

UFO

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The aliens will get you, hah, hah

By **ROS STROUD**
Staff Writer

MARTINSVILLE — Several aliens and a bigfoot were sighted Saturday in a wooded area northwest of Martinsville.

The sighting of these creatures was not reported to local police because they were seen at the grand opening of the X File, a museum of the unexplained at the Lake Forest Resort.

Ryan and Zelma Emerson of Martinsville have filled their museum with several actual scale replicas of mysterious creatures, including a 9-foot-tall bigfoot, that has been sighted all over the world.

The Emersons spent several months examining sketches and photographs of mysterious creatures. Zelma Emerson, who comes from a long line of seamstresses, built the creatures by using a computer and creating blue prints for each one.

"I want people to be able to see them and enjoy them," said Zelma Emerson. She said the three-dimensional replicas bring the creatures to life in a way no television show can.

There is no admission charge to the museum. The museum is located east of Oilfield, off of Illinois Route 49.

One of the Emersons' most impressive exhibits is the mothman, whose wings stretch out several feet. The mothman was reportedly first sighted in November 1966 in West Virginia. Several dozen people reported mothman sightings to law enforcement agencies during 1966 and 1967.

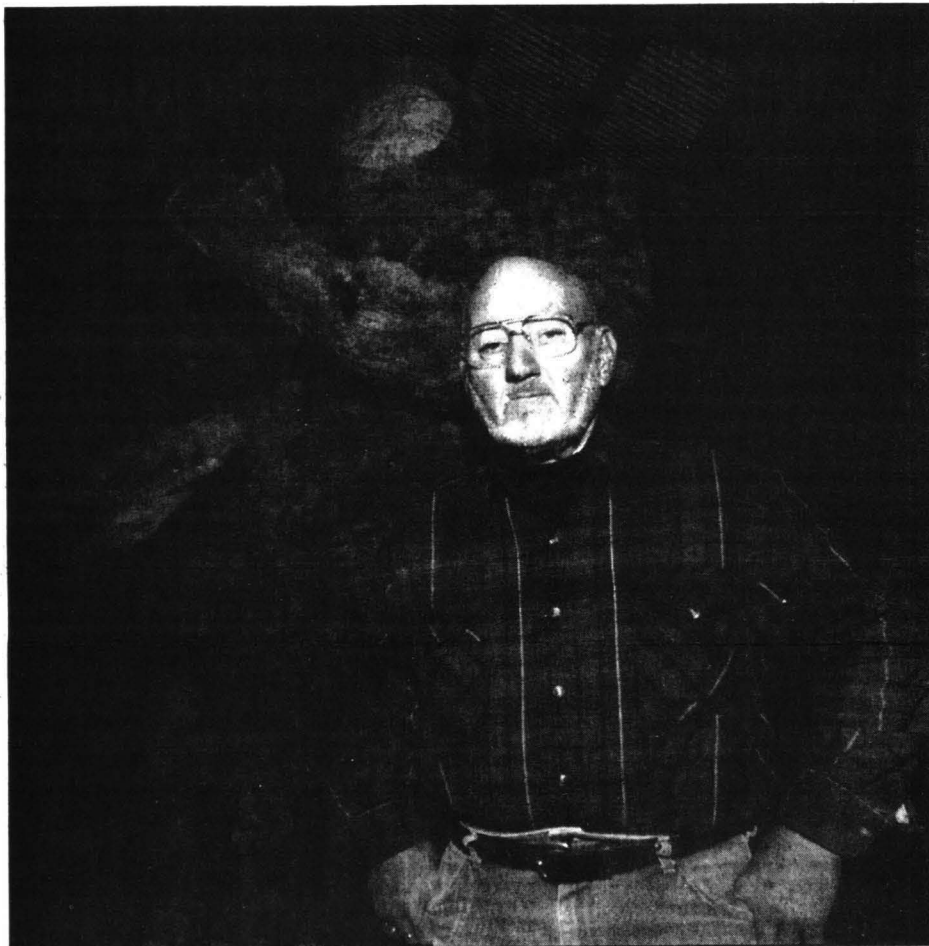


Photo by Ken Trevathan

Ryan Emerson strikes a pose with less than horrifying bigfoot.

The Emersons' interest in mysterious creatures began when they lived in Washington state.

Ryan Emerson said his interest began because the Pacific Northwest is home to many big-foot sightings. He said his wife's interest began after she saw an unidentified flying object near her home.

"We just kind of got into the genre of the unexplained," Ryan Emerson said.

The couple, who are both nature photographers, discovered the Lake Forest Resort while visiting their children in Champaign. Ryan Emerson said they inquired about the resort after seeing a newspaper add.

Ryan Emerson said Sam Farina, the resort's CEO, turned out to be a big fan of the X Files. He said Farina offered him the chance to be the resort's general manager and create his museum there.

The Emersons plan to add to their museum by adding new exhibits and expanding current exhibits.

Ryan Emerson said he would like to build an actual scale replica of a UFO next. He said he is looking for volunteers to help him build the replica.

A gift shop will also be added to the museum. Zelma Emerson is designing smaller versions of the creatures in the museum for the gift shop.

LAKE CO. LEADER, Polson, MT - Nov. 26, 1998

UFOs bring attention/previous sightings

by **Bill Galusha**
of the Leader

According to recently received reports, Lake County has had numerous UFO sightings over the last few decades, some of which weren't made public until recently.

The recent sightings reported in the Oct. 29 issue of the Leader led to a rash of other UFO reports, letters, comments and at least one "close encounter" reported in Lake County.

The most recent sightings occurred between Oct. 16 and Oct. 31, when dozens of reports were received of an unidentified object being sighted over the Mission Mountains. The UFO appeared between the hours of 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. The object was reported to have a dome atop green, blue and red flickering lights.

Eyewitness Don Basta talked to the Leader in an exclusive interview last month after receiving a phone call from a person reporting the mysterious object.

"I went outside, and sure enough, there it was," he said. "It was real high, but you could tell it was too low to be a star and wasn't in the right part of the sky to be Jupiter."

"The lights were flashing at one to two-second intervals. I called the sheriff's office. I wanted the sighting to be documented. When I went home about 6 a.m. I looked up and I saw it was still in the sky."

A sheriff's office dispatcher also went outside and viewed the object on more than one occasion. She believed it to be light reflecting from stars.

After those sightings were reported, other reports were received by the Leader of UFO sightings, crop circles and a close encounter near Flathead Lake.

A letter received from a woman in Bozeman reports a 1966 sighting.

Excerpts follow:

"I was a junior in Ronan High School at the time, my boyfriend and I were driving from Ronan to Whitefish...we were driving along Flathead Lake. I turned to him and saw a bright light shining from my left. I turned to look out the back window...and I was terrified, I nearly fainted. A circular object, the size of a house, was following our car. It was hovering a few feet from the ground directly above the highway. It seemed a few feet from the car...it was spinning slowly...I remember two or three colors of lights on it."

"My boyfriend looked in the rearview mirror and slammed on the brakes, then the gas, then the brakes...The UFO hovered over the car a short time and then zipped off to the west over a hill. It was completely silent."

"I was up all night walking downtown Ronan...all of a sudden the whole town lit up like it was broad daylight. It only lasted a few seconds..."

That report was preceded by another from Kalispell. A woman reported seeing an object in the sky, but was not sure of what it was and didn't report it to anyone for fear of ridicule. Another called reporting crop circles in the Kalispell area earlier in October and wondered if they were related to the report in the Leader on Oct. 29.

Several other reports from earlier years have been called in, many from the 1960s, and some newspaper reports from previous years document UFOs in the Mission Valley area.

No aircraft were reported in the area. Planets during that time of the morning would not have been in the same area of the sky as the mysterious objects. Nothing unusual was reported on radar.

What the objects are or were is uncertain. What is certain is something was sighted by dozens of witnesses of many professions, ages and persuasions.



'Mystery' landing predicted

SANTA FE — Peter Gersten, a Roswell UFO Encounter speaker last July, predicts a mysterious object will land north of Phoenix Dec. 7.

A former New York lawyer who now practices in Sedona, Ariz., which is north of Phoenix, Gersten also is

aware of it.

Another recently opened website claims a capsule, dating to around 900 A.D., was left by time travelers, called WingMakers, in a hollowed out cave in New Mexico. It is very professionally done, complete with music that is reported to have produced strange effects on some visitors to the site.

Let us now depart the Land of the Weird for a trip through the realities of "Dreamland," the latest and best book on the UFO craze. Subtitled "Travels Inside the Secret World of Roswell and Area 51," the book is mainly about Area 51, also known as Dreamland, Groom Lake and the Nellis Air Force Base Range. The secret government installation obviously is out there in the Nevada desert, but it doesn't officially have a name and its existence still is denied except in court documents. "Roswell" was inserted in the subtitle because the word is magic to UFO buffs.

Author Phil Patton, a veteran technology writer, devotes only a few pages to the Roswell Incident but perhaps puts it in the most realistic perspective of anyone so far. Patton is of the opinion that the Roswell story always will

be special because it is the only time the U.S. government has officially claimed to have captured a flying saucer.

After 24 hours of notoriety, the 1947 Roswell Incident disappeared until the early 1980s when it resurfaced as an elaborate government cover-up. Patton calls the scenario perfect: the mysterious shiny object in the desert, the grizzled and baffled rancher, the swift deployment of the military, the hushed ferrying of mysterious wreckage to secret labs and a colorful cast of characters.

In the next 15 years the story grew and was embellished by new witnesses, new crash sites, TV documentaries and a full-length movie. By 1994, U.S. Rep. Steve Schiff had the General Accounting Office digging through government records for the truth about Roswell. This prompted the Air Force to issue new explanations about the incident. And a Roswell mayor was elected who decided to make lemonade from what respectable townspeople had hitherto viewed as a lemon. The Roswell Incident has grown to such proportions and allure, he proposes, that it no longer is in anybody's interest to

seek the truth.

Patton presents Dreamland as a very real flight test area where a handful of aeronautical geniuses perfected the U-2 spy plane, the SR-71 and the Stealth fighter and bomber. He also covers every other imaginable aspect of the UFO craze — the Lockheed Skunk Works, the underground alien bases (including the one at Dulce, N.M.) alien-human hybrids, cattle mutilations, abductions, disinformation campaigns and "The X-Files" TV series.

New Mexico is present throughout Patton's explorations. There are many mentions of Los Alamos, Kirtland and Holloman Air Force bases, White Sands and Wackenhut. That's right, the same Wackenhut that contracts with Gov. Gary Johnson for our state prisons and employs Sen. Manny Aragon, got its start through political connections and legal loopholes that allowed it to provide security for the government's most secret installations and sometimes to handle dark jobs for the CIA.

"Dreamland" is a highly researched, but whimsical tour of the world's obsession with UFOs.



INSIDE THE CAPITOL

JAY MILLER

director of Citizens Against UFO Secrecy, an organization dedicated to prying UFO-related documents away from the federal government.

Gersten's prediction is quite unexpected. Although he believes another form of intelligence is contacting this planet, he has branded most UFO claims — including the Roswell Incident — as hoaxes. He analyzes these claims daily in an e-mail update to his website. But he says this one isn't a hoax, although he doesn't know what sort of event it will be or if we will be

Believers gather in Bordentown for annual UFO convention

By TONI FORD
Courier-Post Staff

BORDENTOWN TWP. — New Yorker Bill Sudbrink says he knows it's hard for people to believe him when he tells them of his UFO sighting.

But at the risk of being called crazy, Sudbrink said in May 1969 he was just five miles outside of Parsons, W.Va., when he saw a

luminescent disk with a beehive-shaped top appear over a mountaintop. Then it just ... disappeared.

It was Sudbrink's first sighting, but it was not his last. That sighting and one in Maryland later reinforced his belief that life exists beyond Earth's solar system.

About 65 other like-minded individuals gathered along with Sudbrink Saturday for the 35th Annual National UFO Conference at the Days Inn on Route 206 to share their experiences and learn more. The event, open to the public, continues today.

Tickets are \$35 for the day.

Not all of them claimed to have seen UFOs, but many were looking for verification and reinforcement that what they believe about alien spacecraft, extraterrestrials and alien sightings is feasible, said Philadelphia's Francis Costello, a doctor of physical science who attended the event.

"I've never seen a UFO, never been abducted, but I came here today because I would like to know whether the general public is coming to some realization that this is true."

Costello and Sudbrink,

who was visiting his son Gary, of Mount Laurel, listened to a variety of speakers during the daylong conference. Today the conference convenes at 10 a.m.

For 30 minutes to an hour, each speaker showed slides and videos to go along with their talks on UFOs and aliens. One of the speakers, Michelle Guerin of Point Lookout, N.Y., distributes a newsletter that provides support for people who say they've been abducted. Guerin said she remembers, at a very young age, flying over treetops and the roof of her house. The experience came shortly af-

ter she was awakened by three beings.

"Little men came through my closed bedroom window," Guerin explained. "They were 3 1/4 feet tall, thin with milky white, almost gray skin. They had the big eyes and the bulbous head."

While Guerin's story sounded like the stereotypical abduction story, Sudbrink said he didn't doubt her sincerity. He listened with equal interest as lecturer Antonio Huneeus spoke at length about findings in Chile and provided footage of reported UFO

sightings and unexplained metallic objects as evidence that other life forms have visited Earth. At the same time, Huneeus noted there are a lot of false reports out there.

Something in the sky



CEDAR — The morning of Aug. 14 was warm and quiet. Dawn was still a few minutes away when Elvira Filbert went out on the deck to enjoy a cup of coffee. That's when she saw it: a large oddly shaped object hanging above the tree line off to the southwest.

"It was just sitting there," she said. "I kept expecting it to move, like a plane, but it didn't. It was tilted at an angle, and there were four projecting things that came out from it and were rounded at the ends, and bars of light that came out and then retracted back inside. And it

UFO sightings not unusual in northern Michigan

made this low humming noise all the time, never louder or softer."

Fascinated, the 57-year-old woman watched for several minutes before going in to wake her sister, Patty. They both looked at the object for awhile and finally went back in the house. The next time Filbert looked out, it was gone.

"I know this sounds absolutely ridiculous, and I don't have any

idea what it was," she said. "But I know that I saw it."

Plenty of other people have seen unidentified flying objects above northern Michigan over the years. According to Dick

Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

Elvira Filbert, right, and her sister Patty Frisk recall the day they spotted an object in the sky southwest of their Leelanau County home last August. The two watched something hover and move about in the early morning hours, before it flew off.

Record-Eagle ■ Mike Norton

Cookman, who teaches astronomy at Northwestern Michigan College, the region's lakes, bays and high vantage points create "wide horizons" for observing things that twinkle and glitter in the sky.

That's not to say that all that glitters is a UFO.

"We also have somewhat less light pollution from other sources, which can make it easy to misinterpret the size and velocity of objects," he said.

In fact, nine out of every 10 UFO sightings occur in the morning or evening when a planet or bright star is visible near the horizon.

"Venus, for instance, is a very bright planet in the eastern sky right now," Cookman said. "If you're driving along just before sunrise and Venus is coming up through the trees, it can look as though it's moving very rapidly when it's really an

illusion."

But even Cookman will admit to one incident that he can't explain: a light he once saw in the west just after sunset that moved in a tight c-shaped arc, headed sharply upward, and suddenly sped off to the north.

"That was a UFO, an unidentified flying object," he said. "And nothing more."

That's a far cry from the blinking lights and strange shapes that bewildered residents of Manistee County — including the county sheriff's department — for more than a week in 1973. At one time, five separate objects were visible in the sky, each one three times the size of a jumbo jet, shaped "like an X-15 experimental rocket" and decorated with blinking red, green and white lights.

"One of them dove so low at a patrol car that one of the officers

dived out because he thought it was going to hit them," said former deputy Neil Rennie, 59, who now has a farm near Bear Lake.

The Manistee sightings created a minor media circus. Officers who participated in the incident found they could barely go anywhere without being kidded about little green men. After several days, some deputies got so tired of the abuse that they began pretending not to see anything, Rennie said.

And those who report strange lights and sights in the sky often end up wishing they'd kept quiet. Anticipating unwanted reactions, others keep such experiences to themselves.

"I got kidded a lot," said Michigan State Police trooper Glenn Guldner, who witnessed a particularly well-documented 1994 UFO

incident in Kingsley. "Most of it was good-natured. There wasn't anybody calling me to tell me to shut up or anything, but everybody and his brother seemed to want to talk to me about what they'd seen and what they believed. It went on for over a year."

As a lawman, Guldner wasn't surprised to see himself quoted (and sometimes misquoted) in media reports about the incident. But ordinary citizens are often unprepared for the kind of public ordeal that awaits witnesses to UFO sightings.

"I'll never, never talk about it again," said Kingsley resident Tracey Cejda, one of the witnesses in the 1994 incident. "I tried to do the right thing by reporting it, but it wasn't worth all the headaches and unhappiness."

"We're very family-oriented and

very private people. But the media blew it all up and wouldn't let it go. We got a lot of support, but we also had more than our share of kooks."

Cejda doesn't fit into that category, and neither do witnesses like Guldner or Filbert, who don't pretend to be able to explain what they saw. They don't talk about space-ships or alien visitors; they don't try to draw conclusions. All they know is that they saw something they can't explain.

