

UFO

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UFO experts to meet in Lima

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A glimpse at brilliant light. Orange. It mimics a normal aircraft but it hovers too low. It blinks and pulsates without making a sound. Then, in an instant, it's gone.



Timmerman

Another case remains unsolved. For years, John Timmerman, a Logan County resident, has investigated thousands of similar unexplained phenomenon. Some believe the files that sit in his office are evidence that UFOs are real. Others don't think that's possible.

But next month, a group of world-renowned experts will gather in Lima for a convention that will tap into the possibility that UFOs exist. The convention, called UFO 2000, is expected to gain national media attention, organizers say.

"People say it's impossible," said Timmerman, a longtime board member of the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies in Chicago. "They tend to feel it's about misidentification and hoaxes. The percentage of people who take that attitude is falling."

Timmerman, 76, became fascinated with the study of UFOs in 1947 while a student at Cornell University. At that time, he read a news report that announced an unexplained image witnessed by a pilot near the Cascade Mountains.

"I concluded that it was worthy of my time," Timmerman said.

A major hurdle for UFO researchers is finding enough money to study sightings. Many researchers who are interested in the topic don't pursue it because it's not profitable.

And some collegiate researchers are afraid to show interest because they don't want to lose grants for other projects.

But Timmerman's office, a small, quiet room in his home on the shore of Indian Lake, includes hundreds of books that delve into the topic.

The office is lined with bookshelves that also include files from an estimated 1,000 cases he has investigated. Two desks sit on the far edge of the office with two small lamps that provide most of the light.

A few pictures of UFOs are placed on the wall, just above a fax machine that helps Timmerman keep in contact with national media looking to explore stories on UFOs.

Mysterious lights reported over ocean in Newport

By Kelly Moyer-Wade
Of the News-Times

For Peggy Standifer, the evening of Sept. 6 began just like any other normal night.

The 32-year-old Newport woman had dined with her mother and stepfather and was ready to return to her own home when the evening took a decidedly bizarre twist.

"It was about 8:15 p.m. and the sun was just setting," recalled Peggy during a recent interview at her mother's north Newport home. "We had finished our desserts and had the blinds up."

Perched on a hill, high above Newport's Agate Beach community, Judy Standifer-Eager and Bob Eager's house offers a spectacular view of the Pacific Ocean, especially from the dining room window.

"We were looking out at the view of the ocean when, all of the sudden, we saw a light," said Peggy, making a circle about the size of an apple with her hands. "It was about this big, and it almost looked like the front of an airplane, but then we saw that it had three lights on it. They were green, red and white lights and were very bright."

For the next 30 minutes, the three family members gathered at the dining room window, binoculars in their hands, amazed by what they were seeing.

"Eventually, the object moved toward the horizon, but we could still see the lights," recalled Peggy. "Then, when it got to the horizon, it just lit up the sky. It made a horizontal flash of light across the horizon."

The family agreed that it was unlike anything they had ever seen before. "And believe me, we've watched a lot of beautiful sunsets from this house," said Judy, who has lived in the house with her husband for four years.

Intrigued by what they had witnessed, the family called the U.S. Coast Guard Station in Newport. "They told us that they hadn't been doing any maneuvers that evening and told us to call 911," said Peggy. "We didn't call 911 at first because we didn't want to seem like people from a National Enquirer headline!"

Still, the family was amazed by the intensity of the lights and the jerky, forward-backward movements of the object, which seemed to be in the shape of an oval.

"We talked about it for hours,"

said Peggy. "And, then, around 10:45 p.m., my mom was closing the window blinds. She said 'Peggy, come here!'"

Returning to the window, Peggy and her mother stared at each other in amazement. "We couldn't believe it," said Peggy. "It was back, but had moved a little bit to the north."

In the dark night sky, the object was not the size of a star and still had the same intense red, green and white lights on it, said Peggy. "We could tell that the lights were flashing, but it didn't look like an aircraft," she added.

Bob Eager, Peggy's stepfather, nodded his head in agreement. "It wasn't an airplane or a helicopter," said Bob, who had seen his fair share of aircraft while fighting for the U.S. Army in World War II. "It wasn't like anything we've ever seen before."

Calling the Coast Guard once more, the family was assured that no maneuvers were going on in that area. "Again, they told us that we really should call 911," said Peggy. "So, this time, we did call."

In a few minutes, an officer from the Newport Police Department arrived at Judy and Bob's home to check out the mysterious lights that were hovering above the ocean, straight out about 20 or 30 miles from the Beverly Beach area.

Two more Newport officers responded, and the three men watched the lights in the sky, then left, saying they were "going to get a better view," said Peggy.

When she checked with the police two days later, Peggy was told that a report had been filed, which concluded that the object "was not an aircraft, and that the officers 'did not know what it was.'"

Curious, Peggy called the News-Times, to find out whether others in the area had seen the strange lights.

"We were so amazed by what we saw that we wanted to know if others saw the same thing that night," she explained.

In search of answers, the family phoned the Federal Aviation Administration in McMinnville and was told that no airplanes or helicopters - military or otherwise - were reported in the area, on the evening of Sept. 6.

On Friday, two days after the sighting, Peggy called the National Reporting Center for unidentified flying objects, which is located in



Peggy Standifer and her stepfather, Bob Eager, sit in Eager's north Newport home near the dining room window, where, last Wednesday, the family spotted mysterious lights hovering over the ocean. (Photo by Kelly Moyer-Wade)

Seattle.

Contacted on Monday morning, Peter Davenport, director of the National UFO Reporting Center, said he remembered the family's call.

According to Davenport, the reporting center received four other reports that same evening, one of which came from Laguna Hills, Calif., and resembled the Standifer-Eager's description.

"The other three were probably not UFO's," added Davenport, who said he could not confirm that the family saw a UFO, but that he was "impressed by their sincerity."

Bob Eager moved to this country at the age of 10 with his Dublin, Ireland-born family. He spent his later childhood in Washington with his five siblings and, in his late teens, joined the United States Army, ready for World War II.

He fought in the Battle of the Bulge, battled Japanese soldiers on islands off Alaska, and witnessed the Allied Forces' joyous celebrations when the announcement came that the war was finally over.

After returning to Washington, Eager worked for the Hanford Nuclear Reservation for more than 20 years and, like many people of his generation, retired to the Oregon coast four years ago.

He and Judy share a passion for the ocean that has carried over to Peggy.

A former nanny to disabled children and respite care worker for the state of Washington, 32-year-old Peggy moved to Newport four months ago to be near her two greatest loves - the ocean and her mother.

She is currently preparing for her first year at Oregon Coast Community College and hopes to become a psychologist.

Judy worked as an apartment manager in Washington and still receives mail from the residents who formed close friendships with her.

Their experience has broadened their minds, said Peggy, and made her into a firm UFO believer. "It was unlike anything I've ever experienced on this earth," she said. "And I truly believe that it was a UFO."

Bob agreed. "I would swear on the Bible that it was a UFO," he said.

The family is far from being alone in their new beliefs.

According to the National UFO Reporting Center, there have been more than 20 official reports of mysterious objects in the Oregon sky during the past few months, two of which were seen by people in the Lincoln City area.

"We just want to know if anyone else saw those same lights in the sky that night," said Peggy. "And we want to find out what we saw."

Jim Hawley, Lincoln County emergency services head, said he had no explanation for the sighting,

cial fantasy explanations.

Now books are out based on newly released government files, which indicated this issue was taken very seriously. Military brass often was not sharing all their information because of national security.

Let us be ever watchful for the moment. If actual saucer crash debris or the bodies of alien pilots were squirreled away at secret locations, would this necessarily cause a public panic of undreamed scale? No. I believe if extraterrestrial UFOs truly exist, then people would be angry at being lied to.

One must research this unusual phenomenon with an objective, watchful eye for deception. Maybe some future presidential administration will eventually tell the American people what is known.

Let us be ever watchful for the unexpected as we sit with a good UFO book and cup of coffee at night reading and wondering, "What if? ..."

UFO controversy rages on

KARL D. SALISBURY
Columbus Grove

Probably one of the most long-lived controversial subjects in history is the UFO phenomenon.

Is it not strange that so many weak excuses and answers were given to the American public in reply to our flying saucer fears?

The new generation of UFO allegations is no longer pulp magazine or tabloid fodder.

It is doubtful all the 1950s photos taken with box cameras by ordinary people, could be sophisticated fakes. Yes, there were lots of hoaxes and mistaken identities but what of other observations?

Military and commercial pilots, even people trained in law enforcement often reported their sightings, which gnawed at offi-

Timmerman said his investigations include talking to witnesses — some he believes are credible and others who aren't. Sightings include disk-like objects hovering in the sky to brilliant lights that appear to move like stealthy aircraft.

"You have to be really cautious and give them the opportunity to say what they want to say," Timmerman said of interviewing witnesses. "Some people swear they saw objects hovering."

Jan Pheneger, coordinator of UFO 2000, started studying the topic as a child when she began reading books on the unexplained. She hopes the government will open its records on sightings.

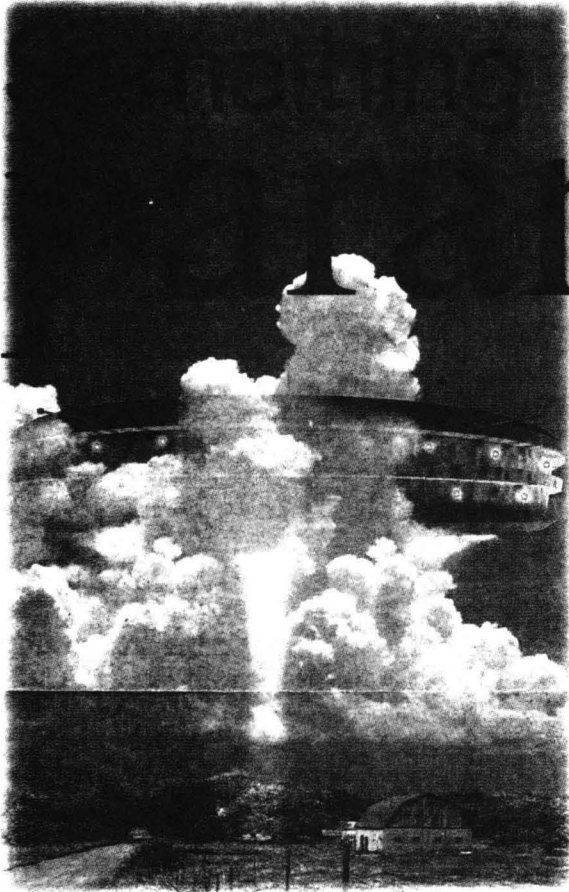
"I would like the government to come forward if they know about aerial phenomenon," she said. "It needs public disclosure. It would be a good thing for the next presidential election. I think people have the right to know."

In 1995, Pheneger saw what she believes was a UFO just off state Route 198 in Amanda Township. She is writing a book documenting testimonials of sightings in all 88 counties in Ohio, though she isn't sure when it will be published.

During the UFO convention, Timmerman will discuss the report of a crop circle that was reported in 1999 just east of Lima. It will be the first time he will discuss the case publicly.

Speakers include Timmerman, Nancy Talbot, president of BLT Research Team, Inc.; Stanton T. Friedman, a nuclear physicist; Bruce Maccabee, an active UFO researcher and optic physicist with the Naval Warfare Center in Virginia; and Budd Hopkins, an abduction researcher from New York.

"It's a chance for people here to get some of the best information available without reading and studying large publications," Timmerman said.



normal this way comes



Jill and Russ Horseman pose with some of the books written by authors who have spoken at seminars the Navarre couple organized in the past. The pair is helping with the Fort Walton Beach Paranormal Conference at the Radisson Hotel.

Conference focuses on topics from UFOs and Bigfoot to out-of-body experiences

By WENDY VICTORA
Daily News Staff Writer

NAVARRE — Something out of this world happened to Russ Horseman at the first paranormal conference he attended in 1995.

He met his wife Jill, a beautiful brunette with wide eyes and a delicately shaped nose. Her parents had helped to organize the conference.

Russ had been dragged there by a friend.

"We had a ball," he said. "These aren't freak shows. They're not a bunch of kooks getting together."

"There's always going to be fringe folks," he added. "We kind of hate to be tied in with that."

He and his now-wife, Jill, who live in Navarre, have since become conference organizers.

Along with her parents, they will bring the Journeys Beyond Paranormal Conference to the Radisson Beach Resort on Okaloosa Island. It starts Oct. 19 and ends Oct. 22.

Speakers at the conference include Stanton Friedman, a nuclear physicist who maintains that some UFOs are alien spacecraft. He was the original civilian investigator of the Roswell incident in New Mexico.

Other speakers will address out-of-body experiences, inner space, Bigfoot, life on Mars and psychic sensitivities.

The Horsemans know that such topics inspire skepticism, sarcasm and outright mockery from the general public.

"I get teased all the time," Russ said. "But I can take it."

"There are a lot of folks out there who are looking for some kind of answers to strange experiences they have gone through," he added. "We always pack the house. Each year, we say we need more chairs."

Past conferences have been held in Gulf Breeze, the sight of some supposed UFO sightings in the 1980s. This will be



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the first in Fort Walton Beach.

The Horsemen organize the conferences with Jill's parents, who were interested in the paranormal even when she was a child.

"Me and my sisters used to make fun of my mother about this," she said.

But after going to some of the conferences and listening to

the speakers, she says she started thinking about some dreams and experiences she'd had as a child.

Now, she finds the conferences fascinating and she always keeps an open mind.

"We just make sure when we pick the speakers that they're interesting and can speak well to groups," she said. "But do we believe everything they say? No, not at all."

Her husband feels the same way.

"We throw it all out there,"

he said. "It's kind of like, 'The following message has not been endorsed by this station.' If it touches you in some way, that's good."

"To me, a lot of the myths and legends that we used to talk about — this is just another branch of that. It's folks getting together and talking about the mysteries that are out there."

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N.W. FLORIDA DAILY NEWS, Fort Walton Beach, FL - Oct. 21, 2000 CR: R. Reid

True believers, curious search the skies

■ A conference on Okaloosa Island this weekend draws those interested in the paranormal.

By WENDY VICTORA

Daily News Staff Writer

Two people saw a bright orange flash in the sky off Okaloosa Island Thursday evening.

One thought, "UFO."

The other, a more pragmatic type,

thought, "Military something."

That no one will ever know for sure what the flash of light really was — or if it even existed — is the stuff that keeps people interested in the paranormal.

And more people than you might imagine are interested in things that

go bump or beep in the night.

Nearly 300 of them are gathered at the Radisson Beach Resort on Okaloosa Island this weekend for Journeys Beyond, a national conference on the paranormal.

"Sometimes we have a tendency to think it's just a bunch of strange people running around with little silver hats on," says Barbara Lawson

JOURNEYS BEYOND

Today's featured events at the Radisson Beach Resort include:

- 9 a.m. — Roswell and MJ12 in the New Millennium
- 12:30 p.m. — Increasing Psychic Sensitivities
- 7 p.m. — The Cosmic Code

of Birmingham, Ala., who looks like somebody you'd meet in line at the grocery store. "You look around and you could be at just about any business conference."

She was right.

Participants at the conference, which runs through Sunday, range in age from young and blue-jeaned to dapper, white-haired couples dressed as if for Sunday service.

Men outnumber women, but only slightly.

Only a few wear their sunglasses inside.

And most are there out of a simple curiosity, an abiding fascination for things unknown.

At 75, Emma Barnsley has been attending conferences for the past seven years. She arrives at this one wearing a T-shirt that says, "UFOs are real. The Air Force doesn't exist."

Her sneakers are swimming pool blue and her haircut is decidedly spunky, with thick bangs an inch above her eyebrows.

The New York woman laughs when it's pointed out to her that she's wearing this T-shirt in an area boasting a major Air Force base.

"I didn't know it," she says. "I'll have to start wearing a different T."

"Oh, the UFO conferences, I go to them all over the country," she continues in her breathy, girl-

ish voice. "I went to my first kind of by accident and I got hooked. From then on, I was addicted. It's so fascinating and exciting and mysterious."

Like most of the other participants, she has never had an "experience."

"Never, never, never had an experience," she says. "Never saw one."

Neither has Will Giordano, a shy, lanky man pushing 50, who comes to the conferences alone because none of his friends or family share his interests.

"I'm always ready for anything unusual to happen," he says, watching the night sky. "But it never does. Though I did see a little streak of lightning out there."

The Greensboro, N.C., man says he spends a lot of time looking up and has come to appreciate such readily-explainable phenomena as cloud shapes and meteor showers.

"A lot of times, when I do things like that, I think to myself, 'I wonder if anybody else is noticing the things I am,' and usually, the answer is 'no,'" he grins.

But not all the conference attendees are as mild as Giordano.

"Did you know that my friend was cruising down the beach in a flying saucer?" Fort Walton Beach's Don Ware mentions, strolling down the boardwalk behind the hotel.

When he reaches Giordano, he tosses out a conversational opener that nearly knocks the other man off his railing perch.

"I have had the fortune of having nine encounters with flying saucers," Ware says.

"Really?" Giordano responds, eyes wide.

During the three-day conference, he will likely hear other things equally surprising.

One speaker will espouse the view that Ronald Reagan may have believed in extraterrestrials and that Franklin Delano Roosevelt spent quite a few years searching for Jesus in Mongolia.

Others will cover everything from Big Foot to out-of-body experiences and the cosmic code.

And if that's not enough, there are always the vendors set up in the hotel lobby. Participants can get zapped, a technique that "destroys bacteria and other invaders in seven minutes."

They can get their aura photographed.

They can browse a collection of books on the paranormal culled from a Niceville couple's private collection of garage sale finds, old library books and other out-of-print selections.

And, if they're feeling light-hearted, they can pick up little green men key chains, a headset of plastic flashing antenna or a mouse pad advising, "Prepare for Contact."

Rick Davison of Atlanta is intrigued.

He came down for a weekend of fishing, but may venture into deeper waters inside the hotel.

"I'm going to check into it," he says, chuckling. "Just for giggles and grins."

Beyond Top Secret

Odyssey to Area 51 along the Extraterrestrial Highway

First of Two Parts

By DENNIS ANDERSON
Valley Press Editor

RACHEL, Nev. — If you are searching for extraterrestrials or top secret black aircraft in the vicinity of Area 51, you are much more likely to have a close encounter with a cow, and that's no bull.

Or, it might be a bull, after all.

This bull stared at us. Blinked. Stared. Blinked. Stared.

Was it a sophisticated sensor system? Was it a horned alien?

No. It was what it appeared to be. Seven hundred or 800 pounds of beef on the hoof. Not abducted. Not mutilated. Just one of rancher Steve Medlin's errant herd.

We stood at the gateway to America's most famous top secret military base. The famed "Black Mailbox" at Mailbox Road stood sentry, a lonely watcher on the road, the final turning point off the main highway before heading toward the point of no return several miles down the way.

We were ready to see "black world" airplanes. We were ready for UFO encounters.

We were, well, gulp, almost ready for an encounter with the dread "cammo dudes," the faceless private contract security force that patrols the perimeter of the denied territory of Area 51.

We were ready for cattle. Well, again, almost. One of our companions, author William F. Wu, was wearing a baseball cap that was as bright a red as any matador's cape.

Additional information on Area 51's origins is chronicled in author Curtis Peebles' "Dark Eagles — A History of Top Secret U.S. Aircraft."

According to LeVier, both Johnson and LeVier scouted the location in 1955 when they were seeking out a site for test flights of the then-top secret U-2 spy plane.

A location was needed that was "remote, but not too remote," according to Kelly Johnson's needs.

The site needed to be far out of the sight of prying Soviet eyes, and in those days of the mid-1950s, overhead satellite surveillance was not yet a factor. That was why a plane like the U-2 was needed in the first place.

Nearly a half-century later, dozens of international satellite reconnaissance flights sweep over Area 51 annually under the international "Open Skies" treaty. Most of the satellite passes are done by Russia, but even little Portugal is permitted a couple of peeps, along with third-rate powers like Romania.

U.S. citizens are denied similar access, but that's another part of the story. Recently, Russian photos of Area 51 went up for sale on the Internet. Interest and customer demand was so high that it crashed the Web site.

Back in the 1950s, the land that encompasses Area 51 looked like a moonscape with Joshua trees. That view hasn't changed much in the intervening decades. No encroaching suburbs out on this range. The Mars Mini-Rover would be at home out here.

Satellite photos reveal a base that looks like many others in the southwestern United States military complex.

