

UFO

NEWSCLIPPING SERVICE

#2 CANEY VALLEY DRIVE • PLUMERVILLE, ARKANSAS 72127 USA EDITOR/PUBLISHER: LUCIUS FARISH

October 2000
Number 375

TIMES, Los Angeles, CA - Aug. 30, 2000 CR: G. Duplantier/H. Kaufman

The Truth Is in There . . . They're Sure of It

The federal government hoped that posting once-classified UFO-related papers on the Web would satisfy conspiracy theorists. Boy, was it wrong.

By LAURA SULLIVAN
BALTIMORE SUN

The National Security Agency began posting previously classified documents on its Web site two years ago to deflect the growing number of requests each year for information about flying saucers and space aliens. But the plan backfired.

Rather than relieving suspicions that the agency is hiding information about unidentified flying objects, the result has been more people than ever demanding to see UFO documents. A record 36,000 people perused the UFO page last month. What has piqued UFO believers' interest is not so much what the documents on the Web site say—often little or nothing between the blacked-out censored sections—but their extraordinary volume: thousands of pages of unofficial reports and antiquated radio interceptions from abroad.

Among the postings from the files of the nation's most-secret spy agency is a National Enquirer article with the headline "Take UFOs Seriously or Be Prepared for Sneak Invasion by Space Aliens."

All of this is fueling speculation among believers who wonder why, for something that doesn't exist, the agency has collected a ton of records. The NSA staff, burdened with hundreds of written requests under the Freedom of Information Act, is not amused. Staff members say the time required for the UFO requests slows down the response time for all requests.

The agency hasn't kept exact numbers, but Pamela Phillips, chief of Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act Services, said the increase in letters asking about UFOs has been significant, forcing the office to hire several additional staffers.

Phillips said the "conspiracies" that believers are inferring from the postings can be easily explained. "These documents contain the term UFO, but they are not necessarily about aliens," she said. "They just contain the term that describes an object that was flying that was unidentified" at the time.

As for the Enquirer article—which one UFO enthusiast says proves that the weekly tabloid, known for its alien abduction stories, has been right all along—Phillips says it's more likely that it was clipped for amusement and found on someone's desk after they retired.

Much of the latest increase in requests is a result of better technology. In the past, people interested in viewing the agency's files would have to find its address and know whom to write to. Now, people can use the agency's online request form to ask for documents, and it's made even easier with a ready-made letter template. Visitors can send in multiple requests in seconds.

The agency hasn't added any new documents to the UFO page—at <http://nsa.gov/docs/foia/released/ufo.html>—since the first posting two years ago, but it plans to soon, Phillips said, especially for the most commonly requested items.

Agency officials said most of the UFO requests ask for information about specific words pulled from the online documents. Enthusiasts believe the agency categorizes documents under keywords—and they just haven't hit on the right word yet.

In pre-Internet times, most requests for

documents with a keyword would center on popular tales such as "Area 51," "Roswell," or "Philadelphia Experiment." Today, the requested keywords are more numerous, prompting agency officials to compile lists of common ones—such as "snowbird," for Snowbird Project, the military effort involving a supposedly recovered alien aircraft—and the results of those searches, so they don't duplicate their efforts.

Requests for information on just plain "UFO" aren't slowing either. Last year, the agency received more than 150 such requests. Believers say what the documents don't say is most interesting.

"The fact that they're releasing this stuff and it's so blacked out, the theories just flurry," said John Greenwald, a Californian who has collected UFO documents from the NSA and other agencies for more than five years and posts them on his Web site, <http://www.blackvault.com>.

"Maybe it has nothing to do with aliens, that's a possibility," Greenwald said. "But I've never

found so many documents this blacked out before, and that adds to the fascination."

To Greenwald and other enthusiasts, it comes as no surprise that so many people are perusing the security agency's UFO documents. One batch of papers deals with an alleged "spotting" in Iran in the 1970s, which has captured the imaginations of many believers.

The NSA apparently intercepted radio communications of an Iranian pilot who said he had temporarily lost control of his airplane when he encountered something in the air that he couldn't identify.

The documents on the Web shed no additional light on this situation, which only adds to viewers' curiosity.

"More people than ever are interested in this stuff," said Peter Gersten, an Arizona-based attorney and director of Citizens Against UFO Secrecy. "Each year you get more and more people, especially young people. With 'The X-Files' and 'Star Wars,' it's exotic. It's entertaining. It's the greatest mystery of all time."



Illustration by REUBEN MUÑOZ / Los Angeles Times

NEWS DEMOCRAT,
Belleville, IL - Aug. 9, 2000

The inside story on UFOs

More than 50 years have passed since the U.S. Army in 1947 announced, and then denied, that an unidentified flying object had crashed near Roswell in the New Mexico desert. There are signs that our leaders have concluded that the public now gradually can be given the true story.

A part of this gradual disclosure was the 1997 book "The Day After Roswell" by Col. Philip J. Corso (Ret.). Corso was an advisor to President Eisenhower in the 1950s and in 1961 was given command of a Pentagon program where he became familiar with the U.S. government's greatest secret.

Corso reports that 1) a vehicle was recovered intact in 1947 and it was occupied by 4½ feet tall android creatures biologically manufactured for space travel (none survived); 2) the vehicle required no fuel but had an electromagnetic field propulsion system which our scientists have not been able to duplicate; 3) these UFOs frequently showed hostile intent; 4) the Cold War allowed the superpowers to jointly prepare the defenses against the extra-terrestrials without having to disclose to the public what they were really doing; 5) the production of thousands of warheads by the Russians and us thus was done mainly to defend against people from other planets; and 6) "the U.S. military now has better, more accurate and more powerful weapons for killing UFOs than in the movie 'Independence Day.'"

Some observers think that these encounters with extraterrestrials were the most important event of the 20th century. But to date there has been almost no reaction to Corso's sensational disclosures, even though he obviously is a reliable authority.

Why haven't our president and other leaders followed up on this? Despite the TV programs and movies, do they still think we are too immature to learn more?

James J. Koenig
Belleville

UFO NEWS: A NATIONAL AND WORLD REPORT
The Majestic-12 documents

"OPERATION MAJESTIC-12 is a TOP SECRET Research and Development/Intelligence operation responsible directly and only to the president of the United States. Operations of the project are carried out under control of the Majestic-12 (Majic-12) Group which

Majestic-12 was established to investigate the crash of a UFO near the town of Roswell, New Mexico in 1947. Or so the story goes. But did such an organization really exist? Evidence in the

Howard W. Tyas Jr. of Charlotte is a Jungian analyst who received his diploma from the C.G. Jung Institute in Zurich. Write him c/o The Observer, P.O. Box 30308, Charlotte, NC 28230-0308 or by e-mail at htyas@jungiananalyticpraxis.com.

But perhaps such a shift would also

Jung repeatedly witnessed the appearance of this circular, mandala motif in the dreams of patients who were facing unbearable psychic suffering. These symbolic expressions of what Jung referred to as the "God-image within" often arose

Jung wrote that UFOs represented an inner longing for "order, deliverance, salvation and wholeness" projected out onto the heavens. In an age dogged by overpopulation, terrorism, religious intolerance, the threat of nuclear annihilation, and technology which outdistances our wisdom to use it responsibly, is it any wonder that our individual and collective

The reports and the fascination simply will not disappear. Perhaps it might be helpful to turn the phenomenon gently in our hand and reflect upon another facet.

pants. The story of the MJ-12 documents is a two-part saga which began in 1984.

U.S. Government organization Majestic-12. The authentic document, known as the Briefing Document, became a heated controversy within the community of UFO researchers.

After several years of intense research, the Woods released their preliminary findings to the public in 1999.

locate any information proving the existence of a Thomas Cantwheell. It seems likely, however, that if the person calling himself "Cantwheell"

Page one of alleged "Eisenhower Briefing Document," purportedly prepared by Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter (Mj-1), dated November 18, 1952.

did exist he may well have used a pseudonym to protect his identity.

his sources may have caused the poly-graph to record deception in regard to source-specific questions. *UFO Netus* was in contact with Mr. Cooper and asked for comment regarding the poly-graph issue.

"I have been advised by counsel not to expound beyond what has been published for legal reasons," said Cooper.

dates, and many other factors prominent in the documents, are among the forensic evidence supporting their authenticity.

ed, the least unlikely conclusion is that the documents are essentially genuine in the story that they tell."

UFO doubters should examine my files

the cases *they* may have investigated.

GEORGE D. FAWCETT
Lincolnton

doubt where one doesn't want to be bothered by facts because one's mind is already made up.
I have invited both Peter Lamal

TOP SECRET

EYES ONLY

TOP SECRET-FY-MAJIC

FY-2-KEMPT (8)
002

UFO watchers gather and share experiences

Sighting, cover-ups topics of conference

Scraps Howard News Service

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas — A trip to Mexico nearly 20 years ago gave Robert Matthews the belief that UFOs exist.

"During the day, I saw a very white beam of light over the mountains that would appear on and off," Matthews said. "I really believe that it had to be something unexplainable."

Matthews, of Austin, Texas, was one of more than 100 UFO watchers attending the 37th Annual National UFO Conference here this weekend.

"We had conferences in other places, but we wanted to bring it here," said Doris Upchurch of Corpus Christi, assistant chairwoman of Mutual UFO Network's South Texas chapter, which sponsored the event.

James Moseley, the author of several books that document sightings as far back as the mid-1950s, said he remains somewhat skeptical about UFOs. "I accept the fact that I have seen them," Moseley said. "The trouble with the sciences like 'ufologism' is interpretation. You have a mystery that is beyond our current understanding, one that can't be measured more than once."

Other lecturers presented what they call further evidence of a government cover-up at Roswell, N.M., where some believe two alien ships crashed in 1947, leaving alien corpses behind.

Stanton Friedman, a nuclear physicist, said an Army Air Corps general who reportedly met with investigators in New Mexico shortly after the Roswell incident was fishing in Port Aransas at the stated time. "There were a great deal of fraudulent documents that were used by the government to confuse researchers," he said.

"We don't say we believe in UFOs because it is not a religion."

— Diana Perla Chapa, television director

"And it still continues."

Pictures of crop circles supposedly found in Corpus Christi were on display, as was a reproduction of an alien's fossilized remains that were supposedly found in the early 1900s, Upchurch said.

Other speakers included Jerónimo Flores Cavazos, a reporter who has investigated UFOs in Mexico for 25 years; and Diana Perla Chapa, a television director who also researches UFOs in Mexico.

Perla Chapa and Flores Cavazos began a group for UFO watchers nine years ago after they met near a mountain where a UFO sighting was reported. Since then, they have done several television reports on UFO sightings throughout Mexico.

"We don't say we believe in UFOs because it is not a religion," Perla Chapa said. "We say we know there are UFO's out there. What we do is the investigation to promote UFO sightings to the public. We show them what we have found, and we let them make up their own minds."

Allowing those with similar experiences to meet and remaining unabashed in their beliefs is the goal of the conference, Upchurch said.

"If you ask people whether they have seen a UFO and they are in an earshot of another person, they will probably deny it," she said. "If you get them by themselves, they will probably say yes. It happens more commonly than we would like to think."

OBSERVER-AMERICAN, Clearlake Highlands, CA - Aug. 30, 2000

UFO? HVL Power outage? An unusual Sunday night

by Tony Reed

An unusual light reported in the sky Sunday evening over Clearlake has a couple of residents wondering if they have seen an Unidentified Flying Object (UFO). Two Clearlake residents reported noticing a small light, similar to a star, following a small airplane above the south area of the city at approximately 9:20 p.m.

The two neighbors, desiring their full names to be omitted, identified themselves only as Angel and Donna. They reported

ed that at the time of the sighting, they were in different places. Angel reported that she was outside with her dog when she heard the sound of the small plane, and looked up to find it. She told media that she noticed the small light first, behind the plane, before the light accelerated to directly in front of the plane.

Donna stated that she also saw the light, and that the weather was clear, as the light outran the plane, before "shooting straight up in the sky," and disappearing. "I thought they were going to collide," said Donna, "That's how close they were together." She also stated that the plane was too far away, and that it was too dark to see any identifying numbers or markings. Both reported that the plane appeared to have been moving in a southerly direction.

Donna and Angel agree the plane was probably a single engine craft, and that it was not moving very fast at the time they noticed it. Both repeated that the light was small, white, and resembled a star, but moved on its own.

Donna reported that after seeing the light by herself, she dismissed the idea of contacting local media, but after speaking with her neighbor and discovering that she saw the light as well, she decided to come forward.

Coincidentally? Just prior to unidentified lights in the sky above Clearlake a power outage struck Hidden Valley Lake residents. Forty-one Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) customers were without power in the area near Deer Hill Road and Spruce Grove Road from about 8:15 to 10 p.m.. PG&E spokesperson Lloyd Coker reported that the power loss is unexplained, and no damage to any equipment has been found. According to Coker, after searching for an obvious cause for the outage, PG&E personnel simply closed the switch and power was restored. The incident is still under investigation, states Coker.

POST, New York, NY - Sept. 27, 2000



Hill's out-of-this-world woe

IF she hasn't already realized that New York politics is a minefield for new players, wait until Hillary Rodham Clinton learns that she has offended a large section of the populace and that they are demanding an apology. The New York Center for UFO Research, a very serious body, has Hillary in its sights for something she said long before she thought of running for anything in her own right.

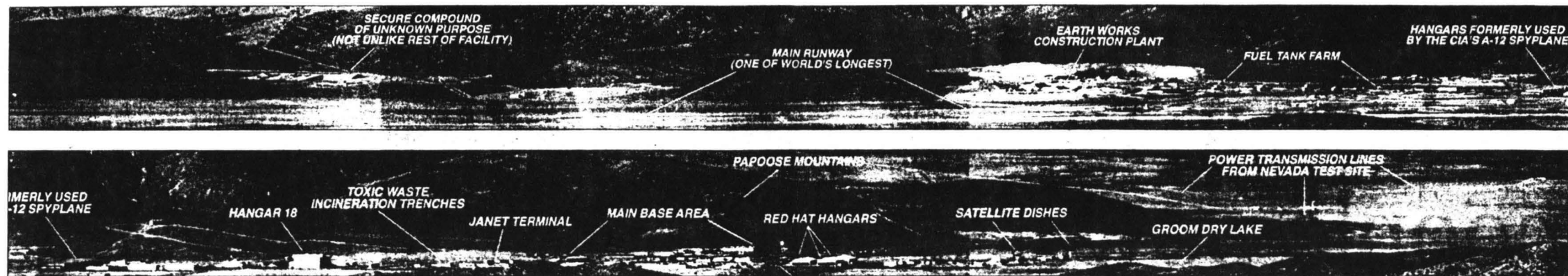
The center's director, Michael Luckman, tells me his members are still steamed about an "insensitive remark" the U.S. Senate candidate made shortly after the Heaven's Gate suicides, to the effect that people who believe in UFOs are like people who believe in Whitewater. "We demand an apology," says Luckman. "I would remind Mrs. Clinton that the majority of Americans believe in UFOs and that her own husband appears to take them very seriously."

(He's referring to a reference in Webster

Hubbell's "Friends in High Places" book in which Hubbell, Hillary's former partner at the Rose Law Firm in Little Rock, quotes a conversation in which Bill suggested getting the Justice Department to investigate UFOs.)

Luckman also wants to remind Hillary that her new abode in Chappaqua is close to the Hudson Valley, known to be a hot spot for close encounters with space travelers. He is going to offer the Clintons a tour of local UFO landmarks, presumably after she has apologized to the true believers.

At least Luckman isn't being partisan about the issue. He is also applying the litmus test to Rick Lazio, the GOP candidate. "We challenge Mr. Lazio to tell New Yorkers where he stands on the UFO controversy," adds Luckman, who plans to push the issue via the "Night World" syndicated talk show he and Art Ford are launching shortly.



Defying the fact that the Groom Lake military base is the only place in the US that cannot by law be photographed from the air, two 'Groomies' took this panoramic shot of Area 51 from a mountain-top 12 miles away AIRCRAFT ILLUSTRATED

America's top-secret 'X Files' air base revealed

THESE ARE the pictures that *X Files* fans the world over want to see.

Armed with the latest in high-powered cameras, two plane-spotters have blown a hole through the US's strictest security and revealed detailed shots of the legendary Area 51.

In case you've been abducted by aliens, *The X Files* is a cult American TV series majoring in the paranormal. And Area 51 is an "above top

BY PAUL LASHMAR

secret" base featuring in many of its storylines.

So secret is the base that the US government denies its existence. But unlike *The X Files*, Area 51 is real.

The pictures have provoked a red-hot reaction on the internet from aficionados of all things spooky. The base has given birth to a legion of Area 51 enthusiasts embracing

ufologists, conspiracy geeks, plane-spotters and the plain mad.

Some say it is the site of germ and biological warfare tests, citing reports that workers from the base have died of strange skin diseases. Others say that the remains of nine UFO crashes are kept there, and rumours abound that it is home to the US government's very own flying-saucer programme.

What is certain is that Area 51 is

a secret military facility about 90 miles north of Las Vegas, hidden in the three-million-acre Nellis Bombing and Gunnery Range. It was the site selected for the testing of the then top-secret U-2 spyplane in the mid-1950s. And the U-2's successor, the SR-71 "Blackbird", and the F-117 stealth fighter, are both said to have made their test flights there.