"I've heard a lot of theories, and some of them are interesting," Rennie said. "I still sit out late at night with a telescope, smoking cigarette after cigarette and watching the sky. Sometimes I've seen things, too. But I don't call anybody now."

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A sampler of northern Michigan sightings

Oct. 18-28, 1973

Eyewitnesses in Manistee, including most of the sheriff's department, reported repeated sightings of large objects — as many as five at a time — hovering and moving in the night sky over the city. They were described as cigar-shaped, with flashing or rotating lights in red, green and white.

The objects were first seen the night of Oct. 18. For almost an hour, people watched them moving in the sky over the town before drifting west over Lake Michigan. The sightings continued for 10 days, and created a stir in the national press.

"I was on the road that first night, and we followed one of them for 12 miles to the Coast Guard Station, where we tried to enlist their help," said former deputy John Rennie. "We shined lights on them, beeped our horns. . . about the only thing we didn't do was shoot at them. They had guys from the Free Press out at the airport trying to get pictures of the things."

April 1979

At about 4 p.m. one day, a Central Lake woman and her grown daughter were driving home from Eastport on M-88. They were passing an abandoned barn when they spotted an immense silvery object hovering in the air above and behind the structure. The woman described the object as looking "like a jetliner without any wings, just sitting there in the middle of the sky." She does not remember seeing any lights, windows or other markings.

After three or four minutes, the object began to move slowly off to the west and suddenly disappeared, "just winked out," into thin air without making any noise.

Oct. 10, 1994

A Lake Ann woman and two male friends were driving into Traverse City shortly after 8 p.m. Near the intersection of North Long Lake and Strait Road, they noticed a triangular object in the night sky to the southeast. They stopped their truck to get a better look at the object, but it rose higher and sped off, at an angle similar to that of a helicopter.

They described the object as having blue lights shining down from its bottom and a red light at its peak. It made absolutely no sound as it rose into the air, they said.

Dec. 21, 1994

A Kingsley woman looking outside around 6:30 a.m. noticed an object hovering above her barn. She described it as a cylindrical mass three or four times larger than the barn, with white and blue lights and what looked like a haze surrounding it. After about an hour, she contacted the Michigan State Police post in Traverse City, which dispatched a trooper to the scene.

The trooper confirmed the sighting and stayed at the home, watching the object through binoculars until it disappeared 20 minutes later. The

trooper said he watched three military jets approach the object, which extinguished its lights until they passed, then turned them on again. A regional air traffic control center in Minnesota confirmed that "something" appeared on its radar screens at the same time.

A five-minute videotape of the object was copied by a local television station and broadcast. The woman told police she had seen something similar a month before, but had said nothing "because she was afraid everyone would think she was nuts."

Feb. 2, 1995

At 7:15 p.m., witnesses in Denmark, Wis., reported a strange object in the night sky that descended rapidly and shot off to the east, reportedly pursued by military aircraft. About 45 minutes later, a retired NASA engineer living in Eastport called the Air Force Recovery Coordination Center in Langley, Va., to ask if they had lost any aircraft. He described seeing a "large, white and very strange light" that descended to ground level off to the southwest — in the direction of Traverse City.

Several minutes after that call was recorded, four Traverse City youngsters — two teen-age boys and two younger children — ran into their house, crying and agitated, and said a "flying saucer" had streaked out of the night sky and hovered over them while they were sledding on a nearby hill, "making a sound like a microwave." The children, who were familiar with military aircraft and helicopters, said they had never seen anything like it.

The object "bathed them in white light" for several seconds before streaking away, first to the west and then to the south, and finally disappeared from view. The teen-age boys reported that they would have run home sooner, but had to stop to put their clothes back on: They

had found themselves sitting on their sled in their underwear with their clothing stacked neatly beside them.

Their mother, who reported the incident, said there was nothing particularly odd about the boys being outside in their underwear on a winter night. But when they said the clothes had been neatly folded and stacked, she knew something strange must have happened.)

Jan. 26, 1996

Shortly after 1 a.m., a Paradise Township man and his wife were awakened by someone pounding on their door and opened to find a frightened young woman standing outside. The woman said she'd been driving home to Interlochen when she almost ran into something on the road; their driveway was the only place she could turn, she said, and she was afraid to go back outside alone. The man agreed to take his car and escort the woman home.

Out in the driveway, the woman told him she had been headed west on M-113 near Hannah when something bright dropped out of the sky and blocked the road in front of her. It gave off a "yellowish light," she said, and was large enough to block both lanes of the road.

The man drove his visitor to the intersection of M-113 and M-37, where she thanked him and said she could drive the rest of the way herself. But when he returned home, he found his own wife extremely excited. After he and the other woman had driven off, she said, "a large oblong object, 30 to 40 feet across" dropped from the sky to treetop level and moved slowly across the road toward M-113 and then disappeared. She described it as shining a yellowish light, with several dark spots along the top and bottom.

The wife, incidentally, had not been present when the stranger told her own story to her husband.

NEWS ROUNDUP

'Mystery choppers' fly low over area

Law enforcement officials have received several reports of low-flying helicopters. The choppers have reportedly been seen in Baxter, Boone and Newton counties starting Wednesday afternoon.

Two were reportedly flying over Baxter County sometime past 9 p.m. Wednesday. A law enforcement official in Baxter County saw two helicopters flying below 500 feet. The officer said both aircraft were painted dark green in the military style.

A dispatcher for the Arkansas State Police in Harrison said the state police had been trying to determine where the aircraft were from and what they were doing, but as of 10:30 p.m. Wednesday, had not been successful.

The same dispatcher said a captain in the National Guard had also tried making several calls to find out about the mystery choppers and had also met with no success.

BAXTER BULLETIN, Mountain Home, AR - Oct. 15, 1998 CR: C. Lippert



CITY PAPER, Tacoma, WA - Dec. 10, 1998

Flying grape streaks through skies

Date	Location	UFO Description	Sightings
Nov. 12	I-5 South, just past Federal Way	Egg shape	The entity appeared to a woman and child as they drove southbound on I-5. "I saw a round white light in the center of the object and a silver sphere on either side," she says in her report. "This did not look like an airplane or a helicopter." Strangely, she writes, "I could not get my daughter's attention to look at the object."
Sept. 25	Near Fort Lewis	A green fireball	The ball had a tail of glowing debris and burned out just above the horizon.
Sept. 23	Puyallup, off Hwy 512	A streak of green light with a small head and a long tail, "like a meteor."	"I was listening to Art Bell at the time and had just heard about green fireballs and such appearing around the country," the unsuspecting driver writes in his report. "At the exact moment that I heard a guest say it was important to try and get an exact time of the sighting, I saw the object in the sky."
Sept. 15	Puyallup	A bluish/green fireball, the "size of a large grape with arm extended."	UFO arched across the Puyallup sky like a shooting star with a white tail and disappeared.
August 19	Des Moines	Multi-colored sphere-shaped object.	"The colors were flashing and blinking in random patterns. I went to get a pair of binoculars and returned to find it still in the same position. After a few more minutes, it began moving slowly in a Northwesterly direction. No radical movements but it was odd enough for me to call the local TV station and bring it to their attention."
July 23	South of Steilacoom	A white circular fireball with a blue halo.	"Several jet aircraft were seen circling the object at an unknown altitude."
March 21	Auburn	A triangular shaped "thing" with red and blue lights.	Hovered over a woman's house, while she was in her backyard lighting firecrackers. "My daughter and I saw it," she writes in her report. "It was like nothing I had ever seen, but my husband thinks it was an airplane."

Source: National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle.

CEO Quits Job Over UFO Views

Advances in technology a gift of aliens, Silicon Valley pioneer believes

By Jon Swartz
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

Joe Firmage — the Fox Mulder of Silicon Valley — resigned yesterday from the firm he founded so he could promote his belief that many of today's high-tech advancements, including semiconductors, fiber optics and lasers, came from aliens.

Firmage is the 28-year-old founder of USWeb, a high-profile Internet consulting firm that merged recently with the Net marketing firm

CKS to form a 1,950-person public company worth \$2.1 billion. Clients of Santa Clara-based USWeb/CKS include Apple Computer, Levi Strauss and Harley-Davidson.

In November, shortly before the merger, Firmage was pressured to step down as CEO of USWeb and take the lesser title of chief strategist because of his campaign to prove the existence of UFOs.

Yesterday, Firmage said he resigned as chief strategist because he believed that continuing publicity,

including this article, would damage the company's reputation.

"I want to ensure the company is not impacted in any negative way," Firmage said. "I do not want to put myself in a position of compromising its day-to-day perception. I was not pressured" to resign.

Robert Shaw, CEO of USWeb/CKS, said, "Given the market exposure associated with his outside interests, Joe suggested that we would all be better served if he didn't have an official role with the

company. Joe is a visionary and he should be quite proud of what he accomplished. This move should demonstrate to the public and the employees that he's always put the interests of the company first."

Firmage said he is willing to risk his career to further publicize his theories, one of which is that many high-tech advancements can be traced to a purported alien spaceship crash in Roswell, N.M., in

1947.

According to Firmage, government officials recovered materials from the spacecraft and reverse-engineered them to develop many of today's high-tech breakthroughs.

Like Mulder, the intrepid, erudite government agent on "The X-Files," Firmage also believes that the truth is being covered up by the military-industrial complex.

Firmage has published his many ideas in a 608-page manifesto, entitled "The Truth," on his Web site (www.thewordistruth.org).

"This is certainly the most important news event in 2,000 years," he said.

Firmage said his theories grew out of a year's worth of research on government documents and an alleged personal encounter with an other-worldly being.

In a chapter from his manifesto, entitled "My Contact," Firmage recounts an incident that he said occurred one morning at his Los Gatos home, shortly before USWeb went public in 1997.

"A remarkable being, clothed in brilliant white light, appeared hovering over my bed in my room," Firmage writes.

"He looked rather annoyed, and asked: 'Why have you called me here?'"

"I answered with a moment's pause: 'I want to travel in space.' This was always my lifelong dream, and it naturally came out in a state of semi-waking thought."

"He chuckled skeptically, paused, and asked: 'Why should you be granted such an opportunity?'"

"I responded without hesitation, in the only way I could have responded given my life to that time: 'Because I'm willing to die for it!'"

Nothing in Firmage's background would suggest any out-of-the-ordinary beliefs. Clean-cut, polite and articulate, he was raised in a modest Salt Lake City home and attended the University of Utah as a physics major. Although fascinated by science fiction as a teenager, he also described himself as "a skeptical scientist."

By the age of 18, he had founded his first company, Serius, a pioneer in object-oriented programming tools. That company was sold to Novell in 1993 for \$24 million, and Firmage became Novell's vice president of networking strategy until 1995. He co-founded USWeb in December 1995.

Firmage's online book contends that extraterrestrials, or "teachers," have randomly appeared on Earth for several thousand years to "nudge" human beings toward radical scientific advancements.

The Web site also contains about 100 pages of new documents from a source Firmage calls the "Deep Throat of Cyberspace."

One of the documents is a purported 1947 memo from President Harry S. Truman to Secretary of Defense James Forrestal that sets up a top-secret U.S. government operation called "Majestic Twelve" to investigate extraterrestrials. Subsequent documents tacitly acknowledge a series of spaceship crashes from 1947 to 1953.

In addition, the site includes an alleged June 1947 letter from Albert Einstein and Robert Oppenheimer to high-tech visionary Vannevar Bush dishing up advice on how scientists should handle aliens, and a Nov. 12, 1963, note from President John F. Kennedy to a CIA operative about "UFO intelligence files." Kennedy was assassinated 10 days later in Dallas.

Dr. Robert Wood, a retired aerospace engineer and longtime McDonnell Douglas executive living in Newport Beach, Calif., said he has studied the controversial documents and believes that they are real.

Many Silicon Valley scientists and historians scoff at Firmage's beliefs.

"It's a joke; if not, then I must be an alien," chortled Narinder Kapany, the Woodside resident who is credited with inventing fiber optics.

"I've met a bunch of the valley's pioneers, and none of them I know are aliens," said John McLaughlin, co-author of "The Making of Silicon Valley: A One Hundred Year Renaissance" and president of the Santa Clara Valley Historical Association. "The valley was built on ingenuity and hard work."

Firmage insists that he is not trying to cash in on the enduring UFO craze. Rather, he has sunk more than \$3 million into establishing Project Kairos (after an ancient Greek word meaning "the right or opportune moment") to prepare mankind for aliens.

He also has bought ads in Rolling Stone, the Wall Street Journal, the Economist and other print and on-line publications to publicize his book.

"There is no money to be made — just to be lost," he said.

Firmage is well aware of a far greater potential loss — his credibility.

"Why would a young, successful CEO risk his reputation on something this fantastic?" he asked. "Because I believe so much in this theory. And I am in a unique position to communicate an extremely important message. I have the money, credibility, scientific grounding and faith."

Nonetheless, he said, competitors have attempted to exploit his fantastical theories. "Our competitors were highlighting this to the media and calling Joe a crackpot," USWeb/CKS board member Gary Rieschel was quoted as saying in one computer trade publication.

Firmage's situation is eerily similar to a recent plot in the TV show "Ally McBeal," in which a respected stockbroker is fired from his job after claiming to have seen a unicorn. The broker is reinstated after a judge rules that his beliefs do not interfere with his job performance.

The tightly knit UFO community is dramatically split over Firmage's book.

"What he has pulled together is quite impressive. I don't know if it's true, but it's worth thinking about," said Bernard Haisch, 49, an astro-



USWeb founder Joe Firmage wants to publicize his theories on UFOs.

physicist and editor of the Journal of Scientific Exploration (www.jse.com).

This summer, the society sponsored the first independent review of UFO phenomena since 1970. Its conclusion: Some UFO sightings deserve further scientific study.

Firmage's critics, however, contend that he is misguided.

"Roswell has repeatedly been discounted as nothing more than a military experiment," said Frank Drake, president of SETI Institute (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence), the Mountain View organization made famous by Jodie Foster in the movie "Contact." SETI is

partly financed by leading high-tech figures such as Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen, Hewlett-Packard co-founders William Hewlett and the late David Packard, and Intel co-founder Gordon Moore.

"It is constantly exploited by obsessive types who want to believe. If it's not Santa Claus, then it's aliens," said Drake.

Firmage said he has great respect for Drake, but "if he had the same information that I have, I don't believe he would reach his conclusion."

"It's the Flat-Earth society mentality all over again, and I'm here to prove my theory is real," he said.

Did aliens abduct the president?

By PETER BRONSON

Maybe you think Men in Black was just a movie. Maybe you scoff at crop circles, tales of mysteriously mutilated cattle and the "Top Secret" room at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base where crashed aliens are preserved in jars like Lenin at the Kremlin.

Then again, maybe you are in for a Publisher's Clearing House surprise "You May Already Be an Alien!"

Today's column is brought to you in the spirit of open-minded scientific inquiry — and a desperate attempt to find something to write about besides Bill and Monica. Besides, it's close to Halloween.

So, what if ...

Maybe you've seen bright lights in the night sky. Maybe you have lost hours that you can't remember or explain. Maybe you've tossed and turned in a straitjacket nightmare of balloon-headed people with big cat eyes, then climbed out of bed in someone else's pajamas.

Welcome to the not-so-distant world of alien abductions.

"A lot of the abductees I deal with are on the edge," said Don Worley, 77, of Connersville, Ind., just a few crop circles across the Ohio border. He should know. "As an investigator-researcher for 33 long years now, I have handled 112 abduction cases," he wrote. "If I don't know what is going on by now, who in God's name would?"

Mr. Worley is reluctant to talk on the phone. "You never know who's listening," he said after a burst of static. Hmmm.

But he was kind enough to explain:

Men in Black: That movie was a joke. Men in Black is the real thing. They don't seem to be human. They threaten UFO witnesses. These things show up a day or so

later at the door to scare the wits out of someone. I know, that's pretty far-out stuff."

Cat-mutes (mutilated cattle corpses found out West): "They (aliens) have taken tons and tons of cow parts. There's just a big cavity they leave in the cow."

Abductions: In numerous articles, Mr. Worley has written about cases such as the woman who "wore her Victoria's Secret nightgown to bed, and returned wearing a man's oversized shirt."

Or the man who was abducted and found himself in a space ship, with nothing to offer to tall, gray aliens but a \$20 bill. He never saw the money again, but found burned circles in the grass where he'd been standing.

Or the abductee who set off slot-machine jackpots just by walking by.

Mr. Worley warns, "If you disturb street lights, radios, computers or similar devices, you need to find out what is going on in your life."

Many abductees are terrorized for life, he said, but some don't know they have been abducted. Implants reprogram them and erase their memories.

Maybe you laugh. Or maybe you're one of them.

But serious, credentialed academics have interviewed abductees and insist the stories are true.

The Internet is loaded with UFO sites, including an article by 1977 Pulitzer Prize winner John E. Mack, "an M.D. affiliated with Harvard who believes that aliens routinely abduct Midwestern housewives and perform strange experiments on them."

"It appears that we can be 'invaded' or taken over," Dr. Mack writes, "if not literally by other creatures, then by some other form of being or consciousness that seems able to

do with us what it will for a purpose we cannot yet fathom."

And there's Temple University professor David M. Jacobs, whose book The Threat describes "the systematic and clandestine physiological exploitation, and perhaps alteration, of human beings for the purposes of passing on their genetic capabilities to progeny who will integrate into the human society and, without doubt, control it."

