

UFO

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Other-worldly experience

Hoping to gather scientific evidence of the unexplained, an Eau Claire man's preoccupation with the paranormal leads him to scenes of reported sightings.

By Pamela Powers
Menomonee News Bureau

Dusk settled over the Elk Lake dam in rural Dunn County as Chad Lewis and Mike Coffield climbed down the bank to the creek's edge.

The two carried still-photography cameras, a video-camera and an electromagnetic field detector.

This evening they hoped to gather scientific evidence of what some believe is a ghostly presence at the dam.

"I try to go from a scientific view," said Lewis, 25, of Eau Claire.

Lewis said he usually brings along a tape recorder when he is searching for presences to pick up any unusual sounds and a thermometer to test for cold spots.

"Everyone has heard of the chill," Lewis said, pausing to take a picture of the dam area. "The cold spot, you tend to get that quite a bit."

Lewis is a member of the American Ghost Society and the state director of the Mutual Unidentified Flying Object Network, a nonprofit organization devoted to scientifically

■ Call Chad Lewis at 833-4639 to learn more about the Mutual UFO Network or the American Ghost Society or to report information to the groups.

documenting unusual phenomena such as UFOs.

He joined MUFON seven years ago as a field investigator, looking into reported sightings. He became the state volunteer director three years ago and is responsible for investigating sightings, reporting cases to MUFON and training new members.

"I always had an interest in the paranormal," said Lewis, who joined the American Ghost Society about five years ago. "I had never heard of groups you could join."

When he was about 5 years old and living in Eau Claire, Lewis' brother, Todd, said he saw a man in the basement. The family later learned the former owner had committed suicide, which piqued Lewis' interest.

"Once you go on an investigation, it's hard to turn back. It's addicting," Lewis said, flashing his red-lensed flashlight around the banks of the



Chad Lewis, left, and Mike Coffield of Eau Claire used an electromagnetic field detector to look for unusual fluctuations in the electrical, magnetic, radio or microwave fields near the Elk Lake dam. Lewis has gone to graveyards and

the dam and taken pictures of unusual lights that were not seen by the naked eye. This photo was taken at night using a longer exposure, which created the lighting effect and the multiple images.

dam, where two men reported seeing a presence last summer.

"It's the fascination with the unknown. We're not certain what happens after we die," he said. "We're not certain if UFOs are man-made technology or extraterrestrial."

Coffield, who hosts "Back Page News" on Eau Claire's public access TV station, said he has been on a dozen investigations with Lewis.

"He is skeptical enough," said Coffield, 39, of Eau Claire. "He does not rush into saying it is this or that. He asks questions to get at least a blueprint of the situation."

"We're very fortunate to have someone like that who is close enough within a radius of Eau Claire

and have him investigate with the expertise he does have."

With recent interest in unexplained phenomena, ranging from "The X-Files" TV show to the movie "The Sixth Sense," people tend to be more accepting of unexplained sightings, Lewis said.

When people find out Lewis investigates for MUFON and the Ghost Society, most have a story of an unexplained sighting or presence they have experienced.

In the past three years, Lewis said more than 100 cases of unidentified flying objects have been reported throughout Wisconsin.

"A lot of the time it is a natural phenomenon or a civilian aircraft,"

he said. "Five to 7 percent of the cases remain unsolved."

In September a rural Menomonee couple reported seeing two UFOs in Dunn County.

The first object changed colors from red to blue to yellow and was going in circles and side to side. The second object pulsed yellow and was triangular shaped.

Police believed the objects were reflections from planets, the northern lights or possibly a helicopter.

Lewis, who investigated the reported sighting, said the couple were sincere, credible witnesses, and the man was familiar with stars and planets.

Despite disagreements, Dark Skies series great

I could write a series as long as the Dark Skies series in response, but I will limit this to a few lines. Having been a sky-watcher for over four decades with an interest in astronomy, aviation and UFOs, I have a disagreement with some of the statements made in this series.

In regard to Tom Mahood's comments that electromagnetic test facilities at Llano, Northrop in the Tehachapi mountains and the Helendale Lockheed facility do not contain underground levels according to his survey, I disagree. Not only have I talked to construction workers, eyewitnesses and others, but I have a published photocopy of the blueprints showing the underground levels at Helendale.

The pylons (called "stingers" by Bill Sweetman) are on hydraulic lifters. Scale model aircraft are mounted on these stingers underground, then raised to the surface to be in line with the radar arrays.

With respect to statements that the glowing orbs seen around these facilities are nothing more than flares, I disagree. I have interviewed witnesses who have seen these orbs up close and personal, perhaps within 30 feet.

These orbs hover and though they emit brilliant light, the light fails to illuminate the ground even when hovering just above ground level. Flares are fires that flicker and change shape.

Anyone who has observed flare drops by the military could not possibly confuse flares with orbs except at extreme distances.

Anyone who has observed genuine UFOs would not confuse these aerial craft with "black world" aircraft unless they are totally unfamiliar with making observations.

As far as we know, black world aircraft still use jet propulsion though in some exotic form, but this limits their performance to known aerodynamic maneuvers.

UFOs do not emit jet sounds nor have any visible exhaust plumes and outperform the best of our aircraft. Also, UFOs usually, but not always, have a glowing plasma corona surrounding them when seen at night, or unusual lighting patterns. They have been seen to hover then accelerate to tremendous speeds (one was seen through a theodolite, going an estimated 18,000 mph through the atmosphere). UFOs have been observed to make sudden, 90-degree turns that would place severe stresses on aircraft frames, even disintegrating normal aircraft.

UFOs do not have aerodynamic configurations and have been seen in all shapes and sizes for over 50 years and perhaps, with increasing finds in historical documents, a lot longer than we have had black world aviation programs.

Despite my few disagreements, the overall seven-part series was excellent and probably went a long way toward raising public awareness of the strange activity going on in our own backyards.

Bill Hamilton
executive director
Skywatch International Inc.
Palmdale

William F. Wu's UFO article void of bull

My name is Jim Goodall and I was quoted in an article by William F. Wu. As someone who has chased "black aircraft" for over 30 years, I felt the Wu article was very well written and void of the usual "B.S." that comes with stories about black aircraft and Area 51.

Please express my pleasure with Mr. Wu from a "Dreamland Interceptor" and one of "The Elders."

Jim Goodall
Langley, Wash.

CR: B. Hamilton

The Elk Lake dam sighting last summer also qualified as unusual enough to get Lewis' attention.

Once night had fallen, Coffield used a video camera panning across the area to see if the film captured anything unusual.

Lewis checked his electromagnetic field detector but did not note anything unusual.

But an unsolved murder in the area could offer a historical reason for the dam to have a ghostly presence.

The body of Mary Schlais, 25, of Minneapolis was found along a dead-end road Feb. 15, 1974, in the Elk Creek area, Dunn County Chief Deputy John Kaanta said.

Schlais was a University of Minnesota student who police believe was hitchhiking to Chicago. It is believed she died of multiple stab wounds.

The case remains unsolved, but Kaanta expressed skepticism that the dam area could hold an unusual presence. He said Schlais had not been killed at the dam and was found some distance from the area.

Although nothing turned up on the photos he took that night, the American Ghost Society keeps a running track of alleged sightings. Lewis will send a case report and any photos he has to the group for its records.

Lewis said he believes it helps his credibility that he has a psychology degree from UW-Stout and is returning in the fall to work on his master's degree.

"That usually helps to give some credibility, so people don't think people that are investigating are kooks," Lewis said.

He said that whenever he goes to a graveyard or another reported haunted area to gather evidence, he treats the site with respect.

"It does take a certain kind of person to go in a graveyard and actually want to see ghosts," he said.

UFOs of the Kickapoo #11

LAWRENCE VALLEY SPOOK LIGHTS



SPOOK ROCK — as named by some is the home of the "Lawrence Valley Spook Lights", near LaFarge. (Bernice Schroeder photo)

By JOHN H. SIME
Epitaph-News

A few months ago, Bernice Schroeder of Viroqua, formerly of LaFarge, sent me a letter telling me about the famous Lawrence Valley Spook Lights, out side of LaFarge. I will quote liberally from her letter in this article about the lights:

"The 'rock' is located on property I now own and last fall I climbed up and took pictures. (At 79 will likely be my last trip up there)."

She encounters an old friend, Lavern Lawrence, and asks him about the mystery:

"He is the youngest son of Era Lawrence who lived in the log cabin in the valley... Lavern recalls a date of October 13 when the light usually appeared. He described it as that of a moon. It moved up and along the top of the 'hill'...It would reappear and fol-

low the same path over and over as he described it. The 'hill' was now covered with trees but the light never went behind a tree, he found this significant. He remembers people coming to the valley to watch for its appearance several nights in the fall. They were not successful but he recalls after they left it appeared. Accompanying the appearance was a strange feeling which he described as 'the hair standing up on the back of his neck'."

She recalled a description of the light seen by Don Potter:

"The story contrasts somewhat with the story Don Potter tells. He, his son Larry and a friend were riding their mules in the valley in the fall of the year coon hunting. He describes seeing two lights resembling yard lights. They didn't seem to move. Their location seemed in the direction of 'Spook Rock' rather than 'the hill' as Lavern

tells it. Don tells also of the strange, spooky and strong urge to get out of there...."

She reflects on the cause of the lights:

"And what is my take on these apparent unusual and abnormal occurrences? I don't know! I doubt that these events would evoke scientific interest to search for an explanation of such abnormal happenings. But one never knows. Could these exceptional sensory experiences affect one and not another? Is it a phenomenon related to the hill country and why limited to this one valley and one specific time of year? I would suspect this will take its place along with UFO sightings and haunted houses. That continued experiences as in recent times by the Potters will keep the myth alive. And while one may find it fascinating, it will likely remain one of those mysteries- unexplained and unsolved."

By JOHN H. SIME
Epitaph-News

A Woman from Viroqua

At Sidie Hollow Park, I walk my dog in the evenings. About three years ago, I noticed for the first time a big blue/white light which is circular in shape. This is bigger than a star, but nowhere was big as the Moon. It is not a satellite because it wobbles or dances when it moves. I don't see it every night, but at least two or three times a month.

When I see it, I think it senses that I see it, because it will come and go numerous times for a half hour or more.

Yes, I have seen more than one at the same time. That is another part of the story.

One evening in June of this year (2000), I just had a feeling to go out there. I walked with my dog out into the center of a cornfield. This was early Summer, so the corn was not knee high. I looked up and I saw three lights moving across the sky in the shape of a triangle. Then I realized that there was an enormous craft between the lights. It was like the dark sky was moving overhead. It was a beautiful night, very clear.

Then, right out of the center of the triangle came a light like the ones on the points and the ones I had seen night after night. It went out and to the left and down, and then it flew in sync with the triangle. This triangle was as big as two barns, flattened out. It was maybe a couple hundred feet in the air. It moved very slowly. I was running in the field- why I don't know- and the triangle was barely ahead of me. I stopped running when I got to the woods. The triangle kept going southeast (towards Readstown). I saw this thing just once. But I have seen the smaller lights since then.

UFO Files Sold

The leading topic discussed in the field of UFOlogy throughout the year 2000 was not crashes, or sightings,

but ethics.

For years, abductees have been interviewed and videotaped by a variety of abduction researchers. Some of these researchers have presented themselves as therapists- either helping those traumatized by abduction or those who through mental illness have deluded themselves into believing they are abducted.

Now, a scandal has developed within the UFO field in which some of these abductee files have been sold.

Much of the controversy surrounds the organization called MUFON (Mutual UFO Network) and a man named Robert Bigelow, a Las Vegas real estate billionaire who has long donated research funds to such UFO researchers as Budd Hopkins, David Jacobs, and Linda Moulton Howe. He also started and funded the first year of Art Bell's "Dreamland." radio show. Bigelow is the founder of a sort of paranormal research foundation- the National Institute for Discovery Sciences. About three years ago, Bigelow purchased interview notes, transcripts, and tape recordings of abductees made by a long time researcher, John Carpenter. Carpenter is a licensed social worker in the state of Missouri, and has conducted seminars throughout the nation, aimed at providing therapy for abductees. The files sold by Carpenter to Bigelow involve about 140 families.

The first news of this sale hit the Internet at the time of the national convention of MUFON this summer. John Velez, a web master- until earlier this year he was the web master for UFO researcher Budd Hopkins and his "Intruders" website- interviewed Walt Andrus, the outgoing head of MUFON about Carpenter's sale of abductee files. Velez posted this interview on the UFO Updates message board. Carpenter responded to the message by pointing out that these were largely personal interview notes and transcripts with only initials of the interviewees used. He underscored the fact that no video

ADVOCATE, Baton Rouge, LA - Dec. 21, 2000 CR: W. Theriot

Colorado exhibit on UFOs weird, whimsical, ethereal

By Knight Ridder Newspapers

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — It's not surprising that Gerry Riggs, curator of the Gallery of Contemporary Art at CU-Springs, wanted to bring an exhibit on UFOs to the gallery. In 1968, when he was 18, Riggs says he saw a pair of UFOs buzz Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

Riggs says he was one of 350 people who watched one of the large, silvery discs hover for three or four minutes before zigzagging off at unbelievable speed. "It was clearly some sort of gyroscopic device," he says. "Hovering, it didn't spin as fast, and you could see windows."

Wright-Patterson was the center of Project Blue Book, the Air Force's famous investigation into UFOs — a project closed down a few months after the incident Riggs witnessed.

The experience didn't turn Riggs into a UFO fanatic, though he does point out that, "It would be stupid of us to think we're alone in the universe."

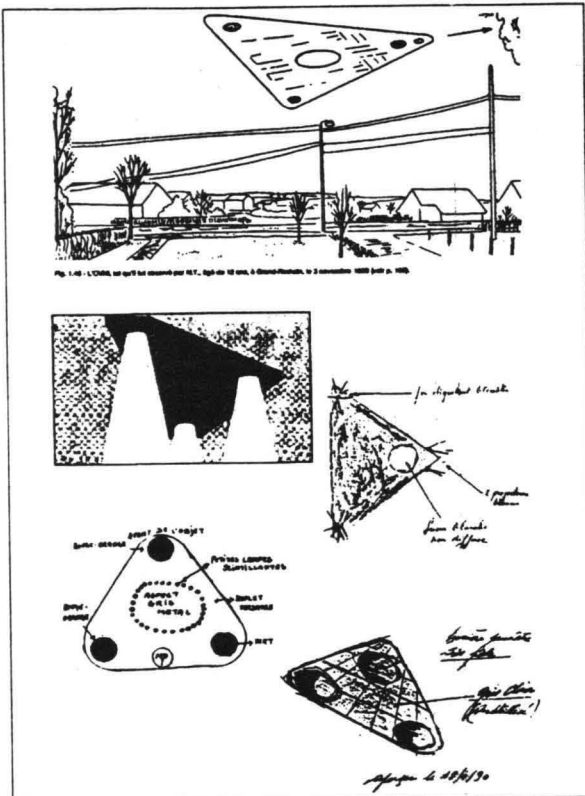
Fanaticism also is only intermittently present in "The UFO Show," first exhibited earlier this year at Illinois State University — ironically, in the town of Normal. This show of UFO-inspired works by 19 artists (plus three local artists that Riggs has added to the mix) is comprised as much of whimsy and weird science as of X-Files-style, "the-truth-is-out-there" earnestness.

One thing that's clear is that Americans aren't the only ones fascinated by the thought of visitors from outer space. Works are by Belgian conceptual artist Panarmarenko (notebooks filled with quasi-scientific scribbles), Ionel Talpazan from Romania (UFO doodles) and Mariko Mori from Japan.

The star of the show is the famous saucer shape.

It can be ominous, as in Ken Weaver's "Abduction Series" paintings. These beautifully modeled paintings are executed almost entirely in blue and white, with a murky, indistinct feel reminiscent of single frames from a cheap, hand-held video recorder.

Other saucers are just plain fun, such as Sharon Engelstein's 6-foot diameter, sequin-covered version, or a pair of large, cartoony UFOs by Jeremy Kidd. A piece of coral is at the controls of Kidd's "Pheroid," reminding that one doesn't need to leave the planet in order to find life that has taken forms very different from ours.



Above, montage of eyewitnesses and reconstructions of triangular craft seen in Belgium between 1889 and 1993. Courtesy of Guy Mossay, Artist Rights Society NY, SOFAM, brussels). (Taken from UFO Briefing Document by Don Berliner)



The craft at this point is purportedly about a quarter mile away from the camera. Note the out-of-focus foliage in the foreground, suggesting that the craft is not a small model. (Taken from *Alien Base: The Evidence for Extraterrestrial Colonization of Earth* by Timothy Good)

tapes were involved, although some audio tapes were (largely unintelligible, he adds). Carpenter also pointed out that his sale of the files was similar to a MUFON project (also funded by Bigelow) called the Abduction Transcription Project which involved "900 hypnosis transcripts that were collected from twenty researchers for analysis by MUFON's new computer" (Carpenter response to Velez on UFO Updates website, July 26, 2000).

Andrus assured Velez that no MUFON files were involved, only Carpenter's personal files.

Within days, it was the subject of intense posting on one side or another. Some asserted that Carpenter had violated an ethical obligation to honor the privacy of abductees. Others contended that Carpenter was in fact furthering the cause of science by selling this information to an organization with the resources to study it properly. Still others asserted that since there is no strict field of study called UFOlogy, the whole thing comes down to entertainment, and is thereby exempt from ethical considerations. Abductees interviewed by researchers began to question the ethics of the researchers who had interviewed them, and in time question the ethics of the entire field. This has been a year far different from the fun anniversary of 1997-50 years after Roswell. This has been a year when many friendships in the UFO field were broken. Some people have questioned assumptions they have had for years.

Some have doubted their own memories or even sanity in their disillusionment.

Man from LaCrosse

(taken from National UFO Reporting Center website:

<http://nuforc.ufoarchive.com>

<Posted: 7/29/2000

Location: La Crosse, Wis.

Shape: Light object appeared in telescope field of view, and executed 90 degree turn before moving out of field of view.

Object observed through telescope. Object estimated to be mag. 8.0 to 8.5, blue-white in appearance, observed for 6-8 seconds. Object observed to execute 90 degree turn in field of view of telescope, then exit field of view. Although object appeared to be similar to what a satellite looks like when it shoots across my field of view, satellites do not execute turns. Object did not slow down while turning. Entire turn took 2-3 seconds, and object observed to fly in straight lines 1-2 seconds before and after executing turn. No "running lights" observed.



Villa's most well-known photo, arguably the best of the series taken in 1963. The craft was a few hundred yards away. Although the upper, domed structure could be turned independently from the lower section, it appeared to remain stationary during flight and the lower section alone rotated at different speeds (Taken from *Alien Base: The Evidence for Extraterrestrial Colonization of Earth* by Timothy Good)

Thus, plus speed of turn and turn radius rule out aircraft of known kind. Turn appeared smooth. Object observed while looking for Comet Linear, approximately 8 degrees from lower "pointer" star in "big dipper" region.

Man from Viola

This was in 1969 in the Waukesha, Wis. area. It was a summer night, dark, but not late- probably at the end of August. I was looking for satellites and things. This small light about the size of a satellite came over, going about four times faster than the satellites. It went from the horizon to overhead in 15 seconds, and then shot back then shot upwards and vanished. The whole maneuver lasted about thirty seconds.

French UFO Report

Controversy raged in Europe over the release of a semi official French report on UFOs. The report was released by the COMETA (Committee for Advanced Studies), and while it is not an official French government document, the authors include numerous French military and political officials. The report slams the U.S. government for its continued secrecy in the area of UFOs:

"We (the government of France) are tired of waiting while you contin-

ue to stretch out the cover-up of the extraterrestrial presence. We are weary of deferring to the U.S. on the process and timetable of disclosure as the damage and embarrassment to all governments, including the NATO partners, grows with each passing year."

Man from LaCrosse

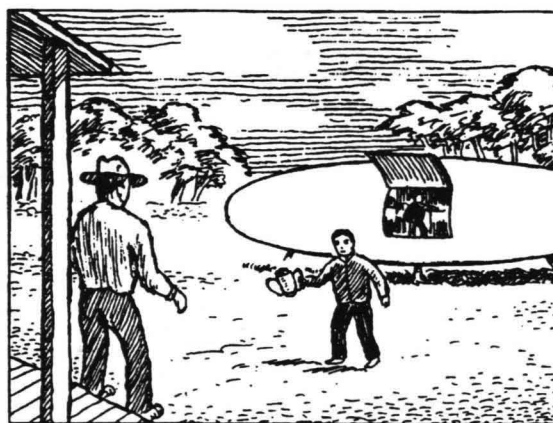
from NUFORC website:

<Posted: 2/16/2000

Location: LaCrosse, 3 to 3.5 miles south of Goose Island Park, Wis.

Shape: Unknown. Driving south on Hwy. 35, I saw what appeared to be an air craft crossing the Mississippi river with two white lights which did not strobe. Mississippi river mile marker 691. It crossed the main channel and dropped in altitude slowed below the stall speed of an air plane. As it moved east towards Hwy. 35, it stopped over Goose Island park, the southern end. I pulled over at park entrance which I believe closes at 10 p.m. Then the two white lights went out, for about 15 seconds; then on, moved slowly, stopped, lights out and after the third time stopped and started to descend below the tree line, and its lights went out I drove south.

