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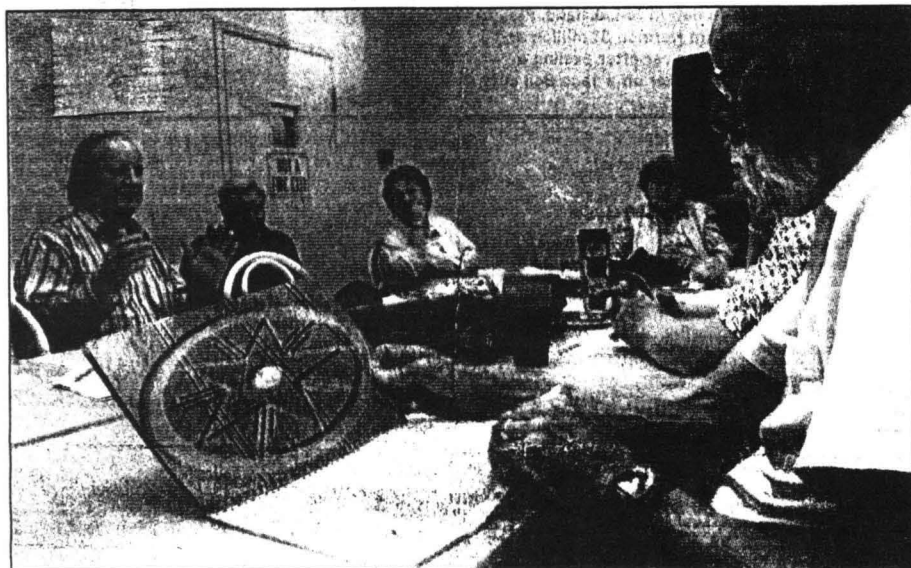
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TRIBUNE, San Luis Obispo, CA - Aug. 22, 2002

UFO AWARENESS GROUP: DISCUSSING THE PARANORMAL



TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY JOE JOHNSTON

Al Lane, right, looks through a calendar of crop circles during a presentation on the subject by Ray Zahn, left, during a recent UFO Awareness Group meeting at Round Table Pizza in Arroyo Grande.

Is there more out there?

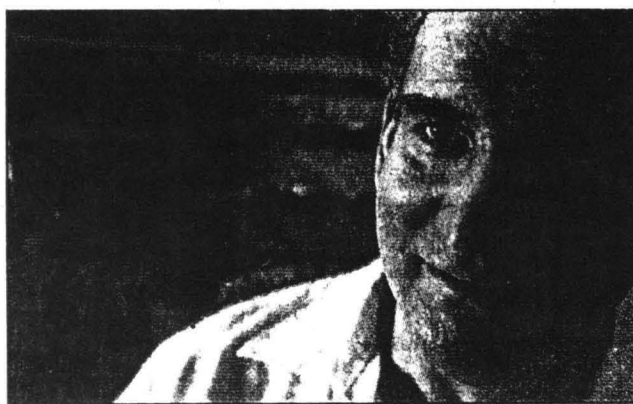
ARROYO GRANDE

By FREDDIE YAP
THE TRIBUNE

Aliens are in our midst. Michael Heiberger of Santa Maria is sure of it. He has sensed them, and he speaks of an invisible Venusian spaceship in the Arizona desert.

Arroyo Grande's John Maloney is not quite as certain, but he relates a tale of a glowing unidentified flying object that hovered briefly over him.

Twice a month, Heiberger and Maloney join other members of the UFO Awareness Group that meets in a room at the Round Table Pizza in Arroyo Grande.



Vandenberg Air Force Base electronics technician Michael Heiberger, at his Santa Maria home, says he believes life manifests itself 'wherever it can.'

A dozen or so participants turn up at each meeting to swap ideas, united by the belief that there's more out there "than what CNN is willing to tell us," Maloney said.

"We need to enlarge our vision," said member Homer Hoyt of San Luis Obispo. "That's what travel does; that's what UFO groups do; that's what some churches do."

Some members speak earnestly about their faith in life-forms from beyond Earth. Maloney also attends the meetings for another reason.

"You just look for reassurance from the group that you're not crazy," he explained.

Aliens and conspiracies

The group was founded in 1991 by San Luis Obispo's Larry Jamison to provide a forum for those interested in UFOs. It has since branched into discussions about conspiracy theories and the paranormal, but aliens and UFOs remain an im-

portant focus.

About 30 to 40 members are in the group today, with a mix of men and women mostly in their 40s and older. Many are active or retired professionals. Hoyt is a former Cal Poly professor. Heiberger is an electronics technician at Vandenberg Air Force Base.

Most members have never encountered an unidentified flying object, let alone an alien. But many believe that we're not alone in the universe.

"Life, I believe, manifests itself wherever it can," Heiberger said.

Some go further, suggesting that aliens have visited Earth for years. Participants base their beliefs on information from Web sites, books and others who have had unusual experiences.

Mainline science says no credible proof of alien life has been found. But an unmanned NASA mission to Mars uncovered evidence of water and ice on the red planet.

Al Lane of Oceano pointed out as proof the thousands of UFO sightings and alien abductions reported over the years.

"It's hard to disbelieve all these people," he said.

Even so, some members admit to sometimes reacting with skepticism to one another's theories. Heiberger, for example, nurses his doubts about some of the conspiracy theories others speak about at the meetings, like the media hiding the truth about President John F. Kennedy's assassination to there being alien life on the dark side of the moon.

There have been moments in the group's history when some members constantly attacked the views of others.

"Almost destroyed the group," Hoyt said.

First encounter

A few members, including Heiberger and Maloney, relate some strange encounters they say they have experienced.

As Maloney tells it, in 1960, then 17 years old, he and a friend were shooting fireworks from a street corner in the Los Angeles suburb of Eagle Rock. They aimed for a swimming pool across the road, listening for the splashes when they hit the target. It was about 9:15 p.m.

Suddenly, he sensed something above him. He looked up and saw what looked like a round "glowing barbecue coal" with distinct edges hovering at least 50 feet above.

The next thing he remembers, he was running to his nearby home. It was past midnight.

To this day, Maloney cannot account for his whereabouts and activities. He was free from drugs and alcohol.

Ask him what he thinks might have happened, and the easygoing man with the quick laughter suddenly grows serious.

"Don't know," he says. "Don't want to find out."

Invisible alien spacecraft

Heiberger recalls how seven years ago, east of Las Vegas and near Lake Mead, he searched for a Venusian spaceship rendered invisible by a force field.

He knew the ship was there, he said: A map in the book "Stranger at the Pentagon" showed its location. He first learned about the Venusians from author Dr. Frank E. Strangess, who has penned several other books on UFOs.

Heiberger relates how he was driving through the desert when, suddenly sensing something, he pulled over. He left his recreational vehicle and, on a nondescript patch of dirt

about 20 feet from the road, he stopped. He had found the ship.

Heiberger sensed the chill of the force field tingling along his arms, chest and back. He recounted how he spoke to the Venusians, asking them to appear. He sensed the field getting stronger — something was moving toward him.

Then nothing else happened: Not a ripple in the air, not a glimpse of the ship. But as he walked away, his body felt peaceful.

Since then, Heiberger added, he has visited the ship at least 14 times.

Making contact

At a recent group meeting, Pismo Beach member Raymond Zahn brandished Internet photos of crop circles in England as proof that aliens are trying to talk to us. Zahn is a retired engineer from NASA and the Defense Department.

One photo, most present agreed, resembled the face of an alien. Another, Zahn described as "ribbons blowing in the wind."

Drawing on his readings, he explained that extraterrestrials are "trying to bypass the government. They're trying to talk directly to the people of the world."

When the opportunity comes, he added, they will lift the human race up to join the intergalactic civilization.

Seeds of doubt

Maloney has always struggled with skeptical family members who have questioned his beliefs in the encounters he describes.

"I've been told I was crazy the first 40, 50 years of my life," he said.

To be sure, he refuses to accept everything he hears at the group's meetings.

In the absence of irrefutable proof, Maloney said, "I don't even know if I believe what I believe."

If you go...

The UFO Awareness Group meets the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Arroyo Grande Round Table Pizza, 1412 Grand Ave. For more information, call Homer Hoyt at 544-6003.

Fear and distrust

Why does SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) get far more support from established institutions than does Ufology?

Ufology has a massive amount of real data, while SETI has virtually nothing to show for itself. Millions of people have seen UFOs in the air and on the ground, yet mainline funding sources (except for a few millionaires) disdain Ufology.

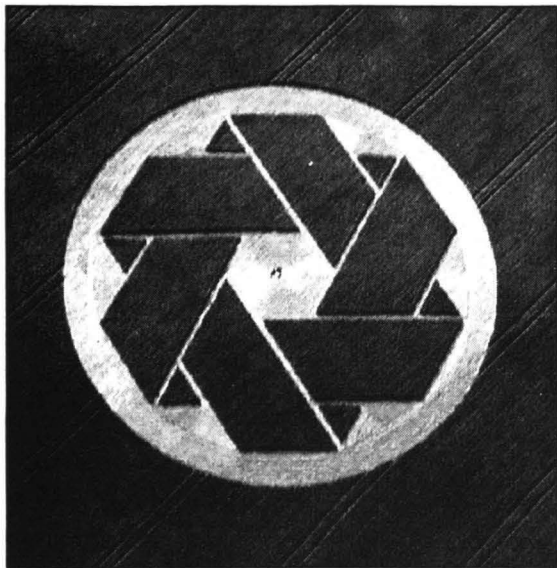
In the short run, the government's disinformation and cover-up tactics have bred more fear and distrust in government.

GEORGE D. FAWCETT
Lincolnton

GASTON GAZETTE, Gastonia, NC
Oct. 9, 2002 CR: G. Fawcett

Crop circles: Precursors to a close encounter with ET or merely catering to the public's appetite for 'occult metaphors'?

Cereal spin doctors



Peter Sorensen

Crop circle enthusiasts meditate in the locus of this geometric formation near Beckhampton, England.

By Rick DeVecchio
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

On April Fool's Day four years ago, Joe Nickell issued his skeptics' Top 10 list of the world's hardest paranormal hoaxes. His prime examples included the Amityville Horror, King Tut's Curse, psychic surgery and the Roswell saucer crash.

Nickell, an investigator for the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal in Amherst, N.Y., is still surprised by the tenacity of one item on his list: crop circles.

"You would have thought that at some point the phenomenon would peter out, that it would cease," he said, "but it's taken on a life of its own."

And it's about to become even more popular. Three new films — including Hollywood's first crop-circle blockbuster, which opens Friday and stars Mel Gibson — explore the large-scale geometric patterns formed by the flattening of grain stalks in rural fields, characteristically in southeastern England.

The International Crop Circle Database has cataloged 2,000 crop formations, some going back to the 1950s. It logged three of unknown origin in the mid-1990s in Santa Rosa, Gilroy and in a field of wild oats near a yoga retreat center in Watsonville overlooking Monterey Bay.

Reported formations so far this year number 48, including 34 in the United Kingdom. Other hot spots are Germany and the Netherlands. A few have been made in the United States. Virtually all are the work of hoaxers, Nickell says.

That crop circles resist the trappings of skeptics seems to result from their ability to inspire feelings of awe, serenity, oneness, beauty or fear among followers from Christians to New Age spiritual devotees to scientists with a metaphysical bent.

The most elaborate formations have the symmetry of a Hindu mandala, or the interlocking bands of a Methodist flow chart from post-Revolutionary America. Nickell says they spark more ferocious feelings than almost any other phenomenon he investigates, with the possible exception of the Shroud of Turin, debunked as Christ's burial cloth.

Some of the designs are simple: The one reported in 1997 on Mount Madonna, near Watsonville, swirled counterclockwise in a single curve, 4 feet in diameter, according to the database. Others are quizzical: A peace symbol reported in a Gilroy field in 1996.

The crop circle phenomenon is bigger than most Earth mysteries because of the formations' visual appeal. There are "circular" calendars, T-shirts and pendants. What's called the formations' "sacred geometry" fills New Age conferences, books and videos.

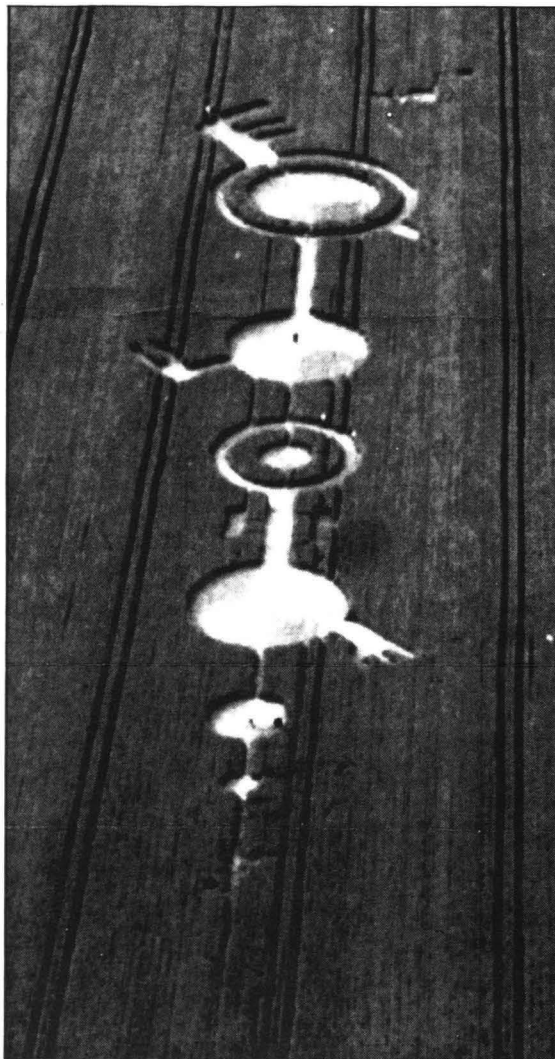
Dutch physicist Eltjo Haselhoff's "The Deepening Complexity of Crop Circles," a full-color production by Berkeley's Frog Ltd., delves into circle-related scientific oddities and contemplates the formations' Euclidean precision.

The three new movies see circles as awe-inspiring. In Disney's "Signs," a formation appears in farmer Mel Gibson's cornfield. Bad news: It's a landing site for hostile aliens.

In "Crop Circles: Quest for Truth," documentary producer-director William Gazecki says there are far too many circles in England alone for all of them to be fakes. Are they "navigational points," messages, warnings?

The crop circle-studded countryside of England's Wiltshire district — home of the world's first cafe with a crop-circle theme — is the setting for the British film "A Place to Stay," a love story between a traveler and a Gypsy.

The movies are appearing as the circle season hits its annual peak in August, just prior to the harvest. The 2002 season has produced at



Reuters 1990

This elaborate crop formation appeared in July 1990 in a field about 20 miles north of Salisbury, England.

"You would have thought that at some point the phenomenon (crop circles) would peter out, that it would cease, but it's taken on a life of its own."

JOE NICKELL, debunker of the paranormal

least one sensation already. Inscribed on the Fourth of July near England's ancient stone circle of Stonehenge was a six-pointed pattern of what appear to be flying ribbons. Nothing like it had been seen before.

Many of the devotees, known as cerealists or "croppies," say such impressions signify life-affirming forces. There's lively talk about whether the forces are natural, extraterrestrial, interdimensional or "the mind of God."

"What is the best way for one species to communicate with another species? Not by language but by mathematics, which is universal," said Joshua Shapiro, chairman of the World Mystery Research Center.

The formations have crossover

appeal to those who believe in ecological catastrophe, who see them as messages for, or from within, the sacred, maligned Earth.

But to skeptics, the circles are human creations intended to service public demand for "occult metaphors," which are as old as the resurrection of Christ.

Dennis Stacy of San Antonio, Texas, publisher of the journal the Anomalist, took part in two expeditions to English circles in the early 1990s. He sent back crop samples to the first U.S. researchers, but later his doubts grew.

"We've had sporadic crop circles in this country, and by the same token we've never had anything of the complexity of English crop circles," he said. "If these are being made by alien crop circle-makers,

why do they make such crappy circles in the United States and Canada and such exquisite ones over there?"

One reason: English wheat fields have tractor wheel paths that offer covert access without leaving tell-tale footprints. Another: The fields are thick, uniform and easily shaped. People with simple tools can sneak in and create impressive formations in no time.

A 1960s UFO flap in several countries featured weedy swirls known as "saucer nests." Two English pranksters had this image in mind when they started the modern circle trend in 1978, Nickell said. Crop pictograms came in 1990 and grew more embroidered over time. They continue to evolve — twisted, beaded, braided.

Circle-makers are "honorable pagan artists" trying to make a better world through covert action, said Ron Russell of Aurora, Colo., a 64-year-old artist and scientist who has investigated the trend.

"Plus, when they make it, they get what I would call a juju experience," said Russell, who grew up in Menlo Park. "That is, they get contact with something from beyond."

But he says not all formations are human made. He can't explain the 400 simple circles of six to 20 feet in diameter that appeared worldwide over hundreds of years before the modern trend began. Just weeks ago, several such swirls appeared in wheat fields in Canada's Prince Edward Island after wicked thunderstorms passed over.

Along with physicist and author Haselhoff, Russell is one of the few of a scientific bent who are studying the mystery. Their research focuses on strange emanations of heat, light and other forms of energy — the source, says Russell, of the "juju experience." Both men argue that the subject deserves intensive study.

Haselhoff said the formations showed "a great amount of curious plant alterations" that couldn't be reproduced by mechanical flattening. "Some of these are cellular changes, and dramatic changes in the germination behavior of seeds," he said.

He believes that some method exists to allow the formations to be created at a distance. "Heat is involved, emitted by something that manifests itself as a ball of light," he said.

"Very rich people playing a silly game?" he said. "Aliens? The military? It's no use to speculate as long as we don't even understand the basic mechanism of crop-circle creation."

E-mail Rick DeVecchio at rdelvecchio@schronicle.com.

COMMUNITY
FOCUSTHE
INVESTIGATIONSMUFON seeks truth
behind close encounters

Bruce Widaman, Missouri state director for the Mutual UFO Network, stands in front of a science fiction poster.

Bruce Widaman had no idea why he was afraid of a traffic light.

It dangled from a cable across a road that used to run between Sibley and Elm streets back when St. Charles was "just a pimple," Widaman said.

A few years after his birth in 1952, Widaman's family moved into a house on Cadillac Drive, a block down from the light and just four houses from what was then the edge of civilization. Beyond the road lay undeveloped farm fields and woodland.

"This was back when KMOX was the only radio station and TV went off the air at midnight," Widaman said. "People went to bed with their screen doors open. There was nothing to be afraid of. There was nothing here."

But there was something here, something that lodged a vague phobia deep in Widaman's subconscious.

"For years, it boggled my mind," he said. "I knew I wasn't afraid of street lights, so why did it bother me?"

Widaman was just entering adulthood in the late 1960s when someone asked him if he had ever seen a UFO. "I said no, but it felt like giving the wrong answer in a lie detector test," Widaman said.