Mr. Worley says it in ordinary, terrestrial, Indiana English "Quite literally, the aliens are into us like mice in Swiss cheese."

It's not a sci-fi invasion — it's infiltration, using "halfings" and clones spawned from abducted humans, to enslave us all.

It made me wonder: Are there crop circles in the Rose Garden? Has the president been abducted lately? Is Hillary a "halfing"? Was that tall alien who took the \$20 bill actually Al Gore?

"No, the stories are unrelated," Mr. Worley insisted. "Monicagate is just a distraction compared to this story."

Dr. Mack seems to agree "abductees do not appear to be deluded, confabulating, lying, self-dramatizing or suffering from a clear mental illness."

That appears to rule out the Clintons.

But part of me hopes Mr. Worley is right. We could use a distraction. And if we make contact, I have a request for the aliens:

"If y'all beam up Bill Clinton, don't send him back in someone else's underwear. Just keep him. Thank you."

Peter Bronson is editorial page editor of The Enquirer. If you have questions or comments, call 768-8301, or write to 312 Elm Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.

The Mysterious Valley

Reports of unusual aerial activities these past few months

by Christopher O'Brien

After two years of greatly reduced levels of reported anomalous activity, reports of unusual activity increased dramatically in the fall of 1998. Here are several intriguing reports as reported to this investigator of "the unusual" as witnessed here in the San Luis Valley.

Saturday, November 14 at 9:15 am over the Smith Reservoir area-west of Blanca, CO: Junne Walkley was returning from dropping her relatives off when, while driving south on Rd. 106, she noticed "a great big silver V" hovering over Smith Reservoir. She stopped the car and watched for around a minute. She estimated it was about 10 miles away to the east and estimated its size as a quarter held at arms length. After watching for a minute the object appeared to go straight up and out of sight in "a couple of seconds." She is amazed nobody else reported the craft. She is sending a sketch of the object which is similar to the October 18 sighting at 6:15 am on the west side of the Valley. (Jenne and her husband Virgil are two of my very best and observant skywatchers.)

Wednesday November 17 at sunset over Greenie Mountain: a relative of the Walkleys, "a strong skeptic," witnessed three objects hovering over the San Juan Mountains near Greenie Ridge. The objects appeared to be reflecting the setting sun and sitting "still." Then, the witness "was amazed" when the objects disappeared instantly. (Very similar to the Arimijo three-object video footage from January 1996.)

On the same day, Wednesday November 17, over Greenie Mountain: I received the following report in the mail—"My wife and I were heading west on the [County Rd.] 10 south road towards Greenie. My wife was driving and I was watching the vapor trails left by the jets flying overhead, when I noticed a bright silver looking object heading south by southwest just south of Greenie. I watched the object for a few seconds to insure I was seeing what I was seeing. There was a few scattered clouds in the sky, which were part of a front that was suppose to be in the next two days. This object, I would say was flying as high as any one of the jets that were flying in the same area. But two things were different about this object. First of all it was not leaving any vapor trail behind. Second of all, I asked my wife to pull over a few minutes so I could check it out a little bit closer. This object was not moving slow like a single engine aircraft would be. It was moving at such a rate that it was out of sight in just seconds from the time we pulled over. Also, it was not moving in a straight line like most aircraft would move in the sky. Due to the altitude, the speed and the way it moved through the sky, I do not believe it to be a chopper or small engine aircraft. It could have been a jet aircraft leaving no vapor trail, but I

have my doubts." (I received this report December 13.)

Thursday November 18, 11:15 pm over Blanca Peak: an ex-career member of the Air Force called to report "a multi-colored light yo-yoing up and down—like on a string." Two other witnesses were told and they also watched the strange light. One witness reported the light stayed there "almost an hour...before blinking out."

Thursday October 8, 10:30 pm, Highway 160, 4 miles west of Blanca, CO: R.A.L. West, while headed east on Highway 160 (near the curve 4 miles west of Blanca), observed an amber colored "hemispherical-shaped" light hovering over the Blanca Massif. She estimated the lights size as around Venus-sized. After a few seconds, the object appeared to jump approximately 20 degrees upward. West pulled off the road and parked (with her engine running) to carefully observe the light. The witness is confused and could not completely remember how long she watched, but she guessed "several minutes." The next thing she clearly recalled was the craft flying at a high rate of speed above her car; headed NE to SW. She described a "triangle-shaped array of white and amber lights" blinking sequentially in "patterns" on the underneath side. She could not estimate the craft's altitude, nor was she able to make out the craft's shape or structure. She did not hear any sound except her car engine running. No other cars were on the road in the immediate vicinity, and I have not received any other reports of this event. West mentioned another sighting that may have been military related that occurred on August 5, 1998.

Tuesday October 13, 9:00 pm, Crestone/Baca Development, CO: a "weird amber-colored light" was observed by four witness moving north-to-south. The object appeared to be "way up in the sky," but "...was larger and moving faster than a regular satellite."

Wednesday October 14, 11:30 am, Los Cumbres Golf Course, Crestone, CO: golfer on the par four, fourth hole fairway observed a "silver-colored disc hovering over Mt Adams," (just north of Crestone Peak), about 8 miles north of his location. Object seemed to wobble, but did not appear to be headed anywhere. Golfer made his second shot and could still see the craft. He headed toward the green watching it. After making his third shot the object had disappeared. He estimated the object was visible for at least 5 minutes.

Saturday October 24, just before sunset, Highway 17 near Mineral Hot Springs: a motorist headed south on 17 observed "two large glowing white objects" that fell at a high rate of speed toward the ground "over Alamosa," (45 miles south). The witness at first thought the objects were meteors, but realized the sun was still up and it was still light out, and the objects did not resemble normal meteors; they were "not as bright" Duration "a couple of seconds."

(Large daylight meteor sightings?)

Tuesday October 27, 9:30 pm Center, CO: Center resident Fabian Sauvo reports a anomalous unblinking bright red light directly north of Hooper, CO. The light at times appeared to hover, but seemed to be traveling slowly SW-to-NE.

He called me real-time and I was able to see the object from my roof. Sauvo, after several minutes on the phone to me, was able to describe the above red-lights location, and I observed the light for several seconds before it disappeared into a cloud bank. I waited for awhile, but it never emerged from the cloud. The light seemed to be between 4,000' and 5,000' above the ground and over the sand piles on Highway 17, between Hooper and Moffat. (Rare to get a call and be able to simultaneously see an anomalous object, a UFO [or military craft?] while on the phone with another witness!)

Friday October 29, Baca Grande Development: a resident reports small objects hitting her roof. No hail or rain was present at the time. House is out in the Valley and has no tall trees within a quarter-mile. Activity is tip of the iceberg. Small hooded figures (about 4'tall) on a couple of occasions have been seen (during the preceeding two weeks), running past the windows. Heavy footsteps have been heard in the house, but no one is there. A tapered "hairy-pig" was reportedly seen outside running past the house. (There are no wild/hairy pigs in the SLV to my knowledge. This sounds like a "Prairie Dragon" sighting.) Witness claims she was "slammed into a door" by an unseen force several days earlier. The event left "a bruise on her cheek" and was witnessed by a painter working in the house several feet away.

The following day, Saturday October 30, at 11:00 pm, same location: same witness observes a foot-long oval-shaped object enter through her back door and slowly head up the hallway toward her. She described the anomaly as being "milky-looking with a reflective band around the rim." The band appeared to be like chrome. The witness was so startled she stopped looking at the object which apparently then disappeared. She estimated, at its closest, it was 10' away from her as it came toward her down the hallway.

Tuesday Sept 1, 9:40 am, Highway 17 and 160, Alamosa, CO: I was headed to Alamosa, when I happened to follow a red late-model Cadillac with Oklahoma license plates onto Highway 17 off of Road T, headed out of Crestone/Baca Dev. The Caddy sped off south and caught up with a Colorado State Patrol vehicle driving in an unmarked semi's blind-spot, on Highway 17. I caught up with the three of them 5 miles north of Hooper, and followed them all the way into town. The Caddy tailgated the State Patrol and semi the entire 30 miles into Alamosa, where all three turned into the Loaf & Jug truck parking lot at the

corner of 160 and 17. Then, less than a minute later two blocks east, an unmarked sedan with alternating-flashing head and tail lights (w/ a heavy-set man in a dark suit at the wheel) dashed around traffic and headed toward Loaf & Jug. I then noticed a Haz Mat (hazardous material) response van a block later.

During the trip south on 17, several obvious speeders went by and the Patrol car ignored them all. He also kept right on the semi's tail, even when the truck traveled way under the speed limit. The Caddy stuck less than 30 feet from the patrol car for over 30 miles. Coincidence? As I returned down Road T, at 11:20 am, I noticed a white unmarked Bronco with US Government plates sitting at the Road 65T entrance of the Baca Ranch. (Go figure...When the convoys appear aerial reports usually follow.)

The same night at 10:15 pm to 10:25 pm north central San Luis Valley: a large craft with alternating pulsing white lights was heard and/or spotted by numerous Crestone/Baca Grande residents. A loud, low-pitched rumbling sound rattled windows and alerted residents to the craft's presence. One witness noted "it shook all the needles on trees around him." Several versions stated the craft's sound took between 5 and 10 minutes from start to finish, although the sighting lasted "about a minute" to cross the Valley, from west to east, and illuminated the clouds over the Sangres de Cristos as it just passed over the range.

Monday Sept 14, at 6:15 am, Highway 285 north of Monte Vista, CO: a Monte Vista resident, while headed north on 285, witnessed a "V-shaped craft hovering over the tops of the mountains to the west." The sun was above the horizon and seemed to reflect off the object "like the sun reflecting on an airplane wing," but the object's structure was still plainly visible to the witness. The witness described the object as looking like "2 big rectangular pillars put together in a V-shape... the size of three (commercial jet) airliners." The witness observed the craft for over ten minutes before he traveled too far north and left it behind him—still hovering over the mountains. No one else driving on 285 seemed to notice the object which puzzled the witness because, "it was so big."

Don't forget my second book of the Mysterious Valley series, *Enter The Valley*, will finally be available next week. Also, don't forget to tune into the Mysterious Valley Report, on KRZA, 88.7 FM every first Friday of the month at 12 noon.

If you witness "the unusual," (or would like to obtain signed copies of my books) please report your experience by calling (719) 256-4407.

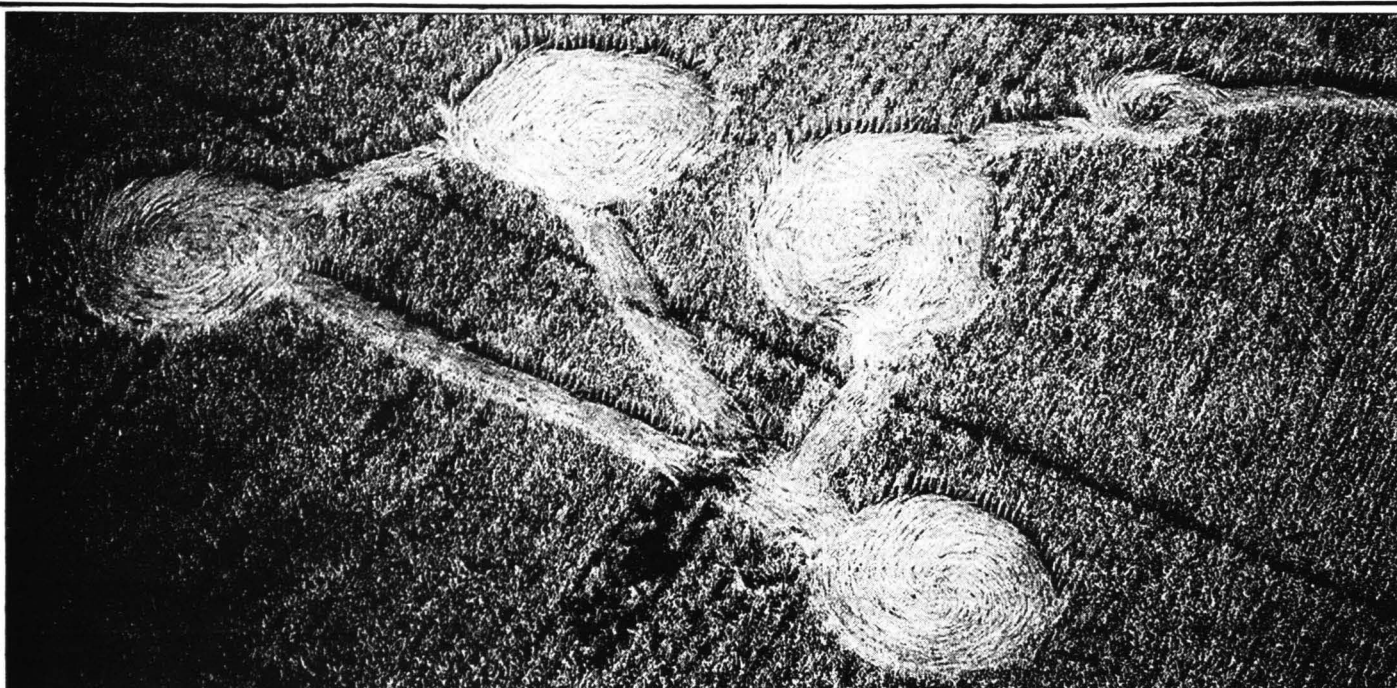
Keep your eyes to the sky, but more importantly, keep your ears to the ground.



FOREIGN NEWS

[All British clippings courtesy of Timothy Good, unless otherwise credited.]

NATIONAL POST, Toronto, Ontario, Canada - Dec. 22, 1998 CR: G. Conway



DREW WILSON / THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

Crop circles appear in a wheat field in Perquimans County, N.C. Reports received by Canada's Defence Department include a Prairie family's sighting of two-metre crop circles.

Bright flying objects, crop circles subjects of military reports

STRANGE PHENOMENA

Defence Department releases latest batch of UFO sightings

BY JIM BRONSKILL

OTTAWA • Several snowmobilers see a round yellowish light assume the shape of a star. It moves slowly westward, like a balloon on a string, then suddenly disappears.

A number of people witness a large triangle-shaped object pass quickly above a Yukon lake under a full moon.

It makes a loud noise, but has no lights and leaves no vapour trail.

A Prairie family finds some of their cattle mutilated. A few years later, they discover a two-metre crop circle in one of their fields.

The mysterious stories are just a few of the unusual reports from people across the country who

have encountered things they simply could not explain.

The Defence Department has just released a batch of the documents, known in military circles as CIRVIS reports, short for Communications Instructions for Reporting Vital Intelligence Sightings.

The names of people who claimed to see the strange phenomena have been deleted, but the memos provide some intriguing glimpses of the eerie episodes.

Some, such as the "large greenish flare" seen over Northern Ontario in January, 1997, can be fairly easily explained as meteors. But others are a little more baffling.

Army Sergeant Clay Rankin remembers the spring day last year in Tuktoyaktuk, N.W.T., when a local woman reported being followed by two cone-shaped unidentified flying objects as she drove home with four companions.

"She seemed pretty sincere about it," Sgt. Rankin recalled in an interview. "What it was, I'm not sure."

The official report says bright blue light shone from windows in the twin objects as they moved through the Arctic sky about one kilometre behind the car.

"They were followed for approximately 15 minutes when contact was lost."

Sgt. Rankin, 38, duly filed his report with superiors at Canadian Forces Northern Area Headquarters.

Still, he doubts the existence of

'AS THE LARGE BALL GOT CLOSER TO ME, IT PICKED UP SPEED AND THE COLOUR CHANGED'

extraterrestrial spacecraft. "I've never seen one myself," said Sgt. Rankin.

"I'm not one of those X-Files fans or anything like that."

A bizarre incident near Marmora, Ont., last February might have

made believers out of three people who saw white and orange lights flying above the ice on Crowe Lake.

A similar sighting took place in Ottawa on a clear July evening. Witnesses told the National Defence Operations Centre of a display by four or five glowing objects that moved about chaotically, "merging and separating at random" for almost an hour before vanishing.

A woman in Coral Harbour, N.W.T., was starting her snowmobile one morning last January when she gazed over the water and saw a large blue ball and two, smaller red balls followed by sparkles.

"As the large ball got closer to me, it picked up speed and the colour changed from blue to red," she told the military. "As it passed overhead it changed colours again from red to orange, then to yellow, then headed up into the sky."

The report lists the incident as a possible "UFO/submarine sighting."

Officials were at a loss, however, to explain the June, 1997 Yukon sighting of the black, triangle-shaped object over Lake Laberge.

"A number of aircraft were in the area around the reported time, but none remotely resembled the object's description."

Southam News

'Where did the time go?'

From Mrs M N Greenman: RE: The UFO sighting by Tom Hemek (the 'Post' September 17):

I was driving from Launceston towards Bude, leaving at approx 10.40am on August 11, and as I passed Red Post my car started to behave strangely, the engine almost stalling several times, then it cut out completely.

I checked the car was not out of petrol then got out of the car to look under the bonnet. As I did so I saw in the sky ahead a strange object similar to the photograph in the paper. I also noticed it was moving very quickly and a fine vapour trail was evident.

I could see nothing wrong with the car so I got back into the driver's seat and the car started immediately and I proceeded towards Bude with no more problems.

