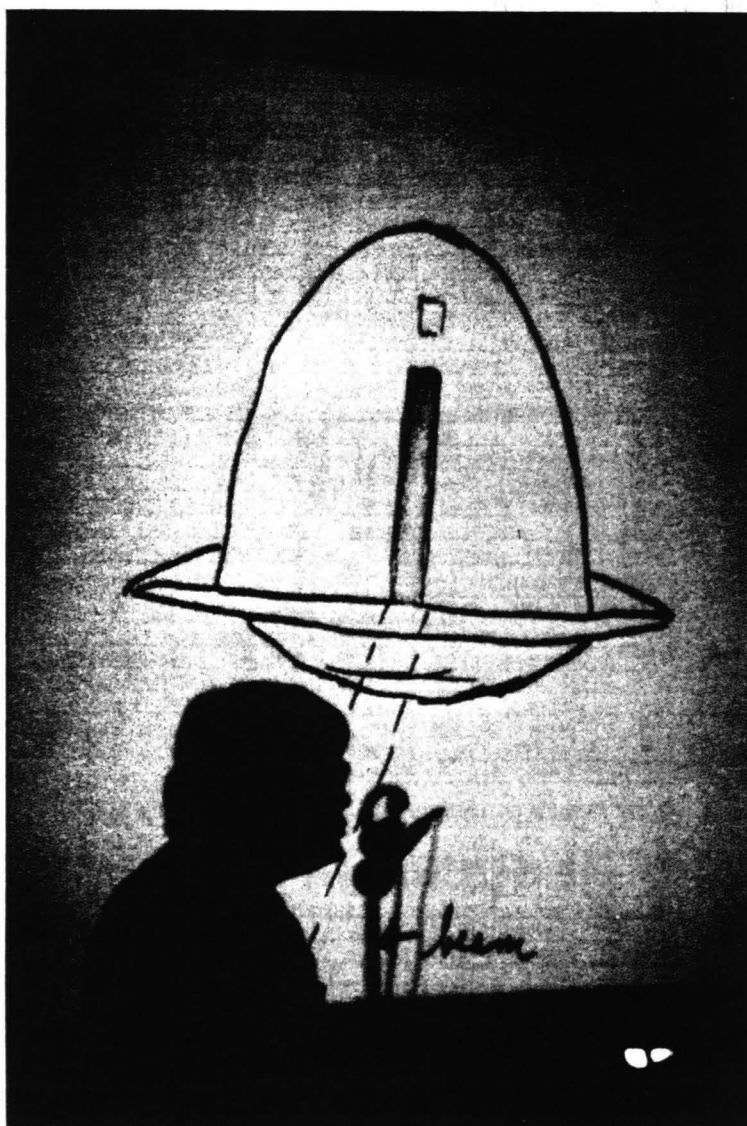
"It took off again, but when we got to Turkey Hollow Road, it disappeared," Tonia reports.

Her mother said the incident so disturbed the teens that each of them went home and awakened their parents.

"The boys even got their dads up," she says.

The Lawsons are intrigued by Puckett's story, and they've had some interesting experiences in the last two weeks, but all in all they say, they'd just as soon get back down to good old earth.

"I really don't want any more to do with it. I've got work to do," said Ed last week as he headed back to his uncut fields. "My wife told me if I find another one of those circles, I'm supposed to combine right through it and keep on going."



Alien encounters

By DAVID JACOBSON
Courant Staff Writer

The buzzword among UFO believers is "missing time." They lose track of time and wonder where the hours went. Then under hypnosis they recall a spacecraft and being abducted by aliens. Maybe the aliens did surgery on them. It's overwhelming. Well, you don't need to go through all that to feel strange and overwhelmed. Spending the past weekend at the North Haven Holiday Inn would have been enough. It was home to "The UFO Experience: A Weekend With Researchers and Contactees." There you could have met beings as unusual in their own way as the 4-foot-tall,

After witnessing a nighttime UFO landing while stationed with the Air Force in England 10 years ago, Warren said, he was attacked by ufologists who didn't think the craft — a basketball-size amber glow that silently exploded to form a solid vehicle — or the creatures he saw — big-headed and hovering — fit previous patterns.

In horn rims and a Dodgers cap, Warren said his fantastic experience, the reality of which even he still questions, led to divorce and has had lasting social consequences.

"Initially, I would tell anyone. Then you leave the room and hear the laughs," he said.

After a hiatus from the UFO-conference circuit, he has returned to "find out what the current hype is." He is working on a book.

"The witnesses are the only ones worth their salt..." Warren said. "These others who make money off us, haven't been through it... We've all been used."

Conferees debated varying versions of the unknowable, the irresolvable: Why don't the aliens more openly communicate with us?

Michael Hochman, 44, of Paramus, N.J., wearing a gold chain and handing out cards advertising his new singles' yearbook, suggested aliens are too advanced: "Our planet is in its infancy. Why would we want to discuss our problems with dogs?"

But his companion, Sherry Kotler, 40, of Scarsdale, N.Y., asserted that if the aliens revealed themselves they would draw mankind's ire:

That's because they've been abducting people, operating on them, draining the blood from cattle.

"I think they're interbreeding [with humans], because they're failing genetically, their race is dying," she said.

And for all the talk of a government coverup, another recurrent theme confided by believers in the back rooms was that the government has been slowly leaking the truth, preparing the public for the reality of alien space visitors — especially working with Hollywood on movies and TV shows.

"It used to be all aliens were looking to kill you, now recently we have 'Cocoon,' and 'E.T.' and now [on TV] 'Alien Nation,' where we're working together," said Jean Munzer, director of the Metaphysical Center of New Jersey.

"I think it's necessary for us to get more into accepting these things... I think the government is leaking it out."

When it came to the lectures themselves, audiences were rapt. Questions took off from presentations without questioning underlying assumptions.

■ Late Saturday afternoon, Ed and Frances Walters of Gulf Breeze, Fla., presented a slide show of their now famed late '80s encounters.

They told of Ed chasing an alien across his back deck and being grabbed by a sudden blue beam. They showed pictures of glowing spaceships hovering in the Florida sky and even one of Frances running

away from the alien beam.

Afterward, there were no questions about the photographs possibly being artful double exposures, as debunkers claim.

Instead, books were autographed. Questions were raised about a rumored TV mini-series. About the results of hypnosis sessions in which Ed supposedly relived "missing time."

Indeed, the Walters have turned the debunkers' attacks in their favor. Ed said that a flying-saucer model found secreted in his old house was planted there.

■ Early Sunday morning, dark-suited ufologist Ann Druffel from Pasadena, Calif., lashed out at alien abductors who "treat human beings as having no rights."

Some people think the aliens are here to speed our evolution, Druffel conceded. Even if it's true, that's no excuse for traumatizing acts, she said.

We may not be able to resist technologically superior beings who arrive in space ships, she said. But as for the "night visitors," who walk through bedroom walls before abducting people and taking them off to ships, she has researched effective ways to beat them back:

"Righteous anger, sustained mental struggle, protective rage and prayer," she summed up.

After 34 years of research, Druffel said, "I have no firm proof myself of the physical reality of abductions."

But audience questions did not address whether such bedroom incidents might be dreams, or intense hallucinations associated with pre-

■ At left, ufologist Ann Druffel gives a lecture at "The UFO Experience: A weekend with researchers and contactees," a two-day conference in North Haven. The lecture suggested how audience members, below, could defend themselves against alien abductions.

David Bruneau / Special to The Courant



big-headed, gray-skinned aliens that many at the conference believe are checking out this planet.

These folks, 300-plus, carried their UFO faith like a sci-fi force field, warding off skepticism, sucking certainties from 14½ hours of lectures, including one titled "How to Defend Yourself Against Alien Abductions."

Your first close encounter would have been in a hospitality area.

A strapping blond guy in a black T-shirt, David Daniotti, 26, had arrived in a silver Isuzu pickup, not a spaceship; he came from South Windsor, not Zeta Reticula (a star some ufologists think aliens are coming from).

Like many at the conference, he got into UFOs after seeing something. It swooped over Tolland one night, banking too sharply for a plane, he insisted, with strobe lights that "looked funny, not like normal strobe lights."

Talking with dozens of others who had seen things glowing and hovering, he was convinced. "My life has become a science-fiction movie," he said.

Daniotti believes the government knows all about the alien visitors — a widely held view at the conference and the subject of several lectures.

He also demonstrated the sharp, jujitsu logic of the UFO believers, logic that turns a skeptic's question into further support for the aliens' existence.

Why don't the aliens just land in Bushnell Park at lunchtime and make themselves known? Why all this swooping and hovering in the rural night?

"If we discovered a group of natives on an island and if this group of natives believed

and post-sleep states.

Hochman asked why alien abductors seem to pick on some people repeatedly. Druffel replied, "People who feel terror and are unable to fight it off are more prone to attack."

■ Sunday afternoon, Bob Luca, 51, a well-known Connecticut abductee, was hypnotized on stage and drowsily recounted his being placed on a spaceship operating table by five aliens.

Afterward, the questions focused more on details of his experience and the aliens' "amnesia block" than on whether hypnosis draws forth facts. One hypnosis debunker calls the relaxed state "a royal road to fantasy."

Outside the motel Sunday afternoon, Pat Marcattilio, 42, a postal worker from Trenton, N.J., sold used UFO books out of the trunk of his big brown Grand Prix. On weekends, he hits conferences all over the East Coast.

"There are only about four or five [alien] abduction experts in the world, and I'm one of them," he said.

His companion, Alice Haggerty, 35, of Trenton, said she's been abducted dozens of times. She said she's relived nine incidents under hypnosis. Marcattilio and Haggerty said she lost a baby at three months that was half-alien.

Suzanne Paul from Reese, Texas, snapped Haggerty's picture.

"It couldn't have lived here anyway," Paul assured Haggerty. "Though I think there are [alien] hybrids living here on Earth. They're more perceptive."

they were the most intelligent, most knowledgeable on all the Earth, and we approached them with Stealth fighters and aircraft carriers, they wouldn't be able to handle it; there'd be upheaval," Daniotti said.

And there can be Messianic overtones to knowing the UFOs are here. "You know that in your lifetime something is going to happen. The announcement [by the government on aliens' reality] is going to be made. You try to prepare yourself."

And, Daniotti asserted, "there are a lot of discussions in these back rooms that are above top secret."

Indeed, morning 'til night, the hallways are abuzz:

"... I can't talk to my family about this. I'm not a wacko..."

"... It would raise havoc. People are not ready to know..."

"... [Aliens] are not all benevolent, I'm sure..."

For most at the conference, "believer" was too weak a term.

Take Robert Bletchman, 58, a Manchester attorney. His speech staccato, his horn-rim aviators slipping down his nose, he decried "new age cockamamie" in the UFO movement. The public has lost its critical judgment, he said. "Everything's possible, but everything is not equally plausible."

Yet when it comes to extraterrestrial UFOs, he said, "This is beyond faith, beyond belief, I know."

To a sympathetic outsider, in the absence of an actual saucer or alien being, the source of this certainty seemed perpetually out of reach.

Officially, the government stopped studying UFOs in 1969 — though much evidence suggests it has continued to do so secretly. Filling that vacuum, ufologists are forever invoking secret documents and conspiracies.

One set of papers in particular, which supposedly show the coverup of a 1947 flying-saucer crash in New Mexico in which the government recovered alien bodies, has become the field's Dead Sea scrolls. Scholarly papers are published on the authenticity of their signatures and style.

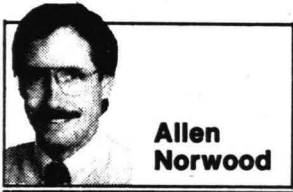
Blurry photographs of glowing discs are computer enhanced and analyzed. It's all a bit like submitting the Shroud of Turin to magnetic resonance image scan, an attempt to lend scientific certainty to mystery.

At conferences like this, organizations, researchers and witnesses subtly vie for the mantle of credibility and popularity. Yet Larry Warren, 30, of Glens Falls, N.Y., insisted the UFO subculture can be stifling.



David Bruneau / Special to The Courant

■ Christine Morciglio of New York City looks over a selection of UFO books on display at "The UFO Experience: A weekend with researchers and contactees."



Allen Norwood

UFOs, U.S. In Secret Alliance?

First, before we get to talk of extraterrestrials and secret government treaties with creatures from other worlds or dimensions, a short vocabulary lesson:

"Greys" are the creatures described by many Americans who report encounters with aliens.

"For some interesting reason, the majority of abduction accounts by people in the U.S. — but not anywhere else in the world — involve the gray entities," said Ginger Richardson of Charlotte.

Greys stand 3 or 4 feet tall and have large, bald heads. They have huge, dark eyes, nearly invisible noses and no obvious ears.

"Ufologist" is the word coined to describe people who study purported UFO phenomena. And, of course, who love to speculate and share their theories.

Richardson hears the word often. She's an aspiring ufologist who hangs out with other ufologists.

She'll be one of five speakers at this weekend's meeting in Charlotte of the N.C. Mutual UFO Network, or MUFON. The first anniversary meeting will be 1-5:45 p.m. Sunday, at the Pfeiffer College Charlotte campus, 1040 E. Woodlawn Rd.

Admission for nonmembers will be \$1, said George Fawcett of Lincolnton, an organizer of N.C. MUFON.

Richardson's topic, Fawcett said, will be the most controversial. She'll talk about greys, and the notion that the U.S. government has entered into secret treaties with them to do frightening genetic research at underground bases.

"Some people say greys are benevolent," she said, "that they're here to save us from ourselves."

"Others say they're out to take over our planet and are thoroughly nasty."

One man, John Lear, has pushed the theory about secret treaties and underground bases, and Richardson will discuss Lear's hypothesis.

"I'm not saying I believe it," she said. "I'm just going to share it."

Which brings us to the obvious question: These folks who report being abducted by aliens, well, are they normal? Do they have green horns or anything?

Richardson attended an international MUFON symposium in Florida in July, at which hundreds said they'd had encounters.

"The majority of those people looked like ordinary people," she said. "There might have been two or three who had — how shall I say? — an eclectic fashion sense. But I heard some unusual things from a lot of intelligent people."

Richardson never has had an encounter with anything cosmic. She just has a healthy curiosity.

She has a master's degree in biology and works as a chemist for the City of Charlotte. She's also an aspiring actress.

Last year, a radio talk show about UFOs and aliens sent her in search of more information. She read several books, including "Above Top Secret" by Timothy Good, which she recommends.

"Now, I definitely believe there is a possibility abductions are occurring," she said.

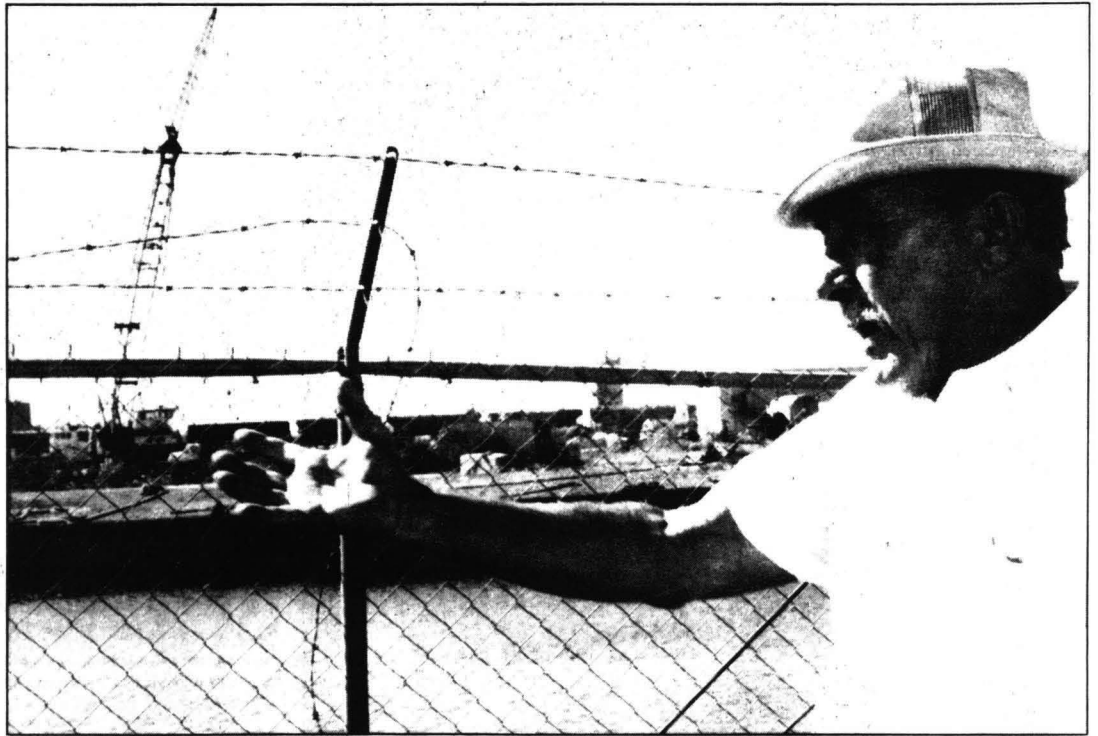
"I find the subject totally fascinating. . . . A lot of ufologists will point their fingers at other ufologists. They'll say, 'She's lying' or 'He's working for the government.'"

"People are starved for the truth. If you're starved for the truth, you'll latch onto the most fantastic stuff."

OBSERVER, Charlotte, NC — Nov. 1, 1990 CR: G. Fawcett

SUN-HERALD, Gulfport, MS — Oct. 8, 1990 CR: B. Clendenon

Remembering a close encounter



VERNON MATTHEWS/SUN HERALD CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER 1977

Charles Hickson describes his encounter with alien beings at the site in Pascagoula where he says he went aboard a UFO.

UFO veterans to speak at gathering

By KEN FINK

JACKSON COUNTY BUREAU

Seventeen years ago this week, two Gaudier men received invitations with no option to RSVP.

Charles E. Hickson and Calvin Parker said they were abducted and taken aboard an alien spacecraft on Oct. 11, 1973.

Now Hickson is issuing an invitation of his own. He is expecting 1,200 UFO buffs to join him Nov. 10 at the Great Gulf Coast UFO Gathering, an all-day convention he helped organize.

More than 200 enthusiasts attended a similar convention held in Gautier in 1988.

UFO fervor swept the country in the aftermath of Hickson's alleged adventure aboard the spacecraft, where he said he was examined by beings who communicated by "buzzing" sounds. He was inside the craft for about an hour, he said.

On Friday, Hickson returned to the spot where he and Parker were fishing on the Pascagoula River, when a 30-foot craft appeared over the marsh behind them. They were invited aboard.

"We were sitting on a pier and I heard a hissing sound," Hickson said. "A sliding door opened and a shaft of light came out. One of the beings took my left arm and took me into the craft. I felt pain. It bled a lot after that." Light glowed from all the walls inside.

"Something came out of the wall like a large eye and came up to my face," he said. "It moved around me and seemed to be examining me as I was suspended."