Rumours that the 4,000mph Aurora spyplane is there have

recently been strengthened with a photo showing a large delta-winged aircraft at the base. And sightings of "UFOs" are so frequent along the highway that it has been redesignated "Extraterrestrial Highway" by the State of Nevada.

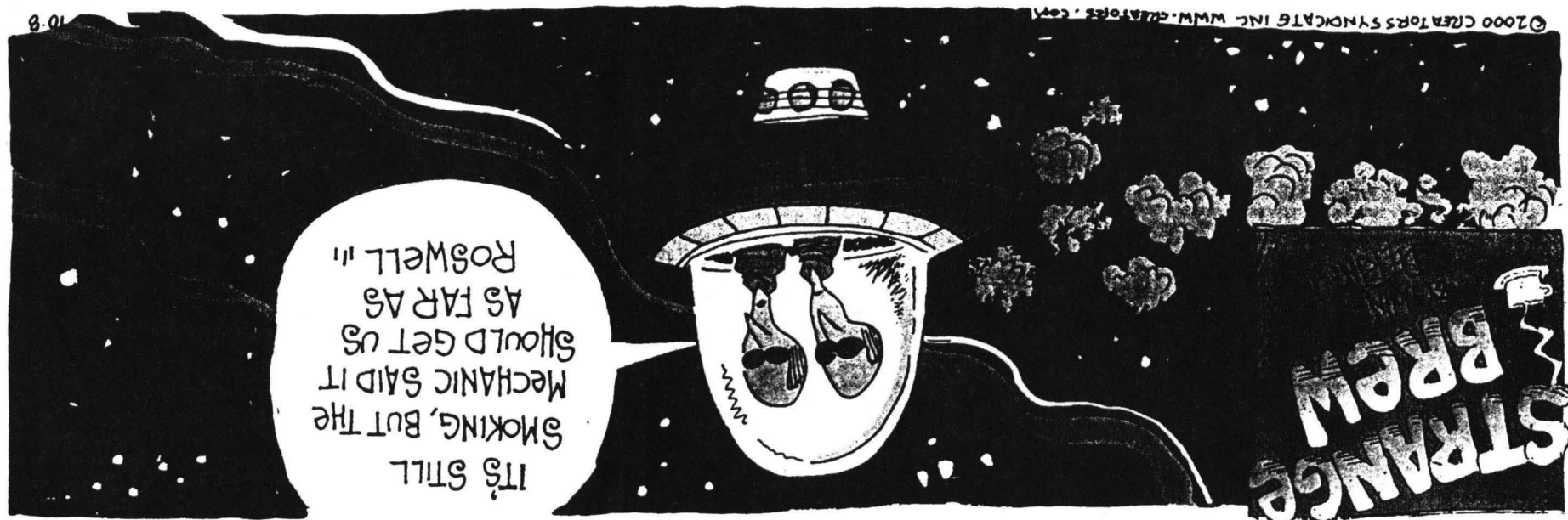
Area 51 is certainly suitable for a hypersonic aircraft, as it has one of the longest runways in the world which, at six miles, could land three space shuttles at a time.

Visitors are not welcome. The perimeter is patrolled by armed guards in Jeeps and helicopters. Signs warn to keep out of restricted areas and state that "the use of deadly force is authorised".

This is the only part of the US that cannot by law be photographed from the air. But the power of modern camera technology has made a nonsense of such distinctions, as has the enthusiasm of the base-watchers

and spyplane enthusiasts drawn to the dry Groom Lake bed where the base is situated. It was a pair of these "Groomies" who took the latest pictures from a mountain-top 12 miles away - having first evaded the base security patrols.

Richard Cooper of *Aircraft Illustrated*, the first magazine to obtain the prints, said: "These panoramic shots are by far the most revealing done of the base so far."



NOTE

As you see, U.S. clippings are scarce for this issue. If you find items of interest in your local papers, please send them in. Original articles can be copied and re-turned, if you wish. Good clear photocopies are fine. Thanks. -- LF

LOOKING BACK

NEWS-PRESS, Glendale, CA - [Date Unknown - 1954?]



—News-Press Photo

HE WAS ABOARD—Truman Bethurum points to an artist's conception of flying saucer which Bethurum says he visited, not once, but 11 times, and on which he plans to take trip to the distant planet from which the space ship came. The ship captain, he said, was a beautiful woman. The drawing shows the entrance to the vessel and also depicts three of crew on ground,

Redondo Man Claims He's Been on Saucer

By GEORGE GOSHORN
News-Press Staff Writer

Truman Bethurum, a construction man of Redondo Beach, has been aboard a flying saucer, not once but 11 times and he expects to make a trip on it to the distant planet of Clarion sometime in the not too distant future.

That is Bethurum's story and he swears by it. He has written a book about it, has told his story everywhere he could get a hearing because, he said, he wants the world to know that flying saucers are real, that their occupants are people of peace and that they intend this world no harm.

Bethurum is lecturing tonight in Long Beach, will speak tomorrow night at Hueneme and Thursday night at 8 in the Tuesday Afternoon Clubhouse, Glendale. He last was aboard the flying saucer in 1952 but, he said, he has seen it or ones exactly like it on occasions since and he knows he will make another contact when the captain of the saucer is ready.

The captain of the saucer, he said, is a woman, Aura Rahnes, who was beautiful in a Latin way, seemed young but claimed to have grandchildren. The saucer was encountered near Mormon Mesa along Highway 91

in Nevada and about 70 miles from Las Vegas.

In June, 1952, Bethurum was employed on a construction job near Glendale Junction, Nev. One evening he drove to nearby hilltop to investigate a story that it once was under water and seashell deposits could be found there. He looked around for sometime, then went to sleep in the truck. He was awakened, he said, by sound of voices and saw a number of men, all less than five feet tall, examining the truck.

Addressed in English

They showed no sign of desiring to harm him, he said, and after trying unavailingly to understand their language was astounded when the leader addressed him in English and explained they could understand any language.

Nearby was the flying saucer. It appeared to be of burnished steel. He was escorted there. The ship was about 300 feet in diameter and in the center was 18 feet in height. The edge of the rim was about two feet thick. Others of the crew clustered about him, he said, apparently curious but not hostile. They were black haired and dark eyed with unusually fine complexions.

Said From Clarion

Inside the ship he met the captain, a woman with a slender, Latin-type face. She wore a "radiant" red skirt, a short-sleeved blouse of black velvet and a black beret with red trim. She said they were from Clarion, a planet so distant it could not be found even by telescope.

During the course of their conversation she told him, Bethurum said, that they had visited Mars, that it had an atmosphere, industry and homes.

At this point Bethurum interrupted his tale to state that the curator of a Minnesota observatory, Frank Halstead by name, had visited him after hearing his report on the flying saucer and told him he had lectured on flying saucers for 30 years and was deeply interested in Bethurum's experiences. Speaking of Capt. Rahnes' remark about life on Mars, Halstead told the California man that he had noted definite new markings on the moon and believed they were

due to changes that possibly might be man-made.

The captain told Bethurum, he said, that the saucer was known on Clarion as a "scow," and that each scow carried a 32-man crew and a woman captain. The scow he was aboard, he was told, was an "admiral" scow.

At later times Bethurum said he saw the ship in flight. It "landed" noiselessly, not contacting the ground but hovering a few feet above it, except when the entrance edge was lowered to permit people to alight or get aboard. When it took off, he said, it was soundless and gained speed so rapidly that it was almost immediately a distant flash of light. He said it took off in any direction, straight up or sideways.

The ship flew, the captain told him, because her people had mastered "magnetical force" but she did not explain what she meant by that term.

Saw in Cafe

On one occasion he and his foreman saw the captain and a crew member in a Glendale, Nev., cafe but the two declined to talk to him. On departing they walked behind a row of slot machines and disappeared. How they left the place, Bethurum said, was a mystery to him. On a following visit to the saucer he asked the captain about the matter but she only smiled and didn't answer.

He asked about life on Clarion and was told the people believed in a "Supreme Entity," that there were no prisons and no child delinquency there.

Bethurum, inquiring why Clarion had advanced in interplanetary flight so much further than Earth, was told it was because earth people's minds are devoted to warfare and destruction.

Bethurum said what he told scientists about the flying saucer showed too great a knowledge for his story to be manufactured, they commented to him.

Bethurum said Prof. George Adamski, a resident of Palomar Gardens, has photographed a flying saucer, has met and talked with occupants of the ship. Bethurum said further that a former aide of Gov. Culbert Olson told him he had attended a meeting in Washington, D.C., at which persons told of seeing a flying saucer near the White House.

Just now Bethurum is waiting for another contact with the ship from Clarion. He will tell more of his plans at his lecture Thursday. Incidentally while there is no admission charge to the lecture, he said, he expects a donation from each. Otherwise he couldn't pay his expenses.

DAILY NEWS, Chicago, ILL - July 7, 1953

AIR MYSTERY IN FRANCE

Now It's 'Flying Turret'

BY PAUL GHALI

Daily News Foreign Service

PARIS—French brass have ordered a hush-hush probe into a new aerial mystery, a kind of "flying turret" officially reported by a topflight air general.

This officer, whose name cannot be revealed, represents France in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

An experienced pilot, Gen. X testifies that while on a routine flight in an army plane he saw a turret-shaped object streak by at "tremendous speed."

It occurred, he says, over a military airfield near Paris.

* * *

"I WAS 6,000 feet up, going 250 miles an hour," he reports, "when suddenly an object about the shape and dimensions of a small ship's turret flashed toward me.

"Gray-black in color, it passed only a few yards from my plane's wings.

"It moved at tremendous speed, but I was able to keep it in view.

"Amazed," he continues, "I followed the course of the dark mass until it disappeared."

* * *

TO MAKE SURE it wasn't something dropped by another plane, Gen. X scanned the skies. He saw no other craft.

Gen. X insists he observed the turret-like mass distinctly in motion. It could not have been an optical illusion, nor a cloud. It had too much substance and form for either.

Gen. X doesn't take his experience lightly—and neither do those responsible for France's national defense.

Flying Saucers: Ghosts or Real? We've Seen Disks, Insist Men Who Fly

Eddie Rickenbacker Agrees with Pilots

What about these flying saucers? For several years there have been regular reports of strange objects in the skies. Are they fact or fancy?

Arthur J. Snider, Daily News science writer, has been assigned to devote his full attention to this mystery and examine it from all angles. In a series of articles he will pass along his findings to Daily News readers to help them evaluate the reports of flying disks.

This is the third article of the series.

BY ARTHUR J. SNIDER

THE radioed word from the men in the clouds is often disturbing to the saucer scoffer.

These are the commercial airline pilots, the veteran sky scanners who have some appreciation of celestial space and speed, of reflections, glints, glares and glows.

Safety of their passengers depends on their critical judgment in distinguishing the illusory from the real, the familiar from the bizarre.

Their testimony, when compiled, lays down a forthright case for the presence of heaven-haunting saucers.

DAILY NEWS REPORTERS have interviewed several at Midway airport.

The pilots have seen curious bodies. Few want to talk about them. They've heard other pilots jeered and taunted by friends and disbelievers.

One of the first airmen to go on record is Capt. E. J. Smith, 18-year, 15,000-hour veteran of United Air Lines.

He's still as convinced as he was in the June dusk of 1947 when he and his co-pilot spotted five curious objects near Boise, Idaho.

LATEST TO BEAR WITNESS is Capt. Paul Carpenter, who has given United 25 years, 22,000 hours and 3,000,000 miles.

He held two disks in his sights more than 2½ minutes as they darted and danced over Colorado.

He radioed Denver. A North Platte-Cheyenne Airway pilot gibed:

"I wish I had a whiff of that stuff."

Ten minutes later, the would-be scoffer was frantically yelling over the airways. He'd seen it, too.

Between Smith and Carpenter, the roll call of convinced pilots is an imposing one.

ONE BELIEVED his eyes so faithfully, he lost his life.

Capt. Thomas F. Mantell of the Kentucky Air National Guard shouted: "I'm going after it!" He soared to 20,000 feet and was never heard from again.

Aware of the capabilities and limitations of flying ships, pilots are innate doubters of fantastic tales of maneuverability when related by laymen.

But they believe their fellow pilots and their own eyes.

"There's got to be something to it," contends Capt. V. R. Evans of American Airlines.

"IT SEEMS TO ME THAT anybody in the business as long as most airline pilots know enough to tell meteorites and other known phenomena from these objects.

"I'd listen to what they say."

Another strongly supporting the flying corps is Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, who has seen mirages from a life raft and knows the difference.

"I think these things are real," he says. "Too many good men who don't have hallucinations have seen them."



CAPT. E. J. SMITH AND STEWARDESS
They looked like, pie in the sky—but they weren't.



MAP LOCATES BOISE
Sight of a curious sight.

NUISANCE?

Disks Keep Air Force In a Spin

WASHINGTON — (P) — The Air Force didn't exactly say so but it left the impression those flying saucers are becoming quite a nuisance.

So much time is being spent answering saucer questions that it's interfering with regular intelligence work, says Maj. Gen. John A. Samford, Air Force intelligence director.

Most of the inquiries are from press and radio. Many are from worried or curious citizens.

The Pentagon press office has an officer working full time answering saucer questions.

PERHAPS just to show how busy it is, the Air Force released a long list of statistics revealing it had received 432 written reports on "sightings of unidentified aerial phenomena" so far this year.

All these went to the Air Technical Intelligence Center at Dayton, Ohio.

They don't include the hundreds of oral reports.

Although the Air Force attributed the recent flurry of saucer sightings to the heat, its statistics indicated the peak over the years had come at no particular season or month.

At least the figures showed the saucer business is booming in 1952.

The largest number of sightings of any month since the saucers were first reported in 1947 came in July of this year—a total of 114, just three above June.

SEES 'TEAR-DROP' FLASH

Most of Us Scared, Says Harvey Flier

BOSTON—(P)—A commercial airlines pilot from Harvey, Ill., says most of his fellow pilots are "a little scared" by reports of flying saucers and mysterious objects in the sky.

Capt. Richard E. Case Jr. of American Airlines said at Logan airport that he saw a green and white "tear drop" flash across the sky over Indiana July 12.

"My first thought was to get my plane out of the way," he said.

"I used to tell other pilots to change their brand of whiskey," he said. "Now I'm a firm believer."

CASE SAID a greenish object appeared at about 15,000 feet and shot downward in front of his plane.

"It resembled a tear drop in

shape and pulled out at 6,000 feet where it went away from us at terrific speed.

"As it leveled off it was the whitest white I have ever seen," Case said.

"Most of the nation's pilots are aware of this thing and most are just a little scared," he said. "After all, it's no fun to have unidentified objects buzzing around your ears in flight."

SUN-TIMES, Chicago, IL - Aug. 2, 1953

HE SAW THE LIGHT, TOO Chicagoan Chased In Canada

A Chicagoan said Tuesday he was chased for almost two hours by a huge white light while returning by auto from a vacation in Canada last September.

Howard M. Horwich, 25, of 7525 N. Claremont, said he

was telling his story now because of news reports that a Wayne County (Illinois) family had been dogged by a similar light last Monday night.

Horwich said he and a friend, Louis Edelman, 28, of 855 W. Buena, were driving

at night along a deserted road in a forest between Sudbury and Toronto, both in Ontario province, when the light appeared.

He said it was circular in shape and as large as the car or larger, and it hovered, spin-

ning overhead. It was particularly strange because it seemed to give off little radiance, Horwich said.

He said he and his companion got out of the car and tried to communicate with it, without success. While they were looking at it, the light shot a strong beam at a passing train for a few moments.

Horwich said he was fearful of the light and tried to evade it by speeding and making quick stops. The efforts failed, but the light finally disappeared of its own accord, he said.

AIR TRAVELERS REPORT SEEING 'FLYING SAUCER'

MOMBASA, Kenya, Feb. 19 (Reuters)—All passengers and crew men of an air liner said they saw a "flying saucer" hovering over Africa's highest peak, Mount Kilimanjaro, in northern Tanganyika, when they flew past today. They signed a statement to that effect when they landed here from Nairobi.

They described the "saucer" as "metallic, silvery, and bullet-shaped," with what appeared to be tail fins. They said it hovered over the 19,317 foot peak at about 30,000 feet for 14 minutes before flashing eastward out of sight.

Two American passengers took photographs with a camera with a telescopic lens. Another passenger, Capt. H. B. B. Fussell of Newport, Wales, photographed it after watching it thru powerful binoculars.



NEWS MIRROR, Sooke, B.C., Canada - Aug. 30, 2000 CR: G. Conway

Close encounters of the Sooke kind

By Miguel R. MacDonald
Sooke News Mirror

Darren A. Skaalrud is a father, husband, artist, writer and photographer who just happens to believe in UFOs.

He is also one of the many people in the province who has seen a UFO.

This year 45 per cent of all Canadian UFO sightings were reported in B.C.

The night that Skaalrud became a true believer happened seven years ago while he was on a camping trip in the Port Alberni area. To get the best possible pictures of area waterfalls, Skaalrud parked his car at a campsite and settled in for the night.

He awoke hours later to the sight of a glowing orb approximately 150 feet in diameter and hovering some 20 feet above the forest. It was a clear night.

"It was so bright it lit up the whole forest panoramically," Skaalrud said. "I knew it was a phenomenon that was rare."

He watched the object for about 10 minutes. Thinking he might be asleep, he tested his senses to make sure he was awake.

"After about 10 minutes of observing this I suddenly felt tired," he said. He explained that he could not fight the urge to climb back in his car and go to sleep.

