

UFO

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TIMES, Fennimore, WI - March 5, 1998
CR: R. Heiden

1975 happenings remain unsolved

It was a routine day in November of 1975. At least it started out that way. It was also press day for members of Grant Publishers, including the Grant County Independent, the Fennimore Times and the Boscobel Dial. Did I say it was a routine day? Well, it started out that way. The Independent went to press. The Times went to press. Nothing earth shaking had happened, up to that point.

The Dial? That's another story. Being the last of the Wednesday publications to hit the press, the Dial publisher was able to squeeze in partial coverage of what turned out to be an eventful day and night. Unusual things happened after we went to press.

WAYSIDE OBSERVATIONS

by Chas. Roethe



For a few hours the Fennimore area was in the center of things. We were the object of special attention from television, radio and the media in general. It turned out to be a headache for the authorities, trying to unravel a couple of mysteries.

For starters, there were strange antics on our television. Then were reports of unidentified flying objects (UFOs) plus a bomb scare at the Southwest Tech campus. The combination of circumstances produced a challenge for the news media. All this took place after the Times and Independent were wrapped up for the week. But leave it to Ralph Goldsmith, the old sleuth. He was able to get some coverage at the last minute, to the consternation of his fellow publishers.

There were about as many versions of what actually happened as there were reports. The UFO sightings, mostly in western Grant County, were verified by many people, who saw something, but couldn't positively identify it.

The bomb scare at Southwest Tech, though it turned out to be a hoax, produced a rash of upset people. For some reason the warning call was made to Iowa County authorities rather than Grant County.

One most intriguing aspect of the events of Nov. 4-5, 1975 defied explanation. To a casual observer there seemed to be a connection between the unearthly television reception and the UFO sightings.

The TV viewing that night was weird, to say the least. Channel 3 was completely blotted out, the other Madison stations Channels 15 and 27, came in loud and clear. At this point we did some experimenting. New stations we had never encountered before popped up at almost every point on the dial. We ended up watching a Dinah Shore show over Channel 50, coming from a Michigan station, which came in surprisingly clear. Short wave came in from as high as 70 on the dial.

Just how far in a radius from Fennimore this unusual reception extended told us quite a bit about local and distant sources. If there was no connection between the objects observed west of Fennimore and the strange television goings on, it was at least quite a coincidence.

That same night, while all this was going on, cattle were mutilated in western Grant County.

A special investigator from UFO tracking headquarters in Milwaukee conducted a search for clues. Apparently nothing conclusive was forthcoming. Just what happened remains a mystery to this day. To my knowledge the strange episodes of Nov. 4-5, 1975 were never adequately explained and/or refuted.

ISLANDER, Pensacola Beach, FL - April 1, 1998

Skywatch Diary

BY CAROLE BAKER

Video footage of an anomalous object was taken this past weekend by an attendee of the Project Awareness 6th Annual Gulf Breeze Conference. It was taken at approximately 3:30 p.m. by a visitor from Maryland, Jeff Ritzmann, who was eating lunch in Chan's Café in the parking lot of the Best Western Hotel on Via De Luna on Pensacola Beach. Catching sight of movement in the sky out of the corner of his eye, the witness ran outside with his video camera and filmed thirteen seconds of an anomalous object proceeding from east to west along the Sound. The two people with whom he was eating lunch watched the UFO from inside the café. The video shows a bright silver/white object flying quickly through the sky at about a twenty degree elevation. Towards the end of the video, the object appears to tilt or turn, catching the sun's rays and causing a bright flash. Subsequent to this, the object appears to pursue an erratic course until it disappears out of sight. Linda Moulton Howe is apparently investigating this sighting, and I understand attempts are being made to locate a source to have the footage analyzed. Everyone was very excited by this turn of events and the footage was shown on Saturday evening before the Speaker Panel event. Whitley Strieber and conference speaker Jim Marrs were in Chan's Café eating lunch at the time of the sighting, but neither one was a witness to the event.

The speakers at the Conference last weekend, while interesting to hear, really did not present any new information. Jim Marrs lecture was interesting and it was valuable to hear the perspective of a journalist in regard to these phenomena. Linda Howe, Budd Hopkins and David Jacobs had some interesting perspectives and comments during the speaker panel. It was moderated by Scott Mandelker and the question was are the aliens "Good or Evil." Despite much discussion and the participants being from varied backgrounds, most of the panelists agreed that it was not

possible to determine either way. David Jacobs new book apparently comes down on the negative side (I have not read it personally yet), but even he was not prepared to make a clear cut statement during the speaker panel discussions. I did not attend any of the events involving Scott Mandelker, Don Ware or William Hamilton, so I am unable to comment on those. The most exciting event, apart from the filming of the UFO outside the hotel, was the viewing for the first time of the footage shot in Mexico City on August 6th, 1997 by a business man, of a very large craft adjacent to some high rise buildings. Jaime Maussan has investigated this case after receiving the video anonymously and has had several well known video analysts look at it. He has now assembled a group of over one hundred witnesses who are prepared to give their names to testimony regarding this sighting. It is certainly the most impressive UFO footage I have ever seen. The craft is very large, moves very slowly and is spinning as it travels. (This video footage will be featured on a special program on the UPN Network on April 8th at 8 p.m. EST - check your local listings for actual times). Daniel Munoz, Jaime's assistant manned the video equipment during Jaime's lectures in order to present all of the outstanding video footage that Jaime brought from Mexico to share with us. Jaime's message regarding the visitation of earth by these craft is a simple one. He feels that this is a great opportunity for mankind, that it provides tremendous possibilities for our future generations; our sons and grandsons, as he puts it so eloquently. He quotes the Mayan prophecy of the Sixth Sun; that the sons of the Sixth Sun will be the ones to travel to the stars, at the end of his lectures.

One of the nicest aspects of attending this conference for me personally was meeting several people face to face with whom I have only previously known through e-mail. People were coming up and introducing

themselves by their screen names, and it was very nice to put a face to them! It was also great to meet and talk with so many people who are reading Skywatch Diary in *The Islander* Newspaper on a regular basis, or hitting our website.

There were two other sighting reports from the Gulf Breeze area during the past week. Unfortunately, neither were accompanied by video footage! One sighting occurred on the evening of Friday, March 20th, 1998 at approximately 7:05 p.m. on Hwy. 98 between Fort Walton Beach and Navarre. The witness, Ginger Heald, was driving home when she noticed to her north a bright whitish yellow light that appeared steady in the sky. "At arm's length, it was about the size of a regular street light about a hundred yards away," Ginger told me. "It had no strobes on it and was quite high up." Ginger states that she saw an airplane flying beyond the light, and could clearly see that it was a plane, since its red and green identification lights and strobe were clearly visible. As she looked back at the anomalous whitish yellow light, it made a zig-zag maneuver in the sky and became smaller and a very deep red color. "It was deeper red than lights on power pylons or those radio towers," Ginger said. After performing the zig-zag maneuver and becoming deep red, the light zipped off to the east, whereupon Ginger lost sight of it behind some trees. The whole sighting lasted about eight minutes.

The other sighting took place on the evening of Monday, March 23rd, 1998 at around 8:30 p.m. A Gulf Breeze couple, William and his wife, were out walking their dog in the area of the Tiger Point subdivision. The woman saw a bright light in the sky, which strobed, or flashed once, and then took off. William stated that the light appeared to just shoot, very quickly, straight up into the sky and disappear.

If you wish to contact me, I can be reached by e-mail at: bakerswd@bellsouth.net, or by regular mail at: P.O. Box 17152, Pensacola, FL 32522-7152. Keep Looking Up!

HERALD & NEWS, Klamath Falls, OR - March 25, 1998

Crop circle-UFO researcher schedules talk in Cedarville

By JEAN BILODEAUX
H&N Special Writer

CEDARVILLE — Internationally known crop circle and UFO researcher George Wingfield will speak 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Cedarville Community Church Hall.

A donation of \$5 for adults and \$3 for students is requested.

Wingfield, an Eton graduate, received his bachelor's and master's degrees in natural sciences from Dublin University.

He later worked as an astronomer at the Royal Greenwich Observatory in Herstmonceux, Sussex, England, where he studied stellar spectra and the earth's magnetic field.

He later joined IBM in England and engaged in a variety of jobs including systems engineering, software development, marketing and computer education. He left IBM in 1991.

In August 1987, Wingfield went to see crop circles at Westbury, Wilts, for the first time and became intrigued with them, and with the UFO phenomenon that appeared to be associated with it.

Crop circles are geometric designs of flattened crops that first gained notoriety when they started appearing in fields in England. Since their initial publicity in 1973, more than 5,000

have been reported around the world.

Crop circles have been found in Oregon near Salem, and near Fort Bidwell in recent years. It is estimated that about 30 percent of the circles are hoaxes while 70 percent have unaccounted-for origins.

Since his initial exposure, Wingfield has devoted much of his spare time to UFO and crop circle research and to interviewing people whose experiences may be relevant to understanding these phenomena.

Wingfield has contributed to several books on crop circles and the UFO phenomenon.

He was a founder member of the Centre for Crop Circle Studies and was until recently editor of the crop circle magazine, "The Cerealologist." He is also a member of the board of FSR magazine, which was started in 1955 and is the world's longest running journal devoted to UFOs.

Wingfield has lectured extensively on crop circles and on the UFO subject both in England and the U.S. He has also appeared on television and radio in both countries.

Wingfield will discuss "flying triangles" that have been recently sighted over various towns in the U.S. and in Great Britain. He will also be show slides and answer questions on some of the crop circles he has investigated.

ENTERPRISE, High Point, NC - April 13, 1998 CR: G. Fawcett

UFO search takes lifetime

By Andy Morrissey
STAFF WRITER

For a man who believes we're being watched daily by visitors from somewhere other than this planet, George Fawcett sounds pretty reasonable.

He's spent 54 years gathering information and investigating on his own just what's behind all those reports of unexplained lights and objects zipping around the skies.

And there's no doubt in his mind the skeptics are wrong. "The biggest change I've found is that people no longer ask me if they're real. They now ask me what they're up to."

what they're up to," Fawcett said from his Lincolnton home. "I've never met an informed skeptic because if you do your homework, it doesn't take long to be overwhelmed."

He said he spent the first years of his UFO investigations trying to disprove the mysterious sightings.

Then he claimed he saw one as he walked across the campus of Lynchburg College in Virginia at about 10:15 a.m., under sunny conditions, in July 1954. He said he saw an object that looked like an orange hovering about 300 feet in the air.

He watched it for about 4½ minutes before it moved up and down like a yo-yo and then flew away at a 45-degree angle to the ground, Fawcett said.

He became a believer.

He recently finished reading his 920th book about UFOs and has investigated 1,200 incidents.

His conclusions?

Fawcett said he can't explain UFOs just yet. But he's got a few ideas.

He believes there are objects weighing anywhere from 12 tons to 20 tons that are landing on the planet and taking samples of the plants and animals they encounter.

The alien ships generally carry three or four crew members, who also show a penchant for poking, prodding and even burning hapless humans and animals. The ships show up most often near reservoirs, military installations and power lines, Fawcett said.

And they visit Earth a lot. There are roughly 50 reported sightings of unexplained objects a day, he claimed.

Fawcett's collection of evidence has found a new home in a community with strong ties to the mysterious world of UFOs and government conspiracies.

UFO donation

Lincolnton UFO investigator George Fawcett donated his personal collection of more than 20,000 items to the International UFO Museum and Research Center in Roswell, N.M.

Statistics from the museum indicate 192,124 people visited the site last year, compared to 1,494 in 1992.

He has donated 20,685 items - ranging from newspaper clippings to photographs - to the International UFO Museum in Roswell, N.M. The museum has become one of that state's leading tourist destinations.

Fawcett, who turns 69 in July, said he's been searching for a venue to make his collection public in recent years. He considered building a museum of his own in North Carolina - which he says ranks fourth in the number of UFO sightings - but couldn't find the time or money to develop it.

He learned of the Roswell museum from his brother-in-law, who travels the nation in a recreational vehicle and visited the museum during a trip out west.

Fawcett, who worked as a newspaper reporter in his hometown of Mount Airy for a decade, liked the objectivity of the museum.

"It's not kooky at all. It's down-to-earth people working to do the right job," Fawcett said.

"My grandchildren will be able to go out there and visit it for sure."

Another man, E.R. Sabo of Florida, has donated another 15,000 pieces to the museum, which is based in a town where some believe a UFO crash-landed in 1947. The mystery surrounding the sight has become fodder for conspiracy theorists and UFO believers who suspect the American military continues to cover up something.

So why all the secrecy?

Fawcett believes the government initially kept its findings quiet so the military could keep the technology from its earthly enemies during the Cold War.

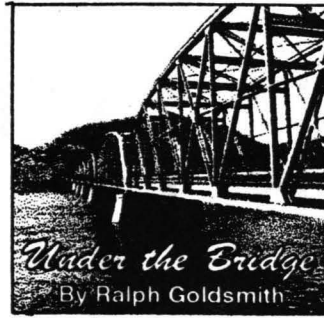
The government tried to figure out the technology it recovered from a UFO crash site, and now must continue to deny the existence of alien technology to avoid admitting that the American military really doesn't control the skies over America, Fawcett said.

He believes a day of reckoning is coming for those who strive to keep those secrets hidden any longer.

Interest in UFOs has surged in recent years, which Fawcett credits to the success of Hollywood's images of aliens.

The entertainment value of extraterrestrials led to publicity that in turn has forced the public to consider the chance we're not alone in the universe, he said.

Places like the Roswell museum are crucial to bringing the truth to light, he said.



STRANGE EVENTS that occurred in this area 23 years ago were recalled in his Fennimore Times column last week by our old friend Charles Roethe, and we remember them well. There were some who believed that aliens from outer space had visited Grant and Crawford counties, leaving mystifying evidence that cannot be fully explained to this day. There was a weird light in the sky, which some suspected was from a flying object; cattle had been found mutilated in farm fields, and television sets went haywire, with strange stations never seen before popping up unexpectedly.

A DIAL HEADLINE in its Nov. 6 issue that year reported: "Grant County Sheriff's Department reports unidentified flying object." The story said an officer was sent to the Greg Schier farm in Wyalusing Township after the Schiers reported seeing a strange light in the sky. The officer also saw the light, which he said appeared at about 1,000 feet up, traveling slowly, and then disappeared to the south at high speed. Others reported seeing the light and a deputy officer snapped a picture of it. A photo of the odd crescent-shaped object was published the next week in local papers.

ALONG WITH the sightings, that were bringing a flood of phone calls to the sheriff's department, there were other strange happenings. A Holstein cow owned by a Patch Grove farmer was found dead in the field with its left ear and its tongue cut out. A few weeks earlier seven dead cows had been found in Seneca and Eastman Townships in Crawford County, some with their ears, teats and sex organs removed. Sheriff William Fillbach said the mutilation was not by other animals but by a sharp knife. The deaths stumped veterinarians called to investigate.

NEWS OF POSSIBLE UFOs brought investigators to Grant County from the National Center for Unidentified Flying Objects in Evanston, Ill., and the Mutual UFO Network in Milwaukee. They reported finding no connection between possible UFOs and the mutilated cattle, but neither could they give an explanation for the lights. At about the same time there were strange things happening on area television, as Charles Roethe noted in his column last week.

"VIEWING CHANNEL 3 out of Madison was completely blotted out the night the lights were seen," said Roethe, "and new stations never encountered before popped up at almost every point on the dial. We remember watching the Dinah Shore show on Channel 50, coming from a Michigan station." We agree with Roethe that neither the lights nor the dead cattle with parts removed ever were fully explained. Those incidents that occurred in the late fall of 1975 remain a mystery.

UFO Sightings Reported In 1997

Stan Gordon of Greensburg has investigated thousands of UFO sightings, as well as numerous other types of unusual incidents from Pennsylvania since his research began in 1959.

Gordon has been taking calls about UFO sightings from the public since 1969. During his 38 years of involvement, Gordon founded three volunteer UFO investigating groups, including the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained (PASU) which is no longer active. Gordon now continues his pursuit of unusual phenomena as an independent researcher.

Gordon utilizes an extensive electronics communication center, which provides him with current information about these events from throughout the world. Gordon also is in contact with numerous other researchers and organizations concerning these subjects.

During 1997, information was received concerning unusual incidents from 17 counties in Pennsylvania, as well as from other areas. Natural or manmade sources accounted for many of the cases reported. Bright stars and planets, flares, lights on aircraft, and the Goodyear Blimp explained many of the UFO sightings.

Some cases are still being examined, and some cases are quite strange indeed, and at this time still have yet to be explained.

These sightings are reported on a yearly basis by people of all ages, and from people of various backgrounds, including professionals such as police officers and pilots. Sighting reports are commonly referred to Gordon's hotline from law enforcement offices, the news media and various other agencies.

Those who wish to report an unusual incident can call the hotline number 24 hours a day, and can report these events without ridicule, and the witness can remain anonymous if they so choose. Some of the types of strange incidents reported in 1997 included UFO sightings, Bigfoot reports, alleged falls of material from the sky, and a crop circle.

Some of the more interesting cases reported during 1997 include:

March 12 — Derry Township — Two men reportedly encountered a creature that is similar to other sightings reported in past years of Bigfoot from this same general area of the Chestnut Ridge. The incident occurred during the early morning hours where the witnesses claim to

have seen the creature which was estimated to stand about 8 to 9 feet tall, muscular build, long arms and covered with white fur at close range. On the other side of the Chestnut Ridge in June, there was a report from Indiana County that large, three-toes footprints were found in the woods, and strange screaming sounds were heard.

During April, some interesting UFO sightings were reported. On the night of April 13, strange rectangular lights were reported over the Pittsburgh area. On April 22 near New Stanton, witness reported a cigar-shaped object hovering over a building. While observed, a surface area opened on the object and emitted bright orange light. The opening soon closed, and then the object disappeared.

On the night of June 14, at about 8:25 p.m., witnesses near the Pittsburgh suburb of South Park observed what appeared to have been two bright white, oval-shaped lights that appeared to be side by side with a dark structure behind the lights. They were observed about 10 minutes before they suddenly vanished. Later that same evening near Latrobe, another witness reported a similar object over the Chestnut Ridge, that began to descend from the sky, and moved towards the witness. The dogs in the area reportedly became very agitated as the object approached and glided over the roof of the observer's home and moved out of sight.

In August, researcher Scott Corrales was investigating a reported daylight sighting of a spinning object that reportedly was observed by a fisherman at Lake Chataqua, N.Y. The object, which appeared shiny and metallic, was last seen moving toward Warren.

From September through the end of the year, a rash of very unusual sightings began to be reported from various

areas. Researcher Jim Brown investigated a sighting which occurred in Fayette County in the early evening of Sept. 14. A witness reported a black object, approximately 10 to 15 feet in length, about 30 feet above the ground when first seen. Later as it moved behind some trees, it gave the impression of looking like a triangle on its side. A short time later, a brilliant light rose upwards from the woods.

It was about dusk on Oct. 2, when a witness near Clarion ran home to tell other members of the family about a strange object that was hovering about 150 feet above the ground near some trees. The object was described as looking like a flat metallic aircraft with a dome at the top. There were very bright lights underneath the object, and there were two projections like fire emanating from the bottom as well. The observer was shaken by the experience, and indicated that the object was very close. At the same time, others heard a vibrating sound in the area.

A motorist has provided a detailed description of a large sting-ray shaped object that he claims flew slowly over his car on the evening of Oct. 9, near Norvelt. On the night of Oct. 30, several independent reports were received from the greater Pittsburgh area concerning a formation of multiple colored lights that were performing unusual maneuvers.

Past and current UFO sightings or other strange encounters can be reported to Stan Gordon by calling his UFO Hotline (24 hours) at 724-838-7768. His E-Mail address is paufu@westol.com. You can also write him at 6 Oakhill Ave., Greensburg, PA 15601. An SASE is appreciated for those requesting a response or information. Witnesses can report these events without ridicule, and can remain anonymous.