Friends suggested Widaman undergo hypnosis to unlock the hidden fear. He initially resisted, but finally took their advice. Under hypnosis, Widaman recalled leaving his parents' house late one night and walking to the bottom of Cadillac. He looked up and saw the

By Raymond Castile, Staff writer
Photography by Roy Sykes

traffic light. Descending from the sky behind the light was - something.

"I went on a ride," Widaman said, his memory of the incident still unclear. "I saw things. I experienced telepathy. I had a close encounter, more than likely of the fourth kind."

UFO researchers, or UFOlogists, use five categories to classify UFO encounters. The first three, developed in 1972 by Allen J. Hynek, include the now-famous "close encounter of the third kind" - contact with alien beings. After Hynek's death in 1986, UFOlogists added two additional categories, including the "fourth kind" - alien abduction.

"I know people will say that I was hypnotized into thinking I experienced something, but that is not what happened," Widaman said. "I saw something."

Today, Widaman lives with his wife and two children in St. Charles, not far from the scene of his childhood trauma. The repressed memory may have spurred his life-long interest in UFOs, but Widaman said his fascination stems equally from his general curiosity about science, astronomy and the natural world.

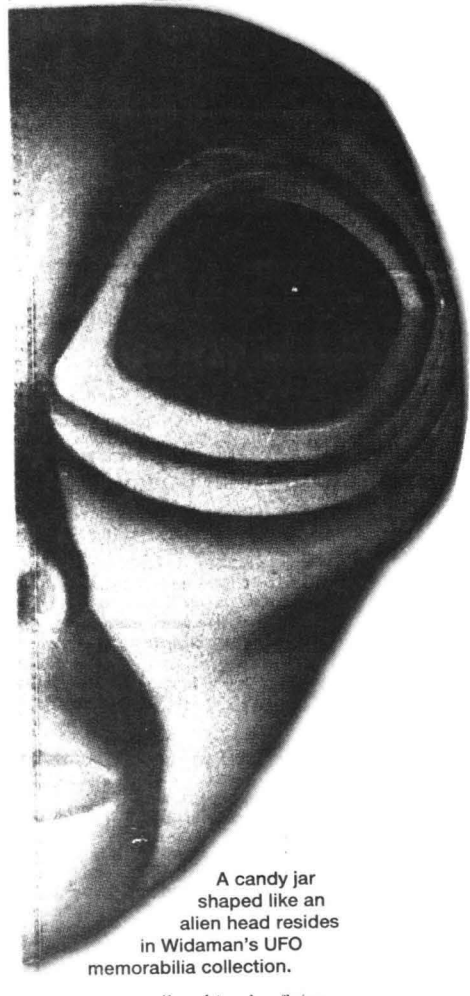
Mike Bohrer, 50, met Widaman at Blackhurst Elementary School and continued their friendship while both attended St. Charles High School. During their junior year, the pair began attending monthly UFO discussion group meetings, Bohrer said. Like Widaman, Bohrer's UFO fascination grew from a childhood sighting.

Bohrer was 12 years old when an anomalous light interrupted a weekend barbecue with his family in St. Charles. "Whatever we saw, it came from one side of the sky, then stopped overhead for 20 seconds," Bohrer said. "Then it took off at a 90-degree angle and flew to the horizon. After 30 or 40 seconds, it came back from that side at another 90-degree angle. There was no sound."

Despite that incident, Bohrer said his interest in UFOs remained mild until the summer of 1970, when he helped investigate an alleged landing site on an O'Fallon farm.

"There were four indentations in a field, three forming the points of a triangle, then one in the center," Bohrer said. "There was a branch ripped off a tree nearby, though there had been no major weather."

The farmer had not seen anything. But the night before, there was a couple - presumably necking - in a parked car near the farm. They described seeing a classic flying saucer at close range. It was lighted and came along the



A candy jar shaped like an alien head resides in Widaman's UFO memorabilia collection.

railroad tracks, flying at twice the height of the telephone poles."

Bohrer said the O'Fallon investigation piqued his interest, leading him to believe there was something physical behind the UFO phenomenon.

In 1968, Widaman's curiosity compelled him to attend a meeting in the home of aerospace engineer John Schuessler. A newspaper advertisement invited the public to come and discuss the UFO phenomenon. That night Widaman found himself in a room full of scientists.

(continued on page 4)

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O'FALLON JOURNAL, St. Charles,
MO - June 30, 2002)

"I sat there thinking, wow, these people really know what they are talking about. Finally someone who has some answers," Widaman said.

The meeting laid the foundation for what became the UFO Study Group of Greater St. Louis, Widaman said. It also brought together many of the people who would later form what would eventually become the world's largest UFO research organization, the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON).

Two groups dominated the UFO scene during the 1960s - the east coast-based National Investigation Committee on Aerial Phenomena and the west coast-based Aerial

Phenomena Research Organization.

"They were like the Republicans and Democrats," Widaman said. "They could not see eye to eye. If you were a member of one, you could not be a member of the other."

Frustrated, UFOlogists such as Schuessler and Walt Andrus founded MUFON in 1969, originally calling it the Midwest UFO Network. The organization changed from "Midwest" to "Mutual" after an influx of members from across the nation and around the world.

"People wanted to be in MUFON because it was so credible. There was no petty fighting," Widaman said.

In recent years, the organization has come under fire from some quarters of the UFO community. Some have labeled it ineffective, despite its reputation as the world's oldest and most influential UFO organization.

Schuessler, who retired from the aerospace industry in 1998, now serves as MUFON's international director, holding office at the organization's Colorado headquarters. MUFON attracts top-name researchers and scientists to its annual UFO symposiums, staged twice in the St. Louis area. It publishes a monthly journal and boasts chapters in nearly every state. Widaman ascended to the position of Missouri state MUFON director in 1986, after two years as assistant director. Bohrer is state section director for Pike and Lincoln counties, serving as a contact for the police, media and public.

"We have trained investigators to go out in the field," Widaman said. "We're very interested in new and old cases. Nine out of 10 UFO encounters go unreported."

On average, about 30 of the Missouri MUFON chapter's approximately 150 members attend its regular public meetings, conducted at 7 p.m. the third Tuesday of every month at Culpeppers restaurant, 3010 West Clay in St. Charles.

Carole Schoenholtz, of St. Peters, joined MUFON in 1986 after watching a presentation by Widaman at St. Mary's College in O'Fallon. Schoenholtz, 56, said she was shocked when Widaman displayed a UFO photograph that looked exactly like objects she saw during the late 1950s while growing up in New York.

"My mom and I were walking on the sidewalk, going to a nighttime Easter Mass," she said. "This strange thing flew over us, a glowing object. But in New York, when you see something strange, you go on about your business."

"Then 10 years later I was shopping at night with some friends, again at Easter time, when this glowing thing the size of a football field appeared. It was oval-shaped and covered the sky. Lots of people saw it."

The anomalies seem to have followed Schoenholtz to St. Peters.

"On four occasions, my husband and I have seen things from our back deck," she said. "Four years ago, my husband saw oval-shaped objects in the sky. Then two years ago, a neighbor came over and saw something through binoculars. He thought it was a fruit fly, but when he lowered the binoculars, he could still see the object with the naked eye. 'That's not a fruit fly,' he said."

Schoenholtz said she has no idea whether UFOs are extra-terrestrial or man-made, but she suspects the government knows the answer.

"That is part of what MUFON is trying to establish - how much does the government know about it?" Schoenholtz said. "The government is keeping us in the dark. They should not be so evasive. Some of these things are really disturbing people's lives. We're beyond being scared. We're fed up. We want to know what's going on."

Widaman said he is determined to break through what he calls the government's "iron curtain of secrecy."

"I am very pro-government and pro-military, but the government has been

POST REGISTER, Idaho Falls, ID - Aug. 15, 2002

Tourists cropping up in Teton

Farmers now offer tours and T-shirts of field formations

By BRIAN DAVIDSON
Post Register

TETON — It's no news to say farmers are up before the sun and not home until the sun has set.

It is news, however, when their families are on the same schedule trying to keep the curious out of their wheat field because aliens or college students or a yet-unexplained phenomenon thought their field needed a little gussying up.

Since the Parker families in Teton discovered a 100-yard-wide crop circle formation in one corner of a 150-acre wheat field over the weekend, nobody's been on a regular schedule.

"We probably should have kept this quiet," said Connie Parker, wife of Teton Mayor Bryon Parker. Bryon Parker and his brother Louis farm the field, about a mile south of Teton, where a formation of a dozen circles of flattened wheat was discovered early Saturday. "But there were too many people locally who knew about it."

Since the local media picked up the story, the Parkers haven't had much time to rest.

About 7 p.m. Tuesday, the county road to the south of their field was lined with cars, "to the point you couldn't even get another car in here," Parker said. "It was like that until dusk."

The families have had their children on watch near the field late into the evening and early in the morning to

power to attract folks from Menan, Idaho Falls, Pocatello and Sugar City, it also has pulled in a few tourists from as far away as Washington state and Boston off U.S. Highway 20 for a peek.

"We finally got smart and had visitors sign in a notebook so we'd know where they were

from," Parker said. "We figure we'll read this in the years to come and say, 'Oh my heck, people came from that far to see this.'"

The circles don't have power over locals and tourists alone. A researcher from the Denver-based Midwest Crop Circle Research Center was scheduled to tour the site Wednesday night, followed by a researcher from a different organization this Saturday.

Those seriously into researching crop circles believe a range of natural phenomena, from sound vibrations to microbursts of intense wind, can cause the formations to appear. Experts use magnets, compasses and other detecting equipment to look for clues as to what could have caused the formations.

The Parkers, at least some of them, still believe the formation's creators are earthlings —



Courtesy Photo
The crop circles south of Teton are seen from the air. The field is farmed by Bryon and Louis Parker of Teton.

keep vandals out. "We have had a few people march in, trampling the wheat down," Parker said. "They're doing a lot of damage."

And since the children are there anyway, the families decided to bring a little commerce to the site. They began selling "Teton City Idaho Crop Circle 2002" T-shirts, printed by American Screen and Print of Rexburg, for \$15 a pop Tuesday night. They're still selling aerial photos of the circles — featured on the T-shirt — taken by the Parkers from a borrowed paraglider, one shot for \$3 or a set of 8 for \$15. The curious

also may take guided tours into the circles for \$3 per person.

"People may think we did this ourselves and are out for the money," Parker said. "But we're not. These kids are out here keeping watch, so we figured we may as well do something. It's here."

The families plan to harvest the wheat in about 10 days, but they're thinking they won't touch the corner where the formation is located.

While the formation still has the

likely bored teenagers or students from Brigham Young University-Idaho in Rexburg. "Some people think I did this," said Cassie Parker, 14. "But I didn't. I'm beginning to believe in aliens more now."

Upper Valley reporter/editor Brian Davidson may be contacted at the Post Register's Rexburg office at 656-0101, or via e-mail at bdauidson@idahonews.com.

JOURNAL, Middletown, OH - Sept. 29, 2002

Curiosity draws large crowd to UFO conference

By Lisa Bernard
For The Journal

MASON — A "Rebirth of Curiosity" was the theme Saturday at the 39th Annual National UFO Conference held at Kings Island Resort and Conference Center.

Hundreds of people attended the all-day event, checking out everything from photos of people who claim to have been scared from alien implants to plaster molds of alien footprints and literature written by alien abductees.

One Northern Kentucky man, Dave Bachman, said that, though he's never had an alien encounter, he came to Saturday's convention, like many others, just to feed his curiosity.

"This type of thing has always fascinated me," he said. "It keeps my interest. I don't know if every one's story is true, but I think there's too much of it out there for it all to be hoaxed."

Laura Bentley, of Cincinnati, said she attended the event to see what type of "strange people came out of the woodwork."

"I guess it's morbid curiosity," she said. "I've always been interested in this and I think there's something to it, but I just don't know what."

According to Kenny Young, conference coordinator for the Cincinnati event, it's curious people

like Bachman and Bentley who keep alive the study of possible extraterrestrial life.

"This is a very viable subject," Young said. "Often the subject of UFO's is one of tomfoolery and we know that. We don't take ourselves seriously, but we take our research very seriously. If we as a society aren't open-minded about researching and investigating these matters, we are only limiting ourselves."

According to Young, "certainty" has become a too-complacent means to an end. He used the events surrounding last years terrorist attacks as an example.

"They had certainty in their faith and it gave them motivation behind their actions," he said. "Perhaps if they were curious about other cultures and beliefs, things might be different today. Curiosity is perhaps the only mechanism we have against the scourge of certainty."

In addition to the exhibits, several speakers were featured at the convention, including Cincinnati-based UFO investigator Donnie Blessing of the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON).

According to Blessing, Ohio has at least 50 reported UFO sightings each year. A retired Clermont County librarian, Blessing has been investigating UFO events for two years and is currently serving as the director of the Southern Ohio branch of MUFON.

UFOs, Bigfoot

Stan Gordon collects clues to the truth that's still out there

By BRANDY BRUBAKER
Daily News Staff Writer
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A couple of friends stand outside of a North Huntingdon Twp. shopping center. They get caught up in a walk down memory lane and don't even notice all of the stores around them closing. Soon enough, the friends are alone in the empty parking lot.

At least so they think. As the friends chat and laugh, one of them suddenly freezes in mid-sentence. Over his friend's shoulder he notices a small, shiny ball floating 10 feet away.

The friends are shocked as the tiny, tennis ball-sized sphere flies closer and then disappears into the horizon.

They know what they saw certainly wasn't a bird, or a plane, or even Superman, for that matter.

Merely a hovering, metallic sphere that just seemed to check them out and go.

In comes Stan Gordon. A Greensburg resident, Gordon has been researching tales of a most unusual nature for more than 40 years.

Although Gordon has never gotten up close and personal with any of the phenomena himself, he has investigated the stories of hundreds, if not thousands, of people who have — or think they have.

"I get reports from responsible people from all walks of life," Gordon validates. "When investigated, though, most reports turn out to be of natural or manmade origin."

So what about the tale of the bobbing sphere cooing up to a few North Huntingdon Twp. residents?

Gordon admits he's not sure what that might have been.

"In a lot of UFO reports, you get the disc or the triangular object," Gordon explains. "What you don't often get is reports of a very small object."



— Photo by Wade H. Massie/Daily News
Gordon tries to pick up a report of UFO activity. At one time, the researcher had more than 20 scanners running at once to stay clued in on alleged UFOs across the world.

Although he can't pin the sphere down to a certain origin, Gordon can offer his theory on what it might have been.

"It could be some type of probe to gather information. We're doing the same thing in space. Who's to say someone else isn't doing it too?"

Although most of Gordon's reports can be traced back to a weather balloon, a plane or even store lights, many stories, like this one, must remain unsolved mysteries — for now, at least.

Gordon plans to share his collection of unusual phenomena at a display at Westmoreland Mall next Saturday. There he hopes to educate the public about what he does — and maybe pick up a few more sightings in the process.

"The public doesn't know

what has gone on for the last 20 years," Gordon explains.

"There have been many sightings in populated areas. But most people who have these experiences don't seek publicity."

So this means that you don't have to travel to the country for your chance at an encounter. Many sightings have been reported in all sorts of metropolitan areas, including downtown Pittsburgh.

"We've gotten reports of sightings around the bridges in Pittsburgh and around Squirrel Hill," Gordon remembers.

Although decades like the '50s and '70s are well-known for rushes of UFO sightings, Gordon says in the past few months reports of potential extraterrestrial activities have really picked up — with

calls coming in from all over the state, including Allegheny and Westmoreland counties.

It was during the UFO craze of the 1950s that Gordon himself got involved in chasing spacecraft.

It all started back in 1959 when Gordon, a Halloween Eve baby, received a world-band radio for his 10th birthday.

Gordon quickly picked up broadcasts from all over the country reporting encounters with spacecraft — and sometimes beings — from out of this world, sparking the young boy to devour as many books as possible on the subject.

Six years later, Gordon had the chance to put his researching skills to the test when an unidentified flying object reportedly crashed in

the woods outside of Kecksburg.

According to witnesses, a large object landed in the rural area. It was unlike anything the witnesses had ever seen — brilliant and emitting a strange blue-colored smoke.

Military officials quickly arrived on scene, cordoned off the area, and, as witnesses reported, hauled off a large, tarp-covered object on a flatbed truck.

Since no one present could identify the object, and those who might be able to aren't releasing information, a lot of what happened that night had to be sketched out through eyewitness accounts.

To this day, Gordon continues to compile these reports. He even produced a documentary on the subject, "Kecksburg, the Untold Story," for which he won an EBE Award for best historical UFO documentary.

His knowledge on the high-profile case, considered second only to the alleged Roswell crash, even gained him a profile on "Unsolved Mysteries."

However, UFOs aren't the only thing the electronics technician researches. He also investigates reports of animals of an unusual nature — everything from black panthers to thunderbirds to Bigfoot himself.

In fact, the Mon Valley has had its fair share of encounters with the hairy, ape-like creature.

Back in the '70s, a rash of sightings broke out in the White Oak area.

There, residents reported seeing a dark-haired creature, walking upright and standing about 7 to 9 feet tall.

After investigating these cases, molding footprints and following tracks, Gordon quickly ruled out any chance that these creatures were

mammal.

Many reports also link the creature to scenes of UFO sightings.

But, again, Gordon admits he can't give a definite answer to any of the cases he investigates. However, over the years, he says he's amassed enough evidence at least to be sure of one thing — unexplained phenomena do exist.

"All of the years I've been doing this, I've never seen any of the phenomena myself, but I've seen a lot of evidence," Gordon explains. "Anyone who's really involved in investigating would generally come to the conclusion that there's a lot of things you can't easily explain away."

But does he wish that he, too, might join the ranks of UFO spotters or have Bigfoot encounterer?

"I would like to see something," Gordon admits. "But the fact that I haven't seen anything myself makes me somewhat skeptical."

To report any unusual activity or sighting, call Gordon's 24-hour hotline at 724-838-7768.

For ordering information on his video or more information on his investigations, visit Gordon's Web site at www.westol.com/~paufo or write P.O. Box 936, Greensburg, 15601.



— Photo by Wade H. Massie/Daily News

Stan Gordon, a researcher of more than 40 years, takes a closer look at a cast of a footprint that may have been made by Bigfoot himself. Gordon says the Mon Valley area had its fair share of Bigfoot sightings in the 1970s.

simply big dogs or bears.

But if several Bigfoots were running around the woods of White Oak, why hadn't anyone caught one?

Gordon says one of the theories is that Bigfoot may not be a primate at all.

"We may be dealing with something with a physical and a non-physical aspect," Gordon explains. "If these creatures have been seen for years, why don't we have more physical proof? Why hasn't someone shot one (although he does not endorse shooting animals) or hit one with a car, or brought in a carcass?"

He can attribute this to many first-hand accounts with alleged Bigfoots.

Take the case of a woman who was startled late at night by a bear going through her trash.

Gun in hand, the woman went outside to scare off the prowling beast. Instead, she was shocked to see what she described as a "big, hairy ape" rummaging through her garbage.

Frightened, the woman fired several shots into the beast. But they didn't seem to injure or even hinder the creature; it simply disappeared into thin air.