The two white lights kept at an equal distance even when turned on again. I opened my window and could hear no helicopter sound and the lights were spaced too far apart



A Wisconsin farmer, above, had an unexpected visitor in 1961 when a UFO landed and its occupant requested water. In return, the farmer was given some odd pancakes as a gift. (Taken from *The Little Giant Encyclopedia of UFOs* by Jenny Randles.

for any helicopter fuselage. There were four cars ahead of me going south they all slowed down but no one pulled over. I wish I would have drove down to the southern end of the park where there is a boat landing. It would have been worth the fine! I believe it did land.

A Man from Readstown

In the first week of January, this year (2000), I noticed a reddish light just over the ridge south east of Readstown. It gradually rose straight in the air and changed into a white light. Next it began to move north away from the ridge- but very slowly. Slowly, it moved north and west, crossing the valley of Highway 14. It continued over Readstown and I lost sight of it to the west. The next day, I spoke with a woman who saw the same light, but she was farther north and could see it over Nelson's Hill (to the west of Readstown). She said that it came from the southeast and then hovered back and forth for some time over Nelson's Hill. It finally disappeared behind the hill.

Chinese UFOs and Space Projects

A wave of UFO sightings in China has attracted attention to the growing Chinese UFOlogy movement. In fact, the first UFO sighting of the Millennium was reported in China and even recorded by TV. Cameras:

"At about 6:30 a.m. Beijing time on Saturday, January 1, 2000, a silver-gray UFO appeared over the Great Wall of China. As it hovered, it was captured by Cable News Network (CNN) TV cameras and broadcasted live in the USA. Eyewitness M. Lamb was watching the CNN coverage "when CNN showed a shot of the Great Wall of China at sunrise... When they cut to the shot, there was a gray orb floating over the wall. Then it floated to the right, then up. Then they (CNN) cut away from the shot without any explanation of the floating object. It was silver and appeared to float or glide without any means of propulsion." (UFO Roundup/Joseph Trainor, editor, Vol. 5, No. 1)

A former translator for Chairman Mao, Sun Shili, has founded the Chinese UFO Research Organization, which now has a membership of 40,000 including professors, students, engineers, and even Communist party members. Sun reports there are over 3,000 UFO sightings in China each year.

China has also announced the formation of a program somewhat like S.E.T.I. (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) organization, which will scan the skies for radio signals from outer space. It has also been reported that within two decades China wants to build a reusable launcher like the

Space Shuttle and begin to colonize the Moon. Japan has also launched a probe to Mars called Nozumi ("Hope"), which is expected to reach the Red Planet in January, 2004.

A Man from Tomah

from NUFORC website:

<Posted: 12/16/1999

Location: Tomah, Wis.

Shape: Chevron. Saw a Chevron type of object with green and white lights on it. It flew very slowly across the interstate by Tomah. Witnessed by five other people parked along the interstate watching object.

Other witnesses were strangers parked along the interstate. Object was about 200 feet across. Moved very slowly with out sound. Moved to the south east direction. Lights did not blink and were on all the time. I have driven this route on the interstate to work for 23 years and never have seen anything remotely resembling a UFO until 12-7-99. Very strange sight and traffic was heavy that night.

A Man from Madison

from NUFORC website:

<Posted: 4/1/2000

Location: Madison, Wis.

Shape: Formation. We saw 3 lights, as bright as stars in the city, move due south. They seemed to be 1000's of feet above us and moving quite fast. The very weird thing was that they oscillated rapidly in a lateral direction while moving.

My girlfriend and I stepped off of our front porch in downtown Madison, circa December 1999. Looking straight up to see the stars, as I am wont to do, I noticed three lights in a triangular formation moving very rapidly to the south. The lights were about as bright as stars and seemed to be very high in the sky.

From the time I noticed them until the time they left the horizon it was, at most, 10 seconds. The thing that was very bizarre was that all three of the lights oscillated or "jiggled" very rapidly in a lateral direction as they flew.

Hundreds of witnesses

from CAUS (Committee Against UFO Secrecy) website:

Oct. 23, 1978: At 8 p.m., hundreds of witnesses are watching a movie in an outdoor theater when they see a large luminous UFO in the sky over Lintiao Air Base in Gansu Province, China. The object is oblong in shape, has two searchlights in front, and flies from east to west. Light beams are emitted from the UFO that change in length and brightness during the sighting, illuminating the object in a mass of smoke and mist. The sighting lasts for three minutes before the object disappears.

The unexplained

Part 2 of a 3 part series

by Linda Lyman

UFO's. Unidentified Flying Objects. Note that these sightings are not called extra-terrestrial flying objects. While the possibility exists that some of the sightings have an otherworldly explanation, many that seem unexplainable now could be from government testing of experimental aircraft. However, some sightings do give rise to questions in the most rational of us. According to investigator Stan Gordon, the Harrison City area, the Beaver Run watershed, and Penn Township in the area of the Manor substation have "hotbeds" of UFO sightings. Consider the following:

April 1973. In the midst of what Gordon described as a major outbreak of UFO sightings, a number of people in the Penn-Manor area near Jeannette saw a "bright, round object" between 8:30 and 9 p.m. The solid object had square windows from which showed colored lights. The same object was reported flying quite low later that same night. Then, around 11 p.m., near the Manor substation, a man saw a white glowing object above the trees over the railroad tracks.

Getting out of his car to look more closely, he later described the object as "motionless" and said it appeared to be spinning in place. It was described as 36 feet in diameter, domed, and bright white with red, yellow, and green lights. He also noted a "high-pitched whining" and said that his car stalled and its lights dimmed as the object moved off towards Harrison City. He also reports having seen what looked like a torso or form apparently connected to

the object by a strange colored beam of light. There were many reports that same night of people seeing a "large object" in that area.

December 1984. A couple in Trafford was watching television when they heard tapping on their window. Looking toward the source, they noted a sphere-like "red object" slowly cross the window. Turning on the outside lights, they went outdoors to get a better look. They described it as the "size of a basketball," red with black markings. The couple said that there were beams of light that gave off sparks as the object rose over the house next door. When it was out of sight, they turned off the light, and returned to the house. At that point, the object came back to tap again at their window, before once again rising over their neighbor's house.

September 1987. A number of people, including some law enforcement personnel, watched a large cylindrical object the length of two blimps near Greengate Mall. It came from behind an apartment complex, crossed over the high-tension power lines, and moved across the road. It was originally moving horizontally, but as it crossed the road, it began to rotate to a vertical position. It was described as having blinking red lights front and rear, and steady white lights all over. Interestingly, there was a momentary power failure recorded as the object moved through the area.

September 1995. A man driving along the railroad tracks in Penn Township at 3:30 a.m. one morning spotted an odd-shaped "golden light" on the



Stan Gordon and Bob Daley with visitor to their display at a recent Westmoreland Mall UFO information session. The men were discussing a stainless steel disc found in a field in Beaver County. The night before its discovery, a man and his wife had watched an unidentified domed-shaped aircraft hover over the field on beams of light. Researchers have been unable to ascertain the purpose of the disc, nor can their sources discover who manufactured the object.

ground near the tracks. Exiting his car for a closer look, he noted a "W" shaped object, about 20 feet high, as wide as the tracks. There was an extension of the middle fork, making it longer than the two sidepieces. He then ran the thirty or so feet back to his car, grabbed a camera, and returned to take a picture. Later computer enhancement of the picture revealed an "egg shaped form" behind the light, according to Gordon.

May 2000. Gordon is currently investigating a "large depression" in a field of tall (6 to 7 feet high) grass in a rural area outside of Delmont. De-

scribed as irregularly shaped and about 32 feet across, Gordon said there was a very unusual pattern of flattened vegetation in the center of the field. The site could not be seen from the road, and there were no tire or other tracks into the area. According to area residents, the flattened section was not there in the morning, but appeared between noon and 3 p.m. While investigators at first thought there might have been a microburst, later checks of weather records showed no severe weather in the area at that time.

Gordon reports that he has interviewed people from all walks of life, who have had no reason to make up stories of what they have seen. Most do

not want any publicity. Perplexed, they call in their reports looking for answers. Many times these sightings are in the vicinity of a power source, such as a generating station, or near a large body of water or railroad line. They are sometimes accompanied by physical effects - power losses, stalled cars, etc. Reports of landings are sometimes accompanied by burn marks or tripod indentations in fields or on roads.

If you have seen anything unusual, give Gordon a call on his 24 hour UFO hotline (724-838-7768) or contact him by email at paufo@westol.com. He carefully maintains confidentially, and is willing to accept anonymous calls.

RECORDER, Belleville, WI - Oct. 17, 2000 CR: R. Heiden

Lights In The Night

By Stuart Shapiro

What would you do if you saw lights and unexplainable sights in the skies overhead? Most certainly would not keep such an experience to themselves. You would want to compare experiences with another human being. But what if the experiences were with something that may not have been human, something that defied description-would you still share them? You probably would, just like some Belleville residents did 14 years ago.

In 1986, the skies around Belleville didn't make sense in a human way. They had the crystal clear qualities of fall but there were objects in that crisp air that defied any explanation. There were sights that shouldn't have been! The sightings took place over several months, thus there was not just one odd evening.

In one sighting Belleville Police officer Glen Kazmar (still a respected member of the force) was patrolling the Village. The police department had a "ride along" program for citizens at that time and Jeff Furseth was in the squad car with Officer Kazmar. The date was January

15. They noticed odd looking lights in the sky to the south of Belleville. The two drove to Quarry Road which intersects Highway 69 just south of town and is a high point on a hill where the two could get a better view of the lights. It was very late.

Glen turned the squad car onto Quarry Road and Jeff Furseth's remark was "Are you seeing the same thing as me?" There was a brilliant light out in the valley next to the desolate road. The light defied precise description. It was a different light and brilliant beyond description.

The brilliance confused them. How far away was it? How big? It didn't seem to have dimensions they could understand.

They aimed the squad car's search light at the "thing". That did nothing. They got on police radio and called the Dane County police dispatcher who, after some additional conversation, called the Dane County Municipal Airport. Their radar was down but Chicago had taken over and they did confirm that there was something at those approximate coordinates. The Green County Sheriff's Department was contacted and they progressed to the

scene.

The two men watched for over 45 minutes and then, as strange as the light was, it began to move away. It flew, or moved, or disappeared, and suddenly it was gone. The Green County patrolman saw this also. No one could explain what they were observing-the scene didn't match anything familiar.

A few months later on a Friday night, Lavonne Freitag was getting ready to join friends at Belleville's popular Friday night fish restaurant "Borlands". She would be meeting friends who were coming from Mount Horeb.

Putting on her make-up she looked out a window that faced south from her house. There was something in the sky and it defied description. The object had an odd shape almost like a barrel or a fuselage without wings. There were similar shapes near it although they were much smaller. They didn't move and were motionless in the sky. She called her son, Bill, to ask what he thought it was.

All of a sudden the largest object shot away from the others with unbelievable speed. The smaller objects began to disap-

pear, almost like puffs of smoke and then they were gone. When the friends arrived they had seen the same thing. There was no explanation to be shared. There were no military craft in the area when the matter was later investigated. They were objects without understanding or identification.

There were dozens of other sightings in the coming months, but none quite so well documented. There were sightings in other parts of the country as well.

A few years after the investigations were completed (or should we say finished because no answers were produced) a group of civic leaders thought that Belleville had as rightful a claim to UFO Capitol of the World as any other. They started a community event to celebrate the possible visit from another world.

Obviously this is strange stuff, defying description and more than a bit scary. Thus UFO day is held close to Halloween when visits from other worlds before and after become a commonplace part of our culture. Belleville can truly claim that it's Halloween has a deeper chasm of the unknown than anyone else's. Who knows, under those masks and not so humanly costumes, there could be visitors from another world.

Strange and unexplainable occurrences do happen the world over. They're not figments of the imagination by any means. Scientists have for years said that

these unexplainable phenomena need more attention. The French government for 21 years has had a panel devoted solely to gather evidence of sightings of the unexplained. The US Air Force has also spent considerable time investigating unexplained phenomena in the skies, but like every other group doing this kind of work there just have not been explanations that cover every situation.

Some of the sightings have indeed been spectacular. Three hundred French sailors and civilians aboard submarines and at a weather station near the Caribbean island of Martinique watched a large luminous object circle and then disappear almost like a light bulb being extinguished. There have been dozens of such sightings around the world. Great astronomers like the late Carl Sagan believed it would be a matter of short time before we would find another human or non-human inhabitant form of intelligence in our universe or and adjacent one.

There is absolutely no reason to doubt our Belleville "sighters". Please don't call them though, when they reported their sightings the whole world was interested and they got calls and visits until they were exhausted. They've told their story hundreds of times, so let them have a little peace.

UFO beliefs not just 'fringe' faction

In the editorial of Oct. 30, the Gazette-Times editorial board lumped belief in the reality of UFOs and Bigfoot in with Neo-Nazism and Castro Communism as examples of political parties whose candidates should not receive tax support. Why did they insert this belief into the political mix, unless the intent was to scoff at it or imply it is some weird fringe belief? The UFO belief is held by many and has nothing to do with politics. Although one presidential candidate, Heather Hardy, has spoken out in favor of disclosure of UFO information held within various governmental branches, this is but one issue out of 19 on which she has presented her views.

Gallup polls taken in the United States have indicated belief in UFOs to be 46 percent (1966), 54 percent (1973), 57 percent (1978) and 47 percent (1996). Gallup polls in Canada have shown 53 percent (1974), 46 percent (1978) and 45 percent (1988). The polls show that one in 12 or 15 have had their own definitive UFO sighting. Thus, belief in UFOs is no fringe view. In 1997 a panel of 10 top scientists, led by astrophysicist Peter Sturrock of Stanford, reinvestigated the UFO phenomenon and recommended that scientists crank up their curiosity. They also recommended that institutional support be granted for further UFO investigations.

Regarding Bigfoot, recent evidence supporting its reality is now so compelling that even Republican talk-show host Michael Medved last week favored keeping an open mind. The G-T editors should stop scoffing and start doing their homework.

Jim Deardorff
Corvallis

N.W. FLORIDA DAILY NEWS,

Fort Walton Beach, FL
Dec. 8, 2000 CR: R. Reid

■ KITTANNING, Pa. (AP) — It'll be Christmas in March for a small town in rural Pennsylvania, thanks to a new Richard Gere movie.

Merchants in this town 35 miles from Pittsburgh have been asked to leave their holiday decorations hanging for the five weeks of location filming of "The Mothman Prophecies." Filming begins in late February.



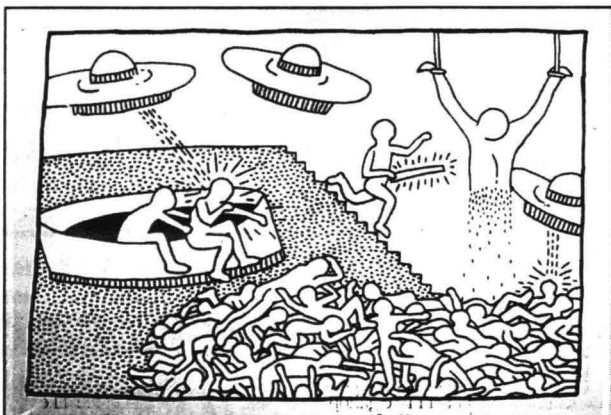
Christopher Johnson's 1997 oil on linen "Rt. 97, Oregon."

ALIEN invasion

UFO art
show
lands at
Colorado
Springs
gallery



Sharon Englestein's 1998 sequin and foam "Flying Saucer."



Keith Haring's 1990 serigraph "The Blueprint Drawings."

By Mary Voelz Chandler

News Staff Writer

COLORADO SPRINGS — They're out there. Actually, they're in here, in a gallery at the University of Colorado.

"They" are flying saucers rendered in oil, in pen, in foam, even in sequins. In two and three dimensions, the vehicles range from silly to thought-provoking to downright heartfelt. "The UFO Show," organized by the University of Illinois University Galleries, has dropped into the spacious Gallery of Contemporary Art for a six-week sojourn. Aply, the gallery is in the CU-Colorado Springs science building.

"People are really intrigued by the subject," said gallery director Gerry Riggs. "In the early days, this was all about the Cold War and politics. It's a good topic for contemporary artists, this whole idea that we're not alone. Everyone has an idea about that. The cosmos is so huge — how can we

In booking the show, for which a catalog is available, Riggs is pursuing a longtime interest.

Along with the dozens of literal interpretations of flying saucers, Keith Haring's funny drawings of earthlings being zapped by saucer rays and Kenny Scharf's conversion of a round vacuum cleaner into a saucer wannabe, a piece of Riggs' own artwork hangs on the wall at the gallery's entrance.

Arturian Curator, a 1975 etching, recalls Riggs' encounter with ufology: a mass sighting in the late 1960s at Wright-Patterson AFB in Ohio. Shortly after, a government program charged with studying UFOs was closed at the base.

"I didn't think too much of the

sighting at the time, as I felt the vehicle looked man-made," Riggs notes in text next to the etching.

But now? He speculates that saucers carry beings "on a curatorial mission" from the Arturian System, 20 light years from Earth.

It's a quicker trip to "The UFO Show," which is a counterpoint to a season that too often goes soft when it comes to art. No sightings of reindeer are mentioned, though Lance Horenbein posed toy cows next to a metal disc for the color Polaroid *UFO*, a reminder of early clunky special effects.

Riggs, who marks a decade as gallery director next summer, said the size of the show as much as the subject matter led him to book it. It's large, as traveling exhibitions go, with more than 60 works that sprawl through the CU-Colorado Springs space.

The curators, Bill Conger and Barry Blinderman of the University of Illinois, stress that they were seeking valid artistic expression on the topic of extraterrestrial travel when looking for participants. They include work from across the United States, plus Romania, Belgium and Japan.

The last piece, an eerie video by Tokyo artist Mariko Mori, focuses on a woman attired in silver and white — including reflective contact lenses. She is cradling and turning a crystal ball, as if rolling the Earth around in her hands. (The 1996 *Miko No Inori* was part of the 1999 "Spectacular Optical" show at the CU Art Galleries in Boulder.)

THE UFO SHOW

What: Work by 22 artists — national and regional — on a theme of UFO's and paranormal subjects
When: Through Feb. 2
Where: Gallery of Contemporary Art, University of Colorado-Colorado Springs
Information: (719) 262-3567

Even works that seem jokey on the surface make a point. A fuzzy orange saucer — *Pheronoid*, by Jeremy Kidd — contains the alien life form of coral under the craft's protective bubble. Here, sea drives air.

Another Haring work, *Fertility*, uses rays and Day-Glo colors to suggest a different sort of immaculate conception. And four works from Ken Weaver's "Abduction Series" can be read as workmanlike abstractions or the kind of sighting that leaves a blurred image and even more blurred memory.

Weaver's cobalt and pale blue paintings, scattered around the spacious gallery, rely on smudges and smears to indicate that something is there, but what is not quite clear.

Riggs got permission from the curators to include paintings by two area artists, and during the opening last week hoisted an inflatable saucer by the Palmer Park artist Lindsey Ray onto the gallery's roof. The piece since has been removed.

Left behind are a symbol-filled painting by David Gonzales, as well as one of the stand-out pieces of the show. Colorado Springs artist Fritz Mann's 1983 *The Ancient Ones Encounter the Distant Ones*, borrowed from the Sangre de Cristo Arts and Conference Center in Pueblo, is a masterfully painted vista of people going about their daily work and play.

Suddenly, above the cliff dwellings rise two silvery circles. It is a scene that is as naturally, and fully, rendered as if Mann were creating a diorama for a museum. And of all the work in "The UFO Show," Mann's makes such a scene seem somehow possible.

Yet polemic is not the bottom line here. "Most of the artists are not serious about the subject," Riggs said. "But they're serious about its implications."

Contact Mary Voelz Chandler at (303) 392-2877 or chandlerm@Rocky Mountain News.com.

BROAD TOP BULLETIN, Saxton, PA - Nov. 7, 2000

Strange object seen over Saxton Oct. 28

What was that strange object seen over Saxton the evening of Saturday, Oct. 28?

Bob Loughry, who lives on the 800 block of Main Street, reported watching the object after dark, for a period of about 20 minutes.

Bob reported that the unusual object was watched by several neighbors, including through binoculars, and also by a Saxton Borough police officer and also an officer from neighboring Liberty Twp.

"I went outside on the front porch about 7:30 p.m. and saw a bright object in the sky. I called several neighbors, and also '911' which is why several police officers stopped to look. It was glowing white and as viewed from the porch, about the size of a quarter to a half dollar."

In reality, Loughry said the object was probably as big as a car.

He was looking in the direction of E. Eichelberger & Son store, and the object was hovering in the sky

to the right of the store in the direction of Stonertown. It was between 250 feet and 1,000 feet in the air. It gradually descended, Loughry said, and may have landed, for at that point the lights went out and it was no longer visible. The possible landing site, Loughry speculated, was on Abbott's Ridge. He did not see it after that.

"It was not the glow of lights from the Seton manufacturing plant -- I see them every night," he added.

He recalled seeing strobe lights from several aircraft, who passed overhead while the UFO was hovering. "They may have seen it, but we'll never know that," he said.

Loughry said both police officers said they didn't know what it was, except a UFO.

Several Stonertown residents reported seeing a similar object in the sky the previous Wednesday, Oct. 25, after dark. It was more distant than the one seen Oct. 28, and they said it made erratic maneuvers in the sky, the kind that a conventional aircraft could not make.

X-Files in Idaho?