Article on our UFO collection was well done

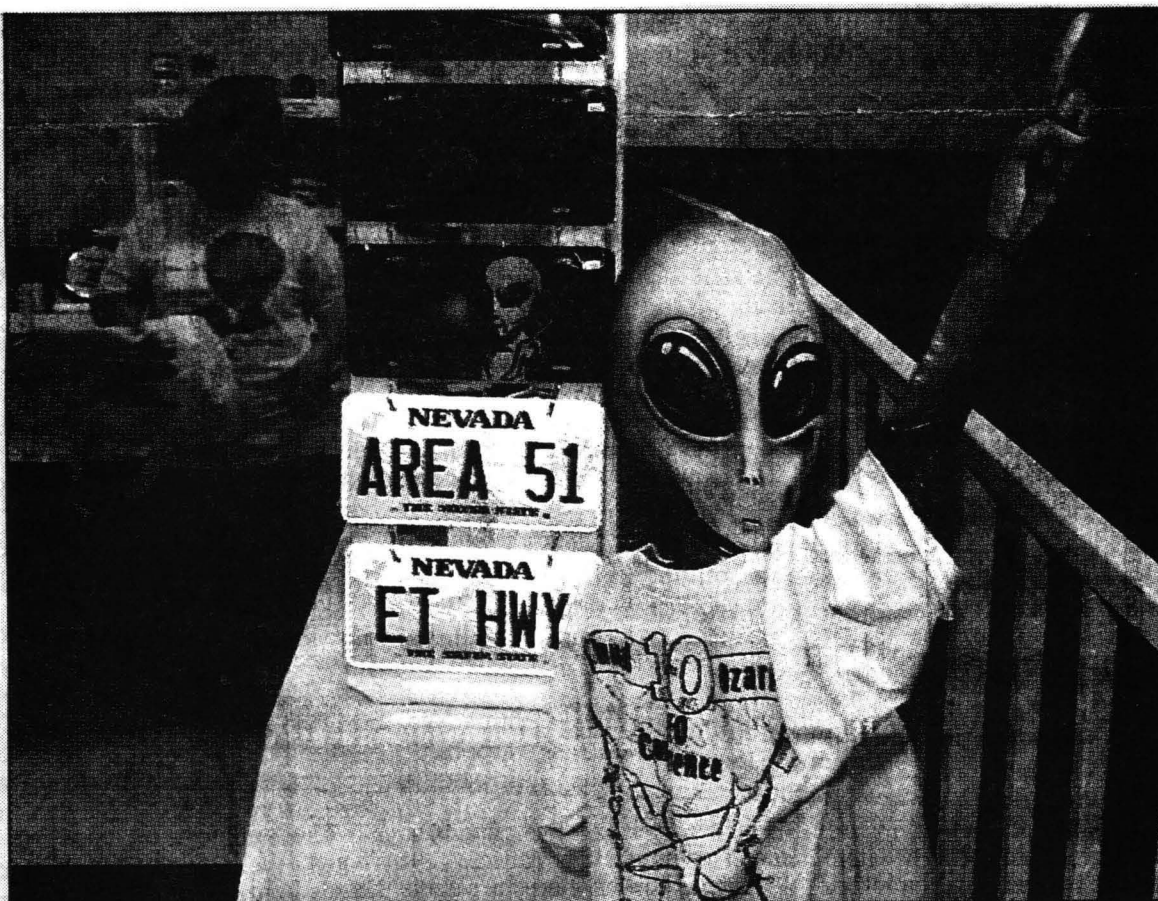
The recent interview article by Joe DePriest, staff writer, that appeared in the March 20, 1998, issue of The Charlotte Observer's Gaston section was one of the finest UFO stories I've ever seen over the past 54 years of dealing with the subject.

The 'No fly-by-night thing' story concerning the acceptance of over 35,000 UFO items by the International UFO Museum & Research Center in Roswell, N.M., donated by myself and fellow investigator Robert E. Sabo of St. Petersburg, Fla., has been well received by those who have read it and made comments about it.

And the massive collections are now being processed by the museum, which drew over 200,000 tourists from 42 countries in 1997 alone.

Again, our thanks to both your paper and DePriest for your coverage of the event.

GEORGE D. FAWCETT
Lincolnton



FLIP PUTTHOFF / THE MORNING NEWS

A wooden alien (above) greets customers while Mary Greenen of Yalaha, Fla., stocks her booth. Bari Wyte (left) of Excelsior Springs, Mo., shows convention-goers one of the calendars he sells.

Lost in space: UFO conference begins

Anne Flippin
The Morning News

They want to believe.

Not necessarily in everything that's touted as scientific fact, not in every lame theory that comes down the pipe, but they want to believe in the mystery, that something else is out there.

They've come to Eureka Springs from all over the United

States, and even beyond ... like, England, for example.

The 10th Annual Ozark UFO Conference, continuing this weekend, has drawn a variety of people together to discuss everything from crop circles to alien contact, and maybe to buy a T-shirt or bumper sticker.

Some believe in UFOs, some believe in alternate realities. Some believe aliens are here to

help mankind, some believe that they come to perform experiments via abductions or animal mutilations.

No one believes everything that's theorized at the conference.

As Andy Ambercrombie, who came to the conference from Houston, put it, "There's a wide spectrum of information, some more validated than others."

"There really are a lot of hardcore skeptics here, or I probably should say objective skeptics," he said.

Ambercrombie, visiting the conference for his fourth time, said that he does believe in UFOs. He added that anyone who thinks about UFO's "for 20 or 30 minutes would believe that there's a lot of garbage out there, but there really is something to the phenomena."

JoAnn Smith, an artist from Springdale, came to the conference to sell drawings and to hear testimonials about UFOs. She thinks that the government has suppressed or made light of UFO proof. "All we ask is give us evidence," she said.

The conference centers around two main rooms at the Inn of the Ozarks: the conference hall and the vendors' room. In the conference hall, lecturers talk about possible

alien agendas or how evolutionary and creationist theories are both wrong. In the vendors' room, tables are covered with books, pamphlets and videotapes on conspiracies and government cover-ups, spiritual journeys, how to prepare for the coming of the metaphysical visitation of alien guides, etc. Some vendors have crop circle and alien jewelry, T-shirts, mugs, mouse pads, crystals, key chains of googly-eyed E.T.s and posters as well.

Jim Grennen, a vendor from Yalaha, Fla., said he first became interested in UFOs five years after he had seen one in 1957. He said he saw a 15-foot by 60-foot cigar-shaped object moving slowly in front of him in New Hampshire. Now he and his wife travel around the country, making friends at conventions and trading stories about UFOs.

There are two basic camps at the

conference, one focuses on a general sense of distrust in the U.S. government and a belief that the American people are getting too much "misinformation" from it. Books like "The Day After Roswell" and "Project Blue Book Exposed" are offered as evidence that the government knows more than it's willing to reveal to the general public.

But there's also the kinder, gentler, holistic, earth-motherly side of the UFO conference — one of crop circles, alternate realities and legacies from the stars. There is magic associated with the alien unknowns.

Most of the conference-goers do have a sense of humor. They know that some people think of them as quacks, but the power of their belief sustains them in their drive to understand and find the truth about "what's out there."

Blanca Gas-Attack?

Something unusual was going on with the military

by Christopher O'Brien

On February 23, 1998, I awoke to hundreds of e-mail requests for information about the following posting on the Center for the Study of Extraterrestrial Intelligence (CSETI) web-site:

February, 1998

A recent attack by covert forces with a deadly Sarin-like nerve gas on the ET spaceport under 14,345' Mount Blanca, Colorado ended in disaster when the attacking forces were overcome by the gas and a quarter of the personnel involved had to be medically evacuated. The airspace over Mt. Blanca, which was annexed by the Military in 1997, remains restricted to civilian air traffic.

I immediately logged on to the CSETI web-site and observed the above claim for myself. My first course of action was clear. I contacted CSETI director Dr. Steven Greer to confirm the story and learn more. The following is a synopsis of my phone conversation with Dr. Greer:

During the second night of Ambassador to the Universe/CSETI training in The San Luis Valley last June, Dr Steven Greer claims the CSETI group experienced 1000's of strobe lights all over the western side of the Blanca Massif during the second night of their "training session."

(This description IS consistent with reports of thousands of old-time "switchboard light" type lighting arrays that stretch back into the mid-1960's. These reports are all from the west side of the Blanca Massif, where the CSETI group was "training." See page 79-80 in The Mysterious Valley, St Martin's Press 1996)

According to Greer, around "30 people [in the CSETI group] saw ET craft flying" nearby. Greer, and late-director Shari Adamiak, went up the trail alone, and "remote-viewed the ET's inside the mountain." They came back down the trail to get the group and all went back up to the spot where the two had remote viewed on the trail. Greer claimed people in the group saw Greer disappear in a "gold light" which seemed to be coming from above them. Then, a "semi-circle of a dozen ET elders; all different sized," that were visible w/ naked eye, surrounded Greer who seemed to then disappear. ET's "communed" with Greer. They said they were "under

attack in the mountain by covert military forces." Greer claims this communication lasted about "20-30 minutes." According to Greer a "couple months" after the CSETI's mountain apparition, a professional helicopter pilot from southern Colorado, who Greer claimed "knows the area well," received an emergency call to evacuate injured members of "special-forces" group and immediately flew to the Blanca area to help. He got near the location and was told it was "an accident involving sarin nerve-gas." The pilot refused to transport the injured because of the hazardous materials danger. He then reported the incident to CSETI/Greer, who called the pilot "a very legitimate source." The pilot did not know why the troops were there at Blanca, or how they became gassed. Greer told me he was being vague on the web-site in an attempt to try and corroborate this story from additional area witnesses or military/intelligence sources with further information, thus no name of the pilot, or a date.

Your local gumshoe immediately went to work trying to corroborate this fantastic story. Three calls to the Huerfano County sheriff produced no sheriff, but a disclaimer from the dispatcher. "I read your book, and if this is about UFOs, we haven't had any calls." Several sources in the Red Wing/Malacite, CO area were not aware of any "special forces" activity.

Then, voilá, I managed to locate the mystery helicopter pilot. I assured him I would honor his anonymity if he would confirm or deny Greer's claim. Here is his response:

"Hello Chris, Yes, it is true that I was called in to assist personnel from the U S Army's field unit in the San Luis Valley. I still don't know the nature of the accident, but I can assure you that the officer on my Unicom channel was very distressed and was seeking my assistance for an 'immediate MediVac Transport.' He did mention 'daughters of Sarin' [sic] being the contaminant during the call.

"It also was a week of 'foo fighters' and green lights in the area to the south east of 160 and Mt Blanca. The reason for the call, came about (I am told) because the daylight was receding [sic] and Fort Carson was unsure if they should make an extraction in the unknown winds and thermals that affect the valley at that time of the afternoon. As it was, I was already in the air over Ponca Pass south of Salida. I was asked on 121.5 mHz if I had Hazardous Material Training (I do) and was given coordinates for a landing.

"I came within two miles of the area when I was advised to break off after I told the officer that I would not carry anybody outside the aircraft. I believe it was the plan to strap someone to a rudder and fly him to Fort Carson. I might add, this was also heard by ATC at Alamosa Center. I did see a small encampment at

the area I was directed to but I never landed. I can tell you that there was a heavy military response to the area immediately thereafter. I did ask the usual military personnel that is so often staying overnight at [a local hotel] ... but they claimed no knowledge of the event.

"I believe that nightvision could have aided in landing the Blackhawks because it was VUCU 00 while I was in the area ...

"I am probably the most experienced pilot in terms of terrain in southern Colorado. I am not a 'flying saucer' buff however. This does not diminish the fact that I have encountered many, many odd objects flying in a controlled, and at times, in an almost whimsical manner, in the area.

"Something is going on in the San Luis Valley, and from my experience, the military has a greater interest in it than an involvement." [end of e-mail message from pilot]

As of this writing, no additional confirmation of this fantastic claim has been obtained by this investigator. It is intriguing to note however, that around the approximate date of this alleged military maneuver, the Atlantic Richfield CO2 reportedly experienced some very strange activity. The following reports were logged by this investigator the first week of September:

The first or second of September, 1997, Malacite, CO, North of Sheep Mountain (There is some confusion as to the exact date) A C-131 transport plane was seen dropping a "huge box" just north of the Atlantic Richfield CO2 plant (located between Sheep and Little Sheep Mountains) in Huerfano County, near the towns of Red Wing and Malacite, CO. Locals in the area witnessed the "drop" and set off to investigate. They began to search for the box.

Three separate reports of the

following events have emerged. In one report, locals witnessed two men with "jet-packs on their backs flying up and down, around and between" Sheep and Little Sheep Mountain, apparently looking for the box.

Other witnesses claim they saw a craft, a short time later, that had the appearance of a large clear bubble. From the bottom of the bubble sparks were being emitted with a "clattering sound" from square objects that were described as "magnets."

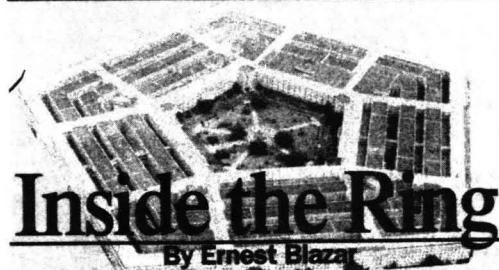
One witness (in true Colorado fashion) evidently fired a gun at the strange-looking object as it passed overhead and later that evening the man was confronted and then accosted by three men. He told neighbors he was wrestled to the ground and one of the men grabbed him and "snapped his neck" and he immediately was rendered unconscious.

Another report claims personnel were seen searching ranches and barns north of Sheep Mountain later that night, or early the following morning. A number of locals witnessed this apparent search by these unknown craft and personnel. [end of sighting log entry]

I do not have any evidence linking this ARCO Plant event to the CSETI Blanca claim, however the timing is very intriguing. Evidently, it appears something strange occurred around area around the first of September, 1997, but whether these reports by locals are tied directly to the fantastic CSETI story, is another matter.

One thing is for sure. If this story does represent our military using nerve-agents in a designated wilderness area, somebody at the Pentagon has some serious explaining to do!

More as this curious story develops.



Inside the Ring

By Ernest Blaz

Moscow's UFO fleet

As Cold War files keep opening, it's getting more difficult to exaggerate the level of fear that prevailed back then. Proof comes in a new CIA report that tells how the spy service confronted the UFO scare of early postwar America.

The first reaction: Blame Mother Russia.

A CIA group, convened in 1952 to investigate UFOs, "envisioned" Moscow's possible use of UFOs in psychological warfare.

How so? The panel suspected Moscow would use UFO reports "to touch off mass hysteria and panic" in the United States, thereby threatening the "orderly" functioning of government, according to the CIA report.

Also, Russia could use UFO sightings to overload U.S. radar systems on the lookout for a surprise nuclear attack.

As the panic waned, the CIA became convinced UFOs didn't exist — or at least didn't present a national security threat. To calm public fears, another CIA advisory panel recommended enlisting the mass media, advertisers, business clubs, schools

"and even the Disney Corporation" to debunk the UFO threat.

But not wishing to leave any stone unturned, the panel did recommend that two civilian UFO interest groups be "monitored for subversive activities."

The CIA tried to get out of the UFO business by 1955, but reports surfaced that Nazi scientists were helping Russia build flying saucers as warplanes. That kept the CIA's hand in the game a while longer.

In the 1970s and 1980s, CIA interest in UFOs rose again, this time as a counterintelligence matter. The agency feared the Soviet KGB would use U.S. citizens and UFO groups to get information on secret U.S. weapon programs such as stealth planes. The agency also looked into "parapsychology and psychic phenomena associated with UFO sightings." Reassuringly, the CIA reports it took a "conservative scientific view" of the paranormal studies.

Weighed down by 93 footnotes, the CIA report concludes: "Like the JFK assassination conspiracy theories, the UFO issue probably will not go away soon, no matter what the agency says or does."

Little wonder.

Book World

The Start of Something Big

THE THREAT

The Secret Alien Agenda

By David M. Jacobs
Simon & Schuster. 287 pp., \$23

FACES OF THE VISITORS

An Illustrated Reference to Alien Contact

By Kevin Randle and Russ Estes
Simon & Schuster. 308 pp., \$12

MILLENNIUM, MESSIAHS, AND MAYHEM

Contemporary Apocalyptic Movements

Edited by Thomas Robbins and Susan J. Palmer
Routledge. 334 pp., Paperback, \$18.95

UFO CRASH AT ROSWELL

The Genesis of a Modern Myth

By Benson Saler, Charles A. Ziegler, and Charles B. Moore
Smithsonian. 198 pp., \$24.95

QUESTIONING THE MILLENNIUM

A Rationalist's Guide to a Precisely Arbitrary Countdown

By Stephen Jay Gould
Harmony. 190 pp., \$17.95

By Elaine Showalter

IN 1898, in *War of the Worlds*, H.G. Wells played masterfully on his culture's *fin de siècle* anxiety with a story of telepathic, blood-sucking Martians landing in suburban London to invade a world they regard as crowded by "inferior animals." In the 1930s, Orson Welles terrified New Jersey with his radio adaptation of the story. Now David M. Jacobs, a professor of history and ufology at Temple University, carries on the tradition, but he doesn't think it's fiction.

In *The Threat*, Jacobs expounds his view that a race of alien pod-people is about to take over the earth. For decades, he explains, extraterrestrial beings have been carrying out a sustained program of abductions, sperm collection, ova-harvesting, and alien-human cross-breeding. "At the heart of the reproductive agenda," he writes, "is the Breeding Program," using "extrauterine gestational units" that look like brown paper bags to impregnate menopausal women; "Mindscan" to create sexual arousal in unwilling victims; nasal implants to monitor negative thoughts, and "fetal extraction" (fatal attraction?) to salvage the hybrid if its carrier thinks about abortion. Moreover, there's nothing we can do; already "it may be too late" to stop the threat of "alien integration," and the aliens could be coming as soon as 1999.

Preposterous as Jacobs's theory sounds—and surely mil-

Elaine Showalter, a professor of English at Princeton University, is the author, most recently, of *Hysterics: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Media*.

around the end of our century.

Alien invasion is only one of the many conspiracy theories and apocalyptic scenarios that constitute what the novelist Don DeLillo calls "millennial hysteria." Believers can hitch their scenarios to a multitude of alleged apocalyptic "signs"—AIDS, the breakdown of the family, the Internet. Lubavitcher Hassidic Jews interpreted the Gulf War as a sign of the imminent appearance of the Messiah. Egyptians, as *The Post* recently reported, interpreted the death of Princess Diana as a British-Israeli conspiracy designed to keep her from marrying a Muslim. But, warn Thomas Robbins and Susan Palmer in the introduction to their excellent *Millennium, Messiahs, and Mayhem*, apocalyptic thinking can "become dangerous when actual events appear markedly convergent with the anticipated scenarios of zealots." The recent massacre of 70 tourists in Egypt is partly the result of widespread cultural support of xenophobic conspiracy theories.

The contributors to *Millennium, Messiahs, and Mayhem* analyze contemporary religious and secular apocalyptic movements from the Mormons to Waco and Aum Shinrikyo, and explain the central significance of prophecy in these movements. Prophecies are useful because they enhance the charismatic authority and power of the leader, bind the followers together, and make leaving the group seem risky. Paradoxically, even "failed prophecy" or "apparent prophetic failure" can unify millenarian groups. David G. Bromley notes that "apocalyptic intensity can be maintained through predictions that are imminent but indetermi-

nate, which then necessitates and legitimates a constant state of readiness." No amount of counter-evidence, testimony by scientific panels, or contradictory hypotheses can shake these firmly held beliefs and suspicions. In fact, as anthropologists of religion have demonstrated, disconfirmed prophecy leads to intensified faith and proselytizing, as believers seek "dissonance reduction" through disclaimers, rationalizations, and self-congratulation that their faith has saved them.

With regard to the alien invasion stories, anthropologists have also analyzed the role of folklore, myth, and media in the construction of narrative. In *UFO Crash at Roswell*, cultural anthropologists Benson Saler and Charles A. Ziegler, along with atmospheric physicist Charles B. Moore, trace the process by which the belief that a manned flying saucer had landed in New Mexico in 1947 became a contemporary "techno-myth" expressing "antigovernment sentiment."

The authors offer a useful vocabulary and terminology for understanding the formation of myth, in a "process of transfiguration" that involved successive retellings in which some of the historically recorded events were retained, some were distorted or repressed, and entirely new elements were inserted. They identify six versions of the Roswell legend from 1980 to 1996, evolving from the genre of "crashed-saucer story" to a myth of the culture-hero (the ufologist) wresting knowledge from an evil monster (the government). The Roswell myth has been assembled from various fragments and sources:



ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL SLOAN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

lennial social anxieties of intermarriage, immigration, artificial insemination and genetic engineering have something to do with his vision—he presents it with serious intent, and undoubtedly many readers will believe him, just as they headed for the hills when Orson Welles broadcast his "War of the Worlds." Indeed, recent surveys show that 25 percent of all Americans believe that aliens have landed on earth. And they're not all the big-eyed Tall Grays we know from "The X-Files" or "Close Encounters." In *Faces of the Visitors*, Kevin Randle and Russ Estes describe, sketch, and rate the credibil-

ity of sightings of over 100 different kinds of alien beings, from reptoids and insectoids to humanoids, indistinguishable from you or me, to sexy Brad Pitt-like "Nordics." Whatever their appearance, most of the aliens are sexual predators; there is even a Midwestern support group for those raped by reptoids.