When I arrived at the optician to collect my new spectacles, I found I was extremely late for my appointment and that the journey from Launceston to Bude had taken one hour 45 minutes! I could not understand what had happened to the time and neither could my optician when I told him what time I left Launceston.

Can anyone shed light on this mystery?
Tavistock Road,
Launceston.

'Aliens out there?'

From Bill Peters: I refer to your article on UFOs on the morning of August 11 (the 'Post' September 17). I was in my garden and may have seen the object Mr Hemek describes.

Hearing a noise like a rushing of wind I looked up to see an object, dark in colour and more oval than Mr Hemek describes. It was not supersonic as there was no bang but it was very fast and I only saw it for a second or two heading east towards Holsworthy.

Mr Hemek's letter and photo reminded me of it, though I couldn't say what it was. Perhaps there are aliens out there.
St Michaels Road,
Stratton.

SOUTH WALES EVENING POST, Swansea, Wales - Oct. 14, 1998

Mystery caller says jets involved in aerobatics

UFO sightings are blamed on aircraft

By PAUL TURNER

TWO jets doing high altitude aerobatics are claimed to be behind some of the supposed UFO sightings in Swansea.

But mystery still surrounds sightings of helicopters seen in the area at the same time.

The claim about the jets was made by an anonymous caller who said they were flying between Swansea and Cardiff.

He said the jets, which were painted silver, were practising knife-edge flying at high altitudes, where they travel with their wings in a vertical position.

"From the ground this would give you the

concept of something flying without wings," said the caller, who refused to identify himself.

Exercises

He said the Sea King helicopters seen in the area were on exercises from Sennybridge Barracks.

Aircraft controller at Swansea Airport, David Healey confirmed two de Havilland aircraft had returned there from Cardiff.

Their return was at around dusk last Thursday, when many of the UFO sightings took place, he added.

"They are silver and they are quite unusually shaped aeroplanes because they have a short wing span and quite a large tail area," said Mr

Healey.

He could not comment on whether the De Havillands had been involved in aerobatics.

The source of the helicopters remains unknown.

RAF Chivenor and Sennybridge Barracks have both denied they came from there.

CORNISH & DEVON POST, Launceston, England - Sept. 24, 1998

Magazine explores Yukon UFO sighting

By CHUCK TOBIN
Star Reporter

Photographs from a suspected UFO sighting over Tagish Lake in the early 1970s are featured in this quarter's publication of *UFO*BC Quarterly*.

The story and photographs stem from research conducted by Martin Jasek, a local water resources planner who is *UFO*BC*'s northern correspondent.

Jasek was turned onto the story last June after his interest in the phenomena was detailed earlier in the spring in a *Star* story. That was followed by a long interview on a local radio station.

Told of a photograph that surfaced in Whitehorse in the early '70s, Jasek was able to track down a duplicate of the original slide from a friend of the man who took the picture.

Jasek said in a recent interview the friend did not want his surname revealed (first name George), nor the surname of the photographer (first name Jim).

But, as the story goes, Jim was trav-

elling down Tagish Lake in a boat when he noticed seven strange lights. Four were close to the water, and another three were further up the mountainside.

Jim was able to watch the lights for about 15 minutes, as the story goes.

"The four that were closer to the water eventually drifted up and joined the other three that were on the mountainside; that is what Jim said," Jasek recalled from what was recounted to by George.

George didn't witness the lights, as he was following in a boat about four kilometres (2.5 miles) behind.

He didn't even know of Jim's unusual sighting until about a week later, after Jim received his film back from the processing laboratory. Supposedly, he wanted something to back up his story before he dared reveal what he saw.

Jim died about 10 years ago but a surviving daughter is living in B.C. The B.C. organization is trying to reach her to see if the original slide still exists.

Examining the original won't allow

scrutineers to determine whether the lights were UFOs or a strange natural occurrence. It will, however, give them the ability to determine whether the lights were part of the original photograph, and if so, whether they were a significant distance from the camera, said Jasek.

Tracking down the original slide may also bring to the surface other pictures of the same incident that Jim took but didn't circulate.

Apparently, there were copies made of the particular slide, one of which was supposedly sent to the Department of National Defence in Ottawa, Jasek explained.

"I think he inquired about it a year later, and was told it was classified."

Jasek visited the exact location from where the picture was taken in September.

From his examination of the picture, knowing the location of light closest to Jim as it was set against a backdrop of shoreline spruce trees, Jasek estimates that light measured 1.4 metres (4.5 feet)

in diameter.

"And that goes together with what Jim said. He said they were roughly three or four feet in diameter."

Jasek's investigation of the Tagish story is featured in a four-page spread in the B.C. quarterly report.

The magazine's cover story details the story of crop circles that were noticed in a hay field in Vanderhoof, B.C. on Aug. 28.

Crop circles have been made famous by several occurrences around the world. The 11 Vanderhoof circles mea-

sured 5.6 metres (18.5 feet) in diameter to 30 metres (99 feet).

The Tagish story will also appear in this fall's quarterly report *The Flying Saucer Review*, a British publication that began publishing in 1955.

Jasek said he's backlogged with about 20 local reports of UFO sightings that have come to him since he went public about his interest in bizarre sightings last spring.

His home phone number is 633-2472. The website address for *UFO*BC* is (www.ufobc.org).

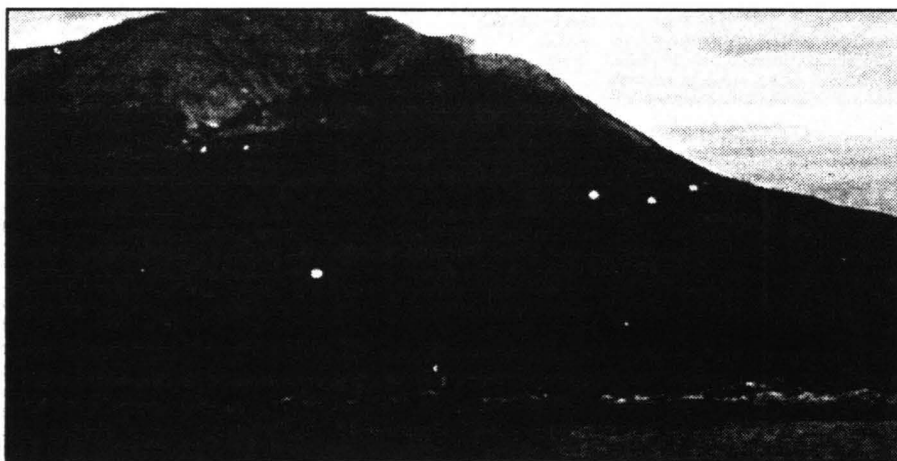
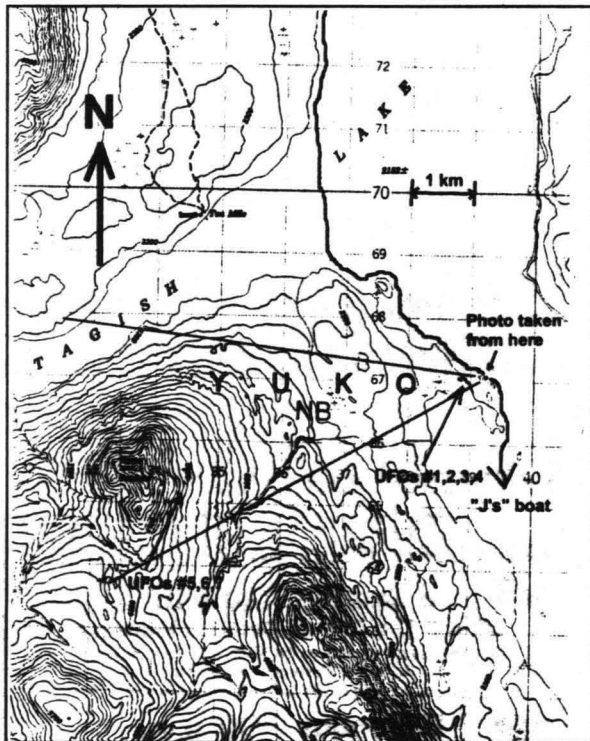


Photo Submitted

IS THERE LIFE OUT THERE? - Local UFO enthusiast Martin Jasek located this picture of seven strange lights taken along the shore of Tagish Lake in the early 1970s by a local resident. The case is among 20 or so that have been brought to Jasek's attention after he publicized his interest in the phenomena last spring.



Map Submitted

LOCATION PINPOINTED - The map details where seven strange lights were photographed on Tagish Lake in the early 1970s.

UFO near misses in the skies

PASSENGERS who travel by air are being kept in the dark over a series of near-misses between aircraft and UFOs, it is claimed.

The revelations are made by Derbyshire-based author Jenny Randles, who has listed more than 100 close encounters between passenger jets and bizarre flying objects in her new book.

Randles claims that since 1991 at least 25 such encounters have occurred above Britain alone. These have included a wedge-shaped UFO which passed alarmingly close to a Boeing 737 landing at Manchester Airport.

Her book, *Something in the Air*, says the aircraft was carrying 60 passengers as it descended to 4,000 feet above the Peak District. Suddenly, a glowing wedge-shaped object appeared to be heading straight for the plane.

A "very thorough" CAA probe into the encounter failed to find an explanation but mentioned the possibility of "extraterrestrial activity" and concluded "this is not within the Air Miss group's remit."

Randles claims First Officer Stuart and Captain Roger Wills are just two of dozens of

By DAVID CLARKE

aircrew whose aircraft have been buzzed and intercepted by weird objects in the skies.

The latest came last November when a private aircraft pilot reported an encounter with a UFO while landing at Leeds-Bradford airport, which air traffic control were unable to explain.

But Randles says aircrew have been forced to stay silent about the growing number of near-misses because competing airlines are terrified of the effects such revelations may have on customer confidence.

Energy

She believes some of the incidents are caused by secret prototype craft like the Stealth fighter being tested by the military, space junk like Bolide meteors and unknown electrical energy similar to ball lightning.

"It is quite possible to have UFOs which are not aliens but natural phenomena which we don't understand and which can pose a real threat to aircraft," she said.

■ *Something in the Air* by Jenny Randles is published by Robert Hale this week.

STAMFORD MERCURY, Lincs., England - Sept. 25, 1998

More strange lights in the sky

by Kahn Johnson

UNIDENTIFIED flying objects have been spotted over the skies of Stamford.

A couple in Conduit Road were sitting in their back garden on Sunday evening when they saw a strange object flying overhead.

The woman, who does not want to be named, said: "I saw something that looked a bit odd flying overhead, so I went to get the binoculars. It was a sort of W shape, with the three-points flying forwards and about 20 lights on the periphery. It was flying very fast and was difficult to track."

What ever it was, it flew across, from south to north at about 8.30pm, and again, from west to east, about 10 minutes later.

"When it flew over again, you could see clearly the shape - it was like nothing I had seen before. I wasn't particularly excited by what I saw - just very intrigued."

Two more UFOs, this time the shape of "old fashioned brass ashtrays" were seen flying over at about 10pm the same evening.

RAF Wittering said that neither

'UFO was shaped like an old-fashioned brass ashtray'



ABOVE: The woman's drawing of those lights in the sky

it nor RAF Cottesmore were flying at that time of night, and Stamford police has so far received no reports of anything flying over Stamford.

"I'm not a believer in UFOs by any stretch of the imagination, but what I saw was certainly not any sort of aircraft that I know of -

and I used to be an aircraft engineer," the woman said.

"Hopefully, someone else will come forward and say they saw it as well."

● Did you see something unusual over the skies of Stamford on Sunday night? If so, call the Mercury newsdesk on 01780 762255.

Are UFOs little green men in alien spaceships, the fevered inventions of weird enthusiasts or a cosmic cover-up? **ROWAN MANTELL** met a Norfolk family dedicated to uncovering the truth.

There's something out there!

YOU could hardly get more solid and respectable, more down to earth and normal, than Howard Hackett.

He's ex-RAF, a retired policeman, a family man living in a pleasant modern detached house in a quiet village just north of Norwich.

But Howard and his wife and daughter share an unusual hobby.

They spend much of their free time investigating reports of strange lights in the sky, bizarrely shaped aircraft hovering over Norfolk, shining, soaring, glowing, pulsing and resoundingly unidentifiable flying objects.

Howard, Jeanette and Karin Hackett are all key members of the Norfolk UFO Society, dedicated to investigating the numerous UFO sightings made locally every year.

But far from being convinced that we are in contact with aliens from another planet they describe themselves as "open-minded sceptics".

"We are all really sceptics at heart. It is such a bizarre subject," said Howard, who worked as a police officer in London and Norwich after leaving the RAF.

He has never seen a UFO, but Jeanette is proud of her sighting, meticulously logged in the Norfolk UFO Society's case file.

It was in January 1996 that she went to the bathroom in the early hours of the morning.

She took a look out of the window and was amazed to see a bright red-orange ball hovering over the roof of a neighbouring bungalow. She watched it for three or four seconds and said it then "just blinked out, as if it knew I was watching it. It was a weird feeling."

As always when dealing with a sighting, members of the society checked with authorities including the airport, the RAF and American Air Force, and the Met office to try and explain away the object. They drew a blank.

Howard is understandably

RECENT LOCAL UFO SIGHTINGS INCLUDE:

February 13 1997, Norwich, 10.30pm.

Two people saw flashing light which gave off a bright "aurora" before it disappeared.

February 15 1997, Colman Road, Norwich, 10pm.

Three people saw two bright "stars" with flashing lights, one in the north and one to the south-east. They appeared to be flashing to each other.

March 18 1997, Sprowston, 7.30pm.

Witness saw one large and six smaller white lights, rotating left and right "like paper doilies". Viewed over 1½ hours. (Possibly a laser show but not able to confirm this.)

July 1997, Spixworth, night.

Woman awoken by a high-pitched noise. Saw lights on her bedroom wall, turned to look out of the window and saw a bronze metallic burger-shaped object

directly outside her window with red and white flashing lights, up to eight-feet in diameter. Witness felt she was then forced to go to sleep.

September 22, 1997, Norwich.

Witness saw a cylindrical object.

September 26 1997, 7.15pm, Norwich.

Two people saw a white glowing spherical object with dark lines or joints around the edge "like cracks in ice or lightning". It appeared to have a hatch or door below centre. When it moved away, fast, it appeared to have horizontal lines across it and a light to its lower left.

October 18 1997, Reymerton, 2pm.

An experienced RAF engineer was playing golf and looked up as a cylindrical object, with something like a long trailing aerial behind it, passed directly over him, moving silently and quickly northwards.

slightly jealous of Jeanette's sighting. After all, he is the one who has been fascinated since childhood.

He also believes that there are people in power who could account for many UFOs, but choose not to.

"There are a lot of aircraft about that we know about," he said. "There is obviously something happening but I don't know what it is."

"The more you hear the more you don't know, the more questions arise."

The former RAF man has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the aircraft, stars and weather conditions which can be mistaken for UFOs, but some sightings he cannot dismiss.

During his time with the RAF he came across several air-crew who had seen odd things. "Some would talk about it, others wouldn't," he said.

Karin, who has become just as involved as her parents said the huge popularity of the X-Files

has sparked a resurgence of interest in UFOs. "We would be pretty arrogant to think we are the only ones here," she said.

Her father said: "I think it's more acceptable to discuss this kind of thing now."

All three are trained investigators for the UFO Society, carefully taking confidential witness statements.

Howard said: "Most of us are sceptics at heart and our main object is to try and find out what's happening, really."

"We take each sighting on the premise that it can be explained."

Sometimes the potential spaceship packed with aliens proves to be the planet Venus, an unusual aircraft, a hot air balloon, or a vapour trail from an aeroplane.

Jeanette insisted: "We are not looking for little green men."

But just occasionally, someone sees something so strange that there seems to be absolutely no explanation...



WATCHING THE SKIES: the Hacketts keep an eye out for strange sightings.

Photo: JULIAN NICHOLLS

● MOST of the country is covered by a UFO Society and Norfolk's local group was founded several years ago by some students at City College, Norwich.
● The Norfolk Society meets every other Monday at Wensum Lodge, King Street, Norwich. New members are always welcome — just turn up to the next meeting on Monday, October 5.

● Norfolk's UFO enthusiasts range in age from teenagers to pensioners and most meetings attract around 30 people
● The fortnightly meetings cover the latest sightings plus experts on subjects ranging from crop circles to cover-ups.
● Things are quite quiet UFO-wise around Norfolk at the moment — for more action, head to Yorkshire or Essex.

FREE PRESS, Prince George, B.C., Canada - Sept. 6, 1998 CR: G. Conway

Spectators circle around local attraction in Vanderhoof

It isn't clear whether the Vanderhoof crop circles are a peanut butter and chocolate laced hoax or a phenomenon that only special agents Dana Scully and Fox Mulder could explain.

But the ambiguity surrounding the 11 circles that mysteriously appeared in a farmer's oat field last week is exactly what appeals to the hordes of curious onlookers — about 500 a day — who are coming to

check them out. Field researcher Chad Deetken, who has examined some 200 circles, says the attention is unprecedented. He says the circles rarely receive more than one or two visitors and very little media attention.

In Vanderhoof, however, the stream of curious has been steady. So steady in fact that the crop is now trampled to the ground. People appear to be both reluctant to specu-

late on who or what created the circles, while at the same time hopeful that their community may have been the subject of paranormal attention.

