

# UFO

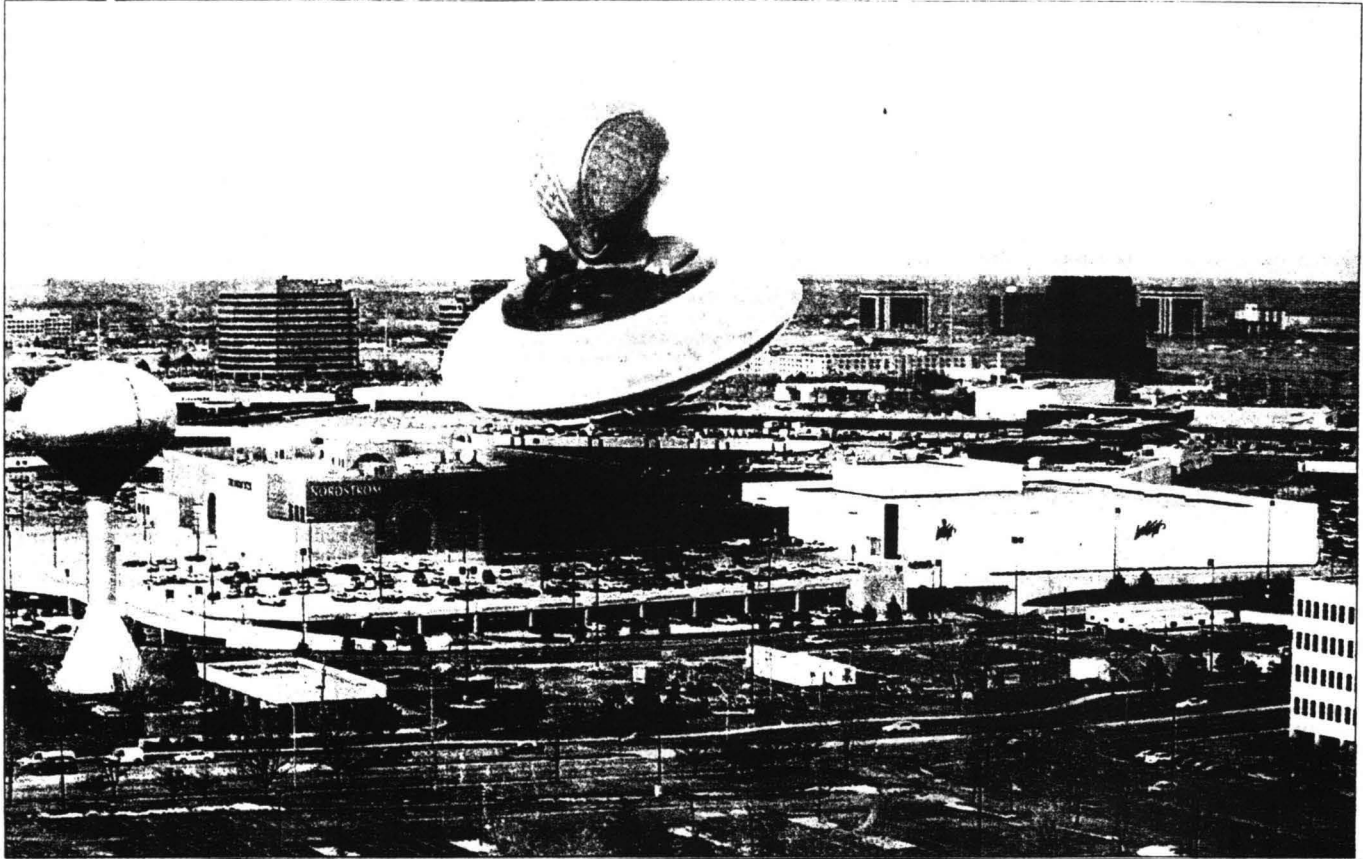
# NEWSCLIPPING SERVICE

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DAILY HERALD PHOTOILLUSTRATION/DAVE TONGE, DANIEL WHITE, RICHARD WESTGARD

## Aliens invade Schaumburg!

Then again, maybe it was just a satellite. Suburban UFO sightings happen all the time, but no one's seen any little green men ... yet

BY HILARY SHENFELD  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

**M**ike Sparks knows satellites. He can identify planets. He's familiar with stars. What he saw flying through the Schaumburg skies not long ago was none of the above.

Now he's left to wonder if the blazing light was a visitor from another world. That's right, an alien.

**Links**  
dailyherald.com/uz  
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National UFO Reporting Center  
Committee for Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal  
Center for UFO Studies  
Unknown magazine

The business owner was walking his dog about 10:10 p.m. on May 28 and gazed skyward. He often sees satellites in the night sky, so he wasn't surprised when he spotted a slow-moving light floating above. But suddenly a faster moving and much brighter light appeared in the southeast. Rather than cross paths, though, the two lights met at precisely the same point and then the faster light disappeared.

Sparks, an amateur stargazer who tracks satellites via a NASA Web site. "The odds of observing two visible satellites intersect has got to be in the billions to one."

Sparks, 30, believes the first light likely originated here on Earth. As for the second one, he's not sure, but he reported the sighting to the National

UFO Reporting Center.

"What that second object is is open to interpretation," he says.

Sparks certainly isn't the only one questioning the existence of intelligent life on other planets. And he's not alone in wondering whether aliens have ever visited here.

In fact, suburban residents see unidentified flying objects on a fairly regular basis.

So far this year, for example, several unexplainable phenomenon were reported to the National UFO Reporting Center, which maintains a record of otherworldly sightings. They include:

- A cigar-shaped, metallic object spotted high above the clouds in Palatine. The air-borne object

moved very quickly.

- An astronomy student reported seeing two flashes of light and felt a gust of wind, followed by the vision of a bright, shiny, diamond-shaped flying object in Schaumburg.

- A Wheaton resident heard a deafening, pulsing, droning sound and felt the house rattling. A friend who lived a mile away also reported hearing the sound, comparing it to a gigantic helicopter hovering over the house.

- In Glendale Heights, four people witnessed a bright light hovering in the western sky for 45 minutes. The light appeared to change shape at



Hoffman Estates resident Chris Fleming, shown alongside an alien model, publishes Unknown magazine, which chronicles otherworldly events including UFO sightings. His painting "Reacquaintance," in background, represent spiritual beings in the afterlife.

DAILY HERALD PHOTO/JOHN STARKS

(continued on page 2)

least six times, but stayed constant in intensity.

Be afraid. Be very afraid. But don't move to some place you think is safer.

Turns out Illinois ranks fairly low in the number of nationwide sightings, says Mark Rodeghier, director of the Chicago-based Center for UFO Studies.

Since the early 1980s, 407 reports have come from all over the state, including numerous sightings in Rockford, Chicago and DuPage County, according to the national reporting center.

In the United States, California, Washington and Texas rank among the top states for sightings.

All in all, Rodeghier says, aliens seem to avoid busy, heavily populated urban centers and their suburbs.

What? They can't stand a little traffic congestion? Are they afraid of our strip malls and skyscrapers?

Actually, Rodeghier speculates our little green friends are simply trying to avoid being seen by a lot of people. Really, who can blame them, after seeing the havoc humans wreaked on their species in such movies as "Men in Black" and "Aliens"?

Other theories are that city residents don't look up a lot, and even when they do, they can't see much because there's so much artificial light flooding the sky, he says.

Still thinking about bolting? Don't bother. Even if you wanted to run, those clever, bulbous-headed beings could find you just about anywhere.

"Based on the evidence available to me, it seems indisputable that these things we call UFOs are in American airspace every day of the week," says Peter Davenport, director of the National UFO Reporting Center, based in Seattle, Wash.

But just because there are objects and they are flying, doesn't necessarily mean they are unidentified.

Indeed, all but about 5 percent of UFO reports turn out to be either planets, satellites, space debris, aircraft, the moon, reflections, weather phenomena or hoaxes, Davenport and others say.

It's that remaining 5 percent that's spawned unabated speculation about extraterrestrial visitors, alien abductions and impregnations, as well as untold numbers of books, Web sites, TV shows, movies and magazines.

Hoffman Estates resident Chris Fleming publishes one such magazine, *Unknown*, a publication devoted to unusual phenomena.

By day, the 34-year-old is a regular guy, plying his trade as a staid mortgage broker. But during his off hours, Fleming delves into the worlds of ghosts and aliens, Bigfoot sightings and angels, spooky sounds and seances.

He is willing to admit that not every

"Based on the evidence

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Peter Davenport, director of the National UFO Reporting Center, based in Seattle, Wash.

photo or article from his correspondents is entirely plausible.

Even the editors of *World Weekly News* might be suspect of some of the magazine's reports touting the authenticity of the "death touch," a technique in which a person can kill with only a touch, or clearly staged photos of alien spacecraft.

"People are gullible. They'll believe anything," he says. "Some people send stuff in and it's so fake."

However other stories, he says, chronicle some of the same supernatural and wacky goings-on he has experienced himself.

One ardent interest is ghosts, which he says started visiting him at an early age. He's seen demonic faces appearing through walls, visions like the black, spinning form resembling a 6-foot high tornado that blew into his room, as well as benevolent angels who've protected him.

Compared to all that, his UFO sightings seem almost dull.

About three years ago, he saw a black, hat-shaped object disappear behind a cloud near Woodfield Shopping Center in Schaumburg. Another time, he and a girlfriend saw an enormous, glowing red, white and orange object flying through Addison.

And twice, he's seen a glowing red orb: about two years ago in Clearwater, Fla., and another time outside his apartment door just a few weeks ago.

"Many types of different alien species have visited this planet before and will continue to," Fleming says. "And there are probably many more coming."

That's news to James McGaha, a UFO debunker who is a retired Air Force major and current astronomy teacher in Tucson, Ariz.

He says all you people now quaking with fear and trying to figure out what type of appetizer to serve an intergalactic visitor can relax.

"I do not accept the idea that an alien spacecraft has ever visited the Earth for one reason," he says. "There's no evidence."

People who report unusual sightings, bright lights, creepy space sounds or eerie flying objects simply don't know what they're seeing, McGaha says.

"The problem is people don't know what they're looking at," he says. "It could be any number of things. The least likely is that it's a spacecraft from another world."

McGaha, like some other scientists, does concede the possibility that some type of intelligent life exists on other planets. The sheer volume of planets in the universe leaves open the possibility that we may not be alone.

But so far no one has come up with the proof: a chunk of alien spacecraft, an extraterrestrial passport or any other piece of physical proof.

"The harder we look, the less we find," he says.

He must need glasses. Author Jay Rath, who wrote a book about unexplained phenomena in Illinois, says there is plenty of evidence including photos, videos, eyewitness accounts and even pieces of spacecraft material.

"I don't think there's any question that there's something in our skies that are UFOs," Rath says. His book, *"The I-Files"* (Trails Books, \$14.95), details hundreds of strange happenings in our skies. "If you stop and examine even a few (reports), you begin to become uncomfortable."

So keep looking. Seek. Explore. Search. Just make sure not to confuse speculation with facts.

"We must not mistake fantasies, fears, hopes and fears for reality," says Joe Nickell, a senior researcher at the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, based in Amherst, N.Y. "The fact is, there is not any good evidence that they're visiting us now."

But if you're still worried, all you have to do to protect yourself from an unwanted E.T. invasion is to question their existence.

"Be skeptical," Nickell says. "Because the aliens are not abducting skeptics."



"I don't think there's any question that there's something in our skies that are UFOs," says author Jay Rath.

## Event will open eyes and minds, UFO group says

News Staff

**BOULDER** — The truth is out there, and they have proof.

So say officials of the Disclosure Project, a nonprofit research group working to publicize the facts about UFOs, extraterrestrial intelligence and classified advanced energy and propulsion systems.

On Saturday, the project will present "The Disclosure Event," a program that includes a two-hour video featuring 50 government and military witnesses to UFO and extraterrestrial events and projects. The video will be followed by a presentation by project director Dr. Steven Greer.

The free program begins at 1 p.m. in Room 140 of the Chemistry Building of the University of Colorado.

"This is the first in the series of free town hall meetings that are scheduled to be held across the United States," said Ken Elliott, a spokesman for the Disclosure Project. "We are trying to bring up the level of public awareness, and at the same time trying give the Congress the impetus and the courage to hold disclosure hearings."

Elliott said Greer, a Virginia emergency room physician, has been doing Disclosure Project briefings on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., for four years but nothing has come of it.

"So now we are going public," Elliott said. "They say what we need is real evidence, and the people in this video are the evidence. These aren't the lights-in-the-sky stories of people delivering pizzas or who have had too many beers. They are people who represent every military branch and rank. The evidence is overwhelming."

"All we ask is that the public give this information an intelligent hearing."

## A Fire in the Sky

For as long as human beings have watched the sky, shooting stars have portended something — the birth of a hero, the turning point of a battle, a generous harvest. So what to make of last Monday, when western Pennsylvania was surprised by a fireball in the sky at 6:18 p.m. E.D.T.?

True, fortunes vanished, nations clashed and the Yankees appeared to be emerging from their slump, but nothing happened that the peoples of the world might agree was all that lamentable or miraculous.

The shooting star itself, in the modern manner, was scrutinized to death. Only hours after it fell, the object was described by Reuters as emitting "a lustrous rainbow of colors" and then, in the same report, police were quoted as saying that it might be just a part from a plane.

Speculation moved to a fiery meteorite. Near Williamsport, a volunteer fireman, Jerold Ross, hastened to a cornfield that seemed freshly

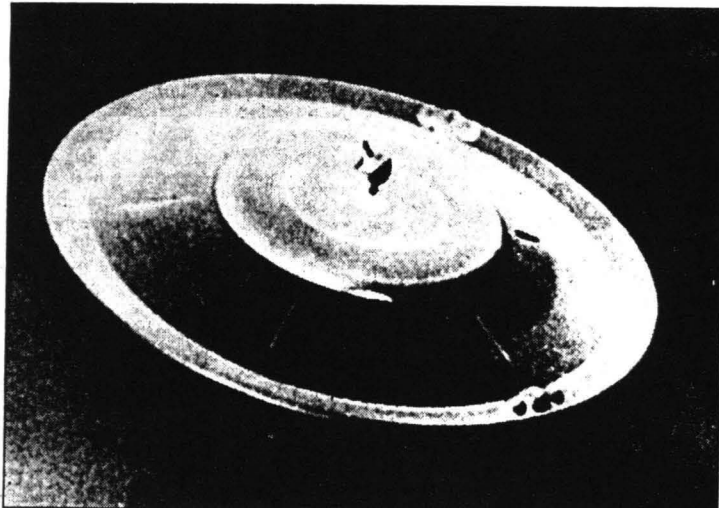
scorched. Reporters followed.

But a meteorite big and dense enough to survive atmospheric entry — say, the size of luggage — would shatter 20 miles up and the resultant shards would cool the last nine miles or so and feel lukewarm by the time they hit. No scorching.

What the object also clearly wasn't was a U.F.O. No, that was what was seen July 16 over Carteret, N.J.: 16 orange lights that appeared to hover in a V-formation and then vanish. James Richardson, who heads the Fireball Monitoring Program at the American Meteor Society, a group of meteor buffs, said a meteor could appear to hover if an observer was "looking directly down its barrel." But seeing a group of such meteors would be impossible, he said.

By week's end, the puzzle of the Pennsylvanian fireball also persisted. But by then a restless world's interest had burned itself out.

ANTHONY RAMIREZ



Archive Photos

As real as it gets: a flying saucer built in Canada to be used in movies.



On a Colorado ranch, alien-watchers keep . . .

# An eye on the sky



TOP: A sign directs visitors to Judy Messoline's UFO Center.

ABOVE: Messoline leans on a telescope in front of the watchtower at the

UFO Center. She opened the center a year ago Memorial Day and keeps hours to please guests from this world — and others.

Photos by JAY JANNER The Gazette

## Woman leaves light on for little green men

By Bill McKeown  
The Gazette

**SAN LUIS VALLEY** — With her long business hours, Judy Messoline reckons she'll be open when the aliens come.

Mary Munoz, who is perhaps Judy's most faithful customer, is counting on it.

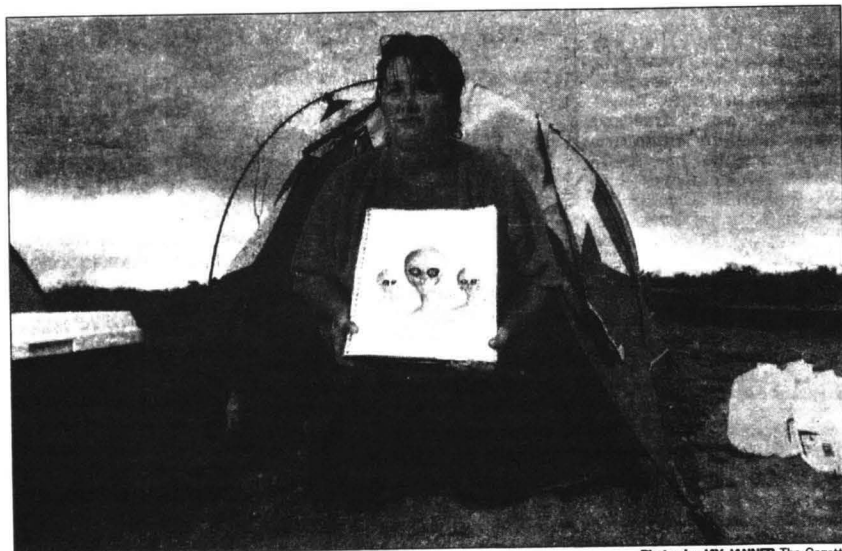
Judy's hours at the UFO Center are officially 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week. Good enough, you'd think, for most aliens — and for the tourists visiting the Great Sand Dunes just to the

east. But should an alien pass over, hover or land any time after 10, Judy lives just through the campground and up a short lane. She'll be down in a minute. Sometimes, "when things are happening" in the sky, Judy goes with it and keeps the UFO Center open until 2, 3 or 4 in the morning.

Of course, if aliens were visiting Earth looking just for 24-hour convenience, they'd land at a Super Wal-Mart. No, say Judy and Mary and hundreds of others lured to this high

### IF YOU GO

The UFO Center is on Colorado Highway 17, south of Hooper and just north of the entrance to the Great Sand Dunes National Park. Colorado Springs residents can visit by traveling west on U.S. Highway 24, then heading south on Colorado Highway 285 at Salida, or by driving Interstate 25 to Walsenburg and heading west on Colorado Highway 160. Summer hours are from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. — unless aliens are visiting, in which case the hours are extended until they leave.