What we don't have, though, are Polaroids. In fact, there are no photographs, videotapes, or material evidence to prove that any of these Oids exist. Some of David Jacobs's patients (he has studied hypnosis and done over 700 "hypnotic interviews" with abductees) have set up video cameras in their bedrooms to film nighttime abductions, but the cameras seem to fall down or break or show the patients getting up at night and turning them off. At a National Press Club luncheon in Washington in October, a reporter asked Gen. John Shalikashvili, then-chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, whether the United States was adequately defended against the threat of invasion by extraterrestrials. "I sleep well at night," the general replied, "without fear that an alien being is going to capture me." The journalists laughed, but neither high-level assurance, absence of evidence, nor disconfirmed prediction seems to halt the fears of abduction, invasion, conspiracy, and apocalypse that swirl

an alien child. Could it be that they are mourning lost fertility, fearing lost sexuality? Although they sometimes express distress at their rapes, and at feelings of sexual arousal they wish to disown, the more unpleasant aspects of imagining forced sex with an alien are played down, and the emotional satisfactions played up. At worst, we hear that male aliens are not circumcised. (Presumably, there are no Jewish hybrids).

At best, many of the women fall in love with their "personal-project hybrids," male aliens who have lifelong relationships with them, choosing them for frequent sex and fathering their hybrid children. The PPHs joke and even linger "for a short time" after sex "before putting on their clothes and going to another task." (They wear blue jeans.) But alas, like so many other men in romantic fiction, these hybrid males have several personal "projects," are not monogamous, and lie. Donna's PPH says "that he wants to be with me more than he's often able to." Uh-huh. But "even the romantic hybrids can suddenly display anger and malice," just like the guys on "Melrose Place." Sympathetically understood, *The Threat* is a sort of apocalyptic version of

The Rules, a sad statement of women's unmet needs for love, sexual attention, and adventure.

How much of the current hysteria is generic to the millennium? In *Questioning the Millennium*, Stephen Jay Gould dismisses much of this theorizing as "speculative, boring, and basically silly" and refuses "to speculate about the psychological source either for the angst that always accompanies the endings of centuries (not to mention millennia) or for the apocalyptic beliefs that have pervaded human culture throughout recorded history, particularly among the miserable and malcontented." Instead, his subjects are "calendrics, astronomy, and history."

BUT GOULD does get into the debate over the previous turn of the millennium in 1000 A.D. While historians used to believe that the year 1000 saw a wave of terror sweep over Europe, this view has been widely challenged ever since French "positivist historians of the subsequent Third Republic, imbued with the rationalist spirit of the late nineteenth century, adopted an opposite and skeptical attitude that has dominated the

(continued on page 7)

(continued from page 6 -
POST, Washington,
DC - Jan. 4, 1998)

profession to the present day." Nonetheless, Gould is convinced that modern chronology had circulated so extensively among all social classes in Europe by the year 1000 that there is reason to cautiously support the idea of "substantial millennial stirring."

His own book concludes with "a little story about an ordinary person who has done something heroic in the domain of calendrics and who loves the millennium with all his heart." Gould's hero is Jesse, a young autistic man who is a savant day-date calculator—what some label "with the stunningly insensitive name idiot savants—that is, globally retarded people with a highly precise, separable, and definable skill." Jesse's fascination with naming the day of the week for any date in history is a substitute for his inability to understand other kinds of relationships, and Gould explains the mental process behind what seems an uncanny phenomenon. But his last paragraph is unexpectedly moving, as he incorporates Jesse's world-view into a broader sense of how we all question the millennium: "May we all make such excellent use of our special skills, whatever and how limited they may be, as we pursue the most noble of all our mental activities in trying to make sense of this wonderful world and the small part we must play in the history of life." It's a wish people like David Jacobs should heed. ■

DAILY NEWS, Anchorage, AK
May 1, 1998 CR: J. & L. Nicholson
Survey

ET'S IQ

There is intelligent life in the universe — more intelligent, in fact, than we are. That's what most Americans think, according to a survey by the Marist Institute for Public Opinion. And contrary to the depictions in such movies as "Independence Day" and "Men in Black," by a margin of 86 percent to 14 percent, people told the pollsters they thought galactic neighbors are friendly rather than hostile.

— The Philadelphia Inquirer

ings, and tours of the crash site. A list of speakers scheduled to attend a UFO symposium include those who claim to have seen UFOs and allege the government is engaged in UFO cover-ups.

"The UFO thing may or may not have happened, but who cares," says Tweeti Blancett, owner of the 39-room Step Back Inn, Aztec's biggest motel. "Anything we can do to promote our community excites me."

Going by the books

Old-timers in town say that since the 1950s there's been talk of a UFO crash outside of town, but nobody seems to know how the talk got started. However, in a 1950 book titled "Behind the Flying Saucers," author Frank Scully wrote about a disk-shaped object 99.9 feet in diameter that crashed near Aztec.

Scully didn't name his information sources.

In 1986, William Steinman and Wendelle Stevens privately published 1,000 copies of a book titled "UFO Crash at Aztec." Like Scully, the authors don't divulge their information sources, but manage to fill 600 pages in this well-bound, hardback book with an alien's head on the cover.

The book has sketches of dead aliens and their spaceship, allegedly drawn during the government's

secret recovery operation near Aztec.

The lack of sources in Steinman and Stevens' book, no doubt, raises doubts about its credibility, and a glance at the book's cover leaf doesn't help. Throughout the book, the crash date is given as March 25, 1948, but the cover leaf gives the date as May 25, 1948.

"We're saying May 25 because it works for us," says Aztec librarian Leanne Hathcock, who thought of using the 50th anniversary of the alleged crash as a library fund-raiser.

A ho-hum attitude

The library has started an Internet Web site with information about the alleged crash and events planned for the anniversary celebration. Hathcock says she's been receiving Internet inquiries from around the world.

Three radio stations, one in South Africa, have interviewed her live over the telephone.

Aztec Mayor Mike Arnold says people he talks to in town have a ho-hum attitude about the crash anniversary.

"I don't think anybody is going to take it so seriously that we're all kneeling down in a circle at the park with our heads uplifted and waiting," Arnold said. "I think everybody takes it for what it's worth."

Lee Crane, who worked in the oil and gas fields around Aztec as an engineer beginning in 1950 and is

NEWS TRIBUNE, Tacoma, WA - March 20, 1998

Trick of sun on Mount Rainier may have led to plane-crash report

By BRUCE RUSHTON
THE NEWS TRIBUNE

Officials at Mount Rainier National Park spent several hours Thursday tracking down a reported plane crash on the mountain that turned out to be an optical illusion.

The rescue that wasn't is the sort of thing that happens occasionally at the state's highest peak, say park officials who've grown accustomed to well-meaning people who report disasters that didn't really happen.

In this case, the scrambling began with an early-morning call from a couple in Graham.

As is their custom, the couple was looking at the landscape through a high-powered telescope at 6 a.m. when they saw what looked like smoke and fire on the mountain, said chief ranger John Krambrink. They called park officials to report a plane crash.

'You can get very interesting environmental conditions sometimes. The sunrise on the mountain played with the clouds and played with the icy surfaces of a glacier.'

— John Krambrink
Chief ranger, Mount Rainier National Park

Park officials took no chances. Rescuers prepared to climb the mountain. Officials called the Federal Aviation Administration to see if any planes were missing or overdue.

They also called McChord Air Force Base and Whidbey Island Naval Station to see if any aircraft were missing or had jettisoned fuel tanks that might account for smoke and flames. Officials sent a park employee to the couple's home to see what they saw.

The employee saw smoke but no flames. Officials subsequently called

the Department of Natural Resources and several timber companies to check for slash burns from debris left over from logging operations.

Atmospheric conditions can sometimes make smoke from foothill slash burns appear to be coming from the mountain, Krambrink said, but no burns were in progress.

The park service then hired a helicopter to fly over the mountain and check for trouble. With the help of the telescope, the employee at the

Graham couple's home told searchers in the air where to look.

The search turned up nothing. By afternoon, park officials were convinced they had an especially spectacular daybreak on their hands.

Sunlight on the mountain can play tricks on the eyes, Krambrink said, and Thursday's sunrise was a brilliant one.

"You can get very interesting environmental conditions sometimes," said Krambrink, who has seen Saint Elmo's fire on the mountain, an atmospheric phenomenon in which electrical charges appear to be balls of flame.

"The sunrise on the mountain played with the clouds and played with the icy surfaces of a glacier."

Besides false plane crashes and reports of UFOs, people sometimes call the park to report an eruption. The calls are earnest and are typically prompted by the sight of unusual cloud formations at the peak or snow blowing off the summit, Krambrink said.

"It looks like the mountain is steaming," Krambrink said.

Eruption reports are one type of false alarm park officials don't have to worry about. The University of Washington seismic laboratory has an arrangement to call the park in the event of unusual seismic activity that signals an eruption, Krambrink said.

On Thursday, Krambrink said, park officials couldn't afford to ignore the plane crash report. Planes have crashed on the mountain before, he noted.

Pilots of small planes sometimes don't file flight plans, so the lack of a report of a missing plane doesn't mean one hasn't crashed, he said.

"We really appreciate people who report things like this," Krambrink said. "We take them seriously. It's just all part of the job."

CR: K. Pflock
JOURNAL, Albuquerque, NM - April 19, 1998

Aztec Hopes UFO Event Lands Tourists

1948 Incident Has Mysterious Origins

By BILL PAPICH
For the Journal

AZTEC — Folks organizing activities for the 50th anniversary of an alleged UFO crash near town have a more pressing question than about the crash itself.

The big one is: How many people will show up May 25, Memorial Day, at this community of 6,000 for the anniversary of the crash that purportedly occurred May 25, 1948?

Most everyone has heard about crowds at the UFO crash festival at Roswell last summer — thousands to celebrate the 50th anniversary of an alleged UFO crash near that community. The Aztec incident has far less documentation than the celebrated incident, whatever it was, down south.

"Where are people going to stay in Aztec? I don't know," says Al Guilford, president of Aztec library's board of directors.

Proceeds from events at the anniversary celebration will go to a library fund for buying new books and computers.

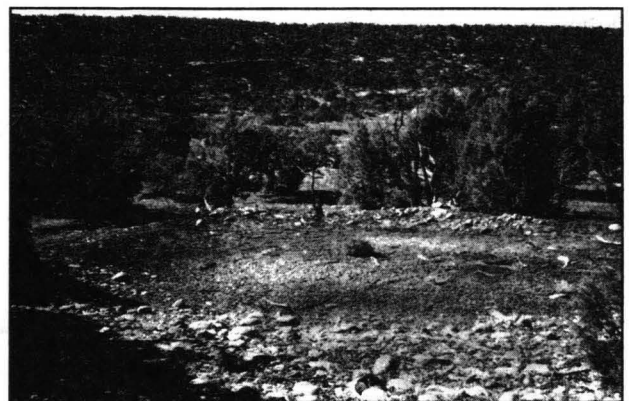
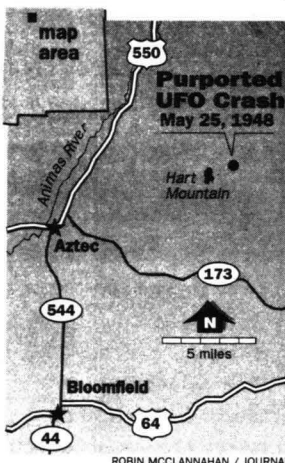
With only about 75 rooms at four motels in town, there could be lodging problems if Aztec draws a fraction of the crowds at Roswell.

Guilford is helping organize what's being billed as the "UFO Crash at Aztec 50th Anniversary Event." Since the 1950s, locals have heard stories about a flying saucer with 16 aliens on board crashing about 12 miles northeast of town — the dead aliens and their space ship secretly hauled away by the government.

A large concrete block of unknown origin embedded in the ground near the alleged crash site could be a marker. Nobody seems to know why the block is there.

The alleged crash site is said to produce higher Geiger counter readings than surrounding areas.

Events planned for the crash anniversary include an alien costume contest, model rocket launch-



MYSTERY SITE: A patch of dirt that is the alleged UFO crash site near Aztec might become a tourist attraction.

"What they more than likely would have done is set iron in it with the iron stenciled," he said.

If the marker is part of natural gas and oil well drilling, it wasn't recorded on oil and gas patch maps, says Roger Moore of Moore Anthropological Services in Aztec. The Bureau of Land Management requires archaeological investigations before gas and oil wells can be drilled on the agency's land. Moore contracts his archaeological services to oil and gas producers.

"I've looked at all the maps I have that show all the wells and they don't show anything there," Moore

said. "Sometimes they cap water wells with something like that, but there's no reference to a water well being in that area."

Deon Crosby, director of the International UFO Museum and Research Center at Roswell, said organizers of Aztec's UFO crash festival should not be discouraged by skeptics. Last year the Roswell museum's guest book recorded 192,000 visitors.

"Our saying is 'it's interesting that 192,000 people came to see something that didn't happen,'" Crosby said.

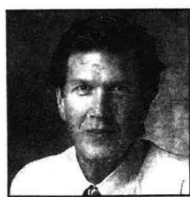
'Phoenix Lights' witnesses credible, hard to dismiss

When the "Phoenix Lights" were reported last year, I yawned. I didn't see them, and breathless TV broadcasts were underwhelming. It seemed easy enough to dismiss the lights as flares or military aircraft. UFOs? You've got to be kidding.

Still, as the March 13 anniversary of the sightings approached, I was curious enough to seek out some witnesses. I suspected most would turn out to be UFO devotees. My skepticism was heightened by a *New Times* story last week that debunked the extraterrestrial theorizing and discredited a leading local theorist, Jim Dilettoso, as a "quack scientist."

I found several people with credible credentials who witnessed the lights. At the least, their stories are interesting. Even if you regard their accounts dubiously, as I do, they raise legitimate questions.

Enough questions, says Peter Davenport, director of the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle, that what happened that



STEVE WILSON
Republic Columnist

night "may rank as the most dramatic UFO event in the past 50 years."

First, a little background. The lights were spotted between 7:30 and 10:30 in the evening over a 300-mile corridor from the Nevada line through Prescott Valley and Phoenix to the northern edge of Tucson. Some reports indicate that a single "V" formation traveled across the state, while

others suggest multiple UFO events. The lights were seen by hundreds of people.

Here are four:

• Dr. Bradley Evans, 47, is a clinical psychiatrist from Tucson. He and his wife, Kris, were driving north on Interstate 10 to a swimming meet in Tempe. They watched the lights for 20 minutes or so move slowly south in a diamond formation and pass over them at an estimated 1,500 feet. Even then, with the car's moon roof open, they heard not a sound from the sky.

He was "awed" by the experience and has no idea what he saw. Kris said she couldn't explain it either and guesses it was "something military."

• Trig Johnston, 50, is a retired commercial airline pilot who lives in north Scottsdale. His 22-year-old son was looking for Comet Hale-Bopp that night when he noticed the lights and told his dad.

"I looked up and remember saying out loud, 'I'm going to chalk this up to an illusion.' It was the size of 25 airliners,

moving at about 100 knots at maybe 5,000 feet, and it didn't make a sound. I've flown 747s across oceans and not seen anything like I saw that night," Johnston said.

"I don't expect anybody to take my word for it," he added. "This was something you had to see for yourself to believe."

• Max Saracen, 34, is a real estate consultant who lives in north Phoenix. He and his wife, Shahla, were driving west on Deer Valley Road when they saw a huge triangular craft. They pulled off the road, got out and watched it pass overhead.

"It was very spooky — this gigantic ship blocking out the stars and silently creeping across the sky. I don't know of any aircraft with silent engines."

• Dr. X is a physician who lives near Squaw Peak in Phoenix and asked to remain anonymous for fear of ridicule.

Her home has an elevated, panoramic view of the Valley, and she has some of the best known videotape and photographs of the lights. Though she had no prior interest in UFOs, the episode prompted her to begin her own investigation.

"I think what happened is mind-boggling," she said. "I'm trying to be as scientific as I can, and a number of things just don't compute."

I'm not given to an otherworldly answer. But neither do I think these four people and so many others who saw the lights are all exaggerating or delusional.

Of all the explanations, a U.S. military operation of some sort, maybe testing experimental aircraft, seems most likely. Mitch Stanley of Scottsdale said he could clearly see several planes when he pointed his telescope at the lights. But if it was a classified operation, why conduct it directly over the nation's sixth-biggest city? And if it wasn't, why hasn't the military simply acknowledged it?

You don't have to be a ufologist to be puzzled about what lit the sky that night.

Steve Wilson can be reached at 444-8775 or at steve.wilson@pnri.com via e-mail.

TIMES, Washington, DC - April 8, 1998 CR: R. PanLener

UFO fans doubt dismissals, insist truth's out there

Accuse government of hiding truth

By Julia Duin
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

One Sunday evening last summer, two local television news anchors were broadcasting yet another government report on UFOs. The latest explanation: purported UFOs were actually reconnaissance planes.

The female anchor read the report with a straight face, then tossed it aside. "Is that right?" the male anchor asked her.

"So what?" she replied. "No one is going to believe it, though."

What people actually do believe may hover somewhere between "Lost in Space," "Contact" and "Men in Black." Gallup polls show 72 percent of Americans think there is life on other planets. Seventy-one percent think the U.S. government knows more about UFOs than it's telling.

UFOs and their alien passengers more than haunt the edges of popular consciousness. They keep on popping up in ads, on the Internet and in an upcoming R-rated thriller, "Species II," about a mission to Mars gone amok. Monday night, the UPN cable network

aired "Danger in Our Skies," a show about UFO sightings above Mexico City last summer.

Those who want more on UFOs can attend three upcoming local conferences on the topic. The Mutual UFO Network, known as MUFON and based in Seguin, Texas, plans a mid-Atlantic conference on May 9 in Bethesda. A related group based in Mt. Ranier, the Fund for UFO Research, is having its conference Aug. 22 at Prince George's Community College.

Next year, the national MUFON conference will be during the July 4 weekend at the Crystal City Hyatt Regency. MUFON recently restarted its Northern Virginia chapter with monthly meetings at a Tysons Corner restaurant.

About 20 people attended a recent meeting where one speaker encouraged listeners to become UFO field investigators. "I think the tide has turned" regarding public interest in UFOs, he said, pointing out that western Virginia, specifically Wytheville, gets lots of sightings.

Bill Weitzel, a retired college professor who lives in the District

and spends his days researching government archives about purported UFO sightings over Washington in July 1952, pointed out that the public can access many government files on the topic.

"The Air Force can be presented face-to-face with very provocative testimony and just throw it out the window," he said. "The lack of attention by the military is due to an ingrained belief there's nothing to look at. The government views the UFO phenomenon as a vocal group of people with extreme beliefs. But there are serious scientists out there doing good research."

U.S. Air Force spokeswoman Gloria Cales says the Air Force investigated UFOs from 1947 to 1969 in what was known as Project Bluebook.

"We ended [the investigation] because there was nothing to support it," she said. "None of these UFOs were a threat to national security, none of them represented any technological developments beyond the range of modern knowledge and none of the unidentified objects were identified as an extraterrestrial vehicle."

But she had no explanation for what appeared a year ago on March 13 in the Arizona skies, when thousands of people reported seeing a huge V-shaped object approximately a mile long floating over the cities of Wickenburg, Glendale, Phoenix, Scottsdale and Tempe at about 30 mph.

All lines to local police, media and to nearby Luke Air Force Base were jammed with callers. Three months later, a Phoenix city council member named Frances Barwood called for an investigation of the mysterious object. The Air Force has said it was not one of their planes.

Researchers at the Center for the Study of Extra-Terrestrial Intel-

ligence, based in Asheville, N.C., say sightings are reaching a critical mass.

Headed by Dr. Steven Greer, an emergency-room physician, the CSETI pounds home a theory that the U.S. government has known of UFOs for at least 50 years. Dr. Greer has put together a 2-inch-thick document targeted at members of Congress that claims the U.S. government has various facilities connected to UFOs: Edwards Air Force Base, portions of Nevada's Area 51, Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, and Fort Huachuca in Arizona, where alien spacecraft and previously autopsied bodies are supposedly being stored. All are commanded from a vast underground complex southwest of Salt Lake City, accessible only by air.

All these facilities, he says of this "Independence Day"-style scenario, are built by private contractors — he has a list — including the best-known names in aerospace: Boeing, Lockheed Martin and McDonnell Douglas.

Such hypotheses have gotten little acceptance from mainstream media, except for appearances on Larry King's show and, most recently, a March 30 article about secret UFO briefings held for Clinton administration officials by White House correspondent Sarah McLendon.

"I'm always battling secrecy in the federal government," said Miss McLendon, who appeared yesterday on national talk show host Art Bell's all-night show for a discussion on — what else? — UFOs. CSETI has repeated asked for a congressional investigation on the matter, and, a year ago this week, invited members of Congress to 2½-hour briefing at the Westin Hotel in Georgetown.

"We do not expect you to believe in the reality of UFOs," its invitation said, "but we do request that you be willing to consider the evidence and listen to these courageous military and intelligence witnesses who are moved on a deep personal and ethical level to come forward."

An audience of 100, including about six members of Congress, embassy personnel, Pentagon and White House staff, came to hear a succession of rocket scientists, Air Force pilots, intelligence analysts and Apollo 14 astronaut Edgar Mitchell, who admitted to never having seen a UFO.