Hickson said he could not move anything but his eyes. He was not sure what had happened to Parker since he saw him faint



MIKE RAMSEY/SUN HERALD PHOTOGRAPHER 1977

Charles Hickson revisits the site of his encounter a few years after it happened.

before he was led into the ship, where he stayed for about an hour. Inside, there was no sound, no odor.

He later realized that the three beings that took him into the ship were probably robots, controlled by other beings inside the craft.

"I was trying to talk to them," he said. "I was saying 'what are you going to do with me. What do you want.' I couldn't hear what I was saying."

There was no need for communication on their part, Hickson said. "It was like they had a job to do and they did it and left."

Hickson said he has finally realized that the beings had no intention of harming him

and should a similar incident occur, he would not be as afraid as he was that October night as blue lights strobed in the darkness.

He was taken to Keesler Air Force Base for a physical examination and a check for contamination of any sort. Personnel were evacuated from the area where the physical was to take place. He was led to an examination room where men stood around in protective clothing.

Parker lives in Louisiana now. He was hospitalized briefly because of the strain of

SENTINEL, Gulf Breeze, FL — Sept. 27, 1990

Dear Editor:

After reading Ed and Frances Walters 1990 book, *The Gulf Breeze Sightings*, I began to wonder why the UFOs would maneuver in the sky over that particular area during the years 1987 and 1988. In my opinion, Gulf Breeze may represent a significant or key site on the surface of our round planet Earth (similar to Stonehenge in England or Salt Lake in Utah or the Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt). In a recently-completed but as yet unpublished book manuscript, I show how certain mathematical grid patterns and measures extend around the surface of this planet. The center focus seems to be the Great Pyramid (circa 2600 B.C.). I think that Gulf Breeze represents to the UFOs a key site related to significant saucer reports of the past 40 years—such as Mount Rainer (June 24, 1947), Salt Lake (July 2, 1952), and Levelland, Texas (November 2 and 3, 1957).

In the end, the coming of the saucers may point to (1) the revelation to humanity of an advanced knowledge concerning the creation/design of this Earth and related sites within ancient Mesoamerica cited in the *Book of Mormon* and (2) the possibility that the UFOs might possess extraordinary forms of energy that might be used to overcome the catastrophic effects of nuclear war on Earth in order to "save" the human race. Clearly, we are entering an era of crisis and unprecedented events. The UFOs may represent "wonders in the heavens" that will provide protection to the human race as well as enlightenment or higher knowledge.

In my unpublished book of drawings, I show that if you take a flat map of the world and locate Gulf Breeze at the center of a large circle, this circle will touch the far northwestern edge of Alaska (North America) and the extreme southern edge of South America. Thus, the UFOs may have appeared over Gulf Breeze because of the precise location at the center of the circle.

CR: R. Reid

Kenneth Lloyd Larson

the ordeal. "He just couldn't take it," said Hickson, who remains in touch with Parker.

"It's been a frustrating thing for all these years," said Hickson. "But I have to live with it. I can't change it."

Hickson has undergone psychological testing, was interviewed by scientists, passed a polygraph test and was placed in a deep hypnotic trance.

There are those who don't believe Hickson's story. But Hickson remains adamant that it happened.

He hopes he will be joined at the convention by other enthusiasts and specialists in the phenomenon with which he is so familiar.

Among those scheduled to speak are Hickson, Debbie Tomey, who said she was abducted from a rural area of Indianapolis, Ind., Betty Andreasson and Bob Luca, whose abduction case was chronicled in the books *The Andreasson Affair* and *Phase II*, and Ed and Francis Walters, whose photographs of UFOs in Gulf Breeze, Fla., have received national attention.

The gathering will be held at the Broadwater Beach Hotel in Biloxi from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Tickets for the event cost \$30 in advance or \$35 at the door.

Hickson would not elaborate, but offered a prediction of things to come: "In 1992, there won't be any doubt that there is another world. We're destroying ourselves and we're not going to be able to live here much longer. We are moving toward a point that if something doesn't happen, we are going down the hill and there will be no way we can turn it around. But there will be an intervention."

Government's battle with New Mexico UFO witnesses

By KATE MacGREGOR

(Kate MacGregor is a writer/columnist for Sunmount Syndicate, Santa Fe, NM.)

To hear Robert Lazar tell it, the government sent him to a top-secret base located in the corner of the Nevada Test Site where he was assigned to examine the power sources of spaceships.

But to hear the government tell it, Robert Lazar does not exist.

A scientist who claims a background and credentials in physics and electronics, including a degree from MIT, Lazar has come forward with a story both bizarre and controversial: As a civilian employee for the US Navy in 1984, he was transferred from Los Angeles to a site called Area 51 in the southern Nevada desert, where, he contends, several alien spacecraft are housed.

His job was to disassemble the flying saucers in the hopes of identifying and understanding the advanced propulsion techniques used to fly them.

Unwilling to keep hidden what he considered the greatest story in the history of the world—that some physical contact has been established with another intelligence in the universe—Lazar eventually went public despite a shroud of government secrecy. Last fall, KLAS-TV, the CBS affiliate in Las Vegas, NV, interviewed the scientist, at length, before producing a carefully researched nine-part "special report" about his claims.

Asked about Lazar this week, personnel officers at Los Alamos told Sunmount Syndicate they could find no record that he was ever employed at that laboratory. Nonetheless, a reporter's check revealed Lazar's name listed in an official 1982 laboratory phone directory, and a 1982 news article, apparently about the same Robert Lazar, appeared in the Los Alamos Monitor.

While tales of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) are fascinating and newsworthy, however, neither the sightings nor even the credibility of witnesses like Robert Lazar tell the whole story.

Equally intriguing is the concerted, sometimes extreme measures apparently taken by various arms of the US government to discredit, ridicule, harass, suppress, and even intimidate individuals who claim any knowledge about, or experience with, UFOs.

Such tactics are not new to New Mexico residents, who constitute one of the largest groups of UFO witnesses. In the late 1940s and 1950s, there were more reported UFO sightings in

the state of New Mexico than anywhere in the world. Since New Mexico was then the nexus of the most sophisticated military activity of the era, many of the individuals who reported the sightings were military personnel associated with the 509th Bomb Group at Roswell, the White Sands Missile Range near Alamogordo, or with Los Alamos where the atomic and hydrogen bombs were spawned.

According to many of those witnesses, they were frequently ordered by their government superiors not to discuss their experiences. Their reports were often classified, which prevented public dissemination. Some were even threatened with loss of retirement or subjected to outright discrimination if they made what the government considered "indiscreet" comments about what they had seen.

Much of the documented suppression tactics centered around the 1947 crash in Roswell, New Mexico of what the Army originally called a flying saucer. Photographs taken by the Roswell Daily Record, a venerable and respected New Mexico paper, were splashed across newspaper pages throughout the US, and, according to Jack Swickard, the former editor of the Record, the words "flying saucer" were published for the first time by that paper.

More than one hundred witnesses to that explosion are still alive, and some have waited 40 years before admitting that they were ordered to falsify their reports. Some of those interviewed by Sunmount Syndicate:

●Walter Haut, a retired Army lieutenant who acted as the official press liaison at the time of the incident, wrote the original press release announcing that the US Army Air Force, as it was then called, had recovered the crashed remains of a "flying saucer." Immediately inundated by press inquiries from around the world, Haut was ordered by a general to retract his earlier release and identify it as a government weather balloon instead.

Haut now says he was told by his commanding officer never to mention the term "flying saucer" again. Haut resigned his commission less than a year later.

●Among the officers associated with the government's infamous investigation of UFOs called "Project Bluebook" was an Air Force Major named Milton R. Knight. Yet the Air Force reportedly eradicated Knight's records when he was suspected of discussing his activities with the media. Even though Walter Haut himself and others had served with Major Knight for many years, and knew

Knight's serial number, the Air Force insisted that no such individual existed.

●Lt. Bob Shirkey was a flight operations officers for the US Air Force at the time of the Roswell crash. He told KLAS-TV that he had been dispatched to a local funeral home to obtain caskets for the bodies of alien creatures that had died in the crash. Contacted at his Roswell home recently Shirkey refused to discuss, over the telephone at least, various government efforts to silence him.

●Major Jesse Marcel, a former Army intelligence officer who has since died, was in charge of loading the New Mexico wreckage onto a transport plane and flying it to Ft. Worth Army Base in Texas. According to Swickard, who is now editor of the Farmington Daily Times, Marcel is said to have made a virtual deathbed admission that the remains he saw in the New Mexico countryside in 1947 were "not of this earth."

Not surprisingly, interest in the Roswell crash has not waned in the 43 years since its occurrence, nor has the federal government revised its policy to downplay the incident. Cory Beck, publisher of the Roswell Daily Record, says documents about the crash remain classified by the Army and Air Force. Beck continues to receive inquiries from interested parties around the world, and a major film company is currently considering producing a movie about the bizarre crash.

The crash was depicted in a 1980 non-fiction book entitled *The Roswell Incident* which, according to Beck, was widely read in the community. The television series "Unsolved Mysteries" featured the crash in a late 1989 episode, and camera crews and journalists from both the US and abroad routinely request information from the Daily Record.

William Moore, the Los Angeles-based author of *The Roswell Incident* says the government has not attempted to discredit his journalistic credentials or to censor the book. He has, however, been approached by various government agencies, including the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, which has given him what he calls "disinformation."

"UFOs are a magnet for every crackpot in the country," cautions Moore. "So one must be very careful in analyzing documentation. Certain agencies stir the UFO pot, for some reason, and there is a tremendous amount of disinformation and phony documents circulation in the UFO community. Some are extremely sophisticated, and some are merely diversions from the

UFO show identifies government 'coverups'

By Diane Mason
ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

CLEARWATER, Fla. — Many people believe in UFOs. And why not? Things are getting pretty serious down here on Earth. UFOs could really juice the party.

A recent program sponsored by Caryl Dennis explored UFOs and other unexplained phenomena that many people believe are the work of aliens.

The first half of the program is a film documentary titled "UFOs: The Best Evidence," produced in November by KLAS-TV in Las Vegas.

The report traces the history of "UFOlogy," beginning with a mysterious explosion in Roswell, N.M., in 1947. UFOers now call this event the "cosmic Watergate," alleging that a spacecraft crashed and the Air Force squirreled away the debris and masterminded the first of many UFO coverups.

Testimonials from UFO witnesses, scientists, a nuclear physicist and other UFO aficionados tell stories of eerie saucerlike sightings, green fireballs, and various unexplainable phenomena that led to a virtual flying saucer craze in the 1940s and 1950s.

Here are some highlights of the documentary:

During the early UFO years, the more people saw, the more the government beefed up its debunking strategy, say UFOers, who charge that UFO witnesses were spied on, harassed and discredited.

This drove many into the closet, afraid to speak out for fear of ridicule. Even when the Air Force launched an official inquiry in the mid-'60s, UFO sightings were summarily dismissed as weather balloons or temperature inversions.

Film of mysterious cattle mutilations where cows are found with eyes, ears, genitals, udders and bowels cut out by advanced laser surgery is presented. One researcher dubbed this phenomenon as the "alien harvest," suggesting that dying alien populations are studying the cow organs for genetic clues that might help their civilizations survive.

"Crop circles"—perfect symmetrical areas of squashed corn and wheat—are appearing in fields in England and the United States. Unable to find a scientific explanation, some researchers suggest these circles are scorched radioactive areas.

All this stuff is really happening, say the faithful.

After the film, Miss Dennis reports that at the MUFON (Mutual UFO Network) conventions she attended, several people gave testimonials about being abducted. They described being mysteriously paralyzed before being taken to spacecraft and attached to various monitoring devices, she says.



Surveys have shown that a majority of Americans believe in UFOs. But most are afraid to say so publicly.

If you want to escape your abductors, UFOers advise you to "move anything—wriggle a toe, your finger—it will help by breaking the paralysis," she tells the audience.

One woman says she is reassured "knowing there is something you can do, because I'm scared to death."

One man says he saw a glowing saucerlike object near West Palm Beach about 10 years ago. But he passes off this sighting, saying that UFOs are only a small fragment of the story. This man has bigger fields to plow. The entire U.S. government, he says, is controlled by 10 men who are, unbeknownst to them, controlled by aliens.

Miss Dennis says surveys have shown that a majority of Americans believe in UFOs. But most are afraid to say so publicly, or to tell about their own "sightings," for fear of ridicule.

Indeed, people who take UFOs seriously take great risks with their credibility, says George Knapp, the KLAS-TV anchor who investigated and produced the UFO series.

"It's a lot easier to make fun of this than to take it seriously," says Mr. Knapp, adding that it doesn't help that there are "so many wackos" in the pro-UFO camp.

● Distributed by Scripps Howard.

truth."

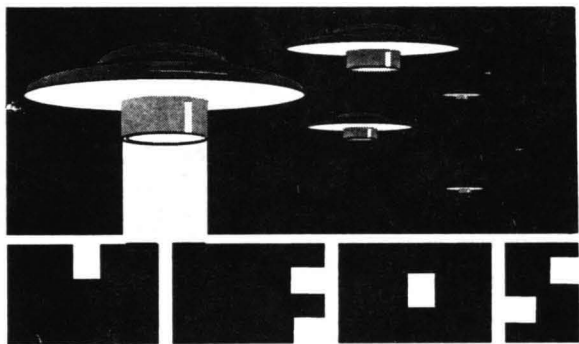
More recently, an Army sergeant, based in Roswell and assigned to the New Mexico Military Institute, reported another UFO sighting. His veracity immediately came under attack from colleagues, moving him to file a discrimination lawsuit against the US Army. By believing in flying saucers, he contended, he was, in effect, labeled a "UFO nut" which jeopardized his military career.

If the US government has officially undertaken the mission of "debunking" of UFO mythology, as many published reports suggest, then the process seems to

have backfired. In 1947, 90 percent of the US public had heard about UFOs, according to a Gallup Poll. By 1966, not only had 96 percent of the public heard of them, but more than five million Americans claimed to have witnessed a UFO. By 1973, 15 million Americans had seen one or more UFOs.

Both witnesses and skeptics agree that belief in flying saucers is a personal matter, and should not expose anyone to personal or professional ridicule. But then in places like Roswell, crediting the existence of UFOs has always been more than a matter of casual opinion.

People



Group tries to shed light on sky sights

By KATHY CURTHOYS
Leisure Staff Writer

If you called Jeff Ballard and told him you saw a flying banana-shaped thing with flashing lights, he wouldn't laugh at you.

He's heard it before, from people he sees as reasonable, regular folks.

In his role as a UFO investigator, he's heard a lot, and he doesn't appreciate the wink-wink, nudge-nudge attitude some skeptics have toward reports of UFO sightings.

His attitude is, who's to say E.T. never left home, but by the same token, where's the proof he did?

The Huntsville electrical engineer describes himself as a skeptic, but in the pure sense of the word — as a questioner, not necessarily as a debunker.

Ballard is the state director of a group known as MUFON, or Mutual UFO Network, an international organization that investigates reports of sightings and encounters with UFOs.

He and his wife, Karen, have investigated reported sightings in Huntsville, Mobile, Birmingham, and Limestone and Shelby counties.

Perhaps the most renowned series of reported sightings he probed was in Fyffe, beginning Feb. 10, 1989, when several bewildered residents including police reported seeing a silent, brightly lit object that hovered and sped away.

Some reported that it appeared to be banana shaped with red, green and white lights. Fyffe Police Chief Junior Garmany saw it and described it as "bigger than a jumbo jet."

According to the *Fort Payne Times-Journal*, the sheriff's office got a call from a Lickskillit resident who said, "You better get a deputy over here quick. I don't know what it is, but it's scaring the hell out of my bird dogs."

UFO watchers from around the Southeast converged on the little town and filled highways and hilltops to see if they could spot the UFO. Dozens of people reported seeing such an object over the next few weeks, according to Associated Press reports.

Ballard's investigation turned up no indication of aircraft in the area at the time of the sightings, and no natural phenomena that could account for them. He initially thought it might be a lighter-than-air military craft, but after more research abandoned that idea.

He didn't reach a firm conclusion on the Fyffe sightings, extraterrestrial or otherwise.

"... At this point there has been nothing here to make us jump up and down and say 'aliens,'" he was quoted to say at the time.

In more than two years as a UFO investigator, he hasn't been quick to reach that conclusion.

"We stay scientific, and there are a lot of things to be studied," Ballard said in a recent interview. "Yes, there is a paranormal side to it, but we stay scientific. MUFON as a whole is conservative. We're still at the stage where we question

Cover Story

whether UFOs, as alien craft, exist."

He said that at a recent symposium in Pensacola, Fla., there was interest in making a statement that some UFOs may be alien craft piloted by intelligent life forms. A St. Louis branch of MUFON plans to adopt the term UFO/IAC, for identifiable alien craft.

"It's hard to keep playing devil's advocate," said Ballard, who hasn't seen a UFO himself. "It's hard to look at a star-filled sky and say 'we're all alone.' There are a lot of theories."

There are unresolved cases that keep him wondering — for instance, the series of reported UFO sightings in Gulf Breeze, Fla. Investigators were working with a woman who, under hypnotic regression, recalled being abducted by creatures who implanted something in her nostril. A series of studies was done on the woman but was suspended because no one knew the nature of the supposed object and there was concern about harming her, Ballard said. He said the woman had another "visitation" in which she was told not to talk to investigators.

One of the investigators was awoken by a noise one night and went outside to see what it was. On her back patio, Ballard said, she found five small humanoid creatures. When the investigator woke up in the morning, she considered it a dream until her husband asked her why she'd left the door open and the outside light on during the night.

Ballard said both Fyffe and Gulf Breeze have certain "common denominators" often found near reported UFO sightings. They both are situated near large bodies of water, both are near power sources (a nuclear power plant is near Fyffe) and both have military installations in the area.

There is a contrast, he said, in the towns' incomes and professions that shows UFO sightings aren't particular to a certain group of people.

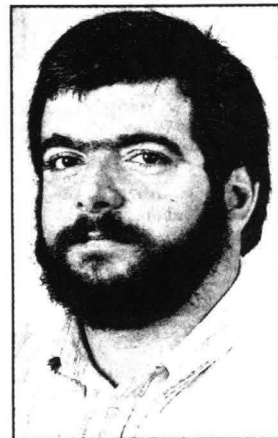
Most sightings can be attributed to natural or normal causes, such as weather balloons, celestial phenomena, secret military missions, blimps, meteorites or ball lightning. Venus often is mistaken for a UFO, Ballard said, and two weeks ago he investigated a UFO sighting that turned out to be Mars aligned with a bright star in the Taurus constellation.

A minority of reported UFO cases seem to defy explanation, Ballard said.

One of those was a sighting he investigated in Shelby County. A woman reported that she was driving down a road when she noticed a bright light above that seemed to be a helicopter, but it was silent. It seemed to follow her quite a ways, Ballard said. She came to a grocery store with a large tree outside, and the object hovered above the tree. The woman reported seeing a large saucer-shaped object just above the tree, which then



The 1959 film "Invisible Invaders" put a menacing, grade B-movie spin on the idea of extraterrestrials and their flying saucers.



Dave Dieter/Huntsville Times
Jeff Ballard, a Huntsville engineer, is state director of the Mutual UFO Network.

passed over the tree line. The woman said she could see it go up the valley and then disappear as a point of light.