Gordon says stories like these give more evidence to theories that Bigfoot may be more supernatural than

UFOs hit close to home

EMERALD L. CHRISTOPHER
Staff Reporter

While Delaware may be the home of some unusual life forms, according to the Mutual Unidentified Flying Object Network, aliens are not among them.

Carl Feindt is assistant state director in Delaware for MUFON, a non-profit organization that investigates UFOs.

"It's really slow here," Feindt says. "There's nothing spectacular that happens in Delaware."

People from around the country volunteer as directors to investigate sightings in the state where they live, he says.

Feindt says that despite the many organizations and volunteers devoted to investigating UFOs, there are three basic questions that remain unanswered: where they come from, how

REVIEW [Univ. of Delaware], Newark, DE - Sept. 20, 2002

they operate and why they are here.

"Remember, we can only investigate what's reported. There might be more in Delaware than we think."

Ralph Flegal, state director of MUFON for Delaware, says he has only investigated seven reports in Delaware. Of those seven reports, he says, five were determined to be planes or lights.

"All possibilities were investigated for the other two," he says. "However, we could not identify exactly what the witness saw."

Flegal originally worked for the government, but has since retired. While working for the government, he says, he was investigating UFO sightings and reported his findings to the Air Force.

The Air Force, he says, claimed that Flegal's report of a UFO could be an explained aircraft.

"I realized then, that there was more to it than what the Air Force was saying."

This instance prompted Flegal to further investigate where UFOs come from. Most likely, he says, UFOs travel to Earth from beyond the galaxy and the solar system.

"Because our planet is young they come out of curiosity," Flegal says. "They have already solved the basic concepts of physics that we have yet to solve."

He says the beings in UFOs are friendly.

"We are a hostile nation, whereas they are a very peaceful people,"

Flegal says. "In 15 years, I have never heard of a hostile incident."

John Schuessler, international director and founding member of MUFON says he started the organization in 1969 after a branch of the Air Force known as Project Blue Book closed. Project Blue Book was the original organization the reportings of sightings.

MUFON was established to provide a place for people to report sightings and, he says, currently it has approximately 3,000 volunteers worldwide.

This year, there have been more than 2,000 sightings reported to MUFON's website around the world, Schuessler says.

"We have about 450 resource specialists to help identify things, as well as video and photo analysts," he says.

MUFON does not work for the government, Schuessler says.

"We help the government when they need it," he says, "but if we were to work for them, we would have to follow their rules and regulations."

Schuessler says if something happens to those that witness a UFO, it's not done on purpose.

He describes an incident, known as the Cash-Lendrum Incident, which involved a UFO on Dec. 29, 1980, in Texas.

Three people in a car encountered a UFO on some back roads, he says. The driver was forced to stop the car

CR: J. Schuessler

when a UFO appeared hovering in the middle of the road.

A husband, wife and their child were severely burned from radiation and the heat generated by the UFO, he says.

The UFO did not harm the family on purpose, Schuessler says.

They were simply at the wrong place at the wrong time.

However, Feindt says, there are incidents when investigators are not at the right place at the right time.

Feindt gave this account of an incident that occurred in 1952:

On two separate weekends, UFOs flew over Washington, D.C. and Delaware and the UFOs were recognized on multiple radar screens.

Andrews Air Force Base was the primary air force base to protect the nation at that time. However, they were repaving their runway and jets were unable to take off. Men from the New Castle Air Force Base were called in. Whenever the jets arrived at the scene, the UFOs would unexplainably disappear and would reappear when the jets left the scene.

It was almost as if the UFOs knew the jets were there.

Despite their lifelong dedication to the study of UFOs, Feindt, Flegal and Schuessler all say they have yet to actually encounter a UFO.

"As a result of all my readings over the years, I still believe they exist," Schuessler says.

Despite the fact that many reported sightings end up being hoaxes, he says, more often than not, the sightings are real.



THE REVIEW / Kristen Margison

DAILY HERALD, Lisle, IL - Sept. 26, 2002



A crop circle appeared in Steve Berning's soybean field in Naperville this summer. Berning, who plans to harvest the crop next week, said he still doesn't know who did it.

Harvest should end the crop circle saga

BY SUSAN STEVENS
Daily Herald Staff Writer

When farmer Steve Berning harvests his soybean crop next week, he'll erase the last evidence of Naperville's flirtation with intergalactic traffic.

The field on Diehl Road attracted national attention this summer after Berning discovered an intricate design of concentric circles had been cut into the field.

No one has stepped forward to claim responsibility for the crop circles. Berning says he still has no idea who created it.

Various experts who examined the site believe the design was made with weed cutters. The timing left many people questioning the coincidence; the design appeared a few days before Mel Gibson's movie "Signs" opened in theaters.

When Berning checked his crop

UFOs over Illinois

What: A presentation on UFOs and other phenomenon observed in Illinois, including the Naperville crop circle

Who: Members of the Illinois Mutual UFO Network

When: 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 6

Where: Downers Grove Public Library, 1050 Curtiss St.

Monday, he said he found more evidence of the circle's creators. Red and yellow flags were stuck a few inches inside the borders of the design.

"It looked like they were marking the corners," Berning said.

The Illinois Mutual UFO Network, which on its Web site describes itself as an "organization composed of

people seriously interested in studying and researching the phenomenon known as unidentified flying objects," also looked at the field and declared the circle a hoax.

"It was fake," said Bill Leone, who investigates crop circles and unidentified flying objects for the Illinois Mutual UFO Network.

"This circle was cut," Leone said. "The plants were laying there. They were all snipped off."

Leone and other investigators will present their findings on the Naperville crop circle as well as other unexplained phenomena at a presentation Oct. 6 at the Downers Grove Public Library.

Recently, Leone said, he's received a report of a UFO over Clarendon Hills, where a couple videotaped a shiny object darting across the sky in September.

"It's very, very strange, the whole thing," he said.

WEST VALLEY COURIER, Hillsboro, OR - Oct. 30, 2002

Forest Grove crop circle termed real by scientist

By Lisa Waggoner

A circle that cropped up in Lyle Spiesschaert's wheat field this summer is the real deal, not a hoax, say a scientist and expert who specialize in crop circle studies.

The formation, in the shape of three joined circles topped by a crescent with an adjoining key or "F" shape, shares several characteristics of genuine circles, says Dr. William C. Levengood, a biophysicist from Pinelandia, Mich., who studies the phenomenon.

"Over the past 10 years, study of hundreds of crop formations have revealed certain anomalies which, when present, are hallmarks of genuine formation, those which cannot be attributed to people," says Carol Pedersen, Oregon Branch Coordinator, Center for Crop Circle Studies.

"The laboratory report by Dr. W.C. Levengood, issued Sept. 30, 2002, confirms that this crop formation is consistent with factors found over the last 10 years in crop patterning formed by a plasma vortex energy..."

Like other crop circles that cannot be attributed to human activity, the Forest Grove crop circle had:

Magnetic particle deposits

higher than the average of the controls (control areas). Soil within the circle had over 90 times the upper limit found in normal soil.

- (Wheat) node expansions greater than average of control sets. Of 44 formation "sets" of wheat stalks, 36 had greater node expansions.
- A strong resemblance between its F-shaped downed area and "wave guides", constructed metal tubes used to efficiently direct microwaves or ultra-high frequency energy.
- Linear lay patterns in the F-shaped area, rather than circular lay patterns as within the circular formation.
- Significantly suppressed seed germination from plants taken from within the crop circle, compared to plants outside it.

"What the residents of Forest Grove witnessed this July was not a fake circle made to boost ticket sales for the movie "Signs" as (some) media (were) quick to promote, nor was it a joke made by the teens buzzing around in fairy costumes with wings on who claimed they made it," says Pedersen.

"It is part of the mysterious and ongoing puzzle which science is helping us to understand."

CR: B. Harris



FOREIGN NEWS

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

STAR, Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada - March 13, 2002 CR: G. Conway

Twins still mystified by UFO sighting

By **CHUCK TOBIN**
Star Reporter

Sarah Baker says the Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) she witnessed as she crested King Solomon's Dome in the Indian River country near Dawson City was one of the largest things she's ever seen.

For several minutes, she and her identical twin sister, Susan Malcolm, watched the object until it disappeared behind Haystack Mountain, Baker said in an interview Monday. She spoke following last Saturday night's second Yukon UFO conference at the Alpine Bakery in Whitehorse.

Accompanying what appeared to be the mother ship in the early-morning hours in late July 1996 were numerous tiny fire-fly type objects, Baker recalled.

"The thing did not scare me," said the Whitehorse restaurateur. "I just wanted to get down to my house so I could grab the binoculars. I have never seen anything so big. It was huge and I had a bunch of little ones around it."

"... On one hand, I have never seen anything so humongous and I have never seen anything that small," she said of the bright lights dancing around the large UFO. "It was like they were stars."

As Baker and Malcolm watched, the UFO continued to move behind Haystack, as though it was driving itself smack into the side of the mountain or the ground behind it.

Martin Jasek, a former Whitehorse UFO buff who moved to Vancouver last year, returned for Saturday's conference.

When he interviewed the twins about their experience, he told the *Star* on Monday, they were apprehensive about recalling the details of the huge craft disappearing downward behind the mountain - why would the UFO seemingly drive itself into the ground?

In fact, however, the topography behind Haystack Mountain from where the women say they watched the UFO is a valley deep enough to accommodate the size of the vessel described by the twins. Jasek pointed out on a slide he prepared for the conference.

He also prepared slides of the original drawings he had the twins sketch in separate rooms when he interviewed them. Their renditions of a close-up of the windows, and an overall view of the entire vessel with the little objects dancing around it, matched.

Baker said the sighting of the cigar-shaped object has not been the only UFO encounter in her life.

Like Jasek, she suspects there are countless people who have witnessed something they can't explain - something entirely out of the normal - but who are reluctant to reveal their experience because of the ridicule factor.

But more and more, she believes, people of noteworthy backgrounds and credentials are coming out of the woodwork to share their UFO experiences.

Jasek said the conference, which was sponsored by the Yukon UFO Research Society, is a continuing effort to not only share experiences but to promote frank discussion without fear of derision.

It's his and Baker's hopes that eventually, the scientific community and other professionals will shed their reluctance and participate fully in the investigation of unidentified flying objects.

"People are interested, but are afraid to admit it," Jasek said. "Professionals are interested, but are afraid to admit it.... We would like to encourage professionals in different fields to come forward and help study."

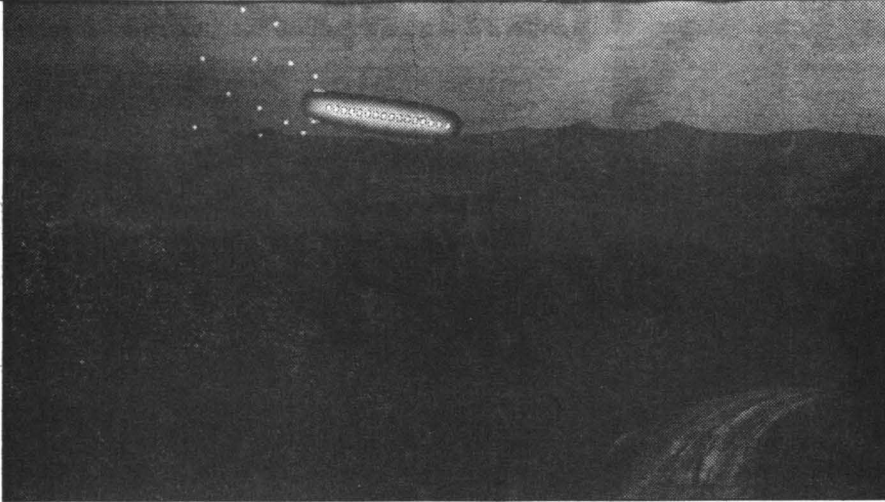


Illustration submitted

UFO - This is an artist's rendition of a UFO that Sarah Baker and her twin sister, Susan Malcolm, said they saw in July 1996.



Star Photo by PAUL GETSON

KEEP LOOKING UP - Susan Malcolm, left, and her identical twin sister, Sarah Baker, were witnesses to a UFO on July 28, 1996, while approaching their claim on the Indian River in the Klondike goldfields. After leaving the Dempster cut-off, on what would normally be a 45-minute drive, they arrived home more than 3 1/2 hours later. UFO researcher Martin Jasek estimates the UFO was about half a kilometre wide.



Illustration submitted

DISAPPEARING ACT - As the sisters approached their home, the object began to disappear behind Haystack Mountain in the Indian River country near Dawson City.

Baker said in countries like Mexico and Chile, there's no shame in discussing UFOs. They just accept it, she said.

It's only the world's bigger and stronger nations, like Russia, the United States and Canada, that don't want to openly address the issue of UFOs, for whatever reason, she said.

Jasek said 64 people attended what was billed as the second conference. About 80 per cent were at the first conference in the fall of 2000.

The first gathering drew upwards of 300 people but was funded through the Millennium Fund. It featured several keynote speakers renowned in the area of UFO research, he pointed out.

Jasek, who was among the founders of the local UFO research society, was this year's keynote speaker.

In addition to the Baker and Malcolm experience, Jasek related three other reported sightings and encounters based on interviews he's conducted.

In 1958, the recently deceased Billy Blair of the White River First Nation was out hunting with a partner near Snag in the Beaver Creek area, Jasek recalled in Monday's interview. A UFO, he said, suddenly moved sideways from out of the trees and sat over a meadow, where Blair and his partner watched the object for about 15 minutes from 300 metres away.

Jasek said Blair's partner pointed his rifle at the object but Blair warned him not to shoot.

"He said, 'Don't shoot, there might be a white man in there,' because they didn't know of UFOs, they had never heard stories, or seen pictures, or anything," Jasek said.

The UFO researcher also recounted two separate stories from the North Canol Road. They included testimony and drawings from an unnamed individual who also saw a UFO as well as some type of beings.

Included in the slide presentation was a photograph taken about a year later along the North Canol with an unidentified object in the sky.

As well, Jasek told a story of a row of lights that had been seen in the Pelly Crossing area.

The feature discussion during the first conference included several eyewitness accounts of an extremely large UFO first sighted over Fox Lake on Dec. 11, 1996 but eventually seen by some 31 Yukoners from Fox Lake through to Carmacks, Pelly Crossing and Mayo.

DAILY MAIL, London, England

Oct. 4, 2002 CR: N. Oliver

UFO film 'bungle'

FILM of UFOs buzzing RAF planes has been lost by the Government, a top space researcher claimed last night.

The films - of spinning balls of light approaching British jets - were taken in the 1950s by astonished aircrews.

Best-selling authors Andy Roberts and Dr David Clarke say bungling bureaucrats did not realise their significance, filed them away and are now lost.

Could this close encounter be the third of its kind?

By David Wilkes

THE similarities could be purely coincidental.

But try telling that to UFO believers who have been transported into orbits of delight by this remarkable picture snapped from a field in Kent.

They have excitedly compared the image - described as one of the greatest ever unidentified flying object sightings - with two other famous 'extra-terrestrial' visits captured on film.

The first was over McMinnville, Oregon, in 1950, the second at Rouen, France, in 1964. All are

disc-shaped with a tower on top.

A porthole is discernable on the British version, which reportedly moved sideways for ten minutes before suddenly disappearing.

Taken in Tonbridge, the photo was posted to the offices of the Kent and Sussex Courier. The sender gave a false name on a cov-

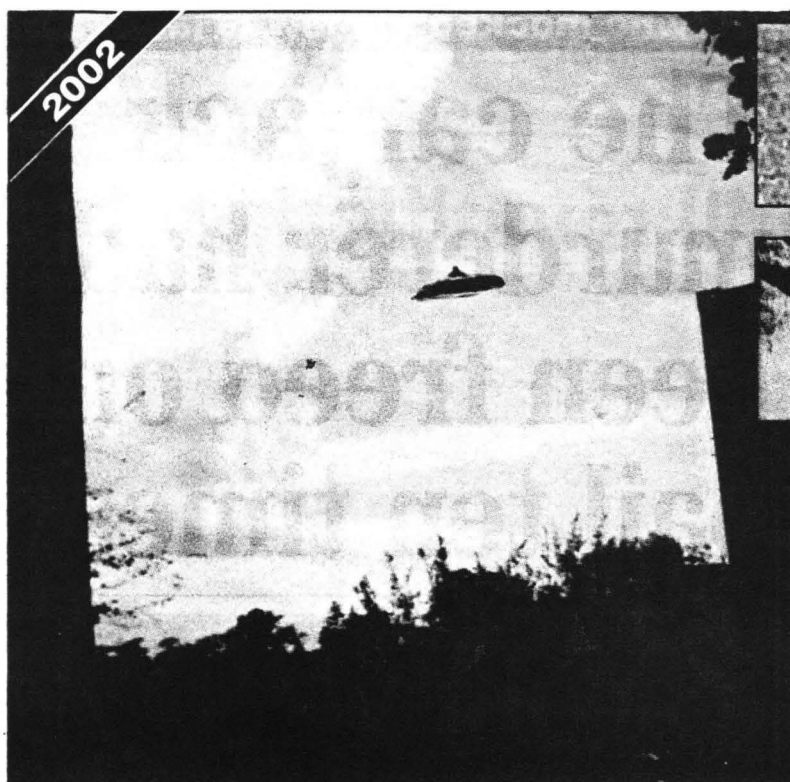
ering note, which explained that his son was in their back garden when he called out to say there was a strange object floating in the sky.

It went on: 'At first I thought it was a kid's helium balloon that had floated off, but it wasn't going upwards, it was moving sideways.'

I ran into the house, grabbed a

camera, and my son and I followed it.' They took the picture from a field behind a hotel, he said, adding: 'We caught the attention of a few dog walkers who also saw it.'

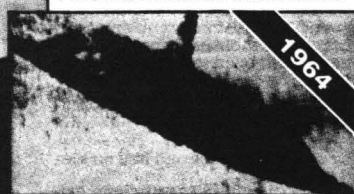
It was sent by the newspaper to the British-based UFO Magazine, whose investigators subjected the print to rigorous analysis. The



THIRD: Tonbridge in Kent. The comparisons are said to be 'incredibly interesting'



FIRST: McMinnville in the U.S.A.



SECOND: Rouen in France

results were inconclusive although one of the light filters it was examined under showed two barely discernible thin lines leading in the direction of the craft's tower.

It was impossible to establish whether these were natural quirks of the image grain or traces of a hoaxer's attempt to suspend the disc in mid-air, perhaps from a wire.

The magazine's editor, Graham Birdsall, said of the Tonbridge photo, which was taken in June: 'If it is genuine, it would be historically extremely important as one of the greatest ever UFO pictures.'

'The fact it has a tower-like structure on the top is incredibly interesting as it looks very similar to the McMinnville and Rouen sightings.'

The McMinnville photograph, taken by a farmer, has shown no evidence of being a fake despite being subjected to computer analysis, which indicated the disc had an 80ft diameter.

Mr Birdsall added: 'If the Tonbridge photo is a hoax it would be incredibly elaborate. The fact it was sent in anonymously doesn't mean it was a hoax because some people are scared of the publicity.'

This was one weird close encounter

OK, UFO fans, what did this couple see?