"I don't know what to think," says Kim Paradis, a forest technician in Vanderhoof. "We'd all like to believe we were visited by someone, it's kind of neat. Some people think it's a hoax put on by the Chamber of Commerce and then there are those who believe we have been visited."

Stories of "weird" events are spreading around town, many with real or imagined links to the circles — dogs barking uncontrollably the night the circles appeared, a farmer's truckload of hay spontaneously bursting into flames as it passed the field of circles.

When asked what may have created the circles most people respond with a shrug of the shoulders and say, "I don't know."

Still others have a sense of humour about the circles. Ms. Paradis points out that if the aliens were trying to catch Vanderhoof's Rock-Fest concert they were three weeks late and in the wrong field. Derek Kellam, a Vanderhoof teen, says young people are taking the potential alien presence seriously while others think it's a youthful prank.

"If it was my friends that made the circles I'd be proud of them."

Crop phenomena authentic – now what?

By MICHELLE LANG
Free Press staff writer

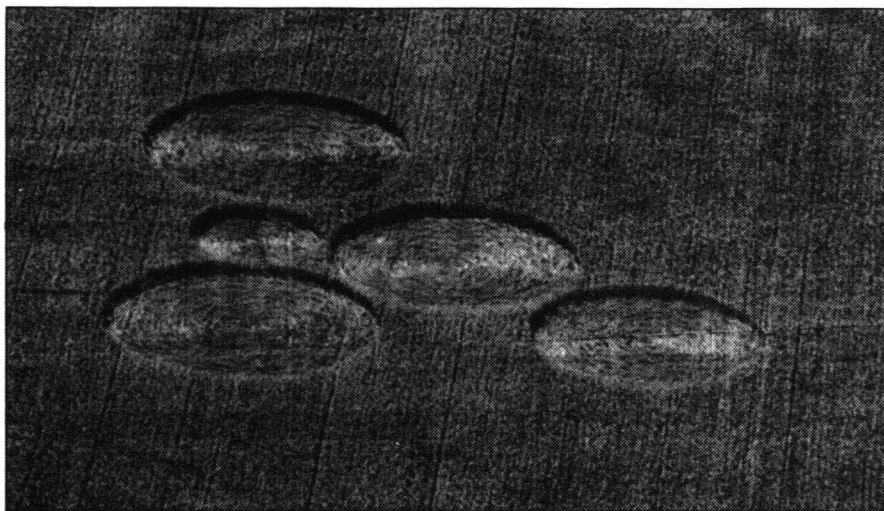
Vanderhoof—The authenticity of the Vanderhoof crop circles won't be known until samples taken from the site are analyzed in a Michigan lab.

By all preliminary indications, however, field researcher Chad Deetken claims the circles – the first documented crop formations in British Columbia – are not a hoax.

The 11 circles, discovered in a farmer's ripe oat field on August 28, are laid out in three sets, two with three circles and one with five circles. The stalks are bent over at ground level, swirling in either a clockwise or counterclockwise direction in each circle.

For eight years Mr. Deetken has examined such circles under the U.S.-based National Institute for Discovery Science. He believes the Vanderhoof circles are authentic.

When the discovery was made last week there were no paths leading into the field. There was little seed spillage, unusual because ripe crops have delicate seed that easily spills



A Vancouver-based crop circle authority says the 11 circles found in a Vanderhoof field of oats last Friday are most likely not a hoax. JOHN MCKENZIE/FREE PRESS

out. It is difficult, according to Mr. Deetken, to hoax a crop circle without leaving damage.

"There is always a possibility it is a hoax, that's hard to eliminate 100 per cent," says Mr. Deetken. "But so

far it looks like it is for real."

Mr. Deetken has taken several stalk samples which he claims will officially determine the circles' authenticity. He takes 24 stalks per circle, cutting them above the ground

before the bend occurs.

"With authentic formation you see an expansion of the cells by about 40 per cent. This weakens them and allows them to fall over without experiencing damage," he

explains.

If the Vanderhoof circles produce these results then Mr. Deetken says they are authentic, meaning they are unexplained phenomenon. Since the formations began appearing in the 1970s, however, there have been plenty of theories. Some say they are an act of nature like whirlwinds, disease or radio activity.

But their careful placement in highly visible fields and, in some cases, their complex geometric patterns lend credibility to circle enthusiasts who believe they are a deliberate act by something super-intelligent.

"At first they were seen as UFO landing sites, then people realized it was something far more complicated," says Dr. Jim Butler, a biology professor at the University of Alberta who studied England's circles. "They involve a geometric perfection that is difficult to execute in a crop."

"I was taken with the melding and bending of the stalk. It's certainly worthy of our attention but what they mean, I just don't know."

SOUTH WALES EVENING POST, Swansea, Wales - Oct. 12, 1998

Investigator says helicopters tried to intercept object

UFO mystery is deepening

By RHODRI EVANS

REPORTS have been flooding in from people across Swansea who say they saw UFOs in the sky on Thursday night.

UFO investigator Neil Spring has had more than 40 calls about lights seen in the sky.

Mr Spring, from the Office for Global UFO investigation, said: "The phone has been red hot."

"The thread which appears to run through all the accounts is that there were lights travelling from east to west in the sky parallel to one another."

"There were helicopters in the area at around the same time and the reports indicate that the helicopters were attempting to intercept the object but it was travelling too fast."

People in Mumbles, Bishopston, Gorseinon and Port Talbot all reported seeing the object at about 8pm on Thursday.

Swansea Airport today confirmed a number of military helicopters had been in the area at the time but poured scorn on the idea of alien spacecraft flying over Swansea.

Alan Jennings, speaking from the airport's control tower, said: "No way was it a UFO."

"The RAF were night flying with Sea King helicopters and their search lights were on. I don't know exactly where they were from but it was probably RAF Chivenor."

"It's a fairly regular thing, it just so happened this one was at night."

But Mr Spring said: "It's an insult to our intelligence to suggest nothing happened. There were UFO sightings all last week, not just on Thursday."

"Sightings in Fforestfach, Kilvey and Loughor all occurred earlier in the week. I don't think the helicopters were from Chivenor because when I phoned them they said they weren't theirs."

"And I don't think the helicopters in the area gave rise to misidentifications because people are not stupid."

He said an angler had been heading home at 6pm when he saw grey objects, resembling jets without wings, head silently from Waunarlwydd out into the bay.

Mr Spring is now asking anyone who has seen a UFO, especially if they have managed to catch it on film, to ring him on 01792 234766.

POST OPINION

Why can't they try the truth?

THE truth may be out there, except when dealing with Government or official departments adept in double speak or, sometimes more often, non-speak.

There are many people, not all of them obsessed with little green men or The X-Files, who saw something at least unusual in the skies on Thursday night.

Now, the more sceptical, perhaps sensible, among us might say the lights or objects may have had just a little to do with the meteorite showers forecast for West Wales on most weather updates hours before many eyes shot upwards.

However, other people with no time at all for the world of the paranormal, concede that what they saw bore no resemblance to any meteorite or shooting star they had ever seen or imagined.

At the root of the latest fuss and new conspiracy theories is the stubborn refusal of officialdom to come out with any sense or clarity in the face of another example of why West Wales is regarded as a hotspot among UFO watchers.

It will not shock many of us if, given Britain's stated position on the rising tensions and slaughter in Kosovo, there were a range of understandably covert exercises in this region on a given night.

Neither will thousands of us start digging huge bunkers in our gardens if someone were to admit that Thursday's dance of the light fantastic is unexplained.

Instead, the official line that is trotted out, just as it has been for years, is "it wasn't us, guv" or "why on earth does anyone take notice of someone potentially unhinged?"

This attitude only serves to fuel the more sensational and paranoid among certain groups of people convinced the aliens have already landed and are running strategically important countries.

A little more openness would not go amiss. The idea that the public is not ready to digest certain concepts or possibilities becomes ever more silly.

When a respected scientist who has landed on the moon concedes, as reported in a more serious broadsheet newspaper yesterday, that circumstantially it is likely there are other life forms out there in the vast eternity, it indicates that an admission that some things cannot be explained may not force thousands of people to fear Armageddon is around the corner.

TIMES, Derbyshire, England - Sept. 10, 1998

Spotters shocked by close encounter

UFO terror at remote spot

IT SOUNDS like a scene from the IX-files ... but for two UFO spotters it was a terrifying experience.

Investigators Carl Allsebrook and Jonathan Guest came face-to-face with a UFO when they spent the night on an isolated Derbyshire high-spot.

by
David Hopkinson

And after the scary incident, Carl told the Derbyshire Times: "It was an encounter we both will never forget — I am convinced that it was an alien space craft."

Carl, director of investigations for the East Midlands UFO Research Association, and fellow investigator Jonathan had parked at Alport Heights, near Alderwasley.

This is one of Derbyshire's highest points and has panoramic views of the area.

After a few hours watching aircraft flight paths, they spotted an extraordinarily bright light.

Said Carl: "It was a luminous gold-like colour. It had just suddenly switched itself on, like switching a light on."

"We estimated its size as big as a very large airbus, and its light brightened to a more intense yellowish colour," said Carl.

He attempted to video the object but his camera would not operate. Suddenly the object started moving towards them. "It seemed to enlarge itself. The light was more intense and the size was huge."

"By this time we were both very apprehensive and frightened. Jonathan was hiding behind me. He was shaking and very shocked," said Carl.

The silent object moved to within 60 or 70 feet of the pair, then simply disappeared.

Carl and Jonathan, who live in Hucknall, are both members of the new East Midlands UFO research association, which covers Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire and has hotlines to UFO research teams all over the world.

Carl, who has been following UFO sightings for 30 years, is keen to hear of any other sightings. He can be contacted on (0115) 9538941.

How instruments are blind to close encounters, by expert

UFOs 'still a no-go on radar'

X-Files fans the world over know the truth is out there. And Andy Rackham of Leeds-Bradford Airport is going to help them find it when he addresses the 17th Leeds International UFO Conference at the weekend.

One thousand tickets have already been sold for the conference, sponsored by Ilkley-based UFO Magazine and hailed as the largest and longest-running event of its kind in Britain.

Among the key speakers will be Mr Rackham - the airfield services manager responsible for logging UFO sightings reported to the airport - who will reveal all about radar. But enthusiasts are in for a disappointment because, he says, he has never seen a UFO register on radar during 28 years in the job. "I will be talking about radar and what it can and can't see," he said. "I don't know what UFOs are. But they may not show up on radar unless they are made of metal, have a reflective surface, or travel at a certain speed.

"People see something they can't explain, decide it's a UFO and ring the airport thinking it will be on our radar - but it isn't.

"Usually there's an explanation for the UFOs but I have read reports from various parts of the country where objects are seen which can't be explained.

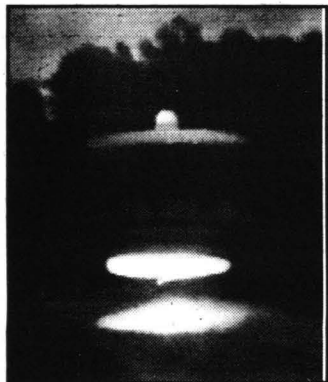
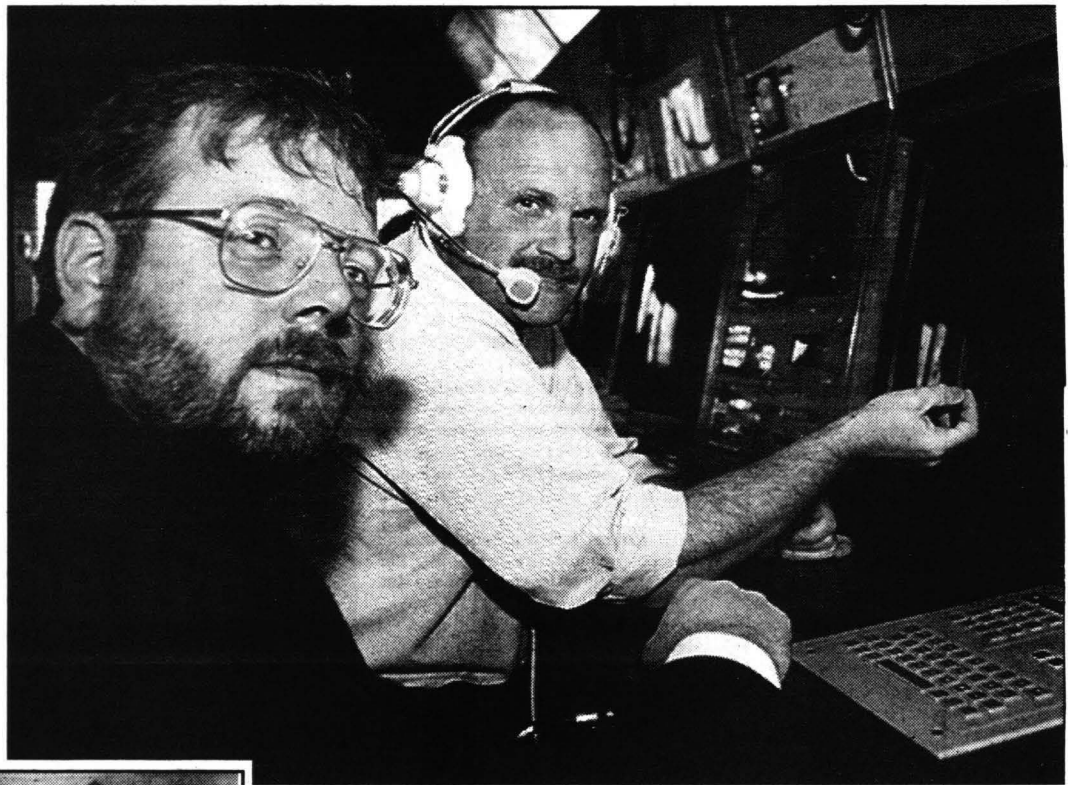
"There are those who will be attending the conference who are total believers and I don't wish to discredit that. I haven't seen anything myself but I keep a fairly open mind."

He added: "It's a hot topic throughout the country and this area doesn't differ. Some weeks we get many, many calls. We like to assist wherever possible but it's not our primary role. We couldn't afford to do an in-depth inquiry unless the safety of an aircraft was compromised."

He was invited to speak after more than 200 calls were made to the airport in February when two mysterious bright lights were reported hovering above Bradford and Leeds. They didn't show up on the airport's radar either.

Graham Birdsall, a director of Quest Publications International Ltd, which publishes bi-monthly UFO Magazine, expects 1,500 people from across Europe at the conference at Leeds University. He said: "The conference is there for everybody - it doesn't matter whether you're a believer, a sceptic or just plain curious. We found our visit to the airport extremely informative."

To find out more about the conference, which runs from September 11 to 13, call 0800 068 7281.



ON WATCH:

Andy Rackham, right, and Graham Birdsall at the airport radar room. Left, weird shapes previously seen in the sky

▼HOTSPOTS and an alien 'sighting'

Local UFO hotspots — worthy of investigation by X-Files supremos Fox Mulder and Dana Scully — include Bolton Woods quarry, Wyke and Ilkley Moor.

Other incidents include:

- In August 1997, Bradfordian Russell Kellelt from the UFO Research Network claimed residents saw an object resembling a Christmas tree bauble at Bolton Woods quarry.
- A few weeks ago a cigar-shaped

object was seen hovering over Leeds. It turned out to be the Sky TV airship above Elland Road football ground.

- A mystery explosion and flash of light in the sky above homes in Sutton-in-Craven on July 19, 1995.

- In December 1987 a photograph apparently depicting an alien getting into a spacecraft on Ilkley Moor was examined but found not to have been tampered with.

DAILY MAIL, London, England - July 21, 1998

So is the truth out there?

IF YOU are fascinated by mysterious phenomena such as UFOs and really believe Earth is being visited by extra-terrestrials, these sites are essential reading.

■ **UFO SCOTLAND:** In August 1997, Dave Ledger, his girlfriend and others saw strange lights in the night sky over Kirkcaldy, Fife. It appears their lives have not been the same since. This is Ledger's file of UFO sightings in Scotland. <http://ukweb5.cableinet.co.uk/dledger/index.htm>

■ **DR BRUCE CORNET, UFO INVESTIGATOR:** American scientist who believes aliens are living among us (and lighting up our skies with their transport). As this website reveals, he seems to have devoted his life to proving UFOs exist, by using photos and graphs of his own sightings and comparing their flight paths with ordinary aircraft movements. <http://lorion.adp.wisc.edu/cornet1/>



INTERNET
SEARCH

UFOLOGY

■ **MILLENNIUM & APOCALYPSE:** So you thought the millennium bug was just a computer problem? If you believe this American website, it will cause infrastructure breakdown, martial law and global dictatorship. Other conspiracies include: U.S. still ruled by Britain, and Denver Airport, is the centre for a Mason-ruled new world order. <http://www.ml.net/~watcher/new.html>

■ **UFO FOLKLORE:** Details of unexplained incidents, ranging from Roswell to crop circles, Men In Black (here to noble UFO witnesses, apparently) and Area 51, the U.S. military zone where people claim to have seen test flights of alien space vehicles.