The object had been too close to the woman for her to misidentify it, Ballard said. But to him the disturbing thing about this case was her watching the object disappear up the valley. A person on the ground would not have that vantage point because trees would obstruct the view, Ballard said.

There have been "one or two" cases of UFO sightings in the Huntsville area but they were distant night sightings and there was nothing for him to "grab on to" as an investigator.

Authorities should not be too quick to slam a case shut, Ballard said. He uses as an example reported sightings near Titusville of a glittering red, blue and white object in the early morning sky. Local astronomers identified it as a heavenly body, probably near Sirius.

"The only trouble was, later on a police officer saw it land," Ballard said with a laugh. "Sometimes people are in too big a hurry to close a case."

He said there is "a lot of talk" about what the government keeps from public scrutiny in UFO cases.

"There are no amazing revelations in the near future (from the government) but the door is opening," he said.

Ballard said it is possible some UFO sightings are actually secret projects of the United States government or another country.

"There are supposedly 'black' budgets in the billions, and there may be a lot of stuff we may never know about," he said. "Black" projects are those the government keeps shrouded in secrecy.

Some ufologists readily tie New Age thinking to UFO phenomenon, an approach Ballard says he doesn't take.

"We hear bits of information from people who do channeling and things like that, but that's not 'mainline ufology,'" Ballard said. "There's a lot of stuff you hear and God knows where it comes from."

There have been all sorts of UFO theories since the modern age of the flying saucer began in 1947, Ballard said, when pilot Kenneth Arnold reported multiple sightings of high-speed objects over the Cascade Mountains of Washington state.

The Arnold sightings weren't of saucers, however, but of chevron-shaped craft. Triangular shaped craft have been reported in Fyffe and Belgium, Ballard said.

He said the most compelling case for ufologists recently has been the appearance of "crop circles," or clean, neat circles and pictograms found in fields in England, Japan and reportedly Canada. While UFOs have not been conclusively linked to the sudden appearance of the markings, no other explanation is clear, either. Ballard said he disputes the idea that microbursts caused the circles, and he doubts it's a gigantic hoax. He noted that the stalks of crops have been bent into a swirl pattern but not broken, and even in their flattened state continue to grow.

MUFON of Alabama will give a video presentation with a detailed view of the British crop circle mystery in a program at 6 p.m. Friday, Nov. 2 at the Huntsville/Madison County Public Library auditorium. Admission will be free.

MUFON is an international organization made up of people interested in a serious study and research into UFOs using scientific methods. It has about 2,000 members across the United States and in many other countries. The Alabama group has about 30 members, most of them in the north part of the state.

The network was founded in 1969 and organized to operate on a grass-roots approach. State directors oversee field investigators through state section directors. An international coordinator and continental coordinators work with foreign representatives and national directors from other countries.

MUFON is governed by a board of directors made up of 17 people. The network has a board of consultants representing areas of science, technology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, astronomy, communications, photo analysis and other disciplines. The consultants are available to MUFON to apply their expertise in UFO investigations.

The network sponsors annual international UFO symposia where scientists, engineers and authors lecture on their specialization or contributions to resolving UFO cases.

Members of MUFON may serve in a range of positions, as consultant, field investigator, or newspaper clipper. Ballard said there are no specific requirements for membership, only that potential members have an interest in scientific inquiry into UFOs.

Field investigators are trained and are required by the network to uphold standards of professionalism, according to MUFON's informational literature. The field investigators "uphold the confidentiality of witnesses and case information ... and attempt to doc-

ument sighting information in a thorough and unbiased manner."

MUFON maintains a master file of all submitted UFO sighting reports, and Amateur Radio Networks, operating weekly, receive and disseminate reports and current UFO information. A monthly magazine, *MUFON UFO Journal*, updates members on UFO sighting reports and other information.

Guidelines and techniques were proscribed in a 1983 edition of "MUFON Field Investigator's Manual" for conducting UFO sighting interviews and investigations.

When the Ballards investigate a case, they interview the people who reported the sightings and try to flesh out the details. They try to find the site and take into account geographical area. Then they begin methods of research, using charts, maps and consulting authorities. Ballard has a computer program that he uses to determine the location and brightness of heavenly bodies at certain times and dates.

They follow up on cases as needed, and maintain contact with people if the sightings recur.

"We are talking to normal Ala-

At a Glance

What: Mutual UFO Network
When: Periodic meetings and programs. "British Crop Circles" program will be Friday, Nov. 2 at 6 p.m.
Where: Huntsville-Madison County Public Library
Cost: Programs usually free. Dues charged for membership in MUFON.
Phone: 586-6568.

bamians who've had strange encounters," he said.

Reports of strange encounters from around the world sometimes describe other beings. Of about 4,000 investigations of "trace landings," or evidence a craft landed, about 1,200 involve reports of entities, Ballard said.

Descriptions of such entities seem to coincide in many ways. People report seeing frail-looking grayish humanoids, about four feet tall, with large heads and slanting eyes. There's even discussion of where they might hail from.

Ballard cites the case of Betty Hill, who reported an encounter and afterward had recollection of a star map "that may have been a training route." Someone built a scale model of what she recalled and compared it to known star maps.

"It turned out to be an extremely accurate map of an area that had some details we didn't even know existed," Ballard said. "The thing was, it wasn't a map from an Earth perspective." The map allegedly shows an area thought to be part of the Zeta Reticuli constellation.

But before humans start figuring out where their supposed neighbors live, Ballard said, "let's get first things first."

"We've got to get to the main point," he said. "Let's see if they exist for sure in the first place."

What's Up With What's Up There?



A composite of an alien constructed from various people's descriptions of their sightings is displayed at the annual meeting of Mutual UFO Network in Charlotte.

Ufology Today

Theories Updated In Charlotte Gathering

By RHONDA Y. WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

EBEs.

The government has a pact with them. They have gray bald heads, large dark eyes and spindly arms — they're extraterrestrial biological entities. Aliens.

But the EBEs have violated the agreement — technological knowledge in exchange for harmless medical experimentation on humans. The "Grays" have implanted trackers in human brains, murdered humans for food and impregnated women to create hybrid offspring.

More than 150 people listened atten-

tively Sunday as ufologist Ginger Richardson, a chemist for the City of Charlotte, explained John Lear's hypothesis: The government has secret treaties with aliens that it's trying to cover up.

"One must consider these possibilities, all possibilities when studying UFOs, but still maintain a healthy dose of skepticism," Richardson said at the annual meeting of Mutual UFO Network at Charlotte's Pfeiffer College. "As ufologists, we must wade through the garbage to get to the kernel of truth. ... We know, something is definitely going on."

MUFON is an international organization founded in 1969 to investigate the

UFO phenomenon. Topics on Sunday ranged from evil aliens abducting humans to creating an atmosphere for bilateral exchange.

Steven Greer of Asheville says all aliens aren't evil. A real chance exists for bilateral communication. It's called the CES Initiative, "CE" meaning close encounter.

But humans must extinguish destructive behaviors, like war, before alien contact can begin, said Greer.

"The extraterrestrial civilizations are out there and are indeed wanting us to get to the place where they feel more comfortable having an exchange," said

hours to Charlotte from Eden.

"I've been told a lady who I know, who is very intelligent, had an encounter with some type of alien, and that it was very traumatic," said Dowless, 43. "From hearing instances like that, you can't help but believe that there's something."

alien life forms exist in this universe on another energy level — in a different dimension.

Participants in the five-hour seminar traveled from Asheville, Lincolnton, Pineville and Concord to hear what ufologists — investigators of UFOs — had to say.

The phenomenon so intrigued Jo Dowless that she drove three

Greer, director of the Center for the Study of Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence in Asheville. "But they're cautious of their own security as well."

Some MUFON members believe what they've seen aren't extraterrestrials, but alterterrestrials. The beams of light, the disc-shaped spaceships and the

ET TU, E.T.?
Re Philip J. Klass' review of Howard Blum's "Out There: The Government's Secret Quest for Extraterrestrials" (Sept. 2):
Surely Klass is in a Klass by himself—reviewing a book in which he himself appears, and for a major newspaper, no less!
A renowned debunker. Klass is hardly an objective observer of the UFO scene. He of all people should not have the last word on what may be an important development in UFOlogy—one of the most misunderstood but newsworthy fields ever to catch a reporter's eye—and Blum, it should be noted, is not your run-of-the-mill reporter. His investigative efforts have twice earned him Pulitzer nominations.
Klass, on the other hand, has made a successful second career out of scoffing at the UFO enigma, and is not taken seriously by anyone who has objectively studied the phenomenon. When one looks closely enough at the facts, it's obvious that the government has at least a "UFO Working Group" within the Department of Defense, as Blum describes. Blum has verified its existence.
If facts here and there seem not to check out, it should be remembered to what lengths some government officials will go when they perceive a breach of national security. Lying and deception are commonplace.
Blum at least attempted to break through the rings of disinformation, which keep the UFO field in a stranglehold, and which Klass does his utmost to tighten.

VICKI COOPER
Editor & Co-Publisher
UFO Magazine
LOS ANGELES

In his review of "Out There," Klass mentions the photos of Floridian Ed Walters.

Walters' 1990 book, "The Gulf Breeze Sightings," contains color photographs that show a brilliant, fiery "power ring" or energy source under the saucer as well as a blue beam flashing to the ground.

Personally, I think that the numerous sightings, photographs and films from around the world over the past 40 or so years suggest that the UFOs came in order to patrol (like observers or guardians) our planet, to be seen by and to enlighten us, and to intervene in order to overcome and protect human beings from the disastrous effects of a large-scale nuclear war in the Middle East and involving several nations.

KENNETH LLOYD LARSON
LOS ANGELES

An enormous number of trained observers (astronomers, pilots, police) have seen UFOs in daylight, and very close, so that there was no mistaking the craft for swamp gas or Venus. That is why the government's chief advocate, astronomer J. Allen Hynek, switched sides.

Take "The Gulf Breeze Sightings" by Ed and Frances Walters. Klass alleges that the photos therein are fakes, even though the book contains extensive expert analysis to the contrary. Some photos were taken with a tamper-proof camera, were taken in the presence of others and were shot by other than the authors. There were also 200 eyewitnesses, so the photography issue is irrelevant.

SCOTT S. SMITH
THOUSAND OAKS

Klass is wrong.

I myself have seen at least three UFOs in daylight, two in the 1950s and one in 1982.

Indeed, I lead a group of "UFO Walkers" the first Sunday of every month from Descanso Gardens in La Canada.

I may mention, too, the "Great Los Angeles Air Raid" of Feb. 14, 1942, when anti-aircraft guns opened up on "something" flying over the night skies of Los Angeles. (Even The Times of the next day reported bright lights flying over the coast.)

The previous night, a bright, shining light was seen above Avenue 34 in Glassell Park. They called my father out (he was air-raid warden for the block). He put on his Civil Defense gas mask, waved his arms wildly, and the "light" disappeared!

EDSON ANDRE JOHNSON
ALTADENA

When worlds collide

Fact, fiction clash in new UFO book about this island Earth

Keay Davidson
OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

ONE NIGHT at Yosemite 25 summers ago, a 12-year-old boy curled inside a sleeping bag and used a flashlight to read Edward J. Ruppelt's "Report on Unidentified Flying Objects." Outside the tent, bears tore open trash cans, but they weren't as scary as the book. Allegedly based on Air Force files, it told chilling tales about flying saucers that attacked a scoutmaster, chased airplanes and, perhaps, zapped a jet pilot.

Through the summer, I must have reread that book 20 times. Every time I looked at the stars I hoped to spot the glow of a UFO — the chariot of visitors from another world.

The next year I stopped looking, having learned that most saucer literature isn't worth the pulp paper it's printed on. Careless authors abound; they misquote UFO witnesses and leave out crucial facts (e.g., the UFO resembled an airplane). The result: Jane or John Doe's innocent misidentification of Venus as a UFO is transformed, in print, into a "close encounter" with aliens who pursue the frightened Does over hill and dale.

Which brings me to Howard Blum's new book, "Out There" (Simon and Schuster, \$19.95), a rambling, cloak-and-dagger portrait of an American subculture — people whose lives orbit one big idea: "We are not alone in the universe." They include military brass and CIA agents who, Blum says, have been secretly studying UFOs for years; saucer buffs who think the government found a crashed UFO and its dead pilots in New Mexico after World War II; scientists trying to detect intelligent radio signals from other stars, and rural Midwesterners designing a \$50 million landing pad for UFOs.

Unfortunately, many questions have been raised about the reliability of Blum's book... but that can wait. First, let's review the claims of Mr. Blum, age 37, a Stanford grad and former writer for the New York Times and Village Voice.

"Out There" is a schizophrenic book: some parts are tongue-in-cheek and some are almost comically paranoid. Blum's tongue is most firmly in cheek, and his prose most enjoyable, when he takes us to Elmwood, Wis., population 991, a Frank Capra-esque community haunted by unidentified flying objects.

Elmwood's first UFO witness was a local cop, George Wheeler. One night Wheeler saw a huge fireball dash over a hill. He hit the pedal and chased the object past pastures and meadows. "When he

caught up with it," Blum reports, "the object was, to his amazement, hovering... He was scared, trembling even, but he got out of his squad car and took it all in."

"The object was a craft of some kind. It was shaped like two cereal bowls put end to end and it was hovering about 1,500 feet above the ground. It was huge — at least the size of a football field."

"And it didn't make a sound." (Thrilling? Yeah, but I've heard far better saucer stories that fell apart under scrutiny. You'd be surprised how many sincere, respectable people have described a bright star as a "large, fast-moving object making 90-degree turns." Even Jimmy Carter mistook Venus for a UFO — and he should have known better, having studied celestial navigation at Annapolis.)

Ever since, Elmwoodites have fallen in love with UFOs; they spot them as routinely as Californians spot coyotes. Town boosters decided there were dollars in them thar saucers and began holding an annual "UFO Days" festival. The events include a cow-chip tossing contest (the chips are shaped like UFOs). Residents even considered building a UFO "landing pad" for \$50 million (200 times the town's annual budget). The trouble was, how could they encourage the UFOs to land? Blum says one "suggestion that won a few supporters was to have a larger-than-life illuminated depiction of a man and a woman copulating; what, it was asked, could be more inviting and more indicative of our peaceful intentions than such a primal scene?"

This is all very funny. But Blum's mood darkens — and his reporting loses credibility — when he turns his sights from rural high jinks to Pentagon intrigue.

Blum says a spy tipped him to the existence of a secret government UFO project. To get more information, Blum sought the help of famed investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, formerly of the New York Times. According to Blum, Hersh checked around and confirmed the reality of (in Hersh's words) "some kind of (government) committee that's looking in to all that kooky stuff."

While tracking down the "kooky stuff," Blum writes, he uncovered numerous stories bordering on science fiction. They include:

► In December 1986 at the U.S. Space Command near Colorado Springs, Cmdr. Sheila Mondran detected a radar signal from a UFO maneuvering wildly through the heavens. "On the radar screen, the bright green tracking sets were constantly changing," Blum writes. "First there would be a lazy, double helixlike pattern of loops and backtracks, then a set of spiky lines indicating crash dives followed by sudden climbs at astonishing speeds. The object was going through a series of complex maneuvers and rapid changes of inclination at speeds and altitudes that were... impossible."

► NASA is trying to figure out

what aliens look like. The space agency's Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence, or SETI, is based at Ames Research Center at Moffett Field and aims to use radio telescopes — including the Goldstone facility in the Mojave Desert — to listen for radio signals from civilizations orbiting other stars. In Blum's book, he visits SETI scientist Jill Tarter at Ames and she "offhandedly suggested that as long as I was there, I might also want to view NASA's collection of extraterrestrials."

"I was directed to a long hangar, and when I walked through the door, I was confronted with a variety of creatures from other worlds. Or at least the drawings and three-dimensional models I began to study were what government scientists believe extraterrestrials could very well look like."

► SETI may have already detected alien signals, but the government is keeping the news secret. Blum describes sharing "a much too expensive lunch in a pastel-colored hotel dining room just a short walk from the White House with Jonathan Thompson... executive secretary to the President's Science Adviser." On assignment from the White House, Thompson had visited the Goldstone radio telescope, where he "was told by a well-known SETI scientist: 'We've been getting some repetitive noises from space. Very curious signals. When Washington finds out, it'll shake them up.'"

Similarly, famed SETI pioneer Frank Drake detected an unusual signal on a radio telescope in West Virginia in 1960. At the time, Drake speculated that the sound was man-made radio interference. "Or at least that was one theory," Blum adds ominously, quoting Drake: "We never really knew what it was."

► A secret UFO project is under way in the Pentagon. Its leader is one Col. Harold E. Phillips of the Defense Intelligence Agency, who comes across in the book as the Oliver North of UFOlogy. According to Blum, Phillips' "UFO Working Group" is staffed by officials from the CIA, Department of Defense and National Security Agency. One presumes that while Eastern Europe falls, the Soviet empire crumbles and the Middle East goes up in flames, these guys huddle within the Kafkaesque chambers of the Pentagon and talk about aliens.

These are incredible stories. But are they true?

The Examiner has uncovered numerous people cited in Blum's book who say he misquoted them, twisted the truth or misidentified their names or titles. Moreover, there is some question as to whether two crucial characters even exist, at least as Blum identifies and describes them:

► Investigative journalist Hersh acknowledged telling Blum the government was engaged in "kooky stuff" — but, Hersh stressed, it didn't have anything to do with UFOs. Rather, it involved psychic research by the military. (Which is hardly news. For decades, the Pentagon has funded minor psychic research in the hope (so far in vain) of developing "psychic warfare."

"I resent a former colleague of mine coming into my office and then writing a book in which he drops my name in an effort, I think, to lend credence to what I believe are nutty theories," Hersh snapped.

► Despite Blum's detailed description of "Commander Sheila Mondran" — including her Christmas shopping, her boyfriend "Jim," and her radar sighting of a UFO — U.S. Space Command spokesman Cmdr. Chuck Connor released the following statement: "Personnel records indicate that there has never been a Cmdr. Sheila Mondran assigned to the United States Space Command... There were no space events in December 1986 that remotely resemble the one described in Mr. Blum's fanciful account." True, an "uncorrelated" (military lingo for unidentified) target was spotted on radar on Dec. 4, 1986, but this "was con-

sidered insignificant." It may have been a fragment of a Spot 1-Viking rocket that disintegrated.

► SETI scientist Tarter (Blum spells it "Tartar") dismisses as "pure fabrication" Blum's claim that she directed him to three-dimensional models of aliens. She suspects he got the idea from a photo of SETI scientists located on her bulletin board (not in a "long hangar") on which she had placed whimsical cutouts (not three-dimensional models) of extraterrestrials from a speculative book on aliens by a private artist (not "government scientists").

► Thompson hit the roof over Blum's account of their lunch. Now an international business consultant in Alexandria, Va., the former White House official said no SETI scientist ever said a word to him about mysterious signals.