Three months later, Skaalrud suddenly woke up one night scared out of his wits. He jumped out of bed and pinned his back against the wall for no apparent reason.

He said that in his dream he had felt a sensation similar to two pins touch his chest which then drew an oblong shape. The entire area inside the oblong suddenly went numb, "like when your foot goes to sleep," he said. Then his whole body felt numb.

He felt himself floating forwards for what he judged to be around 100 feet, but he said he could not move. His feet then lost contact with the ground as he was slowly rotated until his back became level with the ground. He was then slowly lowered until his body made contact.

"I didn't want what was happening to happen," he said. "I couldn't open my eyes."

When he did finally open his eyes it was to jump out of bed frightened. It was 3:30 a.m.

Six weeks later, while staying at a friend's place on the sofa, Skaalrud said he felt his whole body lift off of the sofa and float forward.

"Somehow it stops and I drop," he said.

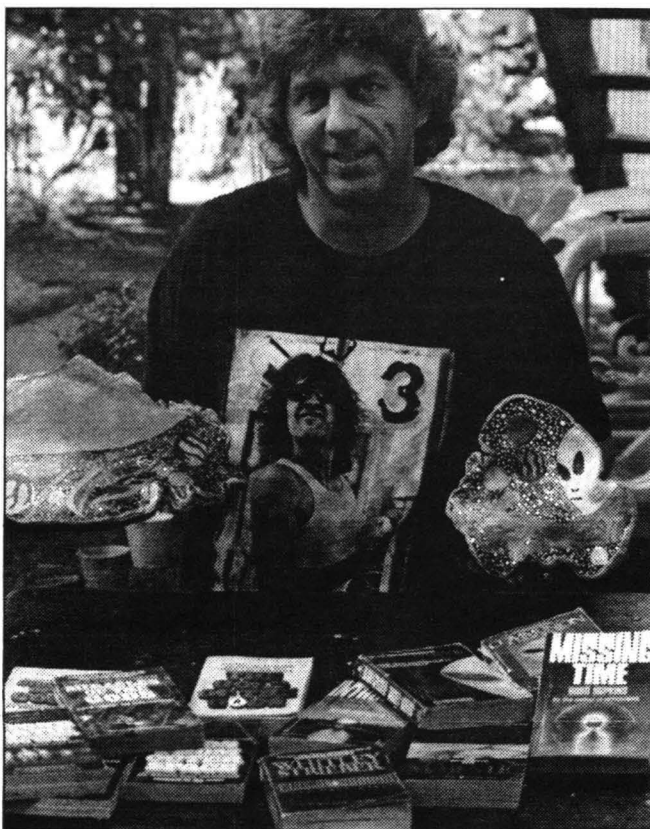
When he awoke he was six feet away from the sofa. It was 3:30 a.m. Thinking he had simply rolled over in his sleep he tried to slip off of the sofa to see if he would travel the same distance forwards. But after a couple attempts he said he could not get more than a couple feet from the sofa.

"I got back on the sofa and I said, 'If there's somebody here give me a sign.' That's when the TV came on.

"I'm not the only person who has had these experiences," he explained. "These aren't isolated incidents."

And Skaalrud, more than anyone, should know.

For the past four to seven years he has educated himself about UFOs through a number of sources. He is an avid collector of books about UFOs like Whitley Strieber's *Communion*, and Budd Hopkins' *Missing Time*.



MIGUEL R. MACDONALD/SOOKE NEWS MIRROR

Darren A. Skaalrud's experiences have inspired him to read about UFOs and paint their images as well.

He has also been in touch with a number of experts in the field. One such expert is president of UFOBC Graham Conway.

UFOBC is a non-profit organization that publishes material about UFO sightings and other such occurrences.

Conway said that while he has never met Skaalrud, the Sooke resident did tell him about the same stories that he told the *News Mirror*.

One such sighting involved seeing a very large electric charged cloud hovering over the Sooke Basin. Skaalrud said it was, "like seeing an anti-aircraft floating in the sky."

The cloud hovered over the basin for a long while to the fascination of Skaalrud and a friend, whom he chose not to name. According to Skaalrud the cloud then slowly crept away in the direction of Victoria.

According to Conway, Skaalrud is not alone in his sightings.

"I've heard that many times before," said Conway, who has been studying UFOs for 54 years. "I have people who tell me many times they wake up, they hear noises in the house and see luminous lights and even see the outline of a figure."

"I've seen objects in the sky I cannot explain."

Conway does not believe that British Columbia has more sightings than elsewhere in Canada. He said the reason for B.C. residents to have reported 45 per cent of Canada's UFOs is because British Columbians have an established and very active organization, UFOBC to which they

can report their sightings.

Sooke RCMP Staff Sergeant Don Brown said that in his three-year tour of duty in the area he was not aware of any sightings reported in Sooke.

He added that there have however been a number of meteor showers in the area this summer.

So why don't more people see UFOs?

For starters, both Conway and Skaalrud agree that people are conditioned to sleep at night, making it less likely that a large number of people will be watching the night or early morning skies.

But there is a second theory as well.

"It is possible that only certain people can tune into the 'vibration' (of UFOs)," Conway said. "Sometimes a group of people will see (a UFO) but one or two people in the group won't see anything."

Nonetheless, Conway said he has seen over 30 different sightings in different parts of the country. He said while he does not know what the UFOs are specifically, he does believe in their existence.

Skaalrud, always an artist, has used his experiences as fuel for inspiration.

He now paints images of flying saucers and aliens on forest tree fungus. He uses the natural relief and curvature of the fungus to enhance the shapes in his drawings. He said he began painting the images shortly after his first sighting. He has his own theories about why the UFOs visit.

"I think they're here for their own purposes," he said.

But until they reveal their plans, Conway has advice for everyone:

"Keep watching the sky."

It's cloth, Jimmy, but not as we know it

Kirsty Scott

As one of Scotland's favourite haunts for golfers, the quiet seaside town of Gullane in Lothian is used to the sight of garish materials of dubious natural origin. But an unusual piece of cloth found in mysterious circumstances on the nearby hill of Berwick Law has brought the community a new and much less welcome identity as one of the world's more intriguing centres of possible UFO activity.

The small mustard-coloured swatch was found last summer by an American golfer as he investigated strange lights over the hill and was handed in to a local hotelier. Its discovery came not long after a group of Japanese tourists had reported seeing a large ball of light in the sky over another nearby hill, Traprain Law. They took the story back to Tokyo and persuaded one of the country's broadcast networks to return to the area this March to investigate. The TV crews plan to fix their cameras to the roof of a Gullane hotel and run a live internet feed of the sky above the two hills.

Stephen Prior, the hotelier who will play host to the Japanese and who was given the cloth for safe keeping, welcomes the attempt to get to the bottom of the mystery. He's been trying unsuccessfully to find a lab to test the material for him.

"I'm actually glad that someone is going to try to make a decent scientific study of what all this might be, but the cloth is what really fascinates me," he said. "It is very weird, like the softest kid leather but with spores that come out when you tap it. It's like nothing I've ever seen. But I am prepared to be told it comes from C&A rather than being a pair of fairy knickers."

Mr Prior said the American golfer who discovered the material, a lawyer with a military background, could not be persuaded to take it back to the US to be analysed for fear of being ridiculed.

"These were middle-aged professional people. They had been out to supper and saw

some lights over Berwick Law. They wandered up to investigate and one of them was scratching around where he believed he saw a light emerge and found this piece of cloth."

While the discovery of the material is new, Mr Prior said there had been reports of strange sightings over Berwick Law and Traprain Law for hundreds of years.

"In Victorian times it was stories about fairies but since space became fashionable we are getting stories about UFOs."

He believes there is a more earthly explanation for the activity. "I think it may be a form of marsh gas. The lights that are picked up from marsh gas combined with static electricity. Similar to crop circles, it's an earth sources thing."

Gullane is not the first Scottish community to become the focus of UFO watchers. In the early 1990s the central belt town of Bonnybridge played host to TV crews from across the world after numerous reports of UFO sightings.

At the Linlithgow offices of Strange Phenomena Investigations, the founder, Billy Devlin, gave a weary sigh at the latest news from Gullane. "People have been seeing UFOs since time began but we're still looking for the evidence," he said. "We've been dragged out to see angel hair that had supposedly fallen from a UFO and turned out to be mildew."

"We went out to see one man who claimed he was seeing a UFO at roughly the same time every night. We sat with him until he started shouting 'Here it comes, here it comes! And a plane roared overhead. He was right under the flight path.'"

Mr Devlin said the recent publicity about Gullane will undoubtedly result in a rash of fresh sightings. "It is self-perpetuating. You get one or two reports and then the phone starts ringing off the hook."

The residents of Gullane, meanwhile, are less than excited at that prospect. "I know exactly what it is," said an elderly man walking his dog along the seafront yesterday. "It's hokum."

Japanese on UFO watch

A JAPANESE television crew will attempt to catch extra-terrestrial visits to Scotland on film by setting up round-the-clock cameras in an area renowned for sightings.

The crew is planning a six-month visit to Gullane, East Lothian, after hearing of its reputation as a centre for paranormal and UFO activity.

Cameras will focus on two landmark hills at the centre of many reports, Traprain Law and Berwick Law. They will be mounted on the roof of Templar Lodge Hotel after its owner granted permission for the crew to use the building.

Stephen Prior, a hotel spokesman, said the Japanese crew would be arriving in the spring and would film 24 hours a day.

He said: "They got in touch with us firstly because they wanted to monitor UFO activity and secondly because they could see Berwick Law from here."

"We had heard various rumours locally that there were a lot of UFO sightings over the hills, some seeing them as far away as Fife. There are Celtic stories about them being fairy hills with fairy lights on them. My own suspicion is that it may be tied in with coloured gas from the granite."

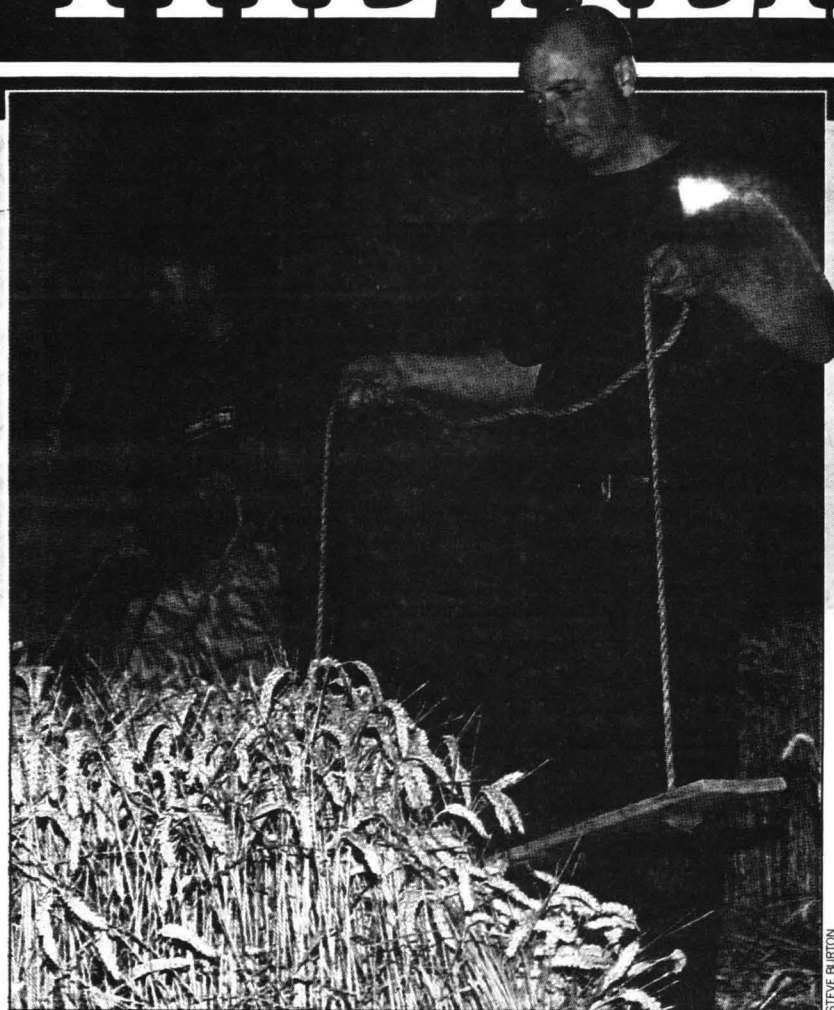
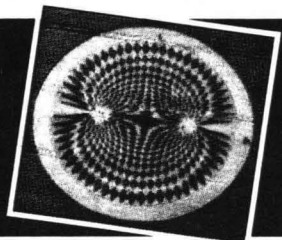
Mr Prior said the crew had been alerted by an American businessman's unusual experiences during a visit to East Lothian.

The man claimed to have found a strange piece of cloth on Berwick Law after seeing lights on the hill about four months ago.

SCOTSMAN, Edinburgh, Scotland - Jan. 5, 2000

WE ARE

'THE ALIENS'



HOW THEY CREATED THIS CROP CIRCLE

<p>1</p> <p>Tools: three people, 140ft of tape and a 'stomper'. For the basic circle, one person holds one end of the tape, the second holds the other end and walks round, creating a human compass. The third person follows behind stomping the corn.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Using 120ft of tape, an inner circle is made. On this circle, make a mark every 4ft; 60 in all, like minutes on a clock. From the centre, mark two equal points along the diameter line and with tape and stomp straight lines from these to each of the 60 marks.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>There's now a circle full of diamond shapes. Go to circumference of the inner circle. Leave corn standing in each diamond pointing at you. Stomp the next diamond on the line, leave the next, stomp the next and so on until there is a design like the one above.</p>
---	---	--

For years we thought crop circles were the work of visitors from space, but now Peter Hillmore reveals the down-to-earth truth...

be too complicated for a human being to devise - such as the beautiful 280ft design that appeared at Avebury Truslove in July, all swirling circles and magical diamonds, pictured far right.

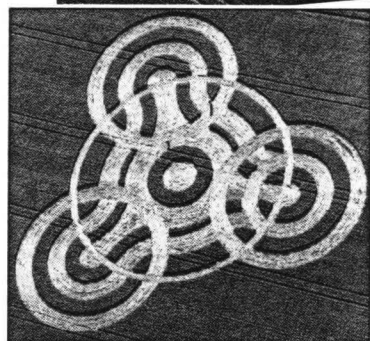
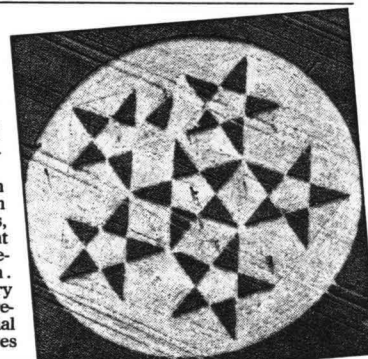
A local engineer, Colin Andrews, has been researching the circles, with the help of a grant from America's Rockefeller Foundation. Although his first theory was that they were created by 'extra-terrestrial activity', he now believes they are formed 'by the earth's electromagnetic field'.

Francine Black said last week that some of the corn designs 'are very complex mathematically and use an unknown kind of geometry'.

It is, says Lundberg, amazing what patterns you can make with a computer.

'We make our initial designs with the help of a computer and then we work out on paper how to create them on the ground, dividing tasks up among teams. It's quite complicated because we have to work at night and in silence.'

He points to an aerial photograph of one very intricate pattern in a cornfield, and then expertly deconstructs it. 'You start with one person standing in the middle of a field holding one end of the surveyor's tape while the second member of the team holds the other end of the taut



Circles of friends... Two new exhibits in this field of art and, right, Lundberg, Dickinson and Russell at work last week

tape and walks in a circle. The third member follows him with the stomper, flattening the corn, making a circle. Then you move to another point and repeat the process. And again.

'Then you make straight lines using the same process. That gives you a grid; you mark out diamond shapes and flatten some and leave others standing. And before long you've got a design

From the outside, The Barge public house looks completely normal. Situated in the rural village of Honeysweet in Wiltshire, it often draws in tourists visiting the area. Inside, however, it's anything but normal. In fact, it's paranormal.

On the ceiling there's a painting of a mystical crop circle. Around the walls are pictures of these strange shapes that appear mysteriously in the night, along with magazine and newspaper articles discussing their supernatural powers.

The pub's customers discuss little else, and the talk last week was about a new crop circle, 300ft in diameter, that had appeared on Woodrow Hill in the dead of night the previous weekend. A Japanese researcher who had been watching the hill every night for some time reported that he had seen and heard nothing.

The Barge is the meeting place for the world's 'Croppers', the growing band of people who believe that these circles and complex shapes are devised and made by extra-terrestrial, super-intelligent aliens.

Not far away from Honeysweet is the equally rural Wiltshire village of Lockeridge. This is where the Who'd A Thought It hostelry is located. It's a curious name for a pub, but the right name for a venue where John Lundberg can talk about the crop circles that he designs and builds in the middle of the night with half a dozen friends. He's intelligent, but he's definitely terrestrial and, despite close-cropped hair and matching beard, he is not an alien.

The Who'd A Thought It is the meeting place for the Circle Makers, the small, secretive band of people whose idea of fun is to trample cornfields at night, create the corn circles in a few hours - and fool gullible folk. Lundberg is their leader.

Who would have thought that a 31-year-old designer has spent the past ten years devising and building many of the inexplicable and mysterious shapes that appear in fields of oilseed rape, barley and corn?