Last Nov. 2, a Friday, just after midnight, well known local magician/entertainer Steve Chmara, 45, and his wife, Donna, 42, are driving west on the Trans-Canada Highway just past Portage la Prairie, heading to Regina for a Saturday show.

Donna is driving, Steve relaxing after a performance. The night is clear. Steve's eyes wander from a plane he is watching, back to the highway where, in the distance, he notices a bright light.

Although she doesn't mention it, Donna has noticed the same light and is thinking maybe it's a yard light on a farm. Donna notices the dash clock reads 12:10 a.m.

Within a few seconds, the light appears to be getting closer and much brighter, suddenly seems to surge through heat wave and then is immediately in front of their car. The light is brilliant (but doesn't hurt their eyes), lasts only a second or so and disappears.

About the time they saw it do its "heat

warble," Donna asked Steve, "Did you see what I just saw?" and then it was on them and gone.

Donna's wondering, "Where the heck did it go?" glances up through the sunroof and spots it "at about telephone pole height" just above the right side of their car. Steve, she believes, is watching the same thing through his window. This turns out to be a very mysterious part of their "encounter."

Although Donna can see this "UFO" quite clearly over them, she just keeps on driving.

"I'm trying to rationalize," she recalls. "Jeez, are we close to Shilo, is this a prank of some sort, a projection from a field nearby? Absolutely nothing made sense. I watched it for what seemed like a minute or so, observing it was boomerang shaped and had what appeared to be a highly polished metal surface.



laurie Mustard

lmustard@wpgsun.com

As it leaves, Steve opens his window, yelling, "It's got thrusters, it's got thrusters," and both watch it move off quickly. There is no noise, no heat.

To make a long story short, they are in shock, talk rather excitedly about the encounter, as they continue on to Regina.

The mystery? Steve only remembers seeing the craft arrive in front of their car, then speed off to the north east. He has no memory of the period when Donna was watching

it hovering over their car. As it disappeared, she again checked the clock. Still 12:10.

"We know some people are going to say we're whacked," says Steve, "but we're really not nuts. We don't attend UFO conventions, none of that."

Chris Rutkowski, co-ordinator of UFO research at a University of Manitoba says there have been at least four other sightings of this type of UFO this year in Canada: Cambridge, Ont., on Jan. 27; Telkwa, B.C., on Feb. 2; Newmarket, Ont., on March 27; and Kelowna, B.C., on April 30.

He says Steve and Donna's is the most descriptive (with this type of UFO), yet. "Whatever we saw," says Steve, "it inspired both fear and wonder and was truly the experience of a lifetime."

I know these people. They're not nuts.

Whaddya think kids? Contact? Laurie Mustard can be reached by phone at 632-2749, by fax at 632-4250, or e-mail at lmustard@wpgsun.com

Readers try to shed some light on 'UFO' sightings

A SIGHTING of strange lights in Sleights has provoked a massive response from readers.

The office's phonelines were red hot following a story about Gill Wood's seemingly extraterrestrial experiences featured in Friday's Whitby Gazette.

While three people rang in to say the four cloud-like revolving lights seen in Sleights the previous Friday evening came from a Robin Hood's Bay search light, around 20 others from around the Whitby area recalled similar weird sightings to which they had no explanation.

The most vivid account came from Russell Barber, from Uggelbarnby.

He described how before spotting the lights, he went outside at 11.30pm to close the garden gate at the remote property. At that time for a 10-minute period a "phenomenal gale" came from nowhere which was so strong it almost "pulled bushes up out of the ground".

"There were four or five lights in the sky and they were perfect little balls of cloud with a blue tinge to them. It was definitely spooky," said Mr Barber, who watched them with his wife Debra and their friends Tony and Ingrid Reynolds.

"I've seen the lights from Robin Hood's Bay and these were thoroughly different. They were nothing like that.

by Greig Tindall

"But I would be glad to be convinced that this was the case because I've never seen anything so strange in my life. It was really weird."

April Holloway, whose home backs onto fields at the top of St Peter's Road towards Hawsker, also witnessed the lights.

"It's the weirdest thing I've ever seen," she said. "The lights were so low at the back of my garden and also above the house. They were there for about three hours from 9pm."

"My next-door neighbours John and Carolyn came outside to have a cigarette and they couldn't believe what they saw as well. It looked like they were about to land. It was quite scary."

Holidaymaker David Illingworth was in a caravan at Mickleby when he saw the lights in the sky at about 10.15pm. "I didn't want to say anything because people would probably think I was mad. But when I read the story in the Whitby Gazette I thought I'd better get in touch. There were four of the lights in the sky and they were just oval-shaped balls that were moving about. They were weird, I couldn't believe what I was seeing."

Roger Storey from Fylingthorpe believes the lights could have come from Robert Rymer's powerful four-Kilowatt search light at Robin Hood's

Bay, which he helped to wire up.

But Mr Rymer, who lives and works from the village's Old Station Waiting Rooms, in Station Road, is not so sure and was amazed at Mrs Wood's experience. "It does seem odd," he said.

"I think I was using my search light that night but I've never heard it described like that before at all. It's very strange. I was also baffled by the distances it was spotted, as far away as Uggelbarnby and even Mickleby. I've never known it to be seen so far out."

"The chances are it probably was my light because it can go into four separate beams. But I can't account for the revolving cloud-like formations that were following the woman down the street. The only thing that comes to mind that might explain it is strange atmospheric conditions. If that is not the case then I am as non-plussed as everyone else."

"I guess with the nights starting to draw in earlier at this time of year people do take more notice of what's happening in the sky. It will be interesting if the lights are seen again when I know my search light was not in use. There could be something out there. It is naive to assume humans are the only living beings in the whole universe."

Did you see the lights or have you seen other strange sights? Ring Greig Tindall on (01947) 829910.

CENTRAL SOMERSET GAZETTE, Wells, England - Aug. 1, 2002

Mystery in the sky

Can someone help me unravel a mystery? On the evening of Monday, July 15, at approximately 8.15pm I witnessed, with two friends, a strange object slowly approaching the village of Croscombe from the west.

At first I thought it was a micro light aeroplane but as it came nearer to where I was standing it seemed to have neither engine nor pilot.

The shape was unusual in that it had a bulbous centre of about three feet diameter and four arm-like appendages.

It appeared to be controlled as it lowered down the side of the valley, almost landing on the slope, but suddenly lifted off, rising steeply into the sky heading east. At the point when it almost landed I was able to see that it was a metallic blue colour.

If anyone can shed any light on this mysterious object I would be grateful.

"Skywatcher"

Church Street
Croscombe

● This letter writer has supplied his full name and replies can be forwarded to him via the editor.

Strange harvest

Crop circles in B.C.? We've got 'em, along with some of Canada's leading experts in the field



ANDRE FORGET/CP

Curious people stand in crop circles discovered last weekend near the town of Howick, Que., near Montreal. (B.C. crop circles inside!)

(continued on page 10)

Fields of dreams

No one knows for sure who creates the crop circles that appear each year on farms in B.C. and around the world

By DAVID STONEHOUSE

It was a day unlike any other for Larry Bangs, though it started out as most Sundays did for the Vanderhoof businessman, with a free-spirited flight behind the controls of his small plane.

But not far from the Vanderhoof airport that day in August 1998, he looked down at a sight that perplexed and astonished him: a string of perfectly formed circles stamped into the crops of a field farmed by his sister-in-law Margaret Hall. It was no hallucination — his son, Jay, saw it too.

There were 11 of them, circles of all sizes grouped into three clusters — the largest looked to be nearly 30 metres across.

They did not breathe a word of it at first — not even during Sunday brunch with Margaret, who tended that very field.

It came out slowly, tentatively, in uncertain tones. Neither father nor son could make sense of it themselves — never mind what others would think. Margaret Hall was dumbfounded. Sure, she had heard of this sort of thing before. But in Vanderhoof?

If it weren't Larry telling her about the circles, she would have been inclined to think it was a joke. But this was her conservative brother-in-law talking, confessing he had no other reasonable explanation.

They sat there pecking at their meal, unsure of what to do next. It's not as though you can look up crop circle in the yellow pages and have someone out for a look.

Bangs and his son decided to take to the skies again after breakfast for another look, and this time Jay took his camera.

By the next day, an excited Jay Bangs was taking his pictures to the local paper, the *Omineca Express*. Word was spreading quickly, even before it hit the press. Bangs actually wasn't the first to discover the circles. A few days earlier, on Aug. 28, a pilot returning to Vanderhoof after patrolling the forest for fires had spotted the circles. He went back up with friends and photographed it from the air, then explored the field looking for signs it was a prank. Convinced it was genuine, they started telling others.

By the time the weekend was over, word had spread like wildfire and hundreds of people began converging on the field to see for themselves the province's first authenticated crop circles.

"Nobody had ever heard tell of anything like that round here at all," Hall recalled in an interview this week.

B.C. isn't known as a hot spot for crop circles — only about a dozen sightings have been reported since the mid-1990s, and the Vanderhoof incident has been the most impressive so far. The only other significant and well-documented case was in Agassiz back in 1995 — a single circle that appeared in a corn field. But even though it isn't renowned for sightings, B.C. is home to some of the country's leading crop-circle experts.

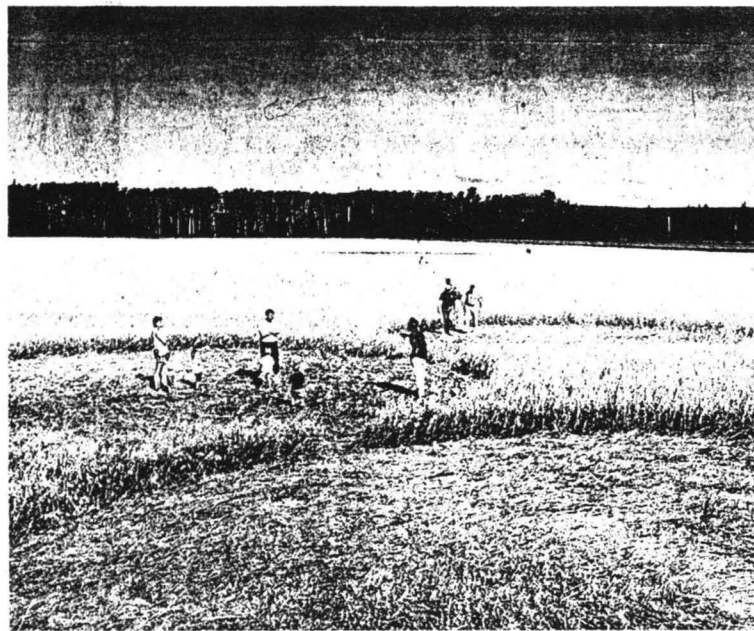
And these days, with the crop circle "season" in full swing and a Hollywood blockbuster on crop circles in wide release, they're busy. The strange phenomena are high profile this summer following the debut of *Signs*, a new thriller by *Sixth Sense* director M. Night Shyamalan. Mel Gibson stars as a former priest in Pennsylvania beset by anxiety turned to fear when strange events start unfolding around him, including crop circles that appear on his farmland.

At least 12 crop circles mysteriously appeared last weekend at a bed-and-breakfast/dairy farm near Montreal, the same weekend *Signs* opened.

The renewed interest in crop circles has left Paul Anderson feeling a little worn. The Vancouver graphic designer's phone is constantly ringing with reporters wanting interviews and folks reporting new sightings. Anderson, 35, is founder and director of the Canadian Crop Circle Research Network, and one of chief Canadian trackers of the phenomenon.

Last year, according to the network's annual report, there were 20 different formations reported in Canada. Saskatchewan is this country's hot spot, with half of the reported formations discovered there. Three were from B.C. and four from Alberta, while Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba each reported one.

This year's B.C. reports include semi-circular patterns found in a hay field in Duncan, the largest stretching about eight metres across. Many of B.C.'s cases remain inconclusive, however, even in the minds of crop-circle believers. Earlier this year, experts were called to Surrey after Canada Day to examine some circles discovered off the Trans-Canada High-



Curious people visit crop circles found in Margaret Hall's field near Vanderhoof in 1998.

way near the Port Mann Bridge. But they turned out to be a hoax — shaped in the crude form of a Canadian flag.

Anderson has been fascinated with crop circles since seeing an episode of *Unsolved Mysteries* in 1990, and set up the non-profit research group in 1995. Although he doesn't often travel to reported sightings to view them personally, he's got affiliates in seven provinces and who he can tap to investigate reports that come in.

The curiosity has hit such a fevered pitch that his Web site is overloaded by the demand. If you were trying to hit the crop circle network's page this week, you probably got a message to try later.

A Mel Gibson movie is always guaranteed to capture some attention, but Anderson is afraid it will feed the notion that aliens from outer space create crop circles. While not discounting this as a possibility, he is skeptical.

"I feel there is evidence of purpose behind these of some kind — that there is somebody, something, doing this. It isn't just random acts of nature," he says. "And yet I find myself leaning more away from the idea of aliens, per se. There are too many aspects of the whole thing that one explanation just doesn't answer."

"Other people say it is military testing satellite technology making the formations, but that doesn't explain the very complex patterns that you see in a lot of these. That's another misconception out there — that these are just flattened-out crop."

"In some cases it is but, in other cases, it is flattened down, it is woven together, it's braided, it is multiple layers stacked on top of each other — sometimes half a dozen layers stacked on top of each other going in alternate directions," he says. "In cases like that, it isn't just something that a bunch of kids went out and did for fun. It is more complicated than that."

Believers speculate it could be some unknown but powerful Earth force creating

them, a quirk of nature, that humans themselves are unwittingly willing them to appear, or even some other invisible presence.

"Some people would say angelic, some people would say demonic," Anderson says. "Who knows?"

The existence of crop circles could suggest "another kind of intelligence that is around, or has been for centuries," he says, and may be a sign that the human race isn't the most intelligent or most advanced life form or species on the planet. "That is something we have always assumed, but maybe we aren't. I don't know."

The alien theory, he says, does not explain some of the bizarre things people have reported experiencing inside the circles — electronics acting up or powering out, animals avoiding the area or acting strangely, visions and premonitions. Anderson counts himself among those who have had premonitions, recounting how he had lucid, detailed dreams about circles only to receive reports of nearly identical formations within a day or two.

Skeptics, take note: Anderson isn't the only one to make such claims.

"Stuff like that happens," says Chad Deetken, a Vancouver man touted as the best crop circle investigator in this country. Unlike Anderson, Deetken regularly travels to crop circle sites to study and document the occurrences, and his visits have led to some surprising experiences. While investigating a formation in Lethbridge a decade ago, he decided to lay out in it at night to see what would happen. After a while, he says he felt a slow paralysis move up his body, starting at his toes. It felt so strong, he says, he bolted up in fright when it reached his chest. Two others with him reported hearing footsteps nearby when no one else was there.

"Some may see a white horse running across the field really fast, like a phantom," he says. "Other people have a very, very deep religious

or spiritual experience. Three German guys were sitting in one and all of the sudden they were completely overcome with emotions, all three of them were crying."

About an hour after he heard about the crop circles in Vanderhoof, Deetken hit the road for the nine-hour-plus trek to check them out. Still, it was four days after they were first spotted, and the avid crop circle investigator did not arrive until after nightfall, which meant he had to wait until the next morning to begin his sleuthing. Deetken was dismayed that so many people had already been tramping through the oat field, leaving trails that would complicate efforts to prove the mysterious formation was not a man-made hoax.

But, examining some of the untrampled circles, he became convinced that this was no prank and set about taking measurements for his report and collecting stalk samples.

He interviewed neighbours and others, some who told how their pets acted strangely afterward. One neighbour reported seeing an eerie, orange glow over the forest nearby around 2 a.m. on Aug. 28 that she thought might have been a fire. Within the hour, she said, the glow had disappeared.

He collected stalk samples for testing at a lab in Michigan. When the results came back, they reported a change in the cell structure and swelling, which he says indicates there was an intense, short-lived energy similar to microwaves that hit the stalks.

What caused that energy blast is the big mystery — part of that wider mystery that Deetken and others like him are so keen to solve: what is it that is carving out these things? Not that he ever expects to find the answer.

"I don't hold my hopes up for it," the 57-year-old says. "It's been elusive for so long."

Still, he makes an annual trip each summer to England — a global crop-circle hotspot — to explore and chum with fellow enthusiasts. But why? Why does he traipse the Canadian and English countryside in pursuit of the ever elusive? In part because he is in awe of crop circles, he says, and finds it comforting to be inside them.

"I get a very strong spiritual sense in the formations, a feeling of a presence — that there is someone else there. You just feel that there is someone watching you. But it's totally benign — it's not aggressive, there is no sense of danger. It's actually a nice sense," he says.

"There is a very powerful energy there. You get the sense that they are put there deliberately, to get you to come to look at them and possibly be energized by them."

Deetken has been doing this for the past 12 years. For more than four of them, it was a way of earning a living — bankrolled by Las Vegas millionaire Robert Bigelow, who was keen to investigate crop circles and other bizarre phenomenon.

These days, Deetken works as a first-aid attendant at movie sets. But he still devotes plenty of time to his passion. He still holds a glint of hope in his heart that it will someday be explained.

"Everybody loves a mystery — this is one of the greatest. It really is," he says. "I am there to get the answer. Hopefully."

Deetken is not the only one in B.C. looking for the answers. Sunshine Coast filmmaker Robert Nichol, who is wrapping up a 72-minute documentary on crop circles for the Space Channel, says one of his field crew had a painful knee injury soothed while visiting one.

"It healed up tremendously," says Nichol, a long-time believer in things extraterrestrial who became intrigued with the circle phenomenon seven years ago after coming across some photos of them.

He believes the circles are an attempt by some higher intelligence — "whether it is inter-dimensional or extraterrestrial or from the future" — to communicate with us.

Barry Beyerstein, a Simon Fraser psychology professor who studies human behaviour and deception, firmly believes crop circles are nothing but hoaxes.

"It's not that I don't believe in them — it's a question of who made them, and I have no belief at all that it is anything supernatural or done by aliens or anything like that. And they have all the earmarks of hoaxes," he says.

"On top of it all, there has never been anything produced — any artifact left or any physical evidence that is credible — that couldn't be done by hoaxers. When they carve one into the nose of George Washington on Mount Rushmore, then I will start to listen."

He does not doubt that people have unex-

'I feel there is evidence of purpose behind these of some kind — that there is somebody, something, doing this. It isn't just random acts of nature. And yet I find myself leaning more away from the idea of aliens, per se. There are too many aspects of the whole thing that one explanation just doesn't answer'

— Paul Anderson, director of the Canadian Crop Circle Research Network



'I get a very strong spiritual sense in the formations, a feeling of a presence — that there is someone else there. You just feel that there is someone watching you. But it's totally benign — it's not aggressive, there is no sense of danger. It's actually a nice sense'

— Chad Deetken,
Vancouver crop circle
investigator

plainable experiences inside a crop circle.

"If you are a believer and you think you are in a sacred spot and you are in some kind of a time warp or energy vortex, whatever their preferred explanation is, I have no doubt they can psyche themselves up into eerie feelings and even hallucinatory things. That happens all the time."

