

# UFO

## NEWSCLIPPING SERVICE

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This composite illustration of an alien by Clark McClelland of Cocoa Beach, assistant state director of the Mutual UFO Network, is based on accounts by various witnesses.

# Is Florida a UFO mecca?

## Reports of sightings, abductions continue

By Diane Lacey Allen  
The Ledger

**T**hey're here. In Florida. And Gulf Breeze, a city near Pensacola in the Panhandle, is the hottest place in the world.

You don't have to pick up a supermarket tabloid to hear about aliens. There are people — maybe even people you know — who have seen unidentified flying objects in Polk County.

■ In March, a Haines City police officer came across a large, green disc-shaped ship that lit up and shut down his patrol car.

■ In 1979, Auburndale policemen reported a UFO sighting, "rapidly moving" yellow-orange objects east of the city moving along the horizon.

■ Two months earlier, a Winter Haven patrolman made the front page of The Ledger with his observation of a "bright circular object" in the area above 10th Street and Golfview Circle Northeast.

The Air Force stopped investigating UFO sightings in 1969, says Diane Green, the chief of community relations for MacDill Air Force Base.

"More than 12,500 reported sightings

### IF YOU SEE A UFO

If you sight a UFO, note the date, time and weather conditions. Mark your location; try to make notes: What did the object look like? What color? Any lights on the outside? Were there any noises connected with the object? Did it land? Report your sighting to Fearon Hicks, 967-1594 or write 140 Elaine Drive, Auburndale, 33823-3016. Your name will remain confidential. If you should find a landed UFO, never approach it. If you should be affected physically by your encounter with a UFO, it is advised that you consult your physician for a medical evaluation to document the effects.

Since November 1990, Gulf Breeze has been a favorite of UFOs and their audiences.

"Gulf Breeze, Fla. is the hottest place in the world that we know of," says Andrus, "where we have repetitive sightings."

Several UFOs are reported each week in the area. "The UFOs vary there," says Andrus. "They vary from a big red ball of light, kind of glowing. Then it turns to white and just disappears into the sky. Sometimes it turns out to be six or eight white lights in a circle. One night we videotaped it for 9½ minutes. It did a complete barrel roll, those eight white lights."

"It looks like it's putting on a show."

If they are visitors from another galaxy, why are they here?

"We can't say it's good or bad," says Andrus. "We can only say that UFOs currently will be seen. Some people speculate they're getting braver and may want to make contact."

Some also say it's already happened.

Hicks, a 43-year-old freelance writer and photographer, says at least two cases of abductions have been reported in Polk County. The abductees want no publicity.

And there may be more.

Andrus estimates one out of every 10 people has been abducted by aliens.

Some more than once.

"Some don't know it," says Andrus of the abductions, "some do."

"Some just think it's a terrible nightmare, and some don't want to know what happened to them."

Tonight, national television will delve into the matter, with the miniseries "Intruders" on CBS at 9.

MUFON, though, is a real-life group made up of everyone from scholars to everyday people who are interested in the unidentified flying object phenomena.

It has 3,800 members worldwide. There are 22 Polk

County members. Florida has the third-largest membership, behind California and Texas.

Investigators from the group interview people who believe they've been abducted or have sighted a craft. They question them about what they can remember, and use hypnosis as a tool to unblock lost moments.

"One thing that seems to be very predominant lately," says Andrus, "all are subjected to physical examination ... one of the areas that seems to come up frequently is they're taking sperm from men and ovum from women — for genetic experiments we think."

"They also take ladies who are pregnant ... they remove the embryo to develop in an incubator to bring up to full term."

Andrus says they may also impregnate women.

So why aren't these women or men on the front page? "They very seldom call the local sheriff," Andrus says.

"They're afraid of ridicule."

The calls do come in, though.

"We've had people call up and say aliens or people from outer space were shooting rays through the house at them," says Lt. Steve Holland, with the Lakeland Police Department.

"We send an officer out to talk to them ... we haven't found any evidence where rays are being fired from outer space."

Some people, he says, are Baker Acted — a legal maneuvering designed to protect a person from harming himself or hurting others.

Hicks, though, says people who have been talking about visitors from outer space have long been discredited.

He says it was common practice to discourage people from calling in UFO tips in the '50s. The government, he says, did not see potential aliens as a threat to national security. But people tying up phone lines was.

Hicks comes armed when he talks about neighbors from another galaxy.

were investigated," says Green. "Of that, the vast majority — about 95 percent — were explainable."

The sightings, she says, were caused by such natural phenomena as meteors, satellites, aircraft, lights, balloons, weather conditions, reflections of other planets and just plain hoaxes.

"There was no evidence there was a threat to our national security," says Green.

The Mutual UFO Network, based in Seguin, Texas, receives reports of sightings from telephone calls, says Walter Andrus, international director of MUFON. An investigator is assigned and talks to the person who had the sighting.

"We're able to come up with something mundane to explain 80 to 90 percent of the cases," says Andrus. "That leaves 10 to 20 percent that defies any earthly explanation after a thorough examination."

The ones without answers are called UFOs, Unidentified Flying Objects.

The ones with explanations are IFOs, Identified Flying Objects.

People have interpreted planets such as Venus or Jupiter as alien crafts, says Andrus.

MUFON gets the most calls on space debris as it breaks up in the atmosphere. Spent rockets used to launch satellites tend to put on a big display, shining brighter than a meteorite and possibly covering several states.

Fearon L. Hicks of Auburndale is state section director for the Mutual UFO Network Inc. He believes the Haines City sighting and is 99 percent sure it is an extraterrestrial craft based on the officer's description, and the atmospheric conditions of cool temperatures in the vicinity of the craft, which would indicate superconductor metal use along with electromagnetic propulsion.

Hicks, who has researched and investigated UFO sightings for more than 28 years, also has his own firsthand experience.

His first sighting was at age 4, when he was playing with neighborhood children in Lake Shipp Heights as their mothers watched.

"I can recall it like it was two seconds ago ...," says Hicks. "It was just after the sun went below the horizon." Hicks saw a disc that went west to east, a luminous yellow.

There was a large, blue-green ring around the outer edge, with four, small, blue-green rings at the center of the craft.

In 1958, when Cape Canaveral was launching satellites, children would gather in a front yard in Lake Shipp Heights before launches. One night, Hicks says, the count of UFOs went as high as 85, although more than one may have been counted twice because of the activity in the sky.

The crafts were shaped like discs.

Some were green fireballs.

And some crafts floated like a falling leaf.

He has a front page from the Roswell (N.M.) Daily Record that tells of a 1947 UFO crash.

It boldly goes into territory generally reserved for checkout counter reading: RAAF (Roswell Army Air Force) Captures Flying Saucer on Ranch in Roswell Region.

Hicks says the incident may actually have been two UFOs involved in a collision. The episode is the subject of a book, "UFO Crash at Roswell" by Kevin Randle and Donald Schmitt, that found 300 witnesses and an event cloaked in government secrecy.

MUFON's goal is to unravel the UFO enigma, to educate and to furnish positive proof of what UFOs are.

MUFON interviews with people who have been abducted or contacted, says Hicks, have found evidence of more than 70 different species visiting planet Earth.

■ Some aliens, for instance, are believed to be 3½ to 4 feet tall.

■ Weigh 40 to 60 pounds.

■ Some have extremely long arms.

■ They generally have four fingers and no thumbs.

■ Some are strictly vegetarians. They take vegetable matter, chew it and then spit out the cellulose.

How many people have actually seen aliens or their crafts, though, is not known.

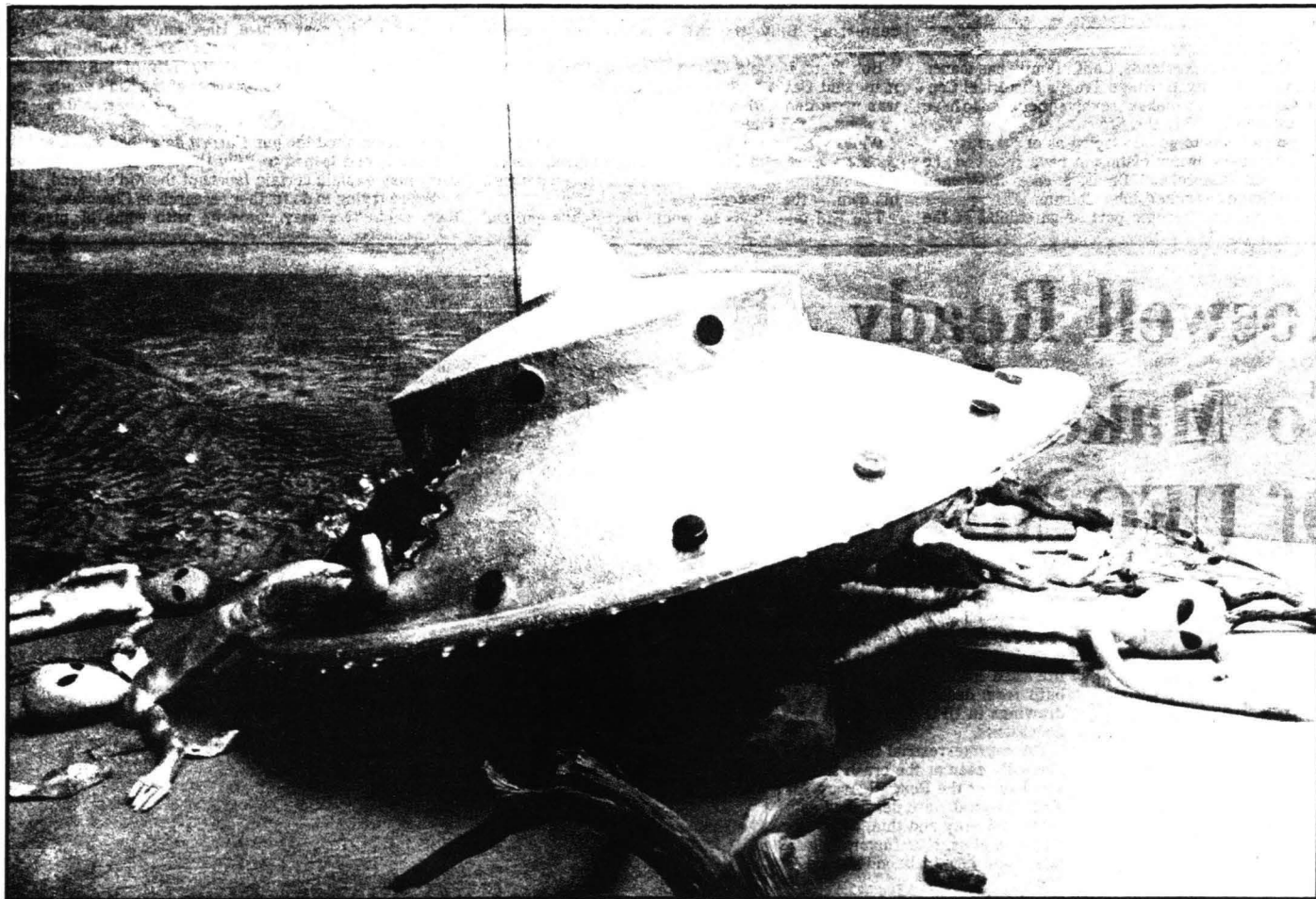
Locally, there are the two cases of abductions that were referred to Hicks.

"There are many more," says Hicks. "But people are afraid to talk, afraid of being labeled 'mentally unbalanced.'"

But regardless of how many are out there, Hicks is sure of one thing:

"If the occupants of the UFOs wanted to take over," he says, "they could have done so a long time ago."

Ledger file reports were used in this story.



# E.T., CALL HOME

In 1947, Roswell had a close encounter with a UFO, and with fleeting fame. Interest in the story persists, and now the town hopes to make permanent room for its notorious 'visitors.'

Above, John Price's re-creation of the Roswell UFO incident appears in a wing of a video rental store called the Outa Limits UFO Enigma Museum. Price's "flying saucer" is made of two 6-foot satellite dishes welded together, painted silver, topped by a green beacon and encircled by flashing red and yellow lights. Scattered around the UFO are life-sized mannequins stitched by Price's sister, representing the "bodies" of four extraterrestrial travelers. Price says he has had more than 400 visitors since he opened his museum in April.



By Fritz Thompson / Journal Staff Writer

ROSWELL — The man who officially announced to the world in 1947 that the U.S. government had found a crashed flying saucer is today, 45 years later, back in the space business — only this time he's looking for an empty building with lots of room.

Walter Haut thinks it's about time the city of Roswell cashed in on the fleeting notoriety it gained when pieces of the wreckage were hauled into a nearby hangar at the air base.

He and a couple of friends who were around in those days want to open what they say will be the world's first UFO museum and research center.

"It's part of New Mexico's history," he says. "The UFO crash is of significant historical value."

Haut says the museum idea has been enthusiastically — if somewhat bashfully — embraced by Roswell. And he wants people to know he and his friends are serious: "We're not a bunch of weird Harolds with Frisbees and stuff."

## Date with destiny

In 1947, Haut was a first lieutenant and public information officer at the Roswell Army Air Field when he was cast in a key

role of what became known as "the Roswell incident."

Officers from the air field that summer had been directed to a place far out in the open country, where they found a huge, elongated gouge in the soil and scattered pieces of a mysterious foil, or metal.

On July 8 of that year, on orders from the base intelligence officer, Maj. Jesse Marcel, Haut distributed a news release saying the military had recovered the wreckage of a "flying disc."

The news release began, "The many rumors regarding the flying discs became a reality yesterday . . ." It said the wreckage had been found by a rancher in an isolated area some 70 miles northwest of Roswell.

The announcement was the first and only time the U.S. government publicly acknowledged it had possession of a flying saucer, or at least pieces of one.

Worldwide, the news media were stunned. Telephones at various places in Roswell rang all day. Lines to the air field's offices were jammed.

## Piecing it together

Meanwhile, a man named Glenn Dennis was experiencing a different kind of encounter. A Roswell mortician in 1947, Dennis was to become moderately famous after he said he was queried by telephone about tissue preservation techniques. A day later he was told by a nurse, in great detail, about three alien beings who were dead on arrival at the base hospital. Dennis never saw the bodies. The telephone calls were from military doctors and were made to the mortuary on the evening of July 8.

What Dennis heard that day didn't seem important until years later, when researchers found supposed witnesses who said three (maybe four) space travelers were found dead at a crashed spaceship several miles from the gouged earth.

Haut's press release didn't mention bodies, but the news of the flying saucer still caused an uproar. The military became nervous.

A day later, on July 9, Brig. Gen. Roger Ramey said the Army had made a mistake, that the wreckage was simply the remnants of a crashed weather balloon and that there was no "flying disc." His announcement didn't say anything about bodies.

The story died quickly. Within two days, it vanished from the news. It stayed gone for 30 years.

In 1980, a book called "The Roswell Incident" was published. It cited new evidence, raised new questions.

A growing number of researchers decided the crash northwest of Roswell — and the subsequent actions of the military — was one of the most important events in the history of UFOs.

And ever since, people have been arguing about what actually happened out there on that New Mexico cow pasture.

## A dream takes shape

On the vacant seventh floor of a downtown Roswell bank building, Walter Haut, Glenn Dennis and a real estate dealer Max Littell have taken over a suite of lease-free offices and a collection of second-hand furniture. Every day, the three men come up here and talk about the UFO museum.

What they're talking about these days is where to put it. At last word, they have a promising lead on a big vacant building in a part of town they decline to identify, lest it discourage the deal.

(continued on page 3)



"People come here and the first thing they want to know about is the UFO crash," says Haut. "They come out to my house and bug me. They ask me 'Were you really there?' and 'Did you touch the bodies?' I probably average two or three calls a week relative to the UFO story."

The crash site is closer to the town of Corona, in Lincoln County, than it is to Roswell. And after 45 years, the place where it happened looks just like the surrounding countryside. Even if a visitor managed to find the rough ranch road to the site, there is nothing to see. "Two dust storms and a three-inch rain and the evidence was all gone," says Littell.

### Keeping the faith

Haut says the museum will not choose up sides and espouse any theory about whether the crash involved a balloon or a flying saucer.

Meanwhile, the city of Roswell, it seems, has emerged — almost inadvertently — as a touchstone for those who believe in the existence of flying saucers, or at least in UFOs.

"We had so many different news organizations and other people coming into Roswell, we decided maybe we ought to get something permanent they could see," says Dennis.

A few weeks from now, he says, a sculptor should be working on a life-sized model of a space alien, built from descriptions and drawings in UFO books and documents.

The extraterrestrial travelers allegedly seen at the crash site and later at the Roswell Army Air Field hospital were described as short and gray and thin, with fragile bodies, four fingers, big heads and large, almond-shaped eyes.

The three men also talk vaguely about duplicating the crash site, making various mannequins to match differing descriptions, and building scaled-down replicas of flying saucers.

They worry that all this may sound too carnivallike, and they hasten to dispel the notion by pointing out that the museum has been officially incorporated as the International UFO Museum and Research Center. It has received certification as a non-profit operation.

They envision the facility as a place for UFO research, with books and documents and tapes. So far, they have a dozen videos, stacks of publications and some news clips of the Roswell incident tacked to a portable bulletin board in an otherwise empty room.

### Personal views

While the museum is supposed to be non-partisan, Haut admits to some definite personal sentiments regarding the 1947 incident.

"At the time, when I put out the news release, my own feeling was 'My God, why are we getting involved in this stupid thing?'" Haut says. "And when they said it was only a weather balloon, I kind of wiped the sweat from my brow and thought 'I'm glad that's all it was.'"

In fact, Haut says, the incident seemed so insignificant that he totally forgot about it. "A crashed weather balloon doesn't leave you with much of an impression 30 years later," he says.

In the last several years, however, his attitude has changed.

"It was all a part of a finely tuned cover-up," he says. "It wasn't pursued because the news media was not as pushy as it is today, and the 509th Bomb Group at the air field was very secretive — their planes were the only ones then capable of carrying a nuclear bomb." Haut isn't inclined to talk at length about the "cover-up."

"The point is," he says, "something happened out there that was historically significant."

### Making it real

South of Roswell, near the old gate to the Army Air Field, John Price has put together his independent version of the flying saucer crash.

The exhibit is in a wing of a video rental store called the Outa Limits UFO Enigma Museum. Admission is \$1.

Curiously, none of the three men in the downtown bank building ever mentioned this place.

Price's "flying saucer" is made of two 6-foot satellite dishes welded together, painted silver, topped by a green beacon and encircled by flashing red and yellow lights.

It sits at one end of his exhibit hall. On the wall behind it is a mural of the nighttime countryside. Depicted in the foreground is a long gouge in the earth.

Around the craft are "bodies" of four extraterrestrial travelers. One is sprawled grotesquely through a hole blasted in the side of the saucer, another lies in the open hatchway. Price says his sister stitched the life-sized mannequins together. Their skin is gray, their eyes are big and each hand has four fingers.

"We didn't get the necks quite right," Price says.

Price grew up in Roswell, right beside the old air base. When he was 15, he became interested in the saucer story, but nobody wanted to talk about it. "They didn't know much," he says. "Most people believed it was some super secret thing the government was working on and people shouldn't know about."

### Healthy skeptics

Around Roswell, people are increasingly interested in the flying saucer incident, but they talk as if they don't want to appear gullible.

"There are a lot of people here who are skeptical," says Sara Whiting, director of the convention and visitors bureau for the Chamber of Commerce. "But this is a conservative city. We'd like to be known for other things, too, like the bus manufacturing plant and the lollipop, Levi's and fireworks factories."

The tourism potential hasn't gone unnoticed. The Chamber of Commerce has used the flying saucer incident in national advertising. Whiting says she gets about 100 calls a month and Price says he has had more than 400 visitors since he opened his museum in April.

Haut says he is fielding a growing number of requests for information on the incident. "It's fascinating, the broad interest in this," he says. "And for us, it isn't fun and games. It's serious business."

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS,  
Denver, CO - June 28,  
1992 CR: C. Carpenter

### UFO expert speaks

Earthlings could learn much from extraterrestrials who communicate through human "contactees," said the key speaker at the 12th annual Rocky Mountain Conference on UFO Investigation in Larimer, Wyo. James Harder spoke to more than 100 people at the University of Wyoming Friday night. Harder, who has a civil engineering degree from the University of California at Berkeley and a doctorate in mechanical engineering, has been active in the study of UFO reports for more than 30 years. After interviewing hundreds of people who say they've been contacted by aliens or talk tele-



RICHARD PIPES / JOURNAL

John Price grew up near the old Roswell Army Air Field and became interested in the UFO story when he was 15. "Most people believed it

was some super secret thing the government was working on and people shouldn't know about," Price says.



RICHARD PIPES / JOURNAL

Glenn Dennis, left, Max Littell and Walter Haut show some of the research materials destined for their proposed museum. Haut says the museum idea has been endorsed by Roswell and says he and his friends are serious: "We're not a bunch of weird Harolds with Frisbees and stuff." On July 8, 1947, on orders from the Roswell Army Air Field's intelligence officer, Haut distributed the news release that said the military had recovered the wreckage of a "flying disc." Dennis was a mortician in Roswell and was queried by military doctors over the telephone about tissue preservation techniques.

pathically with them, he said some of the aliens appeared to be quite talkative and helpful. Many of the aliens seem to think Earth is overpopulated, Harder said. Otherworldly vis-

itors also apparently have influenced some Earthlings to become involved in environmental issues, like saving the whales, he said.

# Amid denials, Pentagon still is riding herd on some UFOs

By Mark Sauter  
The News Tribune

A cold-hearted Air Force general allowed hideous space aliens to land on Earth, where they tortured, impregnated and generally terrified a number of U.S. citizens.

Millions of Americans saw it happen in May in a two-part CBS movie called "Intruders."

Some people claim the movie was based on fact. Don't believe it? Neither does Col. Douglas Kennett of the Air Force.

"Pure fantasy," said the exasperated Kennett, whose office has been denying such stories for years.

Then how about the story of six Army intelligence staff members with top secret clearances who abandon their sensitive posts in Europe to rendezvous with flying saucers in Gulf Breeze, Fla.?

Don't believe it? You should. It happened — in real life.

Whatever their level of skepticism, millions of Americans have a strong appetite for tales of UFO encounters and Pentagon cover-ups. Such stories are showing up more and more often in everything from supermarket tabloids to network entertainment shows.