Francine Blake, chairperson of the Wiltshire Crop Circle Study Group, calls Lundberg 'a demon'. He has been chased and threatened by irate Croppers who followed his team at night in a Range Rover fitted with a dazzling helicopter's lamp.

He has, bizarrely, been accused of working for the British Secret Service, employed to create corn circles to disguise genuine ones made by alien landing craft.

Lundberg comes not from Mars but from Shoreditch in London's East End. And there's nothing special or alien about the tools he and his team of friends use to make their circles - they consist of a 100ft surveyor's tape and a 'circle-stomper', a 4ft piece of narrow wood which is used to flatten the corn.

Lundberg claims that he and a handful of like-minded subversives are squarely to blame for the simple circles, dice spots, pendulums, crescent moons and whirlpool shapes that dot the Wiltshire countryside. They are also responsible, he says, for the complicated and fantastical shapes, the pictographs, the hieroglyphics that are deemed to

More on ufology

I WAS interested in your story of a UFO sighting in Truro (Indy, February 20).

I run an investigation group in Wellington - Utopia Investigations - and we meet once a month to discuss ufology. I have just been told of sightings at Wellington on January 1 and February 3 at around midnight.

It consisted of an object that was described as a tennis ball with a ping-pong ball on top.

If anyone observes something in Somerset, contact me on 01823 660761

DAVE THOMAS
Wellington

Iron filings cause great excitement

(continued on page 9)

that follows geometrical rules unknown to modern man. It's complicated, it's backward engineering, but it's not that difficult.' He grins modestly.

Lundberg's group certainly makes it look easy. Last week, he and his two team leaders - special effects artist Rod Dickinson, 34, and musician Will Russell, 27 - met in a Wiltshire car park on a late summer evening and headed off to a nearby field. Working silently, to a predetermined design, they measured and trampled and fashioned a weird shape out of the ripe corn.

They worked quickly. 'People think it takes hours to flatten corn, but we can do it at a fast walking pace,' whispered Dickinson. Before long, just a few hours in fact, they not only make it look easy, they make it look boringly repetitive.

Lundberg explains that if you make the circles in early summer when the corn is ripening, it will spring back in the air a little after being flattened. This will make believers in the supernatural and paranormal describe it as having been 'lightly brushed' by an alien spacecraft or some such. If you do it in high summer, the weight of the corn will keep it flat, 'proof' that a spaceship actually landed.

And if you want to confuse people with sophisticated scientific devices, the judicious dropping of iron filings will cause sensitive needles to quiver wildly, creating great excitement.

'All the research into crop

circles, all the outlandish theories about their formation is a great help to us Circle Makers,' says Lundberg. 'They publicise our work around the world and draw large audiences to see our creations.'

'Wiltshire now advertises our crop circles as a tourist attraction and you can take helicopter trips over fields to see our patterns. I've paid to see my own creation from the air.'

Among the small group of Circle Makers - Lundberg says he knows of only two other groups working in this country - there is a fashion trend in design every year. Last year, the groups met in the Who'd A Thought It and settled on the theme of 'spectral geometry'. Lundberg says they added designs from age-old spiritual concepts 'to encourage the mystical believers'.

This year, they met in the pub and settled on the theme of 'visual grids and optical illusion'. It will take another meeting next spring, just before the start of the circle season, to decide on the next crop circle fashion.

Lundberg himself was inspired by the pioneering work of two pensioners, Doug Bower and Dave Chorley. In 1992, the two retired artists from Dorset claimed they were responsible for the simple but bewildering circles that had been appearing in English fields since the mid-Seventies.

As a young man, Lundberg had been fascinated by the corn circles and believed they were made by alien landing craft. 'I was really

shocked by Doug and Dave's claims,' he said. 'I didn't believe them. I tried to make one to see how difficult it was. Our first attempts were very badly made - but they were pronounced genuine by the experts. They were seen as proof that spacecraft had landed.'

Lundberg's later circles were much better. 'But then experts came along and said they were due to factors like meteorological forces and the effect of wind on the crops. So we began to make them more complicated and intricate in a way that the wind could never emulate.'

'Now they have got so intricate - one in Wiltshire, at West Kennet,

'The Croppies don't want to find us...'

has 1,600 separate elements - that we're approaching a critical mass. We can't get much more complex because we still have to build them in only a few hours of summer darkness.'

His matter-of-fact explanations in the Who'd A Thought It don't bear thinking about in The Barge at Honeysweet. So they don't. The fervent Croppies continue to put forward all manner of theories. Interest in crop circles is so high that last month the Centre for Crop Circle Studies was able to hold a three-day international conference in Andover, Hampshire. Ironically, in The Barge the

more you present sceptical and rational explanations for the crop circles and tentatively mention the unholy trinity of Lundberg, Dickinson and Russell, the more the believers seem to put forth an irrational explanation.

As Dickinson points out: 'It wouldn't be all that difficult for the Croppies to find us. They know the areas where the circles appear and a bit of decent night surveillance equipment would soon reveal our whereabouts. But they are frightened of discovering us because we're the rational explanation.'

Lundberg says that his team create their circles near the ancient monuments that dot Wiltshire because that is where tourists tend to gather. A complex pattern next to Stonehenge caused such interest that traffic on the A30 was halted. Indeed, the crop circle received more visitors than the stones themselves.

In The Barge, however, the closeness of the circles to prehistoric sites is deeply significant. Sam and Julie Listeron have come from America - where there are only a few circles - on a spiritual pilgrimage. 'Just because some circles are made by hoaxers doesn't mean that some aren't genuinely the work of higher intelligence from outside the Earth,' explains an earnest Julie.

However, The Barge is clearly the wrong place to suggest that if such higher intelligences existed they would find something more intelligent to do than make circles in corn fields.

Reshi's mystery for the X-Files

AN X-Files enthusiast was waiting to wake up and find his cornflakes soggy when he spotted a flying saucer hovering over Grimsby's Freshney Place.

Reshi Kumar (11), a pupil at St James' School, Grimsby, thought he was dreaming when he saw the unidentified flying object.

The schoolboy was sitting in the back of a car stuck in traffic with his family, when he spotted the eerie object at 8pm a week last Friday - six hours after Grimsby fruitier Tony Kelsey spotted a similar alien prescence in the sky above Willingham Street.

Reshi said: 'I noticed this really bright round light in the sky, it was hovering in the same position then it dropped really steeply and left a white line behind it.'

'One minute it was there, the next it was gone, it was really weird,' explained Reshi who does not believe in aliens - despite being an avid X-Files follower.

Reshi added: 'At first I thought it must've been a plane but the object didn't have any red or blue lights - it's definitely one for Mulder and Scully because I don't know what it was.'

Reshi's father, Dr Kumar, who was driving the family car at the time, said: 'We were in a traffic jam when Reshi pointed the object out. I didn't really get a good look myself but I told him it was probably just an aeroplane.'

'I was really shocked when I read in the Grimsby Telegraph that someone else had seen the same object and described it exactly the same as Reshi had.'

The RAF denied carrying out any unusual activities over Grimsby at the times in question - so what was it that Reshi and Mr Kelsey saw?

■ If you spotted the Grimsby UFO too, contact Joe Lumley or Chris Millar on (01472) 360360.

Aliens? Send for the supernatural sleuths

by James Rozmus

IN 1994 Malcolm Robinson was called to a quiet nook of West Scotland called Aultbea by a man claiming to have seen strange lights in the sky.

What Malcolm, an investigator of paranormal phenomena, saw on that starlit night has stayed with him ever since.

'The guy flicked his torch light up into the sky,' he said. 'And suddenly a light came tumbling down. It was a rope ladder of light.'

'It just came from a single point in the sky and then seemed to fold back into itself.' Since founding Strange Phenomena Investigations in 1979, Malcolm has been called out to everything from UFO sightings to poltergeist hauntings.

A case in 1997 found him and a local psychic monitoring a haunted house in Stirling with infra-red camera equipment.

He said: 'Suddenly the whole room was covered in these pin pricks of white light. It even seemed to go up our arms and legs.'

'I asked what was going on and the psychic told me we were seeing pure psychic energy, but when we looked at the cameras afterwards

there was nothing on film.'

In spite of both these experiences his first aim when investigating a case is to try and disprove it.

'The vast majority of UFO reports have natural explanations,' he revealed. 'About 95 per cent. And there are a lot of charlatans, a lot of people trying to pull the wool over our eyes.'

'But when you sweep that aside you are left with a residue of reports which you can't explain.'

Now based in Ealing, it is this elusive five per cent he seeks to uncover through his work with SPI and the British UFO Research Association (BUFORA).

Witnesses

He said: 'Our aim is to inform the general public. These subjects demand to be looked at but many members of the scientific community won't open their minds because of the possible ridicule factor.'

His partner Judith Jaafra has worked extensively with UFO witnesses through BUFORA's Witness Support Group.

'A paranormal experience can stay with people for the rest of their lives,' she said. 'But about half

of the people we worked with had probably seen something quite normal and convinced themselves otherwise.'

It is something which has become more common in the last 30 years with movies such as *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and television's *The X-Files*.

Although people have become more open to the idea of the paranormal, some have become too ready to believe.

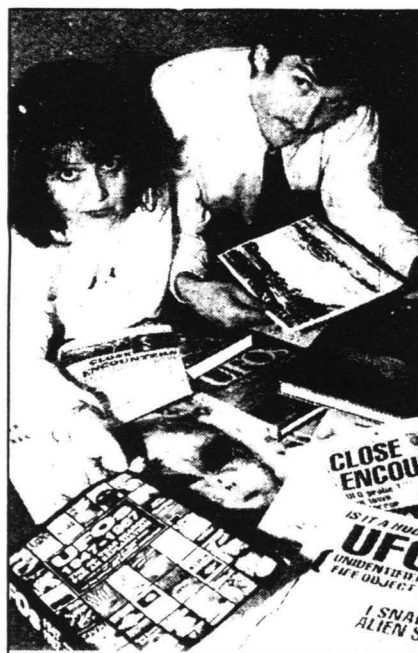
Judith said: 'It's part of a world view now. It's rare to find a virgin witness, someone who hasn't been touched by this UFO culture.'

But then there is always that five per cent. A statistic which may even get the government to take action with a possible investigation into the dozens of reported UFO sightings, since 1993, over the Scottish town of Bonnybridge.

Having now set up an SPI group in London, however, Malcolm and Judith are keen to look into cases of the unknown closer to home.

Anyone who thinks they may have experienced the paranormal can speak to them confidentially by calling 0181 998 4636.

BUFORA lectures will also be at the University of Westminster throughout the year.



The truth is out there: Malcolm Robinson and Judith Jaafra look into the unknown.

Albertans describe chilling alien abductions

With a great many UFO abduction stories, there's that uncomfortable moment in the midst of the telling when the abductee grimaces, ducks his head and says in an embarrassed mumble, 'You sure you want to put this in the paper?'

He means the anal probing. 'I remember this long, segmented metal thing. It looked like a hose,' said James, shifting anxiously in his seat.

'There was a lot of poking and prodding and ... I don't know for sure why they do it. Personally I think it's part of some sort of genetic experiment.'

James (he's keeping his last name to himself) is a 40-something resident of a town not far from St. Paul, site of this weekend's UFO 2000 conference of paranormal studies.

He grew up on a farm, and it was in the middle of the night in a lonely field near New Norway that he caught his first glimpse of the glowing discs.

'There were three of them, disc-shaped objects, shining and flying along the ground in, like, a triangle formation,' he said. 'Every once in a while one of them would shoot out a red beam of light, and a cloud of dust would rise up the beam.'

'I was 13 at the time. I was out with my camera taking pictures of star trails. I took this,' he said, holding up a

scratched and grainy black-and-white image of what looks like a First World War British army helmet floating in space.



Doug BEAZLEY
THE INSIDE STORY

In the years since, James has become an extraterrestrial frequent flyer. He said he's been abducted a dozen times all together; he can remember clearly every time he's seen spaceships from the ground, but his abduction experiences he has recalled only under hypnosis.

'This one time, my first wife and I were driving along, and we see this bright light in the trees,' he said.

'Before we know it, we feel like we're coming out of this fog, we're on a completely different stretch of highway. We figure we lost about 2½ hours. Couldn't remember a thing.'

Until he was hypnotized. In his trance, he described his pickup truck being lifted into a huge spaceship by some sort of beam, and both he and his wife being levitated out of the cab.

'We were taken to separate rooms,' he said. 'There were these three guys, about four feet tall, big heads and eyes, wearing these silvery coveralls. They did these tests and things on me.'

'Then they showed me this spiralling disc, and I was falling down a long tunnel. I could see pictures of, like,

tanks and nukes blowing up all around me, pictures of war.'

Not all abduction stories are that colourful. Some seem like waking dreams, centred around real memories of personal tragedy and loss.

Dave (not his real name) is 17 years old, a thin boy with pale hair who talks in low whispers. He lives in a farming town a few hours out of St. Paul.

After his mother died when he was nine, he started seeing aliens.

'I'd get them every few months,' Dave said. 'It was like night paralysis, you know? I'd be three-quarters conscious, but I couldn't move. And my whole body would tingle.'

'Sometimes I'd see just a hand at the foot of the bed. A couple of times I saw this ... small man with huge eyes, staring at me. He'd say, 'Go to sleep,' and I'd conk out.'

'A couple of times I felt like I was being carried. I guess they took me inside the ship. It was really dark. I saw maybe the corner of a counter, a table. I don't remember anything else.'

Sometimes, he'd have deep-sleep dreams about his mother. In one dream he met her at a cousin's house near his home.

'I looked out of the house and I saw this huge ship floating over the house. My mother was with me in the house. And she looked over at me and said, 'I'm not dead.'

'I don't know what it means. Something.'

Glowing object sparks UFO alert



▲ UFO spotter: Georgina Wells, who saw what she believes was an unidentified flying object during the early hours. Picture by Keith Blackham. 0504/12

A WOMAN struggling to sleep as she battled a cold claims she saw a UFO land in Worcester.

Georgina Wells said she saw a glowing object which hovered in the sky for more than an hour at 2am last Thursday.

The 20-year-old said she saw the "extremely bright" egg shape from her third floor bedroom window at the back of her Bransford Road home in St John's.

But she said she was amazed to see the glowing yellow object, which she claims had a helicopter next to it the whole time, begin to descend.

"It got lower and lower then it stopped glowing," she said.

"I'm convinced it landed but I don't know where. But minutes later it came back into view and was really bright again and shot off into the sky and vanished. I have never seen anything go that fast before."

'It hovered and then descended'

by GUY WHITMORE

Evening News

Miss Wells, who was awake because of a cold, added she had not taken any medicine which could cause her to hallucinate, nor was it a dream.

"I was awake because I could not stop coughing," she said.

"I stood up and watched it. It was not a police helicopter with its spotlight as there was no light-beam.

"I nearly woke my mum and dad up but I thought it wasn't fair, I don't think they would have been very impressed."

But dad Jim, 63, said he was disap-

pointed his daughter did not wake him as he may have been able to identify the object.

He said he would not dismiss the possibility that it was a UFO.

"It could have been a number of things, including a UFO," he said. "I do not know of any aviation vehicles which can shoot off and vanish in a matter of moments."

West Mercia Police said they had no reports of anyone seeing anything unusual and added that the police helicopter was not flying at the time.

A spokesman for the Civil Aviation Authority said he was unable to confirm what was flying at that time, as it is not a controlled area. A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence confirmed no military aircraft were in the area.

Did you see anything unusual in the Worcester skies that morning? Or, have you an explanation for Miss Wells' experience? Contact reporter Guy Whitmore at the *Evening News* on 01905 748200 ext 207.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS COURIER, Kent, England - March 10, 2000

Stunned caretaker and family chase UFO through town

A STUNNED Langton Green caretaker has spoken of his disbelief after he chased a UFO through Tonbridge on Friday.

Peter Woods, 57, of Elmhurst Gardens, Tonbridge, told the Courier he saw a "strong pulsating light" hovering half a mile

in front of his vehicle. Mr Woods, caretaker for Langton Green Primary School, pulled his car over three times to watch the object.

But what surprised Mr Woods, who was driving his wife and eight-year-old twins to Sevenoaks, was the way the UFO reacted to air-

craft. "There were a lot of planes flying from Gatwick but when they got close to the light it switched off. It then lit up again very intensely."