■ Reports of strange lights and a fireball in the sky prompt calls to newspaper

By REBECCA BOONE
OF THE TRIBUNE

There may be something in the air: Bizarre and unexplained lights reportedly shimmered and shot over the Lewiston-Clarkston valley Monday night.

By some accounts, they were 30,000 feet in the air and sounded like planes. By other reports, they were just 300 feet up and made no noise at all.

But alien or otherwise, several Valley residents reported seeing strange, bright objects in the air this week.

A Lewiston Orchard woman who contacted the Tribune Tuesday morning said she and other family members observed what appeared to be four V-shaped, lighted objects in the sky Monday night.

The woman, who didn't give her name, said one of the objects split away from the other three, which then slowly passed directly overhead but did not make a sound.

Another Valley resident, who also didn't give a name, called the Tribune and said she saw three sets of lights, equal distances apart, coming from the direction of Clarkston, across the river, and then flew over Lewiston High School at about 7:30 p.m.

She said they were approximately 300 feet off the ground, and made no noise.

Two other women also told a Tribune reporter they saw the same as-yet unidentified flying object. They described three sets of lights in a line, with two bright lights on the edge of each line and one dimmer light in the middle. They also described the lights as being equal distances apart and only about 300 feet high.

Belinda M. Zephir, who works in public relations and marketing at the Lewiston/Nez Perce County Airport, said no unusual aircraft was landing or taking off at the airport yesterday.

But she said she also saw eastbound lights in the sky. They looked just like military planes flying in formation at about 30,000 to 40,000 feet high, she said, and it's likely that's what they were.

The Air Force doesn't notify the local airport when flying maneuvers overhead, she said. On a clear day or night, people can sometimes even see refueling aircraft flying over the valley.

The airport also got a call from a woman saying she'd seen the unusual

lights, Zephir said. The woman said the lights were seen twice: once at 7:30 p.m. and again about midnight.

The Lewiston Police Department also took a peculiar report Tuesday morning. A man came in about 7:30 a.m., a police dispatcher said, and reported he saw a "big ball of fire" coming straight down in the western sky as he was driving near Winchester.

A man also apparently told a Nez Perce County Sheriff's deputy he saw a meteorite-like object falling over the prairie.

Three UFO reporting centers, in Las Vegas, Seattle and Boise, said they haven't had any reports from our area about the Monday night sky.

But Peter B. Davenport, director of the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle, said two other apparent sightings in Seattle and Oregon could be connected to events here.

"We received two sighting reports, one at 22:42 hours (10:42 p.m.) and one at 22:49 hours (10:49 p.m.) of a very dramatic blue or bluish fireball over the Seattle area."

Davenport described the fireball as being teardrop-shaped and said it may have left a smoky trail. He said his first guess would be that the object was a meteorite.

Around the same time, the center got a call from a couple in Oregon who said they saw a triangular-shaped object hovering over the sky and suddenly shooting north, Davenport said.

Ike Bishop, the Idaho state director for the Mutual UFO Network out of Boise, said he gets about five cases a week and the majority of them come from northern Idaho.

"When I just get a report of lights in the sky, there's not much you can do with that unless you've got something credible or tangible. If they resulted in a landing, then it would be worth taking a look at," he said.

Bishop said there recently was a report of an UFO landing in Noxon, Mont., a town near the Montana-Idaho border, east of Coeur d'Alene.

"In this particular case there was beings spotted, all of three types. The three types of aliens reportedly seen included a '7-foot-tall reptilian being, the traditional 3½-foot-tall grays, then also the other one was just a combination of the two,'" said Bishop.

The alleged aliens were spotted by a couple who were camping, he said.

The Mutual UFO Network brought investigators up from Las Vegas, and the sighting is still being evaluated, he said.

"They had an incredible sighting, if in fact it is true. But lights in the sky and that sort of thing, basically what I do is take the report and catalog them in the database and forward them on to the MUFON center. I just investigate the ones that have landings or cattle mutilations. We get three or four cases of those a year, usually south of Boise."

Between 80 to 90 percent of the time, reports called into the Seattle center have nothing to do with "genuine UFO sightings," Davenport said.

"When I get just a report of lights in the sky, there's not much you can do with that unless you've got something credible or tangible. If they resulted in a landing, then it would be worth taking a look at."

Ike Bishop, Mutual UFO Network

Wisconsin Traveler

by Curt Casetta



The place to spot UFOs

"I saw something when I was 13 years old ... and I've been totally fascinated ever since. I know it wasn't a plane. I'm not a kook, I'm not nuts, and I'll never forget what I saw."

David Hankey has been a strong believer in UFO's since that sighting as a kid growing up in Chicago. And he has brought that fascination to his new job, as manager of one of the newest — and certainly most unusual — museums in the state, the American UFO and Sci-Fi Museum in Wisconsin Dells.

The museum houses a collection of props from science fiction (sci-fi) movies, homemade dioramas and displays detailing UFO sightings.

Strangely enough, Wisconsin is actually a reasonably appropriate site for just such a museum. According to the museum's Web site (www.ufomuseum.com), we rank second only to New Mexico in reported UFO sightings. Goodness, Wisconsin's Elmwood, southwest of Menomonie, even adopted the moniker, "UFO Capital of the World" following a string of reported sightings in the 1970s. So, indeed, our UFO heritage runs deep.

The self-guided museum tour, however, starts with the sci-fi.

You're greeted by the 8-foot-tall slimy, bony and ferociously toothed creature from the movie, "Alien." Although this actual alien didn't appear in the movie, it is made from the exact mold of the one that made Sigourney Weaver's blood race.

And there are other exact copies: the eerie, spindly monster from "Independence Day," the wise and wrinkly Yoda of "Star Wars" fame. You can find E.T., as well as the diminutive, bulbous-head, wild-eyed Martians from "Mars Attacks." All can make for some pretty fun photo opportunities.

There are also some, although not many, actual items that appeared in some classics of modern science fiction. The Darth Vader costume, the blue light saber and a black fighter helmet were all used in one "Star Wars" movie or another. From the Star Trek television series are two show-worn uniforms, including red and the blue one associated — at least I think so — with pointy-eared Spock.

Flanking display cases are dioramas, showcasing scenes from the movies "Planet of The Apes" and

"The Terminator," as well as TV's "Star Trek: The Next Generation." Movement along the corridor trips a tape of the "Lost in Space" robot saying, "Danger, Will Robinson." You can try a brief quiz about science fiction movies, or peruse old posters

CHECK IT OUT American UFO and Sci-Fi Museum

Where: 740 Eddy Street
Wisconsin Dells
Phone: 608/253-5055
Admission: Adults, \$5.95 (plus tax); Ages 6-12 and Seniors, \$3.95 (plus tax); 5 and under, free
Open summer daily and weekends only in September, October, April and May. Call for hours.

from old sci-fi flicks such as "The Incredible Shrinking Man."

The last half of the museum is devoted to UFOs. A good portion of the displays recount the supposed events of Roswell, New Mexico in 1947, when local papers ran the headline, "RAAF captures flying saucer on ranch in Roswell region." Believers have offered that after the saucer crashed, aliens were captured and studied (shown in life-sized dioramas). You can read and see documentaries detailing the changing stories of the U.S. Government in describing the event.

You can view pictures of UFOs, hoaxes and the like, along with reading accounts of sightings from pilots and other generally trustworthy sources.

A wall entitled "Wisconsin Encounters" pinpoints some of the UFO sightings in the Badger State, with brief descriptions of the encounters. Especially interesting to me is the rash of sightings in 1947, just days BEFORE the Roswell incident, from Racine to Eau Claire, and virtually all points in between.

If you're into this stuff, the museum is a pleasant little visit — although expansion plans are said to be in the making. If you're not, it still might be worth a smile of nostalgia for the sci-fi or the wondering if there's someone out there.

And a lot of normal folks like manager David Hankey believe that there are.

SANGRE DE CRISTO CHRONICLE,
Angel Fire, NM - Sept. 28, 2000

WEATHER BALLOON?

SILVERY MYSTERY...

A silver orb glinted in the eastern sky last Tuesday evening, never moving, seemingly tethered in air.

It created quite a stir with those who witnessed the sight.

Richard Sutton raced into The Chronicle about 6:30 p.m. dragging me outside for a better view where we gathered with other Centro Plaza bystanders. We considered photographing the sight, but recorded only a spec with Richard's digital camera.

Sue and Dave Huettnier tried calling by cell phone on their way home from Taos to alert us of the object. The static was so severe I decided we were getting calls from the mysterious UFO!

On our recorder at home, 7:04 p.m. Tuesday, Angel Fire's Joan Graham announced, "We've just seen the most amazing thing off our

porch. It's the most beautiful sight we've ever seen."

Later Jack Graham said, "I have a very powerful spotting scope. I can see craters on the moon."

Aiming the scope at the orb, Jack saw an unbelievable silver balloon "with things hanging on the side, almost like the balloons that cross the ocean."

Jack watched the balloon until it got dark. "It never moved."

Adding to the excitement was a giant star "that came out next to it. I could get both in the scope."

If only The Chronicle jet had been in service (or as Gene Erb quipped, The Chronicle Piper Cub), we'd have a better eyewitness report.

Alas, it remains a beautiful silvery mystery. Hope you saw it!

— Marcia Wood ■

TIMES [National Weekly Edition], Washington, DC
Dec. 18, 2000 CR: J. Edmiston



To digress

Just when we thought it was safe to go back outside, active-duty military pilots have reported a UFO sighting.

Flying aboard two U.S. Air Force F-15 Eagle Mach 2 interceptors, the unidentified pilots were about to land after a practice mission on what was a bright sunny day with unlimited visibility, the Fund for UFO Research Inc. reports.

First detected as a bright yellow spot, the UFO rapidly approached one of the military aircraft, pass-

ing from the windshield to the left window. The pilot described the object as round, with a metallic-looking surface and bright yellow lights on top.

As a veteran fighter pilot, the officer reportedly conceded he should have retracted his landing gear, ignited his afterburners and chased "the son of a bitch," except he was "shocked to his bones."

● John McCaslin, a nationally syndicated columnist, can be reached at 202/636-3284 or by e-mail at mccaslin@twtdmail.com.



The truth is out there

By Richard Mostyn
News Senior Reporter

Time loss is a common subject on the flying saucer circuit.

An example: while driving down the road, you'll see an otherworldly disc.

You'll stop to admire the lights and, the next thing you know, it's the next morning and you've, somehow, been the victim of a cosmic memory-robbing bender.

In fact, such stories highlight a common complaint about the aliens routinely zipping through the Earth's atmosphere and hovering, silently, over fields and streams — they're sneaky.

They abduct you, cut your hair, take blood samples, operate on your lymph nodes or, in some cases, steal fetuses right out of your womb, then, perhaps compassionately, impede your memory of the incident.

Such time losses can be disconcerting. I know, because it happened to me, last Sunday during Whitehorse's UFO Conference.

I'm missing about 45 minutes. Not a lot of time, but enough.

It happened some time after UFO*BC founders Graham Conway and David Pengilly gave a speech on the best saucer sightings in their province to about 250 conference delegates in a ballroom in the Westmark Hotel.

This on a day when the Canadian Alliance could barely field a quorum to nominate Jim Kenyon as its candidate in the next federal election.

In the next room, in fact, an important conference on the connection between animal abuse and societal violence drew just 50 people.

Not that there weren't similarities between the two conferences.

In fact, sometimes they were eerily similar.

As speakers at the Tangled Web of Abuse conference recounted how cannibal Jeffrey Dahmer mutilated animals, UFOers told stories about a saucer seen abducting an elk in the Midwest and how other aliens abducted and operated on unwilling humans.

The elk was found dead eight days later. There were no signs of injury and, more eerily, it was untouched by scavengers.

Odd? You bet.

And I'm still missing 45 minutes.

To the best of my knowledge, Conway's and Pengilly's slide show was finished around 4:30 p.m. Sunday. That's when I started to talk to Conway.

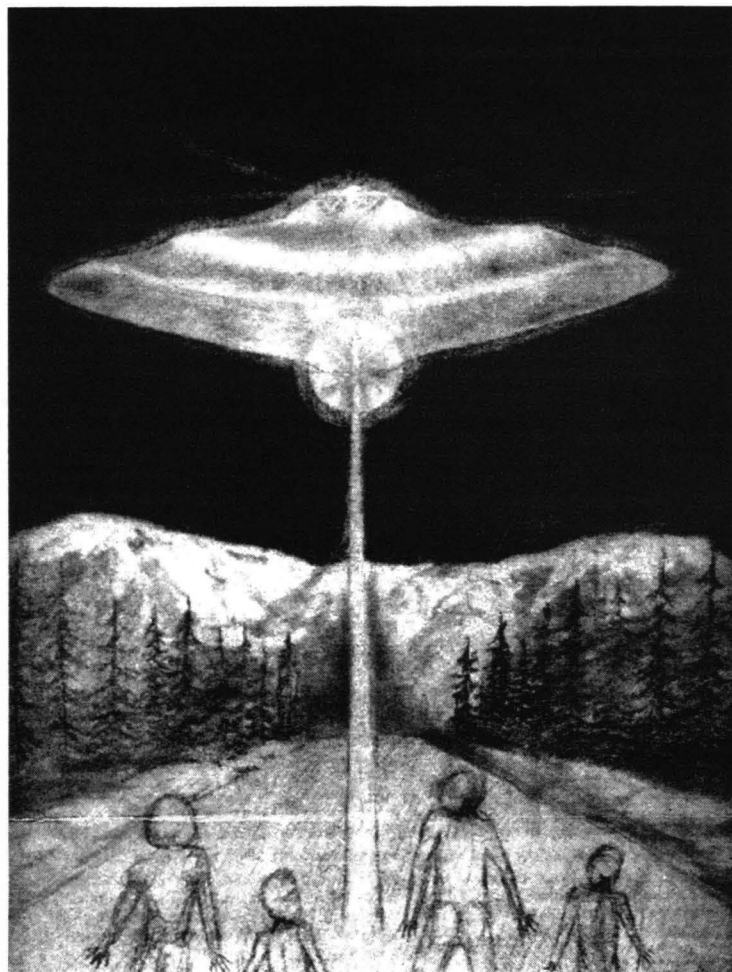
He's an old-school UFOer, a 73-year-old Englishman who was turned on to the saucer phenomenon in 1947, after Kenneth Arnold saw a "saucer skimming over water," near Mount Rainier, Washington.

"I pursued it with passion," said Conway, who retains the vestiges of his Sheffield, England, accent, despite having lived more than 34 years in Canada. "I come from a country with a lot of mystery."

Britain is famous for its tales of Bonnie Prince Charlie, the Knights of the Round Table, haunted houses and castles, the Loch Ness monster, fairies and sprites, he said.

As a child, Conway used to play on a road built by the Romans.

"I grew up with ancient history and mystery surrounding me."



courtesy of Martin Jasek/UFO BC

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS...This drawing depicts an UFO encounter four young boys experienced in Wolf Creek in the early '80s.

Has he ever seen a UFO?

"In 54 years watching the sky, I've seen objects 34 times, at least."

There were three significant sightings, said Conway, who has been a top-flight hotelier, teacher and auxiliary cop in his working career.

His first notable UFO sighting occurred in Ontario, in 1964.

There, near a nuclear power plant, he watched as two objects hovered over Lake Ontario.

Beneath them was a T-shaped bar that was rotating in a counter-clockwise direction, he said.

He gathered some neighbors to watch, then the vehicles vanished.

"In a clear blue sky, they went from zero to 1,000 in a second, or dematerialized, who can say?" he said.

He filed a report with the Canadian government, even though it supposedly has no interest in such strange things, he said.

Years later, he found his UFO report on microfilm at the archives, he said, suggesting Ottawa is more interested in such things than it's letting on.

Later, he saw a red disc "about six feet in diameter, visually," dancing around the skies over Vancouver one afternoon while he was driving home in July, 1986.

He watched it for about five minutes.

The last big event happened in August, 1997, when he saw a totally silent airship, at

least 30 metres long, pass over his veranda at his home in Delta, BC.

The airship, flashing a brilliant strobe light, could be seen for two minutes.

It wasn't a blimp, he stressed, because he knows what a blimp engine sounds like.

He's investigated hundreds of cases, including a mysterious Port Coquitlam sighting, where three children watched a saucer land in a gravel pit.

Conway recovered soil samples from three depressions in the pit, allegedly where the vehicle touched down.

Analyzed by UBC, the samples contained elements that could be created by a blowtorch, the destruction of a car battery and from the exhaust of a motorcycle, but not to a depth of 25.4 centimetres, as in the depressions.

It's one of those odd stories, the ones that can make the hair on the back of your neck prickly.

But Conway's not all that interested in sightings anymore.

It's like chasing phantoms, there's no evidence, just anecdotes about flashing lights, hovering objects and high-speed vanishing acts, he said.

And while talking to him, you get the impression that such things are of interest to those on the cusp of believing, but hold less value to true believers.

No, Conway is more interested in the so-called experimenter mysteries.

Have a run-in with a UFO and you're probably going to be monitored for life, said Conway.

He's interviewed hundreds of people who have experienced time loss, and other odd things at the hands of hairless and obsidian-eyed creatures.

One Vancouver woman, following the demands of her infant who still couldn't walk, strode onto a soccer pitch at 2 a.m.

There, she saw a UFO. She awoke the next morning on the far side of the nearby Capilano River.

For 20 years, he's kept in contact with her. The visitations have continued.

Conway dug around in his briefcase and retrieved an old Turtle chocolate box.

Inside were a handful of her tapes, the cases melted into Dali-esque shapes during an alien home-invasion, said Conway.

Though the tape cases have been damaged, however, the actual audio tape wasn't melted, he noted.

Such odd things are not uncommon.

All you have to do is stand up in any office, extend your arms, and you'll probably encounter a person who has experienced something strange.

"I'm not only convinced something is happening out there, it's happening on a massive scale," he said.

"Most of them are coerced into being silent — if you speak, people think you're a nutcase."

Of course, there are nutcases out there, but you get a sense of truth in a person's voice, their actions and body movement, said Conway.

"The flakey types are few in number. Credibility is like virginity. You can only lose it once and you never get it back."

So, for decades, Conway has investigated strange brushes with interstellar beings on Earth.

His wife tags along.

"In 45 years, she has not written me off as a nutcase... completely," he said, smiling.

"When we got married, I told her we'd never be rich, but it will never be dull being married to me."

His eldest son ignores the topic, but his youngest son is "very psychic," and his eldest daughter has had "things happen to her."

His adopted daughter has expressed relief that none of his blood runs through her veins — "You're a bunch of nuts," she jokes, he said.

As for his own mysterious experience, he's never had one, he said, though his kids can cite strange happenings.

"There's evidence to indicate I have," he finally admitted.

Evidence of experimenter phenomena is fairly easy to come by — streetlights go out as you pass them, lightbulbs in your house burn out frequently, fridge magnets jump off as you walk by, television channels change by themselves, computers crash without you having touched them... the list is long, and may suggest a brush with interstellar destiny.

Ask your parents whether you ever vanished, inexplicably, which may point to an abduction, he said.

But recalling such meetings can be painful, and, in his case, he doesn't want to do the necessary digging.

"I don't want to know about it."

And then we shook hands, and I left the conference.

It was 6 p.m., and a 45-minute interview had suddenly become a 90-minute talk. I'd lost 45 minutes.

CITY MAN SETS UP HELP GROUP AFTER YEARS OF STRANGE SIGHTINGS

UFO sightings no joke, says David

By SARAH TYRRELL

A COVENTRY man who claims to have had a lifetime of close encounters with UFOs has set up a help group for others who have had extra-terrestrial experiences.

David Rogers, aged 46, is launching his own UFO support group to help other people come to terms with their sightings of aliens.

He thinks people who have reported seeing strange things in the sky desperately need an opportunity to talk to others who have had similar experiences.

Ridicule

David, a care worker, who lives in St Patrick's Road, in the city centre, may even start a hypnosis regression group to try to unlock the hidden secrets of their extra-terrestrial adventures.

He said: "People report their UFO experiences and organisations record them, but they are left with no answers and no-one else to turn to."

"They need to talk to people who have gone through similar experiences, understand what they are trying to say and won't ridicule them."

David was away at boarding school when he says he spotted his first UFO. The 15-year-old was in a lesson when he saw the orange light darting backwards



STRANGE ENCOUNTERS: UFO support group founder David Rogers. Picture: DERRICK WARREN

and forwards in the sky.

Soon his teacher and classmates were also gazing at the strange object, which finally shot out of sight.

The teenager put the incident out of his mind until he came back to Coventry two years later and saw the UFO twice again.

His closest encounter was when he woke up in bed at

his former home in The Moorfields, Stoke Aldermoor, and saw a bright object outside.

He claims to have seen two aliens, which he says were both "human looking" with blond shoulder-length hair and all-in-one silver suits.

David, who is adamant the incident was not just a dream, said: "The male

one told me they had put information into my mind that would be retrieved at a later date and they would make a reappearance in my late 30s."

Waiting

He has since experienced several other UFO sightings, which have been investigated by the British

UFO Research Association. But he is still waiting for the return of the aliens - the only ones able to shed more light on his strange experience.

"I would like them to come back," said David. "I want to know why me and why others?"

To find out more about the UFO Support Group, call David on 01203 630348.

Strange sightings in the night sky

ANOTHER Medway resident has sighted the UFO reported in our sister paper the *Medway Standard* on Tuesday.