"I have not only been misquoted but misquoted terribly," Thompson declared. "Had Mr. Blum taken the time to transcribe his notes correctly, he would know that I never said those things. And he would also know that my title was not 'executive secretary' but 'executive director,' and that I did not advise the president or the president's science adviser on SETI. I have never been to the Mojave Desert except (to visit) Edwards Air Force Base regarding the Challenger (shuttle accident)... I've never been to Goldstone. I don't know where Goldstone is on a map."

► Although Blum quotes SETI scientist Drake as saying "we never really knew" what the strange signals were, Drake denies there's a big mystery. The signal "had the characteristics of radio jamming systems that were then in use by the military," said Drake, now teaching at UC-Santa Cruz.

► I called all over the Pentagon trying to locate Col. Phillips, alleged head of the UFO Working Group. No one had heard of him or the "Group." Until recently there was a Pentagon staffer named Captain Harold E. Phillips — now at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina — but he said he's a military medical official and doesn't follow UFOs.

Blum says Col. Phillips graduated with an engineering degree from the University of Southern Illinois. There is no such school. However, there is Southern Illinois University in Carbondale where, according to school spokeswoman Kathryn Jaehnig, there's no record of an engineering grad named Harold E. Phillips.

What is one to make of these discrepancies? At the book's beginning, Blum assures us: "This is a true story. I verified every name, incident, date and conversation that is recorded in this account."

Indeed, in an interview, Blum stood by his story. He dismissed as "malarkey" Hersh's claim that their conversation was confidential. Blum also insisted Hersh's information concerned the UFO Working Group, not just parapsychology. "I'm not going to get in a p---ing match with Sy Hersh over a book he hasn't read."

Blum also insisted that Col. Phillips is real but that the military is just "making it very hard to get in touch with (Phillips)... My book is about government secrets... and I expect them to try to keep them secret." In fact, he says he's "a victim of a government attempt to besmirch me."

Cmdr. Mondran is also real, Blum said, but he refused to give The Examiner her phone number because he said she did not want to be contacted.

"My notes confirm the statements in the book," Blum said. "All journalism is based on people denying stories that later turn out to be true." Probed further about some of the alleged discrepancies, Blum terminated the interview.

Meanwhile, Simon and Schus-

ter's publicists are launching a big publicity campaign for the book. They have sent newspapers a brochure ballyhooing its weirdest claims; it alludes to Thompson's alleged remark about "repetitive noises" as follows: "NASA's \$100 million SETI program in the Mojave Desert has already received signals that appear to be from other worlds, according to a key member of the president's office of science and technology." (Evidently, advertising writers think "repetitive noises" and "signals... from other worlds" are the same thing.)

Carl Sagan once met a young woman reading a book by Erich Von Daniken, who claimed aliens helped build the pyramids and other ancient marvels. When Sagan scoffed, she insisted: "They wouldn't let him publish it if it weren't true!" Wrong, madam; they wouldn't print it if it weren't profitable.

Of course, they also wouldn't print it if there weren't millions of people eager to read it. Why are there so many? Perhaps the UFO craze mirrors the anxiety of the nuclear age. Likewise, in the turbulent 16th and 17th centuries, people tended to see "witches" everywhere — and began burning them. And the Victorians assuaged their religious anxieties (while Darwin was controversial) by seeing "ghosts" during seances.

Indeed, UFOs may reassure many people. Perhaps they're repelled by the universe of the astronomers — that vast blackness sprinkled with hellish stars and galaxy-gobbling black holes. Perhaps they prefer a kinder, gentler cosmos, one enlivened by cute little E.T.'s.

Perhaps. In that regard, no one has probed saucer buffs' secret yearnings more sensitively than the Canadian photographer and writer Douglas Curran. His 1985 study, "In Advance of the Landing" (Abbeville Press; New York City), is the best UFO book ever written.

He toured the continent to meet these folks — generally lower-middle-income types who claim to have chatted with UFO pilots and flown in saucers to the stars. Some have tried to build their own UFOs (which resolutely refuse to fly). Lacking illustrious family trees, they weave fabulous tales about their relatives on other worlds (who are always monarchs and warriors. No one traces their lineage to a janitor on Alpha Centauri).

Curran's pictures are haunting precisely because they're so bland. They capture what is, in a sense, his subjects' most disturbing trait: their ordinariness. They're dreamers like the rest of us — only more so. With little money, little education and little to look forward to on Earth, they have turned their eyes starward.

CR: R. Sigismund



Another mysterious circle appears

BY JASON BELL

PETERSFIELD—Andy Janisch knows his friends are practical jokers, but even he admits they couldn't have pulled off what he discovered this past weekend.

Janisch, 31, was swathing his wheatfield Sunday afternoon around 2 p.m. when he came across a 75-foot circle of compressed wheat, much like the ones being found in other parts of the province thought to be the work of pranksters.

"I just stared at it for a minute, then began to laugh," Janisch said a day after his startling discovery.

"I thought someone was pulling a fast one on me. At first I thought my buddies might have done this. But it'd be too much work for the guys I was thinking about," he said.

The circle was found about 40 metres from Henry Road, three kilometres north of Petersfield.

While swathing, Janisch noticed paths running through his field and assumed they'd been made by deer.

On his next pass by the site, he noticed a clearing off to his right side and again thought a herd of deer must have flattened his wheat.

"But when I came by again, I saw this thing and it floored me. I guess I stood by it for awhile and then went home to call the RCMP."

"I was wondering if I should report it to someone or if I should forget about it. The officer came by about twenty minutes later."

Selkirk rural RCMP Cpl. Bob McAfee said the officer took some photographs of the circle, which looked like a huge swirl ending at a point in the centre.

Two paths headed into the circle and another two push the wheat down as if someone was going out.

But Janisch didn't even want to talk about the possibility of aliens landing for a visit.

He doesn't have a reasonable explanation for the circle. But he scoffed at theories made by recent newspaper articles mentioning the circles were being made by kids with hockey sticks.

"No way. How could anyone get such a perfect circle. The wheat is pressed down so evenly."

"The thing was definitely not made by hockey sticks."

Aerial shots of the discovery where to be taken late Monday and a research team from the University of Manitoba were also expected out Monday.

SUN-TIMES, Chicago, IL - Nov. 7, 1990 CR: R. Boomer Europeans unite in spotting UFOs

By Gerard Bon
Reuters

PARIS—Mystery shapes in the sky—variously described as orange balls, triangles and silently moving points of light—were reported Tuesday over France, Italy, Switzerland and Belgium.

French police and fire departments from the German border to the Atlantic coast were flooded with calls about the "unidentified flying objects." A Geneva Reuters technician reported seeing a large orange-colored ball streaming across the night sky from the Jura mountains toward the Alps.

In France, Belgium and Italy, witnesses talked of a moving

shape composed of three, five or six brilliant points of light. The timing and dispersal of the sightings suggested a large phenomenon at very high altitude.

Experts in Munich said a meteorite might have exploded.

But Belgium, where dozens of people reported a triangular object with three lights flying slowly and soundlessly to the southwest, said its air force was studying the reports with observers of neighboring air forces.

The French government appeared to take the reports most seriously. Jean-Jacques Velasco, director of the Service for the Investigation of Re-entry Phenomena, said the country was launching an investigation.

He said several airline pilots

had reported sightings. But no radar contact was recorded in French air space.

An Air France pilot said, "We were on a flight to Barcelona [Spain] at about 33,000 feet at about 7 p.m. when we first saw the shape."

"It couldn't have been a satellite because it was there for three or four minutes."

A French yachtsman off the coast of Brittany said, "We saw this geometric shape... with five or six twinkling points of orange light with white trails behind them."

In Italy, six airline pilots reported "a mysterious and intense white light" southeast of Turin. Pilots also reported five white smoke trails nearby.

Theories go round 'n' round in the world of crop circles

Canadian Press

WINNIPEG — They're appearing in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, the United States, Japan and England and the theories of their origins range from the really boring to the really wild.

Welcome to the wonderful world of crop circles.

Whether hoax or message from another world, the mysterious flattened circles of grain became almost routine this past summer in Manitoba.

And UFO researchers say if people weren't afraid to be dismissed as nuts, even more would be reported.

"The ones that aren't hoaxes are genuinely puzzling," says Ed Barker, who produces shows for the Manitoba Plantarium and investigates flying saucer reports on the side. "There isn't one theory that covers them all generally."

There are plenty of theories, of course.

It has been suggested the crop circles that stole headlines in Britain this summer were the work of

pranksters who might have used field hockey sticks to flatten grain. British physicist Terrence Meaden believes they're produced by weather and wind phenomena.

Environment Canada meteorologist Jay Anderson also suggests hoaxes and unusual wind effects not yet fully understood are the most likely explanations.

"I could easily figure out a way to do it," says Anderson.

On the other side of the scale, Richard Hoagland, a UFO researcher in Virginia, has decided a grid can be drawn linking the circles in Manitoba, the midwestern United States and Britain to Stonehenge, the Bermuda Triangle and Devil's Tower in Wyoming.

The Devil's Tower was the spot in the movie Close Encounters of the Third Kind where aliens decided to make contact.

Barker says scientists are reluctant to study the crop circles because the phenomenon attracts eccentrics.

STRATFORD-ON-AVON HERALD, Warwickshire, England
Aug. 24, 1990 CR: T. Good

Crop circles: Hoax or mystery?

ONE of Britain's leading crop circle specialists has been in touch with the *Herald* following the recent report on the sightings in the area.

Frederick "Busty" Taylor was interested to hear of the circles spotted on Meon Hill and near Preston and confirmed they would be noted in the official records.

He said he had been very busy over the last few weeks trying to catch up with the end-of-season circles and admitted that many of the shapes were hoaxes, but these were easy to spot.

He referred to the recent Bratton Affair where circle experts Colin Andrews and Pat Delgado were made to look fools in front of the whole world.

"Somebody studied the man, knew the equipment and knew the procedures in order to pull the prank off. This was definitely an inside job," he said.

"The question is who did it,

and why did they do it? You must remember that the world had its eyes on this location and if you wanted to discredit the circle phenomenon with one million pounds worth of equipment being used to try and discover what is causing the circles, then this would be the place to do it.

"Let's face it nobody has owned up to doing it, newspapers, students, religious groups, people from the locality, nobody has owned up. Why?"

Mr Taylor's book on the subject, *The Crop Circle Enigma*, is being published later this year.

The contributors include a professor of astronomy, a meteorologist, an archaeologist, an engineer, a farmer, a dowser, a paleo-historian, and a pilot.

And there are some 60 marvelous photographs by Busty himself, mostly of the unpublished 1989 and 1990 circles.

The first part deals with the history of the circles, with their superstitions, fantasies and strange solutions.

Part two looks at the evidence for their formation, with alternative views, from physics to energy effects to UFO connections.

Part three discusses symbolism and meaning, and the last part summarises the insights of the 1990 season, anticipating what the future developments might bring.

The Crop Circle Enigma will be published in November by Gateway Books, The Hollies, Wellow, Bath, BA2 8QJ at £14.95.

DAILY MAIL, London, England - Oct. 11, 1990 CR: J. Delair

How they took the news from Mars to Ghent

Daily Mail Reporter

HAVE the lords of the universe chosen their first colony on Earth?

If they have, their subject people could be... the Belgians.

The question is exercising the minds not only of the Belgian scientific establishment but also of the air force and police.

UFO freaks can forget all that stuff about flying saucers, according to a series of sightings over the tiny

country more often concerned with eating, drinking and minding its own business.

The mysterious visitors are appearing in flying pyramids.

Belgian police have logged more than 2,000 sightings of a triangular object, with three huge lights, hovering in the night sky — including reports from at least 20 of

their own gendarmes. And UFO-spotters are euphoric after the latest sighting was apparently backed up by the Belgian air force's own radar log.

According to a physicist at Brussels Free University, Professor Leon Brenig, two F-16 fighters scrambled from Ghent after reports from the public of another UFO.

He says their radar locked on to an object which accelerated away before they could see it.

The pilots have been forbidden to say anything. But air force Colonel Wilfried de Brouwer, in charge of an official investigation into the incident, admitted: "They are convinced it was something special."

Professor Brenig, formerly an unbeliever, now claims to have seen a UFO himself.

He is hoping the analysis of photographs and radar echoes of earlier episodes will be ready this week and will be discussed at a

gathering of the country's scientists later this month.

He is also arranging a UFO hunt for members of the Belgian Society for the Study of Space Phenomena, with the backing of the Belgian army and air force, he says.

"No country has ever taken UFO sightings so seriously," he said.

"I am a sceptical man, but I feel that something is happening which is very strange..."

ET PHONE... TULLY!

UFOs TURN THE AUSSIE SUGAR TOWN INTO THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE'S FLYING SAUCER CAPITAL

By Robert Reid

NEVER MIND the Brits' fixation with mysterious circles in their crops - the canefields of north Queensland have been UFO ports for three decades.

Bizarre sightings have made the sugar town of Tully one of the world's top UFO spots. Researchers say Tully's saucer "nests" are one of the most important UFO discoveries of all time.

Most residents of Tully, better known for having the continent's highest rainfall, have seen a UFO or know somebody who has.

Mainly canefarmers - Catholic and conservative - they're not the kind of people to invent strange tales of flashing lights.

UFO watcher Claire Noble is convinced Tully and Wiltshire, England, are key points on a global grid system used by intergalactic travellers as "power boost" stations.

"Tully is a very special place," Noble said. "I've lost count of the sightings I've experienced. 'If I told everything I know, a lot of people would be scared.'"

From her home on Mt Tyson, overlooking Tully, Noble has watched UFOs since the early '60s.

She says she has been escorted 15km by "two round, bright lights" outside her car and was part of a team that brought a UFO down to treetop level using psychic power.

"I was ridiculed by just about everybody at first," she said. "I was

accused of getting on the plunk, making stories up, and some people said I'd gone crazy."

All that changed on a clear January morning in 1966 when banana grower George Pedley was driving his tractor on neighbor Albert Pennisi's cane farm.

About 30m from an area of swampland known as Horseshoe Lagoon, Pedley heard a hissing noise and leaned over to check his

Albert has recorded 22 nests since 1966.



Albert inspects the first floating saucer nest at Horseshoe Lagoon.

tyres. When he looked up, "a large saucer-shaped object" rose out of the lagoon, tilted slightly and "shot away sideways at terrific speed".

When he pushed through the thick swordgrass bordering the swamp, Pedley saw a 10m circle of water slowly rotating in a clockwise

direction, completely devoid of reeds common to the lagoon.

Pedley didn't want to believe what he saw. He climbed back on his tractor and went to work, trying to shut the sight out of his mind.

Five hours later, he drove back past the lagoon. A thick mat of reeds was floating on the surface. The

reeds had been uprooted whole without damage to the stems.

When Pedley told Albert and Amy Pennisi of his find, they laughed. "It seemed a ridiculous thing to say," Amy said. "Flying saucers on our property? We couldn't believe it."

But they weren't laughing the next day. The whole world seemed to be knocking on their door.

"An endless line of cars appeared from nowhere," Albert said. "We had tourists trampling all over the farm and the phone never stopped."

George Pedley left town for two weeks, tired of being hounded by the press. But before he left, he and Albert Pennisi inspected the nest.

"The water was nearly 2m deep in the lagoon," Pedley said. "Albert dived to the bottom and said it was hard and smooth as a billiard table. The water was crystal clear."

That wasn't all - the "mat" of floating reeds had formed a pontoon that supported the weight of the two men. Scientific tests later showed the reeds had been completely dried out in a remarkably short time.

Many "experts" said the nest was

Claire Noble, above, says the Tully saucer nests show aliens are preparing to contact humans.

"They've been around so long, it's part of normal life," Albert said. "The farm has special meaning for us now and we'll never sell it."

George Pedley is still wary of the press. He was called a liar but he knows what he saw. "I hope I live long enough to see another one," he said. "There's definitely something there."

Claire Noble believes the English cornfield circles and the Tully saucer nests are part of a global plan for extraterrestrials to finally reveal themselves to humans.

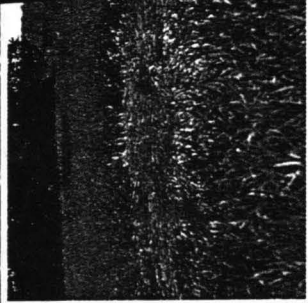
"They've been watching us and letting us evolve for centuries," she said. "Now it's about to happen."

"I want it to happen soon, not just for myself, but for the whole world."

caused by whirlwinds, sun devils, hoaxers or mating crocodiles. But no-one in Tully disbelieved Pedley and the Pennis.

And Pedley's nest was only the beginning. More appeared in the district over the next 10 years, mainly clustered around the Pennisi farm. Albert has recorded 22 nests, ranging from 3.5m to 10m.

The Pennis have become used to seeing searchlight rays beaming down from dark shapes in the sky, pulsating arcs snaking across the horizon and objects streaking away from rose-colored lights.



Corn circle 'was the creation of extraterrestrials'

A CORN circle recently discovered in a farm field at Linby was definitely caused by an extra-terrestrial presence, in the opinion of a Bulwell man who has just formed the East Midlands UFO Research Association.

Mr Anthony James, of Roosa Close at Hemphill Vale, told the *Dispatch* this week that faked crop circles were easy to eliminate from an investigation, as they were crudely trampled down and messy to look at.

"A genuine circle leaves the crop undamaged, and the corn continues to grow and ripen horizontally," said Mr James.

"If you slide your hand underneath the plants and try to raise them, they feel stiff and reluctant — it is as though they have been induced to lie flat, and that's how they intend to stay."

He said that loud hissing, crackling, knocking and roaring sounds had been recorded around corn circles, sometimes inaudible to the human ear.

Cameras and video equipment placed around the circles had also been "jammed" by interference, and bright flashes had been seen by people standing in the circles.

If a pendulum was held in a circle, it would always swing in the same direction as the corn was laid.

"Very few people have seen corn circles forming, as they occur mostly at night, and it is said that it only takes about 20 seconds to complete," went on Mr James.

GENUINE FORMATION

After the faked corn formation in Wiltshire when hoaxers fooled scientists, a genuine formation was later captured on film, and was now being analysed in Birmingham.

"I dismiss the idea of whirlwinds, hedgehogs, rabbits and vortices because of the elaborate patterns," Mr James told the *Dispatch*.

"Whoever is causing these circles has complete control over the situation. UFOs have often been reported in the vicinity of a corn circle, and I, as well as millions of others, would like to know the truth behind them."

It was believed that UFOs created magnetic forces and also spun at great speed, inducing a spiral effect.

"Without people such as myself who are willing to investigate — despite some ridicule from the cynics — we wouldn't stand a chance of revealing the truth."

Mr James added that he was aggrieved by tales of "little green men" which damaged serious investigations.

He intended to try to talk to as many farmers as possible in the county and to ask them to keep an eye open for unusual corn circles, and report them to him so that he could inspect them and form an opinion.

Anyone who was sincere about wanting to learn more about corn circles, UFOs and other phenomena, would be welcome to join him in his spare time research.

Mr James can be contacted on Nottm 275623.

My close encounter with UFO — hotel boss

A CLOSE encounter with an unidentified flying object has allegedly occurred in West Cumbria. Roy Daugherty, chief executive of the Westland Group which owns Workington's Westland Hotel, claims to have spotted a large ball of light hovering yards away from the hotel.