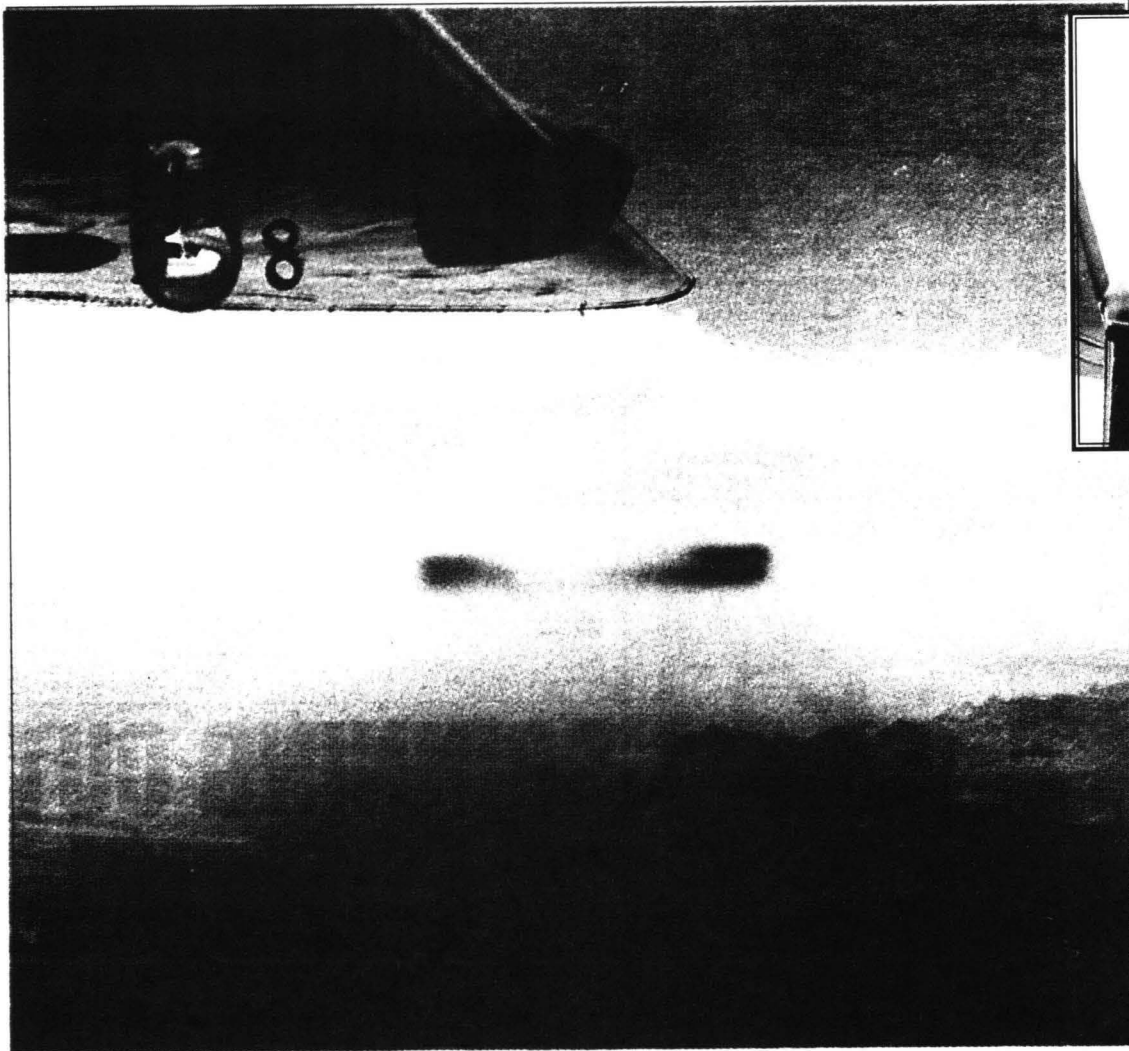
"I disbelieve in UFOs but I cannot give a rational explanation," he added.

Gatwick Airport spokes-

woman Caroline Alderson, said: "We have not received any reports of UFOs near us."

Did you witness the pulsating light while travelling through north Tonbridge on Friday at 7.15pm?

If so, contact Courier reporters on 01892 686970.



My close encounter

■ by MARK EVANS

IS it a bird? Is it a plane - or is this spooky, cigar-shaped thing a UFO?

Pilot David Hastings, above, has no doubts - he says the picture he took over California's Mojave Desert is final proof that UFOs do exist.

He and his co-pilot David Patterson thought they were going to die when the mystery black shape came at them head-on, then flashed overhead.

Seconds later they became aware of an object moving at high speed at their side. David, 67, from Salhouse, Norfolk, grabbed his camera and one of the snaps clearly showed the weird object.

He said: "There's no doubt in my mind that we had an encounter with a UFO - and I've got the picture to prove it."

"There's simply no other explanation, and nobody else has any ideas about it. Whatever it was must have come alongside to take a good look at us."

When David, who has been flying for 40 years, later showed the snap to US Navy officers they refused to comment.

SOUTH WALES ARGUS, Newport, Wales - May 16, 2000

Watching the skies with the UFO spotters

Kath Johnson, founder member and leader of a UFO enthusiasts' network, has been watching the skies over Abertillery for 21 years. MATTHEW BLYTHE caught up with the investigator at the start of the summer's scheduled watches

first major one. Previously, I had seen zig-zagging light and silver spheres, playing cat and mouse in the sky," added Mrs Johnson, who lives on the Penrhwi estate in Brynithel, Abertillery.

There was a lot of UFO activity in 1979, she says, including cattle transportations, spacemen sightings and airborne folk about the countryside.

The early 21st century is quiet by comparison, but SWUFON's sky-watchers carry on regardless.

Mrs Johnson's most spectacular piece of evidence is a video shot of a brilliant glowing sphere hovering above SWUFON's regular point of observation, at the top

of St Illtyd, south of Abertillery.

It was a fine night in March and Mrs Johnson was with her son, Matthew, armed with a video camera and a lot of patience.

"The glow manifested itself above the mountain and hung in the air."

"There was no sound and it just hovered for a while," explained Mrs Johnson. "We were quite pleased with that - it was very exciting."

The video footage she took that night was included in a BBC Choice television magazine series called In Full View, shown at the end of last year, when Kath and fellow group members spoke about their UFO sightings.

SWUFON is affiliated to groups across the UK who begin co-ordinated sky-watches next month.

The first Welsh sky-watch of the season is on Saturday, June 17, on St Illtyd.

"We want people to start watching the skies," said Mrs Johnson. "We will then keep in touch with groups across the country."

"People who see a UFO have nowhere to report it so we have made the group so people can come forward. We thought if there was a number for people to call it would be better."

Mrs Johnson's quest to uncover the "conspiracy of the era" has drawn flak from her friends and neighbours, who think

she's mad.

"I like to quiz people to see what they think," said Mrs Johnson.

"You must be mad!" they say.

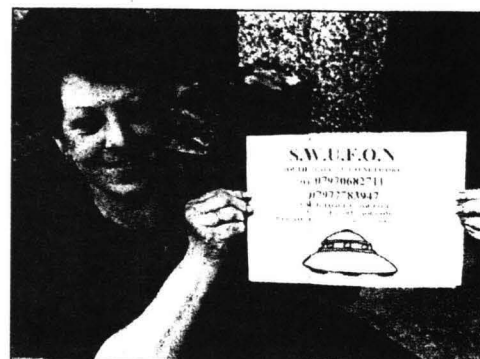
Not all take such a jovial attitude to her UFO-spotting talents - Jehovah Witnesses have taken a much harder line with her.

"According to them, it's all from the devil," said Mrs Johnson. "They found out where I lived and came around to tell me: 'It's the devil tempting you to believe in him,' but I don't let it worry me."

But does Mrs Johnson have any idea why she seems destined to see so many unexplained objects flying in the sky, when the rest of us never see anything?

"It's because I keep looking, I suppose," she said.

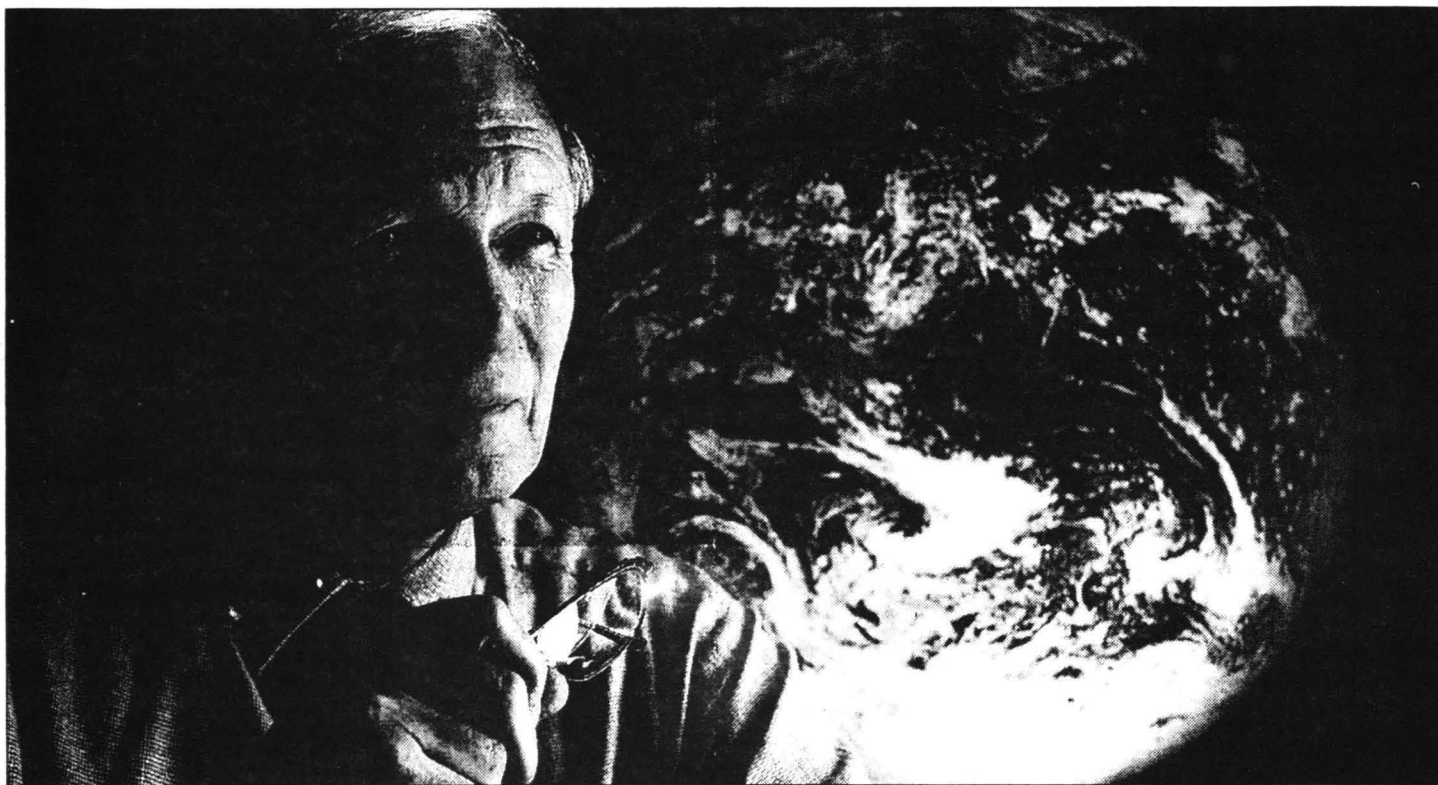
● You can e-mail Mrs Johnson's group on members.aol.com/lore474/ind ex.html/lore474@aol.com



UFO SPOTTER: SWUFON founder Kath Johnson

Torquay scientist holds data from which he predicts when UFOs will appear

RICHARD AUSTIN



● **CONVINCED:** Roy Dutton, who believes there is someone out there, has logged 1,300 UFO sightings

'Probes from outer space are watching'

LITTLE green men stepping, from huge saucer shaped aircraft, unexplained happenings hidden in the X-files, aliens infiltrating the human race; for years Hollywood has had a field day with the idea that there could be extra-terrestrial life.

Someone who talks about their fascination with the idea of earth being visited by another life force is usually labelled an "anorak" and a rather eccentric one at that.

Roy Dutton has grown used to the derision. "It is one of the greatest problems I have," he says. "People don't take you seriously."

But the unassuming retired aerospace engineer from Torquay is convinced that for years earth has been under surveillance from outer space.

He didn't set out with an agenda to prove. It was simply that 32 years ago, in the course of his work in the aerospace industry, he began investigating reports of unexplained lights in the sky.

Since then he has methodically researched and logged 1,300 UFO sightings.

Using mathematics, physics, astro-navigation, computers and his aerospace engineering experience, he claims to have discovered a set of ten approach paths circling the earth which he says our observers always stick to; a bit like the airpaths followed by civilian aircraft.

Using this data, he now claims to be able to forecast the exact times they are most likely to occur in the future.

Researchers using his advance information have said they saw activity in the skies above Wiltshire when he predicted they would. On another occasion, over 500 people turned up near Dublin and a number of UFOs came in at the time he forecast - two of them being captured on camera by an RTE crew.

"I have no doubt at all that we have been watched and monitored

DENISE O'LEARY

for years" he said. "To me it is a scientific fact."

Since taking early retirement to the Westcountry in 1993, he has monitored activity throughout the region and is convinced it is being surveyed, with Plymouth a hot spot.

Not all the UFOs are manned, he believes some are automated probes, but he does not discount reports of abduction.

"I think that they treat us rather like we treat wild animals," he said. "They observe us from afar and from time to time they drug us so they can examine us to do more detailed analysis."

"It doesn't worry or frighten me at

all. It just fascinates me that there are those out there who have perfected a better way of flying than we have."

His research has also convinced him that the notorious Roswell incident - reportings of a UFO found in New Mexico, USA, in 1947, happened. The timing corresponded with when he would expect alien activity.

He also believes crop circles are created by the same mathematical laws. His theory is they were accidentally formed by scanners but as the interest of earthlings increased the aliens began "playing with us" and attempting to communicate through them.

"I think they are dealing with us in a scientific way but staying aloof," he

said. "They will probably not try to make proper contact until we are on the same kind of level technologically, and that is a long way off."

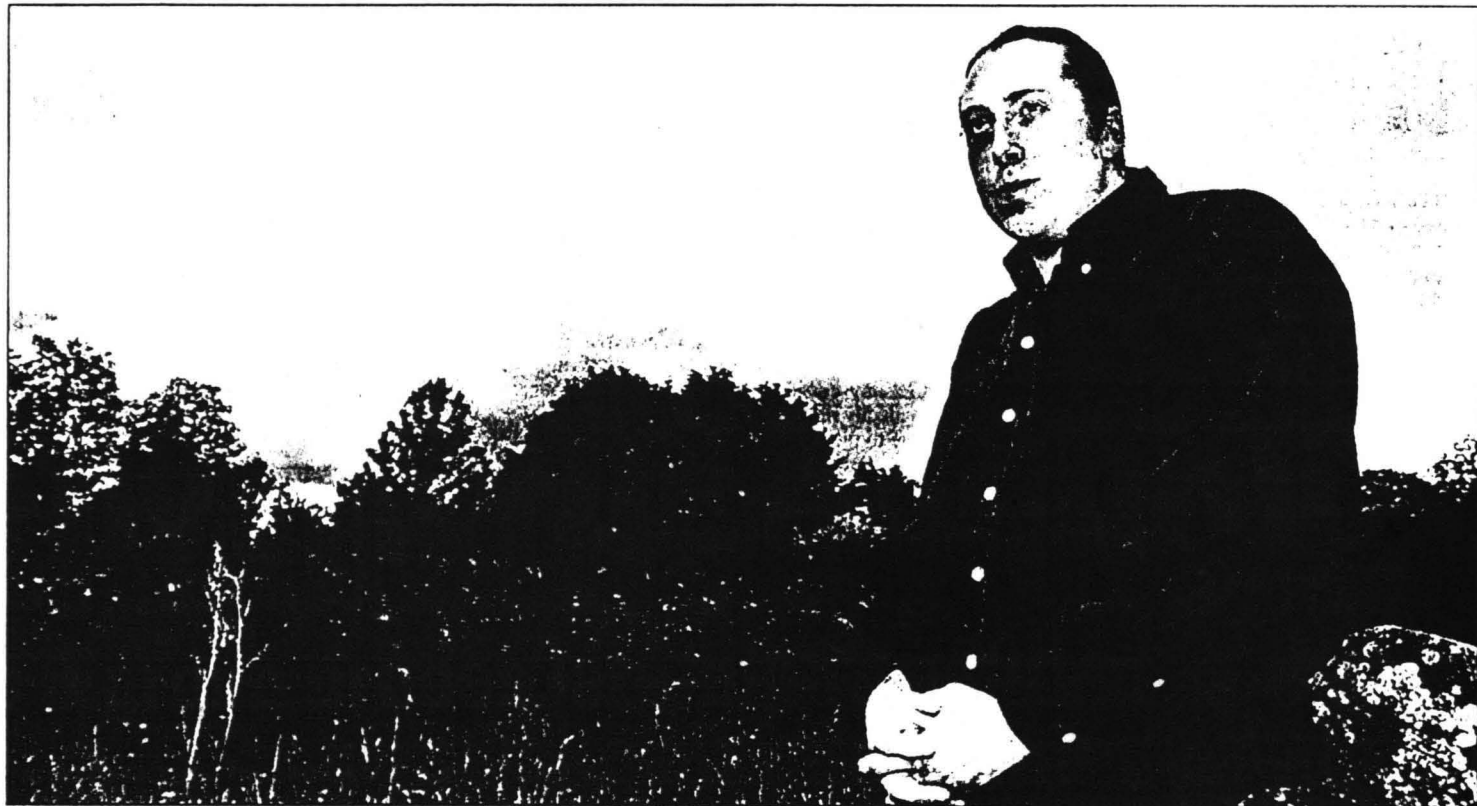
Mr Dutton, 63, has one of the most comprehensive collections of UFO sighting reports in the world and his theory shows they stick to a strict system.

"I have been a member of the British Unidentified Flying Objects Research Association for 25 years," he says, "I've offered them all my findings on a plate. But the offer was ignored, possibly because they are disinclined to accept a nuts-and-bolts answer to the mystery. "It is mind-blowing, I know, but the fact is that the ETs have their movements logged and I have them logged, too."