Our Dark Skies series

Antelope Valley residents watch the skies. Mostly we are looking for anything fascinating that flies. We know that our Valley is crucible to the world's premier military aircraft — the U-2, the F-117 stealth fighter, the B-2 stealth bomber.

Drawing from open source materials and primary source interviews, the Valley Press offers a week's worth of stories that explore the landscape of the fabled "black world" and beyond, another extra for Valley Press readers.



The bull that stared at us was big enough to enter any torador's arena.

"I heard they're colorblind and that red cape stuff is just stuff," Wu said.

"I've heard it both ways," our companion, Daniel Carnahan, said.

We gave rancher Medlin's bull



ALIEN INN — Earthlings are welcome at the Little A-Le-Inn, the roadhouse cafe and motel run by Pat and Joe Travis of Rachel, Nev.

From high above, and from the photographs taken by amateur enthusiasts of Area 51, the base looks less like a top secret James Bond-style destination than a kind of cousin or clone of Edwards Air Force Base.

There are good reasons for that. From a distance there are more similarities than differences between Edwards and "the Ranch" at Groom Lake. Long runways, reputedly the world's longest — allegedly for takeoffs of a black world aircraft popularly known as Aurora.

something so fast and so loud it makes the Earth rumble and leaves space shuttle-style sonic cracks in its wake.

Big hangars at this base, and big microwave dishes. The radars at Area 51 are reputed to be among the Pentagon's most powerful for the testing of the many kinds of radar-evasive aircraft that are tested from the super-long runways at Area 51.

For many years of its existence, before it became a pop culture icon, Area 51 was called "The Ranch," al-

so "Watertown." And for military pilots who are told to stay away from the restricted air space, it's "The Box," according to the Viewer's Guide written by Glenn Campbell — a UFO researcher, not the singer.

The Ranch ultimately grew like Topsy, but began because of the expanding needs of the ultra-secret U-2 project in the early 1950s.

The Cold War years prior to satellite surveillance produced a life-and-death need for the United States to be able to spy on the mili-

itary installations of the Soviet Union. Fear of a so-called "missile gap" between the United States and USSR remained a heated topic all the way through the election of John F. Kennedy.

But Kennedy's predecessor in the White House, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, already knew that

the benefit of the doubt, saddled up the old sport-utility vehicle and kept rolling toward the no man's land of the forbidden territories: Area 51, off in the distance, just beyond White Sides Mountain.

Area 51 is a myth, a combination of lore and legend, and it's also a real place: a real military base where the nation's most advanced and secret aircraft are tested.

The myth and the legend is that Area 51 is where the extraterrestrial spacecraft are kept. Let's stick with the real-world stuff for a while.

Many of the "black world" aircraft tested at Area 51 had their origins in the Antelope Valley or are deeply connected to secret work that has been done by workers in the Valley since the coldest years of the Cold War.

The past, present and future of Area 51 is tied to legacies of the Cold War. Area 51, on an intimate basis, is profoundly linked to the prime defense contractors of the Antelope Valley, most notably Lockheed Martin and the fabled Skunk Works division that gave birth to one "black world" airplane after another.

A short definition of a "black world" aircraft: A cutting-edge plane with secret technologies developed and tested under conditions of extreme secrecy, such as the U-2, the stealth fighter or the stealth bomber.

For that matter, Area 51 apparently has another link to the Valley. Publications ranging from Aviation Week to the small press publication "Area 51 Viewer's Guide" cite the secret base as the home of Air Force Flight Test Center Detachment 3, thus affiliating the organization with Edwards Air Force Base.

There would have been no Area 51 if not for the security needs of legendary aircraft designer Clarence L. "Kelly" Johnson, the patron saint of black aircraft programs.

Some of the history of Kelly Johnson's most secretive work is chronicled in author David Darlington's "Area 51: The Dreamland Chronicles — The Legend of America's Most Secret Military Base."

During his research, Darlington interviewed Tony LeVier, the former chief test pilot for Lockheed before LeVier died in 1998.

Web sites that attract Black World enthusiasts

No guarantees are made about accuracy of information contained in these Web sites. That is, in fact, part of the attractiveness, and the downside of the Internet. Some of the information is, however, accurate by virtue of its availability from other open source records. Some of the bibliography and record searches achieved by free-lance researchers at these sites are quite good.

www.abovetopsecret.com
www.bluefire.com
www.dreamlandresort.com
www.ufomind.com



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there was no missile gap. He knew, but couldn't tell, because Eisenhower used the ultra-secret asset of Kelly Johnson's creation, the U-2.

The U-2's high-flying eye in the sky provided the ability to probe the mysteries of Soviet military production until it was shot down, crashing the 1960 summit between Eisenhower and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev.

In his book, "Dark Eagles," author Peebles recounts how Kelly Johnson's crew from Skunk Works searched out and discovered Area 51.

The need for secrecy flowed from the U-2 being midwifed as a CIA, rather than an Air Force, project.

The "client" at CIA believed U-2 should not undergo its crucial tests because Lockheed's Palmdale facility, and even the relatively remote base in the Mojave Desert at Edwards, might not be able to keep the project hidden from prying eyes.

At the behest of the CIA, Lockheed chief test pilot LeVier and Skunk Works foreman Dorsey Kammerer scouted up to 50 sites across the Southwest, Peebles wrote. To maintain secrecy, the pair donned hunting apparel and told their friends at work they were headed for a hunting vacation in Mexico.

The vacation took them over dozens of sites in a Lockheed Beech V-Tail Bonanza.

"When Richard M. Bissell Jr., the CIA official selected to direct the program, and his Air Force liaison, Col. Osmond J. 'Ozzie' Ritland, reviewed the list, they felt none of them met the security requirements," author Peebles wrote. He continued: "Then Ritland recalled a 'little X-shaped field' in Nevada he had flown over many times while involved with U.S. nuclear testing. He offered to show it to Bissell and Johnson."

Ritland said later, "We flew over it and within thirty seconds, you knew that was the place ... it was right by a (dry) lake. Man alive, we looked at that lake, and we all looked at each other. It was another Edwards, so we wheeled around and landed on that lake, taxied up to one end of it, and Kelly Johnson said, 'We'll put it right here, that's the hangar.'"

Groom Lake became another Edwards — only this air base, even to this day, does not officially exist.

Military maps of the area do not even note the presence of the super-long runways.

The numerical map designation appears to refer to an old site map reference from the Nellis Bombing and Gunnery Range, which encompasses the area where the nation's most secret military air base is maintained.

Nowadays, Area 51 is a tee-shirt slogan, a bumper sticker, the occasion of pop culture reference in movies such as "Independence Day." The summer

1996 blockbuster movie propagated the science-fiction myth that the forces gathered at Area 51 are studying dead aliens and are "reverse engineering" extraterrestrial spacecraft — taking 'em apart to see how they work.

Michael Adams, a local college trustee and city economic planning official, formerly was an investigator with the Air Force Office of Security Investigation. Information about Area 51 has always been buried, he noted.

Back in the 1970s, Adams said he weighed whether to consider application for assignment, but was advised by an Air Force mentor that such duty would involve a kind of career disappearing act. "You might know somebody from school, but they'd never be seen or heard from again," he said.

Even though people who go

there "vanish," they just as often reappear, coming home on the commuter flights that go out to the area.

Until 1995, the base was visible to viewers who scrambled atop a rocky hill known as "Freedom Ridge." The hill offered a good sightline perch that opened the base to the kind of peeking and photography common to a Cold War border.

The Air Force, irritated at the continued observation, expanded its territory in a hotly contested annexation of several thousand acres that was challenged in court and finally approved on national security grounds. So, the Freedom Ridge viewing perch vanished behind the nearly invisible departure line that divides the denied area from free grazing range.

What really happens at Area 51? Some of the mysteries are known. Some of the mysteries solved are now part of this nation's politico-military history. And some mysteries still lie out there, only to be guessed at.

Doubtless, many residents of the Antelope Valley have direct knowledge, but they do not tell tales. To follow the dictums of the Chinese philosopher Lao Tsu, "Those who talk don't know. Those who know don't talk."

But among the projects that passed through a top secret crucible were many of the aircraft that became signature history of the Antelope Valley.

First, there was the U-2; later, the A-12 and its variants, including the SR-71 that became known as the "Blackbird" triple-mach spy plane. First flown in the early 1960s, the Blackbird still holds records for fastest known flight by an "air-breathing" aircraft.

Also on the Area 51 honor roll

are Northrop's B-2 stealth bomber and the F-117 Nighthawk stealth fighter. Some of the code names are known now. Oxcart. Have Blue. Aurora? Well, some of the code names are also still code names.

For some in the Antelope Valley and the Las Vegas environs, Area 51 is a work destination. Workers shuttle out to "The Ranch" in Nevada aboard mysterious jet transports the way Valley commuters board a bus or Metrolink to head to work "down below" in Los Angeles.

Such residents of the inner circle of defense security can be seen flying from the Valley aboard what black world watchers call "Janet flights."

The unmarked 737-200s are rust-red-striped commuter haulers. Sometimes, early in the morning, they can be seen departing from Air Force Plant 42.

Such flights also depart daily from a special terminal in Las Vegas. The special flights carry the workers to the extra-long runways and the big hangars in the hills behind Steve Medlin's ranch.

To follow the road to Area 51 is to engage on a journey between light and darkness, between the white world and the black, to skirt the borderland where visitors can roam freely in the wilderness of federal range land into a place where freedoms do not exist and strictest military security prevails.

Signs posted along the perimeter area advise: "WARNING: It is unlawful to enter this area without permission of the installation commander. Photography of this area is prohibited. Use of Deadly Force Authorized."

We saw the sign. We believed it. To Be Continued

NEW MEXICAN, Santa Fe, NM
July 23, 2000 CR: D. Perkins

'Alien baby' woman attempts suicide

GRANTS — A 31-year-old California woman who claimed she was impregnated by an alien wandered to the top of a mesa where she tried to slit her throat with a rock in an apparent suicide attempt, police said.

"She just told me she had been impregnated by an alien ... that she didn't want to have an alien baby," state police officer Billy Cunningham said. "She cut her throat with a rock."

Cunningham said when he arrived on the scene early Friday morning, he spotted blood in the Jeep Cherokee. The unidentified woman apparently slit her wrist inside the vehicle before leaving, he said.

Cunningham said he and a Cibola County sheriff's deputy followed the blood trail for more than two miles for some five hours before finding the woman dazed and bleeding heavily.

After leaving her vehicle, Cunningham said, the woman climbed the mesa, where she fired a flare pistol into the ground. She found a rock and cut her throat, barely missing her jugular vein, he said.

The woman was taken to Cibola General Hospital, where she underwent emergency surgery.

What really happens at Area 51? Some of the mysteries are known. ... And some mysteries still lie out there, only to be guessed at.

ADVOCATE, Phillipsburg, KS

Oct. 19, 2000 CR: J. Brown-Jacobs

Life goes on...

Did you see it?

I am still not sure what it was, but it sure has people talking. I am talking about the ...thing... that blazed across the sky on Friday, Oct. 13. Oooh, Friday the 13th...I just realized that connection.

Anyway, for those of you who weren't outside on that beautiful fall evening, there was ...something... that blazed across the sky trailing smoke and fire.

I was sitting in the Fort Hays stadium watching the Phillipsburg Panthers play football against TMP when people in the crowd began pointing to the sky in the south. Whatever this thing was, it traveled from what I called the west side to the east side. It was so unusual, I could not stop watching it until it was out of sight.

Some people I have talked to say it was a meteor. Some people say it was a space shuttle. Some people say it was trailing three lines of vapors behind it so it couldn't be a meteor. Some say they saw it lift during its trek across the sky, which also defies the falling meteor theory.

Some people were driving to the southern area of the state and didn't see it because it was raining.

Raining. If we don't get some of that commodity around here soon, we will act the same way we were when we saw the ...thing... traveling across our Kansas skies. Moisture from the sky? What is that?

Anyway, it brought to mind a discussion I had several years ago with my oldest child. We were driving home one dark evening when we saw a strange blue light in the sky. It provoked a conversation between the two of us that I still ponder.

The discussion, of course, led to talk of flying saucers and the oldest said if a flying saucer landed near him, he would want to be abducted. I, of course, being more intelligent and mature, screamed NO WAY. Why in the heck would you want to be taken by something that you knew nothing about to the lord only knows where and had unimaginable things done to you?

I realize that my rantings were based entirely on watching too many sci-fi movies from the 1950's, but what can I say. I was impressionable.

So, if anyone finds out for sure what this...thing... was that flew across the sky on Friday the 13th, please let me know. I don't want to be around when they come back to round us up.

Depending on the day and my mood, I might be tempted to send the spouse to check it out, though.

Lee

NEWS & REVIEW, Chico, CA - Sept. 7, 2000

As the spheroid turns

2000 Bay Area UFO Conference

Doubletree Hotel

San Jose, Calif.

Aug. 26-27

In only its second year, the 2000 vintage of the Bay Area UFO Conference showcased another all-star lineup of UFO-type researchers, experiencers and buffs. The subject, contrary to popular perception, is far from stale. From the "cold-hard-facts" camps to the more esoteric, inner-self crowd, the search for the truth behind the UFO enigma has never been more fervent.

To her credit, event organizer/executive producer Victoria Jack put together a list of the heavy hitters from the field. Ex-NASA man and independent researcher Richard C. Hoagland exhibited more NASA images of Mars showing supposedly artificial, even glass structures hidden under sand, as well as shots of geothermal water activity. His Web site is thorough at www.enterprisemission.com. Another noted hard-facts man present was lecturer and nuclear physicist Stanton T. Friedman, whose books, *Crash at Corona* and *Top Secret/Majic*, written after painstaking research among 17 national archives, make a powerful case that there was at least one live alien at the "other" flying saucer crash near Roswell, N.M. in July 1947. He also contends that an elite group of 12 military, scientific and civilian minds called the "Majestic Twelve" came together to deal with the situation (www.v-j-enterprises.com/sfpage/html).

Art Bell successor Mike Siegel, who hosts the radio program *Coast To Coast AM* (Weeknights 12 a.m. to 4 a.m. 1290 KPAY) hosted the celebrity dinner (www.coasttocoastam.com); Washington resident and near death experimenter James Gilliland invited me up to his Trout Lake, Wash., ranch to view and photograph UFOs (I'll let you know how it goes, www.cazekie.com); Implant surgeon Dr. Roger Leir (www.alienscalpel.com) had more implants to discuss that he personally removed from several alleged abductees; and Ian Christopher's crop circle presentation from this year's series in England was breathtaking (www.cropcircleconnector.com). Elsewhere at the convention, ex-NATO and military man Robert Dean offered a sequence of photographs showing a UFO morph into a cloud. And women made a stronger presence this year as both contactee Anna Hayes Gruber and Dr. Angela Browne-Miller presented lectures that proved both enlightening and fun. Check out all of these provocative guests and other UFO-related topics at www.bayareaufoexpo.com.

-B.L.



Photo illustration by Roland Cobb, for FLORIDA TODAY

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE officer Philip J. Corso, left, claimed he slipped alien hardware to private corporations during the '60s in his book, "The Day After Roswell." Now his son, Philip Corso Jr. of Port St. Lucie, right, is posting his father's full manuscripts on the Internet. Ginger Thompson, pictured with Maury Povich, shared tales of abduction with the elderly Corso before he died.

UFO memoirs go online

Son plans to upload father's story on Web

By Billy Cox
FLORIDA TODAY

After the litigation and the vitriol, after the firestorm of controversy, Lt. Col. Philip J. Corso's curious legacy still can be whittled down to a single question: Why would he lie?

Why, in the final years of his life, would an old man with an apparently distinguished career in military intelligence charge that extraterrestrial technology led to the development of today's fiber optics, Kevlar, microchips, night-vision scopes and lasers?

And why would Corso — called to Capitol Hill as an expert witness to testify on Cold War intrigues — fabricate in a book the claim he was the agent who slipped alien hardware to private corporations in the early 1960s?

"Money definitely wasn't a factor. He never made a dime off it," says his son, Philip Corso Jr. of Port St. Lucie. "Pop had no reason to lie. He was telling the truth."

Two years have passed since the elder Corso died of a heart attack at 83, and three years since his hotly debated memoirs, *The Day After Roswell*, became a national bestseller. But today, Junior is planning to



CBS

UFO MADNESS engulfed Roswell, N.M., in 1997, marking the 50th anniversary of the alleged UFO crash. Corso's book was timed for release during the festivities.

"complete my father's mission" — by dumping his dad's full manuscripts onto the Internet.

"Only 10 percent of the story came out in the book," says Junior, who builds experimental airplanes and lives in a gated community here with his wife and three kids. "Anybody who read the book realizes it had more questions than answers. Dad was very unhappy with how it turned out."

A lot of people were — from the staff of Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Strom Thurmond, who say the senator was misled about the nature of the book for which he wrote a glowing foreword, to the UFO researchers who ripped holes in Corso's accuracy.

The Day After Roswell wound up in protracted litigation over who owned the story rights. Nevertheless, Corso went to his grave maintaining the alleged crash and recovery of a flying saucer near Roswell, N.M., in July 1947 provided the "Rosetta Stone" for back-engineering projects at Bell Labs, IBM, Monsanto, Dow, General Electric, DuPont and Hughes.

The payoffs, he said, are measured in exotic new metallic alloys, particle beam weaponry and superterracity fibers.

The Day After Roswell reads like an "X-Files" subplot.

Corso claimed that, as head of the Foreign Technology desk under the command of

On the Web

To read *The Day After Roswell*, go to www.corsofiles.com

Army Research and Development director Lt. Gen. Arthur Trudeau in 1960, he was ordered to leak Roswell debris to certain defense contractors. He didn't tell them its origins. Corso claimed they kept the material away from the Central Intelligence Agency because he and Trudeau felt it was infiltrated by Soviet spies. Accordingly, instructions were delivered verbally to eliminate a paper trail.

The result, according to *The Day After Roswell*, was a "quantum leap" in American technology that gave the United States a decisive edge over the USSR. Moreover, the missile shield premise behind Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, or "Star Wars," actually was a ruse whose real purpose was to defend against threats from space aliens.

Corso also writes that Army insiders, including Trudeau — best known for leading Allied forces into action at Pork Chop Hill during the Korean War — agreed that the last surviving insider would release the information to the public.

Critics have had a field day with Corso's accounting.

Among them is Stanton Friedman, who first investigated the Roswell controversy in 1978 and wrote *Crash at Corona* and *Top Secret: Majic*. From his home in Canada, Friedman says Corso's book was a sloppily researched rush job timed to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the incident.

Lacking an index or references, Corso's memoirs are saturated with inconsistencies, historical errors and an overall strain of credulity, Friedman charges.

"Here's a guy who claims, while he was stationed in Fort Riley (Kansas) in July 1947, he just happened to see the (alien) bodies. ... When a bowling buddy tells him about it? And lets him into a warehouse for a peek? And there's no guards? C'mon," Friedman says. "Give me a break."

"Corso says the military sat on this stuff for 17 years and didn't do anything with it. And here we have a man, neither a scientist or

an engineer, who singlehandedly, within a year and a half, somehow manages to get all this stuff figured out. Something nobody else had thought of doing before. I'm not saying it wasn't done; I suspect useful technology came from the wreckage. I just doubt his role in it."

Day After Roswell co-author Birnes, now publisher of *UFO Magazine* in Los Angeles, laments the lack of referencing and concedes there were "mistakes made on deadline."

He also says he regrets Corso died while revenues from book sales — variously estimated from 120,000 to 200,000 copies — hung in legal limbo because of a contract dispute with agent Neil Russell, which wasn't resolved until earlier this year.

"I worked with Col. Corso on this book for two years, and everything he told me about outside UFOs — things that could be veri-

fied — held up," Birnes says. "This man had a fascinating career, from his intelligence work in Rome during the war, to smuggling out German rocket scientists in Operation Paperclip, to working as an investigator with the Warren Commission."

"We were looking to do a book on his World War II experiences when I noticed this one brief passing reference he made to UFOs. I asked him about it, and what he told me was compelling enough for its own book. We couldn't put everything he knew about the subject in there because it might've been a little too much."

But telling dad's entire UFO story is what Corso Jr., intends to do, at www.corsofiles.com

Web site newsletter

Still smarting from the conventional publishing experience, Junior plans to charge a \$4.95 semi-annual

subscription fee to a Web site newsletter. He says it'll take roughly three years to upload his dad's notes, or until April 2003. That's when the elder Corso said a major event is scheduled to happen. Junior, of course, won't say what it is.