<http://www.qtm.net/geibdan/fra memst.html>

■ **SCEPTICS ONLY:** If you are a doubting Thomas you'll enjoy this site. What looks like an authentic photo of a UFO seen in Southend, Essex, is in fact a pan knob stuck to a window. Richard Hawkins concludes that crop circles are not caused by boozed-up aliens 'stomping down the grass while singing at the top of their lungs'. <http://www.netcomuk.co.uk/richh/mindex.html>

Retired couple spot UFO over Ore

RETIRE couple Ruth and Gordon Griffin are convinced they saw a UFO hovering above Hastings last Wednesday night.

The grandparents, both 62, have spoken out about their personal close encounter in a bid to track down any other witnesses.

Mrs Gordon was looking out of a bedroom window at their Victoria Avenue home when she saw the 'thing' just before 9pm.

"There was a huge white ball of light in the sky above Christchurch at Ore," she said. "I immediately called my husband and we both watched it. It didn't move for 15 minutes, it was static, just hovering there.

"Then all of a sudden it shot off. It was moving so fast Gordon couldn't keep up with it with his binoculars.

"We could see it was triangular with three white lights on each corner and a pulsating blue light on top. It didn't make a noise at all. Then whoosh, it disappeared."

Within minutes of first spotting the object the couple tried to ring friend and freelance photographer Derek Casper to capture it on film but unfortunately he wasn't in.

"I have never seen anything like it," said Mrs Griffin. "It was ever so high up - it was too high in the sky to be a helicopter. It was absolutely clear

as a bell.

"From a different angle, straight-on, it appeared more oval shaped with green, white and red lights underneath."

Mrs Griffin is convinced what they saw was from outer space.

"It was a UFO. I don't care what people say. It wasn't anything from our planet," she said.

"I have always believed there is something out there. But if you tell anyone else they think you are nutty."

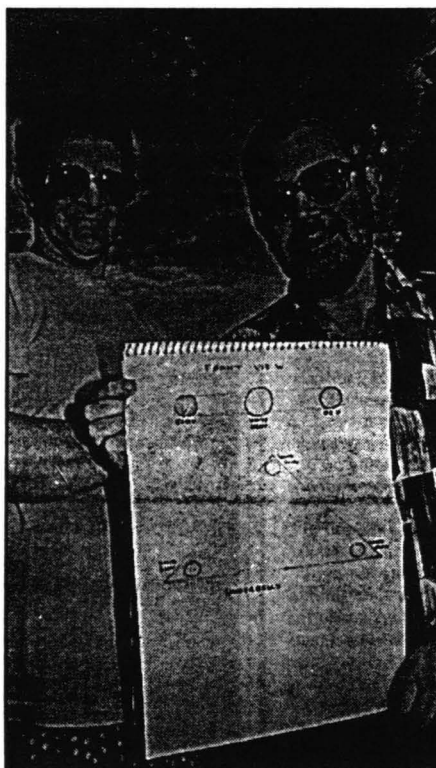
She only contacted the Observer to see if others had seen the object.

However, police, coastguards, the Ministry of Defence, Civil Aviation Authority and Meteorological Office received no other reports of unusual sightings and could not give an explanation as to what the Griffins had seen.

It was suggested it could possibly have been a meteorite or shooting star - Perseids meteorite showers were due in this area between August 5-14.

But Mr Griffin says: "It wasn't a meteorite. I don't know what it was, it was much bigger than an aeroplane. I can only think it was a UFO. I can't come up with any logical explanation."

● **PICTURED:** Ruth and Gordon Griffin with a drawing of the UFO.



Mystery of 'UFO sighting'

UFO investigators are looking into reports of objects flying over Edinburgh's Corstorphine Hill.

The Scottish Earth Mysteries Research Group is puzzled by a report of a diamond-shaped object flying over the area.

A concerned resident in the area contacted the group after seeing the object late last Friday night.

Group chairman Ron Halliday said: "A woman living in the area was going to bed about 11.30pm when she saw this object from her window.

"It had two bright white lights, was diamond-shaped and had a red light underneath. It came down low over Corstorphine Hill and headed towards the town. It does seem a bit odd."

Any other witnesses are asked to contact Edinburgh group member Brian Wilson on 0131-476 9406.

THE PEOPLE, London, England - Sept. 13, 1998

EXPOSED TOP-SECRET BASE SPIES ON ALIENS

EXCLUSIVE by NIGEL NELSON

THIS is the top secret airforce base which a former defence chief believes is used to spy on alien activity above Britain.

Lord Hill-Norton, chief of the defence staff in the Seventies, is convinced that a United States Air Force squadron in Suffolk is tracking UFOs which may threaten Earth.

"There's something fishy at the base and I am puzzled," he told me. "I have asked a number of questions about the base and never get a satisfactory answer."

The Ministry of Defence did admit that RAF Fehwell has a special US unit "tracking man-made objects in deep space".

But it refused to answer Hill-Norton's question about how many objects "remain unidentified and how many of these were transmitting a signal" citing the need for secrecy.

Entitled

An MoD spokesman said: "We are entitled to refuse certain information on topics which we consider to be sensitive."



PUZLED: Hill-Norton

But he did admit that UFOs would be tracked if they were spotted.

"They need to catalogue everything up in space," he added.

Officially, the US 5th

Space Surveillance Squadron is part of Britain's early warning system to protect against missile attack from space.

But Lord Hill-Norton will not accept that it is there purely to defend us against earthling enemies.

"For a start, there are no man-made objects in interstellar space. So I want to know what they are really doing."

"And I want to know what the Government is doing about the UFO problem."

NORTH DEVON JOURNAL, Barnstaple, England - Oct. 22, 1998

Was it a plane ...or was it a giant UFO?

BRIGHT lights seen over North Devon earlier this month may have come from a UFO, an expert has claimed.

The phenomenon, seen during a meteor shower, has been described as a 'classic case' of an unidentified flying object by British UFO Research Association regional investigator Doug Cooper.

"It's a classic UFO sighting. But that doesn't mean it's an alien space craft — it could be a flying object," he said.

Last week the *Journal* reported on a pair of strange lights seen all over the region. Witnesses saw them flying low in the sky, but making no noise, on Thursday, October 8, between 7.30pm and 9.30pm.

By MADELEINE BRINDLEY

There "did not appear to be an astronomical explanation", said Mr Cooper said he has done some checking.

"It does appear there was an unknown object in the area that night. It could be a very large triangular shaped object. It could be very large, as indicated by the lights being quite far apart. It could be about 500ft across."

It could be some form of experimental craft, but Mr Cooper said he did not subscribe completely to that idea. "It's more likely to be terrestrial than extra terrestrial, but at the same time you can't discount that line of thought."

The *Journal* has received 11 calls in the past week from other people who saw the lights and wanted to share their

experiences. Their descriptions coincided with those given by Alan Essex, of Knowle and Linda Burston, of Torrington last week. The majority said they could not see anything behind the lights even when they used binoculars.

But there were some differences in the various accounts.

Mark Berridge, of Baggy Point, describes two groups of lights flying next to each other in an oval, egg shape, whereas Allan Roberts, of South Park, Braunton says there were two triangles "not travelling point first."

Helen Marchant, of Goose Green, Torrington says the lights were orange, and Sonia Piggott, of West Meadow Close, Braunton, describes them as being the same brightness as Jupiter, which was visible on that night.

Most said they initially thought the lights belonged to some sort of aircraft, but they dismissed that possibility because of the lack of noise.

Paul Smith, of Northam, said: "I thought of Hercules but they were too slow. They were much slower than aircraft. They could not have been a helicopter because the lights were all wrong and there was no movement."

But Desmond Paul, of Braunton, said: "I saw them at about 8.30pm as they moved across. The lights were two Hercules from RAF Lyneham. I went out again at 10pm and they were coming across. If you listened very carefully you could hear the hum of the engines."

RAF Lyneham spokesman Sqn Ldr Christopher Bartle said none of their aircraft was flying over North Devon on that night.

Mr Cooper added: "If they were Hercules people would have heard them. They would have seen four lights and certainly green and red lights as well."

TRANSLATIONS

City and country of incident: Guayaquil, Ecuador

Date of incident: April 19, 1998

Name of paper and date of clip: Crónica, April 20, 1998

City and country of paper: Buenos Aires, Argentina

Credit: Roberto Banchs, Buenos Aires, Argentina

TV CAMERAS "LOCATED" A UFO WHILE FILMING A SOCCER MATCH

Guayaquil, 19 (ANSA).- While a soccer match was underway today between **Barcelona and Deportivo Quito**, the TV cable channel that was transmitting it caught on tape an unidentified flying object (UFO) over the **Guayaquil** sky.

Although somewhat fuzzy, a round image was shown several times moving at great speed and then hiding above the clouds.

The sky over the **Monumental de Barcelona** stadium was partially sunny and the object was intensely bright, as could be seen in the image shown by the cable TV channel.

The announcer publicly congratulated the cameraman for his skill and ordered the image to be repeated at least three times to show there was no hoax of any kind.

The channel rejected the possibility of this object being a plane because of the curvature of its flight.

City and country of incident: San Carlos de Bariloche, Río Negro province, Argentina

Dates of incidents: April 14, 15, 19, 1998

Name of paper and date of clip: La Nación, April 20, 1998

City and country of paper: Buenos Aires, Argentina

Credit: Roberto Banchs, Buenos Aires, Argentina

UFOS WERE FILMED PASSING THROUGH BARILOCHE

SAN CARLOS DE BARILOCHE.- Strange celestial phenomena happen once again in the Andes chain. To the tens of witnesses of the inexplicable dance of colors that occurred last Sunday (April 19) which was reported by La Nación, a document is now added which will be thoroughly analyzed: three minutes of 8mm film showing intensely colored lights circling in the sky.

The images were recorded Wednesday night (April 15) by Adrián Zuber who had his video camera ready in case there was a repeat of last Sunday's occurrence. The images show a light giving off red, blue, yellow and green flashes. Zuber also video taped the moon to give an idea of the size of the light that is similar to that of Venus.

"It was clearly not a plane", he told LA NACION.

All of Bariloche talks about the subject

The case is the everyday subject of conversation in this city of one hundred thousand people which is considered by many as a privileged place to see this kind of phenomena which caught the attention of UFO experts all over the world.

Francisco Martínez, a member of the Argentine Ufology Network (RAO) expressed his interest in analyzing the film. "There are many comments about these appearances, but there are usually no convincing documents to prove them", he said.

"The reports in this region are quite frequent but there is not usually one like this", said Néstor Echarte, a local investigator of occult sciences. "In 1995 a resident from the El Cóndor district took a very good picture of a UFO", he stated.

The video recorded by Zuber reminded many of a photo taken in 1968 by Tomás Sardá of an unidentified object over the Nahuel Huapi lake, or the more recent experience of pilot Jorge Polanco who saw "two intermittent, bright lights" flying alongside his plane while he was about to land in Bariloche.

Others said these phenomena are common in the area that divides the waters between lakes Gutiérrez and Mascaradi, but that never before have there been as many and differing reports as this time, even among the sceptics.

While this time the operators at the local airport could not explain the appearance of the furtive lights and neither could the Power Cooperative of Bariloche justify the sudden and excessive demand for power that made the system go down last Tuesday (April 14), Bariloche turned into the capital of mystery thanks to the lights that Zuber recorded on video.

City and country of incident: San Carlos de Bariloche, Río Negro province, Argentina

Date of incident: April 12, 1998

Name of paper and date of clip: Crónica, April 14, 1998

City and country of paper: Buenos Aires, Argentina

Credit: Roberto Banchs, Buenos Aires, Argentina

UFOS IN THE BARILOCHE SKY Seen by residents in the Western area; inexplicable power outages occurred at the same time

While a string of power outages left San Carlos de Bariloche in the dark, residents of the western part of the city claimed yesterday having seen a series of luminous objects in the sky. As to the outages, the company was strangely unable to explain the cause of the failure.

Spokesmen of the Power Cooperative of Bariloche (CEB) reported yesterday that the search for the source of the outage that left a large part of the city in the dark between 08.00 pm Sunday and 1.30 am Monday "was unsuccessful in spite of having checked the power lines pole by pole."

The sources said that "at 01.34 am and without any evidence to explain the reason for the blackout, the power lines were again energized, the service being restored from then on without any problems."

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Meanwhile, Andrea Caparro from the Nicolás Levalle district, said that at 11.30 pm she clearly saw in the sky "a kind of saucer with red, yellow, green and white flashes and another, somewhat bigger, elongated, object with red and yellow lights."

"After hovering for several minutes, the luminous objects flew off towards the lake area", she said.

The young woman claimed having seen the phenomenon at approximately 11.30 pm but explained that her family and neighbors "had seen it much earlier."

According to accounts from neighbors and Caparro herself, the flying objects "which were bigger than a plane, came and went to the Carbón hill (in the Eastern part of the city) at great speed."

On the other hand, several residents of the high part of the city called radio and TV stations to report some stars that moved and gave off red, yellow and green flashes and one "bright" white flash between 10.30 and 11.45 pm Sunday. The neighbors said the lights moved forward and backward in a straight line until another object appeared "elongated, in the shape of a small soda pop bottle" which they joined.

A woman, who the same as other witnesses preferred to remain anonymous, said that this docking maneuver took place with a "bright flash similar to an electrical discharge, and immediately the city lost power".

The local airport reported that except for the blackout, which was taken care of with the emergency equipment, "nothing strange was noticed" in that area.

Spokesmen for the CEB stated that the first power outage happened at 07.45 pm when the Cipresales Transformer Station went out of service due to an interruption in a medium voltage line "which left practically half the city in the dark."

Then, they added, at 10.14 pm, "ten minutes after power had been restored, another failure led to a thorough checking of all the medium and low voltage power lines in the high districts where the problem had first been encountered."

Spokesmen from the Cooperative stated that "the search for the source of the outage was unsuccessful in spite of the installations having been checked pole by pole."

City and country of incident: Villa Alonso Norte, Santa Rosa, La Pampa province, Argentina

Date of incident: March 25, 1998

Name of paper and date of clip: La Arena, March 27, 1998

City and country of paper: Santa Rosa, La Pampa province, Argentina

Credit: Roberto Banchs, Buenos Aires, Argentina

EARLY IN THE MORNING

WITNESSES WATCH UFOS PASS OVERHEAD

A driver from the Carlos Pellegrini

passenger transportation company and most of the passengers he was carrying shortly before 06.30 am Wednesday, claimed having seen the passage of a "very large" strange luminous object. Neighbors from the Villa Alonso Norte confirmed the sighting and also said that at that same hour the object "illuminated everything" with an intense white light, while two mechanics from the same company saw a very large "strange" object hovering in the air which then moved slowly to the East.

"I never saw anything like this", said driver Juan López who works for the transportation company. "I was driving up the bypass on the bus line that goes from Plan 5000 to the hospital and shortly after reaching the bypass I noticed the strange very intense white light flying at low altitude and it lighted up not only the bus but the inside also."

López alerted the passengers about the object and "they all moved over to the left to see it", but the most surprising part of his story happened while some thought it was a falling star and "the object stopped for a few seconds and then disappeared at great speed to the North."

"FROM NORTH TO SOUTH"

"The object was moving from North to South", claimed the witness, "almost parallel to the bypass avenue" and disappeared "in the same direction."

Witnesses from Villa Alonso Norte confirmed the account given by the bus driver and some passengers and agreed that it "illuminated everything."

VERY LUMINOUS AND LOW

The witnesses defined the object as "very luminous" and while it flew on "it shot off sparks or fire backwards" but "as soon as it started to hover only a very intense white color could be seen."

The backwards luminosity reappeared "when the object continued its flight to the North at a great rate of speed."

With regard to the altitude at which the UFO was seen, they said it "was very low. It gave us the sensation that it would pass very close to the lake, but at low altitude."

"LIKE A FLATTENED TIRE"

When the witness described the size of the object, he said it was "the size of the tire of a small bus", and the shape was "flattened." Most of the witnesses remained silent for a few seconds and then commented on the subject which became public only in the late hours of the day.

TEN O'CLOCK

Two mechanics from the Carlos Pellegrini company who worked in the garage located in the company's warehouse on Corona Martínez street a few meters from the bypass avenue, claimed they saw a strange object hovering in the northeastern part of the city.

The witnesses said that "at first we thought it was a star, but when we noticed the time, 10 in the morning, we realized it couldn't be." "We watched it for several minutes -they added- and then it started to move slowly to the East until it disappeared."

Translation: Jane Thomas Guma
Glendale, Arizona
November 1998

(continued on page 15)

City and country of incident: Provinces and cities in Argentina

Dates of incidents: See below

Name and date of source: RAO Bulletin

City and country of source: Buenos Aires, Argentina

Credit: Mrs. Ruth Gerstel, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Translation: Jane Thomas Guma, Glendale, Arizona (October 1998)

1997 RAO CASES

Cases below have been reported by members of RAO (Argentine Ufology Net), and put in chronological order by the RAO coordinator. We thank all the colleagues for their assistance.

(This is an excerpt of the most interesting cases - Tr.)