"While there is no smoking-gun evidence in the public domain... there's all sorts of evidence pointing to the smoking-gun evidence in the classified domain," the astronaut said.

Dr. Greer calls it all a "cosmic Watergate," and says he has 150 military and government employees who've handled aliens and examined their spaceships through "reverse engineering," which is taking apart a spacecraft to see how it works. These people will only talk under the protection of a congressional investigation, he says. When asked how such massive projects are being funded, he explains that plenty of "black budget" funds — completely outside of congressional oversight — are available for such things.

As reported by Tim Weiner in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in the late 1980s — for which he won a Pulitzer Prize — the black budget is a secret stash kept by the Pentagon that costs American taxpayers \$100 million daily. The Pentagon hides this, he reported, by keeping two sets of books: one for itself and the other for the public.

"It's the tip of a very large iceberg," Dr. Greer says. "Many witnesses want to be subpoenaed by Congress on this. This has been a matter of interest in the popular culture for decades. Ten percent of all Americans have seen a UFO but so few talk about it; the ridicule level is so high."



Photo by Paul Trent/Special to The Washington Times

Taken May 11, 1950, in McMinnville, Ore., this photo of a saucer-shaped object has intrigued believers and baffled investigators ever since.

SKYWATCH DIARY

BY CAROLE BAKER

Merry Christmas and Happy Chanukah! I hope everyone has a splendid holiday season. Due to the publishing schedule at *The Islander*, this week and next week we are covering some historical reports from the Gulf Breeze area and will catch up with all the current news in the January 7 issue.

There is a long history of sightings in the Gulf Breeze area and along the Gulf Coast and here is just a sampling of some of the reports that we have collected.

From the *Pensacola News Journal*, October 16, 1973: "UFO Reported over I-10" CRESTVIEW - Two Mississippians reported seeing an unidentified flying object near Interstate 10, Monday, at about 1:30 a.m. According to sheriff's department reports, Greg E. Havard and Will Hollin Jr. of Lucedale, spotted the UFO hovering to the south of the interstate somewhere between the Pensacola bridge and the Fort Walton Beach exit. They reported it was stopped in the air about 1000 feet up and lit up by some "normal looking" lights and some flashing lights. They told sheriff's deputies they watched it for about five minutes, then it swooped away, making no noise. In a separate incident, Philip Lynch, a visitor to the area, reported spotting four UFOs at 10:36 Sunday night, 15 miles east of Destin. The UFOs were white, at about 3000 feet and travelling at a high rate of speed toward Destin according to Lynch's report. He said there was no noise. Lynch reported the sighting to the Air Force's Air Defense Training Center at Eglin. An Air Force spokesman said there was no trace of any flying objects on the radar."

Multiple witnesses are cited in this *Pensacola News Journal*

report from July 8, 1975: "UFOs spotted by 12 Late Night Observers." At least a dozen persons fishing in Grand Lagoon over the weekend reportedly watched two unidentified flying objects darting in the skies "at incredible speed" for more than two hours. Six women, accompanied by their husbands, were participating in a three-day fishing rodeo when the brilliant objects were sighted about midnight Sunday. James Clancy, Grand Lagoon Yacht Club commodore reported the aerial phenomena resembled stars "except that they were moving and darting around like no airplane or anything any of us had ever seen before." He added, however, that the two UFOs were so high in the sky that their general shape and size were impossible to determine. "When they moved slowly and steadily in a straight line, it was not anything that would particularly get your attention," Clancy said. "But then they would shoot off in one direction, up or down, or to either side, moving at unbelievable speed and angles. When they accelerated around fast, they left behind a trail of light like a comet." Clancy said that the motion of the flight reminded him of the way a water bug darts on top of the water. Another witness, Mrs. Chesley Severns, said her attention was first focused on the bright light while she was fishing. "I noticed this thing at the end of my fishing pole. Although it was a hazy night, we could see it well because of its brilliance. And it maneuvered more than anything I've ever seen—from north to south and from east to west. Then another one began moving." She agreed that they appeared to be stars except for extraordinary speeds and 90-degree-angle turns. Mrs. Stevens alerted Charles Fillio, a retired Navy navigator,

who grabbed a pair of night vision binoculars and followed the lights for about twenty minutes. "At first, sitting there on the dock, I thought it was a satellite," he said, but soon changed his mind when he saw a change of direction. "It was pretty strange." But he said he wouldn't stake his reputation on their identities because it was too far away to pin them down. A teenager, Denise Woltzen, reported the objects "didn't act like shooting stars. They seemed to move in a pattern, up and down and from side to side. I stayed up until 2 a.m. watching them and they were still moving when I went to sleep," she said. Mrs. John Bethune, said at about 2:30 a.m. her attention was focused on a reddish colored light near the mouth of the Gulf that would extinguish and reappear at intervals. She watched for 45 minutes as it moved from the channel to the bridge. She couldn't hear any noises and claimed it could not have been a fishing boat because it was moving at excessive speed. "It was getting eerie and I moved away from the dock," she said. Other witnesses followed the aerial flight until approximately 3 a.m. Sunday when the UFOs disappeared from sight, Clancy said. Those questioned said that they never flew in tandem. While they flew all over the sky, they always stayed away from each other. The Federal Aviation Administration's Radar Air Traffic Control Center at Forrest Sherman Field, Monday, reported no unusual sightings during that time and their log showed no phone calls reporting any sightings."

If you wish to contact me, please e-mail me at Cbakewd@aol.com or write to me at P.O. Box 17152, Pensacola FL 32522-7152, thank you. And remember - Keep Looking Up!

UFOs lift scientist to career high

Things were not looking up for Dr. Bruce Cornet. "I always had my eyes down on the ground," remembered Cornet, whose expertise in geology and paleontology — he holds advanced degrees in both — was once tapped by energy companies searching below the earth for fossil fuels.

His life was changed forever with the broadcast of a 1992 television miniseries. By the time "The Intruders" concluded its two-night network run, Cornet's head was tilted in the opposite direction. There, it has remained.

Today, the business card professed by Bruce Cornet reads: "UFO Investigator." To Cornet, it's a full-time job. He spends his days studying photographic computer images and documenting the air speed and trajectory of airborne phenomena that look like airplanes but hover like helicopters.

Cornet did not enter this vocation blindly.



STEVE GIEGERICH

Trained as a scientist, he pored over books and periodicals and academic tracts hoping, really, to be dissuaded. When instead he became persuaded, Cornet entered a different orbit — one he acknowledges that not many others fully understand. Like his former employer, "I could say my career came to a quick halt," the Red Bank resident said.

Hastening the end was an event that occurred on a June evening in 1992 outside Middletown, N.Y. (where Cornet and his family then resided). There, escorted by a group of true believers, Cornet saw his first UFO in the night sky. Cornet and the others photographed the cigar-shaped object.

The pictures constantly affirm to

CR: B. Cornet

Cornet that "I'm not going crazy." The photographs, along with what Cornet says are documentations of subsequent sightings, can be seen on Cornet's website: <http://orion.adp.wisc.edu/bcornet1>.

In believing in that great other world, Cornet is far from alone.

UFOs and extraterrestrial contact have become so popular that each night on WABC radio, talk show host Art Bell presides over a nationwide program dedicated solely to the subject. Skeptics might note that WABC broadcasts Bell's program at 3 in the morning. Realists might note it is the exact time of day during which Larry King launched his national broadcast career.

The 52-year-old Cornet has no use for ye of no faith. "I don't care if they dismiss me," he said. "I could care less about the skeptics. If they don't want to believe it, I have no time for them."

Cornet does, however, reserve time for the fellow in Ocean Grove who last month reported seeing a UFO hovering just past the shoreline in the middle of the day. To Cornet, seeing is believing. And, having seen for himself what the Ocean Grove man professes to have seen, Cornet believes.

Clicking his mouse, Cornet summoned a picture onto his computer screen. It depicted a stoplight. Above the stoplight was a white blur.

The white blur, said Cornet, followed him up the Garden State Parkway from the Atlantic City Expressway to Exit 109. The picture was taken at the intersection of Newman Springs Road and Shrewsbury Avenue. Cornet claims the location, known to most as a hot spot for service stations is, in reality, a "hot spot" for UFOs.

At the same time, Cornet professes not to know why he is being singled out from above. "Hey, if I had an answer to that, I could make a million dollars," he said.

Or, at the very least, make an appearance on Art Bell's program.

□ Steve Giegerich, who can be reached at steveg@app.com, is an Asbury Park Press staff writer. His column appears Sunday, Wednesday and Friday.

SKYWATCH DIARY

by Carole Baker

This week I am pleased and honored to share with you a report that was written by my dear friend and webmaster, Russell Bunge. He and a friend spent some time in Brazil earlier this year. The focus of their trip was the UFO phenomenon and they had an extremely interesting time down there. So, here are Russell's observations of the state of UFO research in Brazil.

UFO Research in Brazil by Russell Bunge

The Beyond Boundaries 'Primary Expedition to Brazil, January 13th - February 2nd, 1998, could be renamed "UFO Pilgrims Discover Serious Ufology." The pilgrims in this case an eclectic group of seven UFO enthusiasts, who at the time of the expedition become a diverse team of researchers. The expedition's story is as varied as that of the ufological profiles of the team members - a computer programmer, a farmer, a military veteran, a couple of writers. It's a story of discovery, a compen-

dium of "field notes" on the topic of the human response to post-modern contact with extra-terrestrials and their machines. The main point is that human beings develop as many theories to explain away the sightings of anomalous lights and contact experiences as they do to confirm such phenomena. And, that both kinds of "theory development" are essential to our every-evolving awareness of our role in creating a universe that is more than the sum of the seen and the unseen.

UFO Research Important

It is difficult to review the complete expedition briefly, because the study of UFOs in the United States scarcely prepares an enthusiast for the systematic and detailed UFO scholarship found in Brazil; and because the individual team members hold their own equally valid points of view. However, it is possible to examine a couple of examples that support the genuine importance of UFO research in Brazil.

Throughout the expedition our hosts and guides warned of the inherent dangers accompanying the appearance of the OVNI (Objectos Voader Nao Identificado - Portuguese for UFOs). "Do not be embarrassed to hide or to hold onto trees" when an OVNI is overhead, went the warnings. According to Professor Ilulvio Aleixo, the OVNI don't care who they attack. Both women and men of all ages and from all social and economic backgrounds have suffered physical attacks with laser-like beams emanating from the OVNI. The Brazilians call these attacking OVNI the "Chupa-Chupa." These are not be confused, as they initially were by our expedition members, with the blood sucking "Chupa Cabras" of Goat Suckers" of Puerto Rico.

Professor Aleixo teaches psychology at the University in Belo Horizonte and has researched nearly 500 cases over the past 35 years. His research methods are exacting. By carefully gathering data and following a unique protocol he designed for

UFO research, Professor Aleixo is able to map and quantify each of his case studies. His precision interviews include number coded palettes for color identification and drawings and clay models made by the interviewees. The modeled OVNI are impressive for the three dimensional representation of every kind of shape - bell, globe, fish, cigar - even saucer, and for the multiple combinations of blue, yellow, red and green clays. Because of his methodology, Professor Aleixo's research is invaluable for ufologists now and in the future. His work is a means by which studies could measure, compare and contrast, this most strange phenomenon worldwide.

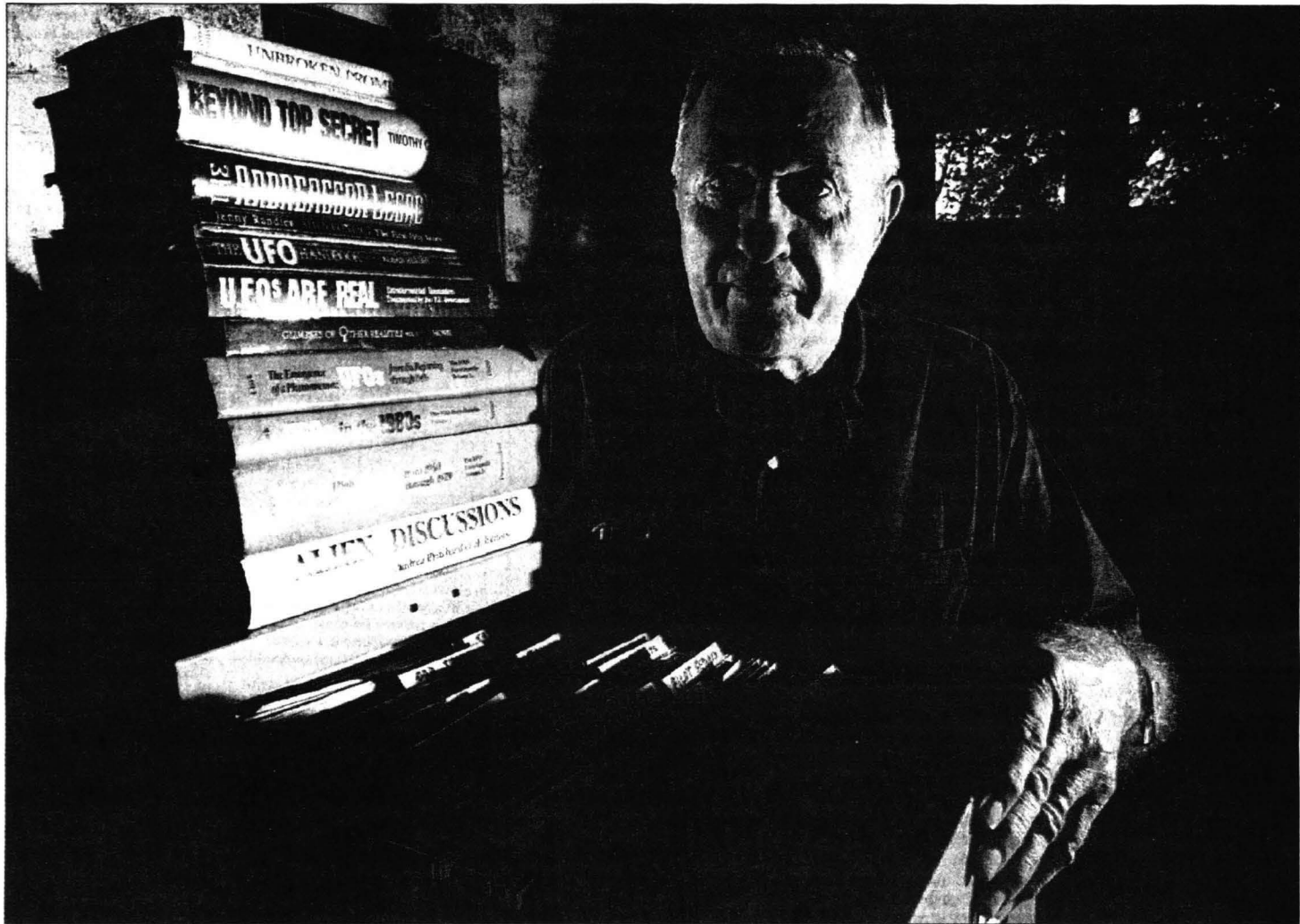
This story of the Brazilian Research Project will be concluded next week.

If you wish to contact me, my email address is: bakerswd@bellsouth.net or my mailing address is P.O. Box 17152, Pensacola, FL. 32522-7152. Keep looking up!

PEOPLE

"I avoid the word believe because it doesn't have anything to do with belief. I'm the Ralph Nader, not a Billy Graham, of UFOs."

GEORGE D. FAWCETT, UFO enthusiast



JOURNAL PHOTO BY DAVID ROLFE

UFO INFO: George Fawcett still has much of his material on UFOs, he recently donated 20,685 documents to a museum in Roswell, N.M.

Curious George of UFOland

UFO cases have convinced George Fawcett, but he's no believer

By Kim Underwood
JOURNAL REPORTER

LINCOLNTON — In more than 50 years of investigating UFOs and UFO-nauts — as he calls them — George D. Fawcett accumulated enough letters, journals, questionnaires, photographs, Freedom of Information Act documents and other materials to

fill a museum.

Fawcett, who is from Mount Airy, had hoped to do just that somewhere here in North Carolina. He even made some preliminary designs for a UFO museum that would look like a classic flying saucer.

The North Carolina museum never worked out. But he has found a home for his archives: In March, he donated 20,685 documents to the International UFO Museum & Research Center in Roswell, N.M.

He held on to 600 case studies that he's using for a book he's writing about UFO incidents in North Carolina and South Carolina.

At the same time, a colleague of Fawcett's in Florida — E.R. "Bob" Sabo — donated 15,000 items to the Roswell museum.

As the site of what became one of this country's most famous UFO incidents, Roswell is a natural site for

a UFO museum. In 1947, some men found what they thought was wreckage of a spaceship and reported seeing soldiers putting dead extraterrestrials into body bags.

Fawcett, who is the founder of the Mutual UFO Network of North Carolina, said he's disappointed that he wasn't able to start a museum here, but the Roswell museum, which had about 200,000 visitors last year, is an excellent home for their collections.

In March, four movers spent 10 hours at Fawcett's house in Lincolnton packing up the material, much of it in nine four-drawer filing cabinets. Fawcett's is the largest-ever donation of documents to the museum, said Dennis Balthaser, the museum's operation's manager and a UFO investigator.

"We're extremely grateful to George and Bob for thinking about us," Balthaser said.

It's difficult to put a monetary value on such a collection, Fawcett said, but he estimates that it's probably worth about \$350,000. Balthaser said he thinks a \$300,000 to \$400,000 estimate is conservative because many of the items are irreplaceable.

Some of Fawcett's collection will be put on display. The other material will be made available to people doing research.

Fawcett, 68, first became intrigued by UFOs in

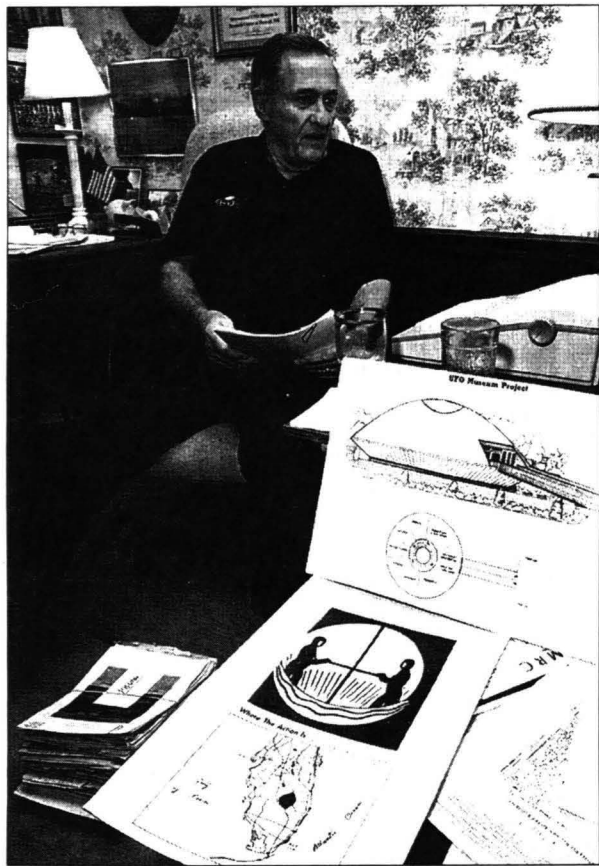


HOME BASE: The International UFO Museum & Research Center is in Roswell, N.M., the site of one of the most famous UFO incidents.

1944 when he read an item in a newspaper about "mysterious silvery balls" floating in the air. At the time, the Allies speculated that the balls were a new weapon being developed by the Germans. It later turned out that the Germans thought they were a weapon being developed by the Allies.

"It certainly got my curiosity," Fawcett said. "I became a Curious George of UFOland."

(continued on page 11)



LOST DREAM: George Fawcett displays his plans for a UFO museum in North Carolina, a project that he later abandoned.

He remained skeptical for about seven years before becoming what he calls a non-skeptic. He makes a point of saying he is not a *believer* in UFOs.

"I avoid the word *believe* because it doesn't have anything to do with belief," he said.

It has to do with conclusions drawn from investigations, he said.

"I'm the Ralph Nader, not a Billy Graham of UFOs."

Since Fawcett began investigating UFO incidents personally, he has looked into more than 1,200 cases — about half of those in North Carolina and South Carolina.

Although he says that beings are coming to this world from other worlds, he doesn't count himself among those who buy every story and theory they hear.

"I've had to walk that narrow path between foolish faith where every light in the sky is a spaceship," he said, "and blind doubt, which is 'Don't bother me about the facts, my mind is made up.'"

After his investigations, he could offer ordinary explanations for all but 22 percent of the incidents. Even though most incidents become IFOs — Identified Flying Objects — he estimates that only 1 percent were hoaxes.

"Most of the people are sincere," he said. "That doesn't

mean they can't be sincerely wrong."