Among those who've gotten a sneak preview is Ginger Thompson of Rockledge. In 1997, Thompson and her husband, Gary, purchased an RV from the Corso family. Thompson, who appeared on "Maury Povich" several years ago to talk about her alien abduction experiences, became friends with Corso before he died.

"What he told me about his own knowledge of abductions confirmed just about everything I was experiencing myself," says Thompson. "It was almost a relief."

Indeed, newsletter subscribers will learn that Corso claimed to have been abducted by aliens re-

peatedly, going back to childhood and running through his military career. For Friedman, the imminent publicity windfall is ominous. "Gads," he remarks. "Just what we need are claims of Corso's having been on board and talked to an alien."

But Junior, scheduled to meet Friedman at a "Paranormal Conference" in Fort Walton Beach on Oct. 20-22, is steadfast. He claims Dad told him the Air Force possesses "the whole enchilada" from the Roswell crash, and that the Army was left with the scraps Corso farmed out to the private sector. Interservice rivalry kept both branches from sharing data.

Nevertheless, current applications gleaned from the Army's alien "insertions" made Trudeau wonder if "we hadn't advanced our own technology by a leap of about 250 years," says Junior.

"I know that Dad was very concerned that maybe we lived in an altered future as a result. But before he died, he said we'd made such huge strides that, by around 2003, we will have caught up to the alien state of the art as it was in 1947."

"I guess a book would've been the way to go in order to make money off this; I figure a lot of this information is going to get reproduced and passed around. But it's not strictly a money issue anymore, since I finally own the exclusive rights to Dad's story. Dad felt strongly that this is no longer a national security issue, that a new generation needs to know a history that's been hidden for all these years."

So the debates over Corso's revelations may continue.

Courageous claims

In Bethesda, Md., where Stephen Bassett operates a political action committee lobbying elected officials to take a stand on public disclosure of classified UFO records, arguments over *The Day After Roswell* amount to "nitpicking" that "helps government management of this issue." Statements such as Corso being a member of the National Security Council, when he was only an aide, don't bother him.

"The core issues here are true" he says. "For whatever flaws the book might have, it took a tremendous amount of courage for Col. Corso to come public with it. If you listen to the man tell his story on camera, he comes across as sincere and credible."

For others, such as retired Army Col. and former Los Alamos National Laboratory director of Advanced Concepts John Anderson, the lack of evidence for Corso's claims only deepens the mystery.

"The world's leader in night-vision technology is the Army. Some of those guys in Electro Optics' night-vision division are personal friends of mine," Anderson says. "I looked into the history of their technology development, and Phil's story doesn't hold. You never see technological advances that cannot be accounted for — or anticipated — by traditional good science."

What puzzles Anderson, author of *Future War: Non-lethal Weapons in 21st Century Warfare*, are the facts that can be verified.

"I met Phil before the book came out. I liked the guy," says Anderson from his home in Las Vegas. "Ninety-eight percent of what he claimed is, in fact, accurate — where he was, what he did, all that."

"I checked it out. Here's a man who sat in front of Congress in 1992 saying we lost quite a few planes over the Soviet Union playing cat-and-mouse with their air defense system. In '95 or thereabouts, he was up there again, exposing the KGB's exploitation of American POWs who were sent to Czechoslovakia."

Equally intriguing to Anderson is Corso's relationship with Trudeau. In 1980, when the Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, Pa., began videotaping oral histories for its library, "Trudeau was one of the first eight men to be interviewed," Anderson says. "There's a wide status gap between a lieutenant colonel and a lieutenant general, but when Trudeau was interviewed, who did he want right there with him? Phil Corso. It was a very, very unique situation."

Anderson's take on Corso? "He's an enigma."

The Forbidden Zone

A writers' journey to Area 51

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the second part of a weeklong series. By DENNIS ANDERSON Valley Press Editor

RACHEL, Nev. — In Sunday's edition, Valley Press reporters recounted their journey to the environs of Area 51, America's most Top Secret military base. Today's installment concludes that odyssey and narrative.

Pat and Joe Travis are your hosts at the Little A'Le'Inn in Rachel, Nev., just off state Highway 375, designated by the governor of Nevada as "The Extraterrestrial Highway."

Nevada's governor made this designation in 1996, seeing a possible boost for state tourism from the notoriety the area gained as a haven for UFO seekers.

It's true that the Air Force probably hated this idea. Who needed more prying eyes? But it is also probably equally true that the Air Force has made peace with the idea.

My companions and I eyed our cool new "Area 51 Alien Driver's License" purchased at a minimart in the Pahranaagat Valley, which is a surprisingly lush, green valley replete with lakes that meander into wetlands just before the turnoff to the "Extraterrestrial Highway."

Now, sitting at the inn a few hours' drive north of Las Vegas, we had our Area 51 I.D.s. They were cute. One of those E.T. kind of aliens peeps out at you off the laminated surface of what looks like a driver's license.

We sat in the A'Le'Inn, munching on alien chili burgers that were out of this world.

"An Air Force officer came up with the idea for licensing the warning sign, allowing all the merchandise like the driver's licenses," our guide, Daniel Carnahan, advised us, his tone dry as toast. "He told me himself."

"They've learned how to manage the public relations aspect of this thing the past few years."

If the journey to Area 51 is a kind of Hajj to Mecca for UFO en-

thusiasts and "black world" plane watchers, the Little A'Le'Inn is the restaurant at the end of the universe.

To call it a tourist trap would be unkind. The Little A'Le'Inn has achieved a butterfly transformation into a tourist destination, thanks to the governor and legions of UFO enthusiasts.

The inn has a pretty good home-style restaurant, attached to an amiable road-house bar and small unit motel. Once known simply as the Rachel Bar and Grill, owners Pat and Joe

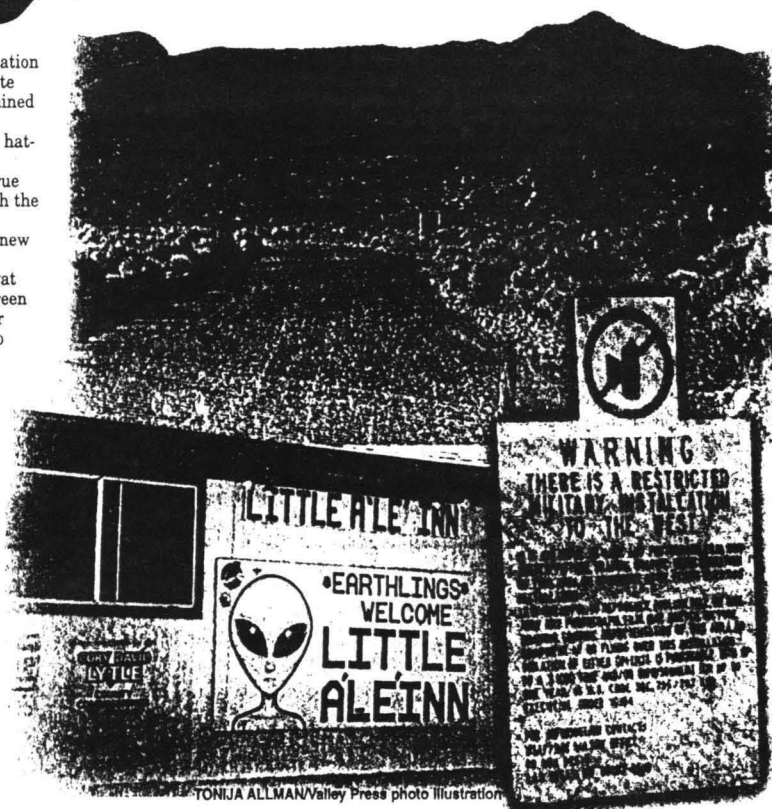
Our Dark Skies series

Antelope Valley residents watch the skies. Mostly we are looking for anything fascinating that flies. We know that our Valley is crucible to the world's premier military aircraft — the U-2, the F-117 stealth fighter, the B-2 stealth bomber.

Drawing from open source materials and primary source interviews, the Valley Press offers a week's worth of stories that explore the landscape of the fabled "black world" and beyond, another extra for Valley Press readers.

Travis rechristened the establishment as the Little A'Le'Inn, and they have generally prospered.

Through the 1990s, multitudes of UFO enthusiasts flocked to the environs of Area



TONIJA ALLMAN/Valley Press photo illustration

"I had no interest in breaking national security or finding out something that we're not supposed to know about black airplanes. But you know, if there were UFOs out there, all bets are off!"

— Tom Mahood, UFO researcher, physicist

Visitors continue to make the journey out on the "Extraterrestrial Highway." And the Little A'Le'Inn supplies those visitors with their needs, wishes and wants. You can buy your Area 51 T-shirts, your inflatable aliens, your bug-eyed T-shirts and a lot of books about government cover-ups and conspiracies.

Walls at the inn are packed densely with extraterrestrial bric-a-brac and military memorabilia from jet jock squadrons that train at Nellis Air Force Base near Las Vegas or air defense crews that tour nearby Tonopah Test Range. There's even a scroll from the Spanish paratroopers.

"As far as I can remember from my studies, that's a group that's left no footprint on history whatsoever," author William F. Wu observed.

The afternoon we pulled in, a Jaguar car club also rolled up. The snappy classic lines of the XKEs and other Jaguars looked sleeker than a lot of the flying saucers depicted in the UFO magazines lining the shelves at the Little A'Le'Inn.

The Jaguar visitors took delight in ordering cold beers and playing pool among bug-eyed alien effigies. This would probably be the closest any would get to Area 51, which is OK with the Air Force and others who guard the installation.

"We're going to make this an annual rally event," one Jaguar clubber said.

"Make yourself at home," hostess Pat Travis beamed as she busied tables and delivered alien burgers. "You can go out and see the remnants of the barriers."

In some ways, the glory days of spoofing the Area 51 borderlands has a bygone flavor to it. A 20th-century nostalgia pervades.

After the Air Force expanded the perimeter way beyond Freedom Ridge, denying the relatively nearby viewing perch, getting any sight of the secret base became much more difficult.

To get a peek requires a steep hike to the top of Tikaboo Peak, an 8,000-foot summit that is about 26 miles from the base proper.

So the Little A'Le'Inn becomes the destination, rather than the

dread Darth Vader presence of the area itself. Most tourists and casual visitors will be more than satisfied with wares purchased at the counter of Pat and Joe Travis.

"It's all changed," Carnahan noted. "So many souvenirs here now." We all purchased a few. Memories.

Carnahan was touched by the generosity of Pat Travis, who gifted him with a necktie with extraterrestrial creatures printed on it as a present for his upcoming wedding.

Carnahan is a prospector, bearded philosopher and poet, a former soldier of fortune with a linebacker's build. And like many Californians, he eventually found his way into the entertainment business. He also was one of the seekers after truth during the glory days of Area 51 watching during the past decade.

"The area itself is a thing worth seeing, because of the vastness of its space, the scale, the size and the vastness of the power behind the enterprise," he said.

A skeptic who believes the government conceals most of what it knows about UFOs, Carnahan believes it is wrong that foreign governments can overfly Area 51, yet U.S. citizens can be shot for venturing past a warning sign.

To make complete our journey, we had scanners, CB radios, high-powered optics and bottled water. Lots of bottled water. The Nevada desert we traveled in is at altitude in excess of 5,000 feet and surprisingly green compared to our own Mojave Desert homeland, but it is desert.

We finished our alien burgers, slapped road dust from our khakis and boarded our SUV, heading out

toward Mail Box Road and the gravel hardpan that points like an arrow out toward the unfenced borderland of Area 51.

A visit near the border of Area 51 requires a matador's sense of avoidance with the bull that is authority. All the more necessary because there is free roaming cattle all over the place, many of them the ripsnorters like the one that greeted us at the entrance to Mail Box Road.

Our SUV rolled onto the gravel road used by Area 51 workers who commute into the restricted area daily aboard a Greyhound-style passenger bus.

For anyone who traveled along any of the Cold War borders, the unfenced buffer area outside Area 51 invites comparison. Even with the absence of guard towers and barbed wire, a sense of No Man's Land dominates the landscape nearly as soon as the state highway disappears in the rear-view mirror.

At the wheel, Wu drove with steady determination at convoy speed.

It's an unmarked road, approaching an unmarked area. But there are still speed limit signs, that gradually decline from 35 mph to 25 mph. When our driver rolled past the 25 mph sign, Carnahan announced quietly, "We're very close now."

And then you could see it. Descend down a twisty corner of desert, and then, up among the strewn boulders and Joshua trees, they appeared. Wraith-like on the ridge line, binoculars in hand. The "cammo dudes."

Some call them Wackenhuts.

51 after a guy named Bob Lazar claimed in a series of broadcast interviews that he conducted "reverse engineering" work on extraterrestrial spacecraft in an area he called "S-4" at Papoose Lake, another dry lake in the restricted area near Groom dry lake.

More than a decade later, Lazar remains a figure of renown and controversy in UFO circles.

Tom Mahood is a conscientious researcher in the realms of truth, controversy and fun surrounding the subject of UFOs and Area 51. For one thing, he conducted extensive background research that refuted many of Lazar's claims about his education and scientific background.

For another thing, Mahood — a trained physicist — loves finding facts such as property records and conducting on-the-ground research near Area 51 and other restricted installations.

"To tell you the truth, I am really interested in UFOs because I think there's some hardware out there, somewhere," Mahood said in a phone interview.

"As far as Area 51 goes, I had no interest in breaking national security or finding out something that we're not supposed to know about black airplanes. But you know," he said, playfully, "if there were UFOs out there, all bets are off!"

Looky-loos and UFO true believers flocked to conferences at the Little A'Le'Inn, in larger or smaller numbers depending on the year and level of interest. In 1996, the governor, hoping for even more tourist dollars for Nevada, dubbed state Route 375 "The Extraterrestrial Highway."

The Hollywood gang, led by Roland Emmerich and Dean Devlin, producers of "Independence Day," contributed to the festivities and left an "ID4" chunk of granite and brass the size of an alien obelisk outside the inn dated April 18, 1996, labeled a time capsule "to be opened in the year A.D. 2050, by which time interplanetary travelers shall be regular guests of our planet Earth."

The movie, also known as "ID4," was great, cheesy fun. The flick proposed in over-the-top blockbuster movie fashion that scientists had been studying dead aliens and spacecraft at Area 51.

For some people, it's a movie. For others — well?

Others say they are employed by EG&G, another contractor that does security work for the government and NASA. The lore also says that the security who patrol the Area 51 picket line are former Delta Force operators and ex-Navy SEALs.

All of this is difficult to verify, but people who have experienced personal encounters with them attest that they are well-armed, well-equipped and several cuts above your usual private cop or even the Lincoln County deputies who will put you under arrest once you have been detained by the cammo dudes.

"They can be quite shy unless you are in their territory," one veteran Area 51 watcher told me.

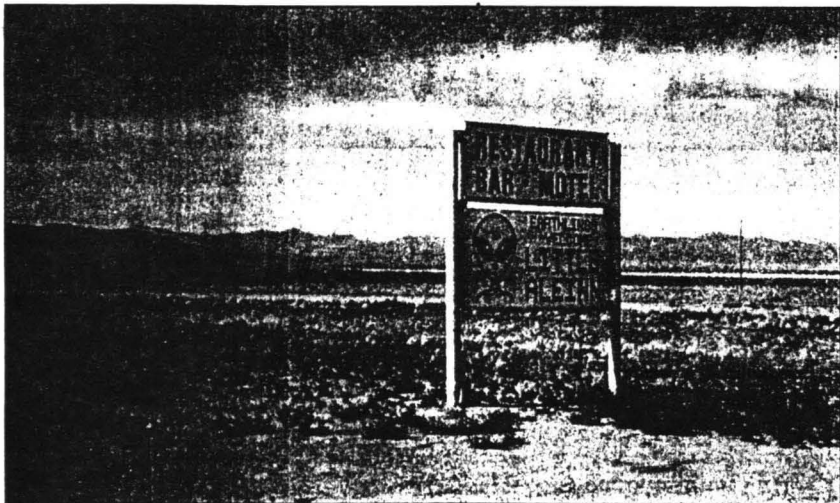
The nickname for the security force was popularized by Glenn Campbell, the researcher who compiled the "Area 51 Viewer's Guide." The group was so named because of the Desert Storm-style chocolate chip camouflage pants they wear.

We spotted them up on the ridge, in a white, unmarked Jeep Cherokee with a light bar on the top.

They perched like state troopers in a speed trap, but they moved quickly once they spotted us, their vehicle rolling the instant they sighted our SUV heading toward the warning sign.

"This is where we have to stop," Carnahan announced quietly. "Otherwise, we will have an unwanted interface." Then he looked at us, his blue eyes pure, bland, unblinking. "Unless you want to have an interface."

(continued on page 8)



WILLIAM F. WU/Valley Press photos
EXTRATERRESTRIAL HIGHWAY — The sign to the Little A'Le'Inn rests just off Nevada State Route 375, officially dubbed the Extraterrestrial Highway. Right, unofficial UFO researcher Daniel Carnahan has a close encounter with a lonely bull at the entryway to Mailbox Road just outside Area 51. Bulls are more plentiful — or at least more visible — than aircraft in this spot.



No. We didn't want an interface. We were close enough. We were there. The border.

About 200 feet ahead of us, we could make out the big red and white sign. The one that says "Restricted Military Installation ... Deadly Force Authorized."

The cammo dudes who spotted us from the ridge were already hunkered down by the sign, looking like a Desert Storm Humvee crew waiting for the jump-off command to run at the Iraqi border.

We watched them. They watched us. Blinking. Staring. Blinking. Staring.

The bull that is authority. There's no winning in this kind of stare-down. Not for Area 51 border visitors, anyway. Cross the line to become an Area 51 intruder and you are in a whole different ball game.

In fact, it is no game at all. Real enough.

Up on the hill, an electronic surveillance monitor that looked like a Star Wars droid from "The Empire Strikes Back" took us under its baleful electronic eye. Another one about 50 yards up the ridge did the same.

For the record, it's not been reported that anyone ever has been shot trying to bust a move in the Forbidden Zone. But anyone who strays into the denied territory will be handed over to authorities by the patrolling cammo dudes. A misdemeanor fine can go \$600.

The cammo dudes will hand you over to the Lincoln County sheriff's deputies, and they may also impound your vehicle. A thousand bucks for the impound. Ouch. Curiosity may not kill the cat, but the cat that's caught will have to dig out a checkbook.

"We should leave now," Carnahan advised.

We clicked a few snapshots of each other and ran out of film, too hurried to reload as we stared across into the armed border of America's most secret military base.

"We can camp out on BLM land," Carnahan said as we were leaving. "You never know when you might get a sighting."

As it happened, we saw neither UFO or black aircraft. No, we didn't get a sighting.

Such is often the case, advises Campbell, who in addition to writing the Area 51 Viewer's Guide runs an authoritative Web site at

www.ufomind.com.

In his guide, Campbell writes, "In my two years living in Rachel, I saw a lot of fascinating phenomena in the skies — often spectacular displays that at first glance I would swear was something out of this world."

He continued, "But after additional investigation, I have always been able to find a reasonable explanation in military exercises, known celestial activity or optical effects."

Others attest they have seen UFOs or other inexplicable phenomena. Still others hope for glimpses of terrestrial but still top secret military aircraft.

Then, there are the stars.

We made a small camp fire and gazed up at the Milky Way. We wondered at the real secrets of the heavens, but never saw a mysterious orange light or heard a blast of black plane engines taking wing over White Side Mountain.

Once, thinking we might be sighting a "Star Wars" experiment, a firmament of mysterious blinking lights in the sky, Carnahan informed us gently that we were looking at Saturn, and farther up in the heavens, the Pleiades.

A couple of times during the evening we heard the cammo dudes roar by in their Cherokee. We were ensconced in our legal campsite, in a little arroyo, watching the universe unfold.

Once, in our alarm about being watched by the watchers, we saw a mysterious glinting object. At intervals, it would flash. We wondered if we had encountered one of the ground sensors depicted in the "Area 51 & S4 Handbook" compiled by local author Chuck Clark. The next morning's daylight revealed it was a beer can that reflected moonlight, a silvery glint that added to the mysteries of the desert.

And that was our journey to Area 51. We were leaving the Box, the Ranch, Dreamland behind. The mysteries endure. The mix of the real, and unreal pervades.

The night sky over the desert revealed a diamond splash of starlight and the bright brush strokes of spinning planets, all the while keeping all the secrets that the stars intend to hold until our own journeys take us there.