In recent years, NBC's "Unsolved Mysteries" has presented at least four episodes featuring Americans who claim a military UFO conspiracy, says Tim Rogan, coordinating producer of the show.

Rogan says up to 40 million Americans have seen each of the "Unsolved Mysteries" stories.

Similar, although less well documented, tales are a staple of tabloid newspapers, and even The New York Times, Wall Street Journal and The Morning News Tribune have presented stories or columns about UFO abductions and claims concerning a military cover-up of UFOs.

Why would such a range of media sources continue to report a military UFO cover-up?

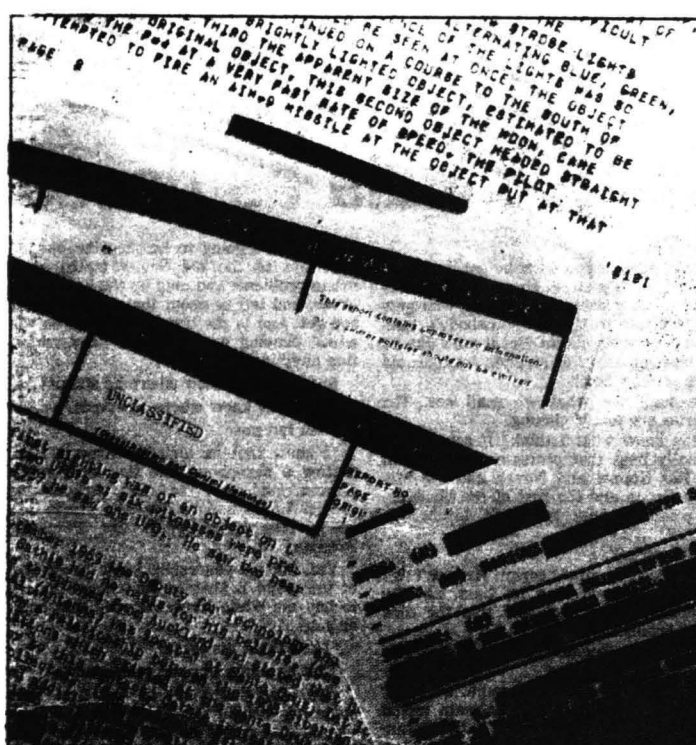
For one thing, given allegations of CIA drug running, questions about the JFK assassination and the Iran-contra scandal, "people do have a suspicion of their government," said George Knapp, a former Las Vegas television reporter who won broadcast awards for his investigative reporting of the Pentagon-UFO connection.

Also, there's evidence the Pentagon is hiding UFO-related information. Military officials deny it.

But Freedom of Information Act requests by The News Tribune produced piles of Pentagon documents on UFOs and revealed some material the military has yet to release.

Federal lawsuits by private researchers have identified dozens of UFO documents the Pentagon refuses to declassify, saying they're too secret to be made public.

The question is: What is the government hiding?



It's not just supermarket tabloids that are interested in UFOs. The Pentagon — despite its denials — is collecting UFO information — and some of that information remains classified.

Nothing important about UFOs, says Philip Klass, a leading debunker of UFO reports and contributing editor to the prestigious magazine "Aviation Week and Space Technology."

"There are many, many reasons" for the government to keep records classified, and none of them relates to secrets about aliens, Klass says.

For example, some UFO information probably came from intercepted Soviet messages, and releasing the files could help Russian intelligence agencies plug leaks, Klass says.

Other data may have come from spies, whose identities would be revealed if the UFO information were released.

However, despite Pentagon denials, there's no doubt U.S. military intelligence still collects information on UFOs.

For example, one 1990 Defense Intelligence Agency report, obtained by The News Tribune after being partially censored by the Pentagon, is titled "Belgium and the UFO Issue."

The document said the U.S. Air Force had to assure the Belgian military that mysterious aircraft, which terrified one Belgian officer and were later reportedly tracked by Belgian military radar, were not American stealth fighters.

In another incident several months later, six U.S. soldiers left their top-secret intelligence jobs at the 701st Military Intelligence Brigade in Augsburg, Germany. Two of the men later reappeared in

Tennessee, where they asked photographer Stan Johnson to help them buy a van.

The soldiers told Johnson they were headed for Gulf Breeze, Fla., the location of repeated UFO sightings, to meet their comrades and see the landing of a spaceship.

Soon after reuniting in Florida, the six soldiers were arrested by civilian police, then whisked away to an Army base and quietly dismissed from the service.

Two years later, The News Tribune filed a Freedom of Information Act, or FOIA, request for files on the case.

The Pentagon conceded it had conducted a counterintelligence investigation of the incident, but said it couldn't find the records.

When The News Tribune took further action under the FOIA, the Pentagon admitted having hundreds of pages of records on the case — all classified.

So a reporter tracked down one of the former soldiers involved in the incident. The ex-soldier refused to answer when asked if Pentagon UFO secrets prompted him to go AWOL.

"I'm not going to answer anything," he said.

Other intriguing UFO records date to the 1970s and '80s, when U.S. intelligence officials reported separate dogfights between Peruvian and Iranian jets and UFOs.

Another document, mostly censored, is called "BAF (Brazilian Air Force) has a close encounter of the first kind," a term describing testimony from a witness who gets within 500 feet of a UFO.

Klass says those reports can be explained. For instance, the Iranians really mistook the Planet Jupiter for an alien craft, he says.

But UFO researchers such as

Don Berliner disagree.

Berliner's group, the Fund for UFO Research, has helped sue the government to declassify the Pentagon's UFO records.

"I think we're talking a fair-sized library, in addition to hardware," Berliner said.

A number of UFO researchers claim the Pentagon captured two crashed alien spaceships in New Mexico during 1947.

Nuclear physicist Stanton Friedman has located alleged witnesses to the event, including a retired military intelligence officer who says he handled the debris and a retired general who claims the military covered up the recovery.

Friedman, whose latest book on the incident is due out this summer, claims to have found White House briefing papers discussing the saucers and four alien bodies found near them.

Phil Klass, the skeptic, says the papers are forged and the crash stories made up or misconstrued. But no one made up what's happening at a remote Air Force range outside Las Vegas.

Knapp, the former investigative reporter at KLAS-TV, documented mysterious events at Groom Lake during 1989 and 1990.

An FAA technician reported tracking bizarre aircraft far beyond the capabilities of modern technology.

First- and second-hand sources told Knapp the military was flying captured alien aircraft at the base. The former reporter, now working at a communication firm, thinks the military has alien spaceships.

"I believe they do," Knapp says. "I haven't seen it. I haven't kicked the tires. But I believe they do."

The story is complicated by the fact the Air Force has used the

base for testing secret planes such as the stealth fighter.

NBC News staked out the area in April, looking for a possible new U.S. spy plane called "Aurora."

The crew didn't see "Aurora," but did pick up another mysterious flying object.

"This is exclusive NBC News night vision video of one of those secret flying machines... something that seems to defy the laws of physics," reported NBC Pentagon correspondent Fred Francis during the Nightly News on April 20.

So what is the military doing at Groom Lake?

"I can't get into that. There's no information. I won't confirm anything there," an Air Force spokeswoman said.

The News Tribune asked a senior government official with top secret clearance about the controversy.

"When are they (the military) going to talk about the UFOs they've got?," a reporter asked.

"I don't know anything about that — that I can talk about," the official said.

But the popular media intend to keep talking about a military UFO cover-up. "Unsolved Mysteries" is working on four UFO segments for next season, Rogan said.

"Generally we get a good response from people saying: 'We believe it and why can't we find out more?'" Rogan said.

But don't expect to find out any more from the Pentagon.

"Does the U.S. Air Force have any interest in UFOs? The answer is absolutely not," says Kennett, the military spokesman, adding: "I believe the American people are smart enough to determine the difference between fantasy and truth."

ROBESONIAN, Lumberton, NC - April 21, 1992

# Mysterious craft puzzles observers

SCOTT BIGELOW  
Managing editor

Ian Dial just laughed and said, "I don't believe in U.F.O.'s or spaceships."

But Dial and three neighbors were confronted early Monday morning with just that — an unidentified flying object.

The 21-year-old, who lives on Harper's Ferry Rd., between Pembroke and Maxton, said he was asleep around 1:15 a.m. Sunday morning when his answering machine woke him up with an ex-

cited message from his neighbors.

Delilah Locklear, Cricket Locklear and a female friend were already out in their yard watching the moonlit sky to the sound of dogs howling all over the community.

Dial described the flying object in classic spaceship terms.

"It was shaped like a discus or flying saucer," he said. "It was pretty far off, but it was pretty big too."

"It hovered for about three minutes and then gradually started moving towards Lumberton," Dial said. "It had a red and a white light

on top that rotated in a circular fashion."

Dial said it emitted a humming sound and the outside edge had lots of white lights.

"I was completely sober," Dial said. "I just want to know what it was."

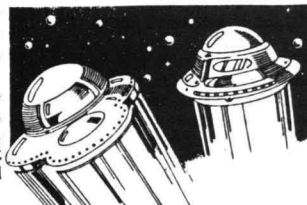
One theory Dial proposes is that it was a blimp or airship. From a distance the shape of a blimp may look somewhat saucer-shaped, although he has never seen a blimp with lights like this one, he said.

The Lumberton Municipal Air-

port, which is a frequent stopover for commercial airships, said they did not have any visiting airships Sunday or Monday.

"Blimps or airships don't generally travel at night," said Ned Gaddy, assistant manager for the airport. "I'm not saying it isn't possible, but this type weather is too windy and unstable for night flying."

Exactly what Dial and his neighbors saw early Monday morning remains a mystery that he hopes will be solved. Dial knows that just



because he couldn't identify the craft doesn't mean that someone else can't explain it.

He said he'll wait by the phone for an answer.





Mercury Photo by John Strickler

UFO researchers, from left, Mike McClellan, Bruce Rideout, Matt Graeber and Tom Carey look at depressions in a Limerick wheat field in an effort to determine what caused them.

## UFO researchers descend on field, leave unimpressed

By TODD SHERMAN  
Mercury Staff Writer

LIMERICK TWP. — In a 25-acre field near Township Line Road something has happened to the wheat.

There are more than a dozen depressions where the stalks, slightly taller than knee-high, have simply been flattened.

The depressions don't really have identifiable shapes, although one does resemble a child's drawing of a Tyrannosaurus Rex. Some are large — as big as 50 by 75 feet. Most are simply splotches on an otherwise wavy expanse of grain.

They are strange, unnerving, just kind of . . . out there.

And they are not alone.

"The imprints really do suggest that some type of object was in there and rolled on the wheat," said Mike McClellan of Sanatoga. "Or, if you will, they suggest something landing and taking off — but I'm just kidding.

"I'd like to be able to say that, but I don't see how."

McClellan and others like him — formal and informal UFO and unexplained phenomena researchers — have been descending on the field faster than Sigourney Weaver could flee an "Alien" since the depressions were discovered Monday morning by township police officer Jeffrey Vernacchio.

The field also has become a hover point for UFOs — identified flying objects — in the form of helicopters carrying television news crews, whose reports Monday night have drawn the curious by the dozens to the field.

Others have taken to the phone.

The Mercury on Tuesday received a number of calls from unidentified readers who said a UFO was spotted Monday behind the Pottstown-Limerick Airport on Ridge Pike. Another caller said more of the depressions have been found in a field near Route 724 and Bethel Church Road in Spring City.

The depressions are no mystery at all to Carolyn Gottshall, whose husband of 40 years, Henry, farms the field and another 175 acres.

"Oh, it happens every year," Carolyn Gottshall said Tuesday. "The only thing that is wrong is that there is too much nitrogen on the wheat. It makes the wheat go down."

Gottshall said with the excess nitrogen (a fertilizer), the wheat grows too fast and the stalk becomes weak. When the wheat gets wet, the stalk cannot support the weight and it "lays down," she said.

She said the wheat may or may not spring back to its original stature.

Nitrogen pellets are spread over the field by machine in the spring, and when the tractor makes a turn extra nitrogen can fall in some areas, she said.

Others don't agree.

"That's a good possibility, but if you look at the areas, they are quite a few different sizes and shapes," said McClellan, a postal worker in West Chester. "I talked with him (Gottshall). The shapes aren't in areas where you would think the farmer would be turning his tractor around."

Thomas J. Carey, a financial manager in CIGNA's Philadelphia office and a member of the Mutual UFO Network, Inc., goes one step beyond, er, further.

"The farmer suggested nitrogen, but that's not the

case," Carey, of Huntingdon Valley, said. "We feel that it was a Memorial Day weekend prank. We think that one or more people were rolling something around, maybe a barrel, a keg, or a piece of metal. Someone tried to make a design and they couldn't pull it off — it's just a mess out there."

Carey, McClellan, and Ursinus College psychology professor Bruce Rideout and Matt Graeber of Norristown teamed up on the site Tuesday. Carey, who holds a master's degree in anthropology, said he sent a soil sample to MUFON's state headquarters in Greensburg, just in case. MUFON, he said, is a non-profit international research organization based in Seguin, Texas.

"We are not quackos," he said.

Carey said the group found trails — not tracks — leading into and out of some of the areas.

"You could see where someone had walked in from a clear spot and started matting down the wheat," Carey said. "I went up there not knowing what to expect, and it was fun, it was interesting, but nobody is suggesting anything other than something explainable."

Carey and McClellan do suggest, however, that television and the movies may have something to do with the suspected hoax and the public interest it sparked. In addition to the movie "Alien 3" opening last Friday, a two-part miniseries called "Intruders," about two women being kidnapped by extraterrestrials, was televised on CBS last week.

However, when Vernacchio — who discovered the depressions early Monday morning while on routine patrol — examined the area he found no trails, no tracks. Vernacchio saw the depressions as he was driving along Township Line Road.

"I thought, gee, that's interesting," he said.

Vernacchio thought the depressions were so interesting that he rented a plane at the Pottstown-Limerick Airport — at his own expense — after his shift and took photographs from the air.

"It was all matted down without any of the stalks being broken," Vernacchio said.

But while the Gottshalls haven't seen any little gray men — little green men went out with the B-movies of the 1950s, by the way — they have seen aliens. Carolyn identifies them as the many people now trampling their wheat field.

"I wish they (the television crews) would have just come to us," she said. "I would have told them what it was. But they just have no consideration for other people's property. Those crops are what we make our livelihood on."



UFO researchers Tom Carey, Matt Graeber, Bruce Rideout investigate some of the smaller imprints found.



Edward Noa, chairman of the Limerick Township Board of Supervisors, walks past an area of imprints in the wheat field.



JUDITH FOWLER ILLUSTRATION

# UFO reports get a going- over

In the face of ridicule,  
abduction tales draw scrutiny  
as psychological  
phenomenon

By David L. Chandler  
SPECIAL TO THE GLOBE

One night in late November, 1989, Maria says, she was asleep with her husband in their apartment, on an upper story of a Manhattan building near the Brooklyn bridge, when she awoke to find herself paralyzed, with three small gray figures in the room.

The beings caused her to float up off her bed and out the window, she says, into a beam of blue light which drew her upward, as if on an invisible elevator, into a hovering UFO.

The story told by Maria (not her real name) to an artist-turned-UFO-investigator is typical of those of people who say they have remembered, usually with the help of hypnosis, occasions when they believe they were abducted by alien beings, subjected to medical examinations aboard an alien spaceship, interrogated, had tissue samples taken from them, and then were returned home.

Such tales were almost unheard of until recently, but in the last decade a series of popular books and movies have made alien abductions a hot topic among tabloid newspapers and tabloid-style television talk shows. A recent Roper poll, the believers say, shows that up to two percent of Americans answered "key questions" in a way that suggests that they may have been victims of alien abduction; although they don't remember it. (The same poll shows that 11 percent, have seen ghosts).

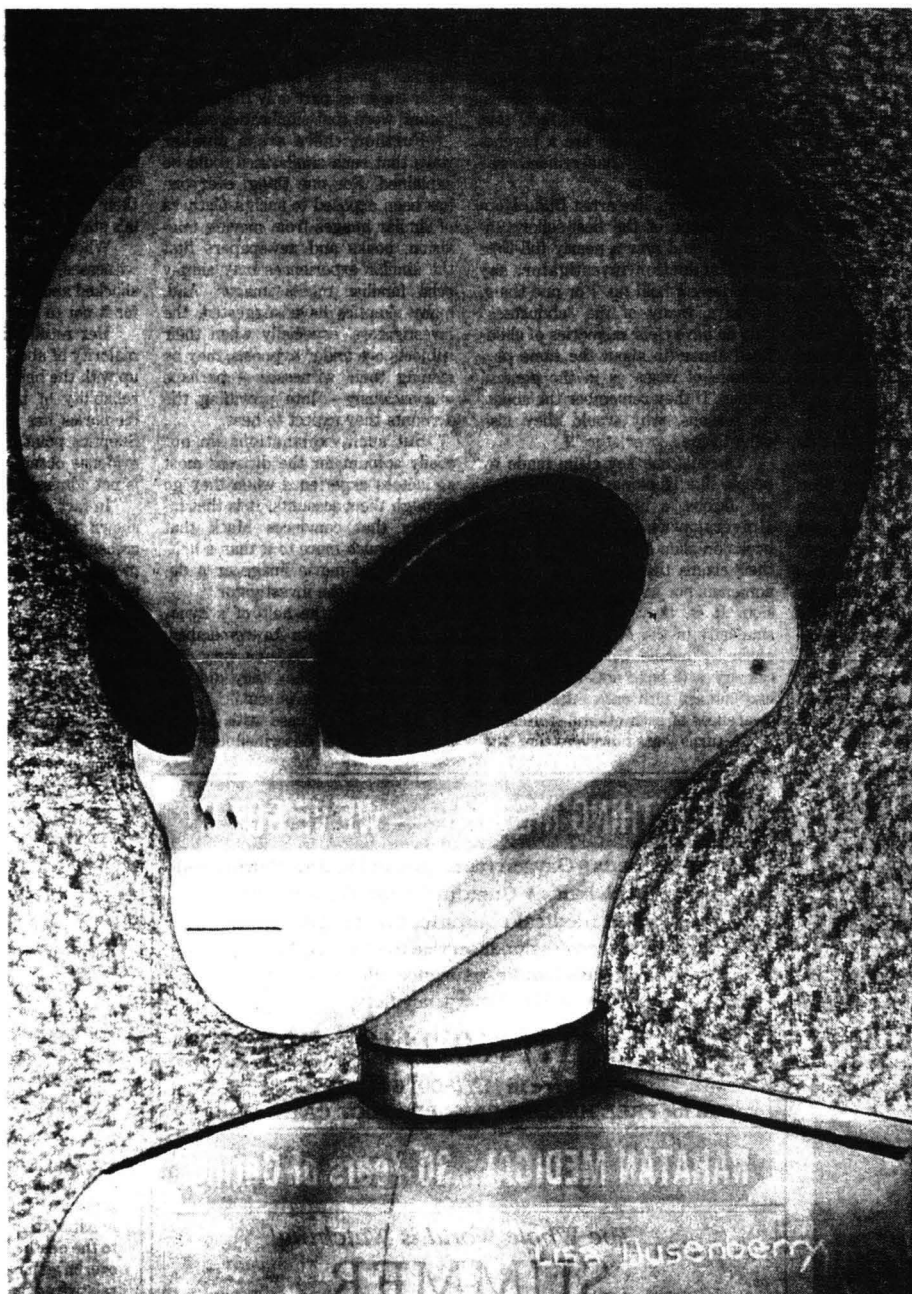
Most people, and nearly all scientists, feel such stories are so absurd as not to merit a response, let alone a serious investigation. A small but growing number of mental health professionals, however, are beginning to say the reports are widespread enough, and different enough from known psychological syndromes, to deserve serious analysis.

"These are valid experiences, and not some sort of mental aberration," says John Mack, a psychiatrist at Harvard University. "It's different than anything I could have imagined."

Not so fast, says Robert Baker, a professor of psychology at the University of Kentucky. "I think the whole thing is a mistaken notion, a fallacy," he says. Baker has written extensively on the use of hypnosis, a key feature of many of the UFO abduction accounts. He says the kind of experiences recounted by the "abductees" are typical for people who have "waking dreams," a not-uncommon phenomenon people sometimes experience just as they are drifting off to sleep or waking up.

Baker says most of those who investigate and write about supposed alien abductions have no training in psychology and "are very naive." Except John Mack - I'm really shocked at him."

But Mack, who has practiced psychiatry for



LISA DUSENBERRY ILLUSTRATION

Drawing of a crashed alien spacecraft at top, based on accounts of a sighting in New Mexico

In 1947, is similar to craft described by some who say they were abducted by aliens.

Short, gray-skinned alien with large eyes, above, is a standard type described by many people in independent accounts.

more than 30 years and was the founding director of the Cambridge Hospital psychiatry department, says after talking in detail with 60 people about abduction experiences, "I could not put them in any kind of psychiatric category - except trauma. But if it's trauma, then what is the source of the trauma?"

It was that sense that this is a real psychological phenomenon - but a largely unrecognized one - that led Mack to join with Massachusetts Institute of Technology physicist David Pritchard to organize a conference on the subject last week on the MIT campus.

It was the first time respected academics have dared to mount such a meeting within the walls of a respected institution, and their fear of ridicule by the press and public, and reproach by colleagues, led them to go to great lengths to emphasize

that MIT was in no way sponsoring the event and that no public funds were in any way used for it.

In fact, Pritchard and Mack tried hard at first to keep the whole conference a secret. Only reluctantly did they allow any journalists to attend, and then only on condition they not disclose who was there or quote directly what was said.

The subject is certainly easy to ridicule, and those who have gone public with claims of abduction have sometimes lost jobs or been demoted. But those who have worked with the "abductees" are increasingly convinced that whatever the physical reality may be, those involved need care and understanding that is not always forthcoming from mental health professionals.

David Gotlib, a psychotherapist with a private practice in Toronto, says, "I believe that there is an un-

usual phenomenon going on here that cannot be explained in the usual ways that skeptics explain it. That, I'm sure of.

"What it is, I don't know."

Mack and other professionals who have studied these cases say that those who say they have been abducted are sane, normal, and, on the whole, typical. When Mack asks the subjects to rate their certainty that the experiences were real on a scale of 1 (outright lie) to 10 ("it's as real to me as you standing here before me"), he says, "almost invariably it's a 10. Occasionally a 9."