He said that he had been sober and stressed: "I am not a 37-year-old UFO crazy."

"It was a great big mass of light and it pulled down from the sky in front of me."

Roy had taken his dog for a walk at about 2.30am on Wednesday when the encounter occurred.

"It hovered there for about half a minute and I just kind of froze looking at it and so did my dog."

"It seemed like it was looking at us and then pulled off horizontally at great speed."

He described the object, which was shrouded in light, as a rounded structure some 60 to 80 feet wide, hovering about 80 feet off the ground.

He added that it had no windows.

"I wasn't frightened more interested in what it was and what it was



Roy Daugherty... close encounter.

doing and the feeling that it was looking at me," he said.

American-born Mr Daugherty said that his dog had been sick afterwards and he was so shaken that he had been forced to take the day off work.

Police said they had no reports of UFOs in the area, while the RAF would not reveal any details of flights over West Cumbria.

"I must have looked at it for nearly a minute but by the time I walked to a desk in the kitchen to get my camera it was gone"

'Red object' in Bunbartha sky

By JUANITA GREVILLE



Karin Peardon knows she saw a UFO on Thursday night — to her a glowing red object which hovered above her Bunbartha property was unidentified, it flew and it was definitely an object.

For Karin, her husband Tony and neighbor Peter Pettigrew it was an eerie sensation watching the circular ball of iridescent red light hover above shade cloth covering 20 ha of cherry and nashi fruit trees on Fuji Orchards in Maneroo Rd.

But when she walked away to get a camera Karin said the ball disappeared; repeated searches of the night sky failed to show any evidence of a craft in the area.

"The dog never barked and he barks when a car drives up the roadway," Mrs Peardon said.

All realise they are putting their reputations on the line reporting the incident, but they hope somebody may have an answer to the puzzle.

Efforts to contact the Defence Force for information on manoeuvres in the area on Thursday night were unsuccessful, and it is believed aviation authorities only track by radar above 3000 m in this district.

It was between 8.15 pm and 8.30 pm when Mrs Peardon first noticed the unusual light.

"It was reflecting off the wall oven," Mrs Peardon said.

"I walked across the family room and looked out ... it was just above the shade cloth."

"I must have looked at it for nearly a minute but by the time I walked to a desk in the kitchen to get my camera it was gone."

Five minutes before she noticed the craft Mrs Peardon said the house experienced a two second power drain, which did not effect neighbors.

And an orchard worker who had been spraying trees until late at night for the past week had finished two hours earlier — had the woman worked as normal she would have been in the enclosure when the craft appeared.

Both Mrs Peardon and her husband said the ball pulsed an unusual red-orange color; "You couldn't describe it (color) because it's not in our vocabulary."

"I turned back, it went ... and there was nothing even in the sky," Mr Peardon said.

Neither heard a sound coming from the craft, nor saw a distinct shape behind the single huge bright light.

And animals, including deer, and horses, on the property were not spooked, but were abnormally quiet.

"It's so quiet out here you can hear the owls in the tree hooting above the television," Mrs Peardon said.

For Peter Pettigrew the night had been spent unloading sheep which had arrived for his Maneroo Rd property, west of the Peardons.

As he drove east down the road at about 8.30 pm he too noticed the bright red light.

"It was just above the shade cloth ... it just stood still," he said.



Karin Peardon ... she knows she saw an unidentified flying object.

"At first I thought it was a new moon, but then it realised it was in the wrong place."

The properties are in a remote spot, with no houses on the other side of Nathalia road and Medlands Estate the nearest housing development two kilometres to the north.

Friday morning the three got together to walk the orchard checking for any traces of the craft's visit; the shade cloth was undisturbed or damaged, the fruit trees appeared intact.

None had seen anything like it before — they are hoping they don't again.

Questions about the craft being higher have been virtually discounted as it was viewed from different angles; the view from the family room window out above the shade cloth is block after about .5 m by a pergola roof.

"It was a narrow band of sight," Mrs Peardon said, Mr Pettigrew added it seemed to be almost sitting on the shade cloth.

Both Mr and Mrs Peardon slept little Thursday night as they tried to come up with an explanation, putting forward everything from flares, to lights, to aircraft, helicopters or balloons.

But, Mrs Peardon said, for a helicopter or airplane to be in the area it would have to be heard and flying so low would likely have crashed.

Somebody standing on the shade cloth beaming a light was would also be impossible, they said.

It had obviously spooked them, now they would just like an answer.

● Anybody who may have sighted the object or know about its origins are asked to contact THE NEWS.

A puzzle all round

BRIGHT lights flashed in the sky, the wind howled and Berwick St John woke to find circles in barley fields in another twist to Wiltshire's corny tale.

Farmer Richard Pocock (pictured right) discovered rings in his field last Saturday after a family guest reported strange goings-on in the night.

Visitor Maureen Cartwright was woken by lights in the sky and the sound of rushing wind, said Mrs Mary Pocock.

"She got out of bed, closed the windows and pulled the curtains be-

cause it was so strange," said Mrs Pocock.

Wendy Rigby, landlady of the nearby Talbot Inn, was also woken by bright lights on the same night and is puzzled by the rings.

"I really don't know what to think. I can't see how human beings could have made them because they are so perfect," she said.

Mr Pocock also found another ring on Monday and others have recently appeared near Laverstock as the mystery continues to baffle boffins and the public alike.



Aliens are taking our babies for a ride . . .

by Tim Cooper

ALIENS are abducting women and stealing their babies, according to a leading American authority on the subject.

Well, you don't need to lock up your daughters just yet, but the news was announced in all seriousness at the London Business School last night by Budd Hopkins, who has written two books on alien abductions.

There was no dissent among the 100 UFOlogists who crammed into a lecture hall in Regent's Park to hear and see the evidence.

Mr Hopkins, a painter-sculptor from New York, has spent the last 15 years studying the phenomenon of alien abductions.

He claims to have documented more than 300 individual cases, including pregnant women whose babies "disappeared" after their close encounters, confounding them, their gynaecologists and the fathers-to-be.

The victims are always, so far as one can gather, returned to terra firma after being whisked aboard alien spacecraft for a once-over by an ET GP.

They witness some strange sights—four ft aliens with grey skin and big black eyes, piles of extra-terrestrial corpses and even half-human half-alien crossbred babies. Once abducted, the victims are likely to be whisked into the ether again and again.

Mr Hopkins said he had never been abducted and had no such wish for himself or his family.

Children and young people seemed to be a particular target for the aliens, said Mr Hopkins, who showed slides to illustrate their experiences, including their impressions of the aliens they had encountered.

You had to admit they all bore an uncanny resemblance to each other. You also had to admit they looked like close cousins of the aliens in Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind*.

As for his own opinions, Mr Hopkins displayed a reluctance to go on the record. "I don't think they come from Birmingham or Central America," he opined, adding, helpfully: "They come from somewhere else."

Wherever they do come from, he thought they proba-



Budd Hopkins: "I don't think it is an invasion"

bly had some kind of "genetic evolutionary problem" hence their eagerness to examine humans so closely and take our babies.

"I don't think it is an invasion," declared Mr Hopkins to the audience, members of the British UFO Research Association. "It could be some kind of infiltration. But I see terrible psychic damage coming in the wake of it."

"This phenomenon is very large worldwide. It is very upsetting. It has a very ominous quality."

"We are faced with something that deserves investigation, not ridicule."

Belgian Scientists Seriously Pursue A Triangular UFO

Sightings by Walloons Inspire Ethnic Jokes by Flemish; Military Joins Sky Search

By TOM WALKER

SPECIAL TO THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
BRUSSELS—In Flemish folklore, people who see things fly are generally mad. And there is nobody that Belgium's Flemish citizens like more to diagnose as bonkers than their traditional rivals in the south, Belgium's Walloons.

So all Flanders is giggling over word that several thousand Walloons have confessed to seeing an unidentified flying object over the past year. "Walloons See Things Fly Again," a headline in the Flemish press trumpets.

But will the Walloons get the last laugh?

Weekend UFO Hunt

Eminently sober-sided burghers saw the thing, it appeared on radar screens, and Belgium's armed forces as well as UFO specialists have taken the sightings rather more seriously than Flanders' headline writers. Over the summer, the Belgian air force and army even organized a weekend of UFO hunting, putting two planes at the disposal of the Belgian Society for the Study of Space Phenomena (Sobeps) and civilian scientists who are studying the phenomena. The airborne flock of intellectuals zig-zagged back and forth across Wallonia chasing UFO reports.

Last week, the Ecole Royale Militaire, the air force training school, began computer-aided analyses of UFO photographs. Preliminary results of these and of radar-echo studies by the Free University of Brussels are expected to be disclosed this week. At the end of the month, scientists from all of Belgium's main universities are due to meet to discuss the matter.

"There's at least one [photograph] that is well worth investigating," says Leon Brenig, a nonlinear-dynamics theorist at the Free University, adding that the air force has "much better facilities than we have for this sort of thing." Prof. Brenig, whose department is studying radar echoes, is a former skeptic who claims to have seen a UFO himself in the spring.

UFO enthusiasts are delighted that they aren't being dismissed as cranks. "It's the first time ever that a national authority has worked with a private society in researching UFOs," asserts Lucien Clere-

baut, secretary-general of Sobeps. (In the Soviet Union, too, recent UFO sightings, including some of triangular-shaped objects, are being taken seriously. The Soviet Academy of Sciences has begun an investigation in the Byelorussian Republic.)

Since the rash of sightings here began almost a year ago, more than 2,600 have been reported of a triangular object with three huge lights hovering in the night sky over Wallonia. Reports were particularly numerous on Nov. 29 last year and March 30 this year. Both times, the *gendarmeries* of Eupen and Wavre were inundated with calls. Some 20 gendarmes themselves claimed to have seen the strange craft.

A Matter of Duty

Having denied that the UFO is one of theirs, the armed forces now feel compelled to demonstrate that they are on top of the situation—even at the risk of ridicule. "They've played our game," says Prof. Brenig. "We kept on asking them if it was a top-secret military project and, if so, why they were testing it over densely populated areas. They had to deny it and help to prove that it had nothing to do with them."

Military authorities of Belgium's neighbors maintain an amused detachment. "When I'm returning from the pub, I, too, experience certain phenomena that I can't explain," says Stefan Lang, a German spokesman on North Atlantic Treaty Organization military affairs in Bonn. Although Eupen, a focus of the recent sightings, is just over the border from Germany, Mr. Lang says he isn't losing any sleep over the UFO.

Belgian brass take the position that they have seen their duty and are doing it. "Our approach is that it's our job to see what's going on," says Air Force Col. Wilfried de Brouwer, who is coordinating the investigation. As for the risk of ridicule, he says, "I have no problem with that. I'm doing my duty."

Col. de Brouwer says the air force had no choice but to take action on the night of March 30, when eyewitnesses telephoned the radar station at Glons, between Liege and Tongeren, to report the flying triangle. Controllers picked up something on their radar screen, too, and quickly contacted colleagues at a station in Ghent.

Ghent controllers confirmed the presence of a slow-moving blip. Two F-16s were sent to investigate, and their radar locked onto the target. Suddenly, says Prof. Brenig, it seemed to accelerate at a speed too high for an earthling to withstand. "The force would have been 46 times gravity," he calculates. "That excludes the possibility of any human pilot."

Col. de Brouwer agrees that the acceleration and quirky, steplike movements of the object were "not normal behavior." The air force won't allow the two F-16 pi-

lots to be interviewed, to discourage their being labeled as members of a UFO pursuit squadron. But Col. de Brouwer says, "They're young guys, and they think it was something special. They're convinced that it was something."

One policeman who saw the UFO is Brig. Heinrich Nicholl, a gendarme in Eupen for 35 years. "What sort of force could do that?" he wonders about the craft's maneuvers. "It's the silence I can't explain. It was so big—just hovering there but absolutely silent. It was like watching a football match with no sound." But he hardly believes that Klingons were inside. "I think it's a very sophisticated and ultra-secret military project," he says.

The military has shot down speculation that the craft was an American Stealth bomber. "This thing hovers and doesn't make any noise," adds Col. de Brouwer. He and others strongly deny that the UFO is of military origin. Still, scientists are intrigued by the possibility. Prof. Brenig says a French physicist, working on a military grant that was later canceled, proved—albeit in a fish tank—that acceleration to supersonic speeds is possible without the usual sonic boom. A spokesman for the French air force confirms that the scientist's research grant was canceled but declines to say whether the military continued his research on its own. "It's really not for me to reply to that," he says. "I think the imagination travels a lot in cases like this."

Nation of Skywatchers

Prof. Brenig is organizing a second Sobeps UFO hunt, again with the army and air force, for later in the year. "I want to carry out an observation campaign for two or three weeks," he says. "People aren't used to observing the sky, and we need more reliable witnesses."

Prof. Brenig thinks that of all the Belgians who have informed Sobeps of sightings, only 300 or 400 are completely reliable. The rest of the reports, he says, are probably "socio-psychological contaminations"—delusions or tall tales.

The sightings still continue. Several weeks ago, a driver in Liege reported that the triangular object had winked back at him when he flicked his headlights at it. In another encounter near Braine-le-Compte, south of Brussels, a gendarme reported seeing a whole field illuminated by one of the craft's spot lights.

And while the Flemish still jeer at the debate, the most recent witness—a tax inspector who claims to have seen the craft from his garage, about 15 miles from Liege—is Flemish. "People lose their fear of seeming ridiculous when they see witnesses as reliable as themselves," says Prof. Brenig. "But nobody wants to be considered a fool."

Prairie crop circles baffling

SUN, Vancouver, B.C., Canada
Oct. 1, 1990 CR: G. Conway

Canadian Press

SASKATOON—More mysterious circles have turned up in Saskatchewan wheat fields, leaving scientists baffled by the strange markings and people thinking of visitors from outer space.

The most recent markings, discovered two weeks near Meath Park, Sask., are attracting a steady flow of curious people to the fields. Meath Park is about 150 kilometres north-east of Saskatoon.

"It's more than strange that we've been growing grain for centuries and it has only been in the past three or four years these have appeared," said Herman Austenson, a professor of crop sciences at the University of Saskatchewan.

Clarence Brule, who discovered

the Meath Park circles, and Austenson aren't buying explanations the circles are the work of pranksters or weird weather patterns.

"I believe they were made by some kind of craft... extra-terrestrial or army," Brule said.

He said there are two circles; one inside the other, with the largest about three metres in diameter.

The circles are considerably larger—but of a similar nature—to one found by farmer Mike Shawaga about two weeks ago near Alvena, 30 kilometres northeast of Saskatoon. And in late August, a farmer about 180 kilometres northwest of Saskatoon discovered a series of neat, symmetrical patterns in his field.

One set of three concentric circles was about 18 metres across with two,

two-metre circles nearby. There were no tracks leading from the circles and there were no depressions in the earth.

Brule said there were no tracks near the most recently discovered circles either.

"They were so well defined—they went from standing stubble to compressed grain."

He said the earth below was not compressed.

"It seems something hovered there. Anything with weight would compress the earth."

Brule said he had a call from a researcher in Winnipeg, but no one in the scientific field has come to look at the rings.

KENT EVENING POST, Maidstone, England - Sept. 3, 1990 CR: T. Good

Military monitor UFO

SOVIET anti-aircraft defences were monitoring the flight of an unidentified flying object which appeared this evening near the northern city of Murmansk, Tass news agency reported. It said the brightly-illuminated object looked like an airship and flew at an altitude of 15 miles from the Barents Sea towards the Kola peninsula. Soviet media often report sightings of UFOs. Last year the city of Voronezh in central Russia was spellbound by reports from children who claimed to have seen giant aliens landing in a ball-like craft.

DAGENHAM & BARKING ADVERTISER, England - Aug. 3, 1990 CR: T. Good

An object lesson from sky watcher Roy

SKY WATCHER Roy Lake will be unpacking his telescope along with hundreds of other enthusiasts this month, with the start of the meteorite season.

But Roy, from Tudor Road, Barking, and Peter Oliver, of Lucas Avenue, Grays, will be looking for more than just meteorites. Peter, 42, and Roy, 51,

are chairman and president of the East Anglian Unidentified Flying Object and Paranormal Research Association, which numbers churchmen, spiritualists and former army personnel among its members.

Roy said: "A lot of the time, what seem like UFOs or paranormal

events can be explained after rigorous research which we carry out."

However, during the 30 years that Roy has been investigating, and the 24 years Peter has been interested, the pair say they have seen some pretty

hairy happenings.

One household in Dagenham telephoned Roy after the daughter reported seeing strange lights in the sky.

Roy said: "Then she lay in bed and saw these lights come out of the wardrobe and whizz round the room."

"Strange things started happening in the house after that, but eventually, a priest exorcised the house and things returned to normal."

If you are over 18 and would like to join the association, telephone Grays Thurrock 377280, or 081 594 4797.

ARKANSAS GAZETTE, Little Rock, AR
Nov. 10, 1990

Soviet rocket pieces create stir in France

PARIS — Mysterious lights observed by thousands of people in the night sky over France came from pieces of a Soviet rocket re-entering the atmosphere, the French space center said Friday.

The phenomenon, described by witnesses as a collection of small lights in a triangle shape, was seen across France on Monday evening.

The National Center of Space Studies said information provided by U.S. space officials had established that the light came from pieces of a Soviet rocket that had launched a telecommunications satellite Oct. 3. (AP)

Mysterious circles in fields pose cosmic dilemma

Johnson, who'd never before seen a crop circle, and his colleagues who have visited the farm can't explain it.

But Johnson's seen plenty of whirlwinds and dust devils that didn't create circles, adding it would take tremendous energy to

The circles have been popping up around southern Manitoba; reputedly far more than have been reported.

And they're appearing in Saskatchewan, Kansas, the Dakotas, and Japan, joining the hundreds of circles befuddling and bedeviling the British in fields largely concen-

trated near — of course — Stonehenge.

The theories range from the mundane — British physicist Terrence Meaden says they're weather and wind phenomena — to the exotic — an American unidentified flying object buff says aliens are tracing out the basic math code of the universe so we can learn to interface with another galaxy.

Don Johnson is not the kind of guy who watched Invaders From Mars and Earth Vs. The Flying Saucers in the '50s and thought they were documentaries.

So unlike some Earthlings, he didn't assume alien invasion when a mysterious cir-

flatten thick, strong wheat, yet not break it.

"The ones that aren't hoaxes are genuinely puzzling. There isn't one theory that covers them all generally," says Ed Barker, Manitoba Planetary's producer and UFO investigator.

He lamented that scientists, abundant at U of M, are shying away from the crop circles, primarily because they draw the flying saucer crowd.

That's why a family out Sundown way that saw a bright, shining object land in their field eight years ago, leaving behind a perfectly round crop circle, haven't told many people, he said.

Nevertheless, Chris Rutkowski and his colleagues at Ufology Research of Manitoba have been investigating the circles, all the while exchanging their data with other UFO buffs throughout North Ameri-

ca and Europe.

They're serious people who look first for hoaxes, then for natural or human-made explanations, and then, and only then, stick a tentative toe into the twilight zone.