February (mid month) - Ranch "El Lechuzo", La Humada (La Pampa province), 10:00 pm: After completing their day's work, a group of ranch hands gathered close to the entrance, meters from the house. A reddish orange light passed close to them. The phenomenon seems to be repetitive, so the men shout and throw a stone at it. The light passes very close by which makes them run towards the house and seek refuge. The luminous sphere follows them and remains motionless in front of the residence. It was approximately five feet in diameter and stayed in that position for more than three hours until it disappeared. (Credit: Cefu - Hemisferios)

February 21 - Cerro Campanario, Bariloche (Río Negro province) - Daytime sighting: María González was being photographed by a friend. After processing the film they saw an unknown body. The newspaper "El Cordillerano" enlarged the photos and a dark object with a cupola can be seen. The "witnesses" saw nothing at the time. (Press clipping).

March - Río Cuarto (Córdoba province) - 09:00 pm: A married couple saw (for the second time, the first sighting occurring last February-Tr.) a luminous body (apparent size of a star) that quickly changed colors (blue, red, yellow and white shades). The UFO zigzagged, climbed and moved horizontally toward the SE. A cloud like halo appeared around it that stayed with the object until it disappeared. (Credit: Conex) Investigated: Strangeness 7/Credibility 9.

March - (Easter week) Victorica (La Pampa province) - 11:00 pm: Assistant chief of police Santillán was on night patrol in the "La Holanda" area when he saw an intense light ascending, which was the shape of a beret. The object followed the patrol car for a while in complete silence, and it was a white/light blue light coming from a solid body. After

several kilometers the light was lost behind a hill. (Credit: Cefu - Hemisferios)

April (first week) - Río Cuarto (Córdoba province) - 05:30 pm: Mrs. Z.M. got a spectacular photo of a lens-shaped UFO (grey) that was perfectly defined in the sky. She was photographing a strange double rainbow and never saw the UFO. (Credit: Conex) Investigated: Strangeness 4/Credibility 9.

April 29 - Parque Siquiman, Sierras Chicas (Córdoba province) - Night time sighting: Two women were in their home when they saw an intense luminosity. It was a luminous object between the trees, red, blue and yellow. Suddenly the object descended, an undercarriage could be seen, and it touched ground. Two strange humanoid figures could also be seen inside (bright as fluorescent lamps). One of the witnesses was very impressed. When the object flew away shortly afterwards, it left a circular track of dry grass four feet in diameter. (Several sources - Radio Universidad de Córdoba - Adifo, Monier)

April 30 - Colonia La Pastoril (La Pampa province) - 08:00 pm: A local resident known as the "monona" saw an ovoidal object, almost 10 feet in diameter, light blue in color, fly over her house at no more than 32 feet above the ground, lighting up the night. The object took about 5 minutes in crossing the visual path of the witness. (Cefu - blue) at low altitude, giving off yellowish lights aimed towards the ground (beams). (Conex) Investigated: Strangeness 9, Credibility 9.

June 11 - From Colonia Pastoril to Telén (La Pampa province) - 00:30 am: Mr. Nicolás Especiale saw a white light following behind the pickup truck he was driving. On reaching Telén, the vehicle had a power failure. To his left he saw something resembling a huge "steely grey, light blue mushroom". Two days later he had the same sighting some 24 miles to the West. (Cefu - Hemisferios) - Apparently two traveling salesmen reported the same sighting to the police station. (Several sources - Clarín newspaper)

June 14 - Between Telén and Victorica (La Pampa province) - 02:05 am: Acting police inspector Gallego, sargent Pilar Badal and sargent Cerna were on night patrol in a police car when they saw a reddish object that accompanied them for 9 miles at a distance of 300 feet. The object was at an altitude of 98 feet. Cerna said he the only thing he succeeded in doing was "look and look". (Cefu - Hemisferios - Clarín newspaper)

June (beginning) - La Humada (La Pampa province) - midnight: Police inspector Véliz and a group of residents saw a large object fly by slowly at low altitude, in

(continued on page 16)

(continued from page 15)

complete silence. Its brightness lighted up the place and it gave off multicolored lights, predominantly orange and light blue. It disappeared towards the West (Mendoza province). They immediately tuned their radio to a Mendoza station and after a while the object was reported flying towards the Nihuil area, where it caused a blackout. (Cefu-Hemisferios)

June 20 - Victorica (La Pampa province) - 01:00 am: Mr. Martínez (owner of the cold storage plant in Loventue), saw close to the intersection of route 10 and provincial road 105 a reddish orange light surrounded by a light similar to that of (oxyacetylene) welding. It was at an altitude of 32 feet above route 10 and its shape was oval (almost 20 feet in diameter). The object was blocking the road and the witness could not pass. He got scared, turned back and saw that the object followed him for a while. (Cefu - Hemisferios)

July (end) - La Humada (La Pampa province) - 02:00 am: Roberto García (temporary worker) was returning to town when he saw a series of six lights in a row, similar to mercury lights (they resembled the lights of a distant train). The sighting lasted for 10 minutes. It should be noted that the area is desolate, there is no electric light and the generator is turned off at 01:00 am. (Cefu - Hemisferios)

October 5 - Villa Elisa (Buenos Aires province) - 05:30 am: When he was returning home from work a 16 year old young man and his mother, saw two humanoid entities a few meters away who were making fast but normal movements close to a bright, spherical reddish object. The object seemed to "pulsate" like heart beats. The entities were about 90 cm tall, macrocephalic with big eyes (protruding with respect to the ocular cavity). One of the figures carried some kind of metallic box that he watched insistently. After 15 minutes the figures enter the sphere which then climbs, tumbling upwards until it disappears at great speed. (Cefu - Hemisferios - Case is being investigated - witnesses requested anonymity)

November (first week) - Río Cuarto (Córdoba province) - 07:40 pm: Oscar Zuliani (member of Conex) took five photos from his home of an orange, elongated UFO, which was apparently descending and/or leaving towards the East. Of the five snapshots taken with the reflex camera, the UFO can be seen in four. (Conex)

Investigated: Strangeness 7, Credibility 9.

November 16 - Berrotarán (Córdoba province) - 09:00 pm: A family was traveling to Río Tercero when they saw a round, luminous, white body. The UFO approached and flew over the car (approximate altitude was 1600 feet), turning back towards the northwest. This maneuver was repeated seven or eight times until the object disappeared. (Conex)

Investigated: Strangeness 7, Credibility 9.
November 25 - Gral. Cabrera (Córdoba province) - 09:30 pm: Some twenty passengers on a bus belonging to the Sat company (coming from Villa María) on route 158 saw a bright object to the West. Mrs. Alicia Gorosito de Lourenco saw it first, and alerted the other passengers (one of them a policeman). The UFO was oval with a white incandescent light, changed shape and gave off four luminous beams from both ends. One of these beams was directed towards the bus and passed in front of Mrs. Lorencó's face. With her cellular phone she called FM radio station "Ser" in Río Cuarto to report what was happening. The UFO accompanied the bus until it almost reached Río Cuarto (north-south trajectory). After 10:00 pm a mobile unit from the radio station drove to the area. Once it arrived in Higuera it parked close to the Argentine Air Force base. The announcer described the phenomenon as a "bowl". And many witnesses approached (almost a hundred). A photo was taken. (Conex). Investigated: Strangeness 8, Credibility 10 (the latter was taken as a group). Members of Conex went to the place and saw the abnormal movements of the personnel on duty at the base. They requested information but it was impossible to obtain anything. They later interviewed the Chief of Materiel at the Río Cuarto Air Force Base (Commodore Rico), who acknowledged that "the personnel at the base saw an unusual phenomenon", and said that he did not know of any tests being performed by the Air Force.

November 30 - Río Cuarto (Córdoba province) - 10:00 pm: Víctor Adaro (new member of Conex) saw a bright object to the northwest which he filmed for 30 seconds. It was round with an intense white yellowish brightness and gave off light blue flashes. It changed its size and shape, and an ochre-colored nucleus could be seen. Adaro did not use the camera's zoom, so it could be that the change in size was due to the UFO itself approaching and moving away. The UFO then left. (Conex) Investigated: Strangeness 7, Credibility 9.

December 8 - Río Cuarto (Córdoba province) - 05:00 am: Mrs. Lucía Oviedo de Rodríguez was hastily leaving home due to the illness of a relative when she saw in front of her house to the south, a huge luminous oval body at very low altitude. It gave off orange flashes and the witness was quite impressed. After oscillating (from right to left) the object made three spins, electronic noises were also heard and then it climbed vertically, disappearing in the sky at an incredible speed, leaving a trail of lights. (Conex) Investigated: Strangeness 7, Credibility 8.

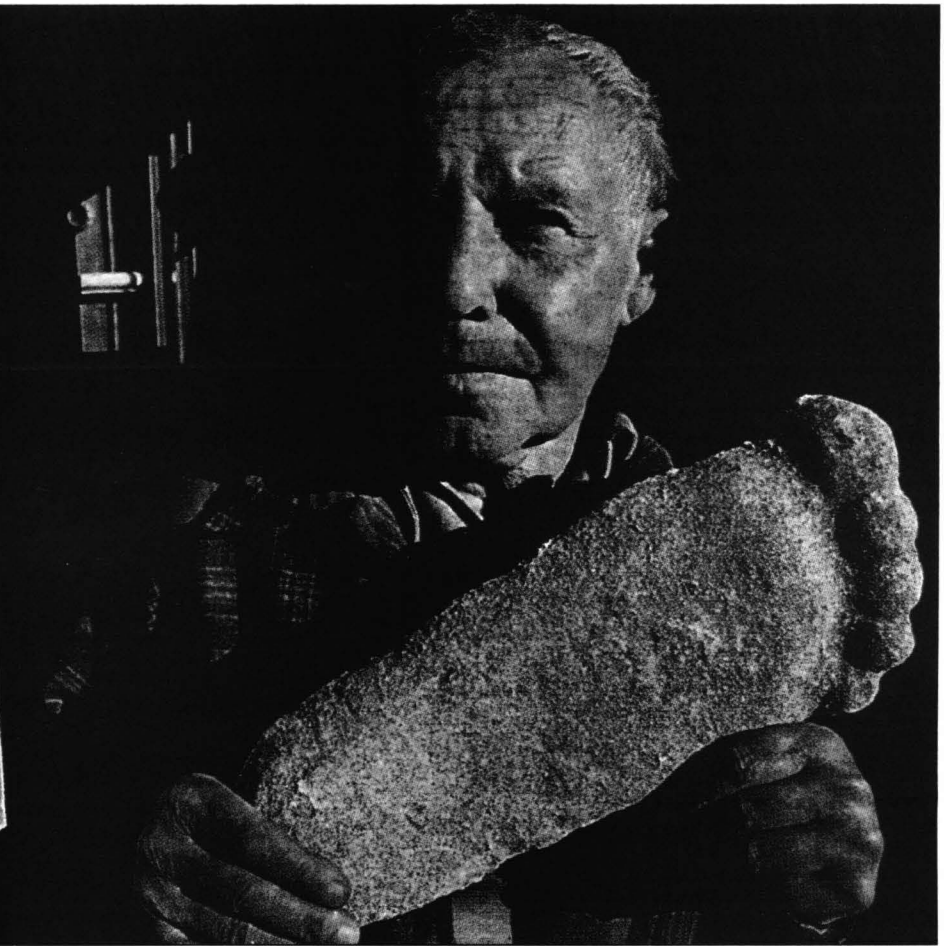
Translation: Jane Thomas Guma,
Glendale, Arizona (October 1998)



NATIONAL POST, Toronto, Ontario, Canada - Dec. 21, 1998 CR: G. Conway

Those who have 'seen' a sasquatch insist they weren't drinking, or doing drugs. But, until believers can find the ape dude for all to see, bigfoot will be nothing more than a big lark

Truth is out there, maybe



JEFF VINNICK / NATIONAL POST

Rene Dahinden of Richmond, B.C., holds a mold of the footprint of a creature spotted in the Bluff Creek region where the infamous Sasquatch film footage was shot in 1967.

BY MIKE RANDOLPH

Okay. Let's try to be mature about this, alright? You're not in a ninth grade sex-ed class, so try to stifle the snickering. And besides, who do you think you are?

More knowledgeable people than you have given the idea of sasquatch some serious thought, including Jane Goodall and George Schaller. They are two of the most respected primatologists in the world. Got that?

This is what John Bindernagel, author of the new book *North America's Great Ape: The Sasquatch*, might say if he weren't so polite. But he is, which is unfortunate in a way because it would be great to hear him stir it up on the CBC.

After all, he's got every right to be indignant. Though he's been treated like one, the man's no quack. He's not some magic-mushroom-eating B.C. hippie who thinks the ape dude is far out.

He's a trained biologist who works on contract for the United Nations. And in his spare time he researches the possibility of the existence of a North American primate.

Just what does being a sasquatch researcher require, you ask? Well, first, curiosity. And second, patience.

Of the two, patience is probably more important. Not because the sasquatch is an elusive creature, although if it does exist, it obviously is. It's more a question of dealing with people.

Put yourself in Bindernagel's position for a moment. Here's a guy who's spent a lot of time and money researching a creature that most people associate with the beast that dragged Col. Steve Austin into that mountain cave during an episode of the *Six Million Dollar Man*. Or the costumed actor who steals a two-four of Kokanee out of Rene Dahinden's trailer in that beer commercial.



This 1967 frame from the film *Sasquatch* was taken from the Internet. During a newspaper interview two years ago, makeup man John Chambers claimed to have faked the film depicting the celebrated bigfoot.

Sure, go ahead. Laugh it off. Bindernagel is used to it. In fact, that's what got him started. Ever since the first time he heard about sasquatch - back when he was studying at Guelph U. - he decided to investigate the matter with an open mind. Which is more than his classmates were willing to do.

"It all started in 1963," says Bindernagel. "I read an article in a magazine

about the so-called ape man of California. I raised it in class and was laughed at. That got my back up. I thought, surely we would at least discuss this. But no, we weren't even going to talk about it."

Bindernagel decided to pursue his study independently. In 1975, he moved from Ontario to B.C., partly to get nearer to his subject.

Naively, he says, he started off asking people whether they'd seen any sasquatches, but he dropped that tactic quickly.

"You just don't do that," says Bindernagel. "It's just not done. You get more than the occasional raised eyebrow. It was pretty bad."

That kind of public attitude continues to this day, which hampers Bindernagel's investigations from both ends. "Sasquatch sightings are not quite as rare as we think," he says. "It's just that the taboos of reporting them remain very, very strong."

Even the people that do file reports often think twice about blabbing all over town, and often times they're none too eager to chat with a sasquatch researcher.

"They're always apologizing to me, explaining that they haven't been drinking and they don't do drugs. And I tell them it's okay. Many of them, have told their stories to others and gotten bad reactions. After that, well, they've had it. They won't tell anybody again."

Still, there have been more than enough people willing to talk about their sasquatch encounters. Bindernagel and his colleagues have documented more than 3,000 cases.

"Talking to eye-witnesses has become quite important to me. Of course it's just anecdotal and there's the whole problem with credibility, but some of the stuff that's being reported is quite interesting," Bindernagel says.

A number of reports described mischievous sasquatches chucking rocks at people, trying to ping them upside the head.

"This was so intriguing to me because this behaviour is right out of the repertoire of chimpanzees."

It's also an unlikely thing for someone to make up.

As Bindernagel started researching more about the great apes he found more similarities.

"Aside from the rock throwing, other forms of intimidation have been reported - shaking things, breaking branches, incredibly loud vocalizations, and chest beating, all of which are documented extensively in the world of great apes."

Also, Bindernagel says, people report seeing long hair trailing behind the animal.

"It's been described as a cape. And we thought 'what is going on here?' Well the interesting part is that the orangutan has such a thing and they do call it a cape or a mantle. And so do some baboons."

"So this thing that sounds so bizarre does occur elsewhere with primates."

Though many biologists who have worked with apes agree that all the clues point towards an ape relative, there's still no cold hard evidence.

Until some farmhand driving down a backwoods road clips one with his Chevy and winches the body into his pick-up, people just won't believe.

But when you think about all the thousands of consistent reports made in the past 150 years (which come from all over the continent), the descriptions of similar behaviours, the plaster casts of footprints, the native legends - which is easier to believe, Bindernagel asks: A new ape species? Or an intricately conceived pan-continental hoax that to this day can withstand so much scientific scrutiny?

"Eventually we'll have a body," Bindernagel says wistfully. "Someday in the future I'll be vindicated. But it's still hard."

National Post
Mike Randolph's features
appear on Mondays

Some say Fouke monster is alive; legend sure is

BY RODNEY BOWERS
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

FOUKE — The Fouke monster, a legendary bigfoot look-alike, still stalks the lowlands of Miller County, according to local residents.

"There were 40-some sightings last year," said Rickie Roberts, Fouke's unofficial monster spokesman. "There were 22 sightings in one day. ... There's even one guy who swears there's a family [of monsters] who live behind his house."

Roberts, who owns the Monster Mart grocery on U.S. 71, said the latest sighting came July 17 when four people purportedly saw the creature walking along a dry creek bed about 5 miles south of town.

Sightings of the Fouke monster have been reported since the 1940s, according to newspaper articles. In all that time, no one has photographed the creature or captured it.

For a time, the only evidence of the creature was a plaster cast of a 13½-inch footprint taken from a local soybean field. The cast was destroyed in a service station

fire in the late 1970s, Roberts said.

"That was the only real proof you'd have around here" that the monster exists, he said.

Though scores of residents have reported seeing the hairy creature, experts scoff at its existence. Frank Schamback, an archaeologist at Southern Arkansas University at Magnolia who debunked the footprint as a hoax in the 1970s, said he doesn't believe in the Fouke monster.