Photos by JAY JANNER The Gazette

ABOVE: Mary Munoz, a UFO Center regular, shows a drawing of aliens she says abducted her.

desert plain, there's something special about the San Luis Valley. It has an . . . aura.

American Indian legend has it that "ant people" live under its sun-baked soil. Scores of modern residents and visitors have reported seeing strange lights — or strange aircraft — in the sky. Some believe alien "mother ships" come and go from secret caves high in the Sangre de Cristo mountains that run jagged down the east side of the valley. Folks even whisper there are one to four secret "bases" somewhere in the valley — either alien or government, or both. At least one writer has made a cottage industry out of the UFO sightings, churning out books of personal anecdotes from people who have seen something weird, from mutilated cattle to pulsing lights in the sky.

When Judy moved to the valley from Golden six years ago, she wasn't attracted by the aura that has made nearby Crestone a metaphysical mecca for such people as actress and past-lives guru Shirley MacLaine. No, Judy bought her place, the 164-acre TLC Ranch, intending to raise Scotch Highland cattle. But she didn't have the water to grow feed, and the cost of hay eventually forced her to sell most of her herd.

Casting about for a way to keep her land and house and support her three grandchildren, the 56-year-old decided to throw her lot in with the aliens.

After winning permission from the perplexed county commissioners, Judy set about to construct the UFO Center and a campground on a patch of her land near Colorado Highway 17. By Memorial Day 2000, she was ready for visitors — alien or human, preferably both.

So far, the aliens have been a bit shy — although one may have hovered over Judy's campground one predawn morning, she said. But human traffic has been good, a mix of tourists passing through and true believers visiting their holy land. They drop coins — sometimes even bills — into Judy's donation box and climb the stairs to the UFO watchtower, a long, wide platform of pipes and steel mesh raised about 15 feet off the ground.

The watchtower offers a wide view of the Sand Dunes and the Sangre De Cristos to the east and a lot of sun-baked sagebrush to the west. At night, visitors can unfold their lawn chairs and blankets on the spacious deck of the watchtower and gaze up hopefully at a velvety blanket of stars, an alien interstate.

If little green men don't pop down for a photo-op, visitors needn't worry. Judy has a bunch of them in the gift shop, a concrete igloo just below the watchtower. There are green ones, of course — they look remarkably like dolls made in Taiwan. There are alien pens, suitable presumably for two- or three-finger writing. There are even must-have saucer accessories: alien key chains, bumper stickers and dashboard dolls.

It's all been great fun, says Judy, who's a bit coy about whether she actually believes in UFOs. She hasn't seen one or — God forbid — been abducted by one. But since she's been in the alien biz, she has seen some strange lights in the sky above the valley. Besides, she says, it doesn't matter what she believes. Like a good bartender or barber, she's there to listen.

(continued on page 4)

"A lot of people who come in don't like to talk about what they've seen because people make fun of them," she says. "We don't make fun of them here — that's the big thing."

Even when she wants to. Like the guy who appeared at the igloo one day, walked up to her and said with a straight face:

"I'm an alien."

"I thought he meant something else," Judy recalls. "I said, 'Mexico?' He just looked at me and then said, 'Pluto.'"

Judy also was visited by a group of four women, each of whom had been abducted by aliens. They wrote their stories in a notebook Judy keeps in the igloo for such visitors, and even drew pictures of their kidnappers.

In just her first year of operation, in fact, Judy heard so many weird stories about UFOs that she began taping them. She transcribed them over the winter, and they're now collected in a booklet available for sale in the gift shop. She thinks it makes great reading for those long saucer trips across the galaxy — and for folks tooling around the West in their Winnebagos.

Mary Munoz' story is in the booklet. Mary and her husband, Abe, residents of Mori-

arity, N.M., stayed at Judy's campground last Memorial Day, along with her daughter and her nephew. Sometime in the dark, early morn, says Judy:

"I heard like a microwave going on and off. I told myself 'I hear the ship. I have to wake up.' But I couldn't. Then my nephew woke up and he saw a roulette wheel kind of light at the top of the tent and he saw that my husband was gone. My daughter heard what sounded like kids jabbering. And my husband said it seemed like it was a dream, but he was outside the tent, looking at a ship two feet off the ground with little creatures — white, with little green eyes popping out of them."

OK, OK. Mary knows what you're thinking. She's heard it all before, starting when she was abducted by aliens when she was 12.

"Even some of my family members say, 'OK, she's kind of wacky,'" Mary says. "My ex-husband told me I was a wacko. He hated me for the UFO stuff. It's made me very careful about what I say and who I say it to."

But not to Judy. Mary and Abe know she won't judge them — and in fact has befriended them.

"We love Judy," she says. "It's kind of neat to talk to her and have her understand and not look at you and think you're a nutso."

Tourists may come and go. Gen-Xers may hit the roadside attraction to smirk. But the Munoz family has found a second home at the UFO Center. Ever since their experience last year, they've been making the 3½-hour drive to Judy's place up to three times a month. In warm weather, they stay in the campground. In the winter, they find a motel.

Now, they've become so hooked on the aura of the valley they're talking about buying some land, building a house and moving up permanently.

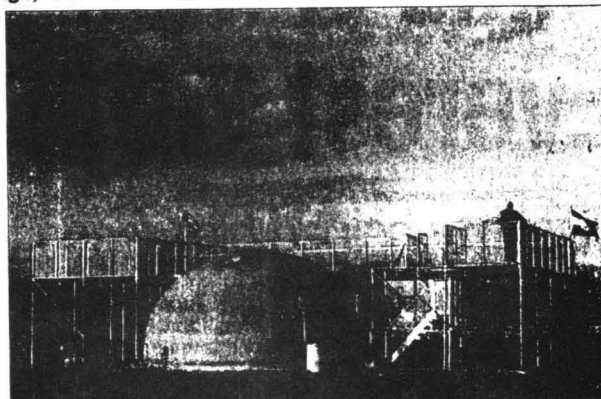
There's just something ... otherworldly ... about the sky over Judy's place, Munoz says.

"I've seen other things in other places, but I have never experienced the spiritual end of it as I do in that valley."

Of course, Judy isn't guaranteeing visitors will get a visit from aliens like Mary did. But she'll do her darndest to accommodate.

"If there's something out there, you'll see it with the hours we keep."

Bill McKeown covers general assignments and may be reached at 636-0197 or mckeown@gazette.com



Judy Messoline's UFO Center and watchtower in Hooper.

NEWS@NORMAN, Denver, NC  
July 18, 2001 CR: G. Fawcett

## Letters To The Editor

### Thanks for article

Thanks so much for the excellent article concerning some of my UFO investigations in North Carolina. The type of information conveyed is identical to much of the hidden testimony revealed at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. on May 9.

Over two dozen, military, intelligence and governmental eye-witnesses revealed for the first time reports of plane chases, landings, crashes (with bodies recovered), shooting incidents, radar tracking, E-M reports worldwide under "Project Disclosure." Four hundred eye-witnesses have been videotaped concerning their encounters with UFOs for possible Congressional or UN hearings.

George D. Fawcett  
Lincolnton

FLORIDA TODAY, Melbourne, FL - June 27, 2001

## UFOs haunt missile crew

When you're a launch-control operator in charge of a single missile fitted with a plutonium warhead packing enough yield (three megatons) to enlarge Hiroshima's incineration by a factor of 150, life in even the loneliest desert can get a little intense. You remember the big things first.

You remember things like October 1962, when activating the go codes — and a nuclear exchange — was literally at your fingertips. As it was again in November 1963, when the president got blown away and the first prime suspect was already locked into a pretargeted grid pattern. If you were at the Strategic Air Command outpost near Roswell, N.M., you watched fuel explosions destroy three Atlas silos, and you wondered what would happen if it got down to launching live rounds.

You remember other crazy things, like the 24-hour shifts, which actually worked out to about 27 after you added round-trip drive time. You remember the toll baby-sitting ICBMs took on marriages and other relationships, the divorces.

But it wasn't until last month, when Jerry Nelson of Cocoa Beach read about the Disclosure Project going on in Washington, D.C., that he remembered something else.

In May, some 20 people claiming encounters with unidentified flying objects while performing military or government duties went public to demand open congressional hearings on this largely classified phenomenon. One Air Force veteran, Robert Salas, reported how UFOs buzzing missile silos at Malmstrom Air Force Base managed to shut down more than a dozen Minuteman nukes in Montana during March 1967.

Actually, more widely publicized UFO snooping into restricted space around nuclear weapons systems occurred in the autumn of 1975. That's when security forces at Loring, (Maine), Wurtsmith (Michigan), and Malmstrom (again) Air Force bases were scrambled — in vain — to apprehend the intruders. But Nelson had never heard of those events. And even though he was stationed at Walker AFB on the outskirts of Roswell in the 1960s, he also says he never heard of the alleged 1947 flying saucer crash near the New Mexico cow town until several years ago.

What Nelson does recall is how, as a

member of the 579th Strategic Missile Squadron, his post at an ICBM silo called Site 9 sustained its own peculiar nocturnal security breaches during a period of several months.

"The guards were scared," says Nelson, a retired pharmacist. "These objects would hover over the silo and shine lights down on them without making any noise. So I'd call the base and the base would say, 'We'll take it under advisement,' but I never got a chance to see it, because I couldn't leave my post."

One USAF veteran who got a look at something a little different was missile facilities technician Bob Caplan, now living in Rohnert Park, Calif. He didn't work with Nelson's crew, but late one night on another shift, a guard at Site 9 asked the ranking officer below to dim the security lights to cut the glare because weird lights just beyond the perimeter were giving him the willies. Caplan went topside to check it out.

After emerging into clear, moonless, pitch-black darkness, Caplan says it took him a few moments to spot the silent interloper. "It was definitely on the ground, and it was white and very intense," he recalls. "It's hard to explain. It didn't put a beam of light out, it was more concentrated, but not like a sphere. More like a flat circle, like a halogen light that's shining flat on the ground."

When Caplan and a guard swung their flashlights toward the thing and approached, it vanished. Nothing was there. The light reappeared seconds later, some 20 to 30 feet away, only to disappear without a trace. Although Caplan never saw it again, he was interrogated several days later by an Office of Special Investigations agent. Caplan never saw the report, assuming one was filed.

Gene Lamb of Oklahoma City was a 579th SMS deputy crew commander who didn't see anything, but heard about and read UFO stories. "One of those things supposedly landed north of Roswell," he says. "It was reported by a highway patrolman who said it left a triangulation pattern where its legs touched down. And there was another (UFO) incident after that, a daylight sighting."

Even his crew commander witnessed UFO activity. Lamb says he can't get into it, because his old buddy feels constrained by a security oath.

Lamb, by the way, is the reunion coordinator for the 579th, whose short life span ran from 1961 to 1965. Although the assignment produced some lasting personal bonds, Lamb says not everybody wants to attend get-togethers. "I've had guys tell me, 'I don't want to be discourteous, but what happened out there ruined my life.' One even told me he suffered a nervous breakdown afterward."

Well, at least we won the Cold War.

Billy Cox's column runs every Wednesday. He can be reached at 242-3774, or Florida Today, P.O. Box 419000, Melbourne, FL 32941-9000.



Billy  
Cox  
People

DAILY RECORD, Roswell, NM - June 29, 2001 CR: G. Fawcett

## Museum gets one millionth visitor

D. J. DeKEYSER  
RECORD STAFF WRITER

They come from all over the world for an out-of-this-world experience, but for one teenager, a visit to the International UFO Museum and Research Center provided a once-in-a-lifetime memory.

Amanda Dennette, 17, of Jacksonville, Fla., was the one millionth visitor Friday to the IUFOMRC. She and her parents, Bucky and Cathy, are on the return leg of a trip to the Grand Canyon. The Roswell museum was a "must-see" on their itinerary, Bucky said.

He said even though the Grand Canyon was the ultimate goal of their trip, Amanda's only reason for coming was to visit the UFO museum.

"It was the book we used to get her to come on the trip," he said.

The high school senior said she is a big fan of the weekly television show, "Roswell," and that she and her parents watch it every Monday night.

As the tourists from Florida entered the museum with Amanda in the lead, the group that had gathered in the lobby for the occasion broke into applause as cameras started flashing.

"I wasn't sure I should come in," the young sci-fi fan laughed. The startled teenager received a silver-balloon gift basket full of Roswell/UFO mementos and a \$50 gift certificate to the museum's gift shop. After posing for several photos, Amanda looked at her parents and groaned. "I didn't even put on make-up this morning."

The gifts and interviews weren't the only surprises in store for the millionth visitor. Shortly after arriving, Amanda received a phone call from Eduardo Castro, the Brazilian ambassador. Castro said he had seen on the Internet that the IUFOMRC in Roswell would have its millionth visitor Friday, so he called to speak with the lucky person.



Daily Record • Bill Moffitt

Florida native Amanda Dennette, 17, talks with the Brazilian ambassador on the phone while visiting Roswell Friday. Dennette received the call after being the one millionth person to visit the International UFO Museum and Research Center.

Having regained her composure, Amanda answered the ambassador's questions with the calmness of an expert. She described the artifacts she had seen, thus far, in the "cool" museum.

In answer to an obvious question, Amanda replied, "It's proof enough for me — I believe it happened."

According to Sandy James, gift shop manager, the museum opened in the fall of 1992. She said July is the busiest month of the year because of the UFO festival.

"This time of year, we have 700 to 800 visitors a day. During the week before and after the festival that number increases to closer to 1,000 a day," she said.

The International UFO Museum and Research Center, 114 N. Main St., is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week during the summer months.



# LOOKING BACK

PLAIN DEALER, Cleveland, OH - July 30, 1952

## REPORTS NO EVIDENCE OF SAUCER PERIL

General, However, Pushes Probe of 20% of Cases Still Unexplained

BY PHIL G. GOULDING  
Plain Dealer Bureau

WASHINGTON, July 29—If there is any danger to the United States from the flying whatzits, the air force has not found it.

Sudden reappearance of the aerial objects over the nation's capital and elsewhere in the east led today to a top brass Pentagon press conference, conducted by the air force director of intelligence.

Recent "sightings" over Washington were derived from natural causes, said Maj. Gen. John A. Samford, who added that personally he was satisfied they were a result of "temperature inversions."

While he was not concerned about any of the reported objects being hostile to the United States, Samford announced the air force was stepping up its investigations so that an unexplained 20% of reported incidents becomes explainable.

### Analyze Reports for Five Years

Some thought is being given to bringing in another governmental scientific body to help out.

Samford announced his men had analyzed between 1,000 and 2,000 reports of "flying saucers" since 1947. His conclusions:

ABOUT 80% HAVE BEEN identified as friendly aircraft, our guided missiles and rockets and various phenomena of meteorology and electronics.

INSUFFICIENT information from observers is the primary cause for lack of identification of the other 20%.

"NO PATTERN reveals anything like a purpose or anything like a consistency that in any way represents a menace to the United States."

### Nothing Material

The saucers jumped into headlines here two weeks ago when they were picked up on radar screens. They swooped back over the capital Sunday morning and were picked up again by radar this morning for several hours.

Jet planes were sent to track them down Sunday, but couldn't catch them.

Samford and a half-dozen aides declared the jets found nothing because there was nothing material to be found. They said the radar screens had registered temperature inversions, which occur when warm and cold air meet and run around together.

Various ground images are reflected into the air to provide the lights.

### Orders 200 Cameras

The air force has ordered 200-odd cameras with refraction grids to be given certain observers. These cameras, which have not before been used in connection with flying whatever, will enable experts to tell whether a particu-

lar sky light is gaseous or whether it is a reflection from some garden-variety headlight down on a country road.

The air force is also toying around with the idea of buying a special telescopic camera with a 150-degree aperture to photograph the entire hemisphere with one plate. These run between \$3,000 and \$5,000.

The cameras with grids cost only about \$30.

Samford said the original method of investigation was to collect as many reports as possible to sift through them for some kind of pattern.

### Not "Frantic Attention"

Now, he said, the air force was convinced that the only way to get material suitable for scientific analysis was to bring in more scientific reports.

"Our present course is to continue on this problem to the best of our ability, giving it all the attention it warrants, but not frantic attention," he told newsmen.

In answer to a question, he said there had been absolutely no pattern of speed or size in the unexplained 20% of the whatzits.

Samford had a rather tough time deciding on what to call the reported sights, finally deciding on "things desirable to intercept."

Asked about the possibility of the saucers being from a foreign nation or another planet, he replied:

"If you could collect out of this mass of reports any one or two and find them with theoretically no limit to the power involved or the mass involved, then it could be explained as one of those things."

### Even in Biblical Times

He later added:

"The highest probability is that these are phenomena associated with intellectual and scientific interests that we are on the road to learning something more about, but nothing in them is of material or vehicular or missile interests of menace to the United States."

Samford said reports of things in the sky went back to Biblical times, but were more numerous today because man had put more objects in the sky and had a better opportunity to observe it.

One of several lesser officers who helped out with specific questions during the press conference, which went on for nearly 90 minutes, said there was no basis to rumors that more explainable objects were seen around atomic energy plants.

While there were more reports from such areas, because of 24-hour-a-day alert guards, the percentage of unknown sights was the same as elsewhere, a captain asserted.

### Kimball Adds 'No'

PORTLAND, Ore., July 29—(INS)—Secretary of the Navy Dan Kimball declared in Portland today that flying saucers do not exist.

[Paper Unknown], Cleveland, OH - Sept. 10, 1951

## Air Force Pilot Reports Sighting 'Flying Disc'

MITCHEL AIR FORCE BASE, N. Y. (AP)—An Air Force jet pilot reports sighting a mysterious round object speeding about 900 miles per hour over the New Jersey coastline.

The report came from Lt. Wilbert S. Rogers, 28, attached to the Air Force Base at Dover, Del.

PLAIN DEALER, Cleveland, OH - Nov. 22, 1953

## Canada, Serious on Flying Saucers, Sharpens Radar Eye

BY DON BROWN  
Plain Dealer Special

OTTAWA, Nov. 21—Canadian scientists hope to determine conclusively by the summer of 1954 if flying saucers actually exist, and if they do, the scientists hope to have charts and data to prove it.

The Canadian government is taking such a serious view of the possibility of visits from inter-terrestrial aircraft that it is setting up the world's first "flying saucer" observatory 10 miles west of here.

The observatory's radar "eyes" will be in operation early next year and if saucers exist, officials expect they will be picked up on the intricate instrument screens during the summer when Mars is the closest to the earth.

Wilbert B. Smith, chief scientist in charge of the saucer sighting station, says, "There is a very high degree of probability that flying saucers are real objects, and a 60% probability that they are alien vehicles."