UFO HOTSPOTS ACROSS THE WESTCOUNTRY



SCIENCE OR FICTION: 'Metallic spheres 2,000 ft in the air' get the South Wales UFO Network excited



BELIEF IS EVERYTHING: Paul McCarte says he was inundated with calls from other 'witnesses'

Picture: PAUL SHARP

'Alien visitors' take an interest in the Valleys

IT'S official. We are not alone in the universe and the latest target for extra terrestrials appears to be the Valleys.

In a scene that could be straight from the Hollywood blockbuster, *Independence Day*, people have reported seeing "fleets" of metallic spheres floating 2,000ft in the air.

This may sound like the opening lines of H G Wells's *War of the Worlds*, but according to one Abertillery-based UFO enthusiast, the spheres are not science fiction, but fact.

"The first incident we had was last year," said Paul McCarte, a founder member of the South Wales UFO Network. "It [a sphere] was spotted travelling up the Valleys. We had a report from that and another witness saw it. He was in a car full of people and it was going in the same direction," he said.

JAN BUTTER

Paul put out a call for other witnesses and was inundated.

All the descriptions of the metallic spheres were strikingly similar. They were said to resemble ball bearings. They often hovered in the air, but at other times moved at various speeds.

Paul said they had discounted the suggestion it could be a balloon.

"This thing was stationary and it was there for at least 15 minutes with clouds going in front and behind it."

He said there had been many UFOs over the past year above the A465 between Abergavenny and Ebbw Vale.

● Anyone who thinks they have had an extra-terrestrial experience should contact SWUFON on 07970682711 or e-mail lore474@aol.com

WELSH 'SIGHTINGS'

● 1974 - people reported seeing a craft take off from an alleged alien ship crash site in the Berwyn Mountains near Bala. It was claimed the MoD took boxes of alien remains to Porton Down research centre;

● February 14, 1977 - pupils at Broad Haven primary school claimed they saw a cigar-shaped spaceship land near the playground. They told their headmaster, Ralph Llewellyn, who asked them to draw what they had seen. He was astonished to find the drawings were virtually identical;

● November 21, 1996 - a black triangular craft and balls of light were seen above Cardigan Bay. The unexplained phenomenon was seen by a number of people.

● 1997 - a Welsh farmer said his mutilated herd resembled other cases



of alien interference around the world. One cow's broken legs looked as though it had fallen from a height and it also had small holes through which its organs had been removed.

DID ALIEN SPACESHIP SPY ON THE COUNCIL?

UFO group probes late-night sighting

ALIENS could be targeting the COUNCIL OFFICES. The latest UFO sighting was a red-and-blue light hovering over the building in Cecil Street, Margate, accompanied by a droning noise.

It was seen by a Hawley Square resident last Tuesday night at about 11.30pm.

Checks with Manston revealed it was not an aircraft, and balloons have been

counted out because of the poor weather. Chris Rolfe, director of UFO Monitors East Kent - a special hotline set up because of the Isle's history of strange sightings - said it was too early to say whether the object was extra-terrestrial.

There could even be a down-to-earth explanation.

"It may have been a helicopter, but I don't know how long the man observed it for," he said.

The group is adding the details to its extensive database and trying to work out what the object was. "We use a com-

puter programme to check the position of the stars and planets on the night," Chris said.

"You'd be surprised that if you get two planets together, to a person who doesn't know they can look pretty weird."

Chris has not yet discounted extra-terrestrials but warned: "A UFO doesn't necessarily mean aliens from outer space, it means just what it is - an unidentified flying object."

"We're currently doing a lot of research into the flying triangle in Kent and are convinced it's something to do with the military."

"It was usually sighted when there was lots of military activity and as soon as the RAF pulled out of Manston the sightings absolutely dropped. There have only been two sightings since."



HOTLINE CHIEF: Chris Wolfe is investigating the odd sighting

Starship troopers

WEEKEND, London, England - June 3, 2000

IS THERE anybody out there? Yes there is, according to the 1.7 million people (130,000 of them British) who search for extraterrestrial life over the internet.

Because of an increasing number of sightings in Dorset, four people from Christchurch have set up a UFO information service called Sirius (Southern Investigation and Research Into UFO Sightings). Sharon Phillips, Kirsty Rollinson, Ian Farrow and Jason Eastwood are receiving more than 30

Natalie Bruckner meets those who certainly don't believe the sky's the limit

enquiries a week. They have been invited to the Nasa (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) base in Washington, appeared in teen mag *More!* and the reputable *UFO Magazine* and liaised with famous stargazer Patrick Moore. And they believe their phones are bugged.

Jason, director of investigations and research said, "An organisation like ours is no threat to the government. All we do is put information into a legible format for anyone who's interested. I suppose saying we're bugged makes us sound paranoid." Today Sirius is recognised worldwide. It has

more than 200 members (including several in the military) from America, Europe and Britain. Jason said: "It stemmed from a discussion. I've been the southern area investigator for Bufo (British Unidentified Flying Objects Research Association) for five years, and the others have always been interested."

"We were tired with all the highbrow material about UFOs and decided to create a newsletter accessible to all."

But research for the newsletter took up more time than expected.

"Three of us work full-time and Ian has just finished college. Every evening is spent looking up material on the internet, compiling and researching the information sent to us, as well as getting out there and watching the skies." By day Jason works as a facilities manager for a book company in Ringwood, Kirsty works in life insurance at Eagle Star and is taking her *Ufology* A-level at Totton in Southampton, Ian has just completed a computer course at Bournemouth and Sharon is an office administration assistant.

"People at work used to make fun of us... now they accept what we do. It's no longer seen as a sensational subject - the alien ate my hamster scenario is becoming a thing of the past."

They're hoping the free quarterly newsletter based on the group's findings will rid the subject of this stigma.

Kirsty said, "Ninety-five per cent of the sightings we receive can be explained. We look for the logical explanation first, check to see what satellites are in the area, military aircraft, laser shows, anything that might explain the sighting. And when we've ruled them out we consider the sighting and log it."

Last August there was a record number of sightings of between 18 and 20 unexplained lights over Poole. This continued for over four hours - there was no radar signal and no explanation was found. "We liaised with the police who received a number of phone calls, but couldn't come up with an explanation. Dorset and Hampshire are well-known for sightings of unidentified flying objects. Porton Down and Sopley Camp are the most famous, no-one knows what goes on there... it could be they're testing bases for UFOs."

It's not only local issues that interest the group. "We wanted to find out who would be in control if there was an alien invasion."

We wrote to the government, who said there was no appointed board, so we wrote to Nasa who wrote back saying there was no government agency currently responsible for investigating UFOs.

"It may be they're covering up, because if there was (a special agency) it would mean they were taking the issue seriously. But if they're not, it's very worrying."

The Nasa factsheet actually stated that, from 1947 to 1969, the USAF investigated UFOs, then in 1977 Nasa was asked to examine the possibility of resuming UFO investigations.

After studying all the facts available, it was determined nothing would be gained by further investigations.

The issue currently occupying Sirius is alien abductions. Jason said, "I'm in contact with someone who believes they were abducted. They can't talk to their family about it, and feel no one understands."

"We listen to what they say, we don't judge them, and we document the information. This kind of thing happens

all the time, it's just not reported."

"People have tried to find other explanations... but failed."

But with no proof for or against extraterrestrial life, groups like Sirius struggle to gain serious recognition.

Jason said, "People still don't like to admit there could be something out there, but it would be very narrow-minded of us to think we were the only ones in this galaxy."

"There are more stars in the galaxy than grains of sand on this planet and our solar

system is still very young. "If sulphur plants can live deep in the sea then why is it so hard to believe something can live in space?"

■ Contact Sirius at PO Box 3839, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 3YH or e-mail vger32@talk21.com



Starman: Billy Meier's image of the strange grey object hovering over the American countryside



We want to believe: Kirsty Rollinson, Ian Farrow, Jason Eastwood and Sharon Phillips

Utterly Fascinating Occurrences

■ It's not just humans who are abducted. On February 27 1998 a dead lamb was discovered in Dorset. The cause of death seemed to be a neat 1.5cm hole above one of the eye sockets. The skull was found to be empty.

Similarly, on January 20 1996 four men discovered the bodies of two cows in the New Forest that had had their sexual organs removed. There was a clean oval incision from the base of the tail to the top of the hind legs. The cows' right ears had also been removed with a very sharp instrument. No blood traces were found.

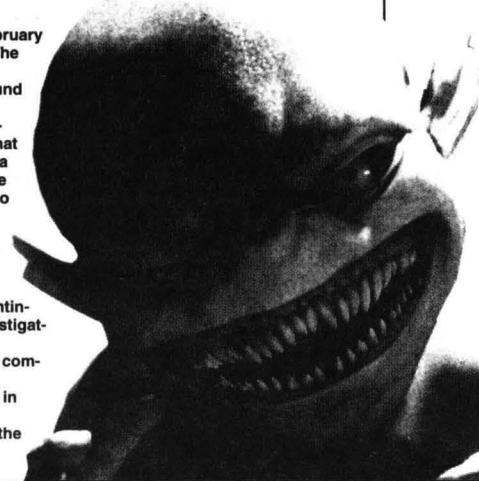
■ St Catherine's Hill, Hengistbury Head, the New Forest and Muford are the most popular hotspots for UFO sightings in Dorset.

■ Microsoft tycoon Bill Gates has spent, and continues to spend, enormous amounts of money investigating ET intelligence.

■ Black triangles and cigar shapes are the most common UFO sightings.

■ Sixty per cent of the American public believes in extra-terrestrials - more than believe in Jesus.

■ 1999 saw a spate of UFO sightings in Beijing, the capital of China.



MYSTERY LIGHTS OVER SEAFRONT

DOZENS of Skegness people have been mystified by the appearance earlier this month of bizarre lights over the sea.

Could we really be under scrutiny by creatures from another planet?

Greta Farr, watching from an upstairs window at her home on Albany Way, said: "I saw them at about 2.30am on August 31 and thought they might have been satellites.

"There was no sound, and they looked, from a distance, about eight inches in diameter.

"They were in a straight line and I could see there were about eight in number."

The previous evening, Adrian Langley and his wife, owners of the Avon Guest House on Grosvenor Road, were out for an evening stroll at about 8pm when the lights began to appear, one by one.

BANANA SHAPE

Mr Langley says: "At first, they formed a banana shape.

"There were about four when we saw them and then they increased in number.

"People were gathering along the road, all wondering what was causing the spectacle."

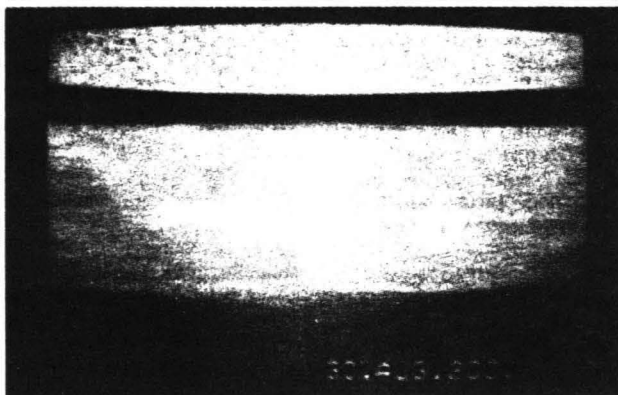
Mr Langley says he has served with the RAF for 28 years and such sights as these could have been parachutes which light up.

However, he continues: "There was no sound of a plane or helicopter - and they just suddenly disappeared!"

Mrs Jeanetta Harding and her family from Chapel St Leonards were quick off the mark when they saw the display from their window, earlier in the evening.

They captured the spectacle on a camcorder and have now transferred the amazing sight to video.

by Eileen Buxton



These lights were captured on camcorder by Jeanetta Harding.

Their view of the lights showed them to be eight in number, disappearing and re-appearing alternately, and glowing white or orange throughout.

Says Jeannetta, "We didn't hear the sound of a plane. The lights appeared quite suddenly and were there for some minutes."

PYRAMID

Seen on Jeannetta's video, they are an incredible sight - almost as if lights were being switched on and off in the sky!

Jason Desmond called into our office to talk about the phenomenon.

He put forward the idea that military aircraft activity might have been responsible but he, too, had noted the absence of any sound from an aircraft.

He said: "The lights began to dip in a sloping direction, before forming into a pattern like a pyramid. Then, in a straight line, they began to mysteriously disappear."

Only recently, Mr Desmond had seen a TV programme on UFOs and what he had witnessed out at sea was very similar.

UFO fan sees light in the sky at night

UFO enthusiast Roger White had his lifelong wish answered when he spotting a mysterious triangular object in the sky.

Mr White, 57, from Bradley Road, Southwick, saw a UFO travelling towards him last Friday night, as he was outside the Avon VMS plant, in Chippenham.

He said: "I was at work and taking some boxes outside when I happened to be looking up at the sky. I saw three white lights west of the yard and could see that one was coming towards me.

"There were bright lights around its perimeter and when it passed over, I saw it was a triangular shape, but it made no sound at all, and headed off towards Lyneham."

Mr White and his wife Carol, 48, who are both members of the International UFO Network, have been avid followers of all things extra-terrestrial ever since a close encounter just outside Warminster in 1978.

Mrs White, who was in the car with her mother and three children at the time, recalled the events leading up to her sighting.

"We were just coming into Longbridge Deverill and the lights on my car failed. As I stopped to see what had happened, there was suddenly a bright light right above the car.

"At the time, it wasn't that scary as my mum joked that we could now see where we were going at least, but when it disappeared my lights came back on."

Mr White's recent encounter sparks comparisons with the infamous triangle spaceship often featured in the television hit, The X Files.

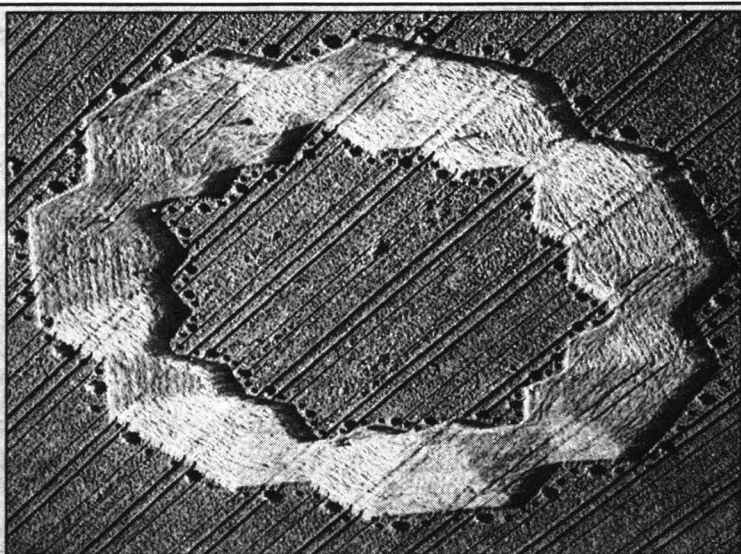
He added: "To actually see the famous UFO triangle was amazing. I was gobsmacked.

"People that know me believe me as they know I am telling the truth."

Complex crop circle certainly not a hoax

AFTER many years studying crop circles, I believe that they have something to do with the Earth or something within the Earth. However, an event witnessed by myself throws into doubt Colin Andrews's claim that complex circles are hoaxes (Echo, August 17).

In the early hours of July 24 last year, I was in the car park at Silbury Hill. Opposite me was a field of corn. At about 2.30am the Moon went down and the countryside darkened. At 3.30am I looked at the field, it appeared to be glowing, very similar to moonlight on it. I wondered if sprays used by the farmer were the cause but research later showed that this could not be the case. It



CROP CIRCLES: Some are not hoaxes.

seemed to glow until dawn came shortly before 6am. I was joined by two people and as we spoke about what I had witnessed, a microlight used by German circle researchers began circling the field.

At once we knew a formation was there, so we went into the field to the ridge and there before us was a complex formation which we named

the Silbury Step Pyramid, due to its shape.

It was very well executed and no one was in the field all night. It would have taken many hours for anyone to execute this design. The hoaxers are clever, but to do this without being seen was impossible.

So, Mr Andrews, how do you explain this one?

MIKE WRAY, Totton.

UFO still leaves its mark three decades later

ROBIN SUMMERFIELD
CALGARY HERALD

It's been a 30-year quest, but Randi Season is still searching for answers to explain what she saw in the skies on a stretch of highway near Medicine Hat in the summer of 1972.

"All of a sudden, coming out of nowhere, it came down really fast and levelled off going parallel to the horizon and stopped, instantly in mid-air, just stopped— we don't have anything that can do that, even 28 years later."

Season was a 24-year-old New York City law student driving just east of Medicine Hat on the Trans-Canada Highway with a friend on her way to California when she saw the reddish-orange metallic object, shaped like a "flattened football," shoot out of the sky on Aug. 10 that year.

Although scientists deemed the object a meteorite that skipped into the atmosphere and back out into space, Season, now 52 and living in Greenwich, Conn., is not convinced.

"What I saw was not manmade, this thing hovered in mid-air, moved left and then right . . . with orange kind of flames shooting from each side," Season said.

She celebrates the 28th anniversary of her sighting Thursday and promises to continue the search indefinitely for the truth behind her unidentified flying object.

Season, who became an international corporate lawyer, is looking for others who saw what she saw that night and is digging up newspaper articles from across Alberta, British Columbia and into the U.S., where the phenomena was also seen.