Don Phillips (68) of Carlton Crescent, Luton and trustee of Luton Millennium Green, claims to have seen Sunday evening's weird mystery.

He said: "It was just before 7.30pm when I saw it and I knew it was something strange."

"It was difficult to see with the naked eye. I considered all the possibilities - a child's balloon, a weather balloon or a hot air balloon, but it wasn't a balloon."

"I want to believe it was a helicopter, but I'm not convinced."

"I can't be sure what it was, it was such a strange shape - it was kind of circular, but narrower at the back."

"I cannot identify it positively, so it could well be a UFO, but it wasn't a frightening experience - it takes a lot to frighten me. They interest me." He said it was flying at about 10,000 feet and moving in a slow westerly direction.

The alleged UFO first came to the attention of *Standard* reporters as a result of a phone call from a couple, who do not want to be named, from Wakeley Road, Rainham.

The man said he was looking at the sky when he saw something strange.

Like Don, he tried to find a legitimate explanation but failed.

The Rainham man said: "What we saw was an object that cannot be identified. This certainly denied normal logic, but then some things are completely and utterly explainable!"

And both men were in agreement that while many UFO sightings are hoaxes, they believe they do exist.

Duty Manager at Rochester airport Pete Johnson said: "It is unlikely that what the men saw was a helicopter as helicopters in Medway do not normally fly above two-and-a-half thousand feet."

Did you see the UFO? If so, write and tell us at *Medway News*, 12 New Road Avenue, Chatham, ME4 6AT.

Invasion of balloons from 'outer space'

ON July 18, *Newsnight* on BBC2 broadcast some wobbly video footage of a flying object taken above Northwich, Cheshire, on July 9. Despite a regional UFO group claiming the film to be the "best ever UFO footage", experienced ufologists are distinctly underwhelmed, suggesting that the object in question is a balloon or flying toy of some kind. The low cloud cover indicates it is quite small, while the timing of the incident, two o'clock on a Sunday afternoon, is the appropriate time for garden fetes and similar events.

In recent years, Mexico City has been in the grip of a UFO "flap" fuelled by lousy home videos; so it was not surprising that, on July 12 - following the release of silver celebration balloons by the Marquis Reforma Hotel on the Paseo de la Reforma - air traffic controllers, police and security services received hundreds of calls reporting at least 20 UFOs.

Many of the callers described how the "silvery objects" formed geometric shapes. "I don't think that it's an airplane, much less a

UFOs

Paul Sieveking

child's lost balloon," said a taxi driver, referring to one of the objects. "Airplanes don't have this colour... and a balloon would have burst on account of the gusts."

Investigation transforms the vast majority of UFOs into IFOs (Identified Flying Objects) but, since sightings are so numerous, even the small percentage remaining unexplained is quite sufficient to keep researchers occupied for years.

For instance, on June 20, a man in the Italian town of Viterbo, 60 miles north of Rome, made a 10-minute video of a white rhomboidal object hovering over the rooftops.

A week later, on June 27, Richard Lewis, a resident of Gloucester, filmed two aerial objects to the south-west of the city. At first, he took them for balloons but when they began to move apart he thought this indicated powered flight. Despite the notorious difficulty of esti-

mating size and distance, he reckoned they were 30 miles away at an altitude of 10,000ft. He was puzzled when they suddenly disappeared from view, since there was only a single, high cloud in an otherwise clear sky.

Massive, triangular UFOs have been seen in large numbers in recent years, most famously in the Belgian "flap" of 1989-91.

In the small hours of June 18 this year, two large triangular objects were seen flying over Charlesville-Mézières and Villers-Semeuse in eastern France. They made a loud, strange engine noise and swooped down to roof height. They had metallic bars beneath the engines, with lights at either end.

Half an hour earlier and about 200 miles to the south-west, Thierry Garnier was skywatching on a hillside on the outskirts of Gansy when he saw a strong white luminous flash approaching from the east.

The French authorities have long had a reputation for taking the subject of UFOs more seriously than their neighbours. Last month, after a three-year

study examining nearly 500 sightings, radar/visual cases and previously undisclosed pilots' reports, a 12-member committee of high-ranking French officials, including retired generals from the Institute of Higher Studies for National Defence, issued a 90-page report entitled "UFOs and Defence: What Should We Prepare For?"

They assert that the estimated five per cent of cases that cannot be explained in terrestrial terms "seem to be completely unknown flying machines with exceptional performances that are guided by a natural or an artificial intelligence". Extraterrestrial craft have demonstrated no hostile acts, the report states, "although intimidation manoeuvres have been confirmed".

The report recommends that the European Union undertake diplomatic action with the United States, "exercising useful pressure to clarify this crucial issue, which must fall within the scope of political and strategic alliances".

□ Paul Sieveking is editor of *Fortean Times*

ALDERSHOT MAIL, Hants., England
Aug. 22, 2000

Search for UFO witnesses

CAN readers help us with our research into the UFO subject, please, with regard to an incident that took place during the late 1970s at Ash, near Aldershot, when a Mr Peter Inwood, (a former member of the Royal Observer Corps), and his daughters saw an 'object' moving over Tweseldown, Aldershot, which was also seen by a Mrs Maureen Slater, who was then living in Hindle Close, Farnborough.

While it has never been our intention to embarrass any reader by naming them, we should point out that they originally had no objection to their personal details being used in the first place, together with the fact that we have always attempted to speak personally to the UFO witnesses themselves, rather than depend on other unreliable sources of information.

Should any reader be able to assist us with putting us in touch with any of the above named people, or have any knowledge of a UFO seen over Ashdown Forest, in East Grinstead, Sussex, by Mrs Knottling, at about the same time, we would be very obliged.

John Hanson, (ex-police officer, retired); Dawn Holloway, (Researcher), PO BOX 6371, Birmingham. B48 7RW

Concluding our serialisation of a controversial new book on UFOs which, if true, questions the very future of mankind

ALIENS UNDER THE SEA

MANY will find it impossible to believe. Others will wonder whether, for all its apparent absurdity, the theory contains a grain of truth. In a new book, Timothy Good, one of the world's most respected authorities on UFOs, puts forward the astounding thesis that aliens have established bases under our seas in vehicles he describes as Unidentified Submersible Objects. Impossible? Maybe. Backing up Good's claim is a wealth of evidence of inexplicable phenomena on the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico, and his dossier carries the endorsement of the retired Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Hill-Norton. On Saturday, in the first of two articles, Good recounted a story of weird objects beneath the waves and strange revelations by military sources. Here, he continues his account. Before you dismiss it out of hand, see what he has to say...

THE story from local people was always the same. Something strange was going on in the dense rainforest of north-eastern Puerto Rico. Travellers who braved the mosquitoes, the mists and the torrential downpours which periodically engulf the area would find themselves confronted by armed men, clad in black, ordering them to leave.

'I don't know what's going on up there,' said Juan Antonio Skerret, from nearby Río Grande. 'Before, you could go up to any place there. Now American military people stop us. Someone is hiding something up there.'

Trails into the 28,000-acre El Yunque rainforest are periodically — some say conveniently — closed due to flooding, landslides or hurricane damage.

The U.S. Navy and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) have radar and communication facilities in the area, to which access is always restricted.

But is there another reason why military personnel seem to appear out of nowhere, ordering visitors to move away?

Carlos Pérez Figueroa, a TV news editor in Puerto Rico, lives on the edge of El Yunque. One night in November 1997, he was with some friends when all of them saw a brilliant light approaching the house, accompanied by a roaring sound which shook the building.

As it came closer, he saw that the light was at the front of a huge, dark, triangular or boomerang-shaped craft with what looked like engines underneath. No tailplane, fin or control surfaces could be seen.

With heat radiating from it, the craft moved at no more than 30 to 40mph. It appeared to be much wider than a Boeing 747, although not as long.

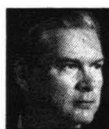
It flew just above the trees, following the contour of the terrain, before disappearing between El Yunque and El Toro, the two highest mountains in the forest. Afterwards, loud explosions could be heard from that direction.

ANIGHT or two later, Carlos Pérez took three friends to visit the rainforest, only to be ordered out by soldiers at the point of a gun. Had he and his friends stumbled on a military exercise? If so, what kind?

A number of strange craft were seen in the El Yunque area at that time. On several occasions, strange, apparently military planes were accompanied by even stranger, more sophisticated craft.

Earlier that year, Juan Hernández, a security guard, was driving in north-west Puerto Rico when he claims to have encountered a huge, triangular-shaped craft.

It was covered with lights which changed colour, and underneath the craft were fan blades which rotated slowly and silently.



by
Timothy Good

Suddenly, a beam of light from the craft engulfed Hernández, who by this time had stopped to watch. He became imbued with a sensation of peace such as he had never experienced before.

When Hernández got back into his car and tried to follow the craft, he found his way blocked by an official-looking vehicle occupied by several men.

They warned him not to go further — and threatened serious consequences if he did so.

Hernández overheard one of the officials telling the others that two more craft were coming. When they loomed into view, they were identical to the previous one but had twin engines, emitted exhaust and were making an extremely loud jet-like noise.

The original craft — which had surrounded itself in turquoise and then violet light — shot off vertically, leaving the others behind. Finally, the men left in their vehicle, apparently following the other two craft, which headed in the direction of what was once the U.S. Ramey air force base.

The 'military' craft seen by Carlos Pérez and Juan Hernández are remarkably alike in description. And in the early hours of that same day, two similar craft, with equally noisy engines, were seen by several other witnesses.

Once again, they were coming in to land at the former Ramey air base, now an airport in an area still controlled by the U.S. air force.

It seemed to Hernández that the second and third craft were less earthly than the first. Were those two aircraft of terrestrial origin, perhaps incorporating extraterrestrial technology copied from the first? And were the men in the vehicle monitoring a test flight?

Such speculations are easy to dismiss. But on Saturday, I revealed how two high-placed sources — one in the U.S. navy, the other in the U.S. air force — have provided evidence of a liaison

between the American military and unidentified aliens who have established bases on our planet.

It sounds incredible. But as I explained, I have shown my evidence and given full details of my contacts to Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Hill-Norton, former Chief of the Defence Staff and ex-chairman of the Nato Military Committee.

He vouches for the probity and good standing of those I have spoken to and is prepared to stake his own reputation on my findings.

The alien bases — many of them underwater — are said to have been established in Australia, the Pacific Ocean, the Soviet Union, the U.S., and the Caribbean. The Caribbean base is thought to exist at Puerto Rico, a former U.S. colony, where much of my research has focused.

IT DOES, indeed, seem incredible. But just suppose these outlandish claims are true. What could these strange beings be doing here?

One idea is that they simply wish to use the Earth as a 'way station' — a temporary staging post on their exploration of the galaxies.

But this possibility is dismissed by the U.S. air force officer who has spoken of their activities. 'They are

here on a permanent basis,' he says ominously. 'They're after this planet.'

One theory is that the aliens hope to exploit our natural resources — such as water. Our planet is plentifully supplied with it, while on other worlds, otherwise suitable for life, it is scarce. This would explain the aliens' choice of submarine bases.

Another suggestion comes from the air force officer himself. He claimed that the aliens were 'messing around with plate tectonics' — the movement of one earthly continent against its neighbours.

ONE CAN only suppose that this might be an attempt to control or limit seismic activity — but why? Perhaps it would be for our benefit, to prevent a global catastrophe. Perhaps there is another, deeper agenda of which we know nothing.

Certainly, the air force officer believed that this activity posed a threat to the environment. He also suggested that the presence of the aliens in our seas was contributing to the global warming of the waters.

But there is another, still more disturbing explanation of the aliens' activities. Much anecdotal evidence suggests that they may have been taking biological

samples, in El Yunque and elsewhere.

Perhaps they are intending to create a genetic Noah's ark, so that they could re-create Earth's life after a future ecological disaster.

Perhaps, more sinisterly, they intend hybridisation experiments, so that their race may colonise our planet.

However extraordinary the idea may sound, it connects with the facts. People in the Caribbean have long spoken of a creature called the chupacabras — the goatsucker. It is said to attack livestock and drain its victims of blood.

It is easy to dismiss as mere legend. But creatures of legend have in the past been shown to exist in reality — and evidence for the goatsucker is growing each day.

Over the years, thousands of cases involving small farm animals and pets have been reported, particularly from Puerto Rico.

A typical case came in January last year, when ten hens and four Canada geese were killed in mysterious circumstances in the village of La Laguna.

For Dorina García Lugo, whose family owned the hens, this was nothing out of the ordinary. 'It always happens in this type of terrain, near to mountains, and it always attacks at night,' she said.

She had no doubt that the

Extra-terrestrial aircraft, Dracula creatures and aliens planning to colonise Earth . . . surely all this is much too absurd to believe

(continued on page 10)



Close shave: Puerto Rican police officer Juan Collazo Vazquez, top, who shot an unidentifiable creature which was attacking his dog

Above: The so-called 'serpent-bird' caught by fishermen

chupacabras was responsible. "The hens were killed inside a new cage we had just built. It put the dead hens in a circle. The injuries were on the back of the neck. There was no blood left."

At times, chupacabras attacks almost reach epidemic proportions. During a wave of sightings of unknown aerial craft and bizarre beings in north-west Puerto Rico in 1975, innumerable strange killings of animals occurred around the town of Moca.

The Federal Department of Agriculture confessed bewilderment. "The situation is occupying all the time of my department," admitted the Assis-

Friend or foe? Aliens have long been the staple of schlock-horror films. But inexplicable phenomena suggest aliens might well already be among us

tant Secretary of Agriculture. According to one report: "The wounds on animals appeared as though caused by a sort of 'punch' or sharp instrument which cuts through organs and bones. In the case of birds, the diameter of wounds is about one quarter of an inch; in cases of goats, the diameter is more than an inch."

"There is never a drop of blood anywhere around the wound. And the wound remains open — as though the instrument producing the wound has simultaneously extracted any flesh or organs which it encountered." The list of animals killed over this period includes 182 domestic fowls, 40 ducks, 33 goats, 20 rabbits, eight geese, eight cows, five sheep, three pigs, three dogs and a cat. Clearly, whatever was carrying out these mutilations was determined to take samples from as wide a range of creatures as possible.

On several occasions, witnesses claimed to have seen the creatures responsible. Their accounts varied, but they spoke of 'hairy creatures', a 'gigantic bird' and a 'terrible greyish creature with lots of feathers and a long thick neck'.

Astonishingly, one of the creatures appears to have been captured alive. It happened in April 1989, after a party fishing in the River Jaguas in east-central Puerto

Rico heard a strange howl. It had come from a bizarre-looking bird with two large fangs. As soon as the fishermen shone their torches on the bird, it fell to the ground, motionless. They caught it and took it home, where it was kept in a cage for several days.

Señora María Ortiz, the wife of one of the fishermen, exhibited the 'serpent-bird', as it was called, to many people, including officials of the Department of the Environment and the police.

The creature was fierce and 'howled like a dog', had large, white fangs — unknown in birds but common to certain snakes — and would eat only raw meat. It looked like a small fowl, but had rough, toad-like skin and no feathers on its head.

One might imagine that, once captured, such a creature would be the subject of eager scientific study. But instead the 'serpent-bird' was confiscated.

MARÍA ORTÍZ was asked by her local mayor's office to bring in the creature for examination. When she arrived, two policemen snatched the cage from her and made off in a van at top speed. Fortunately, photographs of the creature still exist.

According to a source in Puerto Rico's Department of Natural Resources, the 'serpent-bird' had been taken by members of a 'task force', which included American federal personnel, to a secret laboratory containing specimens of other strange creatures.

Is this story true? Or was the whole thing an elaborate stunt? That might be easier to believe were

there not other, first-hand accounts of equally unlikely encounters.

One 'goatsucker' was seen attacking a chow dog in the garage of a Puerto Rican police officer, Juan Collazo Vazquez. He shot the animal — which he described as about 3ft in height, with an oval-shaped snout and a build resembling that of a kangaroo.

But the creature, though wounded, managed to escape as Agent Vazquez dived for cover. He found that part of his dog's hair had been shaved, as if the chupacabras had been about to pierce it.

Blood samples from the incident were taken by doctors specialising in genetics. Their report makes fascinating reading — for it implies that the chupacabras is related to no known species on Earth.

Perhaps the creature that spilled this blood is the product of highly sophisticated genetic manipulation. Or perhaps it is an alien species, totally unknown to present human science.

Of course, it all sounds like something from a science fiction film. But so much of the evidence from Puerto Rico suggests that the truth may be stranger than fiction.

What do the American military authorities really know about the weird events on this beautiful island?

LAST YEAR, a 90-page report on the worldwide alien phenomenon — UFOs And Defence: What Must We Be Prepared For? — was put together by experts from the French Institute of Higher Studies for National Defence.

It concluded that the reality of UFOs, under the control of intelligent beings, was 'almost certain'. Submitted to President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, the report was, however, ignored by the international media.

Gildas Bourdais, a leading French researcher, explains that the report is the result of an independent study by France's Committee for In-depth Studies, otherwise known as Cometa.

The committee's report states that alien activity is 'by far the best scientific hypothesis' for explaining the prevalence of UFO reports.

One of the most intriguing passages examines American policy towards these issues, looking at the infamous Roswell affair of 1947, when the U.S. authorities are alleged to have covered up the crash of an alien craft in New Mexico.

Ever since then, the report says, American attitudes to the UFO question have been 'extremely strange'.

The Roswell incident has continued to be shrouded under a unique layer of secrecy.

Could it be that the U.S. authorities have something very important to hide? Did Roswell provide their first contact with alien intelligence? The report takes the possibility seriously.

'If the Americans managed, on that occasion or on others, to recover at least some pieces of debris or complete wreckage of extraterrestrial vehicles, in more or less good condition, or even humanoid corpses, then some kind of contact would, indeed, have been established.'

The report goes on: 'Why and how could a secret of such magnitude be kept, in spite of everything, up to the present day?'

'The simplest answer would be that the U.S. wants to protect, at all costs, military technological superiority derived from the study of UFOs, and perhaps, a privileged contact.'

Surely, the secrecy has lasted long enough. Whatever the threat posed by alien species, I, for one, would welcome an official disclosure.

■ Extracted from *UNEARTHLY DISCLOSURE* by Timothy Good, published by Century at £16.99. © Timothy Good 2000

More common UFO sightings

RODBOROUGH residents have come forward to back up the UFO sighting reported in the SNJ last week.

Kay Hodgson watched with disbelief as a ball of orange light passed silently through the night sky on August 24 — at exactly the same time as North Woodchester resident Mark Jarvis captured the mystery light on video.

A frame of his film, published in last week's *News & Journal*, jogged Mrs Hodgson's memory.

She lives on the edge of the common and her back garden overlooks the Severn Vale.

Fizzled

"I remember it was between 9.20pm and 9.25pm — it was really bright," she remembered. "It was the colour of a

street lamp.

"We saw it shoot across, then stop but we didn't see where it came from."

"Then it just fizzled out. We were standing there and I was getting quite agitated because I wanted an explanation but no-one could give me one."

"It was really weird, just like a big ball

of fire — I can still see it now."

The light hung quietly in the sky over Selsley Common for between three and five minutes, before vanishing, she added.

Flash

George Strange of Fisher's Way, Rodborough, and his neighbour were walking home from the pub through Lightpill with their wives, when they wit-

nessed a similar light in the sky at around 11.15pm.

"When we got to the top of Kitesnest Lane we saw something like a distant moon flash down the night sky above Cashes Green," he wrote to the SNJ. "It disappeared very quickly across the horizon."

"I don't think it was a case of too many drinks as my neighbour's wife saw it as well."

'WE ARE BEING VISITED BY BEINGS FROM A PARALLEL UNIVERSE'

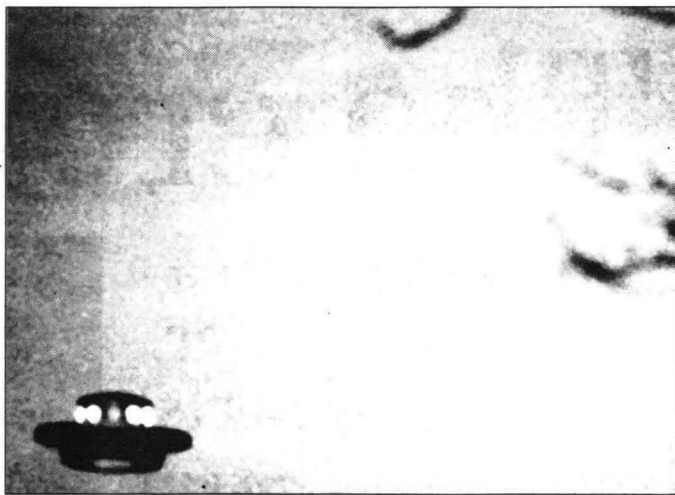


PORT SIDE: This UFO travelled alongside an aircraft in America in 1996 and was seen by those on board. Picture: UFO Magazine UK



CHRIS ROLFE

"There are probably several sightings happening at any one moment"



LIT UP: This picture of a flying saucer-shaped UFO seen over Mexico in 1993 was taken by a police officer. Picture: UFO Magazine UK

'I wish I could track UFOs full time' says Chris

LABOURER Chris Rolfe has a dream. He wants to give up his job and spend all his time chasing spaceships.

Chris runs UFO Monitors East Kent, and gives up all his spare time to watching the skies. He is sure we are being visited by beings from a parallel universe, and says sightings are on the increase.