### Defense Board Concerned

The saucer-sighting station is the product of five years of hobby experimenting by Smith and some scientist friends. Their findings were so startling and convincing that the Defense Research Board of Canada—the nation's top scientific research office—is co-operating in the saucer investigation.

Top Canadian scientists, Dr.

O. M. Solandt and Dr. C. J. MacKenzie, former head of the Canadian atomic energy project, consistently have refused to ridicule the numerous reports of credible witnesses that they have sighted strange saucer-shaped objects in the sky.

"My own opinion is that the reports are valid," Smith states. "The optical illusion explanation is lovely, but in every sighting there is always some factor which rules it out. So we've decided to learn just what flying saucers are."

### Using Super Radar

Smith and his associates believe the highly-sensitive radar equipment they have perfected will reach far enough into the stratosphere and beyond to pick up the trail of any foreign body and record its presence on delicate recording devices.

The instruments will record the probings of the radar eyes, but the chances that the scientists will see a saucer with the naked eye are slight, unless, of course, they come as close to the earth as they have been reported on numerous occasions.

From the very beginning of the flying saucer reports several years ago, Canadian authorities have maintained a file of all details which witnesses have been able to adduce. The Royal Canadian Air Force is looking for information constantly, and has a special branch to deal with such matters and reports.

## Air Force Studying New 'Saucer' Report

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Air Force followed a familiar routine today—sending through channels its latest flying saucer report.

Two airline pilots, First Officers W. B. Nash and W. H. Fortenberry, reported in Miami eight objects 100 feet in diameter glowing like red hot coals and traveling 1,000 miles an hour passed directly beneath their plane over Chesapeake Bay on Tuesday night.

The Air Force said it has made a preliminary report to the Air Force's technical intelligence center at Dayton, Ohio, and that a complete written report is expected to follow.

Until this report is made, the Air Force added, no evaluation can be made of this reported sighting.

Capt. E. J. Ruppelt of the air technical intelligence center at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, said today 60 reports of flying saucers from throughout the nation have been channeled to the base.

Roy T. Ellis of Dayton reported seeing an object almost like an ice cream cone with an elliptical dark object in the center where the ice cream would rest in the cone.

Ellis, an amateur astronomer, said he was looking for comets Sunday night when he saw the object. He said it moved "very deliberately."

Col. Richard H. Magee, Dayton Civil Defense director, said "There is something flying around our skies and I wish I knew what it was."

Asked if flying saucers could be the reason for the "skywatch operation," Colonel Magee said no specific reason had been given, "but that could be the answer."

## Ship Officers, Crew Report Seeing Flying Saucer in Area

Nova Scotians Arrived at Marine Terminal Differ On Description, Speed and Size of Object, But All Agree They Saw Something in Sky

Those "things" are being seen, around Delaware now—flying saucers, that is.

The captain and crew of the Marcala, which docked yesterday at the Wilmington Marine Terminal with a load of barytes from Nova Scotia, all saw something.

Their descriptions differ as to flying altitude, distance from water, and shape of the white metallic flat object—but they all caught a glimpse of its appearance, dip toward the ocean, and departure.

This all took place about 100 miles west of Five Points Bank Light Vessel, off the mouth of the Delaware Bay, on Saturday.

Captain Nils Lewring, master of the vessel, and Third Mate Osie Parson, gave their description first.

They agreed, as did most of the crew, it was a large flat white metallic object which traveled at a rapid rate on an angle with the ocean.

The captain said it came toward them from the northwest, ran parallel with the vessel, dipped toward the water, and vanished in the northeast. He thought it looked about 10 feet long, and the same distance in diameter.

"It" reminded the mate of a large kite, somewhat diamond in shape, and he thought it was about 70 feet above the water. Unlike a kite however, it dipped and rose again rapidly.

There was nothing attached to it or on it, all the observers said.

Some believed they estimated the speed at 12 to 14 miles an hour, while others guessed at 70 mph.

One or two thought it was four to five feet wide, but still others were closer to the captain's estimate.

Captain Lewring said he didn't have time to take a photograph; the "thing" was going too fast and had gone when he was ready with the lens.

"Flying saucers" or objects fitting into that unofficial category, were reported last May by a Shipside housewife, who thought she saw an object "odd in shape and shiny silver in color."

But the Marcala crew report is the first one given by a large number of people who said they saw it at the same time and reported a simultaneous action.

TRIBUNE, Scranton, PA - Aug. 7, 1952

### Flying Saucers

Editor, The Tribune.

Sir: It seems to me that some scientists are putting themselves away out on the proverbial limb with recent statements that the objects being sighted and recorded (in instances on radar screens) are the result of either hallucinations or are natural phenomena.

It takes a very narrow mind to conclude that life exists nowhere else but on this minute particle in the universe. It is my careful opinion, as an uneducated layman, that some of the statements made by so-called scientists strongly indicate a mental fog that belongs in the 12th Century rather than the 20th. Some of the explanations that have been advanced are so obviously ridiculous that they do not merit space in print—all this business of optical illusions and hallucinations condemns the observations of a great many reliable, sober people.

The mental gymnastics some Air

One explanation which should become a classic of logic is that the objects sighted on radar screens around Washington, D. C., were tinfoil confetti drifting down from Canadian maneuvers and therefore the radar screens were mistaking "clutter" for true radar returns. The strange thing is that this was picked up by radar only at night and pilots reported seeing moving lights with which they could not close.

## 'Saucer' Skims Conneaut Shore

A "flying saucer" or something that looked like one is responsible for intensification of a drive in CONNEAUT for enough volunteers to operate the Ground Observation Corps post 24 hours a day.

The object, described as brown, and shaped like a pie plate, was seen heading east along the Lake Erie shoreline at about 2,000 feet. It circled several times and then sped east and disappeared, according to James Marshall of Conneaut, one of the first to observe it.

The GOC post was not open at the time but a formal report on it was filed with the Canton Filter Center based on witnesses stories.

[Paper Unknown], Cleveland, OH - July 28, 1952

DREW PEARSON:

## 'Saucer' Stories Now Taken More Seriously

WASHINGTON — While the politicians have been watching the none-too-mysterious conventions, some other people, including the Air Force, have been watching a mysterious rash of flying saucers.

Furthermore, the Air Force, long skeptical about flying saucers, has now made some official and important admissions.

Admission No. 1 is that they have now detected something that looks like flying saucers on radar at the same time that people have said they saw flying saucers. In other words, flying saucers are not just cloud freaks or hallucinations. If so they could not be detected on a radar screen.

Admission No. 2 is that flying saucers could possibly be space ships from another planet. The reason for this admission is that it will soon be possible for us to build a space ship to visit the moon if we are willing to spend the money for research and construction.

Our current research into atomic power and supersonic speeds already has progressed so far that it is definitely known such a ship can be built, but the big expense would come from creating atmosphere inside the ship to support human life while traveling from one planet to the other.

Therefore if we are this close to interplanetary travel, Air Force officers admit that a more advanced civilization could be keeping this planet under surveillance through flying saucers.

Admission No. 3 is to the effect that scientific observation posts have been set up in New Mexico, where we are testing guided missiles, to track flying saucers also. A number of flying saucers have been seen in the Southwest, and since trained specialists are already on the job in that area with the latest scientific gadgets, the Air Force has ordered them to watch for flying saucers and track them scientifically.

In addition, the Air Force has instructed its 24-hour air observers to watch not only for enemy planes but flying saucers. Furthermore it has set up special cameras on its radar screens to keep a pictorial record of flying saucers or any other strange objects fitting across the screens.

Finally, Wright Field, at Dayton, the center of all Air Force research, has been instructed to chart all flying saucer patterns, find out whether their light behavior is similar, and what characteristics they seem to have in common.

This was started only two months ago and no similar patterns have yet been reported, except for the peculiar fact that more flying saucers have been observed around U. S. atomic centers and around Wright Field than any place else. This could be because observers from another planet were interested in our atomic and air development, though the Air Force thinks it's more likely to be because the population around these bases is more sensitive to something strange in the skies.

However, while Air Force officials are taking every precaution to solve the mystery they also warn that the first flying saucer was seen by the Prophet Ezekiel, who reported seeing a flying wheel in the heavens.

The Air Force has tracked down thousands of fantastic reports from that of George Koehler of Denver, who reported blond beardless three-foot men from Venus, to the movies taken by Nick Mariana of Great Falls, Mont. The beardless men turned out to be a hoax, and the movies turned out to be pictures of two high-flying jet fighters.

So, while the Air Force is doing everything possible to solve the mystery, it still has its collective fingers crossed.

Force spokesmen and "experts" go through to further confuse the public is hardly a testimonial to logical, careful deduction or opinion.

Most of the explanations clearly lack careful thought and logical appraisal of all the facts and in varying degrees credits the observers of these sightings en masse, with delusion, hallucinations, or a level of intelligence comparable to that of small children.

W. J. K.





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

# The X-Files

## Jetliners' 30 near misses with UFOs



By Roger Taverer

**H**UNDREDS of passengers were within a split second of Britain's worst aviation disaster when two jets missed colliding by just 100ft at Heathrow airport.

The public was shocked and public confidence severely dented. But what air travellers didn't know was that in the last two decades there have been around 30 similar near misses - with UFOs.

The Western Daily Press has uncovered a dossier detailing the sensational incidents. The Civil Aviation Authority's X-Files are now in the possession of top investigative author Nick Redfern who has shown the contents to the Daily Press.

The CAA's hidden files, only recently released after years under wraps, documents pilots' and air traffic controllers' descriptions of the unidentified flying objects which were close to bringing down jets loaded with passengers.

Last night the CAA's spokesman Chris Mason said of the classified papers: "Our reports are from highly trained pilots and air traffic controllers. We have no argument with what they say they have seen, even if what they saw can't be explained."

"We admit that in some cases the aircraft which were nearly in collision with the aircraft have never been traced."

**W**e keep an open mind about UFOs. Some things just can't be explained, but they have been reported by top professionals and we do take that into account."

The CAA has been carefully and quietly collecting and analysing data pertaining to near-collisions between airliners and UFOs for a number of years.

And while such a claim might sound like something straight out of an episode of The X-Files, it is one supported by the CAA's own records.

"I've never seen anything like it before and can't

### AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER: 'WAS IT, ER, AN AIRCRAFT?'

**JANUARY 6, 1995:** Captain Roger Willis and co-pilot Mark Stuart were beginning their descent towards Manchester Airport in a Boeing 737 twin jet with 60 passengers on board.

Seventeen minutes before touchdown, a mysterious, triangular-shaped UFO flashed past

the right-hand side of the aircraft at a distance described as being "very close" - so close, in fact, that the crew instinctively "ducked" in their seats.

This is an extract from the conversation between crew of the B737 and the radar controller. B737: "We just had something

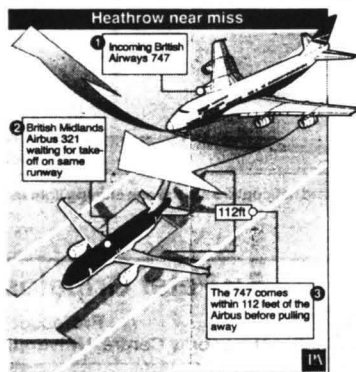
go down the RHS just above us very fast."

**MANCHESTER:** "Well, there's nothing seen on the radar. Was it, er, an aircraft?"

**B737:** "Well, it had lights; it went down the starboard side very quick [and] just slightly above us, yeah."

**MANCHESTER:** "Keep an eye out for something, er, I can't see anything at all at the moment so, er, must have, er, been very fast or gone down very quickly after it passed you I think."

**B737:** "Okay. Well, there you go!"



encounter' took on an altogether more significant meaning for the crew and passengers of a London-bound airliner. At 9.00 pm Captain Achille Zaghetto, who was piloting a McDonnell MD80 aircraft, was amazed to see an unidentified flying object pass his aircraft as it flew over the coast of Kent at a height of more than 22,000 feet.

**A**s the UFO was no more than 1,000 feet above the airliner, and the incident therefore classed as a 'near-miss', an official inquiry was launched by the CAA.

Approximately two weeks later the following brief statement was issued: "The pilot said the object was light brown, round, three metres long, and did not describe any means of propulsion."

"The aircraft was under the control of London air traffic control centre who had no other aircraft in the vicinity, but consistent with the pilot report, a faint radar trace was observed ten nautical miles behind the Alitalia aircraft."

"Extensive enquiries have failed to provide any indication of what the sighting may have been."

But more was to come. The next incident to occur took place on June 1, 1991 when a yellow-orange cylindrical object, ten feet long, was seen at close quarters by the crew of a Britannia Airways Boeing 737 en route to London from Dublin.

Sixteen days later, yet another cylindrical-shaped UFO was sighted, this time by one Walter Leiss, a German engineer aboard Dan Air flight DA 4700 as it headed toward Hamburg.

●Nick Redfern is the author of three best-selling books on UFOs. The latest, Cosmic Crashes, is published by Simon and Schuster at £6.99.

## Tally hits 22

THE NUMBER of sightings of UFOs over the Dales and Peak skies since last September now stands at 22.

A Tideswell man saw a saucer-shaped object hovering over the hills at Millers Dale on Wednesday morning.

And as he pulled up in the layby to inspect further, two more saucers came over the hill and sped off following the first one.

The 47-year-old, who asked not to be named, said: "I just pulled in to have a look because there was this light object hovering at the side of the hill, and then when I got to about 200 yards away, it took off with two more following it."

"They shot away really quickly, and there is certainly something out there because there is no object that can move that fast, be it military or from another region."

"I wasn't frightened but it was very strange as time seemed to stand still, even though it all happened in about a minute."

The saucers were about 60 feet in diameter, and the man says they made no sound.

Have you seen any strange objects or lights in the skies? If so, telephone one of our reporters on (01629) 582432.

MATLOCK MERCURY, Derbyshire, England - April 19, 2001

CANNOCK CHASE POST, Wolverhampton, England - March 29, 2001

by Nick Redfern & Irene Bott

**F**or the majority of people, any mention of term Men in Black inevitably conjures up images of Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones - the dark-suited stars of the Hollywood blockbuster movie of the same name.

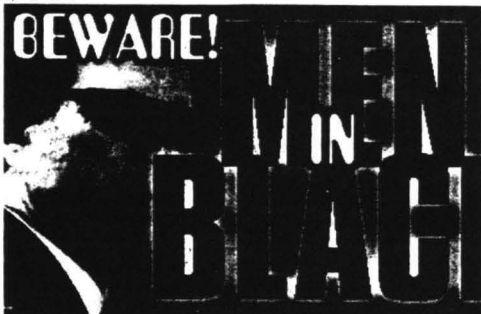
However, it is a little-known fact that the film itself was based on real-life reports of encounters with mysterious Men in Black-style characters who warn witnesses to UFO incidents not to talk about their strange experiences.

Reports of meetings with the Men in Black date back to at least the early 1950s and possibly earlier - and the range of theories put forward to try and explain who they are and where they are front it intriguing. Bill Moore, a US author, is convinced that they are, in fact "really government people in disguise who originate with a rather bizarre unit of Air Force Intelligence known as the Air Force Special Activities Centre".

He further asserts that the history of the Men in Black can be traced back to an "oddball unit", a composite of special intelligence groups whose job it was to get people to talk. Recruited into the job, says Moore, were safe-crackers, cat burglars, lock-pickers, impersonators and assorted masters of deception.

According to Nick Pope of the British Ministry of Defence, however, the Men in Black are nothing but "Walter Mitty" style characters who like to think of themselves as "secret Agents" and who obtain fun from living out their fantasies in this way.

However, in several Men in Black encounters in the UK, it has been proven that



the mystery visitors were attached to a branch of the Royal Air Force known as the Provost and Security Services - a branch that until 1998 had its headquarters at RAF Rudloe Manor, Wiltshire, and from where it has long been rumoured that secret UFO investigations are undertaken from.

This, of course, renders Nick Pope's assertions

absurd.

But what, you may ask, does any of this have to do with the Cannock Chase? Well it seems that the Men in Black have been dishing out their warnings to UFO witnesses in this area too! The following account comes from a woman who lives in the heart of the Chase and who had a truly sinister encounter with one of the real-life Men in Black

in 1994 and shortly after seeing a UFO. As she told us:

"The door banged really slowly but hard, like someone was hitting it with their fist instead of knocking (and) when I opened it there was this horrible little man about five feet tall. He was dressed in a black suit and tie and had a funny little black hat on. His face was really strange; he looked like someone with anorexia, you know? His cheeks were all gaunt; his eyes were dark and his skin was almost white."

"I didn't know what to do and just stared; it was really frightening. Then he suddenly gave me this horrible grin, and I could tell his lips had been coloured, like with make-up or something. He took off his hat and had this really bad wig on. You know, he looked about 60 but the wig was jet black."

"All he said was: 'We would ask that you cease your studies.' I said, 'What?

Then he repeated it, exactly the same and I had to ask what he meant. 'The sky lights,' he said. Then it dawned on me. I'd seen a UFO late at night about a week before when my husband and I had been driving home and we both had a really weird dream after about some little men standing around our car on the edge of the woods."