STAR BEACON, Ashtabula, OH - Nov. 7, 2000

Ashtabula Township woman videotapes UFO near her home

By PAMELA E. GRAN
Staff Writer

ASHTABULA TOWNSHIP - It's been more than three months since she spotted several unidentified objects in the night sky, but Mary Standy said it's time to speak out about her findings.

Standy has about 15 minutes of tape shot with her family's camcorder to prove what she saw late on July 17. Standy was recording the full moon at about 11:30 pm.

"I was going to use the pictures to make a poster for my daughter's room," Standy said.

What she saw as she aimed the camcorder at the night sky from her bedroom window turned out to be far more than just a scenic view of the moon and picturesque wispy clouds, however.

As Standy videotaped from the east side of her Lincoln Drive home, suddenly she noticed tiny, round white lights streaking from left to right above, below and around the moon.

"They weren't planes and they weren't shooting stars," Standy said, beginning to shake with the memory of her experience.

One of the lights drifted to the right of the moon, disappeared behind a large cloud, then seconds later zipped to the left and was gone from sight. During about 10 minutes of recording, more than a half-dozen such "lights" alternately appeared and disappeared around the edges of the moon, Standy said.

Standy said she was forced to brace her arms on the window's edge to steady them as she began to react to the incident.

Her dog, a cocker spaniel, hopped onto the nearby bed and began to growl. Standy also recalled that the fur on the dog's head stood on end as it reacted to whatever was traveling the sky.

An hour later, Standy's nerves suffered a further shock when she went to her front yard and recorded an even more spectacular sight.

Carefully focusing the camera into the cloudless sky, Standy's daughter captured another five minutes of a rapidly darting light, which alternately changed shape from round to elliptical to tubular.

The object appeared white as it darted around the sky, but when caught on freeze-frame, it turned green, red and purple.

Even though it was a warm July night, Standy felt chilled to the bone, she said.

The incident in July is not the first, nor was it the last such experience for Standy.

"I've been seeing objects in the sky since about the age of 9," she said.

On Oct. 21, Standy once again caught something unexplained on film. This time it was a large, white ball of light. At first she thought it was the moon. However, the orb was not in the right position in the sky at the time she was recording ... about 2 am, Standy said.

Standy said she is frightened, not only about what the objects might be, but of the consequences of her coming forward.

Friends and family, as well as strangers, have ridiculed her in the past. Standy was prompted to come forward after reading an article on other UFO sightings in the Ashtabula area which ran in Monday's *Star Beacon*, she said.

Standy and her family have had difficulty sleeping since the July sighting.

"I didn't sleep for 53 hours after it happened," Standy said.

To this day she is haunted by bizarre dreams in which UFOs enter her home. Standy has contacted representatives of "Real TV" and other media agencies.

"I don't care what anyone says. I know what I saw. I believe they were spaceships," Standy said, adding there are many questions to which she would like the answers.

CR: B. Greenwood/B. Cater

DAILY TRIBUNE, Gallipolis, OH - Sept. 26, 2000

Gere signed to star in new 'Mothman' movie

FROM STAFF REPORTS

POINT PLEASANT — Variety Magazine reported that actor Richard Gere has signed a contract to star in "The Mothman Prophecies."

The movie, based on John Keel's 1975 book, is about a strange series of events in Point Pleasant in the late 1960s.

Mark Pellington, who directed "Arlington Road," has agreed to direct the film in which Gere will play a reporter drawn to Point Pleasant to investigate bizarre events, including sightings of the Mothman, UFOs and psychic visions. "Mothman" is described in Keel's book as a man-sized, birdlike creature with wings.

"Mothman" is described in Keel's book as a man-sized, birdlike creature with wings. Appearances of the creature allegedly coincide with power outages and the December 1967 collapse of the Silver Bridge.

According to Variety, filming of the movie is scheduled to begin in January. Lakeshore Entertainment is financing the project, which will be released by Sony. Producers of the film are Lakeshore Chairman and CEO Tom Rosenberg, President Gary

Lucchesi and Gary Goldstein.

"There has been no decision made as to where they're going to film," Mark McNabb, head of the West Virginia film office, told the Charleston Gazette.

"We are trying hard to make it happen here, and have been in contact with the producers for the past year and a half, as the project has been developing," he added.

McNabb told the Gazette that producers look at many issues when they determine filming location, such as proximity to services, support crews and other considerations.

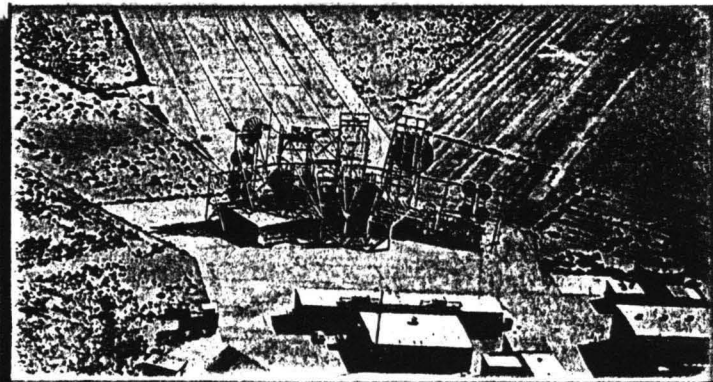
"There are about 1,000 other issues that have to be decided before this film will actually be made or it will be made here," he said.

Point Pleasant Mayor John Roach hopes the camera crews will be rolling into the city.

"It is our hope that they will film in this area. I feel that if this movie is a success it could bring possible tourism dollars to the area," Roach said. "The Mothman has always been a local interest and national exposure will draw attention to this area."

The mayor found out about the film through a call from a resident and seeing a story in the Gazette Monday.

Desert hides radar sites



History of test facilities cloaked in 'black world'

EDITOR'S NOTE: The fourth installment of a weeklong series

By JANA M. TREECE
Valley Press City Editor

EL MIRAGE — If you drive the vast maze of winding, dirt back roads of California's Mojave Desert long enough you'll either end up near a secret military test installation, or on a movie set, or both.

Near the abandoned movie locale lies a Cold War mystery, the Mojave Desert's secret radar ranges.

Driving about 30 miles east of downtown Palmdale, in this corner of the Mojave Desert, a large lake materializes mirac-

ulously in the desert.

A mirage? No. A lake, yes. It's the El Mirage dry lake bed, once the scene of battle between aliens and jet fighters in the blockbuster "Independence Day."

Remember Will Smith's dogfighting with an alien interceptor, and a bunch of RVs charging hell-bent for leather across the desert toward a movie-lot facsimile of the famed Area 51 secret air base? Yep. El Mirage.

That's the Mojave Desert for you. A home to Tinseltown, and also to real-life secret air bases, all within a few miles and a few mirages of each other.

The air fields and radar ranges near El Mirage loom up off the desert floor. If you drive off the paved path onto the washboard roads off State Route 138, near 245th Street East and Avenue R-8, you'll find Gray Butte.

Up until a few years ago, secret stealthy radar testing was conducted at Gray Butte. Locals called an enormous mobile hangar "The Behemoth." Available research shows the hangar most likely was used to shield aircraft mock-ups from spy satellite overflights.

Now, at the Gray Butte site, operations are a bit less mysterious. A company called General Atomics will do work related to the Predator unmanned aerial vehicle, a spy in the sky.

At the Gray Butte site, encompassed by a barbed-wire fence with "No Trespassing" signs posted, there's an eerie-looking real life "X Files" cluster of buildings surrounded by radar, microwave and satellite dishes and a semi-abandoned guard shack.

At first glance, the facility looks deserted, except for an occasional weekend charge of off-road motorcyclists, or a jack rabbit thumping off into the brush.

A visitor who keeps watching will now find cars parked at the Gray Butte site, and a security truck might make a pass.

Locals give accounts about the Gray Butte facility that range from potential UFO activity, to "black world" aircraft testing, to military plasma energy research.

Security at the area, now barely visible, once was as tough and blunt as the private contract security cordon that keeps the curious away from Area 51.

blackened out. Then, it became brighter and brighter again — a brilliant ball of orange in front of the building.

"All of the sudden," he said, "there must have been a breach of security and everything was shut down. Black."

That was in just one viewing of the range. In others, he said, bright white and orange orbs flocked together about the range. Within moments they would "start to move slowly and then smaller pieces would appear and then break away" into nothing, vanish in the air.

Today, The Behemoth is gone; the pylon is gone; and, by most accounts, the encounters with rent-a-cops have stopped. And the orb sightings have vanished.

Independent researcher Mahood does not necessarily subscribe to UFO theories of alien visitors, because science, his research and evidence found don't seem to support that finding.

"My explanations are more mundane," Mahood said.

Essentially, these sightings rise from contractor-operated facilities for testing the radar cross-sections of military aircraft.

These, he said, are pretty interesting in their own right.

Mahood, in watching and photographing The Behemoth, said what locals have seen around El Mirage is probably nothing more than a mobile hangar and a pylon used to hold the shapes of aircraft for radar testing.

Simply, Mahood says, RCS facilities are used to test radar on aircraft — or to test how radar won't work on aircraft.

Testing stealth

Radar works by taking a radar beam (a high frequency radio wave) and directing it toward an object. Some energy is absorbed by the object; some of the beam bounces back

(continued on page 10)

Dark Skies

Top, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc. recently purchased a radar cross-section facility at Gray Butte near 235th Street East and Avenue R-8 in El Mirage. Above, the facility has distinctive markings on what appears from the air to be a landing strip. Right, signs posted along the property lines warn away trespassers and loiterers.

ROB LAYMAN/Valley Press photos

Our Dark Skies series

Antelope Valley residents watch the skies. Mostly we are looking for anything fascinating that flies. We know that our Valley is cradle to the world's premier military aircraft — the U-2, the F-117 stealth fighter, the B-2 stealth bomber.

Drawing from open source materials and primary source interviews, the Valley Press offers a week's worth of stories that explores the landscape of the fabled "black world" and beyond, another extra for Valley Press readers.

TRESPASSING & LOITERING
FORBIDDEN BY LAW
RIGHT TO PASS BY
PERMISSION AND SUBJECT
TO CONTROL OF OWNER

UFOs or what?

So what was out there on the ground at Gray Butte and other ranges scattered across the Mojave Desert? The Gray Butte site includes a 5,000-foot runway and airfield in addition to the radar array.

Tom Mahood, an engineer with avid curiosity about UFOs and the generally unusual, went in search of answers after hearing tales of strange sightings.

The answer to Mahood, even after years of investigation, isn't all that simple. But his research yielded plausible answers, though not as juicy as a bonafide, authenticated UFO in the hand.

The El Mirage facility — also known as Gray Butte — is a radar cross range facility, or RCS range. According to Los Angeles County assessors' records unearthed by Mahood, it was once owned and occupied by aerospace giant McDonnell Douglas, the former prime contractor that was sold to The Boeing Co.

Mahood contends sightings of strange activity are likely phenomena connected to the work at the radar ranges.

In addition to Gray Butte, there are at least four others in the Mojave Desert — Northrop Grumman's at Tejon Ranch west of Rosamond, Lockheed Martin's at Helendale, Junction Ranch's at China Lake Naval Weapons Center near Ridgecrest and Wheatpatch north of Tehachapi near Bakersfield.

Strange sights

Mahood wrote about these installations in an Internet-posted article titled, "Radar Ranges of the Mojave."

Why the Antelope Valley? Also known as the Aerospace Valley, the region is home to development, production, testing and modification of the greatest air armada in the history of the world. The air forces that won the Cold War and the Persian Gulf war were born here.

The Valley — stretching from as far south as Acton and Agua Dulce to as far north as Ridgecrest — from Victorville to the east and to Hughes-Elizabeth Lake to the west — is witness to some of the most incredible flying machines ever built.

Some of these aircraft are known and now world famous or historic. Some remain cloaked behind a veil of black world mystery.

These aircraft lift off from multiple military bases and aerospace contract facilities from Air Force Plant 42, Edwards Air Force Base and the China Lake Naval Weapons Center. Often, moving in the dark of night, they wing their way to Nevada where they go through testing at the ranges of Nellis Air Force Base, Tonopah Test Range, and yes, Area 51.

The list of these birds of prey and reconnaissance craft include such legendary flying machines as the U-2 spy plane, the SR-71 Blackbird, the F-117A stealth fighter and the B-2 stealth bomber.

Most recently, flying above the Valley skies from the El Mirage area is the Predator unmanned aerial vehicle, an eye-in-the-sky spy that conducted reconnaissance over Yugoslavia and was used to monitor both battlefield intelligence and the tenets of the Dayton Peace Accords.

With the Valley's history, secrecy has surrounded development of such awesome warbirds and with that secrecy comes the unknown, the mysterious and the unexplained.

With the unknown, or yet unveiled, come the myths, legends and rumors.

Even those who know the rich Valley military and aerospace history have reported sightings of weird flying objects near El Mirage and west of Rosamond near Edwards AFB.

Mostly, these sightings go unexplained or are given no credence from official sources.

There's nothing up there

On July 4, 1997, a series of visitors

reported seeing in the early evening hours white-and-orange orbs hovering in the sky southeast of town. The orbs seemed to hover for long periods of time before zipping away at unimaginable speeds. Minutes later the sight would appear again and repeat the maneuver.

Months later, one evening in April 1998, to the north in Rosamond, residents shopping and eating dinner were awed by a large hovering object sighted above the Albertson's supermarket off 25th Street West and Rosamond Boulevard.

Viewers called the Valley Press and described a flying object the shape of a diamond, or in some reports, a triangle or octagonal object. It was reported to be the size of two football fields with bright lights of orange and white encompassing its bottom.

Residents stared; motorists pulled off the road to gawk as it hovered several hundred feet above the store. More than a dozen residents reached for cell phones and ran for pay phones to report the sighting.

Every sighting report was similar, but not exactly the same, and everyone reported absolutely no sound whatsoever associated with the object.

The response from area sheriff's, government and military officials — nothing was there.

Rosamond sheriff's officials said they had no reports of such sightings.

Air Force Plant 42 officials had no information on the event. And at Edwards, the official position was that the base had no operations or flights scheduled in that area at that time of night.

Edwards officials speculated that it could have been a helicopter with a lighted billboard attached to the bottom, akin to the ones that occasionally buzz The Hangar during a JetHawks baseball game.

Federal Aviation Administration officials showed nothing on the log for the night.

off and is picked up by a receiver, creating an image called a radar signature.

So, how does all this technology relate to stealth?

Simply, the very essence of stealth technology is to shape the object in such a manner that radar beams that strike it are radiated every which way but back toward the radar receivers.

Mahood says while stealth is thought to be undetectable to radar, every object, even stealth aircraft, can be picked up on radar. The important thing is how close the object has to be before the signal it reflects back toward the radar receiver is strong enough to register.

These RCS ranges were probably used in the early and late 1980s and into the 1990s to develop and test the advanced stealth technology of warplanes such as the F-117A stealth fighter and the B-2 stealth bomber.

And, Mahood said, "The most reliable way to find out how much radar signal a new aircraft design will reflect is to simply try it and find out."

"And there's no need to use an actual aircraft; a smaller size model" will do.

And that seems to explain the pylon used to hold variously shaped model aircraft.

The building, Mahood says, probably housed some type of hoist to lift models onto the pylon. Then the building was rolled back, via some type of wheels and tracks, and radar testing began.

Mahood said the building is a mobile target shelter that probably covers the model to protect it from weather and unauthorized observation.

Mahood said probably the most famous of these ranges, of course, is Area 51 in the Nevada desert.

Other explanations

Mahood does not necessarily subscribe to the more sinister, or government conspiracy, explanations.

"Well, a segment of the UFO community has firmly latched on to the idea that these installations are simply covers for underground bases," he said.

Stories, he added, go on to describe multiple-level underground facilities, (with the requisite genetic engineering labs) and flying discs zipping in and out through surface openings, which some locals surmise is some kind of underground testing involving ball plasma, ball lightning or secret military jet propulsion systems.

Upon inspection of Gray Butte and other similar ranges from the air and ground, Mahood found "no evidence whatsoever of any kind of subsurface structures, other than normal building and mast foundations. There were no signs of access points, ventilation ducts or utility feeds."

As for the glowing orbs and flying craft, Mahood has collected and developed his own theories.

Of the orbs sighted, Mahood said, the more mundane explanations are that of the testing of cruise missiles and drones, flare activity and even simple car headlights coming over the hills.

"I've seen flare activity in the desert that looks much, much closer than it really is. He explained their brightness could appear very close while being 30 to

40 miles away. And the flares, when attached to parachutes, can hover for 5 to 6 minutes before dropping out of sight or fizzling.

As for cruise missile testing, Mahood said if a rocket is viewed from the back end, particle beams appear and make "nice-looking orbs." He said these orbs can appear to hover and can "suddenly jerk up and down."

And finally, but certainly not the last of many possible explanations, Mahood said, are drones, which he has seen tested near Twentynine Palms, the Marine Corps Ground-Air Combat Training Center.

When the military loses communication with a drone, this flying object can appear as an orb and again can appear to hover for long periods of time before "floating or fluttering to the ground."

As for sightings of the large craft like the one seen in Rosamond, Mahood isn't quite sure what is being tested.

Noting similar sightings have appeared throughout the United States, including one in Illinois earlier this year, he suspects people may have seen some kind of test of a flying antenna, or the testing and development of some kind of bi-static radar.

In the case of the antenna, he says, the structure may have the ability to pitch upward to intercept a beam from a transmitter and a receiver, both from extremely long distances away. This antenna and its ability to pitch upward may create the perception of a large hovering craft.

Despite all his theories and research, Mahood emphasizes he is no expert.

"I'm just a plain guy," he said, who is giving alternatives to what people have seen. "What I try to do is to sever the explanation from the sightings."

What Mahood does know for sure is that sightings are fun and that people will believe what they want to believe.

"People want to believe there is something behind this stuff as part of the new world order," he said. "It's wacky and interesting."

"I'm sure there is testing going on out there, probably on stealth craft, mostly at night, and on things we do not yet know about."

"And whatever's up there, if it doesn't have a transponder, no one who doesn't need to know is going to know it is out there. ... It's invisible."

Jim Delehanty is MUFON's assistant state director for southern Indiana. He said sightings of unexplained objects in the night sky over Lucky Point have increased lately.

In the past, there have been reports of cattle mutilation; a sighting of a large, hairy being and the sighting by a Knox County Police Officer of a large triangular UFO with slender

beings with large heads.

"Recently, there's been a lot of sightings of triangle-shaped objects there," Delehanty said.

While he personally has never seen a UFO at Lucky Point or anywhere else, Delehanty obviously believes beings from other planets visit Earth.

"I've been interested in this subject since high school," he said. "I've never personally seen anything, but I'm convinced there are credible people who have."

He told of two earthly visitors at today's seminar — an Olney, Ill., man who reported a UFO sighting and his son, who is attending college in Greencastle and saw a similar object not long after his father's sighting.

In addition to his post as assistant state director, Delehanty is a certified MUFON field investigator. That title gives him the authority to investigate UFO sightings by a civilian.

Delehanty said how the investigation is handled is based on what kind of sighting was

reported. Investigators examine everything from reports of nocturnal lights to alien abductions.

"I've never investigated a case where there were entities (aliens) or an abduction," he said. However, he said Sievers helped investigate the reported abduction of an Indianapolis woman.

Delehanty estimated about 10 percent of all UFO sightings are "unexplained." Usually, he said, nocturnal lights — which are sightings of lights in the night sky whose appearance or motions is out of the ordinary — are airplanes or planets. Nocturnal lights account for the biggest amount of UFO sightings reported.

If you think you are seeing a UFO, MUFON recommends getting as many other witnesses as possible and taking a picture of the object.

Then, to report the sighting, call the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle, Wash., at (206) 722-3000, or the local police department. Delehanty said law enforcement agencies can usually direct you to a UFO investigator.

Jim Delehanty, assistant director of the southern Indiana Mutual UFO Network (MUFON, Inc.), left, and director Jerry Sievers, look at photos of UFOs and drawings of aliens Saturday at the Blue Jeans Center during MUFON Inc.'s symposium.

Staff photo by Tom Bartholomew

MUTUAL UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS NETWORK

Group in search of UFOs visits Monroe City

By REBECCA DENHAM

Staff writer

MONROE CITY — The truth, they say, is out there. And UFO enthusiasts appeared in Monroe City Saturday for the Mutual UFO Network's (MUFON) annual symposium to look for it.