The usual response to these claims is baffled looks or scepticism. He has been dismissed as eccentric.

He said: "People are a lot better now, since programmes like the X-Files have become popular, but I do still have to deal with sceptics."

"I just tell them to go and look at the Public Records Office, where there are a lot of files dealing with UFOs."

"There is one order that went to all military personnel, telling them what to do in the event of an unexplained aerial phenomenon, and warning them they could be

STRANGE lights in the night sky.

Sinister military orders darkly warning of prosecution under the Official Secrets Act.

Unexplained memory loss.

It sounds like the start of a plot to a sci-fi film.

But some believe that these mysterious occurrences are real and that they are signs of visits from another universe.

Liz Eburne spoke to a believer.

prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act if any information was leaked.

"Orders like this are not issued for nothing, so I believe that something was there to prompt it."

Chris produces a weekly news bulletin detailing the latest visits from outer space beings. The most recent major incident was in May, when a bright white object was spotted over the Channel, with a pulsating orange light and smaller

red objects coming out of it.

Chris said: "There are probably several sightings happening at any one moment, all over the world."

"The number of UFOs reported to us varies from month to month, but there do seem to be a lot around here."

"We concentrate on investigating the sightings, and we normally have at least one big, meaty case a year."

"I don't think they are little green men from outer space, but I do believe that the aircraft are from another universe, quite close to ours. This is quite a respected view, and there are some scientific theories about it."

"I also think they are connected with military activity, because most sightings also include mention of jets, and RAF activity in the area seems to increase at the same time."

In Wingham, a spear-like object was said to be seen travelling against the wind and through an aircraft vapour trail.

Chris said: "It could not have been a balloon, and had to have been powered somehow, because it seemed to try to attack a passenger jet."

"Several flying triangle shapes and so-called flying dumbbells have also been seen, combined with an increase in military activity in the



LANDING SITE: An artist's impression of a UFO, based on eye-witness reports. Picture: UFO Magazine UK

area. Since the RAF pulled out of Manston, the number of sightings in that area has dropped. I am convinced they are linked.

"My personal experience was of seeing two disc-like objects that were being pursued by jets - I don't think all the reports like this can be coincidence."

No one is sure what the flying shapes are or where they come from.

"There are some theories that are too weird to comprehend," said Chris. "One is that some UFOs are similar to micro-waves. They could be beyond our vision and only enter our dimension every now and then."

"Mobile phones use similar waves, and people report memory losses and cancers after using them."

"Some people who have been up close to UFOs experience the same things."

He is also unsure about what controls them.

He said: "They could be living entities, or they could be piloted by living entities. No one knows. And until the scientific community starts taking the sightings seriously and investigating them properly, no one will ever know."

"I don't know if we will ever find the answer to many sightings. I wish we could, and I wish I was a millionaire so I could spend all my time on it, but I can't, so I will just carry on doing what I can."

A spokesman for the Space Science department at Kent University said the unit did not research UFOs, because most sightings were, in fact, meteorological phenomenon.

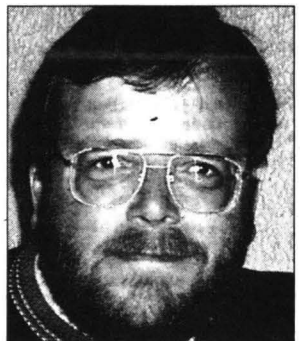
Other experts disagree. Graham Birdsall, of UFO Magazine, said: "There have been many sightings over Kent over the years, mostly by credible witnesses."

"More than 3,500 pilots have reported seeing UFOs. When you consider less than 10 per cent of people act on what they see, I am sure the real number is much higher."

"People are often ridiculed when they go public, but I am convinced the sightings are genuine and we will find the answers."

"After all, we went to visit the moon - who's to say that people from other solar systems or planets haven't visited us?"

■ Anyone who has information or sightings can contact UFO monitors East Kent on 07091 020078.



GRAHAM BIRDSALL: Convinced sightings are genuine



OFF THE GROUND: A low-flying UFO captured on film in 1993. Picture: UFO Magazine UK

CORNISHMAN, Penzance, England - Aug. 31, 2000

UFO sighting reported

by Maurice Stevens
Staff Reporter

A UFO has reportedly been spotted in the skies over West Cornwall.

A Hayle mother and daughter, sitting on a bench by the harbour in Penzance, claim to have seen a 'very fast moving light' in the southern sky.

The light - said to be a brilliant white - moved right over the top of

the witnesses heading for St Michael's Mount.

The mystery sighting has been reported to the Truro-based Cornwall UFO Research Group, which is now appealing for other witnesses to come forward.

It believes the report is 'quite genuine' and hopes others might have photographed it or captured it on a camcorder.

Said CUFORG's Dave Gillham: "As the light reached the mount it

stopped and hovered over the mount for about 15 minutes."

The couple were then joined by a holidaymaker and used their pair of binoculars to focus on the strange object.

"They noticed there was a round object in the light. Disk shaped, the round object was oscillating and seemed to be a silver colour."

After a short while, the light/object moved slowly off out to sea and eventually out of sight."

At around the same time, and from

the opposite direction, a passenger jet came into view and flew over the area towards Land's End and the Atlantic Ocean, he added.

CUFORG (01872 276381) receives and investigates up to 20 UFO reports every year from all over the county. The last report from Penwith was three months ago - a star-like object over skies near Marazion.

Added Mr Gillham: "Things have been quiet for the last year, but sightings seem to be picking up again."

UFO appeal

UFO investigators are appealing for information from the public after a sighting over Buckden.

A local man was out walking at Greenfield Forest when he saw an object hovering in the sky above, but with no accompanying noise.

After a while it began to slowly move away but not before the eyewitness photographed it. When blown up, it shows a cigar shaped object. Now investigators from Skipton-based UFO group "Serious" are keen to hear from anyone else who saw the object.

The group's Donald Cooper said: "It happened in the early afternoon of August 12 - the first day of the grouse shooting season - so there could have been a lot of people out on the moors."

Anyone with information can contact Donald on 01756 795006.

The crop crusader

Prankster with a plank is fined for mocking 'experts'

Daily Mail Reporter

HIS mission was to sweep away the mysteries of the crop circle once and for all.

Matthew Williams crept through the wheat fields of Wiltshire at dead of night armed with planks and bamboo sticks.

Over three nights, with the help of a friend and some scribbled geometric calculations, he created a huge seven-point star shape in flattened grass.

The target of his artistry was Professor Michael Glickman, a world authority on crop circles who frequently pronounces on the 'strange forces' behind them.

Williams was intent on publicly ridiculing his ideas and proving that the complex shapes which mysteriously appear in fields could be created by humans.

Last night, however, the crop circle mystery was as deep as ever and Williams was paying the price of his moonlight jaunt in the form of a £100 fine for criminal damage.

The story unfolded at Devizes magistrates court, where Williams,



Fair crop: Matthew Williams and an aerial shot of a seven-point star similar to the one he created



29, became the first person in Britain to be charged in connection with making a crop circle.

Stephen Clifford, defending, said: 'The crop researcher said it wasn't possible for humans to create it. My client's desire was to prove Mr Glickman wrong.'

Professor Glickman called in police after an e-mail written by Williams was sent to him. The hoaxer had also broadcast a picture of his work on the Internet.

Williams freely admitted what he had done and 'went into some detail about how he did it'.

Roger Jones, prosecuting, said: 'Mr Williams showed no malice. He thought the farm belonged to another farmer who hadn't objected to crop circles in the past.'

Williams was told he would not have been in court if he had bothered to find out who owned the field first. 'We suggest that before you go running around making

artificial circles you get permission from whoever owns the field,' magistrate Geoffrey Olsen told him.

Damage to the wheat, at Manor Farm, West Overton, was estimated at £200. Further damage was caused by people trampling across to see it, said Mr Clifford.

After the case Williams, of Bourton Lane, Bourton, Devizes, said: 'The public are being conned. The majority of crop circles are man-made, although I do believe some

are the work of the paranormal.' Professor Glickman said he was delighted by the prosecution.

From his home in Horton, Wiltshire, he said there had been 150 circles this year of which seven or eight were possibly man-made.

'Mr Williams's pattern was not up to standard anyway,' he said. 'These formations appear in a flash and are very intricate. So who's working for the hoaxers... Michelangelo?'

WORLD-SPECTATOR, Moosomin, Saskatchewan, Canada - Aug. 28, 2000 CR: G. Conway

A scientific explanation? Scientists think they can explain crop circles

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

A scientific explanation may spoil some of the fun of speculating about the crop circles that showed up in a field near Moosomin recently, but members of a research group that has been studying crop circles around the world think they have such a theory.

The theory is based on an energy burst that could be related to air pollution or the thinning ozone layer.

William Levengood of Grass Lake, Michigan, is a research scientist with a Bachelor of Science degree in physics and mathematics from the University of Toledo, a Master of Arts degree in bioscience from Ball State University, and a Master of Science and a PhD in biophysics from the

University of Michigan.

Levengood first became interested in crop formations when a British crop formation investigator, Pat Delgado, asked if he would be willing to examine some plants taken from some British formations.

He agreed, and found some peculiarities about the plants.

Among the first observations was that, although the seed heads and glumes in the formation plants looked normal on the outside, inside they were devoid of seeds. The control plants taken outside the formations were normal and contained seeds. The formation plants also had a condition known as polyembryony, an uncommon genetic aberration which results in the formation of multiple embryos within

a single glume, preventing the development of seeds.

These findings were duplicated in samples from other British formations. After ruling out other known causes for polyembryony, Levengood was left with one known possibility — the condition can be produced by ionizing radiation.

Of the hundreds of sites from which sample have been taken, about 90 per cent reveal some or all of the changes.

In the early 1980s, a British meteorologist, Dr. Terrence Meaden, began researching the phenomenon. He specialized in research in atmospheric vortices, tornadoes, and whirlwinds, and suggested that crop formations, at least the simple circles, were the result of atmospheric vor-

tices, perhaps accompanied by electrical forces.

Levengood and his research team have further developed the theory. Levengood suggests highly-charged complex ion plasma vortices which originate in the ionosphere.

In a 1994 paper published in *Physiologia Plantarum*, Levengood wrote "Crop formations consist of geometrically organized regions ranging from two to 80 m diameter, in which the plants (primarily grain crops) are flattened in a horizontal position.

"Plants from crop formations display anatomical alterations which cannot be accounted for by assuming the formations are hoaxes. Near the soil surface, the curved stems often form complex swirls with vortex-type patterns... evidence is presented which indicates that structural and cellular alterations take place in plants exposed within the confines of the circle type formations, differences which were determined to be statistically significant when compared with control plants taken from outside the formations."

Nancy Talbot, field research co-ordinator with the BLT Research Team, said in an interview recently that people shouldn't be surprised to find a natural cause to the sometimes complex patterns of crop formations.

"Think of a snowflake or a flower petal," she said. "Those are very complex patterns formed in nature. Fluid dynam-

ics and plasma physics dictate the kind of patterns you can find in crop formations."

For a paper published in *Nature*, Levengood studied vortex instability by dropping denser liquids into perfectly still vats of water, and found a wide range of patterns can be formed randomly and spontaneously.

Talbot says that crop circle reports appear to vary on an 11 year cycle, in sync with the cycle of sunspot activity. The more sunspots, which produce radiation, the more crop circles.

She also believes the phenomenon may be related to the thinning ozone layer, which has been shown to allow more radiation into the atmosphere as it thins.

"We have a case where we have more and more radiation hitting the earth's surface, and this may be one thing that it's doing — creating these vortices," she said. "But it may be an early warning for us. What ever is causing this is making the plants infertile. What if it happened to all the crops? If it can do this to plants, what can it do to us?"

She compared the research into crop circles to early research into the effect of pesticides on marine mammals. "At first, no one believed it, but now we know that one of the byproducts of pesticides is decreased fertility, and pesticides can be directly responsible for reproductive cancers in human beings. We feel our research is just as important as that early research into pesticides."

EVENING LEADER, Chester, England - Aug. 1, 2000

AN ORGANISATION that investigates strange goings-on in the skies of Chester is seeking funding from a US billionaire.

The cash would be used to carry out research into paranormal activity across the North West region.

Members of the British UFO Studies Centre decided to approach billionaire Robert Bigelow after their video of a mysterious craft weaving through Cheshire skies provoked international interest.

Mutilations

The Northwich-based organisation has now applied for funds to the National Institute for Discovery Science, which is backed by Mr Bigelow.

He already supports projects including the investigation of cattle mutilations on farms in

UFO group in plea for American cash

the Midwestern United States.

Two weeks ago, BUSFOSC unveiled footage captured by cinema manager Karl Woods, filmed from his house in Hartford, of a circular silvery craft dodging in and out of the clouds. NIDS has now agreed to analyse the video.

Eric Morris, director of the centre, said they had been inundated with sightings, reports and new video footage.

He said: "The vast majority of sightings will be misidentifications of mundane objects, but a small number will relate to clearly structured craft of

unknown origin and maybe even provide evidence of encounters with a non-human intelligence."

Mr Morris added that Cheshire and neighbouring counties had a rich history of "high strangeness" events.

The Cheshire Project will also involve researchers from the Lancashire UFO Society, the Cheshire Paranormal Group and the Manchester Anomalous Phenomenon Investigation Team.

NIDS said the institute would have to analyse the video before any decision on funding is made.

Close encounters

UFO authority seeks others who may have had been abducted by aliens

By MARSHALL JONES
STAFF REPORTER

This is not a spooky pre-Halloween story, but Graham Conway, president of UFO BC wants you to know that—they are out there.

The engaging authority on the topic of the unexplained is bringing his message to the Okanagan this Saturday and expects them to be in attendance. He urges you to be unafraid.

"I would venture that in and amongst your friends and colleagues or relatives there are people you know on a day-to-day basis," he said, "who can tell you stories of events that they have experienced for which they have no explanation and they are very reluctant to talk about unless they feel you are not going to laugh at them."

He is talking about alien abductees and he expects from experience that about half of the audience that attends his speech at the Penticton campus of Okanagan University College Saturday from 6:30 p.m. to 10:15 p.m. will have stories to tell him.

"Anybody who will be there is not there because there is nothing on television or its raining out," he said. "They have a very personal stake in what I am talking about."

Conway, based out of Vancouver, has been studying the paranormal for 54 years, the last 25 of which has been an attempt to move beyond the unverifiable "lights in the sky" stories and into something which can be proved, like abductions.

He says too often the frightening implications of their stories make them prey for the closed-minded; the fear is directed at them instead of

what happened to them.

But, he maintains, there is no denying it.

"They will have a finely honed telepathic sense," he said. "They know who is on the phone before it rings, they'll know when someone has died or when someone is going to die."

The person may also have an unusual effect on their surroundings, he added.

"They may have unusual electronic effects. They go near a computer and it will crash; the television will change channels without them using the switcher; they walk down the street and the lights come on; they walk past the refrigerator and the magnets fall off. They have no control over them but they are very real events," Conway said.

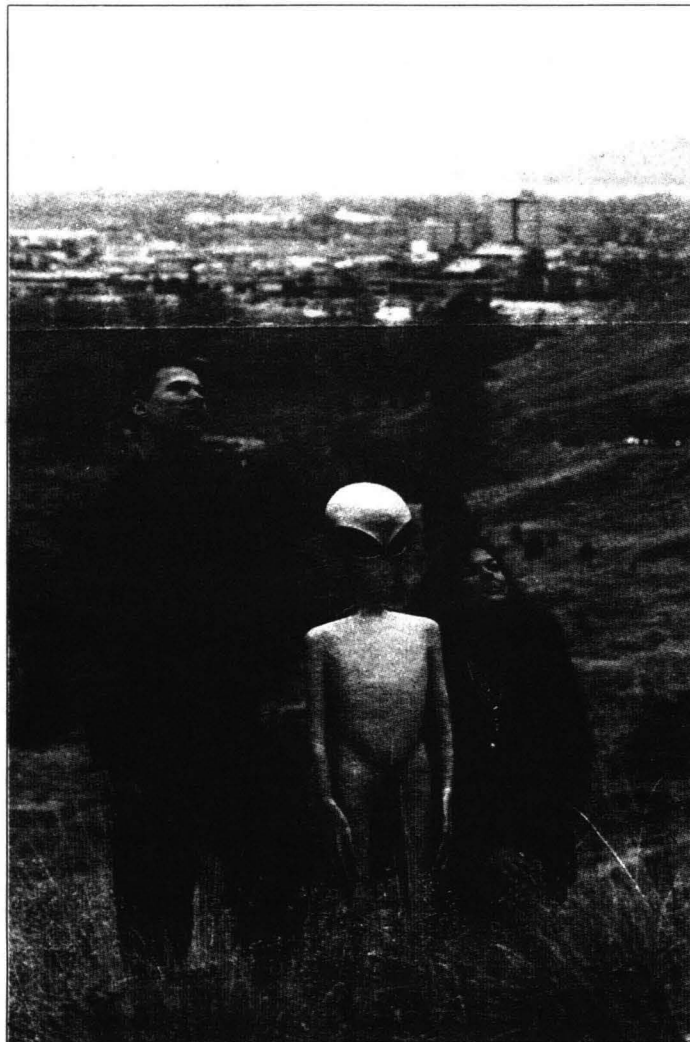
Conway's UFOBC chronicles the various sightings in, as it so opportunisticly borrowed from the tourist association, "Supernatural B.C."

That includes an under-represented contingent from Kelowna. Our searching eyes are spent more often on the feeding grounds of Ogopogo than in the skies, he says.

The UFOBC web-site counts just three recent UFO sightings in the Central Okanagan — two in January, 2000 and the latest from June 8, 2000 when someone watched a satellite burst into light, change direction and high-tail it into orbit.

Kelowna was, however, home-base for a kind of alien support group run by Corina Saebels and her husband Robin. It continued for a few years before being dropped to waning interest.

Saebels is now in the midst of her own research after



ALIEN EXISTENCE is no laughing matter say Corina Saebels and husband Robin. Corina says she has seen them and modeled this lifesize "Grey" alien, which has also been seen by many other people, after them. The couple ran an alien support group in Kelowna that eventually died out for lack of interest.

having seen and felt space-ships at several times in her life, most of which she says can be verified by other people, and she is responsible for bringing Conway back to the Okanagan. Saebels' first sighting was a child in Montreal, verified by her father who saw the ship across town.

The most recent was in Peachland, when she saw one overhead. She has also been privy to sightings of "the grays", three-foot-tall gray men which have left tracks all over the world. She and Robin have even created a replica of it. They named it Digit.

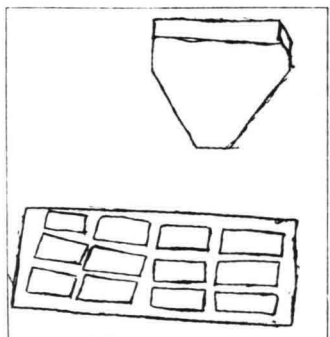
DAILY MAIL, London, England
Oct. 19, 2000 CR: N. Oliver

Cough drop

■ NOT a lot of people know this, but crop circles, I am reliable assured, can sometimes be efficacious to health, as explorer Colonel John Blashford-Snell's wife, Judith, has discovered. Inspecting one such phenomenon in a wheat field at Milton Lilbourne, Wiltshire, with crop circle investigator Lucy Pringle, Judith was temporarily cured of a virus attack. 'It was quite extraordinary,' says Judith. 'I'd been suffering from a bad cough for months, brought on by a touch of viral pneumonia. 'But after spending 20 minutes in the crop circle, I suddenly became aware that I had stopped coughing. 'The effect lasted 24 hours — which was a great relief because I had been coughing so much it was becoming quite exhausting.' However, Lucy adds: 'Only genuine crop circles — not the man-made ones — have healing properties...'



Littleborough - Landing site for aliens? (2705)



Ceri's sketch of the triangular-shaped UFO he spotted over Littleborough.

Stargazer's close encounter of the triangular kind

By JONATHON DILLON

A LATE night walk home turned into a jaw-dropping experience for Ceri Kenyon.

While gazing up at the heavens trying to find a star he named after a former love, car valet Ceri spotted something else winking back at him — and he is convinced it was a UFO.

Ceri, who lives in Featherstall Road, Littleborough, was walking back from Smallbridge after visiting a friend and he claims that as he got closer to the flickering lights, which were now red and blue, he could hear a strange buzzing sound and saw that the object was triangular in shape.

Ceri explained: "I had just got past the chip shop when I noticed it. I sometimes look at the stars to see if I can spot the one I nicknamed Honeybunny after my former fiancée."

"I looked straight up at it and could see there were lots of red and blue lights. I could also hear a buzzing sound like a vacuum cleaner."

"From the underneath it was almost triangular in shape because the lights went around it. It was hovering above some flats and moving ever so slightly."

As he stood transfixed, two other people came down the street and watched the low-flying object for 20 minutes before it rose up and flew off towards Rochdale.

Ceri said: "I stopped two lads and asked them if they could see it. I asked them if it was just me but they said 'no mate, there's something up there'. It looked like there was a kind of energy around it."

While believing in UFOs and aliens Ceri, aged 21, has an open mind as to where the visitor could have come from.

He said: "I couldn't relate to it as anything I've seen before. There's a lot of aircraft testing being done in this area. If this craft was experimenting with energy it could be harmful to nearby planes in the sky."

Graham Birdsall, editor of Britain's leading title on the subject called UFO Magazine, said triangular UFOs are being reported not only by the public but by pilots as well.