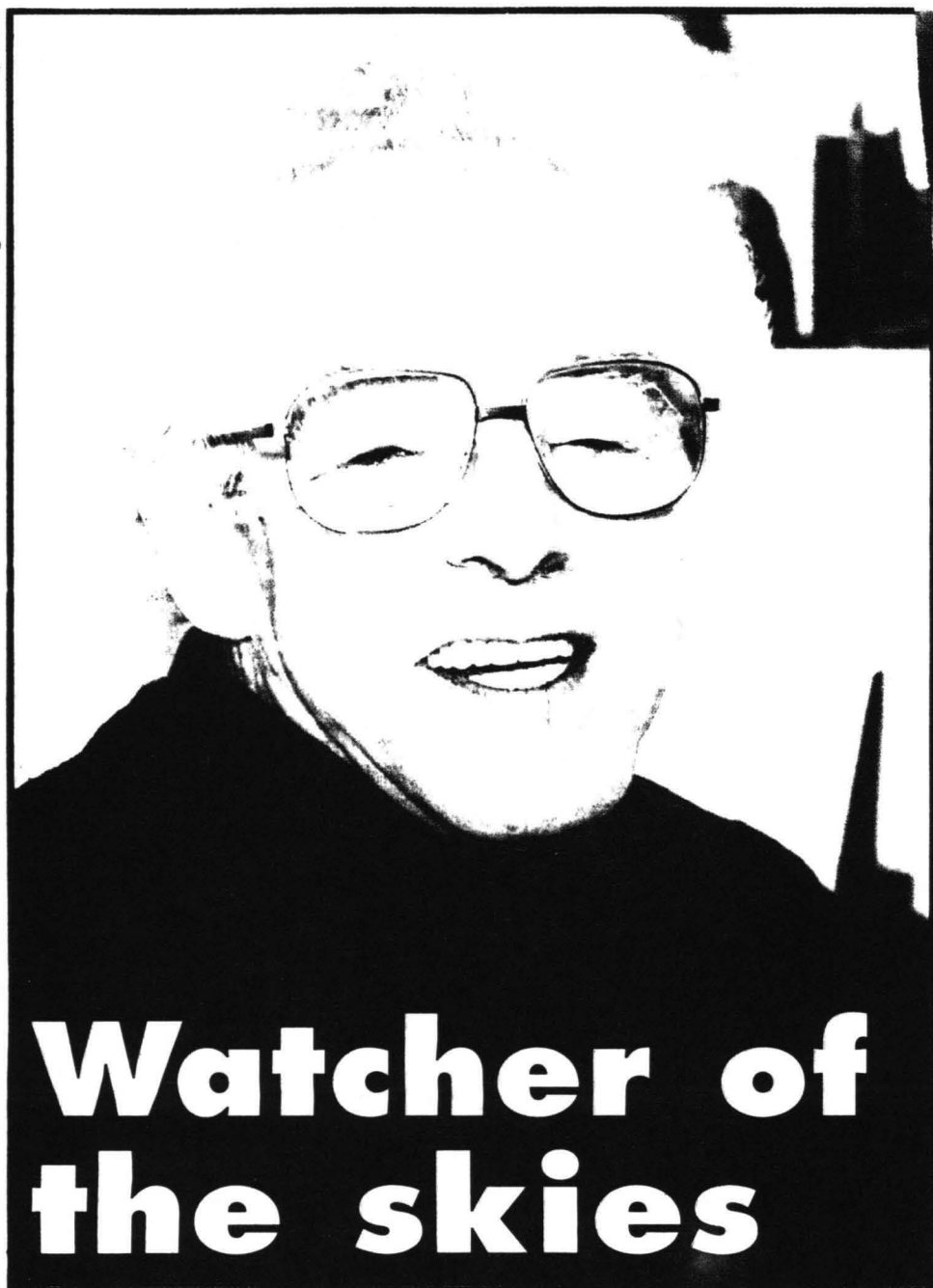
"Then he said something like, 'Cease and dream easy'. I think that was it, and he gave me a really long stare like he was going to attack me or something. But he just walked away down the drive. I started to feel dizzy and slammed the door. I just crawled to the bed, and fell asleep for about three hours. But when I woke up there was this horrible smell like burning rubber all through the house. We had to have the windows wide open for days and get the carpets and furniture cleaned to get

rid of the smell."

"It really shook me up and apart from telling you I haven't really talked about it until now."

So who are the Men in Black? Are they part of some secret US Government project designed to hide the truth behind the UFO controversy? And what of the links with RAF Rudloe Manor? We do not pretend to have all of the answers but if you one day see a UFO on the Chase and you later hear a slow banging on your front door, be careful: they may be coming for you!

■Have you seen a UFO on the Cannock Chase? Maybe you've had an encounter with one of the Chase's big cats? Or perhaps you have a ghostly tale to tell? If so, contact our C-Files investigators Nick Redfern and Irene Bott on 01922 869641.



# Watcher of the skies

**TIM CHAMPION meets Dorset's David Kingston, one of the UK's leading authorities on the phenomena of UFOs and crop circles**

THE aliens are invading and planet Earth has no defence against them.

As interest in unidentified flying objects has exploded in recent years, the extra terrestrials have launched a no-holds-barred assault on our TV and movie screens - *X-Files*, *Independence Day*...the list is endless.

And there are people who believe that the aliens have already arrived in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense.

Little green men may or may not already be living a covert existence among Dorset's unsuspecting populace, fiendishly disguised as humble fishermen, farmers, council and even journalists - depending on whether or not you choose to believe the more outrageous of the conspiracy theorists.

But the county is certainly home to one of the UK's foremost authorities on the UFO phenomenon.

Retired Royal Air Force intelligence officer David Kingston, 63, has spent the last 40 years amassing information on, and studying the mysteries posed by, these elusive extra-terrestrial intruders.

He has written dozens of articles and featured in television and radio broadcasts all over the world in a resolute bid to spread the UFO message amid the endless claims and counterclaims.

This guru of the unexplained moved to Dorset in 1981 after spending much of his life continent-hopping with the RAF.

I met him at the secluded farm cottage near Martinstown he shares with his wife, Virginia, and the first thing to strike me was the remoteness of the location. You could be abducted by aliens and not a soul would know about it for weeks - in deepest Dorset no one can hear you scream.

David's career with the RAF - first as a communications technician then as an intelligence officer - took him to the Pacific outpost of Christmas Island in 1957, where he witnessed both nuclear tests and, he claims, his first flying saucers.

He mused: "UFOs are often seen near military bases, nuclear power stations and communications masts.

"There may be a connection with whatever energy system is used to propel the craft. Or they may just be keeping an eye on what is happening on the Earth, as there might be consequences for life on other planets."

During the 1960s, the budding UFO detective was attached to the United States Air Force and posted to RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire, where his fascination with mystery objects grew.

He said: "The Americans were flying 24-hour patrols to monitor Russia and the other Iron Curtain countries - many of the pilots reported encounters with UFOs.

"Despite the Cold War, it later became clear that the Americans and Russians had co-operated quite closely in sharing information on UFOs."

Reports filed by David on these close encounters found their way into Project Blue Book, an official investigation into the saucer enigma. But he is dismissive of the project's conclusions, believing it to be a whitewash designed to reassure a nervous general public.

He grumbled: "Project Blue Book was compiled by the air force for the purpose of putting minds at rest. Virtually all the cases included could be easily explained away."

Dorset has experienced its fair share of strange sightings. David said that a total of around 150 craft have been spotted in the county's skies during the course of the last year - 44 of which defy explanation.

The county has also produced "one of the best examples of UFO footage I have seen in this country", according to David.

In April 1998, a London man visiting relatives in Weymouth noticed an unfamiliar object floating in the sky above a communications mast on the Ridgeway.

Intrigued by the unusual shape moving erratically overhead, he stopped his car in a lay-by and filmed eight minutes of astonishing footage that clearly shows all the classic 'flying saucer' features. The UFO was also seen by a group of witnesses, including a vicar and his wife.

The Ridgeway is not the only UFO hotspot in the county - Maiden Castle near Dorchester is a magnet for flying saucers and there have been numerous sightings stretching back decades.

Stories of crash landings and government manoeuvres are legion in UFO lore. The granddaddy of these conspiracy theories is the 'Roswell incident', where a spaceship is said to have fallen to earth in the New Mexico desert in July 1947.

The United States Air Force immediately issued a press release stating that it had captured a flying saucer, but the statement was later withdrawn and the incident was put down to a crashed weather balloon.

Despite official denials, there have since been countless rumours of alien corpses being recovered from the desert and a video of the so-called 'alien autopsy' later emerged - but it is widely considered to be a fake.

The public imagination has also been stimulated by the idea of a huge compound in the Nevada desert - known as Area 51 - at which the military tests out

captured UFOs and advanced alien technology. The US government claims the base doesn't exist, but there have been a disproportionately large number of UFO sightings recorded in that area.

In common with other UFO buffs, David Kingston believes that governments are engaged in an elaborate cover-up because they don't trust dumb old Joe Public enough to reveal the full extent of their knowledge.

He explained: "In the 1960s, a panel of academics and other leading figures known as the Brookings Institute was asked to put together a report for NASA on the implications of encountering alien life forms or UFOs during missions into space.

"The report stated that the impact on society in general, religion and economic and monetary systems should be taken into consideration. I believe the evidence for UFOs is being covered up by governments because they think that people are not ready to hear the truth."

But it is possible that the authorities may be on the brink of a monumental shift in their attitude towards disclosing what they know about UFOs. An organisation called the Centre for the Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence is currently gathering UFO testimonies from military and intelligence personnel. The findings of Operation Disclosure are due to be presented to US President George W Bush later this year.

These alleged alien visitors keep their secrets well hidden from modern man, but there are people who think they were not such a mystery to our ancestors.

Maverick historians and authors have stirred up controversy and provoked scorn from mainstream academics by suggesting that aliens regularly visited ancient cultures on Earth and may have imparted some of their wisdom and technology.

One of the most popular and radical of these is Erich Von Daniken, author of UFO buffs' bible *Chariot of the Gods*. He has even gone as far as reinterpreting biblical texts and suggesting that aliens may have bred with our forebears.

The 'ancient astronaut' theory is one David keenly subscribes to. He enthuses: "I don't doubt that our planet has been visited by aliens for thousands of years.

"UFOs sometimes appear in religious paintings. They are clearly depicted in the Sistine Chapel in Rome - Michelangelo was definitely aware of their existence.

"Images of UFOs go back to many of the ancient civilisations, such as the Egyptians and Sumerians."

However, the apocalyptic 'Independence Day' scenario of malevolent beings besieging planet Earth gets short shrift.

David said: "I do not think there is any reason for us to fear UFOs and beings from other planets. I am sure that if they wanted to harm the human race their superior technology would have enabled them to do that already. For all we know, we may even be a greater threat to them than they are to us."

Alien races may already be trying to establish communication through cryptic symbols more commonly known as crop circles.

David will be exploring the link between UFOs and these striking and often highly complex crop formations as part of a conference he is organising in Dorchester next week.

The conference, in its sixth year, will explore all aspects of unexplained phenomena such as UFOs and is expected to attract visitors from all over the country.

David revealed: "Although we know that some crop circles are hoaxes, they have occurred all over the world, from Afghanistan to Japan. There have even been ice circles in the Hudson River in North America."

He added: "When I was lecturing in Salisbury a few years ago, I met a Russian man who told me that until the Berlin wall came down his countrymen thought that Western governments were responsible for creating crop circles."

David offered his library of crop circle images to an expert in Egyptian hieroglyphics who is currently studying them in an attempt to discover whether they hold any hidden meaning.

The determined band of people who profess a strong conviction that we are not alone in the universe are frequently waved away as cranks and eccentrics. However, David Kingston, an unassuming and thoughtful type with a credible military background, is not a freak or a weirdo.

He is calm, articulate and plausible. He is even sceptical about claims of 'alien abductions' - although his explanation of these intergalactic kidnapping bids is equally unconvincing.

He seems to be suggesting that the 'abductions' could be hallucinations produced by bizarre mind-control experiments carried out by the military to block the memories of people who have stumbled upon national secrets.

Personally, I find his version as unsatisfactory as tales of sinister creatures in spaceships - as nearly four million Americans claim to have been abducted by aliens at some point in their lives, surely they can't all be the victims of a military plot. Despite my doubts, this theory is still deeply unsettling.

When I arrived at David's rustic headquarters I was full of confidence that flying saucers and oddly shaped bug-eyed beings from far-off galaxies belonged exclusively to the fictional world of *The X-Files* and the investigations of agents Mulder and Scully.

But I left with a greater feeling of uncertainty about the existence of UFOs and government agencies that are hell bent on keeping the truth from us.

As I drove back from Martinstown, a sense of mild paranoia came over me as I noticed another car close behind.

Could it have been one of the shadowy 'men in black' who are alleged to pay a visit to witnesses after an alien encounter and warn them to keep their noses out? On the other hand, surely they would drive something a bit more menacing than a Ford Fiesta.

The UFO puzzle may not be fully solved for many years to come, but public curiosity shows no sign of waning. The human condition requires a belief in some form of higher intelligence - and with the decline in organised religion in the West, the UFO obsession seems to be filling the void...the aliens have landed.



MEL GIBSON TIPPED FOR STARRING ROLE AS CROP CIRCLE RIDDLE EXCITES PICTURE MOGULS

# How Hollywood is homing in on the West's strangest UFO mystery

Film star Mel Gibson: Lead role



**C**ROP circles are set to become the latest West phenomenon to hit the silver screen – and Hollywood heart-throb Mel Gibson is hotly-tipped to play the lead role.

The tough-guy star of *Lethal Weapon* and *The Patriot* is fascinated by the famous circles – and is considering an offer from Disney to star in a supernatural thriller about them.

The still-secret film, called *Signs*, is thought to concern the appearance of elaborate crop patterns on a family farm in Pennsylvania.

It is being directed by Sixth Sense director M. Night Shyamalan and shooting begins this autumn.

Disney picked up the project last month in a multi-million-dollar pre-emptive bid – making crop circles the latest West phenomenon to cross the Atlantic for a showbiz makeover, following hard on the heels of Harry Potter and Anne Robinson.

Gibson is the latest VIP to take an interest in the weird patterns and the movie will only add to their cult status.

Actress Goldie Hawn travelled to Marlborough last year and flew over some fields close to the M4 for a bird's eye view of the bizarre shapes.

And millionaire rocker Reg Presley, lead singer with The Trogs, regularly travels to Wiltshire in summer to inves-

## THREE CENTURIES OF CROP CIRCLES

●The first recorded crop circle appeared in 1678, in Stirlingshire. It came to be known as the Devil's Circle.

●Ten years ago two elderly men from Southampton, Doug Bower and Dave Chorley, claimed to have created most of the circles with a rope and a plank.

●Oxford-educated physicist Dr Terence Meaden believes some circles could be created by 'mini-vortexes' of wind.

●Other theories include electromagnetic fields, mating hedgehogs and UFOs.

●Circles have taken on fractal shapes, galaxy-style shapes, Star of David shapes – and one even one resembling Captain Kirk's Starship Enterprise.

●The Hop back Brewery at Downton, near Salisbury, brews a beer called Crop Circle.

●Crop circles have spurred the creation of dozens of websites, many in the USA. People with an obsessive interest in the phenomenon are known as 'croppers'.

●An enthusiast of the phenomenon was last year fined £100 for creating his own circles. Magistrates heard that Matthew Williams, 29, created a seven-point star to disprove claims by an expert it was not possible for humans to create such an elaborate pattern.

Using planks and poles, Williams and a friend spent three nights making the star, which sparked a tourist invasion. He then sent pictures to an expert, who alerted police.

Williams, of Bishops Cannings, near Devizes, admitted causing criminal damage to a wheat field at Manor Farm, West Overton.

By David Humphrey

investigate circles at close hand. He's convinced there's an extra-terrestrial explanation.

Crop circles have been around for three centuries, but only started to grab the public's attention about 20 years ago when they began appearing with increasing frequency in Wiltshire.

In the late 80s a Japanese TV crew sponsored Operation Blackbird, complete with sophisticated surveillance equipment, at Westbury's White Horse.

They caught a group of hoaxers trying to create circles under cover of darkness.

Then two years a member of the fabulously wealthy Rockefeller family commissioned a study into circles.

After exhaustive site inspections in Wiltshire, Colin Andrews, a former Hampshire local government officer turned full-time circles sleuth, concluded most of them were hoaxes.

**T**he circles are now a major money spinner in Wiltshire, where circles appear in greater numbers than anywhere else in the UK.

Thousands of tourists from around the world flock to the county to inspect the baffling pictograms, which grow more sophisticated by the year.

Two of the most elaborate patterns, both near

Marlborough, have been in the shape of a Jewish candelabra and ancient Egyptian ornament.

Many farmers resigned to having their crops trampled by camera-clicking tourists now charge them admission to make up for their losses.

The circles have appeared all over the world, including Australia, the Ukraine and the wheat fields of Kansas.

But here crop circle investigators fear foot-and-mouth will mean a disastrous year for study of the phenomenon.

If movement restrictions are still in force in the countryside as crops begin ripening, enthusiasts will have to study formations from the air instead of on the ground.

D.Humphrey@bep.co.uk



Crop circles: Is the explanation extra-terrestrial or just a plain hoax?



Trogs singer Reg Presley

## Celebrity fans

TROGS lead singer Reg Presley has thrilled audiences throughout the world with hits like *Wild Thing* and *Love is All Around*.

He is one of two original band members who still tour, performing with as much gusto as they did in the 1960s.

He is also one of a string of celebrities, including actress Goldie Hawn, Blues Brother Dan Ackroyd and American millionaire Laurance Rockefeller, who make regular visits to Wiltshire's crop circles.

# UK close encounters for the US president

A UFO spotter's collection of extraterrestrial video film footage is to be examined by the President of the United States.

David Kingston, aged 63, of Martinstown, is backing The Campaign for Disclosure which aims to reveal the facts about UFOs.

Witnesses who have seen UFOs and other extraterrestrial events will come forward as a group to tell their stories at an international press conference in Washington, USA, on Wednesday 9 May which is expected to be attended by George Bush.

Mr Kingston's video footage of a flying saucer over Dorset is among evidence

## Report by Tim Edmonds

that will be shown at the conference by Dr Steven Greer, the campaign organiser.

He said: "As far as I know he is going to use some of my stuff. I relayed lots of information to him but he has of course amassed so much information."

"Some of the top military men that have had UFO experiences are coming forward to operate a disclosure programme project and put all the facts before President Bush."

"They were hoping to do it for Clinton but now it will be Bush and they will be saying to him 'This is what we have got. How do you explain it away?'"

"Dr Greer spoke to the leaders of each country and when he came over here he spoke to some fairly high-up people who I cannot name for obvious reasons."

Mr Kingston, a former RAF intelligence worker who collated information on possible sightings, saw his first UFO over the Pacific in 1957 and since then has seen around 60 other close encounters.

He receives 50 e-mails a day from var-

ious UFO organisations and members of the public who are put in contact after reports of UFOs are made to the police.

Mr Kingston believes the UFO hotspot of the county is Maiden Castle, Dorchester, and recently claimed paranormal activity in the Dorset skies appeared to have increased during the past year.

The campaign is calling for a presidential executive order to protect witnesses afraid of violating security oaths and to declassify documents and secret projects.

**W**here have all the UFOs gone? The National UFO Reporting Centre in Seattle, Washington, logged just 143 sightings across America last month — its lowest record for more than two years.

At the turn of the Millennium there were dozens of unidentified objects in America's skies every night.

It doesn't seem probable that the new President, who has just announced defence spending plans that would bankrupt any other nation, has ditched all the experimental aircraft which sceptics claim are the source of most spaceship sightings.

So if the UFOs were truly paranormal, why are we seeing fewer of them? Have the aliens headed home?

Or is Western culture less receptive to psychic experiences at the moment?

I have long held that cynical people fail to understand the nature of reality when they sniff. "I'll believe it when I see it".