The hoax theory was heavily debated during the 1990s when two people came forward and claimed responsibility for creating crop circles: retired British artists Doug Bower and Dave Chorley, who said they had been pulling off circle pranks since 1978. In 1999, Bower demonstrated in a BBC documentary how they created the patterns with ropes and planks.

Believers in crop circles concede there are hoaxes out there — that's why they look for signs of human tinkering and trampling when they investigate the patterns. But they doubt humans could engineer some of the patterns they have seen, especially the intricate and remote ones. To them, it just doesn't make sense.

"That means teams of people, well-trained, would have to be travelling all over the planet over the last 20 years — in some cases in very, very remote areas that only pilots have seen from the air — to do this," Nichol says.

He sees no motive for anyone to do that either, saying there is no financial reward, and any claims to artistic reasons are doubtful since the patterns are not signed. Not that he is trying to convince anyone.

"People can choose to believe what they want to believe," he says. "We should have some compassion for those people who cannot accept the reality of this wonderful phenomenon, because their denial is basically a defence mechanism."

For Toronto-based author John Robert Colombo, who has written more than a dozen books about paranormal and supernatural phenomena, the inexplicable nature of crop circles is part of their appeal. "He who cannot pause to wonder is as good as dead," Colombo says, quoting Albert Einstein. "I'm quite pleased to leave their explanation vague. What strikes me as interesting is that they exert such a tremendous amount of fascination. We can't shake them off."

In the end, Colombo suspects crop circles come from "inner space, not outer space. You really can't conclude too much from them."

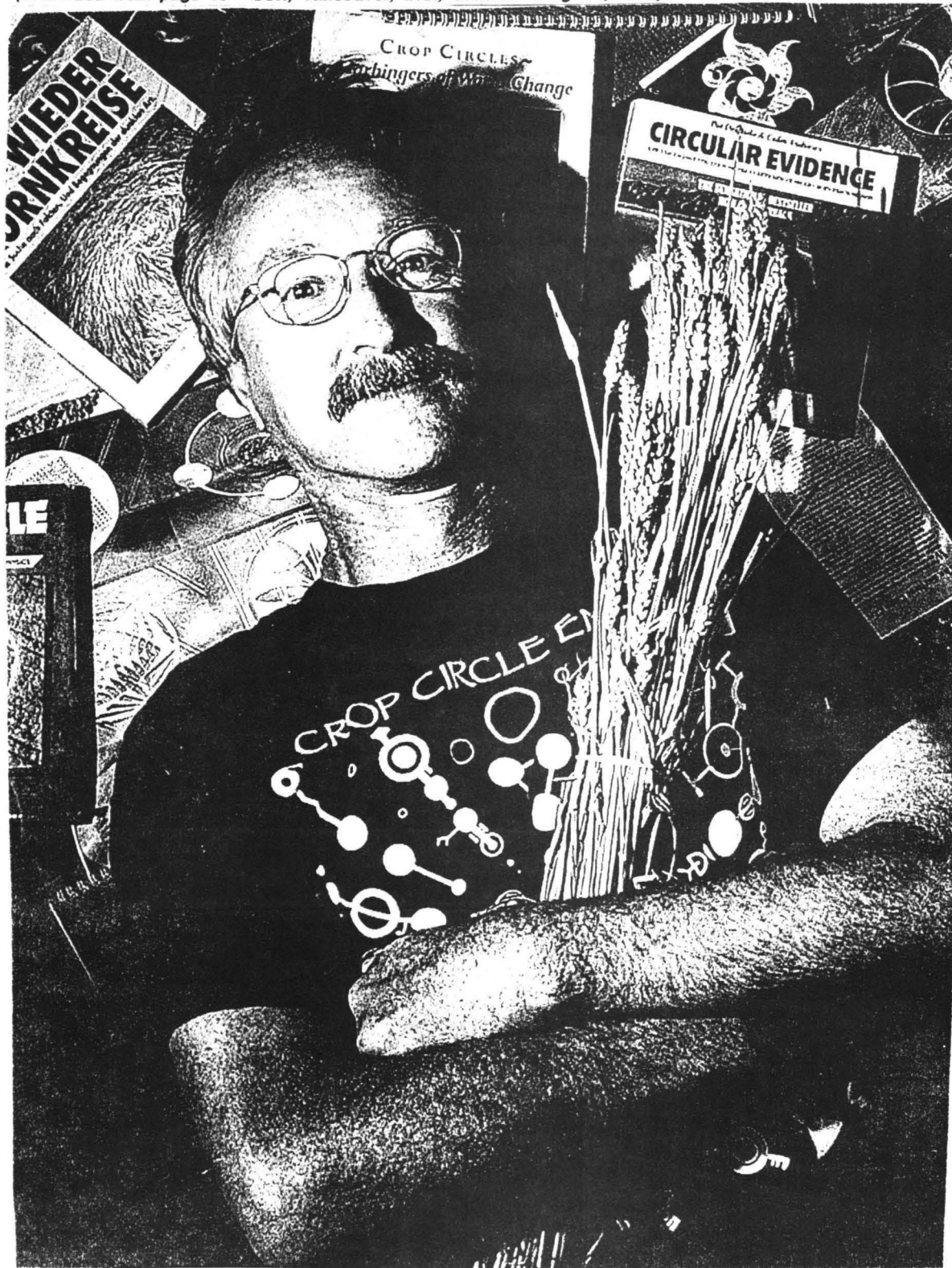
But he's still proud to note that the first modern crop circle may in fact have been Canadian. Forms of the crop-circle phenomenon date back to pre-Christianity, he says, citing ancient belief in fairy rings, for instance. And during the Middle Ages, strange circular formations were described as the work of the devil, who cut down crops with a scythe. But modern crop circles are a phenomenon of the past few decades, Colombo says, and the earliest credible report he's come across was in Canada, on a Saskatchewan wheat farm in 1974. An RCMP report of the incident, which occurred in a field of rapeseed near Yorkton, noted "there were five distinct circles caused by something exerting what had to be heavy air or exhaust pressure over the high grass."

"I think of this one as the grandfather of crop circles," he says, adding that modern examples of the phenomenon didn't emerge in Britain until the 1980s.

"They're a fascinating phenomenon," he adds. "They're beautiful, they're puzzling and they're open to a million interpretations."

Margaret Hall may not have an explanation for them, but she is certainly a believer. Almost exactly three years after the 11-circle creation mysteriously appeared in her oat field by the Vanderhoof airport, another set of crop circles appeared nearby — this time on another parcel of land she leases for farming.

"They are so perfectly made, it just seems unbelievable that they would be created as a hoax sort of thing," she says. "Particularly the first set, which were close to a fairly busy



Vancouver crop circle investigator Chad Deetken holds some dried grasses he gathered in the field.

WARD PERRIN/VANCOUVER SUN

road. If people were to be out there doing something like that, it would be hard pressed for them not to be noticed."

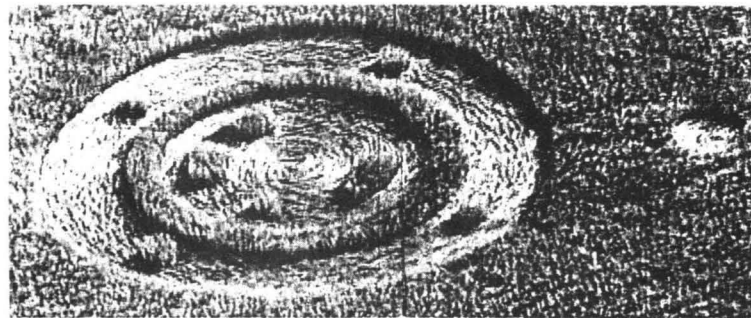
Even before the second set showed up last year, folks around began whispering that maybe she was behind it all. Were there to be a third set — well, that would just be too much of a coincidence for some to bear.

"I hope they show up again," Hall says, "but in somebody else's field."

David Stonehouse last wrote for Mix on the proliferation of robots in everyday life.

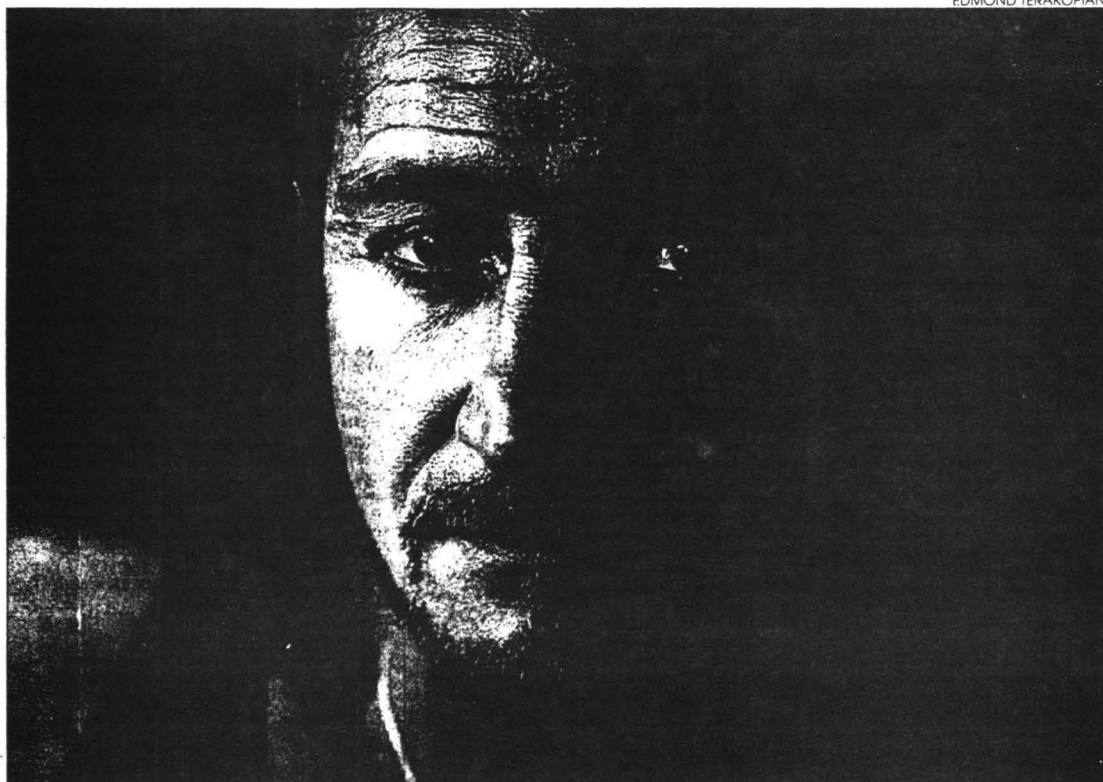
'People can choose to believe what they want to believe. We should have some compassion for those people who cannot accept the reality of this wonderful phenomenon, because their denial is basically a defence mechanism'

— film-maker Robert Nichol



Crop circles that appeared near Mildale, Sask.

CANADIAN CROP CIRCLE RESEARCH NETWORK



Bob Rosamond, who will listen to testimonies and attempt to find a logical explanation for what people have seen

Just a regular guy who looks beyond the sci-fi

DAVID BULLOCK meets a carpenter from Harrow who has a fascination with UFO abductions

BOB Rosamond is, by his own admission, just a regular guy. But when people find out what he does in his spare time they are usually stunned. He investigates UFO abductions.

The 44-year-old carpenter from Harrow has had a fascination with the subject for more than 37 years but, contrary to clichés about the subject, he doesn't spend his days staring up at the sky.

"I'm not a UFO nut," says Mr Rosamond.

"I don't have pictures of ET on my wall and I don't have time for talk of spaceships or little green men."

"I'm a perfectly regular guy. I lead my life and have nothing to do with the subject unless I'm asked to go and take somebody's account."

"I'll meet people if they want to meet me."

Mr Rosamond helps people who want an explanation for something extraordinary they've seen in the sky. He has talked to several people in Harrow who have had some unusual experiences.

"My area of interest is alleged incidents of abduction," he says.

'I'm not a UFO nut. I don't have pictures of ET on my wall and I don't have time for talk of spaceships or little green men'

"I get calls from people who say they've seen something."

"They want to know what it is but more often than not you can't help them with that."

"What I can do is take the sting out of it and make it something less frightening and less weird."

"It's difficult for them to know who to approach because they know what the reaction's going to be. It can become very personal and affect their family life."

"I've got a guy who's e-mailing me about events from four years ago and he still feels uneasy about talking to people."

Mr Rosamond will listen to testimonies and attempt to find a logical explanation for what people have seen.

Some UFO sightings he can discount as low-flying planes but when evidence is more compelling he will investigate further.

"I will go to the location and see if there is anything to add weight to their claims," he says.

"This could be evidence of landing pads or scorch marks on the grass in perfect circles."

"And if something recurs they can call in the middle of the night."

"It's a serious issue and deserves to be treated seriously. If there's no reasonable explanation I have to let them down gently. My job is to support these people."

Mr Rosamond's fascination in the subject first started at the age of eight.

"It started as a youngster," he says.

"I heard my father talking about a small glowing object outside our bathroom window. I wanted to know more but

couldn't ask my parents, so I went to the local library, got a book and devoured it."

Since then Mr Rosamond has gathered information on numerous unexplained phenomena which are often linked to UFOs.

He describes implants obtained from under abductees' skin and cattle mutilated with surgical precision in the middle of the night.

"It's a real subject," he says. "If people take the time to look at the wealth of information available it points to the same conclusion - something is going on."

"It's left the realms of science fiction and is fast heading towards science fact. It would be silly to write off life on other planets."

But for those who find the subject worrying there is good news.

"Harrow is relatively quiet," said Mr Rosamond.

"The amount of things spotted is high, but the percentage that is reported is very small."

"I'm hoping that those holding back will think 'I'll give this guy a try'."

Mr Rosamond can be contacted on 07734 504024.

Looking for proof that the truth is out there

By ROB DAVIES

IF EVER there was a time when folk might report seeing UFOs it was last night. For those whose view was not obscured by cloud, the heavens were ablaze with a spectacular display of shooting stars.

It wasn't alien life of course, just the Perseid meteor shower back for its annual show. Great fun for most of us, but to those who peer into the skies hoping to find extraterrestrials, it's all rather a distraction.

And as sure as starry night follows day, there will be a good few unwelcome reports of alien life arriving at the desk of the Staffordshire UFO Group and elsewhere.

Even among the converted, 90 per cent of sightings turn out to be false alarms, admits the group's chairman, planning officer Graham Allan from Rugeley. That does, of course, leave an interesting 10 per cent which remain, literally, unidentified flying objects. Some, believes Mr Allan, definitely are examples of alien life.

The Staffordshire area has proved rather quiet of late, but a couple of years ago, there were some spectacular sightings, he recalls.

"There was a spate of sightings of a triangular-shaped object, and some were verified by air traffic control," says Mr Allan. "We had a sighting reported to us by three individuals, one was from a family in a car travelling between Tamworth and Lichfield."

"The other was from a resident in Tamworth itself and the third sighting was in Beaconsfield, Stafford. It was a of a bluish-black triangular object travelling slowly in the direction of Lichfield."

One witness described it as a black triangle with white lights.

There have, in fact, been several similar reports of 'mysterious

triangular shapes, not only in the Midlands but elsewhere in the country and worldwide," says Mr Allan.

Sometimes the objects drop down to an altitude of 80 to 100 feet and have been estimated to be as large as a football pitch.

Air Traffic Control in Birmingham dismissed the Staffordshire sightings as those of a plane but Mr Allan is convinced it could be a sign of alien life.

"I don't think it's fanciful. I am quite open to the fact that maybe we are being visited. I would say yes, we are."

So where's the conclusive proof? "I think the proof is there, we just don't get to see it. The only comment I get officially is that there has been no threat from these objects."

Mr Allan suspects a cover up by politicians anxious to avoid creating alarm. Privately, many military figures accept the existence of alien life, he claims. After all, why shouldn't there be extra-terrestrials, he asks? There are countless thousands of planets out there capable of supporting life. Surely it is possible sophisticated creatures from another planet might pay Earth a call. But if they come down in their triangular, or cylindrical machines, why do they never land?

Some do, claims Mr Allan, and in one instance caused substantial fire damage to a hedge in Staffordshire.

Mr Allan and the 30 or so fellow members of Staffordshire UFO group (also known by the acronym SUFOG) are used to detractors and scoffers. Yet at their monthly meetings in Stafford, they regularly host talks by respected scientists who believe in the existence of UFOs. Mr Allan himself gives talks on the subject (he too has seen the mystery triangles) and the sceptics are often taken aback by the amount of evidence out there, he says.

● Anyone wishing to report possible UFO sightings can call Mr Allan on (01889) 585149. The next meeting is on Thursday at St Leonard's Social Club, Stafford, with guest speaker astrologer Paul Mayo.



Talk of a UFO over Claverley in 1996 was literally hot air - it was a balloon.

SOUTHERN DAILY ECHO,

Southampton, England - Sept. 13, 2002

Did you see this UFO?

AS public relations officer for Southampton UFO Group, I have received a report from a mother and her adult son who were walking in Lordshill on the evening of Saturday, September 7.

They spotted a brightly lit disc-shaped object hovering over the area. It didn't seem like an aircraft and they were startled to see it suddenly speed off towards Eastleigh. No

sound was heard. Further details are being retained so as not to influence anyone who may have also seen it.

Inquiries are being made of local authorities and a sighting form is being sent to the pair.

If anyone has information about it please contact me.

ERNIE SEARS,
23 Ashburton House,
Rotary Court, Netley
Abbey, Southampton
SO31 4EF

BRIDLINGTON FREE PRESS,

Yorkshire, England - Aug. 29, 2002

UFO seen over field

A BRIDLINGTON man is hoping readers may be able to solve the mystery of a possible UFO sighting.

Paul Sinclair is convinced he and a colleague saw an unidentified object hovering above a field near Sledmere as they were driving back to Bridlington last Wednesday. Now he is hoping other people may have seen the mystery object, which he described as a 'white glowing oblong', and may be able to explain it. Mr Sinclair said: "We both saw it and at first we thought it was a plane. It was very big and was just stationary in the sky. We watched it for about a minute-and-a-half and then it just disappeared." Mr Sinclair and his colleague spotted the object in a field off the B1253 road from Sledmere to Bridlington, just outside Sledmere, at around 4.15pm.

TRANSLATIONS

[The following translations are all courtesy of Scott Corrales and the Institute for Hispanic Ufology, with translation copyright being retained. Credit for individual contributors will be given at the end of each article. All articles are from South American newspapers and other media sources.]

July 3, 2002 — *La Voz del Interior*, Cordoba, Argentina — HYPOTHESIS GENERATES MANY DOUBTS — "It's hard for me to believe in such an attack by rodents on dead cows," says Jaime Polop. The UNRC rodent specialist reports that the red-muzzled rodents ingest barely 10 to 12 grams of nourishment and that in order to consume the mutilated cow tissue, it would have been necessary to have hundreds of mice acting in concert.

Polop states that he did not have the opportunity to see the mutilated animals and that it is impossible for him to draw conclusions from scant existing data, but he has his doubts.