He said: "We have received a telephone call from someone in Manchester who saw a triangular object last month. We have been getting reports over the years of these so-called 'flying triangles' from all over the world."

"Some people think this is the latest stealth technology but wonder what is it doing over populated areas. These sightings are surely a matter of significance in terms of safety."

"These people on the ground who see them are not alone, there are people seeing them from the air and logging them."

Richard Wright, from the Civil Aviation Authority, which uses radar to track the movements of aircraft in UK airspace, said they had received no reports of any incidents in the area.

He said: "We have no record in the log which means nothing has been reported to us directly by pilots or employees. It could have been a surveillance helicopter that operates outside controlled airspace."



UFO witness Ceri Kenyon following his close encounter in Littleborough. (2704)

When little things go missing

Local man explores the unknown with theories on aliens and why some things just disappear

EVER WONDER what happens to those little things that go missing? The socks that lose their mates somewhere? The all important set of keys that vanish from their normal spot from time to time?

Larry Sommerfield says he's experienced a bizarre rash of missing items that suddenly re-appear, sometimes altered. The difference though, is that he's not just accepting it, he wants to know why, and he thinks he might be on to something.

Sommerfield, 77, lives in Thornhill where used to operate a repair business. Currently, he passes time by fixing up old electronic equipment and helping out with local senior citizen's organizations.

The strange series of events that would lead Sommerfield to become a UFO theorist began a few years ago.

Sommerfield keeps a large collection of old eight-track cartridges, which he keeps in cases in a padlocked shed with barred windows on his property.

From time to time, he makes cassette copies of them for the seniors at Terraceview Lodge, and occasionally for Northern Native Broadcasting.

In the summer of 1998, while searching through his album collection and repairing old eight-tracks, Sommerfield noticed that an eight-track copy of My Way by Frank Sinatra was mysteriously missing from its usual spot in the case, where he had seen it just minutes before.

"I began to think my mind was acting up," said Sommerfield, who vividly recalled placing the eight-track tape on a pile for inspection later.

Four days later, as he finished fixing the last batch of tapes, My Way re-appeared, but was now inaudible, with tape jammed up inside of it.

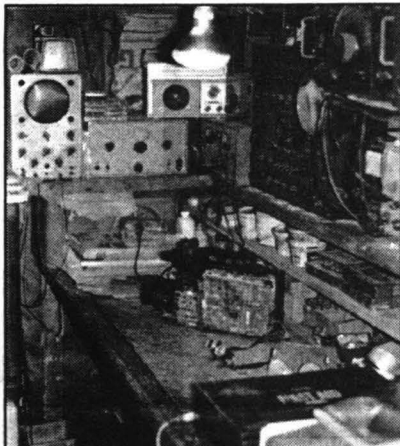
"There was just no way I could've missed it," Sommerfield said.

He said he would never have done any such thing to the tape himself during repairs, and figured that only someone or something else could've mangled up the tape so badly.

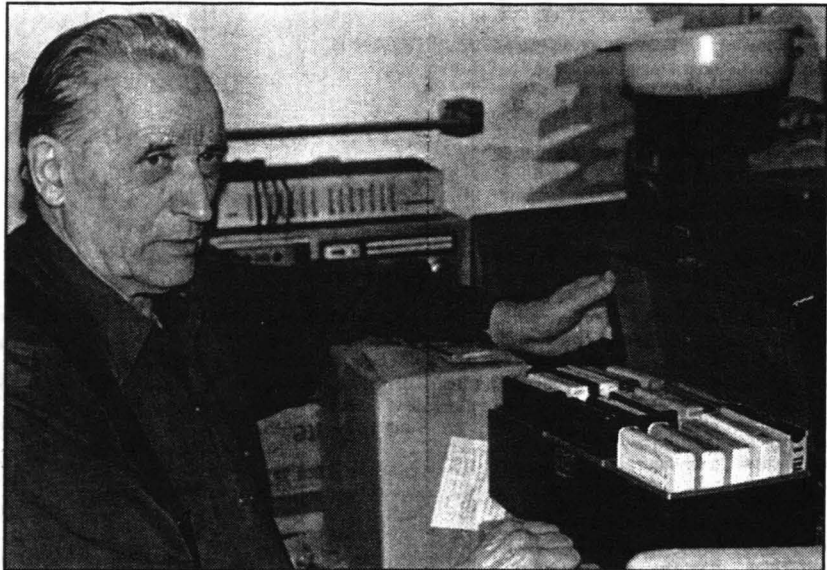
"This was something that couldn't possibly happen from wear and tear," he said.

But this wasn't an isolated incident, rather the beginning of a series of events that would turn Sommerfield into a full-blown UFO theorist.

On his Thornhill property, Sommerfield has several sheds where he keeps all manner of tools for almost any kind of repair you could think of from video cameras to old cars.



THIS IS WHERE Larry Sommerfield does a lot of electronic repair work. It's also where he says he's had items simply disappear on him, only to return to the same spot at a later time.



WHERE DID IT GO: Larry Sommerfield examines his 8-track cartridges. Several of the cartridges have gone mysteriously missing in the past few years, and then re-appeared in the same spot. Sommerfield isn't just ignoring it though, he's developed his own theories as to why, and they're far reaching.

Several years ago, Sommerfield ordered a drill bit set from Princess Auto — a set which, it turned out, was missing a small size 56 bit, he got a backup set with the right bit and shelved it in a cupboard until he needed to use it.

When a pair of plastic framed glasses of Sommerfields needed repair, he knew the size 56 drill bit would be ideal.

When he went to the new set he'd bought, the bit was missing. Sommerfield acknowledges that a skeptic would say that he probably lost or misplaced the bit. Sommerfield disagrees.

"To a person with my makeup, breaking a tool is like breaking an arm," he said. "I remember every one."

Sommerfield has shared his experiences with friends and found that he was by no means alone with this disappearances.

One friend had found an old hunting knife at the Thornhill landfill, found that it was a valuable antique and cleaned it up.

He put it on display on a shelf where visitors could see it, but one day, when he returned from work, it was gone.

His trailer was locked and there had been no sign of a break-in, but the knife simply wasn't there.

Four days later, the knife re-appeared, again without a sign of any sort of break-in.

Sommerfield is convinced that the disappearances are caused by aliens, and that the objects are being researched by them in a sort of archaeological way.

"The aliens aren't interested in taking over," Sommerfield said. "They're interested in human development and evolution."

Sommerfield has filed his stories, gathered up the stories of others and has approached UFO groups in B.C. and south of the border.

In a 27 page handwritten report, Sommerfield outlines his theories from Roswell to crop circles to space travel.

"Many people enjoy the scary space movies, knowing that they're fiction and probably won't happen in real life," he said.

Sommerfield says he's increasingly frustrated by newspapers which dismiss his reports, and the police who file them away and ignore them.

"They have no directive of what to do with UFO reports," he said.

"They only file them for awhile and then toss them into the waste basket."

The federal government, Sommerfield says, has no agency or department to deal with reports either. He said that they advised him to contact volunteer UFO groups.

In the report, Sommerfield goes over a few

cases others have mentioned to him that are more on the dramatic side.

One of the incidents involved a friend of Sommerfield, Tom, who, while driving to Prince Rupert for a wedding late in the day spotted an unusual string of lights in the middle of the Skeena River.

Hovering directly above the river, half a mile from the highway was an eggshaped UFO.

The craft was between 50 and 60 feet wide, with a thickness between 12 and 20 feet. Bright lights shone from the inside, visible through a row of windows.

When Tom arrived at the wedding reception, an off-duty policeman was there who had also heard several accounts of the unusual lights.

Others Sommerfield has spoken to recount seeing "fast moving stars" in the night sky that would stop and start suddenly.

Piecing together sightings reports from the Yukon to Seattle, Sommerfield believes that the region is a hotbed for aliens.

Sommerfield feels that high-powered telescopes designed to track extra-terrestrial intelligence are essentially tuned to the wrong wavelength. He makes a few interesting analogies to prove his point.

"This may be like trying to determine if Indians exist by being on the lookout for their smoke signals, when they're all using cellular phones," he said. "For a more advanced civilization than ours, electromagnetic or radio waves may be as out of date as the American Pony Express today is to us."

Another point Sommerfield makes is that atomic bombs, which were first exploded in the 1940s, led to an increase in UFO sightings reports.

The fact that humans were capable of such explosions, sparked interest by alien civilizations, he says.

"If any advanced civilization was watching us, it would have taken over four years for the light from these atomic bombs to reach them," he said.

He added that the aliens must be capable of faster than light speed to get to the earth within five years of the atomic blast, when lots of reports started circulating.

But what is Sommerfield doing with this information, and what does he hope comes of it all?

He just wants people to open their minds to the possibility that alien civilizations could exist, and to take them seriously.

"I never paid too much attention to it before," he said. "I accepted the possibility that life could exist elsewhere."

DORSET EVENING ECHO, Weymouth, England - Sept. 20, 2000

DAILY MAIL, London, England Sept. 11, 2000 CR: S. Gerrard

Cleaners see UFO

A TRIO of cleaners today claimed to have seen the mysterious flying object above the West Dorset coast. Jenny McConnell, 50, Ivy Balfour, 48, and Janet Wheatland, 38, say they spotted the craft on their way to work at Weymouth Bay holiday camp. The sighting comes after families on Portland and near Bridport claimed to have seen an unidentified flying object (UFO) off the coast. Mrs McConnell, of Kitchener Road, said: "We were on our way to work at about 6.30am. We saw a round object in the sky with flames coming out of the back, high above the sea past Bowleaze Cove. "It definitely wasn't an aeroplane as it was moving much too fast."

Axils to grind

I'M SURPRISED that no crop circle investigator has pointed out the following: not all crop circles are hoaxes, but we are distracted from the truth by people such as 'Dave' and others who've managed to demonstrate on TV and in national newspapers how easy it is to fake them. Yet real circles can very easily be distinguished from hoaxes. In a real circle, the joints — or axils — along the stem of each piece of cereal are mysteriously and inexplicably melted before the piece falls into its pattern. It then hardens after its fall. In hoax formations, the stems are either flattened and remain straight, or are broken. So the question remains: how are the joints melted and by whom or what? MICHAEL JOYCE, Birmingham.

CANNOCK CHASE POST, Wolverhampton, England - Sept. 28, 2000

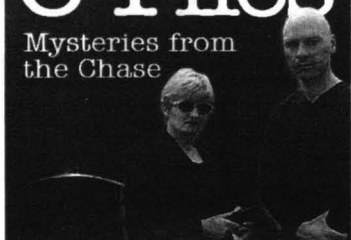
FLYING TRIANGLES OF THE CHASE

Top secret British invention or visitors from another planet?



T.H.E. C-Files

Mysteries from the Chase



EACH week our Chase Files duo, Nick Pope and Irene Bott, try to unravel the mysteries of the Chase. If you've had a close encounter or witnessed ghostly goings on, contact them on 01922 869641

For the vast majority of people, any mention of the term UFO inevitably conjures up images of Flying Saucers and similar shaped objects.

Over the course of the last few years, however, our investigations into the UFO mysteries of Cannock Chase have shown us that an increasing number of people are now reporting encounters with a distinctly different type of UFO - one that has become known as the Flying Triangle.

Typically, the Flying Triangles are reported as being black (or sometimes silver or white) in colour, of varying sizes, and are generally seen late at night or during the early hours of the morning.

We have in our files a whole host of such reports filed by witnesses throughout the Cannock area. However, there are two cases in particular that stand out more than any other. The first, from March 1993, is most notable of all because it attracted the keen attention of none other than the Ministry of Defence.

Between 1991 and 1994, Nick Pope investigated UFO sightings for the MoD and in 1996 wrote a best-selling book about his time as the ministry's official UFO investigator. He told us a remarkable story concerning an encounter with one of the Triangles, reported by a family that lived near the Chase.

According to Pope, "there had been a family gathering and several members were out on the drive saying goodbye. Suddenly, this large, triangular-shaped craft flew over them very, very slowly; this was a flat triangle with a light in each corner and a larger light in the street direct centre of the underside".

Pope continued: "They also reported a low-frequency humming sound coming from the UFO; a humming that they described as quite unpleasant. Imagine standing in front of the speakers at a pop concert and almost feeling the sound as well as hearing it - that was the effect."

Astonished

According to Pope, the astonished family leapt into their car to give chase! "They came to a point where they thought the UFO was so low that it must have come down in a nearby field. But there was absolutely nothing there. The UFO had gone."

Nick Pope told us that he launched a full inquiry that ruled out conventional aircraft, the secret test-flight of a prototype vehicle or any form of natural atmospheric phenomena. To this day, the March 1993 encounter remains unexplained.

Our C-Files show that four years later, one of the Flying Triangles returned to the Chase. From a Derby-based UFO investigator, Omar Fowler, we received the following account:

"The witness's attention was attracted by a noise similar to a high-revving, two-stroke engine. He went outside in the darkness and saw hovering lights approximately 150 yards away and 50 feet up from the ground. He went indoors and fetched his binoculars and was able to

make out the shape of a black helicopter in the vicinity of the lights."

But that was not all. Hovering close to the helicopter was a 'black-out, triangular craft! According to Fowler, the helicopter reminded the man of the heavily armoured helicopter from the 'Airwolf' TV series.

"I couldn't believe my eyes!" he told Fowler. As the man moved closer to the scene, said Fowler, the helicopter suddenly exited the area at "an incredible rate of knots". For a moment the Flying Triangle remained in hovering mode and then it, too, vanished out of sight.

Top secret

There are those who believe that the Flying Triangles are nothing more sinister than a Top Secret British equivalent of the American B-2 Stealth Bomber. However, it is worth noting Nick Pope's words to us on the 1993 encounter over the Chase: "If you were to ask me to take my best shot, I would say that this was the real article; this was extra-terrestrial."

Space ships or spy-planes? The truth is out there and we intend to find it!

Have you seen one of the Flying Triangles over the Chase? Do you have a mystery or a conspiracy from the area that you would like our C-Files team to investigate? If you do, call Nick and Irene on: 01922 869641.



UFO investigator Omar Fowler with a model of one of the 'Flying Triangles' that have been reported from the Chase. Picture: Nick Redfern

YORKSHIRE EVENING POST, Leeds, England - Sept. 4, 2000

New UFO footage on way to city

BY PAUL JEEVES

SECRETLY filmed UFOs shot by space shuttle astronauts are to be unveiled at the longest-running and most prestigious UFO event on the European calendar.

The 19th Leeds International UFO Conference, being staged at Leeds University next month, is bringing together some of the best-known figures in international UFO research in a diverse and fascinating series of presentations.

The undoubted highlight of the three-day conference, which starts on Friday, September 15, will be the astonishing new UFO footage gleaned from NASA.

Graham Birdsall, editor of the Ilkley-

based UFO Magazine and organiser of the conference, believes that both space shuttle astronauts and cosmonauts on board the Mir space station have not only observed anomalous objects in the past, but have filmed them in the process.

Mr Birdsall claims Nasa have attempted to deflect media and public interest in such footage by citing 'ice crystals' or 'debris' as an explanation.

But NASA's public stance could be about to change with the appearance at Leeds of Martyn Stubbs, a former Cable TV manager from Vancouver, Canada, who over a period of five years, used his station's satellite receiving dishes to record and log over 2,500 hours of successive space shuttle missions from NASA's own downlink. Mr Birdsall said: "This footage is nothing short of amazing. Astronomers and scientists who have viewed some of the anomalous objects contained within the footage have been knocked off their feet."

Also on show at the conference will be more NASA footage to be presented by an American known only as 'L.L. Wille'.

Mr Birdsall said: "Wille deployed an array of 17 satellite dishes to secretly record NASA transmissions emanating out of the back end of a space shuttle.

"In one sequence we see dozens of 'spheres' hovering perilously close to a newly deployed satellite above the shuttle's open cargo bay hold. Ice crystals? Forget it."

Poll

The theme of this year's conference is UFOs: The Challenge Ahead, and will be examining how to address deep-seated prejudices and scientific dogma ranged against those who either see, write or even dare to talk about UFOs.

Mr Birdsall added: "The fact is that every public opinion poll conducted on UFOs this past decade has shown a healthy majority in favour of the notion that they are real and not imagined."

Guest speakers at the three day event include authors Nicholas Redfern, Nick Pope, Peter Robbins and former West Yorkshire police officer Alan Godfrey, who will recall his famous 1980 'abduction' experience in Todmorden, West Yorkshire.

Tickets are available for all three days and prices start at £5. For more information contact 01943 816611 or www.ufomag.co.uk.

paul.jeeves@ypn.co.uk

GAZETTE, Clacton, England - July 7, 2000

Woman 'spots UFO'

A WOMAN looking after her sick dog spotted a UFO from her garden that was "hanging like a huge bat", it has been claimed.

The Essex UFO and Paranormal Research Group is appealing for any other witnesses to the incident in Clacton at the beginning of June.

A group spokesman said: "During the early hours, a huge

black triangular object was seen hovering silently and stationary for about three minutes over the rooftops of a well-known estate in Clacton.

"It then shot off at great speed in a westerly direction towards Colchester.

"The person, a UFO sceptic, was tending her sick dog in the garden at 2am when she noticed the black object."

There's more to what's seen in the sky than first meets the eye!

EXETER zoologist Jonathan Downes has spent years tracking down tales of sightings of weird creatures. Now he had linked up with a leading writer on the subject of the alien and during the Second World War. They told SANCHIA TETLOW that what they discovered has surprised them.

REAL LIVES

MENTION UFO experts to most people and the word 'anorak' springs to mind but Jonathan Downes and Nick Redfern are anything but.

Although both are interested in UFOs, neither of them have a burning desire to see one and admit they think those who do are "barking mad".

The duo are more interested in researching the phenomenon in an analytical way than chasing lights in the sky.

But they do strongly believe that there are things going on that we have no idea about.

These beliefs are based on reports they have uncovered from trained, military personnel.

And now they have released the first of a series of books called *Weird War Tales*.

The first in the series focus on reports by both Allied and enemy forces during the hostilities of 1939 to 1945.

The work came about after Jon, a former nurse from Exwick, read a book by Nick called *Covert Agenda*.

Nick, 35, from Walsall, is a full-time author of UFO books.

About three years ago Jon was doing the book reviews section on an Exeter-based magazine called *Sightings* when Nick's book arrived.

He said: "I am a zoologist and I was only working on the UFO magazine because I needed to pay for my divorce. I didn't care

about UFOs, I just thought they were stupid things.

"Most UFO books are dreadful, absolute twaddle, but when I read Nick's book I was surprised by how it made sense."

In the book, Nick had gone through all the declassified public files in the public records office and uncovered a number of reports of sightings made by highly trained pilots.

Jon said: "The fact that some of these reports had made it into official Government documents going back as far as the 1940s, and in some cases even the First World War, interested me."

Nick said: "There are a lot of books that deal with D-Day but very few that have delved into the paranormal mysteries during the war. There are a lot of reports of strange phenomenon. Bomber pilots were seeing these weird things."

The two became friends and decided to pool their skills.

As a child, Jon, 40, had grown-up in Hong Kong and his interest in mythical creatures started then.

For the last 11 years he has been travelling the world, collecting tales of weird animals, such as the yeti, and writing about them.

Nick became interested in UFOs through his father.

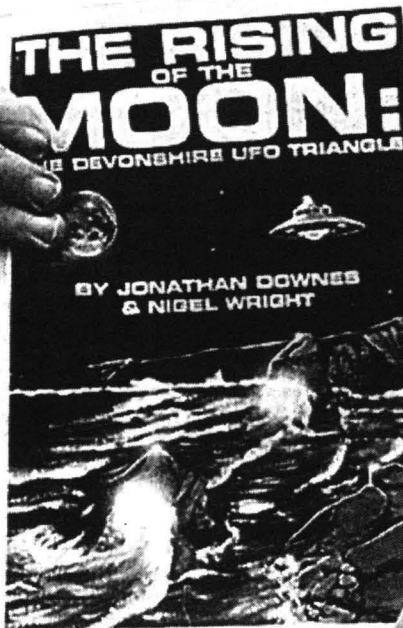
"My dad was an RAF radar mechanic. In 1952 he was working at RAF Neatishead in Norfolk when they tracked unusual objects on the radar which were travelling about 3,000 miles an hour."

"The first thought was it was a Russian attack. The pilots reported seeing glowing lights which then disappeared."

"Everyone involved was told never to talk about it. That convinced me."

The pair are hoping the books will change the way people regard UFO sightings.

Nick said: "Because the UFO subject is so controversial it is not enough to say I in-



UFOLOGY: Jonathon Downes, above, with an earlier publication. Inset, Nick Redfern, who Jon has teamed up with to write *Weird War Tales*.

terviewed someone who saw a strange light in the sky.

"But I have found that you can convince people if you tell them about official records of RAF pilots who have seen things in the skies, or odd objects being tracked on radar."

"The pilots used to call them Foo Fighters, from a comic book character."

"During the war the Americans and the British thought the Foo Fighters were a secret German device."

"It was only when they debriefed captured German prisoners that it was discovered the Germans thought they were an Allied device."

"The issue was never resolved. But the Government is now declassifying some of the reports."

The public records office has more than 4,000 pages of UFO reports since the war and about 10 per cent of them are from the military.

Nick said: "These are trained observers, not someone falling out of a pub on a Friday night."

"A pilot would have to be very sure about what they had seen before they would be willing to report it officially and go on record."