Fawcett said he would be hard-pressed to say what the most intriguing case he has studied over the years is because they're all so intriguing. He likened it to being asked to say what was the best hot dog he has eaten in the last 40 years.

Fawcett saw a UFO once — on July 10, 1951, when he was a student at Lynchburg College in Virginia. As he walked across the campus, he saw an orange hemisphere hovering about 300 feet above the administration building. He watched it until it rose out of sight 4½ minutes later.

He has never met any UFO-nuts. He's not sure whether he's sorry that's never happened, he said.

"I've got misgivings," he said.

It would depend on which ones he met. Some appear to be friendly enough. Some, though, appear to be downright hostile, and who would want to meet them?

In dealing with the public over those years, Fawcett has seen a shift in thinking about UFOs. Early on, people tended to dismiss them, and many considered him a crackpot.

Now, they don't ask whether they're real, they ask about the latest information. Fawcett estimates that about 50 percent of people think there is something to UFOs; 25 percent are skeptics; and 25 percent don't know what to think.

Balthaser said surveys have shown that 48 percent of people

say that UFOs are real and 68 percent say that the U.S. government is covering up something.

Although Fawcett didn't use to give credence to stories that the government has had contact with extraterrestrials, he now says that evidence indicates it's strongly possible that contact has been made.

In any case, he says that the way the government has handled information about UFO incidents has resulted in needless suffering.

"These people's lives have been ruined because of coming forward," Fawcett said. "A lot of people have lost their homes and families because of UFOs, and that's where I think the government went wrong."

Fawcett doesn't have much to say about UFO plots to such TV shows as *The X-Files*, which he doesn't watch, other than such shows often have smatterings of truth mixed in with all sorts of other stuff.

He did say right out that he thinks the alien autopsy show on TV was a hoax. Which is not to say that there haven't been real alien autopsies, he added.

While Fawcett was investigating UFOs, he worked his way through four careers. From 1952 to 1972, he was a director of YMCA's in various locations. (He's working with others to get a Y started in Lincolnton.)

For the next 10 years, he was a reporter for newspapers in Mount Airy and elsewhere. For 15 years, he helped his wife, Shirley, run a sandwich shop in Lincolnton. During part of that time, he continued working part-time for newspapers, teaching classes on UFOs at Gaston College in Denver, N.C., and selling World Book encyclopedias.

He then spent 11 years of his working life at Mohican Mills before retiring a couple of Christmases ago.

After retiring, Fawcett decided the time had come to acknowledge that the UFO museum in North Carolina wasn't going to happen. Although the state would certainly be an appropriate place for one, he said. It's first in flight and fourth in UFO sightings. Only Pennsylvania, California and Missouri have had more sightings.

Although Fawcett has donated much of his material, he has by no means retired from investigating UFO-related incidents, and he still gets a lot of requests to talk about UFOs.

With everything that's going on in his life, he said, it's hard to find the time to devote to the book — his second on UFOs. But he hopes to have it done in three years.

At the moment, he's planning to call it *UFOs & UFO-nauts in North Carolina and South Carolina*. He considered calling it *Flying Saucers, Little Men and Ray Guns* but decided that the time has passed for such a title.

■ More information about the International UFO Museum & Research Center in Roswell, N.M., can be found online at www.iufomrc.com

SKYWATCH DIARY

By CAROL BELL

Oh No! A family in Lake County, Minnesota is abducted and their son is able to film the whole event... wait a minute... what's that at the end of the video? Credits?! Alien #1 played by... Mom played by...! Come on UPN, aren't things confusing enough? Did the well known experts, Stanton Friedman, Yvonne Smith and Derrel Sims, involved in this show, know what they were contributing to or were their statements taken out of context and used in this pitiable manner? How gullible do the media think the public are? They ask if we think what we have just seen was real, then show us credits detailing who played the aliens? What is this about? Are they just trying to see who will watch such a program or what? We just have to keep that ridicule factor alive, don't we, boys?

It was a disappointing week in several ways. I could not skywatch because I succumbed to a chest cold, and I was particularly sorry to miss the return visit to Shoreline Park of J. Michael and Donna Long from Laurel, Mississippi. (J. Michael has been getting some responses to his Internet appeal for information about Mississippi sightings, so my thanks also to all those who are helping him out. His e-mail address is jmichael@cnet.com.) We had planned this weekend since their last visit in December and I felt bad that I was under the weather and could not even go out! They did get to skywatch on Friday and Saturday night, though, along with a few others of the regular skywatchers at Shoreline Park. Tom, our staunch regular who hardly misses a night, and Bill Ford were at hand to share the evening with them in our absence, thankfully. My husband did go out on Sunday evening and reported that all was quiet. So, we still await our first Shoreline Park sighting for the New Year of 1998.

Forced rest allowed for some catching up on reading of e-mails, forwards, letters, articles, etc. I also received a surprise telephone call on Sunday evening from friend and webmaster Russell in Brazil. He told of spending a day with a professor who has been studying UFOs for 35 years in that country. This man has a tremendous amount of information and data. Can't wait to hear more details on this interesting meeting after Russ and Kelly return home in February.

Another telephone contact this

week with a former Gulf Breeze resident, now living in Louisiana, yielded a report of a sighting from the beginning of August 1997. Details here are vague, but what she described was so spectacular, I am wondering if there is anyone else out there who remembers witnessing this event. This witness states that a huge triangular shaped configuration of lights (somewhat similar to the Phoenix sightings) travelled along Santa Rosa Island west of the Navarre Bridge. The lights were yellow, changing to white and the configuration disappeared by one light after the other going out in sequence. Apparently, according to this witness, hundreds of people must have seen it. Navarre Police vehicles were lining the Navarre Bridge as a result of it, and military helicopters were in hot pursuit of it! No reports were received of such a spectacular sighting to my knowledge, but if anyone knows anything about this event, please get in touch with me so we can piece together more information. Thanks.

Two other sighting reports came my way—one from the U.S. and one from Germany. In Gilford, New Hampshire on January 12 at 5 p.m. a man witnessed a ball of white light travelling overhead at about 1000 feet. It was heading in a NNE direction and appeared to be about the size of a softball. There was no noise involved with this sighting and the ball of light travelled in a straight path from horizon to horizon in about three seconds. Fantastic speed! Reminiscent of "tinkerbells" at Shoreline Park! Thanks to this White Mountain State witness for sharing this with us. Also thanks to a witness from Frankfurt, Germany, whose English is about as good as my German, for sending the cryptic message "My English is not the best sorry. Someone else saw the fire rig thing in the sky? Please contact." I have not come across any reports from Germany of sightings on the night of January 10/11, but again if anyone has anything on this, I will surely pass it along to our Deutsche friend.

To continue in an international vein, I received the latest OVNI newsletter from Omar Fowler in England with great interest. Page 3 of this wonderful newsletter details events taking place in the East Anglia area of England. I have a particular interest since this is an area of that country in which I once

lived. Apparently there have been an increasing number of reports concerning everything from flying triangles to balls of light and luminous craft at ground level! Some of this activity has been captured on what Omar described as "mind-blowing" video, and hopefully we will get to see this at some point. The town of Thetford and adjacent Thetford Forest is a hot bed of activity where many bizarre things have been seen, including black Cadillacs with dark suited, sunglasses clad men sitting in them. Having lived in the town of Thetford for four years, I can attest that this is indeed a bizarre and unusual sight!

Omar also includes three reports of Flying triangles spotted over U.S. airspace recently—in Elk City, Oklahoma on October 4, 1997, a witness and several police officers saw a large bright triangular object with a hole in the center go over. It was joined by another UFO. In Allison Park, Pennsylvania on December 16, 1997 a large dark gray triangular shaped craft was sighted travelling northwest at about 4-6000 ft. There were six large white lights on the outer rim of the object and two red lights at the leading point. Another flying triangle was reported in West Georgia near Franklin on December 5 heading southeast at about 2000 ft. Omar puts out a really interesting newsletter and if you would like to subscribe you can contact him at: The Phenomenon Research Association, 94 The Circle, Siffin, Derby DE24 9H, England. The Phenomenon Research Association's motto is "We believe in the free exchange of UFO information." Go Omar!

For information about the Project Awareness Gulf Breeze UFO Conference to be held March 20, 21 and 22 on Pensacola Beach you can hit their website at: <http://www.projectawareness.com>, or write to Project Awareness, P.O. Box 730, Gulf Breeze, FL 32561, telephone them at (850) 432-8888 or e-mail: vickilyons01@sprynet.com.

For information on the annual Ozark UFO Conference to be held April 10-12, 1998 in Eureka Springs, Arkansas contact: Ozark UFO Conference, 2 Caney Valley Drive, Plumerville AR 72127-8725, telephone: (501) 354-2558.

If you wish to contact me, please e-mail me at Cbakswd@aol.com or write me at P.O. Box 17152, Pensacola FL 32522-7152, thank you. And remember - Keep Looking Up!



UFO mystery after night car chase

A CHIPPING Sodbury man has told how he and a friend chased a UFO for 40 minutes across two counties.

The 25-year-old was loading his car with a friend in St John's Way, at around 8.30pm on Sunday, when they noticed a strange light in the sky.

The two walked across a cricket pitch to get a closer look, then decided to jump in their car to pursue the light.

"It was a bright white glow, about a quarter of the size of the full moon, and had four red and green flashing lights inside it," said the 25 year old from Couzens Close, who asked not to be named. They tried to get closer to the

By TRISTAN CORK

object as it moved north from Chipping Sodbury towards Wickwar.

"We went down lots of country lanes, and didn't really know where we were going," he said. "It was pretty big and pretty slow, and we got to within 500 yards of it, but never nearer than that."

"All the time we were thinking of the rational thing it could be: a balloon; a helicopter or some kind of aircraft. But there was no way it was anything we could suggest." The pair lost sight of the light after driving under trees near North Nibley, near Dursley. "We came out the other side, and it had gone. Then we

saw three jets flying in formation to where the light had been - that was very strange."

A spokesman for the RAF dismissed the two men's report. "The RAF doesn't fly on Sundays - we have no record of any flights," he said.

But the Cheltenham-based UFO investigation group Circular Forum confirmed other sightings.

"A father and daughter have told us that they saw large, bright white lights travelling north over Cheltenham half an hour after your sighting," the group's Robin Cole told *The Gazette*.

"The speed and direction are about right, so it could have been the same thing."

EVENING MAIL, Birmingham, England - Dec. 31, 1997

'UFO' spotted over houses

A MYSTERIOUS object which hovered in the sky today left a group of Midland workers baffled.

Several staff at a design firm in Leamington spotted it on the A452 Balsall Common to Kenilworth road as they travelled to work.

Engineer Tom Leavesley said: "It was the size of a jumbo jet, but was far too low to be an aircraft. I'm a bit of a sceptic over UFOs, but this was very strange."

White lights

Design engineer Richard Hamilton said: "I was driving to work when I suddenly saw what I at first thought was a low-flying aircraft."

"When I got closer, however, I noticed this thing was just hovering about 200ft from the ground above some houses. It was pretty dark, but it had continuous white lights on each corner."

A spokesman for Birmingham Airport said that as the sightings were on a flight-path, it is possible the 'UFO' could have been an aircraft.

West Midlands police said they had received no reports of unusual objects in the area.

An RAF jet fighter is flying over Fife. The pilot sees a UFO, panics, and shoots it down. Then what?

Invasion: Perth

Story by **Eddie Gibb** Alien images by **Creative Photography**

CHOW-TIME at RAF Leuchars, and a square-jawed Tornado pilot is explaining the intricacies of taking a leak in a rubberised flying suit. "The trouble is you have to find exactly the right zip," he says. "It's like bondage is back in fashion, a sort of retro-punk look. Then there's the G-suit where compressed air is fired into your pants, basically. When you do a really tight turn, the air automatically pumps into your legs and it stops the blood rushing to your feet, because that makes you black out." After lunch, he will return to his fighter jet and save the world.

Not in real life, of course. Vincent Regan is undoubtedly square of jaw but he is an actor playing the part of a pilot. The Tornado jets screaming down the runway are real enough but inflating underpants are as close as this boy will get to lift off. With the blessing of RAF top brass, who are doubtless hoping for a *Top Gun*-style recruitment boost, the Fife air base is being used as a location to film a six-part drama called *Invasion: Earth*. But the rules are strict - hands off the hardware.

Co-produced by BBC Scotland and the American Sci-Fi Channel, the concept could be lazily described as "*Independence Day* over Scotland". Writer and producer Jed Mercurio winces at the suggestion. "Yeah, the *Braveheart* spirit lives on," he says sar-

castically. "Invasion: Perth, maybe."

OK, but is Regan anything like the Will Smith character who saved the world in last year's alien invasion blockbuster? After all, this show is being produced partly for the US market.

"Yes and no," says Regan, who previously played a helicopter pilot in ITV's air-ambulance drama, *Call Red*, and seems in danger of being typecast. "Will Smith finds the whole thing rather amusing whereas it's my character's fault that all this is happening because I shoot down a UFO at the beginning. I don't go out there and kick ET's butt - I'm a bit too perplexed by the whole situation for those witty one-liners. Then I fall in love, take responsibility for my actions and realise what a fool I've been - a Hamlet of the skies!"

The only similarity between *Invasion: Earth* and *Independence Day* is that they both feature lone pilots holding the future of the world in their gloved hands. But Mercurio, a former doctor who scripted the gall-soaked hospital drama, *Cardiac Arrest*, is well aware that the success of those kind of sci-fi movies, combined with the huge popularity of *The X-Files*, have made *Invasion: Earth* possible. Word was out in the BBC that a home-grown sci-fi drama was required, and the fact that Mercurio developed the project with BBC Scotland ensured that the series was

filmed north of the Border.

"If you do a science fiction show at a time when other work like *The X-Files* and *Independence Day* has been a huge commercial success," says Mercurio, "people will assume that the words 'wagon', 'band' and 'jump' will be put together into a sentence, and to be honest I don't think this would have been made if it hadn't been for the success of those. But that was really just greasing the wheels. In television most of the time they don't read the script so it's the concept your selling, and this was high concept."

And that concept is?

"It's what if the RAF shot down a UFO," he says. "Let's not say you've got UFOs all over the world landing in the White House garden, all that rubbish. What if some poor sod's up in his aircraft over the North Sea, he spots something weird that's obviously a UFO and shoots it down. It crash-lands in the wilds of Scotland but the alien pilot survives. What have you got? Well you've got a situation analogous to a Russian pilot being shot down during the Cold War where they want to find what the hell he's doing there. Except it isn't the Russians and there's a much more difficult question to answer about why the guy

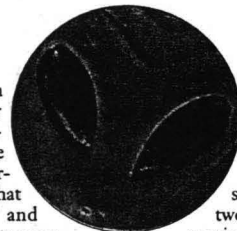
is here. It's tapping into how the military would deal with the threat."

To that scenario add a budget of around £5 million, a load of computer-generated special effects, and not one but two alien species fighting over the precious piece of intergalactic real estate we call home. Divide into six equal portions, heat to a gently simmering paranoia, season with a pinch of sci-fi mythology, and there is today's recipe for a mass-audience BBC1 drama.

"The first thing that struck me about this piece was that it had a lot of action and kept moving," says Monia Joblin, vice-president of programme development at the Sci-Fi Channel in Los Angeles. "I've worked with UK producers before and I thought, hello, this is not a typical BBC script. I would say that Jed's approach is to have what I call a significant 'oh-s***!' moment every episode. He is a writer of commercial TV and I don't mean that in a derogatory way. He knows how to write stories that have lots of peaks and valleys, as opposed to a drama that builds slowly over time, which is the more usual British style."

But with the secrecy befitting a top-secret military operation, the BBC has classified

(continued on page 13)



Invasion: Perth

the script as eyes-only and for security reasons not a frame of film can be shown to a civilian observer. We'll have to wait until next spring to discover what happens when the aliens meet their square-jawed nemesis with the oxygenated underwear.

Until then, there is the interesting question of why Scotland? Is it simply because that's where the cash is coming from and the producers were contractually obliged to film the story up here to satisfy the BBC's regional production quotas? Not quite. Mercurio says the inspiration came while he was working in Glasgow on the final series of *Cardiac Arrest*. BBC Scotland drama boss, Andrea Calderwood, sent him a newspaper clipping about the numerous reports of UFO sightings around Bonnybridge. For ufologists, central Scotland had come to be regarded as a "hot spot" of UFO activity.

"Let's say there were UFOs in Earth's orbit - I know there aren't, but let's say there were - and you wanted to set up a ground station where there's nobody around," says Mercurio. "You would put it somewhere like the Arctic. From there you launch little reconnaissance missions over populated ground and a pretty good route is across the North Sea and over Bonnybridge. Of course that's complete nonsense, but it just set me off thinking."

NONSENSE? According to a recently published book called *A Covert Agenda*, "Staff at the [RAF Leuchars] base regularly track unknown objects operating in British airspace, and that while such incidents are 'played down', details of all 'radar irregularities' are logged and investigated." The section relating to the RAF base in Fife concludes: "Amongst the personnel at Leuchars, there is considerable interest in the UFO mystery."

A Covert Agenda (Simon & Schuster) is a suitably paranoid title for yet another account of UFO sightings and the secret military operations to cover them up. The book's author, Nicholas Redfern, is indeed a conspiracy theorist who is convinced that the Ministry of Defence has amassed vast amounts of secret evidence relating to UFO sightings by military pilots.

Although the references relating to RAF Leuchars rely on an un-named source, most of the book is based on official MoD records which have been released under the "30 year rule" that allows for the declassification of all but the most sensitive of Government documents. Redfern says plenty more material remains classified under 50, 75 and even 100 year rules, which is enough to send a conspiracy theorist into paroxysms of paranoia.

In researching his book, Redfern has not relied on the usual collection of eyewitness accounts. He has used only official reports filed by military pilots who, presumably, had little to gain and a great deal to lose by appearing to support a "little green man" theory of UFOs. But even the most sceptical reader of Redfern's book would hard pressed to refute his conclusion that the military on both sides of the Atlantic devote a certain amount of manpower to logging and collating, and in some cases actively investigating, reports of UFO sightings. Someone, somewhere is taking this stuff seriously.

"You don't have to rely on my word," adds Redfern. "You can go to the Public Records Office in London, ask them to show you the UFO records and you'll get around 3,000 pages of documents."

Taken literally, any flying object is a UFO until it has been identified. If the military track



Down from the skies: writer and producer Jed Mercurio on the Fife set of *Invasion: Earth*

a blip on their radar which can't be identified, then that's a UFO. "None of this proves that UFOs are extra-terrestrial beings but it does prove that the MoD is very concerned about this," adds Redfern. "I hope people will see that I'm using credible witnesses rather than cranks."

The contents of Redfern's book could be seen as the real *X-Files*, a television series which has catapulted an interest in unexplained phenomena into the mainstream. Like FBI agent Fox Mulder, Redfern is a believer, who thinks it unlikely that we are alone. In the TV series, Mulder is convinced his sister was abducted by aliens, which provides the motivation for his obsessive investigations. Redfern has a similar interest in the subject; during national service, his father took part in an RAF exercise shortly after the war which claimed to track a UFO by radar. Naturally, all photographic evidence and radar tapes were removed from the base by unnamed senior officers and never seen again.

"When I say all this doesn't prove that some UFOs are extra-terrestrials," adds Redfern, "if a pilot says he's seen a large spinning disc, I can't for the life of me think what else it can be." He is convinced compelling evidence of alien visitation is kept from the general public for fear of alarming us.

It is 50 years since the term "flying saucer" first cropped up in an eyewitness account of a UFO sighting in Washington state by an American pilot called Kenneth Arnold. In fact, 1947 turned out to be an enormously significant year in UFO lore. Ufologists have argued that the huge increase in reported sightings after the war was the result of alien species checking out all the nuclear and space rocket technology that was starting to stockpile on our planet.

A month after Arnold filed his flying saucer report, the American airforce issued a news release claiming that a UFO had crash-landed near Roswell in New Mexico, and the bodies of four alien life-forms had been recovered. The following day this official statement was flatly denied, and the military invited reporters to inspect the wreckage of a high-altitude balloon which had been

mistaken for a flying saucer.

From that moment, UFO-watching became a global hobby, and with it allegations of governments suppressing evidence proliferated. Some years later a grainy, hand-held film of the supposed autopsy of one of the Roswell aliens surfaced, but is now widely believed to be a hoax. Corroborated accounts of the incident itself have been harder to explain away, however, and the Roswell Incident remains an important episode in any serious studies of ufology and the science fiction which feeds it.

As of 23 September 1996, Scotland was able to boast its very own incident, near Falkland in Fife. Details of the so-called Fife Incident are provided in exhaustive detail on an Internet website maintained by Malcolm Robinson, an Alloa-based ufologist who founded an organisation called Strange Phenomena Investigations in 1979. It's nutty stuff, and the four eyewitnesses have chosen to remain anonymous. Their account describes a series of bright, spinning lights in the sky which led the three to a clearing in some trees where they saw hundreds of "small grey beings" carrying boxes from a "dark triangular structure".