Reality works in reverse: we see it when we believe it, and our brains screen out anything they are not prepared to recognise.

The late Douglas Adams, whose brilliantly witty science-fiction makes me laugh out loud when I simply remember the jokes, invented a spacecraft which became invisible by cloaking itself in sheer improbability.

It could land in the middle of a Test match at Lords and disgorge hundreds of extraordinarily ugly, heavily-armed extra-terrestrial shock-troops, and no one would 'see' this because they refused to accept or even register the evidence of their own senses.

Real UFOs may be the same. The Millennial excitement has ebbed away, the New Age is old hat and most people are not expecting the world to end any time soon — despite the President's eager investment in 'defence' and his contempt for global warming treaties. A scan of any day's papers shows the

## URI GELLER NOT BENDING THE TRUTH



# Do laws of physics allow you to travel back in time - and shoot yourself?

world is truly getting weirder; but we're not on the look-out for weirdness.

I believe that the 21st century, driven by the twin engines of amoral hunger for knowledge and unsurpassed human greed, will generate discoveries so extraordinary that Nostradamus himself could not have dreamed of them.

Time travel, for instance: scientists at Connecticut

around in the loop. You could get on, travel backwards to the point when the machine was switched on, and get off again. If the machine had been running for a year, you could re-emerge twelve months before you boarded.

Travel into what is 'the past' as I write this will not be possible on Mallett's machine. You won't be able to go back to the days of the Patriarchs or even Tuesday: the attainable past will not begin until the slow loop of light is first created.

That day may not be far away — Lene Hau at Harvard has slowed a light beam from 186,000 miles an hour to a standstill.

Sceptical readers will be laughing at my gullibility now — how can I believe a mad scientist, when time travel is clearly impossible because we are not overrun with time-tourists from the future?

And (the clincher) what about the eternal sci-fi paradox: how could the laws

of physics permit the invention of a machine which enabled a man to travel back a week and shoot himself dead?

*Two scientists have solved that one, without reference to the time-travel concept.*

Jaume Garriga of the Independent University of Barcelona and Alexander Vilenkin of Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, say an infinite number of histories are happening in parallel across a near-infinity of universes.

Everything that can possibly happen is happening, so I am spontaneously combusting on some other plane at this precise moment.

Put the two theories together, and it's possible that time travel will involve a leap from one universe to another. Step into the loop in this reality, but re-emerge in another to commit simultaneous murder and suicide by killing yourself.

"Not only is Elvis Presley still alive, but an infinite

number of Elvises are still alive," suggests Vilenkin.

The mind-bending possibilities that spiral off these combined theories are so immense that I shall need another column to begin to explore them.

You'll read it here next week, assuming that neither you and I are one of those unfortunate spontaneous-combustion planes.

## My prayer is $e=mc^2$

Meanwhile, I leave you to ponder this: ordinary people have become so pragmatic and practical that they can't even see the UFOs that were recently so plentiful.

But some scientists have opened their minds so wide that they are blessed with the kind of insights and enlightenments which in previous eras were granted

only to mystics and meditators of the highest spiritual purity.

This is clear evidence that science itself is a religion, and that intense theorising is a type of prayer.

The two theories, of time travel and infinite histories, inspire me, but I am even more inspired by the knowledge that science, as well as spiritual wisdom, proves that belief is the first layer of reality.

My meditation and prayer this Sabbath, as the Shabbat candles are kindled, will not be a plea for peace or health or mercy.

*It will be an equation — my prayer tonight is  $e=mc^2$ .*

●Confessions of a Rabbi and a Psychic by Uri Geller and Shmuley Boteach is published by Robson Books. Uri's five-CD collection of inspirational music and words can be ordered on 0500 829262. Visit [www.uri-geller.com](http://www.uri-geller.com) and email [urigel@compuserve.com](mailto:urigel@compuserve.com)

## Unsurpassed human greed

University claim the technology is within our grasp.

*Ronald Mallett, professor of theoretical physics, has published a paper which shows that if a light wave could be slowed almost to a halt and bent into a loop, the core of a time machine could be constructed around it.*

In Mallett's machine, time would run around and

EALING & ACTON GUARDIAN, London, England - May 17, 2001

# Musician Richard tunes in to space

by Teresa Keane

**AUTHOR** Richard Lawrence is a very down to earth bloke, until he talks about his cigar-shaped spaceship experience in Hull.

He said: "I was a university student when I had my first sighting. I had spent a lot of money on books about UFOs and yoga. I should have been spending it on trainers."

"I was in the middle of this huge field looking up at the spaceship when it became obscured behind a tree. When I went over to the tree, there were a new pair of trainers in exactly my size."

Pretty wild stuff, but it's impossible not to warm to the softly spoken, intelligent voice of the secretary of the Aetherius Society, in Fulham Road.

Richard, a former Henry Compton School music teacher, regularly lectures

and presents his ideas to sell-out audiences all over the world. He is regarded as Britain's leading expert on the paranormal.

His planned workshop on telepathy at the Mind Body and Spirit Festival May 27 to June 3 is in popular demand.

One of the original presenters at the show in the Royal Horticultural Halls in Victoria, he will be one of its star attractions — so to speak — at the 25th anniversary celebrations this year.

In an age when the spiritual revolution is taking hold, and an insatiable appetite for answers instantly devours anything new, Richard comes well prepared.

When most of us were completely self-obsessed at the age of 14, he was wrestling hard with philosophical musing on the meaning of life.

Richard, the new age Fulham-based guru, said: "I wanted to become a priest, but religion did not suit me." He adds hastily: "Not that I have any problem with religion."

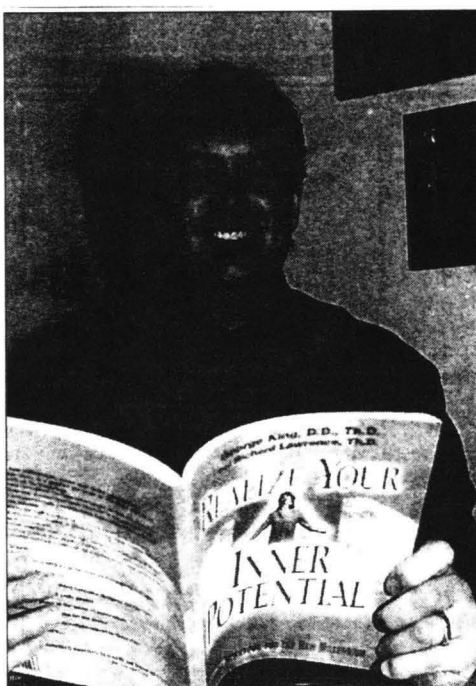
"It's just that in the 70s the search was on for all

things eastern, like yoga, or Indian philosophy. Re-incarnation and karma were also very trendy. I looked into meditation and discovered the Aetherius Society. It's not everybody's path, but it suits me."

Aetherius, derived from the Greek word ether, means one who speaks or travels across the ethers of space. The world-wide spiritual organisation, which loftily claims to be dedicated to the enlightenment of mankind, was founded by Dr George King.

The doctor awoke on the morning of May 8 1954, to be informed that he was now the voice of interplanetary parliament. Since then he claims to have hundreds of communications with extra terrestrial human being or the gods.

The society also has a health food shop at 767 Fulham Road. A sister group for anyone who wants to discover their inner potential can be contacted on 020 7731 1094. Information and ticket for Mind Body Spirit Festival are available on 020 7938 3788.



Richard Lawrence: First sighting as a student.

THE MAMMOUTH BOOK OF UFOs, by Lynn Picknett (Robinson, £7.99)

OPIATE for believers and quite probably a red rag to sceptics, this latest creation in the acclaimed Mammouth series leaves no stone unturned in seeking to answer the big question. So, is anybody out there? And if they are, what are their intentions as far as this planet and its inhabitants are concerned? Are aliens — if they exist — benign or of malignant intent?

This masterpiece by Lynn Picknett may be short on answers, but who cares when the anecdotal evidence appears so compelling. And it certainly grips the reader right from the start as the case for the existence of extraterrestrial intelligent beings starts to build up.

Here are true-life accounts from around the world, of craft sightings, alleged alien abductions and other strange phenomena — from crop circles and UFO cults, to conspiracy theories and the Men In Black.

We learn what the craft look like, how they behave and where they are seen. Then there are the aliens themselves, encounters, abductions and abductee interviews... plus the animal mutilations and the poltergeist outbreaks after UFO sightings.

A couple of points. First, are we really alone? And second, if not, what messages do UFOs hold for us? This book will undoubtedly help the reader gain a greater insight, even if a greater understanding remains tantalisingly elusive.

John Phillippott.



# BROUGHTON MOOR: Alien-spotter claims video capture UFOs 'filmed' over former arms base

By Fran Walker

A CUMBRIAN UFO-hunter claims to have video footage of two unidentified flying objects she spied over the former armaments depot at Broughton Moor.

Sharon Larkin, 28, from Harrington, has achieved minor fame through her work as the investigations and administrations director of Cumbria UFO Research and Investigations.

On Thursday, March 3, Sharon was watching the skies over Broughton Moor.

She said: "I saw a light in the distance that I thought was a star, but it started to move towards me and I realised it wasn't a star."

"It was coming from the Cockermouth direction and it was totally silent. It came right over the top of the car and I filmed it going about 100 ft above us."

## Triangular

Sharon describes the object as being large and triangular, with a red light in the centre and two white lights on either side of it.

The second filmed sighting by Sharon was at the same place again, on March 20.

"I saw an unusually large star in the sky so I started to film it, but then I realised it was too large and bright for a star," said Sharon.

"Then I noticed two planes in the sky and they were travelling towards it, but then the light disappeared into nothing. Once the planes had gone, the light came back and it headed off towards the Isle of Man."

"I zoomed in on it with my camera and saw it was a strange triangular formation of white lights, with a neon blue light in the centre - and I know aircrafts don't have blue lights on them."

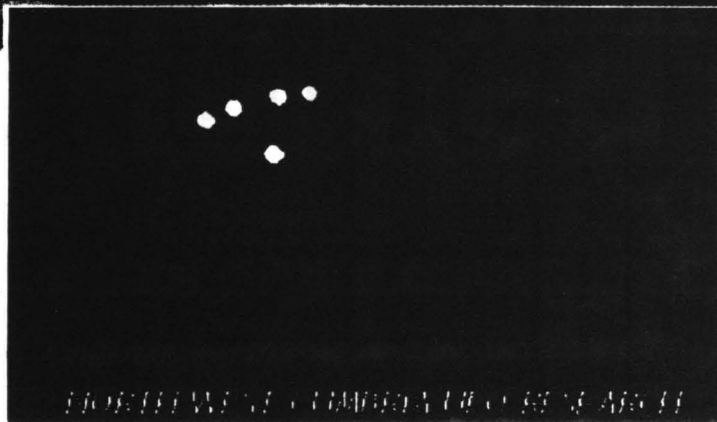
Both sets of video footage have now been sent to Germany and Derbyshire to be enhanced and analysed.

"When we see things like this we have got to be careful about what we assume is a UFO and what's just an aeroplane," said Sharon.

"I am really pleased to have caught these sightings on camera after years of tracking them."



**The truth is out there:** Sharon Larkin, 27, reflected above in front of her telescope  
**Evidence?** Sharon's photo, left, of one of the Broughton Moor UFOs



Sharon is investigating six sightings in West Cumbria so far this year - the two cases at Broughton Moor, a sighting of strange discs in the sky at Silloth and three sightings of strange

balls of light over the Solway Firth.

Although UFO activity seems to be centred on West Cumbria so far this year, Sharon Larkin believes that North and East Cumbria will see some activity at some point this year.

"We have got quite a few files on sightings in Carlisle, Penrith and Kendal. Cumbria is a hotbed of activity for UFOs - there are far more sightings in this county than anywhere else in mainland Britain."

## talking point

Have you seen a UFO in Cumbria?  
Ring our Talkback line on

**01228 612300**

LICHFIELD MERCURY, Staffordshire, England - April 5, 2001

## Pilot's UFO talk

LICHFIELD Science and Engineering Society will be holding an evening on the world of UFOs at St Mary's Centre on April 12.

Hosting the evening will be Group Captain G H Burgess, who is a senior ex-RAF officer and NATO post holder.

As the result of an incident in 1958, he became interested in UFOs and will talk about his experiences in this field.

Captain Burgess stresses that everything he says will be attributable only to him and does not represent either Government or MOD policy.

Admission will be £2 for visitors, free for students and members of the Lichfield Science and Engineering Society.

Further details from the society's meetings secretary Brian Hammond on 01543 252693.

## UFO mysteries

POLICE say they have had reports of possible UFO sightings, over Oldham and Crumpsall, last night.

Residents across the borough saw strange lights in the sky and called the police to find out the cause. The lights were like spotlights which came together before moving off at great speed.

Peter Hough, a North-West UFO expert, has appealed to anyone with evidence - pictures or film footage - to contact him. But Mr Hough, who has co-written 17 books on the unexplained, says that usually there is a terrestrial explanation for the phenomena.

"This could be the result of a laser display which, if there is thick cumulous cloud, can create a strange effect."

He said satellites, stars and planets can also be misinterpreted, but that a clear sky was needed to spot them at all.

Anyone who has evidence which they think could help Mr Hough in his research can contact him on 01942 604265.

CLOSE ENCOUNTER ◀ Safety issues raised over low flying UFO

# Resident claims the truth is out there

AN EYEWITNESS has described how a huge black triangle hung in the air above her home for a few fleeting moments just weeks after a UFO slowed traffic to a snail's pace on the Silver Jubilee Bridge.

John Rossiter, a resident of Wood Street, Widnes, claims he was sweeping his front garden at around 9.30pm on Tuesday, April 3, when he looked up into the darkening sky to see a unidentified object hover for about two seconds over fields near his home, before zooming off at high speed towards the bridge. He said the object had three red lights along each edge.

Mr Rossiter does not believe the flying machine was a product of extra terrestrial technology but has suggested it was an experimental aircraft being tested by the military.

Whatever its origin, the same strange vehicle has been putting the wind up residents in Runcorn and Widnes since New Year.

## ◀ ADRIAN SHORT

On April 5, just three days after the Mr Rossiter's sighting, the *Weekly News* focused on alleged UFO activity over the Runcorn to Widnes bridge.

A Northwich researcher claimed a triangular object identical to the one seen by Mr Rossiter was chased by RAF jets. He claimed the alleged incident was just one of a spate of sightings in the Halton area since January.

The article prompted other local witnesses to tell their tale including a Runcorn woman who had a brush with a UFO on Old Moore Lane in the 1960s.

Mr Rossiter said: 'I saw it on the Tuesday while I was brushing up my front path. It was triangular shaped but I am not saying it was a space machine. I saw it about 9.30pm so it was dark but not totally pitch black.'

'It had red lights, three on each side,

six in total and it flew away in the direction of Halton bridge

'I was slightly afraid - it seemed big like a low flying aircraft.

'If it is an experimental aircraft then I want to know what it was doing in Widnes. The Government shouldn't be testing things like that out over built-up areas. I'd say they were definitely testing something.

'It is as though someone wants people to see these things - I can't understand it.

'When I was 13-years-old I saw a UFO while playing. That was along time ago, but this latest sighting is fresh in my mind.

'People don't want these things flying around near their homes. Something should be done. They ought to be gotten rid of.

'I don't believe in little green men. I think these things are mostly what the Government is up to.'

EXPRESS &amp; STAR, Wolverhampton, England - June 9, 2001



Members of a Stourbridge-based UFO group appealing for any witnesses to a reported sighting of an unidentified flying silver disc say they have received information about the incident.

Carole Baker, of UFO Research Midlands, said the group had been contacted by a number of people who said they had seen the disc-shaped object in the skies near the M5 and West Bromwich Albion football ground at about 1pm on Tuesday, May 22.

A man originally said he had seen the disc remain stationary for around five minutes before it disappeared behind a cloud.

He was unsure how long the object had been there before he spotted it and minutes later he said he had seen high-speed military jets chasing across the skies.

Mrs Baker said anyone who had witnessed the incident could contact her on 07973 977940 or Steve Poole on 01384 356690.

The group will tonight hold its first skywatch since the foot-and-mouth outbreak began.

It will be on Hartlebury Common from 9pm onwards.

EVENING GAZETTE, West Lancashire, England - May 1, 2001

# Seminar to investigate sightings in the sky

IT's out of this world! Strange unearthly sightings in the sky over Fleetwood will be top of the agenda at a gathering of Lancashire UFO investigators this weekend.

Up to 500 delegates are expected to attend the annual conference of Lapis, the Lancashire Aerial Phenomena Investigation Society, which begins on Saturday at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston.

Highlight of the two-day

## By GAZETTE REPORTER

event will be a presentation of video footage of mysterious light formations in the night sky over Fleetwood.

The lights have been reported by scores of residents in the town on at least five separate occasions since January this year.

## Impressive

UFO Magazine editor Graham Birdsall will tell the conference that these sightings contradict recent claims made in the national press that interest in the

UFOs has waned in recent years.

Lapis co-ordinator Rob Whitehead said: 'The Fleetwood sightings will certainly be the talking point of the conference.

'They are the biggest thing we've dealt with in the 15 years since the society was formed.

'Literally hundreds of people in Fleetwood saw these lights and the video footage we have seen is very impressive.'

Tickets for the weekend's LAPIS conference are available from Janet on 01253 890601.



# WHAT'S ON AT THE WEEKEND

'Remember: look up to the skies, see something, report it'



**LOOKING FOR THE TRUTH:** Members of Hull UFO Society (from left) Tony Barker, Jason Lewis, Sean Tierney, Ian Barker, Mark Savaris and Vicki Skelton study photographs of unexplained flying objects stored on computer

## Keeping watch on the unexplained

**THE Hull UFO Society (Hufos) was formed in October 1997 and has gone from strength to strength.**

The group was formed because there was nowhere to discuss or report sightings and, as it turned out, it was very much needed.

Hufos was formed by three friends who all had a similar interest in UFOs. They realised that there was no place in the Hull area to report sightings of this strange aerial phenomena and definitely no place for people with an interest in the subject to meet and discuss this weird and wonderful topic.

So, they decided to form the city's first and only UFO club. Anyone with an interest in UFOlogy can come and listen to the latest events that are happening locally, nationally and internationally in the world of UFOlogy today.

They can also discuss their own experiences and theories with other members and make new friends in the process.

Since Hufos was formed, it has

By SEAN TIERNEY

HULL UFO SOCIETY

investigated hundreds of sightings made by the public and has featured several times in UFO Magazine which is read by readers around the world.