They've confirmed at least one hoax near St. Norbert — a circle formed by dragging a heavy chain over a crop — but argue there are far too many circles over wide-spread, isolated areas for many to be faked.

There are killjoys such as Environment Canada meteorologist Jay Anderson, who credits hoaxes and unusual wind effects not yet fully understood.

"I could easily figure out a way to do it," Anderson said. He'd enter a dry field where he wouldn't leave tracks, then use a long stick or a roller to flatten a circle.

But the ufologists say they've tried to duplicate the circles without com-

ing close to pulling off a decent fake.

Meaden, a British expert on tornado and storm formation, writes that the circles are the products of "a remarkable atmospheric vortex phenomenon" creating spinning winds in open, gently undulating farm country, suddenly spiralling downward and almost immediately dissipating their energy.

The theory's untested, Rutkowski said: if it's the wind, why are incidents sporadic, clustered every few years, and suddenly showing up in several countries?

Yet Rutkowski thought aliens would have better things to do. "There must be simpler ways than making marks in farmers' fields. If this is aliens, why bother?"

"It's definitely intelligent, and it may have something to do with the magnetic field of the area," said fellow ufologist Roy Bauer, who's

found no trace of radiation in Manitoba's circles.

Ufologist Guy Westcott doesn't dismiss spacecraft, but believes it's isolated pockets of ionized air.

"It's like a bubble of air, it's electrically charged. It will pop, and it will leave a nice little circle," Westcott said.

"I'm of the belief it's an extraterrestrial spacecraft. My belief is the government knows exactly what's going on," said ufologist Grant Cameron.

He believes Virginia-based UFO researcher Richard Hoagland may have a point.

Hoagland has drawn grids linking circles in England, Manitoba, and the Midwestern U.S. along longitudinal and latitudinal lines to Stonehenge, the Bermuda Triangle, and Devil's Tower in Wyoming — where, it goes without saying, the alien mothership landed in Close Encounters of the Third Kind.

NEWS, Shepparton, Victoria, Australia - Oct. 31, 1990

Confirmed! Others see 'UFO'

By JUANITA GREVILLE



in Wolfe, said no army personnel were in the area on Thursday night; the nearest operation was at Dookie.

And researcher for the Victorian UFO Research Society (VUFORS), Mr Paul Norman, who has spoken with the Pearsons, said the group definitely saw something that was "unusual".

One common occurrence associated with UFO sightings — a power drain — was noted five minutes before the sighting and some animals in the area had been disturbed.

A woman also contacted The News to query if it could have been a "min min" — Australia's version of a "will-o'-the-wisp" — believed to be caused by gases, but Mr Norman felt this was improbable.

Mr Norman is in the Goulburn Valley on holidays, but has taken the opportunity to look into the sightings.

He is presently investigating the appearances of unexplained circles in wheat fields in the Mallee and Wimmera districts similar to those documented in England.

He has asked that if any rings are found in crops or on ground in this area that people contact VUFORS on (03) 592 2502.

CR: P. Norman

UFO research group on alert for rings

Researchers on unidentified flying objects are looking for unusual rings in Wimmera-Mallee cereal crops.

They want farmers to co-operate with them in research and tests later this year.

The Victorian UFO Research Society announced last night it was preparing for research on a Wimmera-Mallee 'ground and air ring phenomenon' and appealed to graingrowers to watch for changes in paddocks.

Society vice-president and researcher Paul Norman of Arcadia said the group would appreciate advance warning, before harvest, if rings appeared in crops.

He said: "The phenomenon causes minimal crop loss, restricted to the ring area. Research has not produced evidence of dangerous radiation

contamination.

"But rings must be treated with caution until our equipment has cleared the area."

Force

Mr Norman said rings appeared in many areas and in a variety of field vegetation. They were much more noticeable in wheat where they were

easily seen.

"The affected area does not recover, showing the field is under the influence of some force," he said.

"There is no guarantee rings will occur again this year but we must be alert for their return."

Mr Norman said farmers and others in England reported more than 400 rings in summer this year.

There was no explanation for the force, produced mostly at night. UFO lights sometimes coincided with rings.

Barking

Mr Norman asked farmers to watch for any depression or change in normal wheat growth, mysterious lights, animal disturbance such as panic, death or dogs barking, unusual radio or television interference, heavy water loss from dams or water tanks and any unexplained family illness or worry.

He asked farmers to secure a ring by enclosing it with light wire or rope to keep out people and animals and prevent evidence damage.

Unexplained rings have appeared on many Wimmera farms.

Rings appeared on Geoff Bibby's land at Navarre in 1972, and Jack Russell of Melrose merino stud, Nurrabel, found a circle on his farm in 1973. Neither received an official explanation.

Vivid green

At Nurrabel, the ground remained bare until winter rain when grass grew a vivid green and about two centimetres higher than surrounding growth.

Scientists of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation took soil samples at Nurrabel but Mr Russell was never told the result of their tests. Both farmers found the soil impregnated with a dust-like substance.

* Farmers and others willing to help the Victorian UFO Research Society may 'phone Paul Norman at 03 5922502 or 058 267284, home, or write to the society at PO Box 43, Moorabbin, 3189.

WIMMERA MAIL, TIMES, Horsham, Victoria, Australia - Oct. 5, 1990 CR: P. Norman

PROVINCE, Vancouver, B.C., Canada - Oct. 24, 1990

Mystery circle — was it a UFO?

By Fabian Dawson
Staff Reporter

It took a perfect circle of flattened grass to convince Ralph Thomsen that UFOs are visiting.

Now he is scanning the skies above Dawson Creek hoping to see what landed on his lawn.

Whatever it was, it left a perfect circle of flattened grass.

"I am quite sure something landed on my lawn," Thomsen, an 80-year-old retired farmer, said from his farm 16 kilometres north of Dawson Creek.

"There are no marks to the circle or away from it and the grass inside the circle and outside has not been disturbed."

Thomsen said the circle of flattened grass was 9.4 metres (31 feet) in diameter and "a perfect six-inches all around."

The phenomenon, described as crop circles, has appeared in England, the Prairies and the U.S., over the past decade.

But the Dawson Creek circle is the first in B.C., said Lorne Goldfeather of the Vancouver-based UFO Research Institute of Canada.

He said the institute will analyze grass and soil samples.

"From the verbal description so far, it could be UFO-related," said Goldfeather.

Thomsen said the weather was normal the night before he found the circle last Tuesday.

"When I woke up the next day, there it was between the house and my barn," he said.

"I missed this one but I am keeping a lookout in case the Martians or whatever come back."

CR: G. Conway

Corn circle 'not a hoax'

A RIPLE of excitement is spreading through a village near York after a corn circle was discovered.

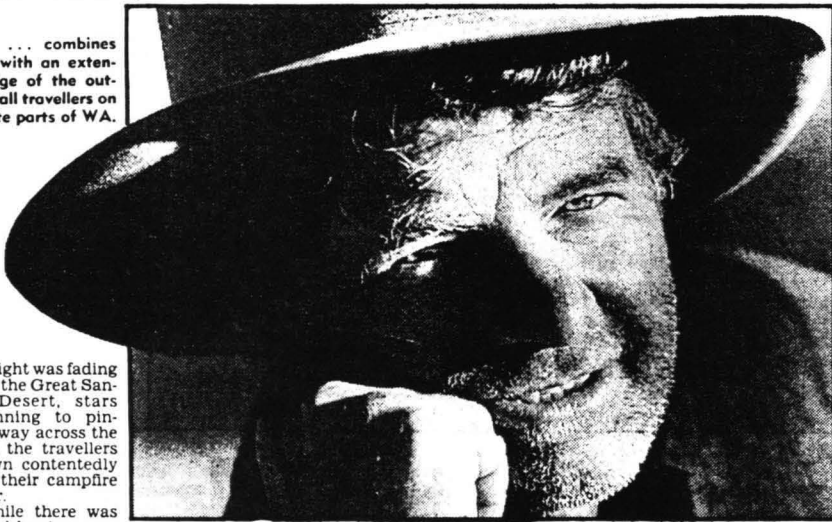
The latest phenomenon, sighted in a village field next to the B1363 road through Stillington comes only days after a ring was spotted in a field in nearby Brandyby.

Local farmer, Mr John Sparrow, who owns the field, described the latest formation as "about 25 yards in circumference, with about 2 yards of the wheat standing up, and another circle running around it in perfect proportion."

Mr Sparrow said last night: "It's unbelievable, a perfect circle."

"It's difficult to describe how it happened really. Everyone thinks it's a whirlwind, but I have my doubts. It is very unusual."

● Eric Gard ... combines story telling with an extensive knowledge of the outback to enthral travellers on tour to remote parts of WA.



THE light was fading over the Great Sandy Desert, stars were beginning to prick their way across the heavens as the travellers settled down contentedly in front of their campfire after dinner.

For a while there was light-hearted banter.

Then Eric Gard stood up holding a pair of long wire rods with hooks on the ends.

An expectant hush settled over the campers — Mr Gard had picked up his "talking sticks".

He used the rods to lift a barbecue plate from the fire and poked at the embers.

Then, with a slight chuckle, he began to tell a story. It was the same every evening during our trip up the Canning Stock Route.

Mr Gard, 47, of Wembley Downs, has already lived a full, off-beat life — almost as unusual as that of his wife Ronele.

Mrs Gard toured Europe and the US as a freelance journalist, interviewing stars like the Beatles in the early 1960s, before becoming a human biology lecturer and sex educator at Presbyterian Ladies College.

"I met Eric in 1970 in a pub and we began living together — much to the consternation of the PLC," she said.

Ten years ago the couple developed a taste for driving the remote areas of Australia and for the last four have taken travellers up the stock route as professional guides.

Mr Gard is a seventh-generation Australian and was born in Hobart where his father was an orchardist.

The original Gardes were convicts.

He left school at 17 to work for an insurance company but lasted only 12 months.

"I saw everyone sitting

Never ending stories

MARK THORNTON meets a bush couple taking travellers up the remote Canning Stock Route. Eric and Ronele Gard have a wealth of campfire stories, not least their UFO sightings in the outback.

in glass cages and imagined myself there in 50 years. It was not for me.

"I already had a pilot's licence, taken with the Air Training Corps and when I saw an advertisement for the Fleet Air Arm decided that was what I wanted to do."

He married in 1965 but his love of flying meant he spent little time at home. Within three years he was divorced.

A period in general aviation followed when he specialised in ferry and charter work. Then he moved to Perth, and met Ronele.

He worked for oil companies until 1981. At that time he decided he wanted

to be his own boss and began doing odd jobs.

But by then he and Ronele had done their first trip into the desert which they both enjoyed immensely.

"I had bought an old Willys Jeep in 1978. It was a wreck but it allowed us to get away."

"We bought a Nissan Patrol in 1981 and went up to the Kimberley."

"Until 1985 we made a good living from the odd jobs."

"Then we were asked to take a tour group up the Canning Stock Route for a tour company."

"We did three tours for them then decided to take our own in 1986."

"We have not looked back since."

In remote places they have seen some strange sights, notably UFOs.

The first time was in 1969 when Mr Gard was ferrying a twin-engine Piper Aztec aircraft from Brisbane to Perth across the Nullarbor.

"I was flying with co-pilot Mark Smith at about 9000 feet when we had what appeared to be total electrical failure."

"All the dials dropped off the clock but the engines kept turning faultlessly. Mark told me to look out over the port wing. About 100 m away there was a silvery flying disc."

"Then I saw there was one an equal distance off the starboard wing too. We looked around and saw there were seven of these things. Each was about 18 m across."

"The discs hovered round us for a while, then took off ahead, formed up again about 1 km in front of us, then arched upwards."

"We looked up and there, at 20,000 feet, was what I can only describe as a huge mother ship. It must have been massive because it dwarfed the discs which disappeared into it."

"I told Ronele about it much later and she scoffed. Then, in 1986, we saw some UFOs together at the Bungles."

Mr Gard never gave a thought to the environment before he began driving around WA. Now he is "dark green".

"Seeing is believing is appreciating," he said.

By Art Robinson
of the Star-Phoenix

More mysterious circles in Saskatchewan wheat fields have left both farmers and soil scientists baffled.

The most recent — discovered two weeks ago in fields worked by Clarence Brule near Meath Park, east of Prince Albert — have attracted a steady flow of the curious.

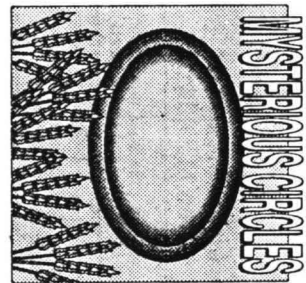
"It's more than passing strange that we've been growing grain for centuries and it has only been in the past three or four years these have appeared in many places," said Herman Austenson, a professor of agronomy (crop sciences) at the University of Saskatchewan.

Neither he, Brule nor those finding similar circles in their fields are buying explanations being put forward that they are the work of pranksters or weird weather patterns.

"I believe they were made by some kind of craft ... extraterrestrial or army craft," Brule said.

He said there are two circles — one inside the other, with the largest being about three metres in diameter.

The circles are considerably



larger — but of a similar nature — as one found by farmer Mike Shawaga about two weeks before

near Alvena, northeast of Saskatoon.

Brule said there were no tracks near the circles. "They were so well defined — they went from standing stubble to compressed grain."

He said the earth below was not compressed. "It seems something hovered there. Anything with weight would compress the earth."

Brule said he had a call from a researcher in Winnipeg but no one in the scientific field has come to look at the rings.

"(The circles) definitely isn't normal," said Austenson, who has been looking at grain fields for 40 years.

"I don't think whirlwinds would do it. They've been around for decades and never done anything like this."

Shawaga said he had a call from a university student in Regina who intends to take a look at his circle with some researchers who have been studying others.

He dismisses explanations the circle is the work of pranksters. "It would take a year to make it."

He also said he is surprised scientists haven't come by to look at it.

This past year, there have been

circles found in at least three locations in northern Saskatchewan and another half-dozen in Manitoba.

While there have not been any scientific explorations of them other than by UFO-followers, there have been U.S. agency scientists considering outer-space matters.

Earlier this summer, North American Space Administration (NASA) workers were flying balloons across Manitoba and northern Saskatchewan loaded with equipment to do research on cosmic rays — high-energy rays that can best be tracked in the North.

Things extra-terrestrial

FOR those with an interest in things extra-terrestrial a new book combines such subjects as unidentified flying objects and circles in the corn and puts them in a local setting.

'UFOs Over Hampshire', by Robert Price, catalogues a whole series of odd incidents in the county, dating from the 1950s.

Some sightings, which at first seem to be utterly bewildering, turn out to have sometimes simple and perfectly rational explanations.

Others have no explanation at all — other than the existence of other life forces.

Although obviously an enthusiastic UFO convert, Robert Price does not go out of his way to convert others. He sticks to the facts. Where logical explanations are available he puts them forward.

But the fact remains that there have been a number of weird incidents that no amount of logic can explain.

He reports on scores of sightings and encounters recorded in the county and the Isle of Wight during the last 40 years and to pick out any for special mention would be impossible.

Suffice it to say that places familiar to readers in this area are frequently named. If the question of UFOs interests you then so will this book.

'UFOs Over Hampshire' is published in paperback by Ensign Publications, price £5.95.

KRD

'Orange globe' scare is no joke to David

NORFOLK crop circle investigator David Dane is convinced that the strange formations are not the work of hoaxers.

Mr Dane, a Broadland artist, has been to Wiltshire to study the complex patterns where he teamed up with Cropwatch organisation.

He has also visited the sites of numerous crop circles in Norfolk where he has interviewed those who found them.

And he has been amazed by the story of one family from North Nor-

By Julian Sturdy

folk, who wish to remain anonymous for fear of being ridiculed by people who treat UFOs as a joke.

EXPERIENCE

"They are just too embarrassed to talk about it, but something quite remarkable happened last Saturday," he said.

"They were on the verge of retiring for bed when from the bedroom window they saw a huge orange globe with a series of lights around the centre."

"They all saw the same thing and watched it for some while. It went down in Witton Woods with a sound like a chainsaw going through trees," he said, adding that they later saw two forks of lightning.

A member of the family yesterday confirmed the strange experience, but said they had not been able to find any evidence in the wood.

Mr Dane said he expected Cropwatch investigators in Wiltshire to come up with the proof to show that UFOs were responsible for the crop circles — despite one false alarm which turned out to be the work of hoaxers.



Rancher reveals origin of design

□ Four persons trench a Hindu meditation symbol measuring a quarter mile in the Oregon desert

By DICK COCKLE
Correspondent, The Oregonian

BURNS — A rancher on Friday morning told Harney County authorities that a huge, mysterious design cut into the desert of Southeast Oregon was the work of four vacationing artists.

It does not, the sheriff said, appear related to occult activity.

"The rancher said he knew who they were, but he'd just as soon not say," said Sheriff Dave Glerup. "That's fine by me."

Glerup said that as far as he knows no laws were broken by those who cut the elaborate network of trenches that formed the design. The Bureau of Land Management took a different view, however.

Don Cain, acting district manager for the BLM at Hines, said his agency is "upset" about the design because it was cut into a wilderness study area. He said it constitutes a violation of Intermanagement Act, and he's asked BLM's law-enforcement arm to look into the matter.

Cain was, however, impressed by the design.

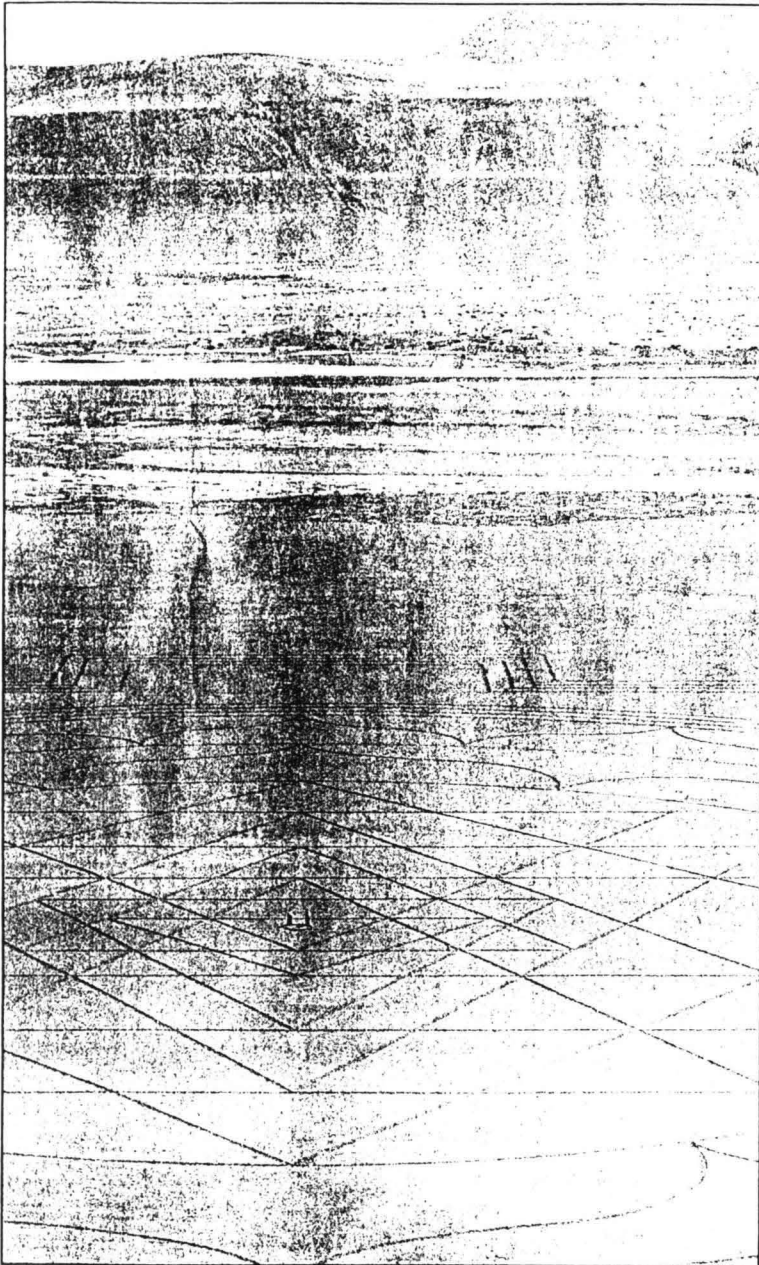
"Somebody took a lot of time and effort to do this," he said. "It was very carefully done and shows a lot of work."