They test normal on batteries of psychological tests. They come from all walks of life, all races, all ages. And almost all of them say they would much rather be told they are crazy than to have to accept their memories.

In many ways, those who report

such experiences resemble survivors of childhood physical or sexual abuse: The memories are initially suppressed, are recalled only with great difficulty, and, then cause great mental anguish. Some therapists have suggested, in fact, that the abduction stories are a psychological mask for half-remembered childhood abuse.

But others, like artist Budd Hopkins, author of the best-seller "Intruders" and now a nearly full-time UFO abduction investigator, say that doesn't hold up. For one thing, he says, many of the "abductees" also do have clear memories of childhood abuse (in about the same percentage of cases as in the general public). If they remember the abuse, he reasons, why would they also cling to the "cover story"?

There is one key claim made by people like Hopkins, Mack, and Da-

vid Jacobs, a historian at Temple University who has written two books on alien abductions, to bolster their claims that this is a real phenomenon, not just some kind of delusion. It is, they say, the startling similarity in the details of accounts given by people from all over the country who have apparently never had contact with each other or any awareness of each others' stories.

It turns out, however, that the people who investigate such reports in fact describe a wide variety of experiences, ranging from terrifying to exhilarating, and different kinds of aliens ranging from green-skinned reptiles to tall, blond Nordic types.

Another problem with this argument is that because most of the "abductees" insist on anonymity, there is for the most part only the investi-

(continued on page 7)



gators' word that similarities exist.

Further, there are a number ways that such similarities could be explained. For one thing, everyone has been exposed to such a plethora of similar images from movies, television, books and newspapers that the similar experiences may simply echo familiar media images. And, many skeptics have suggested, the investigators, especially when their subjects are under hypnosis, may be leading their witnesses - perhaps unconsciously - into providing the accounts they expect to hear.

But such explanations do not easily account for the distress most abductees experience when they go through their accounts. It is that intensity that convinces Mack that there is much more to it than a half-remembered movie image or a desire to please the investigator.

When, with the help of a hypnotist, subjects begin to remember, Mack says, "they became very distraught, because they they did not want to believe this is real."

That was the case with Maria, the woman who described her abduction through an upper-story window in Manhattan to investigator Hopkins. More than a year after she had told him her story under hypnosis, Hopkins says, he was independently contacted by two law-enforcement officers who had witnessed a UFO and saw a woman float out her window and into the craft, accompanied by three small beings. He describes the men as being terrified and shaken, as evidenced by an emotional audiotape one of them made. The date, time, place and details of their account precisely match Maria's story, Hopkins says.

When he told Maria about the witnesses, Hopkins says, she was shocked and distressed. "She wanted for it not to be real," he says.

Her recollections, like those of a majority of abductees, were dredged up with the help of hypnosis, and the reliability of hypnotically-recovered memories has been a central issue. Skeptics point out that, in general, evidence obtained through hypnosis is not admissible in court.

In fact, careful experiments have shown that hypnosis produces an increase in both correct and incorrect memories; adding to the confusion, it produces an increased confidence in both.

And, the investigators point out, about one-fourth of the cases involve people who say they remember their "abductions" without hypnosis, and their descriptions match the others'.

Both believers and skeptics acknowledge the emotional intensity of memories unleashed through the process of probing these memories, with or without hypnosis.

Richard Boylan, a psychologist who has a private practice in Sacramento, Calif. and specializes in working with "abductees," says "some of the investigators are not aware that this requires some psychological help and working through." The two leading investigators in the field, artist Hopkins and historian Jacobs, say they have hypnotized thousands of subjects to elicit memories.

Hopkins, most of whose subjects contacted him after reading one of his books, says he would welcome help from mental health professionals. He points out that he charges nothing for helping them to remember their experiences and refers his

subjects to qualified professionals for help if they seem to need it - and can afford it. He says the people he works with are given support, put in touch with others who have had similar experiences, and generally say they feel better after their hypnotic sessions with him.

Boylan remains concerned, however, that in some cases troubling memories will be forced into a subject's consciousness by investigators who then walk away, more interested in collecting cases for their books than in helping people.

"The violence may be more on the human end than the alien end," he said. "As a psychologist, I just can't cotton that kind of stuff going on. It's UFOlogy malpractice."

## The search for physical evidence turns up little

What would it take to prove, or at least to produce good evidence, that such an extraordinary occurrence as being abducted by alien beings really did take place?

As astronomer Carl Sagan has often pointed out, "extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence." So far, despite widespread interest in UFOs and in alien abductions, no such hard evidence has yet been forthcoming.

"I regard the best physical evidence" yet produced in support of the claims of alien abduction "as being totally inconclusive," said David Pritchard, the MIT physicist who organized a conference on the subject, in an interview last week.

Pritchard has studied one of the few pieces of purported physical evidence for the phenomenon: a tiny "implant" that UFO abductee Richard Price of Latham, N.Y. says was placed in his abdomen by aliens and later worked its way out. He

says the object provides "absolutely no proof of anything, but I wasn't able to explain it in some obvious way."

Tiny implants are a common feature of alien abduction stories, so they ought to provide a good way of testing the claims. Some investigators have obtained Magnetic Resonance Imaging scans of people who say they were given implants, and some of the scans do show unexplained spots that could be implants. But such spots also show up on a significant number of other MRI images in general.

Some investigators suggest that while individual MRI scans don't mean much, a large number of similar images might be more convincing - especially if spots seen in them correspond to where the abductees say their implants were placed.

Another line of evidence that would not provide proof but might be strongly suggestive, say

investigators, is a database containing many of the detailed stories told by abductees interviewed by different investigators. Many of these investigators have said they find amazing similarities among accounts given by people who have had no contact with each other, but others say the similarities could be caused by subtle leading of the witnesses by the investigators.

If significant similarities showed up in accounts collected by different investigators, therefore, it might make a more compelling case.

Psychotherapist David Gotlib also has suggested that the selection process could affect the findings - that investigators may select, out of thousands of people who contact them, the ones whose stories are most similar to those they have already heard and written about, thus producing a self-fulfilling prophecy of similar-sounding accounts.

- DAVID L. CHANDLER

DEMOCRAT, Tallahassee, FL  
May 11, 1992

### We are not alone

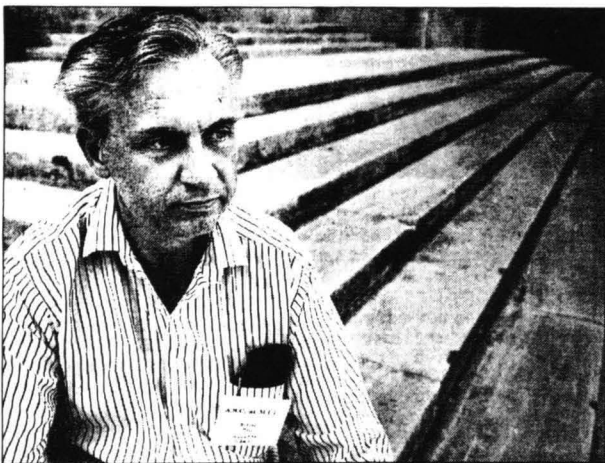
In "Theory is shaking up UFO reports" (April 15), it appears as though geophysicist John Derr is attempting to explain away reports of UFOs as merely mysterious balls of electricity referred to as "earthquake lights." The scientific community needs to stop trying to debunk UFOs through senseless experiments and instead take an objective look at the many reports of a genuinely unexplainable, otherworldly nature.

Those of us who have been researching and investigating the UFO phenomenon are appalled at the lengths our "scientific" community has taken to dismiss what they either refuse to accept or are afraid to admit is real... that we are being visited by aliens from other worlds and have been for many, many years.

Granted, a large percentage of UFO reports do have a natural or conventional explanation. But people from all walks of life report UFO sightings daily, and many even claim to have been abducted by strange beings that have come to be known as the "greys."

The UFO problem is a complex one, with dimension that can only challenge our preconceived notions of our place in the universe.

KELLY FREEMAN  
Florida UFO Network



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / SUZANNE KREITER

Richard Price, who says he's been abducted several times, produced an object he calls an "implant" left by aliens. Tests were inconclusive.

TRIBUNE, Salt Lake City, UT - May 12, 1992

### S.L. Braces for Close Encounter With National UFO Conference

By Jon Ure  
THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

The best of unidentified flying objects premieres Friday night in Salt Lake City.

That is when UFO Congress President Bob Brown brings his documentary, "UFOs: A Need to Know," to the Salt Palace Auditorium for a free public showing. Mr. Brown, contacted Monday in Sacramento, Calif., said the film is "a powerful documentary that has the power to open people's minds."

The free Friday session kicks off the UFO Congress conference. Saturday and Sunday ses-

sions will cost \$15 each. The public is invited to attend.

The four-hour sessions will feature highlights of last year's international conference boiled down to the top 16 presenters and four films, Mr. Brown said. Topics will include reports on abductions, contactees, initiating contact with aliens and government cover-ups.

Mr. Brown's interest in UFOs began 20 years ago when he saw what he calls an unexplainable sighting while whale watching in Baja, Calif. The former pilot says the evidence is "phenomenal" that UFOs visit Earth.

MT. HOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADVOCATE, Gresham, OR - May 22, 1992

## UFO club descends on Mt. Hood Community College

By KARI HOCKS

Advocate Staff  
Aliens!

The question of whether there is life on other planets is the topic of discussion on the third Sunday of each month at Mt. Hood Community College.

Rea Washington has no doubts that there is life in outer space; she has seen an alien being. "They were grey creatures with big eyes," she said.

Washington said supernatural events have been happening to her since she was a small child. And just last month she saw another alien that "looked like a little troll." She said it scared her, and she closed her eyes. When she opened them again, it had disappeared.

Two and a half years ago Washington said she saw a UFO (unidentified flying object). She described it as "a ball of light," 100 feet off the ground. She called the UFO hotline and expressed concern to the supervisor of the Portland UFO group (now the Northwest UFO group) who told her "others had seen it, very close to where I had seen it."

Washington became a board member of the Northwest UFO group two years ago and is the editor of the group's newsletter. She is also the editor of the newsletter for the State of Oregon's UFO group.

Charline Elliott is now the supervisor of the Northwest UFO group.

The group's meetings are open. "We do not have any specific beliefs," Elliott said, and the group does not claim to have any answers.

The group gets together to share stories, listen to speakers and participate in support groups. This summer if funds are available

the group would like to go on a sky-watching trip.

No membership is required, according to Elliott. Between one and five hundred people attend the meetings on campus. Some of those who attend the meetings have had experiences with UFO's and/or aliens, some believe in UFO's and/or life in outer space and others are just curious and want to know more, she said.

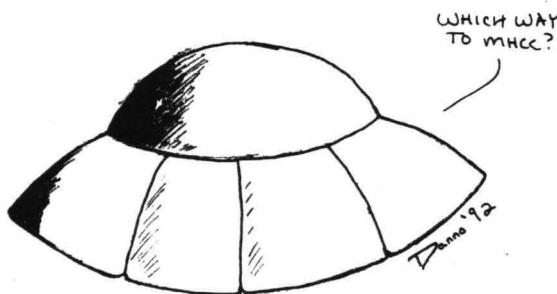
Elliott believes in UFO and/or alien life because of personal experiences. "I believe there is other life," she said, although "I've never seen one."

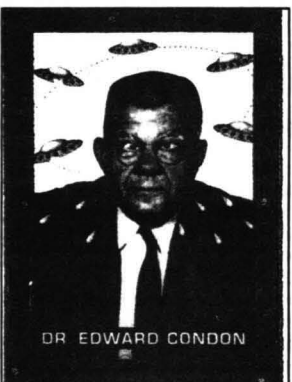
"In my life there has never been something as important as this phenomenon," Elliott said. She said it "transcends society" and everything in the universe.

The group's big event this year is the arrival of Bud Hopkins, the author of the book that led to the mini-series "Intruders."

Elliott said there is a lot of scientific proof about abductions.

The event will be held at the Red Lion Inn.





Here are some examples of "Saucer People" trading cards.

# UFO trading cards

By Jay Rath

Special to The Capital Times

**N**ever mind whether or not flying saucers are real. Are they cool?

The creators of "Saucer People" think so. It's a set of trading cards — many of them created by Wisconsin artists and writers — that provide a historical overview of UFO encounters.

The 36-card set costs \$10.95, and ranges from naive encounter tales of the 1950s to the buzzing of nuclear bomb sites in the 1970s. A full-color illustration is on one side, with text on the reverse.

The nationwide release to book and specialty stores is scheduled for this month.

Though the publisher of the cards is based in Wisconsin, the talents weren't brought together out of hometown pride. The publisher says that odds were in favor of it.

"Wisconsin, for whatever reason, truly has a disproportionate share of comics creators," says Dennis Kitchen, founder of the Kitchen Sink Inc. publishing company, based in Princeton. "It's not typical. It's really not."

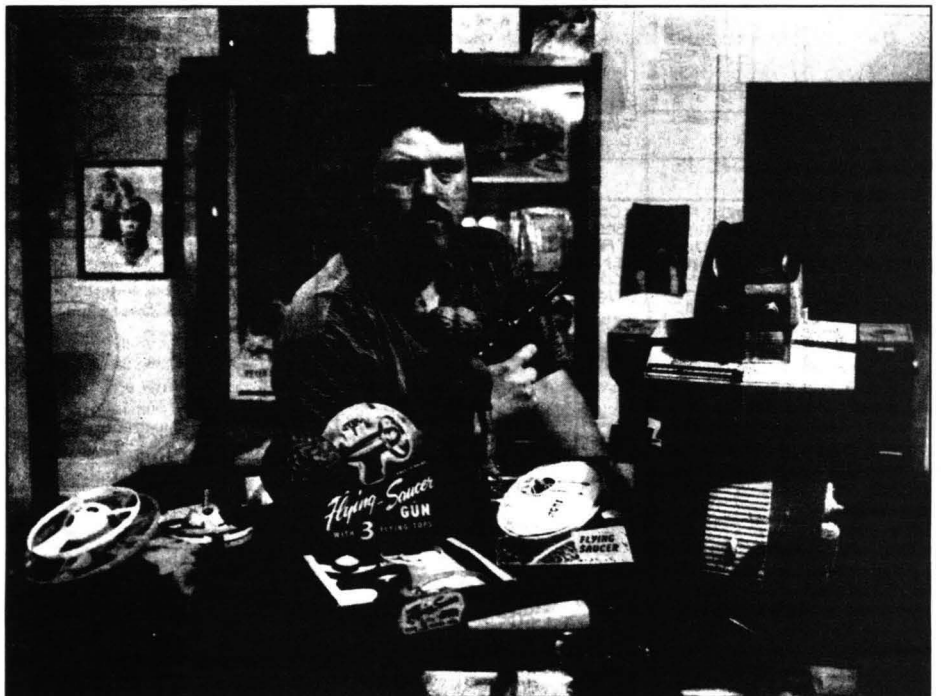
Kitchen Sink, a longtime publisher of underground comic books, these days also publishes more mainstream comics, and creates scholarly packages reprinting classic cartoons, such as Al Capp's "Li'l Abner" and Milt Caniff's "Steve Canyon."

"Wisconsin is a hotbed of comic book and cartoon people to begin with," says Madisonian Jamie Riehle, editor and a writer for the project. "We had access to a lot of Wisconsin based artists, and we also went after top artists around the country."

...

**T**he card series is the brainchild of Madisonian Eric Nesheim, an instructor in typographical design at Madison Area Technical College.

Other artists involved in the project include John Nyburg, Madison, who has worked on "Nexus" and "Plastic Man" comics; Dan Burr, Milwaukee; and Jeff Butler, Menomonee Falls. Other contributing artists from around the country include Don Simpson, Howard Cruse and Steve Bis-



DAVID SANDELL/THE CAPITAL TIMES

"Saucer People" is a set of soon-to-be-released trading cards that put UFO sightings into a historical perspective. The card series was created in part by Eric Nesheim (above).

sette.

"You know, I'm not really involved in this subject to discover whether it's true or not true that there are UFOs," says Nesheim. "I'm interested in this culture that's grown up around UFOs: the cult groups, the serious investigators and the popular culture."

"Flying saucers were part of an era," Riehle says. "The '50s,

"Flying saucers have always been cool," says Riehle. "I mean, I'm a child of the '60s. I used to hang out outside to see if I could find any."

...

**T**hat's not to say that everything is taken seriously. Take card No. 7, the story of Ozark farmer Buck Nelson's 1955 UFO abduction.

Some cards, such as No. 21, may make the government squirm. It's about the Sept. 15, 1964, launch and flight of an Atlas "F" missile at California's Vandenberg Air Force Base.

The event was captured by a television camera coupled with a radar-guided telescope. Upon review, the two officers in charge of the taping discovered that "a bright object appeared just after the missile's launch."

Air Force 1st Lt. Robert Jacobs and chief science officer Maj. Florenz Mannsman viewed an object that "was clear, distinct and round. It flew toward the missile and gave off a brilliant flash of light. The object kept pace with the missile, maneuvering around it and setting off three more bright pulses before vanishing."

Seconds later, the missile had malfunctioned and crashed into the Pacific Ocean. Two men in plainclothes, present at the screening, took custody of the recording. It has not been seen since, and the officers — who had agreed not to discuss the incident — only came forward with their story 17 years later.

Says Riehle: "I think people are going to be impressed with the information in the cards and the quality of the project itself."

**'I'm interested in this culture that's grown up around UFOs: the cult groups, the serious investigators and the popular culture.'**

ERIC NESHEIM

the '60s, the start of the '70s."

Television programs such as "The Invaders," "Star Trek" and "Lost in Space" combined with news reports in those decades to create a science fiction subculture, which Riehle says is part of a renewed fascination with all things "retro."

It's not that UFOs are subject to the whims of fashion, but that the public's interest in them — and interpretation of them — is.

"Of his space flight, Buck said, I couldn't see the sun because it was very dark in space."

"We tried to let the humor come out naturally," Riehle says, "but we dealt with the more serious cases, too."

Through UFO researcher Todd Zechel, the project received access to previously secret CIA information on UFO sightings through the Freedom of Information Act.



# Actor Crenna believes 'Intruders' lurk among us

By STEPHANIE DuBOIS

**T**his is going to bring a lot of people out of the space closet," said Richard Crenna of his fact-based CBS "Intruders" miniseries that explores the subjects of extraterrestrials, UFOs and alien abductions.

Crenna plays a character based on psychiatrist John Mack, the former head of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, in the four-hour miniseries that airs today and Tuesday at 9 p.m. on Channel 7.

During filming Crenna met several people Mack worked with (played in the miniseries by Mare Winningham, Daphne Ashbrook, Susan Blakely and Ben Vereen) who claimed to have been abducted by extraterrestrials.

"There was one young man who told that this had given him his first chance to explain what he's been through," said Crenna.

"He's lived in abject terror for most of his life that he'd be abducted again, but he was afraid to say anything until he started working with John Mack."

Crenna also worked with Mack and said, "He told me he was very skeptical about these incidents until he started dealing with these people. Then he did a 180-degree turnaround. After investigating and hypnotizing dozens of them, he's absolutely convinced they are telling the truth."

The actor admits to a healthy curiosity and interest in the subject of extraterrestrials and UFOs, but said, "I went into the project with a certain amount of skepticism, too. I always believed something was going on ... but I was a little ambivalent as to whether I believed people had actually been kidnapped."

But, he said, after working with several alleged abductees, he too became a believer.

"I worked with Bud Hopkins, whose book 'Intruders' is



**TRUE UFO BELIEVERS:** Susan Blakely, top left, and Richard Crenna portray people who are drawn into the harrowing world of alien abductions.

roughly based on," said Crenna, who learned how to hypnotize from Hopkins.

"I watched him put three people under hypnosis and the more you hear these people, the more open you are to the possibility."

"What's so interesting about all these spaceship stories is that they're all the same. All the people who are hypnotized, whether they're from Peru, Borneo or China, tell essentially the same story. The spacecraft and the beings are always described the same and the happenings are very similar."

As the film points out, many of the abductees weren't actually aware of what had happened to them until they had undergone hypnosis and therapy.

"When they first tell their stories," explained Crenna, "they don't come in and say 'This is what happened to me.' They only know something very disturbing has taken place ... that they're missing time."

"I kind of likened the process to what happens with victims of child molestation," he

said.

"They're people who've sublimated the act and blocked it from their experience, but as they get older they start remembering fragments of things ... Then after working with a psychiatrist, the incidents become reality again."

"Another interesting thing about so many of these people," he continued, "is that they exhibited scars, that some of them had kept in secrecy, from operations performed on them."

But, according to Crenna, "their medical records indicated they'd never been operated on in such a way. They're surgical scars and there is evidence of perfect surgical procedures."

He went on to say that investigators even reportedly "found metal implants in some of the abductees. Bud Hopkins told me one such object is currently undergoing metallurgical analysis at MIT."

Crenna commented, "People who are very skeptical are not going to change their mind as a result of this film — and that's not the intention."



willingness to embrace the prospect of extraterrestrials is based on fear.

"It's a frightening prospect to most people. You can imagine what would happen to our sense of all that we hold nearest and dearest, if somebody told us these people were out there. It would mean a rethinking of our religions, our mathematics ... of our entire existence."

"It would be a total disruption," he added, joking. "Almost as bad as having Jerry Brown as president. It would be as confusing as that."

Crenna, however, is convinced we have nothing to fear. The way he sees it, "There's a kind of optimism (among investigators and experts on the subject) that these abductions were not meant to be hostile acts, but perhaps investigative in some way."

"The thought that's the most comforting to me is that if these people meant harm to us, they would have done it long ago."

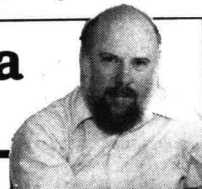
And then he added with a laugh, "If I were going to take over this world, I would have done it during Norman Rockwell's time. I would have knocked us off around about 1900 — before we'd messed everything (the planet) up."