"This would put their reputation would be at stake."

"When you have people of this calibre going out on a limb then that suggests to me there is something strange going on."

Jon said: "In 1997 there was a great rush of books on UFOs being published because people thought of it as the 50th anniversary of Roswell, no one was prepared to believe that anything else had happened before then."

"But we are finding reports that go back as far as the First World War, from Vietnam and possibly even the English Civil War."

"We have enough for at least six volumes."

"A lot of them could be do with paranoia, the fear of secret weapons. That is what interests me, the psychology of the whole thing. We live in a post-Star Trek era and people are much more interested in strange phenomenon these days."

Help us with 'UFO' mystery

WE are still currently seeking any information that readers may have with regard to the appearance of an unidentified object, which was seen hovering over the ambulance station, at Hind Hill Street during May 1989.

It was reported that a crew from the station attempted to communicate with the 'object'.

We have ascertained that an oval shaped 'ball of light' was seen over the Heywood Community School in March 1989 just after 11.30pm.

The resident who spotted it telephoned Manchester Airport air traffic control, who told her they had no sightings of foreign aircraft.

The official explanation for the reports concerned was that it was a star reacting to atmospheric conditions.

Based on our research involving investigation of hundreds of similar cases all over the United Kingdom over the last five years, we do not believe this was the case.

It is fair to say that, in our view, while there may be no conventional answer for the manifestation of such 'objects' we do not believe that they are alien spaceships.

We would welcome enquiries from Advertiser readers who may wish to communicate with us regarding what we perceive as a fascinating phenomenon well worthy of investigation.

JOHN HANSON (retired police officer) and DAWN HOLLOWAY (researcher), consultants for E.S.R., PO Box 6371, Birmingham B48 7RW.

UFOs over Wiltshire

UFOs have been spotted in the sky above Wiltshire, over the ancient Stonehenge site. Julie and Eddie Roberts travelled from their home in Cheshire to reach Stonehenge at about 5.20pm on Sunday, September 10. While at the site Mr Roberts posed in front of the stones to allow his wife to take a souvenir snapshot.

On developing the film, they were surprised to see three shapes hovering in the air over the site. The shapes, two described as saucer-shaped and one triangular, were not seen by the couple at the time, revealing themselves only in the photograph.

The photographs have been forwarded to experts for examination.

Call for UFO witnesses

DID you witness a strange phenomenon in the skies above Basingstoke on March 3?

The Southampton UFO Group has been busy investigating a report of an unidentified flying object above Basingstoke on that night - but so far no explanation has been found.

Steve Rider, Southampton UFO Group investigator, explained: "The eyewitness saw 20 to 30 objects arranged in two lines in a V-formation. The objects were 'zig-zagging' and glowing orange/red."

He said the formation moved in an easterly direction and was described as

similar to the "Lubbock Lights" seen over Texas in America in the 1950s.

"That was a classic case which is named after the place in Texas where a V-formation was seen and photographed. There have been other sightings of V-formations but this is the first I have heard of in that particular shape down here in the south," said Mr Rider.

The group has contacted Gatwick and Heathrow airports, as well as the UFO reporting desk at the Ministry of Defence.

"They all came up with nothing else on that date," added Mr Rider.

A spokesman for Basing-

stoke police told The Gazette he was also unable to shed any light on the strange sighting.

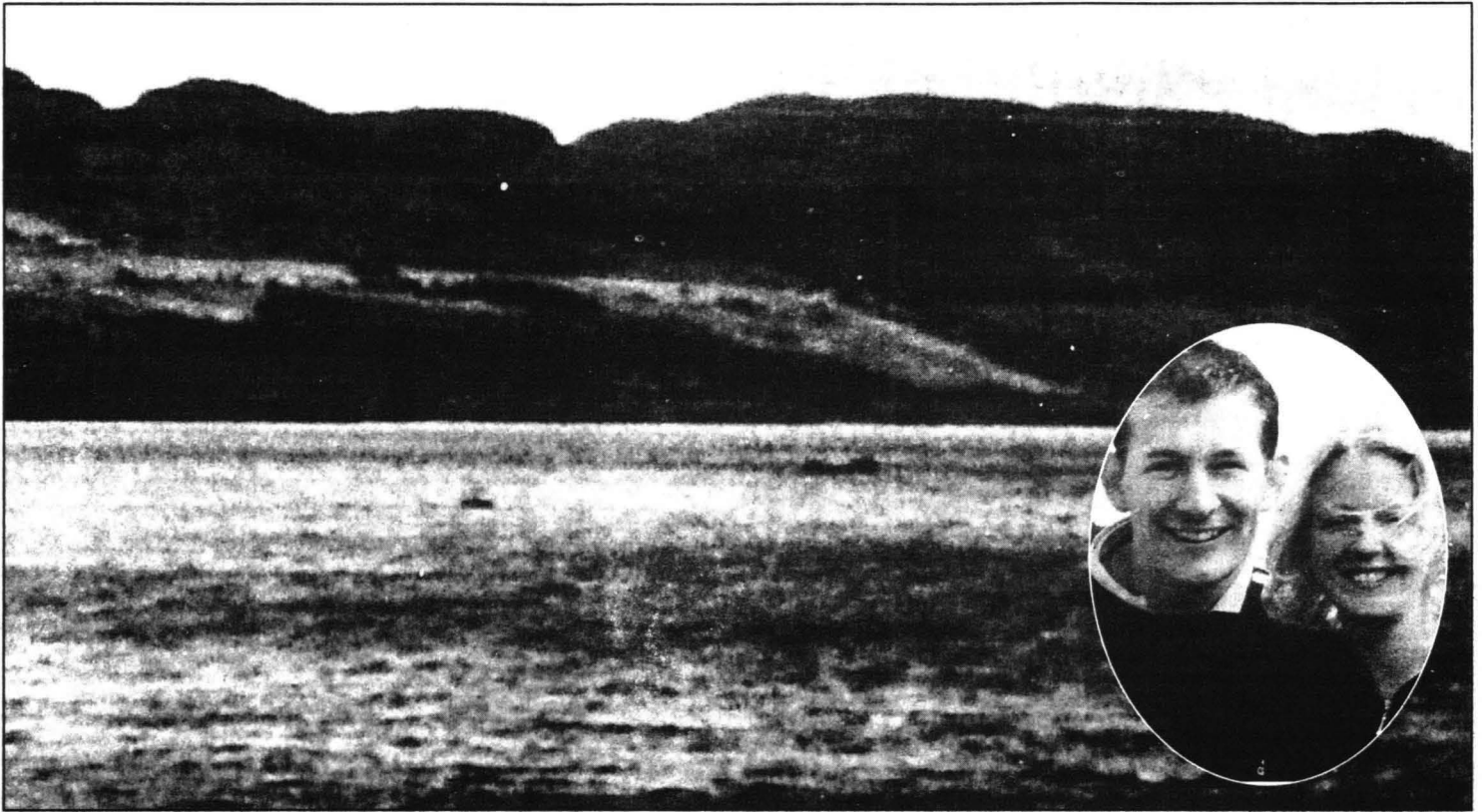
Mr Rider said: "The witness is a pilot so he's used to seeing a lot of different things in the sky. But he said he's never seen anything quite like this before."

He added: "As of this year, this is the only UFO report we've had in Basingstoke. We will try and go up and have a look at the area where he saw the object and see what's around there."

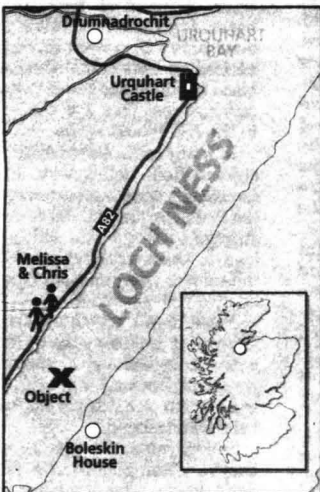
"We will either try and provide an explanation if there is one that looks viable, and if not it will just be logged as unexplained."



EXCLUSIVE: IT COULDN'T BE NESSIE..COULD IT?



Riddle of the deep: Melissa and Chris, inset, didn't notice the two objects when she took this picture in July. The mystery developed in the photo lab when her holiday snap was processed



Mystery: Melissa took stunning pic of objects from north shore of Loch Ness

TWO dark shapes emerge from the depths in one of the most baffling pictures ever taken at Loch Ness.

Veterinary nurse Melissa Bavister's baffling snap clearly shows a double hump on the right and a single mass on the left.

Experts calculate the main object is 25ft and was bang in the middle of the one-mile wide loch at its deepest point. The object left a circular wake in the water. So is this the proof that monster hunters have been waiting for?

Or is it another camera trick that just can't be explained?

Last night, Melissa, 21, who took the picture on her first holiday to Scotland, said she had no idea that she might have captured the Nessie on film.

She was with boyfriend Chris Rivett on the north shore of Loch Ness, near Drumnadrochit, when she took the picture.

She said it was only after her holiday snaps were developed that she spotted the dense object in the water.

It was the classic double hump shape that has been seen by Nessie hunters over the decades.

Melissa said: "We had stopped at a

Vet's amazing picture

By LORNA HUGHES

lay-by and I'd snapped one picture using my little Kodak camera.

"I just wanted a scenic picture to show people back home. I was amazed when I looked at the photograph."

Chris, 21, a management trainee, said: "Melissa and I were just admiring the beautiful scenery and saying how much we had enjoyed Scotland when I spotted this shape in the picture."

"I said to Melissa that there are no islands out in the middle of the loch and that got us wondering just what was it out there on the water."

Haunted

"To be honest, neither of us saw anything that made us think: 'There's the monster', and take a picture."

"At the same time, we are positive we never saw anything else, such as a boat, that could have given this image."

"Had something attracted our attention, I would have grabbed a camera with a telephoto lens from the car."

The couple, from Northampton, had visited relatives in Edinburgh and Perth

before going on to Loch Ness. Melissa said: "We drove out from Inverness on the Urquhart Castle side of the loch on the main A82 road."

"Just past the village of Lochend the big lay-bys with the fixed telescopes were crammed with visitors, so we drove on about a mile or two until we found a lay-by that was empty."

"It was a fine clear day and we are positive there were no craft on the loch or birds flying about."

The picture, snapped on July 16 this year at about midday, was taken using a £30 APS camera with a 35mm lens.

Last night, experts agreed the single photograph showed a very large object in the water half a mile from either shore.

The exact location, near the reputedly haunted Bolestin House, is one of the deepest parts of the 23-mile-long loch, believed to be around 700ft deep.

Alistair Bowie, the Inverness photo lab technician who developed the print, confirmed that the image is on the negative.

He said: "The object is on the film and it's not a mark on the negative. Whatever this is, it was there when the picture was

taken." The startling image was examined by Jim Cordner, 58, senior lecturer in photography at Glasgow's School of Building and Printing. He said: "It's certainly one of the more interesting monster photographs I have seen."

Picture expert Jim came up with four theories after a detailed study:

● **HOAX PHOTO:** Objects planted to look like the humps of a monster are almost impossible to fake in deep water. This photo shows an object halfway across the mile-wide loch in an area that scientists believe to be 700ft deep. I would say it is certainly not a fake.

● **BOAT:** If this was a boat, or other floating object, it would have to be at least 25ft long and would not appear so dense. The wheelhouse, which would be to the left of the picture as you look at it, would be out of sync with the rest of the object.

● **FREAK WAVE:** The outline of the shape on the loch is too defined for it to be a freak wave or wake, and too large.

● **TRICK OF LIGHT:** There is no shadow or reflection that could result in the unusual shape in the water.

So is it Nessie? Jim said: "Most pictures are explained away. What we have here is a large object with two clear, definable humps in the middle of a loch."

The mystery goes on.

BAXTER BULLETIN, Mountain Home, AR - Jan. 4, 2001 CR: L. Willett

Bulletin probes 'boom' mystery

By FRANK WALLIS
Bulletin Staff Writer

The Baxter Bulletin is attempting to discover the origin of things that go bump in the night.

The Bulletin has received several reports of loud noises that occurred generally in the coldest hours of the night Jan. 1 and 2. Descriptions of the noises range from like a "sonic boom" to "a hammer" hitting against a floor joist.

The U.S. Geological Survey offices in Memphis, Tenn., reported no seismic activity (commonly associated with an earthquake) in The Twin Lakes Area on Jan. 1 or 2.

Whatever the origin of the noises, the events seem also to share one common characteristic — they are usually confined to a relatively small area which would seem to rule out the possibility of a sonic boom created by aircraft breaking the sound speed barrier.

A boom at a residence on Spring Lake Drive around 10:45 p.m. Jan. 1 and again the night of Jan 2 may be representative of other noises heard across The Twin Lakes Area. The boom

the night of Jan. 1 was loud enough to frighten the occupants of the house, but not loud enough to be noticed by next-door neighbors. To add to the mystery, a neighbor's dogs that usually bark at the slightest sound or motion in the night were silent.

Brent Wurfel, physics instructor at Arkansas State University Mountain Home, said prolonged cold temperatures and water offer at least two possibilities.

Wurfel offers a theory of slabs of water-saturated rock freezing and cracking. Thick sheets of ice on lawns also may shift and crack, he said.

Steve Stafford, a U.S. forest ranger at Blanchard Springs, said ice in the quiet forest offers an array of constant sounds. In trees, it can sound like "a shooting war," he said.

Ranger John Thomas said "old-timers" tell tales of cold weather causing booming-and-crashing sounds in houses and larger structures like barns.

Thomas said a large timber at the base of a load-bearing wall or in the ridge of a roof contracts in cold temperatures over a long period of time and may shift suddenly and emit a loud noise that seems to permeate the structure.

"They say it sounds like something hitting the house," Thomas said.

Bulletin readers may share first-person accounts of winter noises and theories on their causes by e-mail: wallisf@baxterbulletinonline.com.

SUN, Vancouver, B.C., Canada - Nov. 9, 2000

MADE IN BC MONSTERS

City Limits loves monster stories and the Sasquatch story is the best of all. The word comes from the Sto:lo dialect of Halkomelem. It was first used in articles written by John W. Burns in the 1920s when he was a teacher at the Chehalis Indian Reserve on Harrison River west of Harrison Hot Springs. The Sasquatch is reported to be a very large upright human-like animal covered with hair. More than 350 sightings have been reported with the greatest concentration occurring in the Fraser Valley, around Vancouver and in the Kootenays. For the most comprehensive information on Bigfoot/Sasquatch, go to www.bfro.net



Okanagan Lake. It is allegedly a serpent-like creature 12 to 18 metres long that moves like a caterpillar through the water. Ogopogo has a sleek black or dark green body and a head like a horse or sheep, and sometimes sports whiskers, a forked tail and flippers.

Cadborosaurus: On August 10th, 1932, F.W. Kemp, an officer working in the provincial archives, saw a sea serpent on Chatham Island near Cadboro Bay. Victoria Daily News editor Archie Mills held a 'name-the-monster' contest which resulted in the creature being called a cadborosaurus. Or Caddy for short. A smaller version was dubbed Amy, allegedly Caddy's mate.

Ogopogo: After the Sasquatch, the second most famous B.C. monster is Ogopogo, the denizen of the deep in

CR: G. Conway

Cattle mutilations: Questions remain despite intensive study

By Phaedra Greenwood
The Taos News

"There's no such thing as a perfect crime," said District Attorney John Paternoster, the man who was instrumental in setting up a forensic team to investigate unexplained animal deaths about six years ago.

On a busy afternoon, he sits poised at his glass-topped desk. He is a solid, handsome man with a neat goatee and gold-rimmed glasses. Everything about him is precise, intense.

He has turned over the ornamental hourglass on the corner of his desk and the white sand is streaming into the bottom. Time is running out. "I have only two more weeks," he says. Then Donald Gallegos takes over as district attorney. But Paternoster says he plans to continue to be involved in investigating strange animal deaths as a private citizen.

What has Paternoster accomplished in the field of strange animal deaths during his term in office? Will Gallegos continue the effort? He said, "I'll look into it."

Are we any closer to solving the mystery of so-called "cattle mutilations?"

Yes. A team of forensic investi-

gators backed by the National Institute for Discovery Science (NIDS) has brought us a few steps closer to discovering the cause of death in at least one cow, and has ruled out a number of theories.

A mutilated cow in Utah was found dead with a strange, blue gel around the eye that, on laboratory analysis, turned out to be potassium chloride, the chemical they use to execute prisoners by lethal injection. Under the microscope, it was clear that the cow's hair had been cut with a sharp instrument, which ruled out scavenger damage.

Paternoster became involved in the "mute" mystery back in 1993 or '94 while talking to a client, Tom Reed, manager of Tres Ritos Ranch north of Questa. Reed said he had had a recent cattle mutilation, and has had over 20 since then.

The district attorney commented, "A lot of ranchers have these, but they don't want to report it because they don't want to be branded as kooks."

Paternoster started doing research on his own, called a few people and came up with the idea of forming a professional investigative team that would treat unexplained animal deaths as a

said. "I was struck by the need for sustained science."

The forensic team formulated established protocols for collecting evidence and came up with a questionnaire for ranchers to fill out, which was sent around to law enforcement agencies. Working with NIDS, Paternoster set up a cross-section of trained people to investigate the crime scene. They also provided scientific laboratory testing for blood and tissue samples.

"Here are two things that fueled me," said Paternoster. "The first was the hardship of real people who were suffering real economic losses. They are just as entitled to answers as any other people in the county. They say, 'Nobody is listening to us. There's a problem.' But people just blow it off. We deserve better. That's what motivated me to do this. The goal is to get a fresh 'mute' — the fresher the better."

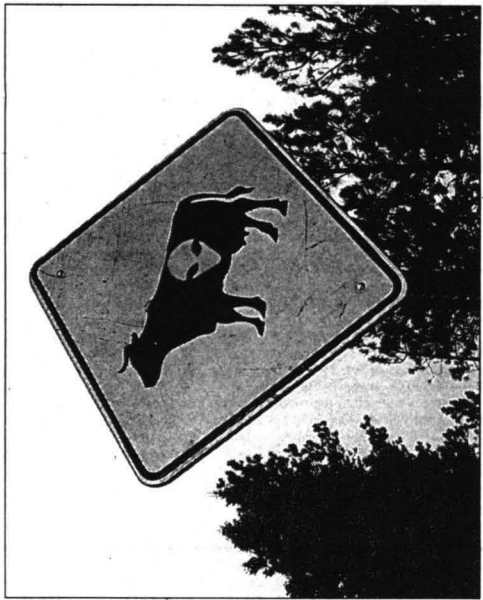
"The second thing," he continued, "is that it's reckless for an unknown cause of death in livestock to remain unknown at the

crime scene, rather than jumping from one theory to another.

"We got faxes and e-mails from all over the country and that's how NIDS found us. We were inundated with theories from an alien base in Dulce to crop circles, abductees and all other areas of

On the high road to Peñasco a road sign emphasizes the beliefs of many locals that the continuing mutilations of cattle in northeast New Mexico and throughout the state are linked to alien sources.

Megan Bowers



on the outside. Inside, the crater was ringed by a clumpy, yellow substance that was also found on the belly.

"And it's not predators," Paternoster continued. "There were no signs of a struggle or predatory wounds around the nose or back legs. Lab tests have determined that scavengers did not cause the death."

There was some unusual evidence in this case that could not be explained. Paternoster and Gabe Valdez discovered "mechanical indentations all over that field, backhoe size, 18 to 24 inches in diameter," said Valdez, field investigator for NIDS. Valdez has been investigating unexplained animal deaths since he was a state police officer in Dulce where ranchers experienced dozens of cases in the 1970s. Valdez said he had seen tracks like that before on a case he investigated in Dulce.

Paternoster got down on his knees in the Archuleta field to examine the mechanical tracks. He said he has been trained as a lawyer, so he has learned to observe and analyze the evidence. "Our job is to find direct

evidence. If there's a body in front of me, I should be able to determine the cause of death."

But the cause of death happens to be one of the most elusive facts in the ongoing mystery that has plagued ranchers across the United States, into Canada and also in Brazil, Belize, England, France and Sweden.

A handful of so-called "cattle mutilations" have occurred over the summer in Northern New Mexico, two in Sunshine Valley north of Questa to cows that belonged to ranchers Jerry Sanchez and Rumaldo Martinez. Both were reported to the state police. Five more were reported in the towns of Gallina and Coyote, northwest of Española. "Nobody saw anything," Valdez said. "We haven't had any UFO reports or strange lights flying."

His report shows that on June 18, 2000, Sanchez lost a 4-year-old black Angus cow. The area along the spine and the left front leg showed hemorrhaging, the udder was damaged and the tongue was missing up to the back of the throat, another typical aspect of a "classic" mutilation. The bottom left side of the lip showed abrasions, but the ears and eyes were intact.

The second cow belonged to Romolo Martinez, who lives two miles north of the Tres Ritos Ranch. Two other suspected cases occurred in the Brazos.

In another bizarre incident, on May 20 near Cuba, N.M., a rancher, who didn't want to be identified, found a live cow with the tongue and ears removed. While rounding up cattle to bring them to the corral, the owner discovered that a 2-year-old Charolais cow had both ears missing and displayed severe upper lip lacerations. He reported it to the New Mexico field investigator from NIDS, who transported the cow to a veterinary clinic.

The examination showed that the lower third of the muzzle and the upper lip looked as if they had been burned by some corrosive chemical. The ears appeared to have been cut, especially the left ear. Nothing unusual was found in the area where the cow had been grazing.