"The oxymycterus are habitually found in very low numbers among regional rodent populations, which is why it is hard to imagine a massive attack on deceased cows. This mouse species is often found near water courses and I understand that this is not the case where the Berrotaran animal was found." He found it difficult to believe that such a drastic nutritional change could have affected the red-muzzled mouse and adds that if these are indeed the culprits, their fecal matter should be found on the mutilated calf and in its surroundings.

Moreover, the Vice-Chancellor of the School of Agronomy and Veterinary Medicine of the UNRC, Anibal Bessone, pointed out that new histopathological studies will be available before this weekend regarding the animal found at Berrotaran. "No clean incisions are found at Tandil, only ripped or torn ones, and they have proven the rodent's presence in at least 3 or 4 out of 30 [mutilated animal] cases. We will consult them and keep investigating. We would like to have more cases to furnish a general conclusion," he underlined.

Aside from the tenured faculty of the National University of Rio Cuarto, there were also some professors at the National University of Cordoba who expressed their doubts as to the possible involvement of these mice on dead cows. However, they refrained from taking an official stand on the subject.

The clean incisions on this animal found in Berrotaran are the main cause of the controversy. — CREDIT: Alicia Rossi

July 3, 2002 — *La Voz del Interior*, Cordoba, Argentina — SENASA Explanation Found Unconvincing in Rio Cuarto — Rio Cuarto — Researchers at the Universidad Nacional De Rio Cuarto reiterated yesterday that the calf found mutilated yesterday in Berrotaran presented "clean incisions" in its hide, thus discounting any attacks by predators. They admitted in this case that "in principle, the conclusions applied by SENASA cannot be applied," referring to the University of Tandil's report which fingered the red-muzzled mouse (*oxymycterus rufus*) as the principal culprit in the cattle mutilations.

Jaime Polop, a specialist in Rodent Ecology with the National University of Rio Cuarto, stated that the presence of this type of mouse is "minimal" in the southern provinces and expressed doubts regarding the possibility that this animal is the key to unlocking the nationwide mystery.

Polop is an associate professor of Natural Sciences in the School of Mathematics, has 22 years experience as a tenured researcher at UNRC and has spent over 24 years studying rodents. He declared that while the red-muzzled mouse is omnivorous and feeds on vegetable and animal organic matter, it is "very rare" that it should consume carrion. "The information from the Univ. of Tandil is the first we've received regarding this type of behavior by *oxymycterus*. There is no scientific background information in this regard," he said with caution.

Without wanting to dispute SENASA's report, Polop limited himself to saying that in the globality of cases registered in the country, there could be different causes for the mutilations. Polop did address, however, the subject of the sheer number of rodents which would have been needed to produce the lesions found on the cows and rejected the possibility that these mice could produce clean incisions in the hides of other animals to feed on them. "The *oxymycterus* has chisel-shaped teeth, and it is impossible for that type of dentition to produce clean cuts on animal hides. It's bite is similar to any mouse chewing through wood, which would never be mistaken for a surgical implement," he defined.

He also noted that the muzzled mouse "is not a predator": "Normally, when a predator such as a fox begins [by eating] the entrails, it continues to feed from the same open wound. To find lesions on the mouth, abdomen, and anus, and to see this pattern repeating itself, draws my attention considerably," added Polop.

Meanwhile, another mutilated bovine, missing eyes and genitals--characteristics similar to other finds in other provinces--was discovered late yesterday in the town of San Pedro, Department of Santa Rosa, 150 km from the provincial seat.

The National Health and Agroalimentary Service (SENASA) confirmed that "a Commission is working in the area to determine the discovery of a mutilated bovine animal." — CREDIT: Alicia Rossi

July 6, 2002 — *Noticias*, Carmen de Patagones, Comarca Viedma, Argentina — **Strange light seen last night by occupants of 268 homes** — UFOs REPORTED OVER PATAGONES — "We were able to see how an airliner in the distance appeared to pass over the object, which vanished into the horizon following a zig-zag pattern." — PATAGONES — A new unknown and luminous object appeared over the Comarca, but this time the strange object, which changed colors, was seen last night by several local residents -- some 25 people -- occupying the 268 homes that make up the village of Carmen de Patagones.

Faced with the strange light, the villagers alerted each other and slowly emerged from their homes and were stunned by the clarity with which the alleged UFO could be seen.

The luminous object's appearance occurred shortly after 21:00 hrs and it remained visible until 21:30, at which time it receded from view until it vanished in the horizon.

According to the locals who saw it, the object approached and receded "like some sort of zoom lens" and changed colors as it did so. Other locals followed the luminous object with their own eyes, while others used binoculars. One villager informed a relative in the city of the Viedma, who confirmed that the object was visible from said city. According to the information given by several of the locals, the object had considerable luminosity, changed colors and moved in a zig-zag pattern, although it stopped at times to move in a swinging motion. The object was allegedly filmed by the daughter of a local merchant who followed it to the rotunda, located by the Basilio Villarino bridge. It was seen one last

time heading toward Guardia Mitre before losing itself in the horizon.

One of the eyewitnesses was Anibal Benitez, owner of a business on Calle Mexico, who stated with regard to the light that "the light was very potent and changed colors every so often to red, blue and bright white," adding that: "We were able to see how an airliner in the distance appeared to pass over the object, which vanished into the horizon following a zig-zag pattern." The businessman didn't hesitate and followed the object as it moved. "I hopped into my pickup truck with my family and we followed it up to the road that leads to Guardia Mitre, where the object gradually became lost in the horizon after remaining for a few minutes."

In the meantime, Isabel, another villager, stated that the "object was very luminous and we could see it for around 25 minutes. The object appeared to come closer and then recede. Many people in the neighborhood saw it." — CREDIT: Alicia Rossi

July 6, 2002 — *Rio Negro On Line* and *Telam News Agency*, Argentina — According to INTA, the cows died of natural causes — "The conclusion agrees with the one reached by SENASA specialists" — BUENOS AIRES (TELAM) — The bovine deaths and depredations reported in several provinces of the country are due to natural causes proper to this time of year, according to a report from the Balcarce Experimental Station of the National Institute of Livestock Technology (INTA). Histopathological studies and necropsies performed by INTA technicians show that the tissues present no alterations aside from those which are "produced by the passing of time" and that the cause of death was attributable to "common diseases for the time of year." The communique, signed by Ernesto Odiozola of the INTA's Specialized Veterinary Diagnostic Service (SDVE) agrees along general lines with the opinions given by scientists of the Universidad Nacional de Centro at Tandil, requested by SENASA.

The report is based on analyses performed "as of June 20" in "different locations in the Buenos Airean districts of Dorrego, Tres Arroyos, Tandil, Necochea and Olavarria," at the request of "veterinarians in private practice." During these visits, 10 animals presenting similar characteristics were observed, with necropsies being performed on four of them and samples taken from all of the animals, explained the report.

The histopathological studies performed at the INTA Balcarce laboratories showed that the animal tissue "described as cauterized presented no alterations beyond those produced by the passing of time, post mortem changes which are common to any tissue several days after death." It likewise states that the "necropsies performed on animals that had been dead for only several hours revealed that the cause of death could be attributed to diseases common to the time of year, such as pneumonia, hypomagnesemia, etc." The incisions observed presented "serrated edges" with irregularities which could be explained as the action of common predators." — CREDIT: Alicia Rossi

July 7, 2002 — *IFOR [Investigadores del Fenomeno Ovni de Rufino]*, Argentina — ANIMAL MUTILATIONS NEAR RUFINO: THE COLONIA TRES ARBOLES CASE — "A mutilated calf was found on a field located 10 km SE of Rufino, owned by one Mr. Caunedo and currently leased by Mr. Camilo Lisiardo." — Mr. Lisiardo habitually tours the field in order to observe the state of his cattle. On June 28, he noticed that his herd was doing well. When he returned on Monday, July 1, he noticed a dead calf in a rather remote section of the field. Its body presented strange mutilations.

IFOR got in touch with Lisardo on July 2 and were immediately taken to the site. On site, they found the carcass of a small calf lying on its left side with its head pointed toward the southeast. They immediately became aware of a clean cut running from its nose to the throat. The lower maxillary and a small portion of the upper maxillary were completely clean, as though the animal had been dead for several months. It was also noticed that its right eye was missing and the orbital cavity was completely empty. Its belly, particularly around the navel, featured a circle almost 4 cm in diameter. Its hindquarters showed signs of predation, but Lisardo, who had seen the animal a day earlier, had detected a well-delineated circle in the anal region with the extirpation of said organ. The presence of the tongue was not detected through the lower maxillary.

IFOR returned to the site on Wednesday the 3rd with veterinarian Hernando Brandino, who made a full examination of the animal, stating that the animal's hindquarters had been predated by carrion eaters. After careful observations, posing a few hypotheses and making incisions with a knife, he was able to corroborate the similarity between the existing cuts and the ones made. While he did not altogether discard predator action, he leaned toward the evidence that said incisions could be due to the action of a sharp instrument. He was also alerted by how clean the lower maxillary looked, which would be the case in an animal that been dead for a long time. This find, which can be included in the long list of mutilations recorded in different parts of the country, since it follows the same patterns, cannot be linked to the observation of lights or other anomalous phenomena, since these have not been detected.

Regarding this specific case, we respectfully disagree with the explanation provided by SENASA that names the Common Red-Muzzled Mouse (*Oxymycterus rufus*) as the cause of these mutilations for several reasons: among them, should this rodent exist in our area, its population density would be too low to provoke such depredations. On the other hand, there is no evidence that these rodents can make such straight and perfect incisions.

Detail of the head mutilations: A straight incision can be seen along the neck and running to the nose. The lower maxillary is completely skinned and the tongue and an eye are missing. In the case involving this mutilated calf, it is very likely that the incisions were made by an edged instrument. What remains to be answered is who or what did it and to what end.

I.F.O.R.: Juan Jose Mecchi — Norberto Mollo — Leonardo Mollo — CREDIT: Alicia Rossi

July 9, 2002 — *El Diario de la Pampa*, Argentina — AUTHORITIES STATE THAT THE RED-MUZZLED MOUSE DOES NOT EXIST IN LA PAMPA — "Government dismisses SENASA report on cattle mutilations" — The provincial government dismissed yesterday the official report presented by the National Health and Agroalimentary Quality Service (SENASA) regarding the causes of death and mutilations of dozens of bovines, since the "red-muzzled mouse," the alleged perpetrator of dozens of bovine deaths and mutilations, is not found in La Pampa. This was made clear by the Minister of Production, Nestor Alcalá, who pointed out that the rodents of this species "are unknown to me, nor do I believe they form part of the Pampan fauna." Veterinarians and agronomist engineers echoed this sentiment.

Gustavo Siegenthaler, director of the National Museum of History of La Pampa, noted that "this species has not been found in the surveys we have conducted." From 1986 to 1992, Siegenthaler headed a multidisciplinary team which produced a report entitled "Survey of Vertebrates in the Province of La Pampa."

"We have placed between 70 and 120 traps each night and have never found that species, and it does not appear in the bibliography either," he stated. The book "Mammals of Argentina," by the Migule Lillo Institute, indicates that the "red-muzzled mouse" lives from Mesopotamia [Translator's Note: name given to the region of Argentina between the Parana and Uruguay Rivers] to northeastern Buenos Aires province. "It cannot have spread to other areas, because it

would have been detected," he explained. "And in the event that they were the authors of the mutilations, it would be assumed that there would be more or less significant populations, thus making them easy to find, which has not happened."

Veterinarian Maria Parturlane said that "the anapathological lesions (on the mutilated cows) cannot be said to have been caused by a mouse." Medical veterinarian Alberto Pariani, Academic Secretary and Professor of the School of Veterinary Medicine at the National Univ. of La Pampa at Pico, after reading the SENASA report, considered that "there are always field mice, but for example, in the cases we found in the field, there were no traces of rodent fecal matter."

Meanwhile it was learned yesterday that a mutilated cow was found in the "San Juan" pasture field near Algarrobo del Agula, owned by Pablo Bravo. Alcala said that "the report these people have put together (meaning SENASA, based on research from Univ. del Centro in Buenos Aires) may be what they saw, but I don't know that it agrees with what is happening in La Pampa or other parts of the country."

The SENASA report states that the mutilated bovines died "due to natural causes" and that subsequent lesions on the hide and organs were caused by predators such as rodents and even foxes in some cases. The health organization thus attempted to pour cold water on the subject, but few have believed in this version of the events.

Furthermore, the Uruguayan government ruled, on the same day that the report was issued, that mutilations in that country were produced by the German Wasp (yellow jacket). — CREDIT: Alicia Rossi

July 9, 2002 — *El Diario de la Republica, Argentina* — ANOTHER MUTILATED COW IN SAN FRANCISCO — SAN LUIS — Just when the mystery of the cattle mutilations appears to have been dispelled by a scientific explanation, a five month old bovine was found dead in San Francisco del Monte de Oro, showing the same incisions as the others which were a source of intrigue throughout the country. The discovery was made on Friday night at a ranch known as "El Quebrachito", 8 km west of the entrance to the community.

According to Ruben Diaz, a journalist with San Francisco Television, the person who saw the animal first is a man known as "El Negro" Vazquez. The animal and the field belong to Alberto Martin, former superintendent and a respected businessman in the community. According to Diaz, the bovine is missing several internal organs and its flesh had a strange look. "It's as though a machine had gone into its mouth and sucked out everything inside." The external examination showed that the bovine was missing its ears, tongue, intestines and one eye. Its anus appears to have been extracted and the entire area presents a wound similar to ones made by burns. "Part of the tail has similar lesions," noted the journalist.

People who know the area are startled by the fact that dogs did not bark out a warning, nor make any sound whatsoever. They are further certain that the event was discovered shortly after it took place. According to Diaz, on Friday afternoon, the field owner's children were cutting down a tree not far from where the dead cow was found.

In an interview granted to Diaz's TV show, Martin stated that he had never before seen anything similar. — CREDIT: Alicia Rossi

July 9, 2002 — *El Diario del Sur de Cordoba-Villa Maria, Argentina* — Cows Found Inside Water Tank — The Strange Case of Suco, Investigated by *El Diario* — On the last Friday of June 2002, an event of truly strange characteristics took place in a field of the locality of Suco, located to the west of Rio Cuarto, very near the border with San Luis Province. In the aforementioned Cordoban locality, a well-known livestock producer respected by all for his responsibility and honesty, found 19 dead animals within an Australian-type water tank [Translators note: steel-sided, sheet metal tank with a conical cap]. Nine of the bovines were dead, according to subsequent medical-veterinarian examinations due to asphyxiation through immersion. The rest were alive, but affected by the low temperatures and near dead due to freezing.

The news not only spread like wildfire throughout the area: it was confirmed by police officials of Regional Unit 7, headquartered at Rio Cuarto, who took over the investigation of the case employing personnel from the Sampacho District Sheriff's Office, located 50 kilometers west of Rio Cuarto on National Hwy. 8.

What no one could explain is how the 19 animals could have entered the enormous water tank, bearing in mind that they first had to cross an electric drover (sic), then a 1.50 meter tall fence, and finally, "jump" over the tank wall.

Two days after, in a field bordering the first one, the farmhands and owners of the property found a cow that showed the same signs of mutilations suffered by bovines in ranches of Buenos Aires, La Pampa, Mendoza, Southern Cordoba, etc. This time, the mutilated animal had given birth to a calf, although it was stressed that only the mother was affected in this case, showing burns and precise incisions in different parts of the carcass, as though experts had deftly used a special type of scalpel. These cases, according to the statements of a veterinarian named Cumin, who lives in Sampacho, have been investigated from the onset by specialists from the School of Veterinary Medicine of the National University of Rio Cuarto, although they have not received any report that allows them to explain what has really happened.

Those who have dedicated themselves to the possible existence of other forms of life, of UFOs and their consequences, posited the challenging possibility that what they term "teleportations" occurred in this case, thus "explaining" how a lot of 19 animals of large size and weight could have been conveyed by an unknown force from a common and accustomed place (a cow pen) to a strange one (the interior of a water tank), an action that is illogical in both method and objective. If so, these repeated events do away with the efforts aimed at explaining the events and which lay the blame on both "red-muzzled mice" and "carnivorous bees" and "cattle rustlers".

It was acknowledged yesterday that a pasture owner in La Silleta, Province of Salta, found a dead pig showing the characteristics of a mutilated animal, lacking maxillaries, tongue or eyes.

This is how veterinarian Juan Carlos Gimenez Monje discussed the subject. He visited the farm after receiving a call from the owner and added: "I took the animal over to SENASA in Salta and they sent it off to Buenos Aires." The veterinarian explains the situation as being due to the fact that "the agricultural producers stopped using herbicides because of the high cost, then vermin and wild animals can reoccupy the fields once more. Agricultural activity," he added, "consists of zero farming nowadays and the plough, which used to destroy rodent burrows, no longer enters the fields."

What the expert could not explain was how wild animals could extract the organs in the fashion detailed earlier, with precise cuts, and further having cauterized the wounds. — CREDIT: Alicia Rossi and Jorge Luis Gorno, Villa Maria UFO Research Group

July 10, 2002 — *El Ancasti, Catamarca, Argentina* — MUTILATED DOG FOUND IN CATAMARCA — A large mixed-breed dog was found dead yesterday morning by its owner in their dwelling's enclosed back yard. The animal is

missing its tongue, eyes, trachea, aorta, part of its extremities and most of its skin, which appears to have been sheared off by a sharp object rather than torn. There were no signs of blood in the area. — CREDIT: Gloria Coluchi

July 10, 2002 - *La Gaceta*, Tucuman, Argentina — GOATS AND COWS MUTILATED AT THE LEALES INTA — ****Resident claims having seen a large light. Animals found in Tucuman are missing soft parts such as eyes, gums and genitals**** — Tucuman couldn't be left out. Eight bovines and seven goats were found mutilated in recent days in the pasture field owned by INTA at Santa Rosa de Leales. In all cases, the soft tissues were missing, such as eyes, tongue, gums and genitals. Neighbors were surprised to see that the animals were bloodless. For two months now, cases involving mutilated animals have kept Argentines in suspense. From extraterrestrial beings to the legendary "Chupacabras", theories regarding the authors of the attacks were numerous. Two weeks ago, SENASA issued a report stating that the attacks had been carried out by a predator known as the "red-muzzled mouse", which had undergone a mutation and become carnivorous. In Leales, Maria del Carmen Reyes claimed having seen a bright light, which was followed by the discovery of the dead animals. The mystery continues... — CREDIT: Gloria Coluchi

July 11, 2002 — *El Fuerte*, Chascomus, Prov. of Buenos Aires, Argentina — ****BREAKING NEWS**** — In the Don Cipriano area — Another Mutilated Cow Discovered — The subject of cattle mutilations appeared to have come to an end following certain professional explanations, but a new case has become known in our district. This one occurred in the "El Taray" field owned by Felipe Sallenave, located on the road to Vado near Public School 19 in the town of Don Cipriano, where the foreman, Fernando Ulloa witnessed to his amazement that a pregnant cow that was in perfect health the day before, showing no signs or symptoms of any malady, was found dead the next morning with signs of mutilation.