"Why hang around to take over now?" □

TRIBUNE, Pacifica, CA - April 29, 1992

## Pacifica Moods

Jef Raskin



### UFO and whale sightings

A few weeks ago a strange phenomenon puzzled my family and me. As we were driving up to our house we saw two lights, preternaturally bright, just behind the trees. We watched the lights turn and move at uncanny rates. I have only once before seen something that looked so much like a "classic" description of flying saucers. One of the lights was slightly orange-yellowish. The other was blue-greenish. They moved in exact synchronization as though they were either flying in formation or were part of the same incredibly large object.

By the time we got to our driveway, the lights were gone, and we were soon absorbed in getting the kids out of the car and into bed. I guessed that perhaps the Navy or Coast Guard were flying a pair of searchlight-equipped helicopters near the coast but the lights had moved too fast and too perfectly together for me to feel that the guess was a good one. Also, they did not appear to brighten or dim as they turned, an effect searchlights would definitely show.

On tax night, I had gone to bed early, and in consequence got up early the next day. It was still dark, and out over the ocean I saw a bright orange-yellowish light. At first I thought it was moving, but when I sat still, it didn't move so I knew it was just the relative motion of a sleepy head that I had observed. The light was just as bright as the UFOs we had seen. I got out the binoculars and saw that the light was reflecting off the ocean; clearly a boat or a helicopter was out there. As the day broke an object came gradually visible through the glare of the light, and a half hour later I could see it was a fishing boat with a large bank of sodium-vapor lamps.

I also now knew what the UFOs were: two fishing boats, one like this one, and another with blue-green mercury vapor lamps. At night it is very hard to judge where the horizon is, and walking out on the driveway (which rises above our house) today I saw that the horizon seems to run right through the trees. It was our motion in the car, combined with our belief that the lights were much closer than they were (due to their extraordinary brightness) that made them seem to move. The UFOs thus turn out to be an illusion, explained by simple geometry combined with the inherent human inability to judge large distances visually.

Watching the now clearly visible fishing boat I noticed a small black shape in the water near the beach. "That surfer is out early," I said to myself. So I trained the binocs on him or her. No surfer. A seal, a shark, some flotsam? I wondered. A large (really large) fin broke the surface. Finally a spume of water went up. "That she blows!" I said to myself and spent the next 15 minutes watching a humpback whale, just at the line of breaking surf, making its way slowly northward toward the pier — my reward for getting up early in Pacifica.

## When it comes to UFOs, consider the possibilities

As a public service and because young people are usually too small to do me physical harm, I occasionally like to analyze their views.

A few days ago, I received the following letter from Andrew David Cole, age 12, of Lutherville.

"Dear Mr. Simon," he begins. "The most terrifying aspect of the UFO phenomenon doesn't come out of the skies. It's not on a wheat field in England. It doesn't abduct people for goodness-knows-what purpose. It's our own government, as well as those of other countries."

"For many years, the U.S. government has withheld from its citizens, or so it seems, at least as much UFO information as it has released."

An articulate young man, I think you will agree. And it made my heart swell with pride to discover that our grammar schools are teaching our young people to be as dizzy and paranoid as their parents.

Andrew continues: "People present when UFOs have landed and when beings emerged from them have been threatened by government agents that, if they don't move away and/or if they tell anyone about the event, physical harm will come to them."

Well, now, Andrew, this is where I would like to interrupt you for a moment. It is very important to distinguish between fiction and fact, especially in our mass-media society where the two are so often blurred.

So remember: UFOs, witches, hobgoblins, Elvis sightings, Murphy Brown and Dan Quayle are all fiction. Death, taxes and more profiles of Ross Perot are inevitable facts.

Got that? OK, let's go on with your letter: "In the 1950s, a UFO crashed near an Army base in the southwest and, nationwide, articles were written about it in the newspa-

ROGER  
SIMON



pers. ... Once, in another desert in the southwest, a different UFO crashed, and a family went to investigate ...

Let me stop you once again, Andrew. You raise some points about UFOs that I have never understood. They are built by superior creatures from civilizations far more advanced than our own. So tell me this: Why do they pick such nutty places to land?

Why is it always a "southwest desert" or some remote stretch of tundra or in a swamp in south Georgia? Why don't they land in Central Park? Or on "Donahue"?

And why do so many UFOs crash? Is there no such thing as Mr. Galactic Goodwrench?

Back to Andrew's letter: "... a different UFO crashed and a family went to investigate. When they got there, they found four alien creatures. Two dead, one dying, and the fourth still standing, having suffered apparently little damage."

The standing alien was taken back to the military headquarters where it lived for a few years before dying of an unknown illness. I think out of all the countries in the world Belgium is the only one that make

public all its UFO information."

Exactly my point, Andrew. Belgium is the global equivalent of swamp in south Georgia.

Whoever heard of anything important happening in Belgium except the occasional soccer riot or a NATO meeting or the recent disappearance of 250 hectares of downtown Brussels in a bright blue flash?

"We try to live in harmony with other organisms on this planet," the letter continues, "so why not do the same with other planets? It's basically the same thing. Humans could openly visit whoever's out there, and they could openly visit us. Why is the government trying to prevent that?"

Well, Andrew, I can think of three reasons our government might want to prevent contact with aliens:

1. Our economy could be plunged into turmoil trying to match the exchange rate of Martian pesos.

2. The Andromeda Nebula might demand one of the two new NFL expansion teams.

3. The crab creatures of Altair Six smell funny.

There is another possibility, Andrew, perhaps one even a person as bright as you did not envision: Perhaps that alien creature that survived the crash in the southwest did not later die "of an unknown illness."

Perhaps that was just a cover story. Perhaps that creature escaped, assumed human shape and now lives among the unsuspecting inhabitants of this planet.

Perhaps he has the ability to cloud minds and bend people to his will.

Perhaps he is a vastly influential newspaper columnist, whose mission is to make fun of UFOs so you puny Earthlings are unprepared for the coming invasion!

Just something to think about, Andy.



CHRISTOPHER A. RECORD/Staff

**What caused it?** UFO investigator George Fawcett of Lincolnton looks over part of a circle in the grass at Shirley and Bud Long's

farmhouse. He and fellow investigator Danny Barger took soil and plant samples and magnetic readings.

# UFO?

## Gawks, guesses, but no explanation for strange marks in Lincolnton lawn

By JOE MARUSAK  
Staff Writer

LINCOLNTON — Shirley Long has never believed in UFOs, but she's had to think twice since finding the large barren circle in her lawn.

UFO buffs have examined the circle but can't explain it. A hoax? A natural phenomenon? Or is it the imprint of a visiting spacecraft?

Dozens of friends, family members and UFO enthusiasts have driven to Long's farmhouse off rural Killian Road to see for

themselves since it appeared last month. No one has had an answer for Long and her husband, Bud, who runs several local convenience store-gas stations.

"I've never believed in UFOs, my husband doesn't either," Long said as she studied the circle, which is 14 feet in diameter and has three parallel bars where the grass died within it. "But I guess anything's possible after this."

Skeptics dismiss the circle, where the grass is now starting to

### Mysterious circle

The origin of the 14-foot circle of dead grass, found outside Lincolnton, is unknown.

#### Comparison



MIKE FISHER/Staff

grow again, as a prank.

"Did somebody go out and do a hoax or did a spaceship land?" asked Barry Karr, director of the Buffalo-based Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims

of the Paranormal. "What seems more plausible? The last thing I would think of is an alien spaceship."

Karr's international group tries

to debunk claims of the extraterrestrial by offering what it calls plausible, land-based explanations.

Though he hasn't seen the Longs' circle, Karr said pranksters make them on lawns and in fields by using string and stakes for accuracy. Hoaxers then apply weed killer, making the grass vanish within 10 days or so, Karr said. Pranksters started with farm

**"I would just like to know what it was. It's a mystery to everyone as to what could have happened."**

— Shirley Long

fields in England a decade ago. When U.S. TV shows highlighted the supposed phenomena, mysterious rings suddenly cropped up in America, Karr said.

"It was hilarious," he said. "You would have people saying it was alien hieroglyphics."

Longtime UFO investigator George Fawcett of Lincolnton said he is discounting neither pranksters nor aliens. He and fellow investigator Danny Barger took soil and plant samples and magnetic readings. They even sniffed the ground for chemicals, but they detected none.

"Something laid that pattern down," said Fawcett, who has investigated 1,200 suspected UFO cases across the country over the past 48 years. "I said to Bud (Long), 'Something happened here or you had a dozen men working on this to try to pull my leg.'"

The Longs said they're as puzzled as Fawcett and their neighbors. Shirley Long said she first spotted the circle in early May when the bare area appeared as surrounding grass started to grow.

She said she also happened to look up at her pecan tree and notice a large limb, 50 feet up, smashed against the tree trunk as if something had crashed into it.

"If it was a spaceship, they would just about have had a crash landing, with all the open space around here," she said. "I would just like to know what it was. It's a mystery to everyone as to what could have happened."

#### Got a clue?

Anyone with evidence of what created the circle on the Long property can call George Fawcett at 735-5725 anytime.

## UFO abductions taken seriously

By PAUL DELLINGER  
SOUTHWEST BUREAU

WYTHEVILLE — UFO Intruders? Not in Wytheville, thank you.

A prominent Harvard psychiatrist, among others, had expressed concern that the CBS-TV miniseries, "Intruders," would awaken dormant UFO abduction memories in unsuspecting viewers.

Even the somber Wall Street Journal headlined those worries in a May 14 story written perfectly straight, without a hint of the tongue-in-cheek cuteness that shows up in many stories on UFOs.

Residents of Wytheville had particular reason to have an interest in that miniseries because an estimated 3,000 people reported UFOs in the skies over Wythe County in late 1987 and into 1988.

None reported abduction experiences then, or since the CBS show aired on Sunday and Tuesday nights.

If anyone seemed a candidate for such an experience, it most likely would be Danny Gordon, who found himself at the center of the UFO vortex in his home county.

Gordon, news and sports director at WYVE radio in Wytheville, broke the first sighting story that led to national media interest in Wytheville. And he was the one who ended up probably seeing more UFOs, about 40 in all, than anyone once he went out looking.

The media interest has continued. "Unsolved Mysteries," which used a segment on Wytheville to open its 100th anniversary show Feb. 19, repeated it on NBC-TV Sunday night just before CBS broadcast its first "Intruders" episode. East Coast viewers missed it this time around because of a sports event that ran longer than expected.

In addition, Gordon is

featured prominently in a cover story about Wytheville's UFO flap in the current issue of Virginia Southwest, a regional magazine published in Roanoke.

Tales of abductions by beings from the sky go back to ancient mythology. They happened in science fiction pulp magazines dating back to the 1930s and in such movies as "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" (1977).

Gordon never had been a fan of such stories. "In 1987, I had nothing in this house on UFOs," he said while viewing the second part of "Intruders" at his home Tuesday night.

Now he has piles of books and magazines about them, part of the crash course he undertook in UFOlogy when the spotlight turned on him during the Wytheville sightings. The books include one by Budd Hopkins, the New York artist whose interviews formed much of the basis for "Intruders."

Gordon since has talked with Hopkins and others prominent in UFO studies, attended UFO conferences in other states, and even heard from Betty Hill, who was the subject of the book "The Interrupted Journey."

"Based on letters, she's just a normal person," Gordon said.

She and her husband, Barney Hill, who has since died, reported a UFO in New Hampshire in 1961. They found themselves suffering

from stress which they linked to the sighting and, under hypnosis, told a story of being taken aboard the craft and examined by gray-skinned creatures with large heads.

The Boston psychiatrist who worked with them called their account a shared dream. But other people began reporting similar events under hypnosis. Whether the experiences are real, as Hopkins maintains, or result from some other repressed traumas, as some psychiatrists suggest, those who think they recall them are often deeply troubled by them and need counseling.

Gordon has been told more than once, by people more deeply involved than he in the UFO field, that the number of his sightings makes him a prime abduction candidate. One woman even informed him that she had seen him when they were both aboard a UFO.

"There are a lot of people out there and they are very nice, ordinary people, until you hear their story," Gordon said, shaking his head.

He is unwilling to undergo hypnosis to seek repressed abduction memories. "Hypnotic regression is still a gray area with me, because how do you draw the line between fact and fiction in the mind?" he said.

He found the miniseries' interesting, although it condensed the accounts of many people in Hop-

kins' interviews into those of a few characters. "I think this is a good portrayal of it, but ... it's a composite."

But he said he could identify with some of it.

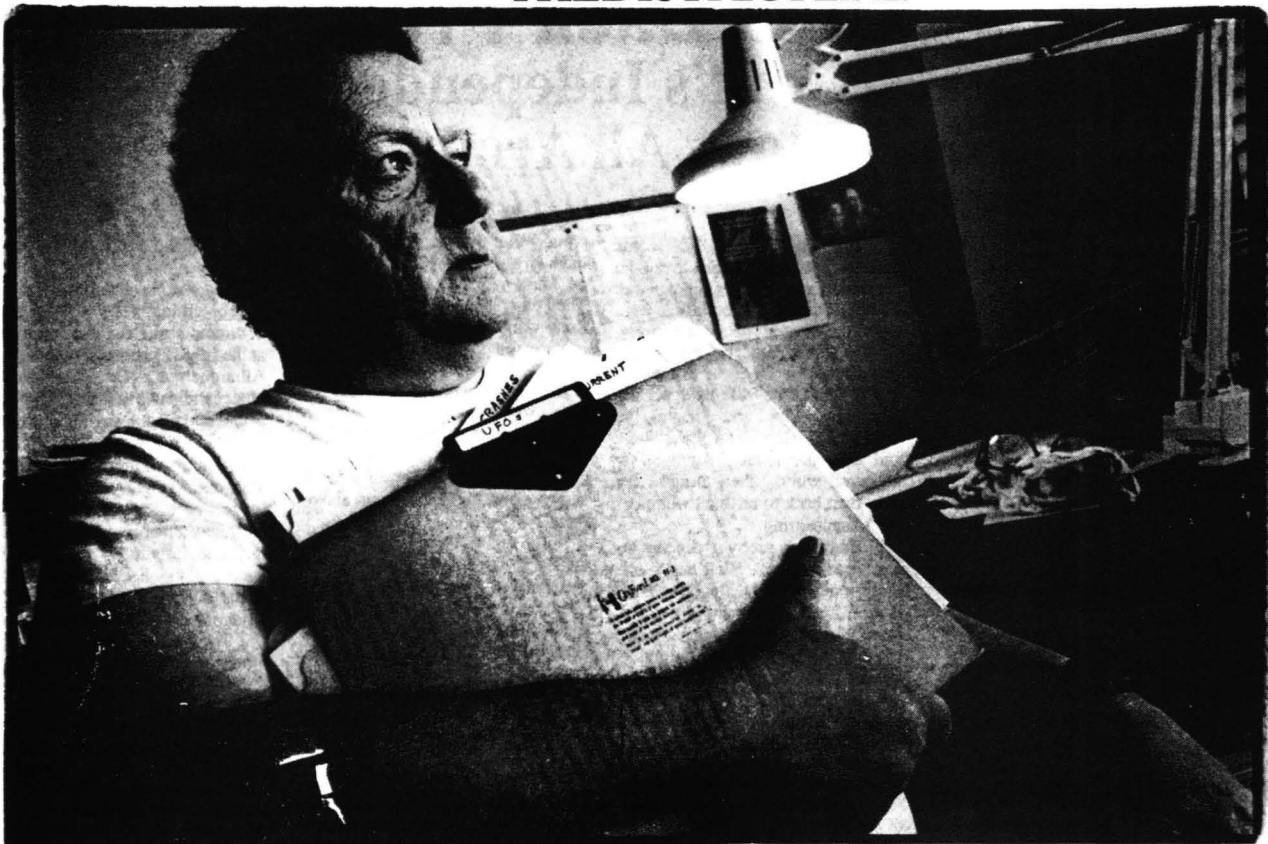
There were the so-called "NASA representatives" who dropped in to talk to the psychiatrist in the miniseries. Gordon had "reporters," who turned out not to work for the paper they cited when he tried to call them later, visiting his home.

When Gordon was a featured speaker at a UPI convention and suggested that reporters take a more serious approach to UFOs, he said, he got reactions like those of the miniseries psychiatrist. The character made the same kind of plea at a gathering of his fellow practitioners, who got defensive or walked out.

"I think this program will make people more aware of the UFO phenomenon," Gordon said.



## THE DISTRICT LINE



UFO Researcher  
of the Serious  
Kind: Don  
Berliner

## It Came Out of the Sky

Don Berliner's Close Encounters With People Who Have Had Close Encounters

"It's good they ended it that way," Don Berliner said, his feet propped on the living room coffee table in his Alexandria apartment as the final frames of *Intruders*, a television movie about outer-space creeps, rolled by. "That gives people a way to think about these things without as much fear."

Berliner, a 61-year-old free-lance writer affiliated with a local group called the Fund for UFO Research, was referring to the gauzy Spielberg ending (more on this shortly) tacked onto the two-part docudrama, which aired May 17 and 19 on CBS. Sappy though the finish was, a little uplift was a relief after what came before it. The film dramatized the abductee experience, the claim made by a surprisingly large number of people who remember being kidnapped by aliens. (The memories usually emerge under hypnosis.) It focused on the tribulations of two fictionalized women—composites based on case histories taken "from the files of" Budd Hopkins, author of *Missing Time* and *Intruders*.

Both gals were regularly nabbed by sneaky, pear-bodied ETs and strapped to what looked like Lucite operating tables for a series of intrusive surgical noodlings. Nebraska "Mary Wilkes" (played by the hardest-working lady in TV movies, Mare Winningham) received a metal nasal-passage implant of unknown purpose, was relieved of a tiny scoop-shaped sample of flesh, and dimly recalled that a "miscarriage" she'd suffered years before was... something worse. "Lesley Hahn," a Californian, was snatched and seeded by aliens who stole her baby when her role as hydroponic nanny was complete.

Elsewhere, we saw a maverick psychiatrist drummed out of the ranks because he dared to tell the truth. (This being that scores of Americans are abducted by extraterrestrials on a regular basis. A new poll released in conjunction with *Intruders* claimed that one in 50 American adults, or some 3.7 million, believe they have been abducted.) We saw a by-now-stereotypical U.S. government official, evil incarnate, telling the psychiatrist that of course the authorities know something from Out There is Here. The grim brass hat hissed that a supersecret working group exists in the government—black-budget material all the way—to figure out just what in hell is going on. Until real answers emerge, cover-up is essential to prevent planetary panic.

And we saw Ben Vereen playing a psychiatric-ward inmate whose trauma began in 1973. At that time, the Vereen character was stationed at a New Mexico airbase. One night, while working the graveyard shift, he saw a flying saucer crash and burn in the desert. He rushed to the crash site and found three dead ETs and a lone survivor. This

ET, as big-eyed and appealing as an Edward Keane founding, telepathically begged, "Helllp meeeeee." Sadly, bad guys from the government arrived and dragged Ben away to the bounce-off-the-walls warehouse. This ET's fate could only be surmised, but if his experiences matched existing UFO lore, he was probably whisked off to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio—the site of many alleged ET incarcerations over the years—where he is now banging a cup against cell bars and telepathically demanding, "Lemme outta here, ya screws."

In short, not the sort of thing that inspires confidence in man's institutions or his place in the cosmos. Strangely, though, the four hours of horror, moody intimations of conspiracy, and creepy background music ended with Mary getting grabbed yet again, this time for a perky explanation of what it all was about. A gentle, standard-variety ET (thin, big-headed, with those insecty black eyes) showed her a big room full of fetuses in column-shaped aquariums bubbling with red liquid. (Not blood red, blessedly... Kool-Aid red.) Mary met her daughter (the same child who was taken from her years before), a blond waif who looked like a morph between a pretty little girl and Ron Howard's unfortunate younger brother, Clint, circa his 1967-69 "work" in *Gentle Ben*. No explanations were offered as to why such hybrids were being produced. Later, however, after Mary was returned to her family, she bizarrely opined that the experience convinced her that the aliens weren't evil. Whatever they were up to, it was important, for-the-good stuff, maybe an attempt to revive their own dying race with our sprightlier genes.

Throughout the concluding episode, Berliner helpfully shared tips about where the film stuck with recognized UFO legend and theory, and where it went a bit Hollywood. It should be noted that the Hollywood didn't bother him much. He seemed confident that the loftier goals being served (spreading the truth and letting traumatized UFO-abductee victims know they "are not alone in this") were worth a little dramatic license. He had only two minor beefs. The Budd Hopkins stand-in, a brilliant anthropologist who scoffed at the psychiatrist's early skepticism (with the withering wit of Sherlock Holmes), did not resemble the real Budd, who Berliner said is "scholarly and quiet." (The real Budd, by the way, is not a faculty scientist, but an artist and writer.) Berliner also disliked the ETs' necks. "I don't know why they gave them long necks," he frowned. "I know of no evidence of them having necks like that."

Just for the record: No 1973 event like the movie's crash has been alleged. The Mare Winningham abductee was based on the star performer of *Intruders*—the book, "Kathie Davis" (a pseudonym for a woman named Debra Tomey). And the psychiatrist who most closely resembles the movie's shrink (John E. Mack of Harvard Medical School) has been allowed to study this subject without the professional equivalent of an Amish shunning. Shortly before the movie aired, Mack assured the *Wall Street Journal* that abduction tales can't be written off as "mass hysteria." Others argue otherwise, including

the ever-watchful men and women at *Skeptical Inquirer*, who, in response to *Intruders*, mass-mailed a reprint of old *S.I.* articles that dismiss the abduction "phenomenon" as the product of psychological abnormalities already familiar to mental-health pros. (Such as confabulation, "the tendency of ordinary, sane individuals to confuse fact with fiction and to report fantasized events as actual occurrences.")

Berliner doesn't buy it. "I believe the chances of abduction being what it appears to be"—that is, for real—"are approaching 100 percent."

Does his opinion carry any weight? That depends on viewpoint. Hipster that you are, you're surely aware that many non-academic research UFO-related questions with what, to them anyway, is the same rigor and detachment as top scientists. (Whether they achieve this or not is a question we'll skip; getting into it at all is to open the nozzle on an ink-squirting firehose.) One veteran observer of the UFO scene, who asks not to be identified, cautions that there are "two cultures" within the realm of UFO research: the "large folk culture of belief-oriented people" and a "smaller elite of more skeptical, critically minded people."

The clear implication was that Don, while a nice and intelligent guy, should be taken with a deer-lick-sized grain of salt.