While the rancher told Glerup the design was "trenched" by hand, Cain said it may have been done with a machine.

The elaborate, symmetrical design is a square with T-shaped appendages on all four sides. Inside are three concentric circles. Inside those are two concentric circles of lotus leaves. Inside those are nine graduated triangles, four pointing one way and five pointing the opposite, all overlapping. At the very center is another circle.

The design, described as a Hindu meditation symbol known as a sriyantra, was discovered recently by Idaho Air National Guard pilots. They had photographed it while making routine photo-reconnaissance training runs over Southeast Oregon. Glerup was told the design had no particular meaning, but some authorities speculated that it had occult or sexual connotations.

The design is just north of the Alvord Desert in the sunset shadows of Steens Mountain, near the southeastern corner of vast Harney County, and is situated about 4,000 feet above sea level. It's more than 30 miles from any paved highways.



BARBARA REYNOLDS

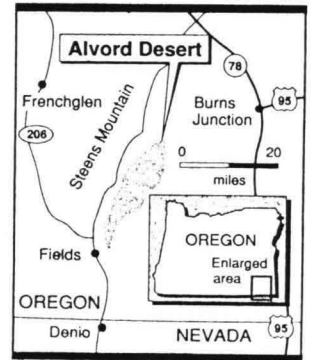
Idaho Air National Guard pilots discovered a Hindu meditation symbol carved into the earth north of the Alvord Desert in southeastern Oregon. An unidentified rancher said the work, measuring a quarter-mile across, was done by four vacationing artists.

It measures about a quarter mile across, is oriented to true north and is precisely laid out along a normal training run used by Air Guard pilots, said Capt. Michael Gollaher of

the 124th Tactical Reconnaissance Group in Boise.

"We're talking a major engineering effort here," Gollaher told The Associated Press on Thursday.

The rancher's revelation Friday appears to have solved what seemed a baffling mystery. The design was relatively new — it hadn't been there for more than a few weeks — and authorities couldn't figure out



The Oregonian

why anyone had placed it there.

But the rancher told Glerup the design was basically an art project. Glerup said he knows the rancher and would respect the rancher's request not to be named.

Glerup said one of the artists apparently is from Iowa. "I understand they do these things in the cornfields," he said.

Glerup said he thought the first rain or snow would wash it off the cracked desert playa, a desert basin that temporarily becomes a shallow lake after heavy rains.

The pictograph was first reported Aug. 10 by Lt. Col. Bill Miller, who returned Aug. 24 and photographed it from his RF-4C Phantom jet, said Gollaher. He said it's unlikely the design was built before the middle of July, because pilots would have spotted it.

Sgt. Charlie Swindell, the non-commissioned officer in charge of photo quality assurance for the 190th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron in Boise, drove out to the site on U.S. Bureau of Land Management range land.

"It's beautifully done," Swindell said. "I would love to meet the person that did this."

Swindell said he measured the sriyantra to be 1,563 feet square.

"The circle in the center is 9 feet, 3 inches, with a one-inch deviation, which I consider to be a pretty dog-gone good circle," Swindell said.

Swindell said he found a number of surveying stakes at corners driven deep in the ground, with nails and pink plastic ribbons on them.

"Some of the architects around here said it would take \$75,000 to \$100,000 to survey it and lay it out," Swindell said.

He speculated that someone used a garden tractor or rototiller to plow the furrows. Such a machine could have folded over the earth to cover the tire tracks.

Fisherman claims to have photographed Lake Erie Monster

Last Friday, Oct. 5, started as a normal day for Tom Siegel, owner of Siegels, 2014 Cleveland Rd. W., in Huron. But by early that afternoon Siegel received a photograph that would add more fuel to the fire of the growing story of the Lake Erie Monster.

Around 2 p.m. in the afternoon Siegel went out on the deck adjoining the bar to ask a lone man sitting there if he wanted a drink.

"The man was medium in build," said Siegel. "He was a fisherman around 60 years old with grayish white hair and beard."

The man did not want a drink and instead showed Siegel eight photographs that he claimed were pictures of the now famous Lake Erie Monster.

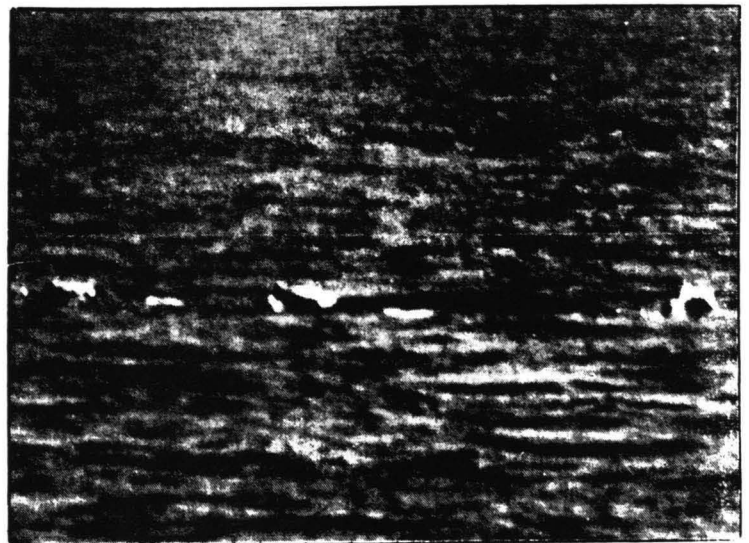
"He claimed that he has seen it many times when he has been fishing and is just waiting for the reward to go higher before he catches it," explained Siegel. "He gave me the picture because he did not want to give it to Tom Solberg

because Solberg would recognize him and he did not want the hassle."

According to Siegel the man claimed that he has seen it about one and one-half miles north of the Huron River on numerous occasions. He would not reveal his name to Siegel, but left him one photograph, gathered the other seven up and left.

Whether the picture is real or something else has not stopped Siegel to join in Monster Mania like everyone else in Huron. He has instituted the Monster Cheeseburger, which has become a huge success with about 20-30, being sold everyday. Siegels is also selling Monster sweatshirts which are selling very well and featuring two new drinks, "Beam Me Up Bessies," and "Monster Masher."

Take a close look at the photo on the right. What do you think? Is the fisherman telling the truth or hallucinating or just pulling an elaborate hoax. You be the judge.



Is it real or is it not?

Is this really a photograph of the Lake Erie Monster taken by a local fisherman; is it a floating log, large sturgeon or an elaborate hoax?

Artists meant no harm to desert

By PAULINE BRAYMEN
The Times-Herald

The nation has been astir with news reports of a mysterious drawing that covers about one-quarter mile on the Mickey Playa of the Alvord Desert east of Steens Mountain. It was discovered recently by the Idaho Air National Guard.

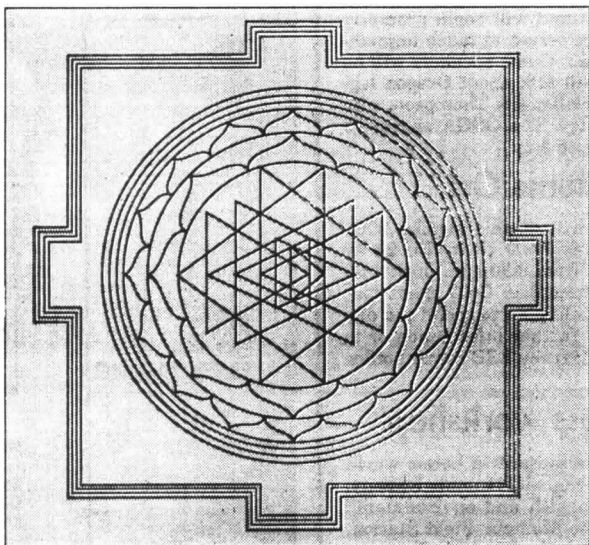
BLM officials have been concerned because the activity took place in a Wilderness Study Area on public lands without official permission.

Late Tuesday evening, the artists who created the design contacted the Burns Times-Herald with this letter:

"To the people of Harney County:

We are writing this open letter to provide details of the creation of the diagram etched on the dry lake bed in Harney County. It is important to understand that it was never our intention to attract publicity or promote ourselves in any way. Now that the media has given the diagram so much attention we want to come forward to explain why we made the drawing. The drawing is the work of six people: three artists, an architect, a film maker, and a ten year old boy. The group was organized to undertake an artistic experiment on a grand scale, one that would challenge our abilities to make a highly precise drawing at a size that would require a true team effort. The complexity and beauty of this diagram provided the perfect subject for our experiment.

This collection of circles, triangles, and squares is associated with the artistic traditions of Asia, but we chose the diagram as the subject of this project because of the beauty and intricacy of its design. We find the integration of balance, harmony, and rich complexity in the drawing to be an almost endless source of visual delight. As aerial photographs show, the design's appearance continuously changes



A computer generated picture of the drawing by The Bulletin of Bend

as one moves around it. We felt that the shapes generated by the various intersections of lines and circles would also be interesting from the ground when seen at a large scale. In our studies of art history we found this diagram to contain all the qualities that we wanted to explore in our artistic experiment.

In order to carry out our experiment in a way that would not attract attention, we searched for the most remote place we could find. One of the members of the group has been visiting Harney County for the past 25 years to paint its unique beauty. He suggested its location because of the special qualities of the place and knew that few, if any, visited this spot.

The diagram was created in ten days, between July 31 and Aug. 9. We worked in the hours before noon and in the early evening. One aspect of our experiment involved laying out the diagram using the most

ancient methods of surveying. No transits, compasses, lasers or other modern methods of determining direction, proportion, and placement were used. Our equipment consisted of a pair of binoculars, flags, nails, wire string, sticks, and a tape measure. We were delighted to find out that the architects in Portland thought that the surveying for the project would cost between \$75,000 and \$100,000. Especially since we did much of it at twilight with little prior experience! The furrow that defines the lines of the diagram was made with an old fashioned garden cultivator that we pulled by hitching four of us up like human horses. No footprints were left on the site because a rain happened to smooth out the ground the night we finished the diagram. The work was demanding because of the complexity of the project, the limited amount of time available to us, and the intense heat.

Because we were concerned with the impact on the environment, no motorized equipment was used and we walked to the site instead of driving heavy vehicles. The diagram was made by simply moving dirt six inches from its original location. We felt that this was not any more disturbing to the land than the motorcycles and other vehicles that people use to cross the nearby Alvord. Nothing was brought in to 'paint' the site and no plants were disturbed. In time, the rain and wind will remove all traces of this artistic experiment. We have written a letter to the BLM explaining our sincere desire to do no damage to the land and that we did not want to create difficulties for their management program.

We were not motivated by any strange or mysterious reasons for creating the diagram. We did not want to make a landing pad for UFOs! We did not create it as a symbol of any religion, nor as the expression of any particular group. Our only intention was to create something beautiful and wonderful that stretched the boundaries of our hearts, minds, and artistic abilities.

We may have been naive to think that this design would remain unnoticed, but we were glad to hear from the reports in the press that the people who have seen the design think it is a beautiful and precise piece of work. It is our sincere hope that the publicity does not cause the land to be over run, and we hope that the people will not take this as an encouragement for this to be done elsewhere. We hope this letter has cleared up any unknowns about the design and explained the reasons for its creation.

Bill Witherspoon
Tony Lawlor
Bob Hoerlein
Jim Ainsley
Miles Witherspoon."

SUN, Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada - Aug. 31, 1990

Food as mythical as yeti in U.S.S.R.

MOSCOW

THE NEWS from the Soviet Union today is, as ever, both good and bad. The good news is that the 1990 Soviet yeti hunting season has opened. Every August intrepid teams head off for the remote mountains in search of what Soviet scientists call "the relic humanoid." And every September they wearily return having seen or found nothing of any substance.

But everyone loves the yeti mystery and Soviet people more than most. There are all manner of research groups set up to find it and everyone wishes the yeti-hunters well.

TREVOR FISHLOCK

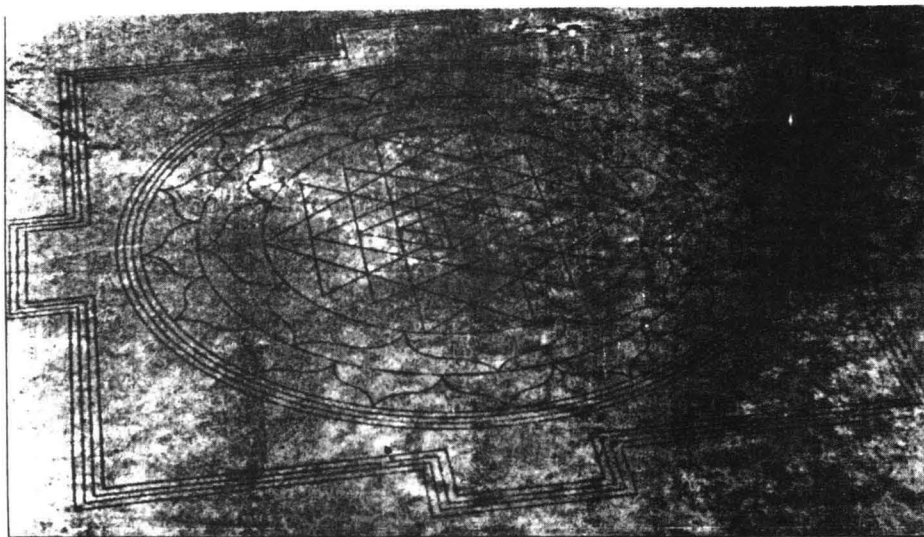
Our own yeti file in Moscow bulges with newspaper reports of sightings in the Pamirs, the Urals, and the unpeopled vastnesses of Central Asia, and we have dubious pictures of giant footprints.

This year's 15-strong expedition has set off into the mountains of Tajikistan. Its leader described the quarry as follows: tall, hairy, impressive biceps, jug-eared and able to manipulate the human mind from a distance.

This description, which you might think could fit someone in your own neighborhood, has been compiled from various sources, including counter-intelligence officers. Odd to think that deep in the KGB's Lubyanka headquarters there is a file on the yeti.

MANY Soviet people believe that, given the ever-worsening supply of food these days, the expedition has a better chance of finding a yeti than most citizens have of finding a sausage. Indeed many foodstuffs are so rare that they have become almost as mythical.

CR: G. Conway



The Hindu meditation symbol carved in the Oregon desert measures a quarter mile across.

Vacationing artists plowed desert symbol

The Associated Press

A gigantic Hindu meditation symbol plowed into a remote dry lake bed in southeastern Oregon was created by a band of vacationing artists who couldn't resist using the naked desert landscape as a canvas, the Harney County sheriff said Friday.

"If somebody wants to draw a pretty picture, I guess that's OK," Sheriff Dave Glerup said.

But the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, which controls the site on the Alvord Desert, considers the artwork to be an unauthorized use of public lands.

"I'm not sure they could even get a permit," said Mark Arm-

strong, spokesman for the BLM Burns District.

However, it wasn't immediately clear whether the BLM would try to prosecute, he said.

The design measures a quarter mile across and represents a sriyantra, used by Hindus as a focal point during meditation. It was discovered Aug. 10 by an Idaho Air National Guard pilot flying a photo reconnaissance run out of Boise.

The symbol remained a mystery until the wife of a military photo technician identified it from a book she had at home.

The intricate design was laid out on a piece of the Table Rock

Wilderness Study Area with survey stakes topped with pink ribbons. It was scribed into the bare earth of a dry lake playa with six-inch furrows.

"We contacted a local rancher, who wished to remain anonymous, who said there were four people vacationing on the south end," of the Alvord Desert, Glerup said. "They had some artistic talents and saw the Alvord Desert and couldn't resist."

"They trenched this design in the desert, then one of the (local civilian) pilots flew them over it, they took some photographs of it, and they went on their merry way."

REGISTER, Sandusky, OH - Sept. 25, 1990

Marina offers reward for creature's capture

HURON — A simple sighting of the Lake Erie "sea thing" just won't do, but the live capture of the mysterious creature may net someone \$5,000.

Huron Lagoons Marina is offering the reward to the person who can bring the creature, live and kicking, to the marina's "capture control center," said marina president Tom Solberg.

Huron firefighters, members of the U.S. Coast Guard, fishermen and state rangers have sighted the long, thin object several times throughout the summer in waters from Marblehead to Huron.

The most recent sightings of the "thing" were off Huron last week.

Solberg said he anticipates the \$5,000 will "mushroom into a very large reward" as other businesses enter the unusual contest.

The man who will verify and identify the catch is Dr. Charles E. Herdendorf, Huron, a former Ohio State University professor who also was involved with the Ohio Sea Grant program, Solberg said.

"The fishing has been so poor this year, maybe the monster scared the walleye to the east ... maybe it's eating all the zebra mussels. We want to know," he said with a laugh. "We're going to run with this thing."

CR: V. Perry

GREAT BALLS OF FIRE

By RUSTY COATS
Bee staff writer

Egon Bach sits inches away from the television screen, his thumb punching the Frame-Advance key on his VCR's remote control.

Paparazzi balls of light burst in the black Alaskan night. They silhouette Mount Redoubt as it shudders with volcanic indigestion across the waters of Cook Inlet.

"See?!" he cries just as a lightning shard lances three balls, like an electric needle stringing pearls. "The lightning is attracted to them, right, but is not as stable. They fly away now. See?"

In the next frame, the balls are gone.

The videocassette is a composite of films shot during two of Mount Redoubt's 1990 eruptions, taken by oil riggers working in the Gulf of Alaska. Dubbed together, the film lasts all of one minute, forty-five seconds.

Bach has analyzed every frame. All in search of those balls.

The Vikings called them "draco volans," or flying dragons. They appear in ancient Orient art as demons and in hillbilly lore as lightning balls riding on a freight-train rail. The current term is "UFO."