The specimen was a half-breed Aberdeen Angus and Hereford. It was missing its ears, part of the jaw, tongue, one of its eyes and the nipples on the udders had been shorn off. Part of the rectum was also missing. It was learned that the incisions observed were similar to the ones seen in similar events occurring in other provinces. The pasture field's owner does not consider it possible for the oft-mentioned rodents to have been involved in the act, confirming that he made no police report on the event since he didn't consider it proper (sic). He further explained that access to the field was rather complicated given the poor condition of the roads. — CREDIT: Alicia Rossi

July 12, 2002 — *El Diario Austral de La Arucania*, Chile — UFO CAUSES SENSATION THROUGHOUT VILLARRICA — This is the UFO caught on tape by videographer Alberto Sandoval on Wednesday night. Around 21:00 hours on Wednesday night, dozens of families in Villarrica were watching TV or listening to the friendly voice of their local radio station, which mixed with the soft sound of the rain falling in the darkness and silence of the evening. But this tranquility was suddenly and unexpectedly altered by the appearance of an unidentified flying object (UFO) which lit the winter night. In spite of the fact that the clouds obstructed a clear view of the object, it was seen from several points of the lake region by hundreds of people, and yesterday, the incredible phenomenon was being discussed in all corners of this city.

On that night, in the control booth of Radio Apumanque, Patricio Castillo, 28, was choosing music selections for hundreds of listeners while the rain continued outside. When the clock marked 21:15 hours, the station's phone began to ring. The radio controller raised a headphone and heard the voice of his co-worker Pilar Castillo, asking him to look out the window because there was a very strange object in the sky. Patricio hung up and opened one of the windows, leaned out and saw the strange object in the dark and rainy winter night. "I looked and I saw a luminous object with three red lights in one of its sides. It was still for a few seconds and then made a very swift movement. I stopped looking at it for a few seconds because I ran in to play a song and when I returned, it was gone," he explained. He had been working for 9 years in radio and had never had a similar experience. "I used to not believe in these things, but my opinion changed after this."

For one moment, Patricio thought it could be the millionaire who is crossing the world by balloon, but then realized that he had already passed over South America, adding that despite its luminosity, the UFO made no noise, dismissing the possibility that it could be an airplane.

Pilar Castillo, the host of the "Morning Talk with Pili" segment, stated that after 21:00 hours she had left a meeting when she realized that there was something strange in the sky. Some of the persons with her were astonished as the luminous object vanished suddenly. "It was like a shooting star that changed colors as it went away. It came from the direction of Nancul to Villarrica. It was red for some minutes and then turned violet."

We left the station and under a southern rain headed to the house of Alberto Sandoval, 47, a self-taught cameraman with years of experience, who managed to record the UFO. Upon reaching the property, one of his neighbors told us we could locate him at Radio Pianisima. We reached the station and found him hosting the "Mundialmente Mexico" program, which airs for one hour every morning. Between Mexican ranchero songs, Alberto Sandoval, who has spent some 28 years in radio, confirmed that he had indeed managed to film the UFO. "A neighbor called me and told me to go outside with the camera to film a strange object in the sky. I took out my machine and between the raindrops managed to obtain some images which have a duration of some 5 seconds."

This isn't the first time, said Sandoval, that he has obtained UFO images in the lake region. "In the summer of '95, a neighbor woke me up at 5 a.m.. I took my camera and filmed a strange object. The good thing is that the sky was clear. I could see a luminous sphere similar to last night's, only larger." FOR MORE INFORMATION: <http://www.diarioaustral.cl/> — CREDIT: Gloria Coluchi

July 12, 2002 — *El Diario de la Pampa*, Argentina — DID TOXIC AGENT CAUSE ANIMAL DEATHS? — "Tests must be sent to laboratory," says Isequilla — Up to now, no laboratory in the country confirmed the presence of toxic agents in the mutilated animal carcasses. Specialists believe that the animals are dying from pneumonia or lack of minerals. The bureaucrats, holding on to a report since July 1st which suggested the possibility that at least two cows could have died from having aspirated a toxic agent, waited until yesterday (when *El Diario* published the story) to request the corresponding lab analysis. The Undersecretary of Agrarian Affairs, Juan Isequilla, pointed out that he could "neither confirm nor reject" the suspicion that a toxic or caustic narcotic caused the deaths of cows which have turned up dead in the Santa Isabel region, since lab tests have yet to be performed. "In order to have a proper diagnostic it is necessary to send the tests to a lab to carry out the histopathological and chemical diagnoses, among others," he said, after *El Diario* published the story of two necropsies performed by a veterinarian of the western part of the province, who suspects the animals died from aspirating or ingesting a toxic chemical. "As per good veterinarian practice, one must be able to demonstrate what one is speaking about," stated Isequilla, adding that it is therefore necessary "to submit the material to the lab for corroboration." — CREDIT: Alicia Rossi



USA TODAY, Washington, DC - Nov. 1, 2002

Some scientists give Bigfoot a second look

Skepticism still reigns, but a few are 'receptive'

By Marco R. della Cava
USA TODAY

IN THE SISKIYOU MOUNTAINS, Ore. — There are times in life when we must summon every shred of courage to stand tall and unflinching in the face of fear.

This is not one of them.

It is 2 a.m., and outside a tent lit by a full moon something stirs in the forest.

Crack! goes the twig.

"Deer, right?" asks a visitor, about to tick away the nerve-racking night one snap, crackle and pop at a time until dawn delivers an odd and harrowing howl.

"Nah," replies local Matthew Johnson, sliding a hand onto his .44 Magnum. "That wasn't a twig; it was a thick branch. Whatever's out there is bigger. Much bigger."

Bigger as in Yeti and Sasquatch.
Bigger as in Bigfoot.

Cover story

That's right, the hairy, smelly lunk is still with us. Regardless of which name is used — Asian, Native American or tabloid — he's still the same old 10-foot-tall, half-ton, mannish ape whose star turn in a grainy 1967 home movie helped generate thousands of sightings.

Make no mistake. Bigfoot and his kin remain part of a freaky family of *Charlie's Angels*-era fads (think poltergeists and UFOs), and the scientific community at large remains amused.

But the faithful hope Bigfoot may yet make a monkey out of non-believers. For decades, a small but loyal legion of Bigfoot hunters has spent countless weekends prowling forests in nearly every state, piling up evidence such as alleged footprints and hair samples that now has a handful of animal experts willing to at least entertain the possibility of his existence.

"I've gone from being a raving skeptic to being curiously receptive," says Robert Benson, director of the Center for Bioacoustics at Texas A&M. He appears in a new documentary, *Sasquatch: Legend Meets Science*, critiquing taped Bigfoot



By Steve C. Johnson for USA TODAY

A big foot: Many believers search for clues.

interesting that something allegedly that large has never been found."

The same issue concerns the Wildlife Conservation Society's Alan Rabinowitz, an Indiana Jones figure in the world of animal anthropology. "It is very rare, once you've been told about an animal and its habits, to then never find anything tangible," he says.

'He's out there'

The mere possibility of an elusive ape-like creature has an almost primal allure, as evidenced in the hundreds of reports filed each year with the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization. That he's been spotted in almost every corner of the USA makes Bigfoot rival Elvis in terms of sightings; but that doesn't bother the committed.

"He's out there," says Johnson, a clinical psychologist in Grants Pass,

a town about an hour northeast of his Bigfoot stomping grounds.

Johnson had no interest in finding the beast until the beast found him. He spied his personal Moby Dick while on a family hike two summers ago and was reduced to tears by its size — impressive considering that Johnson is 6-foot-9, weighs 250 pounds and wears size 16 shoes. Now he's leader of the Southern Oregon Bigfoot Society, a ragtag but dedicated assemblage



Photos by Steve C. Johnson for USA TODAY

Hot on the trail: Matt Johnson hikes Oregon's Siskiyou Mountains.

of sleuths who typify the breed.

"Once you hear him scream at you, you're hooked," he says. "Some people play sports or fish. Others, well, we go Bigfootin'."

Bigfoot's legend dates back to the earliest campfire gatherings.

Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest had stories about encounters with *sesqec*, from which the term *Sasquatch* emerged, and the pioneers had their own run-ins with the woolly misfit.

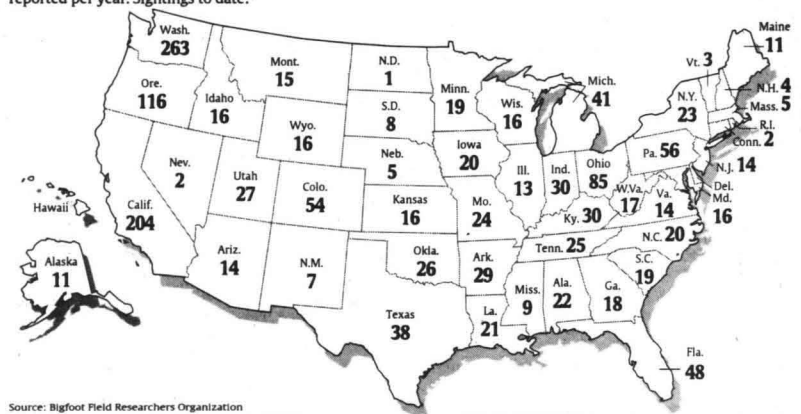
But what really launched Bigfoot into a Loch Ness Monster orbit was the amateur film shot in northern California by Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin. The upright beast with gorilla looks and human gait — dubbed *Patty* — loped past and then suddenly glared at their lens.

The hunt was on.

Over the ensuing decades, pop culture went Bigfoot-crazy. In the '70s, *Star Wars*' Chewbacca was an intergalactic nod to the big guy. The '80s brought us stubby, two-foot-long "Bigfoot" model skis, and the '90s delivered the TV series *Harry and the Hendersons*. More re-

Bigfoot sightings by state

Though Bigfoot is most often associated with the Pacific Northwest and the Himalayan Mountains, the creature has been spotted in all but three — Delaware, Hawaii and Rhode Island — of the 50 states, with a few hundred sightings reported per year. Sightings to date:



"We're in the South; we've got things hanging out in the woods. It's got to be inbreeding."

True Believers

Do big hairy primates occupy East Texas? Other than humans, we mean.

BY MICHELLE MARTINEZ

"I don't believe in Bigfoot. I thought I'd let you know that I absolutely do not believe in Bigfoot," begins Chester Moore Jr. The audience shuffles and murmurs uneasily, as if they have been tricked. "How many people here believe in Bigfoot?" Almost everyone warily raises a hand. Moore delivers. "I think that believing is for religion, and I've accepted the fact that we have a hidden species of primate in North America." Sighs of relief break out among the believers.

Moore, a wildlife journalist whose work has appeared in *Texas Parks & Wildlife*, *Texas Fish & Game*, *Tide* and *Port Arthur News*, is one of several speakers who took a stand for Bigfoot at the Second Annual Texas Bigfoot Conference held earlier this month in Jefferson, near Longview. The conference was organized by the Texas Bigfoot Research Center, a volunteer group based in Dallas that investigates reports of Bigfoot activity in the state and attempts to document habitual behavior of these cryptids or "hidden animals."

Cryptozoologists, as many Bigfoot researchers tag themselves, study animals that are either thought to be extinct or unknown to science. Vindication for the science, to some degree, has come in the form of the coelacanth, the okapi and the mountain gorilla, creatures that existed only in local legend and eyewitness accounts until their eventual discovery and classification during the 20th century. Enthusiasts are quick to remind that Bigfoot is not paranormal, but simply another of these unknown animals. "I tell people, you know, we're not dealing with a monster here or the missing link or a shape-shifter from another dimension or an extraterrestrial being," says research center assistant director Craig Woolheater. "I believe it's a flesh-and-blood animal, a primate of some sort. A primate that has been able, for the most part, to elude man."

Though conference attendance topped 200, believers are the exception rather than the norm among the general population. But maybe there

would be a lot more converts, Moore suggests, if people understood that there is a scientific basis—and precedent—for the existence of Bigfoot. "When I say, 'I believe in Bigfoot,' to some people, they look at me like I said I believe in some false god or something," Moore says. "Most people's representation of Bigfoot [is]...some tabloid headline that says, 'Bigfoot Stole My Grandmother.'"

While sightings of Bigfoot have become almost commonplace in the Pacific Northwest, the idea of Bigfoot in Texas is news to most. Cryptids in Texas shouldn't come as a surprise, Woolheater says. His research of Texas folklore uncovered tales of a Bigfoot-like creature—"The Wild Woman of the Navidad"—as far back as 1837. Texas also offers the mild winters, diverse agriculture, abundant prey base and natural shelter in which a Bigfoot herd could thrive. The creatures' size, intelligence and speed would put them at the top of the food chain, and with no natural predators, East Texas forests and bottomlands might be able to sustain a sizable Bigfoot population.

Luke Gross and Woolheater, who met on the Internet through their common cryptozoology interest, founded the Texas Bigfoot Research Center in 1999. In the past three and a half years, the center's volunteer staff has grown from two researchers to 30, with eight to 10 associate members. All research is self-funded through membership dues. "It would be nice if we could find somebody, a wealthy benefactor that might be interested in helping us," Woolheater admits. "There's not a whole lot of funding out there for stuff like this." Searching for Bigfoot is not an inexpensive hobby; the gear that the investigators use—generation III night-vision cameras, motion-activated infrared cameras, parabolic dish listening devices, thermal imaging units, GPS-integrated walkie-talkies—costs thousands of dollars. In hopes of finding a modern-day Tom Slick—the Texas millionaire who funded cryptozoology expeditions in the '50s—the Center has tried, unsuccessfully thus far, to elicit the aid of both Mark Cuban and Don Henley.

The Texas Bigfoot Research Center has received more than 100 eyewitness reports through its Web site, www.texasbigfoot.com, with 40 of those coming immediately after a news special about the group aired on NBC-56 Tyler-Longview in July and August. While some of the sightings were fairly recent, quite a few were older claims, people who are coming forward to tell what they've seen and kept quiet about for decades. "We find that people, a lot of times, are even traumatized by these events," Woolheater says. "It's almost a therapeutic experience for them because they don't have anybody that they feel they can say anything to...But in small towns in East Texas, people don't talk; it's just fairly accepted that

these things are out there."

Woolheater himself claims to have seen a Bigfoot in 1994. On the way home to Dallas from New Orleans with his wife on a moonless night, his headlights caught a tall, hairy figure walking beside the road. "It was grayish in the light, and it was moving in the same direction we were moving, so we just saw the back of it, but it was definitely moving," he recounts. "And we both, simultaneously, looked at each other and said, 'Did you just see what I just saw?'" He wanted to turn back, but his wife, then girlfriend, did not. He hasn't seen another Bigfoot since that day.

Once an eyewitness files a report with the TBRC, the investigators follow up by phone, and if possible, visit the site of the incident. If the sighting was fairly recent, the researchers look for Bigfoot signs—tree breaks or twists, hair, blood and, of course, tracks. "We do have a lot of areas where we're finding the tree twists...and to be able to actually twist it against the grain, it takes more than just a large animal leaning up against the tree and breaking it. It has to apply torque, and that almost requires a thumb to be able to do," Woolheater says. Investigators also try to judge whether the sighting area would even be habitable for Bigfoot, offering adequate food, water and shelter.

Despite a growing quantity of evidence, the public remains doubtful about its quality. "You should be skeptical about cases where there should be some more evidence, some better evidence, and there isn't," says John Blanton of the North Texas Skeptics, a Dallas-area group that promotes the use of science in exploring extraordinary happenings. "We wouldn't consider this paranormal, because this is within the realm of possibility. If there's some large creature, an ape-like creature, and he's managed to elude our discovery all this time, more power to him. But it would be a pretty difficult thing to do."

Bigfoot trackers explain anomalies such as inconsistent track shapes and toe number with genetics. As Moore put it, "We're in the South; we've got things hanging out in the woods. It's got to be inbreeding." A small genetic pool would also account for the Bigfoot aggressiveness that has been reported in the South and not in the Northwest. And since no carcasses or skeletons have been found, researchers reason that maybe Bigfoot bury or cannibalize their dead or, like some animals, conceal themselves as they are dying.

Woolheater concludes that there are only a few choices. "Either people are out-and-out lying, or they are hallucinating, or they are being hoaxed by someone else unbeknownst to them, or they're misidentifying a known animal—or they saw what they say they saw. And I feel that at least part of them fall in that last category. And even if only one of them actually saw what they say they saw, then there's something out there." ●

You know what they say, big feet...big casts: Craig Woolheater displays a plaster Bigfoot cast.



ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE, Little Rock, AR - Jan. 25, 2002

Perplexing legend of Mothman remains just that — perplexing

BY ANTHONY BREZNICAN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — No one is quite sure what came to the river town of Point Pleasant, W.Va., in the 1960s. Was it an alien? An angel? The devil? Or merely an instance of group hysteria? Whatever the answer, it was called Mothman.

And now that Hollywood has produced *The Mothman Prophecies*, mystery investigator John A. Keel expects skepticism about the bizarre phenomena he chronicled in his 1975 book.

That's OK with him — Keel is a skeptic himself.

"I have tried to remain as objective as possible," he said. "I've gone through periods where I think, 'Now I know it all' ... but I don't know if anyone will ever fully understand it."

Although the sightings in Point Pleasant and the deaths that followed are more than 30 years old, the Mothman remains a potent piece of American folklore.

It started in 1966 when two young couples reported seeing a winged man with "glowing

eyes" on a woodland road outside the town.

Sightings continued for nearly a year, making national news and prompting an investigation by local police. The sightings ended in 1967 when the town's Silver Bridge collapsed into the Ohio River, killing 46 people.

Some believers said the Mothman had come to warn them, while others suggested the entity may have caused the tragedy.

Throughout the season of sightings, several dozen townsfolk said they witnessed the winged man firsthand while others spotted only glowing lights in the sky. Televisions and automobiles often malfunctioned during the sightings, farmers reported cattle mutilations and peculiar "men in black" supposedly menaced witnesses.

But Keel doesn't believe the Mothman was an alien, and the movie — starring Richard Gere and Laura Linney — doesn't either. "There's an ancient Egyptian proverb I made up that goes, 'The nature of the unknown is to remain unknown,'" said *Mothman* screenwriter Richard

Hatem. "That's the underlying theme of both Keel's book and this movie."

The film fictionalizes some of Keel's experiences, with Gere's character changed to a *Washington Post* reporter plagued with visions of his dead wife. The movie also creates another alter-ego for Keel named Alexander Leek — "Keel" spelled backward — a curmudgeonly scientist with theories about the Mothman.

"I think there is a fascination with the unexplained because everything in our lives is so over-explained," said *Mothman* director Mark Pellington, whose previous film work includes the conspiracy-filled *Arlington Road* in 1999. "We're always looking for something to add a little magic to life."

The Mothman legend appealed to him because there was no easy explanation — the mysteries of the universe remained mysteries in Point Pleasant.

"As long as we get an answer — any answer — we're satisfied, but when these stories are not tied up neatly they continually perplex us," he said.

COLUMBIAN, Vancouver, WA - June 17, 2002

Report of Bigfoot sighting falls short

No sign of legendary beast found in forests

SAPPHO (AP) — Police followed up on a reported sighting of the legendary Sasquatch, also called Bigfoot, but came up empty-handed.