Nobody thinks of himself as "folk," including Berliner. He believes he is, and strives to be, a Researcher of the Serious Kind. The group he's linked with, the Fund for UFO Research, is one of the few in the jumbo field of "ufology" that has credentialed scientists on its board of directors. (Among them Bruce Maccabee, a physicist who serves as chairman.) Established in the District in 1979 as a non-profit group, it raises money to support research projects and to pry UFO-related documents from the federal government. (Yes, some exist.)

Berliner himself is a bit more footloose than the Fund as an entity. Before *Intruders* aired, he called *Washington Post* TV critic Tom Shales, who quoted his worries that the movie would generate a flood of calls from people who, watching the show, realized they too were abductees. (Berliner got three.) But the real make-or-break moment for his reputation comes in August, with publication of *Crash at Corona*, a book he wrote with a UFO-researching warhorse, Stanton T. Friedman. It deals not with abductions but with alleged saucer crashes in New Mexico in July 1947. One at Corona, N.M., the other at a desert region in the west-central part of the state, the Plains of San Agustin. The first crash is popularly known among UFO researchers as the Roswell Incident, named for the town where the alleged saucer debris was supposedly taken (after the crash) by the covering-up military, which put out the story that it was a crashed weather balloon.

The second is the rub. Going into this in detail is another impossibly inky task, but here are the basics: Some people, Friedman and Berliner among them, believe there was a second crash at the Plains. And that, as in the Ben Vereen scene from *Intruders*, human witnesses saw an ET survivor before officials

made the scene and removed everything. The key witness, Gerald Anderson, was 6 at the time. He told Friedman and Berliner that he and his dad, uncle, brother, and cousin were hunting for rocks when the saucer struck the earth. Running to the site, they found three dead ETs and one who "...was breathing very erratically and its chest was heaving in an unnatural way...."

"Dad and [Uncle] Ted were kneeling down next to this creature that was alive, and Ted was trying to talk to it in Spanish and it wasn't responding. When someone moved suddenly, it would recoil and put its hands up like it was afraid it was going to be hit."

To say that this story is controversial within ufology is like saying that some paleontologists disagree about human origins. The same veteran observer of the UFO scene quoted above (who, for now, wants to stay out of this fracas as well) finds Anderson's story ridiculous. "He reminds me of a guy from the '50s who said a UFO shot at him and burned him."

"Anderson's story does not stand alone," Berliner calmly responded when informed of the blast. "There are a lot of people who have testified to a second crash in the San Agustin area."

Obviously, come August, a lot of blood will flow on the desert floor. —Alex Heard

TIMES, Los Angeles, CA - June 15, 1992 CR: D. Clements

## UFO Sightings

■ In "UFOs Are Real—in Our National Psyche" (Commentary, May 27), Prof. Laurence Goldstein suggests that UFOs are not cosmic but psychic disturbances that coincide with social and economic trouble, the end of the Cold War and the millennium, and the concept of saviors who will solve all our problems. But according to the Mufon UFO Journal of May, 1992, France in 1990 experienced the greatest UFO flap or multiple sightings by well-qualified observers since the wave of 1954. Most of these sightings of brilliant objects have been largely unpublished and are unknown to the reading public. Starting in November, 1989, Belgium has had over 3,500 UFO sightings by highly credible witnesses who live in heavily populated areas. All of this doesn't include the hundreds of sightings and photographs taken by witnesses in Gulf Breeze, Fla., starting in November, 1987, and extending up through the spring of 1992.

It is true that isolated reports of the UFOs do appear on TV programs and in magazines and newspapers. But on the whole, the public doesn't grasp the phenomenal worldwide extent of the UFO sightings over other nations of the world and over America. But Goldstein is right when he urges readers to "keep watching the skies!"

KENNETH LLOYD LARSON  
Los Angeles

# 'I Know This Sounds Crazy; Was It A Flying Saucer?

By Larry Bingham  
Staff Writer

RAEFORD — What is round, orange and as big as a swimming pool? If you know, tell Diane Messing. Because whatever it is — or was — landed in a hay field across from her home during the weekend.

"Sitting in the field was — I know this sounds crazy — but the first thing I could think of was a flying saucer," said Mrs. Messing, 29, who reported the incident to authorities early Saturday.

When six sheriff's deputies came to her trailer on Ranch Road, about three miles west of Raeford, Mrs. Messing had one thing to say.

"I said we don't drink, we don't smoke pot or anything like that. We go to church all the time," recalled Mrs. Messing. "It's funny because I don't believe in that stuff."

Now she isn't so sure.

It was 12:30 Saturday morning when she and her mother first heard something that sounded like a freight train. The trailer rattled as the noise passed overhead.

They ran to the front door, fearing the return of an earlier heavy storm. Or maybe a tornado. Instead, the sky was overcast and the area unusually dark because an outdoor yard light had mysteriously gone off.

And then they saw it, some 300 feet away, in a hay field surrounded by woods: something the size of a swimming pool, maybe 15 feet by 15 feet, but in the shape of a circle.

"It looked like a fire burning in the woods but the more you looked at it, it was like orange windows around it," Mrs. Messing said. "It was like it was just sitting there looking at us and we were looking at it. And it was quiet. That's why I called the police. I didn't know what it was going to do next."

She stumbled for the telephone. Her mother groped for her glasses. When they returned — with telephone and glasses — it was gone. The outdoor light had come back to life, and three lights down

the road had gone out. The police missed it all.

Early the next day, on Saturday, the two women walked to the field and found a circle of grass pressed flat. Nobody bothered to take pictures. Instead, the only evidence they have that anything happened is a mangled front yard where one of the deputies had gotten stuck in the mud.

So, what was it? Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base don't claim the strange aircraft.

As Gail Bennett, a spokesman for Pope, said: "I can't think of anything we do, or any aircraft we would fly, that could even be construed as that."

At the National Weather Service in Raleigh, me-

teorologists reported thunderstorms and lightning — but no UFOs.

"It was there, no matter what anybody says. Something was out there," said Mrs. Messing.

Her mother, Jackie Rijfkegel, 47, adds: "I've never believed it. I mean I've watched the shows on TV. But when you see something yourself, you wonder is there something out there."

"The sad part is when you watch that stuff on TV there's an ending. But when something happens to you in real life, there's no ending," she said. "It leaves you hanging."

ISLANDER, Pensacola Beach, FL - July 10, 1992 CR: E. Walters

## UFO Back From Vacation Craft's Independence Day Show Glows All Around Town

by Bland Pugh

The "Gulf Breeze UFO" seems to have been on vacation over the past few weeks, making appearances on June 27, and again on July 2. Both sightings were in the same vicinity, "Skywatchers" reported the "UFO" simultaneously from the Southwest end of the Three Mile Bridge, and South Shoreline Park, placing the object in the "Bob Sikes" bridge area, and over the sound. The objects appeared white, then turned ruby red, then back to brilliant white before disappearing.

That was a pretty routine sighting report...right? Well here's one that's out of a "Ufologist's Wish Book". Let's set the scene, it's July 4, the sky is crystal clear, stars are out, the evening is warm and balmy, a breeze is blowing from the Southwest over the bay, it's a few minutes after 9:00 p.m., and the fireworks are scheduled to begin at 9:15 p.m. from a barge located just off the Pensacola port facilities. The Beach fireworks show is underway over 6 statute miles to the South Southeast.

Vicki Lyons, MUFON investigator, has just stepped onto her front porch on Cervantes St., Art Hufford, President Pensacola/Gulf Breeze MUFON, is at a gathering at the "Barkley House", Gary Watson, Chief Investigator is at the North end of the Three Mile Bridge near the Marine Patrol Station, Patti Weatherford, MUFON investigator, is at Navy Point with a group of friends, there are approximately 175 to 200 people gathered at the S.W. end of the Three Mile Bridge in Gulf Breeze. Shortly after 9:00 p.m., as if to say "OK folks now that I have an audience, I'll open the fireworks show", and with that the "Gulf Breeze UFO" hovered for 8 minutes over Pensacola Bay in front of thousands. The people at the Southwest end of the bridge cheered, the people at the "Barkley House" were amazed as Art pointed it out, Gary Watson showed it to friends that were visiting from New Orleans, Gary was also wondering if any of the other "Research Team" members were seeing the "UFO". Vicki couldn't believe her eyes, this was her first sighting from her home, as she watched, Vicki looked at her watch, the fireworks would start any second, she

wondered if the pyrotechnics would have any effect on the "UFO", the answer was soon to come...Not In The Least. The object remained stationary above the fireworks show.

Readings were taken from 4 different locations, azimuth and elevation, these readings show that the object was at an elevation of between 7500 and 8000 ft., placing it well above any fireworks. Several aircraft circled above the fireworks show, as the "UFO" hovered above them.

Remember Gary Watson wondering if any of the other "Team" members were seeing the "UFO"? Well let me give you a report from the Beach and my vantage point on the Elk's boat docks. The Pensacola Beach fireworks were great!!! You guessed it...I never turned around, only proving the point I always preach "Keep Looking Up".....and around behind you.

Congratulations are in order for Charles Flannigan Florida State Director of MUFON, and Bruce, and Anne Morrison Field Investigators Pensacola/Gulf Breeze MUFON they

were nominated for an award honoring the person or team deemed most instrumental in advancing the science of Ufology. The MUFON board of directors will announce the results at the July 12, annual symposium in Albuquerque, NM. There are 12 other candidates in the running. The award and plaque are in the name of the late Dan E. Overlade Ph.D.

Visitors continue to come to the area, almost nightly someone tells us they are here just for the "Skywatch", and many tell of detouring 500 to 600 miles to hopefully see the "Gulf Breeze UFO". Even the construction at the S.W. end of the Three Mile Bridge hasn't been a problem to most.

There were 9 sightings for the month of June, as of this writing there have been 52 for the year comparing that to last year, the sightings seem to be right on schedule.

The Hotline continues to receive calls; so if you have had a sighting or have seen any anomalous lights or objects please call 438-3261, and remember to Keep Looking Up....and around behind you.

### Don't be so quick to dismiss crop circles

To the editor:

You ran another crop circle item (May 30, page C-9), "Farmer says crop circles just overblown." Its silly and contradictory content was similar to the previous crop circle item you ran (Sept. 10, 1991), about the two fake circle-makers, Doug and Dave in England (presented to the public in a controlled press conference sponsored by a newspaper with British intelligence service connections, researchers have found).

Apparently, without examining the complex nature of the crop circle phenomenon, you have made an editorial decision to debunk claims by investigators and scientists (including astronomers) who have studied the configurations that an unknown force from above the ground has bent (not broken) every stalk about an inch from the ground in irreproducible layering and weaving patterns (the British army has tried, and failed).

My 12-hour "Crop Circle Mystery" workshop will be offered at Cuesta and Allan Hancock colleges in the fall for those interested in a thorough, calm presentation, and rational analysis of the phenomenon and for those comfortable enough with not over-indulging their denial to take an objective look at what has been appearing in the fields of England for 12 years now.

Steve Canada  
Morro Bay

CR: S. Canada

OBSERVER-TIMES, Fayetteville, NC - July 3, 1992 CR: G. Fawcett

## Hmmm? 'Nobody Believes Us,' Woman Says

By Larry Bingham  
Staff Writer

RAEFORD — Chalk up another unsolved mystery. Diane Messing doesn't buy any of the theories that might explain what she and her mother say they saw that stormy night last week.

So, what was the strange round thing that landed in a deserted field and suddenly disappeared? Was it a UFO? A wayward balloon? A blimp?

"Absolutely not," said Mrs. Messing. "If it was something that accidentally stopped, it would have been here when the police got here. It was just too eerie. It came, sat down, then just left."

Despite that, Wanda Locklear thought she had the whole thing figured out when she read a newspaper article Thursday. Mrs. Locklear saw something, too.

"I do not know this lady, or her mother, or where

they live, or anything, but as I was going to church on Sunday I saw this orange and yellow balloon had landed," said Mrs. Locklear, who runs a day-care center in Raeford.

The balloon had dropped near the Antioch Fire Department on N.C. 211, not so many miles south of where Mrs. Messing reported her sighting the day before.

"It was so beautiful, and all the cars had stopped," she said. "But I was running late for church so I couldn't stop." The way she figures it, the balloon matched the colors Mrs. Messing described.

"I don't think so," said Jackie Rijfkegel, Mrs. Messing's mother. For example, a hot-air balloon does not sound like a freight train. And besides, it would not have rocked the trailer or caused outdoor lights to mysteriously blink off as it passed, she said.

The control tower at Fayetteville's airport had another solution:

Maybe the blimp that got away in Bladenboro had landed.

Richard Bryan was celebrating the first-year anniversary of his store, Bryan's Supermarket on N.C. 211, and to announce a great deal on Pepsis, he rented a blimp. But the bright red blimp snapped a line and floated north one afternoon.

The only problem with that theory is the blimp got away on Tuesday — three days too late. But if you see the blimp, Mr. Bryan is offering a \$50 reward.

"That was \$350 that just floated away," he said. "I wish the wind would shift and it would come back to us. Then we'd really have a story, wouldn't we?"

Meanwhile, up the road on N.C. 211, Mrs. Messing wonders.

"I wish you could have seen it," she says. "It was so scary at the time but now it's exciting. We sit around between 12:30 and 1 and hope it will come back. Nobody believes us."





## FOREIGN NEWS

NEWS, Shepparton, Victoria, Australia - May 15, 1992 CR: P. Norman

### UFO probe of Goulburn Valley sightings to continue

UFO researcher Paul Norman's investigations in unusual lights sighted around the Goulburn Valley are expected to continue into the weekend.

Yesterday Mr Norman, from the Victorian UFO Research Society (VUFORS) continued to speak with people who reported encounters during a two day phone-in at Shepparton earlier this week.

Since then there has been "chain-

reaction" of information channelled to him, drawing a two-day visit into a week. All the so-far inexplicable cases have been marked by a lack of noise from lights which sometimes moved erratically.

On Wednesday Mr Norman spoke to Leo and Nola Jones, who saw two ribbons of solid orange light across Waranga Basin on Sunday, May 3.

"It couldn't have been flares," he said, referring to army exercises being held at the Puckapunyal Army Base

that week. "It was rectangular, with sharp edges."

Mr and Mrs Jones looked out their back door, which faces onto Waranga Basin, at 8 pm on May 5 and saw two separate lights, which originated from two small orange balls above the water surface.

The Jones' said the lights stopped about 300 m from their back fence — "they were so close, it was like you could walk out and touch them".

Both lights instantly disappeared

when Mrs Jones' camera flash went off as she attempted to catch the phenomena.

Mr Norman said VUFORS would attempt to have a spectrum analysis done of the Jones' photograph through scientists in the United States.

Examples of similar beams of orange, yellow or blue light in the Goulburn and Murray Valleys have been reported to VUFORS since 1971, when an encounter was reported at Gunbower, west of Echuca.

Another report was also made by a farming family in the same area in 1977. Last Sunday a report of a sharp-edged beam of light was also reportedly seen near Mt Major, Dookie.

Another major sighting, by the Matthews family on May 6 was not a army helicopter, Mr Norman said.

Mr Chris Matthews saw a conical object with orange and pale blue lights near his Cooma farm on the night of May 6. His brother Mark also saw a light in the sky at the same time.

BRIDPORT NEWS, Dorset, England - May 15, 1992 CR: T. Good

### UFO spotters recipients of 'strange calls'

TWO BRIDPORT men who say they spotted a UFO claim they have received anonymous phone calls warning them not to investigate their sighting.

But Mike Sturt (37) and Lee Brown (23), who caught three unidentified objects on film in February from a vantage point on Eggardon Hill, say they won't be put off trying to find out what they really saw.

The photo has since prompted an investigation into their claims by BUFORA — the British UFO Research Association.

Mike, who claimed he and Lee had received three calls linked to their sighting in the past two weeks, said: "Out of the blue, we both had strange phone calls."

"The callers never identified themselves. "But they did say that if we continued to pursue our sighting things would not be good for us. Then they just hung up."

#### Investigations

BUFORA, who investigate 400 to 500 reported UFO sightings in Britain and Northern Ireland every year, are very interested in Mike and Lee's claims.

Jenny Randles, BUFORA's director of investigations, said: "About 95 per cent of sightings do have conventional explanations but the other five per cent usually remain a mystery even after we have followed them up."

Local police confirmed at the time of the Eggardon Hill incident that no military low level flying was scheduled to have taken place over the Bridport area when Mike and Lee say they saw the UFO.

EXPRESS & STAR, Wolverhampton, England - May 12, 1992 CR: T. Good

### Are we all hooked on hi-tech fairytales?

By PETER RHODES

THE scenario is familiar. A perfectly ordinary person going about some workaday task is suddenly confronted by a flying saucer.

He is abducted and undergoes some weird and inexplicable experience before being returned, unharmed, to normality.

To UFO buffs, such close encounters are proof positive of a higher intelligence patrolling the skies and keeping watch over puny earthlings.

To David Morris, author of a fascinating new book, the classic UFO-abduction, with its progression from normal to abnormal and back again, follows the same formula as the fairy tale throughout the ages.

Morris, a lecturer at Dudley College of Technology, does not question the phenomena themselves: What he challenges is their "techno-occult" interpretation.

#### Believers

The occult has always been with us. Morris traces today's fascination with UFOs and crop circles to the ouija-board spiritualism of the 19th century and the witch-hunt mania of the Middle Ages.

Every time, he says, believers claimed that supernatural forces were at work. And yet the physical effects were tiny, banal and illogical.

Witches were accused of petty offences such as making cattle sick. Mediums invariably conjured up dull, insignificant messages. UFOs left only the most trivial traces.

As for crop circles, he argues, if gigantic intelligences are involved, why do they waste their time making elaborate designs in cornfields?

"There is this basic feeling among human beings that there has to be something more than this," says Morris, who lectures in history and media studies and describes himself as an agnostic.

"There is a constant need for something to worry about, coupled with the belief that somehow we can be saved."

He argues that humans mould things to fit their own fears and their own idea of technology.

Thus, UFOs were described in the 19th century as slow-moving airships. By the 1930s they had become secret monoplanes. After the Second World War they were flying saucers, the products of some fantastically advanced alien technology.

According to Morris, the post-war flying-saucer mania in the United States mirrored America's sudden terror over advances in Russian atom bombs and the paranoia about Communist infiltration.

Flying saucers were the half-glimpsed evidence of a superior intelligence which might somehow save them from nuclear holocaust.

As the Soviet threat diminished and environmental concerns took over, so the UFO story changed. In today's accounts, extra-terrestrials warn us about the dangers of global poisoning.

The lure of techno-occultism cannot be denied. Erich von Daniken, world famous author of *Chariots of the Gods* sold 13 million books in two years.

It hardly matters that conventional scientists have rubbishied von Daniken's work. For the theory that God was an astronaut is not rooted in real science, says Morris. It can be traced to occult beliefs such as those of the 19th century Theosophists who mixed religion with science and believed that Lucifer, not God, was the bringer of light to mankind.

So the more scorn that conventional science pours on UFOs, crop circles or witchcraft, the more convinced the believers become that the establishment is covering-up the real truth.

With current concerns over pollution and an unstable post Cold War world, the time is right, says Morris, for another rash of techno-occult phenomena.

#### Detected

So what next? Already, some pundits are speculating that the world is long overdue for a collision with a massive meteorite.

In David Morris's theory, it does not matter that no such meteorite has been detected. What matters is that it fits the age-old bill.

It provides a metaphor for our own anxieties and powerlessness and it offers hope that, somehow, some of us will be saved.

● The Masks of Lucifer is published by Batsford at £17.99.

ADVERTISER, Andover, England - May 8, 1992 CR: T. Good

### Mystery veils Charlton lake sightings

MYSTERIOUS objects and lights over Charlton lakes are the latest development that Busty Taylor, one of the country's top investigators into corn circles, is attempting to unravel.

The Andover-based investigator says he has known for a long time that there is 'something special' about Charlton and Anton Lakes, and at a recent lecture in the village, members of his audience revealed sightings of small objects over the water.

Busty goes to America at the end of the month to attend an important seminar on UFOs and other unexplained phenomena, and wants to compile the fullest report possible on the Charlton sightings.

He would like residents with experiences to relate to phone him urgently on Andover 324496.

"All reports will be treated in the strictest confidence," he says.

"I cannot emphasise how important it is that I get the fullest information

by Ann Shaw

possible on these local sightings."

On his return from the States he will be involved in ground and air

investigations of the corn circles, working alongside Colin Andrews, Andover's other expert.

Busty Taylor's particular area of investigation will centre on Avebury in Wiltshire.

GAZETTE, Eastbourne, England - May 13, 1992 CR: T. Good

### WAS IT A PLANE?

'I DON'T believe in UFOs or ghosts,' says Gazette photographer Justin Lycett.

But he is unable to offer any alternative explanation for a strange phenomenon which left him 'shaken and scared'.

It happened while driving into Eastbourne with friend Steve Hazelgrove in the car.

It was 10.20pm and they had just gone through the traffic lights at Polegate and were approaching Willington on the A22.

Justin said, 'I noticed a red flashing light in the sky on the Downs side of the road and as I drove I saw the silhouette of a plane.'

'It was very low and I thought perhaps it was in trouble.'

'I told my friend to

look and he saw the flashing light. We pulled into a bus stop near the new garage to have a look.'

'I could see the outline of the plane — it was a DC9 or BAC111 — just above the skyline of the Downs at Butts Brow. It was getting lower and lower but there was no noise. I was convinced it was going to crash.'

'Then the nose pulled up and it turned towards us. I just put my foot down. I thought it was going to hit us.'

'We stopped near Church Street and looked back but there was nothing. We even drove around searching but found nothing.'

'There were no aerials or anything around with red lights on. My hands were shaking. We were both a bit scared.'

Police told the Gazette they had no record of any reported sightings of low-flying aircraft on the night in question, Friday May 1.

And author Cecile Woodford, who lives in the area of the sighting, said she too had heard no reports of low flying aircraft.

She did offer one clue, however.

Over a year ago she spotted an object she believed to be a UFO in the night skies above Willington and after her story appeared in the Gazette was contacted by a UFO society.

It stated that among the most common shapes it recognised as genuine UFO sightings were... aeroplanes.