Season, a mother of two boys, is not alone in her fascination with UFOs. Albertans have long been captivated with the spacecraft. Home-grown enthusiasts, like many people around the world, eagerly jumped on the UFO-seeking frenzy.

In 1956, thousands of Calgarians huddled around their radios awaiting the voice of Mon-Ka, chief of the Martians, after seven alleged radio transmissions over Los Angeles promised a message would be sent to the world. The message never came.

The world has seen the UFO frenzy reach fever pitch in 1947, 1950, 1952, 1957, 1967 and 1973, particularly active UFO sighting years, said local expert and author W. Ritchie Benedict.

"It comes in waves, with peaks and

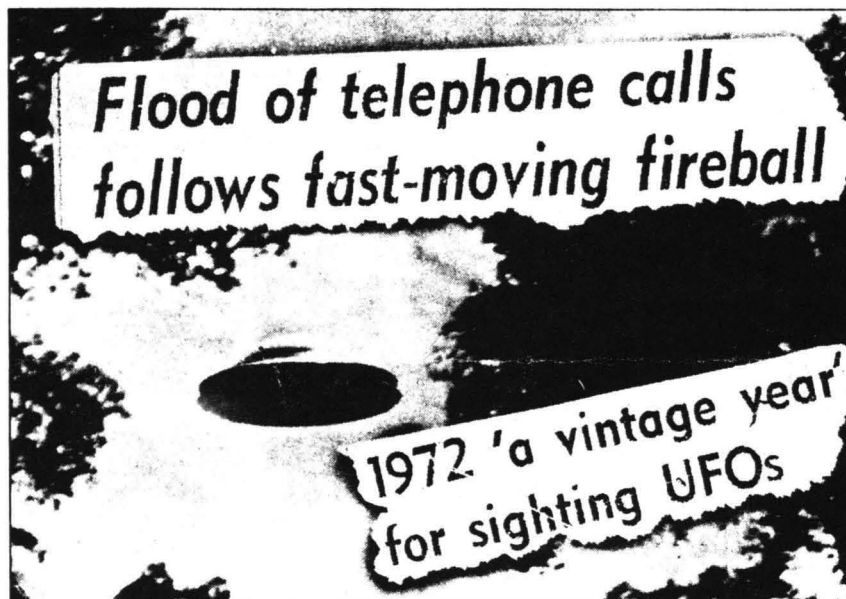


Photo illustration by Bruce Full

UFOs flooded the media in the 1970s, recalls local expert W. Ritchie Benedict.

valleys in between," said 55-year-old Benedict, who had his own UFO sighting 26 years ago in Calgary.

Like many UFO sightings, the event was fleeting.

What appeared to be a whitish weather balloon collapsed and disintegrated into nothing above Benedict's Calgary family home in 1974.

Today Benedict, like Season, spends his time searching for the truth behind UFOs. For the past seven years, he has spent countless hours searching newspapers dating back to the late 1800s, delving into university and scientific studies.

Benedict's search has expanded to include all things unexplainable, flying or not. Poltergeists, sea serpents, ghosts, Big Foot, psychic phenomena are all fair game in Benedict's research.

It is an early fascination with UFOs at age nine, after reading a Life magazine article, however, that still drives Benedict today.

"It adds excitement to the regular, every day world," Benedict said. "It would be pretty dull world if we couldn't speculate about these things."

Winnipeg-based author of the 1999 Canadian UFO Survey, Chris Rutkowski, who has yet to see a UFO in 25 years as a researcher, agrees.

"We're all interested in what's out there," Rutkowski said. "It's that quest for the meaning of life. We look at life and say, 'There's got to be something more here.'"

Last year, Canadians reported seeing

259 unidentified flying objects, up from 194 in 1998, and above the annual average of 234.

So far in 2000, sightings are on par with last year at this time. People will continue to look to the skies to catch a glimpse of something, anything otherworldly, said Rutkowski.

Calgary Science Centre's astronomy expert, Alan Dyer, doesn't deny the sightings of those 259 UFOs in the skies above Canada last year believe what they saw to be true, but he thinks their eyes are deceiving them.

"Most times the truth is out there, but people don't want to accept it," Dyer said. "They want to believe they have experienced something unique, something special, something that few others have seen."

The sightings can be explained as optical illusions, meteorites and other explainable occurrences or their eyes playing tricks on them, he said.

Even if the scientists and experts don't believe what she saw on that stretch of highway near Medicine Hat in August 1972, Season won't let her search for the truth die.

"I'm just trying to prove to my kids and my husband that I didn't come from a fruit tree."

"I know what I saw was real," said Season, who is committed to her quest for the long haul, even if it takes another 28 years.

"I want to really show them on black and white that it did happen, that it was seen all over and that it is real."

GUARDIAN, London, England - June 10, 2000

Small press corner



UFOs in the House of Lords, 1979
(The Stationery Office, £6.99)

We are in the middle of the Winter of Discontent. The

Labour government is on its last legs — and what are the peers of

the realm debating? Little green men. No, this is not science fiction, but verbatim reporting from that unimpeachable organ, Hansard. The debate — which took place on January 18, 1979 — has been rescued from the Public Records Office as part of the brilliant little series, Uncovered Editions. Only one small misjudgment — to publish this hilarious tome in summer rather than at stocking-filler time.

'Chased' by UFO

WE are currently researching the UFO phenomenon, with a view to hopefully publishing a book on the UFO/Crop Circle phenomenon, and are particularly interested in incidents involving people and motorists who have been 'chased' by 'Balls of Light' - commonly interpreted by many as 'Alien Craft' - something we personally do not believe.

We are hoping that some of the readers will be able to put us in touch with Lorraine Fox and her family, who were actually 'chased' by a UFO in August 1993, as they drove home to Carmarthen, which received some publicity in a national newspaper.

John Hanson
(ex-Police Officer, retired)

Director
UPN Investigations
London

PO Box 6371
Birmingham B48 7RW

JOURNAL, Carmarthen, Wales - Feb. 16, 2000



FORTEANA NEWS

THE HAIRY TRUTH



PHOTO RE-ENACTMENT

Mike Quast passes a slender hand over a map of Minnesota hung on his wall, his fingers brushing across a red pin just outside of Rochester, a white pin near Windom, and a green pin on Highway 52 very close to the Iowa border. Each of the pushpins marks a spot where someone has reported seeing Bigfoot, finding a footprint, or hearing unidentifiable sounds in the woods.

You thought Bigfoot sightings went out with Pop Rocks and moon boots. Try telling that to Mike Quast, who is convinced the creatures are alive and well and living in Minnesota.

The northern half of the state is a virtual forest of multicolored dots. A thick swath stretches northeast from the White Earth Indian Reservation, through the Chippewa National Forest, up to Pine Island State Forest, a largely unpopulated bog in Koochiching County near the Canadian border.

The pins are further apart in the Superior National Forest to the east. After more than a decade of cataloging people's claims of Bigfoot encounters, Quast is convinced that there are fewer sightings here because there are fewer

people tromping through those woods. "It may sound like a broad statement, but if the Sasquatch does not exist in the Superior National Forest, then

it does not exist at all," Quast wrote in his most recent work on the topic, *The Sasquatch in Minnesota* (revised edition).

The map hangs on the wall of a small office just off Quast's living

room. Inside is a library of Bigfoot lore. Shelves sag with more than 50 different volumes, many of them self-published like Quast's: *Bigfoot in Ohio*; *Bigfoot*

on the East Coast; *The Sasquatch in Alberta*. A "Big Foot Country" magnet hangs on the shelf. Copies of newspaper articles—"Clearwater County man says tracks made by Bigfoot"—

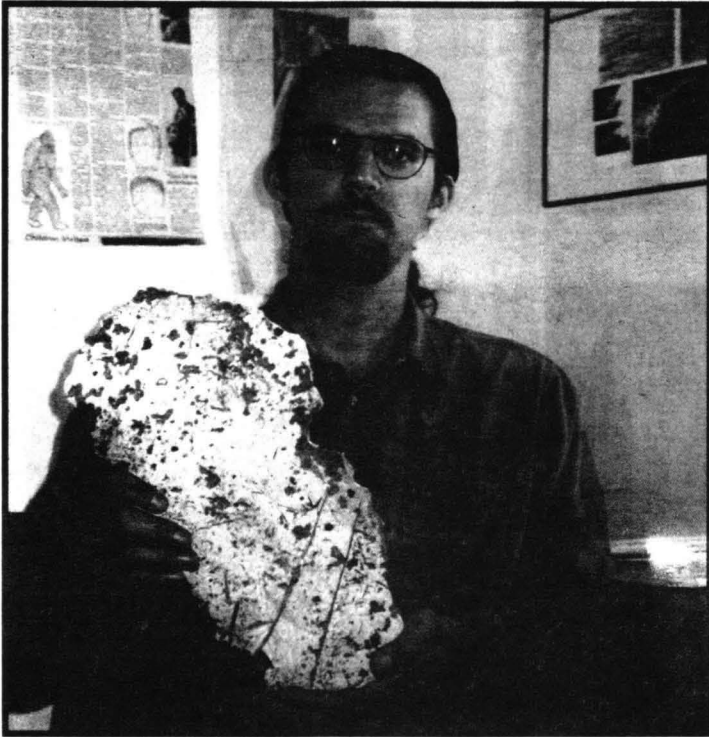
and photos cover the walls. Two Bigfoot footprint throw pillows, one light brown, the other a bluish-gray, rest on his couch.

At 32, Quast seems like one of those quiet, smart, slightly eccentric kids who never said much in high school. He lives on a tidy residential street in a two-story brick apartment building in Moorhead, more than 230 miles northwest of the Twin Cities. He pulls his long brown hair back into a ponytail, and wears a goatee and round glasses.

Quast's own work is represented on the shelves, but he →
(continued on page 18)

BY BURL GILYARD

PHOTOS BY FRED PETTERS



He walks these woods: Mike Quast holds aloft a plaster cast of a footprint he found

PHOTO COURTESY OF BURL GILVARD

concedes his is not a big name in the world of Bigfoot research. "I'm pretty well known as just a supporting player, I think," he allows. "I've never been really famous or anything." So far, he's sold around 50 copies of his last book; when an order comes in, he goes down to the local Kinko's and runs off a new copy. For years he published a monthly newsletter, *The Sasquatch Report*, with a circulation of roughly 50 at its peak, but he got burned out on that and quit. He passed the operation off to a friend, but the newsletter ceased publication in 1996.

Today Quast's work is hampered by his lack of a car and a working computer; he pays the bills by cleaning offices and isn't able to get out into the field much. But he has ideas for more books—and more ways to advance his thesis that Bigfoot can be found in Minnesota, not just the Pacific Northwest, as many followers of the hairy hulk believe.

Quast says that the bulk of the pins in his map represent incidents or sightings that he believes to be credible. But he logs the

probable hoaxes anyhow. In fact, a close look at the map reveals a green pin smack dab in the middle of the Twin Cities metro area. Quast doesn't believe there was any such sighting. "There was a story in a book here, like an urban legend-type thing about a creature that was found digging through garbage bins and was supposedly captured and kept at a lab somewhere," he says dismissively. "It didn't happen. But I just marked it to establish that it was told."

To make the best case for Bigfoot, Quast figures, you need to establish yourself as someone who doesn't just believe any wild story.

Claims of hairy, manlike creatures wandering the woods date back hundreds of years, but the moniker *Bigfoot* was coined in 1958 when a northern California road crew gave the nickname to an unknown night visitor to its work site. The notion of Bigfoot didn't become part of the popular lexicon, though, until October 1967, when a Bigfoot-seeker named Roger

Patterson filmed a hulking, dusky ape-man striding away from a shaking, handheld 16mm Kodak camera in northern California.

A month later Mike Quast was born in northwestern Minnesota. As he grew up, a debate over the authenticity of the Patterson footage raged, and Bigfoot seeped into the public's consciousness. *The Legend of Boggy Creek* and other movies introduced Bigfoot to millions of people. Leonard Nimoy's *In Search Of...* and other documentaries made the name a household word with adults; Sid and Marty Krofft's *Bigfoot and Wild Boy* held kids in thrall on Saturday mornings. Bigfoot even battled the Six Million Dollar Man. Not surprisingly, reported sightings were widespread, and they came from all over the country, no longer only the Pacific Northwest.

As a child, Quast was well aware of the Bigfoot controversy. He lived on a dairy farm about ten miles north of Detroit Lakes, near the North Dakota border. He'd even seen a couple of books on the subject in the school library. Then in 1976 Quast had his own Bigfoot sighting. "I can remember talking about it in school," he recalls. "I don't think a whole lot of people believed it." The disbelief only served to deepen Quast's commitment to prove that Bigfoot was real.

In 1986 Quast graduated from Audubon High School. He'd been a member of the Future Farmers of America, but says he never really planned to get into the family business. After high school he took a job in a plant in Detroit Lakes that made parts for sugar-beet processing machines. He earned a degree in commercial art from a technical college, but he never landed a job in that field.

Forging a career was a secondary concern for Quast. His Bigfoot sighting had cemented his avocation, and he began doing serious research not long after he got out of high school. His first quest was for the truth behind a local legend, "The Hairy Man of Vergas Trails." Back in the Fifties or Sixties, many people said, a crazy man had killed some teenagers at the site, a wooded teen hangout near the town of Vergas, and retreated into the woods, where he became a hermit and let his hair grow.

It was Quast's brother-in-law who first told him the story. "He told me the name of a guy who had told him about it, and he thought he remembered that that guy had actually seen it," recalls Quast, who questioned the purported witness. "He said, 'No, I didn't see it, but I heard the stories about it and I can tell you who says he did see it,' and gave me the name of this guy named Ziggy."

Quast met with Ziggy, a mechanic, on a cold January night in Ziggy's garage. "That was my first real witness interview," says Quast. "He told me this story about how this creature had jumped out in front of his car and dented the trunk and everything. I remember driving home afterwards in the

dark in the woods looking around after hearing that story. He was animated in the telling of it, too. He got really excited."

Quast could find no evidence that the homicides ever took place. "I checked with the sheriffs' departments around and they said they didn't know anything about that story, so that part I'm pretty sure is just some embellishment that somebody put on it at some point." But Quast believed the bulk of the tale, and began making regular surveys of the area. Later that year he found some 16-inch-long tracks in the area—proof, as far as he was concerned, that there was something to Ziggy's story. Quast redoubled his efforts to hunt down reports of Bigfoot sightings.

By now Quast was beginning to envision himself as a professional Bigfoot researcher, the kind of person whose archives are consulted by *Unsolved Mysteries*. He made a pilgrimage to visit Peter Byrne, one of the more celebrated and controversial Bigfoot hunters of the 1970s.

As a kid, Quast had written away to Byrne for a packet of information. "He got most of the publicity," Quast says of Byrne. "He was on TV and in the press a lot, and a lot of other people in the field resented him for that, and they called him the made-for-TV Bigfoot hunter. I tried not to get

Sid and Marty Krofft's Bigfoot and Wild Boy held kids in thrall on Saturday mornings. Bigfoot even battled the Six Million Dollar Man.

involved in what everybody else thought." More recently, Quast had been corresponding with the then-retired Bigfootologist.

In October of 1989, Quast rode a Greyhound bus to Hood River, Oregon, where he spent the night at Byrne's house. The younger man was starstruck. "Peter and I sat by his fireplace listening to opera, sipping hot rum, and talking about the Sasquatch," he wrote later. "The surroundings, plus his suave Irish accent, seemed to lend a distinct air of class to the whole business."

The following morning, Byrne showed Quast one of the few remaining complete

sets of *Bigfoot News*, which Byrne had published during the Seventies. Quast told the former investigator that he had been thinking of starting his own newsletter, and Byrne bestowed the full set upon him, along with permission to use any material he wished. The following spring, Quast had launched his own newsletter, *The Sasquatch Report*.

Some time afterward, Byrne came out of retirement and returned to Bigfoot work. He and another researcher got into a bitter argument about the origins of an alleged Bigfoot footprint. In his newsletter, which had received some funding from Byrne's new Bigfoot Research Project, Quast made a point of trying to cover both sides of the issue objectively, angering his old mentor. "Peter Byrne kind of got upset that I wouldn't exclusively take his side on it," says Quast.

But if there's one thing Quast had already learned about the political and emotional subculture of Bigfoot followers, it was that even researchers as far outside the mainstream as himself needed to know the value of scientific objectivity. If researchers don't flush out the hoaxes faster than anyone else, then no one will ever take them seriously.

One of the first cases Quast investigated—that of the Minnesota Iceman—was fairly well-known among Bigfoot hunters, if not widely agreed upon. During the late Sixties, a southern Minnesota showman named Frank Hansen was making the rounds of carnivals with an attraction he sometimes billed as the "Siberskoye Creature," a hairy, humanlike thing frozen in a block of ice. Hansen said he wasn't the oddity's owner, but was serving as an agent for an unnamed person in the entertainment industry. According to one version of events, the block of ice had been found floating in the sea by either Russian or Japanese sailors. Some

who examined Hansen's frozen find were convinced that it was a real primate of some sort.

Confusion deepened when Hansen began touring with a different creature, which he claimed was a reproduction of the original. The first corpse had allegedly been returned to its owner following some inquiries from the FBI. (Contacted by *City Pages*, Hansen said he no longer cares to discuss the matter.)