"We were unable to locate, identify or capture the Sasquatch," Forks Police Chief Mike Powell said.

The report came from a man living on Burnt Mountain Road in this community, about 30 miles northeast of Forks. The man, whose name was not released, said he spotted the hairy, human-like creature near his house Monday.

An animal control officer checked the area but found no signs of the creature. That took the burden of figuring out how to deal with such a discovery off local law-enforcement officers, Powell said Friday.

"I don't know why we would impound him or where we would keep him," he said.

Sightings of the creature, reputed to lurk in the shadowy Pacific Northwest forest, are rare, but Monday's wasn't the first in this neck of the woods.

In June 2000, Gene Sampson found two sets of large footprints in the woods behind his home and that of a neighbor on the Hoh Indian reservation. Sampson also reported finding trampled trails in a densely forested area, with branches and bark broken off trees about 20 feet up. And he heard the sounds of the alleged creature above the wind, he told the Peninsula Daily News.

Sampson's report drew the attention of a Sasquatch advocate and expert Grover Krantz of Port Angeles, who died Feb. 14. The retired Washington State University anthropology professor was an expert in cryptozoology, the study of secret animals.

"Some people seem to think they're out here," said Powell, who added that he couldn't remember another sighting in the Forks area.

Bigfoot society to hold annual conference, expo

By SARA SNATCHKO
Staff writer

JEANNETTE, Pa. — Pitzer's Townhouse Restaurant in Jeannette, Pa., will possibly have the most unusual dinner crowd in its history on Sept. 21.

That's when the Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society will hold the fourth annual East Coast Bigfoot Conference and Expo.

According to Kathy Altman, secretary for the Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society, this year's expo is expected to draw record crowds because it is the first year that it will be open to the public.

"In past years, it was just researchers. And we would have so many people who heard about it and came uninvited, that we decided to have it at a bigger place and invite the general public. And we expect a pretty good turnout," Altman said.

The event will feature several guest speakers including Stan Gordon, an internationally known researcher and investigator from Greensburg, Pa.

Gordon has been investigating Bigfoot and UFO sightings since 1965, and is known as an

authority on the subject, having taught adult education courses on the subject and been featured in such publications as the Philadelphia Enquirer, Time Life Books Mysteries of the Unknown and Sports Illustrated, to name just a few.

He has also been featured on television shows Evening Magazine, Inside Edition and A Current Affair.

Gordon said he will lecture about his experiences in investigating and documenting bigfoot and UFO sightings, particularly those that occurred in the 1970s.

"Something very unusual happened in the 1970s," Gordon said. "That was the last major wave of bigfoot sightings. It was an unprecedented amount of sightings in over seven counties in Southwestern Pennsylvania."

Gordon started three research groups of volunteers with science, engineering and research backgrounds. This group provided fast response to sightings and worked to gather evidence.

Gordon had a hotline where sightings were reported and said it was inundated with calls in the 1970s.

"We were responding to calls 24 hours a day."

Gordon admitted that some of the calls are undoubtedly hoaxes, but sightings that are witnessed by several different people, coupled with physical evidence and strange animal behavior warrant a closer look from Gordon.

"The most convincing evidence that I have seen is animal behavior," Gordon said.

"I've gone to investigate sightings where people claim to have seen a very large hairy creature and their dogs will be standing where the creature was said to have been and they just stand there paralyzed. They don't bark, they don't move. It's very strange."

He added that in his years of investigating bigfoot, he's seen cattle and horses moving in groups to other parts of the pasture.

"People can be hoaxed, but animals can't. They have so much instinct and to see them react to this phenomena is intriguing."

Gordon said that although the wave of bigfoot sightings in the 1970s has not been matched since, he still receives 150-200 e-mails a day from people who have visited his website, police who have heard of sightings and others wanting information about bigfoot or UFOs.

In fact, a hotline that he set up in 1969 for UFO sightings is what led him to investigate bigfoot because so many people called the hotline with a myriad of strange information.

"I'm not sure if there is a correlation between bigfoot and UFOs, but there have been reported sightings of UFOs and bigfoot seen together."

"The possibility makes it all the more intriguing to me," he said.

A specifically well-documented case occurred in Fayette County, Pa., in 1973. While Gordon said simultaneous UFO and big-

foot sightings are extremely rare, a case of a UFO landing in a field, followed by two bigfoot-like creatures walking along a fence line made him realize that the mystery was stranger than what he had ever imagined.

The witnesses described the bigfoot like creatures as, "Two tall figures, seven to nine feet tall, covered with hair, and arms hanging down past the knees, and displaying glowing green eyes," Gordon said.

The UFO was said to have disappeared when one witness fired shots of ammo at the two creatures.

The creatures proceeded to walk into the woods.

When Gordon and his team arrived on the scene after being notified by a state police officer, the area was no longer glowing, but he noticed the strange animal behavior that he feels is convincing evidence.

"A bull in the field and a dog seemed unconcerned with us, and were looking in the woods," Gordon said.

He added that the main witness of the event suddenly began to growl while being questioned.

The man threw his own father and Gordon's assistant to the ground before his own dog tried to attack him but eventually walked away, whimpering.

"The man came out of what appeared to be an almost trance-like state, and began talking about visions he saw about the end of the world. It was apparent that professional help was required in this

case," Gordon said.

The man was treated by a well-known psychiatrist.

Gordon said also that he expects the conference to be well attended, and that typically people don't talk about bigfoot sightings because they're afraid they'll be considered crazy. But when people come out of the woodwork to attend events, many times there are people in the crowd who have seen bigfoot but have never told anyone about it.

In addition to Gordon, William Draginnis from Virginia will have his Bigfoot Research Vehicle on display.

Known as the "Bigfoot Primate Research Lab," the 1989 Ford E-350 served as a mobile veterinarian clinic prior to Draginnis' purchase in the fall of 2001.

It now houses a 4,500 watt gas powered generator, four 12VDC gel cell batteries and a 25 foot extendable mast on which sits the Raytheon NightSight 200

Thermal Imaging System.

That system detects heat given off by objects up to 800 feet away.

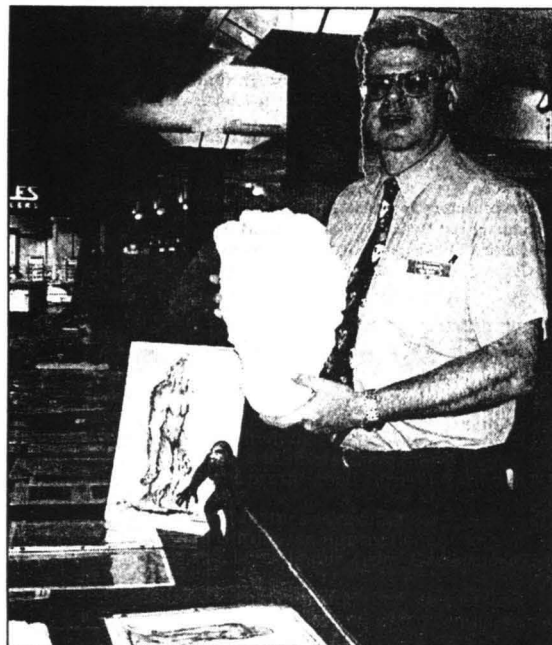
A smaller, more portable thermal camera is used when doing deep field study.

The vehicle also is equipped with a mobile video transmitter and receiver, GMRS radios and aircraft radio, which is used only when the assistance of aircraft is needed to investigate sightings.

Draginnis designed a 360-degree perimeter viewing camera, which allows him to see a 360-degree panoramic view of the surrounding area on a single video monitor.

The conference will begin at noon and admission is free. For more information, visit www.pabigfoot.com.

ECHO, Ligonier, PA - Sept. 26, 2002 CR: S. Gordon



The giant footprints of Oak Grove

UFO researcher Stan Gordon enthusiastically holds up a plaster cast made from a series of large three-toed footprints found in the snow in the Oak Grove area on Jan. 1, 1990. The footprints are believed to have been made by the eastern Sasquatch, or "Bigfoot" as they are commonly known. The footprint cast, along with a vast array of information on other phenomena, was on display during the National UFO Information Week at Westmoreland Mall recently. The mall has hosted this unique display since 1985 and reports that it has always attracted hundreds of enthusiasts and skeptics alike. This year's most asked question to Stan and the other experts on hand was, "do you know anyone reporting what I've seen?" If you have information on unusual animals such as Bigfoot, Mountain Lion (Eastern Cougar), Black Panther, giant birds, strange animal mutilations, falls from the sky, strange geological or archeological finds, unexplained artifacts, religious miracles, crop circles, undetermined explosive sounds and anything strange or unusual, please contact Stan at the PA UFO Sighting 24-hour hotline number 724-838-7768, or e-mail paufo@westol.com.

Photo by Alice White

JOURNAL, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada - Jan. 21, 2002

Wild Horses Found Dead, Mutilated Near Sundre

Chris Purdy
Journal Staff Writer

Two wild horses have been found dead — one sliced in half — near Rocky Mountain House.

The province and Alberta SPCA are investigating but few details are being made public.

Investigators have "never seen something like this," said Lisa Block, spokeswoman with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development which is conducting the joint investigation with the SPCA.

The two mares were found on Crown land, in a forested area west of Sundre, several metres away from a crudely built wooden corral.

Block didn't give further details, but said other than the fact one was cut in two, the corpses showed "no signs of obvious cruelty."

It's not known if the horse was dead before it was mutilated. An SPCA investigator refused comment.

About 250 feral horses — some escaped from ranches — roam southern Alberta.

Albertans are allowed to capture such horses, in ratios of three males to one female, if they purchase a \$200 license and agree to use them for a proper purpose, Block said.

"We've looked in our files and nobody has purchased a license for that area," said Block.

The capture season runs from Nov. 1 to Jan. 31 for three areas: west of Rocky Mountain House; west of Bragg Creek; and the largest section, west of Sundre, where the dead horses were discovered.

Capture without a license can net a maximum \$5,000 fine under the Stray Animals Act, Block said.

Further charges could be laid by the RCMP or Fish and Wildlife officials.



GEORGE
PLAGENZ

Science doesn't explain everything

Living as we do in a scientific age, we are convinced there is a logical explanation for everything.

Even so, there are times when the only response to seemingly inexplicable events around us is to scratch our heads in amazement. Take what happened to a couple of my acquaintance. After they had moved from the city into a 140-year-old farmhouse, they noticed one morning that the door to the guest room was open. They had always kept that room shut to save on heat. A few mornings later, they awakened to find the light on in the room.

When the door was found open on other mornings, the husband searched for some explanation, such as the wind or a faulty door latch. He put a wad of paper between the door and the jamb to keep the door from opening. Even after doing this, however, he would sometimes find the door open in the morning and the wad of paper on the floor.

"That didn't bother me so much," he said. "I assumed I hadn't made the wads of paper thick enough. But I was really shaken one morning to find the door to the room open and the wad of paper not on the floor but on top of a chest of drawers six feet from the door!"

Is there a reasonable theory to account for such eerie occurrences?

Even stranger is the story of an Eastern Airlines jet that crashed in the Florida everglades in 1972. Among the 101 casualties were the pilot and flight engineer.

A few months later, the ghosts of the two crew members began to appear on other Eastern Airlines planes that were using salvaged parts from the wrecked plane.

In his book, "The Ghost of Flight 101" (Berkeley Medallion Books, 1976), John G. Fuller tells of one occasion after the accident. A flight attendant discovered she had one more passenger than she could account for on the manifest. Then she spotted an Eastern Airlines captain in uniform she hadn't remembered seeing.

"I beg your pardon, captain," she said, "I don't have you on my list." He didn't respond, but stared straight ahead. She called the captain. When he leaned down to address the man in uniform, he turned white.

"My God!" he said. "It's Bob Loft!" Loft had been the pilot of the ill-fated plane. As soon as the captain blurted out Loft's name, the man disappeared.

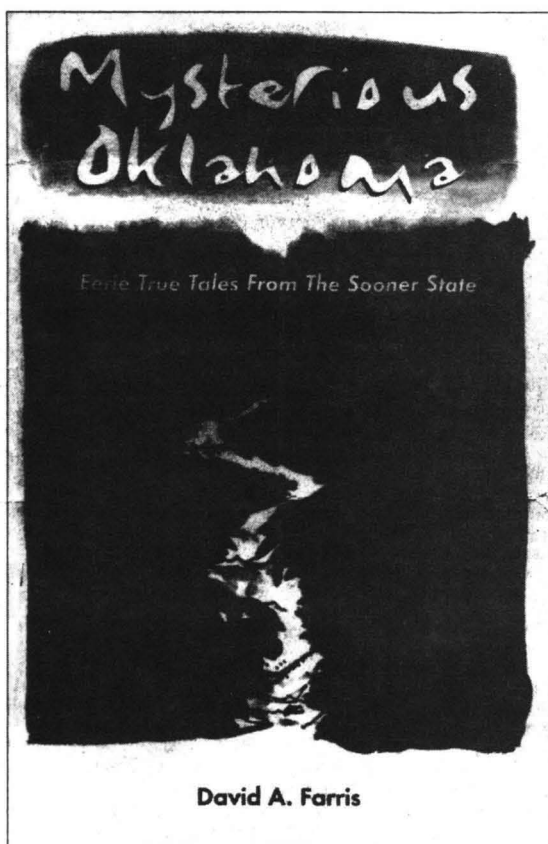
According to Fuller's book, that was just one of the many occasions in which Eastern Airlines crew members and passengers reported seeing the ghosts of Loft and the flight engineer.

Susy Smith, author of "Prominent American Ghosts" (World Publishing Co., 1967), says ghosts appear occasionally at the places where they were happiest or saddest or at the scene of a great crime or accident in which they were involved.

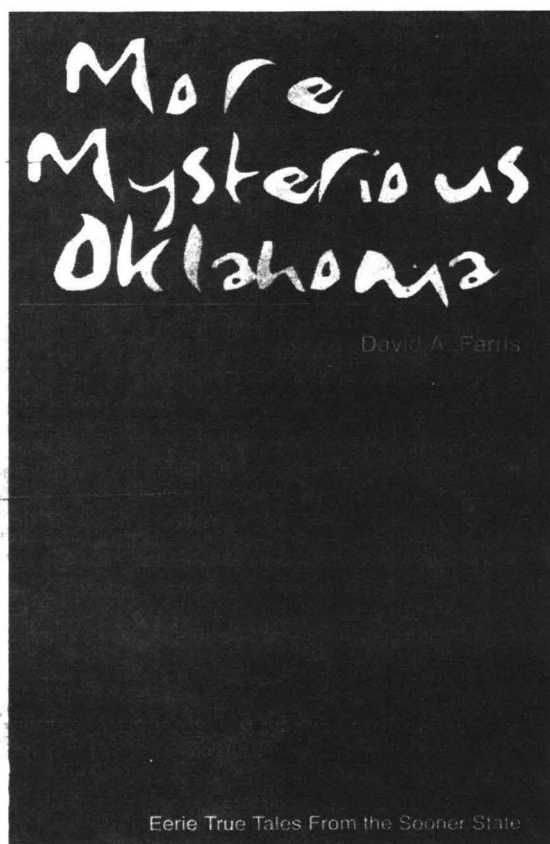
The renowned Society for Psychical Research in London, made up of psychologists, physicists and doctors, still has an open mind on the subject of ghosts.

While conceding that many ghost stories originate in the imaginations of people, it does go so far as to say it is not impossible that there are such things as ghosts.

TRANSCRIPT, Norman, OK - Oct. 13, 2002 CR: D. Farris



David A. Farris



Eerie True Tales From the Sooner State

Spooky Stories Night to feature Oklahoma mysteries

By Barbara Quigley
LifeStyle Editor

David A. Farris, author of "Mysterious Oklahoma" and "More Mysterious Oklahoma" will be featured at Spooky Oklahoma Stories Night, from 8 to 9 p.m. Oct. 30 at The Cleveland County Historical Society, 508 N. Peters.

Farris admits to being a spook fan since he was a child, admitting he first heard tales of ghosts and UFOs from classmates who swore them to be true.

His interest grew when during the fourth and fifth grades he ordered books about ghosts, UFOs, psychic phenomena and Bigfoot.

After Farris graduated from college he "escaped" to the public library where he read his way through books on UFOs, ghosts, psychic phenomena, strange beasts and other anomalies.

Farris says he didn't compile his collection of scary tales to prove anything. "There would be nothing but the cold harsh reality of the (so called) 'Real world,'" he said.

His first book includes a chapters on the Spiro Mounds, ghostly hauntings, UFO sightings, strange happenings in Ottawa County, crop circles, alien abductions, mutilations and other fascinating accounts.

He expounds on his collection of strange tales in his second book including little people, prehistoric mysteries, saucer invasions, ghosts, spooklights and John Wilkes Booth.

Farris is a native and long time resident of Oklahoma. He is a graduate of Central Oklahoma University in Edmond.

HOUMA TODAY, Houma, LA - Jan. 21, 2002

Larose Rancher Finds Mutilated Cattle in Field

By Katina A. Gaudet
NYT Regional Newspapers

LAROSE -- A Larose cattleman returning from an out-of-town trip came home to an unpleasant discovery Monday - a mutilated cow and an unborn calf that had been removed from its mother's womb.

Ray Cheramie, who owns pasture and raises cattle behind the Larose Landing Subdivision north of Larose, said two of his field hands discovered the slain cattle late Sunday on his property.

They told him of their find about noon Monday when he returned home.

The cow, which was about 2 years old, was nearing the birth of her first calf. Both animals had been mutilated.

"Someone cut the stomach open and removed the baby calf, cut the ear off the baby calf and also cut one of the front hooves off right at the first joint," said Cheramie. "Three of the mother's milking tips on the cow's milk bag were also cut off."

Cheramie said he reported the incident to the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office.

Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office spokesman Larry Weidel said the

investigation into the deaths of Cheramie's cattle is still under way. The animals are worth between \$1,200 and \$1,500.

Afterward, Cheramie reported the incident to an enforcement officer with the state Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

Ashley Rodrigue, a department spokeswoman, said the department is working with the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office in investigating the incident.

Department policy, however, prohibits the release of information relating to an investigation until it is complete, Rodrigue said.

The Sheriff's Office is also investigating the shooting death of another local cattleman's cow that occurred over the weekend, Weidel said. The cow, which was shot with a high-powered rifle, was found in a pasture near Twin Acres Subdivision in northern Larose.

Although several people living in the neighborhood have been questioned, police have little information. Anyone with information into either case can call the Criminal Investigations Division in Lockport at 532-2255 or call Crimestoppers at (800) SHERIFF. Callers need not give their names.

The society is aware of the chance for fraud on the part of mediums who purport to be speaking to the dead. Consequently, mediums who come to the society are put through stiff tests. They are required to blow through their lips the entire time they are conducting a seance.

Because it is impossible to blow through your lips and speak at the same time, if a voice speaks while the medium is blowing through his or her lips, the presumption is that it is authentic -- the spirit of the deceased is speaking through the medium's voice mechanism.

But most seances are held in the dark, you say. Under such conditions a medium can pretend to be blowing while not blowing at all and no one will be the wiser.

Next week, I'll tell you how the society nips that little ruse in the bud.