"It seemed so bizarre, even to me, and I am constantly researching this area," says Robinson. "But there is corroborative evidence and several eyewitnesses, and I believe there is something very real happening in Fife." His report on the Fife Incident, based on interviews with the original witnesses which he says convinced him of the sincerity of their account, is everything that Redfern's book is not; fanciful, inexact and rambling. But in their own way, both are equally convinced that the truth is out there; it's just that Redfern has based his conclusions on a better grade of information.

Jed Mercurio doesn't really buy any of this stuff, and nor does he have to in order to write a sci-fi drama. The beauty of science fiction for the agnostic is that it has great allegorical possibilities and you get to write about aliens swarming all over the place. "Look at the best science fiction - it's a useful social metaphor for today," adds Monia Joblin.

"It's about who we are and how we are different from them."

Although *The X-Files* has its fair share of icky, low-budget special effects, the central idea of a high-level cover-up of embarrassing, incriminating or just down right puzzling information rings true. Governments don't like to look stupid, any more than they care to look guilty. If there was evidence of alien UFOs visiting Earth, it's not hard to imagine that it would be suppressed.

Since Roswell, the US has appropriated the mythology of science fiction through the global dominance of its military firepower and entertainment industry. For Mercurio and BBC Scotland to sell the myth back to an American sci-fi audience is an audacious move indeed. But odd as it may sound at first, the Scottish location starts to make sense. Anyone who has ever walked in a Highland glen when the peace has been shattered by a low-flying jet hugging the hillside will understand the plausibility of an inexperienced pilot with an itchy trigger-finger acquiring a target we all come to wish he hadn't.

"The remoteness and the fact that you have got vast tracts of land with low population is just like those American science fiction B-movies of the Fifties and Sixties," says Mercurio. "They always land in the middle of the desert and there were just some in-bred hillbillies out there who were the first to get zapped. If this thing crashed in the middle of London it would be a difficult story to tell without reaching a global scale, whereas in the remote countryside, no one would know about something landing there."

The fact that parts of Scotland currently have an international reputation - in discerning ufology circles, at least - as UFO hot-spots gives an extra spin to the story. It adds a frisson of plausibility without requiring the audience to take the story at face value.

Walking around the primitive tin-shack constructions that house much of RAF Leuchars' military hardware, I was reminded of shaky old *Dr Who* episodes featuring the Brigadier. It will be interesting to see the reaction to the series in America, a country which genuinely believes global security is its job, to our gentlemanly attempts to save the planet. Let's hope Vincent Regan manages to zip his fly in time. **WE**

TRI-CITY NEWS, Vancouver, B.C., Canada - April 5, 1998 CR: G. Conway

By JASON ROESSLE
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Vancouver has its own answer to the the Lone Gunmen, the three conspiracy theorists in *X-Files*.

They don't have a name as dramatic as that, or the long haired, super computer nerd, but UFO*BC compiles their own lists of conspiracy theories, ghosts, Sasquatch and other unexplained phenomenon.

Unlike the *X-Files* characters, these people only deal

in local unexplained events.

UFO*BC opened in March 1996 and according to Gavin McLeod, the secretary treasurer, they opened because there was a need.

"No one else locally is doing it," said McLeod. "I came across people for years that said 'I saw something and I didn't know who to phone.'"

The organization averages about four to five calls a week, but the real action happens in Northern B.C.

UFO*BC is non-profit and

they gather information on local sightings, investigate them as fully as possible, then makes discoveries open to the public.

This non-profit does not get their funding from another planet but through bringing in speakers to lecture on alien abductions, cattle mutilations, crop circles and UFO crash/retrievals.

In addition to their website (www.ufobc.org), UFO*BC publishes a magazine four times a year.

Truth is out there, says UFO group

Tories hid Howard's 'alien visitation'

by Sebastian Hamilton
Westminster Correspondent

SO there really was something of the night about Michael Howard. The former home secretary was visited by extra-terrestrial beings in the run-up to the last election, according to UFO-watchers near his home in Kent.

In a case worthy of The X Files, the claims were apparently covered up by a Conservative party media machine desperate to avoid embarrassing headlines and cartoons.

Senior Tory spin doctors say they were aware of the story, which appeared in a local newspaper, while Howard's agent has admitted halting publication of further detailed reports about the incident in the paper by complaining to the editor.

The bizarre story began on the night of March 8, 1997, a week before John Major announced the date of the general election but with all the parties already firmly in campaign mode.

At 3am Sarah Hall, a reporter on the Folkestone Herald, was driving along Donkey Street in Lympne, near Hythe, when she heard a strange humming and stopped her car. Ahead of her she saw a huge triangular craft hovering over a field. Was it a spaceship or even an omen in the shape of Labour's Millennium Experience? "It had a large dome at one end and lots of bright lights around the sides and looked quite shiny. I had no idea what it was. I felt the hairs stand up on the back of my neck," she said. "After a few seconds it shot off and stopped 500 metres away. It then moved and stopped four times before flying off."

Her sighting was confirmed by Chris Rolfe, a local UFO spotter. "This tallies with an unofficial account I was given that it was seen by two firemen hovering above Mr Howard's house at the same time."



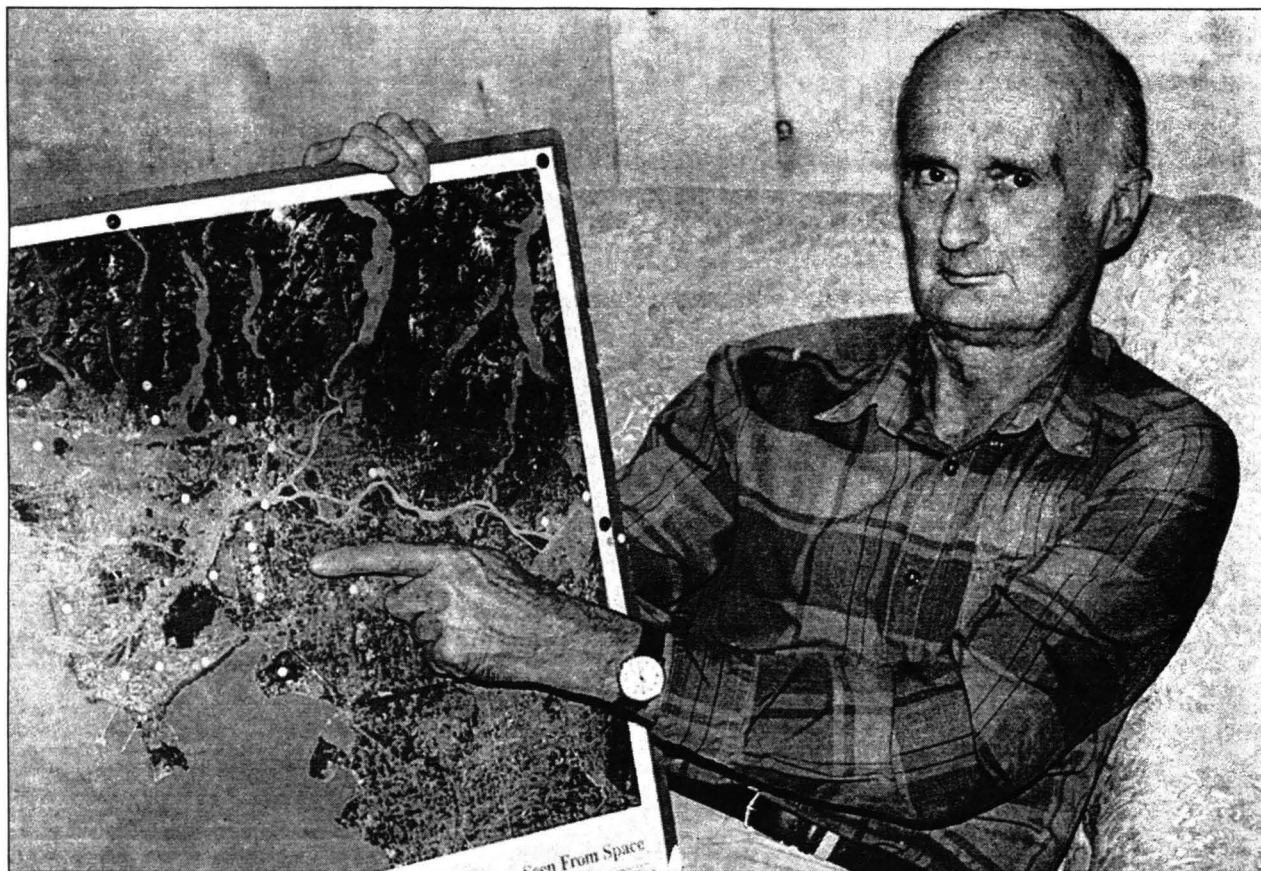
he said. Eight separate reports were filed with local UFO spotters of a triangular craft, grey in colour, hovering in an area 15 miles around Howard's home.

Hall wrote up her experience for her paper but was astonished to find that when it appeared, the location had been moved from near Howard's home to the other side of the marshes at New Romney. "Events seemed to have been relocated several miles away. I don't know how this came about; I have asked but have not been given an explanation."

When Hall attempted to suggest in a later article that Howard's home had been the real site of the visit, the Tories began to fight back. Michael Buxton, Howard's agent, telephoned the paper to complain: the stories stopped.

Neither the local police nor the Ministry of Defence have any record of an incident that evening, despite the series of

NOW, Surrey, B.C., Canada - March 14, 1998 CR: G. Conway



now photo: Leah S. Beddow

UFO expert Graham Conway points out the UFO corridor through North Delta and Surrey.

THE UNEXPLAINED

UFO hunter, extraordinaire

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy... Hamlet.

There is an element of the unknown which is far too complex for us to see... Graham Conway.

The weird, the wonderful, the unknown. Shakespeare may have given these passing mention in his play, but North Delta resident Graham Conway has spent a lifetime investigating them.

At age 70, Graham is one of B.C.'s foremost UFO chasers, having devoted 50 years to studying the strange and wonderful.

The former school teacher-police officer-Salvation Army employee personally lays claim to some 30 sightings himself, and has interviewed some 200 people who claim to have been abducted by aliens, or at least experienced some form of contact with them.

He first became "hooked" on flying saucers in 1947, when nine mysterious craft were spotted over Mount Rainier. But his first personal sighting was in 1966, near Scarborough Ontario, after he'd got off a bus.

The sky was clear blue, he remembers. "I thought, 'Oh, there's Venus.'" He got home, lay back in the grass with his binoculars and watched two ball-bearing shaped objects scoot about in the sky for

Those bright lights moving through the Surrey-North Delta night sky may not be airplanes bound for Vancouver International Airport. Local UFO expert Graham Conway has interviewed more than 200 people who claim to have come into contact with... aliens! Story by Tom Zytaruk

about 75 minutes, before they took off in the direction of New York State. Since then, he's seen tons of 'em, including a bright red disc over Canada Way, and a cigar-shaped craft with strobe lights off his veranda.

Asked why he's seen so many, a puzzled expression creeps across his face. "I don't know... if you seek out the paranormal, it finds you. I have always been interested in the unusual."

While his wife, Shelagh, doesn't share his passion for UFOs, she's at least "tolerant," Conway says.

"She is my stabilizer. She brings me down to earth when I get carried away."

Conway, now retired except for a casual job at Sands junior high, is kept quite busy with his 'hobby'. He's been lecturing for 17 years, at schools, seniors' homes, on 29 radio shows, at psychic fairs, colleges, and has appeared in movie documentaries and newspapers. He's also appeared on 15 television shows, including *Strange Universe*, *Encounters*, and *Sightings*.

He is currently president of UFO*BC, which publishes a

quarterly magazine and has a web site has recorded 18,000 hits so far.

Where Conway is, interesting things follow. In 1994 he put this reporter in touch with a North Delta woman who claimed to have been abducted by aliens at night. After one of her nocturnal experiences she woke up with a bloody eye which, following X-rays, proved to be caused by a tiny metallic object, like a ball-bearing, behind her eye. Doctors told her they couldn't remove it without blinding her.

Of particular interest to Conway is the Surrey-North Delta UFO corridor, a strip of land running from Mud Bay to the Pattullo Bridge which is one of Canada's most active areas for UFO sightings.

Skeptics say that's because of the powerlines here, and the airplane flight path.

Do electromagnetic fields around the lines generate strange light play that can trick the eyes?

Not likely, Peter McMullin of B.C. Hydro said in an earlier interview. "If that were so it would have been long since defined. But we can't get into the UFO debate. They don't exist. It's certainly not an issue

with B.C. Hydro."

Even so, Conway notes there are also many powerlines in Ladner and Tsawassen, but never any UFO sightings. And about the planes, Conway contends that people here should especially be able to recognize the configuration of lights on airplanes. And airplane sightings can hardly explain abduction stories.

"It does baffle me," he says, musing that perhaps the Surrey-North Delta corridor attracts UFOs because of a stress fracture in the earth's crust, or some other magnetic "anomaly."

Over the years, he admits, he's heard some astonishing stories. "I don't think there are a lot of people lying to me," he says, noting that being a school teacher and police officer has made him somewhat of a skeptic, and also helped develop an ability to sniff out dishonesty.

"I have an inner, gut feeling," he says.

His own astonishing stories are not restricted to UFOs, either.

In springtime, 1971, he and

his son were puttering along the banks of the Squamish River when they spotted what Conway figures must have been about 200 Bigfoot prints, probably made by a family.

"I wear a size 11 bush boot and I could put the whole boot well inside this print," he said, adding he and his son didn't stick around for long.

"I had no desire to find who made those prints at all," he explains. "I was... impressed."

While he can't be sure who or what made the prints, he noted that they were made in March, and at that time of

year, "people looking for Steelhead trout certainly aren't wandering around in their bare feet."

Over the years, Conway has noticed that people are

warming to the idea of UFOs and such.

"No doubt about that," he said. "Now the media is coming around to being our biggest supporter. The 'old school, I don't believe this b.s.' have retired and died."

For his part, Conway has no plans to retire from the hunt.

"I've been doing this for 50 years — I don't think I'm going to be stopping tomorrow."

sightings. A police spokesman, however, said it might have been dealt with by Howard's own police protection team.

Sheila Gunn, John Major's press secretary, said last week she was aware of reports at the time of an extraterrestrial sighting, but the Tories had managed to keep them out of the national papers. "It was all rather strange," she said, "but then, that election campaign was pretty strange all round, wasn't it?"

The case is now being pressed by Mark Watts, the Labour MEP for Kent East, who is asking the European parliament to investigate. "There have been so many sightings from reliable witnesses — people can't be suffering from mass hysteria," he said. "I was amazed the story never went further."

Howard, who was last year described as having "something of the night about him" by Ann Widdecombe, the for-

mer prisons minister, was last night unavailable for comment. The Tory party said it knew nothing about the Howard's nocturnal visitors. But then, given the home secretary's responsibility for immigration, perhaps they were illegal aliens.

'West Yorkshire people say they were abducted'

Alien research

has X-Files style

By CLARE HORTON

X-FILES investigators Mulder and Scully have a real-life equivalent researching UFOs and the paranormal from his home in Brighouse.

And like the TV agents, Mark Gibbons is convinced that the truth is out there.

A life-long interest in the unexplained has led to him forming new group the British Parapsychological Research Centre, which will study the paranormal, UFOs, extra-sensory perception and past lives.

In just one year he received reports from three people in West Yorkshire who claim to have been abducted by aliens and says there are hundreds of UFO sightings nationwide every year.

He says he has seen many UFOs hovering. Most recently he spotted a triangular object in the skies above Scammonden.

Mr Gibbons said: "We are not alone. And none of the other groups which exist to study this kind of thing are really getting to the bottom of it. I believe in looking into all possibilities."

Mr Gibbons, 27, of Smith House Avenue, says reports of close encounters from around the globe have too much in common to be mere coincidence.

Children too young to have been influenced by stories of little green men have had alien experiences and their tales — as well as those of people living in the most remote parts of the world — tie in with other reports.

"There have been sightings in places like the Brazilian jungles, where there is minimal contact with the outside world," he said.

'A minority probably do make up their stories but they are easy to catch out'

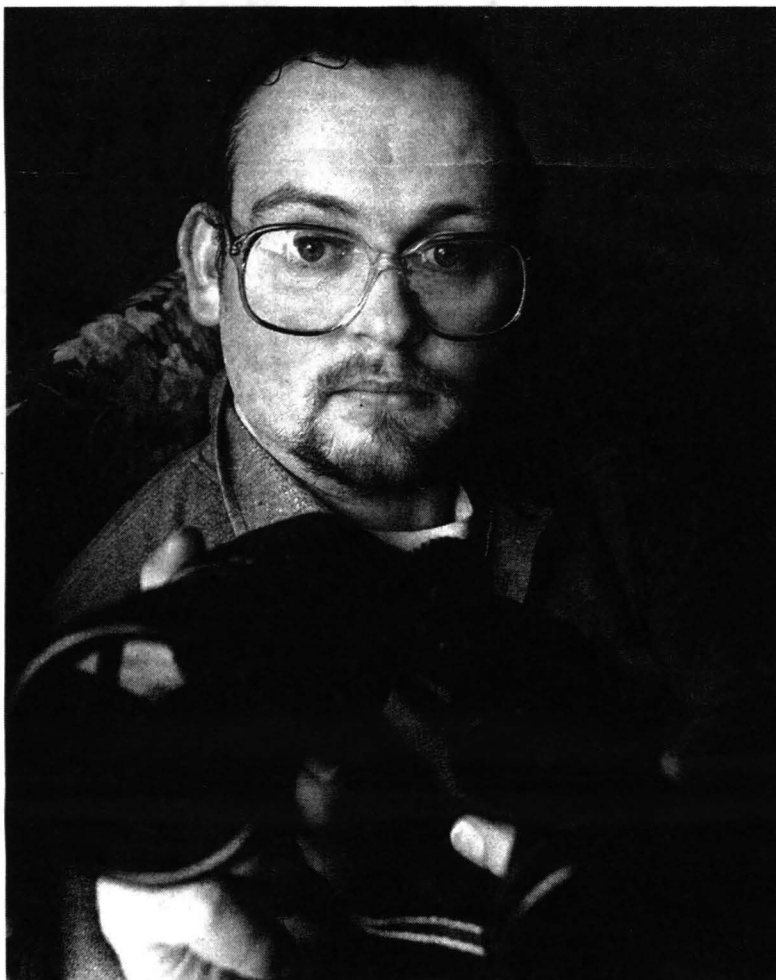
Two descriptions of aliens recur repeatedly.

Many people have described grey figures — often around 4ft tall — with big, almond-shaped eyes. The other common visitor is known as "the Nordic" and is around 6ft, blond and of Scandinavian appearance.

People with an interest in, or knowledge of, these unknown phenomena are often not taken seriously, says Mr Gibbons. This is something he wants to change.

"It is unfair for the people who report experiences," he said.

"They are real. The people have often had tests to prove there is nothing wrong with them — no psychological or physical problem.



Brighouse UFO researcher Mark Gibbons — ready to investigate the unexplained

"A minority of people probably do make up their stories but they are easy to catch out.

"But, generally speaking, they are telling the truth and just want a fair hearing, for people to believe them and to be reassured they are not the only ones to have experienced these things."

Mr Gibbons believes that if scientists and academics could get involved in the study, much quicker progress could be made.

As for why the aliens seem to consistently return, and meet ordinary people rather than heads of state, the UFO watchers are divided.

"Some people say they are working with governments, which are allowing them to create a hybrid race because the planets are dying," said Mr Gibbons.

"Others say they are just on fact-finding explorations and have come here over centuries to monitor progress. And others say they could be time-travellers.

"One of the theories I think could be right is that the aliens are trying to prevent something — a lot of people who have been abducted say they were shown footage of mass disasters."

He added: "There are so many possibilities and that is why the whole subject needs to be taken more seriously so we can get to the bottom of it."

● To join BPRC, receive its magazine or report a supernatural experience, contact: PO Box 10, Brighouse, HD6 1ZD.

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY STANDARD, Scotland - Dec. 3, 1997

Close encounters chronicled

EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL activity over Dumfries and Galloway features in a new book on UFO sightings.

Author John Jenkins began investigating mysterious events in Scotland's skies after a personal experience.

The Penicuik piano tuner spotted a UFO while driving through Edinburgh to a job five years ago.

Intrigued, the amateur sleuth began collating details of alleged extra-terrestrial activity in recent years.

He has now published a book, titled, "Of No Defence Significance", in which he recounts numerous tales of UFO sightings by the Scottish public.

The fascinating collection includes details of strange events reported in the south west nearly 20 years ago.

In 1979, two Moffat women, Joyce Byers and a neighbour, now deceased, logged over 100 sightings.

The book tells how both women became convinced that the Moffat hills were a base for UFOs and were frightened that the

alien craft could present real danger to the community.