Quast talked to Hansen in 1989. "A couple of the cover stories that he came up with said that it was shot in Minnesota," Quast relates. "He told me that he actually had a sighting of something up by Duluth, but he didn't really go into detail about it. He said, 'Maybe it was Bigfoot, maybe it was from outer space. I don't know what it was.' He said that was in 1963, I think. And so he used that later on when he was going around with the Iceman, he kind of expanded on that and said that he'd shot what he'd saw."

Quast's fundamental faith was unshaken. The myriad different stories Hansen spun around the ice-creature, he concedes, are "just an embellishment. I think the original was real."

Even hoaxes aren't that detrimental to the cause of Bigfoot research, Quast figures, because they don't really change anybody's opinion on the issue. "People either believe in it or they don't, and I think it's going to take a major discovery to really convince people on a big scale," he says. "But there's a certain percentage of the population that does believe it, a more open-minded percentage."

Still, Quast is frustrated by local accounts that don't pan out as advertised. Accordingly, his book contains a chapter called "Hoaxes," which includes what he dubs "the granddaddy of all newspaper hoaxes in Minnesota." "Man-Beast Sighted, Tracked Above Hovland," the *Cook County News-Herald* reported on April Fools' Day in 1991. Quast initially believed the report, and wrote to a



PHOTO RE-ENACTMENT

"People either believe in it or they don't, and I think it's going to take a major discovery to really convince people on a big scale."

number of different people trying to get more detail. They all wrote back that he must have gotten a version of the story that had been stripped of its final paragraph, which indicated that it was an April Fools' Day story.

One of the correspondents, a wildlife manager with the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR), felt compelled to add his two cents on the matter. "I must admit that I feel there could well be such beasts in the western U.S.," he wrote, "but am skeptical of reports in the Midwest."

Quast is much more irritated by the most recent Minnesota Bigfoot headline. Five

(continued on page 19)

years ago the city of Crookston attempted to proclaim itself "the Bigfoot capital of the world." Don Holbrook, then executive director of the Crookston Economic Development Authority, told the *Star Tribune* that the small town wanted to drum up "alternative" tourism by opening a Bigfoot museum. To that end, Holbrook had told the *Strib* that the town would be doing more research into Minnesota sightings. Quast wrote to Holbrook, offering his services. When he never got a reply, it began to dawn on him that it might all be just a stunt.

"I contacted them and I said, 'I have all these files, with all these reports, and you want to open an information center. I'd like to cooperate with you,'" says Quast, disgusted. "And I never heard back from them, so I could only assume they weren't really interested into going into much depth about it." (The exhibit never came to pass, but a local beanery, RBJ's Family Restaurant, commissioned an ex-taxidermist to build and display a 9-foot, 300-pound Bigfoot statue.)

Quast's book addresses both the Minnesota Iceman and the Crookston affair, but it recounts many less-celebrated cases. For example, a Minnesota DNR official named Harvey Cole had heard enough reports in the Koochiching County bog area near the Canadian border that he started keeping a file on Bigfoot at the Northome DNR station. Cole put Quast in touch with a hunter and trapper named Ed Trimble, who then lived near Itasca State Park. Trimble had begun finding large, unexplained tracks on his property and had become something of an evangelical on the topic; he and Quast became fast allies.

"A lot of reports I was getting in the Nineties came from [Trimble]," says



PHOTO RE-ENACTMENT

Quast. "He was a really good source of information. After he found those tracks, he started talking about it to everyone he met, and that's how he started getting reports from other people."

Among the stories that Trimble brought to Quast was an odd tale from August 1974, when a pig farmer near Bagley came home to find that 78 of his hogs had inexplicably huddled into a storage room and suffocated. What does this have to do with Bigfoot? "Would livestock react in such an extreme way to the approach of a Sasquatch when other animals do not have

"Even with all the technology that we have today there are still things that people don't know anything about, but that are real and that other people make fun of."

nearly as much effect on them?" Quast wrote. "It is possible."

But of course, Quast doesn't know—and for him, it's the unknown that holds such boundless allure. Many of the stories in *The Sasquatch in Minnesota* are presented as unresolved mysteries. Quast briefly recounts reports of a "large, white-haired Sasquatch" near the town of Windom. Quast tried to run down the source of this sighting, too. He wrote to the Windom Chamber of Commerce. "We have no information on Bigfoot sightings in the Windom area," someone there politely wrote back.

The point, from Quast's perspective, is cataloging the possibility of Bigfoot in Minnesota. "Through what feels to me to have been minimal effort on my part, I

have somehow become the chief investigator for the state of Minnesota," he wrote. When he published *The Sasquatch in Minnesota* (revised edition) in 1996, Quast's files documented more than 130 Minnesota encounters. Today he puts the number at 159. And those are "just the ones that have a chance of being credible, which most of them do, really."

But despite Quast's continued efforts to make a case for Bigfoot, Minnesota resident, official state records are fairly mum on the whole topic. Quast says he once wrote to the Minnesota Historical Society to find out what, if anything, the state's archivists might have on file. He found the answer disappointing.

"The State Historical Society has some copies of this little newsletter that was put out by a couple of kids from, I think it was Edina, back in the Seventies," he complains. "It actually had almost nothing from Minnesota in it; it was a really juvenile thing. Somehow it made it into the Historical Society archives."

Naturally, the easiest place to find Bigfoot is on the Internet, which has offered a new way for disparate and previously isolated enthusiasts to network, trade ideas, and swap sighting reports. This is not great news to Quast, who doesn't own a computer, much less a domain name. His work is getting around, though: Quast's titles crop up in several online bibliographies of Bigfoot-related work.

One of the places Quast's work is touted is on a "Minnesota Bigfoot" Web page (www.angelfire.com/mn2/mnbf/) belonging to another Moorhead resident, Joe Heinan. Bizarrely enough, the two have

never met: The 24-year-old Duluth native, who works as a counselor at the Clay County Juvenile Detention Center, learned of Quast's efforts from yet another Web site and has since become a fan. "That's a hell of a book," Heinan says of Quast's *The Sasquatch in Minnesota*. "It's kind of coincidental that we live in the same town. I've actually never even met the guy. I've talked to him on the phone and through e-mail."

Nor is Quast among the investigators who collaborate with Matt MoneyMaker, an Orange County, California, attorney and Internet consultant who, in terms of notoriety, is turning out to be the Peter Byrne of this generation of Bigfoot chasers. In 1995 MoneyMaker, a 17-year veteran of the search for Sasquatch, launched what has become one of the subculture's most popular Internet resources, the Bigfoot Field Researcher's Organization (www.bfro.net). The site lists sightings in almost every state in the union; currently just six of the reports are from Minnesota, most of them perfunctorily brief.

MoneyMaker says that only about ten percent of the cases that are reported to him ever make it to the Web site. "We only post firsthand information that the investigators strongly feel is credible," he says. "We've gotten a lot more raw information from Minnesota than is posted." He also says that he has detected a conservationist bent from Minnesotans on the issue. "In Minnesota it seems that a lot of people are concerned that other people are going to go out and hurt these things," he notes.

A number of different factors can affect sightings that get reported to the BFRO, MoneyMaker says. If a Bigfoot witness doesn't have access to a computer, MoneyMaker and the investigators may

never hear about the sighting. And even those people who do offer reports are often cautious, he says. They frequently ask for anonymity so that they won't be subjected to ridicule, or to prevent their hometowns from being overrun with Bigfoot hunters.

Although he expresses surprise at MoneyMaker's claim to have five investigators here, Quast says the California man is doing good work. "I looked at what he had in Minnesota, and he has a couple of things I hadn't heard of before, but nothing really recent."

Since Quast stopped doing the newsletter, he hasn't been in close contact with other Bigfoot enthusiasts. For a while, back when he was still publishing, Quast had a partner, Bloomington native Tim Olson. Olson took over the newsletter in 1995 after Quast burned out on the endeavor. Almost a decade ago, however, Olson moved to Arcata, California, to live in an area known for Bigfoot sightings. (Arcata is located about two hours from the site where Roger Patterson shot his 1967 film.)

Today Quast is at work on a project that will necessarily take him beyond the borders of Minnesota. He hopes to publish a book analyzing purported films and photographs of the creature, *Big Footage: A History of Claims for the Sasquatch on Film*, by the end of the year. But the process has been slow. "Things keep coming up," says Quast. "I had everything on a disc that got damaged and then I kind of had to start over."

When the new book is eventually published, Quast doesn't expect much media attention. Today, he figures, the mainstream press has other preoccupations. "I guess they just moved on to other things,"



PHOTO RE-ENACTMENT

he says. "It does still get reported once in a while. It bothers me that when it does get reported now it's usually from a humorous angle, like a tongue-in-cheek sort of thing."

"I've always been drawn to things that are out there in the world, that are unexplained," he says. "Even with all the technology that we have today there are still things that people don't know anything about, but that are real and that other people make fun of."

Quast pauses for a moment. "And I saw one myself," he adds, angrily. "And then I hear the subject being made fun of, and I guess I want to do something about that."

In many ways Mike Quast is still eight years old. He believes what people say. He has faith that he saw something that scientists say simply does not exist. And

"I saw Bigfoot myself. And then I hear the subject being made fun of, and I guess I want to do something about that."

he doesn't really understand why so few people believe him, or listen to him. The 24 years that have passed since Quast's own sighting have only served to deepen his belief.

Quast's family was out for a Sunday drive. "We were just driving in the Strawberry Lake area," he recalls. "I was in the back seat just looking out the window at the scenery. All of a sudden, up the road, between 50 and 100 yards or so, there was this black object next to the road. I don't know why nobody else in the car saw it, I guess nobody was looking at that exact spot at that second."

"It was between six and seven feet high and it was just solid black, and the first thing I thought was that it looked like a burned tree trunk or something," he continues. "But then as I was looking at it, it stepped away from the road, and walked

"It walked into the woods and disappeared. I only had it in sight for maybe five seconds, but it was totally upright, walking on two legs."

into the woods and disappeared. I only had it in sight for maybe five seconds, but

it was totally upright, totally vertical, walking on two legs."

Quast says his mother, who was in the car at the time but didn't see anything, is willing to believe what her son saw. "She doesn't think I'm lying about it," he says. "She doesn't think too much about it, but she's always said that she thinks those things probably exist."

In its scant details, the story is similar to many other reported Bigfoot sightings: the initial thought that it must be something else, the flash of recognition, and then, just like that, the creature is gone into the woods. Quast is matter-of-fact when he tells the story, almost clinical. For him, it's simply what happened.

But he does want listeners to be convinced that he has ruled out other explanations. "It was not a bear, and I don't know why somebody in a gorilla suit would be

standing there, you know, hoping for somebody to come along," he says. "It's not an area known for Bigfoot, so you wouldn't expect somebody to pull a hoax like that."

Whether or not the cultural pendulum ever swings back to a broader interest in Bigfoot doesn't seem to concern Quast. In a way, he would just as soon that it didn't, so that he could be spared the cartoon and tabloid images of the creature that were so common in the 1970s. For Quast, for whom the memory of the scene at Strawberry Lake is powerful and enduring, this is important work. The image of what he saw when he was eight has never left him, and has given him a cause.

And even if nobody listens, Quast has left a record of what he saw—in the pages of his book, and symbolized by a red pin stuck into his map, just past the western shores of Strawberry Lake.

(continued on page 20)

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

Meet three of Bigfoot's other Minnesota followers

Mark A. Hall

Bloomington resident Mark Hall has self-published a host of "cryptozoology" books on a range of topics, including Thunderbirds (birds with a reputed wingspan of more than 20 feet), giant owls (Bighoot), and lake monsters. "I actually have to tell you," he confides, "that I think there are surviving Neanderthals." Hall studied physical anthropology at the University of Minnesota, but left without taking a degree. During his studies, Hall came to believe that there was a scientific basis for the existence of Bigfoot. But he doesn't believe there's a single kind of creature wandering the woods of North America. Rather, he suspects there are roughly a half-dozen different species.

While Hall's true passion may remain unknown to many of his everyday co-workers, he does have some profile nationally. The recently published *Field Guide to Bigfoot, Yeti, and Other Mystery Primates Worldwide* by Loren Coleman and Patrick Huyghe referred to Hall's work. And in 1994 he traveled to California for an appearance on *Unsolved Mysteries* to discuss his impressions of the Minnesota Iceman case.

In his own book, *The Yeti, Bigfoot & True Giants*, originally published in 1994, Hall laments humanity's lack of interest in Sasquatch. "Human beings are entirely too self-absorbed at this time to give serious attention to the existence and well-being of their close primate relatives," he writes. Eventually, he says, he'll be proved right. "I have confidence that time is on my side." Assessing Quast's work, Hall wrote in his book that he believed Quast had made a good case for the presence of what Hall calls the American Yeti. "He has gathered accounts and track observations that suggest the presence of a small group of them—possibly a family unit."

Kris Johnson

"This is a real departure for me," says Kris Johnson. Now in her mid-50s, Johnson is the mother of two college-aged daughters and does part-time clerical work. As one of Matt MoneyMaker's Twin Cities-area contacts, she's also a part-time Bigfoot investigator. "I'm probably one of their least likely volunteers," she says with a laugh.

Until last year, she professes, she would never have imagined herself looking for Bigfoot. "I was hiking in northern Minnesota up along the North Shore, and I found a footprint and what I believe to be a scat," she says. "I wasn't out looking for Bigfoot by any means."

"It stays with you for a long time," she says, recalling her own discovery of the footprint. "There still is not a day that goes by that I don't see my hand in that footprint." She says she has been open with her family about her new passion. Her daughters, she says, are "quite entertained—in a positive way."

She started reading and found a reference to MoneyMaker's site. Next thing Johnson knew, she had become a volunteer investigator, following up on reports of sightings in Minnesota. "I don't know if I'd call it work," she says. "I'd call it an interest or a passion. I'm a middle-aged woman with no real scientific background for this."

Business hasn't been brisk during the year since Johnson became an investigator. "I've probably made about a half-dozen phone calls and been on site twice." She traveled to northwestern Minnesota in March, and the north-central part of the state in August, she says without offering more specifics. "Quite often the report will say that they don't want it to be made public," Johnson explains. "They just seem so relieved that someone is going to listen. People tend to not talk about it because society in general tells you that you're crazy."

Jimmy Wilson

Last year Minneapolis-based independent filmmaker Jimmy Wilson made a documentary under the title of "Jimmy Wilson's Snowman," billed, like all of his other films (available via www.jimmyfilms.com), as "entertainment for the whole family." Wilson's 23-minute film features interviews voiced over an array of nature scenes against a backdrop of vaguely dreamy new-age music. The film includes Wilson's dramatizations of the occasional shadowy creature moving among the woods. By the end of the film, narrator Wilson has reached no definitive conclusion, but says, "Let's keep on learning. And let's keep on looking." Ron Schara's *Minnesota Bound* television program did a short feature on Wilson's film last year.

Why Bigfoot in 1999? Why not, replies Wilson, who quickly concedes he's no Bigfoot hunter. "I try to do very interesting subject matter. I did one of the wolf prior to this," he explains. "It seems the subject is quite magnetic and polarizing all at the same time."



PHOTO COURTESY OF OJ VOLKMAN

CP

Ogopogo spotted near Kelowna

■ Six adults saw lake monster
near Bernard Avenue

By Daily Courier Staff

Ogopogo had been keeping a pretty low profile this summer — until midnight Monday.

Four security guards and two other people say they spotted a strange-looking creature in the waters of Okanagan Lake off Bernard Avenue downtown.

"They say they saw something about 12 feet long, thrusting forward the same way a caterpillar moves," says Arlene Gaal, the Rutland Ogopogo expert who was contacted by one of the security guards on Tuesday morning.

The creature appeared to have four flippers, two at each end, Gaal says.

Local tourism groups are offering a \$2 million reward for anyone who provides "verifiable proof" of the existence of Ogopogo, the reclusive reptile said to inhabit Okanagan Lake.

Unfortunately, Gaal says, none of the six people involved in Monday night's sighting had a camera with them.

This is the first sighting Gaal has heard about since March 9, when a man reported seeing Ogopogo in Okanagan Centre, north of Kelowna.

"The weather's been pretty poor this summer, and Ogopogo is a creature that obviously enjoys the heat," says Gaal, speculating on the reasons for the relatively few sightings so far this year.

Gaal, who has written two books about Ogopogo, said it's possible that a film crew from Japanese television will return to Kelowna in early September to make another program about the creature.

A Kelowna-based expedition is trying to find the elusive creature. Financed by Can Pro Diving and led by Bill Steciuk, the search team has explored the area around Rattlesnake Island with sonar equipment and a remote operating vehicle that can search under water caves and send back video images.

Town puzzled: Bigfoot or bear?

ZWOLLE, La. (AP) —

Zwolle's police chief plans to put to rest rumors about Bigfoot stalking his town.

Chief Marvin Frazier thinks a black bear is prowling around Zwolle and responsible two recent Bigfoot sightings.

This summer several reported sightings of hairy manlike creatures have been investigated by authorities. A series of sightings in the Pineville area were dismissed as a prank earlier this month.

"Some may sit back and laugh, but it's serious to me," Frazier said.

In Zwolle, the hairy creature has been held responsible for devouring farm hogs. It has also stirred fear among some Zwolle residents. Some older residents have given up the evening feeding of farm animals and some parents are keeping their children indoors.

Frazier wants to find out if a black bear is posing a danger to the community.

BAXTER BULLETIN, Mountain Home, AR - Sept. 28, 2000 CR: L. Willett