Bach calls them "Gorgons," after the mythological creatures that were either so beautiful or so ugly that to look upon them meant death. He has chased them through historical accounts and government documents, from the Bible to Project Blue Book, and calls the Redoubt footage his final trump.

He says they are a new form of matter — not lava, not plasma, but a kind of pressure-cooked chlorine — that vamoose out of volcanoes at about three times the speed of sound. If harnessed, he claims, gorgons could end the energy crunch.

Physicists, vulcanologists and geologists say Bach's theory holds less water than a colander.

"I've seen (Bach's) films and his manuscripts, but there's nothing there that has a definite basis in actual science," says Bob Christiansen, a seismologist with the state Office of Earthquakes, Volcanoes and Engineering. "Ball lightning is seen as a curiosity, not something highly important."

Bach has deemed it important enough to sink some big money into it — all his own. His long-distance phone bills are outrageously high from calling volcanic observatories around the world and talking for several minutes.

After Redoubt's Jan. 2 eruption, he booked a flight to Anchorage and spent several days interviewing witnesses — 40 of them along the 50-mile area around the village of Kenai — and obtaining photos, films and sketches.

He did, however, wait for cheaper rates before leaving.

"I have to watch my budget," he says. "I am doing work what paid scientists should be doing, and all is on my own money. Research is costly."

Research of ball lightning is darn near negligible. A 1988 convention in Tokyo of physicists who specialize in ball-lightning only drew 25. The topic gets less than a paragraph in most encyclopedias, and never in the context of a "new form of matter."

When related to volcanoes, ball lightning — and lightning in general — is common, according to Steve McNutt, senior seismologist with the California Department of Conservation.

"The particles of ash ejected rub together and cause lightning, and also because they are charged," he says. "Some particles are bonded together by electrostatic charges and, when excited, burn with white or blue light."

Electrostatic charges are unstable and don't last more than a few seconds. Gorgons, Bach says, are stable. So stable that they fly along the magnetic meridian at

about Mach 3.

The speed he knows because the balls appear in one video frame and not in the next; the film-speed would catch the balls in-travel if they were doing sub-Mach.

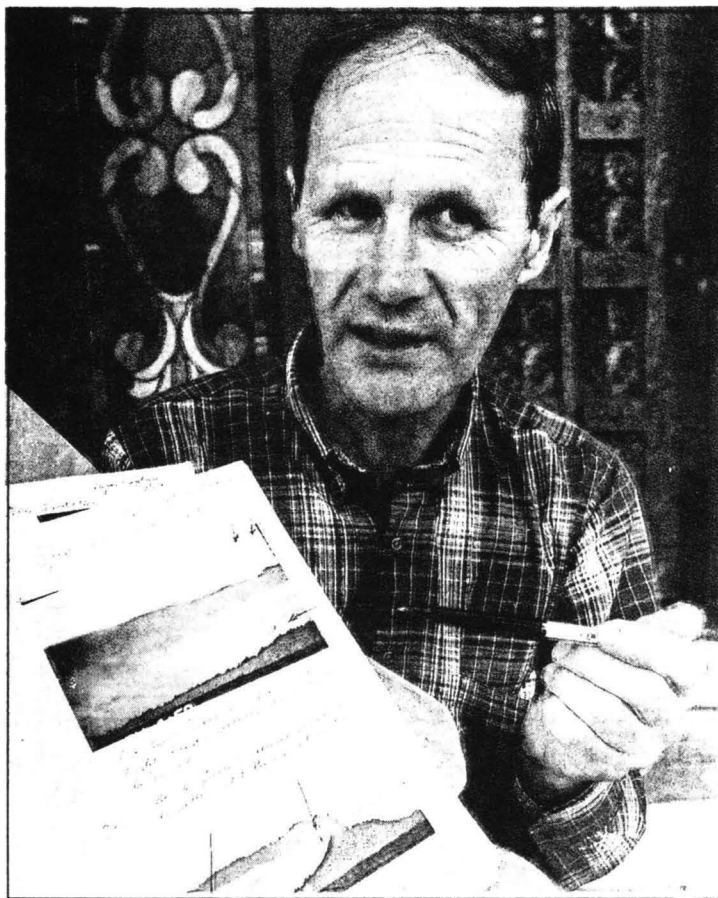
Other scientists retort that the reason is that the balls are electrostatic and dissipate — not zip away.

The stability comes from his claim that the balls fly several miles and are seen in faraway cities. But no one outside the Redoubt area reported seeing flying fireballs, even though, by the magnetic meridian, they should have swarmed Anchorage.

And no one has found a crash-landed gorgon. Not even after the snow melted.

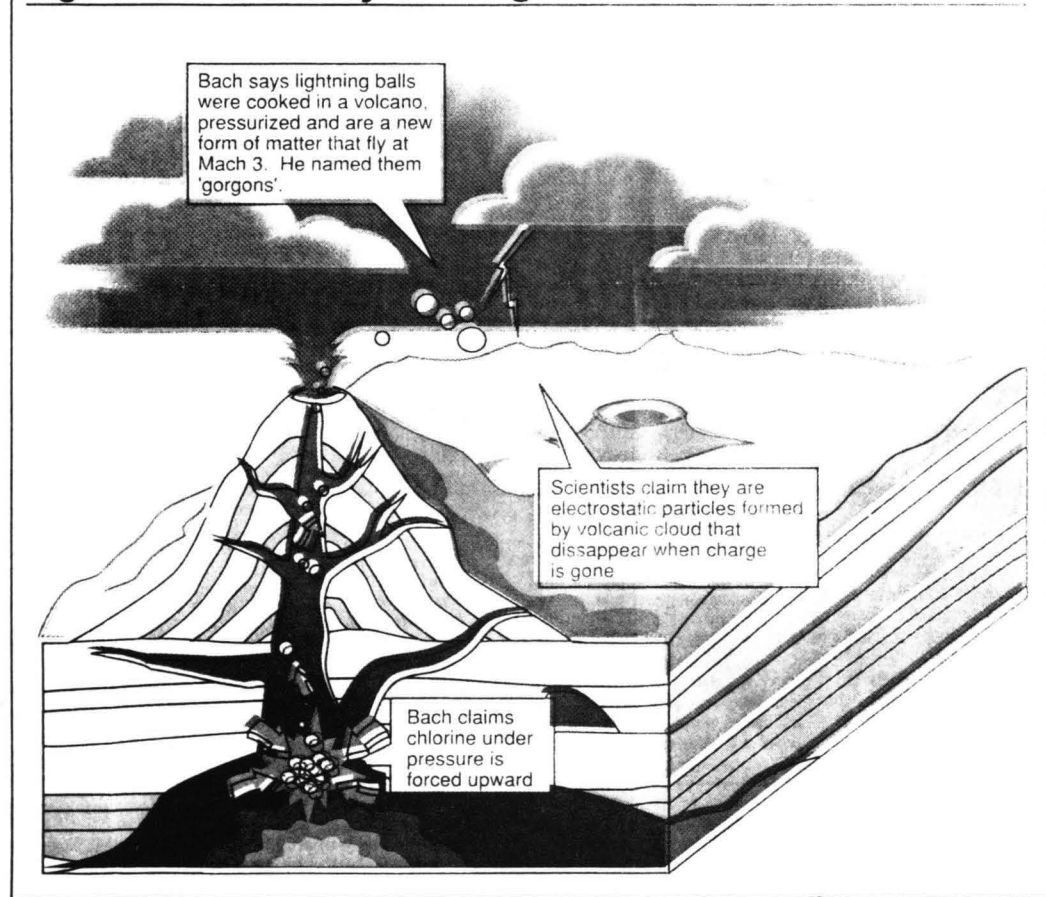
These things don't bother Bach. He rattles off the names of

Egon Bach says the fiery volcanic objects he calls Gorgons could be the answer to America's energy and defense needs. Others think his theories hold about as much water as a colander.



Debbie Noda/The Bee

Egon Bach's Theory Of 'Gorgons'



Jim Lawrence/The Bee

renowned inventors and scientists whose ideas were ridiculed. Ben Franklin. Thomas Edison. Albert Einstein.

Vulcanologists and physicists rattle off some less palatable names.

Some scientists refused to have their names used for this story, citing instances of harassment from Bach.

"I'm at the point now where, if I see one more letter from him, I'll call the police," says one university vulcanologist. "At first I was inspired by his devotion, but now, it frightens me."

Bach's history is one of devotion. He narrowly escaped the Soviet Union after Stalin deported his family to Siberia. He was schooled in East Germany and worked in biophysics for several years before emigrating to the

United States.

Now he runs a 23-acre almond orchard in North Modesto and chases gorgons. His name is known in observatories every two or three days, according to Tom Miller, observatory scientist-in-charge.

But they can't question his persistence.

After the initial Redoubt eruption, Bach called the U.S. Geological Survey's volcano observation station in Anchorage every two or three days, according to Tom Miller, observatory scientist-in-charge.

"We hate to be short with him when he calls, but when we've got a crisis situation, we don't have the time to talk theory with Egon," Miller says. "Basically he's a polite man who's desperately concerned that we're miss-

ing a very big breakthrough."

Miller says the reason he no longer responds to Bach's letters is because of other, more pressing research and a tight budget. Bach says it's because of government secrecy.

"They are ignoring me," he says. "The Air Force has a policy about UFOs. Maybe the people at USGS have a complete silence about this. Maybe the CIA is involved, right?"

He's sent data to state agencies and universities across the country. Some corresponded at first, then stopped because, according to a professor at Stanford University, "we didn't think this phenomenon was as riveting as he does."

(continued on page 20)

Riveting he thinks it is. In one of his manuscripts on the topic — all unpublished — Bach announces suspicions that the Soviets, Chinese and Japanese are developing gorgonic engines. Using a process he calls "reverse viscosity," these fliers would make stealth bombers look like skateboards.

But for all the ridicule he takes, Bach still is determined to get his theories published in a scientific journal and to see his name recognized as the father of a new science.

He has 40 people in Alaska

who say they saw fireballs, though some say they only saw flashes. He has a videotape that has been dissected, and he has a mountain of historic literature that mention volcanoes, comets or UFOs.

Unfortunately, he also has the Internal Revenue Service on his back. Uncle Sam disagrees that Bach's trip to Alaska and all his phone bills are deductible expenses.

"What they do not understand," says Bach, "is that this is important research."

GASTON GAZETTE, Gastonia, NC - Nov. 3, 1990 CR: G. Fawcett

Police dismiss cult activity in case of mutilated calf

By Bo Petersen
Gazette Staff Reporter

CHERRYVILLE — The weirdly mutilated remains of a two-month-old calf were found Friday morning off St. Mark's Church Road.

But Gaston County police suspect the calf was slaughtered for its meat. "There is no indication of satanic cults," Officer J.B. Lineberger said. Lineberger said the meat might be suspect since the calf had been sick and was under medication.

Tony Stroupe discovered the head, liver and a three-inch strip of hide from his Black Angus calf tossed over a far fence from his pasture. A pool of blood

ture, where it was strangely gutted.

Instead of a single cut usually used to gut for meat, two cuts were made three inches apart, from the scrotum to the neck. The cuts were sectioned.

The head was cut free. The intestines, lungs and heart were removed and then the heart was separated from the lungs. The intestines, heart and lungs were taken, with the flesh, hide, legs and hooves.

A hide strip was left dangling from a tree branch over the animal's head.

"That took skill," said veterinarian George Creed. "I've never seen anything like that. Why anyone would do that is beyond me. All they need to do was cut it. The cuts were at least twice the length needed."

The work also must have taken far longer than a simple gutting, Creed said. Calves stolen for meat usually are killed, taken off and slaughtered later, Creed said.

"I've never seen one slaughtered on the farm like that."

Neighbors told police they heard a calf bawl Thursday night, but did not think it anything unusual. The calf had been penned while recovering from a

TO OUR READERS

The contents of this story may be objectionable to some readers.

lay in a pen back up the pasture, where the calf had been kept overnight.

The nursing mother cow had been cut above the hoof.

"I reckon she was walking around when they were slaughtering the calf," Stroupe said.

At least two people slit the throat of the 150-pound calf, bled it to death, then dragged the body across the pasture.

"The way that calf suffered," Stroupe said, "you cut your throat, it'd be a little bit you'd run around before you bled to death. Anybody who'd do that would do anything."

The calf had been sick almost since birth, Stroupe said. At one point, Stroupe fed it five days through a tube before it would nurse again.

But Stroupe had planned to turn the nearly-recovered calf back out to pasture Monday.

A Black Angus calf loose in the pasture would have been tough to tackle, Stroupe said. But the sick calf was well concealed in the dark pen.

A chain also stolen Thursday night from a neighbor's puppy may have been used to drag the calf, Stroupe said.

"Being that dark at night, somebody knew the routine," he said. The calf would yield from 80 to 90 pounds of meat.

Stroupe dairy farmed for 22 years before taking up beef cattle as a hobby five years ago, he said. "I've never had this kind of encounter in my entire life. Why would they take the head?"

"I guess it was somebody looking for easy meat, unless it's satanic. I don't know about that. I don't know the ceremonies. They did take the heart but they didn't take the head."



Knox County farmer Buddy Davis with his Big Foot creation

Real or not, Big Foot is putting down roots in Ohio

By Jim Riepenhoff
Dispatch Staff Reporter

BLADENSBURG, Ohio — Big Foot sightings on Buddy Davis' farm in rural Knox County are frequent these days.

More than a few motorists have done double-takes when they saw the tall, hairy, manlike creatures standing near Davis' barn, about 100 yards from Rt. 541.

"People about run off the road looking back," Davis chuckled. Those reactions make him feel good. They prove his sculptures look real.

A taxidermist-turned-artist, Davis, 40, began creating life-size models of sasquatch, or Big Foot, about 15 months ago for display throughout the United States. The exhibit includes four models of the creatures and copies of supposed Big Foot footprints, stories from people who have claimed they saw a real Big Foot, and demonstrations of how people have faked Big Foot evidence.

"What we've got is a Big Foot investigation," Davis said of his exhibit. "I show both sides of it. I try not to be biased."

The exhibit will be shown at Richland Mall in Mansfield Monday through Sunday. The exhibit will go to Florida, Delaware and New York in January, February and March, respectively.

Davis became fascinated with Big Foot lore in the 1960s. Asked whether he believes Big Foot is real, Davis said, "It depends on the day you ask me. There have been sightings by doctors, lawyers and theologians."

"Big Foot has been seen over 3,000 times. It

seems hard to believe that everyone's lying.

"I don't know what Big Foot is. I don't know if he exists. But if he does exist, I think he's human. I don't believe in anything half man, half ape."

Davis has researched sasquatch for years. He has written to organizations and individuals who claim they have evidence. He found that many were not eager to part with what they knew or had.

"Whoever finds Big Foot and proves it exists is going to be a famous person," he said.

Davis obtained a copy of the so-called Patterson footprint found in Colorado in the 1960s. It is one of the most famous Big Foot sightings, and one of the few pieces of evidence that scientists have not been able to debunk, he said.

Big Foot, said Davis, is 7 to 10 feet tall, weighs about 500 pounds, is brown, has a pug nose, and is flat-footed.

It took him four months to build his first model. He began with a sketch. Then he constructed a plywood silhouette, wrapped a strawlike substance around it to shape the body, and used clay and fiberglass to sculpt the face, hands, feet and muscles. Synthetic fur was added later.

"There's a lot of guesswork in it," he said.

Of his four models, one is a 7-foot female; two are males, 8 feet and 10 feet tall; and one is a 6-foot Yeti, more commonly known as the Abominable Snowman thought to roam the Himalayas.

Davis said he hopes to travel to the Pacific Northwest next year and search for Big Foot to satisfy his own curiosity.

"But if I saw it," he adds "I'd probably run off the mountain as fast as I could and say he's real."

REGISTER, Sandusky, OH - Sept. 24, 1990 CR: V. Perry

Firefighters seek other witnesses of unidentified Lake Erie 'sea thing'

HURON — The Huron firefighters who saw — something — in Lake Erie near a Cleveland Road West condominium want other witnesses and a good artist to help them figure out just what the "sea thing" is that people have been seeing in this area all summer.

Fishermen, state park rangers and Coast Guard officials have reported "four or five" sightings of a long, thin object in Lake Erie over the summer, mostly in the area of the lake near the Marblehead Peninsula and Cedar Point.

Firefighters Jim Johnson and Steve Dirks saw something that matched what little description there was Sept. 11, off Huron. Johnson said today he's heard something similar was seen in the last few days in the lake off either Ashtabula or Conneaut.

Johnson wants to make one thing clear: he's not claiming to have seen a sea creature, just something he didn't recognize. In fact, when he first saw it, he assumed it was a breakwall. It wasn't moving, but he saw ripples breaking over it.

"If you say to me, 'Well, Jim, what is it?' I've got to tell you I don't know," he said.

He's hoping he can get other people who have seen it to sit down with a sketch artist — such as a police composite artist, or someone similar — to put together everyone's description of what they saw. He wants each witness to sit down with the artist separately, so they don't influence one another.

He's also willing to talk to any marine biologist who's interested, though the supermarket press need not apply.

"If anybody official wants to interview us, we'll sit down with 'em," he said.

CITIZEN, Asheville, NC - Sept. 4, 1990 CR: J. Fisher

Mysteries, Marvels And Things That Go Boom At The Beach

The Associated Press

SUNSET BEACH — Just what is that noise that residents along the coast have been hearing?

Reverberations powerful enough to shake beach cottages are heard and felt several times every autumn along the coast in New Hanover and Brunswick counties.

"It moves the earth, I tell you," Minnie Hunt of Sunset Beach said. "Sometimes you get two or three in a row."

Residents long ago nicknamed the strange sounds the "Seneca guns," she said. Lacking an explanation, they concocted a myth that the Seneca Indians, edged out of their land when European settlers arrived in the New World, were returning with the white man's own weapons for revenge.

Residents who are now grandparents say their own grandparents remembered the rumbles, so they presume the sonic booms of jets breaking the sound barrier.

And the beach booms, which last only two or three

seconds, have a different resonance than supersonic aircraft, Mrs. Hunt said. Neither can the noises — which occur most often on clear days — be confused with thunder.

"It's a very distinct sound," she said. "It can be likened to both of those, but it's not either."

The noises clearly emanate from the sea, she said.

"There's no doubt it's coming from the ocean," she said. "It's not a land phenomenon."

Many have supposed there is a military connection. Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal, a shipping point for ammunition and explosives on the Brunswick County shoreline, often is accused.

But Myrtle Meade, a spokesman for Sunny Point, said the terminal just moves the explosives. It doesn't use them.

"We do military shipping operations and they're very quiet on that water," Meade said. She said other military installations also disavowed any connection with the disturbances.

"We have looked at it and looked at it and looked at it, and it's not us," she said.

The sounds occur most often in the fall and spring, though they occasionally shiver across the beaches in other seasons. Sometimes they shake the coast more than once in a day. Sometimes they happen a few days in a row. Sometimes they are weeks apart. They have been reported as far north as Carteret County, but are most frequent near Wilmington and southward.