SWINDON EVENING ADVERTISER, Wiltshire, England - April 25, 1992 CR: T. Good

### New theory amid aliens' corn circles

A LEADING UFO investigator today called for more research into what she claimed could be a "hidden invasion" by sophisticated aliens.

Jenny Randles, the country's only full-time UFO researcher, said phenomena such as corn circles could be part of a "glant intelligence test" set by an alien power to study our reactions.

#### More comprehensive research required

She said people who believed they had sighted flying saucers and creatures from outer space could instead be having their minds probed from afar.

They believed they had sighted UFOs only because science fiction had left them impressionable to conventional images.

Miss Randles, director of investigations for the British UFO Research Association, told a conference of international UFO experts in Manchester that research should be more comprehensive.



The circles... an IQ test?

## COLUMN

## One

**C**AROL HAYES and her husband Chris of Squamish were "still in shock" the day after it happened. (No, "it" wasn't Nicole Parton's recent Sun column slugging the town).

On a clear night earlier this week Chris, 34, who is interested in astronomy, and Carol, 29, left son James, 4, sleeping to go outside their house to look for satellites.

"We were looking at the Big Dipper and we saw it come from there; glide across the sky really slow. Chris said 'there's a satellite' then 'that's not a satellite!'"

"It was huge and it was surrounded by an orange glow. It went north toward Whistler. We went inside to separate rooms and drew pictures of what we'd seen. They were identical."

The UFO sighting is a nice segue into International Astronomy Day on Saturday. There is a host of free activities at the MacMillan Planetarium and Southam Observatory.



□ Jenny Randles



□ UFO spotter - a Boeing 737

# UFO near-miss scare baffles the scientists

SCIENTISTS were last night baffled by a dramatic close encounter between a holiday airliner and a UFO, 14,000 ft over southern England.

The Britannia Airways Boeing 737 came within feet of the mysterious lozenge-shaped object as it descended towards Gatwick, according to an official Civil Aviation Authority report.

Experts from the British UFO Research Association also investigated the incident and ruled out any possibility of the object being another aircraft, weather balloon, or missile.

And last night, experts at the Meteorological Office, Cheshire's Jodrell Bank Observatory and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) remained mystified by the incident.

BUFORA's chief investigator, Jenny Randles, of Cheshire, said: "This was a classic close encounter with a UFO."

"Alien life forms are an extreme hypothesis but if we find we are dealing with advanced intelligences, that would be a discovery of earth-shattering importance."

"People tend to dismiss reports of UFOs, but when they came as close as this one did to causing a major accident then they have to be treated seriously."

Margaret Fry, BUFORA's chief investigator for Wales, added, from her home in Llangernyw, near Llanwrst: "I definitely believe that this was extra-terrestrial. It was clearly not a weather balloon."

The aircraft was travelling at 355 knots when the pilot spotted "a black lozenge-like object" 500 metres ahead at the same level.

According to a CAA air-miss report, the object passed only 30ft above the wing of the aircraft which was flying in from Crete last summer.

A CAA spokesman tried to dampen speculation that the airliner may have been in contact with extra-terrestrials.

He said: "It's exciting to

think it might have been something from outer space but it was probably a balloon."

"Balloonists often send up smaller balloons to test weather conditions. It may well have been something like that."

But a spokesman in the central forecasting room at the Meteorological Office said the object was at the wrong height and the wrong colour to be a balloon.

"A cloud-based balloon would only reach 6,000ft. It

would never reach the height of the plane. It would be an orange/red colour, not black."

A spokesman at the Jodrell Bank Observatory, in Cheshire, agreed. "It doesn't fit the description of a balloon," he said.

A NASA spokeswoman in Washington also confessed to being baffled.

Miss Randles said: "We looked at all the usual possibilities, such as weather balloons, other aircraft or optical illusions. At first we thought it might have been a missile but that was ruled out too."

In the "lozenge" air-miss report, the Britannia crew said that after the initial sighting "within the space of 1.5 seconds it passed very close, less than 100 yards away, down the port side of the aircraft, and only 30 feet above the wing".

The crew immediately reported their sighting to London air controllers, who spotted a small primary radar contact behind the 737.

The air-miss working party said a black weather balloon had been released that day but it was not thought to have been able to reach such a high altitude.

By Ian Herbert

Daily Post Staff

## My encounter with midnight UFO

STANDARD, Chatham, England  
May 5, 1992 CR: T. Good

### RAINHAM GRANDMOTHER THOUGHT GIANT CRAFT WAS PART OF AN ALIEN INVASION

IT CAME out of the sky like a great white light. It was unidentified, flying and Rainham grandmother Elsie Bassett-Burr thinks it contained aliens.

The giant craft — "it was the size of an aeroplane" — hovered over Herbert Road at midnight on Tuesday. "I thought we were being invaded," said 52-year-old Elsie.

"Admittedly I had two drinks, Bacardi and cokes, but they were weak ones and I saw what I saw," she said.

Elsie had been drawing her bedroom curtains when she spotted the suspected UFO. "It was round like a wheel

and it had spikes. It had at least 100 lights, all white. I was not scared. I was just excited," she said.

"I believe in these things. I believe there are space ships everywhere. There could be another world somewhere. The first thing I thought was we were being invaded by aliens. I am not a crank."

She hopes other residents who saw the strange flash of lights will come forward. She said it was heading south from the River Medway.

Police said they were not aware of any more reported sightings.



Close encounter: Elsie Bassett-Burr.

CY1065/4

TIMES, London, England  
May 19, 1992 CR: T. Good

## Earth moves in an extra-terrestrial way

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN NEW YORK

When it comes to studying space, American universities have notched up a fine record, but eyebrows are being raised over the latest enthusiasm of a handful of academics: the abduction of earthlings by extra-terrestrial aliens.

At issue is the question whether a Harvard psychiatrist and professors from Philadelphia and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have taken leave of their ivory towers in giving credence to the belief, shared by thousands of Americans, that flying saucers have visited their suburbs and beamed them on board, often for some intergalactic hanky-panky.

John Mack, of Harvard Medical School, David Jacobs, a historian from Temple University, and David Pritchard, a physicist at MIT, are the most prominent among a group which thinks there must be more than fantasy behind the extraordinarily similar accounts of alien kidnapping given by citizens from all backgrounds, races and professions. The most celebrated report came from Michael Shea, a government lawyer in Washington. According to reputable surveys, about one in every 50 Americans thinks they have received the attentions of visiting aliens.

By curious coincidence, the aliens are usually described as diminutive, big-headed, dish-eyed, smooth-skinned creatures who arrive in beams of intense light. But going beyond this stereotype, the accounts usually feature some form of physical examination in a cosmic operating theatre. This often involves sexual manipulation, with women saying

they had been impregnated and men saying their semen had been extracted.

Dr Mack, who featured last weekend in fictional form in a CBS television drama, is organising an abduction conference in Massachusetts next month. Mr Jacobs, who teaches a university course called "UFOs in US Society", has been promoting on TV his book *Secret Life: Firsthand Accounts of UFO Abductions*. He believes the aliens are engaged in "a programme of systematic exploitation of one species over another, in which people are mined — or farmed, if you will — over and over and over again, over the course of their lives, from infancy to adulthood."

Dr Mack, who has helped 40 patients overcome abduction trauma, says he retains an open mind and cannot dismiss the phenomenon. "I don't have an explanation. But I know they've undergone a powerful sense of being intruded upon and traumatised," he said recently. Mr Pritchard said in *The Wall Street Journal* last week that the CBS mini-series could prompt a mass recall of alien experience. "I think it's a disaster in the making," he said.

Critics, who come from the "orthodox" wing of the UFO fraternity as well as the medical profession, say there are simple explanations. All the "abducted" recall the details of their experiences under hypnosis. They are probably mingling personal trauma, usually abuse during childhood, with Hollywood-born fantasies suggested by their questioner.

NEW ZEALAND HERALD, Auckland, New Zealand - Feb. 26, 1992 CR: R. Collins

## Circle hoax pair own up

NZPA Ashburton Agricultural contractors, not UFOs, are the perpetrators of mysterious crop circles which have appeared in mid-Canterbury grain paddocks over the past month.

Mr David Harrison and Mr Randal Hanrahan, of Fairton, have publicly owned up to the hoax.

"We had nothing better to do on a Tuesday night," Mr Harrison said.

Three circles were made by the pair at weekly intervals.

Armed with a ski pole, a piece of string and two lengths of board nailed together in a T-shape, the pranksters made their mark in the failing twilight.

Only two of the three circles were found.

A crudely made fourth circle found in silage oats over Methven was a copycat, they claim.

They entered crops by walking along undrilled lines left in the crop for spray vehicles.

Mr Hanrahan held on to the ski pole which acted as a pivot with the string attached to the upside-down T-shaped board.

Mr Harrison then stomped the board around in an anti-clockwise direction. It took about 30 minutes to make each circle.

The culprits were finally tracked down after persistent inquiries around Ashburton by local newspapers.

Mr Hanrahan was a common name put forward by several sources. Mr Harrison was also known to have returned recently from Britain, where crop circles first appeared. He owned up to the hoax and agreed to demonstrate how the circles were made.

The men said they always intended to tell the wheat-farmers at a later date.

"We were going to get them all together and buy them a beer," Mr Harrison said.

Yet despite the cover of darkness they were not alone during their escapades.

"The first one we did [in the Blackford area] there was a header going in the next-door paddock," Mr Hanrahan said.

At the second site, many cars passed "and it took a lot to get into the paddock."

The third circle was made near the Ashburton airport to ensure it was sighted.

Before mid-Canterbury's harvest season, Mr Harrison had been working for silage contractors which allowed him to choose accessible and visible sites.

A Methven farmer who found the first circle, Mr Ray McIntosh, said he was pleased the mystery had been solved.

"It was a good piece of clean fun which put mid-Canterbury on the map. I'm pleased it has gone the full circle."

The farmer whose property the first circle was on, Mr Graham Robertson, said he was intrigued and amused by the escapade.

"The guys should be congratulated for an excellent job."

But not all the "victims" were admirers. One farmer had threatened to "flatten" the culprits if he discovered who they were.

Crop circles found in Britain have raised speculation of extra-terrestrial beings.

Mid-Canterbury's circles drew interest from around New Zealand and overseas, with an Australian magazine offering to buy Mr McIntosh's photographs for several hundred dollars.





## Potpourri of unusual ideas found in Eclectic Viewpoint

By WENDY WEGREN  
Staff writer

What do the assassination of John F. Kennedy, NutraSweet and the Ark of the Covenant all have in common?

They have all been past topics of The Eclectic Viewpoint lecture series.

Cheyenne Turner, director of The Eclectic Viewpoint, brings in various speakers on diverse science and phenomena issues.

Turner, a Plano resident, has always had an interest in science. She is a former research biologist and has taught science in high school.

"I have a very scientific background," she said.

Turner would discover various issues and speakers that interested her when she traveled.

"I go to a lot of conferences around the country and I would meet so many interesting people who were doing research on so many unusual things, things that were not mainstream science," she said.

Turner remembers thinking, "Oh, I'd give anything for people to be able to hear this locally," she said.

So she started The Eclectic Viewpoint on her own, to bring in these various speakers for people to hear.

Turner pays the airfare, hotel and meal bills of her speakers. She also has to book a place for the lecture, which can take a lot of time to find and can be expensive.

She also produces a newsletter about the lectures, which she writes and mails out at her own expense.

Sometimes Turner would wonder

if her effort was worth all of her hard work, but then she would get letters supporting her cause.

"I would get incredible letters thanking me for doing this," she said. "People would say, 'I didn't know somebody else had all of these different interests.'"

Bringing these various issues to the attention of the public is Turner's goal.

"I don't bring anyone in for entertainment," she said. "I'm trying to educate people in a variety of issues and shake up their thinking."

Turner hopes that the lectures will help people make more rational decisions about an issue and hear different viewpoints about it as well.

"I don't always agree with the speakers, but at least I'm getting a different perspective on the issue," she said.

Turner is very excited about her next lecture, which is about the monuments of Mars.

Richard Hoagland will present his findings about the photographs that were taken from Mars from the Viking orbiter in 1976.

Turner said that Hoagland has addressed the United Nations on his findings and has served as an advisor to Walter Cronkite for the Apollo Moon Program. He also co-wrote the first interstellar message for the Pioneer 10 mission.

"I feel that the most important message that he has is about the future of our planet," Turner said.

She said that Hoagland will discuss the mathematical concepts that are encoded in the pyramids on Mars and how this relates to finding a free form of energy on the planet.

POST-HERALD, Birmingham, AL - April 10, 1992 CR: M. Freeman

## Constant calls bad as Hueytown hum

By Nancy Bereckis  
Post-Herald Reporter

Hueytown residents are saying bah-HUM-bug to the annoying HUMdrum of attention being paid to the low-decibel noise emitting throughout their town.

In fact, they've lost their sense of HUMor.

And they're sick of stupid HUM jokes.

All they want is the noise that has been bothering them for the past five months to stop. They also wouldn't mind if the dozens of local and national reporters who have been churning out cute hum stories ad nauseam would go away. Yesterday, a New York Times reporter visited.

"I wish everyone would just mind their own business," Hueytown city attorney John Ennis said.

Ennis yesterday talked with Jim Walter Resources Inc. officials, who promised to bring a sound specialist to Hueytown to find the exact source of the hum.

Many residents of the southwest Jefferson County suburb — including Mayor Lillian Howard — are convinced the hum is coming from a ventilation fan at the mining company's No. 3 mine.

But since the fan is on 24 hours a day, and residents complain of the hum only at certain times — mostly at night — the noise could be caused by both the fan and perhaps weather conditions, such as the wind, Ennis said. Or the hum may be coming from a

**'I wish everyone would just mind their own business.'**

— John Ennis,  
Hueytown city attorney

combination of a Jim Walter fan and a fan from another mine.

"We will take care of this problem," said Mayor Howard, a normally bubbly woman who admitted becoming a bit cranky from having to field hundreds of phone calls from people offering theories about the hum's origin.

"We are under a moral obligation to solve this problem. But we're not going to spend \$50,000 solving a Jim Walter problem," she said. Then, regaining her Southern manners, she added: "Could you please soften that up a bit so I don't sound so angry?"

Ennis said he is confident Jim Walter officials eventually will silence the hum.

Meanwhile, he asked that residents be patient. Ennis wants anyone who believes he knows where the hum is coming from or has some sort of "hum-finding" service they want to sell the city to stop calling.

"If you would put in your newspaper to tell all these yahoos to quit calling, I would really appreciate it," Ennis said. "All these crank calls are diverting us from stopping the noise."

## Loch might yield its mysteries

BPA London  
Loch Ness may yield up its secrets next month when Britain's top freshwater scientists launch an intensive study.

In 1903 an underwater survey of Loch Ness was carried out from a rowing boat using a lead weight and piano wire. This time the 150-tonne MV Simrad, equipped with an array of the most modern sonar technology, will map the depths.

The scientists have been brought together by Project Urquart, named after Urquart Castle on the banks of the loch. The consortium includes the Natural History Museum and the Freshwater Biological Association.

It also has the support of the National Museums of Scotland, the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, the Society for Underwater Technology and the approval of the Royal Geographical Society in London.

None of the scientists made direct reference to Nessie, the loch's most famous denizen of the deep.

However, Professor Colin Curds, keeper of zoology at the Natural History Museum, said it was highly likely that species new to science would be discovered in Loch Ness.

CR: R. Collins

## 'Bigfoot' makes enormous impression

For years the people of Flintville, Tenn., a quiet little farming community nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian range, have been bothered by a giant, hairy creature that seems to enjoy attacking automobiles and trying to snatch little children.

Locals call the creature "Bigfoot" because of the enormous footprints it leaves behind and because of its uncanny resemblance to the more famous behemoth many people believe inhabits remote regions of the Pacific Northwest.

Exactly what the Flintville monster is or where it came from remains a mystery, but more than two decades of sightings and terrifying encounters have left a lot of folks convinced the thing is more than just real.

Some say it's dangerous.

"That thing's so big it could easily hurt somebody," complained one local farmer. "Who knows how many head of our livestock have gone missing because of it?"

So far no one has been hurt by the Flintville monster, which often leaves behind 16-inch footprints along with a foul, "skunk-like" odor. But there have been a few close calls.

Like the man who claimed that a "seven-foot tall hairy monster" chased him through the woods, howling and screeching at him like an ape.

And the woman whose car was attacked by the same kind of creature while she hid in the floorboard.

On at least one occasion, a child was nearly kidnapped by a thing with long, hairy arms.

The trouble began back in April 1976 when a woman told police a "giant, hairy monster" broke her automobile antenna then jumped onto the roof of her car and started bouncing up and down. As soon as the woman's story made headlines, other citizens stepped forth to describe similar encounters with Bigfoot-like beasts.

Of all the stories, however, none can match the near-tragic drama related by Mrs. Jennie Robertson.

On April 26, 1976, Mrs. Robertson's 4-year-old son, Gary, was outside playing in the yard when his mother heard him suddenly scream. It was late afternoon, Mrs. Robertson recalled, near sundown, and a cool afternoon breeze floated in from the woods across from her yard.

When she ran outside to investigate, she became conscious of a foul odor that reminded her of a skunk or "dead rats." Then she saw it — a huge, ape-like figure loping around the corner of the house.



E. Randall Floyd

### SOUTHERN MYSTERIES

"It was seven or eight feet tall," she told investigators, "and seemed to be all covered with hair. It reached out its long, hairy arms toward Gary and came within a few inches of him."

Seconds before the shaggy beast encircled the child with its arms, however, the terrified mother snatched up the boy, darted inside the house and locked the doors. When she got up her courage to look out the window she saw a "big, black shape disappearing into the woods."

The first thing she did was pick up the phone and call her neighbor.

Then she called the police. Within minutes half a dozen men armed with shotguns and rifles surrounded her house, searching for clues to the mysterious animal's whereabouts.

One and all, they resolved to track down the brutish thing that had nearly captured little Gary Robertson. It was obviously the same creature that had been rampaging through the community for months, breaking automobile windshields, beating on the side of houses and filling the night air with blood-curdling shrieks.

All night long relay teams of hunters combed the rugged woods on the outskirts of town, guns at the ready, eyes and ears keenly attuned to the shifting shadows and strange noises of the swamp. Several times they thought they heard the monster, grunting and snorting at them from behind bushes, and several times they opened fire.

With each onslaught of bullets, the monster would issue a high-pitched squeal. Instead of falling, however, the enraged beast threw rocks at its attackers before bounding away into the brush.

The next day more than 16-inch footprints were found, as well as hair, blood and mucus. The hair was scientifically analyzed but could not be identified.

Throughout the South, from Arkansas to Virginia, reports of Bigfoot-like monsters continue to trickle in across the desks of law enforcement officers and park rangers. The vast majority of these sightings can be dismissed as hoaxes, of course, or illusions triggered by poor visibility or unsteady imaginations.

But a few — like the so-called Flintville monster — cannot be explained away so easily.

Randall Floyd is a syndicated writer who lives in Augusta, Ga.

JAPAN TIMES, Tokyo, Japan - April 7, 1992

## 'Forest monster' found in Russia

MOSCOW (Reuter-Kyodo) A journalist in northern Russia said Sunday he had discovered the remains of a huge "forest monster" that climbed trees and lived off bark, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported.

Vyacheslav Oparin, writing in the Petrozavodsk newspaper, said people in the Karelia region often had seen footprints of the animal, which they called an abominable snowman.

But he said it was obvious from the remains of a giant specimen he found that the animal lived off bark and should therefore be called a "forest monster" or "tree eater."

"Scientists were shocked by my discovery," Oparin added. Russians are notoriously superstitious and newspapers often publish reports about abominable snowmen and flying saucers.

CR: Y. Matsumura

# Pa. hot line helps ease mind for those spotting a UFO or Bigfoot

By STEVE GOLDSTEIN  
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

## OFFBEAT

PHILADELPHIA — The magazine ad says simply: "Encounters with Bigfoot, whether old or recent, can be reported in confidence to experienced researchers."

A phone number follows. No, it isn't (800) BIG-FOOT.

People who call the number often sigh with relief after a few seconds; the person at the other end is not falling down with laughter over the success of the prank.

Got a tale to tell about a close encounter of the beast kind? Or about a UFO sighting? Relief is as handy as the nearest phone.

Simply dial the hot line for the Hairy One, a.k.a. Bigfoot, Sasquatch, Yeti or Alma, as the Russians call the legendary creature.

At the other end is the Pennsylvania Center for UFO Research, a repository of information about unexplained physical phenomena.

Sightings of Bigfoot abound, especially in the western part of the state. The problem, researchers say, has been getting witnesses to confess their experiences.

"People who see these things don't want to talk about them," said Paul G. Johnson, the center's director. "They're

afraid of the publicity or being laughed at."

"We end up acting like psychologists," he said.

Johnson, 48, is the leader of the center's "cryptozoological study group," which collects and analyzes exploits of these semi-mythical creatures. The group recorded 101 Pennsylvania Bigfoot reports from 1980 through 1989.

Bigfoot has been spotted in pairs (Bigfeet?), in family groups (Littlefeet?) and even swimming in ponds.

July and August are the big months for creature sightings, the reports show, perhaps because there are more people hiking through the woods.

Johnson is a chemistry professor at a major university in Pittsburgh that, he says, would rather not have its name used because "they get a little testy" about being linked with the missing link.

Perhaps it's the same feeling most callers have as they dial (800) 322-8360.

The callers usually begin: This is going to sound (pick one) — a) stupid b) crazy c) incredible d) all of the above.

Then the person at the other end of the line says, "We're here to help."

Johnson said: "We try to sense the

relief in the person's voice. It's one of the guideposts we use to tell whether someone is hoaxing."

The group has been running advertisements about the year-old hotline in Pennsylvania Woods & Waters magazine, local newspapers and shoppers' guides.

The supportive person at the other end of the line is Joan Jeffers of Bradford, Pa., a former nurse. Now disabled, Jeffers, 59, has a fascination with creatures that dates back to her childhood years.

In 1975, Jeffers said, she and a friend had a nighttime encounter with a pair of creatures north of Pittsburgh while they were following up on a report by a police officer, who said he saw something huge cross a road with a small deer slung over its shoulder.

By Jeffers' account and others, Bigfoot is 7 to 12 feet tall, weighs as much as 1,000 pounds and has broad shoulders, almost no neck, knee-length arms and dark black hair covering its body.