The annual symposium is an all-day event, beginning with a meeting and field investigation and culminating with a sky watch at Lucky Point, Vincennes resident Jerry Sievers is the state director for MUFON.

Lucky Point is about 12 miles southeast of Vincennes in the White River flood plain. The area is noted for its abundance of UFO sightings.

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FOREIGN NEWS

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

MAIL, Oxford, England - July 27, 2000

Mystery of the scorpion circles



ANOTHER mystery crop circle – the second this year – has appeared near the White Horse in Uffington. Whatever the message, the setting could not be more dramatic. Smudgy mist blurs the horizon. Great wrinkles of hillside, like green velvet, drape into the valley. And nine circles – arranged in the scorpion or “thought bubble” pattern – part the golden wheat.

The design – best seen from Dragon Hill below the White Horse – is simpler than most this season, which use elaborate 500-diamond patterns and 3-D effects. But the spectacle is attracting swarms of enthusiasts. The quiet men and women clamber along White Horse Hill, wearing shorts, anoraks and hopeful expressions.

They gather to “feel the energy” radiating from the 170-foot-long pattern. One man had driven down from Leeds. “I’m convinced that Earth energies, ley lines and extra terrestrials are involved,” he announces. “They show such finesse, such complexity, such fine detail. You couldn’t do this with planks and rope.”

Geoffrey Ambler, 57, of Wheatley, also believes in the site’s power, but cannot pin down the allure. “The appeal is difficult to describe – I had the same problem when I was a trainspotter.

By Amanda Castleman
amanda.castleman@nqo.com

“I guess it just connects with our subconscious minds. There’s no way of knowing what the circles mean or why they are here,” muses the member of Contact International UFO Research.

“I know for certain that human beings are not responsible for everything. The circles are caused by energy forms not visible. You can feel the energy there.

“Sometimes there’s a tingle in my fingers which is so strong and various electronic gear goes haywire. This is not just pranksters trampling corn.

“These enigmatic series of figures are so superbly made. I think beings from another dimension are trying to remind us that they’re there.

“They probably don’t want to talk to humans. I don’t think they like us much. Occasionally they incorporate a symbol, like the disabled sign, which appeared several times. Perhaps this indicated that we are disabled in some way.”

The White Horse area hosted three other circles in the last eight years. Patterns also cluster not far from Garsington, in Toot Baldon, and Asthall near Burford.

“They used to hug around sacred sites like Avebury. It’s a tenuous link, but they can appear anywhere,” Geoffrey said.



ENIGMATIC: A series of crop circles, top, has appeared near the White Horse in Uffington. Previous circles have appeared in Ipfeden, near Wallingford, in 1994 above, and left near Beckley in 1992
Main picture: David Fleming

WESTERN DAILY PRESS, Bristol, England - Sept. 6, 2000

A college course – in crop circles

By Barry Leighton

THEY have fascinated, intrigued and baffled millions of people around the world and lured countless thousands to the West to experience the phenomenon first-hand.

Mystics, UFO-hunters and followers of assorted religions and cults have been drawn to Wiltshire because of its annual crop of corn circles.

A mini-industry involving books, talks, guided tours, TV documentaries, photographic exhibitions and overnight hotel stays have sprung up in their wake.

Recognised

Now the study of the patterns that appear every summer in fields in Wiltshire and neighbouring Hampshire has been officially recognised by education chiefs.

Swindon College is offering a crop formation course as part of its autumn programme. For £19, students will be able to attend a day-long course on the circles.

Wiltshire-based Jude Stammers, an expert on ancient wisdom, energy forces and sacred landscapes, who is currently lecturing in the U.S., will take the seven-hour course at the Natural Health Centre in Marlborough on Saturday, November 4.



Still a riddle: One of the West's corn circles

She will guide students through what is known about the formations and explore ideas and theories with them.

Students will attempt to distinguish between the man-made circles and those that seem to appear naturally.

Jill Sudbury, a co-operative member of the centre, said: “I think the powers of the

crop formations are actively enabling people from all walks of life to start thinking about their place on the planet.

“People have been able to walk into these wonderful formations, feel the energy and start to question where they are in their lives.

“The crop formations are making people talk and communicate, whether they are formed by aliens, the mystery of nature or man-made – or maybe a mix of all three.

“There’s a lot of evidence that many of these formations are quite genuine.

“I think it will be a fascinating course and I would advise anyone wishing to attend to book up fairly soon.”

To reserve a place on the course, telephone 0800 7312250.

ADVERTISER, Rugby, England - Aug. 31, 2000

It was nothing like I have ever seen says UFO spotter

DRAMATIC accounts of unidentified flying objects circling in the skies above Rugby have been made by local residents.

The revelations follow reports in the Advertiser two weeks ago of unidentified activity when a white, triangular shape was spotted earlier this month.

Pensioner Jack Hazell of Lower Hillmorton Road believes he saw a similar craft last week.

He told the Advertiser: “I saw something over towards Brownsover and it appeared to be fairly low in the sky and was very bright indeed.

“It looked like two triangles with a space between them.”

Mr. Hazell, 79, rushed outside to get a better look of the mystery shape but it had disappeared.

“I came back inside and said to my wife: ‘There is something queer happening out there.’”

He added: “I was amazed by it. It was bigger than an aircraft and very substantial. It’s like nothing I have ever seen before.”

Another Rugby resident, Glenda Line, 50, of Lennon Close, Hillmorton, has now spoken of a possible UFO she saw three years ago but was too embarrassed to mention at the time.

She claims to have seen a bright light in the sky on the night before Princess Di’s funeral three years ago.

“I was coming home at around 11.15 on the Crick Road and the object looked as if it was over Althorp. It was an enormous light and I said at the time it was Diana’s star,” she said.

“I remember it so vividly and I always felt I should have said something at the time.”

About ten months later, Mrs. Line heard a big, loud, low aircraft but by the time she reached the window there was nothing to be seen.

“My son Fraser, who is 18, came in and was quite shaken. He said there was something filling the sky. It was big and low and round and the plane that was following it could not keep up.”



■ Shedding light . . . Our photographic department's impression of a UFO descending on Oxford

Lesley Steptoe and Antony Moore

When E.T. flew in to identify flying objects

Oxfordshire's UFO spotters gather to hear claims of close encounters of various kinds

Two elegant, elderly ladies had just introduced themselves to E.T. "So, I hear that you were abducted?" one inquired sweetly. For E.T. it is the same wherever he goes, everybody wants to know exactly how he ended up with strange finger marks and red circles all over his body.

"It happened while I was in Perth," he replied casually. "But we do not use the word abducted any more."

The room above the Inner Bookshop off Cowley Road, Oxford, was beginning to fill up with Contact International members. For a group that specialises in "unravelling the great UFO enigma," they all seemed surprisingly down to earth.

Sitting at the back was Ms Linda Dellow, who works as a cook at Tesco, then there was Mr Carl Howard, a mechanics student at Oxford College of Further Education, who had come with his uncle. Busily moving between the rows of chairs was the group's long-serving membership secretary, Mrs Fran Copeland, of Kennington, who works as a book-keeper for small businesses. Under her arm were bulging files and folders, but these told of sights and sounds that would be altogether alien to your average accountant.

On the floor, the treasurer, Mr Geoff Ambler, was trying to unlock the mysteries of a seriously old video machine.

Only the public relations man, Mr Michael

Oxford's most well-known UFO photograph outside the New Marston Co-op back in 1977. The picture was even featured in the recent Marston Millennium exhibition.

Mr Soper, too, was preoccupied by the marks on E.T.'s body but I was already close to cracking the mystery. Ellis Taylor (for a long time his name could not be used for "security purposes") had spent the night with his attractive girlfriend, May, in the middle of a desert. When he threw back his quilt in the morning, his body was covered with finger marks with a large red mark on his right buttock . . .

Before I could suggest an altogether simpler explanation than a close encounter with occupants of inter-planetary craft, Mr Soper was putting me right about the real facts of life.

"You must realise that it may seem like it's imagination but these marks are known to those people who investigate these things.

"And, of course, Ellis had been groggy for weeks afterwards," I pointed out helpfully.

But by then the treasurer had called for order to introduce the guest from afar, though apparently not as far as some may have hoped.

"So allow me to hand over to Ellis Taylor, E.T. I hope you are not too disappointed to find that he is human," joked Mr Ambler — well, at least I assume the editor of the group's *Awareness* magazine was joking.

The story of the abduction was to be briefly delayed as the treasurer remembered to deliver an impromptu OX-files review of what has been going on in, around and above Oxfordshire. "We have been busy with UFOs in the last few weeks. One report being investigated is at Syresham, just over the border in Northamptonshire.

"Less good news on the crop-circle front. The local group is not functioning well. I try to get around — but with petrol priced at 85p a litre — anyway, there was a strong showing at Aylesbury and Astel, near Burford. Garsington proved to be a false alarm."



■ Scrutiny . . . above the Inner Bookshop, UFO enthusiasts study the latest findings

Looking around at the 15 people listening intently, it was becoming increasingly difficult to believe that Contact International counts itself as the UK's third biggest UFO group, behind the British UFO Association and Quest in Yorkshire. Created in 1967 in Wheatley by the UFO enthusiast, Earl Clancarty (the author Brinsley Le Power Trench), today it has a membership of 250.

The group was bequeathed by Clancarty one of Britain's most impressive UFO libraries (housed at an unidentified house in Abingdon) and over the years it has collected details of more than 80,000 cases, including a full account of Oxfordshire's most famous "abduction" on June 19, 1978.

The story of how three adults and two small children driving in a car near Faringdon were intercepted by a large spaceship has been featured in such classic UFO books as *The Janos People: A Close Encounter of the Fourth*

Kind by Frank Johnson. But that's hardly surprising when you remember that the family were taken aboard for nearly an hour during which time they enjoyed a short trip in the immense flying saucer and saw on film how the Janos people lived.

The story goes that after passing through Stanford in the Vale, the family noticed a bright light in front, which seemed to be travelling at the same speed as their car. It was only some time later that members of the family all experienced "dream recall" of an adventure in a spacecraft. But John, his wife Gloria, their children Natasha (then aged five), Tanya, three, and John's sister Frances, were able to give enough detail to fill a 200-page book.

Today, Mr Soper, a former electrical technician at the Churchill Hospital, has the

(continued on page 13) 12

By REG LITTLE



Soper, looked refreshingly eccentric, with a bushy moustache, worthy of the man who took



■ E.T. . . . guest speaker Mr Ellis Taylor, from Australia

job of taking calls from UFO spotters. They are often put in touch with him by grateful police officers, who may not share his eagerness to record full details about bright balls of light or the pending colonisation of the earth.

Often the distraught callers seek to unburden themselves in the early hours of the morning.

"Yes, I do receive some of the weirdest calls," Mr Soper told me before I could even ask. "Not long ago, I took a call from a man who called to inform me that he had seen animals copulating on the moon through his telescope."

But then there has been a Cumnor couple who saw something like Concorde standing on its tail and gleaming with magnesium lights and an Otmoor girl who, while out with her boyfriend, came across a flying saucer hovering over a haystack.

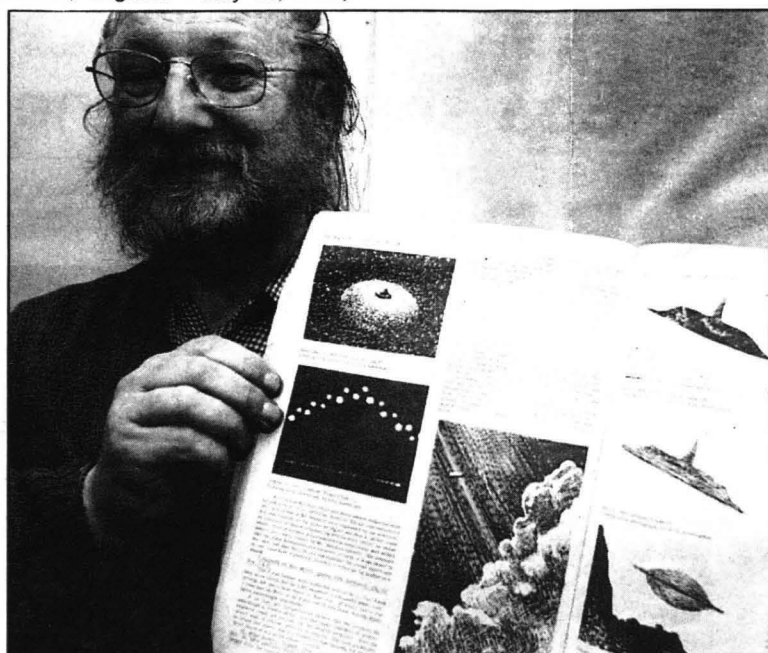
Somehow you know that Mr Soper would have given them all the polite and sympathetic hearing of a true believer, for he too has had his own precious

unidentified flying-object experience, which still burns brightly more than 40 years later. He had been walking in the Malvern Hills in Worcestershire when he saw something oscillating above a Valiant bomber.

"At that time, I was very interested in aviation and I knew it was too fast to be a plane," he recalled. "So I started to read up about UFOs."

Mrs Copeland, the membership secretary, began passing me pages of completed hand-written reports detailing more recent sightings. She first became involved with the group 18 years ago after seeing two big squares of bright light one bright June morning as she drove along the Oxford ring road, when she was then training in an accountants' office.

She has never managed to convince her husband, who remains a total UFO sceptic — a pity given that the size of membership has slipped significantly from a high point of 800 20 years ago. The problem would seem to be that Contact International is effectively being



■ Public relations . . . Mr Michael Soper with some early examples of 'sightings'

hi-jacked by the Internet.

"We produce a magazine to keep everyone up to date about the UFO scene," said Mrs Copeland. "But now there is such an enormous amount of material going straight on to the Internet." Some 3,000 websites at the last count, and growing.

World Ufology may be taking off as never before, it just seems that meetings above bookshops on wet Thursday nights are rather closer to the age of H.G. Wells than to the cyberspace revolution.

It turns out that even the shabby Inner Bookshop room is a bit of a luxury. "We normally have to meet in each other's homes," admitted Mr Ambler, a stamp dealer. "We have not held any big events since 1997, when we hosted a big conference at the Exeter Hall in Kidlington."

"We ended up losing money on that. I managed to get this room cheaply and just wait to see who turns up. There are usually a couple of strange faces."

Mr Taylor, the Oxford-born Australian, had

not proved to be the big draw that the Wheatley-based Contact International group had hoped for.

"The question remains whether they were, in fact, crease marks on his skin from the sheets or something more profound," said Mr Ambler afterwards. "I'm not entirely sure. We have to be an objective organisation. I do not believe in abductions as physical events. I see them more as something that takes in the mind."

Somehow it seemed the wrong moment to run my bad taste 'night of passion' theory past him.

It was still raining heavily as the small group finally dispersed down the wooden steps, after politely thanking Mr Taylor for giving them an exclusive viewing of his hour-long video, never before shown outside Australia. Slightly disheartened, the Contact International UFO researchers may have been, but on the way home you knew they would still be looking up to the sky.

SUNDAY SUN, Newcastle, England - June 18, 2000



By HUGH MACKNIGHT

☐ IS it a bird? Is it a hubcap? Who knows? But unlike our mocked-up picture they really ARE out there flying over the North, say classified documents just released on the orders of a Government watchdog.

☐ TWO out of five unidentified flying object sightings in Britain in the last two years were in this region, says the report from the secretive Government department Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a, which collate statistics.

☐ THE information was made public at the insistence of the Parliamentary Ombudsman after a request by Colin Ridyard, a research chemist from Wales seeking information on

Secret report released

sightings by pilots or radar operators between July 1998 and July 1999.

☐ THEY reveal that in February 1999 a pilot was startled when an "incandescent light" lit up his cockpit over the North Sea.

☐ THE shimmering ball, moving at incredible speed, was spotted by three more planes . . . yet air traffic controllers saw nothing. Five minutes later a weather station operator picked up a UFO on his radar.

☐ IN June 1999 a strange aircraft was spotted over the North Sea

again. A Boeing 757 airline pilot reported that an unidentified military-looking vehicle buzzed his aircraft flying in the opposite direction.

☐ IT is no surprise to North UFO expert Andrew Ellis. He said: "We've had a lot of sightings recently. People have reported seeing orange and yellow balls flying silently up and down the valleys."

☐ "THEY'RE similar to sightings by pilots in World War Two of balls of light following their planes, which they called Foo Fighters."

☐ DECLASSIFIED documents from June 1965 reveal that it was official Ministry of Defence policy to "play down" UFOs and "avoid attaching undue public attention or publicity to the subject . . . as a result we have never had any political pressure to mount a large-scale investigation".

☐ OTHER documents from that time say that unusual sightings "are in no circumstances to be disclosed to the press".

☐ ANDREW said: "The Government may be opening up more about this now, but you never know what reports they are holding back."

☐ "ALL the good stuff might be being dealt with 'in house'."

—Sea search planned for vanished plane—

Fresh light on UFO riddle



Missing: Frederick Valentich was a keen flyer.

By MARK DUNN

NEW evidence in Australia's most controversial UFO mystery has identified the likely spot a young pilot's plane may have crashed into Bass Strait.

Researchers have gained what they claim are fresh eyewitness accounts of an eerie green light that surrounded Frederick Valentich's ill-fated Cessna almost 22 years ago.

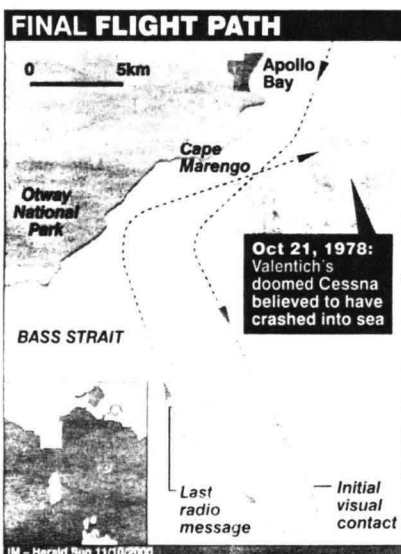
Valentich's dramatic disappearance off the Apollo Bay coast in Victoria's south-west on October 21, 1978, was recorded in radio transmissions he sent from his rented Cessna 182L to Melbourne airport.

Speculation about Valentich's disappearance has ranged from freak weather conditions and pilot disorientation to UFO abduction.

Former NASA scientist Richard Haines, who studied the case, includes in his theory the possibility of a secret military weapons test.

Now, new witness accounts of the plane and its position have sparked calls from the Valentich family and investigators for an undersea search for the aircraft wreck.

Valentich's mother, Alberta, has for two decades maintained hope for



some resolution of the mystery.

Mrs Valentich, who lost her husband Guido this year, yesterday issued her plea for assistance with the planned ocean search.

She said famed oceanographer Jacques Cousteau had before his death sought government permission several times to

look for the aircraft but was refused.

Mrs Valentich also revealed she received a call from an unidentified man in Russia shortly after her son's disappearance who said he would visit them but the phone call was cut off mid-conversation.

Her dying husband had expressed a belief that

Frederick Valentich may not have been killed.

"I don't think I'll see him where I am going," Mr Valentich told his wife shortly before he died.

More than 50 people reported seeing bright lights in the Cape Otway region on the night 20-year-old Valentich disappeared en route to King Island.

But the latest information comes from a man and his two nieces who are believed to be the last to see the Cessna.

They support the description of a green light hovering above the plane as detailed by Valentich to Tullamarine airport radio controller Steve Robey.

"They saw both the lights of a small aircraft

and a very large green light travelling directly above it," said Paul Norman, of the Victorian UFO Research Society, after interviewing the trio.

Mr Norman said the Apollo Bay man, aged 47 at the time, had initially told his wife but she didn't believe him.

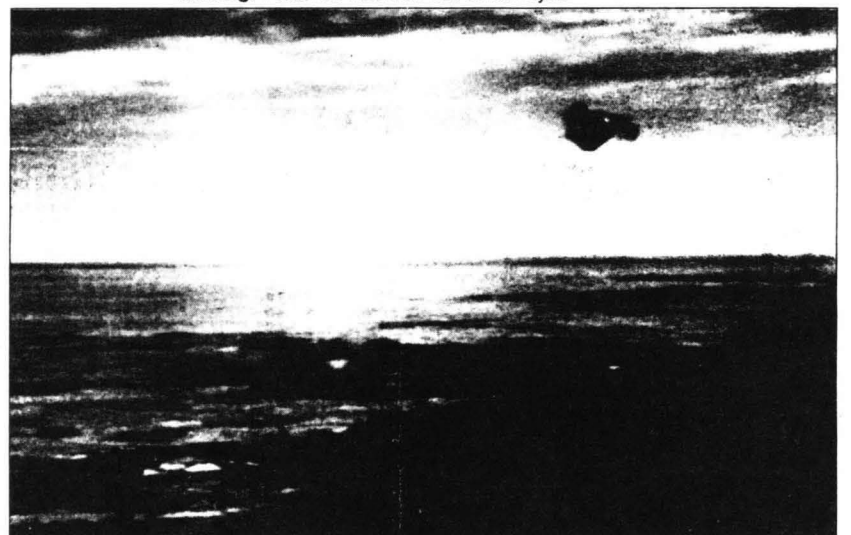
He failed to raise it until now because he feared

being ridiculed, Mr Norman said.