Hufos' team of dedicated investigators work tirelessly when a report is received and write to all the local military and civilian airbases to see if anything unusual has been reported on radar, as well as to the local police force and, of course, the Ministry of Defence.

Although we do let the public know what is happening in our region either in magazines such as UFO Magazine or our own Hull UFO Society magazine, on local radio, in the local newspapers, on the Internet or even at the lectures we give, witness confidentiality is of utmost importance.

All witness statements are confidential and a witness's personal details are never disclosed.

Hufos also works in close co-operation with several other groups

around the country to share information on the latest sightings and to correlate information to establish a broader picture of UFO sightings in Britain and the rest of the world.

With the Internet, it is now possible to share information with other UFO groups worldwide.

A typical meeting consists of a round-up of events and sightings and then members give talks on some of the many fascinating subjects within UFOlogy.

Hufos holds two skywatches each month - one local and one a little further away.

We don't go out there to "chant UFOs down!", but let people come together in a less formal way to allow people who are a bit shy at the meetings to put their opinions and theories forward.

We take flasks and sometimes hot-dogs, crisps and doughnuts which keep us going on those long cold nights.

But most of all we have a good laugh and that's what it's all about.

### Factfile

**HULL UFO Society's future meetings:** February 13, March 13, April 10, May 8, June 12, July 10, August 14, September 11, October 9, November 13 and December 11.

If anyone has Internet access the society has a couple of websites, which at the moment are in their infancy, but hopefully will expand as Hufos grows.

Find us on [www.hullufosociety.moonfruit.com](http://www.hullufosociety.moonfruit.com) and [http://beehive.thisishull.co.uk/hull\\_ufo\\_society](http://beehive.thisishull.co.uk/hull_ufo_society)

If you would like to report a sighting in total confidence contact Sean Tierney on (01482) 219887 or Jason on 07977 517778 or by e-mail on [hullufosociety@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hullufosociety@yahoo.co.uk) or by post to Sean Tierney, c/o Hull UFO Society, 62, Egton Street, New Cleveland Street, Hull HU8 7HU.

Society meetings take place at the Friends Meeting House in Percy Street, Hull, on the second Tuesday of each month. Admission is £1.30 for a normal meeting and £2.30 for a meeting with a guest speaker.

ALTON HERALD, Hants., England - June 15, 2001

## Is the truth really out there?

A SELBORNE man and his mother were amazed on Sunday when they believe they witnessed a UFO hovering in the night sky.

Ashley and Sue Martin were in the living room of their at home at White House Farm on Sunday evening when they both saw what they described

as "a bright orange light" in the sky.

Mrs Martin (54) was the first to spot the object which was completely still. She thought it might be a helicopter.

According to Ashley (25) - a sheep farmer on the Selborne Road, the light hung in the sky,

not moving and then faded and disappeared completely. He puts the time at about 830 pm.

"There was no noise, just this bright light in the sky above the woods towards Chawton," he said.

Fascinated by UFOs, Ashley had a similar experience a few months ago when he saw a

green light dropping from the sky. But he was convinced that was a meteorite. This he believes was something else entirely.

□ We would be interested to hear from anyone who may have seen the orange light or who may be able to shed any light on its source.

# HOAX Even aliens love Canada

Crop circles near the Port Mann Bridge likely have more to do with Canadian nationalists than aliens from outerspace.

Tom  
ZYTARUK  
Staff Reporter

Canada's leading crop circle expert, Chad Deetken, was called in to investigate two mysterious circles this week that are on the steep east bank of the Trans-Canada Highway just before the Port Mann Bridge.

UFO\*BC president Graham Conway, a North Delta resident, said he received calls about the circles, which are about 15 feet in diameter and "in some manner compressed" into what looks like barley on the bank. Conway and Deetken, who lives in Kitsilano, went to investigate and quickly determined it to be a hoax. The clincher? About 50 metres from the circle they found another impression stamped in the grain, of a Canadian flag.

"It's in our opinion clearly a fabrication," Conway said. "I don't know how it was done. It must have been a very difficult project. I can only conclude it was some Canada Day joke."

Deetken said he was skeptical from the outset when he heard the circles were beside a bridge and near a trailer park.

Each year, he spends a month in the UK investigating crop circles and has seen hundreds, some of

**CHAD DEETKEN/  
"The very crude  
maple leaf kind of  
did it for me."**

them up to 1,000 feet in diameter.

Surrey's circles didn't impress him much. "These were really bad," Deetken said. "They were laid down poorly. It's unfortunate hoaxers pull these stunts."

"The very crude maple leaf kind of did it for me."

SUNDAY SUN, Newcastle, England - April 28, 2001

# IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE? UFOs a vanishing breed

By MICHELLE FIDDLER

**I**T is a case fit for the X-Files . . . the mysterious disappearance of UFOs. The British Flying Saucers Bureau say we just don't have close encounters any more.

Mulder and Scully would no doubt be baffled at the lack of alien sightings, but the fall-off has led the sky-gazing organisation to hang up their telescopes.

After almost 50 years the group, which once boasted a membership of 1500 spotters, have shut their doors.

Pensioner Denis Plunkett, who founded the organisation with his dad in 1953, used to receive up to 30 UFO reports a week.

But he blames the end of the Cold War for signalling a slump in sightings.

## SIGHTINGS

Mr Plunkett, of Bristol, said: "The number of sightings always rises at times of international tension and declines in times of peace."

"There was also a lot more secrecy about new weapons, like the stealth bombers, which accounted for a lot of the sightings."

But members of the British UFO Research Association — who are continuing to investigate and research UFOs and associated phenomena — believe the truth is still out there.

A spokesman for the association said: "UFOs still exist."

"While the recent demise of the British Flying Saucer Bureau may appear to indicate that sightings and reports of UFOs are on the decline, the truth is very different."

## EXOTIC

The association will celebrate their 40th anniversary in 2002.

While they admit the number of sightings reported directly to them is not as high as in the 1970s, they say they still receive regular reports from members of the public worldwide.

Of these reports, an increasing

By MICHELLE FIDDLER

number are of more "exotic" encounters with anomalies and even entities when no UFO as such has been seen.

Their experts also believe an increase in the use of the Internet by groups could also be responsible for a decline in reports of sightings.

A spokesman added: "A significant number of reports are notified via the Internet and are often discussed in chatrooms."

"The Internet has changed the manner in which people discuss their reports. Research groups must evolve with this new form of information exchange."

## STRANGE

North UFO expert Gloria Dixon is director of investigations for the UFO association . . . as well as editing the quarterly magazine Strange Daze from her home in Wideopen, North Tyne-side.

She said: "Since 1998 there has been a general decline in the actual number of reports made to us. But what you have to remember is that there are many local UFO groups springing up all over the place."

"There is no major central point for statistics to be collated in the UK from all the groups to be evaluated."

"It is very difficult to get any kind of idea of a national number. Even the UFO desk at the Ministry of Defence are only interested if it is something that's a threat to security in airspace."

GAZETTE & HERALD, Swindon, England - May 24, 2001

## Hunting for UFOs

WE wonder if the readers have any knowledge of a series of strange incidents that befell a Winchester couple, during the 1970s, involving sightings of an unidentified object?

We are currently trying to locate any relatives of Joyce Bowles, who was living in Quarry Bank, Winchester, Hampshire, and involved, along with her companion, Edwin Pratt, in a number of strange UFO experiences that, at the time, attracted the attention of the tabloid press.

We know Mrs Bowles reported seeing apparitions both at the house where she lived, and also at her place of work — Winchester Railway Station — which were apparently seen by others and that a Professor John Taylor, who was then a

lecturer at King's College, London, in mathematics and physics visited the house and witnessed for himself, so it is said, paranormal phenomena.

Mrs Bowles, who was accompanied by a Mrs Anne Stickland on one occasion when an unidentified object was seen, was interviewed by investigators from the Wiltshire area, Barry and Judy Gooding and John and Maureen Rowston, whom we would also like to be put in touch with. Has any reader any information on the whereabouts of the above-named persons please?

JOHN HANSON (Ex-police officer, retired)  
and DAWN HOLLOWAY  
(Researcher)  
Consultants for FSR PO  
Box 6371  
Birmingham, B48 7RW  
(07870) 359210



# Alien visitors in deepest Perthshire!

**W**HEN HE read the item about the young girl who claimed to have been taken aboard a UFO in a wood near Meigle during the 1970s, Mr Donald Paton of Perth was intrigued.

"It brings to mind the experience of a Perthshire journalist and his wife who were fishing a Perthshire river (I think the Earn) in the autumn of 1974," he writes. "Just as it was growing dark, a glowing orange coloured object which appeared to be oval or round in shape and with what looked like fireworks emanating from it hovered over a fringe of trees, about 200 yards from where they were fishing."

**BY**  
*Craigie*

"It dipped down below the trees out of sight, then rose, hovering again and descended once more. At the same time there were popping and cracking sounds like small arms fire but they were convinced that they were not noises made by any rifle, pistol or shotgun. The first impression was that it might have been a helicopter engaged in a military exercise but quickly the man realised that it was not."

"The couple were quite disturbed and, on returning home, reported the matter to the authorities but were informed that there had not been any special activity in the area that evening."

standing. Could the sounds the couple thought they had heard been the cracking of trees as the object descended?

"It remains a mystery but about a week after the incident a family reported sighting a similar object on the outskirts of Glasgow and their description was identical."

"There is also an account in Ron Halliday's book *Scotland's X-Files* of a Blairgowrie couple who claim to have seen a 'large, bulbous-shaped object with a long tail' hovering above their house in April 1984. 'Beneath the tail section, a light illuminated five V-shaped ports and a lip or orange flange surrounded the circular area.' The object was judged to be about 150 feet in length and was floating about 80 feet above the ground. The UFO, or whatever it was, then disappeared at great speed but, as in the other incident, there has been no official explanation of what it could have been."

## Remains a mystery

Continues Mr Paton: "Later, accompanied by his son-in-law, the man investigated the woodland spot. They found a clearing where some time trees had been felled with a saw. They also found trees that had been broken off at the edge of the clearing—rather as if they had been blown down in a gale—but thought this unlikely as they were in the centre of a wood and the other trees were still

SCOTTISH X-Files  
BY RON HALLIDAY  
Strange encounters that won't go away  
FOR most people an encounter with a UFO is a one-off event – but some have had repeated contact.  
Derek Lauder, of Aultbea in Ross-shire, has experienced UFO and other strange encounters all over Scotland. The first he can remember was seeing an angel at his bedroom window as a child.  
After that, the encounters came thick and fast.  
Derek said: "I lived in the village of Roslin for seven years. And from my wooden cabin in the grounds of the remains of Roslin Castle, I saw many UFOs.  
"I saw a one being chased by two jet aircraft and another slow-moving, multi-coloured UFO.  
"Then there was the UFO which looked like one object when you saw it with the naked eye, but when I watched it through my telescope was clearly five separate objects.  
"On another occasion I saw a beam of intense white light shoot down on to Roslin Castle from an unseen source as I was walking back to my cabin. I decided to try signalling to the UFOs so I flashed my torch and someone flashed back."  
In 1979, Derek saw a black lens-shaped UFO with two bright white lights like car headlights which rose up next to the castle.  
Derek's experiences at Roslin

## SCOTTISH X-Files

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Derek's experiences at Roslin

## UFO nicknamed Big Bertha because of the noise it made

supported the views of those who believe the chapel there is a mystic centre of the world and may have been a landing site of ancient astronauts. The area is full of strange carvings.

But Derek's own experiences are of a more extensive nature. "I moved to Hoprig Mains farm in East Lothian and once again the UFOs were there. And they were still flashing back to my torchlight."

## Confessions of a UFO spotter: We don't want a war in space

THEY GOT to their feet one at a time, taking their turn at the microphone and unburdening themselves of their stories. They then sat down to rapturous applause. Confession is never easy. When you are confessing to strangers that you believe you have witnessed UFOs, it is even more difficult.

Yesterday 20 witnesses from the American military, intelligence services, and scientific establishments gave their testimony to start a campaign which they hope will force the government to investigate the UFO phenomenon. They want Congress to hold open hearings and to halt the development of space-based weapons – "to prohibit acts of war against extra-terrestrial civilisations".

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE  
in Washington

The former naval commander Graham Bethune was typical of many giving evidence at a press launch in Washington. He said he was piloting a plane between Iceland and Newfoundland on 10 February 1951 when he witnessed a series of unexplained lights, which rapidly turned into a halo-shaped vessel that flew alongside him.

"The instruments in the cockpit... we had four or five failures. We had 31 people on board and a psychiatrist – we all witnessed it," he said, before adding to raucous applause: "I will testify under oath before Congress that everything I have said is true."

The Disclosure Project, which was set up in 1993 and is co-ordinating the campaign, said the witnesses were people in senior positions with top-secret clearance and who had nothing to gain from inventing stories. The group also wants Congress to hold hearings about technology the UFOs might be using, as a way of dealing with the US's energy crisis.

"A number of members of Congress have told us privately that this is the way it has to happen – for people to take the initiative," said a spokeswoman. "These [witnesses] are highly credible. They used to be trusted with nuclear weapons. Why would they not be trusted to believe what they saw with their own eyes."

"I particularly remember the time I saw two orange-coloured objects. One was brighter than the other. I watched as the smaller object sped away from the larger one. They were over Fife heading south."

Now living in Aultbea, Derek is still seeing UFOs.

He added: "I have many good sightings in this area and 'someone' is still replying to my torchlight."

Only Joyce Byers from Moffat can match such UFO multi-sightings. In the 70s she had hundreds.

Joyce regularly saw a large spacecraft which she nicknamed Big Bertha because of the rumbling noise it made. Another UFO was shaped like an egg timer.

As with Derek, Joyce was convinced that on at least one occasion she had seen an aircraft following a UFO.

The response of the UFO was aggressive, flying directly at the plane and chasing it away.

DAILY RECORD, Glasgow, Scotland - June 6, 2001

## Odds-on aliens

A RECORD photographer's close encounter with a UFO has got the bookies worried.

As a result of our snap of a flying saucer over Glasgow, William Hill have halved the odds on visitors from another planet.

They will pay out when the Prime Minister confirms contact with alien life forms. He must have been tempted after his run-ins with William Hague and Ann Widdecombe.

Now we had better get ready for the real thing – the arrival of ET and his pals.

After all, the bookies – and Record photographs – are never wrong.

# AH SO, UFO

## TV crew from Japan claim they have proof that aliens are ready to invade Scotland

**STAND by for an alien invasion of Scotland - the Japanese have spotted UFOs at a hotel in Gullane.**

After years of telling the nation that little green men are about to land, UFO-watchers are convinced they finally have the proof they need to stop us all laughing.

But the most stunning discovery in the history of mankind was not made by NASA, or the FBI, or even Agents Mulder and Scully.

The evidence comes from a Japanese TV crew who stuck a camera on a hotel roof and left it there for a year.

The remote camera kept capturing strange balls of light hovering in the skies above Gullane's Templar Lodge Hotel.

### Excited

Who knows what is attracting these unearthly visitors to this sleepy and scenic corner of East Lothian.

Maybe the Templar Lodge does great bar lunches, or they fancied a quiet game of golf or a dip at the village's famous beach.

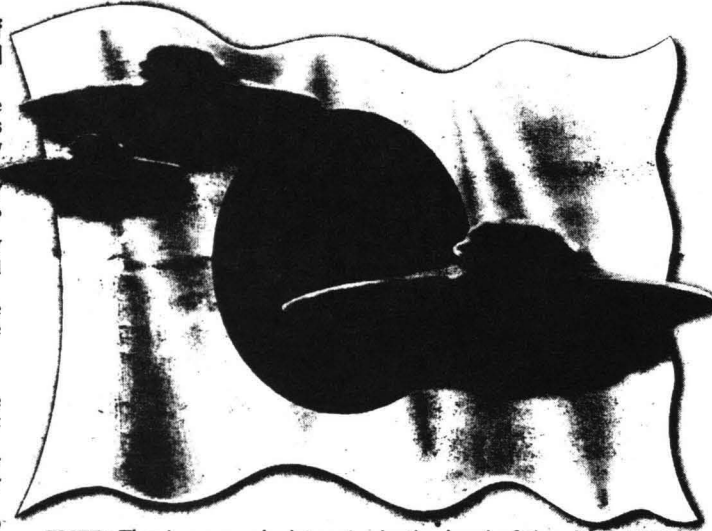
Whatever it is, they're here, according to UFO expert Ron Halliday, who has spent years trying to persuade us we're not alone.

Now, finally, he is convinced his days of being branded a crank are over.

He said: "Sceptics cannot continue to scoff after this. The Japanese film will silence many critics."

"It may be proof that aliens are targeting Scotland for a landing."

"Could these objects be reconnaissance crews from another planet? The prospects are mind-boggling. With this hard evidence, scientists and sky-



**FLIER:** The Japanese insist we're in the land of the rising UFOs

### RECORD REPORTER

watchers will take such sightings far more seriously in future."

The Japanese filmed several objects, all quite distinct, in Gullane, the USA and Mexico for a UFO documentary.

They're so excited that they will only release the pictures at a London premiere.

But to make sure we're all ready to welcome our guests when they arrive,

we've created an artist's impression of what the spacecraft might look like.

Ron chairs the Scottish Earth Mysteries organisation, and often gets reports of sightings from the "Bermuda Triangle" between Edinburgh, Stirling and East Kilbride.

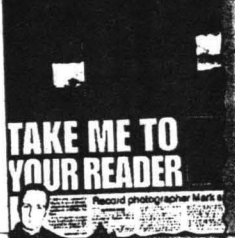
He says one video of the skies over East Kilbride showed a Goblin-like creature in what looked like a rubber suit, moving around a bright light just above the ground.

Another featured an odd-looking light with an "entity" stepping out of it.

Locals in Bonnybridge, Stirlingshire, have described dozens of UFO sightings in the last 10 years.

Ron insisted: "The reports we receive cannot all be imaginative hoaxes. The people who come to us are far too serious and sensible to be making up stories just for the publicity."

Templar Lodge manager Stephen Prior said: "I'm a sceptic about these things, but we'll see."



## THEY ARE NOT ALONE

EAST Lothian is not the only Scottish location where alien-type crafts have been spotted.

Only last month we

rapher Mark Runnacles caught a UFO on film over Glasgow at dawn.

His pictures clearly showed a glowing saucer-shaped object in the sky.