"They like mystery," he said. "It's just that. People like to have a mystery."

Residents would have proof by now if the creature existed, Schamback said.

"There are people down there with dogs who would have run it down in two days" if it existed, he said.

Toby Giles, Miller County's chief sheriff's deputy, said there haven't been any reported sightings in the past few years, but "we do [have one] every once in a while."

The sheriff's office used to receive a few reported sightings when he joined the department about 14 years ago, Giles said.

"But nothing was ever confirmed," Giles said. "It's still a well-talked-about subject."

The town plays up its connection with the monster. Down the road from Monster Mart, a visitor can poke his head through a hole in a metal silhouette and have his photo taken as the monster.

Roberts, who sells monster T-



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/KAREN VANDONGE

Diandra Coleman, 8, climbs to the top of a Fouke monster cutout for a photograph recently. Diandra was visiting Fouke with her parents, Richard and Judy Coleman, of De-

Quincy, La. Sightings of the Fouke monster have been reported since the 1940s, but no one has ever photographed the creature.



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/KAREN VANDONGE

Rickie Roberts, owner of Monster Mart in Fouke, recounts the latest sighting of the beast. In the past year, up to 40 sightings have been reported, said Roberts, the town's unofficial monster spokesman.

shirts, caps and bumper stickers at his store, said the long-armed creature has been described as 6 to 9 feet tall with red, brown, black or black-gray hair covering its body.

Roberts said he has never seen the animal, which he speculates might be a "swamp ape," and he wouldn't admit it if he had. "I wouldn't say a word," he said. "People'd think you're crazy."

He has heard an eerie howl, possibly from the monster, that almost defies description, Roberts said. "I've heard it twice. It's a different sound. I don't know what you would call it," he said. "It'd be a sound like a cross between a cow

bellow and a panther screaming."

The monster has never harmed anyone although it may have caused a few heart-pounding frights, Roberts said.

"This thing has never attacked anyone," he said.

The Fouke monster brought attention to the town in 1972. Film crews descended on Fouke that year to make the *Legend of Boggy Creek* and forever put the community on the map.

The town of 614 is listed on the Internet as one of the top 10 places in the world to look for bigfoot, the name associated with creatures similar to the Fouke monster, Roberts said.

"We get people in here every day" looking for the monster, he said. "We had a guy save his money for two years to come down from Indiana this summer."

Roberts' wife, Beverly, said too many credible people have seen what they described as the monster for her not to believe it exists.

"I've got family members who firmly believe they've seen it," she said, noting that they moved away shortly after the experience. "Whatever it is, there is something."

Tracy Nichols and Sue Page, who work at City Hall, said they have heard scores of monster tales over the years.

Nichols, noting that the creature is generally associated with "a bad odor," said a local man recently saw the monster twice, "but he won't talk about. He's afraid of being ridiculed."

Although uncertain of her own beliefs, she said, "I've heard credible people come through here who said they've seen it."

Nichols admitted that the legend is fun.

"We went hunting for it the weekend before last," she said.

Page, whose constable father appeared as himself in the *Legend of Boggy Creek*, said, "I don't know if it's true or not."

"We have calls from way off [from people] wanting to know about it," she said.

Fouke resident Lavelle Brune said she thought she saw the monster recently.

"We saw it" while driving out of town, she said, but "we got to looking, and it was just a bush."

SUN, Vancouver, B.C., Canada - Oct. 7, 1998 CR: G. Conway

Yeti just a Himalayan bear, mountaineer Messner says

REUTER

FRANKFURT — Mountaineer Reinhold Messner said Tuesday he has solved the mystery of the yeti, or abominable snowman, of the Himalayas.

The yeti is not a humanoid ape but a

large bear and there are about 1,000 roaming Nepal and Tibet, Messner said.

"It's clearly a Tibetan bear, similar to a grizzly but with longer hair," said Messner, who claims to have encountered one.

It can grow up to 3.4 metres and can walk on all fours, as well as on its hind legs. It lives at heights of between 4,000 and 6,000 metres.

Bigfoot's 'out there' and he's not alone

For true believers, search for the man-beast never ends

By **LAUREN DODGE**
Associated Press writer

MOLALLA, Ore. — A seasoned Bigfoot enthusiast, Charles Baker knew the signs: the matted grass, the twisted branches, the stench that set the dog off and the shrill scream that made it silent.

It was late one February night, and Baker was wandering through the woods along the lower Molalla River. He didn't see the beast. But the 28-year-old security officer and outdoorsman believes he had a close encounter with the creature also known as Yeti, Yayoo, Skunk Ape or Sasquatch.

"It's out there, and it's a lot more intelligent than people realize," Baker said.

After all of these years, reports of the elusive giant continue to trickle in from the forests of the Northwest, the foothills of Ohio and the swamps of Florida. And despite the persistent lack of hard evidence, investigators continue to dog the beast, risking savings and reputations to find proof that Bigfoot exists.

"I have every confidence it will happen," says Ray Crowe, founder of the Western Bigfoot Society, a Portland-based nonprofit group that is considered the largest of its kind. "I'm just concerned someone else will beat us to it."

Crowe estimates that 50 to 100 researchers are actively pursuing the creature around the world, using sophisticated search tools ranging from infrared cameras to DNA-retrieving dart guns and seismic sensors.

Still, the most conclusive evidence on record is the primitive 1967 footage known as the Patterson film, which shows a blurred and jerky image of what appears to be a large, hairy beast running through the woods.

"No one can knock that picture," Crowe said.

These days, with the technology to alter film and video easily and realistically, bigfooters know it will take more than footage to prove the beast exists. They need a body — dead or alive.

"That's the only way," Crowe says.

Crowe, 60, has been looking for Bigfoot since 1991, when he began transforming the basement of his used-book store into a Bigfoot museum and meeting place. The society was born, quickly growing to 250 members, and Crowe began to publish the Track Record newsletter every month.

It was Crowe who took the call about some strange goings-on near Molalla. Baker, who has hunted in the area since he was a child, believed he had come across the spot where a Bigfoot creature had made its bed at the base of a ridge.

Several months old by then, the giant footprint Baker saw pressed into the ground was long gone. After ducking through a thicket for a closer look, Crowe concluded that the matted grass was more than likely made by a camper's sleeping bag. The broken branches were clearly cut by machete.

Still, there was no explaining the

eerie scream that echoed through the canyon. Or the stench, which is often reported along with a sighting: "That sucker was ripe," Baker said.

And it wasn't the first such report in the area.

In 1992, Sharon and LeRoy Jones were camping nearby when they say they heard something banging on the cage of their pet rabbits. They say they then saw a Bigfoot dart back into the bushes.

There are dozens of accounts on the Internet:

- In Portland last year, a student reported seeing a Bigfoot while videotaping a class project near the Washington Park Zoo, although his father believed the sighting was an excuse for losing his new video camera.

- Near Colton, southeast of Portland, in 1995, a bow hunter sensed he was being followed, turned and saw a Sasquatch staring at him about 25 feet away.

- At a logging camp near Detroit, a small town southeast of Salem, in 1970, a 16-year-old girl reported seeing a Bigfoot with breasts stealing meat from the family's cooler.

Sightings haven't been limited to the Northwest. There is an active Bigfoot society in Ohio, where one man recently claimed to have videotaped a white Sasquatch. In Florida, recent reports of the "skunk ape" can be found on the Internet.

Crowe writes up nearly all the sightings in his newsletter, although he warns readers to keep on their "skeptical" and is leery of reports that link Bigfoot with UFOs, psychic connections and different dimensions.

"You don't throw out data," said Crowe. "You never know if it will be the thing that gives you something new."

The greatest problem is not weeding through the sightings, but getting information about them in the first place. Often, people are too embarrassed to come forward or don't know whom to call, he said.

Publicity had been boosting the Western Bigfoot Society's exposure in recent years, and reports were rolling in more frequently. But they've slowed in the last year, after the fire marshal banned meetings larger than 10 people and Crowe decided to shut the store down.

He hopes to replace it with a stand-alone Bigfoot museum, which he plans to build along Interstate 5 as soon as the funding is found.

His group still meets weekly at a north Portland restaurant, where on a recent Tuesday a lively debate ensued about what sounds, if any, Bigfoot makes.

They're a diverse bunch: an archer who once heard unidentified screams on Dixie Mountain in the 1970s; an industrial pump salesman who has taken to baiting Bigfoot with Spam in steep canyons throughout Northwest forests.

And there's Peter Byrne, who with his khaki clothing, field vest and silk ascot, would look more at home on safari than in suburbia.

For five years beginning in 1992, Byrne led the Bigfoot Research Project, the most technologically advanced search for Bigfoot in his-



Associated Press photo

Charles Baker points to a spot where he claims Bigfoot slept.

tory.

Funded by a \$1 million grant from a benefactor who wants anonymity, Byrne and two assistants were equipped with a Jeep, police gear, military search equipment and a toll-free phone number (1-800-BIG-FOOT.)

Dozens of volunteers were on call in case of a sighting. Two helicopters were on standby, one equipped with infrared equipment. Biopsy guns were readied to extract pellet-size samples of tissue for DNA testing.

But the best the searchers got was a 31-day-old report from a policeman who believed he saw a Bigfoot walking along the Oregon coast. Any evidence was gone by the time investigators got there.

The project ended last year, and Byrne is still working to drum up more funding. In the meantime, he and the others continue the search on their own time and money.

Their motives vary. A few are all too aware of the fortune to be made if the creature is ever proved real. Some just want an excuse to spend time in the woods.

But most say they're motivated by the mystery.

Todd Neiss, 37, has no doubt he saw three Bigfoot creatures during a 1993 demolition exercise with the National Guard — a sighting corroborated by three others.

"If people don't believe me, that's their problem," said Neiss, now a vice president of a transportation company. "My point to find these animals is not to say 'Na-na-na-na-na-naaa, told you so.' It's because I'm so fascinated and intrigued, I have to see them again."

ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE, Little Rock, AR - Jan. 15, 1999

China wants groups to stop hunt for Bigfoot

BEIJING — China's government has called on tourist agencies to refrain from operating safaris in remote areas to search for a Chinese version of Bigfoot, Chinese media reported Thursday.

The Shennongjia Nature Reserve in the mountains of central Hubei province planned to lure tourists with a \$60,240 reward for the capture of Bigfoot, the elusive, manlike creature also known as the yeti, the *China Daily* reported.

But at a symposium on ecotourism this week, the State Forestry Administration announced that it doesn't endorse the safaris because they mislead people and could harm the environment, the newspaper said.

Chinese scientists have looked for Bigfoot in the wilds of Shennongjia. (AP)

Bigfoot tracker calls famous film a hoax

Enlargement shows catch on costume, he says

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOTHELL, Wash. — In the hearts and minds of true believers, Bigfoot's existence has long been enshrined in a single minute of jerky, grainy footage of a startled sasquatch retreating into the upper California woods.

But two enthusiasts of the legend are alleging four magnified frames of the 16mm footage show tracings of a bell-shaped fastener at Bigfoot's waist. They say the creature in the Patterson-Gimlin film can finally be dismissed as a man in a monkey suit.

"It was a hoax," said Cliff Crook, a longtime Bigfoot tracker who devotes rooms to sasquatch memorabilia in this suburb north of Seattle. "How can an artificial, man-made object end up on a Bigfoot?"

The film, purportedly showing a female Bigfoot fleeing a streambed, was taken by Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin on Oct. 20, 1967. It has largely withstood independent scrutiny and, for many steeped in the lore of the man-beast, has become bedrock evidence of its very existence.

"There's no way of really detracting from it," said Ray Crowe, president of the Western Bigfoot Society in Portland, Ore. The image captured in the footage "has a fluid motion. It's a wild creature of nature."

The film is important because many Bigfoot believers compare all plaster casts of telltale footprints against those made by Patterson the day he purportedly filmed the creature crossing a sandbar in the Six Rivers National

Forest.

Discredit the footage, experts agree, and the gold standard for Bigfoot tracks will be washed away.

Crook bases his assertion on computer enhancements performed by Chris Murphy, a Bigfoot buff from Vancouver, British Columbia. Murphy maintains he discovered an aberration in the footage in 1995 while helping his son Daniel prepare a class project.

Murphy declined to be interviewed, instead supplying a written narrative detailing his discovery.

According to that account, the Murphys used a color photocopier to duplicate a frame of the Patterson film. Zooming in again and again, Chris Murphy became suspicious.

To him, something geometric — vaguely the shape of a bottle opener — seemed to take shape at Bigfoot's waist. Murphy maintains that four sequential computer-scanned frames of the film show the object in different positions, as if it were swinging. He theorizes something is cinching the sasquatch costume in place.

Murphy made a clay model of the object and in October gave that and the enlargements to Crook, a charter-bus driver transfixed by sasquatch stories since 1957. That's the year he made a camping trip with teen-age friends on Washington's Olympic Peninsula that ended with telltale signs of a sasquatch encounter: a rustling of brush, a throaty growl and an ever-worsening hallmark musk.



Associated Press

Photographer Roger Patterson, shown in this 1967 photo, compares his own foot to that of what he claimed is a sasquatch, an example of the apelike creature said to roam the Pacific Northwest. Patterson said he made a mold of the footprint. Now four magnified frames of the 16mm footage film purportedly showing a sasquatch indicate the creature may be a man in a monkey suit, enthusiasts say.

HERALD & NEWS, Klamath Falls, OR - Dec. 4, 1998

Listening continues, but nothing heard

By DOUG BRIDGES

Guest columnist

If anyone were to ask, "What's up with SETI?" there are two correct answers: "Plenty" and "Nothing." Plenty of listening continues, but nothing has yet been heard, according to Dr. Guillermo Gonzalez, University of Washington astronomer. The acronym SETI (search for extraterrestrial intelligence) became better known when the movie *Contact* was released in 1997.

As Christopher Chyba wrote in "Life Beyond Mars," published in *Nature*, v. 382, absolutely nothing was detected, not even a single mysterious blip, while tuning in to 202 solar-type stars, within a radius of 155 light years and listening for radio signals as strong as those routinely produced by large radar systems on Earth. This null weakened the faith of some scientists that life arises by natural processes alone.

Major search projects have included Harvard's META, UC Berkeley's SERENDIP, and the SETI Institute's "Phoenix." Project META lasted five years and is now complete. It covered most of the northern sky with an 8.4-million-channel receiver. The eleven "candidate" signals detected were turned over to others for follow up.

Project Phoenix continues with its 57 million channels. Its "two-site" mode makes it the

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most fool-proof targeted experiment. A candidate signal picked up at the main site, currently a 140-foot dish at Green Bank, W.Va., can be quickly targeted by the second site, a 100-foot dish at Woodbury, Ga. for confirmation. The two dishes, working together in tandem, can determine whether the signal originates from the vicinity of a star or from terrestrial, man-made interference, such as an artificial satellite. However, Project Phoenix, while still searching, has found nothing. It has followed up on the META-detected signals and has yet to identify a candidate not attributable to man-made interference. The famous "WOW!" signal detected in 1977 at Ohio State University has been intensely scrutinized, but with no redetection.

Project SERENDIP, which is still active, makes use of the largest single-dish receiver in the world, a 168-million-channel system in Arecibo, Puerto Rico. Nothing to report here either.

Other searches have focused on eight planetary systems outside our own that have been discovered since October 1995. To date, the receivers have

picked up not so much as a "beep."

SETI has virtually eliminated the possibility that our galaxy contains hundreds of thousands of planets populated by technologically advanced societies. This limit does pose, if nothing else, a serious challenge to teachings being promoted about life on planets all around us.

Perhaps, in some distant galaxy there might exist a whole civilization of little green men. We don't know that they are there and, for certain, don't know that they are not. There is room for differences in the Christian community on the issue of ETI as the Bible itself leaves room for such differences.

As scientists continue to examine the universe, what is being discovered is having a profound theological impact on many of them. For example, the degree of fine-tuning (*Herald and News*, Apr. 11, 1994, p. 5) is utterly amazing — far beyond what human endeavors can accomplish. A brief sampling of applicable comments follows:

Neurobiologist Sir John Eccles, a Nobel Laureate: "We come to exist through a divine act. ... Divine guidance is a theme throughout our life ... Each of us is a unique, conscious being, a divine creation."

• Astrophysicist Fred Hoyle, originally an opponent of

Christianity: "... a superintellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology..."

• Astrophysicist Paul Davies: "It seems as though somebody has fine tuned nature's numbers to make the Universe. ... The impression of design is overwhelming."

• Theoretician Alexander Polyakov, Moscow's Landau Institute: "We know that nature is described by the best of all possible mathematics because God created it."

• Robert Jastrow, Founder and Director of NASA's Goddard Institute of Space Studies: "Modern scientific discoveries make it easier and easier for scientists to believe there is a God — in fact, they make it harder and harder for anyone to believe that there is not."

SETI research reveals how "religious" scientists can be. SETI demands blind faith in the unknown and unseen. Further, it demands rejection of what is known and seen: the abundant evidence for Earth's unique and not-scientificallypredictable capacity to support advanced life. If only these researchers — and the rest of us — would seek God with the same patience, persistence, and passion, what a different place this world could be! For divine guidance, check with the God of the universe. Read the Bible. Read Deuteronomy 4:29.