"We have tracked it as far as we can without an underwater search," he said.

The society and the Valentich family are appealing for help in mounting the sea search using sonar or video equipment.

They can be contacted on 9506 7080.



Mystery: a picture taken from Cape Otway minutes before the disappearance.

Final six minutes of a pilot lost in time

The following is an edited transcript of the six-minute, 35 second radio transmission between Tullamarine airport radio controller Steve Robey and Valentich on October 21, 1978.

Valentich: Melbourne, this is Delta Sierra Juliet. Is there any known traffic below five thousand?

Robey: There is no known traffic.

Valentich: I am, seems to be a large aircraft below five thousand.

Robey: What type of aircraft is it?

Valentich: I cannot affirm, it is four bright, it seems to me like landing lights.

Valentich: Melbourne, the aircraft has just passed over me at least a thousand feet above.

Robey: Roger, and it is a large aircraft, confirmed?

Valentich: Er, unknown due to the speed it is travelling. Is there any air force aircraft in the vicinity?

Robey: No known aircraft in the vicinity.

Valentich: Melbourne, it's approaching now from due east towards me.

Valentich: It seems to me that he's

playing some sort of game, he's flying over me two, three times at speeds I could not identify.

Robey: What is your actual level?

Valentich: My level is four and a half thousand: four, five, zero, zero.

Valentich: Melbourne, it's not an aircraft, it is ...

Robey: Can you describe the, er, aircraft?

Valentich: As it's flying past it's a long shape ... cannot identify more than, it has such speed ... it's right before me now Melbourne.

Robey: Roger, how large would the, er, object be?

Valentich: Melbourne, it seems like it is stationary. What I'm doing now is orbiting and the thing is just orbiting on top of me also. It's got a green light and sort of metallic like, it's all shiny on the outside.

Valentich: ... it's just vanished.

Valentich: Melbourne, would you know what kind of aircraft I've got? Is it a military aircraft?

Robey: Is the aircraft still with you?

Valentich: It is now approaching from the south-west.

Valentich: The engine is rough-idling. I've got it set at twenty-three, twenty-four and the thing is coughing.

Robey: Roger, what are your intentions?

Valentich: My intentions are, ah, to go to King Island, ah, Melbourne. That strange aircraft is hovering on top of me again. It is hovering and it's not an aircraft.

Valentich: Melbourne ... (microphone remains open for 17 seconds and a strange pulsed noise is heard but nothing more from Valentich).

UFO conference proves big draw

By **CHUCK TOBIN**
Star Reporter

Overwhelming attendance at a Yukon UFO conference held over the weekend proves the growing interest in unidentified flying objects (UFOs), says the event's main organizer.

"I think there has been a lot of sightings up in the Yukon, and there was a great line-up of speakers," Martin Jasek said in a post-conference interview this morning.

While the \$25,000-budget was based on an audience of 150, early last week, Jasek was estimating 120.

When the conference opened Saturday at 1 p.m., it was sitting room only. By the time the agenda closed near 11:00 that night, 304 people had paid their \$10 to hear eyewitness accounts and stories of government conspiracies to dispel UFO believers.

It was a conference designed to encourage more open discussion of UFO sightings, to reduce the ridicule of those who report seeing something unexplainable by modern technology.

To that end, said Jasek, it was a success, from the opening words of Yukon NDP MP Louise Hardy to the \$17,000 the Yukon government contributed through its millennium projects fund.

"I was impressed by how serious Martin was, the fact that he has a very scientific background and he wanted to bring the study of unidentified flying objects to the forefront," Hardy said in her opening remarks.

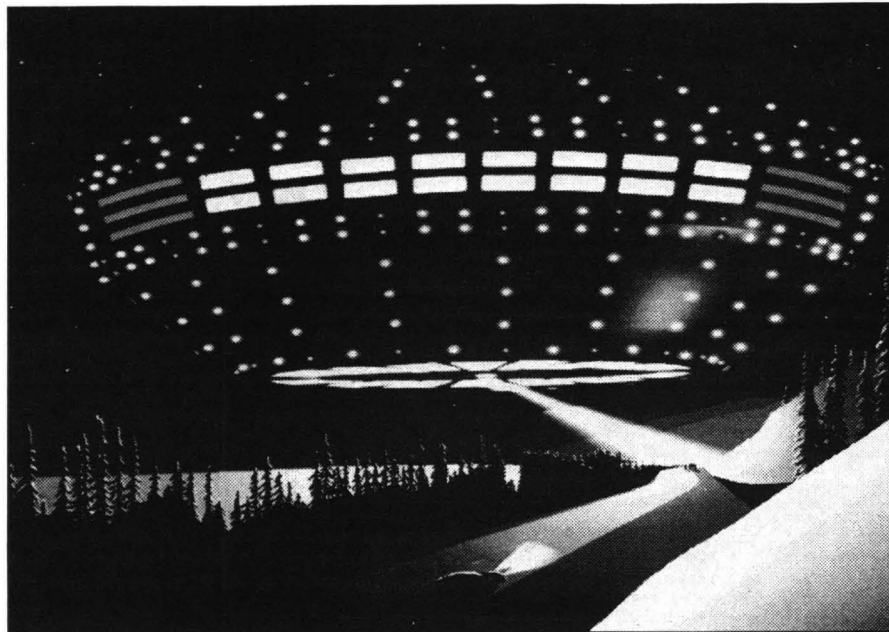
"I think Martin's drive and curiosity is so important because it is about what it is around us, not just over our own planet, because there is a lot around us."

In the hallways during the breaks, there was a story here and a story there from audience members who didn't speak but were there in search of commonality.

"I just wanted to hear how similar other experiences were to mine," said Tracie Harris, who witnessed a flying saucer in 1958 while attending the University of Alberta. "At that time, you didn't talk about it. Everybody would have thought you were a kook."

Internationally-renowned UFO researcher and author Stan Friedman, told the audience it's time to shed the neurosis about unidentified flying objects. Humankind will be spending a lot of time in space this coming century, and it should learn it's not the biggest kid in the neighbourhood when it comes to space travel.

The man who's led the attack on the U.S. government for its apparent cover-up of the flying saucers that crashed near Roswell, New Mexico in 1947 wasn't shy about calling the U.S. air force a liar, and backing it up with what he maintained was solid proof. He pointed to several cases of what he called exercises in disinformation by



Drawing Courtesy of UFO B.C. SPECIAL REPORT #1

STRANGE PHENOMENON - This is an artist's rendering of the UFO that was seen by at least 31 people in 1996, from Fox Lake to Mayo. Indications are that it may have been the size of several football fields.



HELEN NEUFELD

the U.S. government.

The biggest naysayers, Friedman told the audience, are often ignorant of the facts, have not done the level of research required to substantiate their dismissals of UFOs or purposely mislead their listeners.

There is just too much overwhelming evidence to dismiss UFOs as real, says the nuclear physicist who worked in private industry in the 1960s on the development of an advanced nuclear rocket for the U.S. airforce.

Since 1967, Friedman has travelled around the world presenting his lecture program, *Flying Saucers are Real*.

The National UFO reporting centre in Seattle receives 5,000 calls a year, Peter Davenport, the centre's director, told the packed house.

"The question is not are all UFOs alien spacecraft; the question is are any? And the answer is yes," said Friedman.

Alberta psychologist Helen Neufeld, who has over 30 years' experience in the field of hypnosis, has worked with individuals - she doesn't like to use the word abductee - who maintain they experienced encounters with alien life forms.

"I have no doubt whatsoever about the fact that there are other intelligent beings in other universes, and, in fact, many of them are coming here," she said.

She said there are ancient pictographs around the world that depict alien life forms in spacemen-like shapes, as far back as 15,000 years ago.

"They are simply found everywhere," she said.

Neufeld said not even the United States had aircraft as far back as the 1950s that could turn instantly at right angles, while travelling very, very fast, at supersonic speeds.

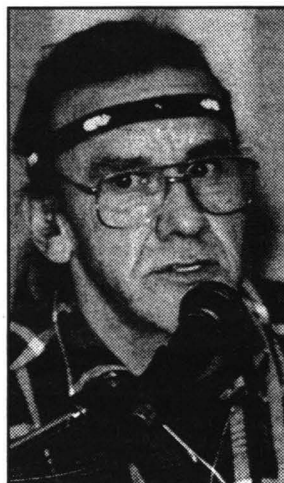
Jasek told the audience that 293 UFO sightings in the Yukon are on record, of which 147 have been documented and 146 need more follow-up.

Thirty-eight per cent of the sightings had two witnesses and 11 per cent of the sightings were witnessed by five people or more.

The spike in local UFO sightings that occurred here in 1975-77 corresponded with an increase in reports around the world, said Jasek.

And since 1996, sightings recorded annually have been on the increase, with a peak of 25 in 1997 and 13 or 14 so far this year, one as recently as last month.

Yukon reports of unidentified flying objects referred to by Jasek date back as far as the 1930s, with a sight-



DON TRUDEAU

ings reported from Hunker Creek in the Dawson area.

The conference organizer told of a two Lake Laberge residents who witnessed a triangular UFO; four boys who encountered a UFO while walking along a road in Wolf Creek; a mother in a car-full of children who watched an unidentified object hover over a Porter Creek home; the case of two boys on a snowmobiles whose encounter was so close, they could feel the heat from the UFO; the case of an ambulance en route to Whitehorse with a patient from Haines Junction that was followed by an unidentified object, and the attendants who called the RCMP to report their concern; a prospector who tells of a red-shaped disc over Montana Mountain near Carcross; and the list goes on.

Of the two eyewitness accounts given by Yukoners, one involved a recreational therapist who recently moved from the territory, but tells of two encounters.

Colette Oppen told the audience that one incident was experienced by she

and her older daughter along Hamilton Boulevard. Recent hypnosis, she and the renowned hypnotist Neufeld told the audience, has given her cause to believe she was taken aboard or at least detained in some fashion by the UFOs.

Jasek detailed the multi-witness, Dec. 11, 1996 sighting of what's being described as a giant UFO seen by 31 Yukoners, from Fox Lake, through Carmacks, Pelly Crossing and Mayo.

Motorists who saw the UFO at or around 8 p.m. as they were in the Fox Lake area describe the UFO as being up to a kilometre or two wide, Jasek said. Some five or six motorists stopped in at the Braeburn Lodge, one after the other, to relay their experience to the owner, and each drew a picture.

They told of rows of lights, and a couple of the motorists recalled a search lights beaming down from the object.

It was there, said Jasek, that the case opened up.

There were eyewitness accounts from Carmacks to Pelly to Mayo of a humongous UFO, so large that it blacked out the stars as it passed overhead.

One youth in Pelly who was crossing the Pelly River Bridge hit the bridge out of fear as the object passed by, and his grandmother tells of how unnerved the youth was when he recounted his experience to her.

Don Trudeau, a Pelly Crossing resident who is the assistant director of self-government for the Selkirk First Nation, was out on his trapline.

"My first thought, it was a plane coming down, a 747 or something," Trudeau told the audience. "I turned my focus a bit more and at that point, I knew it was not a plane. It was a UFO."

Trudeau said as he looked toward the object, his headlight pointed directly toward it and instantly, the craft moved toward him at unbelievable speed, to within 250 or 275 metres.

"At that point, I could not see the whole thing. I had to turn my head to take it all in."

In the middle of the UFO, said Trudeau, there were about 100 lights stretching across its girth, measuring two metres in height and six to nine metres in width.

About 50 metres higher up on the object, there was a row of seven much larger lights spreading horizontally across the object.

"Also, out the back there were two lights that were pointing down," he said, adding there was a search-type light pointing out the front.

"As all this was happening, it is still moving slowly, slowly to my right."

Trudeau told the audience he took four steps, briefly taking his eyes off the object to position himself in a better spot to follow it as it moved.

By time he'd take the four steps, it was gone.

"Immediately after, I thought, 'Jesus, what just happened?' There was no noise from this thing, there was no wind."

"Something this big, could move move along as slowly, as quietly, and defy gravity as I know it?... It was a real eye-opener for me."

The weekend's keynote speakers and local organizers of the event were meeting today in a workshop to develop means of promoting public reporting, and reducing the ridicule factor further.

MIDSUSSEX TIMES, Haywards Heath, England - Aug. 24, 2000

Astronomers spot UFO over town

AMATEUR astronomers are searching for clues to the identity of a mystery object sighted in the skies over Burgess Hill on Monday.

William and Deborah Ripley-Duggan had been watching meteor showers and were observing the Milky Way on the clear, still night from their back garden in Chanctonbury Road.

At around 11pm, Deborah spotted a flying object described by William as "like

an arrowhead formation with dim, orange glowing lights."

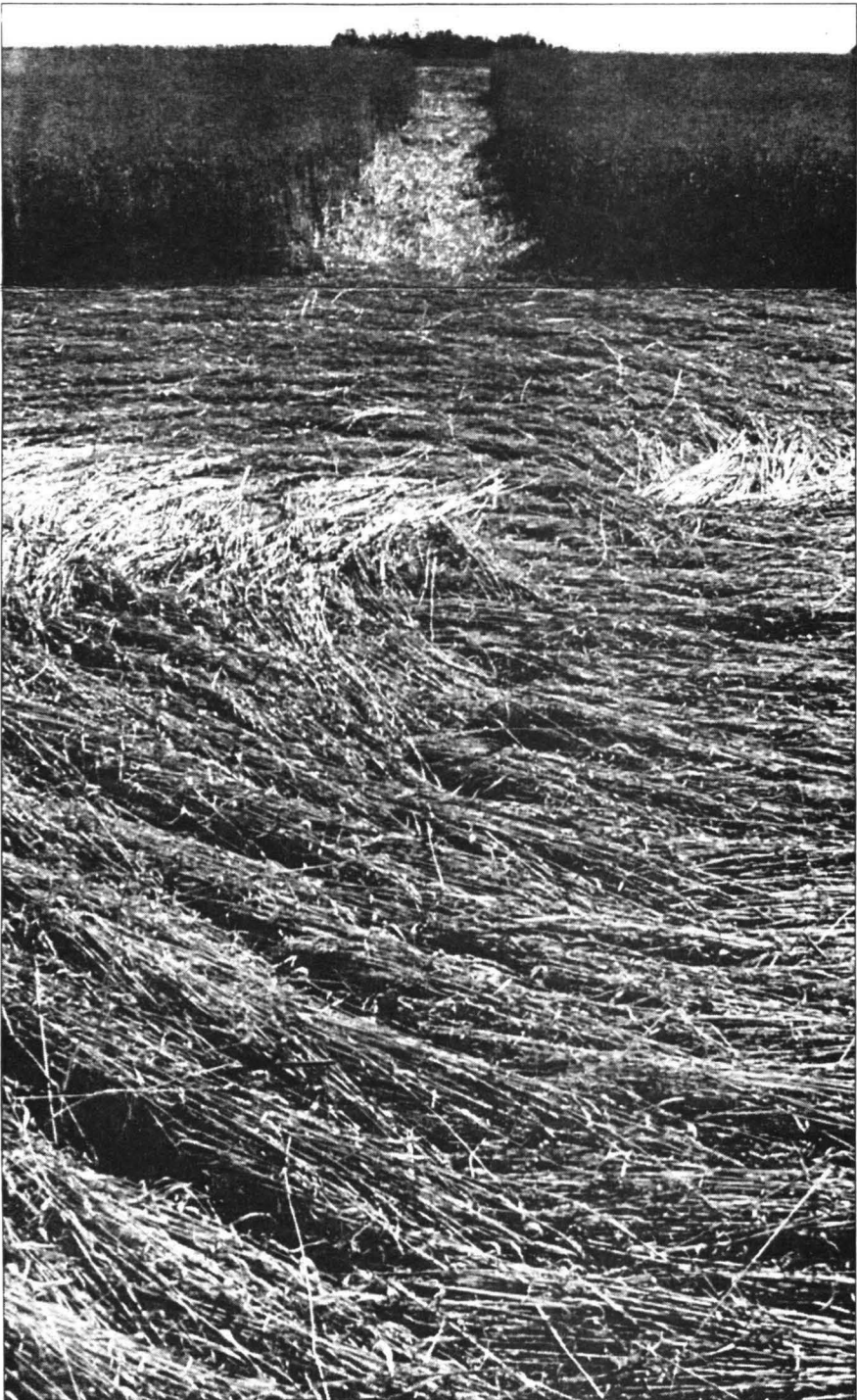
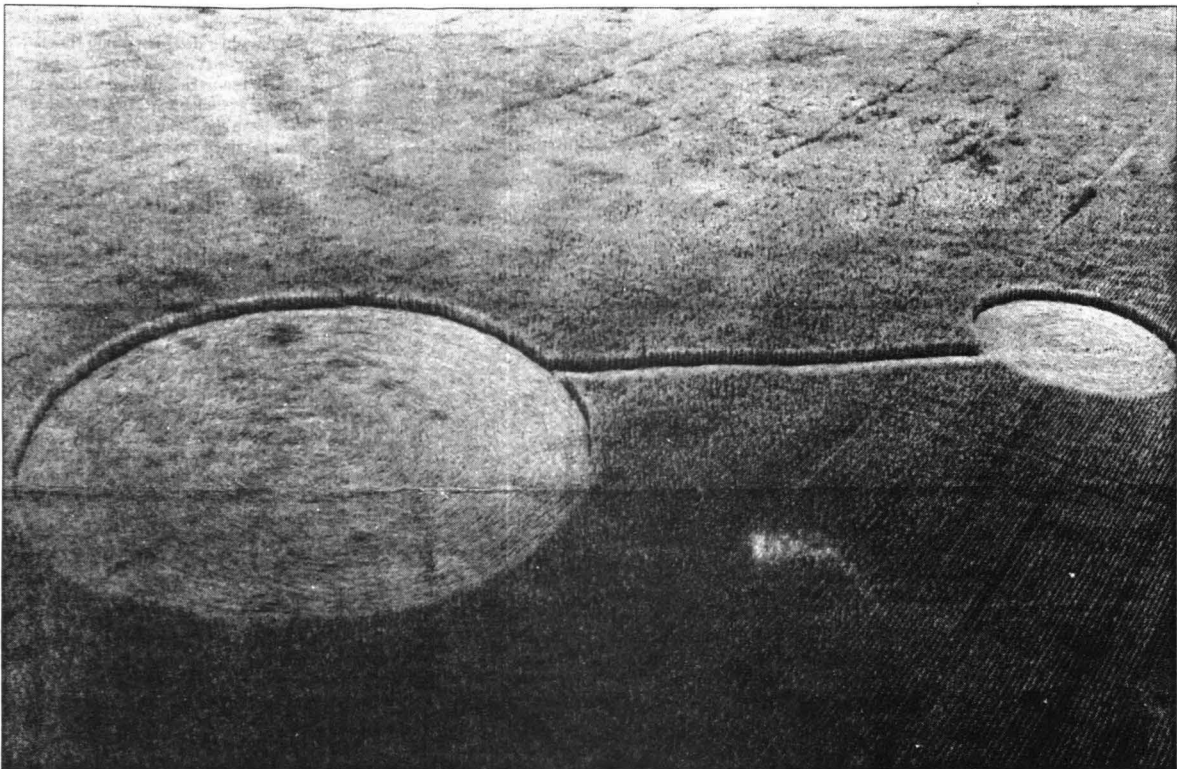
William, who has been watching the skies for 10 years, said: "We were looking at it with binoculars for 2 or 3 seconds. It was at 1-2,000 ft and passed over in complete silence, very fast."

Deborah described the sighting as "mind blowing" and said her husband had said UFOs did not exist until the sighting: "He has always been a non-believer and there

it was in front of him, he could not deny it any more."

William and Deborah stressed the UFO may not have been visible to those whose eyes were not accustomed to the dark and would like to hear from other astronomers who may have been observing the sky on Monday night.