The strange objects were variously described as being flashing blue and white balls, orange and red triangles, saucer shaped and egg timer shaped.

The women also claimed to have seen an apparent mother ship, which made a noise like a distant waterfall and was nicknamed "Big Bertha" after a large gun used in the First World War.

A report on the sightings appeared in the Standard on November 2, 1979.

According to the book, Mrs Byers destroyed her diary and gave up her research after being ridiculed by neighbours.

Mr Jenkins also tells of various sightings by police officers around Kirkcubright and Dumfries.

Priced at £4.99, the book is available at Edinburgh branches of Thins and direct from Mr Jenkins at 21 Breck Terrace, Glenconce, Penicuik, Midlothian EH26 0RJ. Tel/fax number 01968-677-666.

In search of alien nation

IN A Covert Agenda (Simon & Schuster, £16.99) Nicholas Redfern attempts to prove that there has been a systematic cover-up of UFOs — that is, inter-galactic space ships — by the British and American authorities, since at least 1947.

His thesis is that we have been visited by creatures from outer space, that they may even have colonised Earth, that they have abducted humans, that they have mutilated farm animals in bizarre experiments, that they are responsible for corn circles and make our tellies go on the blink at the climax of Coronation Street.

What is infuriating for Mr Redfern is that there is no real, hard evidence to prove his claims. There is, however, a welter of circumstantial evidence to point to certain mysterious happenings. But after a while, the greater mystery appears to be why Mr Redfern is so intent on believing the impossible.

Why should the authorities want to cover up this vital, and exciting, information? Because they are too afraid, or do not know how, to break the news to us dumb earthlings, says Redfern.

Why should they want to abduct specimen human beings, and dump them back where they found them? Because they are testing our development as a species, says Redfern.

The poor chap is so desperate to believe in aliens, he prefaces his facts with phrases like "There is good reason to believe that..." or "In all probability..." Other sightings, which the authorities insist are due to natural phenomena, like the Moon, Redfern dismisses with "...the results remain unknown."

Mr Redfern has done much research (and he acknowledges the help given to him by our own Staffordshire UFO group), and one feels that he has convinced himself.

But he hasn't convinced me.

Woman's fears after seeing UFO

A WOMAN claims she has had a close encounter with a UFO.

Miss Janet Bottomley, of Rydale House, Sowerby Bridge, now claims she cannot sleep after seeing the round grey object in the night sky last Wednesday.

Miss Bottomley was walking from her home to her sister, Susan's home at Eskdale House, Sowerby Bridge, between 5.30 pm and 6 pm.

"I saw this figure in the sky. It was grey and it had lights underneath," she said.

The object made no sound and stayed in the air for five or six minutes before it vanished.

"I have never seen anything like that before. It was a really frightening experience," she said.

The object was bigger than a bus wheel and was hovering above the ground roughly twice the height of a block of flats.

"I haven't been able to sleep or eat. I have been sick," said Miss Bottomley.

"I don't know why I was so frightened. I think it was because I went so cold. It was as if I had died and come back again," she said.

Miss Bottomley did not report her experience to the police and said she did not know what she should do about the encounter.

Caldar Valley police said they had received no reports of unexplained sightings on Wednesday evening.



LOOK OUT FOX AND DANA ... John Jenkins is on the way

X-FILES STRIKE A CHORD WITH SCOTS UFO-HUNTER

IN TUNE ... Piano man John Jenkins has a double life as UFO-hunter but he's sceptical about ever learning the truth



By ARLENE RUSSO
PIANO tuner John Jenkins' life changed dramatically at precisely 9.30am on December 10, 1992.

He was driving along an Edinburgh road to his first job of the day when he saw a UFO.

Mr Jenkins said: "It was a vivid orange ball blazing in the sky. It looked like a mini sun. Suddenly it shrunk down to a tiny spot of light and shot off in a straight line at a tremendous speed."

Dumbfounded, John (60) stared at the object, but his practical side took over.

"Well, aliens or not, I've got a piano to tune," he said to himself and drove on.

Little did John know at the time, but the 'blazing orange ball' was to set him on a five-year mission to uncover the truth.

His sighting picked away at his mind so much that he started delving through newspapers in the National

But he keeps his feet firmly on the ground

Library in Edinburgh, searching for a common link in the thousands of reported UFO reports.

He didn't solve the mystery of his own UFO, but he interviewed dozens of people about other sightings, spent months researching in libraries and wrote to the Ministry of Defence in his search for the truth.

HE adds: "It was the last thing I thought of before going to bed and the first thing I thought about in the morning."

"It took over my brain. It was like a bug."

Now he has published a selection of UFO encounters in his book, *Of No Defence Significance?* He is convinced aliens are already here.

UFOlogists of his age are a rarity but John reckons his age has its advantages. "I'm a mature individual. At 60, I don't need the approval of the general public."

"I'm not a stupid man. I'm not into intergalactic space travel or sci-fi books. I don't even read books by UFO experts."

"I only set out to convince myself."

In the book John investigates the strange case of the 'Flying Toblerone', a remarkable UFO sighting in that the witness

viewed the object for a long time.

Andy Swan, a 27-year-old cable layer, was outside the Armadale Academy in West Lothian at midnight when he spotted a 'Toblerone-shaped' object descend into a field and hover 15ft above the grass.

Mr Swan dug out a spot lamp from his car boot, eager to get a clearer view of the strange device. But mysteriously his car's electronics had gone dead.

As he tried to start the engine, the object shot off, swooping over his car at speed.

John - who comes from Bellshill but now lives in Penicuik - has also examined a ripped pair of trousers, the key to one of Scotland's biggest alien mysteries.

In 1979 forester Robert Taylor claimed he had a hostile encounter with a UFO while walking his dog through Dechmont Woods, near Livingston.

As a huge UFO hovered above the ground, two spiked balls detached themselves from

the craft. They shot towards Taylor and attached themselves to his trousers, dragging him to the craft. Luckily he struggled free.

"This is one of the most authentic cases I have investigated. Nearly 20 years later, Taylor still insists on what he saw."

John has been astonished by the large sales of his book, and he offers advice for would-be UFO investigators who are attracted by TV shows like *The X-Files*.

"It's not all glamorous like TV's Mulder and Scully. I'm just basically a door-to-door salesman. I'm out there to get something from people. Information."

ADDING: "It's important to keep your feet on the ground as it's easy to get carried away."

"Someone reads about a UFO, they see a star and they automatically think it's a UFO."

John is determined to spread the message that we are not alone.

"There is definitely something strange going on in our skies."

"Unfortunately I cannot say how long aliens have been here for. We don't know their life span. It could be 20 times

longer than ours.

John Jenkins realises that we still have far to go. "Unless a UFO crash lands into the City Chambers, I don't think we will ever learn the truth."

"Government sources are certainly playing down the number of reports they receive from the public, while insisting the reports they do acknowledge are of no defence significance."

Bid to trace 'UFO' witness

A UFO investigator is trying to track down the person who witnessed a mysterious object plummeting towards Winter Hill on Monday.

Stephen Balon, aged 45, from Leigh, wants to get in contact to add to his research on a book into weird sightings and paranormal activity in Bolton.

The object was described as a micro-light descending rapidly towards a point between Rivington Pike and the TV mast.

As reported in Tuesday's *BEN*, police turned out to search the area, fearing a micro-light had crashed after receiving a report from a member of the public.

However, a massive search of the area failed to find evidence of a crash landing.

Sightings

Mr Balon, who has been interested in UFOs for 30 years, said there had been a number of similar sightings in the past two years.

He said: "There have been four incidents of a similar vein where somebody has reported what seemed to be a light aircraft going to the ground but with nothing found later."

The amateur UFO spotter, who works at BICC Cables Ltd, has investigated many strange incidents around Bolton.

He said: "Bolton is such an interesting place - there seems to be so many things happening."

He would like to hear from anyone who has seen similar strange sightings to contact him.

Write to him at 10 Woodlands Avenue, Pennington, Leigh, Lancs, WN7 3HL or ring 0831 702394

UFO spotting on the rise

WINNIPEG (CP) — Are Canadians seeing more lights in the night sky or do they have X-Files on the brain?

That's the question being asked by one UFO researcher following a study that shows a growing number of Canadians reported unexplained sightings last year.

There were 284 reports of UFOs in 1997, up 10 per cent from 1996, says Chris Rutkowski, who wrote a national report on the sightings.

Rutkowski said the 50th anniversary of an alleged UFO crash in Roswell, N.M., as well as the immense popularity of X-Files — a TV show chronicling the paranormal pursuits of two alien-hunting FBI agents — may help explain the jump in sightings.

The 1997 Manitoba results, released Monday by Ufology Research, recorded 32 sightings of unidentified objects. Many can be discounted as planets or planes or natural phenomena, said Rutkowski.

"There are some garbage reports out there, no question," he said. "But there are also some very good reports that raise a lot of questions."

A cover-up in Looe?

I WAS most amused at the recent cover up. I refer of course to the UFO landing or whatever atop East Looe last weekend. The police, traffic wardens and fire brigade were hastily pressed into service to cordon off the entire area.

The press release for the guillible was about a little mud on a road. What the truth is we may never know. To have Morval, Widegates and St Martins cordoned off for a little mud on the road? At least at Roswell they had a weather balloon as a prop.

NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED

Was it a UFO?

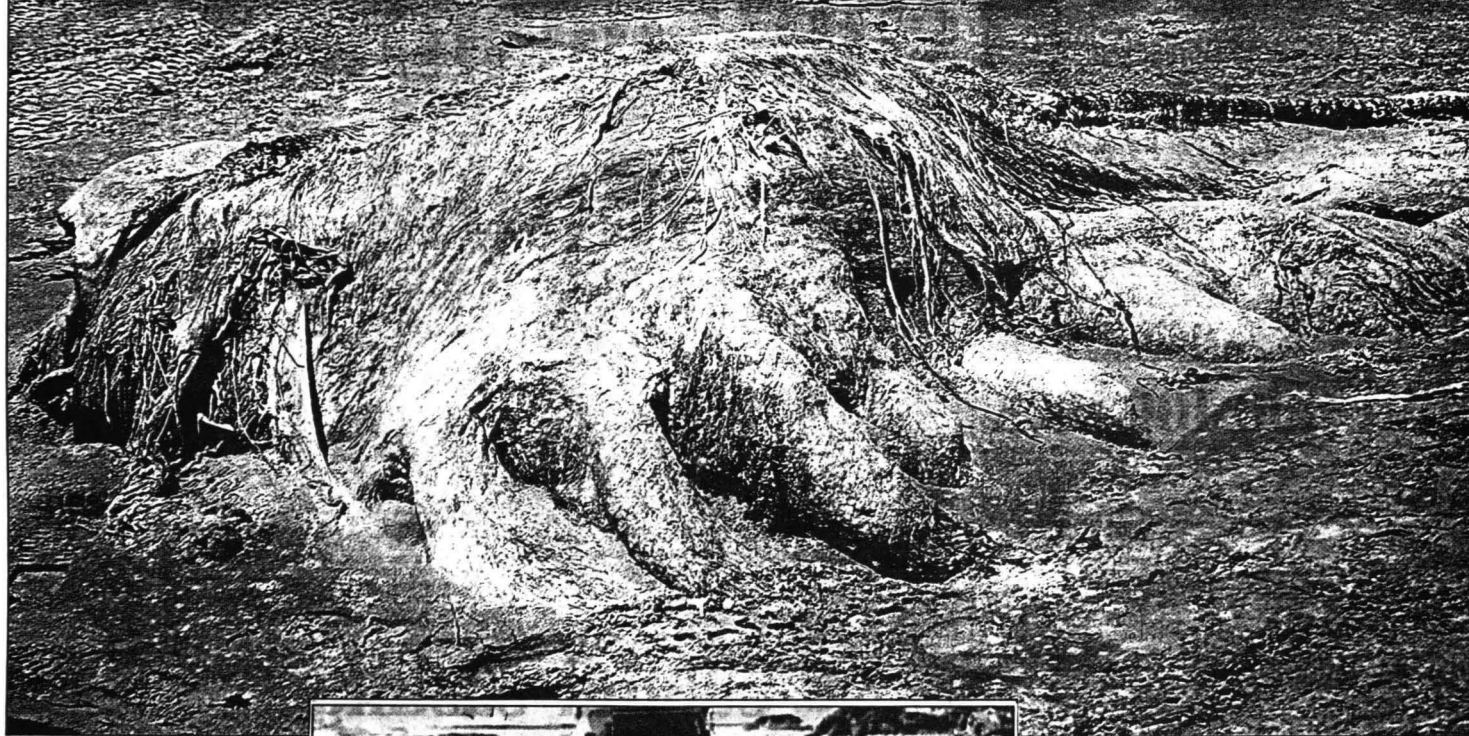
I WOULD be interested to learn if other readers saw, and were equally puzzled by what I saw at around 5.50 pm on November 25, and furthermore, what was it?

Drifting in the sky from south to north over Broadstone was a vertical object, probably about 20 feet tall by four feet wide, brightly lit from top to bottom with white lights. There was no audible sound of an engine and its steady movement was quite slow. It took several minutes to traverse the night sky before disappearing from view. Might this have been a night-flying balloon or should it be considered a UFO?

E E AUSTIN
Charborough Road,
Broadstone



THE BLOBSTER



by
**PAUL
HARRIS**

THE PRECISELY defined scientific classification of the animal kingdom would probably place it somewhere between a plesiosaur and a blobbus giganticus.

Just for the moment, however, the experts are not sure exactly where — if anywhere — they should file away information on the four-ton, six-tentacled monster which came to rest on a wind-lashed Tasmanian beach ... and just stayed there.

Note the caution over jumping to the easy conclusion that it was washed ashore from the deep. For the theories about this globby, hairy, smelly hunk of mystery include the possibility that it came up from a fissure in the ground, or even fell from the sky.

Doubtless, the truth is out there somewhere. Right now, the only truth is that no one knows for sure what we are dealing with.

And if an unknown race of giant aliens is about to take over the world, there is disturbing news: they have been here before.

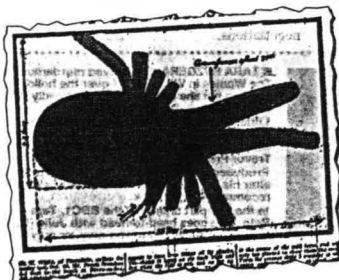
The blob-like monster (let's call it a Blobster for now) has many of the same characteristics as several similar finds dating back at least to the early Twenties. Since then, Blobsters have turned up as far apart as Russia, South Africa, New Zealand and Scotland. Nanny Louise Whitts last year produced some photographs taken in 1992 from her holiday in the Scottish Western Isles showing a Blobster of similar shape and dimensions. When she returned the next day, it had disappeared.

Yesterday, all the excitement was on Four Mile Beach in Tasmania, where the latest one was discovered by local fishermen. So what clues do we have to the possible identity of the Blobster?

YESTERDAY, an expert at the Natural History Museum in London admitted with uncommon candour that he simply didn't have the faintest idea. Fish curator and sea-life specialist Oliver Crimmen floated several theories with colleagues at the museum, but eventually discounted them all.

The experts' first thought was that it was the remains of a huge basking shark, a creature which has small, bristle-like teeth on its skin. Experience has shown that the outer flesh of the dead beast can rot to reveal a grotesquely-shaped inner lump of fat and gristle. The 'tentacled' effect is caused by flesh receding around the shark's gill apertures.

The Tasmanian Blobster, however, has far too many 'gills' and the bristles are too long. Crucially, a shark has a cartilage backbone — and by last night, none had been found in the Tasmanian Blobster.



Monster mystery: The Tasmanian Blobster (top and above). Right: Louise Whitts pictured with a Blobster in Scotland. Left: A newspaper sketch from South Africa after a sighting in the Twenties

So could it be the remains of a whale or dolphin? Wrong. For a start, it would have to be the biggest dolphin in the world if even the remains are 20ft long. If it is a whale, why are there no identifiable whale bits to be seen? Besides, who ever saw a hairy whale?

Some say it may be a huge chunk of whale blubber which has dried in the sun. There is some substance to this theory because whale blubber, we are told, can dehydrate to form leathery fibres. That would be fine, of course, if the blubber did not have an unexplained set of legs.

A squid, then? Not necessarily. Although squid have long been surrounded by mysterious legends of the deep, the complete article in this case would have to weigh about six tons, which would be the mother — and father — of all squid.

Also, if the stumps are tentacles, there appear to be too few, as squid ordinarily have ten. Conclusively, Mr Crimmen touted a photograph of the Blobster around various departments in the museum and told the Daily Mail: 'I've run it past the giant squid man and he says it's not a squid.' So there.

A dinosaur, perhaps? There is a theory that the Blobster could be the remains of a plesiosaur, a prehistoric sea monster with a long neck and paddle-like limbs.

When a Blobster was washed up in New Zealand 20 years ago, there was speculation that it had come from a forgotten civilisation under the sea bed, released by an earthquake, but it was discounted because there was no sign of a skeleton.

Nor is it a giant turtle (too big); or the late Mirror newspaper publisher Robert Maxwell (too small; too late).

There is a slim possibility it is the remains of some massive mangrove root-ball, although most investigators feel it is meat, not veg. It stinks of fish — but then, as Mr

Crimmen pointed out: 'So would you if you'd been in the sea that long.'

ALL THAT just leaves the alien theory straight from the X-Files. If so, it would either have come from the ocean, or meteor-like from the sky. Sceptics pompously discount the alien theory because the Blobster has no head. But what if it is the head ... On this, Mr Crimmen was discreetly non-committal, though he ventured that there seemed something fishy about it.



'I'm afraid no one here can make head nor tail of it,' he said. 'All we can say is that it looks like some kind of fibrous mass, but there are too few identifiable features to pin it down.'

In Tasmania, DNA tests are being carried out on the Blobster in the hope of doing just that.

Meanwhile, there is one possibility that has not yet been canvassed: that it is all an elaborate hoax to enable someone to appear tomorrow with a fanfare and declare: 'Here's that sick squid I owe you ...'

HERALD, Boston, MA - March 3, 1998

CR: J. Trainor

Loch Ness monster has believer in Mass. man

By PAUL SULLIVAN

A Needham researcher who has hunted the Loch Ness monster said last night he believes the mysterious creature still exists and may have been recently photographed by a Scottish pet food salesman.

Charles Wyckoff, 81, said he and another researcher,

funded by the PBS program "Nova," went to Scotland twice last summer with sonar equipment and although they didn't get a photo of the elusive Nessie, it did register on the sonar. "There's no question, we did get a sonar reading that could be the monster in the vicinity of Urquhart Castle," Wyckoff said.

Wyckoff theorized there were several Nessies in the deep, cold waters of the famous loch but he thinks many have died off and that's why there are so few recent sightings.

Tell that to Richard White, 53, an amateur photographer who snapped mysterious happenings in the loch near Urquhart

Castle. "I always carry a camera in my van in case of a road accident," the former soldier told a Scottish news agency yesterday.

"I was on my way to Foyers, a small village above the loch, as part of a regular sales run, when I noticed an unusual disturbance halfway across the loch toward on the opposite bank.

"I stopped to take a look and remembered I had the camera, so I got it out and just started reeling off the photos," he said.

"This is a remarkable sequence, some of the best 'Nessie' photos that I have ever seen," said Gary Campbell, president of the Official Loch Ness Monster Fan Club.

Bigfoot of Bridgewater

Is it a man-beast or Hockomock crock?

By ED HAYWARD

Like his father and his grandfather before him, John Baker was out in the swamp in the pitch black of night, running trap lines for muskrat.



BIGFOOT OR BIG LIE?

A firearm on his hip, Baker worked from his canoe on a section of the Hockomock River, just a mile or so from his West Bridgewater home.

But the peace and quiet trapping demands were undone that night as fear set in on the woodsman. The cold thought that something was watching him.

"Something was following me and I knew it was big," said Baker, 48. "So I took the boat down a small creek to a dry hill and it kept moving."

As he paddled quietly, he could hear the shambling gate of the man-beast shatter the thin crust of swamp ice.

He stopped and watched as the shadowy, hair-covered

giant strode a few yards away.

"I knew it wasn't a human because when it passed by me I could smell it," said Baker. "It smelled like skunk — musty and dirty. Like it lived in the dirt."

To a man who had spent more than 30 years of his life working in the swamp, the early 1980s encounter was unlike any other event.

"My heart was up in my throat," said Baker, who punctuates his sentences with a quick "you know what I mean." "To this day I don't know what it was, but I know I saw it and it was out there."

The dozens who've felt this fear know it could still be out there — the Hockomock swamp creature.

How it survives, no one is quite sure. Does it feed on deer or wayward house pets? Does it comb the marsh for tender shoots of spring grasses or munch on 10,000-egg clusters left by mating wood frogs?

No one doubts any animal could find refuge in the vast 5,200-acre swamp, which remains a remote, wild place despite the roads, trails and sizzling power lines that criss-cross the soupy forest.