It walks erect on two big feet, which are 13 to 22 inches long and 6 to 9 inches wide.

That's a 23 EEEEE, according to

Flocco's Discount Shoes in Conshohocken, Pa., which specializes in hard-to-fit sizes.

Bigfoot-watchers believe the creature is a descendant of the ape-like gigantopithecus, which is believed to have lived half a million years ago.

Many anthropologists discount this theory, saying they don't think such a creature has survived and that this species of ape was not as massive as the purported Bigfoot.

Sasquatch means "smelly ape" in an American Indian dialect. Reports usually confirm that the creature has a body-odor problem.

Johnson often visits the sites of reported encounters to search for footprints or other evidence. He is waiting for more information on a reported sighting late last month near the village of Derry.

The village lies at the base of Chestnut Ridge, a part of the Allegheny Mountain foothills where numerous sightings have allegedly occurred.

Aroused by the barking of his dogs, the witness caught the creature in his flashlight beam at about midnight and, although he had a gun, decided not to shoot.

"He felt it had a human aspect," said Johnson.

There are other reasons witnesses don't pursue their brushes with Bigfoot.

## or Bigfoot

"If you encountered something 9 feet tall and hairy with canine teeth, how close would you want to be?" asked Jeffers.

In 1985, she and Johnson published a 100-page book called "The Pennsylvania Bigfoot," but the tome, like its subject, is hard to find.

Johnson said he was convinced the creature exists but not sure what it is — just as he isn't certain about the nature of UFOs.

TIMES, New York, NY - June 27, 1992 CR: E. Rager

# The Case of the Missing Pharaoh

By John Anthony West

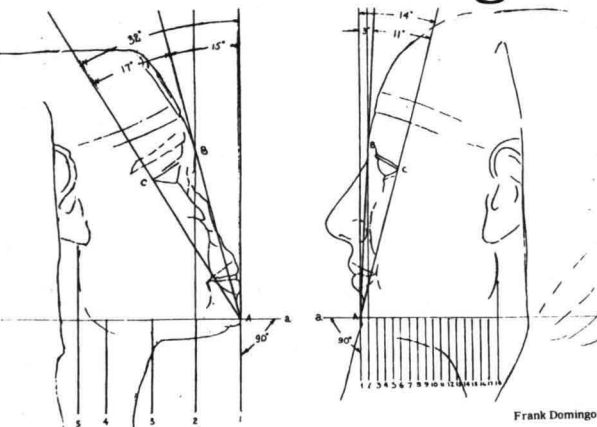
SAUGERTIES, N.Y. — he police seldom work on a subtle but critical crime of scholarship. But a New York City detective's forensic art apparently has exposed a case of academic malpractice. His work lends credence to theory that the Sphinx is thousands of years older than Egyptologists and archeologists think. If it is, we must radically revise our ideas about ancient civilization before the rise of the Egyptian culture about 3000 B.C.

Egyptologists insist that the Sphinx of Giza was built about 2500 B.C. by an Old Kingdom pharaoh, Chephren (or Khafre). But a Boston University geologist, Dr. Robert M. Schoch, argues that, at a minimum, a civilization that preceded the pharaohs built the limestone Sphinx between 5000 and 7000 B.C. and he suggests that Chephren did further work on it.

He thinks rain caused the extensive weathering on the Sphinx. Many nearby Old Kingdom structures built from the identical limestone do not show such weathering; the inescapable conclusion is that the Sphinx was hewn earlier than they were, when the climate was far wetter.

Dr. Thomas L. Dobecki, a geophysicist with a Houston seismic surveying company, strengthened this theory.

John Anthony West, a proponent of the hypothesis that the Sphinx is older than scholars think, is author of "The Traveler's Key to Ancient Egypt."



The Sphinx

Museum statue

## Just how old is the Sphinx?

His analysis of sound waves that penetrated the subsurface limestone of the floor around the Sphinx showed that the front and sides are twice as weathered as the rear; this suggests the rear was carved out of the bedrock much later than the other sides.

The belief that Chephren built the Sphinx is based upon purely circumstantial evidence and unproved assumptions. The most cherished is a fancied resemblance between the

Sphinx's ravaged face and the face of Chephren perfectly preserved in a magnificent statue in the Cairo Museum. Only Egyptologists think the Sphinx looks like Chephren; but since resemblance, like beauty, may be in the eye of the beholder, revisionists felt no need to challenge the resemblance until it was "proved."

Using computer graphics, Dr. Mark Lehner, a University of Chicago Egyptologist, reconstructed the ruined face of the Sphinx as part of a three-dimensional model of the Sphinx as it appears today. He concluded that its facial features were originally Chephren's, as traditional Egyptologists believe. But since he used the museum's Chephren as his model — it made the 3-D Sphinx

"come alive," he wrote — his "proof" is a technological tautology. This circular logic can be used to "prove" the Sphinx was Elvis Presley.

Last fall, Detective Frank Domingo, the New York Police Department's senior forensic artist, traveled to Egypt with a Sphinx team I assembled. He carefully measured the Chephren statue and directed the photographer to get exact profile and full-face views of the Sphinx.

Despite the damage to the Sphinx's face, the statue and the Sphinx share enough undamaged reference points for Mr. Domingo to compare their facial structures. Using his police procedures, he produced an artist's impression of the Sphinx as it might have looked originally.

His report concludes: "After reviewing my various drawings, schematics and measurements, my final conclusion concurs with my initial reaction: the two works represent two separate individuals. The proportions in the frontal view and especially the angles and facial protrusion of the lateral views convinced me that the Sphinx is not Chephren. If the ancient Egyptians were skilled technicians and capable of duplicating images, then these two works cannot represent the same individual."

Profound technical knowledge went into building the Sphinx and adjacent temples. If the revisionist theory is correct, this implies that pre-Egyptian culture was more sophisticated than we ever imagined and that our ideas about social evolution and world history will need radical overhauling.

## Probe to hunt Loch's bottom, not monster

LONDON (AP) — Scientists are about to probe the depths of Loch Ness, not to look for the monster but simply for the bottom.

"This will be a serious scientific investigation and not a monster hunt," said David Hepple, curator of mollusks at the National Museums of Scotland in Edinburgh.

In July, investigators from the Freshwater Biological Association and London's Natural History Museum will take samples of the lake's water and sediment and survey a V-shaped fissure in the lake bed.

Hepple said the water of Loch Ness is so clogged with peat fragments that it's too dark for divers to see more than a few inches below the surface.

The scientists hope to find whether there are subterranean connections to the sea. The Ness River, the lake's outlet to the sea, is only a few inches deep at the port of Inverness.

Sir John Murray, who surveyed the lake in 1903, reported the depth as 754 feet, but one recent report found it to be 820 feet deep.

Loch Ness, hemmed in by mountains, is 24 miles long and averages one mile in width.

Modern sightings of the monster were first reported in the 1930s, but the earliest recorded was in the sixth century.

POST-HERALD, Birmingham, AL - March 26, 1992 CR: M. Freeman

# Humming has Hueytown harping

By Nancy Bereckis  
Post-Herald Reporter

The hills are alive with the sound of humming in Hueytown, and so is the ground, the air, and even the bathroom plumbing.

Residents of the southwest Jefferson County suburb are complaining of a mysterious monotone hum that sometimes is so loud they need earmuffs to fall asleep.

"It's a very steady humming sound that doesn't change in tone or pitch," Hueytown Mayor Lillian Howard, who has heard the recurring sound, said yesterday.

"Sometimes it comes from the ground and sometimes it vibrates through the air, hitting gutters and walls. In some houses, it's being

transmitted into the water pipes that go into the bathroom."

Dozens of people have complained of the hum, which was first heard in December and has been getting worse ever since.

Some people believe that a ventilation fan from one of the mines run by Jim Walter Resources Inc. is causing the noise.

The hum is loudest in two subdivisions, Virginia Estates and Edenwood. Both border the Jim Walter mines.

But Dennis Hall, director of public relations for the mining company, said officials ran tests but couldn't find the source of the hum. "It's almost like a movie when aliens come down and they

just hit different places at different times."

And, to make matters worse, every time Hall responds to a resident's complaint, the hum stops. "It's kind of like when your car acts up but when you take it to the mechanic it stops," he said.

Residents said the hum is loudest at night; especially on Monday and Tuesday. On cloudy and rainy days the hum is extremely loud, they said.

One woman said she wears earmuffs to bed to block out the hum. Another said the noise was so bothersome she couldn't open her windows.

"Some days, though, you don't hear it because the wind is blowing

in a different direction," said Richard Eaton, who has lived in Hueytown all his life and has heard the hum for the last month.

Eaton said he realizes that Jim Walter officials have gauged the decibel level of their fans and have determined they are not a nuisance.

"But it's not the hum level that's a problem. It's the steady noise," he said.

"It's like the old Chinese water torture. The drip, drip, drip is not going to drown you. But just like that constant noise, in the end it'll drive you crazy."

Other companies mining in the hills behind Hueytown also have received complaints about the

hum. Linda Baker, a spokeswoman for Taurus Exploration Inc., said officials have taken inquiries from residents out to their coal bed methane wells. "When they hear the noise the compressor makes they say it's not the same sound," she said.

U.S. Steel has mines 10 miles from Hueytown. But Steve Sobat, manager of public relations, said that's too far away to cause the noise.

Hall called on experts from the University of Alabama's Mineral Engineering School yesterday for help in tracking down the source of the hum.

"Right now we're puzzled," he said.



# Why We Love a Mystery

There is something life-affirming about a quest for answers

BY DONNA LARCEN  
AND COLIN MCENROE  
HARTFORD COURANT

**A**h, sweet mystery of life... Finding the mysteries is no trouble. We've got a million of them. Who shot JFK? Who built the pyramids? Are there UFOs? What happens when we die? Is the Shroud of Turin really the image of Jesus? Who was Deep Throat? Why was I born? Why am I living?

"We need to have mysteries," says Dr. Bruce Greyson, a psychiatrist at the University of Connecticut Health Center and editor of the *Journal of Near Death Experiences*. "The world can be a very frightening place, and a lot of our struggle is with having to control our environment. So I think we need to retreat into fantasy, abandon reality and think about things that are beyond our knowledge."

There is also something in us that likes to solve puzzles. That could explain the fascination with the NBC show "Unsolved Mysteries," which addresses murders and disappearances of ordinary people but also has looked at Amelia Earhart, the Bermuda Triangle, the shroud and UFOs.

## We Want Answers

"People find these stories fairly familiar," says Tim Rogan, coordinating producer of the show. "They say, 'I know something about this, but what's happening?' People always want answers, and it's hard for them to accept that there are questions that won't be answered, that may take even longer than a lifetime."

There is also a life-affirming quality about the quest for answers.

"Problem-solving for all living creatures has high life-survival value," says George Michael Evica, an English professor at the University of Hartford, known for his work on the JFK assassination. If you solve the problems of eating, shelter and reproduction, "then you can get to the pinnacle of problem solving." At the top is human culture, where lie these great mysteries.

The solution to any mystery has two parts. The first is a set of facts that constitute a proof. The second is a willingness to believe those facts. The willingness is often harder to get than the facts.

"I think that's true," says Joe Nickell, a science writer in Lexington, Ky.

## Nasty Decisions

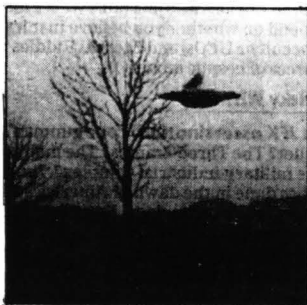
Nickell says a lot of people are either too quick to debunk a mystery or too eager to embrace it out of sheer love of the wondrous. He tries to persuade people to investigate each case on its merits.

Nickell has investigated the Shroud

## THINKING ABOUT THINGS THAT ARE BEYOND OUR KNOWLEDGE



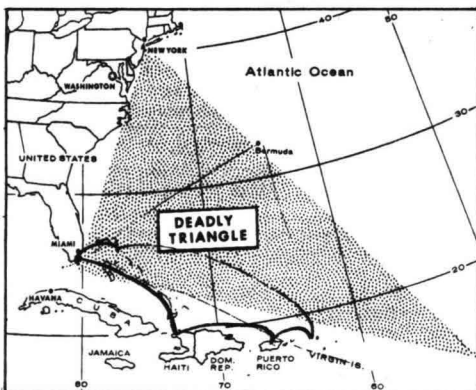
The Pyramids: The mystery of these giant structures was how ancient people could have built them.



UFOs: Perhaps our strong interest in alien spacecraft is an attempt to confirm that we are not alone.



The Kennedy assassination: New theories are constantly added to the ones that have piled up since the president was shot in Dallas in 1963.



The Bermuda Triangle: Some believe an area of the Atlantic swallows ships.



Amelia Earhart: Disappeared without a trace.



The Shroud of Turin: It's hoax, art or miracle.

of Turin, the Virgin of Guadeloupe and the "crop circles" of England. He says he meets people who are angry to learn he has explanations that do not require the intervention of gods, angels or UFOs.

"You get the feeling that these people don't want an answer," he says.

Nickell says that some fascination with the paranormal is a way of saying: "Well, science doesn't know everything, and ... I don't want it to."

"You hope the facts transcend personalities," says Kenneth L. Feder, anthropology professor at Central Connecticut State University. "But it's also people interpreting reality."

Feder's book "Frauds, Myths and Mysteries" (Mayfield Publishing) offers scientific explanations that debunk paranormal claims about Stonehenge, Atlantis, the Shroud of Turin and Swiss author Erich von Daniken's theories that creatures from outer space visited Earth in prehistoric times.

Even though he considers himself a hard-headed scientist, Feder admits: "We've all got those things we hold near and dear to our hearts." If you have 20 years of energy and emotion invested in a particular position, you're not eager to see it overturned, he says.

Mark Twain once wrote: "Why shouldn't truth be stranger than fiction? Fiction, after all, has to

stick to possibilities."

Some cases are so weird and complex as to resist explanation.

Take the JFK assassination. Few puzzles have been subjected to such exhaustive scientific, investigative and forensic study. And yet, the solutions floating around today depend more on personal interpretation than facts.

"One of the problems is a multiplicity of data, and much of it is contradictory," Evica says. "Solving the JFK mystery has a profound moral dimension for humanity. It goes beyond the clutter of data and gets into our passion, our history."

Some mysteries rest mostly on faith. If Jack insists that aliens from Zetta Reticula routinely abduct Earthlings, examine them with gamma rays, erase their memories and return them, and Jill does not believe him, there is no way to resolve their difference.

So? Are Jack and Jill doomed to disagree forever?

"As a scientist I'm supposed to say no," Feder says. "We'll figure everything out eventually."

The problem, he says, is getting people to believe what science figures out.

When carbon dating showed that the Shroud of Turin is no more than 700 years old, Feder says, "the devout Shroud of Turin guys rejected categorically the

carbon dates."

The only impenetrable mysteries, he says, are the ones about which so little information is available there is no way to test any hypotheses. Nobody knows why ancient people built Stonehenge, he admits, and there is no way to test anybody's theories about it.

Feder disputes theorists who claim that Stonehenge, the giant figures at Easter Island and other marvels of prehistory must be the work of extraterrestrials because primitive peoples could not have made them. In his book, he dismisses this as a fallacy he calls "our ancestors, the dummies."

"There seems to be not just a little European ethnocentrism at work here," he writes archly.

When a new mystery springs up — huge, flattened circles in crop fields in southern England or a weeping statue — credulous people quickly embrace it. Scientists, often venturing far outside the field of actual expertise, weigh in with competing theories that sound persuasive. Hoaxers may come forward to claim full responsibility, and other experts may then claim the hoaxers are lying.

Nickell says part of the problem with paranormal mysteries is that they are all so peculiar it is impossible to have an established procedure for checking them out.

(continued on page 18)

## Exploding TVs plague Netherlands

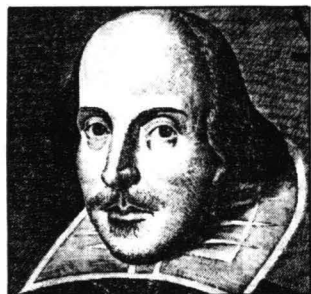
THE HAGUE, Netherlands — More than 200 people called a consumer hot line this week with reports of television sets that exploded or caught fire.

The country's consumer safety institute set up the line Monday after receiving reports that 10 sets had gone up in smoke since January. The consumer safety agency said it was baffled by the fires, which have occurred in a variety of brands.

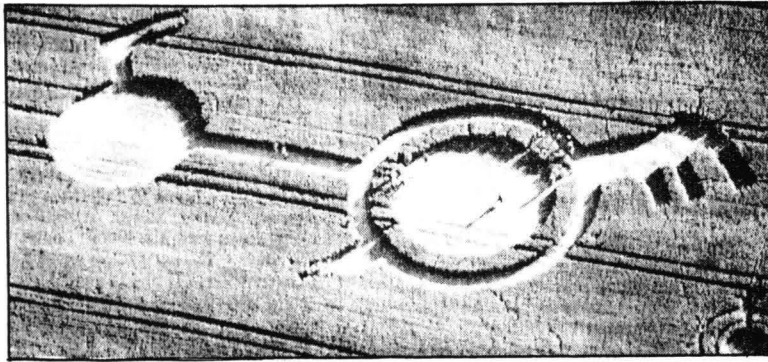
## MYSTERIES: VARIATIONS ON A THEME



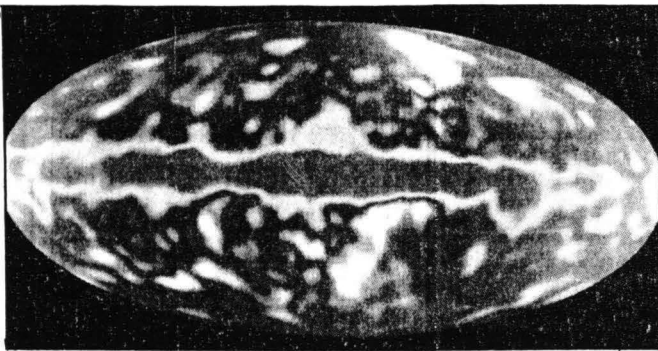
Is Elvis alive? No, but controversy surrounding his death is.



Who was Shakespeare? Some believe he was an earl.



Last year, two hoaxers said they were responsible for England's crop circles, but experts say it's technically impossible.



The biggest mystery of them all, the universe: Where did it come from and where are we going?

HERALD, Bellingham, WA  
June 10, 1992

## Whatcom County a 'refuge' for Bigfoot

Bigfoot no longer must tread softly in Whatcom County.

As of today, the county offers refuge to the legendary large, furry humanoid. And county leaders have beseeched all citizens to recognize the creature's asylum here.

At least, the Whatcom County Council did by resolution Tuesday.

The council resolved to give succor to the well-known but little-seen creature on a request from the Foothills Chamber of Commerce, which is promoting its Bigfoot at Baker festival June 19 to 21.

Al Magnuson, chamber vice president for promotions, had sought a detailed law on Sasquatch-slaying crimes and penalties.

Sasquatch is alive and well here, Magnuson claimed. Hikers from Seattle saw one near Nooksack River's South Fork April 7.

"He stared at them for three minutes," Magnuson said. "They stared at him back. Then he ambled off."

Council Chairman Dan Warner shied from action involving an ordinance. "I'm concerned about an ordinance protecting a mythical animal," he said.

Yet, Warner wrote the resolution, which the council passed unanimously.

Magnuson had asked for a Bigfoot-hunting ban last spring. The council began to vote on the ban, but realized it had convened as the county health board. It did not take up the proposal again.

## Modern man's origin in doubt after skulls found

Reuter

BERKELEY, Calif. — Two 350,000-year-old skulls from China have shaken the theory that modern man came out of Africa.

U.S. and Chinese anthropologists say in the latest issue of the British scientific journal Nature that while the brain casings of the skulls are those of the primitive homo erectus man, their facial features are relatively modern.

Current theory holds modern man, homo sapien, developed first in Africa and then spread out to other continents, replacing homo erectus (primitive man).

Berkeley anthropologist Dennis Etlar and Chinese anthropologist Li Tianyuan say the modern facial features of the skulls indicate modern man did not originate in Africa and then migrate to other continents but may have evolved simultaneously in several places.

SUN, Vancouver, B.C., Canada - June 4, 1992 CR: G. Conway

# Three Kinds of Mysteries Haunt the Soul

Mysteries come in three categories: Sticky Wickets (continuing debates over facts), Wonders and Curiosities (questions whose answers depend on whether you believe in miracles, the occult or UFOs) and Eternal Riddles (deep sources of cosmic anxiety).

### 1) The Sticky Wickets

■ **The JFK assassination.** Lone gunman? Magic bullet? The Three Tramps? The mob? Cubans? The military-industrial complex? The murder was done in the dawn of America's new day of information technology. But computers, gas chromatography, digital imaging and neutron activation analysis could not put this one together again.

■ **Deep Throat.** Alexander Haig? David Gergen? Nobody? This one bugs people, partly because the press is supposed to clear up mysteries, not create them. A new series of books and articles has poked at the 20-year-old secret without flushing out the Watergate mole.

■ **Shakespeare.** This is still a real howwroteit. If it wasn't Will, was it probably his contemporary, the Earl of Oxford, Edward de Vere? The earl's detractors call him a murderer, liar, drunkard and molester of small boys,

but one theory runs that de Vere took on the false identity of Shakespeare to conceal that many of his love sonnets were to his paramour, the Earl of Southampton.

■ **Inslaw and Danny Casolaro.** Probably the least famous mystery listed here, but if true, it makes Watergate look like an episode of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood." One argument goes that a group of Reagan cronies, inside and outside the U.S. Department of Justice, conspired during the 1980s to steal some valuable software from Inslaw, a private company, and that Casolaro, a free-lance journalist, was murdered when he got too close to the truth. The other argument is that Inslaw was just a mom-and-pop company that lost a big government contract, and Casolaro committed suicide.

■ **Elvis sightings.** Enough already — he's dead. Charles C. Thompson II and James P. Cole, authors of "The Death of Elvis" (Dell, \$19.95), said the mystery endures because Memphis authorities did not release the autopsy reports.

### 2) Wonders and Curiosities

■ **The Shroud of Turin.** Some say it is the burial covering of Christ. Carbon dating says it is no more than 700 years old. The man's image

on the cloth is the result either of a miracle or artistry.