* Did you see the UFO? Contact Katherine Simmons at the Middy newsdesk on (01444) 452201.



Crop circles

These crop circles appeared in a field just northeast of Moosomin recently, flattening part of Murray Bruce's wheat crop. The field is a mile north and a mile and a half east of Moosomin Airport. Many local people have gone out to see the crop circles, and a path into the site from the road allowance is marked with survey stakes. The crop circles were first spotted by local crop duster Joe Mitchell. The larger circle is about 100 feet across. Local pilot Marshall McLeod, who took the aerial photo at top, says he has only seen two similar formations from the air. The first time was 22 years ago near Spy Hill, and the second time was in 1996, when two large crop circles showed up in a field near Rocanville. There are many theories about crop circles, attributing them to everything from pranksters to naturally occurring phenomena. One research group based in Cambridge, Mass. has conducted scientific studies on crop circles, and while it has attributed some to hoaxes, the BLT Research Team has published studies in journals including *Nature* and *Physiologia Plantarum* that point to a natural cause for the crop circles — swirling balls of energy that flatten crops when they hit the ground.

EVENING TIMES, Glasgow, Scotland - Aug. 26, 2000

SCOTTISH X Files

BY RON HALLIDAY

Alive and kicking in depths of the earth

COULD there be a race of beings living underground in Scotland? And does this explain where UFOs and loch monsters come from?

Through the centuries many have believed the earth is hollow, and that passages from the surface lead to this underground world.

It is claimed that part of this secret passageway links the lochs of Scotland, so the creature hiding in Loch Ness can move between there and the sea, or to other lochs.

But could a civilisation have been set up in the bowels of the earth, with secret technology and the ability to visit other planets?

It has been suggested that centuries ago the earth was peopled by civilisations as advanced as our own. But they became involved in nuclear and germ warfare. The evidence for this is in the vast deserts of Africa and Asia, the blasted mountain-tops of the islands of Mull and Skye, and the disappearance overnight of 10,000 species of animals.

Bizarre diseases like AIDS and the Black Death, which appear from nowhere, may be the result of this ancient warfare.

To escape the effects of radiation and deadly viruses the survivors hid in ancient caves and mines.

The evidence for this bizarre subterranean civilisation comes from across the globe.

Could Nessie get to the sea and other lochs by passageways underground?

One of Scotland's earliest ghost hunters, William Linsell, made a weird discovery in St Andrews. He had become obsessed by accounts that a group of strangely-shaped people lived below ground.

Linsell unearthed a network of secret tunnels running under the town which seemed to connect all the main buildings.

But more strange than that, they seemed to run deep into the earth, although they were blocked by rocks.

He came to believe that identical systems existed in all the main Scottish towns and that they were connected in some bizarre communication system.

Linsell wasn't the only one fixated by underground civilisations. The mystery disappearance of Colonel Percy Fawcett in 1926 while exploring South America continues to fascinate students of the occult.

Fawcett believed a tribe of advanced people inhabited an underground world beneath the Amazon forest.

And then there's the mystery of UFOs. Where do they go when they're not speeding through the Scottish sky? They may be heading underground.

William Balfour claims to have seen shiny disc-shaped objects burrowing into the earth on hills near the village of Kinbuck.

DAILY STAR, London, England
Oct. 16, 2000 CR: N. Oliver

HITLER HAD ALIEN HELP

ADOLF HITLER used alien weapons against us in the war, a UFO researcher claimed yesterday. Robert Lesniakiewicz says a flying saucer crash-landed near the home of his mistress, Eva Braun. SS troops transported it to German scientists, who adapted the alien technology to create flying bombs and new forms of aircraft.

Polish researcher Robert reckons the Hitler link explains the Roswell UFO incident in 1947.

The researcher, who unveiled his theories in an international UFO magazine, said: "I am told German prototypes were later taken to a test area in New Mexico, USA."

"Might the Roswell UFO have been a Nazi flying disc? This is a possible explanation."



Mailman joins the hunt for a marsupial that's a fair way from home

A roo in the rough?



Roo or false? A sympathetically attired Harris points his telescope in the direction of the last sighting

Picture: MIKE FORSTER



Paul Harris
on safari in
South London

Holed up on an English golf course, mystery beast with a strange cry and a big kick

IT COULDN'T have looked much like the Outback.

First there was the climate: dull, grey and drizzly. Then there was the landscape. Not the lush, eucalyptus-rich terrain of the Australian bush, more the damp green parkland of suburban England.

And, of course, the biggest giveaway of all... small groups of Pommies whacking little white balls around and shouting *Fore!*

But despite the alien elements, Chippy the errant kangaroo appears to have settled in quite nicely to his new surroundings at Beckenham Place Park Golf Course, near Lewisham, South-East London.

There have been at least four reported sightings of a large roo-like creature bounding through woodland and across fairways around the 15th and 17th holes.

And not just sightings. Strange noises have been heard in the trees, and an elderly woman complained last week that her small dog was propelled from the undergrowth by 'something with a powerful kick'.

A large footprint has been photographed by council officials and sent for analysis.

True, no one has actually encountered a giant marsupial breaking its 40mph stride to ask the way to Sydney (or even Sydenham).

But like so many of these beastly tales, facts have a habit of being swamped by legend.

So yesterday, in full Crocodile Dundee monty, I went on a South London safari in search of the truth. Or at least, the strewth.

Alas, the source of the original report was impossible to trace. An unidentified male golfer apparently spotted the animal just as he was lining up a shot.

Mary Tidnam, bar manageress at the golf club, is a hardened veteran of hard-luck stories at the 19th hole, but even she was persuaded.



Rumbled:
ATV crew
spiced up
its report of
the mystery
by bringing
along its
own fancy-
dress
kangaroo,
which was
promptly
set upon
by an
excitable
dog

'People make up all kinds of stories to cover up the fact that they've messed up a shot,' she said. 'But this guy was adamant. They were still talking about it when they came back.'

Players pinned up kangaroo Wanted posters in the bar and coined the nickname Chippy (as in 'a short chip to the green' for the uninitiated). Others sang Rolf Harris songs on route to the first tee.

After separate sightings from at least three people, rumour quickly became fact. Well, sort of fact. One of the alleged witnesses described

the creature as 'bloody gigantic', thus lending immediate weight to the belief that this was in fact *macropus giganteus*, Australia's legendary Eastern Grey kangaroo.

Lewisham Council's two-strong animal welfare team (it doesn't have a kangaroo department) visited the park twice in search of evidence, snapping the aforementioned footprint at the 17th.

Suggestions that the print might belong to a dog did not impress council spokesman Richard Rose. 'I've got size 11 feet, and it was bigger than my footprint. It would have to be an enormous

dog,' he said. It wasn't long before the council realised that flippancy alone might not be entirely appropriate.

Local banner headlines proclaiming: 'Lewisham Woman Boxed To Death By Giant Roo' would not have been great PR.

Mayor David Sullivan was dispatched to the scene, although it must be said that he took some coaxing to treat the matter with due seriousness.

'Someone first told me the story in a pub, so I thought it was probably a wind-up,' he said. 'Then I

'I'm told they can turn nasty'

heard that the council was gathering evidence, so I assumed we were taking it seriously.

'However, I must add that I've been in this area for 20 years, and never seen a single kangaroo as far as I can recall.'

In the spirit of public service, he gave much thought to what advice he might offer residents if they found themselves face-to-face with the imposter.

'Leg it,' he said. 'Or at least hop it. I'm told that kangaroos can sometimes turn nasty.'

Others came up with recipe suggestions (there was one for Kangaroo Medallions with Champagne and Apricot Sauce; and the course restaurant was helpfully offering Roo in the Hole yesterday). Quite

why a 6ft kangaroo might make its home in Lewisham remains unclear.

There is a local museum that keeps wallabies but yesterday they were all present and correct.

There was also a circus in town but it was the animal-free variety and didn't even boast a clown in a roo suit - which is more than could be said for one of the TV crews attracted by the fuss.

In its native surroundings, the kangaroo has been gradually pushed out of its habitat by ceaseless development. Much like the people of Lewisham, someone remarked.

But surprisingly, the golf course might actually be a good place for a runaway roo to settle.

The World Wide Fund for Nature said kangaroos tend to laze in the shade during the day (there was plenty of shade in Beckenham Place Park yesterday) and graze, mainly on grass (ditto).

The park even offers a collection of exotic companions. Parakeets fly wild there, refugees from an aviary wrecked in the great storm.

A young local could be heard telling an American TV crew that boxing champion Nigel Benn had a house just a few hundred yards from the 17th. 'It's obviously looking for a fight,' he said.

By the time darkness fell the theory seemed no less feasible than all the rest. By any jump of the imagination.

p.harris@dailymail.co.uk

Bigfoot body imprint reportedly uncovered

By Theo Stein
Denver Post Environment Writer

Researchers in the Pacific Northwest believe they've obtained the first clear body imprint of a sasquatch, evidence they hope will spur serious research on the ape of legend.

The imprint was found by a team of researchers in a mud wallow near Mount Adams in southern Washington on Sept. 22, according to an announcement Monday from Idaho State University.

Skeptics dismissed the reported evidence of bigfoot, as the never-captured animal is also called. "All they have are anecdotes and anecdotal data," said one.

But impressions of what appeared to be a large hairy forearm, buttock, thigh and heel recorded in the mud were all roughly 50 percent bigger than a 6-foot tall man, said Jeffrey Meldrum, a physical anthropologist at Idaho State University who's one of the few active academic bigfoot researchers.

Meldrum said the sasquatch appeared to be lying on its side as it reached into the center of the wallow for apples and nectarines the team used as bait.

While it's not definitive proof of

bigfoot, the cast constitutes "significant and compelling new evidence" that Meldrum hopes will stimulate further research into the possible presence of these primates in the mountains of the Northwest and elsewhere.

The anthropological establishment rejects theories that sasquatch, which has loomed large in northwestern and Colorado lore, could possibly exist. Most scientists steer well clear of even talking about Meldrum's work.

"If you believe bigfoot, it's most likely you believe in Loch Ness and the lost continent of Atlantis," said Michael Shermer, publisher of Skeptic Magazine and author of "Why People Believe Weird Things." Bigfoot advocates "are tapping into an open-mindedness that borders on gullibility," he said, adding that there is only anecdotal evidence of its existence.

But Walter Hartwig, a California anthropologist who specializes in fossilized South American monkeys, defended Meldrum's work.

"What Jeff does is bring science to bear on observations that relate to the concept of bigfoot," Hartwig said. "Professional anthropologists may sneer at this because they believe in their hearts that the concept of bigfoot is impossible."

Meldrum supervised the final cleaning of the mud-caked 200-pound plaster cast of the imprint, which was also examined by four other bigfoot experts. They agreed it could not be attributed to any known animal.

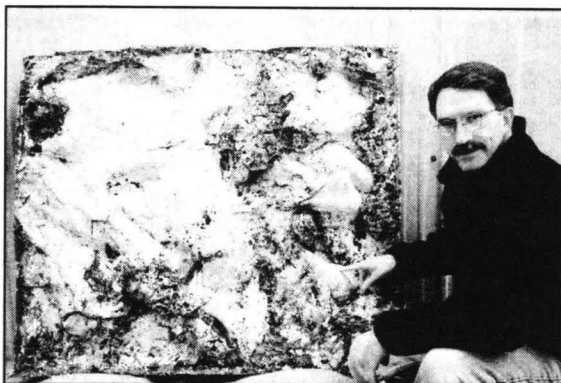
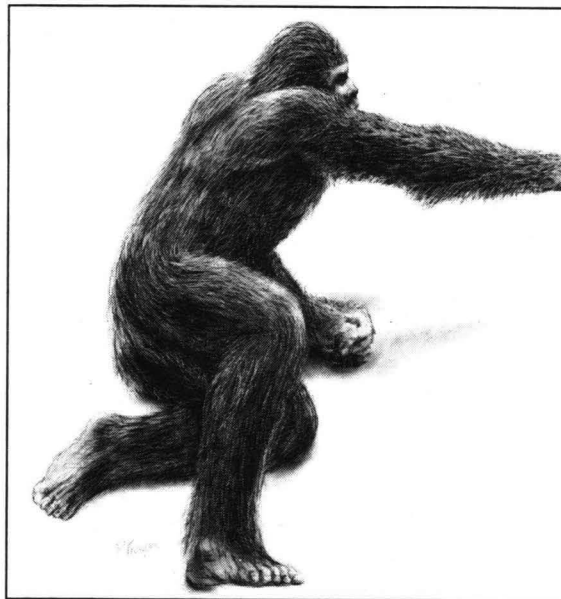
Several bags of hair plucked from the cast by Meldrum were examined by Henner Fahrenbach, an Oregon biomedical research scientist. Most came from elk, deer, or coyotes.

But one fragment matched unidentified primate hairs previously collected near other sasquatch sightings, he said.

"It wasn't a lot, but people are convicted in court every day on as much," said Fahrenbach.

The investigative team used a thermal imager loaned by a television production crew to track the animal and found its footprints, according to expedition leader Matthew Moneymaker, an attorney who heads the Bigfoot Field Researcher's Organization.

The team also broadcast tape-recorded calls of a sasquatch into the night — and received replies, said



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A drawing, top, depicts sasquatch in a reaching position that researchers believe the creature was in when the imprint was made. (Fruit had been set out in a wallow as bait.) Anthropologist Jeffrey Meldrum, above, points to imprint made in southern Washington.

Moneymaker.

One reply was uncomfortably nearby. "The guys closest to it were petrified," he said. "These are obviously loud noises, much louder than any other animal out there."

While Meldrum says the find "may represent an unknown ani-

mal," Moneymaker is certain it was made by a sasquatch.

"I'm 100 percent confident of that," he said. "It was clearly a hominid-shaped thing, except that it was 40 to 50 percent larger than a human, and it was covered by hair."

Corn leaves mysteriously fall from sky

By RANDY HAWKINS
LTN Staff Writer

It was raining fodder Wednesday afternoon in downtown Lincoln.

Corn stalk leaves up to three feet in length fell from the sky around 2 p.m., according to several witnesses.

"It wasn't like they blew off a truck," said Lincoln County Sheriff's Detective Kelly Clemmer, who noticed something falling and looked up to see more objects floating down.

"They were really high in the air," sheriff's Lt. Ronnie Matthews said. "You could barely see the specks."

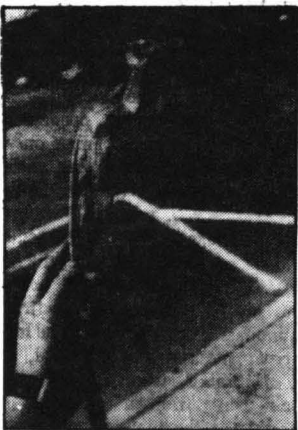
"It was pretty amazing," said Assistant District Attorney Rick Shaffer.

The corn leaves fell around the Courtsquare and in other sections of the city.

"I saw them all over the place. They were all over town," said Lincoln Police Officer William Vaughn, who didn't see the leaves falling. "I just saw them all over the street."

"I really don't have a good explanation," said Kevin Starr, director of the Lincoln County Cooperative Extension Service, which assists farmers.

"I really can't think of any meteorological reason why that would happen," said Doug Out-



LTN photo by Joseph Brymer

A corn leaf that measures nearly a yard in length was found on the Courtsquare after witnesses reported seeing fodder falling from the sky.

law, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service regional office in Greenville, S.C. "That is highly unusual."

Winds were generally light in the area Wednesday afternoon, Outlaw noted. "If there weren't any strong thunderstorms, there wouldn't have been any mechanism to sustain (the leaves) in the air for a long time."

Terry Benthall, data program manager with the Greenville office, said no storms had occurred in the region or in Tennessee that could have carried the leaves aloft.

"Really we don't have any explanation," Benthall said. He speculated that a dust devil — a miniature whirlwind — might have been responsible for the phenomenon.

Starr said some farmers in the area may have been harvesting corn.

Corn stalk leaves were found earlier in the week deposited a few miles from Lincoln at homes on Bethel Church Road and Buffalo Shoals Road, according to residents. Those leaves also apparently fell from the sky.

Said Starr: "Just be glad it wasn't ears of corn."

ADVOCATE, Baton Rouge, LA - Sept. 9, 2000 CR: W. Theriot

Evidence mounting against 'Bigfoot'

By KEVIN BLANCHARD
Acadiana bureau

COTTON ISLAND — Newly analyzed evidence in the two-week Bigfoot hunt seems to support law enforcement's opinion that someone's milking the long-legged legend for all it's worth.

Herds of people have been combing this heavily wooded area of northeast Rapides Parish since the end of August, when two loggers reported seeing the hairy creature.

Investigators found strands of hair lying on a log near 16 tracks in a dried-out creek bed.

But a scientist in Oregon says the hair likely belongs to a cow — not Sasquatch.

State Wildlife and Fisheries agents have said the whole thing's a hoax. The Rapides Parish Sheriff's Office has even said they plan on investigating the hoax as a crime.

The jury of public opinion seems ready to issue a Bigfoot-does-not-exist verdict. But the cow hairs do not close this case, the scientist said.

W. H. Fahrenbach, with the Oregon Regional Primate Research Center studied the hairs, which were sent to him by Pineville firefighter Scott Kessler. Kessler is the Louisiana investigator for the Bigfoot Field Research Organization.

In an e-mail to Kessler, Fahrenbach said the hairs are three to four times thicker than the samples of believed Sasquatch hairs Fahrenbach has seen.

The pigment granules in the hair are coarse — unlike human and Bigfoot hairs, Fahrenbach wrote.

Cow hairs at the scene don't mean Bigfoot wasn't there, Kessler said.

"I still believe they saw something that day in the bayou," Kessler said.

Kessler also said the bait shop owner, Mary Ward, is not selling T-shirts and tickets to see the Bigfoot tracks, as the Sheriff's Office has reported.

The Sheriff's Office sent away its own samples to be analyzed at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine.

Pat Edwards, a spokeswoman for the school, said scientists studied the hair sample, but couldn't determine anything from the one strand supplied.

They sent the strand to Mary Manhein with LSU Forensic Anthropology and Computer Enhancement Services, Edwards said. The FACES lab was closed Friday.

In Friday's Alexandria Town Talk, Sheriff's Maj. Michael Slocum said his department isn't finished investigating. They want to know what type of cow provided the hair.

Cryptic comment

Re "UFOs and sasquatches are what make this world great" David Bly Calgary Herald Aug. 28.

Unfortunately, in an essay that tries to be funny are incorrect statements. Let me attempt to address a few.

First, you say "cryptozoology" is not in the dictionary. Various new editions of well-known North American and English dictionaries began carrying "cryptozoology" as an entry in the late 1990s. Dictionaries in Europe began defining "cryptozoology" earlier, during the last decade, due in part to the fact the word was first coined in French, by a Belgian, Dr. Bernard Heuvelmans, in the 1950s. Cryptozoology A to Z, which was published by Simon and Schuster in 1999, has 200 encyclopedic listings in an alphabetical format which might be helpful in learning more about the subject. Cryptozoology is taken seriously by a growing number of academics, scholars and the general public. It is not just an Internet inhabitant.

Secondly, the column appears to misstate and perhaps misunderstand the process of discovery. To say that cryptozoologists "aren't bothered" by having the handicap of not having "actual specimens" may be a nice journalistic bit of phrasing, but it misses the point. Cryptozoology is the study of hidden animals; so as soon as an animal is verified, for example, by having an actual specimen in hand, the animal is no longer a cryptid. A cryptid discovered is no longer an unknown. The list of such "discoveries" is composed of several well-known examples, including the pygmy hippo and the mountain gorilla of Africa, the soala and four new muntjacs of Southeast Asia, the coelacanth of Africa, and hundreds of other "new" animals. Once an actual specimen is taken, it's a new animal and within the realm of the exact subarea of its study, within the broader field of zoology, but not a primary focus of cryptozoology.

Next, you comment that "People have seen things they believe are sasquatch... I don't doubt for a minute that they saw something. I just don't draw the same conclusions they do." Needless to say, that is your right. But you mix apples and oranges, belief systems and science. Cryptozoology builds its database on many forms of evidence. Eyewitness accounts by credible, down-to-earth folks do form a solid foundation of our investigations. But cryptozoology is not about "belief." Believing is the realm of religion, and cryptozoology, like all sciences, is about gathering the data and evidence to develop trends, patterns, and evidence which lead to hard facts and discoveries.