Hockomock. The Indian word means "the evil spirit place" or "haunted place."

A new breed of scientists — cryptozoologists — say the swamp sits smack in the middle of the Bridgewater Triangle, a "window" open to the bizarre world of man-beasts, giant hounds, UFOs and unexplainable lights.

But to some veteran swamp-watchers, cryptozoology is a four-letter word.

"There are no monsters out there," insists Joseph Cardoza, 77, a member of the Easton Rod and Gun Club and its 1984 sportsman of the year. "Where do people get these ideas? The biggest footprint I've seen out there is mine."

But even historians give the reported sightings some respect.

"Who am I to call them liars?" says Ken Moore, chairman of the Bridge-

water Historical Commission. "I wouldn't go near that place in a million years."

"They've got snakes as big as stove pipes, giant birds and Bigfoot. No, I don't go near there."

But the creature stays safe within the primeval confines of the swamp — so remote and deep in some places that chunks of ice still remain from the glaciers that carved out the Hockomock centuries ago, or so the legend goes.

The Hockomock Bigfoot — not to be confused with the Pacific Northwest's Sasquatch — has never

been photographed or trapped. But not for lack of trying.

To this day, Joseph DeAndrade gets emotional when he recalls his much-publicized sighting of the creature in 1978.

DeAndrade was exploring the Clay Banks section of the swamp when he glimpsed the creature.

"Something in my mind told me, 'Turn around and you will see,'" said DeAndrade, 43, a former security guard who now writes pamphlets about UFOs. "I saw what I will never forget for the rest

of my life. It was 200 feet away and it was walking slowly, like Frankenstein, into the brush."

DeAndrade later reported the incident in a local newspaper.

"I cried when I wrote that," he said the other day. "I am a very emotional person."

Swathed in camouflage, he and two friends formed the Bridgewater Triangle Expedition Team. Armed with long rifles and cameras, they never spotted Bigfoot again.

The team was later disbanded by DeAndrade.

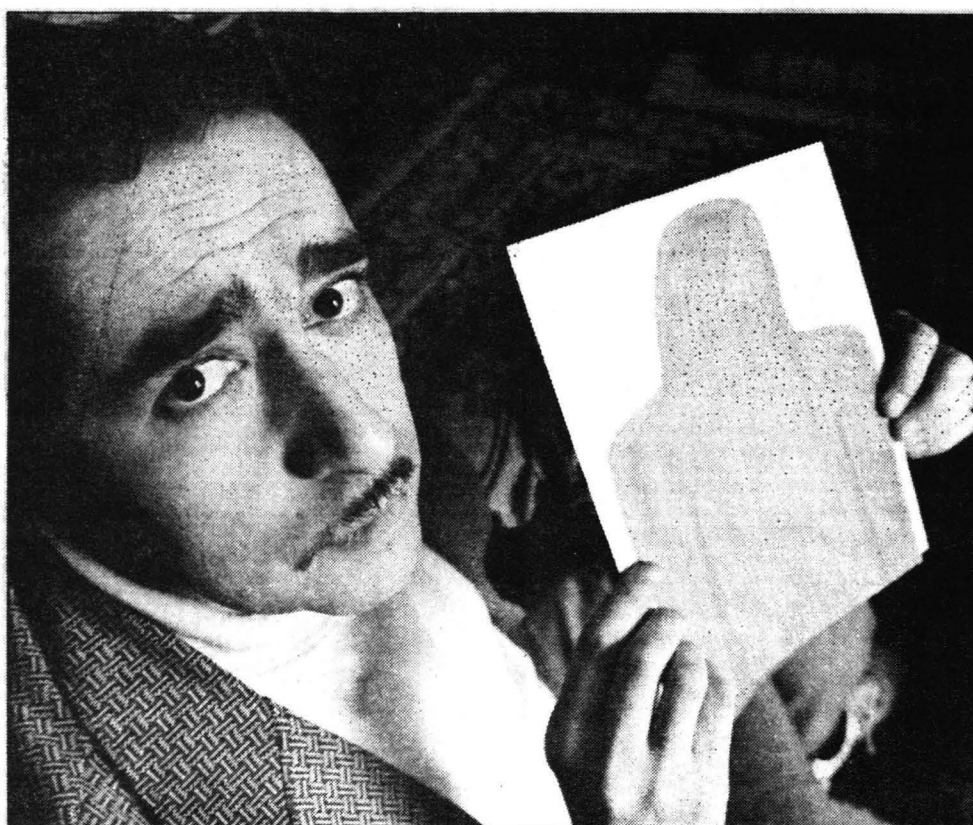
"It's hard to find good

people. If you're going to do that kind of work, you need help."

Despite the fear it inspires — its beastial size, foul odor and fearsome strut — one thing is for certain: The creature has never harmed a human.

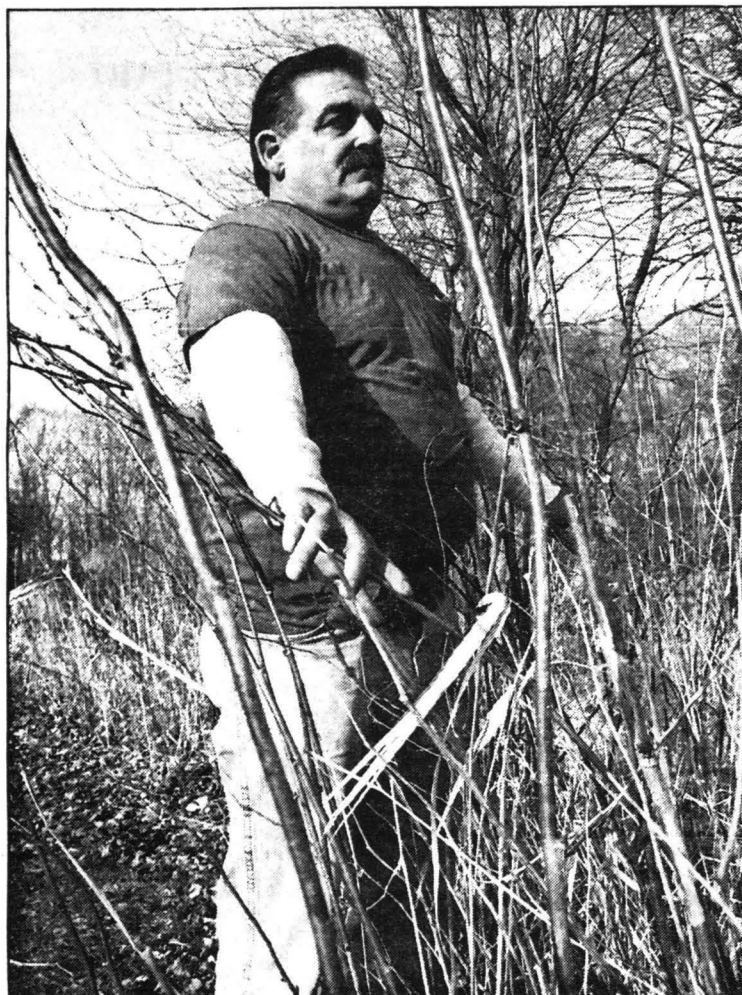
At least none who lived to tell the tale.

"It makes me think I'm lucky to be alive," DeAndrade said. "In the Hockomock Swamp, anything is possible."



MONSTER VISION? Joseph M. DeAndrade of Bridgewater holds a shadowy illustration of the creature he claims followed him through the Hockomock Swamp.

Staff photo by Laurie Swope



EYE WITNESS? John Baker of West Bridgewater looks out onto the Hockomock Swamp, where he claims to have seen the man-beast in the early 1980s.

Staff photo by Laurie Swope



Staff illustration by Jeff Walsh

BEAST OF EAST: The Hockomock Swamp creature, depicted in this artist's rendering, is rumored to roam the Bridgewater bogs, but it has never been photographed.

Bay State's Bermuda Triangle?

By ED HAYWARD

The "Bermuda Triangle" may lay claim as the vortex of mystery, but Massachusetts boasts its own weird window.

Take a map and take a pen. Connect the dots between Abington, Freetown and Rehoboth. There lies the "Bridgewater Triangle."

Superimposed over much of the 5,200-acre Hockomock swamp, it is a "window" area where the paranormal and abnormal swirl.

Despite the encroachment of civilization, the swamp remains wild at its core, an able host to the primitive and puzzling.

From Bigfoot to UFOs, the triangle has hosted an equally wild assortment of "phenomenon," as cryptozoologists — students of unknown or undiscovered animals — call them.

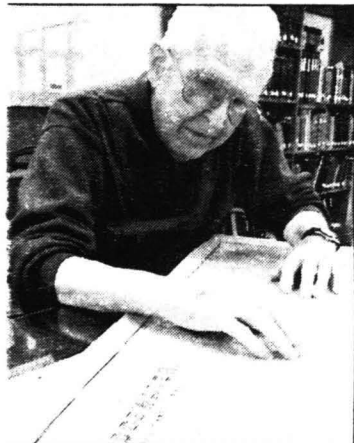
"In the Colonial times, there were things called yellow days," said Loren Coleman, a Maine writer who coined the term "Bridge-

water Triangle" in the 1970s. "The skies shone with an eerie, sulfurous, yellow light."

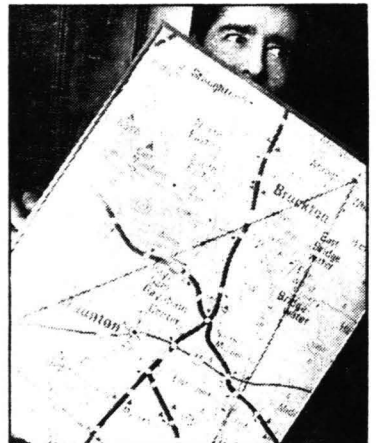
"Spook lights" — unexplainable, elusive balls of light — allegedly swirl near the dog track in Raynham. Then there was the giant bird spotted in 1988. And the blood-thirsty hounds spotted one year, gnawing on the throats of two ponies.

The swamp boasts an ancient burial ground — possibly 8,000 years old — and Dighton Rock, which bears antique graffiti from Colonial and modern times.

As far as Bigfoot goes, Coleman says even cryptozoologists such as himself are skeptical about many reports. But he puts evidence in other sightings. "I think 80 percent of the Bigfoot reports in the Eastern U.S. are misidentifications and hoaxes," he said. "But there does seem to be something going on here. I call them 'unexplainables.' I think maybe we have some migration of these creatures."



STEERING CLEAR: Ken Moore says he wouldn't go near Hockomock Swamp.



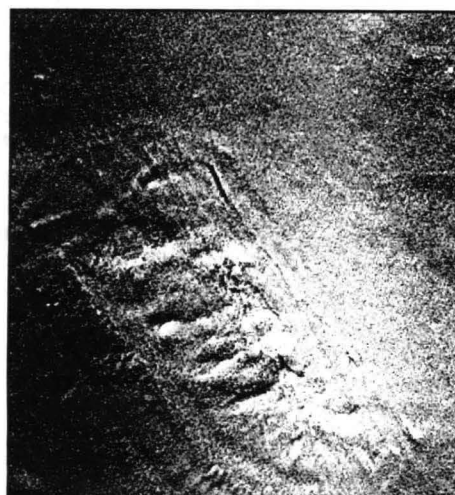
DANGER ZONE: Joseph DeAndrade shows a map of the "Bridgewater Triangle."

ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE, Little Rock, AR - April 7, 1998



Associated Press

This feature on the surface of Mars, in which some people believe they see a face, is shown in a photograph sent in 1976 by the Viking spacecraft.



Associated Press

This is a 1998 NASA photograph of the Cydonia region on Mars. The image in the lower, left corner might be the Face of Mars formation.

Mars Global Surveyor takes photos of Cydonia, unable to find 'Face'

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PASADENA, Calif. — The "Mars Face" got its picture snapped for the first time in two decades and guess what? It's a face-off.

The formation in the image beamed back to Earth from the Mars Global Surveyor and released Monday looks like everything from a sandal print to a stuffed chili pepper — everything, that is, but a face.

"It's a butte, a mesa, a knob," said Michael Ravine, advanced projects manager at Malin Space Science Systems in San Diego, which operates Surveyor's camera.

"The 'Face' was photographed more than 20 years ago and has taken on a life of its own since images of the shadowy, gape-mouthed visage were popularized.

While mainstream scientists say the image is a trick of light and shadow on natural features, believers say it may be part of an ancient city on Mars.

But under the scrutiny of the modern camera, the gape-mouthed "Face" with empty eye sockets seen in images from a 1976 Viking mission is gone.

"Nothing jumps out at me and screams, 'This must have been built by the forces of intelligence,'" Ravine said.

The chief proponent of the "Face" view quickly charged that too much data had been stripped from the image in enhancing it and the result was of too poor quality to draw any conclusions.

"It's like looking at a TV with a

bunch of snow on it," said Richard Hoagland. "There's all kinds of random speckles. The damn thing is as noisy as hell."

Hoagland describes himself as principal investigator for The Enterprise Mission, a New Mexico-based research and NASA watchdog group.

Others were certain the new images only showed natural features. "It's noisy, but it's not that bad," said Michael Carr, a geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey in Menlo Park.

The area photographed is in a transition zone between an old cratered area and newer low-lying northern plains. Knobs of rock from the older formations poke up in the plains and this is one of them, Carr said.

"It's a natural formation," he said. "I hope this has scotched this thing for good."

Surveyor turned its camera on the Cydonia region early Sunday because of public interest in the Viking "Face" images, which showed the

formation lit from the west. When Global Surveyor passed over, the light at 10 a.m. local time on a wintry Mars day came from the southeast.

NASA declined to offer its own opinion because of the controversy.

"We're taking a neutral stand on this," said Glenn E. Cunningham, manager of the Global Surveyor project at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Several years ago, supporters of the "Face" theory suggested that the space agency had even disabled its billion-dollar Mars Observer mission to avoid photographing artificial structures on the Red Planet.

NASA lost contact with Observer as it approached Mars.

"There've been charges of conspiracy and manipulating the data and we want to make it very clear to everybody that no such activity goes on here," Cunningham said. "We put the raw data out there."

This time, NASA had the raw image placed immediately on its Web sites.

TIMES, Washington, DC - April 22, 1998 CR: R. Forte

Dust disk suggests possibilities of life across universe

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Signs of a new family of planets orbiting a distant star are the clearest evidence yet of worlds forming beyond our solar system and suggest that planets where life could evolve may exist throughout the universe, astronomers said yesterday.

Using powerful new instruments on telescopes in Hawaii and Chile, two teams of astronomers independently found a doughnut-shaped disk of dust around a star 220 light-years away. A light-year is about 5.9 trillion miles.

They said at a news conference that the doughnut hole may have been caused by the birth of planets.

"A solar system like our own is being constructed in the middle of this disk," said David Koerner of the University of Pennsylvania. He is a member of an astronomy team that used the Keck II telescope in Hawaii to study the star.

He said the finding, along with similar discoveries reported this week in the journal *Nature*, suggests that planets may be very common throughout the universe. "Perhaps there are lots of places for life to exist," he said.

Another astronomy team, using the Cerro Tololo Observatory in Chile, made a confirming observation. Both teams focused on a star called HR 4796.

"These disks are thought to be the birthing rooms of planets," said NASA astronomer Edward Weiler, head of a space agency program that is searching for evidence of extrasolar planets and life.

Lee Hartmann of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, stressed, however, "We haven't actually detected any planets." But the Cerro Tololo team member said the most likely explanation for the absence of dust in the hole of the disk is that planets have

formed.

He said new and highly sensitive instruments are allowing astronomers to move "from just speculating about planets forming to actually seeing it."

A new type of infrared detector attached to the Keck and the Cerro Tololo telescopes determined that the dust about HR 4796 existed mostly in a thin outer ring and that between this ring and the star there was an empty cavity. It is believed that this cavity was carved out by planets.

A team of U.S. and British astronomers describes this week in the journal *Nature* finding the tell-tale doughnut holes in dust disks around three other stars: Vega, Fomalhaut and Beta Pictoris. These stars are older than HR 4796 and it is believed that planetary formation there is further along.

As planets form, the astronomers said, they would tend to act like gravitation vacuum cleaners, sucking up the dust and gas from areas near their orbits. After all the planets are formed, only a faint outer ring of dust and gravel is left. Such a ring, called the Kuiper Belt, exists now around the sun, orbiting beyond the outermost planets Pluto and Neptune.

The planetary disk orbiting HR 4796 is 18 billion miles across, while the cleared area, or doughnut hole, is about 9 billion miles across, slightly larger than the diameter of the solar system, the astronomers said.

Cow's death is investigated as possible case of mutilation

By DANIEL J. CHACON
The New Mexican

The death of a 4-year-old cow on a high-mountain pasture about 10 miles southeast of Red River is being investigated as a cattle mutilation, Taos District Attorney John Paternoster said Monday.

The animal, which had been dead for about a day, had massive amounts of hemorrhaging and was missing an eye and its tongue.

There were no signs of predators, scavengers or a struggle on the open and remote pasture of the northern part of the 8,600-foot Moreno Valley, he said.

"No apparent cause of death was immediately visible," Paternoster said of the dead cow, which was discovered Sunday. "I'm not certain what I'm looking at (but) we have since the beginning been taking these deaths seriously."

"I don't think people should be concerned, I think they should be vigilant," he said.

He said a team of law enforcement officers and Gabe Valdez, a field agent with the National Institute for Discovery Science — a privately funded Las Vegas, Nev., organization that helps investigate paranormal phenom-

For about the past 25 years on Northern New Mexico ranches and pastures, cattle owners have reported unexplained and unusual animal deaths — many of which have marks or signs of mutilations.

ena — responded to the "crime scene" in a mountainous part of Colfax County.

Paternoster said he believes this to be the first reported and suspected cattle mutilation this year.

But for about the past 25 years on Northern New Mexico ranches and pastures, cattle owners have reported unexplained and unusual animal deaths — many of which have marks or signs of mutilations.

"This is all really a fresh page — that's what we're up against," he said. "This is real, real early."

There has been an ongoing debate about the cause of these so-called mutilations. Some say aliens are responsible. Others blame satanists. And some say it could be black government helicopters with lasers conducting secret experiments.

An autopsy will be performed on the cow and samples of tissue, blood and organs have been cut

from the dead animal to be analyzed at an Albuquerque laboratory, he said. Soil samples also were collected.

Last May, an 11-year-old bull was found in the Arroyo Hondo area; its tail and tongue were missing and there was a pinky-size burned hole on the neck. When the animal was skinned, Paternoster said, investigators discovered a bowling ball-size hole without any tissue or bone.

Although an autopsy was performed on that animal, he said he wouldn't release the results "because we don't know what some of the chemical findings are."

He said that no matter what the cause of the animal deaths may be, he intends to do everything possible to involve government agencies, too.

"I don't think these cattle mutilations are going to stop suddenly," he said.

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Israeli researchers use DNA to build tiny electronic circuits

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HAIFA, Israel — One day, Israeli physicist Uri Sivan said he hopes to meet a colleague's 40-year-old challenge to store all the texts of the Library of Congress — 17 million books along 500 miles of shelves — on a space the size of a speck of dust.

Sivan said while that day is still far off, he and two fellow researchers have made progress by mixing biology and electronics — for the first time letting DNA molecules build electronic circuits.

"We are using the same machinery used in biology. We are taking advantage of 4.5 billion years of evolution and letting the DNA do most of the work," Sivan said as he fiddled with the espresso machine in his office at the Technion, one of Israel's premier research institutes located in the hills above Haifa Bay.

In a first step, the research team — Sivan, chemist Yoav Eichen and biophysicist Erez

Braun — has produced a conductive wire that is one-thousandth the width of a hair or less than half the size of wires in use today.

The Technion team said it hopes to build a wire that is 250 times smaller than the existing ones.

The implications are as far reaching as the proportions are microscopic. A microchip assembled with DNA could create faster, cheaper and more complex computers and electronic products. A computer built with DNA-made microchips could store 100,000 times as much information as a current model.

In the lab, Braun played a video of the experiment taken through a microscope. The footage showed the molecules of the DNA strand quickly recognizing each other and attaching to the two electrodes to create a bridge.

To make the bridge conduct electricity, a thin layer of silver was added onto the structure, re-

sulting in a tiny metal wire.

The Technion team's work was published in the Feb. 19 issue of the science journal *Nature* and their conceptual breakthrough in the field of nanoelectronics has won praise from U.S. colleagues.

"This will likely be viewed as the paper that set us off down the road," said Daniel Colbert of Rice University's Center for Nanoscale Science and Technology in Texas.

The team said the research is still in its infancy, and they have far to go before meeting a 1958 challenge by a colleague, Nobel Laureate Richard Feynman, to store the Library of Congress on a speck of dust.

"We have shown that DNA molecules can be effectively used as organizers for the simplest electronic component, a conducting wire," Eichen said.

"The next step is a self-assembled transistor 100 times smaller than those used in present microchips," he added.