DAILY RECORD, Glasgow, Scotland - June 5, 2001

## UFO alert as readers back our snapper

**UFO FEVER** swept Scotland yesterday in the wake of the amazing pictures captured by a Record photographer.

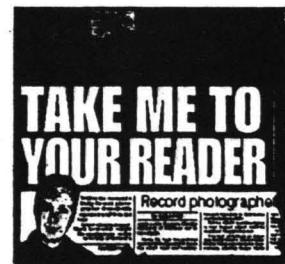
Mark Runnacles' images of a flying saucer-shaped object in the skies above Glasgow sparked a flood of calls to the Record reporting similar sightings.

Martin Fraser, of Maryhill in the city, saw a UFO in the same place six days before Mark. He was watching meteors over the Campsie at 4.30am.

He said: "What appeared to be a star grew to about 25 times its original size."

"The flash of light was incredibly bright and I know for sure it wasn't an aeroplane."

George Young, of Motherwell,



### AMAZING: Our story

saw the objects as he scanned the skies early on Saturday morning.

He said: "I was looking out towards Hamilton when I saw what I can only describe as a glowing beach ball in the sky."

"This was not a plane. It was an awesome sight and I watched it for about five minutes before it disappeared."

Raymond Adams, 36, of Carnwadric, Glasgow, was alerted around the same time when his six-year-old son Ross began shouting about coloured lights in the sky.

He said: "I saw a thin streak of light in the direction of the Campsies. It was reddish white in colour and was there one minute and gone the next."

Jack Young, 53, of Kilmarnock, and Elizabeth McGleish, 42, of Springboig, Glasgow, also reported sightings.

The Ministry of Defence are investigating the pictures taken by our photographer.

# Search on for UFO witnesses

By Melina Cannon  
melc@nqmds.co.uk

INFORMATION is being sought from a former caretaker and pupils at a Redditch school about mysterious lights in the sky nearly 30 years ago.

John Hanson and Dawn Holloway, who are compiling material for a book entitled *UFOs! Chronicle of a Phenomenon*, have also renewed a previous appeal to Pc William Hunt, who was involved in seeing similar

sights over Ullenhall Lane in 1972.

The appeals follow a plea in the *Redditch Advertiser* earlier this year for witnesses to the Ullenhall sighting, which resulted in all the parties coming forward bar Pc Hunt.

Mr Hanson said: "As a result of the publicity, we managed to track down all of the witnesses, apart from retired Pc William Hunt, who is living in the Warwickshire area but whose present whereabouts are unknown."

"A similar phenomenon was seen during Christmas 1973 over the Redditch area by a Mr CT Davis, who was then a school caretaker,

which was explained away a few days later as being an experimental aircraft!"

"Has any reader any information regarding either Mr Davis, ex-Pc Hunt or any of the schoolchildren who witnessed the phenomenon during the Christmas period?"

Mr Hanson said the caretaker was on night patrol on another occasion when he saw a light shooting across the sky which went into the moon's glare where it stayed for at least 30 seconds.

This was followed by another light from a different direction and as this started to disappear the first light shot out of the moon's glare and also disap-

peared.

"I would hazard a guess that it was at Abbey High School as I think the school would fall on an energy line coming from Bordesley, which ties in with our hypothesis," he said.

Mr Hanson previously explained about 90 per cent of sightings from his and Miss Holloway's research happen around Roman roads because of the way the energy lines lie.

Anyone with information can call John Hanson on 07870 359210 or write to PO Box 6371, Rednal, Birmingham B48 7RW.





# PONDERING THE HUM

Residents of Kokomo, Ind., report hearing a vibration similar to the infamous 'Taos hum'; no one knows what's causing this one, either

By TOM SHARPE  
For The New Mexican

A mysterious hum, similar to one reported in Taos nine years ago, has turned up recently in Kokomo, Ind., where dozens of people say it is making them sick.

Like the Taos hum, the Kokomo one has produced a cluster of people who say they are bothered by unexplained, low-frequency vibrations.

People elsewhere in the United States and in other industrialized countries have complained about similar vibrations.

"Yesterday, it had me completely knocked out," Winona Whitted of Santa Fe

said on July 16. "All I could do is just (lie) there in a microwave coma."

Like many other hum hearers, Whitted participates in Internet discussions where theories about the source of such hums range from UFOs, military-industrial plots, secret experiments, electric-power plants and cellular telephones to natural phenomena, hysterical paranoia, drug use, hypochondria and differences in how we perceive sound.

In June, the Kokomo Tribune ran a five-part series plus an editorial based on interviews with about 40 locals who said they began



Megan Bowers/For The New Mexican

Sara Allen, an engineer with KTAO radio in Taos, says she continues to hear the Taos hum but suffers no severe symptoms and no longer tries to do anything about it.

*Publicity about the hum died out, and it became a joke around Taos. A California rock band took the name — the Taos Hum — and the Range Cafe in Bernalillo named a dessert for the phenomenon.*

hearing or feeling "a low-pitched droning" about two years ago.

Steve Kozarovich, a Tribune assistant editor whose wife wrote the series, said that since publication, others have called to say they too hear a low-pitched sound.

"Almost immediately after the noise began, nearly every resident reported having chronic and severe headaches, were awakened several times at night and were fatigued," wrote Lisa Hurt Kozarovich, a freelancer. "About 30 residents said they were also nauseated and had other symptoms — the most common being pressure or ringing in their ears, chronic joint pain, dizziness, depression and diarrhea."

One of those interviewed for the article was Kathie Sickles of Greentown, Ind., a city of 45,000 located 10 miles east of Kokomo, who said she began feeling a low vibration in late 1999.

"When the paperwork (documenting the vibration) was first brought to me and I read it, I knew immediately what had plagued my house," she said in a recent interview. "You can feel it here. We have bedrooms that vibrate. We have people with patios that vibrate by the back door."

Sickles has formed a group called Our Environment to investigate what she believes is an environmental condition from heavy industrialization in north-central Indiana.

"Some people think they (people troubled by the vibration) are crazy," she said.

The Kokomo hum, which Sickles said has been measured at 10 to 30 hertz (or cycles per second), appears to cause maladies worse than the sleep deprivation and irritability reported in New Mexico almost a decade ago.

In the summer of 1992, a half dozen Taoseños said a low-pitched buzz was keeping them awake at night. Bob and Catanya Saltzman, who lived south of Taos, hired an acoustical engineer who reported a tone of 17 hertz with a harmonic rising to 70

hertz near the area. The low range of human hearing is 20 to 30 hertz.

Bill Richardson, a Democratic U.S. congressman for Northern New Mexico at the time, stirred up speculation in early 1993 when he said the hum could be defense related. Two months later, U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., said the Pentagon had assured him there was no defense involvement.

Scientists and engineers organized by the University of New Mexico set up acoustical, seismic and electro-magnetic instruments near the Saltzmans' home in May 1993. But the report issued that August failed to pinpoint any source or isolate the exact vibration, which was said to be between 30 and 80 hertz.

The study estimated that two percent of Taos County's population heard the vibration.

The Taos hum became an instant news story, drawing such diverse media as the Wall Street Journal and the cable-TV show Sightings. Nevertheless, publicity about the hum died out, and it became a joke around Taos. A California rock band took the name — the Taos Hum — and the Range Cafe in Bernalillo named a dessert for the phenomenon.

Taos residents who first complained of a hum have left the area or simply stopped trying to solve the mystery.

Bob Saltzman, an art photographer, and his wife, Catanya, a professional dancer, moved the next year to Baja California where, they said, they did not hear a hum.

Another couple, Paul Loumena and Alexandra Lorraine, sold their Laughing Horse Inn in Taos and also

moved away.

Taos-hum hearer Sara Allen, an engineer with KTAO radio in Taos, says she continues to hear it but suffers no severe symptoms and no longer tries to do anything about it.

"We didn't get any real satisfaction or any real interest," Allen said. "I have my own theories about it that I've expounded on many times, and I still believe them. I think it affects people who don't sense it, too. They're just lucky."

She believes the hum is from military-communication signals.

Shatzie Hubbell, who lived on Canyon Road in Santa Fe, where, she said, she was bothered by a vibration, moved to a ranch near Fort Worth, Texas. There, she added, she no longer sensed it. Hubbell has posted a map on a Seattle-based Web site (eskimo.com) showing the locations of 368 hum hearers, grouped generally on the East and West Coasts, the Rocky Mountains and upper Midwest.

Low-frequency sounds also have been reported in other parts of the world, including one case in the early 1960s and again in the late 1980s in southern England, as well as in Sweden, South Africa and Australia.

That's no comfort for those who live with the sound.

"It's horrible. It's killing me," said Whitted, who lives on Airport Road in Santa Fe. "I went to see my doctor

about a year ago, and I told him that I just couldn't make it any longer. I'm just in so much pain. And he gave me a prescription for an antidepressant, not for its antidepressant qualities, but because it helps with what they call undefined pain and a lack of sleep."

David Deming, an associate professor of geology at the University of Oklahoma, said he believes the hum is caused by ELF, or extra-low-frequency radio signals, used for communications between submarines and aircraft.

The signals use antennae buried in the upper peninsula of Michigan and in Wisconsin, though Deming said its headquarters are at Tinker Air Force Base near Oklahoma City, about 20 miles from Norman.

Deming said when he began sensing the low-frequency vibrations in 1994, he thought it was something in his neighborhood. But, after he and his wife moved to a new house a few miles from Norman, both began hearing it. He said it often is at its worst late at night, just before he hears the engine sounds of an airplane overhead.

After the Norman Transcript published an article about their experiences, Deming said, they heard from dozens of other people bothered by the same thing.

"I'm normally not a person who is worried about that sort of thing," he said.

"I live underneath power lines. I use a cell phone all the time. But at times when it's most intense and painful, what scares me is the ignorance. We don't know what causes it and what the effects are."

But Deming said he had stopped participating in the Internet discussion groups because "it attracts the misinformation people — the kooks."

## '75 Evidence Of Mars Life Overlooked, Scientist Says

LOS ANGELES, July 28 (Reuters) — Did NASA discover evidence of life on Mars and then misplace it for almost 25 years?

A neurobiologist at the University of Southern California argues that is what happened and that data from the 1975 Viking probes suggest the existence of Martian microbes.

The scientist, Dr. Joseph Miller, plans to present his findings on Sunday at a conference in San Diego. His study has not yet been reviewed by biologists in the field.

In his report, Dr. Miller says that a re-examination of NASA records shows a surprising pattern: Gas released by the Martian soil followed the same kind of rhythms that organisms on Earth, from humans to fruit flies, follow.

"I think, basically, that it's bugs," said Dr. Miller, a neurobiologist who studies the circadian rhythms that regulate biological activity.

NASA launched two Viking spacecraft in 1975, and they took almost a year to reach the Martian atmosphere. Both sent probes to the surface to conduct a series of experiments, several designed to look for evidence of life.

In one test, a robotic arm scooped up soil samples, which were dropped into a dish along with a radioactive carbohydrate solution. Scientists reasoned that any organisms in the Martian soil would consume the nutrients and release radioactive carbon as a gas.

Viking found evidence that the Martian soil generated gas, but scientists concluded that it was the product of a chemical reaction, not evidence of life, Dr. Miller said.

That closed the book on the Viking experiments until 1996, when Dr. Miller, who had worked with NASA in the early 1980's studying the sleep cycles of monkeys in space, asked the agency to review the record of the experiment.

After Dr. Miller examined the data, on long-neglected computer tapes, he found the gas emissions from the soil sample fell into a cycle of precisely 24.66 hours, the length of the Martian day.

That pattern of heightened activity in the day and inactivity at night is akin to the circadian rhythm that simple organisms like bread molds exhibit, Dr. Miller said.

## Big prints seen as proof of Bigfoot

SEAWANUCK, ONT. • Footprints indicating a creature with a two-metre stride have some Northern Ontario residents speculating the elusive Bigfoot may have moved in with the region's black bears and howling wolves.

Footprints measuring 38 centimetres long and 12 centimetres wide have been spotted in this far-flung aboriginal community on the south shore of Hudson's Bay, and the chief of the Wemusk First Nation has only one explanation: Bigfoot, the mythical ape-like beast also known as Sasquatch.

"It's definitely not a bear," Abraham Hunter said firmly. "I looked at them. They were six feet apart, walking."

Ministry of Natural Resources official Brett Kelly admitted no one could explain what caused the tracks.

The Canadian Press

CR: G. Conway

# Searching for Sasquatch

The facts and legends surrounding North America's most elusive creature

A special report by Sarah A. Zimmerman and Craig Battle

## Great apes in our woods?

By SARAH A. ZIMMERMAN

DR. JOHN Bindernagel wants to make the world safe for reporting Sasquatch sightings.

Bindernagel holds a Ph.D. in wildlife biology and has over thirty years of field experience researching wildlife behaviour.

As a man of science he knows all too well the ridicule that comes with associating oneself with Sasquatch research.

While in a wildlife management class at the University of Guelph in 1964 Bindernagel brought up a recent and widely reported Sasquatch sighting and wondered if it was worth looking in to.

"My colleagues laughed, they made fun of me," he recalls. "They wouldn't even talk about it."

He says that many people who have seen the animal are too afraid of ridicule to come forward publicly with their reports.

When Bindernagel started investigating reports of Sasquatch sightings in 1975 he was met with considerable resistance from the scientific community.

"Scientists are not the curious people we like to think they are," he says. "They are not particularly welcome to things that are radically different or don't fit their theory."

In the early days of his research Bindernagel himself was unsure whether the animals actually exist-

ed but thought it was a valid line of inquiry nonetheless.

Reports have come in from throughout northern B.C. of possible Sasquatch dens, feces, shrieks, rock-throwing, and footprints.

Wildlife biologists routinely use tracks to confirm the presence of animals like bears, wolves and coyotes, so it's not such a stretch to use footprints to confirm the existence of Sasquatch, says Bindernagel.

And so far, footprints provide the bulk of physical evidence that Sasquatch exist.

Plaster casts of extremely large feet ranging in size from 14-18 inches have been made from all over the world and are said to belong to the elusive creatures.

In fact some of the earliest and best footprints were found in the Skeena Valley in 1976.

The tracks - about a dozen of them 15.5 inches long and 6.5 inches wide - were found by some children near a slough in the Terrace area. According to researchers they had a walking stride of just over seven feet.

A Sasquatch researcher named Bob Titmus lived in the area at the time and made plaster casts from the footprints that were left in the hard clay.

Dr. Bindernagel now has a copy of those casts.

Either there is a world-wide conspiracy of people



BOB TITMUS poses with a sample of footprints cast in plaster. Titmus lived in New Hazelton in 1976 when 15-inch footprints were found near Terrace.

From *The Sasquatch File* by John Green, 1973.

creating the tracks as a hoax or something very human-like is out there leaving those tracks. And Bindernagel feels that whatever is out there is deserving of study.

"Why the denial? Why the skepticism?" he asks.

Bindernagel himself made plaster casts from Vancouver Island in 1988 of feet 18 inches long.

His own discovery along with hundreds of reports he's received over the years have led him to believe the creatures do exist.

"I have heard enough, I no longer have any doubt myself," he says.

And he has developed a theory that the Sasquatch are actually large upright apes living in the woods.

"This thing doesn't just look like a great ape," says Bindernagel. "It is one."

Just this year he received a report from a man who saw something unusual on a tributary of the Skeena River.

The man assumed it was a very big human being wearing a hooded sweatshirt because it had a pointed head.

But Bindernagel says that the pointed head could indeed have been a sign that this was no human.

"There seems to be a sagittal crest in the males," he said.

A sagittal crest forms where the skull meets in the middle forming a pointed ridge, much like a

male gorilla. Bindernagel says that detail was enough to make him think it may have indeed been a Sasquatch sighting.

With numerous reports of Sasquatch sightings coming from the northwest Bindernagel says they could well live in our neck of the woods.

Until the body of one of the animals is found or until more physical evidence is recorded, the Sasquatch remains for many a thing of myth.

"We're lacking sufficient evidence," he said.

Bindernagel lives on Vancouver Island and continues to investigate Sasquatch behaviour, anatomy, how they spend the winters and their responses to human presence.

## New Aiyansh man spots Sasquatch

*The following is an account of a Sasquatch sighting in New Aiyansh in the fall of 2000. The name of the man who told the story has been withheld at his request.*

"MARK MILLER" is not a man who ever believed in Sasquatch. A skeptic by nature he never believed in anything for which there is no proof.

The stories he heard about Sasquatch when he was growing up in New Aiyansh were told as cautionary tales to keep children from wandering into the forest unattended.

But late last fall the unbeliever saw something that simply didn't fit into

any category of animal he'd ever seen.

"I'm not one of those kind of people," he says of enthusiasts who try to seek out the Sasquatch. "The evidence has to be pretty damn strong for me to believe, but I just couldn't pass this off as being anything else."

At eight o'clock in the morning - in broad daylight - Mark was getting ready for work.

As he looked out his back window towards a forested area that borders his and his neighbours property, Miller saw a man walking toward his house.

The first thing Miller recalls is that the man was

wearing a shirt the same dark colour as his pants. There happened to be road construction underway just beyond his property and he assumed that it was one of the workers dressed in overalls.

The man was average height, maybe 5'5", walking upright just like a normal person would.

But when the man got closer, 200 feet from Miller's window, he realised that what he saw was neither human or animal.

The creature came into the clearing between his house and his neighbour's and reached out for a branch on one of the trees.

"I just thought it was a person. Its arm went down

to the branch and pulled the branch down and I saw that his arm was hairy," he said. "I saw the hair very clearly it was really kind of freaky."

The hair was dark and thick except under its armpits and along the side of its body where it was lighter and more sparse.

Its chest looked like that of a gorilla though he says the rest of the creature appeared remarkably human.

Its body resembled that of a fit, young body builder with a V shaped torso, thick neck, defined muscles, broad shoulders, thin hips and even nipples on its chest.

"You really got the

sense that it was a human creature," he says.

It crouched down onto its haunches like a back-catcher while it looked toward Miller's neighbour's property. It put its fist down on the ground to steady itself as Mark watched transfixed.

"I didn't even want to accept what I had seen," he says.

After about six seconds the creature turned to face the window where Miller was watching it. It froze for a split second, turned towards the wooded area and disappeared into the woods.

"It was as scared as I was," says Miller.

Being a skeptic, Miller

didn't want to accept that what he had seen could have been a Sasquatch. He tried in vain to get the image of the creature out of his head.