Loren Coleman
Portland, Maine

LOREN COLEMAN IS AN ADJUNCT PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE WHERE HE TEACHES A COURSE ON DOCUMENTARY FILM THAT INCLUDES THE EXAMINATION OF CRYPTOZOLOGICAL FILMS.

I absolutely hate it when people lump cryptozoology in with ufology. The two are completely unrelated. Also, while the Internet lists do tend to get bogged down with idle gossip from people with little insight into the subject, it does not render the entire field of cryptozoology unscientific.

How are we supposed to discover new species without looking for them, using standard scientific principles? And why should there not be a branch of science dedicated to this? It would seem that you have not gone to the effort of attempting to sort the wheat from the chaff.

Kirsty Pope
London, England

CR: W. Benedict

Try your hand at cracking the uncrackable

Mathematician sets site on manuscript

By A.S. Berman
USA TODAY

Anyone who has ever poked a nose into a lavishly illustrated book only to find the text written in an unfamiliar language knows something of Rene Zandbergen's frustration.

For more than five years, the German mathematics analyst has worked to unravel the mysteries contained in the Voynich Manuscript, a 361-year-old volume whose text has so far defied all attempts at translation.

Of Net interest Colorful illustrations depicting herbs, stars and tiny people suggest the book contains sections on astronomy, pharmaceuticals and recipes — but no one can say for sure.

"I think (the manuscript) was written by someone whose mental processes we can't really fathom," Zandbergen says.

Since the book found a permanent home in Yale's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library in 1969, only qualified scholars have had the opportunity to examine its enigmatic pages.

The World Wide Web has changed all that. Last year, Zandbergen launched a Voynich Manuscript site, which features a detailed history of the 235-page book, as well as speculation on its possible origins and links to photographs of the volume's unusual text and illustrations.

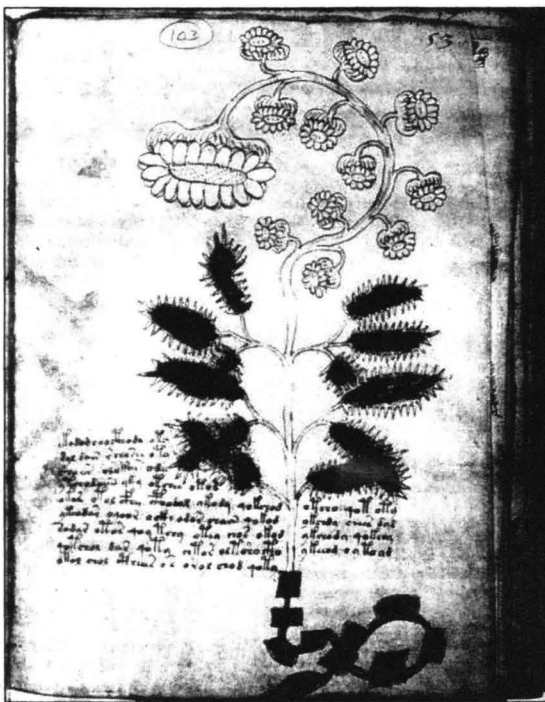
Thanks to the Web site, those with an Internet connection and a little free time now can try their hand at cracking one of history's few truly uncrackable codes.

The book "attracts a great deal of attention," says Christa Sammons, curator of the German literature collection at Yale's Beinecke Library.

With the Web site, people online "can all talk to each other easily, which intensifies the phenomenon," she says.

Indeed, the Internet has expanded Zandbergen's own knowledge of the book and its impact on the rest of the world.

"Sometimes interesting questions come up from people who just happen to" visit the site, says Zandbergen, 41, of Darmstadt, Germany. Recently, he re-



The Voynich Manuscript: The 361-year-old illustrated volume from Germany has so far defied all attempts at translation.

ceived an e-mail from a French musician calling his attention to the Voynich Cipher Manuscript, a piece of music by Nigerian-born composer Hanspeter Kyburz inspired by the unreadable book.

Zandbergen's own five-year fascination with the Voynich Manuscript began after he came across a posting about it on sci.skeptic, a Usenet forum for discussions of pseudo-scientific topics.

For more information

- ▶ www.voyrich.nu
- ▶ web.bham.ac.uk/G.Landini/evmt/evmt.htm
- ▶ web.bham.ac.uk/G.Landini/evmt/eva.htm

The first time the mathematician saw a picture of the book, his impression was, "This looks as if I can read it," Zandbergen recalls. "Of course, I couldn't. Somehow it got me hooked."

Since discovering the Voynich mystery, the mathematician has joined forces with several individuals equally interested in the manuscript, including Gabriel Landini of Birmingham, England. Landini and Zandbergen have been working to create a digital transcription of the book based on a photocopy of the original supplied by the George C. Marshall Library and Archives in Lexington, Va.

In order to create a digital version of the text, Zandbergen created a special Voynich font representing most of the strange characters found in the manuscript.

So far, Landini and Zandbergen have each transcribed the manuscript into the special font, says Landini, 40, senior lecturer in analytical pathology at the University of Birmingham's School of Dentistry.

The next step is to compare transcriptions, correct discrepancies and eventually post a finished version online.

"Given that it is a handwritten manuscript and it is so old, many places (in the book) are barely legible," Landini says. "This is a very long-term project, and we do it outside working hours, so it may take some time to be finished."

E-mail aberman@usatoday.com

ADVOCATE, Baton Rouge, LA - Sept. 6, 2000 CR: W. Theriot

'Bigfoot' novelty wears thin for the law

By KEVIN BLANCHARD
Acadiana bureau

COTTON ISLAND — P.T. Barnum said there's a sucker born every minute — but apparently none of them grew up to be deputies at the Rapides Parish Sheriff's Office.

For the last two weeks, hundreds of folks have flocked to the piney woods in north-eastern Rapides Parish to hunt for Bigfoot and look at 16 massive tracks left in a dried-up creek.

But Maj. Michael Slocum of the Sheriff's Office said if those tracks are the work of a prankster, "We will arrest somebody for this."

Two loggers reported seeing the elusive creature of legend on Aug. 24. One of the

loggers, Earl Whitstine, said he'd seen Bigfoot the day before, too.

Reports hit the newspapers and television news programs.

Mary Ward, the woman who owns the Cotton Island bait shop on the land where the alleged Bigfoot likes to roam, has gotten calls from television producers around the country.

Her son, Joe Ward, said Aug. 28 that Bigfoot once paid his deer stand a visit in the early morning hours last year.

People have come from far and wide to tramp the thickly wooded hills and bays in the area to find the furry figment.

Some have brought guns, Slocum said.

Ward's bait shop has started selling Bigfoot T-shirts and selling tickets to people who want to see the roped-off foot-

prints, Slocum said.

While it was funny for awhile, things have gotten out of hand, Slocum said.

Detectives sent samples of hair found at the footprint scene and plaster molds of the prints to scientists at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine, Slocum said.

No results yet, but investigators are "looking real hard" at criminal charges if the evidence points toward a hoax, Slocum said.

He didn't name possible suspects.

Slocum insisted that the Sheriff's Office is not trying to be party-poopers. If enough armed people go traipsing out into the woods, someone will get hurt, he said.

"Hey, I'd love to see a Sasquatch. I really would," Slocum said. "But our main concern is keeping the peace."

NATIONAL POST, Toronto, Ontario, Canada - Aug. 2, 2000 CR: G. Conway

Microsoft co-founder donates \$11.5M to search for extraterrestrials

LARGEST LISTENING POST

Hope to pick up alien chatter via radio dishes

By SIMON AVERY

MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIF. • Paul Allen, co-founder of Microsoft and the world's third richest man, is spending US\$11.5-million to help fund the search for extraterrestrials.

The 47-year-old philanthropist has joined Nathan Myhrvold, the former chief technology officer of Microsoft, in funding radio telescopes to look for signs of intelligent life in space from a remote

site in Northern California.

The US\$26-million project, expected to be ready by 2004, will tie hundreds of five-metre dish receivers together with sophisticated software and computers, creating the equivalent receiving power of a giant dish, 100 metres in diameter.

Astronomers have used more primitive radio telescopes for nearly 40 years to pick up radio waves travelling through space at light speed, which scientists believe offer the easiest way to spot signs of other civilizations.

The Allen Telescope Array will be the world's largest telescope devoted to the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI), able to receive more than 50 million radio frequencies at the same time.

"That's important because we don't have any idea, of course,

what frequencies an alien civilization might transmit on," said Greg Klerkx, director of development at the SETI Institute in Mountain View, Calif., the world's largest private organiza-

OTHER HIGH-TECH BUSINESSMEN HAVE

DONATED TO PROJECT

tion looking for extraterrestrials and the group behind the Allen project.

While scientists today are able to scan only a few hundred star systems each year, once completed, the Allen Telescope Array will let astronomers monitor more than 100,000 stars annually.

In the Milky Way Galaxy alone, there are an estimated 400 billion stars — the equivalent of 67 stars in our galaxy for every living person on earth.

Enthusiasm for SETI among highly successful technology businessmen is not limited to Mr. Allen. Since the U.S. government dropped funding for the SETI Institute in 1993, David Packard and Bill Hewlett, co-founders of Silicon Valley pioneer Hewlett-Packard Co., have donated US\$13-million. Gordon Moore, co-founder of Intel Corp., the world's largest chip maker, is another big donor.

Explaining his US\$1-million donation yesterday, Dr. Myhrvold said: "While the best scientific estimates tell us the probability of intelligent life elsewhere in the universe is fairly high, there is great uncertainty and some controversy in the calculation. One thing however, is beyond dispute. That is, if we don't continue supporting projects like the Allen Telescope Array, our chances of discovery will remain at zero."

National Post

Search for B.C. lake monster begins after 22-year wait

Proving Ogopogo exists means \$2-million reward

SUZANNE WILTON
CALGARY HERALD
KELOWNA B.C.

It was Oct. 17, 1978, precisely 12:45 p.m. Bill Steciuk was on his way to work, crossing the floating bridge that connects the Westbank to downtown Kelowna, when he glanced to the right and saw something emerge from the crystal waters of Lake Okanagan.

Steciuk slammed on the brakes and parked the car in the middle of the bridge, leaving a stalled line of frustrated commuters behind.

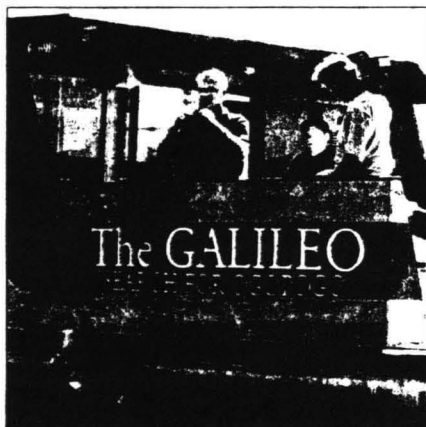
He ran to the edge and looked over the rail. "I distinctly saw three humps and what I thought was a head coming out of the water," recalls a grinning Steciuk, running a tanned hand through his thick head of silver hair.

The image of what he believes was the elusive Ogopogo lake monster is as fresh in Steciuk's mind today as it was 22 years ago.

Now he wants to prove what he saw was the serpent-like aquatic creature fabled to have lurked beneath Lake Okanagan for more than 100 years.

The real-estate agent launched his dream on Saturday — a three-week-long scientific expedition to find the beast beneath, using three kinds of sonar and an underwater camera called a remote operating vehicle (ROV), similar, though smaller, to the one used to scope the Titanic.

It's a dream that may pay dividends. Forget



Desmond Murray, for the Herald

Bill Steciuk, left, leads the expedition for Ogopogo with help from computer operator Trevor Ryder, videographer Denis Abramsen, right, and support diver Jay Sinclair, in water.

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire, find Ogopogo and double your money. That's right, \$2 million is the price attached by a local tourism bureau to the head of this mysterious creature, which has drawn monster seekers from around the world to the shores of this popular lake in British Columbia.

Indisputable proof, which must include photographic evidence and an original negative showing the suspected Ogopogo as a minimum of seven metres in length, is required to collect the prize.

All evidence, which must be submitted before the contest's end on Sept. 1, 2001, will be reviewed and verified by a group of cryptozoologists.

Finding the Ogopogo would put to rest years of controversy over whether there exists a species of prehistoric aquatic animal that inhabits not only Lake Okanagan but also Loch Ness and other bodies of water around the world.

Many believe that Steciuk will fail to find anything, and will reveal the supposed animals and their sightings as nothing more than exaggerated fish stories.

Ogopogo has endured ridicule, sparked battles between lakeshore communities over its official home and provided the multimillion-dollar tourist industry with a marketable icon. But Steciuk's story is just one of hundreds chronicled over the years, most of them in a book by local author and Ogopogo expert Arlene Gaal, a 50-ish, community-minded woman who has dedicated much of her life to verifying as authentic what she calls USO sightings — unidentified swimming objects.

Gaal's interest in the mythological creature dates back more than two decades, before she saw for herself a massive, tailed animal in the water. Reported sightings peg the snake-like Ogopogo to be anywhere from five metres to 25 metres long, with a goat-like head.

Gaal researched the local chamber of commerce archives and found sightings as far back as 1860, when it was documented that a team of horses were pulled under while swimming across the lake and never seen again.

But the folklore goes back even farther.

An Indian tribe here before the settlers revered and feared a sacred creature they called N'ha-a-itk. They believed the monster swam in Squally Point, about 20 kilometres south of Kelowna, and would sacrifice small animals as offerings when venturing by canoe into the area of the beast.

In 1924, white settlers renamed the monster Ogopogo, after the popular music-hall song, and the legend continued throughout the years with more sightings.

Today, though, it's more of a mascot than a myth. The toothless grin of the green, horned Ogopogo are everywhere — on the welcome sign into Kelowna, on the beach where kids hang from his green humps and in the tourist pamphlets pushing the \$2-million promotion by Penticton tourism authority.

To the believers, it's a chance to strike it rich and show the world what they saw was real. But there are fears Ogopogo, if it exists, will be harmed in the process.

"There is no doubt in my mind there's something in that lake that needs investigation," says Gaal, a former elementary school teacher. "But we certainly don't need anyone out there with harpoons."

Steciuk wants to protect Ogopogo from harm. He started planning the expedition long before this month's launch of the year-long contest, and if he finds it, he will push the B.C. government to put the animal on the endangered species list.

"It has been my dream since 1978," says Steciuk as he sets up one of the sonar imaging systems, which operates at 200 Khz and has a forward range of 400 metres and a depth range of 300 metres.

"There were days where nothing was working," he says of the trials of organizing an official expedition.

"I knew this was a good idea 22 years ago. I knew it was a good idea five years ago, and when I woke up this morning I still knew it was a good idea. That's what has kept me going."

He assembled a volunteer crew of Kelowna residents and secured sponsorship to fund the expedition, which was initially budgeted at about \$400,000. Steciuk won't reveal the final figure.

California-based Interphase Technologies provided thousands of dollars worth of high-end sonar equipment to scan the bottom of the lake, while Kelowna-based CAN PRO Diving has provided the ROV camera, which can scoot across the bottom and take photos. A local film company, Tripod Films and Video Productions, is recording the expedition for a one-hour documentary.

The sun dances off the ripples of the lake as the Galileo, the houseboat headquarters of the expedition, navigates its way across the water. But Steciuk is too excited to sit on deck and enjoy the beauty. He's inside, busy listening to the beeps of the sonar as it picks up schools of fish deep below, and watching for a massive monster to appear on screen. Two large objects were recorded on Sunday, but nothing conclusive has been captured.

Outside, a member of the camera crew engages in a deep discussion of how the power of legends like the Ogopogo can fuel the imagination and drive people to make immeasurable sacrifices.

"We'd drive 120 miles on the roughest road just to see that dinosaur jaw. Why do we do that?" asks Ben Tohill, a partner in Tripod Films and Video Productions, which is posting daily footage of the expedition on its oktv.net website.

Tohill is no stranger to the unexplained, having worked on the set of the television series X-Files. But looking for the elusive Ogopogo, he says, is like chasing ghosts.

"We believe what we want to believe. At the right time, the right moment, you could see whatever you want to see."

He dismisses the possibility of a lake monster. Instead, Tohill believes most of the sightings, which are all remarkably similar in description, are sturgeon, fish which can live up to one hundred years and grow in excess of four metres.

Bumper year for sightings of sasquatch

BY ANDREW DEMILLO
Seattle Times staff reporter

It's been 44 years since Cliff Crook said he first saw the legendary beast known as a sasquatch emerge from the deep woods of Washington and tromp into the middle of his campsite. He says the image still gives him chills today, as does this summer's spate of reported Bigfoot sightings across the Pacific Northwest.



Cliff Crook

In his four decades trailing the bearded creature said to roam the forests of the Northwest, the 59-year-old "Bigfoot tracker" can't remember a summer as active as this one.

"These are some pretty exciting finds," said Crook.

Park rangers and police say the upswing in reported sightings is just another instance of nature playing tricks on the eyes of hikers and hunters who mistake shadows of tree stumps or animals. However, Crook and teams of Bigfoot trackers and enthusiasts around the country say this very well could be the summer of sasquatch.

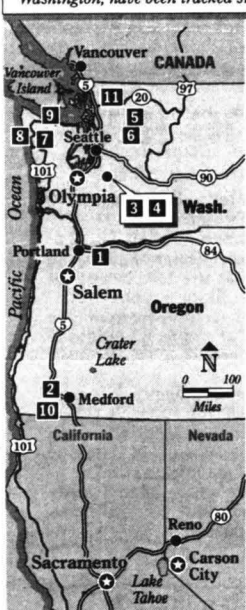
Crook's Bigfoot Central — a tracking and research center based out of his Bothell home — has logged 11 sightings in the Pacific Northwest since May, a record number, he said.

Most have come from Washington, according to Thom Powell, northwest curator of the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization, based in Los Angeles. The nationwide network of trackers, scientists and enthusiasts also has received a record number — more than a dozen reports in the past two months, Powell said.

"Washington seems to be the most active spot around right

Bigfoot sightings

Eleven alleged sasquatch sightings around the Pacific Northwest, most in Washington, have been tracked since May.



Source: Bigfoot Central

- 1 May 7: Troutdale, Ore., near the Sandy River. Campers find a set of tracks in the wilderness.
- 2 May 18: Grants Pass, Ore. A motorcyclist reports seeing Bigfoot off Highway 101.
- 3 June 3: Orting, Pierce County. A family reports finding large footprints running through its property.
- 4 June 5: Orting. An elderly woman sees an unidentifiable creature pass by her car.
- 5 June 16: Darrington, Snohomish County. Footprints are found along the Mountain Loop Highway.
- 6 June 21: Mount Pilchuck. Hikers find large footprints.
- 7 June 24: Olympic National Park. Footprints are found along the Sol Duc River.
- 8 June 27: Hoh Reservation. Giant footprints, unidentifiable noises and hair are found in the woods.
- 9 June 29: Port Angeles. A forestry manager for the Suquamish Tribe allegedly sees Bigfoot in a forest.
- 10 July 1: Selma, Ore. A psychologist reports seeing Bigfoot while hiking in the Oregon Caves National Monument.
- 11 July 3: Concrete, Skagit County. Hikers find giant footprints near Highway 20.

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now," said Powell, a middle-school science teacher in Portland.

Attention has been focused on a report from the Hoh Reservation on the Olympic Peninsula, as well as a reported sighting by an Oregon psychologist hiking in the Oregon Caves National Monument in that state's southwestern corner.

Mary C. Williams, who lives on the Hoh Reservation, said she and her husband noticed a set of curiously large footprints behind their home. She said her husband heard an intense banging sound and found animal hairs near the prints.

"It really surprised me and the rest of the folks around here," Williams said. "Just think how long they've been around here for."

An official with the Bureau of Indian Affairs said the agency looked into the report but was skeptical. "There is something big going through their yards, but it's most likely a bear," said Indian Affairs' Scott Small.

But Oregon psychologist Mat-

thew Johnson, who had never thought much about sasquatches, said he's sure what he saw while hiking with his family July 1 at the Oregon Caves National Monument was anything but a bear. Johnson, who lived in Alaska 20 years, said he knows the difference between a grizzly or black bear and a sasquatch.

"This was it, Bigfoot," he said. "It was this tall hairy animal poking through the woods at us."

Since Johnson's reported sighting, which was widely reported in news accounts, the park has been getting several calls a day from media representatives and visitors interested in the sighting, said Craig Akerman, superintendent of Oregon Caves.

"I would just prefer that we would get attention for the park itself," he said. "Not for Bigfoot."

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