■ **Stonehenge.** It was started 5,000 years ago and took 2,000 years to build. Could people from a simple agrarian culture quarry and arrange these huge stones? Or is it evidence of another, more sophisticated lost civilization?

■ **Crop rings.** Something or somebody keeps flattening grain fields, usually English ones, in very precise, large circular designs. UFOs? Sex-crazed hedgehogs? Pranksters? In 1991, a couple of guys claimed to have made the rings, but aficionados — known as cereologists — claim it would have been technically impossible.

■ **UFOs and alien abductions.** Thanks to "E.T.," "War of the Worlds," endless Hollywood interpretations and the National Enquirer, we seem to love these. Alien abduction is the latest buzzword, thanks to Whitley Strieber, author of the 1987 personal narrative "Communion."

### 3) Eternal Riddles

■ **Who started the universe? Why am I here? What's the meaning of life?** These are the imponderables that lead to religion, New Age movements and all-night dorm sessions.

HARTFORD COURANT

Now some people have added to the traditional ventilation-fan theory by suggesting that the hum is actually a harmonic convergence of the sounds emitting from not only the Jim Walter fan but all the fans located in nearby mines.

And besides the unusual electronic-field reasoning, there's at least one person who believes the hum is caused by a local airplane repairman who revs up the engines he fixes to make sure they work.

Still others say the hum is getting louder due to the addition of dozens of idling cars and trucks belonging to news crews that have descended on Hueytown since the hum story hit the newsstands.

Almost every local newspaper, and radio and television station has reported on the hum. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution has run a story. And national news crews from ABC and CNN have come to Hueytown.

"The funny thing is that when re-

porters come, the hum stops," Hall said.

A local pilot first floated the idea last week that an electro-magnetic field caused by high-voltage power lines was responsible for the hum.

An electro-magnetic field is present around any electrical device, like a computer or television set.

But Chris Conway, spokesman for Alabama Power, said it would be highly unlikely that such a field could cause a noise. And, he added, there is no evidence that any unusual electrical sources are present in Hueytown.

Although interesting, the theories are no comfort to the people of Hueytown who are bothered by the annoying resonance.

"It wouldn't be bad if it was just a little background hum, but it's really irritating," said JoAnn Hicks, a hum victim. "Listening to it makes me really ticked off at the world."

# Hueytown buzzes with new theories on infamous hum

By Nancy Bereckis  
Post-Herald Reporter

A Bermuda Triangle-like electro-magnetic field could be causing Hueytown's now-infamous hum.

At least that's the latest theory on the source of the noise that has been irritating Hueytown residents for the past five months.

But it's not the only hypothesis. Since the Western Star newspaper and the Birmingham Post-Herald first reported the hum last month, an increasing number of people have been volunteering theories on where it is coming from.

But there still is no clear resolution to the mystery.

"The hum has taken on a life of its own," said Dennis Hall, director of public relations for the mining company, Jim Walter Resources Inc. "Yet no one's hit on the cause."

Residents first thought the noise was from a new ventilation fan recently installed at Jim Walter. But Hall said he has no evidence that the new fan is making any more noise than the old fan.

## Hearing the Hum

Residents have no trouble hearing the Hueytown hum, but visitors sometimes find it elusive. Here are some tips in hum hearing:

■ **Best location** — Residents claim the hum is loudest around the Virginia Mines area of Hueytown, which is off of Virginia Drive in the southwest corner of the Jefferson County suburb. Residents in Lakeview Estates, Virginia Estates, Edenwood and other nearby subdivisions report hearing the noise.

■ **Best time** — The hum is usually loudest at night, especially on Mondays and Tuesdays. Residents, however, have heard it also on weekends. When it's cloudy or rainy the hum is usually audible.

Sources: Hueytown residents

MAINICHI DAILY NEWS,  
Tokyo, Japan  
April 8, 1992  
CR: Y. Matsumura

## 'Snowman' really 'tree-eating monster'

MOSCOW (AFP-Jiji) — A mysterious "abominable snowman" whose footprints have been spotted in northern Russia is really a "tree-eating forest monster," according to a local expert who has spent 15 years trying to track down the creature.

Specialist Vyacheslav Oparin said his conclusion was based on "the bone of a giant, unknown animal discovered in the forest" in the Karelia section of northern Russia, near the border with Finland, according to a report by ITAR-Tass.

He speculated that the creature resembled "less a man than some sort of extraterrestrial creature." It has "two teeth 15 centimeters long" that it uses to "peel bark off trees and branches to eat," he said.



# "What I saw was a ghost." — Wisconsin resort guest

## 'Something' is out there, haunting Sawyer County

KATHY OLSON CORRESPONDENT

**S**omething is out there, deep in the heart of Sawyer County amid 17,000 acres of the best fishing waters in the Midwest.

More than a few people on the Chippewa Flowage are talking about it, but quietly.

"I was never going to mention it in public," said professional fishing guide Al Denninger. "But one night some of us were talking, and I just pulled out this photo and asked if anyone ever saw anything like this."



Denninger

Denninger, 45, a Milwaukee firefighter for 23 years and also a licensed guide on the flowage for the past 17 years, had taken the photograph while fishing on the "Big Chip" last October.

"I intended to keep quiet about it," Denninger said. "It's like a world's re-

cord muskie story, and people are always skeptical. I didn't want to sound like people who have lunch with Elvis or just talked to God."

The photograph shows a shape shrouded in white, suspended in front of a tree-line.

Denninger and a client who is a long-time friend, were doing some fall fishing, sitting in lawn chairs on the shore of one of the flowage's 140 islands while hook-rigged suckers plied the depths for those famous fall lunger muskies.

"All of a sudden he looked at me, his mouth was wide open, and his face white as a ghost, and said, 'Al, wha, wha, what's that?'" Denninger said.

"I looked at him and asked, 'Since when do you stutter?' Then I looked up and saw it coming down through the trees on the island across the channel."

Denninger, who never goes anywhere without at least one camera, grabbed his Polaroid and shot.

"Then the camera refused to shoot again, and I thought I was out of film. I'm fumbling around for more film or another camera, all the while not taking my eyes off it, and my mind is going



This — the white blob hovering in mid air just off the island's shore — is the "something" Denninger photographed with his Polaroid camera. Then the camera for no discernible reason failed to operate.

through its file, like, 'It's mist, it's smoke, it's a weather balloon, it's ... a ghost.' I never saw a ghost before, and I didn't have a handy reference to turn to."

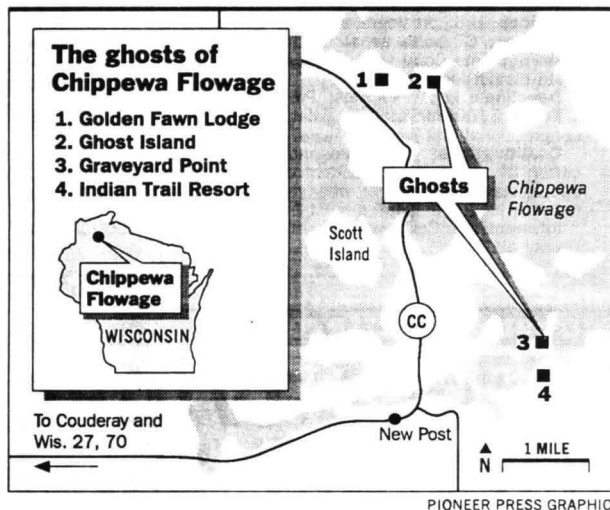
Then his camera jammed, so he kept watching the "ghost," which he said remained in its position about 10 feet above the ground near the shore for about a minute and a half, then drifted to the left and up again through the trees.

"All this time, it never changed shape," he said. "And it had been raining for five straight days, so smoke was not a possibility. Besides, I know what smoke looks like."

He jumped in his boat and motored to the spot where the "ghost" had been, but found nothing to explain what he had seen, and what, by now, had developed on the Polaroid exposure.

"My client thought we'd call it a day, so we went in," he said, laughing.

Denninger works out of Indian Trail Resort, a place rich in its own lore. Co-owner John Dettloff, a fishing guide and president of



the Sawyer County Historical Society, listened to Denninger's story and then went to the site. He picked up some leaves for later examination, but found no solid clues to explain what the two men

had seen. Dettloff continued his investigation.

"I had Al's photo with me when I went over to Golden Fawn Lodge, which is near the island, to talk to the owners," Dettloff said.

"I asked Barb McMahon, one of the owners, if she ever saw or heard anything strange on that island, and she said, 'Oh, you mean Ghost Island?'"

McMahon, who has lived across from the island for 20 years, said guests named it Ghost Island because of the many strange noises they heard, especially at night.

"The noises have scared people," she said, "but no one that I know of, except Al, has ever seen anything there."

Michael Norman, a River Falls author and journalism professor who has devoted years to collecting and reporting ghost stories, said he had never heard about ghosts in this particular area. But it's not unusual, he added.

"It's amazing how many people have these stories," said Norman, who has co-authored with Beth Scott the books "Haunted Wisconsin" and "Haunted Heartland."

Dettloff said an old road crossed the island. "I couldn't find any records of anyone ever living there. But there are two old graveyards on the flowage. There are probably a lot of spirits out there."

In 1923, Northern States Power

Co. completed its dam on the Chippewa River at Winter and flooded the area, which became the Chippewa Flowage. The impoundment connected 10 existing lakes, and among the areas affected were an Indian village called Post belonging to the Lac Courte Oreilles tribe; a Catholic Church and cemetery, now known as Graveyard Point; and an American Indian burial site. Many graves were moved to higher ground, but some remain at their original sites, complete with tombstones.

Graveyard Point is near Indian Trail Resort, and at least four people tell more than fish stories about the famous landmark.

"What I saw was a ghost," said Tim Cook, 27, of Libertyville, Ill.

Cook, a guest at the resort last fall, was fishing with a friend, Andy McClenahan, and they were on their way back to the resort.

"We wanted to hit Graveyard Point before we quit, but it was pretty windy," he recalled. "We didn't know if we could drift-fish past there. When we got to the point, no wind was blowing. It was absolutely calm."

"We hadn't been there very long when Andy said, 'What's that?' I looked toward the tombstones and said, 'Oh my God!' We both freaked."

Cook described what they saw as "a man in a flowing gray robe, about 6 feet tall, floating above the graves."

"We kept looking, and he clearly looked right at us, and just floated back into the woods," Cook said.

Later, at Indian Trail Resort, Cook told his story, then headed back to Graveyard Point with eight people who wanted to see for themselves. But a thick fog and a strong wind made that impossible.

Both Denninger and Cook recall other odd occurrences. "As soon as it (the apparition) was gone, my camera worked again," Denninger said. "When I walked into the woods below where it was, the temperature dropped several degrees."

Cook recalled that once when he and his brother Sean were fishing off the point, his rod snapped in half and "the same thing happened to Brent Hersch." Cook said neither his brother nor Hersch had a strike when their rods snapped.

NORTHSIDE PEOPLE, Dallas, TX - June 18, 1992

## Life on Mars? Former NASA staffer thinks so

By Natasha Kroeger

Is there life on Mars? Was there at one time?

Former NASA consultant Richard Hoagland thinks the space agency

may be sitting on information that proves some sort of intelligent beings once lived on the Red Planet.

"We have enough evidence to bring down an indictment," he told *Northside People* this week. "But we

must have better evidence to convict."

Hoagland, who will present a seminar at 7:30 p.m. Friday, June 19 at the Holiday Inn Crown Plaza on Valley View Drive, said photographs

taken by the Viking space orbiter in 1976 indicate the presence of pyramid-shaped structures as well as a structure in the shape of a human

face.

His evidence comes from the use of mathematical a calculation known as fractal analyses.

Hoagland said the U.S. government is engaged in an intricate maneuver to cover up this mission. He said the knowledge of artificially produced shapes on the planet's surface is the reason President George Bush said, "We will go to Mars" last month when discussing the space agency's budget.

"A government that views its role

paternalistically will not readily release such findings on national security grounds," Hoagland said.

NASA officials, for their part, have discounted but not totally dismissed Hoagland's theories.

"The U.S. has already announced its intention to go to Mars," said Brian Welch of the Johnson Space Center.

"We are reasonably sure that within the next century we will physically explore that planet and one way or another we will know whether or not Hoagland's theories are rooted in reality."

Welch said scientists thought there was a possibility life existed on Mars in the mid 1970s, when Viking orbiters and landers were launched. Elaborate soil tests were conducted and the results made public. The tests were looking for bacteria, microscopic particles or other indications of life.

"So I would say the government has not exhibited any tendency toward squelching information relevant to this possibility," Welch said.

Tickets to Hoagland's seminar cost \$10.

# Sasquatch sage suggests man-beast may make last stand in B.C.

LARRY PYNIN

Sun Provincial Reporter

David George Gordon stares poker-faced across the table and insists B.C. could be the last stand for that mythical man-beast, the Sasquatch.

Seriously. If the Sasquatch exists at all, says the 42-year-old Washington state biologist and nature writer, it exists here.

"I think we're greatly impacting the range of the Sasquatch," he asserts, pointing to forest clearcutting and the population explosion pushing northward from California.

"We are quite likely seeing the last of a dying breed. It's highly likely B.C. would be the last great stronghold of these creatures."

Gordon, a biologist and nature writer from Port Townsend, is the author of the newly published *Field Guide to the Sasquatch*, a sci-

entific view of the beast complete with a family tree, historical sightings and evidence-gathering techniques.

Based on reported sightings over a century, he speculates the Sasquatch is primarily a vegetarian, 2.5 to 3.5 metres tall, hairy and human-like — and highly secretive.

People can laugh all they want, he says, but it's usually nervous laughter.

"We have a hard time dealing with the idea there is a creature of this size and similarity to human beings that we don't know about. That in itself is going to raise some titters."

Gordon, who conveniently refuses to take a firm position on the issue, is nonetheless appalled that scientists choose to ignore the Sasquatch.

And despite numerous hoaxes over the years, he argues that some footprints cannot be easily discounted and certain hair samples go scientifically untested because of lack of private money.

Even within the shadowy world of cryptozoology (the science of hidden animals), the Sasquatch holds bottom rung on the ladder, far below even Okanagan Lake's Ogopogo monster — believed by some to be a landlocked sturgeon.

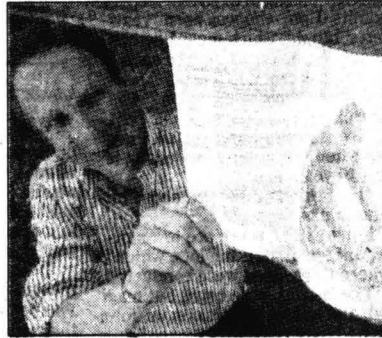
"People who investigate Sasquatches are looked upon as California crazies," he admits. There is only one Sasquatch capture on record.

The *Victoria Daily Colonist* reported on July 4, 1884, that a train crew captured a hairy, 1.4-metre-high, gorilla-like creature named Jacko and placed him in the jail in the Fraser River community of Yale.

Jacko's fate went unreported.

He also suspects the Sasquatch is society's way of throwing a monkey wrench into a scientific, know-it-all world.

"People want to believe in monsters," he says. "It's a romantic idea — a wild creature living in harmony with its environment."



MARK VAN MANEN

**WRITE STUFF:** Author David George Gordon with his field guide to hairy creature

ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE, Little Rock, AR - June 28, 1992

## Lost at sea in the Bermuda Triangle

BY DEBRA K. MINOR

Orlando Sentinel

ORLANDO, Fla. — The tropical waters off Florida, however lovely they are, have a dark side.

In an area covering about 44,000 square miles, hundreds of vessels and aircraft, along with thousands of their crew members, have vanished without any indication of distress, leaving no oil slicks or debris. The Coast Guard classifies them as "disappeared" at sea. (A classification of "lost" at sea would suggest that some wreckage had

been found.) This area, stretching from Bermuda southwest to Miami, southeast to the Bahamas and Puerto Rico, then northwest again to Bermuda has come to be unaffectionately known as the Bermuda Triangle.

In *Mission: Bermuda Triangle*, part of the largest expansion in Sea World's 19-year history, visitors can participate in a simulated research dive to the Puerto Rico Trench area of the Triangle. But be prepared for the unexpected.

As you wait to enter the attraction, overhead monitors show a fascinating documentary on the Triangle's history of strange occurrences. A Triangle with Two Sides tells about the 1918 disappearance of the Navy's USS Cyclops and its load of manganese ore. The mysterious disappearance of the 500-foot vessel with its crew of 308 was classified by the Navy as a wartime loss, even though there was no activity in the area on that day.

And then there was Flight 19

— a Naval air training squadron from Fort Lauderdale whose last radio communication in 1945 was, "We are completely lost." A sea plane sent to search for the squadron also disappeared. Six pilots and 20 crew members never were heard from again.

More chilling facts are presented as narrator Hugh Downs explains that the two sides of the Triangle are representative of the believers — those who

believe that some unknown force reigns in that area — and the skeptics, who offer theoretical and scientific explanations for the disappearances.

As you weave your way to the attraction's entrance, you'll see several models of submarines used in deep-sea research and recovery dives. Charts and graphics along the walls offer more information about the mysterious Triangle.

Once inside, groups of about 60 are led into one of two large briefing rooms at Research Base Sea Scan, where another short video is presented. This one tells about the exploration area. "Your mission should be a smooth one," Downs says on the briefing video, "But, after all, this is the deep sea — and, moreover, the Bermuda Triangle."

With that, you are led to the boarding area of either the Neptune, Skipjack or Barracuda, deep-water submarines that will carry you on your expedition. A door opens to reveal a small cabin area with several rows of seats. After everyone is buckled in, the mission begins. This is where flight simulator technology takes over.

As a video is presented on the screen at the front of the cabin, the entire cabin begins to move, mimicking the movements of a vessel on the water's surface. After plunging below the surface, it's smooth sailing until your sub gets a little too close to a humpback whale and her calf. The jolt is a quick pitch forward with shudders from side to side. All is well again until a sister vessel radios about a discovery nearby.

Why, it's the USS Cyclops, eerily poised along the edge of the Puerto Rico Trench. Imagine that! A quick swing across the ship's deck and Whoa!, an undersea earthquake stirs up the water, knocking your vessel all about and finally causing the Cyclops to tip over. Quick! Back to the surface! Whew! That was a close one!

Depending on where you sit in the cabin, your 4½-minute ride will be moderately rough. If you get a seat near the right rear corner of the simulator, prepare to be jerked and tossed around like a kernel of corn in an air popper.

The ride strategically lets you off at the gift shop, which offers nautical clothing, items with the attraction's logo, toy models of divers and sea creatures and educational books.

## On a wild goose chase for Russian 'Bigfoot'?



Holger Jensen

the North American Sasquatch.

The group of Russian and French adventurers will be headed by Marie-Jeanne Koffmann, a 70-year-old Frenchwoman who has spent a quarter century trying to prove the alomasty's existence. She has recorded 200 sightings by other people — the last one on Aug. 25, 1991.

She felt confident enough to provide an Identikit picture published recently in the French newspaper *Le Figaro*. It depicted an apelike creature between 6 and 7 feet tall, covered in reddish hair, with jutting eyebrows, receding chin, strong cheekbones and slit eyes.

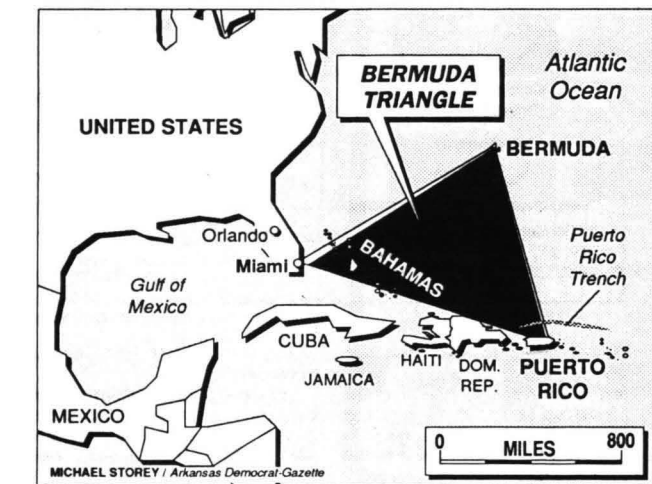
The Caucasian yeti is said to make a monotonous drumming sound; just how, no one is quite sure. Like his American and Asian cousins, he gives off a strong odor and is extremely shy, moving mainly at night. Based on the depth of his footprints, Koffman estimates the alomasty's weight at 400 to 500 pounds. And she says he eats berries, roots, eggs, frogs, lizards and small rodents.

These are amazing details. How can anyone determine the diet of a creature whose existence has yet to be proven?

But such questions don't faze the elderly Frenchwoman. Besides belonging to the Moscow Geographical Society, she is a member of the International Society for Cryptozoology — the study of animal life for which there is little evidence — which must of necessity have different rules.

Her information on the alomasty is based on interviews with Caucasian shepherds, farmers, soldiers — anyone who claims to have seen one or heard of one — and she cheerfully admits that it is a mixture of fact and legend.

Koffman's most interesting anecdote: an elderly village doctor recalled that in 1941 he examined a remarkably shaggy-haired man who was suspected



of being a weirdly disguised wartime spy. The doctor thought he was an alomasty, but couldn't remember whether the creature spoke any known language. Of course that was during World War II, in the Communist era, and whatever medical records there were in the village had been lost.

One problem the yeti hunters will encounter is large numbers of incredibly old people, some of them quite shaggy, who have trouble separating myth from reality. The Caucasians Mountains are famed both for the longevity of their inhabitants — 140-year-olds are considered routine — and the tall tales spun by the old-timers.

Koffman and her fellow anthropologists will be well-equipped with four-wheel-drive vehicles, night vision devices, a light aircraft and a video camera mounted on a remote-controlled helicopter. The latter assumes that if the alomasty is too shy to allow human beings to approach he might not object to a large aerial egg-beater.

The expedition hopes for a "direct contact" that will provide irrefutable proof in the form of video tape or still photographs. Of course, photos can lie. Remember one of California's Bigfoot? It never impressed the scientific community and wound up as a whiskey commercial.

This time maybe a vodka ad?

Holger Jensen is international editor of the *Rocky Mountain News*.