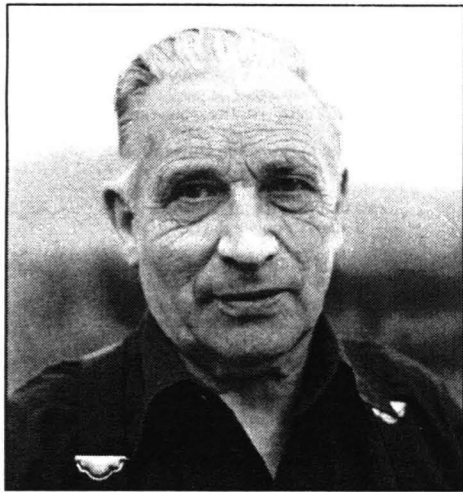
An experienced hunter and outdoorsman Miller racked his brain trying to convince himself he had seen some sort of an animal. But as time went on there was no denying that what he had seen was so human-like that it had to be a Sasquatch.

After word spread that Miller had seen this creature elders told him that it was a blessing, but Miller's not so sure.

"Some people say 'I'd love to see that,' but when you do see it you wish you hadn't," he said. "I'm still kind of traumatized by it."

(continued on page 19)





LARRY SOMMERFIELD has been collecting Sasquatch reports from the Terrace area since the 1970s.

## Local man compiles Sasquatch lore

By CRAIG BATTLE

WHAT could possibly possess a man to devote years worth of free time to researching and relating Sasquatch sightings?

Well, as local Sasquatch enthusiast Larry Sommerfield says it, the answer may surprise you.

"Simply an interest in what goes on around us," he says.

Sommerfield began his interest in Sasquatch in the late 1960s, upon seeing two large plaster cast footprints in the window of a local veterinarian clinic.

The veterinarian, Dr. Proctor, was also interested in the Sasquatch and hoped the display would bring in more information. And it worked, for Sommerfield at least.

Over the past 30 years Sommerfield has kept his eyes and ears open to Sasquatch stories from people all over the northwest and compiled the information in a detailed report.

"Even if the stories are fantastic I don't dismiss them," he said.

"I write them down exactly as I heard them. I don't change anything. This is research."

Here, in chronological order, is a small sample of the sightings collected - some names and locations have been withheld - as told by Sommerfield himself.

### ■ Lorne Creek, 1974

"Jim," a man who lived across the Skeena River from Lorne Creek, was used to seeing moose in the area, but this time he had seen something different in the woods - a moving patch of brown.

Curious as to what it may be, he sneaked closer. It appeared to be a brown-coloured bear that had its back towards him and was standing up on its hind legs, eating Saskatoon berries and using its front paws like hands.

Jim wanted to stay hidden, and the last cover was 50 feet from the creature. From this point he realised the paws were hands and this was not a bear, but some kind of hair-covered humanoid a little over six feet tall. Also it had a very strong odor that reminded him of camel smell when he once worked in the circus.

After about 10 minutes the creature sensed that something was near it. It turned sideways, spotted Jim and trotted off. Jim believes the creature was female, as it had breasts.

### ■ Williams Creek, 1980

Two men were driving to Kitimat one morning. Coming down the airport hill they could see a ground fog over the Williams Creek flats.

As the car came around a slight bend at the bottom of the hill they could see arms waving in the fog ahead of them. Thinking that someone had gone off the road they prepared to stop.

When the car was still several car lengths away from the figure, the passenger saw that it was not human. It was a very tall hair-covered, human-like creature standing in the water on the edge of the grade.



KWAKIUTL BUKWAS, 1914

ABORIGINAL people from throughout North America have stories about Sasquatch. Pictured above is an image of a Kwakiutl Bukwas. The Tsimshian call them Bowis. Though some anthropologists assert the stories about Sasquatch are legends, many aboriginal groups feel the creatures are living, breathing beings. Photo from the Dr. William Saxe Wihr collection, Portland Community College.

## Tsimshian call it Bowis

By SARAH A. ZIMMERMAN

THE HAIDA call it Gogit, the Kwakiutl call it Bukwas but a local Tsimshian man recalls elders calling the mysterious Sasquatch-like creature Bowis.

"I used to sit amongst elders and would listen to them talk about it," says Orlando "Bossy" Bolton.

The Bowis was said to look like a small gorilla that lived in the bush. It was known to steal food, throw rocks and whoop or shriek at night.

Though Bolton says the animals haven't been seen in some 70 years or so, the stories remain fresh in his mind.

The creature was most frequently seen stealing food from gardens and sheds.

"In those days they had dried meat and dried fish and dried clams, whatever they liked that's what they used to take," he said.

The most common sightings says Bolton were along the coast where clams are plentiful.

Though many anthropologists describe native stories about Sasquatch-like creatures as being part of superstition Bossy says the Bowis are very much living, breathing creatures and not the things of myth.

"This was a real thing just like you talking to me," said Bolton. "The elders said they walked around just like humans."

Like so many other reported sightings of the mysterious creatures, Bolton vividly recalls the elders' description of the animals.

They describe the Bowis as having long brown hair, a rank smell, flat faces and human-like footprints.

"I used to figure they were small monkeys," said Bolton. "But my grandmother said no, they were bigger ones, about four or five feet," he said.

Bolton says the animals would holler out loud with their heads tilted back with their hand pressed to their throats. They reportedly could never stand still and were constantly in motion.

"That's why they call someone who is crazy is a Bowis," said Bolton.

## Museum of the Unexplained in Missouri

By EARL STRESAK  
Branson Daily News

Bob White's main interest is unidentified flying objects. But if it goes bump in the night or makes a person stare in disbelief, he's probably interested in it.

White is the curator of Museum of the Unexplained, in Reeds Spring, Mo.

The museum has walls lined with photos of UFO sightings from around the world.

"We stay in contact with a lot of other people known around the world to be UFO experts," said White, 70.

"There is just more evidence that keeps coming out about UFOs all the time," he said. "Our mission is to inform and educate the public on unexplained phenomenon. This is a place where people can come and share their experiences with us."

Admission to the museum is free, although White sells novelties. But basically, White has

poured his own money into the place. He has applied to the state for nonprofit corporation status.

White and his wife are retired singers and entertainers. He's worked in local shows, including Shepherd of the Hills. He enjoyed a career as an entertainer in television and movies, until his life took another trajectory.

A nighttime drive through a remote area of Colorado turned into an odyssey adventure for White. He and a friend were driving between Grand Junction, Colo., and Cisco, Utah. The friend was driving and spotted a strange light far ahead on the remote road, White said.

She woke up White who thought it was just a railroad light.

"I looked up at it again," White said. "You've seen the sun when it goes down - well, that's about what it looked like. I compared it to a full harvest moon. As we got closer, this

thing got larger. It was as big as a barn. It was so bright, we needed to shield our eyes."

When they were within a couple of blocks of the object, White reached over and turned off the car lights and ignition. They stopped, and White got out to stare up at the object. When his companion turned the headlights back on, the object shot off into the sky. As it did, a piece of something broke off and fell to the ground. Whatever it was glowed hot and crashed to earth, he said, plowing a groove into the desert ground.

When he located the object, White said, it was about as large as a small deer horn, and it was still glowing hot. He used an old glove to pick up the object, and the glove didn't burn.

White had the piece analyzed five times at academic laboratories. Results came back mixed. The closest the labs came to its composition was that of an aluminum casting.

When the car came to a stop they were alongside the creature. The creature's head was level with the occupants in the car and about five feet away.

After a brief moment the creature's eyes and mouth opened wide in terror. It threw its head back and covered its face with its arms, as if warding off a blow by a club. The creature then turned around and dashed into the swamp, leaving two stunned men in the car.

### ■ Terrace, 1997

A local landfill worker returned to the dump at about 2 a.m. to pick up a set of keys left in a piece of equipment.

As he was walking past the area where the last dumping was he saw a figure crouching amongst the garbage. He called out with a "Hello there, what are

you doing in the dump at this time of the night?"

The figure stood up and the worker, who was about 100 feet away, was amazed at its huge height and size. It stood at over 10 feet tall.

The creature turned and looked at the worker, then just walked out to the bush at the rear of the landfill, looking back several times to see if it was being followed.

When it was a safe distance away the worker went to the spot where it was first seen. The footprints were five feet apart, farther than the worker could spread his legs. Also it walked through two feet of snow as easily as a human could walk through ankle-deep snow.

Two days later a similar sighting was made in Usk, about 12 miles east of Terrace.

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CHRONICLE, Houston, TX  
July 30, 2001 CR: W. Theriot

# Cattle mutilations leave ranchers guessing

By JIM HENDERSON  
Houston Chronicle

CALDWELL — The prize bulls of Burleson County are dying. The troubling questions are how and, more importantly, why. Some ranchers talk of a cult that drains the blood of the animals for use in Satanic rituals. The sheriff believes most of the animals are dying of natural causes but admits he is perplexed by some of the circumstances. An investigator for a cattlemen's association chalks some of the deaths up to thieves stealing body parts, rather than meat. Whatever the cause, cattle have been turning up dead under what ranchers consider "mysterious" circumstances at

'I don't know what it is. It could be a prankster, but if it is the other (a cult) it could be pretty dangerous.'

Johnny Lyon, who lost a valuable Charolais bull

almost predictable intervals — once or twice a year, around the time of Halloween or a religious holiday, such as Easter — for nearly a decade.

"I don't know what it is," said Johnny Lyon, who lost a valuable Charolais bull last Easter. "It could be a prankster, but if it is the other (a cult) it could be pretty dangerous."

These kinds of stories have been told in cattle country for as long as cattle have been dying. Sometimes the stories grow outlandish. Rarely is there evidence to back them up. Nevertheless, ranchers in Burleson County believe there is something more than storytelling going on there. When Lyon found his bull at the rear of a 300-acre pasture, its abdomen had been split open and its genitals removed. He said that has been a consistent pattern in previous incidents. Another rancher, whose family has lost several head of cattle in recent years, is so convinced that a cult is behind the deaths that he would only speak anonymously. There were no signs — claw or teeth

marks — to suggest that his cow had been killed by a coyote or other predator and "there was not a drop of blood on the body or the ground," the rancher said. Not all cattle deaths arouse suspicion. In some cases, the cause is obvious. Lyon recently found an angus cow that died after breaking a leg. "I didn't report that one," he said. Those in the mysterious category, however, share similarities. Like Lyon's Charolais bull, the cause of death was not apparent; body organs and, sometimes, tongues were removed while the valuable meat was untouched. In most cases, the genitals were removed. And, Lyon said, it appeared in each case that the blood had been drained from the bodies.

NEWS-SENTINEL, Knoxville, TN - July 8, 2001 CR: M. McCormack

# Group tries to solve mystery of Brown Mountain lights

## Phenomenon caught on video

By The Associated Press

ASHEVILLE, N.C. — Hundreds of people have claimed to see the mysterious flickers of light on a low-lying ridge in western North Carolina, but no one has been able to explain them. Now an Asheville group says it will try to find the cause of the Brown Mountain Lights, one of North Carolina's most enduring legends. Joshua Warren heads the group that recently announced it captured the elusive phenomenon on video. The video was shot last November from an overlook on N.C. Highway 181 north of Morganton. Warren, who has made a full-time job out of researching and writing about the paranormal, says his group is using the tape to pinpoint where the lights originated. The group has also been camping periodically in the area to find an explanation and has launched a Web site — [www.brownmountainlights.com](http://www.brownmountainlights.com). The 24-year-old Warren said he welcomes skeptics who want to challenge the legitimacy of the video. After all, he says, scrutiniz-

ing the video might lead to an explanation for the lights. "I know without a doubt (the video) is legitimate," Warren said. The lights have generated a wide range of theories, including the paranormal, alien, natural or man-made. Folklorists point to a Cherokee legend that attributes the lights to the spirits of warriors slaughtered in a battle between Native American tribes on the mountain. Some legends say the lights are torches carried by ghosts of grieving maidens. The video, captured with an infrared camera, shows the ridge from 3 1/2 miles away. On two separately taped segments, narrated by Warren, spherical lights appear and dance around on the mountainside, then seem to form an orderly line moving toward the top of the ridge. "They don't move like headlights or other man-made lights. They're also in an area of the mountain that has no roads. "I have no reason to believe it's been faked," said David Mull, who lives a few miles from the mountain and has documented sightings of the lights since the mid-1980s. "The appearance in the video of these lights is not inconsistent with the reports I've gathered over the years from witnesses." Daniel Caton, an astronomy

professor at Appalachian State University, said caution should be used when approaching the mystery. He thought he saw unexplained lights on the mountain once and wrote about them in a 1998 column in The Charlotte Observer. He has since concluded what he saw was a car light. However, he's aware that reports of the lights were documented before cars were invented. A German engineer wrote references to them in journals in 1771. They were also described in an area newspaper in 1912 or 1913. "I just don't know what to make of any of it," Caton said. "I can't really even say for certain there's anything there." The lights have entered pop culture, first with the 1960s bluegrass song "Legend of the Brown Mountain Light." They were most recently featured in a 1999 episode of "The X-files." Warren said no existing scientific theory — gases, seismic activity, mirages or ball lightning — has satisfactorily accounted for the bizarre behavior of the lights. "I feel there is a good chance this will be explained according to the known laws of physics," he said. "But there might not be another place on the planet which produces an effect just like this one."

"The buzzards don't even go up to them," he said. Scavenger birds, he said, do not feed on bloodless carcasses. Burleson, a hilly and wooded county about 75 miles northwest of Houston, is home to several small ranches where cattle often graze in thickets away from highways or other public vantage points. Often, a carcass is not immediately discovered, which has made investigation difficult. "I don't think it has anything to do with a cult," said Sheriff Thomas Gene Barber. "Some are natural deaths. But, some are very unusual ... the removal of the organs. You wonder if any animal could do that." He said it is also "strange" that most of the cattle whose deaths seemed unusual "were the best animals they had," not the weakest or sickest. In the past 10 years, Barber said, the "unusual" deaths have occurred about once a year, sometimes twice, and in one year — 1994 — there were four clustered near Halloween. He has investigated some, but the carcasses had decayed or were partially devoured by animals. "If you can't get to one in 24 hours, you can't learn much about what killed it," he said. Barber said he suspects that some of the cattle died from over-fertilized feed or toxic oleander bush that is found near water in that area. If any were killed by humans, he said, "I think it was some kids getting body parts." Evidence has been scarce, Barber said. His deputies have never found footprints, tire tracks or other clues that would point to a suspect. At the same time, he said, there has never been evidence of cult activity, such as candles, pentagrams or other ritualistic paraphernalia. "It's a mystery to me," he said.

At the request of ranchers, Larry Gray, director of law enforcement for the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, looked into a few incidents and, like the sheriff, said he discounts the notion of a cult at work in the county. "These things really get blown out of proportion," Gray said. In 20 years of investigating cattle deaths in Texas and Oklahoma, Gray said, "I have never seen one that was cult-related." What the ranchers saw as an absence of blood, he said, probably was blood pooling at the bottom of the carcass. The split abdomens and missing genitals could have been the work of small animals after the animal died of other causes. "Skunks and opossums have very sharp teeth, and they usually attack the softest tissue first," he said. In cases where the victim was a bull, Gray said humans may have been responsible but probably not for occult reasons. Genitals of large bulls have been turned into grotesque walking sticks or into bags. Lyon said he hopes to solve the mystery by someday getting a fresh carcass to Texas A&M, where officials at the college of veterinary medicine have offered to perform necropsies. "It happens so infrequently that we don't get a clue," Lyon said. "I just want to find out what's behind it." The unexplained deaths of four head of cattle in 1994 caused a minor buzz even among residents, but the talk quickly faded, deputies said. The latest deaths have attracted little attention, except among ranchers. "I haven't heard any talk about it," said Caldwell Police Chief Virgil Hurt. "And we haven't had any cult activity in this town."

# Cattle mutilation near Stoughton remains a puzzle

By Dawn M. Barker

Barb and Harvey Hemphill of Stoughton have seen dead cattle before. What unnerves them is that they don't know what killed one of their top Simmental cows May 18. The animal was found May 19 only a half mile north of their farm yard when Harvey was preparing an adjacent field for seeding. The udder and genitals appeared to have been surgically removed, and there was no trace of blood at the site. "It was really eerie," said Barb during a recent interview. "None of the other animals would go near the carcass. Even the scavengers wouldn't touch it. A couple of weeks later, Harvey took another cow that had died out and

laid it beside that one. The scavengers started in on the second cow right away, but they hadn't even touched the first one. "It's not like we don't have a lot of coyotes around. This winter, we had them come right into the yard." The Hemphills had last seen the cow alive the evening before, and had left the farm for a few hours. "She was fine the night before. We had to go in to the vet with another animal, and we were gone for a few hours. It gives me the chills to think that whatever it was, was right here in the yard," Barb said. The mutilation follows a pattern found all across North America since the 1970s where cattle and horses have been killed and

dismembered. Often, the animal's sexual and sensory organs are removed, and there is a marked lack of blood at the area. Although the Hemphills didn't notice any on their cow, it is common to find one or more small (loonie-sized) areas where the hair has been removed. Scavengers refuse to prey on the carcass, and other animals appear panicked when near it. The mutilations generally occur in isolated areas, and the intruders seldom leave a trace of their presence. When tested, the ground around the carcass often contains a high radon content. Radon is a carcinogenic, radioactive gas resulting from the natural

(radioactive) breakdown of uranium in the soil. The Hemphills' cow was autopsied, but the ground surrounding it was not tested. The explanation behind such events is the subject of much controversy. Theories about the culprits include UFOs, satanic cults or scavenging wild animals. Some people even believe oil companies or the government may be conducting pollution testing on the animals in secret. Barb said she thinks that a cult may be responsible for her animal's death. "As far as the scavenger theory, in the first place, the cuts were made too smoothly to be done by an animal. And in the second place, they didn't eat the meat that was

left, and there was a lot of it. They didn't come near the animal for a long time." The Hemphills contacted Dave Long, coordinator of investigative services for the Saskatchewan SPCA. Long said that the Hemphill incident is hardly an isolated case. He has investigated nearly 100 similar cases in the province during the past 10 years. Veterinarian Margo Hemmelder conducted an examination on the dead animal. She said there were no evident injection marks or indications for the cause of death, and no spillage of blood in the area

OBSERVER Carlyle, Saskatchewan, Canada

June 18, 2001 CR: G. Conway

around the cow. "The cuts were clean. I've never seen that sort of thing before. It was a weird case. The udder was clean gone," Hemmelder said. Barb said the event has distressed her.

"It was only about 100 yards from the house. That's too close for comfort. "I'd like to know, though, how they pulled her down. She was a big girl, between 1700 and 1800 pounds, and she had a personality to

match. You wouldn't want to mess with her. No way. But the area doesn't look like there was a struggle at all," she said. "It's plain weird. You sort of feel like looking over your shoulder all the time now."