The NIDS theory was that the animal had to be incapacitated before the ears were removed, either by manpower, by administering a tranquilizer from a distance by shotgun or by using a non-lethal stun device. They ruled out the manpower theory because several skilled people would have been required to catch the animal, and they would have left plenty of tracks.

Tranquilizers are routinely used to capture wild animals, but it requires certain training and skills. A thorough examination of the animal's hide did not reveal any signs of drug injection. It seemed unlikely that an electrical stun gun was used because when struck experimentally, cows simply move away. A stronger prototype was tried on a 1,500-pound bull; it could be dropped, but the effects lasted only as long as the power was being fed into the animal.

The Cuba calf survived for several days; when its condition worsened, the owner decided to shoot the animal and, unfortunately, no necropsy was done.

In a separate and unrelated incident, 30 cattle were found dead on the Marcelo Macias ranch near Roswell. According to an article in the *Albuquerque Journal* by staff writer Fritz Thompson, the deaths were not caused by aliens. The culprit was said to

be a poisonous weed that got into a one-ton bale of hay. Assistant state veterinarian Thurman Reitz said the lab report showed evidence of nitrate poisoning, which alters an animal's blood and deprives it of oxygen.

But the four calves found dead in Oregon on March 18 of this year are still a mystery. The case was investigated by Deschutes County Society Sheriff's Office and the Humane Society of Bend, Ore. The animals were discovered by a rancher in a remote deserted area of Milican Valley. The next night eight more dead calves were found in the same area by a recreational user about half a mile farther north.

Kimball Lewis, executive director of the Humane Society, who examined the carcasses, said they were scattered in pairs about a quarter of a mile apart. Eight of the 12 were found partially skinned, and their reproductive organs were missing. No vehicle tracks, footprints or blood were detected in the area. The carcasses had not been touched by coyotes or other scavengers, even though some of calves were thought to have been dead about a week. The owner was never located.

Two of the calves were necropsied by a local veterinarian who said in her report that their skin was removed from just behind their front shoulders down to the ankles. The front legs were partially skinned, and the rear legs were stripped of flesh to the bones. Apparently the calves were dead before they were killed. She noticed an unusually low level of blood in the tissues, heart vessels and cavities. This was confirmed in the NIDS laboratory.

In many cases across America, unidentified helicopters have sometimes been seen around the cows either before or after a strange animal death, which has led to the speculation that the military or "paramilitary" might be involved somehow.

What does Paternoster think? "Maybe it has something to do with biological or biochemical weapons testing," he said. "Or maybe it's something we can't even comprehend."

Valdez said, "Whoever it is, they're coming down by air. I don't know who they are, but whatever is behind it, it's something big."

Our best chance of finding out who or what is killing these animals is to methodically examine the evidence, Paternoster said. Ranchers can report their losses anonymously, and their privacy will be respected.

To ask for an investigation of a mysteriously dead animal, Valdez urged ranchers to notify the sheriff's office as soon as possible, at 758-4709, or himself at home in Albuquerque, 505-275-5943; pager: 505-857-1717. Please keep clear of the area and do not blot out possible clues, he added.

Still no answer for odd sounds

By FRANK WALLIS
Bulletin Staff Writer

The jury is back with an array of verdicts in the case of strange "booming" sounds heard all across the Twin Lakes Area during the record cold spell.

According to *Bulletin* readers, the noises are created by:

- Lumber shrinking and popping in joints caused by the constant cold temperatures.

- Rusty burners in gas-fired furnaces and poorly adjusted pilot flames that cause the gas to explode against the heat exchange panel creating a sound like a timpani drum, except louder.

- Sheets of ice cracking on roofs or, rafters adjusting to the release of pressure from the heavy ice-pack as it is reduced in weight by thawing.

- Freezing and bursting of natural springs that occur in some residential areas of the Twin Lakes Area.

The *Baxter Bulletin* received several responses to a story in the Thursday issue that queried readers for possible explanations for the noises. Some readers seemed relieved to know that other area residents experienced the same phenomenon.

"Thank you for that article on the mysterious booms we heard over the last week or so," wrote Robert and Lynn Clark, residents of the Wildwood subdivision. "While it didn't clarify what caused them, at least I know that I don't have a problem with my house."

"The first (and loudest) boom we heard was the early morning of 29 December. It was so loud

it literally shook the house and woke my wife and me out of a sound sleep," Clark wrote. "My wife was frightened and thought someone was in the garage. I was concerned enough that I got up, loaded a gun, and walked around looking for something to shoot at."

One *Bulletin* caller offered a theory that the roof of an average-size home would catch ice and snow weighing at least two tons. Rafters and sill timbers can easily bear up under that load, but the lumber makes big noises as the ice diminishes, he said.

Ida Jones, a resident of Willowbrook, offers perhaps the best empirical evidence that cold temperatures at least cause structures to move in a big way.

The door to her apartment and her neighbor's door both changed during the cold weather, so much that the doors struck the door casings and cracked the casing in her neighbor's door.

"I've noticed they're (the doors) getting better about opening and closing the warmer it gets," Jones said.

Whatever the cause of the booms, most of the events were structure specific — neighbors don't hear the noises that are loud enough to awaken people from sleep.

"On the first (January) we were awakened about 4 a.m. It sounded like someone had run into the end of our house with a truck," wrote Rick Bernard, who lives south of Yellville.

Bernard said he and his family couldn't figure out what made the noise, but an earthquake was believed to be a possibility.

"Then, the next night about 8:30; Wham!" Bernard wrote. "We were watching television in a different part of the

house. It sounded like it was right behind the couch."

Bernard said he had experienced the sound of an earthquake. The noises at his residence on Jan. 1 and 2 were similar. He said he also has witnessed a thick layer of ice on a lake as it fractured and separated and has seen lake ice exploding to leave a crest of ice 15 feet high.

"It (the noises from his house) was different," Bernard said, adding that he believes the noises at his home were "something with the ice and cold ground."

The *Bulletin* has checked with U.S. Geological Survey Offices in Memphis, Tenn. No seismic activity at earthquake levels was reported.

Ken Harrelson and Karen DeJarld also reported "booms" Jan. 1 and 2 at their residence about 9 miles south of Mountain Home.

"(The boom) was loud enough to wake us up and we thought our roof might be collapsing from the ice and snow," Harrelson wrote.

"We've lived in some areas where winter temps got much lower than we've just gone through and never noticed anything more than some creaking in floors and walls from the expansion and contraction. Nothing like the booms we heard."

"We were concerned enough to call our builder and ask that he send someone to check our roof joists," Harrelson wrote. "We'd be interested in knowing if the other people who experienced this lived in the same general area or if it were more widespread."

The *Bulletin* continues to accept reports from readers who have additional information on the mystery booms.

Comments by e-mail may be sent to frankw@baxterbulletinonline.com.

Rain of tiny silver fish astonishes English townspeople

NATIONAL POST, Toronto, Ontario, Canada - Aug. 8, 2000 CR: G. Duplantier

WEIRD WEATHER

It frequently rains "cats and dogs" in Britain, as any local will tell you, but Sunday was different — it rained fish. Britain's Meteorological Office said a shower of dead, but still fresh, sprats rained down on the fishing port of Great Yarmouth, in eastern England, after a thunderstorm. The baby fish fell more than a kilometre inland, on the houses behind the resort's seafront, lining lawns and pathways with bite-size sprats. The shower of fish astonished residents of the town, where a thunderstorm preceded the ship of falling seafood on gardens and roofs. "I thought at first I might have had something wrong with my eyes," said

Fred Hodgkins, 65, a retired ambulance driver, whose house took the best of the unexpected catch. "The whole of my backyard seemed to be covered in little silvers of silver. When I looked again, I realized they were scores of tiny silver fish." The two-inch-long sprats covered a garden shed and several lawns in the area, giving local cats a memorable day. Andy Yeatman, of the government's Meteorological Office said waterspouts — small tornadoes over the sea or lakes that suck up water and anything on or in it — regularly deposit everything from loads to pettinikles on

surprised communities. "I have rained fish, frogs and even inanimate objects like straw and plants," he said. "Mini-tornadoes build up under thunderclouds. In this case, the tornado gathered over the sea and the fish got sucked up into the clouds. They were obviously carried along in the cloud for some distance before the cloud burst and the fish fell away with the rain. It was impossible to say where the sprats came from, he added, but often objects can be carried a distance of several kilometres in this way. Reports of falling fish, frogs, tomatoes and even coal date back to the dawn-

ing of the millennium. The Roman writer Pliny the Elder mentioned storms of frogs and fish in the first century AD. The phenomenon was also featured in Paul Thomas Anderson's 1999 film, *Magnolia*, which also explained how an underwater diver — a frogman — could fall from the sky. The phenomenon could offer a scientific explanation for the plague of frogs that the Egyptians of the Old Testament experienced, the BBC reported. Two U.S. scientists, Dr. John Marr, a former chief epidemiologist, and Dr. Curtis Malloy, a medical researcher, think so. They have explained the 10 plagues of Egypt as a series of linked natural disasters. *National Post*



HARRY ROSETTANI / THE STANDARD

This cat, believed to be a panther, was photographed last weekend.

Elusive animal captured on videotape

By ANNE MARIE OWENS

Down the road from the Ripley's Believe It Or Not museum in Niagara Falls, people in the town of Fort Erie are buzzing about sightings of an exotic black panther.

The long-running rumours of a large black jungle cat roaming the backyards and open fields of this Ontario border community gained some credence last weekend when the head of the town's humane society witnessed the latest panther sighting.

Roy Pastorius, manager of the Fort Erie Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, says he stood about a hundred metres from a large black cat, the size of a big German shepherd, stretched out in a farmer's field.

"This is the first time I've seen it. It's a big, beautiful animal," said Mr. Pastorius, who has hired a trapper to try to capture the animal.

The weekend sighting is just the latest of several dozen reported to the SPCA over the past four years.

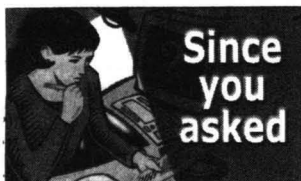
Mr. Pastorius believes the animal probably escaped from someone's personal zoo.

The black panther is native to Africa and has never made a natural habitat in North America.

Before the most recent incident, the panther sightings in Fort Erie were beginning to resemble more urban legend than reality, since the mysterious animal always disappeared by the time authorities arrived on the scene.

This time, Mr. Pastorius and his crew managed to capture the animal in photographs and on videotape. He says the creature he saw was "definitely bigger than a house cat," at about a metre long, with a tail about a metre in length, weighing more than 150 pounds.

National Post



Since you asked

Bigfoot trap is still out in the woods

Several years ago a friend showed me a hiking trail on the west side of Applegate Lake that led to an old mining camp and what he said was a Bigfoot trap. I can't remember the name of the trail, but was wondering if you knew anything on the history of this.

—Mike K., Medford

We dug through the old clip files at the Mail Tribune and sure enough, wedged between files on the Loch Ness Monster and an Atlantis street map, we found the Bigfoot file.

The Bigfoot trap is along the Rogue River National Forest's Collings Mountain Trail, which starts across the road from Hart-Tish Park at Applegate Lake.

The trap was built in 1974 by the Eugene-based North American Wildlife Research team in hopes of capturing a live member of the family of 7-foot-tall hairy critters called Bigfoot or Sasquatch.

The research group is now defunct, but the trap still exists and continues to draw interest among Bigfooters as well as others from the public still fascinated by the search for the big mammal. Bigfoot

has not yet been documented or classified by science as a currently living creature.

Back in 1994, a Washington Bigfoot researcher said it was the only such trap in existence.

The trap is 10-by-10, made of wood and reinforced with metal bolts. It has a heavy metal door. The plan, apparently, was to lure a Bigfoot into the cage with something like a dead rabbit, and have the door slam shut behind it.

Needless to say, Mike, the trap didn't produce a Bigfoot when it was active for six years. The Forest Service bolted it open in 1980 after its builders failed to remove it.

But it's certainly worth seeing on an afternoon hike.

Follow the trail about ¾ of a mile, then take a left where the trail forks at an old mining cabin. The trap is about 200 feet beyond the cabin.

Send questions to "Since You Asked," Mail Tribune Newsroom, P.O. Box 1108, Medford, OR 97501; by fax to (541) 776-4376; or by e-mail to youasked@mailtribune.com

500 11 NORTHKOPING
Sweden

On trail of new Bigfoot clues

Creature savors fresh seafood, says enthusiast

By Nick Perry
Journal Reporter

BOTHELL — Bigfoot is alive and thriving on fresh salmon and butter clams in the Hoh Rain Forest, according to Cliff Crook, a Bothell Bigfoot enthusiast.

Crook has just returned from a week's expedition to the Hoh and says he has brought back incontrovertible evidence a small clan of Bigfoots is in that area — two plaster-cast footprints measuring 15 inches and 17 inches, 11 hairs and piles of empty clam shells.

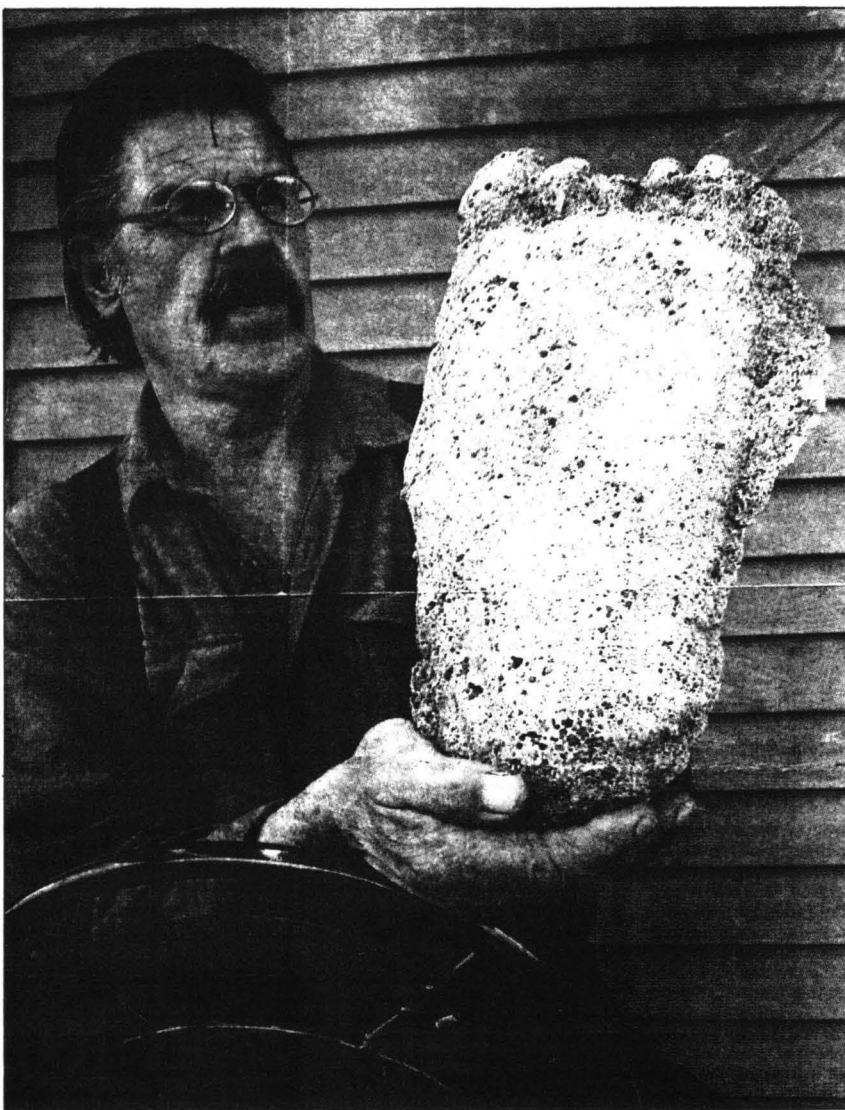
His journey came after Gene Sampson reported finding footprints and hearing a "bam, bam, bam, stop, bam, bam, bam" noise just behind his house on the Hoh Indian Reservation. Sampson now says he believes the noise was three Bigfoots cracking open clams they had collected from a nearby marsh.

But an Idaho university professor has abandoned an investigation the site after, he says, Crook ruined the only footprint worth studying by taking the plaster-cast.

Crook has been chasing Bigfoot, or Sasquatch, for more than 40 years. He said the Hoh discovery is the most exciting evidence he has ever seen of Bigfoots — large, apelike creatures some people claim to have seen in the Pacific Northwest.

"They have come up for the salmon run and will be gone down south again in about two weeks," Crook said yesterday at his Bothell home. The beasts probably will return to Mount Rainier, he said, or to the back country of the Olympic Mountains.

The dozens of footprints he saw in the Hoh could not have been fakes for several reasons,



Maxwell Balmain/Journal

Longtime Bigfoot enthusiast Cliff Crook displays a cast he said he made from a track recently found on the Lower Hoh Indian Reservation. He thinks a small group of the legendary animals was there dining on clams.

Crook said. They were spaced in a natural way and so well-hidden they would have taken "a gang of men a year to make."

Crook said he used several

tests to determine the prints were real, but he declined to reveal his methods, citing fears that hoaxers might capitalize on the information.

Sampson said he also found sharpened sticks, some 3 feet long, which the presumed trio

of Bigfoots used as tools. He also found two droppings, probably one from a mother Bigfoot and one from a baby Bigfoot.

Crook said he will have the hairs tested, either at a DNA laboratory in Oregon or at the University of Washington's Burke Museum. He said he has been in touch with the Oregon lab, but wants to negotiate a cheap deal and cannot reveal the name of his contact there.

Dr. Jeffrey Meldrum, an Idaho State University associate professor, said Crook had agreed to investigate the Hoh site with hunter Derek Randles. But he said Crook went a day early and took his plaster cast before Randles arrived.

"We saw a photograph of the footprint in a Pennsylvania daily paper. So Derek went to the scene, and he was not extremely impressed with what he found," Meldrum said.

John Rozdilsky, a mammalogist at the Burke Museum, said it could conduct DNA comparisons on hairs if someone is willing to pay more than \$100 for each test. But from previous experience, he did not hold out much hope of finding evidence of Bigfoot.

"I think it would make a far more fascinating study to look at why people believe in and love Sasquatch so much," he said.

Nick Perry can be reached at nick.perry@eastsidejournal.com or 425-453-4629.

Reports of angel sightings bolster belief

The congregation of an English church says it experienced one such vision

By CAROL MIDGLEY

LONDON — There had been no warning, no heavenly choir, no blinding rush of light. Midway through an everyday baptism at a village church in Hertfordshire, north of London, claims the astonished congregation, an angel simply appeared, unheralded.

Most of the 30-strong group, including the rector, churchwarden and organist, claim to have felt the sensation of warm liquid pouring over their skin. The church, they say, was suffused with an extraordinary smell, reminiscent of rose petals.

The mass "sighting" is one of 800 accounts gathered by the PhD student Emma Heathcote from British people who claim to have been visited by angels. She has been studying the phenomenon for two years and says there has been an upsurge in the number of people claiming to have witnessed angels.

The rector at the church agreed to talk to *The Times* on the condition that he and his

church would remain unidentified. "We didn't want all sorts of weirdos turning up and people coming to see what they could see," he says. "When God does something in this fashion, it is bewildering for the rest of the world. We knew we were incredibly privileged and we didn't want to commercialize it."

He says the angel appeared four years ago as he was baptizing a 22-year-old woman who was about to get married but had never been christened. "Suddenly there was a man in white standing in front of the font about 18 inches away. He was a man but he was totally, utterly different from the rest of us. He was wearing something long, like a robe, but it was so white it was almost transparent."

The figure did not have wings or a beard but he and the rest of the witnesses were in no doubt that it was an angel. "He was just looking at us. It was the most wonderful feeling," he says. "Not a word was spoken; various people began to touch their arms



Guardian angels, a popular Christian belief, are said to protect the faithful.

because it felt like having warm oil poured over you.

"The children came forward with their mouths wide open. Then all of a sudden I suppose it was a few seconds but time seemed to stop the angel was gone. But it changed our lives."

"Everybody who was there was quite convinced that the angel came to encourage us."

Not everybody has been as reluctant to talk. Anver Hajee, an accountant from Birmingham, in central England, recounts how an angel visited him while he was in hospital eight years ago suffering from chest pains.

Hajee's father had died from a heart attack at 38 and his brother at 42, so he was convinced that

his death was imminent.

"I was very scared. I thought that this was it and fear came into me," he says. He went into the bathroom and saw a tall man standing in front of him with long hair and a long white beard.

Curiously, Hajee, a Muslim, said the figure had a pink face and spoke in English rather than Katchi, the language that he and his family normally speak at home.

In another account given to Heathcote, a woman who was cooking dinner told her six-year-old son to call his grandfather down from an upstairs room. The boy returned saying that he had gone up but that the room was full of angels. When the woman went upstairs, she found

the grandfather had died.

Susan Blackmore, a psychotherapist, contends that angel sightings are merely apparitions created by the brain in times of crisis to provide comfort. She also argues that people are highly susceptible and will claim to "see" what others see and points to a booming industry in angel books and workshops.

Heathcote believes that many angel sightings may be "crisis apparitions" but believes the congregation sighting in Hertfordshire was impressive: "I interviewed a lot of people about that angel and everybody told the same story. Their descriptions were totally consistent."

The Times of London